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More Beautiful Than Death

Either/Orchestra | Accurate

Personnel: Tom Halter – Trumpet, Flugelhorn; Colin Fisher - Trumpet, Flugelhorn; Joel Yennior – Trombone; Laleel Shaw – Alto Saxophone (except 2); Russ Gershon – Tenor Saxophone, Soprano Saxophone; Charlie Kohlhase – Baritone Saxophone; Dan Kaufman – Steinway Piano, Rhodes Piano, Wurlitzer Piano, Hammond B-3 Organ; Rick McLaughlin – Bass; Harvey Wright – Drums; Vicente LeBron – Congas, Bongos, Percussion; Miguel Zenon – Alto Saxophone (2); Atemu Aton – Bass (2).

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They're Back! To paraphrase Mark Twain, "The rumors of the Either/Orchestra's permanently playing Grateful Dead music have been exaggerated." After disbanding the small big band in 1997 and starting a family (just add water), saxophonist and lab entrepreneur Russ Gershon has reformed the E/O. At this point I'd like to exclaim "Yahoo," but due to copyright restrictions imposed by a certain information technology mega-company, my lawyers inform me I can only state how pleased I am to tell you they have a new CD out. Gershon along with E/O veterans, trumpeter Tom Halter and baritone saxophonist Charlie Kohlhase, enlist a cadre of fresh Boston talent to produce what could be one of the new millennium's top ten records. Graduate of earlier versions of the orchestra (or, more likely, survivors of the road shows) include John Medeski (Medeski, Martin & Wood), Drummer Matt Wilson, Andrew D'Angelo (Human Feet), Curtis Hasselbring, and John Carlson.

Where the genius of Russ Gershon's latest creation (and E/O sixth release) is evident is their ability to move gracefully between genres and styles. The band has always been equally comfortable with Sun Ra or Dizzy Gillespie's music. Their latest offering glides through complex charts of simple entertainment. On "Ain't Those SOB's," Dan Kaufman's piano plays Thelonious Monk's "Crepuscle With Nellie" behind an Ellington blues groove, swung hard by the trumpet of Tom Halter. They change gears quickly into a Mambo, some calypso, a bit of Reggae, and parts an Ethiopian Suite that sounds as if it should be expanded into an entire recording itself. The disc closes with "The Eighth Wonder" where Dan Kaufman's Wurlitzer electric piano accompanies a funky horn line worthy of Oakland's Tower Of Power. Recordings of the E/O really only give us a sample of the

talented musicians employed by and glimpse at the hundreds of charts mastered by Gershon's troops. These 74 minutes of music leave the listener wanting more.

Track List:Amiak Abet Abet; Number Three; More Beautiful Than Death; Musicawi Silt; Breaktime For Dougo; All Those SOBs; Slow Mambo For J.J.; Feker Aydelmwey; The Eighth Wonder.

~ [Mark Corroto](#)

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