

Jeff Lorber: Prototype (2017)

By [Stanton Zeff](#)

Label: Shanachi (5449)

Track List

1. Hyperdrive
2. Prototype
3. Test Drive
4. What's The Deal
5. Vienna
6. The Badness
7. Hidden Agenda
8. Gucci
9. Park West
10. River Song



Introduction

After many nominations dating back to the mid-80's, this CD won Jeff Lorber a Grammy Award for "Best Contemporary Instrumental Album" in 2018. In addition to his legendary career as a jazz/fusion keyboard player/writer/producer, he also contributed production credits to the likes of Michael Franks, Richard Elliot, Gerald Albright and Rick Braun, among others. I had the pleasure of meeting Jeff Lorber (and his band) at the Riverfront Jazz Festival in Dallas during Labor Day weekend of 2017. In fact, I received the unexpected bonus of an autographed pair of drum sticks from the great Gary Novak, which I keep next to my practice set to this day!

Audio Quality

There's so much good music on this CD I don't know where to start! The only track I don't really like is *River Song*. *Hyperdrive*, *Prototype* and *Badness* all are hard-driving jazz/fusion grooves with excellent horn arrangements. *Test Drive* features a Steely Dan-like shuffle that isn't nearly as easy to play as it sounds, and veteran bass player Jimmy Haslip (of Yellowjackets fame) and drummer Gary Novak absolutely nail it. *Vienna* features a driving Latin groove with a note-filled melody that requires a virtuoso-like performance to execute. *Gucci* reminds me of those great Jeff Lorber Fusion tunes from the late-70's and early-80's.

Summary

Jeff Lorber is one of the most prolific (and successful) jazz artists of our time, composing nearly every song that has appeared on his many releases. In fact, he seems to get better with age, having released a string of CD's under both his name and that of Jazz/Funk/Soul in the last 10 years or so. With over 25 releases dating back to the 1970's (most of which I have on either LP or CD), it's nice to see Jeff Lorber finally earn a well-deserved Grammy!

Audioholics Ratings Scale

- 5 – Outstanding:** Far exceeded expectations and previous experience – Very highly recommended
- 4 – Above Average:** As good or better than other products/performances – Highly recommended
- 3 – Average:** Met expectations, may include some moments of brilliance offset by small flaws – Recommended
- 2 – Below Average:** Did not meet expectations, some obvious flaws – Some may enjoy
- 1 – Very Poor:** Why did they even bother? Obvious flaws abound, monumental problems – Not Recommended

Review Ratings for Jeff Lorber: Prototype

Metric	Rating
Audio Quality	5
Surround Implementation	N/A
Video Quality	N/A
Features (liner notes)	4
Overall	5

Reference Equipment

Yamaha RX-A2050 AVR (Stereo Mode)
Panasonic DMP-UB900 UHD Player
Polk Monitor 10B Speakers (x2)