

Bio information: **PRESENT**

Title: **TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIE** (Cuneiform Rune 382)

Format: CD / DIGITAL DOWNLOAD



Bio information: **PRESENT**

Title: **LE POISON QUI REND FOU** (Cuneiform Rune 383/384)

Format: 2xCD / DIGITAL DOWNLOAD



Cuneiform promotion dept: (301) 589-8894 / fax (301) 589-1819

email: joyce [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (Press & world radio); radio [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (North American & world radio)

www.cuneiformrecords.com

**FILE UNDER: ROCK / AVANT-PROGRESSIVE**

**Cuneiform casts new light on the early years of one of the Rock in Opposition Movement's most Legendary groups: the Belgian band Present, led by composer/ guitarist/ keyboardist and Univers Zero co-founder Roger Trigaux**

**– Present's 1st two studio recordings remastered & reissued with previously unreleased live material –**

*"...a neoclassical, odd-metered set of instrumentals whose roots go back to Gentle Giant, Stravinsky...Lounge Lizards. ...Trigaux's vision is disturbing on several levels. Partly it's the abrupt rhythms, non-triadic chords, and multi-dimensional counterpoint; partly it's the vigorous live ensemble work (with little or no electronic processing), which puts the music right in the room with you; and partly it's the stark absence of humor and lyricism. Cuneiform continues to astound us with these uncompromising releases."*

*– Jim Aiken, **Keyboard Magazine***

*"This reissue of the first two albums from...Present shows that when it came to cross-breeding rock and classical musics, the (continental) Europeans were actually able to make stuff sane people want to hear. ...their concept of "classical" didn't stop at Beethoven but was a continuum that extended up through 20<sup>th</sup> century heavyweights like Bartok, Babbitt, Cage, Stockhausen, Stravinsky, etc..."*

*– Lang Thompson, **Sounds Like***

*"Magma and King Crimson comparisons are relevant, but the dark and edgy Present are an entity unto themselves." – **Atlanta Press***

*"Dark, Bartok-like arrangements driven by Gothic rock percussion and the tortured guitar of Roger Trigaux. This is classical rock with an industrial vengeance..." – **DownBeat***

Under the inspired and fiercely determined leadership of composer/guitarist/keyboardist **Roger Trigaux**, one of the most influential musicians in **Belgium's** contemporary music scene, the band **Present** has been blasting apart boundaries between rock, classical and jazz music for more than three decades. Present's music is a striking blend of rock with classical and jazz influences. The compositions, most penned by Trigaux, utilize complex counterpoint, rapidly shifting time signatures and a strong instrumental attack. The final result is blindingly precise works of syncopated instruments, all seemingly coming from different angles, but working together into a cohesive whole.

Founded in 1979, the Belgian band is widely acknowledged and celebrated as one of the leading lights of the **Rock In Opposition (R.I.O.) / avant-progressive / Chamber Rock** scene, notable for producing genre-transcendent, non-commercial music outside ("in opposition to") the mainstream music industry. **Cuneiform Records**, one of the leading and longtime international supporters of Rock in Opposition music, is now reissuing Present's first two studio albums, 1980's **Triskaidekaphobie** and 1985's **Le Poison Qui Rend Fou**, as two separate CD releases, each accompanied by a wealth of bonus material. The new CD reissues feature each studio album plus bonus live material by Present, including previously unseen archive concert footage; and CD booklets featuring historical photographs, interviews, and in-depth biographies of the band's early days written by historian **Aymeric Leroy** and **Renato de Moraes**.

**Triskaidekaphobie** includes 20 minutes of bonus live material – versions of two Univers Zéro pieces, "**Dense**" and "**Vous Le Saurez En Temps Voulu**", re-arranged for Present, taken from a 1981 concert in Brussels. This marks the first time either is made available as performed by Present.

**Le Poison Qui Rend Fou** comes with an entire CD's worth of live material, from a 1982 performance (one of the last with the original line-up) in Livry-Gargan near Paris, plus three videos: a complete performance of "Ersatz", and two excerpts from performances of other pieces – sadly this is all that could be salvaged from a worn-out VHS cassette of the same show.

Both albums have been freshly re-transferred and remastered from the original master tapes, and the live material much improved, by Present's sound engineer, and an acclaimed producer and mastering expert in his own right, **Udi Koomran**.

Specially conducted, in-depth interviews with Roger Trigaux and past members of Present, notably **Daniel Denis** and **Alain Rochette**, provide revealing insights into the genesis of the band and its music, along with previously unseen photos.

Featuring studio and live recordings by one of avant-music's most legendary bands, performing works that should be credited as some of the most significant, boundary-defying compositions of late 20<sup>th</sup> C. classical and rock music – Trigaux's "**Promenade Au Fond D'un Canal**" and "**Le Poison Qui Rend Fou**", and **Daniel Denis'** **Univers Zero** tune, "**Dense**" – these Present reissues are essential not only for R.I.O. fans, but also by all who love sophisticated composition and genre defying musics, whether post-classical or post-rock.

*[press release continued on verso]*

Bandleader and composer Roger Trigaux is one of the more influential musicians in Belgium's contemporary music scene. In 1974 he and drummer **Daniel Denis** co-founded **Univers Zero**, one of Europe's most respected New Music bands. Trigaux performed with UZ for five years, recording on two UZ albums: 1977's *1313* and 1979's *Hérésie*, feature Trigaux's guitar and compositions (plus harmonium on the latter). Both of the Denis/Trigaux-led UZ albums were unqualified critical and popular successes, and were accompanied by frequent tours throughout Europe. Cuneiform recently reissued both UZ albums in remixed form, accompanied by bonus material and historical booklets.

In March 1978, the Denis/Trigaux-led Univers participated in the founding event of the **Rock In Opposition** movement, a 5-band concert in London that the UK band **Henry Cow** organized to showcase their international "non-commercial" colleagues and provide an alternative model for international touring and distribution. Over time, the R.I.O. tag assumed a « musical » meaning, becoming synonymous with Chamber Rock (a hybrid genre combining an electric rock sound with acoustic classical instruments), of which Present are considered one of the masters. The original RIO collective was short-lived, but its spirit lives on in the bands and their offshoots, and in festivals and tours. Since 2007, a yearly R.I.O. festival takes place in Carmaux, Southern France, run by former Present promoter/manager **Michel Besset**, with Present being a frequent participant.

In 1979, seeking to lead his own, more rock/electric-based band, Roger left UZ and formed **Present** with jazz and classical pianist **Alain Rochette** and two fellow members from UZ, drummer **Daniel Denis** and bassist **Christian Genet**. Initially planned as a studio-only project, Present released its debut album *Triskaidekaphobie* in late 1980 prior to undertaking live performances. In *Triskaidekaphobie*, Present successfully reinterpreted early UZ's Chamber Rock aesthetic – which Trigaux had been instrumental in defining – for a smaller, wholly electric line-up, resulting in a louder, and decidedly visceral, rock edge. When Present began performing live, its two epic-length pieces, the classic **"Promenade Au Fond D'Un Canal"** (which the band still performs live to this day) and **"Quatre-Vingt-Douze"**, formed the core of its stage repertoire alongside some UZ material – two examples of the latter are included as bonus tracks on the new reissue.

The labyrinthine, 19-minute **"Promenade Au Fond D'Un Canal"**, an impressive exercise in episodic composition, made for a gripping listening experience as well as an exhilarating and rewarding challenge for the many brilliant musicians who, over the course of Present's long existence, would perform it in concert – usually as the apocalyptic ending climax to the band's performance. With its succession of striking, distinct yet organically related sections, highly complex at times and starkly repetitive at others, unified by the constant and haunting presence of Trigaux's dexterous, wailing lead guitar, "Promenade..." is something of a holy scripture for all lovers of the RIO / chamber rock genre. And while perfectly suited to a small electric ensemble like the original Present, it has proven equally successful rearranged for the band's later expanded line-ups, not to mention the short-lived **Once Upon A Time In Belgium** ensemble which brought together the members of Belgian bands Present, Univers Zéro and **Aranis** for two exceptional European performances in 2011/2012. Simply put, **"Promenade Au Fond D'Un Canal"** may well be one of the most significant serious compositions of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century music, whether classical or rock.

Present's music was described by contemporary reviewers as "classical rock with an industrial vengeance, [with] dark Bartok-like arrangements driven by gothic rock percussion and tortured guitar" (*DownBeat*); "intensely complex, with melody and tempo shifts every four to six measures [...], furiously propelled by extraordinary percussives and guitar patterns, offset by piano fills and accents." (*Unsound*), with "open-ended structures, dark moods, highly-charged ensemble playing and slithering rhythms... Not cheery, pick-me-up music but neither do they wallow in despair" (*Sounds Like*).

Present's personnel was unchanged for their 2<sup>nd</sup> album, *Le Poison Qui Rend Fou*, with the exception that bass duties were handled by **Ferdinand Philippot**, a young musician of note on the Belgian jazz and rock scene. Alongside the two-part title track as its *pièce-de-résistance*, totaling 25 minutes, the album included the ultra-complex **"Ersatz"** (recently covered by fellow Belgian ensemble Aranis) and a contribution by pianist Rochette. Although completed in early 1983, various production snafus meant that *Le Poison* only saw release two years later on **Cuneiform Records**, by which time the band no longer existed. Most of the material had been performed live prior to recording however, as the bonus CD, taken from a 1982 concert near Paris testifies.

In 1986 a duo version of Present was briefly attempted with percussionist **Pierre Narcisse**, but a disillusioned Trigaux then left the music scene for several years, only re-emerging in the 1990s alongside his son and fellow guitarist **Réginald Trigaux**, initially as a duo. Present resumed full-band tours in the mid-1990s with US drummer **Dave Kerman**, as documented on 1996 *Présent Live* (Cuneiform Rune 87). A studio-only reunion with former members Rochette and Denis produced 1998's *Certitudes* (Cuneiform Rune 107), which was followed by extensive tours of the USA, documented on the explicitly-titled *A Great Inhumane Adventure* (Cuneiform Rune 207). New members **Pierre Chevalier** on keyboards and **Keith Macksoud** on bass are still in Present, 15 years later alongside the Trigaux father and son, and Kerman. That basic line-up went on to produce 1999's *N°6* and 2001's *High Infidelity*, both on Belgium's **Carbon 7**, and 2009's CD/DVD combo *Barbaro (Ma Non Troppo)*, on Kerman's own **Ad Hoc** label.

A charismatic bandleader, prolific composer and tireless activist for non-commercial, uncompromising music, Present's visionary leader **Roger Trigaux** truly personifies the R.I.O. ethos. He is true survivor of the financial and physical hardships that come with following an uncompromising musical vision, far outside the mainstream. A progressive health ailment has caused him recently to focus on keyboards and relinquish guitar, an instrument he showcased on *Triskaidekaphobie* and *Le Poison Qui Rend Fou*, and several subsequent records. Trigaux & co.'s performances with Present remain among the most riveting, powerful performances of any rock band alive; performing on request at festivals, Present continue to astound audiences worldwide.

"...*Le Poison*" is simply brilliant and is a must for anyone interested in strong musicianship." – PL, *Unsound*

**For more information on Present:**  
[www.rocktime.org/present/](http://www.rocktime.org/present/) - [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com)

## WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT:

### **PRESENT      TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIE / LE POISON QUI REND FOU      1989      Cuneiform Rune 17**

lineup: Roger Trigaux (guitars.pianos); Alain Rochette (pianos & synthesizers), Christian Genet (electric bass on Triskaidekaphobie); Ferdinand Philippet (electric bass on Le Poison Qui Rend Fou), Daniel Denis (percussion); Marie Ann Polaris (vocals)

“This reissue of the first two albums from...Present shows that when it came to cross-breeding rock and classical musics, the (continental) Europeans were actually able to make stuff sane people want to hear...I suspect the difference is that (1) Europeans weren't trying to gain respectability by latching onto cultural icons and (2) their concept of “classical” didn't stop at Beethoven but was a continuum that extended up through 20<sup>th</sup> century heavyweights like Bartok, Babbit, cage, Stockhausen, Stravinsky, etc. ...Present was fairly true to both traditions with their open-ended structures, dark moods, tightly charged ensemble playing and slithering rhythms. It's not cheery, pick-me-up music but neither do the wallow in despair, instead turning it into, well, art.”  
- Lang Thompson, *Sounds Like*, #6

“His [Trigaux] compositions are complex and labyrinthine, seamlessly shifting from high speed jazz-rock bristling with menace to eerily evocative quiet passages to writhing, sinuous guitar solos cut free from either jazz or rock moorings. ...Univers Zero drummer Daniel Denis hits the skins with a much lighter (though no less precise) touch than he has on recent UZ outings, while Alain Rochette's roiling, Bartok-influenced keyboard configurations are characterized by breathtaking accuracy and aggression that deftly counterpoint Trigaux's sinister ostinatos. ...it's refreshing to be spared the stiffly played chamber instruments that have practically become the trademark of progressive bands in the wake of (and sometimes including) Henry Cow.”  
- Michael Draine, *Damp*, #5

“...Paradoxically, Present's sound is almost a concentration of Univers Zero – more Univers Zero than the thing itself – due not only to the presence of two dominant members of the group, but also to Present's being a quartet...which allows for the very essence of the musical vision to emerge without any frills or distractions. “Triskaidekaphobie” begins with a haunting theme, and then moves through a series of jagged but rhythmically precise riffs, building tension and then releasing it (but never altogether), and then building it again. Genet and Denis are, as always, the foundation...their weight anchors the other instrumental voices and maintains the oppressive atmosphere. The twin pianos of Trigaux and Alain Rochette are played percussively, almost as rhythm instruments, and there is a crazed, obsessive quality to the repeated riffs... The effect is suggestive of someone (or something) to tightly wound, which is on the verge of self-destruction. ...like percussive minimalism...to the aficionado, the tension is exquisite.”  
- William Tilland, *All Music*, www.allmusic.com

### **PRESENT      LE POISON QUI REND FOU      1985 Cuneiform      [1989 reissue as Cuneiform Rune 17]**

“A masterwork in both form and content, this is of no less significance than any of Univers Zero's finest moments. **The finest example of chamber rock you are likely to discover, ‘Le Poison...’ goes tamer on the from-the-tomb Lovecraftian nocturnes: but almost more intense**, if you can believe it, on the structural intricacies of the instrumental layout.”  
- Mike Ezzo, “Present Tense with Roger Trigaux,” *Exposé*, #14

“...a neoclassical, odd-metered set of instrumentals whose roots go back to Gentle Giant, Stravinsky, and maybe the Lounge Lizards. ...Trigaux's vision in disturbing on several levels, Partly it's the abrupt rhythms, non-triadic chords, and multidimensional counterpoint; partly it's the vigorous live ensemble work (with little or no electronic processing), which puts the music right in the room with you; and partly it's the stark absence of humor and lyricism. Cuneiform continues to astound us with these uncompromising releases.”  
- Jim Aiken, *Keyboard*, June 1989

“Classically influenced progressive rock from two founding members of Univers Zero who, of course, are one of Europe's prime exponents of this style. ...There's a strong hint of Magma here, but none of the crazed, manic frenzy. And while this is a little dark, it's not demonic (thank God). ...Present aims more for a small group feel, which it gets. Nice use of syncopation, the ideas are on the rack all the times, and the gothic flavor never becomes too much to handle.”  
- C.W. Vrtacek, *Option*, January 1989

“... **Conclusion: splendid horror with incredible depth and power! Highly recommended!**” - Jeroen Tenkin, *Background*, #36, August 1993

“Present's “Le Poison” along with Univers Zero's “Uzed” Lp are, without a doubt, my favorite progressive discs of 1985. ...The music of Present is muscular and astoundingly technical, rooted in the tradition of such groups as Henry Cow but bringing new found energy and musical dynamism to the form. “The Poison” is largely an instrumental, furiously propelled by Denis' extraordinary percussives & Trigaux's Frith like guitar patterns, offset by pianist Alain Rochette's fills and accents. Although Present combines elements of jazz and classical, there is no easy categorization for their music. The material is intensely complex, with melody and tempo shifts every four to six measures. “Le Poison” is simply brilliant and is a must for anyone interested in strong musicianship.”  
- PL, *Unsound*, v.2, #3/4

“one disc of pure delight. “Le Poison Qui Rend Fou” (The Poison that Makes You Mad) insane builds steamy, layered textures from the inside out. Two classic sides... The latter for only the sturdy. A rare jewel of new jazz.” - Thom Story, *Beef*, v.5, No. 16, Fall/September 1985

“Critic's Choice: John Diliberto: New Release: Present, *Le Poison Qui Rend Fou* (Cuneiform). Dark Bartok-like arrangements driven by Gothic rock percussion from the tortured guitar of Roger Trigaux. This is classical rock with an industrial vengeance, from Belgium.”  
- John Diliberto, “1985 Critic's Choice”, *Down Beat*, January 1986

“Boston Phoenix Critics' Top Ten LPs for 1985: M. Bloom: #6: Present: *Le Poison Qui Rend Fou*” - *Boston Phoenix*

“Fans of Robert Fripp (not just King Crimson) would do well to give Trigaux a listen. ...Trigaux matches Fripp in overall technique and force. ...this is for the experimental person, one who appreciates a musical challenge and is willing to give the music time to fully reveal itself. ...if you give it the chance, you will be rewarded.”  
- *Gibraltar* v. 7, #1, Feb 4, 1997

“Present's style of mystic progressive jazz is not meant for feeble beings... their majestic compositions evoke sonic images... Theirs is an elder, regal sound. ...Their long-sustained, tortured guitar, as it darts between venomous riffs... their classical piano...the complicated drumming structures lurking in their darkling sound... the fuzz-bass, with its from-the-gut-intent...their strict command of reedy despair and somber tension...It is difficult for me to accept that the beings in Present who make this music are actually human. It is truly “The Poison That Makes You Crazy!””  
- Matt Howarth, “Sonic Curiosity,” *Stardate Magazine*, August 1993

“...Beginning in 1969 with... Magma, France and Belgium became the breeding ground for a distinctively continental take on the originally Anglo-American phenomenon of progressive rock. ...groups such as Univers Zero and Art Zoyd forged a unique sound that is...among the most valuable contributions to the music of the late 20th century. One of the second-generation manifestations of the Franco-Belgian “avant-prog” movement was Present, a group founded by guitarist Roger Trigaux, in 1979. After contributing to the first two albums of the pioneering chamber rock group Univers Zero, Trigaux broke off in order to pursue a more electrified, guitar-based sound. .... The opening track of the band’s sophomore release, *Le poison qui rend fou*, shows the group in prime form. While the rhythm section hammers out short, syncopated riffs whose sudden juxtaposition recalls the ostinato patterns of early Stravinsky, Trigaux’s guitar and Alain Rochette’s keyboard unfold a melodic polyphony at once jagged and elegant. ...the exhilarating potential of rock-influenced music freed from the shackles of conventional song form.”

- *Acousmata*, October 29, 2012, [www.acousmata.com](http://www.acousmata.com)

**PRESENT      TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIE      1980 Atem      [1989 reissue as Cuneiform Rune 17]**

“Trigaux plays with a Fripp-like intensity within the stylistic framework first defined by Univers Zero. ...It is mainly the interplay between Trigaux, Rochette, Genet and Denis that creates the taut atmosphere...The first two cuts are greater than 15 minutes each and highlight the parlay between all four musicians, building in statement and fervor until the very end. I don’t know how long I held my breath but I visibly relaxed at the end of each tune. These songs [are] prime examples of tenseness and intensity.”

- *Gibraltar*, Feb 4, 1997

**PRESENT      A GREAT INHUMANE ADVENTURE      2005      Cuneiform Rune 207**

“Present’s dark vision is alive and well...and the vision...even more congenial to the modern audience than it was at the time of its inception back in 1981. ... Present...a guitar band, relying on slashing, dissonant electric guitar leads and a certain relentless repetition that distinguishes Trigaux’s jabbing, insistent and sometimes borderline obsessive compositions. ...*A Great Inhumane Adventure*...the monumental “Promenade au Fond d’un Canal,” ... The two guitars entwine exquisitely on the newer live version of the piece, and Pierre Chevalier assaults his keyboards with dissonant, propulsive energy... Dave Kerman...is a congenial force on drums, and he combines with bassists Jean-Pierre Mendes and...Keith Macksoud for the thick, bottom-heavy sound associated with the classic French prog rock groups such as Magma. Perhaps the most pleasant surprise on this...is Trigaux’s gravelly, pitch-challenged singing... the vocals are never dominant enough to detract from the disquieting instrumental malevolence that has always been Present’s specialty. The result is music that is still uniquely Present, communicating a sound and vision that hold up nicely more than 20 years after the band’s inception.”

- Bill Tilland, *All Music Guide*, [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com)

“...aggressive and...raw, like a demented punky/classical edged side-step from King Crimson... with those unique Present stylisms, but different. ...”

- Alan Freeman, *Audion*, #51, Spring 2006

“If there is a band in the RIO genre that I like above all others, then it must be Present... brooding darkness and overall intensity... *Delusions* leaves no doubt: the style of this band is heavily influenced by Magma...while the overall sound is a bit heavier. Important in the music is the tangible tension... The heaviness comes from the rumbling bass and the guitar. ... The guitarwork strongly reminds of the great Crim. An excellent, long and tense opener and characteristic for the band. ... This live album is excellent from start to finish, and may be considered a best of album as well... What is offered by Present is a complex package of dark RIO with...links to King Crimson and Magma. ...I...like Present more than these two stalwarts. The tension is always high, as if you are watching a thriller movie without the images. ...”

- Jurriaan Hage, *Axiom of Choice*, November 2005

“...Present clearly consist of top notch musicians which are able to bring their complicated music to [life]. Five tracks, in total over 70 minutes, this is no easy listening but a real worthwhile challenge.”

- Andre’, *Background Magazine*, Spring 2006, Issue #93

“... The band was a well oiled machine at this point, having proven itself to work harder under less than ideal live conditions. The CD consists of newer performances of most of the recent *Live*, album (three songs) and the lead track from the recent *Certitudes* recording, “*Delusions*.” ...the band’s intensity and composure is evident throughout.”

- Jeff Melton, *Exposé*, September 2005, Issue #27

“Present’s grueling 1998 U.S. tour will likely not soon be forgotten by anyone in the band, nor by anyone who caught them at some point along their 21 date trek from the US east coast to the west coast and back again. Now a live document...is available.... A must-have for every *Exposé* reader.”

- Peter Thelen, *Exposé*, September 2005, Issue #27

“Roger Trigaux predicted that Present’s 1998 tour of North America would be “a great human adventure.” ... From the fan’s perspective, these were legendary shows not to be missed, a one-off experience that was never expected to happen and would never happen again. ... It was a grueling tour but the members were fully up to the task, feeding on the challenges and spitting out the refuse on stage each night, fine-tuning their performances until the tour’s climax at Orion Studios in Baltimore. Now that very show is presented here in its vicious, soul burning glory. ...those who didn’t attend can feel the heat from this simmering conflagration. Present listeners know the drill: ferociously churning compositions that burrow into your forehead and spit-roast your brain until tender and well-baked.”

- Mac Beaulieu, *Exposé*, September 2005, Issue #27

“...Present, today... Trigaux remains the band’s centerpiece. ... It took almost seven years for this material to be released, but it was surprisingly worth the wait... *A Great Inhumane Adventure* opens with “*Delusions*,” from the group’s 1998 album *Certitudes*, and also contains two classics from Present’s debut pair of lps, and two new tracks. ... Pierre Chevalier’s work on the Roland piano helps Present retain the feel of their older material, which...still inhabited...”chamber prog” territory. ...hearing the souped-up versions of “*Le Poison Qui Rend Fou*” and “*Promenade au Fond d’un Canal*” are certainly this disc’s highlights. It’s...impressive how easily Trigaux...led the transition of the band, the new line-up seems spot-on, and *A Great Inhumane Adventure* is enough to make anyone hope that Present’s 1998 US tour wasn’t their last.”

- *Fakejazz.com*, August 2005

“I had the good fortune to attend the very show documented by this live album, so to say I was psyched about getting this CD is a bit of an understatement. ... The powerful, dark, repetitive music, Dave Kerman playing the drums with seemingly anything he could get his hands on... Roger Trigaux towering over the audience in his dark trench coat, and someone near the end of the concert pounding on the stage with a big, red pipe. I’d never seen (or heard) anything like it before, but the show convinced me to pick up...*Certitudes*...and from there I ended up with the group’s whole catalog. ...the song “*Delusions*”...made me a fan. The whole album is good...the high point is...“*Promenade au Fond d’un Canal*”. It holds the listener in a trance as it shifts through its various repeated themes and builds up momentum. ...”

- Bob Eichler, *Ground & Sky*

“...I feel completely confident in saying: if you haven't heard this band live, you haven't heard them at all. ... Present's music can be likened to a more aggressively rock-influenced **Univers Zero**, though this lineup is fairly stripped-down, with repetitive themes hammered out on piano, bass and drums over which the dual guitars of the Trigaux father-son duo weave rhythmic patterns or scream through tortuous solos. ...the two...tracks, taken from the band's first two albums...absolutely slay. "Le Poison Qui Rend Fou"...immediately sets itself apart from the vocal-oriented pieces with its unrelenting aggression and tension-building. Trigaux's dissonant, explorative guitar work takes center stage over an insistent, repetitive piano line, building through the entire 10-minute length until a brilliant, brief closing passage which actually sounds consonant enough to be a riff by a classic hard-rock band.

But the classic is "Promenade au Fond d'un Canal," from the band's debut album: a 20+ minute tour de force in which the band manipulates the repetition of dark musical cells into an unforgettable wordless story full of dramatic chase scenes, unexpected explosions, calm-before-the-storm brooding, and twisting, acrobatic gunfights.”  
- Brandon Wu, *Ground & Sky*

“...The band's action-packed framework is centralized upon odd-metered time signatures, scathing chord progressions and oscillating drums-bass-piano ostinatos. In addition, Trigaux's stark vocals and harrowing electric guitar lines cast an ominous edge... the musicians...drive it all home with a blitzing, yet unequivocally focused, force of energy. There's nothing delicate or schmaltzy about this lot as they make their points via a whirlwind approach, while maintaining an overall methodology that is unparalleled within prog-rock idioms. (Recommended...)”  
- Glenn Astarita, *Jazzreview.com*

“...*A Great Inhuman Adventure* is an excellent sounding recording of the dazzling live performance that closed the band's 1998 American tour. ... Present spills its morbid doctrine with all its trickery and intensity on the relatively loose live setting, resulting in a livelier and perhaps more accessible sound than is to be found on their studio works. ... The band is certainly at the top of its wicked game, with every member contributing a showcase of his own while completing the very dense, macabre sound. A thrilling recording aimed at anyone who is ready to make acquaintance with the Present force. (9.3/10)”  
- Avid Shaked, *Maelstrom*, Issue 36, www.maelstrom.nu

“This mighty art-rock album consists of five complex and dramatic pieces of more than ten minutes each. ...an awesome set in the tradition of fierce King Crimson and such RIO acts as Univers Zero. ... This is heavy, but not oppressive, music from the far reaches of the music-sphere where jazz and prog touch extremities. (4.5)”  
- Tom Schulte, *Outsight*

“The recording is a live recording of a well rehearsed band. The vocals on the first track sound a bit normal against the density of the music, and could have used a vocal effect...but most of that track is instrumental. ...”  
- *Progressive Homestead*, progressive.homestead.com

“Belgium's *Present* has put out one of the best progressive records in many years. ... This is a real grower; the more you listen to it, the better it gets. The songs are layered and sophisticated, yet they deliver a direct emotional power you'll rarely hear. The atmosphere is dark and obsessive. The suspense just drips out of your speakers. ... *Present* sounds definitely like a band in top form here. Roger Trigaux and son Reginald deliver powerful guitar work, backed by pulsing bass by Jean-Pierre Mendes and...tour manager Keith Macksoud and the awesome drumming of US citizen Dave Kerman, one of the leading men in the Rock-In-Opposition movement (*5UU'S*, *U Totem*, *Thinking Plague*). ...while *Univers Zero* excels in...‘chamber rock’, *Present's* sound is heavier... This is an absolute must for *UZ*, *Magma* and *King Crimson* fans. ...a breathtaking experience! [rating 10/10]”  
- Christoff Lintermans, *Prog-Nose*, www.prog-nose.org

“...Many have stated how Present really hit their stride in a live format more than on their studio recordings, and after hearing this blistering set I'll second that notion. ...Present live are...mixing elements of avant-garde prog rock, jazz, classical, and hard rock into their bubbling cauldron of flowing musical adventure.  
The Present "legend" is built around the intricate guitar work of father and son team Roger and Reginald Trigaux, as well as keyboard player Pierre Chevalier, and the three make for an impressive trio of soloists for the crack rhythm team of drummer Dave Kerman and bassist Jean-Pierre Mendes to anchor under... There's plenty of rampaging King Crimson- meets -Univers Zero stuff going on here, from the complex intricacies of "Delusions" to the cranking guitar workouts of "Le Poison Qui Rend Fou". ...repetitive...is the style of this band, as they weave intricate patterns with the two guitars and keyboard over and over with dizzying flair, then stomp into a heavy barrage of riffs and caustic rhythms that will surely send shivers up your spine. ...serious intensity and reckless abandon, with no speck of commercialism in sight. *A Great Inhuman Adventure* is live, dark prog rock served up on a silver platter, from a band that are as close to legendary status as there is in the business today. ...musical bliss AND madness... [4 stars]”  
- Pete Pardo, *Sea of Tranquility*, www.seaoftranquility.org, May 17, 2005

"*A Great Inhumane Adventure* is the latest album by Present, and it's a mighty fine one. Present plays what one might call European Progressive Rock. ... Very intense, with lots of tempo changes, but with repeating lines and phrases, what makes it an absolute joy to listen to. Highly recommended!"  
- Peter van Laarhoven, *United Mutations*, June 12th, 2005, www.united-mutations.com

**PRESENT                      CERTITUDES                      1998                      CUNEIFORM RUNE 107**

*lineup: Roger Trigaux (guitar, vocals, keyboards); Réginald Trigaux (guitar, vocals), Alain Rochette (piano, keyboards); Guy Segers (bass), Daniel Denis (drums, vocals, percussion)*

“An anticipated release to say the least. ... Present's strong point... is the building and layering of tracks, culminating in wonderful complex polyrhythmic lines. ...Present have come back with a fine piece of work. The angular piano is very prominent, the guitar is as raw as ever and the rhythms are eminently undanceable. .... “Delusions” builds in really classic style to a fabulous repeated piano riff and one of Trigaux's famously wild and excellent guitar solos. An instantly recognizable Present track, full of energy and consummate skill. This is a very aggressive album and sometimes reminds me of Voivoid ...my speakers boomed and wobbled throughout. “The Sense of Life” was quite a shock at the opening; it has a very modern, heavily syncopated metal riff on the guitar. ...around 5.30, the guitar bursts in with Present's version of an uptempo riff and beat... I instantly think of early Crimson because of the way-out jazz allusions. This builds and builds into a marvelous orgy of sound before collapsing into a staccato broken riff and then into a restatement of the opening section. ...Well, Present are well and truly back... It is a pleasure to be able to say that this was worth waiting for.”  
- Phil Kime, *Sonitus*, Feb 1998 / *Music Uncovered*, #29, 1998

“Alright, Present still isn't a melodic rock band but the four long pieces have accessible moments just as they have dark moody or experimental ('new music') passages. ...People who are into experimental bands like UNIVERS ZERO and MAGMA will love this...an interesting album which I

will listen to some more...it's a departure on yet another exploring trip into another part of the magic worlds of progressive rock."

- CB, *Background Magazine*, #67, Winter 1008/1999

"It's difficult to 'pigeonhole' the style - quite jazz inflected with hints of Mothers/ Zappa and Bruford some great lead guitar from Reginald Trigaux and Segers' and Denis' contributions crisp and clear...Present have real talent and play an 'experimental jazz' with such a great melodic structure that the richness of the musical tapestry is most accessible and enjoyable. In 'Delusions' they have created a classic piece that is a tribute to Roger Trigaux's compositional ability... the album...is for me one of the most memorable releases of 1998."

- Phil Jackson, *Acid Dragon*, #22

"The overall lyrics (through the initial 3 tracks) involve dispelling our illusions with life, or living through them, & creating another world with new illusions. "Yes, your kingdom of delusions will fall down/ down, down down into oblivion/ If you can kill your faith, hopes and compassion / You'll see the world transformed, liberated" or: "So many dreams, so many hopes in my heart/ I've some troubles with the real sense of life/ Not enough time to satisfy my obsessions/ Give me a child & I'll never die." Very interesting CD."

- Jasmine Sailing, *Cyber-Psychosis AOD*, #8, August 1999

"For fans of dark progressive music, the reformation of Roger Trigaux's Present is cause for considerable celebration. ...The complex structures, rapidly shifting time signatures, and intricate instrumental interplay of the group's early work are all present once again on this vigorous, virtuosic outing. Here the duel guitar attack of Trigaux and his son, Reginald, is augmented by original keyboardist Alain Rochette's dramatic, sensitive playing and Univers Zero drummer, Daniel Denis' extraordinarily technical, dynamic percussives. *Certitudes* is a must for fans of progressive music in the vein of early Henry Cow, mid-period Crimson, Gentle Giant, Univers Zero...My only complaint is that this CD is tantalizingly brief! ...I am left wanting more! (A)"

- Paul Lemos, *Under the Volcano*, #43

"An electric offshoot of the Gothic chamber group Univers Zero, this Belgian band released two albums of devastatingly complex terror rock in the 80's, before...an eight year hiatus. Present returns to classic form as a guitars/ keyboard/drums ensemble reuniting members of the '80s Present and 70's Univers Zero lineups. Present navigates labyrinthine instrumental passages with passion, unity, and abandon, the father and son team of Roger and Reginald Trigaux trading splayed, molten leads against angular, Bartok-like piano configurations. Gravely intoned, fatalistic lyrics deepen the atmosphere of darkness at the edge of time."

- Michael Draine, *Vendetta*, #10

"...the oppressive darkness of Trigaux's previous work has lifted on *Certitudes*... Not that the arrangements are any less chaotic, any less engulfing and overwhelming than before. The trademark sounds, the oddly spaced keys and dissonant string work, the almost suffocating moods remain typical of these folks. ...There's an unusually high variety of vibes on this disc, moving from the unexpectedly morbid drone of "Delusions" to the almost upbeat...sound of "The Sense of Life," a song starting with a guitar riff that could easily have opened a Kiss or Motley Crue song. ...*Certitudes*...might well be a gateway for people to discover the canon of work by these influential artists."

- James Bickers, *Progression*, Winter//Spring 1998

"One doesn't really get the grinding resolve of Roger and Reginald Trigaux's latest until the instrumental middle bit of the second track "May Day" comes up, and the mellotron stretches out across an immensely cavernous space, shoved further and further away from the listener by the needling semi-syncoated bass of the one and only Guy Segers. When it returns after Roger snarls a damnation ("Soldier - waiting for death at the back of his gun..."), Segers and Daniel Denis (equally the one and only)'s drums push that motif again to just beyond the breaking point before "May Day" collapses back into the absurd baroque electric piano riff that opens the track. ...Present has always made music for adults. You have to think to get it. Maelstroms of keyboards courtesy of Alain Rochette with the roaring, clanking guitars of Reginald and Roger Trigaux form the atmosphere here and Segers/ Denis the propulsion, but the words cap the songs. Incomplete though they might be they are not ciphers but arrows that point to what direction they'd like you to think in. ...Wittily Denis clobbers the crash cymbal whenever the word "love" is said, making a weapon of it rather than a caress. ...the opening "Delusions" is a roar from the guts (again to manically nervous structuring) against belief in the deity of the month... With some ensemble riffing worthy of classic Magma Present again makes is clear they're not ready to be tossed on the heap of past...heavyweight. And they're coming to the USA as I write this. Pretty scary. My advice to the thinking fan? Get on board or get run down."

- A.S., *Tone Clusters*, #68, May/June 1998

"Mixing rock with classical music; bad idea or big mistake? ...Of course, there have been exceptions...like Henry Cow or King Crimson.... For a variety of reasons, Europeans have proven to be the best at this; just take a knowledgeable gander at the fine Belgian band Present. Present came into being when Univers Zero guitarist Roger Trigaux wanted an outlet for darker but more energetic music. ...*Certitudes* is the newest album from this full outfit and the band is celebrating with their first North American tour. ...*Certitudes* shows what lucky listeners are in for. The album opens with "Delusions," a fifteen-minute extravaganza of shifting time. pounding bass and zippy guitar. It flows from a long, intricate guitar solos to near-atmospherics to ripping vocals...because of such unusual structures and intricate playing, *Certitudes* actually sounds better the more you hear it. ...a brains-to-the-wall album."

- Lang Thompson, *Funhouse Journal*

"This new recording is an experimental jazz, classical progressive musical fusion reminiscent of some of the greater excesses of King Crimson. featuring 4 tracks, 3 of which are over 10 minutes thus allowing their complex play full reign, this is a dark foreboding release that commands your attention."

- Terry Craven, *Wondrous Stories*, #174, February 1998

"...*Certitudes* is an excellent CD...quite different to anything else I have heard. It's very dark, highly complex at times, hypnotic rhythms, excellent guitar work."

- Derek Daniel, *Stormbringer*, <http://www.stormbringerwebzine.co.uk>

"Present's *Certitudes* is powered by founder Roger Trigaux's genius, rhythmic compositions and guitar, Pierre Chevalier's unusual piano/ keyboards, drummer Dave [K]erman and bassist Jean-Pierre Mendes' mesmerizing rhythm-section collaborations. Unbelievable! Chanted lyrics do not exactly create a "rock opera," but there is some kind of story line here - and certainly a nervy, moody netherworld that sucks you in."

- Cliff Johns, *Old Town Crier*, July 1998

"There's no question that Present is an art-rock band; the Belgian quintet's "Certitudes" contains only four songs - might as well call them "compositions," actually - and three of them are at least 10 minutes long. Still, this band has a standard rock lineup and a lively, edgy sound. Such tracks as "Delusions" may sound like King Crimson, but it's the taut '80s version of that band Present resembles, not the bloated '70s one. ...For all the music's complexity, the latter passages have a pulsing intensity that recalls such bands as Talking Heads and Pere Ubu' "The Sense of Life" soon

turns it into a showcase for jazzy bassist Guy Segers, but it opens with a clipped guitar fanfare that suggests the Jam.”

-Eric Brace, *The Washington Post*, May 1, 1998

“This group...represents an enigmatic form of fusion where rock, jazz and gothic aesthetics ignite in a fiery union. The electro-acoustic nature of the music is quite powerful - at times it comes across like a soundtrack for a German expressionist film. ...Present are a robust group of players who are tightly locked by capable of finding fluidity within their heavily syncopated songs. And what songs they are - the controlled chaos of “Delusions,” the frenetic yet atmospheric “May Day,” the unseemingly successful hard rock-jazz fusion of “The Sense of Life” and the twisted march of “Ex-Tango.” ...Alain Rochette’s piano is just as ominous as the wailing and screeching electric guitar work. ...epic tracks. Ultimately, Present don’t represent a category, for very few artists fashion similar music. And it’s great that an electro-acoustic band can stir up this much dark musical mayhem and give it such character.”

- Bryan Reesman, *New Age Voice*, 3/2000

“Coming off a strong live release, the band seems to have extracted some of the live energy and fused it into the new compositions. “May Day” builds a dramatic tension, worthy of the best of the Belgian euro-legacy. Vocally, the opening lead tracks remind me very much of Bernardo Lanzetti from PFM with his rough Italian vibrato. Lyrically the tone is bleak... The opening track also reminds of the strongest moments of Henry Cow’s first album, angry electric leads against a tight rhythm section upheld by Daniel Denis and Guy Segers. ...Present is still at the forefront of the European progressive movement, carrying the RIO banner forward into the twenty first century.”

- Jeff Melton, “Roundtable Reviews,” *Exposé*, #14

“...a big shock - back to the Present of the ‘80’s with piano, in that instantly recognizable pizzicato style that gave his earlier work its patented Stravinsky-esque propulsion. A new slant is evident, however by Trigaux’s menacing vocals, which only further articulate the mad perilous zeal in Present’s music. Counterpoint between bass and piano on “Delusions” provides a bedding for rapid-fire guitar soloing that practically knocks the wind out of you. ...This is the closest any Present effort has come to reproducing their fiery, abrasive live atmosphere on a studio recording. ...excuse my sycophantic fawning over “Certitudes.” But after so many years and so few chances to sate the appetite, an occasion like this is cause for dusting off the thesaurus and pulling out some hyperboles..”

- Mike Ezzo, “Roundtable Reviews,” *Exposé*, #14

“...their music could best be described as aggressive electric chamber rock, dark and twisted, almost frightening at times, with some hints of Magma and even stronger hints of Larks’-to-Red era Crimson (though Present’s music is fully composed with very little improvisation). Trigaux’s anguished and tortured vocals play right into their sound. This studio release essentially marks a return to the form of the early eighties releases “Le Poison Qui Rend Fou” and “Triskaidekaphobie”, yet here **the intensity level seems much higher, more urgent, more fierce...proof positive that some bands don’t mellow with age.** “Certitudes” could easily be Present’s strongest studio release to date.”

- Peter Thelen, Roundtable Reviews, *Exposé*, #14

**“Proof positive that progressive rock isn’t a stagnant form.** Leader Roger Trigaux and his son Reginald weave their guitars for an eternity over top tension-building repetitions from the piano and rhythm section until the listener is ready to pop. It’s like a thick dream in which you’re desperately trying to traverse the stairs of some Cimmerian castle. Magma and Crimson comparisons are relevant, but the dark and edgy Present are an entity unto themselves.”

- *Atlanta Press*, Jan. 1-7, 1999

“Present recorded 4 new tracks (40’) in a Brussels studio, 4 new claustrophobic nocturnal adventures, classic avant-garde-like, jazzy and...still strange after all those years! This is...a collection of subtle, somber continental avant-garde rock that will undoubtedly please anyone in to Faust, Magma, The Residents or Giant Eyes - music from the dark side of life. Face it!”

- Louie Behiels, *Crohinga Well*, #14, 1998

“Exposé Writers Choices - Best of 1997: Jeff Melton: #6: Present - *Certitudes* / Mike Grimes: #9 = Present - *Certitudes* “ -*Exposé*

“Unlike their past chamber-like classicism, Present is a ferocious, raucous beast, an intense intersection of jazz, rock and modern classical music. With compositions penned by Trigaux, *Certitudes* bristles between the stunning interplay and complex counterpoint of the rhythm section, keyboards and two guitars. This is tightly taut, sophisticated music that balances on precarious angles with tricky times signatures and yet just when it looks like it will crumble under its own brooding weight, is pulled back by the cohesive and precise playing.”

- Richard Moule, *Exclaim!*, 1998

“Like Univers Zero, Present specialize in dark, moody, often violent gothic-rock fusion which moves between forceful repetitive passages and more free-flowing segues. Dissonance and consonance, spontaneity and structure all cohabite in the Present sound matrix, one which hints of both modern gothic and German Expressionism. Combining Denis’ sharp and fluid [percussive attacks, the Trigauxs’ diverse guitar modes, and some forceful and deftly executed keyboard and bass lines, Present fashion enigmatic numbers which you have to approach on their terms. ...”The Sense of Life”...opens like a dark heavy metal number with its churning riff and straightforward drumming; the third movement of the song explodes into a cacophony of hypnotic guitar riffing, spontaneous keyboard runs, and charging rhythms. While this is definitely music for those who enjoy cerebral sounds (the lyrics get a bit abstract), it’s intelligently grounded by some very visceral performances which will strike you on a physical level. They make for fascinating listening.”

- Bryan Reesman, *Goldmine*, July 17, 1998, v. 24, #15

## **PRESENT                      LIVE!                      1996                      Cuneiform Rune 87**

*lineup: Roger Trigaux (guitar, vocals, keyboards); Réginald Trigaux (guitar, keyboards, vocals), Bruno Bernas (bass, vocals), Daniel Denis (drums, vocals, percussion)*

“The music of Present is still capable of casting its dark shadow upon the unprepared listener: it’s strange, moody and nocturnal avant-garde rock with lots of influences from modern classical music, jazz and the experimental school. .. Fans of Faust, Henry Cow, Magma and The Residents will love this one. A fantastic album that takes your mind to very dark places. The best Belgian release of ‘96, that’s for sure!”

- Louis Behiels, *Crohinga Well*, (Belgium), 1997

“After a few wonderful albums, Present disbanded...only to re-coalesce in the early Nineties, touring in late 1995 to produce the material on this splendid live recording. Darkly metallic with jazz and classical influences, Present’s sound is made up of a pair of dueling screech guitars, loglike percussion, haunting keyboards and sinuous bass. The vocals remind one of Magma sung in English. In fact, there’s certain Magma flair to the hard gothic rock music, with its rapidly changing time signatures and complex counterpoints. Raging and dynamic.”

- Matt Howarth, *Those Annoying Post Brothers*, #55, April 1997

“The live disc adds vocals, but turns up the volume and goes for an all-pout rock and roll approach, with blazing and wailing guitars. How progressive it all is another matter, but it’s certainly refreshing and entertaining.”

-Bradley Smith, “Additional Recommended Titles,” *The Billboard Guide to Progressive Music*, Billboard: 1997

“...Trigaux serves up a powerful chamber influenced rock, the closest analogy to the more well-known ‘progressive’ bands being ‘72-’74 period King Crimson but taken a couple more steps in the ‘Fracture’ direction. ...All tracks are fascinating workouts mixing desolate passages with pounding interlocking twin guitar work over a churning rhythm section. There’s certainly plenty to savor here, with repeated plays revealing further intricacies and interplay.

-Martin Mycock, *Facelift*, #17, January 1997

“Over the years, Cuneiform has proven to be one of the finest of new-music and progressive labels, both for its new releases and commitment to unearthing old classics. ...Yet, having said that, never have they released a batch as extraordinary as this! Present *Live!* ...The dual affront of Trigaux’s (father and son) is all the more inspiring, guitars at the double – fire! The opening Laundry Blues feels to me like an amalgam of familiar Present structures cross-bred with Caspar Brötzmann and wilder King Crimson. A blues it is not. ... The masterpiece here, however, is the radically different new arrangement of Promenade au Fond d’un Canal (from the 1980 debut TRISKIDEKAPHOBIE), in which the percussive piano parts are re-scored for guitar, with lots of other twists and turns in the arrangement. So different, yet exactly the same in compositions, it’s extraordinary for a studio work, so it’s even more amazing in how they remember all those moves in a live situation! It all adds up to an excellent, and very different, document of one of Europe’s most innovative bands. Familiar yet different, it’s exactly the Present album we needed!”

- Alan Freeman, *Audion*, #36, Autumn 1996

“A most remarkable outfit from Belgium... Present offers violently cerebral, no-nonsense, no-compromise music. ...very atmospheric, laden with anxiety, dark and gloomy the way we like it, with many tempo changes, very good playing and pretty (?) vocal harmonies here and there (No, don’t worry! Not that kind of pretty. Sad and melancholy, the way early Floyd could do it. ...Highly recommended for fans, still recommended to others. (4).”

- Michel Polizzi, *Carbon 14*, #10

“On this first official live release, the guitar dominates.. When Trigaux senior solos, he makes a wonderful noise: “Laundry Blues’ has a twisted blues part the he tortures perfectly. ‘Contre’ is another new track in a subtle approach to the classic Present style. It restrains itself just up to the point of bursting out... the Present discipline is still, well, present. ...most people will be wanting to hear the live rendition of ‘Promenade au fond d’un Canal.’ ...the dual guitars make...new and interesting counterpoint. ...Reginald Trigaux adds some unobtrusive vocals to this track before the main point arrives: the guitar solo. Live, they make the most of it, interposing a quiet section with strange effects beforehand. ...very solid indeed, and one which should be on the list of every Univers Zero and Present admirer.”

- PK, *Music Uncovered*, #26

“The music of Present is still capable of casting its dark shadow upon the unprepared listener; it’s strange, moody and nocturnal avant-garde rock with lots of influences from modern classical music, jazz and the experimental school Fans of Faust, Henry Cow, Magma and The Residents will love this one. A fantastic album that takes your mind to very dark places. The best Belgian release of ‘96, that’s for sure!”

- Louis Behiels, *Crohinga Well*, [Belgium], #13, 1997

“...this version of Present may be considered the strongest outing by their patient fans - Trigaux has removed most of the classical trapping of keyboards and cello to include the second guitar of...Reginald Trigaux, for an aggressive twin-axe assault. Along with Bruno Bernas’ intricate bass work, all three fretmen weave complex, interlocking instrumentals that appropriate King Crimson’s intensity with Lycia’s bewitching overtones. Even better, guitar heads that are constantly looking for compelling influences should check out the Trigauxes’ handiwork - minor key runs bouncing between guitarists in blistering arrangements that only hint at their classical background. Rather than copping baroque riffs... Present are more concerned with maintaining dramatic tension to keep a centerpiece, like the 22-minute “Promenade Au Fond D’un Canal,” as an edgy netherworld soundtrack. **One of the best guitar albums to surface this year from the unlikely source of untapped European new music.**”

- Richard Proplesch, *Jam Magazine*, Nov. 22-Dec 5, 1996

“...the listener quickly becomes aware that the dark, horrifying atmosphere didn’t get any lighter. Ostinato bass, guitar and drums give foundation to searing guitar from Roger Trigaux. This quickly gives way to a dark cellar of scraping strings, feedback and graveyard vocals that can only call to mind the otherworldly musings of Devil Doll’s Mr Doctor. Half way through the twelve minute song, Roger Trigaux evaporates the dampness with a solo of terrifying intensity. And the show has just begun! next up is the seven minute “Contre,”...Sustained feedback and frantic soloing on top of taut rhythm once again compels the listener to hold his breath, waiting for a release of tension that never seems to come. ...”Alone” begins with a groove that even a casual listener can grab hold of, but as soon as he grasps it the nightmarish sequence begins to cradle the listener with a quiet unease. Somber vocal and guitar lines lull you deeper and deeper before exploding with hellish fright. Finally, comes a 22 minute rendering of “Promenade au Fond d’un Canal”.... **the fervor is as hot as ever. A must.**”

- *Gibraltar*, v.7 #1, Feb 4, 1997

“This live CD, recorded 15 years after the brilliant Triskaidekaphobie and 11 after Le Poison Qui Rend Fou, finds only guitarist Roger Trigaux remaining from the original group, joined by his son Reginald on second lead guitar. ...with all writing and arranging done by the elder Trigaux, it’s also possible that he was looking for some mainstream success beyond the cult following enjoyed by the earlier bands... This one is for completists and fans of guitar heroics...”

- William Tilland, *All Music*, www.allmusic.com

“The Audion Choice List: Top 10 New Releases: #2. Present – Live! (Cuneiform Rune 87) CD” -Audion

“The Audion 1996 Round-Up: Choice 50 New Releases: Present - Live (Cuneiform Rune 87) CD” -Audion, #37, Spring 1997