

guitar hero just might have the power to make the F-, P-, and J-words (fusion, prog, and jam, as in “jam band”) good words again. **Abstract Logix.** —Jude Gold



## BRYAN BELLER

### Thanks in Advance

Although bassist Bryan Beller's second solo release is technically a “jazz-fusion” album, deploying plenty of serious musical

talent, he assiduously avoids the gratuitous displays of virtuosity and compositional bombast all too often associated with the genre. Beller's compositions are sophisticated but not stuffy, powerful but not overblown, diverse but not diffuse—and they are chock-full of great guitar playing by Mike Keneally, Chris Cottros, Rick Musallam, Griff Peters, Mike Olekshy, Bruce Dees, and Beller himself on one cut. Ace Nashville and Southern California players round out

the team. Opening with the purposefully languid “Snooze Bar”—which ends with the sound of an alarm clock buzzer—*Thanks in Advance* recapitulates Beller's journey of personal awakening and transformation, catalyzed by the death of a close friend in 2005. Highlights along the way include the Weather Report-approved “Casual Lie Day” and the N’awlins-inspired “Greasy Wheel,” both featuring tasty licks by Cottros; a bit-smashed noise rocker on which Beller plays everything but “real drums” titled “Cost of Doing Business;” the Zappa-esque “Blind Sideways;” a gorgeous orchestrated bass piece called “Life Story;” and a bluesy trio showcasing Griff Peters' gutsy guitar called “Cave Dweller.” But the pièce de résistance is “Love Terror Adrenaline/Break Through,” a complex yet lyrical King Crimson-meets-the Beatles masterpiece powered by a merciless guitar barrage from Keneally. The soulful, Hammond-drenched title track, and a sax-frenzied “From Nothing” close things out. And for those who like to delve deep, a special CD+DVD package is available on Beller's Website. The DVD features studio and live footage, interviews, and lots of bonus audio tracks. **Onion Boy.**

—Barry Cleveland

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## PRINT



### OFF THE RAILS: ABOARD THE CRAZY TRAIN IN THE BLIZZARD OF OZZ

By Rudy Sarzo

This book is not particularly well written, is chock-full of typos, and is poorly edited. That being said, it's also a fascinating window into bassist Rudy Sarzo's world and a heartfelt tribute to his friend and bandmate Randy Rhoads. Sarzo talks about his youth, growing up in Castro's Cuba, getting his first guitar, and dedicating himself to music upon seeing the Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. But it's Sarzo's tales of meeting and playing with Rhoads that will really appeal to guitarists. He recounts how a young Rhoads captivated audiences at Quiet Riot gigs with a Les Paul plugged into a solid-state Peavey amp. He explains the changes in Rhoads' tone and technique after recording with Osbourne in England (he had switched to his famous Marshall rig by