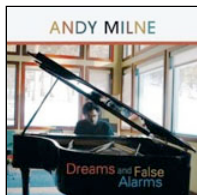


Andy Milne: *Scenarios* and *Dreams & False Alarms*

Andy Milne | ObliqSound | Published: July 8, 2007

 By [Tom Greenland](#)

 Andy Milne/Grégoire Maret
Scenarios
[Obliqsound](#) 2007

 Andy Milne
Dreams & False Alarms
[Songlines](#) 2007

Coming from a land-up-over (Canada), pianist Andy Milne sheds a uniquely northern light on current jazz trends. Having paid dues in Steve Coleman's Five Elements Band, absorbing the additive rhythms and intervallic orthodoxy championed by the M-Base collectivity, later marrying these concepts to a streetwise, all-up-in-your-grill attitude personified by his own Cosmic Dapp Theory, Milne's latest inklings seem, by comparison, downright ruminative. Consider *Scenarios*, a duet album with chromatic harmonicist Grégoire Maret, an outing comprising equal parts original compositions, jazz standards and free improv, espousing a less-is-more urgency and subtle intimacy. While tunes like "Crystal Labyrinth" evince the compound clavés of an M-Base paradigm, "Pharos of Alexandria", "Follow Me", "House of Fisher" and "Intersections" are, as their titles imply, unabashed bare-bones freeplay. When Milne and Maret attempted the same feats onstage at Jazz Gallery last month, it was clear there was no safety net: relying solely on gumption and guile, the duo took chances that ultimately paid off. Maret used a variety of sound processors - whammy pedal, flanger, phaser, digital sequencer - to layer sampled bytes from his Japanese table harp and bass harmonica, while Milne played with one hand on the keyboard and one mallet in the sound box, creating an unusual aural pastiche. Maret's terse yet thematic phraseology marries well with Milne's chunky, polydextrous style and they can generate significant heat, as they did on "Con Alma" at the Gallery, or on "Couch Talk" from *Scenarios*.

For an even more intimate experience of Milne, there's *Dreams & False Alarms*, a solo excursion exploring originals and an unusual selection of "standards", including two tunes apiece by fellow former Canadians Joni Mitchell and Neil Young, plus material from Sting, Bob Marley and Bob Dylan. Milne had previously covered Mitchell's "Free Man in Paris" with Cosmic Dapp Theory, but here the stark setting allows listeners an unadorned hearing of the pianist's innovative approaches to reharmonization and re-rhythmification. Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'", for example, originally in 3/4 time, is now in 4/4; Milne interprets the melody with off-kilter phrasing that somehow works, a treatment he also applies to "Message in a Bottle". Another interesting aspect of his style is the seeming independence of his right and left hands; on "The Metamorph" they appear as two individualists in dialogue with each other.

Tracks & Personnel

Scenarios

Tracks: Headache in Residence; Pharos of Alexandria; As Far As We Know; Con Alma; Follow Me; House of Fisher; Couch Talk; Steps From Body to Soul; Intersections; Crystal Labyrinth; Moon River.

Personnel: Andy Milne: piano; Grégoire Maret: harmonicas; Anne Drummond: Alto Flute; Gretchen Parlato: vocals.

Dreams & False Alarms

Tracks: Amelia; Geewa; Message in a Bottle; I Shot the Sheriff; After the Goldrush; The Times They Are A-Changin'; The Metamorph; Don't Let it Bring You Down; Sensei-tions; The Circle Game; Danny Boy.

Personnel: Andy Milne: piano.

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