

Bio information: **MICROSCOPIC SEPTET**

Title: **HISTORY OF THE MICROS,**
VOL. 1: SEVEN MEN IN NECKTIES

Disc 1: **LET'S FLIP** [Cuneiform Rune 236]
Disc 2: **TAKE THE Z TRAIN** [Cuneiform Rune 237]

Title: **HISTORY OF THE MICROS, VOL. 2: SURREALISTIC SWING**

Disc 3: **OFF BEAT GLORY** [Cuneiform Rune 238]
Disc 4: **BEAUTY BASED ON SCIENCE (THE VISIT)** [Cuneiform Rune 239]

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ

"Oh, how we've missed the Microscopic Septet! Back in the early 1980s, when jazz, on all aesthetic levels, seemed to be resolidifying its connection with its heritage, these wild and wooly virtuosos leapt into the breach between "outside" and "inside" jazz and made a cheerful shambles. They were as clever as the Beatles, as subversive as Captain Beefheart, as antic as Spike Jones. Did I mention that they were – and are – more fun than any other well-dressed jazz ensemble in the western world? ...fans still light candles for their return. ...Hurry back, fellows, won't you? The uptown neoclassicists still have a lot to learn from you downtown pranksters."
– Gene Seymour, *Newsday: The Long Island Newspaper*, June 13, 2000

"Posterity is going to remember the Microscopic Septet as one of the best bands of the 1980s."
– Frances Davis, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Aug. 25, 1988

The music of **The Microscopic Septet** was the sound of jazz in 20th C. America: *all* of it, from Ellington to Ayler, bebop to Zorn, Dixieland to experimental, captured in a microcosm. It distilled the essence of jazz as a popular music into a sound that swung, a music that was intelligent, sometimes smart-aleck, and always good clean fun. Optimistic and upbeat, full of innocent confidence, the Microscopic Septet captured not only the sound of jazz, but also the sound – or *soundtrack* – of 20th Century America. No wonder, then, that when **National Public Radio (NPR)** needed a new theme song for one of its most popular shows, "**Fresh Air, with Terry Gross**", broadcast to every home in America, it asked this band to compose the tune and has used it ever since.

Active from 1980-1992, The Microscopic Septet was part of New York's emerging Downtown Music Scene, a diverse group of artists on the fringes of jazz, rock, and improv that would converge in the Knitting Factory when the club opened in 1987. But while the band shared an aesthetic for breaking down genres boundaries with such other Downtown bands as Curlew, Massacre, and Material; shared the goal of creating intelligent music that could be danced to with Curlew, and shared stylistic surface elements (retro sound, stage costumes and attitude) with the Jazz Passengers and Lounge Lizards, the Micros, as the band was familiarly called, neither sounded like nor was directly comparable to any one of the Downtown bands. More inclusive than even the barrier-breaking downtown crowd, the Micros shared elements with *all* these bands – and more.

During the 1980s, jazz in New York City was split into two distinct scenes. Downtown's jazz scene was unregimented, avant in outlook, and inclusive in scope, often merging with the rock scene and including improvisers, the free-jazz players, and the new jazz-funk/groove-influenced players. Mainstream jazz was headquartered Uptown, where Grammy Award-winning trumpeter **Wynton Marsalis** was reviving early forms like swing and bebop, enforcing a return to stylistic tradition, and championing jazz as America's new classical music. As Will Friedwald noted "While the two major strains of '80s jazz were "neo-classical" (ala Wynton Marsalis) and the avant garde, the Micros seemed to be doing both at the same time." As NYU dropout and Micros' founder Johnston said: "Break all the rules and respect all the saints." Like Uptown, the Micros played swing music and quoted from the Masters. But they extended swing into the present, bringing free blowing from the lofts and Knitting Factory noise into the dance hall, and introducing the radio age to TV theme songs. As Johnston relayed in an interview with Howard Mandel: "...our music, if nothing else, is definitely jazz...Jazz is something that's always changing, so of course our music is different than the way it was in the Fifties. It incorporates all the things we've experienced."

As the Micros asserted in interviews, jazz began in the 1920s as a popular music, inclusive in its form. Danceable and approachable, it embraced the life around it, incorporating Latin rhythm, tango, polka and more. Later jazz, whether avant or traditional, became a 'serious' art form, aloof and apart. Johnston said in interviews:

"What the Micros are about...is that jazz went through a period of being an entertaining, popular music as it was in the twenties, thirties, and forties, to bop to eventually being this serious cult art music. Jazz for us is more than that, it is music we love and want to have fun with, which should not take away from our real reverence for the music."

In the '80s, jazz purists had frozen traditional jazz forms in time, cast them in bronze, and confined them to Uptown museums. The Micros brought Uptown jazz back Downtown, where together they had a good time, broke all the rules, and spawned the

smiling future of the genre. Sounding like no one else, the Microscopic Septet was the only living jazz band in 1980s/90s NYC that was playing traditional jazz – swing music – and keeping it ‘real’, extending it into the future. Ironically, while purists feared that the Micros were undermining traditional jazz, the band had done the opposite. “Surrealistic Swing” – the music of the Microscopic Septet – was the jazz swing music of the late 20th Century.

The Microscopic Septet was founded in 1980 by **Phillip Johnston**, a composer, soprano saxophonist, and improviser on NYC’s Lower East Side. Largely self-trained as a musician, Johnston was influenced by a pantheon of jazz and avant-rock greats that included **Steve Lacy**, **Thelonius Monk**, **Duke Ellington**, **Captain Beefheart**, and more, as well as by popular music in myriad forms. At the time he founded the Micros, he was co-leading the **Public Servants** (with vocalist **Shelley Hirsch**), a rock band that combined pop, funk, swing, Beefheart, and avant-garde performance art, and playing in **Noise R Us**, a large punk/funk band with a four-sax front line. Johnston was also playing in a quartet and septet led by composer and pianist **Joel Forrester**. Johnston recruited musicians from these and other bands to assemble a saxophone-quartet-plus-rhythm-section jazz band. He brought Forrester on as co-leader, sharing half of the composing responsibilities. The **Microscopic Septet**’s first line-up also included **Dave Sewelson** (baritone sax; Noise R Us & Public Servants), **George Bishop** (tenor sax; Noise-R-U), **John Zorn** (alto sax; Public Servants), **Dave Hofstra** (bass; Public Servants) and **Bobby DeMeo** (drums). By the time the band played its first show at the Lower East Side’s Ear Inn, on Feb. 22, 1981, **Richard Dworkin** was in the drummer’s seat, having replaced DeMeo, and **John Hagen** had replaced Bishop on sax. When Zorn left to pursue an independent career, **Don Davis** joined the Micros on alto sax. **Paul Shapiro** replaced Hagen after the Micros first lp, *Take the Z Train*, was released. The band’s lineup remained remarkably stable afterwards.

The new band’s name – **Microscopic Septet** – alluded partially to the composers’ desire to create big band arrangements and orchestrations for a smaller group. Said Johnston: “The instrumentation is enough to give us a big range of colors and work compositionally in a more expansive way.” It worked, *Downbeat* noted, as “the septet often fools you into thinking that there are four or five more horn players hiding under the chairs.” But the name also described their compositions, which evoked entire eras of music through snips of tango or other tell-tale refrain. As the *New York Times* stated: “The Microscopic Septet stands out...primarily through its command of idiomatic detail – the group summons the sound of an Ellington orchestra, or the feel of a 50’s rhythm-and-blues band, with a few well-chosen phrases and sonorities.”

The team-up of Johnston and Forrester as the Micros’ composers proved to be magic; their compositions became the band’s stars. Called “the boldest and most gifted pair of composers to have joined forces in one group since Roscoe Mitchell and Joseph Jarman of the Art Ensemble of Chicago” [*Philadelphia Inquirer*], the two had known each other since the early 70s, and shared the same musical aesthetics, humor, and similarly skewed world views. They had met, says Johnston, when he was living in the Bowery, and Forrester, hearing music, barged into his apartment, unannounced: “I was playing a **Thelonius Monk** tune, and a guy I had never seen before came walking through my door, which wasn’t locked- those were the hippie days...” Not surprisingly, humor would play a role in the Septet, emerging in Johnston’s and Forrester’s compositions and in their onstage banter. The Micros would prove that technically sophisticated music could also be funny, and fun.

For the Microscopic Septet, Johnston and Forrester envisioned writing music that would capture jazz’s essence: fluid and inclusive, a popular music that was joyful and danceable (ie. a music that swung). They wanted to break away from then-standard head-solo-head song formats and instead write extended, layered jazz compositions that segued different themes in a single piece, as **Duke Ellington** and **Jelly Roll Morton** had done. Their extended compositions would assimilate the entire history of jazz, as well as other popular music from the soundtrack of their lives, from polkas to Latin tangos to cartoon ditties to klezmer to TV theme songs to New Wave. “We all came out of the type of music played by the **Art Ensemble of Chicago** and **Anthony Braxton**, as well as bebop. But we were playing standards, Dixieland and rock to make a living”, said Johnston in various interviews. “We ...grew up listening to pop. What we try to do is get to the heart of all these different musics.” Johnston and Forrester adhered to one stylistic rule: “It’s gotta swing, whether its Latin or R&B or straight-ahead blowing. ...But swing – that’s the foundation of what we do.” The Micros, asserted Johnston, “...play music that swings, that has beautiful harmonies and melodies, and everything else is really second to that. The ideas that have always run through jazz – of swinging, of telling a story, of being real – to me that’s at the essence of everything we try to do.”

A late-20th C. swing band steeped in dancehall tradition, The Microscopic Septet thrived on live performance. “We were all about playing,” says Johnston; “all we really wanted to do was have a good time and play the best music we could imagine, the best we knew how.” It played the Downtown music scene circuit – rock clubs like CBGB, Mudd Club, Danceteria, Peppermint Lounge, Studio Henry, Acme Bar and Grill and more. Later, it played the Knitting Factory and such mainstream jazz clubs as The Blue Note, as well as jazz festivals worldwide (JVC Jazz Fest). These performances attracted a devoted cult following as much for the music – technically sophisticated and played by top-notch musicians – as for the on-stage antics. The band wore suits and ties onstage, as a respectful tip ‘o the fedora to Uptown’s jazz traditionalists as well as a wink to stylish New Wave rockers with skinny ties. (A poster announcing the band’s first show depicted its lineup as the seven steps to tie a necktie, and

New York Rocker would later refer to them as “Seven Men in Neckties” in a review.) Like the **Sun Ra Arkestra**, its performances were legendary not only for musical substance, but also for entertainment value. Live renditions of one favorite tune, “Lobsters on Parade,” featured besuited Micros donning tassled fezs and parading through the audience.

Johnston and Forrester were prolific composers; by the time the Micros disbanded, in 1992, it had a songbook of over 180 tunes. Only 34 of those were recorded and released in the band’s lifetime, in a total of 4 albums, all released on small labels to an impressive amount of high-profile critical acclaim. The Micros’ recordings received glowing reviews in big-city newspapers (*New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*) and alternative papers (*L.A. Reader*, *The Village Voice*) on both coasts, as well as in major jazz publications (*Downbeat*, *Cadence*). *Op* and the subsequent *Option*, the bastions of hip alternative music in the ‘80s and ‘90s – equivalent to today’s *The Wire* – also favorably reviewed the Micros, as did such mainstream music publications as *Musician* and *Billboard*. Towards the band’s latter years, it was being praised enthusiastically in such widely-distributed general magazines as *Interview*, *The New Yorker*, *Elle*, *GQ: Gentlemen’ Quarterly*, and even *Vanity Fair*. The Jan/Feb 1990 issue of *Option*, featuring Laurie Anderson on its cover, devoted a full article to the Microscopic Septet.

The band’s debut LP, *Take the Z Train*, came out on **Press Records** in 1983. Recorded “direct to two-track – basically the way they did it in the ‘50s...[at] Seltzer Sound, where Eubie Blake recorded,” it featured cover art by San Francisco artist **Bill Paradise** and received an auspicious amount of press, including 4-star reviews in both *Downbeat* and the *Rolling Stone Jazz Record Guide*. *Cadence* exclaimed: “It is as if the entire history of improvisatory music is on parade.... recommended!” while *New York Beat* called it “the headiest collection of new swing music to come along in some time.”

The following year, the Micros did its first 6-week tour of the Netherlands, home to **Willem Breuker** and the **ICP Orchestra**, artists to whom some compared it. It recorded its only live album, *Let’s Flip!*, which was released in 1985 by Dutch label **Osmosis Records** with liner notes by **Richard Forman**, a key figure New York’s avant-garde theatre scene. *Let’s Flip!* captured the excitement of the band live in concert in Rotterdam and received glowing reviews from *Downbeat*, *Musician*, and *Billboard*. *Option* called it “Good clean fun, recorded live.” A 2nd tour of The Netherlands generated a studio recording, *Off Beat Glory*. Released by Osmosis in 1986, *Off Beat Glory* contained liner notes by American novelist **William Kotzwinkle**, author of *The Fan Man*. *Downbeat* remarked that “...these guys should be more famous than they are. Their music is well-written, their playing cooks, and everything they do is accessible...”

Beauty Based on Science was the band’s 4th CD, and last recording released during their lifetime. Recorded in NYC, it was released on **Stash** in 1988, and featured liner notes by ‘New York School’ poet, **Ron Padgett**, CD cover art by painter **Bob Tuska**, and cartoons by **Collin Kellogg**. It generated positive reviews not only in the music press, but also captured the interest of mainstream, general interest publications. *Vanity Fair* announced that “If they don’t watch their step, the Microscopic Septet, lovingly known as “the best New York band that hardly anybody’s heard of,” is going to have to change its tune....the Katzenjammer Kids of postmodernism have arrived.”

As the 90s arrived, the Microscopic Septet was poised on the edge of mainstream success. In Jan. 1990, it recorded several versions of a new theme song for NPR’s *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, composed by Forrester, which have aired continually ever since. Also in 1990, the Micros recorded a single, “**You Know What You Know**”, the only recorded Micros vocal tune. Frances Davis, who had championed the band from its beginning, advocated for a Micros’ TV show:

“When I replace Letterman...the World’s Most Dangerous Bar Mitzvah Band has to go. The band I’m considering as a replacement is the Microscopic Septet, a New York saxophone quartet (plus rhythm) whose riff do what riffs are supposed to do: set your pulse racing and stick in your noggin for days on end. ... So why aren’t these guys rich and famous, or at least universally adored by those in the know? ...on the bandstand, their high-spirited humor is difficult to resist. This is a band that knows how to have fun while going deep, and one would think that, with proper exposure, that combination would give them widespread appeal. Somebody oughta put these guys on TV.”– Frances Davis, *Outcats*, Oxford University Press: 1990

Cuneiform’s 4-CD retrospective of the Microscopic Septet puts the spotlight back on a band that should have never left the stage. Called *History of the Micros*, this retrospective is released in two parts/volumes, each containing 2 CDs. It contains the music on all 4 of band’s albums, and an additional 11 tracks never released during the band’s lifetime. The CD artwork is by Pulitzer Prize winning New York cartoonist **Art Spiegelman**, creator of the graphic novel *Maus*.

Part 1, titled *History of the Micros Volume 1: Seven Men in Neckties*, covers the band’s early history, from 1980-85. It contains 2 CDs, featuring reissues of the band’s 1st lp, *Take the Z Train*; its 2nd lp and only live album, *Let’s Flip!*; and several previously unreleased tracks, including live recording done at the same time as *Let’s Flip!* and the most common version (“Evil Twin”, in minor key) of Forrester’s theme for *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*.

Part 2, titled *History of the Micros Volume 2: Surrealistic Swing*, covers the years c. 1986-1990. It features reissues of *Off Beat Glory* and *Beauty Based on Science (The Visit)*, the band’s 3rd and 4th release. It also includes previous unreleased tracks from throughout the band’s career, including 2 tracks from an early recording by the band’s first lineup with John Zorn; an

unreleased single with vocals by Paul Shapiro; the “Happy Twin”(in major key) of Forrester’s theme for *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, and a different Fresh Air theme used during the First Gulf War of 1990-1991.

To celebrate the release of *History of the Micros*, the Microscopic Septet are reuniting for a tour in November and December 2006, including dates in both the U.S. and Europe.

MICROSCOPIC SEPTET BAND MEMBER BIOS:

PHILLIP JOHNSTON bio info derived from: www.phillipjohnston.com, www.allmusic.com,
www.furious.com/perfect/phillipjohnston.html, www.berkshireweb.com/rogovoy/thebeat/beat990826.html

One of the most active saxophonists and composers (theatre, dance, film scores and jazz music) in New York's Downtown scene, Phillip Johnston has been active as a performer and bandleader since the 1980s, working with John Zorn, Joel Forrester, Elliott Sharp, Eugene Chadbourne, Mikel Rouse, Wayne Horvitz, Shelley Hirsch, Walter Thompson, Lenny Pickett's Borneo Horns, Earl King, and Guy Klucsevsek. He founded, led and co-led several highly acclaimed jazz groups, including the Microscopic Septet (1980-1992), Big Trouble (1991-1995), the Transparent Quartet (1995-2000) and Fast 'N' Bulbous (his arrangements of the music of Captain Beefheart co-led with Gary Lucas, which released a CD on Cuneiform in 2005). Johnston has released more than a dozen albums under his own name and in various groups/ensembles on a variety of prominent labels, including Avant, Winter & Winter, Tzadik, Black Saint, and Koch Jazz.

After disbanding the Microscopic Septet, Johnston focused his attention on composing film, theater and dance scores, in addition to doing work for radio and TV. A prolific composer, he has scored more than a dozen motion pictures, working with such directors including Doris Dörrie, Paul Mazursky (Faithful), Philip Haas (The Music of Chance). In addition, he's done scores for silent movies, including F.W. Murnau's *Faust* (1927), which premiered at the 2002 New York Film Festival and has subsequently toured Europe and the US. Two CDs of Johnston's film scores have been released by Zorn: a compilation of film scores, *Music for Films* (1998, Tzadik), and *The Unknown* (1994, Avant), a score for Tod Browning's 1927 silent film. Johnston has also collaborated with artist Art Spiegelman (*Maus*) on "Drawn To Death: A Three-Panel Opera". The growing friendship between them led to Spiegelman's offer to contribute the cover art for the Microscopic Septet re-releases on Cuneiform.

Johnston's distinctive compositions are most notable for their defiance of genre and consistently pervasive humor. As Seth Rogovy wrote in the *Berkshire Eagle*:

"...what distinguishes or characterizes Johnston's work, and what makes it impossible to tame or define in conventional terms, is its willful perversity – its utter unwillingness to stay in one place, its defiance of genre, its universal embrace of the offbeat, its celebration of the quirky, dramatic and surprising gesture. His scores can flow seamlessly from cocktail jazz to horn-laced funk grooves to acoustic chamber music to synthesized electronics to frenzied post-bop to banjo bluegrass to rock 'n' roll to ersatz klezmer to cartoon music to skronking metal to Asian harp to blues guitar riffs to blowzy polka and back to classically-styled, string quartet music."

In 2005, he moved with his family to Sydney, Australia, where he leads The Coolerators, and SNAP, and writes music for film and theatre. He continues to perform in Europe and the US from time to time.

JOEL FORRESTER bio info derived from: www.joelforrester.com, www.allmusic.com

Pianist, composer and arranger Joel Forrester is one of the most prolific composers to emerge from New York's Downtown scene and perhaps "the world's finest improvisational accompanist to silent films," according to *The Paris Free Voice*. Composer of more than 1200 tunes, Forrester co-led the critically acclaimed Microscopic Septet with Phillip Johnston. In addition, as the leader or member of the ensembles Private Life, The Illustrious Others, and People Like Us, Forrester has released albums on Ride Symbol, Koch Jazz and Koch International. Forrester is perhaps most widely known for composing the theme song for National Public Radio's "Fresh Air with Terry Gross", (recorded by the Microscopic Septet) which has been played and heard on American radio more often than any other jazz composition in the last 28 years. Forrester actively performs in both New York and Paris; he has played in Paris at the Louvre, the American Center, the Forum des Images and the Musée d'Orsay and in New York at the Film Forum, the Brooklyn Museum and the Anthology Film Archives.

Born in Pittsburgh, Forrester met Thelonious Monk upon moving to New York City as a young man, who urged him to focus on "music that hadn't been written yet." *The Paris Free Voice* relates Forrester's unique tutelage under the guidance of Monk, shortly before his death in 1982:

"...Fully dressed, Monk would lie on top of his bed, listening to Forrester's playing in the adjoining room. 'It was the most acute form of musical criticism I've ever received,' recalls Forrester. 'If he didn't like what I was playing, he'd just stretch his foot off the bed and kick the door shut!'"

Critics worldwide have extolled Forrester's compositional and improvisational expertise. Heather Phares of All Music Guide describes his "complex, often witty composition skills," while *The New Yorker* lauds Forrester as "...a most agreeably eclectic pianist, and among the most undervalued of jazz composers. The sheer pleasure he brings to a panoply of styles, and to the individual way he absorbs them all, denotes comfort rather than scholarly erudition." A review from AllAboutJazz.com perhaps best locates Forrester in the school of modern jazz:

"Joel Forrester in an undiscovered national treasure. He is brilliant both as a pianist and as a composer. His music is intelligent, witty, and colorful as it looks into the jazz tradition and emerges as something individual and different. Millions have heard his great theme for the NPR show Fresh Air with Terry Gross. ...The music is identifiably Joel's – ever-fresh and smartly swinging."

DON DAVISbio info derived from: www.allmusic.com

Alto saxophonist Don Davis has been a member of The Microscopic Septet, Dr Nerve, and New York Gong. Additionally he has performed and/or recorded with: LL Cool J, Michael Mantler, Carla Bley, Karl Berger, Marc Black, Material, The Waitresses, Toots and the Maytals, Danzig, The Swollen Monkeys, Ed Brolms, and others. He is currently free-lancing in New England and performing with The Davis/Deleault Duo, The New Hampshire Jazz Orchestra, Larry Simon, and others.

PAUL SHAPIRObio info derived from: www.paulshapiromusic.com, www.allmusic.com

Saxophonist, flutist, composer and bandleader Paul Shapiro has been active on the New York scene for over two decades. He currently leads two projects, his jazz group Midnight Minyan and his 40's Yiddish swing project Paul Shapiro's Ribs and Brisket Revue. As a solo artist he has released two albums, Midnight Minyan in 2003 and It's in the Twilight in 2006, both on the Tzadik label. He has also recorded and/or worked with diverse artists such as Lou Reed, Brooklyn Funk Essentials, Michael Callen, Jay-Z, Ben Folds Five, Steven Bernstein, John Zorn, Ofra Haza, Naughty By Nature, Marc Anthony, Frankie Knuckles, Elliott Sharp, Wayne Horvitz and Queen Latifah, Majek Fashek, Khaled, and many others.

DAVE SEWELSONbio info derived from: www.sewelsonics.com, www.allmusic.com

Saxophonist Dave Sewelson is an active member of New York's avant jazz scene. He has played and/or recorded with Wayne Horvitz, Robin Holcomb, Saheb Sarbib, John Zorn, Roy Campbell, Mofungo, Elliott Sharp, Dee Pop, Frank Lowe, Pat Place, Billy Bang, Susie Ibarra, Bobby Radcliff, Dave Douglas, George Gilmore, Kyosuke Otsuka, the Microscopic Septet and Fast 'N' Bulbous. Additionally, Sewelson is currently a member of William Parker's Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra, as well as the leader of Sewelsonics and The Daves.

DAVID HOFSTRAbio info derived from: www.allmusic.com

Bassist and tuba player David Hofstra has performed on close to 100 CDs since 1980. Constantly active on the New York jazz scene, he has recorded with Wayne Horvitz, Bobby Previte, Michael Callen, Bobby Radcliff, Bill Frisell, The Waitresses, Robin Holcomb, John Zorn, Elliot Sharp, The Metropolitan Klezmer Orchestra, Mark Ribot, Lou Grassi, Sewelsonics, William Parker, and many others.

RICHARD DWORKINbio info derived from: www.allmusic.com

Drummer Richard Dworkin has been active on the New York scene since 1980, when he began playing with the Microscopic Septet. He has appeared on over 35 CDs, drumming for James Chance, Alex Chilton, Philip Johnston's Big Trouble, Bobby Radcliff, Harry Shearer, Samm Bennett, Eric Anderson, Fast 'n Bulbous, Michael Callen, and others.

JOHN HAGENbio info derived from: www.onefinalnote.com

Appearing in sessions with William Parker in the 1970s and the Microscopic Septet in the 1980s, saxophonist John Hagen released his first solo album, Segments, on Cadence Jazz Records in 2004. He replaced George Bishop, the original tenor player in the Microscopic Septet early on, and performed on Take The Z Train, and on the unreleased pre-Take The Z Train session.

DANNY NIGRObio info derived from: www.allmusic.com

Saxophonist Danny Nigro has appeared on recordings from Plant the Seed (Plant the Seed, OFMB, 2005), and The Dalton Gang (Last Year's Waltz, Second Step Music, 2006). He toured Europe in 1984, subbing for Paul Shapiro, and appears on Let's Flip!

JOHN ZORN

For more information on John Zorn, see: www.tzadik.com; wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Zorn; www.ejn.it/mus/zorn.htm; www.wnur.org/jazz/artists/zorn.john/discog.html; www.bombsite.com/zorn/zorn.html; members.tripod.com/~JFGraves/zorn-index.html; topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/z/john_zorn/index.html

Composer and saxophonist John Zorn has been a leading figure in the New York Downtown scene since the 1970s. As a key figure and major player in the avant scene, Zorn has been a member of Naked City, Cobra, and Masada, among many other bands, often recording albums at a prolific pace. Zorn has also recorded as a solo artist and founded the Tzadik label, specializing in experimental, jazz and avant-garde music. John Zorn was the original alto saxophonist in the Microscopic Septet, and appears on the unreleased pre-Take The Z Train session.