

DOUBLE Bassist

D O U B L E

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YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE
A WEEK ON THE LSO ST LUKE'S
STRINGS ACADEMY SCHEME

RON CARTER

RUGGED INDIVIDUALIST

UNDERHAND OR OVERHAND
WHICH BOW GRIP IS BEST?

PULL-OUT SUPPLEMENT: GRADUATE COURSES 2007

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Miloslav Gajdos

Both pieces have been altered enough to make the tracks engagingly new yet still familiar. The bass holds a traditional role supporting the front-line, and when called upon solos with an even, woody tone. I wasn't able to view the video on my iBook and there is no information given on what you might need to do so. Otherwise, Teepe has organised a very good CD and it is worth getting it if you can find it. **DH**

Which Way Now

Harry Miller's Isipingo

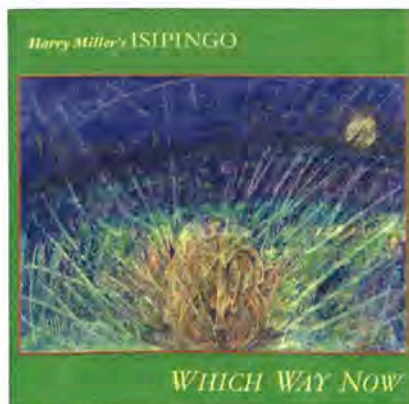
Harry Miller (db)

Nick Evans (tbn), Mongezi Feza (tpt), Mike Osborne (asax), Keith Tippett (pf), Louis Moholo (drum)

Cuneiform RUNE 233

Bassist Harry Miller was born in South Africa, but became a key figure of 1970s British jazz, working with John Surman, Mike Westbrook, Keith Tippett, Mike Osborne, and Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath. He co-founded the Ogun label, while his group Isipingo was a smaller-scale, more straight-ahead version of the gloriously free, kwela-influenced Brotherhood. That's not in any way to diminish its achievement – and what a line-up the group had. It's heard to magnificent effect on *Which Way Now*, a well-recorded radio concert from Bremen in November 1975, featuring four long tracks – the group only released one album during its lifetime, so this is an important addition.

Miller wrote all the compositions. He really powers the ensemble throughout, but the standouts for me are the third and final tracks. The modal vamp *Eli's Song* is a minimal composition, but what a springboard for improvisation. We're in Coltrane-ish territory – but with a distinctive township take – from the opening flourish. Miller then begins the



vamp and we're on a voyage of impassioned improv. Keith Tippett's fluid Tyner-inflected solo is followed by the bassist's breathless, tumbling torrent of ideas. The concluding title track is a boppish number which gives a taste of Miller's furious arco playing. Harry Miller was only 42 at the time of his tragic death in 1983 following a car crash, a huge loss to jazz and improvised music. **AH**

Tarabuk

Tiziano Zanotti (db)

Marco Lo Russo (accdn)

Velut Luna CVLD 133

An eclectic duo project from Bologna, Italy, *Tarabuk* features two young musicians on double bass and piano accordion. Each has contributed five



compositions, and the recording is equally balanced – the bass is as prominent and as eager to take the lead as the accordion.

In the absence of percussion, Tiziano Zanotti's bass enjoys taking full rhythmic responsibility, both pizz and arco. In his ebullient *XA* both players burst into a bout of percussive tapping and slapping, nicely integrated into the piece. Marco Lo Russo's title track blends arco bass and accordion left-hand bass notes into an impressive hymn-like sequence, before launching into an earthy, Mediterranean rhythm workout, the bass arco throughout. *Afternoon In Solo* is a charming song-like melody, embodying the drift of a post-prandial daydream. Both players have fun and fireworks with *Biagio*, presumably an homage to the Italian defensive midfielder footballer.

The writing is in a modern and melodic, jazz-flavoured style, with plenty of improvisation. The playing is fluent but not particularly adventurous – although admittedly the restraint of their playing is often beautiful and effective. Sometimes the pair seem to favour caution, out of a desire to be liked, rather than stretching into more challenging areas. Lo Russo's accordion frequently assumes a tinge of Argentinean tango, and more of Astor Piazzolla's fiery risk-taking would be welcome. Bassist Zanotti claims an interest in Indian and Japanese music, but there's little evidence of it on this pleasant album. **CB**

CDs – a contact list

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