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MARC COPLAND's "ZENITH"



Released March 1, 2016

“If this first recording is any indication, this label will be a sure source for superbly creative recordings in the future.” ---huffingtonpost.com

“So beautiful it's almost hard to believe.” ---allaboutjazz.com

“The four kindred spirits mingle in magical ways. The results are often breathtakingly beautiful.” ---Downbeat Magazine

“Copland, clearly at the height of his creative powers.” ---Jazz Thing (Germany)

“A gold standard in contemporary acoustic jazz.” ---Irish Times

“A classic quartet.” ---Stereophile

“A crowning achievement.” ---Elmore magazine

“Einfach wuehlende schoene.” ---Jazz Podium (Germany)

“Zenith belongs in that special category of jazz discs that are gorgeous on their own terms. Whether he’s delving into his own compositions or interpreting standards, Copland has an immense range of colourful chords at his fingertips. His playing is always deeply intriguing yet lyrical...This maiden release on Innervoice Jazz sets the bar very, very high, and it will be a delight to see if subsequent releases can match or surpass it.”---Ottawa Citizen (Canada)

“A triumph...Each of the four musicians is a renowned soloist. But it's through real interplay--the back-and-forth at the appropriate place, an interaction by which the best results are produced---that this concert proved to be a milestone of modern creative jazz at the highest level.” ---Augsburger Allegemeine (Germany), 2015

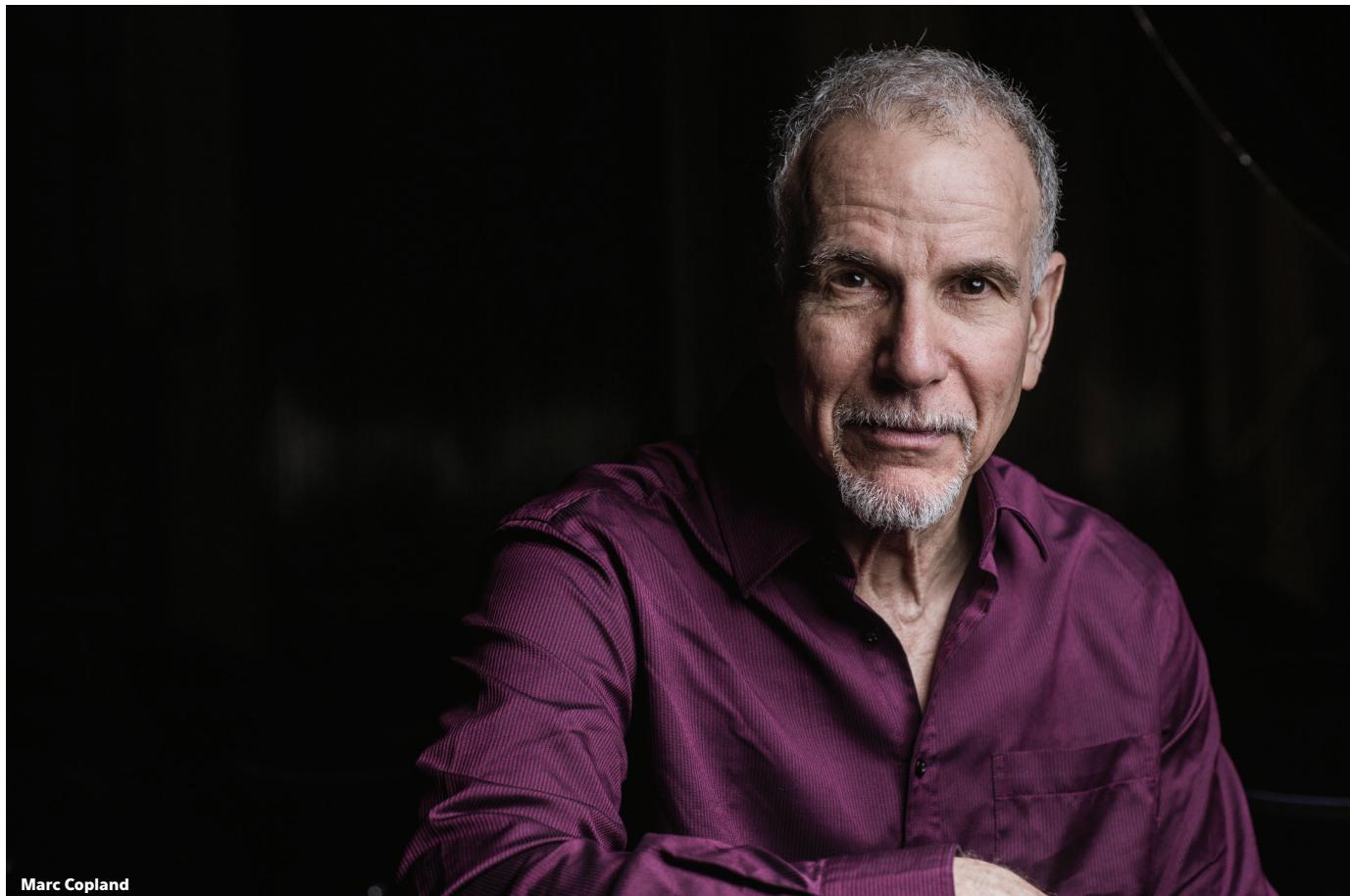
“It's a long poetic score unrolling before our eyes...the trumpet-- a bird, the piano—air, the bass—wind, the drums—earth. This project of Marc Copland and Zenith is without doubt born of a dream. Thank you Marc, thanks to you.” -- Discordance.fr (Fr), 2015

“A quartet that beats with one heart. Marc Copland knocked me out...so keyed into what the moment needs from him, and delivers it with passion, humor, touch, and a killer rhythmic instinct. *Zenith* finds Copland at the—wait for it—summit of his abilities.” ---melminter.com

AS FEATURED IN



MAY 2016



BEYOND THE NOTES

By Bill Milkowski / Photo by Guido Werner

In his prodigious output as a leader (more than 40 albums to date) and as a highly valued sideman (Gary Peacock Trio, John Abercrombie Quartet), Marc Copland always seeks a place in the music that takes him somewhere beyond the notes.

"For music to really fulfill its function as an art form, it has to get beyond the notes, just as painting has to get beyond the colors," the pianist-composer maintains. "These things are all tools that enable the art form in question to move the listener and make an experience that's deeply resonating, both in musical and extra-musical ways. All those tools are important, but at a certain point it's about what is this art saying at another level. The musicians whom most listeners would recognize as artists like that—John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock—they all had that. And at certain points in their careers, it all coalesces and it's very clear that they're sending a very strong message, both with the innovative tools that their music uses and with what they're trying to say beyond the notes."

Over the years, Copland—who studied under the great Lennie Tristano at Columbia University—has trained himself to access that rarified space more quickly, whether it's in solo, duo, trio or quartet settings. "The access is pretty much there most of the time, but the test is are you get-

ting into new territory. If you're playing a little bit differently than you did a year or two ago, then something good is happening. You're trying to develop what you're doing and expand the places that the music can go, which involves expanding the capabilities of the musical tools, in part."

On Copland's album *Zenith* (see "CD Reviews," page 71), released on his own newly established InnerVoice Jazz label, he and his longstanding telepathic rhythm tandem of bassist Drew Gress and drummer Joey Baron explore new territory with trumpeter Ralph Alessi, for whom he has particularly high praise. "When I heard Ralph's [2013 album] *Baida*, something clicked in my head," Copland explains. "I felt I was listening to someone with real depth, both as a composer and as a player. And as soon as we hit together, it was very easy. He just jumped right in. He totally gets what I'm trying to do and what we're trying to do as a rhythm section, and he brings his own perspective to it."

"I think clarity is a really good word to describe what Ralph does," Copland continues. "Chops, to me—and I tell this to students—are meaningless. It's nice to have them, but if you're not saying anything, what good are they? Clarity is good; meaning is good. Then if you can enhance that with chops, fine. But the danger is always that someone will get seduced by chops for chops' sake. And to me, music is not about that. Music is about

going to another place."

The key for this empathetic quartet, and every musical situation that Copland finds himself in these days, is listening.

"It helps when everybody listens first, and that certainly happens in the bands I'm spending most of my time with now, which is the *Zenith* band, Gary Peacock's trio and John Abercrombie's quartet. That's a common feature among all those groups. As musicians we want to leave space. That's a sound that's been inside my head from the very beginning. At any recording or gig I play, I try to establish that sound and use of space, and listening is the first step with that. And if everybody isn't doing that, it can't happen. But if everybody's listening and responding to each other and to the sonic environment, then with the piano one can set the musical stage so that harmony and melody and rhythm can interact among the players in a certain way. And when that happens, then it's very easy to start to go beyond the notes."

While Copland has previously recorded for the Pirouet, hatology, SteepleChase, Savoy, Challenge and Sketch labels, forming his own InnerVoice Jazz will allow him to go even further in his search for that place beyond the notes.

"I've been very fortunate in my career to work with quite a few different producers, as a leader and as a sideman, and they've all been great. Having the label is an opportunity to put some of what I've learned to good use and to let the music take another direction. It's an issue of having another outlet. Right now I'm kind of associated with ECM because John's band and Gary's band are on that label, which is a fabulous label with a great producer, obviously. But again, it's like when you play with different musicians: It enables you to sometimes take the music to a slightly new or different place. So this experience of having my own label feels to me kind of the same. It's not to replace working with other labels and other producers; it's to enhance and supplement."

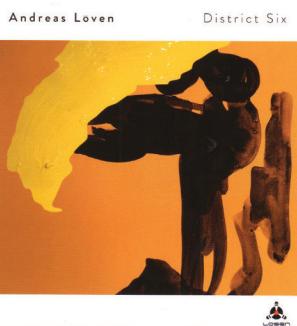
DB



STEVEN SUSSMAN

Copland's new album on InnerVoice Jazz is titled *Zenith*.

Andreas Loven District Six

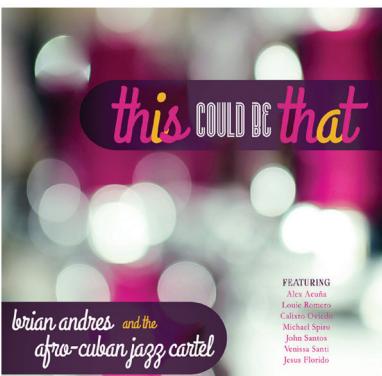


"African heat and dusty rhythm filtered through Scandinavian cool and reflection...Loven's piano playing is a lovely mix of Norwegian and South African, blending influences of Tord Gustavsen and Abdullah Ibrahim into something that feels very personal to this man himself."

-Peter Bacon, *TheJazzBreakfast.com* (UK)



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-Raul Da Gama, *LatinJazzNet.com*

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"...some near telepathic ensemble playing, and maintains the listener's attention, not least on account of Davies' deft and sensitively imaginative percussive technique." -*AllAboutJazz*

"...a jazz symphony that demonstrates the power of artistic integrity, spiritualism, creative passion..." -*hisVOICE*

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MAY 2016

Le trompettiste Cuong Vu (au milieu), avec son bassiste Stomu Takeishi et son batteur Ted Poor, a eu la bonne idée d'inviter Pat Metheny sur son nouveau cd. Lire p. 52.



WILLIAM POOR (MONESUCH)

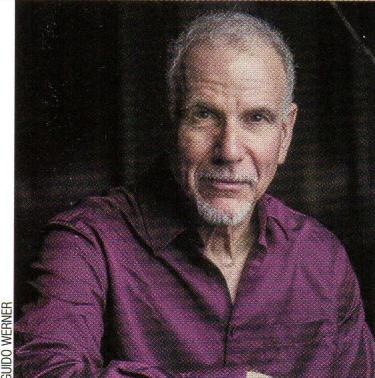
le guide

JAZZ

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Label affaire

On n'est jamais aussi bien édité que par soi-même ? L'élegant et raffiné pianiste Marc Copland lance son label, InnerVoice Jazz. Première référence, "Zenith", en quartette avec Ralph Alessi, Drew Gress et Joey Baron.



GUIDO WERNER



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Ping Machine Easy Listening

Ping Machine Ubik

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Bill Charlap Trio Notes From New York

Cuong Vu Trio Meets Pat Metheny

Daniel Freedman Imagine That

John Hébert Rambling Confessions

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Stan Getz Moments In Time

Labtrio Featuring Michaël Attias & Chris Hoffman The Howls Ar Note What They Seem

Julian Lage Arclight

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Rova Channelling Coltrane Electric Ascension

Marcus Strickland's Twi-Life Nihil Novi

Claude Tchamitchian Sextet Traces

Airelle Besson Radio One

Jaco, hier et aujourd'hui

La discographie officielle du big band de Jaco Pastorius s'enrichit : le double CD "Then & Now" (Warner Music) vient de sortir au Japon. Le CD 1, produit par Peter Erskine, est composé d'inédits et de versions alternatives de "The Birthday Concert" (enregistré en 1981). Le CD 2, produit par Peter Graves, comporte onze relectures récentes de thèmes signés – ou souvent revisités – par le bassiste.



Pour l'amour d'Oscar

Enregistré dans le home studio d'Oscar Peterson et sur son légendaire Bösendorfer Imperial, le triple album "Oscar, With Love" (oscarwithlove.com) réunit entre autres Chick Corea, Kenny Barron, Bill Charlap, Monty Alexander. Chronique dans notre prochain numéro.

Les abréviations utilisées dans Le Guide

acc	accordéon
aff	flûte alto
arr	arrangements
as	saxophone alto
b	contrebasse
bars	saxophone
baryton	
bcl	clarinette basse
bjo	banjo
bs	saxophone basse
bsn	basson
btb	trombone basse
bu	bugle
cello	violoncelle
cl	clarinette
cla	claviers,
synthétiseurs	
cnt	comet
comp	composition
cor	cor
dir	direction
dim	batterie
elb	basse électrique
elg	guitare électrique
elp	piano électrique
elec	effets
électroniques	
fl	flûte
g	guitare
hb	hautbois
hca	harmonica
hp	harpe
mar	marimba
org	orgue
p	piano
perc	percussions
pit	platières
prod	production
prog	programme
ss	saxophone soprano
ssn	saxophones sopranino
trombone	
tp	trompette
ts	saxophone ténor
tu	tuba
vib	vibraphone
vin	violon
voc	chant
vtb	trombone à pistons

playlist

10 morceaux qui tournent sur les platines de la rédaction

Ella Fitzgerald Can't Buy Me Love

Extrait de l'album "Hello, Dolly!", lui-même inclus dans un coffret à prix doux, un autre standard des Fab' Four revisité avec maestria par Ella, et produit par le cinquième Beatles, George Martin. On raconte que Paul McCartney fut honoré.

Où ça ? "5 Original Albums" (Verve / Universal)



Branford Marsalis Quartet I'm A Fool To Want You

Quatre plus un, certes, quand Kurt Elling ajoute sa voix au combo dirigé depuis plus de trente ans par le grand frère de Wynton, mais cette version d'*I'm A Fool To Want You* est un duo sans filet entre le chanteur et le saxophoniste. Bluffant.

Où ça ? "Upward Spiral - With Special Guest Kurt Elling" (Okeh / Sony Music)

Miroslav Vitous Birdland

Si Weather Report avait enregistré *Birdland* en 1971, sans doute aurait-il sonné ainsi. Comme un double à la fois familier mais radicalement différent. Ce disque fera débat le mois prochain...

Où ça ? "Music Of Weather Report" (ECM / Universal)

Brad Mehldau And I Love Her

Retour au trio, quatre ans après "Where Do You Start", en compagnie de Larry Grenadier et de Jeff Ballard. Avec, toujours, cet manière sensuelle et habile de relire les standards pop. Ici, une pépite des Beatles, qui fut leur premier morceau entièrement acoustique.

Où ça ? "Blues And Ballads" (Nonesuch / Warner Music)

Sarah Vaughan A-Tisket A-Tasket

Chroniqué dans ce numéro et récompensé d'un Choc, ce live inédit fourmille de grands moments, dont cette version du tube... d'Ella Fitzgerald, que Sarah Vaughan interprète de bon cœur, même si le public, invité à choisir une chanson, s'est visiblement trompé de diva !

Où ça ? "Live At Rosy's" (Resonance Records / Socadisc)

Lucky Thompson Thin Ice

Cette vivacité de grand fauve du bop et ce velouté du timbre donnerait raison à Don Byas qui voyait en lui l'un de ses disciples, tout comme en Paul Gonsalves avec lequel Lucky partage un certain sens de la diagonale harmonique sur cet inédit de la Radio de Hambourg de 1960.

Où ça ? "Bop & Ballads" (Sonorama / sonorama.de)

Ellery Eskelin Trio On (or About)...

L'an dernier, au festival de Willisau en Suisse, Ellery Eskelin (ts), après un long prélude, Gary Versace (org) et Gerry Hemmingway (dm) flâneront "sur" (ou bavardent "à propos de") trois standards (*My Melancholy Baby*, *Blue and Sentimental*, *East Of The Sun*). Une suite de 51'30 d'une infinie tendresse.

Où ça ? "Live" (Hat Hut / Harmonia Mundi)

Dave Liebman & Richie Beirach Welcome / Expression

Quarante ans après leur premier duo, quarante-cinq ans après leurs premières rencontres autour d'expériences que Liebman qualifie de "free jazz à la late Coltrane", les deux frères en musique nous offrent une vision apaisée du Coltrane de la fin.

Où ça ? "Balladscapes" (Intuition / Socadisc)

Marc Copland Mystery Song

Un contretemps vous prive de la chronique attendue du premier album du label de Marc Copland. C'est d'autant plus fâcheux que cette mélodie de Duke Ellington de 1930 ne perd rien de son mystère sous les doigts du pianiste et de ses comparses Ralph Alessi, Drew Gress et Joey Baron. À suivre...

Où ça ? "Zenith" (InnerVoiceJazz / innervoicejazz.com)

Dominique Pifarély Tracé Provisoire I

Sur les logiques rythmiques infernales évoquant les injouables chaos que Colon Nancarrow composait pour ses pianos pneumatiques, le violoniste nous rappelle quel formidable jazzman improvisateur il reste.

Où ça ? "Tracé provisoire" (ECM / Universal)

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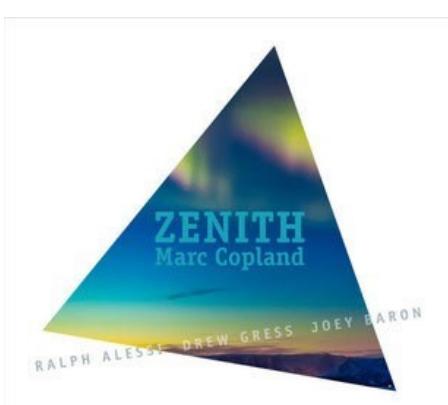
THE BLOG

Pianist/Composer Marc Copland Reaches New Heights With Zenith

⌚ 03/09/2016 11:36 am ET | Updated 21 hours ago



 **Ralph A. Miriello**
Jazz Journalist

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The definition of zenith is "the highest point reached in the sky by any celestial object." Over the years I have always enjoyed Mr. Copland's work. I identify deeply with his musical sensibilities. The pianist has consistently tried to reach his own personal musical zenith, whether it be as a leader or as a much sought after sideman. With his latest recording *Zenith* he may have accomplished just that.

From the opening bars of "Sun at Zenith" you are transported into a world of thoughtful rumination. Mr. Copland has a wonderfully sensitive touch on his keyboard and here he is joined by his working trio of equally emotive musicians, his long tenured associate Drew Gress on acoustic bass and his frequent collaborator Joey Baron on drums. The trio finds another partner in this evocative music making journey in the form of the trumpeter Ralph Alessi, a musician whose subtle brilliance shines beautifully on this recording. Together these gentlemen make magic happen.

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All compositions, except "Mystery Song" and "Air We've Never Breathed," are by Mr. Copland whose style has a floating, weightless feel to it, the perfect platform to allow Mr. Alessi's delicate trumpet work to soar in the open, both within the band's elastic rhythms and above them. "Sun at the Zenith" is a testament to the group's one speak-four musicians melding their distinct sounds into one cogent and unified statement of beauty.

Listen to the pliant bass work of Gress on the opening of "Mystery Song," a Duke Ellington composition hardly recognizable under Copland's modern arrangement, specifically tailored to be a true collaborative effort for these particular musicians. Mr. Baron's syncopated drum work is the epitome of subtle force and probing drive. Copland's piano is rhythmically elegant as it weaves lines of unexpected beauty over the composition's core rhythmic drive. The effect is intoxicating in the way the group just pulls you along into its sway.



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Marc Copland

Alessi is a unique voice on the trumpet, a voice that sings in an almost angelic way. Even when he reaches to the outer limits of the trumpet's higher register it is restrained and purposeful with no tendency toward brashness.

The "Air We've Never Breathed" is a three-part suite that is like a series of tonal conversations that was created by Mr. Copland along with his other band mates. The first features an interchange between Gress' plucky bass and Alessi's muted trumpet, subtitled "The Bass Knows." This proceeds to Copland stirringly creating a series of repeated motifs on piano titled "Up and Over." Gress and Baron percolate in their own rhythmic soup over which Copland and Alessi have their own distinct conversation. The music vacillates between subdued and animated with each musician lending their individual talents in a show of unified purpose. Baron suddenly transforms the music with a stunning display of precision cymbal work on the final piece titled "Lips." The relentless cymbal time used as a background for a gorgeous interplay between Copland's melancholic piano and Alessi's sorrowful trumpet.

"Waterfalls" is a wonderful vehicle for the pulsating bass work of Gress. No other bass player, with the exception of Christian McBride, sounds quite as robust at keeping such difficult and complex time with unerring consistency as Drew Gress. Anchored by his frenetic heartbeat, the group veers into a driving cascade of sound that finds Alessi at his most intense, pulled along by the gentle prodding of Copland, the unassuming director of the whole production. Baron splashes into the

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current with his liquid-like cymbal work.

The more traditional "Best Bet" is a composition that features Copland at his most lyrical. The gentle, breezy feel is accentuated by Alessi's solo work that takes to the air like a bird in flight. Copland's dancing elegance creates an air of calm beauty that is reminiscent of some of Bill Evans's ruminative ballad work. His cascading arpeggios fall lightly like lingering raindrops falling on a thirsty leaf. Alessi's poignantly squeezed notes perfectly counterbalance Copland's tender sound.

The last cut on this fine album, titled "Hurricane," has a circular feel to it with Copland's repeating lines and Gress' big round bass pulsating throughout. Baron's rambunctious drums create the whirlwind background as Alessi's horn hovers like a scream in the wind. Copland's piano is at its most percussive with the bombastic Baron filling in between the notes with relentless cymbal crashes, tumultuous toms and pops on his snare. A hurricane of sound that leave the listener anxiously waiting for the impending calm.

Zenith is an initial release from Mr. Copland's recently formed label, Inner Voice Jazz. If this first recording is any indication of what is to come, this label will be a sure source for superbly creative recordings in the future.

Here is a video of some of Mr. Copland's previous work:

Spartacus Love Theme - Marc Copland...  



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CONVERSATIONS

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& blue rhythm



To have one's own record label, better control, and maximum artistic freedom: now Marc Copland has become part of a trend jazz musicians have discovered for themselves. Following on the heels of his pianistic feats on Gary Peacock's ECM trio album "Now This," with the debut of his InnerVoice Jazz label the introverted New Yorker reveals an unexpected facet of his virtuosity. In the company of the famous Joey Baron (drums), Drew Gress (bass) and Ralph Alessi (trumpet), Copland masterfully dances back and forth between impressionism and expressionism, idling in neutral and pushing ahead, free and bop playing, lyric melancholy and an elegant funkiness. It's fascinating how all the spaces in these compositions open for each instrument, even for the bass, as if in the shape of a fan—as in "Air We've Never Breathed," but also in Ellington's "Mystery Song." If Alessi worked in recent European concerts rather like a satellite thrown from its orbit, his horn on this CD lends an unusual rough, thrilling narrative mark to the refined and mysterious ensemble sound. In between it, before it, behind it, besides or under it: there is Marc Copland, at 67 clearly at the height of his creative powers.

jazzthing

& blue rhythm



Marc Copland

Zenith

(Inner Voice/marccopland.com)

Eigene Plattenfirma, bessere Kontrolle, maximale künstlerische Freiheit: Auch Marc Copland folgt einem Trend, den Jazzmusiker für sich entdeckt haben. Nach seinen pianistischen Großstoten auf Gary Peacocks ECM-Trio-Album „Now This“ offenbart der eher introvertierte New Yorker zum Start seines Inner-Voice-Labels eine ungeahnte Facette seiner Virtuosität. Mit dem famosen Drummer Joey Baron, Drew Gress (Bass) und Ralph Alessi (Trompete) tänzelt Copland virtuos zwischen Impressionismus und Expressionismus, Leerlauf und Antrieb, freiem und boppigem Spiel, lyrischer Melancholie und eleganter Funkiness hin und her. Dabei faszinieren vor allem die Räume, die sich in fächerartigen Kompositionen wie „Air Weve Never Breathed“, aber auch Ellingtons „Mystery Song“ für jedes Instrument, selbst für den Bass, öffnen. Wirkte Alessi in den jüngsten Europa-Konzerten eher wie ein aus der Umlaufbahn geworfener Satellit, so verleiht dessen Horn auf CD dem raffiniert-geheimnisvollen Ensemblesound eine ungewöhnliche raue, aufregend erzählerische Note. Dazwischen, davor, dahinter, daneben oder darunter: Marc Copland. Mit 67 definitiv auf dem Zenit seines Schaffens.

Marc Copland CD reviewed



PETER HUM, OTTAWA CITIZEN

[More from Peter Hum, Ottawa Citizen](http://OTTAWACITIZEN.COM/AUTHOR/PETERHUM88) ([HTTP://OTTAWACITIZEN.COM/AUTHOR/PETERHUM88](http://OTTAWACITIZEN.COM/AUTHOR/PETERHUM88))

Published on: March 24, 2016 | Last Updated: March 24, 2016 11:38 AM EDT



Jazz pianist Marc Copland KONSTANTIN KERN

Zenith (InnerVoice Jazz) Marc Copland

On pianist Marc Copland's new disc *Zenith*, the simpatico between him and trumpeter Ralph Alessi is so striking that I had to ask Copland

just how much playing the two of them had done together previously.

I'd thought that their music-making history was negligible, and it turned out that I was right. "Ralph and I played together up here some years ago, just the two of us," Copland wrote me back. "It was fun but didn't really stick with me. My bad.

"Then I heard *Baida*," — that's Alessi's 2013 album on ECM — "and I felt very strongly that I was listening to somebody with a big heart and a real musical intelligence," Copland continued.

|

"So I called him and sounded him, and he said sure, he'd like to do something. The hookup was immediate. What a player and composer.....he gets it, totally."

Factor in the splendid playing by bassist Drew Gress and drummer Joey Baron along with the quick connection between Alessi and Copland and the result is some outstanding music. Released this month, *Zenith* belongs in that special category of jazz discs that are gorgeous on their own terms.

Since the late 1980s, Copland, now 67, has been one of jazz piano's great harmonic explorers. Whether he's delving into his own compositions or interpreting standards, Copland has an immense range of colourful chords at his fingertips. His playing is always deeply intriguing yet lyrical. Meanwhile, Alessi, who is a decade and a bit younger than Copland, has his own ways of manoeuvring through or coming at angles to a song's given harmonies, and the surprising variations of his sound, from pure to raspy, with many gradations in between, add a welcome extra dimension to the music.

Throughout the disc's six tracks, Copland and Alessi relish the opportunity to get in there and wrestle at length with the guts of each piece to create vibrant, real-time music. Indeed, it sounds as if Copland, Alessi, Gress and Baron went into the studio, turned the taps to their maximum and let the creativity flow.

The five Copland compositions on the disc are full of unique details, with shapely melodies dovetailing with bass lines and mood-altering harmonies holding court.

The album opens with *Sun at the Zenith*, a slow, patient piece that swells in intensity until it glows. Next comes a rendition of Duke Ellington's *Mystery Song*, transported from its Cotton Club origins and reconfigured into a luscious, open, quasi-calypso.

The disc's second act stresses free playing. *Air We've Never Breathed*, credited as a composition by all four musicians, must be a free improvisation. Even so, it seems almost plotted, if not composed, because the feelings of intention, listening and common purpose are so strong. Over its 14 minutes, the track moves from a duet for bass and muted trumpet to a passage for skittering piano and drums before switching gears repeatedly, becoming reflective and then jaunty and the urgently charged. And just when you think the music is going to find its point of rest, Baron prolongs matters with some cymbal work that leads to a sad and proper denouement.

Waterfalls, which follows, is a concise, knotty theme that launches some rugged, swinging free-bop. *Best Bet* is a plaintive waltz that puts everyone on their prettiest behaviour.

The disc's last track, *Hurricane*, is another tune in three, but it's broader, more rolling in its feel, and ultimately surging and exciting. On this piece, during and after the bold, swirling solos by Alessi and Copland, Baron offers his most splashy, exuberant playing of the set.

The trio of Copland, Gress and Baron have appeared on record before, on the 2013 ECM record *39 Steps* by guitarist John Abercrombie. That record, while lovely, was more subdued than the expansive, questing *Zenith*, which is the debut disc on Copland's own label (<http://www.innervoicejazz.com/our-label/>). This maiden release on InnerVoice Jazz sets the bar very, very high, and it will be a delight to see if subsequent releases can match or surpass it.

phum@postmedia.com (<mailto:phum@postmedia.com>)
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FRED KAPLAN

Marc Copland's Zenith

By Fred Kaplan • Posted: Mar 17, 2016



Until *Zenith*, the first release on his own label, *Inner Voice Jazz*, pianist Marc Copland had never played with trumpeter Ralph Alessi, but they prove an ideal match. Joined by bassist Drew Gress (who has long played with both musicians) and drummer Joey Baron (who can play anything with anybody), this might turn out to be a "classic quartet."

Alessi, 53, has a lean tone and a penchant for minor chords that seems to owe much to Miles Davis' *In a Silent Way* mode, but he adds to it a classicist's harmonic stretch and an expansive puzzle-master's sense of space. His albums as a composer-leader, most notably *Baida* and *This Against That*, tend to explore the tectonic layers of a song in always intriguing, sometimes riveting ways.

Copland, 67, played saxophone early on before switching to piano, which may account for the sharp clarity of his melodic lines (a legacy of his horn-blowing days) and the vast palette of colors in his voicings (a dimension of music that he couldn't tap into with a horn alone). When he and Alessi start playing the melody of Ellington's "Mystery Song" (the album's only cover), I thought for a second that two horns were blowing in unison.

stockpile of vintage mikes (and some modern clones), including Neumann M49s and KM84s, RCA 44s, and a pair of Schoeps CMT-56s for ambience. Some jiggering was done in the mastering with a Manley Massive Passive EQ and Prism-Maselec MLA2 limiter.

Alessi's trumpet sounds warm but natural and vibrant; Baron's trapset snaps and shimmers; Gress' bass is properly woody and articulate; and Copland's piano has the right mix of percussive and liquid.

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COMMENTS



Nice review

Submitted by crenca on March 17, 2016 - 10:50am

It zero's in on just the sort of things I am interested in. I might purchase this blind as it is not on Tidal, though I usually wait to hear a few snippets first...

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Thanks! for sharing- FK.

Submitted by Allen Fant on March 17, 2016 - 3:17pm

Thanks! for sharing- FK.
I look forward to more Jazz in 2016!

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By DAN MCCLENAGHAN
 Published: January 31, 2016
 Views: 1,995



After releasing a series of excellent but under-recognized CDs on various small record labels—starting in the mid-1980s—pianist Marc Copland rose in prominence in 2006 when he took up residence on Germany's Pirouet Records. The highlight of his Pirouet days was a set of trio discs wrapped in a marketing package dubbed "The New York Trio Recordings." *Modinha* (2006); *Voices* (2007); and *Night Whispers* (2008), with a shifting set of band mates: [Gary Peacock](#) or [Drew Gress](#) on bass, [Paul Motian](#) or [Bill Stewart](#) drums, showcased Copland's skills to perfection. These discs attain the pinnacle of the very best piano trio offerings, ever, and they won for Copland some very well-deserved recognition. Copeland's sound in the piano trio is singular: he dips deeply into harmony, creating glistening chords and shimmering rhythms, a sort of diaphanous dream music so beautiful it's almost hard to believe.



Then there's Marc Copland teaming with horns, whether it's with saxophonist [Greg Osby](#) on *Crosstalk* (Pirouet Records, 2011), or with trumpeter Randy Brecker on *Both/And* (Nagel Heyer, 2006), the horn additions to his trio set-up changes his music, giving it a different momentum, more urgency, more gregariousness.

Zenith finds Copland with long time cohorts Drew Gress (bass) and Joey Baron (drums), teaming with trumpeter [Ralph Alessi](#), for perhaps the best of the pianist's non-trio outings. It also finds him without the backing of a record company. Marc Copland has started InnerVoice Jazz, his own label.

Alessi, after releasing very successful records on the Clean Feed and CamJazz labels, has landed on the ECM Records with *Baida* (2013), and in early 2016, *Quiver*. He is a consummate jazz man/improviser, with sideman slots in

recordings, sitting in with Drew Gress on *Black Butterflies* (Premonition Records, 2005), plus set with Ravi Coltrane, Sam Rivers, Don Byron and Steve Coleman. He brings to *Zenith* a brashness and energy, a beautiful sense of abstraction.

"Sun at the Zenith" opens the disc with Copland's impressionistic melody. His piano is, as expected, gorgeous. The band floats. Alessi's open horn has a measured richness as it issues wandering lines that weave sinuously in and around the rhythm section. "Mystery Song," from the [Duke Ellington](#) songbook, 1931, doesn't sound Ellingtonian. It's a controlled tumult, a shifty, sneaky version, Copland's piano work sounding particularly inspired and on edge, with Baron and Gress injecting the sense of rolling, tumbling mystery.

The centerpiece, "Air We've Never Breathed," is a fourteen minute group improvisation, a sometimes playful, sometimes introspective rumination on Bill Zavatsky's poem, printed on the inside of the fold-out cover. "Waterfalls" is roiling rapids, an implacable rush of water. "Best Bet" brings in a beautiful ballad mood, and "Hurricane" begins gently, calm before the storm mode, then slow cranks things up to near gale force.

Zenith, Marc Copland's debut on his new label, meets all of the expectations his stellar work at Pirouet Records established.

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INNER VOICE JAZZ

MARC COPLAND/Zenith: With day jobs as the backing crew of two ECM mainstay acts, Copland and pals go really indie here, leaving the Pirouet stable and not asking Manny Eicher for favors as they bring downtown to you and sound younger and more experimental than graying hair would leave you to believe. First class sitting down jazz by a crew that can easily play it any way they want to, this is a good indication of how arts council music would sound if it was beholden to on one. Nicely played, chaps.

Volume 39/Number 93

February 2, 2016

MIDWEST RECORD

CHRIS SPECTOR, Editor and Publisher

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Augsburger Allgemeine

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30. November 2015 00:43 Uhr

AUFTRITT

Gipfeltreffen der Jazz-Avantgarde

Das „Marc Copland Zenith Quartett“ setzt einen Meilenstein *Von Stephanie Knauer*



Der Auftritt des Zenith-Quartetts mit Marc Copland am Piano geriet zur musikalischen Offenbarung.

Foto: Thomas Eder

Dieses Gipfeltreffen war von Triumph gekrönt. Das musikalische Zusammentreffen eines hochrangigen Quartetts geriet zum Höhepunkt des Modern, des Avantgarde Jazz und war an jedem Instrument luxuriös besetzt. Mit gutem Grund hieß das Gastensemble im Birdland „Marc Copland Zenith Quartett“.

Sowohl im klanglichen wie im rhythmischen und im freien Zusammenspiel war der Samstagabend im Neuburger Jazz Club eine Offenbarung. Wie etwa bei John Abercrombie – mit dem fast alle Quartettmitglieder schon gespielt haben – gab es keinen klassischen Aufbau. Das schöpferische, freie Spiel, so schien es, begann von Anfang an. Ein hingeworfener Gedanke, impressionistisch sphärische, mit nebulösem Pedal in den Weltraum katapultierte Akkorde und Sekundintervalle initiierten eine Dauer-Genese, die sich ekstatisch aufschwang und wieder

erschlaffte. Antrieb und Leerlauf wechselten ab, aus boppigem Dauerlauf wurde ein Tango-ähnlicher Schritt, der funkig anklingende Bass-Einstieg entpuppte sich als zündender Latin-Rhythmus.

An jedem Instrument saß ein Künstler, an der Drumstation sogar ein bildender Künstler. Joey Baron besaß eine riesige Bandbreite von streichelzart bis bombastisch, solierte mit großer Klangdelikatesse und überraschenden Anschlagtechniken. Es war der neue Blick auf das Geschehen, Schlagzeugeinwürfe, die ein genial anderes Licht darauf warfen, auch mit unkonventionellen Klängen, die Barons Kunst und die der anderen so außergewöhnlich machten. Zusammen mit Drew Gress, der seinen herrlich sonoren Bass kongenial bearbeitete, und Pianist Marc Copland, ein superber Jazz-Pianist mit großem Horizont und entsprechend beeindruckendem Spiel-Ambitus, bildete sich die klassische, auch klanglich eingeschweißte Jazztrio-Besetzung, die faszinierende Momente von hypnotisierender Verhaltenheit schuf.

Naturgemäß ist die Trompete dagegen klanglich exponiert, obwohl Star-Trompeter Ralph Alessi auch über meisterhaft leise Töne verfügte. Selten ist eine derartige Instrument-Beherrschung zu erleben. Töne werden lang und makellos bruchlos gehalten, Spitzen gelingen treffsicher, auch technisch war dieser Abend olympisch. Kurze Free-Szenarien erstanden, aber ebenso ein typischer Swing, der aber nur von kurzer Dauer war. Wie ein Weltraumspaziergang mutete diese Birdland-Premiere an, ein steter Wandel mit unzähligen eindrucksvollen Begegnungen. Jeder der vier Musiker ist ein renommierter Solist. Doch erst durch das echte Zusammenspiel, das Vor- und Zurücktreten an passender Stelle und durch das Zusammenwirken um des besten Ergebnisses willen, wurde dieses Konzert zum Meilenstein des modernen, auf höchstem Niveau kreativen Jazz.

Marc Copland & Zenith | Schiltigheim |

30.11.2015

par [Léna](#) mise en ligne le Mercredi 9 décembre 2015

Catégories : Concert

Cet été, Discordance a eu l'occasion d'écouter Marc Copland en trio avec Gary Peacock et Mark Ferber. Nous l'avons retrouvé avec Zenith dans la salle du Cheval Blanc à Schiltigheim. Retour sur une soirée pleine de poésie.



Un tonnerre d'applaudissements. Le voilà sur scène. Avec eux. Avec nous. À la lumière, chemise bleu ciel, **Marc Copland** s'installe à son piano. Se met à l'aise... s'échauffe les mains... les poignets. Le concert peut commencer.



Et quand ça commence, allons-y ! C'est **Ralph Alessi** à la trompette qui donne le ton. **Drew Gress** à la contrebasse suit le tempo. Ils passent très vite à *Mystery Song*, une composition du grand Duke Ellington. Mais attention, ça swing'. À chacun son interprétation, celle de ce soir est plus vive. Ca tombe bien, pour Marc le jazz c'est « ça » : varier autour d'un morceau. **Joey Baron** ; que dire... ? Lui qui a souvent joué avec Stan Getz, Ron Carter, Al Jarreau, Dizzy Gillespie,... parmi d'autres ; il se tient là, baguettes en main, toujours prêt à faire rythmer tête, pieds et oreilles du Cheval Blanc. « *Fantastique* » est le mot. Ses longs solos sont un plaisir à écouter. Il semblerait qu'à 60 ans, Joey soit toujours en forme. C'est dire le rythme qu'il tient. À lui seul, il fait automatiquement hocher les têtes des spectateurs. Son jeu est incroyable. Nous regrettons seulement de ne pas l'avoir connu plus tôt que ce soir... On se rattrapera sur le net, en attendant on écoute. Nos oreilles apprécient. Et *Hurricane*, quel beau morceau...



Si Marc Copland, Drew Gress et Joey Baron jouaient déjà ensemble ; avec le trompettiste Ralph Alessi, la musique prend une tournure toute particulière. On retrouve la poésie, domaine si cher aux yeux du pianiste.

Ce soir, c'est une longue partition poétique qui se déroule sous nos yeux. La trompette, l'oiseau... Le piano, l'air... La contrebasse le vent... La batterie la terre... Ce projet entre **Marc Copland & Zenith** est sans doute né d'un rêve... En tout cas nous, nous sommes toujours pas sortis de ce rêve...

Merci Marc. Merci à vous.

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Partager !