



## SPIN CYCLE

Since joining forces to form **Spin Cycle** in Fall of 2016, drummer **Scott Neumann** and saxophonist **Tom Christensen** have been serving up an eclectic blend of jazz featuring original compositions by both musicians. Almost from the start, **Spin Cycle** has been busy touring and recording as well as performing in their hometown of New York City. The band can most often be heard at venues like Smalls in Greenwich Village or Bar Bayeux in Brooklyn, doing educational work at colleges or on the road playing at clubs like The Rex in Toronto and headlining at jazz festivals. On any given night, you might encounter the band playing an arrangement of Lesley Gore's "It's My Party", burning through a modal original a la Coltrane or playing something inspired by Herbie Hancock's funk explorations of the 1970's, all of it performed with the band's characteristic high energy and deep grooves.

Tom and Scott first played together in 1989 at a jam session at Neumann's apartment in Astoria, Queens, shortly after Christensen's arrival in New York. They were soon playing together at such hallowed clubs as Birdland, Visiones, The Village Vanguard and of course the legendary Augie's

on the upper westside. Having performed in all kinds of settings including with the **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra**, **Cecile McLorin Salvant**, **Maria Schneider**, **Joe Lovano**, **David Liebman**, the **Jazz Mandolin Project**, **Toshiko Akiyoshi**, the **Gil Evans Project**, and **Madeleine Peyroux's** touring group the co-leaders know how to dig deep, swing hard, and put a shine on a ballad.

In 2016, what might have seemed an obvious move to their followers—forming a band together—became obvious to Neumann. “I naturally thought of Tom. In addition to playing together, and playing with many of the same musicians, we’ve spent a lot of time backpacking and hiking together and just generally hanging out. He had tunes, I had tunes. They went well together because we share a lot of the same musical influences.”

Once they decided on the format of the band, getting **Pete McCann** on guitar was a no-brainer. Neumann has played with the Wisconsin native for more than 30 years, going back to their days at the esteemed music program at North Texas State (now the University of North Texas). And Christensen had played with the guitarist in **Maria Schneider's Jazz Orchestra**. **Phil Palombi**, a gifted bassist with whom Neumann had played in trumpeter **Bill Mobley's** big band during their four-year run at Smoke, was the final inspired piece to fall into place.

Born on August 18, 1962 in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, **Scott Neumann** fell in love with the drums when he was little, bashing away on a toy set. He was exposed to what we now call classic rock by his brother, who is eight years older than he. Jimi Hendrix's Woodstock version of “The Star Spangled Banner” stands out, as do songs by Bob Dylan and Janis Joplin. His brother also turned him on to New Wave bands like Talking Heads and Pretenders. Before long, Scott was “wrapping my ears around” the jazz-rock fusion of bands including Weather Report and Return to Forever.

Neumann went on to blossom at North Texas State. Recruited by **Tony Scherr**, who was playing bass with the **Woody Herman Orchestra** on his way to becoming a cog in **Bill Frisell's** bands, Neumann played with the “thundering herd” for a year before moving to New York in 1988.

In his early years in New York Scott played sessions at his apartment in Queens with Christensen as well as with such up-and-coming players as **Rick Margitza**, **Rich Perry**, **John Fedchock**, **Scott Wendholt**, and **Pete McGuinness**, whose big band he later joined. On his first solo album in 2006, **Osage County**, he led a quartet including pianist **David Berkman** and saxophonist **Sam Newsome**.

Scott quickly became a busy player on the New York scene playing with such luminaries as **Kenny Barron** and **Ben Allison**, Neumann also accrued impressive credits as a vocal accompanist (for **Ann Hampton Callaway**, among others), Broadway musician (he made *Swing!* swing), and instructor (he directs the drum studies program at Lehigh University).

**Tom Christensen** was born on December 27, 1961 in Ventura, California. Like Neumann, he was drawn to rock as a youngster—in his case the likes of the Beatles, Pink Floyd, and Paul Simon—as well as Country and Western hymns. He first became interested in jazz-rock fusion, and straight-ahead jazz, while attending high school in the Napa Valley. He frequented clubs in nearby San Francisco, where he heard such legends as Sonny Stitt, Dexter Gordon, and Art Blakey and stayed up late listening to the music on prized radio station KJAZ.

In what proved to be a milestone in Christensen's ongoing musical education, his school band director, who knew Joe Henderson's girlfriend, helped arrange for young Tom to take private lessons from the tenor saxophone great at Henderson's home in San Francisco.

“I’d go to his house in the late afternoon for a three-hour session,” said Christensen. “It was a pretty unique thing. Joe would teach me a solo he made up on the spot. He made me memorize it, lick by lick. Then he’d disappear for half an hour. It was like that every time, though I remember him showing up four hours late one night. He was super-smart, very soft-spoken, but a little mysterious.”

Christensen attended the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he studied classical music as well as jazz on both undergraduate and graduate levels and acquired degrees in performance. In 1989, he moved to the New York City area and recorded three solo CDs there: his 2000 debut, *Gualala*, and 2002 effort, *Paths* and *New York School* (2005), which features a work of his based on the poetry of Frank O’Hara and was commissioned by Chamber Music America.

For eight years, he was a member of the **Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra**, appearing on five of their albums. He also has played on such notable recordings as **Joe Lovano’s** *Celebrating Sinatra*, **Don Sebesky’s** *I Remember Bill*, **Rufus Reid’s** *Quiet Pride*, the **David Liebman Big Band’s** *Tribute to Wayne Shorter*, and **Ryan Truesdell and the Gil Evans Projects’s** *Lines of Color—Live at the Jazz Standard*. Tom is currently working with **Cecile McLorin Salvant** on her *Ogresse* project.

With its strong melodies, tight rhythms, intriguing textures, and sophisticated interplay, **Spin Cycle** has got everything covered. What makes the band special is how everything fits together—or, by intention, doesn’t. For listeners and band members alike, every tune is an adventure.

## Recent Press

### *About Spin Cycle III*

On Spin Cycle III, there are great solos from the first to the last groove, lots of groove and endless joy of playing.

*Koeln News, Germany*

A tight band with a high comfort level from years of playing together, exploring a range of musical styles, from the 1970s era Herbie Hancock-inspired "Butter Funk," to the spacious introspection of "Thin Ice," to the solemn reverence of "Prayer" and the cool, relaxed grooves of "Form IV" and "Fallacy." With Spin Cycle III, the waters remain crystal clear, as the group offers up their vision of their fine-tuned, distinctive modern jazz sound.

*Dan McClenaghan All About Jazz*

There is something here for everyone. The opening track "Churn," penned by Christensen is an absolute post-bop burner, matching his tenor saxophone with the ever nimble guitar work of McCann.

*Mark Corroto, All About Jazz*

About *Assorted Colors*

From the moment the group dives headfirst into the lead off track, the playful angular and hard-swinging “Break Tune”, the intensity never relents, until Christensen completes his exhilarating tenor workout on the athletic closer “Fit Bit”. Characteristics that made the group’s initial release so appealing – strong melodic hooks, rock solid grooves, advanced harmonies and aggressive, deftly executed improvisations – have been refined by two years of intensive touring and are displayed even more cohesively on “Assorted Colors”. Spin Cycle is on a roll with momentum to spare.

*Ed Enright, Downbeat*

Spin Cycle is one of freshest groups on the scene today. With a quartet composed of some of New York's best players, great solos abound from start to finish.

*Rochester City Newspaper*

About *Spin Cycle*

Spin Cycle’s self-titled debut CD is an all-original program of 10 tunes—six by Christensen and four by Neumann—that captivate with bright melodic lines, deep-seated grooves, catchy rhythmic devices and sophisticated harmony. Improvisations run wild, as soloists embrace aggressive and daring ideas from the realms of modal jazz, free-jazz, second-line and soul, not to mention good old-fashioned swing.

A cohesive unit that commands an exceptional stylistic range and exhibits a go-for-broke attitude, Spin Cycle has the potential to connect with a broader national audience as well as international listeners.

*Ed Enright, Downbeat*

This is one seriously high octane release hard charging, straight ahead jazz fans will love. With chops and energy to spare, this is a set that certainly knows how to hit all the right notes.

*Midwestrecord.com*

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