

Mp3 Groovelily - Are We There Yet?

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Smart pop with blazing electric violin, pounding rock piano, Stewart Copelandesque drums and exquisite lush harmonies: Steely Dan meets Barenaked Ladies and Paula Cole. 12 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Power Pop Details: "Smart pop with consummate instrumental artistry" -- The Ark, Ann Arbor, MI

BAND BIOGRAPHY: GrooveLily inhabits that contemporary space where creative musicians ignore the boundaries laid down by words like rock, folk, jazz, and pop. Intelligent original songs with no shortage of wit connect lush musical textures with the vocals and blazing electric violin of founding member Valerie Vigoda. With backgrounds in classical music, musical theater, jazz, and rock, the three members of GrooveLily are making a new music that's all their own. Valerie Vigoda, electric violinist and singer, is the founding member of GrooveLily. Originally from McLean, VA, Valerie is a classically-trained musician and an honors graduate of Princeton University. She has toured the world with Cyndi Lauper (opening for Tina Turner and Cher), Joe Jackson and the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. A former Army lieutenant, Valerie stars with her bandmates in print and on TV in the ongoing "Perseverance" ads for "Today's Military." She founded GrooveLily (originally "The Valerie Vigoda Band") in 1994, with a critically acclaimed CD called "Inhabit My Heart." Dirty Linen Magazine wrote: "to call Valerie Vigoda talented barely seems to do her justice. She has a great voice, is an intelligent lyricist...and an ace violinist. Methinks we'll hear more of her." Brendan Milburn plays keyboards and sings. Before joining GrooveLily, he graduated from Pomona College and NYU's MFA program in Musical Theatre Writing. He does a lot of arranging for GrooveLily, and he's an accomplished record producer as well. He often yearns for his native San Francisco. Seth Rogovoy wrote: "...Milburn was a deft pianist, his nimble fingerwork doing double-duty as the band's bassist and provider of its harmonic foundation, delivered with the jazzy sophistication of Steely Dan's Donald Fagen and the rock and roll theatrics of Billy Joel." Gene Lewin plays the drums and sings, and hails from Princeton, NJ. Like many of his heroes (Jack DeJohnette, Russ Kunkel, Vinnie Colaiuta), Gene joyfully blurs the lines between jazz and rock, supporting and complementing the music but unafraid to instigate when the time is right. After graduating from Princeton University, Gene earned a Master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music. He has appeared on CDs with George Coleman, John

Patitucci, and many others. "His gift lies in his frenzied dynamo attack of cymbals and skins. Think Tony Williams sits in with Weather Report." (Mark Corroto, All About Jazz) CD REVIEWS OF "ARE WE THERE YET?" (A SAMPLING): The ancient Chinese curse puts it this way: May you live in interesting times. Well, the times are nothing if not interesting these days. Whether it's military turmoil, techno-economic crises in the music business, or just building an individual career in a wary economy, it's hard to imagine times more "interesting" than the days we traverse with each successive sunrise and sunset. GrooveLily threads through the core of this tense nerve-wire, resonating with the energy of its vibrations, amplifying, focusing and projecting it out into the world in broadband resolution. With songs whose themes apply both globally and intimately, musicianship that spills out like the instant pudding in Woody Allen's *Sleeper*, and freshly nuanced songwriting defying this age of formulaic pop, *Are We There Yet?* is the child of creative collaboration at its peak. Throughout the album the music is sharp, powerful, masterful, mature and relentlessly catchy. It remains unfathomable how this degree of explosive talent has not yet hit the big time, except by indicting the dogmatic channels of the celebrity-driven marketplace. With almost a full decade riding the roller-coaster road underneath the star radar, there is no independent band that is more ready to break big than GrooveLily. It should have happened a long, long time ago. Many of the tunes on this album reflect the manic-depressive experience of struggle and breakthrough, crestfallen regret and resolute hope, in the face of towering challenges. "Rewind" begins by appealing to science fiction for a second pass at life. "Live Through This (Are We There Yet?)" insists that "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger" while "This Is Going To Stop" insists equally that resolution will ultimately be inevitable, whether it entails a breakthrough or abandonment. "Apocalyptic Love Song (I Don't Care)" is about infatuation so powerful it threatens the fundamental order of life simply to experience the current moment. These are not fluffy little love songs -- they plunge the knife into your marrow and twist it a bit just to make sure you don't ignore them. Life is lived deeply here, not simply waltzed through with accessories and window dressing. Not that irony is avoided -- "Diva Girl" is a hilarious deadpan account of a 30-something obsessed with a teen diva, simultaneously seduced by her goddess image while ridiculing the shallowness of her music and his own pipe dreams of meeting her. It's no wonder that this band can't bend to meet the star system on anything but their own terms. Bless 'em. Trying to find the path into the limelight will never be a systematic process, and this trio-plus-cohorts has made the tough choices all the way through. But to walk away from their creative integrity would be

pointless. The standard hooks (explicit glam and outrageous spectacle) may not fit them, but maybe the real hook is that they are genuine where the glitterati are false and hollow. This is a band with staying power. Just let 'em in the door, and they'll set up camp for the duration. -- Dan Krimm, Music Unbound, August 2003 -----

Spritely and sweet-natured, richly tuneful, lyrically playful and comforting. That's the like-no-other, adult-rock trio GrooveLily in a nutshell, on the charming indie release "Are We There Yet?" Let vocalist/violinist Valerie Vigoda, keyboardist/vocalist Brendan Milburn and vocalist/drummer Gene Lewin wrap you up in the cozy warmth and theatrical flair of "Rewind," "Live Through This (Are We There Yet?)," "Apocalyptic Love Song (I Don't Care)," the amusing "Open Letter to Madonna" and "All I Want Is What I Do Not Have." -- Jonathan Takiff, The Philadelphia Daily News, 9/2/03 -----

If you are looking for original, intelligent, anytime-listening, then this is the CD to fit any mood ... -- Jenny Ivor, Rambles Cultural Arts Magazine, May 8, 2004 ----- The music is refreshingly mature with many layers to appreciate over repeated listening. At the same time it is also fun and lively with an internal energy to grab the listener. The group's diversity easily makes this album a popular contemporary classic. -- Victoria Ann Davis, LowDown CD of The Month Club, April, 2004

----- Valerie Vigoda, Brendan Milburn and Gene Lewin are GrooveLily. Together they weave their songs of fierce hope in an uncooperative world into moody tapestries. Vigoda's violins are the primary solo voice, Milburn's keys the atmosphere and occasional solo, Lewin's drum the pulse and punctuation. GrooveLily's music addresses both brain and body with clever lyrics and music you can move to. Heady fun. -- MT, Sing Out! Magazine, Spring 2004

----- Just the way GrooveLily has seduced the folk circuit with a fully-electric, pop-rock approach is proof of the members' ingenuity, and to quote Vigoda's military ad, "perseverance." -- Daniel Gewertz, Boston Herald, March 12, 2004

----- Combining keyboards, drums and blazing electric violin, their sound is astounding, delightfully entertaining and somewhat mesmerizing. -- Brent Jeffries, Soundwaves (Folk Society newsletter), February, 2004

----- It is utterly unfathomable that Groovelily remains unsigned. -- Joe Gratz, joegratz.com, December 26, 2003

----- If this is the sound of a band continuing to evolve,

then I hope we never get "there." This musical trip is simply too interesting. -- Devin Grant, Charleston Post and Courier, November 13, 2003 ----- For those who can appreciate rich string accompaniment and harmonies, sometimes at a "Beatlesesque" level, plus a good measure of jazz influence and Steely Dan-like wit (and sound, too), then this release comes highly recommended. -- Bruno Westover, leftoffthedial.com, October 27, 2003

----- Why GrooveLily was still without a label deal when they recorded this excellent album in 2003 is anyone's guess; their '90s and early 2000s releases are among the best in the adult alternative field. -- Alex Henderson, All Music Guide, October, 2003

----- simply unique, unashamedly intelligent pop music
-- Shael Risman, rismixlive.com, October, 2003

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