



Derek Frank

Let The Games Begin

[www.dfrank.net]

The trendsters say the '80s are hot right now, but Los Angeles side-

man vet **Derek Frank** is having none of that on his supergroovy debut album *Let The Games Begin*. Right from the bass-and-drums-only downbeat of disc opener "Breakout," it's an unapologetic, bass-drenched homage to everything cool about rhythm sections from the '70s, and Frank's '63 Fender P-Bass (strung with flats, of course) is the star of the show, in front of the mix and carving fiercely. *Games* isn't stuck in that era's rut, either; there's just enough modernity sprinkled about to avoid easy caricature, and today's thumb stylists will appreciate the Marcus-influenced slap-melody approach to the Hall & Oates classic "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)." But make no mistake—this is mostly a smorgas-

bord of vintage keys, unison horn lines, and filter-soaked funky bass that's designed to make the booty move while the disco ball spins. Somewhere, the Brand New Heavies and Jamiroquai are nodding their heads in approval. (BB)



Ike Sturm

Jazz Mass

[ikesturm.com]

Jazz musicians, many of whom started playing in church, are no strangers to spiritual works, whether overtly religious large-ensemble pieces by Duke Ellington and Dave Brubeck, or the likes of John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme." Christian worship clearly is at the heart of double-bassist **Ike Sturm's** *Jazz Mass*, ten devotional pieces running from the prayerful "Kyrie" to the closing processional, "Hymn: Shine." But the music, which sometimes hints at ECM-label spaciousness and



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Metheny-esque heartland Americana, isn't strictly for believers. Sturm, jazz ministry directory at Saint Peter's Church, the spiritual home of Manhattan's jazz community, brings together a 14-member choir and 10-piece string section with classically trained singer Misty Ann Sturm and such standout soloists as tenor saxophonist Donny McCaslin and trumpeter Ingrid Jensen for music of extraordinary emotion and beauty. His improvised solo, "Interlude," is a resonant gem, marked by quick chord crawls, flashes of dissonance, and then a quietly insistent groove. (PB) **BP**

BB—Bryan Beller

BF—Brian Fox

PB—Philip Booth