



“Confluentia”

“A merging, a coming together, the flowing of ideas and events to achieve a common purpose.”



Laying down the guitar track for “The More I See You.”

The Project

I’ve arranged, produced, and played guitar on a lot of recordings over the years. And in all that time, I never made the time to do a studio recording of my own music. I had plenty of encouragement, from colleagues, friends, my wife Julie, and in early 2025 I decided to take the plunge. After talking with my long time friend and California Central Coast neighbor George Stone about the best way to record an ensemble this size, with the players we wanted, we embarked on this incredible journey.

George is a true Renaissance man... great piano and trumpet player, great composer and arranger, great educator, and a brilliant recording engineer. He even designed and built the studio (where we recorded rhythm tracks and woodwinds) himself!



George and I were super happy after hearing the final mix!

I began by selecting which tunes we would record, which also meant selecting which ones we would *not* record—not an easy job. Budgets and timelines were developed, logistics and personnel were discussed, and before too long we were in the studio, laying down rhythm tracks. Seven months later, here we are, ready to release “Confluentia!”



Performing one of my charts with the FCC Jazz Ensemble.



The Music

I've been fortunate to have a lot of my compositions published, and they are performed by professional jazz ensembles, schools, and universities around the world. But that's not the music I wanted to share on this project. Instead, I wanted to record the music I have written that did not have any limitations, music that would challenge the best players, music that reflected my highest aspirations and goals as a composer.

This album features seven of my original compositions, along with two of my arrangements of jazz standards. I'm sure you'll hear the influences of some of my heroes, but I also hope you'll get a sense of my own style as well. This is the music I wrote "for me." And for you.

Mi Respuesta is an Afro-Cuban contrafact of a well-known jazz standard. The flutes, clarinets, and bass clarinet add vibrant colors to the orchestration. You'll also hear brilliant solos by Alan Ferber (trombone), Brian Kilgore (congas), and Aaron Janik (trumpet).

I composed **Elysian Shore** with Ingrid Jensen's stunning trumpet sound in mind, and I am so thrilled to hear her lyricism and passion on this ballad!

The Truth Is explores harmonic ambivalence, angular melodic lines, and some good old fashioned funk. It was a treat to play on this track with Bob Mintzer, one of my favorite tenor players.

Farther (still) is a tribute to my great friend Paul Shaghoian. Soprano soloist Tim Ries was also a good friend of Paul's, and it meant a lot to me to have him on this track. His heartfelt playing is perfect.

The More I See You is one of my favorite standards. I love the small group feel at the top, and each player (Bob Mintzer, tenor; Alex Iles, trombone; Aaron Janik, trumpet, Eric Marienthal, alto) gets a solo turn. Big shout-out to Wayne Bergeron for his lead playing on this (and all other) tracks!

It's Just A Phase is one of those "can I make this work?" charts... seven bar chord roots phase through eight bar phrases, bar lines seem to move around (they don't, really), even the melodic "hook" moves in and out of related keys. It all seems to work, and the solos by Bob Mintzer and Alan Ferber really seal the deal.

You Don't Know What Love Is, another of my favorite standards, reflects my love of the ECM aesthetic, as well as the music of Maria Schneider and Astor Piazzola. Of course, I had to play a guitar solo on this one, but the star of the show is Aaron Janik's stellar trumpet playing!



I often compose with specific players in mind, and in **December**, that meant Tim Ries and Ingrid Jensen. Hearing them together is magical. Their blend, phrasing, and interaction are perfect here.

When I was testing the idea for this project out on my friends, they all said “you’re going to do **Confluentia**, right?” And here it is... a straight-ahead chart with lots of solo space for George Stone (piano), Wayne Bergeron (trumpet), Mike Dana (guitar) and Eric Marienthas (alto).

The Band

After much discussion about the best way to record this project with the players we wanted, we decided to cut the rhythm tracks and saxophone section in George's studio, then send out rough mixes of those tracks to the trumpet and trombone players. This gave us the opportunity to get exactly the players we wanted, and not to have to worry about touring/recording schedules and travel. We were able to include outstanding studio players and jazz soloists from Los Angeles and New York to participate, and everyone we asked graciously and enthusiastically accepted.

During my time as jazz studies director at Fresno City College, I brought many fantastic jazz performers to FCC as guest artists for our festivals. These were the players that inspired me, and I wanted my students to have that same experience. I’m so happy that those FCC guests are now a part of this project.

And so...what an honor to have Bob Mintzer, Tim Ries, and Eric Marienthal as featured saxophone soloists! And Ingrid Jensen and Wayne Bergeron on trumpet, Alan Ferber on trombone—lucky me! I was also fortunate to have some new (to me) players contribute solos... thank you Aaron Janik (trumpet), Alex Iles (trombone). and Brian Kilgore (percussion.)

And, thank you for your interest in this project, and for supporting this music. This coming together of composer, musicians, engineers, and freinds is very... confluentia!

More Info

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Personnel and Credits

WOODWINDS

David Becker - alto sax, tenor sax, flute, clarinet
Ron McCarley - alto sax, tenor sax, flute, clarinet
Michael Mull - baritone sax, clarinet, bass clarinet
Jessica Hoffman - oboe
Lisa Nauful - bassoon

TRUMPETS

Wayne Bergeron
Daniel Rosenboom

TROMBONES

Alex Iles
Alan Ferber
Joe Turgeon - bass trombone

RHYTHM SECTION

Mike Dana - guitar
George Stone - piano
Ron Suffredini - bass
David Tull - drums
Brian Kilgore - percussion

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive Producer - Mike Dana
Produced by George Stone
Recorded at Central Coast Studio Works, August 2025
Engineered, edited, mixed, and assembled by George Stone
Mastered at Seismic Mastering Studio by Will Borza
All compositions and arrangements by Mike Dana (ASCAP) except:

- The More I See You (composed by Harry Warren & Mack Gordon, arranged by Mike Dana)
- You Don't Know What Love Is (composed by Don Raye & Gene de Paul, arranged by Mike Dana)

ADDITIONAL RECORDING CREDITS

Ancient Pathways Recording (CA) - Brian Kilgore, engineer
ARJ Studios (CA) - Aaron Janik, engineer
BoomHill Studio (CA) - Dan Rosenboom, engineer
Canyon Cove Studio (CA) - Bob Mintzer, engineer
Charles Myers Recording Studio, Manhattan School of Music (NY) - Dan Rorke, engineer
Gault Street Sound (CA) - Wayne Bergeron, engineer
LDR Studio, NYC - Laura de Rover, engineer
Sanctuary Studio (NY) - Alan Ferber, engineer