



Mark Dresser: *contrabass*
Gerry Hemingway: *percussion*
Phil Minton: *voice*

Bob Ostertag's SAY NO MORE

Say No More is a unique ensemble in the history of music. On the surface it is simply a superb quartet featuring four virtuosos. But through innovative use of computer technology, the group co-exists with a digital mirror of itself. Changing form as it becomes virtual, then flesh and blood, then virtual again, Say No More combines the emotional power of live performance with the technical power of computer music, making a hybrid that transcends both media.

Ostertag began Say No More by sending the three instrumentalists, separately, into studios with no instructions other than to record improvisations. Using a computer, Ostertag then took these tapes and reconstructed them into a "band" that played works he composed from fragments of the improvisations. The remarkable recording that resulted, *Say No More*, is possibly the first recording ever released by a band that had never played a note together.

Ostertag then returned this recording, along with a score, to the musicians. In effect they were challenged to re-learn their own playing, but as heard through the prism of Ostertag's work. When the musicians gathered to rehearse, the ensemble began to develop a life of its own through the direct interaction of with the musicians struggling to perform the computer-derived material.

In October 1993, the ensemble made a live recording at ORF-Vienna which was released as the band's second cd, *Say No More in Person*. It features the same compositions that Ostertag developed on the computer, performed in their transformed, concert rendition.

Ostertag put the live recording back into the computer, exploded it once again into little bits, and assembled a new work, *Verbatim*, released in 1997. The group premiered the live version of *Verbatim* at the Taktlos Festival in Switzerland, 1996. A performance in Gent Belgium was released in 2000 as the fourth and final cd, *Verbatim Flesh & Blood*.

Bob Ostertag was born in Albuquerque in 1957. He dropped out of music school after 2 years to tour with Anthony Braxton, then settled in New York City in 1978 and immersed himself in the emerging "downtown" music scene of the period. He left music in 1980/81 to work in Central America, and became an expert on the region, with writings published in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In 1988 he relocated to San Francisco and resumed his musical activity.

His instruments range from cutting edge digital devices to contraptions pieced together from tape recorders and helium balloons. His compositions include solo works for live electronics, the repertoire of his touring ensemble, and works for other ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet. His creative and unorthodox work with digital sampling and recording has established him as an influential pioneer in these media.

Ostertag's collaborators range from avant garders John Zorn and Fred Frith to dyke thrash rocker Lynn Breedlove and heavy metal star Mike Patton, the Kronos Quartet to drag diva Justin Bond. He is the recipient of numerous commissions, from the US National Endowment for the Arts, Austrian State Radio (ORF), Australian Broadcasting Corp. (ABC), and others. Eleven cd's of his compositions have been released. He has performed throughout North America, Europe, Japan, Australia, and the former Soviet Union.

Mark Dresser is also both a player and composer. His Arcado String Trio tours and records frequently. He has been a member of the Anthony Braxton quartet for several years, and has performed with Anthony Davis, John Zorn, Sunny Murray, and many others.

Gerry Hemingway leads his own quintet. He is a core member of the Anthony Davis Ensemble, performs in duo with saxophone virtuoso Earl Howard, and has worked with Derek Bailey, Leo Smith, Oliver Lake, and many others. He has two solo recordings, *Solo Works* and *Tubworks*.

Phil Minton has toured extensively in Russia, the United States, Australia and Europe. In 1987 he was voted Number One Male Singer in Europe by Jazz Forum Magazine's Top People Poll. He performs solo, and with the Mike Westbrook Band, Lindsay Cooper's Oh Moscow, the Grubenklang Orchestra, and the Dedication Orchestra.

