

Brandon Ross' **BLAZING BEAUTY** (usa)



Brandon Ross – guitars, banjo, vocals

Ron Miles – cornet

Stomu Takeishi – bass

J.T. Lewis – drums

Guitarist and composer **Brandon Ross** is drawn to “formless forms” of art. He tours and records with many luminaries of the jazz and new music fields, including Henry Threadgill, Butch Morris, Leroy Jenkins, and Oliver Lake. Since 1993 he has been musical director for vocalist Cassandra Wilson.

Besides co-leading the electric power trio *Harriet Tubman*, he is leading his own quartet **BLAZING BEAUTY**. Here, Ross is dividing his time between electric and acoustic guitars and six-string banjo. “Future-folk music” is his term for this family of sounds, at once pastoral, dissonant, intimate and subtly avant garde. Cultivating an oasis amid skyscrapers, Ross often subdivides the group in a number of ways: he and bassist **Stomu Takeishi** (*Myra Melford, Cuong Vu, Erik Friedlander, ...*) play acoustic duos of exquisite minimalism, **J.T. Lewis** (*Harriet Tubman, Vanessa Williams, Henry Threadgill, Sting, Whitney Houston, Marianne Faithful, ...*) joins for tight trio pieces, and cornet great **Ron Miles** (*Bill Frisell, Don Byron, the Ellington Orchestra, ...*) rounds out the line-up to form a quartet that creates an all magical vibe.

And Ross sings! His exquisite voice is most endearing and often quite gentle and precious, but bluesy enough to give it some edge.

“We've always known that he is an immensely diverse guitarist, yet nothing has prepared us for this, his second solo effort and a most creative and enchanting pop/jazz treasure. “If You Come to Me” opens with delicate, sweet singing and elegant acoustic guitar. Brandon reminds me of Stevie Wonder on “May as Well Know”, which features some lovely chromatic harmonica and is completely touching. “Aloeifa” is a dreamy mostly instrumental with sublime guitar, superb melodic bass and that wonderful spinning grace that JT Lewis does so well. Harriet Tubman-like, perhaps a bit more laid back.”

– Downtown Music Gallery Newsletter, Feb. 2007

CDs: Costume (Intoxicate Records, 2004) / **Puppet** (Intoxicate Records, 2007)



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