



# MICHAEL MUSILLAMI TRIO +2



## **MICHAEL MUSILLAMI TRIO +2**

Musillami's long-standing core trio, featuring bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller, with the addition of Jason Robinson on saxophones and flute, and Thomas Heberer on trumpet.

**👍👍** *Life Anthem* takes the listener on quite a journey with compositions that are, arguably, the finest of the guitarist's three-decade plus career. With his long-time rhythm section as well as two new companions, *Trio +2* is a formidable ensemble worthy of your attention.

—Step-Tempest / Richard Kamins **👍👍**

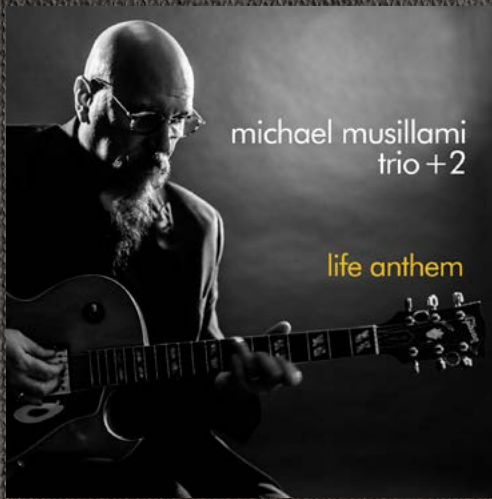
## **VIDEO LINKS:**

- [\*\*▶\*\* MM TRIO+2 \*\*LIFE ANTHEM\*\* VIDEO](#)
- [\*\*▶\*\* "VISIONS" LIVE, LAKEVILLE, CT](#)
- [\*\*▶\*\* "UNCLE FINO'S GARDEN" LIVE AT BIRDLAND](#)
- [\*\*▶\*\* "ROBERT PARIS" LIVE AT BIRDLAND](#)
- [\*\*▶\*\* POINT OF DEPARTURE INTERVIEW](#)

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Playscape Recordings is proud to release *Life Anthem* (PSR#091717), featuring veteran guitarist/composer Michael Musillami with his flagship trio. *Life Anthem* is Musillami's ninth Playscape Recordings release with the trio, featuring bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller. As he has done in the past, for this latest release Musillami augmented the trio with the addition of cornetist Kirk Knuffke and Jason Robinson on saxophones and flute.

"The MM Trio has been creating music since 2002, with our first release, *Beijing* being released in 2003," writes Musillami in his liner notes. "It has been, and continues to be, a wonderful journey filled with multiple tours to Canada and Europe, as well as our home in America. *Life Anthem* offers the trio in full bloom, fearless and on fire. The addition of Jason Robinson and Thomas Heberer punctuates our message in all CAPS!!!"

*Life Anthem* documents Musillami's journey back from sudden illness followed by a months-long recovery during which this music was composed. On June 8th, 2016 Musillami woke up with what he termed as a "crashing headache." After waiting two days with what he thought was a migraine, he found himself in a life or death situation after an ambulance ride to the ER followed by a flurry of tests which revealed not only a brain hemorrhage, but (oddly) an unrelated brain tumor.

"I opened and closed this record with the title tune 'Life Anthem', because it is an optimistic melody," writes Musillami. "For the opening track I asked each player to play this melody alone, their own way, as they think it should be played. All renditions were beautiful. The simplicity and warm tone Kirk achieved on his horn made for a perfect opener. The most beautiful things in life can be the most simple. We closed the set out with the full ensemble in a spirited, open and free reading of the melody, 'Life Anthem'."

"The music contained on this CD was written during late June, July and August of 2016 as I slowly recovered from my ordeal," writes Musillami. "I am happy to report that I am fine and better than ever."

★★★  
"Four Stars ★ ★ ★ ★"  
–Downbeat Magazine

"One of the most stimulating contemporary sets I've heard in a long time."  
–Nick Jones, Jazz Journal magazine

"It's one of the year's best recordings."  
–Jerome Wilson, All About Jazz

A recording not only of superb music but also a witness to hope and perseverance, *Life Anthem* truly delivers on the album's title. And we can all be grateful that Musillami, as he attests in the liner notes, is indeed "fine and better than ever."  
–Troy Dostert / AllAboutJazz.com

"Michael Musillami's music is a treasure, and we are fortunate that he came through his recent crisis unscathed."  
–Tim Niland, Jazz and Blues blog



**LIFE ANTHEM**





## MICHAEL MUSILLAMI

"His compositions develop in leisurely style from quiet simplicity to intricate complexity," writes Jack Massarik in Jazzwise, "and the ensemble playing is civilized, sophisticated and clean." The Boston Phoenix's Jon Garelick adds, "Musillami sounds familiar – this is swinging jazz guitar, after all – but not quite like anyone else."

Born and raised in California, Musillami studied with renowned guitarist Joe Diorio before moving to the east coast in the early 1980s, working primarily in organ trios led by Richard "Groove" Holmes and Bobby Buster, among others. In addition to paying his dues by sharing the stage with Junior Cook, Dewey Redman, and Curtis Fuller, Musillami became part of the circle of musicians connected to the Hillside Club in Waterbury, CT, throughout the 1980s.

Over his 35-year career, Musillami has led a variety of ensembles, releasing 23 CDs and touring throughout North America, Canada and Europe. Along with his longstanding flagship trio with bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller, he has earned critical notice as the leader of groups ranging from duo to octet, featuring such prominent collaborators as Mark Feldman, Kris Davis, Drew Gress, Thomas Chapin, and Matt Wilson.

**"A Modern-Day Jazz Master"**  
**–Roger Levesque, Edmonton Journal**

*Michael Musillami stands out in the crowded field of jazz guitarists for his ability to synthesize different traditions into a personal style. In Musillami's music, the bluesy hard-bop feeling of Grant Green meets the harmonic daring and the extended techniques of Eric Dolphy in an irresistible combination of down-home intimacy and sense of adventure.*

**–Ed Hazell, Boston Phoenix**

*"... scintillating and provocative, striking a delicate balance between thoughtful, through-composed music and intuitive, freewheeling extrapolation...while there is a definite sense of discipline inherent in each piece, there's also a prevailing sense of unfettered risk-taking".*

**–Bill Milkowski, The Absolute Sound**

**ABOUT**





**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI**



**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI TRIO  
W/ JASON ROBINSON**



**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI  
TRIO +2**



**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI  
& GEORGE SCHULLER**



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TRIO +2**



**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI TRIO**



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**MICHAEL MUSILLAMI  
TRIO**

