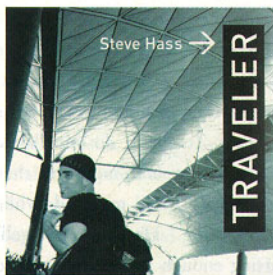


# DRUM! PICKS

STEVE HAAS

*Traveler*

HASSBEAT PRODUCTIONS



**MUSIC:** Jazz is getting an infusion of fresh oxygenated blood by borrowing, as it always has, from popular melodies. On *Traveler*, Haas segues from a gospelly version of “People Get Ready” with singer Janis Siegel, into a one-minute Middle Eastern drum riff called “The Veil,” and slides from there into the spacious and jazzy “Seventh Heaven,” and from there into a version of Sarah McLachlan’s “Do What You Have To Do.”

**DRUMMING:** What a great drum sound Haas gets here. The way he dances around the kit behind the soloists on “[718],” “J Ben Jazz,” and the other jazzier tunes just sizzles. And on the vocal numbers he lays way out, letting the slow arrangements build tension without unnecessary interference.

**VERDICT:** When this many styles are tackled on a recording, the artist skirts with alienating the listener, but this disc has been glued to my CD bay for days.