

[Abrams on bass & clarinet, and Avreeayl Ra on drums release their 2nd collaboration in a 2-CD album of live and studio improvisations, adding Jim Baker on keys and electronics for the 2nd disc. ... Click to View](#)

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Dganit Elyakim
Failing Better
(Aural Terrains)

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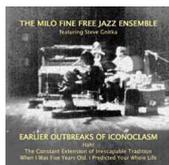


Looks like Israel has become a fertile soil for experimental composers to grow juicy fruits. This is especially true for those who deal with electroacoustic mutations of reality and mind-altering vocalizations. Most of Dganit Elyakim's work belongs there, but she's more than ready to tear down a few fences. This collection — her debut album — investigates the relation between human and (apparently) inhuman as sonically portrayed by a series of snapshots (or longer scenes, for that matter). These intuitions are rendered tangible through the use of contrasting atmospheres, small degrees of obsessiveness, anguish and

perturbed reflection; all of the above represents a set of primary constituents for the listener's focus.

A characteristic of Elyakim's music is its unwillingness to remain unnoticed: don't you ever dare using its forthrightness as a furnishing complement. As soon as a track begins one perks up the ears to understand what the instruments want to affirm, how a mangled text is used as a rhythmic device, how slanted combinations of diverse genders attribute unusual harmonic gradations to a given score (in that sense check the brilliant "Old Skool", performed by Eskesta Ensemble). There's no parsimony in the dynamic aspect, either; take for instance "One On 1.1", a duet for bass clarinet and electronics handled, respectively, by Yoni Silver and the composer herself. Within a restricted palette, Elyakim and her cohort conceive an impressive variety of melodically wavering cut-and-pastes and multi-shaped propagations; still, the essence of the clarinet's timbre is retained regardless of the overall abstract nature. The same can be told of "Dogma I Am God" (note the palindrome, please), Ronald Boersen's viola getting multiplied and superimposed by the deus ex machina's deft manipulation.

We could list additional examples of Elyakim's talent, but that would be pointless. Perhaps the best compliment we can give is that she appears to be a rare case of "jack of several trades, master of most of them". Happiness is finding a sequence of ideas that doesn't sound as a shallow showcase; *Failing Better* offers a measure of weight and profundity beyond its polychromatic content.



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