

"Silky bends, sweet legato lines, and tuneful shred... instrumental rock fans should catch this guy." -Guitar Player Magazine

"Melodically tasty, the playing is smoothly confident while technically brilliant, and production is so sonically crisp the sound practically leaps from your speakers..."
-Progression Magazine

"A guitar hero in the making....this is a band on their way to great things" - Sea of Tranquility

"...Unquestionably a guitar lover's dream, this dynamic power trio offers much more than the dime-a-dozen Berklee educated wankers vying to dethrone Joe Satriani..."
-Sea of Tranquility

"...This band has all the chops and blazing technique to send all you wannabe shredders back to the woodshed, but what makes them stand so far apart from their peers is the SONGS..."
-Foundrymusic.com

"Think of a musical stew mixing a thick brown Rush gravy with big hearty chunks of Steve Morse and a dash of Jeff Beck... I haven't been this impressed since the pairing of nitro and glycerin..." -Ray Sansom

"...A smoking instrumental power trio...With tons of technique to burn..." -Expose Magazine

"A lot of meat on the barbecue..."
-Axe Magazine

"Sharp, aggressive trio fusion here...moving, hypnotic...a wondrous thing to hear." -Progression Magazine

"The Travis Larson Band hits a musical bullseye with an admirable album of guitar-based all-instrumental jazz-rock. An electrifying studio effort..." -20th Century Guitar

"Larson is a melodically inclined instrumentalist, fierce of chops and clean of tone (as creamy distortion goes)...The trio makes a big, heroic sound..." -The Independent

"This is a great instrumental rock band..."
-Bass Frontiers Magazine

"Larson weaves some very sophisticated and chop busting complexity into his soulful compositions..."
-Guitar 2001 Magazine

"How about that Larson shit! I like that shit!" -Ted Nugent

Travis Larson: Electric and Acoustic Guitars, Keyboards

Jennifer Young: Bass

Dale Moon: Drums

City of Origin: San Luis Obispo, California

Musical Genre: Instrumental Rock, Fusion

Endorsements: Ernie Ball/MusicMan, Electro-Voice, Digitech, DV Mark, Markbass, Kurzweil, PedalTrain, Hipshot Prodcuts, Gretch, Sabian

Discography:

Shift, CD, 2013, PRCN-1010

Soundmind, CD, 2011, PRCN-1009

Rate of Change LIVE, DVD, 2009, PRCN-1008

Rate of Change LIVE, CD, 2009, PRCN-1007

Rate of Change, CD, 2006, PRCN-1006

Burn Season, CD, 2004, PRCN-1005

Rock Show, DVD, 2003, PRCN-1004

Suspension, CD, 2001, PRCN-1003

Travis Larson Band S/T, CD, 1998, PRCN-1001

Contact Information:

Precision Records

PO Box 14803

San Luis Obispo, CA 93406-4803

(805) 528-4471

www.travislarsonband.com



WE'VE GOT A

California's **Travis Larson** *celebrates 10 years of prog-rock excellence*

With a talent as bright and virtuosic as guitarist **TRAVIS LARSON** at the helm, that old cliché "there's no I in team" might, under normal group circumstances, be sorely tested. But as a trio, members of the TRAVIS LARSON BAND understand intuitively that the three spokes in this impressive musical wheel carry equal weight in the studio and on stage.

More than 10 years on, Larson, bassist **JENNIFER YOUNG** and drummer **DALE MOON** remain prime examples of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts, displaying their unique vision of guitar-centric instrumental progressive rock over four albums and two DVDs -- the latest being a simultaneous CD/DVD release **RATE OF CHANGE LIVE**. The California-based band wanted to celebrate over a decade making music with an ambitious project in its natural environment: the concert stage.

Hearing the seamlessly organic interplay of these three gifted musos is a thing of beauty that "progressively" attuned ears are sure to relish. Seeing it happen takes the experience, and appreciation, to a whole new level.

"We did a DVD called **Rock Show** a few years ago and recorded it at a small club in our hometown. But we thought, let's celebrate our 10 years together and serve the live show up on a silver platter for those that can't necessarily make a show," says LARSON, a nimble, technically accomplished player often compared to **DIXIE DREGS/DEEP PURPLE** fret master **STEVE MORSE**. "We hired a few pro camera guys, we had a bunch of cameras that we owned and recorded the new project on 24-track digital. At the end of the night we had nine cameras worth of footage and a 24-track recording of a two-hour show.

"We went to work on editing and mixing the album part of it and then edited 18 hours of footage to it over several months. So it was almost as much work as recording a new album, if not more! And just like everything else we've done we did it completely ourselves."

The band built its own 2,000-square-foot recording/rehearsal studio in San Luis Obispo roughly 12 years ago in cooperation with audio confidant and engineer **KIP STORK**. Stork has been at the helm engineering all of the band's recordings since day one. "When we're not using the studio Kip makes his living off of it with acts in the area," says LARSON. "Sometimes national acts will come through, like **BELA FLECK AND THE FLECKTONES** or **YES's JON ANDERSON**, who lives nearby. We love working with Kip and this has been a very worthwhile venture."

Origins of the TRAVIS LARSON BAND date back in the early 1980s when high school chums Larson and Young met and became musical soul mates. "When we met I was heavily into **RUSH**," says

Young. "That was pretty much it for me, but any kind of rock like **LED ZEPPELIN** or **PINK FLOYD** was fine too. When I met Travis we both started playing around the same time. We've been through a hundred drummers since then!"

Recalls LARSON, "Actually, when I was a kid I started out as a piano player. I was into guys like **HERBIE HANCOCK** and **CHICK COREA** and proggy keyboard bands like **EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER**. And then I morphed into the guitar players when I picked that instrument up. But being young I didn't even know there was a music called 'progressive rock' or 'fusion.' It happened very organically for me.

"I heard **JEFF BECK** play guitar and that made me want to play guitar! Having a background with all these keyboard players I started to hear in my head a mixture of jazz and rock. Once I started searching for that sound I found a number of guys who were doing that sort of thing. Obviously, Dixie Dregs is a huge influence on my writing. And **JOE SATRIANI** was one of the guys back then who really kicked the door down and made me think this is something you really can do and have a career at. **STEVE VAI** was another one. It's not so much that they influenced my playing style, but that [guitar-led instrumental rock] was a viable musical style, I guess."

In short order of their meeting and work together in various cover bands, Young's love affair with Rush influenced LARSON's evolving guitar chops and helped forge their development as an eventual progressive rock trio. The couple met drummer Dale Moon in 1996, finding him through a reference from Stork.

"We hadn't put out any records before this, just gigging and trying to find our own voice," says LARSON. "Dale joined the band and we built that studio and have been a solid unit ever since. It's funny, because when he joined this band he had blown out his rotator cuff playing 20 to 30 nights a month with this reggae/hip-hop band. He injured it through the monotonous patterns he had to continually play with his high-hat hand. As strenuous as some of our music might seem, he actually has a much easier time because variety in the selection of music works better for him. He was kind of a wounded bird when we got him, so to speak."

TRAVIS LARSON BAND has self-released several critically acclaimed recordings beginning in 1998 with its eponymous debut disc, followed by **SUSPENSION** (2001), **ROCK SHOW** (2003), **BURN SEASON** (2004), **RATE OF CHANGE** (studio/2006) and the current, aforementioned live offering. Over that span the group's sound has evolved considerably, from prototypical instrumental jam hopefuls to self-actualized progressive artists playing tight, challenging compositions.

"I think our sound has evolved in the fact that we don't play our



LIVE ONE HERE!

Travis Larson Band

with new concert recording.

By **ERIC HARABADIAN**

starting out you're so influenced by your heroes and it seems so obvious to listeners. But I think over the years we've started to meld all those influences into something that's a little more 'us.' And I think we're starting to hone in on a Travis Larson Band sound, if there is such a thing."

The modest, laid-back guitarist delves a bit deeper into the essence of his band's approach. "We like to write things that are complicated at the core but sound uncomplicated, if that makes any sense," he offers. "We'll write in odd time signatures and we'll put in a different change in each section. But the songs are graspable with melodies that you can hold onto -- something that people who are not necessarily musicians or music aficionados can enjoy."

A strong suit is the band's live show and consequent bond with fans. This grew from steady and prodigious touring, which finds the trio digging into everything from instrument clinics for the **SAM ASH** music store chain to national tours opening for the likes of **UFO**. The group has participated in special events with acts as varied as **TED NUGENT**, **ELVIN BISHOP**, **RONNIE MONTROSE**, Steve Morse, **BILL BRUFORD** and **LOS LOBOS**.

"It's interesting, because early on the majority of our fan base were musicians," says LARSON. "But the last few years we've been able to play some of these high-profile gigs and get in front of some different audiences. It's more of a well-rounded audience now. There's kids that'll come see us, older guys who play guitar, grandparents. I've never been afraid of that kind of diversity. I go back to that old-school **BILL GRAHAM** mentality where you don't necessarily stick four bands together that all sound alike. A little diversity makes for a better show, in my mind."

Adds Young, "And people aren't as stupid as one might think. They are a lot more mature in their listening and get a lot more things than [one might] think they would!"

A unique aspect to the band's sound is its integration of technology to render sonic landscapes as rich and vibrant live as on record. Each member employs an intricate series of looping and sample-triggering devices to be as musically lush and unfettered as possible. It's an approach they all take very seriously. "Everything that we do live, we've never gone back and overdubbed parts," says LARSON. "We take a cue from one of our favorite bands, Rush, where there are a couple rules on stage we live by: Anything that ever gets triggered as a sample by a member of the band has to be played by a member of the band and it has to be triggered by a member of the band. There can't be somebody with a Macintosh behind the stage like we're doing some kind of **BRITNEY SPEARS** thing, you know?"

The **TRAVIS LARSON BAND** is on the rise for 2010, doing more national shows with plans to take its act overseas as well. Ω

FROM LEFT: JENNIFER YOUNG, TRAVIS LARSON

BASS MUSICIAN

the face of bass

FEB2013

Jennifer Young

Prog Rock
Extraordinaire
by Eric Parsons

BEST OF
WINTER
NAMM

2013

Zombie
Apocalypse

Interview with
Gerald Veasley

Eric Parsons
NAMM

Photo File

The Dynamic
Amanda Ruzza
and more...

Transcription:

Anthony
Jackson on
I.G.Y.

Jaco Only Needed
4 Strings...
and I Don't Care

Tales from
the Pit:
HAIR

Bass Lines

How I Create

SA Bassist

Kai Horsthemke

BASSMUSICIANMAGAZINE.COM



TRAVIS LARSON

3
RIG
IN
1

di
Guglielmo
Malusardi

«Cominciasti a suonare la chitarra a 12 anni, quando mio fratello mi iniziò alla musica di EL&P e Pink Floyd.

Qualche tempo dopo ascoltai Jeff Beck, diventando matto per scoprire come diavolo tirasse fuori quei suoni! Non sapevo nemmeno dell'esistenza della leva! Con l'avvento di Eddie Van Halen, "capitolai" e investii i miei risparmi in una Strato economica. La chitarra l'avevo, ma non sapevo nulla... Dopo qualche anno da autodidatta, incontrai Jennifer [Young, bassista del gruppo]. Era un'accanita fan dei Rush e la prima canzone che affrontammo fu *Xanadu* [da *A Farewell To Kings*, 1977, Mercury]. Passammo gli anni successivi con varie cover band, proponendo pure i brani originali che cominciavamo a comporre. Dopo nove anni decidemmo che avremmo suonato solo la nostra musica...» Così parlò **Travis Larson**, californiano di vichinghe origini e doppia *esse* persa, come altre migliaia di cognomi scandinavi all'anagrafe statunitense. Il trio che porta il suo nome ha celebrato i dieci anni di attività con l'uscita nel 2009 di *Rate Of Change Live*, doppio CD o doppio DVD dal vivo in cui è condensato il meglio di una decade di musica.

10 anni scrivendo, arrangiando, registrando, viaggiando e suonando... Bello ma non sempre facile!

Verissimo. Una notevole mole di lavoro, che ricade quasi esclusivamente sulle nostre spalle. Di fondamentale importanza fu la costruzione nel '97 dei nostri Avalon Studios a San Luis Obispo in California. Fu il primo e decisivo passo per avere il totale controllo sulla nostra musica. Appena pubblicato il primo CD [omonimo, 1998], iniziammo a procurarci date in ogni maniera possibile per diffondere la nostra musica il più possibile. Cercavamo di aprire concerti per musicisti noti, come Bill Bruford e i suoi Earthworks, i Dixie Dregs o Ted Nugent. Suonavamo senza sosta e da allora non abbiamo mai smesso [sorride]! **Ogni concerto è un'avventura diversa**, ed è quello che ti fa andare avanti come musicista.

Advanced instrumental guitar fusion: è la definizione che dai alla tua musica sul tuo sito...

Essendo partito dal piano, ascoltavo gente come Chick Corea o Herbie Hancock. Passando alla chitarra, ascoltavo cose più rock. Questi elementi costituivano una specie di doppia identità nella mia anima musicale... Insomma, non ero un jazzista, ma nemmeno un chitarrista rock! La solu-

zione del conflitto fu Steve Morse! La sua musica mi colpì dal primo ascolto, vidi la luce! [Risate]. Capii come diversi elementi potevano coesistere in una miscela graditissima alle mie orecchie! Diventò la mia principale fonte d'ispirazione. Il termine *fusion* acquisì finalmente un significato concreto. Tra i tuoi compagni d'avventura è presente una bassista, Jennifer Young...



Sì, è una gran musicista... L'attenzione su di lei è forte, ma questo l'ha solo

spinto a migliorarsi. È una bassista serissima ed è pure attraente! [Risate]. Dale Moon [batterista] è con noi dall'inizio. Prima suonava hip hop! Col suo avvento **riuscimmo velocemente a raggiungere il "muro di suono"** che le band di tre elementi, una su tutte i Rush, possono proporre dal vivo. A tale scopo sono indispensabili campioni e parti di tastiera...

Parlaci dei tuoi ferri del mestiere...

Praticamente ho tre rig in uno. Le mie chitarre sono sempre state Ernie Ball MusicMan: uso una Silhouette 20th Anniversary, una Axis Sport, una 25th Anniversary e un paio di John Petrucci Signature che collego a un pre Ditech GSP 1101 [il finale è un Randall RT2/50 stereo; come acustica Travis usa una Carvin AC175, ndr]. [Dal finale] la parte elettrica è collegata in stereo a due casse 4x12" custom con altoparlanti ElectroVoice EVM 12L Classic. Il segnale del pickup piezo passa invece attraverso una DI Klark Teknik e un riverbero. Per i suoni di tastiera uso un convertitore MIDI Shadow [SH075]. I suoni piezo e sint vanno in due monitor attivi *full range* EV SXA250. Tutto viene mixato direttamente dalla mia pedaliera tramite **cinque pedali volume Ernie Ball.**

Come è cambiato negli anni il processo di composizione?

Grazie alla tecnologia è diventato tutto molto più semplice. Oggi posso creare una demo e farla avere via email agli altri. È molto più complicato ritrovarsi insieme e spiegarsi ogni volta. Ognuno di noi ha una concreta idea di quello che desidera prima di trovarsi a suonare insieme in una sala.

Tu e i soli...

Quando registro, di solito suono una serie di soli fino a che arrivo a quello che contiene qualcosa di speciale. Dal vivo cerco di ripetere i soli del disco, soprattutto nel caso di un pubblico nuovo.

È più facile produrre un CD dal vivo o un album in studio?

La situazione è un po' intricata... La mole di lavoro è enorme, perché equivale al missaggio di due CD, ma senza il piacere di essere creativo in quanto si tratta di pezzi già editi. D'altro canto, la proposta dal vivo conferisce ai brani nuova vita.

Come avete registrato *Rate Of Change Live*?

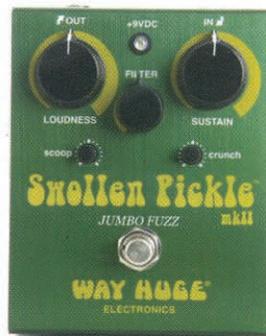
Su hard disk e in seguito con [DigiDesign] ProTools per il missaggio.

***Rate Of Change Live* è offerto anche come doppio DVD...**

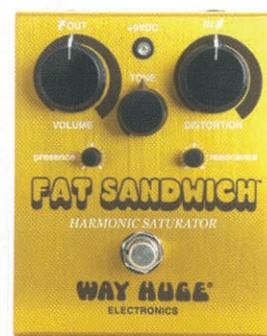
Volevamo rappresentare tutto l'arco di questa decade, così abbiamo filmato un concerto che è stato trasferito nel primo DVD, mentre il secondo contiene riprese dalle registrazioni del nostro primo CD, un concerto al Musician Institute [di Hollywood] del '98 e un documentario.



WHE701 AQUA PUSS
ANALOG DELAY



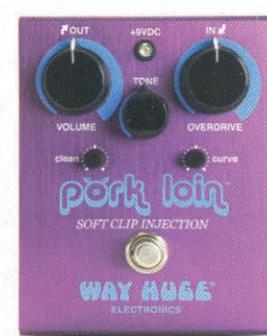
WHE401 SWOLLEN PICKLE
MKII JUMBO FUZZ



WHE301 FAT SANDWICH
HARMONIC SATURATOR DISTORTION



WHE101 ANGRY TROLL
LINEAR BOOST AMPLIFIER



WHE201 PORK LOIN
SOFT CLIP INJECTION OVERDRIVE

Rimanendo dal vivo, avete diviso l'esperienza DigiTruck col virtuoso canadese Dave Martone: qualche ricordo?

Il DigiTruck [gioco di parole tra *DigiTech* e *truck*, camion per gli angloparlanti; nda] era un camion/palcoscenico itinerante, con cui abbiamo girato in lungo e in largo gli USA, suonando in festival, piazze e negozi di musica. Prima di quell'occasione conoscevo Dave a malapena, ma alla fine è diventato uno dei miei chitarristi preferiti! Vederlo suonare equivale a conoscerlo come persona: divertente e pieno di talento!

Esempi da *Rate Of Change Live*

No Fate È noto come la chitarra in trio debba assumersi compiti onerosi: lo strumentista deve avere l'abilità di riempire spazi melodici e ritmici che in altri contesti vengono occupati, per esempio, dalle tastiere. Nell'esempio, Travis Larson esegue una ritmica basata sui power chord con l'aggiunta della 9ª e sulle triadi in posizioni laterali. Per quanto riguarda i primi (power chord con l'aggiunta della 9ª), nel contesto del trio rappresentano il marchio di fabbrica di Alex Lifeson dei Rush. Questi accordi hanno la caratteristica di unire l'incisività dei power chord all'apertura armonica tipica della 9ª e sono efficacissimi in distorsione. Lo stesso si può dire delle triadi "aperte" (cioè in posizione laterale), come il Rem e il Lam nella battuta 2: grazie agli intervalli ampi fra le voci, questi voicing creano una sonorità ampia senza perdere definizione. Notiamo anche il Do/mi "riassunto" con sole due note (mi e do). La qualità della distorsione piena e "violinistica" usata da Larson è anch'essa tipica del suono da trio rock: potremmo tracciarne un albero genealogico che, gettando le radici nell'Eric Clapton dei Cream, raggiunge i tempi nostri passando per Steve Morse ed Eric Johnson.

♩ = 157

C5(add9) G5(add9) D5(add9) Dm Am C/E F5(add9) C/E F5(add9) C/E F5(add9) C/E F5(add9) 4 volte

E a proposito di Morse e Johnson, il medesimo brano continua arpeggiando lo stesso tipo di accordi mostrati nell'esempio precedente, con una tecnica utilizzata spesso dai due biondi virtuosi. In questo caso, l'effetto è melodico e armonico nello stesso tempo e l'ampia tessitura coperta da ciascun accordo assicura che nel trio non rimangano... buchi.

♩ = 157

Em Cadd9 Gadd9 Em Cadd9 Dadd9

Barrage A Trois Cosa sarebbe un power trio senza gli unisono di carattere virtuosistico fra chitarrista e bassista? Nell'esempio, Travis e Jennifer suonano un velocissimo riff in tapping, che sembra uscito dalle dita di... Keith Emerson!

Commenti e trascrizioni di *Barrage A Trois* di Maurizio Parri; esempi da *No Fate* di Travis Larson.

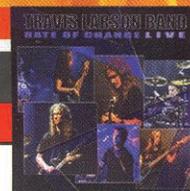
TRAVIS LARSON BAND

RATE OF CHANGE LIVE (Precision Records)

La Travis Larson Band è tra i gruppi strumentali più longevi e commercialmente fortunati al mondo, anche se non tutti lo sanno. Questi tre straordinari musicisti (Travis Larson alla chitarra, Jennifer Young al basso e Dale Moon alla batteria), hanno riscosso un enorme credito da parte di fan e addetti ai lavori già con l'omonimo debut datato 1998. *Rate Of Change Live* è un doppio disco dal vivo che ha lo scopo non solo di "omaggiare" la dimensione live del combo, ma anche quello di regalare a tutti gli aficionados della TLB l'emozione di rivivere il mega-concerto che la band tenne il 18 settembre 2008 per festeggiare i dieci anni di attività. Di carne al fuoco ce n'è tanta: venti canzoni per un'ora e mezza di puro rock-prog sanguigno e viscerale, che evidenzia uno dei guitar playing più

precisi in circolazione. L'axeman riesce a unire al meglio l'immediatezza di un linguaggio fortemente rock blues con la ricercatezza di linee melodiche mai scontate e un timing incredibilmente incisivo. L'etereo guitar work carico di delay di *Sticks And Stones* trova il suo cardine proprio in questa dinamicità ritmica; si tratta di una composizione dal chorus melodico che si contrappone all'irruenza della successiva intro prog metal di *Barrage A Trois*. Larson cambia di nuovo pelle nei giochi di leva che aprono l'evocativa *Burn Season*, piccolo capolavoro che sembrerebbe voler rendere tributo al genio visionario di Steve Vai. Un live splendido, disponibile anche in DVD.

Matteo Rocchia



TRAVIS LARSON BAND



Guitar Player Magazine GP Editors' Top Three 2011

SOUNDMIND (PRCN-1009)

Silky bends, sweet legato lines, and tuneful shred characterize Larson's playing on these 12 cuts. Some stellar moments include the slick lines on the opener, "Nevermore," the swooping whammy work on "Down on Victory," and the cornucopia of tones on "Forest for the Trees". Larson is expertly backed by drummer Dale Moon and bassist Jennifer Young. Instrumental rock fans should catch a gig or clinic from this guy.

By Matt Blackett

Progression Magazine / Autumn 2011 SOUNDMIND (PRCN-1009)

This powerfully virtuosic trio just gets better. Not only can one hear the remarkable chemistry between guitarist Travis Larson, bassist Jennifer Young and drummer Dale Moon, you can feel its organically seamless flow through raucously rockin' changeups and delightfully nuanced shifts in mood. Just kick back, crank it up and close your eyes for a fun ride on the sonic continuum.

Seldom does instrumental music this precisely delivered sound as melodically "lyrical" or smooth. The sweetly resonant likes of "OI' Gus," for instance, flows like water, pairing acoustic guitar and bass. The earnest "Out of Bounds" and wistful "Dream Catcher" offer further evidence that TLB is in less of a hurry to strut its prolific arsenal of chops than craft a good song with feeling.

But plenty of the former is in play on Soundmind, as well. "Nevermore," "Cartoon Justice" and "What's What," for instance, rock powerfully. Jazzy shadings also provide supporting contrast.

The Steve Morse allusions still apply to Larson's style, and that's a good thing!

By John Collinge

Soundmind? Indeed!

Most folks would agree that it's tough to pick a favorite child. Although every child is unique and each displays a set of characteristics that might have a parent secretly leaning one way or another, at the end of the day, most parents (at least the good ones) embrace the respective delights presented by each child and distribute their love evenly amongst their brood. What's my point? Soundmind, the Travis Larson Band's (TLB) fifth studio release, is a shiny new baby born to a family blessed with beautiful siblings, making a secret favorite all the more difficult to choose.

Soundmind starts out with a roar, unleashing two gritty-cool romps, "Nevermore" and "Rise and Fall" setting the pace for an album rife with more tasty layers than a royal wedding cake. Make no mistake, the fullness of these tunes boast an intense wall of sound that Phil Spector would unashamedly trade his gun collection to achieve. The general flow of this album is such that a comparison could be made to a roller coaster in the dark. It has fun written all over it, anticipation levels are high, and it's impossible to know where the twists and turns will be taking you. If the offering has been executed correctly, and in this case it has, you find yourself bolting to the front of the line again before the darn thing has come to a complete stop. Two words, "All Aboard!"

(Side note) I think it's a shame that technology has the general populous cherry picking singles off of an album and subsequently denying buyers the complete experience the artists had intended, including song sequence and the collective feel of a well crafted effort in its entirety. I point this out only because I think the listeners cheat themselves out of really understanding and ultimately appreciating the artists/albums true objective. (point made, back to the meat) Caution be damned! This album packs an initial punch to get the blood flowing and then somehow segues into a realm of melancholy beauty (see "Dream Catcher"). Gifted is the tune that can evoke several emotions at the same time. It's like having your girlfriend of five years break up with you only to learn that her younger, cuter sister has had a crush on you the whole time (and she cooks!).

Larson has honed the craft of creating soul candy for the ear by combining interesting melodic layers and textures of sound complete with searing/soulful guitar prints that most of us wouldn't know could be stacked in the first place. I'll leave the complexities of multi-dimensional musical chess in the creative hands of Mr. Larson but the end product speaks for itself and undeniably to the listener.

Let it be stated up front that the weaving of guitar and bass in a notable game of run, chase and tag in "Cartoon Justice" is served up on an exotic plate not to be found at the Three Chord Diner. Thank God, as I'm certain they'd screw up the order. However, if you're just soaking in the jazzy snap of "Fuzzy" with its flavorful presence of crisp drum punctuation, relaxing to the dreamy sonic pleasures of "Would you Believe" or delving into the mystery and eerie suspense of "Out of Bounds" with its intriguing mesh of whining guitars served over a bed of sizzling percussion, you'll find that throughout Soundmind is a banquet of all things right with progressive rock.

The TLB has maintained a standard of top shelf musicianship as evidenced by their body of work to date and this release has the punch, groove, beauty and excitement to sit righteously amongst its predecessors. Speaking of top shelf musicianship, Dave LaRue makes a special appearance and giftedly assaults "Fuzzy" with an impressive two-wheels-off-the ground bass lead that will have the rest of us placing our instruments on Craigslist. While we're on the subject of gifted bass offerings, the album ends with an enchanting original bass ballad written by Young entitled "Hush". An appropriately soothing nightcap with layered bass runs ushering Soundmind to a close.

At the end of the journey the stats lay out rather handsomely. Eleven original guitar- stretching tracks penned and performed by Travis Larson. One original track and tasty sit-up-and-take-notice bass work throughout, courtesy of Jennifer Young and wrapped up tightly with the percussive spot on wizardry of Dale Moon. The collective efforts of these artists have me thinking that if silence is the canvas of the musician, then the folks of TLB have done a masterful job of splashing all of the right thought provoking melodies and inspired tones from the universal sound pallet onto a once-silent disc destined for heavy rotation. Move over siblings, there's a new kid in town and its name is "Soundmind".

By Ray Sansom



**Travis Larson Band
Burn Season (PRCN-1005)**

Itching for something that will sound as good speeding down the interstate as it does in your home stereo system? Look no further than Burn Season, the third studio album from the Travis Larson Band.

While Burn Season is unquestionably a guitar lover's dream, this dynamic power trio offers much more than the dime-a-dozen Berklee educated wankers vying to dethrone Joe Satriani. Though Travis Larson can shred with

the best of them, he has a keen ear for melody, mood and dynamic arrangements. Notice that this is the Travis Larson Band and each member is free to shine and does so often.

Burn Season offers up twelve very different tunes and wastes no time getting into it with the melodious "Nevele". A complex and swinging rhythm provides the bedding for Larson's Steve Morse like approach to lead guitar. The moody title track is a nicely textured piece with humble but effective keyboards delicately placed in the background.

Other favorites would have to include "No Fate" and "Heads or Tales", two very different compositions that manage to remind me of Rush as much as the aforementioned Steve Morse: "No Fate" just rocks out with special props going to bassist Jennifer Young while "Heads or Tales" has a sort of jazzy feel with great fills from drummer Dale Moon.

Guitarist Steve Lukather guests for a cover of Rod Stewart's version of the Curtis Mayfield classic "People Get Ready"...and I'll be damned if this doesn't top just about any treatment of the song I've heard. The percussion free "Strawberry Spring" has a great folky near Elizabethan feel and shows yet another side of The Travis Larson Band.

Just when you think the CD is mellowing out comes the appropriately titled "Barrage a Trois", a supercharged speed rocker that showcases the entire band. Burn Season concludes with the reggae tinged "Seclusion(With You)", Travis Larson Band's first ever vocal performance and features guest singer Vinx's soulful baritone over a tune that is unexpectedly relaxed and pretty.

Burn Season is a rich collection of tasty compositions and for those of you who crave thoughtful melodies as well as fiery guitar leads, The Travis Larson Band will more than satiate your appetite. Great stuff here.

Sea of Tranquility December 2004

**TRAVIS LARSON BAND
BURN SEASON
Precision Records (2004)**

Guitarist/keyboardist Travis Larson has a bit of Steve Morse sensibility to his technically nimble melodic/harmonic guitar work, which dominates this very pleasing disc of mostly (except for one cut) instrumental workouts.

Opening track "Nevele" comes across as very much in the Dixie Dregs vein with its nimble changeups amidst a bright, jaunty melodic theme. The title piece spreads things out and slows them down for a funky/bluesy shuffle that also remains melodically pleasing. From there, the band moves *Burn Season* through its various paces, from mid-tempo rockers to tracks with a more atmospheric vibe. But that Dregs-like touch endures throughout as does a special knack for melding solid melodies with complex arranging and ample rock crunch.

One curious addition is a cover of Curtis Mayfield's classic "People Get Ready" with guitarist Steve Lukather guesting. (Lukather certainly doesn't have anything on Mr. Larson." A very sweet rendition, though.

Fleshing out the ensemble's sound are Jennifer Young on bass and drummer Dale Moon. A fellow called "Vinx" adds soulful vocals on the closer, "Seclusion (With You)."

Progression Magazine Spring 2005



Travis Larson Band - Burn Season (PRCN-1005)

Third album, all instrumental bar one song right at the end, a trio consisting of Larson on all guitars and keyboards, Jennifer Young on electric bass and Dale Moon on drums, with guest appearance from Steve Lukather on one track.

Now I listen to instrumental guitar-rock and fusion albums from the point of view of the emotional impact that the compositions have - all this bit about how technical the playing is, whether the guy can do this that or the other - all that is not only completely over my head but totally irrelevant - all these musos wittering on about such things should just listen to the music for what it is, not how adeptly it's played. If they do, then they will find their own slice of heaven in this album, for it features track after track of music that is so superbly composed and arranged as to strike a chord on every level.

Take something like the seven minute title track - a gorgeous slice of emotive music, taken at a mid-pace and delivered with finesse, strength and feel, as the rhythm section provide an undulating backdrop of rolling bass and drums, over which the lead guitar solos and soars, reminding me of some of the more ballad-like classic tracks that a guitarists such as Jeff Beck used to do, and here, the effect is so addictive, having you enraptured from start to finish, the searing, slow electric slide and lead guitars playing a melodic series of solos that are both heartfelt and make the hairs stand up on the back of your neck - wondrous stuff.

The four minute 'Edges' features a deeply riffing electric rhythm guitar as the rhythm section increase the pace slightly and over all that this lead guitar chimes away effortlessly until the pace drops, string synths are added, the bass, delicately pounds and drums splash, while this subtle and beautifully entwining lead guitar solo is heard as the track begins to take off once again. The four minute 'No Fate' rolls solidly along, this time a much more searing lead solo soars away on top, twisting and turning, changing shape and sound as the pace and structure of the track remains solid and yet languid at the same time, the pace allowing the maximum melodic impact of the playing to shine through, and the bass work here is upfront and mesmerising. The five minute 'Heads Or Tales' has an almost country-blues feel to its use of gorgeously chiming twin guitars as the structure of the composition twists and turns as it goes, always tuneful, and almost reminding me of some of the most heartfelt instrumentals from classic Stanley Clarke, only with more melody but just as strong.

'Axe To Grind' features nearly five minutes of rock as the band fire up, again, not without its fair share of dynamic arranging that breaks the power display, and while it's a feast of mid-paced strength from the band as a whole, the guitar work shines and melodies are firmly set at the heart of things, again some wicked Stanley Clarke-esque bass coming to the fore. The four minutes of the Curtis Mayfield classic ballad, 'People Get Ready' inevitably brings to mind the Jeff Beck hit with uncle Rod on vocals, but this instrumental rendition is just gorgeous with some heartfelt guitar work that really cuts through while the band provide a strong and relaxed rhythmic backing as the piece sails into a magical sunset.

A couple of tracks follow that are melodic excursions for electric and acoustic guitars over the rhythm section's fine work while the penultimate track is a faster paced exercise in melodic fusion, with some electrifying electric leads, galloping drums and way funky electric bass. With a few more tracks in a similar vein to all this that I've missed out along the way, and the four minute song at the end, the latter a rolling ballad with an distinct ethnic feel in the rhythm section, some gloriously multi-tracked electric and acoustic guitars, plus lead and harmony vocals, the result is an incredibly satisfying album that isn't bombastic or over-the-top, choc full of melody and expressive guitar work, superbly arranged, produced and composed and just a thoroughly brilliant work.

CD Services October 2004

TRAVIS LARSON BAND

Rockshow DVD
Precision Records (2003)



Guitar freaks have a new reason to rejoice, because let me tell you folks, I've found THE new band for you.....THE TRAVIS LARSON BAND, and they are simply amazing.

Comprised of guitarist Travis Larson, bassist Jennifer Young, and drummer Dale Moon, this band has all the chops to blazing technique to send all you wannabe shredders back to the woodshed, but what makes them stand so far apart from their peers is the SONGS. At times reminiscent of Steve Morse with a touch of JOE SATRIANI-esque melody, this band writes songs that not only flow very well together, but leave plenty of room for tight interplay. Larson, who I will say sounds a lot like STEVE MORSE at times, is simply flawless and never resorts to silly grandstanding to display his technical abilities. Both Larson and Young are tremendous instrumentalists and Moon's tight, in the pocket drumming shines all over this DVD.

What makes this DVD so enjoyable is the fact that you get a band caught on tape doing what they do best - PLAYING. No silly fade ins, no sophomoric video "effects", no silly camera work, just simple, well structured footage which focuses on all the right things, at all the right times. Each member is given equal billing, the song list is lengthy with plenty of solos going around and when they lock into a groove - watch out.

I will note that my only wish was for some extra bonus features (i.e. backstage footage, rig-details, outtakes, etc), but considering this band produced, financed and edited this DVD themselves, they've done a better job than most 'pro' budget DVD concert films.

I will also note that you should definitely check out this band's two CD's - Travis Larson Band & Suspension, both excellent CD's with top notch songwriting and superb musicianship. Finally, someone new to watch out for.

FoundryMusic.com November 2003

TRAVIS LARSON BAND
Rock Show DVD
Precision Records (PRCN-1004)

More and more excellent music DVD's are being released these days, but sometimes the most enjoyable are the hard to find ones. Take this one for example, a live concert from the Travis Larson Band-probably not one you will find in your local Virgin Music Store, but one that every guitar and instrumental rock fan should seek out. Travis Larson is an extremely gifted guitarist, with obvious influences like Steve Morse, Eric Johnson, Eddie Van Halen, and Steve Vai poking out through his playing. His bandmates are quite adept at their instruments as well; bassist Jennifer Young is way cute, and owns some serious muscular chops, while drummer Dale Moon keeps a steady groove and pounds away furiously when needed (check out his acrobatic drum solo included here.) The band has written a host of melodic songs that feature complex time changes, chunky riffs,



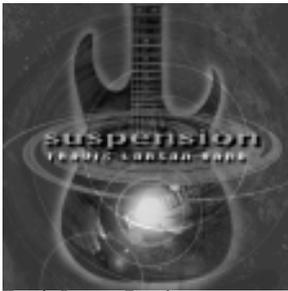
blinding solos, and steady grooves, all elements that make this DVD an enjoyable near 90 minutes of fun.

Steve Morse Band fans will love the the aggressive attack of tunes like "Stratospheric Alien Boundaries" and "Junkablaja", not to mention the intricate lines

of "Nut Boy." Bassist Young shows off her impressive slap 'n' pop style on the frantic "Squeeze & Shake", and her melodic side on "Know Strings Attached", a song that really shows the synergy that she and Larson have on stage. Larson throws the audience all sorts of curveballs, as he incorporates searing legato lines, whammy bar fills, manic arpeggios, and tasty jazz breaks, all played with melody, finesse, and style on his Music Man guitar. While he can be flashy when he wants, the guitarist never shows off, instead utilizing the less is more technique, which allows this ensemble to really come across as such, a band with plenty to offer.

Rock Show is filled with plenty of intriguing and memorable tunes that instantly pushed me to repeated viewings. Being an admirer of Steve Morse also helped me get into this DVD very quickly, as structurally many of the TLB tunes are stylistically similar to the work of the Steve Morse Band or the Dixie Dregs, and that's not a bad thing in my opinion. Check out the band's website for more info.

Sea of Tranquility August 2003



Travis Larson Band
Suspension
Precision Records

Co-produced by bassist, Jennifer Young, *Suspension* is the latest musical vision of the Travis Larson Band. These melodic, instrumental songs are anchored by Jennifer's driving, often unison bass lines and the hard-hitting, Dale Moon (not kin to Keith, but very heavy nonetheless).

Larson soars on "Power Down", utilizing Jennifer's slapped groove to guide his flight. Victor Wooten appears courtesy of Mom & Pop Wooten to tap his way into your hearts with a moving intro to "Georgia on my Mind". Travis' guitar in "Crosstalk" has a cool delay, flowing over Jennifer's arpeggiated bass line and the odd time signature laid down by Moon. My favorite song on this record is "Sandusky Trail". Its minor, almost Caribbean feel, augmented with a guitar-tapped motif is very spacious and well arranged.

Bass Frontiers Magazine Vol. 8 Num. 2

TRAVIS LARSON BAND
SUSPENSION (PRECISION RECORDS)

Sharp, aggressive trio fusion here. The opening "934" slips into a reggae groove, then goes all whooshy before guitarist Larson jettisons the closing moments with his silvery lead. Illustrating his keen songwriting abilities, "Full Suspension" rides a series of melodic, rhythmic, and textural turns, like a prize stallion on a four-minute adrenaline rush. Larson also mixes guitar tones nicely, from Page-like mountains of electricity, to folk-ish strums. "Return to Zero" is post-Floydian instrumental power-pop, with a moving, hypnotic chord sequence that blossoms in a delicious rush of colors.

Victor Wooten's virtuosic bass solo highlights "Georgia On My Mind," Larson's blues-drenched guitar taking the theme and subsequent solo - shredded Georgia on his mind - building toward a gracefully burning close. The Michael Hedges-like "Sandusky Trail" shows off Larson's melodic gifts, as he blends acoustic and electric sounds with keyboards, over a bed of deep bass. The vaguely Nordic, delicate "Touch" is expanded upon by "Aftertouch," with enchanting percussion, and muted electric work from Larson; his final explosion into outright roar is a wondrous thing to hear.

Progression Magazine
Issue 39 Summer 2001

TRAVIS LARSON BAND

Suspension
(Precision)

With the release of their second full length CD *Suspension*, The Travis Larson Band hits a musical bullseye with an admirable album of guitar-based all-instrumental jazz-rock. An electrifying studio effort from the California-based trio, *Suspension* is the work of a band that has already garnered acclaim as an opening act for Trey Gunn (King Crimson), Gary Hoey and Dick Dale. Larson's guitar is tastefully mixed right up front for maximum impact, and he receives some kindred assistance from his bandmates **Jennifer Young** (bass) and **Dale Moon** (drums). Also appearing as a guest artist on a TLB cover of the old soul chestnut "Georgia On My Mind" is Bela Fleck bassist **Victor Wooten**. That cover and eleven more Larson originals makes *Suspension* an all-around winner for fans of jazz-rock guitarists like Steve Morse, Steve Howe and Steve Vai. www.travislarsonband.com

MWE3.com Summer 2001

TRAVIS LARSON BAND - "Suspension"
(Precision)

This is a serious quality release from a serious quality all-instrumental rock band, and includes an amazing guest performance by Grammy-Award winning bassist, VICTOR WOOTEN. The music of guitarist Travis Larson can be said to tastefully reflect the styles of Steve Morse and Jeff Beck, yet Larson and the band indeed have their own strong and unique voices. Larson is well under control here, presenting a nice display of mature guitar work and musicianship...well paced, well organized, and always musical. As well, Larson has managed to weave some very sophisticated and chop busting complexity into his soulful compositions. Jennifer Young (bass) and Dale Moon (drums) are incredible musicians, and lay down a precise, solid and purely musical foundation...exceptional playing and superb sound!!! Young and Moon really lock it up tight while still being able to offer insightful interplay and killer ornamentation. Extremely impressive!!! The entire album flows well, lots of melody and phrasing, a very nice musical geography from beginning to end. The recording/production quality is top notch, having been recorded at the band's own studio, "Avalon Digital Recording Studio" in San Luis Obispo, engineered by ace veteran Kip Stork, produced by Larson and Young. Overall, this is an excellent work, and is highly recommended!!!

Visit: www.travislarsonband.com
Precision Records P.O. Box 14803 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
DM

Guitar 2001 Magazine Summer 2001



TRAVIS LARSON BAND
"Suspension"

Secondo disco per questo interessante trio . Rispetto all'esordio i tre propongono anziche' rock-funk un misto di fusion e rock melodico e devo dire che i risultati sembrano dar ragione ai loro sforzi ! 934 apre il disco ed e' proprio Dale Moon alla batteria che fa da intro solista con un groove bellissimo ed un suono da paura ... !!! La song che mi ha colpito di piu' e' *Powerdown* , molto particolare con una melody-guitar davvero azzeccata , un mid-tempo cool e una Jennifer Young al basso sempre in "movimento" . I 12 brani presenti fanno si che l'ascoltatore non si annoi molto , secondo me un grande salto in avanti per Trevis Larson e la sua Band , da avere !

Guitar Chef August 2001 / Italy



Travis Larson Band
Travis Larson Band
Precision Records

This 60 minute, 14-track disc is another addition to the roster of instrumental rock in the spirit of Vai, Morse, and Satriani. The Travis Larson Band consists of Travis Larson on all guitars and synthesizers, Jennifer Young on bass, and Dale Moon (no, not Keith) on drums. Larson's compositions are thoughtful and intelligent and the performances are muscular and precise. Young and Moon experiment with everything from foot pedals and MIDI triggering to pull off Larson's heady arrangements. Young and Moon also work closely together to navigate many styles of varying intensity, using dynamics to their advantage. Young kicks ass on the Cobhamish "Nut Boy," slaps and pops on "Short Fuse," and makes the 5/8 time of "The Big Snuggle Up" seem danceable. This is a great instrumental rock band, due in a large part to Jennifer Young's versatile bottommanship.

Bass Frontiers Magazine Vol. 6 Num. 1

**TRAVIS LARSON BAND - S/T
(Precision PRCN-1001)**

The Travis Larson Band comes flying out of San Luis Obispo, California with an impressive, self-titled debut recording containing fourteen tracks of rock-based instrumental fusion. The trio of Travis Larson (guitar), Jennifer Young (bass) and Dale Moon (drums) provide the precise maneuverability through sometimes intricate arrangements, while intelligent orchestration allows for an unlikely depth of sonic texture. This richness of sound is the result of a stubborn refusal to accept the limitations of the trio format. What it adds up to on the *Travis Larson Band* is some exciting music, as evidenced on tracks such as "Nut Boy," "Nameless" and "Morse Code". Larson is a high caliber soloist and his work on the *Travis Larson Band* CD should be carefully studied by fans of excellent guitar music. Kudos also to Young for her flowing bass work and production and to Moon for his tight drum performances.

Guitar Nine Records April/May 1999

Guitar Hero goes from tender to full throttle

Tracing the evolution of the rock guitar instrumentalist would probably start with Les Paul and move into the realm of the surf movement, the technical advances of Hendrix and Clapton, and then into more modern axe grinders like Eric Johnson and Joe Satriani. Add to the stack a cat named Travis Larson, and you have yourself the ultimate guitar solo experience.

One of the premier musicians on the Central Coast, and arguably the finest rock guitarist, Travis Larson and his trio are busting out a new album, called *Travis Larson Band*. The 14-song epic delivers spectacular grooves and colorful soundscapes with Larson's knack for melodious lines driving this powerful record. I guess jazz has to be mentioned in the description because it certainly has a sense of spontaneous combustion, and the instrumental moodiness, but this record rocks too hard for it to be passed off as just another guy playing scales.

Basically, to describe Larson's sound you need to understand and get a sense of Rush. That legendary trio was full of overly competent players, but lost many casual listeners with falsetto-driven, operatic lyrics. Take away Geddy Lee, and you can start to get an idea of Larson et. al. This is metallic, sure, but filled with emotional and smart movement. The band's ability to shift gears and relate to each other's instrumentation is the foundation for many of the record's best work.

Take "Short Fuse," the record's second cut, which sounds so much like a full throttle drive in a hot car on a winding road, that you can almost feel your seat in the down-shift, and the wind in your hair. The rhythm work of Dale Moon and Jennifer Young is so tight and succinct, that Larson would have to work very hard to sound anything less than perfect.

Other cuts on the album range from the tender-yet-splendid "Nameless" to the large sound of "Know Strings Attached," which boasts classical-type movements and layers of thoughts over a simple bass line. My favorite is an acoustic piece called "Window Falls," which shows off the band's ability to create emotion.

High Fidelity October 1998

**Travis Larson Band - S/T
(PRCN-1001)**

First album from a new name to me but definitely a name to watch as this is one seriously hot instrumental rock guitar trio. Fourteen tracks allow the musicians all the room they need to show you that they can definitely whip up a storm while still retaining that vital sense of melody to make the songs flow so well. That, allied to a fantastic set of arrangements where dynamics plays a crucial role, means that this is music that positively glows. The average track length is around four minutes and this is absolutely perfect, distilling the electric guitar-driven essence that is this red-hot trio into one fantastic composition after another, ensuring no self-indulgence, and plenty of expressive playing. Many of the tracks fly along on a wave of riffs and rhythms but rarely would you label it as "metal" although it decidedly rocks. Then you get a track like 'Nameless' that takes a more languid path yet remains strong but builds into a swirling storm of a track nevertheless, the guitar work so full of feeling while the rhythm section seem to hold it all together effortlessly. Special mention must be made of the production which is crisp, clear, sharp and crystal clear. But, above all, it is the lead guitar work that shines and it's all about feeling, which every track on this album has by the bucketload, as it largely drives a rock guitar path through some strong tunes and superior playing all round - a magnificent debut for sure.

CD Services April 2003



TRAVIS LARSON BAND

Larson is a melodically inclined instrumentalist, fierce of chops and clean of tone (as creamy distortion goes), and he has two strong, precision-gearred bandmates in drummer Dale Moon and bassist Jennifer Young (breaking with the boy's club model of chops-wielders, and bully for her). Morse is an obvious influence here, as referred to in the tune "Morse Code," and that's not a bad thing. The trio makes a big, heroic sound, recorded with a startling clarity at the SLO Avalon studio for their new CD on the Precision label.

The Independent January 1999