

ADAM BERENSON,  
DIALECTICAL CONSTRUCTS,  
Ⓢ DREAM PLAY, no #.

*Initiation and Transformation (Contingency) / Very Soon Mankind Will No Longer Be a Useless Passion (Broadway Melody of 1996) / Incarnation Dialectic / Ricercar (For Sven Nykvist) / Dissolve / Empirical [sic] Waltz / The Sphinx / Inheritance / Tenth Tableau (Apodictic Ubiquity) / Trio For Three. 69:10.*  
Berenson, p; Scott Barnum, b; Bob Moses, d. June 23 and 24, 1996, Cambridge, MA.

is a pleasant debut by Berenson, whose style ranges (perhaps a bit too widely) from near-mainstream to near-cutting edge. His compositions are subtle and engaging and his playing, which is more than competent, generally remains at the service of the music. He is particularly well served by Moses, whose innovative, often crunchy-sounding percussion supplies many of the disk's highlights – both during his solos and within his tasteful accompaniments. The bass playing is a little diffident and is not clearly recorded. In addition, the quality of the tunes drops off a bit after the touching opening piano solo and the quirky second tune until the clever waltz that comprises "The Sphinx." But the only real downside to the disk is the pseudo-intellectual (and even ungrammatical) prose in the liner notes. ("Life so often provides us with the unequivocal and obvious, that it becomes a kind of responsibility for that of the arts to provide another view or perhaps dimension of life." etc. etc.) I suppose we have to put up with this kind of stuff from truly great artists like Anthony Braxton or Sun Ra, but I'm not sure why so many Jazz musicians feel the desperate need to enlighten us regarding their metaphysicopsychological insights into the meaning of the universe, the psyche or the astral regions.

I don't really know, but I have a strong suspicion that Blues fans don't have to suffer through liner notes on unreachable truth or tune titles involving apodicticity. Of course, what's important is the music, and Berenson demonstrates to a moral certainty that he has something interesting to say in *that* language. Q.E.D.

Walter Horn