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By Stewart Smith

Aki Takase **Japanic**

Thema Prima BMC CD/DL

Thema Prima's opening track "Traffic Jam" bursts out of the speakers in a frantic dash of piano and drums. Daniel Erdmann weaves tight coils of sax in between the rushing bodies, while DJ Illvibe sets off a huge hoover-like tone. Aki Takase likens her ongoing collaboration with Illvibe to Conlon Nancarrow's work for player piano, where there is a focus on overlapping sounds. The title track modernises Nancarrow's concept of piano player building blocks. At first the sound sources are distinct, Illvibe answering Takase's robust piano figures with rhythmic scratches, but as it continues parts cross over and textures merge.

"Wüstenschiff" finds the ensemble responding to Illvibe's manipulation of Arabic jazz vinyl. Once the stately ensemble theme is established, Illvibe cuts in rap fragments; a surprisingly effective move.