**ARTIST:** The Jazz Defenders  
**TITLE:** Memory In Motion  
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**CATALOG N.:** HR008

UK jazz ensemble **The Jazz Defenders**release their third album ***Memory In Motion***on **Haggis Records**, another quality release of original material that takes in their usual diverse mix of influences and genres, from timeless acoustic jazz referencing the classic sounds of **Blue Note Records**, to a more contemporary fusion where jazz meets soul, funk and hip-hop.

Although they love to mix things up, their roots are in the classic acoustic jazz quintet sound of the late 1950s/early 1960s, back when hard bop and modal jazz ruled. They have already explored this musical path well on their previous albums but they still deliver a couple of classic inspired jazz cuts here. **"Chasing Fantasies"**and **"Fuffle Kerfuffle"**both give the band some space to cut loose on solos over swing jazz beats that will keep their original jazz audience happy. The latter bubbles away with a jazz shuffle beat that would make drum legend Art Blakey smile.

**"Meanderthal"**and **"Snakebite Playfight"**bring soul to this jazz party. Exactly like jazz legends **Lee Morgan** / **Herbie Hancock** / **Freddie Hubbard** etc did back in the early-mid 1960s. The first is a feel-good, toe-tapping gem that's heavy on the backbeat and short and snappy on the solos, the exact reasons that made it the perfect opening single from the album. **"Snakebite Playfight"**comes with a jaunty New Orleans shuffle before transforming into a heavy psychedelic soul jazz burner, flipping back with ease to the NOLA shuffle for the Mardi Gras meets bebop piano solo by band leader **George Cooper**.

**"Rolling On A High"**is a hip-hop/jazz banger that sees the band continue their collaborations with UK rapper **Doc Brown**, a perfect combination that began on their second album ***King Phoenix***'. This time, the **Doc** spits some old-school block party- style bars over a bouncy uptempo funky beat with the band cooking up some soul stew behind him. Definitely dancefloor material.

Another uptempo jam is the heavy jazz fusion jam **"Net Zero"**. It kicks off with some live broken beat kit playing and piano/bass staccato vamping before taking off into Headhunters territory on the solos, sounding both contemporary and classic at the same time. This is **The Jazz Defenders** at their fiercest and toughest and delivering a track that will have jazz dancers worldwide in an utter frenzy.

It's not all uptempo numbers or dancefloor-oriented compositions on this album. Two tracks take the musical dynamics right down to give a temporary break from the high- energy numbers. **"Take A Minute"**has a rolling double bass line locked into the groove while the horns play a lazy and laid-back theme with vibes embellishment, sounding like some trippy independent film soundtrack. Another recurring musical reference point for this band over the years.

The album finishes on a poignant and introspective note with a beautiful piano and double bass feature for **George Cooper** and bassist **Will Harris**. It's called **"Enigma"**, it was recorded live in Paris and it closes the album on a peaceful note evoking the music and playing of **Bill Evans**. The perfect way to close this brilliant third album from **The Jazz Defenders**.

With ***Memory In Motion***, pianist **George Cooper**and his band undoubtedly pay great homage to a golden era of jazz music that they love, but also elaborate on this influence with a wealth of modern musical experience, to create their own raw and vibrant compositions. The result is an enthrallingly unique sound that is as danceable as it is listenable.