



THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

May 2011

NEW YORK @ NIGHT

As part of the celebration of its 40th Anniversary, The Kitchen invited former director George Lewis to recreate his electroacoustic anthem *Homage To Charles Parker* (Apr. 16th). The piece, which had its New York premiere at the Kitchen in 1979, sought not to emulate the bebop lexicon of Parker, but instead to pay tribute to the great innovator within an original sonic environment. The suite, which featured Lewis' trombone and electronics, with AACM colleagues Matana Roberts (alto sax), Amina Claudine Myers (piano and Hammond organ) and Reggie Nicholson (percussion) and Richard Teitelbaum (a member of the 1979 ensemble) on synthesizers, was divided into two discreet sections, the first of which - "Blues" - sought to depict Parker's "short, turbulent life". Opening with ethereal electronics and percussion, Myers' organ, alternately churchy, circus-like, scifi-ish and swinging, set the various moods with Roberts' squawking, blurring horn referencing Parker's power and frailty. The second section, from which the work takes its title, contemplated "a Parkerian afterlife", beginning with Roberts' alto sounding spiritually reminiscent of Coltrane's "Dear Lord" and Myers' piano moving from barrel house Chicago to sanctified South Africa, as Lewis electronically manipulated Nicholson's sprawling rhythmic accents before briefly switching to laptop-modulated trombone. Then, with Roberts' thick toned wail recalling Bird, Myers' funeral organ fittingly ended the tribute. - Russ Musto



George Lewis & Matana Roberts @ The Kitchen

Photo by Allen Nakagawa