REVIEW FOR DAVE SHARP’S SECRET SEVEN CD “7” on Blue Pie Records

****Track listing: Africano; Chrispy Underground; Skeleton Key; Blackout; Boop Bwee Ahh; The Seventh Secret; Lootmar (Wind Song); Africano [Radio Edit]; Can I Be Your Squeeze?

**FROM ALLMUSIC.COM**[**http://www.allmusic.com**](http://www.allmusic.com)Dave Sharp is an electric/acoustic bassist hailing from Ann Arbor, MI. His Secret Seven comprises differently sized ensembles, playing music that ranges from contemporary club-dance music to legitimate jazz, world music with African or Latin beats, and a positive attitude toward diversity. While only a regional artist, Sharp's national image will be greatly enhanced by this, his second album as a leader. Able assistants include the talented, veteran-Detroit keyboardist Dale Grisa, saxophonist/co-composer Chris Kaercher, drummer Eric Wilhelm, and notable guests such as guitarists Andre Frappier, Alex Anest (on lap steel), or Kris Kurzawa, the fine tabla player John Churchville, and trumpeter Ross Huff. Together they play infectious and joyous music that does not let up or lose momentum until the final note is played. There's a retro feel to tracks like "Chrispy Underground," recalling original boogaloo Latin soul with Grisa's organ and Kaercher's baritone sax bottom and alto lead, or the New Orleans street strut of "Skeleton Key," loaded up with the full horn section, calypso spice, and sly ooh-ooh vocals by Chris McCall. Grisa is marvelous throughout as the foundation for the band beyond Sharp, wafting with his B-3 into Churchville's tabla-inspired funk for the simple melody of "Lootmar," or inspiring the group to drift along with him on the John Coltrane-influenced "Blackout." In a harder beat, "The Seventh Secret" also evokes passage into Middle Eastern markets, while "Boop Bwee Ahh" is the get-down, club-oriented tune for the youth audience. Then there's "Africando" that lives up to its Afro-Cuban name, a burning, celebratory cumbia played in seven-minute trim, and as a radio edit, reduced by 90 seconds. "Can I Be Your Squeeze?" is listed as a bonus track, but is really a commercially derived afterthought, fun in its basic R&B-retrospective nature, but ultimately standing apart from the more substantive cuts. Sharp is a very talented performer/leader, with a good mind for tradition, the now, and the future. His next project should prove as wide, deep, and even more satisfying than this good one. ~ Michael G. Nastos