

# SONAR

## A Flaw Of Nature RONIN RHYTHM

Swiss post-rockers trance themselves dizzy.

**S**erious chaps, these. Four instrumentalists whose moniker stands for Sonic Architecture, SONAR create their unique sound via Pythagorean theory and what they call 'tritone harmonics'. It might all suggest something a bit dry and academic, but their debut is actually a pretty stirring experience. Their unusual tunings are designed to bring out the more dissonant elements of these nine songs, allied to odd meters and complex rhythms. Leader and chief composer Stephan Thelen, one of two guitarists here, is a US-born mathematics doctor who studied under Robert Fripp and



also plays with Zurich proggers, Radio Osaka. Thus the 11-minute *Tromsø* is an extended exercise in cerebral atmospherics, drummer Manuel Pasquinelli providing busy percussion while Thelen, Bernhard Wagner and bassist Christian Kuntner

add knotty rhythms and subtle shifts in tempo. There are vapour traces of King Crimson and the minimal aesthetic of Bartok, but the most impressive aspect is each player's devotion to the whole rather than any flashy showboating. *A Flaw Of Nature* is not an easy listen by any stretch, but it repays your attention with each play. **RH**