

GOING FOR ADDS: SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2023 FILE: JAZZ

ARTIST: ANDREW DANFORTH

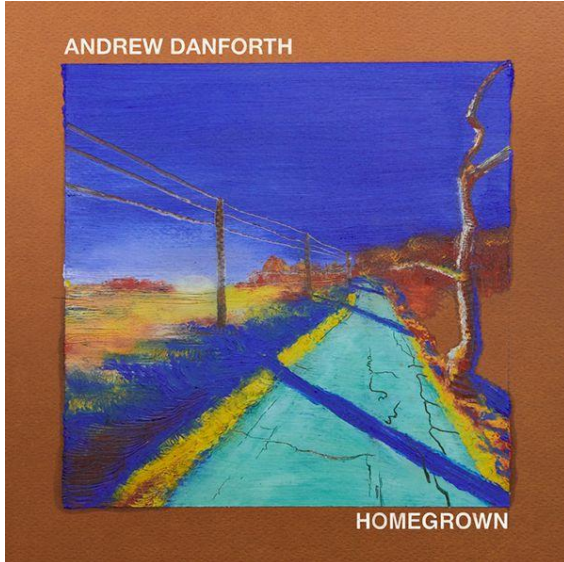
ALBUM: Homegrown

LABEL: Self-Released

BAR CODE: 197644379965

WEBSITE: www.andrewdanforthmusic.com

SUGGEST TRACKS: 1, 2, 4, 7



TRACKS

1. *Homegrown 8:37
2. *New Wood Floors 4:09
3. Vacate 2:37
4. *Absence of the Avenue 5:04
5. Vacant 2:43
6. In Motion 10:23
7. *Orange Hue in the Uplands 6:34
8. Prairie Breeze 5:48

TOTAL RUN TIME: 44:35

MUSICIANS

Andrew Danforth – Trombone, Composer

Sean Imboden – Tenor Sax

Christopher Pitts – Piano

Nick Tucker – Bass

Carrington Clinton – Drums

PRODUCTION

Recorded at Primary Sound Studio in Bloomington Indiana on December 17th, 2022

Mixed at Primary Sound Studio from December 20th, 2022 to February 27th, 2023;

Mastered at Bunker Studio in Brooklyn, NYC on March 23, 2023

Social Media:

Instagram: [@andrewniven](https://www.instagram.com/andrewniven)

CD AVAILABLE:

<https://andrewdanforth.bandcamp.com/album/homegrown>

About "Homegrown"

As a sophomore in High School I received a lesson from a New York jazz trombonist that changed my perspective on music. In the lesson I was asked to play some fundamental jazz exercises (ii-V-I licks) for the teacher to gauge where I was at in my playing. Having never practiced any licks before, I improvised my way through the progressions. The trombonist said they sounded very “Homegrown.” Frustrated by this, I spent a long time working on the fundamentals of jazz language and bebop playing. At the time, I used the comment as fuel to get better at my craft, but it took on a new meaning to me in my masters degree. The more I spent working towards mastery of my instrument the more I realized how important it was to have a unique voice on the instrument. The “Homegrown” quality of my improvisation would never leave the core of my music. Gaining perspective from my upbringing in the Indy jazz community and finding a much deeper appreciation for the history of music in my hometown went a long way. This album is a dedication to the past, present and future of creative music in Indianapolis and a musical representation of the natural landscape, humanity and social geography of Indianapolis that I have grown to care so deeply for.

The eponymous track “Homegrown” reminds me of the vast landscape in central Indiana where skyscrapers and corn fields meet. The combination of city and county governments in the 1970’s along with urban sprawl forced the mixture of urban and rural communities which gives Indianapolis its unique atmosphere. A floating horn melody sits over the off kilter lilt of the ostinato groove. There is a constant switch from dark to bright tonal centers throughout the piece. All of these compositional choices are done for musical intent but hold a strong relation to the mixture of lifestyles and culture in Indianapolis.

My parents moved to Indianapolis in the late 1980’s and raised my sisters and I in a musical household. I asked my mom what her first memory of Indianapolis was and she said it was waking up in their first rental home and looking at the brand new wood floors. “New Wood Floors” reflects the upbeat nature and positive atmosphere that comes with new beginnings.

The darker side of history in Indianapolis comes out in “Absence of the Avenue.” Indiana Avenue was a segregated Black community in Indianapolis that birthed one of the richest and most vibrant Black

cultural hubs in the United States. At its height in the mid 20th century, the Avenue produced internationally known jazz musicians like Freddie Hubbard, Wes Montgomery, James Spaulding and Carl Perkins. It was also home to four giants in jazz trombone. JJ Johnson, considered by many to be the greatest jazz trombonist of all time; Slide Hampton, whose harmonic framework crafted a new era of modern jazz trombone after JJ; David Baker, who's playing career was cut short but delivered the highest technical proficiency of the instrument seen up to that point; and Phil Ranelin, Freddie Hubbard's preferred trombonist and longtime Detroit jazz legend.

This fervent jazz culture died out as a result of urban blight and eventual government led destruction of the neighborhood. Although there were calls for the city to help the struggling Avenue and save the community from forced relocation, they chose instead to demolish the Lockefield Gardens which had offered affordable housing to so many on the Avenue. The Interstate Highway Act saw the destruction and relocation of black neighborhoods in most cities and Indianapolis was no exception. The Avenue was razed to construct I-69 and the newly founded Indiana University student apartments. Only the Madame Walker Theatre remains on the Avenue as a historic landmark. The jazz community reformed and has repopulated since, but with the changing music trends of the 1970's, Indianapolis jazz never regained the widespread and heightened popularity that Indiana Avenue once gave it.

"Vacate" sets up a free improvisation into the bed of the piano creating a wash of color that echoes in the air. The theme for the Avenue comes in as only certain overtones are left to ring out. The wash is gone and only the basic structure of the melody is sustained.

"Absence of the Avenue" depicts the razing of the neighborhood. It has an angry and helpless quality to it.

"Vacant" shifts immediately to a somber wail, again into the piano bed. Another wash, this time much simpler than "Vacate," depicts the emptiness after the destruction of the Avenue. The main theme comes back slower and more drawn out than before, signifying the end and acceptance of reality.

"Orange Hue in the Uplands" is a nostalgic look back at my time in Bloomington, Indiana. The forested rolling hills that turn a deep orange in the fall are a

treasure of the Southern Indiana landscape. The ebb and flow of the meter mimics the hills while the staid harmonic palette embraces the serenity and simple beauty of an Indiana autumn.

"In Motion" was written specifically for the personnel in my band. I wanted to showcase the high level of musicianship that is still coming from Indianapolis. The solo section allows the band to play a more modern avant-garde and post bop approach that I see in many of the groups here in Indianapolis.

The final track, **"Prairie Breeze,"** refers to a small stretch of land in the Tipton Till Plain just northwest of Indianapolis. On my biweekly drive to and from Urbana during my masters program, I would pass by a beautiful prairie that opened up out of a thickly forested country road. The setting sun, coloring the clouds auburn and purple, color the pasture and reveal the beauty of open grassland that often gets ignored. I wanted to recreate the atmosphere of a summer breeze blowing over open grassland.

About Andrew Danforth:

Andrew Danforth is a proud product of the Indianapolis jazz scene. He is an active trombonist, composer and educator in multiple genres. Throughout his career he has performed and recorded with world class artists including the Buselli Wallarab Jazz Orchestra, Steve Allee Big Band, Sean Imboden Large Ensemble, The Temptations, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony and National Repertory Orchestra.

As a composer and improviser, Andrew blends traditional Naptown hard bop with elements of Midwest emo, European art music and RnB. He seeks to pay homage to the long legacy of creative music in Indianapolis by writing innovative compositions and pushing the boundaries of contemporary jazz.



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814.482.0010

www.katesmithpromotions.com

katesmithpromotions.kate@gmail.com

katesmithpromotions.richard@gmail.com