

Kif

David Fiuczynski & Rufus Cappadocia | Fuzelicious Morsels

The country of Morocco is respected throughout Europe for, among other things, an estimated 30% of the continent's marijuana imports. The superior raw material called *Kif* is found there in the mountains of Rif. In Arabic, it's called:

كيف

Okay, got that? Enough said.

But don't go into *Kif*, the record, thinking it's some sort of stoner jam-band excursion. Quite the opposite: guitarist David Fiuczynski and cellist Rufus Cappadocia apply a razor edge to these pieces, asserting a very mixed up world view that emphasizes similarities as much as differences. On "Phrygianmode," for example, distorted metal passages and funky cello interludes pass in and around a prancing

Middle Eastern foundation. Not for the faint of heart! (But it works very well.)

While the leadership of this date is split between Fiuczynski and Cappadocia, it's the former who delivers the most dramatic and provocative performances. On "Chinese Go-Go" he roams an Eastern melody on the fretless guitar, sliding hither and thither between notes. Clearly the date was mixed and overdubbed in the studio for maximum effect, but there are still plenty of moments where it's not at all clear whether one man or two are playing the guitar (or any of the other six components of his stringed arsenal).

Downtempo moments such as the tender ballad "Prayer For My Father" take maximum advantage of the communication between the two string players. The cello, whatever it's plugged into, retains a thick, warm acoustic sound which underlines the organic flavor of this piece. Later on, Cappadocia draws further from the orchestral nature of his instrument to underpin "SlapBow."

If Tobias Ralph is really playing the drums on "Roxy Migraine," as I suspect he is, it's a fearsome concept. Just as on Fiuczynski's previous adventure *Jazz Punk*, the rhythm transforms inspiration from electronic drum-n-bass into a surreal backdrop for funky improvisation. Effects here--including Lian Amber's stretched-out vocals, and something that sounds like seagulls conversing--round out a most unusual theme.

In the end you have to accept the fact that *Kif* is just as much about stretching boundaries as breaking them and

gleefully thrusting the shards back together. Like everything David Fiuczynski has done since his early days with Ronald Shannon Jackson, this is pure fusion. Not the lame wank-guitar version, mind you, but a serious attempt to electrify jazz in all senses. *Kif*'s special infusion comes from so-called "world music," something which renders it distinct from all the rest. If you appreciate that inspiration, you'll find *Kif* an essential musical experience.

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~ Nils Jacobson



Track Listing: Mektoub; Phrygianmode; Chinese Go-Go; Prayer For My Father; Roxy Migraine; Purple Vishnu; SlapBow; Gaida; V'Smachte; Lullaby For Che.

Personnel: David Fiuczynski: fretted and fretless guitar, 12-string and quartertone guitar, bass, shortscale 11-string guitar, cümbüs (all pieces); Rufus Cappadocia: 5-string cello (all but #11); Daniel Sadownick: udu, djembe, congas, and percussion; Gene Lake: drums; Tobias Ralph: drums; Lian Amber: vocals; Matt Darriau: gaida, kaval, clarinet; Matte Henderson: "everything else."



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