

ALAN LEWINE BIO

(ALSO AVAILABLE AT musicians.allaboutjazz.com/alanlewine)

Bassist/composer Alan Lewine, relocated to Philadelphia a few years ago, where he has recently married and reopened Owlsong Productions with his wife, Spanish soprano Ana María Ruimonte. They have already released two CDs in 2014: Ana Maria Diaz - Arded, Corazon, Arded (www.CDBaby.com/cd/AnaMariaDiaz) featuring Ana Maria singing Spanish baroque romanzas from the 17th Century, and Owlsong - Sampler (www.CDBaby.com/cd/Owlsong) with a variety of material, new, previously unreleased and rereleased.

Working with Ana María as SOPRANO MEETS CONTRABASS, Lewine has become more active since 2014. SOPRANO MEETS CONTRABASS has performed in Philadelphia, New York, Colorado, Granada, Sigüenza, Madrid and elsewhere in Spain, as well as the Netherlands, Belgium and Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in Israel. Lewine says "This project has reignited my creative interest in music, with its highly innovative combination of Sephardic, jazz, classical, Latin American and flamenco influences. I'm excited to be creating new arrangements and new approaches to my instrument!"

Lewine also performs and has recorded all styles of jazz from dixie to avant garde, blues, afropop, salsa, samba, as well as contemporary classical and flamenco-influenced music. He has recently embarked on an exploration of the Sephardic tradition, too. It all flows through his unique sensibility as a player and composer.

Lewine first took up the string bass in 1978. Though he began musical studies on piano at age 6, he was never formally trained on the bass. He learned primarily by playing. "Most of my early lessons were from pianists or guitarists who would yell at me when I played a wrong

chord or drummers like the one who actually once threw his sticks at me when I messed up the beat.”

Milt “the Judge” Hinton, whom Lewine first met in 1982, was a principal teacher and mentor. Leroy Vinnegar was also a great inspiration when they frequently crossed paths around Portland, OR in the early 90s. More recently, John Clayton has provided crucial input and learning. Lewine has received “green room” lessons and encouragement from the likes of Ray Brown, Harvie Swartz, Major Holley, Lynn Seaton and Bruce Gertz as well.

Lewine has worked with many of the great names in jazz over the years, in all styles. He made numerous appearances with “alto madness” saxophonist Richie Cole. He has also performed with clarinetists Eddie Daniels and Kenny Davern, sax masters Joe Henderson, Clifford Jordan to Henry Threadgill, Jim Pepper and Vinnie Golia, vocalists such as Anita O’Day, Sheila Jordan and Mose Allison, pianists including Ronnie Matthews and George Cables, drummers Gus Johnson and Butch Miles, guitarists Barney Kessel and Herb Ellis, young turk Roy Hargrove, and old masters Sweets Edison, Stephane Grapelli and Carl Fontana and others. Once he played duets with Charlie Haden.

Favorite bassists include the usual suspects - Milt Hinton, Jimmy Blanton, Ray Brown (“the killer groove”), Scott LaFaro, Charlie Haden, Ron Carter, Jaco Pastorius, and Dave Holland, a list by no means exhaustive. Charles Mingus, Krzysztof Pendercki, Duke Ellington, Frank Zappa, John Cage, Thelonious Monk, Joaquin Rodrigo, Iannis Xenakis, Tito Puente, Tomás Marco, Count Basie and Edgar Varese have been prime influences as band leaders and composers.

His interest in all forms of musical and cultural expression has led Lewine also to study traditional Ghanaian (Ewe) percussion with Obo Addy, Balinese gamelan with I Nyoman Suadin (and Lewine performed

(usually playing the mid-bass xylophone-like Jegogan) in Suadin's Gamelan Mitra Kusuma around the Washington DC area on and off from 1999 through 2007). He studied and recorded traditional delta blues with Johnny Never (the CD "Never Home"). Lewine also studied composition formally with William Wood.

Alan Lewine dropped out and "retired" from full time musicianship in 1994, went to law school, and now works as a transactional and policy attorney with one of the world's major cable companies, focusing on technology transactions, Wi-Fi and the Internet backbone, as well as eCommerce and copyright law, policy and licensing. Before recently relocating to Philly, he still composed and performed occasionally around DC, including with with the Alan Lewine Xtet, the Afro-Jazz Explosion, and as a side man. He's currently developing musical possibilities in SE PA. He currently maintains a low profile as a musician but still performs on the local Philly scene.

Awards

Over a dozen NM-MIC (New Mexico Music Industry Coalition) nominations in the late 80s for best album (jazz), best composition (jazz), album of the year, best producer (jazz), best cover (jazz), etc.

SOME PRESS CLIPS

"Lewine possesses a dark sound, powerful and foreboding." - Jazz Scene

"...a composer and a scholar in many of jazz's many- splendored forms..." - Wayne Thompson, Jazz Society of Oregon

"...graceful bass work..." - Willamette Weekly

SOPRANO MEETS CONTRABASS Another great review from the Music Librarian of the Philadelphia Free Library: "I just wanted to thank all of

you for the amazing concert on Sunday. This was the first pop-up where, not only did we fill up all the seats we had out there, but we even exhausted the reserves I had hidden in the wings. And since people kept wanting to stay to listen, I had to call Buildings Department to bring up another cart of chairs mid-concert. That's how much people wanted to stick around to hear you! Yes, excellent sound, excellent show. Thanks to all three of you".

"Great mix of opera and jazz"

"Op donderdag 11 december trad de Amerikaanse bassist Alan Lewine op. Lewine mag bij niet iedereen bekend zijn, maar hij speelde eerder met grote namen als Roy Hargrove, Joe Henderson en Anita O'Day. In Brebl gaf hij een uniek dubbelconcert dat niet alleen avontuurlijk, maar ook zeer contrastrijk was. Helaas was er maar weinig publiek in de zaal, waarop Lewine grapte: 'Altijd fijn om te zien dat er meer publiek is dan het aantal muzikanten op het podium'.

"Voor de pauze trad Lewine op met een trio dat momenteel door Europa toert onder de naam Soprano Meets Contrabass, met de Spaanse klassiek geschoolde zangeres Anna Maria Diaz en cajon-speler Victor Monge Barrios. Diaz, inmiddels getrouwd met Lewine, maakt in Spanje en de Verenigde Staten deel uit van verschillende operagezelschappen en werkte onder andere met Placido Domingo en Montserrat Caballé, Victor Monge Barrios behoort in Spanje tot de flamenco scene. Deze minimale bezetting bracht middeleeuwse Spaanse liederen met een mix van klassiek, jazz en Latijns-Amerikaanse muziek. Lieder over liefde, maar ook over het dagelijks leven in de middeleeuwen. Een bijzonder concert, waarbij Lewine zijn veelzijdigheid als bassist liet horen.

"Na de pauze schoven lokale grootheden Michiel Braam, Bo de Graaf en Fred van Duijnhoven aan. Braam en Lewine hadden elkaar al eens ontmoet tijdens een jazzfestival in de Verenigde Staten. Met

percussionist Monge Barrios speelde het gelegenheidsquintet een opzwepende set met composities van Lewine en Braam. Het was alsof de band al jaren bij elkaar was, zo goed leek men elkaar aan te voelen. In het nummer Yesterdays, grapte Braam nog door in zijn energieke solo frasen van James Brown's Sexmachine te verweven."

—Ugenda.nl review, December 2015

"I loved it!Ana sang beautifully (very rich tone) and Alan sounded terrific [on bass]." - Suzanne Cloud, jazz singer and Executive Director of JazzBridge.org

"I was really blown away on Sunday. SOPRANO MEETS CONTRABASS presents a very energized, cohesive and altogether enjoyable listening experience! The percussion is great and adds to the drama and story. Ana Maria's voice was riveting and lovely and Alan's bass was restrained, poignant and agile.... it all mixed together in a fabulously entertaining way." - John R. Dorchester, film producer/director (MediaDog Films) and blues musician (a/k/a Johnny Never)

From reviews of "Alan Lewine Sextet: Original Jazz" (1986): "... an intelligent and well paced set and makes for good listening." - Cadence Jazz Magazine reviewing "Alan Lewine Septet: Original Jazz"

"Outstanding, tight and tasty mainstream jazz. The loose, intelligent excitement of the Septet's playing is reminiscent of the VSOP Quintet of former Miles sidemen." - Albuquerque Journal

From reviews of Alan's "Red Hot Peppers: Swinging Dixie" (1989):
"They not only know how to do Dixie, they do it well. ...quality stuff by any standard." - The Mic Line -'New Mexico's Monthly Music News'
"Sizzling Dixieland and strong mainstream jazz..." - Albuquerque Journal

From reviews of "Alan Lewine Xtet: Freewheeling" (1991): "The music was held together by the tight trio of Brown, Lewine and Haines, and carried forward by the unadorned playing of guitar master Brown" - Mic Line Monthly

From reviews of "BassResponse" (1999): "The quartet... writes and performs music that frees the soul, moves the mind to wonder at possibilities, but most of all, sings hymns of exaltation in these most needy of times." - Phillip R Egert

"BassRespänse delivers a sonority rich in the lower frequencies..."
"...the quartet enables a constantly changing stream of ideas" - Nils Jacobson, allaboutjazz.com