



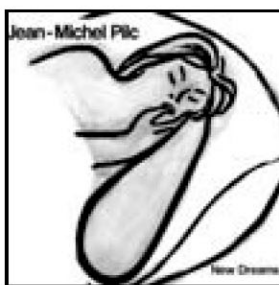
all about jazz

NEW YORK

October 2007 | No. 66

Your FREE Monthly Guide to the New York Jazz Scene

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New Dreams

Jean-Michel Pilc (Dreyfus)

by Laurel Gross

Like a master builder, pianist Jean-Michel Pilc constructs and reconstructs, but instead of fixed or stable edifices his creations are more like castles in the air. All the better. There's nothing stiff or rigid about what he makes through his playing and composing so there's room for listeners to breathe as they explore these new spaces with him.

If all this sounds a bit strange, just listen to *New Dreams*. Move along with him note to note, moment to moment. Trust. If you have the ears for it, you will find this time well spent. It's pure delight to follow Pilc without knowing where you are going - and it's impossible to know where he is going, until he gets there. So every song on this recording is an exploration, a discovery.

There are standards (including "But Not For Me", "A Child Is Born", "Satin Doll" and "Straight No Chaser"), 10 of the 15 tracks are Pilc originals ("Trees Part I", "Hummingbirds", "New Dreams", "Action" and "Trees Part II", among them) and there's also a rearrangement of Robert Schumann's "Widmung". Every one is exquisitely, delicately rendered and, in some ways, it doesn't matter what is a standard and which is a Pilc original - they all sound completely fresh. At times, it's like hearing an extraordinary magical music box which just refuses to play the prescribed tunes again and again, the same way, as would be expected. Pilc seems to tinker with one's perceptions. An original heard for the first time can sound extremely familiar, a standard unknowable. And even when hearing this music on repeated listenings, everything still sounds unexpected.

Throughout, Thomas Bramerie on bass and Ari Hoenig and Mark Mondesir sharing drum duties provide elegant and subtle support perfectly attuned to Pilc's unclassifiable sounds.

If you are talking (or thinking or analyzing how these great effects are achieved or why Pilc chooses to do things as he does) you can't be hearing. And if you're not hearing fully, you're not experiencing this music. So stop reading and, in this age of multitasking, go against the grain and do only one thing: Listen.

For more information, visit www.dreyfusrecords.com. *Pilc* is at *Jazz Standard* Oct. 2nd-3rd. See calendar.