



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 6th, 2015

“OUR ROOTS”  
A NEW QUINTET CD BY  
SAXOPHONIST/COMPOSER GEOFF BRADFIELD  
TO BE RELEASED BY ORIGIN RECORDS  
OCTOBER 20

PRESENTED IN CHICAGO AND POLAND IN 2014.  
THE NEW QUINTET FEATURES BRADFIELD WITH MARQUIS HILL, JOEL ADAMS,  
DANA HALL, & CLARK SOMMERS.

CD RELEASE SHOWS IN CHICAGO:  
THE GREEN MILL DEC. 11 AND 12  
ROOM 43/HYDE PARK JAZZ SOCIETY DEC.13

*Voted Rising Star Arranger, 2015 Downbeat Critics Poll*

*“Geoff Bradfield has drawn plenty of praise for his work as a reed soloist, and it’s all deserved... But in the last few years, Bradfield has made just as much impact with his precise and colorful writing, in compositions that evoke a vivid sense of place through the same mixture of detail and sweep.” Neil Tesser*

On saxophonist/composer **Geoff Bradfield’s** new CD ***Our Roots***, which Origin Records will release on October 20, his chordless quintet delves into the sacred and profane music of the rural South. The ensemble premiered the music at the 2014 **Hyde Park Jazz Festival** and a few months later gave its first European performance at the **Made in Chicago Festival** in Poznan, Poland.

Joining Bradfield on ***Our Roots*** are trumpeter **Marquis Hill** (winner of the 2014 Thelonious Monk Trumpet Competition), trombonist **Joel Adams**, drummer **Dana Hall**, and bassist **Clark Sommers**, all long time collaborators on the vital Chicago jazz scene. Sommers, Bradfield and Hall form the freewheeling trio Ba(SH), which released its first CD on Origin in 2013. That same year, Adams and Sommers contributed to Bradfield’s critically acclaimed suite ***Melba!*** for the label. Hill and Bradfield are the frontline of Greenleaf recording artist Matt Ulery’s chamber jazz quintet, ***Loom***.

Inspired by Clifford Jordan's *These Are My Roots: The Music of Leadbelly*, **Our Roots** offers new interpretations of four pieces from that 1965 recording. "I first heard Clifford in person alongside Von Freeman at the Green Mill in '91," says Bradfield. "Though completely distinctive, they both embodied this combination of sophistication with gutbucket that defines the great Chicago tenors." Bradfield and company summon the spirit of Jordan's original recording, but don't necessarily adhere to the letter: the trio rendition of "Black Girl," for example, owes as much to Albert Ayler as to Jordan, while the harmolodic conversation between trumpet and tenor on "Yellow Gal" evokes Ornette Coleman.

Alongside the Lead Belly pieces are Bradfield's arrangements of spirituals from the Georgia Sea Islands and songs by Texas blues singer and itinerant preacher Blind Willie Johnson. Three new pieces by Bradfield round out the album. "Meshell," "Clinton Hill," and "Mbira Song," are dedicated respectively to Meshell Ndegeocello, Randy Weston, and Oliver Mtukudzi, all master musicians with the deepest roots," writes Bradfield in the CD notes. "I've had the good fortune to play a little with each of them, and they all had a powerful impact on my musical thinking."

**Our Roots** is Bradfield's first recording as a leader since *Melba!* in 2013. In the interim, he has been engaged in numerous performances as both leader and sideman as well as teaching at Northern Illinois University, where he recently became an Associate Professor. His septet performed *Melba!* on the main stage of the 2013 Chicago Jazz Festival with special guest **Randy Weston** joining them on Bradfield's arrangement of Weston's "African Sunrise." The ensemble was also featured in a live performance of *Melba!* on NPR's **The Jazz Set** hosted by Dee Dee Bridgewater.

Other projects include the collaborative **Spin Quartet**, which played venues from Shapeshifter Lab in NY to the Earshot Jazz Festival in Seattle on a nationwide tour following the 2014 Origin release of *In Circles*. Spin performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival and will tour Canada and the Northwest later in September. **Matt Ulery's Loom**, with which Bradfield appeared on NPR's Tiny Desk Concert and at Winter Jazz Fest, returned to the Whistler in Chicago this summer for a residency in preparation for a new recording in October. **Dana Hall's Black Fire** is enjoying its second year of Monday nights at Andy's Jazz Club in Chicago playing the music of Andrew Hill and anticipates recording in the fall as well.

Bradfield will celebrate the release of **Our Roots** with performances at Chicago venues the Green Mill **12/11** and **12/12** and Room 43 **12/13**. Dates in Milwaukee, Detroit, New York and Ann Arbor are also in the works for December, and the band looks forward to returning to the Square Room in Knoxville, TN, as part of a Southern tour next spring.

"While I love rhythmic puzzles and harmonic labyrinths as much as the next modern jazz musician, you largely won't find them here," writes Bradfield in the liner notes of the album "...much of my favorite music is simple and direct, about singing a song with the right feeling, and that's what I hope to share with you on **Our Roots**."

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