



KLEIER *We Speak of Deep Night. The Juan Cortina Suite. Brickyard. Lodi. Chambers Street. Woodside Meteor. We Speak of Deep Autumn* • Roger Kleier (elec gtr); Annie Gosfield (keyboards)
• STARKLAND 211 (40:52)

Roger Kleier (b.1958) is based in downtown New York, and uses the electric guitar as his principal creative tool. Having said that, one hastens to add that his music both derives from the language of rock and at the same time moves into realms far removed from it. Kleier performs largely as a soloist on this collection, accompanied only by his collaborator Annie Gosfield on keyboards. In order to extend his instrument, he uses a variety of processing devices and techniques, including digital delay, alternative tunings, and pre-recorded aural backdrops sculpted on the computer. The influences are varied, ranging from non-Western musics to the alternative rock of such 60s idols as Captain Beefheart. I had noticed recently that a review in another publication had voiced some concern about those times in the music when Kleier directly evokes rock gestures, but frankly I found such moments especially telling because the composer invariably takes the music in a different direction from what the clichés might dictate (to offer one example: The power chords and trap-set riff in *We Speak of Deep Night* have the heroic cast of a rock anthem, but they are almost meditative and lulling, due to their insistent repetition).

I have reviewed Gosfield a couple of times before, and consistently admired her work. Here it is almost impossible to determine exactly what on the recording comes from Kleier and what from her, because the keyboard in her hands is an orchestra of samples. (This distinction would probably be much clearer in live performance.) While her music is often raucous and evocative of industrial process, Kleier's tends to be more moody and reflective, even when it rises to a powerful wall of sound. Strange to say, considering the sonic surface, this is music of a gentle integrity. Of definite interest to those interested in the continuing cross-fertilization of the American experimentalist scene, and of the expanding repertoire and practice of the electric guitar.

Robert Carl

"Music of a gentle integrity... moody and reflective."