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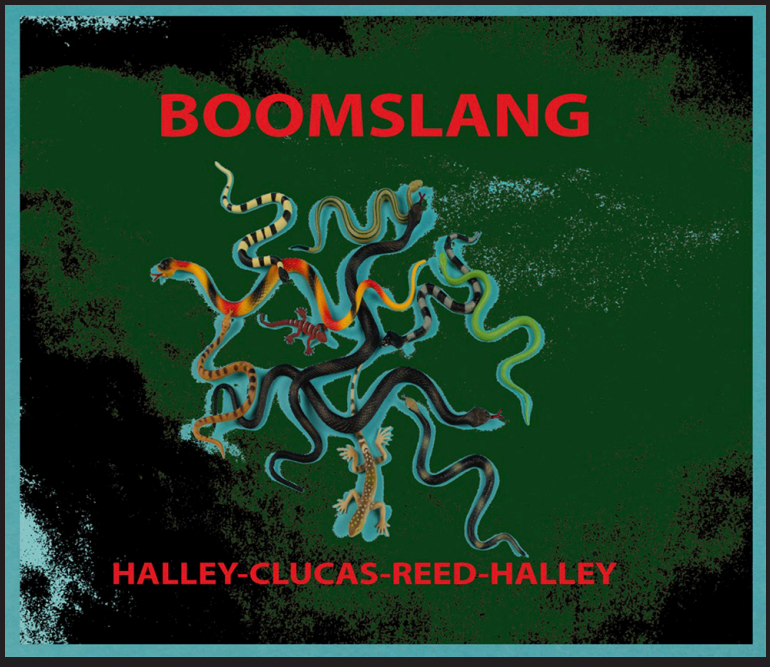
Volume 47 Number 4 Oct Nov Dec 2021

Boomslang is the new recording by Rich Halley , featuring a quartet with Los Angeles cornetist Dan Clucas , Canadian bassist Clyde Reed and long time drummer Carson Halley . R ecorded in Portland in December 2019, Boomslang features a mix of Halley compositions and spontaneous improvisations that showcase the depth and inventiveness of the group's playing.



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"Halley has a big, full-throated sound that may recall prime Sonny Rollins."
Kevin Whitehead, Fresh Air, National Public Radio

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CARLA MARCIANO QUARTET

PSYCHOSIS

HOMAGE TO BERNARD HERRMANN

This album is my heartfelt homage to one of the greatest geniuses of film score, the composer and conductor Bernard Herrmann, whose music has dazzled me since I was a child. It has been very interesting to arrange, revise and adapt, for a jazz quartet, some of the best known themes from outstanding soundtracks Herrmann wrote for equally outstanding films - all psychological thrillers (hence the title Psychosis) - by brilliant directors, including Marnie, Psycho and Vertigo by Alfred Hitchcock, Taxi Driver by Martin Scorsese and Twisted Nerve by Roy Boulting. Bearing a classic feel and originally conceived for orchestras, the tracks in this album were arranged in full respect of the originals, leaving intact, for example, the beauty of the melodies, while at the same time creating new improvisational spaces that would allow our quartet to maintain its own identity.

www.carlamarciano.com

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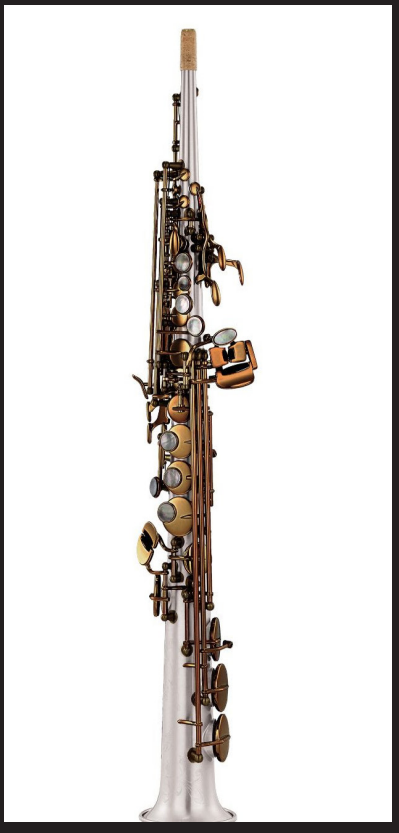

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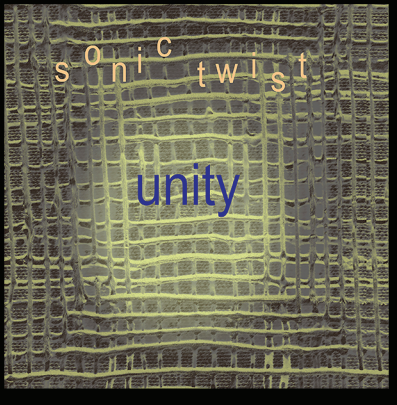
Judi Silvano

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#1237 Ernie Krivda *At the Tri-C Jazz Fest* w/C. Black, M. Hayden, R. Gonsalves
#1238 Steve Swell's Nation of We: *The Business of Here...Live at Roulette*
#1242 Barry Wallenstein *Luck These Days* w/A. Birnbaum, V.Chauncey, N. Haiduck
#1243 Kazzrie Jaxen Quartet *Callicoon Sessions* w/C.Krachy, D.Messina, B.Chattin
#1244 JCA Orchestra *Stories* w/H.Honshuku, J.Hobbs, R.Stone, P. Scarff, N.Zocher, M.Cho
#1245 Mack Goldsbury's Quintet Feat. Maciej Fortuna *Live At CoCo's* w/S.Mahoney
#1246 Ehran Elisha Ensemble *Continue* w/H.Elisha, S.Bardfeld, D.Bindman, K.Filiano
#1247 Marilyn Lerner-Ken Filiano-Lou Grassi *Live in Madrid*
#1248-1252 Sal Mosca *Too Marvelous for Words*
#1253 Lee Shaw Duo *Live* w/Rich Syracuse
#1254 Pucci Amanda Jhones *Love, Jhones* w/Williams, Lemon, Sanabria, Tranchina
#1255 Glenn Wilson *Timely* w/J.D'earth, J.Toomey, J.Masters, T.Martucci
#1256 Dominic Duval, Skip Scott, Tim Siciliano *Elements*
#1257 Doninic Duval-Vincent Loccisano-Chris Covais *The Project*
#1258 David Haney *Angel Foot Shuffle* w/J. Priester, A. St.James, B. Purdie
#1259 Eric Plaks New Trio *Sun and Shadow* w/John Murchison, Leonid Galaganov
#1260 Ted Brown Quartet *Live at Trumpets* w/J.Easton, D.Messina, B.Chattin
#1261 Don Messina *Dedicated to…* (double bass) solo
#1262 Buffalo Jazz Octet *Live at Pausa Art House* w/Bucheger,Rivera,Baczkowski
#1263 The Infinitessimal Flash Quartet *Live* w/J.Tchicai,M.Marucci,A.Lane,F.Wong
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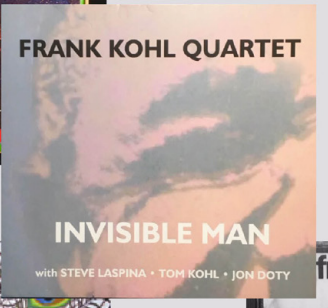
with Jay Rosen(dr)

CIMP 409 Ehran Elisha Trio *Heads*
with Albert Beger(ts/ss) Dave Phillips(doublebass)

CIMP 410 Mat Maruccl Trio *Inversions*
with Rick Olson® Adam Lane(b)

CIMP 417 Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound
A Little While in Chicago
with Fred Jackson(sax) Jerome Croswell(tpt) Ed Schuller(b)



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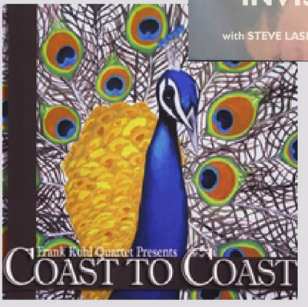

RATS LIVE ON NO EVIL STAR

WHY DO YOU RIDE?

JAILHOUSE DOC WITH HOLES IN HER SOCKS

A WALLFLOWER IN THE AMAZON

Darrell Katz

musician composer
bandleader educator
http://www.darrellkatz.com

"Katz's compositions are a melting pot of diverse styles and cross-references; avant-garde classical machinations rub shoulders with of funky fusion, swinging Stan Kenton-esque "big band" moves, Globe Unity Orchestra- styled freakouts, and the sweetly unadorned vocal stylings of passages Rebecca Shrimpton…"
All About Jazz-Dave Wayne

"…Darrell Katz has made a name as an imaginative and innovative composer, and this collection can only increase his reputation, such is his ability to create so many atmospheres and textures over the space of one record."
Downbeat, Simon Scott

"Katz has carried on the compositional tradition of Julius Hemphill (1938-1995) in that his music is always a fusion of blues, avant-garde, poetry, improvisation, disparate elements thrown together that reveal their connections after multiple listenings…"
Step Tempest-Richard B. Kamins

Arriving on the cusp of the Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra's thirtieth anniversary year, Why Do You Ride? (October 14, Leo Records) shows off Katz's deft ability to juggle off-kilter modernism with electrifying dynamic shifts and a tumult of jazz-history reference points in his vivid, smash-cut big band arrangements, all combined for this excursion with his love for cycling and a fascination with what Albert Einstein had to say about learning, knowledge, love and war…"
Leo Feigin

Antonio Adolfo
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At #1 On The JazzWeek Chart
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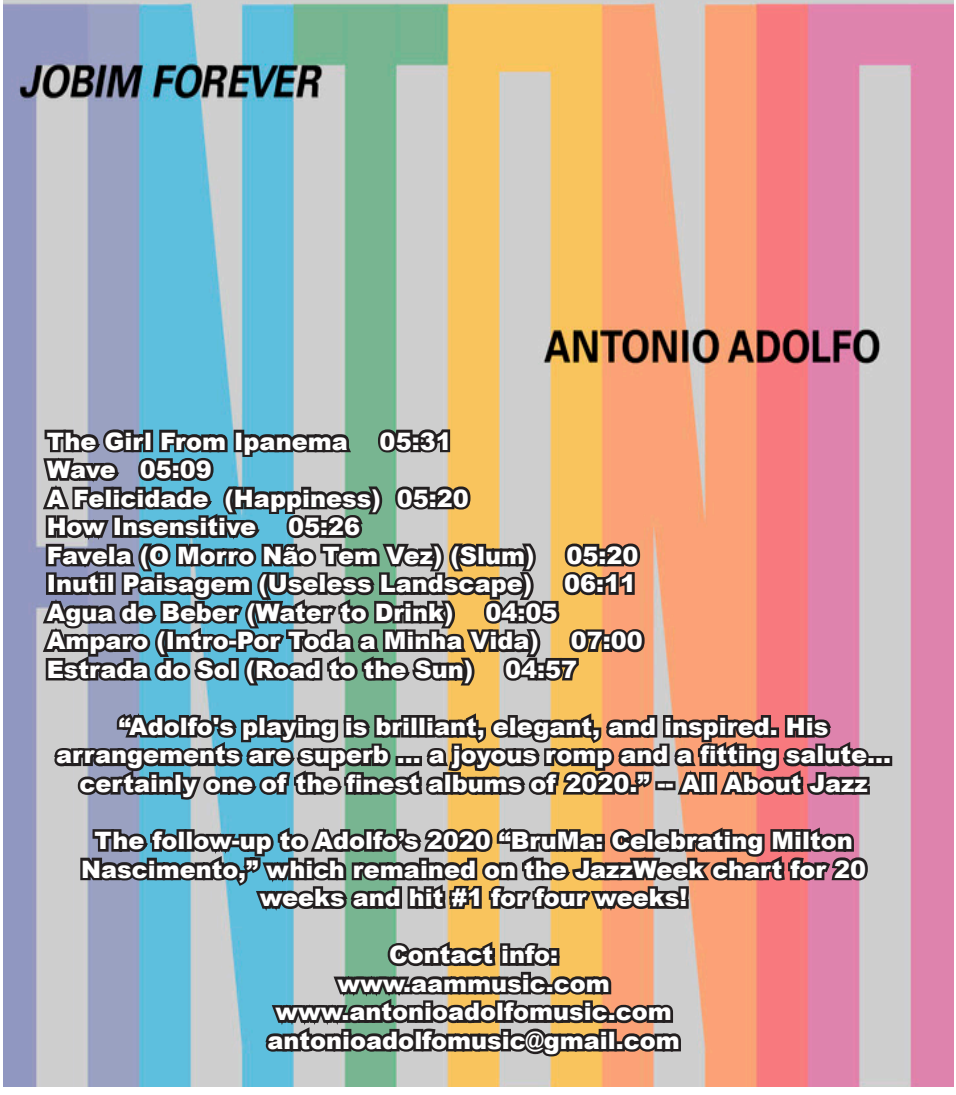

The Girl From Ipanema 05:31
Wave 05:09
A Felicidade (Happiness) 05:20
How Insensitive 05:26
Favela (O Morro Não Tem Vez) (Slum) 05:20
Inutil Paisagem (Useless Landscape) 06:11
Agua de Beber (Water to Drink) 04:05
Amparo (Intro-Por Toda a Minha Vida) 07:00
Estrada do Sol (Road to the Sun) 04:57

"Adolfo's playing is brilliant, elegant, and inspired. His arrangements are superb ... a joyous romp and a fitting salute... certainly one of the finest albums of 2020." -- All About Jazz

The follow-up to Adolfo's 2020 "BruMa: Celebrating Milton Nascimento," which remained on the JazzWeek chart for 20 weeks and hit #1 for four weeks!

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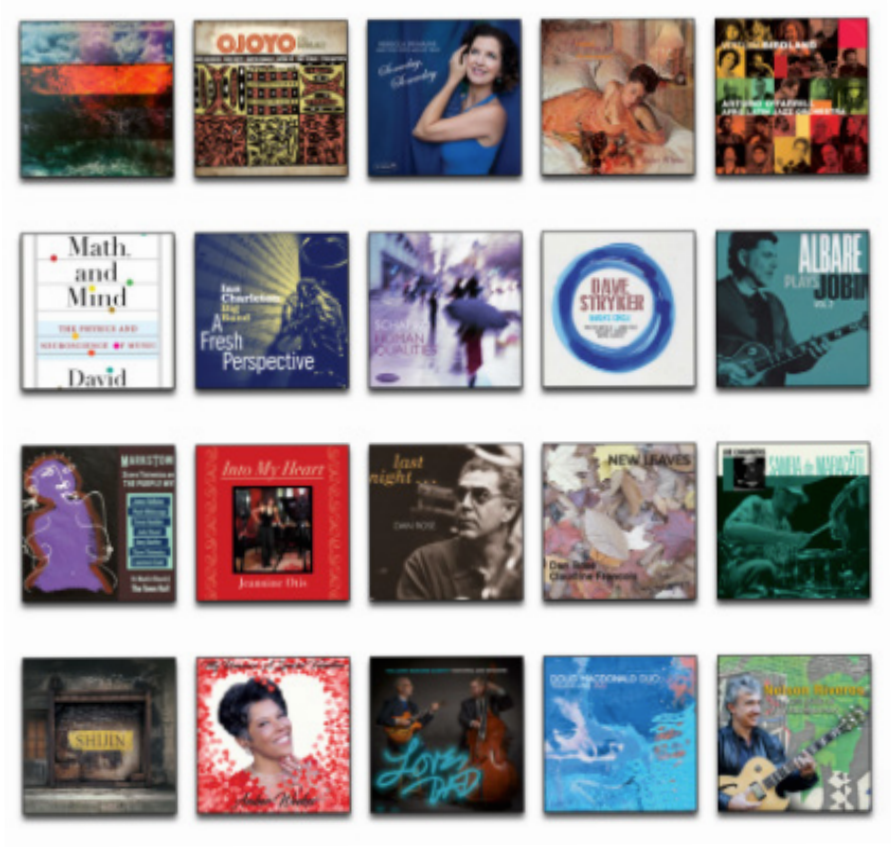

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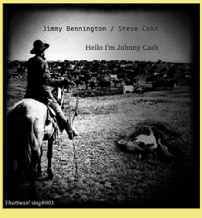

*Hello, I'm Johnny Cash

- Jimmy Bennington / Steve Cohn

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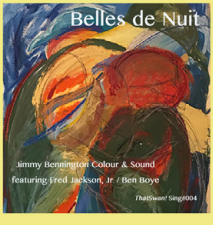

*Belles de Nuit

- Jimmy Bennington Colour *&* Sound
  feat. Fred Jackson Jr. (AACM) and Ben Boye

*ThatSwan!*Sing#004

*One for Peace

- Jimmy Bennington / Samuel Hasting

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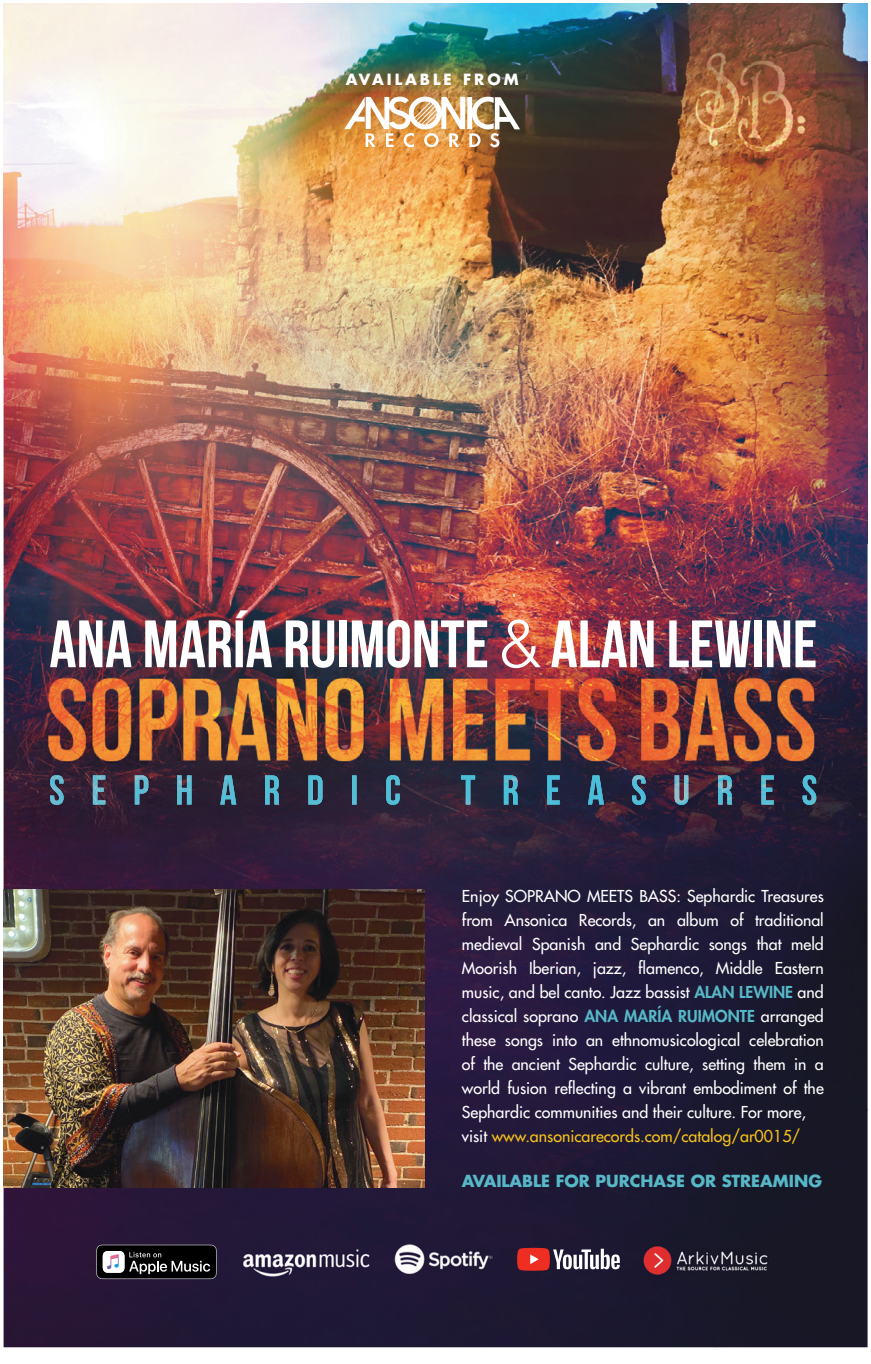

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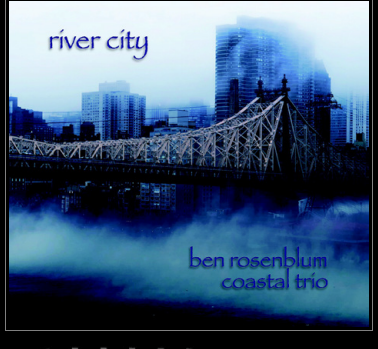
Ben Rosenblum

Cadence top 10 critic's poll, 2019

River City



www.benrosenblummusic.com

"There do emerge conservatoire aces with grit in their imaginations and a facility to express such in their playing. Ben Rosenblum is one such performer/composer"
— All About Jazz

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"Got the hands of a diamond cutter here." ***— Jazz Weekly***

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112 Luther Thomas 4tet
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114 Paul Lytton 4tet
115 Joe McPhee 4tet
116 Steve Swell 4tet
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156 Lou Grassi's PoBand
157 Mark Whitecage's Other 4tet
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159 Frode Gjerstad 4tet
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162 Joseph Scianni duets
163 John Gunther's Axis Mundi
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336 Carl Grubbs Quartet
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338 David Haney Trio
339 Burton Greene Quintet
340 Byard Lancaster 4tet
341 Sophie Duner 4tet
342 William Gagliardi 5tet
343 Joe Fonda's Bottoms Out
344 Lou Grassi's PoBand
345 Burton Greene Trio
346 Mat Marucci - Doug Webb Trio
347 Dominic Duval's String 4tet
348 Jimmy Halperin & Dominic Duval
349 Michael Bisio & Tomas Ulrich
350 Seth Meicht 4tet
351 Stephen Gauci 4tet
352 Steve Swell - David Taylor 4tet
353 Odean Pope 4tet
354 David Haney Trio
355 Burton Greene solo piano
356 Mat Marucci - Doug Webb Trio
357 David Haney & Julian Priester
358 Chris Kelsey 4tet
359 Stephen Gauci Trio
360 Michael Bisio
361 Stephen Gauci 4tet
362 Kalaparush McIntyre 4tet
363 David Schnitter - Dominic Duval - Newman T.Baker
364 Khan Jamal & Dylan Taylor
365 Bobby Zankel Trio
366 Ernie Krivda Trio
367 David Haney & Andrew Cyrille
368 Chris Kelsey 4tet
369 David Haney-Andrew Cyrille-Dominic Duval
370 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESATrio
371 David Haney Trio
372 Michael Bisio 4tet
373 Ernie Krivda
374 David Arner Trio
375 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
376 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESATrio
377 David Arner Trio
378 Odean Pope 4tet
379 Jimmy Bennington Trio
380 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
381 Tom Siciliano Trio
382 Brian Landrus Group
383 Andrew Lamb Trio
384 Nate Wooley + Taylor Ho Bynum 4tet
385 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
386 David Haney 4tet Avenue of the Americas
387 Diane Moser + Mark Dresser duo
388 Frode Gjerstad + Paal Nilssen-Love
389 Andrew Lamb Trio
390 Jimmy Halperin + Dominic Duval
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392 Adam Lane 4tet
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DISK 4: Ken Filiano Quinet **DISK 5:** Bill Gagliardi Sextet / Adam Lane's Villach Orchestra

CIMPoL 5037:
Trio-X - Live at Kerrytown
Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

CIMPoL 5038:
Trio-X - Live at the Sugar Maple
Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

CIMPoL 5039:
Trio-X - Live at Craig Kessler & Janet Lessner's
Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

CIMPoL 5040:
Trio-X - Live in Green Bay and Buffalo
Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

Earlier CIMPoL releases:

5001	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	AIR: Above and Beyond
5002	Odean Pope	Serenity
5003	Joe McPhee & Dominic Duval	The Open Door
5004	David Bond Quintet	The Early Show (live at Twin's Jazz)
5005	Salim Washington	Live at St. Nick's
5006-5012	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Live on Tour 2006
5013	Gebhard Ullmann + Steve Swell 4tet	Live in Montreal
5014	Ernie Krivda	Live Live at the Dirty Dog
5015-5019	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Trio-X - Live on Tour 2008
5020-5024	CIMPFest 2009: Live in Villach, Austria	Live in Villach, Austria
5025	Seth Meicht and the Big Sound Ensemble	Live in Philadelphia
5026	Eric Plaks Quintet	Live at Bronx Community College
5027-5030	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Trio-X - Live on Tour 2010
5041	Mat Marruci Trio	Live at Jazz Central
5042	Teresa Carroll Quintet	Live at Dazzle

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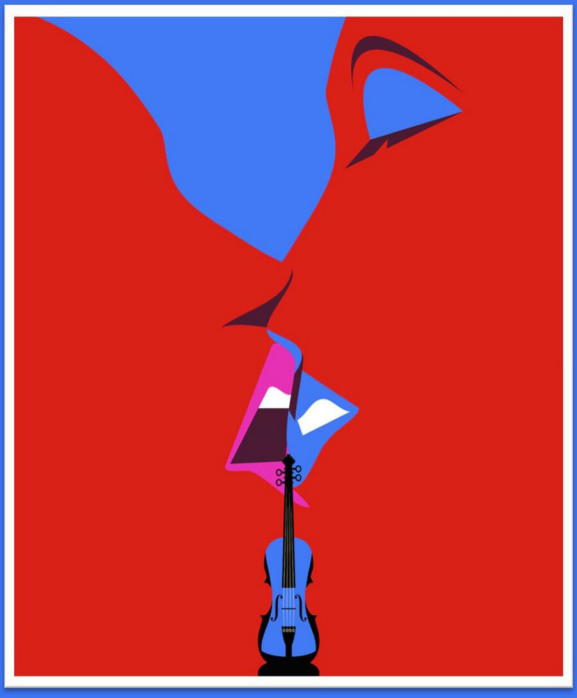
ON NE SAIT JAMAIS



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Eva Kess: Sternschnuppen: Falling Stars

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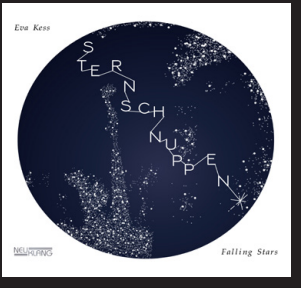

The bassist, composer, and bandleader Eva Kess has created an arrestingly beautiful body of music that sounds unlike any other in the jazz-string canon. Kess's fourth album, Sternschnuppen: Falling Stars, is an ambitious departure from her previous projects...
Falling Stars marks her ascension as a composer/arranger with a strikingly integrated vision that treats all of her collaborators as equals within a single septet.

Encompassing the post-bop continuum, chamber music, and jazz's kindred South American traditions, the music showcases her big sound and commanding presence as a player, but Falling Stars is most impressive as a statement by a composer who has found a voice as distinctive and personal as her compositional mentors, British pianist/composer Django Bates and Argentine pianist/composer Guillermo Klein.

www.evakess.com
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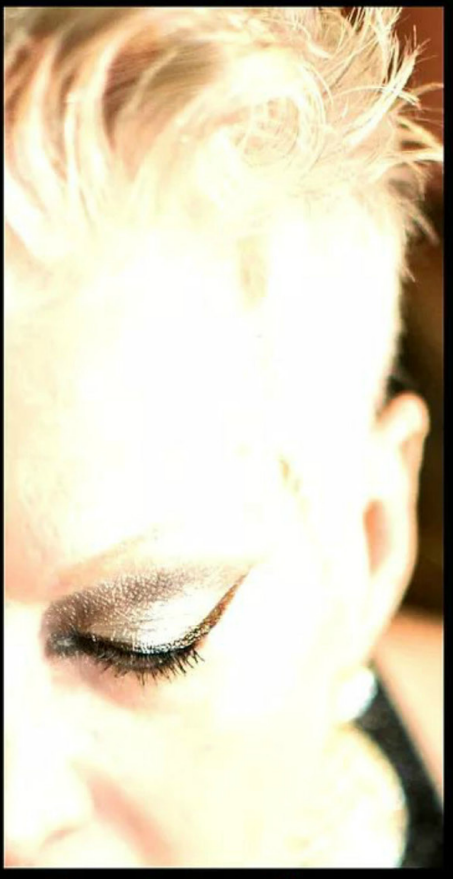

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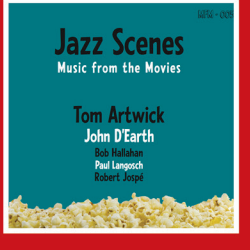

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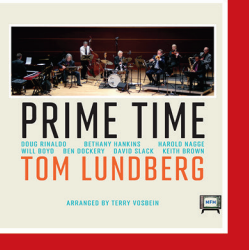

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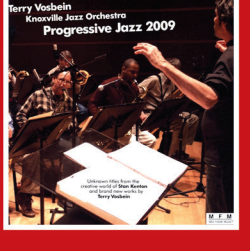

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CADENCE

acc: accordion
as: alto sax
bari s : baritone sax
b: bass
b cl: bass clarinet
bs: bass sax
bsn: bassoon
cel: cello
cl: clarinet
cga: conga
cnt: cornet
d: drums
el: electric
elec: electronics
Eng hn: English horn
euph: euphonium
flgh: flugelhorn
flt: flute
Fr hn: French horn
g: guitar
hca: harmonica
kybd: keyboards
ldr: leader
ob: oboe
org: organ
perc: percussion
p: piano
pic: piccolo
rds: reeds
ss: soprano sax
sop: sopranino sax
synth: synthesizer
ts: tenor sax
tbn: trombone
tpt: trumpet
tba: tuba
v tbn: valve trombone
vib: vibraphone
vla: viola
vln: violin
vcl: vocal
xyl: xylophone

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FRONT COVER
Clockwise from upper left

ALAN SILVA

OREGON -
RALPH TOWNER
COLLIN WALCOTT
PAUL MCCANDLESS
GLEN MOORE

ZEENA PARKINS

Inside This Issue

CADENCE MAGAZINE EDITORIAL POLICY

Established in January 1976, Cadence Magazine was a monthly publication through its first 381 issues (until September 2007). Beginning with the October 2007 issue, Cadence increased in number of pages, changed to perfect binding, and became a quarterly publication. On January 1, 2012 Cadence Magazine was transferred to Cadence Media L.L.C.
Cadence Magazine continues as an online publication and one print issue per year. Cadence Media, LLC, is proud to continue the policies that have distinguished Cadence as an important independent resource.
From its very first issue, Cadence has had a very open and inclusive editorial policy. This has allowed Cadence to publish extended feature interviews in which musicians, well known or otherwise, speak frankly about their experiences and perspectives on the music world; and to cover and review all genres of improvised music. We are reader supported.

Cadence essentially always has been and remains "the best independent magazine of Jazz, Blues, and Creative Improvised Music that money can't buy."

Contributors

JAMES BENNINGTON (Feature, Jazz Stories/ Interviews) *has collected oral histories and photographs of several artists, mainly published by Cadence Magazine and Modern Drummer Magazine. Bennington is also a drummer/ bandleader recording for SLAM (UK), Cadence Jazz Records/ CIMP/ CIMPoL (NY), Unseen Rain (NY), OA2 (Seattle), and his own ThatSwan! label (Chicago). Once mentored by Elvin Jones, Bennington celebrates nearly 30 years in the music field. He is a Dream Cymbals and Gongs Artist and is based in Chicago.*

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LARRY HOLLIS (CD Reviews) *is a devout zen baptist, retired saxophonist & militant apathist. His work has appeared in mostly indie publications, liner annotation and Cadence for over three decades. Flanked by his books, records and videos, he lives an insular life in his hometown of Oklahoma City.*

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NORA MCCARTHY, (Reviews, Features) *Voice, Composer, Poet, Improviser, Writer, Educator, Original Music, Bop/Post Bop Jazz, Classic Jazz Standards, Contemporary Jazz, Blues, Groove, and Free Jazz Art Forms. Nora has written for Jazz Inside and Cadence Magazine. She has two podcasts at Cadencejazzworld.com about emerging artists and new music.*

SHEILA THISTLETHWAITE (Short Takes) *is a journalist and music publicist based in Saskatchewan, Canada. Her articles on the arts have appeared in publications in Canada and the U.S. She has been a board member, and has worked as a publicist and as executive director for jazz festivals in Calgary, AB and Kelowna, BC.*

KEN WEISS (Interviews, Photos, Short Takes) *has been documenting the Philadelphia jazz and experimental music scene with photography since 1992 and has written the Cadence Short Takes column since 2003 as an attempt to defeat the conventional adage that, once played, the music is "lost to the air." He has also completed numerous interviews for Cadence and Jazz Inside Magazine.*

TEE Watts, (Interviews) *Music journalist T. Watts has written features for Glide Magazine, Blues Blast Magazine and many others. He is a radio producer at KPFZ 88.1 fm in Lakeport, CA and currently co-writing the memoirs of Lester Chambers of the Chambers Brothers.*

ROUND UP OF MUSIC RELEASES AND MUSIC EVENTS OF INTEREST FROM THE NEW YORK AREA

1. **TUES DAYS** Release Date: September 15th, 2021 Jane Ira Bloom soprano saxophone Allison Miller drums, percussion https://allisonmiller.bandcamp.com/album/tues-days

2. **BRYANT PARK PICNIC PERFORMANCES'** season of free, live performances reaches its finale on Monday, September 20 at 7pm with The Town Hall: Centennial Concert with Chris Thile, featuring special guests Cécile McLorin Salvant and Sullivan Fortner, Zakir Hussain and Ganesh Rajagopalan, Damon Daunno, and Timo Andres. The evening will be hosted by Broadway performer Jessica Vosk. For anyone unable to attend in person, a **FREE LIVESTREAM** broadcast of the performance will be available nationwide via Bryant Park's website and social media platforms,

3. **CRAIG TABORN 60 X SIXTY** Sixty pieces of music in sixty minutes each about sixty seconds in length.Pressing PLAY initiates a run of 60 tracks in a randomized order. The sequence ends after all 60 pieces play. The numbers relate to the ordinal position of each piece in the present playlist and are not intended titles or identifiers of the musical works. Every subsequent play shuffles the deck. In time new pieces may be added as others are removed.

4. **SHARIF ABDUS-SALAAM INTERVIEWS THE LATE PHIL SCHAAP**. A 2009 INTERVIEW WITH THE LATE PHIL SCHAPP DISCUSSING HIS ENTIRE CAREER OF RADIO, JAZZ AND KEEPING THE JAZZ TRADITION ALIVE! https://soundcloud.com/chris-digirolamo-1/sharif-abdus-salaam-interviews-the-late-phil-schaap

5. **JOE'S PUB IS REOPENING** Justin Vivian Bond will be our first act, as they were twenty years ago, when we reopened after the September 11th attacks. This time, joined by opener The Illustrious Blacks, we anticipate that their wonderful wit and the loving way in which they hold a room offer the healing and hilarity our audience and our team have been craving. Our entire fall season is one filled with your treasured favorites and incredible artists for you to (re)discover. We can't wait to see you walk through our doors. For our fans who are further afield than the five boroughs and the tri-state area, we plan to continue our digital offerings and hope you'll join us for more performances and other programming on our YouTube channel, and our social media.

6. **COMES LOVE: LOST SESSION 1960** is the new Capri Records release featuring a previously unheard studio session by legendary vocalist **Sheila Jordan**. Out September 17, 2021, this remarkable find offers the earliest representation yet of the 92-year-old NEA Jazz Master.

7. Germany's first jazz label, **MPS RECORDS, REISSUES ALBUMS** on vinyl and CD by many of the biggest artists in the genre. On Friday, albums by OSCAR PETERSON and his trio, The COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA, and ROLF KÜHN resurface via Edel Germany in partnership with Bob Frank Entertainment.

8. NEW ON 577: **JESSICA ACKERLEY & DANIEL CARTER - FRIENDSHIP LUCID SHARED - DREAMS AND TIME TRAVEL**

9. NEW ON 577: **FRANCISCO MELA FEAT. MATTHEW SHIPP AND WILLIAM PARKER - MUSIC FREES OUR SOULS VOL. 1**

10. NEW ON 577: **NEW YORK UNITED VOL. 2**

11. Easton PA Oct 2 9pm **COLTRANE CELEBRATION** goodandplentyjazz.com LafayetteBarJazz.com

12. NEW ON Pyroclastic Records Bassoon innovator **SARA SCHOENBECK**'s self-titled album of duets will now be released November 26, 2021.

13 NEW ON Pyroclastic Records Saxophonist **TONY MALABY**'s album THE CAVE OF WINDS will be released January 7, 2022. October 29, 2021 is still the release date for pianist **SYLVIE COURVOISIER** and **GUITARIST MARY HALVORSON**'s second duo collaboration, SEARCHING FOR THE DISAPPEARED HOUR.

14. Major multimedia concert event at **ROULETTE ON SAT. OCT. 30**, for the centennial of artist **RICHARD POWERS! SCOTT ROBINSON'S HIGHER POWERS**: a Richard M. Powers Centennial Concert – Roulette This will be an amazing evening; more info to come...

15. NEW ON Navona Records
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Watch the podcast at www.cadencejazzworld.com

SHORT TAKES: CALGARY, CANADA
by Sheila Thistlethwaite

It is amazing how the pandemic has brought out the creativity of the Calgary jazz community, and brought into focus the fact that this city has a tremendous amount of export-worthy talent.
Nowhere was this more in evidence than at the TD JazzYYC Summer Festival, August 19-22.

Live jazz music in Calgary, as in most places in the world, has suffered a hard blow with pandemic restrictions over the last year and a half. But artists have not stopped creating or performing. When the restrictions for public spaces were eased across the province on July 1, venues that had established jazz policies before the pandemic switched the live music back on. New performance groups that had formed during the shutdown finally had live audiences to play for. The revival seemed to happen overnight.

With the theme of Live Jazz is Back in Calgary, artistic director Kodi Hutchinson of the jazz collaborative JazzYYC, curated an exciting lineup of Canadian talent for a four-day summer festival program that included both live and streamed concerts, and, for the first time, two large outdoor stage presentations of 18 local acts to close out the festival August 22. Tickets sold out early for the headliners André Wickenheiser Sextet, Audrey Ochoa Quartet (featuring JUNO nominated guitarist Jim Head), Caity Gyorgy and Johnny Summers, Terra Hazelton and the Jim Brenan Quintet at the Ironwood Stage & Grill, and the King Eddy, which is one of the performance venues in the National Music Centre. Such was the demand that organizers added a second Gyorgy & Summers show. With the exception of Gyorgy (Toronto/Montreal), Ochoa (Edmonton) and Hazelton (Crowsnest Pass), all the headliners were based in Calgary. The fest was capped off by a free, streamed concert with the award-winning Toronto-based pianist, composer and vocalist Laila Biali, recorded earlier in the summer. Having the outdoor festival component was a longtime ambition for Hutchinson. The drawbacks had been the greater expense of mounting an outdoor event and the necessity for good weather. But JazzYYC is currently in its best financial position since it started. And, usually, the summer festival is held in June, Calgary's rainiest month, but this year, JazzYYC was able to move the festival to August. Mostly, the good weather held. A distant lightning strike forced the two outdoor stages to close temporarily, then the show resumed as soon as there was no longer any danger. All the acts played their sets--including the winner of the 2021 Richard Cowie Memorial Scholarship, guitarist Daniel Sanguinetti in quintet--although after the delay, the sets had to be shorter to fit everyone in during the time allowed. Calgary has not had an outdoor jazz festival in about two decades. Hutchinson wanted to bring it back for several reasons, not the least of which is the experience of feeling part of a real festival that it provides for the performers. So, the signature Jazz Walk of past festivals,

which presented live music at indoor restaurants, bars and retail establishments, was dropped this time. They are fun, Kodi said, but for artists it does not feel like a festival. The outdoor day-long stages allow the performers to be watched by people who are specifically there to see them perform. And he wanted to stage Calgary artists so that they could be appreciated on the high level they deserve. It was a good range of talent, for example, a tribute to the Buena Vista Social Club led by pianist Tricia Edwards, Sargeant X Comrade, the vocalist Cheryl Fisher in quintet, the Delirium Street Party Brass Band, Nigeria-born saxophonist & songwriter Perpie, drummer Jon McCaslin in quartet, and the drummer Sanah Kadoura in quintet--she also led the festival's wrap-up jam at Betty Lou's Library that night.

Pandemic travel restrictions, and restrictions in general that changed often, meant booking international acts was either impossible or could not be guaranteed to go ahead. The TD Jazz series at Arts Commons typically has presented international artists, but the uncertainty of pandemic restrictions made it more prudent to book artists closer to home. The result was an Alberta jazz all stars show, steamed free of charge. Stephanie Huchinson, Manager, Presenting for the series and the producer of the concert (yes, she and Kodi are married) told me that the all stars show had originally been planned for live recording at the Jack Singer Concert Hall in Arts Commons in April. However, the facility was going through reconstruction and the concert had to be moved to August. It was the first concert using the hall's new Canon Canada video equipment, and what a show it was! Order of Canada recipient and alto sax player PJ Perry, and Al Muirhead, the "Elder statesman of Jazz Trumpet in Alberta" gathered onto the stage trombonist Audrey Ochoa, pianist Chris Andrew, vocalist Mallory Chipman (granddaughter of the late great Canadian jazz champion Tommy Banks), plus Bob Tildesley, Dave Laing, Jim Brenan, Kodi Hutchinson and Pat Belliveau. Stephanie said they were lucky to be able to have about a hundred people for an audience in a hall that seats nearly 1,800 people. It was really nice for the artists to have humans to play for, she said. It had been a long wait for the artists indeed.

The 2022 TD Jazz series will begin January 29 with SuperBlue: Kurt Elling featuring Charlie Hunter, followed by Jazz at Lincoln Center: Songs We Love March 3, the Canadian National Jazz Orchestra premiere performance April 28 and Pink Martini featuring China Forbes May 19. A holiday season show with the vocalist Tim Tamashiro is in the works, and there is a chance Calgarians will also get to see the Canadian Afro-Cuban post-rock band from Toronto, Battle of Santiago.

It is important to note that all of the local private venues with jazz policies have stayed in business despite restrictions on live attendance throughout the past 19 months. The only venue to close was Lolita's, and my understanding is that the new owners intend to bring back live jazz music on weekends very soon. As this issue of Cadence magazine goes live, the weekly jazz jams are back at Kawa Espresso & Wine Bar, Koi and the newer performance space at Asylum for Art. Alvin's Jazz Club continues to present jazz acts Thursday through Saturday. Thursday night

jazz at Hotel Blackfoot is still going. Scott Morin, who staged his first Jazz Sexy show September 5 at the Ironwood--a recreation of the loft parties he hosted in Toronto when he was a music industry exec early in his career--plans to keep on presenting it as a monthly event.

Meanwhile, Calgary jazz fans can look forward to the next annual JazzYYC Canadian Festival in November, which will present as its headline act Dee Daniels with Denzal Sinclaire at Studio Bell. They will be accompanied by A-listers drummer Herlin Riley, multi-instrumentalist Tyshawn Sorey and bassist John Clayton. Wow!

As I wrote at the beginning of this column, this city is a jackpot of jazz talent these days. At the Calgary Music Awards, streamed live on Facebook September 26, the drummer Karl Schwonik's "Reinventions" won the 2021 Jazz Recording of the Year award. It had to have been a challenge to choose just one winner, as the other nominees included the vocalist Aimee-Jo Benoit with Trio Velocity for "Borjoner," the late pianist Brian Buchanan for "Solo Sessions," the saxophonist Pat Belliveau for "Lakeview Drive" and the Calgary Jazz Orchestra featuring vocalist and trumpeter Johnny Summers for "My Funny Valentine."

The pandemic will be with us for a long time yet, and the fluctuations of following safety precautions is going to influence everything in our lives, including our enjoyment of this music we love. Despite this, Kodi Hutchinson believes we will see an explosion of live art in the next three years. Artists are actively creating, there is a strong impetus for artistic growth, and some people say it will be like the post-First World War Roaring '20s, also known as the Jazz Age. I want to believe that, too.

Sheila Thistlethwaite

SHORT TAKES: TASMANIA

by Alwyn Lewis

Hot August Jazz Hits Hobart

Two days prior to Spring arriving in Hobart the 17th Annual Hot August Jazz Program bid farewell to winter with its one day free festival held in North Hobart with fiftyeight groups, six big bands and one choir. Presented by Hobart Jazz Club, ably coordinated by Christine Bailey and sponsored by the City of Hobart, Hobart FM, the Rotary Club of Hobart and Onepac and all within patron's walking distance of each venue, this smorgasbord of music to suit all tastes drew an appreciative audience, all taking advantage of Tasmania's presently COVID free state. In spite of the plethora of available groups to listen to, the tyrrany of time allowed us to only choose four as an indication of the choices available to inspire would be travellers to plan ahead, should Covid permit, to join in the festivities at August's end, 2022.

Festival opened with the Spike Mason Quintet, Mason tnr, Hamish Houston bass, Konrad Park drums and Steve Brien gtr. Mason first arrived in Poatina, a small northern Tasmanian town of around one hundred people where he found the inspiration for his thoughtful composition Clouds, featuring some nice guitar work from guitarist Brien, followed by a nice reading of Benny Golson's Whisper Not……..Then a quick walk to the Providence Café a small room seating around thirty to hear the Alexandrina Duo with Andrina Racket vocals, Alex Millward keyboards. That Old Black Magic with Andrina's hearty vocal sound touched memories of Pearl Bailey while When I Fall in Love showcased Millward's sensitive piano. To the Crescent Hotel for the Danny Healy Swing Quartet with Healy clt, saxes, Tim Jones tuba, Aaron Entresz gtr and Alf Jackson drums where Jones gave a stirring solo on Someone Like You and Healy's soprano delighted as always with I'm Confessin' that I Love You…..Ken Schroder's Swingmatism at the Republic Bar featured Schroder bari, Aaron Entresz gtr, Isaac Gee bass, Eric Johnstone drums and for their second number chose Dimitri Tiomkin's Green Dolphin Street later delighting with Tea for Two at a cracking pace and ending the set with a beautiful You Go to My Head.

Pat Metheny at Jazz Alley 9/16/21

by Frank Kohl

Concerts and live music have a special place in my heart these days. Having tickets to see Pat Metheny in the intimate club setting of Seattle's Jazz Alley was something I was greatly looking forward to. Unfortunately Covid would change all that and the show would be postponed a whole year. This somehow added a whole nother level of intrigue and importance to the event, not just for me but I would imagine for the performers too.

I've always had a special interest in Pat Methenys musical evolution. I first encountered him at Berklee in the 70's. I never knew him personally but we did briefly share some classes together. All the guitarists at Berklee had heard of his great musical abilities at such a young age. The fact that he would be joining Gary Burton's band meant he was someone to watch. Indeed he was someone to watch ! Almost fifty years later Pat's musical career is nothing less then jaw dropping. As a highly evolved musician he has found the sweet spot between commercial success and staying true to all that Jazz players hold sacred. Not an easy thing to do ! Thru endless hard work he has reset the bar for Jazz guitar perfection.

We're here at a sold out show at Seattle's Jazz Alley, one of my favorite clubs to hear live Jazz, with a respectful audience, great sound system and seating for about three hundred. It makes all the difference in the world to hear Jazz in a small club like this, where you can really feel what's happening. The stage is all set up and I'm seeing six different keyboards including the grand piano. Pat has his archtop, a solid body and an acoustic guitar plus a electric bass set on a stand so he can play it while his guitar is still strapped on. Not to mention many electronic devices. His musical Conrad's are Keyboardist and Blue Note recording artist James Francies and Drummer Joe Dyson. I'm very excited to hear them as they are young players and I know very little about them. As we will soon find out Pat has chosen well and the trio will take us on a fresh and innovative musical journey. I like to think that Pat is mentoring the younger players and in return they are presenting him with new approaches to the music. A win-win for everyone.

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The group opens with Ornette Coleman's "Turn Around". This is simply a twelve bar blues and throughout there will be no bass line as we are use to. This presents a challenge to the players as they have to dig down harder to convey their blues and bebop lines. The solos are strong and soulful and I quickly feel the presence of Pat's depth of phrasing and ability to command the guitar. Throughout much of the piece guitar and drums solo together, locked into each other's ideas and the drums are sounding awesome. Francies takes an amazing solo using all of the different keyboards at his fingertips. His creative way of thinking becomes immediately

apparent and enjoyed. Most the music we'll be hearing tonight is from the new cd "Side Eye". It was recorded in Sept. 2019 and it's my guess it was not fully released till now due to the pandemic. Either way it's a fine recording. There will be ten pieces performed at this ninety minute show. "Bright Size Life" an older and very popular Metheny original comes out exceptionally well. The ballad "Cinema Paradiso" is absolutely perfect, the phrasing and timing is beyond captivating and the degree of excellence here is stunning. One of my favorites was "Timeline" a Metheny original that's based on a minor blues and then some. The melody is especially nice as it has very few notes but the notes it has are given lots of rhythmic energy. The piece swings hard as the organ does the walking. Once again you can hear Pat go the extra distance with his phrasing. His solo lines are amazingly inventive with so much nuance and surprise. This is the kind of soloing that sets him apart from everyone else. Francies and Dyson are right there with him, everyone supporting each other. When the show is over Pat comes back alone for an encore and does a solo guitar piece. I found this especially moving and so personal. Pat really doesn't speak much to the audience during the show, however this closing piece seemed to be his way of saying thank you and showing his love and appreciation to his audience.

Frank Kohl

Arts for Art Presents Vision Festival 25 Breaking Free Coming Home

July 22 – 31, 2021
July 22-23 & 29-30: Performances at Pioneer Works
159 Pioneer St, Brooklyn, NY 11231
July 24-25 & 31: Performances at The Clemente (outdoors)
114 Norfolk St, New York, NY 10002

Text and photos by Ken Weiss

Arts for Art admirably pulled off the 25th year presentation of its groundbreaking free arts celebration – the Vision Festival - during the tail end of a lull in the Covid-19 pandemic. "Breaking Free, Coming Home'' was an apt slogan for this year's event which exploded into an array of spirited presentations for in-person and online viewers, as well as performers, starved for live creative music. This year's A Lifetime of Achievement honoree was pianist, organist, composer, and singer, Amina Claudine Myers, who played with three of her bands on July 23.

Some of the multitude of outstanding sets included Matthew Shipp String Trio, solo piano by Cooper-Moore, Tony Malaby's Sabino Quartet, Pheeroan akLaff Liberation Unit, James Blood Ulmer ODYSSEY, Amirtha Kidambi's Elder Ones, James Brandon Lewis Quartet, Mara Rosenbloom's Flyways, Trio 3 + David Virelles, the Brandon Lopez Trio with Gerald Cleaver and the maniacal Steve Baczkowski on sax and woodwinds, Ingrid Laubrock's Monochromes with Jon Irabagon, Zeena Parkins and Tom Rainey, Jaimie Branch's Fly or Die, and the David Murray Octet Revival.

The festival ended with an all-day tribute to the late, percussionist/thinker Milford Graves. Andrew Cyrille, who had performed with Graves at the 2019 Vision Festival, played solo, followed by the Loose Booty Band led by Joe McPhee (Warren Smith, Jay Rosen, Brandon Lopez, Michael Bisio, James Keepnews, Jason Kao Hwang, Rosie Hertlein), and then Shahzad Ismaily on multiple instruments with West Coast-based, mesmerizing dancer Destefano DeLuise, who also played saxophone for the first time in public this day. John Zorn did a set with drummer Laura Cromwell, which led up to the finale tribute to Graves with William Parker, Lee Mixashawn Rozie, D.D. Jackson, William Hooker, Francisco Mela and a young saxophonist from Tennessee named Zoh Amba, who were soon joined by a mass of musicians and dancers in a loving sendoff to Graves as his family looked on.

Laura Cromwell John Zorn Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Reggie Workman Photo credit - Ken Weiss

James Blood Ulmer Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Aruán Ortiz Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Zeena Parkins Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Pheeroan akLaff Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Joe Morris Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Amina Claudine Myers Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Matthew Shipp Photo credit - Ken Weiss

Dave Burrell Darius Jones Photo credit - Ken Weiss

William Parker Photo credit - Ken Weiss

1974 - a new album by the quartet OREGON context – chronicle - critique

the album:

1974 Moosicus 1218, 2 CD

the band:

Ralph Towner - acoustic guitar, percussion on 'Raven's Wood', all compositions
Paul McCandless – oboe, English horn, percussion on 'Raven's Wood'
Collin Walcott – sitar, tabla, percussion, piano on 'Ogden Road"
Glen Moore – bass, piano on 'Distant Hills' (uncredited)

Recorded March 14, 1974 @ Radio Bremen Sendesaal/Studio F
Recording producer: Peter Schulze

CD 1:
Brujo
Ghost Beads
Dark Spirit
Ogden Road

CD 2:
Distant Hills
New Tune ('Embarking')
Raven's Wood
Canyon Song
The Silence of a Candle

This album, recorded early in 1974, is a time capsule from another present era, a pre-digital world in which Richard Nixon was still in the White House, cassettes had yet to overtake 8 track tapes, New York City subway tokens went for 35 cents, mailing a letter cost a dime, and Duke Ellington was still alive.

It was my good fortune to cross paths with the members of Oregon in various contexts – at clubs, concerts, workshops, studios and simply hanging out, on the road or at their homes - in 1973 and 1974, so, in full disclosure, let me acknowledge, up front, that personal experiences and recollections will still inform my observations, all these years later.

Oregon was in a particularly fertile phase. It was their fifth year of working together, and they had hit their stride as an ensemble. Blossoming at every turn, they were in an ever-upward creative spiral, relishing group improvisation with an ever-expanding shared

vocabulary that was growing like kudzu in southern summer sunshine. This all fed into a gloriously ongoing conversation which, even in its infinite variety, always possessed an irrefutable aesthetic logic.
Everyone brought tunes to the table. Towner was the most prolific, delivering, as few can, both quality and quantity, each one a carefully crafted vehicle with great potential for ensemble explorations. McCandless tended toward the lyrical, distinctively lush without devolving into mush. Moore's were the most unusual and challenging, but no less rewarding. Walcott wrote the catchiest tunes, in ways that played up his cohorts' greatest strengths, but then they all did that, while adding their own licks to the mix.
All were classically trained, but that was just the first step. Just as knowledgably, they incorporated and transcended folk and jazz traditions. Towner had the precision of Andres Segovia and the agility of John McLaughlin, making good use of those qualities as he evolved his own way and kept churning out compositions. McCandless' territory was contiguous to Charlie Mariano, Jan Garbarek and Eric Dolphy, but he'd also gained an appreciation for Brazilian music from Paul Winter. Moore had been inspired by Scott LaFaro and Red Mitchell, approaching it all with a sense of unfolding wonder akin to Buell Neidlinger. Walcott had formally studied African and Indian music and worked with avant-garde artist Meredith Monk. He brought all of that and enough more to rank as sui generis, even among these colleagues.
Together, they could create a musical energy both inspired and inspiring, offering an even higher rate of return than compound interest, a dynamic balance of personalities making common cause uncommonly well. In their early days, Aaron Copland heard Oregon and declared their manifestation of collective improvisation was on the level of what prominent avant-garde composers were trying to write. Indeed.
They would collectively continue on this course for another decade, but at that moment, they were totally in the moment. 1974 presents copious evidence of their shared genius and comprises a significant addition to their discography. They could repeatedly surprise one another, to say nothing of the audience, these deft magicians who never seemed to run out of rabbits or hats. For those of us who knew them then, this is a warm and reassuring reminder of their unique capabilities. For those who are new to their music, 1974 can be a revelation.
Oregon was hard to pigeonhole, but that didn't stop the musical-industrial complex from visiting labels upon them, such as 'world music' and 'chamber jazz', or, at worst: 'new age' (rhymes with 'sewage'). The monikers bestowed included some new and different shoeboxes, but none proved large enough to contain them. In any case, they were out of step with their commercial times, more concerned with grace than glamor, and stuck with what they loved, keeping at it, and succeeding in building a support system for it, more extensively in Europe than in the USA, but that is not unique to them alone.

OREGON one week before the Bremen concert comprising 1974 was recorded. L-R: Ralph Towner, Collin Walcott, Paul McCandless, Glen Moore - Rockbridge County, Virginia, March 7, 1974. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®. First published on front cover of Downbeat, October 10, 1974.

What most set them apart was emphasizing acoustic instruments and eschewing the trappings of amplification, or, to use the term, coined by Moore, neologizing electricity and atrocity: electrocity . To paraphrase Whitman, they sang the body eclectic. Though in the day sometimes referred to as an acoustic counterpart to Weather Report, Oregon, with all four of its contrasting, complementary voices being equal, was a much more democratic and cooperative operation than that band became after Miroslav Vitous' departure.

Stylistically, Oregon's territory was more directly contiguous to the subtle elegance of the Modern Jazz Quartet while, at the same time, to the gleeful yet purposeful abandon of the Art Ensemble of Chicago in full frolic. Those were really the only two other groups under the jazz umbrella which played primarily original repertoire and had maintained a level of longevity in their personnel rosters, another key to the potential for increasing intricacy in ensemble interplay. More tie-dyed than tuxedoed, without face paint or lab coats, Oregon had its own brand of energy, more enchanting than entrancing, often closer to a whisper than a scream, lacking in loud levels but not intensity, delivering complex, sophisticated music without pretense, sometimes with an innocence akin to childlike.

That they could move freely, without constraint, was only possible because their deep trust in one another and a unanimous dedication to lifting their music to the next level every time they took to playing, thoughtfully, time and again reinventing the wheel as easily as falling off the proverbial log. It wasn't so much a matter of making things happen as of letting things happen. They were collectively thriving in charting the course for where the music would go, with few limits to where it could go, freeing them to decide, in the moment, where it should go, in a way to make the whole band sound better.

This shared endeavor was not their only commitment, but it was the only one involving them all, and paramount though seldom all-consuming. Each followed his own muse in other contexts: besides a cameo with Weather Report, Towner recorded with Clive Stevens and Horacee Arnold prior to several projects with his ECM Euro-buddies (as well as with John Abercrombie, Gary Burton and later, Gary Peacock). McCandless continued consorting with Paul Winter, and began his still-ongoing dances with the soprano saxophone and bass clarinet. Walcott participated in Miles Davis' On the Corner sessions, and his work with Don Cherry led to the even freer structures of CoDoNa, where he reveled with the long-time Ornette cohort and Nana Vasconcelos (their 3 ECM albums have been reissued as a mid-price box set and would still be well worth it at full price). Moore made the first of several duo albums with fellow Portland bassist/pianist David Friesen, a live recording yet to appear on CD, and then one with pianist Larry Karush, also yet to appear on CD (May 24, 1976, which at least is available digitally, via ECM), and later with singer Nancy King and pianist Art Lande. What each did in all those other contexts informed what they brought to Oregon on the next go-round, making the process of growth constant.

OREGON outside their hotel before departure from Tampa, Florida, mid-November 1977.
L-R: Collin Walcott, Ralph Towner, Glen Moore, Paul McCandless.

the album:

This recording is of the second performance on their first European tour. It includes the otherwise never officially-recorded/released tune "Embarking," (under the working title 'New Tune') which, upon first listening, already sounded somehow familiar, but then much of Oregon's music can have that effect, even while also sounding brand new.

Delving into my archives I found an explanation: I had first heard them play that tune the week before this album was recorded, when they had played a few miles from the barn where I photographed them in Rockbridge County, Virginia. It is beyond science how, sometimes, receding images in the rear-view mirror can, despite shrinking in relation to all that has happened since, retain sharp focus across great distances in space or time. (Nor is this the only known case of such a thing involving performances I heard at colleges in the hotbed of social rest known as Lexington, Virginia: in 1970, the Winter Consort performed there, early on in the same tour which produced Road, and, most famously, in 1971, the Allman Brothers played in a gym there nary a month before recording their classic double LP Live at Fillmore East, but that's another story).

A vibe of adventurous seeking permeates the proceedings, all of which possess a spontaneous, naked sort of purity that can only come directly from the heart, a rare quality, bringing to mind few others, foremost among them Fred Neil, who also had an appreciation for versatile and imaginative guitar players capable of dressing things up in beautifully unexpected and unusual ways. In hindsight, Neil would have been a much better folkie singer-songwriter than Tim Hardin for Towner and Moore to work for, but that's a story for an alternate universe…

Oregon was honing a kinetic creative equilibrium allowing engaging ensemble explorations of a high order, extending into new territory with each outing. Here we hear Oregon as their gathered effort had developed to a point where it could cusp, if not on the mystical, and least on the telepathic. All of the above, really. Process and content became more and more inseparable, intertwined by an intensity of spirit without an excess of volume. The free and the written each informed the other in ways that made it impossible to tell who was enjoying the shadow of whom.

The biggest treat in listening to 1974 is getting to hear Walcott and Moore together at full tilt again for the first time in nearly 40 years. In tandem, they formed a moving force, one that sounded organic and natural, but never forced. Not to take anything away from Towner and McCandless: they always had a sturdy platform upon which to spin out their brilliant peregrinations, but there was far more to it than just that. Whatever was holding any given group moment aloft seldom stopped changing hands. As Moore put it: "When it's happening, you can't always tell who's doing what in this whole fabric, but you're afraid to stop, because your own thread might be the one that's holding

PAUL MCCANDLESS AND COLLIN WALCOTT at Mi Chinita, home of the best sautéed bean sprouts in all of New York City, around the corner from the building where Walcott and Ralph Towner had apartments in those days. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®.

it all together."
1974 can be seen as a bridge in their collective live-recording continuum from 1970's Road to 1975's In Concert, encompassing the best of both. The former's nascently fresh and fearless if not yet unfettered striving taking things to places no band had been before meets the level of subtly-detailed interplay they'd reached by the latter. There are plenty of fully hatched Oregonian moments on Road, and they went Winter one better on improvs: the Consort incorporated a free piece ("Come to Your Senses") into every concert, but Oregon included one in every set. They would inhabit that plateau for another decade, and somehow manage to continue gaining elevation.
No one has yet passed that way again.

1974, tune by tune:

They jump right in, quickly attaining escape velocity, on the opener "Brujo", with Moore providing propulsive drive from unexpected angles. There's not so much leading and following as just trying to keep up. "Ghost Beads" follows, with much walking on air while managing to rise rather than fall. It's as if they've built an arch with four equal - but far from identical – keystones, holding up the impossible. Next comes "Dark Spirit", where, again, it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish between who's pulling and who's pushing, with all playing like men possessed. This version of "Ogden Road" voluptuously fleshes out Towner's solo rendering on Diary, and Walcott's piano is a revelatory delight, more exploratory than perfunctory, bringing the first disc to a close.
Walcott sits out on "Distant Hills" (though you can practically hear him listening – and smiling) and Moore takes to the piano, while Towner repeatedly and wonderfully pushes his guitar to unlikely heights of divine ornamentation, harmonic daring, asymmetrical phrasing and curious chordings while McCandless weaves around him. "New Tune", which would become "Embarking", is a forum for Moore to propel and excel. He is lovingly, gleefully muscular in his dance with the bass. "Raven's Wood" clocks in as the album's longest tune, yet hardly seems long, between the joyful noise of all-hands percussion accompanying Moore's arco adventures and McCandless' supple soaring. This, more than any of the album's other 8 tunes, takes us out to where we can peer over the edge, and then it brings us home, leaving a feeling of having been somewhere new. "Canyon Song" has a well-earned feeling of being on the home stretch, with Walcott coming closest to sounding like a drummer, but remaining a percussionist, in turns driving and being driven. He and Moore repeatedly set the stage on fire. Walcott's sitar carries the melody for the brief closer "The Silence of a Candle" with Towner's guitar in faithful accompaniment. What may be most amazing about this encore is that they had enough energy left to play anything at all. As a coach would have said: they left nothing on the field. 1974 is a lasting document of unlikely possibilities glowingly realized.

It is also worth noting that you couldn't buy a ticket to this show: it was free. Indeed.

Even at 47 years' remove, 1974 sounds fresh, vital and invigorating. It is a surprisingly cogent and profoundly vivid reminder of this ensemble's unique music, more powerful than overpowering. Their oeuvre remains worthy of examination and even more worthy of enjoyment. Its evolution merits recounting, especially since so many of their recordings remain available.
While I hope this listing is comprehensive, it is also selective, not complete. Other than Oregon albums, only albums involving more than one member of the quartet are listed, and are listed in order of recording, not of release date.

before the beginning:

Bird on a Wire, Tim Hardin, Columbia, released 1971 – Moore, Towner and Walcott (the latter on vibes and background vocals) are all involved as session players. This is where Moore and Towner, musical partners since college, first met Walcott. Also working these sessions was cellist Richard Bock, at the time also a member of Paul Winter's Consort. He connected enough dots for the rest to be history, persuading Winter to hire all three. (He would be succeeded by David Darling). The album's roster is a cavalcade of greats which reads better than the resulting music sounds.
Woodstock: Back to the Garden, 50th Anniversary Experience, 10-CD edition, Rhino, released 2019 – Disc 1 includes 4 tunes by Tim Hardin, only the last of which, "Misty Roses," features Glen Moore and Ralph Towner, sounding very much like themselves, their emerging musical personalities evident, if only briefly. This is significant as the first official release of their fabled appearance at Woodstock. The hefty 10-disc set is an important historical document of the East Coast's closest equivalent to the 1967 Monterey Pop festival, including work by every artist who appeared there. Hardin's entire set ran to 10 numbers, all of which are presumably on the sold-out 38-CD complete edition.
Road, The Winter Consort, A&M, released 1970 – Ground Zero for Oregon, the first recording of all four founders together, in the company of cellist David Darling and bandleader/saxophonist Paul Winter. Its intensely inventive organic energy is both infectious and explosive, but without abuse of amplification. Here we hear the original versions of Towner's signature tunes "Icarus" and "Ghost Beads" as well as his delightful curiosity entitled "General Pudson's Entrance" which presages his later – and still ongoing – avant-adventures on classical and 12-string guitar. Moore and Darling comprise a heartful, agile string section, virtually orchestral, as pithy or lush as the moments call for, equally deft in arco or pizzicato, moving between the sound of mountains breathing and birds flying. Moore and Walcott could lock in, but more frequently cover much more waterfront than the average

rhythm section, both cogent and supple in driving the band, setting the stage ablaze time and again. Walcott's versatility verges on frightening. McCandless' and Winter's lines constitute a soaring double helix, prancing atop the ever-progressing juggernaut. Even 50 years on, every time I listen to it, I feel like somebody beat the crap out of me – and it felt good.

Road has long topped my list of desert-island discs. It is one of two albums I credit for rescuing my eardrums - and musical taste, then still in its formative stages – from lifelong retardation by rock, some of which was very good, but all of which was debilitatingly loud. The other is that sublime mobius strip known as Miles Davis' In a Silent Way, which is very much another story…

Cyrus, Cyrus Faryar, Elektra, released 1971 – Faryar, a folkish singer-songwriter friend of Walcott's from his UCLA grad school days, was host to Oregon at his Increase Farm, a sheltered retreat in the Hollywood Hills, where, in the summer of 1970, following the tour which produced Road, Oregon holed up and recorded what would finally appear in 1980 as Our First Record, ironically their final album on the Vanguard label. All four Oregonians appear on this, Faryar's own debut solo album. (Walcott would also appear on its follow-up, Islands).

Icarus, Winter Consort, Epic, released 1972 – Moore had departed Winter's group before this recording, a pristine production helmed by no less than Sir George Martin, of Beatles fame, with all the players shining brightly in the studio. Perhaps the album's most notably unique artifact is Towner's vocal on "The Silence of a Candle," which has been both praised and lambasted, sometimes held up as Martin's biggest mistake, though I would give that dubious distinction to his bringing in any additional percussionists when he already had Walcott in the room. The music is consistently pretty, often beautiful as well, a standout being "Juniper Bear," Towner and Walcott's duet which could only have been improved if Moore had been on hand. It presages the open-ended excursions of "Brujo" on the next year's ECM debut, and dealing with as finicky a producer as Martin turned out to be good training for dealing with Manfred Eicher.

the beginning:

Our First Record, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1980 – The band's collective declaration of independence, recorded in the summer of 1970. Walcott has nearly as many songwriting credits as Towner, and Moore has one too, along with Scott LaFaro's "Jade Vision" and a couple of the group improvisations which would become their trademark. Oregon is all there, fully formed right out of the gate, earnestly hungry young men, gifted enough to be able to seek something new and find it.

Music of Another Present Era, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1973 – Their formal debut infused the refinements of the studio with the spontaneity of the unfettered bandstand. Its intricacies were without precedent. Hereafter referred to as MAPE, this tempered the detail of Icarus, which

OREGON humored me by gathering for a band photo at the Mercer Street loft of Larry Karush, May 1974. L-R: Paul McCandless, Collin Walcott, Glen Moore, Ralph Towner. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®. I wish I'd known better what I was doing.
Blame it on my youth.

could come perilously close to precious, with the immediacy of Road. It was a new amalgam, heady without being too abstractly cerebral, kinetic enough to keep one's attention, yet with room to breathe, and possessed of a beauty which made the music at home anywhere.
Trios/Solos, Ralph Towner with Glen Moore, ECM, released 1973 – The beginning of Towner's still-ongoing association with Manfred Eicher's label, and, de facto, Oregon's third album, though all four members never appear at the same time. Towner's 12-string work really takes off, going much deeper than his cameo on Weather Report's I Sing the Body Electric. His "1 x 12" is particularly exhilarating, and his work on this album raised the bar for all guitarists. Moore's sinewy solo feature "A Belt of Asteroids" is as delightful as his spirited playing on the Bill Evans tune "Re: Person I Knew" that features Towner overdubbing himself on guitar and piano. Which came first is hard to tell. Towner would record his ECM solo debut album Diary a few months later, and has since recorded more than a dozen albums for that label as a soloist or bandleader, and even more in collaboration with others, plus, including this one, 4 albums as part of Oregon.
At the House of Cash, Chris Gantry, Drag City, released 2017 – The title refers to Johnny Cash's studio near Nashville, where, on the first full day of summer in 1973, singer/songwriter/free spirit Chris Gantry recited his poem "Tear", with Oregon, who had played at the Exit/In the night before, providing improvised accompaniment. It's wonderfully out there, much in the adventurous spirit of the times. There are 10 other tunes, none with Oregon, on the album, which I have yet to hear.
Distant Hills, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1974 – Recorded a couple of weeks after their adventures in Nashville, this follow-up to MAPE was more exploratory but no less revelatory than its predecessor. It featured fewer but longer tunes, with two of the six being total improvisations, journeys set out upon without specific destinations or predetermined itineraries, evolving in real time while retaining a sense of the stone from which it was all hewn.
The Restful Mind, Larry Coryell, Vanguard, released 1974 – Guitarist Coryell's first all-acoustic project, with Messrs. Moore, Towner and Walcott participating. There's not really much one-upmanship to be found, with Towner sounding as selfless as he ever did with Oregon in support of his fellow guitarist. Moore and Walcott bubble under, providing sturdy support upon which the plectrists prance and making themselves worth listening to when heard.
1974, Oregon, Moosicus, released 2021 – Recorded several months after Distant Hills, in a time of leavening that album's deeper, darker colors, with a palette ascendant as they headed toward the sessions for Winter Light a few months later.
Winter Light, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1974 – This album presents a succinct summation of what the band was all about: audacious and bodacious at once. It encompasses the qualities of their earlier albums in a way so seamless as to defy gravity. There is variety in balance with

OREGON in Vanguard Studios during the recording of Winter Light, August 1974. L-R: Paul McCandless, Ralph Towner, Collin Walcott, Glen Moore and engineer David Baker. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®.

consistency, taking the listener to heretofore uncharted territory in ways that could gently seduce. The music commands attention through its beauty and strength.

In Concert, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1975 – Recorded a little over a year after 1974, the only overlapping tune is "The Silence of a Candle", here given a much more extended rendering than as the Bremen encore. If there exists a more relentlessly optimistic and uplifting tune than Towner's "Yet to Be," on which he plays piano, I have yet to hear it. A lovely performance.

Together, Oregon with Elvin Jones, Vanguard, released 1976 – There are flashes of brilliance in this odd pairing, but it doesn't always work, especially when Jones' energetic playing rushes the band, or comes too close to drowning them out. This is their least successful undertaking.

Friends, Oregon, Vanguard, released 1977 – From duets to quintets. Moore brought pianist Larry Karush, with whom he had recorded the aforementioned duo album for an ECM subsidiary, and would later work with further in the MoKaVe trio (with Glen Velez). McCandless' fellow reed player, saxophonist Bennie Wallace, made his recording debut here and would go on to a successful career scoring films as well as playing jazz in his own way, always in good company. Walcott had percussed in the past with David Earle Johnson, another who would die too young, whose conga and timbales work prominently figures in Jan Hammer's Miami Vice theme, and would later work with Bruce Hampton. None of the guests sounds out of place. All augmented the band sound, adding their own spicings to an already-flavorful recipe.

Violin, Oregon with Zbigniew Seifert, Vanguard, released 1978 – The Polish violin wizard, who died in 1979, is among peers here, and he had few. Seifert's contributions aid and abet an ensemble already long elevated, dancing above the clouds and deep in the heart all at once. Seifert led Oregon into some even freer territory than they were accustomed to, and I think they all enjoyed the expedition. The results hold up well. Seifert would also appear on Moore's solo debut, Introducing, as part of a string trio with Moore and cellist David Darling (featuring Jan Hammer as their drummer).

Live in New Orleans, Oregon, Hi-Hat, recorded 1978, released 2016 – Sweet but short. This set was recorded for National Public Radio's fabled Jazz Alive series, abbreviated but not attenuated. Yet, for those guys, squeezing an entire performance into less than an hour was somewhat akin to reading the Cliff's Notes rather than the book itself - and it was a really good book… Despite being a more recent recording, the sound quality isn't up to 1974, but it's better than on most such quasi-official release, and on balance, I am glad its out there, even if its cover art is wretched and its booklet's pirated newspaper article carries no byline. At least it's a good piece, and I would gladly praise its writer by name, if that had been included. There are also several purloined, unattributed photographs in that booklet (including one of my own).

Moon and Mind, Oregon, Vanguard, 1979 – By design, an album of

COLLIN WALCOTT tuning his sitar before Oregon's performance in the garden at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 1974. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®.

duets, recorded prior to Out of the Woods but not issued until after that Elektra debut and only after much wrangling between the band and the label. A sort of round robin, with Towner and Moore paired twice, as are Moore and McCandless, and Towner and Walcott. As per usual, sparks fly, especially on Moore and Walcott's aptly-named "Rejoicing". On "Elevator", the overdubbing by both Towner – on Hammond B-3 as well as classical guitar and percussion - and Walcott, on piano as well as conga and other percussion, yields luxuriantly orchestral results. No matter what time of year I hear this piece, it sounds like the carefree height of summertime.

Out of the Woods, Oregon, Elektra, released 1978 – At long last freed from Vanguard's skinflint studio scene, the band was finally given the time to insulate themselves with an able engineer and studio at their disposal. They could build this album from the ground up, with nobody hurrying them along. The results are spectacular. Its issuance in the fall of 1978 was celebrated with a concert at Carnegie Hall, which I was lucky enough to attend. They did the music - and the venue – justice and then some. A righteously triumphant arrival.

Roots in the Sky, Oregon, Elektra, 1979 – Their second for Elektra, created under the same conditions as the first, with time to polish its many facets while retaining the gusto of spontaneity. More challenging than its predecessor but no less rewarding, suffused with gnarly charm. By this point, a decade into their ensemble endeavor, they could have had it all down to a science, but were plenty enough creative to keep the music beyond science.

In Performance, Oregon, 1980 – A sumptuous live-recording successor to In Concert, its music spread across two LPs, allowing tunes to run on the longer side, which enables more fully savoring the process of unfolding discoveries in the moment of creation. Due to corporate machinations, it would prove to be their final recording for Elektra, taking them out of the WEA conglomeroid on a high note.

Oregon, Oregon, ECM, released 1983 – More than a decade after Trios/Solos, here, finally, is the band's full-fledged ECM debut. It also marked the recorded debut of Towner's work with synthesizer, in this case a Prophet 5, which is heard on every tune, sometimes threatening to become a voice more dominant than participant. Of the 8 tunes, 4 are credited to the band, 2 to Moore and one each to Towner and McCandless. The closer, Moore's "Impending Bloom" is a tour-de-force with a nice feature for Walcott. That tune would be reprised on Moore's album of the same name with vocalist Nancy King, and later extended, as "Bloomination", on his Nude Bass Ascending album, with Carla Bley, Steve Swallow and Arto Tuncboyaciyan).

Crossing, Oregon, ECM, released 1985 – This one picks up where its predecessor left off, and the most accurate answer to whether it sounded more like an Oregon album or an ECM album is, simply: yes. Soulful and searching, served up with impeccable technical perfection.

The month after Crossing was recorded, as Oregon's touring bus was

RALPH TOWNER and GLEN MOORE on air at WBAI-FM, New York, May, 1974. ©1974 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®.

returning to West Germany from a concert in Berlin, Walcott, who was riding shotgun, died, along with their driver, Joe Haerting, in a traffic accident on the East German Corridor Road near Magdeburg. Walcott was 39. McCandless and Towner, who had been asleep in the back of the bus, were not seriously injured. Moore was not on board, having flown home earlier for the birth of his youngest son, whom he and his wife Samantha named Alexander Walcott Moore.

Six months later, Oregon's surviving members regrouped for a Walcott tribute concert in New York City, with a roster which included Trilok Gurtu, who would subsequently record 3 albums as a member of Oregon before being hired away by John McLaughlin. Gurtu does not play sitar, nor have any of his successors. He was followed in the percussion chair by Jamey Haddad and Arto Tuncboyacian, after whose briefer stints Mark Walker came on board in 1995, where he remains.

Since Walcott's death, Oregon has made 14 more albums for various labels, the most recent of which is 2017's Lantern, their fifth on CAM Jazz.

Moore stepped away from the band in 2015. He was succeeded by Paolino Dalla Porta, who can be heard on Lantern.

Oregon's most recent tour, through six European nations, was in the spring of 2018.

Since so much of what I wrote even 5 years ago now embarrasses me, it was nice to come across a paragraph I wrote 30 years ago which I will still proudly claim. It closed out my liner notes for Oregon's first of five albums on the Intuition label, Always, Never and Forever:

Oregon's adventurously searching urgency has always been about more than mere entertainment, though there's plenty of that in it, of a variety that challenges. Building upon European classical disciplines and American jazz traditions – transcending both – as well as many musics from the rest of the planet, their sound is characterized by an optimistic, forward-thinking strength. Oregon's continually-growing style is never out of fashion and feels at home wherever it is heard. Their music is the soundtrack of life itself, always in the present tense, with equally scenic vistas of past and future. Time falls away and their music ends much too soon… May there always be more."

Though this music cannot make me young again, it still gives me hope.

COLLIN WALCOTT setting up for soundcheck before Oregon performance at Tampa Theatre, Tampa, Florida, November 1977. ©1977 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®. A couple of years after I'd given him a print of this, he told me it captured, better than any other photograph he'd seen of himself, the essence and feeling of being on the road. Previously published in Jazz Calendiary 2008.

Alan Silva Interview
Needing to Sound Like it Never Came from Earth

By Ken Weiss

Alan Silva [b. January 22, 1939, Bermuda] is best known as an inventive bassist who created and recorded with heavyweights such as Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, Sun Ra, Sunny Murray, Bill Dixon and Archie Shepp but that just scratches the surface of this iconoclastic artist/thinker. His workings as a leader are featured in collective groups – the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble [Burton Greene] and the Center of the Earth [Frank Wright, Bobby Few, Muhammad Ali] and his everchanging, large group Celestrial Communication Orchestra. The path his career took and the number of life experiences he's had is astonishing, including being one of the founding members of the '60s Free Jazz movement, performing in Bill Dixon's 1964 October Revolution, serving in the ill-fated Jazz Composers Guild, and establishing his own school in France. Silva, a staunch supporter and explorer of Free improvisation, would be better known in the States if he had not moved to France in 1972 but what a story he's got to tell in this 13-hour interview done via numerous videoconferences between November 28 – December 18, 2020. One of the issues addressed is the real story behind the breakup of the Jazz Composers Guild.

Alan Silva: I was surprised when you contacted me, the last interview I did for an American magazine was, wow, well over ten years ago. Nobody's done anything on me. So, when I heard from you, I thought, 'Wow, some guy from Cadence.' I was wondering why the interest?

Cadence: You've been out of the country for so long, I guess unfortunately, it's out of sight, out of mind. You've had a long and interesting career that bears hearing about.

Silva: Well, America doesn't hire me at all. Forget it, not even Canada. I've made some Vision Festivals in the '90s but the real problem with Americans is that no one wants to pay the airfare for European musicians. The Americans come over to Europe and the Europeans pay their fare. In France, the government helps, that's why I'm here. Jazz was a business in the United States when I left but it's not a business anymore. Rock & Roll wiped out Jazz as a business.

Cadence: There's some discrepancy about your birthname on the Internet. It appears as Alan Lee da Silva, as well as Alan Treadwell DaSilva. What is your correct given name and why did you change it?

Silva: Alan Treadwell DaSilva is my real name but when we got to America, the Americans dropped the Da so on my passport it says Silva.

Cadence: In past interviews, you've pushed back against being called an expatriate, preferring to think of yourself as living in Europe but an American at heart. At this point, you've lived in Europe for almost 50 years, what's your connection to America now?

Silva: It always has been America. I'm an American living abroad.

Interview: **Alan Silva**

[Laughs] I'm part of the CIA – the Cultural Intelligence Agency. The CIA sponsored Jazz in Europe. Did you know that? That was a major CIA program. The State Department got involved in cultural affairs and the CIA was involved in setting up the program to spread American culture in Europe at the end of the Second World War. I never liked the ex-patriate term because I was not an ex-patriate, I didn't disagree with the United States. I'm in Europe because the Europeans decided to give me a job. I came here in 1965 for four months with Cecil Taylor on a project and I liked it here.

Cadence: In your mind, what is the purpose and role of music?

Silva: For me, as an American artist, it is to communicate cultural ideas and give people a vision of themselves. That's one of the things that an American artist is about – individuality. American music has always been about the individual expressing himself. I thought that was the key issue of American art – such as Jackson Pollock's painting. It's to give an American idea of what America is. In Europe, the artist functions in a different way. In the United States, the artist is independent, and he has to survive on people who he has to communicate to with his work [versus the European artist who is funded]. So, for a Jazz musician like myself, who's an improvisor, the most important thing was the communication between us and the people. That was very important for me when I decided to become an artist, and when I mention becoming an artist, I'm not meaning just a musical artist, but an artist as a person and as a concept. For me, a musician has a different meaning. By Webster's definition, a musician is a guy who can read music and works on other people's music. That's what the Europeans gave America, they gave us written music. American's contribution to music has been Jazz. Where in European music can you have the pizzicato bass? Not too many parts. Piano, bass and drums – do you find that in European music? Nope. I studied European music. I was a trumpet player first, and I played piano when I was six while living in Harlem. My mother gave me piano lessons and then I studied with a piano teacher that taught Thelonious Monk's sister how to play piano. Harlem was a great place to grow up and be exposed to the arts.

Cadence: Making the world a better place through music is an early vision you've worked towards. How successful have you been at that? Is that concept achievable?

Silva: Yes, I did that, that's always been my vision. It is achievable, it's part of the participation in the human experience of an American artist. I haven't really played a lot of music. I didn't perform a lot in my life. I stopped performing in 1972, but I knew that music gave me a lot. Music has always been a big part of my life, not my own music, other people's music. I have to hear music every day.

Cadence: Why do you say you stopped performing in 1972?

Silva: I stopped playing in 1972 because I became a music teacher. Before that I was playing in a really fantastic group with Frank Wright,

Interview: **Alan Silva**

Bobby Few and Muhammad Ali.

Cadence: The way you played bass was unique.

Silva: I was a special kind of bass player. I had a specialty. I was not a bass player for [general] hire. You hired me for what I do, not because I can do this for you. I've had two careers as a bass player. I did cocktail bass playing, that was how I made a living, with Valdo Williams. We used to play every night in strip clubs and cocktail lounges, from 9 PM to 3 AM, for 25 dollars per night. My other music, [Laughs] that's Jazz music, although I was not a Jazz musician like bass player Paul Chambers. When I decided to become a bass player, it was to do something different, actually. I didn't want to be a Jazz bass player. I was interested in the bass because I liked the sound of it. My bass playing was different because I was a different kind of guy. I had studied art and music, but I was really a painter. I liked records. Records for me, and the sound that's on records, was my image of the music. I wanted to paint the music. [Laughs] That's what I was really interested in – abstract expressionism. The music that Charlie Parker was making, I could visualize it. I had to study what it was and then I could figure out how to listen to a record. I'd listen to a record, analyze it, and then I would know what it was. For me, it was all analytic with the notes and how they were put together

Cadence: In past interviews, you've more commonly noted influences by musicians who play instruments other than bass. Which bassists have been most impactful on you?

Silva: Charles Mingus, obviously. I studied with him. He was a bass player that seemingly was exploring his instrument. He was technically on a very high level. He studied with a famous bass player teacher in New York named Mr. Zimmerman, a fantastic teacher of the bow. I also liked Paul Chambers' use of the bow, and Slam Stewart. All these people who used the bow and singing with the bass, they had heavy influence upon my thinking. I wasn't even a bass player yet. I hadn't even played the instrument. I listened to them though. When I decided to play the bass, I sought out a bass player in the Village at the time named Ali Jackson who played a lot of cocktail music. I was practical, I knew I could get a job playing cocktail music. I had to take care of myself and I wasn't looking to play Jazz. Charles Mingus was in the Village and I used to go to his concerts all the time. I had a very good ear; I could write chord changes down. I learned transcription. Once I was sitting in front of Charles Mingus and writing the chord changes to the song down and he stopped the band in the middle of the song and talked to me. "What are you doing?" I said, 'I'm writing the chord changes.' He said, "Don't do that." I told him okay, and I stopped. So, after the gig, he came to the table and told me to go to the back. I thought, 'Wow, he's really upset.' [Laughs] So, I went to the back, very humble, and he comes over and says, "Let me see what you've got." He looks. "That's right, you've got all the right notes." So, Mingus took me under his wing, Thelonious Monk too. I also used to slow down records and study the notes. I really liked the sound of the bass and

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what Mingus and the other guys were doing. It was really something fantastic. So, it was Mingus influencing me to experiment on the bass, his solos were really inventive. Paul Chambers and Reggie Workman had profound effect on me for bowing. I can't say there were just one or two bass players to name, you have to put them all together. I decided that I wanted to [concentrate] on the bow. I wanted to have bow technique, and that's what made me a little different when I started working on my own career. When I started working with Frank [Wright], I had to concentrate more on pizzicato. I liked working with Henry Grimes on Cecil Taylor's records.

Cadence: As a young player in New York, you lived on the same street as bassist Jimmy Garrison. Talk about your relationship with him.

Silva: Wow, yeah, that band with Jimmy Garrison, McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones was fantastic, but the writers were only on John Coltrane. They were never really giving the band credit. I used to say that to Jimmy. The magazines were only talking about the horn players. I didn't like that, so I became a bass advocate. I even wrote letters to DownBeat. Jimmy Garrison was living next door and I used to take care of his kids and his wife when he went on the gigs. He was a good friend, and we had a really personal relationship. Jimmy's sound was so dense. His solos were not so adventurous as some other people but that was not the point. The point was the sound he got, and that's what I always wanted to have – to get a sound on my bass. We would discuss that. I had a very good ear. You could give me a saxophone player, blindfold me, and I could tell you who the guy was. That's how good it was. I knew every fucking saxophone sound. I could even tell you what kind of technique he was using. With bass players, it was exactly the same. Anyway, I had bow techniques that I developed, and Jimmy was a fantastic pizzicato bass player. The thing that made American bass players great is their pizzicato playing, and Jimmy had a big sound. His hands were huge and with callouses, which were important because we didn't have amplifiers at this time. The gut strings would create beautiful soft sounds, but when you play acoustic bass without an amp, it doesn't project too far. But Jimmy Garrison could project, you could hear the sound of his bass and feel it. He was really underrated. We used to bow together. I gave him a lot of bow techniques. I had an idea of a double bass concept. He asked me one time, "Would you play double basses with John Coltrane?" Wow! I never did get to play with him though. We could have done that because John was really stretching the music live. I saw him play a lot of times in New York. The records don't represent what he was doing live. The magazines only deal with John Coltrane's recordings, never dealing with his performances.

Cadence: You've noted in the past that your pizzicato work is based on the drum and tabla, while you're aiming to sound like a string choir with your arco playing. How did you come to that mindset?

Silva: [Laughs] Wow, that's really interesting. You really did some

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research! I remember that one, that was some time ago. Yeah, tabla and drums. Donald Byrd, who I trained under, was a member of the Asian Music Society at Columbia while he was studying for his doctorate degree in music education. He told me, "Alan, with that analytic ear you got, you should become a musicologist. Go and study with Alan Lomax." There was Folkway Records which was a little record company that had a lot of music from all over the world. I worked in a record shop and I started listening [to Folkway records], to Indian music, especially during that time in the '60s. I could hear the tabla drums attacks – tight drumbeats – with pitches. I could do the rhythms with my fingers and I could translate that on my bass. That's how the tabla sound became [my sound] instead of a walking bassline. I decided that I was not going to do a walking bassline. I was working with Bill Dixon and I told him, 'No, man, I don't do that.' He said he wanted me to play some time and I said, 'Yeah, I'll play you some time, but that's not my function. You can get somebody to do that, but I don't do that.' That was how my sound started coming together. You don't find too much of my pizzicato work, only until much later when I was by myself or with a band like the Frank Wright Quartet. With Cecil Taylor, the only place you're gonna find that is when I did Student Studies with him and recordings I did with Andrew Cyrille and Jimmy Lyons. I was working on time, what I call meter. I believe the greatest thing about Jazz in America was the bass meter. You think of Ornette Coleman without that bass player. He didn't have the piano, only the bass, that was the only harmonic instrument in Ornette's band when he came to New York. The bass concept in Bebop, which was this forward motion in the rhythm section as the driving force of the music since Louis Armstrong, but I wanted to change that. So, Indian and World music had a big influence on me. I studied with Alan Lomax. Indian music doesn't have a bass. African and Chinese music doesn't have a bass. Only European music has a fucking bass.

Cadence: What about your arco playing sounding like a string choir?

Silva: I developed the upper qualities of the bass on the strings. We call it the harmonics, up near the bridge. I made a lot of work there, studying that area on my solos. The string quartet idea was very much a part of my thinking. I liked the sound of a string quartet.

Cadence: You're known for your glissando [a glide from one pitch to another].

Silva: Sunny Murray had this idea of the drums sounding like a drone. When I was working with him, he was on his bass pedal, he was working the lower frequency of the bass. I didn't need to make any pulse with him so I could arco to add to the drone. His bass pedal was going constantly, plus he was vibrating his cymbal, and then he had his big drum. I said, 'This is a big frequency. I'm not gonna get in your way,' so that's why I really started to develop my own arco playing with him, getting this drone under his work. We only made one record, but we did a lot of gigs together, and they were different. When Sunny was working with Cecil Taylor, Cecil didn't have a bass, so Sunny

developed his bass pedal.

Cadence: The question of why you moved away from playing the bass in the '90s in favor of keyboards is one that you've frequently been asked, and it seems you've grown weary of the questioning. Would you comment on why you moved away from the bass?

Silva: I'll tell you how that happened. Around 1972-3, my career shifted because we were not getting a lot of jobs and I had to make some choices. Go back to the United States or stay in France. I didn't want to play the bass with a lot of people. I wasn't looking to be on the scene, playing with European musicians at this time. That left me off the scene and I decided to start teaching music. I practiced bass every day, but I started accepting bass students. That became another part of my career, and I wasn't available to work with any bands in the '70s. I became quite successful in teaching, I had over 30-40 students, and it was a quite big operation. I eventually started a studio. I rented a space, and it became a real music school, and I became the pedagogical director from 1974 to about 1990. I did some work with the Globe Unity Orchestra in Germany with Alexander von Schlippenbach, and then I started doing some records with Bill Dixon in Italy, but that was mostly in the '80s. But during the '70s, I didn't make any recordings. People have to realize that improvised music during this particular period, there's no documentation when you look at the '70s. We didn't start recording on a massive level until the '90s in Europe. I recorded a lot of music when I was working with the Frank Wright Quartet, and we had our own record label, but we didn't produce it. This was a great band and then all of a sudden, Frank wanted to go back to the United States. Muhammad [Ali] stayed and we did some work with Bobby [Few]. My career is different from other people. I never played with a lot of groups or on a lot of gigs. I only came back to the United States a couple times and played in New York. The synthesizer came much later, in the '90s, and that was because in pedagogy, I was working on using synthesizers and computers - Mac computers and MIDI. At first, I was not performing in it, I was studying it as an instrument that I was gonna use in my school. I had piano teachers, but I saw the synthesizer as another instrument all together, and [needed to learn] how to use the synthesizer in music improvisation. All those different sounds that were in the sound banks were really interesting for me in teaching, so I bought a synthesizer for my school and a MIDI system. There were several guys studying synthesizer in Paris and I brought them into the school. At the same time, I was against the guitar. The guitar was becoming a real big problem for me. Too many people wanted to study guitar and we were losing a lot. Rock and Roll was kicking our ass. I was really getting upset that young people only wanted to play guitars. I was getting angry. So, synthesizer was a future idea. It gave the possibility of, maybe, something different from the guitar. I studied how you could use it in a band and how to use those sounds in improvisation. I was teaching improvisation unlike any other Jazz school.

Cadence: What is your connection to the bass today?
Silva: You can find on the Internet where I played a lot of bass with Abdu in the beginning of the 21st century. I played a lot of bass, just here in Paris, on a small record label. I played synthesizer and bass. Bass is always the lower frequency, and even on the synthesizer, people say I play a lot of things lower, like I'm still playing the bass, and that's because that's my world. I'm a bass player, not a piano player. I can play acoustic piano, but as a synthesizer player, I don't think like a piano player. I think of the sounds that I like, and I try to shape those sounds. I was trying to figure out how to get MIDI to my bass. I'd like to take all the stuff that I do on my bass and transfer it to the module, like a guitar player, then I would play my bass through a synthesized sound. I was very much involved in the early beginnings of microphoning the bass. That's another thing people don't know. I was one of the first guys who actually put a mic in front of their bass and put it through an amp. The drummers were so fucking loud, you know. And this is not my forte. You know what my forte in bass is? The Modern Jazz Quartet. I like Percy Heath and the Modern Jazz Quartet. This was my sensibility as a bass player. I could have played electric bass if I wanted to be heard, and a lot of Free Jazz bands were very loud. I was not that. I'm not known for that. For me, the bass has a certain sound, even if you amplify it. It has a natural sound and you've got to be careful about playing too loud.
Cadence: Would you clarify that better?
Silva: I'll explain. I never believed that improvised music is a concert music. I liked acoustic. My ear is very sensitive. I thought Rock music was too loud.
Cadence: Did you study piano?
Silva: Yes, my piano teacher was a guy named Lefty. Lefty didn't have a piano, [Laughs] Lefty had a paper piano. I mean, how fucking gullible could I be, right? I didn't have a piano either, but I had a piano at my church that I could use. I'd pay Lefty 10 dollars for a harmony class. I asked him how could I hear [what he was playing on the paper] and he said, "You have to hear the notes," and I could do that. He sat there and taught me piano with no sound. He'd unroll his paper and we could do it in the park with no sound. I was 19 years old.
Cadence: You're one of Free Jazz's pioneers, one of the earliest to expound the glory of free improvisation. You play what you feel. What is your obligation to the listener?
Silva: Ooh, the obligation to the listener. He'd better do his homework. [Laughs] I expect the public to do just as much work as I do. I expect them to really make the same effort that the musicians must make. If they don't, they'll never understand improvised music. If they don't want to do that, they can hear Rock music. Improvised music, for me, was real work [when I was in] the audience. I say that because I did that. I used to go to the clubs, which I liked more than the concerts. I'd go and see Thelonious Monk play every night because he'd play

something different every night, and that's when its exciting. Even back in the '60s, we felt we were club musicians, not concert musicians. Which means every day I play the same song, but I develop those songs. So, the public has to make the work too.

Cadence: Well, how does the public do that?

Silva: I was fortunate enough to enroll in New York City's public school system, which during that time, music and art were very much a part of the curriculum. You learned to play a musical instrument. You learned to listen to music, and to look at paintings. This was all intellectual work. Listen to Beethoven or listen to Charlie Parker, you have to work to do that. I used to have this discussion with Cecil Taylor. I said, 'Cecil, you're going so far you're gonna lose the audience. You're gonna do that because the audience cannot catch up with you.' I remember the first time I heard Cecil Taylor. I heard him at Newport with Steve Lacy. I was 19 and I said to my best friend, 'That shit is the most newest shit I've ever heard in my entire life.' I couldn't figure it out. He was doing great stuff but pushing the system, and the people, I guess, couldn't figure it out. I, myself personally, made the effort, trying to understand somebody's work, and that's what I felt everybody should do. I try to explain to people about The Beatles' work. Those guys were still playing the same after 10 years because they didn't know too much about music, and the public liked that. People don't want [to work at change] and Cecil and we didn't think that was good for Jazz. We practiced, we wanted to improve our skills. This was our profession. I worked to make something on the bass. My teachers knew what I did was an improvement.

Cadence: How has your relationship with improvisation changed as you've gotten older?

Silva: I never associated myself as a Jazz musician. I consider myself an artistic improviser. I don't consider Jazz a good word for what I do. I thought Louis Armstrong was a great improviser, he expressed himself musically. The only difference between written music and Louis Armstrong was that he improvised. We're stuck with the word Jazz, which nobody even likes. I feel improvisation in America is very much something about our culture, just as abstract expressionism [allows the painter to express themselves]. As I've gotten older, I've tried to improve upon my skills of expression. The opportunity to express ourselves professionally becomes less and less as we get older. If it were up to me, I would have stayed in New York and played in a small space every night with only 20 people every night. I'd be okay with that, and there'd be hundreds of us like that. We create all these musicians – they buy an instrument, work on it, with the hope of getting a job, getting paid, getting an insurance policy, and getting a house, all these things, but America doesn't believe that artists have any rights to this. These are basic rights for all Americans.

Cadence: You've played to audiences of 3,000 people, why would 20

listeners be sufficient?
Silva: I was lucky for that many people. I'd be fine with 20 people every night, and I would like them to come back the next night [Laughs] because I'd have something new that next night. That's what I meant. I worked with Cecil every day on that music, every day practicing for hours - him, Jimmy, myself. It was great that we were doing that because we could communicate but we weren't playing gigs.. When you compare playing in a space nightly versus playing an occasional concert [there's no comparison]. It's like when I did my first orchestra piece, it was two hours and a half. People said, "Why so fucking long?" It was because I had all these great musicians, they needed to play. Why put all these great musicians on the stage for only an hour? You dig?
Cadence: When was the last time you played extensively notated music?
Silva: Oh, notated music. [Laughs] No, I haven't done that in a long time. I've written some music myself. I've written a lot of orchestra pieces, but playing it myself? I don't consider myself a guy who reads very well. I'm not Anthony Braxton who writes out everything. Even Cecil didn't write that much. He had his own notating system. So, me playing notated music? No. I became an improviser because I couldn't play the same music night after night.
Cadence: Would you explain why you favor large ensemble playing over small group work?
Silva: That's a good question. The greatest development in Western music is the large ensemble pieces – orchestra music – where you have notated music and you get a 100 people to play for 20 minutes. That's how long Beethoven's symphonies are – no more than 20 -30 minutes. Opera is a little longer but I'm talking about instrumental ensemble music. When I was a 10-year-old student I used to go to the library a lot and that's where I became interested in the area of a record and a score. My library had some recordings, and they had the score notated so I could look at the record and learn how to read the score. I looked at all the pages of notation and thought about all the work that went into that. To think of all those parts coming from one guy's head, wow, that was fascinating to me as a young person. Whoa, a guy sat down and wrote all those things? That was me in 1955 in a library playing Beethoven with a pair of earphones. Knowing that Beethoven had no technology to help him really freaked me out at 10. I used to listen to records at my best friend's house, recordings of Bessie Smith and Duke Ellington, and we'd listen to those sounds. For me, as a young kid, the records were like absolute fucking magic. Those guys playing those notes and being able to see it on the paper – the violin part, the trumpet part. These were human beings doing that work, not a machine. I don't need people in music who don't see that as magic. For me, the sound on that record was something living, and I became fascinated

by the living orchestra sound, and that's why I put composers on a real upper level. Now, to go back to why I chose orchestra music that was absolutely free of written parts? My concept of my orchestra was no written music because the music that I was thinking about didn't come from my head. I'm not the composer, I don't consider myself a composer. I worked on big orchestra music in France. I had a 30-piece orchestra. [Laughs] These large ensembles are really where music is big in the Western world.

Cadence: One of the hardest things to do in Free Music is to organize a large ensemble of musicians who are leaders in their own right, which you excel at. Do you have a process for how you work, how you steer what is played, or do you rely on being in the moment to create?

Silva: Thank you very much for that one. The first time I thought about this idea was when I was working with Sun Ra. I met Sun Ra during the time we were in the Jazz Composers Guild together. I had all his records even before that. As a bassist, I wanted to play orchestra music, not small group, so I decided to play with Sun Ra. I remember saying to him that I didn't like to read a lot of music and he said, "Don't worry about it, everybody else can do that. You do what you do," and I thought that was great. I learned so much from just being around him. Sun Ra was a prolific writer, everything was different. He had boxes of written material and I used to go through his stuff. It was unbelievable. One time I saw him conduct an orchestra and it had such really fantastic lines. I started thinking that if you had all these musicians, they had to be playing all the time. That was my idea and I started thinking about writing 10 parts, all of them different. I started writing some parts and every part was different. I showed it to Sun Ra and he said, "This is the most intense shit!" Ten guys all playing something different. It was like putting Charlie Parker on top of John Cage and putting all these levels of music all on one track. All this was sound for me. It was on record, it wasn't real. In the 1960s, I was with Rudy Van Gelder in his studio and I was seeing his technique when we were doing [Cecil Taylor's] Unit Structures. I was watching him on the mixing table, and I thought if you took all these levels, and you put all of them different, you'd get different, what I call 'strata's of sound.' I was telling him to [change things], bring things up a bit, but Rudy didn't have this concept. I was also influenced by Lennie Tristano. I was into the free form concept – a concept that came from Lennie Tristano. I had studied his music and I knew a couple of people that studied with him. He relied on oral music, not written. Written music was not his forte because he was blind.

Cadence: How are you creating on stage if nothing is written down? Are you relying on the moment or do you have a process in place?

Silva: The model of what I do is my big record Seasons. It's a radio studio performance and the cornerstone of my work. I didn't have an orchestra to practice with until I had the school, which allowed

me to practice every week with an orchestra for months, but not perform. I used to think what if you had an all-star orchestra with Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, all these people together, the sound that they would create. I had the idea that the conductor would do "gestural orchestration." There would be hand gestures and people would interpret these in space and time. It was like I was painting with a paint brush; the only difference is that it's not with colors, it's with musicians who are interpreting these spontaneously created motions. I didn't come with any idea of what I wanted to do on Seasons. I had an idea of how I wanted to shape it, everything was in the moment. That's what makes my [projects] a little more unique than say the Globe Unity Orchestra. I don't know what's going to happen. I use the musicians that I have. I wasn't like Sun Ra. I couldn't keep a band because you'd have to compose things for people every day for them to stay with you. Celestrial Communications Orchestra was a studio band, it was not a performing band. It's like when I heard Miles Davis with Gil Evans, they never took that on the road. Another great orchestra piece of music was Thelonious Monk's Big Band. Fantastic! I was at the concert with Donald Byrd, but they never played those charts again. My concept could not be a working band. When I did Seasons, which I think really still holds up, I listened to it last night, in fact, I said, 'Damn, that's really something,' I think now about how did that really happen? I couldn't tell you honestly that I knew what was going to happen. I got all these people – the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton - together and we had a rehearsal and people asked where the charts were. There was a lot of resistance, but people at the end of it, they respected it. It's like when I was commissioned to do a piece for Carla Bley's Jazz Composer's Orchestra, she asked, "So, where's the charts?" I said, 'I don't have charts.' Lee Konitz, who I really respect, said, "What are you gonna do?" I said, 'You know what to do. It's gonna be some music, man. [Laughs] I'm gonna paint.' But after a while, they understood. I made it work, it just took some time. That's why when I'm selected to do something, I always select the musicians I want so they end up doing what I want. These are great musicians; I don't need to write anything for these guys. What? [Laughs] Solo! Yeah, do it! It was beautiful. I needed every one of those great solos. If you look at orchestra music from the point of view of analytic, most composers start out with a key and a motif, and they arrange these motifs in scores. That's their job, getting these little melodies, putting them together, and they get someone to play them. When I did the Visions Orchestra at the [1999] Vision Festival, I said, 'Look guys, you know the parts you play, whether your playing tenor saxophone, alto, you know the register you're in in the score. So, just play that register. Don't get into everybody's register.' That was the first thing I tried to understand about orchestra music – you've gotta have a strata. Now, I could score that for you, make you stay in this area, and you get this

kind of harmony. I was explaining this to George Russell, who was a great writer. 'You like to write but I'm not interested in writing. I'm interested in what these guys can play if they have nothing to play.' "But Alan," he said, "they've got to play on something." 'No, they've got a lot to play. Don't you know that? They're waiting for when they finish those lines. They want to play [what they feel], you can feel that in every orchestra.' I was like a policeman, a traffic cop - 'You're a little too loud. Slow down!'

Cadence: So, what did Carla Bley have to say after she commissioned you for a piece and you didn't write anything?

Silva: Yeah! [Laughs] She knew about my work. I had done a piece in the Jazz Composers Guild, but it was more of a written piece with some graphic designs. I used to know Edgard Varèse. He used to live in the Village, and he'd come to the coffee shop every day where I worked. I used to talk to him, and I knew all his pieces of music. Ionisation is one of his fantastic percussion pieces and I asked him how he wrote all those percussion parts. He said, "They're frequencies. You've just got to learn what are the frequencies. Just don't let anybody get in each other's way. That's the most important thing." I understood that – it was like mixing. And then John Cage did a piece in New York called 12 Radios. It was a piece in which all you had to do was dial into the stations. That was the score. You tuned the stations for the set amount of time. So, I had all these weird ideas and I told Carla Bley that I liked freedom. I call it 'Democracy in Jazz.' It's called free speech. Me as a composer, I have nothing to say. The musicians have more to say than me. I said the same thing to Cecil Taylor. I said, 'You don't really need to write anything. Jimmy can play anything. I can play anything. What you can do is be a bandleader.' I told him when I first met him that he could be a great orchestra leader, that he should think about larger ensembles. At the time, he was thinking of himself with a quartet. I told him, 'No, man, you have something on the piano, you play all those 88 keys. If I could transcribe everything that you play on the piano, and apply that to the orchestra, you'd have a score.' But Cecil Taylor's music is so complicated that no person could play it if you wrote it down. It proves that improvisation is something unique of the person. So, that was how I thought. If you take the word free – F-R-E-E. F is frequency, R is rhythm, E is emotions, E is energy. Free is frequency, rhythm, emotions, and energy improvisation. That's it. Put the frequencies together with emotions, because without human emotions, music doesn't exist. I don't like compu*ter music because you cannot replace the human being in music.*

Cadence: As a youth growing up in New York, your aunt took you to the Paramount Theater every Saturday to hear the great big bands of the late-'40s and into the '50s. What do you recall seeing that made an impression on you?

Silva: My mother was working so my aunt would take me to

performances. I tried to understand what those guys in front of me were doing. I was too young to really state the impression I had of these Saturday sessions at age 10 and 11, but I think that's what shaped my ideas. I saw Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and Duke Ellington. It was really a show. I'd also go to hear the New York Philharmonic Orchestra when I was in high school, which was another big thing in my life - seeing Leonard Bernstein. I can say the biggest impression I had much later in life was Duke Ellington conducting the New York Philharmonic. This was the first time they had a drummer, a bass player and a piano player in the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and they played a commissioned Duke Ellington composition. I saw that Orchestra many times and this was the only time I saw the string players sweating, and they were swinging. This left a big impression upon me, the idea of being in show business. My aunt and mother were big fans of this music and they passed it on to me.

Cadence: Do you feel that you went into show business?

Silva: [Laughs] I thought of it as show business but a little bit more abstract. I thought that Sun Ra was show business. Yes, we needed to be a show, okay? And I really believe that one of the great things about show business is that. And some people may think that show business is lower level, but I always thought that show business was really high-level art in the United States. With Frank Wright, Cecil Taylor, I always thought that it was a show. Charlie Parker was show business. There's nothing wrong with it – entertaining at a high level. There're only two types of music. There's spiritual music, that's religious music, and there's secular music, which is what show business music is.

Cadence: You don't feel that your music is spiritual music?

Silva: Of course, it is, I'm doing both. Musicians are people who are spiritual, they manifest a spiritual existence. To get up there on that stage and play like that is some kind of magic for me. I think you have to use spiritual in a broad context.

Cadence: A friend took you to a sanctified church where worshippers would go into trances. Did time spent there have bearing on your future views of music and spirituality?

Silva: Wow, you did your research. [Laughs] My best friend's mother was a Holy Roller type and I used to go to this church with him and his mother on Sundays. I used to go to my church, a Presbyterian church in Harlem, and also to this other church that would be going on for, wow, 5 hours! I used to take Albert Ayler there in 1966. They had a band that would play for 5 hours, they'd never stop. That's where I started thinking about music and getting people to that level of commitment. We'd watch these people getting up and singing. That's where I got the idea of the spirit taking you over. That's what happened in the composition Seasons. Some magical things happened, it just came out.

Cadence: How was it to watch people go into trances at the church?

Silva: It was fantastic to watch that and hear the sound of foreign tongues. My ear was so sensitive to pitch and sound, analyzing it was

really interesting. Especially the voices because people would change their voice, and I became very interested in the sound of people's voices. Everybody seems to have a unique voice and speech, and as a young person I couldn't figure out how the fuck did they do that? How does nature give everybody a unique sound? Those people were all singing and speaking, and in my church they couldn't all sing in tune. You'd have 20 people singing in all different pitches, it was fantastic, and I said that to Albert. The sound that he was getting on his saxophone, crying, and the emotionality in the horn. I told Albert, 'I think we do music of the Cosmic Church.' [Laughs]

Cadence: Do you think the experience in that church had an effect on Albert Ayler's music?

Silva: He was already there, he was on that road. When I heard his first album Spiritual Unity, I heard that in his music. I wasn't close friends with him, we didn't hang, but he came to my house a couple times and we played Beethoven charts. He could read very well.

Cadence: Around age 15, you became interested in trumpet but lost interest in your trumpet teacher who insisted you play compositions, when what you wanted to learn was improvisation. That was an unusual goal for a teenager in the mid-'50s. Why were you so drawn to improvisation at such an early age?

Silva: The first time I wanted to play trumpet was when I was listening to improvisation, not written music. When I asked Donald Byrd to teach me how to improvise, he said I have to learn how to technically play the trumpet. He gave me the famous exercise book for trumpet. My reading skills had to be mastered and the book took me through the different stages of reading trumpet music. At the same time, I was saying to Donald, 'This is not my sound. I want to develop my sound. If I continue to play this written music, I will never find my sound.' And he understood that. He was studying at Manhattan School of Music, getting a master's degree in trumpet studies. He could play in a symphonic band if he wanted to, but I didn't want to play European music or written music. I played written music in junior high school in the orchestra, but I knew the Dizzy Gillespie [improvised] stuff was not written, and that's what I wanted to play. Donald Byrd knew I wasn't ever going to be a good reader, and he told me that. That meant, in New York City, if you couldn't read, don't try to get a job as a professional trumpet player because you have to read this shit. You can't get hired without reading. I asked Cecil why he would go to Manhattan School of Music. They taught European written music there, it had nothing to do with improvisation. Everybody thought if you go there, you'd get some skills – yes, reading skills, but not improvising skills. From the start of my interest in music, I always knew what I wanted to do, and Donald Byrd recognized that. He told me to go study musicology at Columbia University with Alan Lomax and maybe teach music. He didn't think I was going to be a great trumpet player, so he was giving me some pointers. I was young, 15-16 at the time, but Donald knew that I had other talent. He said, "You have a talent because you know what sound is."

Cadence: Why did you pick Donald Byrd to teach you trumpet?
Silva: There was a record shop in Harlem with Jazz records in the back of the shop and I used to sneak into the back and pull-out Byrd's Word with Donald and Frank Foster, a really fantastic album. I used to sit there and hear that shit. One day, at a club on 135th Street, I saw that Donald Byrd's name was outside. I was too young to go into the club, but I was very tall, and I went into the club and the guy said, "Okay, you can have a Coca-Cola." The music was really happening, and after they finished, I walked up to Donald and said, 'I really like your record. I don't have a trumpet, but I would like to take some lessons from you.' He said, "You gotta first get the trumpet." [Laughs] He took it like, "What a fucking weird kid." So, I went to a pawn shop and I got a not too good trumpet for 45 dollars. Donald said, "Oh, boy, you're gonna really have to work this one." That's how that started. I always pride myself on going up to musicians and asking them questions, they like that. Donald praised me on that. He said, "Very few fans ask you questions about music. I liked you because you were always asking me questions." I also asked Thelonious Monk for lessons once. Thelonious was a guy who really liked me, he saw that I was in the club a lot. I wore a suit, I was dressed. I learned how to improvise from listening to him night after night in the clubs because he would play new shit every night. I learned how to shape my chorus, how to shape my improv, and not make it too long. One chorus is enough because it gets boring, especially on tunes. Anyway, I was in the Five Spot bathroom, standing, taking a piss next to Thelonious, and I said, 'Hello Thelonious, how you doing? Do you give any lessons?' He said, "I just gave a lesson. Didn't you hear what I just did?" I said, 'You're right, man.' That's the brilliant thing he said to me, "Just listen to my records and study what I do. That's a lesson. That's better than paying me. Buy my records and listen to it."
Cadence: You're saying that you were side-by-side with Thelonious Monk at the urinal and you asked him for lessons?
Silva: Yeah, he had jumped off the piano and I felt like it was a good time to talk to him. So, I followed him into the bathroom.
Cadence: Talk about your relationship with Donald Byrd and what he taught you about music and life.
Silva: Donald was more like a mentor and I took care of his kids and wife when he was touring. He brought me into his Blue Note Records recording sessions and introduced me to players like Hank Mobley, Walter Bishop, Jr., Jackie McLean, Lee Morgan and Doug Watkins. He brought me into the Blue Note world and taught me the business. He spoke to me about writing music, and what music is about, and about the things he wanted to achieve. That's how I met Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock. I was able to exchange ideas with these people. I started working on diminished stuff at a time when nobody used the diminished scale because it's really tough, it doesn't resolve. I thought

it was really interesting, and Donald and the other guys, like Hank Mobley, used to say, "Why did you choose this scale?" They would throw information back at me. We would really exchange information. There was a period where I hadn't seen Donald Byrd for a while, and I came to Blue Note when Cecil Taylor signed a contract with them and there, I met Donald Byrd again. He said, "You're playing with this guy? Ahhh." Donald felt that wasn't going to lead me anywhere. He didn't think that Cecil Taylor was gonna sell. To me, Cecil was no further out than Thelonious Monk. Donald made his career with Blue Note, but Cecil only did 2 albums with them. When I heard Cecil had signed with Blue Note, I thought we were gonna make it big. I felt like now I was beginning my real professional career. But he didn't sell, and they dropped the contract after 2 records. I'm proud of Unit Structures, it was brand new stuff. I thought that we were gonna break new ground, but it didn't happen. Cecil didn't become famous; he didn't make any money either [at that time.] [Laughs]

Cadence: By that time at 19, you were married to an aspiring dancer and money was a concern. You had studied to be a jeweler at vocational school and were doing quite well at that trade, working in a high-end shop, making more money than you would have in music. How satisfying was it to work in that setting? As someone committed to communal/collective concepts, it seemingly would not resonate with you to create expensive jewelry that only a few could afford and enjoy.

Silva: [Laughs] Ahhh, yeah, I know that's the tragedy of my life. My wife would tell you that. Let's look at it this way, being a jeweler was my mother. My mother was a Portuguese lady who came to America and did a lot of jobs. She didn't have any skills; she only did 4 years of education. I was her oldest son and she wanted me to have a high school education and a vocation. I didn't want to go to college. I was artistic. I was a craftsman, I was good at working with my hands. She told me to study jewelry, and it seemed okay to do. I studied the history of jewelry and design, and I got hired by a high price shop. I could make molds and casting. The highest you can go as a jeweler is a molder, to actually design jewelry and make a mold. I could do diamond cutting, all the stuff. I could still do my music as secondary. I finished my high school training, and I had a good paying job, so my mother felt okay. I wanted to do the jewelry. I liked fashion and I was good at it. I could draw very well. That's why I got married so young, I had a good job. My wife also had a job, she was a typist in a typing pool, but she wanted to be a dancer and a poet. We both had artistic goals, but we had to be practical. It wasn't easy and sometimes I think that I made a bad choice. If I had stayed in my trade, maybe I would have really achieved in the jewelry trade. My mother didn't want me to become a musician, and she was right. It was hard to make a living at it.

Cadence: You have regrets about being a musician?

Silva: Sometimes I do, to tell you the truth. So many people made so many records and I didn't make many, so I think maybe I should not have done it this way. Sometimes I think that way, but it's too late for that. I've gotten past that. I will say that I am very proud that I made the music school. That was a very big thing in my life. I've done some things that are what I wanted to achieve. I didn't think that I was gonna be a great band leader, and I did a couple of good band things. I don't think it was as good as Sun Ra, he had better skills than I. I thought working with Cecil Taylor would be the break I needed, but it didn't work out. Rock and Roll came and forget it, we just couldn't work. Yeah, the jewelry would have been great. [Laughs] I always thought that Jazz musicians were getting screwed in record deals and in the clubs. During my time, If I went down and worked in the Village Vanguard, I'd make 25 dollars a night as a sideman. That was the union scale for working in a New York City class A club. That would be for 3 sets each night. I remember seeing John Coltrane and paying $2.50 at the door. People don't realize that you go into a recording session, work for 3 hours and get paid 61 Euros, that's all you get for that session. That's why I made my own records.

Cadence: You came to bass by happenstance as you mentioned briefly earlier. During a college Saturday night dance, you went from listener to playing the bass when the band's bassist failed to show for the gig, and you experienced an immediate connection to the instrument. Talk about that night and of finding your authentic musical voice.

Silva: I still think about that. I had some knowledge of the bass but when I picked up that bass that night, it felt good. I plucked the strings, and I heard the notes. With trumpet, you're out front, but on bass, you're behind everybody, and I felt good in that position. And the next day, I went and rented a bass at Sam Ash, where I had worked before. I bought a book – A Tune A Day. Every day I'd practice this bass and it felt good. It seemed like I was made to do that. I never had that feeling on trumpet or piano. I could really hear and relate to the register of the bass- the low frequency. I had a real ear for that. There wasn't so much pressure as there was on trumpet, in terms of what you had to learn. I began to think of bass as my profession instead of jewelry.

Cadence: You happened upon bass early in your career and really resonated with it. What are your thoughts on musicians who never find their truest instrument?

Silva: I've talked to guys like Anthony Braxton who have so many different instruments. What makes a great improviser is getting a personal sound. The real voice of an improviser is his sound, and you need to find that in the extension of yourself. In the great artists, like Sonny Rollins, their instrument is an extension of themselves and you have to find that in your own instrument. As far as how many people don't find their instrument? Yeah, wow. When students come to me and they say I want to play this or that instrument, but they

have no technique yet, I think of how I can help them find the right instrument. That's another job of the teacher - making sure that your student is finding the right instrument. That's a difficult job for a young person, to decide on their instrument. The first thing I did at the music school was put together a questionnaire. People used to ask why I was asking all these questions and I would say, 'You're deciding on the instrument, but how do you know this instrument is the right one for you? Why? Because you heard John Coltrane play tenor?' Like with me, I played the trumpet because I liked Dizzy Gillespie, but I couldn't think like a trumpet player. That's where you need to think. You need to think about the musical language that you need to create from the instrument, which is an extension of language. I made it clear to my students that the key was learning a musical language. They needed to think about what kind of sound they could get and what kind of music they wanted to play. I didn't think that people should study instruments at a young age [because they may have the wrong instrument]. It's good for your brain to study an instrument later in life.

Cadence: Talk about your experience seeing Ornette Coleman's first band at the Five Spot in 1959.

Silva: I went with Donald Byrd to hear Ornette Coleman and I was impressed with the trumpet player, Don Cherry, but not Ornette. I was not impressed by Ornette. I just didn't think it was that great. There were a lot of people in New York at the time who didn't think that Ornette was the new shit. I bought his records and slowed them down, but I just didn't think that he was the new Charlie Parker. I took Ornette Coleman apart. I figured out that Ornette Coleman was not that avant-garde. He was just a Blues musician. [Laughs] I call it 'Texas Swing.' I thought Jelly Roll Morton's early music was the most avant-garde music I heard in the 20th century. He had the most revolutionary American band. The early Dixieland bands were really original American music

Cadence: After listening to a lecture by George Russell in 1962, you went home and experimented playing Free duets with your classmate Eddie Gale. How did those first trials of playing free feel?

Silva: Eddie Gale! He was really a talented trumpet player, a free-spirited guy. He could create songs out of nowhere. Remember, at this time, we didn't have the Real Book. We could go and buy some published songs and learn the songs, but Eddie was a 'follow-me' type of guy. At that time, Eddie was already creating his own music, he didn't need a tune. What George Russell was saying in the lectures I heard him give was what you could do on a scale, not the chord. What you could do on a scale by playing different organizations of scale. But if you get all those notes, you still got to play a melody, and there's the sense that I think Eddie had – how you make a melody. He had that talent. Eddie also played on Unit Structures. He had a talent for taking Cecil's music and making it accessible, just as Jimmy Lyons did.

Cadence: How successful were those early trials of free improvisation?
Silva: When we started trying to play free, I loved it. I thought it was great, and I really loved the freedom of it. We were young. We didn't try to get a gig on it. No. The first time I thought about selling free improvisation was much later in my career. We were just young guys experimenting. Eddie could create a melody and I'd follow it. With free improvisation, there's no right or wrong notes, because we're not playing a tune. My ear opened up to a lot of possibilities. I didn't want to keep time because that's not freedom, although it's not a bad idea to have good timing in music. You have some people thinking that freedom gives you chaos, but chaos is just one of the possibilities.
Cadence: Meeting Burton Greene in 1962 was another act of happenstance when he answered your ad in the Village Voice looking for, "Anybody into cosmic consciousness through music, art and expression" to live in a rundown, fixer-up house you bought in Brooklyn. Greene was the perfect fit for you as an improviser as well as someone interested in the notion of communal living. Talk about meeting Greene and what you were looking to build at that house.
Silva: I was into an early American philosophical movement called Transcendentalism, which produced Thoreau and Emerson. Cosmic Consciousness was a couple of the books of the Transcendentalists. I wasn't looking for a religious concept, I wanted to deal with a spiritual concept. I wasn't really looking for any thing with rituals or cults, I wanted a philosophical school of thinking in music and art. I was interested in Kandinsky and the spirituality of art and early American art. Also, communal living, living in a community, was another idea of the art community. There was an early American art community in upstate New York in Woodstock that I was interested in. I was into all these early American artist movements outside of the mainstream. So, having a house and making art, and living in an art communal situation, that was my idea. Burton, who was coming from Chicago, was looking for a room. He came into a group that I was involved in at the time called the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble which was Eddie Gale, at the time, 3 bass players and a drummer, but no piano player. Burton answered the ad and that began a relationship that grew in 1962. Burton ended up bringing 2 people into the band – Gary Friedman and Jon Winter. The house needed to be fixed up. You could rent it, fix it, and then buy it. I liked the house. I had studied early New York architecture and this building had a lot of architectural designs. The houses on this street dated back to the 1870's and my mother already owned a property on that street. For this group, we had a 4-track tape recorder, and we recorded everything that we did and then analyzed it. That was very different. For me, these were compositions we played, not tunes – that was from Kandinsky's point of view. Kandinsky, as a painter, wanted to bring

painting and music together. I saw the same thing in Jackson Pollock's work. I saw music the same as painting, the only difference is we were dealing with sound. That's the concept I had, it came from the idea that we're, like, meditating, when determining the role, we played in the composition. I didn't ask people to always be playing all the time. I made what I call "studies of time." I'd say, 'This piece is going to be 5 minutes long, decide how many minutes you want to play. Map out your time.' We studied those compositions [from the tape] and that's how we played this music. We had to do a lot of listening to each other, listening to each note. These were the exercises that we built, and we practiced this quite often. We also used poetry from my wife, and we used film. I was also thinking about making improvisation off of silent movies. It was a very experimental group, and the house was a place where we could perform. Up the street was my church and we could perform downstairs there. That was my concept, and it lasted up into the time we joined the Jazz Composers Guild.

Cadence: Between 1958-'65, you struggled financially. You were married with children but didn't have a paying job beyond playing coffeehouses. Greene wrote about the situation at your house in his book [Memoirs of a Musical Pesty Mystic - From the Ashcan to the Ashram and Back Again, Cadence Jazz]. He recalled the building was literally falling apart, leaning to the side, and "Living high on music and spirited comradeship" but being so poor that there was no glass in his bedroom window. Talk about how you lived, how you survived those hard years.

Silva: Because he didn't pay the rent. Burton can make some romantic ideas about it, but people didn't pay their rent, so that's why the place was bad. It was a beautiful house, but it needed money to fix it up. My wife was working, and I had some side jobs, but not everybody had a job, so it didn't work. I wanted to keep the house because I didn't want to live in an apartment. I had 3 kids and I wanted my kids to grow up in a house. My mother helped me financially, but these guys didn't pay their rent. That was the financial plan. I rented rooms out, and that was going to pay to fix it up. Burton came from a successful family and he was there trying to be an artist, like everybody else. I want to say that Burton was a good musician, and the experiment that we did together, it was brilliant. I liked Burton all the time, but financially, he ruined my life.

Cadence: Would you talk more about the Free Form Improvising Ensemble and how it fulfilled your mission to present an integrated collective that played purely improvisational music.

Silva: That was my goal. The house was the key element – we had our own studio, and we had the recording device. We had a stack of tapes, maybe 100 hours of tapes, documents of our work, all with no written music. I felt that since we were all playing our own non-written music, the music belonged to all of us who made it. I tried to explain that to

the rest of the band. I held up an hour-long tape of the band playing original music and that I wanted to sell it for 1,000 dollars. It was all original, and there was only one copy. What I play on this bass is my fucking shit, and if someone wants to hear it, they have to buy the tape. They didn't understand my concept. If Gershwin makes a song, it's his song. The writer of the song gets paid, but the guy who does the solo on the song doesn't get paid beyond what he got paid for doing the session, even though it's his original work. I looked up Charlie Parker's estate and he wasn't worth anything because he didn't own anything musically. Yeah, he got paid for making a lot of records, but he didn't own them. John Coltrane played "My Favorite Things" every night. Rodgers and Hart were making 40,000 dollars off of that song, just because he performed it. I started thinking that this was wrong. The government didn't recognize the record as a published item unless the music was written. I was influenced after reading Harry Partch's book Genesis of a Music. A fantastic book about making instruments and sound. He said if composers would use a tape recorder and put their sounds into the technology, they own the sounds and could get a copyright for that. I tried that. I went to the copyright office and I told them, 'I have this tape that's an hour long. I want to copyright the tape.' They said, "You can't copyright the tape, you have to write down all the music on the tape." I realized that, for years, improvised music was being sucked out of billions of dollars' worth of money that the record labels and the producers were making. I'm talking about the people who improvise, not the people who wrote music. I told Burton that 65 percent of American music was non-copyrighted music. There were no living composers making any money. Sixty-five percent of the music done by every symphony orchestra is European was not protected by copyright laws. There're no living composers writing for these bands. The only place that living composers are making it is for Jazz or some songwriters. The only one who understood what I was talking about was Sun Ra who owned all his music. I was one of the guys who said, 'We make this music, let's make the records ourselves.' I could make a record for 50 cents and sell it for 5 dollars.

Cadence: The FFIE only lasted about two and a half years [1962-'64] and according to Greene, only played 10-12 concerts. What was the reaction to the group's music by listeners and other musicians?

Silva: We did some great music and I think that people didn't give us any credit for what we did inside of what we call Free music. We played a number of very important gigs, a number of New Music festivals. There was a New Music concert series in New York at Town Hall. That was one of our major appearances, and other times we played in small venues in Brooklyn, cultural places and Unitarian churches. We couldn't play improvised music in a club in the early-'60s. Were we going to go down and play in the Vanguard? You play the Vanguard, you gotta come in there with some music. So, that was

my problem with improvised music. I didn't think that we could do club engagement, night after night. We were invited to play at the October Revolution Festival by Bill Dixon. Before that, we didn't play a lot, we mostly rehearsed for 2 years. We did a couple of gigs in a coffee house one time. We played mostly in churches and we made tapes. I was always thinking about what to do with the tapes and making records. Burton was correct – I agree we needed to have an income. I took recordings to Columbia. I knew Teo Macero [producer at Columbia] because he was at the October Revolution Festival and he heard the band. There's a review of that concert in DownBeat that quoted Teo Macero saying our band was one of the most interesting bands there. I took our tapes from the festival, went into a studio, and made a master. I presented the master to Teo and he said, "I think the music is really great, but I don't think I can market it." Columbia didn't have a New Music division. Burton wanted to be on a Jazz label, but I didn't think it was Jazz at all. Jazz is based on a composer who plays his music, and the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble was a collective group of instrumentalists who were making their own music. We had no tunes; the compositions were the tape itself. We didn't fit into being a Jazz band. The problem with Jazz is that Jazz is a word that codified African American players, not the composers. Dig? Burton and I always had these little arguments. I'd say, 'Burton, you always wanted to be a composer. I told you I'm not interested in composition because it's a copyright issue. Blue Note was selling 20,000 copies and the leader didn't get no more than 1,000 dollars for it.

Cadence: Bill Dixon heard the group play and invited it to be a part of the October Revolution Festival he was organizing in 1964, and he subsequently asked you to help him organize the ill-fated Jazz Composers Guild.

Silva: Bill Dixon came to a concert of ours and thought the group was really interesting. I knew Bill from the work he was doing for Savoy [Records]. Bill was living in Greenwich Village, which was my real hangout since I was 16 years old. Everybody knew me in the Village, and Bill was also a fixture there. When he decided that he wanted us to play in his October Revolution Festival, I told him that I had to talk to the rest of the band because we were a cooperative band and we made decisions together. We discussed it, and there were varying opinions of whether to play there or not. For me, I had a problem with the festival's name. I was trying to establish our group as a free form ensemble doing free improvisation as a concept. I didn't buy into the term Free Jazz. I didn't see myself as a Free Jazz musician. This is very important to understand. I said to Bill, 'What do you want to do with the October Revolution? You've already got Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor, they're already the founders of some kind of new avant-garde music. I don't know if that fits into what we're doing?' Bill wanted to focus on all these musicians who couldn't get a gig in New York.

None of them could work in a Jazz club. Meanwhile, we were playing. Our group had just played Town Hall, but Burton wanted to get some exposure. I said, 'Yeah, but what kind of exposure?' So, we decided to play there and then Bill asked us to join the Jazz Composers Guild as foundering members, along with Carla Bley and all those people. I thought that was fantastic, these were all great musicians. The first time we met [as the Guild] we asked what name are we gonna call this? And, oh, this was a big battle. Jazz Composers Guild? Agghh. That was a tough one because they said "Composers," they didn't say players, and here I was, a player, I wasn't a composer. They never understood about the players, the credit that players don't get. They all wanted to be composers, and I said, 'What are you gonna do with the players, the people who work in your bands? Are they members of the Guild? What is the goal? You're not a union, we already had the 802 Musicians Union. Are you a political party? We had a problem with what this name meant. I understood what they were trying to do, but that was the problem that I was having at the time. I didn't know at that time, that Bill and those people had some leftwing leanings. They weren't liberals, they were leftist people. I didn't have any problem with capitalism, it's an American idea. I didn't buy that musicians were being exploited. The unions in New York City made that not possible. If the club owner didn't hire you in the club, that's his choice. At the meeting, you had all these people talking about exploitation and the music business. Archie [Shepp] and a bunch of other people were talking about Black Nationalism. Oh, man, whoa, back up here. Are we a Civil Rights organization? No, we're not the NAACP. I proposed that we be artists who are in the art business. I didn't have any problem with being in the business. I didn't see us as a political party or a social party, this was a business. This was a valuable company – we can make recordings and rent rooms to play in – and that's what we should do. We should be independent artists doing our own thing. We should not attack the people who are already in business. I'd been in the clubs since I was a young kid, I didn't want to attack them. I was a fan. I didn't have a political edge on this. I saw it as art. Jackson Pollock and all those painters, they were doing their thing, and we were doing our own thing. So, the Jazz Composers Guild was a tricky name, and that was our problem. There were some people who wanted to create a nonprofit cultural program, and I didn't agree with that. What, suddenly Jazz is a nonprofit business? They allowed Rock and Roll to be profit making, and they're gonna allow Jazz to be nonprofit? I told Bill we should make the Guild a business, make it a corporation. And so, that was the breakup. It broke up because what were we gonna do? We had a little concert space, and I performed a lot of concerts there. Cecil never played there. We tried to organize to get some recording contracts. They wanted to sell the entire group to any recording company that wanted to record a member of the Guild. I didn't agree

with any of these concepts. I said we should make our own records, do our own thing, make a business. But no one knows the end of that - we broke up for several reasons.

Cadence: What is the real story behind the breakup of the Jazz Composers Guild?

Silva: I'll explain it to you because no one ever questioned me. There's a lot of mythology that went down about this in the press. It's never been really researched correctly, as far as a scholarly investigative report from the real sources, and I'm a source. I was on the committee to establish us as a record label. I did all the research to see how much money we would need to make our own record label. It would have to be a real business. Sun Ra was the real businessman in our group because he had his own record label already - Saturn Records. He had his own publishing company and was already in BMI. Archie Shepp was not in BMI yet, he hadn't recorded with anybody. Cecil Taylor was already in BMI, but he had only recorded for small labels. Nobody was under contract. I proposed that we needed to get a business license, form a publishing company, and then we could record everybody and every concert, and make our own records. I was 25 years old, the youngest guy in this group. The others were 10-20 years older than I was, but they politically were in the wrong idea. When the Guild started, we went to speak to John Coltrane. I asked him to join but he said he couldn't because he was under contract, but he agreed with our concept. Ornette Coleman wanted to keep doing his own thing. None of the guys in the Guild had any money but we got a place to play on Friday and Saturday up above the Vanguard. The lady who ran the dance studio there just gave us the space for 2 nights every weekend. Without the place, the work was nothing. But [the members soon] drifted away from each other. I don't like the story that Archie was the one who broke the Guild. It's not true, it was broke a long time before that because the guys didn't want to take the point of view of independence for this valuable group. They never wanted to take the responsibility of being a leader financially.

Cadence: You ended up working with Bill Dixon doing duos, doing projects in the New York art and dance scene.

Silva: The first group with Bill Dixon was a duet concept – bass, trumpet and tape loops. Bill had a Revox tape recorder and we started recording and laying in different tracks. There were several different ensembles that I played in with him including a trio with Rashied [Ali] on drums. The thing I really liked was when we started breaking into the art scene that I was in at the time. I had been doing improvisations with dancers in the Village, and Bill and I worked with an Italian video artist named Aldo Tambellini who was living in the downtown area. We did several projects in association with the downtown arts scene that grew in Soho in association with the early loft scene. Bill's involvement with [dancer] Judith Dunn in the development of

improvisation and dance led to us working with her. Bill Dixon was the one who actually convinced Cecil Taylor to do the double basses on his Blue Note albums. Around that time, we drifted apart, for reasons I can't remember, and Bill went to Bennington.

Cadence: You also worked light shows at the start of the psychedelic movement, even working with rock bands. How did you get into that?

Silva: Oh, yeah, the psychedelic movement. That's another phase of my life that I should have been famous for. [Laughs] On Eighth Street in the Village, there was a club called the Dome, and up above it was a big dancehall that got converted into a psychedelic room – one of the first psychedelic spaces. I was an artist there in the projection arts. We had old parachutes all over the walls, and we surrounded the people with projections of psychedelic art. The first light shows were done with retrograde projectors. We had oil bubbles and slide shows and old movies shot on the walls all around. This was an old dancehall, so it was great. People could come up there in the daytime and just psychedelic-out. People could drop acid there. At first, we were using records. I was the first one to start using records and using light shows together. I was in the early beginnings of using Super 8 film. There were a whole group of experimental film people and we were doing improvisations to film. Bill and I did a lot of this type of work, working with video. Eventually, this area became more evident in Rock bands. The development of the light show was a team, 5 or 6 guys doing their different exchanges, like making stuff bubble. The first psychedelic Jazz bands I did were done with John Coltrane. It was John Coltrane at the Village Theatre. It was fantastic music, with his wife. He was thinking about Carnegie Hall, but he decided to do it at the Village Theatre, which was better for his night of Cosmic Music. That was the first light show of Cosmic Music and it was done by a Jazz band. Everybody thinks that the light shows were done with Rock bands but fundamentally they started out with abstract bands because in the Village, there were no Rock bands, only Jazz bands. That's another issue – people don't understand that New York didn't produce Rock musicians. The musicians who came to New York, mostly were Jazz musicians or Contemporary music people like Lamont Young, who was one of the first guys to start doing projections in the loft scene. My early light shows involved flooding the stage, there was no focus upon the musicians as a show. The concept of the early light shows that we were working on, was called an "enmeshed feeling" - putting yourself in a trip. There was no focus on the musician as an ego, the ego of the musician is finished in the psychedelic experience. The later development of Rock bands' light shows was different. They wanted the lights on them for their ego so that you could see them playing, but my idea was that the performance was enmeshing people in images and sound, and the musicians were part of the whole image. My concept was space. In fact, the room was big, and we had the stage in the

middle of the space. You could walk around the room and the ceiling was full of projections. When we moved to a theatre, like with John, you didn't see the musicians, you just heard the music. We assumed that the people in the space were on a trip. My interest is psychedelic came from me taking psychedelic trips with the master. Along with a lot of Jazz musicians, I had taken LSD with Timothy Leary. Mingus was involved in the early beginnings of the psychedelic scene. My idea was the fantastic idea of improvisations on psychedelics. I didn't think it was a great drug to be high on. As a performing drug, marijuana was much better for that. It opens your ears better. Psychedelics were a little too strong as a performance drug. It caused a perceptual overload and sometimes you can't handle it. I tried it, and, as an artist doing a show, it doesn't work.

Cadence: The first show you did was with John Coltrane? Did he approach you to work his show?

Silva: He came up to the Dome where we were doing the light shows. The Village Theatre had already had a light show and I was already working with Bill Graham, who owned the theater. I later worked with Sun Ra on his light shows. I wanted to do it with Cecil.

Cadence: Do you know if Coltrane did LSD?

Silva: Yeah, he did. What do you think Love Supreme was?

Cadence: Did you envision psychedelia in other settings?

Silva: I wanted to open a psychedelic record shop, and in the back, I would play my music. I like to make what I call "trips" in records. I would organize on tape different groups of music. Under Timothy Leary, we all were discussing "the trip," how to control "the trip." People don't understand that we did not endorse taking theses psychedelics without understanding what it was as an experience. We didn't see it as a pleasure drug, either. I only saw it, personally, as an art therapeutic concept for serious art processing. The early beginnings of the psychedelic movement were based on the idea that this drug would take you [on a trip] for about 2-3 hours, based on the dosage. We thought of whole audiences taking it, but I was too afraid that we couldn't handle the trips with too many people doing it. You didn't know what would happen. It became dangerous when you get too many people using a drug where every person is going to have a different experience. Marijuana was a different kind of drug, and I was more for using that as an art experience. I was selling joints at my gigs.

Cadence: Did you have a relationship with Andy Warhol?

Silva: No, I knew him, but I didn't agree with some of his stuff. I was more abstract expressionist, and he was hyper-realist, pop art. I was in the Downtown art scene/Jazz world and performance art. He was from Pittsburgh, He came to New York, and I'm a New Yorker. Dig it? People came to New York to make their careers, which upset us – people coming to New York to make their careers with the New York audience. All these foreigners come to New York to make their living

off the people that live there. They can't do it in their own town.
Cadence: So those are your people!
Silva: Right. I believe that the United States is too big to have a unified culture like Germany has. There's too many people and you have to accept that there are different cultures in the States. I believe that the artists should work in their own towns because it is good for the culture of their city. In New York, there's a whole bunch of people competing with each other for the same audience. That means you have wastelands due to a cultural drain in other cities like Philadelphia, Detroit and Chicago. If Louis Armstrong had stayed in New Orleans, there'd be all kinds of different musicians all over the United States.
Cadence: Sun Ra was an important role model for you, including his concept of how an ensemble should function as a social organization and not just as a musical entity.
Silva: Definitely, yeah! For me, Sun Ra was the real deal as a conceptual American artist. He had a concept of his music and that's what I was trying to do with the Free Form Improvisational Ensemble. We needed his view in the Jazz Composers Guild, as far as the position of the artist in the social sense. For us to succeed, we needed to control the environment. We needed to control spaces owned and run by artists. The most important thing was that these were social spaces. The problem was that the Jazz Composers Guild had no audience, and without an audience, you can't make a living. You can't conjure up an audience. We had to create an audience, and that's what Bill and all the other people didn't understand. Sun Ra understood it. I spoke to Sun Ra about it. He said we needed people to be connected to what we were doing. That makes an honest artistic movement. You want people seriously involved with your concept, not just a fan base. He had a concept of Interplanetary Music – a fantastic concept! He made Intergalactic Corporation - a profit-making corporation with stocks, capital and an object in mind to move people from one planet to the next through teleportation. Dig that shit! I mean, he's got a legal company. I saw the papers when I was working with him! I understood him and it affected what I did. The Celestrial Communications Orchestra was coming from that, along with the idea of the school. The problem with Cecil was that he didn't want to be social, he didn't have a message. Archie didn't have a message. So, if an artist doesn't have a message, what the fuck are you an artist for?
Cadence: Did Sun Ra actually live with you at one point?
Silva: No, he never lived in the house. I had room and I was looking for a tenant. I had guys not paying their rent, so, I said, 'Maybe Sun Ra can pay rent.' [Laughs] He came and looked at the place, but it wasn't big enough for him and his entourage. That's when he went to Philadelphia, he needed a house. I did arrange for some concerts for him at my church. That's the other thing, I did a lot of concerts at the Presbyterian church. I did a lot of promoting of concerts there, I even

brought Duke Ellington to the church.

Cadence: At one point, Sun Ra had you selling his records?

Silva: Oh, yeah, that was great. I liked his concept so much that I did that. I told him I would sell his records, and he allowed me to make a little money myself. He understood I was married with kids and that I had responsibilities. Every time I played for him, he always paid me. And over the years, I helped him in many different projects. He came to Paris and I sponsored his tour one time when I had my school. He made a film that I sponsored. I helped him to go to Egypt.

Cadence: You were in and out of the Sun Ra Arkestra from 1964-'70. Did playing in that band feel different than playing in other bands?

Silva: Yes, of course. I liked that Sun Ra's band would play really long. It was the only band that would play for 4 hours. It was really a trip. That affected my [mindset] throughout my whole performance career. I also liked that he encouraged people to join the band. At the end of gigs, he used to go out and ask people to join Intergalactic Corporation, buy some stock, become a member. He tried to establish an outreach program and sell records to the people. I also organized some stuff for him in Harlem. I should have stayed in the band. [Laughs] Before he died, I had him at the school in Paris and I was thinking of joining the band again, but he said, "Nah, you keep doing what you're doing."

Cadence: Cecil Taylor began using you on his Blue Note recordings, starting with Unit Structures [1966]. He already had Henry Grimes in his group. How much direction did Taylor give you regarding how he envisioned the two basses working in his music?

Silva: That was Bill Dixon's vision. I was working with Bill Dixon, and Cecil wanted to audition me. I didn't think that I had the technical level to play in his band. I didn't understand his music. He was a composer with a concept, and I was coming from my work with an ensemble that was different. This was before I joined Sun Ra. It was during my journeymen period when the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble broke up and I didn't have a band. I was sitting there thinking about what was I going to do now? So, I auditioned for Cecil, and I just couldn't cut it on pizzicato. I didn't understand what he was doing, that was my problem. He understood that and I got a call from him saying, "Bill Dixon suggested that I do double basses for my Blue Note album." It was Bill Dixon who decided that I should play on Unit Structures. So, I began working with Cecil. He had his own notation system. He'd give us some notes. I can say that I looked at the notes, a couple notes, [Laughs] and I just didn't understand what he wanted me to do. I used my bow, and that became what I did, and he tolerated it, I guess. Bill Dixon recognized that I knew the music that Cecil was playing, with my ear. I knew what Cecil was doing, but whether or not he would allow me to do what I wanted to do, that was the question. Cecil was improvising his own parts, but he was not allowing everybody else to do that. I made it clear to Cecil and to Bill that you don't ask me to

do that. That's not what I do. Bill knew that I wouldn't do that, but he knew that whatever I was going to do, it was going to be interesting. It wasn't going to be wrong. How could it be wrong? I thought playing the bass was my job. It was the same with Henry Grimes. As fast as Henry played, do you think you could notate what he was playing? No. Why are you giving me some notation? You're not asking Henry to notate anything, or Andrew Cyrille. So, the drummer, the 2 basses, and the piano were playing what they felt, and the horn players were playing some notes, and that's what we practiced. When we were doing Unit Structures, we did a lot of rehearsals. And when you listen to the record, it's one of the most revolutionary records in the history of Jazz. That's if you want to call it Jazz. I don't call it Jazz. I call it Cecil Taylor's music, and the music of all the people playing on it. I have to say that in the beginning, I didn't want to play with Cecil Taylor because I knew I couldn't make any money on it. I've never said I didn't like it. That guy was a real fucking genius, but who's gonna buy it? I had obligations I had to deal with and I needed to make a living.

Cadence: When did you first play with Cecil Taylor?

Silva: I played with Cecil at Bill Dixon's October Revolution Festival at a coffee house with Tony Williams, myself, Jimmy Lyons and Pharoah Sanders. During all the time of the Jazz Composers Guild, he never asked me to play with him. Cecil never played at the space we had with the Guild, but I played there with a lot of different groupings of guys. I played with Paul Bley, Marshall Allen, and Perry Robinson. I was one of the guys who kept that place rolling on the weekends. Me, Burton and Paul Bley were the people that made that work. I did three big band pieces there on top of the Vanguard. When I did the audition for Cecil, I was the one who said I can't do it. It was sometime after that, that Cecil asked me to record with him at Bill's suggestion. At the time that I was working with Cecil, I didn't have any other work until Albert Ayler asked me to do the Impulse date. I did help Cecil during this period as a business guide because I was concerned that he was not working. I had obligations so I had to push him to get work.

Cadence: You first met Albert Ayler when he asked to sit in while you were playing at a cocktail lounge. Had you been aware of him prior to that night?

Silva: Yes, I was aware of his work on ESP. The night he came to that club, he was leaving for Sweden the next day. I was playing with a piano player named Valdo Williams, working on West 4th Street in a cocktail lounge and he showed up and asked to sit in. We were playing mainstream at this lounge and I knew he was an avant-garde musician. I asked him, 'What do you want to play, man?' He said, "Let's play "Ornithology," and I said, 'Wow, okay.' It was late and there were not too many people in the room. I knew the owner, but we needed this gig. We needed not to lose the gig. It was very important for us. Me and Valdo, we worked in this little circuit in the Village. Right across

the street, we used to work in a strip club. All these were Mafia places. [Laughs] So, Albert starts playing with us, and I have to say, I was impressed. I liked to play time then, and I had good time, and I liked a saxophone player that could play in time. His meter was so good, and his solo was so interesting. I knew the song very well. It was a popular song during jam sessions, but this guy was playing some really interesting stuff. Valdo and I had never heard no shit like that before on "Ornithology." The music he played on that first chorus was Bebop, Hard Bop, whatever that was, he did it. The second chorus, now, uh-oh! Uh-oh! [Laughs] But he was in tune, he was in tune with the changes. That's what freaked me out. All the things he was doing were so advanced, structurally, these compressions. It was all in tune with the piano. That was the problem with Ornette, he had a tuning problem. Piano was not a good instrument for him because of the tuning. That third chorus was really out. We had to stop after that! I had to pull his coat – 'Okay, man. Beautiful!' We packed up and got on the train together for Brooklyn. I told him I knew him and that I knew his album and that I was really impressed that he could play mainstream like that, but then that second chorus – wow!

Cadence: In 1967, you performed on Ayler's Albert Ayler in Greenwich Village and Love Cry. With the recent passing of Henry Grimes and Gary Peacock, you are one of the very few remaining people alive who recorded with Ayler. What was it like to play and spend time with him?

Silva: Love Cry is the one I really love. Albert had sold Bob Thiele some tapes of his music that included me playing with him at the Village Theatre and that came out on the Albert Ayler in Greenwich Village record. John [Coltrane] was gone from Impulse so Bob Thiele decided to sign Albert. Albert decided that he was going to have me, Milford Graves, his brother, and Call Cobbs, the harpsicord player, on the new recording that became Love Cry. I thought this was the beginning of my career with Impulse. Oh, wow, I loved Impulse, it was a great label. I heard Albert's music, and we were ready to launch into a real situation, we had a tour set up. But I heard that some people in the company didn't like Milford and his politics. So, they decided to change that band to the New Grass band and go with a more R & B band. We were ready to go out to the Fillmore West on tour and I thought we'd [really make an impression]. The problem was that after I did the Love Cry session with him, we played one last time, one week at Slugs, and no one came. It was really bad business there and I think the record people thought that maybe this band was not so successful. I remember that was a real tough time. I really loved this band. I really liked playing his music, especially with Milford. I had a special relationship with Milford with my bass, and you can hear that on Love Cry. I liked the exchange that we had and the songs that Ayler wrote. I liked the whole concept of the record and the way we played the tunes.

We did the same tunes at Slugs and it was really beautiful. We were ready to take it on the road. I didn't see Ayler again because they broke the band. He went to Europe and he didn't use me, he used [Steve] Tintweis. It was tragic for me, not being able to play with him more. I returned to Cecil after that.

Cadence: You returned to Cecil Taylor and got to play the Filmore West with him.

Silva: Yes, Cecil Taylor played three nights at the Fillmore West in May of 1968 with a sextet [Frank Wright, Jimmy Lyons, Andrew Cyrille, Eddie Gale] that I arranged. We played opposite the Yardbirds. We had that Rock audience of 3,000 for an hour straight and we got a very impressive response from them. We had one of the great psychedelic light shows that night by the top group doing that. Leonard Feather wrote a review of that show that was syndicated in 26 newspapers. Afterwards, Cecil got a call from the Rock producer [Paul Rothschild] from Elektra Records who wanted to give Cecil Taylor a contract to record. He wanted to record Cecil and the band and put us on tour, opening for The Doors. He was going to pay $30,000 as an advance payment, but Cecil didn't take the contract. No one knows this, no one knows that Cecil Taylor had a contract. If he had taken the contract, imagine what my career would have been? This is a true story. I wonder how people will react to hearing this? If this event had happened, I would not be sitting here talking to you. My life would have been different. If you look at The Doors today, they're like a 100-million-dollar value. Cecil Taylor's problem was that he didn't have any commercial value, even though we recorded for Blue Note, he still couldn't get a job. He couldn't sell a ticket.

Cadence: I think Cecil Taylor liked it that way.

Silva: No! I don't like this theory about American artists needing to struggle. People say he was too avant-garde for America. No! He was a professional musician. He went to the highest level of education in the United States, so how is he not gonna be employable? He was a genius at the piano. I didn't like these amateur people fucking with the music business. The Rock musicians couldn't play. I've studied music since I was 6 years old and I didn't like these British bands coming into the United States and fucking up the business, taking the girls and shit! You buy a record of an American musician, that's an investment. That's not a joke. You pay for a ticket to a gig and you're paying a musician to work. And those Rock motherfuckers came in here and changed the business, and I'm against that.

Cadence: During the late '60s, you worked for Bernard Stollman and his ESP-Disc record company. What did you do for him?

Silva: First, I wanted to learn the business, so I asked him what I could do there. I had worked already in a record shop, Sam Goody. Him and his brother, who was running a newspaper, decided that I should do sales. They had me get on the telephone and call record shops in all the

college areas in the Midwest. They gave me a free telephone line and they had all the numbers for the record shops. We had a distributer in the area, but they were not doing any work or selling any records. I did that, and I was doing okay, and then I came up with an idea of getting college kids to sell ESP records on college campuses for money. We'd give them some records to play in their dorm rooms and they could take orders. I was looking at all the different ways to sell a small label. Bernard was a music lawyer; he was not a record guy. In fact, he didn't have anything to do with music, really. As far as knowing what was good or bad, his taste was not that great. But he knew that I could work A & R. At that time, he had lost Jazz players and was working with the Rock crowd, looking for new talent. He had pulled completely out of the Jazz market. Then I became a promotion manager for him, going on the road to meet disc jockeys, trying to get the music played in the South. That's where I learned a lot. We'd go to disc jockey conferences in the South, but nobody was biting. People were simply not interested in Sun Ra in Alabama. We couldn't get any of these Black stations to play Sun Ra. I became extremely disillusioned about the system. I was an idealist, and it was too hard. It turned me off the way that people treated the records, how they treated the music outside of New York City. It was a shock. I think it affected Bernard, too. He was really a nice guy. A lot of people say he was a crook, but I always defend him.

Cadence: Since you brought it up, I will ask you about that. Bernard Stollman never paid you any money, nor did he send you any copies of Skillfulness to sell. That was typical for him, yet, unlike many other artists, you've been very understanding about that.

Silva: I was there when it was really bad, we were not selling records, man. In fact, he was losing money. If it were not for his parents, who were working there and giving money, it would have been lost. My contract with Bernard said that I was the producer of Skillfullness. I own the record, I get 15%. It's my work. The only thing he did was to pay the musicians. I have made money from it. I get royalties from the playing of it. He didn't sell too many copies of it anyway. He may have pressed 500 copies, and after he paid the engineer and other people, maybe he got paid a little bit of money from it. I worked there so I know a lot about the business that other people don't know. That's why I've been very lenient with Bernard. I was always for the musicians selling their own records themselves. That's how I built Center of the World. I didn't distribute the records, but I made 5 records and I sold them on the gig. I sold 2,000 records off the gig. We made almost 20,000 dollars off that first Center of the World record. We'd sell signed albums after gigs and we'd make all the money. But Bernard had a lot of expenses, he had an office building and people to pay.

Cadence: Your first recording session as a leader came in 1968 with Skillfulness [ESP-Disc]. You perform the title piece based on the second chapter of the Lotus Sūtra, the Mahayana Buddhist text that stresses

the importance of faith and devotion as a means to the realization of enlightenment. How is that delivered in the piece?
Silva: The little part that I cut out [from the text] has to do with music. It has to do with rattling the bells and that all the instruments are involved with people reaching enlightenment. This is about what I call "Celestial Music of the Law," that musicians are involved in. For me, John Coltrane is the bodhisattva [someone on the path to enlightenment] of music. When you become a musician, you become a bodhisattva of the music. All music leads you to enlightenment, even evil music, which I don't believe in. I don't believe in evil. I don't accept Christianity's ideas of evil and bad. In the world of Buddhism, we're just humans. From the Lotus Sūtra and the Buddhist perspective, the goal of attaining enlightenment is not death, it's just a state of mind. It's a higher state of being, and we're all living in these different states. So, music for me, especially American music, was about those different emotional states that we're in, like anger. And that's why I didn't like people to think of this music, like the way Frank Wright played, as being angry. A lot of people thought that we were angry, and I wanted to calm that down a bit. So, that record that I made for ESP went along with the label's concept of extra sensory perception – ESP – and I believed in that concept. That record was my contribution to the label.
Cadence: When did you become interested in Buddhism and do you practice it?
Silva: Oh, yeah. I believe in incarnation, I'm an incarnation. Personally, I became a Buddhist in the '60s because I took LSD. You know the book that Timothy Leary wrote [The Psychedelic Experience] based on The Tibetan Book of the Dead? He described the process we go through in Buddhism of when you die, and you have to go through many different states to be reincarnated in your new form. When I took LSD, I entered this state because I was familiar with my incarnation. I had been a Buddhist in my past life and this life is just like a continuation. That's what came to me in my work. Once, around age 18, in 1959, when I was walking in a mystic bookshop on Eight Street, this book came popping out [on its own from the shelf]. I had to pick that book up – it was the Lotus Sūtra. That book was so difficult to read at first, I couldn't understand it at all. It took a long time. I even gave it to Sun Ra. He thought it was fantastic. Eventually, I could understand it after 5-6 years of working on it. That's how I became affiliated while I was in New York with the Japanese Nichiren Shoshu sect of Buddhism that practices the Lotus Sūtra. At the time I started my study, [flutist] Becky Friend was practicing this practice, so that's how I got involved. My world until then was art and music, and the Lotus Sūtra gave me a social system to put it in. Sun Ra gave me the cosmic concept. I didn't consider Buddhism a religion, I consider Buddhism as a philosophy because it doesn't believe in a divine being. What I like about Buddhism is that they look at it from an organic point of view. You have to be

born, first and foremost, to be alive, and that's organic. That's why I couldn't get the Christian God thing. Is he alive? I was more scientific, I liked biology in school. When people ask if I believe that God created the world, I tell them I'm not going for that. Organic life, man. I don't believe in superiority or inferiority. I can't accept that. We need to think of everyone as equal.

Cadence: Why did you decide not to play bass on Skillfulness? You played violin, cello, piano and conduct, but there is no bass on the recording.

Silva: [Laughs] Right, yeah. Everybody wants me to play bass. Why? I'd been working on violin. I had Karl Berger on vibes, we had been working together. I had been playing bass with him and sometimes violin. I also had Mike Ephron on organ and Becky Friend on flute. I didn't play bass because I wanted to explore these instruments with my piano work. The bass was not on my agenda for that gig, and I wanted to demonstrate my early idea of free improvisatory music. All the music there is improvised, nothing is written. The name of the album is Skillfulness which is the idea of being skillful and it is the title of the second chapter of the Lotus Sūtra. In this chapter, the Buddha is trying to explain to his disciples. Skillfullness is a methodology of explaining about the different practices, but the Lotus Sūtra is the primary vehicle. It is the final teaching of Kadima Buddha. So, Skillfulness is my [attempt] at trying to explain the skillful means in which I tried to convince these people to attain enlightenment because the goal of all Buddhists is to attain enlightenment in this lifetime and to be a bodhisattva. Until all people attain enlightenment, we will continue to come and forth [into lives]. If you listen to that music, you will see that I was very ahead on any kind of string instrument playing at the time. If you look at the work I did on violin, there's no violin or cello player like that in Jazz at that time. Both instruments, I broke ground. There's no cello player in Jazz in 1968 except Calo Scott. I was the first violin player on ESP. Bernard really liked what I did. After that recording, I started working on my conduction.

Cadence: You started playing the violin in the late-'60s and used a very unorthodox technique. Why did you hold it downwards, between your legs, and play it like a cello?

Silva: I played it like the way an Indian plays violin. When I was working with Alan Lomax in World music and studying world instruments, he had an enormous collection of instruments and sound worlds. I saw a lot of Indian music during the '60s. I played it like a cello because it gave me more access to the fingerboard. I sat in a chair, but I saw the Indian musicians sit on the ground. I put a clamp on my leg so that I could hold it and it could be freestanding. It was a whole different approach to violin, and it was fantastic. It wasn't the European way. I played it more like contemporary music, more like ragas. I was used to playing bass so playing it that way, I didn't have to twist my

body.

Cadence: You were one of the first exponents of conduction [the spontaneous creating of group composition without the aid of written music], starting in Sam Rivers' loft in the '60s. What about conduction attracted you early on and who else was very interested in it at that time?

Silva: The first time that I saw conduction was Leonard Bernstein conducting the symphonic orchestra as a kid. My school would take us and I used to go right up front and I'd watch him. I remember when I was a little kid living in Bermuda, I was listening to Beethoven on a good sound system and I was moving my hands, conducting. Later on, I read up on a couple of contemporary composers and about some of their techniques of conducting and gestures. In Jazz, the only ones I saw conducting were bandleaders in their tails in the early '20s. I saw Cab Calloway, with his tux, doing some gestures with a stick, and I thought, 'That's a nice show.' [Laughs] I know Duke did it too, but I didn't see him. When I really saw it done first was with Sun Ra. He conducted an opening piece at a concert we did with me on bass. He used his hands and his guys seemed to know what he was doing. I was so impressed by the way he was making his people play these different melodies and sounds. Then I read a book by Joseph Schillinger called The Mathematical Basis of the Arts, a big theoretical work, and here he had a whole bunch of gestural things you could do. And along with that, there was Theremin who used hand gestures to create sound waves. So, I put all this together to come up with an idea and started doing it with the first Celestrial Communications Orchestra with Sam Rivers, Becky Friend, Frank Lowe, and Karl Berger. I looked at conducting improvisation as if I were painting. My idea of music is more visual, and that's what makes my concept a little different than a composer's. This all came together on Seasons.

Cadence: Were you the first one on the Free music scene to use conduction?

Silva: I think so. It already existed in contemporary music to a certain degree, but not in improvisation.

Cadence: People tend to think of Butch Morris when conduction is brought up. Did you have a connection with him and how does your conduction technique differ from others?

Silva: He's the one who majored in producing it, I always give him that credit. He was working around the world doing conduction. I did not pursue that. I had an orchestra in Paris, and I did some conduction with it, but I wasn't doing it outside of my own work. He was doing it with all kinds of people. He did workshops and he was selling his concept. We discussed this. He had people that wanted to study with him, and he created a whole school around conduction. My work is my own personal system. I didn't try to teach other people about it. I didn't codify my system like [Butch Morris] did.

Cadence: You also used screams and vocalizations as a conduction tool?
Silva: Yes. I used to sing lines as another system I used which is called "oral transmissions." I could sing lines and the people would repeat it.
Cadence: Did Cecil Taylor have interest in your conduction?
Silva: Cecil didn't produce any real orchestra music. In fact, I encouraged him to have a large orchestra, which I thought he needed. I thought he had the great music to do it. One time in New York I told him that I wanted to do a conduction of one of his pieces, but he didn't want to do it.
Cadence: Why didn't he want you to do it?
Silva: We weren't in good shape together. I had some issues with him. I wanted to be known for what I do, and I think that people gave a lot of emphasis to him and not to me. Cecil got too much credit. Free music was my specialty, it was not Cecil Taylor's specialty. Ornette is not a Free musician either. So, these two people, who are named as the founders of Free Jazz, they're composers, but they're not guys like me. When Ornette did Skies of America, they were scores, and he improvised on top of it. He didn't get the band to improvise. I don't say I'm a composer, I'm a player. I'm an improviser, and my music is about improvisation. I consider Jazz as improvisatorial music.
Cadence: What was your involvement with the Minimalist scene?
Silva: I was involved with the Downtown New York scene in the 1960s - the Minimalists with Terry Riley, Morton Feldman and drones. Now people do drones, back then I was doing drones with my bass. With La Mont Young, I did a cello piece in his loft. He didn't ask me to write anything, he just asked me to play one tune. I understood the concept, but I thought it was a little boring as a performer.
Cadence: You appeared at the 1969 Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algeria as a member of Archie Shepp's ensemble.
Silva: I was impressed that I was selected to go to the Pan-African Cultural Festival. That festival was quite a rare event. I see this as a major turning point in my career. The fact that Archie Shepp selected me, and that I had a chance to go to Algeria, it was a fantastic event for me, as a musicologist. There were so many kinds of African music there and people, and they all dressed in their native costumes. The amount of music I heard in those 5 days was enormous and it really impacted on my work as an improvisor. We were coming from a point of Jazz as an American music, but our roots were universal World music. I thought this was the rising of the World music movement. Archie, and all of us, we all tried to bring that movement forward in our own group. It was important for us to identify with Africa. We were not financed by the American government, we were financed by the Black Panthers, and the people in the United States refused to deal with what this event really was. This was one year after the French student revolution and the passing of the Civil Rights Act in America.

Cadence: Your appearance there led to you getting offered to record for BYG as part of their recording frenzy of American musicians. Luna Surface by your Celestrial Communications Orchestra was an 11-piece ensemble [including Leroy Jenkins, Anthony Braxton, Shepp, Malachi Favors, Dave Burrell and Grachan Moncur lll] of fellow top improvisers. How did you arrange the band on short notice and what were your goals for the music?

Silva: I met Jacques Bisceglia when I first came to Europe in '65 with Cecil Taylor. He was a young French photographer, and I knew him very well because he was running a little restaurant where I would take my breakfast and dinner in Paris. He was at the Pan-African Cultural Festival because he was also an executive producer for BYG Records with Claude Delcloo, and they decided to bring the bands from the festival to Paris to record. The record company was offering all of us, Archie Shepp, Dave Burrell, Sunny Murray, Grachan Moncur lll, Clifford Thornton and myself, an exclusive contract to make two albums a year. In Paris, Archie Sheep decided that we all were going to play on each other's dates. The company was paying us anyway, a nice fee – about 3 or 4 thousand dollars advance per person. This was actually the first record under my own name since I did the ESP record. I played bass on most of those records, but I didn't play bass on my own record [Laughs] again. I played violin and I was the conceptual composer. My first piece with the Celestrial Communications Orchestra was called Luna Surface because at this time, the United States was launching their lunar program, so, I put this out [to represent] the sound of the takeoff and onto the landing on the moon. The concept was based on John Coltrane's Ascension album. I really liked the opening sound on Ascension, which was like a scale. My concept was that everyone plays for 20 minutes straight without having solos. So, we did 20 minutes like that. We did two 20-minute sessions and I timed it. We only made 40 minutes of music. Dave Burrell had this fantastic style of playing piano, like a rolling sensation. It was very unique, and I told Dave, 'Do that!' I told them, 'Don't think that you're gonna make a composition. Nope! This is not a head thing, this is a straight solo all the way through.' I didn't conduct either, this was a straight piece. And it was so dense, the engineer didn't know what to do with the sound because there was so much sound on the tape. And to reduce the sound to two tapes was, my God, technologically impossible because we had all these different tracks. He didn't know how to mix everything. This thing was massive, and when I heard it, I said, 'This is what I'm talking about! This is real cosmic!' The dude thought I was absolutely crazy, man. Archie Shepp said, "Damn, Alan, you're gonna put that out?" The engineers did their best to reduce to left and right tracks. This music was some of the densest I ever did. It needed to sound like that. It needed to sound like it never came from the Earth. [Laughs] I had just seen all that beautiful African music. That was real Earth music, the

music of Africa with all the instruments and dress. Well, I said, 'What we're doing is going to the fucking moon!' [Laughs] Sunny Murray wanted to make a homage to Africa, and I said, 'Yeah, y'all can go that way. I'm going to the moon!' Everybody was feeling how great it was being in Africa and [it inspired everyone] but my piece stood out as what the fuck is that? [Laughs] That piece got really bad reviews. If you want to talk about early Punk Rock... People didn't understand what I was trying to do.

Cadence: Why did you name the group Celestrial instead of Celestial? Celestrial has no official meaning in English.

Silva: [Laughs] I think that's misspelled actually. See, another thing is that I'm not very good at spelling.

Cadence: Your second recording of the Celestrial Communications Orchestra, Seasons [BYG Actuel], which many consider to be a milestone in the history of Free Jazz large ensemble projects, only happened because Stan Getz declined a 1970 Paris Christmas concert for a French radio house, and you were asked to replace him. With the 5,000 dollars that Getz was to be paid, you hired over 20 improvisers [including the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Steve Lacy, Dave Burrell, Bobby Few, Joachim Kühn, Michel Portal and Alan Shorter]. Talk about that event.

Silva: This was really a historical event for recorded music. This orchestra piece was two hours and thirty minutes straight-through. The radio engineers who recorded it had done a lot of work in orchestra music over the years, and afterwards they said they had never seen an organization like that in their entire fucking lives of recording music. That became, for the O.R.T.F. [French national agency that provided public radio and television], a real milestone in radio broadcasting. Seasons is known by all the European radio stations as an historical piece of radio time. First, because it was recorded with no breaks on two tape recorders, they never stopped recording it. I didn't know how long the concert would last when we started. When they contracted me to do the job, they didn't say how long I'd play. Alan Lomax used to talk about going to Africa and hearing some ritual music that lasted for 2 days straight. I became fascinated by that. Seasons stands as a piece of improvised music that had never been done before. No other composer had ever reached two and a half hours of written instrumental music in the West. It's a 3-album set. It's the first time in the history of the recording history that you have 3 albums for one continuous set. It is the longest fucking Jazz record in the history of records. This makes that recording one of the most important Jazz records in the history of recording, and it's a live recording. Later on, I did more pieces for radio. Most of my work has been done in the radio house. I stayed in Europe because the Europeans appreciated what I did.

Cadence: There was an issue at the recording session regarding crowd control?

Silva: More than 2,000 people showed up but only 250 could get inside the studio. They had to put the music on speakers outside the radio house. They overran the place, and we had the police there. It was really a major thing. I was impressed myself, although I didn't really know about it until after the performance. It was a critical level of crowd and they didn't know what to do with these 2,000 people. There was a journalist who had a lot of power and he encourage young people to listen to my music, so they came out to listen to it. I've been thinking of doing a book on this.

Cadence: The CCO appeared at an opportune time in France. The music and message resonated with the 1968 French student revolt.

Silva: I never saw myself as a political musician, although I respect the political issues of Free music. The Pan-African Cultural Festival was organized by people from Algeria who were on the left. The whole thing included the Black Panthers, Timothy Leary and the American Civil Rights Movement. The whole thing was put into one whole big bag. The Leftists from the United States in Europe were talking about some Socialist revolution, but I did not want to link that to my music. I disagreed with the writers who saw [my] music as protest music. I know that everybody puts me in this protest bag because of those two records I did on BYG, which were really important records for me because people remember them. As I said before, Seasons was my concept of celestial. I wanted my music to be non-Earthy. The other artists, like Archie and Sunny, were making music with an African theme. I played on their records and people confused me with that political view. I would like to point out that in the past, I fought in the Civil Rights field, but that was not part of my work as an improviser.

Cadence: After moving to Paris in 1972, you joined the Frank Wright Quartet in 1974 [with Bobby Few and Muhammad Ali] after Noah Howard left. Why did the group's name eventually change to the Center of the World?

Silva: Frank Wright was already in Paris and had done a lot of records together with his quartet, but he had no bass player. At the time in Paris, I didn't have too much work and I was wondering what I was gonna do. I was doing a few solo concerts and then Frank asked me to join the band. Frank and I go back to Cecil Taylor's group, the one that played at the Fillmore West. Back at that time with Cecil, I asked Cecil to become a collective band called the Cecil Taylor Unit instead of the Cecil Taylor Quartet. I told him if he'd do that, I'd be alright, because I didn't want to be a sideman in his group. I wanted it to be a full partnership between me and him. I proposed this idea of a band where all of us had equal rights, but Cecil did not agree. He wanted to keep it as the Cecil Taylor Quartet, so, Frank and I left. Frank agreed on this. So, when Frank called me, I told him it can't be the Frank Wright Quartet, it has to be a name we decide on, it had to be a collective. That was my philosophy, and that's why people didn't hire me. When you

hire Alan Silva, that's something a little different. So, with Frank, we decided the name would be the Center of the World. That became our publishing company and the name of the group. I told Frank that I'm the Celestrial Communications Orchestra, I just recorded a band, and that he was also part of this band. We both agreed that we had now two bands – Center of the World and the Celestrial Communications Orchestra. That's how Frank and I became a cooperative. All the things I wanted to do with Cecil, I did with Frank Wright and this band. With that band, we ran our own business. This was my idea - we're in control. In Jazz you gotta take control of your own stuff and you have to invest in it. I told everyone in the Center of the World to give me 300 dollars and we made our own record label.

Cadence: How was the name for the band derived?

Silva: I came up with it. You know – Center of the World. [Laughs] Like it?

Cadence: It's a little grandiose.

Silva: Yes, right, it was the sound of the center of the world. Okay, this is deep shit. Now we're getting to the philosophical. There's the idea of center, the idea that center is always round. I'm a visual guy, I'm not verbal. I think of it like looking through a microscope when I was 9 years old, looking down through the lens and saying, 'Damn! What the fuck is that shit?' So, the band, for me, was like looking through that microscope. So, center is the circle for me, and the band was four components- piano, bass, drums, and saxophone. These were all frequencies inside this big sound, it was like a frequency playing all the time, and we don't stop.

Cadence: Would you compare and contrast the experience of playing on stage with Albert Ayler and Frank Wright? Both were such powerful and spiritual tenor saxophonists who reached ecstatic levels.

Silva: Wow, let me get a cup of coffee. When you ask the question about feelings, that's very important because emotions are the most complicated thing to put into words. You can listen to the music and the emotions are all mixed in the music itself. That was a big issue for me – making sure the emotions in the music were the most important thing. That the music had some state of mind that the public could reach. This comes from the psychedelic movement. It comes from smoking dope. People came to the bar to drink. I tried to explain that to Frank, I said, 'People come here to drink, man. They don't come here to be spiritualized.' I knew that from working in the cocktail lounge, I knew that from working in the strip clubs. Hey, the girl got to take her clothes off, and we've got to put the music to that. Now when it comes to spirituality, that's very private, and I was for that. I was not for making revolutionary music, I was not going to be involved with people killing each other, and I told that to Archie Shepp. But I was for giving people a spiritual message.

Cadence: Well, how did the experience of playing with Ayler differ, if it

did, from playing with Wright?
Silva: There was no difference. I only played a couple of gigs with Albert Ayler, but I played a lot with Frank Wright. Frank didn't get all the credit that he deserved. My music with Frank was on the emotional level, and that was my problem with Cecil. Cecil's music was too much from the brain level and I was more interested in emotions in music, not your technical abilities. That's why I didn't like too much European music because it was too fucking technical for me. An essential point of American's contribution that made our music unique wasn't the composers, it was the guys who played the music and who put their emotions into the music. Take Frank Wright, he took that emotion and put it into a saxophone – whoa! The critics didn't understand the esthetic. They thought we were angry, but that wasn't true. People never understood about John Coltrane's later music. Why did he play like that? I watched John clean a club out. The club was full, and at the end of the night no one was there, just me and Cecil Taylor. I knew that [type of] music could not work in a club. This was a spiritual message, not a revolutionary message, and I want to be clear on that. After all these years, people have not asked me what was the message?
Cadence: Talk about the Center of the World group.
Silva: We made a record called the Center of the World which was recorded at the first gig I played with Frank, other then the time he played in my Celestrial Communications Orchestra. This was different because I played bass this time. This was in Holland at a radio house, and that's when I found out how fantastic this band was. This was some new shit that we were doing – a real breakthrough in the relationship between four people. Our four elements became something that I'd never had before in my entire life. To experience the kind of improvisation at this level, was beyond what people might think, because none of those people could ever understand what we were playing. I know a lot of music and this was like the highest scientific level that I could go. There are only 12 notes, but the world of music is so complicated, you dig, all these levels of frequency. Muhammad was playing so many complicated drum patterns, it would take a thousand computers to figure out exactly what he was doing. We were a top band, we played in a lot of countries at Jazz festivals.
Cadence: Would you share a memory of Frank Wright?
Silva: The guy could drink a lot of beer, but I want to remember him for his genius on saxophone. Every time we played a gig, everyone in the room loved that band. I didn't like musicians who played intellectually but without feelings. Feelings for me were very important. That's why I liked Frank Wright. Even though he didn't have a lot of technique he was able to express himself, and that's what I was interested in. How do you express yourself? Yeah, you may improve your skills, but your expression is more important. I'll tell you a story. We played in Italy with Charles Mingus playing first. And after

our performance, all 2,000 people, nice Italian Catholics, were taken somewhere they'd never had been before. Those people all stood up at the end of that concert to applaud, and that was the greatest feeling in my entire fucking life, man. And the greatest mind in music, Charles Mingus, was sitting and listening to that music, my great revolutionary bass teacher, and he said, "Alan, please don't use the chains, that was really tough." Frank had brought chains from Georgia that you would have for a horse, and we began the concert stirring a long string of chains on the ground. It was to remind people of the chain gangs during slavery. We were telling a story. We were giving these Europeans a cultural message and story about slavery with our African dress on. The band had great achievements that Americans don't know about. It was sad that the band broke up. Frank didn't agree with it, but we broke up. That was painful for me. I never thought that we'd breakup because we were in control.

Cadence: Why did the group breakup?

Silva: That's a real story. The quick story is that I was a control freak, I guess. I kind of believe in destiny and I'd try to figure out why some bands were more famous than others. That was my problem. I'd see a band that was famous and know they didn't play that well. I don't really want to get into this, but I would wonder, 'Why does the public choose this shit, because it's as terrible as a motherfucker.' You understand? So, if we're gonna judge what the public says… I don't believe that I can analyze what normal people would decide. From my view, Frank Wright was one of the greatest saxophone players, and that band was one of the most interesting bands, but [the public] doesn't know that. The level of emotions, you don't get that kind of honesty in other music. Improvised music is different from all other music and it's one of the oldest art forms on the planet. Frank Wright was playing his own sound. He transferred his emotions to his horn. It took John [Coltrane] a long time to do that. The timbre of Frank's horn, and all the things he did on stage, is what made him Frank Wright. Off the stage, he drank a lot of fucking beer, man. [Laughs] If I could keep him on the stage, maybe he'd be a better guy, but the problem for us was we were not working. I don't want to go into it, the guy was a great guy to be around and work with.

Cadence: You didn't solo in that band.

Silva: I don't like to play solo. Stand on the stage by yourself? That's as boring as a motherfucker. That's like Anthony Braxton doing that shit. I said to Anthony, 'You don't want to hire a bass player? You don't want to hire a band?' I used to say that to Steve Lacy – 'You're taking all the money now from a quartet.' If you're gonna take jobs away from other people, then you're bad news to me.

Cadence: By 1975, your main interest turned to teaching when you co-founded your school, the IACP [Institut Art Culture Perception] in Paris. Your intention was to teach improvisation, rather than

Jazz. Talk about what made the school unique and how you recruited students.
Silva: The school had a lot to do with the breakup of the Center of the World, which had been my main source of income. Also, the shift to not wanting to travel. With the band, we had our own truck which we spent a lot of money on to make it great, and we could travel anywhere in Europe by car. This was taxing on me, but it was the only way we could make it to a gig economically. I put a lot of money into that truck, and moving that band around France, getting gigs, was my job. You've got a club? I can come to your club. When the band broke up, I was left with nothing except my room, so I had to get an income, and that's how I began teaching. What started me teaching was a young kid from Philadelphia who came to Paris. Somehow he knew I was living in Paris and he found me. He came knocking on my door on a day that I had no fucking money and said he wanted to study the bass. He said he would be in Paris for a year and I said, 'Good, go buy a bass and be ready to pay 3,000 dollars in advance for classes and come back and see me.' Two weeks later, the fucking guy comes back with the bass and the 3,000 dollars and I began teaching him. That's how I got into teaching. I got a guy who could pay my rent and put some food on my table. Beautiful. This young kid was brilliant, and I taught him the bass, my way! I didn't teach him to read music, I taught him how to gravitate, and that became my technique. Students came to me because I had a certain way of teaching. I didn't produce a book because if you produce a book, people take your book and don't come to take your lessons. I made it so that if you couldn't pay for 2 months in advance, don't come and see me. I guaranteed you 1 hour of my time, but you had to pay for that time, and that became my concept and the basis for my school's concept. I could build up quite a sum of money in advance to pay my bills, because this was my job and that's what kept me alive. This young kid was very helpful because he went and got me 3 or 4 other American students. When I got up to 10 students, I was economically secure, and I kept getting more students. I was living in France, tax-free, making at least 25,000 – 30,000 dollars a year. I didn't make that on the fucking road playing music, man. I had a 40-hour work week and over 40 students. With the Frank Wright Quartet, I struggled like a motherfucker, but with teaching, I made 5,000 dollars a month. That became my core. What? Go on the road and play with Cecil Taylor for 100 dollars? That's crazy. Plus, I didn't like other people deciding when I was to work. Eventually, I started getting so many students, not just Americans, but French students started finding me and wanted to learn how to improvise. Some didn't have technical abilities on saxophone, so I had to find somebody to teach them saxophone. By then I had fashioned my method and I could teach any instrument. I ended up handling 350 students. [Laughs] I also had my own rental studio business and did my own concerts in Paris. I was a business

within a business, I had a corporation. I didn't depend on the French state for nothing. I was an independently operating guy with the Celestrial Communications Orchestra, doing 5 concerts a year in Paris and having 2,000 people come. I had plans to stay in Europe although this was an American project, and the French government didn't like it. Jazz Magazine [a French magazine] didn't like it either because I was making more money on Jazz than they were.

Cadence: Did you have professional musicians come out of your school?

Silva: Yes, eventually. In the beginning, I taught my methodology, which was the IACP methodology. It was a corporation. I made books, and if you wanted to teach my method, you had to teach it in my school, so I had a lot of French guys who learned my method and taught it in my school. In the beginning, I had my students play in my band. The Celestrial Communications Orchestra had 30 guys in it. I'd install them in the band, and they'd work in our system. The people who did not become professional musicians became good listeners of the music. They became people that we could sell records to. They became the audience.

Cadence: Developing your own pedagogy program was an impressive feat.

Silva: I was prepared for that. I studied with George Russell and I had his books. I studied music pedagogy by observing at the university. My three individual influences were George Russell, Harry Partch and Joseph Schillinger, the Russian theoretician. Put Sun Ra on top of that and that's my sauce. [Laughs] I felt that listening to records were key. The record can teach you a lot if you can learn how to analyze a record, and that's what I taught. These people couldn't play their instruments in the beginning, so we had exercises where they learned to do that. If you had no fucking knowledge of the instrument, this was a 3-year program. For 10 years, from 1972-1982, more than 3,000 French students had passed through this system. Some of them became musicians, some didn't, but they all connected with the school.

Cadence: What other unusual teaching techniques did you utilize?

Silva: First of all, I wouldn't let them read music. They didn't learn how to read at the beginning, they had to learn what I call the "geography" of their instrument. In teaching the bass, they had to learn the positions and listen to the sound of their instrument. For each instrument, I had special techniques that they had to do. They had to find their own sound. We studied how they played air, how to stand, the way to hold the instrument, they studied all of this before they learned how to read. This was all unique. The guy who came first to study bass with me, it was 6 months before I let him read a note of music. Then I taught him how to read, and he read [snaps fingers] just like that. He told me 10-20 years later, it was the best exercise he'd ever learned. He astounded his next bass teacher because he knew his instrument. In Africa and India,

people don't read music, but they're taught instruments. I had 5,000 Jazz records in my record collection and every student had to spend 2 hours a week of Jazz listening and 5 hours a week of music class. This program didn't exist anywhere else in the world. The training was for amateurs, not professionals. I wasn't teaching people how to be a Jazz musician. I was teaching them how to play an instrument for fun. I didn't want to make professional musicians. A musician is an artist, he's expressing himself musically.

Cadence: Synthesizers and computers started to interest you in 1986. You saw their creative potential as performing instruments, and you've continued to explore the use of electronics and technology. Has electronic technology lived up to your expectations?

Silva: This was a new instrument, an instrument of the 20th century, a new sound. I learned a lot about this from Donald Byrd when he was studying for his doctorate degree in music education. He said, "Alan, the synthesizer is the new shit!" He had just come back from a conference. He went on to make some very interesting recordings with synthesizers on Blue Note. I liked that you could hear the structure of the note on the synthesizer and I saw this as a way to educate the public, turning them on to records and teaching them what music was. I'd say, of course it's lived up to expectations. The new computers are fantastic. A lot of the music I made on computer has not even been released. I have 100's of compositions on synthesizer that I have on file that I've never put on record. That's another part of my career that I've wanted to do. I started working in this field in the 1980's, and when I left the school in the '90s, I became interested in computer music making improvisation and orchestrating. I did a lot of stuff in Germany, which I never did anything with. I'd improvise and then I'd score the whole thing. When the French government and the people decided that they didn't have interest in big orchestras anymore, that's how I got out of the orchestra business. I decided to go into the computer music business because then I could work every day. No one was interested in a big orchestra anymore and I couldn't ask my guys to practice together when there were no jobs.

Cadence: It was unusual that you were a bass player who changed focus to synthesizer.

Silva: Yes, most synthesizer players have been piano players. I was the only bass player to decide to become a synthesizer player. I loved it because I could have all the strings on the keyboard. I had violin, cello, I could make a lot of great stuff. I wanted to be a big string orchestra behind a band, and I did one record with William Parker and Kidd Jordan on a beautiful synthesizer with weighted keys.

Cadence: One of the ways you're currently utilizing technology is through a music and video streaming service you've developed called Abstract Rhythm in Time DigitalART that you publish almost daily. Talk about what you're doing there.

Silva: That's what I want to push now. This is something people don't seem to understand – abstract relationships in time. An area of my life that had a profound affect on me was LSD - from an artistic vision, not a psychological department. In the 1960's, I was an abstract expressionist. That was an American art form in which you used gestures to create your works of art. The big thing for me as an artist was how was I able to play Charlie Parker or Duke Ellington's music and make images of their music? What was the vision of this music? I put together that there must have been a connection between Jackson Pollock and all those Bebop musicians – a connection between abstract expressionism and music. I was very interested in putting those two things together. When I listen to music and get high on marijuana, the music becomes real, it starts to become a vision of these guys playing the song right in front of me. It's like I've got Louis Armstrong right in my room. This became an aesthetic for me as an artist in my studio and in my paintings. I used to paint on big canvass. It was impossible to paint the shit I saw on LSD. A 12-hour experience? Jesus Christ! In 1965 I had to stop [painting] because the LSD and the visions were just too much. I couldn't paint Jazz. In the early beginnings of Mac computers, they put up some visualizing software. I started looking into that and thought it would work. It was close to an LSD trip. It was a graphical language and I love that. At first, I used to look at white noise on the TV screen. [Laughs] Late at night, after the program was over, all you'd get was just the white noise. [Laughs]

Cadence: Why would you watch static on the TV?

Silva: Yeah, man. Me and Frank [Wright]. We'd get high and play music to this white noise coming on. [Laughs] Now you think we out there, see?

Cadence: Oh, now? I think that came closer to the beginning of this interview.

Silva: I told Frank, 'See that shit? If we can put that in a movie, we'd fuck so many people up.' Getting people high was always my job. [Laughs] Basically, that was my program. Getting America high was what I was interested in doing.

Cadence: How come?

Silva: I told Frank, 'This [music] has to do with dope, man. The only way to get these people to listen to what we're doing is to get them high.' My generation was born in the 1930s, that's the real weirdo generation of what I call the "Post-2nd World War Art of America." I'm like the last of these guys. I was born in 1939 and I fell into that psychedelic art movement of that period.

Cadence: We got off track. Would you talk about your Abstract Rhythm in Time DigitalART?

Silva: Abstract relationships in time is the word A-R-T. Sun Ra taught the symbolic language. Like, say, -F-R-E-E = Frequency, Rhythm, Emotion and Energy. So, art for me was abstract concepts, rhythm,

all kinds of rhythm, and time. Music is these three elements. It's a time-based concept. You can't have music without time. Pulse and vibration are ingrained in us. Music has to be danceable. So, Abstract Relationships in Time is using the power of computer technology in converting light symbols into time. That was my program for YouTube in the beginning of YouTube. YouTube was a program for putting video on at first. You could put up 15 minutes of video and I had collected hundreds of these experimental things I had done on my Mac computer. I'd play my Jazz pieces and make all these different images, record it, and then slow it down, and that's how I ended up with the visual concept that Jazz now has its image. This is the abstract relationships in time images that are coming off the surface of the computer that I could now control as a video artist. And I call it digital art because now it is digitalized. Once we created a digital file, it became a whole new area of reproductive processing. We can now slow down a record and not lose any quality. I do a show and sometimes maybe 5 people come. I'm there for 5 hours on YouTube broadcasting. I was running a radio program where I was streaming 3,000 songs every day. I sit there listening to the music, maybe 3 people come. That's enjoyable. I also transmit bicycle trips [through the French countryside] and put it to Jazz music so there's music when you look at the trips.

Cadence: Does what you do now on the computer generate money?

Silva: Ah, I don't have to worry about money, I inherited money. I never wanted to make money on my art, anyway. The only thing was that in the United States, I wanted people to pay for my art. I don't think it's free. I don't believe in giving away shit for free. That's why I didn't like the word 'Free.' I'm not a socialist/communist, I'm a capitalist. I put things on the Internet because I'm interested in the Internet as a means of communicating with people. Today's Internet is bad for music. The public now expects free music, so many bands are working for free.

Cadence: In 2003, Eremite released your National Treasure Box, a 4-CD set of music performed by a supersized version of the Celestrial Composers Orchestra recorded at Switzerland's 2001 Uncool Festival. You hand-made and hand-painted the boxes which are signed and numbered in an edition of 385. Why did you go to such extraordinary measures in the presentation of this release which has become an almost impossible item to find?

Silva: Cornelia Müller, the organizer of the Uncool Festival, came to me in Berlin when I was playing with William Parker and invited me to her festival in 2 years. She wanted me to do a Celestrial Composers Orchestra piece like the Seasons piece I had done at the radio house. She was a psychiatrist, and she used my Seasons piece in her work. She commissioned me to do that for her festival. I decided to use mainly Americans for the band and that we'd do 2 concerts, each of which had to be at least 2 hours long. To have 30 great musicians come and only

play for an hour was ridiculous. This was a big expense for her, and she wanted to make a recording of it for her record label. Swiss radio taped it and Eremite was willing to press the CDs for her label, and I decided to make a box. I'll explain why I have the box because it's a very important concept. It comes from Center of the World concept. I didn't like the CD size, I felt it was bad for Jazz. The CD was the worst piece of merchandise put on the market for artistic development, and anybody in the art world would tell you that. You can't read anything or put any art on a CD. I've worked with records since I was a kid, and the CD size was the worst you could have for a product. My box is exactly the size of an LP. [He holds up a Treasure Box] At that time, I Googled Jazz on the Internet and saw that the United States government had declared Jazz to be an American national treasure [in 1987]. The name is coming from the idea that Jazz is a national treasure and that all of us musicians from America are considered treasures. I decided to make this a project. I was in business, again, there we are [Laughs] – Alan Silva's business. I designed it with a French artist who designs furniture out of cardboard. I had him design me a box and we took it to a manufacturer. Each one of the boxes has my original art. We made 3,000 boxes and each one was going to be sold for 120 dollars each. They were art objects that were to be sold only by mail order, not in the record shops. I took this concept to Verve in France and they weren't interested.

Cadence: Are you saying that you have more boxes?

Silva: I own the design. I can reproduce the boxes if I want to. I own the patent for it. We stopped selling it almost 10 years ago. I'm out of the business now, I'm 81-years-old. I've been watching sales of it on eBay for the past 10 years and nobody has sold their boxes.

Cadence: What do you think your Treasure boxes should be worth these days? There's one listed on the Internet for 300 dollars.

Silva: That's great, that's exactly what I was predicting. I figured there were 3,000 Jazz collectors in Europe, and I was always encouraging people to collect records. These are art objects. There are drawings inside and outside of each box. I never think of them as commercial. This box was an investment if you kept it. Every musician in the band, received a box for payment. They were also given [unfinished] boxes so they could make boxes themselves to sell if they bought the CDs to put inside of it. That's how I wanted that band to work, but nobody came back asking for more boxes. My wife Catherine, before we were married, was very important in realizing this project. I couldn't have done it without her, she put her money up. She's an artist too, and she did a lot of beautiful boxes herself that were sold. Otherwise, I was the only one working on this and it was a really hard project for me. Sometimes it made me depressed.

Cadence: Your performance at the 1999 Vision Festival in New York City, leading the Sound Visions Orchestra, was your first appearance in the United States since 1968. That's a gap of over thirty years. Why

haven't you played in your homeland?
Silva: No one hired me. I was in Europe and no one in the United States decided [that I should play]. And the only way those people at the Vision Festival hired me was that they found out I was coming to see my mother. I had done an album with William Parker [A Hero's Welcome] on Eremite and he invited me to play the festival if I was in town. There was a group of us in Europe that were pioneers in developing the music in Europe. I had no intentions of going back to America. If Americans wanted me to play in the States, they would have sent for me. They could have written about me. The only thing they could remember was that I played with Cecil Taylor. That was the only thing I did in their eyes. After Cecil's Blue Note records, who is Alan Silva? He just went off the scene, but over in Europe, I was something else. I've not gotten credit in the States for what I've done in Europe. Europe has produced a different history for me. It was tough for me to be in New York with my ideas and not be able to get a public.
Cadence: You reappeared at the 2004 Vision Festival as part of William Parker's Bass Quartet that featured four Free Jazz bass legends – Parker, Henry Grimes, Sirone, and yourself – along with Charles Gayle on alto sax. How was it to play bass with that collective of bass improvisers?
Silva: That was an interesting project. We didn't rehearse so it was a real improvisatorial concept. It was a challenge to organize that because each of us have different approaches, and then we had Charles Gayle. It was a rare event for me, playing with that many bass players with different styles. I really like playing as double basses, like with Henry Grimes.
Cadence: Painting has been a longtime interest of yours. You favor creating abstract expressionism. How big of a role does painting fit into your life and do you sell your work?
Silva: Abstract expressionism was something that I started as a young painter, mostly with acrylic paint and paper, not on canvas. As I said, I was trying to capture music in my painting. I felt that was what these painters were doing. If you look at Jackson Pollock's paintings and put on a Charlie Parker record… If you're listening to a song while you're painting, there's interaction going on, but once you've finished the painting, it can go with a lot of different songs. It depends on who buys the painting. I didn't sell any of my paintings, although I had a couple of galleries in New York City who were interested in my work. I worked on the streets of New York during the Greenwich Village Art Shows. I was a street artist and that had a profound influence on my interest in light shows and video. I never made any money on selling my work until I made the boxes.
Cadence: Are you still painting?
Silva: I stopped, and the digital screen is now my workplace. I stopped because painting is just one image and it's finished. I also didn't have a

studio.

Cadence: You have a brother who is a writer. What does he write about?

Silva: He writes books about homosexuality. He was one of the first to write a homosexual tragic novel. His name is Owen Levy, and his first book is called A Brother's Touch. He sold about 30 – 40 thousand copies. My other brother was a saxophone player. He was a sailor first and then he got involved with bringing big quantities of marijuana into the United States. He'd bring in 12 million dollars' worth of marijuana. He owned 2 boats, 3 houses, and the Feds took it all when he went to jail, which is where he started playing saxophone. He actually got very good at it by playing every day in jail. In fact, what I wanted to do was to open up a Jazz club in New York and have people smoke marijuana there.

Cadence: That would be illegal.

Silva: Right! I didn't see why they let people drink alcohol [and not smoke marijuana]. I became a member of the Native American Church; whose members are the only ones who are allowed to smoke marijuana and peyote in America. If you joined the church, you could smoke marijuana in New York. The Supreme Court gave them the right because they use it for religious purposes. I didn't like marijuana use as a pleasure drug, that was what the criminals wanted.

Cadence: You and Catherine moved to the country [Le Mans- 218 kms from Paris] in November 2004. How is life for you there?

Silva: That was the greatest thing I ever did. In 1992, I moved to Germany, after being asked to join a group that Frank Wright created, along with A. R. Penck, the German painter and drummer, and that's when I first started living in the countryside. I moved back to Paris in 2000. Living in Le Mans is great. We have a nice country house, and it's been great for my health because I can have fresh air. Catherine was the key to making that move. She's French and wanted to be close to her parents who live in Le Mans.

Cadence: Anything you care to say about what else you've been doing over the latter part of your career?

Silva: As I said, I've been working on my relationship with the Internet, which is a big part of my life since the "Net" was created. I use it and my career is documented on the Internet much more than any other place. I ran my own Jazz radio station for over 10 years to educate people about Jazz and its history. That was called Live365, and we had 35-40 broadcasters playing a lot of different musics. I was bringing people music they couldn't get in the record shops. You have to realize that this was before the CD was made. We had to convert vinyl records into MP3 to put them on the "Net." That's where I understood what the computer was, and that became my whole world. When I joined the Internet, guys like me, 50-years-old, were rare, but I came to it to do my work as an artistic director.

Cadence: Did you make money from the radio station?
Silva: No, and that's the drag. Live365 was a nice platform. You pay 5 dollars a month to be broadcasted a certain amount of records every month. They paid so that we could pay the musicians the royalties for every song played. We couldn't get anybody to buy 5 dollars a month for 720 hours' worth of music. The Pandoras and all those people took the idea from Live365. Live365 were guys like me just putting up their record collections, and we had a lot of beautiful guys that had beautiful records that no one was playing on the radio. The radio station in your town- what are they playing? But on the Internet you could play records from 1940. It was only fair that you should pay for that, but these people wanted to pay nothing. Pandora is just making those corporate guys a lot of money, not the musicians, and the government is allowing them to do that.
Cadence: Do you still practice bass?
Silva: No, there's no reason to. Nobody calls me to play the bass. I haven't had a job in 2 years, man. So, what am I supposed to do? I'm not doing that anymore.
Cadence: Are you retired?
Silva: No, I'm not retired. [Catherine laughs in the background] People could have called me when I was up in prime. Look at William Parker, a lot of record labels recorded him, but I was not being recorded by anybody. I was recording myself. I've got a LOT of music of myself recorded on tape.
Cadence: What are your interests outside of music?
Silva: First of all, I'm a Buddhist. I've been a Buddhist my entire life actually and that's a driving force in my life - to create a Buddha man. I don't believe in life after death, I believe in living your life the best way you can. My garden here is a Buddhist garden, and you can see that on the Internet. I started it 10 years ago, and that's a big project I did with the land here that's all documented. The second thing is riding a bicycle. I put a camera on my bicycle and I go out and record roads where I'm living, and put that on the Internet with Jazz put to it. The Internet is my retirement. I'm retired. I accept the fact that I'm retired, and that's how I use my retirement. That's what you should do at 80-years-old.
Cadence: What are your guilty pleasures?
Silva: I don't have any. [He calls over Catherine for input]
Catherine Silva: Yes, I have one. He's a complete fan of the Star Wars movies and he loves all the Marvel movies.
Cadence: The last questions have been given to me from other musicians to ask you:
Joëlle Léandre (bass) asked: "What do you think about music in France, creative music, and all those festivals where nobody who plays creative music performs?"
Silva: As I said to her before, I was not for the festivals. I was for the

Jazz club concept of improvised music. When we talk about creative music in France, you have to realize that before the French government got involved in music, especially creative music, it was during the '80s. During the '70s, French producers were the ones who were producing music. From her point of view, as a French woman, she rose in her career when the government decided to sponsor improvised music, so she is a product of the system. But for me, I was an American living in France, and Jazz here is American music in France, and I'm from the point of view that we're a business. She may disagree with me because fundamentally, from a Frenchman's point of view, this is what they do. The festivals are really big in France because the government invests in them, but they want French Jazz. When she says creative music, it's what we generally call European improvisation. Mine is American improvisatory concept, not European.

Marshall Allen (multi-instruments) asked: "I remember the times you played with the Arkestra. Would you give a memory about playing with the band?"

Silva: I remember my first time with the band we played a set in Slugs from 9 o'clock in the evening to 4 o'clock in the morning. Sun Ra played the entire time, and we would be shifting, going out to get food. He'd continue to play, no breaks. I remember saying, 'God damn! This is the longest concert I've ever done in my entire life! What are you guys doing, man?' No breaks, nope. From 9 to 4 they were on the stage playing. We'd take turns going out next door to get some chicken to eat. For me, the experience was unbelievable the first time I played with these guys. Marshall Allen and the band, the intelligence - I couldn't believe what I heard from this band. All of them were great. There was not one person in the band who was not an original and I couldn't believe the level these people were at.

Oluyemi Thomas (multi-instrument) asked: "Greetings Mr. Alan. Please talk about your approach to the Spirit of Silence, Spirit of Tones, and the Spirit of Sonics in your life and your compositions/ intuition and performances. Peace."

Silva: Oluyemi Thomas and his wife [Ijeoma] are really deeply involved in the spirit world. The first time I played with him I did a record [Transmissions] on Eremite and I played bass. That was one of the rare times I could play the bass the way I wanted to. I think the work I did on that album was part of these things that he's saying. When we played together he really understood what I play on the bass. And the spiritual dimension of him and his wife, it's an ancient spirit. They're both of the Bahia faith. Everybody that I play with is different, it's always unique, but with him, it was very unique. Playing with Marshall Allen and Sun Ra, that's unique. I improve when I play with people like them. I played a number of times with Oluyemi, including at the Vision Festival, and I don't have to say too much about it, it's exactly what he's saying. The music speaks for itself, more than

anything.

Steve Swell (trombone) asked: "I am curious to hear about the actual meetings of the Jazz Composers Guild that Bill Dixon started. How were the meetings organized? Barry Altschul told me a little bit about them, that they were upstairs from the Village Vanguard."

Silva: The first thing was coming up with the name and deciding on what we were trying to do. Those were the issues that you could write a book about. This was a group of guys trying to figure out what kind of organization they wanted to be. That was the big issue. What are we talking about? Are we talking about being a union or an association or are we talking about revolutionary measures? What will this group do? That was our problem, deciding on what we wanted to do. I was in the meetings and I'd say, 'What do you guys want to do?' A lot of time was spent during the meetings on people talking about their own basic problems of trying to survive. I'd say, 'Look man, I'm not here to solve your financial problems.' I was trying to find out what Bill Dixon was trying to do. These guys didn't know what they wanted to do. That was my problem with it, and I was the youngest there. They were talking about gigs and I said, 'Gigs? What? You've got no fans here. There's nobody who's going to pay for anything.' They didn't seem to understand that. They were talking about the politics of not getting hired in certain clubs such as the Vanguard, but they didn't have an audience to fill a room, and they did not want to come to grips with that. The meetings were chaotic. They were filled with people just expressing themselves about what? They had no jobs. And I just didn't think it was interesting. There was no organization. It was different from the Chicago guys [AACM] who decided to make a non-profit organization and get a charter. This group never did that. They couldn't figure out which way they were going to go. Were they going to be a business, a performing arts group, an educational group, a record label, a union? I don't really want to give it a bad [name]. I had been in organizations before. I was in a civil rights organization, the NAACP, so I knew how it could work. I realized that we needed a space to give concerts and Bill Dixon found that the dance studio above the Vanguard would let us rent the space on Saturdays and Sundays. I said, 'If you lose this space, you have nothing.'

Burton Greene (piano) asked: "Alan, when we first met and played together in the church basement in Brooklyn at the end of 1962, did it ever occur to you that we were creating a milestone for generations to come in music with the formation of a band totally dedicated to making spontaneous music together without any preconceptions?"

Silva: Yep, that's Burton Greene. [Laughs] Burton Greene had the words in our group. He was a very intelligent guy, and he was able to put it into a context. All of us were very strong in the theoretical area of music. That means that we knew composition and what role each one of us played in the composition. That was the major thing that made

us different. The Free Form Improvising Ensemble was my concept of a group, it wasn't a quartet. That was the problem that we had. Burton wanted it to be the Burton Greene Quartet and I didn't like that. I wanted a collective name and that became the big problem that I think broke the band.

Burton Greene also asked: "When I met you, you had so many flecks of different colors of paint on your clothes. You were a Free painter before you became a Free musician. Jackson Pollock obviously had a big influence on you. In a way, Jackson was not only a most important innovator of free expression in painting, but also, he could be considered a father figure to the Free spontaneous music that followed. Would you agree?

Silva: Oh, yeah, there were similarities between the abstract expressionist painters and musicians. Jackson Pollock came to New York and had his first studio in Greenwich Village, along with the other painters in the art community downtown. They were living with all these Jazz musicians in the Village at the time, and many of them identified with the Jazz artists. We were downtown and Pollock was another poor guy coming from painting. The abstract painters could not get into the uptown galleries. The uptown art world was Picasso, not American art. It's the same with Classical music. You look at any symphony orchestra in the United States, 90 percent of their music is European, no American artists, man. And that's what I go against. People don't consider records as art, but I do. When Ornette did Free Jazz, they put a Jackson Pollock painting on his work. But, I have to say that it was me and Burton, and some other musicians in New York, who were the ones who were really doing improvisation, not Ornette.

Cadence: What were you doing musically right before Burton joined you?

Silva: When Burton came in '62, I was doing things in churches. I wasn't playing Jazz, I wasn't thinking of myself as a Jazz musician. I was still doing cocktail music then. I was playing commercial music. Burton and Gary Friedman thought of themselves as Jazz musicians and I got labeled as a Jazz musician because of them, but I never was a Jazz musician.

Dave Burrell (piano) asked: "Please elaborate on that exciting experience during the crossing of the Mediterranean one night from Algiers to Marseilles in August, 1969."

Silva: [Laughs] Oh! Where'd you get that from? That's a real fucking story, boy. We were spooked out, I'll tell ya. We had to leave Algeria after the festival, and I was paranoid over the political situation in Algeria at the time. I was trying to keep positive. We Hi Ken, I cant find Alan's website for photos?d were under contract to go back to Paris to do the BYG sessions and they were the ones who were responsible for helping us get on that boat. There was a very tight schedule we had to keep and paranoia over not knowing where we were going. It

felt like a precarious situation that we had no control over. We were in a real heightened level of anticipation of how we were getting our money and our passports. So, me and Dave were sitting on this boat and talking about this experience that was so historical in the sense that we had gone back to Africa and played for the people. Dave was a guy who, as a piano player, had a different style than Cecil and Burton Greene, and that's what I was impressed by - his approach to the piano and composition. We talked about free expression that night, and that my idea did not involve written music, it involved this immediate expression. How to sustain it was what I was worried about and whether or not we could make a living at it. We talked about how we could possibly survive. I remember sitting on the terrace of the boat, looking at the sky. I can't really express those feelings I had sitting on the Mediterranean with some wine, but it was spectacular. We had no place to sleep so we slept in deck chairs. It was Dave and I, sitting out there talking all fucking night. [Laughs] Why's Dave asking me that kind of question? He knows that was a freaky night. We didn't know what was going on – getting from Algiers to Paris.

William Parker (bass) asked: "You are one of the most original thinkers in music and art. What is the key to your longevity?"

Silva: [Laughs] I'm still surviving! What's the key? The Creator, the Creator has a master plan. It's nice that William asked me that, but I don't really feel that I'm that important. It's nice that people think that I'm important, but basically, my ego doesn't allow me to do that. My ego doesn't tell me that I'm important. History will not know about Alan Silva.

William Parker also asked: "Now that Trump is gone, will you consider more frequent visits to America?"

Silva: [Laughs] Wow, beautiful. I remember when we had 9/11 with George W. Bush, and I said to William, 'I'm getting' out of town.' We had just done Jazz is the National Treasure of America. I did that project, and I came back to America. William was responsible for [me being in the States] because he had the Vision Festival. William was born in the Bronx and I grew up in Brooklyn, so we have this bond. I knew him when he was a little boy in the Village, him and his wife. He knows that I have this problem with America. I told him that I was in Europe because I didn't like America, I didn't like what was going on. When Richard Nixon won the election in the United States, that's when I got out. I couldn't believe the American people would vote for Richard Nixon after Watergate, and that's when I said I ain't coming back unless you send me a ticket. Eventually, my mother died and she left the house to me and my 3 brothers. William wanted me to stay in the United States, but I didn't think I could fit in there anymore. I'm really proud of what William's done in New York as a bass player. I'm really impressed.

Muhammad Ali (drums) first wanted to give you a message: "The

nickname that I gave you is "Silver Bells," named after the Christmas song, because that is the feeling I had for you, personally. You were like a bell to me. I called you that and then everyone in the [Frank Wright] band started calling you "Bell." I wish that you continue to stay well, and I have always appreciated playing with you. I know we will remain who we are to each other forever."

Silva: Wow, thank you very much. That was really beautiful. "Silver Bells," [Laughs] yeah, everybody fucking called me "Silver Bells." Piano, bass and drums have always been the core, and Muhammad, I and Bobby Few made great musical history together with this band. I didn't think we'd ever breakup. We were a unit, and it was difficult to play with anybody else after that.

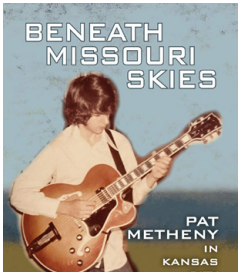
Muhammad Ali (drums) asked: "You were my favorite bass player at that time, when you were playing with Albert Ayler and Cecil Taylor, and then when we met and started playing together. We developed together from '74 and into the '80s, and as much as we played, we were able to find each other and our playing became more intense. We were both young and we brought each other up. We developed together. Your conception of the music was just extraordinary. We both had a tremendous passion for playing the music. We did some beautiful gigs together in the Frank Wright Quartet. Would you talk about the festival we did in the '70s in the South of France? We were on the program with Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp. Those were the three leading bands of the avant-garde at the time and that was a beautiful festival."

Silva: Antibes was the top festival in the South of France, bringing in all the great American artists. The 1975 festival had Cecil Taylor, Archie Shepp and the Center of the World. We were the first band to play, and this was a real fantastic opportunity for us because we were gonna wipe out everybody on that stage. Frank wanted to be the last band, but I told him we needed to go first because the audience was all our audience. These were the French people who came to our concerts in Paris. So, we played the first set, and they gave us a really fantastic response and it was hard for the other bands to follow us. Cecil was last to play and he said, "What the fuck are you doing? I told him, 'We're the baddest shit here!' [Laughs] He didn't like that. We had a stand there and we sold over 200 records that night. None of the American magazines knew or wrote anything about what happened at that festival that day when 2,000 people stood up and applauded.

Cadence: Final comments?

Silva: Thank you very much. It was good to reexamine my life like that. There are things in my life that I regret like Cecil Taylor not taking the gig with The Doors, and Albert Ayler deciding that we were too far out. My whole life is [like that], and then I ran away to Europe and worked in my own little area. Now I have my house and I'm 81 years old and okay. How are you going to type all this up?

Book Look



BENEATH MISSOURI SKIES: PAT METHENY IN KANSAS CITY 1964-1972
BY CAROLYN GLENN BREWER,
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS PRESS.

This is the 14th book to roll out from Denton, Texas in the North Texas Lives Of Musicians series. It follows David Dann's excellent Mike Bloomfield biography which this writer covered in an earlier edition of this publication and can be found in the 2020 Annual Edition on pages 212 & 213.
Of course it's a completely different set of circumstances from reassessing a deceased artists work as opposed to covering the early years of a celebrated musician who is still very much with us. These dozen chapters start with the eleven year old protagonist hearing the Miles Davis Columbia record Four & More. For those unaware Pats older brother Mike is a considerable trumpet player with several albums of his own and the culprit that turned the young lad onto the joys of modern jazz. From then on it was the age-old story of practice, paying dues in various bands and a time of apprenticeship from liner note readership to hearing name groups in person. Many of his mentors or influences are noted such as Atilla Zoller, Clark Terry, Herbie Hancock, Freddie Hubbard and Gary Burton. It was with the vibraphonist with Steve Swallow & Paul Wertico that this writer caught the guitarist for the first and only time. Ms. Brewer doesn't go into detail regarding Metheny's distinctive musical style and although this book is dedicated to fellow band directors isn't overladen with academic prose. There are sub-divisions to the chapter along with end notes for each one , an eye-catching photo gallery, a bibliography and index. My favorite section was the Appendix:The Kansas City Jazz Scene which holds almost thirty thumbnail sketches of local jazz figures. Like Wayne Shorter (among a few others), this journalist is more a fan of his music writing than his actual playing and it is interesting to note that he seems to be moving in that composing direction with his latest release. Nonetheless this is an interesting rendering of his formative years and may we look forward to more titles in this series ?
(Larry Coryell, Roy Buchanan, Jerry Hahn, Robben Ford, etc.). Recommended.

Larry Hollis

Film Review: Fire Music

Fire Music: The Story of Free Jazz
A film by Tom Surgal

The film opens with a great clip by the Sun Ra Orchestra.

A narrator talks about how music started with one guy on his porch just playing. Then as people get added things become more formal. What free jazz did was to undo that formalism and go back to the beginning to see if we can still talk to each other and improvise freely.

Then on screen we have this quote: The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. From Karl Marx

First chapter is about Ornette Coleman. With various critics talking about the past and how it evolved into free jazz. There is a big discussion of Charlie Parke which puts Ornette in context. With brief spots by Ornette.

Chapter two is Cecil Taylor, with great clips of his playing.

And in talking about the transitions between styles, there is a great discussion of Charles Mingus, and the influence of Mingus on freer music, especially because of Eric Dolphy. And this leads to a discussion of Sonny Simmons and Prince Lasha, who came to New York because of Eric.

This leads to John Coltrane. And how everyone mover to New York, which became the center of free jazz. And how Ornette's record Free Jazz was a catalyst of the movement.

The next section is called out of the bop and into the fire. When the music was criticized as being unintelligible Cecil says that while musicians have to prepare, so do audiences.

And in this context we get a good discussion of Don Cherry. And back to Ornette and how black musicians weren't getting paid what white musicians were getting in the same clubs. And this then leads to a discussion of the jazz Composers Guild by Bill Dixon. And on to the whole New York scene in the 60s.

Then we get an interesting discussion of the changes of John Coltrane and how the Avant garde influenced him, and how, in turn, he influenced them. How Coltrane helped the careers of Archie Shepp and Albert Ayler.

The film then shifts to the Midwest and the AACM and their influence, with a special look at Europe. And back to New York and the Loft Movement with Sam Rivers.

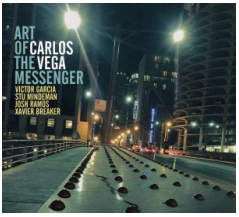
The final segments are about the scene in Europe and the film ends with a great section on Sun Ra, which brings the film full circle.

But there is a coda about how jazz is going back to the mainstream, and how the free players lament this

To sum up: This is a very interesting account of free jazz and it's major sources and influences. What makes this film so good is that most of the interviews about the music are by the musicians themselves. And we get just enough clips of the musicians playing to hear what is being talked about. So find out where it is playing and go and watch.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



CARLOS VEGA
ART OF THE MESSENGER
ORIGIN 82824.

ART OF THE MESSENGER / BIRD'S WORD / ODE TO THE PATIENT OBSERVER / ACROSS THE OCEAN / DON'T FORGET TO ASK / SOMETHING TO SAY / OH / THE OWL / WHO COOKS FOR YOU / HEED THE CALL / SERENATA FOR BELA. 75:06.Vega,ts; Victor Garcia, tpt, flgh; Stu Mindeman, p; Josh Ramos, b; Xavier Breaker, d. 12/18&19/2017. Chicago, IL.

Here's a belated present for all us hard bop lovers. This Carlos Vega has a pair of previously issued discs for the Origin label and is not to be confused with the drummer of the same name. Those two platters were salutes to Bird but this time around its a nod to powerhouse drum-master Art Blakey

Vega's bandmates are the same on all three discs so one has little trouble understanding how super tight this quintet is on this third album. Each of the eleven compositions present are from the pen of the leader which lends even more cohesion to the program. The trumpet and tenor lock in like two lovers over an elastic band-like rhythmic bed to produce some scintillating sounds. The leader allows everyone plenty of solo space as he should since, although not well known, these guys are beasts on their instruments. Both upright and drum kit get to stretch out impressively but it is Victor Garcia who knocks it out of the park every time out. Straight out of Freddie Hubbard to these ears (and liner scribe Neil Tessers) this is a brassero to watch. His frontline comrade also is equal to the task of keeping up with him and holds many sax strains in his stylistic bag which lets him fit in with the Chicago "tough tenors" school. Garcia lays out on tracks 7 and 11 and there are a pair of sambas heard with crackling drums on "Across The Ocean" and "Heed The Call". My sole question concerning this fine offering is why it took over three decades to release.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

RAJIV HALIM/ SHAREL CASSITY / GREG WARD, ALTOIZM.

AFAR MUSIC NO#.

CEDAR GROOVE / BEMBE'S KIDS / THE MIGHTY MAYFLY OF TRUTH / THOROUGHBRED / THE TIME HAS COME / JOHN COTTON / LAST MINUTE. 42:00.

Halim, Cassity, Ward, as; Richard D. Johnson, p; Jeremiah Hunt, b; Michael Piolet. d. 1/7/2021.

One doesn't have to think back to far to remember the days when multi-horn gatherings were JATP-style assemblies blowing over the changes to old standards was the norm. This current trio of altoists finds them essaying a batch of from-the-group originals. All are from the Chicago area and none are exactly household names. The best known is Sharel Cassity who has a handful of titles in her resume and is a perennial "rising star" in critics polls. Like her companions she is a child of Bird with her own take on the neo-bop idiom. Her composition opens the proceedings with a fluid solo which regular listeners have come to expect from her. There is a more aggressive statement from Greg Ward before the theme. Initially inspired by Charlie Parker, Rajiv Halim's sole contribution tune-wise has him as the only e-flat soloist followed by an impressive spot from Sharel's husband Richard D. Johnson who also serves as MD for the occasion. This writer hears a faint Cannonball influence in Halim among other alto aces. His debut album Foundation came out in 2015 so this isn't his first rodeo. Beginning with a repetitive piano chord Greg Ward's "The Mighty Mayfly Of Truth" is the most complex sounding item on the agenda with solos from all saxes (RH/SC/GW). Like his bandmates, Ward is an educator, music scholar and passionate soloist. Like her work "Cedar Groove" Ms. Cassity's other penning "Thoroughbred" is a contrfact of another jazz giant, Benny Golson so all you aficionados out there can guess which classic its based on. Where the opening number is built upon a Cedar Walton piece that goes under two different titles the Golson framework is from a certified jazz classic that most erudite listeners should be familiar with. This is followed by the only ballad of the set, "The Time Has Come" scripted by pianist Johnson with shimmering ensemble playing by the ensemble (reminiscent of Supersax) and Sharel singing a lyrical investigation of which she is a master. Ward is heard from once again in his "John Cotton" with the reed trio trading lines before a hot shot from the composer. Things wind up with the appropriately titled " Last Minute" from Johnson replete with inner action by the front line swapping choruses. Consider this a master class in alto-ology. Mention must be made of first rate rhythm backing helmed by pianist Johnson (who also produced). Judging from his astute comping, sharp charts and sterling soloing he sounds overdue for an album of his own. This one has my nomination for sleeper of the year .

Larry Hollis

New Issues

BILL EVANS, BEHIND THE DIKES, ELEMENTAL 5990441.

DISC ONE:(ANNOUNCEMENT BY MICHIEL DE RUYTER} / YOU'RE GONNA HEAR FROM ME / EMILY /STELLA BY STARLIGHT / TURN OUT THE STARS / WALTZ FOR DEBBY / 'ROUND MIDNIGHT I LET A SONG GO OUT OF MY HEART / ALFIE / BEAUTIFUL LOVE / MY FUNNY VALENTINE / LOVE THEME FROM SPARTACUS (*). 59:40.

DISC TWO: ONE FOR HELEN / QUIET NOW / SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME(#) (ANNOUNCEMENT BY AAD BOS} /VERY EARLY / A SLEEPIN' BEE /TURN OUT THE STARS / AUTUMN LEAVES / QUIET NOW / NARDIS / GRANADAS(A)/ PAVANE(A). 57:47.

Evans, p; Eddie Gomez, B; Marty Morell, d. (A) Metropole Orkest. (*) 3/26/1969.Hilversum (#) 11/28/1969. Amsterdam. (A) 3/25/1969. Hilversum.

Subtitled The 1969 Netherlands recordings, here is another gemstone from Zev Feldman and crew. Encapsulated in a two-fold digipack with a thirty-one page booklet packed with never-before-seen photos, commentary by Feldman, Bert Vuijsje, remembrances from Eddie Gomez & Marty Morell and a reflection on Evans by Vijay Iyer. Here we have three sets impeccably rendered by what was the pianist's longest running trio. Listening to these renderings brought back the title of an old blues song “It Ain't The Meat, It's The Motion” due to the fact that the tune list consists of very familiar items in the Evans reportoire but it is the way in which they are presented that makes them acquire an interesting freshness. It is clear that the audiences dearly loved the man and his music and bassist Gomez reiterates that fact in his interview portion. That affectionate reaction from the crowd plainly had a positive effect on the band and it can be heard throughout the concerts. True, there are some of the famed delicate touches evident but to these ears this is some of the most animated Bill Evans playing this writer has ever heard. Too many highlights to mention but there are some nice upright spots from the always dependable Gomez and Morell is mostly discrete yet rock solid. Another great addition to the Bill Evans Trio discography.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

THE COOKERS
LOOK OUT!

GEARBOX-1571.

THE MYSTERY OF MONIFA BROWN DESTINY IS YOURS / CAT'S OUT THE BAG / SOMALIA / AKA REGGIE /TRAVELING LADY / MUTIMA. 54:38.

Billy Harper, ts; Donald "Big Chief" Harrison, as; Eddie Henderson, David Weiss, tpt; George Cables, p; Cecil McBee,b; Billy Hart, d. No dates given. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

The formation of certain super-groups has gained in popularity over the years mainly in the rock arena and idioms other that jazz or blues. They seem to burst upon the scene then almost just as quickly vanish. That notion is being dispelled by the seven piece combo known as the Cookers. Whereas most of these hastily assembled units last maybe an album or two the Cookers are now issuing their sixth release this time for the esteemed Gearbox label out of London. The cast of characters should be well known to most readers of this magazine. All of the arrangements, save one, are by trumpeter David Weiss who has extensive experience fashioning charts for larger groups. That one that he didn't arrange is the designated single, "Somalia" from Billy Harper. It features a chant in the manner of Trane's big number and solos from Weiss, Cables and Harper who, to my knowledge, has never had exposure on a domestic label. His voluminous Texas tenor bar-walking honk is perhaps to strong for some ears. One cool aspect of this release is that all soloists are identified track by track which will surely aid more novice listeners. Superlative sound from Maureen Sickler at the Van Gelder Studio, attractive graphics and first-rate presentation under the Gearbox logo all adds up to another grand slam from the septet known as The Cookers.

Larry Hollis

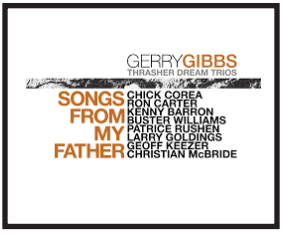
New Issues

GERRY GIBBS THRASHER DREAM TRIOS
SONGS FROM MY FATHER:MUSIC OF TERRY GIBBS
WHALING CITY SOUND 131

DISC ONE: KICK THOSE FEET(2)/ SMOKE 'EM UP(3)/ BOPSTACLE COURSE (1) NUTTY NOTES{4}/ TAKE IT FROM ME(2)/ SWEET YOUNG SONG OF LOVE (1}/ THE FAT MAN(4}/ LONELY DAYS(3}/ HEY CHICK(ALL 4 TRIOS + TERRY GIBBS). 48:12.
DISC TWO: TOWNHOUSE 3(3}/ T & S(2)/ 4 AM(4)/ WALTZ FOR MY CHILDREN(1)/ HIPPIE TWIST(3)/ LONLEY DREAMS(2)/ FOR KEEPS(4)/ PRETTY BLUE EYES(3)/ GIBBERISH(4)/ TANGO FOR TERRY(1). 48:35.
Gerry Gibbs, d all tracks: (1)Chick Corea, p; Ron Carter, b.(2)Kenny Barron, p;Buster Williams,b. (3)Patrice Rushen, p; Larry Goldings, org. (4)Geoff Keezer, p; Christian McBride, b. circa 2020/21. Various studio locations.

This is a very unique album. True, it is a concept work of sorts featuring all-star trios performing writings from the protagonist. And it is a tribute package of sorts in that it celebrates that person in a very personal way. Lastly it is fairly unique in the fact that it honors jazz giant who is still very much with us at age 97. We're speaking of Terry Gibbs, vibraphonist, composer, big band leader and all-around swinging jazz musician. The genesis of the project is explained by son Gerry in the generous booklet housed in the twin disc digipack. The eighteen selections stem from the pen of the elder Gibbs and each platter is tagged at end with "Hey Chick" where all the trios play along with a snippet of a previously recorded vibes solo by the honoree and on the second disc an original especially written by the late Corea for the occasion. Numerous goodies are strewn throughout with the expected dazzling keyboards of Barron, Keezer, Rushen,Goldings (supplying organ basslines) and Corea in what may be his final recorded statements. Everything is mostly upbeat except for two ballads "Lonely Dreams" &
"Pretty Blue Eyes". It's heartening to hear contemporary musicians paying nods to an older figure. Hopefully this will provide impetus for further recognition to those jazz elders (Lou Donaldson, Roy Haynes, Benny Golson and many others) still sharing the air with us.

Larry Hollis



New Issues

WE ALL BREAK
PATH OF SEVEN COLORS
PYROCLASTIC RECORDS

WOULE POU MWEN/ HERE'S THE LIGHT/ LEAVES ARRIVE/ WOMEN OF IRON/ LORD OF HEALING/ RAW URBANE/ PATH OF SEVEN COLORS/ THE VULGAR CYCLE 59:37

Ches Smith, d; Matt Mitchell, p; Miguel Zenon, as; Nick Dunston, bass; Sirene Danor Rene, vcl; Daniel Brevil, perc, Markus Scwartz, perc, Fanfan Jean-Guy Rene, perc

This recording is by an interesting group led by Ches Smith and is described as being influenced by Haitian Vodou. Daniel Brevil started finding traditional Haitian songs to fit Smith's musical vision and we have this record.

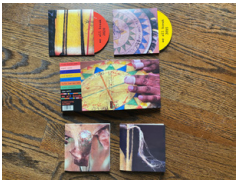
The music has that Caribbean lilt, which makes one want to dance. The songs are in French but all the lyrics are included in the download. The first track opens with a piano and has solo voice with chorus. But track 2 takes off. Also featuring choral and solo singing, the percussion comes through. There is also some great sax work from Zenon and a nice piano solo by Smith who really captures the rhythm.

Lord of Healing starts off slow with chorus and solo singing. Then about half way in the tempo changes and the soloists take over. Throughout the recording Zenon and Mitchell provide excellent solo work, always original but always within the rhythmic context. And the percussion section really cooks here.

My favorite track is raw urbane, perhaps because it is almost completely instrumental, but mainly because it really cooks. This is an excellent example of Afro-Haitian, as opposed to Afro-Cuban music. And it is the one that comes closest to a good blowing jazz session. Zenon really stretches out here.

In short a really enjoyable record. One can listen to it, one can sing along, and one can dance!

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

ROS BRANDT AND THE MEDUSA ENSEMBLE
MEDUSA DREAMING

NEUMA RECORDS

THE TEARS OF YEREBATAN/ FROZEN LOCKS, ATHENA'S CURSE/ FISH DREAMING/ ODE TO EMPEROR JUSTINIANUS/ WATER THROUGH GLASS/ CORINTHIAN SONG/ WATER DREAMING/ MEDUSA DREAMING/ BASILICA DREAMING/ FROM BELGRAT FOREST/ 52 STEPS TO THE FUTURE OF WATER 56:36

Natalia Mann, tarhu; Ros Brandt, flts, air whistle; Erdem Helvacioglu, elec guitarviol; Izzet Kizil, perc

Always good to listen to something outside your normal sphere. The theme of water runs through this recording. The notes point out that this recording is a re-creation of a concert which took place in the Basilica Cistern beneath Istanbul. There are flowing sounds which do simulate the sound of moving water. But there are also some interesting sounds from different instruments. And some voices. On the second track people speaking behind very airy musical sounds. From what is stated above, I am going to assume they are speaking Turkish.

The water theme runs through the recording very nicely. The flute and air whistle create lovely open sounds, underscored by the strings and percussion. The tarhu sounds very much like a harp in places. The combination of harp and flute is magnificent. While this music is so different, I started thinking of Mozart's concerto for flute and harp, another piece where the combination is beautiful.

The three Dreaming tracks are very dreamlike but every once in a while something might wake you up. A bit of percussion or a voice. And the trip from the Forest is a bit noisier with the electronic sounds of the guitarviol are used effectively.

The final track also has voices and, in some sense, it would be nice to know what they are saying, but it really isn't that important. Just think of the voices as part of the musical sounds. The water sound is almost constant throughout this track, and it ends with what sounds like someone walking.

A really interesting record. It works as a kind of background mood or ambient music as well as something to listen to carefully.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

X PRISM QUARTET
HERITAGE/EVOLUTION VOL 2

XAS RECORDS

FORBIDDEN DRIVE/ IMPROVISATIONS/ SUPER SONIX/ TONES FOR M 76:20

Timothy McAllister, ss; Zachary Shemon, as; Mathew Levy, ts; Taimur Sullivan, bari s, Joe Lovano, ts; Chris Potter, ts; Ravi Coltrane, ts, ss; June 2, 2017 Philadelphia and May 11, 2015 Brooklyn

Here we have a saxophonists dream. Seven sax players, with no rhythm section. The main group is the quartet, made up of, McAllister, Shemon, Levy, and Sullivan, with Lovano, Potter and Coltrane as guests.

The opening piece by the quartet exhibits great harmonies and textures. The featured soloist here is Joe Lovano who does a very nice job of fitting in with the quartet.

We then get a series of ten short improvisations with Chris Potter either solo or with a different guest on different tracks. Instead of trying to listen to each track separately I just let them play and appreciated all the interplay. Potter is constant throughout and each other guest works with Potter in their different ways, allowing for a kind of theme and variations program, which constantly maintains the listener's interest.

And then back to the quartet with each track featuring one of the guests. Lovano gets more space here than Coltrane, but that is because he contributed more of the compositions. And on Super Sonix there is an interesting use of a gong. And on another Super Sonix track there is a drummer. And the recording ends quietly with the quartet featuring Potter and Coltrane. But no matter who plays everyone turns in a great job.

Highly recommended.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

NATALIO SUED
JARDIN DE ESTRELLAS
EARS AND EYES RECORDS

ANGELES/ BIFURCACIONES GAUCHO URBANO/ DICIEMBRE/ TRES HISTORIAS/ ZAMBA SATIE/ ATOMOS MOLECULES/ BLOOD TEARS/ WALKING TO BROOKLYN/ ADIOS 61:09

Natalio Sued, ts; Demian Cabaud, bass; Luis Candeias, d Lisbon, September 2020

The opening track is a nice slow ¾ tune. Sued's tenor has a bit of a harsh tone, somewhere between Coltrane and Rollins, which I like. We then get a nice bass solo. In spots Cabaud reminded me a bit Mingus. And Candeias is a very busy drummer whose work complements the soloists beautifully. In some ways this piece sounds like a duet between Sued and Candeias being held together by Cabaud.

Gaucho Urbano, or I guess 'urban cowboy' has a nice dance rhythm to it. Sued's tenor swirls nicely over the rhythm, Cabaud is rock solid under Candeias' accompaniment, while never losing the rhythm. The rhythm sounds South Amrican and Sued is from Argentina. And on Diciembre we get some solo work by Candeias with interplay with Sued. I love the sound of his drums. He has a great touch and phrases nicely.

Tres Historias begin with unison statement of the melody by Sued and Cabaud and moves into some great blowing and then returns to the unison melody. And for a great contrast, Blood tears is a beautiful ballad with Candeias on brushes.

And we end with a lovely Adios, and with a harmonic.

A really first rate record by three musicians who listen and work well together. This stays in my collection.

Bernie Koenig

JON IRABAGON
BIRD WITH STREAMS
IRABBAGAST RECORDS
ANTHROPOLOGY/ SIPPIN AT THE BELLS/ BEBOP/ ORNITHOLOGY/ NOW'S THE TIME/ DONNA LEE/ HOT HOUSE/ SCHWIFTY/ MOHAWK/ K.C. BLUES/ GET SCHWIFTY/ SEGMENT/ MOOSE THE MOOCHE/ BLUES FOR ALICE. QUASIMODO 51:30
John Irabagon, ts Black Hills, South Dakota

The record opens with some growling, very un-Birdlike, but I guess it is to put his stamp on things. And as I listen, I find very little of Bird and all of Irabagon. I assume that since I am totally unfamiliar with him. This is my first experience of hearing him. Also, the title with streams is relevant since it sounds like the recording was done outside near a stream.
As I get to Ornithology I was actually able to detect the melody. But he is all over horn. He clearly is a very proficient player and probably, based on what I am hearing here, more of free player than a bebop player. And on Now's the Time, there is no sense of melody, but lots of growling. And, what sounds like bird sounds.
Also, the idea of streams seems prevalent as on a number of the tracks we hear loud background noise, which I assume is a fast running stream, On a number of the tunes Irabagon leaves space so we can hear the roar of the stream.
While it is clear Irabagon is a good player, I have two negative comments here. One is that though this is supposed to be some kind of tribute to Charlie Parker, there is no sense at all of Bird in Irabagon's playing. That is not necessarily a problem as we all do tributes in our own way, but he is too far from Bird, even on the playing of the melodies. Second, probably because this is a solo album, after a while the playing gets a bit repetitive. I now this is difficult to avoid, especially as I am a free player, but when doing some kind of tribute, referencing the honoree would go a long way to avoid that problem.

Bernie Koenig

GGRIL - SOMMES

TOUR DE BRAS RECORDS

DISC 1 ALICE/ CHAT/ IIOTS TURGESCENTS/ TO LEAVE THAT WELL 59:52

DISC 2 CHAT/ CHAT/ EISTPHEIST/ IN MEMORIUM ROBERT ASHLEY/ RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS/ UNE NOTE NECOUTANT QUELLE MEME 68:46

DISC 3 CHANCES ARE/ CHAT/ CHAT/ CUMULI/ HANTISES D'OS NOUES/ LA COURBE DU MOMENTS/ UNE NOTE NECOUTANT QUELLE MEME 56:50

Robert Bastien, el g; Isabelle Clermont, harp; Alexandre Robichaud, tpt; Eric Normand, el bass; Olivier D'Amours, el g; Catherine S. Massicotte, vln; Remy Belanger de beusport, cel; Gabriel Rochette, tbn; Robin Servant, acc; Sebastien Corriveau b clt; Mathieu Gosselin, bari s Rimouski Quebec

Given the length of this package I thought I would review each CD separately over a period of time. As I come to the end of the first CD, I am not sure how to proceed. Is this music all improvised, or is it composed? In one sense it doesn't matter since, as I have often mentioned, avant-garde music, whether composed or improvised still use the same musical materials. The music here certainly has an improvised feel to it, but in some sections the way the musicians interact feels composed, or at least agreed upon. The first CD is made up of one short and three long pieces. The short ones seem to set up to feature a particular performer, while the longer ones use everyone. The main piece on disc one is liots Turgescents and features a long drone section with minimalist developments. There are lots of noises made by the instruments, including what sounds like to me blowing into a mouthpiece. One can hear all kinds of small developments within the drone. And the next piece features an idea of a melody with interesting accompaniments and with very interesting harmonies. Part of this feels composed. The mix of instruments is also quite fascinating. There is also some uncredited percussion, which adds to the mix. Love use of vibes. And CD one ends with beautiful harmonic cadence. CD two begins with two chats: very short pieces each featuring one player. The first is an electric guitar, the second trombone. The first is credited to Pascal and the trombone chat is credited to Gabriel, who is the trombone player in the ensemble. Both pieces are interesting in what each player wants to 'chat' about. The first long piece on CD two features, among other instruments the accordion, which blends beautifully, especially with the electric guitar. In memoriam Robert Ashley begins slowly and develops nicely. In the background there a voice, barely audible and in French. Don't know who Robert Ashley was, but he must have been one hell of a guy. The first track of CD 3 is fairly long and develops nicely. Again there is some uncredited percussion. The two Chats are great. Each player gets to do something on their own. Cumuli builds nicely and uses voices at the end. And the next track starts with voices.

I have gone on and on. Time to sum up. Over 3 CDs and 3 hours I am still interesting in listening to this group. They work well together and the mix of instruments always keeps things interesting. I also love how they mix up the combinations of instruments to keep the listener involved. Truly interesting music making.

Bernie Koenig

FLOUNDER
I AM THE FLOUNDER
CURE-ALL RECORDS

I'M THE FLOUNDER/ CROOKED MILE/ HARD LUCK BLUES/ SPACE AGE/ TRICK KNEE/ PERSISTENCE BLUES/ THE CRAB/ CUT STRINGS/ SUCKER PUNCH/ PEOPLE MOVING 61:02
DAVID DVORIN, G, MODULAR SYNTH; RANDY MCKEAN, B CL, TS; CLIFFORD CHILDERS, B TPT, EUPH; TIM BULKLEY, D; WITH GUEST JONAH DVORKIN, PERC

To start off with a pun, there is nothing fishy here. The mix of instruments creates a lovely sound, often dominated by the guitar, but everyone can be heard, and the euphonium adds a lovely sweet sound to the mix. This is especially the case on Hard Luck Blues.

In spots I was about to complain about the drums, mainly because the beat was a kind of eighth note beat, which at times I find annoying when the solos are nice and loose, but then on Trick Knee Bulkley turns in very nice blues shuffle with brushes, just proving a point that one never knows the full abilities of any player. And also on this track the contrast between the synth and the bass clarinet is really nice. As much as I am Dolphy fan, it is great to bear a bass clarinetist not influenced by Dolphy.

In a nice change of pace, Persistence Blues is a nice short piece featuring Dvorkin on guitar. And that is followed by The Crab which features a nice arrangement showing off the interplay between the instruments. I love the repeating sound of the bass clarinet under the euphonium solo.

Over all this is a really nice record. There is some great writing and interplay, between the different instruments. At times I wondered if the arranger had some good classical training. And the solos are all first rate.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

ANDREW CYRILLE
THE NEWS

ECM 2681

MOUNTAIN/ LEAVING EAST OF JAVA/ GO HAPPY LUCKY/ THE NEWS/ INCENSIO/ BABY/ DISTANCE OF THE NUANCES/ WITH YOU IN MIND 53:53

Andrew Cyrille, d; Bill Frisell, g; David Virelles, p, synth; Ben Street, bass August 30, Sept 1 2019, New Jersey

Andrew Cyrille is one my influences. When I started listening to free jazz he was on over half the records I bought. I happily got to see him live a number of times. And so I am really looking forward to another record by him. I also like Bill Frisell's playing. So here we go.

As I listen, and I am up to track 5, I realize that this record is more of a showcase for Frisell and a bit for Virelles, while Cyrille shows himself to be a great accompanist. Since I like Frisell's playing, once I switched expectations, I just sat back and listened.

Cyrille's accompaniment on Nuances certainly exhibits that quality. He uses his tom toms in a very subtle manner backing the playing of Frisell and Virelles.

With you in Mind starts with a love poem about how love cannot be far behind. And the tune is a lovely extended work by Frisell.

At first my expectations were not met as I was expecting to hear more Cyrille, especially a good solo here and there. But once my expectations shifted and I started to listen to what was here, I found the record very interesting. Frisell is an excellent stylist and carries this record beautifully. Everyone provides excellent support, though at times Street's playing did not come through. And Cyrille showed himself to be an excellent and subtle accompanist.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

GRAHAM DECHTER, MAJOR INFLUENCE

CAPRI-74158

ORANGE COALS / REFERENCE /MAJOR INFLUENCE / MOONITHOLOGY / MINOR INFLUENCE / PURE IMAGINATION / BENT ON MONK / BILLY'S DILEMMA. 49:00.

Dechter, g; Tamir Hendelman, p; John Clayton, b; Jeff Hamilton, d. 8/17/2018. Hollywood,CA.

Finally,. It's been around ten years since we had a new recording from guitarist Graham Dechter.

That and the fact it was put down to sound almost three years ago. On the plus side, the same threesome (Jeff Hamilton Trio) that were on his previous albums are present on this one and the tightness is a given. As was displayed on those forerunners the leaders dexterity is breathtaking. He never runs out of ideas and his articulation is flawless. There is an inner bluesiness present that made this writer think of Herb Ellis, Kenny Burrell or Barney Kessel. There is not one track that doesn't command one's attention so that will be left for individual listeners to savor. Other than the evergreen, “Pure Imagination” the majority of compositions are highly listenable numbers from Dechter's pen some inspired by jazz giants of yore. And if one still has any doubts about this quartet just check out the blazing last track of this impressive work. Dave Stryker and Peter Bernstein need to may way for another fretboard star, one Graham Dechter. Highly recommended for sure.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

A SONG TO LOVE
VICTOR JANUSZ BAND
VJ MUSIC

A SONG TO LOVE, BORN IN A TENT, CHRISTMAS ON MARS, FRUITCAKE BLUES, LIVING IN A BLUE STATE, JUST ANOTHER SUNDAY, FRENCH KISS, STILL I REACH FOR YOU, SAINT-MALO, DREAMING OF. LENGTH, THE BONES OF RICHARD III, COSMO STREET, SOLDIER ON, GUADALUPE, DON'T START THE SHOW WITHOUT ME, LATE INTO THE NIGHT, JUST ANOTHER SUNDAY (INSTRUMENTAL).

They say that variety is the spice of life. A SONG TO LOVE is a piano - vocals album. It's also a lot more. It's a road map into the mind of Victor Janusz. Janusz demonstrates a freedom in his approach and an open mind with his arrangements. There is a range here that expresses the idea that music can be a varied thing. Yes, variety is the spice of life.

The songs are clearly presented and it's nice to hear clear simple arrangements that don't add too much. There is a balance here that positions the singer as entertainer and m/c presenting a show of musical ideas.

Zim Tarro

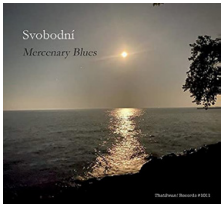
MERCENARY BLUES
BY SVOBODNI
THAT SWAN RECORDS

CICADA'S SONG FORUM 11:37 2 RUINS OF MARI 6:32 3 GANGES 6:33 4 BLUES IN THE KEY OF UR 4:04 5 THE WHORE FROM LARSA 17:01 6 MERCENARY BLUES 8:08 7 WOODEN SHIP 7:56 8 OTHER SHORES 15:34 9 THE HILLS OF NINEVEH 1:41

Phil Hunger, gtr; Davi Priest, bass; Brian Seyler, synth; JImmy Bennington,drms

Wow, this is powerful music, It reminds me of what the potential of rock music could do, the trance like, almost religious, group experience. Svobodni is a Slovenian word and it means Free. This music is free but it is not contrained to being non referential. It has a complex inner drive not unlike the various rhythms that make of a healthy heart beat. This is one of those albums that could become a soundtrack of the times. Jimmy Bennington's drumming is a real stand out. There are some poly rhythms going on here that really help the music happen. Bennington has many very good albums out on a variety of labels. Add this one to the many exciting projects in his stable - this one is a real gem. Great band. Kudos all around.

Zim Tarro



New Issues

SCOTT HAMILTON & DUKE ROBILLARD
SWINGIN' AGAIN

BLUE DUCHESS/SHINING STONE RECORDS 006.

I NEVER KNEW / I'M PUTTING ALL MY EGGS IN ONE BASKET / NEVER MIND / STEADY DADDY / ALL I DO IS DREAM OF YOU / BLUE LOU /PENNIES FROM HEAVEN / ESQUIRE BOUNCE / ONE O'CLOCK JUMP. 52 :21.

Collective personnel: Hamilton, ts; Robillard, g; Bruce Bears, p; Brad Hallen, b; Mark Teixria, d. Tim Ray, p; Jon-Erik Kellso, tpt; Sugar Ray Norcia, Sunny Crownover, vcl. No dates listed. Warren, RI.

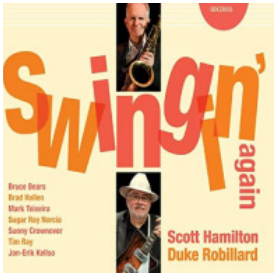
Scott Hamilton is a maverick among mavericks and Duke Robillard is a guitarist for all seasons.

As musical comrades they have a long term relationship and have successfully teamed on the bandstand and in the recording studio.

This current collection finds Hamilton with Duke and his band plus two singers, a pianist and trumpeter for ten tune assortment of ambient selections. Duke is mostly in his T-Bone bag and Scott, is well, with his confluence of swing sax masters.The other main instrumental soloist is Duke's piano man Bruce Bears who more than holds his own in this fast company and is spelled on two cuts (Blue Lou, Pennies From Heaven}. That latter number is the most unique of the lot, as it is usually taken up or as a novelty a la Eddie Jefferson, but here it is rendered as a ballad with effective tenor from Scott. Sugar Ray shows up on the second track and “You Can Depend On Me” with restrained vocals while Duke's band chirp Sunny Crownover shines on “Steady Daddy” that starts as a slow blues but kicks into double time for the rides. The closer is Bill Basie's 1937 classic “One 0'Clock Jump” with Freddie Green guitar comps and Duke's best solo statement to these ears.

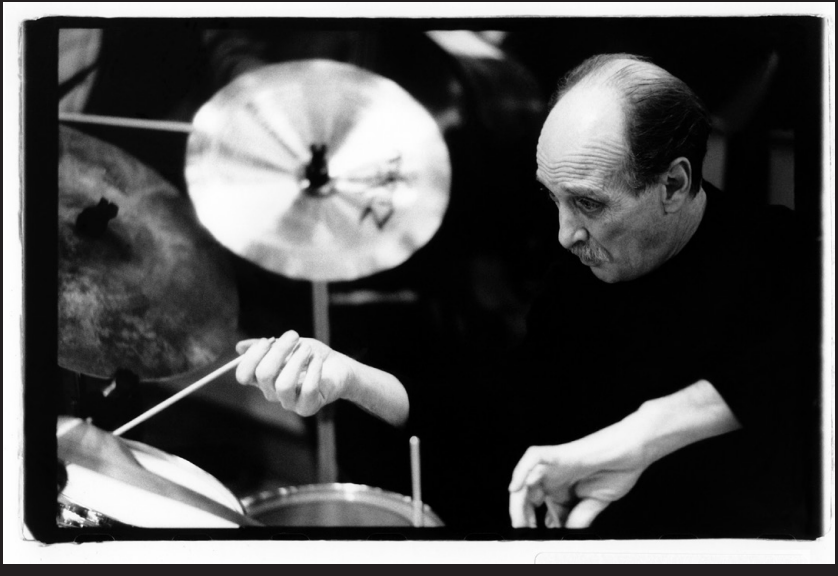
A real fun listen.

Larry Hollis



Remembering: Jerry Granelli

December 30, 1940 – July 20, 2021
Jerry Granelli at JazzFest Berlin 1992



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ARTHUR JUINI BOOTH

February 12, 1948 – July 11, 2021

There was only ONE Juini Booth.

by Nora McCarthy

An extraordinary artist, double bassist, composer, improviser, undefinable musical artist. He surpassed and defied labels, categories and comparisons, a grand master of improvisation, a conceptualist, a time traveler, an eternally young explorer of life and a man for all seasons….I could go on and on about one of the most unique, genuine, gifted and interesting people I was blessed to meet, work with and call friend – Juini was a friend for life, if he liked you, if he loved you and he loved so many people and even more who loved him. Juini was loved worldwide. He inspired everyone he met, and he touched everyone because Juini's home was his heart and his heart was his music which he gave so freely. No façade, he was the real deal, what you saw, and heard was always what you got, true to form, like it or not, approve of it or not, able to comprehend it, embrace it, or not. He reflected the human condition. Juini a follower or a 'yes' man, he spoke his mind always. The one defining characteristic of Juini Booth was that he was authentically endearing, a true to life living work of art, and a warrior of the highest order. "You've got to be strong Nessy," (his pet name for me,) "It's a war out there." "Every day missed, is a lost opportunity," he told me on more than one occasion throughout our twenty-four year friendship. His wisdom, based on the truth, the truth of his real struggle, his experience, his wins, his losses, his heartaches, his pain, was priceless, unforgettable and invaluable knowledge and wisdom.

His many professional credits will forever be etched on the wall of the greatest jazz and avant-garde musicians. This article isn't about all of the jazz masters he played with; this is about him. He left his mark on the music and equally on all those who met and knew him, in whatever role or character he was embodying in the moment of impact, the one he bore the most was that of a consummate artist who lived his music, there was no fronting, no duplicity, nothing was veiled, he was an enigma, but at his core, his heart, his soul, he was Arthur E. Juini Booth, the guy who grew up in Buffalo, NY and traveled the world with jazz royalty of which he was one.

Juini lived the dream and the life of a true artist with its many ups and downs – it wasn't always easy or beautiful,

in fact most of us could never have endured his trials however Juini was made of some other stuff; he was the warrior of which he spoke and he walked the walk traversing the tumultuous thicket of the jazz world and the music business, with courage, denying his own human comforts and security, he bore it all, the suffering in particular, unwaveringly and with a hero's grit, wearing only his music as his shield; he was indeed a formidable warrior the kind they don't make anymore. He and the other great few like him, represented this art form with the highest level of craftsmanship, God given skill, fearlessness and individuality. He loved and believed in the music and forsaking everything else, gave himself to it at a very young age. That was Juini Booth.

Magical, mystical, humorous as hell, vulnerable and formidable – a dichotomous soul and space traveler.

I met Juini in the late 90's. I was living in Harlem and finding my way as a singer in the NYC arena. One night I went to the Small's late-night jam. As usual, it was packed. Every seat was taken. At one point toward the end of the night, I got up to use the restroom and asked the fella next to me to hold my seat. When I returned, the seat next to my seat was now occupied by one Mr. Juini Booth. He introduced himself and I responded in kind. I'd remembered Juini's name from his having played in Cleveland but had never met him. We chatted briefly and by that time the jam was ending. Suddenly, Juini stands up, grabs my hand, yells out to the room, wait, don't close it down yet, there's one more and proceeds to lead me to the stage while asking me what song I wanted to sing. It was so unexpected and out of the blue that the first song that came to my mind was Body and Soul in the original key; I was actually stunned by what he was doing. We arrived at the stage, Juini walks off to the side to pick up his bass, I stand before the mic, the lights are softly aglow and the next thing I know, everybody who had begun to get up and leave now sits down again as Juini emerges with bass in hand and begins to outline a beautiful ocean of sounds. He literally was in every harmonic universe. I listened intently and am now in this dissonant space with him. I begin to start lacing my voice around what he's playing, finding the song and weaving textures through his tonal centers as we explored the song's vast harmonic possibilities. Someone who shall remain nameless, gets up on the piano and starts to hammer out a few basic block chords as if he's giving us some sort of direction, and Juini turns to him and yells, "Lay the "F*ck Out!!"

Then as if it were spiritually arranged, we both drop into Body and Soul simultaneously and played that piece as beautifully as I've ever heard it done, it was magical. When we were through, we got a standing ovation and several listeners proclaiming they were happy they stayed because they saved the best till last. Juini looked over at me with a big smile and said, "I knew you were my orchestra!"

About a week later, Juini called me asking to speak to his orchestra and told me to be at The Dharma, which was a sweet bar that featured music on an upstairs

balcony that overlooked the main area, on Orchard Street, in the Lower East Side at 3pm and that we had an open-ended duo gig – it was the beginning of my flight into the avant-garde, because Juini was the conduit, he set me free and was my mentor, my friend, my cohort at the time, and touch stone for all that the music represented. He forced me to be my better self and to have confidence by basically putting me on front street. For instance, at the above gig, he told me to just start singing, he'd be sitting at the bar and when he heard something, he'd join me. Now that rather freaked me out, but I did as I was instructed and before I knew it, I heard his beautiful sound behind me and we were off into music land.

He told me many things, many stories, he told me to stay away from the squares, he shared his life story, his life as it was unravelling, he showed me the Lower East Side that he owned, with all of its crevices and after hours places, introducing me to his famous and not-so-famous quite interesting friends and also the croakers…lol…that he brought to my apartment for me to cook, or as it were, to ruin…hahaha.

Over the years we never lost touch. I saw him around or heard he was playing somewhere and I'd go to hear him at the Nublu or at various spaces and places again in the East Village. We did an interview for Jazz Inside Magazine that was unfortunately lost. Most recently, I featured his piece, "Aquariana" with George Spanos, percussion and Leo Genovese, piano on the 12th edition of Nora's Jazz Show for Cadence Magazine, August 2020 entitled, "The Why Behind the Question." Nora's Jazz Show 12th Edition for Cadence Jazz World August 2020

Over the years, we got to play some, with my groups with Jorge Sylvester and of course he'd pop up from time-to-time, always out of nowhere to tell me of his latest adventures. The last time I saw and spoke with Juini was February 4, 2021, over a video chat. He called me out of the blue, as in typical Juini fashion, just showing up whenever. "What Up Sweet Face!!" That was his greeting. We talked about recording a duo CD, going to Ireland to perform after the plague was over, and he told me I was more precious than gold and all the diamonds in the world, and that I was his orchestra. And then he said this, "you know us Aquarians are here to save the world if only we can remember to do so."

At 4:34 pm March 4th Juini called via another video chat that I missed and followed up the following day with a text about his JB's Groove that he had put up on Bandcamp for sale. I will forever regret missing that last call. And as Juini always reminded me: Time waits for no one. Seize the moment while you can. Every day lost is an opportunity missed.

Rest In Heaven Mr. Sandman, "love the heck out of ya," till we meet again.

Dino Deane 1950-2021

Friday, July 23 at 11:14pm marked the peaceful passing of Dino J.A. Deane. He transitioned in New Mexico with his dearest friends, Joe Sabella and Katie Harlow, at his side. Born on February 16, 1950, Deane was 71.

Over a career spanning more than four decades, this multi-instrumentalist, sound-designer and conductor demonstrated a unique and innovative approach to the world of music. Dino pioneered the use of live-electronics in Indoor Life - a popular art/punk band from San Francisco during the early 1980's. He played a trombone-controlled synthesizer which emulated the sound of an electric guitar and employed a tape-echo to create loops.

During the 1980's Dino toured the world with Jon Hassell as the electro-acoustic live-sampling percussionist. That collaboration resulted in the ground-breaking Power Spot recording for ECM in 1986, produced by Brian Eno & Daniel Lanois.

During that same period Dino became a close collaborator in Butch Morris's real-time composition creations called Conductions®, and in 1995 co-produced Morris's epic 10-CD box set Testament, for New World Records. Dino originated the term "live-sampling" - recording members of an ensemble while in performance, manipulating the sound, then playing back the recorded audio like an instrument. He is considered a master in this field of performance.

Dino had an extensive background in composition for modern dance, having created over fifty dance/music works with his life partner, dancer/choreographer Colleen Mulvihill. He had an equally long history creating sound designs for dramatic theater, working with writer directors as diverse as Sam Shepard, Julie Hebert, Christoph Marthaler and John Flax of Theater Grottesco.

Since 1995, Dino released several albums under his own name and directed the ensemble Out of Context. More than 400 hours of his compositions are being prepared for streaming release to preserve his legacy and his contributions to improvisation.

In November 2020, Dino published Becoming Music - Conduction and Improvisation as forms of QiGong, which is available through Bandcamp and other stores.

https://dinojadeane.bandcamp.com/merch/becoming-music-a-book-about-the-art-of-flow-in-music

His music and writings are being preserved at:

https://dinojadeane.bandcamp.com/

http://jadeane.com/

For more information on Deane's contributions please contact:

Cookie Marenco / Blue Coast Music at support@bluecoastmusic.com

RICK LAIRD 1950-2021
bass
died on July 4, 2021
He was 80

Rick left meritorious legacies as a musician and as a photographer. The first time I saw him play, I could barely hear him amidst the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Early '73, DAR Constitution Hall, DC. The second time was much nicer - he was playing acoustic, with Mike Nock on piano, at Bradley's, back when Bradley's was a significant venue on the Greenwich Village jazz circuit, long before drummers were allowed to play there. Not that they needed a drummer. Spring '74. Rick said he was still getting his hearing back. It was a glorious set by two outstanding players, one born in Ireland, the other from New Zealand. In the late 70s, when Rick's Dutch quartet album with Joe Henderson was licensed for the US by Muse Records, I shot the front and back cover photos and wrote his liner notes, in the course of which he and I spent the better part of an enjoyable day together. Rick was one of the good guys. May he rest easy on that Other Shore.

Patrick Hinely

BRIAN BUCHANAN
piano
died on Aug. 16, 2021
He was 59

By Cindy McLeod, reprinted from The Calgary Herald.

He was a very fine musician and so adamant," McLeod says. "He really didn't like to play synthesizers or electric pianos. He was committed to the piano. That made life increasingly harder as far as being a musician. There used to be grand pianos everywhere. They are pretty rare now. But he was really firm about that and created a career around that. I watched him through the years. He paved the way for a lot of musicians. He mentored a lot of musicians."

Cindy McLeod

Obituaries - 2021

George Wein

GEORGE WEIN *died on Oct. 3, 2021. He launched the outdoor pop-music festival business in 1954 and helped transform jazz. He was 95.*

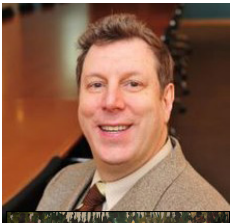
Dr. Lonnie Smith

DR. LONNIE SMITH Hammond Organ Legend. *died on September 28, 2021. He was 79.*

Pee Wee Ellis

PEE WEE ELLIS, saxophone, *died on September 23, 2021. He was 80.*

PHILIP VAN NOORDEN SCHAAP jazz radio host, *died on September 7, 2021.He was 70.*



Philip Schaap

BRIAN BUCHANAN, piano, *died on Aug. 16, 2021. He was 59.*

RICK LAIRD,bass *died on July 4, 2021 He was 80.*

Brian Buchanan

DINO DEANE multi-instrumentalist, *died on July 23, 2021. He was 71.*

ARTHUR JUINI BOOTH,bass, *died on July 11, 2021.He was 73.*

Rick Laird

JERRY GRANELLI , drums, *died on July 20, 2021. He was 80.*