

TUCKER:

So, here's my list. I'm not certain if it was a particularly tepid year--some of my choices are a couple of years old--or that only mainstream music finds its way to the midwest. I hope to get some inspiration from your lists.

faves of 2001 in no particular order

Steady Pull, Jonatha Brooke

This was the only pop album of new material that held my interest this year. I love Brooke's writing and sensibility.

Supernova, Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio

He's just a bad motherfucker and he's not afraid to crank up a synthesizer.

Midnight Blue, Jimmy Bruno Group

My boys, what can I say? Rip the lining out!

From me flows what you call Time and other Orchestral Works, Toru Takemitsu

Something about Takemitsu's writing resonates with me. I find most recent orchestral writing boring. This is romantic and soulful.

Live At Filmore East, The Allman Brothers Band

I found the Mobile Fidelity Gold Superdiscs re-issue in the used bin at a local shop and managed to copy them before sending the originals

off to my friend Steve Hayden. This was a great rock band captured at, perhaps their finest moment.

Green Chimneys, Andy Summers

Summer's take on Monk's music. The companion piece to last year's pick of Peggy's Blue Skylight. Summers shows a real understanding of

Monk's music and manages to filter it through his own sensibilities.

Tijuana Moods, Charles Mingus

The re-issue on Bluebird with a ton of alternate takes.

Live Beefheart 1978, Captain Beefheart (sp?)

A bootleg, perhaps, sent by Hartl. As always, I find the good Captain strangely compelling.

Jaco Pastorius

The CD re-issue of that first solo album on Epic that blew some minds

back in 1976. There is a serious groove going down on this record.

Call Me, When You Get There, Mary Louise Knutson

Local (Twin Cities) piano trio, great players, interesting covers and originals.

honorable mention

Songs of Freedom, Bob Marley. Tuff Gong boxed set covering Marley's entire career.

Sacred Songs, Daryl Hall

I always liked this collaboration with Fripp. Call it a guilty pleasure.

Dig, Boz Scaggs

It may not be a classic Boz record but it has moments that say Boz is back.

HARTL:

It's time again for the Top 10 CDs of the year, that is to say the most influential albums in my life over the last 12 months. I already got Tucker's list, and I'm in the same boat, all of my favorites are pretty much re-releases or older stuff...oh well. Here's the top 10 in no particular order:

1.) Various artists - Brain In a Box: The Science Fiction Collection. A great collection of most every sci-fi theme you'd ever want, including TV, movie, and popular song. Also the best box-set packaging ever with a 3D brain hologram. Rhino is definitely the leader in repackaging.

2.) Various artists - Can You Dig It? The '70's Soul Experience. Another Rhino compilation, 6 CDs of music I absolutely detested when it was occurring, but sounds great compared to what black pop music wrought AFTER this...just about every tune I ever played with Larry Tucker, etc., and also all the ones I wished at the time we WOULD play. Just fun guilty-pleasure listening, trussed up in an 8-track tape library box.

3.) Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band - I'm Gonna Do What I Wanna Do (Live at My Father's Place, 1978). No, it's not a bootleg, it's another Rhino release, this one of a live concert done with Beefheart's last good group doing old tunes and current tunes. A little mini-CD holds the encore. Only available by mail order as a Rhino special product for die-hard fans. I will always love Beefheart's music, and think his career was the most demonstrative example of fringe musical art in the land of commerce and the resultant tensions created. This CD serves as his last hurrah before retiring from the biz forever, but filled with discovery and joy instead of resentment and disillusionment, a rare fete in itself.

4.) Wendy Carlos - Switched-On Box Set. All the old Moog albums done from '68-'73 remastered and sounding great! The extras packed in this thing are amazing as well. Nobody can appreciate what Carlos had to do to make this music at that time, because even given tools that blow that technology away, no one can make this music now, either.

5.) Bob Marley and the Wailers - Catch a Fire (Deluxe Edition) One CD is the original Jamaican versions of the tunes, the other CD is the album as released with sweetening by Chris Blackwell. These deluxe editions are worth the money and really go the distance on albums one may like a lot and want to know more about.

6.) Miles Davis - Live at the Fillmore East (March 7, 1970) Miles with Chick Corea, Wayne Shorter, Jack DeJohnette and Dave Holland. Playing OUT stuff to confused hippies. They truly don't make music like this anymore, or even try to, and the guys on the CD don't even play like this anymore. A rarely-recorded legendary band stretching every boundary known. What's not to like?

7.) Metagroove - Send Us Your Children. OK, OK, I'm prejudiced. Metagroove is a quartet of University of Arts graduates who I coached for a year, teaching them prog rock tricks to add to their stew. They finally recorded a disc this year, and I dig it a lot. These are all originals and blend a lot of influences, but somehow they end up sounding like English prog-rock to me (which the group is totally unaware of). Great energy, great vocals from Andy. Musicians are best when they play what they want. Here's the proof along with #6 above...

8.) Scott Henderson, Gary Willis, and Tribal Tech - Rocket Science. These guys keep growing and blazing the fusion trail almost all by themselves. This one shows a return to form missing from a few of the last CDs, and highlights some strange and up-to-date synthesis sounds.

9.) King Crimson - Level Five and Heavy ConstruKction. Fripp releases more product than General Foods, so let them split this spot between two collections from the surge this year. Level Five was only available at the 2001 Fall concerts, and highlights a new direction for Crimson, finally throwing off the songform-dominated style blazed in the '80's. The other 3-CD set highlights their live shows as a newly-reformed quartet, and (as Kelly noted) sounded even better after seeing them do it. The only rock group left that I buy every disc unreservedly.

10.) Jimmy Bruno Group - Midnight Blue. OK, OK, I'm prejudiced. But if we're talking about discs that I personally was influenced by, I've got to include this. I play keys with other guys I teach with and

wonder what I'm doing here. The most demanding musical situation I've ever found myself in, and here's the payoff.

Honorable mention:

- 1.) Woody Shaw- The Complete Woody Shaw on CBS (Mosaic set)
- 2.) Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony - Varese: Ameriques, Arcana, Deserts, Ionisation
- 3.) The Firesign Theatre - The Bride of Firesign
- 4.) Wendy Carlos - Beauty In the Beast
- 5.) George Harrison - All Things Must Pass (30th Anniversary Edition)

Dishonorable abuse:

1.) Michael Brecker - Nearness of You. One more icon in my life blows it following the advice of the beancounters, to my ears. James Taylor singing? Wrong CD, sorry. Play your horn and can we please do something faster than 80 BPM, I'm dyin' over heyah. Oh yeah, and if Pat Metheny doesn't stop using that fucking cow-caught-in-an-electric-fence lead sound, someone is going to have to shoot him.

2.) Boz Scaggs - The Lost Concert. Great music, a revelation of how good Boz could be in concert at his peak. But whatever lowlife company put this out doesn't even know the correct names of the tunes, the composers, what year they were recorded, the musicians, or anything else. A totally sleazy release of music that deserves far better treatment.

STEVE CARL:

Here's my list (in no particular order):

Miles Davis - The Complete In A Silent Way Sessions. In A Silent Way has always been one of my favorite recordings, so this is a natural. Who knew that Miles taped John McLaughlin while he was figuring out the melody, and that became the intro?

Ralph Towner - Anthem. Anything by Towner is okay in my book. Great versions of Goodbye, Pork-Pie Hat and Gloria's Step, along with some great Towner originals.

Jim Hall - Jim Hall & Basses. One of the last great guitarists of his generation in duets with Scott Colley, Charlie Haden, Dave Holland, Christian McBride and George Mraz.

Roland Dyens - Nuages. This guy is kind of like Towner - hard to categorize. It seems almost arbitrary to put Towner in the jazz section and Dyens in the classical section, but what're you gonna do? This guy is just plain amazing. Great arrangements of Nuages, Goodbye, Pork-Pie Hat and others.

Manuel Barrueco - Nylon & Steel. The great classical guitarist (second only to John Williams, in my opinion) in duet settings with Al DiMeola, Steve Morse and Andy Summers. A highlight - Wolvesville - with Barrueco playing Villa-Lobos' (get the pun?) Etude #1 while Morse wails on electric guitar. The classical press has been universal in panning this, which should recommend it to you.

Groningen Guitar Duo - The McLaughlin Suites. Birds of Fire as a classical guitar duet? Sounds great to me.

Steve Reich - Triple Quartet. More adventures in live musicians (including Kronos Quartet) interacting with tape loops. By the way, I saw the world premier of Reich's Different Trains arranged for tape and the Philadelphia Orchestra this fall. Very cool!

Boris Berman - Prokofieff: Complete Piano Sonatas. I spend so much time listening to Stravinsky, Shostakovich and Schnittke that I forget how good this guy was.

Emlyn Ngai and Peter Watchorn - J.S.Bach: Six Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, BWV 1014-1019. Music of incomparable beauty, recorded beautifully. The use of a Harrass harpsichord, which is much larger and louder than most, enhances the balance with the violin. As a bonus, this CD comes with a third disc which contains a lecture about the music.

Wolf Harden - Busoni Piano Music, Vol. 2. Busoni's transcription of Bach's D minor Chaconne blew my mind when I heard it played the first time. It still knocks me out more than the original solo violin version, or even Segovia's guitar version.

Video of the Year: From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China. Isaac Stern went to China in the 70s (and again in the 90s) to give master classes. He was an amazing teacher, as this video documents.

