

**WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT THIS ALBUM:**

**UNIVERS ZERO**

**CLIVAGES**

**CUNEIFORM 2010**

This album features: **Michel Berckmans** (bassoon, English horn, oboe), **Kurt Budé** (clarinet, bass clarinet, alto sax), **Pierre Chevalier** (keyboards), **Daniel Denis** (drums, sampler), **Dimitri Evers** (bass), **Martin Lauwers** (violin) with guest **Andy Kirk** (guitar)

“...over the last three decades the ensemble has lived up to the dictionary meaning of avant-garde: those in the arts who create or apply new or experimental ideas and techniques.

*Clivages*...coalesces what has made Univers Zero such a unique and demanding group for the past 30 years but the record also yields new inclinations. For one, compositional responsibility has been split to different band members... This allows for both familiarity and surprise. Denis furnishes four pieces...Michel Berckmans pens three...Kurt Budé wrote two and guest guitarist Andy Kirk – a Univers Zero compatriot from the late seventies and on and off during the eighties – brings in one expansive work.

Univers Zero fans...will find Denis’ material...gratifying and galvanizing. Opener “Les Kobolds” has an accessible, major-key arrangement... The melodies and tonal colors render a slightly Renaissance feel but harmonic shifts impart an underlying ominous persuasion. ... Denis references his previous achievements on the funereal and desolate “Les Cercles d’Horus,” with ashen drums, comparative keyboards and bass, and minor-key piano and cello.

Berckmans “Vacillements” focuses entirely on wind and strings and has a neo-classical slant... Berckmans’ final tune, “Retour de Foire,” has a splendidly shadowy arrangement akin to Bernard Hermann...

Budé supplies two adventurous compositions. ...

Like earlier Univers Zero outings, *Clivages* has a live-in-the-studio approach with minimal overdubs, superb instrument separation, bright EQ and frequency modulation that is impeccable. This is music that has outstanding sound realization, recommended for a high fidelity system.”

– Doug Simpson, *Audiophile Audition*, April 23, 2010, [www.audaud.com](http://www.audaud.com)

“I first learned of...Univers Zero when its drummer and founder, Daniel Denis, was featured in *MD*’s February 2010 issue. I was drawn in immediately by Denis’ carve-your-own-path aesthetic and the fact that he seemed to give equal weight to composition and spontaneity.... The thing that struck me immediately about UZ’s wonderful slow-burning new album, *Clivages*...is that this is no attempted merger of “polite” chamber instrumentation with “nasty” rock ‘n’ roll, as so many “let’s tack a kit onto an orchestra” projects turn out to be. No, the music is at its very core conceived for a sensitive, versatile unit – a *band* – that happens to contain a quirky blend of instruments. *Clivages* prowls the low end with electric bass, bassoon, and Denis’s big drum sound. On the storm-bringing “Warrior,” Denis works huge tom blasts and cymbal-crash thunder... He’s full of surprises throughout and never short of compelling.”

– Michael Parillo, “What We’re Listening To,” *Modern Drummer: Wire*, 4.4, April 2010

“...this is Univers Zero’s best record ever since the band’s reformation in the mid-‘90s. ...this one...grabs me and moves me: more troubling, more experimental ...with a strong human elements. ... Top-rate avant-prog and a great Univers Zero release by any standard. ...”

– François Couture, *Monsieur Delire*, January 7, 2010, [blog.monsieurdelire.com](http://blog.monsieurdelire.com)

“...this is one of their more accessible releases. Don’t get me wrong, it’s still Univers Zero... it seems to be fairly easy to latch onto melodies and something resembling a hook throughout the disc. I like this a lot and it might have two of my all time favorite Univers Zero tracks on it.

Warrior ...is a real scorcher and one my favorites of all time from the group. ... a more jazz like movement that reminds me of Henry Mancini goes RIO. ...

Straight Edge ... is quite a dynamic and powerful piece of music that has jazz, funk, classical and pure prog all woven into it. There are some cool bits of retro keyboards... This could fit well into a movie soundtrack and despite its strangeness is quite compelling. ... This composition is definitely another highlight of the disc, and...qualifies as one of my favorite Univers Zero tracks.”

– Gary Hill, *Music Street Journal*, [musicstreetjournal.com](http://musicstreetjournal.com)