

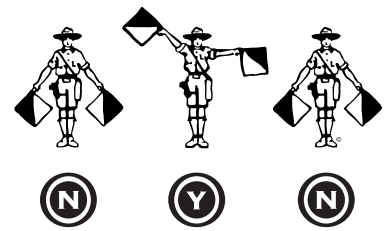
News Release

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NEXT YEAR'S NEWS, INC

C O M M U N I C A T I O N : W H A T E V E R I T T A K E S !®

For musical co-conspirators Ashley|Story, *Standing and Falling* is as much about process as product

For more than 15 years, Dwight Ashley and Tim Story have collaborated in the creation of electronic music that has often been described as “experimental.” Their new release, *Standing and Falling*, was itself an experiment in how two artists could reconfigure a creative process.

Standing and Falling was produced across half the duration of the Ashley|Story relationship, an eight-year period during which a full-scale revolution in recording technology radically transformed the way recordings are made. Ultimately, this had an impact on the Ashley|Story collaborative process as well.

“When we did *A Desperate Serenity* (1991) and *Drop* (1997), we were working side-by-side in a commercial studio, and the projects were very much about two people sharing a mental space,” says Ashley. “We’d pass ideas back and forth in ‘real time’ and in most cases, we’d have a track completed within one studio session.

“We started *Standing and Falling* the same way,” Ashley continues. “The first three compositions were recorded on two-inch tape, and we began using a digital audio workstation (DAW) to produce the final mix on two of these. But once Tim and I had our own DAWs in our own studios, the process became much less direct. Weeks could pass between the time one of us recorded a few tracks, and the other heard them. At first, a lot of material that was generated ended up going nowhere, because we didn’t have the instant feedback from each other and weren’t really thinking about what the other guy would find interesting.”

This could have turned their “collaboration” into a process of one artist editing or embellishing what the other has created — but it didn’t.

“While our solo work is quite different,” says Story, “we approach what we do in a similar way: we find and explore aural space. The process is really about probing the possibilities inherent in a musical idea. Most of the experimentation is done in the beginning stages — each piece then evolves its own structure and form over a period of time. That didn’t change with the use of DAWs — it just took more time to happen. The same questions always arise: Is it music — or ‘musical’? Is it creating the emotional or aesthetic effect we’re looking for? Is anyone other than Tim and Dwight going to want to listen to this? In the process of answering these questions together, we create something neither of us would have produced on our own.”

Dwight agrees. “Over time, we learned to anticipate each other better — and got more comfortable with taking each other’s ideas in unexpected directions. I’m not sentimental about the days of two-inch tape. Every process has its merits, and its aesthetic rewards. But for me, the ability to explore a greater range of sonic possibilities vastly outweighs any shortcomings of the way we do things now. And, strangely enough, people we’ve known who’ve heard the pre-release tracks say it’s our most thematic album to date. I would never have predicted that,” says Ashley.

“Working with Dwight has always been very much a meeting of two equal minds,” adds Story. “People who know our solo work guess at who did what on our collaborations — and they frequently get it wrong. They probably will this time, too.”

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for artist biographies: www.ashleystory.com • for release information / album description: www.nepenthemusic.com

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