

PRESS RELEASE

Tim Richards Trio

New album – 'Four Aces' (Future Music Records)



Release date **30 November 2025**.

CD: FMRC730-0925 – available from timrichards.bandcamp.com

Vinyl: FMRVL730-0925 – available from ElasticStage.com/timrichardstrio

On streaming platforms from **12 December**.

Jazz pianist **Tim Richards** releases his fourth TRIO album this month, featuring the new line-up of **Alex Keen** (bass) and **Daniel Howard** (drums).

Described in The Observer as a 'cornerstone of British jazz', Tim's extensive career encompasses leadership of the long-running SPIRIT LEVEL quartet/quintet in the 1980s and 90s, followed by the nine-piece GREAT SPIRIT from 1999 and six-piece HEXTET, which featured between them the cream of British jazz musicians such as Ed Jones, Dick Pearce, Pete King, Tony Kofi, Gilad Atzmon, Jason Yarde, Seb Rochford, and many others.

Running alongside these larger ensembles, the more intimate setting of the piano trio offers Tim an opportunity to explore a range of attractive jazz styles, as well as being a vehicle for his original writing.

The new album has already been reviewed on the '[Bebop Spoken Here](#)' website:

"I sense a lot of influences in the mix. Brubeck, Jarrett, Jamal, Ramsey Lewis and a few others... It's piano playing worthy of the grandmasters of the past by, arguably, a grandmaster of today."

"As well as the exemplary piano playing, bass and drums are equally outstanding. Keen, with that big, resonant, sound that only the best bassists manage to achieve, is an absolute tower of strength."

"Howard, even when he's swingin' like crazy still manages to maintain a samba/bossa feel that does no harm at all."

It's ten years since Tim's last release, the 2015 HEXTET album 'Telegraph Hill', and 15 years since he brought out a TRIO record, 'Shapeshifting' (33Jazz205). This release proves he's alive and kicking!

NB: It's been almost 40 years since Tim last appeared on vinyl – the 1986 'Killer Bunnies' Spotlite LP with SPIRIT LEVEL, featuring Mingus trumpeter Jack Walrath

PTO for TRACK LISTING and LINER NOTES

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Tim Richards TRIO – ‘Four Aces’

Tim Richards – piano
Alex Keen – bass
Daniel Howard – drums

1. <i>Four Aces</i>	(Tim Richards)	5:12
2. <i>Metaphysics</i>	(Tim Richards)	3:51
3. <i>Atlantis</i>	(McCoy Tyner)	5:51
4. <i>Wave</i>	(AC Jobim)	5:10
5. <i>Sunshower</i>	(Kenny Barron)	5:46
6. <i>Free Spirits</i>	(Mary Lou Williams)	4:19
7. <i>Pandeiro</i>	(Tim Richards)	4:18
8. <i>Sonora</i>	(Hampton Hawes)	4:22
9. <i>Solar</i>	(Miles Davis)	3:10
10. <i>Lover Man</i>	(Davis/Ramirez)	6:47
11. <i>Island Hopping</i>	(Tim Richards)	3:48
12. <i>New Cross Blues</i>	(Tim Richards)	3:11

Recorded and mixed by Paul Higgs at Toucan Tango Studios, London, 3 Sep 2024 and 15 July 2025.

LINER NOTES by Ian Mann (the jazzmann.com)

Tim Richards’ music is something I’ve admired since his days with the pioneering UK jazz quartet Spirit Level and his later nine-piece Great Spirit. I’ve continued to follow his playing with a variety of different line-ups, including his six-piece group The Hextet and various editions of his long-running trio.

Four Aces is his fourth release in the piano trio format, a new line-up featuring the lyrical bass of Alex Keen and the expressive drumming of Daniel Howard. The fresh sound of the trio positively leaps out of the speakers. The material includes five impressive Richards originals along with an eclectic and well-chosen selection of tunes by leading jazz composers, many of them fellow pianists.

Of the original pieces, *Four Aces* exhibits the influence of two of Richards’ favourite pianist/composers, McCoy Tyner and Thelonious Monk, while *Metaphysics* features Keen playing the melody on bass and shows off the trio’s impressive musical rapport. The joyous *Pandeiro* is an expression of Richards’ love for Brazilian music and includes a feature for drummer Howard, as does the jaunty calypso *Island Hopping*. The album concludes with the funky *New Cross Blues*, a catchy soul-jazz head written during the trio’s residency at the Old Library Bar in New Cross.

Four Aces maintains the high standards that we have come to expect from Richards. The music embraces a variety of jazz styles and sounds as fresh and exciting as ever, combining intelligent writing and arranging with superlative playing from all three participants.

LINER NOTES by Tim Richards (timrichards.ndo.co.uk)

I first met drummer Daniel Howard during lockdown, when he set up his kit in the street to play outside his front door. After jamming together we invited bassist Alex Keen to join us for a gig at the Ethno Jazz Festival in Folkestone in October 2022... and a new line-up for the trio was born.

Shortly afterwards we were invited to play a monthly Sunday afternoon residency at the Old Library Bar in New Cross Road, London (musicroomlondon.com), which we’ve continued for the last three years. This album is the culmination of all that playing. I hope you enjoy it!

It feels great to be releasing a vinyl album after 40 years – the last one was the 1986 Spirit Level album *Killer Bunnies*, with Jack Walrath on trumpet (Spotlite SPJLP25). It seems things have come full circle.

Piano arrangements for *Pandeiro* and *Island Hopping* appear in my book *Jazz, Latin & Modern Collection (15 pieces for solo piano)* published by Schott Music. PDFs of the music for each piece are also available separately from schottmusiclondon.com

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