



Thursday, 24 May 2012: ALEX HUTTON TRIO: 'LEGENTIS'  
Review on JAZZWISE Magazine by Selwyn Harris

**ALEX HUTTON TRIO - *LEGENTIS***  
**F-IRE RECORDS**  
**2012**

Alongside vocalist Kate Winter, the pianist Alex Hutton has been co-hosting the unpretentious Jazz Show on local p station Hayes FM. Hutton leaves his presenter's chair to release his third piano trio album *Legentis* on the F-IRE imprint. Having earned his dues as a straightahead sideman in the 1990s, he released his trio debut *Cross That Bridge* in 2006 followed two years later by *Songs from the Seven Hills*, a graceful Jarrett-influenced tone poem to the often overlooked pastoral beauty of the landscape of his native town subtitled *The Sheffield Suite*. The new release *Legentis* retains some of the storytelling qualities and episodic variations of its predecessor but it signals a change in direction that engages with more recent trends in piano trio jazz. While Jarrett's influence still looms large, its latin vamps hint at Avishai Cohen, pounding baroque-influenced themes at Neil Cowley, and a few of its grooves on melodic reveries recall EST.

Hutton writes excellent themes and utilises his guests well, filling out a few tracks with various instrumental colours. Heidi Vogel's semi-operatic wordless vocal makes 'JJ' sound like Ennio Morricone performed by The Bad Plus while 'Legentis Script', partly inspired by the arrangements of film composers such as John Williams, has echoes of Flora Purim and early Return to Forever. Enter a French horn and cor anglais on a few tracks to give a folky Canterbury chamber-prog flavour while the closing 'A Norsk Tale' is graceful solo piano, inspired by Grieg's Lyric Pieces. Hutton has assembled a vigorous rhythm section with a big presence featuring Moscow-born classical virtuoso double bassist and Gwilym Simcock sideman Yuri Golubev and the high-class Israeli drummer Asaf Sirkis. For those into current piano trio jazz trends, this has to be one of the best and most interesting around at the moment.

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