

Brad Mehldau - Largo (2002)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 15 October 2009 20:10 - Last Updated Sunday, 03 August 2014 17:14

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- 01 - *When it rains*
- 02 - *You're vibing me*
- 03 - *Dusty McNugget*
- 04 - *Dropjes*
- 05 - *Paranoid android*
- 06 - *Franklin Avenue*
- 07 - *Sabbath*
- 08 - *Dear Prudence*
- 09 - *Free Willy*
- 10 - *Alvarado*
- 11 - *Wave mother nature's son*
- 12 - *I do*

Personnel: Brad Mehldau (vibraphone, piano); Phillip Yao, Daniel Kelley, Joseph Meyer, Jerry Folsom (French horn); William Reichenbach, George B. Thatcher, Kenneth Kugler (trombone); Steve Kujala, Dave Shostac (flute); Gary Gray, Emile Bernstein (clarinet); Jon Clark, Earle Dulmer (oboe); Peter Mandell, Rose Corrigan (bassoon); Jim Keltner (vibraphone, piano, drums, percussion); Jon Brion (piano, guitar, percussion); Larry Grenadier, Darek "Oles" Oleszkiewicz (acoustic bass); Justin Meldal-Johnsen (electric bass); Matt Chamberlain (drums, tabla, shaker, percussion); Victor Indrizzo (drums, percussion); Jorge Rossy (drums).

In the most enigmatic project up to this point in his career, Brad Mehldau explores conflicting aesthetics, sometimes in tracks positioned next to each other, and occasionally within the confines of a single performance. A spare simplicity governs much of the album, emphasized by almost puritanical horn arrangements -- long notes, mournful triadic chords. After acknowledging these episodes with childlike figurations on the piano, Mehldau then builds his solos along more dissonant lines, which invariably end up enhancing the mood. But then there are tracks like "Dropjes," whose electronic effects gnash angrily at the piano, or "Free Willy," on which putty attached to the instrument's low strings allows Mehldau to unleash a feral

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improvisation, with lines that suggest scurrying rodents more than bebop blowing. Producer Jon Brion stimulated much of this adventurism, at times diving directly into the mix with his guitar synth or Chamberlin keyboard. But what intrigues most about Largo in the end is the perspective it offers on Mehldau, whose playing here is, as always, intelligent, perhaps a bit cerebral, and now open as well to sonic exotica. --- Robert L. Doerschuk, allmusic.com

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