



## Virculum - Central CD Release and Australian Tour

Genre-bending New York band Virculum have returned with their second release entitled 'Central'. The compositions are from the pen of Sydney-raised, New York resident Mark Lau. Lau is more well-known as a jazz bassist making his living these last seven years in the thriving downtown New York music scene - lending his solid low-end sound to local New York City and international artists and recording sessions.

Most jazz musicians arrive in New York, make a 'jazz standards' album with some 'name' players, then if they are 'lucky', manage to release the recording on some tiny niche jazz label. Lau's surprising, critically-acclaimed debut album 'Songs for Insomniacs' was instead a totally self played album of warm ambient electronica and double bass, released as a digital download through the pioneering US electronica label en:peg.

This time around, Virculum have gone a slightly more conventional route with a band album recorded in Uptown Manhattan comprising US and Australian players. The instrumentation is flugelhorn, clarinet, bass and drums and the music owes just as much to alternate rock and electronica than to jazz and improvisation. Central moves freely from beautifully stripped down ballads to aggressive, distorted horn textures and loops. The band is still with en:peg but this time they are also releasing CDs with hand-stamped, eco-friendly covers made from recycled cardboard. The Virculum Collective are in Australia at the moment to promote their new CD.

The musicians are:

Nadje Noordhuis on trumpet and flugelhorn. Noordhuis is another Australian living in New York. She has played with notable improvisors such as Jim Black and Ben Monder, and was a finalist in the recent International Thelonius Monk Competition.

New Orleans born Dustin Cicero is the clarinetist and alto saxophonist. His resume includes stints with such greats as Joe Lovano and Herbie Hancock.

Mark Lau is also on bass, Tim Firth and Dustin Rohrer are on drums, percussion and programmed loops. Firth is one of Australia's busiest drummers who plays with James Morrison, The Don Rader Quintet, James Muller Trio and The Judy Bailey Trio. US North Carolina born Rohrer spends much of his time these days touring with Slide Hampton, Barry Harris, Steve Wilson and Keith Getty.

# Viriculum - Central

## CD Tracklist:

1. central
2. there
3. PJP part I - precarious angel
4. PJP part II - little monkey
5. PJP part III - staunkin'
6. gysis
7. thankfulness
8. obscure object
9. l'immortalité
10. presentense
11. sosac

All compositions: Mark Lau BMI

## Playlist Suggestions:

Pop: 1, 2, 11  
Rock: 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11  
Jazz Ballad: 3, 7, 9  
Slow: 7, 9, 2, 3, 4  
High Energy: 5, 10  
Electronic: 10, 4, 1

# The Virculum Collective Australian Tour

## CD Launch Dates:

14th July Excelsior Hotel, Sydney  
4th August Bennetts Lane, Melbourne  
1st July The Hippo Bar, Canberra

The Virculum Collective are a group of four musicians that have been playing together for over fifteen years. The quartet features Spike Mason on alto saxophone, Richard Maegraith on Tenor saxophone, Mark Lau on bass and Tim Firth on drums. They first met at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and found they had a certain empathy playing as a group and have continued to play together ever since.

Although Lau now resides in New York City and Mason has since moved into the Wollongong area, the musicians have continued to perform in Australia and abroad and have even worked together long distance composing and recording music via the internet. The quartet plays mostly original music drawing from diverse influences such as jazz/improvisation, alternate rock and electronica.

## Tour Dates:

1st July Hippo Bar, Canberra. 8:30pm.  
9th July ABC Jazz video and recording.  
14th July Excelsior Hotel: CD launch (Jazzgroove), Sydney. 8:30pm.  
15th July Underground Performance, Sydney.  
16th July Cafe Space (8 O'Clock Sharp), Sydney. 8pm.  
17th July Wollongong University (Illawarra Jazz Club), Wollongong.  
30th July Cafe Space with Tim Stevens (8 O'Clock Sharp). 8pm.  
4th August Bennetts Lane: CD launch (MJC), Melbourne. 9:30pm-12am.  
5th August Uptown Jazz Cafe, Melbourne.  
6th August Paris Cat with Tim Stevens (MJC), Melbourne. 9pm-11:30pm.

## Mark Lau Biography

Mark Lau is a bassist/composer originally from Sydney Australia now living in downtown Manhattan, New York. He received his Master of Music degree in jazz bass performance at Manhattan School of Music, NY and a Bachelor of Music degree in jazz bass performance from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Sydney, Australia.

Mark has performed at New York City venues such as Birdland, Dizzy's Club, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, The 55 Bar and Sweet Rhythm in New York City and has performed with notable musicians such as Dave Liebman, Dick Oatts, Cecil Bridgewater, Phil Markowitz, Michael Feinstein, Bob Berg, Joel Frahm, Bob Sheppard, Avishai Cohen, Theo Bleckmann, Peter Eldridge, Aaron Choulai, Mike Nock, Gordon Brisker, Don Rader, Tony Gould, Tim Stevens, Mark Isaacs and Dale Barlow.

Mark has played at major festivals around the world including the Umbria Jazz Festival in Italy, the Pori Jazz Festival in Finland, the Rome Film Festival, the Wangarratta, Manly, Brisbane, Melbourne and Bellingen Jazz Festivals in Australia, the Hong Kong Fringe Festival and Newport and Cape Cod Festivals in the US and has played on numerous recordings and albums.

Mark originally came to New York on an Australia Council for the Arts Development grant and has since won many grants and awards. He was a member of the Manhattan Jazz Orchestra which won the 2004 Downbeat Award for Best Studio Orchestra, was a finalist in the Wangarratta Bass Competition and is a Yamaha Music Artist Relations Contract holder.

Mark has studied performance and composition with Rufus Reid, Jay Anderson, Homer Mensch, Harvie S, David Grossman, Gary Dial and Michael Patterson. He has taught at Manhattan School of Music since 2004.

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