

Double Zero Denman Maroney (Porter)
Don't Leave Us Home Alone
 Mikolaj Trzaska/Thomas Szwelnic (Kilogram)
 Archiduc Concert: Dansaert Variations
 Paul Hubweber/Philip Zoubek (Emanem)
 Uncovered Correspondence (A Postcard to Jaslo)
 AMM (Matchless)
 by Clifford Allen

There is an adage that, when pianist Burton Greene was fretting about the condition of a piano before a Jazz Composers' Guild performance, Sun Ra asked him "well Burton Greene, if it isn't a piano then what is it?" The story goes that Greene, drumstick in hand, used everything but the keyboard to produce sounds and music for a successful concert. The piano is, after all, a bit more than 88 tuned drums - strings and wood provide, either on their own or with alterations, a vast resource. While certainly using the inside of the piano is nothing new in improvised music, prepared piano appearances are a little more rare.

One of the most curious figures to emerge in expanded piano work is New Yorker Denman Maroney, whose hyperpiano is a carefully studied and

methodical approach to vastly increasing the sonic resources of the instrument through objects placed on or moving against the strings. Though Maroney has recorded with a litany of artists, solo is perhaps the best way to experience his work. *Double Zero* is a nine-track witness to his strikes, plucks, stops and singing wire and their unearthly palette. Masses of electrified, gutsy chords buzz atop delicate, plaintive keyboard anthems on the third movement, expanding on the stomach-churning vortices of the second. These aren't sounds one can easily attach to any particular instrument - if the fact they come from a piano wasn't foreknown, one might be hard pressed to find the individual sources of this "orchestra of excited strings".

Don't Leave Us Home Alone is the first recording of the duo of prepared-pianist Tomasz Szwelnic and reedman Mikolaj Trzaska, both hailing from Poland and jauntily tearing across 19 vignettes in just under an hour. Szwelnic's approach to the instrument is a bit less extreme than Maroney's, combining pointillism and detailed keyboard glissandi with the wheezy, springing accents of inserted objects. It is sometimes as though two separate but related instrumentalists are chasing and goading Trzaska's brushy tenor on "The Last Three Cookies". Damped strings, bells and bamboo-like sounds are woven together to form a carpet underneath hard alto push on "He Could Hear Trees Grow" while whistling harmonics are reminiscent of arco cello on "He Saw Them Get In...". It's important to remember that even though the preparations expand the possibilities of the instrument, Szwelnic is still most definitely a pianist and this recording with Trzaska is a very fine, excited set of piano-reeds improvisation.

Archiduc Concert: Dansaert Variations presents another form of prepared-piano duet, this time between

Austrian pianist Philip Zoubek and German trombonist Paul Hubweber. Coming from a garrulous school of trombone improvisation, Hubweber's flits and multiphonics move from micro to macro-sonic areas in a very short amount of time. As a confrere with Zoubek and his resonant glassy spikes and prods, they make a fascinating pair, working along the knife-edge of creativity. There are four pieces, which cover an hour's performance that, though it's a set of extremely concentrated improvisations, is not without humanity - Hubweber matching the tones of passing sirens and creaking doors while emulating the stately tailgate and bugle-flick of history's great trombonists. Zoubek is equally versatile, though his instrumental approach of volcanic gymnopedies doesn't have the same tradition-bound structure.

The longstanding British group AMM is represented by the pairing of pianist John Tilbury and percussionist Eddie Prévost on *Uncovered Correspondence*, a 2010 Polish concert of hushed simplicity that could almost, at times, pass for minimalism (though it is defiantly 'maximal' in scope). Prévost's percussion work is incredibly deep, bowed and shimmering cymbal gestures in counterpoint with the muted, interlocking cells of Tilbury's Cage-ian piano. A delicate metronomic pulse emerges in the last five minutes of the first piece, unwavering patter skirting plaintive, low blocks of sound. As measured as restive breathing albeit punctuated by sharp admonishments, the three movements are examples of going back to the building blocks of musical creation.

For more information, visit porterrecords.com, kilogram.pl, emanemdisc.com and matchlessrecordings.com. Maroney is at Experimental Intermedia Dec. 14th with Hans Tammen. See Calendar.

STEPHEN BUONO PROMOTIONS

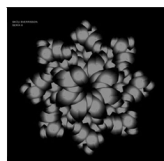
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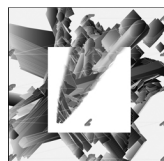
Seabrook Power Plant
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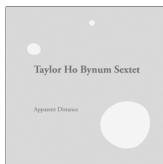
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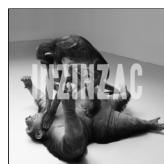
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Taylor Ho Bynum Sextet
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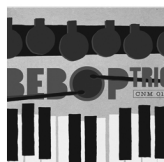
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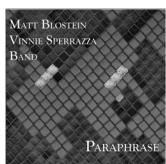
Sarah Bernstein
Unearthish



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Nick Millevoi
Black Figure of a Bird

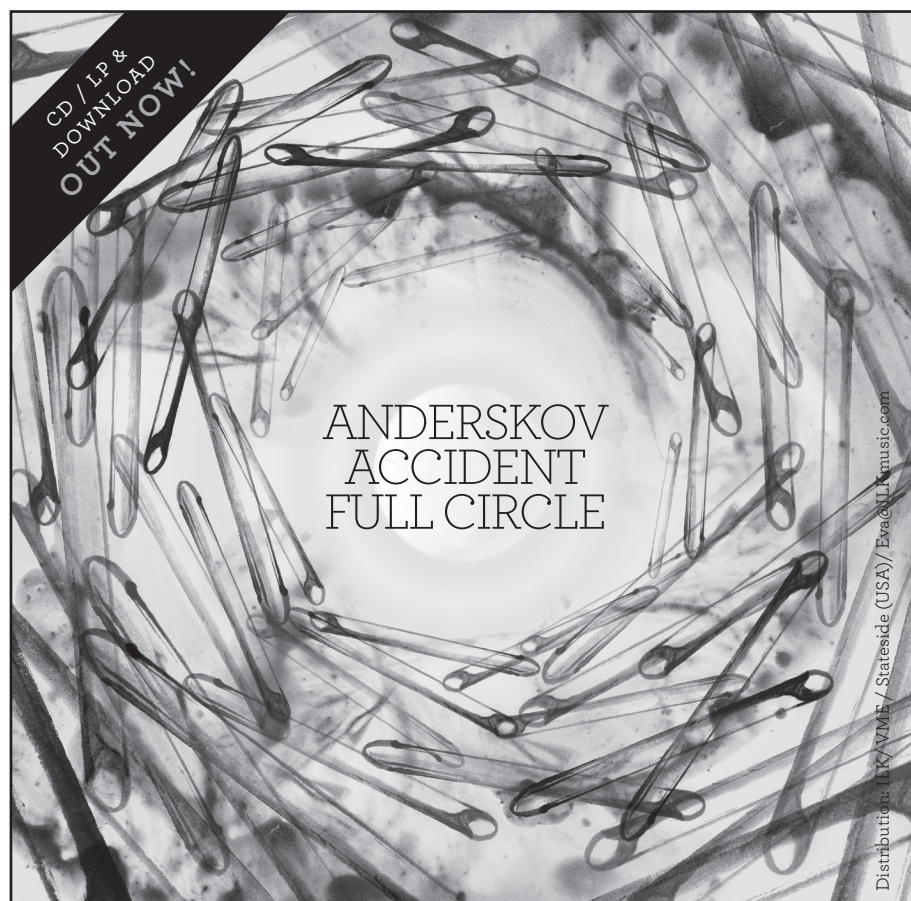


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