

Tomas Fujiwara Trio CD coming December 2

**RELATIVE PITCH RECORDS TO RELEASE TOMAS FUJIWARA  
TRIO'S *VARIABLE BETS* ON DECEMBER 2, 2014  
Performing October 23 at The Cornelia St Cafe**



Ralph Alessi - trumpet  
Brandon Seabrook - guitar  
Tomas Fujiwara - drums

- 1) Mr. Or in Pivot (8:57)
- 2) Insomniac's Delight (7:31)
- 3) November Wept I (5:45)
- 4) The Comb (9:59)
- 5) Harp Ran Blond (4:50)
- 6) A Table's Stem (Variations on a Theme by Benny Golson) (13:47)
- 7) Lord Sumo (2:08)
- 8) Nudge Storms (5:06)

Total time: 58:09

All compositions by Tomas Fujiwara  
Recorded September 11, 2013, live at Barbes,  
Brooklyn, NY  
Relative Pitch Records RPR1028

New York, NY - On December 2, 2014, [Relative Pitch Records](#) will release ***Variable Bets***, the debut recording of the [Tomas Fujiwara Trio](#), featuring the leader/composer on drums, Ralph Alessi on trumpet, and Brandon Seabrook on guitar. Described as "a brilliant new trio developing an innovative musical vocabulary" (Cisco Bradley, *JazzRightNow.com*), the album explores the drummer/leader's compositions in free-flowing conversation, captured in a live set at Barbes in Brooklyn, NY.

**For more information or to receive a digital promo download code, please email:**  
[contact@othersideartists.org](mailto:contact@othersideartists.org).

Each musician comes from a different sub-genre of NYC's rich jazz and creative music scene; in fact, while all three have extensive performance credits, this ensemble was the first time any of the three had played together. Fujiwara says "I've always been drawn to bands who's lineups make me think, 'what is THAT going to sound like?' The unknown of interesting combinations is a big part of the mystery and fun that I appreciate about music, especially live performance. I had no idea how this band would sound, and that's one of the main reasons I put it together."

In contrast to Fujiwara's long-running, critically acclaimed quintet The Hook Up, this trio offers a stripped down, freer context for his musical ideas. With compositional inspiration ranging from instrumental investigation to family lore to hard bop royalty, Fujiwara and his collaborators deconstruct these materials through ensemble improvisation, focusing on balanced interplay rather than traditional soloist/accompanist relationships. The result is a continuous set, almost an hour of thrillingly creative engagement between three artists whose

virtuosity is matched by their sensitivity.

To preview the new CD, the Tomas Fujiwara Trio will be performing at [The Cornelia St Cafe](#), 29 Cornelia St NYC, on October 23, 2014; advance copies will be available for sale at the concert.



Photo credit Peter Ganushkin

About the artists:

[Tomas Fujiwara](#) is a Brooklyn-based drummer and composer. Described as “a ubiquitous presence in the New York scene...an artist whose urbane writing is equal to his impressively nuanced drumming” (Troy Collins, *Point of Departure*), Tomas is an active player in some of the most exciting music of the current generation, with his bands Tomas Fujiwara & The Hook Up and The Tomas Fujiwara Trio; his collaborative duo with cornetist Taylor Ho Bynum; the collective trio Thumbscrew (with Mary Halvorson and Michael Formanek); and a diversity of creative sideman work with forward thinking peers. In *The New York Times*, Nate Chinen writes, “Drummer Tomas Fujiwara works with rhythm as a pliable substance, solid but ever shifting. His style is forward-driving but rarely blunt or aggressive, and never random. He has a way of spreading out the center of a pulse while setting up a rigorous scaffolding of restraint...A conception of the drum set as a full-canvas instrument, almost orchestral in its scope.”

Born and raised in Boston, MA, Tomas studied with legendary drummer and teacher Alan Dawson for eight years before moving to New York at the age of 17. He is currently a member of ensembles led by Bynum, Halvorson, Matana Roberts, Mike Reed, Nicole Mitchell, Matt Bauder, Tomeka Reid, and Josh Sinton (Ideal Bread), in addition to projects with artists such as Anthony Braxton, Roswell Rudd, Tim Berne, and Marty Ehrlich, and has performed at festivals and venues across North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Middle East. Tomas also has many experiences outside the jazz realm, including a five-year run with the Off Broadway show Stomp and performances with the Tony Award winning Broadway musical Fela!, featuring Patti Labelle and members of Antibalas.

*Jazz Times* magazine says [Ralph Alessi](#) has “drop-dead trumpet chops” and calls his music “as clean and airy and sophisticated and disciplined as post-modern progressive jazz gets.” He was born in San Francisco, CA, the son of classical trumpeter Joe Alessi and opera singer Maria Leone. But after taking degrees in jazz trumpet and bass—he studied under the legendary Charlie Haden at CalArts—he lit out for New York, where he swiftly

became an ubiquitous presence on the downtown scene. He's been a frequent collaborator with such notable musicians as Steve Coleman, Jason Moran, Don Byron, Ravi Coltrane, Fred Hersch, Uri Caine and Dafnis Prieto. Alessi has recorded nine albums of original compositions which draw on everything from post-bop to neo classical music. *Jazz Times* named This Against That's debut outing one of the ten best recordings of 2002 and in 2010, Alessi released "Cognitive Dissonance" which received a 4 star review from *Downbeat* magazine and was included in *The New Republic's* top ten list of records of 2011. In 2013, Ralph released "Baida", a quartet CD on ECM records and "Only Many", a duo recording with pianist Fred Hersch on CAMJazz.

[Brandon Seabrook](#) is the guitar and banjo-shredding frontman of the raucous avant-thrash trio, Seabrook Power Plant. Mixing tweaked out hardcore with art rock improvisations where tech-metallic squelching converges with punk-jazz his bands two self-titled albums, Seabrook Power Plant I (2009) and Seabrook Power Plant II (2011), were released on Brooklyn's Loyal Label. The Village Voice named him "NYC's Best Guitarist of 2012" and he has received national and international recognition in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, NPR, Fret Board Journal and the UK music journal Wire. His Time Out NY called their debut album "not only one of the most baffling experimental releases of the year, it's also one of best..."

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