

Roy Campbell

ROY CAMPBELL, JR. was born in Los Angeles in 1952 and grew up in New York. His musical journey began as a child with piano lessons, initially inspired by his father, whose trumpet was the first one he used. By the time he entered high school, young Roy was playing flute, recorder, and violin, and he began studying trumpet as a high-school senior.

As a young fan, Roy met Lee Morgan at the Bronxwood Inn in the late '60's, and in 1971 Roy began participating in Jazzmobile workshops, working with jazz masters Kenny Dorham, Howard McGhee, and Lee Morgan, as well as with Howard McGhee and Joe Newman in Jazz Interactions workshops. Later, as a trumpet major at Manhattan Community College, his professors were Leonard Goines and Dick Vance, and Roy studied music theory, arranging, and composition with Yusef Lateef, graduating in 1975 with an Associate's Degree in music.

By 1972, Roy was leading his own band, Spectrum; he had just turned 20. He was also in great demand as a side man and studio musician. During the time from 1974 to 1976, Roy co-led with Radha Reyes Botofasina a band called the Spirits of Rhythm, which included, at various times: Omar Hakim, Rodney Jones, Kenny Kirkland, J.T. Lewis, Zane Massey, Cecil McBee, Jr., Andy McCloud, Marcus Miller, Charles Neville (of the Neville Brothers), Ricardo Strobert, Rudy Walker, Kenny Washington, and Bobby Watson.

In 1978, Roy met master bassist William Parker, who recommended him to Jemeel Moondoc, who in turn invited Roy to join Ensemble Muntu, an association that led to many dates and tours abroad. Roy's travels and worldwide exposure allowed him to develop an international following in Europe, Japan, the Caribbean Islands, and the USA. He lived in the Netherlands from 1990 to 1992, working as a freelance musician and lecturer and holding conservatory workshops. He was the leader of the Thelonius New World Orchestra in Rotterdam for two years; he played with the bands of Ruud Bergamin, Klaas Hekman, and Dennis Winter; he led a Thursday-night jam session in Rotterdam; and he also played as a side man in numerous ensembles. In this period, the Eindhoven and Groningen Festivals commissioned Roy to compose music for brass ensembles.

Yet there was a part of his creative spirit that polished musicianship alone could not satisfy. Back in the States, Roy expanded into writing and arranging music for himself and others, scoring documentaries, and composing and arranging for off-Broadway productions. He scored the documentaries "The Selling of Harlem" and "Survival in New York," his compositions and arrangements were featured in the off-Broadway productions "Ludwig" and "Parole by Death," and "Hughes' Dream Harlem," a Black Star Entertainment special about Langston Hughes directed by Jamal Joseph, features Roy Campbell, Jr.'s recorded music. Roy's television credits include appearances on ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, UPN, and cable networks, participating in interviews, new programs, and profiles. He appears in Zakariah Sherzad's Vision Festival documentary "What's All That About?" as well as several other concert films; his composition "Malcolm, Martin,

and Mandela" was played during a WBAI "Democracy Now" broadcast on Malcolm X's birthday, '03; and Amadou Diallo's mother played Roy's "Amadou" from "Ethnic Stew and Brew" on the air during an interview in California.

In addition, Roy is an actor who has appeared in independent films and plays. He has performed with dancers including Leena Conquest, Aleta Hayes, K.J. Holmes, Maria Mitchell, Patricia Nicholson Parker, Nayo Takasaki, and others, as well as musical accompaniment for poets Umar bin Hassan (of the Last Poets), Steve Dalachinsky, Shirley LeFlore, Felipe Luciano (of the original Last Poets), David Nelson, Jilal Nazzarudin, and Eve Packer.

As a bandleader, Roy Campbell, Jr. has long maintained several stellar working units. TAZZ (with Andrew Bemkey, Chris Sullivan, and Michael Thompson) is a reflection of various musical styles, languages, backgrounds, and sources, with a mission to break down cultural barriers through a sound that is at once eclectic, progressive, polished, and funky; in a word, TAZZ is hot! Roy Campbell also leads THE PYRAMID TRIO (with William Parker and Hamid Drake), which he began in 1983 and which includes music of many world cultures with a jazz overtone. In addition, he founded the collective group OTHER DIMENSIONS IN MUSIC (with Daniel Carter, William Parker, and Rashied Bakr), which plays improvised music of all styles.

In 1995 he formed SHADES AND COLORS OF TRANE (with Walden Wimberley, Hilliard Greene, and Warren Smith), a tribute band for master saxophonist John Coltrane. And in 1999 Roy added the group DOWNTOWN HORNS (with Daniel Carter and Sabir Mateen).

Roy Campbell, Jr.'s composing, arranging, and playing embrace a wide range of roots and styles, including jazz, funk, rock, rhythm & blues, hip-hop, rap, classical, reggae, and more. Whether performing, writing, arranging, or producing, Roy Campbell's abilities burst forth in an electrifying stream of talent and originality. His virtuoso instrumental performances have been praised by fans, critics, and fellow musicians alike. All of the bands he leads have inspired and uplifted audiences to spiritual heights, and each band is unique and highly acclaimed by all. Robert Innapollo, in a review from "Cadence" Magazine (January, '90), stated, "Campbell is a monster trumpeter. He's the latest in a long line that has extended from Navarro through Brownie through Booker Little and beyond." Program notes from the 1998 Fire in the Valley Festival praise his "approach and technique, taking the influences of both Lee Morgan and Booker Little and hauling them into the future."

A few of the leading innovators among contemporary musicians Roy has worked with include: Rashied Ali, Billy Bang, Evelyn Blakey, Dave Douglas, Carlos Garnett, Henry Grimes, Eddie Harris, Makanda Ken McIntyre, Jemeel Moondoc, David Murray, Sunny Murray, William Parker, Hannibal Marvin Peterson, Sun Ra, Woody Shaw, Cecil Taylor, Charles Tyler, Wilbur Ware, Frank Wright, John Zorn, and a countless host of other bands and ensembles. Roy and his contemporary bands play virtually constantly in concerts, on tour, and in festivals all over the world.

In the year 2001, "JazzTimes" designated Roy Campbell's CD "Ethnic Stew and Brew" (Delmark 528) number three of the top 50 jazz CD's of the year. Roy was also nominated trumpeter of the year by the Jazz Journalists' Association in 2002, and he will receive an award as a Harlem Unsung Hero of Afrikan-Amerikan Classical Music at the Lenox Lounge in November, 2003.

On the summer 2006, Roy Campbell and KJ Holmes (dance) performed their project "Constellation" at the Covent Garden Opera House in London, for the dance festival.

On October 2006, after playing the Newcastle free improvisation festival, Other Dimensions in Music recorded a double milestone album on the French label of Gerard Terronès "Futura", called "Live in Paris" w/ Daniel Carter, William Parker and Hamid Drake. This was followed by an extended European Tour with Marc Ribot's Spiritual Unity (featuring Henry Grimes and Chad Taylor). And two other European tours with Jemeel Moondoc quartet, and Burton Greene quartet in spring 2007.

At the 12th Vision Festival in June 2007, Roy Campbell received a commission and composed and recorded the "Akhenaten Suite", featuring Billy Bang on violin, Bryan Carrott on vibes, Hilliard Green on bass, Zen Matsuura on drums. It will be released on Arts for Arts Vision Label soon. His band Tazz is going to record in the fall 2007.

Roy Campbell's life experience reflects his belief that music is the voice of universal truth. His music has continued to grow throughout the '90's and into the new millennium. His sound combines ancestral voices, modern artistry, and futuristic vision. He is a master trumpeter, musician, composer and arranger, and a universal force to be reckoned with.

Andrew Bemkey

ANDREW BEMKEY is a musician who honors the tradition, knows and loves the music of the masters, and doesn't sound like anyone ever heard before. He has an extraordinary ability to share his impassioned artistic journey with bandmates and audiences alike. It's very moving to hear him, to witness his courage and sensitivity, and to be washed in the beauty of his musical expression.

Andrew was born in 1974 in Libertyville, a little town outside of Chicago, and grew up in Elkhart, Indiana. After finishing high school, he moved to New York City and was fortunate to be schooled and inspired by three great musical mentors: Jaki Byard, Makanda Ken McIntyre, and Reggie Workman. During this time Andrew also began his own band, KinShip, which he maintained for three years, composing original music for the group, playing piano, keyboards, wooden flutes, and small percussion instruments. Meanwhile, master musicians such as Rashied Ali, Andrew Cyrille, Lawrence "Butch" Morris, and William Parker were calling on Andrew Bemkey to play in their bands. Mr. Cyrille, Ori Kaplan, and Mr. Workman first brought Andrew into annual Vision Festivals, while in the year 2000, as the youngest of some 50 bandleaders, Andrew

brought in his KinShip trio - and brought down the house. In the Vision Festival of '01, Andrew was again heard in Rashied Ali's group with Frank Lowe and others, and in '02 Andrew was proud to play piano in Roy Campbell, Jr.'s large ensemble salute to Buhaina (Art Blakey).

In this time, New York area concert venues for Andrew included, among others: Adam Clayton Powell State Office Building, Borders Books & Music, Brecht Forum, Christian Parish for Spiritual Renewal, Context Studios, the Cooler, 5C Cultural Center (solo piano every Friday since mid-'01, and continuing), the Empire Diner (solo piano Wednesdays for a year), the Knitting Factory, Lenox Lounge (every Monday night for three years with Roy Campbell, Jr.'s band), Merkin Concert Hall, the Museum of Modern Art, New School Performance Space, Northsix, Roulette, Rue B, St. Peter's Church, Sista's Place, and Tonic, and a bit out of town, Princeton and Wesleyan Universities. Andrew also enjoys playing in nursing homes, hospitals and youth centers, which he's done most frequently with singer Ellen Christi, sometimes with trumpeter Roy Campbell, Jr., and at other times with Reggie Workman's groups.

Andrew Bemkey's original music was featured in an off-Broadway play, and later he was heard in the stage band of William Parker's "Dancin' at the Belltown Rack" at Theatre for the New City. He has toured with drummer Susie Ibarra, playing duets at HotHouse in Chicago; his travels with alto saxophonist Ori Kaplan's groups led to Rome (the Villa Cellimontana Festival), Finland (Tampere Jazz Happening), and Paris (more intimate settings); and Andrew played in a Lawrence "Butch" Morris ensemble in Lisbon (Jazz em Agosto Festival) as well as several more here in New York.

In the summer of 2002 Andrew began a love affair with the bass clarinet that has blossomed into a new form for his musical expression while strengthening his relationship with the piano. Word is spreading, and now Andrew is being called upon to play his horn with nearly as much frequency as the piano. As a leader he was heard in 2005 playing bass clarinet & drum duets with Michael Thompson at the Vision Club Series and Newman Taylor Baker at John Zorn's new venue, The Stone.

For the past several years Andrew has been a regular member of both Roy Campbell, Jr.'s band "Tazz" and the Billy Bang Quintet, playing concerts and festivals in the U.S. and Europe, including the Sons d'hiver Festival in Paris and the Other Minds Music Festival in San Francisco. While still emerging as a recording artist, Andrew will be featured on two Billy Bang Quintet CDs to be released in the coming months.

August of 2005 found Andrew playing several concerts of note in New York City with Roy Campbell, Jr. at the Jazz Standard, Billy Bang at Sweet Rhythm, and the alto saxophonist Saco Yasuma at a concert in Central Park. In September, Andrew reunited with Reggie Workman and Rashied Ali in a Roy Campbell, Jr.-led birthday tribute to master John Coltrane. The group played four sold-out sets at The Stone to the joy of audience and musicians alike.