

Dapp Theory

a musical melange

Toronto-born pianist blends jazz, funk and hip-hop

Some musicians are satisfied to simply find a good groove. But for others, that's only the start of a larger, intuitive process.

When keyboardist Andy Milne heads up his Dapp Theory band, pulling together elements of jazz, funk and hip-hop is just part of a bigger picture.

"I think of this music as coming from jazz," says Toronto-born, Pennsylvania-based Milne, "but it's an organic process. I have to sit with something for awhile before I can draw your ear to the sense of beauty that lies there."

To that end, Dapp Theory draws from influences like Miles Davis's '60s band and '70s jam experiments, and more recently, from the exploratory rhythms of the New York "M-base" collective that first drew Milne south in the 1990s.

Milne took piano as a kid, got serious about a musical career in high school and entered the jazz program at Toronto's York University in the mid-1980s. That led to a crucial experience of studying with New York saxophonist-leader Steve Coleman at the Banff Centre Jazz Workshop in 1990. Before long he was living in New York, playing keyboards in Coleman's band Five Elements. After a dozen albums with that project and a wider experience in other styles of jazz and groove music, Milne set out to follow his own personal passions.

Now, after 10 years, several recordings and a few personnel changes, Dapp Theory is an intriguing quintet that balances compelling ideas and interaction, jazz improvisation and infectious grooves, electric and acoustic instruments, and some serious words with the music. You can hear all that on the group's heady new album *Layers of Chance*.

As Milne explains on the phone from his home: "I'm writing for the sound of the band and specific musicians within the group but within the arrangements we're trying to find a real fluidity."

When Dapp Theory returns to the Yardbird Suite tonight, you can hear Milne's piano and keyboards alongside

Roger Levesque



saxophonist John Beaty, bassist Chris Tordini, drummer Kenny Grohowski and percussionist John Moon, who injects largely improvised raps into about half of the tunes they play.

The show is at 9. Tickets are \$18 for members, \$22 for guests, in advance from Ticketmaster or at the door.



Milne