



ROBERT BURKE  
TONY MALABY  
MARK HELIAS

**PRESS RELEASE** Robert Burke enjoys a diverse and wide-ranging career as a performer, composer and educator in music. He has performed and composed on over 300 CDs and has toured extensively throughout Australia, Asia, Europe, and USA over the last 30 years.

As an Associate Professor and the Convenor of Jazz and Popular Music at Monash University in Melbourne, Robert's focus is on creating research, educational and artistic ties with institutions, researchers and musicians in Italy, USA, Japan and Brazil. He is also the President of The Australian Jazz and Improvisation Jazz Network (AJIRN).

Recorded on July 17, 2017 at Acoustic Recording Studios in Brooklyn, New York, HEAD UNDER WATER is the 12th CD released under Robert's name. This album brings together Robert on Tenor and Soprano Saxophone and long time collaborator Mark Helias on Double Bass, along with the renowned Tony Malaby, also on Tenor and Soprano Saxophone.

Like Robert, American musician and prolific composer Mark Helias is an educator, teaching at Sarah Lawrence College, The New School, and the School for Improvised Music in Brooklyn.

With his improvisational playing and distinctive sound, Tony Malaby is considered to be one of New York's most in-demand Tenor Saxophonists. He leads a number of ensembles and is also a member of Mark Helias' 'Open Loose' combo.

Whilst Mark and Tony have previously collaborated on six Open Loose studio albums, this was the first time that Tony and Robert had played together.

This album epitomises spontaneity. It is a point in time with no written or rehearsed elements locked down, no extra takes or remixes. On HEAD UNDER WATER, the musicians are the composition. Each brings their own experience, expertise, identity and ego to the session. In the moment of recording, musical decisions are instinctively made and performance positions taken up. Robert, Tony and Mark choose whether to play or not. Whether to explore their own idea or whether to respond to another's idea. Ideas can be matched, developed or ignored. The resulting tracks are rich, raw and organic.

Sometimes harmonious, sometimes cacophonous this album surrounds the listener and immerses them in an evocative and emotional aural journey. The audience is rewarded on both an objective and subjective level by actively allowing themselves to be challenged by the interplay between the musicians.

HEAD UNDER WATER captures a spirited and seductive collaboration between three of the most influential free jazz musicians on the world stage.



# THE HEAD UNDER THE MATTER

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Reviews for  
**Robert Burke  
& Mark Helias'**  
Previous Albums

**SHIFT**—review by **Eddie Naran, Jazz on the Street**

"A stunning jazz album that identifies Melbourne as a significant contributor of talent and inventive and pioneering jazz on the world stage. Beautifully recorded and presented. ... undoubtedly a masterpiece."

**POWER OF THE IDEA**—review by **John McBeath, The Australian**

"4.5\* ...this recording can't fail to exemplify its title to demonstrate all-powerful jazz ideas. This is a groundbreaking collection — complex and adventurous."



**POWER OF THE IDEA**—review by **John Shand, The Sydney Morning Herald**

"Burke and his fellow composers presented an undeniable complexity of compositional ideas, but such was the calibre of musicianship on hand that any difficulties were readily chewed up and spat out as rampant energy. This often raging, tumultuous music is the opposite of a pearl: the grit is on the outside, and at its core is a grain of pure beauty."



**ATOMIC CLOCK**—review by **Chris Kelsey, Jazz Times**

"I think that if I were a bassist who wrote his own tunes, I'd want Tony Malaby in my band. The guy's equipped—he can read down anything and improvise his tail off, besides... As for Helias, few bassists possess his chops and melodic ingenuity."

**THE SIGNAL MAKER**—review by **John Sharpe, All About Jazz**

"Malaby deploys a pliable muscularity that sees his lines edging into overblowing then pulling back and veering into other areas, be that lightly lyrical licks or muffled vocalization. He has a chameleon-like ability to sound like different players between or even within cuts."

**VERBS OF WILL**—review by **Clifford Allen, All About Jazz**

"Helias has assembled a group that can play his uniquely swinging compositions with grace and vitality, yet the irony of this feat is that the compositions are subsumed to a holistic group language, and it becomes increasingly difficult to tell where "theme" and "improvisation" begin and end. This is, of course, the ideal that the bandleader-composer wishes to attain."