

Saxophonist adds new music to his web platform Myriad Streams

East Lothian-based saxophonist-composer Phil Bancroft will release two new additions to his groundbreaking web platform, Myriad Streams on 31 May.

Now living in Glenkinchie after many years in central Edinburgh, Bancroft conceived Myriad Streams as a calm place for people to become acquainted with his music away from the established streaming services where thousands of artists are competing for the public's attention.

"If people only listen on the huge platforms, such as Spotify, then the artists who shout loudest, or those selected and packaged by the commercial music industry, will be presented to them," said Bancroft, who has been a major figure on the Scottish jazz scene since emerging with the John Rae Collective in the late 1980s. "For some people, this is what they love – and that's great. A huge body of classic work has emerged from the commercial music industry."

But he regards Myriad Streams as representing another side to culture, where non-commercial artists who go deeper and more slowly into their music, build creative output over a whole lifetime.

"These musicians are creating music between bringing up families and taking on the other paying jobs needed to finance their art," he added. "Myriad Streams allows listeners to take

their time, to listen to something more than once in its entirety, rather than in soundbites, and to really get to know an artist's output."

Bancroft launched Myriad Streams last summer and is making available music that he released on the now defunct Caber Music label as well as music that has not yet been released. His latest additions are the album with which he launched his career as an international bandleader back in 2004, *Headlong*, and a duo recording with the tabla master Gyan Singh, which he recorded partly at home in Glenkinchie and partly in Delhi.

"Recording *Headlong* was an amazing experience," he said. "The other guys in the quartet were all well-established international names, so there was pressure to deliver something of quality, which I think we did."

Featuring the bassist with American band The Bad Plus, Reid Anderson, the leading Norwegian drummer Thomas Strønen and guitarist Mike Walker, who had worked with jazz legends George Russell and Mike Gibbs, *Headlong* was widely praised for its combination of gutsiness, lyricism and playfulness. Unfortunately, the Caber label went out of business shortly after its release and the quartet that recorded it lost momentum as a result.

The second album Bancroft is releasing, *Birth and Death*, reflects the saxophonist's love for the Indian classical music tradition and his engagement with other cultures, including the Scottish tradition.

"It draws on Celtic Jazz and Indian traditions and there's something of the single line European Classical music tradition, such as the Bach Cello Suites, in there," he said. "But I see it as modern contemporary improvised music that's striving for a new sound of its own and I hope people will log onto Myriad Streams and check it out for themselves."

