

# BRAITHWAITE & KATZ

*Communications*

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## Jazz Drummer-Composer Mark Lomax Presents a Bold, Dynamic African Mytho-Spiritual Suite with the Album Isis and Osiris

**Isis and Osiris - to be released Feb. 11, 2014, via Inarhyme Records - features the Mark Lomax Trio with saxophonist Eddie Bayard and bassist Dean Hulett**

“The drummer’s music is as sharp as his perceptions are, and it swings magnificently.” — All About Jazz

The **Mark Lomax Trio** - with the drummer-leader joined by saxophonist **Eddie Bayard** and bassist **Dean Hulett** - have created a boldly dynamic suite on African mytho-spiritual themes with the album **Isis and Osiris**, to be released **February 11, 2014**, by Inarhyme Records. Isis and Osiris follows Lomax’s lauded 2010 album, *The State of Black America* - which All About Jazz declared “audacious” in bridging “the firebrand music of the 1960s from today’s world,” walking “the roads traveled by John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, Sonny Rollins, John Tchicai and Archie Shepp... to deliver **an unflinching tour-de-force.**” Jazz Chicago called the album “**electrifying**,” while Lucid Culture said: “This album is **a clinic in making every note count**: Lomax is the rare drummer who leaves you wanting more, leading his bandmates through a strikingly terse, brilliantly counterintuitive and ultimately joyous series of explorations.” And Jazzwise summed up the virtues of the previous album in a way that applies equally to Isis and Osiris: “This is **an impressively conceived and executed piece of work**, one in which the gravitas of the title is matched by the depth of both the composing and improvising of the trio.”

Isis and Osiris - featuring melodies of deep-blues feeling and polyrhythms evoking Africa traditions - brims with **thematic unity and improvisational fire in the spirit of John Coltrane’s A Love Supreme**. The Mark Lomax Trio is a telepathic unit, colored by Bayard’s moving, muezzin-like keening, Hulett’s ever-earthly tone, and Lomax’s detail-rich drums that drive the music with a composer’s will. The tracks of the album are woven like a tapestry, with interludes that connect the sequence and feature the talents of each player solo. **This is exciting, affecting music, accessible to all lovers of jazz past and present.**

The release of Isis and Osiris comes during the middle of **Black History Month**, as well as just after the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation - **an ideal time to reflect on the roots of African-American culture**. While Greco-Roman mythology permeates the learning on which much of American culture has been based, the beautiful creativity at the

heart of Egyptian mythology hasn't reached the mainstream in quite the same way. Isis and Osiris is Lomax and company's instrumental offering to help right the balance, inspired by the stories and history of Africa and its descendants.

Lomax says: "I wrote the 'Isis' melody as part of the music I composed for my wedding, and a few years later, Eddie wrote his for 'Osiris.' I always thought the themes complemented each other. Then I was talking with some composer friends about **how great it would be to create music around Black/African mythological and spiritual themes in the way that movies, music and literature have been created around the resonant themes of ancient Greece and Rome.** I turned to working on a setting for the 'Isis' and 'Osiris' themes immediately after that conversation.

"I drew on Nubian rhythms for the opening 'Kemet,' and 'Isis' is a character piece highlighting the characteristics of **wisdom, power and love** ascribed to the goddess believed to be the mother of all living things," Lomax continues. "Eddie's 'Osiris' is another character piece, one that portrays the **strength and majesty** ascribed to the god by his followers. 'Chaos' is a group improvisation depicting the god Set, his murder of Osiris and the battle that saw him defeated by Horus. 'Love' extends the Isis theme, its melody corresponding to the quest by Isis to resurrect Osiris and undo the work of Set. 'Resurrection' represents the defeat of Set and the ascension of Osiris as supreme in the pantheon of Egyptian gods."

Reflecting on the process to create Isis and Osiris, Lomax says: "Musically, I'm inspired by such drummers as Elvin Jones, Max Roach, Michael Carvin and Ed Blackwell, as well as composers Ellington, Monk and Mingus – and Bartók and Ravel, Bill Banfield and Hannibal Lokumbe. Eddie and I worked together in much the same way as did Duke and Strayhorn. But I also used improvisation as a tool to connect the themes as Coltrane did in A Love Supreme. **Eddie and Dean are musicians who believe in the power of music to make profound statements.** We've been performing together for more than a decade now, and I can't think of more sympathetic artists I could be working with, musically or spiritually."

Lomax's father, Dr. Mark A. "Ogunwale" Lomax, wrote an evocative liner note for Isis and Osiris, elucidating some of the mythic fables of Africa that his son and his bandmates drew on for the album's inspiration. He concludes: "The chaos in the Kemetic divine community was brought on by jealousy, hatred, conspiracy and murder, but it was defeated by love. Love is the power that overcomes negativity and violence as ultimate realities. Love is also what allows Lomax, Bayard and Hulett to conjure the spirits of the ancestors. The **drums roar and cymbals crash**, resonating and putting us on a firm rhythmic foundation. The voice of the bass vibrates in **frequencies deep and wide**, so as to settle the soul. And the saxophone soars and laments, petitions and praises so that we are swept to **heights where memory marries imagination and finds new vision.**"

Reflecting on the conflict and violence that seem to dominate the headlines, Lomax says: "Albert Ayler said, '**Music is the healing power of the universe.**' That's true in that love is what can heal the world, and our music is an expression of love at the deepest level."

## **Mark Lomax**

As a drummer, Mark Lomax has led his own groups and has been featured as a member of the Marlon Jordan Quintet, Delfeayo Marsalis Sextet, Ellis Marsalis Quintet and Azar Lawrence/Edwin Bayard Quintet. He has also performed with jazz legend Clark Terry, as well as saxophonists Billy Harper, Bennie Maupin, Victor Goines and Wessel “Warm Daddy” Anderson. Lomax has also toured with many local and regional bands playing a wide variety of styles, from folk, blues and rock to funk, gospel, R&B and hip-hop. As a composer, he has written jazz, gospel and classical works, and his orchestral arrangements of gospel songs have been played by the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and National Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Czech National Symphony. He has produced eight recordings for his BMR label that range from traditional and more avant-garde jazz to gospel music for children. Lomax recently completed a Doctor of Music Arts in composition at Ohio State University.

**Press photos, sound samples and more available at:**

**[http://www.inarhymerrecords.com/release/Isis\\_and\\_Osiris](http://www.inarhymerrecords.com/release/Isis_and_Osiris)**

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