



MYSTIC DANCES

Soundwind 1120

- 1 **Fantasia** B. Hansen (BMI) 7:33
- 2 **Angles of Reflection** B. Hansen (BMI) 11:00
- 3 **Trillium** B. Hansen (BMI) 5:02
- 4 **Mystic Dance** G. Wolfe/B. Hansen (BMI) 9:07
- Echoes - Lied - Dance**
- 5 **Jubilate** G. Wolfe/B. Hansen (BMI) 9:29
- 6 **Nuage Musique** Sonny Burnette (ASCAP) 6:15
- 7 **Dark Moon** G. Wolfe/B. Hansen (BMI) 9:37
- Introduction - Night Rhythms**
- 8 **Aurora** Ralph Towner (BMI) 7:21

BRAD HANSEN digital synthesizers and computer

GEORGE WOLFE soprano and alto saxophones

SRINIVAS KRISHNAN tabla

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Cover art by Alfredo MarinCarle.

Distributed by Soundwind Records, SW 1120.
Call 1-800-348-5003 to order.

About the Music

New age music, with its minimalism and repetition, has been criticized as being simplistic and lacking in compositional sophistication. George Wolfe and Brad Hansen challenge that criticism with this compact disc. Utilizing rhythmic process counterpoint, a technique developed by Hansen, melodic and rhythmic ideas are layered. East Indian modes and talas (rhythmic cycles) are used to add complexity to the new age idiom without sacrificing its minimalistic design. Hansen's mastery of the synthesizer and Wolfe's inventive saxophone improvisations result in musical offerings that are innovative and marvelously varied in texture.

The recording begins with Fantasia, an up-tempo Hansen original with a Latin flavor. It sets an optimistic mood and displays the duo's skills as jazz artists. Angles of Reflection is a sectional composition, and in the introduction the saxophone interacts with a repeated whole-tone motive. Improvisation by Hansen with a shakuhachi flute sample is added. The body of the piece is based on a 13-beat rhythmic cycle driven by a punctuated bass line and by the skillful tabla artistry of Srinivas Krishnan. The tabla embellishments continue through the freely structured closing section, featuring a tremolo koto texture based on the introductory material.

A classical approach to performance is displayed in Trillium, which was conceived by Hansen in rondo form. Mystic Dance begins with Wolfe in the first movement (Echoes) playing unaccompanied soprano saxophone with digital delay. His interaction evolves into a duet as he playfully uses the delay to accompany his melodic line. Movement two (Lied) continues with Wolfe's lyrical improvisation over a 14-beat cycle with synthesized accompaniment. This is followed by the final section (Dance) in *teen-tal*, a 16 beat pattern. Hansen solos, trading improvised rhythmic ideas with Srinivas Krishnan on tabla. The popular South Indian raga *Hansadhvani* serves as the melodic material for Jubilate, set in this rendering to a nine-beat cycle. The opening section of collective improvisation is broken up by a contrasting interlude with Hansen exploiting unique synthesized timbres.

Nuage Musique is a lighter composition by composer/saxophonist Sonny Burnette, with a tranquil background of synthesized rainfall. A more serious mood is captured in Dark Moon, composed for this recording by Wolfe and Hansen. In the introduction the melody is stated by the saxophone, free from rhythmic constraints. The second section (Night Rhythms) is then announced by a four-bar bass motive. The irregular form of the of the tune, leaping intervals, progression of altered augmented chords, and edgy timbres give this performance an eerie quality. This is contrasted by the percussion interlude in the middle of the piece, featuring Krishnan on tabla. The final work, Aurora, returns the listener to a more conventional harmonic framework supporting this beautiful melody written by Ralph Towner. Thus concludes a journey through the myriad musical colors and textures made possible by MIDI technology, and an approach to music that incorporates contributions from musical cultures around the world.

About the Players

George Wolfe holds a doctorate from Indiana University and received training in North Indian music in New Delhi, and at the Ali Akbar College of Music in California. He plays Bamber mouthpieces, is an international Yamaha performing artist, and teaches saxophone at Ball State University.

Brad Hansen holds a doctorate from the University of Northern Colorado and a masters degree from the Cincinnati College/Conservatory. In addition to his work as a composer and synthesist, he is an educator, author and jazz pianist.

Srinivas Krishnan is a native of India who trained at Sangit Mahabharati, a music school run by Pandit Nikhil Ghoshi. He is a disciple of the late Ustad Ahmed Jan Thirakhwa, and frequently accompanies touring Indian artists...