

Featured Artist: Brubeck Braid

CD Title: twotet/deuxtet

Year: 2007

Record Label: Independent

Style: Contemporary Jazz

Musicians: Matt Brubeck (cello), David Braid (piano)



Review: An upbeat performance featuring exceptional playing from two gifted musicians, Matt Brubeck and David Braid, in a duet performance of piano and cello, in a style that may only be classified as contemporary music. These two young composers, playing in the moment and writing songs that come from all that has influenced them in their lives have put together a joyful recording. The album comprised of eight compositions explores many musical elements that are strongly based on a classical foundation, with styling from around the globe, Latin, Spanish, Indian, Middle Eastern, American folk and jazz all become prevalent. The personalities of the musicians are hinted at in the song compositions and titles.

Matt Brubeck is the youngest son of jazz pianist Dave Brubeck, as he puts it in the promotional material he is also the tallest son. Matt Brubeck has been raised on jazz and is classically trained from Yale. He has a diverse range of experience that encompasses all styles of music, while specializing in improvisation on the cello. David Braid is one of Canada's most gifted composers as well as an outstanding pianist who seemingly spans musical genres with ease. Braid was the recipient of the 2007 Socan Composer of the year award which recognized his compositional skills attributed to the David Braid Sextet, his principal residence of composition since 2000. A graduate from the University of Toronto in 1998, Braid has rushed headlong into an award winning musical career that is just getting underway, the future seems very bright for high achievement.

The opening track of the CD has a Latin groove, "Huevos Verdes y Jamon" composed by Matt Brubeck, this song is anything but, green eggs and ham and has Brubeck playing his cello in a percussive manner, while Braid accompanies with melodic piano playing. A fiesta of tonal coloration flows forth with enthusiastic frivolity. "The Return of Dr. Spookulus" another Matt Brubeck composition, explores the theme from a Halloween thriller and shows a humorous side to this classically trained, jazz minded musician.

On a more serious level, the co-composed "Improvisation 17.04.2006" not with standing the title, lacks not in originality, a funky, pulsating percussive rhythm sets the stage for exploration of the theme - sliding gracefully into a cello break of pleasing classically tinged tonal musings that create emotions of high drama, solitude and passion. Other Brubeck compositions follow along in a similar manner, displaying skilful musicianship, playing with abandon in either col arco or pizzicato style or some combination thereof Matt Brubeck has a feel that conveys a vibrant personality. "Sniffin Around" and "It's Not What It Was" are both interesting compositions, the later is full of passion, while the former is a bit of country, perhaps no further afield than Guelph, a little bit of country and a little bit of jazz.

The David Braid compositions "Mnemosyne's March" and "Spirit Dance" are two examples of Braids' strong compositional skills. The cello accompaniment on "Mnemosyne's March" adds wonderful texture, creating a beautiful sound that transforms the opening into the realm of a classic. The pizzicato playing by Brubeck later in the song allows Braid to showcase his talents as a fine pianist. The song rocks back and forth between genres as classical meets jazz in a contemporary setting. The recording *twotet/deuxtet* comes to it's finale with Braid's "Spirit Dance" a spirited romp through a jig like rhythm that traverses the lines of state and country, the musicians add their respective world flavours to the mix. The synergy, cello and piano Braid and Brubeck work very nicely together and I look forward to much more from these two gifted contemporary musicians.

Tracks: Huevos Verdes y Jamon, Wash Away, The Return of Dr. Spookulus, Mnemosyne's

March, Improvisation 17.04.2006, Sniffin Around, It's Not What It Was, Spirit Dance

Record Label Website: <http://www.davidbraid.com>

Artist's Website: <http://mattbrubeck.com>

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