

TAKE EFFECT

BEN VERDERY & ULYSSES QUARTET

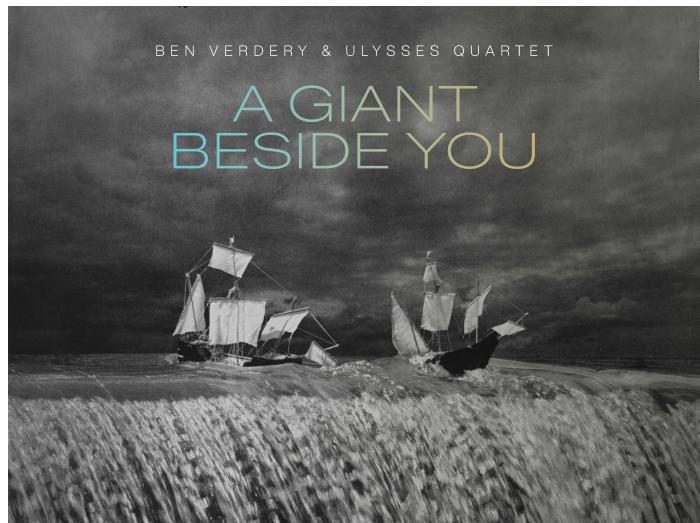
January 31, 2024

A Giant Beside You

ReEntrant/New Focus,
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The classical and electric guitar icon Ben Verdery brings us a pair of originals, a piece penned by Bryce Dessner and particularly imaginative arrangements of a Leonard Bernstein classic and Chilean composer Javier Farías for this guitar and strings collaboration.

Dessner's "Quintet For High Strings" opens the listen with quivering strings and strong attention to detail, where the melodic setting unfolds with dancing interaction between the players and Verdery's meticulous playing.

Bernstein's "Clarinet Sonata" lands in the middle, and is rich with the precise winds and emotive guitar making for much intimacy, while Verdery's originals, "About To Fall" and "A Giant Beside You", emit a stirring presence of beauty and grace via the careful strings of the former, though the latter is busy, tense and mesmerizing in a rock fueled sort of way.

The final selection, Javier Farías' "Andean Suite", comes with 3 chapters of cultured, cinematic sweeping song craft that spotlights the string acrobatics via the Peruvian folklore.

A very worldly and timeless body of work, Verdery makes for an unconventional but very intriguing listen that's highly admirable.

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