

Featured Artist: Fabien Degryse

CD Title: The Heart of the Acoustic Guitar

Year: 2008

Record Label: Midnight Muse Records

Style: Fusion

Musicians: Fabien Degryse (acoustic guitar), Bart De Nolf (upright bass), Bruno Castellucci (drums)



Review:

Like the title suggests, guitarist Fabien Degryse takes audiences into the heart of the acoustic guitar on his trio's latest CD *The Heart of the Acoustic Guitar*. The trio of Degryse on acoustic guitar, Bart De Nolf on upright bass and Bruno Castellucci on drums take passengers on an engaging ride of upswept riffs, warm-tempered hues and bluesy guitar wobbles. The music shows a Bohemian freedom in the guitar bars, moving from jostling chord rotations in "Dreams and Goals" to a series of calm slinks coursing through "Fatima." The Spanish flavoring in the notes of "Time For Some Sun" have a sassy samba swing while the jolly fiesta lighting of "Alea" induces a party mood. Many tunes are a model of classic jazz with a hint of blues and stylish harmonies. The songs have an upper-crust air about them without showing any elitism in the entangling lines and twirling solo batons.

The album is equal in quality as it is in quantity with most of the tracks over five-minutes long and the melodic trimmings perfectly groomed. Degryse portrays the lowlights and highlights of the acoustic guitar with a maestro's sensibilities. The quiet contemplative mood of "Waltz for Life" offers a moment to reflect over life while the island tusks of "The Odd Party" demands the audience's full attention. Degryse's tonics are made either shaken like "The Odd Party" or tenderly stirred like in "Da Ann Blues," though the trio's showers are always plated in warm tones. The track "Back to the Roots" has a tinge of Americana country, which may seem strange since Degryse is from Belgium. Regardless, the track is traditional sounding and inventive in its chord movements. The final number "Suite" comes in three parts which each show a different facet of the acoustic guitar. The lowlights of "Part I: Away From Your Love" portrays a desert landscape as "Part II: It's A Long, Long Journey" drags deeper into the barrenness with the heavy weights in the modulations of the upright bass, and "Part III: Back Home" has a celebratory feel, which pulls the listener from the abyss.

The Fabien Degryse Trio is a classic jazz outfit that knows their jazz. They keep their temperatures warm and their structures feeling free while looking stylish. Their harmonies are challenging, but seem effortless in the trio's hands. All of the tracks on *The Heart of the Acoustic Guitar* are written by Degryse and show the three decades that he has been playing the guitar on a professional scale. He is certainly not a novice, nor does his music intimidate novice musicians, which makes this album quite attractive and one that musicians and fans will talk about for years to come.

Tracks: Dreams and Goals, Alea, Fatima, Da Ann Blues, Time For Some Sun, Waltz For Life, The Odd Party, Back To The Roots, Suite – Part I: Away From Your Love, Part II: It's A Long, Long Journey, Part III: Back Home

Artist's Website: <http://www.fabiendegryse.com>

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Reviewed by: [Susan Frances](#)