

**Evan Parker  
Electro-  
Acoustic  
Ensemble**

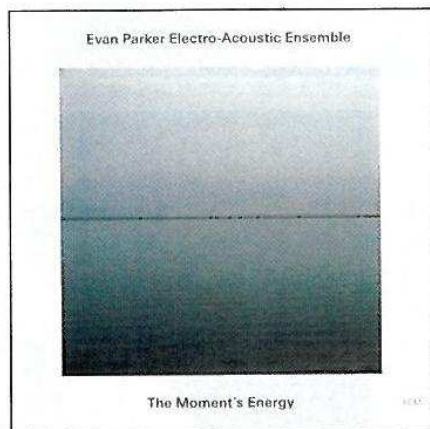
***The Moment's  
Energy***

ECM B0013023

★★★★

What constitutes music? In other words, what gives music that quality, that audible something that tells you you aren't just listening to ... someone talking, car traffic, a plane flying overhead?

Banter about such things occurred whenever classical composers started getting creative around the turn of the century before last. And, of course, Elvis started something else again. Not to mention jazz, Charlie Parker and his ilk. And let's not forget the likes of free-jazz and literal noise as music in avant-garde pop and rock circles. Whatever free-jazz was back then, it has morphed into many things, and British reed player Evan Parker has been around long enough to now be considered a veteran of the "genre." *The Moment's Energy* is the latest edition of his Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, an ensemble that sidesteps the heat and light of



refracted tonal instruments for something altogether different. Instead of just musical instruments used in a variety of ways, the Electro-Acoustic Ensemble prides itself in being an equal-opportunity sound machine, at least when it comes to acoustic and electronic instruments.

On board are a host of kindred spirits, 14 in all, including long-time colleagues Philipp Wachsmann (violin, live electronics),

Barry Guy (bass) and Paul Lytton (percussion, live electronics). *The Moment's Energy*, the group's fifth album, amounts to a combination live and studio recording, seamless in execution across eight selections, including the title piece, an extended commissioned work.

Speaking of live versus in-the-studio, one might wonder if these sound collages have more impact, meaning and entertainment value if experienced in the moment, so to speak, live and in-person. As the material plays out on this recording, the combined shrieks and coos; steely electronics as well as ethereal ones; piano twinklings; sudden percussive crashes; scampering twitches; sustains and brief staccato episodes ... all of it may cry out for a visual equivalent, if only in one's mind or imagina-

tion. With seven sections of *The Moment's Energy* (I through VII) followed by a coda of sorts with "Incandescent Clouds," what really happens may depend on the listener's ability to engage in these sonic explorations. And what makes "II" distinct from "III"? The earnest, sincere and able execution of this material by seasoned and well-trained artists suggest "a new chamber orchestra" (especially now that the ensemble has grown from its original sextet size). There is cohesion and a kind of forward movement here. And their edginess spills over into a kind of frolicking playfulness light years from the energy of so-called free-jazz.

The melding of *The Moment's Energy's* composed and "processed" improvised energies begs the question of repeat performances. Imagine the concert where an avid fan yells out for an encore of "IV." —John Ephland

***The Moment's Energy***: I; II; III; IV; V; VI; VII; Incandescent Clouds. (67:06)

**Personnel**: Evan Parker, soprano saxophone; Peter Evans, trumpet, piccolo trumpet; Ko Ishikawa, sho; Ned Rothenberg, clarinet, bass clarinet, shakuhachi; Philipp Wachsmann, violin, live electronics; Agusti Fernandez, piano, prepared piano; Barry Guy, bass; Paul Lytton, percussion, live electronics; Lawrence Casserley, signal processing instrument; Joel Ryan, sample and signal processing; Walter Prati, computer processing; Richard Barrett, live electronics; Paul Obermayer, live electronics; Marco Vecchi, sound projection.

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