



Steve Cohn by Wicher Donga

Both Jason and Tom were individually auditioned for this Quartet and the music was very fluid. Fred Hopkins was the original bassist and at first I was auditioning vibes instead of French horn, but Fred and I discussed it and came up with French horn. Vincent Chancey was originally hired but he had a gig. His playing was even more Jazzy. Varner's interest in modern harmony and extended techniques interested me, but it was the musical connecting that convinced me. This quartet brings a traditional and abstract combination which I feel adds to the depth.

*Are there times when you are less than satisfied with this process of Free improvisation? On your trio date with Thurman Barker and Fred Hopkins (Ittekimasu, ITMP Records, September 1987), the process is quite organic and flowing.*

Most Artists dedicated to the highest ideals will always become frustrated with the path they're on and put it to the test as well as completely change it or expand upon it. I was recently in Europe and Chicago playing with some new players. I still find improvisation with no pre-instruction a way to create great music. And when I'm collaborating with Artists who have some pre-instruction, I'm always willing to try. As long as I continue to play totally improvised, I will only do it with interest.

Rather than pre-instruct the musicians or conduct their activities, I would rather create situations where the instrumentation or sound

source information may be strange, but the Artist can freely decide how to add to the creation.

In the case of large amounts of sound being involved, I may choose to share my vision of how I see what we're doing and the structure I am challenging. With larger amounts of sound it helps to bring things conceptual to the simplest common denominator. Like teaching, one must explain the unexplainable in the most simplest terms.

I do not like being shushed or overly controlled by other Artists I'm working with. And if given written material or using written material of my