

Beata Pater - Fire Dance (2017)

Written by bluesever

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*01 – Curse Of The Locust 02 – Daylight Savings 03 – Sand Dunes 04 – Harvest Season
05 – Fire Dance 06 – The Princess 07 – Round Dance 08 – Flash Back 09 – The Quest 10 –
Reaping Spell 11 – Ritual* Beata Pater - Vocals Scott Collard - Keyboards Aaron Germain -
Bass Alan Hall - Drums Aaron Lington - Sax (Baritone) Sam Newsome - Sax (Soprano) Brian
Rice - Percussion Anton Schwartz - Sax (Tenor)

Beata Pater's first five albums could be called 'typical' vocal jazz albums, as they featured the usual mix of standards and originals. That's not to say her vocal approach has not been inspired, instead, she has received high marks for her flexible and fluid style, but no previous album she has made could prepare her followers for her latest, "Fire Dance". On this new one, Pater employed Alex Danson to write eleven new originals, which Pater then arranged for multiple wordless vocal overdubs supported by a saxophone trio and a four piece electric rhythm section. The end result is a sort of modern big band made up mostly of Pater's voice multi-tracked up to sixteen times on some cuts. The multi-tracked vocals sometimes have a classic vocal jazz ensemble sound that may remind some of The Swingle Singers or Manhattan Transfer, while the overdubbed wordless sounds may remind some of Bobby McFerrin, but for much of "Fire Dance", Pater has crafted a sound that is unique to this album.

Musically this album pulls from a variety of styles including modern RnB, post bop and fusion from the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe. The end result is sometimes similar to Weather Report in the late 70s, or any of Joe Zawinul's bands since WR. Imagine the Swingle Singers covering classic Weather Report material and you might have a clue as to what is going on here. Along with Pater's lead vocals, the saxophonists occasionally take short solos, and even exchange in free three way interplay on a couple cuts.

The make or break on here is Pater's approach to wordless vocals. No doubt this was a very

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risky record to make, many have a right to fear what an album based around wordless vocals might sound like, but “Fire Dance” is a success due to a very careful use of vocal sounds that never become annoying or embarrassing. Pater is also careful to never overuse the so-called ‘scatting’ technique, a decision that saves this album from potential indulgence. Instead, all of the multi-tracked vocals on here are carefully arranged, much like a complex big band chart. Top tracks include two beautifully abstract numbers that appear in the middle of the CD, title track “Fire Dance” and “The Princess”. Both feature soaring vocals that recall a pre-Renaissance European style, as well as a classic Middle Eastern sound. ---
jazzmusicarchives.com

This is the third album I’ve heard by vocalist Beata Pater, and it is a change from the Spartan “Golden Lady” or fusiony “Red,” the clever lady takes her wordless approach and delivers a mix of CTI soul jazz and toe tapping funk.

At times she sings by herself, and other moments she’ll multi-track, making other worldly yet accessible sounds as on the exciting “Reaping Spell” where she comes across like a vocal horn section, while on “Round Dance” she takes a Headhunter groove and creates sounds that mixes the swoop of Sarah Vaughan with the squeal of Ella Fitzgerald.

The team of Sam Newsome/ss, Anton Schwartz/ts, Aaron Lington/bs with Scott Collard/key, Aaron Germain/b, Alan Hall,dr and Brian Rice/perc serve a perfect blend of 70s soul stew for Pater’s trumpet tones on “Fire Dance” or a tour de force visceral gumbo of voices on “Ritual.” This lady takes the human sound to a new level, making ladies of the cabaret crowd sounding anachronistic . Wonderful! When’s she hitting LA? --- George W. Harris, jazzweekly.com

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