



JEFF PARKER Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy

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DESCRIPTION

"Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy, x2 LPs of long-form, lyrical, groove-based free improv by acclaimed guitarist & composer **Jeff Parker's ETA IVtet**, is at last here. Recorded live at ETA (referencing **David Foster Wallace**), a bar in LA's Highland Park neighborhood with just enough space in the back for Parker, drummer **Jay Bellerose**, bassist **Anna Butterss**, & alto saxophonist **Josh Johnson** to convene in extraordinarily depthful & exploratory music making. Gleaned for the stoniest side-length cuts from 10+ hours of vivid two-track recordings made between 2019 & 2021 by **Bryce Gonzales**, *Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy* is a darkly glowing séance of an album, brimming over with the hypnotic, the melodic, & patience & grace in its own beautiful strangeness. Room-tone, electric fields, environment, ceiling echo, live recording, Mondays, Los Angeles. Jeff Parker's first double album & first live album, *Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy* belongs in the lineage of such canonical live double albums recorded on the West Coast as **Lee Morgan's Live at the Lighthouse**, **Miles Davis' In Person Friday & Saturday Night at the Blackhawk**, **San Francisco & Black Beauty**, & **John Coltrane's Live in Seattle**. While the IVtet sometimes plays standards &, including on this recording, original compositions, it is as previously stated largely a free improv group – just not in the genre meaning of the term. The music is more free composition than free improvisation, more blending than discordant. It's tensile, yet spacious & relaxed. Clearly all four musicians have spent significant time in the planetary system known as jazz, but relationships to other musics, across many scenes & eras – dub & **Dilla**, primary source psychedelia, ambient & drone – suffuse the proceedings. Listening to playbacks Parker remarked, humorously & not, 'we sound like the **Byrds**' (to certain ears, the **Clarence White**-era Byrds, who really stretched it). A fundamental of all great ensembles, whether basketball teams or bands, is the ability of each member to move fluidly & fluently in & out of lead & supportive roles. Building on the communicative pathways they've established in Parker's – **The New Breed** – project, Parker & Johnson maintain a constant dialogue of lead & support. Their sampled & looped phrases move continuously thru the music, layered & alive, adding depth & texture & pattern, evoking birds in formation, sea creatures drifting below the photic zone. Or, the two musicians simulate those processes by entwining their terse, clear-lined playing in real-time. The stop/start flow of Bellerose, too, simulates the sampler, recalling drum parts in Parker's beat-driven projects. Mostly Bellerose's animated phraseologies deliver the inimitable instantaneous feel of live creative drumming. The range of tonal colors he conjures from his extremely vintage battery of drums & shakers – as distinctive a sonic signature as we have in contemporary acoustic drumming – bring almost folkloric qualities to the aesthetic currency of the IVtet's language. A wonderful revelation in this band is the playing of Anna Butterss. The strength, judiciousness & humility with which she navigates the bass position both ground & lift upward the egalitarian group sound. As the IVtet's grooves flow & clip, loop & repeat, the ensemble elements reconfigure, a terrarium of musical cultivation growing under controlled variables, a tight experiment of harmony & intuition, deep focus & freedom. For all its varied sonic personality, *Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy* scans immediately & unmistakably as music coming from Jeff Parker's unique sound world. Generous in spirit, trenchant & disciplined in execution, Parker's music has an earned respect for itself & for its place in history that transmutes through the musical event into the listener. Many moods & shapes of heart & mind will find utility & hope in a music that combines the autonomy & the community we collectively long to see take hold in our world, in substance & in staying power. On the personal tip, this was always my favorite gig to hit, a lifeline of the eremite records Santa Barbara years. Mondays southbound on the 101, driving away from tasks & screens & illness, an hour later ordering a double tequila neat at the bar with the band three feet away, knowing i was in good hands, knowing it would be back around on another Monday. To encounter life at scales beyond the human body is the collective dance of music & the beholding of its beauty, together." –**Michael Ehlers & Zac Brenner**

TRACKLISTING

01. 2019-07-08 I	03. 2019-05-19
02. 2019-07-08 II	04. 2021-04-28

HIGHLIGHTS

- *Mondays at The Enfield Tennis Academy*, x2 LPs of long-form, lyrical, groove-based free improv by acclaimed guitarist & composer **Jeff Parker's ETA IVtet**.
- Recorded live with drummer **Jay Bellerose**, bassist **Anna Butterss**, & alto saxophonist **Josh Johnson**.

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