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## Oscar Penas “From Now On” BJU Records

By Ron Netsky on December 16, 2011

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There are many excellent CDs released every year in the realm of jazz, but it remains a rare occurrence when an album takes the listener on a unique journey from start to finish. Maybe it's because Oscar Peñas, the superb guitar player who wrote all eight compositions on "From Now On," was born in Barcelona. Both his writing and his playing --- especially when his fingers fly over nylon strings --- are imbued with a delicious Spanish flavor, with rich syncopation underlying the joy or pathos of every tune. Peñas takes off on many a wonderful solo, but this album is really all about the band, with saxophonist Dan Blake and six string bassist Roto Fukushima sharing the spotlight. Richie Barshay does a fabulous job keeping up with the often complex rhythms on drums, percussion and pandeiro. He's not alone; Franco Pinna greatly contributes to the album's gorgeous coloration on Bombo legüero (Argentine drum). And, among the most crucial ingredients on this fantastic excursion is the evocative accordion work of Gil Goldstein.