

BRIAN LYNCH
SONGBOOK VOL 1:
BUS STOP SERENADE

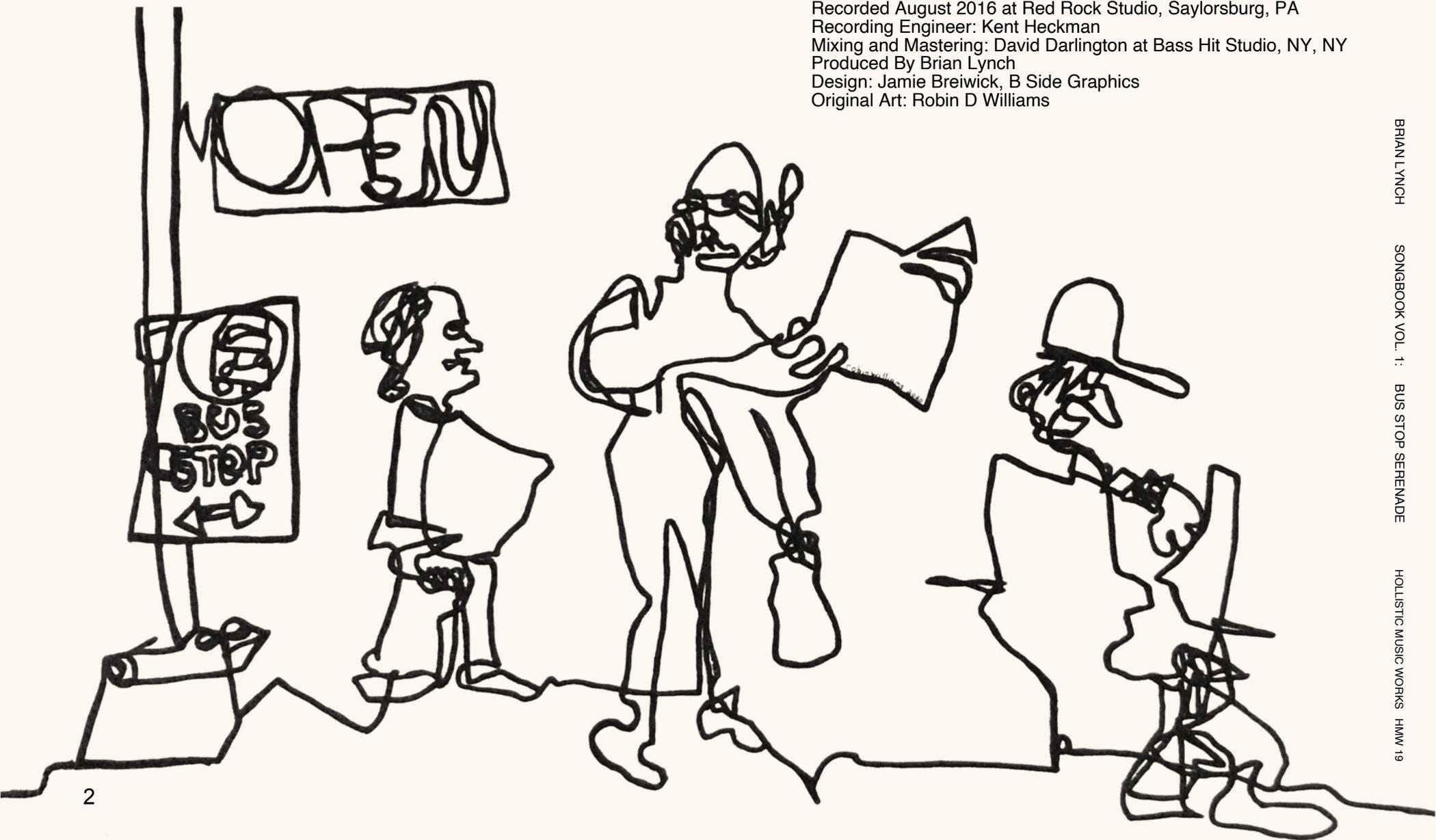


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JIM SNIDERO
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DONALD EDWARDS
Hollistic MusicWorks HMW 19

BRIAN LYNCH SONGBOOK VOL. I: BUS STOP SERENADE

BRIAN LYNCH trumpet, flugelhorn / JIM SNIDERO alto saxophone / ORRIN EVANS piano / BORIS KOZLOV bass / DONALD EDWARDS drums

Recorded August 2016 at Red Rock Studio, Saylorsburg, PA
Recording Engineer: Kent Heckman
Mixing and Mastering: David Darlington at Bass Hit Studio, NY, NY
Produced By Brian Lynch
Design: Jamie Breiwick, B Side Graphics
Original Art: Robin D Williams



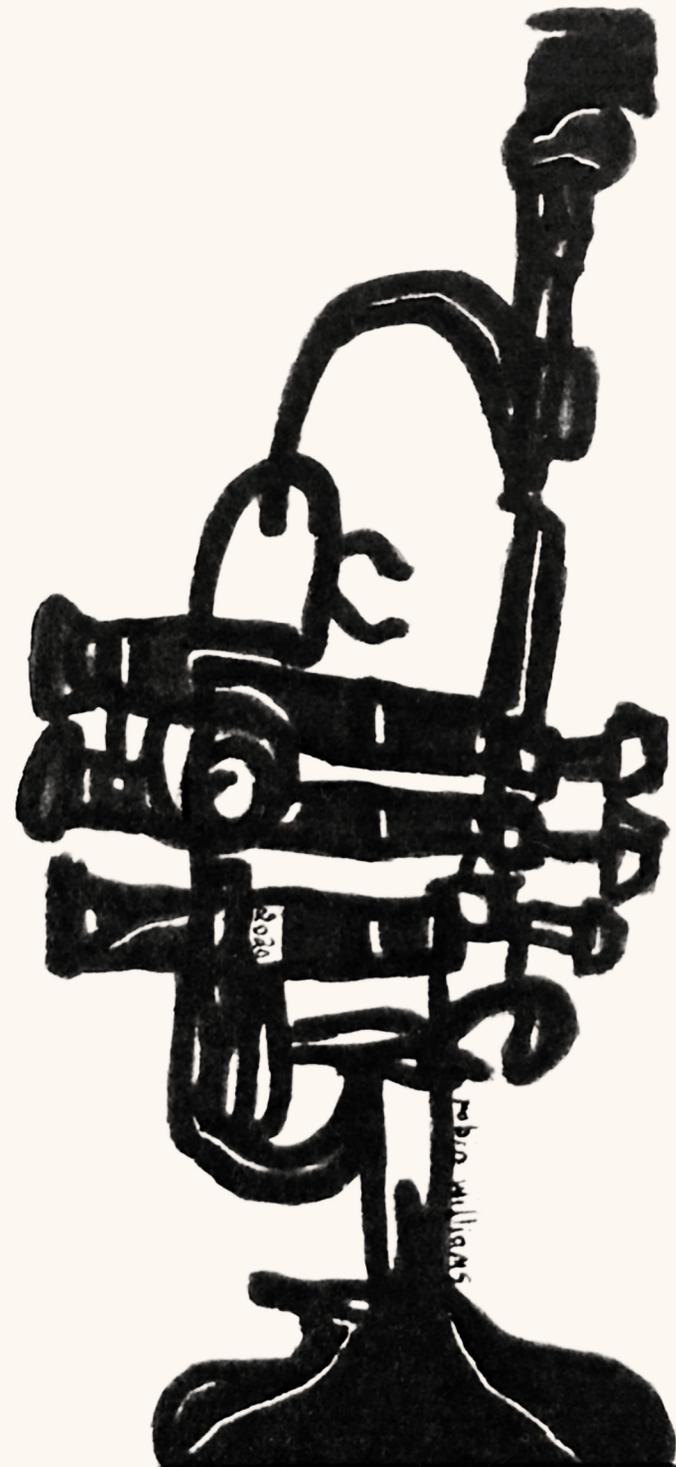
As a youngster, my first efforts at composing music consisted of nothing more than plunking on the family piano, fantasizing that I was performing some sort of amazing original work. My childish self had no real conception of harmony, a very limited notion of melody, and rhythm may have been something of a vague blur as well! I think if there was anything going on there at all, it was a certain sense of form that I had a feel for. I never wrote any of these imagined “works” down, obviously, not having the skill to do so. It was only later, when I started to study music in earnest, and my musicianship developed to the point where I could write notes and rests reliably down on music paper, that I actually started to compose.

Two things got my composing going in earnest: my ear developing to the point where I could take things off of records, and thus be able to transcribe my favorite sounds for both performance and study purposes; and acquiring enough basic piano skills to be able to work with harmony in a consistent manner, enabling me to find the chords and connections that I wanted to hear. Once I found my footing with changes, then I was ready to write tunes, at first emulating the sounds of my musical heroes and then slowly finding a style of my own within the typical forms of the idiom. I always thought that writing originals (and arranging other pieces in one’s own distinctive “treatment”) was an essential part of being a good musician and certainly required if one had an ambition as a bandleader or recording artist.

As my understanding grew, and I became more able to find the sounds that I really liked to hear on the piano, I composed more and more. By the time I arrived in New York City as a young trumpeter I was well on my way to possessing a portfolio of original small group compositions suitable for performance and recording, reflecting my musical influences, conducive to improvisation and even possessed of (or so I hoped) a certain amount of distinctiveness and even originality. These were also the qualities that I strove to have in my playing. I wanted my music to challenge me as a trumpet player and improviser, and composed it as such; often material for my tunes would come out of work on improvisational facility during my trumpet practice sessions.

At a certain point in this long journey in music, composing took on a more sustained fascination for me, and I developed a desire to extend my reach towards larger forces and forms. My expanding musical universe over the years has also given me more influences and sounds to charge my composing palette. But the core of my compositional “style”, if I even have one, are in the sort of quirky little tunes that I’ve written over more than 40 years now.

This album is the first in a series of “Songbooks”, intended to reclaim for myself the many original compositions that I’ve recorded on other labels through the years. Volume 1 focuses on works composed between the mid 1990s to the mid 2000s and originally released on the Sharp Nine and Nagel Heyer labels, configured here for the classic quintet formation of trumpet or flugelhorn, alto saxophone (my old front line partner and great friend Jim Snidero), piano (the redoubtably creative Orrin Evans), bass (stalwart virtuoso and true buddy Boris Kozlov) and drum kit (the swingingly inventive Donald Edwards).



Here's a short rundown of the tunes and their original provenance:

24-7 - The original recording of this tune on the Nagel-Heyer label was inadvertently truncated on the first pressing of the album of the same name (released in 2004), due to an error in the finalizing process. In this present version, nothing was left out, needless to say! Whether in the longer first take or the more compact second take, very satisfying and swinging performances by the quintet are a hallmark here.

Afinque - A term used by Afro-Caribbean musicians, especially percussionists, to express a certain quality of groove and blend that is most desirable whether on the bandstand or in the recording studio. You can hear it right here on this cut for sure! Originally released on the Nagel-Heyer album *24/7*, and subsequently recorded by a larger ensemble for my *Bolero Nights For Billie Holiday* album on the Japanese Venus label (2008), this is the first recorded quintet version of this hip little cha-cha/guajira-ish thang. In my humble opinion, exquisite! - in both takes.

Keep Your Circle Small - This tune was the title track of my first release for the Sharp Nine label back in 1994. Originally recorded as a quartet piece, to my ear this tune really shines with the added horn! The original version was quite a good performance indeed, but the remake makes me feel good about how I've preserved my skills, and even improved a bit, over the last two decades. This song's title is a tribute to the wit and wisdom of a colorful figure from my youth, hometown (Milwaukee) organist and club owner (of the legendary Space Lounge) Vernon Yancey.

Bus Stop Serenade - my third Sharp Nine release was the quartet *Tribute To The Trumpet Masters*, featuring the piano mastery of the immortal Mulgrew Miller. *Bus Stop* is one of three tunes on this album originally on that recording, all of which I believe tremendously benefit from the added horn in the new versions. Orrin Evans is particularly fine on this track, as indeed he is on all the tracks on this album.

Clairevoyance - a product of my second and most ambitious Sharp Nine release, *Spheres Of Influence* from 1997. Named for my longtime San Diego friend Peggy Claire, now gone, *Clairevoyance* stays true to the original two horn format of its original release but opens up from it considerably, both in the spaciousness in the rhythm section and in the spinning out of the "long line" in the solos. This tune gives the magnificent Donald Edwards a chance to stretch out a little, on the tag.



Woody Shaw - Another product of the Trumpet Masters session. Actually, *Woody* and *Bus Stop Serenade* were both written in a single day for a Phil Woods Quintet gig at the old Iridium club in NYC across from Lincoln Center, right around the time I met my wife Marissa in 1999. I was very proud of the way this tune came out back then, and it seems to have endured - it's fun to play on and captures the essence of my love for the great Shaw of Newark very well, I think. The quintet is amazing on both takes here! Since recording this version, I've expanded the tune into a big band chart for my Grammy Award winning album *The Omni-American Book Club*; it's interesting to hear the different versions back to back (I'm just sayin...)

Charles Tolliver - another tribute to one of my early idols, still a vital force in Black American Music. Since the original *Trumpet Masters* version (2000), I've brought the tune down a half step and given it the second harmony part that it always needed. I'm very pleased with the way the refresh turned out on this one - and what great, absorbingly interesting playing by everyone, on both takes!

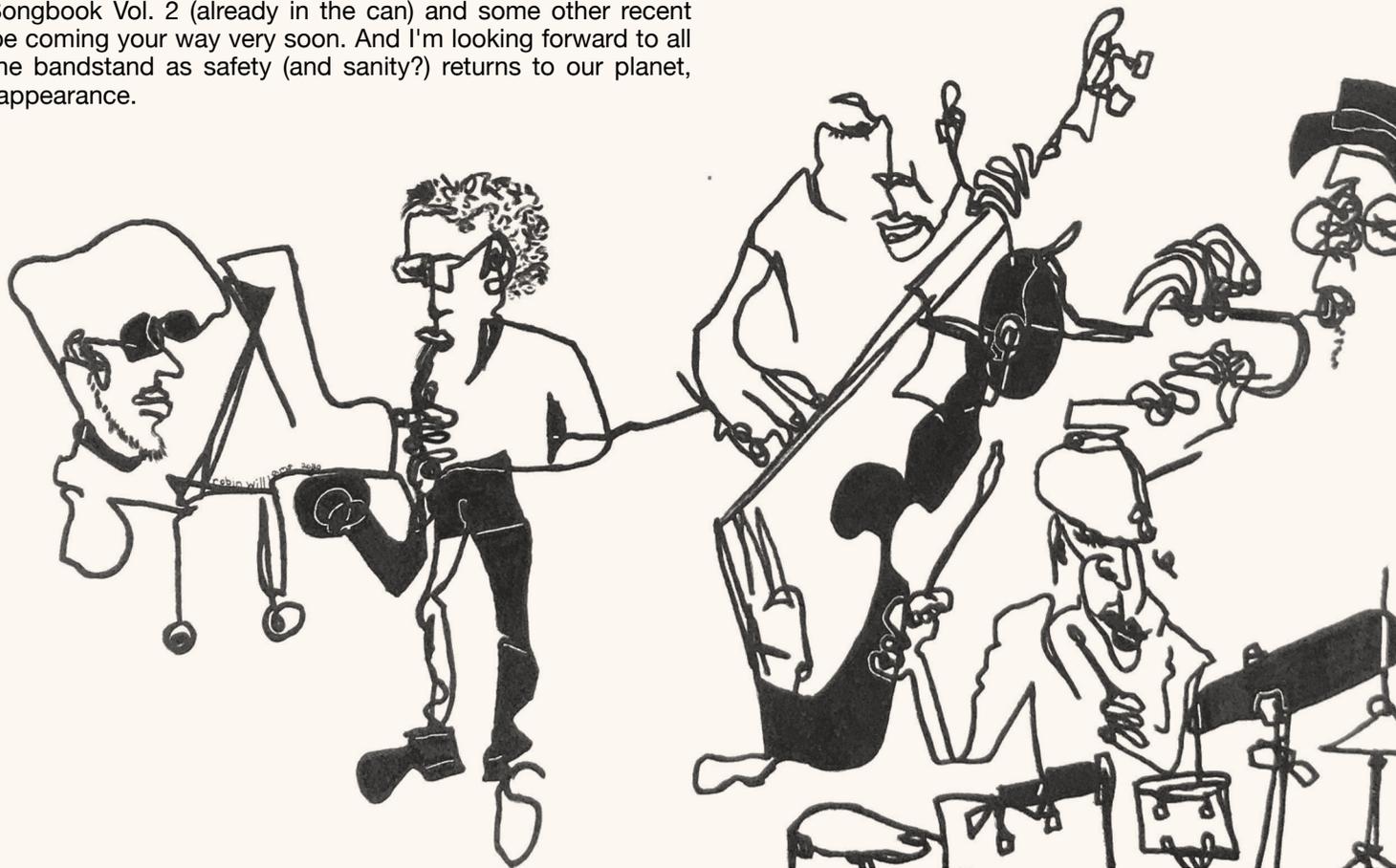
Before The First Cup - from the last of my Sharp Nine albums, the quartet date *Brian Lynch Meets Bill Charlap* from 2003. A tribute to the early morning hour, or in some cases minutes, before the espresso machine starts up. A most beautiful Boris Kozlov bass solo is a highlight of this track. I think the added horn (and Jim Snidero's wonderful playing) really enhances the composition. Also notable is the sonic poetry of Orrin Evans' piano throughout, whether in solo or accompaniment.

On The Dot - Originally recorded on *Brian Lynch Meets Bill Charlap*. It's great to hear the line on this tune played by two horns and this track is a fine example of the musical bond Jim and I developed over the years of our close association, both playing each other's music and as a part of Toshiko Akiyoshi's big band. It's wonderful to be playing together again. and to find that our front line affinity is still intact. I think it's grown even stronger with the passage of time and all the experiences we've had since we were young "cats" on the make in the big city, back in the day.



A note on the recording process, the track list, and an apology for a bit of indecision on my part. We cut this album in a single day in Kent and Lois Heckman's beautiful Red Rock Studio out in the Poconos, after a warmup gig the night before at the famed Deer Head Inn. In order to get through all the material in time for the rhythm section to drive back to the city for their Saturday night gigs (boy, could we use some of those now), things had to move quickly. There wasn't generally time for more than two takes of anything - a "warmup" first take that allowed us to get comfortable with the tune (we sometimes stretched out more on those) and then a second pass for the record. When I reviewed the session for mixing, to my surprise I found that so many of those first takes were special, along with the "real" takes being so outstanding as well, that it was exceedingly hard to make a choice. So I decided to include them all! On some tunes there's a shorter "radio-friendly" and a longer "stretching out" version and on other tunes the two takes are more or less uniform in length. I've organized the album itself as two "takes" of the program, with Keep Your Circle Small (the only tune in a single take here) as the bridge between the two programs.

I'm so very happy to finally get this album released - it should have come out earlier, but my big band project (The Omni-American Book Club) took ALL the air out of the room for quite a while, and then came the pandemic. Songbook Vol. 2 (already in the can) and some other recent recording projects on HMW will be coming your way very soon. And I'm looking forward to all of us finding our way back to the bandstand as safety (and sanity?) returns to our planet, hopefully for more than a cameo appearance.



BRIAN LYNCH SONGBOOK VOL 1: BUS STOP SERENADE

“THE EXPRESS ROUTE”

1. 24-7 5:50
2. AFINIQUE 7:12
3. ON THE DOT 5:06
4. BUS STOP SERENADE 7:26
5. CLAIREVOYANCE 9:17
6. WOODY SHAW 6:29
7. BEFORE THE FIRST CUP 8:45
8. CHARLES TOLLIVER 8:39
9. KEEP YOUR CIRCLE SMALL 6:01

“THE ALTERNATE ROUTE”

10. ON THE DOT take 1 / 5:25
11. CHARLES TOLLIVER take 1 / 8:44
12. BEFORE THE FIRST CUP take 1 / 8:39
13. WOODY SHAW take 1 / 10:15
14. CLAIREVOYANCE take 2 / 9:13
15. BUS STOP SERENADE take 1 / 8:37
16. AFINIQUE take 1 / 7:04
17. 24-7 take 1 / 9:32

All music composed by Brian Lynch (Hollistic Music - BMI)

