

release also includes a playful “Better Than Anything” (David Wheat, Bill Loughborough), “The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress” (Jimmy Webb) in trio format, and a reimagining of “Tiny Dancer” (Elton John, Bernie Taupin) as a restrained pianissimo. The title track closer (Leslie Bricusse, Henry Mancini) is meant as a quiet reckoning: Goldstein’s accordion and arrangement, paired with strings, is cinematic, suggesting a triumph over chaos.

The Schulmans are passionate and sincere in their intention. But unlike classic protest songs, it’s unclear if the complete message comes through. Still, it’s a very worthy effort, with excellent musicality and appeal in its funkiness.

For more info visit asisjazz.com



Vibe Ride
Hu Vibrational (Meta/New Dawn)
by Tom Greenland

There is something strange and yet familiar in Adam Rudolph’s music: something earthy and ancestral, something else astral and futuristic. This is due to his deep digging into the roots of African, South American and Asian rhythms while simultaneously finding new functions for these ancient forms. His Hu Vibrational project, now over two decades old, with Rudolph the only remaining original member, serves as a sort of chamber group for these evolving experiments. The sextet—currently comprised of Rudolph (percussion, electronic processing, thumb pianos, vocals), Alexis Marcelo (electric keyboards, percussion), Jerome Harris (bass, bass guitar, vocals), Harris Eisenstadt (batá drums, percussion), Neel Murgai (sitar, vocals, electronics), Tim Keiper (percussion, dusu n’goni), Tripp Dudley (tablas, percussion)—dropped its sixth album, *Vibe Ride*, late last year.

Continuing the trajectory of 2015’s *The Epic Botanical Beat Suite* and 2023’s *Timeless*, the ensemble’s new album juxtaposes the intimacy of acoustic percussion instruments (caxixi, cajon, clay pots, frame drums, congas, tablas, batá drums, bells, chimes, cymbals, rattles, shakers, hand-claps) with melodic, thumb-plucked idiophones (kalimba/mbira and dusu n’goni), and the aspirated tones of end-blown bottles and human hissing, whistling, overtone singing and vocal percussion. Adding an electronic element are Marcelo’s signature Fender Rhodes sound and synthesizer patches and Murgai’s signal-processed sitar, now distorted, now wah-wahed, oftentimes almost unrecognizable. A final and definitive factor in the overall sound is the mixing and mastering by sound engineer James Dellatacoma, whose tasteful cinematic touches bring the raw soundscapes to full fruition. Dellatacoma has clearly taken a page from Jamaica’s dub tradition, but he’s also written a few pages of his own.

The album’s five tracks form an extended, immersive suite. “Ignition” begins and ends with swirling chords, a wonky kalimba groove driving its middle section. “Wheel Spirals” is a dense jungle of acoustic and electronic noises, with noticeable tweaks and enhancements created in the mixing room. “Morphic Mystery” combines futuristic arpeggiator sfx with layered hand drums, the individual instruments often indiscernible. Similarly, “Ride The Vibe” layers arpeggiator and robotic squeaks and chirps over a driving tabla groove in 9/8 (5+4), later modulating to

6/8 and back. “Head light”, probably the thickest track of all, mingles the sounds of a mad scientist’s lab with batá (and many other) drums. The lingering impression is that of an urban jungle, where a myriad of cultural aesthetics, sonic and otherwise, pile atop and around each other, autonomous yet interdependent.

For more info visit new-dawn.bandcamp.com. Adam Rudolph is at Bryant Park Jun. 12 (part of “World of Percussion Re-Imagined,” presented by World Music Institute). See Calendar.



In My Dreams
Bill Frisell (Blue Note)
by Kurt Gottschalk

Bill Frisell plays well with others—a congenial spirit best served by longstanding relationships. *In My Dreams*, his 43rd album in as many years, was released to mark his 75th birthday. The guitarist has nurtured an aesthetic of simple joyfulness, a pure pleasure that sometimes belies his remarkable instrumental skills. There’s a reason he’s always smiling while he plays; that spirit plays a large part in sustaining his ongoing musical relationships.

This new release extends his current trio—with Thomas Morgan (bass) and Rudy Royston (drums), each of whom he’s been working with for more than a decade—by adding a string section of even longer-term associates: Jenny Scheinman (violin), Eyvind Kang (viola) and Hank Roberts (cello). Frisell avoids the fullness that the strings could offer, favoring a more spacious, delicate chamber dynamic. He also steers clear of space for solos, opting instead for easy but never simplistic, group exploration. There’s some Americana (the pre-Civil War folk song “Hard Times” and two takes of “Home on the Range”, the latter being one of the album’s most memorable tracks); some old Frisell nuggets (“When We Go”, first recorded in 1985, and “Small Hands”, which dates back to a record he’d made with Vernon Reid that same year); and at least one jazz nod, in a low-key take on Billy Strayhorn-Duke Ellington’s “Isfahan”. The players, the tunes, the sound, all are familiar, and the album is nothing short of lovely.

Frisell played Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Appel Room on a nine-city birthday tour, playing with the *In My Dreams* band (Mar. 27), and another old friend, singer Petra Haden, along with trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire and drummer Tim Angulo (Mar. 28). Haden and Frisell have a fantastic camaraderie, one that calls to mind the Ella Fitzgerald/Oscar Peterson partnership. Haden doesn’t showboat like Ella, and she was better suited to “You Only Live Twice” than “Lush Life”, but there’s not much to complain about with two such heavy-hitting songs in one set—even one that runs well over an hour. In concert, their simpatico, and his guitar prowess, are most evident. Frisell makes changes to complement each band member, adding slight bits of dissonance, subtly pushing volume and pulling it back, and finding surprising extrapolations for segues across medley arrangements. It’s easy to smile from the audience, as well. The angel is in the details.

For more info visit bluenote.com. Frisell is at LeFrak Center Jun. 13 (part of Brooklyn Guitar Festival), Kirby Center for the Performing Arts (Wilkes-Barre, PA) Jun. 6 and Daryl’s House (Pawling, NY) Jun. 10. See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.

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