

SAXAPHONE

NEW MUSIC:

PROGRESSIVE
EXPERIMENTAL
ELECTRONIC
AVANT-GARDE
MICROTONAL

NOISE

NORMAN SALANT

SAXAPHONE DEMONSTRATIONS (ALIVE RECORDS, 533
SUTTER, SUITE 1107, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102; 1981
12" 33 RPM EP)

Norman Salant takes full advantage of studio processing and overdubbing capabilities on this disc. As many as eight saxophones are overlaid in these pieces of a usually melodic slant, giving a depth and thickness to an instrument which is commonly only given consideration as a tool of solo improvisation. Side 1 is titled "4 Saxophone Demonstrations in the New Wave". While the rhythms remain within the simple framework associated with that style, the music exhibits none of the harshness that is typically partnered with it. The first piece, "Golden Arm", is a pleasant enough example of that, melody and counterpoint both provided by saxophone. "Accidents" and "Tickets Are Free" are also in an ebullient progressive pop vein, though atypical saxophone mating calls under the melodies manage to sustain my interest. "Bowieszawa" is Eno/Bowie-inspired eeriness, vibrato effectively applied. Side 2, yclept "4 Saxophone Demonstrations of Sex and Love", again shows melodic leanings while the experimental elements finally begin to emerge. "Second Coming" contains some muted and processed sax at appropriate moments. An excellent, mysterious wailing envelope "19.4". "After Loving" and "As Far As We Can See" are mellow, lyrical pieces, though the latter reaches out with emphatic layers of unusual sax tones. My greatest impression from SAXAPHONE DEMONSTRATIONS is the richness given to the melodic lines through the processing, often sounding like a mellotron version of saxophone and not merely a chorus of saxophones. It would be even more interesting to see how this could

be employed in lengthier and more developed pieces. This EP is, however, original enough in itself to send the curious scurrying its way.

-John Loffink