

*dCS* "Only the Music" presents

# The Spirit of Turtle

a collection of the most innovative high-end audio recordings by NorthStar Recording



SUPER AUDIO CD





presents... "The Spirit of Turtle Records®"

"The Spirit of Turtle Records®" was set free on a Summers eve in 1997.

Although we had never met before, Harry van Dalen of "Rhapsody Sound Masters" and I were aware of each others work and in a sign of projects to follow, it was over the use of a *dCS* analogue to digital converter that I visited Harry's store in Hilversum, Holland.

As Harry and I talked about music and recording it soon became clear that our ideas and visions about recording and reproducing music of all styles were so strikingly similar, that it felt like we had found our soulmate in sound and performance.

By the end of this chance encounter we were both convinced that we had to start something together in the music business and out of this positive energy a new record label was born with only one objective: "to capture the musical message of a real live performance, translating it into the frozen bits of a recording, and then translate it back such that the essence of this performance is communicated to the listener without any loss of detail and emotion."

Like the *dCS* slogan: only the music...we wanted to create a gateway between the performer and the listener which, in the best case, appears not even to be there. Furthermore an approach of no compromise and unconditional effort to reach "the optimum" under all circumstances.

This motto perfectly describes our shared vision for music recording and playback and we both realised it could only be achieved by combining great musical performers with state of the art equipment and revolutionary recording techniques.

We knew from our own experience that the essence of a magic musical moment in a real world event is often lost in translation by porting it into the virtual world of loudspeakers, only firing pockets of pressurized air, but we were determined to get it right all the way through the electronic chain and during the creative process of working with the artists.

Myself and my partners at Kompas CD Multimedia had great experience in professional recording tools and producing techniques and allied to the knowledge Harry and Martin Odijk from More Music had gained from many years in High End consumer audio. This gave us a unique opportunity to join forces and benefit from each other's talents and connections. This synergy quickly led to a truly "High End" recording philosophy which still might be one of the best around and forms the basis for all recordings we do. They all are shaped after this first "blueprint" and carry the signature of "The Spirit of Turtle Records®". It is due to the talent and combined effort of the people from the first hour(\*) that "The Spirit" became such a powerful guide for the path of the future.

The set of tracks we have chosen reflects our original motto and our taste for musical content and performance. Two of them, the first and the last, are as old as "The Spirit" itself, and we took great care to "translate" those into our current universe of high resolution stereo and 5.1 Surround Sound.

Recent advances in mastering technology mean that the original "impulse responses" of halls and rooms can now be digitally sampled in high resolution and this along with the availability of digital techniques to shape the images and colours in a recording, have allowed us to breathe new life into Turtle tracks that originally were only available in stereo. Interestingly enough these tracks now give us the same emotional response as the stereo version did 15 years back, whilst the latter is more of a great memory. As if one steps into a time machine, the remasters and surround version somehow turn the sweet Memory into the actual feel of the Present we found!

## The tracks

(see page 12 for the complete track list)

1. "Teardrops for Jimmy", the very first Turtle Records® production. This track is a time machine for us and a joy to put at the start of this production. Completely remastered and put into the world of surround sound it is as if the musicians and recording space materialises in front and around you.
2. "Noodle Effect", the most recent Turtle Records® production. A great track for checking if we stayed on our desired path over all these years, but also if we managed to learn new things... this is all improvised music, happening "in the moment".
3. "An American in Paris", a vivid and vibrant recording of Gershwin's masterpiece which triggers the imagination of what the composer might have envisioned by describing a long walk in Paris. It was boiling hot during the recordings and the city of Amsterdam was mumbling along in the background.
4. "Ravel's Tomb". A brilliant piece by Rob van Bavel for piano and strings inspired by Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Mr. Couperin". This

recording embodies all that "The Spirit" is about, a perfect synergy between musical styles and instrumentation. No boundaries!

5. A string quintet arrangement of the piano part of Johannes Brahms' clarinet sonata opus 120/1. This arrangement fulfils a long wish by many of there to be more music like the famous original Clarinet Quintet by Brahms, which has a real "music for the millions" status. That piece was his last and so beautiful that one wonders how it would have been if he had written more for this combination of instruments. The arrangements on this recording give a genuine answer!
6. Improvising on existing classical music is an art lost a long time ago. It however used to be a part of normal concert practice, e.g. Franz Liszt always did so, he even added notes and ideas to the great composer's legacy. Over time this was regarded disrespectful, but Michael Gees has a different opinion. He simply carries on where Satie has stopped, or he tries to imagine where he might have gone further. Also a great example of what "The Spirit" is all about. All is possible, no "performance style police", just music!

7. Beethoven's 5th! Why? Just Because! What else...It is the pivotal piece in music history. It's been exploited, turned upside down, turned into Disco, but many have stated that this particular version makes you listen to it again and be mesmerized by the power of these musical inventions. This piece highlights perfectly why great music will always survive the passage of time.

8. When it comes to communicating the essence of a musical performance, a "live" recording has the most suggestive cues for a listener to follow because there is so much happening besides the music in the recording space. The audience breathing, or holding their breath...musicians preparing and so on. All these sounds only happen once, they are unique for that moment, like how music should be. Recording and playing over and over again is somewhat unnatural for the essence of music. However, just listen to the sheer depth, width and endless harmonic sound palette of this version of Britten's War Requiem and it will be as if it happens right now!

9. The fine detail that intimacy in a musical performance reveals is so hard to reproduce. From the little air movements around

the performers, the whispering background noises from the instruments like the keys of a bass clarinet and pedals of the harmonium to the delicate pronunciations of one of the world's most renowned singers, Christoph Prégardien. This recording leaves you in awe.

10. There is nothing like a beautiful soprano who sings her heart out... so what if 2 beautiful sopranos are going for it? It is like Sirens at sea seducing the sailors and totally irresistible. This track shows how inventive Mendelssohn was as a composer. His second symphony is almost unknown because it had an odd shape and setting, more like a church cantata with a large organ required, but this recording puts it right and it is worth listening over and over again.

11. One of the most surprising projects I did in the past years as I had no idea what to expect when a trumpet teams up with an accordion and a cello. It is just staggering what these musicians pull off on this record. So small an ensemble, but such a tremendous range. Eric Vloeimans' one of a kind art of trumpet playing....it is just staggering. Great stuff!

12. The original Turtle artists Tony Overwater, Maarten Ornstein and Wim Kegel in a brand new electro-acoustic formation, Jungle Boldie. LET'S GET LOUD!

13. If any maestro is able to mould string players to his preference it is Jaap van Zweden, American Conductor of the Year 2012. Anton Bruckner's music is obviously in his blood and his performance with this orchestra is just so wonderful that it had to be in our favourite list. Orchestral music is so universal and powerful that we cannot imagine our lives without it.

14. Walking around audio shows, it is a given that this piece comes from one of the listening rooms at some point. Why? Well it somehow triggers the kind of primordial emotion that all human beings seem to understand. As if nature itself is speaking. A thunderous bass guitar, with an extended range delivered by High End amplification and speakers and hypnotizing tab-la's and drums. Everything in this recording shouted high resolution and SURROUND for all these years when it only existed in CD stereo. Now it exists as such and the sonically holistic effect that was always there, has been upgraded into an ultimate

immersive experience that most likely many would describe as a hallucinating trip!

I hope you will enjoy listening to the music in all its permutations as much as we did producing these discs.

**Bert van der Wolf**

July 2013

I would like to dedicate this volume of "The Spirit of Turtle Records®" to my love Mrs.V, Martijn, Thomas & Sander for their unconditional support and patience with my music and sound obsession.

I thank the following persons for traveling through time with me and "The Spirit of Turtle Records®": (in alphabetical order) (\*)Rob Becker, Marcel van den Broek, (\*)Harry van Dalen, (\*)Ted Diehl, Brendon Heinst, Rens Heijnis, Anne de Jong, Bastiaan Kuyt, (\*)Oscar Meijer, (\*)Martin Odijk, (\*)Veronique Oude Avenhuis, (\*)Michael van Polen, David Steven(†), David Steven jr., Mike Story, (\*)Fir Suidema & all at More Music, Data Conversion Systems & Rhapsody Sound Masters.

Northstar Studio with High End Surround monitoring



Werner Ero

## "Music is the language of the Soul"

Bert asked me to write a piece for this colourful selection of this sample for Turtle Records. What can one write about music I wondered while I am listening to a recording of Charles Lloyd (saxophone) and Jason Moran (piano).

I realized that music is everything except mental, and I realized that when music is perceived without the interference of our mental consciousness, it can bring us back to the essence of what we are, namely Silence and from Silence music arises.

Once Charles Lloyd was asked before a concert; "in which key would it be played". His answer was: "the tone of the Universe" and that was all the musicians got from him. Nothing was to be excluded because the whole Universe is in harmony, like the colourful collection of music on this release. Maybe that is what drives Bert and I to record music as close as possible to what it actually is; beautiful, soft, raw, exciting, still and mean. Nothing is excluded and it all is about the pure experience and now I realize that what we were searching for was the silence in the music.

Recently I read a piece by a great musician and mystic from the beginning of the previous century, Hazrat Inayat Khan, and he wrote the following two quotes about music and sound;

- What science cannot declare, art can suggest; what art suggests silently, poetry speaks aloud; but what poetry fails to explain in words, music can express.
- All things are made by the power of sound. So everything is made by a portion thereof, and man can create this world by the same power.

I hope you will enjoy the music as I did.

**Harry van Dalen**



Founded in Cambridge, UK in 1988 by a group of expert electronic engineers, *dCS* originally designed and manufactured high performance analogue-to-digital (ADCs) and digital-to-analogue (DACs) converters for major telecommunication companies and military agencies, whose major requirement was technology that delivered state-of-the-art precision, linearity and reliability.

Recognizing that this technology had a key role in music recording and playback, in the early 1990's we decided to concentrate on developing products for the digital music recording industry. It was in 1996 that we intensified our collaboration with Bert van der Wolf from Turtle Records, who had been involved with *dCS* as a sales agent from the very beginning, and it quickly became clear that we shared the same beliefs about the recording and playback chain and how recorded music should sound to the listener.

At *dCS* we believe that the role of recording technology and the hi-fi system is to preserve all of the subtle information on a recording through the reproduction chain and present it to the listener with every last nuance of the emotional content intact.

Our scientific approach to the conversion of the live performance into digital bits (A-D) and those same digital bits back into living and breathing music (D-A) is a perfect fit with the talents and vision of Bert. Over the years we have shared ideas, debated how to implement and use various technologies and driven each other on to continually improve our products.

From the *dCS* perspective its been a wonderful and fun partnership. Yes, our products are high end - a combination of world class craftsmanship and leading edge technology; but for the people who buy *dCS* and listen to wonderful music such as that recorded by Turtle Records, our systems offer the chance to experience that unique, spine-tingling moment where the world stops and there is... Only the music.

**David Steven, Managing Director**



TR0001

1. Up Close



CR73368

2. Quantum Stories



CC72530

3. Antonin Dvorak |  
Gershwin

CC72612

4. Crossroads



CC72572

5. Strings attached



CC72512

6. ImproviSatie



CC72364

7. Ludwig van Beethoven |  
Symphonies nos. 1 & 5

CC72388

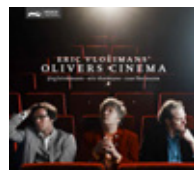
8. Benjamin Britten |  
War Requiem

CC72518

9. Wanderer



CC72543

10. Felix Mendelssohn |  
Symphony NO.2  
"Lobgesang"

CR73374

11. Olivers Cinema

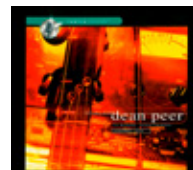


TR75533

12. Jungle Boldie



CC72549

13. Anton Bruckner |  
Symphony NO.8

TR0004

14. Think.....It's all good

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### Colophon

Executive producer: Bert van der Wolf / Edison Production Company BV

Recording facility: Northstar Recording Services BV

(track 2-12), Kompas CD Multimedia BV (track 1 &amp; 14)

Recording Producers: Bert van der Wolf (track 1-13), Ted Diehl (track 14),

Harry van Dalen (track 1,2 &amp; 14)

Recording balance engineer/editing &amp; mastering: Bert van der Wolf (track 1-14)

Recording engineers: Fir Suidema (track 7, 12 &amp; 14), Michael van Polen (track 14),

Oscar Meijer(track 14) &amp; Bastiaan Kuyt(track 14).

Track selection: Harry van Dalen &amp; Bert van der Wolf

Mastering: Northstar Recording Services BV

Pure Audio BLURAY authoring: Wouter Strobbe, Wisseloord Studios

Cover photography &amp; Art direction: Marcel van den Broek

Sleeve design: Juan Carlos Villarroel

Production coordination: Marijke Wingelaar

This High Definition Surround Recording was Produced, Engineered and Edited by Bert van der Wolf of NorthStar Recording Services, using the 'High Quality Musical Surround Mastering' principle. The basis of this recording principle is a realistic and holographic 3 dimensional representation of the musical instruments, voices and recording venue, according to traditional concert practice. For most older music this means a frontal representation of the musical performance, but such that width and depth of the ensemble and acoustic characteristics of the hall do resemble 'real life' as much as possible. Some older compositions, and many contemporary works do specifically ask for placement of musical instruments and voices over the full 360 degrees sound scape, and in these cases the recording is as realistic as possible, within the limits of the 5.1 Surround Sound standard. This requires a very innovative use of all 6 loudspeakers and the use of completely matched, full frequency range loudspeakers for all 5 discrete channels. A complementary sub-woofer, for the ultra low frequencies under 40Hz, is highly recommended to maximally benefit from the sound quality of this recording.

This recording was produced with the use of Sonodore microphones, Avalon Acoustic monitoring, Siltech Mono-Crystal cabling and *dCS* Converters.

[www.northstarconsult.nl](http://www.northstarconsult.nl)

1	<b>Dave Burrel - Teardrops for Jimmy</b> Tony Overwater & Maarten Ornstein - Up Close	05:34
2	<b>Marc van Roon - Noodle Effect</b> Marc van Roon Trio - Quantum Stories	09:16
3	<b>George Gerhwin- An American in Paris (excerpt)</b> Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra Amsterdam / Mario Venzago - Antonin Dvorak   Gershwin	06:15
4	<b>Rob van Bavel - Ravel's Tomb</b> NedSym Lite - crossroads	04:08
5	<b>Johannes Brahms - Allegretto grazioso / Opus 120/1</b> Arno Piters and members of The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra - Strings attached	04:44
6	<b>Erik Satie - 5ème Gnossienne</b> Michael Gees - ImproviSatie	08:31
7	<b>Ludwig van Beethoven - Allegro con brio / Opus 67</b> The Netherlands Symphony Orchestra / Jan Willem de Vriend - Ludwig van Beethoven   Symphonies nos. 1 & 5	06:34
8	<b>Benjamin Britten - Dies irae (excerpt)</b> The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra / Jaap van Zweden - Benjamin Britten   War Requiem	03:50
9	<b>Robert Schumann - Mein Wagen rollet langsam / opus 142,4</b> Christoph Pregardien & Ensemble Kontraste - Wanderer	02:51
10	<b>Felix Mendelssohn - Andante / Opus 52 Sopran I, II &amp; Chor</b> The Netherlands Symphony Orchestra / Jan Willem de Vriend - Felix Mendelssohn   Symphony NO.2 "Lobgesang"	04:41
11	<b>Tuur Florizoone - L'Amour des Moules</b> Eric Vloeimans, Tuur Florizoone & Jörg Brinkmann - Olivers Cinema	03:45
12	<b>Maarten Ornstein - Quicksie</b> Tony Overwater, Maarten Ornstein & Wim Kegel - Jungle Boldie	03:58
13	<b>Anton Bruckner - Finale (Feierlich, nicht schnell)</b> The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra / Jaap van Zweden - Anton Bruckner   Symphony NO.8	07:38
14	<b>Dean Peer - Mars</b> Dean Peer & Ty Burhoe - Think.....It's all good	04:55

Total time 77:00



5.1 DTS HD MA 192kS/s-24bit  
2.0 LPCM 192kS/s-24bit

**flac** BONUS: PCM surround en stereo 192kS/s-24bit audio files



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