

Midwest Record

Entertainment
Reviews, news, and views

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01/26/10

MANATEE

KELLEY RYAN/Twist: Hi, I'm new around here but I hangout with Don Dixon, Marti Jones and Van Dyke Parks. Wanna come out and play? Well, you've got our attention. Many have tried but Ryan does a fine job of being the nu Joni Mitchell, that is, if she wants the job. Confessional female pop that rings a lot truer than reality show infused music with musings that make you wonder just what's going on in those empty heads. Ryan serves the steak instead of the sizzle and sets a pretty high bar for this year's crop of indie pop since January isn't even over yet. Oh college girls, have I got something here for you...

4

OUT OF THE PAST

STEVE HOWELL/Since I Saw You Last: Check it out alert. This cat has been riding the back roads for 40 years and has the knack for making things look easier than they are. The kind of thing that would have passed for Americana in the 70s when back porch music held it's own on college campuses before the disco wave took hold. Organic like you wouldn't believe, this is a real blast from the past for anyone that hung out in folk bars or wish they could have. Fun stuff to experience if you really want to kick it lo fi.

3

ROSA

JENS WENDELBOE'S Big Crazy Energy New York Band V. 1/Inspirations: There's been an awful lot of love in the air for Billy Strayhorn lately, and while we are no one to dis Strayhorn, it's nice to hear a new indy record that kicks it off with some Billy Cobham. Wendelboe revs up what contemporary big band is all about. This is a smoking hot set where everyone gets the chance to turn it up and turn it out. Really rising to the occasion by delivering a set of mostly originals that keep your attention, With 26 years as a pro delivering quality to all quadrants, this is a cat that it's time you got to know. On the money throughout.

6

STIR STICK

WHITNEY JAMES/Nature of Love: The debut of an important new jazz vocalist finds her working the diva set card but she gives things a nice new spin. Whether taking it down a notch or turning up the heat, James has the chutzpah to claim her place in the tradition but this isn't necessarily for grandpa only. Finding her own space in this time, James is a clever vocalist that is as much of an instrument as what the cats backing her up are playing. Not preconceived for mass market consumption and disposal, this thrush is here to stay. Well done.

VORTEX JAZZ

DAVE SHARP'S SECRET SEVEN/7: Turbo charged jazzy party music on tap here. A delightfully sizzling date that has rock and Latin undercurrents running head first into each other for an upbeat,

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hard charging take on the kind of gringo party music the was running through the under score in pics like "Romancing the Stone". Everybody here is having a grand time and you will too. Check it out.
1969

ZEKE MARTIN PROJECT

ZEKE MARTIN/U4RIA: When your pop played with John McLaughlin and Herbie Hancock, you might find yourself indulging in some fusion and left leaning jazz as well when you step up to the podium. A respected Boston jazz drummer in his own right, the younger Martin introduces himself with a an august set card of covers from the pens of the greats circa mostly 60s and 70s. The funk and the fusion are alive and well here.

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