

**WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT CHEER-ACCIDENT'S FEAR DRAWS MISFORTUNE (CUNEIFORM 2009):**

"Cheer-Accident are the quintessential Chicago post-rock band that, sadly, you may have never heard of. Too bad. They've been...leaving a pronounced influence on the Windy City's art-rock scene. Their playful musical approach is a ripe aesthetic of absurdist humor: ... band leader/multi-instrumentalist Thymme...Jones has grown his band's adventurous sound from schizoid metallic post-rock (in the vein of scene brethren Rapeman, Shorty, or Don Caballero) to a higher-brow variety of avant-rock that covers ground as diverse as falsetto vocal vignettes, orchestral dissonant horn lines, Van Dyke Parks-ian rainy-day pop, cubist piano compositions, ambient cinematic excursions, noise collages, free-form freakouts, and every kind of noodle-y and angular guitar manifestation possible. ... If 1997's *Enduring the American Dream* served as Cheer's first ambitious...synthesis of post-rock, krautrock, orchestral pop, and minimalist classical influences, their new *Fear Draws Misfortune* is the fuller realization of those initial experiments. Except that *Fear* is their unequivocal prog with a capital "P" record. ...Cheer-Accident's music is...in constant melodic and dynamic motion. ...Much like Magma, *Fear's* cornucopia of interweaving keyboard lines and Fripp-ian six-string squiggles frequently ascend into cosmic-choral singing. When you mix the juiciest sounding bits from abacus-rockers like This Heat, Henry Cow, Magma, King Crimson, and Yes-- which this CD most definitely does-- you get a prog-rock geek's wet dream. A key influence is the guest appearance of Carla Kihlstedt of Sleepytime Gorilla Museum..."

- D. Shawn Bosler, *Pitchfork*, April 8, 2009, www.pitchfork.com

"Cheer-Accident are a Chicago underground phenomena, a band who way outdo even Cardiacs for hiding their talents under a bushel. ... If your radar's finely tuned, you catch that sparkle of slippery brilliance, and you're hooked chasing it forever. 'Fear Draws Misfortune' however, doesn't hide anything: it dazzles effortlessly from the start, working on a dozen levels. Its as cool as Shellac and Pavement and F\*cked Up and any number of out there alt.indie bands, whilst simultaneously being one of the greatest progressive rock albums, ever. It's way more dense and detailed and complex than The Mars Volta, and way easier to listen to courtesy of a seemingly endless supply of richly varied melody.

Cheer-Accident have been making music - and a few other things, including a legendary weekly surrealist TV cable TV show - since some point in 1981, around core members Thymme Jones...and Jeff Libersher... The Organ's first encounter was via 'Dumb Ask', possibly Cheer-Accident's most straightforward 'rock' output and duly released in the UK by metal label Neat... The only thing really comparable at the time was Voivod's Nothingface (aka: the birth of math metal). ...

'Fear Draws Misfortune' is a coming-of-age, a perfect maturation point with years of creativity behind it. ... They've kept their puckish, contrary humour under control, though it bubbles up to good effect in a menacing quacking trumpet in The Carnal Garish City. Thymme Jones holds it all together on a legendarily knackered kit, apparently a 'rattletrap' bucket of bolts; he may well be one of the finest drummers of our time, as distinctive and personalised as Zach Hill. Effortlessly rolling along these astonishing Fripp-style cyclic multi-time-signature loops, yet always beautifully expressive, not unlike Guy Evans of Van Der Graaf Generator. They kick off into proper Zappa type complexity, and a chunk of Koenjihyakkei flies past...the influences go by in blurred, subliminal hints, within those bleakly beautiful King Crimsonish lopes: Morricone, early Genesis, UK, (loads of) Stravinsky, (loads of) Yes, Lalo Schifrin.... Bacharach? Is that what that is, at the end? They even sound like early, Dumb Ask Cheer-Accident at one point: in fact, they always sound like Cheer-Accident... Above all, they will always arrive at a tense, haunted, mysterious place, whether exploring with minimalist drones and sparse drums or, as in 'Fear Draws Misfortune', going for all-out maximalism. A breathtaking, essential album for anyone into post or math or real progressive rock, or just the different and beautiful beyond classification."

- Organ, #297, March 5, 2009

"Listening to a Cheer-Accident song is like toppling over a box full of riddles and non-sequiturs, yet these bursts of experimental pop invite newcomers to join the strange revelry... They've always been willing to hurl together a giddy mix of chromatically tilted guitars, synths, even horns, flutes, and strings, and rhythms that feel complex but not overly disciplined. ...its most recent album, *Fear Draws Misfortune*. Voices rise up together into high-pitched choruses of eerie mischief in the middle of abrupt, twisty passages... "Blue Cheadle"...builds up into quite a chaotic spiral with a catchy calm at its center... to combine "maddening" and "fun" in the same fractured sentence."

- Scott Gordon, *AV Club*, February 2, 2009, www.avclub.com

"...Cheer-Accident is still releasing whatever the hell it wants, and now it does so for the first time on Cuneiform.

The group draws from elements of prog rock, noise rock, chamber music, theatrical rock, and pop, and *Fear Draws Misfortune* is many of these things, often in the same song. ...make no mistake: this album lays down some big-time rock riffs."

-Scott Morrow, *Alarm*, January 20 2009, www.alarmpress.com

"*Fear Draws Misfortune* is more of the solid music that has made Cheer-Accident a staple amongst atmospheric rock lovers. And it even features some of the group's more dense compositions to date. ... "Blue Cheadle" calls for the funk and grimy feel of hard-hitting rock. ... It's heady, weighty, thick music that requires patient ears. ... In many ways...this is an exhausting listen. ...as a collective unit, Cheer-Accident's music is complexly opaque. Perhaps this is the driving force behind their success ...with more of the same on *Fear Draws Misfortune*, maybe that's the way they want it: familiar and consistent. Both make for a very solid combination."

-Bryan Sanchez, *Adequacy.net*, August 18, 2009

"...Chicago band has been operating for 27 years, in which time they've predated, been associated with, and outlived such regional movements as Chicago No Wave and Chicago Math Rock, all while being nothing less than real-deal modern-day epic pop-prog masters. They were recently the deserving cover stars of *Signal to Noise* magazine and have signed with a real-deal modern-day prog-rock label, Cuneiform... Their first record for the label is...a good one. ...interchangeably playful and classically prog-melodic male/female vocal melodies circle and glide over cycling and pounding riffs that have a heavy Magma/*Udu Wudu* bounce. Fans pick it up now, and for newcomers it's an excellent place to start." - Larry Dolman, *BLASTITUDE* #28, June 01, 2009

"Other ships in Chicago's post-rock fleet displace more water, but CHEER-ACCIDENT is the scene's Flying Dutchman: eternally sailing far out at sea, the band is half distant mirage, half unsettling portent. They're musicians' musicians... the guys to watch to see what everyone will be doing next year or next decade or maybe just never dare to do at all. I can't imagine why it's taken them till this point in their quarter-century career to turn up on the cover of *Signal to Noise*, but better late than never. The new *Fear Draws Misfortune* is their first album for Cuneiform... a stalwart experimental label that's been around almost as long as the band. Cheer-Accident adopt a different tone for every release, and this one has a lush,

richly orchestrated sound that makes their puckish humor feel spiritually resonant, like the teaching jokes in Zen and Sufi traditions... you've ever loved Magma's apocalypticisms, Neu!'s ghosts in the machine, or Beefheart's Dada boogie—or at least dreamed of watching the Mormon Tabernacle Choir fall down a very long flight of stairs—it might be for you.”

- Monica Kendrick, *Chicago Reader*, February 2009

“Most folks have stopped counting Cheer-Accident's releases, but this is their first for Cuneiform Records, and it brought the band to the attention of a slightly different crowd. ...*Fear Draws Misfortune* is a very sharp and focused proposition, an excellent calling card for the band and point of entry for curious listeners. On this album, Thymme Jones stretches his creative muscle in several directions, from lyrical ("Sun Dies," ... to silly ("Blue Cheadle" ...to expansive ("Humanizing the Distance," ...*Fear Draws Misfortune* may be a bit more accessible composition-wise than other Cheer-Accident albums...it definitely belongs to the group's select best opuses, thanks to good (and simple) production values and strong songwriting... This one might even make a convert out of you.”

- Francis Couture, *All Music*, [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com)

“...with Cuneiform, the band has finally found a great fit. ...Cheer-Accident don't fit the prog mold (or any mold...) very well; they're just as likely to break into a gentle pop melody as they are off-kilter rhythms. Theirs is a confounding formula ...combining a broad songwriting palette with a taste for experiments, humor, games, and anything else that might catch their compositional fancy.

*Fear Draws Misfortune*...features a more even-tempered Cheer-Accident. ... Thymme Jones, the group's ringleader...lends his sonorous voice to much of the album, though additional vocalists are plentiful, often in the form of a unison choir...something a bit heavenly above what can be a choppy, churning musical terrain below. ...

...the majority of *Fear Draws Misfortune* is simply and solidly executed. Whether brimming with capricious energy or unclouded, insistent emotion (or, most likely, more than a bit of both), Cheer-Accident perform with aplomb. "Your Weak Heart," which closes the album, encapsulates this beautifully... It's a great blend of some of the disc's most earnest pathos with some of its most agile rock, and a great way to close what is hopefully the beginning of a bountiful new pairing of a band and a record label.”

- adam strohm, *FakeJazz*, March 27, 2009, [www.fakejazz.com](http://www.fakejazz.com)

“...*Fear Draws Misfortune* can be filed under avant garde/progressive art rock, although the variety of music touched on is impressive: Zappa in progressive form; any number of bands that feature Robert Wyatt; Henry Cow with a healthy dose of Van der Graaf Generator and Gentle Giant incorporated for good measure. Indeed, it is this latter band that immediately springs to mind on opener *Sun Dies* with its layered vocals... The musical influence of the Giant also appear elsewhere...and in particular on the epic closing number *Your Weak Heart* which starts off as a somewhat sentimental piano/vocal ballad but gets twisted...a musically complex battle that is all over the place in terms of timings and rhythms - the way Jones keeps a handle on everything throughout is truly impressive. ... They pack more into 160 seconds than most bands could in 20 minutes! The last time I heard anything like this was when the Cardiacs were in their prime. *Humanizing The Distance* throws a curve into King Crimson territory...

...the album is...entertaining, engaging and at times downright exciting. If you favour the more out there kind of music, have a passion for weird time signatures and...enjoys figuring out just how...a group of musicians can combine together in such an intelligent and unusual way then Cheer Accident may well be worth checking out. Conclusion: 7 out of 10”

- Mark Hughes, *Dutch Progressive Rock Pages*, 2010: Volume 16, [www.dprp.net](http://www.dprp.net)“This is the 16<sup>th</sup> release in the 25 years career of the Chicago based art collective known as Cheer-Accident. And what a release it is. ...

*Fear Draws Misfortune* features only nine tracks, but boy, are they ever packed with music. And I mean all kinds of music. Track one “Sun Dies” [5:49] starts out with a kind of XTC riff on the guitar...after about two-minutes the song morphs into a throbbing, pulsating, rumbling jumble of wonderful driving riffs. It's totally captivating... it's the longer pieces where Cheer-Accident shine giving their compositions a wealth of variety. The music itself is a mix of rock, played with a Frank Zappa off-kilter sensibility spiced up with a variety of proggy embellishments. ... I was humming the catchy riffs. None of these pieces is simple... But when it all comes together the angular parts really serve to heighten the more straight-forward parts. ...

Fans of RIO or Avant-Prog will find much to enjoy here, but I have to say prog fans in general looking to stretch their listening pallet will also enjoy the work of Cheer-Accident. *Fear Draws Misfortune* is well worth the time you invest in it. “

- Jerry Lucky, *The Progressive Rock Files*, <http://www.jerrylucky.com>

“Brand new release by art prog-jazz-rock-whatEVER band from Chicago that the promo sticker blames post-rock, math-rock, post-punk and most other indie rock on ... King Crimson definitely comes to mind, and ... Soft Machine and Matching Mole, Univers Zero. I'd...align this with the creativeness of Glenn Branca and other NYC types. ... (I used to think that “post-rock” was just bands who wished they could play jazz or prog. If that's the case, then this is the prog they wished they could play). Do not miss this!”

- KZSU, *Zookeeper Online*, March 31, 2009, [zookeeper.stanford.edu](http://zookeeper.stanford.edu)

“... “Fear Draws Misfortune” is again unrestrained by a single genre but would appeal to...followers of avant-progressive-post-math-art jazz-rock! The omnipresent musical themes are its angular melodies, glorious repetitive instrumental and vocal phrases and its imaginative lyrics... It could be seen as an updating of “Waka / Jawaka” and “Hot Rats” era Zappa, with wildly fluctuating, often abrasively juxtaposed fragments, but utilising darker, modern metallic guitar tones. There are moments of sheer groove ... sections when math-rock's atypical time signatures come to the fore, as well as snippets of cool jazz. There are also times of both melancholy and awkwardness ...”

- *Leicester Bangs*, March 26, 2009, [www.leicesterbangs.co.uk](http://www.leicesterbangs.co.uk)

“... This is the only CD of the band that I have listened to and I enjoyed it very much. ...combination of art rock, RIO, and Avant-garde rock. ... I hear elements of Frank Zappa, Art Bears, Magma, Suu's, Univers Zero Thinking Plague, Bill Frisell and King Crimson. ...

... "Disenchantment" ... reminds me of early 90's Bill Frisell songs like "Yuba City" and "Child at Heart". ... Closer "Your Weak Heart" is...the longest song ... The mid section sound like 70's style Italian progressive rock... A very nice way to end the CD.

*Fear Draws Misfortune* is a very strong CD that could have easily been a miss. When a band creates an album with so many different elements in a non-traditional way it must take a lot thought to make it sound interesting and pleasing at the same time... [4 stars]”

- Christian Bernier, *Sea of Tranquility*, June 25th 2009, <http://www.seaoftranquility.org>

“... showing clear influences from a post Captain Beafheart approach mixed with elements of Magma, King Crimson, mathrock, near-jazzrock and especially Rock In Opposition, with the use of some female vocalist, namely Sleepytime Gorilla Museum's Carla Kihlstedt. This is intelligent new rock music with an important contribution of RIO compositional techniques with a good rhythm section. ... At certain small points/stage they remain closer to progressive rock. Well-composed newrock-RIO from Chicago.

- Gerald Van Waes, *Psychemusic.org*, July 3, 2010, <http://www.psychemusic.org>

“That's the moment I realised that this album was something a little bit special. The way Thymme Jones manages to sweep in with such a lazy, simple drum beat over all those confusing, jangly sounds is simply staggering. Something that started out sounding almost alien in its obliqueness suddenly sounds perfectly natural. The remainder of the song more than lives up to its initial promise, too - a bleak, disharmonious tune filled with massed female vocals, gritty guitar and pounding bass (...reminiscent of Jannick Top's meaty Zeuhl sound, but with a little more restraint). ...restraint is a surprisingly good word to describe much of this album. The whole thing is a tightly composed, arranged sort of affair with little room for improvisation. ...

The two short tracks which follow the superb but somewhat lethargic opener brilliantly showcase the band's more frenetic side. "Mescalato" is a quick burst of bass-laden madness... "Blue Cheadle" was an instant favourite of mine... It's been a struggle to write this review, as there are so few adequate ways to describe the music on this album. ... Any seasoned avant-prog fan...will simply relish in its complexities (and its simplicities too), and wallow in the nigh-on perfectly constructed-ness of it all. ...”

- David Edwards, *Prog Archives*, [www.progarchives.com](http://www.progarchives.com), March 2, 2009

“...Imagine the multi-part fugue-like structures of Gentle Giant, the jazzy gnat notes of Frank Zappa, backing vocals from The Northettes of Hatfield and the North, the avant-oddity of This Heat, the circus-like RIO whackiness of Hamster Theatre, the hypnotically repetitive chanting of Magma and the dark uneasiness of The Residents *all playing at once*, and you're somewhere in the ballpark of what *Fear Draws Misfortune* sounds like. ...This album is on my short list for the best album of 2009. It's simply a masterwork. ...”

- Fred Trafton, *Gibraltar*, May 31, 2010, [www.gepr.net](http://www.gepr.net)