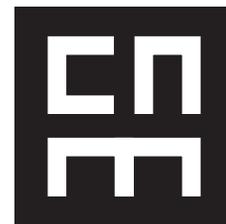


Street Date: June 21, 2011



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Eric Hofbauer & The Infrared Band

LEVEL



Creative Nation Music CNM 020
UPC: 1 82907 00008 3

MUSICIANS

Eric Hofbauer, guitar
Kelly Roberge, tenor saxophone
Sean Farias, bass
Miki Matsuki, drums

TRACKS

1. These Two Things (5:59)
2. La Ligne de Chance (8:01)
3. Castor and Pollux (1:35)
4. The Faction (5:48)
5. Murder for a Jar of Red Rum (7:26)
6. Surely Some Revelation... (11:16)
7. Spy vs. Spy (0:55)
8. Ghosts and Giants (2:09)
9. Pocket Chops (8:01)

All compositions by Eric Hofbauer (Spice-E Music, BMI)
Recorded January and February 2010 at Notable
Productions (Watertown, MA)

DESCRIPTION

LEVEL is Boston-based guitarist/composer Eric Hofbauer's second recording with his working quartet, The Infrared Band. Like its predecessor, 2008's *Myth Understanding* (Creative Nation Music), this release revels in Hofbauer's penchant for wit and wordplay (the title is a palindrome), but the primary concept behind his newest compositions is a thematic exploration of balance and duality.

"The music on *LEVEL*, like most of my work, explores the human condition using sound to tell stories," writes Hofbauer in the liner notes. "Historian and writer Joseph Campbell believed the new myths of the 21st century would be written in music. *LEVEL* embraces that idea, and offers nine mythology-themed pieces about duality in the universe and in life—two sides trying to find balance."

Inspired by the universal dichotomies of good vs. evil, fate vs. chance and conflict vs. resolution, these pieces also reference such narrative examples as the mythological twins Castor and Pollux, Act II, Scene I of *Julius Caesar* and the W.B. Yeats poem, "The Second Coming." On a musical level, Hofbauer draws on styles ranging from the blues to bebop to free jazz to a 12-tone row, while also making allusions to Albert Ayler and Jelly Roll Morton among others.

"Hofbauer brings a wealth of historical antecedents to his playfully inventive compositions," wrote AllAboutJazz.com's Troy Collins in his review of *Myth Understanding*, which he called "a sterling debut." The *Providence Phoenix's* Jim Macnie adds, "the leader bounces through an array of swinging originals that aren't afraid to look around corners and investigate odd areas. Like most jazz, the music is based on nuance—careful listening is rewarded in numerous ways. Saxophonist Kelly Roberge is an able foil for Hofbauer, and their rhythm section is terrifically agile."

DISTRIBUTION & MAJOR SALES POINTS

Physical distribution by City Hall Records

Digital distribution by IODA

Online sales at Amazon, Best Buy, CD Universe, iTunes, etc.

Direct sales from erichofbauer.com



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Eric Hofbauer & The Infrared Band

LEVEL

Marcus Stern



ABOUT ERIC HOFBAUER

Guitarist/composer Eric Hofbauer is known for his genre-defying versatility, technical virtuosity and innate ability to interject a distinctive bit of tongue-in-cheek humor into a style of music that often takes itself a bit too seriously. When not working as a solo guitarist or leading The Infrared Band, he is a member of such diverse ensembles as the Garrison Fewell/Eric Hofbauer Duo, Charlie Kohlhase's Explorer Club and the Variable Density Sound Orchestra.

"It's guitarists like Eric Hofbauer that can make life so very interesting," writes PopMatters.com's John Garratt. Critics have called him "a singular stylist" (Troy Collins, AllAboutJazz.com), a "bold transgressor of traditional genre boundaries" (Owen McNally, *Hartford Courant*), and "an original if not maverick exponent of the guitar" (Kevin Le Gendre, BBC Music). *Signal To Noise* reviewer Robert Iannapallo adds, "Technically Hofbauer can obviously play the standard jazz guitar game, but it's clear he doesn't want to be hemmed in by the clichés of its tradition."

Learn more at <http://erichofbauer.com>

ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS

- ◆ The Infrared Band is Eric Hofbauer's flagship ensemble and the primary outlet for his innovative original compositions. "If there's a single overarching ethos to the band it would be tell your story," he explains. "All my compositions have a back story or theme and I encourage each player to add their own take on those stories and to play from personal experience. There's no role playing. I compose to each of their strengths, featuring everyone and challenging their limits."
- ◆ Critics called the four year-old quartet's debut, *Myth Understanding*, "intriguingly original" (Bill Milkowski, *JazzTimes*), "rewarding on every level" (Michael Coyle, *Cadence*) and "a bright showcase for Hofbauer's multi-layered music, which basks in the contrapuntal and the conversational and is stocked with narrative lines and mythological allusions" (Owen McNally, *Hartford Courant*). *Signal To Noise* reviewer Nathan Turk added, "*Myth Understanding's* music speaks, flows and evolves...It's great stuff, and Hofbauer's definitely found the right voices for his brand of avant-postbop."
- ◆ *LEVEL* follows Hofbauer's latest solo guitar recording, *American Fear* (Creative Nation Music). Like all of his projects, the music revolved around a central theme, in this case an examination of fear in American popular culture. It featured original pieces juxtaposed with strikingly idiosyncratic interpretations of music by Johnny Cash, Andrew Hill, Nirvana, Charlie Parker, Tears for Fears, Van Halen, Fats Waller and Hank Williams. "For all its variety, drawing on recognizable elements of jazz and other musical traditions," wrote *AllAboutJazz-New York's* Tom Greenland, "Hofbauer's voice emerges here unique and distinct, blending the comedic with the tragic—and having some serious fun."



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