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CD Reviews: Dapp Theory - "Layers of Chance" CD-2008 Contrology Records/Obliqsound

Posted by: editoron Saturday, September 13, 2008 - 01:34 PM

Glenn Astarita

The band's first album since its 2003 Concord Records release looms as a stylistic crossover among M-Base, hip-hop, progressive jazz, funk and more. To that end, I missed out on the group's inaugural outing. However, keyboardist Andy Milne and saxophonist Loren Stillman are among the preeminent movers and shakers within modern jazz circles. In effect, they conjure up an overall tone of newness whether performing as solo artists, or accompanying others. Such is the case here, as the quintet designs a multi-genre gait that yields high dividends, largely due to its penchant for crafting a distinct sound.

Admittedly, I'm not a huge fan of rap, but on several cuts John Moon provides what he calls, "percussive poetry." Think rap-lite here, and the good news is that Moon's orations seldom become overbearing. He doesn't override, complements the rather hip musical plane, which is a potpourri of New Orleans shuffle beats, quirky flows, and funk-driven pulses, steered by Milne and Stillman's sinuous phrasings and melodic textures.

With tight rhythms and mood evoking themes, the quintet seamlessly integrates a buoyant vibe into the grand schema. It's partly about the "groove" amid Milne's occasional jazz-fusion type forays via his subtle synth generated lines. Moreover, the soloists' fluid line of attack atop Christopher Tordini's pumping bass lines instill a sense of continual motion into the preponderance of these eleven works. Ultimately, the band should garner wide appeal, to include the younger generation along with well-versed aficionados who appreciate the ever-evolving state of jazz music. - Glenn Astarita

Andy Milne: piano & keyboards; Loren Stillman: alto & soprano sax., flute & clarinet; John Moon: percussive poetry; Christopher Tordini: electric & acoustic bass; Sean Rickman: drums & percussion

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