



**JAMES FULKERSON, MICK GREEN, DAVID MURPHY:  
IN THE SAME BREATH  
(FMRC208-0906)**

James Fulkerson (trombone, also with tenor sax mouthpiece and bassoon reeds), Mick Green (bass ash tray, soprano and tenor sax), David Murphy (clarinet, soprano, alto and tenor sax)

Where composition is work improvisation is play, although I'll admit its not quite that simple. If a composer's work lacks elements of play the result is lifeless. As for improvisers, if their play lacks discipline and work the music is self indulgent. So work and play are vital to both. We're talking different ends of the telescope, but the emphasis is important, especially in freeform improvisation such as on this CD.

Another way of putting it would be that in improvisation there is no eraser. The acts of composition and performance occur simultaneously. However, this does not necessarily lead to that dreary, but oft-heard, formula that improvisation is instant composition. There are real distinctions between the two as the example of composers who improvise (or vice versa) often show. James Fulkerson is a good example, composition and improvisation bringing out different aspects of his musical personality, although certain thumbprints remain - for example his penchant for long, beautifully controlled and rounded muted tones on the trombone with maybe a little bit of Wah.

Interestingly Fulkerson is the only player who does not present a solo on this CD. The composer/improviser is, therefore, heard interacting with Mick Green and/or David Murphy. Group improvisation, of course, enforces a kind of creative compromise which may be better described as the willing abandonment of the musical persona in favour of a group dynamic. Ever since the early days of freeform improvisation in the 1960s this has been recognised as a profoundly political practice. Imagine (shades of John Lennon) what it would be like if even a few members of the aggressive Western governments, or the so-called terrorist groups they find themselves in conflict with, were to willingly abandon their political personae in favour of a group dynamic. You may say I'm a dreamer...

As with practices such as meditation I've heard the objection that this attitude of self effacement risks losing, or dissolving, the individual's personality into a group blandness. I'd say if that happens, you're doing it wrong. This CD, and others in the same ballpark, demonstrates the folly of this fear. By submitting themselves to the discipline of duo or trio playing (listening intently and expansively to one another in other words) Fulkerson, Green and Murphy gain heightened musical personalities in which they play things they probably would not have otherwise played.

I like to tell students that improvising with others is ideally like a good relationship. You can be together, together-alone, alone-together, or alone and all are satisfactory. I also tell them to remember that "not playing is playing", and that improvising in a group is not a matter of losing yourself but of finding new aspects of yourself >.

Tracklistings:

1. Flutter (trio 1)	18.04
2. s.b.d.c. (mick's solo)	8.13
3. Snake Eyes (Dave & Jim duo)	11.07
4. Slow Bone Home (Mick & Jim duo)	8.58
5. Head To Head (Dave & Mick duo)	9.42
6. Soliloquy For m.i.p. (dave solo)	6.00
7. In The Same Breath (Final Trio)	15.15
total time	77.40





>. There is evidence of this in the performances on this CD. Knowing the playing of Green and Murphy particularly well I'm surprised by how different they sound yet with no loss of their essentials as musicians. The three duos are particularly impressive, especially from the work-play viewpoint. As a bonus there are solos from Green and Murphy in which streams of ideas seem endless.

The album has a story. In the 1980s James Fulkerson taught at Dartington, that famous but curious mix of old world patronage and rustic modernism which occasionally gives rise to something surprising. He naturally got to know some of the musicians who lived nearby in Totnes and the surrounding area. Mick Green and David Murphy are among the best of these, luminaries of the local jazz scene as well as freeform improvisers. Fulkerson eventually relocated to Amsterdam, but has occasionally passed through Devon, notably with the Barton Workshop contemporary music ensemble. One night in August 2004 he passed through Totnes, marking the occasion with a concert of improvised music in the back room of the Kingsbridge Inn. The music was recorded by Richard Douglas-Green and the result is this CD.

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**Track 1:** MG: bass ash-tray (sax pipe with Turkish bowl on the end - a swanee/slide sax) and tenor sax; JF: Trombone with sax mouthpiece, DM: Bb clarinet.

**Track 2:** MG: tenor sax.

**Track 3:** JF: trombone; DM: soprano sax.

**Track 4:** JF: trombone; MG: tenor sax.

**Track 5:** MG: tenor saxophone; DM: tenor sax.

**Track 6:** DM: alto sax.

**Track 7:** MG: bass ash tray + soprano sax; JF: as track 1; DM: as track 1.



Recording Engineer: Richard Douglas Green ([www.green.ltd.uk](http://www.green.ltd.uk))

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Totnes, Devon, UK on 4th August 2004.

Produced for FMR by Trevor Taylor

CD layout by Ewan Rigg

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