

Reviews

For the last two decades Sunnyside has showcased some of the best and brightest jazz musicians on the scene. This new recording is no exception. It heralds the sound of the 21st century. Tenor saxophonist Marc Mommaas's Sunnyside debut, **Global Motion**, marks the extension of the jazz saxophone into the 21st century. This Tegelen-born, Amsterdam-raised musician's sound is full-bodied, articulate and comes close to Michael Brecker's John Coltrane-born sheets of sound.

.....- **By Eugene Holley**

Review Downbeat (June 2004 Issue)

Saxophonists are seekers by nature. They search for their inspiration by reaching toward the future, relishing the past, searching the world over or settling down home. Marc Mommaas: Global Motion: Odd, alternative time signatures and syncopated subdivisions run far and wide on this heady, globally influenced set by the Netherlands-raised tenor saxophonist. Drummer Tony Moreno and guitarist Rez Abbasi—new additions to the group since Mommaas' 1999 trio debut—contribute to the progressive exotica with African percussion and electric sitar, respectively. Global Motion is always in stylistic motion, spanning bop, ECM-esque soundscapes and free-form chamber dreams.-**By Ed Enright (2004)**

Review JazzTimes (February 2004 Issue)

...Ofcourse, improv versus composition isn't a battle to be won or lost. Sometimes the two thrive as equals. Witness tenor saxophonist 'Marc Mommaas' Global Motion (Sunnyside), a finley crafted and uplifting example of a progressive-but-not-precisely-avant-garde jazz aesthetic. Mommaas is a gifted tenor saxophonist, ... and a writer of intricate and pleasingly unpredictable tunes. On '3458' and 'African FBI' Mommaas seems to delight in subverting convention, especially in regard to time. Such metrically complex tunes are only as good as the band wraps its chops around them. Mommaas' crew ... does the material justice, interpreting its quirks with grace... The music has its own nearly classical beauty.....-**By Chris Kelsey (2004)**

Review Cadence (January 2004 Issue)

...The compositions of saxophonist Marc Mommaas have angular folkish themes enhanced by very very active rhythms and lively improvisations. This work comes off closer to the impressionistic side of Herbie Hancock or the piercing cries of Jan Garbarek than normal blues-based American Jazz. There's a nice throbbing pulse wrapped around sitar on 'Maktub' while 'Intuition' has Mommaas peeling lovely spirals of tenor over a chiming, abstract rhythm. 'Something Else' is the heaviest piece, guitarist Rez Abbasi stepping to the front and playing springy, tense rhythms against Mommaas' increasingly frenzied tenor. Bassist Hebert and drummer Moreno also prove invaluable to keeping the crisp tempo afloat. This is a cerebral set, but one with a measure of passion as well.....-**By Jerome Wilson (2004)**

All About Jazz (2003 Issue)

A note to ECM label head Manfred Eicher: I've got a new artist for your stable. His name is Marc Mommaas, a Dutch tenor saxophonist living in NYC, and he's just released a fine album on Sunnyside, Global Motion. The album features the Global Motion Trio, including pianist Nikolaj Hess and bassist John Hebert, expanded to a quintet by the addition of drummer Tony Moreno and guitarist Rez Abbasi. The group creates a sound with affinities to much of ECM's European jazz—an abstract, painterly quality, melodies that wind through twists and turns while retaining a folksy lilt, and an air of wistful melancholy. Mommaas, who studied with Joe Lovano and Dave Liebman, is a musician of much promise; his tone is rich and rounded, with a bit of sandpaper rasp in feistier moments, and his compositions (all tunes on the album are his) are darkly appealing and well-constructed. The quintet can move from song-like melodies to free passages and back without a hitch, and their sympathetic playing provides a cohesion that distinguishes the album. The opener, "One Way Only," is one of the best tunes, featuring a maze-like melody over an irregularly accented meter that periodically gives way to an agitated bridge played in unison by Mommaas and Hess. An ominous single-note rhythmic pattern provides a base for Moreno's drums to solo over, heightening the tension before the tune is brought home with a final set of changes. "Maktub" and "African FBI" add some Dave Holland-like world beat touches: Abbasi plays an electric sitar guitar (if you've heard Steely Dan's "Do It Again" you know the sound) on the former, which again features a torturous melody before settling into an elegant

groove; and Moreno's African percussion duet with Mommaas on the latter is a highlight. Another is "3458," a memorable theme over shifting meters with some wonderful playing by Hess (a real find) followed by a remarkable sax solo where Mommaas begins as if awakened from a dream, becoming slowly more alert as his lines become sharper and more declamatory. Like other ECM-style groups, this one sometimes dissolves into merely pleasant abstractions that fail to make a long-term impression: the first part of "Copenhagen Suite," for example. Nevertheless, this record establishes Mommaas as an artist to watch, and makes the case for this group to receive wider exposure. Your move, Herr Eicher? – **Joshua Weiner**

Review All Music Guide (2003 Issue)

Raised in Amsterdam and now a resident of New York City, tenor saxophonist Marc Mommaas has studied with sax titans such as Joe Lovano and David Liebman. With his second outing as a leader, Mommaas displays a penchant for working thru linearly devised themes amid a few shrewdly devised digressions along the way. He receives strong support from guitarist Rez Abassi, and pianist Nicolaj Hess, both serving as sympathetic collaborators here. The saxophonist's compositions include breezy passages atop the often swirling and blustery rhythms provided by bassist John Hebert and drummer Tony Moreno. Hence, Mommaas has aligned himself with good company. Marked by oscillating flows and a few melodically tinted dreamscapes, the band's tactics also consists of lithely engineered motifs. As the overall concept and execution of this album might spur notions of traversing rolling hills via winding country roads -- at an abnormally high speed, that is! Overall, Mommaas possesses a fluid attack, enhanced by a velvety tone and his bop-induced soloing escapades.

-- **Glenn Astarita**

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