

# BIOGRAPHY

IRA STEIN and RUSSEL WALDER  
Windham Hill Records Recording Artists  
ELEMENTS, WH-1020 and WT-1020 (cassette)

## IRA STEIN

Pianist Ira Stein, the composer of Elements (Windham Hill Records WH-1020), was born in Los Angeles in 1962. At 10 he began classical training, and five years later began to study jazz to compliment his classical background. He performed extensively between the ages of 15 and 18 as a soloist and in ensemble works throughout the Los Angeles area.

In 1980, at 18, Stein attended the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, lured principally by the prospect of studying with the members of the group "Oregon." Ralph Towner of "Oregon" quickly became a positive force in Ira's musical direction, inspiring several compositions which would later emerge as pieces on his debut LP project, Elements.

Subsequent to attending Naropa in 1980, Stein moved to Santa Barbara where he studied composition. He again attended Naropa the following summer at which time he studied with Art Lande and Charlie Haden.

Now living in San Francisco, and having furthered his studies at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Stein is exploring the uses of synthesized sound in his new compositions. He has been concentrating on the promotion of Elements, six compositions for piano and oboe, by touring throughout the United States with oboeist Russel Walder.

## RUSSEL WALDER

Russel Walder was born in Deerfield, Ill. in 1959 where he lived until the age of 17. He began playing the oboe at 14, and, at 18, toured Europe with the United States Youth Symphony. Russel continued his studies on the east coast with oboeists in the New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony.

In 1979 Walder moved to California to complete his B.A. in music from the California Institute of the Arts with Allen Vogel of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. In 1981 Walder attended the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado where he studied with one of his primary musical influences, Paul McCandles of the group "Oregon." It was at this time, too, that Russel met his future collaborator on Elements, pianist Ira Stein.

Walder currently plays English horn as well as oboe, and uses select electronics in combination with his acoustic approach. His own compositions, as well as other pieces co-written with Stein, will be featured on the next album.