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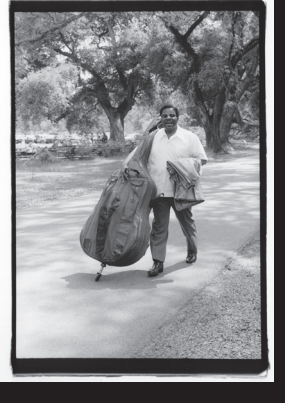

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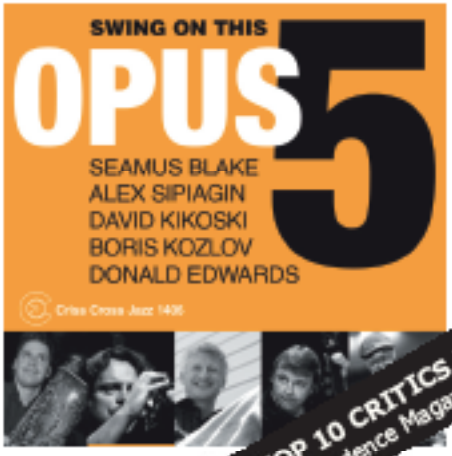

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5005	Salim Washington	Live at St. Nick's
5006-5012	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Live on Tour 2006
5013	Gebhard Ullmann + Steve Swell 4tet	Live in Montreal
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5015-5019	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Trio-X - Live on Tour 2008
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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.*

PATRICK HINELY (Features, Jazz Stories, a Photo History) *makes his living as a photographer and is based in Lexington, Virginia. He has been photographing and writing about musicians since 1971.*

LARRY HOLLIS (Album 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 (Album 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 (Album Reviews) *is a professor of music and philosophy at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, Canada. He had two books published includinig 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 (Album and Concert Reviews) *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.*

JEFFREY D. TODD *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.*

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

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

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CADENCE

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

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Inside This Issue

CADENCE MAGAZINE EDITORIAL POLICY

Established in January 1976, Cadence Magazine was a monthly publication through its first 381 issues (until September 2007). Beginning with the October 2007 issue, Cadence increased in number of pages, changed to perfect binding, and became a quarterly publication. On January 1, 2012 Cadence Magazine was transferred to Cadence Media L.L.C. Cadence Magazine continues as an online publication and one print issue per year. Cadence Media, LLC, is proud to continue the policies that have distinguished Cadence as an important independent resource.

From its very first issue, Cadence has had a very open and inclusive editorial policy. This has allowed Cadence to publish extended feature interviews in which musicians, well known or otherwise, speak frankly about their experiences and perspectives on the music world; and to cover and review all genres of improvised music. We are reader supported.

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

Short Takes - Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, PA: The Bad Plus at World Café Live on 12/10 brought its new lineup to town for the first time. Gone is Orrin Evans (still waiting to hear the real reason he left after two albums), replaced by reedist Chris Speed and guitarist Ben Monder. Their sound is very different now, it might be time to change their name. Reid Anderson and Dave King remain as a singular rhythm section and still write their tunes that bridge modern Jazz and Rock but there was a noted absence of the humor/playfulness that the original band made its rep on while churning out Rock covers. Of note, there were no cover songs this night. This is not to say that a band can't evolve, it's just that The Bad Plus have morphed away from what made them unique. There was a bit of Mahavishnu Orchestra at the start with "Motivations II" and "Anthem For The Earnest," a King tune from their Suspicious Activity? release, while "Stygian Pools" showcased the uncanny connection between Anderson and King, and their ability to stop-and-go. The quartet proved to be well rehearsed and really soared on King's composition "Sick Fire" which started with solo Rock-ish drum pummeling and soon all were flying along with a crush of wonderful sound and guitar noise – all done with a bright red backdrop of light and audience cheers. The encore piece – "The Dandy"- featured Speed on reedy clarinet and an ever-shifting downbeat that ended the set on a high note. Illy B – also known as Billy Martin opened the program with a solo set of percussion. He spent less time at his drum set to focus on his wide array of other sound making items such as small cymbals, two handfuls of shrubbery that he shook fervently for rustling sounds, and used a pair of corn whisk brooms as brushes. One section that really stood out was his sampling/layering of various bird calls that he produced into a chorus of chirps. At the end he explained that, "Every time I play it's improvisational. Thanks for bringing that out in me!"… Nasheet Waits (d)/Miles Okazaki (g)/Hannah Marks (b) at Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop) on 12/15 was made possible by New York City's The Jazz Gallery's Mentorship Program that pairs aspiring musicians with established Jazz artists in order to learn the music and business of Jazz. It seemed a daunting task at the onset to hang in there with gunslingers Waits and Okazaki but the young bassist held her own throughout the set of very interesting compositions. Waits' set list started with Sam Rivers' "Unity," Geri Allen's "No More Mr. Nice Guy," Monk's "Trinkle, Tinkle," and Okazaki's "Kudzu." Waits' hyperkinetic drumming on the Allen tune was a stunner and it was a treat to have him presenting in the leader role, spotlighting his playing. That's not to say that he overtook the music, it was well balanced, but it was a change to hear as the bandleader. Okazaki played enough rapid fire guitar to render images of the late Pat Martino…On 12/23 at Solar Myth, Ars Nova Workshop celebrated the release of Milford Graves: A Mind-Body Deal (Inventory Press), a new catalogue of the museum exhibition it organized in Philadelphia in 2020 to commemorate the life and work of the iconoclastic artist Milford Graves. Graves participated with the exhibition which subsequently ran in New York and will soon be in L.A. The catalogue features contributions from Fred Moten, William Parker, moor mother, and many others, along with documenting the exhibit. Multi-instrumentalist and longtime collaborator and friend of Prof. Graves, Shahzad Ismaily, played in duet with drummer Marlon Patton for the musical portion of the night.

Short Takes - Philadelphia

The Bad Plus at World Café Live on 12/10
Ben Monder - Reid Anderson - Chris Speed - Dave King

Nasheet Waits at Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop) on 12/15

Short Takes - Philadelphia

Billy Martin at World Cafe Live 12/10

Shahzad Ismaily at Solar Myth 12/23

Short Takes - Philadelphia

Bobby Zankel - Jaleel Shaw - Sumi Tonooka - Richard Hill - Pheeroan akLaff

Kalia Vandever Solar Mython 1/19

Short Takes - Philadelphia

Marc Ribot and the Jazz-Bins with Greg Lewis and Chad Taylor at Solar Myth on 2/23

Nduduzo Makhathini - Hamilton De Holanda at City Winery on 2/27

Short Takes - Philadelphia

Ravi Coltrane - Nicholas Payton at Chris' Jazz Café 2/11

Marshall Allen - William Parker - James Brandon Lewis - Chad Taylor - DM Hotep - Tara Middleton 2/28 at Solar Myth

Ismaily at the start implored the audience not to clap until the end and, "If the music is unprovocative or just mediocre, don't applaud at all." Patton, best known for his association with the Lonnie Holley band, laid a groundwork of bubbling percussion as Ismaily spent time running through his array of instruments – drums, electric guitar, nylon string guitar, shakers, electric bass and droning Moog. Once the short set concluded, Ismaily sat at stage front and called on audience members to ask him questions about Milford or anything such as, "What I had for breakfast or why I'm wearing a jumpsuit." The young lady he called on first did indeed take him up on his offer to talk about his breakfast and it turned out he'd gone to a recording session and Mark Ribot came by with a bowl of oatmeal which he took half of. He was asked to sum up in 5 words what he learned from Graves and answered with, "Surfing the wave much easier." He said Graves was such a powerful player that you were compelled to meet him on "the wave" of what he was doing, "You have to be with him." Ismaily also learned from Graves that, "The voice is the closest you can get to vibrating the body so do everything from a singing voice [approach]."…Bobby Zankel had not had a significant musical presentation since New Year's Eve 2019 so he made his 12/30 Painted Bride offering a night to remember with a stacked crew of Jaleel Shaw (as), Sumi Tonooka (p), Richard Hill (b), Pheeroan akLaff (d) and vocalist Ruth Naomi Floyd. Zankel has a new recording [Changing Destiny] coming out based on funding he received to create dance music inspired by looking into and talking about the practice of slavery in the first White House [which was in Philadelphia at 6th and Market St]. Some of the performers on the recording were different but Zankel was so excited by the music he wanted to perform it before an audience before the end of the year. After failing to hire an available tenor player (he prefers the sound of the alto anyway), Zankel got Shaw, a Philadelphia native Zankel's known since Shaw was 12, to come back home. Zankel always puts his heart and soul into his work and his compositions are continually a challenge to play, but the band, who performed a scaled-down version of the recording project, invested themselves in the engrossing music. The leader's sometimes astringent alto was a good fit with Shaw's warmer sounding approach. Tonooka, who had a number of her students in the audience, added her voice in a non-formulaic way with colorful additions while Floyd episodically sang short sections straight out of the church, before completing the night with a tearjerking rendition of "Come Sunday," the only non-original piece covered. akLaff, who couldn't remember the last time he played in town, "soloed" all night long, driving the music compellingly, taking the intensity up a notch on his solo and required a wardrobe change at intermission. That led to Zankel humbly saying the following day that akLaff, "Just stole the evening. He's just remarkably creative with a wide vocabulary musically and a wonderful guy." Zankel also said he's been a fan of akLaff's for a long time but this was the first time the two performed in public together and that he specifically needed him for this project because, "It's dealing with a lot of different kinds of music." A surprise bonus this night was the Spoken Word offerings from Sekai Afua Zankel, the leader's wife… Cyrus Chestnut at Chris' Jazz Café on 1/13 marked a

rare Philadelphia appearance of the Baltimore-based piano virtuoso. Aided with his steady trio of bassist Eric Wheeler and drummer Chris Beck, he attracted a large audience to his second set. Touring in support of a new release dedicated to his father, a self-taught pianist and organist who played in church and the man who first taught him to play. His father passed in 2021. The trio opened with Duke Jordan's "No Problem," Rodgers and Hart's "Lover" in ¾ time before heading into the set's highlight - a version of Miles Davis' "Nardis," which featured Chestnut's most devastating solo of the performance. While still pinning together elements of Bluesy, spiritual playing, he expanded outside his envelope, perhaps funneled by thoughts of his father. At one point, he ran up and down the keyboards, evoking a breaking glass sound. A melancholy rendition of McCartney and Lennon's "Yesterday," and then a Bluesy "Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You?" followed. He finally did an original piece, "Epilogue," a recent composition "inspired by the last minutes of my father's life." Chestnut announced his father told him on his deathbed that he didn't leave him an inheritance but did give him the music and that was his gift to him…Young trombonist Kalia Vandever was attracted to trombone the very first time she heard one (Delfeayo Marsalis playing on a CD) and she's come a long way towards mastering the instrument herself since then. Touring in support of her second release, Vandever sold out Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop) on 1/19 with an audience that seemed well aware of her work – (I have to admit she was a new name for me). No doubt appearing on Saturday Night Live with Demi Lovato, performing on Samantha Bee's Full Frontal with Lizzo, and her work with Harry Styles has helped solidify her reputation. Turns out, her youthful quartet was entrancingly modern yet rooted in the tradition. It's rare to have a female trombonist leader and doubly rare to have a group of emerging artists (who are looking to make a name for themselves) be so dedicated and invested in group play and not showy runs of virtuosic peacocking. Vandever's group included electric guitarist Lee Meadvin, whose playing included elements of Mary Halvorson, Miles Okazaki, and John McLaughlin ("Yes, I listen to all of them," he said), bassist Kanoa Mendenhall, who made her debut with the leader this night, and drummer Connor Parks. The soft spoken Vandever announced at the start, "We're gonna play music for you tonight," and they did – working their way down a setlist that mirrored the order of the recording. The music was filled with beauty, loss and regeneration, much of it riding on the back of Vandever's lovely legato playing. One composition to point out was "More of the Good Stuff Later," a touching piece inspired by one of the last conversations she had with her grandfather who struggled with Alzheimer's before passing away in 2019… Ars Nova Workshop had another sold-out gig the next night (as well as the following night) with an all-star band put together and led by local hero alto saxophonist Bobby Zankel. Bobby Zankel and the Wonderful Sound Time Travelers included Chicago's tenor sax colossus - Isaiah Collier (search the YouTube video with him and James Carter!), bassist supreme - William Parker, pianist, Sumi Tonooka, and drummer Pheeroan akLaff – who got the call the day before to fill in for the two scheduled percussionists who both got sick. No worries – if you need someone to fill in for two drummers – akLaff is your man – he drove the band all night long. Oddly enough, he

played in thick, black gloves as his wife watched from the front row. The lengthy two sets of high octane fueled and spiritually uplifting music began with the youngest and least established of the quintet – Collier. Decked out in all black and shaded glasses, Collier presented a striking appearance – reed thin and tall (he wore thick soled boots which added even more height). It was a potent pairing to have him on stage next to Zankel, a man who spent many years with Cecil Taylor and has dedicated his life to pursuing music from the soul with the utmost integrity and honesty. Zankel remains all about the music and never about himself. It was heartwarming to watch Zankel tear it up on his solos while Collier watched from the side, beaming with appreciation/admiration. When Zankel and Collier played together with the ensemble, they performed as like-minded mystics, losing themselves in their calling. Sorry to heap on the superlatives here but, damn, this was special. At points, both saxophonists stood next to each other, arching their backs in unison, screaming beautifully from their horns, without an ounce of premeditated showmanship. William Parker was rock solid as always, smiling in the rear of the stage at times, he showed off some new fancy hand and wrist slaps on one of his solos. Tonooka added unique color statements to the mix but was hampered by the use of an electric keyboard that didn't seem to fit with the music as a whole. Most of the music was penned by the leader along with a piece by Collier and some of the music of John Coltrane – "Compassion" and "Venus."… Kahil El'Zabar's Ethnic Heritage Ensemble has been invigorating audiences with February tours for 49 years with varying personnel. Trumpeter Corey Wilkes and baritone saxophonist Alex Harding have been helping out for a number of years now and have formed quite the connection with El'Zabar's vision of combining concepts of African American music-making with the roots of traditional African music to produce something that carried the music into the 21st century and beyond - spreading the precepts of the Association For The Advancement Of Creative Musicians based in Chicago. He formulated this desire after returning from his studies at the University of Ghana. Percussionist, composer, vocalist, and bandleader El'Zabar often establishes trancelike grooves within his music so each set intentionally becomes a healing session that includes a short talk on taking care of each other and the need to set good examples for the younger generation – many of whom he feels have lost their way. Switching between kalimba, cajón and a small traditional drum set, El'Zabar remained in constant motion – vocalizing/chanting and also often wearing tambourine attachments on his right foot. The set started with "Black is Back," a very Bluesy, funky segment that led into a rousing rendition of Coltrane's "Resolution." "Caravan" followed with muted trumpet, bubbling bari and El'Zabar beating an unusual path center stage on cajón. El'Zabar later returned to cajón to sit and mimic playing saxophone with his hands while scatting it for a portion that drew cheers. A late cover of "Freedom Jazz Dance" was full of Funk, groove, Jazz and African elements, further establishing Kahil El'Zabar's Ethnic Heritage Ensemble as a rare and passionate life force…Chris' Jazz Café presented their Second Annual Lee Morgan Tribute Weekend With The Orrin Evans Quintet across two nights featuring modern torchbearer Ravi

Coltrane and post-modernist Nicholas Payton, along with bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Mark Whitfield, Jr. Their final set on 2/11 drew two songs from Morgan's The Procrastinator album - starting with Wayne Shorter's "Rio" and later the funky pleaser "Party Time." Morgan's classic "Ceora" was beautifully rendered by the accomplished horn section, both of whom had plenty of solo time during the night and short periods of shared playing. Evans called up locally-based drum veteran and Buddy Rich alum -Mike Boone – to man the bass on Evans' original tune, a real barnburner, "Don't Fall Off the Ledge." That was it for Curtis as another local bass star, Madison Rast, replaced Boone (one thing Evans has always done has been to support the local Jazz scene and help focus attention on his musical brethren – young and old). The night eventually ended with "The Theme," featuring floating heads played by each member. It was a fun set for all, especially enjoyed by a grinning Evans who was swaying and dancing on the piano bench at times and rising to his feet when so inspired. He announced he's already looking forward to the 3rd annual show in 2024. When asked how the lineups are picked (last year's tribute included Evans with Robin Eubanks, Sean Jones, Tim Warfield and Nasheet Waits), Evans said he brainstorms with Al McMahon, the venue's talent booker…Marc Ribot and the Jazz-Bins (Greg Lewis, org; Chad Taylor, d) at Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop) on 2/23 was a fast-paced Funk-Blues-Jazz romp covering a seamless array of mainly funkified Grant Green arrangements such as "Ain't it Funky," "After Shower Funk," and "Grant Stand." Ribot assumed his traditional seated, slumped over position with charts scattered every which way on the floor around his chair, only looking up to smile approvingly at Lewis's Hammond B3 searing work or to give directions as the infectious grooves took root. Ribot said these tours are set up a year and a half in advance and he had to come up with a group so he settled on organ, a nod to his early career in 1979 as a member of Captain Jack McDuff's Hammond B-3 combo for a few months. The drum chair in the trio was a rotating seat and Taylor was sublime in the role this night…South African pianist (and Blue Note recording artist) Nduduzo Makhathini joined forced with Brazilian 10-string mandolin (bandolim) player Hamilton De Holanda at City Winery on 2/27. The project was billed as Routes of Discovery – an exploration of the musical diaspora from the slave trade to the present day - a transcendent musical saga of the struggles and shared memories within their communities. The subject matter was quite heavy but the actual performance was filled with happiness and connectivity. Both musicians flashed easy smiles and joy while sharing original tunes with each other and both played numerous styles of music from their countries. It was clear to see why Wynton Marsalis thought to connect the two together, which was how they met. The set began with two De Holanda originals, including "A Portion of Happiness and Peace" which was composed only 5 days previously. Makhathini spoke at some length about creating songs and how he has failed in the past – "You've got to do something you know is impossible but you've got to do it anyway" and how he tries to "compose the self into the dimension of song – tries to go inside of song. Songs are memories and the futures that we tap into." A highlight came with a rendition of De Holanda's "Maxixe Samba Groove," the title track off his new release

which just cornered a Latin Grammy for Best Instrumental Album. They took some solo space to represent their respective countries. Makhathini played Abdullah Ibrahim's "The Wedding Song," while De Holanda did Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Águas de Março" and "The Girl From Ipanema."…At 98, Marshall Allen has made some concessions to age and plans to do less grinding travel, thus, he's more available to play in town. He loves to play and his burning desire to perform shows no signs of slowing down. Ars Nova Workshop arranged the latest "pop-up" hit for Allen on 2/28 at Solar Myth under the title of Marshall Allen's Ghost Horizons – which apparently is an ongoing series of quickly arranged gigs with revolving personnel. This rendition included William Parker (b), James Brandon Lewis (ts), Chad Taylor (d) and Arkestra bandmates – DM Hotep (g) and Tara Middleton (vcl). Parker said he got called for the performance one week in advance and didn't hesitate to play once again with the grand maestro, telling Cadence, "When I get the call, I answer." This marked the first time Lewis was to play with Allen and the young tenor rebooked a flight from Seattle earlier that morning to have the opportunity. Minutes before the gig, Lewis said, "Don't let my calm demeanor conceal my excitement." Once the set started, it was all that you'd expect – fiery playing and space exploration. It's not new that Allen has been spending less time on his alto – he also used EWI and a tiny Casio keyboard – as well as hand directing the group. Middleton started off singing, "Who are you to tell me space isn't real?," and bedazzled with her soft, pretty voice and striking blue lipstick, glittery oversized spectacles and tights. She followed by singing, "It's spring, spring time again," offset by alto blasts from Allen and then tenor exclamations by Lewis. Renditions of "Space is the Place" and "We Travel the Spaceways" followed but most of the night was spent on instrumental performances including a late jam supported with funky rhythms by Taylor, Lewis' percussive accompaniment and Parkers booming, grounding bass. The night ended with surprising song choices from Middleton – "'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," and then – "I'd like to do one of my favorite soundcheck songs. Can I do that Marshall?" It was the theme from "The Love Boat" done with an echo effect…Tim Berne was celebrated with a two-night residency at Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop) on 3/10-11. The first night featured his long running (13 years this year) Sun Of Goldfinger band with David Torn (g, elec) and Ches Smith (d, perc), joined by special guest New Orleans accordionist Aurora Nealand. I'd seen the core group perform 3 times previously and this night's quartet maintained the dynamic intensity and ebb and flow sense of danger present in the earlier performances but the addition of Nealand brought sonic creations up a notch. The set started with Torn's sparse guitar soon joined by Berne's pleasingly caustic alto and a slow group build to great dramatic peaks of sound that would sustain and then drop. Nealand began by sitting on the stage, handling electronic pedals before switching to clarinet and finally accordion, on which she shined and connected with her bandmates. Berne was especially sensitive to what Nealand was doing on accordion and often mirrored it. The long first piece was followed by a second shorter segment that began with Berne blowing air through his horn for a windy, gurgling effect that turned into high pitched overtones. Torn, always

interesting to watch on stage with his shock of long white hair that illuminates with stage lighting and his in constant motion, playing guitar and manning his gaggle of electronic devices. He was on point, adding just the right amount of electric guitar soundscapes. Their music was loud and Torn could easily overwhelm the sound but he never did. Berne ran out a new quartet the next night called Bat Channel featuring guitarist Gregg Belisle-Chi, bassist Eivind Opsvik and drummer Jeff Davis. After Berne played some warmup on his alto he announced, "That wasn't music yet – I just wanted to let you know." He also said, tongue-in-cheek, after playing "Sludge," the first song – "I can't guarantee I'm gonna talk the rest of the night. I will if it's going well." This group was heavily into Berne's charts on stage as opposed to his band the previous night which relied on improvisation. His songs, often pulsatile, dense and angular, led by his stunning alto playing, paired well with Belisle-Chi's expansive guitar playing. It's notable that Belisle-Chi credits Berne as a big influence and has released a solo recording of Berne's music, as well as releasing a duo recording with him…The Dave Douglas (tpt) and Elan Mehler (p) Sextet ended their American tour on 3/18 at Solar Myth (Ars Nova Workshop). This new project combines Jazz and poetry – more specifically - haiku within the context of improvising music with the help of vocalist Dominique Eade, John Gunther (ts, cl), Simón Willson (b) and Rudy Royston (d). Douglas explained that the music performed was from If There Are Mountains, a recording released on Mehler's high end LP label Newvelle Records and now available on CD, which was, "Based on haiku that are hundreds of years old with really beautiful images we were inspired to create to." The compositions were authored equally between Douglas and Mehler. Eade had her work cut out for her – these are tricky melodies to sing but she succeeded in doing them all so elegantly. On 17th-century poet Bashō's "Village of No Bells," she sang, "Village of no bells/ spring evenings/ what's to listen for?" On Japanese poet Santoka Taneda's title track haiku Eade sang, "If there are mountains, I look at the mountains. On rainy days, I listen to the rain… Spring, summer, autumn, winter/ tomorrow too will be good,/ tonight, too is good." Douglas humorously introduced "We Saw You Off" as a rather "grisly" title, something out of a horror movie but it had especially touching lyrics - "We saw you off/ And returning through the fields/ I thought, morning dew had wet my sleeves/ But it was tears." Douglas also displayed a sense of humor after announcing a run of tunes, he said, "What else can I say?" A voice from the rear of the space yelled, "Play!" To which the trumpeter answered, "Am I that captivating?" The talented band was heavily situated in the tradition more so than what Ars Nova typically presents but each artist had their time to push the envelope a bit. Douglas is always a standout performer who can seemingly do anything he wants on his instrument [which explains why a number of local trumpeters were in attendance including Bhob Rainey and Bart Miltenberger]. It's always nice to see the band having fun and that was especially true on the late set rendition of "Barn's Burnt Down" which featured Mehler's effectively raw barrelhouse piano and scream/singing the words to the haiku by Masahide - "Barn's burnt down now, I can see the moon!," while Douglas rushed over with a mic each time the singing started.

Concert Review

ESPERANZA SPALDING AND FRED HERSCH AT JAZZ ALLEY 1/25/23

Seattle, PA - It was no surprise when the Esperanza Spalding Fred Hersch two night engagement at Seattle's Jazz Alley was sold out and an additional late show had to be added. This allowed many more people to attend this thought provoking, explosively creative concert. Listener's were about to witness something uniquely different from the standard Jazz experience.

Fred Hersch is playing a strikingly in tune grand piano and Esperanza is on vocals. It was quite a surprise and even disappointing to discover she would not be playing Bass. That disappointment soon faded away when the music began an we experienced Esperanza's vocal abilities. Hersch would use his mastery of the Piano and all that is musical to enhance Esperanza's every vocal inflection. Working with her shifting time and sometimes spoken words the two of them became one and the time would become relative. This was a multi layered artistic event that encompassed the rhythm of poetry and storytelling with elements of humor, politics and being human. Esperanza conversed with the audience on a very personal and uplifting level but then there were also moments of satire, making us laugh at ourselves and our sometimes too serious take on life. With her clever wit and impeccable timing she captured the hearts of the audience with the music of be-bop as her backdrop.

We began with Charlie Parker's "Blue Suede Shoes" and it immediately became clear that this would not be your typical Jazz concert. Combining the rhythm of poetry and Be-Bop the piece moved at its own pace determined by Esperanza's spoken and vocalized elegance. Fred Hersch stayed right by her side and when there were spaces for him to let loose the finest notes and harmony would fly from his fingers. A rendition of Monk's tune "Evidence" was performed. Any Monk fan familiar with this tune knows how off beat and difficult it can be. Esperanza uses the tunes craziness to her advantage and tells a wild story about Monk using lots of humor and antidotes about him. The tune "Girl Talk" was a big success. Again Esperanza takes the lyrics out of tempo and makes the tune quite amusing as she creates a parody of some of the stereotypical roles of woman in our society. All along Fred Hersch flows right along with her showing off his technical abilities and keen sense of timing. Some heart felt, deeply moving ballads were performed like "Some Other Time", "Body And Soul", "Prelude To A Kiss". Each one of these ballads exceeded expectations and left the audience mesmerized in melancholy splendor. Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Inutil Paisagem" was another jaw dropping beauty. The original-"Loro" was a joyous treat full of impressive bird like gymnastics and humor. The entire evening was quite an uncommon event that entertained on many different levels. The creative abilities of both players was undeniable. Fred Hersch with his masterful command of the piano and sensitivity to his surroundings put him right up there with the icons of his instrument. The gifted Esperanza broke through to reveal another level of her talent. She once again becomes a beacon to aspiring young Jazz musicians and demonstrates the many paths available to them.

Frank Kohl

AND YOU'RE GONNA PAY MY TOLLS A PORTRAIT OF ED SCHULLER

BY JAMES BENNINGTON

We issued from his beloved brownstone in Brooklyn not without some difficulty. There were the personal bags of the three musicians, their equipment, and the matter of using the bathroom to prepare for the long journey. Despite the roominess of the place, Ed and his presence there made it seem like a shrouded and comfortable cubbyhole. Something a grumpy bear might like to hibernate in, winter or summer. Once on the road, we made our way to New Jersey to pick up Perry Robinson aka 'the summer of love'. With the Maestro in and his bags and licorice stick packed, we set off once again for the fringes of Upstate New York (read C.I.M.P).

After the usual greetings and catching up, the talk of what we were to play, we withdrew into silence; each one engrossed in his own thoughts. A relative silence as Ed had the radio going, some Shakespearean Theater or something…but the signal cut in and out on the obscure station and made listening, let alone thinking, difficult. Perry tuned out in the back, in a seeming meditative trance, I looked out the window to the unfolding parts of New York I'd never seen, from the city to way on out in the country, Ed meanwhile would exclaim, grumble, and guffaw by turns at anything and everything…'Gaah! You see? This guy over here doesn't know how drive, I mean…' or 'Auughf! This radio, come on! It's giving me an F-ing headache!'

When I suggested changing the station to one that came in better, he said, ' No… cuz then you gotta search all the stations and that takes all this time and probably you're gonna have the same problem, I mean come on!' and he waved a hand to indicate the vast wilderness we were entering of Upstate New York all around. We stopped at a remote service station where we used the facilities, got coffee, water, etc. and learned of a recently collapsed cattle car there in the parking lot…a double decker with the poor cows smashed under the 2nd tier. Gruesome. It was cold and brittle out, with twigs and leaves as dry as a bone. The wind dried you out and froze you at the same time. The Catskill Mountains provided an awesome background. When we got back in the car, Ed got in and fished for his keys, his hand unable to find and penetrate his jeans pocket. 'Why is everything so F-ing hard !?' he bellowed. He had begun to perspire. Once on the road again, the Shakespearean Theater cackling in and out like a strange message from outer space, I suggested to Ed that he maybe keep his keys somewhere else so that he could easily access them. 'You're sitting down after all and…' I said. But he had an answer for that, ' No, because you put the keys there and then you forget em'. Maybe on a chain somewhere then? 'No cuz then it's on your neck and it itches or it's jingling around making noise'

As we drove along Perry meditated in the backseat, occasionally exclaiming 'Beautiful Baby! Beautiful!' as was his wont. We checked in on him from time

to time as you would a quiet old grandfather. Ed drove with that detached automatic attitude of the master driver…putting up with this, with that, but self-assured all the same. At some point he began fiddling around with his nose and mustache, exclaiming 'Mwauugh' each time. After a while, as his nose became more and more red and irritated. I asked 'Ed, everything OK over there?' 'Aw yeah, its just my nose, I dunno what's up…God Damn!' I could see that one or two of his mustache hairs had wildly curled right into the side of his nose. I mentioned that trimming his mustache might fix things but, 'No, no! I mean you don't wanna be messin' with that stuff, I mean you get the scissors and… no no…that's not it, it's gotta be something else, I mean, who knows what it is?' and again he swept his free hand across the New York landscape while his other deftly clutched the wheel and guided us along.

After a long drive, the day spent together, with all the missteps, the time and the occurrences beyond our control, the stress of following the obscure directions, the New York sun going down on the cold day, we took a final hidden road, made one last hairpin turn, and there we were at 'the Compound'. The thought being to get our equipment and things in, refresh, and sit down to one of Susan Rusch's renowned spreads at the big table. Before the last bag was in I heard loud voices growing louder and sharper…what could it be I wondered? When I returned to the house with the last of my equipment Ed and the great Hemingway like Bob Rusch were at each other's throats…

"Set up your equipment and we'll get a soundcheck, Then we'll sit down and eat." Commanded Rusch.

Perry and I accepted this with quiet resolve…'What must be done must be done'…but not Ed.

"Hey", he called out, "I been drivin' on these roads for hours, I'm gonna rest first…and eat! Maybe we'll do the soundcheck or whatever it is you want tomorrow!"

"That's not how we do things here…I want tomorrow to go smoothly and the so the soundcheck happens tonight!" said Rusch, putting his foot down in words.

"Yeah well that's not…I mean… I've played in concert halls all over the world man. I do it the way I do it!"

Rusch: "Well that may be, but…."

And so on, while Perry and I quietly and tiredly set up and arranged our instruments. At one point, as the supposed leader, I said, "Hey guys, come on, I mean we just got here…"

Bob turned a deaf ear and showed us his back as he went into the kitchen. Ed, the seasoned veteran may have grumbled and cursed under his breath, but he heard the voice of reason in my words and despite his protests and annoyance, he began unpacking and setting up his bass.

The sound check that seemed destined not to be, continued on, with the tinkling of cymbals and the cracking of drums, Perry's clarinet swirled underneath, throaty, mysterious as the forests floor. Ed's bass took command the moment

his notes and runs boomed out…our rock and monolith from which we took the utmost heed. We played and the sheer joy of it swept our exhaustion away. Ed was trying very hard not to smile…he wanted to be 'oh so surly', but I saw his grin pop through more than a few times. Perry, the '100 year old baby boy', hovered and meditated near us, his clarinet by now red hot.

They had to tell us to stop, in fact. Dinner was served. Bob told the three of us where we would sit, with me at his side. When we had taken our seats, Ed was about to resume his gruff mood, maybe get in a last word. Rusch was on high alert. When we took our seats and invariable sighed, Ed and Bob looked at one another a moment, you could see the wariness, then both broke into bright grins, if not smiles, they became jocular and Ed said, "Yeah, OK, what's a guy gotta do to get that butter passed over here?"

Monolith, Station Master, Guide, our whip hand, driving the wagon, no load too great, bumps and jolts and grizzly bear days…sounding out to the universe….the man who 'Hears around corners'

Our music was played, a few days were spent at Cadence in the Netherlands of New York. Good solid meals for men with irregular lives…a family table and the shared love of an endeavor. As we packed the car that last late morning and said our 'goodbye's', Perry had misplaced his beret. He'd had it since the 70's he told Ed and I. The key was in the ignition, but we made our way back into the grand log cabin, the firewood stacked, the dogs and cats everywhere, and searched and retraced our steps (Perry's steps rather)…we searched everywhere with no luck. Susan offered to send it along in the mails if it turned up. Crestfallen, our Maestro Perry Robinson made his way quietly back to the car. He was resigned by the time he settled himself in the backseat. 'Well that's how it goes I guess Maestro…' He said to me. We waited a moment for Ed to detail the car before the long journey ahead of us. When he got in the drivers seat, and checked the rear view mirror, Ed broke out laughing and said, 'Aw Maest! Agh Maest!…it's on your head Maest! It's on yer head!' And it was.

…just some moments shared in our work and endeavors together. There are many such tales, some recounted, some not…just the picture, the portrait, the idea… not unlike an afternoon with a Picasso, a Lloyd Wright, a Celine. Whether in the studio or at a hot dog stand, you feel the presence of a timeless master; catsup or mustard notwithstanding. Having the chance to tour, record, and perform with this artist has been one of the thrills of my life; death bed stuff.

P.S. The last time I was with Ed, we were making a record with pianist Steve Cohn (New Jersey Freebie, SLAM). We were all ready for him, warmed up and looking forward to his arrival from Brooklyn. He and Steve hadn't met yet. Ed arrived, came in, set up, and before the greetings were gone from the air and the first note had been played, intoned "…and you're gonna pay my tolls!"

Ed Schuller; American National Treasure

Chicago

Feb., 2023

Ed Schuller, The Bop Shop, May 2014 (NY)
Photo credit © Deborah Lee

A CENTENNIAL SALUTE TO EUGENE WRIGHT
MAY 29, 1923 – DECEMBER 30, 2020

BY PATRICK HINELY

Growing up in Chicago, Wright's first instrument was the cornet, but his first love was the bass. He was enamored of the playing of Walter Page, a progenitor of walking bass, and would follow him as Count Basie's bassist in the late 1940s, after leading his own 16-piece Dukes of Swing for several years earlier in that decade. Wright also played with, among others, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, Errol Garner, Sonny Stitt, Cal Tjader, Buddy DeFranco, Red Norvo, and Gene Ammons.

Wright is best known for his decade, 1958 - 1968, as a member of Dave Brubeck's quartet, in which he, along with drummer Joe Morello, provided the motor muscle propelling, supporting and further elevating the playing of the pianist and saxophonist Paul Desmond. During the earlier part of that tenure, before passage of the Civil Rights Act, touring in the southern states with a Black band member could prove problematic, but Brubeck solved that by simply refusing to play segregated gigs.

In the original 1960 edition of The Encyclopedia of Jazz, Leonard Feather's three adjectives for Wright were "serious, dependable and capable", with Wright naming Milt Hinton as his favorite. Somewhere along the line, he picked up the nickname "Senator". I'd go further: I'd add to that "The Honorable," just as I always addressed 'Judge' Hinton as "Your Honor"…

Wright was on board with Brubeck for more than 30 albums (plus a panoply of live recordings which, blessedly, continue to surface), including 1962's The Real Ambassadors, which adds Louis Armstrong, Carmen McRae and Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, singing Iola Brubeck's libretto, a swinging paean to civil, human and universal rights, a masterpiece of an album too often overlooked by critics who still can't figure out which single pigeonhole into which it can be crammed.

1962 also saw Wright's only studio recording as a bandleader, The Wright Groove, in New Zealand. The tunes were all his own, fleshed out from solos with the Brubeck band, decades before Eberhard Weber did something along similar lines with recordings of his solos while touring with Jan Garbarek's band. The baritone saxophonist on Wright's date was Laurie Lewis, who would later, with his wife Alwyn, long serve as the Australasian correspondents for this magazine's Short Takes section.

Following dissolution of the Brubeck quartet, Wright led his own group and worked for several years in Monty Alexander's band, as well as playing with, among others, Buddy Collette, Dorothy Donegan, Kenny Drew, Vince Guaraldi and Kai Winding.

There exists a badly-recorded live album from North Hollywood's Money Tree Club in the mid-1980s, African Breeze, featuring a later incarnation of the Dukes of Swing, with guests such as Snooky Young and Buster Cooper. We can always hope it will eventually benefit from the efforts of a tape restoration wizard.

Later, Wright distinguished himself in the educational field. as head of the jazz program at the University of Cincinnati, and was a founding mover and shaker of the International Society of Bassists.

To borrow a saying from Wright's fellow bassist Steve Swallow: Senator Wright had a groove as deep and wide as the Grand Canyon.

Eugene Wright demonstrates walking bass technique, en route to the stage, where he would revel in a reunion with Dave Brubeck, at Magnolia Gardens, near Charleston SC, for Spoleto Festival USA in May, 1983.
Photo credit ©1983 by Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®

HOW ONE RECORD LABEL SURVIVED THE PANDEMIC INTERVIEW WITH RELATIVE PITCH CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER KEVIN REILLY

By Ken Weiss

Cadence : What is your musical background, your connection to music?
Kevin Reilly: I really have no musical background, I never played an instrument. I'm from a working class background. My parents were practical and thought that I should get a college degree. When I was 10, I got a stereo for my birthday. I think my first two albums were both by Elton John - Goodbye Yellow Brick Road and Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy. This was 1975. I was really into Rock music mainly Bob Dylan into my 30s. Only a handful of classic Jazz records- Kind of Blue, A Love Supreme and The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady. I had a friend who would send me really out music which I tried to listen to but found unbearable. It was like nails across a chalkboard, I found it intolerable. But I kept trying because I knew I wasn't hearing it. Then after 9/11, it was like a switch went off in my head. Not only did I find I could hear this music but it was extremely cathartic. Ornette Coleman's The Shape of Jazz to Come was now full of beauty and Peter Brötzmann's Machine Gun was seriously swinging. I really owe it all to that one friend who never gave up on me and kept sending me challenging music. I started going to live shows and in particular, Cecil Taylor every time he played. I'm really a huge Cecil fan. The live shows were dramatically cathartic and they taught me how to be present. Made me a better person in all my relationships.
Cadence: What led up to you starting a record label?
Reilly: I met Mike Panico standing in line at Tonic and the Stone. The Stone was curated, you couldn't get a gig there unless you were asked. After Tonic closed we started talking about running a venue, we talked about that whenever we ran into each other, and that eventually morphed into starting a label. We knew most of the artists that played (in that scene) and we were naive enough to start a CD label just as CDs were dying as a medium. Sadly, Mike passed away in 2018. I kept as many of his commitments as I could and released several things that had been in the pipeline. It was a real shock to everyone that knew him - no one saw it coming.
Cadence: What's behind the name Relative Pitch?
Reilly: Mike came up with the name. I didn't care about the name or the logo or any of that stuff, the music was going to make the label. The first name he came up with was Subdominant Records but then he wasn't thrilled with the Google results. Then he came up with Relative Pitch, my friend made the logo and here we are. One thing Mike and I both agreed on early was the idea that our releases would be recognizable. We could easily locate the Impulse CDs and the Black Saint CDs on our shelves so we wanted something uniform that would stand out for our label so we made them with blue spines.

Cadence: How have you financed the label and what are the financial benefits of continuing it?

Reilly: Mike and I started the label with $5000 each. I paid out of pocket for all the postage for the first 3 years. Eventually, it started paying for itself. Bandcamp was helpful. I have a storage unit that I pay $350 a month for out of my pocket because for the first 6-7 years we pressed 1000 copies of every release. Now I'm pressing 500 or 350 and it's much more manageable.

Cadence: What's your goal in running the label and how do you measure success?

Reilly: The only goal is to get this music as far and wide out into the world as possible. I'm a fan and I join together with an artist to put this music out. Both the artist and the label have expenses and we both put it up on Bandcamp so that we both have revenue streams. Once the record is out, it is a success.

Cadence: How have you decided what to release?

Reilly: I'm a fan, first and foremost. The music has to resonate with me. Why would I put out something that I wasn't excited about? Right now I'm working almost two years ahead. The 2023 schedule has been full since May. I'm hoping to cut it back in 2024. I really poured myself into the label during the pandemic when there were no shows and 2023 still reflects those days. In 2019 the identity of the label took a sharper focus. I wanted to give some younger people opportunities and I wanted to commit to a few massively talented artists who I believed were criminally under-recognized. The label right now has three artists it will continue to release each year until I get hit by a bus. Susan Alcorn, Jessica Pavone, and Zeena Parkins. I hope to put out at least one record a year by each of them, that's the plan. So in 2027 if there are not 5 more releases from each of them then I will have failed.

Cadence: How did you deal with the pandemic?

Reilly: In early 2020, after live music shut down, the initial excitement over livestreams dissipated pretty quickly for me due to the fact that livestreams did not provide the catharsis of being at a live show with its intersubjective participation. So I really focused on the label and ended up doubling the number of releases that were scheduled for 2022-2023. I poured all my time and energy into the label. So 2022 had around 20 releases and 2023 will have closer to 30. I'm guessing I will cut back but it's a privilege to get these recordings out. It's not just that I had more time, the artists were also looking for outlets. Ironically the label has thrived through this pandemic. In March of 2020 with the help of Jessica Hallock I got the whole catalog up on Bandcamp. That was a boost. Since I was not going to shows, I spent a lot of time watching livestreams, listening to videos people sent me, and watching Instagram videos. Brandon Lopez sent me a clip of Amidea Clotet and I reached out. She sent me some solo stuff and over a year or so had a beautiful record. I first saw Signe Emmeluth at a festival put on by Ingebrigt Håker Flaten. I tuned in to watch Maja Ratkje and left the TV on and was just blown away by Signe's solo

set. That performance is what we put out on the solo CD.

Cadence: Were there any new difficulties the pandemic created such as cost or supply chain issues or anything that you had to negotiate with or deal with?

Reilly: I manufacture all the CDs in Poland with Monotype and they have been terrific. Apart from some very modest delays, the only real issue during the pandemic was that after the George Floyd murder, we did a blackout which altered the release schedule. I delayed releasing new material after the murder until October. I had one already in motion but everything else was put on hold. It didn't feel right to proceed business as usual after such a gross display of inhumanity. So, the label basically went silent for 3 months. Prices have increased for me but that doesn't get passed along to the people who buy CDs. We have to protect the people who support the music.

Cadence: How do you identify artists to record?

Reilly: Since the death of my label partner, all the releases are things that I like. I have broad taste, I like Free Jazz, Noise, some minimalism and some new music. All of these categories serve heuristic purposes, they don't really tell you much about what you are hearing. Early on, I struggled to move away from intellectualizing the music so I don't really ever ask why I like something, if it resonates I go with it. But the label is really about artist relationships. You and I briefly discussed our mutual admiration of Nick Cave but Nick Cave is not one thing, his early stuff is punkish and he evolved through many phases into the looping minimalist stage he's into now. That is how I see many of the label's artists. I like the first thing I hear and then I wonder where they will go. So, a lot of the artists have multiple releases with the label but the label has no proprietary claims. I am first and foremost a fan. People send me music and sometimes I suggest bigger European labels that have state funding and real budgets. I'm not supporting a release, I'm trying to support an artist over time with potential for multiple releases. And after they have some success hopefully they can move on to bigger and better funded labels

Cadence: You've lucked into discovering some artists by chance by combing the internet. Would you give some examples of that and the response of the artists when you offered them the opportunity to record?

Reilly: There are stories behind every release and ultimately a relationship. In 2020, the label released its first record by someone I had never met, Signe Emmeluth's Hi Hello, I'm Signe. I saw that performance on a livestream and that's what came out. It's a beautiful solo record. I love that record. 2020 also saw the release of Hermione Johnson's Tremble. Hermione is from New Zealand, an incredible pianist. Magda Mayas introduced us. Magda also introduced me to Christine Abdelnour. Christine turned me on to the amazing vocalist Agnes Hvizdalek. It's all connected. The first time I met gabby fluke-mogul was through their playing with Nava Dunkelman. I saw Nava play with William Winant at the old Stone more than ten years ago and I became an instant fan. Nava and gabby came to play in New York in September of

2019. I met gabby and they told me they were moving to New York. I gave them my number and they texted me the day they landed at JFK about a week before the lockdown! Everything was canceled. So gabby and I went into the studio, masked, just gabby, me and Jason Rostkowski, the engineer. We did that four times, twice solo, once with Joanna Mattrey, which was just released in December, and once with Nava, which will be out in the spring. I've been looking at YouTube videos. I had a link to a YouTube video, I do not recall the specifics, I watched less than a minute and then clicked away and hopped in the shower. While I was in the shower, I had this scraping, textured inside piano playing in my head, but again, I forgot about it. Then when I got in bed late that night, I heard that piano playing again and had to reconstruct where I had heard that. I found the video in my YouTube watch history and within 48 hours was texting with Marta Warelis. That really is the norm - the music grabs me, something takes ahold.

Cadence: How active are you as the executive producer? Are you giving feedback to artists? Have you rejected projects and asked for something else? What's the extent of your involvement in the finished product including artwork?

Reilly: I do not like to be involved in artistic decisions. I am a fan. I have rejected things but mostly because they were too short or in some cases it did not resonate with me. I just was not hearing the music come together. My goal is to establish a relationship of trust with an artist. I'm going to continue releasing Jessica Pavone solo CDs until I am struck by lightning. And I know I will love what she does ahead of time. She's an artist, criminally under recognized, and she's two steps ahead always of what I'm even capable of imagining. Susan Alcorn just sent me a track from a project she is working on. She sent it to my phone. I spent hours listening in awe to this one piece. She has vision, she can see things I cannot. Zeena [Parkins] just sent me the new Glass Triangle recording. I was there in the studio when that was recorded. How that session became the masterpiece of the recording is beyond my grasp. It's an overused word but its genius. And I have the privilege of often being surrounded by it. When did Tim Berne's first record come out? 1978? 1979? I see Tim often. After 40+ years, he's lost none of his passion. He has this incredible body of work behind him and his music still has this searching edge. He's still playing with new people. In the movie Amadeus, Salieri curses God because God gave him the ability to recognize genius but not the ability to produce it. For me, it's a great thing to be able to recognize genius in others - it's a gift. That's all I have, my ears, and I've learned to trust them. So, I don't have to constantly see who is hot and try to finagle a recording. I couldn't do that.

Cadence: In our talks leading up to this you've made it clear that you are not driven by the thought of sales.

Reilly: At no stage in the process of releasing a CD do I ask myself if a particular release will sell. It's not on my radar at all. I am interested in

supporting artists and their projects. And so far, so good. I love these releases, if someone else put them out, I would buy them.

Cadence: How do you publicize your label and your releases?

Reilly: I don't use a publicist, I can't afford one. Instead I've compiled a list of writers I send promos to and I'm trying to cultivate a group of writers who do not typically write about this music. I have been focusing on good writing more than pitching the music to them. It's a work in progress. I do think we need some fresh blood and more diversity among the writers.

Cadence: What's the future look like for Relative Pitch?

Reilly: The future is wide open. Right now I am very excited by the new Glass Triangle recording by Zeena Parkins, Mette Rasmussen and Ryan Sawyer. Just today I heard a track from a forthcoming Susan Alcorn release recorded in Chile and the level of the music is astounding. Working with these amazing artists is a constant source of inspiration. I'm so eager to help get this out into the world. There may be a few lifestyle changes going forward. If I go to a show in NY, just the gas and tolls round trip are now $50. If I resume my pre-pandemic schedule and go out to see this music only 200 nights, that's $10,000 just in gas and tolls. That's entirely out of pocket. I have never taken a cent from the label. I will need to seriously reconsider going that often to see live music. I'm wondering if I could get by with 100 nights out. Maybe I will go to see some European friends play. There are vibrant scenes in Buenos Aires and Mexico City that I might like to visit. One of the positive things I can say about the digital distribution of music is that it is global. The label received an average of 10 submissions a week, much of that from international artists. 2023 will see releases from artists in Uruguay, Peru, Argentina, as well as Spain, Italy and New Zealand. The medium may change but the art forms of improvised and avant-garde musics are thriving. We need to think outside the box about the best ways to support the artists.

Kevin Reilly - Photo credit © Ken Weiss

Interview: Kevin Reilly

Kevin Reilly - Photo credit © Ken Weiss

The Jazz Angel of Seattle

By Bill Donaldson

I went to Seattle. I shopped at Bud's Jazz Records in Pioneer Square. I bought a Lucky Strikes CD. Bud Young, the owner, upsold me on some more CD's recorded by local jazz talent. After I demonstrated my jazz preference with the purchase of the Lucky Thompson recording, Mr. Young made conversation with the out-of-towner. He said, "Lucky lives here in town." "I know," I replied. "Where?" He confessed, "I don't know. You'd have to ask the Jazz Angel." Said I, "The Jazz Angel? Who's that?" "She's Lola Pedrini," Mr. Young revealed.
So I talked to the Jazz Angel of Seattle.
Ms. Pedrini approved a draft of this interview for accuracy before publication.

CADENCE: Who gave you the nickname of "the Jazz Angel?"
PEDRINI: That I don't know. It just developed over time. John Gilbreath [the executive director of Earshot Jazz Society of Seattle] and the Earshot people probably used it. But who actually began that name, I don't know. I've been called "the Jazz Mother" too—not "Mutha," but "Mother." [Laughs]
CADENCE: If they call you the "Jazz Mother," do you mind if I ask how old you are?
PEDRINI: I'm going to be 61 tomorrow.
CADENCE: Happy birthday. Is anything planned for your birthday?
PEDRINI: I have a Victory Music board meeting tomorrow night, and I'm president. So I have to be there. [Laughs] So that's my birthday.
CADENCE: What's Victory Music?
PEDRINI: Victory Music started out as a musicians' co-op almost thirty years ago in Tacoma. It's a folk and jazz organization. It progressed through many different venues. In the late seventies, I got involved with [Victory Music]. I should have been involved many years earlier. My best friend knew the man who started the organization years before, but she couldn't seem to get me involved. I was too busy raising kids and working. I got involved because of the jazz aspect of it. They had jazz two nights a week at a restaurant in Auburn. It's an all-volunteer organization. They do some wonderful things. First of all, they have a referral for musicians that is unique. The organization refers three or four names of musicians for gigs to anyone who calls. We figure we put at least $250,000 worth of gigs through this organization to other people over the period of a year, and we're trying to get that up. Our goal is $1 million. But it's primarily folk musicians—acoustic music. We don't do any rock. The only instrument that is not miked would be the bass. Everything else is all acoustic. That's the goal of this organization: to continue acoustic music.
CADENCE: Are those jobs placed only in the Pacific Northwest?
PEDRINI: Yes, just in the Pacific Northwest for the most part.

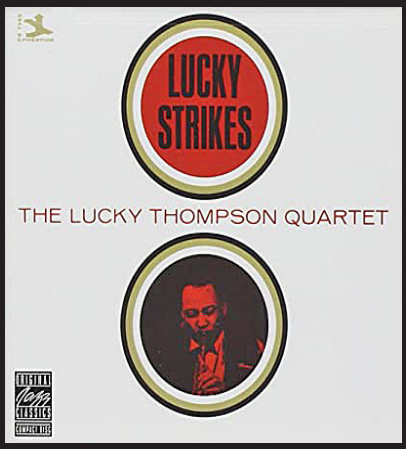
CADENCE: Do you ever bring in outside people?
PEDRINI: Not very often, no. We review CD's and videos that come through from nationally known musicians. But primarily the music we bring in is for Northwest musicians.
CADENCE: Do you have your own newsletter?
PEDRINI: There's a 36-page newsletter that's involved with this.
CADENCE: And you're involved with Jazz Alley in Seattle too.
PEDRINI: It's because I like the music. I also run the condos. I'm the quote-unquote "caretaker" for the condos that the musicians stay in when they play at Jazz Alley.
CADENCE: Does the owner of Jazz Alley own the condominiums too?
PEDRINI: Yes.
CADENCE: What does being the "caretaker" there involve?
PEDRINI: It involves cleaning them up, setting them up, keeping the places running. When anything goes wrong, I'm there to turn the water off if the water heater breaks. I have to be there when they move in and to answer all of their questions and to try to keep them happy and content while they're here. Once they move in, the place is theirs. I do not become the chambermaid or anything like that. They have their own washers and dryers here. So they're on their own after they get here.
CADENCE: Do you live near the condominiums?
PEDRINI: I live in the building. On Monday nights, I work at Jazz Alley for Earshot. I started doing it because I wanted to keep Jazz Alley's costs down so that they would be able to keep the venue for us. It started on Sunday nights. And so if the costs were kept down, then John [Gilbreath] would feel that he could do it. [Jazz Alley] was dark one night a week anyway prior to that. And then we started doing really well on Sunday nights with it. So then the owner [John Dimitriou] changed us to Monday nights because that way he was able to keep some of the [nationally known] people if they had a full house on Saturday night. He could offer them that same gig on Sunday.
CADENCE: Has anything interesting ever happened to you while you took care of the condominiums?
PEDRINI: Oh, yes. Most of those things I don't retain because I don't like to go around and gossip about things. One time, though, [a musician] called me at the crack of dawn to tell me there was steam coming out of his kitchen cabinets. It turned out to be a blown hot water tank. The darnedest thing was that the apartment was next to mine, and I got the water. He didn't. The water came into my apartment. I had to go and turn the water off. As I ran out, I realized this had been going on for a while. When I ran out of my bedroom door barefooted, my carpet was wet. Obviously, the water goes downhill, and I'm at the lower end of the building or something. And then I had to keep calming him down because he was afraid to go to sleep. He was afraid the whole place was going to burn down.

Interview: Lola Pedrini

Lola Pedrini

Lucky Thompson

Lola Pedrini with Earshot Managing Director Karen Caropepe and Executive Director John Gilbreath, 2014


LUCKY STRIKES
THE LUCKY THOMPSON QUARTET


Lucky Thompson
LORD, LORD, AM I EVER GONNA KNOW?
CANDID

Lucky Thompson

CADENCE: Did you have a place to move him to?
PEDRINI: There was no problem in his apartment. He was just little afraid. I said, "No, the building isn't going to burn down. First of all, the water's turned off, and secondly, that's steam. That's just hot water, not smoke."
CADENCE: Have the musicians sent you on any errands while they were there?
PEDRINI: Well, actually, Phyllis Hyman was here, and two weeks later, she committed suicide. I got real close to them. They were neat people.
CADENCE: Who was with her?
PEDRINI: She had a lady here who took care of her and who actually shared the penthouse with her. The woman she had with her was really very supportive. Every day, we ran errands and bought groceries and bought clothing. It was a 2-1/2-hour stint every single day. I don't ordinarily do that. But I just connected with [Hyman]. I really liked her! I didn't realize she was in trouble until she left. She autographed a little book I have here for my daughter. In there, she wrote something and handed [the book] to me closed, and I didn't read it until after she left. Then I read it, and I realized that she was in trouble. I didn't know it prior to that. I didn't get that from her at all.
CADENCE: What did she write?
PEDRINI: Just simply how she should be respected. I'm looking for it, but I don't see it now. Here it is. "Your mom is the best. My mom is gone, and I will never get the opportunity to tell her I love her and will forever miss her." And she wrote: "Love her," meaning me. She said: "Love her, care for her, and remember that when she's gone, that's it. God bless you."
CADENCE: That must have been a shock when you read about the suicide.
PEDRINI: Yes. It was, and it wasn't. I immediately called her friend who was with her. She was in Chicago then. I talked to her for probably an hour and a half. She was there at the time [of the suicide]. Phyllis had sent her out on an errand that would take too long to save her. When she came back, [Hyman] was gone. [Hyman] had all the doors locked, and she didn't have any way of getting in. By the time she got in, [Hyman] was gone. That was the day they were having a tribute to her in New York. That was what was so ironic about that whole thing: She did it before the tribute.
CADENCE: Did she cause any problems for you in Seattle?
PEDRINI: No. Oh, she was such a professional! [Hyman] would go [to Jazz Alley] very early in the afternoon, like 4:30, and she would dress and greet the people. She would walk around the restaurant from table to table and introduce herself and talk to the people. She probably talked to maybe fifty tables. Then she'd go back into the dressing room, finish dressing for the show, and then go on stage. Most of the nights, she would be out there telling them "good bye" and "thank you" when they left. She was just such a gracious person. I've been told many times in the last few weeks especially that, "Yeah, Lola, So-and-So would do that just for show because they would know you'd

tell everybody how they reacted. How they stood in line to pay a door fee at a benefit for another musician when he could have just as easily handed you the money from backstage." I've been told many times that I see things differently—that I pick up the cause and do things that will benefit them in the long run. So what they're telling me is that I'm seeing things through rose-colored glasses, I guess. I always thought I saw the glass half empty. I was forever sticking on things. You know, "It could have been this way or it should have been that way" instead of saying that "this is so great." I'm always picking on the things that didn't work and how we could have made them better. That's how I thought I perceived things. Maybe what we see of ourselves and what other people see are two different things.

CADENCE: I see that you're the treasurer of Earshot too.

PEDRINI: Yes, I didn't go to the last meeting—I was gone for a few days—and they renamed me treasurer. They didn't ask me. They just did it. I was one of the original board members when Earshot was created.

CADENCE: Who created it?

PEDRINI: There were three people who actually started the publication: Paul de Barros, Gary Bannister and Allen Youngblood. They created the publication knowing that in the long term they wanted to become a non-profit organization. But the newsletter came first to promote the music and what was going on a little better. The newspapers weren't doing it. The Seattle Times just does not cover much jazz. One of the founders, Paul, writes for The Seattle Times. We have had two or three reviews in the Times. Paul decided the [jazz reviews] weren't getting out enough and that we needed another way of doing it. So when they first formed the board, Paul asked me if I would be on the board because he knew about my involvement with Victory Music. So I sat in with that first echelon of people who started [Earshot].

CADENCE: Are you involved with the Earshot Jazz Festival too?

PEDRINI: Yes. I've been quote-unquote "the box office." I have been doing the box office since it started. I sort of evolved and continued to do that. There's a story that goes with that one. Three years ago, I had an old '82 Toronado, and it needed gas a lot. I had always taken the box office home at night and justified it and rectified it and got all the numbers together and made up the new bank for the next night because we were doing two weeks in a row. I made out the bank deposit and everything. At that time, I wasn't living in the city, so my trunk looked like the KMart cart, you know. You open up the trunk, and the whole trunk is full of clothes and files. It was just full of everything. I went to get gas at a gas station on the way to the Earshot office, and I had the bank and all the money in the trunk of the car. I filled up the gas tank and walked over to pay for the gas. Meanwhile, a car got between me and my car. I went to pay for it, and the guy in front of me [in line] was having a difficult time with his credit card. So it took too long. I turned around and went back to my car and it was gone. Someone had stolen the car because the keys were in

the ignition. It wasn't more than 25 feet away from me at most. So of course, I'm panicking and screaming in the middle of the parking lot. Everyone was looking at this fool in the parking lot. No one saw my car leave. It turned out that they found my car a day later not far from there behind some buildings. The windows were still open. My purse was still on the seat of the car. [The thief] had dumped it. A whole big coin purse of quarters was in there. He hadn't taken them. And the car keys were gone. The money was buried in the trunk. If you opened it, you would never have seen it. Nothing had been taken from the trunk of the car. There was well over $1000 to $1500 in cash there—credit cards, checks, whatever. Anyway, somebody was looking out for me, I'll tell you. The man had thrown the car keys in the weeds or something so that no one else could steal the car. It had a full tank of gas. It could have gone a long way. That's another reason they say that I'm an angel, as if somebody was looking out for me because I wasn't looking out for myself. [Laughs]

CADENCE: Are you a native of Washington state?

PEDRINI: I am a native of the area—moss behind my ears and web feet. I was born in Tacoma and was raised in the Green River Valley near Auburn. I lived most of my life in Enumclaw near Mount Rainier.

CADENCE: When did you develop your interest in music?

PEDRINI: I've always liked jazz, but I never really cultivated it. I went to work when I was 21 years old for the Liquor Board and worked all my life and raised five kids. So pretty much, I worked and did PTA as everyone else did, and I became president of that. When arthritis got the best of me, I had to quit the job. I became very bored, having worked over twenty years. My son brought home a Victory Music newsletter, and it had a picture of Yvonne Griffin on the cover. He said, "Mom, I think you might be interested in this." At that time, the music was in Auburn, which was only about fifteen miles from my house. So I went there, and the man at the door, Chris Lunn—who started Victory Music and had kept it going all those years—was a very perceptive man. Immediately, I found me a seat, and we talked for a little bit and he told me to come back because So-and-So was going to be there the following week. He knew I would enjoy that. He got me involved doing little things at the restaurant itself. They did their newsletter there. Volunteers actually collated it and folded it when they had music scheduled. They got me involved as a volunteer, and that was the beginning of the end. [Laughs] I became a staunch volunteer for them. I did their trad jazz column for a little while. "Doctor Jazz," it was called. I can't write, and so I hemorrhaged from my fingernails every month trying to get this little column written. I did it for quite a while. I always had to go back and read my column. I was given the information, and then [Lunn] would add things to it. I always had to make sure I read my column to know what I had written. [Laughs] I became a Victory Music board member in the late '70's, and I've been a board member ever since. I went through a major accident. I was run over by my own motor home. The transmission slipped, and one wheel went across

my face and my chest, and the other wheel went over my legs. I watched the other wheel go over my legs. I did not lose consciousness. I spent six weeks in [Harborview Medical Center] and a number of months recuperating. I got a leave of absence from the board. Rather than get rid of me, they put me on a leave.

CADENCE: Did you ever play any instruments?

PEDRINI: No. I never did. The phonograph and CD player are my speed.

CADENCE: Bud said that Lucky Thompson lives in Seattle. Do you know him?

PEDRINI: Oh, yes! I met him at Jazz Alley when Johnny Griffin was here. There was this Black man with hiking boots and a backpack sitting in a booth. Johnny Griffin was standing in front of the table with his horn around his neck. And the look on his face! I had never met Johnny Griffin before, but the admiration on his face! I mean, I saw this when I walked in. I said to the man who walked in with me, "Who is he talking to? Look at the admiration on his face! He's just glowing." He looked over and said, "Well, that looks like Lucky Thompson." So we sat down. The man I was with knew Johnny. Johnny said, "Look who's here." I sat down, and I talked to Lucky quite a bit that night. I found him to be such a charming man with this twist of something in talking to him. I couldn't quite get hold of it. I found out later that he was sick, and he had this concept of people and of.... Well, he's paranoid.

CADENCE: Was it paranoia or cynicism?

PEDRINI: I think it was a little bit of both.

CADENCE: He doesn't like people?

PEDRINI: He doesn't trust people. But he was talking to me about the earth and the sea and about how he would walk from place to place. He lived up on Beacon Hill at the time, but he would go all the way to West Seattle. He'd be down in Ballard, and he'd walk along the beaches. He'd go to Lake Washington. This is a long distance in Seattle, at least three miles. He may have walked ten to twelve miles in a day. He didn't bus. He just walked it. He's a very healthy man. I sensed this religious thing from him, but it didn't involve God. I had the funniest feeling. I didn't see him again for a while. And then because of Buddy Catlett, I became more and more involved with him. [Catlett] would say, "You should go see Lucky. You should see how he's doing. You should see what's happening with him." Buddy Catlett used to be a bass player with Count Basie and with Louis Armstrong until Pops died. He lives in Seattle. He was from Seattle, but he lived in Brooklyn for 25 or thirty years. He was with Chico Freeman, and he was on those Quincy Jones records that came out of Paris with Clark Terry. So [Catlett] knew him. He just didn't have the time [to help Thompson]. I started going out and visiting Lucky. He was up on Beacon Hill in a little shack. It didn't have running water. It didn't have electricity. But he loved to work in the yard and the garden.

CADENCE: Did he own the property?

PEDRINI: He didn't own it. There was a couple who were living here in the city who allowed him to live on the property. They met Lucky in a park. I don't

think they knew who Lucky was at the time. I think they found out later. They offered Lucky this property so that he could stay there. Lucky maintained the property for a long time, but there was nothing there for him. It was just a shack. The yard was just beautiful. I mean, he had the yard all nice and cleaned up. He had taken the blackberries and woven them into this wonderful fence. It was about a foot high with all these old dead blackberries. [The property owners] finally had to put Lucky off the property. Lucky got a hose and turned the water on. The water pipes were all so corroded that the water was leaking from the pipes and going underneath the house and going down the hill below it. [The property owners] said that they got this water bill for this ungodly amount of money. Even though [Thompson] had his hose off, the water was running underground from all of those old pipes. Lucky kept saying, "I didn't have the water on. I didn't have the water on." But what he was saying was that "I didn't have the water running." Actually, he had turned it on at the meter out in the street. So consequently, it was running. He was fortunate that the people down below didn't lose the foundation to their house. Anyway, [the property owners] finally had to put him off that property.

CADENCE: Where did he go?

PEDRINI: Back to the street. That's where he was prior to moving onto that property. He was just living on the streets with a shopping cart with his things in it.

CADENCE: Did anyone at that time know him?

PEDRINI: A lot of people here knew him, but the street people didn't know who he was. And the people dealing out on the streets didn't know who he was. They left him alone. He didn't stay downtown that much. Beacon Hill is south of town up on the hill. He was out away from people. He doesn't deal well with people. He ended up passing out, and the neighbors called 911. They took him to Harborview and treated his legs. His legs were full of sores. They treated him and put him back out on the street. They found him again and realized that time that there was something else wrong. On the second trip to Harborview, they threw him into the psych ward. I'm not sure how many months he was in there. There were daily visits on a monthly basis to try to get him out of there.

CADENCE: How long ago was that?

PEDRINI: Three years ago.

CADENCE: Did they diagnose him this time, or did they just let him go without a diagnosis?

PEDRINI: They diagnosed him as being paranoid.

CADENCE: Schizophrenic too?

PEDRINI: No. Just paranoid. Anyway, it was a long, tough stint to get him out of there.

CADENCE: Usually, doctors try to release patients as soon as the patient has recovered instead of trying to keep them in hospitals.

PEDRINI: The state institutions, yes. Harborview, no. That's Harborview. I don't know. Once you're admitted—it's a county hospital—they keep you for two weeks. Then you have to come back to be readmitted later. The doctor said that Lucky was ill and a detriment to himself. The doctor was in charge of that ward.
CADENCE: Why did the doctor think that Lucky was a detriment to himself?
PEDRINI: Well, Lucky wasn't taking care of himself. He was living on the street.
CADENCE: But isn't that true of all street people? Hospitals don't have the capacity to admit every homeless person.
PEDRINI: Thank you! That's what I thought too. It's been a long learning experience. I still don't understand why they insisted on keeping Lucky in the hospital. It's been the most frustrating two months of my whole life. Every day, there was another problem.
CADENCE: Did Medicare pay for his hospitalization?
PEDRINI: Yes. Every two weeks, [Medicare] had to review [his status].
CADENCE: Did you have to contact attorneys to get him out?
PEDRINI: Oh, God! It was terrible! I contacted a doctor that I know who's a teacher at the University of Washington—a saxophone player who idolizes Lucky. So he became quite involved at the time. And then I got a lawyer, who's also a saxophone player, to help me. All of this was done just out of love.
CADENCE: Do you remember their names?
PEDRINI: Yes. The doctor's name was Larry Halpern, and the attorney was Jay Krulewitch. Oh, here's Lucky's picture! Oh my God! I've got it all in front of me now. Anyway, getting him out of Harborview was a really tough situation. The doctor there was so adamant about the fact that [Thompson] should not be going anywhere. He thought he shouldn't be on the street and that he shouldn't be on his own. He thought [Thompson] might have a heart attack. And I said, "Then why aren't you treating him for his heart?" I thought, "OK. Fine. You aren't doing anything about his heart." Anyway, I got in contact with Jay Krulewitch, who at the time was a public defender for King County. He in fact helped me find this man, Henry Zimmerman, who actually works at finding people of [Thompson's] nature places to live. And he got the state to pay for his time. He put in a lot more time than he was paid for. He in turn found the living facility that Lucky's in now. He did all of this—went to trial, went to court, had a big hearing, and got him loose on a trial basis. Then in the process of waiting for them to sign these papers, the nurse who was on duty wanted to go home. So she took us across to the building early where the papers were to be signed so that she could hurry up the situation instead of keeping [Thompson] in his room. During that process, they found out that we were in the waiting room. The judge asked Lucky and me to come in. He asked Lucky if he was going to stick to the rules. He told him all these rules. And Lucky said, "No. There isn't anything wrong with me." And all those weeks of work were over within ten seconds! Within the hour, they had an ambulance there, and [Thompson]

was on his way to Western State Hospital. I just stood there in the hallway sobbing. I could not believe all the agonizing hours of putting all these people together and getting all of this done would end with having it blown apart in ten seconds. In the end, it was a lot easier to get him out of Western State than Harborview. Meanwhile, [the hospital staff] had him so drugged up. When he came into Seattle for a hearing, I went to see him. I thought he had had a stroke. He could hardly walk.

CADENCE: Do you know what medications were administered?

PEDRINI: I'm not sure. Haldol® and a combination of many things. All he kept saying to me was [speaking very slowly and deeply], "Lola. I can't think. I can't walk." I was just devastated. But there was a lawyer who works through the state: Jack McNish. This man knew who Lucky was. My role in this whole thing, I felt, was to get the people who were caretaking him to know that this wasn't just a street person—a crazy man. He was a legend and a grand person. He's so very charming. So that was my goal in all these places: to get him better care by getting him some of the respect that the other quote-unquote "crazy people" weren't getting. I couldn't go to Tacoma [near the location of Western State Hospital in Lakewood] then as often as I did in Seattle [the location of Harborview Medical Center]. When I did [visit Thompson], he'd be angry at me for not seeing him as often. He liked it out there. Their grounds are beautiful at Western State. It's a beautiful place, except that [the patients] can go out on the grounds only in groups and they can only do it for an hour a day. They can't just roam around. He would have been willing just to roam around and come in and out every night. As far as I know, he hasn't slept in a bed for years. He sleeps in a chair now. Before that, he used to sleep on upside-down five-gallon buckets in a doorway when he lived in that shack on Beacon Hill. When [the property owners] put him off that place, he still went up there and was sitting in that doorway at night. Anyway, I'm digressing. Getting him out of [Western State Hospital] was a lot easier than it was for Harborview. Jack McNish worked hard to do it. Actually, that young man took Lucky home with him over the [Christmas] holidays, and he had two young children at home. That's how adamant this attorney was about getting Lucky out of the hospital. He said that Western State would dope [Lucky] up, and they did. [McNish's] wife was religious, and his mother was religious, but he wasn't. But when he let Lucky stay with him that year, he ended up going to church with his wife and children and mother—and even his mother-in-law! That's the effect that Lucky's stay had on him. Working on getting Lucky's release was the most frustrating, ugly situation I've ever experienced. I was appalled and amazed! I had already found this [assisted living] facility to begin with because Henry Zimmerman was hired and because the woman who ran this facility was so gracious and wonderful. She loves the blues herself. She kept the room for [Thompson]. So when he was able to get out of Western State, she still was glad to have him come in. She has just been an absolute Godsend. I met with her

once to make sure they would take him before he left Harborview and again when it was a done deal. She has kept him there ever since. When he first came out of [Western State Hospital], they cut down on his medications. He became a wonderful person, and we took him out to Jazz Alley a number of times. He was so gracious and so wonderful.

CADENCE: But he wouldn't play?

PEDRINI: Oh, no. He'll never play again. But that's when Stanley [Turrentine] and he got together. I brought him [to the condominium], and he and Stanley visited in the apartment for a long time. And then he went off the medications. He became the Lucky I knew before. He was a different person. Since then during this last summer, he has had another bout with his legs. We had to send him to the hospital. He gets sores on his legs. Also, when he went off the medications, he wouldn't use water. He ate all of his meals, but he wouldn't bathe. I think [lack of bathing] had something to do with his skin condition too. His circulation isn't very good in his legs, I believe. When they put him in the hospital, they put him back on the medications. The last I knew, he was still on the medications. The woman who runs the assisted living facility got him back out [of the hospital] again. She went to court for him and was able to bring him back to live there again. It's like a nursing home, but he can go in and out on his own. It's not very big. He doesn't leave his room much. He's doing a little more now that he's on the medications again.

CADENCE: What brought Lucky to Seattle?

PEDRINI: He came here from Denver. He was in Denver for a while, and then he was in California. Actually, before he came up here, he was going to live in Oregon. He went to Oregon, and the karma wasn't right. He ended up coming here. When he left the East Coast, he had a station wagon fully loaded. When he arrived here, he had lost most of his [possessions].

CADENCE: Did he sell the car?

PEDRINI: I don't know. I've never been able to get that answer.

CADENCE: He came to Seattle around ten years ago?

PEDRINI: Yes. I don't pry, though.

CADENCE: Does he ever see his children?

PEDRINI: His daughter was here a year or two ago. I understand that his son [Darryl] may come to see him this year. He's a guitar player in Chicago. Darryl sent him a flute. After [the property owners] put Lucky off that property, they found a paper bag out there, and they thought it was garbage. But inside of it was a plastic bag, and inside the plastic bag was a rusty flute that Darryl had given him. We were actually looking for it because he had sent it to [the property owners], and they took it to Lucky.

CADENCE: A lot of people have said that Lucky dropped out of music because producers took advantage of him. Do you think he dropped out because of a gradual health decline in addition to the fact that he had bad luck with the producers?

PEDRINI: I think the producers and his own attitude with the people in charge were his demise. In talking to Bags and all the people who knew [Lucky] years ago…. I've talked to Frank Morgan a number of times, and he told me the same thing. He said [Lucky] had that problem thirty years ago, and he wasn't able to overcome it.

CADENCE: James Moody referred to Lucky in a Down Beat "Blindfold Test." He said, "That sounds like Lucky Thompson. Lucky was bad. He could play some stuff, and that was a good while back. He didn't take anything from anybody from a standpoint of all he wanted was to be a man and play…. He's a bag person now in Seattle because he wouldn't take any crap from anybody."1

PEDRINI: He knew exactly what he was talking about when he mentioned Lucky's problems with producers. He knew about all the stories that people have said. There have been so many stories about Lucky since he came out here.

CADENCE: There are a lot of rumors about Lucky on the Internet.

PEDRINI: The Internet is one of the worst sources of gossip that I've ever seen.

CADENCE: I've read messages on the Internet that Lucky is living on the streets or that he's playing sax again or that he's in the hospital or that he's near death.

PEDRINI: Right. See, he was in the streets, and he was in the hospital. But nobody knows the real truth. There's a new CD out called Lord Lord I Wanna Know. Its producer [Alan Bates] called me. He must have made twenty telephone calls to Seattle—twenty, at least. He talked to different people who didn't know anything about Lucky's life here. Not one person knew anything about Lucky until he got ahold of Buddy Catlett. Not one person [except for Catlett] told him to call me. Not one person!

CADENCE: I have an Internet message here that discussed Moody's comments in the "Blindfold Test." The person ends the message by writing, "Is there anyone out there in Seattle that can confirm or deny Moody's comment on Lucky as a bag person? Please say it isn't so." And then there was this response: "I live in Seattle and have numerous contacts in the jazz community. Upon very reliable information from these contacts, I can assure you that Mr. Thompson is not homeless. He is housed, fed, warm, and dry here. In fairness to Mr. Moody, his claim was possibly true a few years ago. We can be thankful that the situation has changed." It's signed by "Ernie S."

PEDRINI: Yes, Ernie called me before he sent that message. If anyone would just call me, I'd tell them the truth. See, I found out later that someone went to Bud. Lucky was just hospitalized this spring. I called him before he went into the hospital, and I called him when he got out again. So this person went to Bud and told Bud that Lucky was in the hospital, that he was near death, that he was going to lose his legs, that they were going to send him back to the state institution. I called the manager at the assisted living facility and asked, "What's going on?" I told her what happened. She said, "He didn't call me. He may have talked to one of the staff. But they're not supposed to be answering those questions. They would tell you because they know you. But they're not

supposed to tell anyone else."

CADENCE: I have a copy of Daniel Brecker's radio interview with Lucky in 1995. He interviewed Lucky for an hour and played some of his music. Lucky was talking about Miles and Dizzy and everyone else. He had good recollection, but he seemed to tie it in with something like the transcendence of music. Did the interview take place at the assisted living facility?

PEDRINI: Yes.

CADENCE: That's what I thought because I could hear voices and noise in the background.

PEDRINI: Lucky said, "I may talk to [Brecker], but call me tomorrow and I'll see." Well, just like with the dentist, he changes his mind just about at the time it's supposed to happen. Lucky in his regular routine at the last minute decided that he didn't want to do the interview. Daniel showed up anyway.

CADENCE: It was gracious of Lucky to go ahead with the interview.

PEDRINI: Yes, he's a very gracious man. If you could talk to him, you would understand why he took so much of my life for a year. I can't tell you why I did it. He's an intelligent man who needed help. And at that particular time, I felt that that's why I was put in that position. That's why Jay Krulewitch stepped in front of me about two months prior to Lucky being put in a psychiatric ward. One night I stopped somewhere, and this man pulled up and introduced himself to me. He told me that he knew I knew Lucky and so forth and so on. Two months later, I needed this man very much. It wasn't like he came into the scene after Lucky was hospitalized. It was before. And so I just felt that these things were put there for a reason and that if I ignored those reasons, I'd be a fool. I felt that God has a way of doing things and that this was his way and that I was meant to do it.

CADENCE: Do you think Lucky would be willing to be interviewed?

PEDRINI: Oh no. He doesn't want to talk to people. And yet, once he gets started, he's fine sometimes. His answers may ramble. That's what happens. I think in talking to him, it would get worse. He starts from being very focused, and then the conversation starts deteriorating. The thing is, though, once you go to see him, you never get to leave. It would be a long stint before you could leave him. He just doesn't want anyone to leave. He tells me about how people were [sigh] monitoring us through the telephone lines and how he couldn't call me on the phone. So I had to go see him because he wouldn't call me. Bags wanted to see him when he was here, and [Lucky] said he would do it. It turned out that [Lucky] wouldn't meet him. I got him out [of the assisted living facility] after a period of time to go to Jazz Alley a few times. That's how he got the saxophone from Stanley [Turrentine]. Stanley gave him a balanced-action Selmer. He had just got it out of the shop. He just had it redone, and he sent it out here to me. I gave it to Lucky, and Lucky put the mouthpiece on it and fingered it. Then he gave it to me, and I put it in my car. That was it. He didn't want it. He said he would lose it if he took it back to where he was living. And

he kept saying he couldn't play it because of his teeth.

CADENCE: He has dental issues?

PEDRINI: I guess so. I never have figured that one out. I meant to get his teeth fixed. I made an appointment for the day before Thanksgiving. Now this man has a memory like you cannot believe. The night before [the appointment], he called me and told me he couldn't make the appointment. [Laughs] I expected [the cancellation] to happen.

CADENCE: Have you ever tried to drive him somewhere for his own good?

PEDRINI: Oh, you don't force him. It's a whole process to get him to do anything to begin with. Once you do, you're never sure. To go see Lucky, you block out the whole day. If you get out of it in less than a day, then that's all icing on the cake and you can do what you want for the rest of the day.

CADENCE: He talks the whole day?

PEDRINI: Right. Yes.

CADENCE: Have you helped anyone else in Seattle besides Lucky?

PEDRINI: I helped Denney Goodhew get his new teeth. He's a saxophone player, and he had major major mouth problems. Sandra Burlingame decided that she was going to do a major fund raiser for him. We put that all together and got at least $10,000 to $12,000. That was three years ago.

CADENCE: About the same time as Lucky's problems.

PEDRINI: Real close! [Laughs] My kids kind of wondered what happened to their mother. They knew she was in the street somewhere; they just didn't know where.

CADENCE: Is there anything else that you think is significant about the Seattle jazz community for the interview?

PEDRINI: I work with Earshot, and two or three times now they have put music in the schools through a state arts commission grant. I can't tell you which grant it is right now. We've been using the 493, which is the old Black union and which is now amalgamated and is called the 76/493 Union. This went on for two weeks...two gigs a day, three days a week. So I worked to coordinate and keep it going and get the people there. I became the "den mother." I went with a Seattle band to Europe a couple of years ago. I bought my own ticket and was going to become a tourist. It turned out that the airport in Vancouver had changed. The international flights were on a different floor from the rest of them. I ended up with all the band's gear in two East Indian cab drivers' vehicles. One spoke English and one didn't. The band was in another rig. I ended up getting all the stuff on the airplane without the musicians. I held the plane for a half hour because I couldn't find the musicians. It turned out that they were in the United Airlines terminal on the ground level while I was in International. After that little stint of having the plane held and getting the musicians back together again and on the plane, I became their road manager. When we got to Europe, I got an eight-o'clock-in-the-morning phone call from the Elmer Gill, the band leader. He asked me if he could hire me as the road manager, seeing as how I could get them out of the country.

CADENCE: It seems that what I've heard from you exemplifies the modest generosity of the jazz community.

PEDRINI: That's the whole thing. You find this in the jazz community, but you find it in other music communities...maybe in the folk community too. Jazz brings a different heart and a different soul to it than you get in any other kind of music. It comes from a different walk of life. I met Benny Carter when he was here in town. Of course, that was a few years ago. I thought, "I wish I had known him fifty years ago." He is such a beautiful human being, and he'll tell you the way it is. He won't put you down if you're wrong, but he'll tell you in a very nice manner that that wasn't right and that this is the way it is. And he won't cut you by doing it. Every once in a while, the phone will ring, and he'll say, "This is Benny Carter." I get tears in my eyes just to hear him call or have him visit. I try to ask him how he is, and he says, "No. I called you. I want to know how you are and what you're doing and what's going on." I try to turn it around, and he says, "Lola...." And I think, "Yes, sir!" And it's things like that that make jazz so special—that make this whole thing so special.

Interviewed in Ju1y, 1997
Lucky Thompson died on July 30, 2005.

1 "Blindfold Test," Down Beat, January 1997, p. 70.

A BIRD OUT OF A CAGE-UNCHAINED

BY KEN WEISS

Andrea Centazzo ["on-DRAY-uh chen-TOTZ-oh"] (b. 3/23/1948, Udine, Italy) has been called Italy's best percussionist and has excelled as a drummer, gong master, composer, author, multimedia artist, filmmaker, conductor, teacher and inventor. He first came to prominence as a member of esteemed Italian pianist Giorgio Gaslini's quartet while still a student. But looking for more than the pianist's structured music reached out saxophonist Steve Lacy, with whom he recorded and toured. From there, his career reads like a Hollywood script. He visited New York City and connected with the burgeoning Free Jazz scene – working with John Zorn, Tom Cora, and Eugene Chadbourne - helping to found the New York Downtown Music Scene. In Italy, Centazzo offered his services to UFIP an Italian gong and cymbal company and invented numerous very popular metal instruments. He was the first percussionist to integrate a full set of gongs into his setup. He was an early endorser of the Minimoog, started his own record label – Ictus, became deeply involved in producing multimedia projects, as well as operas and symphonies, and wrote 2 drum methods books and 4 musicology books. He moved to Los Angeles in 1991 to pursue film scoring but found out that he was too far ahead of the times. He's led a number of his own bands and played with Don Cherry, Derek Bailey, Albert Mangelsdorff, Evan Parker, Alvin Curran, Fred Frith, Gianluigi Trovesi, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Don Preston, Elliott Sharp, Pierre Favre, Henry Kaiser, Gino Robair, Barry Altschul and Andrew Cyrille. The first half of this interview was done in person at the home of drummer Scott Verrastro while Centazzo was in Philadelphia for a 10/5/22 solo performance and then completed by way of the internet when he was back home in L.A. on 12/26/22. Centazzo's passion and humor comes through in the interview.

Cadence: Do you have a middle name?
Andrea Centazzo: I don't have one. It's not so common in Italy to have a middle name.
Cadence: Would you say something about your recent tour on the East Coast?
Centazzo: Besides coming to Philadelphia and doing my solo project, I went to New York for a 3 day Ictus Records celebration that followed the big festival we had in Milan, Italy last July. That festival was really successful and we are waiting for the release of a boxset in 2023 from the festival as well as putting out a movie. They shot the entire festival with those great musicians from all over Europe, as well as Elliott Sharp and Steve Swell. And in New York we duplicated that, thanks to Chris Cochrane, Elliott Sharp and especially David Watson, who has this space called The Shift in Brooklyn. It's a small space but it was very interesting. We did the same thing as in Milan with combinations of several musicians. It was fantastic – 3 nights of brother and sisterhood. The day after those 3 gigs, I got COVID. [Laughs] I was really in bad shape and I didn't

know I had COVID. I was coughing like a cow, saying, 'What's going on?' So, I did a 4th gig with Eric Mingus, Steve Swell and Elliott Sharp, and during the gig I could not breathe. It was painful but I managed to do the entire concert. At the end of the gig, Elliott told me, "But you did test for COVID?" I said, 'No, I'm fully vaccinated and had 3 boosters.' I went back to Steve Swell's place, did the test – positive. Good God, so I had to call Chicago and cancel all the gigs there. I had very interesting gigs planned there but I had to go back home. Next March I will be 75 so Chris [Cochrane] is trying to set up a celebration in New York, so we'll see.

Cadence: You had a most improbable start to a career in music being born and raised in Udine, a little town in Northeast Italy that had almost no music scene. You've said in the past that you "suffered for your first 20 years."

Centazzo: Unfortunately, as charming as this little town was in the '60s and '70s, on the border with, at that time, Yugoslavia, and now it's Slovenia and Austria, it was completely without a real music scene. We didn't have a public music school just a private institute. There were also some private teachers and we had a limited concert series with just very bad Classical music mostly played by amateurs. There were some secondhand opera companies touring that came but there was no Jazz scene. There were a few Jazz fans and some good amateur players but there was no way to make a living playing music in Udine in the '60s. There was a circle of friends who got together to play Jazz. They were much older than me but that's how I was introduced to this kind of music. I was 13 when somebody gave me an EP of Bix Beiderbecke. I remember that I was kind of shocked. I was used to Italian, melodic, popular songs and the Bix EP was another world. So I became immediately interested in that kind of different sound and feeling. I started to order records by mail and there were also a couple of record stores where you could randomly find some things. I found Birth of the Cool by Miles Davis and I found a record for me that was seminal – Saxophone Colossus by Sonny Rollins with Max Roach. That was during The Beatles era which arrived all over including the small town like Udine, which had about 50,000 people. In high school, one day a few schoolmates approached me and said, "Hey, we should put together a band so we can get chicks." I said, 'Yeah, that's a good idea!' A guy said he played some keyboard, and one said he was starting guitar, and another said he was playing guitar but could play bass. They asked me what I played and I said, 'I don't play anything.' They said, "Oh, you can play drums." [Laughs] And that was the beginning. So, I got a very old, dilapidated drum set which, thinking about it now, if I would still have it, since it was really a vintage drum set with a big bass drum, it could be really valuable, but I sold it immediately when I had the possibility to buy a Ringo Starr kind of drum set. So, I started to play by ear, and I've been playing by ear for all my high school years and part of the university. When I was 18-20, I started gigging around in nightclubs and private parties, making a little bit of money. At that point, I understood I could not go on just by ear playing, especially because I had this interest in playing

Andrea Centazzo
Photo credit © Ken Weiss

Interview: Andrea Centazzo

Andrea Centazzo
Photo credit © Ken Weiss

Andrea Centazzo
Photo credit © Ken Weiss

Jazz. I started roaming around for teachers here and there, but I never had a real training like going to Julliard or Berklee. I've mostly done it by myself. By 1970, I was fed up playing in low class clubs and I suddenly saw an ad in the only Jazz magazine we had in Italy at the time – Musica Jazz – and it announced a summer Jazz clinic in Wengen [Switzerland]. I made a call and got admitted, and when I went there, my world changed because I met Pierre Favre, Stu Martin, Peter Giger teaching drums. Even Johnny Griffin was there playing with Slide Hampton. For me, coming from a little town with no live jazz music, was like being in heaven.

Cadence: In high school you traveled 8 hours by train to Milan to see Duke Ellington with Ella Fitzgerald.

Centazzo: One of the guys in the circle of Jazz friends, who was an attorney and about 25 years older than me, told us about this concert at Teatro Lirico in Milan and that we had to go. I was 16-17 and got the okay to go from my parents because I was going with older reputable people. Getting to Milan from Udine was a nightmare. We arrived just before the concert: at that time there was no direct train line. We had to stop in Venice, and then Verona to change trains. Udine was so isolated for many reasons. One of the main reasons was with the Iron Curtain because from Udine, it was just 10 miles to the border of Yugoslavia.

Cadence: Were you impressed with Ellington's performance?

Centazzo: I've got to say I was kind of disappointed. At the end of the concert I said to my friends, 'Is that how it should be?' They said, "No, they came from Germany at the last minute and they were tired and didn't play as they should have." So, I was already capable of understanding a good performance from a bad performance. [Laughs] That was the first time I experienced Jazz live on stage.

Cadence: You were born into a family of attorneys with the expectation that you would be an attorney.

Centazzo: When I went back to Udine from Wengen I was already into law school: my destiny because my family was a family of attorneys for three generations. My father was expecting me to be working in the office with him, But when back I said, 'Look, let's have a deal. I promise you that I finish the university and get the degree but you're gonna help me and let me go to Switzerland for one year to study with Pierre Favre.' That was the beginning of the story because with Pierre Favre at the Swiss Jazz School in Bern, I got such a stimulus, not only technically, but especially philosophically, that I decided that that was to be my career. When I went back, and that's the funny part of the story, the day I discussed my final dissertation in front to the full faculty group of law professors, my father was there, and when I got approved with a nice evaluation, my father said, "Finally, no more fancy music and Jazz. Finally, you got the degree, you come to work with me." And I said, 'Hey, we had a deal but the deal was that I was getting a degree, not that I was coming to work

with you.' He got really pissed and for two he almost didn't talk to me. At that point, I moved out in a farm in the country by myself and started to practice every day to get things going.

Cadence: What type of law did you study?

Centazzo: Funny enough, I chose bankruptcy law, probably sensing that bankruptcy would be the destiny of my musician career. Just kidding! As matter of fact, I chose that because it was the easiest and the shortest [path]. At that point, frankly, the only thing I had in mind was to be free to go back to play music!

Cadence: What type of law did your family do?

Centazzo: My father was a criminal attorney and my grandfather was a civil attorney who dealt with property issues. At the end, my father had a huge business with a few insurance companies that gave him all the accidents and he was making money with that. I hated that kind of work. While I was at the university he took me a few times into court to see how it worked. I sat with him and I hated it. I still hate it and could not do it. I was told that I could have been a good attorney because I'm really polemic and I'm always finding solutions for problems. It's in the DNA, but the entire legal world doesn't appeal to me.

Cadence: You started on drums, why did you move on to play guitar and then clarinet in school?

Centazzo: I played drums by ear and I thought I should study a real instrument [Laughs] because at that time, you know, to play drums – boom-boom-boom- was kind of considered to be just banging and not "playing" a real instrument. So, I went to a guitar teacher and he stressed me so much with the position of fingers on the neck making me play that Spanish kind of guitar music that I said, "I don't want to do this". And then somebody told me if I applied to this private music school, they had an opening for a clarinet student. I said, 'Why not,' and I got a clarinet and started to play it but I have these two upper front teeth that are overlapping, and with the pressure of the reed on my lips, I was bleeding. I did that for about one year until I said, 'Forget it, let me bang the drums and I will study drumming seriously,' because at that point, I understood it was really something that I loved to do.

Cadence: Who were your primary early influences?

Centazzo: I would say Saxophone Colossus is the album that blew me away, especially "St. Thomas." I remember a ferocious discuss with my father. He said, "What is this chaos?" I said, 'That is the creativity." He felt the improvisation was ruining the song. My father's concept was – "The world is divided into two – people who work and musicians. [Laughs] That was his concept! You can imagine how things went for me. Anyway, I remember putting the needle on that groove of the LP to the extent that I ruined the album. I'd listen to "St. Thomas," the first part of Calypso and then the transition to the Swing part over and over again. Later, in 1976, I had the

chance to meet Max Roach. It was like walking in the street and meeting a God. And he was so nice, such a gentleman, such a great man. I had really a great relationship with him later. That was my first influence, and, of course, at the same time I was banging like Ringo Starr with my school, buddies, because at that time, The Beatles were the popular Rock group and all kids were trying to imitate them. They were huge and I still think they changed the conception of the music. Poor Ringo, at that time, to me, he was sounding very simple, and then later, I understood that there was some substance there. No other than Ringo could have given to the group that sound. Ringo Starr is another one who didn't know anything about music, and he was lucky because he was left handed and he had a right handed drum set so he had to invent kind of different patterns to adapt. But when I started to get serious about drumming, Max Roach was my first influence, and then I met Pierre Favre and he became my mentor.

Cadence: Somehow, even though you grew up in a virtual musical vacuum, you knew early on who you were. You've always thought of yourself as a composer who plays percussion.

Centazzo: Yes, at a certain point when I started to play professionally, I found myself improvising but thinking of the improvisation as an instant assembling of something that I composed in my mind before. I was like preparing little fragments on the drum set or on the gongs, and then when I was performing live, I was just fishing in the bag for those fragments and putting them together. That's how I started my composing career. And then I started to write, almost unconsciously, little pieces of music. One day a theme, another day, maybe something for two voices, and from there I started to compose music for orchestra.

Cadence: You create large multimedia musical productions and you can personally use over 200 instruments at times. Have you always imagined music in such an expansive way? Have you always heard music in your head that way?

Centazzo: That is something that is still to this day, I don't understand how it works. In 1983, there was a celebration of the millennium of my town Udine and I presented a project for the Mitteleuropa Orchestra that I had since 1978 with the top European improvisors. The Udine people said they wanted a kind of Classical composition. So, I added to our 14 pieces ensemble a string section with 12 players plus 4 additional percussionists, so the total was a 3o piece orchestra with also marimba, vibraphone, tympani and gongs. To start composing it, one day I took a little Casio keyboard and a bunch of sheets of music into a remote place in the mountain and I started playing little melodies on the keyboard, writing them down, and I don't know how, but at the end I composed an entire concert for orchestra!! Even on this days 40 years later, I don't know how it could have been possible doing that without a proper composer training but the concert came out well and was performed in Udine and Vienna (Austria) where was also broadcasted by the ORF, the Austrian

national public broadcaster. I kept composing for that ensemble of 14 musicians and it's always been kind of trance composing. What I mean is that I had no experience of orchestration. I never studied [how to do it] until a couple of years later. Probably some of the mistakes I was making writing the music, [before I learned more of the conventional rules], made the music interesting. Later, I had the opportunity to study with a couple of great Italian composers - Armando Gentilucci and Sylvano Bussotti. They gave me, like Pierre Favre, not only technical knowledge, but a broader philosophical view. Bussotti told me around 1984, "When you write a piece of music, the important thing is that you write a good beginning and a good end. What's in the middle doesn't matter." [Laughs] He said, "Think about Beethoven's Fifth, people know the opening 'Bah-bah-bah-baah' who knows the rest?" It was, of course, an extreme hyperbolic way to say it, but, in the end, those kind of suggestions gave me a lot of new creative ideas.

Cadence: What are your thoughts on being limited to playing a standard drum set and when was the last time you did that?

Centazzo: I think the last time I played a drum set was when I was playing in clubs. Once I went to the Swiss Jazz School for the Summer Jazz Clinic in 1970 and I saw Pierre Favre with all those gongs and cymbals, I started to add stuff. The first professional job that I had, the very important job that launched me as a professional musician, was with Giorgio Gaslini – the top Italian piano player at the time. I think I got the job not for my playing but for the fact that when I went to the audition, I set up this castle of gongs and drums, which at the time was probably a tenth of what I had later. He had me set up and said he'd come by later to do a little improvisation with me and when he entered in the room and saw my setup, he said, "Oh my God!" [Laughs] We played ten minutes and then he took out his calendar and said, "Okay, you are in and we have the debut of this group at La Scala in Milano in November." That's how the instruments were part of my beginning.

Cadence: Once you started composing, your works displayed spiritual and mystical elements. Can you speak a bit on the major factors you see as influencing that and how would you describe your spiritual life today?

Centazzo: I'm coming from a Illuminism philosophical background. I've not been religious at all. I've had a lot to complain with Catholic, Islam, with all kinds of religion, except Buddhist which is somehow a philosophy more than a religion. It's a way to live and understand. But I've been spiritually always thinking about the need of a balance between nature and man, between inner creativity and the external world. As a matter of fact, somehow, one of my major works in percussion is the Indian Tapes box set I made in 1980, a triple LP set, based on the Native American Indian's philosophy and I've been much more fascinated about that than all the other religions, and that is still where I am today.

Cadence: You've said in the past that karma has led the flow of your life. You

didn't plan anything. Is that true?

Centazzo: Absolutely, you can call it karma or you can call it a stroke of luck or, in many of my cases, bad luck, but the fact is that I never planned from the beginning to do this or that, like to go to live in Los Angeles, for instance. Everything happened because it should have happened. The only thing that I was sure about inside of me, I didn't want to be a fucking lawyer. [Laughs] That's it! All the rest, I accepted every aspect of my destiny. Even composing for film came out of something else, I never planned for that. The multimedia? I had this percussion music that I thought could be a great soundtrack and I was looking for somebody who could put the music in a film but nobody cared about it so I did it myself.

Cadence: You hold a PhD in Ancient Music from the University of Bologna. That's not a common area of interest for most musicians. What attracted you to that study and how has that helped in the development of your work?

Centazzo: That's another karmic thing. When I got the degree in law I was kind of frustrated because it wasn't what I was dreaming of. I was dreaming of studying music in an academic way and I was looking around for music schools and the only one possible was this one in Bologna. If I were to attend there, they would accept 10 of the courses that I did in law school for credits. I never understood how that could have been possible. In law school, I studied Roman law and the history of law, and they got me that as music courses. Another karmic thing happened my first day at the music school. I was attending a lesson of this professor talking about the Middle Age music and I was quite bored until I looked down near him on the floor and saw a bag with a John Coltrane record on the top. After class I asked the professor what he had in the bag and he had a full collection of John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and Albert Ayler albums!. That for me was [breathtaking] and I said, 'I'm a Jazz player,' and we became very good friends. He was academically exceptional in Classical and Ancient music but was also in love with Jazz and Avant-Garde. At the end, I did my dissertation on percussion instruments in Edgar Varese's music instead of Ancient music because that professor allowed me to do it. So it's really been a series of karmic coincidences.

Cadence: Ethnic music has been a source of major interest of yours. You've studied and worked extensively with Balinese Gamelan music, as well as investigated traditional Japanese, Indian, and even Australian Aboriginal music. Talk about your attraction to that music.

Centazzo: This is another karmic experience. The first time I went to New York in 1976, I went to a Greenwich Village record store. At that time, it was a happy time where you'd go in the record store and you looked through the albums – it's all a dream now. I was looking through a section of what was World music and I saw this record called Morning in Bali and I was very curious. I bought it and it blew me away because of the sound of the gongs and the minimalistic approach of the music. That was absolutely an influence on me for when I started to work with the UFIP cymbal factory in Pistoia making

prototypes. I've been trying to copy the Balinese gong in making a series of gongs and since, I was very fascinated by the gong universe. Then in 2000, by way of my girlfriend, I met at UCLA, where she was working, her cousin who was director of the World Music faculty there. The daughter of her cousin was married to a Balinese Gamelan player. I said to her: "Listen, I've been dreaming to play with Balinese musicians all my life". So, she put me in touch with her son-in-law, I went to Bali, and finally I had the opportunity to do a project with a Balinese Gamelan working with Balinese musicians. Much before that In 1978, when I did my first American tour, I went to see Indian reservations and it was really too much to see how they were forced to live. And I had this idea about the Indian Tapes triple album from the Indian music I heard there – the chanting, the drumming. So, I've been picking cherries here and there, and I'm still doing it. You never stop learning. Every day I discover something new and that is the beauty of the music and the beauty in this era to have the possibility to go online and find out all you want. I always tell to people who ask me for suggestions, never think that you know enough. You never know enough, there is always something that you don't know. And you can learn from any kind of situation – even a band of kids playing in the street. They could have something that is -poof!!- interesting and you steal that little detail and you put it in your music. That is the process. [Scott Verrastro's cat suddenly jumps up on the nearby windowsill] It's nice to have a cat jumping during [the] interview!

Cadence: You were one of the first Jazz musicians to be drawn to the gongs in the '70s.

Centazzo: There was a guy in US at the beginning of the '70s named Christopher Tree who was the first to popularize the gong as a solo percussion instrument. He was part of the hippie movement. He wasn't playing real music, he was more playing sounds that later became the so called gong meditation music with the New Age. And in Europe, certainly, Pierre Favre was being the first to use extensively tuned gongs. And then I started to make those prototypes and create my own series and create my own music on those gongs and Indian Tapes in 1980 was the result of 3-4 years of composing for gongs and percussion. During that period I also started to use electronics.

Cadence: It was your attraction to the unusual sounds of ethnic music that led you to want to reproduce those sounds with the help of gongs and cymbals. How did you come to start producing your own series of gongs and cymbals, first with the UFIP company and later with Paiste?

Centazzo: I was kind of lucky because I went to this Swiss Jazz School in Bern (Switzerland) and I met again Pierre Favre, who at the time was the artist relationship manager with Paiste, the Swiss company making gongs and cymbals. He had an astonishing collection for free of those instruments. When I went back to Udine in 1971, I thought, "Well, there is a company in Pistoia producing cymbals, UFIP, an Italian company: let see if I can duplicate what Pierre did with Paiste" And as matter of fact, I did it. UFIP history is

very interesting. They were originally making bronze bells for churches and then around 1930, somebody from Turkey brought over a couple of cymbals (that was the moment where all the dancing bands started to use drum sets) and the company started to produce cymbals and became very good at that. So I approached them and said, "Hey, I have a mind to make gong, bells and several other prototypes" and they hooked up with the idea. So, I started to make and subsequently get the instruments for free and that's why I had a huge collection. In 1984, Paiste approached me because they knew I was the creator for UFIP and they wanted to take me away from UFIP, their competitor. And they were so generous giving me all kind of gongs and cymbals. Generally speaking, I have to say that if in my career I bought 10% of the instruments I owned, that was a lot. I had always this cunning attorney mind to go around to people, [Laughs] getting the way to get free instruments and endorsing them! Around 2012, I had almost 2500 instruments. I had a barn in Bologna where I was living with this huge collection, and at a certain point, I learned that one of the owner of UFIP, Luigi Tronci, a great guy, was creating a percussion museum in Pistoia and I said, 'Look, I give you everything because it makes no sense for me to keep all this for myself. You can put it in the museum and have children play them and have people come see them.'

Cadence: What do you see to be the spiritual and therapeutic properties of gongs?

Centazzo: There are a lot of fake gong players around. Too many. There's people that buy a gong, bang it, and think that is gonna heal the universe. That's not true. Back in the '70s or '80s, they were experimenting playing Mozart's music to the cows and the cows were producing more milk. [Laughs] So, music, of course, has a mental influence on our minds and the vibrations a physical effect on our bodies and music has always been a way to communicate and used to heal. From the beginning, music has been used for healing from the shamans of 3000 years ago to today we know that repeating a sound, having a special vibration with a certain kind of note you could hit your body in a way that could heal and it could get you better. But, I always said you have to believe because if you don't believe, it doesn't happen. It's like hypnotism. In the '70s, I had a serious problem with a shoulder that never resolved and the doctor was trying to hypnotize me and he couldn't because I was resisting. So, the same is with the healing sounds. If you resist to the sound, the sound doesn't affect you – except make you deaf if you bang too strongly. [Laughs] Certainly, there is some vibration that goes directly to the body, that's for sure, it's scientifically proven. But beyond that, there's this enormous movement of healers using gongs or bells or crystal bowls. I mean, there is a lot of faking. Most of those guys are there just for the money and they sell very well their merchandise, but it doesn't affect the people attending their sessions. There are some acoustic principles that really are effective but then you need to know how to apply them and most of the people don't know how.

Cadence: You wrote a book on gongs in 1976. Are you surprised that the gong has not become more popular in Western music?

Centazzo: Actually it did become very, very popular! Right now, it's the top instrument for yoga sessions and meditation, and as I was saying, it's been used in a way that's not even conceivable for me. As a concert instrument, it's a little bit more popular than in the '70s but not that much. It became more popular because of being commercially promoted by Paiste, the main gong maker in Switzerland and Germany. The Chinese gong makers who had a millenary tradition on gongs, now along with the traditional Chinese gongs, started to produce a lot of different new kinds of gongs. On the top now we have a lot of small companies and individuals making great gongs.

Cadence: That's a good lead-in to ask you about all the unique cymbals and percussion instruments you designed such as the IceBell, Ogororo, Tampang, Sheng, Lokole and the Square Bell.

Centazzo: Talking about this is like you hitting me with a hammer on my forehead because I never made a cent out of those instruments! Those guys at UFIP who were producing the instruments, they didn't want to spend money in patenting, which at that time in Italy was very expensive. To make a long story short, the IceBell, which is the main creation of mine and the most popular small cymbal ever, sold millions but with no patent... no money! Immediately after I made the first prototype, in 1976 I went to New Jersey to the Latin Percussion Factory because they were interested to distribute it. They said, "Oh, we can pay 2 dollars for each piece." I said, 'You are just nuts! It cost to us 5 dollars. It's bronze, it's not aluminum.' And the boss said, "Well let me have the prototype and we'll decide later." The next NAMM, which is the big instrument show, you see the IceBell by Latin Percussion made in brass. After that, Sabian made it, Zildjian made it, all the producers in the world, including the Chinese, made that IceBell [claps hands] and I never saw a single cent out of it. It has been really frustrating, every time I'm talking about it. I'm proud that I did it but nobody knows that I did it because nobody said, "Designed by Andrea." And I never made money, which is not my main target in life, but still, a million dollars would be nice. [Laughs]

Cadence: In the past you performed with a full setup of gongs, drums, and perhaps 200 percussion instruments. At one point, you were hauling around 300 pounds of gear and needed 4 hours for soundcheck and setup time. How grueling was that and what were the novel ways you dealt with that issue?

Centazzo: Well, I was young, I was enthusiastic. I had a nice wife that was helping me and I had pleasure in assembling all those instruments and playing them. And now, getting older, everything became more heavy. Right now, I'm traveling with a MIDI percussion keyboard, the Kat mallet (shaped like a marimba) and ten years ago that 10 pound keyboard on my back was like a feather. Now to come off the train to the station or walk in the airport , it's

like having a mountain on my back. Getting old, I had to cut and reduce the set. Also, a lot of reducing the set was because I changed the way I played. I concentrated much more on the keyboard than on the gongs and drums. I still have too much gear but in that era, I was just crazy. I was traveling with 4 cases full of pieces of bronze and iron. I cannot even imagine that today. My entire set right now fits in two pieces of luggage weighting 40 pounds. That's all, that's a tenth or less of what I was used to carrying around.

Cadence: What's the most unusual thing you've used to make music?

Centazzo: Something that I have had since 1974 is a plastic/foam filled little keyboard with a kind of little reeds on the top and when you press it, it makes bird-like sounds. It's a children's toy that I discovered playing very lightly with the mallets on the top of a drum, it makes very peculiar sounds. I've been using all kinds of objects. My principle is that you can get a good sound from anything. If you remember in some performances Han Bennink is playing the floor and all he can reach, and that's the way it should be. Of course, everybody loves to have great instruments, but right now, I don't have drums, I have frame drums because frame drums are the lightest drums you can get and I adapted my playing to those. And also, like the cymbals, they fit one in the other so you can carry 10 of those in a bag where you can fit just a regular drum.

Cadence: What are some of the latest electronic advancements and "toys" that you've been using or seeking to get?

Centazzo: The newest is the Mallet KAT which they started to produce in the '80s. And then there is a new keyboard from Pearl called Mallet Station both configured like a vibraphone. The Mallet Station is very similar to the MalletKAT but the keys are made by silicon and it uses the USB. That's the latest electronic that I'm using. I also have vintage stuff that I keep using.

Cadence: You mentioned earlier that during your time studying law at the University of Trieste, you attended the Wengen Jazz Clinic in Switzerland where you met Pierre Favre. You also got to play with Johnny Griffin at Wengen. How was that experience?

Centazzo: I'm still ashamed. I was so scared that I could not even play regularly the time. I was slowing down and speeding up and the bass player with Johnny Griffin was looking at me, saying, "Hey man, speed up! Speed up," and I was speeding up, "No! Too much!" I wasn't the only one [having a hard time] at this jam session. The point of the entire clinic was to make the students play with professionals. After 5 minutes I said, 'Okay, I give up.' I was trembling. You cannot imagine coming from a small town, having no experience and just getting in front of those guys. It was shocking. It was exciting but at the same time I felt kind of stupid [Laughs] but that was my first experience.

Cadence: What type of career in music were you envisioning while studying music at the university?

Centazzo: I was envisioning exactly what I did. [Laughs] As soon as I escaped from my father, I went to live by myself in the country with one of those buddies who was playing with me in those night clubs - a good organ player. We decided to do a duo and we played a kind of improvised experimental music. I would say a mixture between Soft Machine and Jean-Michel Jarre. We did a first album called Ictus and that later became the name of my label. That's how I got started; that came at the same time as my start with Gaslini.

Cadence: How did you end up in Giorgio Gaslini's ensemble [1973-76] while you were still a student and how was that experience playing his structured music?

Centazzo: It was a great school but it was pretty difficult. Basically, I escaped my father and I went to play with Gaslini. We had 25-30 years difference and he kind of adopted me like a son. He was saying stuff like, "Hey, put your jacket on, it's cold outside," or, "Tonight, put your black shirt on." He would say that and I hated it because it recreated some kind of father-son relationship. That was the difficult part playing with Giorgio but he was a great master. That discipline that I learned from him was absolutely fundamental in learning how you can escape from structure or when you need to stay in structure. His music was composed with some part of improvisation. He had a spot for everybody so you never were a sideman: you had your spot, you had your solo, you had your duo with the bass. His music really was structured and it was great music. From my point of view, if Gaslini would have had the guts to leave Italy and go to New York at the end of the '60s when he started to write his music, he could have been like Lalo Schifrin or Gunther Schuller. He would have been up there with those guys that made the Third Stream Jazz because he was the first to use dodecaphonic series in Jazz. He was a Classically trained composer with a gigantic knowledge. Giorgio had a composer's mentality and he did it scientifically, similarly to [the others I mentioned]. He made a different world of sounds in music. It was an absolutely interesting vision but as a band leader, he was kind of oppressive for me because I was the youngest. The others in the band were older and more established.

Cadence: It was a shoulder injury in 1975 and a 1976 earthquake that transformed things for you.

Centazzo: The shoulder started much before when I was playing volleyball at school. I stretched a tendon and I never recovered. At the end of '75, I went to Paris to treat this with a doctor who was very famous, the top in Europe. He could only fix me a little bit and still today I have problems from time to time. While in Paris, I bought a newspaper and saw Gaslini was presenting his new quartet. He fired me without telling me. That was really hard, that was a really hard experience. But as far as my shoulder, I always say that somehow the problem with my shoulder is also responsible for my style of playing because I could not be a regular Jazz player playing the ride cymbals and keeping

up-tempos. I had to share between my two hands and feet the timing and the improvising. It's been a damnation because it's painful sometimes and I have to take painkillers but at the same time, it has also changed my life. The [other transformative event was the] earthquake destroyed the farm where I was living with my wife so we moved to Pistoia for two years, thanks to those guys at the UFIP cymbal factory and then I moved to Bologna where I lived until I moved to L.A.

Cadence: Why did you target Steve Lacy to connect with?

Centazzo: That's another great karmic story. Steve was really productive and by '76 he had already many albums. He was recording with everybody and I had a full collection of his works. I was in love with the sound of soprano saxophone. When I was in Paris, I wrote a letter to him saying, 'I'm a drummer from Italy, I'm in Paris and I would like to meet you.' He sent me his telephone number and I called him and went to his home. I told him I would like to play his kind of music and he invited me and my wife for lunch. It was a nice encounter. I had already a couple of albums done and he said he loved them. After I returned to Italy, I started looking for gigs and I wrote him that we could have the chance to do a few gigs if he agreed and he said yes. So he came to Italy and we did 7 gigs. That was another key time of my life. The first time I met Steve Lacy, I was again in the Johnny Griffin mood – I was shaking while playing with Steve Lacy. He had already played in Italy with Gaslini and other famous musicians, and here I was playing a duo with him. At the start of the first rehearsal, sitting in my cage of drums and gongs, I said, 'Steve, what you want me to play?' And he looked at me and said, "Hey, play what you feel," and that has been the key to a new music concept for me because coming from Gaslini, where everything was structured, suddenly I felt like a bird out of a cage. After the first 2 gigs, I was still a little bit stiff, but by the 3rd gig, which became the recording Clangs, we clicked and it was just phenomenal. I completely unchained myself and Steve was very happy. He wanted to do more with me and we did a trio tour with bassist Kent Carter and some other gigs as a duo. This came during a short period of time - from '76 to around '79 - but it was very intense, very inspiring.

Cadence: Would you share some Steve Lacy memories?

Centazzo: I had just gotten an album of a Harry Partch opera based on the [Great Depression era] hobos wall writing and I first listened to it together with Steve. It was very weird stuff, most of it I didn't understand because it was microtonal music with lyrics in English slang. Lacy was translating it to me. He was speaking very well Italian and French, too. That's a memory I have of an afternoon spent laughing together. I also have a fond memory of his philosophy. We were driving in my Mini Cooper a lot of times. If you can imagine – me, Steve Lacy, the saxophone, and all my stuff in the back of the Mini Cooper. It was a miracle drive!. I remember we went to play in this big

festival and it was pouring rain. We were sitting in the car, waiting, and I was totally embarrassed with Steve. We had driven him 200 miles from Milan to play this gig. I said, 'Steve, I'm so sorry.' He said, "This is life, man. It should be like this. We'll go back and eat something. Don't worry." That was really calming. It was very philosophically posed.

Cadence: Why were you so embarrassed?

Centazzo: I was embarrassed because while I was in the car I was thinking, 'What happens now? They're not going to pay us because we're not going to play and I promised Steve to be paid.' So, I went outside and found the organizer and told him I am waiting in the car with Steve Lacy and asked what was gonna happen. He said there was no concert that night due to the rain. I said, 'What about the money?' He said, "Oh, the money is here," [Laughs] and he gave me cash and I went back to the car and said, 'Life is good, Steve. Here's the cash.' And he said, "Hmm, nice gig." [Laughs]

Cadence: How did you end up in New York City playing with Free Jazz leaders such as John Zorn, Tom Cora, and Eugene Chadbourne helping to found the New York Downtown Music Scene?

Centazzo: I cannot remember exactly how but Eugene Chadbourne wrote me a letter in '78 because of the Ictus label which by then was already well-known. He wrote that he was coming to Europe and he was interested to do some duo gigs together and I said yes. So, he came and we did 5 duo gigs and I told him I would love to come to the States. He said okay and he did put together the tour. When I arrived in New York, I found all the gang with one of those Volkswagen vans from the '60s. John Zorn and Tom Cora, everybody was there, welcoming me like the great European improviser. As a matter of fact, the Environment for Sextet LP was my group with my compositions, if you can call them compositions being like graphic drawings and instructions. John Zorn [at that time] wasn't the big star that he became later. That's the way it started, and John Zorn even designed a poster for me for my solo gig. Eugene had organized a tour for me nationwide so I went down to Alabama to play with David Williams and LaDonna Smith, who were the only improvisers in Alabama, and then I flew to California to play with Henry Kaiser and the Rova Saxophone Quartet. I also went to L.A. to play with John Carter, Vinny Golia and Alex Cline. That was all done just by word of mouth between musicians. That was absolutely one of the greatest times of my life.

Cadence: This was your second time in New York?

Centazzo: Yes, I had come for the Chicago NAMM show in 1976 because the Italian Office for Foreign Commerce was financing all the Italian music instrument makers to go to the NAMM and we had a free ticket from the government, so I went to Chicago as the sole representative for UFIP. From Chicago, I flew to New York and I met Andrew Cyrille who gave me few fundamental drumming lessons, Gunter Hampel who later was interested

playing with me and a lot of other musicians. The next year, the NAMM was in Atlanta so I went to Atlanta and there I met Peter Erskine, who was playing with the Maynard Ferguson Big Band. And then in 1978, Eugene organized the tour. I went back in 1979 and 1980 again, playing with Eugene, going down again to Alabama, and then I didn't come back to the States for 10 years. When I came back in 1990, it was to move to L.A.

Cadence: It was the refusal from a recording company to publish Clangs, your duo record with Steve Lacy, that led you and your wife at the time, Carla Lugli, to found Ictus Records in 1976, becoming the first independent Italian label of creative music operated by musicians and one of the first independent labels of New music on the world market along with Incus in Great Britain, FMP in Germany, and ICP in Holland. Talk about that process.

Centazzo: It's very simple. I had this contract with a company and they produced my duo Soft Machine-like Ictus recording and then they produced another album of mine – a solo that they hated. When I went there with a third project, a duo with Lacy, they said, "No, this kind of music cannot sell. We don't want it. We barely made the first one because it was a little bit more trendy, a little bit more Rock, but your solo, we didn't sell a copy. Now we don't want anything." I went to another label and they said no. So, by that point, I already had in mind to do it by myself and I started shopping around for the cheapest way to print LPs. I did the cover by myself, very simple, and that was the beginning. We printed, I think the minimum at that time was 1000 copies, and when I went on tour for the second time with Steve, we were selling them like peanuts. We were selling like 40 pieces per night. At that time, my wife started to work for Ictus only and she phoned 3-4 distributors and they were happy to distribute the label. With the money we made from the first sales, we produced the second album with Derek Bailey and then we kept on that way, never making real money but being able to carry on the dream. I can sincerely say that the business was always at the survival level but we still could put out a lot of albums, making music and making the musicians happy because everybody was paid. That was the beginning of Ictus. In '84, I divorced my wife and I could not carry on by myself because at that point, the business needed someone taking care of it. I had no money to hire somebody to do it for me, and at the same time, I was already thinking about video and all kinds of other artistic experiences, so the label died in '84. Then later I produced 3-4 other recordings – New Age kind of stuff – on a new label named Index and then in 2004, I started again my label in L.A. and began the digital distribution of the old catalogue. That year I had happened to meet the old manager I had in the '90s who was supposed to make me a very famous soundtrack composer and instead he made me nothing. I met him and he said, "Hey, I have a new business. I'm distributing digitally labels and I remember that you had a Jazz label. We can do business together." So I gave him the catalogue, I think 20 titles, and in the beginning I was making 700 dollars a year and it was a good

business because I had to do nothing. And then he introduced me to the head of Polish Jazz label in the USA and the guy said, "Oh, my God, the Ictus catalogue, I have all the original pieces. I'm a fan of yours, why we don't start it again?" He put the money up and we started it. He produced this box set of 12 CDs and from there I started producing again from time to time.

Cadence: There's a report online that the label was revived in 1995 to gather funds for Bosnian refugees. Is that accurate?

Centazzo: Not really: as I said the label started again in 2004. That's a requiem for orchestra – A Bosnian Requiem first released by Warner Chappell on their own label and just later reprinted on ICTUS. I wrote it between 1993 and 1994. It was a commission from the Bologna Youth Symphonic Orchestra. I wrote that for 3 sopranos, narrator and full symphonic orchestra. That has been the biggest symphonic work that I wrote. Later I composed and conducted all my operas but with smaller orchestras.

Cadence: Are you a very political person?

Centazzo: If you mean a political person hating liars like Donald Trump, yes, I am, [Laughs] but I've never subscribed to any party in Italy. Here I'm registered as a Democrat, which means nothing because it's such a broad spectrum.

Cadence: Why did you pick the name Ictus? The dictionary lists it as a medical term for a sudden stroke.

Centazzo: No, that's always what people say – Stroke! NO! In Latin, ictus means downbeat. It's a musical term. I got that from studying antique music at the university. Studying Middle Age music, you have the downbeat and it's called ictus and I thought it was kind of a nice name and then I found out it was a mistake using it [Laughs] because of the fact that it's also a medical term.

Cadence: You're credited with introducing in the early '70s a new concept of percussion playing that moved away from Free Jazz to a new form of improvised music. Drum Magazine named you as a game changer in a 2013 article for presenting your early solo percussion concerts. Talk about your concept change.

Centazzo: We were a group of European percussion players, some older than me, who were very inspired by the Free Jazz drummers like Andrew Cyrille with Cecil Taylor. That's one of my main influences in Free Jazz. Also Sunny Murray and Paul Motian, all those drummers playing out of the time, just making colors, making atmospheres. But they were really always based on the drum set as an instrument. They never escaped the concept of 2 or 3 cymbals, the hi-hat, the 3 drums and the snare drums. Instead in Europe, we were trying to enlarge and expand the drum set, adding sounds, especially spurious sounds like putting a cymbal on the drum or putting some tape on the gong and making the gong sound like a lid of a pan or playing the lid of a pan instead of the gong. We were much more into creating new combinations of sounds. Of course, having the privilege to make my own instruments with this company,

I was really fortunate to have enough instruments, enough different kinds of metals to experiment with. Others, for instance like Paul Lovens, Paul Lytton or Tony Oxley, they were using Chinese drums, self-made cow bells or broken cymbals. We were unlimited in the concept. Basically, the drumming technique has always been the same in the sense that you play a single stroke, a double stroke, a paradiddle, but when you play those on a drum set it creates a certain kind of sound, a perfect sound that is traditional for the drum set, even if you play free. When you start to play that, dividing the patterns between a bell and a piece of wood and a drum with a piece of tape on the top, it creates a completely other soundscape, and that's what in Europe we were trying to do. And I was one of those experimenting, mostly with the gongs and the cymbals, because I had access to an endless quantity of them. That was the change of the game and it was mostly a European invention that they started to follow in the States.

Cadence: Throughout most of the '70s you refused structure in music but reportedly, it was working with a large group of Free Jazz musicians in New York that led you to seek organized music. Talk about that transition.

Centazzo: The truth is, as I said before, when we did the Environment for Sextet recording with John Zorn, Eugene Chadbourne, Tom Cora, Toshinori Kondo and Polly Bradfield, I had already in mind to play music that was improvised but inside a structure. That's probably my Gaslini influence. I have to say Steve Lacy somehow also had this kind of cage because Steve Lacy music is a theme, improvisation and a theme. It's still very Traditional Jazz, even if it's played very freely. The music of Steve is very peculiar for that reason. I had the same kind of pattern, the same kind of idea. Let's do a structure, let's do an improvisation inside the structure, playing little connecting parts together or as duos or trios. So, that's why I am always saying that more than improviser, I think to be a composer, because even in the improvisation, I've been trying to find a cage to put everything inside. That happened in '78 when we started to play together. By the way, Tom Cora was the producer of the recording because I didn't have the money at the time and Tom said, "I have a 1000 dollars. I'll give you that and when you produce the record, you give me the money back."

Cadence: So the reason that you changed your thinking to play structured music was to organize unorganized music?

Centazzo: Yes and no, because even when I did my first recording Ictus, that was already organized music. I never played completely improvised music until Derek Bailey, but even with Derek Bailey the music was somehow organized. Drops my duo with Derek Bailey is considered one of the best Derek Bailey duo albums. But why? The story goes like this: we started improvising, we didn't find each other, it was hell and we went into a depression. He had come from London to my place in the country and we

had to do the record. I finally said, 'Let's do something more conceptual, more structured. Let's do a first piece where you play very fast acoustic guitar and I play wood blocks. Then we do one where you play electric guitar very slow, long notes, and I play gongs." Basically, that is the way to compose/organize improvised music. We did that and it clarified everything, and in the end, the album was great because we had some point where to start from. So, I would say I never played completely free, although lately I'm playing more improvised music like I will do in New York on this tour. I don't even know on which instruments those guys are playing.

Cadence: The Moog synthesizer came out in 1970 and through your work with UFIP and the connections made at the NAMM shows, your albums made their way to Bob Moog and you became an endorser of a Minimoog. How did that change things for you?

Centazzo: it changed a lot because expanded my sonic possibilities. Until then you could not sustain a sound with percussion except making a roll. You couldn't sustain a note like you could on the violin or the cello. And with the Moog, I had a percussion controller that was basically a trigger to the main synthesizer and I could play a drone and then improvise on top of the drone. At that time, there were no loops, no sequences yet, but you could play a "sample and hold" sequence, programming the notes, so hitting the drum and having the drum going crazy up and down. You could play on the top of that. So, it became multi-voicing instead of just being one sound out of percussion. And also the quality of the sound, the electronic sound, the filter, the so celebrated Moog filter, that was a really big change in the music.

Cadence: How difficult has it been to integrate electronics and acoustic instruments in a musically meaningful way?

Centazzo: I had two speakers and the Minimoog on the side of the drum set and on the other side I had the bells, cowbells and gongs, and I experimented with how to connect the acoustic with the electronic sound. I experimented one day, two days, three days, and on the fourth day, something good came out. It's been a continuous researching process of experimenting day after day. As a matter of fact, this Indian Tapes triple album I made has loops that I made with a Minimoog and I played percussion over the top.

Cadence: Some labeled your early electronic music as "Cosmic Rock," and consider it to be an ancestor of Techno music. How successful were you with that music and is that work still popular?

Centazzo: Successful zero. [Laughs] This LP that is titled Elektriktus (the Electric Ictus)comes out from experimenting with Minimoog and a very cheap Italian kind of keyboard treated with some tape delay. I was working hours and hours in the studio making those experiments. In the end, I found myself with a lot of material that was more towards Rock and New Age sound than the experimental side or Jazz. I decided to put all those together in an album. The producer who was producing my Jazz albums was also at that time

importing into Italy the Krautrock, the cosmic German Rock with bands like Tangerine Dream and Popul Vuh. He thought what I had made were sounds that fit perfectly in that kind of series and he wanted to release it. I said, 'Why not? Give me some money and I give you the tape.' So, he released that album. The record sold minimally because it was one of the catalogue of more famous Cosmic Rock bands so the distributors were only buying a few copies. It sold a little bit and then disappeared. In the year 2000 or so, I started to see on the internet blogs talk about who was behind this album because it was completely anonymous in the beginning – it was just Elektriktus: Electronic Mind Waves. And they started to say this was the precursor of Techno music because there are pieces like Techno but pretty much primitive. Consequently, it started to be a cult kind of album. Finally a few years later, I was approached by a label that wanted to re-release this album. I accepted and they produced the CD. It ended up selling in Japan very well. I was then approached by a Spanish label asking to produce 500 copies of the album as LP. I agreed and they also sold out. And now there is a third label that wants to reprint it, and of course, I will say once again yes.

Cadence: What was going on in the '80s for you up until the time you turned your focus towards multimedia projects?

Centazzo: The '80s was a confused period because until '84, I was married to Carla Lugli and I was doing mostly composing for Mitteleuropa Orchestra, playing with improvisers like Gianluigi Trovesi, Lol Coxhill, Don Cherry Franz Koglmann and others. Also I was into art, painting visual scores and making exhibition of that material. Then we divorced and I started making soundtracks first, and since I didn't find anybody to do soundtracks for, because nobody accepted my percussion music for soundtracks, I decided to make a film myself! The video film did very well, it won all the prizes, so I started to make videos leaving music on side. And then I got a bit of attention from producers and started composing for films and especially for theatrical productions, which was a major business because in Italy, if you write a soundtrack for theater, you get a portion of the ticket. That was absolutely amazing, especially because I was writing music for the top Italian plays. In the theater, usually you write a short beginning and some other short sections, nothing substantial like a soundtrack for a movie. With 20 minutes of music I was making what I could have made playing 10 concerts. So, I did that for a period while keeping up playing solos and duos with Italian musicians or occasionally with Don Cherry, Franz Koglmann or Lol Coxhill.

Cadence: You moved to Hollywood in 1991 to devote yourself to scoring film soundtracks. Talk about making that move.

Centazzo: That is a long story but to make it short, two years before the move I signed a contract of exclusivity to be a composer with publisher Warner Chappell Music in Italy. They were paying me a fortune just to get my name

on their roster, and it was through them that I ended up in L.A. because they contacted Warner Chappell in L.A. to let them know I was interested in scoring for films and Warner Chappell there said, "Yeah, send your Italian composer here. We can help him to get into the business." Because Warner Chappell Italy controlled the whole Mediterranean sector of publishing and was making gazillions, they were very important to Warner Chappell USA, but when I arrived here, I was one of the thousand composers in the Warner Chappell catalogue. It was frustrating because I had a contract with them so I could not write music for anybody else but Warner and they were paying me every month a salary to do nothing. But there was a catch. I had to give them, as usual, 50 percent of the publishing portion of the royalties. Things were different in Europe. There it works that you are an exclusive composer for a publisher, the publisher pays for the recording and all the expenses to release the soundtrack. The producer doesn't pay for that. Here, it's the opposite. The producer is paying for the recording and then keeps 50 percent of the royalties. So, every time I was going to talk to somebody about making a soundtrack, most of the time they said, "Well, what about us? Why should we give you a soundtrack gig if then the 50 percent of the publishing goes to Warner? No, that doesn't work for us." Even the music director for soundtracks at Warner said, "Yeah, your music is beautiful, but you know what? We have 500 composers on the roster and you are number 501." I stayed there for 3-4 years and then I said, 'Enough,' and I ended the contract. I wrote a few soundtracks for independent movie makers and stuff like that , trying to make my own music, because the big business in Hollywood is very formularized. If you make a romantic comedy, you have to write for violins. If you have an action movie, you have the trumpets and the trombones. It's really difficult to be creative unless you are already Philip Glass where when they call you, you tell them to take your music from one of your recordings and to pay you a half a million dollars. When you have a name, everything changes, but if you are a coming up composer, you have to do what they want.

Cadence: You had the idea for featuring percussion to make soundtracks but Hollywood wasn't ready for that. What did you hear back from the producers when you pitched that idea?

Centazzo: I was going to producers saying, 'I have this idea, we can do percussion,' and they would say, "Oh, no, no, no, no!" [Laughs] "You must be kidding. Here we need something like Star Wars with brass, here we need violins." Nobody wanted to exit from the formula so I got increasingly frustrated, frustrated, frustrated, and at a certain point, I decided to go back to playing, and that has been the end of my Hollywood experience. I did some movies and I've done music for little shorts for people who ask, but basically the idea to be just a soundtrack composer didn't work. Maybe with my personality - I'm kind of tied to my principles. I want to do things a certain way and Hollywood doesn't work in that way. You need to be their slave for years

before you can be your own boss. Unfortunately, my mentality wasn't there.

Cadence: What was your reaction to the widespread acclaim that film director Alejandro González Iñárritu received for using Antonio Sánchez' relentless drumming as the soundtrack for his Grammy-winning Birdman in 2014? The critics applauded that as a major innovation.

Centazzo: Yeah! [Laughs] I, unfortunately, in the '90s I was too early. That could have been me doing that. I can tell you that I was really mad and frustrated when this movie came out. When I proposed that, it wasn't the right time. It's my specialty to be at the wrong place, with the wrong idea, at the wrong time. I had many episodes like that in my life but this one was something really egregious. It's all about timing in this job. You need to be at the right time with the right idea at the right location and I didn't have this luck. I thought the soundtrack worked for this movie but what I had in mind at the time I [proposed this] was something more wide with the sounds. I had in mind to use gongs, not just drums and percussion. I had a more expanded idea to use marimbas and make the percussion melodic.

Cadence: So you didn't watch Birdman and think that that was your idea first?

Centazzo: Yes, that's basically the reaction. Actually, the reaction was a little bit more violent – 'WTF!! THAT'S MY IDEA! OH, TWENTY YEARS AGO!' [Laughs]

Cadence: Okay, that's what I thought. You were being too nice with your first answer. Since Hollywood wasn't ready to accept percussion soundtracks when you proposed them, and things didn't work out with Warner-Chappell, you went back to working on your own and started doing your longtime work in multimedia projects.

Centazzo: I decided to go back to writing music for myself and eventually to play again. Fortunately, I had some good commissions for writing operas, a symphonic requiem and several more orchestral works. I've been surviving until 2000 with that, plus doing a little bit of soundtracks here and there. But then in 1999, an old student of mine in Italy said, "Hey, we would like to have you back here." I told him that I didn't play anymore. That was reality when I saw that nobody was interested in percussion in the soundtrack field. I decided that I wouldn't play anymore, I would just write music. But then this guy convinced me and I went back to playing percussion. At the same time, the technology had evolved and I could play my percussion music with background videos that I could make. So, 'To the hell the movie industry,' I said. 'I will do all this myself.' That was the beginning of the multimedia projects that I've been doing since.

Cadence: Have you gotten into acting?

Centazzo: Twice. I made a soundtrack for an independent movie about 6 years ago and they asked me to do a little cameo part and also in the '80s I also did a cameo in a theatrical production on video. But you know, I am

acting every day in normal life! [Laughs]

Cadence: [Laughs] Yeah, but you're not getting paid for that.

Centazzo: Right.

Cadence: You've been prolifically creative with numerous multimedia works and large projects including 3 operas, 2 symphonies, award winning video films, over 500 compositions for ensembles and 8 musicology books. That's certainly quite a legacy to leave behind. What inspires you to have done all that and where do you get your inspirations?

Centazzo: Ever since I was a kid, I've always been creative. I've always had this urgency to create something. When I was a child, I was creating with Legos and also with the similar British made Meccano construction sets. After that I got into doing experiments with chemical elements but I had to stop because once I was almost burning the house to the ground. [Laughs] My parents were very upset. And then later, when I was in high school, I started directing little plays, doing the lighting, choosing music of the plays and so on. I was always doing something creative. And then I started to play – we had a Beatles cover band as students just for fun. Even there, I was the only one thinking of being a professional. I found the gigs, I set up the PA system, I signed the contracts. At that time, I was also very much into photography. I shot photos and developed them in my dark room. Everything I could possibly do, I did. So, in the end, when I started to be a pro, all those experiences went together and that's why I've been working on several fields in parallel. Earlier in the '70s, when I was in Italy, I observed that we didn't have percussion literature in Italian and just few in English and German and French. There were no books, no schools, just a few things. We had an Italian translation of the Gene Krupa drum method book but nothing really exciting. So, I committed myself to write books about percussion. At that time you had to work hard to find out about things. Now with the internet, you just type on the keyboard something and anything you want pops up. At that time, there was nothing, so in order to learn and to see an instrument, I had to travel all over Europe. I remember a trip to Brussels in Belgium to visit the Music Instrument Museum where I saw for the first time in my life a Balinese Gamelan. I saw the African kalimbas, log drum and so on. It was really difficult but I managed to make this Guide to Percussion Instruments and their Techniques and then from there I became kind of an authority in the field in Italy and I started to write other books. I wrote a book that became very popular The Drum Set History, starting from Congo Square in New Orleans and going forward. That was in the '80s. Somebody is trying now to republish all those but I have to say they have the stain of the time so I'm not sure that I want those books out. There was a period between when I was 28 through 40 where I was really working, working, working all day long – practicing, writing, performing. It was a great period, those were great years. You had maximal possibilities in the '70s, especially for the kind of music I was

playing then.

Cadence: How difficult has it been to get your large works presented?

Centazzo: Until 2002, 2003, I got commissions so people were asking and paying upfront. Now it's a different world because I have to do the projects myself, produce them myself, and then if I'm lucky, I get invited somewhere to perform it. Back in the days I was in Italy, you could present a project to the city. You told them you had an idea about a project, about Leonardo da Vinci for instance, and they would approve it, put the money up front, and you were done. You could work and get the project done. Not anymore, that's the story.

Cadence: You did a 2003 performance at the Literature Festival in Rome in front of the Colosseum with an audience of 2,700 people. That had to be a special moment for you.

Centazzo: That wasn't unusual in those years. I did solo performances all over Europe and the audiences but I remember that because it was a very peculiar situation playing while Jeffrey Kent Eugenides, the famous author of The Middlesex was reading excerpts from the book. But before then all the festivals and concerts I did in Europe had huge audiences especially in the DDR, the communist East Germany in the '80s: it was all amazing. You had an audience of 2,000 people who were completely ecstatic to listen to improvised music. I spoke to people in the audience and they said, "For us, basically prisoners in our own country, this is the sound of freedom." I did a lot of big festivals. I did a concert with my Mitteleuropa Orchestra, the group with top European improvisers, for instance, with Chick Corea and Gary Burton. They were playing duo. I wouldn't say the people came for us but they were there – 3,000-4,000 people – and we played and people liked it. The situation was so different and that's why all the American musicians since the '40s wanted to play Europe. The audiences are much more receptive there. Here, except for a few occasions in the past, there is no audience for this kind of music unless you play very Traditional Jazz or Jazz Rock. If you are Weather Report you can go to the Hollywood Bowl and get 4,000 people but certainly not if you're playing the music I'm playing.

Cadence: You played behind the Berlin Wall, as did a number of Jazz artists. Why did the communist German government allow for that?

Centazzo: [That's a] mystery. There was a promoter setting this up in East Germany. I don't know how he managed to organize those big festivals but over there in the 80s you could have found fall kinds of European and American musicians. The funny thing was that they were paying in East German marks that basically was useless paper. You had these millions of East German marks and there was nothing to buy and no place to go, we were secluded in the dedicated hotels for foreigners . Also, you could not exchange the money. It was just surreal but everybody was happy to go because that was absolutely one of the most satisfying experiences , from the point of view of the audience. People were there because you were representing freedom, it was something very

deep. I remember a funny episode on that. The only thing they had was a good brand of camera Practika (if I remember correctly) and Zeiss lenses which were very well known. On one of those tours, where I was playing in duo with the great unique trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff, I had so much money I decided to buy a camera with a set of lenses. I paid a fortune, I would say the equivalent of 3,000 dollars, but that was the only thing I could do with the money. I had a Nikon back home so I thought to sell this new camera when back in Italy and make some money. So, I bought this big set and then I went to this top photography store in Bologna where I was living and told them I just bought it brand new in East Germany and wanted to sell it. They said, "Oh yeah, this is a good camera, good lenses. The current price here for everything [you have] is 700 dollars." It was a FOURTH of what I paid! That was because the East German government was keeping the prices up for the people to discourage people from buying. It was against their culture. The East Germans told me that for them to buy a car, it was at least a 5-6 year wait, and the only car you could get was a horrible, cheap car called a Trabant [also known as "a spark plug with a roof"]. It was quite an experience touring there.

Cadence: Your last multimedia work Einstein's Cosmic Messengers / Tides of Gravity is especially interesting. It's a collaboration with NASA astrophysicist Michele Vallisneri and based on Gravitational Waves which represent measurable disturbances in the universe as predicted by Einstein 100 years ago.

Centazzo: Einstein's Cosmic Messengers is the first version of what later became Tides of Gravity. The first was a promotional show that I did with this astrophysicist under the supervision of one of the Einstein students who later became a Nobel Prize winner for physics in 2017 - Kip Thorne. I did a lot of performances around the country at universities between 2006 and 2011. The show was organized with a lecture about gravitational waves before the concert and a Q & A after. I shot all the sequences for the background film and I also went to the Gravitational Wave Observatory [LIGO] in Louisiana to get shot of this incredible laser observatory. I did this multimedia concert for a few years. Einstein predicted these waves but they were never detected, they were only theoretical then. Basically, gravitational waves are ripples in the texture of time and space. So the space is delaying and shrinking and time is not what we perceive. It's very complicated. It took me years to understand. [Laughs] Unfortunately, the gravitational waves could not be detected because every single earthquake on the planet creates waves and so the scientists could not understand if they were coming from space or were just products of earthquakes. Around 2016, they upgraded the observatories and their lasers and were able to prove Einstein's theory correct. At that point, they asked me to do a new show and I went again to Louisiana and I shot again videos. NASA gave me more animation sequences and we put together another show in 2016 and the title was Tides of Gravity. Kip Thorne presented it and we did the premiere at Caltech. Two thousand people came, they came not for me, [Laughs] they

came for Kip Thorne. I did other shows of it in Scotland and Milan and a few other places before it faded out as many of my projects [do]. There was initial excitement over this discovery and every newspaper was talking about it so people were inviting me and then, as usual, people forgot about it.

Cadence: How did you first get involved with this scientific based project? Are you connected to the scientific community?

Centazzo: That is another amazing one of my stories. I was looking for an agent in Europe and a producer in Germany told me he could give me some gigs but first there was a very good Italian cello player who wanted to connect with me. So, I met with the cello player, a young kid, very talented, and he introduced me to his piano player. We talked and decided to meet again. After 15 days, I got an email from the piano player informing me that a former musician friend of his was now an astrophysicist at NASA and he wanted to meet me. I said, 'Why not?' and I went to meet this guy who said, "I've been thinking for years about a project combining science and art. Are you interested?" I said, 'Let me think – yes!' [Laughs] That started it and I went to Germany, Italy and back to L.A. It's a very weird story. I presented this program at Northwestern University in Chicago and the astrophysicist there who organized the event and did the lecture before the gig, invited that night her friend from the Adler Planetarium, which is the biggest planetarium in the USA. After the show, her friend came up and said she loved it and asked if I would be interested in doing a soundtrack for a multimedia show at the Adler? I said again, 'Hmm, let me think. Yes!' [Laughs] I got an absolutely huge and wonderful gig there. I did a project called The Searcher at the planetarium. They had this incredible system projecting on the dome with 12 projectors. Sitting in the audience, you had the feeling of moving around space. It was really impressive. And more impressive is the fact that the soundtrack that I did, which was for full orchestra, was mixed there on 12 channels. It was so fun. I did this project in 2011.

Cadence: You've made over 190 recordings under your own name with many prominent musicians. You've not worked as a sideman. Why has working only as the leader been so important to you?

Centazzo: I don't know but it's been like that. I started my career as a Jazz drummer with this very, very famous and very creative, a genius I think, piano player from Milano – Gaslini – playing for almost 4 years and then I met Steve Lacy, and from there it's been natural going on doing my own projects or collaborations. Sometimes people call me to play in their projects like Henry Kaiser or Elliott Sharp but generally, I'm always doing my own music and projects.

Cadence: But why is that? Why are you always the leader?

Centazzo: First of all, because nobody calls me. [Laughs] That's the real explanation. I played with Elliott Sharp in his trio with Brad Jones, a very good bass player now living in Europe. We did this great gig in Slovenia but we haven't done more. That's why I have to do my own stuff.

Cadence: Let's touch on some of your recorded work. One of the earliest Ictus recordings was Drops [1977], your freely improvised duet with Derek Bailey. That came very early on in your career. Bailey doesn't play any recognizable scales, how was it to play with Derek Bailey in that way?

Centazzo: I wrote to Derek and I told him I had the possibility to get a few gigs if he was interested and he said yes. At that time he knew about me through Steve Lacy. He came and met me for the first time in Milan and we did our first gig there but it wasn't good. Derek was basically playing by himself, he wasn't really listening or interacting. We were both not really satisfied. We played another couple of gigs and we got a little bit better but not, from my point of view, enough. Then we went to the studio to do the recording and the beginning of that wasn't good. At a certain point I had to say, 'Look, do you want to do this recording? I do. If you want, we have to get organized. Let's not just improvise, let's decide what to do.' And he said, "Yeah," but he wasn't totally convinced. I said, 'This piece you play acoustic and I'll play just wood blocks and we play a metronomic time. Let's try.' We did it and it was good. 'Okay, next I will play gongs and you play electric, very long sounds.' And we did it this way for the whole session – each track had a different instrumentation, a different timing, a different approach, decided before, so it was a kind of composed improvisation. When it was released, the LP was praised as one of the best Derek Bailey duo recordings. It was very difficult but very rewarding in the end. I had no problem to play with somebody using the guitar like a percussion instrument or like experimental electronics. I've had much worse experiences with musicians just making noises.

Cadence: Do you have a Derek Bailey memory to share?

Centazzo: He was really British and a very private person. We didn't get much along like I did with Evan Parker, for instance, another British guy but with a sense of humor and very sympathetic. Derek was more – "Okay, let's do it. Yeah, it's okay. Thank you, goodbye." I don't really have big memories to share from that period.

Cadence: Shock!!, your 1984 duet with Gianluigi Trovesi, is considered to be one of the most important Italian Jazz albums.

Centazzo: Gianluigi is one of the top reed players in Europe, I have to say, although he's not well-known here. And he's such a great human being, kind, generous and humorous. I invited him in the 1980s to join the Mitteleuropa Orchestra and he came and always did a really wonderful job with alto saxophone and bass clarinet. And then he proposed me to do a duo album which we did combining my compositions with a few open improvisations and then he did a couple of his own more folk/popular music oriented compositions. It came out very well – we had very, very special chemistry. We did a lot of gigs during those years. This brings me to talk about Don Cherry and what is one of the regrets of my life. We did a concert with Don Cherry in a small Italian town called Iesi. I played the first set with Gianluigi Trovesi,

40 minutes, and then Don was to follow. Suddenly, Don came to me and said, "Hey, do you want to play with me?" I said, 'Let me think [Laughs]... Of course I want to play with you! You are one of my idols.' He said he'd call me and [he took the stage] for a 30 minute solo, one of those mystic solos. He was completely gone – high with marijuana hash, I cannot remember, completely stoned, playing weird bamboo flutes, the tanpura, and percussion with just a bit of pocket trumpet. Then he had me join him for a fantastic 30 minute pocket trumpet and traditional drum set duet, as much of a traditional set as could be my drum set. I was playing in an Ed Blackwell kind of style because Don was playing really Free Jazz as the Don Cherry from the '60s. I know the concert was recorded from the PA and I've been looking for this recording for years. That's one of my regrets- not only because, for me, it was very important to play with one of the creators of Free Jazz, but because it was a really good duo. I've never found the guy who recorded it. Last year, I was playing a tribute to Steve Lacy with this great Italian saxophone player, Roberto Ottaviano, who was a student of Steve's for a period, and a guy came up to me before the gig and said, "Do you remember me?" Of course, after 40 years, I did not. He said, "I am Carlo, the photographer. I took all the pictures of you and Don Cherry." I said, 'Oh, my God! Don't tell me!' He said, "Yeah, look at this," and he took out a picture of myself and a picture of Don Cherry – not a picture of us together! I mean... I could kill him! I said, 'What about a picture of us together?' He said, "Oh, I was on the back of the stage, I could not take one of both of you. I took first of him and then of you." So, I have not even a picture of that gig! [Laughs]

Cadence: Why is Shock!! Considered to be one of the most important Italian Jazz albums?

Centazzo: You should ask the guy who said that. [Laughs] It's just a great album and we play some of the tunes in a really Jazzy way. It's very swinging but the language is really new. It goes from some very rhythmic places to open abstract situations. If I can recall correctly, on the first track I play a pattern that could remind one of Max Roach patterns, who was one of my inspirations as a drummer, and from there we go to open melodies with gongs and then some Folk inspired music. The critics and the audience liked it and said it's a great record and I say, 'Thank you. Thank you very much.'

Cadence: You've made a number of recordings with your Mitteleuropa Orchestra. What's been your vision for how to make use of that large ensemble?

Centazzo: Let's go back a few months before I started the orchestra when I was in New York and I did the Environment for Sextet recording. What I was writing at the time was kind of scenarios with interpretation notes. They were really instructions on how to play, how to interact, and then putting in some logical sequences like now the sextet plays, and when I give a cue, it stops and then John Zorn plays a solo, and then I add other people, and then when we are getting high in the music, we stop and Chadbourne and Kondo play another

duet, and so on. I was writing that kind of structure. I moved to Bologna in '78, just a little before this big first US tour of '78. I moved there because they gave me the position of Artistic Director of the Center for Improvised Music and New Dance of the Town of Bologna. I had a lot of advanced students there and I decided to translate the ideas that I had in New York to this group of young players. I started to write little melodies, a little orchestration, and at a certain point, I realized that I had a hardcore group of young players and figured why don't I call top players into it. So I called Franz Koglmann from Austria, Carlos Zingaro from Portugal, Gianluigi Trovesi from Milan, and I built up this group that has been working more or less since 1986. And more and more and more, I've been writing and shrinking the improvised parts. At a certain point, in 1983 when I wrote Cjant, that was a concert for celebrating the millennial of my home town, I also had a string section added to the group and still we had a lot of improvised parts, but in '85, I wrote the Second Concert For Small Orchestra and that was the end of the improvised group – it was more straight Contemporary music. That has been the evolution and how Mitteleuropa worked.

Cadence: Escape from 2012 is a 2011 duo recording you made with former Frank Zappa pianist Don Preston. How did that pairing come about and why?

Centazzo: Don is the sweetest guy you could meet. I don't know [how it started] but I think a sound engineer talked to him about me and he called me and said, "I heard about you. I'm interested to do something with you." Can you believe it? Don Preston. Not only the Mothers of Invention original member, but a great piano player and a creative electronic music guru, so I said, 'Yes!' So we did this concert in Pasadena and immediately we clicked. It was absolutely an incredible night but on top of that, he just blew me up because he came with a double bass and I asked why he had it. He said, "Oh, in the old days, I was playing the double bass, too." And then I found out that he'd been playing bass with the Paul Bley trio! Amazing! Nobody knows about that. He played a tune with double bass with me, this being twenty years later [than his time with Bley], and of course, he wasn't technically a virtuoso, but the ideas, man, this guy was really powerful. After that, we did a few more gigs, one of which was also recorded and is newly out on Ictus but I cannot remember the title [Escape from 202021]. I'm making too many recordings! [Laughs] I loved to play with Don Preston. It's too bad we met so late in our lives because it would have been great to put together a group and to have toured but at a certain point, things change. Don, a couple of years ago, posted on Facebook, "Please help me to find an apartment that I can afford." He's living on Social Security like me, with his wife. Finally, a fan found an apartment for him somewhere. You know, creative music is really difficult to live from but at the time we played together, he was the one getting good paying gigs, which is very rare in L.A. where mostly you play for the door.

Cadence: Although you've actively worked with gongs since 1970, Sacred Gong

Dive [2017] is your first recording totally based on gongs. Why did it take you 47 years to release a gong project?

Centazzo: The gongs have been always present in my music, even if you listen to the Steve Lacy early recordings, even before the Gaslini recordings, it has always been there from my days starting in '75 working my side job as a metal percussion designer. This [public] gong mania started around 2010, around 2015 I started to do gong meditations in yoga places, mostly because that's where you mainly do that kind of stuff. So, eventually I had enough material to release an album and also I had a market. I don't know how many CDs of solo percussion I have released with Ictus but they may sell 1 copy every 7 months!! Unless you are a percussion player, you are not buying percussion records. That's the reality. Instead, a gong CD with the meditation in mind, has been one of the most successful CDs I've released in the last few years.

Cadence: Okay, I was going to ask you why you made the distinction on the label that Sacred Gong Dive was "gong music for meditation, yoga and rituals" but you obviously are targeting a direct market.

Centazzo: There you go, [Laughs] because that is the market for that. I've got to say it's been more than that, people started to buy it even if it wasn't for meditation.

Cadence: Dark Noise, the 2019 duo performance you did with Italian trombone maestro Giancarlo Schiaffini, is a fun and freely improvised session that heavily features electronics. It concludes with a ninth piece that surprisingly includes identifiable portions of "Caravan." Why did a standard tune suddenly pop up in your music? I'm not aware of you covering other standard works.

Centazzo: No, it started like a joke, I've got to say. I went on tour with Giancarlo in Mexico and Guatemala and we needed a hook because we didn't know exactly what kind of audience we would find there. That was another incredible gig – it was at the Mexico City School of Art during the EuroJazz Festival. They invited many players from Europe and there were 2,000 people there for our gig. It was amazing, 2,000 people sitting there listening to improvised music. But we had to start somehow in a friendly way so "Caravan" was the idea. You know the song was composed by [Hispanic] trombone player Juan Tizol for Duke Ellington, but, of course, what we did is not the regular "Caravan." The "Caravan" that we played I arranged with loops with a bass playing a pattern and I was playing drums and Giancarlo was playing just a part of the theme, and then the improvisation went completely Free – nothing to do with the original "Caravan," but the idea was there. That hooked the audience and it was very successful. We had fun.

Cadence: What artistic projects are you currently working on?

Centazzo: Now I have a huge project that came up suddenly a month ago. Around that time, I was desperate. In May, my mom died so before I was there few months taking care of her in her final days; after I had to do a lot of

things in Italy for her and it's been a difficult period. When I came back after the summer tour I got into a car accident and destroyed my car. I said, 'Gosh, has it ended?' NO – in September, my girlfriend slipped in front of the house and badly broke her ankle so I had to be there 24/7 as a caregiver. Then I finally got some gigs, went to New York and I got COVID. By November I was out of my mind so I posted on Facebook that I needed help, I could not manage everything. Many very nice people wrote me saying they could manage my Facebook and Instagram, relieving me of work I don't like. There was also an Australian saxophone/clarinet player, Richard Savery, who in 2015 helped me a lot in producing the West Coast Chamber Jazz Trio. He's an expert on the software I use for mixing and recording. He moved from L.A. to Atlanta as a professor and I had lost contact with him until he wrote me saying he read my post and he's there if I needed his help. He is now back home in Sydney, Australia as an electronic music professor at Macquarie University. He asked about the West Coast Chamber Jazz Trio and I told him I was thinking of expanding it and he offered me remote access to his university's recording studio, with all the musicians that I need. So the West Coast Chamber Jazz Trio became the West Coast Art Ensemble and I'm writing music for 8-10 players, including the original 3 players who will record here and the orchestral part will be recorded in Sydney. That's the new project. I'm writing music like a fool these days and I want to put the project out mid next year.

Cadence: You mentioned the West Coast Chamber Jazz Trio [Ellen Burr, flt; Jeff Schwartz, b]. That's been your primary working group that you founded in Los Angeles purportedly to reflect on your attraction to the 1960's West Coast American Jazz scene.

Centazzo: That's a little bit of a tale. Of course, I love Shelly Mann and those guys but the truth is that I needed a hook to find a way to promote this group that basically plays my old and new tunes. There's a lot of material that I recycled and arranged for this trio, along with new things written. I needed a hook so I thought to an album titled L.A. Strictly Confidential could remind people of the title for the movie L.A. Confidential. The West Coast Chamber Jazz Trio is a real Chamber Jazz trio and the fact that I put West Coast on the front of that made it more appealing. It's been quite successful. It's not that we play that many gigs, because I refuse to play for free. In L.A. you can go to bars, clubs, play for free and get the door, get 20 bucks, but I try to select gigs. The last project I did with the trio has been playing Steve Lacy music rearranged for the trio. The trio is the only group I have here and the only steady collaboration. Occasionally, I'm going to Europe and I play with European musicians.

Cadence: Ictus Records celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2012 at John Zorn's New York City space The Stone for which you curated a 12 night/24 concert festival with top Italian and American improvisors. Talk about that event.

Centazzo: That was nice of John to invite me. I invited the improvisers from

Italy that had been playing with Mitteleuropa Orchestra - Giancarlo Schiaffini, Roberto Ottaviano, Carlo Actis Dato, and I invited Henry Kaiser, Elliott Sharp, John himself, and we created different groups with different combinations. I ended with a final big band two set gig. It was a very interesting experience that was recorded and I released a few CDs from it. It was great to meet old friends and do this kind of music.

Cadence: What is the status of Ictus Records today? How many recordings have you released and how much of the catalogue is currently available?

Centazzo: That is really a painful question. Ictus is really a one-man business. I have to do everything from playing the music, mixing , producing, doing the physical CDs, sending the masters. I do all my own covers. It became too much and lately I stopped and I just release digitally. There's no more market [for CDs] and it makes no sense to print 200 copies when you sell 50. And the distributor that I had in San Francisco just sent me back 2,000 CDs that he had on consignment. What I'm trying to do is sell the label, but even selling the label is not easy because of the weird market. The only thing that really works now is vinyl LPs, which have come back in way I cannot believe it. We're reprinting the original ICTUS LPs from the original reel tapes as LPs in collaboration with Holidays Records and also we'll release some newer albums from my archive, such the duo with Evan Parker and the unreleased second album of Elektriktus. Amazingly they sell very well. I don't get much money but at least the music is circulating. The frustration has been producing CDs that nobody buys. I've done a sale of $1.50 for each CD, and at that price, people are buying but I'm obviously losing money. I'm just creating a little bit of room in my living room which is stuffed with CDs.

Cadence: You gained American citizenship in 2000. From an Italian standpoint, what has struck you as being most unusual about American customs and society?

Centazzo: That really opens the lid of a Pandora vase as we say, I could talk for hours. I'm not enthusiastic about the American way of life, especially after 4 years of Trump. The thing that really hits me is the health care system, which is a total rotten failure. My girlfriend has been the head of UCLA Library for 40 years, paying tons of money into insurance and never used the insurance until now, and she cannot get a caregiver or transportation to physical therapy. It's a rotten system and in this country, if you are not rich, you die. Why the most powerful country in the world has a system that doesn't work and is so greedy and just exploits people?? WHY? In name of freedom?? Freedom of my ass!! And then, if you want to talk about guns…The love of art and music, culturally speaking, is different in Europe where you start from elementary school to appreciate music, art and literature. It's not like here where you have to find it yourself. There, it's like an obligation. We have art history in the middle school. We have Latin, Greek, Ancient Greek, and that's in public school. It's different. I'm enthusiastic about the great museums in this country but things are more

limited here. Every country has its own problems. The only thing that I can say is that I love the weather in L.A., and the beach. That's the only reason, beside my girlfriend, that I'm here in L.A. It was a culture shock to come here after living in Milan and Bologna. The first thing that struck me when I arrived in L.A. is that there is no downtown. Each surrounding area – Santa Monica, Long Beach- each have their own downtowns. And, I have to say, this is not the best place for what I'm doing because I came here to be the next John Williams and instead I just failed. Thinking of playing this kind of music here is just absolutely insane unless you aren't in an academic close circle. All the other musicians here that play this kind of music, they all have day jobs. Nobody lives like me, just playing music. For me, it's much harder here, but I love the weather and I'm living just a block from the beach. As soon as we finish today, I'm going to run on the beach and I'll feel happy.

Cadence: What are your interests outside of music?

Centazzo: That's a good question because music would be probably 95 percent of my life. [Laughs] For the rest, I enjoy cooking, running on the beach. I'm an avid reader – always reading. When I left my house in Bologna, I had a library of 6,000 books that I donated to the town and all the art b and music books plus all my works became part of the Archives Andrea Centazzo at the University of Bologna where also they have all my compositions, all my scores and visual works. But to simply reply to the question: reading is my next passion.

Cadence: What do you read?

Centazzo: Omnivore – anything that could interest me – I read it. If I want to distract myself – mysteries. I like Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers and Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe [series]. That's when I have 5 minutes that I just want to relax, I read one of those novels and I fall to sleep, [Laughs] finally. After 5 pages now. [makes snoring noise] I'm interested in art exhibitions. I'm also a good cook. My specialty, of course, is pasta. I do spaghetti in at least 40 different ways. I also do seafood and vegetables because I'm not eating meat.

Cadence: Do you have any unusual special talents?

Centazzo: No, I have nothing unusual. I'm a very ordinary guy.

Cadence: The final questions have been given to me by other artists to ask you: Gianluigi Trovesi (reeds) said: "It is with great joy that I greet one of the most sympathetic and brilliant artists I have known. My first question is how are you? With a huge hug. "

Centazzo: [Laughs] I'm doing okay, it's not the best period of my life but I'm still alive and kicking.

Gianluigi Trovesi also said: "Before we get to my other question - I wanted to tell you that I consider our project in duo - Shock!! - a small masterpiece. I also collaborated in other projects of yours. In one of them, the staff also included strings and was directed by you. It was the first time I saw you in that capacity, in that role as conductor with a regular podium, baton, etc., as in use in symphony orchestras. My second question to you is has direction

become a constant in your projects?"

Centazzo: I've got to say, for extended projects, yes, I mostly need to conduct the musicians. I even conduct symphonic orchestras and I'm not a conductor, so I don't have a technique. It's very spontaneous. Basically, what I'm doing, since my music is also related to minimalism, I just keep the tempos and I count for the orchestra the repetitions, because that's the main problem when you play minimal music. You have the same pattern repeated a hundred times – if somebody misses one of those, when you go into the next section, there's gonna be trouble. It's a very simple way to conduct but I've conducted 3 operas with the orchestra, choir, and 5 singers. I've conducted a symphonic requiem and all the improvising/composing groups. I'm pretty happy about that and if I have to do it, I do it.

Gino Robair (multi-instrument) asked: "The question I have is about your work as a composer. Have you written any pieces for percussion ensemble? I know you've written books about percussion (in Italian), but I'm curious if you have any scores for an ensemble of these instruments."

Centazzo: Yes, I have an entire collection published by Warner Chappell Music for percussion quartet, percussion sextet, solo percussion, solo timpani, and there's percussion trio. There's a lot of material that I wrote for percussion. Happy to send a copy to you!

Henry Kaiser (guitar) said: "I have been fortunate to play with many of my favorite drummers and Centazzo belongs in the same camp as those greats. He is a TRULY GREAT DRUMMER and is not properly recognized as such. My question is who were the most important improvisers who believed in you at the start of your recording career?"

Centazzo: Steve Lacy, absolutely. I spoke earlier about the first time we met. I was coming from the Gaslini Quartet where the music was partly improvised but a lot of the music was written down. Meeting with Steve that first time, asking him what he wanted me to play, and him telling me to, "Play what you feel," that was really the beginning of a different kind of thinking. That made me more sure of myself. I consider him my mentor and my main inspiration, certainly. An inspiration on the side of percussion has been Pierre Favre, who encouraged me to work on my technique because he saw that I had the inspiration and the creativity to be a musician.

Henry Kaiser also asked: "What did you learn from working with "Derek Bailey?"

Centazzo: Not much, [Laughs] I've got to say. I know that Henry is absolutely a fan of Derek, as a guitar player. With Derek, it was more about exploring the total improvisation. Steve Lacy had a foot in Jazz and a foot in improvisation- it was in the middle. Steve never played a duo concert where he didn't play his own themes and from the theme you get inspiration for Free improvisation. Derek just threw me into completely Free improvisation.

"Evan Parker?"

Centazzo: I had a lot of chemistry with Evan. He was friendly and there was a lot of humor and more interacting. We had a dialogue and we really enjoyed being together.

Henry Kaiser also asked: "What other drummers do you enjoy listening to nowadays?"

Centazzo: That's a very difficult question. Henry just called me. He spoke with Bob Moses and Bob wants to do a duo with me. I will probably go to Memphis soon to do that. I would say Bob is one of my inspirations. These days, I'm not listening too much to drummers. There are a few new kids on the block that are pretty creative but I find most of the guys now, young kids playing this kind of music, they are more or less, reproducing things that we already did in the '70s. Nothing new under the sun, I could say. I don't see something that can make me scream, 'Oh, that's great!' There's a lot of good drummers but I can't say that I'm really a fan of the new generation drummers. I still click more with the old guys.

Elliott Sharp (g) – Sharp has collaborated with you a number of times and I asked him about how it was to play with you and he said, "Our playing together is a conversation, which is a good thing. The first time we played, nothing was spoken of, we just set up and played." Would you talk about playing with new musicians and artists from all over the world, from all different cultures and backgrounds and how you go about creating/improvising cohesive music?

Centazzo: Like Elliott said, if you feel something with a musician you are improvising with, you don't need to talk – the music speaks for itself.

Andrew Cyrille (d) asked: "My regards to you. Do you remember the New York City street and address where you took a couple of drum lessons with me way back when?"

Centazzo: Wow, it's nice to hear from Andrew. That was 1976, I cannot remember, come on. I remember that I went there as a young kid from this little Italian town. I had been listening to Cecil Taylor records with Andrew Cyrille, loving them, and I went to Andrew all enthusiastic and I said, 'Oh, I wanted that you explain me,' and he took out a regular drum book and he said, "Could you play this?" And I was like, 'Aghhh.' He said, "At first you learn to play regularly the drums and then you come back and we can talk about Free music." I remember that and that was the right thing to say to me at that point of my career. And, as a matter of fact, I started to study from those books that he gave me and I improved my technique and finally, I could play much better. Then, the great joy for me came in 2012, when we did the Stone festival, playing with him and Barry Altschul. We had this trio. I mean, Andrew and Barry were my main sources of inspiration in the '70s. And still, if I think of the Cecil Taylor group with Andrew or Circle with Braxton, Chick Corea, Dave Holland and Barry, I mean, those are still great unique interpretations of the freedom in music.

Cadence: How long of an interval was it between the first meeting with Cyrille to the time that he agreed to teach you?

Centazzo: No, no, I never went back. I just went home and I did by myself. He gave me the name of the books and I immediately went and bought the books and when I went back to Italy, I started to study those books. No, we got together a couple of times and when he said, "You have to study," I said, 'Okay, thank you. Goodbye. I saw him a few years later because he came to Europe and he recorded for Ictus, the album entitled The Loop. He was [grilling] me, "How many copies sold?" And I said, 'Look, I am not a businessman. I give you back the master, you do what you like,' and I think he got the master released by someone else. We met again in '77, and then I didn't meet him again until 2012.

Cadence: I asked Andrew what he recalled of you as a student and he said, "Andrea knew where he wanted to go with his music. He listened to me during lessons and at concerts. He is gifted and professional."

Centazzo: Well, [Laughs] So kind of him!! I'm pleased about this because, myself, I felt like a stupid kid in front of a great authority on percussion. So, really, thanks a lot. His statement is partly right because I knew exactly what I wanted already. I wanted to be an original percussion player, I wanted to be a leader of a group. I wanted everything already when I went to see him, but technically speaking, I was a disaster. No, I'm exaggerating because I was already playing with Gaslini so I could not have been a total disaster, but I was, let's say, primitive – not technically refined and not completely into improvising.

Andrew Cyrille also asked: "Do you still have most of those percussion instruments from when I recorded The Loop in your studio in Italy many years ago?"

Centazzo: No, unfortunately, I gave everything to the guy who owns UFIP because he had the project to do a percussion museum. As a matter of fact, he started the project and then he lost the support of the city ,but he still has all the instruments but there's not the museum that I've been dreaming of.

Alvin Curran (composer, performer) said: "What is the future of free improvisation? Will it simply die a natural death, become a ubiquitous app, or will it become a major form of composition in the near future?"

Centazzo: This is a question that probably requires another couple hours of time. [Laughs] I would say that most of the Free improvisation right now has become a bit of cliché. As I said before when I was talking about percussion players, it seems to me, today, the young players tend to reproduce what has already been done, probably even us, when we started the movement in the '70s, we were probably borrowing from some other musicians who previously did something similar. Now, I think Free improvisation is a bit of cliché. I don't know if it's gonna die of a natural death, but certainly I don't think it's in good health, artistically speaking.

Cadence: Anything you'd like to add?

Centazzo: No, thank you so much. This has been like a surgery! [Laughs] You have eviscerated everything!

SCENES
VARIABLE CLOUDS
ORIGIN RECORDS 82862
TILBURY HILL/ TRUDGE/ WHEN JASPER GROWS UP/ COMPANIONS/ LONELY BLUE ANGEL/ VARIABLE CLOUDS/ IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER/ STUDIO CITY/ WITCHI TAI 67:36
Rick Mandyck, ts; John Stowell, g; Jeff Johnson, bass; John Bishop, d 10/29/21 Seattle,Wa

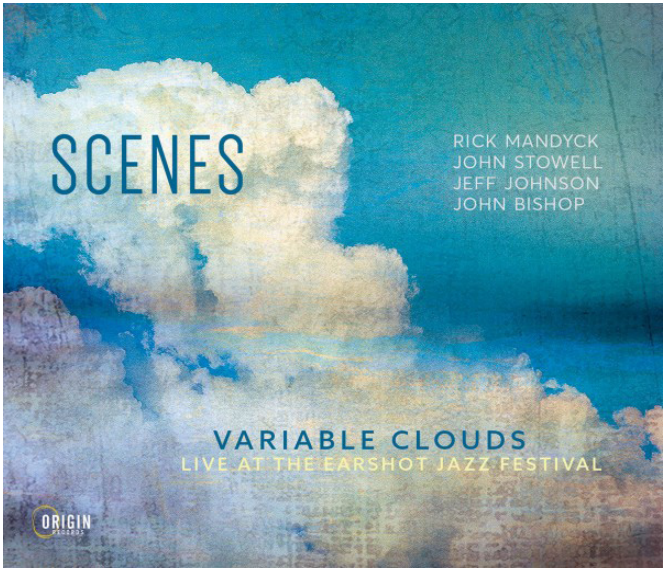
The Northwest based group "Scenes" has partnered with Seattle's Earshot Jazz Festival and the result is a memorable live recording "Variable Clouds". Recorded at Seattle's Town Hall this recording offers exceptional sound quality and the playing throughout is all that most Jazz listeners could hope for. As a trio consisting of Guitar Bass and Drums "Scenes" has been at the top of their game when it comes to progressive interplay for many years. With the addition of Rick Mandyck on Tenor Sax we experience some truly fine moments and witness a group that's tuned into each others every subtle musical nuance. The music can range from delicate to intense with lots of spontaneous rhythmic, harmonic and lyrical exchanges.

We get started with Rick Mandyck's "Tilbury Hill", a rich, meditative piece in three with a deep and pensive melody. Rick's tone is finely crafted with long rich phrases, he takes his time and brings great substance to every note. John Stowell's chordal coloring is vast giving a one of a kind beauty to the music. His soloing combines chords and single notes, unique and unobstructed, possessing a vast vocabulary of color that rivals the role of any great pianist. Rick Mandyck's tune "Trudge" is up next. A short, intense, swinger with a pedal tone intro leaving John Bishop lots of room to give this piece its ferocity. We are shown here how great drumming can take this music to a whole nother level. Not surprisingly Jeff Johnson delivers an outstanding solo along with his psychic ability to direct and anticipate the group's direction. John Stowell's "When Jasper Grows Up" cools things down a bit and puts us back in 3/4 as a ballad like tempo drives this gentle, beautifully written tune. Jeff Johnson shows off his outstanding compositional skills with "Companions". With its strong lyrical melody and harmony to match "Companions" becomes a perfect vehicle for all to let loose and explore. "Lonely Blue Angel", a John Stowell original is an exceptional composition with different sections and time signatures. A very contemporary work that highlights the groups ability to play outside the box and over the bar line. The end result being a fantastic voyage for us listeners. The title track "Variable Clouds" is a Rick Mandyck original and delivers in a big way. Dark and mysterious and out of tempo with John and Rick embracing the melody and Jeff bowing freely. John Bishops loose and free highlighting enhances this piece even further. Some long and powerful expression flows unshackled from Rick Mandyck's horn throughout and then it's followed by John Stowell's masterful command of uniqueness. Two standards are performed on this recording, the first being Rodgers and Hart's "It's Easy To Remember". On this breathtaking ballad Rick plays the melody with some five star beauty and clarity. The listener can feel the quartet breathe as one unit with Rick taking the only solo. The group's accompaniment to Rick is so

creatively satisfying that there's really no need for more then one solo. The second is James Gilbert Pepper's "Witchi Tai" also a ballad of great expression with more of a pop flavor expressed through the lens of these contemporary players. Outstanding drum work and two memorable solos by John and Rick gives this number a peaceful, stellar performance. Jeff Johnson plays melody on his composition "Studio City" with soulful vigor and then takes the first solo. Jeff then hands it off to John Stowell as they hold back on the driving swing feel that's about to come. When that swing feel finally does come John Bishop lights the fire and off they go. Rick's up next and the fire burns even hotter. John Bishops drumming takes off and then he hands it back to Jeff for another melody statement. John then wraps up with a blistering drum solo accompanied by the group's enticing background figure.

I'll simply say that "Variable Clouds" is presented by four of the most forward thinking, accomplished musicians on the scene today. They're using their lifelong commitment to the music we love to push creativity even further into the future. The playing writing and sound quality on " Variable Clouds" makes this recording one of my all time favorites.

Frank Kohl



New Issues

JOE MAGNARELLI
NEW YORK OSAKA JUNCTION

STEEPLECHASE 31939

NEW YORK OSAKA JUNCTION / LAMENT FOR LORRAINE / WHAT'S NEW / COUSIN JOANNE / THESE FOOLISH THINGS / REVEREND TSURUGA / EMILY / THE WEDDING / THE END OF A LOVE AFFAIR. 63:15.

Magnarelli, tpt, flgh; Gary Smulyan, bars; Akiko Tsuruga, org; Rudy Royston, d. No date/location.

There are scads of excellent trumpet players out there who have never gotten the perks commensurate with their respective talents. A few examples would be Tim Hagens, Jim Rotondi, Eddie Henderson, Brian Lynch, Giveton Gelin, Bobby Shew, Jason Palmer & others. One may add Joe Magnarelli to that list. For his second outing for the Danish Steeplechase outfit Mags (as he is known} takes the road less traveled in a slightly unusual quartet session peopled by his spouse, the esteemed B-3 lady from Osaka, Japan (hence the title) supplying not only tasteful comping and arresting solos but a throbbing bass line for top-shelf timekeeper Royston to ride. Topping things off is the boss of the bary Gary Smulyan to make for a very fine foursome. Five leader writings are scattered around four tried and true standards to make for a ear-catching setllist. As Neil Tesser says in his liners "The image of a well-oiled roadster comes to mind, sleek and exhilarating,as the music heard here." Gentlemen, start your engines.

Larry Hollis

THE SOCIETY FOR ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES - MUSIC FROM SEAMUS VOL 21

NEW FOCUS RECORDINGS EAM 2012

RADIANCE/ SCAPE 11/ COMLINKS/ INANNA'S DESCENT/ BLUE TRACES/ WELCOME TO MEDICARE!/ NOSTALGIC VISIONS 73:58

Arthur Campbell, cl; Robert Seaback, g/ Scott A. Wyatt, elec; Maja Cerar vln; Kati Gleiser, p; Mark Wingate, elec; Keith Kirchoff,p no recording information

Here we have seven very different pieces all featuring a different acoustic instrument with electronics. A combination I have always liked. Indeed, I perform in a mixed acoustic electronic group. Com Links also includes voices trying to communicate over electronics. And there is even the sound of a telephone ringing.
In all cases the acoustic instruments work well with the electronics. Blue Traces, while not blues, does create a bluish mood. Welcome to Medicare introduces us to the problems of accessing an agency through an automated telephone system, while Nostalgic visions presents a nice melodic piano with electronic interruptions.
A very interesting recording indeed.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

DAVE STRYKER TRIO
PRIME

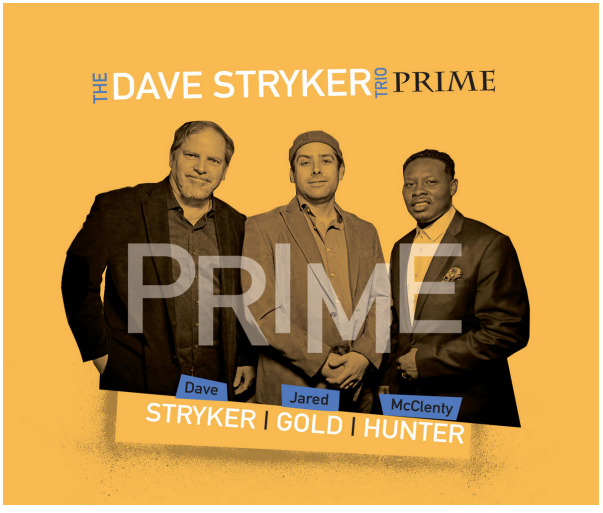
STRIKEZONE RECORDS 8823

PRIME / LOCKDOWN / CAPTAIN JACK / HOPE / AS WE WERE / MAC / I SHOULD CARE / DEEP / DUDE'S LOUNGE 57:57

Stryker, g; Jared Gold, org; McClenty Hunter, d. 10/23/2020. Paramus, NJ.

As a follow-up to his much acclaimed As We Are (SZ-8822) the gifted guitarist does a 360 turn back to the organ trio format. Actually this could legally be considered a reissue in that, as Stryker explains in his brief liners, it was originally streamed due to pandemic restrictions. All first takes and no gadget sweetening this is the debut disc from the original threesome. So maybe technically this could be termed a reissue the sounds heard here are all new to us that didn't get to hear the venue tape. The WWII ditty "I Should Care" is the lone non-Stryker composition present among the other eight titles listed. While none are destined to become standards of that stature they certainly should not be considered throwaways. A few are dedications to fellow players; "Mac" is a feature for long- time trapster Hunter who along with Willie Jones III is one to keep an eye on and a pair of scripts for former employer Brother Jack McDuff in "Captain Jack" and the concluding track "Dude's Lounge" an exciting shuffle that encourages one to hit the repeat button. Two holdovers from his last release, "Hope" & "As We Were" are done in shorter versions. The kinetic interplay among this threesome is something to behold with a shared connection that is never wavering. A more apt title could be no more appropriate, this state-of-the-art organ trio is truly prime.

Larry Hollis

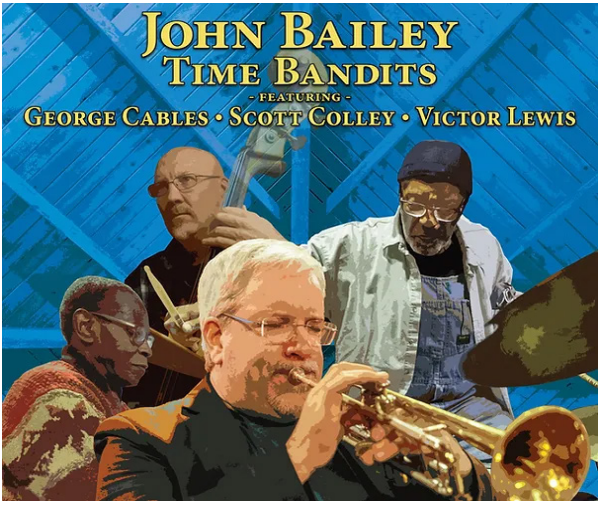


New Issues

JOHN BAILEY
TIME BANDITS
FTRRDOM ROAD RECORDS 002
TIME BANDITS / VARIOUS NEFARIOUS / LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY / ODE TO THADDEUS / OH MAN, PLEASE GET ME OUT OF HERE! / SHE'S LEAVING HOME / ROSE / HOW DO YOU KNOW? / LULLABY / GROOVE SAMBA. 53.01.
Bailey, tpt, flgh; George Cables, p; Scott Colley, b; Victor Lewis, d. 1/16&17/2/12/2022. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

If you are into brass instruments you need to check out this seasoned horn man. A veteran of various large groups {Ray Charles,Buddy Rich} across most genres This is only the third album under his command. His first in 2018 (Real Time} made my Cadence best of list and his sophomore date {Can You Imagine?} was almost as good. For this edition he has enlisted the services of a crack trio with the great George Cables, solid Scott Colley and regular drummer Victor Lewis. These guys could make even Herb Alpert swing. Essaying a tune list of five Bailey originals, the Kern ballad "Long Ago And Far Away", a Beatles staple, and a number each from Cables, Lewis and pianist Gary Dial all laid down in the hallowed confines of the Rudy Van Gelder studio with Maureen Sickler behind the board. All of the selections are within the four-to-six minute range so there is no coasting to be heard. John Bailey is a total brassero master; his trumpet lines are crisp and clean (think Conte Condoli) while his buttery flugelhorn playing is in the manner of Art Farmer. The other major soloist, George Cables has always displayed a special affinity for horn musicians and his comping on Rudy's Steinway is nothing short of riveting. There is an almost six minute video available of the combo performing a selection from the album on YouTube@ freedomroadrecords. Check it out.

Larry Hollis



New Issues

JESSE DAVIS - LIVE AT SMALLS JAZZ CLUB

CELLAR CMSLF005

GINGERBREAD BOY / CEORA / CUP BEARERS / THESE FOOLISH THINGS / JUICY LUCY / RHYTHM-A-NING / STREET OF DREAMS / LOVE FOR SALE. 68:05.

Davis, as; Spike Wilner, p; Peter Washington, b; Kenny Washington, d. 2/17/2022, NYC.

ED CHERRY - ARE WE THERE YET?

CELLAR MUSIC CMRO61622.

JEAN/PAULINE / DING DONG / GREEN JEANS / HOLY LAND / JAPANESE FOLK SONG (KOJO NO TASUKI) / ARE WE THERE YET? / SPRING IS HERE / MR. WALKER / LAWNS / TRES PALABRAS. 61:33.

Cherry, g; Monte, Croft, vb; Kyle Koehler, org; Bryon "Wookie" Landham, d. 6/16/2022/ NYC.

Like myself, many admirers of Jesse Davis have wondered about the disappearance of the gifted altoist for around two decades. Those circumstances are explained in Spike Wilner's notes where he explains the move to Italy, a marriage and family with only sporadic visits stateside. Whatever else the facts this live recording from last year he certainly hasn't diminished his chops instrumentally. Employing a pick-up rhythmic component he sail through eight selections with the fluid grace previously displayed on several led-albums for the Concord label. Kicking off with the popular Jimmy Heath tune the backing threesome of club-honcho Wilmer, rock solid up- right ace Washington and Farnsworth on the kit sets the tone for the remainder which holds four other jazz staples from Lee Morgan, Tom McIntosh, Horace Silver and Thelonious Monk listed respectively. Of these the lovely "Ceora"and funky "Juicy Lucy" are special standouts. The other three titles are all established members of the Great American Songbook. Let us hope this is not the last we shall hear from Jesse Davis.

Appearing on the same label is another quartet commanded by a seasoned survivor of the jazz trenches. First noticed during his decade and one-half tenure with Dizzy he's since worked with organists Dr. Lonnie Smith, Jared Gold, John Patton,Brian Charette & Ben Patterson on a variety of labels. This time out he hired freelancer Kyle Koehler who has been largely ignored and is way overdue for his own leadership session. Another organ vet is timekeeper Landham but the real ringer here is vibraphonist Monte Croft who adds extra timbral freshness to the date. A true graybeard he helmed two Columbia works in 1989/90. His presence reminded this scribe of the late Johnny Lytle a lightning-fast vibest that cut dozens of albums (many with organ) for mostly companies. Croft lays out on some tracks but, on the ones he's on) he provides a welcome kick. A pair of originals, the title tune and "Jean/Pauline" named for relatives, spring from the leader with the remainder from outside sources; from fellow jazzers Grant Green, Big John Patton, Wes Montgomery, Carla Bley and Cedar Walton with the sole brushed ballad being "Spring Is Here" from the Richard Rodgers songbook. Another difference from the Cellar Music norm is where the bulk of their titles are produced by Cory Weeds the producer credits list trumpeter Jeremy Pelt who also contributes an annotation paragraph. Those hip to Cherry's fretwork are aware of his sense of economy opting to utilize held tones and space to endless 32 note runs. This one is a keeper for sure.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

DAVE STRYKER
PRIME

STRIKEZONE RECORDS 8823

PRIME/ LOCKDOWN/ CAPTAIN JACK/ HOPE/ AS WE WERE/ MAC/ I SHOULD CARE/ DEEP/ DUDE'S LOUNGE. 57:55

Stryker,g; Jared Gold, Organ; McClenty, d. 10/23/20 Paramus, NJ.

A crisp, hard driving opener gets us off in the right direction on Dave Stryker's latest- "Prime". This live, untampered-with studio recording is an exquisite demonstration of what's possible when the organ trio is put in the right hands. The CD is presented by Dave and his working trio comprised of organist Jared Gold and drummer McClenty Hunter. We're treated to eight of Stryker's originals and the standard "I Should Care". The title track "Prime" is up first as a up tempo powerhouse of a tune. The melody lays atop a strong written out background figure and then breaks loose into some freewheeling hardcore swing. Stryker's voice is immediately recognized with his keen sense of phrasing and ability to put his notes in just the right place. Jared Gold pushes hard as his hands and feet work together to deliver support and a blistering solo. McClenty Hunter is right there lighting the fire with splendor and precision. When he solos I become frozen in the spell he casts with all his technique and creativity. "Lockdown" brings a big fat serving of soulfulness and attitude. I'm definitely feeling some of the angst of the lockdown. This also has another killer written out background figure and some unison melody with Jared. The piece has a super cool almost hypnotic quality to it as the players relish in soloing over the written figure with an ardent scene of abandonment. More soulful swing with "Captain Jack" written for Dave's old boss organist Jack McDuff. "Hope" is a bright and optimistic tune with brushes on the snare drum pushing a sixteenth note pulse. "As We Were" is from Dave's previous cd "As We Are" with an apt adjustment to the title. The organ starts us out with a warm introduction that brings us to a beautiful guitar melody reading of this sultry ballad. "Mac" is another Jack McDuff tribute that's funky and driven by some fine muscular drumming. The arrangement on this one is especially well done. "I Should Care" is done with a 6/8 feel that gives this standard a fresh and interesting presence. The solos are outstanding with some beautiful octave work by Dave. "Dudes Lounge" is a blues that starts with some super tasty solo guitar work that shows Dave's gift to go it alone and keep our ears wide open. The band then enters with a shuffle feel and it's off we go. Throughout "Prime" I'm impressed with everyone's playing but also with the variety of feels and the creativity of the arrangements.

I've always been a fan of the guitar, organ, drums trio, starting with Jimmy and Wes. The passing of Dr. Lonnie Smith and Joey DeFrancesco was deeply upsetting to me. I was concerned about the future of this unique musical combo. Thanks to Dave Stryker and others I'm feeling that the organ trio is alive and flourishing and here to stay.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

DAVID HANEY, JULIAN PRIESTER, ADAM LANE, MICHAEL BISIO LIVE AT THE DEEP LISTENING INSTITUTE

CMR 019

TRACK ONE/ TRACK TWO/ TRACK THREE/ TRACK FOUR/ TRACK FIVE/ 48:26

David Haney, p; Julian Priester tbn; Adam Lane, bass; Michael Bisio, bass. Kingston, NY July 23, 2006

While this was recorded back in 2006, it was just released last year. A long time to wait, but the wait was worth it. I am familiar with all the players here except Bisio, who is also a bassist.

As expected, this record consists largely of great interactions among the players. Priester's playing here is a bit different from what one normally would expect from him, but he rises to the occasion. Haney is always inventive and Lane provides both great support as well as great solo work. I am assuming that the bowed bass is Bisio, who provides great contrast to Lane's pizzicato work.

Track two provides some great interaction between everyone with some very dense chords from Haney and great arco playing from Bisio. And great interplay between the two bassists. Track three slows things down a bit with some really nice work from Priester. Track four features both bassists in a great conversation. And track five features everyone.

In short a very enjoyable recording. Will gets lots of listening time.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

GUY BARASH
KILLDEER

NEW FOCUS RECORDINGS 355

THE SPACE BETWEEN SILENCE AND ENOUGH/ CONFESSIONAL/ TATTOO/ JESUS KNEW/ SAINT AUGUSTINE/ THE KING OF FIRE/ PARROT/ KILLDEER/ POEM TO BE WHISPERED BY THE BEDSIDE OF A SLEEPING CHILD/ I WILL DESTROY YOU/ PIED PIPER 39:03

Guy Barash, elec; Nick Flynn spoken word; Frank London, Tpt; Eyal Maoz, g; Kathleen Supove, p New York. May 10, 2022

Poetry and music. Looking forward to this. I always liked the idea, going all the way back to the Beats, and to the Charles Mingus Scenes in the City from the 1950s. Here we have a more contemporary classical setting, with some good jazz improvisation. The notes call it "structured improvisation."

The recording begins with an instrumental piece featuring electronics and some nice trumpet playing from London. And goes right into the second track of spoken word. Tattoo begins with some interesting piano work before the poetry begins. Both are accompanied by electronics, and contributions from the other musicians. The poetry covers a wide variety of subjects from a clearly personal viewpoint. Some I found very interesting, others not so much. But perhaps more than music, poetry is very subjective. Some subjects are interesting to me, others not. So I will stick to talking about the music and how it accompanies the poetry.

And the music does a great job of capturing the moods of the poems, and much of the soloing stands well on its own, especially the playing of London and Supove. Barash's electronics also work effectively. Maoz' guitar is occasionally audible but stays mainly in support. I actually own a recording of Supove doing contemporary classical pieces. As the album progressed I found I really enjoyed her playing.

The highlight for me is the multiple track with Parrot, Killdeer and Poem to be Whispered by the Bedside of a Sleeping Child. The poetry flows nicely and the musical accompaniment is really great, from Supove's piano to Barash's electronics to London's trumpet. The piece ends with the line "this isn't even a poem."

A very interesting and enjoyable recording. I will listen again to get more of the poetry, which is interesting. The musical accompaniment is excellent.

Bernie Koenig

RICHARD BEAUDOIN
DIGITAL MEMORY AND THE ARCHIVE

NEW FOCUS RECORDINGS 358

REPRODUCCIO (AFTER CASALS/BACH)/ UNIKAT (AFTER ARGERICH/CHOPIN)/ BACCHANTE (AFTER DEBUSSY/DEBUSSY)/ NACHZEICHNEN/TRACING (AFTER GOULD/SCHOENBERG) / YOU KNOW I'M YOURS AFTER MONK) / LES DEUX LAURIERS (AFTER TEYTE/CORTOT/ DEBUSSY) / 'LA CHEVELURE' FROM TROIS CHANSONS DE BILITIS 44:48

Neil Heyde, cel; Rohan de Saram, cel; Maggie Teyte, vcl; Alfred Cortot, p no recording information

This is basically a classical record where a composer takes a performance of an existing work and writes his version of the piece. Beuadoin wrote these pieces specifically for the performers on this recording. Since I am familiar with five of the seven pieces here I am really looking forward to how Beaudoin interprets these performance pieces.
What Beaudoin does is to take aspects of the performance and minimize it. We get snippets—something like minimalist interpretations of the pieces, which makes Beaudoin's works sound like original compositions.
The other interesting aspect of this recording is that Beaudoin changes most of the original instruments— usually piano—to cello.
Since I am huge fan of the cello I loved the idea.
I think this recording will appeal to cello fans and fans of minimalist composition.

Bernie Koenig

STEPHANIE LAMPREA
14 RECITATIONS

NEW FOCUS RECORDINGS

RECITATION 1/ RECITATION 2/ RECITATION 3/ RECITATION 4/ RECITATION 5/ RECITATION 6/ RECITATION 7/ RECITATION 8/ RECITATION 9 RECITATION 10/ RECITATION 11/ RECITATION 12/ RECITATION 13/ RECITATION 14 53:48

Stephanie Lamprea vcl Glasgow Scotland Dec 2021-May 2022

This is a recital of fourteen recitations composed by Georges Aperghis in 1977-1978 for solo voice.
The recitations are a combination of song, spoken word and vocal sounds. At times I am reminded of Cathy Berberian. I found myself not listening to words, which are in a language I do not speak, but just to vocal sounds. After all the voice is an instrument, so I was listening to that instrument.
As an instrumentalist Lamprea is quite versatile. She goes easily from high volume to very soft. She articulates strange sounds very nicely. Knowing that is composed rather than improvised adds to my admiration of her abilities. It is one thing to improvise all kinds of sounds but to accurately produce what is in a score, which is clearly complex writing, is difficult indeed.
In many ways these recitations blend into one long piece, which some interesting variations. Recitation seven stands out for me due some real vocal pyrotechnics. And Recitation ten really shows her dynamic range. But listening to the record as whole works well for me.
A record for anyone who loves listening to the human voice.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

THE HEAVY HITTERS

CELLAR MUSIC

CLEV70122

HUB / NEW DAY / SILVERDUST / UN DIA ES UN DIA / BIG RICHARD(+) / CHAINSAW(*)/ THIS IS SOMETHING NEW / CEDAR LAND / BLUESIT. 61:20. Eric Alexander, ts,as)(+); Mike LeDonne, p; Jereny Pelt, tpt; Vincent Herring, as; Peter Washington, b; Kenny Washington, d; Rale Micic, g (*). 5/8&9/2022. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Generally recognized as one of the finest editions of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers the sextet comprising Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter and Curtis Fuller in the front line was brought to mind here with the alto sax substituted for the slide trombone. The de facto co-leaders here are Alexander and LeDonne who are responsible for all of the charts, three from the former and six from the latter. The others should all be familiar to regular readers of these pages. All have extensive gig time with each other so this is an extremely comfortable assemblage in the hallowed confines of the famed RVG studio. Many of LeDonne's compositions are dedications to jazz heroes; the opener for Old Mother Hubbard's son Freddie, the funky waltz "Silverdust" for who else?, and "Cedar Land" built off the changes of Mr. Walton's unforgettable "Holy Land". Where the organ playing of LeDonne is out of the Mighty Burner bag this writer discerns some McCoy Tynerism in his piano solos. As for Alexander's writings=his "Chainsaw" is a moderato vamp written in long form with guest guitarist Micic taking first solo honors while the follow-up number has best alto spot from Herring and impressive block-chording from the pianist. Certainly a highlight is Eric's "Big Richard" with the composer switching to alto for an exquisite reading. The sextet takes things out with a tune that is exactly what it says it is, a bluesy shuffle with some serious preaching from all three horns. On the last two titles the upright and drums finally get to stretch their wares. In my music library is a Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis lp from 1979 on the much-missed Muse label entitled The Heavy Hitter. It's a real winner even though singular but the same can be said six-fold for this winner.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

CHET BAKER - BLUE ROOM

JAZZ DETECTIVE 008

DISC ONE: BEAUTIFUL BLACK EYES / OH, YOU CRAZY MOON(*) / THE BEST THING FOR YOU / BLUE ROOM / DOWN. 49:07. DISC TWO: BLUE GILLES / NARDIS / CANDY(+*) / LUSCIOUS LOU(+) / MY IDEAL(+*) / OLD DEVIL MOON(+)/ 43:03. 4/10/1979 & 11/9/1979(+). Hilversum, Netherland Baker tpt, vcl(*); Phil Markowitz, p; Jean-Louis Rassinfosse, b; Charles Rice, d; Frans Elsem,p; (+) / Victor Kaihatu, b;(+) Eric Ineke, d(+).

Subtitled The 1979 Vara Studio sessions in Holland this is the second release from Zac Feldman's new label Jazz Detective featuring heretofore unissued recordings. As a followup to the two twin packs of Ahmad Jamal Emerald City live dates it is a pair of disks from the same year & same studio in the Netherlands. The first two tunes on the second disc are from the month that produced the five on disk one while the remaining four titles see Baker backed by a different rhythm unit some seven months later. Both keyboardists had been thoroughly initiated in Baker bands and can be viewed in dvds currently available. Markowitz and trapster Rice are Americans amid Europeans some of whom have gigged with Baker previously. From Belgium bassman Rassinfosse recalls a 1976 to 1985 while drummer Eric Ineke remembers the second gathering both included in the twenty-three page booklet. The first platter contains rendering of three standards and two items from Wayne Shorter and Miles Davis. Written by Johnny & Jimmy (Burke/Van Heusen) "Oh, You Crazy Moon" is vocalized with mellifluous scat, the opener is taken as a samba and the Miles 24 bar line from 1951 the most jazzy. There are two more selections from the initial session on the second disc before the four that made up the November date which was more problematic according to statements from the participants booklet reports. The two earlier tracks are another Miles take, the well known "Nardis" originally penned for Cannonball Adderley and , somewhat a rarity, a Baker composition "Blue Gilles" which first appeared around a year earlier on the Broken Wing record for Emarcy also with Markowitz. The protagonist stretches out impressively on both moderate titles. The four tune final session holds two vocals, a sung and scatted "Candy" and the standard "My Ideal" is taken as a ballad featuring Chet's mentholated voice. The concluding song "Old Devil Moon" is presto with trumpet head, two brass solos sandwiching a piano spot and an unfortunate fade. The double dig i-pack is top shelf with the aforementioned booklet, containing recollections/appreciations from Randy Brecker, Enrico Rava, Phil Markowitz & surviving members of both combos, Enrico Pieranunzi and others on the production side. A most worthwhile addition to Chet Baker's massive discography. An ending anecdote: Back in 1991 yours truly had the pleasure to write the liners for the unfortunately out-of-print OUT OF NOWHERE (Milestone 9191)which featured Chet on an eight tune program in Tulsa, Oklahoma with a band of local musicians. The band's leader worked at a music store there in town and when the trumpeter told him he had a mouthpiece but no horn he borrowed a Conn Consolation from the store for the gig. To make a long story short, he never got it back. Say Goodnight, Chet.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

JAY MIGLIORI
EQUINOX

OMNIVORE 523

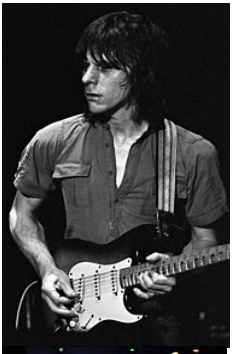
EQUINOX / FOUR BROTHERS / YA KNOW / BLUE JAY / LUNAREY / DAVANA / ASK ME NOW / YA KNOW (TAKE 1) / EQUINOX (TAKE 3) / FOUR BROTHERS (TAKE 4). 52:53.

Migliori, ts; Conte Candoli, tpt; Joe Letteri, p; Jim Crutcher, b; Chiz Harris, d. 9/17,18,19/84. LA.

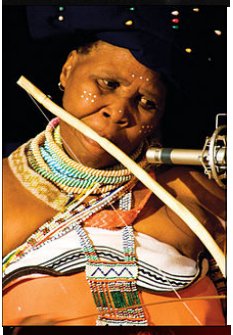
Although this session is from many moons ago it is not a reissue but a long lost historical document of one of the forgotten west coast tenorists. One may think they have never heard of him but he was a session player right up there with Plas Johnson, David "Fathead" Newman or Tom Scott just to name a few. With a resume of over several hundred studio dates my introduction to his work came via the vaunted multi-horn combo Supersax on their 1973 debut disc Plays Bird. But with as much ubiquitous session employment his leadership album output was less than a mere handful. Backing Migliori (born Getululio Salvatore) is the same foursome that was on his 1982 lp The Courage for Discovery. The trumpeter was an old friend from the Supersax days and others were well versed in the tenorman's musical manner from local gigs around the LA area. Straight out of the gate is a spirited rendition of the Coltrane title tune, one of four not composed by the leader. The other non-originals are Monk's much-covered "Ask Me Now", "Four Brothers" which is Jimmy Giuffre's second most popular number (after "The Train & The River") and west coast pianist Lou Levy's "Davana". The remainder is credited to Joe Letteri yet "Lunarcy" is from a 1992 album of the same name by Levy as is "Ya Know" and attributed to a certain Joe Emley. Throughout this disc the solo highlights are mostly from Migliori's crisp tenor but pianist Joe Letteri has his moments also. There are a couple of nice bass spots here and there and trapster Harris is confined to mostly trades with the sax. Three cuts (#4/6/9) sound like the leader on soprano and there is a definite baritone saxophone on the second take of "Four Brothers". Except for maybe the ensemble sections of that title these ears didn't discern any contributions from the younger Candoli brother who is MIA on what is a mostly quartet outing. Nevertheless, a blast from the past and one hell of a find.

Larry Hollis

Obituaries



Jeff Beck



Madosini

Renee Geyer

Tony Ortega

Wayne Shorter

ALAN BATES, jazz producer, *died on Jan. 30, 2023. He was 97.*

CAROL SLOANE, singer, *died on Jan. 23, 2023. She was 85.*

CHRISTIANE UFHOLZ, singer, *died on Jan. 1, 2023. He was 75.*

DENNIS BUDIMIR, guitar, *died on Jan. 10, 2023. He was 83.*

DON COFFMAN, bass, *died on Dec. 11, 2022.He was 83.*

FIONNA DUNCAN, vocals, *died on Dec. 6, 2022. She was 86.*

HERB SNITZER, photographer, *died on Dec. 31, 2022. He was 90.*

JEFF BECK,guitar, *died on Jan. 10, 2023. He was 78.*

LATOZI "MADOSINI" MPAHLENI Xhosa music artist, *died on Dec. 23, 2022. She was 79.*

LÁZARO VALDÉS, piano *died on Jan. 1, 2023. He was 83.*

MACK GOLDSBURY, saxophone, *died on Dec. 26, 2022. He was 75.*

MARCEL ZANINI, saxophonist/clarinetist/ singer, *died on Jan. 18, 2023. He was 99.*

MARTIN ZIELINSKI JR. trumpet, *died on Dec. 24, 2022. He was 92.*

MICHAEL SNOW, filmmaker, *died on Jan. 5, 2023. He was 94.*

RENÉE GEYER, singer, *died on Jan. 17, 2023. She was 69*

RICHARD OESTERREICHER, big band leader, *died on Jan. 17, 2023. He was 90.*

UDO MOLL, trumpet, *died on Jan. 14, 2023.He was 56.*

TONY ORTEGA, saxophone, *died on Oct. 30, 2022. He was 94.*

WALTER "WOLFMAN" WASHINGTON, guitar, *died on Dec. 22, 2022). He was 79*

RASUL SIDDIK, trumpet, *died on Jan. 16, 2023. He was 73.*

WAYNE SHORTER, saxophone, *composer, died on March 2, 2023 .He was.89.*