



The New York Trio Project Fifth House

Adam Rafferty - Guitar
Jeff "Siege" Siegel - Drums
John Menegon - Bass

1. Fifth House (7:15) John Coltrane, Jowcol Music, BMI
2. One For Jimmy (8:24) Jeff Siegel, Siege Music, BMI
3. It's Funny (4:55) John Menegon, Ologon Music, BMI
4. Guijira (8:42) Chick Corea, Planetary / Teddy Reig., ASCAP
5. Like Grains of Sand (6:49) Sir Roland Hanna, Rahanna Music, Inc., BMI
6. Aorbee (4:35) John Menegon, Ologon Music, BMI
7. No Means No (7:41) Adam Rafferty, Raffjazz Music, BMI
8. Peace (4:59) Horace Silver, Ecaroh Music, BMI
9. Beauty and the Beast (8:15) Wayne Shorter, Irving Music, Inc. A/C Imna Music BMI
(Arr. Jeff "Siege" Siegel)
10. Fifth House Take 2 (6:22) John Coltrane, Jowcol Music, BMI

Produced By The New York Trio Project
Executive Producer Lloyd Townsend, Jr.
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Recorded at Upland Studio, Marbletown, NY December 20, 2000 & January 7, 2001
John Menegon, Engineer
Digital Editing at Magnetic North, Saugerties, NY, April 20, 2001 by Todd Levine
Mastered at BiCoastal Music, Ossining, NY May 5, 2001 by Hal Winer (914) 923-4066

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Fifth House

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With its combined resources, the New York Trio Project has no trouble negotiating the thickets of modern jazz with mobility and elegance. But this group is more than just the sum of its substantial parts. And the trio members didn't gather merely to blow off steam for a day. The choice of the word "project" is deliberate, as it conveys an ethos of ongoing work and a collaborative spirit. If you're quite accustomed to hearing guitar trios you may at first think of Adam Rafferty as the dominant voice; but there's a give-and-take permeating these tracks, a sharing of musical space that clearly indicates this isn't the guitarist's record. Rafferty's a player with prodigious technique, but he deploys it only as needed, understanding that one can make a strong statement with one note, perhaps even with a whisper. John Menegon also takes the lead with his share of melodies. Listen closely and you'll hear Jeff "Siege" Siegel play melodies on the drums as well, going far beyond the bounds of timekeeping. It's significant too that each player brought original music to the session, underscoring again the "project" aspect as they shape one another's individual discoveries in the context of collective endeavor.

These are three heavily credentialed and uncommonly gifted instrumentalists. Adam Rafferty, one of New York's finest guitarists, has absorbed profound lessons in the metaphysics of swing from his mentor, pianist Mike Longo. He has performed with the likes of Bob Cranshaw and Benny Golson and has released three albums as a leader - 1993's First Impressions, 1998's Blood, Sweat & Bebop, and 2001's Kush. Bassist John Menegon, a native of Montreal and a New Yorker since the early 1980s, currently plays in quartets led by tenor sax giants Dewey Redman and David "Fathead" Newman. And drummer Jeff Siegel was one-third of Sir Roland Hanna's trio for six pivotal years. He now co-leads a trio with pianist Michael Jefry Stevens and bassist Tim Ferguson.

About the tunes:

Fifth House: A seldom-played classic from the Atlantic LP Coltrane Jazz. It's based on the form of Cole Porter's "What Is This Thing Called Love," but Coltrane interpolated his own "Giant Steps" changes on the bridge. Here, the trio vamps at length on the A section, finally entering the complete form when the feel shifts into double-time swing about halfway through the take.

One for Jimmy: Jeff Siegel's midtempo hardbop blues, written in honor of tenor sax legend Jimmy Heath, with whom "Siege" studied composition while working toward his Masters at Queens College. You can really hear Rafferty's deep feel for the blues on this track.

It's Funny: John Menegon wrote this lilting jazz waltz, which sounds mildly reminiscent of the standard "Alice In Wonderland." Guitar and bass play the final A section in unison, a nice touch.

Guijira: On Chick Corea's original 1966 version, the haunting tripartite melody was played by Joe Farrell on flute and Woody Shaw on trumpet. This trio's reading is sparse and wide open both harmonically and rhythmically, giving all three players a chance to delve deep into the groove.

Grains of Sand: A ballad with a hint of bolero, written by Sir Roland Hanna. Adam Rafferty speaks of its fleeting melodic similarity to "A Child Is Born," also written by Hanna, usually credited to Thad Jones. Siegel's brush work is just right, Rafferty's chord-melody harmonization rich.

Aorbee: The second original contribution from John Menegon. This one's a bright swing tune based on an unchanging B7 tonality. The first notes could almost be heard as a sped-up reference to Ornette Coleman's "Turnaround."

No Means No: In a departure for the normally straightahead Rafferty, this playful funk chart finds him toying with an envelope filter effect. Both he and Menegon quote loosely from Eddie Harris's "Freedom Jazz Dance." Blink and you'll miss it. Ditto the quasi-flange effect that permeates the mix during the guitar solo.

Peace: Horace Silver's well-known ballad. More perhaps than any other track, this one displays the beauty of Rafferty's amplified sound. It also features the guitarist at his most Wes Montgomery-like, deftly playing block chords and octaves during his second chorus. Menegon weighs in with his only arco solo of the set.

Beauty and the Beast: A tune from Wayne Shorter's 1975 Columbia LP Native Dancer. The original alternates between an F7 funk vamp and a mellow Brazilian section with chord changes. Jeff Siegel's arrangement changes the latter to fit over 3/4 time.

Fifth House: An alternate take of the opener. This time the trio gets more abstract, and yet sticks closer to the form throughout. There's a passage in which Menegon briefly falls silent, leaving Rafferty to establish a one-to-one dialogue with Siegel.

Taking their final bows, so to speak, Rafferty, Menegon, and Siegel leave us with a lingering satisfaction and set the stage for more to come. As of this writing (spring 2001) they're preparing for a summer European tour, a number of stateside engagements, and of course, more CDs.

- David R. Adler

One for Jimmy is dedicated to Jimmy Heath
Jeff "Siege" Siegel endorses Vic Firth Drum Sticks
Adam Rafferty plays American Archtop Guitars by Dale Unger and Matt Artinger Solidbody Guitars

Special Thanks To: Lloyd Townsend, Jr., Roy Gumpel, Teri Roiger, David Adler, Hal Winer, Todd Levine, Irmine Jurcsa, Fulvia Zambon, Myra K. Siegel, Eliza Siegel, Mike Longo, Harvey Sorgen and Mark Dziuba to name a few!

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