



Music

Take Five: Jen Shyu, Damon Locks, James Brandon Lewis, Alexa Tarantino, Roxana Amed

WBGO | By [Nate Chinen](#)

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Alexa Tarantino, "Rootless Ruthlessness"

Saxophonist Alexa Tarantino has been a clear talent on the rise in the New York jazz mainstream for a while now — but especially since 2019, when she appeared on several albums from Posi-Tone Records, notably her own effort *Winds of Change*. Her new album for the label is *Firefly*, and it will only hasten her ascent.

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Featuring Tarantino not only on alto and soprano saxophones but also flute, alto flute and clarinet, the album also enlists a first-rate supporting cast: vibraphonist Behn Gillece, pianist Art Hirahara, bassist Boris Kozlov and drummer Rudy Royston. The character of Tarantino's compositions ranges from cool contemplation to boppish élan — and, on a standout track called "Rootless Ruthlessness," pure, headlong overdrive. (Pay attention to the way Tarantino rechannels the intensity during her alto solo, smartly abstracting the tempo before revving up again.)

Firefly will be released on [Posi-Tone Records](#) on Friday.