

TAB TWO *...zzzipp! extended*

Album review by Veronika Starnes

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The Tab Two *...zzzipp! extended* 3CD set is an album which consists of the remastered live recordings from the 2000 album *...zzzipp!* which includes an additional track of a rehearsal with the audience, and a bonus CD with seven tracks from their 2012 tour.

For me personally, it's a set which encompasses exceptional music by extraordinary musicians, namely trumpet player Joo Kraus and bassist Hellmut Hattler. The fact that it's live simply sends chills up my spine for I dare say, it sounds 'too good to be live'.

Geared towards a more mature audience, it's a reflection of all that's remarkable about the power of musical ingenuity for people who cherish superiority of sound. This is a set to relish from start to finish. It is eclectic in nature but Tab Two in every other sense. The band permeates each and every second with their trademark mastership.

I feel blessed to have grown up with the music of Tab Two, and it is in their music that some of the most magical moments of my existence have been forever encapsulated.

Their sound is a manifestation of what was, what is and what will be for years to come, and that is what the essence of music should be, a timeless enclave of wonder, that allows both mind and spirit to wander.

There is no escaping the beauty of their musical creations, and for those who experience music through every fiber of their being; this CD set is not only a must, it is like the bible of musical meaning. For, once you have been touched by the grace of Tab Two, you will forever remain a believer in the impossible.

1. Kunststück – This mellow track soothes the senses and it's a wonderfully calming start to what surely is the CD set of 2013 from the Kings of the 90s, Tab Two.

2. Columbus – This is where South America and electro magic collide. It makes you wanna dance while sipping on some fruity cocktail while the energy of Latina lushness/sensuousness engulfs you.

3. Let It Flow – Now, this track is THE track that defines the 90s for me. Not only is this track ultra personal for me due to the fact that it allows me to relive my college years, but it is a track that has withstood the test of time and is just as mesmerizing now as it was the first time I heard it. I would dare to say that this track is Tab Two's Masterpiece amidst their musical oeuvre. Thank you to Tab Two for this moving time machine that never fails to touch my inner core.

4. Mind & Soul – From New Age to Sade, this track is an eclectic mix of smoothness that can be appreciated by all those that enjoy the finer things in life! It's funky and yet numbs the senses in order for you to just drift away amidst the flawless flow.

5. Dinner For Two (Rehearsal) – I wish I had studied German, for even though I do not understand a single word that is being said, the audience's reaction more than makes up for it and this personal interaction is a welcomed touch. Tab Two's sense of humor is unprecedented and the language barrier does not deter from the enjoyment of this impromptu break.

6. Dinner For Two – It starts off like a voyage to the Land Down Under and then breaks into vocal manipulation that would make Bobby McFerrin proud, followed by a New Orleans-esque feast of musical madness. I must say that the chaotic nature of this particular piece does not win any favours with me when I'm sitting at home with my headphones on and retreating into my own personal Tab Two universe, but *de gustibus non est disputandum*, as they say. Though, it must be said, and I must add, that seeing this track performed live is a whole different ballgame!

7. No Flagman Ahead – So very Africa meets New York. It's tribal with a street edge that reminds me of the Big Bad Apple, while feeling my 'ancestors' calling from beyond. Very spiritually moving.

8. Whatchagonnado – After all this sensual goodness, Tab Two pick up the tempo with this track. Again, they tap into the Latin feel of things, so very Gloria Estefan for all you 80s junkies, and just beg you to prove that 'the hips don't lie', while screaming 'feet don't fail me now'. If this doesn't make you move, chances are you're dead. So, "Whatchagonnado" when Tab Two comes for you?

9. No Way No War – This is a sad, albeit reflective track that some might even find romantic, which retains Tab Two's unmistakable flavor but is chilled to the max. The female vocal is a nice change of pace, which further reinstates the yin-yang of the universe. There's no right and no wrong, only Tab Two!

10. Between Us – This track is beautifully haunting and is yet another homage to the glorious 90s. The fusion of jazz, hip hop and female pop/gospel power leaves you in a daze, and proves that great music is timeless, regardless of what flavours it incorporates and which era it defines. After *Let It Flow*, this is my second favourite track off the set.

11. Heaven's Too High – My Mind's Musical Eye can't help but view this track as the merging of Massive Attack's *Unfinished Symphony* and Brenda Russell's *Piano in the Dark* with a Tab Two twist to turn a dream into a reality. "You hear jazz and I hear soul" best describes the essence of this track which combines all the necessary elements to stimulate all your senses simultaneously. Sandie Wollasch makes this track her own and really compliments both Hellmut's and Joo's genius.

12. Get Rid – The first track of CD 2 kicks off things with some funky beat-boxing that makes my inner hip hop child bob its head like there's no tomorrow, not to mention gets the audience in tha' mood to get their old school on. But don't be hoodwinked by these master musicians, the flavors are multiplied and the rawness of the opening is quickly jazzed up. With the audience clapping along, it's hard not to smile while envisioning the

prevailing atmosphere of soulful sophistication which encompasses any and every Tab Two performance... And then watch them murder the ending!

13. Belle Affaire – Carnival is in full effect. I see sweaty bodies crowd the dance floor whenever I hear this track. This is what sexy is all about, so don't be afraid to bring out the beast in you and dare to indulge in all the guilty pleasures that the beat encourages you to explore.

14. Get There II – Get your ass out on the street and take in all the world around you has to offer. This track is raw'n'rough and yet Tab Two has polished this creation so that it intertwines the best of underground hip hop with jazzy 'jamness' that maintains their unmistakable sound while incorporating fitting musical trends. A mish-mash of awesomeness.

15. Jooleo – Relaxation with a capital R. It's a remarkable piece of music that in the beginning allows your mind and soul to just drift away, and maybe some days even allows your eyes to well up with tears amidst your hesitance to show your inner feelings, and then explodes with energy, that can only bring about an evil grin and further jolts your senses into a trance that takes all you are on an unforgettable musical journey. This is the Jooleo express to the beyond.

16. Kraan Arabia '88 – The Middle Eastern feel of this track is to be expected from the onset, the title does give you a hint of what to expect, with that said, it's in perfect Tab Two tradition with its sensuousness, yet on a personal note, and one that stems from listening to this track in the privacy of my own home, again devoid of any live energy or additional stimuli that undoubtedly changes one's perception of any and every Tab Two endeavor, it does not engage my musical being as much as the other tracks. But naturally, that is a highly subjective assessment of a track that holds a lot of musical history in its wake. For all you musical trivia buffs, it must be said that this particular track has its roots in Hellmut's and Joo's common time with Kraan (1987-91), which was the starting point for Tab Two, not to mention, at that time, Joo was the only one in Germany who could play the EVI (electronic valve instrument). The makers of the instrument asked if Joo and Hellmut would like to experiment with it and add it to their plethora of ingenious undertakings, and so too, they rose to the challenge and toured successfully, whilst making history. Is there anything these two can't do?

17. Wanna Lay (On Your Side) – Another fusion track that embodies all that Tab Two have to offer. It's a track that I would define as funky easy-listening. Not the most spectacular track on the CD set, even though clocks in at a whopping 7:32, but nothing to sneeze at either.

18. The Mouth Piece – We return to the beat-boxing motif which simply reinstates the remarkable versatility of these artists and their endless musical possibilities.

19. Spot Of Choice – I would best describe this track as a Bloody Mary kind of track. It's fierce and makes your head spin while not being overbearing. Again, Latin meets jazz with just a twist of hip hop 'n' reggae here and there. Predominantly, a 'dancey' number, this would best be served at a Salsa joint.

20. Out-O-Fear – The 90s are here to stay with this track. It's another Tab Two classic which has a base line that I love and is layered in such a way that I'm hooked from start to finish, and it totally 'Takes Me Away'.

21. 20th Century Party Waste – Kicking off with a Cool Cat's feel that has me envisioning the dimmed gentleman's jazz club full of cigar smoke (on a side note: remember the good ol' days when you could smoke at clubs?), beautiful women in gowns, ablaze with jewels and drowned in exquisite perfumes, the band in suits, and people moving in time to the beat in such slow and calculated motion, that it all seems surreal. The hip hop undertone of this track, together with the name, does also tend to bring associations of the Beastie Boys meets Miles Davis, but fear not this is just Tab Two doing what they do best, thinking outside the musical box and fusing their repertoire with the best of all the musical kingdom has to offer.

22. Vraiment Paris – This track kicks off CD 3 and it is a darker and somewhat smoother, albeit mature, version of the previous track. Tab Two gets their French on with this truly TT Paris endeavor and with it bring a vision, a feel of Paris, that is unlike anything else you could hope to experience.

23. This Beat Goes Boom – This Gangsta Car Chase of a track runs off the chain, with a splash of The Rollings Stones' *Satisfaction* gelled with *Jumpin Jack Flash* flavor thrown mid-way in the mix. It is a fast paced track that will escape you if you dare not keep up.

24. (There's) Not A Lot – Soulful goodness permeates this track. It's deep and soothing which is my favourite Tab Two combination. This is musical silk to the ear not to mention unending inspiration for one's soul.

25. Sad News – Deep in thought is the state you'll be in when listening to this track, at least in the beginning, however, Tab Two never allow you to stay in one state of awe for long, and as the music changes, so does the mood. This joint is my "substitute of truth" that just gives me more food for thought while gently caressing my soul.

26. The Patient – Odd is all I can say about this track. It seems misplaced and yet works. A contradiction by all means, I "don't trust my thoughts" either on this one. It is what it is, much like life, you can't pin it down or tame it and yet somehow it doesn't care and continues on. I will say it does have this ironical 'mental patient' vibe to it for it doesn't make sense, at least it leaves my senses in a musical labyrinth... Maybe that's the miracle? Or maybe it's the fact that this is the only new track to be added to this exceptional set, of which the studio version was recorded in wake of their best-of 3CD *Two Thumbs Up* which was released in April 2012. Hence the 'miracle' can be explained rationally as stemming from a different creative process in time from the mastermind's musical playground.

27. Rot Und Rund – what's "Red and Round"? If I knew German, maybe I could tell you, but I don't so like a child I'm left to take this track at face value. Message aside, the beat is sexy and sensual and would be the perfect track to slow dance to... If in more private surroundings, this is the get naked, bubble bath track. I'm not ashamed to say it that this is THE BEST baby making track on the set. Your senses will be seduced – *kein Zweifel!*

28. My Horn – It's the final track of the 3rd and last CD. I take this as somewhat tongue and cheek, for a horn as we all know can have a variety of meanings, and Tab Two are no strangers to making their fans' imaginations run amuck. I think it's a fitting musical ending, albeit farewell, to a magnificent collection from an exceptional band. The trumpet and bass never cease to fail within this TAB TWO universe. It takes two to tango, and it takes just two to take you on a musical escapade that will leave you only wanting more. Dare we say we want an encore?

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TAB TWO on the internet

Website: <http://tabtwo.eu>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/tabtwo.official>

Twitter: http://twitter.com/tab_two

Soundcloud: <http://soundcloud.com/tabtwo>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tab_Two

Tour Dates (<http://tabtwo.eu/gig/>)

07 July 2013: D-Wachenheim, Badehaisel Festival

13 July 2013: D-Blaubeuren, Sommerbühne am Blautopf

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