

Bass Bone Drum

mark
helias

ray
anderson

gerry
hemingway



Press Kit

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Composer/bassist **Mark Helias** has been making innovative music since finishing a Masters Degree at the Yale School of Music in 1976. With impeccable credentials as a virtuoso bassist, composer and band leader, he has composed for, as well as performed and recorded with such modern masters as Edward Blackwell, Anthony Davis, Dewey Redman and Anthony Braxton. Mr. Helias has recorded five albums of his own compositions beginning in 1984 with Split Image. This was followed by four others, The Current Set (1987), Desert Blue (1989) and Attack The Future (1992), Loopin the Cool (1995) all for the German label Enja Records. His varied interests have involved him in such projects as two Anthony Davis operas X, The Life and Times of Malcolm X and Under The Double Moon, as well as performance, dance, film and video collaborations with Mary Perillo and John Sanborn. Helias' compositional output includes numerous notated pieces ranging from solo bass to symphony orchestra. Since 1981 Mr. Helias has been awarded thirteen composition and performance grants. In 1992 his piece Upside the Downside was premiered in St. Louis, Missouri by the String Trio of New York. The piece was commissioned by Meet the Composer/Readers Digest. Helias has worked with numerous bands including those of Barry Altschul, Oliver Lake, Slickaphonics, Abbey Lincoln, Don Cherry, Cecil Taylor and Ray Anderson. In addition to his performances on over sixty albums, Mr. Helias has been producing recordings for other artists on the Gramavision, Enja, Avant/DIW and Sound Aspects, and New World labels. He has recently completed a large work for symphony orchestra.



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Gerry Hemingway has been composing and performing solo and ensemble music since 1974. Recent recordings of his music for solo percussion include Electro-Acoustic Solo Works (84-95) and Acoustic Solo Works (83-94) on the German Random Acoustics label. Mr. Hemingway's newest working band is a quartet with Ray Anderson or Herb Robertson, Ellery Eskelin-tenor sax and Mark Dresser or Mark Helias on bass. The band performed 40 concerts in the States in 1998 and it's first recording is Johnny's Corner Song on the Auricle Record label. The quartet's has since released Devils Paradise & The Whimbler on the Clean Feed label of Portugal. This follows twelve years of performances and recordings of his European based quintet whose final Cd is entitled Waltzes, Two-Steps and Other Matters of the Heart. Previous recordings include, Special Detail (91), Down to the Wire (93) and Demon Chaser (94) all on the Swiss Hat Art label and Slamadam (95) and Perfect World (96) on Random Acoustics. His work as a composer and percussionist includes recordings and performances with Derek Bailey, Leo Smith, Oliver Lake, Ray Anderson, Conrad Bauer, John Cale and Hank Roberts among many others. For eleven years, starting in 1983, he was a member of the Anthony Braxton Quartet from 1983-1994 and more recently has been performing as a member of the Reggie Workman Ensemble. Collaborative projects include trios with pianist Georg Graewe and cellist Ernst Reijseger, Michel Wintsch & Baenz Oester, duo's with Marilyn Crispell, Thomas Lehn, John Butcher .



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"If I ever had a home, it was the slide trombone" says **Ray Anderson**. Although the perennial poll-winner (6 times in Down Beat's Critics Poll!) is indeed at home with the "slip-horn", his unique music is now being heard all over the world. Anderson's innovative and influential style is technically awesome but straight from the heart. Born in Chicago in 1952, Ray Anderson started playing trombone when he was eight. After three years in California, playing in funk, R&B and jazz groups, Ray Anderson moved to New York City in 1972. He picked up a wide variety of musical experience, played in the booming loft scene and spent important periods with Barry Altschul's trio and Anthony Braxton's quartet. "Playing with Braxton (during 1978-81) really ended my period of apprenticeship and I've led or co-led my own groups ever since." These bands have included the wild funk unit Slickaphonics. Now Anderson can be heard leading his quartet (piano or guitar, upright bass and drums), his Wishbone Ensemble (which adds percussion and violin to the quartet), his Alligatory Band (electric bass and guitar, drums, percussion and trumpet) his Bonified Big Band (classic big band instrumentation) and Ray's latest incarnation, The Pocket Brass Band featuring Jack Walrath on Trumpet, Bob Stewart on Tuba and Charli Persip on Drums. Ray is also a member of Slideride, a four trombone cooperative featuring Craig Harris, George Lewis and Gary Valente. Ray is currently negotiating with several labels for his U.S. label debut.



BassDrumBone is a trio with an unusual instrumentation and a unique sound. A true collective, their music combines three distinct compositional and improvisational approaches and an exceptional musical rapport. Over the twenty-nine + years they have played together they have developed an uncanny sense of communication that allows for very free and disciplined collectivity regardless of the compositional form being explored.

Mark Helias Gerry Hemingway and Ray Anderson began performing as a trio in the fall of 1977. Their first record, "Oahspe" was released in 1979 on the Auricle Record label. Bob Rusch in his review of the record, wrote: "Exceptionally good music, fearlessly played and tightly coordinated. Recommended."

In 1984 "Right Down your Alley" was released on Soul Note Records of Italy and in the beginning of 1986 "You Be" was released on the Minor Music label of Germany. Both records received acclaim from the European and American press including a five star review in Downbeat magazine for "You Be".

In 1988 "Wooferlo" was released on the Soul Note label. Ben Watson of Wire Magazine commented: "Each musician has a story to tell, the solos are stuffed with event and happenstance".

After 1988 the group went into dormancy while all three of its members pursued their own individual groups. In the fall of 1993 BassDrumBone was renewed for a tour in Europe and never sounded better. A tour in 1996 yielded the Enja release "Hence the Reason" and in March of 1999 Auricle Records released some archival material from 1986-97 in a CD entitled "Cooked to Perfection". Their silver anniversary was celebrated with the release of "March of Dimes" on the Data label from Amsterdam. The trio now in its 29th year is actively touring in the US and Europe. Their next release recorded in April of 2005 will be released in 2006 on the Clean Feed label.

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