

Gapplegate Guitar and Bass Blog

Grego's First Blog: 1,001 Knights, Reviews of Music CDs for Guitar, Bass and Otherwise

Classical-Modern Music Review
Gapplegate Music Review
(Jazz)
Grego's Yakety-Yak



About This Blog

Grego Applegate Edwards writes this column.

The Gapplegate Guitar and Bass Blog has grown over several years to contain more than 1,000 reviews of CDs by guitarists, bassists,

Wednesday, August 14, 2013

House of Love, She Paints Words in Red



When I had to have a tooth extracted a few weeks ago, I spent some time in my dentist's office for several visits. They were playing what I assume was top-40 radio the whole time and I was taken aback. I just don't follow that genre these days for various reasons, partially because it has become somewhat marginalized with the burgeoning of niche programming. A big hit on top-40 these days--it's not a part of the national or world awareness in the top-to-bottom sense than it was when almost everybody listened to AM top-40 and knew all the songs, or at least I get that impression. There is a more specific target, others don't listen anymore so much, though they may know the sexy images of some of the "stars," no? Yeah and that's because the image is what matters now, not the music. But still, what I heard! Never mind what for now

vocalists and otherwise. Each musician is a hero in my mind, a Knight in Shining Armor, devoting a lifetime to music that you can enjoy and treasure. Here are my 1,000 knights, and my many 1,000 nights spent listening so I could review this music for you. If you care about what you hear and want to know more about what is out there, you are the person I have in mind as I write these postings. If music isn't an important part of your life this blog is probably not for you.

Various musical genres get attention on these pages: jazz and rock with guitarists and/or bassists playing a prominent role, classical music for the guitar, world music, blues, roots, electric music, vocalists.

I cover other jazz and improvisation on the Gapplegate Music Review blog (see link on this page) and modern classical and avant garde concert music on the new blogsite Classical-Modern Music Review (see link).

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actually, it was what I did NOT hear. The influence of rock and r&b was not at all discernible, at least the 10-15 songs I heard. That came as a slight shock. It was homogenized synth pop of a pretty uniform, product-oriented, formulaic sort. I did not find much to like. It was a music churning machine thing and other than some hook there was nothing musically or song-wise that stood out. Rather awful.

I bring this up because today's CD by today's group might in another era have made it to the top-40 charts, with the right song. Like REM did even though REM had strength well beyond pop potential. OK so the House of Love group isn't pop. It's rock. But there are songs, real songs on the album *She Paints Words in Red* (Cherry Red 556). It's a strong singing going on too--maybe like mid-late Byrds slightly sometimes. There are good, straightforward lead vocals and nice harmonies when they go to that.

It's a guitar band in the combo-rock sense and there's decent playing going on, a decent lead guitarist too, though he doesn't play much in the way of solos and he isn't note-y as much as tasteful. The lyrics are more alt than trailer-trash dumb, and I suppose that's another reason the dentist's station would not find itself playing their songs. And given what I heard at the dentist, I don't imagine anything of substance would get played? So be it?

What matters is that there still is good alt out there if you look for it. This band sounds very good to me, for all that. There is a slight retro element but in the sense that the music has classic rock roots. So much the better since there don't seem to be widespread roots getting layed out into the earth in the mainstream today. It's worse than Bobby Rydell, baby! Worse than the sweet crooner bands of the '20s-'40s of last century. This ain't that and it ain't what's playing at my dentist's. I love my dentist but not her radio! This band would sound much better in there, novocaine or no.

Posted by [Grego Applegate Edwards](#) at 7:58 AM

Labels: [alt rock today](#), [house of love](#), [house of love she paints words in red](#), [gapplegate guitar review](#), [indie rock](#), [retro flavored alt](#), [song oriented rock alt](#)

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