



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Dan Bruce's :beta collective
Earthshine

(ears&eyes Records / ee:17-069)

Pre-orders available: **September 15th 2017**
CD/Digital Release date: **October 20th 2017**

Genre(s): original, modern jazz



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Quick Pitch Points:

- **Release show** at Constellation (Chicago) **October 26th** feat. full recorded personnel ([details](#), [tix](#))
 - **Video trailer available for premiere.** Get in touch if interested.
 - All **original compositions** by Bruce, except Major_Chord by Nathan Douds
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Tracks/Lengths (*quick listens*):

1. Earthshine 13:29
 2. Reprieve:Reprise 7:20
 3. Lapse 8:56
 4. Ice (no. 2) 9:31
 5. Sofa 8:00
 6. Major_Chord 8:06
 7. Greatest Hit #1 13:26
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Personnel:

- [Russ Johnson](#) - trumpet (of Lee Konitz, Myra Melford, Bill Frisell, Joe Lovano)
- [Chris Madsen](#) - tenor saxophone (of Victor Goines, Chicago Jazz Orchestra)
- [Dan Bruce](#) - guitar/effects/compositions (of Ashley Summers Quintet with Seamus Blake, Dan Wall, Lynn Seaton, The Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, Daniel Lippel, Dave Morgan)
- [Rob Clearfield](#) - piano/Fender Rhodes (of Fareed Haque, Grazyna Auguscik, Matt Ulery, Hoodsmoke)
- [Clark Sommers](#) - bass (of Kurt Elling, Dana Hall, Darrell Grant's "The Territory" with Joe Loche, Steve Wilson and Brian Blade)
- [Jon Deitemyer](#) - drums (of Patricia Barber, Zach Brock, Grazyna Auguscik, Matt Ulery)

(continued below)



(photo by Thomas Mohr)

Story:

A powerhouse group including some of **Chicago's finest improvisers**, Dan Bruce's *beta collective* steps into the spotlight with their **debut album**, *Earthshine*. Bruce describes the new album as “a **tone poem on order and chaos**, and the acceptance of both in the moment.” He goes on to explain, “It is a patchwork of **moods and textures**, underpinned by an overwhelming **feeling of joy and gratitude**”. A hallmark of the compositions is the **interaction between highly composed music and free improvisation**, much of it set to expansive and **driving grooves**.

Led by guitarist and composer Dan Bruce, who has been called “a lyrical musician with a thoroughly modern bent, based on a firm grasp of the tradition” (bassist Lynn Seaton), the group includes trumpeter Russ Johnson, saxophonist Chris Madsen, keyboardist Rob Clearfield, bassist Clark Sommers, and drummer Jon Deitemyer. He composed the album with these players in mind, knowing that they would bring a **level of risk, immediacy, and spontaneity** that goes well beyond the written page. Dan brings a style of his own, informed by a wide variety of genres and drawing upon a large palette.

Bruce has been a mainstay in the Chicago jazz scene for the past decade, and has been on an impressive number of releases as a sideman. His first album as a leader, *A Single Thread* (2007), was released to critical acclaim. Martin Gladu of allaboutjazz.com explains that the album “...combines his learned guitar work, which is at times reminiscent of Ben Monder, with substantive yet airy, contemporary sounding compositions.” This much-anticipated follow up album signals an **exciting new chapter** in Bruce's career as a writer and guitarist.

The term *earthshine* refers to the **glow caused by sunlight reflected off the earth**, especially on the darker portion of a crescent moon. Bruce explains, “For me, **looking up at the moon once a day** is an easy way to remember my place, and to stay grounded and in the moment. I am deeply grateful to be a part of this experiment, and the more mindful I am of that the deeper my experience. While I continue to work on a better understanding, I also try to embrace the role of chaos in the world and in my life. This line of thinking bares a striking resemblance to performing improvised music. I am always striving to be present in the moment and doing my best to navigate the music in an orderly way. At the same time, when it is going well I am able to let in some of the chaos and see what happens. So when I am fortunate to make music with people on the level of this group, I can just tell myself ‘look up and remember you are not in control’.”

From the outset the title track invokes the feeling, which Bruce refers to as a spiritual experience, of **standing alone in a vast open landscape**. “I’ve been lucky to experience a number of breathtaking places on Earth, whether in Scandinavia, the Mediterranean, Africa, Canada, or the American West. Standing in these places I am always deeply **impacted by the dual feelings of insignificance and joyous gratitude**.” In the piece, **meandering melodic phrases** overlap into each other, masking

cadences and creating a **feeling of searching and longing**. This builds and eventually culminates in a **meditative rhythmic vamp** with traces of **Arabic traditional music**.



“Ice no.2” is dedicated to the artwork of **Gerhard Richter**. His series of four paintings titled *Ice* is in the Modern Wing of the Art Institute of Chicago. Bruce explains, “When I first sat in the room with these paintings I was brought to tears. Richter uses layers and motion in the paintings to give us glimpses of vibrant colors coming through the top layer of stillness and cold. For me,

the pairing of the nylon string guitar and Fender Rhodes achieves a similar effect. The two instruments have very different timbres, but go together beautifully.” Bruce’s guitar sets the tone in this piece with a **repeated rhythmic motive**, and Clearfield’s **casual melody line breaks through** that texture.

Not every piece has such a profound back-story. “Sofa” is a haunting track that invokes a **trance-like, semi-conscious, lethargic state of being** and is dedicated to a wonderful couch that Dan and his wife once owned.

Bruce approaches this group as a **composer first and guitarist second**. The pieces are written to utilize the various textures available within the sextet instrumentation, and a number of the pieces were written to highlight specific group members. You will hear a good deal of his guitar playing on the album, but as he describes it, “the **number one priority is the overall group sound**. My goal as a composer is to get out of my own way and see what happens. I am constantly asking myself ‘what does this piece need?’ I try to take myself out of the driver's seat in a sense.” With this compositional approach and the incredible lineup, *Earthshine* achieves a **staggering range of texture and impressive variety of orchestration, while maintaining a steady and relatable lyricism throughout**.

Releases on Chicago-based independent label, ears&eyes Records, on **October 20th 2017**.

Previous Press:

“...a skilled, seasoned player, one capable of filling the space left by an accompanying harmonic instrument with aplomb and finesse.” - Martin Gladu, allaboutjazz.com

“Bruce has done a good job to evolve a sound of his own...I found a maturity in Bruce's playing that belies his physical age. His cumulative experience is what is best represented by his composition and playing, and his craft is developing nicely. A brilliant first effort. I look forward to hearing more from him in the future.” - Chuck Vecoli, jazzreview.com

"Daniel Bruce is without a doubt one of the finest of today's young jazz guitarists. He plays with great creativity, soul and intelligence." - William Piburn, *Fingerstyle Guitar Magazine*

Credits:

- Produced by Dan Bruce and Chad McCullough
- Recorded at I.V. Lab Studios in Chicago, IL by Shane Hendrickson
- Mixed and Mastered by Brian Schwab
- Layout and Artwork by Federico Maksimiuk
- Artist photos by Thomas Mohr

Links:

- Website: www.danbrucemusic.com
- BandCamp: www.danbrucemusic.bandcamp.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/danbrucemusic
- Twitter: twitter.com/danbrucemusic
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/danbrucemusic
- SoundCloud: soundcloud.com/danbrucemusic

ears&eyes Records: www.earsandeyesrecords.com, earsandeyesrecords.bandcamp.com,
twitter.com/earseyesRecords, soundcloud.com/earseyesrecords, facebook.com/earsandeyesrecords,
[YouTube Channel](#)

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Individual Bios:

Trumpeter **RUSS JOHNSON** is a recent Midwest transplant after spending 23 years as an important member of New York City's jazz community. He has 7 recordings as a leader or co-leader and performed on more than 75 recordings as a sideman. Russ has worked alongside many of the legendary figures in jazz including Lee Konitz, Steve Swallow, Bill Frisell, and Joe Lovano. In addition, Russ has recorded and/or performed with a long list of the most prominent musicians currently on the international jazz scene, including Myra Melford, Ken Vandermark, and Tony Malaby. Russ has performed in more than 40 countries across the globe.

The Russ Johnson Quartet is his latest project & features 3 Chicago musicians (Jason Stein – bass clarinet; Anton Hatwich – bass; and Tim Daisy – drums) with international acclaim. This group recently performed at the Umbrella Festival in Chicago in November of 2013, and the 2014 Chicago Jazz Festival in Millennium Park. Their new recording "Meeting Point" was released in May of 2014 on Relay Recordings. "Meeting Point" received 4 ½ stars in the May issue of DownBeat magazine & has been listed among the "Best CD's of 2014" in the January 2015 issue of DownBeat. Magnet Magazine recently placed "Meeting Point" on its "Top 10 CD's of 2014" in the jazz/improvisation category.

October of 2014 saw the release of “Still Out to Lunch,” on the German label Enja. The group performs the music of Eric Dolphy, and recently headlined “Edge Fest” in Ann Arbor Michigan and has a January 2015 performance scheduled at NYC’s “Winter Jazz Fest.”

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Jazz saxophonist **CHRISTOPHER MADSEN** is one of the most in-demand figures in the Chicago jazz world as a performer, composer, and pedagogue. He serves as full-time jazz faculty at the University of Illinois at Chicago, jazz faculty at Midwest Young Artists in Highwood, IL, and was Coordinator of Jazz Studies at Northwestern University (Evanston, IL) from 2008-2014. He is a sought-after jazz clinician, adjudicating at jazz festivals and offering workshops to ensembles of all ages and levels from across the globe. He is a Vandoren Performing Artist, member of the Fulbright Specialist Program roster, Jazz Education Network, the National Educator’s Association, and the National Association for Music Education. Madsen serves on the Education Committee for the Jazz Education Network and has been featured in *Jazziz Magazine* (2005) and the *Jazz Spotlight* for artsamerica.org (2012). Madsen has also contributed jazz articles to *The Instrumentalist* magazine and been interviewed on several radio broadcasts about jazz history and his performing career.

After graduating from DePaul University in Chicago with a B.M. in Jazz Studies and studying with the likes of Mark Colby, Bobby Broom, and Dr. Bob Lark, Madsen was accepted into the jazz program at the Juilliard School in 2003. He spent three years in New York City, performing with and writing for such jazz masters as Wynton Marsalis, Victor Goines, Loren Schoenberg, Wycliffe Gordon, Kenny Washington, Bobby Short, Michael Dease, Jon Irabagon, Lage Lund, Ulysses Owens Jr., Aaron Diehl, and many others. After graduating from Juilliard, Madsen relocated to Chicago in 2006 and has since been a fixture on the local scene, performing regularly at major venues such as the Jazz Showcase, the Green Mill, and Andy’s Jazz Club.

As a leader and sideman, Madsen’s discography is extensive. He has released five albums as a leader since 2004 and can be heard as a player and composer on countless additional releases with artists such as Michael Dease, Marquis Hill, and Jeff Hamilton. His saxophone playing and arrangements can be found on the Loren Schoenberg Big Band’s 2006 release “Black Butterfly” featuring the vocal stylings of jazz legend Barbara Lea.

Madsen is a published composer with Kendor Music, Inc., Walrus Music, and the UNC Jazz Press. He was commissioned by the Illinois Music Education Association to write the 2012 All-State Jazz piece entitled “With Gratitude” and dedicated to his high school band director Don Shupe. He was honored to have his arrangement of the standard “Never Let Me Go” recorded by Phil Woods and the DePaul Jazz Ensemble released in 2007 to rave reviews. He maintains a consistent compositional schedule writing for Chicago- and New York-based ensembles such as the New Standard Jazz Orchestra, the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, and the Jazz Museum in Harlem All-Stars. Madsen’s compositions and arrangements are performed regularly by ensembles of all ages—from middle school to the professional jazz world.

Madsen is an integral part of the Jazz Studies Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago and is responsible for teaching Jazz Improvisation, Jazz Composition, Jazz History, Applied Jazz Saxophone, and ensemble direction. He serves as jazz faculty at Midwest Young Artists in Highwood, IL, directing

ensembles and teaching classes in music theory, history, composition, and appreciation. He has performed and/or presented at the 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2016 Jazz Education Network conferences, and led groups which have performed at the Illinois Music Education Association All-State conference and the Midwest Band and Orchestra clinic. Madsen currently resides in the Chicago area with his wife and son.

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By embracing the influence of his heroes from the jazz tradition and retaining his own musical personality, guitarist **DAN BRUCE** has developed a unique and impressive musical voice. A recent transplant to Ohio after spending a decade as an important member of Chicago's vibrant jazz scene, he is active throughout the Midwest and nationally as a performer, recording artist, composer and educator. Bruce moved to Chicago in 2007 after completing his master's degree in jazz studies at the University of North Texas. He was quickly performing at a number of the city's finest jazz venues including Andy's, The Green Mill, The Jazz Showcase, and Harris Theatre in Millennium Park.

Bruce has performed on over twenty five albums as a sideman. As a jazz performer and recording artist, He has had the opportunity to work with a number of eminent musicians including Seamus Blake, Ali Jackson, Lynn Seaton, Dan Wall, The Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, Marvin Stamm, Dave Restivo, and Rose Colella. He has been a featured composer in Fingerstyle Guitar Magazine, and remains a regular contributor. Daniel released A Single Thread, his first album as a leader, in 2008 on NohJoh records. His second release is due out in the summer of 2017.

Bruce's groups have been featured in The Chi-Town Jazz Festival, The Chicago Composers Collective series, The Chicago Cultural Center Chamber Music Series, The Jazz Institute of Chicago NextGen Jazz Series, South by Southwest, the Toledo Jazz Festival, and a special live radio broadcast on WDCB FM Chicago.

He was awarded a Teaching Fellowship upon entrance to The University of North Texas where he taught applied jazz guitar lessons, directed two guitar ensembles and a student big band while pursuing his own studies at the University. Daniel has held faculty positions at Muskingum College, Cuyahoga Community College, Harold Washington College, St. Xavier University, Interlochen Center for the Arts, and The Chicago Academy for the Arts where he served as Music Department Chair for eight years.

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From an early age, pianist/multi-instrumentalist **ROB CLEARFIELD** has always shown a fascination in all types of music. From his humble beginnings in Oak Park, IL playing grunge rock in his friends' basements and accompanying choirs at his mother's church, Clearfield has become a fixture on the Chicago music scene. As he's matured into adulthood, Clearfield has made a name for himself as one of Chicago's most versatile improvisers, performing with such artists as John Wetton, Fareed Haque, Ernie Watts, Rakalam Bob Moses, Howard Levy, Patricia Barber, Makaya McCraven, Marquis Hill, Juma Santos, eighth blackbird, Steve Gorn, Joe Sanders, Justin Brown, Isaiah Sharkey, Zach Brock, and Greg Ward, among others. Rob is currently an active member of the groups Matt Ulery's Loom, Hood Smoke, Outertown, and the Grazyna Auguscik Group. As a bandleader and composer, he has released six recordings of his original music, and has been commissioned by to compose for churches (Grace

Commons – Chicago), stage productions (Purdue North Central University), and most recently, film (The Lost Remake of Beau-Geste).

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Bassist, Composer and Educator, **CLARK SOMMERS** has toured and performed extensively throughout the world. He has had the privilege of performing with Cedar Walton, Darrell Grant, Brian Blade, Ernie Watts, Bennie Maupin, Von Freeman, Ira Sullivan, Frank Wess, Charles McPherson, Peter Bernstein, Lin Haliday, Dana Hall, Jodie Christian, Bobby Broom, Jeff Parker, Ron Perrillo, Geof Bradfield, Michael Weiss, George Fludas, Kevin Mahogany, Eden Atwood, Ted Sirota's Rebel Souls, The Mighty Blue Kings and The Chicago Jazz Orchestra among others.

Clark completed his undergraduate degree in Jazz Studies and World Music at California Institute of the Arts, where he studied with bass masters Charlie Haden and Darek Oles. While living in Los Angeles, Clark performed with Leo Smith, Vinny Golia, The Charlie Haden Liberation Orchestra, Joe La Barbara and Larry Koonse. He continues to seek expansion of his craft by pursuing his musical studies with masters such as David Grossman of the New York Philharmonic, Mike Longo and Stefon Harris. He recently completed two residencies at the Brubeck Institute in Stockton California.

Clark is proud to be at home in the bass chair with vocalist Kurt Elling, with whom he tours the globe bringing jazz to everyone from Istanbul to the Canary Islands. Thus far he has been privileged to play on two GRAMMY nominated recordings with the band, one of which won the GRAMMY for best vocal jazz album in 2009. When not on the road with Kurt Elling, Clark enjoys leading his own group "Ba(SH)." The group includes long time friends Dana Hall and Geof Bradfield. The group's first CD was released in August 2013 and has received critical acclaim. It was acknowledged on the "notable and not to be missed" list by All About Jazz in 2013.

Clark can also be heard performing with Portland's Darrell Grant in his "Territory" ensemble which includes Brian Blade, Joe Locke and Steve Wilson. Other groups that Clark performs regularly with include Dana Hall's "Spring" and "Black Fire," Geof Bradfield's "African Flowers Ensemble" and "Melba," Chicago Yestet, Dan Cray Trio, Spin Quartet and many other musicians.

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As the drummer of choice for a vast array of incredible musicians, **JON DEITEMYER** embodies the warmth, sincerity, and diversity of the music that he creates. His approach to the instrument is eminently supportive: equally comfortable in a swinging piano trio or a hard-hitting fusion band. Patricia Barber raves "Jon Deitemyer is the drummer everyone wants right now," and his resume only echoes the sentiment. In only a short professional career, he has collaborated with Patricia Barber, Matt Ulery, Zach Brock, Grazyna Auguscik, Phil Markowitz, Ben Paterson, Philip Dizack, Lynne Arriale, Russ Johnson, and countless others. Jon has contributed his craft to dozens of albums, and recordings of his drumming can be heard on the Concord, Greenleaf, Origin, ears&eyes, and MaxJazz labels.

Jon earned his formal music education at the esteemed University of North Texas, where he studied with Lynn Seaton, Stefan Karlsson, and the legendary drummer Ed Soph. An extended workshop at the Banff Centre for the Arts afforded him the opportunity to work alongside Clarence Penn, Dave Douglas,

and Jason Moran - all the while developing his unique brand of drumming and composition. He is currently an active educator himself, with teaching positions at Loyola University Chicago and the Chicago Academy for the Arts.