

THE WIRE 405 | NOVEMBER 2017

WI RE

THE WIRE TAPPER CD
Anthology of underground
music volume 45

Eric Chenaux

MIDWEST IDM
HOLGER CZUKAY
MARK WASTELL
CALL SUPER

THE WIRE 405 | NOVEMBER 2017
The Unbranded Music Magazine
£4.95 | 9 770959 068113 11



Eric Chenaux | Midwest IDM | Holger Czukay | Call Super | Mark Wastell

Richard Stacey
on amiable stoner
hermit personas, a
vividly sketched
dystopia, and a
bullshit-free zone

Brockhampton *Saturation II*

Question Everything Inc/Empire Distribution DL
Right now Brockhampton's main selling point is that they're audibly having more fun making music than anyone else in the known universe. 15 guys in their early twenties inspired by Odd Future and Australian electro pop crooner Troye Sivan living in a house together in South Central Los Angeles with a recording contract to validate their ethos of round the clock uninhibited creativity. Knocking out a sequel to June's *Saturation* in a couple of months because they had to capture the roll. Wondering aloud about whether it's homophobic to only date straight men, about needing an exorcism or an intervention, about how they're determined to build up a culture where lesser minds content themselves with dreaming in the trap.

Earthgang

Rags
Dreamville/Spillage Village/Empire Distribution DL
Two years ago Atlanta duo Earthgang were building up to the release of their fourth DIY album, just starting to inch away from their amiable stoner hermit personas in the wake of two months sofa surfing their way around the US playing support for Ab-Soul. *Rags* serves notice their transformation is complete, a new urgency to their quest for an elusive peace in America, a new fervour in Johnny Venus's voice as he ponders his image as a black man in 2017: "When I fuck my white girl and I meet her daddy/I know deep down inside, man, he hate that shit/ Plotting for the perfect time to bury me".

Jones Brothers

Roughs With The Smooth
Flukebeat Music DL
For over a decade Slough's Kebbie Conteh in his Joker Starr guise has languished in the kind of unjust obscurity you'd marvel at if it weren't the apparently natural state for thoughtful, occasionally brash and sometimes spiritual boombap in the UK. With Jones Brothers he's found the perfect foil in producer El Ay. The atmosphere is casual, patient beyond reason and amiable, from the naked theology of "People" to an emotionally bravura performance with

Conteh singing his heart out on "Love Gets Me High". A triumph.

Juice Aleem *VoodooStarChild*

Gamma Proforma DL/LP
New Flesh and Gamma alumni Juice Aleem has been living in the future so long, you'd forgive a little exasperation in his voice as he waits for the rest of us to catch up. But he's been on fiery form recently, brainwaves connecting with ruthless focus on 2016's 70 page manifesto *Afrofutures And Astro Black Travel* and now with *VoodooStarChild*, his first substantial musical statement in over eight years. At 70 minutes it's an expansive and explicit journey into a vividly sketched dystopia. Kashmiri guests on "Witch Doctors" and raises a smile with his characteristically inspired turn as "A shaman/Eating top ramen".

Legion Of Goon

Project Goon
Lewis Recordings/FUMusic/iLLPrepared DL
Listeners seduced by the epic introspection of Newcastle MC Stig Of The Dump's 2015 album *Kubrick* may initially find it tough getting their head round his hijinks with geordie comrade King Hippo on *Project Goon*. Their loss. For all his claims to be about "Bars, buds, bullshit and nothing more" Stig has a brilliant knack for veering off into an uncomfortable rant just as the party's ready to kick into gear. "Maybe I should cork it, I've burnt a lot of bridges", he confesses at one point, "But every single one of them are certified bitches".

Leikeli47

Wash & Set
RCA DL
Barely two minutes into her official debut album, Leikeli47 treats us to the image of her playing the back of a church, praying to Jesus with a hijab under her ski-mask before switching it up completely to invoke Will Ferrell's Ricky Bobby in an invitation to kiss her ass. It's arguably the weakest moment on a relentless set. On "Attitude" she climaxes with a four time chant of "Kelis is God/So is Beyoncé" before closing the verse with a flourish that establishes her divine status beyond any reasonable doubt.

Rapsody

Laila's Wisdom
Jamla/Roc Nation DL
Junk food addicts may groan when Rapsody endorses a description of herself as "the difference between McDonald's, Burger King and Whole Foods" but the boast proves modest over the course of *Laila's Wisdom*. Far more typical is the claim four bars later that it "should be a crime to be this fly and awesome", as she confidently lines up alongside Kendrick Lamar and Lance Skiiiwalker to declare the power of her black skin greater than any badge or gun on "Power". When she laughs that she's never read Robert Greene's self-help manual *48 Laws*, not only is she declaring her album a bullshit-free zone, she's redefining priorities for 21st century grown-up rap. On this form you have to hope her approach prevails. □

Daniel Spicer on
an astringent
union, brutally
compact rhythmic
packages, and
pugnacious blats

Martin Archer/Graham Clark/Stephen Grew/Johnny Hunter

Felicity's Ultimatum
Discus CD
The bracketed subtitle of "Rachel's Walk (With Roscoe)" is a dead giveaway. Though Martin Archer has released a compendious jumble of music through his Discus label, he maintains an abiding fascination with the music of Roscoe Mitchell and the extended AACM family. It's plain as day right from the opening moments of this new album by a hand-picked quartet of Discus associates: the fanfare-like head of "Amanda's Drum" presses Archer's vinegary soprano sax into astringent unison with Graham Clark's violin, vividly recalling the collaborations of Anthony Braxton and Leroy Jenkins. At the same time, Stephen Grew's nervous piano ripples pull against the precise percussion undertow of Johnny Hunter's woodblock ping and miniscule rattle.

Tim Berne's Snakeoil

Incidentals
ECM CD/DL
I'd love to see what kind of arcane scores alto saxophonist Tim Berne uses to direct and navigate Snakeoil's composed and extemporised environments. Throughout, complex and tightly wound post downtown heads give way to free, open-ended play – improvised passages that can roughly be divided into two forms: bursts of dense turbulence, with Ches Smith's drums chopping out brutally compact rhythmic packages and Oscar Noriega's bass clarinet whipping about like a headless lizard; or extended moments of spectral anticipation with quietly humming electronics hanging like a mist and Matt Mitchell's piano caught in private ruminations. The muzzled electric guitars of Ryan Ferreira and David Torn (on two tracks) add a further sense of cavernous scale to this information-rich production.

Olie Brice Quintet

Day After Day
Babel CD/DL
There's a delightfully old-fashioned vibe to this date led by British bassist Olie Brice, in which he revisits various strategies for free jazz first proposed in the 1960s. "Red Honey, Yellow Honey" is a decent stab at

Ornette's conception of propulsive free bop – or, more pertinently, Don Cherry's mid-60s development of the idea – with George Crowley's tenor sax growling like a disconsolate hound. Meanwhile, tracks like "Interruptions #1" offer billowing group improv wrapped around a central theme. Here too Brice's ghostly arco shrieks and thick pizzicato stabs show how to play a bass solo that won't signal a rush on the bar.

Lol Coxhill & Raymond MacDonald

Morphometry
Glo-Spot LP
Eternal prankster Lol Coxhill had a long and fruitful relationship with the fertile improv scene clustered around Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra, and a close collaborative connection with their key figure, saxophonist Raymond MacDonald. Recorded in July 2008, on Coxhill's last visit to Scotland before his death in 2012, this session finds them in relaxed communion, each playing soprano sax in a pristine recording that foregrounds variations in timbre. But most striking is the conversational feel of these instant compositions. Lines meld and merge, held tones glancing off each other and then finding common ground before splintering and chasing each other in circles like excitable puppies. It sounds like friendship.

Adam Fairhall

Friendly Ghosts
Efpri CD
A performance by Manchester pianist Adam Fairhall is somewhat like a lesson in the history of jazz from a teacher who surreptitiously smoked a fat one out the window just before you arrived. His penchant for recasting classic tropes as slices of woozy avant garde perambulation is deliciously entertaining. Scott Joplin's "Pine Apple Rag" phases in and out of tempo. Sidney Bechet's "Egyptian Fantasy" becomes a lopsided limp with a bottom end struggling to contain flyaway right hand filigrees. His own "KT Boogie" is a rumbling boogie-woogie constantly sliding off into distracted abstraction and back again.

José Lencastre Nau Quartet

Fragments Of Always
FMR CD
Alto saxophonist José Lencastre seems to be reaching for something just beyond himself, straining into keening altissimo as a signifier of a sincere, if slightly hackneyed yearning. He's ably aided by pianist Rodrigo Pinheiro and bassist Hernani Faustino and his drummer brother Joao Lencastre – who unfurl fluid shimmers grounded by the drums' keenly controlled brush and snare battery. Yet, for all his otherworldly intent, Lencastre sounds best when his horn is dealing out pugnacious blats.

Dave Liebman & Joe Lovano

Compassion: The Music Of John Coltrane
Resonance CD/DL
Denys Baptiste
The Late Trane
Edition CD/DL
50 years after his death, John Coltrane continues to exert a quasi-religious