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Bio information: **JASON ROBINSON**
Title: **THE TWO FACES OF JANUS** (Cuneiform Rune 311)

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ

"[Robinson is] a potent improviser who occasionally steps in the Albert Ayler zone...thoughtful writing and bold instincts." – **Jazz Times**

"Robinson's special gift is an emotional intensity that keeps things at the boiling point." – **Jazz Now Magazine**

"[Robinson] draws melodic and harmonic inspiration from Duke Ellington and Gil Evans... the saxophonist himself has a warm expressive tone, occasionally dipping into freer realms yet always staying true to the structure of his compositions" – **Signal To Noise**

The Two Faces of Janus – a title and an album that evokes the ancient god of gateways and doors, depicted with one face looking at the past, and one face looking towards the future. Borrowed from Roman mythology and associated with beginnings, **Janus** is an apt metaphor for the latest project by critically acclaimed reedist and composer **Jason Robinson**. Recorded in December 2009, the album positions Robinson—a West Coast transplant— ensconced within New York’s most innovative community of creative and visionary jazz musicians. It features ten of Robinson’s original pieces, which range in instrumentation from two reed duos to sextets with wildly evocative textures. To perform his music, he recruited an absolutely stellar cast, all of whom are distinguished figures in jazz and improvised music as well as band leaders in their own right. Beautifully played, and seamlessly moving from hard hitting grooves to beautiful abstraction, the music on *Two Faces of Janus* is angular, expressive, emotional and virtuosic, Robinson’s playing and composing embodies the duality of the Janus metaphor—his music draws from the rich historical and modern traditions of jazz to forge a decidedly modern and unique musical vision.

Released by **Cuneiform Records**, *The Two Faces of Janus* is one of three high-profile jazz projects by Robinson that will be released simultaneously by three different labels in September and October 2010. Each of these projects is different; **Cerulean Landscape**, to be released by **Clean Feed Records**, is Robinson’s duo album with noted pianist and composer **Anthony Davis**. Robinson’s third Sept./Oct. 2010 release is a solo saxophone album with interactive electronics, **Cerberus Reigning**, which is his second in a trilogy of solo releases on **Accretions Records**. On its own, *The Two Faces of Janus* is a remarkable accomplishment: a vivid contemporary snapshot of NYC’s most innovative jazz, continually fertilized by a wealth of historical and geographic influences, and its most prominent performers. Together with Robinson’s two other releases, *The Two Faces of Janus* reveals that Robinson has arrived as one of America’s most cutting-edge jazz musicians, and positions him on the threshold of wider international recognition.

American saxophonist and flutist Jason Robinson is a critically acclaimed improviser and composer. The *Los Angeles Times* described Robinson as “wildly spontaneous” while *JazzTimes* lauded him as a “potent improviser.” He performs regularly as a soloist (acoustically and with electronics), with groups he co-leads (**Cosmologic** and the **Cross Border Trio**), as a leader of varying ensembles performing his original music, and in a variety of collaborative contexts. Robinson’s latest albums include his fourth release as a leader—**Cerberus Rising** (2009, **Circumvention**)—and the fourth release by **Cosmologic**, *Eyes in the Back of My Head* (2008, Cuneiform). Robinson recently received a **Grammy** nomination for his saxophone appearance on **Toots and the Maytals’ Light Your Light** (2007, **Fantasy**). Robinson has performed at festivals and prominent venues in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Europe, and performed or recorded with a huge number of artists.

Robinson’s collaborators on *The Two Faces of Janus* include some of the most visionary and highly respected musicians in New York’s creative jazz community. Guitarist **Liberty Ellman** was celebrated by the *Village Voice* for his “rhythmic charge and [...] decisive touch” and can be heard most frequently in Henry Threadgill’s ZOOID. Bassist **Drew Gress** is a highly sought after figure who has performed with everyone from Cab Calloway to Tim Berne and The Claudia Quintet. A musician of unparalleled precision and artistic vision, Gress is an accomplished composer and bandleader whose musical partnerships have guided jazz into the 21st century. Drummer **George Schuller** is also a prolific composer and bandleader perhaps best known for his twelve piece ensemble Orange Then Blue. Schuller’s drumming is stunningly fluid, articulate, and interactive—all reasons why he’s been featured on recordings by Joe Lovano, Ran Blake, Burton Greene, and many others. Robinson’s deep respect for visionary reed players is evidenced by the inclusion of two friends on the recording—**Marty Ehrlich** and **Rudresh Mahanthappa**. Multi-instrumentalist Marty Ehrlich has played with a veritable who’s who list of creative jazz and experimental music. Several of his recent projects celebrate the music of his mentor Julius Hemphill. Equally respected as a gifted composer, Ehrlich has been lauded by the *Village Voice* as “one of the most formidable multi-instrumentalists since Eric Dolphy.” A **Guggenheim Fellow** and multiple recipient of *Downbeat’s* Critic’s Polls, alto saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa is known for his virtuosity, unique artistic vision, and remarkable blending of jazz and Indian classic music. In addition to leading his quartet, the Dakshina Ensemble, and other groups, Mahanthappa is also currently performing with Jack DeJohnette, Danilo Perez, and other leading figures in jazz.

"If music is a form of storytelling, the sounds on this recording intimate a tale of old and new, the past and the future. ...Through our music we put into motion various histories and blend these perspectives with imaginative, hopeful visions of the future. It's on these multiple levels that the Janus metaphor, borrowed from Roman mythology, shapes many aspects of the project...The Two Faces of Janus rests within this ongoing conversation with New York and affords an opportunity to reflect on the past and the future through the lens of the present."
– **Jason Robinson**, in liner notes for *The Two Faces of Janus*

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON JASON ROBINSON, SEE:
www.jasonrobinson.com - www.myspace.com/jasonrobinsonmusic

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS



Digital [High-Resolution / Color] versions of these images and MORE are available for download on www.cuneiformrecords.com in the "Press" section.

Bio information for band members on Jason Robinson's The Two Faces of Janus (Cuneiform 2010)

JASON ROBINSON

[see also: www.jasonrobinson.com - www.myspace.com/jasonrobinsonmusic]

[Bio information from the artist's website]

The music of American reedist and composer **Jason Robinson** focuses on the relationship between improvisation, experimentalism and cultural identity. His current performance interests include the intersection of improvisation and composition, new electroacoustic processing and interaction enabled through software-based technologies, multisite networked performance and the relationship between popular music and experimentalism. He performs regularly as a soloist (acoustically and with electronics), with groups he co-leads (**Cosmologic** and the **Cross Border Trio**), as a leader of varying ensembles performing his original music and in a variety of collaborative contexts.

Fall 2010 marks a watershed in Robinson's output as a leader. He releases three concurrent albums showcasing an enormous breadth of his creative work. These releases include *The Two Faces of Janus* (Cuneiform), featuring a New York-based ensemble that includes **Drew Gress**, **Liberty Ellman**, **George Schuller**, **Marty Ehrlich** and **Rudresh Mahanthappa**; *Cerulean Landscape* (Clean Feed), featuring the long time collaboration of Robinson and acclaimed pianist and composer **Anthony Davis**; and *Cerberus Reigning* (Accretions), the much anticipated second installment of the "Cerberus" trilogy, featuring Robinson's remarkable solo electroacoustic music.

Robinson has performed at festivals and prominent venues in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Europe. He has performed or recorded with **Peter Kowald**, **George Lewis**, **Anthony Davis**, **Marty Ehrlich**, **Eugene Chadbourne**, **Earl Howard**, **Emily Hay**, **Jeff Kaiser**, **Toots and the Maytals**, **Groundation**, **Elijah Emanuel** and the **Revelations**, **Bertram Turetzky**, **Mark Dresser**, **John Russell**, **Roger Turner**, **Gerry Hemingway**, **Kei Akagi**, **Mel Graves**, **Liberty Ellman**, **Babatunde Olatunji**, **Mel Martin**, **Marco Eneidi**, **Lisle Ellis**, **Raphe Malik**, **Mike Wofford**, **J.D. Parran**, **Dana Reason**, **David Borgo**, **Nathan Hubbard**, **Michael Dessen**, **Contemporary Jazz Orchestra** (at Pearl's, San Francisco), the **La Jolla Symphony**, **SONOR** (UCSD), and the **San Francisco Mime Troupe**, among others. Robinson has published articles and reviews in *Ethnomusicology*, *Critical Studies in Improvisation/ Études critiques en improvisation* and *Jazz Perspectives*. He is an Assistant Professor of Music at **Amherst College** and holds a Ph.D. in Music from the **University of California, San Diego**.

MARTY EHRLICH

[see also: www.martyehlich.com - www.myspace.com/martyehlich]

[Bio information from the artist's website, Wikipedia and All Music Guide]

A central figure in NYC's avant-garde jazz/experimental music scene for over 30 years, reed player (saxophones, clarinets, flutes) **Marty Ehrlich** has been called "one of the most formidable multi-instrumentalists since Eric Dolphy." [AMG]. He was born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1955. Ehrlich began his musical career while in high school in St. Louis, Missouri, performing and recording with the **Human Arts Ensemble**, a free jazz collective aligned with the **Black Artists Collective** and AACM. Ehrlich studied jazz and classical music at the **New England Conservatory of Music**, studying with teachers **George Russell**, **Jaki Byard**, **Gunther Schuller**, **Joseph Allard**, and graduating in 1977.

Ehrlich moved to New York City in 1978 and immersed himself in its creative music scene as a composer, improviser, and performer. Since then, he's recorded 25 albums of his own music for various duos (with **Myra Melford**, **Anthony Cox**, and others), trios (including one with **Mark Dresser** & **Andrew Cyrille**) and larger groups, including his **Traveler's Tales Group**, **Dark Woods Ensemble**, and **Rites Ensemble**, for such labels as **Enja**, **Muse**, **New World**, **Tzadik**, **Palmetto**, **BMG** and more. Ehrlich appears on over 100 recordings, and has performed and/or recorded with a who's who of prominent avant garde musicians and ensembles, including **Muhai Richard Abrams**, **Ray Anderson**, **Bobby Bradford**, **Anthony Braxton**, **John Carter**, **Jack DeJohnette**, **Anthony Davis**, **Mark Dresser**, **Don Grolnick**, **Chico Hamilton**, **Julius Hemphill**, **Andrew Hill**, **Wayne Horvitz**, **Robin Holcomb**, **Leroy Jenkins**, **James Newton**, **Bobby Previte**, **Randy Sandke's Inside Out**, **Wadada Leo Smith**, and **John Zorn**. He has premiered concertos written for him by composers **David Schiff** and **David Lang**. His honors include a **Guggenheim Fellowship** in Composition, the **Peter Ivers Visiting Artist Residency** at **Harvard University**, numerous commissioning grants, **Clarinetist of the year** from the **Jazz Journalist Association**, and a **Distinguished Alumni** award from **NEC**. Besides prolifically performing and recording with numerous groups in NYC, where he resides, Ehrlich is an Associate Professor of Improvisation and Contemporary Music at **Hampshire College**.

LIBERTY ELLMAN

[see also: www.libertyellman.com - www.myspace.com/libertyellman]

[Bio information from the artist's website, Wikipedia and All Music Guide]

Guitarist **Liberty Ellman** was born in London, England in 1971 and raised in the USA, on the West Coast. During the 1990s, he was highly active in San Francisco's music scene, performing with musicians associated with the **M-Base collective**, working with hip hop artists and composing music for political theatre groups (**San Francisco Mime Troupe**). In 1997, Ellman founded a record label, **Red Giant Records**, and released his own debut

album and Cds by **Vijay Iyer**, **Eric Crystal**, and **Midnight Voices**. Ellman relocated to New York City in 1998.

Ellman's improvisational and interpretive flexibility has allowed him to contribute to the creative jazz ensembles of **Henry Threadgill (Zooid)**, **Greg Osby**, **Butch Morris**, **Vijay Iyer**, **Rudresh Mahanthappa** and **Steve Lehman**. Ellman also works in a variety of other circles; collaborating with **DJ Joe Claussell**, hip hop artists **Mike Ladd**, the **Coup** and **Midnight Voices**, dance music producers **Spiritual Life** and stand out vocalists like **Ledisi**, **Somi**, and **Jen Chapin**.

All Music Guide notes that Ellman's music "blends highly advanced post-bop jazz with elements of funk and hip-hop". As a composer and bandleader, he has released 3 critically acclaimed CDs: *Orthodoxy* (1998), released on his own Red Giant label, and *Tactiles* (2003) and *Ophiuchus Butterfly* (2006), both released by **Pi Recordings**. His "original and subtle" compositional style has also been described as "At once highly controlled and recklessly inventive." In the words of Ben Ratliff of the *New York Times*: "Mr. Ellman's ballads are special, exotic things: their melodies are memorable."

DREW GRESS

[see also: www.drewgress.com]

[Bio information from the artist's website, Wikipedia and All Music Guide]

One of the most in-demand performers on the international contemporary jazz scene and a critically acclaimed composer/bandleader, bassist/composer **Drew Gress** began his music career as a teenager, when he joined **Pennsbury Concert Jazz Band** in high school in 1975. He received a music degree from **Towson State University**, where he studied with **Hank Levy** and began working with **Ellery Eskelin**, with whom he co-founded **Joint Venture**. Gress was active during the 1980s, playing for such diverse performers as **Buddy Hackett**, **Phyllis Diller**, **Zoot Sims**, **Cab Calloway**, **Mose Allison**, **Pia Zadora**, and **Marc Copland**; teaching at several universities (**Peabody Conservatory**, **Towson State**, **Baltimore School of the Arts**); and founding the quartet **Tekke**.

During the 1990s, Gress became active in New York City and on the international scene, touring extensively and performing with numerous artists on the cutting edge of contemporary improvised music. He co-founded the NYC-based improv trio **Paraphrase** with **Tim Berne** and **Tom Rainey**, and founded **Jagged Sky**.

Gress' latest project, *The Irrational Numbers (Premonition 2008)*, features his original compositions for quintet. Earlier releases include the critically-acclaimed *7 Black Butterflies* (2005) and *Spin & Drift* (2001), both on **Koch/Premonition**, and *Heyday*.

In addition to his work on **Jason Robinson's** new Cuneiform release, Gress can also be heard within the ensembles of **John Abercrombie**, **Ralph Alessi**, **Tim Berne**, **Don Byron**, **Uri Caine**, **Bill Carrothers**, **Ravi Coltrane**, **Marc Copland**, Dave Douglas, **Mark Feldman**, **Erik Friedlander's Chimera**, **Fred Hersch**, **John Hollenbeck** (including Hollenbeck's **The Claudia Quintet**, with 4 recordings on Cuneiform), **Tony Malaby**, and **John Surman**. Other musicians with whom Gress works include **Steve Coleman**, **Dave Douglas**, **Jack DeJohnette**, **Ray Anderson**, **Kenny Werner**, **Steve Lehman**, **Edsel Gomez**, and many more...

Gress has toured North and South America, Europe, and Asia, and has served as Artist-in-Residence at St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia and at the Paris Conservatoire. As a composer, Gress has received grants from the **National Endowment for the Arts** (1990), **Meet the Composer** (2003), **Chamber Music America** (2005), and the CMA French-American Exchange (2007) and Encore (2008) grants.

RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA

[see also: www.rudreshm.com - www.myspace.com/rudreshm]

[Bio information from the artist's website, Wikipedia and All Music Guide]

Guggenheim fellow and recent winner of several prominent jazz awards (named "**Rising Star – Jazz Artist**" & "**Rising Star – Alto Saxophone**" by the **DownBeat International Critics Poll** and "**Alto Saxophonist of the Year**" for both 2009 & 2010 by the **Jazz Journalist Association**), alto saxophonist **Rudresh Mahanthappa** is one of the most prominent young musicians and composers on the contemporary scene. He was born in 1971 in Trieste, Italy and raised in Boulder, Colorado. Mahanthappa received a B.Mus. in jazz performance from Berklee College of Music and an M.Mus. in jazz composition from Chicago's DePaul University. Mahanthappa moved to New York in 1997 where he currently lives.

Mahanthappa's innovative music integrates the culture of his Indian ancestry with myriad jazz influences. He currently leads/ co-leads several groups, including the **Rudresh Mahanthappa Quartet**, **Apex w/Bunky Green**, **Indo-Pak Coalition**, **MSG**, **The Dakshina Ensemble w/Kadri Gopalnath**, **Dual Identity w/Steve Lehman** and **Raw Materials w/Vijay Iyer**. Since his debut recording in 1995, Mahanthappa has released at least 7 critically acclaimed recordings with his groups, most often on the label **Pi Recordings** but also on **Clean Feed Records**, **Innova**, **RM Music**, and Liberty Ellman's label, **Red Giant**. Kinsmen, Mahanthappa's recent Pi release featuring Carnatic saxophone legend **Kadri Gopalnath**, was named one of the Top Jazz CDs of 2008 by numerous prominent publications including *New York Times*, *NPR*, *BBC*, *Boston Globe*, slate.com, *JazzTimes*, and *Village Voice*. His previous releases were similarly acclaimed, listed as among the top jazz CDs of the year in prominent American (*Jazz Times*), French (*Jazzman*), UK (*Jazzwise*), and Italian (*Musica Jazz*) publications, and receiving rave reviews. Mahanthappa has also been awarded grants from the Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, American Composers Forum, Chamber Music America, the New York State Council on the Arts, and is currently a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow.

As a performer, Mahanthappa has achieved international recognition performing regularly at jazz festivals and clubs worldwide with his ensembles as well as bands led by Jack DeJohnette and Danilo Perez. Rudresh K. Mahanthappa uses Vandoren reeds exclusively.

GEORGE SCHULLER

[see also: www.georgeschuller.net]

[Bio information from the artist's website, Wikipedia and All Music Guide]

A drummer, composer and record producer **George Schuller**, was born in 1958 in New York City. He was raised in Boston in a highly musical family; his father is composer/conductor **Gunther Schuller** and his brother bassist **Ed Schuller**. In Boston, Schuller graduated in 1982 with a BA in

jazz performance from the **New England Conservatory** and performed with **Ran Blake, Jaki Byard, George Garzone, and Herb Pomeroy**. In 1984 he put together his long-standing 12-piece group, **Orange Then Blue**, which has released several albums on **GM Records**.

Schuller moved to New York City in 1994 and immersed himself in its jazz scene, forming as number of ensembles (**Chump Change, Jiggle** and many more) and playing with countless musicians. Schuller has performed with **Jaki Byard, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Nnenna Freelon, Dave Douglas, Lee Konitz, George Adams, Fred Hersch, Mose Allison, J. Geils, Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra** among many others. He's recorded on numerous albums as a side person with **Joe Lovano, Ran Blake, Armen Donelian, Burton Greene**, among others, and has recorded and/or produced CD's with **Ballin' The Jack, Mili Bermejo, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Michael Musillami, Lisa Thorson, Gunther Schuller, Luciana Souza, and Peter Yarrow**.

Under his own name and/or as a bandleader, Schuller has released several recordings on the **Playscape** label – most recently 2008's **Like Before, Somewhat After** – as well as albums on **482 Music** and **New World Records**. Besides recording his own music, he has released tributes to **Keith Jarrett** and **Miles Davis**. Schuller's recorded projects include performances with **Tim Berne, Tony Malaby, Curtis Hasselbring, Mark Feldman, Ed Schuller** and other notable players. Schuller is an active performer on NY 's jazz scene, and currently leads the groups **Circle Wide** and **Schulldogs** in addition to co-leads several others (**Conference Call, Trio This, Whirrr!**). His is also active as a producer, and co-produced the 2007 film documentary "**Music Inn**," which was screened at the Tribeca, Berkshire, Galway, Munich and Prague Film Festivals. He is also active as a producer for recordings as well as films, having co-produced the 2007 film documentary "**Music Inn**," which was screened at the Tribeca, Berkshire, Galway, Munich and Prague Film Festivals.

WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT THE GROUP, COSMOLOGIC, CO-LEAD BY JASON ROBINSON

COSMOLOGIC EYES IN THE BACK OF MY HEAD CUNEIFORM [RUNE 263] 2008

[Line-up: **Jason Robinson** (tenor saxophone) - **Michael Dessen** (trombone) - **Scott Walton** (bass) - **Nathan Hubbard** (drums)]

"Where does one find one's muse? ... Cosmologic, found it in jazz, in improvised music, in classical tangents, and in their own palpitating imaginations. They...have forged a strong bond... Their perspicacity and ability to capture the unusual gives their music a rather exceptional focus.

Cosmologic weaves jazz harmonies in the freer atmosphere of improvisation. It is a seamless passage, but the road is strewn with a welter of bristling ideas. "The Rumpus" is a lively opener, with...a rousing intro... The saxophonist comes on bold and brawny in his solo outing, turning his notes up and over, then stinging with short blasts. It's a performance of staggering proportions...

...the band works to give the music a masterful touch. Dessen and Robinson set up a symmetrical linear movement and then diverge...their disparate movements...create an electrifying atmosphere. After the punch comes the calm with...a classical wit; the horns cool and the bass setting up a deep arco. Then it's back to whirling lines, the air now heady with spiraling motifs.

Cosmologic does not let the written note be the guiding light. Their sense of juxtaposition dictates the course. Flow and chaos are consonants in constant flight that are navigated by surprise, and the band documents this consummately, making *Eyes in the Back of My Head* a stirring listening experience."

– Jerry D'Souza, *All About Jazz*, July 23, 2008, www.allaboutjazz.com

"...longstanding working bands are growing increasingly uncommon. Cosmologic is a splendid example of such a rarefied entity. Honing their tightly knit sound for almost a decade...

Though Cosmologic shares aesthetic similarities with adventurous contemporaries like Tim Berne and Ken Vandermark, they also look to the past for inspiration.

..."Face in the Crowd" invokes late period Coltrane with a miasma of fervent lyricism while the title track...channeling the menacing theatricality of classic Archie Shepp.

The two horn front line exudes the telepathic empathy enjoyed by such famous pairs as Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry or Steve Lacy and Roswell Rudd.

...Robinson's muscular phrasing unveils a stout tone informed by...the late sixties New Thing. The flutter tongue trills and multiphonic smears of "Code View" embody the searching quality of Pharoah Sanders in his prime, while the plangent glisses of "Dreams of an Alternate Future/Remembering the Past" convey the emotional resonance of Coltrane. Michael Dessen is an effusive and lyrical player...

... Scott Walton's sinewy tone on upright is bolstered by robust arco playing... A tuneful percussionist in the Ed Blackwell mode, Nathan Hubbard's colorful palette fuels a kaleidoscopic battery on the title track...

Gracefully modulating from serene introspection to contrapuntal vigor, the quartet transitions seamlessly from open-ended explorations to taut ensemble charts... As a true collective, individually authored tunes are cooperatively finalized in practice sessions that lend a natural, organic sensibility to their intricate arrangements. ...

Eyes in the Back of My Head is a richly rewarding statement from a group whose time for greater exposure is long overdue. Accessible yet forward thinking, this is contemporary West Coast jazz at its most heartfelt and adventurous."

– Troy Collins, *All About Jazz*, July 4, 2008

"... "The Rumpus" is martial free-bop with a knotty tripartite theme, Robinson tracing burnished lines and frantic squeals atop an insistent beat. As Dessen enters with a chortling mouthful, rhythmic knots are briefly untied into strands of gongs and bass tug, the foursome then building a rousing unity a la Rudd and saxophonist Archie Shepp towards the final bars. Perhaps spurred on by Robinson's earthiness, Dessen is a bit more extroverted here, or at least they complement one another well as a front line, as Walton and Hubbard knit a web of constant metric subversion around them. ...

The line between the written and collective "arrival" at the material is fairly blurry, though *Eyes in the Back of My Head* isn't necessarily a modular suite. Clearly, time spent in a regularly working unit—rare these days—has served the writing and the playing of Cosmologic and its members very well."

– Clifford Allen, *All About Jazz*, July 25, 2008, www.allaboutjazz.com

"This jazz foursome are still together after more than a decade... they consistently make some of the most vital and exciting music around. Abundant skills, ethereal communication, wild flights of chaos and sustained moments of fleeting beauty comprise this work of art that takes cues from the approach most often known as free jazz. There is hardly an audience for it, but I'm right the fuck in the middle of it."

– D.A. Kolodenco, "The Great Demo Review 2009," *CityBeat San Diego*, Mar 03, 2009, www.sdcitybeat.com

"...Cosmologic...have created a unique style few stable or working groups have attained. ...they've taken the harmelodic theories of Ornette Coleman to heart, producing a sound that ranges from free bop to relaxed associative and written music tailored to blur bar lines and conventional phrasings. ...front line of tenor saxophonist Jason Robinson and trombonist Michael Dessen...explores lower registers and tonal timbres. ...a band that sounds completely fresh, original, and now. ...the liberated "Code View" emphasizes the central aspect of this band in their ability to expertly jam with loose and tight written associations, and extrapolate upon them. ... The fearless attitude that this group exhibits in taking chances, yet remaining quite listenable, is a rare thing. Another aspect of Cosmologic is that they can play to younger audiences in the midst of discovery, while also appealing to the 50s-and-older set that craves both the "new wave" of the '60s and an updated non-electronic sound. Bravo to Cosmologic for making no compromises, playing some truly fascinating upper echelon progressive jazz music."

– Michael G. Nastos, *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com

"...together for almost 10 years... That experience together shows in the extra fine post-Bop they play so well. ...there are many fine duets and ensemble passages here, as Cosmologic seems to be about the groups and not the soloists. This doesn't mean there aren't strong solos...Robinson favors the mid range and shoots for melody...while Dessen's trombone is rich and fat, with an expansive sense of harmony... Still, it is their great group sound and cohesiveness that recommends Cosmologic."

– Phillip McNally, *Cadence*, Jan-Feb-Mar 2009

"...Cosmologic favor an energized shape-shifting upbeat grooving jazz hybrid that smokes and steams and churns out chugging hot chunks of jerky protoplasmic murk and gurgle. Quite supple and mutable too..."

– George Parsons, *Dream Magazine*, #9, www.dreamage.com

"... Here, the musicians mold a singular mindset...starkly inventive and superfine progressive-jazz statement.

As a tight-knit and largely expressive unit, they come at you from all angles. It's a highly-disciplined group, where they also specialize in loose-groove like expansions. Sparked by youthful vigor and a continual reengineering methodology, they fuse unorthodox time signatures with spirited soloing jaunts... One of the distinct pleasures of the album lies within the quartet's acute ability to keep the listener off-guard. ...

On "Code View," tenor saxophonist Jason Robinson shoots bullets atop trombonist Michael Dessen's weepy wah-wah lines, to consummate a verbose sequence of exchanges. ...the rhythm section coyly executes a perimeter of sorts, during the sublime moments. ... No doubt, this is a band for the new age of jazz. Their charismatic and rather impudent mode of delivery bears the mark of distinction. (Heartily recommended!)"

– Glenn Astarita, *Jazzreview.com*

"Free-jazz upstarts from San Diego strike a balance between complex form and forceful abandon... The provocative quartet is propelled by the intuitive hookup between drummer Nathan Hubbard and bassist Scott Walton while trombonist Michael Dessen and tenor saxophonist Jason Robinson... alternately blend on sublime harmonies and freelance above the fray. Thoughtful writing and bold instincts make this a compelling listen" – Bill Milkowski, *JazzTimes*, Dec. 2008, vol. 38, #10

"One of the key sleights of hand of Charles Mingus' small groups was that they sounded like orchestras. ...Cosmologic have duly managed to inflate their sound, pump up its bigness through cunning manipulation of their resources. ...the tenor sax-trombone combination imparts a quite mighty presence to the bass register... Moreover, Michael Dessen has a round, bulbous note quality that occasionally approaches a high tuba...to suggest that there are two brass instruments rather than one... bassist Scott Walton and drummer Nathan Hubbard push its kinetic energy, buoyancy and sense of sustained movement through an astute clatter of marching band beats, a click-clacking procession that shuttles sideways through odd accents around the pulse... The result is articulate, precise orchestration distilled into riff-like explosiveness, a real small group emerging from an imaginary big band. ... the subtle integration of pop culture elements... take Cosmologic somewhere near the territory explored by Sex mob and several of the other groups led by the important and very underrated Steve Bernstein. what Cosmologic have succeeded in doing is create a precisely arranged group sound that excitingly keeps open the possibility of groove or swing, harmonic or free playing at all moments, a vehicle that can negotiate any area of the jazz landscape and invest it with a bold, rousing energy. [4 stars]"

– Kevin Le Gendre, *Jazzwise*, October 2008, Issue 124

"Possessed of an adventurousness to make Yoko Ono look staid...the San Diego experimental jazz combo Cosmologic has released another CD to mark a decade together. ... But for all the out-there blowing, the band can also rein it in... Cosmologic doesn't play around...too often... Which is too bad, because the sounds on this disc are worth every bit of the effort needed to listen to them."

– Jim Trageser, *North County Times*, August 28, 2008

"...this Cuneiform release means significantly more exposure for a band that definitely warrants it. ... While the group's strongest antecedents are in free jazz, the composerly emphasis gives it a distinctive character, the pieces often favoring punchy ensembles and contrasting them with unusual moods and textures, including extended techniques. Dessen's "Code View" makes extensive use of Robinson's multiphonics...the saxophonist's "Dreams of..." begins ... The band's handling of these compositions is anything but static, making use of turbulent collective improvisations and intensive free blowing in order to both explore and break through the primary moods. It's well-designed and well-executed music that opens in a variety of directions."

– Stuart Broomer, *Signal to Noise*, Issue #51, Fall 2008

"this is an archetypal specimen of technically complex Cuneiform project: the instrumental rank to which the act belongs is far above the ground, the boundary between the members firm. Robinson is an efficient reedist, his parallel actions with Dessen's trombone engendering ever-remarkable, often unanticipated contrapuntal juxtapositions halfway through atonalism and chamber music. Percussionist Hubbard and bassist-cum-piano Walton preserve the right equilibrium of instant resourcefulness and sharp moderation, acting as robust branches for dozens of thematic ideas to mature on.

... this is a sleeper destined to grow with every listen; a methodologically prominent record, indubitably rewarding for educated ears."

– Massimo Ricci, *Touching Extremes*, January 1, 2009

"For all the improvised and willfully discordant music this 10-year old West Coast quartet is capable of producing, and reveling in, Cosmologic produces a sound so rich in mood-shifting maneuvers and sophisticated interplay that it defies labeling.

"Eyes in the Back of My Head," ...is intriguing enough to keep you guessing from start to finish. ...two of the recording's sharply contrasting highlights surface: "Dreams of an Alternate Future/Remembering the Past," a soulful interlude that initially brings to mind Jonny Greenwood's thrumming film score for "There Will Be Blood," and "Theme for Darfur," a post-bop-ish anthem that swings hard and fast...

...the album...says as much about Cosmologic's discipline and cohesiveness as it does about its freewheeling spirit."

– Mike Joyce, *The Washington Post*, February 20, 2009

"Between them, the four members of San Diego's Cosmologic have performed with such cutting-edge jazz and New Music luminaries as George Lewis, Anthony Davis, Yusef Lateef and Wilco guitarist Nels Cline. The quartet's fourth and newest album, "Eyes in the Back of My Head" (Cuneiform), is the group's most accomplished and satisfying yet, full of incisive instrumental interplay that is brainy, brawny and soulful."

– *San Diego Union-Tribune*, November 17, 2008

"... Cosmologic's own music champions freewheeling jazz with a heavy improvisational emphasis. But the group's members count among their former collaborators such stylistically varied artists as Jamaica's Eek a Mouse and Toots & The Maytalls, Wilco guitarist Nels Cline, Moe!, former Frank Zappa "stunt guitarist" Mike Keneally, the San Francisco Mime Troupe, George Lewis and Quincy Troupe.

... The new album is the quartet's first on Cuneiform, the Maryland-based indie label whose roster includes such envelope-shredding artists – past and present – as Curlew, Henry Kaiser, Happy The Man, Radio Massacre International, Robert Wyatt, and The Hosemobile. ..."

– George Varga, *SignOnSanDiego.com*, May 2, 2008

"Cosmologic...fit in well with the rest of Cuneiform's jazz output: stuff that is very recognizably coming from within the jazz tradition, but pushes boundaries in any number of subtle ways. Not really free jazz and certainly not unrestrained collective improv, but honest-to-goodness grooving tunes with noticeable tendencies towards experimentation. (The Vandermark 5 might be a good, if more aggressive, example of a band that straddle that line in a somewhat similar way.) ..."

– Brandon Wu, *Washington City Paper's Black Plastic Blog*, February 19, 2009

"... To celebrate 25 years in the music business, Cuneiform is bringing San Diego-based improvisational four-piece band Cosmologic — the label's latest signing — to Silver Spring art space Pyramid Atlantic this weekend. Cosmologic is perhaps the quintessential Cuneiform group: virtually unknown but gifted with limitless musical potential (and improvisational expertise)."

– Johnathan Rickman, "Music's Future? It's in the Stars," *The Washington Post's Express*