



Sexmob

Cinema, Circus & Spaghetti (Sex Mob Plays Fellini: The Music of Nino Rota)

[The Royal Potato Family](#)

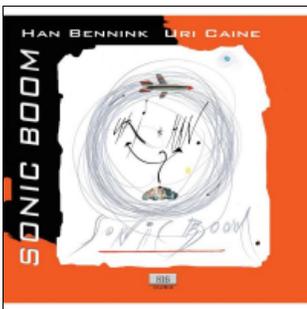
2013

Long out-of-print now, producer Hal Willner's *Amarcord Nino Rota* (Hannibal, 1980) was a touchstone for many Downtown jazz artists to explore film music and especially the unique music Rota created for

the films of Italian director Federico Fellini. Since then, San Francisco's Club Foot Orchestra released *Plays Nino Rota: Selections From la Dolce Vita* (Rastascan, 1998)

Where Willner recorded different artists—[Jaki Byard](#), [Bill Frisell](#), [Carla Bley](#), and [Wynton Marsalis](#), trumpeter and arranger [Steven Bernstein](#) applies his jazz-meets-vaudeville band Sexmob to Rota's Fellini music. His band of saxophonist [Briggan Krauss](#), bassist [Tony Scherr](#), and drummer [Kenny Wollesen](#) have covered film music before. They recorded a *Sexmob Does Bond* (Ropeadope, 2001), in addition to covers of Nirvana, [Duke Ellington](#), The Rolling Stones, and ABBA.

Bernstein and crew may have their finest recording to date. Where previous disc revealed in their over-the-top antics, *Plays Fellini* is the most civilized the Sexmob has ever been. Like their *Theatre & Dance* (2000) tribute to Ellington, there is more curtesy and less camp here. But of course, you can only keep Bernstein from monkeying around for so long.



Han Bennink & Uri Caine

Sonic Boom

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Dutch drummer [Han Bennink](#) in duet with pianist [Uri Caine](#) is a knockout combination. This disc recorded in 2010 at The Bimhuis in Amsterdam is a live date that roils and boils, while the pair toils.

Then again, Bennink has punched up many a piano duet, be they with Aki Takase—*Teo For Two* (Intakt, 2011), [Cecil Taylor](#)—*Spots, Circles, And Fantasy* (FMP, 1989), Steve Beresford—*B + B* (ICP, 2002), Simon Nabatov—*Chat Room* (Leo Records, 2003), or his old friend Misha Mengelberg. Bennink is neither intimidated by nor a menace to his partners.

Uri Caine brings an Americana jazz tradition to this date. He speaks in a blues language that favors swing sprinkled into the improvised music. The disc opens with Bennink's sticks on drums, and maybe the floor, raising the energy level and inviting Caine to race. But this isn't a competition as much as musical wordplay. Speed and improvisation are matched with song sampling and dissonance.

Caine who has traversed the worlds of jazz, classical, and electronic music, has a thirst for mixing and matching styles. Here he maintains a jazz tradition. The pair circle each other, never at a loss for ideas. The one cover tune, [Thelonious Monk's](#) "Round Midnight" gets chopped and hammered

but is easily recognized, albeit as almost pure mischief.



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CJ Shearn — I hope so, I've played it several times already. I've encountered some friends who already dislike it. ...

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John Kelman — A lot younger than 57.... :)

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John Kelman — You're very welcome, Foster; thanks for taking the time to write, and for such kind words. I think ...

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John Kelman — Thanks for writing in Mike; I think the reason we're seeing the broader and more diverse ...

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