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Bio information: **AHLEUCHATISTAS**

Title: **HEADS FULL OF POISON** (Cuneiform Rune 347) Format: CD

Cuneiform publicity/promotion dept.: 301-589-8894 / fax 301-589-1819

email: joyce [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (Press & world radio); radio [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (North American & world radio)

www.cuneiformrecords.com **FILE UNDER: ROCK / AVANT-GARDE / GLOBAL-INSPIRED ART ROCK / EXPERIMENTAL**

"Music doesn't get much closer to the edge than this." – Alternative Press

"...remarkably tight, with the ability to turn complicated and seemingly unrelated phrases on a dime." – NPR

"Formerly a trio, the band...has pared down to a duo. ...The new sound...has...a much greater emphasis on ragged, high-tempo garage prog brutality and spine-chilling soundscapes." – DownBeat

"...they lurch swiftly from speed metal to thrash punk to a kind of heat-stroke minimalism. There's noise and fire in their playing, but most of these tunes are also studded with signposts, demanding close attention and clear execution." – The New York Times

"Not superfluous or simply framed on a crash-and-burn musical ethic, Ahleuchatistas translates into a mindset that circumvents stereotypes or anything that links to a product-driven formula. Loud, rebellious, and riotously invigorating, the band tears down convention to impart a unique identity and sprawling musical plane, unbound by traditional applications or...acquiescence." – All About Jazz

With a moniker that nigh on screams "enigma," Asheville, North Carolina instrumental rock duo **Ahleuchatistas** belong to the beyond-category sector of such iconic, genre-flouting combos as **John Zorn's Naked City**, **Captain Beefheart's Magic Band**, **Swans**, **Tortoise**, and **Sun City Girls**. A duo armed only with guitar and drums, Ahleuchatistas combine wicked precision with intense abandon, droll humor with analytical construction, and a sly gregariousness with uncompromising vision. This pair interweaves elements of punk rock, jazz, classical music, speed metal, grindcore, progressive rock, noise, folk musics from Asia and North Africa, electronic music, and ambient aesthetics, along with volatile, unpredictable improvisation, flowing organically in a virtual world of their own. With a devoted international cult following, Ahleuchatistas is considered by many to be one of the most innovative and ever-developing instrumental groups of the past decade. Cerebral but never ponderous, Ahleuchatistas make immediate music that reaches for the mind, heart, and gut.

On their seventh album and third for **Cuneiform**, Ahleuchatistas' **Heads Full of Poison** is a sonic brew that reveals new flavors, new spices with every aural taste. Now a duo of charter member **Shane Perlowin** (guitar and bass) and **Ryan Oslance** (drums), **Heads Full of Poison** was developed over a two year period, road-tested and honed with numerous performances, including nearly 100 in Europe. The music was altered, edited, and embellished at nearly every gig with improvisational possibilities explored at length. The music combines highly detailed composition with a looseness that encourages a range of interpretation. Each track was recorded live in the studio. Oslance performed all the drums and percussion live with zero overdubs. Perlowin produced the various guitars and bass tracks to impart the richness and detail of a conceptualized studio album, but the basic tracks are performed live. By the time of recording in January and February 2012, the music had been given ample time to ferment, so the performances captured are as close to perfection as possible, with technical hurdles surmounted, the sonic palette settled upon, each note and beat executed confidently with nuance.

The title track is a metallic march, **Jimi Hendrix** meets **John Phillip Sousa** in the Spanish wilderness with reverberations of flamenco and Celtic rhythms in the distance, a lean, harrowing march through a scarily focused mindset—imagine the **Ventures** playing the **Master Musicians of Joujouka** songbook. "Lighted Stairs" is trancelike minimalism with hints of Indian raga, juxtaposed with and given savor by **Keith Moon**-explosive drumming. "Requiem for the Sea" is just that, a wistful, twang-laden dedication to a body of water that can be alternately/simultaneously peaceful and tumultuous, featuring some bittersweet sustained six-string wails slightly evoking **Robert Fripp's** Frippertronics. "A Way Out" is ominous in an **Ennio Morricone** manner, with terse, sharp guitar lines evoking Middle Eastern modality, the Central European variant of klezmer, and whispers-to-shouts of the **Byrds'** groundbreaking "Eight Miles High." "Vanished" features Perlowin coaxing oud-like tones, taking the listener on a whirlwind tour of the Mediterranean, skirting the coasts of Greece and Morocco. "Starved March" has hints of Renaissance and Baroque lute song. Throughout Perlowin and Oslance perform with a rare unity of purpose, without any self-indulgence or water-treading. Oslance plays with the intricacy of a jazz drummer while the rhythms he conjures feel primal; while some guitarists seek to make their axe "speak" and shriek, Perlowin plays it as a guitar, albeit while availing himself of all the colors within the six-string spectrum. Despite (or because of) their number, **Ahleuchatistas** display a virtually orchestral palette on **Heads Full of Poison**.

Attention vinyl devotees! There is also a **limited edition double-vinyl** version of **Heads Full of Poison**, available from **Harvest Records**: www.harvest-records.com

For more information on Ahleuchatistas, please see:
www.ahleuchatistas.com – www.shaneperlowin.com

AHLEUCHATISTAS: BAND BIO

Ahleuchatistas was founded in 2002 by guitarist **Shane Perlowin**. [Their name, pronounced "AH-LOO-CHA-TEES-TAS", is a portmanteau of "Ah-Leu-Cha", the jazz standard composed by bebop legend **Charlie Parker**, and "Zapatistas", the Mexican revolutionary movement.] The guitar/drums duo is the third edition of the band, which had two different trio lineups in previous years. The project began with roots in prog rock, punk, and free jazz, forging an intense sound and a distinctive combination of composition and improvisation. Five trio albums were released, two appearing on **Cuneiform Records** and two on **John Zorn's Tzadik Records**, cutting-edge labels acclaimed for genre-challenging releases by international artists. Ahleuchatistas has built a devoted cult following among fans of rock, jazz, and assorted "out" musics via recordings and potent live performances. With the late 2009 retirement of bassist **Derek Poteat**, the duo version premiered at the **Big Ears Festival** in Knoxville, Tennessee in March 2010, alongside such artists as **Terry Riley**, **The Ex**, and **Joanna Newsom**.

Shane Perlowin (born 1978) is a guitarist, composer, improviser, and teacher who began playing guitar at age 14 and thus pledged his life to music-making. He is a professional musician finding work in various styles in various locations and teaching. He is a prolific composer and runs his own label, **Open Letter Records**, which has released his two solo albums *The Vacancy in Every Verse* (2009) and *Shaking the Phantom Limb* (2011), Doom Ribbons' *The Violence The Violence* (2011), and **Ahleuchatistas' Location Location** (2011).

Ryan Oslance (born 1984) began his drumming career at age 4 on a toy kit. He played in several bands in his teen years, becoming enmeshed in the jazz and rock scenes in Carbondale, Illinois during his college days. Following the departure of **Sean Dail** in 2008, Ryan replied to an **Ahleuchatistas MySpace** bulletin for a new drummer. He drove to Asheville, auditioned, and the band immediately rehearsed for over 25 hours over a four day period, followed by a three-week USA tour. Relocating, he rapidly became a first-call drummer for gigs in an array of styles, from jazz to bluegrass to rock to gypsy/Roma music. He is an in-demand session player and an avid outdoorsman. Freeing himself of most worldly possessions, Oslance lives as a traveling musician, also playing in the **Shannon Whitworth** band, collaborates with members of European ensembles **ZU**, **Tapetto Traci**, and **Picore**, and performs solo percussion concerts.

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS

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



SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

<i>Location, Location</i>	(2011) Open Letter Records
<i>Of The Body Prone</i>	(2009) Tzadik
<i>Even in the Midst...</i>	(2007) Cuneiform Records
<i>What You Will</i>	(2006) Cuneiform Records
<i>The Same and the Other</i>	(2004) Noreaster Failed Industry, re-issued (2008) Tzadik
<i>On The Culture Industry</i>	(2003) Angura Sound

WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT AHLEUCHATISTAS' PRIOR RECORDINGS AS A DUO

LOCATION, LOCATION **OPEN LETTER RECORDS**

Line-up: **Shane Perlowin** (guitar), **Ryan Oslance** (drums)

"Formerly a trio, the band, whose name is a portmanteau of Charlie Parker's "Ah-Leu-Cha" and Zapatista, has pared down to a duo... The new sound...has less of the Captain Beefheartian twitch and instability of their older material and a much greater emphasis on ragged, high-tempo garage prog brutality and spine-chilling soundscapes. [4 stars]"
– Joe Tangari, *Downbeat*, November 2011

"... With recordings for venerable cutting-edge record labels such as Cuneiform and Tzadik amid self-produced ventures, critics and fans of the band's legacy use the term math-rock...largely relating to geometric patterns that are designed with impossibly complex time signatures. ... Excitable, invigorating and technically proficient are descriptors that helped define the group's makeup.

Location Location is modeled on guileful rhythmical episodes, where the twosome scales its arsenal into a more concentrated thrust. Perlowin is an inventive guitarist...conveying innovation along the lines of eminent avant guitarists Henry Kaiser and Keith Rowe.

Perlowin works...via oscillating ostinatos, shadowy voicings, climactic chord clusters and stinging upper register licks. ... Oslance counters, prods and pummels rhythms into submission... Featuring bizarre song forms and reverberating effects, Perlowin churns out a symphony of heavily amplified parts during these interconnecting pieces through overlays and multitasking efforts. ...

Not superfluous or simply framed on a crash-and-burn musical ethic, Ahleuchatistas translates into a mindset that circumvents stereotypes or anything that links to a product-driven formula. Loud, rebellious, and riotously invigorating, the band tears down convention to impart a unique identity..."

– Glenn Astarita, *All About Jazz*, January 21, 2012, www.allaboutjazz.com

“...the group’s original lineup...built a name for itself, releasing records on avant-garde bellwether labels Tzadik and Cuneiform, by playing a kinetic brand of free jazz via punk rock, an instrumental frenzy that owed as much to math-rock’s stop-start tension building as it did bop’s fearless interplay and swinging runs. Razor-sharp, Ahleuchatistas were like a gyroscope, all frenzied spinning... drummer Ryan Oslance...replaced Dail... Oslance and Perlowin quickly built an alchemical, instinctual rapport, honing their “psychic interplay,” ...by collaborating in the ballistic free-music duo Lulo for over a year before Poteat bailed. When the bassist left, Perlowin and Oslance decided to forge on as a duo...

They kept the name...but altered their approach: Largely gone are the ferociously atonal skronk and hairpin turns that characterized Ahleuchatistas’ trio output, replaced with a newfound emphasis on space and texture, mood and dynamics.

... Now, there’s an element of allowing ideas to develop along their own course...

Location Location is a boundary-pushing record for a largely boundaryless band. It doesn’t completely abandon the tension-ratcheting energy that marked the band’s early work; Perlowin and Oslance can still grind... But *Location*’s explorations beyond frenzied spasms and abrupt rhythmic shifts are its shining moments... ”

– Patrick Wall, *Free Times*, Issue #24.25 :: 06/22/2011 - 06/28/2011

“...For five albums, the band operated as a guitar-bass-drums trio, and though the line-up changed, the music—in all its dissonant, confrontational jazz-punk-rock fury—continued to mesmerize and confound. The sound morphed; the sonic palate expanded a little more with each record...

Location, Location, though, marks the band’s first album as a duo. ... What they’ve done as a duo...is awfully impressive. In losing a vital piece of their rhythm section...Perlowin and Oslance used the opportunity...to stretch in new ways. Gone, mostly, are the terse squalls of distortion and cymbals that berated us awake in early records, replaced here with explorations of texture and sonic heft. ... Songs crumble and reassemble, and two players somehow sound just as big and dynamic as three ever did....

... Ahleuchatistas...do not shy away from politics, but they do not use voice to preach. Instead, they deal in a revelatory sort of politics that conveys tension through sound.

...when difficult music also sounds this striking from moment to moment, you’ll be more than happy to lose where you are and follow Ahleuchatistas ... [Rating: 7/10]”

– Matthew Fiander, *PopMatters*, May 18, 2011, <http://www.popmatters.com>

“...the group’s foundational trio...would result in four albums of kinetic instrumental rock full of frenzied runs and abrupt shifts. The many who called it math-rock weren’t off-base, though the allusion to bebop innovator Charlie Parker’s “Ah-Leu-Cha” in the band’s moniker is telling; the swinging runs of notes, nervy interplay, and stop-time tension-builders owe more to bop than post-hardcore.

The trio was also a razor-sharp and precise presence, bursting with punk energy so propulsive that the music often seemed bound to tumble over itself. ...2010 marked a logistical and stylistic renaissance for the band. ... a significant departure — more spacious and dynamic, though much less frenetic on the whole. ... As a duo, Ahleuchatistas’ work began to explore textures more concertedly; their improvisations together became searches for what Perlowin describes as sustained tension.

“It doesn’t really interest me to play music that I wrote when I was 24 or 25 years old, when I’m constantly writing new music and moving in new directions,” Perlowin, now 33, says. ... *Location Location*...follows only two years behind *Of The Body Prone*, the band’s last album as a trio, but feels much removed.

...2010 offered ample opportunity...the band appearing at Tennessee’s Big Ears Music Festival and *The Wire*’s Adventures in Modern Music Festival in Chicago, in addition to two European tours. ...

Without completely abandoning the energy that marked Ahleuchatistas’ earlier work — Perlowin says the duo is balancing the pure-sound meditation and kinetic momentum about equally — the new direction seems to have reinvigorated its players as much as its listeners. “It feels more intense,” he says. “It’s more emotionally involving for me to play...” ”

– Bryan Reed, “Two Is Kinetic Enough,” *Shuffle Magazine*, June 8, 2011

AHLEUCHATISTAS/FAT32 SPLIT

“Ahleuchatistas’ “Heraclitean’ layers Shane Perlowin’s edgy guitar over Ryan Oslance’s precise sequences of military drum patternation...”

–*Wire Magazine*, Nov 2010

WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT AHLEUCHATISTAS’ MOST RECENT CUNEIFORM RELEASE

AHLEUCHATISTAS EVEN IN THE MIDST... 2007 CUNEIFORM

Line-up: **Shane Perlowin** (guitar), **Derek Poteat** (bass), **Sean Dail** (drums)

“... *Even in the Midst...* at times takes a more measured approach to the tangled phrases, sudden turns, and flailing dissonance by which the band has defined itself-- think of what the Magic Band might have sounded like on *Trout Mask Replica* without Captain Beefheart at the helm.

As in the past, the band not only eschews post-production, but most live effects as well. ...

The band's core dynamic stems from the way they ride the line between tight, odd-metered groove and outright chaos, and the divide between disunity and unity gives the first track...its structure. ... "K-Bit" has an excellently tense build-up in the middle...the outro is one of the band's most melodic moments.

... *Even in the Midst...* ...still possessed of many moments of beauty and mayhem...and in joining those moments together with their sense of composition, they've made a record that a lot of fans of complex yet unadorned instrumental music will find rewarding.”

– Joe Tangari, *Pitchfork*, October 2007

“...Ahleuchatistas' fourth album...takes everything one step further. ... tighter, more frantic, more creative, more restless -- more. It might even be more subtle. In the field of math rock, where complexity, intricacy, and virtuosity are essential, groups often achieve these key elements at the cost of feeling. Even in the Midst... is not an album that will get all moody, mind you, but...Poteat... Perlowin, and...Dail manage to squeeze in a few

moments of passion and tenderness -- in that regard, "Take Me to Your Leader Never Sounded So Alien" is a masterpiece. ... Tracks...are a bit longer than this group's average, with four pieces over five minutes -- epic proportions for Ahleuchatistas. ...those longer tunes quickly become album highlights. Despite the fact that they contain so many ideas per minute, they remain coherent and exciting... However, the shorter tracks don't disappoint... A strong opus.”
– Francois Couture, *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com

“...the hyperactivity and woozy syncopation of "Take Me to Your Leader Never Sounded So Alien" is so distinctively this band's own. ...such qualities are symptomatic of impatience with form...passages...are shot through with ineffable beauty.

... The results are... playful...a group playing at such a simpatico level because they can and not out of any facile desire to impress. On one level "Swimming Underwater With A Cat On Your Back" invalidates any thoughts of Beefheart as anything other than a point of reference. ...there's a greater sense of collective will, shaping the music in the moment, a point which just might account for its relative fluidity. ...the sheer joyous angularity of this music is in relatively short supply and that simple fact has the effect of taking it to another level.”

– Nic Jones, *All About Jazz*, March 30, 2008, www.allaboutjazz.com

“As a teen growing up in the 1970s, I was enamored by the complexities of a budding transcontinental progressive-rock scene. Odd-metered time signatures and jazz-like explorations were a feast for the ears, thanks to bands such as Gentle Giant, King Crimson and others. Fast-forwarding to the millennium, a new harvest of performers is perhaps ruling the roost.

...this North Carolina-based trio,...approaches from every conceivable direction via an intricately-carved and mind-bending approach to the rock idiom. ...

Structured upon a wiz, bang and thoroughly in-your-face gait, the trio amplifies the knotty time divisions and metrics heard by fabled musical warriors of a bygone era. And it's balls-to-the-walls all over the place throughout *Even In The Midst...* ...

Ahleuchatistas fuses punk, grunge, free-rock and spacey improvisation into punishing, discordant riffs and polyrhythmic cadences, with Shane Perlowin's twangy guitar lines eliciting a crossbred stylization that merges country, psychedelia and avant-garde concepts. It's partly about diametrically opposed and mathematically correct forward-motion.

...the trio conveys remarkable depth... ..irrefutably stimulating, this album stands on its own amid the sometimes murky waters of contemporary rock. ”

– Glenn Astarita, *All About Jazz*, December 3, 2007, www.allaboutjazz.com

“If you think you've heard everything that is possible using the traditional setup of guitar, bass, and drums...then you probably haven't heard the music of...Ahleuchatistas. These three guys play extraordinarily complex instrumental music that doesn't sound like anyone else currently cruising the planet. This...release...contains strange, frantic, obtuse music that will astound and amaze many listeners...while sending others running for the hills... This trio's music sounds something like an instrumental punk version of Captain Beefheart's Magic Band. ...these guys are unbelievably proficient and tight on their instruments. ... *Even in the Midst...* is a wild ride indeed... Unique. Recommended. (Rating: 5++)” – *Babysue*, Nov 2007

“Continuing their tradition of dissonant and chaotic, yet surprisingly precise instrumental rock, critically acclaimed Asheville trio Ahleuchatistas meander their way through 45 minutes of mathy rhythm flux and noisy confusion on *Even In the Midst...* Without compromising the frantic pounding and technical splendor of epic tracks... Ahleuchatistas also manage to churn out more accessible melodies against a backdrop of unorthodox time signatures on simmering jams like “Take Me to Your Leader Never Sounded so Alien”... From a production standpoint, the record is about...raw energy and improvisation. ...*Even In the Midst's* brilliance lies in the winding free-form guitar-rock, cacophonous post-hardcore and experimental ambience...”

– Dane Smith, *Mountain Xpress*, December 7, 2007, www.mountainx.com

“...Ahleuchatistas assimilated its complex, highly technical playing and its edgy, avant garde leanings into compositions that stretch out a bit more and deliver in a more dramatic and lyrical way.

The compositions are varied and intricate, carrying tones that range from reflective and sensual to disturbing and aggressive, sometimes within the confines of a single track... Moreover, the album has a rare, expressionist, narrative feel...

On the more ambience-oriented moments, most noticeably on the circulating and slightly meditative (yet still packed) closing, "Where We Left Off," a comparison with the UK trio Guapo is evoked, but Ahleuchatistas...comes off pointier and brighter.

...an Ahleuchatistas review cannot be completed without mentioning Sean Dail...his dense, complicated drumming sounds unbelievably natural. In other words... Simply amazing! [rating: 9.25/10]”

– Avi Shaked, *Maelstrom*, www.maelstrom.nu

“2007 TOP LISTS...OUR TOP 50... Ahleuchatistas / Even in the Midst... (Cuneiform)” – Francois Couture, *Delire Musical/Delire Actuel* (CFLX)

“The attack of “...Of all this”, which constitutes both the first track and the conclusive part of the titling sentence, would not be out of context on a Quentin Tarantino soundtrack; think Dick Dale meets early XTC, just before...Perlowin...Poteat and...Dail launch a new assault against the cathedrals of four-on-the-floor by interlocking their virtual horns in chains of absolutely irregular metrics and contrapuntal audacity. ... One of the intriguing aspects of this trio, apart from an obvious technical command, is the nudity of their timbres. Ahleuchatistas are exactly what every garage band should aspire to, namely remaining exactly that while becoming knowledgeable players. ... “The bears of Cantabria shall sleep no more” ... Instantaneous rage tempered by mental discipline: that’s a great asset, and it’s not Ahleuchatistas’ only one. Party music for those who hate parties. Excellently rough stuff.”

– Massimo Ricci, *Touching Extremes*, May 2008

“...their music sticks with you. It is a sick combination of jazz, punk, maybe a little metal, and homegrown political protest folk... Other artists may be taking the same spirit with them...but nobody sounds quite like Ahleuchatistas.

... In the case of *Even in the Midst...*this group is at its strongest. ...this in fact is their smartest and most vindictive record yet. ...they kick your ass. It’s not just the constant pulsing of the drums ...or the unhinged chaos... It’s one of the reasons so many people have grouped them into...”math-

rock,” ... Ahleuchatistas have a vulpine menace that suggests they'll sink their teeth into you if you don't take them seriously. ...

One of the reasons this is such a complete album and better presented than past efforts is that the artwork accompanies the music perfectly. Local artist Courtney Chappell has painted a vivid but pessimistic picture in the eight-page booklet. ...

...Ahleuchatistas play, and they play hard. You, you shut up and listen. The reward is that. ...you come to find that this very special band is doing something more than mere math-rock, or jazz-punk, or even politically charged music on a very broad level. They have made another subtle step forward that has produced their most carefully constructed and brilliantly executed album to date. ...”
– Patrick Masterson, *Audiversity*

“...North Carolina's Ahleuchatistas...may be what the Minutemen would be like if they'd been an instrumental band. ...like the Minutemen, they don't sound like anyone else. ... They are simply a tight three-piece making their own noise and cranking out great albums...

The most refreshing thing about this band is that they sound political. Their name...is as difficult to get a handle on as their music is. But, unlike so many artists labeled “difficult”, the band isn't excluding us. They want us in the fray with them...

Their formula seems to be that they don't have one, and that is what keeps this all so surprising. They maintain an energy throughout ...*Even in the Midst* that is truly astounding, and their ability to turn on a dime, switching time-signature and pace two and three times in a song without blinking, makes...this record seem fresh from moment to moment. ...

And while their song titles, particularly “Take Me to Your Leader Never Sounded So Alien”, are not terribly subtle, the way they approach politics is. Taking a cue from their hero Charlie Parker, they make music that represents a frustration both germane to our times and tragically timeless. ... Ahleuchatistas...illuminate institutional problems by transmogrifying the frustration and confusion and anger and exhaustion that the individual can feel in a world divided into music as jarring and brash as it is controlled and unified, as minimalist as it is intricate.

... There's tension all throughout ...*Even in the Midst*, as the band takes on something bigger and stronger than itself. But, rather than letting themselves get beaten down by the uphill battle, they are charging back up...

And, somewhere, the Minutemen are smiling and raising a can of beer in approval. [rating: 8/10]”

– Matthew Fiander, *PopMatters*, December 4, 2007, www.popmatters.com

“... Since their inception they have constantly challenged ideas of form and structure through their complex, abstract compositions... *Even in the Midst* continues their Faraquet via The Magic Band line of hugely unpredictable, jazzed-up math-rock.

And “unpredictable” really is the word here as the band veers from pretty melodic hooks to crazed, infinitely-complex free-jazz wig-outs, through explosive noise-rock-influenced discordance and back again... This juxtaposition can produce some stunning results...

... *Even in the Midst*...serves to showcase the trio's incredible musicianship and provide as accurate a document of the band's compositions and interactions... thrilling ...”
– Kris Illic, *The Silent Ballet*

“...*Midst* possesses the kind of emotional power in its vocals-less performance that few bands can only hope to meet. Ahleuchatistas' ability to construct beautiful instrumental passages is made all the more captivating by bookending them with mind-bending Lightning Bolt-esque speed breaks. Pedal-free performance is the name of the game, as the band explore the limits of their own instruments-and brains, if the stop-start changes and off-the-wall time signatures are any indication. Music doesn't get much closer to the edge than this.”

– Sam Sutherland, *Alternative Press*, February 2008

“Like a secret meeting between free form jazz and math rock comes the fourth release from instrumental trio Ahleuchatistas. ... What you get on *Even In the Midst*... is complex, weaving, ballsy music, sort of like what you would get if you took three punkers and fed them a steady diet of King Crimson, Mahavishu Orchestra, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Present, John Zorn, Massacre, Happy Family, and Dysrhythmia. ...this stuff is pretty ferocious, but instead of beefing up their attack with distortion and bombast, Ahleuchatistas got for the jugular with pure technical prowess and a raw intensity that is quite impressive. Even when they opt for more gentler and avant-garde tones...the results are equally chilling.

...marvelous synergy and tight improvisation... It's all quite tricky, often times charming, and very enjoyable complex music that should appeal to prog, jazz, math rock, and avant-garde lovers of all ages.”
– Pete Pardo, *Sea of Tranquility*, October 16, 2007

“...there's a wider variety of mood and tempo, but the trio's arrangements are still dauntingly complex and their song titles are still political, but the (all-instrumental) tunes are still approachable and fun even as they challenge... Very nice.”
– Rick Anderson, *CD HotList*

“ALBUM OF THE WEEK ... Wow. This is Ahleuchatistas' fourth album, following hard on their breathtaking 2006 release ‘What You Will’ - and it's even better. More than ever, Ahleuchatistas are a contradiction... super complex instrumental music made easy. A simple, relatively unadorned guitar-bass-drums arrangement, yet endless variety of texture and feel. The production is just right, natural, clean and live... This natural warmth somehow rounds the harsh edges of all those twists and turns... There's enough tunes and riffs and contrasting textures...to match the contents of most record collections - yet something about the Ahleuchatistas' approach makes it, well approachable. ...

... Between them their tastes cover progressive rock, hardcore punk, jazz psych and metal and avant classical - and it shows. Since forming in 2003 they've gigged relentlessly...(somebody at SXSW wrote that their playing “made Mars Volta a band to yawn at”)

There's a couple of handfuls of bands around the world making this rarified high-end intricate rock now... What makes Ahleuchatistas stand out...is the unforced ease of their playing, the warmth, the immediacy: even when they're hammering through some weirdass counterpoint with ninety-degree turn at the end. Everything they do is about communicating... Ahleuchatistas' particular combination of emotional maturity, imagination and stratospheric musicianship is unique. ...'Even In The Midst...' takes the good stuff a little further. ...more passages of straight tunefulness breaking through tension and darkness, more moments of stillness and delicacy up against their furious rock-outs. There are little surprises and joyful twists and a quite brilliant way of balancing a 'predictable' riff with an unexpected flourish. The whole has the best qualities of a good soundtrack, a musical journey that's vivid in itself. There's a coherent purpose underlying the sound, another quality that sets Ahleuchatistas apart from their peers: their overt political and world-aware references in the artwork and song titles are more than a garnish. Take the album and the

first track's title as a statement of intent...even in the midst of all this... violence, chaos, fear... of these times... there is beauty. It's an outlook similar to that of Godspeed! You Black Emperor, despite their sound being very different. ...its all about fragile humans and their trials and joys. ... 'Even In The Midst...' might dazzle technically, but ultimately it's the emotion and empathy radiating from every moment, and the sheer delight at what they're creating, that makes this 'difficult' music so accessible.”
– *Organ*, #234, December 13, 2007

“they...remind me of the disjointed avant-rock of Captain Beefheart's Magic Band. ... Ahleuchatistas...play a...rewarding blend, less flash and technical, or in-yer-face, and with an instrumental blend that takes the Magic Band riffing style closer to the classic High Tide related Rustic Hinge. They apply finesse and complexity to the brew, dynamics, power and restraint, all adding up to a tasty brew that constantly leads you on, wanting to guess what's coming next. ...the 51 minutes of EVEN IN THE MIDST... seem to be over way too soon...a good sign of an album that will be a grower. ...”
– Alan Freeman, *Audion*, issue #54