

= Goin ' Home (Archie Shepp and Horace Parlan album) =

Goin ' Home is a studio album by American saxophonist Archie Shepp and pianist Horace Parlan . After their respective work in the avant @-@ garde jazz movement of the 1960s , Shepp and Parlan both faced career challenges as the jazz scene diverged stylistically . They left the United States for Europe during the 1970s and met each other in Denmark before recording the album on April 25 , 1977 , at Sweet Silence Studio in Copenhagen .

A jazz and gospel album , Goin ' Home features Shepp and Parlan 's interpretations of African @-@ American folk melodies and spirituals . Its title is an allusion to Shepp 's return to his African cultural roots . Shepp had never recorded spirituals before and was overcome with emotion during the album 's recording because of the historical and cultural context of the songs .

Although it surprised jazz listeners upon its release in 1977 , Goin ' Home was praised by music critics for its reverent tone and stylistic deviation from Shepp 's previous free jazz works . Shepp and Parlan were artistically satisfied with the album and subsequently recorded another album together , Trouble in Mind , in 1980 . Goin ' Home was reissued on CD by SteepleChase Records on May 3 , 1994 .

= = Background = =

After surging to the forefront of the avant @-@ garde jazz movement during the 1960s , both Archie Shepp and Horace Parlan faced career challenges during the 1970s after their style lost popularity in the jazz scene , which had split between artists who played either a tamer or a more experimental sound . Like Parlan , Shepp became a more mainstream performer , mostly playing hard bop , although he occasionally return to his free jazz sound . To support himself financially , he spent most of his time playing in Europe . In 1972 , Parlan also left the United States and eventually made his residence in Denmark , where Shepp had signed to SteepleChase Records .

Shepp became interested in recording gospel and , at the request of his producer at SteepleChase , recorded Goin ' Home with Parlan . They recorded the album on April 25 , 1977 , at Sweet Silence Studio in Copenhagen , Denmark . Shepp played tenor saxophone on six pieces and soprano saxophone on three others .

= = Music = =

According to music journalist Tom Moon , Goin ' Home is a reverent jazz and gospel album played with straightforward simplicity by Shepp and Parlan . They interpret nine traditional Negro spirituals , featuring African @-@ American folk melodies that originated from the 1920s and before . Along with Trouble in Mind and Looking at Bird in 1980 , Goin ' Home is part of a series of albums delineated in Shepp 's discography as " modular explorations of traditional musical styles " , which is itself in Shepp 's broader series of musical " portraits of the Diaspora " . The album 's title alludes to a return to African cultural roots .

Shepp viewed Goin ' Home as his attempt to cross the span of time and history between modern African Americans and the black slaves symbolized by the spirituals . In an interview for Down Beat , Shepp said that it was the first time he had recorded spirituals or made " any kind of serious statement about them " , and said that he started to cry when he started playing on the album due to " the strain , the spiritual weight of the moment " . He recalled being momentarily afraid that he would not be able to go through with the album 's recording because of his emotional state , which he explained :

The album has a melodic form , and employs pentatonic scales for melodic development , a practice common in African and African @-@ American folk music . Goin ' Home is mostly tempoless , as most of the pieces are performed in a rubato @-@ like free rhythm . Shepp and Parlan perform sudden accelerations and intended delays and halts , particularly at the end of bars , phrases , and sections in a piece . Most of the spirituals have a thirty @-@ two @-@ bar form , with the eight @-@ bar section comprising four two @-@ bar phrases wherein two choruses of the

spiritual are played . Shepp and Parlan 's interpretations include few choruses from the original spirituals .

Eschewing common jazz practice , Shepp does not improvise new melodic lines within the spirituals ' harmonic framework , but plays short , impromptu passages around a melodic idea . Parlan plays piano solos on only two of the album 's pieces . Shepp contributes a tonal roughness to the songs with growled sounds , which he plays by singing or humming into his saxophone . He also uses harmonic overtones , breathy tonal weight , and expressive chromatic development of melody to add textural and timbral variety to the songs . Shepp and Parlan 's reverent takes on " Amazing Grace " and Go Down Moses " exhibit split tones and fortes .

= = Release and reception = =

Goin ' Home was released in 1977 by Danish record label SteepleChase Records . Jazz listeners were divided in their reaction to the album . According to Doug Ramsey of Texas Monthly , some listeners were surprised by Shepp 's stylistic change , while others viewed the record as a " fulfillment of promise " . Ramsey believed it revealed a " tenderness and humor " from Shepp that his 1960s work only hinted at , writing that it " disclosed an Archie Shepp that many had never known , warm rather than blistering hot , witty rather than contemptuously sardonic " . John Swenson , writing in The Rolling Stone Jazz Record Guide (1985) , praised Shepp 's work with Parlan and gave Goin ' Home a five @-@ star rating , finding it " particularly heartfelt . " Fernando Gonzalez of The Boston Globe called it " exquisite " , and C. Gerald Fraser of The New York Times wrote in 1987 that " this marriage of avant @-@ garde and soul " is " regarded as a classic . " Art Lange of CODA magazine praised Shepp 's " exquisite control " of his instrument , which he " quite literally " makes " able [to] talk " , and found the spirituals to have been " sung " rather than just performed . Lange added that the emotional aspect is more impressive than the technical skill and stated :

Both Shepp and Parlan were artistically satisfied with Goin ' Home and recorded another album together , the blues @-@ inspired Trouble in Mind , in 1980 . On May 3 , 1994 , the former album was reissued on CD by SteepleChase .

In The Rolling Stone Jazz Record Guide (1985) , Goin ' Home was given five stars and called " particularly heartfelt " . In a retrospective review for AllMusic , jazz critic Scott Yanow gave it four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars and found the performances " compelling " . He said listeners who are " only familiar with Shepp 's earlier Fire Music " will see the album as a " revelation . " Moon believed its tempoless mood " gives the themes an extra shot of majesty " and found it " supremely melodic " , writing that both Shepp and Parlan " do whatever is necessary to bring the spirit to the forefront . " Richard Cook gave it four out of four stars in The Penguin Guide to Jazz (2002) . JazzTimes cited Goin ' Home as one of " the finest [albums] of his career " , and Tom Hull of The Village Voice cited it as SteepleChase 's best release . Phil Johnson of The Independent wrote that the album " can be listened to almost without cease . " Jazz historian Eric Nisenson called it " one of the most moving albums of the Seventies " , but qualified his praise by critiquing that Shepp , an iconic figure in free jazz , " was no longer the firebrand who had so frightened and unsettled some white critics and jazz fans . " Nisenson felt that , like Pharoah Sanders , Shepp 's " trial by fire at the heart of the Sixties avant @-@ garde had made him an unusually expressive musician , " and Goin ' Home showed that he was " finding inspiration in the entire black musical tradition . "

= = Track listing = =

All songs are traditional compositions , excepted where noted , and were arranged by Archie Shepp .

= = Personnel = =

Credits are adapted from the album 's liner notes .

Per Grunnet ? design

Freddy Hansson ? engineer

Horace Parlan ? piano

Flemming Rasmussen ? assistant engineer

Archie Shepp ? arranger , soprano saxophone , tenor saxophone

Gorm Valentin ? photography

Nils Winther ? photographer , producer