

What the press has said about Miriodor's: PARADE & LIVE AT NEARFEST, 2 CDs, (CUNEIFORM, 2005)

"...The group has never compromised in it's artistic approach nor in it's creativity and originality.

...To me, **their music evokes images of a twisted carnival. A surreal, dream-like fair where inanimate objects come to life unexpectedly.** ... Mixing acoustic and electric instruments, the quartet (with guests) create music which is clever and whimsical one moment and dark, aggressive, and even oppressive the next. "Parade" is a 16-track excursion into the funny, the whacky, the bizarre, and even the disturbing. ... No track clocks at over 6:45... Each number has a starting point, a direction to travel in, and a destination. ...

As a bonus, we get the "Live From Nearfest 2002" recording on a 2nd CD. This critically acclaimed concert recording showcases mostly the band's previous 2 recordings ("Jongleries Elastiques" and "Mekano") and demonstrates the band's prowess in pulling off their "wild carnival of a music act" in a live setting. ...this is a great sounding live recording and an excellent addition to what is already a stellar release. I realize that we're only in August, but **I'll be hard-pressed to find a better progressive release in 2005.** ... If you're new to the band, this is as good a place as any to introduce yourself to their unique style. Highly recommended. [Score: 4.5 out of 5]"

– Yves Dubé, *Sea of Tranquility*, August 14, 2005, www.seaoftranquility.org

"Their most captivating album to date, and the most memorable, mature and perfect album in their long illustrious career that spans two decades. ...

A daring move of Miriodor to release a double CD... their long-awaited Parade album, which features tracks that have been performed by the band for the past two years, and as a great bonus, the second disk, Live at NearFest... Truly an astounding live performance of their best-known pieces.

With the contribution of legendary accordionist/keyboardist Lars Hollmer (of Samla Mammas Manna) accompanying the group on a few tracks, **Parade + Live at NearFest is some of the most stimulating, challenging and truly entertaining music I have heard this year.** Impressive compositions with a high level of discipline and complexity, and a lot of variety in their sound, from jazzy to eclectic, to industrial, sometimes even intense and somber. **It's hard to imagine that an album can rival the incredible quality of their last CD, Mekano, but Parade does! The production quality and level is simply impeccable.** The mixing the live portion of this album can only be described as a technical marvel, thanks to the genius of Bob Drake. [rating: 9/10]"

– Robert Dansereau, *ProgMontreal*, www.progmontreal.com

"Montreal's Miriodor celebrate 25 years as a group with this astonishing double record. Long known as the primary Canadian exponent of the European-based RIO (Rock In Opposition) ...they continue to create infectious avant-garde, prog rock together that is strange and inventive. Parade is Miriodor's latest album proper and, true to form, the band create a soundtrack for the oddest animated film never made. Pieces like "Pyramide" and "Uppsala" feature unique interchanges between virtuoso guitars, adventurous drums and bass, mesmerising strings, pervasive turntables, and playful horns. **A song like "Scarabée" crosses Rush with the Mothers of Invention to startling effect** and is a stunning example of the wondrous musicality of Miriodor. A second disc reveals the band in fine form as they're captured live at the 2002 NEARfest... Playing songs from acclaimed albums *Mekano* and *Elastic Juggling*, Miriodor are on fire during this spirited performance and the crowd responds in kind to their dramatic shifts in time and tone. ...this is a priceless collection from a group who continue to create joyful jazz-rock at its best."

– Vish Khanna, *Exclaim*, July 2005, www.exclaim.ca

"Everyone loves a *Parade* — or at least they should love the CD by that name... **The 16 tunes, ranging from less than a minute to nearly seven minutes in length, are often densely packed with ideas yet paradoxically light in feel, offering up something new for the senses at every turn.** The music is both entertainingly accessible and startlingly inventive, filled with more sonic details than can be grasped in a single listen, with the keyboard voicings alone (vibes, marimba, accordion, harpsichord, grand piano, and Farfisa anyone?) causing the listener's head to spin, yet always used in service of the compositions in which they appear. *Parade* finds the core quartet ... supplemented, as they were on 2001's *Mekano*, by saxophonist Marie-Chantal Leclair and violinist Marie-Soleil Bélanger...adding additional voicings, melodies, and countermelodies to the often intricate arrangements. ... The tracks featuring Hollmer are noteworthy, particularly "Bonsai Givre," a multi-sectioned number that flows organically into dreamy, spacy interludes with Hollmer's accordion and vocal expertly woven into the group's overall sound, and the concluding "Foret Dense," encompassing drama, mystery, darkness, and light while ending the CD on a chamberesque note. *Parade* is packaged as part of a two-CD set including a bonus disc featuring the entire Miriodor set from the 2002 NEARfest in Trenton, NJ. The sextet performs tracks... effectively captured by mixage wizards Pierre Girard and Bob Drake. **The biggest kick might be hearing the band win over the crowd...the 1,800-plus audience seems to realize what a phenomenal performance it is witnessing, and erupts with thunderous applause.** ... Kudos to the festival organizers for giving Miriodor a spectacular live forum, richly deserved by **one of the finest bands ever to emerge from the Quebec musique actuelle scene."**

– Dave Lynch, *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com

"...intricate instrumental pieces of sophisticated post-classical chamber pop. Fans of Prime Time Sublime Orchestra and late-period Zappa will appreciate this music, at times concise and mathy and at other times zany. ... [Rating: 4.5]"

– Tom Schulte, *Outsight*, www.new-sounds.com

"Hazardous scores, plainspoken technical command and an effective sense of humour are three of the many great riches of this collective from Quebec... "Parade" is their most recent studio effort, showing their compositional attitude as sharp-cutting as never before; **a cross of puzzling instrumental dexterity and inquisitive curiosity gives birth to sixteen tracks which easily find their place in the best avant-progressive music I've heard in the new millennium.** ... Lars Hollmer - a hero of mine - joins the band in three pieces, of which "Bonsai givré" is maybe the top...indeed, **all the pieces contribute to place Miriodor among the greats of the last two decades.** The second CD "Live at Nearfest" is the document of a 2002 concert... **Truly one of the Cuneiform classics, trust me."**

– Massimo Ricci, *Touching Extremes*, September 2005

"Miriodor comes in at #5 in our top 100 poll of 2005. This is was an excellent release and adored by many music reviewers both far and wide. ...by late summer...it was one of the highest rated albums on <http://www.gnosis2000.net> and other progrock e-zines. This double CD is a treat for Miriodor fans... The much anticipated Parade CD, which is their new studio album...seems livelier and bolder... **From the first to the last cut, Parade is a roller coaster ride of adventurous and quirky instrumental music that only Miriodor can make. Seriously, who can you compare these guys too?** Parade also features guest performer Lars Hollmer of Samla Mammas Manna. The second disc features the band's enigmatic performance at NEARfest 2002...which jettisoned me 150% deeper into exploring these French Canadian wonders and their back catalog."

– Tom Gagliardi, "Gagliarchives: Top 10 Albums of 2005," *Ghostland*, www.ghostland.com

"Best prog album: Miriodor: Parade+Live at Nearfest..." – *Symphony of Silence*, www.capture-music.com

"Eric Porter's Top 10 2005: Miriodor – Parade + Nearfest - I can't get enough of this band!!!!!!!" – Eric Porter, *ProgressiveWorld.net*

"... **They are one of the few bands who can construct a concise, intelligent composition in odd meter, light it up with colorful arrangements and still make it kick your butt.** With an average track length of around four minutes, there's ample time to develop themes that go through numerous starts, stops and hairpin turns and still introduce plenty of variations therein; not a second is wasted, though, and the energy level is consistently high, even in the slower passages as on "Sleepwalking in Uppsala" — where tension just builds and builds and finally explodes again. ...Parade is nearly entirely

instrumental, and full of surprises at every turn... Disc two contains all of all the very best material on *Mekano*, caught live less than a year after its release, plus one great one from *Jongleries*, making this package an outstanding value all around. Put this on your must-buy list."

– Peter Thelen, *Exposé*, September 2005, #27

"... For my money I can always rely on Miriodor to deliver the goods and that's exactly what they've done with their latest release *Parade*. Traditional melody lines take a bit of a holiday and on the surface a general zany-ness comes to take its place, but **if you dig below the surface that's where the real musical treasure lies. ... The music on *Parade* is chamber rock with lots of acoustic sounds and lots of "air" in the arrangements. Instruments are constantly playing with and/or against each other. The melodies...exist on different levels, with sometimes more than one melody active** in a composition. Add to this a rock-influenced polyrhythmic undertone and you easily see that **this is serious music being created... Serious yes, but playful as well.** Unlike other bands operating in this genre, Miriodor never lose their sense of humor.

Imagine if you will little minuets gone wonky, Merry-go-round music set to an unusual counterpoint, Madrigal-ish...pieces that start and stop in a totally unconventional manner and all of this injected with an almost comic relief. There are moments of fragile delicacy interrupted by moments of intense bombast. ...

There is a special bonus...the bands first ever live recording as a bonus disc. The 13 live tracks...shows them more than capable to taking their complex style and translating it to the live environment. **...they are one of the finest exponents of the RIO sub genre on the market today. Always inventive, always surprising and always just a little off-kilter. What more can you expect from such a band."**

– Jerry Lucky, *Ghostland*, August 31, 2005, www.ghostland.com

"... The music is a blend of progressive rock ala groups like Camel, ELO, and Genesis mixed with a frivolity that is not normally associated with the genre. At times the music plays like the soundtrack from a surrealist film of the 70s... the music is a bit off the beaten path... The songs have names like Jack-in-the-Box, Skinny Dance, and Frosted Bonsai—there could be no mistaking the variety of themes.

The bonus second disc is a live performance recorded at the Patriots Theater at the War Memorial on June 29th, 2002 in Trenton, New Jersey. ... These discs are definitely an interesting listen..."

– Brian Bloom, *Audiophile Audition*, August 29, 2005, www.audaud.com

"Describing the **spare, haunting sound** these veteran Quebec instrumentalists have mastered is a daunting task. Suffice to say, **the reference points...would range from post-rock noisemakers Rachel's to jazz pianist Brad Mehldau's interpretations of Radiohead and even the contemplative side of '70s prog rockers Gentle giant. ..."**

– John Sakamoto, *Toronto Star*, May 21, 2005, www.thestar.com

"... You will often see Miriodor's name bracketed with bands like Univers Zero or Present but they are far less dark and stern, containing charming little dollops of humour and quirky, almost danceable melodies. ...*Parade*...continues the trend of the last two albums with a **collection of highly composed, succinct** (few tracks ever exceed 6 minutes on any of their albums) **and original music, fusing jazz, chamber, folk, dance, prog and more, delivered with an incredible degree of tightness but with a fluidity which carries the frequent time, harmonic and rhythmic changes over to your ears as smoothly as silk.** Their RIO affiliation is stamped with the appearance of Lars Hollmer, from one of the most noted early exponents of this genre, Samla Mammass Manna, on a number of pieces. ...

Miriodor excel at creating simple imagery with their compositions, often using the names of single objects or animals as titles. ... These are then painstakingly interpreted and musically illustrated by the band in various ways, encouraging the listener to use their imagination, to see the subjects from an angle. ...

With 16 tracks, there isn't space in this article to do justice to all the highlights of this excellent work... Each number is like a different gemstone, endlessly fascinating as you turn it thorough its many facets of melody, dissonance, rhythm and image. I tend to find it helpful to eat the album in small bites, repeating each track two or three times over to extract more of the juices. A highly entertaining parade indeed."

– Richard Barnes, "Foreign Affairs," *Classic Rock Society*, July/August 2005, Issue 149

"A new Miriodor album is a happy event in this house, and this may be their most anticipated album yet in the prog community, given their two relatively high profile appearances at NEARfest since 2001's *Mekano*, one at the pre-show and one on the main stage. **...with compositions taking every twist and turn...one wonders when the train will be derailed, but it never is.** The core trio, Bernard Falaise, Pascal Globensky, and Rémi Leclerc, have been at this long enough that there is little point doubting them. ... *Parade* continues the evolution of *Mekano* towards material with more space, less obviously humorous but with an obvious joy under the surface, intricate and melodically adventurous without obvious resolutions. ..."

– Sean McFee, *Exposé*, September 2005, #27

"**Miriodor is certainly one of the hottest bands in the business right now on Cuneiform.** Following on the heels of their acclaimed 2002 recording, *Mekano*, **the Canadian quartet continues to push the limit emphasizing balanced arrangements with emotive woodwinds and violin together with electric keyboards and guitar.** Best tracks include the opening piece which sets a delicate tone between Marie-Soleil Bélanger's sweet violin and Marie-Chantal Leclair's supportive sax lines. ... Samla Mammass Manna's main man, Lars Hollmer contributes accordion and other keyboards on three tracks too and submits one song ("Talrika") which is one of the best on the first disc. The band fully embraces the arrangement which begins with sharp keyboards before transitioning into a heavy riff featuring a menacing guitar phrase not far removed from Present's style. The companion disc to the new set of recording is surely the band's single most defining musical statement. ...the expanded six piece line-up carefully demonstrated to the Nearfest crowd that they are not just talented studio wizards. What is so surprising again is how evenhanded the arrangements are brought to life on stage... At times the set list is reminiscent of a thoughtful hybrid of Happy the Man combined with Hollmer's band and solo works. With these two new recordings Miriodor stands as the premier ensemble from their home country and on an international stage."

– Jeff Melton, *Exposé*, September 2005, #27

"... Special guest is accordionist/composer Lars Hollmer who had his Swedish RIO example, Samlas Mammass Manna & Von Zamla. ...In general the music leans well to groups like Von Zamla, not only because Lars Hollmer is involved. At moments it has a slight intellectual jazzrock touch to the R.I.O. style. Another beautiful contribution is by bassoon player Lise Millet...amongst some of my favourite. ..."Polar" with its intensity changes and well arranged strength I found brilliant. ...the band sounds stronger than their already strong former album.

As a bonus CD the live recording from Nearfest, recorded June 29th, 2002 is added. This recording is very well done (-mixed perfectly by Bob Drake-), and the music is absolutely convincing with a beautiful composition / group sound balance more in the direction of Univers Zero ...beautiful natural playing and a disciplined complexity in the compositions. The contribution of violinist Marie-Soleil Bélanger is also worth mentioning... This bonus CD alone makes this worth the purchase. [Rating: 4 stars]"

– *Progressive Homestead*, progressive.homestead.com

"...On *Parade* Miriodor may still have found the right balance as far as melody vs experiment goes..."

– Roberto Lambooy, *Axiom of Choice*, November 2005