



OUT:

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FILE UNDER:

Funky jazz jams

R.I.Y.L.:

Medeski Martin & Wood, Jazz

Mandolin Trio, Phish

THE SLIP

Does

Flying Frog

The curse and blessing for live jazz acts is the din of clinking glasses and muffled conversations, an atmosphere that challenges the music so listeners might miss moments of sheer genius or fuck-ups. Studio efforts afford the opposite; not only does perfection shine, the sloppy uninspired stuff sticks out, too. Each works for and against this young, jam-friendly Boston band. When they've got it, they've *really* got it, but when they don't...guitarist Brad Barr's probably singing. On *Does*, their second release, he's dead-on for the upbeat "Rhythm And Gold," and parts of "The Worrier" really

rock. But his vocals, even when good, only distract from what's otherwise solid playing. He's bearable on the unnamed acoustic bonus track, but often off-key during "The Invocation" (notable for bizarre spurts of musical energy). The seven-minute "A Crack In The Sundial," sung almost entirely *en español*, is truly an exercise in tolerance—a shame since what's underneath is such a sweet slow-groove. They should've left it lyric-less, then printed the words in the liner notes anyhow. Being instructed to "skip to the vocal tracks" when I got the disc didn't bode well for the album, particularly when less than a third of the songs qualify. But it pays to ignore advice. Those underestimated instrumentals happen to be fantastic. >>>Robin A. Rothman