

Stephan Crump's *Rhombal* [] press release

**a two-horn, bass and drums quartet convened around a body of work
written for Crump's late brother**

Double Vinyl LP, CD, and digital available now on Papillon Sounds

Ellery Eskelin • tenor saxophone

Adam O'Farrill • trumpet

Tyshawn Sorey • drums

Stephan Crump • acoustic bass / compositions

*"bristles with the unexpected and the lively " - Downbeat *****

Rhombal is not about sadness. Much more, it's a commemoration of a death well-confronted, of a spiritual evolution I witnessed in my brother during our last days together, and of how close we left each other after what had been, for many years, a very troubled relationship.

In putting a band together, I usually look first to the spirits involved rather than particular instruments, although after years of exploring with my all-string Rosetta Trio and numerous duo projects, I knew I wanted to deal with drums and breath. I also wanted the collective freedom and challenge that comes from omitting a chordal instrument, and at times to find how the band, itself, might be that instrument.

Tyshawn and I have a deep musical and personal bond that reaches into more than a decade shared onstage and on the road, mostly with Vijay Iyer's trio and quartet. I met Adam while on faculty at the Banff creative music summer program in 2013 and immediately connected with him as a person, plus I couldn't get enough of hearing him play his horn. Ellery I'd admired from afar for years before introducing myself with this project in mind. I thought he and Adam might make an inspired team and was drawn to the generational breadth they would bring to the group. Hearing their sounds together as they warmed up before our first rehearsal, I was knocked back by the vibration. It almost doesn't matter what notes they play.

In the name "Rhombal" there is a bit of "rumble," evoking a scrum or sparring tangle, but even more, the idea of developing geometries, of shape-shifting while maintaining a powerful structural integrity and functional equality.

I began writing this music in the last few months of my brother's life, as he battled an extremely rare and aggressive sarcoma. The writing flowed through a year after his passing and was shaped by the chemistry of the band as we began to rehearse and perform. Then, this winter, we recorded the album in a two-day studio journey that was one of the most profound and moving experiences of my life, and which left me with the feeling of a new brotherhood, just formed.

now available at: <https://stephancrump.bandcamp.com>

photos/bio/etc: <http://press.stephancrump.com/rhombal>

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