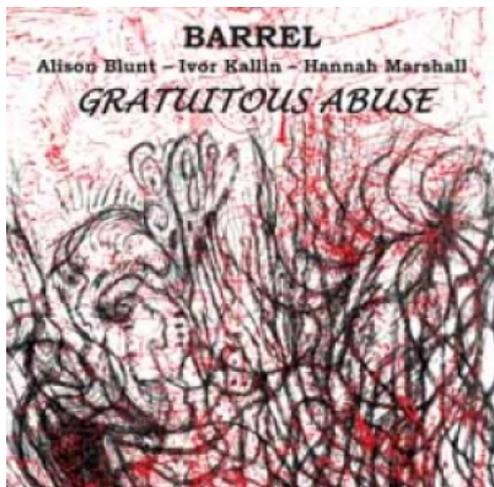


Features JazzReview album 28.12.11

Gratuitous Abuse by Barrel

- Written by [Glenn Astarita](#)
- <http://www.jazzreview.com/index.php/reviews/latest-cd-reviews/item/28821-gratuitous-abuse-by-barrel>



Avant-garde or free-form improvisation doesn't always need to be austere or devoid of character. Essentially, these U.K., based improvisers reaffirm those notions in vibrant fashion via these invigorating works recorded at a home studio and live performances in London.

The trio exercises a gamut of emotively charged and highly expressionistic movements. They play tricks with your neural responses via a layered format where disparate tonalities augment the swerving dialogues, tinted with humor and Ivor Kallin's laughing-cough heard on "Rigwiddie Snauchle Strikes Again in Style." Hence, the humorous track titles signal a lighthearted slant, but the trio's methodology includes, unsettling and creaky foundations amid elusive melodies and frenetic breakouts.

The artists glean the most out of their instruments capabilities with fervent plucking episodes, harrowing lines, brusque accents, and rhythmically charged tapping exchanges. The format is heady, yet jovial. And they weave microtonal and minimalist-style patterns into the grand mix, which are components that add to the trio's depth and keen use of space. They tug, scrape, and pull more than a few tricks out of the hat, while venturing into avant-chamber passages. But the shifting strategy offers a continually oscillating dynamic, steeped within an organic sound.

It's a musical world without borders, especially when the group operates at a dizzying pace. Unanticipated surprises, heated arguments and subtle hues are among many redeeming facets by a band that sometimes morphs a steely, roughhewn-edge into warmly coated mosaics.

Additional Info

- Artist / Group Name: Barrel
- CD Title: Gratuitous Abuse
- Genre: Free Jazz / Avante Garde
- Year Released: 2011
- Record Label: EMANEM
- Musicians: Alison Blunt (violin), Ivor Kallin (violin & viola), Hannah Marshall (cello)
- Label Website: emanemdisc.com
- Rating: Four Stars

Last modified on Sunday, 19 February 2012 10:21

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