

globe. A delightful listen, *Lingua Franca* is a high water mark for internationally inspired improvisers everywhere.

Renowned acoustic super group, Trio Da Paz, deliver a pleasantly joyous interpretation (2) of standards and originals all cast through their multifaceted lens of Latin Jazz. With over fifteen years of experience under their belt of playing together, these masters embody the sort of empathic interaction that can only be borne of such a long term playing association.

Standards like Miles Davis' "Seven Steps to Heaven" and Dave Brubeck's "Take Five" sit side by side with the "Brazilian National Anthem" and Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Corcovado." Their obvious familiarity with one another's inclinations comes through in their spirited interplay. The trio delivers a few delicate ballads, but mostly the album is an upbeat session, with plenty of varied Latin rhythms to maintain the momentum. Their strengths are most apparent on their re-arrangements of more conventionally recognizable material. "Take Five" is taken at a brisk pace with a slightly darker tone, substantially increasing the drama. "Seven Steps To Heaven" is given a brief, but pulsating workout. Their variation on Leonard Bernstein's "Somewhere" is a respectful and gorgeous reading. Although the specter of Bossa-Nova dominates the majority of the session, other Latin rhythms make appearances as well.

Straight ahead, but not conservative in execution, *Somewhere* is a gorgeous example of acoustic Latin Jazz played by acknowledged masters.

Troy Collins

1) MI3, WE WILL MAKE A HOME FOR YOU, CLEAN FEED 39.

Gazzeloni / Ugly Beauty / Shuffle Boil / 3/4 Vs 6/8 4/4 Time / Monk's Point / Three Plus Three / Centennial / Disambiguation / We See. 72:31.

Pandelis Karayorgis, el p; Nate McBride, b; Curt Newton, d. 5/26/02, Somerville, MA; 4/11/03, 5/11/03, Hyde Park, MA.

2) GENE ESS, SANDBOX AND SANCTUM - SONG CYCLE FOR QUARTET, SIMP 50701.

Free 2 Fast / Ryo / Baptisma Pyros / Ballad For A Swordsman / Ask The Guru / Noh Country / Sun Matsuri / Kerama Professional. 66:43.

Ess, g; Donny McCaslin, ts, ss; Harvie S, b; Gene Jackson, d. 3/30-31/05, Union City, NJ.

3) NOPOP, SESTETTO SILTA 501.

L'Airone / Dimal / Gabani / Biancospina / Il Sorriso Delle Finestre / Oali Oala / Saline / Cosmos. 55:16.

Gian Maria Matteucci, cl, b cl, pic; Massimo Zaniboni, ts, ss; Stefano Savini, g; Guido Facchini, p; Stefano Ricci, b; Mauro Gazzoni, d.

How do you spice up the traditional piano trio? One way is to use drum-heavy rock rhythms,

as the Bad Plus does. Another is the mi3 way, replace the piano with a Fender Rhodes electric model and whack the hell out of it. (1) finds pianist Pandelis Karayorgis and a fine rhythm section conjuring a bold, fuzz-filled noise reminiscent of the early '70s when musicians like Paul Bley, Jan Hammer, and Chick Corea began to use electric keyboards toward really wild ends. This trio takes a number of more difficult Sixties Jazz pieces like Eric Dolphy's "Gazzeloni," Hassan Ibn Ali's "3/4 Vs. 6/8 4/4 Time" and Thelonious Monk's "Monk's Point" and sets them to wicked grooves. Nate McBride and Curt Newton play fat and tight rhythms and Karayorgis leaps all over them with noisy wah-wah and reverb-filled runs mixed with bits of abstraction. There are some slower moments from the group as well. Monk's "Shuffle Boil" gets a graceful waltz treatment and Karayorgis' own "Centennial" is a slow, quiet walk that sounds like one of Joe Zawinul's more introspective pieces. This is a side of music that's lain neglected for thirty years and it's great to have someone take up the Fender Rhodes standard again and work it so exuberantly.

There are electric touches to (2) as well, but not many. Guitarist Gene Ess is a relaxed, gentle player who often seems content just to play rhythm in his own group. "Baptisma Pyros" provides a good example of how this quartet works. Ess plays a dancing theme lightly while Gene Jackson gets heavy on the drums, Harvie S plays solid and swinging bass and Donny McCaslin swoops in with brawny, rippling tenor lines. Ess is the quietest player in the group yet you get the feeling that his rhythm is the main thing holding the band together. That pattern holds through the dark funk of "Noh Country" and the half-speed samba melody of "Ryo." Ess sets the pace and when he takes a rare solo, he plays heavy electric chords that sound like John Scofield in slow motion. This is a simple-seeming set with a good bit of substance to it.

Finally there's Nopop (3), an Italian sextet whose music hops around genres in a manner reminiscent of Carla Bley, but with less humor and more drama. For example "Il Sorriso Delle Finestre" is a gentle theme that could be the love theme from an old Joan Crawford movie. And at the other extreme is "Gabani," percussive abstraction that congeals into a percolating rock theme and gives saxophonist Massimo Zaniboni and pianist Guido Facchini a chance to work out.

"Biancospina" is a tango led by piano and accordion that has clarinet and guitar doing the seductive soloing. "Oali Oala" lets the reeds dance over an African-flavored mix of spidery guitar and heavy percussion while "Cosmos" brings an epic close to the set, a gentle programmatic melody that sets the scene for a masterful tenor soliloquy from Zaniboni and mournful bass clarinet from Matteucci. This one goes all over the place but the musicianship makes all the experiments succeed.

Jerome Wilson