

# BRAITHWAITE & KATZ

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **CLASSIC ROCK MEETS FREE JAZZ ON OHIO NATIVE AND GUITARIST RICK PECKHAM'S**

#### **DEBUT *LEFT END* OUT JUNE 15**

**\* Featuring Drummer Jim Black and Bassist Tony Scherr \***

On *Left End*, his debut as a leader, guitarist/composer Rick Peckham draws from his Norwalk, Ohio roots. The title tune takes its name and sound from a Cleveland Led Zeppelin-influenced band Peckham followed in the '70s. Peckham, who graduated from Ohio State in Columbus with a Bachelor of Music in 1981, and also lived in Sandusky for a time while working as a musician at Cedar Point, performs yearly at Denison University's Guitar Fest in Granville.

The Boston-based Professor at Berklee College of Music seamlessly marries rock tones and twisted intent with sophisticated jazz harmonies and freewheeling improvisational daring. Backed by the remarkable rhythm tandem of drummer Jim Black and bassist Tony Scherr, Peckham distinguishes himself as a gutsy, accomplished player whose mind is wide open to sonic possibilities.

"When I first started playing jazz...I don't know how I got the idea...but it really seemed like part of playing jazz was that you had to hate rock," says Peckham. "And so I sort of bought into that for a while. I got a new guitar and put strings on it that were too heavy to bend and just tried to get into Wes Montgomery and Grant Green, which I did. And I still love those guys, especially Grant Green. But when it finally came time for me to make a record, I didn't want to jump into something that would be just another jazz record, I wanted to get into the difficult work of integrating Paul Kossoff (guitarist in Free) and all the great classic rock guys that I always loved."

Echoes of rock guitarists of the '70s and '80s are heard all through the album. "Left End" takes its name and sound from a Cleveland Led Zeppelin tribute band Peckham liked as a teenager. "Mr. Medium" is "my take on 'Mr. Big' by Paul Kossoff," Peckham says. "Shakey" is an homage to Neil Young. "I just love those huge sounds that he gets on his solo records," Peckham says, "that Crazy Horse sound." "Gibbons" is named for ZZ Top guitarist Billy Gibbons.

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But the music on *Left End* refuses to fall into any one neat category. “Free 1” and “Free 2” are completely improvised pieces that explore textures and tone colors more commonly heard in jazz. The odd meter of “353-1001” and the African-flavored beat of “Real Time” add rhythmic variety to the rock rhythms heard elsewhere on the album. The quirky, medium tempo “Hawthorn” previously appeared on the long out-of-print debut CD by new jazz quintet Human Feel, which also featured drummer Black. The trio even takes on a certified jazz classic, Thelonious Monk’s “Evidence.”

A charter member of the notorious Boston-based improvising unit, Um, with trombonist and fellow Berklee educator Hal Crook, drummer Bob Gullotti, bassist Dave Zinno and occasional guest keyboardist John Medeski, **Peckham** appears on their debut CD, *Straydog* (Rope-a-Dope Records). He has also toured and recorded as a member of Irish bassist-composer Ronan Guilfoye’s cross-cultural Lingua Franca band, and is featured on recordings by Human Feel, The George Garzone Quartet, and others. Peckham attended North Texas University and is currently Assistant Chair of the Guitar Department at Berklee College of Music.

The 46-year-old guitarist receives impeccable support from his bandmates. Drummer **Jim Black**, a ubiquitous figure on New York’s downtown improvisers scene, leads his own band, YeahNo, and is a member of Pachora. He has recorded with Tim Berne, Ellery Eskelin, Uri Caine, and many others. Bassist **Tony Scherr** is a fixture in Steven Bernstein’s Sex Mob, Michael Blake’s Free Association and Bill Frisell’s trio as well as a fellow North Texas State alumnus.

With this trio, Peckham makes a most expressive and personal album. “When I’m making a record, I’m not trying to document what somebody else has done,” he says, “I want to go somewhere different.”

Check out just how different his destination is on this edgy and adventurous CD.

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CDs, photos available, [www.rickpeckham.com](http://www.rickpeckham.com)