

News



Winners from the Best Pacific Sunset Shots of 2008.

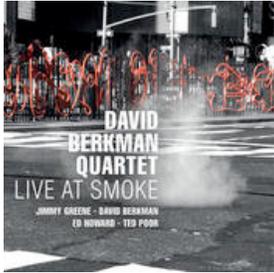
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CD Reviews: Just Good Music

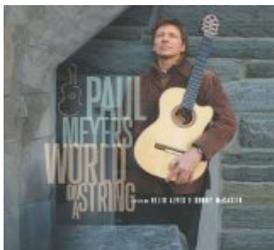
By Richard Kamins on July 29, 2009 4:00 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)



Live at Smoke - David Berkman Quartet (Challenge) - To this day, David Berkman's 1998 CD for Palmetto, "*Handmade*", is one of my favorite recordings of creative music. His subsequent releases for that label were also quite good but there's something about the first release that captured my heart and mind (and still does.)

I am excited to see Berkman recording again. This new release, recorded in 2006, is his first in 5 years and features the excellent young drummer **Ted Poor**, veteran bassist **Ed Howard**, and saxophonist **Jimmy Greene**. Greene, an alumnus of the Hartt School of Music who studied with Jackie Mclean has developed into a quite a player, exploratory, quick mind and a robust sound on tenor and a mellow tone on soprano. He's the perfect partner for Berkman because both really dig into their solos and follow their whims. Their interaction on "*The Mayor of Smoke*" is bluesy, cat-like and oh-so-subtle. The foursome strolls through "*Simple Pleasures*", Poor with pleasing brushwork, Howard's bouncing bass phrases supporting Berkman's jaunty solo spot and Greene's contemplative tenor work. Benny Golson's "*Along Came Betty*" gives everyone (but Greene, who sits out this piece) a chance to stretch out. Berkman takes the longest solo but it moves by so easily one hardly feels the time pass. Greene takes out the soprano sax for "*Carroll Street Pop Tune*", a melodic confection that displays the leader's wonderful ability to accompany other soloists.

Good music need not be complicated - David Berkman does not take it easy nor does he simplify his music yet the results never feel calculated or rushed. "*Live At Smoke*" is pure creative music, informed by the blues but always moving forward. To find out more, go to www.davidberkman.com or click [here](#).



World On A String - Paul Meyers (Miles High Records) - This is acoustic guitarist Meyers' 10th release as leader or co-leader. He's worked and toured with artists such as pianists Geri Allen, Kenny Barron, Eliane Elias, and Kenny Werner as well as with Wynton Marsalis and jazz singers Jon Hendricks and Andy Bey.

He's put together a smart quintet with **Donny McCaslin** (tenor and soprano saxes, flute), **Helio Alves** (piano), **Leo Traversa**



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