

Harris Eisenstadt (b. 1975, Toronto, Canada) works as a drummer, percussionist, composer, bandleader and educator in a wide variety of musical settings.

From adhoc improvised music groups with renowned musicians such as Conrad Bauer, Steve Beresford, John Butcher, Nels Cline, Lol Coxhill, Elton Dean, Mark Helias, Peter Kowald, Tony Malaby, James Newton, Sam Rivers, Paul Rutherford, ROVA, Graham Haynes, Tristan Honsiger, Wayne Horvitz, Phil Minton; projects with John Bergamo, Big Black, Bobby Bradford, Les Claypool, Mark Dresser, Marty Ehrlich, Bennie Maupin, Bernie Worell; large ensembles led by Vinny Golia, Barry Guy, Butch Morris, Adam Rudolph, Yusef Lateef, Wadada Leo Smith; ensembles with musicians from Bali, Gambia, Ghana, Morocco, Iran and Senegal, to film scores for major and independent motion pictures such as *The Wedding Crashers*, *The Hebrew Hammer*, and *Dahmer*, Eisenstadt continues to defy categorization as an artist.

Eisenstadt has appeared at major international festivals throughout North America, Europe, Australia, Japan and West Africa, at Adelaide Festival of Arts, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, World New Music Days Switzerland, The Wire/Empty Bottle Adventures in Modern Music Festival, Vancouver International Jazz Festival, and at traditional Mandinka and Wolof celebrations in Gambia and Senegal, West Africa.

He has participated extensively in interdisciplinary collaborations. Film highlights: work with Wadada Leo Smith accompanying Ken Jacobs' *Perfect Film*, appearing in the New Line Cinemas film *The Wedding Crashers* and recording for the soundtrack. Work with dance: performances with members of Urban Bushwomen in New York, and in California with contemporary Butoh dancer Oguri and as an accompanist in the CalArts Dance department. He studied and performed traditional West African dance from 1999-2003. Work with poetry: the Ralph Jones Quartet feat. Kenny Cox alongside California Poet Laureate Al Young. Work with theater: Eisenstadt is a member of *Macbeth*, a one-man adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy starring Tony award-winner Stephen Dillane, directed by Travis Preston, musical director Vinny Golia. The play opened November 2004 at REDCAT (part of Walt Disney Concert hall in Los Angeles), played London Fall 2005 and toured Australia Spring 2006. Work with opera: Eisenstadt performed in the world premiere of the Anne Lebaron opera *Wet* at REDCAT in Los Angeles (2005).

The recipient of a B.A. cum laude in Literature and Music (1998) from Colby College and an M.F.A. in African American Improvisational Music (2001) on scholarship from the California Institute of the Arts, Eisenstadt has received many awards and commissions including a Meet the Composer Global Connections Grant (2006), American Composers Forum Subito Grants (2004, 2005) and a Durfee Foundation Grant (2004). He was selected as a resident by Collectif d'Artist Plastique (Senegal) to take part in Tambacounda Artists Exchange (2004), and by KlezKanada's international klezmer workshop (2003). He has taken part in sponsored tours by the California Arts Council (2002) and the Fitz Foundation (UK, 2006). He was SOCAN (Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada) composer-in-residence for the Sonic Courage Festival June 2006 in Halifax, Canada.

As a composer, Eisenstadt's diverse body of work draws on his experiences in jazz, rock, contemporary classical and world music. Eisenstadt's compositions for chamber orchestra and big band have been performed throughout the United States by his large ensemble Ahimsa Orchestra (Omid Zoufonoun, conductor) and KOLA (the Kreative Orchestra of Los Angeles), which he co-founded with saxophonist/composer Jason Mears.

Two pieces for KOLA, Kola 1 (for Foday Musa Suso) and Kola 2 (for Jalamang Camara) were premiered in 2004. The first incarnation of his Ahimsa Orchestra premiered his three-part suite Non-Violence at Newsonic Loft in Brooklyn in 2003. In 2004, a Bay Area version of Ahimsa Orchestra performed Non-Violence and a new piece, Variations for Creative Orchestra, at The Jazz House in Berkeley.

A Los Angeles version of Ahimsa Orchestra premiered the four-movement Relief at the Line Space Line Concert Series in 2005. Relief and Non-Violence were released in 2005 on the Nine Winds label, garnering critical praise in publications such as The Wire and One Final Note.

In February 2006, Ahimsa Orchestra was American Composers Forum ensemble-in-residence at Lafayette Elementary School in Oakland, where they premiered Eisenstadt's composition What We Were Told. Without Roots, Eisenstadt's newest piece for chamber orchestra, was commissioned by the Upstream Orchestra and premiered at the Sonic Courage Festival in Halifax, Canada, June 2006.

Eisenstadt has released five albums as a leader, and appears as a sideman and co-leader on 35 other recordings.

His debut album Last Minute of Play in this Period, released on Questionable Records and featuring Wadada Leo Smith and Vinny Golia, was voted Top 20 recordings of 2000 by All About Jazz's Steven Koenig.

In the liner notes to Fight or Flight (Newsonic), composer/percussionist Gerry Hemingway notes "subtle intention and linear coherence mark (Eisenstadt's) second release." Jim Macnie in The Village Voice wrote "Fight or Flight has an attractive, mysterious feel."

Eisenstadt began to attract wider attention in 2004 with his third release, Jalolu (CIMP). An homage to African music, completed after two months studying Mandinka drumming in the Gambia, All Music Guide's Steven Loewy called Jalolu "Ellingtonian in scope," and claimed "Eisenstadt breathes fresh air into the small ensemble." Jalolu appeared on All About Jazz, Cadence, and Coda Best of 2004 Top 10 lists.

Vista, a collective trio with Sam Rivers and Adam Rudolph released on Meta Records in 2004, was celebrated in One Final Note as "indispensable... (Vista) helps one re-hear the essence of this music, the power of complex rhythms and

striking melody” and was voted Best Recording of 2004. In a feature on Eisenstadt in the Winter 2006 edition of Signal to Noise, Nate Dorward wrote "Vista is as stark and powerful as if it were carved in granite."

Eisenstadt saw the release of his fourth and fifth albums in 2005; Ahimsa Orchestra (Nine Winds) and The Soul and Gone (482 Music). Both quickly appeared on Jazz Journalists Association Best of 2005 Top 10 lists, and Time Out NY lauded The Soul and Gone's "complex well-crafted post-bop with an ear toward experimentation." All Music Guide's Francois Coutoure called The Soul and Gone "one of the finest North American creative jazz releases of 2005."

His sixth album, "The All Seeing Eye + Octets," a re-imagining of the Wayne Shorter Blue Note plus two Eisenstadt-penned octets, was released on LA (mostly) hiphop label Poob-bah records May 2007. Time Out New York's Hank Shteamer wrote "Eisenstadt... skillfully reconciles spacious groove with textural intimacy." Troy Collins says at All About Jazz "Eisenstadt's writing resonates with singular clarity." Bill Shoemaker declared it "inspired... a terrific outbound energy characterizes the improvising throughout" at Point of Departure. Massimo Ricci says at Touching Extremes "Eisenstadt has been recently featured in many of the most satisfying jazz-oriented projects on the U.S scene, and this record confirms that his young age belies his flourishing maturity as a composer and arranger."

Interviews and feature articles on Eisenstadt can be found in: Jazz Weekly, One Final Note, LA Weekly, Signal To Noise, The Santa Fe New Mexican and Paris Transatlantic.

Eisenstadt leads workshops at colleges and universities, teaches privately and has taught for several arts organizations. Highlights include workshops and performances at Arizona State University, Mills College, the College of Santa Fe, University of California at San Diego, work as a demonstrating artist for Lincoln Center's "Rhythm Is Our Business" jazz education program in New York, as drum consultant for Mandate Pictures in Hollywood, and as drumset instructor at The Henry Mancini Institute Summer Jazz Workshop for high school students in Los Angeles.

Harris Eisenstadt endorses Istanbul Agop cymbals.