

Charlie Mariano, born in Boston in 1923, began playing locally there with Shorty Sherock (1948) and Nat Pierce (1949-50). After gigging with a band co-led by Chubby Jackson and Bill Harris, Mariano toured with Stan Kenton (1953-55) and later moved to Los Angeles and worked with Shelly Manne. He returned to the east coast, teaching at Berklee in 1958 and after marrying Toshiko Akiyoshi, Mariano co-led a quartet with the pianist on and off until 1967. He played with Charles Mingus in 1962-63 and formed Osmosis, one of the first ever fusion bands in 1967. He later collaborated with the Karnataka College of Percussion (when the world music movement was in its infancy) and co-founded the United Jazz And Rock Ensemble. While living in Europe in the 70s, Mariano recorded for ECM Records, performed with Eberhard Weber and Philip Catherine. Mariano has also recorded with Chet Baker, Bud Shank, Serge Chaloff, Quincy Jones and the band Pork Pie.

Charlie Mariano is far more than an internationally successful saxophonist; he has been listed amongst the legends of the trade for a long time: The musician, born on Nov. 12, 1923, began his career as early as 1941 as a co-musician in professional show bands and worked with quite a number of jazz icons during his further career. If you want to visualise the actual duration of his active life, you just have to become aware of the fact that Mariano is one of the last contemporary witnesses of the bebop era. For example, he worked with Stan Kenton, Dizzy Gillespie, but also with McCoy Tyner during the 50s. Charlie Mariano married pianist Toshiko Akiyoshi and together with her founded a quartet in 1960 that went on tour in Japan and the USA. In 1962, he played with Charles Mingus and accompanied him on the album *The Black Saint and The Sinner Lady*. During the late 60s, he played with Astrud Gilberto. At the beginning of the 70s, he spent several months in India to study a South-Indian wind instrument, the nagaswaram. His cooperation with Indian musicians, for example with the project Bangalore (INT 3246 2), continues until this day. His involvement with the United Jazz & Rock Ensemble, in Jasper van't Hof's Pork Pie (e.g. *Operanoia*, INT 3158 2) show his ability to integrate as well as his individuality.

However, Charlie Mariano did not lend his unique sound to jazz or so-called world music productions alone; since the beginning of the 80s, renowned representatives of popular music (e.g. Nena, Konstantin Wecker, Herbert Groenemeyer and many others) also have called him when an expressive saxophone was needed. You can in fact assume that practically everyone in these parts has already listened to his play, either consciously or unconsciously.

The secret of his success is certainly his enormous versatility, in addition to his instrumental virtuosity and his original, distinctive sound that has its origin in Mariano's constant openness and curiosity towards any kind of musical style and form