

Sara Schoenbeck/Wayne Horvitz
Cell Walk

The pair operates here at the midpoint between chamber music and jazz, performing spare and often disarmingly lovely compositions that flow into free-roaming yet hyper-attuned improvisation, sometimes accented by subtle electronics. Recorded in summer 2019 and January of this year, this is music of otherworldly calm, filled with purposeful pauses, and built around the balletic coordination of two musicians sharing the same space. Put another way, it's the sonic antithesis of 2020 — a memento from a simpler, more connected time. — *Hank Shteamer Rolling Stone*

Cell Walk's real attraction is the way these disparate elements are aligned. The bassoonist growls a bit; her partner often relies on silence. "Tin Palace" and "For Lou Harrison" move quickly; "Sleeper Ship" and "Sutter St." exude calm. Most of the 17 tracks clock in at under four minutes. As they reveal their relationship to each other, each evocative miniature reminds that a sketch can have the emotional impact of a symphony.

Jim Macnie Jazz Times

With disturbing simplicity and cinematic quality, Horvitz's "*The Fifth Day*" includes silvery unisons and develops with iterative motifs underpinning the improvisations. This piece leads to Schoenbeck's "*Deep Well Well*", where the bassoonist makes a keen demonstration of some of the powerful extended techniques applied to the instrument. Whereas here, we find doleful cries over a piano lament, on "*Sutter St.*", her circular breathing technique adds a little bit more pathos, magnifying a brooding improvised number marked by a remarkable manipulation of electronics. — *Jazz Trails*

Schoenbeck and Horvitz settle in for a collection of (mostly) miniatures that both rise to great heights and sink to dark depths, all the while showcasing synergy and sympathies of an extraordinary nature. The program includes spellbinding melodic drifts spied from a distance and sourced from the heavens, descents into catacombs echoing cacophonous lines, meetings with the proudly sedate, and curious turns of phrase that soothe and suggest multiple pathways. The music is never short on surprise, and it's always focused on a fine balance in voicing and vision(s) — *Dan Bilawsky All About Jazz*

This gem of a recording pairs-up the formidable duo of bassoonist Sara Schoenbeck and pianist Wayne Horvitz for a session of lovely pieces that are improvised, composed or straddling points in-between. — *Stuart Derdeyn Daily Herald Tribune*

The most outstanding track is "The Fifth Day". Horvitz' notes are steady but spare, like a mild spring rain on a metal awning, and Schoenbeck virtually croons in a manner not unlike early '60s John Coltrane, poetic, passionate, but also with a sense of economy and restraint. "Tin Palace" finds Schoenbeck really going to town, driving the twisty tune the way a postbop saxophonist would while Horvitz provides torrents of sober, determined swing. If you like soulful reed instruments, wittily self-effacing piano and sonic atmosphere you could cut with a knife, this is the ticket. — *Mark Keresman NYC Jazz Record*

There's only two of them, but they know how to fill your head with sound. — *Forrest Faubion Midwest Record*