

Matthias Lupri

Reviews

SAME TIME TWICE



"Vibraphonist Matthias Lupri has gained international attention because of his mastery of this percussion instrument, a rare one in the jazz idiom, but one that he induces to speak in a beautiful array of musical colors and textures. On **Same Time Twice**, the Berklee graduate teams up with guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel, saxophonist Mark Turner, acoustic bassist Reuben Rogers, and drummer Gregory Hutchinson, all excellent leaders in their own right.

"But despite the giant-sized talent of this ensemble, there are no conflicts of jazz interests here, just splendid complementing and soloing and audacious improvising. This highly listenable straight-ahead jazz collection boasts 11 brand new songs, all written by Lupri and packed with the significant vibrato and production concepts that he has gleaned over the years from such master vibists and educators as Gary Burton and Lionel Hampton. However, this stellar set is played in the ensemble's own voice, with a variation on the typical vibraphone sound, as Lupri runs through a pickup and guitar amp.

"Same Time Twice" opens the program, and includes excellent simultaneous solos from Rosenwinkel and Hutchinson over the ending vamp. Throughout the song, they set a pattern of sound replicated by the group in amplitude and pitch, even though the group's improvisations are independent of each other. The group's approach to chromatic harmony gives the impression of exotic origins on the dulcet-titled "Jade." Lupri's lyricism and modulations form its beautiful melody and sentimental tone, while Hutchinson and Rogers supply just the right tempo and emotion. "You Just Never Know" and "After Hours" are pensive ballads that are both provocative and soothing, and yet still entertain. Overall, **Same Time Twice** exceeds the expectations and satisfaction heard on Lupri's previous two releases, **Window Up Window Down** and **Shadow of the Vibe**, providing a continuum for Lupri's vibraphone and compositional values and creativity." *Paula Edelstein, All Music Guide (AMG)*

"While working as a heavy-metal drummer in touring Canadian rock bands during the 80's, Matthias Lupri harbored the secret desire of becoming a jazz musician. Having already learned the basics of jazz theory while studying piano and vibes at a college program in Calgary, he began leading a double life out on the road: shedding on vibes with Jamey Aebersold records by day while bashing the hell out his kit at night. Eventually, the decadent party atmosphere of the rock scene took its toll, and in 1990 Lupri checked into the Berklee College of Music to further his studies in jazz.

"Inspired by his vibes mentor, Gary Burton, Lupri began pursuing a jazz career in earnest, documenting his progress along the way on 1998's **Window Up, Window Down** and 1999's freewheeling **Shadow of the Vibe** (both on Chartmaker) with tenor saxophonist George Garzone and bassist John Lockwood of the Fringe. On his third outing as a leader, **Same Time Twice** (Summit), the 37 year old, German-born, Canadian-raised Lupri aligns himself with two forward-thinking colleagues in guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel and tenor saxophonist Mark Turner.

Bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Gregory Hutchinson, a longstanding rhythm tandem with Joshua Redman, bring a natural chemistry and precision aplomb to the composer's well-crafted originals. From the hushed introspection of the haunting ballad "After Hours" to the all-out burn of the aptly named "Release" to the luminous title track, Lupri and company forge a decidedly progressive path on this splendid disc.

"It's very open, lead-sheet music and the players can take it where it goes, which means it's going to change up a lot from night to night," Lupri says. "We just did a show with Greg Osby subbing for Mark Turner, and that was a whole new trip. That's the beauty of jazz. You can switch players in and out, and it takes it to a different space, which is ideally what you're trying to achieve when you're playing and writing music. To create a certain space that everyone can dig off of—the players and the audience—and see where it goes, what the story tells you".

"As engrossed as he currently is in jazz, don't look for Lupri to have any reunions with any of his former rock bands. "I didn't feel I was getting the musical nourishment I needed from playing heavy metal," he says. "And when I switched over to jazz, I felt a lot happier."

"These days Lupri's a very happy camper. *Bill Milkowski, Jazz Times "Hearsay" Article*

"I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Matthias Lupri has created a personalized approach to his instrument and to his music. Listen to other vibraphonists (admittedly a very small group of practitioners), and Lupri, who has been working on furthering his own still-unfolding musical statement, stands apart. For instance, while Stefon Harris in large part plays on marimba or vibes/marimba and experiments with changes of meter, or the qualities of silence even, Lupri creates music that reflects his state of mind during the composition process.

"The fact of Lupri's continuing dedication to creating new compositions and to mastering his instrument has contributed to his growth, which is perceptible on each of the three CD's that he has recorded so far. And the prediction that his talent will be recognized on a wider basis is coming true. His move to the Summit Records label coincides with a big leap in his career. It's appropriate that Summit, which records highly promising jazz talent at the start of their rapid ascent into widespread public consciousness, has added Lupri to its roster. Each time he has recorded, Lupri has notched up his career as he works with new voicings, deeper textures, entertaining melodies, increasingly complex insights and top-notch sidemen.

"Case in point: While Lupri recorded with musicians from Boston on his last CD, *Shadow of the Vibe*, he recorded *Same Time Twice* in New York with New York-based musicians, including two-thirds of Dianne Reeves' current rhythm section (minus Peter Martin). In fact, it's gratifying to hear Mark Turner and Kurt Rosenwinkel again, both open-minded musicians with their own sounds, particularly since Turner no longer records on Warner Brothers. That frees him to tour with Lupri throughout the Northeast states this winter.

"Recognizing that the attitudes of the musicians on his new CD are different from those on his previous CD, Lupri has written the tunes on *Same Time Twice* as a kind of suite, consistent in mood and tempo, as opposed to the breakneck speed of, say, George Garzone on "Fast Corners" of ***Shadow of the Vibe***. Not that the musicians of ***Same Time Twice*** can't turn a

few heads with fast changes either, but Lupri's intent on this CD is more thoughtful, with a broader listener appeal. The comparison between the two CD's is made, however, to emphasize Lupri's versatility, should *Same Time Twice*, with its wider distribution, be a listener's exposure to Lupri's music.

"The "suite" of *Same Time Twice* proceeds from the luminous at-once personal opening track, which is particularly suited to the sound of the vibes as the controlled unison lines of Turner and Rosenwinkel lead into whole notes held over four measures during which Lupri adds iridescent colors. The track is "particularly suited" because it attains a confident ease at once reassuring and engaging the listener. Fast-forwarding to the last track, a reprise of "After Hours," one finds the same state of meditation expressed by Turner's soprano sax over the sheen of gradually shifting chords laid down by Lupri, minus Rosenwinkel this time.

"As the CD moves through its first few numbers, though, Rosenwinkel moves from back-up and comping to a more prominent presence. On "Song of Change," his gales of introduction, seemingly opposed to the 12/8 sway of the melody, foreshadow his larger involvement later in the track as he pushes forward with a slight distortion, Rogers and Hutchinson taking his cue. "The Wish Song" is similar in its movement and in Rosenwinkel's ability to create pulse through anticipation of the beat, though he doesn't dominate the performance, as he does on "Song of Change," and though he performs acoustically, the purity of the strings' vibrations accompanying any his vocal undertone.

"Saucy" allows bass and drums to shine as Rogers and Hutchinson fill in the rests between the minimal three-note phrasing with crashing and throbbing energy, their percussiveness making plain the implicit restlessness of the tune implied by vibes, horn and guitar.

"Once again, Matthias Lupri, due to the abundance of his talent, has proven to be unpredictable as he makes sure that the music he puts forth is consistent with his concerns for quality and with the talents of the musicians he recruits--and that it is thematically consistent throughout the length of his recording." *Don Williamson, JazzReview.com*

"Matthias Lupri seemingly found his calling in life after hearing being indoctrinated to the music of vibist Gary Burton. A graduate of Boston's renowned Berklee School of Music, Lupri's finely honed craft shines in luminescent colors with his third release as a leader. He garners consummate support from the dynamic duo of saxophonist Mark Turner and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel. Furthermore, bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Gregory Hutchinson display bounds of creativity atop a polyrhythmic attack.

"Lupri demonstrates spider-like dexterity while toggling between a dry, rhythmic sound amid ringing overtones and a shrewd sense of the dynamic. On the opener, "Same Time Twice," he lays down a multifarious samba groove in concert with Rosenwinkel's expressive mid-toned electric lines and Hutchinson's crushing rhythmic forays. The soloists often partake in cheery unison choruses to coincide with a few heated swing vamps. Regardless of tempo, the musicians consistently maintain a groove. The piece titled "Release," is constructed upon Roger's pronounced ostinato, as the ensemble raises the bar thanks to the bassist's blazingly fast walking lines and Lupri's fluent runs. In addition, Rosenwinkel and Turner spin their now familiar magic during several passages. Hence, the quartet's synergy rings loud and clear. Chalk this one up as a top contender for 2002! Feverishly recommended..."
Glenn Astarita, allaboutjazz.com

"Lupri is a consummate bandleader, self facing enough to know when to leave center stage and to let the others do their jobs. Turner is simply outstanding, hewing to the '60s Blue Note line for the most part, but incorporating some daring and inventive Pharoanic motifs with a terrific sense of taste and timing. His snake-charmer soprano solo on "Song of Change" is particularly noteworthy. Lupri's compositional skills also deserve mention: the sidelong ballad "You Just Never Know" is just one among several standouts; it also features one of his most involving solos on the vibes. Winsome also, and showcasing some outstanding ensemble playing and soloing, is "The Wish Song." Lupri's swooping, dynamic solo here never crosses the line into mere showboating, but in service of the music he certainly gets his point across. This one deserves a wide audience and is a terrific example of how well-traveled forms are still full of vitality when placed in capable hands." *Robert Spencer, Cadence Magazine*
