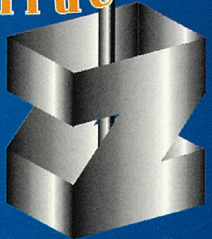




Clarion



Fracture



Zone



LESS STABLE ELEMENTS

What's a bad boy like me doing in a place like this? Call me the least stable element, booze writer turns jazz CD liner note scribe. My first problem is to shuck off bad habits.

So, chardonnay tastes like peach and sauvignon blanc like tinned peaches and tequila like a bad tomorrow. The comparison thing is difficult to disregard. When first listening to *Less Stable Elements* I heard all the obvious comparisons like - Dolphy, Rollins, Tyner, Hancock, McLean, Flanagan, Heath, Mingus, Kelly, Cannonball, Mobley, Evans (Bill), Evans (Gil), Silver, Jones, Blakey, Heath, Cobb, Turrentine, Timmons and the list could go on. But to do that is to play false.

Clarion Fracture Zone are young people (when you've been listening to jazz for over thirty years) playing their own things in their own way. Although the roots are obvious, the compositions, the ensemble work and the enthusiasm allow me to slip the surly bonds and say what I feel. I do my thinking in a glass so allow me a solo from the heart in print.

Jupiter's Pearls by Alister Spence is a cross between a hook and ladder chase on a fire engine with rear wheel steering and a fundamentalist prayer meeting in stop time. Sandy Evans and Tony Gorman are the fundamentalist voices while the section provides the raft.

Serpentine also by Spence is my favourite track. It was composed after viewing the Tweed River by air. Give me a break, nothing happens on the banks of the Tweed, I've been there! This is loaded with tension between keyboards and bass (Lloyd Swanton). The sinuous melody line might meander but it is more like a steamy night in a drive-in movie.

Less Stable Elements is just that, a Keystone Cops romp with clarinet and soprano facing each other at ten paces. It flickers with all the vitality of an ancient silent movie and you understand the folks are having fun!

Jacaranda is another shuck off for me. Purple blossoms mean exam time which meant high anxiety. This composition by Sandy Evans results in exotic percussion

intro by Darryl Pratt leading to the ensemble developing the theme which has a ball room glitz thanks to a punctilious rhythm section.

They May Be Giants is another Spence tune. It's a tad dark and the reeds get a funky workout. It is what I'm all about and that doesn't mean gloomy. It's 2am with a fug of cigarette smoke, smouldering sex in a blur of alcohol. It's how I like to be!

The Waterbearer is

about stretching your ears, to give away the secret of how the sounds came about would be to spoil the plot. Pardon the lapse, you don't need to know what's in the blend in a great wine or how it happened. Rejoice in the middle eastern multi-phonics and expand your mind.

Nomads by Tony Gorman is an up tempo



comforter that uses driving rhythm and extended solos. It is free blowing and dare I say traditional circa the mid sixties. Sandy Evans makes an emphatic statement on tenor while Toby Hall gives yeoman's service on drums. The comfort is not the predictability, it is the fact that this is the essence of jazz.

MARK SHIELD

Produced by Tony Gorman
Recorded and mixed by Guy Dickerson
at Megaphon Studios June 1995

Mastered by Barry Henniger
at Soundview Studios

Executive Producer Tim Dunn

Graphic Design Roger Norris 

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by Kusakabe Kimbei courtesy George Eastman House

Band photo by Michele Agius

They May Be Giants is dedicated to Roger Frampton,
Paul McNamara, Mike Nock and the many giants of
Australian jazz piano.

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