

Borbetomagus The Eastcote Studios Session

Borbetomagus are a group that have always been associated with making noise music, a claim that suggests their sound is more of a test of endurance rather than the spiritual experience it really is. “Invest in some earplugs,” is one common piece of advice whenever their name is mentioned, as though the reeds and guitar trio of Jim Sauter, Don Dietrich and Donald Miller are more intent on driving their audience away than pulling them in to their sonic world of fire music and freeform rock. As if to respond to this reaction, the cover for The Eastcote Studios Session takes on the design of a yellow and black warning sign, a visual message that is almost daring the listener to slam the record on the turntable and turn it all the way up. Loud it is. Noise it isn't. Instead what emerges from the group's latest record is a glorious rush of freedom that sees them taking their individual playing styles to a higher state of transcendental artistry. Here they levitate beyond the noise genre barrier, with Sauter and Dietrich's horn constructions squeezing and sliding their way through Miller's electric guitar explosions like a slinky pair of moray eels. For his part guitarist Donald Miller is on fire, gently stirring up a boiling brew of frantic feedback with his instrument that he puts on simmer – until the time is right to boil over as Sauter and Dietrich turn up the heat. Mostly hidden behind a metallic curtain of electric scree throughout, when the players do emerge it is a thing of substantial beauty. As the fractured static storm gradually subsides, billowing gusts

of horn playing begin to swirl into shape, as Borbetomagus channel their musical energy directly into the same current that produced Albert Ayler's Spiritual Unity, The Frank Wright Quartet's Church Number Nine and John Coltrane's Ascension. Such influences are instinctively embedded in the soul of the group, together with a finely tuned knowledge of improvisational technique that can only be learnt through years of practise. The pure energy that roars like a stoked furnace through “DIS” and “DAT” – as they have decided to call the two compositions that make up this latest collection – is a refined force that has been forged from years of playing together and, more importantly, listening to each other play.

Edwin Pouncey

Side A
DIS
Side B
DAT

Don Dietrich
Donald Miller
Jim Sauter

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at Eastcote Studios, London
Engineered by George Murphy
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