Spin of the Week

By Greg Cahill

Speed of Light. Mads Tolling Trio (Mads Tolling, violin; George Ban-Weiss, double bass; Mike Abraham, guitar)

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Mads Tolling has a rich background as a string player. He's a two-time Grammy–winning violinist with the **Turtle Island Quartet** (a position the onetime Turtle Island violist assumed last year after the departure of **Evan Price**). He studied under the legendary Scandinavian jazz violinist **Svend Asmussen**. And he performs as a member of jazz-fusion bass great Stanley Clarke's band. This trio outing—produced by Tolling and engineered, recorded, and mixed by former Turtle Island member Price—ranges from six impressive Tolling originals to covers of tunes by Clarke, avant-folk-jazz guitarist Bill Frisell, Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderley, and Led Zeppelin. Tolling has a real gift for blending an unaffected folksy sound with sparse jazz licks that are the perfect complement to the atmospheric ambiance that grace most of these tracks. While Tolling is skilled at evoking a beautiful melody, he's equally adept at filling out the sound with powerful double-stops and intricate harmonics as he does on his sensational solo rendition of Davis' jazz classic "Blue in Green," filtered here through a Bach-inflected lens. Other highlights include Frisell's "Godson Song" and Clarke's "Song to John." Tolling is aided by the ace bassist **George Ban-Weiss** and the always impressive guitarist Mike Abraham. Available at **madstolling.com**.

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