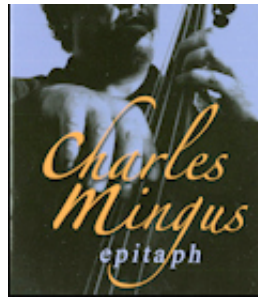


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**The Path**  
 Toronto Jazz Orchestra  
 Independent TJO003  
[www.thetjo.com](http://www.thetjo.com)

The Toronto Jazz Orchestra's third release coincides with the 10th anniversary of its existence. Founding

Artistic Director and Conductor Josh Grossman's baby initially began as a rehearsal band of friends and peers from U of T, Humber College and York University; the grown TJO has gone on to perform with numerous high-profile jazz artists including Phil Nimmons, Seamus Blake and Kurt Elling. While they have

performed various tributes to big band heroes of American yesteryear, a great deal of the Canadian big band's appeal lies in its decidedly modern arrangements, compositions and interpretations. One such example is the funky, futuristic Cereal Blocks by Finnish composer Johan Pyykkö; otherwise, "The Path" abounds with mostly home-grown compositions. The meticulously scored *i love you on the microphone* by Montreal-based composer Moiya Callahan is an intriguing, challenging commission.

Another outstanding track is *The Call*, an inspired composition by David Braid arranged by Andrew Jones. Grossman contributes three of his own, including the adventuresome title track, the sparkling *Chazz* and the comical *TJO*. The director's intelligent arrangements of *Amazing Grace* and Vince Mendoza's *Esperanto* are commendable for balancing freshness and accessibility; the latter is one of two tracks featuring immensely talented vocalist, Sophia Perlman. There are more than a few memorable solos, including wonderful reed work by Mark Laver and Terry Quinney and pianist Ali Berkok. The eighteen-piece ensemble breathes as one throughout. All in all, the Toronto Jazz Orchestra is on an admirable path.

*Ori Dagan*



### Hommage à Kodály

Mihály Borbély Quartet

Budapest Music Center Records

BMC CD 155

([www.bmcrecords.hu](http://www.bmcrecords.hu))

Perhaps only Hungarians can capture the nuances implicit in the compositions of their countryman Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967). At least Budapest-based multi-reedist Mihály Borbély demonstrates that on this CD where he integrates Kodály's themes with his own jazz compositions. Borbély, who also plays in the Magyar folk tradition that influenced Kodály, doesn't imitate the composer. Instead the quintet which plays his themes extends the folkloric style while staying within the parameters of improvised music.

For instance, Balázs Kántor's reading of Kodály's *Sonata for Solo Cello* with double-stopping plucks and Roma romanticism foreshadows the contrapuntal Borbély composition which follows it. *Tilinkós*, *Kodály's own*, features the reedman's buoyant and lyrical soloing on *tilinkós* or shepherd's pipe mixed with tremolo slides from Kántor, tough drum beats from István Baló, high-frequency modal runs from pianist Dániel Szabó, and conclusive Orientalized trills from Borbély's saxophone – which recall that the Turks ruled Hungary for centuries.

Similarly, the dramatic equal temperament Szabó brings to his playing on Kodály's *Sonatina* is as kinetic as the cascading note choruses he displays on the saxophonist's *The Shepherd of Hope*. Although Balázs Horvath's walking bass line plus the supple tongue-fluttering and aviary chirps from Borbély's soprano saxophone may have disconcerted Kodály, he would