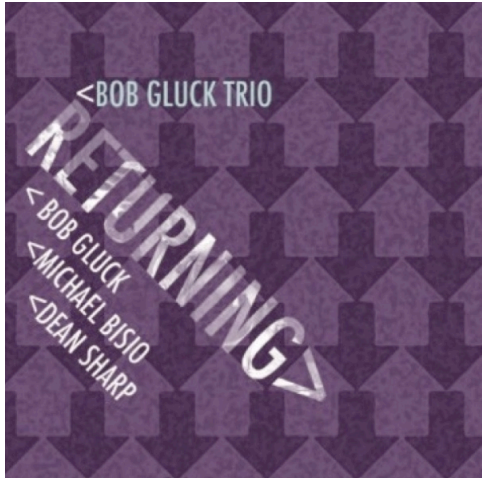


Returning
Bob Gluck Trio
Bob Gluck, Michael Bisio, Dean Sharp
FMR CD292-0710 (2011)



Reviews

Libero Farnè

All About Jazz (Italy)

<http://italia.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=7324> (in Italian)

February 23, 2012

Returning offers music that is unique, oscillating between grace and austerity. Due to its melodic character and structure, it is never boring. The compositional approach (all songs are by Bob Gluck except the last one, which is credited to the collective) is about improvisation and interplay in the moment. The flow of the music is unpredictable, never following a scheme that starts with the presentation of a musical theme followed by its development and improvisation. Instead, the trio often moves into short solo or duet passages that are terse and pithy. This young pianist/leader and his fellow musicians show that it is possible to blend bold arrangements with short and long contrasting sections and sustained ruminations that are both playful and thoughtful. These features may in some ways call to mind the style of Dave Burrell.

Even drummer Dean Sharp stands out as a distinct instrumentalist in a school of his own. His drumming does not rely on overly customary approaches, but offers purposeful interventions, using a kit with a broad tonal range that includes steel drums. Michael Bisio is the most experienced member of the trio: with his powerful bass sounds, dark and resonant, and virtuosic fingering, he deserves a far higher profile than he has within the European (or at least Italian) concert circuit. Anyone who has had the good fortune to hear him as a member of the Matthew Shipp Trio, at the Saalfelden festival in 2011, can appreciate the depth of his expressive world. While this young leader, trio and CD may not be of epochal importance, this is music that demands due attention. With an honest and robust flavor, it unfolds with deep conviction and concentration, offering a sonic discourse of unquestionable authenticity.

Rating: 3.5 stars

John Shelton Ivany

Top 21

<http://jsitop21.com>

December 12, 2011

Bob Gluck, Dean Sharp and Michael Bisio's "Returning" is an album that no one else could create. The idea was each cut being down to earth and you can feel the artistry that was behind "Returning".

Clifford Allen

New York Jazz Record

December 2011

It's easy to forget that pianist-electronic artist Bob Gluck has only been involved in the creative music environment for a little over a decade after years away from music. Though the piano was a part of his life early on, it's only been in his repertoire again for the last six years. Considering that fact, Gluck is a very bold improviser with a strong conception as both a soloist and part of an ensemble, as well as being a composer of stoic depth and maturity. Returning is his second disc in three years with co-conspirators Michael Bisio (bass) and Dean Sharp (drums) and the trio tackles eight of Gluck's original pieces with a rugged enthusiasm. The compositions themselves run from a tuneful and melodic freedom to jagged interplay, often in a very short amount of time.

The opening "Lifeline" is an example of this, piano and bass climbing and hanging onto short motifs as cymbals and brushed snare provide vibrating accents. Stoking the poles of chunkiness and floridness, Gluck's solo displays a brash romanticism in a dense series of spirals. Cymbal scrapes and bullish pizzicato outline and help direct Gluck's playing.

The rangy title track follows, quoting from Carla Bley's "And Now the Queen" before setting off into anthemic Mal Waldron-like sway punctuated by rumbling cymbal work and clattering rimshots. While Gluck's solo seems almost isolationist in its expanse, Bisio's rock-solid walk and the scattered drum commentary build in a way that nips at the pianist's heels. The bassist is, as usual, a total monster and his out-front spot midway through the piece exemplifies muscular, throaty pluck and singing arco. The piece closes with an insistent, tugging bass walk and dusky midrange twirls. "There's no There There" is a bouncy theme, Sharp's augmented kit mimicking a calabash as bass and piano melodies intersect and pull apart. The trio toys with the fact that Gluck's pianism is rather weighty, yet somehow the music must retain lightness and fluidity and this creates a fascinating tension. Between Bisio's anchor, Sharp's wily chatter and Gluck's orchestral grandeur, Returning is a fine and temperamental set of group music.

Don Lerman

Cadence

October - December 2011 (Volume 37, 10-12)

Pianist and composer Bob Gluck, along with sensitive trio mates Bisio on bass and Sharp on drums, provide more music in the Free Jazz arena on "Returning." Gluck, a music professor in Albany whose specialties include electronic music and multimedia music, previously released the CD "Sideways" with the same trio of himself, Bisio, and Sharp on the FMR label. Selections of interest include the musically dense 'By A Field,' displaying the group in full communicative form, and 'There's No There There,' featuring a strong rhythmic groove reworked and developed in striking fashion by the trio.

Bill Milkowski**Jazz Times**

October 14, 2011

Pianist Bob Gluck, a one-time rabbi, has found a perfect balance between formal composition and free jazz with his intuitive rhythm tandem of bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Dean Sharp. His spiky explorations on the opening "Lifeline," for instance, are bookended by a distinctly meditative ostinato theme. The title cut swings in fairly conventional, if angular, fashion before opening up to a middle section full of Gluck's virtuosic runs that may recall such avant-garde icons as Cecil Taylor, Paul Bley and Don Pullen. The tumultuous "Time" is marked by explosive free playing, while "By a Field" gradually develops from plaintive introspection to volatile extrapolation. Bisio, showcased with virtuosic arco work on "That's All You Got?" also delivers humongous bass tones on the playfully Monkish "There's No There There." The collection closes with a whisper with the sparse improv piece "Something Quiet."

Jazz 'n More (Switzerland)

October 6, 2011

Gluck, pianist, electronic musician, music historian and teacher at the University of Albany NY, moves with many-sided interests between diverse traditions and the avant-garde. After the sparingly constructed CD 'Something Quiet', he returns to the trio format with this third FMR production. This time he refrains from using freely rearranged themes of others. The way in which he creates a connection between harmony, 'straight-ahead' and multimodal free development in these eight compositions is reminiscent of Paul Bley and Don Pullen. 'Time' has the effect of a short display of possibilities. The composed material is more just beginning and goal; it is rarely developed explicitly. But the trio is superbly well-practiced, and lets itself get inspired by something along the way and goes at it - either swinging or with free timing full of variation - with robustness and fire that does not ignore the lyrical. Sharp is a sparing but expressive drummer, and is noticeable for his metallic instrumentation. He and especially Bisio shape their solo spaces in an attractive way. Bisio, an all-around bass player who worked for a long time in Seattle, really ought to be better known. His many recordings mostly appear on somewhat obscure labels.

Henry Smith**All About Jazz**

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=40270>

September 4, 2011

The piano trio can be a difficult format for free playing. It is too easy for the piano, so easily a dominating instrument, to overshadow the bassist and drummer, rendering them as backup to the more harmonically complex keyboard. This is fine, and an enormous amount of great music has been made in this format, but when it comes to more exploratory veins of jazz, it is difficult for a group to exhibit the simpatico required for simultaneous creativity and, on the part of the pianist especially, restraint. Yet Bob Gluck Trio's *Returning* makes it all look easy.

To be fair, the trio is comprised of three veteran musicians. Gluck is an accomplished and well-respected pianist in the field and bassist Michael Bisio's prodigious output includes work with Matthew Shipp and innumerable projects of his own, while drummer Dean Sharp has played with musicians as diverse as Moby, Brad Mehldau and Elliott Sharp. Despite their diverse backgrounds however, they sound custom-fit here, settling in immediately on the opening

"Lifeline," with a lyrical theme that meanders around a central descending line before opening outward. The group's skill for loosely flowing improvisation fills in the blanks between the careful constructions of Bill Evans' trio work and Cecil Taylor's richly complex energy. That is a large space indeed, and within it the group finds a sound all its own.

The title track opens with a Bisio solo, richly recorded and confident in its punchy execution, before Sharp and Gluck snap it into focus with the song's melody. Sharp scampers around his kit, sitting in distinct sound worlds for a time, re-contextualizing Bisio and Gluck's fairly steady playing around him. The drummer even moves into percussive sounds that recall Henry Threadgill's work on his self-made hubkaphone. It is a richly varied piece.

Elsewhere, Gluck's tendency toward more classical sounding themes emerges. "That's All You Got?" recalls Conlon Nancarrow's "Study for Player Piano No. 24," its staccato theme quickly settling into a groovy meander through variations on its waltz-like nature. "By a Field" is, on the other hand, more brooding and less playful, Sharp's clattering metallic jangles and cymbal bows careening through Bisio and Gluck's fluttering lines.

"Something Quiet" is, as the title suggests, a sparsely played piece for a rainy day. It contains the same qualities of romance that are a strain throughout the record, but in a more subdued vein that speaks to the record's conclusion. It is a fitting finale to a beautifully executed album.

Karl Ackermann

All About Jazz

August 31, 2011

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=40249>

The piano trio, in one form or another, has been a jazz staple since the 1930s, and consequently skews toward the familiar. Fortunately, there are those atypical artists who invite a deeper dive for the uninhibited. Nothing could be more challenging, interesting and listenable than the music Bob Gluck creates within that formation. Like his *Something Quiet* (FMR Records 2010), Gluck's *Returning* is a brilliant collection of uniquely modern jazz. Throughout, it is a passionate and riveting performance with rhythmic support and outstanding solo work from ground breaking bassist Michael Bisio and inspired drummer Dean Sharp.

The opening track confirms that Gluck is in the league of postmodern innovators like Paul Bley, Ran Blake and Cecil Taylor. "Lifeline" is as adventurous as it is entrancing, with a clear, almost serene, melody surrounded by a good deal of improvisation. The title track is a small epic of shape-shifting creativity driven by Sharp's astonishing array of tones, using every part of the kit. Bisio has two outstanding solos here: the first pizzicato treatment is broken up with Gluck's fine solo, followed by Bisio's arco return. This is a big, inventive, complex piece that finally drifts out so unassumingly that it demands to be replayed.

No-one in Gluck's trio fades into the background for very long; there is always a high level of engagement and contribution. Solo and group expressions can explode in untamed shouts then recover in affecting phrases of anticipation. "By a Field" opens with a balladic solo from Gluck before Sharp literally chimes in. and the pianist finds his way to a brief, classically influenced passage. At that point, things get considerably freer. In the midst of these time and theme changes, Bisio has made his way in with a deep, woody backdrop that evolves into a mesmeric solo. The piece closes much as it began, with subdued support from Bisio.

The collection concludes with "Something Quiet," a piece related in name only to Gluck's

previous recording. It is a meditative and beautiful work that serves as a cool down after the challenge. Gluck masters the balance of structure and improvisation throughout this suite of very forward-thinking pieces. As texturally different as the pieces are, there is a seamless narrative flow from one to another. Each of the nine original compositions breathes with an edgy creativity. Gluck, Bisio and Sharp have produced a truly unique collection of music on *Returning*.

Rotcod Zzaj

Zzaj

Issue #116

August 1, 2011

http://rotcodzzaj.com/wordpress/?page_id=1274

It was easy to become an "instant fan" of Bob's thoroughly spontaneous piano style when I reviewed his "Something Quiet" CD in issue # 111, but for any dedicated jazz fan, it will be even easier on his new release. He's joined this time by bassist Michael Bisio (who I've had the pleasure of watching in live-show mode before) and drummer/percussionist Dean Sharp, and on tracks like the opener, "Lifeline", you'll immediately realize why I enjoy them so much! Michael's bass intro on "Vertigal", and the intricate weave they wrap your ears (& your head) in on this 7:31 winner will make it (as it did for me) a favorite! Looking for something a little more "piano-oriented"? Try on the mighty mellow of "By A Field" – I guarantee you'll love it. This CD is an excellent example of how intricate (yet powerful) trio jazz can be, & it gets my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98.

All About Jazz

Free Download of the Day

'By a Field' (from "Returning")

July 25, 2011

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/jazzdownload.php?id=6686>

Grady Harp

Amazon Reviews, "A New Jazz Sound Explodes on the Scene" (5 stars)

July 21, 2011

http://www.amazon.com/Returning/dp/B004R8P57Y/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1326062174&sr=8-1

The Bob Gluck Trio enters the arena of fine jazz groups with this collection of works collectively called RETURNING. The trio - Bob Gluck, piano, Michael Bisio, bass, Dean Sharp, drums - make this a for all practical purposes a percussive ensemble (the bass doesn't use the bow) and the range of expression represented in the eight tracks is not only rather staggering to the uninitiated ear, here is for all intents and purposes a brand new sound in jazz.

As Krispin Kott so astutely states, "The beauty of jazz, and there's plenty of it, is how intimate it can feel while also coming off as entirely otherworldly. 'By a Field' includes all the traditional clicks of the bass, the rattle of the snare and the delicate waves of the piano while launching the listener into the stratosphere.' This is a collection of composed songs that border on classical music experimentation. At times the 'sound' of the trio seems to be coming from inside the piano - as though the plucked bass line and the drum strokes have been woven among the strings of the keyboard instrument. At other times Gluck's piano technique borders on the tone row before it dips every erotically into the ballad line that makes these songs sing. It has been said that 'Gluck features all originals which provide room to investigate miscellaneous moods, musical colors and feelings which combine both angular - sometimes dissonant - elements with lyrical

underpinnings.' The number available stand alone - Returning, Time, That's All You Got, By A Field, There's No There There (a humorous reference to Gertrude Stein's manipulation of words, matched by the trios good times playfulness with notes and themes), Vertigal, and Something Quiet - though there are portions of themes that tie these all together , as the title song Returning suggests. This is new jazz of the highest order. Pay attention.

Eric Harabadian

Jazz Inside

July 2011

<http://jazzinsidemagazine.com/publications/guide/july-2011> (p.48)

The Bob Gluck Trio is a group versed in classic jazz but tends to lean toward the experimental side of the idiom. They open the disc with a track called "Lifeline." This is a very open and somewhat intangible kind of piece. Gluck establishes a basic chromatic sounding type of chord melody and then all bets are off. The band goes into collective avant garde mode and really explores the recording space. Gluck approaches the acoustic piano with a Monk/Cecil Taylor kind of inventiveness and really pushes the band to creative excellence here. The title track "Returning" follows with a somewhat exotic Middle Eastern or Mediterranean kind of flavor. Bisio plays an ostinato type figure as Sharp responds in kind going toe to toe with Gluck's keyboard punctuations. The band also employs a nice balance of space and silence here. They segue nicely into "Time" featuring cacophonous bursts of sound and energy. Occasionally, bits of piano melody and consonant notes sift through. The playfully titled "That's All You Got?" is loose and open, with Gluck interjecting stride and blues motifs and recognizable melody above the fray. "By A Field" is explosive and dynamic as it puts the emphasis on the piano. Gluck plays unbridled and romantic as the rhythm section share the freedom of mixing solo play and group improvisation together in a seamless whole. The curiously titled "There's No There There" is next and has more of a recognizable groove to the casual ear. Gluck plays an intrepid and provocative melody that slithers out of his keyboard while Bisio and Sharp lay down a shuffle in time. "Vertigal" calls attention to nuance from all concerned. Sharp really steps out here displaying all aspects of the drum kit. Gluck switches from light to dark tonal colors and delves into deep chord choices and ideas. "Something Quiet" is a group composition and simply reflects the title. It is a nice tune to end the disc on and spotlights Sharp's wonderful brush work and Gluck's delicate touch and feel. This is an interesting record and a nice change from the standard fare.

Jazz Station - Arnaldo DeSouteiro's Blog: Jazz, Bossa & Beyond

Monday, June 27, 2011

<http://jazzstation-oblogdearnaldodesouteiros.blogspot.com/2011/06/cd-of-week-bob-gluck-trio-returning.html>

CD of the Week - "Bob Gluck Trio: Returning"

D. Oscar Groomes

O's Place Jazz Magazine

June 21, 2011

<http://www.OsPlaceJazz.com>

Pianist Bob Gluck leads a trio with Michael Bisio (b) and drummer Dean Sharp performing eight original tracks. They warm up on "Lifeline" setting the stage for a free flowing session. Gluck's compositions have a lot of layering with each member operating on different planes. They remain

connected through the theme of each track. We enjoyed the title track featuring a solid solo by Bisio and the use of dynamics throughout the set to draw us into the performance.

Michael McDowell

Blitz Magazine

June 17, 2011

<http://blitzmag.blogspot.com/2007/01/shape-of-things-to-come-by-michael.html>

In recent months, Bob Gluck was the recipient of no small degree of notoriety for the release of *Something Quiet*, his acclaimed collaboration with soprano saxophonist Joe Giardullo and bassist Christopher Dean Sullivan. Blitz Magazine hailed their efforts as, “new avenues of musical expression”, with each participant seemingly buoyed by the luxury of a remarkable amount of creative autonomy.

Interestingly enough, from his perspective, New York City pianist, composer, author, rabbi and social commentator Gluck seems enamored to a greater degree with this latest release, which reunites him with trio partners Michael Bisio (bass) and Dean Sharp (drums). The group’s last studio collaboration came in 2008 with the release of their *Sideways* album, also for the FMR label.

To be certain, *Returning* is far more the brainchild of Gluck than was *Something Quiet*. Not that Gluck was a peripheral participant in those proceedings, though. *Something Quiet* was simply a work that lent itself to more of a collaborative spirit, with each participant thankfully united in purpose.

Conversely, *Returning* is an exercise in creative autonomy, in which any possible extracurricular input would best be served via another outlet. Thankfully, the more focused and determined approach succeeds here for the simple reason that each member of the trio again shares a passion for the common goal.

In the case of *Returning*, that common goal is again the road less traveled, but one that reaches its destination through the most seemingly incongruous of individual routes. To wit, both Bisio and Sharp take an Elvin Jones and Jimmy Garrison-like approach to Gluck’s improvisations; rounding out the proceedings on their own terms, while nonetheless staying the course.

As for Gluck, his is a muse that abruptly changes course at a whim, while never stepping outside of the parameters of his mission statement. The seemingly anti-climactic reinvestigation of the earlier *Something Quiet* that closes these proceedings suggests as much on the surface. However, its relatively subdued mood is more indicative of a cool down in the wake of an extended workout, rather than a reflection of a creative spark that had run its course.

Happily, that creative spark does indeed flourish throughout the preceding seven tracks in this collection. From the opening bars of the circling for a landing atmosphere of the upgrade of *Lifeline* (reprised from *Something Quiet*) to the sneak attack of the eleven and a half minute *Returning* that follows (which doubles as the most sympathetic vehicle for Bisio and Sharp’s latent front man inclinations), Gluck and his colleagues persevere with tremendous resolve on their own terms. Only occasionally do they touch bases with relative convention, as evidenced in the 4/4 backbeat of *There’s No There There* and the unique hybrid of the rhythm track of Apo Hiking Society’s *American Junk* and *Time Further Out*-period Dave Brubeck Quartet that characterizes *Vertigal*.

To be certain, *Returning* is not a project intended for a pedestrian demographic, not even within jazz circles. Nonetheless (and perhaps in contrast to Gluck's expectations), it is an effort that succeeds in uniting even the most disparate factions by virtue of the common ground of commitment to excellence on the part of all concerned. In that respect, Gluck has fulfilled the somewhat prophetic proclamation of his 1998 *Stories Heard And Retold* for the Electronic Music Foundation label remaining ahead of the pack *By A Field*.

**Crispin Kott
Roll**

June 2011

<http://www.rollmagazine.com/jun11/articles/cdreview.php>

If jazz is meant to be a conversation, the Bob Gluck Trio is able to converse on a great many topics, sometimes at the same time. On their latest release, *Returning*, the group brings to vivid life the tension and beauty of Gluck's compositions, beginning with "Lifeline," a five-minute song bristling with electricity.

The trio—Gluck on piano, Michael Bisio on bass and Dean Sharp on drums—moves comfortably between the avant-garde and the emotional throughout, as on "That's All You Got?" a song title that's less a taunt than an inspiration. Bisio strokes the strings solo on the number before being joined by Gluck in a sound that borders on cacophony without ever going too far from the music.

The beauty of jazz, and there's plenty of it, is how intimate it can feel while also coming off as entirely otherworldly. "By a Field" includes all the traditional clicks of the bass, the rattle of the snare and the delicate waves of the piano while launching the listener into the stratosphere.

"There's No There There" is a romp straight from a child's dream of a toy shop coming to life in the middle of the night, while "Something Quiet"—the only joint trio composition on the album—delivers on its promise, a gentle comedown after an often eclectic and wild ride.

The Bob Gluck Trio is a splendid outfit, and on *Returning* they're in a very good place to show it off.

**Doug Simpson
Audiofile Edition
May 23, 2011**

<http://www.audaud.com/article?ArticleID=8931>

***1/2:

On his latest project, *Returning*, pianist Bob Gluck revives the slightly experimental acoustic trio format he explored earlier this year on *Something Quiet*, his preceding FMR label release. Like that last record, Gluck features all originals which provide room to investigate miscellaneous moods, musical colors and feelings which combine both angular – sometimes dissonant – elements with lyrical underpinnings.

This time out, Gluck employs different musicians to help him realize his goal of mating abstract material with probing melodies. Gone are bassist Christopher Dean Sullivan and saxophonist Joe Giardullo and instead Gluck adds bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Dean Sharp. The result is a considered rethink of Gluck's performance palette where he focuses on percussive components and his piano. Bisio is a beneficial choice to assist Gluck. As a solo artist and sideman, Bisio has been both adventurous on his own and able to pair up well with likeminded

musicians such as Vinny Golia, Joe McPhee and Wayne Horvitz. Sharp – who has previously played alongside Bisio – has worked with a diverse roster, which includes Elliott Sharp, Marc Ribot and Todd Sickafoose.

The eight compositions are not free jazz, but over the course of 54 minutes there is certainly a spirit of freeform improvisation, which can be intense, complexly progressive and sometimes tumultuous. The lengthy title track, like the other pieces, has several tempo and rhythmic changes where Gluck's conception stays true but the form varies as percussion and percussive accents fluctuate. Gluck brings in jagged keyboard lines akin to Keith Jarrett while Sharp showcases attentive cymbal dexterity, utilizes spiky hits on the sides of his snares and slips in steel drum-like sounds. Around the halfway mark, Bisio supplies a meditative bowed bass interlude, which is matched by Bisio's subtle use of metal scraping on metal.

Anyone who heard *Something Quiet* should recognize "Lifeline." On Gluck's initial rendition, he emphasized a pensive quality, but here he heightens the softer moments with turbulent aspects which feature twisting piano enhancements, another reflective Bisio solo and Sharp's sometimes gentle and other times course accompaniment.

The trio delivers playfulness on the Gertrude Stein-inspired "There's No There There," which is a counterpoise to the pressured tension of other tracks and takes listeners down a witty path which swings with zeal and zest. Even here, the musicians do not abandon a sense of jarring restlessness but this is tempered by mutual brio. "That's All You Got?" also starts with a similarly jocular approach but quickly shifts to increasingly unpredictable terrain. Bisio and Sharp both furnish memorable solos, with Sharp offering a densely packed solo at the end to produce a cacophonous closure.

The album's only truly spontaneous improvisation is the contemplative "Something Quiet," created after Gluck's brief walk through the woods surrounding the recording studio. Ironically there is no tune by this name on Gluck's record, *Something Quiet*, so this is perhaps an afterthought on Gluck's prior studio date. Gluck's lyrical characteristics are at the forefront as he carefully extrapolates on a pastoral motif accentuated by Bisio's numerous percussive attributes and Bisio's poised bass.

John Book
Book's Music
May 9, 2011

<http://www.thisisbooksmusic.com/2011/05/09/review-bob-gluck-trio-returning/>

Anytime Bob Gluck releases new music, I'm happy. This means this will be a good review, for he has returned in a trio setting with Dean Sharp and Michael Bisio in an album called, aptly, *Returning* (FMR Records).

Gluck is a musician whose approach to the piano is admirable, for it sounds like someone with class, or at least someone who has the utmost respect for the instrument and those before him who have made the instrument what it has become in the world of jazz. The opening track sounds like something freeform, as he's going everywhere with the piano (think of Keith Jarrett's more adventurous works, sans grunts), but maybe it's meant to describe his own 'Lifeline'. It sounds great, as if he revealed a box of emotions and what you're hearing is his intuition at play. Then when Bisio uses his bass as a lasso to round everyone up, you know you're up for a fantastic listen, which is what this album is.

While I love structured jazz, I also love the freedom that jazz provides, and this is one of those albums where upon first listen, you cannot expect anything for what you expect to hear will not happen. It's not free jazz, but the spirit of improvisation and what the next man will do is evident throughout, there's a trust each musician has and they put into the mix and have fun. There are songs that are a bit more polished, but when Gluck and Bisio handle their own solos, or Sharp drums in and adds a nice percussive twist to things, you know you're hearing something exceptional. In the vast world of jazz, that's saying a lot and fortunately, the Bob Gluck Trio enjoy saying many things.

Chuck Vecoli

Jazz Review

May 1, 2011

<http://www.jazzreview.com/reviews/latest-cd-track-reviews/item/28102-returning-by-bob-gluck-trio.html>

Returning is the third CD for FMR Records from Bob Gluck. I fully enjoyed his previous effort *Something Quiet* which came out earlier this year. While the similarities are there, this latest effort in my mind, is a step farther for Gluck. The trio format features Gluck's virtuoso piano work, the tight supportive punctuation of Michael Bisio's bass work and the incredible dynamics of Dean Sharp on drums. This configuration drives the relationships of dynamics and rhythm and the interchange that must be ever-present in the trio format.

Gluck's compositions are expressed with an intensity and sensitivity that is spellbinding. I cannot fully convey the attraction deeply seeded in these pieces that becomes stronger as the composition progresses. Edgy taunts of tone and tension, dynamic and melodic subtleties that weave a fabric of strong colors and deep textures. One thing you hear is the interrelationships between the players. The give and take is palpable and constant. They execute the trio format impeccably. "Returning", the title track is the longest time-wise at 11:25, but the piece moves so smoothly and constantly forward that it seems to be over too soon for the listener. It has such unique components inside each section of the composition. Changes in tempo, rhythm form, percussion and percussive accents are throughout the piece. I find it fascinating to go back and listen again to this track and see the detail to which the trio emphasizes these subtleties.

Other notable tracks are the shorter, but equally epic, "Time" in which Bisio delivers a blistering intro on the base, setting the scene for the remaining two minutes. Sharp is a driving force in the trio, with a notable solo in the later minutes of "That's All You Got". "By A Field" has a compositional simplicity that belies the emotional intensity that is conveyed by it's execution. Even deep within the base solo, you can feel the essence of an underlying tension accented by both accompanist, Gluck and Sharp. "There's No There There" is almost counterpoint to the tension of the previous track and lets the listener take a deep breath and feel some playfulness. That being said, it is a further example of how tight this trio is and how they can convey moods as one voice. "Vertigal" was both different and familiar to me at the same time. Gluck is surprising in the use of melody and rhythm to convey mood. This track is a great example of what *Returning* is all about, returning to some familiar territory. For me, that is what the Bob Gluck Trio has done with this latest effort, brought me back to some familiar territory of Gluck's composition, but took me there with some new experiences. While the CD ends with a track of a similar name to the last effort "Something Quiet" is again new ground over familiar country. I enjoyed returning to Gluck's music on this latest release.

Michael Czékus**HFP Portal Zene** (Hungary)**April 29, 2011**<http://hifipiac.hu/index.php/zene/53-lemezaj/790-bob-gluck-trio-returning>

Rating: 8/10

The musical career of the American-born jazz pianist Bob Gluck has not followed the usual pattern; there was a period in his life when he put aside his music in order to devote himself to religion as a rabbi. This period ended in 2005 when the black-and-white keyboard regained central position in his life. He made his first recording with a trio bearing his own name under the aegis of the British jazz record company FMR, and it was released with the title "Sideways"... The 55-minute disc carries eight compositions, most of them by the bandleader. Only the closing piece 'Something Quiet' in the collection had the creative [compositional] assistance of the other two members of the Gluck Trio, Michael Bisio and Dean Sharp. Even if Gluck tried, he could not deny the influence of a number of earlier musicians that had attracted him to jazz. The spirit of Ornette Coleman, Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock and Miles Davis is palpable in these recordings.

In "Returning" the listener will encounter a production swelling with energy and opening wide new vistas. Gluck's piano playing can never be characterized as calm; it races with unbridled speed that pushes the limits of aural perception. The most significant track in the repertory is definitely the 12-minute-long eponymous composition "Returning", in which the trio's members work seamlessly together in well-adjusted cooperation. Another exciting piece is 'Vertigal' whose structure shows similarity to 'Sleeping Giant', a composition on "Crossing", a disc by Herbie Hancock, one of the seminal figures for Gluck's music. Not every piece on the new disc is accessible on first hearing; however, repeated listening will unveil the secret. Bob Gluck Trio's new album is indispensable material for the fans of free jazz. (Translated by Paul Sohar)

Gregory Edwards**GappleGate Music Review****April 29, 2011**<http://gapplegatemusicreview.blogspot.com/2011/04/bob-gluck-in-excellent-piano-trio.html>

Bob Gluck goes his own way. He is an excellent pianist, with harmonic and melodic ideas to spare. His recent *Returning* (FMR 292-0710) finds him in formidable company. Drummer Dean Sharp has the sensitivity and big ears to thrive in the intimate free-oriented trio setting. Michael Bisio has basso profundo status these days. He has become a major player (see my recent interview with him in All About Jazz), and for good reason. You have to have independent inventive prowess plus good team-interactivity to thrive in an open piano trio setting as a bassist now (and mostly always), and Michael surely has both.

Returning shows the integrity and artistic brilliance of those early Paul Bley trios, then affirms that this is the Bob Gluck Trio, with certain affinities, but with the compunction and talent to extend the forms and personalize them.

The level of playing has consistency. It is high throughout. The music can be forceful, or whisper to you. It can get a head of steam in the linear swing-zone, then turn around and head into space. The improvisations revel in thematic logic and yet remain open to spontaneity.

Gluck is a stylist of stature. The trio has six hands, and at least three feet (in the musical sense) and they are put magnificently to use here.

Alonzo Weston

St. Joseph News-Press

April, 2011

<http://www.newspressnow.com/entertainment/27508687/detail.html>

"Returning" reprises the energetic trio led by pianist/composer Bob Gluck reunited with bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Dean Sharp.

This new recording showcases Gluck's original compositions, which articulate a broad expanse of mood, pulse and color. The music is textural, sonically lush and multi-layered, highlighting Gluck's evocative, angular, yet lyrical approach to the piano.

Selected reviews of the Bob Gluck Trio's first recording, "Sideways" (2008)

Jay Collins, Cadence: "A potent first document of this expansive trio, with Gluck's open-ended compositions and those of others sparking the creative improvised explorations from all... a sense of openness and improvisational acumen with shards of daring..."

Hrayr Attarian, JazzTimes Community: "A near classic work of art, one that will easily withstand the test of time."

Free Jazz Blogspot: "... the trio's version of 'Lonely Woman' is brilliant. Ornette Coleman's beautiful tune is fully in sync with the rest of the album's desperate tone, full of shattered hope, and deep longing for a better world."