

February 10th, 2022

The History of Us should turn heads come Juno nomination time

Carn Davidson 9 is a jazz nonet that is co-led by trombonist William Carn and alto saxophonist Tara Davidson. The pair are joined by a gifted and respected collection of Canadian musicians including Kelly Jefferson (tenor & soprano sax, clarinet), Shirantha Beddage (baritone sax & bass clarinet), Jason Logue (trumpet & flugelhorn), Kevin Turcotte (trumpet & flugelhorn), Christian Overton (bass trombone), Andrew Downing (bass) and Ernesto Cervini (drums).

Finding Home Suite is Carn's stirring three-part composition inspired by his parents' voyage from Hong Kong to start a new life in Canada. A New Life begins with a reflection on a life about to be left behind and then shifts into a hopeful journey, featuring a climactic solo by Kevin Turcotte on trumpet. A Mother's Song is inspired by a lullaby that William Carn's mother would sing to him as a child, extracted from a traditional Chinese melody. Carn's trombone solo on this track is stunning. Home is a statement on Canada and how we define home, reportedly inspired by "majestic landscapes" and a Buddhist chant.

Suite 1985 is Davidson's moving three-part collection that was influenced by her mother's passing from breast cancer at the young age of 42. The movements are framed as a series of letters to family members. The Epitaph (For Mom) begins with hope and joy until fragments of shadow and dissonance creep in. Swept Out to Sea (For Dad) gives musical life to the waves of grief that can arrive and shift like ocean tides. Wisely If Sincerely dedicated to Davidson's extended family and her Scottish heritage. It is a heartfelt and moving suite from start to finish.

Goodbye Old Friend is a brief but charming tribute to the couple's cat, Murphy who passed away suddenly.

This History of Us is a tender and personal collection that should turn heads when Juno nominations come around next month.

David Reed