

MARC COPLAND QUARTET

SOMEDAY

featuring Robin Verheyen (ss, ts), Drew Gress (b) and Mark Ferber (dr)

INNERVOICE JAZZ / IVJ 107 / EAN 0 653 415 695 981

release date 15. October 2022 / Contact Germany/Austria: Galileo Music

info@galileo-mc.de / tel +49 (0) 8141 226 130



- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME (CHURCHILL / MOREY) 5:58 | QZVUQ2200001 |
| 2. SPINNING THINGS (COPLAND) 8:04 | QZVUQ2200002 |
| 3. DUKISH (VERHEYEN) 6:48 | QZVUQ2200003 |
| 4. LET'S COOL ONE (MONK) 7:34 | QZVUQ2200004 |
| 5. ROUND SHE GOES (COPLAND) 9:07 | QZVUQ2200005 |
| 6. ENCORE (VERHEYEN) 4:03 | QZVUQ2200006 |
| 7. DAY AND NIGHT (COPLAND) 10:12 | QZVUQ2200007 |
| 8. NARDIS (DAVIS) 7:33 | QZVUQ2200008 |



As the pandemic winds down and music re-emerges in 2022, Marc Copland has released his first quartet CD in several years, featuring some of the finest talents on the New York scene. Copland feels that this is one of his best recordings ever, and after listening, we can see why!

By now **Marc Copland** needs no introduction. At 74 years, he's arguably at the very top of his game, making him one of the handful of jazz pianists playing at the highest level. Certainly John Abercrombie and Gary Peacock thought so; for over 30 years, they played in his bands, and he in theirs. **Drew Gress**, the other veteran in the band, has been omnipresent on the jazz scene in the last three decades and likewise needs no introduction. He covers the whole instrument with breath-taking virtuosity, and his understanding of time and harmony is perhaps unrivaled among his peers.

Copland and Gress, partners for many years, are joined by two outstanding younger talents. **Robin Verheyen** is a Belgian-American saxophonist who has been playing with Copland for nearly ten years. Says the pianist, "he really knows how to listen, and has his own sound and approach, which is so important." Copland, who has played and recorded over the years with (among others) Bob Berg, Mike Brecker, David Liebman, Joe Lovano, and James Moody, says simply, "Robin is my favorite tenor and soprano saxophonist." But it's not only the saxophonist's talents as a player that shine here; Copland has included two ballads composed by Verheyen on this recording, because "his tunes are unusual but very logical, and fun to play on." Drummer **Mark Ferber**, who splits time between New York and Los Angeles, is no stranger to jazz listeners, having toured and recorded with Gary Peacock's trio, Ralph Alessi's quintet (two albums for ECM), and countless other projects. He combines an effortless technical proficiency, killer swing, high intensity, and a quiet sensitivity--- all in one package.

Copland's unique sense of touch, lyricism and poetry at his instrument, his creation of unusual harmonies and lines, and his sense of swing are well documented. What's perhaps less known, but shines brightly here, is how committed he is to the spontaneity of the

moment. “That’s an approach that John (Abercrombie), Gary (Peacock), and I all shared—when I played with either one, it was like we could read each other’s minds.” In this band, the level of spontaneous interaction and interplay between the musicians is remarkable.

“I never come to the studio with all the tunes selected and prepared,” says the pianist. “I like to leave room for something to happen and to encourage band members to participate in the decision making and shaping of the music. When everybody’s involved, you get this thing where the band sounds and feels like one living organism.

For example, towards the end of two days of recording, Robin suggested playing a set as if the band were in a club—no stopping, no talking, no coffee break, no plan, “just play and see what happens.” So Copland started playing, and the other three joined in, making music nonstop for about an hour. And there were indeed magical moments---represented here by the renditions of *Someday My Prince Will Come*, *Nardis*, and Verheyen’s *Dukish*.

How does Copland feel about this music? “In the several years before John Abercrombie passed away, we had a real vibe going with his last quartet. We were, as John liked to say, firmly rooted in the tradition but pushing the boundaries in order to discover new things, and a lot of people seemed to get it and want more. This new quartet feels just like that to me, and I’m sure John agrees, wherever he is.”

Let ‘s talk a bit about the music:

Someday My Prince Will Come (Churchill / Moray) begins with a solo rendition of the melody by Copland, beautifully spare and yet pregnant with contrapuntal and polytonal suggestion, giving the tune a unique sendoff. Check out how Copland and Verheyen play the melody together, with Copland bobbing and weaving between a unison with the saxophonist on the one hand and a loose, inventive accompaniment on the other. The ending of the tune, as almost all the intros and endings on this album, happened in the moment.

Spinning Things (Copland) was written specifically for this band. “Robin and Drew really understand how to negotiate these kinds of structures, and Mark knows how to keep a propulsive carpet under everything.” After Verheyen, Copland and Gress have their say, drummer Ferber takes an exciting solo, after which the pianist and Verheyen engage in some spirited trading as the tune draws to a close, something the pianist says “I don’t think we’d ever done before on this one.”

The ballad *Dukish* (Verheyen) begins with a mysterious and ethereal ostinato over which the composer plays a beautifully plaintive melody. A nod to Duke Ellington, Verheyen’s tune immediately creates and explores a deep mood.

Let’s Cool One (Monk) has been a favorite of Copland’s for a long time, but in typical Copland fashion, it wasn’t planned for this recording session in Queens, New York. “At a certain point, after playing all this challenging material, it just felt like we should swing something with a comfortable groove.” Nuff said, and everybody is indeed swinging on this one, but there is one caveat: Gress’s solo is an absolute monster.

Round She Goes (Copland) is one of the best-known Copland compositions, recorded at first in duo with saxophonist Greg Osby, and later in trio and solo formats. Here, the quartet takes

good advantage of the tune's vibe and structure for some wide-open blowing. The drum solo occurs in an unusual spot, after the "out" head, which has become something of a Copland trademark. In this track, you can really feel the band listening, building climaxes and coming out of them together, functioning not as four individuals but as one organic unit with four high quality moving parts.

Encore (Verheyen) "captivated me from the first time Robin and I played it, originally with a string trio." Copland points out that "a good tune is kind of like a haiku, relatively simple on the surface but lots of depth underneath, and creates one or more clear pathways for the player to explore." This gem is a classic example. It's very short and concise, but loaded with material to use as a springboard into the ozone. Copland frequently floats above the *cantus firmus*, sprinkling ideas over the movement underneath.

Day and Night (Copland), a mainstay of the pianist's repertoire, was previously recorded in trio and in quartet with trumpet (Ralph Alessi); this time it's taken on a drive by quartet with tenor sax. Verheyen plays a beautifully developed solo, with the rest of the band listening and reacting in real time to the saxophonist's thoughts. Copland and Gress follow, with Ferber again commenting at the end, leading to spirited trading between Verheyen and Copland as the take winds down.

Closing out the CD, *Nardis* is yet another track that was unplanned. Verheyen shows just how well he's assimilated the history of his instrument into his own style: he can burn, he can attack, and he can call forth that deep throaty tenor sound and a serious swing feel at any time. Copland and Gress join in the fun, and a jaunty tag takes the tune home.



Recorded January 11 & 12, 2022 by Katsuhiko Naito, The Samurai Hotel, NYC

Mixed and Mastered August, 2022, by Katsuhiko Naito

Produced by Marc Copland and Robin Verheyen

Ears and Band Photo: Fliin Van Hemmen

Poem: Bill Zavatsky

Advice, wisdom and cover photo: Bettina Rossi

Graphic design: Ziel / Elmar Zillgen

Sample tracks available for streaming here: marccopland.com/demotracks.html

Band info: <https://express.adobe.com/page/DL8aZpscflQPI>

Booking:

Concertbüro Uli Fild / www.fild.de / uli.fild@t-online.de

Rob Leurentop / leurentop@icloud.com