

# CKW Trio



CKW Trio's approach to acoustic post-modern jazz allows for a freedom of emotional expression. With solid grooves and explosions of energy and sound, CKW Trio's music reminds one of the music being played by Ken Vandermark and John Zorn's Masada. The instrumentation is similar to Julius Hemphill's trio; woodwinds, cello and percussion. CKW trio plays in a cutting edge jazz style making use of modern forms like circle music and experiments with time and rhythm. They use various non-western scales and sounds as central points for launching into improvisations. This adventure in jazz is created by the unique ideas of the members of the group and can be heard on their new CD, **The Is**, available from **BLACK HAT RECORDS**.

The multi-instrumentalist Michael Cooke heads up the group, with his aggressive tenor saxophone style. This Louis Armstrong Jazz Award winner mainly plays tenor, but you will also hear him play soprano and alto sax, flute, bass clarinet, bassoon and percussion. Michael started playing jazz in High school where he played for homeless shelters in Atlanta. A cum laude music graduate University of North Texas, Michael has played in Europe, Mexico and all over the United States. Relocating to the San Francisco Bay Area, he is striving to develop his style and has recently started studying Larry Ochs' "Radar" composition techniques. Denise Berardini of the San Francisco Beacon describes Michael's "talented sax flowing out color and tone with such feeling I haven't heard in quite a while. Michael plays with such dimension and flavor, that it sets his sound apart from the rest." Uncompromising, fiery, complex, passionate, and cathartic is how the All Music Guide labeled Michael's playing on "**SEARCHING**" by Cooke Quartet and "**Statements**" by Michael Cooke.

Cellist and composer Alex Kelly is currently completing a D.M.A. in Cello Performance with a secondary area in Composition from the University of Oregon. As a cellist, Alex has performed throughout the United States and Canada for the past ten years. In the past three years, he has premiered almost one hundred solo and mixed chamber works. His versatility is demonstrated in his variety of styles, which range from renaissance to romantic, from avant-garde to pop. He has studied Baroque cello and performance practice and has improvisation experience with acoustic and electric cellos. In the Pacific Northwest he is known for his performances with a variety of ensembles, including the new music ensemble "100th Monkey," a free improvisational group called "The Knotty Ensemble," a tonal improvisational group called "Confluence," and a jazz funk group called "The Freedom Funk Ensemble." In San Francisco he is known for his performances with the "New Pickle Family Circus", "Iron and the Albatross", and as co-creator of the "Starr Spectacular".

Whether drumming with avant-garde or Coltrane influenced jazz groups such as trumpeter Eddie Gale or recording his own improvisations, Andrew Wilshusen is always seeking to explore the boundaries of music. His keen ears and fluid coordination make him a drummer whose rhythms, which range from minimalist colorations to polyrhythmic tirades, always perfectly compliment his band mates while propelling them to new heights of their own. His drumming has been referred to as heart-felt, communicative, explosive, and highly imaginative.

*An adventure in Jazz!*

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To whom it concerns:

Greeting Jazz lover from **BLACK HAT RECORDS**. Our current releases are "**SEARCHING**" by Cooke Quartet and "**Statements**" by Michael Cooke.

CQ's approach to acoustic modern Jazz is rooted in 60's and 70's modal style. This style allows for a freedom of emotional expression. With solid grooves and explosions of energy and sound, CQ's Jazz reminds one of the music being played in Oakland and San Francisco in the 70's by Pharaoh Sanders and McCoy Tyner. Their latest release, "**SEARCHING**" is available from **BLACK HAT RECORDS** at the Jazz Loft, Amazon, CDBaby and at fine record stores everywhere.

Time to meet the band. The multi-instrumentalist Michael Cooke heads up the group, with his aggressive tenor saxophone style. This Louis Armstrong Jazz award winner mainly plays tenor, but you will also hear him play soprano sax, alto sax, flute, bass clarinet, bassoon and percussion. Michael started playing Jazz in High school where he played for homeless shelters in Atlanta. He studied Jazz with Tony Carere, Dan Haerle, and Jim Riggs. A cum laude music graduate of North Texas State University, Michael has played in Europe, Mexico and all over the United States. Recently relocating to the San Francisco Bay Area, he is striving to develop his style in the direction of the early 70's Jazz music that used to be played in the area. Denise Berardini of the San Francisco Beacon describes Michael's "talented sax flowing out color and tone with such feeling I haven't heard in quite a while. Michael plays with such dimension and flavor, that it sets (his) sound apart from the rest." Michael is "excited to be playing with such talented musicians", as they work to revive and develop a San Francisco Bay Area Jazz sound. Michael's latest release, "**Statements**" is a solo album, in the lines of Julius Hemphill's *Blue Boye*, Joe McPhee's *Tenor & Fallen Angels* and Anthony Braxton's *For Alto*. Michael plays all parts and instruments, including some bassoon and percussion.

Pianist Mel Nelson, brings experience to the band. Having played, composed and arranged music professionally for over 15 years in L.A. and Washington DC, Mel solidifies the bands sound. He is a multi-instrumentalist playing bass, piano, flute and sax, but is now just focusing on piano. Mel has toured to world as a bass player with major jazz and pop acts. This experience helps him to always be able to add the right accompaniment or a burning solo. Mel has developed a unique heart felt sound, full of fire and grace. This sound has influenced the directions CQ has taken.

Alec Lytle's upright bass playing has a classic big sound with a modern style. He and Michael have played together for a few years, which helps this new group have a seasoned sound. Alec has played with Marcus Roberts in San Luis Obispo and studied with many other notable Jazz performers. He has also performed all over the United Kingdom with touring groups while living in London and spent time in L.A. and Las Vegas but has returned to the Bay area to work on his musical directions. Alec was a member of the Absolute Quintet and the Pete Chen Trio before becoming a full time member of CQ.

Beneath it all is young sensation Sameer Gupta on drums. This 22-year-old firecracker provides the energy for the group. A SF Bay area native, Sameer has been playing for 10 years and is a recent music graduate of Santa Clara University. Sameer started his musical studies in Japan and continued local studies with Wally Schnalle and Kevin Carnes. Traveling around the world allowed Sameer to learn many instruments in addition to set drums including vibes, World percussion, guitar, keyboards, and Classical percussion. A versatile player and composer Sameer's knowledge of Jazz, Classical, and World Music has helped to shape CQ's sound.

CQ sometimes rounds off the group with a percussionist to provide that extra sounds they hear. Musicians Paul Fisher and Roland Robles have performed with CQ in this way.