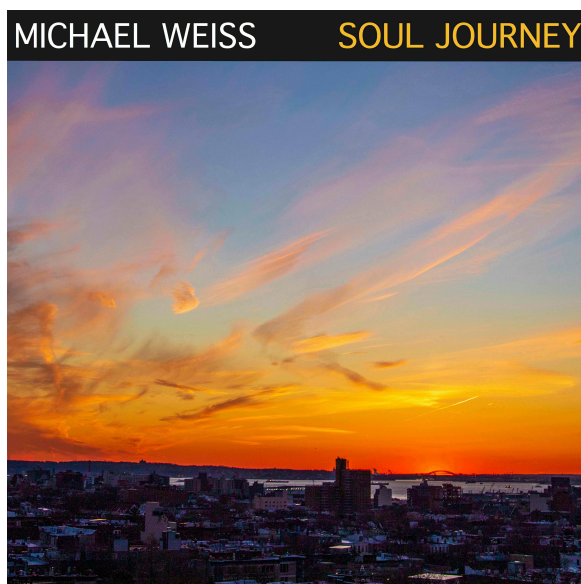


# MICHAEL WEISS SOUL JOURNEY



## Sintra Records rereleases Michael Weiss's Soul Journey onto vinyl.

**Soul Journey** was recorded to 2" analog tape at 30 ips and mixed to 1/2" tape at 30ips by legendary engineer Joe Ferla at Avatar Studios in March of 2000. It was originally released on CD in 2003. To date the original master tapes have remained in pristine condition. With today's resurgent interest in analog sound, Weiss decided to rerelease **Soul Journey** as a limited edition double LP set, sparing no expense to deliver a high quality all analog audiophile product. Only 500 sets have been pressed (250 numbered). Reel-to-reel sets are also available by special order.

- Mastered by Bernie Grundman
- Pressings supervised by Gary Salstrom at Quality Record Pressings onto 150gram vinyl
- Jackets manufactured by Stoughton Printing

**Release date: JULY 15, 2020**

Available exclusively through Sintra Records [sintrarecords@gmail.com](mailto:sintrarecords@gmail.com)

**Purchase online here:** <http://www.michaelweiss.info/recordings.htm>

- Michael Weiss - piano, Fender Rhodes
- Steve Wilson - alto saxophone
- Ryan Kisor - trumpet, flugelhorn
- Steve Davis - trombone
- Paul Gill - bass
- Joe Farnsworth - drums
- Daniel Sadownick - percussion

All compositions and arrangements by Michael Weiss and published by Nepenthean Music Co. (BMI)  
Produced by Michael Weiss



Steve Wilson, Joe Farnsworth, Michael Weiss and engineer Joe Ferla at the recording session

“**Soul Journey** is about as close to perfection as a recording can get. The production is superb. The recording and mixing are as good as you might hear from any major label and recording studio. This should be in everyone’s collection of good contemporary jazz, and if there is truly justice in our world, a Grammy nominee.” – **Jazz Improv**

“This kind of balance between innovation and accessibility is unusual in jazz, and it makes for an extremely interesting and enjoyable listening experience. It is hard to imagine any serious jazz lover not being captivated by this album. Highly recommended.” – **All Music Guide**

“It’s not often that you find jazz compositions of the caliber that Michael Weiss offers up on **Soul Journey**. This very special recording goes far beyond your typical mainstream fare. Weiss is a vital talent with something important to say...and you’d do well to listen.” – **All About Jazz**

“Weiss’ **Soul Journey** reinforces why he is heralded as a front burner musician – a NYC elite pianist who exemplifies the union of style and substance, foraging and dissolving boundaries with missionary zeal and leadership.” – **Herb Wong, Jazz Education Journal**

“Perfectly constructed music, well thought out from beginning to end. The nine originals show a maturity of writing, superbly executed by the musicians, as well as a perfect osmosis between the different styles that coexist in jazz, especially in New York.” – **Jazz Hot**

"This music lives and breathes freshness and exhilarating originality" – **Jazz Journal**

“...considerable talent as a writer and arranger. Weiss has a rich palette of composing devices at his command, and his ebullient piano constantly buoys this recording. – **Downbeat**

“*Soul Journey* shows contemporary writers and players can play jazz that’s forceful, distinctive and exciting. *Soul Journey* has warmth, integrity and above all, originality.” – **JazzTimes**

“...the songs simply smoke.” – **Detroit Free Press**

“His ambitious **Soul Journey**, keeps Weiss’ shrewd writing and arranging skills as clearly in view as his sleek piano work, honed with the likes of Art Farmer and Johnny Griffin.” – **New Yorker**

## **About Michael Weiss and Soul Journey**

Michael Weiss has long been known as a musician's musician – a fluent and flexible pianist whose mercurial improvisations and sensitive musicianship have earned him a place in bands led by an imposing list of veteran jazz greats, including Johnny Griffin, Art Farmer, Frank Wess, George Coleman, Jimmy Heath, Lou Donaldson, the Jazztet, Charles McPherson, and many others. But “Soul Journey” an exceptional program of nine originals, reveals how much more Weiss has to offer.

Here is a composer and bandleader of the first rank, who has forged a broad-minded aesthetic that marries deep respect for the jazz tradition with a modernist's commitment to make it new. “Soul Journey” eschews the current vogue for homage and tribute albums and recycling the conventions of yesterday in favor of carving a personal sound world with the tools of melodic integrity, harmonic richness, rhythmic surprise, expressive detail, formal ingenuity, intellectual honesty and emotional depth. Weiss isn't afraid to reference the past, but his music exists totally in the present.

What is most striking about “Soul Journey” is the diversity of the compositions, the dexterity which Weiss develops his materials and the way the forms and improvisations merge into an organic whole. Take, for example, “El Camino,” which won the Grand Prize in the 2000 BMI/Thelonious Monk Institute's Composition Competition. Weiss' expert tailoring fully exploits the sonorous potential of the trumpet, alto sax and trombone front-line and a fully interactive rhythm section. “El Camino” blends south-of-the-border rhythms with an active bass line, vivid harmonies and a lithe, through-composed melody adorned by an introduction, interludes, coda and background figures adding spice to the improvised solos.

“What's going to drive jazz forward is a greater integration of composition and improvisation rather than just repeating the old head-solos-head format,” says Weiss. “I want to keep the music fresh.”

“El Camino” is far from the only standout track. The album opens with the beguiling strains of “Optimism,” another example of Weiss' formal ingenuity. A sly vamp launches this multi-sectioned and multi-themed composition in which deceptively simply horn melodies and twists of rhythms and harmony bloom with such easy virtuosity that before you know it, the band has reached a fever pitch of intensity. Weiss begins his steeplechase solo riding the sweeping waves of further ensemble elaborations. The effect is exhilarating.

The title track, a brooding contemporary ballad, marries a complex bass line and counterpoint with a beautifully harmonized melody. The subtle funk rhythms and Fender Rhodes piano adds another dimension to Weiss' sonic palette. The uptempo swinger “Orient Express” showcases Weiss' sure-fire technical command of the piano and his ability to scamper with both brains and passion through the most complex post-bop chord changes at the most furious of tempos.

“Atlantis” is a tour de force of delayed harmonic resolutions, contrasting 4/4 Latin and floating waltz sections and the powerful emotional pull of a risky journey into the unknown followed by a safe return home. “The Prophecy” uses sinuous modality and pedal points to grand effect. “The Cheshire Cat” is a bluesy romp whose crafty harmony and in-the-pocket tempo paint a portrait of one groovy feline. “La Ventana” is contemporary samba that supports some of the most infectious blowing on the date. “Second Thoughts” brings the album to a close with the kind of relaxed melody that lingers in the memory like the warmth of an evening spent in the company of old friends.

*Mark Stryker – Detroit Free Press, author of Jazz From Detroit*