



**Ave B Free Jam**

**Laurence Cook, Jacques Coursil, Warren Gale,  
Perry Robinson, Steve Tintweiss  
(INKY DoT MEDIA)  
by Pierre Crépon**

A common denominator among the musicians playing here is ESP-Disk', the historical label of the '60s New York avant garde. Collectively, trumpeters Jacques Coursil and Warren Gale, clarinetist Perry Robinson, bassist Steve Tintweiss and drummer Laurence Cook accumulated sidemen credits on a substantial number of ESP dates, including sessions led by Henry Grimes, Patty Waters, James Zitto, Frank Wright, Burton Greene, Alan Silva and Sunny Murray. The 'star' of the group is Robinson, having made his leader debut on Savoy five years earlier.

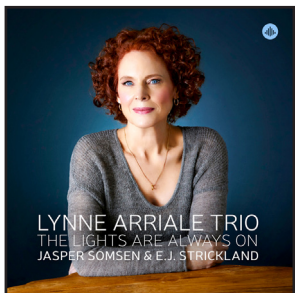
Recorded 55 years ago this month in an Alphabet City apartment, this previously unreleased tape differs in a major way from ESP releases. This is a leaderless collective free improvisation devoid of themes or structure, elements that long remained staples of the avant garde when presented publicly. If musicians such as Silva and Greene had begun to discard tunes entirely, it remained a marginal endeavor.

Preserved and issued by Tintweiss, the recording is of a kind that can rarely be heard: a private session without any audience, unlikely taped with possible release in mind. Was it originally a practice tape? The liner notes shed little light on the context.

This is free playing of the busy kind, with nearly continuous contributions from all participants. The atonal flurry of notes from the trumpets dominates the overall sound. But, thanks to a good recording quality, all instruments are clearly audible, including Tintweiss' arco and pizzicato contributions. Robinson makes his only known appearance on bass clarinet, an oddity reinforcing the feeling that this music was not made for public consumption.

The tape fills the entire CD. A cut may be attributable to a reel change and after what sounds like an ending, a few minutes picking up in the thick of things are added. The tracking sensibly matches the flow of the music. The extended length gives the impression that what is being heard is an unedited version of what would have been trimmed down live, between framing devices, but when the musicians hit, they hit.

For more information, visit [originalvinylrecords.com/inkydot](http://originalvinylrecords.com/inkydot)



**The Lights Are Always On  
Lynne Arriale Trio (Challenge)  
by Pierre Giroux**

The latest project from pianist Lynne Arriale, who turns 65 this month, is a suite of compositions looking at important events taking place over the past couple of years. Along with bassist Jasper Somsen and drummer E.J. Strickland, Arriale fashions a soundscape filled with layers of subtlety along with varied

rhythmic and tonal relationships inhabiting the pieces.

"March On" opens with an AfroCuban affect through low-intensity drumming. Through her chording, Arriale evokes the vision of the story of activists looking to advance their cause. The title track is a lyrical melody, which ebbs and flows through the trio's exploration of its contours.

The next two tracks are an interesting juxtaposition: "Sisters" is a boisterous gospel-influenced piece, Arriale developing her ideas to express the courage of women around the world facing oppression, while "Honor" takes a contemplative approach, Arriale ruminating over the keyboard and Somsen taking a solo showing off his big tone and nimble fingering. "The Notorious RBG", dedicated to late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, is a sprightly and jolly romp spurred along by Strickland.

Sometimes albums based on contemporaneous events or individuals are a slog to get through. But Arriale has developed the music with the listener in mind and it is a welcome addition to the genre.

For more information, visit [challengerecords.com](http://challengerecords.com)



**Pacemaker**

**Liudas Mockūnas/Christian Windfeld (NoBusiness)  
by John Sharpe**

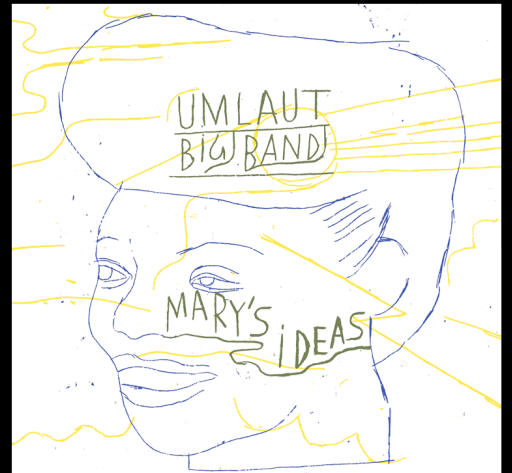
Turning 45 this month, reedplayer Liudas Mockūnas, already one of Lithuania's most talented improvisers, has become almost the go-to partner for like-minded visitors. This 2018 date pairing him with adventurous Danish percussionist Christian Windfeld stands as just the latest in a line of collaborations with pianist Agustí Fernández, bassist Barry Guy, guitarist Marc Ducret and drummer William Hooker, to name only those issued on NoBusiness. As with many free practitioners, the duet is a favored format for Mockūnas, offering fulsome opportunity for intense dialogue.

However, the intensity here stems from restraint rather than rampage, with the feeling that both men are holding themselves in check, only letting off steam in short passionate outbursts when the pressure becomes too much to bear. Windfeld promotes a minimal aesthetic, focusing intently on particular parts of a pared-back armory derived from his personalized kit, which encourages Mockūnas to follow suit. So the first side of the limited-edition LP (also available as a download) begins with the vaguely unsettling confluence of bowed cymbals and subdued keypad popping on contrabass clarinet. Such timbral atmospherics set the scene for much of the ensuing discourse, as they deploy unconventional techniques to nonetheless musical ends.

Within the taut exchanges, it is possible to sense keen attentiveness, both to the detail of what is being played and to the overall trajectory, the sort of set where the roles of accompanist and leader shift by the moment. Certainly Mockūnas grabs the ear with his prepared clarinet on "Maker" when he interrupts his mellifluous tones with sharp interjections of yapping shrieks and vocalized growls and then again on tenor saxophone as his repeated probing, almost lyrical phrases develop a querulous vulnerability. But then Windfeld takes the spotlight as an extended flinty tattoo clatters and whirls to furnish an emphatic conclusion to an absorbing encounter.

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