

Christopher Libertino Press and Reviews

Music from the Movies

Hidden Treasures: Up and Coming Composers

By Mikael Carlsson

CHRISTOPHER LIBERTINO is another name to keep your eyes on. His sensitive score for **Speak**, an acclaimed drama that won the Audience Award at the Woodstock Film Festival last year, is an atmospheric, in-depth listening experience dominated by different layers of distorted guitar sounds combined with minimalist melodic patterns and restrained rhythms. The film tells the story about a high school girl who has chosen not to speak due to a dark, traumatic experience she had over the summer. Christopher Libertino is an electric guitar wizard who has experimented a great deal with guitar sounds over the years, and that background proves to be the perfect match for this story. The film's characters live in a pop-orientated world and that is obviously effectively underlined by electric guitars and rock rhythms, but the most important quality of Libertino's guitar-driven score is that it works on two levels: it evokes the darkness of the story, but also the sadness and reflective qualities of the film itself. Using the full emotional range of the guitar, Libertino creates a moving – and at times, disturbing and intense in a way that reminds me of Elliot Goldenthal's **Heat** score – soundscape for the story to grow in.

The Hollywood Reporter

Speak

By Marilyn Moss

Showtime and Lifetime television team up for an unusual simulcast presentation of the well-made and extremely touching drama **Speak**, the story of a high school girl who is traumatized after being the victim of a date rape. Much of the credit goes to Kristen Stewart, who plays the girl in an understated performance that will touch everyone who sees it.

Stewart spends much of the telecast actually speechless, unable, of course, to talk about what happened to her. Raped by a boy in the same high school (the rape scene is shown in flashback) while at a party, Stewart's character, Melinda, cannot bring herself to tell anyone about the rape, not even her parents. Her mother, Joyce (a wonderful Elizabeth Perkins), naturally thinks her daughter is just acting out ordinary teenage angst, heightened by Melinda's awkwardness at being a high school freshman. Neither does Melinda tell her friends, who are still angry at her for calling 911 after the incident, because it pretty much ruined the party they all attended.

Scriptors Annie Young Frisbie and Jessica Sharzer (who also directs with great subtlety) take material from the novel by Laurie Halse Anderson and do well by it. **Speak** is really an internal journey of a young woman who reacts with great sensitivity to the world around her, all the while keeping inside a secret that is ripping her apart psychologically and emotionally. Stewart really takes the part and runs with it. She is on-camera nearly every minute of the telefilm and holds it together with great style and panache. **She gets great help from Christopher Libertino's sensitive score and Peter C. Frank's wonderful editing, which merges the character's interior and exterior worlds beautifully -- a great feat, given that the two are practically symbiotic throughout the movie.**

Sound on Sound Magazine

Traveller

By Neal McLeod

There's a pleasing gentleness to **Traveller** that is refreshing in that it isn't trying to be brash or limelight stealing. It's just gently and quietly what it is.

Every element of this production — sleeve design included — was done by Christopher himself and, production-wise, it almost feels like he's been doing it in secret; it's an album of almost extreme subtlety, with vocals kept very much in the background and the sounds chosen being muted and soft.

Overall, this is a tremendously successful approach and, unusually, by the end you don't feel the need for a bigger, more attention-grabbing track.

Music Web Express

Traveller

By Robert Steven Silverstein

Libertino's electric guitar work and immaculate studio sound is completely original and quite inventive. Bowie, Eno and Gabriel fans could do a lot worse than spending some time with Libertino's progressive sounding, nocturnal emissions.

Background Magazine

Traveller

By Henri Strik

Christopher's goal for the album was to synthesize the wide-screen cinematic sounds of his film writing with evocative lyrics and musical styles that include electronica, industrial, alternative and ambient music and with hints of African, Caribbean and Middle Eastern music as well. I guess he succeeded very well in his goal because that's just what I heard almost fifty minutes long on a debut on which he can be very proud of. Highly recommended to those who enjoy the music made by the already mentioned acts such as Peter Gabriel, David Sylvian, Kate Bush, Thomas Dolby, David Bowie, Brian Eno and Bryan Ferry!

MusicTech Magazine

Alien Guitars 2

By Nigel Lord

Like the original *Alien Guitars*, *Alien Guitars 2* extends light-years beyond most guitar sample collections. In fact, well beyond anything that sounds even remotely guitar-like. The two-audio plus two-.WAV/Acid CD format offers masses of space for producers Christopher Libertino and David Siskovic to indulge their warped sense of what's possible with a set of wire strings and a roomful of hardware, software and 'demented wetware' (er, no... we don't know either).

The library extends from individual sonic events to complete soundscapes – a good proportion of which really do sound quite alien. You could also add words such as 'dark', 'gothic' and, in some cases, downright 'sinister'.

The accompanying booklet goes some way to describing this aural smorgasbord – and indeed, matches it with some pretty colorful language. One senses that the producers had almost as much fun describing these alien landscapes as they did creating them. Ever wondered what the ‘sound of hopeful machinery’ is like? Find out in the Eden 2.0 section on disc one. Care to dip into the ‘well of harmonic motion’? Check out the Aquatica section on disc two.

Although perhaps not of universal appeal, *Alien Guitars 2* has much to recommend it as a genuinely imaginative and creatively useful sample library. **If a few more guitarists coaxed sounds like these out of their instruments, the history of rock and roll might have been very different.**

Alien Guitars Review

Keyboard Magazine

SELECTION: 8 SOUND QUALITY: 9 DOCUMENTATION: 7 BANG FOR THE BUCK: 8

Picture a multi-legged monster traipsing across an alien landscape. Or pterodactyls flying off into a crimson sunset. Or Wile E. Coyote getting electrocuted. These are a few of the images that form in my mind upon hearing some of the segments on Alien Guitars. A majority of the samples sound like anything but guitar. I'm sure Alien Guitar's creators - guitarist Christopher Libertino and sound designer David F. Siskovic - will take that as a compliment, which it's meant to be.

"I love these sounds," Jim Aikin agrees. "They're evocative and fresh. The word 'guitars' is almost misleading, in my opinion. I wouldn't tend to buy a CD of guitar samples, but this disc is packed with exotic sonorities I'd be happy to use in a track."

While there are occasional guitar riffs and patterns, much of this sonic material could only be categorized as sound effects. Sound types are divided into sections titled Loops, Events, Composites, and Ambiences. Where appropriate, key and tempo (to the hundredth of a bpm!) are divulged for pitched and rhythmic tracks, and multi-event tracks are sub indexed for easier access. Stereo imaging is excellent.

"I found the dark, understated percussive drones like 'night town', 'quantum packet 7', and 'paganrites' very attractive," Jim adds. "The ambiences in the Events sections are chillin'! Don't miss the terrifying scrapes of 'feedback squall', the gauzy, semitonal clouds of 'a single kiss 2', and the deep swirls of 'obelisk.' On disc 2, the rich, evolving 'chemical slow burn' is a standout, as is the laid-back organic burbling of 'interzone arrivals'."

Whether you're in search of abnormal rhythmic loops, strange aural environments, or striking sound effects, Alien Guitars serves up a good supply of each. Heck, you might even put it on for a naked listen so you can trip out. It's certainly safer than doing drugs.