



Davis, Caroline / Naqvi, Qasim / McMurray, Grey **Trappings of Sleep**

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Trappings of Sleep, the equal-billing trio recording from saxophonist Caroline Davis, guitarist Grey McMurray, and drummer Qasim Naqvi, arrives October 30, 2026 via Red Hook Records. Across nine pieces of alto saxophone, electric guitar, electronics and drums, the group treats improvisation and composition as two deeply connected processes.

The trio's rapport predates this record by several years. Davis, McMurray and Naqvi first played together at a casual bar show in Brooklyn, having already crossed paths through New York's improvised music community. The connection was immediate, and for the next few years the three continued to develop that shared language whenever schedules allowed.

Trappings of Sleep grew out of a 2025 performance at Saint Peter's Church's long-running Jazz Vespers series, where the trio played beside Billy Strayhorn's piano and worked through Alice Coltrane's Journey to Satchidananda. The reverberant space shaped the trio's approach, opening up new musical possibilities. After Naqvi shared a recording of the performance with producer Sun Chung, it led to an invitation to develop the collaboration into a studio album, with each member contributing original compositions. Writing on their own before convening to rehearse, the trio aimed to keep their compositions loose enough that their instinctive, in-the-moment approach could still shine through.

The album's title traces back to a memory of McMurray's: half-asleep in an oversized hotel conference room, listening to a lecture on the mechanics of sleep delivered by a speaker he couldn't quite see. The mundane instructions, repeated and inverted, took on a stranger, more open-ended quality, a feeling that carries through the record's nine tracks, from the searching opener "Three" through the drifting "Mono Lake" and the title track's slow-turning phrases, to the charged interplay of closer "Joust."

"What drew me to this project was the way Caroline, Qasim, and Grey create a space where nothing feels predetermined," said Chung, the album's producer. "I wanted to take that energy and place a compositional framework around it without compromising the freedom and openness at the heart of their playing." That tension between structure and spontaneity runs through the whole record: pieces with clear compositional shape still leave room for the trio's

improvisational instincts to take over, so a written passage can dissolve into open interplay and reassemble again without ever feeling planned.

Liner notes for the album were penned by writer Tyran Grillo, who frames Trappings of Sleep as a kind of interior journey. "These pieces treat dreaming as space travel," Grillo writes, describing the trio's search for "habitable zones inside the relational field of their instruments." It's a fitting lens for a record built on close listening and shared instinct, one where structure and openness are never at odds.

Caroline Davis is a Brooklyn-based saxophonist, composer, and activist whose work is driven by a desire for connection and a belief in music's capacity to expand listeners' ears, minds, and hearts. A 2025 Guggenheim Fellow in Composition, she is the recipient of the DownBeat Critics Poll Alto Saxophone Rising Star Award, along with fellowships from NYFA, the Jerome Foundation, Chamber Music America, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. Her residencies include MacDowell, Ucross, The Jazz Gallery, and the Rockefeller Estate, and she has mentored for New Music USA's Next Jazz Legacy program. She has released eight albums as a leader and performed with Terri Lyne Carrington, Allison Miller, Lee Konitz, Wendy Eisenberg, and John Zorn, among others. Her artistic practice is closely tied to advocacy work, including gender equity initiatives through This Is A Movement and efforts on behalf of incarcerated individuals through Justice for Keith LaMar and Creative Beyond Incarceration.

Grey McMurray is a guitarist, producer, and singer whose playing has been described as "sublimely odd" by New York Magazine and "the world's least obtrusive guitarist" by The Guardian. He has performed and recorded with artists including Gil Scott-Heron, Meshell Ndegeocello, Tyondai Braxton, So Percussion, Colin Stetson, and John Cale. He released his solo debut, Stay Up, on Shahzad Ismaily's Figureeight Records in 2019, and is a member of Grammy-winning composer Jessie Montgomery's Everything Band. His collaborative quartet Body Meta released their debut in 2021 and follow-up, Prayer In Dub, on Hausu Mountain in 2024. He also performs with Du Yun's ensemble OK Miss, whose work The Ocean Etched in the Forest premiered at the Beijing Music Festival in October 2025.

Qasim Naqvi is a percussionist, composer, and synthesist. In addition to drumming for the acclaimed minimalist trio Dawn of Midi, Naqvi is an accomplished solo artist whose multidisciplinary work spans film, dance, installation art, and orchestral and chamber music. His concert music has been commissioned and performed by the London Contemporary Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, Bang on a Can All-Stars, and Stargaze, among others. His collaborations include original music for documentarian Laura Poitras and filmmaker Naeem Mohaiemen. Naqvi has released music as a bandleader on Erased Tapes Records, New Amsterdam Records, Red Hook Records, and NNA Tapes.

Featured artist

McMurray, Grey
Naqvi, Qasim

Band member

Caroline Davis	Alto Saxophone, Electronics
Grey McMurray	Electric Guitar
Qasim Naqvi	Drums

Producer

Sun Chung

Mixer

Rick Kwan

aufnahmestudio

The Bridge Studio, Brooklyn NY	Engineer: Amon Drum, Greg Tock
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Mastering

Taylor Deupree

Phonotraphy

IJ Biermann

Cover Artwork

Laura Charlton

Tracklist

- | | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 1. | Three
M: Caroline Davis/Grey McMurray/Qasim Naqvi | 05:05 |
| 2. | Out of the Way of it
M: Caroline Davis | 04:02 |
| 3. | Mono Lake
M: Qasim Naqvi | 07:43 |
| 4. | Trappings of Sleep
M: Grey McMurray | 04:30 |
| 5. | The Toy
M: Qasim Naqvi | 04:44 |
| 6. | Say it
M: Qasim Naqvi | 04:16 |
| 7. | Media Training
M: Qasim Naqvi | 03:58 |
| 8. | Pulse
M: Caroline Davis | 04:00 |
| 9. | Joust
M: Caroline Davis | 06:17 |