

Jamie Baum Septet+ "Bridges" CD & Festival Reviews

"...what shakes out is the fact that this is uplifting music...(the CD's) tone generates vivid imagery and a sweeping grandeur. And when Baum's expanded Septet+ goes big, the music is grander than life. Baum's lineup is like a future wing of the Jazz Hall of Fame." -**Dave Sumner, May's "Best Jazz on Bandcamp"**

"Jamie Baum's ambitious arrangements captivated the audience with a first-class band of eight, comprising some of the finest NY-based musicians" -**Pascal Dorban, Jazz Journal (UK), Tampere Jazz Happening 2018**

"The biggest surprise of the events of Sep. 22 was a name new to me, Jamie Baum, a diminutive flute player whose imagination is as big as the world. Standing outside Dizzy's Den, I heard some delicious cacophony coming from the room and thought, oh yes, let's check this out. It was the most extraordinary music of the festival..."
- **Richard S. Ginell, Journal of Music Critics Assoc. Monterey Jazz Festival 2018**

"(Of) my top five quick takes: Flutist Jamie Baum's Septet+ provided another revelation. An exploratory composer and arranger interested in long forms and arresting voicings, she focused on music from her recent album Bridges."
- **Andrew Gilbert, SFVC, Monterey Jazz Festival 2018**

"Bridges is packed with layered counterpoint and dense sonic textures. It's full of shifting rhythms, frequently within the same tune — The often-serpentine melodic lines overlap, intermingle and clash for dramatic effect. In all, the album ranges from meditative to riotous and deftly balances the tightly scripted intricacy of the compositions with a loose abandon in the solos. It takes a top-flight group of players to execute such an ambitious endeavor. And Baum's Septet+, certainly rises to the challenge. Indeed, (Baum's) tone has a sonic heft — a thickness — that stands in contrast to the instrument's often bird-like quality." -**Eric Snider, Jazziz Magazine Summer 2018**

"...a fine album of ambitious range and sharp melodic clarity. It's part of her continuing experiment with blending hypercontemporary jazz strategies and traditional music from the South Asian subcontinent."
- **Giovanni Russonello, The New York Times**

*****(four stars) "Always a traveler, never a tourist, Baum constructs significant harmonic relationships between jazz and some far-flung music traditions. Everything connects here: concept and execution, soloists and ensemble, Nepal and New York, spirit and flesh." — Michelle Mercer, DownBeat*

"Baum embodies the title of her album Bridges...and clearly shows how easily she can swivel between different worlds.. The recording, which is billed to her long-running Septet+, draws upon some of jazz's most noted syncretists to help her achieve that goal ..." - **Peter Margasak, The Chicago Reader**

"A gifted flutist in any context, Jamie has constantly shifted direction as a composer and bandleader, recruiting versatile instrumentalists to interpret her demanding music. A master at blending multiple influences into her works..." - **Ken Dryden, Hot House Jazz Magazine**

"Offering touches of modernization while remaining steadfast in honoring core values, Baum creates a world where sonic and spiritual resonance rest on an even plane. Even in its most unsettled state, there's a pronounced sense of purpose lighting the way. There's clearly no chasm too wide for Baum to cross." - **Dan Bilawsky, JazzTimes**

"As someone who has studied Indian music for years I have always been wary of attempts at fusion of jazz...To say (Jamie) is successful is an understatement. My initial misgivings have been swept away by the artistic achievement this music represents. Beautifully articulated by the ensemble, with top quality solos by its members — and recorded with great depth and clarity, this is a landmark recording that belongs in the collection of anyone interested in the artistic barriers being breached by visionary jazz artists such as Jamie Baum." - **Peter Westbrook, Flutist Quarterly**

*****(four stars)"Baum has the prestige of a Guggenheim fellowship and a string of fine releases under her belt... (She) elicits an attractively broad tone from the alto flute, writes intricate, developmental, multi-episodic songs...and her ability to make changes of time and texture gel is her strong suit. The inclusion of ear-catching tonal detail...takes the overall sound palette beyond what might have been expected...For all the delicacy of some of the orchestrations, Baum knows when to introduce a heavy, punchy backbeat to excellent effect. This is the latest strong entry in Baum's discography...that skillfully blurs the lines between multi-layered through-composition, hard, tough grooves and focused improvisation."* -**Kevin Le Gendre, Jazzwise (UK)**

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"Flutist-composer Jamie Baum's previous CD was inspired by Near Eastern music, and now her visionary aesthetic has taken her even further east to the land of the Himalayas. The centerpiece of Baum's latest innovative, boundary-crossing statement is her ambitious three-movement Honoring Nepal: The Shiva Suite, rendered with apt delicacy and reverence by her working septet. Music like this truly is an essential part of the future of jazz."

-Bob Bernotas, Just Jazz

"As you read and listen to the track titles you begin to understand the thoughts, story and hope that Baum is telling us through these complex compositions, which combine improvisatory jazz, Hindu, Arabic, Jewish, Classical and Minimalist forms into a beautiful whole! Throughout the album the playing is stellar, the ensemble is perfect and each artist contributes exquisitely to the musical message of the album."

- Barbara Siesel - The Flute View

"The highly anticipated follow-up to her 2013 recording *In This Life*, *Bridges* offers yet another recording of incredible depth, beauty, spirituality, undiluted zeal and is the culmination of Baum's search for common links between some of the world's great religious music traditions. Besides being a fine flutist and bandleader, Jamie Baum, is a gifted composer whose every release shows a great deal of work, dedication and complexity."

- BLG , Downtown Music Gallery

"...Baum has made a name for herself as both accomplished musician and a formidable composer/arranger. Her composing for mid-sized groups is some of the finest and most creative on the contemporary music scene. I've been a fan since I first heard her brilliant 2008 CD *Solace*. Despite some changes in personnel over the years, with her Septet+, she has always managed to assemble and lead a group of talented, like-minded musicians that each bring something special to her musical table. With Baum's music, she downplays her own individual virtuosity, never seeming to have the inclination to feature herself in her work, content instead to let the whole of her musical compositions speak as a unified vision. With *Bridges* Baum has somehow managed to span the gap between multiple musical traditions and successfully integrate them all into a coherent genre that is all its own."

-Ralph A. Miriello, Notes On Jazz

"*Bridges*, the album, does what bridges, the structure, are built to do, i.e. break down barriers, cross borders, bring people and ideas together, and to take people to new places to have new experiences. Jamie Baum Septet+ continues to make exceptional music, music that makes us think, makes us contemplate, and moves us in so many ways." - **Richard Kamins, Step Tempest**

"As someone who has studied Indian music for many years I have always been a bit wary of attempts at fusion of jazz, a music still in its infancy, with a music tradition that has been under development for centuries. To say (Jamie) is successful is an understatement. My initial misgivings have been swept away by the artistic achievement this music represents. Beautifully articulated by the ensemble, with top quality solos by its members — led by Baum herself on concert and alto flutes — and recorded with great depth and clarity, this is a landmark recording that belongs in the collection of anyone interested in the artistic barriers being breached by visionary jazz artists such as Jamie Baum."

Peter Westbrook, The Flutist Quarterly (NFA)

"Nothing about this music composed by Jamie Baum is conventional — this effort from her on *Bridges* must be regarded as truly remarkable as the music succeeds magnificently in the setting of themes, details in modes and the manner in which it stands conventional collisions within the broad swathe of its cultural topography on its head. Incandescent, profoundly human and intoxicating in its celebration...makes for a musical adventure that mixes wild mystery with coruscating brilliance." - **Raul da Gama, jazzdagama.com**

"At times regal and calm, at others ominous or triumphant, the septet captures a rich and colorful tapestry of emotions, led by Baum's impressive compositional ability. That same talent as composer is the very thing which elevates *Bridges* well above the mundane...her ability to skillfully weave together sounds from almost a dozen instruments as well as a few occasional vocalists is most impressive." - **Peter Hoetjes, All About Jazz**

DownBeat's May Issue "CD Pick of the Month"

Found on several "Best of 2018" Lists

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