



ROB THORSEN

TRACK INFORMATION FOR “Lasting Impression” from Rob Thorsen:

1) Dexterity – This song was written by the legendary Charlie Parker and showcases the complexity of Bebop melodic lines. I arranged it with a New Orleans “2nd Line” groove with a unison bass and trumpet melody and added a shout chorus - featuring drummer Duncan Moore.

2) Giant Steps - John Coltrane’s classic composition rearranged into a 6/8 Latin feel for the melody with piano and bass unison figures interspersed within the melody. This song set a new standard of harmonic sophistication in it’s day and continues to challenge musicians today.

3) Little Melonae – This is an arrangement I did of one of alto saxophonist Jackie McLean’s more popular compositions. The melody has a certain melodic “quirkiness” about it that really stands out. It also uses many harmonic devices that were a direct departure from the more traditional Bebop harmony - Fun Tune!

4) Smile – This has always been one of my favorite songs composed by Charlie Chaplin for the movie “Modern Times.” It was written in the 1930’s and someone else in the 1950’s added the lyrics. There is a cool u-tube clip from the movie that is worth seeing. This is a bass feature, after a rubato intro we go into a slow Latin feel and modulate thru several different keys to keep it interesting.

5) Milagro Café – In 2007 I went on a family vacation to Costa Rica and made it a goal to compose for several hours each evening. I was able to come up with the framework for this song and also “Cigarones.” I found the variety in the Costa Rican landscape from lush jungle to frenetic cities (and everything in-between) very inspiring.

6) The Man I Love -This is an up-tempo Afro-Cuban arrangement of George Gershwin’s composition that became famous in the opera “Porgy and Bess.” It features drummer Duncan Moore and congero Charlie Chavez with a blistering solo by trumpeter Gilbert Castellanos.

7) Dance of the Freaky Circles – Another of my compositions, this is a high energy 3/4 waltz. This started as a project to write a blues in a major key and morphed elsewhere

but still retains its “blues” roots. The title came from the vibrating blobs of color that appear on the screen while listening to music files sent over the Internet.

8) Cigarones – The second of my Costa Rican compositions on this recording. It features a bass and piano ostinato figure and horn arrangements with alto flute, bassoon and flugelhorn. When we arrived in Costa Rica the cicadas were in full song and they would crescendo into a triple forte and then diminuendo into a complete silence. This went on day and night the entire time we were in the capitol, San Jose. It was the inspiration for this song and a source of sonic irritation for those living in the area.

9) It's All Right With Me - A very up-tempo version that features bass melody and solos by Ben Wendel, Josh Nelson and myself. Although the tempo is fast we kept a loose floating feeling to the rhythm, which provides more freedom for the soloist and helps maintain a very interactive element between the musicians.

10) Wish On Us – This is an unaccompanied bass solo that explores several different key centers. It was inspired by two female street musicians I met while bicycling on Ray Street in San Diego. One played ukulele and sang while the other one bowed melodies on a wood saw with a violin bow. I told them I wished I could donate to the “kitty” but had no money. They replied, “that’s okay, thanks for the “Wish On Us.”

Shorter Version (for EPK and one page)

Composer and bassist Rob Thorsen’s new release, “Lasting Impression,” takes us on a journey through an audible photo gallery of contrasts, colors, shades of light and space. Although he has focused on musical landscapes before as a leader on three previous CD’s, his current project demonstrates an evolution and maturity as a composer and musician that clearly raises the bar. Rob is a devoted and seasoned instrumentalist, equally confident with standards and original compositions, whose bass sings with a warmth and creative spirit while maintaining an engaging interactive dialogue with the ensemble. “As a creative musician one can never be sedentary in approaching a performance, whether it is live or recorded. Clearly, the musicians on this CD completely dedicated themselves to making this a stimulating and inventive musical endeavor,” remarked Thorsen.

To that end it is obvious why Rob developed a knack for weaving instrumental textures in his music through various combinations of timbres and sonorities and has a special interest in visual arts through his own photography. Rob is no stranger to different instrumental sounds since starting out playing baritone ukulele at age six, switching to classical guitar at eight, then flute, saxophone and tuba through High School and finally buying his first electric bass at a garage sale in San Francisco at nineteen. In his twenties he discovered the upright bass and that became his one true love beginning a long career that started with his first gig on a cruise ship. According to Rob, he has always loved playing music and “the feeling of performing music live is like no other. I would not want to be doing anything else as it brings a lot of joy into people’s lives.”

Thorsen has literally performed with a list of who's who in music and entertainment: Kenny Burrell, Anthony Wilson, Russell Malone, Mundell Lowe, Nick Brignola, Louis Bellson, Nestor Torres, Richie Cole, Bucky Pizzarelli, Ricky Woodard, Jackie Ryan, Lorna Luft, Laurindo Almeida, Hank Crawford, Ernie Watts, Marvin Hamlisch, Steve Turre, Monica Mancini, Charles McPherson, Holly Hofmann, Mike Wofford, Jon Hendricks, Frankie Capp, the Nelson Riddle Orchestra, James Moody, Bill Cunliffe, Brian Lynch, Eric Reed, Jeff Hamilton, Kenny Rankin, Don Rickles, John Lithgow, and as he humbly adds, "a bunch of others too."

Besides his contributions on other artist's recordings, Rob has produced his own CD's: "First Impression", "Evolution" and "Moon Ray," garnering noted reviews and radio airplay. He has an extensive list of venues where he has performed at throughout his career as both a sideman and leader that include: The Great American Music Hall, Kimballs, Yoshi's, the Concord Jazz Festival, Newport Beach Jazz Party, Glenwood Springs Festival and brief tours in Mexico and Germany. "I love the creative possibilities of playing with other musicians and the interaction that occurs when everybody is listening and reacting off one another," shared Rob. "For me there are two kinds of musicians in the world, those that listen and those that don't."

It will not take long to recognize that on "Lasting Impression" Thorsen has surrounded himself with those musicians that listen: Geoffrey Keezer and Josh Nelson (piano), Gilbert Castellanos (trumpet and flugelhorn), Ben Wendel (tenor sax and bassoon), Duncan Moore (drums), John Rekovics (alto flute), and Charlie Chavez (congas). The diversity of these musicians strengthens Rob's musical vision of creating a tapestry of sonic personalities and cultures through the music of recognized jazz greats (Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, George Gerswin, etc.) along with his own original compositions that echo the landscapes of Costa Rica. Just like Duke Ellington, Rob's compositional approach relies on the qualities of each of the musician's talents resulting in a cohesive and unique result. He often leans towards emotional musicianship as opposed to technical virtuosity, which explains why the music on the CD touches the sensitive vulnerability of the listener. In the end Rob Thorsen succeeds in delivering a remarkable "Lasting Impression."

250 - 150 Word Bio (approximately):

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On “Lasting Impression” Thorsen has surrounded himself with stellar musicians: Geoffrey Keezer and Josh Nelson (piano), Gilbert Castellanos (trumpet and flugelhorn), Ben Wendel (tenor sax and bassoon), Duncan Moore (drums), John Rekovics (alto flute), and Charlie Chavez (congas). The diversity of these musicians strengthens Rob’s musical vision of creating a tapestry of sonic personalities and cultures through the music of recognized jazz greats (Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, George Gerswin, etc.) along with his own original compositions that echo the landscapes of Costa Rica. Just like Duke Ellington, Rob’s compositional approach relies on the qualities of each of the musician’s talents resulting in a cohesive and unique result. He often leans towards emotional musicianship as opposed to technical virtuosity, which explains why the music on the CD touches the sensitive vulnerability of the listener. In the end Rob Thorsen succeeds in delivering a remarkable “Lasting Impression.”