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'SAX TALK'
Norman Salant
(C.D. Presents Ltd.)

SCENE rating: ★★★

Norman Salant is an artist exploring the possibilities of the saxophone as a lead instrument in a genre other than jazz.

What that genre is, is anybody's guess. The seven cuts on "Sax Talk" work their way through funk, dance, new-wave, electronic freak and Third World influences.

Playing over basic guitar-drum-bass-synth back-ups, Salant covers a variety of textures and styles, from the squawking jazz imitation of the title cut, to the black-velvet smoothness of "Europe After Dark," to the sinuous Middle Eastern snake-charmer melody of "No Night."

Strange stuff, meticulously composed and faultlessly played. But Salant exhibits a slowness about getting to the point — perhaps a lack of point in the first place — that makes the LP difficult and sometimes tedious going.

Patient listeners who like to stay out of the mainstream will find it rewarding.

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