

the louis romanos quartet
Take me there ~ What they're saying



Quick Quotes...

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- AXS

"With "Songo 7", the first song of this album, you realize the tremendous talent Mr. Romanos and his band have for playing with heart and soul to create a profound sound full of elegance and virtuosity. "

- Latin Jazz Network

"A drummer that knows how to give everyone else some, Romanos has great mastery of the kind of club sound that never hit the charts but kept the clubs packed and spawned an almost religious fervor among the true believers. "

- MidWest Record

"Through it all, Romanos changes the undercurrent to add extra drama, with a playful feel on Klezmer and an assertive restlessness on Bruggemann Jam. "

- JazzWeekly.com

"This set of mixed tempo music reflects the feeling and life experiences of Romanos and his team, a satisfying session. "

- O's Place

"It was the laid-back into to Changes that caught my vote for personal favorite of the even dozen compositions, though... this evolves from gentle & easy to a mature piece full of a range of emotions. I give Louis & his crew a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. "

- Rotcod Zzaj

Reviews ...

AXS - Carol Banks Weber - September 19, 2014

The Louis Romanos Quartet takes listeners there in playful jazz synopsis

The best jazz lies in the sum of its parts: When the bassist doesn't know where he ends and the drummer begins, but they travel down the same musical road together, balancing a thread of a melody with harmonic detours that cause the listener to feel more than overthink. The New Orleans-born Louis Romanos Quartet achieves this special effect in its upcoming album, "Take Me There," out November 4, 2014. LRQ made the album in three days, live, and relied on a CD release campaign to finish the project (promotion).

Drummer Romanos formed his acoustic quartet — now based in Athens, GA — in 2001 as a change of pace from his usual electronica fare and PermaGrin, a more progressive jazz band with guitarist Dan Sumner (who's also on LRQ). Together with bassist Neal Starkey and trumpeter/flugelhornist Alex Noppe, they recorded 12 original compositions by Romanos aimed at taking themselves and listeners somewhere else, playful, peaceful, far out, or mysteriously romantic.

Well-versed in interactive media, dance choreography, and state-of-the-art movie score syncing (Edison's Elekrisches Theater at Werkstatt für Kunstprojekte in Leipzig, Germany), as well as music education around the world, Romanos indelibly carved out pathways for a whole host of his favorite styles.

The attentive listener will hear the quartet lightly tripping over ballads or roughhousing through highly charged Latin beats and rock reverb. Whichever the case, LRQ plays as one, cohesive unit, perhaps even one amalgamated, well-rounded being with a lot to say and a lot of time to say it. Credit Romanos, who shows his exceptional quality in traditional and modern jazz, a touch Middle Eastern, a little Hawaii *Aina*, classical, Latin, New Orleans, bebop, and crazy avant-garde hybrids — combined to make a whole lot of sonic sense.

Makes sense considering Romanos' musical background. He's worked with as diverse a cross-section of artists as Keith Richards, Jason Stuart, Stanton Moore, Charlie Miller, Jonathan Byrd, Charles Neville, Earl Turbinton, Chuck Leavell, and John Mayer.

Romanos' evocative soundtrack is rife with personal meaning, which he prefers to keep to himself. For him, it's about letting the audience derive their own personal meaning from the experience.

Overall, despite the variances in styles, the musicians hold and release the same quietly unfolding story and themes. Nothing is jarringly out of place, or ill-fitting. It is as if the songs themselves came out of a naturally occurring event in the space of one person's life, resonating with those he shares them with. The slight variances comfortably transition from one flowing mood to another, playful, pleasant, a blissful state of mind occasionally compelled to wander (not too far) as the mood hits.

Songo 7 directs Latin fire, '60s classic rock, and smooth, supple jazz, with the comfortable flanking of high-stepping strings and horns. The knotting and unknotting of the bass here — as Romanos displays starry-eyed melodic undertones, a one-man percussive band — really stand out.

Sometimes the horns take over what seems to be the bulk of the melodic thread, as on *Second Song*, *Aina*, *Lovely*, *Klezmer*, *Spiritual*, *Bruggemann Jam*, *Far Away*, and *Green In Blew*. But what Noppe does on his horns and with his fellow bandmates makes such a difference on most of these tracks.

Green In Blew would be nothing without the cantankerous enticements of contrapuntal guitarist Sumner and drummer Romanos. While Noppe rises in the hopes of achieving bebop jazz splendor, Sumner's holding down some riveting metal rock, and Romanos is on top with a grandiose, all-encompassing asylum, grazing on all the styles.

Klezmer contains horns on dystopian echo, but also dips into counter-balances of a fevered guitar rage bordering on an Alzheimer attack. This one roller-coasters on a rocky jazz pitch and crawl, goaded by guitarist Sumner and the ferocious rolls of bandleader Romanos on drums.

Bruggemann Jam contains some of the most interesting, if constantly interrupting clashes of melody as the musicians feel their way through contemporary hits and flashes of tempered fusion jazz. It's one musician's possible take on original composition as the world's dizzying multi-cultural, multi-styles flood in, pulling him in different directions threatening to collapse in utter chaos (3:01 mark). The constant threat is this song's saving grace.

Far Away's horn moniker hovers above the straight-ahead jazz mark, barely rippling the stillness of a lake and the somber, quiet of a soul in reflection. Bass and guitar serve to underline the suggestive, melancholic reflection of perhaps one's own mortality in the face of nature's grand design. The LRQ's album cover of a slightly shifting scenic lake in pale blues and grays, as darkness descends, is definitely reminiscent of this lyrical piece.

This is an album of original music constantly evolving new discoveries. That a quartet of fine musicians can hone in on one drummer's vast vision is quite illuminating.

<http://www.axs.com/the-louis-romanos-quartet-takes-listeners-there-in-playful-jazz-synaps-20388>

Latin Jazz Network - Oscar Montagut - May 16, 2015

The Louis Romanos Quartet' Jazz Delight

With "Songo 7", the first song of this album, you realize the tremendous talent Mr. Romanos and his band have for playing with heart and soul to create a profound sound full of elegance and virtuosity. *Take Me There* is the title of the new album by Louis Romanos, composed of twelve tracks that maintain a sequence of skillfulness and creative interpretation. This melodic venture was born in one of the great musical lands of the world, New Orleans, United States, by the percussionist and composer Louis Romanos. The project was the fruit of hope for this artist after leaving New Orleans due to the merciless hurricane Katrina, and settling in Athens, Georgia.

Each song has a little bit of Latin jazz, modern sound, bebop style and New Orleans beat. Pure synergy is expressed in each player's performance as they propose an honest dialog where musicianship is the sweet-sounding sap that flows into its lines. A perfect example is "Lovely", maybe the most inspiring song of this work, with special and magical power that moves the profound heartstrings of listeners. This beautiful theme starts with some smooth guitar notes that sound like a harp, like the song of mermaids hypnotizing those who listen to it. The technique and mastery of Daniel Sumner, playing the electric guitar in the intro, is an unexpected gift for music lovers who will be moved by his precision and spirit expressed through the six strings. The whispers of the double bass and drums subtly fade in becoming part of the song increasing the jazzy atmosphere. The profound sound of Alex Noppe's flugelhorn introduces the melody with great simplicity and feeling, showing brilliance and musical energy in each note played. His flugelhorn interpretation makes me recall some unbelievable lines of master trumpeter Jerry Gonzales in his musical projects The Apache Band and El Comando de la clave; long and clear notes draw a dramatic melody based on a glittering composition.

This quartet is composed of the remarkable musicians Dan Sumner (guitar), Alex Noppe on trumpet and flugelhorn, the bassist Neal Starkey, and the leader Louis on drums. The twelve tracks were all composed and arranged by Mr. Romanos using his skills not only to compose but also to play the drums, showing exceptional sincerity. "Changes" is proof of this; Louis, accompanying the band mainly with cymbals (hit-hat, crash and ride cymbals), creates a crisp

background sonority that enhances the low-pitched sound of the double bass and the bright and penetrating tone of the wind instruments.

Almost two decades ago (1997), the guitarist and drummer co-founded the musical project *Permagrin*, a New Orleans-based ensemble, where they started to share musically. After years of playing together on other stages, The Louis Romanos Quartet was born and now brings *Take Me There* to jazz lovers, an album that pays tribute to improvisation delight with melodic finesse and commitment to music. Dear passionate jazz listeners, I cannot leave you without mentioning the remarkable piece called “Spiritual”, an incomparable theme that is composed of two parts; the first is a mystical and soft instrumental ditty that combines some long Indian sounds (double bass lines) and ceremonial high tones of the cymbals with the sweetness of the trumpet prolonged notes. The second is a jazzy, happy and syncopated rhythm that slowly starts to turn into a wonderful game of improvisation and mastery. I could continue writing more about each song in this wonderful work but I prefer that you take a look and let your mind get carried away, imagining other musical roads and destinies with *Take Me There*.

<http://latinjazznet.com/2015/05/16/features/jazz-report/the-louis-romanos-quartet-jazz-delight/>

Midwest Record - October 19, 2014

LOUIS ROMANOS QUARTET/Take Me There

A drummer that knows how to give everyone else some, Romanos has great mastery of the kind of club sound that never hit the charts but kept the clubs packed and spawned an almost religious fervor among the true believers. Loaded with joyful noise, all the players on board know how to follow the leader, even if he's in the rear leaving you to provide the smoky air and the blissed out hip chicks in all black. Smoking stuff that has it all on the ball and in the pocket throughout.

Jazz Weekly.com - December 11, 2014

NO PIANOS REQUIRED: The Louis Romanos Quartet: Take Me There

Drummer Louis Romanos has put together a simpatico quartet that delivers communicative post bop sounds. The unorthodox team of Dan Summer/g, Alex Noppe/tp and Neal Starkey/b make use of subtle shifts and complex arrangements as on the sleek “Song” and dark *Something Different*. Summer’s guitar can be dainty as on the delicate *Lovely*, electric and bluesy on *Changes* and dark on *Something Different*. Noppe’s horn is clean and clear, serenading on *Far Away* and graceful on *Second Song*. Through it all, Romanos changes the

undercurrent to add extra drama, with a playful feel on *Klezmer* and an assertive restlessness on *Bruggermann Jam*. Bop chops pop into the scene on *Green in Blew* and the rhythm chimes with guitar on *Spiritual*. Quite communicative and intelligent without coming off as sterile.

<http://www.jazzweekly.com/2014/12/no-pianos-required-the-louis-romanos-quartet-take-me-there-ken-thomson-and-slowfast-settle/>

D. Oscar Groomes O's Place Jazz Newsletter March 4, 2015

CD Review: Louis Romanos - *Take Me There*

O's Notes: Louis Romanos is a drummer, composer and leader of a quartet with Dan Summer (g), Alex Noppe (t) and Neil Starkey (b). They play a swinging jazz-fusion starting with the upbeat "Songo" and including the mellow tones of "Second Song" where both Dan and Alex bathe listeners in the melody. This set of mixed tempo music reflects the feeling and life experiences of Romanos and his team, a satisfying session.

<http://www.OsPlaceJazz.com>

Rotcod Zzaj - April 8, 2014

The Louis Romanos Quartet – TAKE ME THERE

When you combine Louis' drums with Benedetto guitars from Dan Sumner, horns from Alex Noppe, & bass from Neal Starkey, you've got a very together set of tunes... pieces like *Aina* will appeal to jazz fans of every color & stripe. The high-energy performance on the 4:10 *Bruggerman Jam* will have you tappin' right along with Louis, to be sure. There's a great deal of freedom expressed by each of the players in the quartet, and the opener, *Songo 7* is a clear representation of their skill at keeping each of the notes together... the changes on this one are nothing short of exquisite. It was the laid-back into to *Changes* that caught my vote for personal favorite of the even dozen compositions, though... this evolves from gentle & easy to a mature piece full of a range of emotions. I give Louis & his crew a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. Get more information at <http://louisromanosquartet.com>.

(You can purchase the CD direct from Louis at his site also) *Rotcod Zzaj*

<http://rotcodzzaj.com/42-2/improvjazzation-issue-153/issue-153-reviews/>