One-Sheet and Press Release

Speak with a Purpose

the new piano-bass duo EP from Billy Test and John Goldsby … swinging, melodic, modern mainstream jazz

Listen here:

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Release Date: June 16, 2023 — all platforms
UPC: 197188145026

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Track Listing:

“Speak with a Purpose” (Billy Test)
“Fizzle” (Billy Test)
“Isfahan” (Billy Strayhorn)
“Desch” (Billy Test)
“Raincheck” (Billy Test)

Billy Test: Piano
John Goldsby: Double Bass

Producer: Robin Meloy Goldsby
Recording and Mastering: Reinhard Kobialka, Topaz Studios Köln
Cover Photo: James Kezman
Cover Design: Julia Goldsby

Press Release:

Jazz pianist Billy Test and bassist John Goldsby announce the release of their second duo album, *Speak with a Purpose*. Building on the success of their previous EP, *I’ll Be Around*, the recording showcases the duo's versatility as they explore the jazz tradition, playing straight-ahead swing, hard bop, free jazz, and beyond. With a mix of original compositions from Billy Test and Billy Strayhorn, the duo celebrates the lush heritage of the piano/bass duo format with their unique and individual style.

As members of the Grammy-Award-winning WDR Big Band, Test and Goldsby explore a multitude of musical styles with some of the world’s best jazz musicians daily. They breathe and speak as one voice, showcasing harmonically rich music with a unique narrative. *Speak with a Purpose* contrasts the duo's previous release by presenting three new original compositions from Test alongside two beloved standards from the Strayhorn repertoire. The album highlights Test's diverse personality as a composer and pianist.

Goldsby says, “Billy Test has exploded on the scene in recent years, proving himself to rank among the top pianists and composers of the modern jazz piano scene.”

The title track, “Speak with a Purpose,” is a tribute to pianists Mulgrew Miller and Harold Mabern, two of Test's early mentors. The composition suggests a

hard bop tune from a ‘60s Blue Note record, but with a modern approach to harmony. Test and Goldsby display their groove and earthiness while playing on complex harmonic structures.

Mulgrew always told me, “All good music has to dance,” says Test. “Whether it’s Bach, Blues, or anything in between—people listen with their feet.”

“Fizzle,” a buoyant Test melody dedicated to pianist Paul Bley and saxophonist Ornette Coleman, pays tribute to the playful, innocent style pioneered by these masters. The title, “Fizzle,” refers to the fancy clothes Ornette wore towards the end of his life.

“Isfahan” is the first of two classic Billy Strayhorn compositions featured on this record. Originally called “Elf,” Strayhorn renamed the tune “Isfahan” after the Iranian city when he and Ellington composed the legendary Far East Suite. Test and Goldsby bring out the spirited nature of the melody, carrying the energy through explorative solos.

“Desch” is an homage to Test's background in classical music. The composition, a contrafact of a Dimitri Shostakovich Piano Prelude, borrows the master’s opulent harmonies as a format for Test’s composition. The relaxed, straight 8th groove allows the duo to craft a lavish atmosphere of texture and emotion.

“Raincheck” is a return to the Strayhorn canon, showcasing the duo at their swinging roots. Strayhorn originally composed Raincheck in 1942 for Duke Ellington during a rainy day in Los Angeles. The tune became best known after Duke recorded the tune on the album *And His Mother Called Him Bill*, Ellington's musical eulogy to Strayhorn.

Speak with a Purpose drops on all major streaming platforms on June 16, 2023. Test and Goldsby will perform album release concerts throughout 2023.

For more information about *Speak with a Purpose*, Bass Lion Publishing, or Test and Goldsby’s upcoming events, please visit their websites and follow them on social media.

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