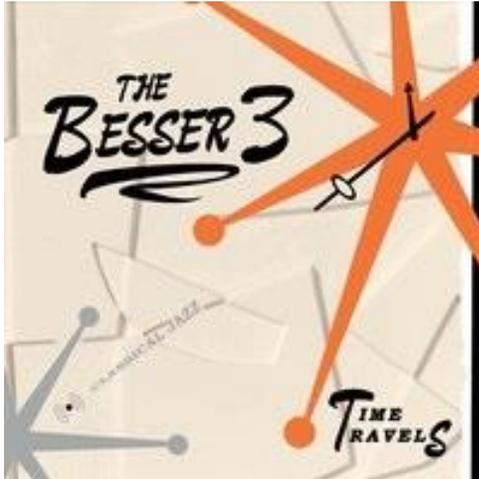


# CD REVIEW: The Besser 3 – Time Travels



**The Besser 3 – *Time Travels***  
(Forcefield Studios. CD review by  
Nick Davies)

**The Besser 3** are a jazz band originating from New Zealand and their latest offering intrigued your reviewer for two reasons: firstly, because New Zealand jazz is very rarely heard in the United Kingdom and, secondly, the record is described as classical jazz rather than simply jazz.

The band was formed by **John Besser** (a New York City native) who has lived in New Zealand most of his life. He was a founding member of the electronic group **Free Radicals** and has spent much of his career composing film scores in collaboration with leading writers, choreographers, musicians, artists and film makers.

The album *Time Travels* runs to 11 tracks with titles like *Who's Counting* and *Three Monks*. The question is whether this should really be classed as "classical jazz". To me, this is a jazz album with some hidden twists. Not outstanding in my opinion, but the music is very good and an enjoyable listen.

Throughout the album, John's piano and **Daniel Christopher's** electric bass dominate with either driving the rhythm, although in *Three Monks Electric* the guitar is brought to the fore. At times, it is very cinematic and, in tracks like *Klezmatized*, it has an added folky 1920s feel. Having said that, it is not always about looking back to the history of jazz. *Three Monks*, for example, is very funky while *One Two Three* is straight out of the circus. Overall, **The Besser 3's** great swing ability adds interest to this release.

As already stated, this album ticks all the right boxes musically but it is not a classic. In order to stand out in jazz today, there has to be a unique element which is sadly lacking here. The songs show a sense of fun and are played to a very high standard but they are not memorable. Overall, I believe people will enjoy this album, but it may not have longevity. I do, however, suspect The **Besser 3** is a band to look out for with really great things to come.

<http://www.londonjazznews.com/2018/06/cd-review-besser-3-time-travels.html?m=1>