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Friday, January 8, 1993

**La Monte Young & The Forever Bad Blues
Band**

Young's Dorian Blues in G

Co-Produced by MELA FOUNDATION

Sat. & Sun., Jan. 9 & 10, Tues., Jan. 12, Thurs. & Fri., Jan. 14 & 15, 1993

**Mikel Rouse Broken Consort
Michael Gordon Philharmonic
Virgil Moorefield**

Saturday, January 16, 1993

For The Kitchen

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LA MONTE YOUNG

THE FOREVER BAD BLUES BAND

Young's Dorian Blues in G

La Monte Young	Korg Synthesizer in just intonation
Jon Catler	Electric Just Intonation and Fretless Guitar
Brad Catler	Electric Just Intonation and Fretless Bass
Jonathan Kane	Drums
Marian Zazeela	Light Design

The Forever Bad Blues Band

La Monte Young

The music the Forever Bad Blues Band plays, *Young's Blues*, is one of the ancestral lineages of my music and, as such, I hope it can be an introduction to lead even broader audiences to the complete spectrum of my more complex works.

The subtitle for Robert Palmer's 1975 *Rolling Stone* article, "La Monte Young: Lost in the Drone Zone" was "When La Monte Young Says 'Take It From The Top' He Means Last Wednesday." This subtitle referred to a Sound and Light Environment at Galerie Heiner Friedrich, Köln, in which frequencies from *Map of 49's Dream The Two Systems of Eleven Sets of Galactic Intervals Ornamental Lightyears Tracery* were set in a structure of 12-bar blues where each chord change lasted for one day, and the entire pattern of chord changes repeated itself every 12 days.

It may come as a surprise to some to find that I consider much of my music either to be blues-based, or to have a strong relationship to blues. Even such complex works as *Map of 49's Dream The Two Systems of Eleven Sets of Galactic Intervals Ornamental Lightyears Tracery*, *The Well-Tuned Piano*, and some of my most recent sound environments have this characteristic, and it speaks for the enormous vitality and power of the blues and its contribution to music.

Young's Blues is a work which I used to perform in L.A. and Berkeley, California in the late '50s and in New York in the early '60s in a piano style of my own invention. One of the origins of *Young's Blues* was my use of the following chord changes when I played blues in 12 bars:

! I⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / !
! IV⁷ / / / ! IV⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / !
! V⁷ / / / ! IV⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / ! I⁷ / / / !

This pattern of progressions already gave even the 12-bar form of blues a more static sound because of the six sequential bars on the I⁷ chord across bars 11 through 4 achieved through the elimination of the IV⁷ chord traditionally played in bar 2, and the elimination of the ! I⁷ / IV⁷ / ! I⁷ / V⁷ / ! sequence usually played in bars 11 and 12. Additionally, the fact that the I chord was always a I⁷ chord, allowed a diatonic consistency which suggested a stronger, more static sense of modality.

At first, I played blues in more traditional blues modal scales. Gradually, I began to play blues in other modal scales. The process for this kind of modal thinking had already begun to evolve in my earliest jazz composition, *Annod*, ca. 1954-55, a blues set in special minor modes. In *Annod*, a particular modal scale could only be played through a few measures of chord changes, and then it was necessary to change to another modal scale to accommodate the next set of chord changes. In other words, it was necessary to play more than one modal scale to go through the complete 12 bars of chord changes.

Young's Blues, however, was usually set in *only one* modal scale. I selected modes which could be played in their traditional diatonic form, without chromatic alterations, and which would be harmonically correct throughout all of the three chord changes: I⁷, IV⁷, and V⁷. The modes I played in most frequently were Dorian for *Dorian Blues* and Aeolian for *Aeolian Blues*. I usually played *Young's Aeolian Blues* in B \flat and often played *Young's Dorian Blues* in G.

At some point, I began to spend long periods of time on each chord, and not be concerned about counting how many measures had passed, giving a much more drone-like effect. Eventually, this combination of harmonic stasis and modal emphasis led to the genre of *Young's Blues*.

Young's Blues is characterized by a rhythmic, chordal, drone-piano style of modal blues in which the chord progression, I, IV, I, V, IV, I, is retained as a sequence, but the time duration for each chord is improvised, allowing longer periods of time on each chord change to emphasize the modal drone aspects of the music.

I first recorded *Young's Aeolian Blues* in Summer 1961 with Terry Jennings on alto saxophone and myself on piano. Between 1960 and 1963, I also used to play *Young's Blues* in E on guitar to accompany Terry Jennings, but we never recorded it. John Cale learned the static rhythmic aspect of this style from me and later played guitar accompaniment to Terry's soprano saxophone when they shared a loft together on Lispenard Street in Tribeca in 1963-64 and, fortunately, one example of this guitar version was recorded.

I remember a very inspired session which took place at Terry's parents' house in Los Angeles at which Terry played alto, Mike Lara played tenor saxophone, Dennis Johnson played hichiriki, and I played piano. I was already living in New York at the time, but had returned for my first visit back to California, which would date the session to be ca. November 1962. This session was important to me because it was the only time that these three of my closest early musical associates played *Young's Blues* with me all at the same time.

The structure I had created for blues in *Young's Blues* back in L.A. in the late '50s became the basis for all of the blues played by The Theatre of Eternal Music during the period in the early '60s when I played soprano saxophone with the group. For instance, my compositions, *Dorian Blues*, *Sunday Morning Blues* and *Early Tuesday Morning Blues*, were all in this style of playing blues, but texturally different in that I was usually playing soprano saxophone instead of the rhythmic drone style of piano. I taught this technique to the performers in The Theatre of Eternal Music, which at that time included Marian Zazeela, voice drone; Tony Conrad, violin and bowed guitar; John Cale, viola and three-string drone; and Angus MacLise, hand drums. They sustained the chord changes while I improvised extremely fast sets of combination permutations on specific constellations of tones based on the chord changes, and Angus played a rhythmic complement.

At the time I originated this genre of blues playing, I hadn't thought of the title *Young's Blues*. However, by 1981 I had begun to feature a style related to the style that was to become entitled *Young's Blues* in "The Magic Harmonic Rainforest Chord" section of *The Well-Tuned Piano*. I entitled these new subsections 'The Ethers Churn (The Dinosaurs Dance),' 'Young's Boogie in E \flat ,' and 'Young's Böse Boogie in E \flat .'

It seems that it was around the time of the opening of the MUDIMA Foundation in Milan that I decided to use the title *Young's Blues* for the original genre of blues that I created in the late '50s and early '60s. Gino DiMaggio and the MUDIMA Foundation commissioned a permanent sculptural tableau realization of my 1960 composition *Piano Piece for David Tudor #1* to be featured in MUDIMA's inaugural exhibition, *Pianofortissimo*, which opened on January 11, 1990. At the opening, I not only performed *Piano Piece for David Tudor #1*, but also dedicated the sculpture with an impromptu piano improvisation performance of my early genre of blues which I called *Young's Dorian Blues in Bb* at this time.

The first performance of The Forever Bad Blues Band was at the *invitational* Gramavision 10th Anniversary party in New York City on November 15, 1990 with Jon Catler, Electric Just Intonation and Fretless Electric Guitar; Brad Catler, Electric Fretless Bass; Bob Muller, Drums; and myself, Korg M1 Synthesizer.

The *public* world premiere of the Forever Bad Blues Band was presented on March 1, 1992 at Ballhaus Naunynstrasse, Berlin, in honor of the 10th anniversary of Ursula Block's record shop-gallery, Gelbe Musik, with myself; Jon Catler; Brad Catler; Jonathan Kane, Drums; and Marian Zazeela, Light Design. Following the Berlin premiere, the Band performed at the Batschkapp in Frankfurt, Szene Wien in Vienna, The Loft in Munich, Posthof in Linz and at the Audio Arts Festival at Korzo Theatre in The Hague.

In Summer 1992, The Forever Bad Blues Band performed the featured opening concert in a special setting of Marian Zazeela's slide projection series, *Ornamental Lightyears Tracery* for the *Pop Goes Art, Andy Warhol and The Velvet Underground* exhibition in Augsburg, and then played the first public concert to open the Forum at the new Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn.

This January 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 1993, five-concert series presented by the MELA Foundation at The Kitchen is the American premiere of The Forever Bad Blues Band.

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La Monte Young

La Monte Young has pioneered the concept of extended time durations in contemporary music for over 35 years. He contributed extensively to the study of just intonation and to the development of rational number based tuning systems which are used in his periodic composite sound waveform environments, as well as in many of his major performance works. Presentations of Young's work in the U.S. and Europe, as well as his theoretical writings, gradually influenced a group of composers to create a static, periodic music which became known as Minimalism. *Musician Magazine* stated, "as the acknowledged father of minimalism and guru emeritus to the British art-rock school, his influence is pervasive," and *the Los Angeles Herald Examiner* wrote, "for the past quarter of a century he has been the most influential composer in America. Maybe in the world."

In L.A. in the '50s Young played jazz saxophone, leading a group with Billy Higgins, Dennis Budimir and Don Cherry. He also played with Eric Dolphy, Ornette Coleman, Terry Jennings, Don Friedman and Tiger Echols. At Yoko Ono's studio in 1960 he directed the first New York loft concert series. He was the editor of *An Anthology* (NY 1963), which with his *Compositions 1960* became a primary influence on concept art and the Fluxus movement. In 1962 Young founded his group, The Theatre of Eternal Music, and embarked on *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys* (1964-), a large work involving improvisation within strict predetermined guidelines. Young played soprano saxophone and sang with the group. Terry Riley, John Cale, Tony Conrad, Jon Hassell, Jon Gibson, Lee Konitz, David Rosenboom, Marian Zazeela and Angus MacLise are among those who worked in this group under Young's direction.

With Marian Zazeela in the '60s he formulated the concept of a *Dream House*, a permanent space with sound and light environments in which a work would be played continuously. Young and Zazeela have presented works in sound and light worldwide, from music and light box sculptures to large-scale environmental installations, culminating in two Dia Art Foundation realizations: the 6-year continuous 6-story Harrison Street *Dream House* (NYC 1979-85) and the 1-year environment *The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119 / Time Light Symmetry* (22nd Street NYC 1989) within which Young presented *The Lower Map of The Eleven's Division in The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119* with the Theatre of Eternal Music Big Band. This 23-piece chamber orchestra consisted of 4 voices, 5 trumpets in Harmon mutes, 2 tenor trombones, 2 bass trombones, 3 horns, 3 tubas, 2 sustained electric guitars, and 2 sustained electric basses, and was the largest Theatre of Eternal Music ensemble to appear in concert to date. As the first western disciple of renowned master vocalist Pandit Pran Nath, Young has performed and taught the Kirana style of Indian classical music since 1970.

The 1974 Rome live world premiere of Young's magnum opus *The Well-Tuned Piano* (1964-73-81-present), was celebrated by a commission for him to sign the Bösendorfer piano which remains permanently in the special tuning. Gramavision's full-length recording of the continuously evolving 5-hour-plus work has been acclaimed by critics to be "the most important and beautiful new work recorded in the 1980s," "one of the great monuments of modern culture" and "the most important piano music composed by an American since the *Concord Sonata*." At the 1987 MELA Foundation La Monte Young 30-Year Retrospective he played the work for 6 hours and 24 minutes continuous.

In 1990 Young formed The Forever Bad Blues Band, and in 1992 the group toured extensively in Germany, Austria and Holland, performing two-hour continuous concerts of *Young's Dorian Blues*, with Young, keyboard, Jon Catler, just intonation and fretless guitar, Brad Catler, bass, Jonathan Kane, drums, and Marian Zazeela, light design. In 1991 Gramavision released the CD performance by The Theatre of Eternal Music Brass Ensemble, led by Ben Neill, of one of Young's most important early minimal works, *The Melodic Version* (1984) of *The Second Dream of The High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer* from *The Four Dreams of China* (1962).

Marian Zazeela

Marian Zazeela is one of the first contemporary artists to use light as a medium of expression. In over two decades of work in a variety of media encompassing painting, calligraphic drawing, graphics, film, light projection, sculpture and environment, Zazeela has exhibited a consistent iconographic vision.

Expanding the traditional concepts of painting and sculpture while incorporating elements of both disciplines, she has developed a unique visual language in the medium of light by combining colored light mixtures with sculptural forms to create seemingly three-dimensional colored shadows in radiant vibrational fields. Light and scale are manipulated in such a way that the colored shadows, in their apparent corporeality, become indistinguishable from the sculptural forms, enveloping the viewer in the continual interplay of reality and illusion. Her work has taken the directions of performance in *Ornamental Lightyears Tracery*, sculpture in the series *Still Light* and recent neon pieces, and environment in *Dusk/Dawn Adaptation*, *Magenta Day / Magenta Night* and her major work *Light*.

As artistic director of The Theatre of Eternal Music she creates the works that form the innovative visual components of *Dream House*, a sound and light work in which she collaborates with composer La Monte Young. Zazeela has presented *Dream Houses*, light installations, performances and calligraphic drawing exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. Recent installations include the Ruine der Künste, Berlin, the 44th Venice Biennale, Galerie Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf, MELA Foundation's "La Monte Young 30-Year Retrospective," New York City, and Köln Kunstverein. She has received grants from the NEA, EAT, CAPS, Lannan Foundation and Cassandra Foundation.

Under a long-term commission from the Dia Art Foundation (1979-85), Zazeela and Young collaborated in a 6-year continuous *Dream House* presentation set in the 6-story Harrison Street building in New York City featuring multiple interrelated sound and light environments, exhibitions, performances, research and listening facilities, and archives. *Arts Magazine* described the centerpiece of this installation: "There is a retreat to reverie as if one were staring up into the summer night sky. *The Magenta Lights* is experienced as a meteorological or astronomical event, a changing color display above one's head, like an art equivalent of the Northern Lights." And *Artforum* wrote: "Zazeela transforms material into pure and intense color sensations, and makes a perceptual encounter a spiritual experience. *The Magenta Lights* is an environmental piece in every sense of the word. What Zazeela has represented is the subtle relationship between precision and spirituality."

Zazeela's one-year sound & light environment collaboration with Young, *The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119 / Time Light Symmetry* (Dia Art Foundation, 22nd Street, NYC 1989) has been acclaimed by *Village Voice* critic Kyle Gann as "some of the strangest and most forward-looking art New York has to offer." Her 1990 Donguy Gallery, Paris exhibition of light works was purchased by the French Cultural Ministry National Foundation of Contemporary Art for permanent installation in France.

Jon Catler, electric just intonation and fretless guitar. A graduate of the Berklee School of Music, Jon Catler offered the first-ever microtonal concert at that institution. In 1985, he designed his own just intonation fingerboard for guitar which uses 49 notes per octave. He performed the world premiere of the just intonation version of La Monte Young's *for Guitar* in Venice, Italy in 1986, and the New York premiere in 1987. He was assistant piano tuner in Young's 1987 concert series of *The Well-Tuned Piano* for the La Monte Young 30-Year Retrospective, studying the piece for a future guitar version, and he also formed and led the sustained electric guitar and bass section for Young's The Theatre of Eternal Music Big Band 1990 5-Concert world premiere of *The Lower Map of The Eleven's Division In The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119*. Jon has recorded and performed throughout Europe and the U.S. with two just intonation rock bands, the Microtones and Steel Blue. He can be heard on The Microtones' recording *Cow People* on the M-Tone label. The just intonation CD, *Steel Blue*, on the Koch International label is scheduled to be released in March 1993. Jon is also currently working with his just intonation blues band, Bottlefinger, which features Jon on guitar and vocals and Elizabeth Pressman on vocals and bass.

Brad Catler, electric just intonation and fretless bass, is a multi-instrumentalist and composer. He experiments with different tunings on many instruments. He studied tabla with Alla Rakha and Zakir Hussein Khan, and sitar with Peter Rowe. He has played sitar for 10 years. He also studied sheng with T.N. Chang, director of the Chinese Ensemble. He plays bass with the just intonation rock band, The Microtones, and can be heard on their M-Tone label recording *Cow People*. He performed the world premiere of the Harry Partch work *December 1942* on fretless electric guitar, with Johnny Reinhard, voice, at the American Festival of Microtonal Music, Merkin Hall, 1987. Brad is also a member of Young's The Theatre of Eternal Music Big Band and played electric bass in the 1990 5-Concert world premiere of *The Lower Map of The Eleven's Division In The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119*.

Jonathan Kane, drums, has toured extensively in Europe, the U.S., and Canada, currently with La Monte Young's Forever Bad Blues Band; Rhys Chatham's 100 electric guitar orchestra, which features Kane as the sole drummer; NYC band The Sirens; and guitarist Gary Lucas' Gods and Monsters. Also a composer, Kane's solos and duets have been performed in New York, Paris, Berlin and Montreal. Other groups and artists worked with include Elliott Sharp, John King, Tony Hymas, Annabouboula, Jac Berrocal, Jean Francois Pavros, and Swans, of which Kane was a founding member. He has composed for choreographers Bebe Miller, Lisa Fox, and the Phoenix Dance Co. of Leeds, England, and also co-wrote music for the ABC News program *20/20*. Kane began performing in 1974 with The Kane Bros. Blues Band, opening concerts for Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, James Cotton, Koko Taylor, Dr. John and others. He studied at Berklee College of Music, and lives in NYC.

Selected performances include: The La Monte Young Forever Bad Blues Band Tours, Europe 1992; the Gary Lucas Gods and Monsters Tour, U.S. 1992; The Sirens Tour, Europe 1992; Musica Festival, Strasbourg 1991; Banlieues Bleues, Paris 1991; BAM Next Wave Festival, NYC 1990; New Music America, Montreal 1990; Edge of Music Festival, NYC 1990; Musique Action, Nancy 1990; L'Aeronef, Lille 1989; Printemps du Bourges 89; Aterforum Festival, Ferrara 1989; Solidarity Festival 89, Palermo; Serious Fun, Lincoln Center NYC 1988; Incontroazione Teatro Festival, Palermo 1988; Art Rock 88, St. Brieuc; MC93 Bobigny, Paris 1988; Ars Electronica, Linz 1987; Urban Aborigines, Berlin 1987; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis 1986; New Music America, Hartford 1984; Kitchen Tour U.S.A., 1982; Swans/Sonic Youth "Savage Blunder Tour," 1982. On disc, Kane is heard on the Swans CD (Young God Records), the Swans CD "Filth" (Young God Records), the Speed Trials Compilation with Elliott Sharp & Swans LP (Homestead Records), Circus Mort EP (Labor Records), Annabouboula CD "Greek Fire" (Shanachie Records), The Sirens (Cassette, Ecstatomatic Records), 101 Crustaceans CD (Fang Records), the Electric World CD "Hot Thumb in a Funky Groove" (Enemy Records).

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Thank you for your cooperation.

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La Monte Young's recordings are produced by Gramavision, Inc.
and are available in record stores and from MELA Foundation.

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