

RHYTHMS 'N' RHYMES

Brownman Electric Trio
play May tonight at 9 p.m.
\$20. 876 Dundas St. W.

ERROL
NAZARETH



Trumpeter brings unique view

A musician can go on and on about jazz icon Miles Davis being their greatest influence, but if their music doesn't boast the same forward-looking and sonically adventurous vibe, that praise amounts to nothing.

Local trumpeter Brownman, whose Electric Trio celebrates the release of its brand new *Gravitation: A Study In Freefall* at May tonight, is a hard-core Davis disciple who's all about pushing his music into uncharted territories.

For proof, listen to the Trio's latest CD or its last few records or consider this: When the 10-day TD Toronto Jazz Festival wraps up Sunday, Brownman can boast that he blew his horn every day of the fest, playing Latin jazz, reggae jazz, jazz-funk, bossa and standards.

And speaking of standards, cue up the Trio's version of *Bye Bye Blackbird* on *Gravitation: A Study In Freefall*.

It starts off with a summery, head-nodding groove powered by drummer Colin Kingsmore's delicious in-the-pocket playing. And then, around the 5:30 mark,

the track begins its ascent into the stratosphere.

"When we play *Blackbird*, I wanted a dirty, New York-style hip-hop feel mixed with a hint of R&B so I told the guys to play it like that, but almost wistfully, and they did," Brownman tells me in between gigs. "But the real magic for me is the end of the tune where Colin starts to hint at drum 'n' bass and blasts off, with (bassist) Tyler Emond in hot pursuit.

"Suddenly, we're doing what we do best — grooving hard — just like Miles did on the *Blackbird Round Midnight* ride-out, except we're doing it over a drum 'n' bass feel."

Those of us familiar with Brown's musical philosophy wouldn't expect anything less adventurous. Far too many jazz singers and players seem content to churn out uninspired covers of standards. Not our man.

"I love standards and I love playing those tunes, but I don't want to sound like they did back then," Brownman says. "To me, that's weird. It's going backwards. When Miles did *Blackbird*,



NILS BLONDON

Local trumpeter Brownman gives the classic song *Bye Bye Blackbird* a drum 'n' bass feel on his Electric Trio's latest album.

which was written in 1926, on his 1956 album, *Round About Midnight*, his goal was to reinvent the piece. To play it like it was a song of the day, rather than a

song of yesteryear. And that's my same ethos."

Brown's restless creativity also inspired the Trinidad-born trumpeter to invite six bassists to grace

the proceedings since he felt no one "owned" bass duties for the Trio when Edmond departed.

He says Emond rejoined the crew for the record-

ing dates and was joined by Marc Rogers, Ian De Souza, Ben Miller, Brad Cheeseman and Damian Erskine, who's considered one of the best electric bassists in the States.