

JAMEY HADDAD • LENNY WHITE • MARK SHERMAN



CHESKY RECORDS

HIDEOUT JAZZ

SACD352

EXPLORATIONS IN SPACE AND TIME

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Jamey Haddad • Lenny White • Mark Sherman

Percussion

Drums

Vibraphone

Binaural Neumann KU-100 "Dummy Head" Microphone

- 01. **Stank** 04:41
- 02. **Wood and Metal** 03:35
- 03. **War** 05:46
- 04. **The Wind** 04:53
- 05. **Seven** 05:37
- 06. **Tranquility** 04:31
- 07. **Groove** 05:10
- 08. **Phrases** 02:41
- 09. **Long Distance** 05:30

Soundfield Mark 5 Microphone

- 10. **Stank** 04:41
- 11. **Wood and Metal** 03:35
- 12. **War** 05:46
- 13. **The Wind** 04:53
- 14. **Seven** 05:37
- 15. **Tranquility** 04:31
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- 17. **Phrases** 02:41
- 18. **Long Distance** 05:30

Binaural Neumann KU-100 "Dummy Head" Microphone

bonus tracks:

- 19. **Rhythm** 06:23
- 20. **Roots** 07:18

* On *Seven* Mark Sherman plays drums and Lenny White plays timpani, vibes and percussion

*All songs written by Lenny White, Jamey Haddad
and Mark Sherman.
Published by: Chesky Productions*



The *Explorations in Space & Time* sessions were simultaneously recorded in two ways: One recording was designed for playback over speakers, and a second “binaural” recording for playback over headphones. Both were ultra-high-resolution 176 kHz/24 bit recordings, and both were completely uncompressed and no equalization or processing of any kind was used. In other words, the sound I heard at the session will be the sound you hear.

The binaural recording’s microphones were located in a Neumann “Dummy Head” where the ear canals would be, and playback virtually puts the listener’s ears in the microphones positions at the session. A single, specially modified Soundfield Mark 5 microphone was used for the recording for playback over speakers. The Neumann and Soundfield microphones were both centrally positioned in the front of the “stage.”

The first thing I noticed about the sound was just how dynamically alive these recordings are. When Lenny White first whacked his snare drum I literally jumped, and the big bass drums’ impact was as visceral as I’ve ever heard. The dynamic shadings of the vibes, small and large drums, and the magnificent tympani were all distinctively rendered. The spatial aspects of the sound were extremely life-like, and three-dimensional over speakers. The binaural recording captured the full 360 degree lateral sound space surrounding the dummy head. Both recordings will put you, the listener, within the great acoustic space at the St Elias Catholic Church. You’re in the best seat in the house!

The Chesky Records’ methodology stands in sharp contrast to virtually all contemporary recordings produced in acoustically dead studios. In those cases the mix engineers apply digital (artificial) reverberation to make the music sound like it was recorded in a live space. Trust me on this, the real thing—acoustic space—sounds far more realistic.

—Steve Guttenberg



In the tradition of Max Roach's innovative seven-piece percussion ensemble M'Boom (founded in 1970 and continuing to this day) and 1984's landmark *Pieces of Time* (a drummers summit meeting with Andrew Cyrille, Milford Graves, Famoudou Don Moye and bebop pioneer Kenny Clarke) comes this compelling compendium of textures, tones and grooves. The three world class players on this boldly experimental session—world music maven and hand percussion master Jamey Haddad, classically-trained jazz vibraphonist-tympanist Mark Sherman and traps set drummer extraordinaire Lenny White—entered into the proposition of making music together with carte blanche. Not only had they never played together before, they had virtually no rehearsal time before recording. And yet, the music they made together was as cohesive and complementary as if the entire encounter had been composed and thoughtfully arranged ahead of time.

"We're composing as we play," says White, famed for fueling the '70s fusion juggernaut *Return To Forever* and appearing on Miles Davis' seminal jazz-rock offering, *Bitches Brew*. "That's what jazz musicians do every night."

"There was no overdubbing so you really had to make a call right then and there," adds Haddad of their harmonious live session. "In that situation, you just hope

that you catch some really good energy and something happens. And I think we did that at times.” Sherman concurs. “There was definitely an instant connection that we made between Lenny and Jamey and myself,” he says. “And we all walked away loving it.”

This was a high wire act of the highest order, an impromptu gathering in the studio (in this case a spacious, resonant church in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn, which Pat Metheny had used as a rehearsal space for his sprawling *Orchestrion* project last year) based on trust and a mutual understanding of groove. Together these three empathetic pros produced dramatic results, ranging on the dynamic scale from thunderous torrents of tympani, gongs and drumset to the zen-like hush of delicate chimes, where silence takes on a significant presence in the mix.





Creating from a blank slate and developing chemistry on the spot requires uncanny listening abilities and finely-tuned instincts. And Msrs. Haddad, Sherman and White were clearly up to the task. For Sherman's part, "I just tried to think in terms of playing cohesively and with purpose. You have this strange combination of instruments and that in and of itself makes it problematic if it's not focused. So I tried to make sure that whatever part I played inside of each one of these pieces brought some sort of symmetry so that it would give the others something to play off of."

The sonics of the session were also of utmost concern to Haddad. "Knowing how to blend so that it doesn't eat up the ambiance is a challenge," explains the master percussionist who has collaborated with the likes of Paul Simon, Dave Liebman, the Paul Winter Consort and Rabih Abou-Khalil. "The ability to do that in an organic atmosphere is very important. All the old drummers could do that. That's truly an art and I don't see it happening very much anymore. It's a difficult one to get right all the time but I think we worked it out by trial and error."

Working off of suggested words or moods, the three accomplished players created themes and motifs intuitively and strictly in the moment. This plan was played out successfully on the pieces included on *Explorations in Space & Time*.

The collection kicks off with “Stank” an unadulterated funk throwdown with hip colorations from Sherman’s tympani and Haddad’s arsenal of hand percussion. There follows the zen-like “Wood and Metal”, which serves as a cleansing breath after the onslaught of “Stank”. “War” begins with a barrage of tympani and gongs. As it evolves White becomes the eye of this percussive hurricane. Tuned percussion by Haddad on the left with vibraphone and tympani accents by Sherman on the right informs this volatile track.

“The Wind”, another atmospheric piece that makes use of silence, conjures up a night in the Amazon rainforest. “Seven” opens with Haddad’s virtuosic playing on Kanjira (South Indian frame drum). The piece develops gradually with Sherman playing gently on the rims of the drums before laying into the kit with increasing urgency. By the midway point, Haddad switches to djembe as Sherman takes the intensity level up a couple of notches. White adds bass drum and tympani accents as the triumverate builds to an aggressive crescendo.

“Tranquility” is another exercise in peaceful restraint that suggests a visit to a Tibetan monastery. “Groove” has Haddad setting the tone on Cooperman tar drum (a large tunable frame drum) as White simmers underneath on the kit and Sherman accents with tympani, vibraphone, and shakere.

“Phrases” is a strictly vocal number with the three percussionists gathered around a single microphone to make playful sounding percussive sounds with their mouths. “Rhythm” grooves along ominously on a latticework pattern of frame drum, brushes on the kit, and vibes.

For “Seven” Sherman switched places with White, an obvious thrill for the acclaimed vibraphonist. “For me it was a real honor to work with Lenny having watched him play many times with Return to Forever. At one point I just had to say, ‘Man, I gotta check out your kit!’ So Lenny let me try it, he went back behind my stuff, and we did the piece that way.”

Bravo to all involved in this maverick undertaking. There has truly been nothing like it in the past 25 years.

—*Bill Milkowski*

JAMEY HADDAD (left channel)

Caxixi, Shakers, Djembe, Balinese Nipple gongs and Bamboo Ahng-Kloong
Bosphorus cymbals, Cooperman Tar Drums, Slap back drum, Hadjira and Kanjira, Remo ocean drum,
Moroccan Brooms, Arabic Riq, Vacuum hose, Misc. percussion

Jamey Haddad plays Cooperman Fife and Drums, Remo, Vic Firth, Bosphorus Cymbals
and Gibraltar Stands.

LENNY WHITE (center channel)

Drum set, Innovation drum kit 20x20 bass drum, 8x12, 9x13 mounted toms, 14x14 and 16x16 floor
toms, 5x14 titanium snare drum. Lenny White signature "EPOCH" Agop Istanbul cymbals. 22" ride, 17"
and 18" crashes, 14" hi-hats. Sticks: Vic Firth "Lenny White" signature model, Vibes, toms, bass drum,
gongs etc.

MARK SHERMAN (right channel)

Vibraphone, 3 Tympani, Gran Cassa (Bass Drum), 4 nipple gongs, wind gong, Tam-Tam,
Multiple Percussion (Cymbals, Tom Toms, Mark Trees, Shakers, Triangles).

Mark Sherman is a Yamaha performing artist and plays Pro Mark mallets.

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Recording Engineer Nicholas Prout
Assistant Engineers, Alex Sterling and Rick Eckerle
Binaural Recording consultant and 3D audio monitoring over loudspeakers, Professor Edgar Choueiri.

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