



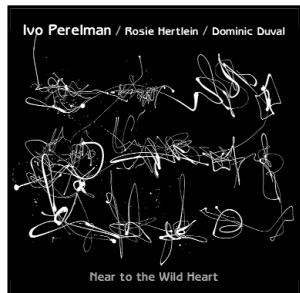
**Pucusana**  
Gabriel Alegría Afro Peruvian Sextet (Saponegro)  
by Elliott Simon

*Pucusana* finds trumpeter Gabriel Alegría and his sextet continuing to highlight their original fusion of AfroPeruvian music and jazz. Percussionist Freddy 'Huevito' Lobatón is an integral part of this sound and here he combines with drummer Hugo Alcázar to invigorate many of these tunes with traditional Peruvian fire. This sophomore release also does an excellent job of capturing the band's intimate and exciting live sound, due to both the open compositions that give the musicians room to stretch and Huevito's vocal commentary and encouragement.

The opening piece, a traditional Peruvian tune entitled "Taita Guaranguito", is given a jazzy vamped-up treatment courtesy of Alegría's growling horn and keyboardist Russell Ferrante's juicy organ. The latter sits in on four cuts and in this opener they set the stage for a program that is heavy on both fun and musical excellence. Joining Alegría, whose great jazz technique combines precision with a delightfully warm tone, is saxophonist Laura Andrea Leguía and together their two instruments dance divinely. The exciting title cut has them alternating hot leads and blending for exquisite voicings in a modern jazz format. This results in a modern Latin approach that is used again on the swinging "Piso 19" to give the sextet a big band feel.

Pianist Arturo O'Farrill joins the group for an AfroPeruvian take on "My Favorite Things" that has Leguía's interpretative soprano lines making Trane proud while Alegría delicately interprets the melody. Guitarist Yuri Juárez is the most traditional player here and although his fast fingers impress on the uptempo solos and his rhythm work is superb he is most notable on the gorgeous ballads. Such is the case on the melodic "Puerto Pimentel" here offered in two versions. It closes out the session, painting a charming portrait of this picturesque seaside port made all the more lovely by bassist John Benitez' emotive solo.

For more information, visit [saponegorecords.com](http://saponegorecords.com). Alegría is at Saint Peter's Oct. 10th as part of All Nite Soul and Tutuma Social Club Fridays-Sundays. See Calendar and Regular Engagements.



**Near to the Wild Heart**  
Ivo Perelman/Rosie Hertlein/Dominic Duval  
(Not Two)  
by Ken Waxman

As unlike the standard 'with strings' session as can be imagined, *Near to the Wild Heart* is instead a fully interactive date between tenor saxophonist Ivo Perelman, violinist/vocalist Rosie Hertlein and bassist Dominic Duval. What's more remarkable is the balance between the discordant and the sensitive maintained by the saxophonist.

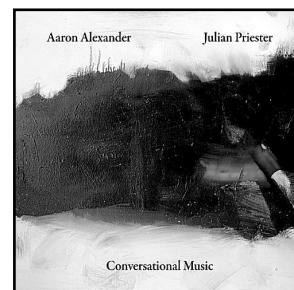
Usually numbered among the high-octane

Ayler-ean reed screechers, Perelman today displays a modified lyricism. This means that midrange trills and deep-toned vibratos define his solos as much as staccato reed bites or splintered glissandi. Over the course of eight instant compositions a common strategy is to harmonize his pressurized narrative with Hertlein's sul tasto stops or sul ponticello sweeps. Duval maintains a cushioning ostinato with stretched string pops or booming thumps. Although there are points at which Duval walks convincingly and is answered by a crescendo of striated vamps from the saxophonist, this no more typifies conventional jazz than the fiddler's bel canto vocalizing alongside her tremolo sweeps become so-called New Music.

This originality is demonstrated conclusively on the third track when a voice-violin exhibition unleashes tongue-slapping altissimo blowing from Perelman, which is answered by Duval's thick pummeling strokes. As the saxist's altissimo chirps and circling split tones search out novel variants, Hertlein's screaming vocalese and spiccato string patterns blend into a connective texture both staccato and forte. Duval's pensive bass pattern provides the impetus to move the three into a satisfying, contrapuntal midrange finale.

Perelman's extended a capella coda of stretched split tones and false register overblowing on "Part 6" demonstrate what he can do on his own. Yet the saxophonist, a talented painter as well as an improviser, confirms the enhanced creativity available in a group show with this CD, giving equal billing - and solo space - to Hertlein and Duval.

For more information, visit [nottwo.com](http://nottwo.com). Hertlein is at Roulette Oct. 5th and The Local 269 Oct. 11, both with John Tchicai. See Calendar.



**Conversational Music**  
Aaron Alexander/Julian Priester (s/r)  
by Alex Henderson

Veteran trombonist Julian Priester, who turned 75 in June, has never been an easy artist to pigeonhole. He has played everything from hardbop and postbop to avant garde jazz to fusion. So from a stylistic standpoint, one cannot take anything for granted when Priester is part of an album. That brings us to *Conversational Music*, a duo project he recorded with drummer Aaron Alexander at different 2007 sessions.

There are no musicians on *Conversational Music* other than Priester and Alexander and the two of them enjoy an intimate dialogue on a CD that, stylistically, is somewhere between postbop and mildly avant garde jazz - mildly being the operative word. *Conversational Music*, for all its abstraction and intellect, is far from an exercise in blistering free jazz atonality; the inside-outside performances, which favor space over density, are contemplative and reflective rather than confrontational. And world music enthusiasts will be intrigued by the fact that some of the selections are influenced by Indonesia's gamelan music. On the islands of Bali and Java, a gamelan is an acoustic ensemble playing a hypnotic type of traditional Indonesian music (as opposed to modern Indonesian pop) that involves mostly bamboo and bronze instruments. Gamelan music has rarely been blended with jazz, but Priester and Alexander manage to make the two sound like a perfectly natural combination - which is saying a lot considering that the trombone

isn't exactly a standard instrument on Bali or Java.

For that matter, duos that combine the trombone with nothing but drums are not common in jazz - and when sessions are this intimate, problems can easily arise if the musicians are not totally in sync. Thankfully, Priester and Alexander very much are in sync on *Conversational Music*, which is appropriately named because the two of them do, in fact, have a musical conversation on these performances. It's one that yields meaningful results and demonstrates that Priester still commands attention after all these years.

For more information, visit [aaronalexander.com](http://aaronalexander.com). Alexander is at Roulette Oct. 24th with Satoko Fujii. See Calendar.

## IN PRINT



**Silent Solos: Improvisers Speak**  
(*Buddy's Knife*)  
by Kurt Gottschalk

Jazz is essentially the art of unbridled expression - spontaneous and (at its best, anyway) from the heart. The improviser is given license to "tell it like it is", a pipeline to the soul. It's a lot of power to give a performer, a kind of authority that might or might not transfer to other areas of expressive immediacy such as painting or, as collected in *Silent Solos: Improvisers Speak*, the written word.

Playing saxophone doesn't make one a poet any more than writing poetry makes one a saxophonist, but fortunately editor Renate Da Rin has a good eye for what works and for what her rarified audience wants: she has previously overseen volumes collecting the writings of prominent players Henry Grimes, Roy Nathanson and William Parker. For the new title, Da Rin has collected poetry and prose from more than 50 musicians and subjects largely (and unsurprisingly) about making or listening to music, but sometimes taken with a broader scope.

Parker appears again with a short piece of impressionistic fiction and Nathanson returns with a touching ode to Charles Gayle. There are a few other heartfelt memorials included: Cooper-Moore remembers Peter Kowald like a homespun sage, Ijeoma Thomas celebrates the spirit of Betty Carter and Ras Moshe reflects on Albert Ayler and John Coltrane. Joe Maneri is also remembered with three settings of his own invented language.

Alongside them, Nicole Mitchell offers a poem inspired by the flights of playing Anthony Braxton's music; Matthew Shipp provides some brief verses about music as astronomy and biology; Lisa Sokolov displays a potent fragility; John Tchicai witnesses the world through his travels; Leena Conquest evokes a Poe-like formalism and Katie Bull gives a nice turn of prose about improvisation as a voyage.

There are a few established voices in jazz poetry present as well. The book includes submissions by David Budbill, Jayne Cortez, Terry Jenoure and Larry Roland. But in large part *Silent Solos* is about music translated, in a sense, into English (with the unfortunate exception of Joëlle Léandre's submission), nicely bound and ornamented with Jorgo Schäffer's vibrant drawings.

For more information, visit [buddysknife.de](http://buddysknife.de)