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like mad. Mr. Wilson said "When the people leave this year's Monterey festival after hearing this, it will be so in their brains that they'll be humming it..." He's absolutely right, for although I wasn't at the festival, I've been humming this music ever since I first heard this disc. The best of suite's seven sections are the easy going "Jazz Swing Waltz", which features Cuber's boppish baritone, cool flute work from Laws and a great conversation between Faddis' Dizzy-muted trumpet and Stafford's warm flugelhorn. The fiery "Latin Swing", which features blazing sax solos from Cuber, Hart, Ron Blake and Kamasi Washington; "Blues", has some nice work from Rosnes' piano, Blake on tenor, rising star Sean Jones on trumpet and Anthony Wilson on guitar. I had heard the younger Wilson's name often before, but I hadn't heard a lot of his work. I came away very impressed with his solos on "Blues" and on "I Concentrate on You", which is his feature piece. Anthony's sound is full and fluid, with an interesting attack that at times, has a touch of Grant Green in it. I definitely want to hear more from him.

*Monterey Moods* is another towering disc from Gerald Wilson, who has been turning out great music like this since before many of us were gleams in our parent's eyes. It is highly recommended as are most of Mr. Wilson's recorded works. In the notes, Wilson thanks the Monterey Festival for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commission and puts in a bid for another one on the 60<sup>th</sup>. By that time, Wilson will be 99. At the rate he is still going, I wouldn't bet against him getting it. I can't wait to hear what he'll have to say.



## ALPER YILMAZ

**CLASHES** — Kayique Records. [www.alper-yilmaz.net](http://www.alper-yilmaz.net). *KuKe; XX; Clashes; Junk Mail; Oddity; Ninni; Spring Breeze; You Have No Idea; Landscapes.*

**PERSONNEL:** Alper Yilmaz, bass, voice, loops & effects; Michael McGinnis, soprano sax, clarinet; Nick Kadajski, alto sax; Matthias Bublath, Fender Rhodes piano; Volkan Öktem, drums; David Binney, alto sax, percussion; Jon Davis, Fender Rhodes piano; Andy Sanesi, drums.

By John Cizik

Dauntless...indomitable...undaunted...unflinching...these are some of the words that appear when searching "Yilmaz" in an online Turkish to English dictionary. All are good

descriptions of Turkish bassist Alper Yilmaz's musical approach on his first solo CD, *Clashes*. Yilmaz has assembled two quintets with identical instrumentation for the project, one featuring musicians from his native country, the other from his adopted New York home. The exception is soprano sax/clarinet man Michael McGinnis, who appears on eight of the nine tracks, all Yilmaz originals.

"KuKe" is the opener, with Volkan Öktem's drums leading into a nice funk bass line by the leader. McGinnis and Nick Kadajski handle the melody and counter-melody. It's a nice 1970's flashback to hear the Fender Rhodes used to lay down the chords, played here by Matthias Bublath. His understated comping backs a great solo by Kadajski, segueing into another by McGinnis. The Fender Rhodes piano work becomes more and more intense as the soprano solo does likewise. "XX" starts with a saxophone staccato line, before settling into a lighter swing feel. Suddenly, the tune takes on an Eastern feel, reflecting the group's Turkish heritage. Turkey is known as the gateway between Europe and Asia — this tune illustrates the concept.

The title cut, "Clashes" brings in the New York crew, and begins with a soft arpeggiated bass line. Yilmaz then sings a wordless melody — something that sounds like it could be wailed from a minaret. McGinnis plays clarinet here, David Binney an airy alto sax. Jon Davis lays down some full chords and fills on the Rhodes. Binney's solo also has an Eastern feel — it is a complex improvisation, stunningly all over the map in style and substance. McGinnis' clarinet solo follows suit. Andy Sanesi keeps it all together on drums.

There's nothing unwanted about "Junk Mail," an upbeat and funky romp that showcases Binney again on an incendiary alto, and Davis with a wonderful Rhodes solo. Listen carefully for Yilmaz's complex bass line underneath. The leader has a PhD in economics from the University of California, but there's nothing economical about his playing on this cut! "Oddity" opens with an alto/soprano vamp, and the rest of the band comes in one-by-one. This is the New York quintet again, and also the first time we hear from the composer as a soloist. He makes the electric bass sing, with lightning runs up and down the fret board, and some eye-opening chordal breaks.

The Turkish quintet returns for "Ninni," a pretty ballad, and "Spring Breeze," a tune that opens with the kind of feel that is reminiscent of Bob James music. It builds as the horns join in. The tune stays true to its title, with McGinnis' soprano solo blowing hard and soft over Rhodes accompaniment. Drummer Öktem gets to show off his soloing chops, trading bars artfully with the rest of the band. The same lineup plays "You Have No Idea," another slow tune, funkier than the previous two. It would be no stretch to com-

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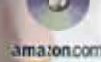
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pare this effort to something from the heyday of Weather Report, with Bublath handling what would have been Joe Zawinul's role on Fender Rhodes. The melody is wonderful, shared by the horns, keys, and bass.

The final cut, "Landscapes," is solo Yilmaz, a chance for him to shine on bass, accompanied only by "loops and effects." Yilmaz began his musical career playing guitar, and shows a great grasp of melody on the bass. There's a feel of a church bell chiming throughout, and again an Eastern feel is exposed in the music. Alper Yilmaz has created a terrific CD of original music with *Clashes*, with help from two quintets of accomplished musicians from two countries. ■

## DVD Review



### AL DI MEOLA

**SPEAK A VOLCANO-RETURN TO ELECTRIC GUITAR** — [www.in-akustik.com](http://www.in-akustik.com). *San Marco; One Night Last June; Azzura; Mi Longa Del Angel; Rhapsody of Fire; Hypnose; Red Moon; Tena De Maria; Tangata; Double Concerto; Tao; Senor Mouse; Fugata. In Conversation With Al Di Meola; Al's Guitar Tips.*

**PERSONNEL:** Al Di Meola, guitar; Mario Parmisano, keyboards; Gumbo Ortiz, percussion; Joel Taylor, drums; Mike Pope, bass

*By Clive Griffin*

*Speak A Volcano — Return To Electric Guitar* is a comprehensive DVD package that provides fans with a multitude of ways to experience the music and ideas of guitarist Al Di Meola. This DVD includes both musical performances as well as a conversation with Di Meola and a track featuring him presenting tips on playing guitar. If you happen to make music, then the latter two tracks will be of ample interest, especially to those who idolize or otherwise want to sound like, play like or be like Di Meola.

Di Meola first established himself when he dazzled audiences of Chick Corea's Return To Forever group with his technical wizardry on guitar in the 1970s. His own solo efforts bolstered his reputation.

*Speak A Volcano* features thirteen tracks with Di Meola returning to electric guitar in the

context of a quintet. The suggestion in the title of Di Meola's return to electric guitar is kind of a play on words — of course alluding to Di Meola's association as a member of Return To Forever, the 1970s fusion group led by Chick Corea. It's not as if Di Meola hasn't picked up the instrument in the ensuing 30 years. He is held in high esteem among the most highly regarded guitarists in jazz and specifically, the fusion genre. As fans well know, his musical explorations on both acoustic and electric guitars have been diverse — exploring a wide array of styles.

There are seven originals composed by Di Meola, five by Astor Piazzola, and a reprise of "Senor Mouse" a lively composition by Corea, that he often performed with the composer during the 1970s. Recorded in Leverkusen, Germany in November 2006, *Speak A Volcano* features a group of players who match and spark Di Meola's energy — including Joel Taylor on drums, Mike Pope on bass and Mario Parmisano on keyboards. Indeed, on *Speak A Volcano*, Di Meola fulfills the hopes and expectations of those who are here to experience the dramatic runs, sound canvases, and explosive energy for which he is noted, and which he creates and delivers here in this performance as well. If you've been a Di Meola fan you've probably bought albums and videos of him playing acoustic guitar, and perhaps even seen him many times — including in the Rite of Strings group with Stanley Clarke and Jean Luc Ponty. If you haven't taken a closer look recently though, among the more astonishing aspects about Di Meola are that his physical appearance and his technical finesse on the guitar haven't changed or diminished at all. In this video, he is dressed casually, electric guitar in hand and burning up the fretboard. It's kind of like a flashback to the mid-1970s, and with the bonus of his 30 years of musical experience added to the mix.

The first couple of tracks are lengthy and there's a lot of stretched-out, meaty playing throughout "San Marco" and "One Night Last June." Other versions of those two songs appear on two earlier Di Meola albums: *Consequence of Chaos* and *Kiss My Axe*.

*Speak A Volcano-Return to Electric Guitar* does offer just that on the first two tracks, and on the closing tracks "Tao" and the extended version of Corea's "Senor Mouse." The eight tracks beginning with "Azzura" feature Di Meola on acoustic guitar.

The video is crystal clear. Camera angles are exceptional — bringing the viewer up close and personal with the performers and the performance. Audio fidelity is top notch, as are the mixes that comprise this sterling production. The seamless presentation adds to the enjoyment of this state-of-the-art performance by one of the more high-profile guitar voices in jazz. ■

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