



Bio information: **LED BIB**

Title: ***THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD*** (Cuneiform Rune 378) Format: CD / DIGITAL

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ / ROCK / EXPERIMENTAL

**The British Quintet Led Bib Soars with Simultaneous Cuneiform Releases,
the Electrifying Studio Album *The People In Your Neighbourhood* and the Limited Edition Live Vinyl *The Good Egg***

“In-your-face urgency of a live album and the punch of a much bigger band...It's Led Bib's best album so far.” —*The Guardian*

“Part free improv, part art-rock, the band’s uncompromising formula puts them in the vanguard of the new school of British jazz.”
—*The Sunday Times*

“Led Bib’s strongest album to date and one which shows the full breadth of their vision and abilities.” —*Londonjazz*

Founded 10 years ago by a preciously talented crew of London university students, **Led Bib** has become a European jazz sensation, tearing up major festivals across the continent, appearing regularly on the BBC, and earning a coveted **Mercury Prize** nomination. Fueled by a successful Kickstarter campaign, the avant-populist, funk-infused band is now set to lead a new British Invasion, bringing their potent blend of big beats and surging anthems to American shores with a new studio album ***The People in Your Neighbourhood*** and a thrilling limited edition vinyl-only release recorded mostly at London’s Vortex Jazz Club, ***The Good Egg*** (both on Cuneiform.)

In many ways, *The People in Your Neighbourhood* captures lightning in a bottle, distilling all the elements that have made Led Bib such a successful and influential outfit. Rather than coasting on their success, the band decided to dig deeper. Honed over the three years since the 2011 Cuneiform release ***Bring Your Own***, the music is more charged than ever, marked by the dizzying swerves, roiling textures, and raw beauty that has earned the band such an avid following.

“Over its 10 year history Led Bib took on a life of its own, winning awards, playing some of the biggest jazz festivals in the world and countless club tours, which can leave you in the whirlwind of just doing things,” says drummer **Mark Holub**, Led Bib’s founder and primary composer. “For this album it was time to take a breath and take stock of what the band is all about, and where we are going.”

Joining the dynamic drummer is his propulsive partner in groove, bassist **Liran Donin**. The potent alto sax tandem of **Pete Grogran** and **Chris Williams** gives the band its unmistakable sound, while the texturally inventive keyboardist/pianist **Toby McLaren** bridges the roiling rhythm section and the surging horns. The unique instrumentation “makes us think differently about how the music’s structured,” Holub says. “You don’t want to have two alto solos on every tune. We’re more about group improvising, and developing tunes with sections that may or may not open up.”

The People in Your Neighbourhood kicks off with Williams’ uproarious “New Teles,” a carnivalesque rave up with a giddy, repeated horn line that bounds over a dark, brooding theme interlaced with a hilariously teasing keyboard figure. The ominous saxophone fanfare that opens Holub’s “Giant Bean” soon gives way to frantic passage that could serve as a soundtrack for an urban car chase. Donin’s “Angry Waters (Lost to Sea)” is another episodic journey that begins mournfully with unsettling keyboard rumbles and slowly builds to a furious vortex. All of these pieces embody Led Bib’s brilliant use of divergent moods, polyphonic lines, and juxtaposed textures.

“It feels like the whole session we really felt able to explore, so while there are many moments of pounding grooves, there are also more introspective moments, where we are able to take our time musically to develop in the way which we see fit,” Holub says.

The band knows that simplicity speaks powerfully too. The folk-like “Imperial Green,” a brief Holub tune without any blowing, feels like a half-remembered spiritual. His “At the Ant Farm” opens with skittery energy, but soon opens up with a long spacious passage marked by McLaren’s celestial keyboard sounds. The album closes with its longest track, Donin’s nearly nine-minute “Orphan Elephants.” Whatever their parentage, the titular pachyderms sound fierce and determined, swaying on a thick rhythmic field laid down by Holub and Donin.

“When I first started I was coming from more of free improvised thing,” Holub says. “Liran brought this vibe where he would take the tunes and turn them into almost mini structures, adding chords and grooves that weren’t written. He came in and said I’m driving this band, and that forced me to change the way I thought about rhythm and structure. One part of Led Bib’s evolution has been about the two of us developing a language.”

The protean rhythmic vocabulary on which Led Bib builds their music does a long way in explaining the band’s ability to maintain its populist appeal while retaining a well-deserved reputation as a progressive creative force. That’s the point of the new album’s title,

which was inspired by a song from Sesame Street where the Muppets take people from different walks of life, from Ralph Nader to Martina Navratilova, and sing a song about how they are people from your neighborhood. "Hey, an avant-jazz band are also the people in your neighborhood," Holub says. The album's gut-punch intimacy partly stems from the brilliant recording work of Grammy Award-winning engineer **Richard Woodcraft**. Working in the studio with a minimum of fuss, he captured the band tearing into new material and pushing deeper into tunes they'd been playing on tour.

With new material mostly drawn from *The People in Your Neighbourhood*, the live vinyl release *The Good Egg* offers a thrilling view of the band in action. Where "Imperial Green" is almost a through composed number in the studio, on stage it unfolds as a dramatic journey, with a crescendo led by the horns playing thick searing unison lines. In the same way "Giant Bean" turns into an epic, crunching three-part saga, with each section emerging suddenly and unexpectedly. Captured at the Vortex after a period of band inactivity in February 2013, the music is charged with the sense of discovery, as the musicians find new ways to play with density, space, stasis and motion.

"It felt great to be playing together again, and luckily one of the nights at the club was recorded," Holub says. "When we got the tracks from the gig, we were all really pleased and that's when I realized I wanted to do a live album and a studio album. It felt important for me to mark 10 years with the band in some sort of significant way, and it seemed this could be the perfect combination"

Holub founded Led Bib in 2003 for his MA project at Middlesex University in North London and the band made its auspicious debut on Feb. 24, 2004 (which happens to be Holub's birthday). Various players cycled through the band that first year, but by December the quintet's current line up had solidified. After a year of frequent gigging throughout London, the group released its first album, *Arboretum*, in May 2005 on **SLAM Productions**. Combining original works and ravishing interpretations of **Erik Satie** compositions, the album received widespread critical acclaim and paved the way for Led Bib's first UK tour. The band went on to win the 2005 Peter Whittingham Jazz Award, an annual award for "cutting-edge jazz" given to a UK jazz group under age 26 "showing great talent and innovation in this field." Previous Whittingham winners include **Soweto Kinch**, **Tom Arthurs** and **Mark Lockheart**. The award money enabled Led Bib to set up the 2006 Dalston Summer Stew, a festival at London's Vortex Jazz Club at which the played alongside premiere UK contemporary jazz musicians such as **Matthew Bourne**, **Pinski Zoo** and **Iain Ballamy**.

With its two-alto front line the group's unusual instrumentation gave it a distinctive identity from the start, though Holub thought about experimenting with other horns. He notes that **John Zorn** and **Tim Berne**'s project **Spy Vs Spy** featured their two alto saxophones but that quartet dedicated to the music of **Ornette Coleman** lacked a chordal instrument and "was totally not what I was going for, though I love that band," he says. "Led Bib actually started life as trumpet and saxophone quintet, and that didn't work out. When I got Pete he said there's this other alto player, which is how I met Chris. At first I did think it's weird, but they have quite a different sounds and there's this ugly beauty in the blending of the two altos. Pete also plays tenor, and Chris does a little clarinet, and they've even brought them to sessions, but we've never ended up using the other horns. The two altos have become the sound of the band."

The sound kept finding new audiences, and in 2006 Led Bib signed to the British jazz label Babel, and embarked on an extensive touring schedule in the UK and Europe. When **Babel** released the band's second album *Sizewell Tea* in May 2007, it rocketed the group into a new level of visibility. Like *Arboretum*, it featured originals and a surprising cover (David Bowie's "Heroes"). A string of high-profile concerts followed, with Led Bib representing Britain at the 12 Points festival in Dublin, a high-concept event that assembled a dozen leading jazz groups from 12 European Union countries. They were tapped for the grand reopening concert marking the reopening of Royal Festival Hall, showcased on a live one-hour session on BBC Radio 3, and performed a flurry of concerts at leading venues and festivals across Europe.

In 2008, Led Bib self-released their third recording *Led Bib Live* as a limited edition EP. Despite not being available in shops, the concert recording received widespread critical acclaim. Later in 2008, Led Bib signed to the US label Cuneiform to release its fourth recording. The following spring, Led Bib played at the FuseLeeds09 Festival, a prestigious British festival devoted to bringing together an international vanguard of jazz, world, classical and popular music.

Cuneiform released Led Bib's fourth album, *Sensible Shoes*, in May 2009. Even before officially landing in stores the CD earned an array of glowing reviews from the British jazz press. Catapulting the band to the top ranks of British jazz, the album cemented its iconoclastic reputation. As the only jazz band nominated for the coveted **Mercury Prize** that year, Led Bib attained unprecedented visibility across the UK, with coverage across all the major newspapers and broadcasters, even performing the theme for C4 News on a nightly segment.

The 2011 follow up, *Bring You Own*, brought Led Bib into new territory. Recorded by **Head**, who co-produced **PJ Harvey**'s 2001 Mercury Award-winning album, *Stories From The City, Stories From The Sea*, the album added more of an edge to the band's already tough combination of churning beats, sci-fi keyboard textures, and give-no-quarter saxophones face offs. With *The People in Your Neighbourhood* (and *The Good Egg*) Led Bib hits as hard as ever, while exploring a wider array of moods and grooves. Rather than losing its antic edge, Led Bib has expanded its emotional palette. With plans afoot to tour internationally, including forays to North America, Led Bib is perfectly positioned to take its music back to the source.

**For more information on Led Bib:
www.ledbib.com - www.cuneiformrecords.com**