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Unland

(CHOUX DE BRUXELLES) www.choux.net



Three years on from their last album *Sea Of Stories*, the Brussels-based trio turn their attention to the idea of 'land'. Their fusion of Arabic and other oriental influences with contemporary and experimental jazz, and their line-up of trumpet with accordion and upright bass gives them a very distinctive identity.

Unland offers six pieces – songs seems too ordinary a word to describe them – with each running between more or less five and seven-and-a-half minutes, Piet Maris's accordion providing a drone or snatches of melody, whilst Otto Kint's upright bass playing adds a jazz-styled foundation, allowing Syrian-born Yamen Martini to improvise freely, quietly and thoughtfully over ever-shifting lines, mostly on trumpet (think Don Cherry with Ornette Coleman in places for a very rough reference point), occasionally flugelhorn and occasionally adding percussion.

Sometimes they all come together briefly, as on 'Staketsel' and 'Oufti'; at other times they follow their own equally valid paths though it is important to stress that the album is a coherent whole. It is not always the easiest listening, but that doesn't mean it is difficult – it just demands your attention and it is worthwhile making the effort.

Norman Darwen