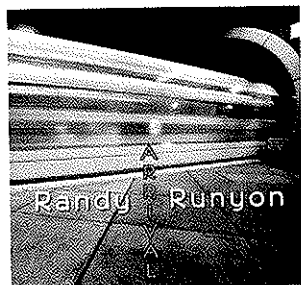


song is based on a groove and a lyrical melody that develops out of or over the groove. Most of the tunes on the album fall into the Latin jazz or pop genres, though with the melodies being so strong and the musicians so tight with each other, fans of straight-ahead jazz might find enjoyment in it as well.

Those listeners who are looking for the new jazz guitar album or an album that will push the envelope *This Way* is not for them. This album is more suited for the listener who is looking for an easy listening experience that will also get them up and dancing.

Reviewed by Matthew Warnock



RANDY RUNYON ARRIVAL

2007 Art of Life Records AL1026-2

www.myspace.com/randyrunyonmusic

Guitarist Randy Runyon will be entering his junior year at the Berklee College of Music in the fall of 2007. This is the young guitarist's first recording as a leader, and features his high school guitar teacher Carl Filipiak, drummer Todd Harrison and bassist Steve Zerlin.

The album consists of seven standards, including "All the Things You Are" to "Night Dreamer" and "Witch Hunt," while the last tune on the album is a blues written by the Baltimore-based Filipiak. Each tune is given a unique treatment and not just played through, head blowing head, as one might expect from such a young player. Though there are extensive solos on each tune, there is careful attention paid to the intros and endings on each arrangement. There is a particularly nice interlude played by the two guitars during the drum solo on Joe Henderson's "Recordame," as well as nice adaptations of the intros to "All the Things" and "Witch Hunt."

Runyon's playing on this album is quite impressive for a young man. He has unlimited chops, tons of great melodic ideas, and when he's in the pocket he sounds twenty years beyond his age. Though Runyon's playing is exemplary for his age there is a noticeable difference between him and the older Filipiak, who is not only more mature in years but in his phrasing and

melodic development as well. Not one to showboat or take away from the younger Runyon, Filipiak plays short, simple, yet elegant solos on each tune that are a nice contrast to Runyon's more jam packed solos. Though this young man may need to grow into his ideas a bit, as he has a tendency to rush and overplay his solos, he is well beyond the curve as far as other guitarists his age.

After listening to *Arrival*, there is no doubt that Randy Runyon will be a name we will all be hearing for years to come. Though his debut recording is more filled with potential and the rawness of youth, it is worth picking up, even if only to check out the next generation of jazz guitarists.

Reviewed by Matthew Warnock



PETER LEITCH SELF PORTRAIT

Jazz House Productions

I'm fortunate to receive dozens of promotional CDs every month for review. And because today's jazz world is brimming with great guitar players, I'm often left grasping for something other than over-used adjectives. But occasionally I'm privy to something extraordinary, like Peter Leitch's CD, "Self Portrait."

I knew I was going to love this collection after hearing just a few bars. Leitch's playing is captivating, creative and frequently smoldering. It is, with an overdubbed exception or two, a solo album; one man, one guitar. There are flashy players such as Tommy Emmanuel, intellectual players like Jim Hall and Van Eps, inventive, edgy players like Joe Diorio, and then there's virtuoso Peter Leitch, who seems to be a mosaic of all the above.

One nice thing about this album is its illusion of Leitch playing acoustic guitar in your living room. Even when he plays amplified he uses only enough juice to create some sustain because his touch and attack produce much of the guitar's natural sound. "H&L," a straight-ahead blues is a case in point as Leitch milks the guitar for all it will give. And it's a blues that he puts right in the pocket.