



Sunday, May 17th, was the last day of FIMAV 39. One of the more interesting things that happen at FIMAV is when a group of musicians is put together for the first time on stage. The following set was one of these well-selected trios of musicians/bandleaders/composers: Francois Houle on clarinets (Canada), Alexander Hawkins (UK) on piano and Kate Gentile (NYC) on drums. I am big fans of all three of these musicians, each one have long/diverse resumes. When free/improv really works, something magical is takes place, something that no one can predict yet you/we know something special is going on. Starting out quietly, slowly, the trio took their time to interact and build upon/with one another. All three members are gifted improvisers, good listeners and work together well. At times, Mr. Houle would start playing a line on clarinet and the repeating in in a circular fashion as piano and drums also became part of the circular stream. As I would concentrate on one instrument, another would start to push me in another direction. As I listened closer, I could hear the way

each member of the trio was adding to the flow. I liked that this was acoustic improv with superb, well-balanced sound. The diversity of influences from each member of the trio was apparent the more closely I listened as there were subtle detours, changes or shifts in direction which would go unnoticed unless you were listening closely.

-Bruce Lee Gallanter, Downtown Music Gallery June 2023