

# The NOW orchestra does it again

**NEW CD:** Boutique label offers the sixth release by the 15-member ensemble

## In concert

### NOW Orchestra *Animal Tales* CD release

**Where:** Western Front, 303 E. 8th Ave.

**When:** Sunday, 7:30 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$10 at the door

BY STUART DERDEYN

MUSIC REPORTER

Two decades on and still going strong, Vancouver's NOW Orchestra enters a new era this weekend. After such internationally acclaimed releases as "Study/WitchGong Game II/10" and "Pola", the 15-member avant-garde big band sees its sixth CD, *Animal Tales*, coming out on the new NOW Orchestra Records imprint ([noworchestra.com](http://noworchestra.com)).

This is the first of five new discs out on the stylishly designed boutique label overseen by the 32-year-old New Orchestra Workshop Society.

Both the artists involved and the Cellar Live jazz imprint are partnered in the venture. Many of the recordings were made during the NOW on Monday Nights concert series that ran at the Cellar ([www.cellarjazz.com](http://www.cellarjazz.com)) over the past few years.

Most of these combos are offshoot groups from the membership. An impressive 40 members of Vancouver's improvised music scene appear on the varied initial releases

from the label.

These are vocal/piano/wind/bass space track crew Ion Zoo's "Set Free At The Cellar;" vocal/tronica duo Viviane Houle and Stefan Smulovitz's "La Belle Et La Bête;" reedsman Bruce Freedman's African Groove Band *Live At The Cellar*; guitarist Jeff Younger's Sandbox's "The Nudger" and the NOW Orchestra's latest.

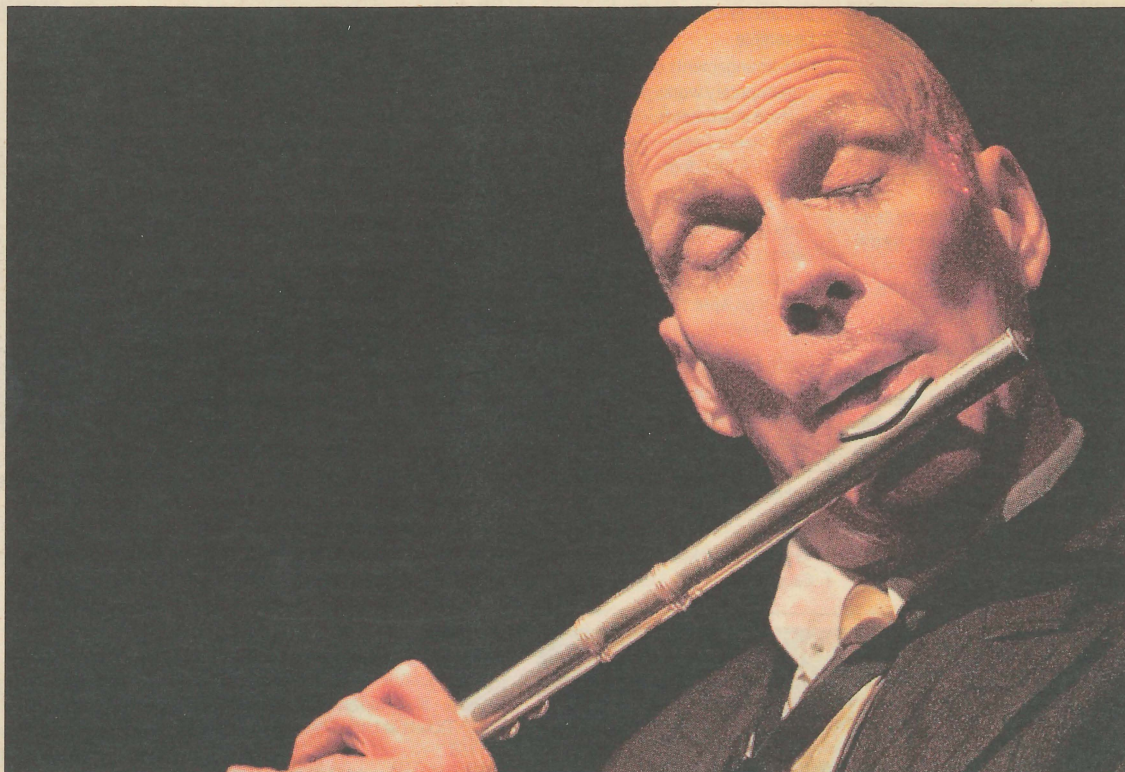
"The idea behind the Cellar series created by Raymon Torchinsky and myself was to provide a showcase for the fantastic creative musicians in the scene," says NOW Society artistic director Coat Cooke. "It ran its course, but all these great sessions came out of it because it's such a great live room for recording."

"After considering the options of how best to make use of these, and in consultation with Cory Weeds at Cellar Live, it became clear that starting a label would be the best, most financially viable way, to get the music out there."

Mixed and mastered by pianist Chris Gestrin at a nice price and with a templated graphic design courtesy of Vanilla Five, the label came together with the help of funding from the province, the B.C. Arts Council, the City of Vancouver and the musician's dedication to the cause.

The reality of producing a CD being what it is, you can do more for less and the catalogue was born.

"For the first mai-out to press and



Coat Cooke says the Cellar series provided a showcase for the fine musicians on the scene. — SUBMITTED PHOTO

promoters, we went to a dollar store and bought these five CD holder booklets, then had a session of cutting liner booklets and so labels to fit and sent them out. It actually worked out to be a better deal for each individual group than doing it on their own."

The NOW Orchestra disc includes

music performed by three different incarnations of the ensemble. The list of players is a who's who of the local scene tackling compositions by Diane Labrosse, Pierre Tanguay and Cooke.

The CD release will be played by a chamber ensemble version of the NOW featuring Cook (sax), JP Carter

(trumpet), Brad Muirhead (trombone), Chad MacQuarrie (guitar), Tommy Babin (bass) and drummer Kenton Loewen.

(Look for reviews of the NOW Orchestra Records releases online next Tuesday).

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