

Paul Elwood



# NICE FOLKS

FEATURING FAMOUDOU DON MOYE  
AND THE INVISIBLE ENSEMBLE



1. **Tru Love** 5:32  
Paul Elwood
2. **Nice Folks** 6:27  
Paul Elwood
3. **Blue Flame** 7:19  
Paul Elwood
4. **Steam Powered Aeroplane** 3:43  
John Hartford
5. **The End of Seventeenth Street** 3:14  
The Invisible Ensemble
6. **Sally Ann** 3:07  
trad., arr. by Elwood and Moye
7. **Incident at Max's** 7:35  
Paul Elwood
8. **4 a.m. Rue Breuteuil** 4:58  
The Invisible Ensemble
9. **Ivaravi** 6:04  
Paul Elwood
10. **Poets of Andalucia** 7:29  
Paul Elwood
11. **Hydraulic** 5:13  
The Invisible Ensemble
12. **Les Fleurs de Castellane** 1:45  
The Invisible Ensemble

## THE INVISIBLE ENSEMBLE

**Paul Elwood:** five-string banjo and vocals

**Famoudou Don Moye:** percussion

**Kelsey Shiba:** vocals

**Pierre Fenichel:** double bass

**Raphaël Imbert:** saxophones and bass clarinet

**Jean-Marc Montera:** electric guitar

**Thomas Weirich:** guitars and music boxes

**Simon Sieger:** keyboards and trombone

**The GRIM/Montevideo Choir**

PAUL ELWOOD

NICE FOLKS



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**Nice Folks: The Invisible Ensemble featuring Famoudou Don Moye**, is a collection of original compositions by banjoist Paul Elwood featuring Moye, the world-renown percussionist with the legendary Art Ensemble of Chicago (AEC), a major innovative voice in jazz. The compositions were influenced by jazz and by my background as a banjoist in bluegrass and Appalachian folk music; since the AEC is well-known for its wonderful improvisations, the recording is punctuated by five short group improvisations.

The AEC, alongside luminaries such as guitarist, John Abercrombie, drummer Jack DeJohnette, bassist David Holland, and saxophonist Ornette Coleman among many others, was a major influence on me as a developing musician/banjo player. In 2011 I met Moye at a concert in Marseille, France. I quickly set about to muster seven young, virtuosic French musicians, the “Invisible Ensemble,” to record a number of my compositions with Moye. This project enabled me to bring to real-

ization a dream I had for many years of using my instrument within the context of an avant-garde jazz ensemble; Famoudou Don Moye’s presence on the recordings is a direct connection to the vanguard of the experimental jazz movement of the ‘60s and ‘70s. I believe that this recording will offer fans of the AEC the opportunity for an aural update on this legendary percussionist and to hear him in a new context.

During the recording guitarist Jean-Marc Montera was sitting next to Moye. Jean-Marc isn’t known for playing softly, but Moye asked him to turn up his amp as he was having trouble hearing him. After adjusting his amp, Montera still couldn’t be heard, so Moye asked him to turn up again. And he still wasn’t heard. Therefore Moye began referring to Jean-Marc as the “invisible brother.” The title stuck and we began referring to the group as a whole as “The Invisible Ensemble.”

— Paul Elwood, Marseille, France, July 2014



PAUL ELWOOD’s music has been featured at festivals in Moscow, Sofia, Mexico City, Marseille, Wollongong, Edinburgh, Darmstadt, and all over the U.S.A. Performers that have played his music include Stephen Drury, the Callithumpian Consort (Boston), the North Carolina Symphony, and Ensemble Signos (Mexico City). Recent recordings are on Innova as banjoist with **Misfit Toys** (2013) and with his own chamber and folk music, **Stanley Kubrick’s Mountain Home** (2011), additional albums are with bassist Bertram Turetzky (2008), and Electric Cowboy Cacophony (2008). He is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome and of the Camargo Foundation (Cassis, France). In 2000 he won the Sigma Alpha-Iota Inter-American Music Awards. Elwood’s compositions are published by C.F. Peters and Smith Publications.



## THE INVISIBLE ENSEMBLE:

Before FAMOUDOU DON MOYE joined the Art Ensemble of Chicago as their percussionist in 1970, the band consisted of saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell, trumpeter Lester Bowie, bassist Malachi Favors, and saxophonist Joseph Jarman. Moye fit in beautifully; he and the band had roots going back to the AACM, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, founded in 1965. In addition to his activities with the band, Moye worked with Randy Weston, Joseph Jarman, Don Pullen, Cecil McBee, Hamiet Bluiett, Julius Hemphill, Chico Freeman, the Black Artists Group, and Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy (among others) and since 1984 has been a member of the Leaders. He currently performs all over Europe with a variety of musicians, most notably the Archie Schepp Attica Blues Band.

JEAN-MARC MONTERA, guitar: started in rock and is known throughout the world for his eclectic use of the guitar in sonorous and free improvisation. He is co-founder of GRIM (Groupe de Recherches et d'Improvisation Musicales) in Marseille, France. He has performed with artists as diverse as Patti Smith, Fred Frith, and Thurston Moore, among other luminaries.

RAPHAËL IMBERT, saxophones: is a major force in the jazz scene in France and has many projects with his Compagnie Nine Spirit, based in Marseille and ranging all over Europe. He has released a number of recordings in the genre of jazz, but has created unique and interesting crossovers with his "Bach-Coltrane" Project and "Heavens: Amadeus and the Duke." He has performed with drummer Gerald Cleaver, bassist Joe Martin, and famed saxophonist Archie Schepp, among many others.

SIMON SIEGER, keyboards and trombone: Simon works both in active performance in jazz and improv as well as in the realms of theory and musicology. An astounding young performer, he has been a member of Compagnie Nine Spirit since 2010 and most recently toured as a trombonist with Archie Schepp's Attica Blues project all over Europe. He collaborates frequently with guitarist Thomas Weirich.

THOMAS WEIRICH, guitar: is a virtuosic and versatile young guitarist who performs frequently with Compagnie Nine Spirit and in an improvisational duo with Simon Sieger. Thomas' abilities are prodigious whether he is working in the realms of jazz and free improvisation, or in country music and blues.

PIERRE FENICHEL, contrabass: was trained originally as a medical doctor and is now one of Southern France's most in-demand musicians performing widely with the likes of Raphaël Imbert, Henri Florens, Benoit Paillard, Perrine Mansuy, and Vincent Strazzieri, among many others. Pierre's interests range from musique contemporaine, being a huge fan of the likes of Morton Feldman, to electronic music having used the MAX/MSP computer platform extensively in his own music.

KELSEY SHIBA, vocals: Kelsey is an extraordinarily talented young musician who specializes both in keyboards and vocals. She performs regularly all over the region of the Front Range in Colorado, working with bands such as TC and the Domestic Engineers, Black Water, Groove Yard, and the ShibaDiva Quartet, among others. She is associate director of jazz studies at the University of Northern Colorado



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L-R: front row: Famoudou Don Moye, Jean-Marc Montero, Paul Elwood, Raphaël Imbert (standing), and Erik Billabert; second row, L-R: Simon Sieger, Thomas Weirich, Pierre Fenichel