



Dominik Huber/Nick Zlonis

Steve Lehman

The tension between structure and spontaneity has long been a core preoccupation for this expressly future-minded alto saxophonist and composer. “Travail, Transformation and Flow” (Pi), due out on Tuesday, takes that tension to heady extremes. Mr. Lehman composed most of the music on the album with clinical attention to frequency and overtone: his harmonies were devised with the help of spectrum analysis and programming software. So in one sense this is computer music, though it’s also the product of a nimbly improvising octet. (On Monday the group will play at Le Poisson Rouge; lepoissonrouge.com.) Some of the album’s eight tracks — notably “Alloy,” the longest and most immediately gripping — summon the ghosts of a knockabout post-bop avant-garde. Others, like “Echoes,” suggest the tolling of temple bells as remixed by a dance-music collagist. And Mr. Lehman closes with a meaningful nod, covering “Living in the World Today” by GZA of the [Wu-Tang Clan](http://www.wutangclan.com). It’s a perfectly ultramodern gesture, and the swagger fits.