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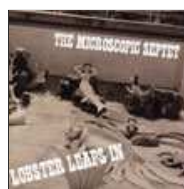
## Jazz CD Reviews



## The Microscopic Septet - Lobster Leaps In - Cuneiform Records

*The first new album in 20 years from the septet whose fame was enlarged by use of their music as the theme of the NPR show Fresh Air.*

Published on November 14, 2008



The Microscopic Septet - Lobster Leaps In - Cuneiform Records Rune 272 \*\*\*\*:

(Philip Johnston, soprano sax; Don Davis, alto sax; Mike Hashim, tenor sax; Dave Sewelson, baritone sax; Joel Forrester, piano; David Hofstra, bass; Richard Dworkin, drums)



This is the first new album in 20 years from the septet whose fame was enlarged by use of their music as the theme of the NPR show Fresh Air. They originally put together in 1980 a sax quartet with a swinging piano trio for a fresh sound that distills the essence of jazz while communicating great intelligence and a spirit of good fun. Cuneiform released reissues of two double-CD albums by the septet two years ago [we [reviewed them here](#)], and acclaim for them resulted in the group reuniting to perform several shows. It went so well they decided to record a brand new album, and this is it.

The new CD features eleven previously unrecorded tunes from their original repertory of over 180. As with their other albums, the musical mix leans on pre-WW II styles but brought up to date with sophisticated and often humorous arrangements influenced by Dixieland, tango, polka, boogie-woogie, Latin, rock, lounge jazz, bebop, klezmer, blues - just about everything and anything. The group's enthusiasm and tongue-in-cheek approach is what makes them so enjoyable compared to many straight-ahead jazz groups, as well as compared to the more avant-garde aggregations. Nearly all 11 tunes are originals from either soprano saxist Johnston or pianist Forrester. Alto saxist Davis is the soloist in *Disconcerto*, and *Lies* is a lush and poetic number in the style of Billy Strayhorn. *Twilight Time Zone* takes a similar musical twist to the wording of its title. The album was recorded in Brooklyn last year and sonics are excellent.

**TrackList:** Night Train Express, Disconcerto for Donnie, Lobster Leaps In, Got Lucky, Lies, Life's Other Mystery, Almost Right, Money Money Money, Lt. Cassawary, Twilight Time Zone, The Big Squeeze.

- John Henry

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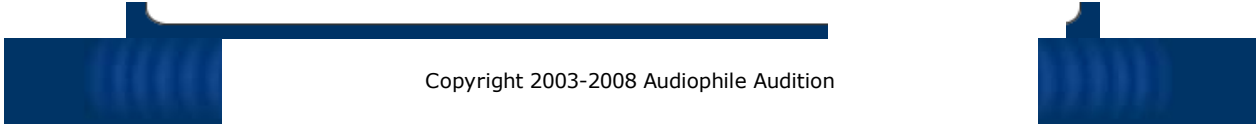
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