

## INDIE SCENE

## RAFIQ BHATIA

*Yes It Will*

rafiqbhatia.com

On his full-length debut, guitarist and composer Rafiq Bhatia presides over jagged jazz jams that don't always feature guitar and seldom feel particularly composed. True, his sharp, spiraling runs are all over "Background Music"—a song with far too many dynamic shifts to justify its self-deprecating name. Ditto "Try" and "Endogenous Oscillators." But on the seven-plus-minute centerpiece "Annihilator Gators," he stays out of the swamp, letting the horns squawk and bray over a chomping upright bass. Bhatia's closing "A Change Is Gonna Come" sounds nothing like the Sam Cooke original, but its stately sax and strings set the proper mood. When the drummer starts wailing, the whole thing goes from expectant to exultant.

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