

**streams of consciousness—
volume two by Kush
Reviewed by Mark Webster
2010**



After reviewing 'streams of consciousness' volume one, I began to develop a real crush on KUSH but initially only on the hush... hush. After a while, I started turning friends on to the CD, included tracks on my own mix tapes and lay awake at night listening for it on smooth jazz radio.

Then towards the end of '09, as I was tuning into Mindi Abair's widely syndicated radio show 'Chill', there it was...KUSH!!! The lead off track, in fact, with a sound that was unmistakably their own and certainly worthy of the international exposure it was now receiving. My heart went out to Etric and Nancy and so it is with much anticipation that I approached the collective's latest release... 'streams of consciousness', volume two.

Just when you might think you've got their formula figured out with their live vibe over tape loops and atmospheric effects, they went and floated this one right down the mainstream of our curious conscious minds. Gone are the extended eight minute sweets (suites), and replaced by studio versions of the same unique sound but now in the digestible pop length of three to four minutes. They also have more variety instrumentally with acoustic guitar and occasional sampled vocal hooks making much of it reminiscent of Herbie Hancock's experimentations with Headhunters in the early seventies.

The Kush core is still intact expertly laying down their funky riffs over irresistible grooves; Eddie Bullen on more chord sequenced keyboards, Bryden Baird caressing us with his muted trumpet playing, Robert Sibony keeps

things percolating on drums and percussion, and Etric Lyons holding it all together with his imaginative bass playing and state-of-the-art programming. All making for a more balanced and polished production.

Starting with opening tracks 'Love is the Currency' parts 1 and 2 through 'Sugar Pusher', 'Lost in Your Own Maze' and 'Freeloaders Remorse', this time they seem to be pushing the upper limits of chill out's beats per minute quota by creating tracks that would work equally as well for DJ's both on the dance floor or in the chill out lounges of the world's most prestigious niteclubs. Check out the ultra hip 'Glamazon' which could be a runway hit for strutting fashion models or 'Free With a Vengeance' which stands out as another cutting edge club cut. Finally, it is the last track 'Dirty Budgie' with its Spanish guitar and synthesized disco beat making it sound like a modern day version Santa Esmeralda that really sparkles on this stellar release.

Both terrestrial and internet radio stations should find a wealth of material here to fit their programming needs. For this is club music at its most sophisticated, jazziest and commercial. Perfect for listeners who want to be right in the moment and still be able to explore the outer regions of their minds at the same time.

Pick up or download 'streams of consciousness' volume two by Canada's chill out kings - KUSH. You won't be disappointed... because it sounds more intriguing and comforting with each repeated listen!

“The Kush core is still intact expertly laying down their funky riffs over irresistible grooves.”



Martin's Miracle by Kush

September 4, 2009

Author: BT Fasmer

One of the hallmarks of great artists is their ability to combine different genres and create something new and totally different. These artists create music that lives on and still sounds fresh many years after it was originally released. I think that the band with the cool sounding name Kush, started by Etric Lyons, has this rare quality. Their most recent release, *Martin's Miracle*, is hard to define but all the more easy to enjoy. Whether you choose to call it nu jazz, new age music, chill out or downtempo, it is simply great music that just sounds different. So yes, it is almost like a miracle!

The thing I have to mention right away is this album's foremost quality which is its incredible coolness.

“Listening to *Martin's Miracle* Is like waking from a beautiful dream feeling positive and refreshed.”

As you know, electronic music is often criticized for being soulless and dull, but the soundscape you'll experience on *Martin's Miracle* is powerful, friendly and easy to like.

It sounds a bit like Thievery Corporation or Air, with a hint of nu jazz, all in a beautiful ambient environment.

The album has six tracks with no pause between which makes for great studying, creativity or just relaxing. You can also safely use it as background music to dinners or parties, knowing that it will not get in the way or be too noisy.

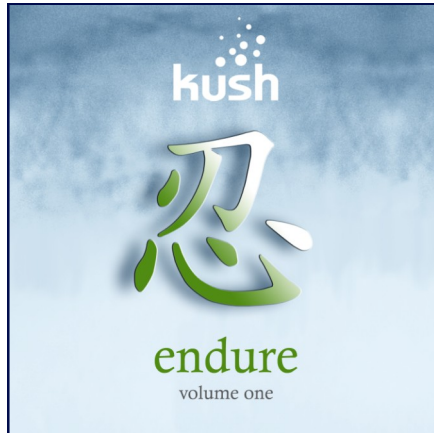
The tracks have no names, but they are quite different in style—although the atmosphere is constant (which I find to be positive on an album like this). Track one and two are quite electronic, with a tasteful bass and sharp synth plucks. It is chill out and downtempo, just the way we like it. Tracks three to five are more like Buddha Bar, or sounding like Enigma's more ambient passages; if Michael Cretu was to make an ambient album, this is what it would sound like. And like all great chill out/downtempo albums, *Martin's Miracle* also has a “wake up” track. Track six is warmer and brighter, and the soft rhythm is just a little bit faster. It is like waking from a beautiful dream feeling positive and refreshed.

I find the sound quality to be very good and a little above most professionally sequenced albums. The synth sounds are fresh and the lead instrumentals fit perfectly. The mastering is very well done. It is simply speaking a quality production on all levels.

Martin's Miracle is different because it combines different genres and creates an unforgettable mix that is as cool and jazzy as it is ambient. But where is the miracle, you might ask? Well, it is in its almost limitless replay possibilities. You will never get tired of these melodies and that is no small miracle!

It is called a Kush Krush!





Kush—Endure, Vol 1

Written by Dub_Ninja

Tuesday 09 June 2009

Track Listing:

1. Definition of Cool
2. Gemini Rising
3. Bite Size Love
4. Mama Joy
5. I'm Not Myself Lately
6. Storm Chaser
7. Earthship
8. Never Question an Angel
9. Fleet of Dreams
10. Baby V
11. I'm Not Myself Lately (instru.)
12. Definition of Cool (instru.)

Endure, Vol. 1 is another brilliant chilled musical journey by Kush. The warm atmospheric textures—signature of the KUSH style—are accented beautifully by the guitar and bass melodies.

The beautiful ambience and slick vocals of Endure's opening track, "Definition of Cool" certainly could be a statement of what is to come. Yet Kush shows their versatility with the atmospheric drum 'n bass influenced track "Gemini Rising".

Like the frothy cream in my vanilla latte, some tracks (like Stromchaser and Earthship) are a bit light and airy yet they add to the overall flavour. Tracks like Baby V and I'm Not Myself Lately are very moving.

While the haunting trumpet solos ever so present in previous release Streams of Consciousness, Vol. 1 are gone, Kush has turned a corner and kept their style of chilled downtempo interesting and above all beautifully hypnotic.

BULLFROGMUSICREVIEWS

CD Reviews of Independent Releases



Streams of Consciousness, Vol. 1 by Kush, Independent

June 15, 2008

I'm always a little leery of listening to indie jazz. It seems to me that, because indie jazzers don't need to keep a label happy and devise listenable music, they tend to go off the deep end with nonsensical conglomerations of abstract musical assemblages.

Not so with Kush, a collective of musicians including Robert Sibony, Etric Lyons, Eddie Bullen, David Williams, Bryden Baird and Nick Ali. The guys in Kush have nothing to prove when it comes to musical maturity and technical skill. The group, which has been nominated for Group of the Year by Canada's Smooth Jazz Awards in 2006, pursues a smooth, jazz-fusion contemporary sound, using loops and samples to provide a breezy ambient-electronic touch.

Some music is made for driving your car really fast down an empty two-laner somewhere in Saskatchewan. Other tunes go well with house work or dismembering the neighbour's pets.

The music on this album is meant for sitting somewhere quiet, thinking deep thoughts and taking an occasional sip of your single malt scotch. Alternatively, I can see myself gliding through the mean street of a darkened megalopolis, grooving to these tunes. In other words, this baby floooooows.

The release comprises selections from 60 hours of improvised recording. The CD starts off with a very ambient-music-feel, slowly doodling around in the musical waters; there's no apparent effort to get from A to B, but there is definitely a plan. The music quickly morphs into down-tempo jazz and never lets go of that style. None of the cuts sound rehashed for want of musical ideas. The guys have resisted the urge to use digital effects as a way of making things more interesting; the effects are used to create a layering effect, generating a delicate wave to sound to swell into a well-placed crescendo.

Would I play this on my stereo? You bet!

Recommended: Hell, yes



streams of consciousness—
volume one by Kush
Reviewed by Mark Webster
2007

Since its inception, electronica music has been evolving and most recently mutated into such hybrid forms as chillout, downtempo instrumental and nu jazz. Retailers have elevated the genre to an eye level profile in order to constantly charge premium prices for hard-to-find imports and the latest domestic releases.

For R & B, smooth jazz and dance music producers/studios, electronica is a welcome relief as a new experimental outlet. It allows them a break from frantic hit formula production freeing them to create mini suites of mood and ambience up to eight minutes in length. By tinkering with various synth sounds, vocal samples and atmospheric effects, they are able to create this new club sub-genre. But how much is just aimless doodling in a cosmic mode?

Enter 'streams of consciousness' volume one by Kush. First off, this recording was not created late at night in a studio under the influence, but rather gleaned from over 60 hours of live playing at the Honey Supper Lounge in Toronto. All the music is totally improvised by some of the finest jazz musicians on this part of the planet; Eric Lyons on bass and sampling, Robert Sibony on drums and programming, Eddie Bullen on keyboards and Bryden Baird on trumpet. So although this has the essential elements that the chillout crowd love, it is unique in the sense that it does not repeat ad nauseum or have a

calculated studio sheen.

"First off, this recording was not created late at night in a studio under the influence, but rather gleaned from over 60 hours of live playing ... by some of the finest jazz musicians on this part of the planet..."

"...'streams of consciousness' should be heard in the chillout lounges of every major nightclub across North America."

If Miles Davis ushered in the birth of cool and Herb Alpert taxied all the way to Tijuana to play for the Lonely Bull, Bryden Baird does that much and more with his muted trumpet. On this CD, he unleashes some haunting riffs over funky mid-tempo beats with the rest of the musicians totally in synch and loving every minute of it.

In a recent radio interview, smooth jazz trumpeter Chris Botti predicted electronica was going to be the next wave... the music of the future because he said you hear it in almost every hotel lounge throughout Europe. That being said, then 'streams of consciousness' should be heard in the chillout lounges of every major nightclub across North America. Because each sweet (suite), of which there are seven, takes the listener on a transcendental trip into deep relaxation.

For those amateur DJ's looking for something new to throw into their mix whether it be an Ipod, MP3 or mixed tape, or those professional DJ's looking to inject some 'real feel' into their down tempo sets try picking up a copy of 'streams of consciousness' volume one by Kush. It's like being taken on a maiden voyage to the pleasure regions of your mind with that friendly supper club vibe... there to keep you alive.

Available at www.kush-music.com.



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Streams of Consciousness, Vol. 1

Kush Kush Music (2006)

By: Glenn Astarita

The music on this first volume of *Streams of Consciousness* was inspired by sixty hours of live recordings of Kush's 2003-4 gigs at Toronto's Potato Blues Supper Club. The quartet, which has been nominated for Group of the Year by [Canada's Smooth Jazz Awards](#), pursues a smooth, jazz-fusion contemporary sound, using loops and samples to provide a breezy ambient-electronic touch. Trumpeter Bryden Baird serves as the prime soloist, entrenching his muted lines within warmly stated proclamations atop snappy backbeats. The ensemble's modus operandi might suggest that it's in no rush to get from point A to point B. And unlike many other offerings of this ilk, effects are used for a layered approach, allowing a delicate wall of sound to morph into a grand scenario. This endeavor is not tainted with an overabundance of wantonly exercised digital processes.



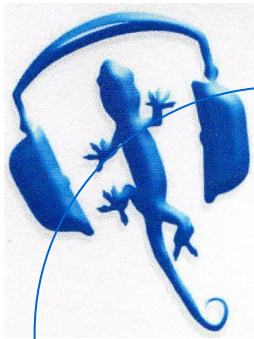
Baird and keyboardist Eddie Bullen engage in lightly soaring choruses solo atop medium-paced grooves laced with jazz-funk undercurrents. The band paints multihued and mood-evoking dreamscapes, all embedded within motifs regenerated from primary melodies. They don't re-engineer the road frequently traveled. However, the quartet's strength resides within its gently tempered movements and ability to portray a scenic musical portrait, solidified with an upbeat rationale.

Visit [Kush](#) on the web.

Track listing: Sweet 1 - 7.

Personnel: Etric Lyons: samples; Robert Sibony: drums, percussion, programming; Eddie Bullen: keyboards; Bryden Baird: trumpet.

Style: [Fringes of Jazz](#) | Published: April 17, 2006



reviews



... because ears are a terrible thing to waste.

Mondo Blu Radio

Kush - Streams of Consciousness, Vol. 1

What people have been saying about streams:

View from the Blu:

On first listening to "Streams", this smooth combination of electronic and jazz appears to float by from one track to the next almost unnoticeably. On closer listening, though, there are subtle changes that keep the theme changing and evolving, in the same way that a physical stream evolves. Although the trumpet begs comparison with Miles Davis, Kush's unique sound is a result of the collective contribution and this is what makes "Streams" unforgettable.

Miles would be proud...Kush has the courage to do what few traditional jazz artists do anymore - create spontaneous compositions live on the fly - and then preserves them so that those of us not fortunate enough to witness the "live birth" can enjoy the fruits thereof, Streams of Consciousness captures the essence of the collective's efforts to achieve this improvisational ambient-electronica-jazz perfectly and transports the listener to another, better place - where Miles must be smiling.

Online Review (www.download.com)
Texas

Totally blown away by this one, enough to give this artist a call and put him on my radio show (3/19/06) 30 min plus music from his "Streams Of Consciousness" CD. Watch this artist, and if you have the chance don't miss anything "Live"! Go Get It!!!! Got It?

Dusty Durst
KCLC FM 89.1
Defiance, Missouri

Thank you for sending on this C.D. Like "Temptation Sessions" this is another terrific Album from Kush, yet totally different in concept. It is haunting and evocative and retains melody and meaning throughout - this entails consistency at its very best. There are passages which may appear bleak, for example like the opening shots of a movie where a helicopter flies over a major U.S. or European City and then zooms in to a run-down, deprived area, where things are hard, and hope is minimal... then the Music kicks in! Well arranged, well played, well conceived, and well done to all!!

John Reid
Keith Community Radio
Keith, Banffshire, Scotland

Brace yourself for one unusual musical journey if you listen to Streams of Consciousness: Volume One, a new release from a Toronto-based quartet called Kush, that is lighting up the charts in Canada. The music is an interesting down-tempo moody and introspective sound that blends fusion and electronica jazz to produce a cross-genre sound. Kush combines a rhythm-based spontaneous groove with a heavy percussive beat that grabs your attention from the start. ...The musicianship is first rate and it had to be given the heavy emphasis on the improvisational side. In summation I would say that the music was made for the mind and the soul. If you approach the album from this perspective, you'll find an enjoyable recording that takes you to a different world and dimension of jazz.

Edward Blanco
www.jazzreview.com

You've probably heard of "quiet storm", "adult contemporary" and "smooth jazz". Added to this musical crush is the sound of Kush, based on an easy-listening mix of loops, samples and live overlays of tasteful trumpet, kinetic keyboarding and percolating percussion and drum work. Great ear-candy for the Sunday afternoon laze. Totally non-threatening and accessible I'd say. Grenadian-Canadian Eddie Bullen is the pianist on the session, while notable Miles Davis sound-alike Bryden Baird lays down some sweet horn lines. Amazing!

John Stevenson, United Kingdom
Ejazznews.com, March 6, 2006



Kush: The New Age In Jazz

By: Adele Ambrose - Posted Wednesday, February 15, 2006



The evening was billed as a celebration launch for Jazz by Genre with the incredible Roy Ayers and a great evening was to be expected. *But the biggest surprise was the stellar opening act, KUSH.* The Toronto collective put forth a musical explosion of new age Jazz, Funk and Electronica for the audience's musical palette. This presentation was so unique that it left us at AfroToronto.com wanting to know more about what makes KUSH so entrancing. Is it the afro beats, the saxophone solos, the pounding bass lines or simply the energy put forth on stage? Well, band leader Etric Lyons took the time to speak to us about this one of a kind collective.

How would you describe KUSH?

Kush is a collective of five to six musicians. Robert Sibony on drums and percussion, Eddie Bullen on keyboards, Bryden Baird sometimes replaced by Nick "The Brown Man" Ali and myself Etric Lyons. When we play live all the music is improvised and created on the spot, and I tend to direct the music as we go, it is something you have to see live to appreciate. It's anything from downtempo to soulful house.

How was the collective formed and what was the reason for starting such a group?

The concept of Kush and the execution of Kush has been around since 2001, the collective was put together by me in 2002. The whole idea of putting it together in the first place was really to put a project together that toyed with the idea of mixing electronica with live performance in an improvised manner.

Since is all improvised, how do you guys rehearse?

We don't really rehearse. All the players in the band are very well developed musicians and have an arsenal of material and a really strong sense of composition to the point we can actually do that on the spot. It's a challenge, a musical adventure. It's not for the weak of heart, you really have to have control of your instrument and control of your enthusiasm so you don't overplay. There are a lot of challenges but it can really work and quite frankly it's not necessary to rehearse just by the design of the project.

How does it enhance your work?

It keeps it very, very fresh since the musical adventure that happens with the musicians and the audience is authentic. The way the audience responds and the way the musician responds completely affects the musical outcome and that's what makes it so exciting. You're a part of the process, it would be too elaborate to rehearse that.

Since everything is improvised, how do you account for your signature sound?

I would say KUSH has a signature approach. Playing with KUSH one thing you can count on is that you don't know what will come next and it's not going to fall comfortably into any one genre.

You have been called everything from lounge to nu jazz to downtempo, how would you describe your sound?

My intention was to create music that was genre bending. Is that good for categories in a record store? No. Is that good for a listening experience? I think so. I like the idea of creating music that is sort of fluctuating seamlessly between genres.

The Canadian Smooth Jazz Awards recently nominated Kush for group of the year, what does this mean for you?

It means that a project that was fundamentally an experiment is validated. It validates what we're doing and it's an opportunity to open doors that normally wouldn't.