

FULLY ALTERED media



**FIREHOUSE 12 RECORDS announces three new releases
from pianist/composer MYRA MELFORD.**

Street date: November 2, 2018

The Other Side of Air

- brand new music by Myra Melford's Snowy Egret featuring Ron Miles (cornet), Liberty Ellman (guitar), Stomu Takeishi (bass guitar), and Tyshawn Sorey (drums)

Life Carries Me This Way

- deluxe double-LP of solo piano music
- reissue of Melford's 2013 Firehouse 12 Records album in tribute to artist Don Reich

12 from 25

- career retrospective Blu-ray disc release
- hi-resolution video and immersive hi-resolution audio mixes
- featuring Melford with past and current collaborators Nicole Mitchell, Tyshawn Sorey, Allison Miller, Matt Wilson, Dave Douglas, Erik Friedlander, Marty Ehrlich, Chris Speed, Ron Miles, and many others

U.S. & European Tour Dates Listed Below



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Bay Area pianist **Myra Melford** – whom the *New Yorker* called “a **stalwart of the new-jazz movement**” – has spent the last three decades making brilliant original music, in equal parts challenging and engaging. She has explored an array of formats, from dynamic solo-piano recitals to deeply interactive small groups and even the swinging grandeur of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. But it's her quintet **Snowy Egret** that best defines her artistry in 2018: “I really feel like it's the vehicle that expresses where I am as a composer, performer and bandleader right now,” she says. **Firehouse 12 Records** will release ***The Other Side of Air***, this ensemble's new album, on November 12.

Premiering live in 2012, with roots that reach back to the mid-'90s, Snowy Egret features Melford alongside four of the most compelling musicians currently working in jazz and the avant-garde: **Ron Miles** (cornet), **Liberty Ellman** (guitar), **Stomu Takeishi** (acoustic bass guitar) and **Tyshawn Sorey** (drums). *The Other Side of Air* follows on Snowy Egret's self-titled Enja/Yellowbird debut, released three years ago to rave reviews. In *DownBeat*: "[t]he group has clearly internalized Melford's conception in a profound manner, demonstrating remarkable intimacy and grace in its execution, truly extending the composer's vision without surrendering individualism"; in *The New York Times*: **"Ms. Melford's calmly investigative style at the piano, and the way she coordinates the moving parts in this music, feel girded in singularity."** Since then, Snowy Egret has continued to develop its rapport, evolving into a kind of telepathic communion. While they remain committed to serving the music, the band members are unafraid to lead the each other into uncharted terrain. "There's a lot of trust, and there's a lot of willingness to let go of what was supposed to happen and go with what is happening in the moment," Melford says.

As a composer, Melford sought to strengthen and to extend many of the winning concepts from the debut record on this new release. "As we were playing the first set of music, I started thinking, 'What else would I like to be able to express with these guys?'" she recalls. The answer yielded the ten tracks on this record – showcasing an unflagging curiosity, as well as music with plenty of visceral impact. **Melford has long drawn inspiration from her enthusiasm for the world of ideas beyond music — from the poet Rumi and the author Albert Camus to architecture and Eastern spirituality.** For the music on *The Other Side of Air*, Melford found her muse in the realm of **visual art**. The album opener, **"Motion Stop Frame,"** responds to the hand-drawn animation of South African visionary **William Kentridge** with an off-kilter groove, intricate counterpoint and free improvisation.

Harmonically demanding yet ebullient, "Attic" began its life as a solo-piano piece related to a drawing by California-born artist **Don Reich**; "City of Illusion," an episodic, largely through-composed piece, begins cryptically but gathers steam in time for solos by Miles and Ellman, and was also written with a Reich drawing in mind. **"Dried Print on Cardboard,"** a response to some of **Cy Twombly's** work, deconstructs a folk-like melody, atop a deft bass figure in the piano doubled by Takeishi's distinctive acoustic bass guitar.

"Chorale," which Melford refined during Snowy Egret's momentous **Village Vanguard** run in 2016, demonstrates her interest in constructing music out of the merest germinal idea. Similar in spirit to the beautifully textural "The Other Side of Air I," where Melford plays a composed part while her cohorts improvise around her, "Chorale" features free playing by the pianist and Sorey, with a harmonic foundation provided by Miles and Takeishi and a closing line composed for Ellman. "Small Thoughts," also crafted for that Vanguard week, underscores a different sort of compositional daring: Melford used chance operations to create interacting rhythmic lines that she polished into an intriguing contrapuntal variation. "I was really trying to figure out how to break myself out of my old habits," she says.

Intricate but supported by an enticing groove, **"Living Music"** recasts a longer multi-sectioned piece originally written for **Equal Interest**, Melford's trio with **AACM** lions **Leroy Jenkins** and **Joseph Jarman**. Like its sister track, "The Other Side of Air II" was named during Melford's research into Kentridge, and it is undeniably an album highlight – a darkly lyrical journey with a noirish motif and gorgeous solo work by Miles and Ellman. "Turn & Coda," yet another Vanguard creation, closes the project with stunning solo piano that wades into a gently cathartic full-band effort.

Alongside this bold new music, Firehouse 12 Records will also release two retrospective projects, showcasing some of Melford's past work in new, audiophile formats. First, a **double-LP 180-gram vinyl reissue of 2013's solo piano album *Life Carries Me This Way*** will present that well-received album cut from high-resolution digital masters by renowned German pressing plant Pallas GmbH. The album features music composed and inspired by the late painter Don Reich, a family friend. Reproductions of the artwork are included on the dust jackets of each record. In the liner notes for the project, Myra writes *"Don was...an artistic inspiration for as long as I can remember. But this project... evolved over the past few years. Don gave me a stack of drawings and paintings to consider. I put them up in my studio in Berkeley and let them speak to me for months and months. Slowly, I began to hear my musical response, and to conceive the music for this recording...The range of Don's work – the kinds of places and spaces it inhabits – seems to dovetail naturally with my own tendency towards lyricism, abstraction and rhythmic mobility. I love his colorful and quirky sensibility; I feel his*

expression on a deep level, and in it, I recognize a kindred spirit. As I continue to explore these artworks after recording the music for this record, I appreciate their aliveness, the quality of living beings to morph over time.”

And finally, **November will also see the release of a Blu-ray disc of performances captured live during Melford’s week-long 2015 residency at renowned NYC club The Stone**. Entitled **12 From 25**, this project features presents 12 performances spanning ensembles drawn from 25 years of Melford’s career. The music features both hi-resolution stereo and immersive 5.1 surround mixes of every performance. The disc also includes **a short film documenting Myra’s week-long residency at the club by French filmmakers Gil Corre and Sylvain Luini**. *12 From 25* features duo performances with drummer **Allison Miller**, clarinetist **Ben Goldberg** and multi-instrumentalist **Marty Ehrlich**; two collaborative trios: *Spindrift* with **Nicole Mitchell** and percussionist **Tyshawn Sorey**, a trio with guitarist **Mary Halvorson** and koto player/electronic sound artist **Miya Masaoka**; Melford’s early 2000’s ensemble *Be Bread* with trumpeter **Cuong Vu**, **Goldberg**, guitarist **Brandon Ross**, **Takeishi** and drummer **Matt Wilson**; her signature mid-late 1990s quintet *Same River*, *Twice* with trumpeter **Dave Douglas**, saxophonist **Chris Speed**, cellist **Erik Friedlander** and drummer **Michael Sarin**; *Snowy Egret* with Miles, Ellman, **Takeishi** and drummer **Ted Poor**; and finally Myra’s original working trio with bassist **Lindsey Horner** and drummer **Reggie Nicholson**.

From Melford’s liner notes to the package: *“During late March of 2015, I performed a 12-show retrospective at The Stone in NYC, which gave me the chance to revisit many of my projects of the past 25 years. I was joined by all of the original musicians who have played in my groups over the years: from the trio I had convened for the first Knitting Factory tour of Europe in 1990, through to my current quintet, Snowy Egret... Gil and Sylvain did a fantastic job of capturing the marathon week visually, as did Geoff Countryman and his crew with the audio recording. It was an amazing experience for me: to revisit all of that history – the music, the friendships, the memories of being on tour together; to share it with the many wonderful people from all over who came to The Stone to experience it; and to dream about what’s next.”*

About Myra Melford

Born in 1957 and raised near Chicago, in a home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Melford studied classical piano during her youth and didn’t become immersed in jazz until college, in Olympia, Washington. **Tutelage under Art Lande and Gary Peacock followed in Seattle, and, later, under Henry Threadgill, Jaki Byard, Don Pullen and others in New York**. At the helm of a number of important working groups, and with a discography containing more than 20 albums as a leader or co-leader, she’s collaborated with creative-music luminaries like **Dave Douglas, Matt Wilson, Mark Dresser, Cuong Vu** and **Marty Ehrlich**.

A recipient of a **Guggenheim Fellowship**, the **Doris Duke Performing Artist Award**, a **Herb Alpert Award in Music** and numerous appearances in DownBeat Critics Polls, Melford has mounted ambitious, multi-disciplinary performances at the **Walker Art Center**, in Minneapolis, and the **Yerba Buena Center for the Arts**, in San Francisco. An experienced educator as well as a renowned composer-performer, she relocated to the Bay Area from New York in 2004 to join the music department at the **University of California, Berkeley**.

Her other recent releases include the eponymous debut **MZM**, a trio with Zeena Parkins and Miya Masaoka; **Dialogue**, a duo set featuring **Ben Goldberg**; and **Unleashed**, by the **Tiger Trio** of Melford, Joëlle Léandre and Nicole Mitchell. An acclaimed 2013 solo-piano release, *Life Carries Me This Way*, has been a catalyst for Melford to continue probing this intimate setting in concert. **Last fall saw the release of Handful of Keys, an album by the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis**, on which Melford joins fellow piano greats like Dick Hyman and Helen Sung. **The collection includes a big-band arrangement, by JLCO saxophonist Ted Nash, of the Snowy Egret tune “The Strawberry.”** “Myra is a true original, both as a composer and a player,” Nash says. “I have been a fan of hers for a long time, and I think this composition is the quintessence of Myra herself: serious yet fun, and always completely surprising.”

<http://myramelford.com>

<http://firehouse12records.com>

Upcoming Performance Schedule

September 21, 2018 - Greenwich House Music School, New York, NY (Trio with Fay Victor, Marika Hughes)

September 30, 2018 - SF Music Day, San Francisco, CA, (Myra Melford, piano + Ian Winters, video)

Tiger Trio US Tour (with Nicole Mitchell, flute; Joelle Leandre, doublebass)

October 5, 2018 - MATCH, Nameless Sound, Houston, TX (Tiger Trio)

October 6, 2018 - The October Revolution, Philadelphia, PA (Tiger Trio)

October 7, 2018 - CapitalBop Loft Series, Washington, DC (Tiger Trio)

October 8, 2018 - Arts for Art, Clemente Soto Velez - New York, NY (Tiger Trio)

October 10, 2018 - Conrad Prebys Music Center Concert Hall, San Diego, CA (Tiger Trio)

October 12, 2018 - Angel City Jazz Festival, Los Angeles, CA (Tiger Trio)

October 13, 2018 - 1068 Spruce House Concerts, Berkeley, CA (Tiger Trio)

October 20, 2018 - Edgefest, Ann Arbor, MI (Tiger Trio + solo piano)

October 27, 2018 - Warsaw, Poland (Tiger Trio)

Snowy Egret US Tour (with Ron Miles, cornet; Liberty Ellman, guitars; Stomu Takeishi, acoustic bass guitar; Tyshawn Sorey, drums)

November 2 - 3, 2018 - SF Jazz, San Francisco, CA (Snowy Egret)

November 4, 2018 - Earshot, Seattle, WA (Snowy Egret)

November 7 - 8, 2018 - Dizzy's NYC, New York, NY (Snowy Egret)

Tiger Trio + Snowy Egret Europe Tour (substitute Gerald Cleaver for Tyshawn Sorey on drums)

November 11, 2018 - exploratorium berlin, Berlin, Germany (Tiger Trio)

November 13, 2018 - Strasbourg Festival, Strasbourg, France (Tiger Trio)

November 17, 2018 - Gottingen, Germany (Snowy Egret)

November 20, 2018 - Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg, Germany (Snowy Egret)

November 22, 2018 - London Jazz Festival, London, England, United Kingdom (Snowy Egret)