



WWW.CUNEIFORMRECORDS.COM

Bio information: **WADADA LEO SMITH**

Title: **SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS** (Cuneiform Rune 290-291)

Cuneiform publicity/promotion dept.: 301-589-8894 / fax 301-589-1819

email: joyce [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (Press & world radio); radio [-at-] cuneiformrecords.com (North American radio)

www.cuneiformrecords.com

FILE UNDER: **JAZZ / IMPROVISATION**

“I decided at the very beginning that Golden Quartet would be a lifelong quartet of mine, no matter what the personnel was or which direction it might go, whether it goes to the Golden Quintet...The idea is that of one horn player and rhythm”

– Wadada Leo Smith

“...not only as inventive and adventurous as he was when he was a younger player, but his creativity and ability to direct a band into new territory is actually farther reaching than ever before. This is brilliant work.” – All Music Guide

“The Golden Quartet is the closest thing to a standard jazz group that Wadada Leo Smith ever used to present his own music. ...the music is lively, even explosive at time, yet still exquisitely balanced. ...No other composer accommodates the independence of the individual and the unity of the ensemble in quite the way Smith does. ...the collective sound always coheres into something purposeful and beautiful.

Remarkably, the personalities and forces are kept in balance.” – Point of Departure

“...a welcome reminder of Smith's continued importance in the continuum of creative improvised music.” – All About Jazz

Lauded as “one of the most vital musicians on the planet” by *Coda*, **Wadada Leo Smith** is one of the most visionary, boldly original and artistically important figures in contemporary American jazz and free music, and one of the great trumpet players of our time. As a composer, improviser, performer, music theorist/writer and educator, Smith has devoted a lifetime to navigating the emotional heart, spiritual soul, social significance and physical structure of jazz – both free and composed – and world music to create new music of infinite possibility and nuance. Early in his career, he invented a strikingly original music notational system called **Ahkreation** or **Ankrasmation**, which was radical for its time and remains revolutionary today. Described as a “musical language” or “notation system for scoring sound, rhythm and silence, or for scoring improvisation”, it remains the physical and philosophical foundation of his oeuvre. Since the 1960s, when Smith became a founding member of **AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Music)** and debuted as a composer with “**The Bell**” on **Anthony Braxton's** 1968 *Three Compositions of New Jazz*, he has released nearly 30 albums under either his own name or his bands’ on **ECM**, **Moers**, **Black Saint** and other labels, including numerous releases on his own **Kabell** label in the ‘70s-‘80s and on **Tzadik**, **Pi Recordings**, **Leo**, **Intakt** and **Cuneiform** in the ‘90s and 2000s.

In recent years, a galaxy of new releases and reissues in a wide variety of projects have brought Smith wider attention and world-wide critical acclaim. When **Tzadik** released a boxed set of his self-released early work in 2004, *The Kabell Years 1971-79, All About Jazz* noted that “Having all this material in one spot establishes Wadada Leo Smith as a major musical force and verifies his important and lasting influence on succeeding generations.” Besides historical reissues, releases of Smith’s new work spotlight his stature as one of the world’s greatest living trumpeters and a dominant, vital force in jazz and free music today. In 2008, when Cuneiform released *Tabligh*, the 3rd CD by Smith’s on-going project **Wadada Leo Smith’s Golden Quartet**, *Bagatellan* proclaimed “*Tabligh* is an album that should be on the shelf of anyone with an interest in the past eighty-odd years of trumpet improvisation.” Smith has begun to receive the recognition long due him; in recent years he’s been interviewed and featured in (and on the cover of) jazz and experimental music magazines worldwide. He has frequently appeared in the **Trumpet** category of the **DownBeat International Critics Poll**, most recently in both 2008 and 2009. More formal accolades are also beginning to arrive; most recently, Smith was awarded a 2009 **Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation** for his compositional work and was nominated in the 2009 **Trumpet category in the 57th DownBeat International Critics Poll**; and in 2008 he received the **FONT (Festival of New Trumpet Music) Award of Recognition**.

In an unprecedented creative surge heralded by the dawn of the new millennium, Smith is recording and performing in a variety of projects ranging from duos with **Anthony Braxton**, **Jack DeJohnette**, and **Gunter Baby Sommer** to larger groupings such as his **Silver Orchestra** and in particular, his **Golden Quartet**. In a 2008 interview he gave to *JazzTimes*, Smith noted:

“I feel more driven now than ever. I’m writing more music than I’ve ever written before. I have over a thousand pieces. This is just music on note staves. I have another couple of hundred pieces dealing with the “Ankrasmation” language. I’m in a flow that could not be better, and it has been that way since the turn of the century.

“Also, performance-wise, I’ve gotten a chance to play more of my music since the turn of the century than ever before.”

Spiritual Dimensions, Smith’s new release on Cuneiform, is a double album that features two groups that have been among the key focal points for Smith’s prolific creativity and compositional and performance activities in recent years. Both groups – **Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quintet** and **Wadada Leo Smith's Organic** – are composed of superb musicians whom Smith carefully selected to interpret and perform his unique compositions, and both were recorded live to capture the energy and spirit of their live performances. Together, this double CD set documents the activities Wadada Leo Smith, one of America’s greatest living jazz musicians, as an ensemble leader, composer, improviser, and trumpet player during the mature apex of his creative years. Featuring some of Smith’s most accessible, jazz oriented music, *Spiritual Dimensions* opens the door to Smith’s creative universe in specific and the boundless dimensions of American creative music, inviting listeners to further explore.

[Spiritual Dimensions press release continued on verso...]

The first disc in *Spiritual Dimensions* is by **Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quintet** and was recorded at **Vision Festival XIII** in New York City in June 2008. The all-star lineup features **Wadada Leo Smith** on trumpet, **Vijay Iyer** on piano and synthesizer, **John Lindberg** on bass and dual drummers **Pheeroan AkLaff** and **Don Moye**. This is the fourth CD release by one of Smith's favorite, on-going groups: his "Golden" ensemble, which began as a quartet but here expands, for the first time on CD, into a quintet with two drummers. When Cuneiform released *Tabligh*, the previous CD by Smith's Golden Quartet— which featured the same lineup of Smith, Iyer and Lindberg but a different, single drummer, **Shannon Jackson** – *All About Jazz* called it "one of the best realizations of [Smith's] work on record". *Point of Departure* noted that "The Golden Quartet is the closest thing to a standard jazz group that Wadada Leo Smith ever used to present his own music." Here, Smith further develops his Golden grouping of master musicians, experimenting with the concept of a small jazz group as a finely-honed instrument to perform his musical visions. While very much the work of an astonishingly empathetic group, Smith, the leader, points down the path that the Quintet follows; his distinctive trumpet work ranging here from peppery outbursts to subtle smears and whispered interjections. The **Golden Quintet** on *Spiritual Dimensions* performs five of Smith's breathtaking avant jazz compositions, imbued with space, depth, melody and abstraction. The music is mostly acoustic, but with some distinctive electric touches, especially towards the end.

In marked contrast with his primarily acoustic **Golden Quintet**, the second disc in *Spiritual Dimensions* is by **Wadada Leo Smith's Organic**, a predominately electric, nine-piece group especially notable for its inclusion of four guitarists. This is the first-ever release by **Organic** (whose name should not be confused with *Organic Resonance*, an album Smith recorded with Anthony Braxton), and was recorded live April 17, 2009 at the jazz club **Firehouse 12** in New Haven, CT. Performing are **Wadada Leo Smith** on trumpet, **Nels Cline**, **Michael Gregory**, **Brandon Ross** and **Lamar Smith** on electric guitars, **Okkyung Lee** on cello, **Skuli Sverrisson** on electric bass, **John Lindberg** on acoustic bass and **Pheeroan AkLaff** on drums. The band stomp and burn through 4 lengthy tracks (all between 12 and 19 minutes long), all composed by Smith. Although the music is more unmistakably groove-driven than on the first disc, many of the same touchstones appear; Smith's strong style and control remain but is manifest themselves differently. The easiest comparison between the albums can be drawn by listening to the two different versions of the composition *South Central L.A. Kulture*, which appears at the last track by the Golden Quintet and as the first track by Organic; its inclusion here is a good example of how Smith's compositions mutate to embrace new settings, and how Smith experiments with ensembles as new voices or instruments for his language. As Smith said in an interview with *JazzTimes*:

"The experiment is to see what kind of interplay, what kind of musical intellect that these ensembles can grab onto, using these same musical properties...the experiment is with ensembles, as opposed to musical style and language. I use the same language. All of the music I ever write can be played by any one of my ensembles..."

Released at the same time as the **Nessa's** label's reissue of Smith's *Procession of the Great Ancestry*, **Wadada Leo Smith's Organic** is a vibrant and vital disc whose music sips from the blues-drenched origins of Smith's distant past, from the realms of noise and electronics, and from eastern vistas and beyond. Fusing a galaxy of influences into an organic and accessible form, **Wadada Leo Smith's Organic** offers an ideal entry point into his vast oeuvre, and should appeal to fans of groove-oriented jazz as well as rock and electronics audiences.

Cuneiform first worked with Smith, along with guitarist **Henry Kaiser**, on the **Yo Miles!** tribute project that they co-led, dedicated to exploring **Miles Davis** 1970s electric music. Yo Miles! released two double-disc critically acclaimed albums on Cuneiform in the mid 2000s: *Sky Garden* (2004, Cuneiform Rune 191/192) and *Upriver* (2005, Cuneiform Rune 201/202). In 2008, Smith and Cuneiform collaborated on the release of *Tabligh* (Cuneiform Rune 270), the third release by **Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quartet**, featuring the lineup of Smith, Iyer, Lindberg, and Shannon Jackson. *Tabligh* received a tremendous response from both critics and the record-buying public and, like the Yo Miles! projects, helped introduce Smith's creative universe to wider audiences. *JazzReview.com* called it a "tour-de-force" and viewed it as a macrocosm of Smith's career:

"Since his emergence in the 1960s Smith's music has taken several routes of expression – minimalist low-volume chamber-jazz, "out" forays with Anthony Braxton, Leroy Jenkins, and Larry Ochs... and tributes to the eclectic music of Miles Davis.. To a degree, all those seemingly disparate aspects come together on the latest from Smith's Golden Quartet, *Tabligh*".

Bagatellan recognized the CD as a landmark not only in Smith's career but in the world of free music, stating that "*Tabligh* is an album that should be on the shelf of anyone with an interest in the past eighty-odd years of trumpet improvisation."

Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quintet and Quartet, and his Organic, perform at jazz and creative music festivals worldwide. On November 20, 2009, Wadada Leo Smith's Quartet will perform at the **Madrid Jazz Festival** in Spain. The group recently performed in Sardinia, Italy at the **Sant'Anna Arresi Festival** in September, 2009.

"The strongest way in which one can receive any information is in the most sincere way... The moment a person steps over the threshold into the music space, they should consider that space a ritual space and a unique cultural moment, and leave the other world outside the door. ...I expect to transform the audience. ...I expect to be transformed along with them."

– Wadada Leo Smith, interviewed by the *New Haven Advocate* in a preview to Organic's April 2009 performance at Firehouse 12.

For more information, visit Wadada Leo Smith online at: www.wadadaleosmith.com & www.myspace.com/wadadaleosmith

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS Digital [High-Resolution / Color] versions of these images are available for download on www.cuneiformrecords.com in the "Press" section.



LEADER & MEMBER BIOS:

WADADA LEO SMITH / LEO SMITH / ISHMAEL WADADA LEO SMITH <http://www.wadadaleosmith.com>

One of the most original and important voices in American jazz, **Wadada Leo Smith**, also called **Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith** or **Leo Smith**, is a trumpet player, multi-instrumentalist, composer, improviser, educator and music theorist/writer. A Mississippi native whose first musical experience was in marching and blues bands, Smith began playing trumpet when he was 12, encouraged by his stepfather, the blues guitarist **Alex Wallace**. After high school, Smith joined the Army, traveling overseas while playing in military bands. Smith moved to Chicago in the 1960s, where he studied at the Sherwood School of Music (1967-9), became a founding member of **AACM (Association or the Advancement of Creative Music)** and played in the **Creative Construction Company** (with Anthony Braxton, Leroy Jenkins, Muhal Richard Abrams, Richard Davis, and Steve McCall.) In the '70s, he moved to New Haven, Connecticut, where he founded a label to release his own music, **Kabell**, and a band, **New Dalta Ahkri** (Smith, **Oliver Lake**, **Wes Brown**, **Henry Threadgill**, **Anthony Davis**). Smith studied world music at Wesleyan University (1975-6) and independently began to develop and carefully document a unique system of musical notation, called **Ahkreation** and later, **Ankhrasmaton**, that would underlay all of Smith's original music.

Since *Creative Music-1*, his first album under his own name, came out in 1972, Smith has released nearly 30 albums either under his own name or his bands' on **ECM**, **Moers**, **Black Saint** and other labels. In addition to his own works, he has worked and recorded with numerous other artists, including **Muhal Richard Abrams**, **Carla Bley**, **Anthony Braxton** ("I have never known a time when Leo Smith was not developing something...The man is a genius."), **Marion Brown**, **Jeb Bishop**, **Leroy Jenkins**, **Cecil Taylor**, **Don Cherry**, and **Anthony Davis**, (who called Smith "one of the unsung heroes of American music.") In recent years, having settling in the Los Angeles area in the 1990s, Smith has unleashed a torrent of critically acclaimed releases that are as striking for their diversity as for the purity of artistic vision uniting them all. In 2004, Tzadik released a 4-CD boxed set of Smith's early work, called *The Kabell Years, 1971-79*. Giving it "4.5/5 stars.", the *All Music Guide* stated that "This is a monumentally important addition to the recorded library of avant-garde music and should be considered a necessary part of any enthusiasts' shelf." Most recently, Smith has released duo recordings with free jazz drummer **Gunter Baby Sommer** on **Intakt** and jazz/world music percussionist **Adam Rudolph** on **Meta/Kabell**, and released an acoustic/electronic project with **Walter Quintus & others** on the **Leo** label.

Smith has published pamphlets on his music theories and won numerous grants and awards as a composer (Meet the Composer, NEA, etc). His compositions have been performed by numerous contemporary music ensembles, including the **Kronos Quartet** and **AACM**. Smith taught at several colleges (**U. of New Haven**, **Bard College**, **Woodstock's Creative Music Studio**) in the Northeast prior to moving to California in 1993, as the first person to assume the **Dizzy Gillespie Chair at CalArts** (California Institute of the Arts-Valencia). Currently, Smith is **Director of African American Improvisational Music Program** at CalArts - Valencia. Smith founded the **Creative Music Festival** at CalArts around 1995, and served as its curator over the years. In 2005, he received the **Jazz Journalist Association's Award for Lifetime Achievement in Jazz Education**.

For additional information on Wadada Leo Smith:

- Howard Mandel, "Yo, Wadada! Leo Smith's Long Pilgrimage," *Signal to Noise* COVER STORY, Spring 2003.
- Ed Hazell, "Wadada Leo Smith: Then and Now", *Coda*, COVER STORY, Sept.-Oct. 2004
- Bill Smith, "Wadada Leo Smith: Then and Now", *Coda*, COVER STORY, Sept.-Oct. 2004
- Piero Scaruffi, "Leo Smith", 2006, www.scaruffi.com/jazz/lsmith.html
- Matthew Sumera, "Wadada Leo Smith: The OFN Interview", April 2005, *One Final Note*
- Fred Jung, "Fireside Chat with Wadada Leo Smith", *Jazz Weekly*, 1997 +2001, , *All About Jazz*, 2004
- Josef Woodard, "ONWARD & UPWARD: the astounding creative trajectory of avant-garde veteran WADADA LEO SMITH", *JazzTimes*, Dec. 2008, Vol. 38/No. 10
- Wadada Leo Smith, interviewed by Kevin Le Gendre, "*Spirits Rejoice*", *Jazzwise*, December 2008 / January 2009, Issue 126
- Marc Medwin, "Artist Feature: Wadada Leo Smith", *All About Jazz*, May 2009, No. 85
- Wadada Leo Smith on *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com
- Richard Cook (Ed.), Brian Morton (Ed.) *Penguin's Guide To Jazz*, Penguin Group

WADADA LEO SMITH'S GOLDEN QUINTET

JOHN LINDBERG (bass)

www.johnlinberg.com

In 1977, Lindberg co-founded the **String Trio of New York** with violinist **Billy Bang** and guitarist **James Emery**. A critically-acclaimed, avant-garde chamber jazz ensemble, the String Trio plays original music as well as works by new and 'classic' jazz masters, and has released 16 recordings on **Black Saint**, **Omnitone**, **Stash** and other labels. In 1980, Lindberg released his first solo album, *Comin' and Goin'*. Since then, Lindberg, a prolific composer, has released 20 albums under his own name, either as a collaborator (duo/trio) or as a bandleader, with such musicians as **Marty Ehrlich**, **Hugh Ragin**, **Steve Lacy**, **Eric Watson** and **George Lewis**, **Albert Mangelsdorf**, **Dave Douglas**, **Ed Thigpen**, **Larry Ochs**, **Wadada Leo Smith**, **Andrew Cyrille**, **Steve Gorn**, and **Susie Ibarra**. In 2000, his **John Lindberg Ensemble** included Smith, Andrew Cyrille, and Larry Ochs, and made two recordings, *A Cat Bird Sings* and *A Tree Frog Tonality*. In 2002, his **World Star Quartet** (with **Baikida Carroll**, **Gorn**, and **Ibarra**) released an homage to composers Charles Ives and Louis Moreau Gottschalk. A ceaseless performer, Lindberg has performed in various groups or solo in the US, Europe, Middle East and Asia, and playing at numerous jazz festival across the globe, from Finland's Tampere Jazz Happening to Argentina's Mardel Jazz Festival.

Besides his own various projects and the String Trio of New York, Lindberg has appeared as a sideman on at least 30 records. In the late 1970s, Lindberg made his recorded debut on the **Frank Lowe Orchestra's** *Lowe and Beyond* and also recorded on albums by the **Human Art Ensemble** and **Anthony Braxton**. During the 1980s, he played on recordings by **Keshavan Maslak**, **Tim Berne**, **Tony Coe**, the **Sunny Murray Quintet**, and **Das Pferd**; during the 1990s, he did an album with the **Eric Watson Trio** and began recording with **Karl Berger**. In the early 2000s, he played on recordings by Berger, **Susie Ibarra**, **Jean Nametz**, **Kevin Norton**, and **Larry Chernicoff**. Lindberg currently plays with Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quartet and Smith's **Silver Orchestra**, which recorded *Lake Biwa* in 2004.

In addition, Lindberg leads an active career as a teacher and is currently Chair of the Music Dept at Minnesota State University. An innovative educator, created a program linking music and the other humanities, called Human Residency, and teaches a popular course "Words and Sounds" - that connects literature and music. A highly prolific composer, he has received dozens of commissions from around the globe (Meet the Composer, West Deutsch Radio Koln, the New York Chamber Ensemble), and fellowships from the NEA and Arts International. In addition, Lindberg has receive numerous awards, ASCAP Special Award, the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, and others, including Chile's Diploma de Honor.

Additional sources: www.metrotimes.com/editorial/story.asp?id=4084, www.pointofdeparture.org/archives/PoD-8/PoD8TravellinLight.html, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lindberg

VIJAY IYER (piano, Fender Rhodes, synthesizer) www.vijay-iyer.com

In 1995, Iyer released his first album, *Memorphilia* (on Asian Improv Arts), which contained pieces by the three groups he was leading at the time: the **Vijay Iyer Trio**, **Spirit Complex**, and **Poisonous Prophets**. The CD featured the musicians Iyer was playing with, including Coleman, Lewis, **Francis Wong** (then head of the **Asian Improv Arts** movement), **Eliot Kash Killion** and **Humberto Kavee**, and led one critic to note that: "It is significant that this project brings together the AACM, M-BASE, and Asian Improv Arts creative movements -- revolutionary, artist-run organizations that seek self-sufficiency, empowerment, and unity through music." Iyer's subsequent projects have included the group **Fieldwork**, and have included such musicians as **Stephan Crump**, **Rudresh Mahanthappa**, **Derrek**, **Steve Lehman**, **Phillips**, **Tyshawh Sorrey**, **Scott Thompson**, and **Marcus Gilmore**. Always pushing the envelope, in 2003 Iyer released a work with poet/hip-hop artist **Mike Ladd**, titled *In What Language*, that was both musically and politically provocative. Iyer has released a dozen albums under his own name on Asian Improv, Pi Recordings, Circumvention, and Savoy Jazz; his newest album, 2008's *Tragicomic*, is on **Sunnyside**. Each of them has brought Iyer greater public and critical attention, and many have made the Best of Year lists in

such publications as the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Art Forum*, *Village Voice*, *Slate*, and *Big Takeover*. As the *Chicago Tribune* notes, "With each recording, pianist Iyer looms as a larger figure in jazz, his sound immense, his concept bold, his ideas bracingly unorthodox." Iyer is currently one of jazz's fastest rising stars; *Downbeat Magazine's* 2007 International Critics Poll named him the #1 Rising Jazz Star and #1 Rising Star Composer for both 2006 and 2007. The *Chicago Tribune* has called Iyer "one of the most promising voices in jazz today."

In addition to his projects as a leader, Iyer has appeared as a sideman on more than two dozen recordings by **Steve Coleman**, **Burnt Sugar** (4 albums), **Rudresh Mahanthappa** (3 albums), **Liberty Ellman**, **Roscoe Mitchell & the Note Factory**, **Kim English**, **Michael Fay Victor**, **Cooper-Moore**, **Mike Ladd**, **Mantana Roberts**, and **David Banner**. As a sideman, he is currently a member of avant-garde pioneer **Roscoe Mitchell's** nine-piece **Note Factory**, legendary poet **Amiri Baraka's** **Blue Ark**, and **Black Rock Coalition** founder **Greg Tate's** **Burnt Sugar**, and Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quartet.

As a composer/musician, Iyer has received grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, Arts International, and the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust. He also lectures and publishes on various topics, including improvisation, cognitive science, and jazz studies. Iyer is active as an educator, having served on the faculties of New York University, New School University, and the School for Improvisation Music. A true polymath, besides his career as a musician, Iyer is active as a writing/scholar, publishing articles in numerous high-profile music and science journals.

Additional Sources: *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com, Viyar Iyer interview with Paul Olson, *All About Jazz*- www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=17776,

PHEEROAN AKLAFF (drums) www.pheeroanaklaff.com

A versatile drummer who has mostly been associated with the avant-garde, Pheeroan akLaff has appeared with some of the more adventurous musicians in jazz of the past 20 years including **Oliver Lake**, **Anthony Davis**, **Michael Gregory**, **Henry Threadgill**, **George Adams**, **Sonny Sharrock**, **James Newton**, **Cecil Taylor**, **Myra Melford** and many others. AkLaff has recorded as a leader for **Gramavision** (an obscure EP in 1983) and **Mu** (1989). In 1981 he had the opportunity to perform and reside in West Africa, working with the **Marie Rose Guiraud Dance Company** in Abidjan, **Cote D'Ivoire**, and exploring urban popular music with **Frank T. Fairfax**, and **Fela Anikulapo Kuti** in Lagos, Nigeria. He received the New York Foundation for the Arts Award for Music Composition in 2000. He has taught at Wesleyan University, Elisabeth Irwin High School, and New School University. He is also a founder of **Seed Arts Inc.** a non-profit organization for the promotion of healing arts and international awareness.

[derived from: http://pheeroanaklaff.com/fr_index.cfm & <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:wcfixq95ldde~T1>]

DON MOYE (drums)

The man most associated with the **Art Ensemble of Chicago** as its percussion master, drummer extraordinaire Famoudou Don Moye. He and the other members of the Art Ensemble of Chicago draw their influence from the entire world of black music, from Africa to the Caribbean and urban to rural spaces. In addition, Moye has been a member of **The Leaders**, and has recorded with the **Black Artists Group**, **Joseph Jarman**, **Don Pullen** and **Julius Hemphill**, among others. He also leads the **Sun Percussion Summit**, a group dedicated to exploring the traditions of African American percussion music. His recordings have received praise from Rolling Stone, Down Beat, and the New York Times. He won the Downbeat International Critics Poll in 1977, 1978 and 1982 and the New York Jazz Poll in 1979 and 1980. He also received performance grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1974 and 1981.

[derived from <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/musician.php?id=9668> & http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_Moye#Art_Ensemble_of_Chicago_and_The_Leaders]

WADADA LEO SMITH'S ORGANIC

MICHAEL GREGORY (electric guitar) www.myspace.com/michaelgregorymusic

Formerly known as Michael Gregory Jackson, Michael Gregory has recorded with many experimental, avant-garde jazz musicians such as **Pheeroan akLaff**, **Oliver Lake**, and **Baikida Carroll**. As an acoustic and electric stylist in the late 70s and early 80s, he was interested in exploring sounds, rhythms, and textures. Gregory later developed an interest in fusion and R&B, experimenting with the possibilities of free improvisation, electric guitar sounds and rhythmic structure. Rolling Stone magazine raved, "By the time (Gregory) was twenty-one he was already one of the most original jazz guitarists to emerge since the sixties."

[derived from <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=21299> & <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:hifoxqt5ldde>]

BRANDON ROSS (electric guitar) www.myspace.com/brmuse

Brandon Ross has worked/recorded with **Cassandra Wilson**, **Henry Threadgill**, **Jewel**, **Tony Williams**, **Bill Frisell**, and many others, crafting a personal approach to (jazz) guitar and improvisation that has taken him all over the world. He co-leads the avant power trio **Harriet Tubman**, a group that explores electronics and pan tonality to sculpt a multidimensional, interactive and sonic language in a "classic" R&B/Rock configuration of guitar, bass, and drums. His acoustic based quartet, **Blazing Beauty**, extends his expressive field into "folk" oriented music. Their first recording, "Costume," (Intoxicate Records - Japan) was released in 2005 to rave reviews and several critics' "best of the year" lists. Ross also composes music for his acoustic string duo, "For Living Lovers" with acoustic bass guitarist, **Stomu Takeishi**.

[derived from: <http://www.myspace.com/brmuse> & http://www.subtone-concerts.de/tl_files/artists/brandon-ross-blazing-beauty/brandon-ross-blazing-beauty_bio_3.pdf]

NELS CLINE (6- and 12-string electric guitar) www.nelscline.com

Guitarist Nels Cline is best known for his work with rock group **Wilco**, **Quartet Music** (with brother Alex Cline, bassist Eric Von Essen, and violinist Jeff Gauthier), as well as other projects in the jazz, rock, and avant-garde idioms such as his work with the **Liberation Music Orchestra**, **Julius Hemphill** and **Charlie Haden**. Cline has also gained esteem for his general involvement in the West Coast's improvisation community. Cline has appeared on over 70 records, led several of his own groups (**The Nels Cline Trio** and **The Nels Cline Singers**) and toured internationally with a variety of bands. As a composer, Cline has scored two films in addition to writing much of his own material. He has also produced albums for himself, **G.E. Stinson** and **Jeff Gauthier**.

[derived from: <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:jifoxqt5ldje~T1> & http://www.indexmagazine.com/interviews/nels_cline.shtml]

OKKYUNG LEE (cello) www.okkyunglee.com

Korean cellist/improviser/composer Okkyung Lee has performed and recorded with numerous artists such as **Laurie Anderson**, **Lotte Anker**, **Nels Cline**, **John Hollenbeck**, **Vijay Iyer**, **John Zorn** and others. Her debut album as a leader, *Nihm* was released in 2005 on John Zorn's **Tzadik** label. Okkyung has received commissions from the New York State Council on the Arts and the Meet the Composer Public Fund. She has performed at festivals all over the world including the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the International Festival Musique Actuelle Victoriaville (Canada), and the Sons d'Hiver Festival (France).

[derived from: http://www.burntsugarindex.com/Home/bios/Okkyung_Lee.html & <http://www.okkyunglee.com/okkyunglee/bio.html>]

SKULI SVERRISSON (electric bass)

Skuli Sverrisson studied acoustic and electric bass in Iceland and attended the Berklee College of Music. After graduating in 1991 he cut a series of CDs for Extreme with the group **Mo Boma**, whose work reflected world music influences while exploring electronic effects and ambient moods. Skuli toured with guitarist **Allan Holdsworth** from '91 to '96 and has since been a mainstay of New York's Downtown scene, recording/playing with **Derek Bailey**, **Peter Brotzmann**, **Tim Berne**, **John Lurie**, **Nana Vasconcelos** and many others. In his solo work, he explores his interest in electronics and extended techniques of his instrument.

[derived from: <http://www.dingaling.net/skulicv.htm> & <http://www.xtr.com/artists/skuli-sverrisson/>]

JOHN LINDBERG (acoustic bass) – SEE ABOVE

PHEEROAN AKLAFF (drums) – SEE ABOVE