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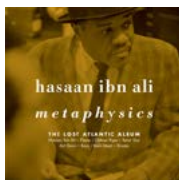
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CIMPoL 5032-5036:

CIMPfest 2011: LIVE IN VILLACH, AUSTRIA

DISK 1: Eric Krivda Quartet DISK 2: Avram Fefer Quintet DISK 3: Steve Swell Sextet
DISK 4: Ken Filiano Quintet 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	Solim Washington	Live at St. Nick's
5006-5012	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Live on Tour 2005
5013	Gabriel Ullmann + Steve Swell 4tet	Live in Montreal
5014	Eric 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 2008: Live in Villach, Austria	Live in Villach, Austria
5025	Seoh 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	Mac Marnac Trio	Live at Jazz Central
5042	Teresa Carroll Quintet	Live at Dazle

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from Milton Marsh an artist you might remember from his classic Monism album for the Strata East label in the 70s; still sounding every bit as brilliant, all these many years later! The set has Milton still working in the larger, more ambitious ideas we love from his other records; a blending of spiritual jazz and additional string players, in a way that

THE MUSIC OF **MILTON MARSH** REVISITED VOL.1



might be the closest approximation to the "black classical music" promised by Rahsaan Roland Kirk and others in the 70s! Yet Marsh is definitely his own visionary here, too carving out a sound that's as powerful as it is individual, with a unique sound that has us sitting up and taking notice all over again. Musicians on the recordings include David Eure on Violin, Stanton Davis on trumpet, Kevin Harris on piano, Carlos Averhoff on tenor, and Keala Kaumehi-wa on bass, with Marsh himself handling the Arrangements and Conducting his original compositions. Titles include: "Not Far From Home", "Great Expectations", "Dialogue", "Loving You", "By Design", "I Wonder Why I Care", and "Subtle Anomaly".

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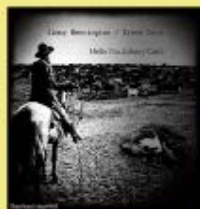
ThatSwan!Sing#001



*Tear it Down, Then Play a Ballad *Live at the Heartland*

- Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound
feat. Daniel Carter and Brian Smith

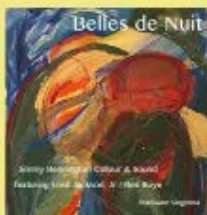
ThatSwan!Sing#002



*Hello, I'm Johnny Cash

- Jimmy Bennington / Steve Cohn

ThatSwan!Sing#003



*Belles de Nuit

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

ThatSwan!Sing#004



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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
Água de Beber (Water to Drink) 04:05
Amparo (Intro-For 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

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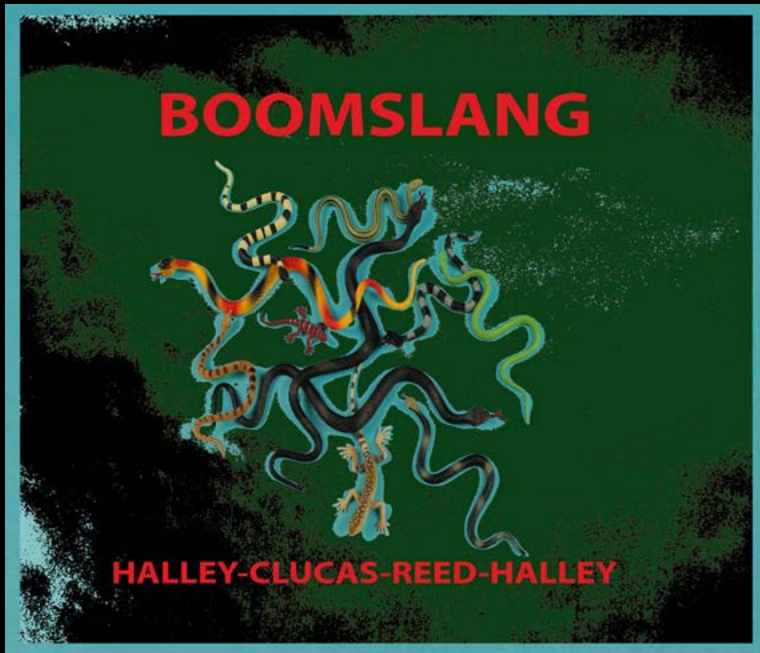
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- #1236 Jimmy Bennington Trio *The Walk to Montreuil* w/J.L. Masson, B. Duboc
 - #1237 Ernie Krivda *At the Tri-C Jazz Fest* w/C. Black, M. Hayden, R. Gonsalves
 - #1238 Steve Swell's Nation of We: *The Business of Here...Live at Roulette*
 - #1242 Barry Wallenstein *Luck These Days* w/A. Bimbaum, V. Chauncey, N. Haiduck
 - #1243 Kazzrie Jaxen Quartet *Calicoon Sessions* w/C. Krachy, D. Messina, B. Challin
 - #1244 JCA Orchestra *Stories* w/H. Honshuku, J. Hobbs, R. Stone, P. Scarff, N. Zocher, M. Cho
 - #1245 Mack Goldsberry'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. Marucci
 - #1256 Dominic Duval, Skip Scott, Tim Siciliano *Elements*
 - #1257 Donnic Duval-Vincent Loccisano-Chris Covais *The Project*
 - #1258 David Haney *Angel Foot Shuffle* w/J. Priestler, A. St. James, B. Purdie
 - #1259 Eric Plake New Trio *Sun and Shadow* w/John Murchison, Leonid Galaganov
 - #1260 Ted Brown Quartet *Live at Trumpets* w/J. Easton, D. Messina, B. Challin
 - #1261 Don Messina *Dedicated to...* (double bass) solo
 - #1262 Buffalo Jazz Octet *Live at Pausa Art House* w/Bucheger, Rivera, Baczkowski
 - #1263 The Infinitesimal Flash Quartet *Live* w/J. Tchical, M. Marucci, A. Lane, F. Wong
 - #1264 Ray Suhy-Lewis Porter *Longing* w/Rudy Royston, Joris Teepe
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NEW from CIMP

- CIMP 406 David Haney Quartet *Siege of Misrata***
with Andrew Cyrille(dr) Dominic Duval(b) Dominic Duval, Jr.(b)
- CIMP 408 Jimmy Halperin-Dominic Duval Trio *Strayhorn***
with Jay Rosen(dr)
- CIMP 409 Ehran Elisha Trio *Heads***
with Albert Beger(ts/ss) Dave Phillips(doublebass)
- CIMP 410 Mat Marucci Trio *Inversions***
with Rick Olson@ Adam Lane(b)
- CIMP 417 Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound**
A Little While in Chicago
with Fred Jackson(sax) Jerome Crowell(tpt) Ed Schuller(b)

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 . Recorded 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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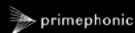
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NEW RELEASES 2021



JHM 279
Georg Ruby
VILLAGE ZONE
Saluti a Peppino

Georg Ruby – p
 Stephan Goldbach – b
 Daniel Weber – dr
 Sascha Ley – voc

Georg Ruby's "VILLAGE ZONE" is a new interpretation of the classical piano jazz trio turning it into one unique body of sound. Sascha Ley, female vocalist from Luxemburg, joins this spiritually communicative alliance on four songs. The chuzpe of the trio's musicians pays tribute to Italian pop folk grandmaster Peppino di Capri's originals and shows how much excessive fun, how much materialised endorphin can be produced by an extraordinary band.

www.georgruby.de | www.stephangoldbach.de | www.dflattul.com | www.saschaley.com



JHM 280
Stephan Goldbach
Transit

Stephan Goldbach – b
 Kostia Rapoport – electronics
 (#3, 12, 13)
 Laura Saumweber – dbbl (#11)

Double bass player Stephan Goldbach from Nuremberg (D) purely amazes his audience on his first solo release with his musical ingenuity and radical confrontations: acoustic sounds versus electronic sound generation, bel canto versus industrial sound. A musical encounter of the third kind, a piece of unpredictable and vivid avantgarde.

www.stephangoldbach.de



JHM 281
A.R.K.
Music By Endangered Species

Andreas Kaling – bass-sax, bcl, ss | Reinhold Westerheide – acoustic g | Karl Godejohann – dr, perc

Andreas Kaling, specialist for original, saxophone-oriented projects, presents something completely new: a bass saxophone as deep base within a trio. A.R.K. is meant as English translation of the German word "Arche" ("Ark of special instruments") or rather the initial letters of the band members' names. In the rehearsing process the trio develops Kaling's compositions further, using the creative circle's input to let the arrangements shine in different lights, questioning and changing old structures over and over again - thus, creating its own typical A.R.K. sound.

www.andreas-kaling.de



JHM 282
Duo Doyna
Driftn'

Annette Maye – cl
 Martin Schulte – g

Annette Maye and Martin Schulte are an excellent example of how klezmer music can be interpreted in a new, open and extremely entertaining way. The versatile education of the two musicians as well as their networking within the jazz field, improvised and contemporary music, are the tools of transformation here. Themes are treated improvisationally free, partly deconstructed or reharmonized. In the miniature instrumentation without rhythm section, the duo likes to experiment with diverse variations of rhythmic strategies.

www.doyna.de



JHM 283
Landeck | Grau | Bonica
Guerilla Jazz

Detlef Landeck – tb
 Sven Grau – ts
 Joe Bonica – dr

This small quick-witted formation presents an expressive, energetic, groovy jazz working with riffs, and resorts to the entertaining style of a kind of mini-show of brass sound and drum grooves, thus "mugging" both the jazz-savvy audience as well as the audience coming from other areas. Cheerful exploding, fun and imaginative, original acting are in the foreground with this trio.

www.detteflandeck.de



JHM 284
Jürgen Kupke /
Hannes Zerbe
Monalisa.

Ballads and more
 Jürgen Kupke – cl
 Hannes Zerbe – p

The duo's second CD continues the improvisational discourse, the varied interplay of the two musicians - both of whom, incidentally, love the music of Hanns Eisler - from the past years in a convincing manner. Without wasting many words, the interactions between Jürgen Kupke and Hannes Zerbe reveal a mutual, intuitive understanding, an intimacy in the interplay that is hardly possible in larger formations. The feeling for time, for arcs and for pauses can hardly be developed in such a way as the two demonstrate it here in duo playing.

www.juergenkupke.de | www.hanneszerbe.de



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ROSEANNA VITRO



The Music of Charlie Parker with new lyrics, along with two classic Bird vocalese tracks!

Skyline-Records/Skyline Productions.Inc. new release features vocalists: Roseanna Vitro, Bob Dorough, Sheila Jordan, Marion Cowings. SING A SONG OF BIRD is a collaboration of four New York jazz vocalists who are passionate about Charlie Parker's music and have rendered new lyrics to six of his compositions. This is the 15th recording for Grammy-nominated vocalist ROSEANNA VITRO, who conceived and guided this project but chose not to sing on every tune. Instead, she hands the microphone to her mentors, bebop jazz legends BOB DOROUGH, SHEILA JORDAN and MARION COWINGS, each of whom take solo turns with their own unique and soulful interpretations on several compositions by Bird.

Gary Bartz & Mark Gross alto saxophonists
Jason Teborek & Alan Broadbent pianists
Dean Johnson bass
Bill Goodwin & Alvester Garnett drums



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This page is a symbolic break, what precedes is advertising, (free of editorial influence), what follows is editorial (free of advertising influence).

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: soprano 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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Cover 3: YOSUKE YAMASHITA, JAMES MINGO LEWIS, NATALYA VYSOKIKH

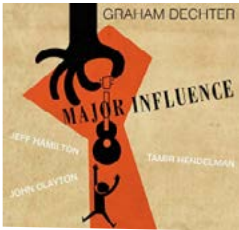
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Top Ten Recordings 2021



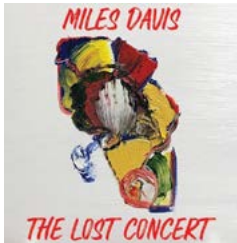
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TOWER OF POWER—LIVE AT THE FOX THEATRE—
MACK AVENUE
WILLIE JONES III—FALLEN HEROES—*WJ3*
MICHAEL DEASE—GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT—
POSITONE



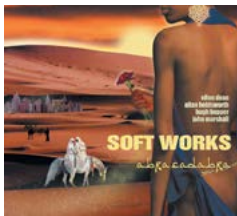
REISSUES/HISTORICAL - LARRY HOLLIS

TUBBY HAYES—TUBBY THE TENOR—*WAXTIME*
(LP)
ROY BROOKS—UNDERSTANDING—*REEL TO REAL*
ROY HARGROVE/MULGREW MILLER—IN
HARMONY—*RESONANCE*
MILES DAVIS—THE LOST CONCERT—*SLEEPY*
NIGHT RECORDS
JOHN COLTRANE—LOVE SUPREME:LIVE IN
SEATTLE—*IMPULSE*
BILL EVANS—BEHIND THE DIKES—*ELEMENTAL*
CHARLES LLOYD QUARTET—MONTREUX 1967—
TCB SWISS RADIO
GEORGE COLEMAN QUINTET—IN BALTIMORE—
REEL TO REAL
BENNY GOLSON—EUROPEAN TOUR—*BLAU*
RECORDS
HAROLD LAND—WESTWARD BOUND—*REEL TO*
REAL

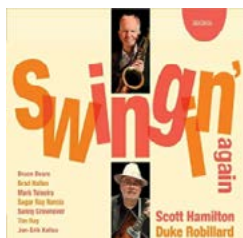


NEW RELEASES/REISSUES/HISTORICAL - GEORGE HARRIS

ALAN HOLDSWORTH/SOFT WORKS—
ABRACADABRA—*MOONJUNE*
BILL EVANS—BEHIND THE DYKES—*ELEMENTAL*
ROY HARGROVE/MULGREW MILLER—IN
HARMONY—*RESONANCE*
LARRY CORYELL/PHILIP CATHERINE—LAST
CALL—*ACT*
THE BAYLOR PROJECT—GENERATIONS—*THE*
BAYLOR PROJECT
JAZZMEIA HORN—DEAR LOVE—*ARTISTRY OF*
JAZZ HORN
ROY BROOKS—UNDERSTANDING—*CELLAR LIVE*
TOMMY FLANAGAN—SOLO PIANO—*STORYVILLE*
RECORDS



Top Ten Recordings 2021



**SCOTT HAMILTON AND DUKE ROLLIBARD—
SWINGING AGAIN—SHINING STONE RECORDS—
RAHSAAN BARBER—MOSAIC—NEW MUSICA**

NEW RELEASES - SCOTT YANOW

**THE COOKERS – LOOK OUT – GEARBOX
ELIANE ELIAS – MIRROR MIRROR – CANDID
BENITO GONZALEZ – SING TO THE WORLD – RAINY
DAYS
VINCENT HERRING – HARD TIMES – SMOKE
SESSIONS
JULIAN LAGE – SQUINT – BLUE NOTE
JOHN MCLAUGHLIN – LIBERATION TIME –
ABSTRACT LOGIX
ANAS RENO – LOVESOME THING: SINGS
ELLINGTON AND STRAYHORN – HARBINGER
VERONICA SWIFT – THIS BITTER EARTH – MACK
AVENUE
ANGELA VERBRUGGE – THE NIGHT WE COULDN'T
SAY GOOD NIGHT – SELF-RELEASED
TERRY WALDO & TATIANA EVA-MARIE – I DOUBLE
DARE YOU – TURTLE BAY**



REISSUES/HISTORICAL SCOTT YANOW

**HASAAN IBN ALI – METAPHYSICS – OMNIVORE
LOUIS ARMSTRONG – THE COMPLETE COLUMBIA
AND RCA VICTOR STUDIO SESSIONS – MOSAIC
ARV GARRISON – THE UNKNOWN ARV GARRISON,
WIZARD OF THE SIX STRING – FRESH SOUND
ROY HARGROVE & MULGREW MILLER – IN
HARMONY — RESONANCE
JOE HENDERSON – THE COMPLETE BLUE NOTE
SESSIONS – MOSAIC
HELEN HUMES – THREE CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS –
AVID
BOB JAMES – ONCE UPON A TIME – RESONANCE
RENDELL/CARR QUINTET – BBC JAZZ CLUB II 1965-
1966 – RHYTHM & BLUES RECORDS
SONNY ROLLINS – ROLLINS IN HOLLAND —
RESONANCE
ROSEANNA VITRO – LISTEN HERE – SKYLINE**



NEW RELEASES - BILL DONALDSON

**CHICK COREA AKAUSTIC BAND—LIVE —
CONCORD JAZZ
ARTURO O'FARRILL— ...DREAMING IN LIONS... —
BLUE NOTE
ROY HARGROVE & MULGREW MILLER— IN
HARMONY — RESONANCE
MIGUEL ZENON—LAW YEARS: THE MUSIC OF
ORNETTE COLEMAN— MIEL
CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE & INSIDE STRAIGHT — LIVE
AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD — MACK AVENUE**

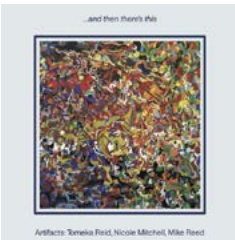
Top Ten Recordings 2021



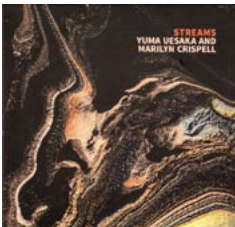
WADADA LEO SMITH - TRUMPET AND SACRED CEREMONIES — TUM
STEVE SLAGLE — NASCENTIA — PANORAMA
GERRY GIBBS—SONGS FROM MY FATHER— WHALING CITY SOUND
BENITO GONZALEZ — SING TO THE WORLD — RAINY DAYS
LUCY YEGHIAZARYAN, VANISHA GOULD — IN HER WORDS — LA RESERVE RECORDS



NEW RELEASES - LUDWIG VAN TRIKT
ROOTS MAGIC — TAKE ROOT AMONG THE STARS — CLEAN FEED
ALEX SIPIAGIN — UPSTREAM — POSI - TONE
ROBERT MAGRIS & ERIC HOCHBERG — SHUFFLING IVORIES — JMOOD
MARK LEWIS — NAKED ANIMALS — AUDIO DADDIO



GABRIEL ALEGRIA AFRO-PERUVIAN SEXTET — SOCIAL DISTANCING — SAPONEGRO
ARTIFACT: TOMEKA REID, NICOLE MITCHELL, MIKE REED — ...AND THEN THERE'S THIS — ASTRAL SPIRITS
JAMES BRANDON LEWIS' RED LILY QUINTET — JESUP WAGON — TAO FORMS TAO
CHES SMITH / WE ALL BREAK — PATH OF SEVEN COLORS — PYROCLASTIC RECORDS
SLAVA GANELIN, ALEXEY KRUGLOV, OLEG YUDANOV — ACCESS POINT" — LOSEN RECORDS
YUMA UESAKA AND MARILYN CRISPELL — STREAMS — NOT TWO

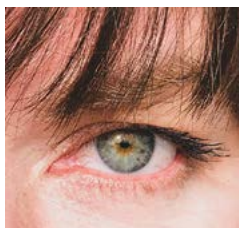


NEW RELEASES - NORA MCCARTHY
JOHN COLTRANE — A LOVE SUPREME, LIVE IN SEATTLE — IMPULSE RECORDS/UME RELEASE
HENRY THREADGILL AND ZOOID — POOF — PI RECORDINGS
MAYHEM AT LARGE — JORGE SYLVERSTER SPONTANEOUS EXPRESSIONS — REDZEN RECORDS
ALEXANDER HAWKINS FEAT. EVAN PARKER + RIOT ENSEMBLE — TOGETHERNESS MUSIC — INTAKT RECORDS
JOEL FUTTERMAN — CREATION SERIES — NOBUSINESS RECORDS
BETTY LAVETTE — BLACKBIRDS — VERVE



DANIEL ELI WEISS — OF CURSE-LIVE AT THE BAR NEXT DOOR — DIGITAL RELEASE
CHARLES LLOYD AND THE MARVELS — POEM — BLUE NOTE
KUBA CICHOCKI/BRANDON SEABROOK — BRISK DISTORTIONS — DIGITAL RELEASE
THE UNDERFLOW — INSTANT OPAQUE EVENING — DIGITAL/VINYL RELEASE

Top Ten Recordings 2021



NEW RELEASES - KEN WEISS

OHAD TALMOR TRIO – MISE EN PLACE – *INTAKT*
ROY HARGROVE/MULGREW MILLER – IN
HARMONY – *RESONANCE*
WADADA LEO SMITH'S GREAT LAKES QUARTET –
THE CHICAGO SYMPHONIES – *TUM*
JAMES BRANDON LEWIS QUARTET – CODE OF
BEING – *INTAKT*
SARA SCHOENBECK – SARA SCHOENBECK –
PYROCLASTIC
THE VINNY GOLIA QUARTET – LEFT, OUTSIDE ...! –
NINE WINDS
HAROLD DANKO – SPRING GARDEN –
STEEPLECHASE
RICH HALLEY-DAN CLUCAS-CLYDE REED-CARSON
HALLEY - BOOMSLANG – *PINE EAGLE*
GORDON GRDINA'S SQUARE PEG – KLOTSKI –
ATTABOYGIRL
ALISTER SPENCE TRIO WITH ED KUEPPER –
ASTEROID EKOSYSTEM – *ALISTER SPENCE MUSIC*

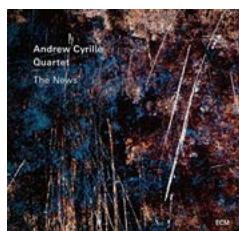
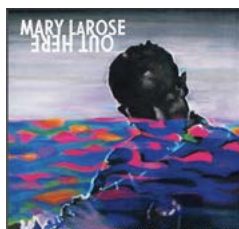


NEW RELEASES - JEROME WILSON

charnett moffett

NEW LOVE

CHARNETT MOFFETT — NEW LOVE — *MOTEMA*
JOHN DAVERSA JAZZ ORCHESTRA — ALL
WITHOUT WORDS - VARIATIONS INSPIRED BY
LOREN — *TIGER TURN*
WILLIAM PARKER — MAYAN SPACE STATION —
AUM FIDELITY
JEFF LEDERER/SUNWATCHER — EIGHTFOLD PATH
— *LITTLE I MUSIC*
BARRY ALTSCHUL'S 3DOM FACTOR — LONG TALL
SUNSHINE — *NOT TWO*
MARY LAROSE — OUT HERE — *LITTLE I MUSIC*
RODRIGO FAINA AND CHANGE ENSEMBLE —
DIFFERENT ROOTS — *RED PIANO*
MARQUES CARROLL — THE ANCESTORS' CALL —
SELF-RELEASED
CHARLES LLOYD AND THE MARVELS — TONE
POEM — *BLUE NOTE*
ANDREW CYRILLE QUARTET — THE NEWS — *ECM*



My apologies to all the dedicated, truth-telling, technically outstanding, creative, fearless, and soulful jazz artists whose albums I didn't hear and thus wasn't able to consider for inclusion in my list. Of course, the count for the traditional Top Ten Albums List allows for the mention of too few releases when a multitude of others may have qualified as well. Deeply appreciated are jazz artists' sacrifices throughout the pandemic and throughout their careers undauntedly to advance the art of jazz.

Bill Donaldson

Inside This Issue - January 2021

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."

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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.

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.

ROBERT IANNAPOLLO (CD reviews) has been writing for Cadence for over 25 years. He also writes for New York City Jazz Record and ARSC Journal. He works as the circulation manager at the Sibley Music Library at the Eastman School of Music and considers himself lucky to be around all that music.

BERNIE KOENIG (CD Reviews, Short Takes) is a professor of music and philosophy at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, Canada. He had two books published including *Art Matters* (Academica Press 2009). He is a drummer/vibist currently performing in a free jazz group and in an experimental group with electronics and acoustic percussion.

FRANK KOHL was born and raised in NY and is a professional guitarist living in Seattle. He is a graduate of Berklee College Of Music and has six CDs as a leader. Some of his recordings include Bassists Steve LaSpina, Michael Moore and guitarist John Stowell. Frank has performed at many notable jazz clubs and festivals from NY to Seattle.

DON LERMAN is a professional saxophonist and woodwind player, arranger, and writer who has written for Cadence for several years. A native and current resident of South Bend, Indiana, Don has also worked extensively in the Washington, DC area.

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.

JEFFREY D. TODD (Interviews) is Associate Professor of German and French at Texas Christian University. He plays saxophone locally in the Dallas / Fort Worth area, and is a lifelong jazz fanatic.

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 KPZF 88.1 fm in Lakeport, CA and currently co-writing the memoirs of Lester Chambers of the Chambers Brothers.

With Covid restrictions closing or almost closing all likely venues, life for performers of the art form known as Jazz has been extremely difficult worldwide. However with easing of total restrictions Jazzamanca's Artistic Director Ted Vining, together with Salamanca Arts Centre's CEO Joe Bugden, have been forging ahead at Hobart's Founders Room, Salamanca Place with restricted seating arrangements to present The Jazzamanca Spring Season starting with *Outa Sight* on September 26 with Scott Tinkler tpt, Julius Schwing gtr, Hamish Houston bass and Ted Vining drums. October 31 saw Konrad Park's Big Small Band with Kelly Ottaway pno, Isaac Gee bass, Jonathon Stone, Alistair Dobson, Finn Secombe and Konrad Park while November 21 brought The Rhythm Section with Matt Boden pno, Hamish Houston bass and Ted Vining drums. This was also the debut performance of vocalist Zoe Fitzherbert who gave a lovely reading of Brandt and Haymes' *That's All*.....plans for the November 2021 Jazzamanca Festival are already well underway with hopes to present a mix of international and national artists Covid-19 permitting.....Hobart Jazz Club continues to present its monthly concerts to restricted audiences and also a regular Jazz Jam at Hobart's The Duke Hotel.....November 18 saw the Matt Ives Big Band back at Wrest Point Casino featuring vocalists Brett Budgeon and Jack Lark.....meanwhile north of the Island the Gnomon Pavilion Ulverstone, Oct 10 featured Only Monk, celebrating the life of Thelonious Monk with Al Dobson tenor, Hamish Houston bass, Kelly Ottaway pno and Ted Vining drums and on November 29 Danny Healy sax, clarinet, flute with Sophie Leslie vcl, Viktor Zappner pno, Nick Hart gtr, Michael Anderson bass and Bruce Innocent drums.

Alwyn Lewis





Name, Place of Birth
 Greg Abate, Fall River
 Massachusetts

***Background, were your
 parents musical ?*** No

***How did you learn music
 and what are your early
 memories?***
 Elementary School clarinet
 lessons

***Recall a turning point in
 your life, either musically or
 personally.***
 When I went to LA after
 Berklee College and joined
 Ray Charles Orchestra

***What was the first musical
 project that you were really
 excited about?***
 LIVE AT BIRDLAND my
 first recording on label
 Candid Records

***Who are your musical heroes
 and which albums?***
 Phil Woods , Art Pepper

Cannonball Adderly Dexter Gordon , LIVE AT THE SHOWBOAT.

Describe your musical education and approach to creating music.
 Berklee College of Music and the real school of music doing it on the
 road with great musicians and bands!

What do you do to survive as a musician?
 I play many gigs , record , teach , compose and arrange

What is your current project?
 Recorded a new CD Greg Abate-plays the music of Kenny Barron with
 Kenny Barron trio at Rudy VanGelder Studios. Whaling City Sound
 Records

What next, what are your upcoming projects?
 Getting back to touring since the Covid. I'm writing new music for my
 next recording!

My name is Greg Abate pronounced (Abah Tay) I live in New England USA. I play all the saxophones , the flute and am a composer , arranger and jazz educator / Conn Selmer artist. I tour world wide. I'm currently recording for Whaling City Sound Records.

My newest recording is with the Kenny Barron Trio playing the music of Kenny Barron. (Not yet released)

....Regarding a turning point in my career , I can say , playing lead alto saxophone with the Ray Charles Orchestra in the mid 1970's was a huge experience and also collaboration with the great Phil Woods as my guest on 2 recordings was a very memorable experience.

But , to catapult my early career was a Trip to Montreal from Boston in a blizzard.

I had a gig in Montreal and I was completely focused on driving there safely and making the gig in spite of the storm!

The city was packed with snow there when I arrived. I was worried that I had made the trip in vain. After an hour or so the side walks were plowed and the club opened. I played as guest with a local trio but there were only 7 people in the club due to the storm. During intermission I was beckoned to the bar where a person asked ; "do you play in NY City?"

I said, not regularly but I have . He said he was partners with another who produced recordings for Candid Records. He suggested I contact his partner, recommending I do a recording with their label .

It took about a year but they recorded me live at Birdland with James Williams , Rufus Reid and Kenny Washington!

This led to several other recordings with Candid and various other labels which got me on all the jazz stations and more Nationally known

...

I played a few times in Georgia Russia and Moscow. One time returning from Moscow in dead of winter blizzard weather again getting to the airport and my visa was to the day which is a mistake because one should give some extra days on it in case of a situation such as this one.

I got to the airport in Moscow and checked bags and getting ready to fly to a Boston and they said flight is cancelled. For me , I could wait but because my Visa was up they said you can't go because of the storm but I couldn't stay there either so I'd have to go to a holding place until I could get my visa up to date . It was really weird . It blew away any joy of the gig there. I was wondering what I'd do but a person in back of me could speak Russian and he said there is a flight to Paris I could take and spend the night there in Paris and go home the next day. I landed in Paris and it was beautiful weather ,Well , it was worrisome because my experience dealing with authorities there a few years past was strange and the idea of a holding place and waiting was not what I wanted to do. A few years ago there in Moscow , going home again , my alto sax was on the inspection table and they wanted to keep my horn luckily the promoter who spoke English hear me call her and she showed them that I was there on work visa!

TED VINING**Drummer/Leader**

CAD *Let's start at the beginning, you were born in Melbourne?*

TV Yes, Melbourne, Victoria, August 22, 1937.

CAD *From a musical family?*

TV My older brother was a dance band drummer who preferred tinkering with motor vehicles to music. He gave me his drums when I was about ten years old.

CAD *How were you first drawn to jazz?*

TV Listening to the popular Hit Parade on radio – Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Glenn Miller, Rosemary Clooney etc.

CAD *How about early live local inspirations?*

TV Radio again, a weekly program featuring Frank Johnson and his Fabulous Dixielanders. And Len Barnard and his brother Bob at the Mentone Life Saving Club on Sunday nights.

CAD *When did you start playing?*

TV My first professional gig was at age 18 with a piano player named Peter Stoddard at the Edgewater Hotel in Mentone. Peter later moved to Jamaica and taught jazz great Monty Alexander. After that I was introduced to the late night hang-out night club in St Kilda called the Blue Derby where I met a lot of Melbourne musicians including Chuck Yates and Brian Brown.

CAD *When did you first tie in with Horst Liepolt?*

TV Once the jazz fraternity accepted me I started gigging with a variety of Melbourne's top players and joined a quintet with John Foster, Freddie Wilson, John Doyle, and David Tolley at the Lido, the forerunner to Horst Liepolt's famed Jazz Centre 44 in St Kilda. Around that time in 1958 I was playing a club called Claridges, where I was introduced to a Channel 7 personality named Don Bennetts, who told me he was about to host a half hour weekly popular music program called "Cool for Cats" and a short time later when the show went to air I was Musical Director leading a Trio (The TV Trio) with jazz musicians and singers each week for almost two years. Dave Brubeck, Chris Karan (ex Dudley Moore Trio) "Sweet Georgia Brown" for the Harlem Globetrotters, Keith Hounslow, Brian Brown, Joe Lane and also Alan Lee with whom I performed for more than ten years at Jazz Centre 44, the Downbeat Club, Jazz Festivals/Clubs across Australia, and recordings. About this time Alan gave me a copy of the Miles Davis album "Round Midnight" with John Coltrane and the fantastic rhythm section of Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. This album had a dramatic effect on me, setting me on a jazz journey I have maintained to this day.

CAD *When did you join up with Brian Brown?*

TV Around the mid 1960's I joined him, Tony Gould and Barry Buckley for a two year stint at The Fat Black Pussy Cat in South Yarra a very successful jazz club established by U.S. expat Ali Sugarman

(later run by poet and jazz enthusiast Adrian Rawlins). Unfortunately electronic groups started playing there, petitions were signed, and the Police closed the place down!

CAD *It must have been soon after that you moved to Sydney?*

TV Yes I moved there for twelve months and played the famous El Rocco with Bob Gebert, then Judy Bailey, The Mocambo in Newport with Alan Lee and Ed Gaston and recorded "Jazz Australia" with Don Burrows, John Sangster, Bob McIvor, Graham Lyall and George Golla.

CAD *You returned to Melbourne for a residency?*

TV That's right, a three year Saturday afternoon residency at the Prospect Hill Hotel in Kew with the Brian Brown Quartet with Bob Sedergreen replacing Tony Gould. In 1969 I also formed the Ted Vining Trio with Bob (Sedergreen) and bassist Barry Buckley and we worked together for some 37 years until Barry's death in 2006. Gareth Hill is the current bass player, joining us in 2011. Bob and I are celebrating fifty years of making music together with a Trio concert in Melbourne on September 6.

CAD *You visited Scandinavia around this time I believe?*

TV Yes in 1978 the Brian Brown Quartet were invited to perform at the prestigious Scandinavian Jazz Festivals/Clubs in Konsberg, (Norway) Åhus, (Sweden) and Pori, (Finland) – sponsored by the Australian Government Foreign Affairs Department, performing alongside legends like Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, Elvin Jones, Frank Foster and many others, including Scandinavian talent. The six week tour was very successful and much lauded by audiences and the media, however when we got back to Australia nobody cared! The Quartet broke up soon after.

CAD *Is that when you moved back to Sydney?*

TV Right 1979 moved back for two years and played with Bob Bertles "Moontrane" at The Basement and the Bernie McGann Quartet at a variety of venues, the David Martin Quintet with Dale Barlow and James Morrison at The Paradise Club, plus many others, in addition to Ted Vining Trio gigs back in Melbourne.

CAD *How did Musiikki Oy come about?*

TV In 1981 I moved to Brisbane for five years and formed Musiikki Oy, the name coming from a sticker placed over a crack in my snare drum case which occurred whilst travelling in Scandinavia. Checked the Finnish Consulate for the meaning, hoping it didn't translate to "this way to the toilets" or something equally banal to find it loosely meant "Music Pty Ltd." I was inaugural Queensland Jazz Coordinator for the Music Board of the Australian Council from 1983 to 1986 when funding was stopped due to heavy factionalism. I was also Artistic Director, Queensland Jazz Action Society and with Greg Quigley ran "The Jazz Spot" featuring two groups each Friday night for around 12 months. And I produced and presented a two hour fortnightly jazz program on 4MBS for about two years.

CAD *Then in 1986 you took Musiikki Oy back to Melbourne?*

TV Well I returned to Melbourne closely followed by members of Musiikki Oy, who, with the exception of Peter Harper who went to London to study with Evan Parker, enrolled for the Jazz Studies Course at the Victorian College of the Arts and on the return of Peter after completing the course we regrouped. Over the ensuing years there have been a number of personnel changes Sam Keevers, Adrian Sherriff, Simon Kent, Roy Voogd, Mick Meagher who all made great contributions to the band, leading to a 15 gig very successful tour of Switzerland thanks to an Australia Council grant in 2002. This is when we changed the name to BLOW, thus avoiding origin confusion.

CAD *When did you form the band "Out of the Question"?*

TV When I moved to Adelaide in 1993 for eighteen months. That was with Andy Sugg and three other locals and we played jazz clubs in Adelaide, Melbourne and the Wangaratta Festival of Jazz. Then in 1994 I moved back to Melbourne and continued performing with BLOW and my Trio, plus the group Mistaken Identity with Bob Sedergreen's sons, Steven and Malcolm, trumpeter Scott Tinkler, the Wanders / Sugg Ensemble and Oynsemble Melbourne a 19 piece orchestra which I co-led with Adrian Sherriff.

CAD *And in 2011 you moved to Hobart?*

TV Yes for personal reasons where unfortunately there is limited opportunity to play the kind of music I've been playing for most of my life. However, I continue to promote the great American art form whenever possible with the best local talent available, forming The Hobart Jazz Quartet to perform the music of John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet. I have also produced and hosted "Contrasts in Classic Jazz" a three hour program every three weeks on radio Hobart FM 96.1 for the past four years. I am kept musically sane with pretty much monthly trips back to Melbourne to play with BLOW at "The Horn" an Ethiopian Restaurant and Jazz Club owned by my great friend Peter Harper. BLOW has held residency there on Thursday nights for the past ten years! The Ted Vining Trio normally plays at Uptown", a very popular Jazz Club in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.

CAD *You were involved with the Horst Liepolt Tribute weren't you?*

TV That's right. Some forty old friends, including his best friend and wife Clarita who flew out from New York for the occasion to attend a Tribute to Horst, a champion for jazz in this country and the USA and held at the St Kilda RSL Club, chosen for its proximity, overlooking the site of the old Jazz Centre 44 (now a McDonalds).

CAD *You won an Award recently?*

TV Yes, I was inducted into the Australian Jazz Hall of Fame at the Bell Awards Ceremony in Melbourne in 2017.

CAD *Is there anyone you would still like to play with?*

TV Well I'm delighted and love the BLOW guys, which of course includes the Ted Vining Trio as the rhythm section. We're great friends on and off the stage, with one purpose in mind – excellence!

Also, when I consider some of the people I've played with in the past, what more could one ask? Dizzy Gillespie, Nat Adderley, George Cables, Clifford Jordan and oh so many more. But actually there is somebody I'd dearly love to play with – pianist Kenny Barron.

CAD *What's ahead for Ted Vining?*

TV BLOW will be applying for an Australia wide Touring Grant for the second half of 2020. I'm about to contact Jazz Club management to arrange dates and conditions, fees, etc. Hopefully there will be a positive result as with previous applications. I'm quite concerned about the future of Jazz in Australia. Mainly because the so called jazz I hear played on the airwaves is sounding like soundtrack music for Travel documentaries. The Jazz that I've been listening to for most of my life seems to bear no resemblance to the listening requirements of the younger generation. And Jazz needs the younger generation to survive. Audiences at clubs and concerts these days are pretty much in the 50-60 age bracket, which to me sadly means the music is going to die with them. Hopefully not, but I ain't holding my breath.

I would like to add a Footnote:

My movement from State to State over the years has got nothing to do with my jazz activity. I decided very early on not to try to make a living playing jazz. Mainly because I enjoy the good things of life and a roof over my head, and to be able to play the music I love without compromise. Consequently I have enjoyed a career in Advertising/Marketing, but in addition to this I was able to find time to produce and Artistically Direct the Melbourne Moomba Jazz Festival on four occasions, featuring such luminaries as the Dizzy Gillespie Quartet, the Count Basie Orchestra, Oscar Peterson and Joe Pass and Australia's best talent. Also I was appointed Artistic Director, then Executive Director of the Montsalvat International Jazz Festival for three of the ten events. We have the McCoy Tyner Trio, Nat Adderley Quintet with Vincent Herring and Jimmy Cobb, plus groups from Europe and all over Australia. As an educator I have taught drumming for the Jazz Studies Courses at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and the Victorian College of the Arts. Plus a few Workshops and Master Classes at the Hobart Conservatorium.

Finally I am awaiting word of funding to produce a weekend Jazz Festival at the Salamanca Arts Complex in Hobart in March 2020. Leading groups from Sydney and Melbourne, plus some locals will be invited to perform.

CAD *Thank you so much for talking with us today.*

Alwyn and Laurie Lewis
Hobart, Tasmania
September 1, 2019



Ted Vining

Aki Takase Interview Floating in a Space of a Different Dimension By Ken Weiss

Aki Takase [b. January 26, 1948, Osaka, Japan] is a pianist of Japanese descent who has made her career in Berlin, Germany, where she lives with her husband, pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach. Takase has interpolated the musical traditions of her birth country, while at the same time, embracing Stride, Swing and traditional Jazz, as well as modern complete abstraction, making her one of the most versatile figures in contemporary Jazz. Some of her collaborators include Dave Liebman, Cecil McBee, David Murray, Reggie Workman, Sunny Murray, Fred Frith, Lester Bowie, John Zorn, Evan Parker, Han Bennink, Eugene Chadbourne, Louis Sclavis, and Paul Lovens. She has often worked with von Schlippenbach, with whom she cofounded the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra in 1988. Takase has released projects covering the compositions of Fats Waller, W.C. Handy, Thelonious Monk, Eric Dolphy, Duke Ellington, and Ornette Coleman. She has also joined forces with renowned writer/poet Yoko Tawada for the past two decades. This interview took place in July of 2020 by way of the Internet during the coronavirus pandemic.

Cadence: One of the many striking aspects of your work has been your career-long versatility. You play in so many different settings – solo, small and large band settings, and you’ve done numerous duets with a vast array of artists. Your recordings, and even your touring schedule, reveals constant change. Why have so much variability? Do you need steady change?

Aki Takase: Yes, I’m interested in a lot of things. I like to play some of the greatest musician’s compositions, to write arrangements for several groups, and to develop other colors and landscapes of my own sounds. For example, the Fats Waller, Eric Dolphy projects, etc. I also like to play in duo with musicians, creating my own musical world by partnering with my favorite players.

Cadence: Your husband, esteemed German pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach, has had the same trio for over 50-years. You’ve not established a set group that has lasted through the years. Why so? Do you not see having an identifiable band as an advantage?

Takase: I admire his ability for keeping one group alive for a long time. It’s never easy, and I think the trio’s attempt to change over time is very interesting and very valuable. I have played with groups through the years such as the Fats Waller Project (Nils Wogram, Rudi Mahall, Paul Lovens, Eugene Chadbourne), after the WC Handy Project (Nils Wogram, Rudi Mahal, Paul Lovens, Fred Frith) for 18 years. But a few years ago, I decided to start my new group with young musicians to play mostly my own original compositions.

Cadence: Your playing style can be very physical and fearless. You are very active at times, using open palms and fists on the keys and playing all areas of the piano. Would you talk about your playing style and how your Classical training informs your improvisation?

Takase: First of all, Jazz is one of the most personal genres in music, and I would like to express my idea of music by improvising. But I would like to play J.S Bach, Beethoven, Prokofiev, and Alban Berg's work in practicing the piano. They are all very valuable to me. Knowing the musical ideas of Western music is very useful for improvising, as well.

Cadence: *You have special interest in bridging composition and improvisation.*

Takase: Composition is condensed improvisation, that is what we call instant composing. They are definitely connected by one bridge.

Cadence: *Would you talk about your sound experimentation?*

Takase: NO!

Cadence: *How do you like your piano specially modified?*

Takase: Sometimes I put metals and other stuff inside.

Cadence: *At times, you use koto, celesta and toy piano. How do these unusual instruments fit into your art?*

Takase: They add different colors to the sounds and another landscape of improvising.

Cadence: *You kindly gave me a question to ask Alexander von Schlippenbach recently for an interview. I'd like to turn it around and ask it of you – what is the real pleasure of improvisation?*

Takase: Unfortunately, it doesn't always happen, but while I am improvising, there is a moment I can feel to fly somewhere, and I have the joy of floating in a space of a different dimension. I never know where I am going and doing, just being. It is something else in those beautiful moments.

Cadence: *You share the same fascination that Alexander von Schlippenbach does with the music from Jazz's entire lifespan including Stride, Blues, Boogie-woogie, Bebop and Free Jazz. You've recorded projects related to Fats Waller, W. C. Handy, Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman. Talk about your interest in the early Jazz styles and why you've made these tribute albums.*

Takase: Early Jazz like Fats Waller, Ellington, or later Dolphy and Coleman, they all played fundamentally like speaking of the Blues in different ways. The challenge is how I can express my personal words in my own language of my Blues.

Cadence: *An area where you differ from your husband is that while he has repeatedly stated his work is not political, you have affirmed that yours is. You've said playing music is, "The best kind of quiet resistance to discrimination. I want my music to be a form of human praise." Would you explain this further?*

Takase: I am not black or white, I am born in Japan. This world is full of contradiction and discrimination. Music is the best gift made by humans and essential for humans. I don't participate in demonstrations or political movements. I want to praise human dignity through music. That is my quiet resistance.

Cadence: *In a 2019 interview, you said, "I am 100% Japanese and I*

Interview:

Aki Takase



Photo Credit: Georg Tuskany

never forget my country, even if I cannot be proud of my country." I believe you were referencing the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. Would you talk about that?

Takase: Everyone loves the country in which they were born, yet at the same time, they also have many criticisms. Japan is like a disaster department store! Topographical typhoons, tsunamis, and earthquakes occur all year round in this island country. We cannot avoid natural disasters. I think there is a limit that must not be exceeded for human destruction due to human arrogance and profits. In that sense, I don't want Japan to have a catastrophe.

Cadence: How do you navigate the significant challenge of presenting fresh versions of the same compositions by masters such as Ellington and Monk that everyone else covers?

Takase: I think that Jazz has the strong articulations of rhythm and phrase and color of the Jazz sounds. The great masters especially show the basic representatives of that, this is why I am interested to express their compositions in my personal interpretation.

Cadence: Talk about your childhood in Japan and your family life.

Takase: My mother gave me many things when I was 5 years old - piano and dance lessons (Japanese dance, modern dance), composition and voice lessons.

Cadence: What were you like as a child? Were you always so strong-willed?

Takase: NO. I was a quite normal girl. I liked to play piano, but I had no desire to be famous.

Cadence: Did the move from Osaka at age 3 to the much more cosmopolitan city of Tokyo help your growth as a budding artist? Why did you move?

Takase: Just because of my father's profession, that he was working at the bank, we moved to Tokyo. There was more music happening in Tokyo, and probably it was important later.

Cadence: You started on piano at age 3, that was obviously at your parent's direction. Did you take to the piano easily? What are your early memories related to music and the piano?

Takase: My mother studied classic piano, but my parents had no idea about directing me to be a professional. I loved playing the piano. My parents used to listen to many Opera records when I was 5 years old. At that time, I was playing Mozart sonatas, and when I get bored, I sometimes improvised in my way.

Cadence: What were your parent's musical expectations of you?

Takase: I guess my parents wanted to give me many opportunities, something I could try to learn. Maybe they would have appreciated if I could be a Classical concert pianist.

Cadence: You also studied modern ballet, Classical Japanese dance and voice. Did that exposure give you enough of a base to affect your future work as a creative artist?

Takase: Yes, I love dance and working with some dancers for a long time.

Cadence: *How did you end up playing acoustic bass in your high school's all-women orchestra?*

Takase: school's all-women orchestra?!, It doesn't matter at all. No. I had no idea, what I must learn as secondary instruments. Then I decided to learn a bass instrument, because no one took a bass lesson and I loved low tones.

Cadence: *Was there an early transformational event that fueled your desire to pursue music as a career?*

Takase: No, but when guests came to my house, I wanted them to listen to something I played on the piano.

Cadence: *What was the extent of your exposure to Jazz as a youth before your university training?*

Takase: No, nothing.

Cadence: *You started with Classical studies at Toho Gakuen School of Music but changed to improvisation. Why did you make the change and how advanced was their improvisation program?*

Takase: My school friend told me that Jazz is one of the most interesting music and that I must listen to Jazz! I did what she said, and I became involved in the Jazz scene. I was really fascinated listening to Jazz records in the Jazz Café in Tokyo, I heard many records such as Albert Ayler, Mingus and Eric Dolphy, etc.

Cadence: *What was your plan of action when you graduated the university?*

Takase: No plan.

Cadence: *Talk about your move to New York City in 1978. How difficult of a transition was that for you?*

Takase: I never felt any difficulty. I was very curious, although I could not speak in English well. I was very young and an innocent girl.

Cadence: *How did you go about establishing contacts in New York? Who helped you and what jobs did you get at the start?*

Takase: My Aunt was living in the USA and sometimes I made visits to her. Besides, I had a good connection with a record company in Japan. They wanted to make my records with the American players in Japan and in New York.

Cadence: *Your second record, Minerva's Owl [1981, Continental] included NEA Jazz Master Dave Liebman. How did you come to utilize Liebman? He never recorded with you again after that.*

Takase: At that time, I was playing with many American players in Japan. I was glad that a record director decided to make record with Dave Liebman in Tokyo, where we played a concert. Later, I also made a record with Cecil McBee, Bob Moses and Sheila Jordan in New York.

Cadence: *A big break came in 1981 with your first European appearance which took place at the Berlin Jazz Festival. How did you score such a prominent performance and how did things change for you after that?*

Takase: George Gruntz, the artistic director of the festival, and Horst Weber of Enja records, came to Japan to invite some Japanese musicians to play at the festival. Luckily, Horst knew my name through Yōsuke

Yamashita, who already recommended him to listen to my concert in Tokyo. They came to several of my concerts and invited my trio to the festival. This was the time I came to know Horst, who made a Europe tour every year, and he also started to make my records such as *Song of Hope*, taped live at the Berlin Jazz Festival, and *Perdido*, live at the Nürnberg Ost-West Jazz Festival. Since then we've made many records together and I have a good friendship with him. Horst was also a total Japanophile.

Cadence: *Your 1982 recording ABC [Eastwind] impressively includes Sheila Jordan, Cecil McBee and Bob Moses. How did you arrive at that lineup?*

Takase: In those days, the record director selected the bass players for me, that's how I ended up working with Cecil McBee and Charlie Haden. But I already knew Cecil as a person since we had met in Japan since some years, so I preferred playing with him. When I was taking a piano lesson by Steve Kuhn, I often heard his group, and Bob Moses was playing with his band. I liked his playing style. Sheila was [a late addition] to sing on my record because the planned children's church choir could no longer appear.

Cadence: *It's worth noting that after using a vocalist for that record, you never used one again in a non-duo setting except for Eugene Chadbourne twice on your Fats Waller tributes and on New Blues [2011, Enja]. How do vocalists fit into your art?*

Takase: Maria Joao and I played for a long time (1987-1994) as a duo. Over time, I started to work with my new groups, and she wanted to play Portuguese music with musicians from Portugal. We were going to a different music direction each other. After a while, I was looking for a voice and banjo player for the Fats Waller project, after the WC. Handy project, instead of Fred Frith. Our "Dr. Fish" Eugene Chadbourne was Paul Lovens' nice idea, and I decided to use Eugene for my quintet. I really liked his banjo and voice. If it would have a chance again, I would like to play with him.

Cadence: *How long did you live in America and what was your experience there?*

Takase: My Aunt lived in America until she died, also my cousin was living there for many years. I stayed there many times and traveled a lot. I took the piano lesson with Steve Kuhn and one with Richie Beirach. I also joined some workshops in New York at times.

Cadence: *You moved to Berlin in 1987 to be with Alexander von Schlippenbach. How did you meet and become a couple?*

Takase: I was playing at the East Berlin Jazz Festival and at the same night, he was conducting for the Radio Big Band. Afterwards, Horst introduced me to Alex. It was our first meeting. I was asked to write a composition in 1987 for a Berlin big band that went on to be called the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, of which, Alex was an artistic director of it. Later we decided to get married.

Cadence: *Talk about becoming enmeshed into the German Free Jazz scene.*

Takase: I was too young. I never felt like I was into the German Free Jazz scene, even when I was playing at the FMP “Total Music Meeting” Jazz Festival, which included many musicians out of the Free Jazz scene. The first time I appeared there, I was playing as part of a trio of women pianists, together with Irene Schweizer and Marilyn Crispell. I later played with George Lewis.

Cadence: *What has struck you as most odd about German culture or life?*

Takase: There’s no flexibility and a lot of rigidity. Also, the cold weather in winter. But I like their reliability and humanity, and I love German food like Schweinebraten und Knödel.

Cadence: *You employ some humor into your work and like to drop unexpected quotes into your playing. Are you surprised by what you quote at times? Also, how does humor factor into your art?*

Takase: Humor comes from inside of the mind and unconsciously. So, if I did it, it was not intentional. Probably, I am an optimistic personality, otherwise I can never live in another country.

Cadence: *Would you talk about your experience playing with the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra?*

Takase: Alex and I used to compose for this orchestra and the key of the orchestra is to perform and produce new pieces by contemporary Jazz composers. We made great efforts to achieve this BCJO concerts for over 10 years. There were many musicians who were asked to write a composition including Carla Bley, Kenny Wheeler and Misha Mengelberg... We made three records on ECM, FMP and DISK UNION. BCJO orchestra is our history and we still love it deeply. Misha wrote some of the compositions for our orchestra and they were absolutely the best compositions for us and the big band.

Cadence: *Let’s touch on a few of your recordings. As mentioned earlier, it’s remarkable how your releases change from one to the next and what songs you cover. For example, your 1992 *Close Up of Japan* [Enja] features you with a string quartet performing 3 of your originals along with a piece by Alexander von Schlippenbach, Charlie Haden, Darius Milhaud, Miles Davis and Astor Piazzolla. What made you group those songs together and what goes into your decision to cover a song?*

Takase: I pondered what kind of compositions would suit a younger strings group and I chose compositions with various variations of color.

Cadence: *On *Piano Duets: Live in Berlin 93/93* [94, FMP], a duet recording with Alexander von Schlippenbach, Frank Zappa’s “You Are What You Is” is performed. Who in the family is the big Zappa fan and why?*

Takase: I am not a Zappa fan, but Alex values him as a composer and likes his satirical approach.

Cadence: *Live at Café Amores [2018, NoBusiness] is a 1995 duet recording with you and your husband sharing one piano because only one piano was available at the small venue. How was that experience playing side-by-side and how often have you performed in that setting? It’s especially impressive that you played that performance without*

charts.

Takase: I like four hands playing for one piano! Anyway, a piano has 88 keys, more than enough for two to play just one piano. Two playing the one piano in a limited range is also thrilling! The two players can also change positions to use the high and low register.

Cadence: *Takeo Suetomi, who composed the liner notes for that recording and owned the club, wrote about the sad fact that his pet dog happened to pass away in the middle of your performance. Any comments on the music's powerful effect?*

Takase: It all helps.

Cadence: *In the liner notes to Gunther Klatt & Aki Takase Play Ballads of Duke Ellington [1990, Tutu] you say, "When I play ballads, it's as if I am hearing stories from deep inside – stories filled with a mysterious dark eroticism. A ballad is something I want to take to bed with me, embrace and caress and wake up to." How has your playing of ballads changed over time and would you talk about your romantic side and how that fits into your art?*

Takase: Sorry, but I do not remember anymore what I said at that time. Ballads are very esoteric and easy to play, but I feel opposite emotions coexisting as well.

Cadence: *You've recorded a number of innovative solo recordings. What's your approach to solo piano?*

Takase: I always think about what are the characteristics of the piano instrument, and what is the potential with it? Although sometimes I like to play a comfortable spirit, like drinking tea. Definitely, I feel a strong intention to play when I get some [fresh] ideas for a new project.

Cadence: *You've made two albums in tribute to Eric Dolphy – Duet for Eric Dolphy [2004, Enja], a duet with Rudi Mahall, and So Long, Eric! [2014, Intakt], with Alexander von Schlippenbach and others. What is it about Dolphy's work that touches you so? Does the fact that he died in Berlin add extra significance?*

Takase: All his compositions are like improvisations. They've given me many hints on my own way of music, and also the arrangement for the big ensemble. I am very interested in his improvisations as an extension of bebop, and on the borderline from Bebop to Free Jazz. I know that he died in Berlin but that has nothing to do with me playing his compositions. I love his improvisations that evolves to follow the whereabouts of smoke. This is free for me.

Cadence: *Thelonious Monk is an acknowledged formidable influence for you. What have you gained from studying Monk's compositions?*

Takase: His articulation of a foundation of Jazz and his strong accent. No matter what, I love Monk's own language of music.

Cadence: *"Dr. Beat" is a composition you wrote in dedication to your husband. What does that piece look to communicate?*

Takase: The heartbeat is the human beat, Jazz is the source of the beat. He is my Dr. Beat.

Cadence: *You've collaborated with renowned writer/poet Yoko Tawada for two decades. How do you, as a pianist, enliven the spoken word?*

Takase: I love her books and for a long time, we've been working together as duo concept of sound and word. Sometimes I speak her written words or my spontaneous words as improvisations in our performances.

Cadence: *One of your newest projects, **Japanic**, is a quintet of young musicians including DJ Illvibe on turntables and electronics (aka Vincent von Schlippenbach, your stepson). The band deals with a mashup of Jazz, improvisation and Hip Hop. Does Hip Hop and electronics resonate strongly with you?*

Takase: I do not care what kind of style and genre Vincent plays. I need to play with the musicians who have a good taste of music. Japanic plays intersecting music. Some lines intersect at one point and everyone plays at a different tempo at the same time. We can waveform and hear several sounds.

Cadence: *You list a breathing method that you teach on your website. Is that something you've developed, and how does that help a musician?*

Takase: It depends on the student. I work with some professional pianists and some amateur pianists. I am teaching a basic technique for the piano to use compositions like S.J. Bach, and I also give some hints for improvisations. I do not know if I could help every student, but I love all my students because they love music deeply. I like to teach them very much!

Cadence: *Would you talk about winning the prestigious 2018 Berlin Jazz Prize?*

Takase: Yes, I got this prize two years ago. I've been living in Berlin for a long time and I've worked on several projects and I've been playing with many musicians in Berlin. This must be the reason why I have got the prize. My new solo album Hokusai contains some my compositions that I played at the award.

Cadence: *What was your experience scoring the soundtrack for **The Taste of Pho** [2019], the movie about a Warsaw-based Vietnamese cook struggling to fit into European culture?*

Takase: People like to eat exotic foods like sushi, pho, etc. I think that the kinds of meals are diversifying in our current life and nowadays, everyone is interested in other food cultures. But In the movie, it's about a Vietnamese father and daughter living in Poland. At that same time, it shows the integration problem from one culture to the other.

Cadence: *You turned 70 in 2018 but haven't slowed down your creative pace. What's left to be done in your career?*

Takase: It's great to be old because there's more intensity to do things than ever.

Cadence: *What are your interests outside of music?*

Takase: Cats.

Cadence: *The final questions have been given by other artists to ask you:*

David Murray (multi-reedist) said: "What I like about [you] is that you can be like James P. Johnson or John Hicks or Cecil Taylor or Bud Powell or Art Tatum." Any comments on that?

Takase: That's a great honor but I am still looking for my way of music, still looking for who I am.

Ingrid Laubrock (saxophone) asked: "What I never have asked you is why Germany? I grew up there myself and left when I was 18."

Takase: Because I met Alex.

Yoko Tawada (writer) asked: "What kind of stage project would you want to realize if a sponsor supported you with a lot of money?"

Takase: A Frida Kahlo project with my favorite musicians and a drawing artist. And my dream is an operetta project someday.

Yoko Tawada also asked: "Which five painters created the works that particularly inspire you as a musician?"

Takase: Paul Klee, Vincent Van Gogh, Hokusai Katsushika, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo.

Masahiko Satoh (piano) asked: "Please give my best regards to Aki-san. Aki-san, you came back to Japan temporarily in April 2016, and do you remember that we performed on two pianos in Shibuya, Tokyo? Now, as I listen to the recording from that time, I am again amazed at the strength of your left hand. Do you think that this strong, off-road running force, and the skeleton that supports the superstructure was cultivated through years of hard work with high-powered musicians in Germany? If so, please tell us what German improvised music is for you?"

Takase: I do not know what German improvised music is. There are many different ranges of the German improvised music scene, but I don't belong to any of them. I've just played with my favorite musicians for a long time. Sometime ago, when I hurt my left shoulder, there was a time when I was playing the piano intensively so that my left hand could be stronger.

Yōsuke Yamashita (piano) asked: "Please extend my deepest regards to Aki. Please tell me your memories from the days you made your debut in Germany, including stories about your German manager, Horst Weber."

Takase: Horst Weber was not my manager, he was a producer of Enja records. He was a big fan of Japanese musicians, and he liked sushi so much. He used to introduce Terumasa Hino, Yosuke Yamashita, Akira Sakata and me to Germany's Jazz scene. Horst was like my uncle for me.

Cadence: You took a piano lesson from Yōsuke Yamashita at one point. What knowledge were you hoping to gain from him?

Takase: I was very young, and I knew nothing about Jazz. I took a lesson from him on how I could play for the basic form.

Cadence: Which, if any, Japanese pianists have most influenced you?

Takase: Masahiko Sato and Yōsuke Yamashita, both were the most famous and the greatest Jazz pianists in Japan. However, I learned to be a pianist who brings out my personality without other influences.

Alexander von Schlippenbach (pianist) asked: "Would you name one artist who is living and one who is deceased that you would wish to play with?"

Takase: I would have liked to play in duo with Don Cherry, and I would like to play in duo or in a group with Marc Ducret.

Alexander von Schlippenbach - The Shape of Time By Ken Weiss

Pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach [b. April 7, 1938, Berlin, Germany] may be best known for fronting his trio with Evan Parker and Paul Lovens, later replaced by Paul Lytton, for the past half century. He is also arguably, Europe's leading Free Jazz bandleader. Schlippenbach formed the Globe Unity Orchestra in 1966 – a big band featuring Free Jazz with the Classical avant-garde which utilizes the twelve-tone scale. The GUO is still active and was among the first free improvising, large European ensembles. Schlippenbach also co-founded the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra in 1988 with his wife, pianist Aki Takase, with the intention of using a big band to perform and produce new pieces by contemporary Jazz composers. He's played with a long list of Europe's finest improvisers and American artists such as Sunny Murray, Sam Rivers, and George Lewis. Schlippenbach has also explored the work of traditional composers Jelly Roll Morton and Thelonious Monk. This interview was done by way of the Internet during the coronavirus pandemic in July of 2020.

Cadence: *You come from a line of German nobility, by rights you are a count. What is your family's history and why do you downplay that birthright?*

Schlippenbach: It's a fact that it is a quite an old family. The count title was earned by my ancestors for some merits more than five hundred years ago. If I would nowadays, as Jazz musician, point to that, it would be just completely ridiculous. It has absolutely nothing to do with my music. I do not downplay that birthright but "von" is more than enough. So, my name is Alexander von Schlippenbach, and that's how I am known as a musician.

Cadence: *I've seen little documented of your childhood family life and what early influences led you to a life in music. Please talk about that.*

Schlippenbach: There was not so much music in my early childhood. My father used to play a little accordion, some popular songs of that time. Anyway, the war was coming to an end, and there were many other things of importance for the parents. I grew up in Bavaria, in a little village, and heard a lot of Bavarian Folk music made up of brass bands and zither players. I especially remember occasional performances of a popular Folk singer named Roider Jackl. He did a great job. I was deeply impressed with what he did. At the age of ten, I was put in a boarding school (Stein a.d. Traun). The style of this place was pretty conservative but much concerned with music. I got my first piano lessons, I was a member of the selected choir, etc... The director was a passionate Wagner freak. On weekends we were invited to his private rooms where he used to give us lectures of the texts and then let us listen to the operas from records. So, I have heard a lot of Wagner before knowing anything of other Classical music. It was certainly an unusual approach to music for kids, but I have good memories

from there. Jazz was not appreciated, but sort of allowed. Some of the guys has Jazz records including Earl Bostic, Ray Anthony's big band and Lionel Hampton. Especially amazing for me was a shellac record of an early Dizzy Gillespie Quintet with Don Byas, Milt Jackson, Al McKibbin and J.C. Heard. I listened to "Night in Tunisia" and "Ol' Man Rebop." One of the guys could play Boogie-woogie on the piano. He showed me how to do it, so I got familiar with the 12-bar Blues form and practiced as much as possible. I had a small transistor radio and listened regularly to the broadcast of the Voice of America Jazz Hour, which really brought me into Jazz.

Cadence: *Did your family encourage you to be a musician?*

Schlippenbach: No, definitely not!

Cadence: *Hearing the Voice of America Jazz Hour with Willis Conover broadcast had a profound affect on you. Would you talk about that and how popular was Jazz in post-war Germany?*

Schlippenbach: Willis Conover's Voice of America Jazz Hour was a big thing for me and certainly had a profound affect. After I found out that it was broadcast every night from midnight to 1AM, I set an alarm clock and went with my transistor radio to an open room to listen to the whole hour, every night for at least two years. It was not allowed, but I could manage it. So, I got all my information about American Jazz from that time (early '50s). Also, I used to read Joachim-Ernst Berendt's The Jazz Book, which was well written, quite interesting, and instructive. It gave an overlook about the history, the key figures, and their influence on further developments. I started to organize a small band with trumpet, sax and rhythm section, and we tried to play Jazz. From that time on, I was more and more concerned with the subject. Jazz was not really popular in postwar Germany, but on the other hand, there were a good amount of real Jazz fans, and slowly, a kind of scene was established by the emergence of Jazz clubs.

Cadence: *What Jazz concerts did you see as a youth and what do you recall?*

Schlippenbach: The first great Jazz concert I remember was a Louis Armstrong All-star sextet with Armstrong, Barney Bigard, Jack Teagarden, Billy Kyle, Arvell Shaw and Sid Catlett. This was in Munich at the beginning of the '50s. A little later, there was "Jazz at the Philharmonic," a series concerts organized by Norman Granz with famous players on stage. I remember especially one with Dizzy Gillespie and Oscar Peterson, among others. Apart from Dizzy, I was extremely impressed by Oscar Peterson. This gave me a very strong impulse to go on with the piano.

Cadence: *How did your training at Köln's Staatliche Hochschule für Musik prepare you to prosper as a free improvising artist?*

Schlippenbach: Not directly, I was a student of composition in the traditional way. Melodic studies for different instruments as well as counterpoint, harmony, form, and structures. All this has almost nothing to do with improvisation. On the other hand, it makes one

look deeper into essential implications of music under technical and artistic aspects. I am sure that there are influences from that on things I did later as a Free Jazz musician and improviser. The prospering of that had probably more to do with the emergence of Free Jazz's beginning in the '60s, and last not least: I found excellent players to work with!

Cadence: *How did you discover Free Jazz? What attracted you to it?*

Schlippenbach: In this context, the recordings of Ornette Coleman's quartet on Atlantic have to be mentioned. I was playing with the Manfred Schoof Quintet at that time. We adapted the Idea of short, significant themes and used them as initial ignitions for, more or less, free improvisation. Also, we were listening a lot to Schoenberg and had the crazy Idea of a atonal Bebop. Completely free improvising came up later at the beginning of the '70s when we started the trio with Evan Parker and Paul Lovens. What attracted me to Free Jazz was probably a certain challenge. Free Jazz was there anyway.

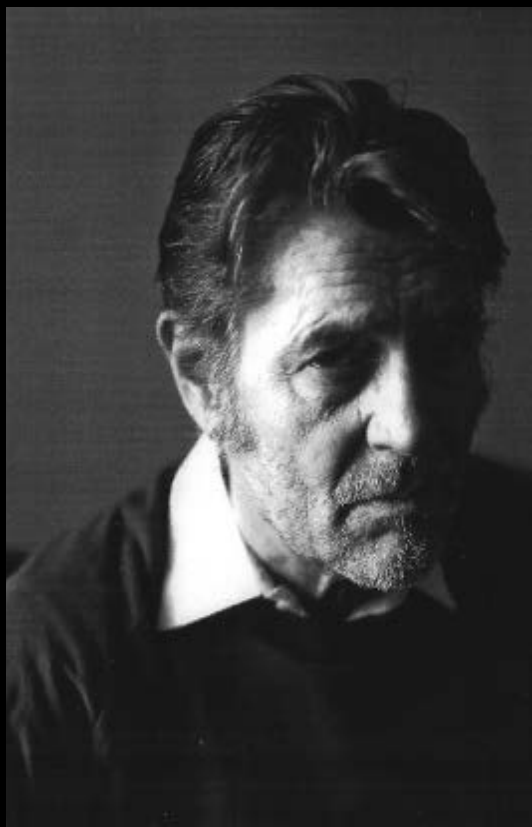
Cadence: *Much has been written of how Free Jazz served as a means for social transformation in Europe. How it helped Europeans throw off the "shackles" of American Jazz's dominance and serve as a rebellion against the status quo in general. Was that on your mind in the '60s when you became interested in this music? You were living in Allied-occupied Germany. How much was the shift to this "freedom music" a conscious rebellion, a political statement?*

Schlippenbach: Probably too much was written about these political implications on the emergence of Free Jazz, and this aspect is still much overrated. More important is the fact that, already at the end of the '50s, developments in Jazz brought up a fundamental change comparable to what happened in European Classical music at the beginning of last century. The emergence of a new language and sound. Free Jazz comes, like all Jazz, from America. So, there had been mainly American musicians like Coltrane, Cecil Taylor, Albert Ayler, Sunny Murray, etc... who started to throw off the shackles and brought up something new. In Europe at that time, Jazz musicians used to play mainly the American repertoire. When the New thing, like Ornette Coleman came up, it was adapted by younger musicians (often misunderstood) and something like a scene for "New Jazz" was there. The rebellion against the status quo in general was sort of superficial and even just fashionable. I have to confess that I did not take it very seriously and was anyway more busy with the music than anything else. To come to the second part of your question, in the '70s and '80s we used to play a lot in the DDR. I think in this case, the shift of this "freedom music," has maybe created a subconscious rebellion among some of the audience, which made them ready to get rid of the unloved status quo.

Cadence: *Peter Brötzmann, who is part of Germany's first generation after WW II, as you are, has been very open about his feelings of shame as a German citizen and the country's role in the war. That feeling remains with him today and fuels his playing. What are your feelings on this?*

Schlippenbach: I have to confess that I am not in this way concerned

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with it, and I don't think it affects my playing. At the end of WW II, I was a child and could survive. Seduction and violence brought the disaster. The end is well known and was bad enough. Good God, don't let it happen again!

Cadence: *Your career started in the bands of Gunter Hampel (starting in 1963) and Manfred Schoof (1964-67). Would you comment on that early time of your life?*

Schlippenbach: I started with the Gunter Hampel Quintet as a piano player. At the beginning, we had to play the Gershwin musical *Girl Crazy* in a theater in Düsseldorf. Later, we went on as a freelancing Jazz quintet. The Goethe Institute has sent us on tour in Greece and we made an LP on Saba Records. In 1964, we played two months at the Blue Note in Paris opposite the Kenny Clarke Quintet. After that, the Manfred Schoof Quintet was founded. We made another LP on CBS and one more on Wergo Records. On all these records are some of my pieces from that time. It was actually the start for me to be a professional.

Cadence: *Talk about the opportunity to play the Blue Note Paris club with Gunter Hampel opposite Kenny Clarke for two months. You also got to attend late-night jam sessions hosted by Don Cherry. How significant was it to have the opportunity to spend such considerable time with those two luminary artists?*

Schlippenbach: We had a great time at the Blue Note, playing about three sets every night. Famous musicians like Coltrane's rhythm section, Donald Byrd, Woody Herman, and others used to come to the Le Chat Qui Pêche club after hours, when they had concerts in Paris. When we finished the job, around 3 AM, we went to listen to Don Cherry's group with Gato Barbieri. There was something really new happening there, and it was exciting for us to watch Cherry leading the band with his horn to determine the direction of the music.

Cadence: *Your opportunity as a leader came with a commission from the Berlin Jazz Festival in 1966 to organize a Free Jazz piece for big band, something that had never been done before. What were your thoughts on the project? Free Jazz had only been around for a few years at that time and you had not led a band yet?*

Schlippenbach: At the time, with the Manfred Schoof Quintet, I already had the idea, and something in mind, to use the achievements of Free Jazz in a project for a large ensemble. The commission from the Berlin Jazz Festival and RIAS Radio was actually to write something for string quartet opposite [German composer] Boris Blacher and two jazz players - Leo Wright on alto sax and Carmel Jones on trumpet. I had told Behrendt, who was the artistic director of the festival at that time, about my idea to make something for a large ensemble. I persuaded him to change the commission and to let me do the orchestra thing. He agreed, and I started to work on it.

Cadence: *"Globe Unity" was the piece you wrote for the festival. How did the name come about and what was your thought process in*

approaching the composition which combined New Music techniques with free improvisation?

Schlippenbach: "Globe Unity" does not refer on any political or spiritual implications. The shape of time as a globe is a vision by the great composer Bernd Alois Zimmermann, who was a mentor for me. It was a kind of reference. Unity is the common spirit of the players in the band, whatever background or country they may come from. Our position on stage is a half-circle. There is hardly anything more to explain about that. "Globe Unity" was the title of my piece. My thought process was to use and exploit the achievements of Free Jazz in a large ensemble by using some New Music techniques, as far as they could serve the Idea. There are tutti [all instruments performing together] parts, certain combinations of instruments in improvisations, solos, composed sections as riffs based on a 12-tone scale, chance operation on numbers, semantic information, and playing advices, whatever. We had a few rehearsals at the WDR in Cologne and the Berlin Jazz Festival in November 1966. It was a scandalous and a sensational success, and a great springboard for the Globe Unity Orchestra's future career.

Cadence: You've said you were not making political music but the name of the "Globe Unity" piece indicates otherwise.

Schlippenbach: It is definitely not political music. It might imagine a united world, which would be all right, but I don't proclaim a utopia. That is not intended in my music. A little misunderstanding, but nothing to worry about.

Cadence: John Coltrane's Ascension album was released in February 1966. Did that recording inspire and inform your "Globe Unity" composition?

Schlippenbach: Of course, I had heard Ascension - a great piece and a real inspiration. The idea of the "Globe Unity" composition is certainly different and was there already before I knew Ascension.

Cadence: You organized the Globe Unity Orchestra (GUO) to perform the piece at the 1966 Berlin Jazz Festival by combining the Manfred Schoof Quintet, the Peter Brötzmann Trio, and members from Gunter Hampel's band. How challenging was it to organize an orchestra of improvisers into a functioning unit for the first time in history on such short notice?

Schlippenbach: The Schoof Quintet and Peter Brötzmann's Trio were the most significant groups in German Free Jazz at that time. A combination of both groups was actually the start of Globe Unity. By adding a few more players, the band was completed in the sense I had imagined. It was challenging, but everyone wanted to play and was ready to cooperate. So, we could manage it and go successfully through the project.

Cadence: GUO's debut at the Berliner Philharmonie, the sacred home of elite Classical presentations, was met with outrage in the press. The performance was labeled as "male nonsense" and as "pandemonium in which Peter Brötzmann played the role of Satan." Talk about that

response and how long it took for the orchestra's acceptance?

Schlippenbach: The press' reaction was indeed very strong, especially in the boulevard papers. Most of the writers did not understand the music, so the headlines and catchphrases in the articles mainly pointed on superficial bullshit like our mixed-up dress on stage. (We had been told to wear suits and neckties, which some of the guys refused. Mani Neumeier even turned up in an adventurous hippie-look with a little Muslim cap on his head). On top the frightening sound of Free Jazz improvisation on such an established and important place like the Philharmonie. Nothing to be happy or proud of. It was not intended to produce chaos and shock, but those reactions made a good push for further activities and we got more offers to perform on bigger festivals. The orchestra was accepted in a controversial way.

Cadence: One of the most impressive elements of the GUO, as well as the common thread throughout your career, has been your egalitarian approach, your interest in inclusivity and community. You've not pushed yourself to the front. Your large ensembles include artists from diverse countries who are allowed to maintain their individual voices while at the same time contributing to the whole. Is this all done as a conscious decision?

Schlippenbach: In the case of an orchestra of improvisers, everything is, first of all, focused on the personality of the players. So, I don't have to push myself to the front as a leader, although I am responsible for organizing and the choosing the musicians. This choice is done very carefully with the intent to have musicians from diverse countries and backgrounds.

Cadence: How do you so effectively handle dealing with so many free-thinking leaders in one ensemble? How do you keep everyone happy and non-competitive?

Schlippenbach: Never can you keep everyone happy and not competitive. Maybe it's a nice Idea, but not happening in reality. Democracy is a great achievement in politics, but it is not working in art, and does not count as well, unless you deny the idea of quality. Different opinions in details and competition are always there in our work, and that's what makes it interesting and efficient. Globe Unity is an improviser's orchestra. Everything is focused on the personality of the players and everybody can bring in own ideas and can play free solo parts. Maybe, I have a little talent in adjust things when possible, but sometimes it was hard.

Cadence: GUO covered only your compositions up until 1970. Why did the process change to playing a more structured song-oriented format?

Schlippenbach: From 1966 until 1970, the band was much supported by [journalist/ producer] J.E. Behrendt, and there were only my pieces by commission - like 1967 at the Donaueschinger Tage für Neue Musik and 1970 in Berlin. At that time, I had an argument with Behrendt about a piece by [Krzysztof] Penderecki, which had been planned to be played by Globe Unity on the festival but the composer could not finish it in time, and never arrived anyway. Behrendt and my relationship

with Behrendt was broken and I joined FMP [record label/production company] to go on with concerts and recordings. Most of the activities used to happen in Wuppertal, where Brötzmann and Kowald [lived and] were the leading spirits. The music at that time was a kind of reaction in the young Free Jazz scene, an obvious desire for simple melodies, if possible, in a political context. I was seduced myself and tried some things, not really believing in it. After a short while, it was over, like bad weather.

Cadence: *Would you explain why you had an argument over a composition you had no control over?*

Schlippenbach: The story is after Globe Unity's performance at Donaueschinger Tage für Neue Musik in November 1967, Krzysztof Penderecki contacted me and offered to make a piece for the band. Behrendt was quite amazed about it and wanted to put it on the Berlin festival program for 1970. I spoke to Penderecki another time, and we agreed that he would send the piece at least two weeks before performance. Time went by, but no piece arrived. After a few phone calls, there was a whisper, the piece may arrive the day before the concert. That meant that we would have to rehearse through the night in order to be able to play it the next day. I refused that. Behrendt was very angry with me and I fell out of his grace. As it happened, the piece did not arrive anyway.

Cadence: *Peter Kowald's influence in the band grew in the '70s to the point where he was co-leading the GUO. How and why did Kowald become so prominent in the mix?*

Schlippenbach: . Kowald was a fine bass player, very prominent and popular in Wuppertal. He helped a lot to set up the regular workshops of Globe Unity in Wuppertal, but he was not a co leader.

Cadence: *Kowald's heavy political interests split the band into "left" and "right" wings which eventually led to tension between the two of you, and ultimately, a physical altercation. Would you talk about that?*

Schlippenbach: Left ideology was a big thing at that time, and some of the players in the band were pretty occupied with it. It was surely not just Kowald's heavy political interests that split the band into a left and right wing, which is a very rough classification anyway. Kowald was obviously very convinced about his political ideas. I did not deal with the political side at all, which brings us to the result that we just did not fit together. There was always a lot of tension, which ended up in that physical altercation in Fongies Bierplace in Wuppertal. The next day, Kowald was fired. We never became enemies because of that, we just ended our collaboration.

Cadence: *Once Kowald and Brötzmann left the GUO, it's music in the '80s changed to purely free improvised sets.*

Schlippenbach: When we recorded Improvisations [1978] for ECM/JAPO, Brötzmann was still in the band. He left before we made Compositions [1980]. The next production Intergalactic Blow [1983]

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was all improvised, so, it was not about Brötzmann. The band, as a whole, had the tendency to go in that direction, and we went on to play most all improvised concerts.

Cadence: *It's a tribute to your leadership that the GUO remained active and vital for so many years (12 albums released from 1967-87, as well as the infrequent reappearances for special occasions). How were you able to maintain a big band for that long? Why was this ensemble so important to you?*

Schlippenbach: It is actually 54 years now since the name of the band as Globe Unity Orchestra was established. It remains like a brand. In 2016, we celebrated our 50th anniversary at the Berlin festival, which is documented on an Intakt CD [Globe Unity 50 Years, 2018], and we had a couple of concerts in between. There is already a new project in preparation for October this year in Berlin. The band has a significant image and a long intense story. So, we will go on.

Cadence: *Brötzmann released his historic Machine Gun album [BRÖ] in 1968. Did that recording influence you?*

Schlippenbach: Brötzmann's Machine Gun is a great and important record, but it had no direct influence on me. Globe Unity [1966-'67] was done before his record anyway.

Cadence: *You played a role in the social transformation and unthawing of Cold War Europe by incorporating artists from the Warsaw Pact countries such as [Poland's] Tomasz Stanko and numerous East Germans into the GUO, long before governmental tensions eased.*

What was the reaction that brought from your audience, as well as the communist countries the players came from?

Schlippenbach: I remember a remark like, "Europe was united by musicians long before politics could succeed," something like that. However, we took it sort of easy. There was more contact to East German musicians since 1970. At the time of the Berlin Festival in November, we used to go to East Berlin to have sessions with them at a place named the Melody Bar near Bahnhof Friedrichstraße. There was an empty room on the second floor with an old grand piano. Before midnight, we had to go back to West Berlin. I have made many tours in the DDR with small groups and there always had to be one foreign musician in the band to prevent too much East/West German conspitation. We had fun, because we had to spend all East German money we earned during the tour, so we used to luxuriate, very much the opposite to our normal life. But it was good to play, and we had a big audience everywhere there.

Cadence: *How did word spread which East German musicians were ready for you to play with them since they were sheltered behind the Berlin Wall?*

Schlippenbach: It wasn't difficult for West Berliners to pass the wall for a day's visit. There were certainly personal contacts that we had to get to some collaboration with the musicians there.

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Cadence: *Once East Germany relaxed its antagonism towards Jazz in the '70s, some musicians there developed their own specific brand of improvisation. How did their playing differ from the West German improvisors?*

Schlippenbach: Improvisation is more an abstract thing. In terms of music, there is no difference in playing between East and West German players. It is just the quality that counts.

Cadence: *You've retained your love and interest in Jazz's tradition and continue to play music from the past masters. Would you talk about looking forward as well as behind in the music?*

Schlippenbach: That's right. Without my knowledge of the Jazz tradition, and my passion for Jazz whatever, I would probably never have come to be a musician. The spirit of this music transforms through different periods, but it is indestructible. I am continuously working on my own compositions and improvisation, so I am necessarily looking forward at all times.

Cadence: *Misha Mengelberg and Brötzmann both were involved with the Fluxus movement. Did you have a connection to that community of artists?*

Schlippenbach: Of course, I know Mengelberg and Brötzmann very well, but I never had any connection with Fluxus.

Cadence: *You co-founded the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra (BCJO) with Aki Takase in 1988 which allowed you to expand on the possibilities of the traditional Jazz big band. Why did you feel the need to establish another big band?*

Schlippenbach: Aki's and my Idea of BCJO was to make up a big band to perform and produce new pieces by contemporary Jazz composers. In the band should be mainly Berlin musicians to make it easier for regular rehearsals. For certain projects, we used to invite special soloists from other places and countries as well. We got support by RIAS Radio and the Berlin Cultural Administration. It was a good idea. I was interested in this as well, and we would go on with that for more than ten years, performing pieces by Misha Mengelberg, Carla Bley, Willem Breuker, Manfred Schoof and Kenny Wheeler.

Cadence: *Your role during performances in the BCJO was that of conductor. How was it for you to conduct but not to play piano?*

Schlippenbach: There was Aki to play piano.

Cadence: *The Schlippenbach Trio is your longest running and best-known group (with Evan Parker and Paul Lovens). How has the group managed to survive for 50 years and hold your interest? What makes this trio such a good setting for exploration?*

Schlippenbach: The Trio was working very well from beginning of 1970 and on. We had a few managers for gigs and have organized things by ourselves as well. Apart from that, we had regular recording releases on LP and CD on the FMP label, and later Intakt. The Goethe Institute has sent us on concert tours in USA, Brazil, Canada and Australia, and

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supported a tour in Japan last year. Also, we played on many European festivals, so, there was always something happening. For more than 20 years, we do a tour every year in the first half of December that we call "Die Winterreise" ["The Winter Journey"], by car through European Jazz clubs. Since a few years, Paul Lytton replaced Lovens, who could not do the long travels by car because of health reasons. A good setting for exploration might be the fact that we don't play very often. There are long periods of time in-between our meetings. Each of us runs our own bands as well, and when we meet again, we just play, and there might be something to explore later.

Cadence: *You're interested in making something new every time you play. That's an obvious challenge for a group that's been playing for half a century. Talk about that challenge and the process of refinement the trio has undergone.*

Schlippenbach: I am not so much interested to make always something new when I play. It's anyway different every time. If you work with a certain group by successful continuing, the music gets something like a stable bottom you can work on. This probably is happening in my trio. It is a slow process, like developing a motor that's efficient. It can take a long time. The real new stuff has happened in the '60s and '70s when there was something revolutionary in the air. Sound and articulations were more rough and aggressive. You can hear that when you compare our early trio recordings with those from nowadays. It may be a process of refinement, but hopefully it's for the best. Anyway, the trio is still on and finds a good audience everywhere.

Cadence: *Bassist Barre Phillips has maintained his freely improvising trio for roughly 20 years, and when they take the stage, just like your trio, there is no prior discussion of how the music is to go. He believes that each performance is a continuation of the last one. Is that how you feel about the work of your trio?*

Schlippenbach: It is the same in our case. We never speak about what we will play before hand, and each performance is in fact a continuation of the last one.

Cadence: *In the liner notes to the Schlippenbach Trio's Warsaw Concert album [Intakt, 2016], you wrote, 'We've been playing together so long it doesn't really matter if we carry on or not. If we were to stop, there are things we'd miss (the anti-depressive effect for instance) but in some senses it might also be a relief.' Would you explain why it would be a relief?*

Schlippenbach: I was just trying to add a little (black) humor, especially with the part about it being a "relief." Maybe not a good idea for liner notes. Apologies!

Cadence: *The same liner notes follow with, 'If we carry on it's also good, because people do actually need our music.' What are you delivering musically that the people need?*

Schlippenbach: This has to do with the anti-depressive effect. Some

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people occasionally told us that our music was a kind of medicine for them. I think if it is really "On," it can help. So, it is even needed.

Cadence: *Thelonious Monk's compositions have intensely attracted you since your exposure to his "Work" song while you were in school, and, to a degree, his angular, clustered style of playing is incorporated into your playing. Would you comment on your interest in Monk and how you've digested his art?*

Schlippenbach: I don't think there is much of Monk in my playing, even so, I admire him as a great pianist. I love his compositions and I try to play them. "Work" has been a key piece through all these years.

Cadence: *What do you hear in Monk's music as a European artist that, perhaps, Americans don't hear?*

Schlippenbach: Hard to say! There is probably nothing in Monk's music of what I hear, that an American could not hear through intense listening. Probably the Afro American audience has a different approach to that than Europeans who may pay more attention to pure musical implications because of a different cultural background. Maybe it's better to consider the other way around. I imagine the American audience, especially the Afro American ones, hear things in Monks music, Europeans don't.

Cadence: *You were the first to cover Monk's entire canon. That came in 1998 at a Hamburg radio station and was followed by 2003 and 2004 recitals in Berlin that was released as Monk's Casino [Intakt, 2005].*

What compelled you to play all of his compositions at once and how exhaustive is it to perform Monk's Casino in concert as three 75-minute sets?

Schlippenbach: Monks Casino's Idea is to show a portrait of the Master by playing all his compositions in one performance. It is all focused on the themes, and since there is not much improvisation, the whole thing takes about one and a half hour. When we played everything, we used to do three sets and have two breaks of 20 minutes in between. This was good for a long night in a Jazz club. On festivals we play just a certain part of it because of the time limitations. It is a good amount of work every time, but there is a certain tension created by the fast sequence of the tunes -sometimes arranged in a special way without improvisations- so it goes by without too much exhaustion for the listener as well.

Cadence: *Which Monk composition has been the most challenging for you to cover and put your own personal stamp on?*

Schlippenbach: The challenge is to get the idea of the tune no matter if it is short -in some cases just four bars- or longer and more complicated. This is more important than to show up with virtuoso choruses and the changes. "Work," "Evidence," and "Introspection," are among others I have been working on and I still like to play them.

Cadence: *which Monk composition has evolved the most for you as you've gotten to understand it better?*

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Schlippenbach: Let's say "Reflections" and "Four in One."

Cadence: *What is your favorite Monk tune and why?*

Schlippenbach: I cannot point on one tune as a favorite, there are too many of those. Every piece is a jewel. They are all favorites.

Cadence: *How, if at all, has your wife, Aki Takase, influenced your playing and composing?*

Schlippenbach: Maybe not so much influence on my composing and playing. Her encouragement, sometimes for things I am doing, is an important influence on my activities.

Cadence: *How challenging has it been to have two actively performing artists in the family? What is the practicing/composing situation like at home?*

Schlippenbach: Actually, it's three of us because my youngest son Vincent (DJ Illvibe) is meanwhile a well-known turntabler and plays with improvisers as well. He has his own place, and we have fortunately an old Berlin flat with room for three pianos. So, each of us has enough space to work our own things.

Cadence: *Live at Café Amores [NoBusiness, 2018] was recorded in 1995 and features you and your wife seated together at one piano because only one piano was available at the small club on that stop of your duet tour. How was that experience? Is that something that you two had done before?*

Schlippenbach: We did the four-hand piano thing on one Instrument before. It is a good Idea because it exploits the instrument's separation into upper and lower register for two players, who can also change the position. There is lot of music composed for four-hand piano on one Instrument.

Cadence: *You've done a number of solo recordings, especially in your later career. How does performing alone compare to playing with a group?*

Schlippenbach: It is easy to answer - you are totally abandoned to yourself and have to concentrate this way.

Cadence: *I'd like to talk about some of your other recorded material. Your second album was The Living Music [Quasar, 1969]. What did you mean by "Living Music?"*

Schlippenbach: "Living Music" points to improvisation and instant composing.

Cadence: *You did the cover art for that album. Why did you use the rear image of an elephant for the cover?*

Schlippenbach: I did it. The elephant is just for fun!

Cadence: *What is the level of your involvement with visual art?*

Schlippenbach: I have a certain interest in painting and architecture, but other visual art, not so much. Technological visual art, not at all.

Cadence: *GUO's recording Jahrmarkt/ Local Fair [Po Torch, 1977] includes a Kowald piece with a very large ensemble along with 25 accordion players, an organ grinder and a Greek folk music group.*

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What do you recall from that experience?

Schlippenbach: The Jahrmarkt project is a mixture of different music with the involvement of outside reality. There were many experiments and social events like this at that time. For Globe Unity, this was just a onetime happening without consequences or meaning.

Cadence: Improvisers Pool [FMP, 1996] includes Sam Rivers. How did you come to record with him? You had not met him prior to the recording's rehearsal.

Schlippenbach: Sam Rivers came to Berlin in 1995 and participated in an ensemble workshop I was doing at the music academy (HdK). It was recorded and later issued as Improvisers Pool by FMP on CD. Two years later, we recorded Tangens in duo for FMP on the festival, which I am particularly happy about. Sam was an impressive person, a great musician, and a man of noblesse and modesty.

Cadence: The Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra's album The Morlocks and Other Pieces [FMP, 1994] includes your piece "Rigaudon Nr. 2 aus der Wasserstoffmusik" which uses a graphic score. Is that a scheme you've utilized often? What are the benefits to working off a graphic score?

Schlippenbach: I use graphic scores sometimes in my pieces to give semantic, or other information to the players if the composition requires it.

Cadence: You've paid homage to Eric Dolphy by recording a number of his songs and even released a whole album of his compositions on So Long, Eric! [Intakt, 2014]. You saw him perform in the '60s. Talk about seeing him live and how he has inspired you.

Schlippenbach: I saw Eric Dolphy only one time, it was in Wuppertal on a concert with Mingus. It was a wild night, everything happened on stage! Especially, I remember the encore - a duet with just bass and flute. They played "You Don't Know What Love Is." It was unforgettable!

Cadence: So Long, Eric! Includes Karl Berger and Han Bennink, both of whom shared the stage with Dolphy. How did having Dolphy's ex-bandmates on the recording help inform the music?

Schlippenbach: There was no direct information about the music from them. It was just good to have them with us. It was helpful to have official discussions with them because they contributed personal experiences with Dolphy.

Cadence: LOK 03 is a trio with Aki Takase and your son, DJ Illvibe. How is it to create music as a family?

Schlippenbach: In the beginning, it was just a kind of occasional jamming at home. Vincent was good on turntables and the mix of sound was interesting. Then Aki had the idea to produce a program of "sound pictures" of capital towns all over the world by bringing together individual associations of each of us on the subject. It was recorded and issued as a CD on LEO Records. We went on with a few

concerts and worked out an organized improvisation on the classical silent movie *Symphonie der Großstadt* by W. Richter from 1921. With that project Lok03 made a Japan tour in 2015.

Cadence: *Do you like working with turntables and a sampling keyboard?*

Schlippenbach: I have to confess that I am not very busied with technology and try to avoid it in my musical work. The way Illvibe plays the turntables in real time, it works well with the way I play piano. For certain projects, It serves as a source for sounds beyond the possibilities of the piano which can still be exploited and developed.

Cadence: *You also play trumpet at times. How accomplished are you on the horn and what does trumpet add to your creative arsenal?*

Schlippenbach: I gave it up more than ten years ago. Before, in the old days, I bought two trumpets in the DDR to sell them possibly in West Berlin. I kept them and started to take lessons, together with Vincent, and we played regularly in a brass octet for a few years. Of course, knowledge of the instrument serves composers work. That's what the trumpet added to my creative arsenal.

Cadence: *How did you come to write the updated liner notes for Cecil Taylor's *Fly! Fly! Fly! Fly! Fly! Fly!* album [Promising Music, 1980]?*

Schlippenbach: I was asked for that by the record company.

Cadence: *You've mentioned Ornette Coleman as a stimulus for you in the past, but I haven't seen a comment from you regarding the work of Cecil Taylor? What role has Taylor served for you?*

Schlippenbach: Possibly I have to repeat something which is already in these updated liner notes. Anyway, Ornette's quartet with Don Cherry was indeed a stimulus for the group [the Schoof Quintet]. This was before we knew about Cecil Taylor. I saw him for the first time in a solo concert in Rotterdam, somehow in the '60s. It was an overwhelming impression. He played one set of about two hours. His music was beyond any Jazz clichés. There was no compromise. It was something completely new - a bit of air from another planet. I admire him, and I think there was a strong influence on my in my young days, like for other pianists of my generation as well.

Cadence: *Would you talk about your interest and involvement with the 12-tone technique?*

Schlippenbach: From beginning of my study in composition, I was especially into Schoenberg, and as a Jazz player, I had the crazy idea about atonal improvising by using 12 tone scales. So, I developed some things on the piano like models for improvisational practicing. To undergo this is a slow and long process. Meanwhile, I found something I can use for atonal Improvising on the piano. I have just recorded for Intakt Slow pieces for Aki, pieces and improvisations, worked out of this material.

Cadence: *Does playing prepared piano interest you?*

Schlippenbach: We did a lot of that in the very old days. There was curiosity about the possibilities of discovering material sound in the

Interview: Alexander von Schlippenbach

free forms. I think most of it, as far as it concerns improvisers, was not very serious. I don't do it anymore, except a piece in the trio we call "Bangin' In," which is a good slow piece to start a second set. Hits on the piano strings, in combination with special use of the pedal, create overtones as a start for a sound piece. There are no other preparations.

Cadence: What's left to be done in your career?

Schlippenbach: Thanks for that question! There is a lot of interest about what we have done in the past. But we are still here, and many things are happening. I am still busy with some different projects and activities. The Globe Unity Orchestra will rehearse and perform a new piece at the Academy of Arts in Berlin, October 2021. This was already planned for this year, but it had to be changed to 2021 because of the coronavirus. The trio is on and will make the "Winterreise" tour and record for Intakt in December. For a few years, I have a new quartet in Berlin with Henrik Walsdorff (alto sax), Antonio Borghini (bass) and Heinrich K bberling (drums). The Schlippenbach/ Walsdorff Quartet (S.W.4) plays mainly my compositions and some Jazz classics. Apart from that, there is the piano duo with Aki and another duo with the Norwegian drummer Dag Magnus Narvesen. Monks Casino is on as well and will play at the Norwind Festival in Oslo. Lok 03 still plays, and I do occasional solo performances.

Cadence: What are your interests outside of music? What would we be surprised to hear that interests you?

Schlippenbach: I like to read philosophy and new German and American literature.

Cadence: The final questions have been given to me by other artists to ask you:

Louis Hayes (drums) asked: "Playing with Oscar Peterson as a member of his trio was one of the highlights of my career. How did his playing translate to you as a young German pianist and what struck you upon hearing his trio live?"

Schlippenbach: I have never heard his trio live, but Oscar Peterson was always one of my favorite pianists.

"Mystery artist" (this artist asked that their identity be revealed after you answered the question and that you should try to guess who asked it): "Do know the reason for your sneezing fit of forty-times-in-a-row at Alarich's place? If you're interested, I could tell you why, but I'm sure you wouldn't believe me. At the very least, this question may make you think of days long ago and perhaps talk about those."

Schlippenbach: I am sure it was Evan Parker who brought up this subject. The answer is -my allergy against chocolate! [Correct answer is drummer Paul Lovens]

Rudi Mahall (clarinet) asked: "Do you think there are any female horn players playing on the same level like the male musicians? If yes, please name 5 of them. If no, what do you think is the reason for this?"

Schlippenbach: If you think of music, like in sports, there is obviously

Interview: Alexander von Schlippenbach

a different level, because women in general don't have the same physical conditions. However, the level of music is another thing. Even among horn players, there are certainly women who can easily play on the same level, and in some cases, even play better than men. It's anyway just a question of musical quality.

Rudi Mahall also asked: *"Do you like the music produced by your son -Pop bands like Peter Fox or Seed? Do you think a musician can switch between styles like changing underwear?"*

Schlippenbach: Rudi Mahall is a great musician and one of my best friends, but he has no idea what Illvibe is doing. Vincent is an excellent turntable player and works successfully with rappers and free improvisers, as well. Peter Fox and Seed are quite successful pop bands. Even so, it is not "my music." I have nothing against them. It is another scene with different implications. Vincent works occasionally with them and makes a good money, which is all right to me. If a musician has the talent and the ability to switch between styles, he can do it. He can enjoy himself by making things happen, as well as making it interesting for the listeners.

Evan Parker (sax) asked: *"Please recount the story of a late night/early Berlin morning with Cecil Taylor holding court in a yellow suede overcoat."*

Schlippenbach: That was a great night, which actually ended the next morning, around 10:30 AM. After a party at my place -Cecil was there- we left together with a few friends for an after-hours hang out. We started at Taxe Moon, a place open 24 hours a day, that played music from tapes. Cecil did a dance with the waitress. Then we went for breakfast at Markthalle-Moabit, which was famous for the best currywurst, whose prices varied and depended on weight. Cecil wore a brand new expensive, bright leather coat. I was worried about possible damage to the coat, the curry ketchup was everywhere, and many weird and drunk people were around. Thank God, the coat survived without damage. Then we all ended up in an old fashioned, rough Berlin pub Zur Quelle. Some of the guys fell asleep but Cecil was still on. He had to do a workshop for FMP the same day. Good to remember this. Since that experience, I admire Cecil even more. That's the story.

Matthew Shipp (piano) asked: *"What are the qualities in Evan Parker's playing that you most identify with and feed off of in the trio?"*

Schlippenbach: Earnestness, good sound and hymnic power.

Matthew Shipp also asked: *"Years ago, I was backstage at the FMP festival and you came backstage and talked with Misha Mengelberg. You two actually talked about counterpoint for a few minutes. What do you miss about Misha?"*

Schlippenbach: There is a lot to miss about Misha Mengelberg. A key figure in European Jazz. Deep knowledge about Jazz and its musical implications. Important as bandleader, composer, and unique piano

Interview: Alexander von Schlippenbach

player. At the same time, a revolutionary spirit, and often good for surprises. It was a big difference, if He was present or not. A big loss of a best man! Yes, I miss him.

Cadence: Misha Mengelberg was a rare peer of yours who shared a fascination with Jazz's entire spectrum and kept it in his work. Did you view him as sort of a parallel spirit?

Schlippenbach: Parallel spirit would be too much honor for me, but Jazz was, in fact, our music. Actually, we both belong to the leading figures at the emergence of Free Jazz in Europe. As people and character, we are probably quite different. Anyway, a certain respect and good friendship.

Aki Takase (piano) asked: "You love many books. Which book was the most interesting ever?"

Schlippenbach: Arthur Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*.

Aki Takase also asked: "What is the real pleasure of improvisation?"

Schlippenbach: With improvisation, I don't need glasses and I can play what I want.



Buddy Rich circa May 1947



The Buddy Rich Band 1981

INVISIBLE STICKS: A TRIBUTE TO BUDDY RICH by David Boyle

Though I was just a little boy when I began taking an interest in and learning about music and musicians, I had definite ideas of what I liked and disliked. In fact, by the time I reached my teenage years I had already listened to music of all kinds, including rock, heavy metal, classical, orchestral, pop, country, and jazz—a solid musical foundation that turned me into a very discriminating listener. During this time as an impressionable youth I saw on television drummer Buddy Rich, whose talent, skill, and stage presence arrested my attention. I had seen performances by drummers of all genres, but none of them dazzled me or excited me as much as Buddy Rich. As a result I started paying more attention to percussionists. To my eyes and ears, Rich was aggressive, confident, and musical, as well as highly demanding of himself and of those with whom he played. For me, watching him play was an adrenaline rush, similar to that felt when viewing an intense and riveting cinematic

sequence. Before long I was drawn into Buddy's sound and style and rhythm and approach to craft, and one Christmas I even got a kiddie drum set, though I had neither the talent nor the desire to play the drums with any degree of seriousness. I had fun pounding them and pretending that I could understand the fundamentals. That was as serious as I ever got, though. No matter. The inclination wasn't alive in me. I preferred then, as I do now, to watch professionals play the drums and make music.

Whenever Buddy came on television my dad and I would watch him together; we marveled at his talent and thought him sensational. The more I saw of Mr. Rich, the more I started comparing him to other drummers. There were many fine drummers—Louis Bellson and Gene Krupa were among the best—but Buddy was in a class by himself. Back then, many of Buddy's contemporaries held him in the highest regard. The great Gene Krupa went so far as to say: "Buddy Rich is the greatest drummer ever to have drawn breath." Although Buddy had a healthy ego—he would strut onto the stage, smirk and make faces while he played, always seemed sure of himself—he could back up his swagger and he did so whenever given the opportunity. Unafraid to

perform side by side with renowned drummers, Buddy often appeared on TV shows and drumbattled. Foremost in his mind at battle-time: having fun and giving an electrifying performance. Back in 1978, I saw him battle Johnny Carson's drummer, Ed Shaughnessy, another top drummer, during which time both men showed respect for each other. Buddy, once again, though, knowing how to amaze his audience, outperformed Mr. Shaughnessy.

Another standout Buddy Rich performance, a televised 1981 Boston Pops concert with legendary composer-conductor John Williams—a favorite of mine—calls up memories of my childhood. Being Mr. Williams's guest, Buddy joined the Pops in a version of "West Side Story." What a pleasure it was listening to Buddy play with the orchestra. Toward the end of the segment the music faded as Buddy started what would become a long, memorable solo, one I've watched numerous times. Throughout the solo he did things I'd never seen drummers do! In complete command of his instrument, Buddy, using a small kit, produced a gallery of sound. John Williams watches the entire solo, and at one point shakes his head in awe of Buddy's artistry. This particular solo can be found on Youtube; look it up and see Williams's reaction for yourself. If you've impressed John Williams, one would imagine you're immeasurably talented. A highlight of the solo was hearing Rich create the "West Side Story" melody with a snare roll. As he's playing, if you watch and listen carefully, you can hear the "I Feel Pretty" melody coming from his sticks, and see his body grooving to the beat. A mesmerizing moment, indeed, and Buddy seems lost in a trance. His appearance with the Boston Pops was the first time I saw him—or any drummer—play with one hand, using his left hand to strike with impressive control his snare drum rack and floor toms, sweeping back and forth fluidly and with precision, an outstanding bit of showmanship—one of several highlights of one performance. Then, Rich's singular finale: drumming on the snare at a very slow tempo, almost stopping, then dynamically working up to full speed, maintaining perfect form. Buddy's wrists, piston-like, generate the power to move his sticks at blurring speed. I'm almost certain I said to my father, "Dad, his sticks are invisible!" My dad, true to form, nodded, smiled, winked at me. All in all, an unforgettable Buddy Rich showcase.

My father took me at least twice to see Buddy Rich play at New Jersey high schools. At one of the concerts Buddy came out for his set and drummed on everything on his way to the stage—railings, tables, chairs, walls, and whatever else he came across. As always, the enthusiastic crowd howled and cheered. Scores of drummers and drum enthusiasts, standing and watching him dazzle the audience, clapped in appreciation. Some stood during the entire show; a number of them had drumsticks in their pockets, hoping, I'm sure, to get them autographed later. These concerts, in which Buddy showed off his speedy crossovers and sweeps, were fantastic, and ended with

extended solos featuring the slow- to- fast snare roll or a variation of that technique. I saw him perform one more time, in 1983, opening for Frank Sinatra at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena. To me Buddy's performance was more impressive than Sinatra's. Rich had just recovered from major heart surgery though it didn't slow him down at all. Nothing could keep him from drumming. Nothing could diminish his spirits, his output, or his lifelong commitment to excellence. Buddy was marvelous, flawless—that night and throughout his life. Buddy Rich never failed to captivate his audience and give them their money's worth. In fact, I've watched many videos of Buddy's performances through the years and never seen him have an "off" night. That in itself is astonishing. That was Buddy Rich—always masterful, always in the pocket, always earning the praise heaped upon him.

Believe it or not, I am influenced by creative people of all disciplines, not just by writers. And when I started writing, back in 2007, the life and career of Buddy Rich came to mind. Not infrequently I thought about his level of talent, his work ethic, his longevity, all he had offered to the world of music and to his fans. Through his work he inspired me to enjoy my own craft more, to experiment further, to work harder, to be better, to never quit. Rich, much like the musicians I revere, loved his work, labored savagely, and spent his life pursuing and sustaining the highest standard. That's an attitude, a work ethic, a state of mind I respect, appreciate, and admire. I wish I had met Buddy, I would have shared with him all these thoughts. Striking a humorous note for a moment, I must say that Buddy made me laugh whenever he performed wearing a suit, which he often did. The perspiration would drip down his face and his neck, drenching his sweat-stained dress shirt. How he played so brilliantly clothed in layers of restrictive clothing, I'll never know. But to me it was amusing and part of what made him a man of distinction.

I'm grateful that my father introduced me to Buddy Rich's music and that he took me to his concerts. My dad became childlike watching Buddy play; he had a positive influence on my musical tastes. And I'll never forget Buddy's style and technique, his speed and power, nor will his improvisational skills ever escape my memory. With each new concert he created something special from his unlimited repertoire, rarely repeating himself. On stage, I never saw him drink alcohol or smoke or do drugs; never heard him complain about his life as a musician or about the rigors of touring or about his earnings. In my opinion, his playing was musical, never just pounding and showboating without technique, never just angst-ridden hammering without direction or melody. To the best of my recollection, Rich never used fancy lighting, special effects, or elaborate drum-sets to create a spectacle—he was the spectacle! No social media back then either. He had to prove himself with hard work, dedication, and talent, not with hype or gimmickry, as is often done nowadays. When you watched

him perform, you couldn't take your eyes off him, nothing could distract you.

Thank you, Buddy Rich, for the music and for the inspiration.

Wherever you are you're probably thundering away. And to my father, thank you for showing me some of the finest music and musicians. I'm sure you're enjoying Buddy's thunder.

Speaking of inspiration, I would like to thank esteemed drummer Nick Pultz, who many years ago encouraged me to write about Buddy Rich in one form or another. Mr. Pultz not only suggested that I write about Buddy, he also helped me incorporate the language and terminology of drumming, a contribution for which I am forever grateful.

"What else is there to say except that the man is a legend. For me, Buddy Rich is arguably the most influential drummer of all time. His talent, control, and passion for his craft are to this day unmatched."—Nick Pultz



Buddy Rich in New York City in August 1946

WEATHER REPORT: A PREDICTION FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS.
Let us remember the story of a famous musical ensemble.
by Ilya Kudrin

The end of the 60s of the 20th century was marked by the birth of a music genre called jazz rock. The first person to walk that path was Miles Davis with his famous release "Bitches Brew". That album became some sort of a reference point for many young musicians. Under the mentorship of Miles Davis emerged an Austrian keyboard and piano player Joe Zawinul alongside a saxophonist Wayne Shorter. Together, they formed the band Weather Report in 1970. It also included Czech double bass player Miroslav Vitouš, drummer Eric Gravatt and percussionist Dom Um Romão.

The first records of the band could be characterized as experimental and exploratory. An electronic avant-garde style featuring many keyboard instruments available in that era gradually crystallizes and sharpens in the title album "Weather Report" as well as in "I Sing The Body Electric" and "Mysterious Traveller". In 1975, the signature sound of the band was finally found: a rich electro-keyboard sound with a saxophone lead and a mobile jazz rock rhythm section. Beside Zawinul and Shorter, the recordings also featured bassist Alphonso Johnson, drummer Leon "Ndugu" Chanler and percussionist Apirio Lima. Ever since then, a certain image of the band solidified in the minds and perception of the audience: Weather Report featured a lush harmonical sound, a wide range of expressive means from subtly written impressionist ballads to a powerful explosive sound avalanche. It is noteworthy that the active musical movement shifted into the lower ends: the bass and the drums, while Zawinul and Shorter actively created prolonged sound clouds smoothly floating above rhythm figures in the background (composition "Freezing Fire").

The next innovative album of Weather Report was "Black Market" which featured a rather numerous cast of new ensemble members. Most importantly, it was the young and phenomenally talented bass player Jaco Pastorius who would soon shine like a first-class star, as well as drummer Chester Thompson and percussionist Alex Acuña. Weather Report became recognized as the leading pioneers of the genres of fusion and jazz rock in the mid 70s. They released albums such as "Heavy Weather" with the composition "Birdland" that became a world-wide hit. It was soon followed by such albums as "Mr.Gone", "8:30" and "Night Passage". Those records were developing upon the same tendencies as the previous ones: a wide employment of electronic keyboards and synthesizers, a mobile bass section that was rich in sounds in the inimitable performance of Jaco Pastorius, and a powerful and exquisite facture of the drums and the percussion (Alex Acuña and Manolo Badrena). The basic repertoire of Weather Report was

still dominated by compositions of Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter. They were also joined by the original tracks of Jaco Pastorius. The compositions of that period can be attributed the qualities of the ballad romanticism skillfully mixed with some traits of blues ("A Remark You Made") and hidden sad dreaminess. At that point, the ensemble had become a world class mega star: their sold records could be counted in millions and their audience filled concert halls with thousands of seats.

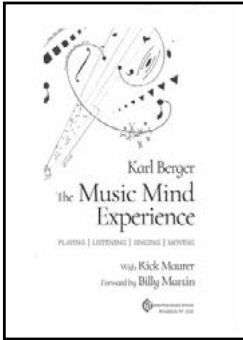
Meanwhile, in the backstage of all the grand events, there was a crisis waiting in the shadows. It all began with Peter Erskine, a drummer closely working with the band, deciding to leave the ensemble. Jaco Pastorius was beginning to work with the band less and less. It was linked to a variety of issues including personal ones. His further fate turned out to be quite tragic. His life was becoming ever more chaotic, he had a growing alcohol and drug addiction, his psyche was gradually being destroyed. In 1987, Jaco Pastorius died in a drunken fist fight with a club bouncer.

In 1983, a few talented new musicians joined the band: bassist Victor Bailey, drummer Omar Hakim, later followed by percussionist Mino Cinélu. It was, so to speak, "the last splash" of the star activity of the ensemble. The albums "Procession", "Domino Theory" and "Sportin' Life" came out. These records paradoxically combine a mysterious unearthly space sound with a rather realistic jazz-swing groove.

The last album that marked the ending of the band's existence received the symbolic title of "This is This". By the time the group broke up, their contract with the label Columbia had not been fulfilled, and in order to respect the legal obligations they recorded an album that became the last one in the vast discography of the project. The further fate of Weather Report was as follows: the first to express his desire to leave the band was the co-founder Wayne Shorter. Joe Zawinul was trying to retain all the control, but Shorter replied with a refusal, appealing to his author's rights for the name "Weather Report". Joe Zawinul came up with a different name, Weather Forecast, yet that didn't work either. Thus, the two founders of the ensemble parted their ways. Joe created a new band, "The Zawinul Syndicate" that played world music, and Shorter periodically reunited with Herbie Hancock, returned to his ex "boss" Miles Davis and managed his own projects.

The 16 years of Weather Report's existence is considered an entire era in modern post-jazz history. Many of the compositions became classics of jazz rock. The group obtained many followers and even straight up imitators. Even after so many years, the records of Weather Report are still being played and find popularity not only with the older but young generations as well.

Book Look



The Music Mind Experience

by Karl Berger

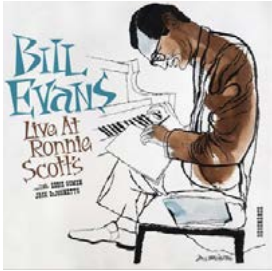
with Rick Maurer

Creative Music Studio,
Woodstock, NY, 2020.

Karl Berger began early playing classical and jazz piano in his native Heidelberg, Germany. He later worked in Paris with trumpeter Don Cherry, who in turn introduced Berger and his life partner, vocalist Ingrid Sertso, to Ornette Coleman in 1966 in New York. Berger and Sertso had extended and edifying conversations with Coleman in New York about the nature of music. The three of them (Berger, Sertso, and Coleman) soon formed the Creative Music Foundation, a non-profit organization in support of music as universal language and the medium of our most personal expression. The foundation's major program, established in 1971, was the Creative Music Studio, where music workshops and performances were held and continue to be held, inspiring music lovers and performers of all backgrounds. Here, in "The Music Mind Experience," Berger discusses in conversational form many of his illuminating ideas about music that are presented in these workshops. His core Music Mind concept, recommending that musicians be "present in the moment" and "tune into the flow of the music," might seem to be most relevant to improvised music, but Berger explains how this concept ideally applies to all forms of music. Detailed discussions on his core topics of rhythm, dynamics, space, listening, and the blending of sounds, all support the goal of finding one's own musical personality and of playing music from the heart, rather than in a more mechanical fashion. Numerous examples and tips for practicing and performing are given in this very readable 178 page paperback volume, aided by the questions and reactions of musician/participant Rick Maurer throughout the work and by the excellent Forward written by Billy Martin, who currently leads the Creative Music Studio. This is a book that will be very helpful in expanding the horizons and thought processes of all musicians and listeners. A related film produced in 2017/18 entitled "Karl Berger - Music Mind" should become available as a DVD in 2021.

Don Lerman

New Issues



BILL EVANS, LIVE AT RONNIE SCOTT'S, RESONANCE 2046.

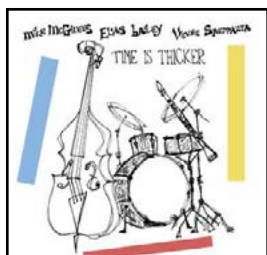
DISC ONE: A SLEEPIN' BEE /
YOU'RE GONNA HEAR FROM
ME (VERSION 1) YESTERDAYS
/ TURN OUT THE STARS /
MY MAN'S GONE NOW /
EMILY (VERSION 1) / SPRING
IS HERE / EMBRACEABLE
YOU / FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE /
SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL
COME. 50:27.

DISC TWO: QUIET NOW /
'ROUND MIDNIGHT STELLA
BY STARLIGHT / ALFIE /
YOU'RE GONNA HEAR FROM
ME (VERSION 2) VERY EARLY
/ EMILY (VERSION 2) / WALTZ
FOR DEBBY / AUTUMN
LEAVES / NARDIS. 49:51.
Evans, p, Eddie Gomez, b;
Jack DeJohnette, d. Circa
7/1968. London

It's still arguable whether the upright bass/drum duo of Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian stand as Bill Evans' penultimate rhythm section but there are probably few that would disagree with me when I claim the team of Eddie Gomez and Jack DeJohnette were a close second. There was a time not so long ago when the Montreux album was the only sonic record available to the public but since those days much more has come to light courtesy of the fine Resonance label. This is the fifth issue under Evans name and was captured by drummer DeJohnette (himself a more than capable pianist) during their unusual four week engagement at the famous bistro. This is jazz piano trio music to be treasured and is state-of-the-art even by today's standards. Although there is nothing out of the ordinary reportorial-wise it is this specific threesome that makes these renditions so extra special. Close inspection of the two repeated titles ("You're Gonna Hear From Me" & "Emily") bring hidden joys. Gomez brings forth pristine bass solos and aids DeJohnette, who continues the Philly Joe Jones precedent, of pushing the pianist to swing just a hair harder. Excuse me for not mentioning highlights as every track is one. Don't turn out the stars just dim them somewhat when we award this one five.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**MIKE MCGINNIS/
ELIAS BAILEY/VINIE
SPERRAZZA,
TIME IS THICKER,
OPEN STREAM MUSIC
NO#.**

GET IN THE CAR / WELCOME
HOME / TIN TIN DEO / LOW
BOW PRELUDE / THE GREAT
EXPANSE / ABNEGATION /
BO LEGGED RELEVE / ON A
CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE
FOREVER / JUST ONE OF
THOSE THINGS. 43:06.

McGinnis, cl; Bailey, ac b;
Sperrazza, d. No recording
dates given. Brooklyn, NY.

This is no-frills date from the get-go. The basic premise is simple; gather three like-minded players together, pick out some favored tunes and have an unhurried go at it. The repertoire is made up of classic standards, a certified bebop anthem and five lines credited to all three participants/ None of these fellows were known to me prior to this recording but all are suitably seasoned with McGinnis having over a half dozen titles in his catalog which I am assuming are all under the Open Stream logo.

It is unknown whether the clarinet is the preferred axe of this multiwoodwindist, but it sure sounds as if it is. There are no long-winded takes herein, the most extended being the Chano Pozo & Gil Fulleropus "Tin Tin Deo" at a little over eight minutes with the "The Great Expanse" clocking in a mere 1:52..

It must be confessed this writer has never been a big fan of the licorice stick with a few exceptions (Giuffre, DeFranco, the late Perry Robinson) but McGinnis holds a tone as smooth as hot buttered rum.

The overall vibe here is one of enjoying playing together and shared fun. It definitely translated to me.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**JEFF HAMILTON
TRIO,
CATCH ME IF YOU
CAN,
CAPRI-74163.**

MAKE ME RAINBOWS /
HELEN'S SONG/ CATCH ME
IF YOU CAN / THE POND /
LAPINHA /
THE BARN / BUCKET O'FAT
/ BIJOU / BIG DIPPER /
MOONRAY. 58:02.
Hamilton, d; Joe Hamar,b;
Tamir Hendelman, p. 8/14 &
15/2019. Hollywood, CA.

Although most often associated with big bands (one of which he co-helms) some readers of this publication might be surprised to find he's been leading his own trio for several decades now. That, in addition to making too numerous to mention side person dates over the years with an assortment of names from Diana Krall to a recent organ/guitar threesome that yours truly covered in these pages a while back. Home ported under the Capri banner, this triad has a new addition in bassist Hamar who replaces longtime member Christopher Luty behind the upright. He and the leader seem to have much in common since both played behind singer the late Ernestine Anderson and both love to swing. Other than that personnel change it's pretty much business as usual.

As is the usual case with this combo the setlist isn't overloaded with old standbys. The most familiar titles are the are no doubt "Moonray" made famous by Artie Shaw, the Ralph Burns warhorse "Bijou" and pianist George Cables "Helen's Song" which is fast attaining standard status. Other large group charts are "Big Dipper" from Thad Jones, John Williams' "Make Me Rainbows" and a piece by Hamilton guru John Von Ohlen "The Pond". Keeping the list current and fresh are the title tune from 88-ace Hendelman and a pair of originals from newcomer Hamar the sketch of their rehearsal space "The Barn" and "Bucket O' Fat" both spotlighting his finger dexterity. It's obviously apparent the man has found a new home in this ensemble. Rack up another winner from Jeff Hamilton.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



SONNY ROLLINS, ROLLINS IN HOLLAND, RESONANCE 2048.

a) BLUE ROOM / FOUR /
LOVE WALKED IN / TUNE
UP / SONNYMOON FOR
TWO / LOVE WALKED IN / b)
THREE LITTLE WORDS. 63:26.

a) 1967=Various locations;
VARA Studio5, Hilversum,
Go Go Club, Loosdrecht;
Academie Voor Beeldende
Kunst, Arnhem-All in the
Netherlands.

b) THEY CAN'T TAKE
THAT AWAY FROM
ME-SONNYMOON FOR
TWO / ON GREEN DOLPHIN
STREET-THERE WILL NEVER
BE ANOTHER YOU / LOVE
WALKED IN / FOUR. 66:45.

b) 1967
Continued=Academie Voor
Beeldende Kunst, Arnhem,
Netherlands.

All tracks: Rollins, ts; Ruud
Jacobs, b; Han Bennink, d.

One can almost imagine the sound of heavy scribbling on manuscript paper coming out of college music departments from Newk nerds transcribing the tenor solos dotted throughout this two disc set. As explained in the impressive booklet enclosed these sound were captured at three separate venues the bulk of which took place in Arnhem comprising the final cut on disc one and all of the second one. Sonny's band mates, both highly respected Dutch veterans, provide just the right amount of push to compel the thirty-six years old saxman to stretch out at length over five standards and a pair of jazz evergreens. Two days later on the fifth of May the threesome found themselves in a well-known studio in Hilversum where they waxed four titles before they reprised two numbers from the Arnhem date for television cameras. Those were taken at a local club. The euphoric feeling that pervades all of these selections is, in part, due to the intuitive backing of bassist Jacobs and the propulsive Bennink who are allotted their share of solo space. As for the leader, he is in peak form having just saw the release of his underrated East Broadway Rundown for Impulse. This is the fire-breathing dragon we all love to remember and will never forget. Seasoned Cadence readers will enjoy comparing the tunes (SonnyMoon For Two, Love Walked In, Four) that are repeated and will savor the thick booklet containing prose from label head Zev Feldman who also interviewed the leader in June of this year, conversations with the sidemen, along with writings from biographer Aidan Levy and Frank Jochemsen. As usual with these archival releases its packed with fresh photos and neat graphics. Thanks to the folks at Resonance for gifting us with this under-recorded period in this Jazz Icon's distinguished career.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

PEDERNAL SUSAN ALCORN

RELATIVE PITCH 1111

Pederal / Circular Ruins / R.U.R. / Night In Gdansk / northeast Rising Sun. - total time: 41:47.

Susan Alcorn – pedal steel guitar; Mary Halvorson - g; Mark Feldman – vln; Michael Formanek – b; Ryan Sawyer – d. recorded 11/12/2019, Brooklyn, NY.

Pedal steel guitarist/composer Susan Alcorn had one of the more curious detours into creative avant-garde music. She began playing guitar as a teenager in bands, migrated toward slide guitar after hearing Muddy Waters. Then by her late teens she began exploring the pedal steel guitar, playing in country bands in Texas and building a reputation. Then, one night driving to a gig, she had the radio on a classical station and it began to play the strangest music she had ever heard. It was so arresting she pulled over to the side of the road and waited for the piece to the end to hear what it was. It was Messiaen's "Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum". Thus began a further detour into another totally unexpected music. And she was determined to make that kind of music on her pedal steel guitar. And she has.

Since 2000 she began putting out her own recordings: some as solo discs, duo and trio collaborations as well as a few larger group recordings. She's worked with players such as Mary Halvorson, Eugene Chadbourne, Joe McPhee, Ken Vandermark, Audrey Chen and many more. With Halvorson, she was part of her eight-piece ensemble that recorded and toured Europe performing *Away With You*. The two worked well together in this band.

When the opportunity arose to record the music for *Pederal*, she put together an ensemble that included Halvorson and Michael Formanek (all three were all members of Halvorson's "Away With You" octet). And she enlisted violinist Mark Feldman, and drummer Ryan Sawyer. It's a crack ensemble that brings this music to life.

Pederal opens with the title track and Alcorn introducing the theme in a rubato fashion. But as the tempo picks up and the other members of the quintet fall in, the melody reveals itself to be pleasant but with an undercurrent of bittersweet and eventually turns into a remarkable group improvisation. The "Circular Ruins" theme is broken up with passages of sustained deliberation as Feldman's violin wanders around the outskirts, delivering a fragmented solo that bears the weight of the music. "R.U.R." (title from Karel Capek's play) has a puckishness to it with a passage about midway through played in tandem by Halvorsen and Feldman that makes this listener smile. "Night In Gdansk" is the most involved piece at 13 minutes. I've heard Alcorn play this piece twice solo in concert and it was brilliant. But arranged for a quintet, it becomes another piece altogether and it draws the listener in from beginning to end. The finale, "Northeast Rising Sun" concludes things on a light mood. The melody is taken from a qwaali song but it sounds equally at home with an American country flourish in the hands of these players. And that's not a musical blend I ever expected to hear.

This is Alcorn's first group record as a leader and it points to her abilities as a composer as well as the foremost experimental pedal steel guitarist. *Pederal* is one of the finest records of 2020.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues



KAZE & IKUE MORI SAND STORM CIRCUM/LIBRA 205

RIVODOZA / POCO A POCO
/ KAPPA / UNDER THE FEET
/ NOIR POPLAR / SUNA
ARASHI / NOIR SOIR. 64:00.

Ikue Mori – electronics /
Christian Pruvost = tpt, flgh;
Natsuki Tamura – tpt, vcl;
Satoko Fujii – p; Peter Orins –
d. recorded 2/12/2020, New
York City.

KAZE is one of the many groups in Satoko Fujii's stable of projects. It includes trumpeter Natsuki Tamura along with French musicians Christian Pruvost on trumpet and drummer Peter Orins. They first appeared in her discography with 2011's *Rafelle* and have recorded six albums since. While the group KAZE is definitely a distinct group entity, they are willing to add personnel as they did on 2017's *June* where they added a second pianist and drummer and 2016's *Peace* where they added Fujii's Tokyo Orchestra (all 13 members) to the group.

Fujii has also formed a musical bond with electronics (and sometime drummer) Ikue Mori on many of her releases. They first collaborated on 2016's *Aspiration* (along with Wadada Leo Smith and Tamura) and Mori has appeared on several of Fujii's recordings since then. So when she decided to record a new KAZE disc, she augmented the group with Mori. And it was an excellent decision.

Not that the group needed augmentation. Christian Pruvost's trumpet playing is distinct from Tamura's and both stand out nicely against each other and also work well in tandem. And Orrins' drumming is both subtle and driving and he adds a lot of textural elements to the music. They seem to push Fujii towards her more abstract side.

They are however, a compositionally-based group. For *Sand Storm*, the program consists of four lengthy compositions each by a member of the base group separated by three brief group improvisations. Orins' "*Rivodoza*" opens the set with a flurry of sound and continues with a group improvisation until Fujii begins playing somber chords and each member blends in and a melody emerges with Mori adding a distinct electronic veneer to the proceedings. It's a remarkable performance. Tamura's "*Kappa*" features some impressive trumpet work from both players with solo interludes and group playing. Mori's contribution to the ensemble stands out during various sections of this piece.

Despite being a quartet, the group has been together long enough (over ten years) that there is group cohesion throughout the program despite the addition of an "outsider". It's KAZE with a difference and I presume that's because Fujii is an excellent judge of collaborators.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

GORDON GRDINA SEPTET RESIST

IRABBAGAST RECORDS

RESIST / SEEDS II / VASCONA / RESIST THE MIDDLE / EVER ONWARD. TOTAL TIME: 49:09.

Gordon Grdina – g, oud; John Irabagon – ts; soprano sax; Jesse Zubot – vln; Eyvind Kang – vla; Peggy Lee – cel; Tommy Babin – b; Kenton Loewen – d. recorded 7/1/2017, Vancouver, BC

Guitarist, oud player and composer Gordon Grdina has been releasing recordings since 2003, the date of his first trio recordings. Based in Vancouver, a city which has had a developing creative music scene since the 90s, he's continued a stream of recordings ever since. He varies his groups but works with a group of players who explore music with a like, open minds. Grdina ties his music with an interest in Middle Eastern modalities and with an avant-gardist's perspective. He's produced a large number of recordings that cover a creative, individual vision.

Resist is the most recent and it's one of his best. For Resist, he has united two of his groups: his trio with Tommy Babin on bass and drummer Kenton Loewen with his "string quartet" (the East Van Strings) and for extra added measure, saxophonist Jon Irabagon, on whose label this has been released. Merging these two ensembles was a masterstroke.

The opening title track is over 23 minutes and gives each member of the ensemble a lot to do. It's a multi-sectioned piece with tempo changes, the group breaking off into various sections and unexpected transitions. Approximately 15 minutes into the piece, the ensemble builds to an intense climax that is abruptly (and naturally) cut off leaving the listener plunged into a string pizzicato section. It's a remarkable segue in a piece full of remarkable sequences. And the track is clearly the centerpiece of the album.

The remaining four pieces are no less interesting however. "Seeds II" is a one minute solo piece for oud and works as an interlude for the remainder of the program and is satisfying piece in and of itself despite its brevity. "Varscona" divides the ensemble into two distinct sections. It begins with the rhythm section plus Irabagon easing into what becomes a driving freebop section and a feature for the saxophonist. It builds to the main theme then stops abruptly and the strings take over with their own free interlude. All merge for the restatement of the theme at the conclusion. "Resist The Middle" draws from the string section of the title piece and eventually becomes a squalling free piece unto itself with its own character for the entire ensemble. "Ever Onward" contains some of Grdina's oud work placed in a dialogue with violinist Zubot for its first part before the rest of the instruments filter in for a rousing middle section until the album concludes with the strings being given the album's final moments.

This listener has only heard a few of Grdina's albums. All have been excellent recordings with their own character. But Resist is perhaps the most unique of Grdina's output. One hopes he works more regularly with this septet in the future.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

THUMBSCREW THE ANTHONY BRAXTON PROJECT

CUNEIFORM 475
COMPOSITION NO. 52 /
COMPOSITION NO. 157
/ COMPOSITION NO. 14
(GUITAR) / COMPOSITION
NO. 68 / COMPOSITION NO.
274 / COMPOSITION NO. 14
(DRUMS) / COMPOSITION
NO. 61 / COMPOSITION NO.
35 / COMPOSITION NO. 61 /
COMPOSITION NO. 14 (BASS)
/ COMPOSITION NO. 150 /
COMPOSITION NO. 19. TOTAL
TIME: 46:56.

Tomas Fujiwara – d, vb;
MaryHalvorson – g; Michael
Formanek – b.
recorded 9/8-11/2019,
Pittsburgh, PA.

MARY HALVORSON'S CODE GIRL ARTLESSLY FALLING

FIREHOUSE 12 034
THE LEMON TREES / LAST-
MINUTE SMEARS / WALLS
AND ROSES / MUZZLING
UNWASHED / BIGGER
FLAMES / MEXICAN WAR
STREETS (PITTSBURGH) /
A NEARING / ARTLESSLY
FALLING. 64:27.

Mary Halvorson – g; Amirtha
Kidambi – vcl; Maria Grand
– ts, vcl; Adam O'Farrill – tpt;
Michael formanek – b; Tomas
Fujiwara – d, beer cans; on
* add Robert Wyatt – vcl.
recorded 12/8-9/2019. New
Haven, CT.

Since emerging from New England around the turn of the century, guitarist/ composer/group leader Mary Halvorson has had resounding success. She's in-demand for others' groups (i.e. those of Taylor Ho Bynum, Michael Formanek, Tomeka Reid, Ingrid Laubrock a/o) as well as leading a large array of her own ensembles: everything from duos up to octets. In the last decade she's put out a remarkable series of albums under her own name. This all culminated with winning the 2019 the McArthur Foundation grant. And now in 2020, we get two new releases that continue the excellence of her previous releases.

One of the most successful groups is Thumbscrew, a co-op trio with bassist Formanek and drummer Tomas Fujiwara. They've released four albums since 2007. Thumbscrew's latest is The Anthony Braxton Project, a set of nine compositions by the august composer/improviser who was their mentor at Wesleyan College and is celebrating his 75th year on the planet.

The compositions, most of which have not been previously recorded, span his entire range of composition from "Composition No. 14", from 1970 (a piece for solo instrument played three times, each by a member of the trio) to "Composition No. 274" (ca. mid-2000s). Braxton's compositions have always intimidated listeners. They're rife with abstraction, graphic titles, openness to interpretation. However, the opener, "Composition No. 52" (from 1976) sounds positively friendly inviting the listener into Braxton's world. It's not that these improvisers are playing it safe and easy. Far from it. But much like an Ornette Coleman composition might sound totally alien to people hearing it in 1960, by 1980, most Coleman compositions sounded "classic". And that is the situation with "Composition No.52". Throughout this set, each player is well-featured and Fujiwara has a particularly strong one playing vibes on "Composition No.35". It starts as a duo with Halvorson before Formanek enters. But frequently Halvorson and Fujiwara play the theme as the bassist gives the piece the rhythmic drive forward. There's a lot to absorb here and this and to be sure there is abstraction and typical unexpected Braxton-esque detours. But this set provides a good example of Braxton's small group compositions. Thumbscrew's release succeeds as both a homage to the composer/mentor and as an indication of where Thumbscrew has been and where they're going.

New Issues

Among other groups in Halvorson's stable of projects is the ensemble Code Girl. They started two years ago with a double album that was well received. It was a different ensemble for Halvorson: she wrote all of the music, including songs with words and employed a singer, Amirtha Kidambi. The pieces on that initial release were artful and experimental with improvisation, traces of rock gestures and free jazz. There's also the notable influence of British singer Robert Wyatt in the structure and harmonies of some of the songs.

Wyatt is regarded by some (including this writer) as a British national treasure but he's little-known in the U.S. He was initially drummer/singer for Soft Machine in their late-60s psychedelic phase. He left that band, did a solo album (a weird mix of pop and free jazz) and formed a second group before an unfortunate accident left him paralyzed from the waist down. When he returned in 1974, it was with what many consider to be the album of his career, *Rock Bottom*. Although his medical issues hounded him throughout his career he maintained a fairly productive output with about 15 subsequent albums all of which are brilliant vocally, musically, lyrically and politically. He also guested on a large number of recordings with many of Britain's creative musicians both jazz and pop. He announced his retirement from recording and performance in 2017.

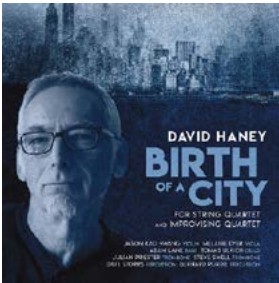
Back in 2010 (or so) Halvorson had a chance hearing of Wyatt's *Rock Bottom* and it had a profound influence on her musically. Certain elements revealed themselves in her music from 2012's *Saturn Sings* onward. But it wasn't until the first Code Girl album in 2018, that she made an attempt to incorporate the song element so directly into her music. But for the latest Code Girl album, *Artlessly Falling*, Wyatt came out of retirement to sing on three tracks ("The Lemon Trees", "Walls And Roses" and "Bigger Flames"). The three tracks sound as if they were written for him. It's nice to hear him backed by this group. Adam O'Farrill's trumpet and Maria Grand's saxophone blend nicely behind his voice. Wyatt has even overdubbed his voice on a couple of tracks. It's obvious Halvorson's music interested him enough to put forth the effort.

Main singer for the band Amirtha Kidambi is featured on the remaining five tracks. She also sings some harmony and certain verses on the Wyatt-based tracks. On the initial Code Girl release, she sounded as if she were still trying to find her place in the band. At times her singing sounded a little too formal. However, on *Artlessly Falling* her singing has more flow, less formality and she fits well into the band's structure. Formanek and Fujiwara are a superb rhythm section giving the band its rhythmic openness. And they're skillfulness allows them to play the more rock-ish moments against the more improvisatory ones directing the group through a landmine of material.

Artlessly Falling brings together the Code Girl ensemble into something both new, interesting and it distinctly fits in with Halvorson's output. Well worth hearing.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues



**(1) DAVID HANEY
BIRTH OF A CITY
BIG ROUND RECORDS
BR8956**

BIRTH OF A CITY PART ONE /
BIRTH OF A CITY PART TWO /
BIRTH OF A CITY PART THREE
/ BIRTH OF A CITY PART FOUR
/ BIRTH OF A CITY PART FIVE
/ BIRTH OF A CITY PART SIX /
BIRTH OF A CITY PART SEVEN
/ BIRTH OF A CITY PART EIGHT
/ VARIATIONS ON A THEME
PART ONE / VARIATIONS
ON A THEME PART TWO /
VARIATIONS ON A THEME
PART THREE / VARIATIONS
ON A THEME PART FOUR /
VARIATIONS ON A THEME
PART FIVE. 52:13.

Haney, comp, arr; Jason Kao
Hwang, vln; Melanie Dyer,
vla; Adam Lane, b; Tomas
Ulrich, cel; Julian Priester,
Steve Swell, tbn; Dave Storrs,
Bernard Purdie, perc

The opening eight selections of (1), for string quartet and an improvising quartet of two trombones and two percussionists, are labeled "Birth of a City" parts one through eight. The four strings form a groundwork or structure, with equal footing from the trombones of Julian Priester and Steve Swell and percussionists Dave Storrs and Bernard Purdie in composer David Haney's imaginative conceptions and directions. Gong sounds begin several of the "Birth of the City" cuts, conveying an opening or birth, or a stately, foreboding or other mood that may strike the listener (a mood that may vary on repeated listenings). Strings employ longer held chords or lines, and shorter clipped staccato notes, with musical responses from the trombones and percussion offered on a similar and complementary dynamic level to the strings. Midway through parts 5 and 6 the entire group takes a freer improvisational course from the entire group. The five "Variations on a Theme" include more varied Haney conceptions, from crosscutting lines by the strings (part one), medium up walking bass fronting a melody from the remaining strings (part 2), interesting pauses for breath (part 3), reflective playing from the strings and trombones (part 4), and joint playing from the trombones, featured alone in part 5, that seem to reach a meeting of minds in held notes midway through and then again toward the end of that final variation.

Don Lerman

New Issues



(2) MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA DATA LORDS ARTIST SHARE AS0176

THE DIGITAL WORLD: A
WORLD LOST / DON'T BE EVIL
/ CQ CQ, IS ANYBODY THERE?
/ SPUTNIK / DATA LORDS.

OUR NATURAL WORLD:
SANZENIN / STONE SONG
/ LOOK UP / BRAIDED
TOGETHER / BLUEBIRD / THE
SUN WAITED FOR ME. 1:35:20.

Schneider, composer,
conductor; Steve Wilson, as,
ss cl, flt, a flt; Dave Pietro,
as, cl flt, a flt, pic; Rich Perry,
ts; Donny McCaslin, ts, flt;
Scott Robinson, b cl, contra
b cl, bari, muson; Tony
Kadleck, Greg Gisbert, Nadje
Noordhuis, Mike Rodriguez,
tpt, flh; Keith O'Quinn, Ryan
Keberle, Marshall Gilkes, tbn;
George Flynn, b tbn; Gary
Versace, acc; Ben Monder,
g; Frank Kimbrough, p; Jay
Anderson, b; Johnathan Blake,
d, perc. August 30-September
2, 2019, Mount Vernon, NY.

The creative and imaginative writing of Maria Schneider may be heard on (2) as performed by an outstanding 18 piece ensemble. It is a 2 CD set, artfully documented by a 64 page booklet with credits, notes on the music, and pictures. Much of Schneider's writing has a full majestic quality, with rich lush backgrounds, innovative rhythms and harmonies, and substantial musical development in selections ranging from 4 to 13 minutes (average length between 8 and 9 minutes). Schneider's works are enhanced by contributions from the many world class soloists in her orchestra, with 12 of the 18 musicians featured on one or more pieces, and with solos woven into the core of the music and generally of significant length. The five selections in CD 1, "The Digital World," often employ electronics and/or project spacey and eerie qualities, with guitarist Ben Monder setting the tone in this respect on "A World Lost" and "Don't Be Evil." CD 2, "Our Natural World," presents an eclectic program that emphasizes different types of natural sounds, such as rich brass chorale sounds in "Sanzenin," perky and fanciful sounds in "Stone Song," medium latin rhythms and inspirational sounds of "Look Up" and "Bluebird," pastoral sounds in "Braided Together," and full brass choir sounds backing the beautiful ballad "The Sun Waited for Me," well stated by trombonist Marshall Gilkes.

Don Lerman

New Issues



ERIC REVIS SLIPKNOTS THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS PYROCLASTIC 09

Baby Renfro* / Sp/E / Earl &
The Three-Fifths Solution* /
Slipknotts Through A Looking
Glass, Part 1 / Shutter /
ProByte / Slipknotts Through A
Looking Glass, Part 2 / House
Of Leaves / When I Become
Nothing / Vimen / Slipknotts
Through A Looking Glass, Part
3. total time: 57:26.

Eric Revis – b; Kris Davis – p;
Bill McHenry – ts; Darius
Jones – as; Chad Taylor – d.
on * Justin Faulkner replaces
Taylor. recorded July, 2019,
New York City.

Bassist Eric Revis has been a driving force in Branford Marsalis' groups since the late 1990s and he's been helming his own sessions since the early 2000s. He has eight albums to his credit as a leader. While his albums have always had something to merit, the last two (*City Of Asylum*, a trio with Kris Davis and Andrew Cyrille and *Sing Me Some Cry* with Davis, Ken Vandermark and Chad Taylor) are essential. His latest, *Slipknotts Through A Looking Glass* adds another to the essential side of the ledger.

Revis sets up situations that gives all of his band members a lot of freedom. From a cymbal crash, staggered bass lines and Davis playing morse code with dampened string, the opener "Baby Renfro" starts things out with a funk inflected rhythm by Justin Faulkner. Soon the horns come in with their own staggered lines and the band is off. But Revis slips in a little tempo shift with a slower passage that lets the listener know things aren't going to be in all one shade. As if to emphasize this point, the subsequent track "Sp/E" is a free trio improvisation with Chad Taylor playing mbira. It floats in from "Renfro" and takes the listener to a different place. It places pianist Kris Davis' piano in the lead with Taylor's mbira and Revis' bass responding to Davis' chord placement and attack (including some prepared work). This track sets up "Earl & The Three-Fifths Compromise" finds Bill McHenry and Darius Jones artfully soloing around each other. The title track recurs three times throughout the program. It's basically a bass solo with barely audible high-pitched reed work sneaking into the background space. They give the listener space between track sequences but they're also strong effective interludes in and of themselves. "Shutter" is a high-energy piece by Darius Jones that suddenly puts things in high gear and features a gruff tenor solo by McHenry and a blistering solo from the composer.

Throughout, the entire program gives the listener a lot of diverse options which seem to reflect Revis' approach to music more than any of his previous outings. There's an appealing looseness that seems to unite the program into an entire album. And it's this album's strength and it's what pushes it into the essential category. If one has not heard a Revis album before and wants to know what his music is all about, this could be the first album to check out.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues



MATT WILSON QUARTET HUG!

PALMETTO 2196

THE ONE BEFORE THIS /
JABULANI / IN THE MOMENT
/ EVERY DAY WITH YOU /
SPACE FORCE MARCH –
INTERPLANETARY MUSIC /
JOIE DE VIVRE / SUNNY AND
SHARE / HUG! / KING OF THE
ROAD / MAN BUN / HAMBE
KAHLE (GOODBYE).

Matt Wilson – d, xyl, vcl; Jeff
Lederer – ts. as, ss, clt, picc,
vcl; Kirk Knuffke – cor, soprano
cornet, vcl; Chris Lightcap – b,
eel b, 8 string space bass,
vcl; on * add Matt Combs –
strings (arr + performance).
recorded 10/13/2019,
Pipersville, PA.

Drummer Matt Wilson has been leading bands of one form or another since the late 1990s. The two most prominent have been Arts And Crafts and the Matt Wilson Quartet. The quartet has been in recorded existence in some form or another since 2003. Its current incarnation with Jeff Lederer on saxophones, Kirk Knuffke on cornet and Chris Lightcap on bass has been stable since 2013's *Gathering Call* which augmented pianist John Medeski to the group for a little extra spice.

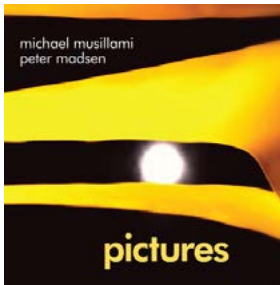
But with *Hug!* It reverts back to the quartet which requires no extra added spice except for an uncredited presence on "Space Force March". And the program is in keeping with the Wilson quartet template of solid playing, good compositions, unusual and very hip covers, all sprinkled with a liberal dose of added wackiness that brings a smile (or perhaps grimace) to the listener.

The record opens with a stomping version of Gene Ammons' "The One Before This" and it's followed by Abdullah Ibrahim's classic "Jabulani". The band sounds fired up and ready to take off. The rest of the covers (Dewey Redman's "Joie De Vivre" Charlie Haden's "In The Moment" and Roger Miller's "King Of The Road") continue the upbeat vibe of the disc.

The originals are among the best tracks on here. Wilson composed an original "Space Force March" to celebrate the new branch of the Armed Forces and it's craftily linked to Sun Ra's "Interplanetary Music". (The Arkestra was/is the true "Space Force" after all.) Wilson slows down the pace on a lovely ballad "Every Day With You". The title track is a breezy, almost pop-like tune with an effective string arrangement backing it up. Being followed by the Roger Miller tune reinforces the pop leanings of the title tune. The running order works fine. But it might have been more interesting with the covers and the originals sequenced in their own order. But it doesn't really matter. *Hug!* Is an upbeat album. Although it was recorded in the fall of 2019 it's almost as if it anticipated what would follow in 2020: the need for something to put a smile on the listener's face.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues



MICHAEL MUSILLAMI / PETER MADSEN PICTURES

PLAYSCAPE 90519

Promenade One / Cecil Taylor
/ Promenade Two / Robert
Paris / Promenade Three
/ Carla Bley / Promenade
Four / John Abercrombie /
Promenade Five / Thelonious
Monk / Promenade Six / Joe
Diorio / Promenade Seven /
Dave Brubeck / Promenade
Eight / Jim Hall / Promenade
Nine / Randy Weston /
Promenade Ten. total time:
56:15.

Guitarist Michael Musillami has been releasing recordings since 1980. There was a trickle during that decade and into the 90s, but when he started his own label, Playscape Records, that trickle emerged into a full-fledged river. Not only has he released over 30 recordings as leader or co-leader, he has produced quality recordings with many associates located in the Connecticut area for his label.

Groupwise, his recordings span the gamut from duos to octets. His most productive band is his trio with bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller. At last count he's recorded eight albums with them and on about half of them he augments the trio with other members including saxophonist Marty Ehrlich, vibraphonist Matt Moran, pianist Kris Davis, violinist Mark Feldman a/o. But one gets the impression that Musillami's favorite format is the duo. He's recorded albums with bassists Michael Moore and Rich Syracuse and pianist Peter Madsen. These albums are characterized by relaxed playing, intricate interplay between the two players and creative conceptual ideas.

Musillami's latest duo release, *Pictures*, finds him teaming with Madsen again. They last met up as a duo on 2002's well-received *Part Pitbull*. Subsequently Musillami produced several solo piano and group recordings of Madsen's. But it's taken them 18 years to reunite as a duo and it's good to hear them back again in that format. *Pictures* takes its cue from Mussorgsky's *Pictures At*

An Exhibition in Paris. But players that take off from the trio, Madsen composed four of the tracks, Musillami two. Those "portraits" that weren't composed were improvised. And each piece entitled "Promenade" is an improvisation. This results in an extended 19 piece suite that plays well as a whole.

The composed pieces don't necessarily correspond to a particular piece by the dedicatee. "Carla Bley", by Madsen doesn't sound like a particular piece by her. Yet it does have a somber tone and mood similar to her classic "Jesus Maria". "Thelonious Monk" has a characteristic playfulness found in Monk's compositions but one would never hear it and think "that's by Monk". But it is definitely Monk-like and the two take off on the composition at hand.

Pictures is a fine album and well-worth hearing. And let's hope we don't have to wait another 18 years for another from these two.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues



RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA HERO TRIO

WHIRLWIND 4760

RED CROSS / OVERJOYED

/ BARBADOS – 26-2 / I

CAN'T GET STARTED / THE

WINDUP / RING OF FIRE / I'LL

REMEMBER APRIL / SADNESS

/ DEWEY SQUARE. TOTAL

TIME: 45:40.

Rudresh Mahanthappa – as;

Francois Moutin – b; Rudy

Royston – d. recorded 1/24-

25/2020, Montclair, NJ.

Since the late 90s, when he migrated to New York from Chicago, where he grew up, alto saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa has seemed to jump from strength to strength. And from his early recordings with pianist Vijay Iyer, he's stayed true to himself and his vision. He's explored the history of jazz on the poll winning *Bird Calls*. He's explored the music of his Indian heritage by merging his trio with the trio of Indian alto saxophonist Kadri Gopalnath on *Kinsmen*. He shared the front line with recorded with veteran alto saxophonist Bunky Green and a stellar rhythm section. Those who have followed his music shouldn't be surprised by his "newest" band, called the Hero Trio. First of all, the trio is comprised with familiar faces: Francois Mouton on bass (who's recorded with Mahanthappa since 2002's *Raw Materials*) and drummer Rudy Royston (who's recorded with him since 2015's *Bird Calls*). But the one big surprise is that there are no original compositions. The program is comprised of ten pieces that are associated with his various heroes. In a sense he did this earlier on *Bird Calls* but he didn't do any of Parker's compositions. He did refashion several pieces but they came out as originals.

But for Hero Trio, Mahanthappa plays originals by Parker ("Red Cross," "Barbados" and "Dewey Square"), Coltrane ("26-2"), Stevie Wonder ("Overjoyed") and standards such as "I Remember April" and "I Can't Get Started". He refashions them to his liking, extending the themes, giving them a different rhythmic feel, occasionally freeing up the group playing. Rarely does he play them straight. Perhaps the one misfire on the disc is Johnny and June Carter Cash's "Ring Of Fire". It's a great tune, to be sure, and Cash surely was an inspired (and inspiring) musician. But they play the tune fairly straight and it sort of sits there in the middle of the program without distinction. That's not to say it's unlistenable but it lacks the energy of the rest of the program. But everything else rises above. Ornette Coleman's "Sadness" a brooding ballad is colored by Moutin's keening arco work and Royston's splashing brush and cymbal work mesh beautifully with Mahanthappa's impassioned playing of this forlorn but beautiful theme. "I Can't Get Started" is done as a ballad but with a staggered rhythmic momentum from Royston. All in all, another worthwhile entry into the Mahanthappa discography.

Robert Iannapallo

New Issues

ALAN BROADBENT TRIO, TRIO IN MOTION, SAVANT 2188.

WONDER WHY / I HEAR YOU /
LENNIE'S PENNIES / STRUTTIN'
WITH SOME BARBECUE /
LATE LAMENT / RELAXIN' AT
CAMARILLO / ONE MORNING
IN MAY / I LOVE YOU / LADY
BIRD / LIKE SONNY / THE
HYMN / MOONSTONES. 56:03.
Broadbent, p; Harvie S, b; Billy
Mintz, d. No dates given. NYC.

RICHARD BARATTA, MUSIC IN FILM: THE REEL DEAL, SAVANT 2186.

LUCK BE A LADY /
EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' / ALFIE
/ CHOPSTICKS / THEME FROM
"THE GODFATHER" / SEASONS
OF LOVE(*) / COME TOGETHER
/ IF I ONLY HAD A BRAIN /
PETER
GUNN/ MARIA / THE SOUND
OF MUSIC / LET THE RIVER
RUN. 67:14.

Collective personnel: Baratta,
d, perc; Bill O'Connell, p;
Vincent Herring, as, ss, flt;
Paul Bollenbach, g; Michael
Goetz, b; Paul Rossman, cga,
perc; Carroll Scott, vcl(*).
1/9&10/2020. Paramus.NJ.

Alan Broadbent is a true piano wonder. Where many of his pianistic peers his age (mid-70s) cease progressing or sit back to revel on past accolades he is still moving forward in body and mind. In Kirk Silbee's liners Broadbent echos the sentiments of one of the heroes, Bud Powell, who once stated "I wish people listened to the music with the seriousness that it's played.". (a) This is the second installment in what could be easily termed "the apartment sessions" recorded during the quarantine at the protagonist's studio apartment. My review of that first volume *New York Notes* (Savant 2166) may be found in the *Cadence Annual Edition 2019* on page 271. As in it's case the program is rife with works from jazz icons like Coltrane, Tadd Dameron, Paul Desmond, Lennie Tristano and two from Bird. Lil Harden Armstrong's unforgettable "Struttin'..." is set in a samba format and there are compositions essayed of Hoagy Carmichael, Cole Porter and others. There is one original from the leader "I Hear You" and the ending "Moonstones" is credited to the threesome. As was the norm on the previous issue, there are a fair share of upright and drum spots. Let's all look forward to future outings from this powerful trio.

A thumbnail biography of Alan Broadbent was provided in the my liners to the above-mentioned first release of his Savant effort but a full description of Richard Baratta's dual careers would be extra lengthy. Fortunately its detailed in Dan Bilawsky's informative annotation. Combining his work in the film industry with previous musical experience is what this debut disc is all about. Vincent Herring and Paul Bollenback score top honors solo-wise but it is the multi-talented co-producer/md Bill O'Connell who steals this show, not only from the piano bench, but even more so from his thoughtful charts of a dozen celluloid gems. Check out his quirky take on "Chopsticks". Jazz interpretations of Broadway scores and movie themes were a big ticket item back in my day so there was a tinge of nostalgia upon first listen. This (b) is a happy reminder of that era.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



JOHNNY IGUANA'S CHICAGO SPECTACULAR! DELMAK 864.

44 BLUES / HAMMER AND
TICKLE / DOWN IN THE
BOTTOM / YOU'RE AN OLD
LADY / LAND OF PRECISELY
THREE DANCES / LADY DAY
AND JOHN COLTRANE / BIG
EASY WOMEN / BURNING FIRE
/ SHAKE YOUR MONEYMAKER
/ MOTORHOME / STOP
BREAKIN' DOWN / HOT DOG
MAMA. 38:51.

Collective personnel: Iguana,
Billy Boy Arnold, Matthew
Skoller, vcl, hca; Billy Flynn,
Bob Margolin, g; Lil' Ed, John
Primer, Phillip-Michael Scales,
vcl, g; Bill Dickens, b; Kenny
Smith, d; Michael Caskey, d,
perc. No dates given. Chicago,
IL

It's not known exactly when Brian Berkowitz stepped into the phone booth to emerge as Johnny Iguana. My guess he adopted that stage name during his days playing various keyboards (from Fender Rhodes to Hammond organ to synthesizer) in numerous rock/pop groups as a sideman and sometimes as leader. Needless to say, he's left all that to concentrate on the piano for his leadership debut under the esteemed Delmark logo. This thoughtful package just reeks with taste not only in production, design & other aspects especially in the use of the many guest that dot the playlist. The twelve tunes heard are an artful mix of originals from the leader to a curated list of titles by the likes of Willie Dixon, Elmore James, Roosevelt Sykes, Big Bill Broonzy, Otis Spann and two from Sonny Boy Williamson. This was John Lee Williamson, not Rice Miller but "Stop Breakin' Down" is somewhat problematic with the song originally credited to Robert Johnson while "You're An Old Lady" was penned by the first Sonny Boy and recorded with a combo that included Big Maceo for Victor. This and the ending Broonzy number features Billy Boy Arnold on vocals, harp on "...Old Lady" and nice guitaring from Billy Flynn on the latter. Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin shows up on the lead-off Honeyripper number & Lil' Ed adds some heavy slide on the Elmore James classic and the following title. It like the other three leader scripts are all instrumentals (the only ones present). Iguana's idiomatic 88's is more prevalent on these. B.B. Kings' nephew Phillip-Michael Scales provides his voice and guitar on "Lady Day And John Coltrane" from Gil Scott-Heron. An inspired selection for sure. Usually I tend to shy away from these thickly populated, all-stars affairs since they often smother the principal artist but not so here. A job well done all the way around.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

(1) JIMMY BENNINGTON COLOUR AND SOUND LIVE AT ANDY'S THATSWAN! TS!1009

A DANCE FOR KEIKO / WAYNE AND WAX / SNEAKY / JULIAN / OLD FRIEND / SKATE / THE BOOT. 73:30.

Fred Jackson, Jr., as, ss; Artie Black, ts; Dustin Laurenzi, ts; Dan Pierson, p; Mike Harmon, b; Bennington, d. May 4-5, 2018, Chicago, IL.

(2) JIMMY BENNINGTON COLOUR AND SOUND LIVE AT THE JAZZ ESTATE

SPACETONIC MUSIC #00003

TWO FASCINATIONS / GANGES / 2300 SKIDDOO / THE SEAGULLS AT KRISTIANSUND / BIRDSEED. 54:34.

FRED JACKSON, JR., AS, SS, FLT; DUSTIN LAURENZI, TS; DAVI PRIEST, B; BENNINGTON, D, MC. MAY 2019, MILWAUKEE, WI.

(3) JIMMY BENNINGTON COLOUR AND SOUND INSURRECTION! LIVE AT THE POTTERY NO LABEL/ NO NUMBER

Drummer Jimmy Bennington has for many years been an active performer and recording artist, having appeared on such labels as SLAM, Cadence, CIMP, and ThatSwan! Records. Here he offers three live recordings of his Chicago-based group, Jimmy Bennington Colour and Sound within a recent two year period. Ranging in size from four to six players, the group includes several top tier musicians on Chicago's jazz scene, with some overlap of personnel over the three recordings. Colour and Sound has deep roots in progressive jazz and an adventuresome spirit, and its music is everywhere aided by the propulsive playing of Bennington and his various rhythmic partners.

The programs include original compositions from its members as well as works from prominent jazz artists Mal Waldron, Herbie Nichols, Pepper Adams and others on recordings (1) and (2). These two recordings, made live at Andy's in Chicago (1) and at the Jazz Estate in Milwaukee (2), feature tenor saxophonists Dustin Laurenzi and Artie Black, both of whom are distinctive and creative improvisers in the progressive jazz idiom. Fred Jackson, Jr., on alto and soprano sax, is a strong and fiery soloist with deep jazz roots who is also featured on these two CDs.

The third and most recent of these Bennington recordings, (3), is unlike the previous two in that guitar and electronics are used and the music is largely freely improvised with a spacey quality. Three long tracks, two of them running nearly 30 minutes, feature the alto and bass clarinet of James Cook and the guitar work of Cook and/or Ben Cruz, with Bennington both responding and helping to shape the direction of the music.

FALSE DAWN / ANTHEM INSURRECTION / TRIO 72:47.

James Cook, as, g, b cl; Davi Priest, b; Bennington, d; Ben Cruz, g; Philip Hunger, synth. December 23, 2019, Chicago, IL.

Don Lerman

New Issues



(1) SESTETTO INTERNAZIONALE LIVE IN MUNICH 2019

FSR 01 2020

QUASARS #1 / NOTTURNO
/ ANAK #1 / NO NIIN /
QUASARS #2 / PIKKU PALA.

1:19:47.

Alison Blunt, vln; Achim Kaufmann, p; Veli Kujala, quarter-tone acc; Gianni Mimmo, ss; Ignaz Schick, turntables, sampler; Harri Sjostrom ss, sop s. January 18, 2019; Munich, Germany.

(2) GEORGE MCMULLEN WITH VINNY GOLIA LINE DRAWINGS VOLUME 1 AND VOLUME 2

SLIDETHING STM101 AND
STM102

VOLUME 1: FAT CHANCE

/ FLUTE PREVIEW 1 / LINE
DRAWINGS / WOWSA /
SQUARE DANCE / HORSE
PLAY / SUSPICIOUS BABY
/ PORTRAIT OF VINCENT
PRICE. 40:16.

Sestetto Internazionale is made up of several of the most accomplished and prominent free improvisers of Europe, with players from Germany, Finland, Italy, and England. The six member group consists of two soprano saxophones, violin, piano, turntable/sampler, and quarter-tone accordion. Their signature works on this recording (1) are two lengthy works entitled "Quasars #1" and "Quasars #2." The striking multiplicity of sounds and ebbs and flows of these two pieces of 36 and 14 minutes respectively, clearly entranced the listening audience in this 2019 live concert given in Munich. Listeners of this CD, who may avail themselves of repeated hearings, will hear new sounds and combinations of sounds of these complex works and perhaps gain insights each time. Three other selections are duo performances, in which each of the six performers participates and pairs with another group member. These selections display more clearly the sounds and inclinations of each player as well as the musical interaction and development which occurs in these duets. "No Niin," for example, displays the sounds of soprano saxophonist Harri Sjostrom along with accordionist Veli Kujala. As this piece develops, a glissando from accordionist Veli Kujala raises energy and is followed by short staccato notes from Kujala and soprano saxophonist Harri Sjostrom, with flurries from both in the frenzied last half minute. The other duos, of violin/soprano sax and of piano/turntable and/or sampler, present interesting sounds and dynamics as well. The six-piece Sestetto returns with "Pikku Pala," in which the high intensity and high volume section earlier in the piece transitions to a quieter and more placid musical presence to close the concert.

Trombonist George McMullen led a trio in his previous recording "Boomerang," a strong offering done in 2015 largely in the post-bop idiom with some elements of unstructured playing. On this, his next recording (2), McMullen moves into a fully unstructured mode, pairing himself on trombone with the veteran prominent free jazz performer Vinny Golia. The two present fifteen selections of freely improvised music

New Issues

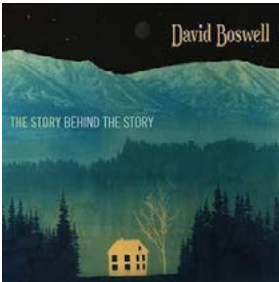
VOLUME 2: SMEARISH / DARK
CORNERS / FLUTE PREVIEW
2 / LOOPER SAYS WHAT? /
DELICIOUS PERNICIOUS /
FULCRUM / DIDNAI. 31:59.
MCMULLEN, TBN, FLT; GOLIA,
SAXOPHONES, B CL, A FLT, G
PIC. AUGUST 19, 2015, LOS
ANGELES, CA.

akin to musical conversations, ranging in length from two to six minutes. These conversations of McMullen with Golia contain seemingly limitless variety in sounds and expressions, generated most importantly by the imaginations of McMullen and Golia, but also by many different instrument combinations used (by my count, eleven different combinations over the fifteen tracks) resulting from the multiple reeds of Golia and from McMullen doubling on flute. McMullen also uses three different mutes on trombone, and in one instance plays trombone slide (with no bell), adding more sound combinations.

The title track "Line Drawings" in volume 1 gives an example of this duo in action. Golia opens with some grating overtones followed by rapid-fire lines in the upper range of the soprano sax. Later McMullen takes center stage, playing melodic phrases with Golia in the background. By the fourth minute, the two horns are sparring intensely until finding common ground on closing held notes to end things more peacefully. On two selections, Golia is in a supportive role on alto flute, playing sustained tones for McMullen's plunger-muted trombone on "Wowsa," and rapid lines conveying harmonies for McMullen's expressive lead on "Looper Says What?" "Fulcrum," in volume 2, finds McMullen on the trombone slide sounding like a baritone horn, interacting in interesting ways with Golia on G piccolo. More interesting interactions as well as solo flights may be heard on the remaining selections.

Don Lerman

New Issues



DAVID BOSWELL THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY MY QUIET MOON RECORDS

MIRACULOUS / A LOS
ANGELES STORY /
INNOCENCE / THE STORY
BEHIND THE STORY / PRAYER
FOR THE PLANET / ALTA /
THE WIND IN HER HAIR /
LOS OLIVOS / THE SUN AND
MOON 47:00

Boswell, g; Mitchel Forman,
p; MB Gordy, d & perc; Jimmy
Haslip, bass; Scott Kinsey, p &
kybd; Gary Novak, d; Otmaro
Ruiz, p & kybd; Bart Samolis,
bass; Andy Snitzer, sax
2020 Burbank, Ca

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY is a magical collection of David Boswell's original compositions. This pristinely recorded and wonderfully orchestrated CD gives precedence to the power of melody spaced out over a rhythmic landscape.

In the opener "Miraculous" you can feel the underlying rhythmic energy like a river moving in time. Atop this David layers the harmony and a carefully spaced melody. The end result is a sound and feel that is visual and meditative yet alive with rhythm. A driving guitar solo with a brilliant sound makes this piece a winner.

David's compositional skills are on full display with the title track "The Story Behind The Story" as he takes us on a colorful journey thru sound and space. The way in which this piece begins and then travels thru it's different phases is a testament to David's expansive musical vision. We are also treated to two beautiful solo's by bassist Bart Samolis and pianist Mitchel Forman. "A Prayer For The Planet" is a short and sweet solo guitar piece. If I were to pray I could only hope it would sound and feel so good.

David Boswell has the ability to combine melody and rhythm in a way that sounds natural. His writings are lyrical and beautifully structured in a way that creates a sense of peace and optimism. "The Story Behind The Story" is elevated to it's full potential by the amazing musicians involved in this project. David's arrangements give voice to all the players and the result is a timeless musical recording.

Frank Kohl

New Issues



A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER STEVE LASPINA

STEEPLECHASE 31907

A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER / CLOUDS / ALWAYS BELIEVE / THE ROAD AHEAD / LIFE IN THE COVE / MOVING FORWARD / NO WAY / SERENITY / SO DANCE / LOST LULLABY / WHEN IT'S TIME AGAIN

66:26

LaSpina, bass; Joel Frahm, ts, ss; Luis Perdomo, p; Eric McPherson, d
12/2019 Paramus, NJ

It's full steam ahead with Steve LaSpina's new cd "A Change In The Weather". This fine collection of originals: some new and some from the past, is presented by Steve and his musical conrad's, three of NY's finest. Everyone in this quartet has a long history of musical excellence in their own right. Put them all together with the right material, fasten your seatbelt and enjoy the ride.

"A Change In The Weather" opens the set, a contemplative ostinato led tune with a beautifully haunting melody. Luis Perdomo is up first as he flies across the keyboard with soulful precision. Saxophonist Joel Frahm then takes off with a deep engrossing tone and strong carefully spaced lines. Steve takes the last solo with jaw dropping technique intertwined with clear melodic statements. Eric McPherson adds just the right touch to allow the quartet to stretch out.

"Clouds" is an up tempo hard swinging gem. Everyone demonstrates their ability to move together and gain momentum as they absorb each other's ideas. There are three exquisitely written ballads on "A Change In The Weather", "Always Believe", "Serenity" and "Lost Lullaby". The degree of sensitivity is clearly at play here as everyone works together for the greater good. What separates these truly great Jazz players from others is their ability to give the ballad the love it deserves. That love is expressed here as Steve demonstrates how important the bass's role is in allowing the ballad to breath, thus reaching a higher level of clarity. This may be one of the reasons why Steve has worked with so many Jazz legends throughout his career. The bass can shape a piece of music in a way that's unlike any other instrument and Steve is highly skilled at making that happen. "A Change In The Weather" is a master work of modern - straight ahead jazz that listeners will enjoy for many years to come.

Frank Kohl

New Issues



BRIAN KOOKKEN HIT IT

SELF RELEASE

HIT IT / ALWAYS LOOKING
UP / BRAZILIAN BLUES /
HATZAS GROOVE / IT'S
MONDAY AND I'VE GOT
THE BLUES / IN THAT FUNK
AGAIN / 5 MINUTES LATE /
SOUL FOR SHAHID

46:00

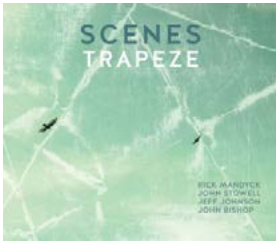
Kookken , g; Greg Hatza, B3
org; Robert Shadid, d
2020 Baltimore, Md

The grand tradition of guitar-organ trio is in good hands with The BK Trio. Brian Kookken takes us on a ride through eight original compositions. With the backing of Greg Hatza on B3 and Robert Shadid on drums, the grooves are tight and the swinging is hard. Brian's tone is biting and way up front, with no wasted notes in his phrasing, he gets his point across and then some. Brian has the rare ability to deliver striking guitar lines and just when you think you've heard it all, he kicks it up another notch.

In a good way the tunes are not overly complex, many of them based in the blues. However they are pleasingly symmetrical, lyrical and direct. Greg Hatza is right on target with his bandmates and delivers powerful solo's. Robert Shahid is the right man for the job, giving the support needed to elevate everyone's performance. In the same way I was drawn to the early days of Benson, I am drawn to Brian's playing. His sound is his own and it hits the right spot for us straight ahead, swinging guitar freaks !!!

Frank Kohl

New Issues



SCENES TRAPEZE

ORIGIN LC29049

ALL DAY PASS / AMOMALY /
HIGHWAYMEN / THE BRIDGE
/ PAUSE / HOUSE OF RA / THE
RECKONING / TRAPEZE

56:30

2/27/20 MERCER ISLAND, WA

Rick Mandyck- ts
John Stowell - g
Jeff Johnson - bass
John Bishop - d

Interplay is the name of the game with Scenes new release "Trapeze". Saxophonist Rick Mandyck's tune, "All Day Pass", opens the set. It's a medium tempo, well crafted original with lots of open space. All players participate, carefully listening to each other, bending twisting and creating a dark and mysterious canvas. Rick's strong tone and his ability to carefully pace his notes allows the players time to absorb and react to what he is saying. John Stowell uses his mastery of texture and color with cords of his own invention to open the minds of the players and listeners to the harmonic possibilities. A solo section that begins with guitar and then turns into a captivating trio exchange of ideas is especially moving. The bass and drums then break into their own conversation before the melody is restated.

"Highwaymen" is a fine medium up-tempo Jeff Johnson original that swings beautifully. Bass and drums are locked in sync throughout. John has the first solo with splashes of harmonic color combined with just the right amount of single note runs. Rick solos next and his deep rich tone comes through with strong creative lines. His ideas are tastefully spaced out allowing for a striking dialog with the drums that are perfectly tuned into his playing. Throughout Bishop is outstanding in his supportive role and at expressing his own individual voice ; allowing the quartet to attain soaring moments of clarity. Jeff Johnson plays a beautifully soulful solo and drives the band to excellence with his clear tone and precise lines.

"Trapeze" consists of five Rick Mandyck originals two Jeff Johnson originals and Claudine Francois's "Trapeze". This cd is a perfect example of Jazz where everyone has a seat at the table. Like so much of the worlds finest Jazz, it's the individuals and their personal contribution to the music and their relationship with each other that makes all the difference. Nowhere else is this more true then in the makeup of the Scenes Quartet.

Frank Kohl

Inside This Issue - April 2021

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."

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Giuseppi Logan Rises to the Stars by Matt Lavelle

The very first time I met Giuseppi Logan, I didn't know it was him. He was an older guy looking to get a reed at Sam Ash in Times Square where I worked. I thought I knew all the street musicians in NYC at that time. A name popped into my head though. In an act of mysticism, I asked him if he was Giuseppi Logan. I had never seen a picture of Giuseppi.

In response G said:

"That's right, I'm Giuseppi Logan. I'm here because I want to end my life playing music." As I recall I immediately tried to get him to go to the Vision Festival and find William Parker. This was in 2008 I believe. A few days later I saw WP and Giuseppi was with him, he got G an Eb real book. G kept coming by the store and we started hanging out more. We decided to partner up and try to get some music happening by any means. The next stop for us was Francois Grillot's kitchen in Hell's Kitchen where bassist Francois Grillot and I played hundreds of sessions. I told Francois about Giuseppi, and he immediately said to bring him by. We started helping G get his chops back. I gave him an old low C Bass Clarinet.

It was during this time that Giuseppi played with Steve Swell's Nation of We at Roulette in an incredible alto section with Darius Jones, Saco Yasuma, and the late great Will Connell. G was reluctant to play and at first declined to solo. Steve asked him again and at that moment the orchestra seemed to go through a window into a different universe where time just stopped. Giuseppi played for about 30 seconds, and there was so much life and feeling present. When I asked Darius about that moment years later he described Giuseppi's sound as a vulnerable mad genius, which really described it so perfectly for me. During this time G was busking at the 34th N Subway Stop. Both Butch Morris and Daniel Carter heard him there. They both stopped and listened but they did not interrupt him. They both conveyed to me that what was impressive was that nobody had ever played like him before or ever since.

Word started spreading that Giuseppi was back and Tom Abbs from ESP called me to see if we could play at the Bowery Poetry Club. The core issue was that Giuseppi was homeless at the time, and had no phone. I talked to Giuseppi about the gig and he said his chops were still too rusty and he needed more time. We spent another few months having sessions and then he said he was ready to go, though definitely not back to full strength. I reached out to Warren Smith to play drums, knowing that we would need his on stage musical help to keep G afloat. We played a 20 minute set in February 2009 on a double bill with Gunter Hampel who played solo vibes and bass clarinet on the first set. I remember after the gig, Giuseppi went and sat on a bench with nowhere to go. Thankfully, he got a ride to a shelter before the curfew. He hated that place because people were looking to steal his horn.

Giuseppi and I got into a thing then. I would get gigs happening and then he would come by the store so we could plan the sessions and get together on what was happening. I tried to get him going with cheap cell phones, but he wouldn't charge



Giuseppi Logan and Matt Lavelle

them. Eventually he got a room on the Lower East Side by Tompkins square Park thanks to our beloved Jazz Foundation of America. He was also hanging out with activist Susannah Troy who started posting videos of him on YouTube. There was always this urgency and he would say "I don't have much time left." Giuseppi wanted to work and the idea of recording came up. Bernard Stollman at the time said no.

Josh Rosenthal from Tompkins Square Records was into it though, and thus came the recording the Giuseppi Logan Quintet in September 2009. We rehearsed as much as we could and Giuseppi had new tunes. All of G's tunes had chord changes even if it might not sound that way. For the opener Steppin' he really worked out the changes with Dave Burrell, somehow connected to Giant Steps. When we ran out of material I asked G to play piano and sing his song Love Me Tonight which I had heard him do at Francois place and on gigs. The thundering chords he played are to me, the storm clouds that seemed to haunt him throughout his life.

After the recording we played as much as possible and David Miller took over on drums. I don't remember all the places but I do remember asking John Zorn for help, and he gave Giuseppi a gig at the Stone right away. We played the Firehouse Space, the Brecht Forum, 5C, the DMG, WKCR, the Local 269 (on YouTube with Warren Smith), NuBlu, Jack, an ESP Festival on Roosevelt island, the Stone 2 more times, the Bowery Poetry club again, and a bunch of others. The most incredible of these gigs was the ARS Nova center in Philadelphia with Dave Burrell on piano. It was packed, and G was on on fire! There were press people in the audience and it was a big event. I remember Dave Miller driving us to Philly. G's chops were getting stronger and stronger. He started calling and playing Confirmation in his own G way. We just kept playing whenever we could through 2012 when in April the New York Times did a story titled Giuseppi Logan's second chance that came out on Easter Sunday April 6th. It was during this time that Larry Weinstein filmed Giuseppi in the documentary the Devil's Horn, though it wasn't released until 2016. Giuseppi's son, pianist and producer Jae Logan came out from California for a deep hang with G (on YouTube). Ed Petterson produced a fund raiser release for Giuseppi that was split into two releases. I helped him connect with G but I was not involved musically. The second one was on the Improvised Beings label. Somehow G got involved with a modeling agency and also a film soundtrack. He played a trio gig with Francois and Dave live on WFMU that was great.

We did a performance at the ESP office in Brooklyn at one point and eventually Bernard Stollman wanted to record the sequel to Giuseppi's original ESP classic. Bernard booked a studio and we really got to work. Giuseppi wrote all new material that we were rehearsing at Francois kitchen. The music had all odd time signature's with new melodies, and was like an extension of Satan's Dance. The kicker was the plan that Jae Logan was going to fly in and be on the recording. 2 days before the date, Bernard pulled out and we were forced to cancel. I remember having to tell Giuseppi the bad news. We were all broke and could not get into the studio. We lost the momentum and rehearsals started being further apart. The storm clouds continued

to gather when Giuseppi hurt his hip really badly and ended up in the hospital. The details of this event are still scattered but the end result was the next thing I knew he was in a nursing/mental home in Far Rockaway Queens. While he was out there, there was more film work down on the documentary *The Devil's Horn*.

What none of us knew was that Lawrence Nursing Care would be Giuseppi's last stop. He found an Angel out there, Dianne Moore. Dianne was really there for him. It was decided that he would stay out there mainly for his own health and safety. He couldn't leave which really bothered him. I didn't know what I could do other than keep him connected to music by visiting him as often as I could. Mostly every couple months for several years. During this period I learned that he was married twice and had 11 children and also several grandchildren. He had 2 sisters who visited him at the home once. They were from Virginia, where he was before he came back to NYC. I'd been tight with his Jae Logan for awhile at this point and we're still tight. I recently corresponded with one of his granddaughters on Facebook.

But what about his music?! G had his horns, but sessions and gigs were no longer possible. His horns were always having problems and at one point alto sax player Rocco John Iacovone donated him a solid alto. Dianne and I got him keyboards with the help of the Jazz Foundation. Piano was his main thing at this point and he played his alto less and less. That continued right up until recently when my brother Reggie Sylvester snuck in a snare drum so that we could have a trio set with G on keys just a few months back.

Dianne called me last week when 15 patients fell to the Corona virus at Lawrence. Not G though, and we thought that as usual he would find a way to survive. Not this time though, and she called me with the tragic news. I immediately contacted my brother Jae Logan. Since then I've been watching G on YouTube pretty much non-stop. As I've been telling journalists contacting me, Giuseppi did not have a huge body of work. The work that he did do, especially his first quartet record, touched a great many people. Musically, like Ornette, he knew exactly what he was doing. His compositions are a huge part of why his music connects. I feel that Giuseppi's sound and all that feeling behind it touched people in a way that meant something that is really unexplainable. It will take me years to process, but part of his music seems to have been about the futility and frailty of human existence. His music has gotten me to see that only the human being can make music. We can't remember where we were before birth, and face inevitable death. We can defy this process but have no control over it. At our core we all seem to be flawed and broken on some level. While we exist we can choose to try and be better human beings. Giuseppi's music was just like life. Choices. Consequences. The task of looking in the mirror and asking not only who we are, but what. Are we good? Are we bad? Do we deserve life? Do we deserve death? How do we treat others? How do we treat ourselves? Do we Love? Are we Loved? Do we deserve pain? Pain on some level is part of every human experience. People say life is all about how you respond to it. Aries people like me might feel that when we get back home we have to show somebody that we did something

important. We are children after all. Giuseppi made choices and faced severe consequences. His music stays with us, the ultimate gift from any musician.

My first mentor Hildred Humphries was also my friend. Hildred was almost 60 years older than me. Bern was 23 years older than me. Roy Campbell was 17 years older than me. Sabir Mateen is 19 years older than me, and we're still tight. Giuseppi was 34 years older than me. Then there's my great friend DC, the wonderful Daniel Carter. I just turned 50. What brought us all together?

The love of music, pure, simple, grand and epic all at once.

The love of music is what bonds most of the people in my life together. Giuseppi and I did have a special thing. Ornette introduced me to the idea of humanity in music as a prime directive. Playing with Giuseppi and being his friend was the master class. He helped me figure out the thesis of my own life. Though we never spoke about it, we were bonded somehow by a deeper reality. He said reaching God was the ultimate meaning in playing music. He encouraged me saying "You know you can play right? You can play!" He also loved the blues!

He took the concept of being yourself in jazz to the extreme. Nobody else will ever play music that way again.

We will never hear that sound in person again

When I got the news that he had passed I was going around saying there is sun today. No sun all all. Now I'm going around saying Love Supreme every chance I get. Giuseppi wrote a tune once called Wretched Sunday, and with 508 people dying from Corona in NYC yesterday maybe it is.

The Giuseppi I knew did exactly what he said he wanted to do.

He went out playing as much as he could.

I see you up there in the stars G

I see you

Matt Lavelle

A Life changing album



"It happened because of the world's greatest jazz record, "Kind of Blue." After 10 years of classical piano lessons followed by 5 years of slide trombone in high schools, I was a member of a local Toledo, Ohio quintet who covered, with instruments and vocals, Four Freshmen and Kingston Trio recordings. On a Saturday in 1959, the group's drummer and I visited our usual record store to check out what was new, and there it was with Bill Evans on piano. Not long after, "Sunday at the Village Vanguard" hit the bin and upon hearing the "Gloria's Step" opening, descending 3 chords of 3-notes, I resolved to change direction and become a jazz musician. Bill Evans I was not, but via Ornette's "The Shape of Jazz To Come" Charlie Haden's bass cemented the deal. One note at a time was a hell-of-a-lot better than dealing with 10 fingers. And the story goes on."

At age five Gene's musical studies began with classical piano. Upon entering high school he was given a trombone which he played for five years culminating in marching on Fifth Avenue in New York City as part of the Memorial Day Parade. During high school he became aware of jazz and was thrilled to attend the first New York performance of Ted Heath's big band at Carnegie Hall. It wasn't until his last year at TU that his interest in music became primary.

After struggling with too many notes, and thanks to Charlie Haden's performance on Ornette Coleman's "The Shape Of Jazz To Come," Perla, at 24, switched to the bass as his main instrument. Not long after arriving in the City his talents became in demand and he found joy in performing with artists such as Willie Bobo, Carlos "Patato" Valdes, Nina Simone, Woody Herman, Sarah Vaughan, Elvin Jones, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis, Sonny Rollins, Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra.

With saxophonist Steve Grossman and drummer/percussionist Don Alias, Stone Alliance was born. This group traveled to three continents and recorded seven albums. Today, Perla exercises his bass talents as a private instructor at Lehigh University as well as playing various gigs.

As an educator Mr. Perla has taught at William Paterson University, New School University, Center for the Media Arts and is currently at Lehigh University. Sound design has been a significant endeavor yielding credits on Broadway shows, theme parks and custom installations.

JAAP BLONK INTERVIEW "YAHP" BY KEN WEISS

Jaap (pronounced "Yahp") Blonk (b. June 23, 1953, Woerden, Holland) is an immensely original sound poet/extreme vocalist/composer. Mostly self-taught, he's built an enormous arsenal of sounds, ranging from whispers to the grotesque, and has even developed a number of his own languages. Blonk first gained international attention for his vocally gymnastic interpretation of Kurt Schwitters' "Ursonate," a work that continues to draw his interest. Although much of his work is done as a solo performer, Blonk has collaborated with avant-garde Jazz artists such as John Tchicai, Ken Vandermark, Tristan Honsinger, Mats Gustafsson, Cor Fuhler, Fred Lonberg-Holm and Michael Zerang, as well as other extreme vocalists Phil Minton, David Moss and Maja Solweig Kjelstrup Ratkje. In addition to leading his own ensemble, "Jaap Blonk's Retirement Overdue", he is also a visual artist. This interview took place by way of Email between January - February 2021.

Cadence: How have you been spending your time during the current global coronavirus pandemic?

Jaap Blonk: As far as creative activity goes; I've spent the most time on my visual art. This has become increasingly important and satisfying for me over the years. The first appreciation I got for this was back in 1993 when the director of the sound poetry festival Hej Tatta Gorem [a quote from Hugo Ball's 1916 sound poem "Karawane"] noticed the scores for my phonetic etudes in my first solo CD Flux de Bouche that had just come out. The festival, in Stockholm, asked me to make larger format drawings of these and they were shown in a small exhibition during the festival. The following year I had a two-week residency in a small gallery in the Netherlands where I made quite a lot more drawings. At first they were still sort of functional scores for vocal pieces, where I used the signs of the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) with a lot of my own invented signs added to represent sounds I liked to make but were not represented in the IPA. But gradually the work 'emancipated' itself towards purely visual art. In 2006 I took a year off of performing, a sabbatical, and learned programming languages. Then I started to also use the computer to design and process images. I have taken part in several exhibitions and published 6 limited edition books so far of the visual work, some combined with a CD. Currently I am mainly working on two series. The first is "Conjectures," which are structures in black and white, designed on the computer, which I then print and add color and other elements to by hand. The second series works the other way around; it is entitled "Garbage Collection." These are collages of trash material and cheap stuff, which I scan and then process digitally afterward. I devise my own algorithms for the design and processing. I don't use commercial software such as Photoshop and the

Interview:

Jaap Blonk



like. On the music front, I keep composing new work. The pieces for instruments, for my band Jaap Blonk's Retirement Overdue (founded in 2018, the year I turned 65), have to be temporarily shelved because we can't play concerts. Other work, done on the computer, with my voice added at times, was issued as a digital album at the end of 2020. Some titles: Inside Outcry, Lockdown Itch, Prime Obsession I. There are new texts as well, partly computer-generated, and some videos, to be found on Vimeo. I have been busy to keep my record label Kontrans alive (started in 1993 as part of the non-profit foundation of the same name). One of the first distributors of the label was actually Cadence.. So far there have been 30 releases. Three of these were issued last year, after COVID-19 started: The double CD New Start by the aforementioned Retirement Overdue (with the Amsterdam-based Miguel Petruccelli, Frank Rosaly and Jasper Stadhouders). My version of Antonin Artaud's To Have Done with The Judgment of God, in English translation, for voice and electronics. And most recently, a trio set with Lou Mallozzi, Ken Vandermark and myself, recorded in Chicago in November of 2019. A good thing for the label was being accepted, last summer, as a member of the Catalytic Sound collective. This gives better opportunities for sales in the U.S. and also I could do two streaming concerts in their festival in July - one solo and one with Mats Gustafsson and Fred Lonberg-Holm. I had a great 3-week tour of the United States scheduled from late March through mid-April of 2020, with 20 performances, which I had worked on to organize for 6 months. Canceling everything took one day only, after Trump announced the travel ban for EU citizens on March 12. A few venues, in Boston, Washington, DC and Chicago, set up streaming concerts for me that yielded a little money from donations. In 1996 I moved from Amsterdam to Arnhem, in the east of the Netherlands. I am able to afford a small studio here, which nowadays in Amsterdam would be too expensive. Also, the surroundings of Arnhem are very attractive for biking and walking, with several National Parks bordering on the town.

Cadence: *What's been your connection with the United States?*

Blonk: Since 1994 I have gradually been building up a network and fan base in the States. A large part of my sales of recordings goes there. Generally, I have found more appreciation as an improviser there than in Europe.

Cadence: *Wikipedia describes you as an "Dutch avant-garde composer and performance artist." Composer is the term you've chosen to describe yourself in the past but are you comfortable with being referred to as a performance artist?*

Blonk: Well, to some degree I would consider myself a performance artist (in the sense of 'performance art' as a recognized part of visual art), but only in the very last place. That is to say: after composer, musician/improviser, poet and visual artist. Music composition was the first creative activity I took somewhat seriously (during the process

Interview:

Jaap Blonk



of giving up my mathematics studies), from 1976 on, at first very simple tunes. I had started playing saxophone a few years earlier, but so far, I considered that just a hobby. I was raised in a fundamentalist Reformed Church family and as soon as I went to university and had my own room in Utrecht, I went to the local music school to learn the instrument that was the very least associated with the church I grew up in - the saxophone. Only when I got addicted to Free Jazz in the late '70s, I got into really practicing saxophone for hours, also trying to concoct every possible sound out of the instrument. However, it never quite came out as I imagined. Meanwhile I had developed an interest in poetry and wrote some (I admit, juvenile romantic poems mostly). Then I discovered Dada sound poetry and started reciting those, at first in private, and later on in small public performances. In 1984 there came a breakthrough: while listening to Archie Shepp's album *Three For A Quarter, One For A Dime* (with Roswell Rudd) in my Amsterdam attic room, I spontaneously jumped into a vocal improvisation along with the record, only to notice I was still doing that when the record had long ended and was spinning in its inner groove. I realized this was much more natural and direct for me than trying to make all those weird sounds on the saxophone. So, the voice became my main instrument as an improviser too. Only much later on I added improvisation and composition with electronics, which are now a vital part of my practice. For a time, I still continued playing saxophone in the arrangements of my compositions for my bands, but in 1995 I gave up the instrument completely. As a poet (the third category I mentioned above) I wrote a lot of sound poetry, both using the regular alphabet and my personal phonetic notations. A comprehensive collection of the work associated with the Dutch language (playing with the language, but also invented languages, sounding like Dutch but with no meaning) came out in 2013 at the Flemish publishing house Het Balanseer. As I already mentioned, the phonetic notations developed into independent visual work, so I am a visual artist now as well, creating videos and interactive animations too. Coming back to 'performance art,' I have been invited to festivals of this specific art form and found most of the work quite boring (after 10 seconds you see what is going to happen and then it goes on for half an hour...). When I have a rare appearance in this kind of context, along with extended voice techniques, I use the space and every prop I can find there, in a completely improvised performance, always different: "Joys of a Useless Life" (<http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/joys.html>). It's true that, as an improvising vocalist, there's more of a performance aspect to my action on stage than with most singers. I won't hesitate to go into the audience space when I think it's needed, or for instance mingle with performing dancers if there are any participating. Here I have found an inspiring counterpart in drummer Weasel Walter, in the exciting new quartet JeJaWeDa (<http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/bbsw.html>), with also Jeb Bishop on trombone and Damon Smith on bass. Especially in the great little Midwest tour we did in November

2019, things way out on the beaten track in improvised music occurred. Sadly, our plans for a European tour in the fall of 2020 were thwarted by the corona crisis.

Cadence: Sound poetry is more popular in Europe than in America. Would you define the term for those not familiar with it?

Blonk: First of all, with "America," you mean the United States? My frequent visits to Latin America have taught me that people there are not amused by this practice ("We're America too! Please say Estados Unidos when you mean the U.S.!"). In Canada it's different, "America" is normally used for the U.S., sometimes even in a derogatory way ("Hey, this is not America!"). I'm also saying this because both in Canada and Latin America there is much more of a tradition of sound poetry than in the States. A very rough definition: in sound poetry the sound is more important than the meaning. 'Meaning' here being the semantic meaning: meaning as in regular language. You should also say sound poetry is poetry where the meaning is conveyed more by the sound than by the words. 'Meaning' is then widened to include also musical meaning, emotional meaning, the direct meaning of sounds. In the United States there is another term for this kind of work: "Text-Sound Texts," which is also the title of a seminal anthology by Richard Kostelanetz from 1980. Many U.S. authors are represented there, a lot of them associated with the Fluxus movement. Some say that sound poetry is older than poetry. Many old religions have ritual formulae with no semantic meaning, and there are theories conjecturing that poetry originated from these. Sound poetry was first presented as an original art form in the 1910s, by both the Russian Futurist and the Dada movements. It has always been a small niche, not only in the U.S. but everywhere. Over my 40-year practice I have seen it become even much more marginalized.

Cadence: How does performing in America differ for you as compared to working in Europe where hearing an array of languages occurs daily?

Blonk: In the bigger European countries (Germany, France, Italy and so on) everything (TV, movies) is still dubbed in the native language. So, people don't usually hear an array of languages. Only in smaller countries like the Netherlands subtitles are the common thing. I think the main reason why performing in the United States is so gratifying for me, is that there is so much less going on outside the mainstream culture than in Europe (except in the big cities like New York, Chicago, LA). So, it doesn't have to do with language. People are eager to experience something special and experimental that would come their way only very rarely. I have had occasions where people made 4-6 hour drives to come to one of my performances. In Europe that would be unheard of. Also, smaller venues in the U.S. have so much more flexibility. They can plan performances at much shorter notice to suit a touring musician's schedule. In Europe they all depend on government funding and often have to fix their program a year ahead, with glossy

printed brochures. So, while artist fees are generally higher and travel distances are shorter, it's actually much more difficult to organize a tour.

Cadence: How did you come to sound poetry?

Blonk: Around 1976-77 I was slowly losing faith in a career in mathematics. My motivation for math was high. I would typically keep working on a problem through the wee hours of the morning. But I was more and more drawn to poetry and Jazz, and the math professors in the department seemed duller every day...I didn't want that kind of future! I started looking around and participated in workshops in various artistic fields. One of those was about reciting poetry, and the instructor offered widely varied material to work with, from very traditional and straight poems to experimental stuff, and even sound poems, namely the "Six Sound Poems, 1916" by Hugo Ball, that he wrote for a Dada soirée at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich, Switzerland. Tressli bessli nebogen leila, zitti kitillabi, zack hitti zopp! This was a tremendous eye and ear opener for me. A no man's land between literature and music, with so many untrodden paths and things to discover, without having to bother about the rules of music or the meaning of language. I memorized one of these poems ("Seahorses and Flying Fish") and recited it in the public presentation at the end of the workshop. I still love this little poem and often open a performance or lecture with it, always adding an improvisation on the 'words' of the poem.

Cadence: You heard a reading of Kurt Schwitters' "Ursonate" (translates to 'Primordial Sonata') which is made up of non-language vocals and it changed you. Did you know at that time that that art form was to be your career path?

Blonk: I heard the "Ursonate" read by a student of the drama school in Arnhem in 1979 (later I learned that a teacher at that school used parts of the work as articulation exercises). I was very taken by it, but I remember thinking immediately that you could do more with it if you managed to memorize it. But a career? No. After I had made photocopies of the text, I played around with it just for fun and practiced sections of it. Over the course of two years, I learned more and more parts of it. I had told friends about it, and at some point a friend asked me to present it at his birthday party. So, I put some more effort into it and committed the complete piece to memory. It turned out that people liked it at that occasion, and I started getting invitations to perform it at small venues like bars and Rock clubs. At the same time though, I had my first Jazz band (Splinks), playing my compositions. I didn't do vocals there, I only played saxophones in the band. For me that was more important as a career perspective than the sound poetry.

Cadence: It's telling that you had a strict Calvinistic upbringing but hated singing organized music in church and in social settings. Was that too confining for you? Were your parents understanding?

Blonk: The congregational singing in church was limited to the so-called 'non-rhythmic psalms,' where each syllable gets the same, rather

long, duration. Any kind of rhythm is considered too frivolous. One line took so long that you had to get a new breath several times within it. And then often after church, we went to visit my grandparents and there was more singing of psalms, with my father at the harmonium. I got to hate this thoroughly and began to refuse to sing along from when I was 9 or 10 years old. Of course, my parents had no understanding for this. Also, later on they were very unhappy with the course my life took. Mine was not considered a decent profession. They never came to any performance of mine.

Cadence: That's a painful situation your parents put you in as a young man finding his path, a path that obviously required great strength for you to stay on. How deep of an impact did their reaction have on you and did you eventually resolve things with your family? Did that help drive you creatively?

Blonk: I wasn't going to go into this in detail, not wanting to throw dirt on my deceased parents. Also, I have no way of knowing how I would have developed if I had been raised in a more liberal environment. Still, I think it's likely that my upbringing made me more of a rebel. From my early teens on, I started listening to 1960s pop music in my bedroom on a small transistor radio I had bought from my pocket money. I had the radio play softly and pressing it to my ear so they wouldn't hear anything downstairs. A little later on I started getting books from the library that were strictly forbidden in our church. My anarchist behavior in the organized systems I had to function in later, in my twenties, can probably be seen as an extrapolation of this. And I think it did definitely drive me creatively, having gotten used to finding out everything by myself from early on. The relationship with my parents was sort of resolved, but it always stayed superficial. On visits we didn't talk about religion anymore because they had given up trying to bring me back on the righteous path and I consistently avoided the subject. The closest my father got to appreciating my work was in a remark he made to one of my brothers. He said, "It may be art what Jaap does, but he shouldn't do it on Sundays." At the funeral of my mother, a neighbor woman told me that she and my mother listened to the radio together a few times when I was on there, out of sheer curiosity.

Cadence: Would you talk about your joy of making sounds? Why is that important to you?

Blonk: Through the exposure to sound poetry on the one hand, and Free Jazz on the other, I found out how liberating it can be to make sounds, regardless of what people find pleasant or in good taste. I experience many sounds as interesting and invigorating that most people would find ugly. I can even enjoy the sound of the dentist's drill or the repetitive metallic sounds when undergoing an MRI scan. I have no explanation for it, it's very intuitive. It's the thing that propelled me into devoting so much time to practice and research. Without that continuing joy I would no doubt have given up at some point, in the face of so many negative or indifferent reactions of people and

institutions in the earlier stages.

Cadence: *How often are you still discovering new sounds, new ways to utilize your body creatively?*

Blonk: Less often nowadays, and not very regularly. Sometimes writing new pieces, in notation, poses challenges that result in new sounds and gestural uses. A prime example is the 9-piece cycle "Vibrant Islands," that I made notes for on a long flight, from Atlanta to San Francisco, in 2015. Back at home I worked out the scores which contain a lot of idiosyncratic symbols inciting not only sounds, but also body movements and gestures. They feed and direct the performance while leaving a large amount of freedom to improvise.

Cadence: *How do you deal with the sounds of everyday life? Are you especially tuned into listening to your environment? Does that serve as inspiration for you?*

Blonk: Yes, environment sounds have often inspired me. Animal sounds, baby sounds, traffic sounds...a concrete example of the latter happened when I lived near where the Amsterdam tram line number 3 came down a bridge by a narrow bend about every 10 minutes, making a high squeaking sound. I got into the habit of imitating that, which gradually developed into a whole range of sounds made by inhaling air.

Cadence: *Have you moved closer or farther away from a Jazz connection as your career has progressed?*

Blonk: It depends on what you consider Jazz. Many people have a conservative view, such as it has to have a regular beat as well as harmonies. But in a more open opinion, Jazz has developed to include many more forms of improvisation. I consider my improvisations on sound poems to be Jazz. There's a strong analogy between soloing on chord changes and soloing on phonetic material. In both cases, the basis is constant, but the solo can do anywhere. But what I think doesn't seem to matter in the outside world. By the powers-that-be, I am not considered a Jazz musician, but a sound poet. More so nowadays, although at one time, a good 20 years ago, I came close to winning the main Dutch jazz prize. With my new band Jaap Blonk's Retirement Overdue I may make a new entry into the Jazz world. In any case, quite a few of the pieces we play are definitely Jazz.

Cadence: *Your work has always been a balance between spontaneous and structured segments. Why are both necessary for you? Have you ever attempted a completely spontaneous performance?*

Blonk: This is a misunderstanding. Completely spontaneous performance has always been a mainstay for me. On my own Kontrans label, the whole Improvisors series (8 releases between 1996 and 2020), as well as the Electronic Improvisations series (5 titles between 2001 and 2017, so far) consist of free improvisation. I have done quite a few completely spontaneous solo performances, and many, many more with duos (with Maja Ratkje, with Terrie Ex) and trios (with Mats Gustafsson and Michael Zerang, with Claus van Bebber and

Carl Hübsch, with Jan Nijdam and Bart van der Putten over several years, and other shorter-lived groups). In the Retirement Overdue band free improv has an important part as well. Also, on tour I have done spontaneous improvisations with local musicians wherever people asked me to. On the other hand, composition has always been important to me of course, and composed parts can make things happen that wouldn't be possible by just improvising.

Cadence: How do you judge a failed performance and how often, if at all, does that happen for you?

Blonk: It's always gradual. Some are better and some less good. I can't recall ever having considered a performance completely failed, not 100% successful.

Cadence: Why do you perform other sound poets' work?

Blonk: Sound poetry comes alive only when you hear it. So, when the poets are dead, and have left none or only sparse recordings of themselves, it makes a lot of sense to me to perform their texts and keep them alive. In many cases, I consider my versions of those as my compositions using their texts, just as composers for many centuries have set texts of others to music.

Cadence: Extreme facial expressions and humor play into your performances. One writer described your striking stage presence as "childlike freedom of improvisation." How and why did you develop that?

Blonk: Ha-ha, it was me who coined this expression in an early bio I wrote about myself. It's actually still on my website ("As a vocalist, Jaap Blonk is unique for his powerful stage presence and almost childlike freedom in improvisation, combined with a keen grasp of structure"). This writer must have quoted from that. I wrote it just because that's how I've always felt when improvising. I didn't develop it; it came to me naturally. The extreme facial expressions are none other than those needed to make the sounds. Of course, in our increasingly square society, that will make people laugh. And laughing is healthy, I think. So, I am not going to cut out the elements that make people laugh. On the other hand, I never devise specific strategies to make people laugh, like stand-up comedians do. That's a whole different field and alien to me.

Cadence: What role does the use of the grotesque play in your art? Why does the audience need this?

Blonk: For myself, a lot of the ideas I get are nothing out of the ordinary, while still considered grotesque by many people. I can't help it. I don't use the grotesque intentionally. For the audience, getting exposed to art outside their normal scope is a healthy thing, I think. Quite a few people have told me that getting in touch with my work has been a life-changing experience for them.

Cadence: How does the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) benefit your compositions?

Blonk: In several ways, the study and use of the IPA has brought me great benefits. First of all, it got me into researching the finer details and the extended possibilities of every single phoneme. Also, it led me to a completely different type of research: not focusing on sounds primarily, but on the 'mechanics' of the mouth: position and movement of the tongue and lips, tension of the throat, air pressure outward or inward, use of the hands on the face. Experimenting with all these and then often being surprised by sounds coming out that I wasn't consciously searching for. This led to the wide range of sounds documented in the *Phonetic Etudes: Rhotic, Frictional and Labior*, on my first solo voice CDs. Furthermore, the use of the IPA allowed me to make better notations of my vocal parts in my own compositions and read the vocal parts in some pieces by others that I performed, such as the composition "Hubschrauber" by Carola Bauckholt, for solo voice and orchestra, that I performed a number of times. I also got into writing more challenging sound poems for myself, with the so much richer and more detailed notation possibilities of the IPA, compared to our normal 26-letter alphabet. I am still working on a strategy to compose algorithmically with the IPA symbols, as I do regularly with music, sound and visuals. This is a tough nut to crack, as there are no immediately logical ways to represent phonemes by numbers, as there are with music and sound (pitch, duration, loudness, overtones) or visuals (color, saturation, brightness, size, place).

Cadence: You've created your own languages. There's Onderlands, a parallel language to Dutch that sounds like Dutch but has no meaning, as well as BLIPAX (Blonk's IPA extended), which uses sounds not represented in the IPA. Talk about your languages and why there was a need to develop them.

Blonk: I started writing poems in Onderlands (Underlands as a synonym for Netherlands) around 2000. It happened spontaneously and it was fun, I didn't have a specific purpose in mind. But as it happened, they served well for the last phase of my trio BRAAXTAAL (documented on the CD *Dworr Buun* of 2001) when we created pieces with a looser structure, relying more on improvisation. Each of the Onderlands poems has a different image or atmosphere (a scene among rich people, a love song, looking at the sky in awe, a drinking song, etc.) which was reflected in the pieces with the trio. A little later some new Onderlands texts were used on the double CD *Off Shore* (2003) with a different trio. A larger selection was included in *Klinkt* (2013). I am not using any system to write these, they are intuitive. However, in some cases I used mathematical systems to create variations on them. In analogy to Onderlands I wrote some work in Ingletwist (example *Round About Ingletwist*), a parallel language to English. This is more tricky for me, not being a native English speaker. I had to check regularly with a dictionary, if I wasn't creating words that already exist without me knowing. BLIPAX uses the regular IPA with a lot of my

own signs added. I needed this in order to go beyond the very limited possibilities that existing languages and their alphabets offer. It is a purely functional notation system that serves to notate vocal sounds in as much detail as possible. However, it still stays very far from capturing the richness of voice completely and I am happy about that.

Cadence: *Why not use some of the language spoken by the audience during your performance?*

Blonk: I assume you mean the native language of the audience? Or actually spoken by them during my performance? For the first case: I do, as much as possible. Where I have sufficient mastery of the language, I offer explanations of my pieces in their language. I manage in English, German, French and Spanish. In addition, the few pieces in my work that are translatable at all have been translated into several languages that I do not speak, such as Czech, Finnish, Estonian). These are "Let's Go Out" (<http://jaapblonk.com/Texts/letsgoout.html>) and "Sound" (<http://jaapblonk.com/Texts/sound.html>). Then there's the minister or president piece (part 1: <https://jaapblonk.bandcamp.com/track/what-the-president-will-say-and-do-part-i> and part 2: <https://jaapblonk.bandcamp.com/track/what-the-president-will-say-and-do-part-2>), that I performed myself in more than 20 different languages, instructed by local people about the correct pronunciation. These included for instance Hungarian, Bahasa Indonesia, Amharic of Ethiopia.

Cadence: *You've studied mathematics, which you've used to construct certain compositions. What is the benefit of using those disciplines and how use them yet maintain a human element that resonates with the listener?*

Blonk: The use of mathematics to construct and generate material has incredibly enriched my work, especially since I started learning programming languages in 2006. Simple principles and number sequences let me concoct structures that I couldn't have dreamt of. In music, for instance several harmonic systems that nobody else in the world uses to my knowledge. In music, sound processing and visual work, the power to fully control the amount of randomness between 0 % and 100 %. I can generate work by unpredictable processes, making mistakes in coding and happening on serendipitous beauty. I don't think this is the place to go into technicalities of the programming. About the human element, I have always been confident that, however strictly structured a piece is, I can always breathe life into it with my voice. The same goes for my group compositions, by the musicians I choose. In the visual work, I add handmade elements to the mathematical structures after printing them.

Cadence: *How much do politics enter into your work?*

Blonk: I think a lot of my work is intrinsically anarchist. In earlier days I had periods of being part of some organized system, and it always led to actions of my part in a Dada vein: office jobs, music school,

university. In 1980 I worked for a while for a big insurance company, in a building housing 2,500 employees. I ended up organizing a big spectacle there on the day I was fired, a protest against the grey office discipline which got a lot of attention on Dutch national TV and radio. But the way my work touches politics is always general, not commenting on a specific time-and-place-limited situation. For instance, the minister/president piece I mentioned above applies to virtually every government in the world. By staying away from concrete situations, the work remains absolute art and doesn't become propaganda.

Cadence: *Do all your pieces have specific meaning?*

Blonk: Sure, but the specific meaning is up to the spectator/listener. The same work can have quite a different meaning for different people. The fact that I mostly don't use words helps of course. Although I'm often willing to offer explanations, the ultimate meaning is to be conveyed by the work itself. There is no hidden meaning that I could convey by words.

Cadence: *You've spoken in the past about performances that were met with audience outrage. What were some of the most extreme examples of this and how do you deal emotionally on a personal level when confronted by angry listeners?*

Blonk: In the early 1980s I got some pretty extreme reactions when I opened for Punk Rock bands, notably for The Stranglers. I got beer thrown at me, but it gave me extra energy. Later someone told me, "In the punk aesthetics, throwing beer at someone is a sign of love." I wasn't so sure of that, but I never stopped a performance. Only once I had to stop performing, but that was when I was physically attacked by a guy who had just been released from prison and had chosen that place to celebrate it with his gang members. They also damaged our van. The police came and the venue was closed for the night. More friendly was the occasion where school kids threw their lunch sandwiches at me when I was performing in a cage (that had temporarily no animals in it) at the Amsterdam zoo. Another memory: once I performed at a big Rock venue but there were only 6 people in the audience, and 5 of them left during the performance. So, I was pretty worried, but afterwards I met all of them at the bar, and heard they didn't find the performance bad at all, they were just scared... In general, adverse feedback during a performance tends to give me an extra impetus, just like very positive reactions. Indifference would be the worst, but fortunately that hardly ever occurs.

Cadence: *You've been using electronics in your art since 2000. What are you currently working with to advance your craft?*

Blonk: I spent many years creating work, both composed and improvised, with the laptop - since 1998. In the field of improvisation, I think I gained a level of flexibility with it that made it a worthy partner for my voice. Now I have just embarked on a similar voyage

with some modular synthesis hardware. I love the hands-on and often unpredictable character of it, but I still have a way to go to really improvise with it. For composition, I am combining it with structures created in the computer, and that looks very promising. There's a liveliness, quirkiness and warmth there that's not easily attainable with just a computer or digital equipment, I think.

Cadence: How was it to collaborate with virtuosic Jazz artists such as John Tchicai, Tristan Honsinger and Mats Gustafsson?

Blonk: The collaboration with Tchicai was just one concert, in February of 1997, when I had a one-month residency at UC Davis, where John was teaching. Local musicians Mat Marucci and Noah Hostock were also involved. We rehearsed once or twice as a quartet, I wrote lyrics to some of Tchicai's tunes and we did some of mine. It was a lot of fun and at times hilarious. I remember watching a video of it later with John and his then-time Dutch wife Margriet, and we laughed a lot. The video seems to have disappeared without a trace, unfortunately. With Tristan Honsinger, I was in a few projects, notably a small opera entitled *Rose Garden* in 1993 at the BIMHuis in Amsterdam. It was written by tenor saxophonist J.C. Tans and also featured singer Peggy Larson and ICP members Ab Baars and Ernst Glerum. Tristan is a superb and unique musician. I never got to know what he really thought of my work. With Mats, I mainly worked in a trio that also featured percussionist Michael Zerang from Chicago, from 1996 till 1999. We recorded one of the first releases of my Kontrans label. The music was quirky and very energetic. After doing a great 13-concert U.S. tour in 1999, we've always been hoping we could play together again, but so far it never happened. In general, working with virtuosic instrumentalists has helped me a lot in developing my vocal improviser's vocabulary, more so than working with other vocalists. I should also mention tuba player Carl Ludwig Hübsch, trombonist Jeb Bishop and bassist Damon Smith there.

Cadence: How does your approach change when performing alongside another vocalist such as Maja Solweig Kjelstrup Ratkje?

Blonk: There are several things I'm aware of when performing with a female vocalist, such as Maja and also Ute Wassermann: the natural difference of register and being more 'polite.' Although, especially with Maja, there was no need to. She has no fear to dive into sounds that many female singers stay away from because they might be not so elegant. In working with other vocalists, I prefer those who do not fall too much for the temptation to go into theatrical antics - which is not so easy sometimes because audiences tend to love that.

Cadence: Cor Fuhler wrote a piece for you to sing in Klingon, the fictional language from the Star Trek franchise. How was singing in Klingon?

Blonk: Cor gave me just the text, he didn't give me a melody or any other instructions. I bought the Klingon dictionary to study the

meaning and learn the right pronunciation. I didn't really have much affinity with it and never went back to it.

Cadence: *Would you talk about your two long standing ensembles - Splinks [Jazz-oriented orchestra founded as a quartet in 1983 and now is up to 13 members] and BRAAXTAAL? [trio noise-prog band with electronics]*

Blonk: Both ensembles ended long ago. Splinks existed from 1983 till 1999, with the double CD Consensus as an end point. The name came from the title of an early tune I wrote called "Blonk's Blinks." It was the band where I mostly developed my Jazz composition. What helped a lot was in the 1980s and 1990s the funding situation for Jazz and improvised music was much better than it is now. For instance, national radio would still regularly record and broadcast concerts. They'd send a van with equipment and a few sound technicians to the venue and pay the musicians a decent fee. That nowadays is unheard of. Back then, Splinks had quite a few tours of the Dutch venues and could really grow as a band. Always, the repertoire was really varied, with elements of straight Jazz, contemporary composed music, free improv and pieces based on text or sound poetry. Some critics have called it eclectic, but I disagree, it's all part of what I have to say. My current Retirement Overdue quartet is the natural successor of Splinks, and the music is just as varied. BRAAXTAAL (1987-2005) was quite different. The creative process was similar to that of a Rock band. There was hardly ever any written music. Band members (keyboard player Rob Daenen, drummer Theo Bodewes and I) brought ideas which in frequent rehearsals grew into set pieces. There were several phases. We started out with a repertoire based on poems by Lucebert (1924-94), considered by many the greatest Dutch 20th century poet. I love his work and already participated in performances of it as early as 1978. After that, I started bringing in my own texts. Until our first CD BRAAXTAAL, I still played some saxophone in the band as well. In 1995, a tour opening for The Ex rather changed our music. It got a lot louder and rougher, closer to a Rock esthetic though of course, still way out for most people. The second CD Speechlos reflects that phase. Over the last years, I started doing electronics as well. Theo played electronic drums only and Rob played a sampler, instead of the DX 7. We ended up as a free improv trio, though often playing grooves, with me contributing texts in Onderlands. The last CD was Dworr Buun.

Cadence: *As you mentioned earlier, you're also an acclaimed visual artist. You've had numerous exhibitions of large-scale drawings of your scores which include wavy lines, colors, circles and other designs. Your scores are wonderful works of art but how does one interpret them into a musical setting?*

Blonk: I am not really an acclaimed visual artist. I don't have a gallery representing me and have sold work only on a few occasions over the years. Most exhibitions were group shows and the few solo exhibits I had were in small obscure galleries. Still, I am happy, especially to

have my visual work published in a number of books (see titles and links at bottom). In the books that come with a CD, there's usually some relationship between the images and the CD tracks. Sometimes literal, as with the texts on kitchen ingredients in *Traces of Cookery* and the Artaud fragments in the book/CD devoted to his sound poetry fragments. Also, the texts in *Fehlberliner U-Wirr*, which are scrambled versions of the station names of the Berlin subway network, are interpreted literally on the CD. In other cases, there can be a relationship in terms of atmosphere or feeling. Most of the work I am making now is not meant to be interpreted as music or sound. It's independent visual art. One could of course transform it into sound in many ways, but that can be done with anything visual. I have done several improvised performances in museums and galleries, sounding the art (paintings and/or sculptures by various artists) that was exhibited there.

Cadence: One of your visual art works is the book 111 Recipes which is filled with numerous renderings of two mixed kitchen ingredients, one solid, one liquid, such as turmeric and buttermilk or beets and icing sugar placed on paper. How did you arrive at this concept?

Blonk: The first 11 images in this book were indeed made in that way. I guess I just liked the visual aspect of some spilled ingredients on kitchen surfaces, especially when I was too lazy to clean up for a time, so that different things got mixed. I decided to try mixing ingredients on paper, and some of these looked really nice, so I let them dry, scanned and printed them and made drawings on them. The other 100 images in *111 Recipes* are reproductions of my original drawings for the book *Traces of Cookery / Kochspuren*. This was printed in an edition of 100, each having an original drawing bound in the middle. Copies of this book are still for sale. The same goes for the Artaud book, only there each copy has a collage on black paper in the middle.

Cadence: What happens at the workshops you present around the world? How do you instruct others about the creative use of one's body?

Blonk: I always start a workshop with a warm-up of the body and voice, followed by some easy and fun games with sound, for people to loosen up. After that it depends on various factors. It makes a difference what discipline students are in, how much experience they have, and what their interests are. It can go toward improvisation (this can of course also include instrumentalists), or deeper into voice sounds when it's for more experienced singers, or into notation and composition if it's for creative writing or composition students. I have a lot of strategies for all these forms. For instance, some ways of having them compose vocal work for a group of people where they are divided to voice different parts. Even with elementary school children this has yielded beautiful results. I often include an explanation on how to gradually develop specific voice techniques, and always give warnings on what sounds can damage the voice if you produce them too long or too loud.

Cadence: Which living sound poets currently excite you?

Blonk: None at all really, I'm afraid...I mean, there are quite a few whose

work I respect, especially some older ones, some of whom are already deceased. I also did some collaborations, for instance with Michael Lentz, Jörg Piringer, Julien Ottavi and Joachim Montessuis, but they seem to have petered out. More exciting things for me are happening in new music, both composed and improvised. Maybe it has to do with the great difficulty of finding presentation opportunities for sound poetry, as it's far less of a recognized discipline than either music or literature.

Cadence: *What are your interests outside of the creative arts? Guilty pleasures?*

Blonk: Ha-ha, what pleasures are guilty? I'd rather not tell. What's certainly not guilty: I love to go out for walks and bike rides, taking advantage of the beautiful surroundings of my town Arnhem. Also, I like being in the mountains. I have done biking in the Alps and Pyrénées as well. As an artist, I can feel guilty when I escape from creative work. A favorite way is reading American crime novels. I especially like L.A.-based books. I've read all of James Ellroy - after reading and rereading Chandler of course.

Cadence: *The final questions have been given by other artists to ask you:*

Theo Bleckmann (vocalist) asked: *"Thank you for including me here. I adore Jaap. I invited him to my series at the old Stone in the East Village. Here's my vocal nerd question (been getting into vocal science during this quarantine a bit too much- LOL) - Throughout all your incredibly wild vocalizations, have you ever had concerns or incidents of vocal injury or fatigue, and how do you keep (vocally) fit for the long haul?"*

Blonk: I am lucky to be blessed with a strong set of vocal cords, I assume. I have never had any long-lasting damage to the voice. On a tour with performances every night, I may be a little hoarse in the morning, but in the course of the day my voice recovers completely, and it gets even better while the tour lasts. Some techniques I had to build up slowly over the years, such as inhaling sounds. As I had found out I could trust I wouldn't damage my voice permanently, I have sometimes consciously hurt it temporarily, such as in the recording of the Tristan Tzara Dada poems that consists of 410 repetitions of the German word 'brüllt' (roar, scream) on my Flux de Bouche CD. After that it took 3-4 days to recover. With my BRAAXTAAL trio I did a tour in 1995 as a support act for The Ex. It was the first time we played Rock venues, and in the course of a week, my voice dropped about a fifth. It changed our music towards getting more rough and extreme, as documented on the second BRAAXTAAL CD, Speechlos. On the recent New Start recording session with my Retirement Overdue band, I scheduled Bernstein's "Somewhere" near the end of the third day because I knew only then I would be able to sing it in the low register I wanted it to be in. Completely different are

the sounds created by extreme air pressure in my 'cheek synthesizer' technique. At first, when applying the pressure very suddenly, I almost fainted, but now I can handle it easily.

Cadence: *What are daily practice sessions like for you?*

Blonk: I don't do daily practice sessions anymore. I only practice when it's required for learning a new piece or a new type of improvisation. I did a lot in the past: breath training, simple singing exercises, articulation etudes with a metronome, uvular trills, inhaling sounds, lip and cheek sounds, etc. My daily activities are studying, learning, inventing, and creating in different fields. There's always been this discrepancy between how most people see me, which is only as a vocalist, and how I see myself, which is most of all, a maker of things: music, sound art, text, and visual work. That's totally understandable of course. People see me on stage, and even in concerts where I do more electronics than voice and the vocal parts stand out because they are visually more striking and direct. Here I'd like to relate an experience. In 2016 I did a 3-week U.S. tour. Among the CDs I brought were 5 copies of the most recent at the time: August Ananke, a mostly quiet record of purely electronic music. As all my performances involved vocals, I hadn't been able to sell a single copy of this. Then at the last concert, an acoustic voice performance in a small cafe in Boston, the barkeeper asked me if I had some music to play at intermission. I gave him August Ananke, and at the beginning of the second set I succinctly told the audience they had just heard a bit of my latest record. Then I sold all 5 of them after the show, and I could have sold more...

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje (vocalist) asked: *“You started out as a sound poet in your twenties, reciting Hugo Ball, and then continued with Kurt Schwitters’ “Ursonate,” and then we know the rest! Did you reflect upon music also already at that time? How did you get into music collaborations, and has your view on what music can be changed from then till now?”*

Blonk: Most people indeed think I started out as a sound poet, but it's not true. I started playing saxophone in 1973, when I was 20, and learned to read music. In 1976 I started to compose my own pieces. They were very simple at first but got more sophisticated pretty soon. I studied books on music theory, such as for instance Vincent Persichetti's Twentieth Century Harmony, Hindemith's books on counterpoint, René Leibowitz on twelve-tone composition and William Russo's Composing for the Jazz Orchestra. In 1977 I discovered Hugo Ball's sound poems, in 1979 Kurt Schwitters' "Ursonate," and in 1981 I did my first public performances with the voice. By that time, I had already done a lot of concerts with several ensembles, including my own, playing saxophone only. So all of my first music collaborations, also improvised, were with saxophone (plus a growing arsenal of toy instruments and other rubbish). From 1984 on, I started to use the voice in improvisation. You can say indeed that this changed my view

on what music can be. So many new sounds turned out to be able to function musically. Only then I realized the wideness and validity of Varèse's definition "Music is organized sound." The major changes after that were: starting with electronic effects and samplers (from 1990 on), using the laptop as an instrument (from 1998 on), and getting back to mathematics after almost 30 years (in 2006).

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje also asked: "Were you the first to perform the "Ursonate" backwards?"

Blonk: As far as I know, yes, I am the first and only person to recite some of the "Ursonate" backwards. It's a nice story how this happened. After my 1986 LP of the piece had been banned by Schwitters' son, and performances had been prohibited, I decided to make an illegal cassette recording of it under the pseudonym Reverof Zrem (retrograde of 'Merz Forever', 'Merz' being Schwitters' personal brand of Dada art). I think this gave me the idea of reciting the Scherzo of the "Ursonate" from the beginning until half-way, and then backwards to the beginning. So, I had, so to say, taken my words back and not recited the piece at all, and thus not violated any copyright. This was how I recorded it on the cassette, which was produced in 399 copies and has become a bit of a collector's item. At one point I saw a copy offered in Discogs for some 180 dollars.

Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje also asked: "What are pros and cons in experiencing a live performance compared to a recording? Is it two very different things? How about free improvisation contra composing?"

Blonk: I assume you mean the experience as a performer. It's an interesting topic. For me it differs greatly, dependent on what is performed or recorded. In performing or recording improvised music with other people, for me there is almost no difference. The main thing is the cutting-edge concentration on what's happening musically every second, regardless of the presence of an audience. In recording a composition, it's different. There's always the awareness that you can do it again, do a part of it again to be edited in later. This was different in the old days before digital recording, when multi-track tape was quite expensive, and you might not be able to afford an extra take. That created a different type of tension. About composing itself, there's a wide range. Sometimes it comes close to free improvisation, for instance when I write spontaneously invented sound poetry. Then, when I compose without mathematical methods, it involves a lot of trying, listening and changing. At other times it's like something is just given to me. It also happens when I have a mathematical structure that is so beautiful that I feel I cannot change it after converting it into music (or visuals, for that matter), no matter what it sounds or looks like. It's about truth. In composing, I also mix free improvisation with computer systems. For the album I am currently working on, Inletwist Fragments, I feed the dictation feature of the computer improvised gibberish that it 'translates' into English text, which I then scramble again with mathematical methods, to get the lyrics for the album.

Joan La Barbara (vocalist/composer) asked: "What are your memories of "Messa di Voce," the collaboration in which we were co-composers/vocalists working with interactive media and graphics [designed by Golan Kevin and Zachary Lieberman]. It was a tour de force for many reasons - not the least of which was cutting edge technology that was somewhat "uncooperative."

Blonk: Yes, my main memories of this project was waiting for Golan and Zach to get the software running correctly...Both in the period before the premiere in 2003 at Ars Electronica in Linz, when I was keeping myself healthy with long walks in the hills, only to meet the two guys with even paler faces after struggling with coding and debugging another night. This was understandable because it was indeed quite a pioneering technology at the time. But I was somewhat surprised to find the same thing happening again before the last performance of the piece, in 2009 in New York. I had an apartment in Manhattan for a whole week, but we ended up having just one rehearsal for the performance. I remember Joan and I both thought the artistic result would have been a lot better with more rehearsal time. In the actual situation we felt at times we hardly got beyond demonstrating the software.

Charmaine Lee (vocalist) asked: Sound poetry has historically been closely tied to significant cultural moments - wars, political movements, Dada etc. Where do you see its function and relationship with today, if at all? Has the practice reached its full potential through the iconic 20th century works, or are there ways for the medium to further its expression?

Blonk: To start with the last part, I think it's always possible to further its expression, as long as there are creative practitioners. I'll keep trying! The bad thing is, it has become more and more marginalized. Indeed, in the 20th century there were these movements that sound poetry was a part of, that had some importance in the general field of culture, like Dada, the Concrete Poetry movement (mainly in the 1950s), Fluxus in the '60s and '70s. There's nothing like that nowadays. Last summer I went through my archives, throwing most of it away, and I saw that in the three years 1993-1995 I had done a total of 50 radio performances just in the Netherlands. All of them with sound poetry, all of them with decent fees. Nowadays I should be happy if I get one radio appearance in three years, and I won't get any payment except for my travel expenses. Money is governing the media in my country now. The main target is the numbers of spectators/listeners. I realize of course that in many other countries, like the U.S. for instance, it has been like that forever.

Patty Waters (vocalist) asked: "How do you prepare yourself emotionally and physically before a performance?"

Blonk: Emotionally, I don't need any preparation. I know the 'holy fire' will be there right away when I get on stage. It has probably helped that I performed on many occasions where my time was limited to 5 minutes

or so (at exhibition openings for instance, or big poetry festivals), and I had to be fully present instantly. Physically, I have to work on the voice only after a hiatus in performing. A few days of relaxed exercise for about an hour each day, mostly soft sounds: yawning sounds, going from lowest to highest register, fast little sounds, quick transitions to different techniques, calling possibilities into my awareness again. Sometimes I do that while playing some music I improvise along with. But when I have frequent performances, I don't need any preparation for the next one.

Phil Minton (vocalist) asked: "Do you still play any saxophone? I'm playing trumpet again and finding new stuff in my eightieth year."

Blonk: Oh, that's nice...it might occur to me too, who knows? I still have all my saxophones, from soprano to baritone, but they have been stashed away in a corner of my attic for 25 years now. I have been thinking of getting my alto out - that's my favorite - and maybe it'll indeed happen before I get to my eightieth year.

Recordings mentioned (see jaapblonk.bandcamp.com)

Six Sound Poems by Hugo Ball (forthcoming, double CD with two versions of the poems)

Ten Chosen Pieces (digital album)

Blonk, Mallozzi & Vandermark (Kontrans 367, 2020)

New Start, by Jaap Blonk's Retirement Overdue (Kontrans 1066, 2020)

Antonin Artaud's To Have Done with the Judgment of God (Kontrans 666, 2020)

Pioneer Works Vol. 1 & 2 (Balance Point Acoustics, 2019)

Klinkt (Het Balanseer, 2013)

Post-Human Identities with Maja Ratkje (Kontrans 651, 2005)

MAJAAP with Maja Ratkje (Kontrans 850, 2004)

Dworr Buun by BRAAXTAAL (Kontrans 448, 2001)

Consensus by Splinks (Kontrans 1545, 1999)

Speechlos by BRAAXTAAL (Kontrans 244, 1997)

BRAAXTAAL (Kontrans 939, 1993)

Flux de Bouche (Staalplaat, 1993)

Art books:

Antonin Artaud by Jaap Blonk (2020): <http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/ana.html>

111 Recipes (2019): <http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/111R.html>

On Tractatus One (2018, out of print): [http://jaapblonk.com/](http://jaapblonk.com/OutOfPrint/on_tractatus_one.pdf)

[OutOfPrint/on_tractatus_one.pdf](http://jaapblonk.com/OutOfPrint/on_tractatus_one.pdf)

Traces of Cookery / Kochspuren (2018): <http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/toc20.html>

Fehlberliner U-Wirr (2017): <http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/fbuw.html>

Traces of Speech / Sprachspuren (2012, out of print): http://jaapblonk.com/OutOfPrint/Traces_of_Speech.pdf

Visual work:

<http://jaapblonk.com/Pages/scores.html> and Facebook

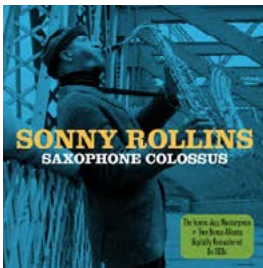
**SONNY ROLLINS,
SAXOPHONIST,
BORN IN 1930,
NEW YORK,
NY, RECOUNTS HIS
"BRIDGE STORY."
RECORDED IN
FEBRUARY 2012.**



Sonny Rollins
The Bridge



Bluebird's Best
Sonny Rollins



Sonny Rollins
Saxophone Colossus

Ed.note: Some of this material was published in the Jazz Stories segment in Cadence Magazine. These stories have been included to provide context with the remainder of the Sonny Rollins interview which has been restored and presented here for the first time.

I am Sonny Rollins. I am a saxophonist and somewhat of a composer, and I have been performing and recording since 1948, working with great musicians the Modern Jazz Quartet, Miles Davis, Art Blakey. I played and recorded with the great Charlie Parker, and with Coleman Hawkins.

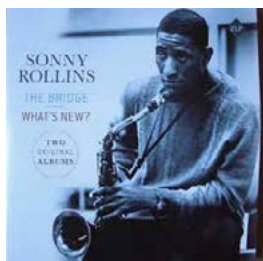
OK, well, New York is about people living next to each other, and if you play an instrument, a musical instrument, you're going to have to be open to the fact that your neighbors might have to go to work while you want to practice your instrument and that's always been a big, big problem for me.

So, anyway, I was living down on Grand Street in the Lower East Side, by the way, and the same situation was obtained. You know, people in the apartment over me. And I had a problem, because, as I said, I'm a very sensitive person; I don't like to bother other people. I don't like to cause them any sort of discomfort, and, of course, that basically was the problem. So I happened to be walking in the neighborhood on Delancey Street, anyway, I was walking, and I was sort of walking towards the bridge that goes across to Brooklyn. I saw the steps leading up to the bridge, and I just, you know — I hadn't even thought about that, and I walked over, and I walked up the steps, and there in front of me was this expanse of bridge. Nobody up there in the middle of the day, so I said, OK, and walked across the bridge. I walked across the bridge, nobody walking in any direction. There were trains coming across the bridge, automobile traffic, and below them was the river, and there were boats coming up and down the East River. And it occurred to me that this would be a perfect place for me to bring my horn and practise in perfect peace, and I wouldn't be disturbing anybody, and I could

Jazz Stories: Sonny Rollins



Williamsburg Bridge, 1960



Sonny Rollins
The Bridge



Sonny Rollins, circa 2011

blow as hard as I wanted, long as I wanted. I had taken a sabbatical, basically, at that time. And so, I would go up there day and night, and nobody would bother you. New York City is a very cosmopolitan place, the people are very sophisticated. They walk by, see some guy playing, and they don't give a hoot and they just walk by.

And I would be there. I took some of my friends up there with me at different times, and it just was a gift from heaven. And I stayed up on that bridge until being discovered up there by a jazz writer who happened to live in Brooklyn and was walking across the bridge, and he knew that I was on a sabbatical and had disappeared from the music

scene. This was my intent, until then. So he wrote a story, and then news got out and, "Oh, Sonny is on the bridge." And it turned into a very romantic story, which indeed it is: this lone musician practicing on the bridge and under the New York skyline, and the boats going below, and sometimes I'd blow my horn at the boats and they'd answer back. It was really a magical experience. Eventually, though, I had to come back to work. But, you know, then I still went there to practice.

So I eventually went back and I had to work, but I had that really high, high point in my life, and, I mean, I'm just eternally grateful for my whole career. I'm grateful that I'm paid to do what I love, to play my saxophone. I am grateful that I'm able to make a living playing, and make some art. And, by the way, I had a nook at the bridge where I couldn't be seen by the trains or the cars, so if they heard me, they couldn't see me, so it was just a perfectly private spot. And that's the story of the bridge.

Cadence: *Yeah, that's a beautiful story... it sounds like you got some time to do what you wanted, to practice.*

Rollins: Yeah, no—I would have stayed. Actually my wife was working—I was working, ... and so I could have stayed up there longer because—but then I realized, “Well, no, now I’m being selfish, you know, so it’s time to come back.” And when you’re in situations like that, it’s easy to become self-indulgent.

Cadence: *Good, okay. Let's see. I had another question, about the early days of Harlem what was it like, playing music, and if it's possible to give people an idea of what that time period was like.*

Rollins: Well, you know, I moved from what we could call—well, in those days would be called Harlem proper, and I moved—in 1939, I moved up to what was sort of the elite section of Harlem, which was called Sugar Hill. And at that time, Harlem was the place. I was born in Harlem, Harlem proper, and then Harlem was the place where there was so much music. So much music, so many theaters, clubs. Just music, music, music, and it was really more than that—I felt lucky to be born in Harlem.

Cadence: *The Fertile Crescent of music, or something like that.*

Rollins: Yeah, yeah, it was just—really rich musically. And I was reading this book, some years ago, by a fellow about a lot of the activity around Harlem when I was a little boy and I didn’t really—I was a child, and I really didn’t go out, but this book, some of the places around there, like the movie theater when I started going there in 1936, and then night club in the house I lived in and when I read this, I just felt that, you know, I was just born at the proper place at the proper time, because I completely embodied all of this great music. You know what I mean?

Cadence: *Yeah, yeah.*

Rollins: Even though I didn’t go there, I mean I was too young at that time, but I just think I absorbed this music. It was all around me. I moved up on Sugar Hill in 1939, and met some of the young people that we formed a band: Arthur Taylor, the drummer; Jackie McLean, the alto saxophonist; Walter Bishop, pianist; Kenny Drew, pianist... So then I met those people, and I was nine years old. I had started actually playing since I was 7, I think my mother went out and bought me an alto saxophone. So when I went up there, I was already into music, and these were some of the people, the young people, that were also into music. And then it was nice hanging up there on the Hill... Bud Powell lived up there; Willie “The Lion” Smith It was sort of an elite section of Harlem at that time, and all of these people were older than us. We were able to observe and, you know it was good for us because we then were able to seamlessly enter into the musical scene ourselves. You know, as we got older and got better, you know, we began playing with some of the older musicians, [it was just a great—it was just something that seems to be prepared for me by a higher power.

As I look back, I can see that. And that’s pretty much my doing, and

somebody said—or something, I should say—had it outlined for me.

Cadence: *Yeah, because there you were. What a place, what a time, what a—you know, that's pretty—that's so special.*

Rollins: Yes, I'm enormously fortunate, you know. Just so blessed. So, so blessed.

Cadence: *I was curious; was there a wide range in the age of people? Like, did the younger people have opportunities? You know, it sounded like you started really young, and was that common? Did you see a lot of young people?*

Rollins: Well, there were bands around that—we had rivals. I would call them teenage bands; they were all in high school. But, you know, some of us made it; some of us didn't. My group made it. Jackie McLean made it. Art Taylor made it. Kenny Drew, Walter Bishop. We made it. A lot of the other groups didn't. You know, I guess we were just touched by—you know, by that talent, God-given talent.

But the guys that were older than us that I was talking about—Coleman Hawkins and all them—they were—you know, these guys would say—if I was 15 years old, I would say Coleman Hawkins would have been 35 or so, so we didn't—we just observed these guys. We weren't the age to hang out with them or anything like that.

Cadence: *Yeah, they were—there was a gap there.*

Rollins: Yeah, there was a gap definitely. They were professional and already doing what we wanted to do, you know?

Cadence: *Talk about THELONIOUS MONK*

Rollins: I heard Monk on a record with my idol, who was Coleman Hawkins. He was the piano player on the record. I'd never heard of this guy, but I thought, wow, I really like what he's doing. Then, when I was getting older, I ran into Monk one time, and we played, and he took me under his wing, so to speak. I used to rehearse with his band down in a little small apartment down on the West Side.

I think we played in the bedroom. All the rooms were small. We had a lot of guys, I think there were four guys in there, playing in that small room. You know, they'd be playing Monk's music and saying, "Monk we can't play this!" But by the end of the night, everybody was playing and it sounded great.

So Monk sort of schooled me, and I looked upon him with the Indian way of looking at things, I looked at Monk as a guru. I had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with Monk. He was a good personal friend and everything else. Monk used to come to my house and play my piano, you know. But I think he was just playing. Now, whether he was composing at the same time, I would imagine he was, because it was the nature of jazz. In jazz, you perform and you compose at the same time. So I think probably he was composing. A lot of Monk's great compositions, not knowing for sure, I suspect he did solitarily. He wrote those by himself, and then he brought them out to have other people play them. I suspect that's what happened.

But talking with Monk, of course, was like playing jazz. He's not gonna play the same thing everytime, so he's composing in the sense, or he's

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formulating in dreams, and so on, while we're playing, you know. Half these guys sit down and write it all out. But yeah, if you get it together, you do it while you're soloing or while you're performing, really, especially in my case. I'm a prime example of somebody who learns my material and then when I'm performing my mind is blank and I'm just clay. And whatever comes out is the form of composing, and it is as spontaneous and as far away from conscious thought as possible.

Cadence: *Yeah. Great, Okay, now this is random, a question that comes to mind is about yoga,. I just do it as an exercise form, but I've done it for 30 years, I think.*

Rollins: Oh, okay.

Cadence: *Just my back was in bad shape when I was a kid, and I learned yoga. My ears perk up any time that I hear that someone might be involved with yoga. It seems to really help you function. Anyway, I was just curious how you got involved with yoga.*

Rollins: Well, I got involved with yoga because I realized, at one point in my life, that there was something—that there was a spirit, or my conscience. There was something else besides the material world, and I think that I attracted to I definitely wanted to be a good person, ... And so I felt that I needed a guide, increasingly, and as you get into studying things like yoga and everything that had to do with a spiritual attitude, and I hadn't heard much. And so then I began seeking out a yoga teacher, and I was doing yoga also, but—I went to India. I studied a little Zen Buddhism in Japan, and I had an opportunity to go to India, and went to India in 1967.. I read the books, and I sought out some people. Forever Young, Forever Healthy Indra Devi. I attended at her ashram in Mexico, actually. I hadn't studied, but mainly from books.

And anyway, when I went to India, then I—what happened was that I ended up studying other forms of yoga. I didn't really study hatha yoga in India; I studied other types of yoga which my guru told me, at the time, would be best for me?? Yoga is mainly some kind of meditation. "I want to be more at peace, and I'm not finding that. I don't feel that I'm getting enough out of life." And he told me, "Well Sonny, when you practice your instrument, you're actually doing yoga. That is meditation. When you're practicing your horn, you meditate." In other words, you work, you do things, and you don't expect, or you don't want any reward for what you do. You just do it, never mind what it is, it's not important what you get out of it. And it's very difficult in a field like show business, where it's so much about the ego, and so I—you know, I found some problems there with the melding of these two philosophies together; how to just forget about myself, and the entertainer, star, and just concentrate on the inner self. But I've worked on it a lot and I know I'm much better about it now. I'm not seeking in the sense that I once was. And I also studied my hatha, which I still do in a much more modified form, because of my age, of course. But I find that it's all good, you know? You know what

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I mean?

Cadence: *Yes, yes, definitely. And your work is your yoga, is what you're saying?*

Rollins: Yes, right.

Cadence: *Right? That becomes—it's integrated in that the studying yoga helps to validate—if you're doing it right, I guess—your life. You know, that what you're doing is of intensive value. Something like that, you know*

Rollins: Well, you know what it's doing is I'm not hurting anybody.

Cadence: *Yes.*

Rollins: That's ultimate—of not doing anything to hurt people. So, in that sense, why not? What's wrong with practicing my horn? What's wrong with playing? And then some people actually said they get something from my playing? Okay, I'll accept that graciously. And so, in a sense, that is a practice of yoga, really.

Cadence: *Yeah, Yeah, I can relate to what you said about the ego because I have 14 records out on a New York label there with a bunch of people, and I've done fairly well for my own personal standards, but it's been a push, and I've never liked the whole "pushing about me, talking about me." And when the opportunity came up to publish Cadence, it felt like this wonderful window to just finally hear what other people are saying and not be so consumed with what I'm doing, you know. It's—even though I thought I was interested and listening, it just—it's helpful to not have to promote yourself all the time. You know, it—I look for that balance, too, where I'm giving, as well as presenting, you know, or listening, and it's a battle that most musicians really—somewhere in them, you know, it's a struggle to—the ego. Anyway—*

Rollins: Yeah, no, I agree completely.

Cadence: *There is a book—Blink, by Malcolm Gladwell.*

Rollins: Oh yes, I've heard of him, yes.

Cadence: *Yeah, Yeah, sort of a secondary sense of awareness, that is actually our main sense. It's not our empirical sense, but it's the one that's our gut instinct, or our—you know, it's one that keeps us alive, and it seems to me that what you're doing is sort of eight times more effective than our rational self; it's eight times quicker and more aware. I mean, that's just arbitrary number.*

Rollins: Well, I think it's like—right, I agree. I mean, I think that that sense is good—it is—that's like the difference between the material and the immaterial, and, in that sense, as the material life, the longer I'm living, but the more I'm seeing that there's something bigger besides this—where I'm living at, and there's something else. There's something else that is much more real, positive.

Cadence: *Yeah*

Rollins: Right, and whatever, you know, people then want to call it different names, whatever you want to call it, but there's something else there that is really what it's all about, you know? It's a really

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comforting feeling when you get close to that, you know.

Cadence: *Yeah, yeah. It's kind of we all want, you know? We're just disconnected, and that's a feeling a connection.*

Rollins: Right, exactly, absolutely. It's a feeling a connection. It's really—it's a really good—something that I finally got to learn, that in the material world is old, young, frail, that's it.

Cadence: *Yeah, it's a bigger thing. We're part of that; we're not connected in these bodies, we're just using these until they're done, you know?*

Rollins: Right, right.

Cadence: *That's how nature chose, and it's a smarter way, you know? You can't keep these bodies going or they would keep disease going and keep—*

Rollins: Right.

Cadence: *You know? Trust in life, right? Like, it—anyway.*

Rollins: That's why the—you know, you might find some—I mean, we live you know—I believe that you shouldn't try to end your life because it's just going to have to come back, maybe, and do it again, and you will be further back. But I believe that—that is—you used a word a little while ago; you said "connected." We're all connected to something much bigger. That's the connection. It's—you know, I mean by the human spirit.

Cadence: *Yes. We're—we're forced to talk about it, like, from behind a curtain, right? We can't see it.*

Rollins: Right.

Cadence: *It's over there, it's just—you know, we know it's big; we just can't quite see it.*

Rollins: Yeah, but it's comforting to know that it's there, and to know that it exists, you know? Then everything is okay. Anything, in fact that's some kind of an illness, a hand cut off, or anything; there's a reason for it which I might not understand, but it's a reason for it beyond my understanding, but it's good.

Cadence: *You just never know.*

Rollins: We never know, We're here... We don't know why, but it's—whatever happens is good, that's the way I feel. Whatever happens because, after all, nobody knows... What do we know?

Cadence: *We're just guessing, that's all we're doing.*

Rollins: Yeah, we're guessing. Exactly.

Cadence: *That's great. Well, we got—we talked for a long time here.*

Rollins: I know, probably too long.

Cadence: *No, no, no. I think we're good. I just wanted to ask you if there's anything else that you'd like to say.*

Rollins: Well, no, I think I've sort of said enough for an old fool.

Cadence: *[LAUGHS] I assume you're talking about me.*

Rollins: *[LAUGHS]*

Cadence: *Well Sonny, I appreciate you sharing these thoughts.*

Rollins: It's great talking to you today.

Andrew Greeney, drummer holds a BA in Music, and Percussion studies from the University of New York New Paltz*Cadence: When did you start playing the drums?*

I started playing drums at age 14. I had an interest in the drums earlier and wanted to play percussion in the school band but I signed up late and ended up with trombone. I am thankful for this in some ways because I learned about the pitches and reading music. Later I would use stuff from around the house as pretend sticks and I got some real sticks at 13. I started taking lessons at 14 and my mom bought me a drum set later that year and I played in my brother's band with some friends.

Cadence: What were your musical influences

I have many diverse influences. When I first started getting into music, I remember having an hour at home alone every morning before school because everyone else left the house earlier. This was when I could use the stereo and crank it as loud as I wanted. I would play my cassettes of Led Zeppelin and Red Hot Chili Peppers and my mom's Steve Winwood and Ziggy Marley. Later, as a teenager, I was really into the skateboard culture and the skateboard videos introduced me to a lot of new non-mainstream music with groups like Fugazi, Sonic Youth, Tribe Called Quest and many others. I started searching for different sounds in music and I purchased many discs in my high school years. This search led me to the funk, and then Jazz. We also had Vassar college radio which played many different genres of music. I got a copy of Bitches Brew by Miles Davis and listened to it one night and it turned me on to a different world of music. From that point I started getting discs from artists who had played with Miles. This led me to the music of Coltrane which has had a profound effect on me. Coltrane's music seemed to go deeper spiritually and I can feel like Coltrane is talking to me when I listen to the recordings. At this point, my tastes and influences are very broad. Some of my all time favorites include Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Bartok, Coltrane, Nas, Ravel, Beethoven, Charles Mingus, Bill Withers, Sam Cooke, James Brown, Weather Report, Herbie Hancock, and many more. I enjoy all the music from around the world which sometimes has a very different aesthetic. There are too many to list.

Then, of course, there are my teachers and the musicians with whom I have worked. It's all a learning experience and the people I have worked with have been great teachers for me. My school band teachers were very helpful and I have taken private drum lessons with Matt Donahue, Peter O'Brien, and Jeff Siegle. I am thankful to these guys for showing me a lot of the nuts and bolts of music and technique and they taught me

about self discipline. There are a few guys who I have had the pleasure of working with that I could say they are like a cultural icon or a master of a certain style. These guys know their music so well and they are like a personification of that music style. These guys would be Natty Wailer, Joe Louis Walker, and, of course Marvin BuGaLu Smith. Natty had played with Bob Marley and the wailers and with Robbie and Sly so he really knew the reggae style and I spent a lot of time with him playing and late night hanging after gigs. JLW is a real master of the blues and has recorded and played with guys like BB King and Muddy Waters in addition to having 24 albums of his own. I learn something new with Joe every time and he is serious about his music. Bugalu is guy who grew up with Jazz from a very early age and his older brother Buster Smith (also a drummer) would often have great players over to the house including Kenny Dorham and Roy Haynes. Marvin was friends with and a student of many of the masters of Jazz drums including Max Roach, Philly Joe, and Elvin. Marvin and I have spent a lot of time together and I have learned from him in lessons and also doing countless jam sessions together and recording the music. Marvin tends to attract great players and they have all been strong influences as well.

Cadence: How did you meet Marvin Bugalu Smith?

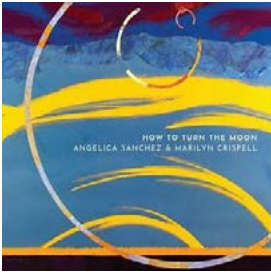
Before I met Bugalu I had amassed a great deal of theoretical knowledge about jazz drumming but my chances to put this knowledge into practice were limited and I thought "What does Philly Joe or Elvin know about the drums that I am missing? It seems like magic." When I saw Bugalu performing at a club in New Paltz NY in 2001 I could see that he knew what they knew. So, I talked with him for a little while and a few months later I started taking lessons with him. He seemed a little strange at first but he ended up being very generous with his knowledge and his time. Then he got me into going to jam sessions all the time and later we ran our own jam session for several years and recorded every week.

Cadence: Talk about a little about the art of recording and what you have learned.

I started doing recordings with my four track cassette recorder when I was in high school. Later, Bugalu and I started video taping all the jam sessions that we went to, primarily for study purposes. In 2009, Bugalu got a Tascam digital recorder (2488) and we began recording all of the jam sessions with that machine and multiple video cameras. After the sessions I would sync the audio to the video and we posted great number of these videos online. We did this for Bugalu's students and for our own study purposes and for people in general to enjoy.

I learned many things by trial and error and we got some decent sounding recordings. Bugalu suggested I take lessons with Malcolm Cecil whom I had met years earlier and at that time he was playing bass at our sessions quite often. Malcolm has a great wealth of knowledge and he won the Grammy for his work on Stevie Wonder's "InnerVisions" album. Malcolm was also a pioneer of analog synthesizers and built an instrument called TONTO (The Original New Timbral Orchestra) which is composed of many different analog synthesizer modules that all work together to create some very unique sounds. Malcolm has been very generous with his knowledge and he taught me a lot about the essentials of recording engineering and electronics maintenance/soldering. Some of my most valuable lessons with Malcolm came from assisting him in doing recordings of live concerts. In today's world there are many ways to record and recording the band live may be becoming a lost art. Malcolm has showed me many things about both live recording and tracking. For the Jazz recordings I try to capture accurately what is happening and it helps when you have really great players that can interact and adjust to the flow of the music. With the Jazz I try to shoot for something similar to the Rudy Van Gelder sound. I have also been doing a lot of MIDI programming and multi-track recording (recording MIDI and audio tracks separately). To me the beautiful thing about the arts and different disciplines is that there is always more to learn and I try to learn with the intent of helping others and providing them with music that helps to enrich their lives. At this point in time I have a new set-up which is great for capturing live recordings and working on my own projects. I think that my broad tastes in music are an asset as a recording engineer/producer because it helps me hear things in different ways. As a musician, one tends to think of music from an analytical head, but it is also very important to tap into the perspective of a total non-musician who experiences the music in a completely different way. Once you start delving into studying music it is harder to get in that head space but I think it is possible.

New Issues



ANGELICA SANCHEZ
AND MARILYN
CRISPELL
HOW TO TURN THE
MOON
PYROCLASTIC RECORDS
10

LOBE OF THE FLY/ ANCIENT
DREAM/ CALYCES OF HELD/
SPACE JUNK/ CEIBA PORTAL/
WINDFALL LIGHT/ TWISTED
ROOTS/ SULLIVAN'S
UNIVERSE/ RAIN IN WEB/
FIRES IN SPACE 50:05

Angelica Sanchez, p; Marilyn
Crispell, p September 28,
2019, Woodstock

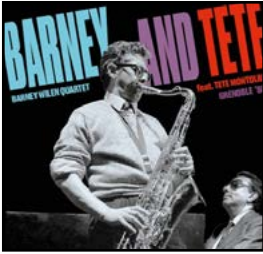
A CD for piano lovers. Two great pianists working together. I am quite familiar with Marilyn Crispell, but not at all familiar with Angela Sanchez. Here they show themselves to be equals. Each is on a separate channel so their playing can be distinguished from each other, but I find that is irrelevant. What works for me here is not who plays what but how they work together. The tunes are in different tempos and textures, so things keep moving, especially on Fire in Space. Most of the CD is about creating moods or impressions. Calyces of Field is the longest track and changes tempo as the pianists change from lead to accompanist. And on Space Junk they sound like they are plucking strings as well as playing keys.

As I keep listening I find myself just sitting back and enjoying the moods. Some tracks seem to blend into the next one. All pieces are composed, most by Sanchez and three by the both of them, which, I assume or more improvisations than compositions.

For lovers of classical piano, I would put this CD next to Debussy's piano music. The tonalities and moods are different, but they would work well together.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



BARNEY WILEN QUARTET, BARNEY AND TETE, ELEMENTAL 5990438.

DISC ONE: LAME DES
POETES / BILLIE'S BOUNCE
/ 'ROUND MIDNIGHT /
SUMMERTIME /
MEDLEY=IT NEVER ENTERED
MY MIND-INVITATION. 48:44.
DISC TWO: ALL THE THINGS
YOU ARE / LA VALSE DES
LILAS / MEDLEY=SOUS LE
CIEL
DE PAREIS-AUTUMNA
LEAVES{LES FEUILLES
MORTES} /BLUES FOR DN /
SCRAPPLE
FROM THE APPLE /
SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL
COME. 49:16.

Wilen, ts, ss; Tete Montoliu,
p; Riccardo Del Fra. b; Aaron
Scott, d. 2/12/1988. Grenoble,
France.

There seems to be a resurgence of interest in saxophonist Barney Wilen of late. His discography is generous both as a leader or sideman up until his passing in 1996 at age 59. Most acclaimed for his participation with Miles on the *Ascenseur Pour Lechafaud* soundtrack there are many titles under his name worth acquiring. Also under the Elemental logo issued in 2019 *Live In Tokyo '91* made this writer's Best Of list.

Wilen's biography is readily available in many places so there's no need to delve into it once more. While less-heralded than other cool school tenormen like Al Cohn, Stan Getz, Brew Moore and others his clearly discernible debt to Pres is apparent although there are hints of early Newk to be heard. Even on his second instrument, the soprano, there are no Coltrane, Steve Lacey or others present in his approach to the straight horn. As was the norm for these one-offs there was no opportunity for any serious rehearsal so the tune list is comprised of standards, along with a few jazz staples and some European titles. The first platter holds five titles; the French opener which is a duet between the fishhorn and upright, a Charlie Parker perennial taken medium up, a brushed take of the Monk classic after a florid piano intro, a semi-free beginning that evolves into the Gershwin evergreen winding up with a two tune medley with the first being solo piano and the second a trio walk. This pair really cements Montoliu as a major player in the ears of the audience.

The proven standard that opens Disc Two has all hands on deck with the tenor only alluding to the melody. That's followed by a crystalline example of Wilen's ballad prowess on his main axe. Scott uses his toms to an almost latinish feel and later comes forth with a thoughtful trap spot on a jaunty "Autumn Leaves". Next is the shortest number, a blues credited to the co-leaders. The first encore is Bird's contrafact of "How High The Moon" with Wilen taking the first ride on his b-flat horn then switching to his Eb axe for the outgoing one. Using the same bass ostinato Miles used, the leader retains his soprano while Tete inserts a couple of clever quotes into his solo space. Thus ends an entertaining and historic meeting between two almost forgotten giants.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

(1) BENJAMIN BOONE THE POETS ARE GATHERING

ORIGIN 82808

THAT'S MY SON THERE /
MAROONING / AGAINST
SILENCE / POEM BY POEM /
DECONSTRUCTION OF IDOLS
/ TRUTHS / THE POETS ARE
GATHERING / SONG / SPIRAL
/ THE SUN ONE (HOMAGE
TO SUN RA) / YOUR MAN /
IMPERVIOUS BLUE / BLACK
MAN / PORTS OF SORROW
/ BRANCH LIBRARY / THESE
CURRENT EVENTS. 1:11:48.
BOONE, SS, AS, ARR; KENNY
WERNER, P (2, 3, 8, 14, 15);
CORCORAN HOLT, B (3, 8,
14, 15); ARI HOENIG, D (3, 8,
14, 15); DAVID AUS, P (1, 11);
PATRICK OLVERA, B (1, 5, 6, 7,
9); RAY MOORE, D (1); CRAIG
VONBERG, P (4, 5, 6, 7, 9);
NATHAN GUZMAN, D (5, 6, 7,
9); RICHARD JUAREZ, PERC
(5, 6, 7, 9); ATTICUS BOONE,
TS (5); ASHER BOONE, TPT (5);
HASHEM ASSADULLAHI, SS,
AS (10, 12); BEN MONDER, G
(10, 16); EYAL MAOZ, G (10,
16); PETER BRENDLER, B (10,
12, 16); JOHN BISHOP, D (10,
16); DONALD BROWN, II, RAP,
PROGRAMMING (13); DONALD
BROWN, KYBD (13); ALBERTO
DIAZ CASTILLO, KYBD (13);
STEFAN POETZSCH, VLN (13),
VLA (16). JULY 6, 2020, MARCH
4, 2019, JANUARY 5-6, 2019,
JULY 17, 2017, LONG ISLAND,
NY (MIX).

Saxophonist Benjamin Boone led this large scale music and poetry project on (1) using the talents of 21 musicians and 11 poets. Each of the 16 selections presents a poem recited by its author with musical backing from groups ranging from one (solo piano) to seven pieces. Boone, the overall musical arranger, provided the compositions or musical leadership on 11 selections (three of them co-composed), with David Aus, Craig Vonberg, Hashem Assadullahi, Peter Brendler, Kenny Werner, and Donald Brown, II also contributing music in some form. On all selections, the composers and performers do well to reflect or respond to the nature or mood of the verse being recited.

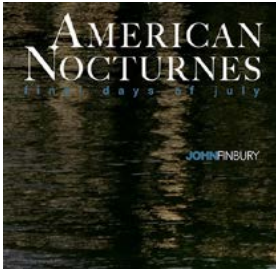
Juan Felipe Herrera's 11-minute narration of his "The Poets Are Gathering" sets the tone for the role of poets to lead the way in expressing concern, resistance, protest, and outrage at injustices in the world, with poems by Patricia Smith ("That's My Son There"), Tyehimba Jess ("Against Silence"), Donald Brown, II ("Black Man"), Patrick Sylvain ("Ports of Sorrow"), and Kimiko Hahn ("These Current Events") also distinctive in their impassioned citations of wrongs.

In a more reflective vein are poems by Lee Herrick ("Truths"), and two by Edward Hirsch ("Song" and "Branch Library"). T. R. Hummer's "The Sun One (Homage to Sun Ra)" is a well-done tribute and portrait of Sun Ra in its artful combination of song and verse.

Boone's music displays wide range, as shown in his highly energetic backing of Dustin Prestridge's "Deconstruction of Idols" versus the ephemeral, airy quality of his music accompanying Marisol Baca's "Spiral."

Don Lerman

New Issues



(2) JOHN FINBURY
AMERICAN
NOCTURNES
FINAL DAYS OF JULY
GREEN FLASH MUSIC LLC
LAY ME DOWN / FINAL
DAYS OF JULY / BLACK
TEA / WINTER WALTZ /
FANTASMA
/ HALFWAY THERE / WALTZ
FOR PATTY (ENSEMBLE)
/ STORYBOOK ENDING /
I'LL PRAY FOR YOU / MY
HOMETOWN / WALTZ FOR
PATTY (PIANO). 45:15.
Tim Ray, p (1-10); Eugene
Friesen,
cel (1-10); Roni Eytan, hca
(1, 2, 5, 9); Claudio Ragazzi,
g (3, 4, 6, 8, 10); Roberto
Cassan, acc (1, 2, 5, 7, 9);
Vitor Goncalves, acc (3, 6,
8, 10); Pete Eldridge, vcl (5);
John Finbury, p (11). May
2016, February 2017, North
Andover, MA.

The music of John Finbury on (2) projects a spirit of optimism and yearning, portraying Americana with moving melodies in acoustic groups ranging from one to five pieces. The eleven selections were judiciously arranged by Finbury, with the major melodic voice of cello frequently passed along to piano and, often with tender results, to accordion, guitar, or harmonica. This music was artfully performed by the eight musicians involved in this fine recording. Don Lerman

CONRAD HERWIG,
THE LATIN SIDE OF HORACE SILVER
SAVANT 2187.

NICA'S DREAM / SONG FOR MY FATHER / THE GODS OF THE YORUBA / PEACE / THE CAPE VERDEAN BLUES / FILTHY MCNASTY / SILVER'S SERENADE / NUTVILLE. 79:00.

Collective personnel: Herwig, tbn; Craig Handy, as; Igor Butman, ts; Alex Sipiagin, tpt, flgh; Bill O'Connell, Michel Camilo, p; Ruben Rodriguez, b; Robby Ameen, d; Richie Flores, cga. Circa 2017. NYC.

The most recent addition to Conrad Herwig's Latin Side project couldn't be more appropriate. The much-missed Horace Silver mixed dashes of many flavors into his original stew; hard bop, blues, dreamy ballads, bop and latin. The offspring of a man from the tropics, he contained that strain in his bloodstream throughout his entire career in varying degrees. As with previous editions in this series Herwig has assembled an all-star contingent of A-list players to perform the eight Silver songs. Three of the selections are Silver standards (I'll let you pick them) along with other titles most seasoned followers will be familiar. Perhaps the least well-known is "The Gods Of The Yoruba" the longest cut, arranged by Marc Stasis & the only one not arranged by Bill O'Connell and the leader. Guest Igor Butman adds his tenor to the frontline while the other guest, Michel Camilo contributes some idiomatic pianoing to a triad of tracks (Nica's Dream/Song For My Father/Nutville). This is mostly fiery stuff with the only breather a halfway- paced ballad interpretation of "Peace". Honcho Herwig displays his estimable bone chops on this and the final number. His bold statement on "Filthy McNasty" recalls the great Al Grey, a nice alto spot from Craig Handy while Butman's solo channels early Newk. When one thinks about there's a no-more natural fit for this project than the iconic Horace Silver. Larry Hollis

New Issues

DAVE GISLER TRIO WITH JAIMIE BRANCH ZURICH CONCERT

INTAKT 357

INTRO/ NAMELESS/ WHAT GOES UP.../ CAPPUCCINO/ SPIEGELGLASSE/ ONE MINUTE TOO LATE/ RABBITS ON THE RUN/ BETER DON'T FUCK WITH THE DRUNKEN SAILOR/ DIVE 51:04
Dave Gisler, g Jaimie Branch, tpt; Raffaele Bossard bass; Lionel Friedli, d November 29, 2019, Zurich

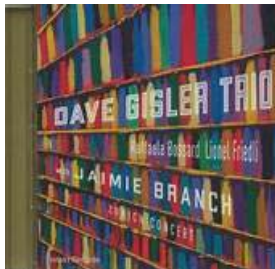
The CD starts with some interesting moody work with nice interplay. The rhythm at first seems a bit abstract but there is a groove. Before I know it I am half way into track 2. Then I am suddenly awakened by some high powered up tempo playing with a solid beat. At first I find this jarring, but I quickly get into the groove.

Then Cappuccino has someone saying cappuccino and other words. Unfortunately I can't quite get them all. But again the piece turns moody with great interplay. In some sense one can consider this free except that Friedli wants to get into a groove. This is not a problem as his playing is always sensitive to the others.

The next track seems to flow into each other. Throughout Gisler's guitar moves from interesting chords to nice single note lines, especially on One Minute Too late. Branch goes between some nice growling also to nice melodic lines with a tone that blends well with the guitar. While in many ways this is my favorite track I thought Friedli was a bit too heavy handed here. And throughout Bossard moves between being rock steady or wonderfully interactive with other players. And Rabbits on the runs really moves

The more I listen to this CD the more I started to think that the music here was influenced by the later electronic period of Miles Davis. Branch's tone at times sounds like Miles and Gisler's guitar sounds like it would fit into that kind of fusion setting.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

(1) COLLAGE PROJECT - OFF BRAND

PANORAMIC RECORDINGS PAN19

FOR MANNY / FREE #2 / INNER ANDROIDS / FREE #5 / ADAPTATION DANCE / FREE #8 / OPEN GLIMPSE / HARD BOILED DONUT / QUARTET FOR BELA: I / II / III / IV. 58:03.

Dan Bruce, el g; Daniel Lippel, nylon str g; Aidan Plank, b; Nathan Douds, d; Noa Even, sax (5-6); Chris Anderson, tbn (3, 8). March 2017, Germantown, NY; December, 2015 and September, 2019, Cleveland, OH.

(2) SAMUEL LEIPOLD - VISCOSITY

QFTF/ 182

VISCOSITY / SEDIMENT I / SEDIMENT II / SEDIMENT III / PARSİ / EX MACHINA / SHO / ANTIMON / PIANO AND GUITAR. 45:46.

Samuel Leipold, g, p (9); Toni Bechtold, b cl (7). No specific date, Emmenbrucke, Switzerland.

The group Collage Project does bring an artistic approach to their music, suggesting to the listener an impressionistic mix of images, or collage of sounds, on their recording (1), which was made in sessions done in three different years. The first of these sessions, recorded in 2015, presents sub-groups of the largely four-piece group, with bassist Aidan Plank interacting with guitarists Dan Bruce and Daniel Lippel in duo and trio form on the four short movements of Plank's "Quartet for Bela." "Free #2," recorded in 2017, is the first of three "free" cuts featuring the bass and guitars in joint playing with notable individual ideas also apparent. In the remaining seven selections made in 2019, the group brought in saxophonist Noa Even for two selections, the first being "Adaptation Dance" by Bruce, an 8 minute work in which a rhythmically intricate angular melody is increasingly developed, with drummer Nathan Douds a key contributor here. Trombonist Chris Anderson is added on Bruce's "Inner Androids" and Lippel "Hard Boiled Donut," providing impressive solo and ensemble work on both extended vehicles. The core quartet plays on the other three 2019 selections, among them "Open Glimpse," in which composer Plank's opening bass line forms the basis for nearly 9 minutes of subtle musical interaction and development from the quartet.

Guitarist Samuel Leipold's 2020 album is titled "Viscosity," a term which refers to the thickness or internal friction of a fluid, and indeed his original music on (2) does have a diffused, non-free flowing character. On the opening title track "Viscosity," faint guitar tones combine with conga to sonically imply a diffused or thick quality. The three "Sediment" cuts present more concrete guitar lines, yet still paired with foreboding, twilight-zone-type chords. Another metaphor or simile for Leipold's music might be fogginess or murkiness (as in weather), which characterize two of the longer pieces, "Sho" at 8 minutes and "Piano and Guitar" at 10 minutes, both of which add a second instrument. The bass clarinet provides fundamental tones with subtle guitar responses on "Sho," while periodic clangs from the piano paired with sustained electronic sounds bring an eerie quality to "Piano and Guitar." Of a different nature is "Antimon," whose rapid repeated notes and recurring lines approach bluegrass rhythmically but not in mood, the music remaining in the largely introspective mindset.

Don Lerman

New Issues

(1) CECE GABLE - MORE THAN A SONG

NEW YORK JAZZ PROJECT NYJP 1001

EAST OF TH E SUN / AS LONG AS I LIVE / LOVE IS A NECESSARY EVIL / I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU / WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE / IT'S ALRIGHT WITH ME / FOTOGRAFIA / I CONCENTRATE ON YOU / DETOUR AHEAD. 45:09.

CeCe Gable, voc; Roni Ben-Hur, g; Brian Landrus, bs, b clar; Harvie S, b; Sylvia Cuenca, d. 2020, Teaneck, NJ.

CeCe Gable sings with a natural quality and with subtle beauty on (1). Harvie S anchors the quartet that is so compatible with CeCe on this well-chosen set of standards. Duo performances of Gable with Harvey S on "What is This Thing Called Love" and with Roni Ben-Hur on "Fotografia" add interest to this fine recording.

(2) GABRIEL- RED DRESS

JRL-SGS RECORDS

I'M GOING HOME TONIGHT / GIVE A LITTLE / WEST INDIAN BROWN / WHEN A WOMEN'S HAD ENOUGH / NEW TOMORROW / THE NEXT BEST THING / STRANGER / NEVER MAKE YOUR MOVE TOO SOON / THE NEXT BEST THING (RADIO EDIT). 47:13.

Femi Knight, voc; Chris Gordon, p, backgr.ound voc; Chad Edwards, keyboards, Hammond B3; Matt Weisberg, keyboards; Steve Gregory, g; Jonathan Pintoff, b; Randy Drake, d; Scott Breadman, perc; Mike McGuffey, tpt; Jeff Jarvis, tpt, fgh; Kye Palmer, tpt; Glen Berger, ts, as; Jim Lewis, tbn. 2020, Los Angeles, CA.

Vocalist and songwriter Femi Knight sings her original songs featuring arrangements by Dave Cushman on (2). The eight to nine piece group backing Knight consists of a five piece rhythm section plus three to four horns, and the ensemble performs Cushman's spirited charts with crisp professionalism. The brisk light latin "New Tomorrow," one of six Knight compositions on the recording, includes Cushman's well-crafted horn backgrounds and Kye Palmer's fine trumpet solo, and is a highlight of this mostly minor funk/rock program. Knight's lyrics are simple but sage in this popular musical idiom, advising on living and relating to others on "Give A Little" and calling our attention to the spritely "West Indian Brown" and her red dress. One of two songs not written by Knight on this album is "Never Make Your Move Too Soon" by Will Jennings and Nesbert "Stix" Hooper, with solos from Glen Berger on tenor and Steve Gregory on guitar well and patiently done. Femi Knight's pleasant voice is well honed to the musical style here, with her background vocals providing additional interest as shown in what may be (or already is) her hit tune, "The Next Best Thing."

Don Lerman

New Issues

(3) HAL GALPER QUINTET LIVE AT THE BERLIN PHILHARMONIC 1977

ORIGIN 82810

DISC ONE: NOW HEAR THIS / SPEAK WITH A SINGLE VOICE / I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING YOU / DISC TWO: TRIPLE PLAY / THIS IS THE THING / HEY FOOL. 1:27:39.

Galper, p; Randy Brecker, tpt, fgh; Mike Brecker, ts; Wayne Dockery, b; Bob Moses, d. November 4, 1977, Berlin, Germany.

It is certainly good news for jazz listeners that Origin Records has released ten of Hal Galper's past recordings as a leader, including this live concert from 1977 recorded in Berlin's symphony hall and released as (3) in 2021 as a two CD set. This concert, occurring in Galper's life chronology between extended stays with Cannonball Adderley (1973-1975) and with Phil Woods (1980-1990), displays a heightened dynamic and McCoy Tyner-influenced quality, both in his compositions and his playing. The forceful horn front line of Randy and Mike Brecker is well suited to this style, providing high energy and virtuosity, and along with Galper and bassist Wayne Dockery and drummer Bob Moses, enough ideas and staying power to produce these selections which average 14 minutes in length. Galper's signature innovative and playful writing and playing takes a more conventional direction in his infectious jazz waltz "Triple Play," and in his quirky/fun vehicle with gospel overtones, "Hey Fool." Added to this recording is the duo of Galper and Mike Brecker on the Brodsky-Cahn ballad "I'll Never Stop Loving You," an outstanding performance from a Mike Brecker Quartet recording done two months later on the same stage.

Don Lerman

FRANK KOHL SOLITUDE

SELF PRODUCED

DREAMS IN COLOR; I GOT IT BAD; IMAGINE THIS; SOLITUDE; ALONE TOGETHER; A CALL FOR PEACE; FLY AWAY; STILL MISSING YOU; CITY LIGHTS; INTO YOUR ARMS; MY SHINING HOUR; WIDE OPEN; ONCE I LOVED 50:51

Frank Kohl, Acoustic Guitar, August 20-21, 2020, Tacoma, WA

The recording quality is exquisite, the music is simple, warm, and thoughtful. This is the solo guitar album by Frank Kohl. There is a charm that glows from the very beginning of the album. You feel the fireside and a less weary, less frantic time. It's soothing without being dull. Kohl can bring a guitar to life and sound like two musicians at times, in a sensitive, intimate style. "A Call for Peace" stand out as a thoughtful stance as well as a beautiful piece. Nice! "Into Your Arms" is another gem. Same goes for "Wide Open". Playing solo can be challenging: time goes slower and you are not able to develop ideas as a group. There is no group. You are the group and the audience can see what kind of musician you are. Frank Kohl is an excellent musician and this album gives you a good look at what he does. Highly Recommended.

Zim Tarro

New Issues

STEVE COHN, LARRY ROLAND, DANIEL CARTER, MARVIN BUGALU SMITH - VOYAGER

TUBE ROOM RECORDS

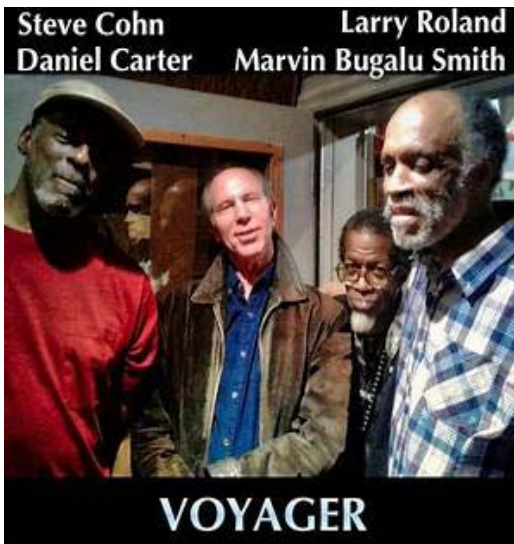
CLIMBING ABOARD/ TAKING OFF/ PARTY TIME/ GOTTA GO/ TROUBLE/ HOME/
GENTRIFICATION 2.0 68:35

Steve Cohn, p, Shakuhachi, tbn, Fender Rhodes; Daniel Carter, tpt, ts, ss; Marvin Bugalu Smith d;
Larry Roland, bass and poetry May 22, 2018, Brooklyn, NY

This is a nice coop quartet, with everyone contributing equally. The drums are up front in the mix, and as a drummer, I am fine with that, especially since Smith's drumming is musical and appropriate to the setting. As I listen I find myself drawn to the interplay. This group works very well together. As a free player myself, I could see playing here, though my style is quite different than Smith's.

Taking Off is the longest track on the CD and captures what the group is capable of. There are nice ensemble passages as well as solos and two-way interplays. I really like the interplay between Smith and Carter in the middle of this track. The only problem I have with this track is it sounded like they didn't know when to stop. As a free player I know this problem all too well. What makes this CD interesting is that two of the players are multi-instrumentalists and so we get more variations than normal from a quartet. Carter is proficient on all horns, and while I am not a fan of the Fender Rhodes, its use also brings about another texture, as does his use of the Shakuhachi, along with the recitation on Trouble and Gentrification.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

CORY WEEDS,
O SOLE MIO!,
CELLAR LIVE 100619

O SOLE MIO / MR. LUCKY / SPEAK SOFTLY LOVE (THEME FROM THE GODFATHER) / ON THE STAIRS / ESTATE / CHICK'S TUNE / TORNA A SURRIENTO / MOODY BLUES / CAPRICCI DI CAMERE (WHIMS OF CHAMBERS). 60:37.

Weeds, as; Eric Alexander, ts' Mike LeDonne, org; Peter Bernstein, g; Joe Farnsworth, d.
10/6/2019. Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

Do you enjoy what is sometimes called Soul Jazz? Does a Hammond B-3 based rhythmic bed under horns or guitar infuse a sense of excitement that the more conventional sounds fail to deliver? If that's the case, do I have something for you. Where most releases of this ilk contain a fairly expected song list of random titles this is that rarity—a soul Jazz concept album filled with writings celebrating the Italian-American heritage in jazz-dom. In a music market over saturated with what Jelly Roll Morton long ago termed “the Spanish tinge” this project was way overdue. Canadian Cory Weeds has hired the Groover quartet helmed by organist Mike LeDonne and staffed with tenor terror Eric Alexander, under sung fretman Peter Bernstein and rock steady trapster Joe Farnsworth.

Each of these men have record dates under their own names making this in essence an all-star gathering. As for the program, it is staffed with interesting titles with the title number, a pair of movie themes (Hank Mancini's “Mr. Lucky” & “The Godfather” theme), and the samba standby “Estate”.

Jazz composers are represented with four writings, the forgotten Dodo Marmarosa's even more obscure “Moody Blues”, Pat Martino's “On The Stairs”, and ringers from Chick Corera and Paul Chambers.

Subtitled Music From The Motherland and co-produced by Weeds and LeDonne these skillfully arranged interpretations by this blue-ribbon quintet should fill the bill for the most ardent Soul Jazz enthusiast. There will be jazz snobs and self-appointed taste makers that will be wringing their hands on this one but this writer will be enjoying it all the while.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ROYCE CAMPBELL, CHRIS WHITEMAN, PAUL LANGOSCH. EMRE KARTARI - THE CAMPBELL/WHITEMAN PROJECT MOON CYCLE RECORDS

JACKRABBIT/ALONG THE WAY/ LADYBIRD/ AUTUMN'S FALL/ BLUES AT AN ANGLE/ MY IDEAL/ SEE YOU AGAIN/ WINTERLUDE/ IN WALKED BUD/ SECLUDED COVE/ BARREL THIEF BLUES 65:00
Royce Campbell, g; Chris Whiteman, g; Paul Langosch, bass; Emre Kartari, d Sept 17,18 2019,
Richmond Virginia

A two guitar group with the guitarists in a mutual admiration society. Judging by some of the tunes we are in store for a good old-fashioned bop session, though most of the tunes are originals by each of the guitarists. The styles of the two are just different enough so they can be told apart, but I don't know which is which.

On all the tunes both solo with the other comping behind. For the most part the CD is about the two guitarists but on Blues at an Angle we get a nice solo by Langosch and some nice fours with the guitarists and Kartari. And we get other occasional bass solos and more fours with Kartari. And throughout Kartari maintains a nice easy beat with solid brushwork, though he switches to sticks on the last two tracks. A nice recording. Bernie Koenig

DAVE STRYKER. BAKER'S CIRCLE, STRIKEZONE 8821.

TOUGH / EL CAMINO* / DREAMSONG / EVERYTHING I LOVE / RUSH HOUR / SUPERSTAR / BAKER'S CIRCLE* / INNER CITY BLUES* / LOVE DANCE / TROUBLE (NO.2). 57:33.
Stryker, g; Walter Smith III, ts; Jared Gold, org; McClenty Hunter, d; Mayra Casales, perc. 1/11/2019.
Paramus, NJ.

With the success of his Eight Track series and his last-issued big band date, veteran string bender Dave Stryker is definitely on a roll. Since his first recording under his own name in 1988 (First Strike) he has cut close to thirty albums under his name with more than double that number as a sideman in his prolific career. This writer owns most of his Steeplechase output and hasn't found a weak one in the lot and is especially fond of the four volume Blue To The Bone series. This most recent release finds him in the company of old hands Gold and Hunter but with the added attractions of tenorist Smith and Casales who adds some Cuban salsa to the asterisked numbers. Three of the titles may be familiar to longtime Cadence readers, Marvin Gaye's "Inner City Blues", "Superstar" from the pen of Leon Russel and the program closer "Trouble (#2)" that appeared on former honcho Stanley Turrentine's Hustlin' for the Blue Note label. There are four Stryker writings found; the tough kick-off which lives up to it's name, the latinish road ode, the moody "Dreamsong" set in seven and the title tune dedicated to one of Dave's mentors David Baker. Elsewhere there is the dusty diamond from Cole Porter and an Ivan Lins penning. All in all, a diverse ten selections that bolster the already sterling reputation of Dave Stryker. Listen up.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

JOHN STOWELL

RAIN PAINTING

ORIGIN 29049

WELCOME TO NICE/ NANTI GLO/ RAIN PAINTING/ PRETTY BOY FLOYD/ ALORA ANDIAMO !/
SPRINGFIELD SONATA/ TAPIOCA TIME/ ALWAYS SOMETIMES/ SCHIFFLETTING/ THE MANDY
WALK

48:43

John Stowell, g; Dan Dean, vcl, bass, perc, d programming 9/29/18 - 5/6/20 Mercer Island, Wa.

One of the most original and innovative guitarists on the scene today would have to be John Stowell. A true pioneer in methods of playing and composing he stands alone in a sea of guitarists.

John's latest release "Rain Painting" gives voice to the intricacies of his compositional skills. Joined by bassist, vocalist and master recording engineer, Dan Dean, John's originals are brought to their full potential. I am swept away by the clarity and meditative power of the melodies and the skill of Dan to orchestrate them. The careful use of vocals, percussion and additional guitar tracks further enhance the recording. Dan's bass playing and vocals are exceptional with their deep rich tones blending so well with the guitar. John's playing is outstanding throughout with exquisite phrasing, tone and use of dissonance. His chordal and single note lines are colorful and unique, using voicings that demonstrate undiscovered ways of approaching the guitar. Our ears are treated to what great possibilities there can be when we leave our harmonic comfort zones. Having ten of John's compositions that were written at different times throughout his career on one recording presents a panoramic view of who John is musically. For those of you not familiar with John's writings "Rain Painting" allows you to experience them as one cohesive performance. This recording is nothing less than a masterful work of art.

Frank Kohl



New Issues

SOFT WORKS

ABRACADABRA IN OSAKA

MOON JUNE RECORDS

SEVEN FORMERLY / ALPHRAZALLAN / ELSEWHERE / BAKERS TREAT / CALYX / KINGS AND QUEENS / ABRACADABRA / MADAM VINTAGE SUITE / HAS RIFF / FIRST TRAIN / FACELIFT.

105:45

Elton Dean, saxello, as, fender rhodes ; Allan Holdsworth, g ; Hugh Hopper, bass ; John Marshall, d. Aug. 11 2003 Namba Hatch, Osaka, Japan (live)

As a Jazz listener, I like to think of myself as an explorer thriving on open mindedness and the desire to find new forms of expression. In this ever-evolving art form we call Jazz, I find that what happens in our society and our lives will eventually find its way into the music. It's always amazed me that in the 50's and 60's while most of society was listening to Elvis and The Beatles, the music of Coltrane, Miles and Ornette Coleman was happening simultaneously with a fraction of the attention. However, some were listening and being guided in a new direction. From the turbulent time of the 60's, the music was rising up and attempting to go where no one had gone before. Soft Works (aka) Soft Machine has dedicated a lifetime to that pursuit. After almost 40 of years pushing the limit of what is Jazz-Rock-Fusion, Soft Works has left us with music that has traveled through generations. During all the years of Soft Works evolution they have stayed true to their core principle of uncompromised music "Art" that is as important today as when it was composed.

"Abracadabra In Osaka" is a live 105 minute testament to the journey of Soft Works. Beautifully recorded, each and every instrument perfectly mixed and mastered. Much of the music is contemplative and is best appreciated by clearing one's mind and letting the music take you where it may. The pristine tone and long rich saxophone lines by Elton Dean are especially satisfying. John Marshall's drums are active and expressive giving the recording a strong rhythmic energy and working well with bassist Hugh Hopper. Allan Holdsworth is nothing short of cosmic, pulling streams of notes from beyond that create an energy which defies time and space. Holdsworth is equally magical in the chordal landscape he creates when accompanying his bandmates.

Soft Works is an important group when one is looking at the evolution of Jazz and how we got to where we are today. Sadly Elton Dean, Allan Holdsworth and Hugh Hopper are no longer with us. However they have left us with a large body of work and this landmark recording as part of their legacy.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

EVA KESSERLING FALLING STARS

NEU KLANG 4320

IKIGAI/ PORTO ALEGRE/ THE SUBSEQUENT USE OF YESTERYEAR AND FUTURITY/
STERNSCHNUPPEN/ EXPERIMENTAL DREAMING/ LET THE MIRACLE UNFOLD/ MANY BLACK
DOTS/ PENTA PIECE 42:53

Vincent Milliod, vln; Susanna Andres, vln; Nao Rohr, vla; Ambrosius Huber, cel; Simon Schwaninger, p; Philipp Leibundgut, d; Eva Kess, bass September 11,12, 2019, Winterthur, Switzerland

A string quintet with a rhythm section. Love the idea. Not sure what to expect, though. Jazzed up Beethoven or some nice background trio backed by strings. To my pleasant surprise we get neither. Rather we get a nice ensemble where everyone gets space at soloing.

The ensemble work is very nice, if middle of the road. Nice harmonies and nice melodies. The solos tend to maintain the feel of each piece. Overall the mood is subdued, which can be deceiving in that the listener can think this is just background music. But is not. Some serious work went into these compositions and arrangements. The tune "Subsequent" which is the longest on the CD is, to my ears the most interesting, with some great bass playing and a lovely interlude with bass and percussion. Leibundgut proves to be a very tasteful player, with great uses of brushes on this track.

There are no details as to which violinist solos on which track but the violin solo on but the solo on Sternschnuppen is lovely. Some of the phrases remind me a bit of Jean Luc Ponty, but the playing here is softer, perhaps one could say more classical. And the interplay between the strings and Leibundgut is very intricate. Great work. Every time I thought I could just sit back and let the CD play in the background, something made my ears perk up. Great praise indeed.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

GEORGE HASLAM, STEFANO PASTOR, JAN FAIX, JOZEF LASKA, JAN SIKL, LOVELAND

SLAM 335

WAITING/ LANDING/ PASTORALE/ LOVELAND/ WHITHER TOMORROW? 74:03

George Haslam, bs, tarogato; Stefano Pastor, Elec vln, kalimba, Jan Faix, melodica, Jan SIKL, d 10 Sept, 2010, Prague

An old, but new, recording. Recorded in 2010 but just released. A recording I am looking forward to for a couple of reasons. Always good to hear George Haslam, and I am really looking forward to hearing a kalimba in this context as I have played it in a free jazz context.

And I have not been disappointed. Haslam is his usual self, adding to this quartet, who clearly enjoy playing together. The different instruments provide a very different tonal setting, with very interesting contrasts. The tarogato is a form of saxophone with a bit of a shrill sound. The melodica adds lovely melodic lines as well as great harmonies while the violin and kalimba add great accompaniments.

On Landing they get into a nice bluesy groove with Haslam playing a great melody with great accompaniment by all, before getting back to a free exchange. Pastorale, which is anything but, begins with a long solo by Haslam on the tarogato, before being joined by the others. Rather than a pastorale, it ended up more like a storm. But then there is a thunderstorm movement in Beethoven's Pastoral symphony. Loveland is the longest track with some excellent playing by Haslam and what sounds like a bass, which provides a great solo and great accompaniment.

Over all this is a very interesting recording. It takes a while to get used to the different instrument combinations, but once that is accomplished, just sit back and listen. I have just two minor criticisms. One is I would like to have heard SIKL in a more forward role and the same goes for the kalimba. Would love to have a heard a good kalimba solo.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

(1) JAMES BRANDON LEWIS QUARTET - MOLECULAR

INTAKT RECORDS CD 350/2020

A LOTUS SPEAKS / OF FIRST IMPORTANCE / HELIX / PER 1 / MOLECULAR / CESAIRE / NEOSHO / PER 2 / BREAKING CODE / AN ANGUISH DEPARTED / LOVERLY. 46:29.

James Brandon Lewis, ts; Aruan Ortiz, p; Brad Jones, b; Chad Taylor, d, mbira. January 13, 2020, Mt. Vernon, NY.

(2) JOHN HOLLENBECK - SONGS YOU LIKE A LOT

FLEX 001

DOWN TO THE RIVER TO PRAY / BLUE / HOW DEEP IS YOUR LOVE? / FIRE AND RAIN / DON'T GIVE UP / KINDNESS / PURE IMAGINATION / KNOWS ONLY GOD (GOD ONLY KNOWS). 63:15.

Hollenbeck, comp, arr, cond; Theo Bleckmann, Kate McGarry, vcl; Gary Versace, p, org; Heinz-Dieter Sauerborn, as, ss, cl, flt; Oliver Leicht, as, ss, cl, flt, pic; Ben Kraef, ts, ss, flt; Steffen Weber, ts, ss, cl, flt, a flt; Rainer Heute, bari s, bs, contra b cl, flt; Frank Wellert, Thomas Vogel, Martin Auer, Axel Schlosser, tpt, flgh; Christian Jaksjo, Felix Fromm, Shannon Barnett, tbn; Manfred Honetschlager, b tbn; Martin Scales, g; Hans Glawischnig, b; Jean Paul Hochstadter, d; Claus Kiesselbach, perc. May 27-28, 2019, Frankfurt, Germany.

James Brandon Lewis's compositions on (1) display his vast imagination, as may be heard from the angular unison lines by the tenor and piano on "A Lotus Speaks," the unusual placement of rhythms on "Per 1" and "Per 2," and the intriguing interaction between the tenor and piano on "Molecular." The program provides contrasts, with deliberative and lyrical pieces "Of First Importance," "Breaking Code," and "Lovely" of stark difference from the uptempo intensity of "Helix." Improvisation is imaginative and largely in the free idiom, strong examples being Lewis's tenor on "Breaking Code," pianist Aruan Ortiz's playing on "An Anguish Departed," and bassist Brad Jones's fine work on "Lovely."

Within composer/arranger John Hollenbeck's eight pieces on (2), rendered well by the Frankfurt Radio Bigband, are indeed recognizable portions of "songs you like a lot," a disparate selection of well known songs from the folk, popular, and showtune categories. But Hollenbeck finds very interesting ways to introduce and musically develop these songs, expanding them to an average length of 8 minutes (range from 6 to close to 11 minutes). Rich band backgrounds often with staggered entrances, rhythmic patterns of varying complexity and meters, and use of both isolated sections of the band as well as the full ensemble, are among the many aspects of Hollenbeck's writing that lend an overall impressionistic reading of these songs, including one Hollenbeck original, "Kindness." Vocalists Kate McGarry and Theo Bleckmann, who both perform in sterling fashion, are selectively and inventively integrated into the music, as are several outstanding soloists from both the rhythm section and the horns. Pianist Gary Versace is especially impressive on "Pure Imagination," a nearly 11-minute work whose title aptly characterizes the creative writing of Hollenbeck throughout this excellent album.

Don Lerman

New Issues

(1) IRA B. LISS BIG BAND JAZZ MACHINE MAZEL TOV KOCKTAIL!

TALL MAN PRODUCTIONS

GIMME THAT / HIGH WIRE / KEYS TO THE CITY / LOVE YOU MADLY / BASS: THE FINAL FRONTIER / YOU'D BETTER LOVE ME WHILE YOU MAY / MAZEL TOV KOCKTAIL / I WISH YOU LOVE / SPRINGTIME / JOY SPRING / WEST WINGS / WHERE OR WHEN. 63:39.

Liss, ldr; Tyler Richardson, as, ss; Nicholas Hoo, as (1, 11, 12); Malcolm Jones, as (2-10); Greg Armstrong, ts, flt; David Castel de Oro, ts (2-10); Josh Smitley, ts (1, 11, 12); April Leslie, bari s, cl; Randy Aviles, Mark Nicholson, Jeff Beck, Jack Houghton, tpt; Gary Bucher, Carly Ines, David Barnard, Tim Hall, tbn; Steve Sibley, p; Lance Jeppesen, b (except 5); Charlie "Stix" McGhee, d; Melanie Medina, g (2-10); Robert Cartwright, g (1, 11, 12); Noah Ines, perc (9); Matt Dibiase, vib (9, 11, 12); Janet Hammer, vcl (6, 8, 12); Carly Ines, vcl (2, 4, 10); Nathan East, b (5); Andrew Neu, t (1); Dan Radlauer, acc (7); Mike Vax, tpt (1). No specific date, San Diego, CA.

(2) WAYNE ALPERN DORIAN WIND QUINTET

JUKEBOX

ACCUSTOMED TO HER FACE / ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE / BARTOK CHORALE / BEAUTY AND THE BEAST / BLUE MOON / BORODIN ON BROADWAY / DO-RE-MI / DON'T STOP BELIEVIN' / DOWNTOWN ABBEY / HANDEL ALLEGRO / HAVE YOU MET MISS JONES / IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD / NUTCRACKER SUITE / ORNITHOLOGY / OVER THE RAINBOW / PENNY LANE / SEND IN THE CLOWNS / SURREY WITH THE FRINGE / WONDERFUL GUY / YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND. 58:30.

Gretchen Pusch, flt; Gerard Reuter, ob; Benjamin Finland, cl; Karl Kramer-Johansen, Fr hn; Adrian Morejon, bsn. No date, New York, NY.

Ira B. Liss's Big Band Jazz Machine displays its strong ensemble work on music in the swing, standard, jazz/rock, and other interesting categories in this 12-selection program of just over an hour. Liss formed his big band in 1979 in Escondido, California, and (1) represents its sixth full length album. Altogether 28 musicians performed on this recording, with a core instrumentation in the big band of 19 (13 horns, 4 rhythm, and two rotating vocalists) plus several guest artists. The compositions or arrangements, many or most newly-minted, come from band members or associates Andrew Neu and Dan Radlauer as well as outstanding writers Drew Zaremba, Alan Baylock, Peter Herbolzheimer, Scott Arcangel, and George Stone. The band's two vocalists, Janet Hammer and Carly Ines, participate on six selections (three each). Hammer is well featured on Herbolzheimer's fine chart on "I Wish You Love," and on two other standards, while Ines is impressive in interpreting both melodies and ensemble passages in charts by Zaremba of Chick Corea's "High Wire" and by Arcangel of Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring." The title cut, "Mazel Tov Kocktail," is an exciting middle-eastern/swing hybrid penned by Dan Radlauer, featuring fine solos by April Leslie on clarinet and by Radlauer on accordion. Also notable solo-wise is Greg Armstrong, on flute on "Keys to the City" and on tenor on "Springtime." What may be the highlight of the set

New Issues

is the band's fine performance of George Stone's excellent chart "West Wings," whose harmonic core is seemingly based on Benny Carter/Sammy Cahn's 1964 "Only Trust Your Heart." This CD, representing the 40th anniversary of the band, is a fine tribute to Liss and to the musicians who have performed in his big band through the years. Wayne Alpern's well-crafted and creative arrangements of light classical and popular music are performed flawlessly by the Dorian Wind Quintet on (2). In Alpern's hands, none of the five instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, french horn, and bassoon) is relegated to any one musical role in this large repertoire of classics (such as "Handel Allegro" and "Bartok Chorale"), standard tunes ("All the Things," "Blue Moon"), show tunes ("Accustomed to Her Face," "Surrey with the Fringe"), and popular fare ("Don't Stop Believin'," "Penny Lane"). Alpern comes up with fine melodies and interesting rhythmic movement in the introductions, transitions, and endings of these arrangements. There is also some presence of finger-snapping swing and/or jazz in Alpern's treatments of "Ornithology" and "Send in The Clowns," with a solo flight from oboist Gerard Reuter leading the way.

Don Lerman

REGGIE QUINERLY, NEW YORK NOWHERE, REDEFINITION RECORDS NO#.

REFLECTIONS ON THE HUDSON / DREAMING IN PLACE / SOMEWHERE IN HOUSTON / NEW YORK NIGHTS / CELSO / WINE COOLER HEADS PREVAIL / NEW YORK NIGHTS (REVISITED) Total Time: 32:57.

Quinerly, d; Antoine Drye, tpt; John Ellis, ts; John Chin, p; Sean Conly, b. 9/2020. Brooklyn, NY.

This is something of a rarity; an album led by a drummer without a single drum solo to be heard. The closet thing to that expected feature are the rim-shot patterns that introduce the second version of "New York Nights". The other unique aspect of this work is the quintet opted to record with all in the same room (like the good old days) without the separation of baffles or headphones. For the fourth recording under his leadership the respected drum-master has returned to the standard two horns and rhythm format of yore to essay an all original six numbers with a re visitation of the above mentioned title making a total of seven. Longtime affiliates Chin and Drye are joined by the under sung John Ellis and Chin friend Conly on the upright. The program is also enhanced by the thoughtful arrangements of Quinerly comrade Willie Applewhite for three charts. The cleverly-named "Wine Cooler Heads Prevail" is out of the hard bop bag, the opening tune a musical portrait of the Big Apple and "Dreaming In Place" is an almost dirge paced dedication to a pair of pals. Nothing out-of-the-ordinary here just a solid, enjoyable slice of contemporary jazz without gimmicks or ornamentation. Give it a spin.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

NATE WOOLEY SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN VI PYROCLASTIC RECORDS 11

SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN VI 45:01

Nate Wooley, tpt , amplifier; Samara Lubelski, C. Spencer yeh, vlms; Chris Corsano, Ben Hall, Ryan Sawyer, d; Susan Alcorn Pedal steel g; Julien Desprez, Ava Mendoza, Elec g; Isabelle O'Connell, Emily Manzo, kybd; Yoon Sun Choi, Melissa Hughes, Megan Schubert, vcl; Nov 29, 2019 Mt Vernon, NY

This piece, of mixed pre recorded tapes and live musicians was inspired by Thomas Merton's Seven Storey Mountain and the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, along with Reclaim the Night by Peggy Seeger, which is incorporated in the final sections of the piece. Wooley's desire here is to get us feel something in the music.

Included is a partial score which shows what sounds are being produced and by whom. This is very interesting to follow.

Musically this could be classified as a form of minimalism, as things develop slowly. There is much repetition on the bottom with slow developments on top. One can feel tension developing through this process. There some very interesting points which grabbed my ears, but in other spots I could focus elsewhere.

On a personal note my relationship with minimalism is mixed. I am not a great fan of listening to minimalism, but I find as a performer and composer I use it quite a bit. I certainly understand the perspective from the composer's standpoint.

Over all, this piece works in terms of what Wooley set out to do. He starts quietly and builds up to about the 35 minute mark when it quiets down again. The voices come in at that point singing Reclaim the Night by Peggy Seeger. The voices here are not all that distinct, but by having the works in front of me, included in the booklet, I was able to follow. The words are powerful.

A piece like this is clearly not for everyone, but for fans of minimalism, for fans of using electronic sounds with acoustic instruments and for fans of Peggy Seeger, there is a lot to appreciate here.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

RAPHAEL PANNIER QUARTET, FAUNA

FRENCH PARADOX 004

LONELY WOMAN/ MIDTOWN BLUES/ LULLABY/ MESSIAN: LE BAISER DE L'ENFANT JESUS/
INTRO TO ESP/ ESP/ OUTRO TO ESP/ RAVEL FORLANE/ FAUNA/ CAPRICCIO DE RAPHAEL/
MONKEY PUZZLE TREE/ FINAL DRUM SOLO 65:14

Raphael Pannier, d; Miguel Zenon, as; Aaron Goldberg, p; Francois Moutin, bass; Giorgi Mikadze p on Messian, Ravel and Monkey 21 August 2020, France

I really am anticipating this CD, from Ornette Coleman to Messian and Ravel with a drummer as leader and composer.

Lonely Woman starts off slowly, highlighting loneliness but then jumps up-tempo and cooks with a nice drum solo and comes back down with a lovely bass solo and back to the melody. Ornette would be proud. And Pannier's treatment of ESP is marvelous. His Intro and Outro really enhance Shorter's piece.

I have always liked the idea of improvising on classical pieces. After all, most classical composers were great improvisers. The classical pieces are beautifully done. The melodies are played as written and the improvisations stay true to the feel of the pieces. The quartet really works well together, everyone supporting everyone, propelled by Pannier's drums. As a drummer I am very critical of other drummers. Here I have found a drummer I can praise. His accompaniments are always appropriate and the last track is a solo framed by the quartet is very nicely done. And he gets an incredible sound out of his big tom tom.

Over all this is a really great recording. It stays in my collection and I look forward to more of this group

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

THE JAZZ WORMS, SQUIRMIN'

CAPRI-74154.

LAUNCHING PAD / BU'S BOX / JOAQUIN / LICKITY-SPLIT / WHEATY BOWL / WHAT IF ALL? / BALLADESQUE / THE CHIMENTO FILES.

Keith Oxman, ts; Ron Miles, cnt; Andy Weyl, p; Mark Simon, b; Paul Romaine, d. 11/19&20/2017. Denver, CO.

To be honest upfront the cover graphics gave me the entirely wrong impression of this group at first glance. After forcing me to recall the childhood poem about Ooey Gooley the worm then wondering if this was just another fivesome of wanna-be's trying to attract the former punk rock crowd I reluctantly gave the disc a spin and boy, was I surprised. Upon closer inspection of the cover photo and a small amount of research it was determined these five individuals have quite a story to tell. Far be it from me to be a spoiler but the plot lies in fact that these principals felt such a sense of respect for each other and love of their music that it resulted in this recorded reunion some three decades after their first release (long out of print). Perhaps the most recognizable member of the band is Keith Oxman, a tenor saxophonist well-respected in the Denver area whose last issue made my top ten 2020 NPR Jazz Critics Poll. The other four (whose last initials make up the acronym of the combo) are all established vets whose credentials make up impressive resumes. The all-original setlist contains two compositions each from the four original members; pianist Weyl's self-describing "Lickity Split" and sweet chart (Balladesque), upright bassist Mark Simon contributed the skippy "What If All?" and appropriately titled "Launching Pad" with its involved horn lines, "Joaquin" & happy walker "The Chimento Files" spring from the pen of Oxman and drummer Paul Romaine furnished "Wheaty Bowl" and "Bu's Box".

Both are named for his two pet birds, the former laced with Parker snippets while the latter holds some percussive sounds from the fowls cardboard cage. Supplementing Oxman's squiggly reedwork is cornetist Ron Miles, the most recent addition to the unit whose Blue Note release of last year garnered deserved kudos. As an ardent admirer of Nat Adderley it's highly gratifying to hear that wonderful small brass sound persevering. Get this one.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

PETER BERNSTEIN: WHAT COMES NEXT SMOKE SESSIONS RECORDS

Simple As That / What Comes Next / Empty Streets / Harbor No Illusions / Dance In Your Blood / We'll Be Together Again / Con Alma / Blood Wolf Moon Blues / Newark News 58:55
Bernstein, g ; Sullivan Fortner, p ; Peter Washington, bass; Joe Farnsworth, d 6/20 New York, NY

When I first heard Peter Bernstein I wondered why Sonny Rollins, Dr. Lonnie Smith and so many Jazz greats have used him on guitar. After listening further, I began to understand why. I thought of some of the great Jazz lyrical players, like Jim Hall and Bill Evans and what set them apart from other musicians. The answer for me was that they had just the right combination of intellect and emotion. They knew how to build a solo and phrase a melody so that the end result was music with both passion and genius. When I listen to Peter Bernstein I hear a guitarist that possesses those same qualities. He can put it all together in a way that creates an intoxicating tension to the point where you can't wait to hear what the next note will be. When he plays melodies or solos, the notes sound alive to the point where you can almost feel them breathing. He does all this with a clean sounding archtop and no effects. Peter has a unique recognizable sound setting him apart from all other guitarists

Peter's latest release "What Comes Next" is the perfect vehicle to showcase his abilities as a guitarist and composer. With only the best bandmates at his side, Peter takes us on a classic jazz ride through six powerful originals and some not so common standards. "Simple As That" is a medium tempo minor key gem that's deep and pensive. The melody so perfectly executed in all it's melancholy splendor that it really does sound as simple as that. Peter's solo takes flight into swing heaven, bobbing and weaving with a rhythm section that's locked into his every phrase. Sullivan Fortner's up next with a spectacular solo that's spacious and soulful. An amazing dialogue is created between his left and right hands that adds even more dimension to his playing. I look forward to hearing whatever Sullivan does next. "Empty Streets" is a dreamlike ballad that's exquisitely written and orchestrated amongst the players. Capturing the feeling of what New Yorkers have endured in the city that never sleeps. Again Peter's melody statement captivates the listener with its depth and commitment to the essence of the composition. Throughout "What Comes Next" all players are in top form. Joe Farnsworth and Peter Washington elevate the recording to excellence with their outstanding playing and commitment to the music. The sound quality throughout the recording is exquisite.

Over the years Peter Bernstein has stayed true to the great Jazz guitar tradition by absorbing everything that has come before him. His time to advance that tradition is now and if you listen carefully you will hear that's exactly what he's doing. Using the power of melody and lyrical playing Peter is guiding the listener to new levels of dissonance and what is harmonically acceptable. I look forward to What Comes Next.

Frank Kohl

Remembering: Senator Eugene J Wright

The recent sad news of the passing of bassist Eugene Wright, the last surviving member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet has touched off many memories shared, going all the way back to a much slower-paced, but jazz inclined New Zealand in early 1960. I met the members of the Quartet when they visited on a State sponsored tour at a cocktail party given in Wellington, during which time my husband and I got to know Eugene, and he talked about coming back to Wellington to record an LP with New Zealanders, pianist Lew Campbell, drummer Don Branch and my other half tenorist Laurie Lewis. Of course this seemed at that time like a pipe dream, nice to contemplate but unlikely to occur. So when the Quartet revisited in April 1962 it was quite a shock, to say the least, when Eugene handed Laurie some charts, asked me if he could stay over at our house for a few days, and a recording was arranged. The recording has spoken for itself elsewhere, but the stay over was something quite wonderful that demonstrates the huge heart of this blues, ear, Chicago bass man. At that time we had two young children, one of whom was attending Lyall Bay Primary School, our local school. Eugene suggested that he should attend that school and one day took himself down to knock on the classroom door, opened by a very flabbergasted young teacher – who Gene told me – “went red from right down here” – as he explained to her that his name was Eugene Wright, he was visiting from Chicago, he played the bass and he had come to “take class”. He then proceeded to tell a wide-eyed class of 5 year olds about the vicissitudes of life – drew his bass on the blackboard and left asking them all to “vote for me for President.” Later that day our son came home with a sack of letters – every kid in the class had written to thank him for the visit. Gene said those letters were to go into his safety deposit box once he returned home.

At that time in New Zealand visiting US artists although known on record, thanks to the untiring efforts of Arthur Pearce (long running radio man who educated a very wide audience with his Friday night jazz programs) were a rarity. And a large, vocal black man was, fairly unusual. After hearing a few guarded phone conversations with my mother and myself Gene cottoned on to the fact that his staying with us didn't quite sit so easily with her, remember this was 1962. He suggested I should invite her in for afternoon tea which I hesitatingly did. It took all of about 30 seconds for her to change her mind completely – and what a lesson that was to me. Get people to actually meet and talk and all their ingrained preconceived notions disappear. They got on like a house on fire. One thing Eugene did do was enjoy his food. I recall one occasion I made a pavlova – for those of you unfortunate enough to be uninitiated to the pavlovian delight it is a large meringue based pie covered with whipped cream and fruits of the season. Eugene looked at it on the table and said unfortunately he was unable to partake of it at that particular time as he had given up all sweet things for Lent. Then he tasted a tiny bit on a finger and that commitment flew right out the window. He picked up a fork and demolished the entire pie. Very impressive, a pie baked to serve eight...

There are so many recollections over the years from when we met up again in Sydney and in the USA and each time shared music, laughter and friendship. Apart from his acknowledged contribution to music Eugene made a huge contribution to friendship and this little tribute is simply to say “thanks for the memories.....you will definitely be remembered”.

Alwyn Lewis

Obituaries



Chick Corea

BABA DAVID COLEMAN died on Feb. 27, 2021. He was 72.

BURT WILSON, trombone, died on Jan. 6th, 2021 He was 87.

CHICK COREA, piano, died on Feb. 9, 2021. He was 79.



Claude Bolling

CHRIS BARBER DIEHE, traditional jazz proponent, died on March 2, 2021. He was 90.

CLAUDE BOLLING, pianist, composer and bandleader, died on Dec. 20, 2020. He was 90.

DAVID ANTHONY RICE, guitarist, died on Dec. 25, 2020. He was 69.

DEBBIE DUNCAN singer, died on Dec. 18th, 2020. She was 69.



Diane Moser

DIANE MOSER, pianist, died on Dec. 3rd, 2020 She was 63.

EUGENE WRIGHT, bassist, died on Dec. 30th, 2020 He was 97.

ED XIQUES, sax, flute, died on Dec. 4th, 2020. He was 81.



Frank Kimbrough

FRANK KIMBROUGH, pianist, died on Dec. 30th, 2020 He was 64.

GARY LEIB, Musician and Illustrator, died on March 22, 2021. He was 65.

GINO MORATTI, artistic director of Jazz at Kitano, in New York, died on Jan. 18th. He was 84.

GÖSTA LINDERHOLM, vocalist/clarinetist, died on Dec. 29th. He was 79.



Gino Morrittiti

JANET LAWSON, singer, died on Jan. 22nd 2021. She was 80.

JEREMY LUBBOCK, pianist, died on Jan. 29th, 2021 He was 89.

JOHN RUSSELL, guitarist, died on Jan. 18th, 2021 He was 66.

JUNIOR MANCE, pianist, died on Jan. 17th, 2021 He was 92.



Junior Mance

JULIAN LEE, pianist, died on Dec. 3rd, 2020 He was 97.

KEITH NICHOLS, pianist, died on Jan. 20th, 2021 He was 75.

MILFORD GRAVES, drums, died on Feb. 12, 2021. He was 79.



Milford Graves

RON MATHEWSON, bassist, died on Dec. 3rd, 2020 He was 75.

SAMMY NESTICO, composer/arranger, died on Jan. 17th. 2021. He was 96.

VICTOR CUICA, sax, flute, actor, died on Dec. 26th, 2020. He was 71.

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."

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Short Takes: Hobart, Tasmania

SHORT TAKES: TASMANIA

by Alwyn Lewis

As southern Tasmania once again starts to feel the initial bite of Autumn, people are beginning to drop the lethargic grip that fear of Covid has given them, leaving their homes to start the healing process by once again enjoying the lift of live music. For some months people turned into mini Escofiers, turning to the kitchen stoves to fill the blank isolation imposed – a little concerned about making the first move out again, but music has its own pull and is drawing audiences back, much to the relief of musicians who never lose the need to perform.

The year kicked off on January 16 with Clarence Arts presenting their Summer Series at The Barn, Rosny Farm with Melbourne guitarist James Sherlock, Ben Brinkhoff, Nadira Farid vocals.....Once again the Clarence Jazz Festival drew large crowds to their outdoor Big Day at Kangaroo Bay and followed this over the weekend of Feb 29 by presenting several groups including master classes by Billy Whitton, Konrad Park, Dan Sulzberger and Spike Mason's Improvisation Masterclass.....Jazzamanca's Summer Concerts presented ex Woody Herman trumpet man John Hoffman with Kindred Spirits, Danny Healy sax, Kelly Ottaway pno, Hamish Houston bass, Ted Vining drums and February 27 had Randal Muir, Hammond, Aaron Entraz gtr, Tom Robb drums, while their Autumn Season kicked off March 27 with The Ted Vining Trio, Vining drs, Bob Sedergreen pno, Gareth Hill bass and guest artist Alistair Dobson sax, slated for May 29 they have the Hobart Jazz Quartet, Kelly Ottaway vibes, Matt Boden pno, Nick Haywood bass, Ted Vining drums.....February saw reed man Danny Healy begin an innovative series of performances in his home demonstrating the versatility of the bass clarinet to a restricted but appreciative audience of ten.....March the Matt Ives Big Band at Wrest Point Casino presented Night and Day hosted by Christopher Waterhouse with vocalist Zoe Fitzherbert.....March 11 at the other end of the island the Viktor Zappner Swingtet with singer Yoly Tores at the Burnie Townhouse, while International Jazz Day at the Burnie Arts and Function Centre featured singer Mia Palencia with Viktor Zappner pno, Alistair Dobson sax, Nick Hart gtr, Hamiosh Houston bass and Steve Hill drums/vocal.

Alwyn Lewis
Hobart

Yōsuke Yamashita - Burning Man

By Ken Weiss

Yōsuke Yamashita [b. February 26, 1942, Tokyo, Japan] was the first Free Jazz pianist in Japan who was recognized in Europe. The following introduction was constructed by Pheeroan akLaff, Yamashita's longstanding drummer, who told spoke with me by phone. "Yosuke has represented many stories of strength. Very much like his name – Shita - which means below or lower, and Yama - which means mountain. He is the base of a mountain. He was the inspiration for Japan's counter-culture artistic revolution in music. He is a respected author, employing wit, humor and irony, without sarcasm. He's perhaps better known in Japan for his writing than his playing. He's a major intellectual. He's friends with some of the biggest intellectual writers. He employs a practical spiritualism that has moved, and in some cases, influenced shrine priests. He knows the importance of acupuncture. He has maintained an American band for 30 years (Cecil McBee and me) while delving into collaborations with Korean traditional musicians, European orchestra musicians, visual artists and craftsmen. He has a great manager and helps many young musicians. Though he is often compared with Cecil Taylor, especially since his most popular trio in 1969 replicated CT's with alto and drums, my opinion is that he organically comes from Earl Hines, and messages with the percussiveness and range of Phineas Newborn Jr. His iconoclastic compositional approach is influenced by folk music- especially drumming ensembles- more than by his philosophical mentor Taylor. No one in America compares to him. He's on TV commercials, he composes movie scores, he's an actor. He's considered to be a national treasure. He's a heavy dude on the planet." This interview took place with the help of interpreter Mr. Hiroaki Muramatsu via email between August 2020 through February 2021.

Cadence: Your presence and importance in Asian cannot be overstated. The Japanese government awarded you it's Medal of Honor for excellence, and you are a household name in Japan. How do you feel you are received in America?

Yōsuke Yamashita: In 1979, I appeared at the Newport Jazz Festival in New York with my Japanese trio. In 1988, I formed the New York Trio with Pheeroan akLaff and Cecil McBee. We performed at New York City's Sweet Basil club every year, making albums and touring the States, as well as Japan. In 1994, I played a solo piano performance at Carnegie Hall for the anniversary concert of Verve Records. I am very much satisfied with the reception in America.

Cadence: Your rise to celebrity status in Japan is stunning, considering that you made your name as a pioneer of Japan's Free Jazz movement in the early '60s. You took a great risk in choosing to play that shocking music. Japan is generally known for valuing group harmony and unity over individuality. There's the Japanese proverb – the nail

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that sticks out gets hammered down. Talk about taking that risk and why your music was accepted even though it was different.

Yamashita: In 1969, I started to play Free Jazz. In those days, the student's movement had influential power and I got their sympathy. Before that, for a year and half, I couldn't play because of a disease. When I came back to the scene, I decided not to play as before. Although I already knew Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor's playing, at that moment I felt sympathy with their music for the first time. I decided to play this free music even though I couldn't get approval from anyone else. One of the reasons I was accepted by the people was due to a TV program directed by Mr. Soichiro Tahara. He had our trio perform in the locked-out campus of Waseda University and the program was on the air nationwide. I think it made my name popular.

Cadence: How did the 1950's Gutai art movement in Japan influence you?

Yamashita: I learned the thought that, "You can do anything you want, if it is artistic expression."

Cadence: During the early phase of your career, you needed to come to terms with how you, as a Japanese man, could participate in the history of Jazz. Why was that culturally so difficult for you?

Yamashita: It was true that the concept of "Free Jazz" was rare in Japanese Jazz history, but I was lucky because I reconfirmed the *raison d'être* of Jazz. That is, you can do anything you want, and I was able to perform with a firm belief.

Cadence: Pheeroan akLaff, the American drummer in your New York trio, spoke with me regarding this question of a Japanese artist's capability to play "real" Jazz back in the '80s, when that trio formed. During the trio's first few tours of Japan, he was frequently asked by audience members if you were really a Jazz player. They asked if you were really playing authentic Jazz. He was surprised by their insecurity concerning whether one of their own people could actually play the music of another country at a high level.

Yamashita: Jazz music is a frank expression by the artist. It is not infected by the nationality or audience. Jazz is MY music! I don't think it is the foreign music.

Cadence: Would you talk about the Japaneseness of your music? What do you identify as Japanese? Has that changed? Has it become more or less, or not at all important?

Yamashita: In Europe, I was frequently compared with Cecil Taylor, but Cecil didn't express the musical structure clearly in his playing. On the other hand, although I also play freely from chords, harmony, or rhythm, just like Cecil, I am always conscious about the tune's structure - that is theme, development, coda, etc., and I try to play accordingly. My trio always plays the theme in unison and then, after each musician's free improvisation, comes back to the theme in unison. This feeling might be my "Japaneseness."

Cadence: At what point did you feel comfortable incorporating

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Japanese elements into your work – Japanese melodies and folk songs?

Yamashita: I like the feeling that Japanese melodies are developed improvisationally by Jazz. I think the answer would be with the recording of Sakura [1990, Antilles] with my New York Trio. In this recording I picked many Japanese melodies and used them as material for improvisation. Of course, Cecil McBee and Pheeroan akLaff are not Japanese, but I definitely like their way of approaching Japanese melodies, and this is what I wanted to express in that recording.

Cadence: Part of the incorporation of your heritage into your work came by way of studying taiko drumming. How did this influence you creatively?

Yamashita: I was very much influenced by Japanese taiko drumming. I feel I can confirm my identity by just hitting keyboards with my elbow in my performance.

Cadence: Japan's exposure to Jazz at the end of World War II in 1945 was limited. Jazz had been banned during the war as hostile music.

How and why did American Jazz music become so popular, so quickly in Japan? Was there not a backlash against America for the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

Yamashita: Before the World War II, Jazz was imported to Japan, and there were many fans. After the war, it was liberalized all at once. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were events of the war, and we thought it had nothing to do with Jazz.

Cadence: What are your thoughts on why Jazz seemingly has a more passionate following in Japan than it does in America?

Yamashita: Generally, Japanese people like foreign cultures, and Jazz is also the case. Improvisation might fit the Japanese temperament.

Cadence: Would you briefly talk about your early childhood, your family, and your family's involvement with music?

Yamashita: My mother was a piano teacher, and there was a piano in my house. I was able to play the piano by ear, without any regular lessons. Then I encountered Jazz.

Cadence: You took violin lessons from the age of 9 – 15 but were never enthusiastic about that instrument. You were drawn to tinkering on the family piano. Why take violin lessons for so many years if you enjoyed piano so much more?

Yamashita: I couldn't play the violin without sheet music, although I played the piano freely. I was interested in the contrast and might think that I could learn the basics of the Classical music through violin lessons. Taking violin lessons was not a pain for me, it was a pleasure to enlarge my repertoire.

Cadence: Did you take any formal piano lessons prior to college training?

Yamashita: I took piano lessons for two years for the entrance exam. I passed the exam playing Beethoven's piano Sonata No. 6.

Cadence: Your older brother recruited you to play piano in a New Orleans style Jazz band in 1956. Was that the type of Jazz you were attracted to?

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Yamashita: I had no options. I met the New Orleans style first, so I was attracted to it. Then I began to know “modern Jazz,” and moved to it.

Cadence: *After working as a jazz pianist for two years, you began your studies at Kunitachi College of Music [1962-67] as a Classical composition major although you could not read music. What were your future plans?*

Yamashita: I aimed to study as a Classical composition major, working as professional Jazz pianist. I thought seriously that to be a Jazz musician as a lifetime job, I needed to study the Classical music. I learned reading music by piano lessons and harmony theories by composition lessons. I am sure both were useful for my career.

Cadence: *Although 1969 is considered to be the official birthdate of Free Jazz in Japan, the movement began in 1962 with the establishment of the Friday Jazz Corner sessions at the Ginparis club run by a collective of musicians. Talk about that scene where wanting to shock listeners was a goal.*

Yamashita: Our leader, Hideto Kanai, once directed to a guitar player to, “Play the ballad with out-of-tempered guitar,” and on another day a bass player screamed, “This is Jazz!,” after throwing a glass to the floor. It was the time when John Cage came to Japan for the first time. We were all interested in his activity.

Cadence: *You were in an experimental band led by Hideto Kanai, along with Terumasa Hino. What unusual things were you and your bandmates working on?*

Yamashita: I myself aimed to perform originally, not imitating anyone else.

Cadence: *How did you become interested in experimental Jazz?*

Yamashita: I heard the records of Free Jazz players like Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor. At first, I couldn’t understand their music, but finally I came to understand them, and I thought I would like to play Free Jazz.

Cadence: *Sadao Watanabe selected you for his first session band upon returning to Japan from America in 1965. He was intent on instructing young musicians. Talk about the importance of that opportunity.*

Yamashita: I was very proud when Watanabe-san invited me. At that time, I was interested in newer ways of playing Jazz, but I studied orthodox methods again with his band.

Cadence: *After working with Watanabe, you formed a trio that played like late Coltrane, but you developed a lung inflammation disorder that sidelined you for 18 months. During that time off, you had a spiritual awakening. What happened?*

Yamashita: When I came back in 1969, I thought that with my old way I couldn’t express my passion and intention anymore. So, I again took notice of the way that I could do anything I wanted without any restrictions.

Cadence: *Once your health returned in 1969, you put together a quartet but before the first rehearsal, the bass player left to work for*

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a record company, so you were down to a trio with Seiichi Nakamura (sax) and Takeo Moriyama (drums). How did that trio move from playing structured music to suddenly playing free one day?

Yamashita: I wanted to play something new, so I proposed we try to play very free to them. We felt there were positive possibilities after the rehearsal.

Cadence: The Yōsuke Yamashita Trio gained instant notoriety when it debuted at Tokyo's Pit Inn in 1969. What was that first public appearance like?

Yamashita: People who knew my previous style were surprised. They said, "Yosuke, what are you doing?" But gradually, my new style came to be accepted, and I was relieved by that.

Cadence: What was your thought process then? You were playing harder and freer than anyone else on the Japanese scene?

Yamashita: Yes, I was. I thought I should keep doing what I wanted.

Cadence: Talk about building an audience for your music. How were you able to play the prominent Japanese venues, such as the Pit Inn, and not the small spaces that the other Free Jazz bands were playing in?

Yamashita: Because the Pit Inn was the venue where I performed before. I kept appearances there, wishing [the audience would give me a chance. I thought], 'Please listen to my music although I've changed.'

Cadence: You were playing a very aggressive style of Free Jazz, a genre that originated in America as a form of African American freedom music, a cry for justice. Where did you draw your rebellious cry from?

Yamashita: Like paintings or literature, Free Jazz is one of the contemporary art forms that everyone can join. My cry must be my wish to know the limit of my expression.

Cadence: You were often compared in the press to Cecil Taylor. Your bassless trio was configured the same as his trio and you played a very percussive piano style, which included elbow strikes to the keys. How do you respond to the criticism that you were imitating Taylor?

Yamashita: I think Cecil didn't aim to play structurally. On the other hand, I keep musical structures such as "theme," "development," and "recapitulation." I aim to play maximum free improvisation within these structural restrictions.

Cadence: One of your most famous performances came in 1969 when you played in the middle of a student activist barricade inside Tokyo's Waseda University. What was that day like?

Yamashita: The producer expected that the student activists would crush our performance, but what happened was that all the students came to listen to our music. It was like proof that war doesn't happen where music is possible.

Cadence: It's a bit ironic that you were playing American-based music for the student activists who were rebelling over America's military involvement with Japan.

Yamashita: I believe what I am doing is participating in the "contemporary art." Whatever its origin is, it is my style to throw

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myself into with all my heart and soul.

Cadence: *Another memorable performance came in 1973 when a Japanese graphic designer featured you playing a burning piano in a short film [Burning Piano]. What was your initial response to his idea of playing a piano lit on fire and how was it to play a piano in that setting?*

Yamashita: I was very much interested when I heard the proposal. I never thought to decline and did it with pleasure. As I expected, it was totally a new experience. Occasionally, fire blew to me but even that was interesting.

Cadence: *You repeated the feat of playing a burning piano 35 years later in 2008 through an arrangement with the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art. How did the second experience compare to the first?*

Yamashita: Since I knew well what would happen, I had enough composure to consider the audience. It was also fun that the organizer provided me a firefighter's suit. That didn't happen at the first time.

Cadence: *Did you ever worry that playing the burning piano might be seen as gimmicky?*

Yamashita: As it was a very much interesting project, I did it purely for my, and the planner's curiosity. It was filmed and made public later, which drew public attention. I didn't expect [all the publicity] in the beginning.

Cadence: *The Yōsuke Yamashita Trio changed saxophonists in 1972 when Seiichi Nakamura left and Akira Sakata, a more ecstatic player, replaced him. How did the music change with the new trio formation?*

Yamashita: Having Akira Sakata as the saxophone player, our music became faster and more aggressive. Seiichi Nakamura played standards also, but Akira played Free music only, by the way.

Cadence: *The trio began touring widely and debuted in Europe in 1974 where the press labeled your music as "Kamikaze Jazz." How did that terminology sit with you?*

Yamashita: I received the word with very much pleasure because I felt the word expressed what we were doing correctly.

Cadence: *At the 1975 Berlin Jazz Festival, you played on the same bill as Sonny Rollins and Herbie Hancock, but the festival organizer declared your trio to be the festival's highlight. What was that time like for you? Playing hard and free, playing whatever you wanted to play, meeting the leading American artists, and gaining acceptance across Europe?*

Yamashita: All the wonderful things came true. Interestingly, many musicians came to watch our performance. I was very happy and that convinced me that what we had been doing was not wrong.

Cadence: *Your debut performance in America came at the 1979 Newport Jazz Festival in New York. How was it to perform for the first time before an American audience and its music critics?*

Yamashita: I was very much anxious about how we would be received because Jazz was born in America. But there was no way to change our style, so we played Free Jazz as we had started in Japan.

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Cadence: *Do you still feel added pressure when playing in America?*

Yamashita: I don't feel such pressure anymore. Jazz is the music where one can express his or her personal thoughts and emotions. If you can do that, there is no difference where you are playing.

Cadence: *The Yōsuke Yamashita Trio was very successful for you. Why did the trio disband in 1983?*

Yamashita: Many successful groups must disband someday. We might have the same reason. We had a long history, understood each other, and could play our music without any difficulty. Nevertheless, I think, at some point, everybody wants to break such desirable circumstances and to see a brand-new world.

Cadence: *Your American experience expanded in 1985. Not only did you make your first appearance at New York City's Sweet Basil club, as part of the Village Jazz Festival, but you took it upon yourself to explore the country's historic Jazz hotspots – touring New York City, New Orleans, Chicago, Kansas City and St. Louis. What was your thought process in experiencing those American cities and what did you gain from that?*

Yamashita: In 1985 I toured the States alone, tracing Jazz history from city to city. I made relationships with local Jazz people and sat in with Jazz bands. All the people I met there loved the music they played and expressed their own opinions clearly. I thought about that and began to follow such an attitude.

Cadence: *How did you come to form your New York Trio with bassist Cecil McBee and Pheeroan akLaff in 1988? How did you decide on the band members, and how has the trio managed to persist for over 32 years?*

Yamashita: I got a good review in the New York Times of my solo piano performance at Sweet Basil in 1985. One of the owners, Horst Liepolt said, "I'll give you the next chance." It came in 1988 when Gil Evans passed away, and I got two Monday nights in July. I had other possibilities to perform either on solo piano or with Japanese musicians, but I decided to form a trio with New York musicians. Richie Okon, who was the coordinator of my 1985 US tour, recommended Cecil and Pheeroan to me. Fortunately, both of them knew of me through tours in Europe and they agreed to participate. At the first rehearsal we could understand each other. At the beginning I tried to play "normally," then gradually added "free" style and elbow smashes, but they understood my music. At the first show at Sweet Basil, we were very much welcomed by the audience and smiled at each other in the dressing room. Since then we became like a family. Actually, we've visited each other's home. We got good reactions to our performances everywhere in Japan and in Europe. We made good conversations and often joked. I guess they were interested in new experiences in Japan and enjoyed them. Thus, we've kept our friendship, like family members, for more than 30 years.

Cadence: *You've said in a previous interview that your New York*

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Trio mates, “Let me know when my playing becomes too simple or ridiculous.” Would you talk further about that?

Yamashita: Ever since we became intimate, I asked them to tell me any opinions they had about my playing, and to do so without hesitation. But actually, the case never happened [where they had to “correct” me].

Cadence: Over time you expanded to a quartet with the addition of noted saxophone players Joe Lovano, Tim Berne and Ravi Coltrane. Talk about their addition and how you came to pick them?

Yamashita: When we became able to play anything skillfully as a piano trio, I felt we were ready to accept horn players. Joe and Ravi came to see our show at Sweet Basil. Tim Berne was recommended by a Japanese record producer, Hiroshi Itsuno.

Cadence: You made it a point to come back to New York City every May to perform with your New York Trio at Sweet Basil, until it closed, and to record an album. Why has it been so important for you to make that annual visit to America?

Yamashita: Having gigs and recording sessions in New York in May and releasing the album and touring Japan in the fall became my annual routine. It was a great pleasure to me, and I also want to keep a relationship with the States.

Cadence: It bears pointing out that when you were to receive Japan’s national award, which fell on the same week that you were booked to perform at Sweet Basil, you chose to keep your New York performance and miss the award ceremony.

Yamashita: Because the dates at Sweet Basil had been confirmed prior to the ceremony. I couldn’t change the dates of my engagement. I didn’t give priority to meeting with the Emperor!

Cadence: Are you still making your annual journey to New York? If so, where have you been performing? When was the last time you toured America?

Yamashita: After Sweet Basil was closed, I played once at the Jazz Gallery, Iridium and Sweet Rhythm, etc. But, in recent years I had to give up annual gigs in New York. In 2004, I made the US tour with the New York Trio plus Japanese traditional instrument musicians - Akihiko Semba and Meisho Tosha. And in 2005, I did gigs at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and the Kennedy Center in DC with the New York Trio. That was my last US tour [to date].

Cadence: In 1994, you played solo at Carnegie Hall as part of Verve’s 50th Anniversary concert. Do you consider that to be your career highlight in America? If not, what is?

Yamashita: Yes, I do. I don’t think I can make a higher career [pinnacle] than that.

Cadence: You’ve spent time with a number of prominent American Jazz leaders including Max Roach, Elvin Jones, Bill Laswell and Lester Bowie. Do you have any memories to share from those times?

Yamashita: Every musician had self-confidence in themselves, and their

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own unique expression. They all also treated me gently, especially Elvin Jones, who did gigs at Pit Inn Shinjuku on the New Year every year. One time he said smilingly, “You are a piano master,” pointing to me. I didn’t really understand what he meant but I was very glad to hear that.

Cadence: Talk about your special relationship and connection with pianist Mal Waldron.

Yamashita: Mal was my idol for a long time. My European manager Horst Weber at Enja Records also managed him. He introduced me to him, and I visited his home. Then I made an album titled A Tribute to Mal Waldron. Later, I made duo concerts with him several times in Japan. We played his popular tunes like “You Don’t Know What Love Is” together and he accepted all of my improvisations with a smile.

Cadence: After years of being called the “Japanese Cecil Taylor,” you played a duet with him in 2007. Talk about that experience.

Yamashita: I talked with Cecil for the first time backstage at Montreux in 1976. After that, I became familiar with him. In the summer 2006, I visited his home in Brooklyn to propose the duo concert. He talked about his story for 6 hours. The second day, after the story, he advised me to play the piano. I improvised freely, then he sat down next to me at the higher keyboard and we played together. He looked to be in a good temper, and I was convinced we would be able to make a duo concert. In February 2007, we made the concert at a concert hall in Tokyo where I produced Jazz concerts every year. He played for one hour and half without a break every time at rehearsals but at the concert it was 45 minutes sharp plus encore. The tune we played for the encore was about 3 minutes long. We played totally free but finished at the same time. I have my students at Kunitachi College of Music listen to the recording to show it as an example that there is various music in this world.

Cadence: You also played with another Free Jazz legendary figure in 2006. While at a European festival, you met Ornette Coleman and sat in with him.

Yamashita: No, that isn’t correct. In 2006, I was asked to perform solo piano as an opening act for Ornette’s Japan tour, and he invited me to join his set on one tune, and then “Lonely Woman” for an encore, as well. It was wonderful experience for me.

Cadence: You recently celebrated some major milestones. In 2018, you released the album 30 Light Years of Floating to mark the 30th anniversary of your New York Trio, and in 2019, you celebrated the 50-year mark since the formation of the Yōsuke Yamashita Trio with a commemorative concert at the Shinjuku Bunka Center, a concert hall that seats 1,800 seats. That event featured the different versions of your original trio. Talk about the significance of those two achievements.

Yamashita: Long years have passed since I started. I wanted to celebrate those anniversaries. I was happy at both events because many

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people came over and celebrated with me.

Cadence: *Before the pandemic, you had been working with the Yōsuke Yamashita Special Big Band. How is it to hear your compositions performed by a large ensemble?*

Yamashita: It is a special pleasure to hear and to play my compositions with a big band. I would like to insist that I am happy to have Osamu Matsumoto as an arranger for my big band. By his talent, many Classical popular tunes, as well as my works, filled our big band's repertoire.

Cadence: *Please talk about your other creative work, including scoring for film and TV, and your work as an actor.*

Yamashita: As an actor I played a supporting role in the theater play Jesus Christ Trickster, written by my friend novelist Yasutaka Tsutsui. I have made several film scores. Once my friend, a director, had me play while watching the screen with my back to the audience like Miles Davis. At other times, I was asked to compose film scores officially. I have enjoyed myself in both settings.

Cadence: *You're a popular essayist in Japan, with over 30 books under your name. Talk about your writing. You are well-known for your humor.*

Yamashita: From my childhood, I liked "rakugo," or Japanese traditional comic storytelling. I might have kept such a mindset up until now. Regarding my writing, first I wrote a short paper titled "A Study on Blue Note," which belongs to ethnomusicology. Then an editor asked me to write softer essays on light episodes of Jazz musicians. I imitated the style of Yasutaka Tsutsui, a popular author whom I was an ardent admirer of.

Cadence: *I have to ask about your grandfather. He's credited with the formation of the prison system in Japan. He was sent to America to study the prison system there and came back to update the Japanese scheme. What was the prison system like in Japan before his involvement?*

Yamashita: One of the members who made the Japanese judicial system, including the prison system, was my great-grandfather, Fusachika Yamashita. His son Keijio became an architect and was a specialist for judicial architecture. He went to the Western countries, including the States, to study prisons there, and built "five big prisons in the Meiji era" with the modern Western style. Japanese prisons until then were old-fashioned from the Edo era. That was the cause of not being able to revise unequal treaties with the Western countries. It is said that the aim of building the modern prisons was for the revision of treaties.

Cadence: *What are your interests outside of music and the arts? Is there anything you like that we might be surprised to hear about?*

Yamashita: I like the Japanese traditional board game Go. I don't have many chances to play it by myself, but I watch its TV programs, and

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read magazines about it. I keep an eye on the female champion, Rina Fujisawa now.

Cadence: *How have you spent your time during the coronavirus pandemic?*

Yamashita: Like everyone, my engagements were totally cancelled by COVID-19. In July, I felt like playing the piano, so I recorded solo piano pieces at a recording studio and it was just released as an album called Quiet Memories. It is an unexpected pleasure for me.

Cadence: *The final questions have been given to me by other artists to ask you:*

Cecil McBee (bass) asked: *“During the initial periods of the New York Trio performances, did it ever occur to you that the trio would actually perform for the grand period of 30 years? That’s an enormous amount of time together! And, if so, please explain the magic of it all?”*

Yamashita: At first, I made efforts to understand Cecil’s and Pheeroan’s music, and they tried to understand mine. After a while we could make our own music, and it was accepted positively by the audience. I think this “success” is one of the reasons we could keep the trio for such a long time. Furthermore, we had a good relationship together, and felt like a family. We joked with each other, and that also helped. Although I feel it is natural now, at the beginning, I couldn’t expect this good relationship to last for such a long period. It’s made me very much happy.

Pheeroan akLaff (drums) asked: *“What did you learn from doing a tour of several African countries?”*

Yamashita: In Africa they play music mainly by percussions and we can make music only with percussions. Through the concert tour, I found a difference in the audience’s reactions, depending on whether Europeans were present or not. Only when there were some Europeans in the audience did they applaud after each tune and required an encore. But when I made a concert at the National Theatre in Lagos, Nigeria, where there were no Western people there, they cried excitedly and clapped hands to the rhythmic music, even in the middle of the tune. But, interestingly, they didn’t react at all to ballads, and they didn’t require an encore after the program. I studied African people and found that they don’t express reactions when there isn’t rhythm in the music. Once I sat in with an electric keyboard at a party and the people came to me and put a bill on my sweaty forehead. I was deeply impressed because I felt like I had been accepted into the community.

Pheeroan akLaff also asked: *“How does acupuncture restore music and musicians?”*

Yamashita: Acupuncture makes you very energetic from inside of your body. Since I was convinced of it, through long years of experience, I recommended acupuncturist Dr. Takemura to Pheeroan.

Famoudou Don Moye (drums) said: *“I first met you during an Art Ensemble of Chicago Japanese Tour in 1974. Your “dynamic trio”*

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opened for us at most of the concerts. What I recall most of all from that New York recording session [First Time, 1979] with Yamashita, besides the energy of the music, was that Joseph Jarman and I agreed to a low fee for the session. Malachi Favors Maghostut held out, consulted with Muhal Richard Abrams, and got paid TWICE as much.....LOL!!!!"

Cadence: *Would you talk about recording with three members of the Art Ensemble of Chicago - Joseph Jarman, Malachi Favors and Don Moye?*

Yamashita: As I admired the Art Ensemble of Chicago, it was an honor to play opening acts for their concerts, and I was very much excited to play with them at the recording sessions. They all played my tunes with their strong personalities. I didn't know the financial matter at that time since I didn't touch it, but it must be the expression of strong individualism of Americans. The album First Time was accepted very well in Japan and got a prize from Swing Journal magazine. It's a good old, joyful memory to me.

Satoko Fujii (piano) asked: *"It's not easy for me to ask a question because I am usually on the other side. I would like to know why after you made big success playing real "Free Jazz" style, you eventually returned to playing more inside, rhythm, chords, melody, etc. What made you return to that style?"*

Yamashita: When I began to play "Free Jazz," I thought I could express everything I wanted. But I played it for long years, and I came to feel that even it is one of the styles. Thinking "I must play Free" isn't really free, including elbow or fist smash. I started to think I could use all the methods I had ever experienced, and that might be the "real Free," that includes rhythm, chords and melodies. Deciding to play "Free Jazz" is not really free thinking.

Satoko Fujii also asked: *"Are you now more comfortable and happy playing piano, physically and mentally, than when you were young?"*

Yamashita: Yes, I am.

Makoto Ozone (piano) asked: *"Where do you think that creative ideas come from when you improvise?"*

Yamashita: It might be the moment you feel like playing this way now, referring to all your musical experiences.

Makoto Ozone also asked: *"What would you like to pass onto the new Jazz musicians of the up and coming generation?"*

Yamashita: I'd like to tell them this - There are huge ways of playing in the music. You should learn them all and then think about what you really want to do now.

Joe Lovano (sax) asked: *"How did it feel to play every year for so many years at Sweet Basil's in New York City?"*

Yamashita: I felt that finally I could join the major league in the States. You came to the club to play together with me and it was my big honor.

Joe Lovano also asked: *"Talk about John Coltrane's influence and*

Interview: Yōsuke Yamashita

what do you recall of his 1966 tour of Japan and its impact on the Japanese scene?"

Yamashita: I had been listening to Coltrane since he was in the Miles Davis group. So, I was very much surprised to witness Coltrane's concert in Tokyo in 1966 because he played completely Free Jazz. I think it led me to play Free Jazz three years later in 1969. It was a revelation that even Coltrane would play this kind of music.

Joe Lovano also asked: "Talk about your Verve recording Kurdish Dance, which was a big record for you. I remember following that release with a long tour of Japan as a member of your quartet."

Yamashita: You were the first horn player to join my trio with Cecil McBee and Pheeroan akLaff. At that time, I composed a tune titled "Kurdish Dance." Thanks for your wonderful interpretation and performance. This irregular 9-beat song became very attractive. It was the title tune of the CD released in 1992, and since then, the tune became my group's "theme song" with which I conclude every concert. We toured Europe with you, as well as Japan. Even now, you are the number one horn player I would like to invite.

Ryuichi Sakamoto (composer, musician) shared a memory: "The first memory that comes to mind about Yōsuke is from when I was recording with Bill Laswell and John Lydon [Johnny Rotten] in New York in the '80s. It so happened that Yōsuke was in New York too, and we got together immediately. One night after recording, someone said, "Let's go to the Rolling Stones' [recording] session!" So, we went to the studio drunk, but, unfortunately, the band members were absent. We moved around some bars and pubs and got very drunk. John and Yōsuke sat next to each other and started arguing - "The vocalist is a God," said Yōsuke. "No, they're not," said John, and on and on. We got tired as it became brighter outside, and we all went to Yōsuke's hotel room. I found music sheets of Thelonious Monk and a melodica on the bed, so I started playing Monk's pieces on the melodica until I became unconscious."

Yamashita: Yes, I also remember that night. I was excited to see the recording session of the world-famous composer. As John Lydon was a frank and talkative guy, we made long conversations. I have known Ryuichi for long years since he started his professional career. We had several occasions to play free improvisation with two pianos. He seems to have an interest in Jazz, that's why he played Monk that morning. If we have a chance again, let's play another Jazz session together!

THE JAMES MINGO LEWIS UNREAL HIGHLIGHT REEL

by Tee Watts

Somewhere online the age on earth of Mingo Lewis is grossly exaggerated. In one conversation I had with him I mentioned that he and Bernard Purdie were about the same age.

"Oh no, he's older than I," insisted Mingo.

"Okay, I must have your age wrong then."

"What do you have my age at?"

"Wikipedia says you made 80 in December." Mingo enjoys a good laugh.

"I'm only 67. I'm only 67. Wikipedia is incorrect. I've tried to correct it I don't know how many times. Some woman put that out there and she had the wrong birth date for me. I've changed it on Wikipedia, but somehow, the next day, the bad info is there again.

"My mother is 90. I don't think she had me when she was 10. I was born in Harlem in 1953.

On Miles Davis, Monk, JB, Carlos Santana, Chick Corea, and Return To Forever

My father was good friends with Miles Davis who was at the house all the time. They were always jammin' and workin' on music.

My father grew up in the South playing Blues. He switched over to playing Jazz when he started hanging out with Monk, Miles, and Max Roach. Max lived right up the street from us. So they were frequently at the house and that's how my learning and playing piano and drums came about. But they could never find a drummer that would hang out too long. I don't know why. I guess because they were always arguing over harmonic stuff. Instead of just playing, they would split and I would be the house drummer. I was six years old playing in clubs with my father. The first place I remember playing at was right down the street from the Apollo and was called the Baby Grand.

It's funny, my dad would come to school all the time and pick me up. He always had the excuse. "He's got a doctor's appointment." "He's got an appointment with the dentist." When I'd get out to the car, it would be full of cats going to a recording session. They would take me to be a gopher to go to the store for them, but the whole time I would be watching and listening. That's how my brain is wired –with nothing but notes and rhythm. That's where I go all the time. It's hard for me not to think of music.

My grandmother, my dad's mother, was a choir director for a Baptist church in Harlem. She played piano and sang. I grew up with her. That's how I learned Gospel stuff. I was always interested in the piano. I started on trap drums but didn't start playing piano until I was twelve.

As big as he was, I never wanted to join Miles' thing. He was just Miles

Feature: **James Mingo Lewis**



Feature: James Mingo Lewis

to me. You know, it wasn't like it was to everybody else. I can't really describe it. He was just one of our friends at the house that sat at the table and ate food with us.

Every time I would hear Monk was coming over I would find every excuse to hide. First of all, he scared me because he'd always have on some kind of weird hat with sunglasses. Secondly, it was at night. Why does this dude have sunglasses on at night? And the first thing he would do is have me sit next to the piano and ask me what notes and chords he was playing. I think it helped me because to this day I have pretty good pitch.

There have been many, many high points. I had played for about three weeks with James Brown in auditoriums that held maybe 1500 people. I was a kid. They didn't pay me much at all. It was obviously quite a high point when I played with Santana at Madison Square Garden because I was only fifteen when I joined the band. To be thrown into the fire at 20,000 seat arenas was pretty intense for a kid like me. That was a highlight that I didn't even realize how important that was for many years.

The reason I got to go up and play with them was when Santana's percussion section quit after the first show. They were about to cancel the whole tour. And then my friend's mother said we have this young fifteen-year-old kid down here. He's a friend of a friend and says he can play anything they can play. So this cat named Chino called the band at the hotel and they came down to check me out. Through a process of elimination, they found out that I could play all the rhythms they used. I didn't know their songs, but I knew the rhythms. They were like, "Oh shit, let's just do the show with the kid." So, I asked them to give me a list with the songs and corresponding rhythm and that's what happened. They wrote a setlist by the rhythms alone for me.

In 1972, when Santana released the album *Caravanserai* it had two of my songs on it. What is interesting though is that I spent almost two years with the band although we went just about a year without playing because Carlos was on his guru trip with Sri Chinmoy. In those days many bands had drug issues and Carlos was trying to find a way against it and he kind of tagged on to become a disciple of Sri Chinmoy through Mahavishnu John McLaughlin.

When we did start playing again, I had learned a lot, having run into a lot of really good players that opened me up to different styles that had more Cuban accents. It was very much more interesting. So, as we were on the road in London, I happened to walk by one of the keyboard player's rooms at the hotel. His name was Richard Kermodé. He had also played with Janis Joplin and Malo. I heard some music and just stopped in the hallway and listened by the door for a minute. And I thought, wow, who the hell is that?

I knocked on the door and when Richard opened the door I said, "Man, who's music is that?"

Feature: James Mingo Lewis

"Oh man, that's the new Chick Corea album. You got to check this out, man." It was the first Return To Forever album and the B side was blowing my mind. The name of the track on the B side is "Sometime Ago" and it takes up the whole side from head to toe. It was the first Return To Forever lineup with Joe Farrell, Airtio, Stanley Clarke, Chick Corea, and Flora Purim.

After listening to the whole B side, I said to Richard, "I'm quitting the band. I'm quitting Santana. He looked at me all crazy, but I was serious, man. I think the next day I told Carlos I was quitting. Nobody believed me. We were making a lot of money, but I didn't want to play Santana music anymore. It was not rewarding. That Return To Forever music that I heard in Richard Kermodé's room was a challenge and that's what I wanted to do. They didn't understand. It wasn't about the money. It was about growth.

Ironically, about a month after I quit Carlos' band, I got a call from Lenny White who had been periodically playing with Azteca and consequently in the Bay Area quite a bit. When he was in town, he and I and Michael Shrive would hang out. Mike was good for that because he always had a lot of drummers at his house.

Lenny said to me, "I'm playing with this band Return To Forever." I said, "Is that Chick Corea's band?"

"Yeah, man. We've got some new music. It's just me, Chick, and Stanley Clarke. I told Chick about you and we were wondering if you wanted to come and sit in with us at Keystone Korner in San Francisco. I was like, "Hell yeah. Of course, I want to play. Man, I'm on my way." I packed up some congas and sped to the venue. When I got there, they were just getting ready to start the first song. I was maneuvering through the crowd to get those congas up on stage. It was really funny. By the time I got them up there, I was so stressed after trying to park and all that stuff. I could hear them warming up and sound checking before I got inside.

When I finally got on stage and sat down, both Chick and Stanley looked at me. They didn't know who I was. I looked back at them. We started laughin'. They were just getting ready to hit and I forgot to open up my seat, my drum stool all the way and when I went to sit on it, I fell backward and grabbed at the piano and almost pulled that over onto me while my drums fell into the audience onto a table. It was hilarious man. Chick stood up, I never will forget. He looked at Lenny White as if to say, "Are you sure this is the guy you told me about?"

Once we started jamming, it was on then. I knew the music front and back. I gave it my interpretation which was different than my predecessor, Airtio. What Lenny didn't tell me was that it was an audition. He'd just asked if I'd like to sit in. He'd told Chick that, 'I was the next cat on congas, period. There's nobody like him.' And Chick said, "Let's audition him."

I was sitting right between Stanley and Chick. They were only an arm's length away. At the end of the night, Chick said, "That was great, man!" I didn't know what to say other than, "Thank you so much."

Feature: James Mingo Lewis

He then said, "We'll be in touch with you." I didn't know how to take that but I do know that I had that lit feeling for a month afterward. My body was vibratin'. I was on fire. Then, about 30 days later, I got a call from Chick.

"Mingo?"

"Yeah."

"This is Chick Corea."

"Hey man, how you doin'?"

"Are you ready?"

"Ready for what."

"Are you ready to come and play with us?"

"Of course."

"Look, uh, how quick can you get to New York?"

Shit, that night in San Francisco I was back in the car headed for New York. I made it in two and a half days. I drove straight through. Me and my dog and my conga's and shekeres and all kind of shit. When I got there, we went straight into rehearsals. That was it, man. I had like a week to learn the whole show.

Unfortunately, because of the Scientology aspect, the Chick Corea thing turned out not to be a good thing for me. As soon as I got there, Lenny White wasn't with the band anymore. It was Steve Gadd who was playing drums by that time. I'm guessing Lenny didn't want to deal with the Scientology thing either.

It was the same thing with Carlos and his guru (Sri Chimnoy) trip but Carlos didn't try to make you choose. Chick wanted the whole band to be into Scientology; the roadies, management, everybody. So it was very strange, you know? I had to be at rehearsal early so that I could lay on this table with these big fuckin' metal blocks on my head, hooked up to this E meter and he'd be asking me all these crazy questions. Really strange man. Frankenstein shit. I couldn't put it together, you know? I wanted to play so bad that I put up with that shit for a while; that whole first week when I was learning the tunes they were monitoring me to see what level I could be in Scientology or something. I didn't know what it was.

I was not cool with that and I told Chick too. "Listen, man, I've never played music like this before and I love playing with you but I'm really not into whatever Frankenstein thing you're doing."

It really insulted him, but he had a thing for me. He loved me so much that he couldn't get rid of me. I played with Return To Forever for almost two years, right before they got huge. We were playing seven nights a week, two sets per night for \$100 per week. The money I made with Santana was fifty times that! But I didn't do it for the money, I did it for the love of music. It became really obvious that it was never gonna work out was when, a year or so later, we played a gig at the big Scientology Center in L.A. At the end of the gig, I got a standing ovation and all these people bum-rushed me after the show.

"What level are you? What level are you?" And I'm lookin' and I'm

Feature: James Mingo Lewis

lookin' thinkin', what the fuck are they talkin'bout?

"What is y'all talkin' about?" What is this level thing you're talking about?" And someone said, "You know. In Scientology. What level are you?"

"I'm not a Scientologist," I said. Man, you have never seen a room clear out so fast. I swear to God, they ran like roaches. Like I was the devil or something. Oh my god, man. They were really strange people. It wasn't long after that that Steve Gadd and I talked about it. He was uncomfortable too. He couldn't stand it either. We both quit Return To Forever. They got Lenny back and right after that, they got that big record deal. They did "Romantic Warrior" and they got Al Di Meola, cuz Billy Connors left too. The way Chick treated him was hard to watch cause he was kind of soft. Chick would pick on him or look at him weirdly. It was strange.

Author's Note:

Because of time constraints, we ended the unreal Mingo highlight reel without talking about his 10-year stint as the drummer for the Tubes, or his time living in South America, or other highlights of his long and varied career. He did however talk about current projects.

For the last seven years, I've been working on a two-piece project with a woman that's called Room of Voices. It's interesting man. We went from seven pieces to five to four and then one day she was the only one that could show up for rehearsal. For some reason, the music sounded better and fuller with just the two of us. Our last album "Casbah" features a guest appearance by Al DiMeola.

My new thing is called "Hall of Souls" I'm mixing it down now (May 2021). A lot of friends came in to help with this record including Lyle Workman, guitarist for Sting. Quite a few interesting players. I'm also gonna be putting up so music on SoundCloud that's called "Music By Mistake" next month for people to check out.

This is some bad shit I'm working on right now. I had this cat come and put a tenor solo on my new pieces for my new record. A cat named Billy Sharks with a smokin' sound like Michael Brecker. I don't really know him. He played at a party for me at the Boom Boom Room in San Francisco. I really enjoyed his energy. I'm not one of those cats, you know, that wants people with names. I don't give a shit. I like people that play and it comes from the heart. I just care about content. I care about how it feels when you play. This brother has so much feeling in his playing.

New Issues



ARBENZ, MEHARI, VERAS CONVERSATION #1

SELF RELEASE

BOARDING THE BEAT / LET'S
TRY THIS AGAIN / GROOVE A
/ OLHA MARIA / IN MEDIAS
RES / VIBING WITH MORTON
/ RACE FACE / DEDICATED
TO THE QUINTESSENCE /
CIRCLE / FREEDOM JAZZ
DANCE

Albenz, d, perc ; Hermon
Mehari, tpt ; Nelson Veras, g
4/5/2021 Basel, Switzerland

The future of creative music “Jazz” is in good hands with Florian Albenz’s “Conversation #1”. Three brilliant musician at the height spontaneous creativity. The cd features nine beautifully written originals and one standard. Right from the beginning you can feel the intuitive connection between the players. The absence of bass seems to open the door to a conversation that is not grounded by a persistent metric presence. Instead the dialog between each musician is what drives the music. The drums are an integral part of this, highlighting their ability to be lyrical as they also effect the musical landscape. Florian is especially gifted at elevating the drums to a position of prominence within the conversation. The recording quality is also especially well done, giving the listener the pleasure of hearing each instrument with pristine clarity and separation.

The opening track “Boarding The Beat” is one of many fine examples of the trios virtuosity. It’s evident immediately that a conversation has begun between guitar and drums, soon to be joined by trumpet. Each instrument is crystal clear, both in their sound and in the ideas they convey. “Let’s Try This Again” is a soulful ballad that begins with some exquisite guitar work by Nelson Veras. Trumpet joins in and then drums as the piece floats in and out of time eventually finding a bright tempo before it fades away. “Freedom Jazz Dance” sets up an intoxicating groove that works so well with this Eddie Harris standard. The players stretch out with amazing solos by everyone. Even with the absence of bass the trio is able to reach a high level of intensity. Showing once again their open-mindedness as they draw from each other’s ideas.

I challenge anyone who feels that Jazz is not advancing into the future to give “Conversation” #1 a listen. I’d even go so far as to say that if Miles were alive today that this recording would put a smile on his face. I also find it especially significant that the players are from three different parts of the world. Proving once again that Jazz knows no borders.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

**CHARLIE
SEPULVEDA REVIEW
CHARLIE SEPULVEDA
& THE TURNAROUND,
THIS IS LATIN JAZZ,
HIGHNOTE 7331.**

LIBERTY / TALES FROM THE
WALL / CHERRY PINK AND
APPLE BLOSSOM WHITE
/ ALFONSINA Y EL MAR /
FRENESI / ESTAMPAS / FIRM
ROOTS / PEER MAGIC. 65:55.

Collective personnel:

Sepulveda, Randy Brecker,
tp; Steve Turre. tbn; Miguel
Zenon, as; Norberto Ortiz, ts;
Nestor Torres, ft; Eduardo
Zayas, p; Gabriel Rodriguez,
b; Francisco Alcalá, d;

Nicholas

Cozaboom, cga; Natalia
Mercado, vcl. 2/7,8&9/2020.
NYC

**GEORGE CABLES,
TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT,
HIGHNOTE RECORDS
7335.**

TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT / CIRCLE OF LOVE
/ THIS IS MY SONG / KLIMO /
FOR ALL WE KNOW / CRAZY
LOVE / ROSES POSES / I'VE
NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE
/ TEDDY / A VALEN TNE FOR
YOU.56:19.

Cables, p; Essiet Essiet,
b; Victor Lewis, d. 9/9/2020.
NYC.

The title of this album pretty much says it all. But not quite, as veteran trumpeter Sepulveda provides some choice comments on the current state of the genre within Neil Tesser's booklet annotation (which this writer most unanimously agrees). Captured at Dizzy's Club a few weeks before it had to shutter its doors due to virus, these cherry-picked numbers offer undeniable proof that the hallowed form is still alive and well in the hands of these music-masters. Kicking off with a hot two trumpet exposition and ending with a Torres flute flurry both of these works, along with three others, are from the pen of the leader. As pointed out in the liners, "Frenesi" is not the well-known Perez Prado evergreen from the fifties and it was a nostalgic treat to once again hear "Cherry Pink..." from the same era. There is a vocal contribution from his spouse, Natalia Mercado on "Alfonsina Y El Mar" Otherwise this is hardcore Latin jazz that could serve as a perfect primer to those unfamiliar with it. Highly recommended.

Larry Hollis

Anyone with more than a passing interest in our native Art form known as jazz should be aware of the piano artistry of George Cables. After several decades of high quality output still hasn't achieved the status he deserves from the fickle music press and tin-eared critics searching for a perennial favorite of hornmen like Art Pepper & Dexter Gordon, etc., the bulk of albums under his leadership have been as trios and this particular unit has been with him, on and off, since 2012's *My Muse* also under the Highnote logo. Essiet and Lewis were once again the rhythmic underpinning of *I'm All Smiles* (Highnote 7322) the pianist's return to the recording studio after barely publicized major surgery. It garnered some of his best reviews as with that issue the playing list is a mix of staples, three Cables compositions and a pair of Bobby Hutcherson scripts, A duet for each sideman is allowed on the standard "For All We Know" with the upright and a hand-drummed rendition of Tadataka Unno's "Crazy Love". In keeping with the format of that release the final number is a solo piano version of the original "A Valentine For You".

This entire work is a sonic valentine.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



(1) BO VAN DE GRAAF
CYCLE JIN-BREBL-
CONCERT
ICDISC NL 20-02
LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT /
BOCYCLE / BASGEWUS /
THIS HAPPENED / DUET
FOR TWO / VIGNETTE /
NEFERTITI / JUST ANOTHER
4:33. 51:33.

van de Graaf, saxophones;
Andre Groen, d, vib; Christoph
Mac-carty, p, kybd, vcl;
Dion Nijland, b; Michel
Mulder, bandoneon, kybd.
September 30, 2020, Nijmegen,
Netherlands.

Saxophonist Bo van de Graaf brought together four of his favorite and like-minded musicians for this live concert, which was performed in the Netherlands in COVID time for a limited audience and recorded on (1). Having been influenced by Anthony Braxton earlier in his career, Van de Graaf looked to a 1971 “Circle-Paris” recording of Braxton with Chick Corea, Dave Holland, and Barry Altschul, for musical inspiration in this endeavor. Van de Graaf begins the opener, “Love at First Sight,” in solo alto mode, establishing some simple thematic ideas in the first minute before the rhythm section enters with a sustained pedal tone, laying the groundwork for the freely improvised music which follows and develops in intensity for the next seven minutes. A brief drum fill serves as a segue to the foreboding, austere “Bocycle,” then amping up to the more energetic “Basgewus,” both based on core musical ideas and playing from bassist Dion Nijland. Van de Graaf’s alto once again sets the tone on the next two selections, interacting with Andre Groen on vibes plus the band on “This Happened” and with pianist Christoph Mac-Carty on the thought-provoking “Duet for Two.” Gary Peacock’s “Vignette” highlights the bandoneon of Michel Mulder, with fine performances from each member of the rhythm section. The group is in full listening and interactive mode for “Nefertiti,” with piano, bandoneon, bass, and vibes sharing, trading, and augmenting the melody. van de Graaf deftly joins in during the second chorus, with Groen moving over to drums to facilitate a swing and later double time feel in this, a highlight of the program. Appropriately, the concert closes on a group improvisation, “Just Another 4:33,” featuring van de Graaf’s strong tenor, Mac-Carty mysterioso-like vocals, and Groen’s propulsive drumming.

Don Lerman

New Issues

(2) BAARS /
DUMITRIU /
HENNEMAN / SOLA
AFORISMEN
AFORISME
AFORISMES

EVIL RABBIT RECORDS
ERR32

RENDZINE / PAARSE

HEI / PIZARRA / ESTEPA

/ ARENA / LAAGVEEN /

DUNE / AIGUAMOLL /

BRUN ROSCATE / ZEEKLEI /

CERNOZIOM. 51:14.

Ab Baars, shakuhachi, cl;

George Dumitriu, vla, vln;

Ig Henneman, vla; Pau Sola

Masafrets, cel. June 30, 2019,
Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

(3) JAAP BLONK,
LOU MALLOZZI, &
KEN VANDERMARK
IMPROVISORS

KONTRANS 367

IZZM AKOLLL / AARR BIEN

/ MOOIVIRRK / ZKRADENN

VAN / OLO ZZAAK LLIB /

DEIVOOA BRRIMM. 46:50.

Jaap Blonk, vcl, elec; Lou

Mallozzi, turntables, CDs,

mixer, microphones, organ

pipes; Ken Vandermark, cl,

b cl, ts, bari s. November 21,

2019, Chicago, IL.

A group was founded when three string players, George Dumitriu, Ig Henneman, and Pau Sola Masafrets, met for an improvising session and were joined by a shakuhachi player, Ab Baars. In the summer of 2019, the four musicians got together to record at the Amsterdam University of the Arts, resulting in (2). The strings, consisting of either violin, viola, and cello or two violas and cello, and the shakuhachi or clarinet all draw upon their musical and exploratory sense to generate for example, a subtle dark feeling in “Rendzine” and a lighter animated sense in “Paarse Hei.” Most cuts are in the five to seven minute range, with some shorter tracks as well, such as the boisterous “Arena” or the more peaceful “Brun roscate.” The track titles are named after the various soil types from the countries of birth of the musicians represented here, namely Holland, Romania, and Spain.

Don Lerman

Improvisors Jaap Blonk and Lou Mallozzi draw upon a large variety of instruments as listed above, plus their own imaginations, to interact with each other and reed player Ken Vandermark in generating this unusual live recording (3) made at Elastic Arts in Chicago in 2019. Some of the sounds produced by Blonk and Mallozzi bring to mind radio static, electronic beeps, feedback, tapping on microphone, whistle and bird calls, knocking doors, rotating plates, wire spring or twangs, each of which may be given other interpretations. Vocal sounds, including mundane and weird talking, historic radio talk, cartoon vocal sounds, and whispering, lend even greater uniqueness to the presentation. Vandermark’s bass clarinet, tenor, and other reed sounds are heard on four of the six selections, adding an earthy quality to the overall collage of electronic and vocal sounds from Blonk and Mallozzi.

Don Lerman

New Issues

JIM SNIDERO, LIVE AT THE DEER HEAD INN SAVANT 2193.

BAND INTRO BY DENNY CARRIG / NOW'S THE TIME / AUTUMN LEAVES / INTRO TO OLD MAN RIVER / BYE BYE BLACKBIRD / IDLE MOMENTS / WHO CAN I TURN TO / MY OLD FLAME / YESTERDAYS*.55:33.

Snidero, as; Orrin Evans, p; Peter Washington, b; Joe Farnsworth, d. 10/31 & 11/10*/2020. Delaware Water Gap, PA.

Of the numerous recordings made at the celebrated bistro The Deer Head Inn this writer owns around a handful and they all are excellent. Now another title can be added to that list with this gig from last year by altoist Snidero. To utilize a euphemism he assembled a "pickup band" consisting of former associates Evans and Washington along with first-call drum master Farnsworth. But what a rhythm section it was. Even that term is inadequate as these gentlemen not only provide impeccable rhythmic accompaniment but contribute forceful solos throughout the program. Speaking of which is made up mostly by tried-and-true titles from the Great American Songbook plus a pair of staples from the jazz sector. Yet these are not by-rote rundowns but re-interpretations with nice touches such as the sterling sax cadenza ending "My Old Flame". I could go on and on but a more thorough explanation can be found in Dan Bilawsky's thoughtful liners. Jim Snidero must have scored a good reed and that feel-good vibe is transmitted to his band mates and the audience in turn. Recommended.

Larry Hollis

JONAS CAMBIEN TRIO NATURE HATH PAINTED THE BODY CLEAN FEED 2001 2021

OERSOEP/ 1 000 000 HAPPY LOCUSTS/ HERRIESCHOPPERS/ HYPNOS/ MANTIS/ THE ORIGINS OF TOOL USE/ BUSHFIRE/ FREEZE/ YOYO HELMUT/ TONGUES/ HELIUM 40:36
JONAS CAMBIEN, P, SS, ORG; ANDRE ROLIGHETEN, SS, TS, B, CLT; ANDREAS WILDHAGEN, D OSLO

The opening piece is only thirty-three seconds but sets the stage for the whole CD. The compositions are interesting from all perspectives: melodically, harmonically and rhythmically. Many of the compositions change tempo and mood along the way maintaining my interest. The trio plays with great energy. Roligheten is a very versatile player on all horns. This really comes out in a soprano sax duet with Cambien on Hypnos, a somewhat dissonant piece featuring both horns. Cambien is a very agile pianist who uses both hands effectively, whether in solo or ensemble setting. His vamp and solo on Mantis is a real standout, providing a great base for Roligheten's soprano. And Wildhagen provides excellent support. The Origin of Tool Use is very humorous, with interesting use of percussion sounds to sound like tool use. On this track Cambien plays organ in the background supporting the interplay between Roligheten and Wildhagen. A note on Wildhagen's snare: It sounds like an old deep drum and the sound fits in beautifully in the ensemble, especially on Yoyo. I should note I am not a fan of bright snare drums.

And after a very high energy set the CD ends with a lovely ballad. In short a very interesting recording that will get many plays.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

MARK LEWIS QUARTET

NAKED ANIMALS

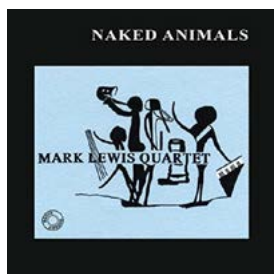
AUDIO DADDIO RS1015

MOONFLOWER / MERCURIAN RENDEZVOUS / GHOST OF A CHANCE / NAKED ANIMALS / A DANCE WITH MONIQUE / CITY SLICKER / 4-D / THE SEVEN ANGELS. 53:53.

Lewis, as, flt; Willem Kuhne, p; James Long, b; Frans Van Grinsven, d. 3/11/1990. Rotterdam, Holland.

Talk about a long time coming. The saga behind these sound from three decades ago is fully explained in the Notes From The Musicians so an abbreviated rundown should suffice. Washington State expatriate Lewis was based in the Netherlands when these eight tracks were recorded digital live half-track then sat in the vault until their release on the second of April of this year. What stunned this writer initially was how fresh these numbers fell upon one's ears. It is easy to recognize the kinetic tightness of this foursome stemming from their lengthy association. Lewis has scripted some clever charts for his liquid alto (his main axe) to navigate with a seeming preference for the higher register of the horn (like Paul Desmond, for instance) and an innate lyrical bent that makes one think of what Art Pepper might be sounding like if he was still with us. His other comrades are equally skillful most notably pianist Kuhne who balances deft comping with rich solo work. His McCoy-shaded ride on the churning "4-D" is a highlight and bassman Long shines in an inventive spot on "City Slicker". This is no dusty diamond from the past but an unreleased gem that deserves to be placed side-by-side with The New York Session from 2017 with an all star rhythm section of George Cables, Essiet Essiet & Victor Lewis (Cadence Annual Edition 2017, page 291).

Larry Hollis



New Issues

NATALYA VYSOKIKH THE VYSOKO PROJECT

SELF RELEASE

THEY CLOSE THEIR EYES/ SNOW/ A STONE SPEAKS TO A STONE/ POEMS/ A MAN WENT TO THE RIVER/ I'M ROCKING THE CRADLE/ SHEVA/ THE LAST DAY OF THE WEEK/ TRAIN/ WINTER/ HE DOESN'T WANT ANYMORE/ FIND ME/ SOMETHING IS CHIPPING ITS SMALL WHEELS/ VID VAS' EGOR/ LULLABY 37:06

Natalya Vysokikh, vln; Natalya Atroschenko vcl; Evgenia Pashigoreva, vln; Alexander Kazakov, , p, St Petersburg 2018

An interesting mix of semi-romantic classical music with Russian folk music. I wish I spoke Russian to get the lyrics. But the over all feel is what is important. This is especially the case in Sheva where the interplay between Vysokikh and Atroschenko is fantastic.

While the tunes are all basic folk music the accompaniments are varied and complex. Everyone here is classically trained and the arrangements show this. If I had to put an era to it I probably would choose the so-called Classical period which is the era beginning with C.P.E. Bach, Haydn and Mozart and culminating with Beethoven. The over all feel is loose, like the early romantic era but the music itself feels like late baroque and early classical. Train has the most baroque feeling.

The unison singing with the violin on Something Chirping at the Small Wheels is fascinating. And the CD ending lullaby is absolutely gorgeous. Overall the musicianship is excellent. But then one would expect nothing less from conservatory-trained musicians. What is interesting is how adaptable they are.

Recommended for anyone who enjoys folk music played in a somewhat formal setting, regardless of language.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

SPIKE WILNER TRIO ALIENS AND WIZARDS

CELLAR MUSIC GROUP CM120120

RIGHTY O-! / NON TROPPO / ADAGIO / MINDSET / BLUE GARDENIA / STELLA BY STARLIGHT /
ALIENS AND WIZARDS / PRAYER FOR PEACE / TRICK BABY

Wilner, p ; Tyler Mitchell, b ; Anthony Pinciotti, d 8/16 & 8/22/20 Astoria, NY

While many of us hunkered down and painfully waited out the past year and a half hoping for better days, some chose a different path. Spike Wilner Pianist and owner of two iconic NYC Jazz clubs- "Smalls" and "Mezzrow's" is one that refused to be taken down by the pandemic. His fight to stay afloat will forever benefit the worlds Jazz community. Through ingenuity and a never give up attitude Spike kept the music alive, gave listeners the opportunity through live stream to listen and gave as many musicians as possible the chance to keep working. And Yes !! found time to record this amazing cd.

"Aliens And Wizards" kicks off with an up tempo, barn burning tune "Righty O-!" that launches us into swing heaven. The rhythm section is on fire as Spike wails effortlessly over the changes, clearly in his own voice yet reminiscent of some of the finest be bop pianists. After his blistering mostly single note solo he shows us the art of lock hand piano playing, kicking the dynamics up even higher. Next up is a tight exchange with the outstanding drummer Anthony Pinciotti as they trade fours and then twos before the head is restated and out we go as were then given a few seconds to let the smoke clear.

One can only imagine the inspiration behind the title track "Aliens And Wizards". Given the time and circumstances in which it was probably written the sky's the limit when it comes to how we interpret this piece. I like to experience it much like I would a painting, except in this case there are three artists involved in a free flowing exchange of ideas and feelings that are captured in time and space for us to contemplate.

You can call "A Prayer For Peace" gospel our the blues, I call it a soulful, heartfelt composition that can bring us all to a better place. Strong and simple it captures the desire us humans have to all just get along and live in peace. How wonderful it is that music has the power to convey this simple message and that Spike has the wisdom to give voice to peace.

"Aliens And Wizards" offers six of Spikes originals and three pieces by other composers, all the music is noteworthy and the overall musicianship is outstanding. Spike has given so much to the Jazz community and his music is another example of his generosity to all that recognize the importance of music in our lives. I do believe that someday you'll read in the Jazz history books about what Spike Wilner did to keep Jazz alive in its most challenging time. Don't wait for that to happen, the time is now and Spikes music and his clubs are here for us to enjoy.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

NOVA

THE ANATOMY OF BLISS

NO LABEL AVAILABLE BY STREAMING

INTERSTELLAR DUST/ FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON PT 1/ FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON PT 2/
THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY, 1ST AND 2ND MOVEMENTS/ THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY, 3RD
MOVEMENT/ 9 TIMES 7? MISSING STAR/ THE ANATOMY OF BLISS 48:30

Christian Zatta, g; Florian Bolger, bass; Florian Hoest, d. Poland 2021

Guitar, bass, and drums. Classic trio. I wasn't sure what I was going to hear, jazz or rock or some form of fusion. Halfway through the record I can say somewhere in between. Zatta is the main soloist and composer. While he is an adept composer and player, after a while the music started to sound repetitive.

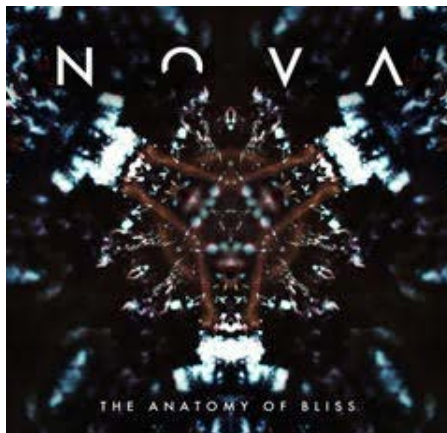
The record opens with Bolger playing melody before Zatta comes in. Zatta's playing is certainly jazz. But what makes me think of rock is Hoest's drumming. I find he is recorded way too high in the mix and his playing, to my drummer's ears, sounds very intrusive. What makes me think of rock is what I call when in doubt his crash cymbal. And his drums have a dead sound to them.

The titles mainly refer to other things. Flowers for Algernon was a book and movie which deals with enhanced intelligence and discrimination. The Foundation Trilogy is Isaac Asimov's great work about the concept of predicting the future. As I have often said, there is nothing wrong with program music if you know the program. Even though I have read these books, I don't see the connection. So I don't try. I try just to appreciate the music for itself.

And the final tune, Anatomy of Bliss, was anything but that to my ears.

There are some really lovely moments here, but to my ears there are too many loud moments and way too much repetition.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

(1) SHIJIN

THEORY OF EVERYTHING

MUSIC BOX PUBLISHING AN300CD

MYSTERY OF A WHITE DWARF / UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY / GOLDEN AGE / IMPLOSION / TIME TRAVEL / SEPARATING CIRCLE / YOU ARE HERE / CURVED WRINKLES. 43:50.

Laurent David, el b; Stephane Galland, d; Malcolm Braff, p, Rhodes CP-70; Stephane Guillaume, ts, ss, ft, b cl. Boulogne s/Mer, France, no date given.

(2) JONATHAN KANE AND DAVE SOLDIER

FEBRUARY MEETS SOLDIER STRING QUARTET

EEG RECORDS

HATE TO SEE YOU GO / IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR / REQUIEM FOR HULIS PULIS / VIENNA OVER THE HILLS. 44:24.

Kane, d, g, b; Soldier, strings; Jon Crider, g (3). 2021.

Shijin, a quartet made up of top international jazz performers, provide creative, energetic, and engaging music on (1). Drummer Stephan Galland sets an intriguing rhythmic pace for “Separating Circle,” one of eight varied selections in this set that feature many interesting rhythmic grooves and attractive melodies. Ensemble and solo performances are outstanding by each of the four musicians, with each listed as contributing to the compositions on this impressive program.

Jonathan Kane and Dave Soldier provide four extended tracks with slowly evolving musical content in this studio session (2). Differing rhythmic backing styles characterize each selection: an energetic rock backbeat dominates “Hate to See You Go,” a trance-like presence provides the background to the popular song “It Was A Very Good Year,” and a triplet based (6/8 or 12/8 time signature) pattern backs up “Requiem For Hulis Pulis.” The closing selection, “Vienna Over the Hills,” is backed not by a repeated rhythmic groove but by abstract sustained chordal sounds, with slowly evolving harmonies and periodic drum entrances providing an interesting foreground for this 11 minute track.

Don Lerman

New Issues

STRANGELET TRIO FEATURING LEO ABRAHAMS MOMENTS OF PRESENCE

AKT PRODUCT 46

DEEPER BREATH/ DOLPHIN MAN/ INTO THE AIR 57:29

Leo Abrahams, g, electron; Yuri Turov, g, electron, sampling; Alisa Efromeeva, p, kybds; Wadim Dicke, bass Tomsk November 29, 2019

Given the lineup of electronics and acoustic instruments this is a CD I am really looking forward to.

Deeper Breath starts off slowly and moodily with electronic sounds. But about ten minutes into the piece the regular rhythm is set with piano and electronics. The piano repeats a rhythmic pattern and the electronics play phrases over the vamp. The bass and guitar can be heard in the mix as the piece builds. The piece keeps changing and developing from some very noisy playing to a quiet section. This pattern follows a lot of free improvised playing where the piece takes on a life of its own.

Dolphin Man uses more of the acoustic instruments. Great playing with piano and bass. Dicke gets a huge sound which comes through the pounding piano nicely. As with the other pieces this evolves into a variety of sounds and tempos, but with the acoustic instruments. There is a lovely quiet section dominated by Abrahams and Dicke, followed by some electronic background. As with pieces of this type, it just keeps evolving, but my interest was always maintained.

Into the air starts moodily with electronics before the other instruments join in. And it builds with electronics over a repetitive piano.

I really love this record. If this group ever decides it needs a drummer, I am available.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

VASCO TRILLA UNMOVED MOVER DOWNLOAD

UNMOVED MOVER/ HYLOMORPHISM/ OUSIA/ LIVING BODIES/ NOUS/ HYLOZOISM/
CELESTIAL SPERES/ CAUSELESS CAUSE 40:32

Vasco Trilla Tympani, gongs Barcelona 30/06/2020

Solo percussion. Really looking forward to this.

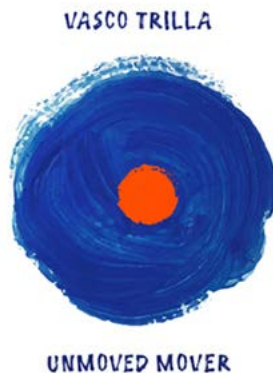
The recording opens with what sounds like electronic enhanced gongs and goes into a series of harmonic gongs. Very moody. Then we get a mix of tympani and gongs.

Ousia is all different gongs, producing an interesting melody. Living bodies uses tympany and high sounding bells or chimes. Great contrast with the low tympany and high bells or gongs. Not sure if there is electronic enhancement or just very high pitched gongs. Great tension.

Nous uses electronics, at least to my ears, to create a wall of sound with high pitched bells and low tympani. A bit jarring, but fascinating to hear it build. On Celestial Spheres he uses a siren, which reminded me of Ionosation by Edgar Varese. And the record ends quietly with bells.

I really enjoyed this recording, on a couple of levels. One, as a percussionist, I loved what Trilla was doing. Two he gave me some ideas for me to try. But most important, it was great to listen to really creative use of percussion.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

(1) ANDREAS WILLERS HAERAE

EVIL RABBIT RECORDS ERR 31

SO LOW / BOTH SINGLE / LANGH'S ARM 3-5 / MNEMO / LANGH'S ARM 6-8 / FAITEN / S GIENG / LANGH'S ARM 2. 48:31.

Andreas Willers, acoustic g. April 2020, Kleinmachnow, Germany.

(2) DIMITRI HOWALD - ILJA SPIRITUAL CYCLE

ANTIDRO - RECORDS

BLUE LAYERS / INTERLUDE / FOR A LITTLE FRIEND / WHITE SHOES / TAXI 31 / A MURDER OF CROWS / SPIRITUAL CYCLE. 71:17.

Howald, g; Michael Gilsenan, ts; Tom Millar, p; Jeremie Kruttli, b; Tobias Schmid, d. January 18-20, 2020, Switzerland.

German guitarist Andreas Willers has been a notable performer and recording artist in the Berlin jazz scene and internationally since the early 1980s. Among Willers's recent recordings is this creative and adventuresome one (1) on solo guitar. In the opener, "So Low," Willers uses the low range of the guitar and percussive sounds in an animated fashion. "Mnemo" includes pointed guitar and woodpecker-like sounds within its seven-minute profile. "Both Single" is of similar length, with tamborine and sharper percussive sounds leading to crystalline chords later in the piece. There is much contrast in the program, with the musically aggressive "Faiten" followed by the slower and pensive "S Gieng." Selections in the "Langh's Arm" series contain shorter focused segments, most in the two to three minute range, which are thoughtful and harmonically advanced.

Guitarist/composer Dimitri Howald and his quintet provide an interesting and varied program of music on (2), with top quality compositions and performances throughout. Much of the program proceeds in a connected way, with segues or transitions enhancing the musical development between some cuts. This occurs on the opening "Blue Layer," an animated minor blues, which transitions at its end into a spacey, echo-y feel in the next selection, "Interlude." The engaging "For a Little Friend" follows, with its latin rock groove, before things return to the contemplative side on "White Shoes," featuring some fine counterplay between Howald on guitar and Michael Gilsenan on tenor. Ear-catching rhythms introduce "Taxi 31" and "A Murder of Crows," both attractive vehicles which display strong playing from Tom Millar on acoustic piano, Jeremie Kruttli on bass, Gilsenan on tenor, and Tobias Schmid on drums. Howald's excellence in both the performing and compositional spheres is clear on the final selection "Spiritual Cycle," with effective guitar/tenor unisons and harmonies, and a dramatic buildup of musical development in the second half of the piece.

Don Lerman

New Issues

HUMANITY IS AN OCEAN - Yael KAT MODIANO ACHER

CENTAUR RECORDS 3830

BIRD: A BIRD ASSEMBLY DISTANCES AND SOUNDS, SUITE I-VII HUMANITY IS AN OCEAN: VARIATIONS ON A MOTIF MASQUERADE FOR THE DANCING SPIRITS, OP.6. BACH, JOHANN SEBASTIAN. CELLO SUITE NO.1 IN G MAJOR, BWV1007 (ARR. FOR FLUTE) DEBUSSY, CLAUDE. SYRINX FOR SOLO FLUTE. 65 MINUTES

Acher, flute, September 5th 2019 to February 5th 2020 at Engholm Church, Allerød, Denmark.

Fulbright scholar in music composition, Yael Acher aka KAT Modiano has released her fifth album of flute music, featuring the music of J.S. Bach, Debussy, and Acher. This is her first album for Centaur Records. The quality of the release is superb. The album opens like a small exquisite bird landing on your window sill. The ideas are clear and genuinely uplifting. Her phrasing and tempo keep this album sounding fresh, alive, and vibrant. Beautiful music. Yes, indeed, Humanity is an Ocean.

Zim Tarro



BERL OLSWANGER AND THE OLSWANGER BEAT

BIG ROUND RECORDS 8969

Original album released 1964, by Rivermont Records Recorded in Memphis, TN
SUTTON'S LICK, SUGAR BLUES, ALLEY CAT, SOUTH RAMPART STREET PARADE, SAINT LOUIS BLUES, AT A GEORGIA CAMP MEETING, RHYTHM IS OUR BUSINESS, BIG MISTREATIN' BITTERSWEET'N BLUES, AFTER YOU'VE GONE, YELLOW DOG BLUES, THE THIRD MAN THEME
OLSWANGER, piano; ART SUTTON trb; PEE WEE WAMBLE, trpt; TOMMY BENNETT, bs, BYRON HUDSON, cln; BOBBY RYAN drums JEANIE PAGE, voc,
FROM THE BACK COVER OF BERL OLSWANGER ORCHESTRA WITH THE OLSWANGER BEAT
Bert Olswanger has been a recognized leader in music circles since he was 12 years old and had his own radio show. Except for a four-year tour of duty in the United States Navy during World War II, his name has been synonymous with "Mr. Music of Memphis."

A fun historical recording, capturing Mr. Music of Memphis, Bert Olswanger. Well executed, clearly recorded - definitely in a groove, albeit one very distant to the music of most of our times. This takes you back, the solos are well defined. Joyous dance music from an era when dances were family event.

Zim Tarro

New Issues

DENNIS REA

GIANT STEPPES

MOON JUNE RECORDS

LIVE AT GAOCHANG/ (UYGHUR SUITE)/ ALTAI BY AND BY/ WIND OF THE WORLD'S NEST/ THE FELLOWSHIP OF TSERING 49:31

Collective personnel: Dick Valentine, as, ss flt; Greg Kelley, tpt; Stuart Dempster, Didgeridoo; Greg Campbell, Fr hrn; Don Berman, d, perc; Dennis Rea, elec g, kalimba, organ g; Albert Kuvezin, vcl; Wadim Dicke elec bass; Brian Oppel, d; Greg Powers, dungchen hrn; Steve Fisk, elec kybds; Daniel Zongrone d, perc Seattle and Siberia

The title, of course, refers to the Russian Steppes, and not Coltrane's tune. And the opening tune has that eastern flavor with its minor key and flute with a drone and a complex rhythm. The melody is then picked up by the guitar with assists from everyone, especially Valentine on alto. The rhythm on this piece is infectious. I got up and started to dance.

Altai has a distinctive melody performed by voices with guitar. Wind starts off with spoken word and then goes into a nice rhythm. I believe the solo instrument here is the organ guitar, followed by a guitar. And I believe the didgeridoo is heard here as well.

Fellowship starts off as straight ahead rock piece and then gets into interplay between everyone in a very abstract way, and then returns to the original feel. To my ears I hear a Frank Zappa influence.

This is a very interesting record with elements of rock, jazz and what is called world music. Rea makes it all work. This will get more than one more listen from me.

DRAGON

FLOATER

DMCHR 71285

FLOATER/ CARBON CHAUVINIST/ HIDDEN ROOM/ SHUTTER GUTTER/ PRIESTER/ PORK CHECK/ DEVIL'S CHOICE/ PHONE BREAKER/ DASHASHWAMEDH GHAT/ WHEN WE FEEL 47:34

Eric Hunziker, g; Thomas Tavano, elec bass; Tobias Hunziker, d Zurich, Sept 2019

Some solid fusion. Not my style but good solid playing. The tempos and textures are varied so the listener is kept alert. As I listen I find that one tune flows into the next. In a sense instead of thinking of this recording as having ten tunes, think of it as one long tune with many variations. This is the case especially since there are changes in tempo and mood with each piece. And we even get bass solos on Priestler, Phone Breaker and When We feel.

Eric Hunziker is a good solid player, providing good improvisations with great variations. Tavano's bass is sometimes lost in the mix, but when he is heard he provides solid support. Tobias Hunziker is a solid drummer but, as a mild criticism, I have a real problem listening to that dead snare sound that is so popular in this type of music.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

FLORIAN WEISS' WOODOISM ALTERNATE REALITY

NWOG RECORDS

INHALE,EXHALE/ SHIVERING TIMBERS/ VALSE DES PAPILLONS DE NUIT/ WABI-SABI/ THE WOODS ARE LOVELY, DARK AND DEEP/ FEUER IM TERMITENHUGEL/ FUGUE FUR A/ ALTERNATE REALITY VISITING OZ/ ALTERNATE REALITY DELIRIUM/ ALTERNATE REALITY AWAKENING
56:00

Linus Amstad, as, flt; Florian Weiss, tbn; Valentin v Fischer, bass; Philipp Leibundgun, d Bern, 2021

A straight a head jazz quartet. Real melodies and proper solos. The unison sound of the alto and trombone is really nice. It gives a more open feel than the more usual tenor and trombone sound.

The mood of Valse of Papillions is really nice. Not quite the way I would imagine a bunch of butterflies but still there is a nice feel to the piece. And the interplay between the horns is nice.

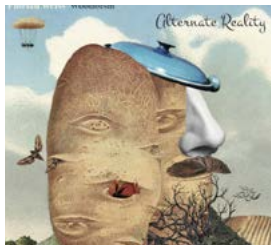
Though it is not listed on the notes, Amstad also plays flute as he leads off on Wabi Sabi The unison sound of flute and trombone is also interesting.

The Woods are lovely. Great moody playing by Amstad and Weiss with nice accompaniment by Fischer and Leibundgun. And on Feuer Amstad is truly on fire, running all over the horn with great accompaniment by Leibundgun.

The last three tunes are the title tracks. Oz actually ends with a quote from Over the Rainbow. Delirium is quiet with some lovely tinkling percussion with a nice bass line up front. And the wakening does awaken after the quiet delirium and features a very nice solo by Leibundgun with punctuations from the other members of the band.

In short a very nice recording. No surprises but some excellent playing.

Bernie Koenig



New Issues

ROY HARGROVE AND MULGREW MILLER,
IN HARMONY,
RESONANCE 2060.

DISC ONE: WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE? / THIS IS ALWAYS / I REMEMBER
CLIFFORD / TRISTE / INVITATION / CON ALMA. 52:38.

DISC TWO: NEVER LET ME GO / JUST IN TIME / FUNGI MAMA / MONK'S DREAM /
RUBY. MY DEAR / BLUES FOR MR. HILL / OW!. 50:51.

Hargrove, tpt, flgh; Miller, p. NYC,NY/ EASTON, PA.1/15/2006. 11/9/2007.

There is only one word to describe this wondrous gem=EXQUISITE.

Larry Hollis

RAHSAAN BARBER,
MOSAIC
JAZZ MUSIC CITY NO#.

DISC ONE: QUARANTINE QUEENS / CATCH AS KETCH CAN / THE PINK PIRANHA / DOWN IN MY
SOUL / HOME COOKIN' / JUST JACK / KOALA / JAMBO RAFIKI. 51:19.

DISC TWO: SWANG THAT THANG / THE MOUNTAINS AND THE CLOUDS / PANIC POINT /
NEW DAY ROCKS / SUNRISE SERVICE / NADJE AND THE SNOW / LA MORDIDA / BREONNA TAYLOR
(HOW MANY MORE?). 44:36.

Collective Personnel: Barber, as,ts,bars; Roland Barber, tbn, conch shell; Nathan Warner, tpt; Matt
Endahl, p; Jack Aylor,b; Derrek Phillips, d. 12/22&23/2020. Nashville, TN.

It's somewhat ironic that reedman Barber named his record label Jazz Music City, while having a small & subdued local jazz scene in Nashville, the only other player of note from there this writer could think of was Bennie Wallace, a highly individualistic saxophonist that has been under the radar for the last few years. Mosaic is Barber's third endeavor and it is quite impressive. The sixteen Barber compositions are equally divided between the two discs and range in time from less than two minutes ("Just Jack" & "NewDayRocks") to the over ten and one-half minutes of "The Mountain And The Clouds". All are arranged by the leader. The same trio of rhythm-mates from The Music In The Night return and their cohesiveness is illuminated even more so from the intervening years of performing together. Rahsaan's twin brother Roland is added to several cuts on blustery bone as is brightly-toned trumpeter Nathan Warner. The former is heard pulling a Steve Turre on conch shell on "Jambo Rafiki" while brother Rahsaan does the difficult task of playing alto and tenor (eflat/bflat respectively) simultaneously on the brief aforementioned "NewDayRocks". Most of these selections are self-explanatory title-wise especially the opening and closing numbers, "Swang That Thang" and the gospel themed "Sunrise Service". With this ambitious undertaking Rahsaan Barber has exhibited a notable growth in his artistic sensibility that bodes well for the future.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

MIKE LEDONNE IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT SAVANT RECORDS 2183.

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT / MATADOR / ROCK WITH YOU / STILL/ PARTY TIME / BAGS AND BROWN / BIGGEST PART OF ME / BLUES FOR JEB. 51;34.

LeDonne, org; Eric Alexander, ts; Peter Bernstein, g; Joe Farnsworth, d; Steve Wilson, Jim Snidero, as; Scott Robinson, Alexander, ts; Jason Marshall, bars; Jon Faddis, Frank Greene, Joe Magnarelli, Joshua Bruneau, tpt; Steve Davis, Mark Patterson, Dion Tucker, Doug Purviance, tbn; Bernstein, g; John Webber, b; Farnsworth, d. 2/12&13/2020. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

The year was 1962. Home on leave from the Navy my hands clutched the most recent "must have", a gate fold LP of just- street ed Jimmy Smith. Of extra importance, this was his initial big band date covering side one while the flip side held three trio tracks with Donald Bailey & Quentin Warren (mistakenly listed as Jimmy). Produced by Creed Taylor, with charts arranged by Oliver Nelson and beautifully engineered by Rudy Van Gelder this was the stuff dreams are made of. There was even a small notation on the original cover=Jimmy Smith performs by special permission of Blue Note Records, Inc. Needless to say the success of that record set off a virtual tsunami of organ/big band releases from the likes of Brother Jack McDuff, Jimmy McGriff and a host of others. The latest of which is this compact disc by Mike LeDonne with five large group cuts and three titles by his combo The Groover Quartet. Wisely chosen by the keyboardist for arranging duties, Dennis Mackrell is a seasoned professional who has occupied the drum throne for Basie and the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra to name but a few. His deft charts are easily handled by a contingent of crack players many readers will recognize. On Jimmy Smith's Verve debut mentioned above most of the big band non-organ solos were handled by either altoist Phil Woods or Joe Newman on trumpet. That is not the case here as the entire solo space is allotted to tenor or guitar rides (other than the organ of course) by members of the Groover unit. Other than the back-beated Lionel Ritchie ballad which is a feature for Alexander's lush tenoring the order of solos is either sax or guitar followed by the leader. The large group numbers include the kickoff title tune (where LeDonne employs his own bass lines under his solo), Grant Greens largely forgotten "Matador", the shuffled Michael Jackson hit "Rock With You" with the other example of organ bass, the finger-popping "Party Time" off of Lee Morgan's The Procrastinator album with a Charles Earland tag before the chop ending and the call&response head of another original where he heads back into Jimmy Smith territory. The other quartet selections are "Biggest Part Of Me" where work-horse Joe Farnsworth finally gets to stretch out in a full-fledged drum spot, the aforementioned Eric Alexander feature and the final "Blues For Jeb" an infectious shuffle that sports the best soloing (to these ears) from all hands. My only puzzlement about this title is with all the power-packed horn sections there are no trumpet or trombone solo spots? Otherwise a worthy addition to the organ with big band tradition.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

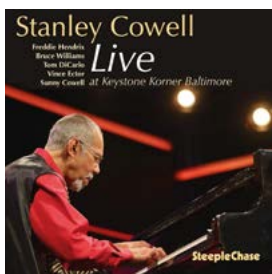
STANLEY COWELL LIVE AT KEYSTONE KORNER BALTIMORE STEEPLECHASE 31908.

CAL MASSEY / CHARLESTON RAG / MONTAGE FOR TOLEDO / EQUIPOISE(*)/ IT'S TIME / BANANA PUDDING / NO ILLUSIONS / THIS LIFE. 71:55.

Cowell,p; Freddie Hendrix, tpt; Bruce Williams, as; Tom DiCarlo,b; Vince Ector,d; Sunny Cowell,vcl(*).October 2019. Baltimore,MD.

There's a multitude of great piano players that never received a fraction of the accolades granted the celebrated few (no names necessary). A list of the aforementioned would no doubt take up the majority of this allotted space. Needless to say, the late Stanley Cowell definitely fits into that hallowed category. Yet it isn't the gratitude we should show him for his musical contributions only but the horde of great music contained in the StrataEast catalog helmed by him and the still viable Charles Tolliver. This sampling from a club gig finds Cowell's trio joined by the exothermic horns of long time associate Williams and relative newcomer Hendrix. This makes for some fully loaded fireworks for his first "in person" album in almost three decades. Freddie's fiery trumpet blends with the tart altoing of Bruce like mac and cheese. The half dozen leader's compositions are like a return visit from some cherished old friends; reworkings of tunes educated listeners should recognize including arguably his most celebrated writing "Equipoise" rendered in ethereal voice by his daughter. The other non-originals from two largely forgotten giants Max Roach and Eubie Blake. The latter is a real hoot and displays the leader's encyclopedic knowledge (a la Jackie Byard) of past styles and masters. Hopefully this will not be the last we have heard from Stanley Cowell but if it is, all this writer can muster to say is "What a way to go out". Unquestionably recommended.

Larry Hollis



New Issues

RONNIE CUBER/GARY SMULYAN TOUGH BARITONES

STEEPLECHASE 31903.

BLOWING THE BLUES AWAY / THAT'S THE GROOVY THING / LITTLE SUN FLOWER / NICA'S DREAM / DAMN RIGHT BLUES / LOVER / WELL YOU NEEDN'T / THE PREACHER / SPLIT KICK / INTERVALS. 61:50.

Cuber, Smulyan, bars; Gary Versace, p; Jay Anderson, b; Jason Tiemann, d. 4/2019. No location listed.

If you're anything like me, a died-in-the-wool analog aficionado whose so retro he feels like a hitch-hiker on the information highway, then this is the album for you. If one ignores the recording date listed on the back tray, Neil Tesser's excellent liners dated November 2020 or the 2021 label marking this delightful session could easily be a "blast from the past" that sails over your sound system like a fresh ocean breeze. As noted in the accompanying booklet there have many memorable pairings of horn players over the years but this one was surely a no-brainer. Both men have well-documented pedigrees that the majority of this publication's readers are no doubt aware of. Expertly backed by a threesome of lesser-known musicians they roar through a no-ballad program of jazz gems from the likes of Horace Silver (4 tunes), Freddie Hubbard, Thelonious Monk, Red Prysock and two Cuber originals. Even the lone standard (Lover) is taken at a brisk tempo. One would be hard-pressed to mistake this burner-filled package for an ECM issue. So leave those "dusty diamonds" from yesteryear on the shelf and dig into this nouveau retro jazz (with a capital J) disc.

Larry Hollis





Editor's note: at the time of publication, Cadence has not been able to verify the death of Francois Grillot.

REMEMBERING- FRANCOIS GRILLOT

by Cheryl Pyle

The sad news of the death of bassist Francois Grillot started on June 6, 2021. We still cannot find any official date but that day is when the news and posts on Facebook began. I played so many wonderful concerts with Francois, many Beyond Duos with flute and bass, and met him at ABC no Rio in around 2013, where we played many Duos. It was around that time that Bern Nix showed up at a lot of our gigs and we started playing together too. I could always tune into his bass sound and ideas and improvising, it was so clear. One of the first times I was at the kitchen, at his apt, we rehearsed for a trio with Claire de Brunner on Bassoon to play at ABC no Rio. I heard from him in March 2021 around his birthday, he asked if he could play with the all women free jazz group of mine, Musique Libre Femmes. He mentioned he would wear a dress, that's the last time we wrote, but we had always meant to play more, when the COVID-19 pause was lifted.

I was also privileged to play with him at University of the Streets, Grotto, Why not Jazz, Parkside, Spectrum, Dissident Arts Festival at Frost Gallery 17 and many 12 House Orchestra concerts at Michiko Studio and Scholes Studio. One of my favorite memories was a concert we played downtown, Beyond Quartet, and a Duo we played at Why not Jazz on the west side, and Beyond Quintet at the 2019 Dissident Arts Festival at Frost Gallery 17. He was a strong improviser, a comedian at times, and his wonderful bass sound still rings on in our hearts and memories.

Obituaries - 2021



Curtis Fuller

ALLON SCHOENER, died on April 8, 2021. He was 91.

CURTIS FULLER, trombone, died on May 8, 2021. He was 88.



Mario Pavone

FRANCOIS GRILLOT bassist, died around June 6, 2021. No further information is available at this time.



Norman Simmons

JEFF CHAMBERS, bassist, died on May 18th, 2021. He was 66.

MARIO PAVONE bassist, died on May 15th, 2021. He was 80.



Peter Hollinger

NORMAN SIMMONS, pianist, died on May 13th 2021. He was 91.

PETER HOLLINGER, drummer, died on May 31st, 2021. He was 67.



Bob Fass

ROBERT GREGG KOESTER, founder of Delmark Records in Chicago, died on May 12, 2021. He was 89.



Royal Stokes

ROBERT MORTON FASS, host of Radio Unnameable, died on April 24, 2021. He was 87.

W. ROYAL STOKES, writer, died on May 1, 2021. He was 90.

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."

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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 Brennan 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 (Crownsnest 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

Short Takes: Calgary, Canada

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 Sinclair 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.

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.

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 enjoyable. 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.

Festival Review Vision Festival 25



LAURA CROMWELL JOHN ZORN PHOTO CREDIT - KEN WEISS



REGGIE WORKMAN PHOTO CREDIT - KEN WEISS



JAMES BLOOD ULMER PHOTO CREDIT - KEN WEISS

Festival Review Vision Festival 25



ARUAN 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

Festival Review Vision Festival 25



WILLIAM PARKER PHOTO CREDIT - KEN WEISS

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

©2021 by Patrick Hinely

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

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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 knowledgeably, 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.

Feature: **1974 by Oregon**



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.

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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.

Feature: **1974 by Oregon**



OREGON outside their hotel before departure from Tampa, Florida, mid-November 1977.

L-R: Collin Walcott, Ralph Towner, Glen Moore, Paul McCandless.

©1977 Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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

Feature: **1974 by Oregon**



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®.

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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.

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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 heartfelt, 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

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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

Feature: 1974 by Oregon



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.

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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

Feature: **1974 by Oregon**



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®.

Feature: 1974 by Oregon

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

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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®.

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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 Tunçboyacıyan).

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

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

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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 Tunçboyacıan, 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.

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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 Calendary 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 Celestial 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.

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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 improviser, 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,

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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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Alan Silva



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

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 it's 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. Celestial 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 computer 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 these 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 Celestial 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 Fillmore 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 Rothchild] 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 distributor 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 Skillfulness. 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. Skillfulness 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 Celestial 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 improviser. 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 Celestial Communications Orchestra was an 11-piece ensemble [including Leroy Jenkins, Anthony Braxton, Shepp, Malachi Favors, Dave Burrell and Grachan Moncur III] 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 III, Clifford Thornton and myself, an exclusive contract to make two albums a year. In Paris, Archie Shepp 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 Celestial 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 Celestial instead of Celestial? Celestial 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 Celestial 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 Celestial 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 Celestial 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 than the time he played in my Celestial 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 Celestial 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 Celestial 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 Celestial 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 Celestial 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 improvisational 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 Eremita 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.

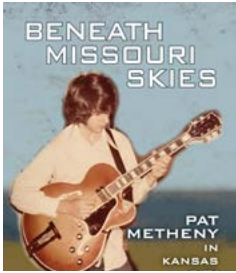
Muhammad Ali (drums) asked: "You were my favorite bass player at that time, when you were playing with Albert Ayler and Cecil Taylor, and then when we met and started playing together. We developed together from '74 and into the '80s, and as much as we played, we were able to find each other and our 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, ALTOISM.

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 too 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 it's 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

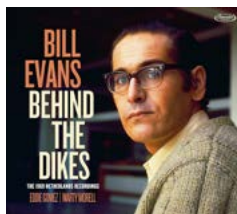
BILL EVANS, BEHIND THE DIKES, ELEMENTAL 5990441.

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 repertoire 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 than 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 too 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

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

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

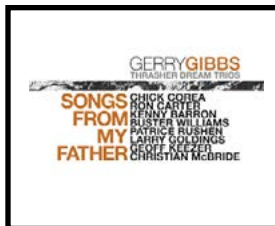
DISC ONE: KICK THOSE FEET(2)/ SMOKE 'EM UP(3)/ BOPSTACLE COURSE (1) NUTTY NOTES(4)/ TAKE IT FROM ME(2)/ SWEET YOUNG SONG OF LOVE (1)/ THE FAT MAN(4)/ LONELY DAYS(3)/ HEY CHICK(ALL 4 TRIOS + TERRY GIBBS). 48:12.

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 Schwartz, 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

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

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 Helvacioğlu, elec guitarviol; İzzet 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.

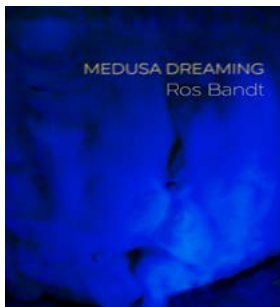
The water theme runs through the recording very nicely. The flute and air whistle create lovely open sounds, underscored by the strings and percussion. The tarhu sounds very much like a harp in places. The combination of harp and flute is magnificent. While this music is so different, I started thinking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

GGRIL - SOMMES

TOUR DE BRAS RECORDS

DISC 1 ALICE/ CHAT/ LIOTS 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

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

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 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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.

Gauche 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 American 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

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

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

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 constrained 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 O'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

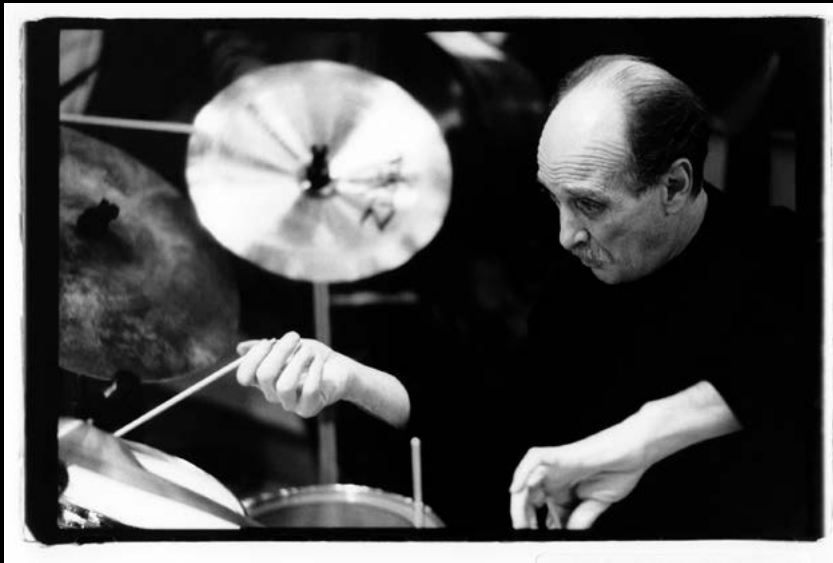


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ARTHUR JUINI BOOTH

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 groundbreaking 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 Marengo / 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 Schaap

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



Brian Buchanan

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



Rick Laird

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

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

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

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