

# FREE JAZZ

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## Steve Moore - Stebmo (Self Published, 2008) \*\*\*\*

Steve Moore is a young multi-instrumentalist from Seattle, Washington, playing amongst others trombone and keyboards. He is accompanied on this album by Doug Wieselman on reeds, Todd Sickafoose on bass, Matt Chamberlain on drums, Eyvind Kang on violin, and the album was produced by Tucker Martine. An all-star line-up of modern jazz, with Martine as a top producer of modern rock. In contrast to much jazz, the main focus of the album is the music on the one hand and the production, with lots of post-editing, on the other, less so on the performance or individual soloing. What you get is dense but light-footed music, conjuring up lots of atmospheric images. Martine's impact is clear, and those familiar with Mylab or some of Bill Frisell's later albums will recognize his influence, but the music is all Stebmo's, using jazz elements, Americana, and sound track-like ingredients with lots of dramatic effects. This is gentle music, intimate and calm, but combining joyful and playful elements with dark and menacing background harmonies or sounds. The first track "Waiting Game" sets the scene perfectly. And on one track, "Majika", I thought darkness and gloom would definitely conquer, but then Wieselman starts playing an almost joyful theme on his clarinet. This is slow to mid tempo mood music, carefully crafted and composed, with lots of attention to detail, and overall hard to compare with other music. But if you like Chris Speed's "Deviantics", Wayne Horvitz's "Sweeter Than The Day", or some of Matthew Shipp's work on his Thirsty Ear label, you start getting a gist of what you could hear here. An excellent debut.

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