



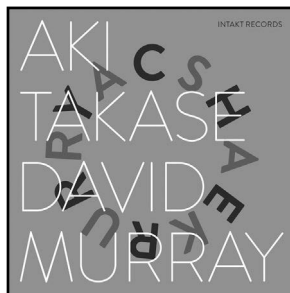
Overseas V
Eivind Opsvik (Loyal Label)
by David R. Adler

In roughly 15 years with his Overseas project, bassist Eivind Opsvik has developed about the strongest band identity for which an artist can hope. The lineup has shifted somewhat but remained remarkably steady, with Jacob Sacks (keyboards), Tony Malaby (tenor saxophone), Brandon Seabrook (guitar) and Kenny Wollesen (drums). Seabrook first appeared on *Overseas IV* and returns playing a dual role: hazy and skronky atmospheric one moment (“Shoppers and Pickpockets”), taut and snappy groove elements the next (“Izo” and “Brraps!”).

On previous outings Sacks has played some rather exotic keyboards, including harpsichord, celeste and Farfisa organ along with the more common Wurlitzer. Now he is more streamlined and his presence on piano is more continuous, offsetting Seabrook’s twangy and amplified sonic unrest. Though Sacks also plays the RMI Rock-Si-Chord organ, it’s enfolded in the mix in a way not always immediately apparent. Opsvik too brings other sounds into play with analog bass synth; he and Wollesen use Oberheim and Rhythm Ace drum machines that heighten the warped dance aesthetic. One is at a loss to categorize a piece like “Brraps!” but “experimental chamber-disco” might be close.

Stylistic curveballs aside, at its core this band tends to function in a jazz-like way. The music’s melodic character is strong; Opsvik favors unison pairings of tenor and piano, or tenor and bowed bass, against lopsided rhythmic feels and strange, beautiful harmonies. There’s mystery, zaniness, trance-inducing noise-rock (“First Challenge on the Road”) or surprising shifts from twisted funk to rubato sound-collage (“I’m up This Step”). Then there are touches of genius like “Extraterrestrial Tantrum”, a bit of softly pulsing electronica, with long obsessive-sounding drone notes from tenor and guitar and a semi-classical piano entrance that changes the color of the piece entirely. With Opsvik and crew you won’t likely anticipate what’s next.

For more information, visit loyallabel.com. Opsvik is at *The Stone* May 2nd with Dan Weiss, *Greenwich House Music School* May 6th with Harris Eisenstadt and *Weill Recital Hall* May 31st. See Calendar.



Cherry - Sakura
Aki Takase/David Murray (Intakt)
by Kurt Gottschalk

It’s hard to ask for much more than what the duo of pianist Aki Takase and reed player David Murray

provides. Each in their own way is unafraid of pushing at the edges of jazz but neither is beholden to such efforts. They share a forward-looking traditionalism, a passion for past masters, without wanting to go back in time. But what perhaps defines the duo most is the warmth and fullness of their playing. The natural voices of Takase’s piano and Murray’s tenor saxophone and bass clarinet are pushed to capacity without being allowed to break. There are passages on their new album where it’s staggering how much music—not noise, not sound, but in-the-pocket melody and harmony—two people can make.

Their only other album together is 1993’s *Blue Monk*, where they matched four of Thelonious Monk’s tunes with some of their own and a few standards. They use a different strategy here, playing four of Takase’s pieces and three of Murray’s alongside Monk’s “Let’s Cool One”, strategically positioned in the first half of the program. Murray states the bouncing theme on bass clarinet before Takase provides a slow stride accompaniment. It’s a few joyful moments in an album that isn’t melodramatic but for the most part has more serious concerns. Takase dedicates pieces to Murray (“Blues for David”) and—in one of the album’s most gorgeous melodies—to her recently departed mother. Murray references his own “Stressology” and “A Long March to Freedom”, as well as the dedicatee of an Aleksandr Pushkin poem. It’s not a dark album but certainly isn’t frivolous.

It would be best at this point in time to refrain from thinking about all the records we could have had from this duo over the past 23 years and just be glad that, at last, we have another.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch. Murray is at *Village Vanguard* May 2nd-7th. See Calendar.

Live! On Stage! ★ **THE DJANGO** ★ Open at 7pm!

Reservations (212) 519.6649 Information THEDJANGONYC.com ★ 2 AVE. OF THE AMERICAS Cellar Level Tribeca

CRAFT COCKTAILS, SMALL PLATES & LIVE JAZZ!
LOCATED IN THE ♥ OF TRIBECA

THE ART OF PERELMAN-SHIPPI VOL 1-7

Ivo Perelman / Matthew Shipp Duo
Le Poisson Rouge - May 7 9:30 pm

Ivo Perelman Quartet
with Matthew Shipp, Michael Bisio, Whit Dickey
Vision Festival - June 3rd 8:30 pm