

Sideshow



Village Voice Best of NYC 1999

"Sideshow's repertoire consists of smart, rowdy, sneaky, bass-clarinet-guitar-vibraphone-percussion versions of Charles Ives' turn-of-the-century art songs; instead of vocals, they provide lyric sheets at their gigs. Transplanting America's gnarliest great composer to semi-improvisational topsoil is a weird idea, but it works shockingly well, and the group blurs the line between intellectual rigor and chaotic fun. Their first album, *In the Works*, should open some eyes in both the classical and new music worlds."

Ives wrote many pieces for "theater orchestra" — an ensemble defined by "whoever shows up." Each individual part or line has a tensile strength great enough to carry the music and listener along, regardless of whether everything written is heard, regardless of whether everything heard is exactly as written.

Ives also spoke of the power of "songs without words" — music implying a text or meaning like a ghost of the original. "Vagueness can be an indication of nearness to perfect truth," he said; we find in that inspiration to explore the region where the defined and the undefined merge, where the disparate find union in the fact of co-existence.

This sonic flexibility, this telescoping of the universal within the personal, and the focused mood in every Ives song with or without words, are what inspire Sideshow to interpret these songs. As Ives says in the postlude of *114 Songs*, "must a song always be a song?"

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Matt Moran

Vibraphonist and composer Matt Moran has performed and recorded with artists as diverse as Gunther Schuller, Lionel Hampton, Paul Bley, Combustible Edison, Mark Dresser, and Merita Halili. His distinctive sound is found among a group of emerging musicians who push the boundaries of composition in jazz, and of improvisation in composed music.

In May of 1995 Matt received a Master of Music degree in jazz composition from New England Conservatory in Boston, where he studied with the visionary multi-instrumentalist and composer Joseph Maneri. Since moving to New York in June of 1995 he has performed both as leader and sideman for the Knitting Factory's What Is Jazz? Festival and Texaco New York Jazz Festival, the Panasonic Village Jazz Festival, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, and the Vision Festival, as well as leading tours in the U.S. and Europe. The Village Voice describes Matt's playing as "superb, technically ingenious...when Moran's short-fuse pauses ignite into four-malleted pyrotechnics, it's like hearing an angel have a seizure."

Matt currently leads the groups Sideshow, Slavic Soul Party!, and Berance. He is also a member of John Hollenbeck's Claudia Quintet, the Mat Maneri Quintet, Theo Bleckmann's ensemble, and Ellery Eskelin's ensemble.

Selected Discography

- As leader: Sideshow, "Songs of Charles Ives" (CRI – Blue Shift)
Slavic Soul Party!, "Slavic Soul Party!" (bell cry music)
Matt Moran's Larobok i, "blurred and somewhat indistinct" (Geode)
- As sideman: Ellery Eskelin, "Vanishing Point" (hatOLOGY)
John Hollenbeck, "The Claudia Quintet" (BlueShift)
Theo Bleckmann, "Origami" (Songlines)
Dorgon y su grupo, "Dorgon y su grupo" (Jumbo Recordings)

John Hollenbeck

Crisscrossing the world in pursuit of new musical languages, John Hollenbeck has created a body of work that ignores boundaries. From recent collaborations with Meredith Monk to appearances with the world's finest jazz ensembles and solo performances in Brazil, Hollenbeck's versatility as percussionist and composer is unparalleled.

Performances with Ellery Eskelin, Hank Roberts, Mark Dresser, and David Liebman have showcased Hollenbeck's melodic and sensitive small-group jazz drumming. He is a member of Bob Brookmeyer's New Art Orchestra and is a frequent guest with the Village Vanguard Orchestra, Maria Schneider's Jazz Orchestra and the BMI Orchestra. A student of Brazilian music, John has gone on to perform a variety of traditional musics from around the world, including klezmer performances with David Krakauer's Klezmer Madness and Frank London (of the Klezmatiks), projects in Colombia with Antonio Arnedo, and in Argentina with Fernando Tarres. He has also toured with former Astor Piazzolla pianist and BMG Recording Artist, Pablo Ziegler.

As a composer, John combines elements of his experiences in jazz and world music. The recipient of a B.M. in Percussion and a M.M. in Jazz Composition from the Eastman School of Music, Hollenbeck has received many awards and commissions including a Meet the Composer's Grant and a National Endowment grant to study composition with Bob Brookmeyer. Recently, John composed and performed the percussion score to Meredith Monk's newest work, Magic Frequencies.

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John's first recording as leader was issued on the BlueShift label in October 2001, featuring David Liebman, Ray Anderson, David Taylor, Ellery Eskelin, Theo Bleckmann and Ben Monder. Currently he leads two ensembles (both with debut recordings on BlueShift), The Claudia Quintet and Quartet Lucy.

Selected Discography

John Holleneck, "no images" (BlueShift)

Cuong Vu, "Cuong Vu Trio" (Knitting Factory Works)

Theo Bleckmann, "Origami" (Songlines)

Bob Brookmeyer's New Art Orchestra, "Celebration" (Challenge)

Oscar Noriega

An Arizona native of Mexican origin, Oscar Noriega began playing the saxophone at the age of ten. His first professional experience was performing in a ranchera group with his four brothers. Performing with this group, Hermanos Jovel, led Oscar to realize that music was his true calling.

After several years of musical studies at the University of Arizona and Arizona State, Oscar moved to Los Angeles, and then to Boston in 1990, where he worked with the Duke Ellington Repertory Orchestra (conducted by Gunther Schuller), the Either/Orchestra, and the Jazz Composers Alliance. He also found himself at home in the fertile improvising communities surrounding Berklee and the New England Conservatory, contributing to sessions and recitals at both schools. Gradually, however, Oscar moved down the coast in what he now views as an inevitable drift toward New York, and the countless opportunities it affords young, driven musicians.

Oscar has lived in Brooklyn since 1992, where he is constantly active in New York's downtown jazz world. He plays regularly in a wide range of contexts, at such clubs as the Knitting Factory, Tonic, Birdland, and Visiones. Groups that Oscar leads include Play Party, featuring Cuong Vu, Brad Shepik, and Tom Rainey, and the Oscar Noriega Quartet.

Selected Discography

Oscar Noriega's Play Party, "Luciano's Dream" (Omnitone)

Unit X, "Rated X" (Timescrapper)

Satoko Fujii, "South Wind" (Leo Records)

Judi Silvano "Vocalise" (Blue Note) [with Joe Lovano]

Adam Good

A graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, multi-instrumentalist Adam Good has lived in New York City since 1996. With a foundation in jazz guitar, Adam has lent an inventive sound to the downtown projects of John Hollenbeck, Andrew D'Angelo and Kung Fu Grip and has performed at venues such as the Knitting Factory, Tonic, alt.coffee, and CBGB's Gallery. His talent on the tambura (a small lute-like instrument with origins in the east) and oud playing Macedonian and Bulgarian folk and other Balkan music has made Adam a fixture of New York's Balkan music scene. As the bass player for Harmonia, a Cleveland-based ensemble interpreting the music from areas between the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube, he has performed at the Philadelphia Folk Festival, the National Folk Festival in Michigan, Severance Hall in Cleveland and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Discography

The alt.coffee tapes (Katahdin)

Matt Moran's Larobok i, "blurred and somewhat indistinct" (Geode)