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Bio information: **ZEVIIOUS**

Title: **PASSING THROUGH THE WALL** (Cuneiform Rune 367) Format: CD / DIGITAL

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FILE UNDER: **ROCK / METAL-JAZZ / JAZZ**

*“Zevious is jazz, it’s rock, it’s the downtown punk-jazz-harmolodic vibe. Zevious is for anyone who loves aggressive rock-oriented improv with grooves and some semblance of a song.” – DownBeat*

*“...this band should wipe the floor with any comparable group that dares to perform with such a bold, in-your-face posture. ...Everything here is short, concise and to the point.” – All Music Guide*

*“The music of Zevious shrewdly juxtaposes order and its opposite: structural intensity pushed to its breaking point in the most appealing way. These boys are brilliant and fearless.” – Vijay Iyer*

Boundaries are meant to be crossed. In recent years, a wave of brainy, ballsy bands has begun to blur the lines between electric jazz, progressive art-rock, punk, and metal. Defiantly original in their approach and sound, **Zevious** are in the forefront of this movement, and their third album, *Passing Through the Wall*, is an emphatic, dimension-smashing statement of artistic purpose. Recorded in February 2013 at **Menegroth, The Thousand Caves** in Queens, New York with producer **Colin Marston**, it’s a red-hot blend of intricate, locked-in three-way interaction and raucous energy that’ll remind you that sometimes you spell “punk” with the letters J-A-Z-Z and vice versa, and have you headbanging and cheering even as you ask yourself, “How the hell did they just do that?”

Zevious are a trio—guitarist **Mike Eber**, drummer **Jeff Eber** (cousins, not brothers), and bassist **Johnny DeBlase**. They started out as straight-ahead-ish jazzbos in 2006, but after a couple of years and a self-released CD, they “went electric,” as the old folks say, with DeBlase putting down his upright bass and Mike Eber picking up the Telecaster that gives his tightly knotted lines their sting. The music they wrote shifted from jazz chords and head-nodding swing to tumbling, noisy rock that recalls instrumental-skronk powerhouses like **James “Blood” Ulmer, Nels Cline, David Torn, Brandon Seabrook**, and more.

Zevious' second album, 2009's *After the Air Raid*, was the culmination of several years of hard compositional and rehearsal labor and showcased a rhythmically intense and highly structured sound. Released on Cuneiform, it garnered much critical acclaim in publications such as *Signal to Noise, Downbeat, Jazzwise* and *Exposé*, and was called a “fully realized,” “genre busting brawny recording”. To support the album, Zevious toured the United States and Canada extensively in 2010 and 2011, playing alongside bands like **Faun Fables, Seabrook Power Plant, Behold...the Arctopus, Upsilon Acrux, STATS, Algernon, PAK, Child Abuse, and Dysrhythmia**.

According to the band, the goal on *Passing Through the Wall* is to induce a trance-like state in the listener through repetition, non-conventional melody and challenging song structure. The compositions are based around large cycles of layered poly-rhythmic patterns against octave displaced melodies, the individual parts working together to create dense, pulsating textures. The title *Passing Through the Wall* is fitting for the music on this album because the band is challenging the listener to literally “pass through a wall” of sound, transforming their state of mind in the process. Or, to put it in layman’s terms, via Mike, “Every piece that we write, we’re trying to explore a particular concept, and on this album we really tried to play with layered time. So at some point or throughout entire tracks, we’re actually playing in three time signatures at once—I might be in one, Johnny’s in another, Jeff is playing both and then on top of that, another one.” Zevious’ compositional strategies are somewhat unique, and atypical for a band as rocking as this; as Mike Eber explains it, “Johnny and I do all the writing for Zevious, but we write separately, so when I write a song, I write all the parts, guitar, bass and drums; I score it out, and Johnny does the same thing for the songs he writes.”

Still, while the music on *Passing Through the Wall* is complicated, and features complexity worthy of **John McLaughlin** or **Allan Holdsworth**, it’s also very much the work of a rock band. The album opens with “**Attend to Your Configuration**,” a hard-charging burst of twisting, turning guitar and bass melodies all bolstered by martial drumming that’ll get any listener’s attention. That sets the stage for “**Was Solis**,” on which feedback and distortion point toward a strong post-punk influence, and the throbbing, ultra-heavy “**Pantocyclus**,” whose almost dubby groove is repeatedly disrupted, in the final stretch, by a grinding guitar sound. Says Eber of “Pantocyclus,” “It’s conceptual—it’s as if a line is continuing, and we’re breaking it up in different places, but it’s consistent, it’s just being pushed maybe a quarter note each time.” On “**A Crime of Separate Action**,” Eber’s guitar may remind you of **Robert Fripp** with **King Crimson** circa 1974; meanwhile, the title piece, coming two tracks from the album’s end, sounds like a slightly altered version of “Attend to Your Configuration,” giving the record something of a looping structure. When the album does end, with its longest track, the eight-minute “**Plying the Cold Trade**,” it’s on a moody and ominous note; the music builds slowly from an almost doom-metal crawl to a dissonant, clanging crescendo and a final burst of feedback. *Passing Through the Wall* is a ferocious 48-minute slab of muscular, intelligent instrumental rock that will thrill fans of progressive rock, jazz fusion, electric jazz, art-metal, and punk alike.

For more information on Zevious, see:

[www.zevious.com](http://www.zevious.com) - [www.facebook.com/zevioustrio](http://www.facebook.com/zevioustrio) - [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com)

## PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS

Digital [High-Resolution] versions of these images are available for download on [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com)



## WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT

### **ZEVIIOUS**

### **AFTER THE AIR RAID**

### **CUNEIFORM**

### **2009**

“...Zevious is jazz, it’s rock, it’s the downtown punk-jazz-harmolodic vibe. Zevious is for anyone who loves aggressive rock-oriented improv with grooves and some semblance of a song...[Zevious lets] us know that being intense doesn’t mean you can’t have arrangements and that following a script doesn’t mean you can’t let your hair down. [3½ stars]”

–John Ephland, *Downbeat*, September 2011

“Led by new electric guitar hero Mike Eber, this band should wipe the floor with any comparable group that dares to perform with such a bold, in-your-face posture. Though claiming various primal jazz fusion influences, the unmistakable sound of Robert Fripp and King Crimson from their trio period and the seminal album *Red* cannot be denied. You also hear the British Canterbury concept via Gary Boyle or Alan Holdsworth, a little bit of the progressive sound of the Muffins, and even pieces of Frank Zappa, the jazzier Jeff Beck and Robin Trower, or Gary Lucas creeping in alongside a punk attitude. Everything here is short, concise, and to the point...hard-edged, dark guitar is at the center of this trio’s core.”

– *All Music Guide*

“*After The Air Raid* is a genre busting brawny recording that leans more towards technical metal than jazz. That said, the trio favor odd-metered grooves and a rocking beat. ... Zevious favors the thunderous bass line over a swing one, but retains the skill of a jazz band. Its quiet/loud approach makes for a winning sound.”

– Mark Corroto, *All About Jazz*, November 20, 2009

“Zevious is devious. It may look like your everyday electric jazz trio...but Zevious is anything but typical. ...the aroma of jazz-flavored metal, but their sophistication – odd-metered rhythms, unexpected harmonic ideas – slyly bubbles up. Their influences range wide: there’s a little bit of fusion forebears John McLaughlin and Tony William’s Lifetime in here, some electric free improv in the vein of Nels Cline and Last Exit, and nu-metal a la Rage Against the Machine. Compositionally and rhythmically, though, their next of kin are modern acoustic improvisers, folks like Vijay Iyer and Ken Vandermark. Even when they turn it down...the music is both frightening and beautiful.”

– Steve Greenlee, *Boston.com*, November 30, 2009

“This album does bear repeated listens. The music is often quite melodic, harder edged in places and plain over the top bonkers at its darkest. Rhythms wriggle and weave in, around and over slabs of guitar. Quieter moments provide respite from the industrial cacophony...music is grounded in a progressive tradition...Zevious throw their influences, together with a healthy dollop of talent into a big pot, break out the distortion pedals and crank out challenging, complex, sometimes insanely loud music.”

– Brian Watson, *Dprp.net*, July 6, 2010

“From our friends at Cuneiform comes a new release that has a grip on me right after the first listening...a sound at times that is electric jazzed punk and at other times the odd metered groove filled jam-scapes reveal a new fusion unlike most I’ve tried before.”

– *Green Arrow Radio*, October 22, 2009

“Zevious is a strong guitar, bass and drums trio that takes the hard edged fusion on seventies stalwarts like The Mahavishnu Orchestra and Tony Williams Lifetime and combines it with the post-modern aesthetic of progressive rock and modern jazz. ...the band is very tight and turns on a dime, using intricate arrangements and improvisatory exploration to make their point...the musicians...carve a unique space in the crowded musical firmament.”

– *Jazz and Blues Blogspot*, November 12, 2009

“This amazing instrumental shredder-jazz-rock trio...is busy, energetic, complex and uncompromising, featuring a restless bottom end and lots and lots of notes...Elements of the technical metal/math-rock idiom mix freely with jazz textures that, together with the overall aggressive tone convey a sort-of punk attitude...at just the right times, they slow it down and stretch out into a less intense improvisational mode... Surprisingly, grooves abound amid the acute complexity...it’s that adventurous spirit...on every cut.”

–Peter Thelen, *Expose*, 2010

“...Comparisons to pre-Mahavishnu efforts by John McLaughlin or the Nels Cline Singers easily apply with a punch comparable to the late great Minutemen. Where the trio really has it together is on tracks like “Coma Cluster” which is dense, bleak and ominous. Johnny DeBlase’s pieces...exorcise the spirit of Gary Boyle and Isotope not only due to Eber’s guitar tone but also the tight rhythm section interplay. Even the ghost of Hendrix leans over and smiles on the heavy rock “That Ticket Exploded” while pieces like “The Noose” suggest the grunge rock of Soundgarden without vocals.”

– Jeff Melton, *Expose*, 2010

“Zevious have melded the ‘70’s Progressive Fusion Rock idea with a modern sensibility...that should find a home with fans of Mahavishnu Orchestra to Frank Zappa to Progressive Metal fans of bands like Meshuggah. *After The Air Raid* is a complex record, to say the least, twisting and turning and pushing the boundaries of what Instrumental music could be. Structurally intense...Zevious do seem utterly mad and genius at the same time...This is a very creative record where musicians play their asses off and still don’t come off as long winded. This is just simply a really cool record.”

– Butch Jones, *Seoofranquility.org*, March 24, 2010

“This follow-up to the New York trio’s 2008 debut finds them moving further from their jazz roots, plugging in electric guitar and bass and indulging in 21<sup>st</sup> century fusion. Anyone who’s followed the rise of UK bands such as trioVD and Troyka will recognize the main ingredients

– **proggy riffs with post-punk spikiness and avant-rock attack**...this is a jazz trio mucking about with rock: check the double-bass solo that starts ‘That Ticket Exploded.’  
– Daniel Spicer, *Jazzwise*, May 4-8, 2009

“If you like guitar based fusion instrumental music, this might be up your alley. All the tracks taken by themselves are quite good. *Where’s The Captain?*: Starting very much in a fusion fashion...but a sound not dissimilar from *Red* era King Crimson is melded into the mix. ... **Gradual Decay: This less crazed and more melodic...not that different from something from Joe Satriani or Steve Vai.** *After The Air Raid*: It’s very mellow and I suppose you could call it “a ballad,” although it’s probably closer to a tone poem...it’s somehow pretty. **This is dark, but intriguing.**”  
– Gary Hill, *Music Street Journal*, July 2010

“**Zevious...navigate its self-assembled rhythmic obstacles courses with such uncanny precision.** While mashing together the languages of jazz and rock, the East Coast trio miraculously avoids the bastardized funk or indulgent noise pitfalls of a thousand fusion bands before...*After the Air Raid*...crafts **jagged instrumentals that rock, swing, pulverize and lull.** Occasionally, these **lock into conventional tempos** long enough for toes to tap along – until another detour ties the listener’s shoelaces together.”  
– Ryan Wasoba, *River Front Times*, March 10, 2010

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## CONCERT PREVIEWS/REVIEW & FEATURES

“...**Zevious is beastly — they executed every odd measure, polyrhythm, and wild polytonality masterfully.** Audience members peered in wonder over their laptops as Zevious melted faces with creative grooves. ...**with apparent jazz and metal influences they straddle two complex realms and point out the similarities.** Mike Eber’s stifled electric guitar led the controlled mayhem, occasionally introducing his improvisational voice in fleeting, claustrophobic melodies. The originality of his playing can hardly be done justice here ...his cousin Jeff...can do absolutely anything to the drums. And the electric bass playing of John Deblase adds an ebullient, dangerous storm of heaviness. Zevious has explored the dark side with tremendous results, providing turbulent songs with quirky names...to seduce everyone’s inner demons. **Zevious is capable of some heinous shit and unbelievable complexity...you don’t have to understand it to be in awe of it.**”  
– Ross Edwards, *Knocks From the Underground*, Jan 7, 2010, [www.knocksfromtheunderground.com](http://www.knocksfromtheunderground.com)

“**Zevious’ basement jazz speaks in rhapsodic, demented freakouts.**” – Corbie Hill, *Indy Week*, [www.indyweek.com](http://www.indyweek.com)

“Zevious is barnstorming the country, bringing spiky, assertive electric jazz to listeners who are hungry for adventurous music. ... a new, more-electric sound, radically defying genre boundaries. ... **Touchstones for Zevious’ work include contemporary jazz improvisers like Vijay Iyer and Ben Monder, so-called math metal bands such as Meshuggah, the pioneering jazz-rock fusion of Mahavishnu Orchestra, and the progressive rock of Magma. Kindred spirits also include aggressive outfits such as Fred Frith’s Massacre, Ronald Shannon Jackson’s Decoding Society and James “Blood” Ulmer’s Music Revelation Ensemble... It may be knotty and cerebral, but there’s a surging groove in Zevious’ music.** Eber says ‘we all went to jazz school and tend to be sympathetic to academia, but there is a lot of technically precise and well-composed music out there that is deadly boring... **What we are trying to do is create music that is precise and sound in its theory, but still packs an emotional punch.**’ The same might be said of the artists who Eber feels have had the most influence on his composing...the modern classical works of composers such as **Iannis Xanakis, Gyorgy Ligeti, Bela Bartok and Igor Stravinsky.**”  
– Gene Armstrong, *Tucson Weekly*

“Zevious is playing Union Pool...with Dysrhythmia and Smother Party. ... If you are in the New York area come out for the show, **these guys are all amazing.**”  
– Kris LoCascio, *Johnny Brazil*, February 25, 2011

“...while Austin certainly gets its fair share of veteran jazz and free improvisation appearances, there aren't too many shows featuring up-and-coming inside-outside players who are putting together some of the most innovative music on the international scene. **Zevious...is touring in support of their second record...After the Air Raid.** The trio...**merge knotty, angular modernism with a gritty rock sensibility. Mike Eber's fuzzed Telecaster appropriates both the all-stops pulled organ work of Larry Young or Colosseum guitarist Clem Clempson into muscular, thrashing trio music that works as an interesting counterpoint to the work of borough jazz-guitar superstars and peers like Mary Halvorson or Amanda Monaco. ...a major dose of both the raw emotion and cerebral detail that are present in cutting-edge jazz and improvised music, and these are first-time Austin appearances that you won't want to miss.**”  
– Clifford Allen, *Austinist*, March 25, 2011, [www.austinist.com](http://www.austinist.com)

“**With increased intensity, distortion, and complexity, these three men are on the rise.** Michael Eber: It took us about a year and a half or so to find our voice as a band, but once we discovered it, we started gravitating towards a heavier sound. You can hear glimpses of it on our first album, but “After the Air Raid” is a much more focused and honest sounding record...**Every show is exhilarating since we just get to relax and play – all the hard work is pretty much done.** Definitely the hardest part is rehearsing. Some songs take us 3-4 months to be able to play and turn into music...more intense, high energy music has led to much more excitement... I have definitely noticed people paying more attention now since the music is more demanding of both the band and the audience. Jeff plays in an amazing progressive instrumental rock band called Dysrhythmia and Johnny plays in a really awesome free jazz/shred band called Many Arms. I have an instrumental microtonal rock band called Smother Party. All highly recommended!”  
– *Ithaca Underground*, February 27, 2010

“...**last night...was a truly awesome night of live music. ... ZEVIIOUS (who came all the way out from New York)... These dudes were honestly an amazing band, and no offense, kicked the ass of many of the INDY bands I’ve seen over the past year.**”  
– “What’s wrong with local music?” *THE EYE OF NAP*, 3/11/2010

“...Although...**Zevious** started off as a jazz combo, it quickly spiced up its compositions with strong hints of math rock, complex prog, and even a touch of technical metal. The group recently released its latest album, *After the Air Raid*, on Cuneiform Records, a perfect fit if there ever was one. ...this kind of stuff is often jaw-droppingly intense and tight in concert.”  
– Brandon Wu, “**Your Weekend in Experimental Music: Zevious, Boom Tic Boom,**” *Washington City Paper*, March 19, 2010