



Andy Milne & Gregoire Maret Duo debut album *Scenarios* to release June 2007

Cinematic piano/harmonica duets prove Milne and Maret are among today's most notable jazzers

"These two musicians are seminal representatives of today's jazz" – Toots Thielemans

New York, NY (May 11, 2007) Pianist **Andy Milne** and harmonica player **Gregoire Maret** – two of today's most accomplished and progressive instrumentalists – are releasing their first duo project, **Scenarios** (OS 507), on ObliqSound in June 2007. The album first hits stores June 26 in the USA, with release dates around the world to be announced on www.obliqsound.com.

Scenarios is an otherworldly yet lovely and accessible 11-track collection of interpretations, compositions and improvisations. For Maret, a sought-after player whose open musicality has inspired artists as far reaching as **George Benson**, **Cassandra Wilson**, **Me'Shell Ndegeocello**, **Little Jimmy Scott**, **Bebel Gilberto** and the **Pat Metheny Group** to seek him out, it marks an opportunity to begin establishing the shape of his own music. For Milne, a proponent of **Steve Coleman**'s highly influential M-Base jazz ideology, it offers a chance to explore his compositions in a fresh context. Maret and Milne have been playing together since the late '90s in Milne's band, **Dapp Theory** and have often performed duets on the bandstand. With this innovative recording of duets, the friends are thrust into a journey of mutual self-discovery and boundary stretching.

When project producer and ObliqSound co-founder **Michele Locatelli** first heard the two perform he was eager to document their explorations. "They have such different personalities," Locatelli explains. "Andy has a very avant-garde sense and tends to stretch, whereas Gregoire is a romantic. I was intrigued by the contrast and urged them to explore it further. Each improvisation was so evocative, suggesting certain frameworks. Images were conjured like scenes from a film and set the pace for the project."

"It was fascinating to see whole pieces emerge from what we were creating," Milne reflects on some of the spontaneous works. "Gregoire's playing differently and I'm finding new timbres and techniques to accompany him. I'm used to playing in ensemble situations where some sounds wouldn't even be audible – here I got to play *inside* the piano. And, for instance, on "House of Fisher," there's a spot in the beginning where Gregoire is just playing the switch on his harmonica – he's not even blowing. It's out of this world."

When Maret came to the New York from Switzerland to continue music studies, connecting with Milne set him on a path out from under the familiar ideologies set forth by jazz harmonica pioneer **Toots Thielemans**. "Andy's world is very deep as far as the concepts of rhythm, harmony and melody, but very musical," Maret adds. "It fits my approach to music perfectly. I love a challenge, but it's also important that there be a strong musical statement. Andy and I are finding that balance between the heart and mind."

Alongside the probing improvisations are a version of **Dizzy Gillespie**'s "Con Alma" and a magical, unintended take on Henry Mancini's "Moon River" featuring emerging guest vocalist **Gretchen Parlato**. "A melody that Gregoire was playing over some of Andy's suspended chords suggested the song, so I proposed adding Gretchen," Locatelli reveals. "Her voice has such a delicate, intimate sound. It sounds so natural, you'd swear she'd always been there."

Milne and Maret plan to tour in support of *Scenarios*, promising scintillating nights of one-on-one musical communication. At the same time, Andy will have another new CD available, entitled *Dreams and False Alarms*, a solo piano project on Canadian label Songlines, and Gregoire will soon embark upon his first project as leader. Be sure to be there for the springboard to it all this summer – with Andy Milne and Gregoire Maret's *Scenarios*.

For one-sheet and additional press information, see www.obliqsound.com/press

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