

JazzTimes

AMERICA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

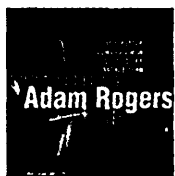
MARCH 2006

REVIEWS Guitartistry

By David R. Adler

ADAM ROGERS

Apparitions (Criss Cross)



Adam Rogers continues a vigorous run on the Criss Cross label with *Apparitions*, his third disc as a leader. Reassembling the lineup from 2003's *Allegory* (tenor saxophonist Chris Potter, pianist Edward Simon, bassist Scott Colley, drummer Clarence Penn), Rogers delivers another batch of cutting-edge original tunes. The opening "Labyrinth," one of his most memorable melodies to date, is beautifully orchestrated, with blue-streak guitar arpeggios under a soaring tenor line. "Continuance" and "Amphora" are also dense and quick-paced, meticulously composed but full of unexpected exchanges. "Tyranny of Fixed Numbers" finds Rogers shredding on Fender Strat over a fierce but unusual groove. "Persephone" and "The Maya" are mellower and darker, full of harmonic tension, and the closing "Moment in Time" is a trio vehicle for Rogers' luminous steel-string acoustic.

The title track, just under three minutes long, is an abstract rubato meditation influenced by the avant-garde composer Morton Feldman. In terms of melodic and rhythmic clarity, Rogers has few peers on the instrument, but his staggering technique is matched by musical sensitivity and a finely honed rapport with his quintet. In the transition from Simon's free-form interlude to Rogers' swinging solo flight on "Continuance," one hears the group dynamic at its most elevated.