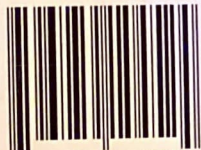




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1. THE SOUTH OF EVERYWHERE 6:58
2. STRANGE RESOLUTION 6:45
3. KIITOS 8:47
4. STELLA BY STARLIGHT 6:14
5. FUNERAL FOR THE ANTS 6:50
6. ELENA 7:05
7. ALTERED EGO 6:37
8. THE BEST THING FOR YOU 4:38

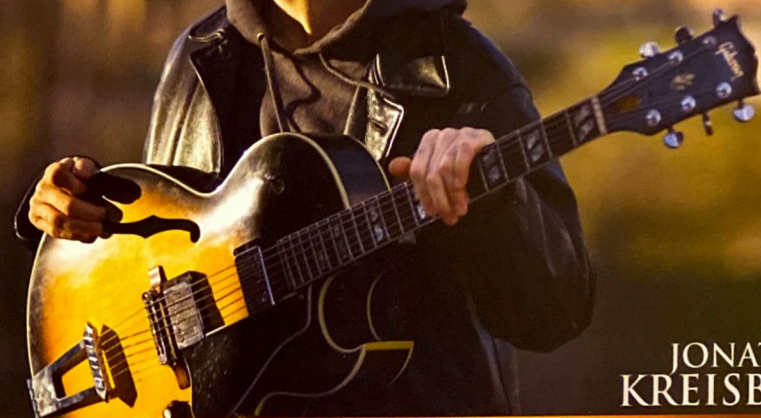
Jonathan Kreisberg
Matt Penman
Mark Ferber
Gary Versace
Will Vinson

Guitar
 Bass
 Drums
 Piano
 Alto Sax

-Recorded by Dan Gellert
 with assistance from James Frazee and John Valencia.
 Water Music • Hoboken, New Jersey • April 2-3, 2007.
 -Produced by Jonathan Kreisberg
 -Mixed by James Farber • Shelter Island Music, New York City.
 -Mastered at Foothill Digital • New York City.
 -Mastering Engineer: Allan Tucker

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**JONATHAN
 KREISBERG**

THE SOUTH OF EVERYWHERE



1. THE SOUTH OF EVERYWHERE (6:58)*
2. STRANGE RESOLUTION (6:45)*
3. KIITOS (8:47)*
4. STELLA BY STARLIGHT (6:14)
Victor Young & Ned Washington, Famous Music (ASCAP).
5. FUNERAL FOR THE ANTS (6:50)*
6. ELENA (7:05)*
7. ALTERED EGO (6:37)*
8. THE BEST THING FOR YOU (4:38)
Irving Berlin, Irving Berlin Music Company (ASCAP).

*Jonathan Kreisberg, New for Now Music (ASCAP).

Jonathan uses:
D'Andrea picks, Gibson strings and Laboga cables.

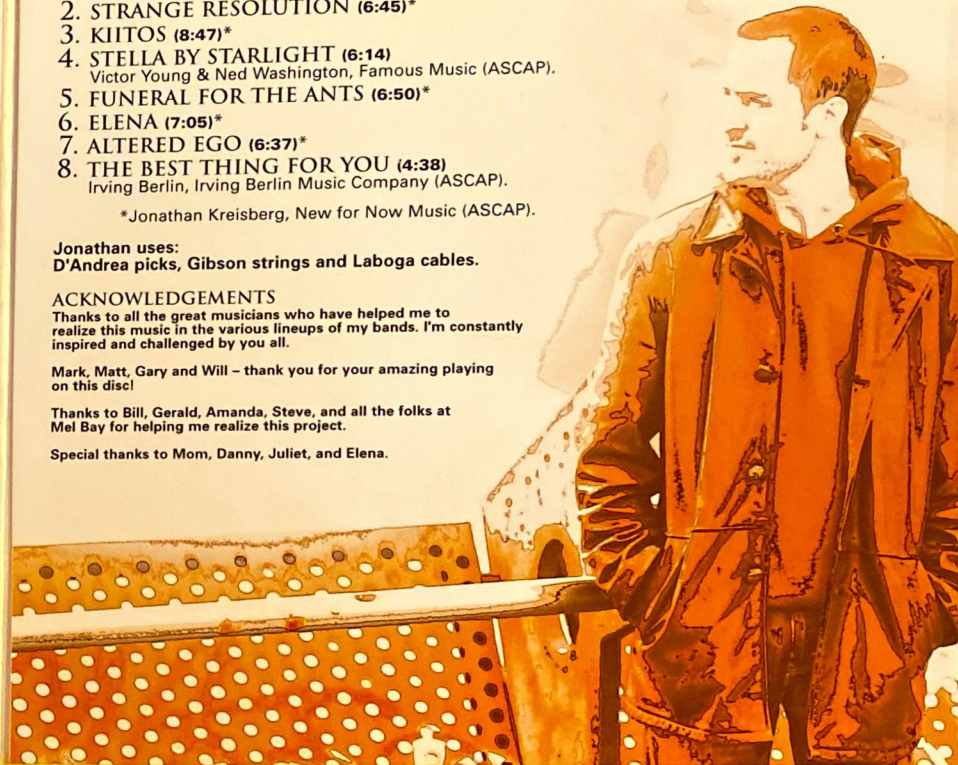
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all the great musicians who have helped me to realize this music in the various lineups of my bands. I'm constantly inspired and challenged by you all.

Mark, Matt, Gary and Will – thank you for your amazing playing on this disc!

Thanks to Bill, Gerald, Amanda, Steve, and all the folks at Mel Bay for helping me realize this project.

Special thanks to Mom, Danny, Juliet, and Elena.



THE SOUTH OF EVERYWHERE

Jonathan Kreisberg has a healthy appetite for musical struggle and growth, and he's rising to the top of what is arguably the most competitive heap of all, the international jazz scene. Possessed of a stunning technique on the guitar, a firm and imaginative grasp of jazz tradition and a way of turning complex theoretical ideas into music of great warmth and lyricism, Kreisberg is generating momentum and turning heads everywhere he plays.

Like most fine jazz artists, he views the forging of deep musical relationships as a paramount goal. Just listen to the common language he's created with the rhythm section on this album – bassist Matt Penman and drummer Mark Ferber. "These guys can play material that's so varied, and yet it's all so clearly them," Kreisberg marvels. "They can go anywhere without limitations. They play music."

The South of Everywhere, Kreisberg's second Mel Bay release and sixth overall as a leader, bristles with the seasoned rapport that years of weekly sessions can bring about. Kreisberg is in top form – his articulation clean and confident, his ideas ambitious and fresh.

Gary Versace, who has played Hammond organ on many of Kreisberg's gigs, makes vital contributions here on acoustic piano. "He plays some magical stuff," says Kreisberg. "He's super-creative, with great ears, and he brings that touch to everything he plays."

Will Vinson, born and raised in London, now one of New York's strongest alto players, handles Kreisberg's tricky melodic lines with aplomb and performs beautifully as a soloist. "Will's got a lot of soul," Kreisberg observes, "but he also has a cerebral side, and my newer writing was going in that direction. Will's concept lines up with the angle I've been exploring."

Kreisberg's previous Mel Bay outing, *Unearth*, featured a quintet in an all-original program. *The South of Everywhere* is a bit different. "Up to now," he reflects, "I've done either trio or quintet, and the two concepts have been pretty separate. On this record I'm trying to present a fuller spectrum of what I do."

The album begins enigmatically, with the guitar sounding almost like a programmed loop. Kreisberg sets up an ambiguous 5/4 feel, and soon the powerful rhythms and spiraling unison lines have the band sounding larger than itself. The music may be daunting, but the geographical reference in the title is poignant and personal:

"I'm drawn to the southern parts of regions, whether it's in the U.S., Spain or Finland," Kreisberg offers. "This music has a feeling I associate with driving down that road. The song just feels like it's heading away from the harsh north to recharge in the south." Kreisberg also has a metaphor in mind: "While ideas may come from the north of the body, the raw energy comes from the south. That's what makes the ideas come alive."

Of "Strange Resolution," Kreisberg explains: "I wanted something with a swinging rhythmic essence but also with some interesting harmonic movement. Like the C minor-major that resolves to a D major. It's odd, but I wanted it somehow to work smoothly." The tempo is slow and steady, but the quick, knotty lines, played in unison by guitar and alto, create an inner tension. Don't miss Kreisberg's extraordinary stop-time break, or his subtle quote of "Honeysuckle Rose."

"Kiitos" is Finnish for "thank you" or "gratitude." This tune has a curiously out-of-tempo feel in the first half. "I wanted something with motion and a bit of a pulse, but also an organic quality, as if the melody is breathing." Ferber begins with a striking solo introduction, and Versace works up to a dramatic statement as the band ebbs and flows around him. In the second half, Kreisberg introduces a flowing 6/8 tempo as the alto and bass state a new melody. When the drums enter, Kreisberg opts for distortion to turn up the emotional burn.

With the brisk 7/8 version of "Stella by Starlight," we get a taste of Kreisberg's searching, inventive approach to the standard repertoire, not to mention his talent in the trio setting. His solo reaches great heights of inspiration, particularly at the start of the third chorus. "Mark, Matt and I have been developing a strong trio concept on gigs," says Kreisberg, "and I felt that this take really captured that."

"Funeral for the Ants" attains, in Kreisberg's words, rather "gothic proportions." Set in an ominous, slow-gaited 3/4, the distorted theme uses harmonies "that definitely come from things I've listened to in the classical world." Behind the title there's a story:

When my girlfriend was young, she saw a bunch of ants, and as kids will do, she stepped on them. Seeing the damage, she immediately felt guilty. So she found a walnut shell and collected their crumpled bodies. Then she held a procession of sorts, burying the ants, placing tiny flowers on the grave and singing them a song. This piece is what I imagined that song would be. When you're young, little events like these can seem like a really big deal. And maybe they are. They can shape us into who we become.

Kreisberg wrote "Elena," an evocative ballad, for his modern day "face that launched a thousand ships." The take features beautiful guitar and piano solos. "It has a certain Mediterranean feel," says Kreisberg. "It really reminds me of being on the islands in Greece, how life can slow down and you can start to see the real beauty in things."

"Altered Ego," one of Kreisberg's thornier pieces, starts with a tight rhythmic figure from the piano and a melody from alto and bass and unison. "Something about this tune is different from the rest," Kreisberg says.

The orchestration is different, the form is unconventional, the alto and guitar solos trade. The title is obviously a play on words, and the opening chord is an altered chord, but there's another meaning too. When you put this next to the standards I play, it is my altered ego. And I do mean altered, because it's really the same persona, it's just that I've got a side that's a little more twisted.

Returning to trio mode for the send-off, Kreisberg picks Irving Berlin's seldom-heard "The Best Thing for You." "Although Matt and Mark sound so amazing on the complex stuff," he says, "they really love to just swing one home at the end of the night." The band begins in a bright two-beat feel with Ferber on brushes — a classic approach. The mood heats up as Penman begins to walk, and Kreisberg burns over the deceptively simple changes. A perfect farewell.

Taking stock of his artistic aims, Kreisberg muses:

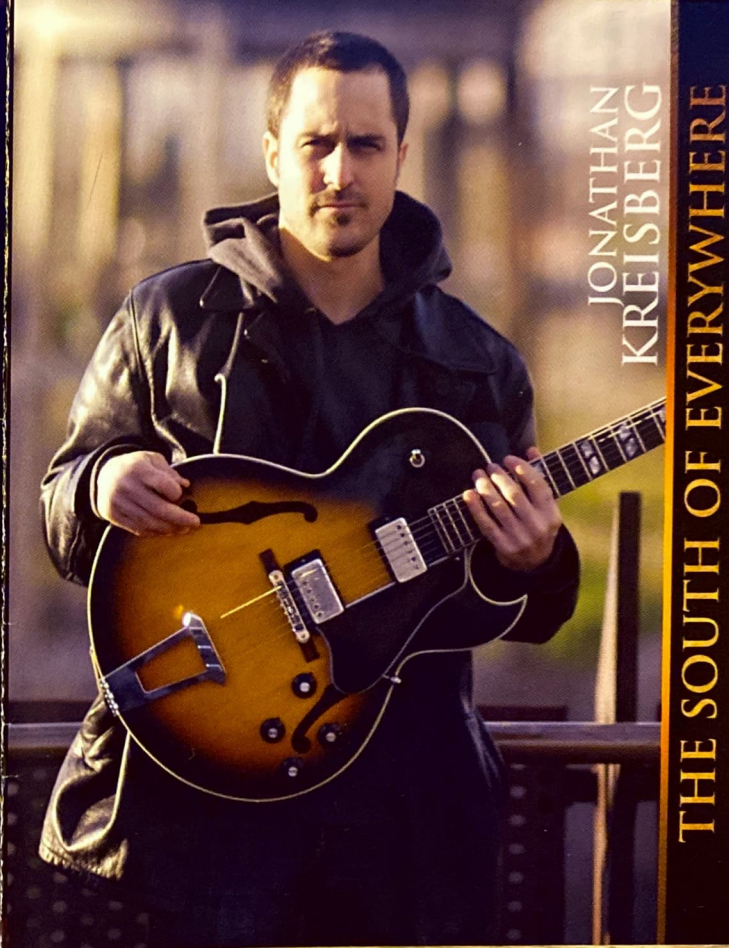
I went through a period where I downplayed my dualistic personality. I was focused on jazz as a singular idea. But I really prefer to think of music as an expanding universe. I want to embrace the fact that I have all these different influences, and they can all enhance each other.

Indeed, *The South of Everywhere* is all the more satisfying for its variety — a new and ever-ripening synthesis from one of the most compelling guitarists on the scene.

—David Adler

David Adler writes for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *JazzTimes* and other publications.

Photography by Noah Shaye



JONATHAN
KREISBERG

THE SOUTH OF EVERYWHERE