

Artist: **Brian Woodbury** Title: **Variety Orchestra** Release Date: 3/15/04  
Style: post-modern jazz composition/experimental big band/world beat/unique ensemble

ReR is proud to announce the release of Brian Woodbury's "Variety Orchestra" a sparkling new CD of melodic post-modern jazz compositions. The music is built around a one-of-a-kind line-up combining a driving jazz rhythm section, Latin and Big Band horns, and the down-home Americana of pedal steel, banjo, fiddles & accordion. This mix is peppered with tabla, new music violin, tone rows, NYC bar band, Satchmo cornet growls, and a 15<sup>th</sup> century brass chorale.

The CD features phenomenal players from both coasts – a who's who from New York's downtown and LA's experimental music scenes: violins – Mark Feldman (*Arcado String Trio*, *Dave Douglas*) & Sarah Parkins (*Zeena Parkins*, Grammy-winning *Angeles Quartet*); pedal steel and banjo – Marc Muller (*Karen Mantler*, *Shania Twain*); trumpet – Frank London (*John Zorn*, *Klezomatics*); woodwinds – Aaron Heick (*Chaka Khan*), Steve Elson (*Borneo Horns*, *David Bowie*), Will Connell (*Charles Mingus*) & Kurt Hoffman (*The Ordinaires*); bass – Conrad Korsch (*Billy Joel*) & Oren Bloedow (*Jewel*); drums – Dan Morris (*Rufus Wainwright*, *James Carney*) & Jon Feinberg (*They Might Be Giants*); vibes – Michael Webster (*Tracy Chapman*); and accordions – Guy Klucsevsek (*Anthony Braxton*, *Fred Frith*) & Nick Ariondo ("brilliant" – Zubin Mehta).

Starting in 1989, the Variety Orchestra and its offshoots have appeared at New York's Knitting Factory, La MaMa, Dance Theater Workshop and Fez.

Woodbury, a Los Angeles-based songwriter, TV and theater composer, studied musical comedy songwriting with **Tom Lehrer**, and avant garde music composition with **Pauline Oliveros**. His songs have been sung by **Jill Sobule**, **Terre Roche** and **Lisa Loeb**. He wrote the theme for the ABC-TV cartoon *Pepper Ann*, and songs for the feature film *Teacher's Pet*. He was head songwriter on Disney's *Book of Pooh* and Jim Henson's *Bear in the Big Blue House*. He also orchestrated **Najma's Forbidden Kiss** (Shanachie), a CD of classic Indian film songs. He is an alumnus of the BMI Lehmann Engel Music Theater Workshop.

Previous Recordings: *All White People Look Alike*; *Brian Woodbury & his Popular Music Group*; *The Brian Woodbury Songbook*.

#### **Praise for *Variety Orchestra*:**

"... an extraordinary confection. Surprise your dinner guests; flummox the music anoraks; and enjoy."

**John Bungey, *The Times (London)*, June 12, 2004**

"Brian Woodbury is a multi-talented musician, bordering on genius. He should be up there with Zappa and Beefheart.  
**BBC Radio 3 *Mixing It*, August 13, 2004**

"... A plush, kaleidoscopic crazy-quilt that playfully, intrepidly skewers all manner of Americana...as it pays loving tribute to it." **Mark Keresman, *Primetime*, May, 2004**

"[a] witty sense of humor &... talent for writing intricate, whimsical music."

**François Couture, *All Music Guide***

"Full of captivating melodies and rhythms. Clever without being coy... Remarkable..."

**John Kelman, *All About Jazz*, April 2004**

This is an acoustic big band album, a big-hearted affair full of irrepressible cheer, and played with ... clean living all-American flair... It's intelligent fun...gloomy pie is off the menu. ...sheer verve and good humour

**Clive Bell, *The Wire (UK)***

#### **Praise for the *Brian Woodbury Songbook***

"Consummate songwriting Craft! Wildly eclectic & celebratory. This music is built to last, with its constant element of surprise. Bright scansion that infuses hope into the lyrical art... with effortless ease. Not since Esquivel and the wondrous works of young Brian Wilson in his lettuce years have I heard sound of this romantic design. World beat with an American watermark. Indispensable."

**Van Dyke Parks**

"Mr. Woodbury has earned his degree as an eclectic." **Neil Strauss, *New York Times***



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