

*As part of the tenth anniversary celebration of his composition project “The Masada Songbook,” John Zorn’s Tzadik records released a gem of an album called Masada Guitars. Featuring Marc Ribot, Tim Sparks, and Bill Frisell, this album contains over an hour of beautiful guitar music—some acoustic, some electric; some dry, some soaked with echo and reverb effects.*

*The entire album is comprised of songs only taken from the Masada songbooks, which began when John Zorn challenged himself to write 100 tunes in traditional Jewish music styles. The Masada Songbook has since grown to over 500 compositions, with a wide array of recordings by wildly different ensembles and performers: Mike Patton, Masada, Bar Kokhba Sextet, Masada String Trio, Secret Chiefs 3, Erik Friedlander, Medeski, Martin, & Wood; Electric Masada, and The Dreamers—to name just a few.*

*It’s a great opportunity to hear the differing styles of three very different guitarists playing music by the same composer. Tim Sparks sounds arranged and polished, with beautiful clean technique; Marc Ribot is bold, rough, and exploratory; Bill Frisell is shimmering, lyrical, and sometimes strange. All are fantastic players, and hearing each in relation to the others makes the experience even more interesting.*

*Masada Guitars is definitely worth picking up.*