

Lunar Adventures

Lunar Adventures (Cassette)

New Moon (Cassette)

Available from Coat Cooke, 1150A Forge Walk, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6H 3P9

Vancouver, B.C.'s Lunar Adventures has hit upon a unique ensemble sound that gathers the innovations of the last 20 years of jazz history—'60s free jazz rave ups, '70s Ornette Coleman harmolodics, '80s no-wave minimalism and scronk guitar—into a new package that's tied off with a bow of urban color. The ensemble sound derives its integrity from the unison lines of altoist Coat Cooke and guitarist Ron Samworth. Cooke is not your typical post-Parker saxophonist. His lines are deliberate and sparse, avoiding virtuosity for its own sake. He is also effective as a counter-melodist behind Samworth's scronk guitar and proficient at a number of styles. He can rock with appropriate growl, scratch and feedback, or can sound like Jim Hall with Paul Desmond (one of Ornette's early influences).

The rhythm tandem of bassist Clyde Reed and drummer Greg Simpson is one of the most together sections I've heard in the Northwest. They bring a traditional jazz feel to whatever sound the group is exploring. These two tapes share some of the same tunes. It's instructive to note how the group's approach has solidified. The headlines are now more concise, the improvisations more thoughtful. "Pacific Lean Time" has also grown into a fully-realized performance gaining both length and clarity.

Lunar Adventures is from the provinces, but they're sure not provincial. This band is so New York I can't stand it.

Gary Bannister