

# Jeff Marx – Sax/Composer

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David Franklin observes in the *Jazz Times*, “Marx can improvise extraordinary post-Coltrane hard bop/modal choruses, but often chooses to break out of the mold and open up his solos with techniques appropriated from the world of free jazz, including a flexible sense of time.”

Born and raised in Detroit, tenor saxophonist Jeff Marx began playing the tenor in 1973. He lists his early influences as John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins and Joe Henderson.

In the '70's Marx moved to Berkeley California to study with Hal Stein. He played sessions and gigs in Oakland and San Francisco with Eddie Henderson and Mark Levine among others.

Marx subsequently resided for 14 years in New York City for where he played with Reggie Workman, Steve Slagle, Kevin McNeil, Donald Byrd, Ed Schuler, Jim Pepper, Gene Jackson, Ira Coleman, Santi DeBriano and Dave Stryker among others.

For five years, he played in and composed for Second Sight with John Esposito, Jeff Siegel and Dave Douglas, recording two CDs, *Flying With The Comet* and *Tiger Tracks*, both on Sunjump Records. He appeared at various colleges, NYC clubs, the Greenwich Village Jazz Festival and live on Columbia University's WKCR. He played in the Cascais Portugal Jazz Fest and throughout Europe as a soloist. He was chosen to play for the National Public Radio memorial program for his colleague Jim Pepper.

Moving to Chicago in 1993 Chicago, Marx continued to work in New York while establishing himself on the Midwest Jazz scene, appearing in Chicago, Detroit, Memphis, Little Rock, Milwaukee and Ann Arbor playing clubs, concert venues and festivals including Ravinia, and the Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival in 2002 and 2003. He worked with Fred Anderson, Harrison Bankhead, Reuben Hoch's Chassidic Jazz Project, and Elbio Barilari, and performed at Chicago venues including, Millenium Park, the Velvet Lounge, Pete Miller's, the Green Mill and at Satalla, NYC. In 1999 Jeff recorded on *Reaching For A Star* by Don Bennett, which featured Malachi Thompson, Jesse Davis, and Harrison Bankhead.

In 2000 he organized a band with pianist Michael Jefry Stevens, bassist Santi Debriano and drummer Jeff Siegel for his first outing as a leader, *Great Unknown* on his own Naugual label. He recorded his second CD as a leader *Treading Air Breathing Fire* (2003 Soluna Records) with John Esposito, piano, Ira Coleman, bass and Peter O'Brien, drums and featured several Marx compositions. Allaboutjazz reviewer Celeste Sunderland wrote that *Treading Air Breathing Fire* "...ponders metaphysical relations on an immense scale....while Marx wildly churns out vibrantly diverse streams of notes."

In 2006 Jeff recorded a duo CD with drummer Jeff "Siege" Siegel entitled *Dreamstuff* followed by a 2008 tour of Germany and the Czech Republic with Siegel and bassist Jaromir Honzak. Stuart Kremsky in Cadence described Marx's playing as ".....varying his sound from rich and burred in the lower registers to shrill but controlled in the upper range, all the while having a vigorous give and take with Siegel....clearly enunciating (his) immersion in the Jazz tradition and (his) commitment to move the music forward."

Marx returned to Chicago in November 2008 to perform the music of Kahil Elzabar and Elbio Barilari at the Morse Theater on Presidential Inauguration evening, with an all star group of Chicago's best musicians.

A continuation of his work with drummer Jeff Siegel with the addition of pianist John Esposito resulted in the release of *Inyo* (2009 Sunjump) a CD that ".....could best be described as unquiet meditations or chaotic lyricism.... a true moment of musical Zen created by three masterful musicians.....saxophonist Jeff Marx takes some bold flights on the saxophone, " wrote Jakob Baekgaard in allaboutjazz.com.

In 2011 Marx returned to Detroit as his base of operations. He visited New York to play concerts at Bard College, the Community Music Space in Redhook, NY and the Stone, NYC. He completed another CD recording with Esposito and Siegel titled *Tahrir* (Sunjump 2012) and followed that with a Spring 2012 seven concert tour of Germany and Austria with Jeff Marx and John Esposito.

Marx, age 62, died of cancer on December 16, 2013, at his home in the suburbs of Detroit, where he was born and raised.

## **Discography:**

- 1986 - Second Sight *Flying With The Comet* Sunjump
- 1987 - Second Sight *Tiger Tracks* Sunjump
- 1999 - Don Bennett *Reaching For A Star*
- 2000 - Jeff Marx *Great Unknown* Naugual
- 2003 - Jeff Marx *Treading Air Breathing Fire* Soluna
- 2006 - Marx/Siegel *Dreamstuff* Ayler

2009 - Esposito/Marx/Siegel *Inyo* Sunjump  
2012 - Esposito/Marx/Siegel *Tahrir* Sunjump

Website:

<http://www.jeffmarxmusic.com/>