

TUNNELS

New York premier fusion band
hailed as one of the best in their genre.

Their latest release, "Natural Selection," is their most sonically sophisticated yet. The nine compositions on "Natural Selection" reveal a hard-hitting collective on an aural odyssey, driven by their intricate interplay and inexhaustible energy. Known for their ferocious live performances, Tunnels has toured widely in the US and Europe, and has had great success at festivals such as Prog in the Park in Rochester, NY and the Malta Jazz festival.

Percy Jones fretless bass

Marc Wagnon midi vibes

Walker Adams drums

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For high resolution pictures, track downloads and more, go to:
www.buckyballmusic.com/press

TUNNELS PRESS

"This maddeningly creative, wild, and sometimes experimental trio makes no bones about its desire to carry on in the hardcore jazz fusion tradition." Jonathan Widran **All Music Guide**

"Tunnels' often delirious songs range from Zappa-esque meter frivolity, to electro-jazz, to atmospheric free funk....these are ferocious performers."

Ken Micallef **Modern Drummer**

"...Mr. Jones is certainly one of the finest electric bassists the music world has ever witnessed...The key ingredient here is the sustained and altogether gratifying entertainment value, featuring loads of impact!"

Glenn Astarita **allaboutjazz.com**

"A stellar second outing by Percy's post-fusion quartet...Percy packs a real groove punch, from the angular funk ... to his hard-swinging walking line."

Chris Jisi **Bass Player Magazine**

"Tunnels clearly has influences in older Brand X yet sounds modern and fresh."

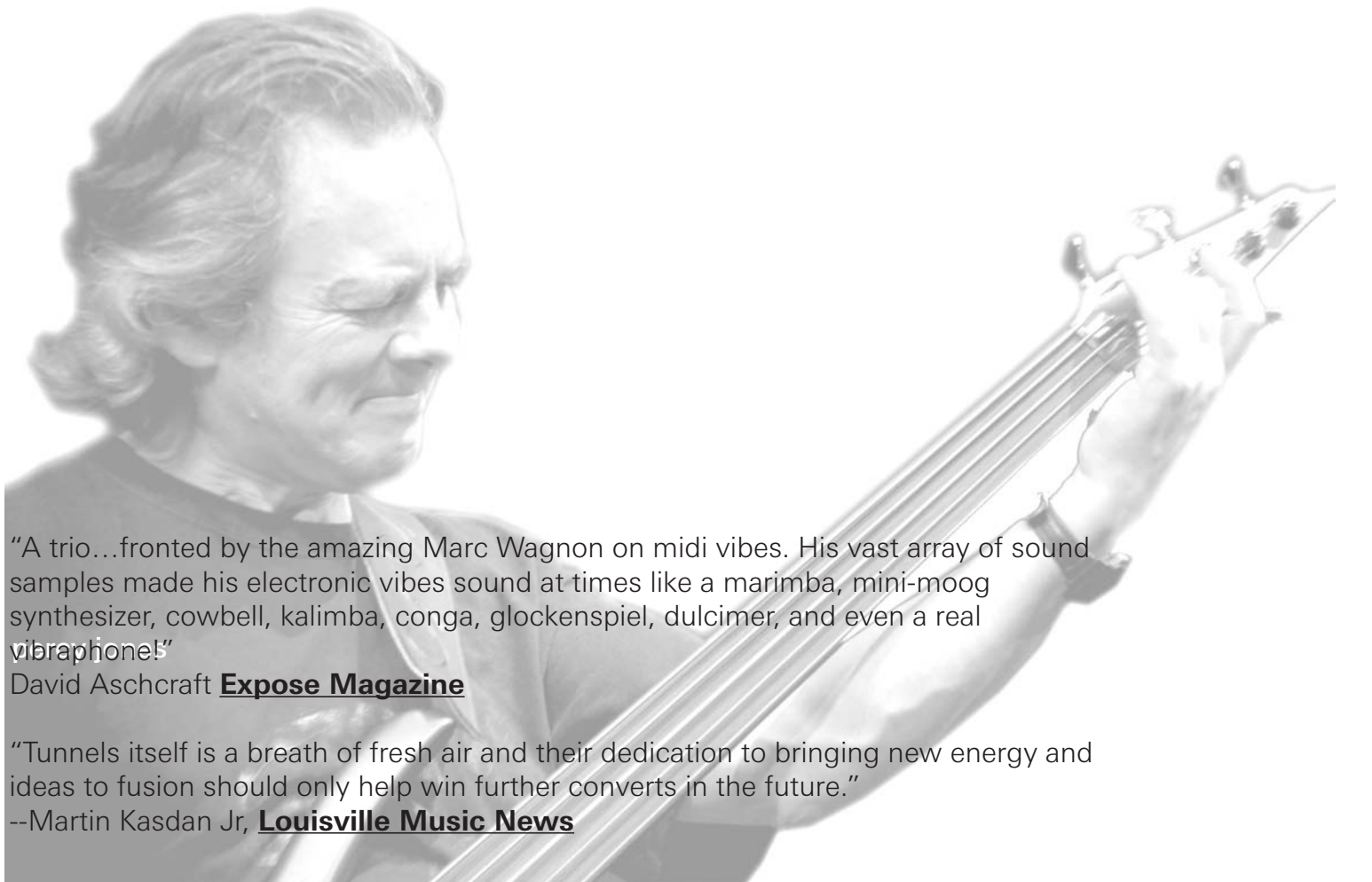
Erik Feder **Aquarian Magazine**

"Tunnels is teeming with a kind of gung-ho fierceness and risk taking that hasn't been heard too much since fusion's heyday.."

Bill Milkowski **Tower Pulse**

"I will never be tired of listening to this genius jazz rock."

Volkmar Mantei **Ragazzi** (Germany)



"A trio...fronted by the amazing Marc Wagnon on midi vibes. His vast array of sound samples made his electronic vibes sound at times like a marimba, mini-moog synthesizer, cowbell, kalimba, conga, glockenspiel, dulcimer, and even a real vibraphone!"

David Aschcraft **Expose Magazine**

"Tunnels itself is a breath of fresh air and their dedication to bringing new energy and ideas to fusion should only help win further converts in the future."

--Martin Kasdan Jr, **Louisville Music News**

BIOGRAPHIES

Percy Jones

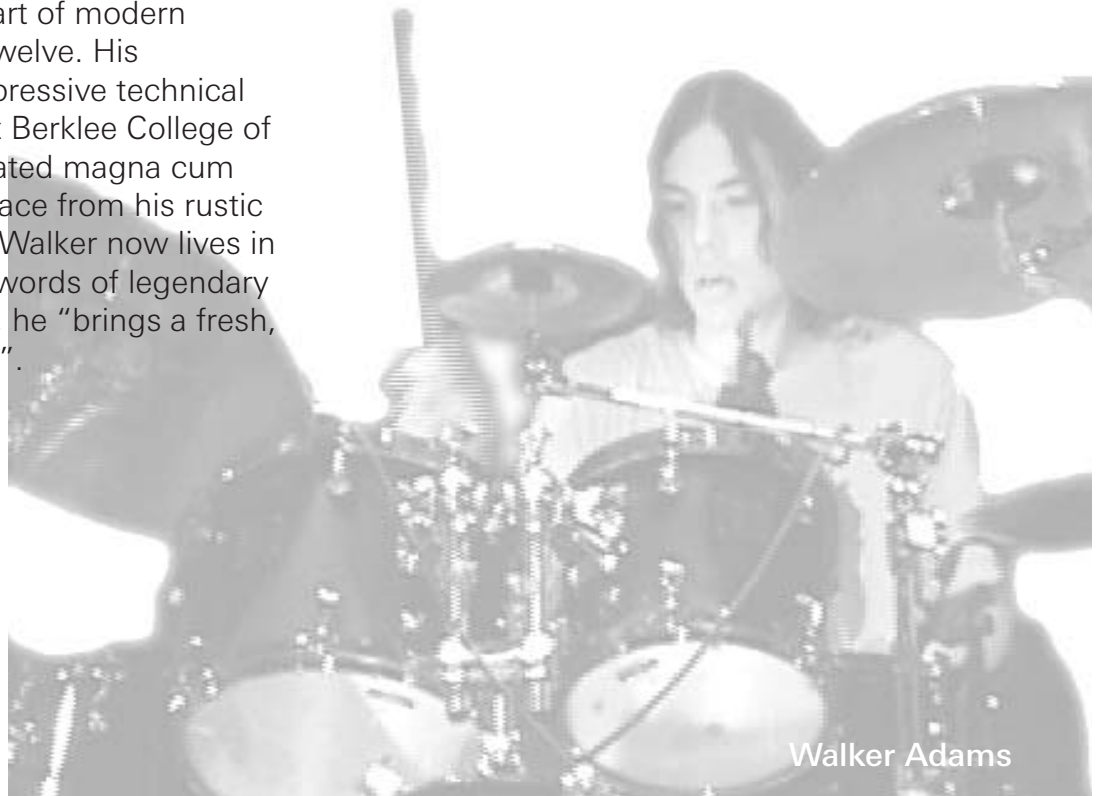
Considered one of the greatest bass players in the world by Bass Player Magazine, Percy first found fame with the English band Brand X. He has since collaborated with an impressive roster of artists including Brian Eno, Bill Frisell, Suzanne Vega, Elliot Sharp, Bobby Previte and Sarah Pillow. With a career spanning over three decades, from the Liverpool Scene to Tunnels, Percy continues to be a pioneer and innovator of new sonic territories. He demonstrates his virtuoso playing technique on his instructional video "Bass Explorations". Percy summarizes his unique approach to the fretless bass as follows: "I'll try anything to make the bass sound like it usually doesn't."

Walker Adams

Heralded as "a young and very impressive drummer" by Louisville Music News, Walker has been exploring the subtleties and complexities inherent in the art of modern drumming since the age of twelve. His versatility, sensitivity, and impressive technical ability made him stand out at Berklee College of Music, from which he graduated magna cum laude in 2004. A change of pace from his rustic upbringing in rural Vermont, Walker now lives in New York City where, in the words of legendary drummer Kenwood Dennard, he "brings a fresh, new funk to the music scene".

Marc Wagnon

Born in Switzerland, Marc studied classical percussion at the Geneva Conservatory and later moved to the United States to study vibraphone and percussion at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Upon moving to New York City, where he currently resides, Marc founded the group Shadowlines, which included such prestigious musicians as Dave Kikoski, Ray Anderson, Dave Douglas, drummer Mike Clark and bassist Paul Jackson. Marc has performed and recorded extensively in the United States, South America and Europe with his sextet Shadowlines, the avant-rock group Dr. Nerve, Brand X, Gongzilla, and Tunnels. In addition to teaching percussion, improvisation and electronic music in New York and Europe, Marc is the founder of Buckyball Music, which dedicates itself to the publishing & recording of creative and innovative music.



Walker Adams

DISCOGRAPHIES

Tunnels releases:

Tunnels Natural Selection Buckyball Records 2006

Tunnels Live Buckyball Records 2004

Progressivity Buckyball Records 2002

Painted Rock Buckyball Records 1999

Tunnels with Percy Jones Ozone 1993 / Buckyball Records 1999

Percy Jones

Solo Projects:

Cape Catastrophe (Hotwire Rec.)1988

Propeller Music (Hotwire Rec.)1990

With Brand X

Unorthodox Behavior (Passport Records) 1976

Moroccan Roll (Passport Records) 1977

Livestock (Passport/Arista) 1977

Masques (Passport/Arista) 1978

Product (Passport/Jem) 1979

Do They Hurt? (Passport/Jem) 1980

Is There Anything About(Passport/Jem) 1986

Live In Lybia Official bootleg..1986

X-Trax (Passport 1986)

The Plot Thins (Virgin/Caroline) 1992

X-Communication (Ozone/Dutch-East) 1992

Manifest Destiny (Pony Canyon) 1997

Missing Period (Outer music) 1998

Timeline (Buckyball Records) 1999

Brian Eno

Another Green World

Before And After Science

Music For Films

R.A.F. (single)

Masami Tsuchiya

Rice Music

Night Mirage

Starlight Shower

Marc Wagnon

Solo Projects:

Marc Wagnon An Afterthought (Buckyball Rec.) 1999

Marc Wagnon Shadowlines LP (Sun Jump) 1988 re-released CD (Buckyball Rec.) 1999

With Brand X:

Manifest Destiny CD (Pony Canyon) 1997

with Sarah Pillow:

Remixes (Buckyball Records) 2003

Nuove Musiche (Buckyball Rec.) 2000

Paper Cuts CD (Buckyball Rec.) 1997

Mike Clark & Paul Jackson

Clark-Jackson-Wagnon

Conjunction (Buckyball Rec.) 2001

With Doctor Nerve:

Out to Bomb Fresh Kings,LP (Cuneiform) 1984

Armed Observation LP (Cuneiform) 1987

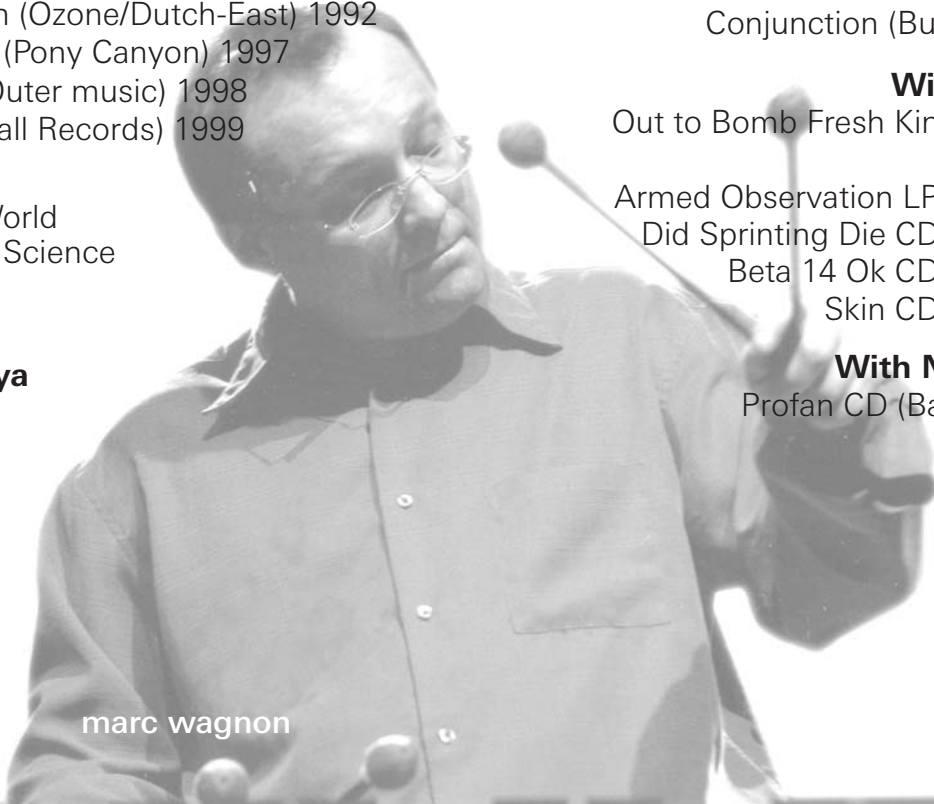
Did Sprinting Die CD (Cuneiform) 1988

Beta 14 Ok CD (Cuneiform) 1990

Skin CD (Cuneiform) 1995

With No No Diet Bang:

Profan CD (Bambrus Rec.) 1997



marc wagnon

POP

☉☉☉ **TUNNELS | NATURAL SELECTION** | Buckyball | Whether Tunnels will surge to the top of the current prog-rock/fusion renaissance remains to be seen, but the late-'90s addition of the legendary British bassist Percy Jones hasn't hurt their standing. Although vibes player

Marc Wagon and drummer John O'Reilly provide the chops for everything from textural sound sculpting to beat-heavy percolations as disciplined and polyrhythmic as Kraftwerk's, Jones — co-founder of Brand X, solo performer, and occasional sideman for Phil Collins, Suzanne Vega, and Brian Eno — is the distinctive voice. High singing melody lines full of rippling phrases are his signature, and they're written all over *Natural Selection*. But he also knows how to rock the belly of the beast, and together with O'Reilly he gives Tunnels a rock-and-roll edge that keeps even their most opaque explorations grounded.

In the minds of some, fusion is a relic — a moment in time when jazz and rock briefly collided and collaborated, a moment marked by some outrageous riffery and a few dozen essential albums.

This is definitely not the case in the minds of vibraphonist Marc Wagon, bassist Percy Jones (formerly of Brand X) and drummer Frank Katz. Together, they are the modern fusion collective Tunnels, a trio that has recorded four albums for the Bucky Ball Records label since coming together in 1993. They'll come together in Louisville at The Ruyard Kipling on Monday.

"Tunnels was a meeting of the minds," Wagon said. "Percy, Frank and I share the same desire to keep alive the jazz rock vein and keep evolving and re-creating the excitement that was lost for some time in fusion."

The music of Tunnels is fascinating in its own regard — rocked-up jazz with a heady love for adventure and experimentation — but it is taken to another level by Wagon's use of MIDI vibes. (MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface; MIDI vibes can be tweaked electronically to produce any number of sounds and textures.)

As with many great trios, Tunnels is a tight outfit — three distinct and bold minds, each exploring their own space while making sure those spaces intersect. Seeing them play, especially in the small club setting of The Ruid, should be a thrilling experience.

"We always start with an improvisation, then things get more intricate, but the improvised elements are ever present," Wagon said. "Later on in the show the pace slows down with extended solos by the bass, drums and MIDI vibes."

"But things can always take an unexpected turn. That is the great thing about a trio, in that the reaction to anyone's creative input comes about very quickly."

— James Bickers, special to The Courier-Journal

FEATURE

By Logan K. Young

Tunnels ... And A Few Trolls, Too

Tunnels Gambrell Hall Auditorium Friday, Sept. 24

By its very nature, fusion is a difficult business. The enterprise itself — combining two essentially heterogeneous elements to form one homogeneous solution — produces only slightly varying gradations of disappointment along a continuum of what's basically failure. At one end, there's the completely insoluble oil and water (e.g. ska); on the other, a ketchup-and-mayonnaise-tasting thousand island dressing (e.g. rap-rock).

So if it is indeed "tricky to rock a rhyme," perhaps it's even more awkward, nigh impossible even, to rock some jazz. The phraseology alone sounds ridiculous; the sonic results even more so. What ultimately happens is one idiom usurps the other, and you're left with some kind of unique, but nonetheless irreconcilable, aesthetic mulatto — two parts this to one part that in a lopsided, diluted concoction hardly anyone wants to eat, drink or hear.

And yet despite more than half a century of recorded evidence to support this fact, progressive rockers and forward-looking jazzers still persevere at this futile alchemy, earnestly hoping to divine just the right proportions. And try as they might, Weather Report were never quite hard enough, and Steely Dan lacked a certain sophistication. But let's be honest — like sex and cooking, some are just better at it than others. And along with the aforementioned artists, Mahavishnu Orchestra, Frank Zappa, the inimitable Miles Davis and the guy who invented frisbee-golf, you can count Tunnels among the more successful practitioners of the endeavor.

Possibly the only five-string fretless bass player to ever come out of Wales, Tunnels' Percy Jones has been in the fusion business almost since the genre's inception. He rose to prominence back in the late '70s and early '80s with the now-classic fusion outfit Brand X, whose incredibly long list of roving personnel once included original Yes drummer and prog potentate Bill Bruford and, believe it or not, animated Disney crooner Phil Collins.

Now here's where it gets complicated.

Collins had already committed to Genesis as a replacement for departed drummer John Mayhew. Collins' original involvement with Brand X — a throwaway moniker hastily written down in a studio log book that nonetheless stuck — was relegated to sheer side-project status. To make a long story short, as Collins began artistically asserting himself more and more (i.e. less prog noodling, more songs about canoeing), there was, appropriately enough, a mass exodus. By 1979, Collins had officially changed the group's name. They were now Brand X featuring Phil Collins.

Amazingly, Jones emerged from all this infighting and interpersonal turmoil unscathed. If anything, judging by his rather lengthy discography and sheer number of collaborations since (e.g. Brian Eno, Suzanne Vega, Bill Frisell, Nova, Doctor Nerve), he was relieved and refreshed. He doesn't like to



talk about it, though. When asked in an interview with *Global Bass* to comment on the whole debacle, Jones is understandably glib: "I would rather talk about the present and the future than about the past. It's all about Brand X. I've sorta told all the same stories over again and again."

And I suppose we did as well. But regarding the future Jones so desperately wants to look to, we will tell you that Friday's show at Gambrell Hall finds him in familiar company with Swiss MIDI vibraphonist (now there's a fusion phrase if ever there was one) Marc Wagon and L.A. drummer John O'Reilly, Jr. This grouping is the new, slimmed-down form of Tunnels featured on their newest release, *Natural Selection*, on Wagon's label, Buckyball Music. ☐

Gambrell Hall is located on the USC campus, roughly at the intersection of Barnwell and College streets. Doors open at 7 p.m. to the debut of Columbia's latest avant-garde couple, Greenlaw (Kevin Green and Tom Law). Tunnels will start around 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$5, \$3 for students with a valid ID. Call 701-7378 for

Show previews

Vibraphone phun

TUNNELS WITH GUITARIST JIM KIMSEY
RADIO RADIO
WWW.FUTURESHOCK.NET/RADIOFRAMESET.HTM
L, WWW.BUCKYBALLMUSIC.COM
WEDNESDAY, OCT 4
\$7

The vibraphone has a long legacy in jazz, pioneered in the 1930s by Lionel Hampton and carried through the post-bop and fusion eras by the likes of Gary Burton.

The magic of digital technology, however, has opened new landscapes for the instrument that will be on display tonight (Wednesday) when a trio called Tunnels performs at Radio Radio.

Tunnels is the brainchild of British bassist Percy Jones, who first made his name with the '60s poetry-rock ensemble the Liverpool Scene. In the mid '70s, he joined Genesis-drummer-and-not-yet-pop-star Phil Collins in a side band called Brand X, whose jazz-rock excursions drew comparisons to better-known fusion combos Weather Report and the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Jones also is known for studio work that includes albums with Brian Eno, Bill Frisell and Suzanne Vega.

The focal point of Tunnels' current incarnation, however, is Marc Wagon, who plays an instrument brand-named MalletKAT and referred to generically as "midi vibes." Its three octaves of rubber pads, laid out like a vibraphone or marimba and played with mallets, allow Wagon to do virtually anything a keyboard synthesizer can, selecting from an infinite array of custom sounds, controlling pitch and volume with foot pedals and tossing up huge washes of sound with a few strokes.

The band's new, fifth album, *Natural Selection*, is a collection of six- to eight-minute instrumentals that wander far afield, but seldom seem lost or aimless, with elements of progressive rock, world music and ambient sound. Wagon is the credited composer on six of the nine selections, but drummer John O'Reilly Jr. is no slouch, and Jones' fretless bass sounds almost like a living creature.

—SCOTT HALL