

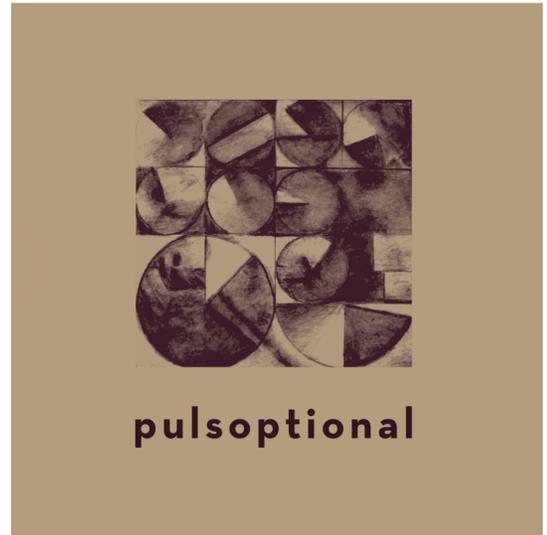
# pulsoptional

**pulsoptional** – Durham, NC’s band of composers – is a composers’ collective and performing ensemble, with an eclectic instrumentation (reeds, electric and acoustic strings, keyboards, percussion and electronics) and an innovative but no-nonsense approach to music making. Effortlessly straddling conventional categories – and equally at home in concert halls, rock clubs, and art galleries – their repertoire ranges from 20<sup>th</sup>-century experimental “classics” to newly-commissioned works by emerging composers, arrangements of TV and movie themes, spontaneous soundtracks and collective improvisation.

Their long-awaited debut album features gripping, assured performances of new works by members of the collective, and captures all the genre-defying excitement of their live shows. It’s New Music, for sure, with plenty of “compositional rigor,” and will certainly appeal to fans of other contemporary-composition “bands” (Bang on a Can All-Stars, Electric Kompany, Clogs) and of the pool of avant-garde and experimental art-music influences the group espouses (John Cage, Steve Reich, Gyorgy Ligeti, etc.). But the album also casually (and sincerely) incorporates rock/pop, jazz, electronica, and ambient sounds and styles into the mix, and should appeal to a broad range of listeners with eclectic and progressive tastes, from post-rock and free improv to punk and prog...

Each composer brings a distinct voice to the project, yet the sum of their contributions comes across as a forcefully unified, fully satisfying album. From the Morse-code derived rhythms and soaring lines of “*What Hath God Wrought*” to the punk/metal drive of *What Chaos Received Bounds*; from *Kid Sparkle*’s wailing, jazz-inspired melodies and harmonic progressions to *’stain*’s subtle processes and delicate ensemble interplay; from the gradual deconstruction of form and style in *I Heart Rosa Luxemburg*... through its transcendent, propulsive coda; from the hyper-complex polyrhythms of *How Terrible Orange*’s outer sections to the static beauty at its core... The album abounds with the energy and joy of its creation, with the commitment of its young composer/performers. Discover for yourself your new favorite band.

More information about the group – including program notes for each piece on the album – is available at [www.pulsoptional.org](http://www.pulsoptional.org).



pulsoptional: *pulsoptional* (FFR 001)  
Release date: May 15, 2007

1 John Mayrose: “*What Hath God Wrought*”: *Reflections on a Theme by Samuel F. B. Morse*

2 marc faris: *I Heart Rosa Luxemburg; Or, Why Embracing Socialism Should Lead to the Irrevocable, Systematic Rejection of the Major Principles of the EuroAmerican Art Music Tradition (But Seldom Does)*

3 Todd Hershberger: *Kid Sparkle & The Parliament Prince*

4 Jennifer Fitzgerald: *How Terrible Orange*

5 Carolina Mallonée: *’stain*

6 marc faris: *What Chaos Received Bounds*

Recorded and mixed by Thom Limbert at The HotWire Studio (Chapel Hill, NC). Mastered by Brent Lambert at The Kitchen (Carrboro, NC). Released by Fugu Fish Recordings.