

The difference between Burk's trio and other 'mainstream' pianists of his generation is in the way he relates to tradition. It is seen as a form of continuous evolution, from which it is possible to extract extemporaneous ideas for improvisation and composition; a language to use for dialogue, a common denominator within the many musical discussions in the moment of artistic creation.

—Vittorio Lo Conte, AllAboutJazz-Italia

Greg Burk - Piano

Jonathan Robinson - Bass

Gerald Cleaver - Drums

# Greg Burk *Trio*



# Burk's Biography



**Greg Burk**, pianist and composer from Detroit, is among the most refined musicians in the contemporary jazz scene. He comes from a family of classical musicians: his father, son of Russian and Polish immigrants, was an orchestra director while his Italian-born mother was an opera singer. This musical education is so deeply rooted in him that it often emerges in his compositions and improvisations. All in all, studying jazz under well-respected teachers has created a profound impact on Greg Burk's musical thought. George Russell's musical theory, Paul Bley's liberal approach toward improvisation, and the spiritual teachings of Yusef Lateef have formed a base for the development of Burk's unique artistic development. Burk teaches jazz piano and "Ear Training" at New York University in Florence.

*GREG BURK TRIO* reinvigorates the classic piano trio format by combining the beauty and simplicity of melodic playing with the creative spontaneity of collective improvisation. Burk recorded in this configuration with bassist Jonathan Robinson and drummer/percussionist Bob Moses on 2002's *Checking In* (Soul Note), and again with Robinson and Boston-based drummer Luther Gray on 2007's *Ivy Trio* (482 Music).

Burk has 6 of his own CDs which showcase his original pieces, performed by his different groups: Greg Burk Trio, *Ivy Trio*, (482 Music, USA 2007) J. Robinson, bass; L. Gray, drums/percussion; Greg Burk Quartet, *Berlin Bright*, (Soul Note/Black-saint 2007); Solo piano, *The Way In*, (482 Music, USA 2006); Greg Burk Trio, *Nothing, Knowing*, (482 Music, USA 2005) Steve Swallow, Bob Moses; Greg Burk Quartet, *Carpe Momentum*, (Soul Note/Blacksaint, Italy 2004), Jerry Bergonzi, Jon Robinson, Gerald Cleaver; Greg Burk Trio, *Checking In*, (Soul Note/Blacksaint, Italy 2002), Jon Robinson, Bob Moses. As a pianist, he has participated in various recordings by both American and European musicians.

Burk is involved in the concert scene on a variety of levels, including festivals in Europe, Japan, the United States, and Africa, some of which include Villa Celimontana Jazz and Image in Rome, Contrappunti di Jazz, Conservatorio G. Martini in Bologna, Summer jazz Farmleigh in Dublin (Ireland), Huis Ten Bosch Spring Festival in Nagasaki (Japan), Boston Jazz Festival and the Ethiopian Music Festival, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). In addition, since 1995, Burk has performed in some of the most famous jazz clubs worldwide. He's also collaborated with distinguished musicians like Kenny Wheeler, Benny Golson, Steve Swallow, Bob Moses, Jerry Bergonzi, John Tchicai, Steve Grossman, Peter King, Dave Leibman, Dave Binney, Roberto Gatto, Rodney Whittaker, Louis Stewart, Sam Rivers, Either/Orchestra, James Carter, Bob Mover, Curtis Fuller, Frank Lacy, Don Moye, Garrison Fewell, Bobby Battle, Roy Brooks and Rufus Ried.

# Cleaver and Robinson

## Gerald Cleaver

Born May 4, 1963 and raised in Detroit, Gerald is a product of the city's rich music tradition. Inspired by his father, drummer John Cleaver, he began playing the drums at an early age. As a teenager he gained invaluable experience playing with Detroit jazz masters Ali Muhammad Jackson, Lamont Hamilton, Earl Van Riper, and Pancho Hagood. While attending the University of Michigan as a music education major, he was awarded a Jazz Study Grant, from the National Endowment for the Arts, to study with drummer Victor Lewis. He graduated in 1992 and began teaching in Detroit, with visiting musicians like Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, Barry Harris, Kenny Burrell, Frank Foster, Cecil Bridgewater, Ray Bryant, Eddie Harris, Howard Johnson, Diana Krall and Don Byron. He moved to New York in 2002. He has performed or recorded with musicians like Roscoe Mitchell, Lotte Anker, Reggie Workman, William Parker, Mario Pavone, Ralph Alessi, Jimmy Scott, Dave Douglas, Tim Berne, Jeremy Pelt, and Miroslav Vitous, among others. His 2001 recording *Adjust* (Fresh Sound New Talent) was nominated in the Best Debut Recording category by the Jazz Journalists Association. *Gerald Cleaver's Detroit* (FSNT), is an homage to his hometown and to the late, great Detroit drummers Roy Brooks, Lawrence Williams, George Goldsmith.



## Jonathan Robinson

Jonathan Robinson, doublebassist, electric bassist, and composer, was born on May 1, 1970 in Hamilton, Ontario Canada and moved to New Orleans shortly after. At the age of ten Jonathan began his studies of Double-Bass as a teenager in Foxborough, Massachusetts with Berklee College of Music Professor Bruce Gertz, and soon after in 1989, began to work regularly around Boston. While attending Foxborough High School in Massachusetts he was awarded the "Most Valuable Player Award" from The International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) and The Louis Armstrong Foundation Award for Outstanding Musicianship. Jonathan participated in the 1990 International Society of Bassist Solo Concerto Competition in New York City. He studied music with multi-instrumentalist Yusef Lateef, iconic jazz-saxophonist Archie Shepp. Jonathan currently resides in Berlin, performing regularly with Kelvin Sholar, Carl Craig,

Ignaz Dinne, Kurt Rosenwinkle, Fat Dragon, For Free Hands, Greg Burk Trio and many more. His debut recording as a leader, *Spatial Stasis* (ITM 1372), features his original music for quintet. It was released by ITM in July, 2009.

# Contacts

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# Selected Discography

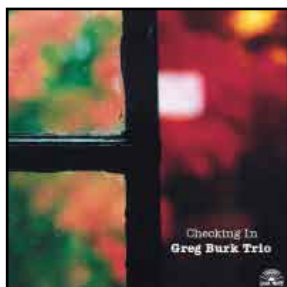
Greg Burk Trio  
**Nothing, Knowing**  
(482 Music)

Featuring  
Steve Swallow, bass  
Bob Moses, drums



Greg Burk Trio  
**Checking In**  
(Soul Note)

Jonathan Robinson, bass;  
Bob Moses, drums/  
percussion  
2002



# Press Quotes

“ Burk’s touch on the piano remains confident and even, his statements being made with proficiency and concision and without overstatement.”  
—Cadence

“*Carpe Momentum* contains everything a jazz heart could desire: swing, bop, grooves. It is structured and free, virtuoso and emotional. Although the album grabs your attention on first hearing, it reveals additional levels, which make it ever more exciting with each listen.”

—Jannek Roland Meyer, Jazz Podium

“ He plays with the inquisitive drive of an experimentalist, yet with the relaxed authority of a mainstreamer...allowing his expressive urge to emerge in asymmetrical phrases under the vigilance of his solid creative process.”

— Musica Jazz (Italy)

This year has seen Burk do the almost impossible: in a jazz world crowded with superstar pianists, he’s put out the best piano trio album of 2005, *Nothing, Knowing*, a remarkable session with electric bassist Steve Swallow and drummer Bob Moses.”

— Paul Olson, AllAboutJazz.com

“This album reveals to us the astounding richness of the playing and compositions of Greg Burk. In a single movement he embraces all! From Monk (‘Prelude to Surrender’) to Cecil Taylor (the torrential logorrhea of ‘Truth be Bold’) while also touching on Randy Weston (‘Borneo’), this student of Paul Bley and George Russell displays rare creativity.”

— Jean Marc Gelin, Jazzman



[www.gregburk.com](http://www.gregburk.com)

