

Internationally documented, Chicago-born, New York City-based sound experimentalist Matana (m(a)-ta-na \) Roberts, works in many performance/ sound mediums including improvisation, dance, poetry, and theater. A dynamic saxophonist, composer, improviser and mixed media sound conceptualist, she aims to expose the mystical roots and the intuitive spirit raising traditions of American creative expression in her music and art. Her innovative work has forged new conceptual approaches to considering narrativity, history, and political expression within improvisatory structures.

She has played with and alongside a wide smattering of sound visionaries, such as Rob Mazurek, Myra Melford, Vijay Iyer, Roscoe Mitchell, Greg Tate, Nicole Mitchell, Henry Grimes, Jayne Cortez, Seb Rochford, Fred Anderson, Latasha Diggs, George Lewis, Tyshawn Sorey, David Berhman, Pauline Oliveros, Reg E. Gaines, Daniel Givens, Savion Glover, Anthony Braxton, Kid Lucky, Liberty Ellman, Guillermo E. Brown, Me'shell Ndegeocello, Amina Claudine Meyers, Jeff Parker, Handsome Furs, Robert Mitchell, Quest Love, Julius Hemphill Sextet, Merce Cunningham, Joe Maneri, Beans, Bill T Jones, Josh Abrams, Chad Taylor, Dave Douglas, John Herndon just to name a few. She has recorded as a side person w/ groups as diverse as Godspeed You! Black Emperor, TV On The Radio, Savath & Savalas, Thee Silver Mt Zion, and the performance artists My Barbarian.

In February 2011, Roberts released *Live in London* on Barry Adamson's [Central Control International](#), a follow up to her first release for the label, *The Chicago Project* (2008), a homage to her hometown.

Since 2006 Matana has worked and workshopped her multi-chapter, multi-media, conceptual composition and narration project COIN COIN with various groups of musicians, most notably a New York contingent (with whom she occasionally tours the project) and a Montreal contingent (the city in which she took up semi-residency as part of a visiting scholar at Mc Gill University at the end of the decade).

Of her work, Matana says the following (from her website):

*“At my artistic core, I am firmly dedicated to creating a unique, and very personal, experiential body of sound work that speaks to, and reminds people of all walks of life to reach, stand up, give voice, regardless of difference, created from mere labels of intellectual classification. In my ideal world the idea of “difference”, is an illusion designed only for the purpose of modern economic division and elitist intellectual hierarchy. Through my life’s work, I stand creatively in defiance.”*

Roberts was raised amongst a community of African American radicals and scholars that deeply valued the place of art and creativity in singular life as well as community. A self-taught mixed media composer, she earned two degrees in music performance from a smattering of American institutions; received her main training from free arts programming in the American Public School System. She is a past member of the Black Rock Coalition (BRC) and the AACM: The Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. She has been a Van Lier Fellow, a Brecht Forum Fellow, Ucross Artist in Residence, Pocantico Artist in Residence, Copeland Fellow, A Jazz Makes Fellow, an ICASP fellow. She is an 2013 FCA fellow. She has been invited to teach, lecture, run workshops and/or take up artistic residencies in countless places under diverse conditions and communities over the past decade and is a past faculty member of the Banff Creative Music Workshop, School for Improvised Music, and Bard College MFA.