

ROBERT STILLMAN'S "HORSES"

Horses is a collection of songs by instrumentalist/composer Robert Stillman. Stillman uses an eclectic sonic palette consisting of saxophones, clarinets, old pianos, pump organs, and drums to create short musical narratives that exist on their own, but also work together to create a vivid, self-contained world echoing the composer's interest in all things mysterious.

Though *Horses* is Stillman's debut recording as a leader, he is no newcomer to the music world. His woodwind-arrangements and piano playing can be heard on friend and labelmate Luke Temple's recent release, *Hold A Match for a Gasoline World*. Robert also lends his drumming skills to the New York rock foursome The End of The World and continues to make his presence felt as a saxophonist on the improvised music scene throughout the U.S. and Europe.

In December of 2004, Stillman and a group of his closest friends from Maine and New York holed up in Seattle's Avast Recording Company with engineer Troy Tietjen (The Decemberists, Death Cab for Cutie) to record the *Horses* repertoire for Mill Pond Records, emerging a little over a week later with the seven beautifully haunted-sounding tracks that comprise *Horses*.

From one listen it is clear Stillman took full advantage of the recording studio's resources to shape a production that is at once delicate and urgent; the sounds on *Horses* seem to live and breathe as distinct characters in a wordless musical narrative. One would be hard pressed to pin the music down in terms of genre; though the shrewd listener may be able to pick out hints of Stillman's variant musical influences, (among whom he counts Kurt Weill, The Band, Milton Nascimento, Miles Davis, and Maurice Ravel). It's clear the music on *Horses* exists on its own terms, a detailed musical territory unto itself.

Since the January release of *Horses*, Stillman has been presenting the repertoire in two different formats: one is his original, experimental take on the one-man-band tradition (a home-made set up of drums, piano, melodica, tape loops, and other various instruments, often played simultaneously); the other is with a band of fellow multi-instrumentalist Mainers. Recent notable *Horses* shows include Vassar College, the Knitting Factory (NYC), American University, The Cake Shop (NYC), and Zeitgeist Gallery (Boston, MA). This summer, the band will travel west to perform at the Bleeding Edge Festival in Santa Cruz, California on a bill that also includes Yo La Tengo, Black Dice, and Matmos.

REVIEWS:

"...'Horses' whirls like a dancer in a slit skirt, each slow turn and quick step showing you a glimpse of something you desperately want to see again, and each track another chance to capture it." -The Washington Examiner

"In an age of so many genres and subgenres, it's refreshing to come across a disc that defies categorization. So it goes with 'Horses'... It's elegant, graceful music that's in no rush to get anywhere in a hurry..." -Billboard

"Stillman is a master of small gestures, and it's his ability to let sound escape in measured doses--like an author slowly revealing each wrinkle in a potboiler--that makes *Horses* consistently engaging." -Magnet

"Stillman exhibits an enviable aptitude for quiet experimentation in his compositions, testing boundaries and taking subtle chances without alienating his audience." -Dusted



MILL POND RECORDS MPO04

TRACK LISTING:

1. The Dance 1
2. Horses
3. Half-Luke
4. Love Theme
5. Cavalry
6. The Dance 2
7. That's Enough

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