

TIM WHITEHEAD PICTURES FROM AN EXHIBITION COLOUR BEGINNINGS



Saxophonist and composer **Tim Whitehead**, in collaboration with award winning poet **Alan Franks** and BBC Jazz Award winning singer **Ian Shaw**, is creating a series of songs and sound images, responding to the late works of the painter **JMW Turner** known as "**Colour Beginnings**".

At the heart of the new performance will be Tim's quartet featuring **Liam Noble** (piano), **Oli Hayhurst** (bass) and **Milo Fell** (drums and percussion) with of course **Ian Shaw** on vocals. The music will be interspersed with film taken at various locations which

inspired Turner's paintings. The performances of the work will also be accompanied by projections of the paintings.

In January this year, thanks to a grant from the Leverhulme Trust, Tim was appointed "**Artist in Residence**" at **Tate Britain** where he will be able to explore in depth the work of this great painter. Tim has had a lifelong love of painting and visual art, both as an observer and practitioner and has a strong tonal and textural relationship between these inspirational works and sound in music.

A particular characteristic of these pictures is the economy with which Turner used paint to depict form. Many view them as the first impressionist paintings, depicting the power of the atmospheric peculiar to English Landscape.

The Colour Beginnings work and the sketch books and oil sketches reveal Turner's experiments in colour and form and the economy and power of his responses to light, weather and the environment.



The collaborators will explore these issues in music, words and sounds, visiting the exhibited works and researching the archives at Tate Britain, visiting the locations that Turner depicted in the works and responding to them in improvised musical and lyrical sketches. These site visits will be recorded on sound and film, which will be used in performances, some of which we hope take place at venues near the original locations. Tim has developed techniques related to this way of working in several previous projects over a period of years. In 1984 he toured a multi-media work **English**

People-The Subterranean Life at Richmond Lock And Other Locations for East Midlands

Arts, which included original music, paintings and narration of words and poetry. **Silence Between Waves** (Ronnie Scott's Jazz House Label) began as a project based on and about the natural environment of the Island of St Agnes, 30 miles south west of Cornwall in the Atlantic and was funded by The Arts Council Of England. In **Nine Sketches of England For Solo Saxophone** commissioned by Jazz Umbrella with awards from the Arts Council Of England, Tim toured locations in England and transcribed improvisations recorded spontaneously at the sites, which he performed at the London Jazz Festival and others. In 1998 he won the Andrew Milne Award for Jazz and wrote **Soundtracks** again working from improvisations, this time in response to researches into the lives of his mentors in the National Jazz Archive. In the same year he was commissioned to write **Heart And Soul** for the 30th anniversary of Jazz North East, improvising the title track with co-writer Pete Jacobsen in the Corner House, their principal venue. Whitehead returned to landscape for **A Third View Of Annet** (an uninhabited island bird sanctuary in The Scillies) featured on the album **Tides** with the Homemade Orchestra, released in 2002 (HMR048).

TIM WHITEHEAD

Tim Whitehead was born in Liverpool in 1950, the son of one of the original writers of Dennis the Menace in the children's comic, The Beano. One of his first public performance was as solo clarinettist in his school orchestra's rendition of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, conducted by his school friend, the now knighted, Sir Simon Rattle. From this promising musical beginning, Tim decided to follow a career in Law, but was pulled back to music, and more specifically jazz, soon after qualifying.

During his career, Tim has played extensively throughout the UK and Europe, and more recently in the USA with American pianist **Phil DeGreg**. In the 70s he toured with **Ian Carr's Nucleus** and **Graham Collier Music** and won the **Young Jazz Musicians of the Year Award** with his own band **South of the Border** in 1977. In the 80's he was a member of the groundbreaking big band **Loose Tubes**, and continued to develop his own music, recording for Spotlite Records and Editions EG - **English People** (1983) and **Decision** (1987) with his own bands, featuring at different times **John Parricelli**, **Django Bates**, **Nic France** and **Pete Jacobsen**. In the 90's he recorded **Authentic** and **Silence Between Waves**, on Ronnie Scott's Jazz House Label with **Dave Barry**, **Pete Jacobsen** and **Arnie Somogyi**, and received **The Andrew Milne Award for Jazz**, as well as several other commissions during this period. In 1999 Tim released **Personal Standards**, an album of soul and pop tunes arranged for jazz quartet, which received widespread interest and critical praise including **Jazz Album of the Year in the BBC Music Magazine**, and led to an educational project at Trinity College of Music under the same title.

In 2000, Colin Riley and Tim won the **Peter Whittingham Award** to complete and record **Tides** with the **Homemade Orchestra**. This was the beginning of long term collaboration. Since then the Homemade Orchestra have toured extensively and received several awards and commissions as well as releasing their second album, **Inside Covers** in 2005.

In 2004 Tim founded the musicians' co-operative **WayOutWest**, which he has continued to chair since, presenting regular performances at the Ram Jam Club in Kingston and at local theatres as well as workshops and discussion groups.

Early in 2005 Tim toured with the award-winning Italian pianist Giovanni Mirabassi. This led to the release of their album **Lucky Boys** in 2006 and since then they have continued to work together both in the UK and Europe. Also during this period, Tim premiered **Landscape with Birds**, a saxophone concerto by Colin Riley, with the Orchestra Viva.

In November 2007 he featured with **BBC New Generations artist Gwilym Simcock** in The Free Thinking Festival at St George's Hall in Liverpool, recorded live for BBC Radio 3, also collaborating with Gospel singer Jennifer Johns on his own piece 'Let Her Rave'.

In December 2007 Homemade records released **Too Young To Go Steady**, a live recording of a performance at the Pizza Express Jazz Club in London, which received four star reviews in The Guardian, Jazzwise, The Birmingham Post, The Manchester Evening News and was awarded 29 out of a possible 30 by "The Jazz" radio station.

Tim is currently working with Colin Riley and The Homemade Orchestra on a series of concerts featuring "Nonsense" poetry of **Children's Laureate Michael Rosen** to original scores. The project features Michael himself reading the poems and is currently on tour following amongst others a performance at The Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre on November 23rd 2008 as part of The London Jazz Festival.

'There are many fine tenor players on the current British scene but Tim Whitehead is undoubtedly one of the best we have' **Peter Lund - Crescendo**

'He is a prodigious tenor player whose graceful compositions always rise above the mere technicalities of the conservatoire... Amid the crowd of anonymous, garrulous and hard-edged tenor saxophonists, Tim Whitehead's music is marked by a sense of grace and economy.' **Clive Davis, The Times**

"...Some of the most beautiful music you will hear this year... has the hairs standing on the back of your neck. Whitehead has a highly personal, always gorgeous sound on tenor and an infinite vocabulary - in a country of fine saxophonists he is one of the finest." **Peter Bacon, Jazz CD of the Week, Birmingham Post, Oct 2002 *******

IAN SHAW



Ian Shaw is regarded as the leading male UK Jazz Vocalist, confirmed by his **2004 BBC Radio 3 Jazz Vocalist of The Year** Award and wide critical acclaim. He has been involved in major recording projects on the work of Rodgers and Hart, Duke Ellington and, most recently, Joni Mitchell the inspiration for his recent debut recording for Linn Records "Drawn To All Things". He has recorded with **Joe Lovano, Cedar Walton, Bobby Hutcherson, Ray Brown, Mark Murphy and the Brodsky String Quartet**. He has toured extensively throughout the world, appearing many times on Winton Marsalis' home territory, **The Lincoln Center in New York**. He has also appeared at **The Hanoi Opera** and Ho Chi Minh City Opera and in **"Jerry Springer-The Opera"**.

"Our finest singer. Marvellous" **Time Out**

"He has few rivals" **Sunday Times**

"One of the contemporary scene's class acts" **The Guardian**

ALAN FRANKS

Alan has written more than 100 songs. Along with the Fairport Convention performances of "The Wishfulness Waltz" many of his songs have been covered by other artists: the Irish singer Joe Giltrap regularly plays "GI's Lament," and the guitar virtuoso Martin Simpson has featured "The Frozen South Atlantic" in many of his sets. As well as the songs, Alan is the author of about a dozen plays, several of which have been produced in the London fringe. For many years Alan has worked with *The Times*, as a columnist, diarist and feature writer. During this time he has published and read on BBC Radio 4 a collection of his columns, and written a comic novel set in the newspaper world on the eve of the technological revolution; one national reviewer described this as a cross between the styles of Flann O'Brien and Kingsley Amis. For *The Times* he has interviewed a large number of writers, artists, musicians and performers of all kinds, including Paul Simon, Lou Reed, David Bowie and Leonard Cohen. Alan won the inaugural Wigtown Festival Poetry Prize 2005, The Petra Kenney Prize 2003, awarded by poet laureate Andrew Motion; the Plough Prize, 2005, judged by "Bard of Barnsley" Ian Macmillan, Southport International Poetry Prize 2005.

**TATE BRITAIN AND ARTIST IN RESIDENCE
TIM WHITEHEAD**

The Tate Gallery opened to the public in 1897. In its current form today, Tate operates four galleries in London, Liverpool and St Ives; a fifth site, Tate Online, and a storage facility in south London. Tate holds the national collection of British art from 1500 to the present day and international modern and contemporary art from 1900. Tate cares for and displays a total of over 67,000 artworks of outstanding quality, diversity and significance, and provides educational resources and activities for all ages,

backgrounds and abilities. The organisation's stated mission is to increase public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of British, modern and contemporary art.

Tate Britain is the world's centre for the understanding and enjoyment of British art, which it works actively to promote nationally and internationally. Launched in 2000, Tate Modern has become one of the world's leading museums of modern international art, and has attracted more than twice the number of anticipated visitors. Plans are now being developed to increase the physical capacity of Tate Modern, with the additional space planned primarily for display and learning purposes. Tate Liverpool, which opened in 1988, has a programme of displays of the permanent collection and temporary exhibitions focusing on modern and contemporary art. Launched in 1993, Tate St Ives promotes art associated with the region and has a complementary programme of displays and exhibitions. Tate Online - Tate's fifth site - is now the UK's leading art website and offers images of 60,000 works in the collection. For Tate's Southwark store, plans are currently being drawn up to establish a state-of-the-art National Art Collections Centre that will provide additional storage, new facilities for Conservation, and space for educational activities and displays. In 2007 the Tate family of galleries received over 7 million visitors and Tate Online currently receives in excess of 1.5 million unique visitors each month, a figure which is rising every year.

The Turner Bequest, housed at Tate Britain, represents the largest collection of work by J.M.W. Turner anywhere in the world. Formed from the contents of the artist's studio, the Bequest includes not only finished paintings, but also thousands of preparatory watercolours, drawings and sketchbooks. One such group is the so-called 'Colour Beginnings', experimental watercolour studies which would have been virtually unknown during Turner's lifetime. Generally comprised of broad, loose wet-in-wet washes these works were not intended for sale or exhibition but played a key role within the artist's working practice. Some establish the preliminary tonal structure of a composition, whilst others experiment with chromatic relationships, technical processes or conceptual forms. Despite being informal and under-developed, these studies reveal Turner's inherent understanding of pure tone and colour, freed from naturalistic representation. They have inspired many modern and contemporary visual artists including David Hockney and Mark Rothko (the latter will be the focus of a forthcoming Tate exhibition in 2009).

The majority of the 'Colour Beginnings' follow a repeated structure where the paper is divided into two distinct elements of sky above and land or sea below. The line of the horizon bisects the picture plane, imposing a natural structure and rhythm around which to centre colour and form. The potential for variety within this basic formula is infinite. By combining artistic intuition with technical skill and discipline the 'Colour Beginnings' represent both a creative and an intellectual act, analogous to that used in the process of jazz improvisation, where the narrative of improvisation can often develop by responding to and developing a spontaneous statement, defined within a given harmonic or rhythmic structure. Similarly, experimentation with tonal structure and relationships has been at the heart of the development of jazz and improvised music. It is this relationship between the use of tonality and texture in creating atmosphere and meaning in music (and painting) that has been a major interest throughout Tim Whitehead's career to date.

Working with Tate Research Tim will create and perform music in response to the 'Colour Beginnings'. The compositions, workshops and performances emerging from the residency will result in an original and engaging body of work in sound, music and video. In the public performances the music will be played alongside projections of Turner's works, film and photographic images taken at the actual locations which Turner was responding to and depicting in his landscapes. There will also be a number of interactive workshops held at Tate sites which will allow the public to actively participate in the project. Finally, the work will be made available to Tate for dissemination via Tate Online

The 'Colour Beginnings' artist's residency is a truly unusual endeavour, seeking to reveal subtle connections between two vastly different art forms. In the nineteenth century the work of revered giants such as Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Veronese and Titian were often considered the ultimate criterion against which British art of the time was subsequently assessed. During his lifetime, Turner deliberately sought to raise the status of landscape painting to equal that of history painting, and his work represented a contemporary challenge to that of the Old Masters. The proponents of the emerging European jazz improvisation scene today are currently engaged in a similar process, as for many years exponents of the art have been measured against the quality of the twentieth century American canon. The Colour Beginnings residency will investigate how these similar approaches have affected the development of both Turner's work and European jazz, in the dual quest for artistic experimentation and a personal expression of the universal. Both Tate and Tim Whitehead believe that the spontaneous force evident in Turner's work has the potential to enhance and inform the improvisational jazz compositions that Tim Whitehead wishes to create, research and perform.