

IN THE SEA

TRISTAN HONSINGER
NICOLAS CALOIA
JOSHUA ZUBOT



Point of Departure

By Staurt Broomer
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Nic Caloia, a strong contributor to Stir has many dimensions to his musical personality: another is evident in the group In the Sea, a string trio with cellist Tristan Honsinger, who lived in Montreal in the '70s before moving to Europe, and violinist Josh Zubot. They've recently released an eponymous CD (Relative Pitch) that documents a tour of Canada and the U.S. Honsinger's compositions are brief melodies with still shorter spoken lyrics, or more precisely, fragmented poems. He can turn the word "haberdashery" into sworn testimony. The pieces have the quality of ancient airs, suggesting a vital folk tradition that has stretched to include Webern: the opening "Setagaya Ku" works from atonality towards dance; "Black Hills in Dakotas" has the open, clarified harmonies of Virgil Thomson. "Nine of Wasps" achieves the rare quality of joyous dissonance, and "Slow Swarm" feels momentarily like rock 'n' roll. Sometimes there are masses of harmonics that sound like a single instrument with 12 strings and three bows, country fiddling that comes simultaneously in regular, large and giant economy size.