

Rafal Sarnecki - The Madman Rambles Again (2011)

Written by bluesever

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1. *The Student Protest* 2. *The Madman Rambles Again* 3. *Hermeto* 4. *The Tower Of Babel* 5. *Bucaramanga* 6. *Poetry In Motion* 7. *The Song Is You* 8. *Spring Has Its Sappy Wisdom* Musicians: Rafał Sarnecki - guitar Lucas Pino - flute & tenor sax Jerzy Małek - trumpet Paweł Kaczmarczyk - piano Wojciech Pulcyn - bass Łukasz Żyta - drums & percussion (except 4,5) Paweł Dobrowolski - drums (4,5) Jose Manuel Alban Juarez - percussion (1,3) All compositions by Rafał Sarnecki, except "The Song Is You" by Jerome Kern

This is the 2nd album by the excellent Polish guitarist / composer / arranger Rafal Sarnecki, following his outstanding debut released a couple of years earlier. Sarnecki manages to repeat the same level of freshness and quality, but the new album is different in many ways, mostly due to the fact that Sarnecki lived in NY for some time, absorbing some of the Big Apple's influences, which are evident in the brass arrangements, Latin rhythms and overall sound of the recording. But fortunately this amalgamation of American influences did not replace his European roots, which remain intact, especially in his superb compositions. He composed seven of the eight tracks on the album and included one standard, same as last time.

His musical cohorts consist partly of the same excellent musicians who recorded the debut album: pianist Pawel Kaczmarczyk, bassist Wojciech Pulcyn and drummers Lukasz Zyta (on six tracks) and Pawel Dobrowolski (on two tracks) (all five are members of the pianist's Audiofeeling Band), strengthened by a brass section: US saxophonist / flautist Lucas Pino and trumpeter Jerzy Malek. Percussionist Jose Manuel Alban Juarez (despite the name he's Polish) guests on two tracks. The sextet format allows Sarnecki to develop a much richer orchestration and complex arrangements for his superb compositions, which he does beautifully, carefully avoiding overdoing it, which is a rare and commendable approach. The performances are of course stellar and these young musicians bring a wide smile on veterans' (like me) faces, seeing that Jazz has a future after all.

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What I particularly admire about Sarnecki is his ability to eschew the Fusion trap – he manages to keep this album 100% Jazz, which is extremely rare for guitar albums these days. The album was released on the Spanish Fresh Sound label, which releases albums by young and promising Jazz musicians from all over the world, giving them a chance of international exposure, an admirable policy deserving support. Polish Jazz legend Tomasz Stanko gives Sarnecki some warm compliments on the album's cover, and I'm only happy to concur with his opinion – this is definitely a great piece of music, which deserves repeated listening and an honorable place on the shelves of Polish Jazz discography. Wholeheartedly recommended! --- Adam Baruch, polish-jazz.blogspot.com

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