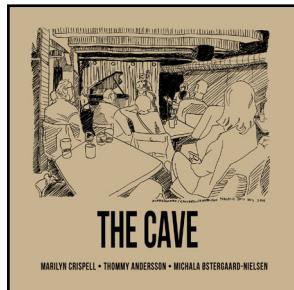


seems to flow naturally and logically. Swell's previously written "Texture #3" and "#7", with included fits and starts, are reworked for the occasion. The trombonist also includes "Periscope", a tribute to the late clarinetist Perry Robinson (1938-2018), on which Taylor features a gently-vibrating mbira (the metal-keyed, traditional African thumb piano). Two collective improvisations, "919" and "991" (named after prime numbers) are interspersed between the compositions, one of which features Duboc's muttering, unintelligible imprecations. Kassap's signature tune, "Crinière" (previously heard on 2022's *Octobres*) and the wickedly driving rhythm section on "2 L8 4 U", weave a flying carpet for reeds and brass to fly and display no end of impish phrasing.

Enhanced by excellent recording quality, the life-affirming mood of *Edges* is sure to lift listeners' spirits.

For more info visit [roguart.com](http://roguart.com). Steve Swell is at Downtown Music Gallery Feb. 3 and Nublu Feb. 12, 19, 26. See Calendar.



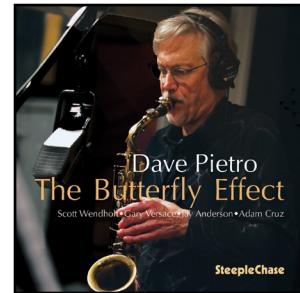
*The Cave*  
Marilyn Crispell, Thommy Andersson,  
Michala Østergaard-Nielsen (ILK Music)  
by John Sharpe

Danish drummer Michala Østergaard-Nielsen has introduced her leadership debut, *The Cave*, through a pianist's touch: indeed Marilyn Crispell's exquisitely-shaped opening to the title cut quickly establishes the governing tone. Swedish bassist Thommy Andersson completes the threesome, which came together in 2022. Together they take the forward-focused egalitarian template pioneered by Bill Evans and Paul Bley, but dial up the melodicism a notch further. Recorded near the end of the trio's inaugural tour, the album captures a group thoroughly attuned to both each other and the drummer's concept of spacious extemporization within understated but gorgeous frames. An animating force, Crispell imbues her artistry with an emotionally-drenched luminosity that elevates even the simplest ideas. Although she first gained wider renown as a member of Anthony Braxton's '80s quartet, she later supplemented the exploratory flights with a fierce balladic intensity, which proves ideally matched to Østergaard-Nielsen's writing. Paul Motian looms as a likely touchstone in the drummer's personal pantheon, and like him she exhibits a super sensitive feel and a propensity to reduce her presence, but maximize her impact. Andersson complements both collaborators, possessed of an assertive woody tone and an innate folk-inflected lyricism, which places him firmly in the lineage of fellow Swedish bass masters Anders Jormin and Palle Danielsson.

Across six charts and two improvisations, Østergaard-Nielsen allows great exposure. The longest track, and in some ways the quintessence of the program, "My Spirit Heart", showcases first Andersson's stealthy creeping resonance, before yielding to Crispell's rippling, cascading shimmer, all set within a languidly melancholic design. Nothing here strains for effect. On "Into The Light", an unchanging pizzicato throb serves as backdrop to the pianist's staccato droplets, which are seamlessly replaced midway through by the music box sonorities of Østergaard-Nielsen's vibraphone. The drummer

returns to mallets again for a reverb-cloaked lead-in to the final "A Smile of a Butterfly", another lovely line where the bassist figures prominently. The drummer's lone solo is the tinkling percussive haze of "Improv #2", but her imprint nonetheless pervades every corner of this finely-crafted program.

For more info visit [ilmusic.com](http://ilmusic.com). Marilyn Crispell is at Village Vanguard Feb. 11-16 (with Trio Tapestry). See Calendar.



*The Butterfly Effect*  
Dave Pietro (SteepleChase)  
by Ken Dryden

Alto saxophonist Dave Pietro's magical sound is matched by his skill as an inventive composer and arranger. The veteran jazz educator is an alumnus of North Texas State University and NYU, the latter where he is now Director of Jazz Studies, while his impressive resume includes long stints with the Maria Schneider Orchestra, Toshiko Akiyoshi Orchestra, Gil Evans Project and Darcy James Argue's Secret Society. It isn't surprising that many of his recordings as a leader have been released by European labels, given his popularity from touring there regularly.

*The Butterfly Effect*, Pietro's second album for Denmark's SteepleChase, features Scott Wendholt (trumpet), Gary Versace (piano), Jay Anderson (bass) and Adam Cruz (drums). Given that he is such a prolific composer, new and original works make up most of this release, including the title track on which the saxophonist's intricate, melancholy melody reveals new facets with each chorus, seemingly explaining with music how a promising situation unfolded into disappointment. "Mr. Breitenfeld" (sans Wendholt) is an obvious tribute to the late great Dave Brubeck alto saxophonist Paul Desmond (Breitenfeld was Desmond's surname at birth); the light-hearted, upbeat song suggests the mood of Brubeck's "In Your Own Sweet Way" without being a contrafact of it, as Pietro captures the essence of Desmond in his witty solo. The full quintet is featured in "Idle Tears", a bittersweet ballad spotlighting Anderson's introspective, spacious bass playing. None of the three pop tunes arranged by the leader are typically played in a jazz setting today, though each of the composers has regularly had music adapted into jazz settings. Burt Bacharach's essentially jazz-based "Promises, Promises" was written for the 1968 Broadway musical adaptation of the film *The Apartment*. Pietro's scoring is fairly straight ahead, showcasing himself and Wendholt at a bright tempo that crackles with energy. With the trumpeter out, the saxophonist interprets Joni Mitchell's "Free Man in Paris" in a jaunty, strutting manner that is interactive with the rhythm section, including Versace's sublime piano performance. Stevie Wonder's "Taboo to Love" is another quartet performance, highlighted by Pietro's emotional alto saxophone yearning for a love that was lost.

*The Butterfly Effect* will likely provoke listeners to investigate the rest of Dave Pietro's discography with great interest.

For more info visit [steeplechase.dk](http://steeplechase.dk). Pietro is at Birdland Feb. 3-7 (with Maria Schneider Orchestra) and Dizzy's Club Feb. 10 (with NYU Wayne Shorter Ensemble). See Calendar.

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