



lofi at lowlands 二
lofi at lowlands 三
Kevin Sun (Endectomorph Music)
 by Brad Cohan

Perhaps you've been to Brooklyn's Gowanus-neighborhood favorite, Lowlands Bar—coffee house by day, music venue by night, with a leaning toward the avant garde. If you have, you'll certainly know the venue is not only the second home of saxophonist Tim Berne, but also of tenor player-composer-improviser and label owner, Kevin Sun. Sun is a protean force who displays relative ease in hurdling from majestic melodicism to seat-gripping improvisational intensity. His stellar series, dubbed *lofi at lowlands*, has so far yielded three volumes showcasing his outstanding group, featuring Walter Stinson (bass) and Kayvon Gordon (drums). Theirs is a growing and revelatory document in which each member's singularly expressive voice coalesce into a ball of creative fire glowing with high-spirited energy and edgy experimentation. All of these elements are manifest on the second and third volumes, *lofi at lowlands* 二 and *lofi at lowlands* 三. Both were impeccably captured live on tape, and reveal an otherworldly, layered sheen that an in-studio recording offers in editing, mixing, overdubs and post-production, yielding a sublime listening experience.

Compiled from three sets in April 2024, *lofi at lowlands* 二 runs only a half-hour but the musical

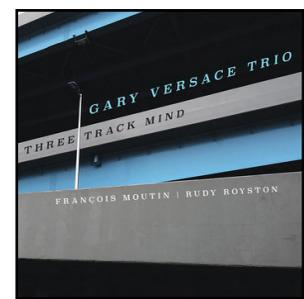
paths this trio traverse contain multitudes during that considerably brief span. The opener is a fully-improvised set that deconstructs, dissects and expands on a Sun composition titled "shimmering"; the effect is akin to a halcyon dreamscape with touches of turbulence. The delay effect Sun employs on his saxophone sets in motion what sounds like a multi-pronged army of horns that is truly dizzying. From there, the feeling is meditative as Sun, Stinson and Gordon connect almost telepathically with investigative and lyrical dialogue. "darksome", anchored by Gordon's rustling and gentle percussion and Stinson's mellifluous plucking, and further uplifted by Sun's gorgeous motif, achieves a state of catharsis as does the swaggering "shimmering ii" and "shimmering iii".

The textured and rhythmic explorations that comprise *lofi at lowlands* 三 melt into one another as if one long, continuous piece rife with distinct moods and unpredictable shifts, while staying true to its melodic themes. A blissed-out ambient kind of jazz (save opening sonic salvo "wending helices"), this third volume homes in on introspective musings and delicate subtlety—not the sort of vibe you'd find sitting in a bar. Yet, Sun's trio pulls it off in spades. "shadowlands iii (groovy)" has a cool-cat film-noir quality to it; Gordon's star turns on "fissures 二" and "gordonisme" is an effects-laden drums *tour de force*. "stinsonia of the lakes" is a bass-driven, ever-mutating mind-melt.

With their *lofi at lowlands* series, Sun, Stinson and Gordon are mastering the art of improvised bar band music.

For more info visit endectomorph.com. Sun is at Five Spot Jazz Apr. 7 and Close-Up Apr. 8. He is also at Nublu 151 Apr. 2 (with Jochen Rueckert), No Work Allowed Apr. 3 (with Nick Panoutsos), Café Ornithology Apr. 14 (with Itai

Eliezri) and ShapeShifter Lab Apr. 23 (with Dabin Ryu). See Calendar.



Three Track Mind
 Gary Versace (Sunnyside)
 by Pierre Giroux

On *Three Track Mind*, pianist-keyboardist Gary Versace forms a trio that understands a truth better than any conservatory maxim: jazz thrives when it is trusted to breathe naturally. With François Moutin (bass) and Rudy Royston (drums) beside him, Versace dismisses strict arrangements, pre-made codas and neat introductions. What remains is conversation: honest, adaptable and vibrant.

The album's program opens with "Doxy", that timeless tune by Sonny Rollins, which is delivered here with infectious energy. Versace's piano states the theme clearly before the trio stretches it like warm taffy. Moutin's bass walks with both strength and wit, while Royston toggles between punch and shimmer. The performance shifts from earthy swing to swift abstraction. The first take on "Autumn Leaves" has the leader shaping the harmony into something brooding and tensile. The swing is suggested rather than overtly expressed; phrases hover then land



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