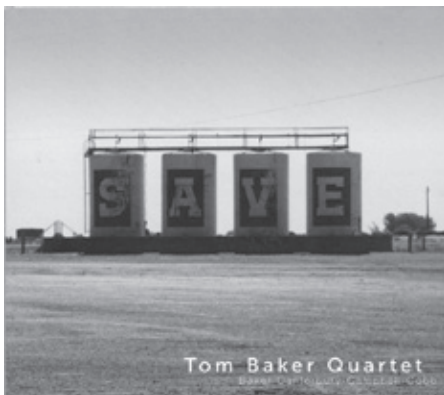


FOR THE RECORD



Tom Baker Quartet *SAVE*

Present Sounds Recordings

I had the good fortune of seeing the Tom Baker Quartet play in last January's Is That Jazz? Festival. It had been several years since I last heard the quartet, and I was eager to hear what was new. The ensemble opened the performance with a long, gorgeously realized piece of chamber jazz that seemed to have no real beginning or end. The wonderful mix of ambiance, momentum, and mystery that the band created left me breathless. I knew then that if Baker's recently released *SAVE* captured any of the magic that the band created on stage then I'd have a disc to savor.

The Tom Baker Quartet is Baker (guitars), Brian Cobb (bass), Jesse Canterbury (clarinets), and Greg Campbell (percussion). The quartet has played together since 2004, and they released their debut album *Look What I Found* in 2007. *SAVE* features compositions by Baker, Cobb, Campbell, as well as Bill Evans' "Time Remembered," and several tracks credited to the entire quartet. The introductory "When We Get There" sets the dark, ambiguous mood before giving way to the twisting grooves of "Bit by Bitt." Here

Cobb and Campbell shine, creating a broiling undercurrent for Baker and the outstanding Canterbury to improvise over. Compared with what follows, though, it is a slightly distancing opening statement, however effectively it presents the ensemble's gifts.

The vignette "Among the Ruins" is an early high point. Featuring some lovely percussion work, bass harmonics, guitar swells, and ghosted clarinet playing, the ensemble creates a powerful statement through atmosphere. It is a thought-provoking piece, and no less adventurous than some of its less restrained neighbors. Canterbury switches to bass clarinet for the following duet with Campbell, "Upon Arrival." The brief duo leads into Cobb's "Big Bad Gus," a memorable theme that takes advantage of another perfectly weighted groove. Baker uses limited electronics to wonderful effect and lays down one of the more impassioned solos on the record.

The quartet is better still in Greg Campbell's "Diminutive," Baker's "Relearning Winter," and the collectively composed "Save," the final tracks of the album. "Diminutive" is an effortless piece that faultlessly transitions from composition to improvisation, sacrificing nothing in the way of excitement. Cobb and Campbell once again threaten to steal the show, and recorded in such detail, they remain a marvel after repeated hearings. "Relearning Winter" is mysterious, beautiful, and provocative – embodying much of what makes the quartet special. "Save," meanwhile, showcases the quartet's talent for creating stunning music that seems to emerge and dissolve into a space outside of time. Here Baker turns in another particularly inspired performance, and as a

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town Bellingham) on the last Sunday of each month, January through November, typically at 4pm. The series features duo, trio, quartet, and quintet performances by top Northwest players. Visit www.jazzproject.org to learn more.

Call for Newsletter Writers!

We are looking for enthusiastic and talented scribes who love jazz and want to contribute to this publication! Writers interested in contributing stories to this publication about

the vibrant Puget Sound jazz scene, including feature stories, previews and reviews of live performances and albums produced by local musicians, should submit two writing samples to Danielle Bias, Earshot Jazz Editor at editor@earshot.org.

Event Listings

Reminder: Please send gig listings to jazzcalendar@earshot.org at least eight weeks in advance if possible. Be sure to format your gig listings to keep with the appearance of this issue's calendar.

In One Ear, from page 3

A complete list of winners is available at www.lucidseattle.com.

Sonarchy's July Lineup

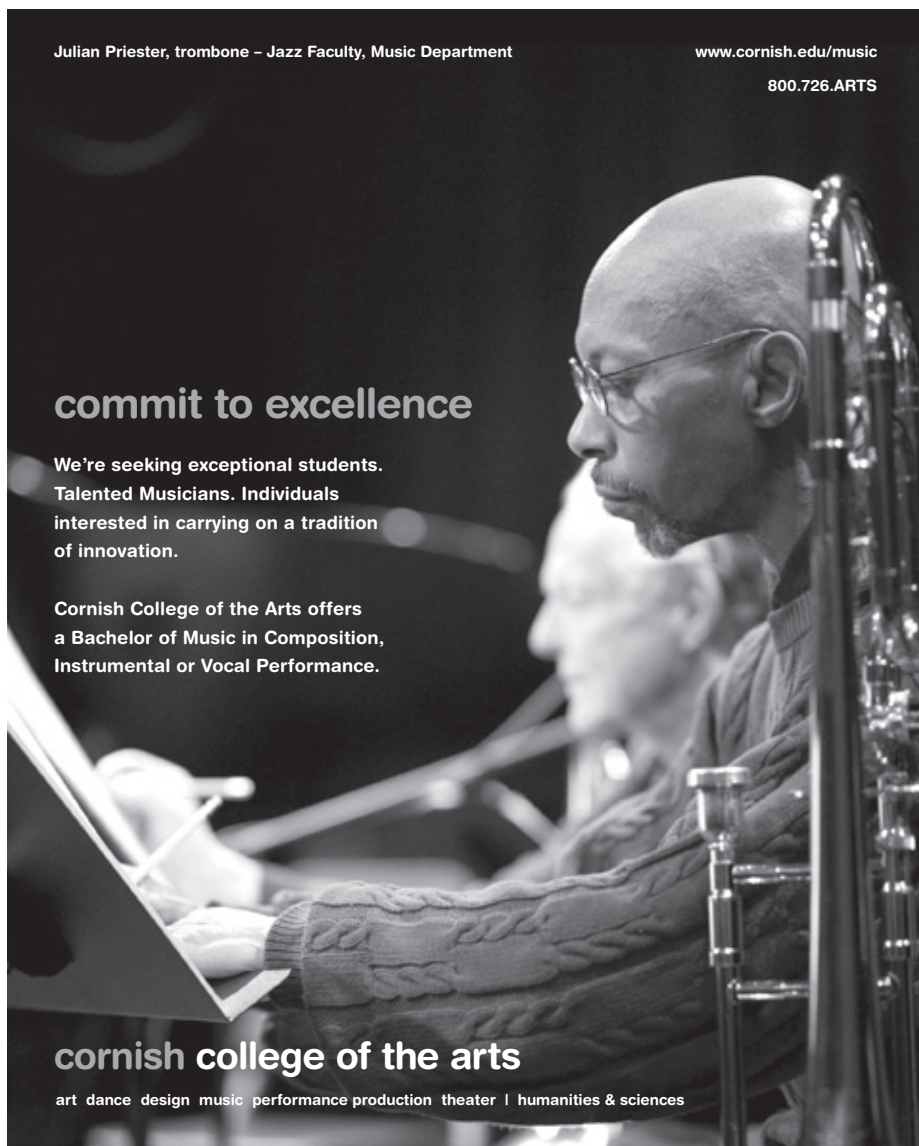
Sound wiz **Doug Haire** is the producer and mixer of *Sonarchy*, recorded live in the studios at Jack Straw Productions in Seattle. This hour-long broadcast features new music and sound art by Pacific Northwest artists. Now into its 14th year on KEXP 90.3 FM, *Sonarchy* is broadcast every Sunday evening at midnight. This month of July, you can hear live performances by the following artists: On July 4th, **Jabon** presents dark ambient avant garde disco comedy. **Scott Colburn** is Jabon. On July 11th **I, Norton** performs. They are a large ensemble improvised collage structure that combines hand cues, graphic scores, memory-based improvisation and fully notated works. The group was created and conducted by Gino Robair. Then, on July 18th, **Oyo** presents a fresh approach to live performance electronics. Finally, on July 25th **Doomsday Device** performs in the fine Seattle tradition of the jazz, new music jam band. The members are Scott Morning on trumpet, Aaron Jenkins on saxophone, Adam Kessler on drums, Nate Omdal on bass and Rich Pellegrin on keys.

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whole "Save" is an almost perfect closing statement.

With *SAVE* the Tom Baker Quartet presents its complex vocabulary and musical logic while offering what is at times a transcendent musical experience. This release is a reminder of the enormous creativity and skill of these (to me) under-appreciated Seattle artists. *SAVE* certainly rewards repeated listenings, though I have little hesitation recommending it to curious audiences.

-Peter Walton



Julian Priester, trombone – Jazz Faculty, Music Department

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