

FRANCESCO CROSARA CIRCULAR MOTION

"I refuse to be labeled a 'straightahead' player or a 'fusion' pianist," says pianist Francesco Crosara. It's a sentiment widely shared by jazz musicians on different roads to get to that place. Crosara, for his part, plays synthesizer on this absorbing, varied program of original music, alternating it with them with electric bass. He cites the influence of Chick Corea, who wrote to Crosara: "Francesco, your music is wonderful. It will continue to saturate the world with it."

Crosara states: "Chick was always innovative in using his groups featured jazz legends, others new young talent. I don't limit myself, rather than focus on a single working band, which is limiting. I'm more interested in discovering new talent and the music that each musician brings."

Crosara debuted with the quartet release *Energy* in 1998, followed by *DownBeat*. In 2008 he released the beautiful *Notes: Piano & Strings* in 2009, followed by the live trio album *Concerto* in 2011. *Circular Motion* includes fresh interpretations of some of this repertoire, with a new goal. The goal was to highlight that constant evolution, that *Circular Motion* is the long game as deftly as Crosara.

The four acoustic numbers—*Longing*, *Gymnopédie No. 4*, *Julia's Tango*, and *Longing*—highlight the rich timbre and presence of double bassist Mark Ivester. These rhythmic flow and texture of drummer Mark Ivester. These are authoritative in their approach to Crosara's tunes. "I tailor the song to the instrument," says Crosara. "Longing" just calls out for that big resonant acoustic bass, whereas *Julia's Tango* has a guitar-like approach, which Farko Dosumov employs on the five-string electric bass.

Dosumov and drummer D'Vonne Lewis, the first rhythm section were chosen to represent the mid-40s contingent. They bring a fluid, contemporary post-Jaco

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OA2RECORDS

- 1 PRELUDIO FLAMENCO 2 LONGING 3 JULIA'S TANGO 4 GYMNOPÉDIE NO.4
5 CIRCULAR MOTION 6 KURAMA 7 PASSION 8 MAKTOUB
9 ONE DAY HONEY ONE DAY ONIONS 10 SARAVA

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the Day Honey, One Day Onions, as well as the Corea and Paco de Lucía-influenced "mentioned above."

which has more of a world music approach, we have Osama Afifi on bass and drums," says Crosara. "Osama is very different from Farko, much less Jacobo, who is a descendant of Stanley Clarke or Anthony Jackson. Xavier is only 24 years old, with 44 there is a different outlook on life than age 40 or 60. It's fascinating how age, energy, maturity—and you can expect a different result from a lot of life experience, as opposed to someone fresh off the block."

on *Kurama* and *Sarava*, at the middle and end of the program are the location of Mount Kurama north of Kyoto, Japan, adapted from a 19th-century suite; the latter a Brazilian-themed sendoff, in fact one of the original (1981). "Songs go through their own evolution, like people," the original form of 'Sarava' after almost 40 years and enhanced it with a new parts to support each solo. The new version, a true suite in three movements, maintaining the joie de vivre of the original."

exhibits a finely honed vocabulary and alert, sparkling touch, each of the three settings. He dedicates the album to his mother, and broadcaster Lilian Terry, who passed not long before this and friend Raul Da Gama as "a peripatetic Italian ambassador of jazz in Tommy Flanagan (1982) and Dizzy Gillespie (1985). She and her friends, featuring late Chicago tenor legend Von Freeman, who also was another big mentor for me," Crosara recalls. "The greatest advice he gave me was music—timing and space."

ative advice has shaped Crosara. Along with Von Freeman, he knew Abbey Lincoln and many of the jazz legends in his mother's orbit. His conversational grace and his expressive range make clear that his contact with music informs every note he plays. *Circular Motion* tells that wondrous story of

- 1 PRELUDIO FLAMENCO 6:01
- 2 LONGING 6:24
- 3 JULIA'S TANGO 6:53
- 4 GYMNOPÉDIE NO.4 8:07
- 5 CIRCULAR MOTION 6:32
- 6 KURAMA 9:48
- 7 PASSION 8:08
- 8 MAKTOUB 7:48
- 9 ONE DAY HONEY ONE DAY ONIONS 6:22
- 10 SARAVA 6:14

Compositions by Francesco Crosara / Ecila Music, BMI

Produced by Francesco Crosara
Recorded & mixed by David Lange at David Lange Studios, Edgewood, WA
on January 17 & 18, 2022; Assistant Engineer: Benjamin Lange
Mastered by Ross Nyberg at Nyberg Mastering, Issaquah, Washington
Liner notes by David R. Adler
Band photos by Francesco Crosara; Francesco photo by Julia Crosara
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This album is dedicated to the loving memory of my mother, Lilian Terry, who provided life-long inspiration and enabled me to embrace my own music career through her life in jazz.