



<http://www.younggodrecords.com>

«Charlemagne Palestine has been making music since the early 1960s (then in NYC, now in Belgium). He studied with the seminal electronic music pioneer, composer Morton Sobotnik, as well as the legendary Indian vocal master Pran Nath (La Monte Young and Terry Riley also studied with Pran Nath). He's renowned for the rising intensity of his live performances, and for the slowly building spiritual power ("transcendent" is a word often used to describe his music) of his steadily morphing drone-based pieces. I'm a long-time fan of American minimal music, especially Tony Conrad, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Phil Niblock et al., but have to admit I didn't know Mr. Palestine's work until David Coulter sent me this CD. It's been a revelation. Maximin is essentially a re-working of the austere tones of several of Palestine's recent original pieces. So, in essence David and Jean Marie played to the pre-recorded music of Palestine, reacting to it in a natural, improvisatory fashion. The result is a deeply-textured, constantly evolving collection of organic soundscapes. One track (Karenina Revisited), which features the frail and plangent vocals of Mr. Palestine (he was also a cantoral (cantorial? Sp?) singer in his youth, at synagogue) is absolutely stunning, and gives me shivers every time I hear it. It's a beautiful record, and it's given me hours of pleasure listening to it here as I work. It's also inspired me to acquire and enjoy many other works by Mr. Palestine, and I hope you do the same. If you care about challenging, soulful music with a purity of intent, you won't be disappointed.

Michael Gira - USA - juin 2002.

«This won't be released until the end of October, but once it comes out there are some stereos on which it will continue playing until time stops. Drone music from a composer named Charlemagne Palestine about whom lots of people apparently knows lots of things and have lots of opinions. I'd never heard of him, but I played this thing at



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*ridiculously high volume when I first got it and I almost saw God» -
John Darnielle of The Mountain Goats - USA - août 2002.*

«Depending on how much a purist you are, UK composer, multi-instrumentalist and session musician David Coulter and Belgian sound manipulator/collagist Jean Marie Mathoul's combined reconfiguration of minimalist/fine artist Charlemagne Palestine's greatest hits will be a pleasant surprise or a nasty shock. Working with edited highlights from Palestine's Jamaica Heinekens in Brooklyn field recording composition, his Schlongo!!!daLUVdrone for solo pipe organ and Karenina, his piece for voice and harmonium, Coulter and Mathoul have applied their own electronic and found sound flourishes to ingeniously remodel some of the composer's original ideas. Yet, for the most part, they keep the spirit intact. (...) The worst thing here happens on Schlongo!!!daLUVdrone revisited # 2, where an ugly electronic drum track and gurgling voice loop clumsily drown out Palestine's sustained spectral organ drone. (...) On the other two versions of Schlongo!!!daLUVdrone revisited and Karenina revisited, the duo are more sensitively attuned to the music which they obviously adore. Here they electronically stroke the edges of the originals and incorporate a bush recording of what sounds like a didgeridoo to create a ritualistic ambiance that embraces the ideas of the three collaborators. Regardless of any misgivings of seasoned Palestine listeners, this CD opens a valuable entry point for those who have not yet to hear a note of this master minimalist's eternally beautiful spiritual swell»

Edwyn Pouncey in Wire - 2002

«Minimalist Charlemagne Palestine crafts sparse compositions that possess the power of classical and the daring of experimental and ambient music. Jean-Marie Mathoul and David Coulter have taken Palestine's work and given it respectful reinterpretation, and the result breathes new life into his atonal, angelic, and always evocative creations.».

Download.com - 2002 / USA



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«Charlemagne Palestine (a noted early minimal composer and conceptual artist) took a break from music for a number of years to focus on his fascinating installations. The last three or four years have seen him return to his minimal roots with a series of brilliant new releases that are varied in their execution, but fairly united in their conception. Pieces tend to range from 45 to 75 minutes in length on compact disc and deal with various aspects of the creation of the drone and its ability to seemingly alter aspects of time. «Maximin» comes as a bit of a surprise. David Coulter and Jean Marie Mathoul have re-configured moments from three of the previous new Palestine records with his blessing and participation. Using those records as templates, they have distilled the pieces into anywhere from two-and-a-half to 12-minute sections, then subtly added additional drones, loops, guitars, pianos, etc. One would think that this would drastically alter the intent of the music (Reich re-mixed anyone?), yet they've managed to very faithfully adhere to the spirit of the original pieces. Highlights include the reworked versions of Palestine's «Jamaica Heinekens in Brooklyn» in which Palestine wandered around during the famed annual West Indian Day Parade with a tape recorder and then applied a drone to the proceedings, and Palestine's very beautiful and odd singing on «Karenina». Hopefully, by shortening the length of the tracks, and in a sense compiling his recent output, the music of Charlemagne Palestine will reach a much wider audience than what he has thus been granted. A brilliant place to start for the uninitiated».

MK - OtherMusic - 2002 (USA).

«Pionnier de la musique minimaliste aux côtés de Tony Conrad et de La Monte Young, Charlemagne Palestine bâtit des pièces méditatives (voire tantriques) dont les variations sont du domaine de la densité. On peut souvent les assimiler à de longs drones mouvants, mais elles restent avant tout qualifiées de sculptures sonores. Peu connu, ce compositeur juif américain compte cependant quelques admirateurs bien en vue dans la génération artistique qui l'a suivi : entre autres David Tibet, Pan Sonic, David Coulter et Jean Marie Mathoul. Ces deux



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derniers, déjà collaborateurs sur le projet 48 Cameras, ont revisité trois de ses travaux récents. Les synthés, l'harmonium et le chant quasi enfantin de Charlemagne Palestine sont délicatement enrichis par une palette plus large d'éléments : didjeridoo, électronique, piano, percussions, platines, flûtes, synthés, rythmes, samples et traitement studio. Il en découle une musique atemporelle, organique, émotionnelle, à la fois ethnique et transculturelle, vaguement psychédélique, douillette à rester sous la couette. Les pratiques musicales des protagonistes s'entrecroisent et se fondent en respect de la démarche de Palestine, à savoir que chaque pièce forme une sorte de «drone+» tout en restant dans la logique d'une masse sonore à la fois compacte et évolutive. (...) Le tout est un maxi minimalisme simplement délectable hormis quelques titres ambient world, moins intéressants que ceux qui collent au plus près des originaux.»

W - Jazdo.

«Music of the seminal early Minimalist composer Charlemagne Palestine, as re-configured/re-iterated by David Coulter and Jean Marie Mathoul, in co-operation/collaboration with Mr. Palestine. Coulter and Mathoul have taken previously recorded works of Mr. Palestine and - with the full respect due these often transcendent and sacred works - interwoven new sounds/found-sounds, drones, and unexpected textures into an ever-shifting flow that brings new light to these deeply soulful, sonic-sculptural emanations. Re-contextualizing the pure and spiritual force of nature that Mr. Palestine's music represents could be a risky musical undertaking, but in my opinion Coulter and Mathoul have pulled it off beautifully, inspired solely by their love and respect of the original works themselves. The mixes have an authentic, hand made sensibility, and even when electronics are occasionally introduced, retain an organic feel.»

Sound - 2002 (UK)



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«The results are usually fairly strong, and at the very least always admirable for effort. The sole exception is «Schlongo!!!daLUVdrone revisited #2,» which, for some reason opts to add a sterile beat that overpowers the already sufficiently exciting music. The single look at Karenina on the album takes one of Palestine's weaker pieces (a long organ drone mixed with chanting) and makes it suitably denser, certainly doing the work justice, despite a particularly short duration. The real highlights in Maximin, however, are Coulter and Mathoul's takes on Jamaica Heinekens, where Palestine's incredibly layered work is analyzed and augmented to an absolutely euphoric degree thanks to electric guitars, hurdy-gurdies, and additional voices. Coulter and Mathoul really seem to get to the center of the piece, that sense of joy and awe that Palestine's work always seems to touch on».

Dorian Basto -19.com

« (...). La musique du compositeur new-yorkais (installé depuis longtemps en Belgique) séduit d'emblée Jean Marie qui soumet un projet de remix auprès de Michael Gira (patron du label Young God Records) et du multi-instrumentiste anglais David Coulter (par ailleurs membre de 48 Cameras). « L'enthousiasme que nous affichions tous les trois ne suffisait pas pour concrétiser le projet. On m'avait annoncé que Charlemagne Palestine était un type peu disponible. Je lui ai envoyé des bandes puis nous avons passé une soirée ensemble... Il s'est montré très charmant et m'a donné son accord. » Une fois celui-ci obtenu, Jean Marie s'enferme quelques semaines dans son « Observatory » pour y élaborer les sculptures sonores qui alimenteront ce Maximin parfois ardu, toujours troublant. L'hommage rendu à ce musicien trop méconnu est aussi vibrant qu'actuel. (...)»

Jazz@round - 2003 (Belgium)



« Palestine / Coulter / Mathoul - Mis bout à bout, les trois noms suggèrent une alliance professionnelle telle celle d'un cabinet d'avocats ou d'experts. En fait d'alliance, il s'agit d'une association momentanée dont on ne sait pour l'heure si elle en restera là ou si elle se renouvellera. La paternité du projet revient à Jean Marie Mathoul (le fondateur et le membre permanent de 48 Cameras) qui eut l'idée de revisiter certains morceaux de Charlemagne Palestine. Il les retravailla avec David Coulter (musicien actif sur la scène new-yorkaise, aussi bien à l'aise au piano qu'au didjeridoo), puis les soumit pour approbation à Palestine qui fut séduit par l'idée. Le résultat ne tient ni du simple remixage, ni de la collaboration concertée et simultanée. Il oscille entre les deux pôles. Les pièces minimales et répétitives de Charlemagne Palestine ont été revues par l'apport d'instruments extérieurs (piano, sampler, percussions...) et retouchées à l'aide de techniques de studio ou improvisées comme... de la colle ! Il faut évidemment être coutumier ou amateur du travail de Charlemagne Palestine pour saisir la portée des nuances qui respectent l'œuvre de manière assez fidèle, si ce n'est sur un morceau où la boîte à rythme apparaît comme étant superfétatoire et étrangère. Mais, même sans ce pré-requis, il est loisible d'apprécier ce disque à sa pleine valeur car en finale la musique de Charlemagne Palestine est l'une des plus subtile et extensible qu'il soit. Le titre rejoint ce constat puisqu'il apparaît comme un pied de nez à l'adjectif minimaliste qui a trop souvent enserré la musique de Palestine dans un carcan stylistique de loin trop étroit pour le personnage. »

Eric Therer - in Rif Raf - B - février 2003.

«L'album de Palestine / Coulter / Mathoul est étrange, électronique et ambient. Les trois spécialistes de la musique contemporanéoexpérimentale ont réuni diverses pièces de leurs archives pour réaliser sept nouvelles oeuvres sonores et planantes où les drones sont sporadiquement perturbés par des samples venus de nulle part ou bercés par la voix indescriptible de Charlemagne Palestine»

in Id-Side - 2003 (France)



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«Whenever people go on about the glut of CDs that are available to buy these days and how that somehow dampens creativity or hurts the music world, it always makes me think about the multitudes of amazing recordings I come across on a regular basis and wonder if I'd be finding the same variety if I was doing this at other points in the past. While there's no doubt legion of great musicians who have been overlooked by most people over time, these days it seems like nearly every lost legend has some great indie label ready to release their works. I may be exaggerating, but it makes me happy to see under-heralded musicians get another chance. Maximin takes the music of one such composer, Charlemagne Palestine--whose biography is an amazing read, filled with important roles in the worlds of art and music--and matches it with two younger musicians. It is thus both a rediscovery and a brand-new journey. Experimental musicians David Coulter and Jean Marie Mathoul have taken Palestine's music and reconfigured it, adding their own sounds and textures. The resulting album both offers Palestine's music and interacts with it. The 7 tracks, built around three different original pices of music by Palestine, are beautiful, haunting minimalist works that envelop you with moods and sounds. Organs and synthesizers seem to be the key instruments, though Coulter and Mathoul have added a whole landscape of voices, beats and sounds to complement and converse with the original music. Maximin is interesting in how, for listeners like me who are previously unfamiliar with Palestine's music, it's both an introduction to the past and a step into the future. In both regards it's exciting.»

Dave Heaton - Erasing Clouds / USA - 2003

«You'd think with such a determined course of action some people would just run out of ideas. Granted, plenty have. Look at popular pariah La Monte Young or upper crust panderers like Philip Glass and you'll see just what a played-out fever dream repetition can be. Obviously, these are two easy targets doing very different music, Glass's additive/subtractive cyclical compositions have more or less devolved to the point where they just sound like easy-bake film music along the lines of a composer like John Williams. I'd like to take the credit for



attributing John Williams with the moniker of «minimalist,» but that distinct pleasure goes to composer Charlemagne Palestine, who could probably teach Glass and Young a thing or two about their music.

Palentine's work has more shared territory with Young than it does with Glass. Long drones, microtonal quivers, epic duration all factor in, but Palestine places importance on innovation and physicality. Palestine's work shows a composer who hurdles himself into his music and requires that the listener do the same. Apparently, he's even bloodied his fists on numerous occasions from the sheer violence he inflicts upon his piano at his concerts. More importantly, however, is the constantly shifting approach to his work.

On an album like the fantastic Jamaica Heinekens in Brooklyn, Palestine mixes a synthesized drone with field recordings he made with a tape recorder while walking through the Jamaica Heinekens festival in New York. It is one of the most colorful, engaging recordings made in the minimalist idiom, feeling almost a thousand miles away from the ominous refrigerator hum of the preceding minds of his genre. Or take all of the amazing work with overdubbed pianos and electronics on Six Manifestations of Four Elements, or the work with strings, sax, and metal chimes on Alloy, or Godbear, where Palestine programmed a Bosendorfer to play his with his distinct approach. These are albums with such a keen attention to overtones and density that they are without a doubt some of the most powerful music I have ever heard.

I meet a lot of cynical, hipster music fans and I tend to ask them when the last time a piece of music actually made them cry, the last time they were literally moved, beyond just using grandiose adjectives to describe the work. Often, the people I've talked to can't even remember. Godbear was one of those albums for me, an album where I was honestly moved to tears. Jamaica Heinekens was also one of those albums for me.

With Maximin, Palestine takes yet another approach to his work. He allows several pieces of his to be «revisited» by David Coulter and Jean Marie Mathoul. Granted, Steve Reich=EDs work underwent remix treatment not to long ago, when a bunch of beat-making electronic music paragons decided to show the kids how cool Reich's work was. I didn't like it so much, to be frank, and hell, to be even more frank, I



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don't particularly love anything Reich's done in the past twenty years, but that=EDs beside the point and perhaps unnecessary.

Maximin draws from three different Palestine albums over its brief 47 minute duration, Schlongo!!!daLUVdrone, Karenina, and the aforementioned Jamaica Heinekens. Coulter and Mathoul employ a variety of musicians and instruments to experiment with Palestine's work, which then in turn gets the go-ahead from Palestine himself.

It's unclear what the motivation here is. The album is certainly more accessible than Palestine=EDs other work, taking works that go beyond an hour in length and re-examining them in shorter fragments, now even denser in sound. It seems justified as Palestine's works have always microscopically analyzed the smallest nuances of music.

The results are usually fairly strong, and at the very least always admirable for effort. The sole exception is «Schlango!!!daLUVdrone revisited #2,» which, for some reason opts to add a sterile beat that overpowers the already sufficiently exciting music. The single look at Karenina on the album takes one of Palestine's weaker pieces (a long organ drone mixed with chanting) and makes it suitably denser, certainly doing the work justice, despite a particularly short duration.

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The brevity of the disc and the pieces on it might not be as substantial or effective at evoking those disorienting and drowning feelings that one might get from Palestine's longer works, but Maximin will, without a doubt whet the appetite of Palestine's future fans».

Dorian Basto _ Ink19 (20??)