

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

<http://thewholenote.com/wholenote/index.html>

twotet/deuxtet

Matt Brubeck; David Braid

Independent bb 001 DVD (www.davidbraid.com)



Matt Brubeck plays cello, a not-common jazz axe, but given the family business (yes, son of Dave) you know he'll be able to improvise. Classically trained and comfortable in all music, Brubeck, the now-Torontonian (on the York U. faculty) joins in duets with David Braid on this fine new issue.

I have to stop thinking of Braid as "Canada's-best-young/most-promising etc." jazz piano player, and (because I've not heard all the others) "among-the-top-anywhere". He has arrived. He ranks. The half-dozen releases as leader and the dozen-and-a-half sideman appearances show his abilities as player, composer and arranger.

I've now moved on to expecting a high standard in his work, and he and Brubeck more than justify my trust on this album. The tonal limitation of just two instruments made me a bit wary, and I generally start to shiver a bit when I see all 'originals'. Brubeck offers four compositions, Braid three, (and there's one improvisation) for "twotet/deuxtet". But the variety is remarkable, with drama matched by beauty matched by fun and just plain diggin' in. (Even the tune titles work: *huevos verdes y jamón*, *wash away* and *sniffin' around* all match the feeling of the music.)

Knowing Braid's remarkable work over the last half decade, the discovery here for me is Matt Brubeck, and his mastery of the cello. Arco, pizzicato, caressing or grooving, he's a full measure of jazz player, despite the rarity of his axe.

By the way, the lower case spelling is theirs, not mine. Such modesty!

Ted O'Reilly