



## **The Sharp Edge of Jazz!** By Karl Stober

Rhythmic escapades that transport listeners to the edge best define Katahdin's Edge, a 2004 release by Mixed Media. Incorporated are arrangements offering a sense of hypnotic energy and mystifying intrigue with a slight touch, at times, of pure sensitivity. This is jazz with a strong injection of ingenuity and creativity. Willie Myette (piano), Mike Connors (drums), and John Funkhouser (bass) evolve each note, with a focused vision; fashioning a new personality to each sound. An amazing performance has been burned on this disk, one that deserves our full attention accompanied with an open mind.

As you ride the crest of this melodic wave allow yourself, as I did, to discard the blinders and educate one. Funkhouser and Myette are facilitators in finesse and with a background in jazz instruction assure us of an intense lesson plan. Pay close attention to the bass sounds offered by Connors, subtle at times, dramatic always. Connors grasps just the right moment to change the flow, thus allowing for mood swings, very cool.

Several cuts come to the surface that should be highly praised.

Chase Scene-esque rhythms introduce "Zargonic Effect" only to transform attitudes in midstream, allowing serenity to dominate accompanied by an angelic piano solo. Myette bares his soul on this project.

"Soulmates" is a lesson in funk. Each member displays their gifts in their own unique style, but mesh them to become one, with that strong funk tone. This cut has a hypnotic effect on the listener and will pull one in. The trio easily demonstrates what the title represents.

Finally "Full Circle" illustrates methodical arrangements, intensely thought out keyboards, percussion, and bass participation in an accelerated pace. The insertion of wind effects makes a strong statement for the critic's claim of innovative passion.

It's intellect like this, we need to distinguish and acknowledge, for these acts of virtuosity will, in the future, sculpt and build the foundation of Jazz for decades to come. This performance makes standing on the "Edge" a refreshing risk.

Karl Stober is an international freelance columnist and broadcaster who can be reached at [jazztrenzz@bellsouth.net](mailto:jazztrenzz@bellsouth.net). Karl can also be reached at 1-802-380-6065.