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MAY 16, 2019
BY S. VICTOR AARON

Sam Ospovat – ‘Ride Angles’ (2019)

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by Sam Ospovat

7. Kim's Line 00:00 / 01:21

Having been a part of way-out-of-the-box ensembles such as Ava Mendoza’s Unnatural Ways, Brandon Seabrook’s Die Trommel Fatale and The Enablers, the time seemed right for the drummer and composer from Lincoln, Nebraska Sam Ospovat to step out on his own. And amply armed with a base trio that includes Matt Mitchell (piano) and Kim Cass (bass), he does just that, absorbing everything from vanguards and processing it en route to making edgy jazz informed by his own strengths as a songsmith and percussion specialist.

That debut *Ride Angles* is a play on words, of course, but it’s also very descriptive. Ospovat is directing the sophisticated course of a performance from his drums, often via a ride cymbal, as each song takes sharp angles as it progresses by mysterious but deadly precise means.

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Ospovat composes in a way that leverages his innate understanding of rhythm. He creatively tinkers with the variations of tempo on “Off The Shelf Self (Head Voice),” making unanticipated speed-ups and slowdowns part of the adventure, with Cass being the immovable foundation around with Ospovat and Mitchell in tight formation swirl around. For “Beynon’s Bounce (Chest Voice),” it’s Ospovat’s cymbal that holds the center, his other hand jousting with Mitchell before it all breaks open into a choppy, rhythm/harmony pattern.

Ospovat’s deep funk construction with an impossible time signature using a ride cymbal, bass drum and snare



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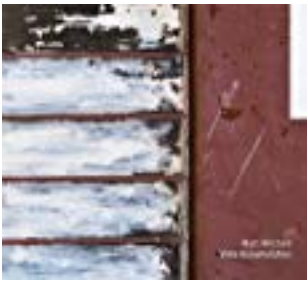







send "The Martian Way" on its way and some extra agitation thanks to Seabrook and alto saxophonist Nick Lyons. "Kim's Line" is brief, but mimics the groove-laden intro of "The Martian Way," only this time Cass is participating in a perfect syncopation with Ospovat.

For "Trans Life," Lyons pairs up with Mitchell this time for the slovenly lines that make up the initial phase; Seabrook prods the song into a freer direction. On that song and on "3-Levels," Ospovat's artistry shows up in his active approach to shift the rhythms to attenuate the mood of a song, a rare ability to drive the harmonics of it from behind the kit. And the vocal of Lorin Benedict acts not as a lyrical vehicle on "Rancune" but an improvisational complement to Mitchell's piano.

It might seem harder to 'lead from behind' but in his first time at bat as a leader, Sam Ospovat's got that all figured out. On *Ride Angles*, the band is an extension of Ospovat's mind, a very fertile mind at that.

Ride Angles is now available courtesy of [Skirl Records](#).

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Me: "Every now and then I get a little bit lonely and you're never comin' round"
Cop: "TURN AROUND!"
Me: "Every now..."
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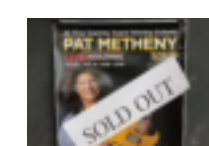
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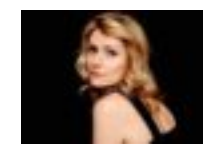
S. Victor Aaron

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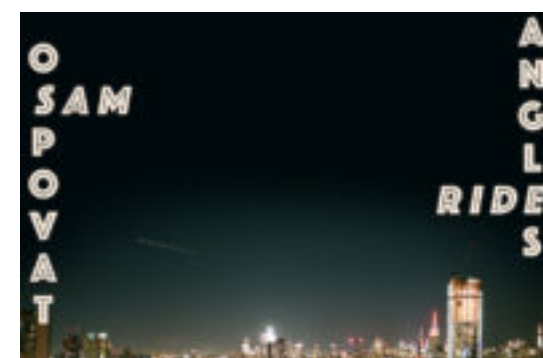
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