

In praise of Pete Samples- *An Unsent Letter* (CD); vr001

"Seemingly out of nowhere comes this killer, no filler, samples and beats release titled *An Unsent Letter* by the appropriately named Pete Samples. Who the hell is this guy and where did he come from? His bio states Winnipeg born and raised, although he's now in Montreal pursuing a fine arts degree. Beyond that I can tell you nothing more. The music itself is at times weird, interesting, and dense. It speaks volumes and once it starts, you are sucked into its vortex. Hypnotic rhythms...I'm hooked, I'm hooked." **CBC Radio 3**

"This record kicks off with a dark bass line that makes me feel like I'm listening to the beginning of a shootout in a Western flick. The mood turns dimmer with the addition of a speedy piano key sequence that sounds like the noise teardrops would make if you could hear them hit glass — sharp and high-pitched. To top it off, rock guitar strumming and distorted guitar bending are added to the mix. And this quickness is Pete Samples — he is capable of creating a soothing potpourri of sounds that you would never imagine fusing together in the first place.

From the sampled harp and beat box and low distorted male laughter on *Phlegmatic* to the smooth jazz-like trumpet and sampled violins of *My Favorite Record*, Samples shows us that when some artists add a variety of sounds it doesn't create noise, but in fact, makes an interesting symphony of tones.

The highlight track is *Two Thirds* — one of three tracks that has vocals —which features the k-os-sounding MC Expedyte. But Samples also adds choir vocals that sound like the howling wind, and amazingly the song remains a hip-hop track even with all the eerie singing.

Samples keeps the album interesting by using everyday sounds such as a dial tone, chimes and the all-too-familiar sustained beep you hear when a hospital patient flatlines.

Refreshing, moody and diverse, *An Unsent Letter* is —with its hip hop and jazz influences — a heaven-sent masterpiece of electronic music." **The Manitoban**

"Pete Samples. Indeed he does. The Winnipeg resident's debut for his hometown's Vinyl Republik label will surely garner comparisons to DJ Shadow; he has the same cinematic flair for sample-tweaking that Shadow exhibited on his breakthrough album *Entroducing* though Samples' songs take a more straightforward approach.

The album gets off to a quiet start with "*Awkward Goodbye*" whose opening somber piano lick is knocked in the noggin by a mean 'lectic guitar toward the end. "*My Favourite Record* has a sub-zero Hoover bassline and Samples, who makes like a less spastic Prefuse 73 and does a beautiful job of slicing them into gossamer threads overtop a bed of acoustic guitar and cello.

If there's one bad spot here, it's "*Picturesque*" where the world turns flat and the corners fold into each other as bagpipes, metal percussion, sitar, flutes, and more partake in a global jam session that just sits unappetizingly like molten Velveeta for nearly seven minutes, though the final section is undeniably pretty swanky. But the finale, "*Nineteentwentytwo*" more than makes up for the crud before it and is a strong finish to a high-quality record." **Quiet Light**



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In praise of Pete Samples- *Unsent Letters* (12" EP); vr002

"Talented young cat from Winnipeg, Canada, this instrumental EP calls to mind early Mo'Wax with songs like "Phlegmatic" and "Lady Luck," but my choice is the warped, indie rock guitars of "Awkward Goodbye," with more than a slight nod to DJ Shadow." **XLR8R**