Chris Thile & Brad Mehldau

SIDE A

1. **The Old Shade Tree** 4:30
2. **Tallahassee Junction** 5:54
3. **Scarlet Town** 6:03

SIDE B

1. **I Cover the Waterfront** 7:00
2. **Independence Day** 8:10
3. **Noise Machine** 4:30

SIDE C

1. **The Watcher** 4:27
2. **Daughter of Eve** 4:38
3. **Fast as You Can** 4:37

SIDE D

1. **Marcie** 4:50
2. **Don't Think Twice, It's All Right** 4:50
3. **Tabhair dom do Lámh** 4:50

Chris Thile, Mandolin & vocals
Brad Mehldau, piano & vocals

Produced by Chris Thile & Brad Mehldau
Recorded December 30, 2016, and January 3-5, 2016,
at Avatar Studios, New York, NY
Recorded and Mixed by James Farber
Edited by Sabe Wilcher
Mastered by Greg Calbi at Sterling Sound, New York, NY
Executive Producer: Robert Hurwitz

Design by Ben Tousley
Photograph by Michael Wilson

Chris Thile Management: Jason Collier and Eric Mayers for Red Light Management
Brad Mehldau Management: Scott Southard and Tom Hutchins for JMH

Thanks to Chris and Calvin Thile, Pauline and Rachida.

Brad and Chris represent a generation that may have grown up in one specific genre/tradition but have had a curiosity and love of music that they have not repressed for the sake of some sort of purity. I know them both very well, and I am always amazed at how broad their interests are, how accepting they are of all kinds of music, and how much they have embraced the music of our time as well as the music of the past. They have a shared love of Bach, Elliott Smith, and Radiohead, and both played that music before they even met one another. Brad will talk about Schubert, Coltrane, and Nirvana, and is fully aware and supportive of the young jazz musicians who have followed him. Chris knows everything about any musician who ever played bluegrass, and can play with Jack White, or Fiona Apple, or Yo-Yo Ma. Both of them do many different kinds of projects, but they are not, as we might normally call them, "side projects." When Chris has tackled the Sonatas and Partitas of Bach—perhaps the most profound works written for solo violin—he has done it with the kind of authenticity and seriousness we expect from the leading violinists of our time. Whether Brad is working in a trio setting, or playing solo, or creating music with performers ranging from the saxophonist Josh Redman to orchestras like Orpheus and singers like Anne Sofie von Otter, he is simply extending his own ideas with like-minded musicians from different traditions. Whatever Chris does, it sounds like Chris Thile; whatever Brad does, it sounds like Brad Mehldau. Yet they are excellent listeners and collaborators, who draw great joy from encountering fellow artists whose worlds they gladly enter.

To be honest, I was not sure how well the two of them would work together, no matter how enthusiastic I was about them individually. I knew Chris was a great fan of Brad's and spoke about him with tremendous respect and awe. Brad knew Chris only by reputation until I brought him to see the Punch Brothers years ago at the Bowery Ballroom. While the concert clearly made a deep impression on Brad, my intention then was not necessarily to see if they would work together; I just wanted to share my enthusiasm about Chris with Brad.

Not long after, they began to play a song or two together at special occasions, discovering that the pairing of piano and mandolin—on the surface, two dynamically mismatched instruments—would actually work, with proper amplification and sound design. And despite the fact that they had two different backgrounds it took little effort to find a common ground.

Because they are such gifted and creative players, it was no surprise that the instrumental part of this collaboration could be deeply satisfying. What I did not anticipate, and what this record demonstrates, is that they would find a way to reinvent a kind of playing/singing that somehow unearths new territory, a style of singing, and its relationship to improvised musicianship, that doesn't really belong to the jazz tradition, or the pop tradition, or folk or bluegrass traditions. It's the Chris and Brad tradition.

Brad and Chris are both redefining what it means to be a modern musician, and they are building off decades of traditions, and though many parts of their music are familiar, because of the nature of their instruments, their backgrounds, their temperaments, their experience, they have created something we have not yet heard before. As role models, they are showing younger players the infinite possibilities of how to live a life of artistic integrity, find an audience, take chances, and help redefine what it means to be a musician in a transformational time. In every generation the most influential artists do that—they bring their discipline up to the minute. I think both of them have the humility to recognize that no one ever creates anything that is completely new, but they are still pushing the process of musical evolution along by using the building blocks of the past to give us something we have not yet heard before.

To witness them together, on the same stage, in the same studio, on the same record, is for me pure joy—watching exceptional artists take deep pleasure in one another's rare gifts. This is how music moves forward.

—Robert Hurwitz, November 2016