



Article Courtesy AllAboutJazz.com



Saxophonist Yaniv Nachum, a native of Israel, leads a European-based quartet featuring players from Finland and Germany.

Yaniv Nachum Quartet

By Mark Sabbatini

They can claim all the elaborate world music influences they want to, but the ultimate result is these guys simply rock.

The [Yaniv Nachum Quartet](#) is a European-based group formed in 2001, featuring players from Israel, Germany and Finland whose style, according to the Web site, “varies from traditional jazz, swing to Middle Eastern with folk music influences involve with odd meters and modern improvisations.”

What they play is highly energetic and intelligent modern jazz that is generally straightahead, with the extra influences providing an accent rather than a dominating presence. If they don't develop into a “name” group at some point, it won't be from lack of talent and innovation.

Two “albums” of their original songs are now available at the [Internet Underground Music Archive](#). The first is seven studio cuts, the second six live recordings. The MP3s total about an hour-and-a-half in length and 80MB in size.

The studio selections provide better profiles of the individual players and influences, the live set arguably offers more enjoyable and superior playing. Several songs are

duplicates, a real plus as the differences between the live and studio versions tend to be significant and provide lots of insight as a result.

Both open, for example, with versions of German pianist Franz Von Chossy's haunting "Tribulations." The two-minute studio version is essentially an introductory prelude to subsequent songs, whereas the live version is a 10-minute rendition dominated by Yaniv Nachum's marathon sax solo.

On Nachum's "Major Exercise" the studio version builds up tightly to a captivating world beat rhythm by Finnish drummer Anssi Lehtivuori;

Nachum, a native of Israel, is a dominant leader throughout the sessions, one of those young guns who never seems to come up for air and can get away with it because he keeps firing off fresh expressions in his lightning barrages of notes. Anyone familiar with Chris Potter - ought to get a kick out of hearing a similar voice with a foreign accent, so to speak. Nachum plays songs like "Ose Shalom" and "Free Road To Nowhere" like a man possessed and with fingerings that might make Wayne Shorter seem meditative, with his phrasings ranging from Rollins-like smoothness to modern free mayhem.

Von Chossy, talented and more nuanced in his approach. A background in classical is evident in his solo opening on the live "Major Exercise" and his jazz training with artists such as Kenny Baron manifests itself throughout (the live "Lizard Queen" and "Hush-Hash" being fine examples).

German bassist Cord Heineking does a nice job of feeding modern mainstream lines into the bottom end, which are much easier to discern and appreciate on the studio selections due to their superior audio quality.

Lehtivuori might overwhelm a group of less intense and virtuoso players with his contemporary and nearly nonstop use of his entire kit - and indeed his sound is a bit too much in the foreground for all but Nachum on the live tracks - but his sense of what his colleagues are building up to and how to support them is superb.

The audio quality from the live tracks is less than perfect - it's a bit hollow and sounds like a recording from a tape player left in the middle of the stage - but certainly passable with no distortion or other annoyances.

There may be young and talented modern jazz groups in the world for ones like this to get lost in shuffle, making online collections like this invaluable for getting some well-deserved attention. All in all this is a download well worth the effort and time, and a group worth keeping an eye on for future albums and performances.

Tracks: □

Album 1: Tribulations; Major Exercise; The Lizard Queen; Page One; Anssicula; The

Other Room; Gary's Concept

Album 2: Tribulations; Major Exercise; The Lizard Queen; Ose Shalom; Free Road To Nowhere; Hush-Hash

Personnel: Yaniv Nachum - saxophone; Franz Von Chossy, piano; Anssi Lehtivuori, drums; Cord Heineking, bass

All material copyright © 1996-2004 All About Jazz and contributing writers. All rights reserved.