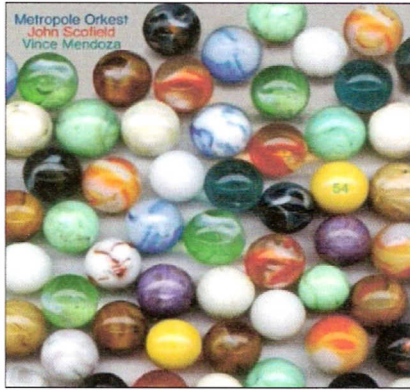
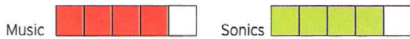


Jazz Music Reviews



John Scofield and Metropole Orkest. *54*. Emarcy.



Kurt Rosenwinkel and OJM. *Our Secret World*. Word of Mouth.

Two great guitarists from different generations display their artistry in large ensemble treatments of their original compositions on superb new releases. Scofield, the elder statesman here at age 58 with 30 recordings to his credit as a leader, collaborates with veteran composer-arranger Vince Mendoza, artistic director of the Metropole Orkest of Holland. With strings, brass, woodwinds, harp, and rhythm section at his command, Mendoza deftly recasts the guitarist's familiar small group tunes with new colors, subtle reharmonizations, and creative counterpoint. Scofield's soulful "Carlos" (from 1995's *Groove Elation*) is given a grandiose sweep plus Latin percussion under the guitarist's signature blues-drenched string-bending riffs. "Polo Towers," a simple funk vamp from 2002's *Uberjam*, takes on noirish shadings in Mendoza's sophisticated arrangement, while the gorgeous lyrical ballad "Honest I Do" (from 1991's *Grace Under Pressure*) gains new majesty.

Scofield's lazy N'awlins groover "Twang" (from *Grace Under Pressure*) is only minimally augmented while "Imaginary Time" (from 1992's *What We Do*) is reimagined with active contrapuntal interplay. Scofield's slinky funk-jazz number "Peculiar" (from *Groove Elation*) is a chance for the guitarist to break out

his wah-wah effects and mind-boggling fretboard skills. Mendoza contributes rollicking call-and-response from the orchestra along with a greasy Hammond organ solo by Hans Vroomans. "Out of the City" (from 1993's *Hand Jive*) is a Basie-styled midtempo swinger featuring an exuberant trombone solo from Bart van Lier.

Rosenwinkel, the most distinctive guitar stylist of his generation, emerged as a leader in his own right with his stunning 2000 Verve debut, *The Enemies of Energy*. He's turned out consistently strong recordings ever since. On his collaboration with Portugal's 20-piece Jazz Orchestra of Matosinhos, Rosenwinkel interacts with three different arrangers—Carlos Azevedo, Pedro Guedes, and Ohad Talmor (the latter having previously worked with the OMJ on *Portology*, a 2007 recording with legendary alto saxophonist Lee Konitz).

Rosenwinkel opens with an ambitious reimagining of "Our Secret World" (from 2003's Q-Tip-produced *Heartcore*), blowing over the changes with remarkable fluidity and a warm, slightly distorted tone. "The Cloister" is an adventurous redo of his tune from 2005's *Deep Song*, with intricate counterpoint and reharmonization that highlight his lyricism. "Zhivago" (from 2001's *The Next Step*) opens with unaccompanied guitar before yielding to the upbeat, surging theme, enhanced by an ambitious arrangement that includes an a cappella horn-choir breakdown mid-song.

The evocative "Dream of the Old" (from *The Enemies of Energy*) is given evocative dark hues by arranger Azevedo until the explosive guitar solo section midway through. Azevedo also puts his stamp on the pensive, minimalist "Use of Light" (from *The Next Step*) while arranger Guedes brings a lush sensuousness to his reworking of "Path of the Heart" (also from *The Next Step*). Throughout it all Rosenwinkel solos magnificently with that most distinctive six-string voice of his. **Bill Milkowski**

Further Listening: Scofield: *Quiet*; Rosenwinkel: *The Next Step*



Turtle Island Quartet. *Have You Ever Been...?* Telarc.

A string quartet plunge into the acid-rock realm of guitar-god Jimi Hendrix is hardly unprecedented, but on what is essentially its 25th anniversary recording, Turtle Island demonstrates the deepest grasp of Hendrix's essence to date. As a teen, violinist David Balakrishnan was psychedelized by seeing Jimi in concert, and he absorbed the famous "Hendrix chord"—the dominant 7th with a sharp 9 that defines "Foxy Lady"—into the very fiber of his musical being.

On *Have You Ever Been...?* (as in "To Electric Ladyland"), Balakrishnan, TIQ cofounder and cellist Mark Summer, and newer members violinist Mads Tolling and violist Jeremy Kittel approach Hendrix as a serious composer. In a deep, dry mix, they extrapolate the guitarist's thorny textures and melodic shards to riveting effect. Jazz vibes star Stefon Harris joins in on "Gypsy Eyes," Mike Marshall plucks mandocello on "All Along the Watchtower," and Summer delivers a jaw-dropping solo treatment of "Little Wing." The quartet also interprets fusion guitarist John McLaughlin's "To Bop or Not to Be" and sweeps through Balakrishnan's own mind-blowing Indian-bebop-rock synthesis, the masterful four-part suite, "Tree of Life." **Derk Richardson**

Further Listening: TIQ: *A Love Supreme*; Robert Dick: *Third Stone From the Sun*