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Bio information: **TATVAMASI**

Title: **PARTS OF THE ENTIRETY** (Cuneiform Rune 371) Format: CD / DIGITAL

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ / ROCK

"... colorful , instrumental rock music enhanced by the tenderness of jazz, dimmed with psychedelic mist, distorted with tensions of underground rock music. Built on prolonged riffs, pulses and improvisations." - ARS2

"Making music is a journey into another dimension, another surrounding, another world. ... These compositions are the only gate into this world, an invitation to play music together, to improvise, to share the energy." - Grzegorz Lesiak, 2013

Born out of cataclysm and nurtured in silence and solitude, the music of **Tatvamasi** reveals hidden depths of the 21st century Polish soul. Inspired by both traditional (**Slavic** folk music) and avant-garde music (genre-defying NY downtown groups like **Curlew**), and inflected by jazz, avant and progressive rock, and Delta Blues, Tatvamasi is an extraordinary instrumental ensemble that plays scorching, electric jazz infused with Eastern European rhythms and defined by searing tenor sax riffs, crunching electric guitar, and a loose and sinewy rhythm section tandem of bass and drums. With the quartet's debut album **Parts of The Entirety (Części Całości)**, released internationally on **Cuneiform Records**, Tatvamasi opens up new territory, bringing the narrative heft of jazz to the sturdy forms of folk music.

"The compositions are designed to form an invitation to play, to improvise, to compose and to create the world within, the world of imagination," says guitarist **Grzegorz Lesiak**, the band's founder and guiding spirit. "The music awakes thoughts, provokes images. The spirit takes its effect, a violet haze wreaths a mysterious goal of the journey into the wild of thyself."

The band traces its origins back to a devastating 2003 car crash that left Lesiak hospitalized for many months. In the midst of a thriving career as an experimental folk musician immersed in Polish and Ukrainian (**Hutsul** and **Bojko**) roots music, he was an expert acoustic and classical guitarist and specialist on folkloric Eastern European string instruments like the mandola and dutar. While touring the folk circuit tour, he barely survived a crash that claimed the life of beloved fellow musician, cost him some of his hearing, and closed one chapter of his life. Lesiak spent the next decade largely off the scene, reinventing himself musically. But the time he reemerged in 2013, he had constructed a vividly detailed, emotionally probing and spiritually numinous musical world that he christened **Tatvamasi**.

The name is drawn from a Sanskrit phrase, "**tat tvam asi**" that means "**that thou art,**" and reflects the spiritual path that brought him back to life and music. During his decade of musical solitude, Lesiak created the new sound he wanted to pursue entirely in his head. But eventually he felt the call to bring it forth into the world, and availed himself of an electric guitar, wrote out the compositions and recruited a group of friends for Tatvamasi, which features tenor saxophonist/arranger **Tomasz Piątek**, bassist **Łukasz Downar**, and drummer **Krzysztof Redas** (who have honed their combustible rhythm section chemistry in the **Klezmaholics**).

Brimming with life and incident, his music reflects a remarkable journey. As Lesiak says, "to live, sometimes one must die, just to be reborn once more. I know that this is a kind of madness, to go back to playing after so many years, but it is stronger than me. The music, it just grows in me, and I just cannot hold it inside anymore."

The album opens with crunching guitar chords, which launch the headlong rush of "**Unsettled Cyclists Peloton,**" a relentlessly sprinting tune that could serve as the score for a frenzied ritual welcoming the spring. Lesiak's increasingly distorted guitar coils and snaps, bouncing against the bounding rhythm section. Like much of Tatvamasi's music, it unfolds in a series of discreet sections, with becalmed interludes heightening the tension awaiting the release of the pent up energy. "**Collapse of Time**" offers a steadily churning soundscape for Piątek's increasingly agitated tenor, leading to a crescendo with a furious climax.

Not that Tatvamasi is all strum and drang. Opening with an agile game of tag between Lesiak and Downar, "**Rhubanabarb**" gyres and gimbles in the wabe, with all the mimsy ferocity of a Jabberwocky. At 14 minutes, the album's longest track "**Astroepos,**" unveils a deep and abiding beatific streak in Tatvamasi's music. Built upon a chiming three-note guitar figure, the piece unfolds with the stark sensuality of a desert dawn, gradually increasing velocity without ever shedding the sense of wide-eyed discovery. The album closes with "**Buy 2, Take 3,**" a playfully imploring number that builds to an irresistible grooving climax.

Viewed as a whole, **Parts of The Entirety** is a remarkable debut from a group that draws on a deep and very particular well of influences. "Each musician is a separate, undeniable and original entity," Lesiak says of his band. "However, when combined they form an inseparable whole. The Slavonic musician stays true to himself and his beliefs, but at the same time he is open-minded and interested in this surrounding world. We look at the world from a different perspective. We break stereotypical perceptions of the world." Tatvamasi unleashes its unique vision to the world in **Parts of The Entirety**, which it will celebrate with a European tour.

For more information on Tatvamasi, see:

www.tatvamasi.pl - www.facebook.com/tatvamasimusic - www.cuneiformrecords.com

TATVAMASI BAND BIOS

GRZEGORZ LESIAK

Guitarist, composer, and arranger **Grzegorz Lesiak** enjoyed a long and fruitful career as a folk musician before the car crash that changed his creative trajectory. A leader of the experimental band **Till Dawn They Played (Do Świtu Grali)** from 1997-2002, he was also a cofounder of **Anne of Green Gables (Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza)**, a group melding folk, jazz, reggae and the most extraordinary interpretations of Silesian folk songs. Before its brief meteoric run ended with the tragic death of phenomenal vocal talent **Anna Kielbusiewicz**, the band won first prize in the “**New Tradition**” category at the **2001 Polish Radio Folk Festival** and released a widely hailed eponymous album on **Konador** in 2003. From 2000-2003 he toured and recorded with the highly regarded **Saint Nicholas Orchestra**, and was featured on the albums *From The Far-Off Times / Z Dawna Dawnego (Nicolaus)*, and *One Concert Live / Jeden Koncert*.

TOMASZ PIĄTEK

A saxophonist and arranger, **Tomasz Piątek** is also a member of **Dwootho**, a group who combine Balkan folk, jazz and rock who released **Space Pressures** (Licomp Empik Multimedia/Polish Radio 2010) and toured throughout Poland and Europe, performing at the International Jazz Festival in Comblain de Tour. In-demand as a sideman, he's recorded with **Comeyah** on the album *To the East / Na wschód (Fonografika, 2012)*, and with **Piotr Selim** on *To The Rhythm of Bolero / Wrytmie bolera (Dalmafon 2012)*.

ŁUKASZ DOWNAR

A bassist, poet, verbal and musical improviser, and performance artist, **Łukasz Downar** has toured Poland and Europe with the **Klezmaholics**, and recorded on their album *Greatest Hits* (Teatr NN 2008). He also appears on a **Lublin Blues Session** (UMSC 2002) album. Downar specializes in performing music for silent, pre-war cinema. In addition, as a dada performer in **Polish Radio** of Lublin, Downar's an initiator and provocateur of many happenings and street interventions.

KRZYSZTOF REDAS

Krzysztof Redas is a drummer, arranger and in-demand sideman. Like fellow Tatvamasi member Downar, he has worked and recorded (*Greatest Hits*, 2008) with the **Klezmaholics**, whose music brings jazz, psychedelic rock and Middle Eastern influences to traditional Hebrew and Yiddish songs, and original music inspired by Jewish themes. Redas has also collaborated extensively with poet/singer **Marek Andrzejewski** recording on *Electric Jersey / Elektryczny sweter (Dalmafon 2012)*.

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS

Digital [High-Resolution] versions of these images are available for download on www.cuneiformrecords.com



TATVAMASI on TATVAMASI

The music of Tatvamasi is a colorful, instrumental space. Its abstract beginning and ending keep it away from one rigid classification. It is a music in which rock, alluring riffs, knotted and twisted by psychedelic herbs, tell bizarre tales. Absurd plots, comic lines, wild fantasies, just like in cartoons take fabulous forms. Often jazzy passion changes its direction radically. A Slavic temperament amplifies and deepens the pulsation. Sometimes you can spot atmosphere from Can and Amon Dull 2, sometimes the twists of Soft Machine and Gong; above it all a spirit of Don Cherry floats peacefully. The pulsation, discipline, order and chaos. Pagans and mystics falling into a trance dance. The compositions are designed to form an invitation to play, to improvise, to compose and to create the world within, the world of imagination. The music awakes thoughts, provokes images. The spirit takes its effect, a violet haze wreaths a mysterious goal of the journey into the wild of thyself.

In February of 2013 members of the group have barricaded themselves in a studio in Warsaw to capture seven magical and fugitive moments of their creation. Their first album *Parts of the Entirety / Części całości* is a 100% live session. “*Parts/entireties, entirety/parts, everything is a part of some entirety, this entirety is just a part of another entirety, everything here is related. Every move, every sound, every silence, every situation – it all has some sort of a meaning. Every experiment and every effort leads to something. Everything is important. This is the idea of our music. We play our inner selves.*” In such words the founder of the group comments on the music recorded on their debut CD.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID ABOUT TATVAMASI

“The band mixes inspirations from jazz, fusion, progressive rock, psychedelic, experimental and avant-garde music together in a very fruitful way. The musicians are complementary to one another. Each sound of the record seems to be in place. Particular instruments create a solid musical background, which appears to be ideal. At times the composition accelerates incredibly; at other times, it takes the listener into a journey through psychedelic landscapes.” – Paweł Bogdan, *Active Radio*

“A Polish quartet performing colorful, instrumental rock music enhanced by the tenderness of jazz, dimmed with psychedelic mist, distorted with tensions of underground rock music. Built on prolonged riffs, pulses and improvisations.” – Henryk Palczewski, *ARS2*

“It is refreshing that in Polish music, representatives of such different musical backgrounds (Rock, Folk, Jazz, Blues?) have formed a band. "OFF JAZZ" in Poland, has been enriched with a new interesting sound. You can feel the saxophonist's extraordinary tone and the guitarist's boldness.” – Paweł Franczak, *Polska The Times*