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Sky Readers
Earth People (Undivided Vision)
By Florence Wetzel

If the cold weather is keeping you away from the clubs, you can still experience the excitement of a live performance on Earth People's recent release *Sky Readers*. The CD captures the art of improvisation, the high wire act that occurs when a song writes itself through musicians and their instruments. And with Earth People, a group composed of skillful and imaginative players, the music is a full-throttle adventure. As the Salvador Dali quote in the liner notes states, if you understand your painting beforehand, you might as well not paint it.

Earth People is an ongoing collaboration with a varying lineup. For this performance, the group consists of Jason Candler on sax, guitar and percussion, Firehorse on electronics, François Grillot on contrabass, Mark Hennen on piano and keyboards, André Martinez on drums and percussion, Sabir Mateen on sax, flute and clarinet, and Doug Principato on electric guitar. The CD was recorded live in April 2003 at New York City's Walker Space, and consists of two songs: the 41-minute "Magical Flower (Horus the Red Travels Backwards)", and the ten-minute "It's That Simple".

One of the reasons this group is so special is because its members are wildly multi-talented. Five of the seven have more than one instrument at their disposal, which allows them to explore myriad directions. Sabir Mateen's distinctive sound travels through various woodwinds, and André Martinez adds both forceful and sensitive percussion. Throughout "Magical Flower", the listener is treated to the shifting dynamics of soloists and group work as the players explore what the song is becoming. The song segues from mood to mood, concept to concept, and repeated listening reveals more and more layers. This is music to give yourself over to, just as one would in a club.

Improvisation is one of the oldest traditions in jazz, and when it's employed by those who seek to explode tradition, the results are exhilarating. This is the new new music, an up-to-date message from jazz avant garde; the music is alive and well, and Earth People is one of its strongest contributors. Be sure to catch them next time they're in town.

For more information, visit www.earthpeople.tv