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**Outside In Music Label Founder Nick Finzer Deconstructs The Creative Grind With
Dreams, Visions, and Illusions, due out April 14, 2023 via Outside In Music**



Trombonist, composer, arranger, producer and **Outside In Music** label founder **Nick Finzer** is proud to announce the **April 14, 2023** release of his new sextet album ***Dreams, Visions, and Illusions***, released on said label.

A follow-up to his 2021 album *Out of Focus* and spiritual successor to his 2020 sextet recording *Characters*, ***Dreams, Visions and Illusions*** represents the ultimate expression of his long-running sextet, which features tenor saxophonist and bass clarinetist **Lucas Pino**, guitarist **Alex Wintz**, pianist **Glenn Zalenski**, bassist **Dave Baron** and drummer **Jimmy Macbride**.

The inspired album was the result of a New Jazz Works grant courtesy of Chamber Music America, an American not-for-profit that provides a variety of resources to small-ensemble practitioners. The program is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, which directly supports the performing arts via generous grants.

“It had been a goal of mine for a long time to get that particular grant; I’d written five records’ worth of music beforehand and tried with all those different ones to try to get the grant,” Finzer says. Happily, the trombonist succeeded, and pledged to push his sextet format to find new inspirations.

Running with the creative possibilities as bestowed by this boon, Finzer crafted a thematically and psychologically penetrating work — one that explores the role of the muse in creative inspiration. As per *Dreams, Visions and Illusions*' title, Finzer trisected this concept and shone it through the lens of creative and professional labor.

“At one point, it’s just a *Dream* — a thing you think maybe you can do,” he says. “And that’s the *Visions* part: ‘You’re playing with people; you’re getting closer.’ As for *Illusions*: “There’s a circular nature to the journey.”

To Finzer, there’s a spiritual escape route from this 24/7 hustle — one that just about every NYC jazz musician is intimately familiar with. “I’m trying to aspire to that — some days succeeding, and some days failing,” Finzer says with a laugh, coming to terms with his overall career arc. “It took me a long time to get to the realization of what this particular life can be.”

Dreams, Visions and Illusions' searching opener, “**To Dream a Bigger Dream**” is a call to move past the entrapments of capitalism’s unscratchable itch.

“As anyone who grew up in the 1990’s might remember, the overwhelming narrative of society was one of achievement — what college could you get into, what dream career would you pursue, and what was your purpose in life?” Finzer explains. “How could you fulfill that purpose through a meaningful relationship with your career?”

In *A Love Supreme* terms, “**Aspirations and Convictions**” is something of a “Resolution” to the opener’s “Acknowledgement.” “When you set out on your romanticized journey, you aspire to overcome, despite the world telling you not to do it,” Finzer says. “Your dreams cloud your mind’s clarity and you’re passionate about your mission, so why wouldn’t it happen?”

Finzer meant the introspective “**Follow Your Heart**” as something of a deconstruction of the titular cliché: “This track explores the dichotomy of these choice making moments in our lives... the journey of making those decisions is tumultuous, but then you just have to *jump*.”

The ambling “**I Thought I Should Take The Road Less Traveled**” faces down the difficult choices each creative person must face. “When considering which way to go in life, we often heed the advice of those who have come before,” Finzer explains. “But when there are no role models left, where do we turn?”

“**But I Did What They Said**” pursues an “edgier energy” and “snarky attitude.” “[It’s] about doing what you were told to do,” Finzer says, “but things don’t always work out for the rule followers.” The counterweight is the following track, “**To the ‘Top,’**” which reflects “good news and good experiences along the way.”

This Campbellian journey reaches its emotional apotheosis with the seemingly weightless “**Vision or Mirage?**,” which Finzer highlights for its luminous piano part from Zalenski. “This one

embodies to me, the feeling when you realize you might have been wrong,” Finzer says. “You might not be able to tell the difference between what *you* think is real and what the rest of the world feels is real.”

The trickling “**Waking Up**” is a call for clear-eyed perception among the noise. “Just because we want something to be a certain way, does not mean it is that way, or that you can change it to be so,” the trombonist admits. “Some things just are the way they are.”

Dreams, Visions, and Illusions concludes with the percolating “**Now, Then and When.**” Notable for its Kenny Garrett-esque groove, the track sends the listener off on an optimistic note. “[I’m] trying to remember that the muse that set us off on our path in the first place just wanted us to make music,” Finzer says.

Few jazz albums turn inward and question the emotional landscape of professional music-making. Finzer, a celebrated musician and label owner in equal measure, is more acutely aware of this perpetual, often thankless grind — the good, bad and ugly parts — than most.

And come **April 14**, there’s a better way — and a clearer looking-glass into the creative soul.

Dreams, Visions, Illusions by Nick Finzer and Hear & Now has been made possible with support from Chamber Music America’s New Jazz Works program funded through the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Tour Dates:

- 4/1 - Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)
- 4/1 - Nashville Jazz Workshop (Nashville, TN)
- 4/3 - Birdland Jazz Club (NY, NY)
- 4/13 - Monks Jazz (Austin, TX)
- 4/14 - Steve's Wine Bar (Denton, TX)
- 4/19 - Sam First (Los Angeles, CA)
- 4/21 - The Nash (Phoenix, AZ)
- 4/22 - Century Room (Tucson, AZ)