



Amulet

Michael Moore & Paul Berner

"You gotta mean it, and you gotta treat it gentle." - Sidney Bechet

Michael Moore - clarinet

Paul Berner - double bass

01. I Never Knew (04:19) - G. Kahn & T. FioRito (1925)
02. Answer Me My Love (04:11) - G. Winkler & F. Rauch (1953)
03. But Not For Me (04:00) - George & Ira Gershwin (1930)
04. This Nearly Was Mine (03:49) - R. Rogers & O. Hammerstein (1949)
05. Night Ride Home (04:28) - Joni Mitchell (1988)
06. Crazy He Calls Me (02:23) - C. Sigman & B. Russell (1949)
07. Home (04:43) - H. Clarkson, G. Clarkson & P. van Steeden (1931)
08. Emptier (02:50) - Michael Moore (2020)
09. Amulet (03:54) - Michael Moore (2020)
10. I'll Fly Away (03:49) - Albert E. Brumley (1928)
11. You'll Never Walk Alone (04:01) - R. Rogers & O. Hammerstein (1945)

Total time: 42:27

Original recording format **DXD - 352kHz**

All other formats are converted versions of the original.

Chemistry between musicians is a magical thing. Michael Moore and Paul Berner have that kind of magic. When they play, the music seems to flow in a natural unhindered stream, each note being an obvious continuation of what was played before. It was a thrill to be in the producer's seat at this session, witnessing these two masters going about their craft. How they would feed off each other and pass the ball at just the right moment. Observing how they would shape a song into a whole by polishing, simplifying or embellishing where needed, yet all the time

being aware of the freshness and immediacy of creating in the moment. The album starts out with **I Never Knew**, written by Gus Kahn and Ted FioRito in 1925, ends with **You'll Never Walk Alone** from 1945 and along the way includes **Night Ride Home**, a late 80' Joni Mitchell song, as well as **Emptier** and **Amulet**, two recently composed Michael Moore originals. That's almost 100 years of song writing right there, yet it all sounds as if each song was composed especially for the Amulet album.



In order for musicians to function at this level, the environment has to be right. Engineer Frans de Rond deserves credit for designing a sound stage upon which Michael and Paul could thrive and create. Frans experimented with various microphone set ups before deciding to keep it as simple as possible by using only the Josephson C700S to record the duo. When Frans was satisfied with the balance of the musicians and the ambient sound of the hall, we invited Michael and Paul up to the control room, hoping they would agree that this was the sound with which we were going to proceed. "This is us, this is how we sound, this is so real" was Michael's reaction upon listening. Paul just smiled at Frans and said: "**Let's play!**"

Listening to Amulet as I am writing these notes, marvel at the completeness of the album, how each song sounds as if it could not have been played in any other way. And it is all the more remarkable knowing that Michael and Paul were improvising, making up the framework of each song right there on the spot. And I marvel at the vivid naturalness of the sound, it's as if I am there, standing at the sweet spot where Frans placed the microphone.

Peter Bjørnild



Frans explains how the *Josephson C700S* works to Michael and Paul

"Since Bach's time it has been clear that two voices are all you need for functional harmony to be heard. This recording is a dialogue between Paul and myself - we collected a number of our favorite songs and a few originals with the only concept being we wanted to play them simply. Actually I have been wanting to do something like this since I heard the great New Orleans clarinetist Louis Cottrell's Riverside recording 'Bourbon Street'. That recording is pure joy!

There's several recordings of saxophone/bass duets and trios with drums, such as Sonny Rollins at the Village Vanguard, but clarinet/bass duos in jazz seem to be very rare. I'd especially like to thank Frans de Rond and Peter Bjørnild - they were a joy to work with. The simplicity of just one microphone in front of us and the relaxed atmosphere in the studio, helped create this very close intimate recording, so perfect for this music."

Michael Moore

"I've loved Micheal's unique voice, especially on clarinet, since I first heard him. Happily and quietly, he and I have been working together for years, collaborating on projects of his and mine. This is our magical Corona-era AMULET: our good luck charm to keep us artistically safe and thriving through this difficult period. Heartfelt melodies played simply and honestly."

Paul Berner

Michael: Your blurb is much more loving, of course, but ya gotta spell my name right, okay?

Paul: Oops, sorry about that! Mine is simply a PR blurb. Yours is more informative but less gushy...

M: Yours is a love letter, mine is pretentious.

P: Yours is descriptive, aimed at the jazz listener. Mine is emotive, aimed at the general audience.

M: Perhaps we should include this conversation as well!

P: Like you were reading my mind.

Recording, mixing and mastering by Frans de Rond
Recorded at MCO, Studio 2 Hilversum, The Netherlands, on December 5th and
6th, 2020
Produced by Peter Bjørnild, Michael Moore and Paul Berner

Catalog Number: SL-1048A

Used equipment:

Microphones:

Main system - [Josephson C700S](#)

Micpre's: Merging Horus

Cables by AudioQuest

Speakers: TAD Compact Evolution One

Poweramp: Moon 760A

Mixing headphones: Hifiman HE1000se / Sennheiser HD800S

Graphic design of front cover by Caitlin Berner - [glitterstudio.nl](#)