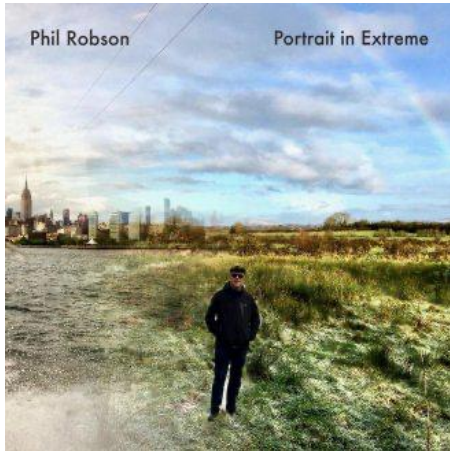


Phil Robson – Recent Press Reviews

Portrait in Extreme reviews:



Jazzwise Magazine Review

Phil Robson: Portrait in Extreme

Rating: ★★★★★

Author: Andy Robson

Portrait in Extreme

Partly nurtured by lockdown, but definitely inspired by his new life amid the lakes and castles of the Republic of Ireland's midlands, this is Robson as sharp and versatile as ever. One moment we're spooked amid the nasty gnash and slash of 'Rumours Abound, Energy Persists', the next we're beguiled by an acoustic Irish air, replete with Christine Tobin's wordless vox on the aptly titled 'New Turf'. Yet this modulates into a percussively kinetic skronk, as Robson's New York years crash back into his current idyll. So it's no surprise when a samba turns into seagulls on 'Straight Story' (no story's ever straight with Robson) or on one of the songs of the year, 'So Many Bees', a long solo meditation, spins on its heels through wind chimes, a siren's voice, an epic chord and, well, a host of bees. If that all sounds like too many handbrake turns at once, it's Robson's gift to find what he calls 'the fluidity of inter connectedness', to discover the logic between polarities. Oh, yeah, and he still rocks. <https://www.jazzwise.com/reviews/review?slug=phil-robson-portrait-in-extreme>

Jazz Journal Magazine review and interview:

Phil Robson – from New York to New Turf

The guitarist's surprisingly rather experimental new album ranges from jazz to Irish folk to Black Sabbath

By [Trevor Hodgett](#)

The title of guitarist Phil Robson's current EP release, *Portrait In Extreme*, recorded as the pandemic raged, is beautifully apt. "I was trying in a fun way to convey the extremes of everything that was going on because in the music world we'd gone from 90 to nought in a fairly swift time," he explains. "And my own situation also radically changed because I'd been living in New York City – or actually in Jersey City, just

across the Hudson River – and I’m now in the countryside of County Roscommon [in Ireland] so that was quite a jump. I joke that we’ve swapped skyscrapers for cows! I really love it here.”

Like many musicians and non-musicians alike Robson found the pandemic and associated lockdowns demoralising. “I was struggling to keep my motivation,” he admits. “And because I live in a rural area it’s very difficult to get high-speed internet so I couldn’t do live streams. I did do some videos but it was almost like I was back in the 90s where I had to leave them uploading all night so that was frustrating. So musically speaking I was very much on my own and I ground to a bit of a halt with practice.”

On most tracks on [*Portrait In Extreme*](#) Robson plays over drum loops supplied by Irish drummer David Lyttle. “I had a clear idea about the things I was going to try so I asked him for specific things,” he says. “I sent him tempos and a description of the vibe I was trying to get with each one – but with freedom for him to be himself as well. And he sent me these really fabulous loops which I chopped up and then I put my parts down. And then I went back to his loops and if I needed more variation I used other bits from the same loops. Most of them were about a minute long so I had more than a few bars which was great.”

Robson enthuses about Lyttle’s capabilities. “He’s very adaptable and really nice to work with. And a serious jazz musician. He loves all aspects of the tradition and because of that he’s got a real depth to his playing.”

Robson acknowledges that he has missed face-to-face interaction with other musicians. “My God, I can’t tell you how much. There’s no substitute for that. But, still, it was lovely to have something to work with and the things David sent me were exciting. And I was also using this software called Ableton that has lots of sounds and effects so experimenting with this new toy and not quite knowing what was going to come out was my substitute for playing with real people. It was a classic lockdown project and I learned loads so it was a great experience.”

In the future Robson hopes to use the software more. “It’s early days and I’m still learning how to use it. I’d like to incorporate it into a live setting but I haven’t quite figured out how you can do this and play guitar at the same time – a basic question but a fairly important one!”

On *Rumours Abound*, *Energy Persists* Robson creates a strikingly disturbing soundscape. “It was meant to represent this whole [pandemic] thing coming in, from the end of 2019,” he says. “It’s a little snapshot of how life was and trying to capture that ominous feeling.”

And the *Energy Persists* part of the title? “I was trying to convey people trying to carry on. And also have a bit of fun because there’s a slight American sound to the crazy guitar stuff on that track which is reminiscent of people far greater than me. *Star Spangled Banner* and all that!” he laughs, alluding to Jimi Hendrix.

Robson’s playing on *New Turf* has the melodic beauty of a traditional Irish air. “Yeah, I was trying to capture something of that,” he agrees. “Wherever I am I always listen

to things from that place so I was listening to a lot of really lovely Irish music like The Gloaming. So it's the influence of being here and what's going on."

Singer-songwriter Christine Tobin, Robson's life-partner, sings, wordlessly, on the track. "She had freedom to change it but that was a written melody," says Robson. "There's a little violin part playing with her which is not a real violin – I did it with the Ableton thing. And the later part of *New Turf*, which is a huge contrast, is the one drum groove I did myself and it was done by literally tapping on a table and then messing around with sounds on Ableton."

'I was a metallor through and through when I was about 10 so Black Sabbath were my favourite band. The thing I liked most about them and bands like Led Zeppelin was they were so clearly coming out of blues'

The Masters is a powerful tribute to Black Sabbath. "I was a metallor through and through when I was about 10 so Black Sabbath were my favourite band. The thing I liked most about them and bands like Led Zeppelin was they were so clearly coming out of blues and the love of blues is so genuine. And I love the slow tempos that you would never get in a modern rock or heavy metal band. Things like *Cornucopia* on *Black Sabbath Vol 4* which is so slow it's almost a dirge. I just love the gritty slowness."

Alas, Robson never saw Sabbath live. "I was a little too young for the original Black Sabbath but I saw Ozzy [Osbourne] live when I was about 13 in Derby, my hometown. It was incredibly loud – I couldn't hear for two days! – but very exciting."

Robson actually sings on *The Masters* although his vocals are mixed very low. "Well, that was a bit of fun, really," he chuckles. "I can take a stab at emulating the overall sound-world but I can't take a stab at emulating Ozzy!"

Robson may have been a heavy-metal fan but at the age of 18 and without being a graduate he enrolled in the postgraduate jazz course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. "Though I had this background of Black Sabbath I'd also been into jazz pretty seriously since I was about 14.

"The modern system of jazz education wasn't in place at the time so that was really the only jazz course and I managed to pass the audition, which bypassed having to have a degree. The course was really valuable. I had great teachers and met some great musical friends but it was over too quickly, really. It was one year and then I was hurled out: 'Go and be a musician, son!'"

Which Robson duly did, one of his key subsequent bands being *Partisans*, which formed in 1996. "We were very good mates and I have endless fun memories of tours and gigs we did," he reminisces. "And I'm very proud of the albums. That band was together a long time and the nicest thing about it was that it was more than the sum of four parts. Myself and [saxophonist] Julian [Siegel] were the writers but the contribution to the material was massive from the other two guys [bassist Thaddeus Kelly and drummer Gene Calderazzo] and the tunes got massively changed by playing them."

Robson also played in the BBC Big Band for 10 years. I wonder if he felt it musically constraining to play in that band as opposed to the more cutting-edge Partisans. “It got more that way as it went on,” he concedes, “but when I joined it there were lots of exciting guests, like Joe Lovano and Phil Woods and Vince Mendoza – we did two days in Abbey Road with him, playing his music.

“And the more conservative end of it, I got a kick out of the discipline of that. And I like playing a lot of different styles which you can hear as a thread through all my music.”

Once, in 2009, on a *Friday Night With Jonathan Ross* special, Robson backed Barbra Streisand. “The nicest part was a long dress rehearsal where we played about 10 tunes because she wanted to play through all the options to see what she would pick as the two [for the show]. Despite the fact that her entourage were trying to have me living in abject terror because I’d got dark blue trousers on instead of black it was actually very relaxed and she was very friendly and very nice and sang really great. It was lovely.”

The singer that Robson has accompanied most often has been Christine Tobin. “She writes her music on the piano so the biggest challenge for me is to find a way of capturing what she’s written on the piano and try to make it sound as full as possible. Which is the biggest problem with guitar in jazz as a harmonic instrument – you’re never going to be able to match what a piano player can do but I’ve learned over the years how to fill out the sound behind her and play the right things in the gaps.”

In 2015 Robson, with Tobin, relocated to New York. “I’m always trying to expand my horizons and learn more and delve deeper and deeper into the music and it was a means of doing that.”

It was, however, a bold move to leave the relative security of being an established figure in British jazz to try and make a living in a city where the competition for gigs is brutal. “Most people would be doing that when they’re in their early 20s but I was doing it in my mid-40s,” reflects Robson. “Basically you have to start again so it was very challenging but super exciting as well and it was a great experience.”

The contrast with his current home county of Roscommon, where the largest town has fewer than 6,000 inhabitants, is almost comical. “I always loved extremes – hence the name of the album! I love big cities and I love the countryside so living here doesn’t seem weird to me,” he asserts.

Currently *Portrait In Extreme* is only available digitally, on Lyte Records, which is owned by Lytle. “It would be nice to have some form of hard copy I could sell on gigs but we decided to put it out as a digital thing initially to see if there was any interest,” says Robson. “And I’m delighted that people have been very positive so I’m really happy about that.” <https://jazzjournal.co.uk/2022/04/25/phil-robson-from-new-york-to-new-turf/>

The Jazzmann – 3.5 star review of Portrait in Extreme An album that reflects the broader polarities of Robson’s life, including the musical ‘extremes’ of a musician equally influenced by both jazz and rock.

Phil Robson

“Portrait in Extreme”

(Lyte Records – Digital Release)

Phil Robson – guitars, electronics, electric bass, vocals, David Lyttle – drums, Christine Tobin – voice

Arguably best known for his co-leadership (with reeds player Julian Siegel) of the mighty Partisans guitarist Phil Robson is a highly versatile musician, with roots deep in both jazz and rock. He has featured regularly on the Jazzmann web pages, both as a member of Partisans and also as a solo artist of some stature.

Having established himself on the UK music scene as a member of Partisans Robson commenced his solo career with a couple of trio releases for The Babel label in the early years of the current century. “Impish” appeared in 2002 and featured bassist Dave Whitford and drummer Asaf Sirkis, with guest pianist John Taylor also appearing on three pieces. The follow up, “Screenwash” (2003), teamed him with the American rhythm pairing of bassist James Genus and drummer Billy Hart. Both of these are excellent albums and highly recommended.

His Six Strings and The Beat project was a combo that successfully combined his guitar with a string quartet plus the bass of Peter Herbert and the drums of Partisans colleague Gene Calderazzo. The album of the same name, released in 2008, is favourably reviewed here;

<https://www.thejazzmann.com/reviews/review/phil-robson-six-strings-and-the-beat>

Robson has also fronted a quintet featuring the acclaimed American saxophonist Mark Turner, this line up recording “The Immeasurable Code” album in 2011. Review here;

<https://www.thejazzmann.com/reviews/review/phil-robson-the-immeasurable-code>

In 2015 Robson returned to the trio format, but this time of the organ variety with the guitarist being joined by Hammond specialist Ross Stanley, plus the faithful Calderazzo at the drums. The resultant album, “The Cut Off Point” is reviewed here;

<https://www.thejazzmann.com/reviews/review/the-cut-off-point>

Robson also works closely with his partner, the vocalist Christine Tobin and plays a key role in all of her projects.

As a sideman his list of credits is impressive and he has appeared on albums by saxophonists Rachael Cohen and Paul Booth, pianist Liam Noble, bassists Michael Janisch and Alec Dankworth, drummer Jeff Williams and jazz french horn player Jim Rattigan. Robson has also worked with the great American saxophonist Dave Liebman and has occupied the guitar chair in the BBC Big Band. It’s an impressive and diverse CV.

Originally from Derby Robson subsequently moved to London and graduated from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. He lived and worked in the capital for many

years, establishing himself as a leading presence on the London jazz scene. He and Tobin then lived in Margate for a while before emigrating to New York City in 2015, remaining there until March 2020 and the beginning of the pandemic. The couple then returned to Tobin's native Ireland, settling in County Roscommon in the Irish Midlands.

During their time in New York Robson and Tobin quickly established themselves on the city's jazz scene and performed with many of America's leading jazz musicians. It's unfortunate that this period of Robson's career has not been documented on disc, with this digital only release representing Robson's first solo recording since 2015.

"Portrait in Extreme" was recorded at home during 2021 and represents Robson's 'lockdown album'. It was financed by a bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland (An Chomhairle Ealaíon) and appears on Lyte Records, the label owned by the Irish drummer, composer and bandleader David Lyttle.

It's essentially a genuine solo project with Robson overdubbing himself on guitars, electronics, electric bass and voice. The album was recorded using Ableton Live 11 software and includes contributions from Lyttle on drums and Tobin on vocals.

The title references the differing extremes of life in metropolitan New York and rural Ireland but also reflects the broader polarities of Robson's life, including the musical 'extremes' of a musician equally influenced by both jazz and rock.

In his album notes Robson explains;

"I've often felt strong polarities in my work, life & the world around me. From within this perspective, I now want to draw upon & embrace the elements connecting the 'extremes', as my inspiration in my playing & compositions. The Covid era has given me a great deal of time to imagine how I want my music to sound in the future & to reflect on & interpret my experiences. To reference possible polarities again, I love John Zorn's 'Naked City' & Chopin nocturnes, the Curlew mountains & the streets of Hackney, Miles Davis & Black Sabbath! By embracing the fluidity of interconnectedness, I want to focus my outer reaches into something homogeneous & listen to my inner voice without limits."

He also quotes the author Kurt Vonnegut, a significant influence for Robson and for other musicians;

"I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center."

At around half an hour in duration it's debatable whether "Portrait in Extreme" constitutes an EP or a full length album. I'll go with the latter, given that there are eight separate pieces featuring an appropriately broad ('extreme') range of music, with influences including jazz, rock, folk, hip hop, ambient, electronica and more. The album cover features Robson standing in what appears to be a wintry Irish landscape with the New York skyline projected behind him. It's an accurate visual depiction of what the listener can hear in the music.

The album commences with the dystopian electronic soundscapes of "Rumour Abounds, Energy Persists", with Tobin's breathy, whispered wordless vocals almost

subsumed in the electronic soundwash. Towards the close the jagged, angry shards of guitar crash in like a metallic meteor shower. An intriguing and unsettling start.

“Callow Freeway” finds Robson adopting a more orthodox jazz guitar sound as he solos fluently above Lyttle’s skittering drum accompaniment. Reading the album notes one gets the impression that Lyttle’s drums were recorded in isolation and looped. Regardless of the mechanics the overall effect is reminiscent of Robson’s early trio albums, “Impish” and “Screenwash” and of “Bright Size Life” era Pat Metheny.

“So Many Bees” begins as a solo guitar meditation, unfolding gently, slowly and organically at first, before being hijacked by electronically generated noises simulating the sounds of windchimes and of a swarm of angry bees.

Electronics combine with more conventional guitar sounds on “Straight Story”, which also includes a contribution from Lyttle at the drums. Initially it’s upbeat, almost samba like, but once again the waters are muddied by the introduction of sampled sounds, in this case those of angry birds, possibly seagulls, possibly corvids.

“I’ve Got This” combines the sounds of guitars with heavily processed hip-hop style beats, these again courtesy of Lyttle. It’s a piece that seems to hark back to Robson’s Brooklyn days.

The introduction to the aptly titled “New Turf” features the sound of acoustic guitars, the folkish quality of the music enhanced by Tobin’s beautiful wordless vocals. But again the rural Irish idyll is punctured by the intrusion of electronically generated beats and the siren like wail of an electric guitar. As on several other pieces the memories of Robson’s urban life seem to intrude on his now bucolic existence in rural Ireland. Or maybe it’s just a case of loving both lifestyles, as his liner notes suggest, making it perfectly logical for both to be depicted within the course of a single composition – “Portrait in Extreme” indeed.

That said “Re-Valley” focusses on a single mood courtesy of a lush arrangement that features the warm, syrupy, Metheny-like sound of Robson’s guitar above a backdrop of sampled strings and Lyttle’s softly brushed drums. Robson seems to have found peace at last – but wait...

The final track, “The Masters”, is an obvious Black Sabbath homage, even the title referencing that of “Master of Reality”, arguably the Sabs’ heaviest ever album. Robson cranks up his guitars to deliver a highly convincing Tony Iommi impression, and he’s pretty good as Geezer too on electric bass. Lyttle fills the Bill Ward role and Phil even steps into Ozzy’s shoes to deliver the four line lyric reproduced below;

“Sitting on my throne, I am the master, of everything you see and hear
Everything I say you must believe now, united in a state of fear
And now, you must follow, my plan, you little man
Everything is fake, so you must come and take, your place now, Oh yeah”

It’s all great fun, but there’s a serious message within that brief stanza that says so much about the state of the modern world.

As Robson's first solo release for seven years "Portrait in Extreme" represents a very welcome addition to his catalogue. Hopefully it will act as a spur and as the world begins to return to normal he and Tobin can begin collaborating and recording with other musicians in a band situation again – assuming that they wish to do so. Let's hope it's not such a long wait until we hear from Robson on record again.

<https://www.thejazzmann.com/reviews/review/phil-robson-portrait-in-extreme>

Phil Robson – 'Portrait In Extreme'

By [londonjazz](#) on [25 March 2022](#) •

(Lyte Records LR050 digital. Album Review by AJ Dehany)

Portrait In Extreme is an approachably avant-garde extended player that presents a thematic exploration of 'extremity' from the fertile musical mind of UK guitarist/composer **Phil Robson**. Recorded under the 'extreme' remote circumstances of late lockdown, the eight-track sequence strikes out into left-field musical directions (sometimes called 'extreme') and reflects on aspects of a necessarily 'extreme' itinerant life, one of mad leaps such as relocating from England to New York and playing with everyone from Dave Liebman to Barbra Streisand. As a *Portrait In Extreme* it is well-named for presenting sides of Phil Robson that we might be less familiar to those who might only have really seen him accompanying his partner the incomparable Irish jazz singer **Christine Tobin**.

It's a lot of fun. What it is about this digital release that makes you listen up isn't just the typically strong creative playing but its unpicking of conventional construction and composition in a restless sequence of stylistic experiments for guitar and electronics, with some stirring quasi-industrial drum loops from David Lytle. After some ruminative post-classical synth ambience, opening track "Rumours Abound, Energy Persists" volte faces into thrashing guitar mayhem. "I've Got It" rattles with wild wonky robotic arpeggiated noise. Closer "The Master" is full-on Sabbath-style widdly metal. On "So Many Bees" a sound sample presumably recorded in the Irish countryside of County Roscommon where Phil has been based since the start of 2020, is indexed by the laconic observation of a lugubrious voice saying "So many bees" and leaving it to the listener to imagine whatever apian invasion might betoken catastrophe or everlasting honey.

Guitar-centred postmodernism naturally boxes in the shadow of John Zorn and his endless inventions. *Portrait's* lockdown feel of disconnection and reaching out in spite of impossible exploded circumstances reminds me most of a strange little album that Zorn himself played on by Mike Patton called Pranzo Oltranzista which was recorded in hotel rooms while on tour. *Portrait In Extreme* has some of the same deliberate scrappy notebook feel, however so polished in its playing and design (with a typically punchy master by Alex Bonney). It's funny that the dislocations that colour both Patton's Pranzo and Robson's Portrait come from the opposite sides of interminable travelling and infuriating incarceration.

Portrait In Extreme is touted as an EP, but it's eight tracks, it's half an hour, I mean it's an album isn't it. Each of its shortened episodes could easily stick around a lot

longer, but its experimental restlessness gives the sequence a pleasing lightness of touch. The nomenclature situation is similar to what's happening a lot in pop hip hop, most recently with the exceptional Tierra Whack releasing a "mixtape" which is clearly a new original album... but calling it a 'mixtape' seems to take the pressure off releasing a capital-a Album. In this case an E.P. might denote/connote a more experimental venture that ought to be appreciated in a different way to a formal or more conventional album.

The shorter EP format would perhaps please Brian Eno, who has lamented that when a band (we're probably talking about 70s prog rockers let's be honest) goes into the studio to record an "experimental" record they somehow manage to come out with a triple album of the stuff, whereas what actually happens, in science as in music, is that most of the time the experiment will fail. This is so even in jazz and improvised music, which is by its nature experimental, dealing with unknowns (whether known or unknown). You might be better off to just, you know, write something. It's one of the absolute pleasures in what we call 'the music' to hear great musical minds thinking out loud. For however 'extreme' the outcome might be, experiments are better off being performed than left unperformed. The results – as here – are often well worth hearing.

AJ Dehany writes independently about music, art and stuff. ajdehany.co.uk

Portrait in Extreme was released on 25th March, 2022 on Lyte Records

Phil Robson – 'Portrait In Extreme'

<https://londonjazznews.com/2022/03/25/phil-robson-portrait-in-extreme/>

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS for Partisans – Nit De Nit Released 2019



"Restless, almost reckless energy... delirious listening... consistently thrilling." BBC Music Magazine

"Turbo-charged, feral yet playful post-bop... Nit de Nit documents Partisans' strong signature and versatile palette of undiluted jazz and rock sub-genre fascinations at its peak."

★★★★ Jazzwise Magazine

"It seems that over the course of nearly a quarter of a century, Partisans have lost none of their magic, indeed judging by this album, the magic seems to have burgeoned. This is compelling music, and some of the very best to be heard anywhere on the planet."

★★★★ All About Jazz

"Nit De Nit" reveals Partisans to still be one of the UK's most exciting live bands, their music a fascinating and immensely enjoyable amalgam of power and intelligence."

★★★★ UK Vibe

"A very engaging, stimulating and varied work."

Bebop Spoken Here

"The playing is on point throughout and the whole is shot through with an irrepressible sense of fun; this release should re-state Partisans' claim to be one of the most creative groups in UK jazz and act as a reminder of their endlessly forward-thinking vision."

Jazz Views

"This is one of the best albums of the year to date: no doubt about it."

Marlbank

"Technically sensational, committed and compelling. This album shows how much substance the quartet has amassed over the years... A closer look at it is definitely worthwhile."

Musikreviews

"Refreshing, very well written, put together and played hooky music from first class musicians."

Jazzman

"Partisans delight in expanding every predictable jazz horizon with rock escapades, experimental sounds and yes, even pop finesse."

Saarbrücker Zeitung

"Nit De Nit reveals Partisans to still be one of the UK's most exciting live bands, their music a fascinating and immensely enjoyable amalgam of power and intelligence."

★★★★ The Jazz Mann

"Nit De Nit benefits from excellent sound quality, each instrument coming across crisply"

Jazz Journal

"An exciting hour full of new compositions and reinterpreted treats from the back catalog."

Medien-Info

Review highlights of 'The Cut Off Point' Released on Whirlwind Recordings, 2015



“Whilst comparisons with Lifetime or John McLaughlin’s 1994 album, *After the Rain* with Joey DeFrancesco and Elvin Jones may seem inevitable, the vast majority of the music here owes little to these groups. Robson is his own man and this trio has successfully achieved what it set out to do, making for a very satisfying album indeed.”

4 Stars, All About Jazz

“This is trio as solo instrument with Robson and compadres as tight and counterpoised as you’d expect... An album steeped in the jazz language of the organ/guitar trio, a uniquely jazz format, yet one that adds a twist all of its own.”

4 Stars, Jazzwise Magazine

“Rapid intensity inviting terrific soloing all round.”

AP Reviews

“This is vibrant contemporary jazz made by three resourceful improvisers.”

The Guardian

“Outstanding”

Bebop Spoken Here

“British guitar phenomenon Phil Robson hardly needs any introduction, save that his new musical departure is realized by an organ trio offering a smörgåsbord of exciting and imaginative compositions.”

4 Stars, All About Jazz

“That fine British guitarist Phil Robson has found his own contemporary way back into the Hammond tradition with organist Ross Stanley and drummer Gene Calderazzo.”

The Guardian ‘Playlist’

“An album brimful of exciting playing and solos... a stimulating and varied set that shows that there is a lot more to come from Phil Robson...”

Jazzviews

Some press highlights RE new Partisans CD, 'Swamp'. Released on 'Whirlwind Recordings Ltd' – Sept 22nd, 2014



Swamp sees Partisans at their very best; unabashed raw emotion mixed with a truly consummate collective sound and interplay that can only be developed when a group has this much history. In a world where so-called 'bands' come and go with the changing seasons, it's becoming even more vital for music such as this to get recorded and heard.

Press Highlights

"This heavyweight jazz quartet continues to carve its own niche, with an eclectic jazz mix."

5 Stars, BBC Music Magazine

"If springing surprises were the whole of Partisans' magic, it would quickly wear off. In fact it springs up joyously in each piece, because the musical fundamentals are so strong. Phil Robson's inventiveness on the guitar is unstoppable, and the band's melodies have a gripping shape and direction. Partisans have been together for nearly two decades, and on the evidence of this album could easily run for two more."

4 star review of CD launch gig, The Telegraph

"Their edgy, energised sound and creative and imaginative improvisations have been a major influence on the UK's burgeoning "prog-jazz" scene, and their palpable sense of collective engagement in the music never wavers."

4 stars, The Scotsman

"It's not always easy to find the words to describe just how good this group is. They've been one of my favourite bands for such a long time and their music never fails to delight. Like its predecessors "Swamp" is instantly accessible but will doubtless continue reveal fresh insights with every subsequent listening."

thejazzmann.com

"Their sound artfully straddles the boundary between acoustic and electric music, equally capable of digging into a dirty funk groove or soaring to freer, post-bop altitudes."

4 Stars, Irish Times

“An incredibly exciting and uplifting album.”

iDrum Magazine

“Partisans can rightfully be cited as the godfathers of the new wave of Brit jazz, who, since their formation in 1996 have always embraced Coltrane, electric Miles, and Hendrix in equal measure.”

Jazzwise Magazine Feature

“Reaffirms their standing as one of the most rewarding bands anywhere.”

London Jazz News

“When it comes down to it, this is just a band that loves playing; and this is an album you’ll love listening to.”

4 Stars, Jazzwise Magazine

“These pieces, closely focused and intricately woven, are masterpieces of detailed performance.”

4 Stars, The Arts Desk

“A very accomplished album with some world class ensemble playing throughout.”

4 Stars, Marlbank

“An eclectic treat. This is an album to get swept up and along in—filmic, rhythmic and inventive throughout it rarely settles for the obvious, expected path and it repays concentrated listening with countless new discoveries.”

4 Stars, All About Jazz

“Swamp sees Robson, saxophonist, Julian Siegel, bassist Thaddeus Kelly and drummer Gene Calderazzo build on their 20-plus years as bandmates to produce a fantastically coherent and broad-ranging album. Swamp swings, grooves, rocks and broods... A standout album from a band who continue to make a huge impression on the jazz scene both at home and abroad.”

Jazz UK

Recommended new release

Drummer Magazine