

## Spike Wilner *Koan*

POSI-TONE 8152

★★★★

Spike Wilner may be best known these days as a partner in (and manager of) the famed Smalls Jazz Club. But those who haven't patronized the Greenwich Village venue or subscribed to its SmallsLIVE media archives may be unaware of his parallel career as a pianist and leader of his own trio.

An alumnus of the inaugural class of Manhattan's New School for Social Research Jazz and Contemporary Music program,

## Peter Kuhn *The Other Shore*

NOBUSINESS 88

★★★½

## *No Coming, No Going: The Music of Peter Kuhn, 1978–79*

NOBUSINESS 89-90

★★★½

Clarinetist/saxophonist Peter Kuhn was part of the New York loft scene, working with tenorman Frank Lowe, clarinetist Perry Robinson and trumpeter Lester Bowie in the '70s and '80s. After a long dry spell, Kuhn resurfaced in San Diego a few years ago. These two albums show where he came from and where he is now.

Kuhn's present work on *The Other Shore* is relaxed and assured. His bass clarinet is capable of languid insouciance or corkscrew runs. His tenor can be as slack as a junkie on the nod, as on "Unstrung Heroes," or hard-edged. Nathan Hubbard's drums push against Kuhn, while bassist Kyle Motl is both percussive and harmonically challenging to the horns.

*No Coming, No Going* is the material from Kuhn's *Living Right* (Big City) LP, with trumpet color from Toshinori Kondo and Arthur Williams. While Kuhn's early improvs can be short on thematic arc, bassist William Parker is a Trojan throughout, holding the center. A

Wilner boasts a style that can be gutbucket at times and precisely articulate at others.

*Koan*, which the liner notes explain is "a paradoxical anecdote or riddle, used in Zen Buddhism to demonstrate the inadequacy of logical reasoning and to provoke enlightenment," features five originals; six covers of tunes by Duke Ellington, Noël Coward and Ornette Coleman; and "Blues For the Common Man," a terrific original based on Aaron Copland's *Fanfare For The Common Man*.

Strutting with a hard-bop winningness, Wilner's "Iceberg Slim" opens *Koan* with a jam session standard-in-the-making. With its flowing lines and grand themes, the title track actually sounds as if it's a lost selection from a classic Broadway musical.

The pianist has a great rapport with bassist Tyler Mitchell and drummer Anthony Pinciotti, his working trio. The spiraling "Monkey Mind" finds the three musicians impressively locked in. *Koan* is a worthy document of a notable trio and the compositional prowess of its bandleader.

—Yoshi Kato

**Koan:** Iceberg Slim; Koan; Warm Valley; I'll See You Again; Hot House; Monkey Mind; Gypsy Without A Song; Trick Baby; Three Ring Circus; Young At Heart; Lonely Woman; Blues For The Common Man. (60:52)

**Personnel:** Spike Wilner, piano; Tyler Mitchell, bass; Anthony Pinciotti, drums.

**Ordering info:** [posi-tone.com](http://posi-tone.com)



delightful drum solo by Denis Charles on "Chi" reminds what a treasure he was. A second CD of a Kuhn and Charles duet recital shows the stringent clarinet admirably compatible with the potent Charles drum patterns.

—Kirk Silsbee

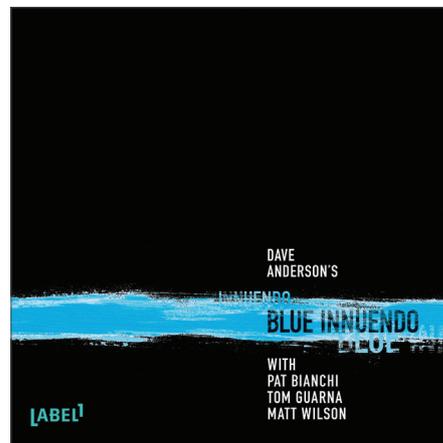
**The Other Shore:** Is Love Enough; Causes And Conditions; Unstrung heroes; Not Two; Volition; No Coming, No Going; The Other Shore; Beginning Anew. (63:18)

**Personnel:** Peter Kuhn, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone; Kyle Motl, bass; Nathan Hubbard, drums.

**No Coming, No Going:** Disc 1: Chi; Manteca, Long Gone, Axistential; Red Tape. (39:13). Disc 2: Stigma; Axistential; Drum Dharm; Headed Home. (60:34)

**Personnel:** Disc 1: Kuhn, clarinet, bass clarinet; Toshinori Kondo, trumpet, alto horn; Arthur Williams, trumpet; William Parker, bass; Denis Charles, drums. Disc 2: Kuhn, clarinet; Denis Charles, drums.

**Ordering info:** [nobusinessrecords.com](http://nobusinessrecords.com)



## Dave Anderson *Blue Innuendo*

LABEL 1 2003

★★★★½

New York-based saxophonist-composer Dave Anderson has pulled together a stellar lineup of fellow New Yorkers for the first recording under his own imprint, Label 1, and third album overall.

Organist Pat Bianchi, a longtime member of Pat Martino's trio, fuels this B-3 quartet session with his deep-grooving bass lines, warm comping and exhilarating right-handed runs, while fleet-fingered guitarist Tom Guarna plays Anderson's partner on the front line, executing tight unison and harmony lines on heads and contributing a number of outstanding solos, particularly on the surging modernist opener "Urban Dilemma," the exuberantly swinging "Redeye" and the funky "22 Doors." Veteran drummer and joyful swinger Matt Wilson elevates the proceedings with a flowing rhythmic pulse, hip syncopations and unpredictable accents on the kit.

Minnesota native Anderson alternates between soprano and tenor saxophones throughout this copasetic session, soaring on the former on the uptempo romp "Genealogy" and the lush ballad "Stuck," while digging deep on the latter on his burner "12-Step Blues," the mellow bossa nova-flavored "Parallel Present" and his ode to Joe Henderson, "The Phantom."

Wilson showcases his remarkably melodic approach to the kit on "Two-Tone Tune," while Bianchi delivers a combination of laid-back charm and pure burn on the title track, Anderson's tribute to organ great Joey DeFrancesco. Great chemistry, great playing and good vibes by a kindred crew.

—Bill Milkowski

**Blue Innuendo:** Urban Dilemma; 22 Doors; 12-Step Blues; Parallel Present; Genealogy; Stuck; The Phantom; Two-Tone Tune; Blue Innuendo; Redeye. (57:42)

**Personnel:** Dave Anderson, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Tom Guarna, guitar; Pat Bianchi, organ; Matt Wilson, drums.

**Ordering info:** [daveandersonjazz.com](http://daveandersonjazz.com)