



Trombonist/Composer JOE FIEDLER's Big Sackbut BIO

"A trombonist known for his remarkable array of timbral effects, celebrates a highly enjoyable self-titled debut from his new brass choir, Big Sackbut, [who] skillfully compensates for the lack of a rhythm section as it contrasts boisterous and reflective moods" - *Time Out New York*

"A versatile trombonist with adventurous tastes . . ." - *The New York Times*

" . . . Fiedler's quartet deftly visits all the textures of the instrument, and there (are) fluttery light moments to go along with the joyous romps. Fun music that takes some chances. Recommended."
- *eMusic*

Influenced by two older cousins who both played trumpet, **trombonist/composer Joe Fiedler**, born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, and based in NYC since 1993, desperately wanted to become a trumpet player himself, but was instead given a trombone by his fourth grade music teacher who saw Fiedler and the trombone as a good match. The young, shy musician accepted the "arranged marriage", and the fourth grade music teacher has since been proven prophetic. Fiedler and the trombone finding each other coincided with the young musician falling under the abiding influence of two albums from his father's collection, The Cannonball Adderley Sextet-*Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*, and Oscar Peterson's *Night Train*.

During his high school years Fiedler entertained a fantasy about going to Berklee and studying with the noted educator, Phil Wilson. But as graduation neared he decided to enroll at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. Fiedler spent a couple of years having a typical college experience, but the trombone was on the back burner. After that period of time he decided to move back home and transferred to the University of Pittsburgh. He soon learned through an old high school buddy who was in Pitt's jazz band that they were in need of trombone players. "So I joined and once my flame was relit, I was all in, and full on! At that time I had no idea how to make a living playing the trombone, but I was just in love with practicing and the whole process," commented Fiedler.

Upon graduating Fiedler quickly becoming an in-demand sideman, freelancing for several years in Pittsburgh, including hitting the road with the Glenn Miller Orchestra and working in pit orchestras for Broadway shows. Shortly after, Fiedler moved to New York City in 1993, and two big breaks really opened up a career path for the trombonist. He heard through some friends who were members of Billy Bang's quintet that the great Cecil Taylor was forming a new large ensemble. As a young, brave, and perhaps naïve musician, Fiedler crashed the first rehearsal, and when he wasn't asked to leave, he kept showing up. "After a while I guess that I was just in the band. While playing with Cecil was great, it was the players that I met that led to many other projects, either directly or indirectly. Some of those players included: Steve Swell, Susie Ibarra, Chris Jonas, Rob Brown, and Chris Lightcap," said Fiedler.

Fiedler also met many future collaborators through Joey Sellers, one of his all time favorite composers /arrangers /trombonists, who was holding open rehearsals at the Local 802 Union with his 11 piece band. Fiedler explains, "through the grape vine, I ended up at one of those rehearsals and was able to stick around. Up until then I was a bit mired in the free jazz scene—which was cool, but I wanted to play in an open setting, but with some harmony and form. (Much in the vein of my hero Ray Anderson.) It was in that band that I finally met a whole slew of like-minded players and finally felt at home. That band included: Tony Malaby, Dave Ballou, Dave Berkman and my future band mates, John Hebert and Michael Sarin."

Since this time, Fiedler, born March 24, 1965, has gone from strength to strength, happily entrenched in a whirlwind of prestigious sideman activity over the past twenty years (Fiedler is one of the first-call trombonists in the world and is featured on more than 100 recordings). He has also been modestly crafting and releasing an exceptional cluster of recordings as a composer and bandleader that has garnered high praise from fans and the most revered journalists and critics covering jazz and creative music.

Fiedler exploded out of the gate as a leader with a one two punch; *Joe Fiedler Plays the Music of Albert Mangelsdorff*, followed by *The Crab* (both on the much-revered label, Clean-Feed Records), that put him on the map as triple threat musician; a seriously gifted improviser, an accomplished composer/arranger and an imaginative bandleader. These recordings garnered such praise as, "one of the small group jazz discs of the year" (Jim Macnie, *The Village Voice*), "a memorable and brilliant tribute. Highly recommended" (*All Music Guide*) and, "pointing a way toward the future of the trombone." (Stephen Loewy, *Cadence Magazine*). In 2011 Fiedler released *Sacred Chrome Orb*, and once again took the trombone to new heights in the exposed setting of a trio (sans chordal instrument), accompanied by bassist John Hebert (who also appears on the Mangelsdorff album), and the ubiquitous drummer Michael Sarin.

The idea for Fiedler's newest band and recording, both titled *Big Sackbut*, featuring Fiedler, Josh Roseman & Ryan Keberle - trombones, and Marcus Rojas - tuba (on the Yellow Sound Label, September, 2012), was born in the late 1980s when Fiedler first saw The World Saxophone Quartet live. He explains this revelation: "The drive and energy that they put forth, all without a traditional rhythm section was quite compelling. In addition, the tunes had a wonderful balance of 'loose-tightness' or 'tight-looseness' that totally sucked me right in. And this is to say nothing of the four powerhouse solo voices. I immediately thought of how I might incorporate my image of all of those elements into a trombone driven project of my own. Those ideas rattled around in my head for more than 20 years. Then a little more than two years ago, while on a gig with Ryan Keberle, I told him of my intention to finally follow through and put it all together. As it turned out he was curating a series for

the New York Slide Workers Union and offered me a gig. The series was taking place at Josh Roseman's performance space, Northsix Media Labs in Brooklyn, so he was naturally recruited, being one of my favorite trombonists. This gig was just the little nudge that I needed to bring the project to life, and here it is!"

On *Big Sackbut* one could listen to and enjoy this music immensely without considering the instrumentation, so complete is this music. However, that would be missing most of the soul enriching listening and gratifying fun that is packed into every measure. To hear and contemplate the vast amounts of timbre, tone, rhythm, harmony, melody, charming wittiness and emotion these musicians extract from three trombones and a tuba is an extraordinary experience.

Joe Fiedler's career is always moving full steam ahead, and in addition to leading his own bands, the aforementioned Big Sackbut, and The Joe Fiedler Trio, he is currently working with Miguel Zenon's Large Ensemble, Eddie Palmieri, Fast 'n' Bulbous, Viento De Agua (whose first album, *De Puerto Rico al Mundo*, was selected among the Top 10 Latin albums of the year by *The New York Times*), the Ed Palermo Big Band, Endangered Species-The Music of Wayne Shorter, and many others. Fiedler is also in the planning stages for a solo trombone project, and is a regular contributor to The Mingus Big Band. Fiedler's "day job" is Music Director: Arrangements (serving as arranger, orchestrator and trombonist) for Sesame Street. Over four seasons he has written more than 150 arrangements and crafted more than 5000 underscoring cues.

www.JoeFiedler.com