



***“An Explosive Performance”***

***“This seemingly disparate grouping ends up pulling dramatic new thoughts out of one another”***

**Coverage is set via [DownBeat](#), [Jazziz](#), [JazzTimes](#), [Stereophile](#) & More, as Steve Wilson Sets First New Album Release in 12 Years**

With coverage already in the works via [DownBeat](#), [Jazziz](#), [JazzTimes](#), [Stereophile](#) and elsewhere, jazz saxophonist **Steve Wilson** looks forward to his first new album release in over 12 years: **‘Steve Wilson & Wilsonian's Grain Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions’** is set for March 24, 2015, as Wilson signs with **Random Act Records**. The new CD will feature tracks recorded live at the Village Vanguard on May 24 & 25, 2014, and will showcase Wilson along with the great talents of **Orrin Evans** on piano, bassist **Ugonna Okegwo** and **Bill Stewart** on drums.

Recent short-lead reviews have praised the ***“explosive performance,”*** and have stated, ***“this seemingly disparate grouping ends up pulling dramatic new thoughts out of one another.”*** A major U.S. tour is confirmed for Wilson, with full itinerary below.



**Blogcritics** – 4.5 Star CD review

2/27/15 by Jack Goodstein

<http://blogcritics.org/music-review-steve-wilson-wilsonians-grain-live-in-new-york-the-vanguard-sessions/>

“Old Socks, New Shoes” - This is how sax master Steve Wilson describes the origins of Wilsonian’s Grain, the ensemble of old friends formed back in 2008. He was interested in revisiting some of his earlier work that he felt could use some further exploration, he explains, with what he calls “a new band of old friends. It’s like putting on old socks with new shoes.” While I’m not quite sure I buy the analogy, I am quite sure I buy the music. That is if the quartet’s debut album, a live set recorded last May at New York’s legendary Village Vanguard, is any indication of what they are capable of. Forgive me but, I’m tempted to say the shoes fit, and resisting temptation was never my strong point. *Steve Wilson & Wilsonian’s Grain Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions*, set for release in March, has Wilson heading up a talented crew of inventive musicians including pianist Orrin Evans, bassist Ugonna Okegwo, and drummer Bill Stewart in a seven-track bop attack built atop

the musical foundation laid down by the giants of the past. Wilson's "old shoes" can stand with the best. Listen to Evans' piano on his original composition "Spot It You Got It." Listen to Stewart's killer solo work on Joe Chamber's "Patterns" which closes the album. Listen to Okegwo on Wilson's "Perry Street." They do great solo work throughout, but when they work together, they shine. Thelonious Monk's "Well You Needn't" makes for a powerful opening number and sets the tone for the rest of the set. Wilson and the Grain take no prisoners. The track opens with the bass, and then the sax takes the theme, while the drums drive the action. It is an explosive performance, with some stunning solo work from Wilson and Evans. Wilson's original pieces, "Chrysalis" and "Spheresophically" and Migiwa Miyajima's "If I Were a Wind of Spring" complete the hour-long set.



## SomethingElseReviews -

**Exclusive Song Premiere:** "Spheresophically"

2/27/15 By Nick DeRiso

<http://somethingelsereviews.com/2015/02/27/steve-wilson-spheresophically-village-vanguard/>

Steve Wilson puts himself on an unusual situation with the forthcoming *Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions*, and not just because it's his first new album release in 12 years. For these May 2014 live dates, Wilson returns with the intriguingly cross-talented Wilsonian's Grain — featuring pianist Orrin Evans, bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Bill Stewart.

Their's is an amalgam that never seemed like it would work and, even as this album begins, feels like a perhaps foolhardy creative risk. Along the way, however, this seemingly disparate grouping ends up pulling dramatic new thoughts out of one another. A perfect mismatch, they challenge Steve Wilson's concepts even as they bolster them. Hear for yourself on Wilson's original "Spheresophically," an exclusive advance sample from Steve Wilson and Wilsonian's Grain *Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions*, due March 24, 2015 via Random Act Records.

This live date is Wilson's first headlining effort since 2003's *Soulful Song*, and also his first concert recording as a leader, first live album at the historic Village Vanguard, and the first release with Wilsonian's Grain — who've been working together, off and on, since 2008. *Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions* was also Wilson's first-ever Kickstarter-related project, having been partially funded by hundreds of contributors.

Steve Wilson included another pair of originals, "Chrysalis" and "Perry Street" in the set, to go with Orrin Evans' "Spot It You Got It," and cover of Thelonious Monk ("Well, You Needn't") and Joe Chambers "Patterns"), among others. A number of tour dates will follow the March release of *Live in New York: The Vanguard Sessions*.

## The Record-Journal - (Meriden, CT) -

Cd Review, By Jim Pasinski 1/15

[http://jpsmusicblog.blogspot.com/2015/01/cd-review-new-independent-jazz-releases\\_14.html](http://jpsmusicblog.blogspot.com/2015/01/cd-review-new-independent-jazz-releases_14.html)



Jazz saxophonist Steve Wilson returns with his first new album in twelve years, "Live In New York: The Vanguard Sessions." Along with Orrin Evans on piano, Ugonna Okegwo on bass and Bill Stewart on drums, Steve Wilson & Wilsonian's Grain as they are called took up residence at The Village Vanguard for a couple of dates back in May of 2014. The live album begins with a nine-minute warm-up jam of Thelonious Monk's "Well You Needn't," which got things going in an up-beat, positive direction. The show continues with the smooth, mellowness of the Wilson original "Chrysalis," before they pick up the pace on the slightly chaotic run through of "Perry Street." The album finishes with the nostalgic feel of Migiwa Miyajima's "If I Were A Wind Of Spring" and the roaring conclusion of Paul Chambers' "Patterns" as Wilson leads his band through this night of

amazing performances. To find out more about this latest release from Steve Wilson & Wilsonian's Grain, please visit [stevewilsonmusic.com](http://stevewilsonmusic.com).

**JazzTimes**

**JazzTimes.com** News item, here:

<http://jazztimes.com/articles/150243-saxophonist-steve-wilson-to-release-first-album-in-12-years>

In addition to being Wilson's first headlining release since 2003's 'Soulful Song', the upcoming album marks a number of other 'firsts': Wilson's first time doing a live recording as a leader, first time recording at the historic Village Vanguard, and first time/debut recording with his 'go-to-band', Wilsonian's Grain. The project was also partially financed thanks to the support of 214 contributors to Wilson's first-ever Kickstarter campaign.

Wilson's goal for the recording was to capture the distinctive vibe of performing in the Village Vanguard. The room is famous for its wonderful, warm sound, and Wilson's aim was to capture that essence for the listener. To add to that, the tracks on this recording were chosen and sequenced to reflect his approach to planning a live concert set. Wilson wants fans to *"sit back, push play, close your eyes, and enjoy this live experience in the comfort of your own home."*



#### **Track listing and song notes by Wilson:**

Well You Needn't - Thelonious Monk

Spot It You Got it - Orrin Evans

Chrysalis - Steve Wilson

Perry street - Steve Wilson

Spheresophically - Steve Wilson

If I Were a Wind of Spring - Migiwa Miyajima

Patterns - Joe Chambers

***Well You Needn't:*** *One of the first arrangements I did for the band. I love Monk's music, he was an original thinker & his music fits the band so well.*

***Spot It You Got It:*** *This tune has a certain quirkiness that reflects Orrin's originality - it's fun to play.*

***Chrysalis:*** *I wrote this tune for my recording Generations with Mulgrew Miller, Ray Drummond and Ben Riley. They played it great, but Wilsonian's Grain plays it the way I originally conceived it, a more free flowing piece.*

***Perry Street:*** *Was written for this recording. I wrote it on Tues, the opening night of the run in May, and the first time we played it was at sound check that night. I didn't know if it would work, and fortunately it did. The title came from the location of the Village Vanguard, the corner of 7th Ave S & Perry Street.*

***Spheresophically:*** *This was written in 2013 for my Special Edition II quintet, and is simply a tribute to Monk.*

***If I Were a Wind of Spring:*** *Migiwa wrote this for me and I thought it would work well with this and, I was right. It's reflective of a very simple, soulful mindset, no particular agenda or concept. Just pure (beautiful) melody. It really plays itself, which makes it very appealing to play.*

***Patterns:*** *One of my favorite tunes and one of the first tunes I ever played when I*

*started my own band back around 1990 and had always wanted to record it. The band plays it true to the spirit of the original Bobby Hutcherson recording. Orrin, Ugonna and Bill play it with great fire and make it their own.*

Wilsonian's Grain's first gig was at the Kennedy Center Jazz Club, October 17, 2008. It was recorded by NPR and appeared on JazzSet with Dee Dee Bridgewater the week of April 2, 2009. They also appeared on WBGO's The Check Out with Josh Jackson, recorded at the Village Vanguard in March of 2010. They have performed together regularly in the years since.

**Upcoming 2015 performances (Dates Subject to change):**

**(Note band update- for March tour: George Colligan (replacing Orrin Evans), Ugonna Okegwo and Bill Stewart)**

March 20: Dalton Center Recital Hall, Western MI University, Kalamazoo, MI, workshop and 8:00pm concert

March 21: Nighttown, Cleveland, OH, 8:30pm

March 22: Nighttown, Cleveland, OH, 7:00pm

March 23: Ann Arbor Community High School, workshop

March 24-26: Residency at University of MI, Ann Arbor

March 26: Kerrytown Concert House, 8:00pm

March 27: Green Mill, Chicago, 9pm-1am

March 28: Green Mill, Chicago, IL 8:00pm-12am

March 29: We Always Swing Jazz Series at Murry's, Columbia, MO, 3:30pm & 7:00pm

April 7: Capital Ale House, Richmond, VA, 7:00pm & 9:15pm (Orrin Evans, Ugonna Okegwo and Clarence Penn)

April 18: B.N. Duke Auditorium, North Carolina Central University, afternoon workshop, 9:00pm Concert (Kevin Hays, Ugonna Okegwo and Clarence Penn)

May 7-10: Jazz Standard, NY, NY Sets at 7:30pm & 9:30pm + 11:30pm on Fri & Sat (Orrin Evans, Ugonna Okegwo and Bill Stewart)

June 27: Saratoga Jazz Festival, Saratoga, NY, time TBA

Sept 18: Side Door Jazz, Old Lyme, CT, 8:30pm

Sept 19: Vermont Jazz Center, Brattleboro, VT, 8:00pm

Other workshops and residencies, Steve alone:

March 15: Jazz Standard Youth Orchestra, Jazz Standard, NYC

March 30 & 31: Kansas University, The Lied Center, Lawrence, KS

April 6: Virginia State University, Petersburg, VA

April 13 & 14: University of WI, White Water

April 29: West Hartford School District

April 30- May 2, Guest Conductor, CT All State Jazz Ensemble

July 19-26: Centrum, Jazz Port Townsend, Port Townsend, WA

Aug 3-8: Samba Meets Jazz, Bar Harbour, ME

*"Wilsonian's Grain, a post-bop quartet that channeled the saxophonist's best qualities — selflessness, a fresh and well-made take on the tradition, and the ability to reference a broad spectrum of strategies and styles without falling prey to pastiche or sacrificing an original voice. " Detroit Free Press*



Wilson was interviewed on **NY-1 TV News** in conjunction with the abovementioned recording sessions at The Village Vanguard: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_8VoNEwKfY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_8VoNEwKfY)

At <http://www.stevewilsonmusic.com/>, visitors can get updates, sample new tunes and see performance footage. The site, part of the Jazz Corner family, also includes a streaming audio player, details of Wilson's numerous band configurations, and more.

For more information about Steve Wilson, or to set up an interview, please contact [SethCohenPR@earthlink.net](mailto:SethCohenPR@earthlink.net). [www.sethcohenpr.com](http://www.sethcohenpr.com)