

Through Foundation

Taylor Ho Bynum/Tomas Fujiwara (s/r)
by Ivana Ng

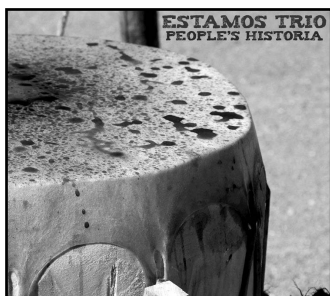
Through Foundation celebrates two decades of collaboration between cornet player Taylor Ho Bynum and drummer Tomas Fujiwara. Friends since teenagedom in Boston, the pair have an improvisational style that is easygoing yet adventurous.

Recorded over three days in Bynum's basement, the album features dedications to the musicians' mentors and influences. "Reunion (for Alan Dawson)" has Fujiwara moving deftly between loose riffs and arching rhythms, in a volatile yet restrained style that he honed with Dawson as his teacher. Cornet chimes in sparingly with languorous notes, which keep the ears focused on the buoyant percussions underneath. "Black Cherry Basement" pays homage to famed trumpet and drum duo Don Cherry and Ed Blackwell, Bynum channeling the former with rapid-fire lines that twist into a flurry of staccato notes and extended slurs. In "Literary References and Basketball Minutia", Bynum kicks it up a notch with blustering squawks and squeaks that feel turbulent against Fujiwara's tight yet understated beats. "Lemuel Birks" shows off the cornet in its natural pitch, a voice-like tone that sounds almost feverish above Fujiwara's restrained hi-hat taps.

Like a light breeze on a humid day, "Backyard Wind" is a welcome exploration into the cornet's lower registers, mesmerizing with gentle, winding percussion and billowing melody lines. Bynum challenges the depths of his instrument even further in "LoJo (for Bill Lowe and Joseph Daley)" via hauntingly guttural moans and teasingly pitched snores while drums rumble below, a respite from the otherwise frenetic dialogues. The duo continues the low-register exploration in "Micro (for Bill Dixon)", a sprawling tapestry featuring Fujiwara's sparse accompaniment.

Bynum and Fujiwara constantly redefine the boundaries of their instruments to keep their dialogue fresh. They move gracefully from referencing postbop legends and avant garde pioneers to creating their own free jazz discourse. *Through Foundation* serves as both a milestone for the duo as well as a prelude to what we can expect from them in the 20 years to come.

For more information, visit taylortomas.bandcamp.com. Fujiwara is at *Cornelia Street Café* Oct. 2nd-3rd with *Reverse Blue*, *ShapeShifter Lab* Oct. 15th and *Cornelia Street Café* Oct. 23rd, both as a leader, and *Ibeam Brooklyn* Oct. 25th with Josh Sinton. See Calendar.



People's Historia

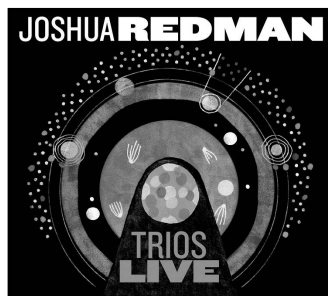
Estamos Trio (Relative Pitch)
by Clifford Allen

Pianist Thollem Mcdonas is a soldier of improvisation who explores the intersections between performance, creativity and community. Though a volatile solo performer, his list of collaborations is long and defies

genre, including work with bassists Mike Watt, Stefano Scodanibbio and William Parker, guitarists Jon Dieterich and Nels Cline and drummers Brian Chase and Sara Lund. *Estamos* first appeared in 2009, bringing together improvisers from the U.S. and Mexico for concerts and a double-disc of recordings titled *jimpani kustakwa ka jankwariteecheri* (Edgetone). *Estamos Trio* is a pared-down unit, joining Mcdonas with drummer Milo Tamez and vocalist/electronic artist Carmina Escobar (both in the larger group). *People's Historia* features 12 shortish improvisations recorded and executed with atmospheric clarity and jarring intensity.

Mcdonas has a number of ongoing duos with percussionists and his pianistic approach is equal parts rhapsodic and volatile, so it's no surprise that the interplay between him and Tamez is one focal point of the trio. Tamez is both a colorist, with a revolving array of wood and metal auxiliaries, and at home with stabbing, athletic clatter and he mines both European free improvisation and traditional Latin American percussive sensibilities. As Mcdonas outlines stark chordal rivulets and Escobar clicks and hums, Tamez bows unsettling vibrational swaths on "Biandakhabo Daiko Kabyñ". The opening salvo, "Aba", features brushy, flitting agitation in a mélange of guttural, wet field recordings, warped vocal overlays and buzzing piano preparations and is a tough introduction to the *Estamos* world. *People's Historia* isn't entirely abstract; the trio sometimes engages in traditionally melodic interplay that butts up against jazz and art music. Yet the framework is environmental and skews toward fascinatingly kinetic sound sculpture.

For more information, visit relativepitchrecords.com. Thollem Mcdonas is at *Spectrum* Oct. 24th and *Downtown Music Gallery* Oct. 26th. See Calendar.



Trios Live

Joshua Redman (Nonesuch)
by Joel Roberts

After releasing one of the more successful "with strings" albums in recent memory (last year's lushly orchestrated *Walking Shadows*), tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman gets back to basics on his new CD, a live set recorded at New York's Jazz Standard and Washington, D.C.'s Blues Alley.

Working with a bare-bones trio, or actually a pair of trios (drummer Gregory Hutchinson with either Matt Penman or Reuben Rogers on bass), the sometimes reserved, cerebral Redman, delivers one of his most exuberant, no-nonsense performances on this collection of three originals and four extremely well-chosen covers. It's a crowd-pleasing effort full of thrilling, athletic solos, which starts with a bang and maintains a high energy level throughout.

The opener, an inspired version of Kurt Weill's "Mack the Knife", begins with a whirlwind unaccompanied intro that can't help but bring to mind Sonny Rollins, one of Redman's chief influences, who famously recorded the song nearly 60 years ago. That's followed by a stirring reading of the ballad standard "Never Let Me Go", featuring gorgeous cymbal work. An exploratory take on Monk's "Trinkle, Tinkle", meanwhile, ranges into the freebop territory charted by Ornette Coleman and Redman's dad, Dewey Redman. Of the Redman-penned tunes, the standout is the 12-minute burner "Act Natural", with some of the saxophonist's most unbridled, dynamic improvisations,

while "Soul Dance" and "Mantra #5" showcase Redman's strengths on soprano.

But the real highlight here is the unexpected and glorious closing cover of Led Zeppelin's "The Ocean". With Redman gleefully shredding the Jimmy Page guitar parts, Penman laying down the funky John Paul Jones bassline and Hutchinson channeling John Bonham's unrelenting drumming, the trio turns the heavy rock anthem into a deliriously free-wheeling jazz jam that leaves the crowd (and likely listeners at home) thoroughly delighted.

For more information, visit nonesuch.com. This project is at *Village Vanguard* Oct. 28th-Nov. 2nd. See Calendar.

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