



Mana
Kalia Vandever (International Anthem)
by Ariella Stok

On *Mana*, trombonist Kalia Vandever continues the inward-turning solo language of 2023's *We Fell In Turn*: long tones suspended in electronic haze, loops accumulating until they become environments. What is new here is voice and piano—both Vandever's, played and sung against themselves through layering—bringing the music closer to song without ever fully settling there. If Vandever's ensemble recordings—from debut *Bloom* (2019) to *Regrowth* (2022) and *Another View* (2025)—have explored openness through group interplay and luminous chamber-jazz writing, this album feels like their shadow counterpart: solitary, submerged and intensely interior.

On "Waiting", the album's third track, a trombone figure enters, bathed in a celestial wash of reverb; it loops, recedes and becomes echo. A line of bass notes is set down and looped on top of it. Then a yearning vocal arrives, high and soft: "Waiting for you so long." The compositions build this way—patient, additive, each layer altering what came before. The lyrics across the recording often circle romantic fracture. "Holding" closes the record with the repeated demand, "Release me / I will release you," while "Tough Play" catches Vandever in the fog of manipulation and attachment: "Your game is up / Tough play but I'm caught up in it." In "Fault", whose smeared textures recall "Unfaltering" (the closing track of *We Fell In Turn*), the line "It's your fault I'm like this" dissolves into glitched abrasion, pitch-shifted bass notes, and a sample of what sounds like sobbing. The lyrics levy an accusation, yet it registers more as self-reckoning—the uneasy clarity that precedes autonomy.

The record's deeper subject is heritage. *Mana* is a Hawaiian word—Vandever has spoken of drawing on Hawaiian ancestry—and the second track's title, "Murmuray" comes from Ilocano, a Philippine language spoken by their grandmother, describing the threshold state between sleep and waking. A phrase from "Waiting"—"wandering around my reverie"—nearly serves as a thesis statement. That liminal condition defines the record itself: music that moves between atmosphere and song, memory and release, at peace in its own ambiguity.

For more info visit intlanthem.bandcamp.com. The album release concert is at Le Poisson Rouge Jun. 12 and Solar Myth (Philadelphia, PA) Jun. 24. See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



watergh0st songs
Chuck Roth (Palilalia)
by Brad Cohan

For those seeking the sonic heroics the guitar has to offer needn't look any further than the boundary-pushing outsiders on Bill Orcutt's Palilalia label—one being Chuck Roth, a ubiquitous upstart and a vital axe-slinging

innovator in Orcutt's stable, fearlessly deconstructing styles and further expanding the instrument's sonic language, complete with the broadest of spectrums. Roth brings a creatively wide-ranging arsenal: live, on one night, you'll see him in full-on improviser mode, bending and strangling the strings with abrasive, abstract abandon, conjuring the no wave salvos of DNA; on another he will slip into the emotionally-charged breadth of his songwriter-vocalist guise in which he composes avant garde guitar explorations (is it folk? rock? post-punk? pop?) that has touches of accessibility. The former manifested on 2024's *Document 1* (Relative Pitch); the latter is realized on the more recent, stunning *watergh0st songs*.

While *Document 1* flexes extreme physicality, building walls of dissonant spikes, *watergh0st songs* is its antithesis, pulling at the heart strings with profound sensitivity and hushed tenderness. You'd be hard-pressed not to be moved by the set's seven sparse meditations, while at the same time, awed by the intricate, math-like guitar work. Roth's propensity for juxtaposing structurally knotty, yet melodic riffs with the warmth of his lilting croon, is truly arresting. The auditory experience is akin to peering in on someone recording in close quarters, quietly baring their soul on tape, albeit with a more polished production sheen than a lo-fi quality. The tuneful bedrock that is at the heart of this album proves even more of a marvel when you read in the liner notes that Roth transformed these songs from their synthesizer-composed origins to guitar and voice testimonials. As it turns out, the experiment was a seamless musical rebirth. Roth's bare-bones approach (he sheds noise pedals and effects) aims the spotlight on his breathy speak-sing and the off-kilter spraying of notes and patterns that fit neatly in every nook and cranny. The guitarist's neck-hopping wizardry is on full display in the brief opener "Twister", as well as on "Bunny Hop" and "Slow Dance"; his falsetto on the twangy slow-burner "Teeth" achieves tearjerking levels; the strings contorting on "Private Boy" bends minds.

Like his labelmate Wendy Eisenberg, Roth is effortless at mastering both gnarly noisescapes and songwriterly leanings.

For more info visit palilalia.com. Roth is at PIT Jun. 14 and Downtown Music Gallery Jun. 22. See Calendar.



One for Archie
Moor Mother (feat. Nicole Mitchell & Nduduzo Makhathini) (Enjoy Jazz)
by David Cristol

It's not too often that a jazz single (on 12" vinyl) is released these days. *One for Archie* is one, with two tracks totaling nine minutes. On October 19, 2023, a duo concert by saxophonist-vocalist-thinker Archie Shepp and poet-performer Moor Mother (MM), was planned to take place at the 25th edition of Germany's Enjoy Jazz Festival, where MM was also part of Denardo Coleman's re-creation of Ornette's *The Shape of Jazz to Come* (Atlantic, 1959), with Nicole Mitchell, Mary Halvorson, Lee Odom, Jamaaladeen Tacuma, Isaiah Collier, Nduduzo Makhathini and a symphony orchestra. But Shepp, whose 2021 *Let My People Go* album (a duo with pianist Jason Moran) was partially recorded at the festival, had to undergo back surgery and was unable to travel. On impulse, the festival's artistic director Rainer Kern took MM, Mitchell and Makhathini to a studio in Heidelberg,

where they recorded this tribute in one take. The spoken word delivery is sober and composed. Flute, piano and voice highlight each other, in a state of grace. The lyrics, likely assembled on the spot, are made up of Shepp album titles (*I Hear the Sound*, *There's a Trumpet in My Soul*, *Attica Blues*) while the single title alludes to Shepp's *Four for Trane* and Marion Brown's *Three for Shepp*. On the opposite stylistic end of the spectrum and from a date unknown, "They've got a plan" (by the Translation Quintet), makes up the B-side. Drums, violin, keyboards and saxophone provide a chaotic setting to MM's impassioned invocation of the African Union's "Agenda 2063".

For more info visit forcedexposure.com



Five Prayers
Joy Guidry (Jaid)
by Jason Gross

When you start out as a bassoonist outside of classical music, you already set yourself apart, and the very stylish Joy Guidry has done just that. Alongside a number of commissioned pieces, her 2022 debut *Radical Acceptance* had a wide scope, including LGBTQIA+ pride, free jazz ranging from abstract to fury, country music, lo-fi aesthetic, cinematic electronics, 20th century avant-

RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES

- Sam Baum—*From My Shiny Imagination* (Special Audiences and Musicians)
- Civil Disobedience—*Civil Disobedience* (Blue Frog)
- Michael Foster—*Selections from the Gutter* (Relative Pitch)
- Fred Frith/Maria Portugal—*Matter* (Intakt)
- Simon Hanes—*GARGANTUA* (Pyroclastic)
- The Joymakers—*A Texas-Sized Band* (Turtle Bay)
- Kira Ra!—*nen* (We Jazz)
- Miya Masaoka, Issui Minegishi, Pauline Oliveros—*Two Days in Dreamland* (Important)
- Ava Mendoza—*Alive Alone, Alive Together* (Burning Ambulance)
- Mark Murphy—*Live at Club 43* (Jazz Rewind-Hindsight)
- Nite Bjuti (Candice Hoyes, Val Jeanty, Mimi Jones)—*Minwi* (Intakt)
- Orbital (Dave Rempis, Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Frank Rosaly)—*The Outskirts* (Aerophonic)
- Dida Pelled—*I Wish You Would* (La Reserve)
- Daphne Roubini—*Black Gardenia: Whisky Scented Kisses* (Cellar Music)
- Jimmy Scott—*Falling in Love is Wonderful* (Tangerine)
- Dick Sisto/Fred Hersch—*Love Grows Deep* (SteepleChase)
- Jason Stein, Damon Smith, Adam Shead—*Five Nights in the Midwest* (Irritable Mystic)
- Cecil Taylor New Unit—*Words & Music (The Last Bandstand)* (Fundacja Słuchaj)
- Aliya Ultan—*Looks Far Woman* (Kōu)
- Mark Winkler—*Love Comes First* (Café Pacific)