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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Send orders and address changes to: DOWNBEAT, P.O. Box 11688, St. Paul, MN 55111-0688. Inquiries: U.S.A. and Canada (877) 904-5299; Foreign (651) 251-9682. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Please allow six weeks for your change to become effective. When notifying us of your new address, include current DOWNBEAT label showing old address.

DOWNBEAT (issn 0012-5769) Volume 78, Number 3 is published monthly by Maher Publications, 102 N. Haven, Elmhurst, IL 60126-3379. Copyright 2011 Maher Publications. All rights reserved. Trademark registered U.S. Patent Office. Great Britain registered trademark No. 719,407. Periodicals postage paid at Elmhurst, IL and at additional mailing offices. Subscription rates: \$34.95 for one year, \$59.95 for two years. Foreign subscriptions rates: \$56.95 for one year, \$103.95 for two years.

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POSTMASTER: Send change of address to: DownBeat, P.O. Box 11688, St. Paul, MN 55111-0688. **CABLE ADDRESS:** DownBeat (on sale February 15, 2011) Magazine Publishers Association.

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MARCH 2011

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Idiom Weaver

BY TED PANKEN

With the exception of Wynton Marsalis, it's difficult to think of a musician possessing greater bona fides in the classical and jazz arenas. From his earliest albums, pianist Mehldau established his ability to weave the harmonic language and feeling of Brahms and Mahler into the improvisational warp and woof—swinging or rubato—of his trio and solo performances.



Terence Blanchard

MARK SHELDON

Cover photography by Mark Sheldon

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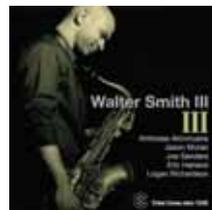
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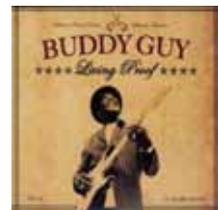
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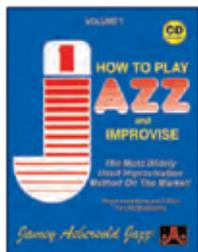
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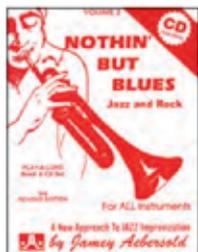


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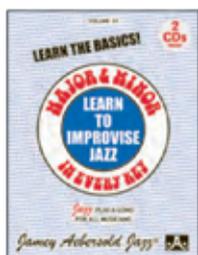
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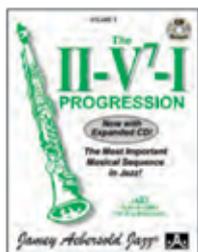


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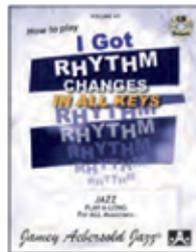


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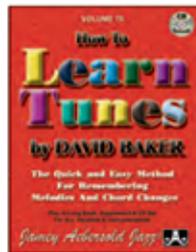


VOLUME 47 I GOT RHYTHM CHANGES

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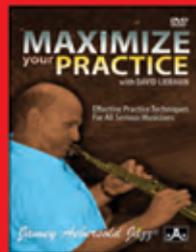
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Billy Taylor, Elegant Advocate

Dr. Billy Taylor’s passing on Dec. 28 at age 89 leaves huge shoes to fill in the battle to spread the word about great art, like jazz. Never before had an individual so quietly and calmly done so much to take jazz to the masses—even when not playing a note.

That’s not to say Dr. Taylor wasn’t a great musician. As a pianist and composer, he displayed artistry, taste and class. Remember, he got his start playing for Ben Webster on 52nd Street and became the house pianist for Birdland playing behind the likes of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davis.

But history will show that his contributions as a jazz ambassador will well overshadow his contributions as a jazz musician. All of us who work in—or simply enjoy—jazz owe him a debt of gratitude for his dedication to the cause.

For starters, there’s Jazzmobile, the not-for-profit organization Dr. Taylor founded in the 1960s to take jazz performances on a mobile stage into New York neighborhoods that might otherwise never see live music. The organization is still going strong and deserves our attention and support with its mission to “present, preserve, promote and propagate Jazz, America’s classical music.”

Then, there’s Billy Taylor, the broadcaster, who began programming jazz shows for radio in New York and created award-winning shows for National Public Radio. He became the arts correspondent for television’s “CBS Sunday Morning” in the 1980s and for the next two decades profiled more than 250 jazz musicians in what he considered to be one of his greatest contributions to this music.

And finally, there’s Dr. Taylor the jazz advocate and lobbyist. Because of his eloquence and his passion to have the music recognized as a cultural touchstone, Dr. Taylor served on many boards, such as the National Council of the Arts, and even took on a few powerful politicians.

Dr. Taylor was an outspoken proponent for not just jazz, but all of the arts. My first encounter with him was also my first year at DownBeat in 1990. At that time, Sen. Jesse Helms was attempting to disband the National Endowment for the Arts over grants for art that the ultra-conservative senator from North Carolina considered to be blasphemous or obscene.

Dr. Taylor was, well, angry and wanted to get the word out to stop Helms in his tracks. He called the office, and we talked for a few minutes. For the next 20 minutes, he spoke factually, forcefully and beautifully. I copied down his words, and printed them just as they came out of his mouth: “Sen. Helms has chosen to focus on 20 grants—that’s 20 grants out of 80,000—in his efforts to cast doubt on everything the Endowment has accomplished. The Endowment is fighting for its life, unnecessarily. It has a tremendous record and has served the country well on one of the smallest budgets in the Federal government. In the jazz world, I can attest that firsthand that for every dollar the government gives, at least five more are generated.” He ended with a call to action for arts lovers to take five minutes and contact their legislators.

His words helped save the NEA, but shockingly such battles continue. Billy Taylor was an elegant fighter. In his memory, we all need to put on those velvet gloves and soldier on. That would be the most fitting of tributes to jazz’s greatest advocate.



Billy Taylor with his DownBeat Lifetime Achievement Award at Jazzmobile’s 20th anniversary celebration in 1984.

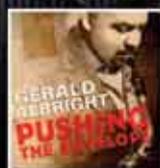
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Sidewomen Of Soul

Strong Jazz Backgrounds Carry Tia Fuller, Kim Thompson, Katy Rodriguez-Hamlet, Marcia Chaves & Crystal J Torres A Long Way In Pop Superstar Beyoncé's Suga Mama Band

By Dan Gutman

In August 2009 during her worldwide I Am ... Yours tour, r&b superstar Beyoncé Knowles checked into the Wynn Las Vegas Encore Theater to perform what was billed as an "intimate" concert. It was filmed for a DVD release. While the show zipped into a typical high-energy, dance-infused affair, about halfway through, with her 10-piece, all-female band Suga Mama ready to blaze, Knowles threw a curve ball at the audience. She declared, "Now it's time for us to have some fun. But you have to get up out of your seats." She then explained that among her many influences, she's indebted to Aretha Franklin, Josephine Baker and Ella Fitzgerald.



Bright Female Future

The Sidewomen of Soul feature (January) was a marvelous read. I recently had the opportunity to see Tia Fuller and her group perform live at a holiday series for the monthly Richmond, Va., Jazz Society Guest Educators series. Her performance captured the essence of the bebop tradition while calling upon images of the avant-garde and the blues and gospel traditions of soul. In particular, her female bandmates—pianist Shamie Royston and long time bassist Mimi Jones—showcased why they are all artists deserving higher recognition. If their creativity and poise is an example of what the future beholds for the ladies of jazz (or just jazz in general), then the future will be excitingly bright!

DARRL DAVENPORT
 RICHMOND, VA.

Top Jamal

Regarding the review of Ahmad Jamal's 1956-'62 Argo recordings ("Reviews," January): Mosaic should have released the entire *Live At The Spotlite Club '58*, it's his best.

DENNIS HENDLEY
 MILWAUKEE, WIS.

Blue Words and Blue Notes

I must agree with Kevin McIntosh's letter urging DownBeat to lose the cursing ("Chords & Discords," January). I'm sick of the profanity-laced features in Downbeat. I too am a longtime subscriber. I have an 85-year-old mother who loves jazz, and I often wish I could share some of the DownBeat articles about the music she loves. But she doesn't like trash talk. I also have a 10-year-old grandson playing trumpet and hopefully going into his school jazz band,

but I certainly would share any of your features with him either. Why limit your already limited audience? Maybe DownBeat has passed me by. I will certainly re-evaluate when my current subscription comes up for renewal.

TODD BOLTON
 SMITHSBURG, MD.

I read that Kevin McIntosh takes issue with some of the language used in an interview of Paul Motian by Ken Micallef. In particular, McIntosh is upset at the use of the f-word, and the s- and b.s.-words in the interview. After reading his letter, I went back and reread the interview, and I did notice that those words in a few variations were indeed used. However, the words were part of a direct quote from Motian, and were not the language used by Micallef. While I'm not condoning the use of foul language, Micallef was simply doing his job. Censoring any part of a direct quote makes it not a direct quote. And, if the offensive words were bleeped out, it would actually draw more attention to them. My suggestion to McIntosh is this: Don't kill the messenger. In this case, Paul Motian is the one responsible for the language, not DownBeat.

MOE DENHAM
 BURNS, TENN.

Correction

- The mention of the Jazz Journalists Association's video training program in the January issue should have listed the organization's website as janews.org.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERROR.

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Beat

New Headhunting Funk Experience

Classic '70s Jazz Fusion Band Returns To Studio With Surprising Guests

Drummer Mike Clark earned acclaim as a master of funk rhythms after joining Herbie Hancock's Headhunters in 1973. But Clark is hardly nostalgic about his four-year tenure with the band. Ask Clark whether he thought the Headhunters would still exist more than 30 years after the band regularly backed Hancock, and Clark responds quickly: Absolutely not, he says. He would have been especially shocked with the group's new incarnation and its planned spring release.

A reunion album (*Return Of The Headhunters!*) in 1998 notwithstanding, the Headhunters' new era began after a promoter asked Clark to assemble a jazz-funk band in the late 1990s for a national tour. Appearing under the name Prescription Renewal, the lineup paired young players like guitarist Charlie Hunter and DJ Logic with original Headhunters bassist Paul Jackson, organ player Dr. Lonnie Smith and trombonist Fred Wesley. After percussionist Bill Summers, another original Headhunter, sat in with Clark, the two revived the Headhunters' moniker in 2001 while adding saxophonist Donald Harrison to the lineup.

Recent editions of the Headhunters continue to mix youth and experience, and have toured internationally. The band embarked on a series of dates in November at pop-oriented venues, where it performed on bills that also featured the Mumbles, a keyboard duo from London. The current group includes rapper Private Pile, and increasingly spotlights new material. It resurrects 1970s tunes like "Watermelon Man" and "Sly," but only by request.

"I don't mind playing these tunes," Clark said, "but we put the focus on what we're doing now. Nobody's even thinking about the old days, [and] nobody's reflecting back on what we did with Herbie. This is a different group of musicians, except for Bill and me."

The Headhunters will release their most ambitious album since the 1970s in May. *Platinum* (Owl Studios) will include rapper Snoop Dogg, funk legend George Clinton and original Headhunter saxophonist Bennie Maupin.

Al Hall, the album's executive producer, was reluctant to incorporate rap, but relented after establishing guidelines. "I said let's go ahead and do it, but with three rules: no racial stuff; no heavy cursing; and no demonizing women. And so [Clark and Summers] looked at each other and said, 'We don't have anything to do,'" Hall said, laughing.



"You should have heard the first track we had—immediately, it was all three [taboos] pulled into one or two sentences," said Hall, who founded Owl Studios in 2005 in Indianapolis. "We're working around that. It's kind of a business part of it that you can't have radio play if you're going to be using the f-word, the n-word or all those other things."

Profane or not, bassist Richie Goods said the band attracts a growing number of the young people largely absent from straight-ahead gigs. "Even if we didn't have the rapper there's a whole younger audience that's into what we do," said Goods, the Headhunters' bassist since 2007. "But that's the direction they want to move. Everyone's writing a lot of music, and they recorded some new music, and they want almost like a new face for the Headhunters. I don't think they ever want to take those vintage songs out of their repertoire, but they want to start building a new repertoire that's just as strong as the old repertoire."
—Eric Fine

Lawrence "Butch" Morris



Jazz Docs: A new documentary about composer/conductor Lawrence "Butch" Morris, *Black February*, has been completed and will tour festivals across North America and Europe this year. Another documentary that focuses on New Orleans musicians, *Tradition Is A Temple*, is in production. Participants include drummer Shannon Powell and saxophonist Ed Petersen.

Details: blackfeb.com; traditionisatemple.com

Chicago Jazz Parks: The Jazz Institute of Chicago has begun its 2011 JazzCity series which brings jazz performances to different neighborhood park facilities. Upcoming concerts include Bebop Brass at LaFollette Park on March 11, Guy Kings' Little Big Band at Kilbourn Park on April 8 and Young Jazz Lions at Gage Park on May 13.

Details: jazzinchicago.org

Hubbard Live: An early '80s recording of Freddie Hubbard at San Francisco's Keystone Korner, *Pinnacle* (Resonance), will be released on March 8.

Details: resonancerecords.org

Stax Trustee: Al Bell, chair of the Memphis Music Foundation and former president of Stax Records, has been given a Recording Academy Trustees Award.

Details: soulsvilleusa.com

RIP, Jack Tracy, Charles Fambrough: Jack Tracy, who edited *DownBeat* from 1953-'58, died of heart failure on Dec. 21 at his home in Nooksack, Wash. He was 84. Tracy was also a producer for Mercury and Argo, where he worked with Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk and Sarah Vaughan. Bassist Charles Fambrough died of a heart attack at his home in Allentown, Pa., on Jan. 1. He was 60. Fambrough was a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and also worked alongside McCoy Tyner and Wynton Marsalis. The bassist released seven recordings as a leader, including *The Proper Angle* in 1991 and *Live At Zanzibar Blue* in 2002.

iTunes Makes Room For Jazz Albums

The iTunes format released its first full-length jazz album, Ellis Marsalis' *An Open Letter To Thelonious* (Nu Jazz Entertainment), on Jan. 4. Since the format was launched in September 2009, its 30 albums have focused on pop artists and major labels, and Nu Jazz president Jerald Miller said that releasing an album through iTunes could bring younger fans into the music.

"I don't think you have to educate an audience as much as present a compelling package," Miller said. "More than in the '70s-'90s, people appreciate different types of music across different genres. It's a compelling package for people who want to learn more about good music. It can appeal not only to jazz fans."

Along with the album's music (11 album tracks and three bonus performances on certain editions), *An Open Letter* also includes video conversations and excerpts from Robin D.G. Kelley's biography *Thelonious Monk: The Life And Times Of An American Original*.

"We don't have major label money and went all out in developing different packages price-wise to fit you in any way you want to go," Miller said. "I had a blank chalkboard. On an iTunes LP, if we conceive it, we can include it."

Miller had been Ellis Marsalis' student at the



Ellis Marsalis

University of New Orleans, and the pianist/educator's son, Jason Marsalis, helped convince him that he should try out iTunes. Both Marsalises and Miller felt that Monk's modern rhythms fit in with contemporary technology, and the father is looking forward to the format developing.

"In the early 20th century, people got around on a horse and buggy, by the time it was over, we were getting around on rocket ships," Ellis Marsalis said. "With Monk's music and Bach's music, it doesn't matter what you play it on, the music remains fundamentally the same."

—Aaron Cohen

Jazzers Dig Into Disney Repertoire

Walt Disney Records' Disney Pearl imprint has released *Disney Jazz Volume 1: Everybody Wants To Be A Cat*. The CD's 13 tracks include Disney classics as well as more contemporary Disney hits, executed in a range of styles from straightforward to experimental.

Recorded last year and produced by Jason Olaine, *Everybody Wants To Be A Cat* features performances by numerous jazz artists who are active today, including Dave Brubeck, Joshua Redman, Roy Hargrove, Dianne Reeves, Roberta Gambarini, the Bad Plus, Mark Rapp, Nikki Yanofsky, Esperanza Spalding, Regina Carter, Gilad Hekselman, Kurt Rosenwinkel and Alfredo Rodriguez.

"Once we started with Brubeck, you couldn't go wrong from there," Olaine said. "Once he got onboard, I think everybody else was inspired by the source material. Hopefully it will inspire others to delve into the Disney songbook as well."

Historically, Disney tunes have proved to be inspiring fodder for jazz musicians. In the decade following Disney's first forays into creating new music (1929-'39), songs from the studio's *Silly Symphony* series and full-length films like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Pinocchio*



Esperanza Spalding

made it onto the Hit Parade, interpreted by such bandleaders as Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller and Bunny Berigan. By the end of the '60s, jazz artists of all stripes had embraced Disney show tunes, prime examples being Brubeck's album *Dave Digs Disney*, Louis Armstrong's *Disney Songs The Satchmo Way* and Miles Davis' and John Coltrane's takes on "Someday My Prince Will Come" and "Chim Chim Cheree."

—Ed Enright



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MERCER RECORDS, 1950

Sometimes all it takes is a font. I recognized the sans serif design on this 10-inch as being early Prestige, but looking a bit closer found little evidence of the better-known label, just the intriguing Mercer appellation, which was at the time unknown to me. The text layout, the different font weights, the absence of images, even the little “non breakable—long playing micro groove,” were all straight from the Prestige drawing board. The other puzzler was the presence of the *New Stars—New Sounds* title, which I remembered also being a Prestige speciality. There was a Lee Konitz/



Stan Getz 10-inch called *New Sounds*, and a Lars Gullin one called *New Sounds From Sweden*, a Leo Parker one titled *New Sounds In Modern Music*, and a Sam Most record called *Introducing A New Star*: all Prestiges from the early '50s. Then again, there was a New Faces—New Sounds series on Blue Note, so it wasn't by any means a patented idea.

On further investigation, it turns out that Mercer was the label run by Mercer Ellington and Leonard Feather, with financial support from Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. A short-lived project, the label ran from 1950 to 1952, and it was relatively unsuccessful, falling in the nether zone between 78 rpm and 33 1/3 rpm formats. Mercer released both, but couldn't seem to gain traction. In truth, listening to this strange little compilation of tracks, one could hardly imagine they thought they'd have a hit on their hands, but it is certainly an oddball, and a very enjoyable one. Three tracks feature multi-instrumentalist (and part-time ventriloquist) Eddie Shu, together with a quintet featuring Denzil Best on drums and Barbara Carroll on piano, the latter sounding very solid. Shu switches between horns, playing alto sax, trumpet and clarinet, but the emphasis is clearly on his bebop harmonica playing, which is remarkably happening, if also borderline kitsch.

Wielding his “real gone organ,” Wild Bill Davis contributes two tracks, both sporting Papa Jo Jones on drums. On “Things Ain't

What They Used To Be,” Davis is joined by Duke Ellington (who was two-timing Columbia Records in the process), and together their interplay is perfectly in sync. Davis is still wed to a prehistoric sense of what the organ can do, but it's a great swing side nonetheless. The final three tracks are the hottest draw for me on this platter. Vibraphonist Joe Roland, who plays with the Shu band, leads a group billed as “his vibes and his boppin' strings.” Truth in advertising, amigo. Starting with the Miles Davis classic “Half-Nelson,” Roland and a string quartet (plus Joe Puma on guitar and Harold Granowsky on drums) run through the hairpin turns and tricky changes. It is delightfully free of any Third Stream pretensions, simply instigating the string players to kick up some dust and have some whip-crackin' fun. A sly line at the tail of “Dee Dee's Dance,” a tune contributed by Denzil Best, ingeniously blends the various instruments' sonorities with a tart twist.

Back to the Prestige conundrum. In fact, there was a direct connection: Mercer was distributed by Prestige, and they may well have used the same designers and manufacturers. According to Feather, Prestige “invariably gave precedence to the selling of its own product,” hence Mercer's demise. But not before they introduced these hot new stars and bracing new sounds. **DB**

EMAIL THE VINYL FREAK: VINYLFEAK@DOWNBEAT.COM

More than 60 years separate the first jazz recording in 1917 and the introduction of the CD in the early '80s. In this column, DB's Vinyl Freak unearths some of the musical gems made during this time that have yet to be reissued on CD.



New Dutch Conference Showcases Talent for International Market

The Music Center the Netherlands (MCN) held the first Dutch Jazz & World Meeting (DJWM) in Amsterdam during the first week of December. About 31 Dutch acts were selected for a three-day whirlwind of performances, seminars and trade schmoozing. Four stages of the Melkweg (“Milky Way”), a multi-tiered venue in the theater district of Amsterdam, teemed with musicians Dec. 1–3, and guests included promoters from across the United States.

The objective of bringing dozens of international producers, club and festival bookers to Amsterdam was to provide local musicians with opportunities to be heard beyond Holland, in addition to underscoring the MCN's pride in local scenes. DJWM is also the first time that globalist acts like the Moroccan funk band Maghreb Mania and the East European-cum-Middle Eastern quartet Arifa have been combined with groups like the freewheeling improvisational foursome Ambush Party. Other participants included the bands Knalport and Artvark.

“The jazz and world scenes in the Netherlands are quite similar in size, though world music is often seen as folklore rather than a higher form of art like jazz,” said Arjen Davidse, who heads up the rock, jazz & world department at MCN. “More and more, jazz and world music acts are occupying the same venues, festivals and media. Radio 6, a public radio station, is for both.”

By day at DJWM 2010, commerce included a trade mart where 110 musicians and labels set up booths. Panels like “Focus On USA” (which featured Lincoln Center's Bill Bragin, Seattle-based booking agent Alison Loerke and Susanna Von Canon, Instant Composers Pool's director), provided tips on pursuing the hard-to-crack American market.

“In essence, the Netherlands is a small country,” Davidse said. “For professional musicians, it is of vital importance that their work territory is bigger than only the few clubs and festivals in the Netherlands.”

—K. Leander Williams

Delfeayo Marsalis Reimagines Ellington-Shakespeare Meeting

Delfeayo Marsalis has always been drawn to storytelling. His debut release as a leader, Pontius Pilate's Decision, was built on a Biblical tale, and the trombonist has written kid-friendly musicals for New Orleans' Uptown Music Theatre for the past 10 years. This narrative pedigree enhances his recent *Sweet Thunder* (Duke & Shark).

Marsalis' latest recording is an octet arrangement of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's big-band tribute to William Shakespeare, *Such Sweet Thunder*. The disc was released last month in conjunction with the start of a staged 36-city production, complete with narration, costumes and scenery.

As in the original, Marsalis' reimagining pays tribute to William Shakespeare through music based on cherished plays, but script writer Charles E. Gerber, a faculty member at The Harlem School of the Arts, has taken appropriate bits of Elizabethan prose to sprinkle throughout the concert. Actor Kenneth Brown Jr. plays Strayhorn to Marsalis' Ellington.

"You not only have the emotional aspect from the music side," Marsalis said, "but now also from the dramatic side."

Ellington's original is a compact suite comprising musical sonnets and other aural set pic-

es. Marsalis took on the daunting task of editing the scoring down to eight instruments from its original 15. He also expanded the piece by 30 minutes and altered how key instruments function within the ensemble. A hallmark of *Such Sweet Thunder* is the beefy Ellington saxophone section; with the reduced band, Marsalis gave the trumpet, which isn't used during the original sonnets, a saxophone role. Amending the score was a challenge, but the sparseness of Ellington's arrangement invited creativity.

"There are not a lot of sections in the music where the entire orchestra plays at the same time. [Ellington] really uses a few instruments to provide a palette of colors and sounds underneath solo instruments," Marsalis said. "Whenever you're scaling down, there will be challenges, but we worked it out, and I think most of the important notes are covered."

During the tour, Marsalis will stage a shortened production for school children in 21 cities. He said his goal is to break down the notion that Shakespeare is "highfalutin territory" and to teach kids that there are things they can enjoy in both Shakespeare and jazz music.

Ellington knew jazz was a perfect match with Shakespeare's plays, even going as far to say Shakespeare would have been a regular at



Birdland. Jazz fits with Shakespeare's works, Marsalis said, because to compose imaginative stories based in reality, the Bard had to improvise.

"You have to imagine something exists and make it exist, and that's what Shakespeare did," Marsalis said. "He would love the creativity and the spontaneity that's required in jazz."

—Jon Ross

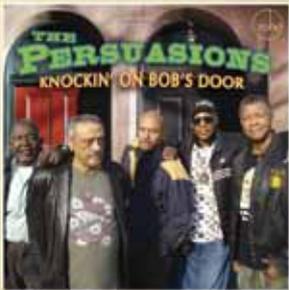


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THE PERSUASIONS
Knockin' On Bob's Door [ZMR 201011]
Founded in 1962 in Brooklyn, The Persuasions are one of America's leading a cappella vocal groups. *Knockin' On Bob's Door* features the band's unique, gospel-driven take on 14 classic 1960s songs by Bob Dylan. "These guys ... are deep sea divers. I'm just a fisherman in a boat." — Tom Waits



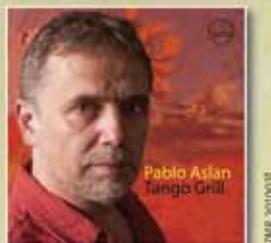
ARTURO O'FARRILL & THE AFRO LATIN JAZZ ORCHESTRA
40 Acres and a Burro [ZMR 201002]
On *40 Acres and a Burro*, 2009 GRAMMY winner Arturo O'Farrill presents his Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra in three O'Farrill originals and eight stand-out Latin classics & newly commissioned compositions, defining Latin Big Band Jazz in the 21st century. Principal guest: legendary clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera!



THE O'FARRILL BROTHERS
Giant Peach [ZMR 201011]
Brothers Adam (16) on trumpet and Zack (19) on drums carry the O'Farrill musical tradition into its third generation, following famous grandfather Chico and father Arturo, pianist and 2009 GRAMMY winner. "ZOHO debut, *Giant Peach*, co-leading a quintet sans dad, bristles with confidence and creativity." — Larry Blumenfeld, *Wall Street Journal*



SCOTT FEINER & PANDEIRO JAZZ ACCENTS [ZMR 201001]
On *Accents*, Rio de Janeiro-based percussionist Scott Feiner is joined by Joel Frahm, Freddie Bryant, and Joe Martin. The sole percussive force is Feiner's masterfully played pandeiro, a handheld frame drum. "Scott Feiner is a soulful magnet for the fusion of jazz and Brazilian music." — Kurt Rosenwinkel



PABLO ASLAN
Tango Grill [ZMR 201001]
2010 LATIN GRAMMY and GRAMMY nominee!
"On this disc, Aslan brought jazz and tango musicians to Argentina to perform ... standards, mainly from the '20s and '30s. The results are beautiful ... the players make their improvisation more about nuance than blowing." — *DownBeat*, ★★★★★



HECTOR MARTIGNON
Second Chance [ZMR 201006]
2010 GRAMMY nominee!
On *Second Chance*, his second ZOHO release, the Colombian-born, New York-based pianist presents his current, hot young Latin jazz quintet with special guests Edmar Castaneda on Colombian harp and Vinny Valentino on guitar.

Alice Coltrane Tribute At UCLA Shapes Its Own Identity

Poetic justice was served with the Alice Coltrane Tribute at the University of California, Los Angeles' Royce Hall on Dec. 5. Coltrane, who died in 2007, was a longtime Angeleno with significant ties to the campus. She recorded her 1976 album *Transfiguration* at UCLA, and then presented one of the more memorable Los Angeles jazz concerts of the past decade at UCLA's Royce Hall in 2006, shortly before her death, and two years after her *Translinear Light*—her first album in a quarter century. The unconventional and vaguely mystical jazz musician was, of course, the famed spouse of John and mother of saxophonist Ravi, was an avowed Vedanta spiritualist and Ashram director who spent her last decades more in tune with spiritual work than jazz work.

Given the multiple hats and entities involved in Coltrane's life, she touched many shores beyond just the jazz scene. At the Royce Hall tribute, ally and spiritual protege Radha Botofasina led the chanting charge, and Coltrane great-nephew producer and laptop player Flying Lotus (a.k.a. Steve Ellison), a rising electronica star, offered up an organically beautiful sonic event. The sound beautifully adorned a short film recounting his visit to India with his great-aunt, whom we also heard sermonizing in her engagingly sonorous voice.

Still, it was somewhat disappointing that this tribute didn't have more actual jazz content involved. It would have been nice to have Ravi Coltrane involved (as he was, and inspiringly so, at the 2007 concert) or Angeleno Charlie Haden, who worked with Alice Coltrane at various points, including on the luminously fine *Translinear Light*.

Avowed Alice Coltrane admirer guitarist



McCoy Tyner

EARL GIBSON

Kyp Malone, of TV On The Radio fame, was an anchoring and charismatic presence for this tribute, but musically, he's more jammy than jazzy. That point was made especially noticeable in a quartet with the more fluently jazz-inclined guitarist Nels Cline, who has been a starring, veteran presence in Los Angeles' left-end jazz population. Cline later led a large ensemble, including harpist Zeena Parkins (harp being an important part of Coltrane's musical vocabulary), on the lyrical Haden tune "For Turiya," dedicated to Coltrane.

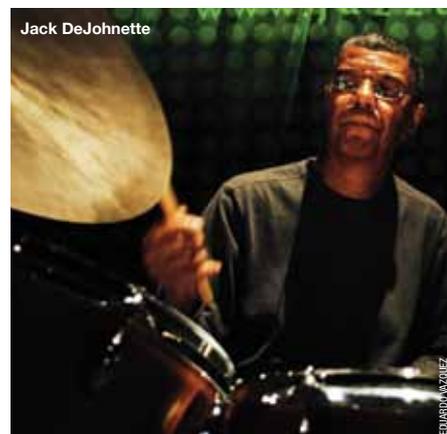
Overall, this evening's high points came in jazz guises. Daniel Carter, making his L.A. debut here, was the show's resident saxophonic force and poet—and those descriptions neatly suit his contributions to the mix. Trustily entertaining Dutch drummer Han Bennink opened the second set with some of his swinging comic relief, playing a single snare, the stage floor and his own body (joking that "sometimes, it would

be nice to have a wooden leg").

Late in the program, McCoy Tyner—that critical piece of the Coltrane story puzzle—appeared for two solo piano pieces, but he passed on Alice's daughter Michelle Coltrane's offer to sit in on the loose-fit finale of "A Love Supreme." Violinist Michael White, who shared with Alice Coltrane certain musical-modal qualities and a stint on Impulse! in the '70s, accompanied the distinctively intriguing singer Leisei Chen. They wove some medley magic, in and out of impressive impressionistic ventures and a telling snippet of "Every Time We Say Goodbye."

Fittingly but also sometimes frustratingly, the Royce Hall tribute moved in many directions, in and out of jazz, suiting the complexities of this unique musical and spiritual figure. She never played by the rules or fit neatly into a given box or identity, and that's just one facet of fascination surrounding the Alice Coltrane story.

—Josef Woodard



Jack DeJohnette

EDUARDO VAZQUEZ

Jazz Loyalty Rewarded, Education Emphasized at Xalapa Festival

Ray Drummond seemed genuinely taken aback by the roar of approval that greeted him at the Teatro del Estado in Xalapa, Mexico, which emanated from a crowd that not only filled the theater's seats but crowded the aisles on either side. Such enthusiasm would turn out to be the norm over the seven days of the third Festival Internacional JazzUV, sponsored by the eponymous school, which ran Nov. 8–14. The legendary headliners—McCoy Tyner, Jack DeJohnette—were given heroes' welcomes, while loyalty was especially rewarded: In his

third festival visit, trumpeter Jason Palmer's every appearance was greeted by something like a miniature Beatlemania.

Drummond played the avuncular host throughout his trio performance, where pianist and festival director Edgar Dorantes and drummer John Ramsay joined him. The bassist's playing was erudite and playful, whether chuckling at his own solo on "Yesterdays" or a more garrulous than usual take on "Round Midnight."

JazzUV is a small jazz school under the umbrella of the Universidad Veracruzana founded

in 2008 by Dorantes, who this year ceded his role as artistic director to Francisco Mela. The Cuban-born drummer brought several of his Berklee cohorts with him, including Ramsay, Palmer, saxophonist Grace Kelly and Daniel Ian Smith, who whipped the school's young big band into fighting shape in a remarkably short time.

A shaky "Early Autumn" aside, Smith's band sounded well-polished on the blazing opener, Nat Adderley's "Sweet Emma," and managed to navigate the labyrinthine turns of Ken Schaphorst's tricked-out rearrangement of "Stolen Moments." With a mission of encouraging jazz education, the festival was oriented toward engaging with students. The guests stayed throughout the week, giving master classes by day and performing at night. Palmer, Kelly, Mela, Dorantes and guitarist Nir Felder were es-

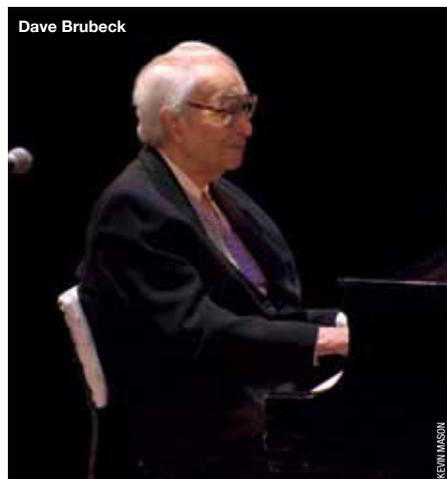
pecially prominent, each taking the lead role in performances that featured most or all of the others. The surprise throughout the festival was 18-year-old bassist Emiliano Coronel, JazzUV's director of bass studies. Stunningly confident, he began one solo with long, resonant tones when he was interrupted by the ringing of an audience member's cell phone, the melody of which he used as the basis of a series of variations.

DeJohnette used similar components through lesser-known pieces by Joe Henderson, Freddie Hubbard and Ornette Coleman. The drummer was inspired, constructing an intricate solo on a Dorantes original that was like listening to architecture in action. He also gave a master class that was mostly performance—a textured half-hour solo followed by a run through of Hubbard's "Bird-Like." —Shaun Brady

Dave Brubeck Revels In 90th Birthday Celebration

At the start of the second half of the Dave Brubeck Quartet concert at the Music Hall in Tarrytown, N.Y., held on Dec. 3, a few days before the legendary pianist and composer turned 90, the capacity crowd began singing "Happy Birthday" as the musicians were readying on stage. Brubeck, beaming with appreciation, sat at the piano and listened to the serenade, then decided to add some accompaniment with blocks of dramatic chords. As the chorus ended, though, he signaled to his bandmates to keep the song going, and alto saxophonist Bobby Militello took advantage of the bluesy waltz tempo to frost the confection with a bold solo that brought forth a big ovation. Militello then took out a lighter out of his pocket and asked the chuckling Brubeck to blow out the flame. After Brubeck's solo—the pace more swinging as he toyed with the song's harmonies—the band wrapped up the informal jam, and when the applause died down, Brubeck pulled the microphone over and said in a hoarse voice, "That's a first!"

Equal parts of celebration and valediction marked the quartet's appearance in Tarrytown, which came close on the heels of a three-night stay at Manhattan's Blue Note. The jazz great walked out on stage holding onto bassist Michael Moore's arm for support, but once seated at the piano showed little effect of recent heart surgery. The band warmed up with a Duke Ellington medley, and Brubeck laughed through Moore's entertaining bow solo before driving his cohorts to a "Take The 'A' Train" conclusion. The band alternated between energetic uptempo numbers and Brubeck's serious, more classical side, af-



firmed in top-notch performances of "Pange Lingua March" and "Thank You," two nods to his wife, Iola, as well as the ballad "Theme For June," written by Brubeck's brother Howard.

Ultimately, the quartet delivered a take-no-prisoners reading of "Take Five," complete with a ferocious drum solo by Randy Jones, his rimshots sounding like rifle fire. A birthday cake was brought out, and then Brubeck's manager, Russell Gloyd, sensing enough was enough, walked onstage to lead the maestro off. Fully enjoying another night out with his bandmates, however, Brubeck was in no hurry, and after licking some icing off his sleeve, he acquiesced to a shouted request for "Unsquare Dance" that featured another tough solo from Militello.

Another long ovation ended, and out in the audience a baby cried. Brubeck, starting to get up from the piano, sat down again and played Brahms's Lullaby, a.k.a "Guten Abend, gute Nacht"—a considerate gesture and exquisite finish to a purposeful gathering.

—Thomas Staudter

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Kenny Werner ▶ *Voices From The Wind*

Like the old standard “You Don’t Know What Love Is,” Kenny Werner had to agree when his inner voice would say that to him.

A self-centered person, by his own admission, it wasn’t until his daughter Katheryn was born, in 1990, that Werner finally understood what love truly meant. “I wrote a tune, ‘Uncovered Heart,’ when she was born,” recalls Werner during a conversation prior to his performance with Patricia Barber at Northwestern University’s Pick-Staiger Hall last November. “Oftentimes the best tune a musician will write is on the day their child is born, the absolute most heartfelt tune, and it is often the one people relate to the most.”

Werner reprised “Uncovered Heart,” originally recorded on *Beauty Secrets* (BMG 1999), for his 2007 Blue Note debut, *Lawn Chair Society* (2007). But this was more than filler for the CD. In October 2006, Katheryn, aged 16, hit a tree in her car on the way home from martial arts class and was killed.

Suddenly there was a gaping void. “That first Christmas was tough,” Werner recalled. “She was born on Dec. 1, and the whole month was usually a celebration of her. I finally said, ‘I’ve got to find a melody to express this sadness.’”

A year before, saxophonist Joe Lovano, who has been a close collaborator with Werner since the two met at Berklee College of Music in the ’70s, together with Fred Harris, conductor of the MIT Wind Ensemble, helped win a commission for Werner for a piece in honor of arts patron Bradford Endicott’s 80th birthday. Werner, juggling composing duties with touring and performing, had had a hectic summer and was at last settling down to focus on the commission when his world changed that fateful day in October.

Buoyed by the strength of meditative practice and his connection to spiritual essence, as outlined in his book *Effortless Mastery*, Werner sought to channel the cataclysmic tragedy of Katheryn’s death through music. Luckily the sympathetic folk at MIT accepted his request to reattribute the commission to the only theme he could deal with, which became a tour de force exploration of the respective sufferings and sublimations of life as we know it and the realm beyond.

No Beginning, No End (Half Note), the recording that ultimately fulfilled the commission, won a Guggenheim Fellowship, an acknowledgment of the consuming cohesion of Werner’s orchestrations for the project.

Utilizing Lovano’s tenor voice as Katheryn herself (she knew him as Uncle Joe and Joe’s wife, Judi Silvano, as Auntie Judi), Werner begins “Death Is Not The Answer” with musical twitterings suggestive of the mental distractions that may have led to Katheryn’s driving error. An ominous rumble rises from the orchestra culminating in thundering tympani, splintering into high woodwind sounds preceding an adaptation of Werner’s eponymous poem recited by Silvano.

Though Lovano seems to freely improvise around the ensemble orchestrations, Werner composed some complex passages for him. “In all my music I like a rhythm you can’t exactly count on, so you have to pay more attention. Things move in an unusual way and you have to stay connected,” said Werner. “This piece has parts where Joe seems like he’s just floating through air, but he lands with the woodwinds and it feels more like nature than some unified beat, like a butterfly landed on a leaf, but that wouldn’t happen here unless I scripted it.”

Listening to the gorgeous, if heart-wrenching string quartet performance of “Cry Out” (the melody of earthbound sorrow that Werner was seeking that turbulent December eventually came to him), it’s clear that



however much he claims he needs to learn about orchestration, he knew exactly what he was doing.

“What I am proud of is that the piece moves compositionally so well but it doesn’t lose the anguish of the first statement. In other words, I didn’t sacrifice the emotions to be a more professional writer,” said Werner, staying true to the tenets of his inner judge.

Though Werner had some experience with strings, he had never worked with a choir before. However, he said he had no choice but to use the human voice after experiencing a dream that he terms a “visitation” from his daughter. “We were in the backyard of my high school and there were all these little groups of choirs, like piles of leaves,” he recalled. “Then I see my daughter in the middle of one and all of a sudden her mouth gets wider and wider and she sings, ‘ooOOH!’ And then I woke up.”

Where “Cry Out” represented the aching dismay of those left behind, the choral piece “Visitation: Waves Of Unborn” is Werner’s attempt to simulate what a choir would sound like on the other side of existence, if music were like the noise of air alone.

Though Werner has reservations that the effect fell short of what he had in mind, the piece shares the heavenly beauty of the aria from Villa-Lobos’ *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5. You can feel the leaves scatter in that schoolyard and the choirs levitate.

“That piece is about the completely transcendent side,” Werner says, almost as if he has been there. “Death is the learning time between lifetimes. The choir actually envisions the place where they go.”

—Michael Jackson



Rondi Charleston ▶ *Time Traveler*

Many vocalists, regardless of genre, think of themselves as storytellers, as someone serving the song through music. But sometimes, the song's meaning is obliterated as the vocalist in question leaps through the gymnastic squalls of technique meant to impress, the equivalent of a guitarist playing too many notes. Vocalist Rondi Charleston is one of those rare artists for whom a song's meaning is as important as its melody. Charleston's second album, *Who Knows Where The Time Goes* (Motéma), couples the American Songbook, choice covers and her original material with a documentarian's acuity.

"I respect the traditions of jazz," Charleston explains, "and try to stay grounded in those traditions—on this particular album, 'I Hear Music' is a great example of that. But then I also branch out with my originals and do a lot of storytelling. I seem to mentally catalog every little snapshot. Ultimately those little snapshots of memories will turn into songs. In this case, we did four originals; I collaborated with pianist Lynne Arriale. I would write out snippets of melodies then she would expand on them. I had the lyrics fully formed by the time I got to Lynne."

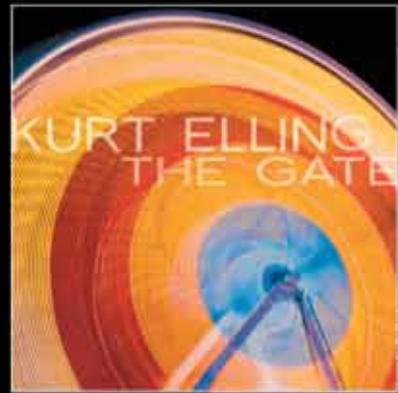
Also joined by Dave Stryker (guitar), James Genus (bass), Clarence Penn (drums), Brandon McCune (piano) and Mayra Casales (percussion), Charleston's personal, thought-provoking original songs slow the heart-beat and raise the mental senses. In "The Spirit Lingers," Charleston tells the story of her great grandmother, a great storyteller herself, who rode covered wagons across Norway. "Song For The Ages" ponders the layers of time (as does the entire album). "Land Of Galilee" is particularly striking. By no means a jazz vehicle, it's Charleston's prayer for peace.

"'Land Of Galilee' was based on an experience I had with my family in Israel a couple years ago," she explains. "All of sudden the skies opened up and it started to snow. It snows once every 25 years in Jerusalem. We witnessed this amazing event where people started coming out of their houses—Christians, Muslims, Jews, young, old. Soon they were laughing and playing together. I realized in that moment that peace is possible. Just maybe."

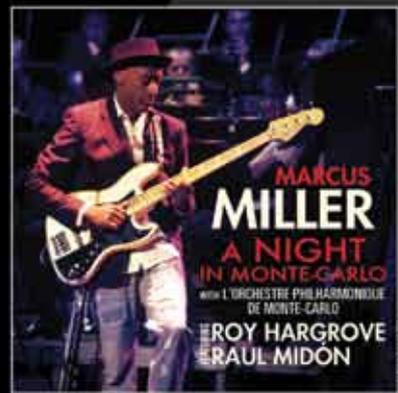
Charleston doesn't come by her storytelling abilities by accident. A former investigative journalist who won Emmy and Peabody Awards while working (for six years) with Diane Sawyer on ABC's "Primetime Live," she's also a graduate of Juilliard, where she earned her master's in voice.

"I do have eclectic tastes in music, and I have this insatiable curiosity about the world," Charleston says. "You can apply that to investigative journalism or to music and songwriting. I try to do both. It's new and original and I hope people will go along with me on this ride. The unifying element in all these songs is the storytelling element. Every song reflects some aspect of our communal experience with time. It's a documentary storytelling approach."

—Ken Micallef



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David S. Ware ▶ *Deep Statements*

Saxophonist David S. Ware's trip to Chicago early November to perform a solo set at the 5th Annual Umbrella Music Festival tested his ability to tour. Indeed, it was his first concert outside of New York since his kidney transplant in May 2009. The transplant itself has not affected his playing, but he now has difficulty walking and standing up. Ware blames the anti-rejection medication he takes twice a day for shutting down nerves in his legs and feet.

The performance came in the wake of the releases of two new albums where his legendary ferocious playing—Ware is the quintessential free-jazz player—is tempered by thoughtful and deep statements. *Saturnian* and *Onecept* (both on AUM Fidelity) indicate that Ware still has a lot to contribute to the music. The former—the first in a planned series of solo recordings—describes his current state according to Vedic astrology, an interest he has been pursuing for about 40 years. "I am [currently] under the major influence of Saturn," said the 61-year-old saxophonist.

"Saturn gives out certain lessons. When you're in a Saturn period, it's for 19 years. Saturn is the slowest moving planet. It is intense because it's slow. I am in the middle of it. I went through dialysis, my father died, my mother died, my dogs died. If I can make it through the next 10 years, I'll be here for a long, long time."

"Onecept," the title of a trio date with bass player William Parker and percussionist Warren Smith, is a word of Ware's creation but again reflects his spiritual convictions. "Everybody knows about waking, dreaming and sleeping, but there is a fourth state, which is enlightenment," he continued. "It is a universal witness to the waking, the dreaming and the sleeping. Meditation prepares your mind to be in that state, and 'onecept' means that all the tunes, all the streams, are going towards enlightenment or cosmic consciousness. They are transcending time and space. It is like a flower opening up."

Both albums feature Ware on tenor sax, stritch and saxello and are fully improvised, which signals a new stage in Ware's musical journey.

Over the years, Ware's fierce playing has drawn comparisons to Albert Ayler, Pharoah Sanders, or late John Coltrane, but *Saturnian* and *Onecept* equally attest to broader influences. For instance, his return to the stritch and the saxello, which immediately bring to mind Roland Kirk, is no coincidence. "Roland was certainly an influence," said Ware. "He is the reason why I have those two horns. What he did is still in the air.



MICHAEL JACKSON

Sometime, I like to mess around with the territory he was dealing with—it's fun. I saw him a lot in the '60s and '70s. He was one of the cornerstones of jazz saxophone." The recordings also include nods to Thelonious Monk, a musician Ware describes as his first favorite piano player.

Whether his recent health problems have given him a sense of urgency or not—he believes strongly in reincarnation—Ware is moving fast. On his Chicago trip, Ware had only brought his tenor and his new love, a soprano (P. Mauriat 50sx) James Carter brought back from Taiwan for him. "I seem to have a natural affinity for this horn," he said. "I don't have to search. The ideas just come. The sound of the horn brings the ideas. It seems almost effortless." Ware has been working on it relentlessly since December 2009 to get it under control—control is a key element in his musical quest—and has already acquired an incredibly full and personal tone.

Recorded a couple of weeks following his Chicago appearance, his next project will feature yet another set of fully improvised music, this time featuring a quartet comprising pianist Cooper-Moore, whom he knows since his Berklee days, bassist Parker, possibly Ware's closest musical partner, and drummer Muhammad Ali, whom he met when he first went to Europe with Cecil Taylor's group. "People forget that when we came from Boston to New York, with Cooper-Moore and [drummer] Marc Edwards, we were improvisers, we had no music," he said.

—Alain Drouot

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Andy Farber ▶ *No Dinosaur*

In Andy Farber's view, the essence of jazz modernity has less to do with the raw materials than the sensibility deployed in molding them.

"I don't want to pigeonhole myself, and I'm no dinosaur," Farber said, "but I don't appreciate pressure from people who say, 'Why are you playing all this old-fashioned shit?' This is 2010.' I say, 'I don't understand—the stuff you're playing sounds like John Coltrane from 1964; that's 45 years old.' Modern jazz doesn't have tunes like 'Royal Garden Blues,' which changes key after the first section and goes into another section. You don't always have to be modern harmonically. Other things can make it sound fresh."

Farber, 41, embodies this notion on *This Could Be The Start Of Something Big* (Black Warrior), leading a 17-piece band of swing-oriented New York A-listers—he solos authoritatively on alto, tenor and baritone sax, and flute—through 14 originals and arrangements honed during a two-year Sunday run at Birdland. Although the originals "Space Suit" and the anagrammatic "Short Yarn" reveal Farber's fluency in the Duke Ellington-Billy Strayhorn language of the *Such Sweet Thunder* era, he draws most deeply from the well of Ernie Wilkins' surging charts for the New Testament Basie Band and the Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra circa 1956–57.

"Art music, whatever that means, requires an attention to detail that isn't useful for tourists who aren't necessarily jazz fans," Farber said, referencing his Birdland audience. "But none of this was designed to do anything but satisfy what I felt like writing and listening to." He converted from a "five-star meal" to "coconut cream pie" a decade ago, after hearing the 1959 LP *Here Comes The Swingin' Mr. Wilkins*, which included an all-Basie trumpet section.

"The first thing I heard was a blues," Farber recalled. "I realized that everybody in the brass section played with vibrato, playing each line, even up-tempos, like they're playing a ballad by themselves. That kind of expression is lost art."

A native of Huntington, Long Island, Farber (the son of a one-time professional jazz drummer and nephew of arranger-guitarist Mitchell Farber) learned the fundamentals early under the tutelage of "mainstreamers" like Chris Woods, Budd Johnson and Billy Mitchell. "My father loved Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane—my rebellion came in college, when I got heavily into Ben Webster and Don Byas," he joked. Attending Manhattan School of Music at the end of the '80s, he studied with David Berger—then conducting the Ellington-centric early editions of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra—and developed his own "heavy Ellington-Strayhorn ob-



session." Around 1990, he assembled a big band at the West End Gate in Morningside Heights. "I had dreams of being Oliver Nelson or Benny Carter, where you play saxophone *and* write."

A few years later, Berger recommended Farber to Jon Hendricks—who sings two tracks on *Something Big*—to arrange and rehearse four-horn, four-rhythm charts for a date at the Blue Note (*Boppin' At The Blue Note*) on which Wynton Marsalis subbed the trumpet chair for Clark Terry for most of the week.

"We were hanging out every day, and got friendly," Farber said, tracing the events that launched his longstanding relationship with Jazz at Lincoln Center. This most recently manifested in a five-city August 2010 tour, on which he conducted a 12-piece JALCO unit through the soundtrack score of the silent film *Louis*, juxtaposing Marsalis compositions and arrangements that reference early jazz with pianist Cecile Nicad's interpretations of Louis Moreau Gottschalk's piano music.

To follow up on *Something Big*, his third leader date, Farber hopes to record either a large-scale Gottschalk project or an already-executed instrumental jazz score for the musical *Oklahoma* that gestated when he transcribed Wilkins' arrangement of "Surrey With The Fringe On Top."

He describes Gottschalk's oeuvre as "a precursor to the ragtime era—demanding classical piano music that requires technique and doesn't require improvisation, with a harmonic sense reminiscent of popular song from the 20th century. You change little things here and there, and modify the phrasing, but it's basically the same piece that Gottschalk wrote, just like Strayhorn and Ellington's arrangements of *The Peer Gynt Suite* or *The Nutcracker Suite*. That's the aesthetic—we're going to play that music our way."

—Ted Panken

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By Ted Panken

IDIOM WEAVER

BRAD MEHLDAU GOES FULL-THROTTLE

The announcement last spring that Brad Mehldau would be the first jazz musician to occupy the Richard and Barbara Debs Composer's Chair at Carnegie Hall for the 2010-'11 season—an honorific he shares with such luminaries as Pierre Boulez, Elliott Carter, John Adams and Thomas Adès—drew surprisingly scant notice from mainstream cultural gatekeepers as a watershed event.

With the exception of Wynton Marsalis, it's difficult to think of a musician possessing greater bona fides in the classical and jazz arenas. From his earliest albums, Mehldau established his ability to weave the harmonic language and feeling of Brahms and Mahler into the improvisational warp and woof—swinging or rubato—of trio and solo performance. He gave his songs Germanophilic titles (“Young Werther,” “Mignon’s Song,” “Angst,” “Sehnsucht”) and described his intentions and thought process in liner notes and essays that refracted a long timeline of German philosophy and literature, producing as extensive an aesthetic manifesto as ever produced by any jazz musician not named Anthony Braxton. His deep grounding in the various tributaries of post-Bud Powell piano expression came through in the career-launching *Introducing Brad Mehldau*, which also documented his knack—he was then 25—for getting to the heart of a ballad. By Mehldau’s second recording, *The Art Of The Trio, Volume 1*, he displayed a nascent comfort zone with 5/4 and 7/4 time signatures, constructing contrapuntal phrases with a flowing, over-the-barline quality. Numerous pianists of his Generation-X peer group paid close attention. They kept listening as Mehldau, after moving to Los Angeles in 1996, increasingly brought contemporary pop songs into his mix, resolving, as he once wrote, to “bypass the temptation to use the collective language of the past.”

Long a devotee of art song, Mehldau upped the ante five years ago with *Love Songs* (Nonesuch), a pair of fully notated song cycles set to poems by Rainer Maria Rilke and Louise Bogan for interpretation by the prominent mezzo soprano Renee Fleming. Fellow diva Anne Sophie von Otter, already a fan of his trio recordings, was impressed, and requested Carnegie Hall to commission her own project with Mehldau. The result is *Love Sublime* (Naive), comprising one disc on which von Otter sings five stark, ravaged Sara Teasdale lyrics from the '10s and '20s and a poem apiece by e.e. cummings and Philip Larkin, and a second on which she traverses a varied menu drawn from a trans-genre cohort of songwriter-composers, among them Jacques Brel, Joni Mitchell, Leo Ferré and Bob Telson. Throughout the proceedings, Mehldau, the virtuoso soloist, embraces the role of accompanist, playing throughout with restraint and dynamic nuance. For the poems, he adheres strictly to the scores, which are at once fresh and idiomatically evocative of the lieder tradition; on the “middle-brow” fare, he imparts an old-school saloon piano feel, interpolating graceful comp with solos that contain no wasted notes.

“Brad plays beautifully, in the truest, most seriously meant sense,” von Otter emailed. “During one of our early meetings, I described my range to him, my strengths and weaknesses, what I would encourage and discourage in the vocal lines. We also discussed our tastes in poetry. The songs sound American to me—Copland comes to mind, though not overly so. But they also have a strong Mehldau style, meaning that

Brad has managed—and this is not so easy—to create his very own sound, something fresh and new.”

There’s no mistaking the Mehldau touch on *Highway Rider* (Nonesuch), his first recorded exploration of the orchestral implications of his pianism. Recorded last March, it’s a motivically connected, 15-movement suite on which a two-drummer edition of Mehldau’s working trio and saxophone soloist Joshua Redman interact with a chamber orchestra consisting of 23 strings, three french horns, bassoon and oboe, each given a separate part on two selections, and functioning sectionally elsewhere. Both on the orchestral

“Music travels through time; often we are travelling through space. So travel works well for me as a metaphor for music. I think that’s pretty universal—when you begin a piece, you feel like you’re in one place, and when it ends, you have gone somewhere.”

selections and the quintet, quartet, trio and duo pieces that constitute much of *Highway Rider*’s second part, Mehldau weaves into his own argot a host of dialects—Euro and American streams of classical music, various iterations of post-songbook pop and classic rock, swinging and odd-metered jazz, flamenco and bolero, the blues. The piece, which has an imaginary screenplay quality, is chock-a-block with achingly gorgeous songs—seasoned with well-proportioned dollops of atonality, and threaded together with recurring harmonic and melodic themes—that seem to be begging for a lyric.

Mehldau toured *Highway Rider* in early November, recruiting the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra for a three-concert American leg that concluded with a Nov. 9 appearance at Zankel Hall, in advance of a fortnight-long, seven-concert European sojourn. During the afternoon run-through, Mehldau negotiated the mix section by section with conductor Scott Yoo and Zankel’s efficient soundman. Occasionally, he responded to the flow with extemporaneous contrapuntal responses; at other points, he walked to different spots in the auditorium to hear for him-

self. After all these issues were settled, after Yoo and SPCO had resolved to their satisfaction various nuances of phrasing and vibrato, the quintet soundchecked with a brisk version of Charlie Parker’s “Ornithology.” Left leg crossed over right, leaning into the keyboard, Mehldau tossed off an intense, ready-for-prime-time solo of several choruses, abstracting the refrain, alternating block chords with hurtling single-note passages.

Hit time was 8:30, and Mehldau had a 5 o’clock meeting with pianist-composer Timothy Andres at Steinway’s 57th Street premises for a pre-dinner parsing of the selections from Andres’ two-piano suite, *Shy And Mighty*, that the two are slated to perform at a March 11 Zankel Hall concert that will conclude Mehldau’s composer-in-residence obligations. (The third concert, on Feb. 19, presented Mehldau and Von Otter in support of *Love Songs*; for the second, on Jan. 26, Mehldau played solo, per his 2010 Nonesuch release *Live At Marciac*.)

Before leaving, Mehldau took 10 minutes to sit and talk. He turned 40 last year, and his dark hair contains the barest intimations of gray. He’s taller and more buff than is evident from a distance or in photos, with ropy arm muscles—accentuated by a tattoo on his left bicep—that are a pianist’s equivalent of an embouchure. Unfailingly polite, he reiterated a message conveyed by management the day before: He had no time to meet face-to-face before his departure for London two days hence, and he’d remain in Europe through December with his wife, Fleurine, the Dutch singer, and their three children. A more in-depth conversation would have to take place by phone and email.

Speaking on New York’s WKCR in 2006, Mehldau related that when he was “around 22, maybe four years in New York,” he rediscovered classical music, which he’d played as a child. “I’d lost enough left-hand facility that I thought I had more dexterity in my left hand when I was 12,” he said. Spurred by “a sort of ego or vanity thing,” he immersed himself in recordings and scores, and played piano literature that required the left hand to be more proactive than typical jazz comping. These investigations ultimately led to the gestation of *Highway Rider*.

“I like to read scores like someone else reads a regular book—in the train, in bed if I’m trying to fall asleep, wherever,” Mehldau said. “It’s a great way to get inside a composer’s head; I feel like I’m getting to know the person who wrote it, even if he’s been dead for 200 years. It’s like he’s telling you everything about himself, right there in the room with you. So writing for orchestra came on its own time. The inspiration was cumulative. All the events in my life led to that moment.”

Later, Mehldau emailed a passage from Rilke, first in the original German, then in translation: “Every-thing is gestation and then birth. To let every impression and every germ of feeling complete itself, wholly in itself, in the dark, the unsayable, the unconscious, unreach-

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able by one's own conscious understanding; and then to wait with deep humility and patience for the hour of deliverance, when a new clarity comes: This alone is the artist's life: in comprehension as well as in creation."

"*Highway Rider* is the largest scale thing I've done," Mehldau declared. "I don't mean just the amount of musicians; I mean the aspiration to have formal continuity throughout an extended, multifaceted piece. The process in which I wrote it might be something like writing a novel, in the sense that when you start to write, you are not starting at the beginning, and as you go along, you don't know where it's leading. You have to pay attention, and not overextend yourself by adding too much material—you achieve continuity by vigorously sticking with one central idea. What happens, then, is super cool: At a certain point in writing—maybe about one third of the way—the theme starts to take over. It starts to dictate what you're writing, and, in spooky ways, large-scale connections between the various parts of the whole start connecting to each other, without your effort, by their own accord. I wrote the first piece for *Highway Rider*—it wound up being the title track—in a dressing room when I was touring with Pat Metheny. I let it sit awhile, thinking maybe it could be a trio tune. Then, a month later, in the tour bus with Pat, I got some ideas for the string piece, 'Now You Must Walk Alone.' I saw a thematic connection, and thought

that was interesting and maybe I could exploit it. Then I began to consciously stay with that motif. But the order of the pieces, and more importantly, what I think of as the narrative 'arc' wasn't there yet—it took another year."

Said narrative arc pertains explicitly to travel—the notion of a journey, a life cycle. Since the 2000 trio recording *Places*, the road has been an ongoing trope in Mehldau's work.

"Music travels through time; often we are traveling through space," he said. "So travel works well for me as a metaphor for music. I think that's pretty universal—when you begin a piece, you feel like you're in one place, and when it ends, you have gone somewhere. Or perhaps, like in a few things I've done already, *Highway Rider* included, you've traveled back to where you started, and maybe you've had some kind of gnosis: You're where you were, but you've gained something. Music always expresses itself through the dialectic of a fixed identity and difference: As a piece develops, some part of its identity is constant, but there is also constant change. Likewise, in a journey, there is always the traveler—his or her surroundings change, but he or she remains the same conduit for all of those varied surroundings."

As a teenager, Mehldau discovered the Songbook tunes that would later enter his repertoire through recordings by female singers like Julie London and Peggy Lee; he's described in-

strumental lyricism as striving for a voice-like quality. In 2006, he addressed the way these concerns play out in his musical production, responding to a question on his Germanophilia.

"I was trying to bridge the gap between everything I loved musically, from Brahms in 1865 to Wynton Kelly in 1958," Mehldau said. "I was very concerned then with creating an identity that would somehow mesh together this more European, particularly Germanic Romantic 19th Century sensibility (in some ways) with jazz, which is a more American, 20th century thing (in some ways). One connection that still remains between them is the song—the art songs of Schubert or Schumann, these miniature, perfect 3- or 4-minute creations. To me, there is a real corollary between them and a great jazz performance that can tell a story—Lester Young or Billie Holiday telling a story in a beautiful song. Also pop. Really nice Beatles tunes. All those song-oriented things are miniature, and inhabit a small portion of your life. You don't have to commit an hour-and-a-half to get through it. But really good songs leave you with a feeling of possibility and endlessness."

During this more recent exchange, Mehldau elaborated on the topics of song and voice. "As a pianist you have the limitations of your instrument, and the big one is that the note dies away after it's played," he said. "Still, you have all these models from the human voice, horns and bowed



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Do “classical” and “jazz” sides coexist within Mehldau? Does he enter different mind-spaces in addressing one idiom vis-a-vis the other, or is the process more holistic?

“It doesn't feel holistic, but it is,” he explained. “Basically, my gift is this: I have the ability to synthesize the classical music I'm listening to, studying, and playing, and let it find a way into my conception. I'm an OK classical player, but I never would have made it as a virtuoso concert artist. You have to have steel balls for that; it's just not in my character. For example, a few years back I worked on Prokofiev's seventh piano sonata—a real warhorse ass-kicker—for a few months. I gave up in self-disgust after trying to play it for some friends and completely flailing. But then it seeped into my solo thing—different parts of it at different times. So I never stop learning classical music or exposing myself to new things. Art Tatum, Bud Powell, Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock—each of them let classical music rub off on their jazz playing.”

In the program notes for *Highway Rider*, Mehldau writes that the structure and instru-

mentation mirrors/responds to Richard Strauss' *Metamorphosen*, a civilizational threnody composed in 1945, at the end of World War II.

“*Metamorphosen* is the perfect piece of music for me if there ever was one. It has everything: That thematic economy I mentioned, on a high level, and the perfect marriage between “horizontal” and “vertical” expression—very harmonic and very melodic all at once. The contrapuntal rigor is unparalleled, yet at times the piece can come at you like a big, fat, beautiful series of chords. Strauss' harmonic language at this period in time—and early Schoenberg in pieces like *Pelleas und Mellisande*, and Mahler in his later symphonies, particularly the Ninth and the unfinished Tenth—is a language that I want to inhabit. It's right on the edge of the abyss; yet it's still tonal. There's a tragic, hyper-real feeling to that.”

Scott Yoo, who also conducted *Highway Rider* on the European tour, discovered that the more he lived with the piece, the more he liked it. “I enjoyed conducting it most on the last day,” he said. “That's something that happens with Mozart or Beethoven or Brahms—the really great pieces are the ones you enjoy more as you do them more. I'm as much of a layman on jazz music as you can get, but with each different show, I could see what stayed the same with the group and what changed. For example, Brad had a lot of cadenzas. One of them is the epilogue, and he played it very straight the first time I heard

it. I thought, ‘OK, fine; that makes sense.’ From night to night, the cadenza became more elaborate. Actually, it was very classical. There were times where I thought it was a shame that what he was putting forth wasn't being documented, because he was making up such profound music on the spot. Then I realized, ‘Aha, so this is what jazz is all about.’ The ephemeral quality of something existing in a brief second of time, and then evaporating, never to appear again, that's the whole beauty of it.”

Joshua Redman, in whose quartet Mehldau entered the international jazz conversation in 1994, played “Don't Be Sad,” “The Falcon Will Fly Again” and “Old West” on duo concerts with Mehldau in 2008 and 2009. However, he noted, he had no foreknowledge of the orchestral aspects of *Highway Rider* when he went into the recording session. “Often when I'm soloing, it's in the context of orchestral passages with bold, sometimes dissonant harmonies,” he said. “So it was a wonderful challenge, hearing it for the first time in the studio, to interact and figure out how to make my soloistic voice blend and complement what the orchestra was doing. On the tour, the challenge, night after night, as I gained more insight into how everything fit together, was somehow to approach the music like I was playing it for the first time.

“There's a lot in the piece that's new and groundbreaking, but it sounds like a natural extension and development of all the musical ideas

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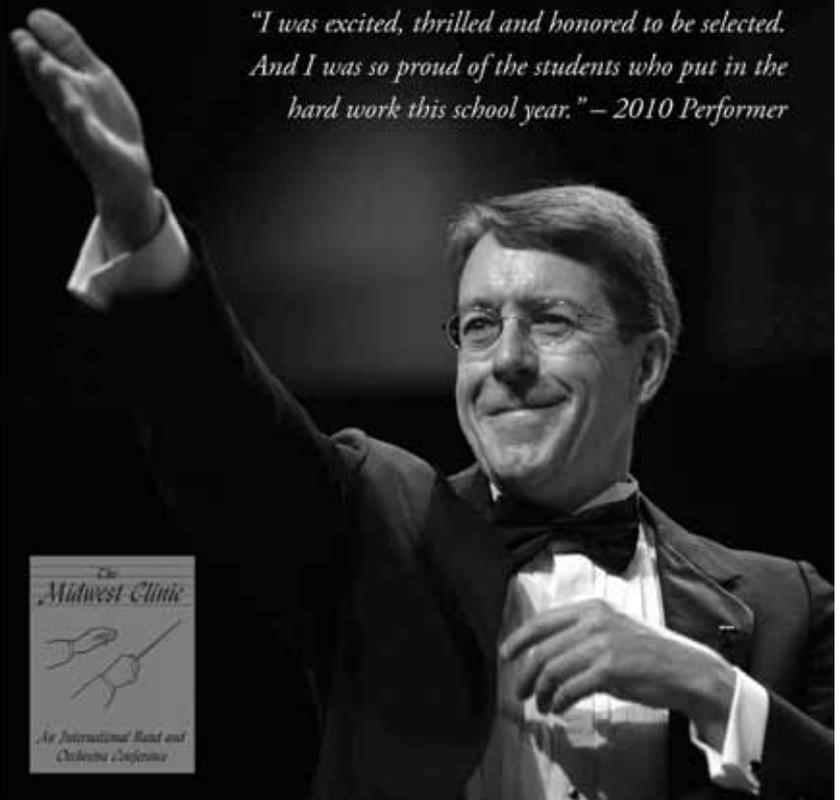
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Back in 2006, Mehdau related that although he was well-conversant in the jazz vocabulary when he arrived at Manhattan's New School in 1988, he didn't have much practical knowledge of how to apply it in a group setting. He added that comping is "part of his definition of being a jazz piano player," that it's "a social, intuitive thing" better learned by osmosis than in the classroom. He observed elder peer-groupers like Larry Goldings and Kevin Hays, and veterans like Cedar Walton and Kenny Barron, noticing what worked and what didn't, and learning on the job with veterans like Jimmy Cobb and contemporaries Peter Bernstein, Mark Turner and Leon Parker. Junior Mance, Mehdau's first teacher at the New School, helped, too. "I told Junior, 'I listened to you on these Dizzy Gillespie records, and your comping is perfect. How do you do that?' He said, 'Well, let's do it.' We sat down, and Junior would comp for me, and then I would comp for him and try to mimic him. Doing these things helped me become a more social musician, versus friends of mine who came to the city but stayed in their practice room the whole time."

Indeed, Mehdau still finds that thoughtful, sensitive comping contributes greatly to his enjoyment of ensemble play, from intimate duet settings to the full orchestra. "Comping is just plain fun," he said. "Think about it: Someone is blowing his or her brains out in front of you, telling a story. What to do? Do you interject? Do you support? OK, you support, but ... do you support strongly like a church choir, or softly like a harp? Or a little of both? It's like playing basketball—you're where you need to be right when your guy needs you to be there. That takes maturity. Comping is also a quick way to find out how a pianist thinks about harmony. You may showcase some worked-out stuff in a solo, but comping will show your actual knowledge of things like voice leading, register considerations, etc."

This being said, the preponderance of Mehdau's schedule until the end of April consists of solo concerts in support of *Live In Marciac*. "I felt like I had something to say solo with *Elegiac Cycle*, but my solo concept wasn't as loose in the concert setting. The looseness—the relaxed thing I have playing trio—kicked in

the next few years and I gradually got drawn to doing it more and more in concert. I put out the first live record, *In Tokyo*, because it represented for me a transition in my solo conception—the end point of something that had developed, and the beginning of something that was hatching. In the same way, *Live In Marciac* is the summation of certain things I've done, with some glimmers of a new conception, which is now in full throttle, I would say.

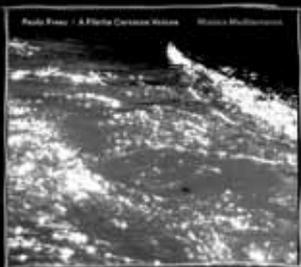
"In the January solo concert I'll intersperse music from the classical repertoire with my own music and talk a little, showing examples of how

various composers have influenced how I write, improvise and arrange other people's tunes. I never take this approach; it's intentionally didactic, and that's not my thing. But I'm doing it in my role as the composer-in-residence at Carnegie Hall. The position is certainly a great honor. A lot of ink is spilled about how the jazz and classical music worlds inform each other, and it's been a tired trope for years—it kind of knocks the danger out of each one. The only way for both genres to inform what you're doing in a meaningful way, whatever kind of musician you are, is to engage deeply in both disciplines."

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Terence Blanchard

NO BOUNDARIES

By Dave Helland

“Trust me: I’m not bragging or complaining,” says Terence Blanchard as an introduction to a list of his recent projects. This February saw the premiere of *Concerto For Roger Dickerson* by the Louisiana Philharmonic. “This was me saying thank you to my composition teacher,” explains Blanchard, who studied with the renowned pianist and educator at Southern University when he was a teen.

“One thing he always said: You have to let the music tell you what it is, and tell you what it means. You have to learn how to listen because ideas are always out there.

“It’s a fine balance between using techniques as a composer to develop an idea versus allowing ideas to present themselves to you. Sometimes you want to work from beginning to end but there’s an idea going, hey, hey, I’m over here.”

Blanchard also worked on director Guy Moshe’s *Bunraku*, which combines ’50s noir with centuries-old Japanese puppet drama, and Anthony Hemingway’s *Red Tails*, about the Tuskegee Airmen, produced by George Lucas. For Opera St. Louis he is composing music for an opera about boxer Emil Griffith, whose knockout of Benny Peret was nationally televised (Peret never regained consciousness). There’s music to be written for a Broadway production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and

films with Chris Rock and Spike Lee as well as another Concord Records release. So there’s always an excuse not to do the dishes.

“No. I wish,” he deadpans.

Blanchard’s role as composer goes back three decades to his stint in the Jazz Messengers—Art Blakey required everyone to write—and widened when Spike Lee hired him to write the scores for *School Daze*, *Do the Right Thing* and *Mo’ Better Blues* in the late ’80s. Commissions to write concertos and for opera are recent, but being a jazz musician proves to be helpful in composing regardless of the project. “It allows me to see ideas and see immediately how to manipulate them,” explains Blanchard. “The very techniques I learned as a composer help in improvisation; it’s give-and-take.

“Composition is the most important thing, to my mind, because composition is how you find yourself. When you compose you have to com-



mit to those notes, you have to commit to those phrases. When you do that you have to make some very distinct decisions about that concept rhythmically, melodically, harmonically. That starts to shape style and form, which also helps your improvisation.” Blanchard offers two criteria for a good composition:

“First, it has to be universal and malleable. That’s the first mark of any great composition; it can cross over to any style. You can twist it up, turn it around and it will be strong.” He mentions Wayne Shorter’s “Ana Maria” as “the kind of tune that will work in any situation.”

Second, a composition needs an idea that is developed, that goes somewhere. “To me, a melody has to reach a logical conclusion.” A tune with a great “A” section but the bridge sounds like another tune is not his idea of good composition; but there are also matters of tempo, singability, memorability. “When a tune has all those different criteria it becomes an inspiration for improvisation.” As an example, he scats Thelonious Monk’s “Rhythm-a-Ning.”

“For me, it’s about music at this point. What it really boils down to is in art you have something you want to express. What’s happening to

me right now in my life is all of the boundaries have been broken down; there are no boundaries anymore. When I would write for film, when I first got in the business, it was, oh, I have to learn to write for orchestra. No, no, no, no. What I’m learning now is I have to learn how to write what it is I want to say no matter who I’m writing for.”

Blanchard’s New Orleans home—shared with his wife, Robin, and their children—has two work spaces. There’s a Yamaha grand piano in the living room. “I like composing there because of the solitude. It’s a calm atmosphere.”

In the attic there is a fully equipped studio with Digital Performer, 5.1 Surround Sound, an assortment of instruments and sound modules with space carved out for a drum booth. This is where he does most of his film scoring.

But even the most fertile mind runs into a dry spell. When that happens to Blanchard he heads for the front porch to watch the St. Charles street-car pass by.

“It’s just matter of relaxing. You’re thinking too much; pressing too hard; trying to force something without letting it happen naturally. I take some time to step away from it. Sometimes when I come back fresh, ideas start to flow again. It’s just matter of getting away from it and not allowing your brain to sit there and fester.”

Blanchard is no homebody. He plays scores of dates each year with his band but also takes part in the rare all-star tour. Last fall he toured Asia with Jeff Watts and Branford Marsalis in support of Tain’s latest release. Several years ago he toured Europe with Herbie Hancock and more recently with the Monterey All-Stars—he was artistic director of the festival—with Benny Green, James Moody and Nnenna Freelon. His tour with Branford Marsalis kicked off at Jazz At Lincoln Center’s Rose Theatre before Christmas and will extend into the spring, their bands taking turns as opening act. Is the jazz scene missing out by not having more of these events?

“No, when those things happen they have to be very special moments. Years ago, there was too much of what you’re talking about: all-star bands that were always touring, and it was very hard for some guys to tour as leaders. That way the opposite happened: You would see all these all-stars together but never have chance to see where their total musical personalities were coming from because you’re not hearing them in their own situations,” explains Blanchard, comparing it to all-star sports teams that never gel into winners in spite of the skill of each player.

So don’t expect each evening’s concert with Marsalis to end with a jam session. “It is something that should happen naturally because you enjoy playing with each other and you have that moment when you don’t want things to end,” Blanchard said. “You say, hey, come out and let’s play something together.”

But don’t be surprised, either: “No, we’re not planning on that, but who knows what will happen. Me and Branford have been really good friends a long time. We’ve always had fun play-

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ing together; that goes back to elementary school at the Loyola Summer Music Camp.”

Another hat Blanchard wears is that of artistic director of the Monk Institute. His chief duties are weeklong sessions every month with the six to eight young musicians who are the Institute’s Fellows. “The whole idea is to find the most innovative and uniquely talented musicians and try to give them a platform to help them develop their uniqueness. The whole idea given to me from Wayne, Herbie and T.S. Monk is that we need more innovators in the business; we need more creative thinkers. That’s been our mandate.”

Blanchard’s sessions with the Monk Fellows focus on improvisation and composition skills as well as general performance. The Fellows perform at Snug Harbor on Tuesday nights; they also stage open jam sessions and conduct classes at local middle schools and high schools.

Blanchard received his MBA from Bu U. (Master of Band Arts under the tutelage of Art “Buhaina” Blakey). “Art talked to me about everything: about being a man, being responsible. The list is endless,” recalls Blanchard, who says the drummer was a major force in his life, pointing out the two of the most important things he learned about being a musician. “He always used to tell us, never speak above or beneath your audience, speak directly to them.

“The other thing was you have to let musi-

cians be who they are. There’s something that made you hire them to begin with. You have to learn to let them be. There’s always a framework you operate under because there will be a concept in place. But inside of that it’s about discovery, and the only way to discover things is to let people go out and do things, make mistakes, learn from their mistakes and move on.

“Art, he never browbeat us or said you have to play this way. He just let us play. He would create a safety net for us, because his personality was so strong musically, that as long as you were up for the challenge you would never falter.”

Blanchard follows Blakey’s example in running his own band. Five years ago when guitarist Lionel Loueke joined his group, Blanchard pledged to “do anything in my power to make sure this guy has a forum to express himself. I’ll do whatever I need to do to make sure he doesn’t feel uncomfortable being who he is.”

It seems to have worked. Loueke signed with Blue Note and has been listed in various categories of both DownBeat polls since ’07, including a string of wins as Rising Star guitarist. It’s an attitude Blanchard applies to the whole band: currently pianist Fabian Almazan, tenor saxist Brice Winston, bassist Joe Sanders and drummer Kendrick Scott.

“I’m always encouraging these guys to do their thing, to stretch. I love it when they bring new ideas to the band. It breathes life into the

music. When you bring in a new piece of music, it changes over the course of time. The guys may add things. Tempos may shift. You may add other little sections.” Still there are limits in the interplay of composed melodies and countermelodies with solo improvisation. Blanchard stresses “paying attention to the concept, to the melodic content of the tune. Don’t totally abandon that; don’t play something arbitrary.”

He compares the interplay of soloist and ensemble to basketball. “All too often you’ve heard about guys who are serious scorers. The thing about those dudes, sometimes their teams don’t make it to the playoffs. But Magic Johnson knew how to take charge and still give everybody room to do their thing. He could see the whole court,” says Blanchard. “That’s the way I think about interaction in a jazz ensemble. When I play my solo, someone may play a phrase that’s interesting. I don’t want to step on that phrase; I want to give them room to do their thing.

“Working bands are really, for me, the cornerstone of the history of this music in terms of its development. Look at any major development in jazz: It’s been very hard for one person to do it by themselves. They always had great support, people to push them, to introduce great ideas in their respective musical styles.”

Living up to the responsibility of the band: This is the engine of innovation in jazz, according to Blanchard. **DB**

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Bob Belden's Spanish Key

By John Ephland // Photos by Jojo Pennebaker

It's a sunny, spring day in May in midtown Manhattan that begins a week of recording. And everybody's waiting for Rabih.

From the podium, the leader croons, "I'm in the oud for love."

With these words of wit that typically go in more than one musical direction at once, Bob Belden commences yet another massive musical adventure. Due out this August, the project is the double-CD *Miles Espanol* (eONE), a recreation of selected material from Miles Davis and Gil Evans' *Sketches Of Spain* along with music written especially for this event. Belden's initial inspiration for it all reflects on his love of history. As he explained in 2010, "Next year—2011—is the 'anniversary' of the Berber/Arab invasion and subjugation of Spain ... 1,300 years ago. This project takes that as a beginning of the actual musical culture of Spain—as it had been a Roman Visigoth outpost, its 'art' culture was Roman/Greek—and paints a cyclorama of color and sound to define the metaphoric progression of history as art through culture via music."

Come again?

Back in New York City, circa 2010, a musical army is forming at the Sear Sound studio. And, crossing the main studio floor is Rabih—Rabih Abou-Kahlil from Beirut, Lebanon. Before you know it, he's sequestered behind a sliding glass door (along with his oud) in a separate room looking in on everyone else. He awaits, along with a sizeable group of other players arranged throughout the main studio, everyone perched and ready to explore their leader's rein-

vention of Gil Evans' arrangement of Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez." Along with harp, woodwinds, percussion and horn sections in tow, Rabih and his oud (a pear-shaped stringed instrument commonly used in Middle Eastern music) are poised, ready to begin.

"Shall we start from the top?" Belden beckons as his arms start to wave, flowing beneath the room's elegant, imposing chandelier.

There's a pause as he motions to acoustic bassist John Benitez on his left, offering some special direction: "Allow the guitar player inside you to transform your instrument into a flamenco bass."

In time, it becomes clear—as the music starts and stops and starts again—that Belden's temperament is ideally suited for this artistic endeavor, his balanced perfectionism expressing seemingly limitless patience.

"Yeah, that's the basic idea."

After many rehearsed parts are played with this section, it all comes together, very quietly, methodically, the music evoking a relaxed, calm yet mysterious world, not unlike Rodrigo's (or Evans') original work of art.

As the next section begins, trumpeters Tim Hagans and Mike Williams are brought in more closely. Belden then takes suggestions from the woodwinds. He responds to their comments, "Play whole notes during the transition." After hearing it, he decides, "It's too dense."

Expressing a new burst of enthusiasm, the entertainer in him begins to crack wise, suggesting a disarming looseness even as the clock (i.e., "meter") ticks away. Just as the oud and oboe state the famous melody, Belden again looks to his left, to where this writer is sitting, grinning: "I'm just thinking of the DownBeat poll, the Miscellaneous Instrument category."

Even with all those starts and stops, the music becomes a mesmerizing Monday morning aural feast, as the oud, harp, bass, oboe, bas-

soon and then bass flute provide their delicate melody lines. What was, just a short while ago, a controlled chaos has suddenly become a flowing musical experience. All the moving, musical parts cohere, with limited, shorthand instructions from Belden. He periodically looks behind him to the control room, seeking confirmation of new directions via eye contact with engineer Richard King and co-producer (for this track as well as "Solea" and "Saeta/The Pan Piper") Robert Sadin.

"OK, let's do it while we've got the vibe."

There's a break, and later the percussionists re-enter. The room now seems swarmed with wild banshees, the mood changing instantly. Belden is challenged to reel them in. What ensues is a loose series of exchanges, some related, some clearly asides. These separate worlds then reconvene as sound-check and camera crews (a video production company is filming the whole shebang) move about, arrangements are checked, and engineer King goes from loose to focused. The inevitable percussion jams stop, and Belden once again takes charge. Getting more signals straight, he pays a lot of attention to everything and everybody, as if waiting for the best moment to restart.

Belden smiles, again, as he now directs the percussion troupe of Alex Acuña (on bongos), Adam Rudolph (cajon) and Brahim Fribgane (dumbek), his body bending at the knees, arms once again waving.

"OK, you wanna do it one more time?"

A medium-tempo jam soon follows.

Suddenly, the music stops. And you can hear a pin drop.

It's the first signs of what will be yet another marvel of planning, logistics and execution.

Indeed, this is familiar territory for the always quixotic all-around troublemaker, a man who sports a highly refined albeit some-



Michael Rabinowitz



Tim Hagans



Chick Corea (left), Ron Carter and Antonio Sanchez



Bob Belden



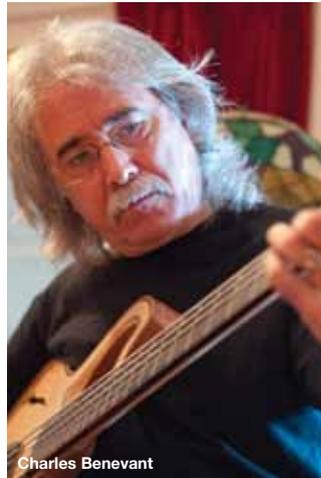
Rabih Abou-Kahlil



Howard Johnson



Jerry Gonzalez



Charles Benevant



Nino Joseles (left) and Chano Dominguez

times bent sense of humor. More significantly, it's Bob Belden's reputation—as an organizer, orchestrator, arranger, composer, bandleader, saxophonist, collaborator, conceptualist and raconteur of the first order—that has brought everyone here. And “everyone,” in this case, includes folks like Chick Corea, Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette and John Scofield, but also lesser-known giants on their respective instruments, such as pianist Chano Domínguez, drummer Acuña and flautist Jorge Pardo. Others on board are familiar names to Belden fans like Tim Hagans, Scott Kinsey and Vince Wilburn Jr. (Miles Davis' nephew). And it is Belden's brainchild to gather up this group, some of whom share a history with Davis along with others who represent the vibrancy of contemporary Spanish music. They come from across the country, around the world and just down the block to be part of what will be an extravaganza of sound, sight and community. (The others who will partake in this musical fiesta include Jerry Gonzalez, John Clark, Lou Marini, Howard Johnson, Charles Pillow, Michael Rabinowitz, Nino Joseles, Edsel Gomez, bagpipe player Christina Pato, Victor Prieto, Charles Benévant, Sonny Fortune and John Riley.)

Belden is dressed casually in faded jeans and a dark striped long-sleeve collared shirt, his always curly, blondish hair topping off a body that's experienced much turmoil in recent years, reducing his torso by more than 100 pounds. Despite

continual health problems, however, he's clearly overjoyed to have all this bustling activity and creative energy surrounding him. And, in what is already becoming yet another example of Belden the orchestrating party host, the “vibe” starts to take on the feel of a reunion, with a cross-pollination of musical types and personalities, the air filled with laughter and much storytelling ... once the players are off in the other room, a room spiked with refreshments, comfortable furniture and all manner of conviviality.

A brief history of other large-scale Belden projects includes such relatively mountainous undertakings as his take on Puccini's *Turandot* (Blue Note), *Miles In India* (combining Eastern and Western musicians, Times Square Records), *Straight To My Heart: The Music Of Sting* and *Black Dahlia* (both Blue Note), the latter “a movie in one's imagination,” created with a 65-piece orchestra.

Two of *Black Dahlia's* collaborators, King and Sadin, are glad to be working behind the glass again. Vital “players” in their own right, Sadin and King express nothing but praise for Belden's style of music-making. Producer of a wide array of musics, including last year's stunning, heartfelt *Art Of Love: Music Of Machaut*, Sadin has been a close colleague and friend of Belden's for more than 15 years, the two having worked together long enough where “shorthand”

and quick visual cues have become the order of the day. “He's well prepared, with a very clear sense of where he's going,” the veteran Sadin says. “And he has a good rapport with the musicians; it's all the things an arranger/producer/musician is supposed to do.

“As it got closer to the project,” Sadin recalls as he sits atop a stool in one of the sound rooms, “Bob realized he was going to be conducting so much, that you need somebody behind the glass keeping a sense of things. Plus, it's a lot to do to have written the music, to be conducting it, conceiving it and just kind of keeping things going, not to mention all the sonic aspects to it. So he asked if I would help, and I was thrilled to do it.”

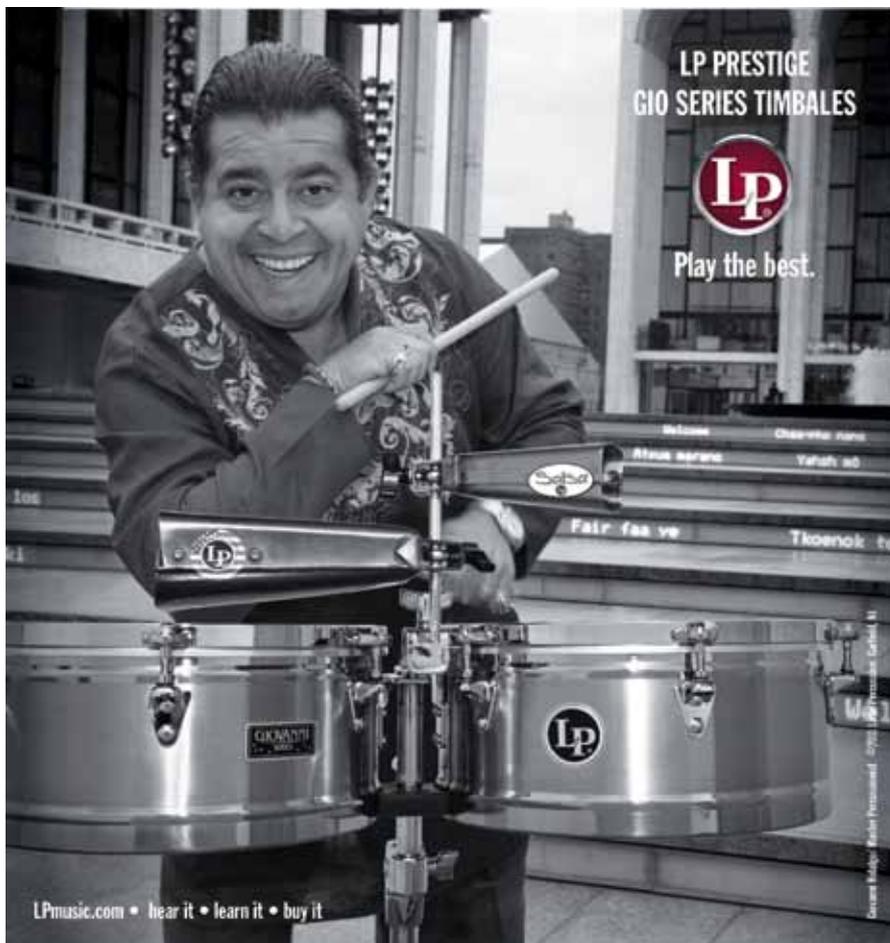
King is another example of someone whose background only served to support Belden's seemingly scheming ways. “In the late '90s,” the youthful, gangly King relates from the comfort of his recliner behind the massive mixing board, “I was working on the mix of a classical album, a piano concerto from Berlin, and Bob wandered into my room at Sony. I think he was doing some remastering of a Miles Davis box set. But the personal project was *Black Dahlia* with the full string section, big band and rhythm section. It was coming up in a few months. He heard my string sounds with the Berlin Philharmonic, and said, ‘That's it. I want to hire you to do my next record.’”

A wealth of information on how the prescient Belden operates, King notes, “Bob always has a big, main concept mapped out in his head, and he's real obscure with everyone around him in terms of what needs to be done when. So, it seems like we're scrambling all the time. But when you get to the end of the project you realize he knew exactly what he was doing right from the start. I've gotten used to that way of working with him. This project as well ... he's keeping everything on one track and one thought. The concept's very strong, but there are many variables along the way.”

He takes a moment to communicate with Belden. “What I do is I pepper him with questions,” King continues. “I draw out of him what I need to know. I ask very specific questions. I don't ask what's happening this week. I say, ‘What's happening in the next three hours?’ I'm on a need-to-know basis; I draw from him what I need to know immediately to finish the day. At the end of the day, I ask what's happening in the morning and we just go from there.”

It should come as no surprise that the man everyone was waiting for, “Mr. Oud,” Rabih Abou-Kahlil, is the musical epitome of what King has just described. “I like recording in a very leisurely fashion,” Rabih casually intones afterwards. “So it's not that strange for me. I think Bob gets a certain feel of where things are going, and I like that. Jazz needs this spirit; that's what I think is missing from a lot of the newer productions—you're pressed for time, it's very serious, academic.”

Pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba, who will come in towards the end of the week, understands this



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method, later stating that when he plays he wants “to do something open; but it must be in some way connected or linked to the concept of the album. What Belden is doing,” Rubalcaba says, “is kind of a revisit to what that record was originally, *Sketches Of Spain*. The good thing is that everybody is totally free to do whatever they want, to paint about that recording, about that music. It’s like bringing that musical experience with Miles at that moment to this moment, without any borders, without any preconceptions.”

Belden himself sounds very Ellingtonian in the way he has structured the music with people in mind. “What you do is you put a melody in front of people who all play a certain thing,” he says. “It’s what I call human orchestration, where the individual does a certain thing, they play a phrase a certain way, they play a rhythm a certain way, their tone is a certain tone. If you can imagine those people working in a certain context together, then you can put these things together.”

There is a standard form to work from, according to Belden, but “nothing is written down completely where you have to play this note at that exact spot.” Instead, he spells it out like this: “Here’s a melody, here’s the harmonic idea. What are you going to do with it?”

Later, when a fair amount of music has already been recorded, Belden speaks more broadly about the setting and style. “There are no rules,” he states baldly. “Most of the stuff is new, but with the larger ensembles, with all the folk music that’s associated with Miles, we have ‘Flamenco Sketches,’ ‘Teo’ and ‘Solea,’” among other tunes. “They’re all back here partying, man,” Belden admits, referring to the rooms away from the studio floor. “It’s like a hang. At first, it took them a minute to get used to the concept: ‘Like, wow, we can just sorta play, and do this?’ And I said, ‘Yeah.’ And now, it’s like a free-for-all; they just all want to be part of it.”

And a part of it everyone is, including percussionist Acuña, a player Belden met in Denver back in the mid-1970s when Acuña was flying high with Weather Report and Belden was with the Woody Herman band. A call out of the blue (and the first contact they’ve had since those heady days) was all it took to get him here. An obvious bonus to these sessions is the time to schmooze and talk shop. “The music that we’ve been recording has been very full of life,” Acuña says. “Not only that, the connections ... I got everybody’s numbers and they got my numbers, and we’re gonna continue to do some things.”

Fresh from a head-spinning session with Rubalcaba and Ron Carter, Acuña (playing drums) can hardly contain himself. “So, I’m in the middle of those two guys, playing with them,” he exclaims. “Wow! And I didn’t know till I got here. That’s the kind of thing that Bob has been creating these days. How can you orchestrate that? How can you premeditate that?”

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Thinking Big

by Bob Belden

To be able to produce concept recordings that are constructed in the way that I do requires a few things that can't be taught but can be developed. One is trust. Large-scale productions depend on the producer/creator's ability to instill trust in the company that is spending a very large amount of money (between \$100–300K depending on scope) on a singular project. Trust that you will get the job done on time and on budget and without enhancing your own personal fortune at the expense of quality or the reputation of the musicians and the company. If you add to the mix the abstract nature of my concepts, you then understand the deep level of trust you must have. You must instill the same level of trust with the musicians, the managers and agents (and the wives and girlfriends!).

You need to have partners. I can produce the music based on my idea, but I can't produce the film or book the band on a tour or get hotel rooms for the sessions. So if you partner with another person, such as Eli Cane, who brings a similar set of skills essential to the production, the job is less daunting. Eli mixes film and music so we can communicate simply on complex production issues.

If you know that a media company has the resources to fund an idea, then you must actually think about what works within the framework of that individual company or with that A&R person. Sometimes a company will approach you but this rarely happens to me; as a rule I decide on what project I want to create in that environment and then pursue the correct avenue to obtain funding. If you know personally the people in the various companies, then you can eliminate that initial barrier of getting time to make your "pitch." Chuck Mitchell at eONE and I have had a musical and personal relationship going back to our days working on projects for Verve, him in the capacity as president of the label and me as a producer, arranger and reissue producer. We've maintained our friendship over the years, and, as the industry changed, we've been able to discuss various production and marketing ideas in the context of progressive jazz music and then apply our ideas to an actual project.

I met with Joan Cararach, the producer of the Barcelona Jazz Festival, at the Jazz Standard in January of 2010, and we discussed ideas about a live show at the festival. I mentioned a concept called "Miles Espanol," and he liked the idea. We started discussing ideas and musicians. I rethought the project as a recording concept, and in February I met with Chuck at his office and made the pitch. He liked the idea and I was then instructed to create a budget (in film this is called "green lighting a project"). So between February and late April, I constructed the basic production outline.

The next step was creating the budget,

and this is what separates the professionals from the hacks. I actually imagined the entire process in my mind, the imagined flights and cab rides, the time in the studio. I calculated the time of each process, then estimated as close as possible the artist fees, airline fees, recording fees, unimagined expenses and so on until I had a complete map of the production from a logistical standpoint cemented in my mind with costs and timelines detailed to the minute and penny.

You then have to help guide the musicians into their comfort zone, either by providing a piano in the hotel to compose with or to get the "dream band" on the track for the artist. You have to be open to suggestions, and if you trust the musicians, the suggestions enhance the music tenfold.

I have made a conscious effort to approach a recording project like a movie project in that I have interwoven film-production concepts within the production of the music, often merging the purposes, so that there is a unity of thought between the aural and visual. *Miles Espanol* was fashioned from the standpoint of making a film about the music and the way it is created, a "documentary" of sorts, but with multiple media platforms for presentation and promotion.

One also has to look at this kind of production from this multiple-media viewpoint. You have the actual audio recording, the promotional video, the documentary video, then the packaging (physical CD/DVD, iTunes and iPad applications). Then there's the touring and the potential for television (PBS or private channel). All of this has to be considered before you make any request of any major company to invest in an idea based on an obscure historical reference (the Berber invasion of Spain in 711 was part of my overview of the project) or elegance (just making the title of the concept easy to perceive). Then there are mundane things like paying the musicians (on time!), flying them in, car from airport to hotel, per diem, rentals, special needs. In this case, for 34 people!

This can only be accomplished if the producer is the "artist," in that I take complete responsibility for engaging the musicians in my own musical endeavor. This makes it so that none of the production elements are in the minds of the actual artists, the musicians who are recording.

In the end, one can create an international concert attraction, a concept that will perform in concert halls and large jazz festivals around the world. In this environment jazz can survive as a viable and visible art form on an international scale.

This is an evolution of my own life as a producer and musician and has nothing to do with any other producer in jazz or the music biz in general. **DB**

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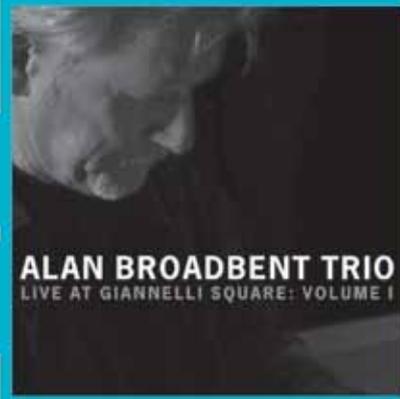
medley, he echoes what is becoming a dominant theme about their leader's style. "Bob gives the freedom to the musician to express himself," he says. With a background in classical music, Castaneda notes, "It's great to play what a composer writes. But when he gives you an idea and you just play what you feel in your heart, that's when everything you know becomes new and fresh, and you play your essence."

It was Jack DeJohnette who offered Belden a new idea early on that changed much that was to come. "The original idea of *Miles Espanol* was to have different people associated with Miles come in and rearrange some of those original compositions," says DeJohnette. "Then I said to Bob, 'Why don't you take it a little step further, and have each one who comes in and rearranges a piece also write something in a Spanish vein?' He thought it was a great idea, to have people come in with pieces but develop the music and leave it open to improvisation and discussion, develop it and record it." DeJohnette's "Spantango" ends up going through just such a process midway through the week. Featuring killer piano player Chano Dominguez, stalwart bassist Eddie Gomez and yet another amazing percussionist in Luisito Quintero, the song's full emergence becomes an object lesson in on-the-spot creativity.

"This process is not unlike how Miles did things like *Bitches Brew*, not having too much complicated music but to have the players, in essence, come together and birth a new conception," says the drummer, who was one of those players for the now legendary 1969 sessions.

Of all the people here, no one knows Belden better than trumpeter Tim Hagans. With a shared history going back to 1989, Hagans also compares his work with Davis. Starting at a time when their music was all pre-prepared charts with the Bob Belden Ensemble, Hagans notes, "Bob has come in with a vision and ideas that he just relays to the musicians. And after several takes we realize that vision that he has. Everybody gets some lead sheets and some instructions. And, of course, he takes a lot of his cues musically and production-wise from Miles Davis, when Miles would just walk into the studio and the tape would roll. And he trusts the musicians and they trust him. He handpicks those that he can work with in this fashion. He's an expert at putting everyone at ease. He just says, 'Do what you normally do and I'll set up the vibe around it so that you feel comfortable.'"

Miles Espanol, among many things, asserts a model for how music can be developed, documented and marketed (see sidebar). Formerly a member of Nonesuch Records' production department, Eli Cane has gone on to create a film production company, Normal Life Pictures, the company now documenting *Miles Espanol* (with a possible DVD). Cane, serving as project coordinator, is also handling logistics for everyone coming and going, and everything



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in between. Reflecting on his role and the innovations they've come up with, he says, "Bob wanted to think about novel approaches to making this record, and so my involvement—a sort of hybrid of session and film producer—made sense. In the end, it was about creating a multi-faceted project: Pay the film company a flat fee, and they deliver an epk [electronic press kit], a mini-doc for iTunes, complete takes of several tunes and two discs worth of recorded material.

"For some marketing folks," Cane emphasizes, "the multi-platform aspect of a record isn't a bonus, it's a necessity. And if that's the case, it makes a lot of sense to film it while it's happening, not as an afterthought. We ended up with about 60 hours of footage, so there are a lot of possibilities for things to make. Making the record simultaneously with the film, and with the same mindset, is something I think Bob, in his search to find new ways to make and listen and talk about music, is really interested in."

At press time, the prospects of a world tour featuring a core band with special additions was being negotiated. "The entire process, from idea to pitch to financing to production to media-content creation to tours to packaging, are all part of the plan," Belden says. "To take a simple idea and turn it into something satisfying for all parties—the investor, the musicians, agents, festival promoters, TV, media and, most importantly, the audience."

And, speaking of investors, *Miles Espanol* is yet another example of Belden's penchant for working outside the system. "This is what you have to create to compete with the past and the entertainment industry ... make overpowering artistic productions."

Another Belden project, *Animation Asiento*, will be released in April on the U.K.-based electronica label Rare Noise Records. Along with Belden, the musicians included in the project are Tim Hagans, Scott Kinsey (both on *Miles Espanol*), Matthew Garrison, Guy Licata and DJ Logic. Also scheduled for 2011 is a project called *Coltrane Afrique*, an exploration of the music of John Coltrane with African textures.

Coming in for the weekend, and final days of recording, regular guest Chick Corea is now joined by DeJohette, Eddie Gomez and Scofield, whose "El Swing" now becomes the focus in the studio. "We just did a real nice take; everyone was smiling, too," Corea notes. "The first take was sensitive 'cause we were learning the song, and then the second take ... we knew it a little bit so there were more risks, chances taken."

"I wrote 'El Swing' with those musicians in mind," Scofield comments from behind the mixing board, referring to Corea, Gomez and DeJohette. "It has a Spanish feel, but it's a swinging tune. We talked about the chords for a

second, and then, within a few minutes we had done the first take." Colleagues since the early '80s, Scofield says, "Some producers try and produce when the music's already good, and Bob just lets it happen. He always knows the right thing to do, or when to not do something. He's completely organic."

A native of Mexico City, drummer Antonio Sanchez's first experience working with Belden on the last day of recording also included Jorge Pardo, Corea and Carter on Corea's flamenco-flavored "Trampolin." "Chick's tunes are so well-written," Sanchez remarks. "They kind of play themselves out, the structure is so strong, yet they're easy to play."

In the midst of all the activity, with all the musicians who have come and gone, the central voice, sound and musical personality remains Bob Belden. Unlike Miles Davis and Gil Evans sharing the spotlight, however (when he hasn't been conducting or playing tympani and marimba), Belden has been the man behind the curtain, the understated star, the center of gravity around which everything ultimately revolves.

Indeed, there were times when he wasn't even there, trusting his colleagues to get the job done, creating a musical mechanism capable of running on its own.

In the end, Belden's style seems to revolve around one created design: "When there are no rules ... it's perfect." **DB**

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CHARLES MINGUS

Changed Man?

By Mike Hennessey // May 13, 1971

As a “cauldron of emotions”—which an American critic once called him—Charles Mingus, a true giant of jazz, seemed to have gone a little off the boil. He sat in the restaurant in London’s St. Martin’s Lane like a sagging Buddha, contemplating half a lobster with a certain mournful enthusiasm and looking tired and resigned—a million moods away from Mingus the enfant terrible of the ’50s, the man who was so frequently at the center of controversy.

And when this great man said softly, with deep melancholy, that fighting to get just appreciation and acknowledgement for black creativity was a “waste of time,” the sadness in the atmosphere was almost

oppressive. When a man like Mingus stops fighting, thinking people everywhere have cause to reflect on the agony and fearfulness of a cultural burden massive enough to



sap even his seemingly unquenchable spirit.

Mingus today seems a weary man, a sad man, a lonely man—and, I feel, a disillusioned man. In his colorful career as a musician, composer and bandleader, he has fought with great conviction and tenacity for a better deal for the black artist and has constantly condemned racial injustice. (And this without bigotry, because he has used many white musicians including Jimmy Knepper, Bill Evans and, currently, Bobby Jones in his bands.)

But now, it seems, he has come to terms with the realization that a change of face is a matter of a moment, but a change of heart can take several lifetimes.

Amid all this despondency, however, there is a brighter side—represented by Mingus' own music, which was acknowledged by many critics during the band's recent European and Japanese trips, as some of the most vital and rewarding small group jazz to be heard anywhere.

In a career spanning more than 30 years, Mingus, now 48, has made a major contribution to the evolution of jazz. His music, a personal, earthy and colorful compound of such disparate influences as Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Art Tatum, gospel songs and modern European musical forms, is powerfully emotional and richly varied.

Mingus makes dramatic use of vocal cries, dissonance, and tempo and time signature changes. If his music today sounds pretty orthodox, it is almost certainly because the ear of the jazz public has become more adjusted to free music.

Mingus recalls: "Barry Ulanov used to call me avant-garde 25 years ago."

Certainly Mingus has explored music with the same courage and spirit he has shown in defending the cause of the black artist—but, not unnaturally, his music has flourished while his political and social initiatives have constantly run up against an unyielding wall of prejudice or indifference.

His attempts to launch a record label giving black artists a fair deal were soon frustrated, as was his endeavor in 1960 to establish a rival annual jazz

festival at Newport.

He even abandoned music once to work in the post office, but the advent of Charlie Parker brought him eagerly back.

If you ask him whether he is disillusioned with the music business he replies: "It is not a business, it is a racket," and that tells it all.

But, if nothing else, Mingus' Debut record company was responsible for one of the most remarkable recordings in the history of jazz—the *Jazz at Massey Hall* concert in May 1953 which featured Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Bud Powell and Mingus. That recording is a milestone.

Recalling it, Mingus says: "That concert was recorded on professional equipment—not an ordinary home tape recorder, as some people have suggested. But we didn't have the best engineer. I intended to keep the master tape for 10 years and then sell it for \$25,000, but the record was put on Debut.

"The Massey Hall gig was mine—a guy wrote from Toronto asking me to bring a band up, so I got the musicians together. It was the only time that band ever played together although I played with Bird afterwards in Boston. Each guy asked for the amount of bread he needed, and the highest paid guy was Bird. I don't know how much Bud got paid, but I don't suppose he saw the money.

"I also remember complaining to Dizzy that there were no bass solos on any of the numbers, and he got wild and violent."

Mingus paused, registered some pain at recalling the past, took another hefty swig from a glass of lager beer and lime and got on with his meal.

Interviewing him is not the easiest task in the world, since he is manifestly reluctant to elaborate on his answers to questions and, when he does, his comments are often barely audible.

Although he acknowledges Parker's overall contribution to music, Mingus says he was not influenced by Bird. "Maybe, like me, he listened to Tatum," he says. "I never tried to imitate Bird. And I wouldn't say his music lives on. When you're dead you're dead.

"He made a big contribution. But so did Harry Carney and J.J. (Johnson) and Fats Navarro and Freddie Webster and Thad Jones . . ."

The lobster now in ruins, Mingus began to attack apple pie and custard with rare vigor and called for a second pint of lager and lime.

After a short hiatus, I asked him for his views on pop music. Perhaps predictably, he was devastatingly antagonistic: "I don't pay any attention to pop and rock. I just don't think about it. It just makes no impression on me at all," he said.

His preferred listening today is Duke Ellington and Beethoven string quartets, and when you ask him who he particularly digs in jazz he looks a little baleful and says: "I don't call my music jazz. Jazz has come to mean the music of second-class citizenship. It means nigger music. Jazz is a word which separates the black musician from the money. I just play and dig music. Good music."

And that doesn't permit compromise. Going through a short list of musicians and their work evoked some terse and surprising replies.

Miles?

"The stuff he's doing now is bullshit."

John Lewis?

"Yeah, maybe if he writes something, but I've had enough of the small group."

Bill Evans?

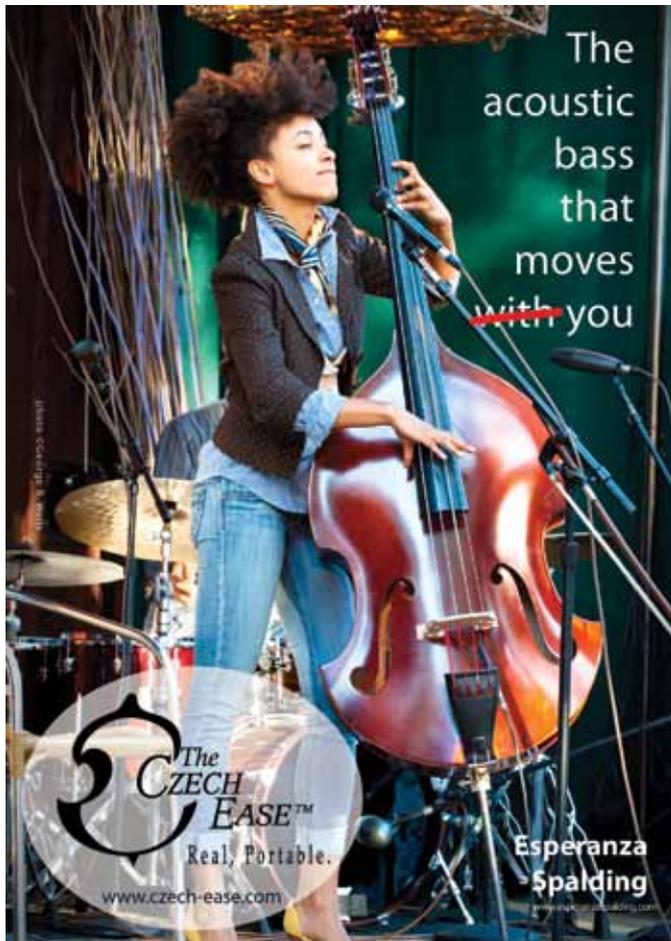
"He was in my band 15 years ago with Knepper and Clarence Shaw and Shafi Hadi. We made some sides for Bethlehem, including 'Celia.'" But Mingus offered no evaluation.

"What do you think of Thelonious Monk?" I asked.

"I never think of Monk. Or maybe now and again he crosses my mind," he said for the first time with the slightest trace of a smile. "I like his playing. I worked with him, Bird and Roy Haynes at the Open Door in the early '50s."

Ornette Coleman?"

"He ain't working that much. When it comes to free music, I have a record on Candid which is complete freedom. *Mingus, Mingus, Mingus*, with Eric Dolphy, Ted Curson and Danny Richmond."



Freddie Hubbard?"

"Never heard of him."

More silence as Mingus puts away the rest of the apple pie and calls for more lager.

I risked a question about his reputation as a sore-headed bear on the stand, and asked why Jaki Byard had sworn at one time never to work with him again.

"I'm not hard to get along with," he said. "The reason Jaki got mad was because on that European trip with Eric [Dolph] we had a television show scheduled in Liège, Belgium. It was in the contract as part of the deal but Jaki wanted extra money. He was on salary and I had to tell him that the TV money just paid our trip over. I could do nothing. That's why he got sore."

Mingus sighed a mighty sigh, drained his glass and sat back in his seat. And then—for the first time in the interview—he volunteered a comment, clearly expecting that it would terminate the interview.

"The book I started 20 years ago says everything I want to say. It's coming out in April." This will be his autobiography, *Beneath the Underdog*, published by Knopf.

As we waited for the bill, I suggested he seemed more relaxed than most people gave him credit for, and he answered: "Not relaxed; just tired. I quit after Monterey in 1969—everybody should retire sometime. But I don't have enough to live on—otherwise I wouldn't still be playing. I had to come back just to make a living."

He said he had written a couple of hundred tunes which should be bringing him money, "but they haven't been handled right." Now he wants to write for a symphony orchestra. "Most of the things I've written are not what I really want to do. When I write what I really want to write, nobody can play it."

It is difficult to believe, as Mingus insists, that he gets little pleasure from his playing and none at all from the acclaim it has received. But he claims he would be just as happy playing with no audience ("I could work out new tunes") and even says he is tempted sometimes to go back to work in the post office. ("I enjoyed working with those sacks—the exercise was good.") And again comes that flicker of a tongue-in-cheek smile.

He doesn't feel the music business has been good to him and feels racial discrimination will never improve. "They'll never open up the studios to black musicians," he said.

He attributes the decline of the jazz club scene to the fact that the owners and promoters wanted to take all the money and exploit the black musicians.

When I suggested that certain musicians might sometimes have been at fault, arriving late or being high on the stand, Mingus' "No" was quite emphatic, brooking no argument.

"The audiences like it that way because that's what jazz is. I remember Monk came into the Jazz Gallery one night an hour-and-a-half late, and the people stood up and applauded him. They're not bitter. That's the kind of thing they expect from time to time."

On the subject of the narcotics scourge that hit so many of his contemporaries, Mingus said he didn't know why they got hooked. ("Bird didn't play as good when he was high.") But then he added, "Nine out of 10 doctors are junkies. Musicians rank about ninth on the list, yet they're always the scapegoats."

As we walked out into the London dusk I asked whom he would choose if he could put together an ideal band. His choices were mildly surprising.

"I'd pick Ernie Royal, Jerome Richardson, Jaki Byard and . . . it would have to be Danny Richmond. Elvin (Jones) and Max (Roach) couldn't—or wouldn't—play my music."

Until he gets the chance to record with that dream group, he considers his most satisfying album *The Black Saints And The Sinner Lady* on Impulse.

We reached his hotel. Mingus shook hands absently and his broad back disappeared through the door—a man as wide as a coal barge, and still intimidating as an interview prospect.

But—though you may choke on the cliché—beneath the gruff and truculent exterior is the spirit of a gentle and sensitive man, a man who has given a great deal more to music than music has given back to him. **DB**

RONDI CHARLESTON

WHO KNOWS WHERE THE TIME GOES

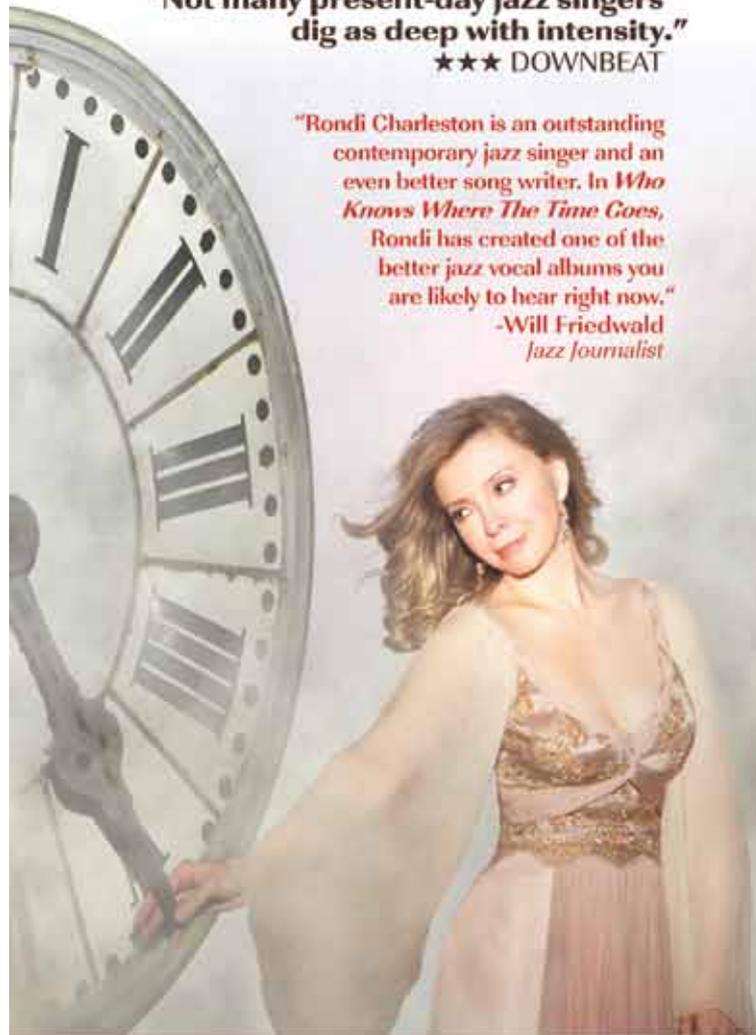
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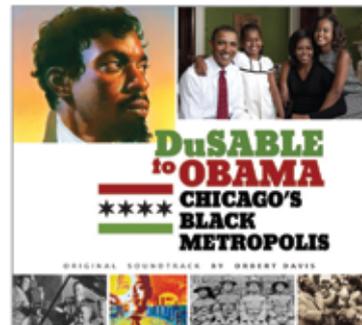
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Pianist Chen's Jazz Focus Sparks Musical Transformation

In making the switch from polished classical student to full-time jazz performer, Jo-Yu Chen demonstrated patience and technical skill. Her most important asset, however, was confidence.

Chen grew up in Taiwan listening exclusively to classical composers—the Romantics were her favorites—and this intense study shone through in her piano and oboe technique. So absolute was her classical training that when she traveled to New York at 16 to study at Juilliard and train as a symphonic oboist, she had never heard any other music.

“After I came to New York, there were a lot of genres that I could check out,” Chen said. “That made me want to explore more.”

A Baroque-influenced piece by Keith Jarrett set Chen's career on a different path. This was classical music in a jazz space, and the young pianist realized that ideas she studied in Taiwan could be applied to this exciting American genre—even though she grew up without the slightest subconscious bits of swing and bebop that Americans might hear while going about their daily lives.

After receiving a Ph.D. in music education from Columbia University's Teachers College, she enrolled in the New School and began tak-

ing piano lessons from Sam Yahel. Chen came to him completely raw—she knew her way around the piano, but the rhythms and improvisation of jazz were foreign to her.

“When you step into a world that's not your world and you don't even know what you don't know, it can be very intimidating, and it can make it hard for you to be productive,” said Yahel, who added that Chen jumped into this new world with tenacity. “She's a fast learner, and she's very focused.”

Even with a clear goal in sight, it wasn't easy for her to stay on the same level with students who had been analyzing jazz for most of their lives. She said that her biggest challenge at the New School was how to play with a drummer.

Writing compositions that blended a classical sense of melody with improvisation gave her the confidence to pursue jazz on a professional level. Her debut CD, which Yahel produced, included five originals and a Taiwanese folk tune. Released in 2009, *Obsession* featured bassist Chris Tordini and drummer Tommy Crane, who are now part of her touring band. The chemistry of a working jazz group is another lesson that Chen learned in New York.

Chen began recording a new batch of compositions a few months ago for her sophomore



album. Yahel was again at the controls, pushing Chen to put out the best possible work. She brought more originals with her this time—classically structured songs with easily ingrained melodies.

“Sometimes I ask myself if I can recall a tune when I get home after checking out some jazz gig,” Chen said. “I want to write songs—something that I can sing along to and something people can remember.”

—Jon Ross



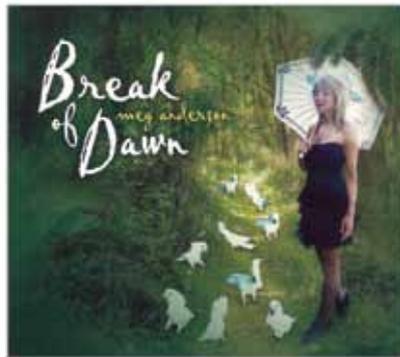
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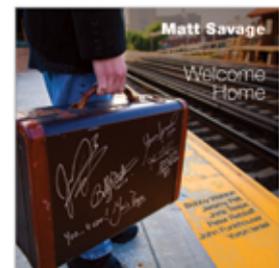
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Drummer Amendola Layers Effects, Challenges Audiences

About 20 years ago, while home for summer break from Berklee College of Music, Scott Amendola failed an audition with pianist Michel Camilo. The experience changed the course of his music.

Until that afternoon, the New Jersey native had emulated Dave Weckl and other '80s jazz-rock drummers. Amendola played a kit with four or five tom-toms and up to a half-dozen cymbals. Day after day he practiced technically challenging patterns at demanding tempos, a regimen of ten lasting 12 hours.

While preparing for his audition, Amendola lost interest not just in the music, but also his own approach. "What crossed my mind is I don't hear the music that way," he recalled. "I'm not that drummer."

Auditioning the next day in New York, Amendola emphasized creativity over flashy chops. During a ballad he stood up and scraped the cymbals with the tips of his drumsticks; the resulting overtones created a jarring effect.

"I felt this is what I'm supposed to be doing," he said. "It was almost like becoming an adult, in a way."

Amendola will celebrate his 19th year in the San Francisco Bay area this spring. His drum kit has shrunk to a four-piece and his focus has

broadened. Known for working with the Nels Cline Singers and TJ Kirk, Amendola leads several groups: a quintet featuring Jenny Scheinman and separate duos alongside an organ player and a guitar player; his albums include a trio date (with a clarinetist) spotlighting Thelonious Monk's repertoire.

Drummer Dan Rieser, Amendola's friend since their days at Berklee, isn't surprised by Amendola's wide-ranging sensibilities. "Sometimes I've heard him on a gig and it's so loud it's almost painful," Rieser said. "But it's so musical and it's so emotional, and it always seems totally appropriate. But I've also heard him play at a whisper."

Amendola self-released his recent *Lift* (SAZi) after two previous CDs on Cryptogramophone. Alongside guitarist Jeff Parker and bassist John Shifflett, the trio's music encompasses lyrical melodies, dissonant riffs and layers of electronic sounds that Amendola triggers using eight different devices.

Lift typifies a brand of jazz not belonging to one type of audience. The highlights include "The Knife," an instrumental suggesting rockabilly and surf music. While discussing influences, Amendola recalls a gig in which he performed with Nels Cline last summer at the



Solid Sound Festival. Presented by the rock group Wilco at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Amendola said, "The range of ages of the people there was just phenomenal, and that's what it's about—trying to get people to like your music."

Amendola books his own bands at rock venues. Such rooms attract audiences that typically avoid pricey clubs and concert halls. "You'll play a Thelonious Monk song at a rock club, and people love it because they like music," he said. "However, they want to be able to have it present in their environment." —Eric Fine

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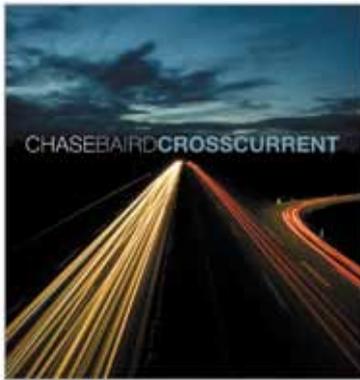
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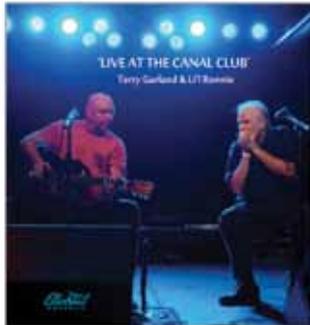
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Joe Lovano Us Five *Bird Songs*

BLUE NOTE 05861

★★★★

What a smart idea, to recontextualize Charlie Parker's music in the lyrical, song-based continuum he no doubt thought of himself as living in, rather than as the work of an angular, "radical" hero, frozen in the past. And what better guy to do the job than Joe Lovano, a supremely lyrical, song-based player himself, whose warm sound, melodic gifts and unique rhythmic fluidity effortlessly envelope Parker's repertoire like a bear giving Bird a big hug. Though the band occasionally rambles, and the two-drummer setup gets a bit distracting at times, this project sparkles, normalizing Parker at the same time as illuminating—through several brilliant devices—aspects of his compositions and style we've become blind to through overexposure.

Slowing "Donna Lee" and "Moose The Mooche" to a crawl is particularly brilliant, since speed was such a bebop ideal. The former is, after all, only "Indiana" in disguise, and Lovano caresses the melody as if he were playing "Stardust." On the latter (based on "I Got Rhythm"), he spins into swing time and pianist James Weidman exhibits a graceful sense of phrasing. "Blues Collage," a brave foray that recalls Lennie Tristano, makes a fugue of three Bird blues, played simultaneously on alto saxophone, piano and bass. It comes and goes in a flash and when it's over you shake your head and say, "Huh? I think I'd like to hear that again." The band takes two stabs at "Yardbird Suite," the first the loopy "Birdyard," with Lovano playing the double-soprano he calls the autochrome (not the only reference to Rahsaan Roland Kirk here; Lovano's opening vibra-



to on "Ko Ko" is pure Kirk) and the rhythm section changing keys with abandon. The "straight" version, rubato, is like a little symphonette. Lovano's lengthy deconstruction of the intro to "Ko Ko" is breathtaking, as snatches of that starburst repeatedly interrupt his lines.

The band's calypso-goosed version of "Barbados" came as a natural inspiration while playing on that island, and Latin rhythms infuse much of the playing here, not only on that one, but the happy opener, "Passport"; Lovano references

the choppy bite and throaty squalls of Sonny Rollins on both. The sprightly percussion of a Brazilian samba school sneaks into "Dewey Square," though the double-drum feature closing the track feels arbitrary and unrelated to the tune. The percussion gets a little annoying on Lovano's mezzo soprano saxophone outing on "Lover Man," too, though the lift he gives that tune—associated with so much pain in the Bird saga—is a nice touch. Gifted bassist Esperanza Spalding's warm, fleet solo is a treat.

In much the same way James Joyce made readers hear the English language in the context of its history, Lovano has shined a light on a musical language we all speak today, but whose particulars we may have become numb to. Great work.

—Paul de Barros

Bird Songs: Passport; Donna Lee; Barbados; Moose The Mooche; Lover Man; Birdyard; Ko Ko; Blues Collage; Dexterity; Dewey Square; Yardbird Suite. (65:33)

Personnel: Joe Lovano, tenor saxophone, alto saxophone, autochrome, mezzosoprano saxophone; James Weidman, piano; Esperanza Spalding, bass; Otis Brown III, Francisco Mela, drums.

Ordering info: bluenote.com

Kevin Eubanks

Zen Food

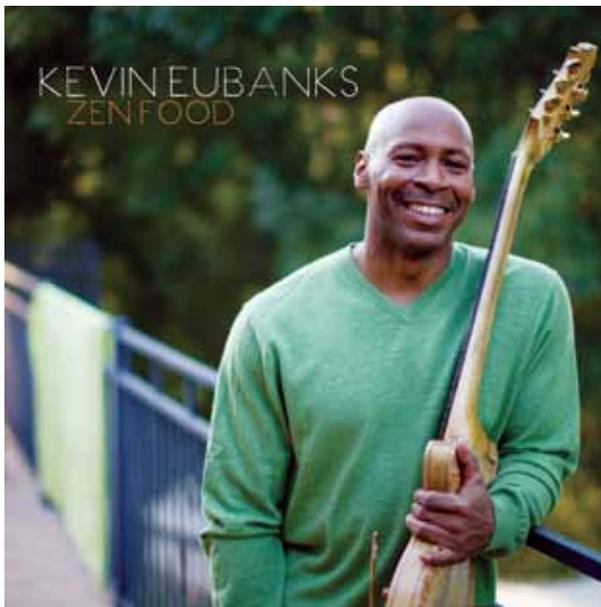
MACK AVENUE 1054

★★★

Some years ago I gave five stars to a Doc Severinsen CD by the old “Tonight Show” big band. Perhaps more than it had coming, but it seemed a rousing account of some familiar swing staples. And familiarity, especially well rendered, tends to seduce critical rectitude.

Here Kevin Eubanks, Severinsen’s principal successor, offers his first post-“Tonight” effort, and I find myself a little less seduced. The band is Eubanks’ working quintet from the local Baked Potato, and it’s as formed and polished a unit as you’d expect rising from the cream of the Los Angeles music scene. There’s no trading on the “Tonight Show” either. So Eubanks, whose profile under Jay Leno was fairly utilitarian, anyway, takes the freedom to play with the kind of ideas he was thinking about when the cameras were off.

The result builds on 10 originals of the contemporary mainstream variety: well-burnished, atmospheric silhouettes in the contemporary mainstream that one often hears more easily than listens to. It’s not that Eubanks isn’t supremely versatile and skilled. He deploys mul-



tipple ensemble themes and interlocking tempo shifts that give his pieces a sense of architectural exactitude and structure. The short but eager motifs of “Dancing Sea” and “Spider Monkey Café” become memorable by sheer weight of repetition—10 times in five minutes for the former—then are forgotten. But then, gauging original music can often be a fool’s game.

“Dirty Monk” begins reflectively, taking pleasure in its own sound. It then morphs into the barroom bluesiness of a Friday night road-

house. Gary Elkins’ piano is slinky and sly, and saxophonist Bill Pierce rolls in with a sweeping, bump-and-grind tenor before everything sinks back into tranquility. It’s a modestly rousing performance in an otherwise soft set. Pierce’s most animated work is on “Los Angeles,” a fast, straight-up romp that remains the truest test track for any tenor. “6/8” also offers some fairly exciting guitar-tenor interaction and a deft interlude of uplifting brushwork from Marvin Smith. Eubanks’ talents make short work of such intense tempos, though when he occasionally doubles up, his lines become clogged and immobile.

“Adoration” is a quiet duet between Eubanks (at his most pensive) and Elkins, while “I Remember Loving You” is so dreamy it almost nods off. But such gauzy tempos give Eubanks the open space to let notes bend and flex into soft sinewy curves. Weakest of the slower pieces is “G.G.,” a two-note theme that never changes key or seems to stop sighing. Though Eubanks and Pierce play against it a bit, the main lesson is that little can come of pushing an F against a C for four minutes.

—John McDonough

Zen Food: The Dancing Sea; Spider Monkey Café; The Dirty Monk; Adoration; Los Angeles; I Remember Loving You; 6/8; G.G.; Offering; Das It. (59:16)

Personnel: Kevin Eubanks, guitar; Bill Pierce, saxophone; Gary Elkins, keyboards; Rene Camacho, bass; Marvin Smith, drums.

Ordering info: mackavenue.com

Wadada Leo Smith/ Ed Blackwell

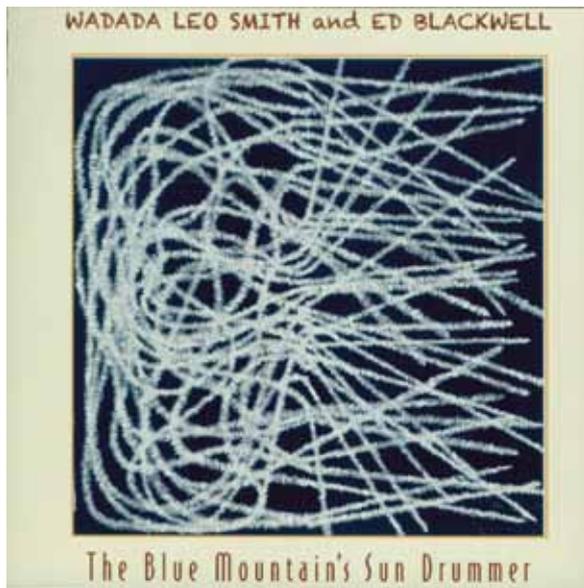
The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer

KABELL 111

★★★★½

Memory has the capacity to cloud or improve a concert, which makes recordings of special meetings particularly important. When an event brings brilliant players like Wadada Leo Smith and Edward Blackwell together for a first meeting, the excitement and anticipation can play havoc on one’s critical facilities. In mind’s hindsight the music we hear might not match the music that was actually made.

It’s a pleasure to be able to say that on this occasion the music actually surpasses the memory. In 1986, Smith and Blackwell played together on a radio broadcast concert series at WBRS at Brandeis University. The performance took place in what was, in essence, an atrium or hallway outside the radio studio: a very humble setting for such splendid sounds. I was fortunate to be part of a small audience. Seating was on the floor, a few feet from the musicians. To say it was intimate is



to pretty it up; it was cramped and a little uncomfortable. But it was unforgettable.

The main reference points in our heads were the two spectacularly important BYG/Actual LPs that Blackwell had made with Don Cherry in 1969. On these the drummer had proven himself to be even more expansive and responsive than we’d known from his time in Ornette Coleman’s

quartet. Smith is much too strong an individualist to play anyone else’s role, and while he has a definite multicultural orientation and clearly loves the raw sonic potential of the trumpet, you’d never mistake him for Cherry. On *The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer* his radiant core sound, warm and projective, floats over Blackwell’s impossibly relaxed drumming.

When Smith brings in mbira, making his own plucky percussion, Blackwell responds perfectly, adding soft gong or quick cross-rhythmic rimshots. On “Sellasie-I,” he pumps a repeated six-note pattern on the kick-drum so delicately you’d think he was using his hands. At the time I recall having trouble with Smith’s holistic recitations. Listening back, I don’t understand my reticence. He has a beautiful voice and the quiet interludes are a welcome part of the performance’s dynamic. When Smith and Blackwell swing into higher gear, as on

“Albert Ayler In A Spiritual Light,” the tremendous sensitivity of two highly attuned souls is undeniable.

—John Corbett

The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer: Uprising; Love; Seeds Of A Forgotten Flower; The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer; Mto; The Celestial River; Don't You Remember; Sellasie-I; Seven Arrows In The Garden Of Light; Buffalo People; A Blues Ritual Dance; Albert Ayler In A Spiritual Light. (51:43)

Personnel: Wadada Leo Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, flute, mbira, voice; Ed Blackwell, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: wadadalesmith.com



The Dave Liebman Group *Turnaround*

JAZZWERKSTATT 079

★★★★

Eric Boeren bent him. John Zorn and Tim Berne ran him through the grinder. Old And New Dreams kissed his ring. Improvisers have tried all sorts of ways to tackle Ornette Coleman. On this sashay through the iconoclast's songbook, Dave Liebman has his ultra-tight group re-imagine 10 of the maestro's pieces—some usual suspects, some oddballs—illustrating just how pliable the material is. In doing so he somehow liberates Coleman, or at least cracks apart the now-codified architecture of those classic Atlantic quartets. Liebman has no interest in mirror images, however. During several of these feisty little performances, it takes a second to hear Coleman floating around the room.

That, of course, speaks to Liebman's individuality. This homage stresses his imagination as much as it illustrates sax prowess. From the wooden flute of "Lonely Woman" to the Steve Lacy-like chirps of "Bird Food," there are discrete approaches to each tune. Using a series of ballsy exclamations, "Turnaround" enjoys several slants, the most convincing of which are a strip-club swagger and a momentary barroom shuffle. Somewhere between the space guitar and the cracked second line allusions, Liebman finds a way to bring the bluesy side of Texas to the table while dodging honking-and-shouting orthodoxy.

Technique has its place. "Kathelin Gray" is one of Coleman's most plaintive ballads, and the smooch it gets from Team Liebman places its elegance front and center. The leader's reeds are full of grace, and guitar foil Vic Juris comes off with lithe lines on nylon strings. The foursome has an aggressive side, though. It's also a kick to hear them tumble through the turf of "Cross Breeding," a pithy investigation into freedom.

With Coleman, Liebman comes up with one of his most novel celebrations yet. —*Jim Macnie*

Turnaround: Enfant; Turnaround; Kathelin Gray; Bird Food; Lonely Woman; Cross Breeding; Face Of The Bass/Beauty Is A Rare Thing; Una Muy Bonita; The Blessing; The Sky. (60:34)

Personnel: Dave Liebman, tenor and soprano saxophones, wooden flute; Vic Juris, electric and acoustic guitars; Tony Marino, acoustic bass; Marko Marcinko, drums and percussion.

Ordering info: jazzwerkstatt.com

The Hot Box

	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
Joe Lovano Us Five <i>Bird Songs</i>	★★★★½	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★
Kevin Eubanks <i>Zen Food</i>	★★★	★★★★½	★★½	★★★
Wadada Leo Smith/ Ed Blackwell <i>The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer</i>	★★★★½	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★
The Dave Liebman Group <i>Turnaround</i>	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★½

Critics' Comments ▶

Joe Lovano Us Five, *Bird Songs*

Lovano paints his Parker much as Picasso painted his women: a phrase here, a theme there, scrambling the configurations and finding fresh juxtapositions. He re-imagines "Donna Lee" as a ballad, "Moose" as a dirge and "Cool Blues" pasted into "Scrapple." Lovano's rendering is masterfully original. —*John McDonough*

The songbook notion has been squeezed dry by folks desperate for a good idea, but Lovano's impetus here comes from a circumstance of plenitude, not scarcity—he's got so much juju that even a Charlie Parker project turns out wonderfully. Rare to find two drummers working together with such clarity. —*John Corbett*

Parker is a tough nut to crack, but as usual Lovano has his own take on this material. Nothing too abstract; swinging is something that the bandleader does naturally. But there are some nice wrinkles in the arrangements, and it's refreshing to hear jewels like "Dexterity" and "Dewey Square" tenor-ized by a living titan. —*Jim Macnie*

Kevin Eubanks, *Zen Food*

Must be a challenge coming back to the creative side from the highest echelon of the commercial. Eubanks has great facility and is very inventive, particularly at brisker tempos where his soft fingerpad attack, gutsy lines and supple way with time are often thrilling. —*John Corbett*

Wonderfully agile guitar playing, but in the service of tunes that stretch from predictable to pedestrian. As much as I'm impressed by the fleet fingers of "Los Angeles," I'm not sure that I'd ever need to hear it again. One nifty twist: the acoustic duet of "Adoration," which might fit on a Dan Fogelberg or Bruce Cockburn disc. —*Jim Macnie*

Eubanks plays with fluid drive and imagination, soaring through passages with speedy, odd-numbered clusters of notes that ride over the time, but there's a glossy patina that makes almost everything feel remote, like it's happening in a fish tank. I found myself most attracted to the simple, folksy acoustic guitar arpeggios of "Adoration," though "Los Angeles" has a brawny, frenetic appeal. —*Paul de Barros*

Wadada Leo Smith/Ed Blackwell, *The Blue Mountain's Sun Drummer*

Think Rex Stewart, Sonny Greer and "Menelik," and this duo looks less insurgent than it might seem, notwithstanding the AACM pedigree. Lots of trills, fanfares and fireworks, but safely anchored in melodic roots. Sheer length gives it the avant glaze of a daring marathon coda. But Stewart's subtone mischief was first and briefer. —*John McDonough*

What a joy to hear Blackwell in action again. I'd forgotten just how compelling he was. He sets up his partner nicely here. Smith's strong suit is the clarion approach, but here, the bittersweet musings and ballad maneuvers—poignant squeaks, poetic sighs—stand out. —*Jim Macnie*

A postmodern field holler by a usually more abstract trumpet player exploring his melodic side. It's an appropriate move, given Blackwell's gifts in that department, though the interaction between the two is limited by the fact that Blackwell lays down a pulse while Smith ranges freely; the conversation rarely breaks open. The mood here is also far from celebratory, but mired in lonely pain—otherwise known as the blues. —*Paul de Barros*

The Dave Liebman Group, *Turnaround*

Liebman find new doors into Coleman's prime 1958-'61 songbook, softening the harshness without dampening the logic or restlessness. "Lonely Woman" transforms into a dark, brooding soundscape. "Breeding" generates a tangle of bracing interplay. —*John McDonough*

Unexpected songbook project from the saxophonist, some fascinating repurposing of (mostly early) Coleman, surprising arrangements like strummed chords on "Una Muy Bonita" and intensified blues of the title cut. One grave error: dressing "Lonely Woman" in exotic garb and removing the dignity from the tune. —*John Corbett*

Liebman has evolved into such an expressive musician, it's ironic that Coleman's repertoire has him occasionally relying too much on a clever plan. That said, I can't think of anyone else who has captured Coleman's unique time feel so accurately. —*Paul de Barros*

CUNEIFORM RECORDS

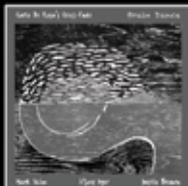
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Benjamin Herman
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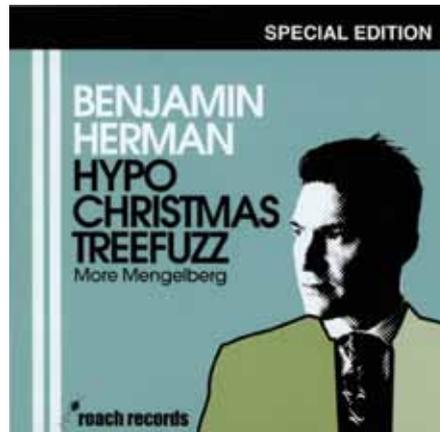
DOX 096

★★★½

Pianist Misha Mengelberg's influence on younger musicians in the Netherlands should not come as a surprise. Alto saxophonist Benjamin Herman pays tribute to him on this action-packed double-CD that is divided into a studio and a live set. Given Mengelberg's reputation as an avant-gardist, the performances swing surprisingly hard and are often dance-enticing. Herman's earlier work with the pianist and the presence of bass player Ernst Glerum, a longtime Mengelberg associate, add to the legitimacy.

On the studio session, drummer Joost Patocko joins Herman and Glerum to form a core trio and the occasional additions provide some variety: children voices, vocalist Ruben Hein, guitarist Anton Goudsmit, Willem Friede on mellotron, or even Glerum doubling on the philicorda, a keyboard developed by the Philips company. The band revisits compositions that span Mengelberg's extensive career, and the interpretations stress his earlier influences as well as tunefulness. A fine example is "Brozziman," an r&b stomper that benefits from Herman's raunchy delivery.

The second disc is a live performance at the North Sea Jazz Festival. This time, Goudsmit joins the trio on all the selections and the combo raises the energy level another notch. The sax-



ophonist should be commended for putting fun and entertainment back into jazz, but the good nature fails to compensate for the predictability of most of the solos. After the initial impact, the effect quickly wears thin because Herman decision relies on some of the cliches that have become the Dutch scene's trademark, namely the overly witty and cartoonish references to styles that have seen better days under the leadership of Mengelberg himself.

—Alain Drouot

Hypochristmastreefuzz: CD1: Hypochristmastreefuzz; Brozziman; No Idea; De Sprong O Romantiek Der Hazen; Rollo III; Kwela P Kwana; Blues After Piet; Wij Gaan Naar De Italiaan; Arm Wiel; Een Beetje Zenuwachtig; Interview with Misha Mengelberg. (47:42) CD2: Een Beetje Zenuwachtig; Arachibutyrophobia; De Sprong O Romantiek Der Hazen; Do the Roach; Kwela P Kwana; Blues After Piet; Arm Wiel; Brozziman; Announcement. (59:00)

Personnel: Benjamin Herman, alto saxophone; Anton Goudsmit, guitar; Ernst Glerum, bass, philicorda (2, 9); Joost Patocka, drums; Willem Friede, mellotron (4); Ruben Hein, vocals (4).

Ordering info: doxrecords.com

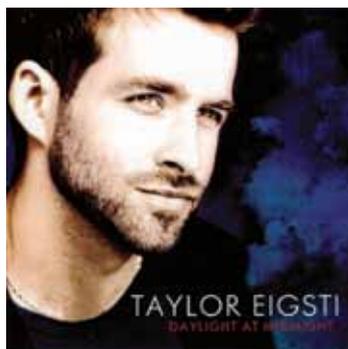
Taylor Eigsti
Daylight At Midnight

CONCORD 32100

★★★★★

Taylor Eigsti continues his stride in becoming one of the most compelling and subversively soulful jazz pianists of his generation. The former child prodigy is a true modernist, someone capable of accessing a wealth of jazz history, who embellishes his music with pop, electronica and r&b elements and then articulates it all in a seamless, willfully uncontrived manner.

Like kindred spirits Robert Glasper and Brad Mehldau, Eigsti explicitly explores the pop realm on *Daylight At Midnight*. Leading a supple ensemble that includes Eric Harland's crackling, almost hip-hop-centric drumming, Harish Raghaven's shadowy yet supportive bass lines and Julian Lage's burnished guitar chords on many tracks, Eigsti delivers a suspenseful rendition of Rufus Wainwright's "The Art Teacher," a heartfelt, bucolic take on Nick Drake's "Pink Moon" and gives a dramatic almost broken-beat feel to Coldplay's "Daylight." Elsewhere, he cov-



ers the music of Feist, Elliott Smith, Mutemath and Imogen Heap.

Throughout, Eigsti and his bandmates keep the proceedings focused yet flexible, allowing for engaging group dialogue and exciting improvisations. Yet it's the presence of singer Becca Stevens that elevates the disc slightly about other like-minded discs. She draws you in with

her gorgeous voice while also making you pay attention to the lyrics on the evocative rendition of Feist's "The Water" and her misty-eyed take on Smith's "Between The Bars." Interestingly enough, she's most poignant on the originals such as "Magnolia" and "Midnight After Noon," which best feature her exquisite, economical and expressive phrasing and slightly bristly soprano.

Because of how Eigsti and the ensemble cast a consistent, late-night haze throughout the disc, nothing leaps out in an obvious way.

—John Murph

Daylight At Midnight: Daylight; Magnolia; The Art Teacher; The Water; Pink Moon; Little Bird; Secret; Chaos; Between The Bars; Speaking Song; Midnight After Noon. (55:09)

Personnel: Taylor Eigsti, piano; Fender Rhodes, Wuritzer electric piano; Harish Raghaven, electric bass, acoustic bass; Julian Lage, guitar (2, 5); Eric Harland, drums; Becca Stevens, vocals, ukulele (2); vocals (4, 6, 9, 11).

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com

**Vinicius Cantuária
& Bill Frisell**
Lágrimas Mexicanas
ENTERTAINMENT ONE MUSIC 2110
★★★

These two artists have already logged some pretty amazing music miles between them (over the course of 25 years). Highlights include his *The Intercontinentals* and his three spots on Cantuária's *Vinicius*. In both settings, the artists on board, combined with superb writing and arranging, offered up amazing results, and with musics that are as varied as they were indicative of each leader's evolving musical personalities at the time of these recordings.

This new collaboration (their first as co-leaders) is an occasion for celebration, if only in that it signals that these two incredible music forces continue to hang. Unfortunately, *Lágrimas Mexicanas*, with few exceptions, plays more like a series of experiments en route to being finished works than the real deal. Listed as co-authors across all 10 tunes, the best cut is the first cut, which seems to signal that this duo's unique take on all things Brazilian and beyond, will, like other collaborations, serve as a launching pad for even more imaginative flights of inven-



tive fancy. From the sweet, lyrical turns of phrase that only Cantuária's intimate, haunting voice can muster (he sings in a mix of Portuguese, Spanish and English throughout the album) to the delicate timing and odd, subtle effects that only Frisell and his guitar can conjure up, "Mi Declaracion" reflects the best that these two are capable of, the song's delicate waltzing rhythm gliding the duo's mingling vocal and guitar lines exquisitely. Similarly, with another slow drawl, this time in 4/4, "Calle 7" marries a seductive yet simple rhythm with an expressive Frisell crawl-

ing all over the song with signature touches and Cantuária singing as one possessed. These are songs where the unexpected and novel meet with the gentle upending of the song form, keeping you close and listening for what may suddenly appear just around the corner. Lee Townsend's production, facilitates all this intimacy.

However, most of *Lágrimas Mexicanas* emerges as a modest success, coming via simple, unadorned almost self-effacing efforts like the anthemic instrumentals "La Curva" and "Cafezinho" or the playful but musically straightforward title track, where the chorus and chord progression are repeated but go nowhere, Frisell's flourishes the only aberrant touches that keep things interesting. Having said that, the closer, "Forinfas," manages to turn this approach on its head, the song's playful, Hoagy Carmichael-ish whimsy and loving glances revealing yet another side to the Brazilian bard. And while nobody does this kind of music better, *Lágrimas Mexicanas* often plays as if the two were approaching the material a tad too reverentially, almost as folk music to be conveyed, and not, as in years past, what could be the stuff dreams are made of.

—John Ephland

Lágrimas Mexicanas: Mi Declaración; Calle 7; La Curva; Lágrimas Mexicanas; Lágrimas de Amor; Cafezinho; El Camino; Aquela Mulher; Briga de Namorados; Forinfas. (41:08)
Personnel: Vinicius Cantuária, vocals, percussion and acoustic guitar; Bill Frisell, electric and acoustic guitars, loops.
Ordering info: entertainmentonegroup.com

STEVE COLE

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the look of love, angel, undun
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New Organ-ic Voices

While some contemporary musicians keep the unwieldy Hammond B-3 relevant, the repertoire often sounds like the heyday of Jimmy Smith, along with the same old adjectives: “soulful,” “greasy,” “bluesy,” “churchy,” “funky.” Yet the organ combo remains as durable as the stately big band, and new voices are present and always welcome.

Organ player Jeff Palmer is the rare downtown (or experimental) player on a largely uptown scene. **Permutation (Rank R604; 44:02 ★★★★★)**, his 17th under-the-radar release, bridges this gap. Backed by Palmer’s working band, the album features blues riffs galore; most of the tracks fall between roughly two to four minutes. Alto saxophonist Devin Garramone’s freeform flights often climax in the altissimo register. Drummer John Fisher creates a dense pocket, lots of bashing and splashy cymbals. The set’s off-kilter sensibilities make up for its lack of variety. The tracks include unusual sounds such as an alarm clock, children’s voices, or just weird organ effects. The highlights include a live recording of “Penetration” and the exuberant “Pancakes.” But there isn’t a weak track.

Ordering info: rankrecordsinc.com

While Joey DeFrancesco needs no introduction, his colleagues on the co-led **One Take, Volume Four (Alma ACD11912; 54:52 ★★★★★½)** are less well-known. The trio of Canadians includes piano, sax and drums. The choice of a blues and several war horses (“Tenderly,” “Broadway,” etc.) sounds vanilla, but the results are inspired. No bass? No problem, as DeFrancesco pinch-hits with panache (but more legato). Phil Dwyer’s commitment to the modern mainstream tenor tradition recalls Grant Stewart. Robi Botos complements DeFrancesco, whether playing fleet bop lines on piano or adding color with a Fender Rhodes. On an up-tempo reading of “Village Green,” everyone contributes something memorable.

Ordering info: almarecords.com

Bob Mintzer’s **Canyon Cove (self release; 68:35 ★★½)** features a high-profile trio that includes organ player Larry Goldings and drummer Peter Erskine. Originally released in Japan, this hour-plus set has its moments. Mintzer’s choice of bass clarinet on “Bebop Special” proves surprisingly effective. Goldings and Erskine play strong grooves on “Bugaloo To You” and especially the title track; it’s not a coincidence Mintzer reacts with more urgency. Even with three free-jazz tracks, too much of the album is composed of bluesy sax or clarinet over bright organ swirls.

Ordering info: bobmintzer.com

You rarely hear recorded music like the City Champs’ **The Set-Up (Electraphonic ER 105; 43:18 ★★★★★)** played by an actual band—so much in this vein is sampled. Hark-



The City Champs: George Sluppick (left), Joe Restivo and Al Gamble

ing back to 1960s instrumental rock and r&b fare, the tight, catchy tunes would work well as backing tracks for a singer. There is, however, little stretching out or jazz-inspired sophistication. Yet Joe Restivo’s guitar parts on “Ricky’s Rant” and “Chinatown,” and the call-and-response between Restivo and Al Gamble’s Hammond on “Local Jones,” remind us how good pop music can sound. The album is also well recorded.

Ordering info: scottbomar.com

The title track of Jared Gold’s **Out Of Line (Posi-tone PR8067; 50:56 ★★★★★)** refreshes the organ’s gene pool: a modal-sounding head, played by tenor player Chris Cheek, that has few if any blue notes. The rest of the set features a bop tune, Songbook standards and classic pop songs. “Preachin’” begins as a leisurely soul-jazz stroll spotlighting guitarist Dave Stryker. Gold’s subsequent organ solo demonstrates why he deserves more exposure—a series of double-time runs that breathe fire and brimstone. With less space, Gold reaches for similar heights on Stevie Wonder’s “You Haven’t Done Nothin’,” pushing well past the groove embedded in the song’s foundation.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com

Guitarist Corey Christiansen’s **Outlaw Tractor (Origin 82562; 50:12 ★★★★★½)** is the second release to feature a quartet hailing mostly from the Western part of the country. But there’s nothing West Coast about its intent. The group recalls hard-bop more than anything: fast tempos, catchy riffs and inspired solos stoked by drummer Matt Jorgensen’s shuffle rhythms and backbeats. Christiansen, tenor saxophonist David Halliday and organ player Pat Bianchi all shine. Yet the group’s restraint on the blues ballad “When You Want” speaks just as loudly. **DB**

Ordering info: origin-records.com



Trondheim Jazz Orchestra & Eirik Hegdal with Special Guest Joshua Redman *Triads And More*

MNJ 010

★★★★★

For his recordings and at his gigs, saxophonist Joshua Redman has built up reputation for emerging himself in diverse settings. Performing unaccompanied? Check. Leading a quintet with two double bassists and two drummers? Affirmative. Being a co-founding member of the all-star SFJAZZ Collective? Sure.

Still, few would have anticipated this recording with Norway’s Trondheim Jazz Orchestra (TJO). Redman was the artist-in-residence at the 2006 Molde International Jazz Festival, where he played with the 12-piece TJO. The parties reunited two years later for more concerts in Scandinavia as well as a recording of the works, which were composed by fellow saxophonist and co-leader Eirik Hegdal. The orchestra consists of jazz and classical alumni of the University of Trondheim and currently fields a guitar-double bass-drums rhythm section as well as woodwinds, brass and strings.

The centerpiece of *Triads And More* is a four-movement, 20-plus minute “Blind Marching Band” suite that kicks off the album and, curiously, is concluded on the second-to-last track. “The Opening” commences with Redman’s tenor assuredly floating over a semi-cacophonous bed of horns, strings and drums. “Flow Away” mixes a hearty sax trio passage with Redman and Hegdal battling it out on tenor and baritone saxophone, respectively, and superb comping from the rest of the orchestra. The stunning “Eroiki” features some of Redman’s most beautiful tenor playing to date, while on the title track Redman demonstrates how effortlessly he can stretch—and play—out. —Yoshi Kato

Triads And More: Blind Marching Band: The Opening; Blind Marching Band; Parade; Blind Marching Band; Flow Away; Triads And More; Walking On Green; Glory; Eroiki; Country; Peas. A Stew; Blind Marching Band; Marching Home; Hymn Hymn. (72:32)

Personnel: Joshua Redman, tenor/soprano saxophone; Trine Knutsen, flute, piccolo, alto flute; Stig Førde Aarksoeg, clarinet, bass clarinet; Eirik Hegdal, baritone/soprano/soprano saxophone; Eivind Lønning, trumpet, piccolo trumpet; Stein Villanger, French horn; Erik Johannessen, trombone; Ola Kvernberg, violin; Øyvind Engen, Marianne Baudouin Lie, cello; Nils Olav Johansen, guitars; Mats Eliertsen, double bass; Tor Haugerud, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: trondheimjazzorchestra.no

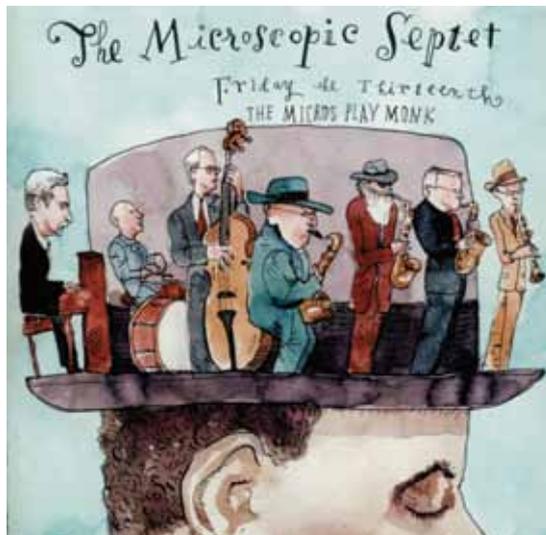
The Microscopic Septet
Friday The Thirteenth, The
Micros Play Monk

CUNEIFORM 310

★★★★

Virtually every jazz musician or aggregate worth their salt could embark on a tribute to the glorious and ever-fresh Thelonious Monk songbook and create a personalized vision of the music, in a particular artist's own image. For the long-standing, avant-swinging and semi-zany Microscopic Septet, the natural inclination is to play up the idea of Monk as a mystic trickster genius—an jazz deity whose music brilliantly straddled the paradoxical approaches of inside-outside, bebop-experimental, urban-rootsy and passionate-cool. The Micros can go there, and do so persuasively on this fascinating trip to Monkville.

As it happens, the septet—whose “microscopic” qualifier indicates an agenda of thinking big in a more compact package—supplies just about the right size and attitude to beefing up Monk’s music while retaining its leanness and internally logical strangeness. Big band Monk can get unwieldy, or unfocused. But the Micros find the sweet spot between large ensemble palette and fattened-up combo sounds.



On this wonderful Monk celebration, the Micros grab onto Monk’s angular themes, giving a new sinew and sheen to tunes like “Off Minor,” the gleaming ballad “Pannonica” and the classic set-closer (and here, album-closer) “Epistrophy.” Vis-a-vis the inside-outside plan, the album’s arrangements continually swerve from fidelity to the source to agreeable liberties taken, starting with the mostly faithful opening blast of “Brilliant Corners.” “Evidence,” with its playfully stabbing syncopations, doesn’t need much rethinking to capture the tune’s modernist

quality, and the proceedings move decidedly freer for baritone saxist Dave Sewelson’s raucous solo “outing” on the otherwise rock and roiling, spanking-the-backbeat take on “Teo.” The famed intervallic melody of “Misterioso” is wryly over-accentuated, as if played by a teetering machine-cum-monster, yielding to a slow-brew blues.

From the party-ponic end of the spectrum, “We See” heads to New Orleans-ian second line, and “Bye-Ya” sounds fine and natural in its calypso. The rubbery ease of “Worry Later” lives up to its Zen koan-like title and nicely showcases soprano saxist Philip Johnston and pianist Joel Forrester (leader Johnston and Forrester are the project’s main arrangers, as well). For the album’s stellar title track, “Friday The 13th,” horns open lightly over tickling rimshot work from drummer Richard Dworkin, expanding into some blissfully chaotic collective improvisation before landing in the land of swing, half-time lazing and a lulling anthemic melodic statement to close. It all adds up to a half-bowing, half-smirking and wholly suitable love letter to the Monk songbook. —Josef Woodard

Friday The Thirteenth, The Micros Play Monk: Brilliant Corners; Friday the 13th; Gallop’s Gallop; Teo; Pannonica; Evidence; We See; Off Minor; Bye-Ya; Worry Later; Misterioso; Epistrophy. (59:21)
Personnel: Philip Johnston, soprano saxophone; Don Davis, alto saxophone; Mike Hashim, tenor saxophone; Dave Sewelson, baritone saxophone; Joel Forrester, piano; David Hofstra, bass; Richard Dworkin, drums.
Ordering info: cuneiformrecords.com

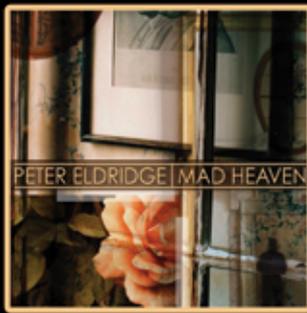
NEW RELEASES FROM PALMETTO RECORDS!



Noah Preminger
 Before The Rain

Noah Preminger – tenor sax
 Frank Kimbrough – piano
 John Hébert – bass
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“Before The Rain is marked by the same Sense of adventure and exploration as Preminger’s 2008 debut CD Dry Bridge Road, but with more compositional depth and group interplay. The tempos never rise above medium, but the creativity and passion remain extremely high.” - *Editor’s Pick DownBeat*



Peter Eldridge
 Mad Heaven

Peter Eldridge - piano/vocals
 Keith Ganz - acoustic guitar
 Tim Lefebvre - acoustic bass
 Ben Wittman - drums, percussion
 James Shipp - percussion, vibes

Peter Eldridge has been called “perennially classy” (*JazzTimes*) and ranks “in the celebrated tradition of melodic poets, most famously represented by such disparate voices as Stevie Wonder, Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell, Van Morrison and Steely Dan – singer/songwriters who create catchy, beautiful tunes with insightful lyrics that are both personal and universal” (allmusicguide.com).



Fred Hersch
 Alone At The Vanguard

Fred Hersch - piano

“Mr. Hersch has developed a solo concept second to none in jazz.” – Ben Ratliff, *New York Times*

Fred Hersch holds the unique distinction of being the first pianist to be asked to play solo at the renowned Village Vanguard in New York City. *Alone At The Vanguard* documents his latest week of performances at the club (11/30-12/5). He recorded the entire week and ended up using the last set on the last night in its entirety.



www.palmetto-records.com

**Jason Stein's
Locksmith Isidore
*Three Kinds Of Happiness***

NOTTWO 846
★★★★½

Bas clarinetist Jason Stein says on his website that his instrument's range is enough to keep him busy for many lifetimes. The Chicago-based musician works exclusively on that woodwind, and his aesthetic doesn't suffer for it.

Though his enthusiasm for jazz's outer reaches is palpable, Stein hews close to the tradition on *Three Kinds Of Happiness*, the latest dispatch from his trio, Locksmith Isidore. Titled after a concept coined by Plato, the album's a treatise of sorts that finds the restless reedist maneuvering the middle of the jazz spectrum. That's not to say it's staid—spontaneity dominates the disc. A string of ideas spills out of Stein's horn before the head snaps the band back into place on opening track "Crayons For Sammy." Jason Roebke's elegant walking bass drives it to swing swiftly and playfully.

Roebke makes the instrument creak and moan with his bow on the ruminative "Ground Floor South," until Stein beckons the rhythm section into a slow-burning shuffle. Mike Pride, a drummer known for his heavy hand, offers understated support in this setting, his tasteful brush-work allowing plenty of breathing room.

**Sidi Touré & Friends
*Sahel Folk***

THRILL JOCKEY 256
★★★★

Sidi Touré was never supposed to make music. His family, Malian nobility, disapproved of his singing as a child, and his brother often broke the guitars he made from found materials. He persisted, though, developing a repertoire and approach on his instrument that stretch the folk music of his homeland into something new.

Thirteen years after his electrified, frenetic debut, *Sahel Folk* shows another side of him. Each song on the album pairs him with one friend, indulging in casual acoustic conversation in the front room of a house in his Malian hometown of Gao. Most of his five collaborators have never recorded before, and the spartan context makes each of their debuts feel like a minor revelation.

Those familiar with Touré's ragged, rough debut may be surprised by the crisp, finely articulated interplay captured here. His three duets with the late Jiba Akolane Touré are nearly telepathic; their cyclical arpeggios merge so thoroughly as to become one. As children, Sidi Touré and Dourra Cissé played their homemade guitars together on the way to school. Here, their playing is a series of calls and responses that beget real dramatic tension and effortless shifts in rhythm.

Touré's duets with Douma Maïga on the

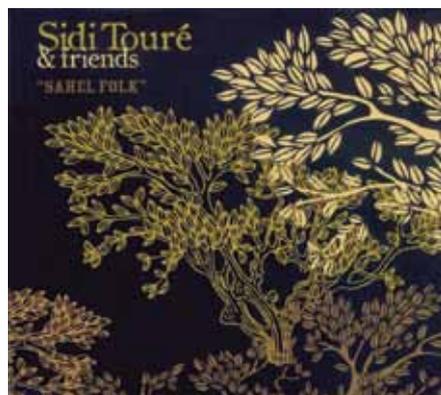


Traces of Eric Dolphy abound, as the bandleader deploys quirky motifs with a cool, supple tone.

In addition to Dolphy, other iconoclasts informing Stein include Archie Shepp and Joe Maneri, each of whom gets a pun-filled nod on "Arch And Shipp" and "Man Or Ray." On the latter, one of this album's most satisfying cuts, Stein honks and chirps over bustling low end and skittering ride cymbal. Tones bleed together in succession, offering a glimpse at the clarinetist's fearless sonic palette.

—Areif Sless-Kitain

Three Kinds of Happiness: Crayons For Sammy; Cash, Couch, And Camper; Little Bird; Ground Floor South; Arch And Shipp; More Gone Door Gone; Man Or Ray; Miss Izzy. (59:23)
Personnel: Jason Stein, bass clarinet; Jason Roebke, bass; Mike Pride, drums.
Ordering info: nottwo.com

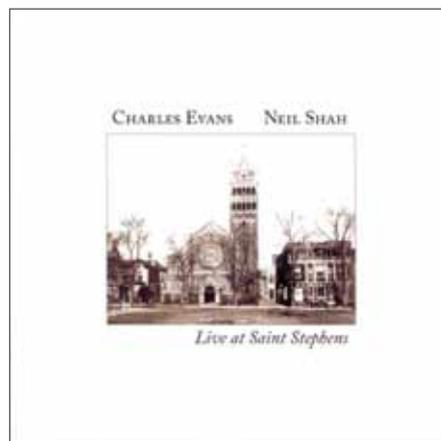


three-string kurbu and Jambala Maïga on the monochordal kuntigui add some much-needed tonal variety. Some of the most exciting playing on the album is found in Douma Maïga's virtuosic kurbu leads on "Bera Nay Wassá." His terse, fluid phrasing translates well outside the Songhai traditions the music comes from.

The recording process was as unhurried as the music: on day one, Touré and his current collaborator chose songs over tea; on day two, they recorded just two takes of each to preserve a spirit of spontaneity. It was the right approach. *Sahel Folk* finds its strength in simplicity.

—Joe Tangari

Sahel Folk: Bon Koum; Adema; Djari Ber; Bera Nay Wassá; Sinji; Kongo; Haallah; Wayey Zarrabo; Ariatanat. (50:12)
Personnel: Sidi Touré, guitar, vocals; Dourra Cissé, guitar, vocals; Douma Maïga, kurbu; Jambala Maïga, kuntigui, vocals; Jiba Akolane Touré, guitar, vocals; Yéhiya Arby, guitar, vocals.
Ordering info: thrilljockey.com



**Charles Evans/Neil Shah
*Live At Saint Stephens***

HOT CUP 092
★★★★½

This fantastic and exciting duo album from baritone saxophonist Charles Evans and pianist Neil Shah continues to blow me away. Recorded in January 2009 at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., this album is more of an art music chamber recital than it is a jazz date. Evans' compositions are highly complex, chromatic and dissonant, the music rarely "swings," and their improvisational vocabulary seems to draw more from 20th Century concert music than jazz.

Cavernous, raw, massive, pliable and complex describe Evans' astounding baritone sound. His virtuosity and creativity are impressive. Evans demonstrates his ability to make his baritone do whatever he wants, from rich and sustained altissimo, to multiphonics, to trills, huge intervallic leaps, alternate fingerings, rapid changes of dynamics to ferocious furies in the horn's bottom end. His ability to manipulate pitch and tonal color recalls Johnny Hodges. Shah is Evans' perfect counterpart. He uses the entire keyboard, pulling out crystalline right-hand runs, sparse rolled chords and thick, heavy, dissonant two-hand block chords at will. Shah varies his accompaniment pattern, keeping the music interesting and giving Evans more to engage with. His inventive solos, especially on "Junie," often experiment with and reconfigure melodic fragments. "Mother And Others" displays Evans and Shah at their conversational best. They trade and feed off each other's version of the tune, developing it into something new.

The acoustics of Saint Stephen's, along with the excellent engineering, create an intimate album with superb sound quality. Evans' key action, like his breathing, is just barely audible. Shah's piano tone is dynamic, and his touch comes to life. Even the silence haunts.

—Chris Robinson

Live At Saint Stephens: Junie—Part I "The Father," Part II "The Friend"; On Tone Yet—Parts I, II and III; Mono Monk; An Die Fliegenden Fische; Mother And Others; What Worked, What Didn't; What Wouldn't, What Would've. (54:24)
Personnel: Charles Evans, baritone saxophone; Neil Shah, piano.
Ordering info: hotcuprecords.com

Resonance Records: Connecting Legacies

Miles Davis

By John Beasley



Miles knew he had a unique voice and had the audacity of courage to expand it. Electric Miles, cool Miles, straight-ahead Miles, experimenting Miles... All these labels illustrate his conviction to follow his artistry. He ignored critics and dared to alienate his bebop audiences to go

beyond what was done before. I am in awe of his bravery and boldness. At 18, Miles played on his own terms with Charlie Parker by not imitating the fast be-bop lines of the day. During Segregation, he formed an integrated band (Birth of the Cool). Even after a racially-motivated police beating, he hired Bill Evans and ushered in yet another style. In the 70's, he blended the street sounds of James Brown and Jimi Hendrix.

I joined Miles in 1989. It was daunting. I stood with this music icon that shaped American culture during socially dynamic periods. Before a gig, Miles would provide direction to each of us in his unique way, sometimes direct, sometimes cryptic. Twenty years later, I'm still distilling and re-interpreting his messages. *From Birth of the Cool, Kind of Blue, Bitches Brew* to his last record, he gave musicians space to make individual statements within his music, thus appreciating their artistry while helping them set the path for their careers. He was an intense listener. He would play a phrase then touch his ear. This was a touchstone for me to listen, for the band to listen to each other, and for him to listen as well. Miles: a musical and social pioneer.



Oliver Nelson

By Bill Cunliffe

Oliver Nelson is one of those big "what ifs" in jazz, along with people like Clifford Brown, Scott LaFaro, and Charlie Christian. This immensely talented man, who excelled at the alto sax, jazz composing and arranging, and film/tv composition, died at the age of forty from, apparently, overwork.

I first was introduced to his seminal work, *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*, at the age of 22, in graduate school at Eastman, where we performed the entire recording in concert. For me, it was one of those brilliant blips on the jazz radar. It was an all-star cast of greats playing simple, yet compelling compositions that hinted at genius by a young guy who, although very productive in his career, didn't fulfill the promise of those early works.

What was so interesting about this record was that these musicians got together only for this date and never again, and the concept of the album, although revisited somewhat in his *More Blues and the Abstract Truth*, side, was never really taken further. What remains great about this record, besides the spectacular playing of Freddie Hubbard, Bill Evans, Roy Haynes, Eric Dolphy, and Nelson himself, is the combination of incredibly compelling tunes with a very loose structure that allowed for jazz "blowing" of the highest order. Everyone seemed really "on their game" on this unique session.

I later found other works of his, such as workmanlike arrangements for big band, a saxophone sonata, and some extended works for jazz orchestra. All of these hint at a genius that was only partially realized and the spirit of a great jazz player combined with the inspiration and skill of a great composer and orchestrator. "Ollie, we hardly knew ye," to paraphrase a John F. Kennedy admirer.

It was such a pleasure to take these six pieces that constitute *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*, and put them through my own grist mill of sounds and harmonies. I really didn't want to change them, but just play them the way I heard them, and give the "cats" the same chance to blow that Oliver gave his men. As time goes on, I throw these at other guys on the road, and it still gives me the same pleasure it did when I wrote them for the first time. George Klabin heard one of these gigs, and insisted that we record it. I'm eternally grateful to him for this opportunity.

Producer's Note

In the period from 1960 to the late 70's, which I feel was the heyday of mainstream jazz, record labels were willing to take the time and make the investment to develop promising talent. They were not solely concerned with immediate sales. Now it is almost impossible for any lesser known jazz musician to find a real jazz label to sign them. I founded Resonance Records specifically for two reasons: to record those exceptional jazz talents who are not able to get record deals, and to release great classic unreleased mainstream jazz.

— George Klabin (President / Resonance Records)

Freddie Hubbard

By Claudio Roditi

The very first time I heard Freddie Hubbard was in my native Rio de Janeiro in the early 1960s. Brazilian trumpeter Paulo de Paula played for me *Open Sesame*, Freddie's first album as a leader. In truth, I didn't like it. My idol at the time was Miles Davis, and I was used to a more sparse approach to the trumpet. Back then, Freddie's playing to my ears was too busy. Little did I know that some time later, I would begin to "hear" what he was saying, and Freddie would become one of my very favorite players.

I then began to try to transcribe his solos; I mean try because the man played so much trumpet that it was impossible for me to execute his solos note for note. However, as an exercise it was one of the most helpful things I ever did for my playing. Freddie's style showed me that one must develop a good sound on the horn, good articulation, clear ideas, knowledge of harmony, a story to tell during a solo, and much more.

In 1992 I had the honor and pleasure of playing alongside Freddie and Red Rodney in Slide Hampton's small big band project called "To Dizzy with Love." That project was one of the most musical situations I was ever in and one of the highlights of my career.

Freddie Hubbard's influence is still strongly felt in the world. And it will always be there, for he was one of the greatest of all times.



Resonance Records: A Non-Profit Jazz Label With a Mission

For more info and free MP3 downloads, please visit: www.resonancerecords.org

Joona Toivanen Trio *At My Side*

CAM JAZZ 3308

★★½

At the top of Federico Scoppio's liner notes to this Finnish threesome's release, he acknowledges the expectations that the music of *At My Side* is about to confirm. Noting that "any piano trio coming from Scandinavia ... seems to have emerged from a film by Andrei Tarkovsky as if a eulogy of slowness," the Italian critic extinguishes any expectation that pianist Joona Toivanen et al. might belie that stereotype.

Rather, they hold that preconception in a chilly embrace. The emphasis on minor tonalities, the occasional resolution to churchy majors, the space that permeates the players' sparsely articulated interactions—all of these hallmarks might have been lifted from the ECM playbook. Toivanen conjures elements of Paul Bley at his moodiest, with right-hand ruminations warmed by the kinds of gospel figurations Keith Jarrett likes to work into somewhat busier contexts.

Whether playing at a tempo so free that it borders on static or playing in a kind of misty swing, the trio seems to challenge itself to find the most minimal language. The results can be intriguing: At medium-up tempo on "Walrus," each musician stretches out, more languidly than intensely, using the spaces between notes to outline the structure of the tune and push the rhythm forward like a sail opening to a cold ocean breeze. They go further down this path on "What Did She Do?," which dissolves into a two-note bossa pattern on the bass and a hiss of cym-



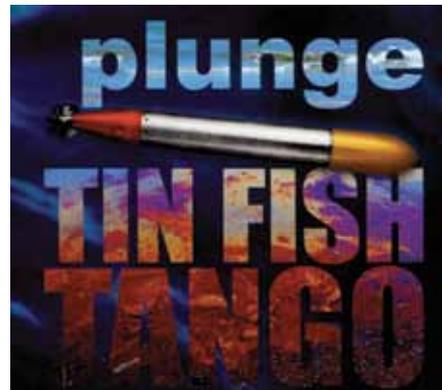
bal implying more than delineating the time.

But "Sleeping Treasure" offers the album's best representation of "less is more." Played unaccompanied on piano, it edges forward slowly, generally no more than two notes at a time, with plenty of rubato. More to the point, Toivanen deadens the strings, so that his instrument sounds somewhat like a muffled lute. It adds up to a little more than two minutes of bleak reflection—yet its symmetry and intriguing sonic quality don't let the listener go easily.

The album closes with "Dream Of A Family," leaving us with an impression that the family alluded to in this stark, trudging tune may be dreaming, during a brief crescendo before one last sigh at the end. —Robert L. Doerschuk

At My Side: At My Side; Mistakes; Five Years; Shades Of Gray; Walrus; El Castillo; Sleeping Treasure; What Did She Do?; Aava; Dream Of A Family; (45:19)

Personnel: Joona Toivanen, piano; Tapani Toivanen, bass; Olavi Louhivuori, drums.
Ordering info: camoriginalsoundtracks.com



Plunge *Tin Fish Tango*

IMMERSION RECORDS IRM 10-05

★★½

Plunge—a suitable name for this New Orleans based drum-less trio, especially considering that the group's third album takes its listeners into deep waters. Taking risks in improvised music is important, but sometimes they don't pay off, as is largely the case with *Tin Fish Tango*, a difficult album that demands much from its audience. The trio, which features trombonist Mark McGrain, bassist James Singleton, and Tim Green and Tom Fitzpatrick, splitting the saxophone duties, specializes in creating chamber jazz meditations on a multitude of different styles (blues, tango, avant-garde) and emotions (joy, angst, anxiety, contemplation).

Despite the album's shortcomings there are some great things on the disc, particularly the various textures and colors available given the group's uncommon instrumentation. No combinations are off limits: soprano doubled with arco bass, alto with trombone, etc. The numerous call-and-response sections between McGrain and either Green or Fitzpatrick, as on the title track and the group improvisation "Pelican Down," show off their musicianship and maturity. Fitzpatrick's mix of relaxed West Coast and bluesy phrasing is particularly compelling, especially on the plodding "The Kroop" and the swinging "Diddlin'."

There is a flatness to the music, however, which sometimes borders on stagnation. Although it sounds like there is energy behind the compositions and performances, that energy didn't quite transfer to the recording. This could be partially due to the engineering, as the instruments sound dry and stuffy, especially the front line. The players, though, could do more to breathe life into the record. For example, the horns don't blow through "Bright Side's" phrases or give shape to the notes. *Tin Fish Tango* could have used more dynamic performances like the mischievous "Jugs." —Chris Robinson

Tin Fish Tango: Tin Fish Tango; Bright Side; Huff-A-Round; No Spill, Spew!; Strollin' With Sidney; Life Lite; Big Bhang Theory; Pelican Down; The Kroop; Love's Wildest Talent; Jugs; Lost To The Vapors; Diddlin'; (67:55)

Personnel: Mark McGrain, trombone; Tim Green, saxophones (1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12); Tom Fitzpatrick, saxophones (3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13); Kirk Joseph, sousaphone (3, 7); James Singleton, bass.
Ordering info: immersionrecords.com

Sabbagh/Monder/Humair *I Will Follow You*

BEE JAZZ 034

★★★★

The French New York-based saxophonist Jerome Sabbagh has been turning heads with his series of elegant inside-out efforts over the last few years, but on his latest effort he goes out on a limb by pushing into free improv territory. It helps that one of his main partners here is guitarist Ben Monder who smoothly intuits where to go and when, but even the veteran Swiss drummer Daniel Humair forms an instant rapport here in his first meeting with Sabbagh. At times the instrumentation—and the relatively gauzy attack on some of the pre-composed pieces like "The Clown"—suggest the sound of Paul Motian's great trio with Joe Lovano and Bill Frisell, but by the time *I Will Follow You* has efficiently ripped through its 13 concise pieces there's little doubt that this grouping has carved out its own turf.

It's a bit surprising that Sabbagh tends to be the most restrained presence here, especially when heard against some of Monder's most extroverted and acid-toned performances—on "Saloon" he unleashes his inner rocker, while on



the title track his low-end zigzags stomp like a dinosaur—but that doesn't mean he plays it safe. On his gorgeous ballad "La Fée Morgane" he summons the baroque beauty of medieval music, while on the aptly titled "Haiku" he borrows poetic form to construct his austere attractive lines. There's a consistent feeling of exploration on display tempered with an unforgiving discipline—a great combination. —Peter Margasak

I Will Follow You: I Will Follow You; Monolith; The Clown; Comp-tine; Come With Me; More; La Fée Morgane; Saloon; Apaisé; Ra-har; Haiku; We Play; Then You Play; I Should Care. (43:59)

Personnel: Jerome Sabbagh, tenor and soprano saxophones; Ben Monder, guitar; Daniel Humair, drums.
Ordering info: beejazz.com



Jonn Del Toro (left) and Rich Del Grosso

COURTESY MARK PICO MEDIA

Global Affairs

Rich Del Grosso & Jonn Del Toro Richardson: *Time Slips On By* (Mandolin Blues 10002; 63:33 ★★★★★) Del Grosso confidently matches his plugged-in resonator mandolin to the electric guitar of Richardson on an impressive bunch of original songs that could only come from the marshlands and bayous of Southeast Texas. That old string-band instrument has an air of gracefulness about it. Above-average singers, the two share the ability to convey boundless joy (“She’s Sweet”) and romantic uncertainty (“Hard To Live With”), supported by their crackerjack rhythm section, the Texas Horns and local guests.

Ordering info: mandolinblues.com

Latvian Blues Band: *Unreal* (Blue Skunk 4520; 66:37 ★★★) These young northern Europeans, merging blues, soul and r&b, appear to have a stronger congenital sense of style and form than many of their roots-music brethren in the States. They impress with their imagination, individuality, musicianship and songwriting. Though no songs are really outstanding, LBB has made a strong debut record with guidance from Duke Robillard.

Ordering info: latvianbluesband.com

Arsen Shomakhov: *On The Move* (Blues Leaf 9845; 40:09 ★★★) Shomakhov’s strengths, apparent on his second album released in North America, are his formidable guitar playing across the spectrum of blues and r&b styles, his songwriting and his knack for finding good obscure material to cover like Detroit blues great Eddie Burns’ “When I Get Drunk.” Tolerate his inexpressive singing and be thankful for four rock’em-sock’em instrumentals.

Ordering info: bluesleaf.com

Lynwood Slim & The Igor Prado Band: *Brazilian Kicks* (Delta Groove 141; 53:25 ★★★) Slim is at the top of his game as an entertainer in the São Paulo studio, singing and wailing Chicago-style harmonica with a smooth swagger in the fast company of ace

guitarist-songwriter Prado and four other young musicians based in the largest city in South America. They revive Chicago blues, Western swing and Tin Pan Alley songs probably found in their record collections.

Ordering info: deltagroovemusic.com

Ana Popovic Band: *An Evening At Trsimeno Lake* (Artist Exclusive 001 DVD; 72:33 ★★) Slavic vocalist-guitarist Popovic, performing with her hyper-dramatic band at a medieval castle in Italy, has the crowd of 5,000 at her mercy for the duration of 14 songs. Her grandiose blues-rock proves excitement isn’t necessarily a pleasure for those of us not lake-side. Bonus: uninteresting acoustic solo performances and an interview.

Ordering info: artistexclusive.com

Andrea Marr: *Little Sister Got Soul!* (Blue Skunk 4524; 41:24 ★★★) Reminiscent of early Susan Tedeschi by way of the Stax grooming school, Marr has won several Australian blues awards in a singing career begun in the late-1990s. Her first North American release (and fourth overall) finds her successfully bridling and harnessing her passion in suggestive originals like “Steam Up The Windows” and in classics identified with Etta James and Dinah Washington. But locating the emotion in religious rocker Glenn Kaiser’s “If I Leave This World Tomorrow” eludes her. The band makes up in professionalism what it lacks in inspiration. Rather than producing herself again, Marr would be smart next time to enlist an American like Dennis Walker or Robillard.

Ordering info: blueskunkmusic.com

Joanne Shaw Taylor: *Diamonds In The Dirt* (Ruf 1164; 45:21 ★) This British singer and guitarist has been described as the “new face of the blues.” Oh sure, and so’s deep-wrinkled Pinetop Perkins, bless him. Overblown, ponderous and pointless blues-rock typified by the unimaginatively titled “Let It Burn.” And that’s being charitable. **DB**

Ordering info: ruffrecords.de



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LUIS PERDOMO PIANO
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One of the more difficult aspects of being a modern musician is acknowledging forebears while developing a unique identity. Trumpeter/composer Diego Urcola pays tribute to his heroes and contemporaries on his new recording, *Appreciation*. He shows his recognition not by imitation but through compositions inspired and dedicated to heroes and friends, including Freddie Hubbard, Hermeto Pascoal, Paquito D’Rivera, and Guillermo Klein. Urcola presents his original compositions with the help of an amazing ensemble, featuring pianist Luis Perdomo, bassist Hans Glawischnig, and drummer Eric McPherson.

DIEGO URCOLA APPRECIATION



Distributed by Sunnyside / ADA www.comjazz.com

Helio Alves

Música

JLP 1001010

★★★★½

Fireworks flash here and there throughout *Música*, but there's virtually no excess, no display for the sake of bedazzlement. A more revealing light illuminates this album in the subtlety, musicianship and extraordinary improvisational facility that distinguish Helio Alves.

Part of his success throughout *Música* owes to the supreme communication he enjoys with bassist Rueben Rogers and drummer Antonio Sanchez. Their interplay is a ceaseless joy, particularly within more complex meters. Seldom has a smoother treatment of 5/4 time appeared on disc than in their rendering of the Moacir Santos tune "Kathy." Sanchez sets the stage amusingly by tapping alternate quarter-notes on a bell in the intro; with each bar, the pulse shifts from up to downbeat and then back again the next. Alves takes his solo with a natural, unforced sense of swing and melodic invention.

The point is made clearer in 7/8 on "Música Das Nuvens E Do Chão." Again, dynamics are more critical and impressive than even the long, fiery lines on the piano and the incendiary rhythm. At the top of the reprise of the theme toward the end, Sanchez plays high-register delicacies and all three musicians work gracefully around brief, breath-like silences. Then, with the finish line in sight, they bear down into the groove, with Alves again playing alternate quarter-notes, this time on snare, to animate the momentum into the album's only faded ending.

Tony Malaby's Tamarindo Live

CLEAN FEED 200

★★★★

The personnel and circumstances augur something extraordinary. Take one singular saxophonist with his most incendiary rhythm section, add the presence of a free-jazz elder who is still playing at the top of his game as he nears 70, and let them rip in a club on a late spring night. Tamarindo's music is as close as Malaby gets to ecstatic jazz. Its album covers reference the spirituality of his Latin American heritage. He's named his tunes after people and things he loves, as well as the mortal end that will take them all away. This record, the group's second, ought to light up the sky; instead it only occasional bursts into flame.

It's certainly not for lack of trying. William Parker's bass sounds as big as a house, and his bowed solos are appealingly rough; he and



On every cut, *Música* highlights Alves' outstanding capabilities as a melodic improviser. His solos at all tempos center on beautifully conceived phrases, almost always winding without interruption throughout their full extent. He is fully capable of incisive, rhythmic passages, as demonstrated on the up-tempo samba "Gafeira," marked by dense, well-placed chords and vigorous interactions between left and right hands. Though Claudio Roditi sits in on this one, contributing a solo that ends with a between-the-beats descent into the last chorus, he underplays, tastefully, as if to keep the spotlight on Alves.

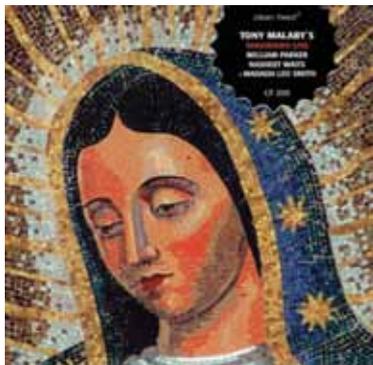
Even the production is noteworthy, with a separation of the drums on the stereo mix to Wayne Shorter's "Black Nile" that positions the listener right on the throne next to Sanchez.

—Robert L. Doerschuk

Música: Gafeira; Kathy; Sombra; Black Nile; Flor Das Estradas; Música Das Nuvens E Do Chão; Adeus Alf; Tribute to Charlie 2; Chan's Song. (58:36)

Personnel: Helio Alves, piano; Rueben Rogers, bass; Antonio Sanchez, drums; Claudio Roditi, trumpet, flugelhorn; Romero Lubambo, guitar.

Ordering info: jazzlegacyproductions.com



Nasheet Waits nimbly negotiate the music's shifts between burly brass oration and hushed, suspenseful exploration. The leader's playing is adroit and evidently heartfelt, and there are moments on "Jack The Hat" when his straining against the limits of his horn's upper register is thrilling. There and elsewhere Wadada Leo Smith shadows his statements in ragged Ornette

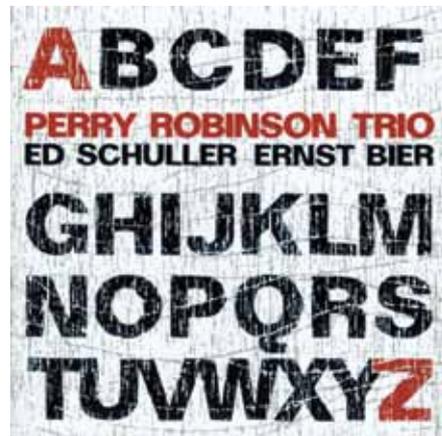
Coleman-Don Cherry fashion. At such moments you get a whiff of the soulfulness they want to convey. But for long passages what comes across is effort without grace. I don't have any doubts about Malaby's ability to fashion strong statements from economical materials; consider, for example, his exemplary sparring with Pheeroan Aklaflaff on Sean Conly's *Re:action*. But he rarely finds that sort of release here.

—Bill Meyer

Tamarindo Live: Buoyant Boy; Death Rattle; Hibiscus; Jack The Hat With Hood. (58:30)

Personnel: Tony Malaby, tenor, soprano saxophones; Wadada Leo Smith, trumpet; William Parker, bass; Nasheet Waits, drums.

Ordering info: cleanfeed-records.com



Perry Robinson Trio

From A To Z

JAZZWERKSTATT 085

★★★★½

Clarinetist Perry Robinson may not be a big name in jazz. That's understandable, given his apparent reticence for the spotlight and because he's been known primarily as a sideman. This even though Robinson emerged on the scene in 1962, playing with Kenny Barron, Henry Grimes and Paul Motian. Because of his relative absence, it comes as a surprise that he's had this trio with bassist Ed Schuller and drummer/percussionist Ernst Bier since 1984.

From A To Z may be indicative of the kinds of musical dialogues these three have been having ever since. And for fans of such outings as the ones Jimmy Giuffre had around the time Robinson was just getting started, *From A To Z* may serve as a kind of welcomed 21st century take on the art of the (relatively) improvised clarinet trio. Like Giuffre, Robinson is comfortable with tonality but also has a penchant for the obscure and angular. While the band's rhythmic sense may be more folkloric than jazz-oriented, their cohesion as a group of longstanding helps to make this album click from track to track.

Robinson's "encyclopedic" take on the music includes such variety as the oddly titled, klezmerized "Funky Giora" (complete with a touch of the vocal); an ode to an old friend with the politically charged, impressionistic "Joe Hill," an anthem that swings with more vocals; the modest, mystically folk-ish "Switchback"; and the tonally whimsical, wayward uptempo swing of "A.K.A. Snake." The music is all original material, various songs written by various Robinson family members as well as Schuller. Through it all, one is left not with an impression of one who is a musical virtuoso but of one who has taken his instrument of choice to tell his stories through his music, however humble, however unadorned.

—John Ephland

From A To Z: Sooner Than Before; Loose Nuts; Unisphere; Funky Giora; Joe Hill; Switchbacks; A.K.A. Snake; Mountain Soup; From A To Z. (62:31)

Personnel: Perry Robinson, clarinet; Ed Schuller, bass; Ernst Bier, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: jazzwerkstatt.com

Transcending Samba

On *Na Bocas Dos Outros* (Desmonta 006; 48:26 ★★★★★) São Paulo multi-instrumentalist Kiko Dinucci operates as an auteur, writing the songs and playing most of the instruments, but enlisting a raft of strong underground figures to sing the words (the title translates loosely as “in the mouths of others”). The 14 tracks cover a wide range of moods, styles and approaches, presenting Dinucci as a curious student of Brazilian music history with an eye toward the future. Fabiana Cozza brings a luxuriant sorrow to “Ciranda Para Janaina,” Mamelô Sound System rap across “Pobre Star,” Vésper Voca suggests five Björks singing Tom Ze on “Agenda” and Paula Sanches bringing throaty joy to the horn-stoked marcha “Perua.” It’s an album of steady delight and consistent surprise.

Ordering info: desmonta.com

Brazilian keyboardist and frequently overlooked bossa nova pioneer João Donato adopts the auteur approach on *Agua* (Biscoito Fino 992: 43:10 ★★★★★), his recent collaboration with singer Paula Morelenbaum. Donato performs a dozen tunes he’s co-written over the years, employing some of his homeland’s best musical minds (including Jaques Morelenbaum, Kassin and Beto Villares) to craft new arrangements. The results are mixed, with some of the tunes veering toward cocktail lounge schmaltz, but other tunes deliver briskness and soul without all of the empty fizz, and Morelenbaum shapes the melodies with consistent ease and grace.

Ordering info: biscoitofino.com

Rio samba prodigy Marcos Valle has been plugging away for nearly five decades and on his new album *Estática* (Far Out 153: 51:57 ★★½) his enthusiasm and energy are undiminished, but his creativity shows some signs of age. The album is well-crafted but the breezy modes, hot tub flourishes, cloying synthesizer tones and treacly arrangements too often summon the ’80s nadir of Brazilian popular music, as if the last two decades never happened. Just the same, Valle can still write timeless-sounding sambas in his sleep, and beneath the sonic lily-gilding his band evokes that classic, chill Rio vibe.

Ordering info: faroutrecordings.com

Singer Vanessa Da Mata’s excellent *Bicicletas, Bolos E Outras Alegrias* (Sony Music Brasil 88697804442 ★★★★★) demonstrates just about everything good about contemporary Brazilian pop music, writing and singing deliciously infectious melodies over simmering grooves that effortlessly reference samba, forró and other native forms while sounding radio-ready. This effort suggests she’s on par or superior to the great Marisa Monte in terms of depth and accessibility. It doesn’t hurt that the album was produced by the adventurous studio whiz Kassin and his clever crew of mu-



Kiko Dinucci

sicians, that some string arrangements were done by Sean O’Hagan, founder of Irish orchestral pop legends High Llamas, and that Gilberto Gil turns up for an intimate duet on the closer.

Ordering info: sambastore.com/en

Zippering in from Brasília, from under any kind of radar, is *Bad Trip Simulator #2* (self-release; 26:46 ★★★★★), the third album from Satanique Samba Trio, a post-everything instrumental combo. The band views a wide variety of traditional styles from their homeland, well beyond merely samba, through a wildly askew lens. The band’s grip on these hallowed traditions, with pandeiro beats, fluid, choro clarinet and brisk, piquant cavaquinho, is firm and assured, but the group’s primary musical muscle suggests a deep fondness and understanding for off-kilter rock heavies like the late Captain Beefheart and The Minutemen. One of the most unique records I’ve heard in the last year.

Ordering info: sataniquesambatrio.net

Rodrigo Maranhão, who first gained attention by writing songs for Maria Rita, comes into his own as a performer on his second album, *Passageiro* (MPB/Universal 60252733541; 41:08 ★★★★★). He favors a largely acoustic attack, alternating between gentle samba grooves and region-free pop balladry—he even tackles some fado on “Quase um Fado,” a duet with the great António Zambujo—that reminds me a little of Lenine at his most restrained. Maranhão makes the most of his limited range, imbuing his performances with warmth and intimacy, leaving something a little mysterious and elusive in their resolution. A number of tracks use excellent string arrangements, giving the music a gorgeous harmonic ambiguity.

Ordering info: sambastore.com/en

JACQUES COURSIL TRAILS OF TEARS



JACQUES COURSIL

TRAILS OF TEARS

SSC 3085 / In Stores Now

Featuring:

Jacques Coursil trumpet

Mark Whitecage alto sax

Perry Robinson clarinet

Jeff Baillard keyboards

Bobby Few piano

Alex Bernard bass

Alan Silva bass

José Zébina drums

Sunny Murray drums

Leaving the world of music for academia many years ago, trumpeter Jacques Coursil invested considerable time in the study of colonialism and its effect on distressed populations. Coursil has since resumed playing in earnest, with his studies as inspiration, and his new music is showcased well on *Trails of Tears*. The intent of this powerful recording is to express the emotion of displacement and loss on the Cherokee tribe that was forcibly removed from their native homeland in the 1830s (the trail of tears) and the response from those of African heritage who were enslaved in the territory that the Cherokees were driven from. The performance is enhanced by the presence of luminaries from the free jazz world, including drummer Sunny Murray, clarinetist Perry Robinson, saxophonist Mark Whitecage, bassist Alan Silva, and pianist Bobby Few. Coursil’s lovely trumpet voice, along with inspired performances by all involved, makes *Trails of Tears* a moving musical experience.



www.sunnysiderecords.com

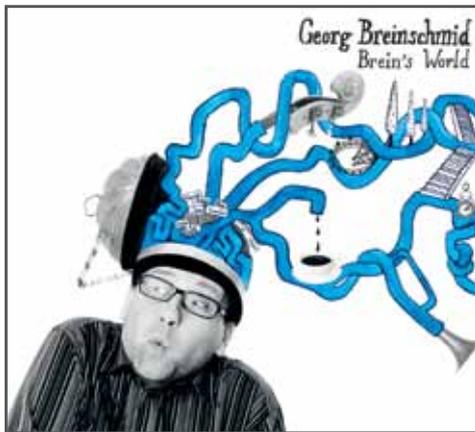
Georg Breinschmid *Brein's World*

PREISER RECORDS 90787

★★★★

Viennese bassist Georg Breinschmid's excellent two-disc *Brein's World* borrows from, among other styles, classical chamber music, Viennese song, European folk music and hard bop. It's at times frustrating, but sure to elicit a few chuckles. Part tongue-in-cheek (check Breinschmid's song tribute to the internet on "Computer-Wienerlied"), part pastiche, part high-brow, the album ranges from playfulness to longing. *Brein's World* shows Breinschmid, who sings in German on five cuts and raps on another (he is no Jay-Z), to be a talented and eccentric artist who can deliver the goods in whatever style he chooses.

Just over half of *Brein's World's* tracks, several of which are waltzes, showcase three of Breinschmid's working groups. *Brein's Café*, which includes violinist Roman Janoska and pianist Frantisek Janoska, mixes intimate classical chamber music with jazz-influenced improvisation. Roman Janoska is the group's primary melodic voice, but each member has plenty of solo space and they expertly interject short statements into the often thick textures. Frantisek Janoska evokes Chopin on "Liebestraum," Roman Janoska is a hell of an improviser, and the pretty "Petite Valse" is a charmer. Breinschmid's digging and funky bass lines support his duo pieces with trumpeter Thomas Gansch, who greases up his sound as easily as he plays it straight. *ClassXXX* features Daniel Schnyder on soprano saxophone, vibist Thomas Dobler and cellist



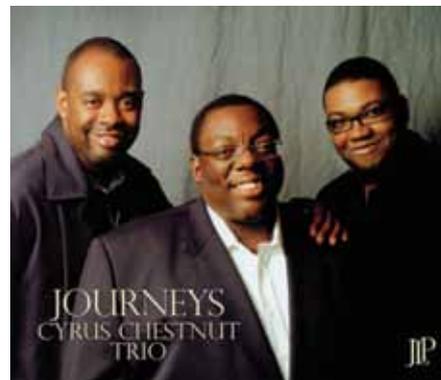
Susanne Paul. On the gorgeous "Without Me," Schnyder blows lyrical lines over Dobler's vibraphone arpeggios. Breinschmid fills out the rest of the album with instrumental configurations and styles. "Oldtime Hit" is a nod to Cannonball Adderley's groups, and the fast and hard-grooving "Dream #71" features Manu Delago on the hang, which sound a bit like steel drums.

—Chris Robinson

Brein's World: Disc 1: 7/8 Landler; Musette #2; Jacaranda; Computer-Wienerlied; Brein's Knights; Quartier Latin; Liebestraum; Flugzeugderolist; Intermezzo; 5/4; Bach 11/16; Tschukkn Belle; Festivalse; Room 422 (75:41). Disc 2: Without Me; Trompetenpolka/Radetzkymarsch; Schnucki von Heanois; Dark Lights; Dream #71; Lied des Zwangsdenkens; Petite Valse; Oldtime Hit; Urlaub am Glat; Blues Five; Ma mauss aufhean wanns am scheenstn is; Window Serenade; Todespolka; Wienerlied - GPS (76:11).

Personnel: Georg Breinschmid, bass, composer, vocals, guitar, whistle; Daniel Schnyder, soprano saxophone; Clemens Salesny, alto saxophone; Thomas Gansch, trumpet, flugelhorn, vocals, percussion, mouth percussion; Horst-Michael Schaffer, trumpet; Robert Bachner, trombone; Roman Janoska, Azzi FINDER, Roland Bentz, violin; Sebastian Gürtler, violin, mandolin, vocals; Susanne Paul, Daniel Pezzotti, cello; Tommaso Huber, accordion, vocals; Clemens Wenger, Frantisek Janoska, piano; Andi Tausch, guitar; Thomas Dobler, vibraphone; Manu Delago, hang; Christian Salfellner, drums; Erni M., vocals, kazoo; Marta Sudraba, vocals.

Ordering info: preiserrecords.at



Cyrus Chestnut Trio *Journeys*

JAZZ LEGACY PRODUCTIONS 1001011

★★★★

No one would make a case for pianist Cyrus Chestnut as a stylistic innovator or artistic rebel. Though he swims in the mainstream, Chestnut's keyboard explorations are not row-boat exercises. He's a master of melodic and rhythmic invention with an endless reservoir of dynamics. The soft touch alone can caress, whisper or plead. When he chooses to unleash his strong left hand on a galvanizing swinger like "New Light," it's full-throttle propulsion. Except for "Lover," all the tunes are Chestnut originals. As songs they might not attract interpreters, but as trio features they're more than adequate.

Much is made of Chestnut's gospel background but nowhere in this collection are there overt gospel devices (like, say, Les McCann's patented minor thirds); maybe in some ballad passages of "In The Still Hours" and "Goliath." Swing abounds but Chestnut doesn't need to pound bass chords to achieve it. His right hand dances through "Little Jon," a musical party that recalls Erroll Garner at his most delightful.

This is a collection brimming with subtleties, and not just in the soft numbers. A couple of bars of block chords on the title number manage to be both rhythmic and lyric at the same time. His comping sticks and moves in an intriguing way, playing with placement and phrasing. "Eyes Of An Angel," an introspective waltz, conjures treble cascades that sparkle and whirl. For the deep listener, Chestnut has provided a pageant of near recessed delights.

Bassist Derzon Douglas and drummer Neal Smith are deferential collaborators, underlining Chestnut everywhere and stepping forward for the occasional solo. Douglas displays nice lyrical content on his pizzicato outing, and Smith peppers a nice chorus on "Smitty's Joint," though each of them could have been mixed a little more prominently on his album, in the solos at least.

—Kirk Silsbee

Journeys: Smitty's Joint; Lover; Eyes Of An Angel; Little Jon; New Light; Journeys; The Flowers On; The Terrace; Yu's Blues; In The Still Hours; Goliath. (57:17)

Personnel: Cyrus Chestnut, piano; Derzon Douglas, bass; Neal Smith, drums.

Ordering info: jazzlegacyproductions.com

Billy White *First Things First*

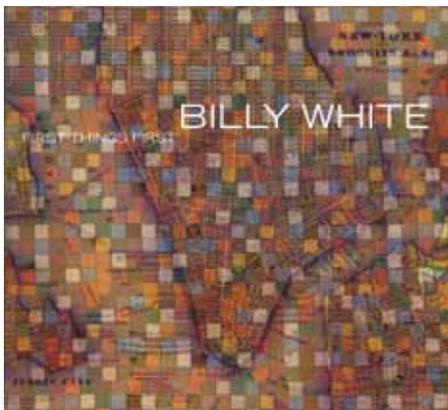
PORTO FRANCO RECORDS 013

★★★★

Billy White studied ethnomusicology in addition to piano during college, so he's been exposed to music from around the world. Yet White's debut, *First Things First*, stays close to home. Think a modern strain of hard-bop performed by a quintet without the perfunctory blues-inspired compositions often included on Blue Note and Prestige LPs in their heyday.

Judging by the brief length of half the tracks, White's intent was to showcase his prowess as a composer. He's quite good, in this regard. I listened to the 11 heads that White composed, sans solos; this litmus test confirmed my initial impression. "ABC Blues," "Cutouts," "Song for A Friend" and "The End Of The Beginning" feature strong melodies and arrangements.

But how much weight should be attached to the solos? While White is impressive, the horn players distinguish themselves on just a handful of tracks. Tenor player Dayna Stephens excels on "Under The Train," "The End Of The



Beginning," "Jelly Bean" and "The Incredible Bob." Trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire stands out on the up-tempo tunes "Cellular" and "Jelly Bean." In most cases, though, they have only a chorus apiece to work with. The album is good, but with more solos, it could have been better.

—Eric Fine

First Things First: ABC Blues; Cutouts; First Day Of Spring; Under The Train; Song For A Friend; The End Of The Beginning; Adios, Shermano; Rue Roy; Cellular; Jelly Bean; The Incredible Bob; Autumn In New York. (59:50)

Personnel: Billy White, piano; Dayna Stephens, tenor sax; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Yunior Terry, bass; Steve Belvius, drums; Yaala Balin, vocals (12).

Ordering info: portofrancorecords.com

Chase Baird

Crosscurrent

JUNEBEAT 005

★★★★½

One of the first things that strikes the listener to this freshman offering is the confidence and fearlessness that Chase Baird brings to the tenor saxophone. The 22 year-old Salt Lake City native has a full-frontal sound and brooks no hesitation when spinning lines and phrases; he goes for the gusto every time. It's not surprising that a youngblood would play hard, fast and pack lots of notes into his solos—that's to be expected. What's remarkable is the clarity and logic of his ideas. As prolix an improviser as Baird is, there's very little excess in his work.

The sound of the band is that of a contemporary jazz outfit, one that has internalized, say, Weather Report and Mahavishnu Orchestra to the point of not having to reiterate their respective musics. John Stori's electric guitar and Julian Pollock's keyboards are restrained in volume in the largely supportive roles they play. Baird's originals are full of time changes and shifts in mood, and usually proceed in a linear manner—with few great crescendos or ascending thrusts. While this generally challenges his players, sometimes tunes like his modal "The Traveler" can be aimless and overly long. Likewise, the torpid "Dusk" is a study in note-shaping and articulation that overstays its welcome at more than six minutes.

Walter Smith III

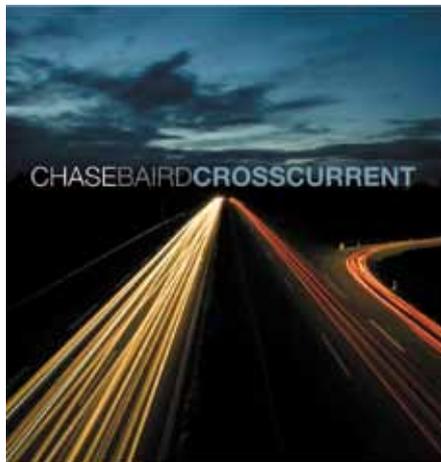
III

CRISS CROSS 1328

★★★★★

Whether it's the bond between tenor saxophonist Walter Smith III and trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, the way that drummer Eric Harland introduces new phrases, or the uncomplicated approach that Smith takes, there is something about *III* that makes it sound like it's from an earlier time in the best possible sense. Recorded mostly in one take, this has the highly melodic feel of a Woody Shaw/Dexter Gordon or mid-'60s Wayne Shorter recording.

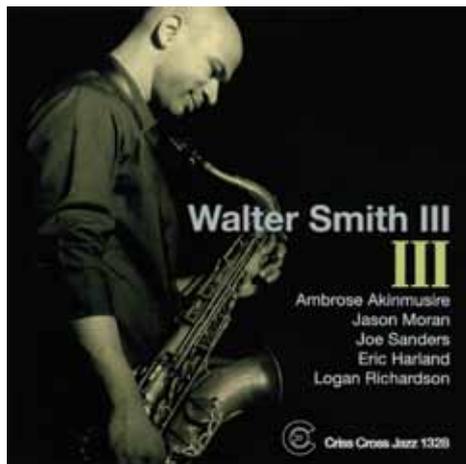
Smith signals his intention with the opening 80 seconds of "Working Title," playing a contemplative solo that begins almost off-handedly and builds substance up to the point where the band enters, steaming. His ability to develop statements that have rigorous form and unerring logic is an obvious strength. On "Capital Wasteland"—which, being based on a post-apocalypse video game, follows in the tradition of cowboy-obsessed Sonny Rollins and superhero-loving Shorter—his central solo begins as a series of short, high cries and then circles up to a hoarse, anxious climax. Duetting with Jason Moran on the pianist's lovely "Aubade," Smith has his heart on his sleeve, balancing breathy sibilance with grainy, full-bodied tone.



Baird has cited Gato Barbieri as an important influence, and the latter's handling of Bob Haggart's venerable ballad "What's New" gives a clue to his identity. He has a full, florid tone that expands on held notes yet sidesteps Barbieri's blowtorch sound. He draws out the notes languidly over drummer Christopher Tordini's slow backbeat. Like many a young player, Baird can't resist doubling up and packing a chorus with filigree that can shinny up into overtones. If this is Baird's entry point, it'll be interesting to trace his trajectory from here.

—Kirk Silsbee

Crosscurrent: Fifth Direction; Crosscurrent; Infinite Motion; What's New; Lunessence; The Traveler; Cascade; Dusk; All Of You. (62:02)
Personnel: Chase Baird, tenor saxophone; Julian Pollock, piano, keyboards; John Storie, guitar; Christopher Tordini, bass; Steve Lyman, drums; James Yoshizawa, percussion.
Ordering info: jazzhangrecords.com



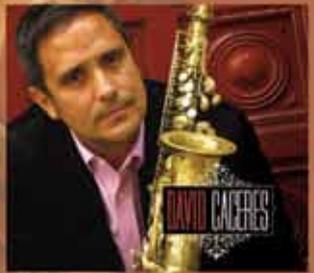
Moran's DNA is almost as much in evidence here. In addition to "Aubade" "Moranish" provides a platform for gospel-tinged playing, his stabbing interjections on "Byus" add tension to the free-flowing soloing of Smith and Akinmusire, and he gets the final word with a graceful conclusion on "Goodnight Now."

III is not a recording that demands attention, but its depths and subtle grace reward it.

—James Hale

III: Working Title; Capital Wasteland; Highschoolish; Himorme; Aubade; Byus; Herya; Moranish; Goodnight Now. (54:55)
Personnel: Walter Smith III, tenor saxophone; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Jason Moran, piano; Joe Sanders, bass; Eric Harland, drums; Logan Richardson, alto saxophone (4).
Ordering info: crisscrossjazz.com

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Bridging popular music and jazz is a high wire act. Insuring authenticity in both genres and making a palatable combination in order to appease the public is a tough job. Vocalist/saxophonist David Caceres achieves these with aplomb on his new self-titled Sunnyside Records release. Backed by an incredible band of jazz's elite and an orchestra arranged by the fantastic Gil Goldstein, Caceres delivers captivating interpretations of songs by legends of popular music (Stevie Wonder, Van Morrison, and Maxwell) and those of jazz (Thelonious Monk and Herbie Hancock). Caceres reveals a command of saxophone, voice and pen with two original compositions on this mature and highly emotive recording.

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Threadgill's Hidden Hand

There's a classic Henry Threadgill interview where the bandleader describes the trio Air as an "octopus," with tentacles reaching out three different ways while still working as one. Nice image, and on point as well. The saxophonist makes music that seems larger than the number of participants would suggest possible. Clever arrangements and compositional sleight of hand developed throughout the myriad bands and eras documented on the eight discs of *The Complete Novus And Columbia Recordings Of Henry Threadgill And Air* (Mosaic MD8-247; 64:04/51:55/72:02/65:54/65:28/37:26/64:25/66:22 ★★★★★)

Members of the AACM in the early '70s, Threadgill, drummer Steve McCall and bassist Fred Hopkins were responsible for some of the decade's most novel small-group abstractions. As Air, they'd cut discs for the Japanese Why Not label and Chicago's Nessa imprint before moving to New York and connecting with producer Steve Backer and his Arista subsidiary Novus for the 1978 session that became *Open Air Suit*. By this time they had an approach down: collective flights of fancy were tethered by a wealth of knotty rhythm maneuvers. Live tracks from the Montreux Jazz Festival and the studio work that generated the lithe intricacies of "Card Two: The Jick Or Mandrill's Cosmic Ass" illustrate just how deep an architectural achievement this is. It ain't easy to make tension seem mercurial.

The trio's most eloquent moments arise on *Air Lore*. Examining New Orleans through the filters of Jelly Roll Morton and Scott Joplin, the group winds its way around "King Porter Stomp" and "The Ragtime Dance" with an anything-goes spirit that salutes their experimentalism while still celebrating melody. McCall, revealing his deep sense of swing, burns throughout.

While Air was refining its approach, Threadgill created X-75, a larger group featuring woodwinds, basses and voice. It opened the door to the modern classical realm, balancing euphoric pieces such as "Fe Fi Fo Fum" with works that boasted an enchanting eeriness. Without a percussionist, the four basses were tasked with delivering the oomph. They fulfilled. "Salute To The Enema Bandit," one of three previously unreleased X-75 tracks here, starts out with a series of growls that are built on nothing but thrust.

A larger palette, filled with unlikely combinations of strings and horns, was something Threadgill embraced from that point on. His '80s work is flecked with orchestral allusions that fend for themselves even during the deepest jazz passages. A trio of Sextett discs on the About Time label gave way to three thrilling titles on Novus, which was newly affiliated



with RCA.

You Know The Number kicked off the series, and its swirl of sound is indicative of the ensemble's roiling interplay. N'awlins-esque polyphony was one of the Sextett's defining traits, and the two-drummer battery provided plenty of liftoff for the trumpet and trombone players. Threadgill had personalized ways to voice bluster. Both ominous and audacious, "The Devil Is On The Loose And Dancin' With A Monkey" is indicative of this era. The group's other forte is the idea of bewitching gloom. "Gift" fairly glows with a funereal aura, pulling you deeper into the thickening plot as each minute passes.

This template sets the parameters for the rest of the music here, albeit with memorable tweaks such as the prominence of an accordion in the mid-'90s. That band, the Make A Move ensemble, stressed guitars and lowered the brass to French horn and tuba without forfeiting swagger or bounce. And if the composer's formula started to become a tad predictable, the group's interplay sustained its fizz. Threadgill's charts are all about fluid counterpoint.

Perhaps his cagiest of moves has been finding a spot for his sax and flute in the middle of these whirlwinds. From Air's "Let's All Go Down To The Footwash" to Where's Your Cup's "Laughing Club," his attack is the box set's most tell-tale through line. Lyrical jabs chop in a way that augments the music's inherent anxiety. There are moments where Threadgill seems to spit phrases into existence, a percussive approach bolstering "the dam's about to bust" feeling that marks many pieces here. Ultimately it underscores the essence of this perpetually fascinating music: a beaming dedication to adventure.

DB

Ordering info: mosaicrecords.com

Cynthia Felton
Come Sunday:
The Music of
Duke Ellington

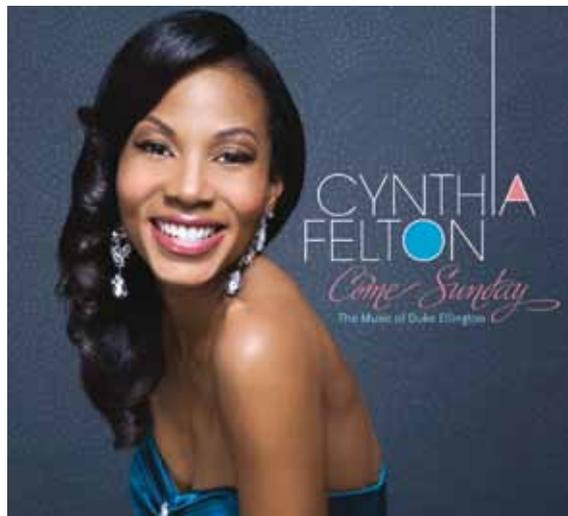
FELTON ENTERTAINMENT 0002

★★★½

Attending a Duke Ellington concert never stopped being an event. But the dreaded non-event that loomed within so many such concerts was his “medley of hits.” These were the songs that everyone knew but that had no surprise left to give in Ellington’s obligatory parade.

I thought of that listening to this work by singer Cynthia Felton, who has picked most of the low-hanging plums from the Ellingtonian medley tree. Had she reached just a bit higher she might have found a few specimens made more interesting by their comparative scarcity: “Creole Love Call,” for instance, or “Azure.” Something that might have made this CD an event.

The burden is on her to see things in them that others have not. Felton brings a lot of virtuosity to the task—range, a sense of drama, a fluent scat vocabulary and the multilingual vocal skills of a soul, gospel and pop talent. She has also surrounded herself with a team of A-list



players whom she shuffles in a continual cycle of musical chairs. It would appear that these tunes come from the same sessions that produced her first CD, *Afro-Blue*, two years ago.

All this is to the good. “Mellowtone” finds an appealingly hip voice as a simple duet with bassist Ryan Cross. And “Lush Life” spins its sad web of ennui as Felton wraps herself convincingly in its elegant depravity. But she has a powerful voice that projects without trying, and this tends to fight the intimacy needed to smoke out the song’s dimly lit saloon poetry.

Her “Sophisticated Lady” is more restrained, though either by neglect or intent she takes a crucial liberty with Mitchell Parish’s frowning lyric. “Some man in a restaurant” becomes “some man in the restaurant.” The restaurant? One word and the casual, nothing-in-particular promiscuity implied in the image is contradicted. “Prelude To A Kiss” is more conventionally romantic, and her way with a ballad serves it nicely. Better still, her stately “Come Sunday,” with its gospel roots and Cyrus Chestnut’s counterpoint, is a more appropriate vehicle for Felton’s technique and sense of theater.

She has good fun with “Perdido” and “It Don’t Mean A Thing,” offering some loose-limbed scatting and interaction with her instrumental colleagues, especially Wallace Rooney and a swaggering Ernie Watts on the latter. Quite good, but not exceptional.

—John McDonough

Come Sunday: The Music Of Duke Ellington: It Don't Mean A Thing; Caravan; In A Sentimental Mood; In A Mellowtone; Lush Life; Perdido; Come Sunday; Take The "A" Train; I Got It Bad; Sophisticated Lady; I'm Beginning To See The Light; Duke's Place; Prelude To A Kiss. (46:53)

Personnel: Cynthia Felton, vocals; Wallace Roney (2, 8, 9), Nolan Shaheed (12), trumpet; Ernie Watts (2, 11), Jeff Clayton (6, 9, 12), saxophone; Patrice Rushen (1, 8, 12, 13), Cyrus Chestnut (2, 5, 7), Donald Brown (3, 6, 9, 10), John Beasley (11), piano; Ronald Muldrow (3, 6, 11), guitar; Tony Dumas (1, 8, 12, 13), Robert Hurst (2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10), Ryan Cross (4), John B. Williams (11), bass; Terri Lyne Carrington (1, 8, 12, 13), Jeff Tan Watts (2, 7), Yoron Israel (3, 6, 9, 10), Lorca Hart (11), drums; Muniyong Jackson (2, 3, 8), percussion; Carol Robbins (13), harp.

Ordering info: cynthiafelton.com

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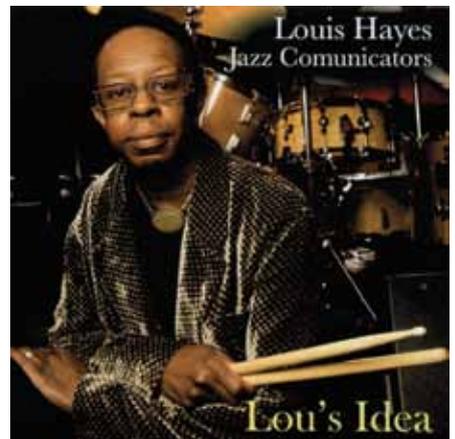
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★★★½

If you like your jazz played right down the middle with a few surprises thrown in for extra measure, veteran drummer Louis Hayes is your man. Recent releases such as last year's *The Time Keeper* and the reissue of Freddie Hubbard's 1969 live date *Without A Song: Live* remind us that everything this ageless talent touches seems to swing and glide almost effortlessly. And, just like a live date, *Lou's Idea* plays just like a jazz set of sorts. Whether it's the leader's opening, casually swinging title track, a rarified unique bossa arrangement of "This Is New," or more upbeat fare like "Just Feeling," the conventional still sounds convincing.

With Hayes and company, it's less about what than how. This is due in large part to the bright combination of Steve Nelson's vibes, Mulgrew Miller on piano and saxist Abraham Burton, all held together by Hayes and Santi DeBriano's solid basslines. The underrated Hayes knows how to orchestrate, organize and utilize his talented crew.

One can get the sense of pacing with *Lou's Idea*, when the cool, evocative ballad "Nothing Better To Do" follows on the heels of the heated "Curtain Call." This is not a blowing date, but rather a series of visits. The repertoire bears this out, where the music goes from the original to the jazz standard to something a bit different, as with the band's swinging take on Burt Bacharach's '60s hit "Say A Little Prayer." The song's familiar theme is followed by a breezy run that's lively and fun, some minor chords altering events reminiscent of other jazz excursions through pop fare, Burton's slightly menacing horn and Miller's urgent, incessant piano playing helping to take the song from a devotional track toward something closer to an incantation.

—John Ephland

Lou's Idea: Lou's Idea; Curtain Call; Nothing Better To Do; Say A Little Prayer; Bolivia; Soul Eyes; This Is New; Just Feeling; Same Page; I Have Nothing Better To Do (extended version). (57:06)

Personnel: Louis Hayes, drums; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Santi DeBriano, bass; Steve Nelson, vibes; Abraham Burton, saxophones.

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Magnus Broo
Swedish Wood

MOSEROBIE 072

★★★★

On his latest and best recording as a leader, Magnus Broo, the Swedish trumpeter and brass fire-brand of the quintet Atomic, drew conceptual inspiration from fellow horn greats Bill Dixon and Bobby Bradford, fronting a quartet anchored by two bassists. The trumpeter doesn't pointedly emulate either predecessor, retaining his own febrile sound, but he clearly recognized the space and plushness a pair of intuitive bass players can provide. On "Oh What Beautiful Day," muted blowing and melodic tenderness evoke Don Cherry, with the counterpoint plucked by Torbjörn Zetterberg and Joe Williamson delivering the first part of the theme and Broo finishing it off, tag-team style. The leader introduces a flash of humor with the ascending hiccup of a melody on "Thought" before leaping into an improvisation of fleetness and finesse.

During the gorgeous ballad "Acoustic Kitten" the bassists unobtrusively split arco and pizz roles with the drummer Håkon Mjåset Johansen, sensitively prodding and poking along the way. The episodic "I Hear You" veers from pointillistic fury to funereal luxury, with Broo blowing uncanny New Orleans-style vibrato as Johansen stutters and dances over his kit. On "And Suddenly" Broo delivers a bravura turn, ripping apart an attractive melody that would seem perfect for a film score. —Peter Margasak

Swedish Wood: Oh What A Beautiful Day; Thoughts Are Things; Acoustic Kitten; Swedish Wood; I Hear You; I Am Coming Home; And Suddenly; New Weather. (50:20)

Personnel: Magnus Broo, trumpet; Torbjörn Zetterberg, bass; Joe Williamson, bass; Håkon Mjåset Johansen, drums.

Ordering info: moserobie.com



Agustí Fernández/Barry Guy/Ramón López
Morning Glory

MAYA 1001

★★★ 1/2

By intent, this trio stays away from the jagged total improv that its members have explored in myriad other encounters. Likewise they steer clear of the electronic hall of revolving mirrors that Barry Guy and Agustí Fernández navigate as part of Evan Parker's Electro-Acoustic Ensemble in favor of a pristine acoustic sound-stage: even the live bonus CD that reprises material from the trio's first album, Aurora, is quite cleanly recorded. It's more pertinent to remember that Guy has a parallel career playing baroque music, and to note that Bill Evans once performed a tune called "Morning Glory."

This trio isn't trying to sound like Evans, but they adhere to some of his aesthetics of clarity, elegance and restraint. Instead of the avalanche of inside-the-piano rumbling he has used to confront power players like Mats Gustafsson, Fernández plays sparse figures that leave plenty of space for Guy to suspend isolated knots of sound, pluck serene melodies, or bow ghostly harmonics. Even when Fernández does get nimble, as on the group improvisation "Perpetuum Mobile," his line is easy to follow. Lopez's role is key; he adorns and shapes the music, but rarely propels it. The result will sound abstract to followers of conventional piano trios, but genteel to anyone familiar with the participants' other efforts. —Bill Meyer

Morning Glory (Disc 1): La niña de la calle Ibiza; Morning Glory; Unfinished Letter; Zahori; An Anonymous Soul; Perpetuum Mobile; Benito (Jordi Benito in absentia); The Magical Chorus; Mourning; A Sudden Appearance; Belvedere (57:41); Live In New York (Disc 2): Dong Miguel; Odyssey; Can Ram; David M; Aurora; No Ni Ng; Rounds (57:11).

Personnel: Agustí Fernández, piano; Barry Guy, bass; Ramón López, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: maya-recordings.com



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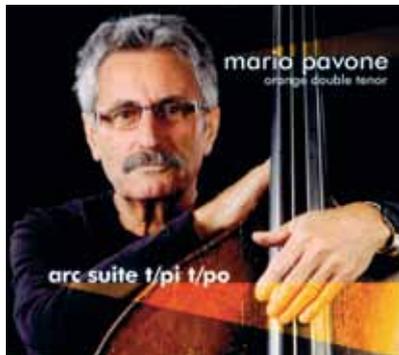
Mario Pavone
Orange
Double Tenor
arc suite t/pi t/po
 PLAYSCAPE 061010

★★★★

Prominent left-leaning and ensemble-sensitive bassist Mario Pavone has associated with some of the avant-garde, including Paul Bley and Bill Dixon, and countless others along the four-plus decades of his active musical path. As a bandleader, composer and confident creative force in his own right, Pavone—going strong at 70—exerts a special brand of relaxed intensity, as heard once again on a rich and adventurously probing suite project with his Orange Double Tenor sextet.

In his suite, commissioned by Chamber Music America's 2009 New Jazz Works, we have complex "new jazz" at once intellectual and swinging, investigative and declarative. Not incidentally, it is also formidably played by his ace group, including the double tenor sound of Tony Malaby (also injecting some soprano action) and Jimmy Greene, the commanding trumpeter Dave Ballou, drummer Gerald Cleaver and pianist Peter Madsen, in close, empathetic dialogue with the man in the center.

Situated at roughly the halfway mark in this 12-track session is a brief, melancholy yet also fittingly angular lament, "Half Dome (for Bill Dixon)," and later the afterthought "Dome," in



honor of the late trumpeter Pavone worked with for years. Whereas these pieces follow a vaguely ascending, atmospheric arc in homage to his former collaborator, much of Pavone's writing heeds a tauter and more structurally rigorous plan of action and athletic-cum-cerebral linear navigations.

That plan is heard throughout the suite, from the opening "Continuing" to "West Crash," the title track "T/pi T/po," and the fervent finale of "17 Notes," all with fluid metric shifts, snugly navigated lines, counter-themes and ideas generally in restless motion.

At times, Pavone's writing suggests the multi-horn writing of another bold bassist-leader-composer, Dave Holland. Whether or not it has something to do with their powers as bassists with a taste for adventure, both balance a searching modal character in the music they write, while assuredly nailing down the bottom, however intricate or quixotic the structure on top. And he has a great collective ally in this band: All aboard deliver on the tricky structured sections, and easily free up according to the leader's venturesome plan.

—Josef Woodard

arc suite t/pi t/po: Continuing; East Arc; Poles; Nokimo; West Of Crash; Half Dome (for Bill Dixon); The Dorn; Silver Print; Dome; T/pi t/po; Mid Code; 17 Notes. (69;34)
Personnel: Mario Pavone, bass; Tony Malaby, soprano, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Greene, tenor saxophone; Dave Ballou, trumpet, cornet; Peter Madsen, piano; Gerald Cleaver, drums.
Ordering info: playscape-recordings.com

Nellie McKay
Home Sweet
Mobile Home
 VERVE FORECAST 14721

★★★★

Nellie McKay first displayed her bottomless grab bag of talents on 2004's *Get Away From Me*. Released when she was just 21, the two-disc debut showcased her acerbic lyrical flair and stylistic range, alternating from rock to cabaret to rap—sometimes in the same song. She followed that up with two more strong releases (one of them another double album) and, in 2009, paid tribute to Doris Day with *Normal As Blueberry Pie*.

McKay's fifth album, *Home Sweet Mobile Home*, is easily her most accomplished work, benefitting from classy production and a knowing voice that keeps getting stronger with experience. "Coosada Blues" is a lovely piece of old-school Americana balladry, and among her finest songs. Such tracks as "Bruise On The Sky" also demonstrate her continuing matu-



rity as a lyricist, reflecting on her younger wise-cracking persona. *Home Sweet Mobile Home* is also McKay's most uneven collection. The genre exercises ("Caribbean Time," "Beneath The Underdog"), while pitch-perfect, are more crafted than inspired. They meander, too, suggesting McKay's first sign of artistic weariness. The question is what she should do next with her gifts. She has the voice for another covers project, but here's hoping she opts to pen more originals and gives each one the necessary TLC.

—Zach Phillips

Home Sweet Mobile Home: Bruise On The Sky; Adios; Caribbean Time; Please; Beneath The Underdog; Dispossessed; The Portal; Bodegal; Coosada Blues; No Equality; Absolute Everywhere; Unknown Reggae; Bluebird. (51:18)
Personnel: Nellie McKay, vocals, piano, organ, marimba, ukulele, saxophone, clarinet, cello, additional percussion and synthesizer; Ben Byrum, drums; Danny Cahn, trumpet; Tim Carbone, violin; Lucien Ceran, saxophone; Rick Chamberlain, trombone; Jim Daniels, tuba; Glenn Drewes, trumpet; Bob Glau, bass; Paul Holderman, saxophone; Brian Jobson, bass; Wayne Jobson, guitar; Reggie McBride, bass; Joslyn "Speckles" McKenzie, drums; Willie Murillo, trumpet and backup vocals; Barry O' Hare, keyboard; Cary Park, guitar; Lance Rauh, saxophone; David Raven, drums; Spencer Reed, guitar; Paul Rostock, bass; Mark Visher, saxophone, clarinet, backup vocals; Paul Wells, drums.
Ordering info: vervemusicgroup.com



The Modern Jazz Quartet
Under The Jasmin Tree/Space

APPLE/EMI 0824524

★★★½

When the world's most popular musicians decide to launch a record label, anything seems possible. That was the outlook that found the Modern Jazz Quartet recording under the auspices of The Beatles in 1968, an arrangement that produced two albums that were marketed as something different than they actually were.

Under The Jasmin Tree had a cover that was sexual and psychedelic, while *Space* was marketed using hyper-minimalism. Inside, the MJQ hadn't changed much from its mid-'50s roots; they still created charming acoustic music that reflected four distinct personalities. Being on Apple heightened the contrast between the band's Third Stream eclecticism and the electric sounds that were beginning to push acoustic jazz aside.

Under The Jasmin Tree came to Apple ready-made and centers around a three-part suite that showcases Milt Jackson's shimmering sweeps of notes and John Lewis' pointillistic, upper-register melodies. On "Exposure," the pianist balances his pinched treble notes against Jackson's arpeggios, creating counter movement and melody. *Space* bows a bit more to its context, highlighting Jackson's lingering reverb on "Visitor From Venus" and the skirl of notes on top of Percy Heath's pedal point on "Visitor From Mars." The drama-laden blues of "Dilemma," a relatively straight-ahead reading of "Here's That Rainy Day" and a gently swinging "Yesterday" put them on more traditional ground. Exoticism passed for hip in '68, and the adagio movement from "Concierto De Aranjuez" fit that bill—a brave move considering how Miles Davis and Gil Evans had claimed the composition as their own less than a decade earlier. The band savors the nuance of the piece, with Jackson's vibes and Connie Kay's bells setting the Spanish mood, and Lewis turning in a poignant piano solo that is as affecting as Davis' trumpet.

Under The Jasmin Tree/Space: The Blue Necklace; Three Little Feelings; Exposure; The Jasmin Tree; Visitor From Venus; Visitor From Mars; Here's That Rainy Day (Carnival Of Flanders); Dilemma; Adagio From Concierto De Aranjuez; Yesterday. (71:53)
Personnel: John Lewis, piano; Milt Jackson, vibes; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums.
Ordering info: applerecords.com

Creating The Ellington Brand

As the title, *Duke Ellington's America* (University of Chicago Press), suggests, cultural historian Harvey G. Cohen's book is as much about the country as about the composer.

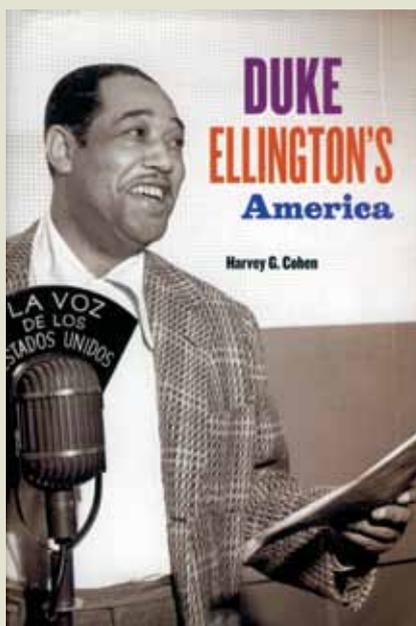
Jazz biographies tend to be catalogs of performances, assembled in the hope that a person may emerge out of the work. But Ellington was much more than a traveling musician. He was a brand, a corporation, a composer and a publisher who employed lawyers, accountants, managers, staff and a roll call of musicians who became franchises of his fame. Such careers generate great paper trails to tempt ambitious biographers, and often, great biographies.

This could be one of them. Cohen, who teaches at Kings College, London, has drilled into the vast Ellington collection at the Smithsonian and produced a work that presents Ellington as the outcome of a pragmatic business plan: a unique product of American marketing and advertising that created a black cultural hero specifically for white consumption; one that accommodated, challenged and helped alter the Byzantine racial codes of mid-century America.

Ellington was raised in a black middle-class Washington, D.C., home, laced with a Victorian sensibility and a faith in initiative and achievement. Soon after arriving in New York, he was signed by Irving Mills, who saw in black music an empty niche in need of filling and in which a savvy white music entrepreneur might build a business. To Ellington, Mills had the connections, claws and toughness to breach barriers he could not. To Mills, Ellington had the temperament, demeanor and ambition to reach outside the race market to a wider and more profitable white middle-class America. Duke Ellington Inc. was formed in 1928, part of a long-term business plan that gave Mills 33 percent of every dollar Duke earned over the next decade plus a composer royalty on every song of the period in perpetuity. A predatory price, perhaps, but things began to happen.

Mills insisted that Ellington record his own songs under as many pseudonyms as necessary to enhance publishing income. Backed by frequent radio broadcasts, Mills engineered a publicity push by Ned Williams (later DownBeat editor, 1941-'52) to position Ellington as the "Negro Gershwin," a "serious" composer of "genius" occupying a higher plateau of American music. The band's formal stagecraft and dress were conceived to support a halo of legitimacy, an image further enhanced in its early movie appearances.

Cohen builds his story through a series of thematic chapters, many of which read well as stand-alone essays. He sheds interesting light



on the creative environment in the band and the disputes over authorship, some of which involved significant money; and the logistics of travel, especially in the South of the '30s.

The Mills business plan took Ellington a long way and taught him many things. Never accept second billing, for instance, a rule that made him leave Columbia for RCA the moment the label signed Count Basie in 1939. Mills' plan taught him to hold himself apart from the fads of the swing era. It taught him hold his silence on racial issues, avoid confrontations, and let his music speak for his politics. And it taught him to value good management—the "white protector"—whatever its cost.

It also taught him when it was time to leave Mills. In 1939 Ellington cut all business ties (over the cost of his mother's casket, Cohen writes), launched his own publishing firm and switched up to the William Morris Agency, presaging a surge in creativity and prestige (not to mention income) that led to Carnegie Hall and *Black, Brown And Beige* in 1943. Cohen digs deeply into Ellington's unpublished scenario for *BB&B* and his ambivalence over public racial protest. "Maybe this explains the strange hesitancy in most of his comments at Carnegie that night," he writes. "[W]as he mulling over whether he should have spoken his mind in a more forceful manner?"

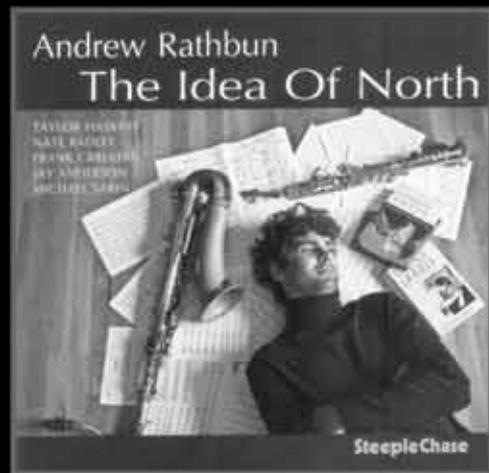
Lost in the perspective is much discussion of the band's musical evolution. But that old critical grist is easily sacrificed for the fascinating ground Cohen has broken, including an examination of the band's later years and the declining financial fortunes that were in a grim race with Ellington's own struggle with lung cancer to bring the band's history to an end. Fortunately, Ellington won. **DB**

Ordering info: press.uchicago.edu

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Andrew Rathbun's fourth album on SteepleChase reflects his musical ideas inspired by fellow Canadian Glenn Gould and looks into the implication of his homeland on his music.



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Xavier Charles/Ivar Grydeland/Christian Wallumrød/Ingar Zach
Dans Les Arbres

ECM 2058
 ★★½



Minimalism is as challenging to free improvisers as ballads are to straighthead jazz players. This is what French clarinetist Xavier Charles and his three Norwegian cohorts—guitarist Ivar Grydeland, pianist Christian Wallumrød, and percussionist Ingar Zach—engage in during the course of their debut, which is finally receiving a domestic release (it came out in 2008 in Europe).

Dans Les Arbres, which is French for “in the trees,” seems a befitting title. Sitting on a branch, the vantage point gives an opportunity to discern some action that slowly develops. Imbued with subtle elements borrowing from global folklore, the sparse improvisations feature a pulse that compensates the absence of a real rhythm and brings a sense of temporality. The four musicians deserve kudos for not choosing an easy path, but they achieve mixed results. The band is up to a strong start. “La Somnolence” imparts a compelling South Asian flavor, and the mournful “L’Indifférence” with its haunting clarinet work and mix of bowed, tingling, and scraped strings establishes a deep emotional connection. Unfortunately, most of the subsequent pieces fail to make a real mark.

—Alain Drouot

Dans les Arbres: La Somnolence; L’Indifférence; Le Flegme; L’Engourdissement; Le Détachement; La Froideur; L’Assourissement; La Retenue. (49:31)
Personnel: Xavier Charles, clarinet, harmonica; Ivar Grydeland, acoustic guitar, banjo, sruti box; Christian Wallumrød, piano; Ingar Zach, percussion, bass drum.
Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

Omer Klein
Rockets On The Balcony

TZADIK 8156
 ★★★★★



The title track of *Rockets On The Balcony*, pianist Omer Klein’s fourth release, provides a sense of the combustible political climate throughout the Middle East. Rooted in the classical tradition, Klein’s somber reading becomes progressively dark; Haggai Cohen Milo’s arco bass, through the use of jarring overtones, evokes the downward flights of missiles.

The foreboding mood the song strikes is misleading. Much of the album is upbeat and—in the case of “Baghdad Blues”—ironic. Recalling Hebrew folk songs, Milo bows in unison with Klein while drummer Ziv Ravitz pairs shakers with the kick drum. “Baghdad” features few if any blue notes and there’s not a hint of the standard I-IV-V chord progression.

The opening track, “España,” features a more conventional arrangement but a similar sensibility. Ditto for “The Wedding Song” and “Hope,” and also “Shir Avoda,” which Klein performs on electric piano.

Rockets is an indicator of the sea change that has been occurring in jazz. Pretty much everyone is dabbling with one ethnic music or another. In the case of Klein’s trio, the musicians all happen to be from Israel and the album successfully reconciles one world with another.

—Eric Fine

Rockets On The Balcony: España; Baghdad Blues; The Wedding Song; Shining Through Broken Glass; Hope; Heïdad; Rockets On The Balcony; Shir Avoda; Neïla. (45:54)
Personnel: Omer Klein, piano, Fender Rhodes; Haggai Cohen Milo, bass, kalimba; Ziv Ravitz, drums, percussion.
Ordering info: tzadik.com



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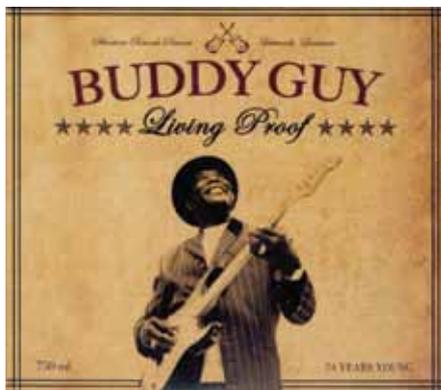
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Buddy Guy
Living Proof
 SILVERTONE/JIVE 88697
 ★★ ★ 1/2

Mel Brown
Love, Lost & Found
 ELECTRO-FI 3421
 ★★ ★ 1/2

Hail two guitar-playing blues senior citizens of special merit. Buddy Guy, more than a half-century into his recording career, maintains his vitality and imagination on his latest album. His colleague, the underappreciated Mel Brown, turns in solid performances on an album of tracks recorded in the decade before his death in 2009.

Guy is a deeply expressive singer, most in character when his aggressive pout torches lyrics about spurned lovers, as with “Don’t Let The Door Knob Hit Ya.” For a change of pace, he shifts gears into a more thoughtful, modulated delivery when addressing mortality on “Everybody’s Got To Go” and “Stay Around A Little Longer,” the latter a celebration of his friendship with guest B. B. King. But Stratocaster electroshock blasts, not vocals, are the main attraction; the archetypal Chicago bluesman revels in short-circuiting a listener’s nervous system. The bends-and-phrases pandemonium in “74 Years Young,” for one, speaks to several generations of rock guitarists. Conviction, as always, fuels his fire and drive, separating him from the general lot of blues-rock guitar hellraisers. It’s another guest, Carlos Santana, who provides toned-down relief on “Where The Blues Begins.” Guy, his point made about still being the hot-guitar champ, is fortunate to have Nashville’s Tom Hambridge on his team as producer, drummer and songwriter. Like Guy, Hambridge has a knack for putting his head and heart into all his contributions.

Andrew Galloway provides a public service by releasing previously unreleased material recorded by Brown for his Electro-Fi label. The onetime Los Angeles session guitarist, whose blues bona fides included work with Bobby Bland and Etta James, shows the same exceptional conviction as Guy but without all the histrionic flair. On mostly original tunes, Brown digs into the dark recesses of the blues with

masterful understanding, or displays his originality and intelligence with jazz inclinations. His pained, grisly Blood Ulmer-like singing packs fresh menace into overfamiliar “Hoochie Coochie Man.” Versatile Brown features his decent piano playing on two numbers, notably a version of Freddie King’s “You Were Wrong” that points to Professor Longhair’s New Orleans. Guests include the young Italian guitarist Enrico Crivellaro and such venerable old-timers as Sam Myers and Snooky Pryor. —Frank-John Hadley

Living Proof: 74 Years Young; Thank Me Someday; On The Road; Stay Around A Little Longer; Key Don’t Fit; Living Proof; Where The Blues Begins; Too Soon; Everybody’s Got To Go; Let The Door

Knob Hit Ya; Guess What; Skanky. (54:04)
Personnel: Buddy Guy, vocals, guitar; Michael Rhodes (1–4, 7–12), Tommy MacDonald (5, 6), bass; Tom Hambridge, drums, percussion, background vocals; David Grissom, guitar; Reese Wynans, keyboards; The Memphis Horns (3); B. B. King, vocals, guitar (4); Carlos Santana, guitar (7); Wendy Moten, Bekka Bramlett, background vocals (6, 7, 9).
Ordering info: jiverecords.com

Love, Lost And Found: Love, Lost And Found; My Baby Wants To Boogie; You Were Wrong, Pretty Baby; Red Wine And Moonshine; Little Girl From Maine; Pattern B; Blues In The Alley; Feel Like Jumping; Come Back Baby; Slow Moan; Under The Counter Blues; Hoochie Coochie Man. (57:40)
Personnel: Mel Brown, guitar, vocals, piano, organ, clavinet; Snooky Pryor, vocals, harmonica (2, 8); Sam Myers, vocals, harmonica (5); Miss Angel, vocals (7); Enrico Crivellaro, guitar (4); Jimmy Boudreau, drums (1, 2, 5, 8); Michael Fontfara, piano (2, 8); Al Richardson (1, 2), Leo Valvassori (12), Jimmie Calhoun (6, 7, 10, 11) bass; Alec Fraser, bass (5), congas (11); Leonard Tarver or Jeff Osborne, drums (6, 7, 10, 11).
Ordering info: electrofi.com

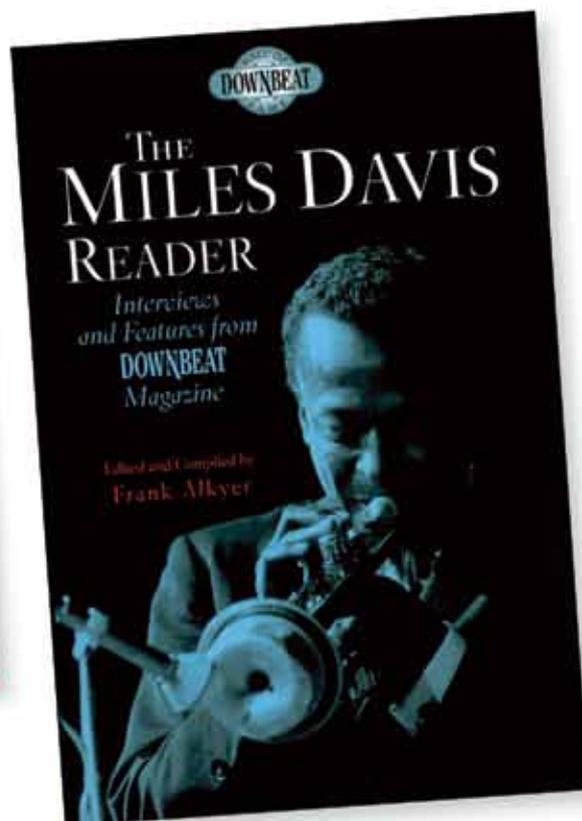
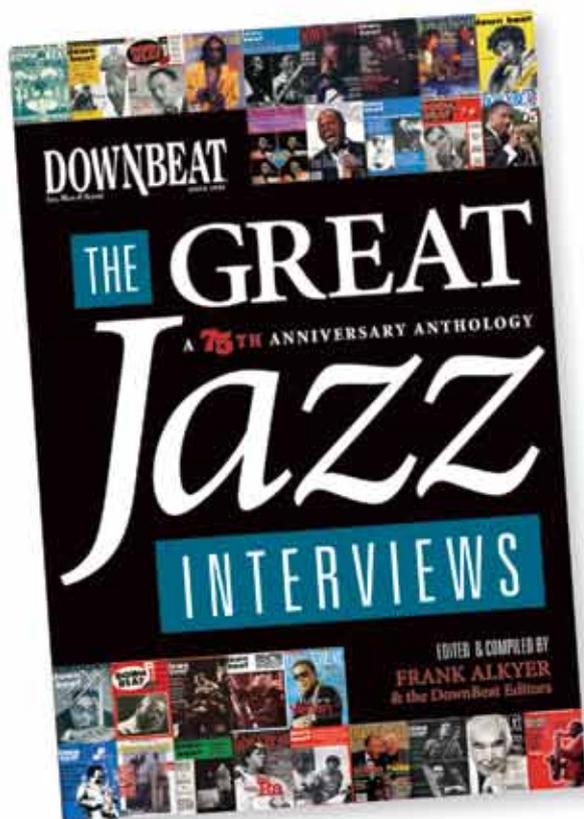
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Boston, Massachusetts
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Berklee's Five-Week Summer Performance Program, now in its 25th year, is the largest, most comprehensive summer music program available, annually welcoming 1,000 students. You must be at least 15 years old by the start of the program and have been playing your instrument (or singing) for a minimum of six months to attend.

Faculty: 160 various Berklee faculty and visiting artists.

Cost: \$7,680 (including housing).

Contact: Summer Programs, (617) 747-2245; berklee.edu/summer.

Camp Encore/Coda Sweden, Maine

June 29–July 24, July 24–August 14

This summer will be the 62nd season of encouraging young musicians at this beautiful lakeside Maine camp location.

Faculty: Brent LaCasce, Kevin Norton, Jared Andrews, Jared LaCasce, Sean Richey, Kyle Moffat.

Cost: 1st session (3 1/2 weeks) is \$4,600 inclusive; 2nd session (3 weeks) is \$3,850 inclusive; full season (6 1/2 weeks) is \$7,100 inclusive.

Contact: James Saltman, (617) 325-1541; jamie@encore-coda.com; encore-coda.com

Camp Medeski Martin & Wood Big Indian, New York

July 31–August 5

Located in the Catskill Mountains, Camp MMW is limited to 80 students ages 16 and up. No matter what instrument you play, you will expand your approach to music, improve your listening skills and interact with musicians in a completely fresh, innovative way. This is five days of musical cross-training led by the band Medeski Martin & Wood.

Faculty: John Medeski, Billy Martin, Chris Wood and special guests.

Cost: \$2,000 full tuition (includes shared accommodation at resort, tuition, meals); \$1,100 for outdoor camping tuition and meals (campers have access to public bathroom facility). Scholarships and discounts available.

Contact: (212) 925-6458; camp@mmw.net; mmw.net/campmmw.

Camp MSM at the Manhattan School of Music

New York, New York

July 10–23, July 24–August 6

This rigorous musical theater camp includes acting, vocal coaching, dance and performance techniques. All campers will receive theory and ear-training classes. Campers can also choose from a diverse array of musical and non-musical elective classes including dance, acting, art, jazz band, stagecraft and more. In addition to studies with expert faculty, campers will also have the opportunity to participate in master classes.



Maryland Summer Jazz Camp

Faculty: Various area musicians and educators including members of the Village Vanguard Jazz Orchestra and Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

Cost: Single session tuition \$1,840, housing \$750, meals \$320. Both sessions tuition \$3,245, housing \$1,500, meals \$634.

Contact: (917) 493-4475; msmny.edu/special/camp; summercamp@msmny.edu.

College of Saint Rose Summer Jazz Program

Albany, New York

June 28–August 5

Students will be divided into two jazz ensembles: students who will be entering grades 7–9 and students entering grades 10–12. Both bands meet every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6–8 p.m.

Faculty: Paul Evoskevich, Matthew Cremisio, Danielle Cremisio.

Cost: \$325.

Contact: Paul Evoskevich, paule@strose.edu.

COTA CampJazz

Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania

July 25–31

Students ages 13 through adult will play in small ensembles based on ability and experience. This intense program includes theory, ear training and sectionals.

Faculty: Phil Woods, Rick Chamberlain, Jim Daniels, Bill Goodwin, Eric Doney.

Cost: \$450 excluding room and board.

Contact: campjazz.org.

Eastern U.S. Music Camp at Colgate University

Hamilton, New York

June 26–July 10, July 3–17, July 10–23, June 26–July 17, July 3–23, June 26–July 23

Jazz education, performance, ensembles and combos, improvisation, theory, harmony, composition, arranging, conducting, guest artists and master classes are all included in this camp. Enrollment is approximately 200

students between the ages of 10 and 18.

Faculty: Sean Lowery, Tom Christensen, Rick Montalbano.

Cost: Varies from \$995 to \$4,298 depending upon a two-, three-, or four-week session.

Contact: (866) 777-7841, (518) 877-5121; easternmusiccamp.com; summer@easternmusiccamp.com.

Eastman Summer Jazz Studies at the University of Rochester

Rochester, New York

June 26–July 8, July 25–August 5, June 13–17

The Jazz Studies Intensive is for highly motivated students currently in grades 9–12 considering jazz studies at the collegiate level. The rigorous two-week program provides an intensive, performance based experience. Students work directly with the renowned Eastman School of Music jazz faculty to enhance improvisational and ensemble skills. The middle school instrumental program focuses on technique and introduces students to the basics of jazz. Also offered is an introduction to jazz history.

Faculty: Jeff Campbell, Harold Danko, Jose Encarnacion, Bob Schneider, Paul Hofmann, Dariusz Terefindo, Bill Tiberio.

Cost: \$1,150 (Jazz Intensive), \$350 (Middle School Instrumental).

Contact: (800) 246-4706; summer@esm.rochester.edu; esm.rochester.edu/summer.

Hudson Jazz Works

Hudson, New York

August 11–14

The fifth annual Hudson Jazz Workshop in upstate New York offers a relaxed yet focused weekend immersion in jazz improvisation and composition conducive to intensive study. Limited to 10 students who come from all over the globe, the level is high.

Faculty: Armen Donelian, Marc Mommaas, Vic Juris.

Cost: \$585.

Contact: info@hudsonjazzworks.org; hudsonjazzworks.org.

Jazz Institute at Proctors

Schenectady, New York

July 18–29

Through jazz, students will build skills including listening, critical thinking, communication and teamwork, all without sheet music. The program will include guest artists for master classes and culminate in a swinging finale.

Faculty: Keith Pray and Arthur Falbush.

Cost: One week, \$200; two weeks, \$380.

Contact: Jessica Gelarden, (518) 382-3884, ext. 150; jgelarden@proctors.org.

Jazz in July Summer Music Programs

Amherst, Massachusetts

July 11–22

Jazz in July is a two-week program focused on joining participants with jazz artists in a learning intensive environment. Jazz in July is centered on teaching improvisation and jazz styles while working to enrich the total musical experience of the participant. Held at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, participants get a variety of interactions with jazz artists through lectures, clinics, master classes and



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Cost: \$1,200, two weeks; \$600, one week.
Contact: (413) 545-3530; jazzinjury@acad.umass.edu; umass.edu/fac/jazz.

Jazz Intensives: Samba Meets Jazz

Bar Harbor, Maine
July 24-30, July 31-August 6

Experienced high school players and adults gain the opportunity to work and learn with world-class faculty. The workshops focuses on jazz and Brazilian music through hands-on classes with vocalists joining trios and ensembles.

Faculty: Roni Ben-Hur, Nilson Matta, Amy London, Bill McHenry, John Cooper.
Cost: \$895 tuition; \$1,360 including lodging and meals.
Contact: Alice Schiller, (888) 435-4003; sambameetsjazz.com.

Juilliard Jazz at Greens Farms Academy

Greens Farms, Connecticut
July 5-9

This new program for students grades 6-12 includes instruction and/or participation in both small and large ensembles, theory and improvisation for all students based upon skill level. Conducted in partnership with Juilliard's Institute for Jazz Studies.

Faculty: Various Juilliard and GFA faculty in addition to world-class musicians.
Cost: TBD.
Contact: (203) 256-0717; gfacademy.org; juilliard.edu/summer/jazz.html.

Kennedy Center Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Piano Intensive

New York, New York
May 18-21

This three-day intensive workshop provides female jazz artists ages 18 to 35 with an opportunity to explore and develop their artistry under the guidance of leading jazz artists and instructors and focuses exclusively on the piano this year. The workshop culminates in a public performance by workshop participants on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage during the 16th Annual Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival.

Faculty: Drawn from the artists present during the Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival.
Cost: Free to those selected (\$25 application fee). Applications must be postmarked by March 18.
Contact: (202) 416-8811; kennedy-center.org/womeninjazzworkshop.

KoSA International Percussion Workshop, Camp & Festival

Castleton, Vermont
July 26-31

This intensive camp is taught at Castleton State College by world-class drummers and percussionists with more than 100 attendees of all ages.

Faculty: Past faculty have included John Riley,

Dafnis Prieto, Steve Smith, Dave Samuels, Giovanni Hidalgo.

Cost: TBD.
Contact: (800) 541-8401; kosamusic.com.

Litchfield Jazz Camp

Kent, Connecticut
July 10-15, July 17-22, July 24-29,
July 31-August 5

Classes offered include combo, theory, composition, improv, jazz history and the business of music. Electives include Latin big band, r&b band and boot camp for jazz musicians.

Faculty: Don Braden, Junior Mance, Onaje Allan Gumbs, Dave Stryker, Eli Yamin.
Cost: \$950 tuition for one week, excluding room and board.
Contact: (860) 361-6285; info@litchfieldjazzfest.com; litchfieldjazzcamp.com.

Maryland Summer Jazz Camp & Festival

Rockville, Maryland
July 20-22, July 27-29

Now in its seventh season, the goal of Maryland Summer Jazz is to get students "out of the basement and onto the bandstand." Each three-day session includes theory, master classes, combo playing, elective sessions and lunchtime and evening faculty concerts. This is a day camp, so many students elect to stay in nearby hotels.

Faculty: Varies by session but may include Jeff Antoniuk, John D'Earth, Wade Beach, Red Lipsius, Frank Russo, Alan Blackman, Felicia Carter.
Cost: One session (register before May 1), \$470; one session (before June 30), \$544; two sessions (before June 30), \$900.
Contact: Jeff Antoniuk, artistic director, (410) 295-6691; marylandsummerjazz.com.

National Jazz Workshop at Shenandoah University

Winchester, Virginia
July 10-15

Inspired by the Stan Kenton Jazz Camp model, this camp includes improvisation, big band and small-group performance, composition, arranging, jazz history, Macintosh software technology, recording technology and instrumental master classes.

Faculty: The best jazz educators and performers from Washington, D.C., including the Airmen of Note, the jazz ensemble of the U.S. Airforce and the U.S. Army Blues band.
Cost: \$500.
Contact: nationaljazzworkshop.org.

New York Jazz Workshop Summer Summit

New York, New York
July 28-31, August 4-7, August 11-14,
August 18-21

A series of four-day summits taught by the nation's leading educators and performers, this workshop is dedicated to providing an intensive learning experience for musicians of all levels. Program includes an improvisation workshop, a vocal workshop, a guitar workshop and a drums and percussion workshop, all presented in the heart of Manhattan.

Faculty: Marc Mommaas, Tim Horner, Vic Juris, Fay Victor, Tony Moreno.
Cost: \$575.
Contact: info@newyorkjazzworkshop.com; newyorkjazzworkshop.com.

New York Summer Music Festival
 Oneonta, New York
June 26–July 9, July 10–23, July 24–August 6

This camp is for musicians of all levels between the ages of 11–25. Students choose from 50 ensembles and classes with more than 40 public performances each summer. Jazz options include three jazz ensembles, up to a dozen jazz combos, jazz choir and classes in improv and jazz history.

Faculty: Justin DiCioccio, Mike Holoher, Sherrie Maricle, Pete McGuinness, Chris Rosenberg and faculty from Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard.

Cost: \$1,700 for two weeks; \$3,300 for four weeks; \$4,800 for six weeks.

Contact: Keisuke Hoashi; info@nysmf.org; nysmf.org.

Penn State Summer Music Camp
 State College, Pennsylvania

July 17–23

Attendees participate in full-ensemble and sectional rehearsals and master classes in addition to daily ear-training, music theory and music appreciation. Students will be placed into big bands and combos based on audition.

Faculty: David Stambler.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: outreach.psu.edu/programs/music camps; summermusic@outreach.psu.edu.

New York University Summer Jazz Workshops

New York, New York

August 1–12, July 11–August 29

Intended for intermediate or advanced participants 18 years and older (applicants under 18 will be considered). Courses include jazz theory, jazz improvisation, rhythm classes, small group ensembles, and master classes.

Faculty: Various faculty from NYU's Summer Jazz Improvisation Workshop.

Cost: Tuition, \$1,800; room and board, \$825.

Contact: Dr. David Schroeder, (212) 998-5446; ds38@nyu.edu; steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/jazz.

Purchase Summer Jazz Institute
 Purchase, New York

July 11–August 5

This four-week immersion program focuses on daily small ensemble rehearsals, instrumental master classes and regular jam sessions with the faculty. All levels of experience welcome..

Faculty: Frank Neimeyer, Tom McEvoy, Sam Lester, Jerad Lippi, John Raymond, Chris Miller.

Cost: \$2,275.

Contact: purchase.edu/departments/academicprograms/ce/summer.

School for Improvisational Music Jazz Brooklyn Intensive

Brooklyn, New York

July 25–August 12

Focused on helping students grow as creative beings through a better understanding of

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GUITAR Henry Johnson Dave Stryker	VOCALS Kevin Mahogany
	GUEST ARTIST Jimmy Heath

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 Students ages 13 to adult welcome Sessions 1-4.

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- Theory
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- Forum
- Evening Jam Sessions
- Composition

Tuition: \$1150, \$1945 with housing and meals

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For students entering grades 7-10

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Tuition: \$350 (no housing available)

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summer@esm.rochester.edu
585-274-1400 or 1-800-246-4706

improvisation and creative music, the SIM Intensive at Long Island University combines master classes, group and open rehearsals and jamming with classes in technique culminating in faculty and student concerts.

Faculty: Ralph Alessi, Tim Berne, Ravi Coltrane, Matt Mitchell, Andy Milne, Josh Roseman, Vijay Iyer.

Cost: \$1,800 (full three weeks); \$1,200 (two weeks).

Contact: schoolforimprov.org.

Skidmore Jazz Institute

Saratoga Springs, New York

June 25–July 9

Skidmore Jazz Institute provides a new generation of musicians the opportunity to learn from gifted educators and world-class performers. Students participate in daily combo rehearsals, improve and special classes.

Master classes are conducted each afternoon by the evening's performing artist.

Faculty: Todd Coolman, Bill Cunliffe, Dennis Mackrel, Pat LaBarbera, John LaBarbera, Bobby Shew, Curtis Fuller, Hal Miller.

Cost: \$2,330.

Contact: (518) 580-5599; summerjazz@skidmore.edu; skidmore.edu/summer.

Tritone Jazz Fantasy Camp Jazz at Naz

Rochester, New York

July 24–29

Held at Nazareth College, this camp is designed for adult players (21 and over) looking to spend a week in a total-immersion jazz playing experience regardless of ability or skill level. Includes instrument and vocal master classes, small-combo and large ensemble playing, theory and improv and an intimate meet-the-artists session.

Faculty: Fred Sturm, Jim Doser, Bob DeRosa, Clay Jenkins, Ted Poor, Bill Tiberio.

Cost: \$775 (tuition only), \$1,075 (tuition and meal plan), \$1,275 (tuition plus room & board).

Contact: (585) 377-2222; tritonejazz.com/camps/naz.

University of the Arts Jazz Intensive Studies

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

July 19–23

This workshop is designed for serious student musicians in their junior or senior year of high school. Many students may also participate in the instrumental camp held during the previous week, which focuses on technique and dovetails into the jazz intensive.

Faculty: From the School of Music.

Cost: \$800.

Contact: (215) 717-6430; precollege@uarts.edu; cs.uarts.edu/summerinstitute/music-studies.

Vermont Jazz Center Summer Program

Putney, Vermont

August 7–15

Focuses on theory, composition and arranging, ensembles, listening, master classes and jam sessions.

Faculty: Sheila Jordan, Jimmy Heath, John Abercrombie, Lee Konitz, Jimmy Cobb.

University of North Texas

Division of Jazz Studies Presents

Summer Workshops 2011

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June 13-17, 2011

Workshop Director: Lynn Seaton

UNT Jazz Vocal Workshop

June 19-24, 2011

Workshop Director: Paris Rutherford

UNT Jazz Winds Workshop

(Sax, Trumpet and Trombone)

July 11-16, 2011

Workshop Director: Mike Steinel

UNT Jazz Combo Workshop

July 17-22, 2011

Workshop Director: Mike Steinel

For more information and to download registration form go to:

www.jazz.unt.edu

UNT[™]
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS



Music For All Summer Symposium

Cost: \$1,500 (tuition, single room and meal plan); \$1,375 (tuition, double occupancy and meal plan); \$1,100 (tuition, lunch and dinner, no sleeping accommodations).
Contact: (802) 254-9088; vtjazz.org/ed/summer; info@vtjazz.org.

William Paterson University

Wayne, New Jersey
 July 17-23

Includes seven days of small-group performances and rehearsals; classes in improvisation (four levels), arranging and jazz history; master classes with daily guest artists; free admission to major nightly jazz concerts; and a free trip to a New York City jazz club.

Faculty: Dr. Billy Taylor, Jim McNeely, Steve LaSpina, Marcus McLaurine, Tim Newman, David Demsey.

Cost: Resident tuition is \$689 for commuters; \$989 including room and board.

Contact: WP Center for Continuing Education, (937) 720-2354; wpunj.edu/coac/departments/music.

educator Fernando Jones and the Blues Kids Foundation, will give national and international student musicians ages 12-18 an opportunity to learn and play America's root music in the hands-on environment of Columbia College Chicago's South Loop campus. Placement in ensembles is competitive, and student musicians (for intermediate-to-advanced skill levels) must audition for positions. A parent-teacher workshop is also included.

Faculty: Fernando Jones, Blues Ensemble Director.

Cost: Free for students.

Contact: (312) 369-3229; blueskids.com; bluesnewz@aol.com.

Drury Jazz Camp

Springfield, Missouri

June 19-24

The oldest music camp in the state dates back to the '50s and '60s, when the great bandleader Stan Kenton was running it. Daily activities include rehearsals, master classes, jazz theory, improvisation, listening and jam sessions.

The camp is open to students 13 years and older with a minimum of one year experience on their instrument, as well as to adults with previous experience on a jazz instrument (saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, piano,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 87



At North Central College, being well-rounded doesn't mean losing your musical edge

2011 Freshman Visit Days:

Monday, January 17

Saturday, April 16

2011 Transfer Visit Day:

Saturday, February 12

2011 Fine Arts Auditions:

Saturday, February 19

(Music and Music Ed.)

Thursday, February 24

(Vocal and Music Ed.-Vocal only)

Saturday, March 5

(Music and Music Ed.)

MIDWEST

Birch Creek Music Performance Center

Egg Harbor, Wisconsin
 July 19-31, August 2-14

This camp provides students with advanced training and the opportunity to perform publicly alongside pros in the jazz industry. Enrollment is limited to 50-54 students ages 14-19.

Faculty: Jeff Campbell, Tom Garling, Reggie Thomas, Clay Jenkins, Bob Chmel, Rick Haydon, David Bixler, Ron Carter, Jim Warrick and others.

Cost: Tuition, Room and Board is \$1,785.

Contact: (920) 868-3763; birchcreek.org.

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Chicago, Illinois

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Your **EAR** is your most valuable musical asset

Perfect Pitch vs. Relative Pitch

In music, you are set free or held back by what you can or cannot hear . . .

by David Lucas Burge



Musicians often think that **Perfect Pitch** is supremely superior to **Relative Pitch**. It's true in some ways, but it's like comparing apples with oranges.

The truth is, **Perfect Pitch** and **Relative Pitch** are *completely separate* hearing skills, each with its own unique powers and abilities.

Perfect Pitch and **Relative Pitch** are *complementary*. They do their jobs best when they work TOGETHER – like the two hemispheres of your brain: right (artistic) and left (logical).

Let's compare the experiences:

1.

Your experience of music **WITHOUT Perfect Pitch** or **Relative Pitch**:



Without Perfect Pitch or Relative Pitch, your understanding of music is blurred.

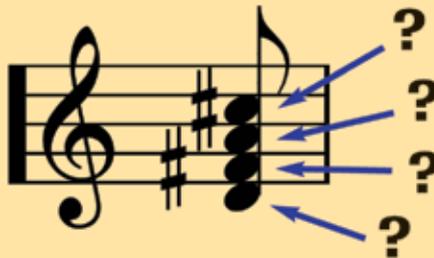
With a completely untrained ear, there is little or no insight into what you hear. Basically: zero comprehension.

Of course, everyone can ENJOY music without any training whatsoever. But an untrained ear doesn't give you any UNDERSTANDING of the music.

Simply put, without **Perfect Pitch** or **Relative Pitch**, you literally have *no pitch recognition*.

Since music is a HEARING ART, a great ear gives you a natural command of the musical language. A "great ear" means: an ear that understands PITCH.

When you do not know the notes and chords that you hear, the music literally passes you by, not fully heard:



Bottom line: An untrained ear leaves you with unanswered questions about everything you hear.

2.

Your experience of music **WITH Relative Pitch** and **WITHOUT Perfect Pitch**:



With Relative Pitch, you hear music with a fully clear and sharp focus.

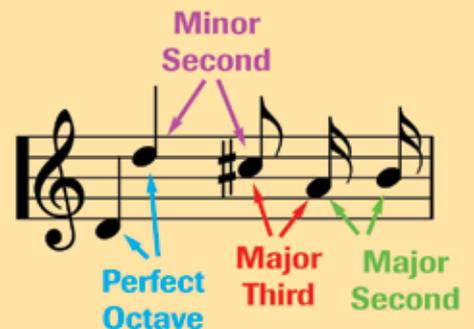
Your sense of **Relative Pitch** tells you how pitches RELATE to one another to create the **language of music**.

Here's how **Relative Pitch** works: When you play any two tones, a RELATIONSHIP occurs between them – which you'll hear as a simple sound pattern, or INTERVAL:



There are 21 basic **Relative Pitch** intervals in music, each with its own name and distinct sound. You need to learn each interval BY EAR, because . . .

Relative Pitch intervals are the raw building blocks of all melodies:



Relative Pitch intervals are also the raw building blocks of all chords. This is why **Relative Pitch** also lets you name any kind of chord – instantly – BY EAR:



Relative Pitch gives you a clear insight into music in a whole new way.

Examples: Your ear can now probe deep into all the harmonies. You can now intelligently choose chords – BY EAR – to harmonize any melody. You can now easily take music out of your HEAD, and onto your instrument.

And when you can FOLLOW THE FLOW OF MUSIC by ear, you naturally can improvise, compose, and “play by ear” to an impressive degree.

To put all this very simply:

Relative Pitch gives you a *mastery of the musical language* – all BY EAR.

In fact, many musicians believe that **Relative Pitch** is all they need in order to excel in music. And for many people, this is probably true.

But **Relative Pitch** lacks a certain aesthetic experience. It lacks the artistic experience of PITCH COLOR . . .

What is Pitch Color?

With **Relative Pitch**, you are still hearing all the tones as “black and white.” In other words, all tones sound basically the same. The only real difference is that some tones sound “higher” and some sound “lower.”

Relative Pitch cannot tell you when you hear a C#, an F#, or a Bb. Nor can **Relative Pitch** tell you the difference between a D Major 7 chord and an F# Major 7 chord.

To know the EXACT tones you are hearing, you need a new dimension of experience . . . which is **Perfect Pitch**.

3.

Your experience of music WITH **Perfect Pitch** and WITHOUT **Relative Pitch**:

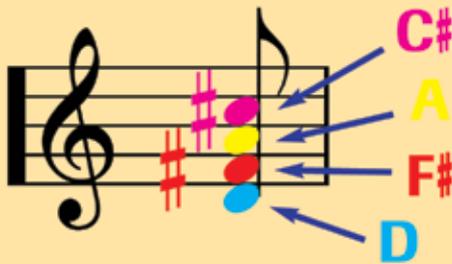


Perfect Pitch lets you experience each tone as a distinct “pitch color” – so you know EXACT PITCHES by EAR.

Perfect Pitch tells you the EXACT pitches that you hear.

When you hear a C#, you know it's a C#, and not an F# or a Bb. You hear it!

Each tone *sounds different* to your ears – similar to how you see colors by eye:



Perfect Pitch gives you the perception of an ARTIST because it endows you with the rich COLOR of every pitch you hear.

The experience of **Perfect Pitch** revolutionizes your abilities in music, because now you know the EXACT tones you are hearing. Quite naturally, this opens up whole new vistas of artistic possibilities for you.

Yet contrary to popular ideas about **Perfect Pitch**, a musician does not experience the full details of the music with **Perfect Pitch** ALONE.

If your ear does not possess the clarity of **Relative Pitch**, your experience of music will not be fully focused.

To hear the sharp details of what is happening in the music, you need another dimension of hearing. This is the dimension of **Relative Pitch** . . .

4.

Your experience of music WITH BOTH **Perfect Pitch** and **Relative Pitch**:



*With BOTH **Perfect Pitch** and **Relative Pitch**, you hear the TOTAL musical picture – in color and fully focused.*

Now . . . here's how **Perfect Pitch** and **Relative Pitch** work TOGETHER:

Example: **Relative Pitch** tells you that you hear a **Major Seventh** chord.

But now the question is: WHICH Major Seventh is it? Are you hearing E Major Seventh? G Major Seventh?

This is where your **Perfect Pitch** comes into play.

Perfect Pitch tells you the EXACT TONES, so you can pinpoint the ROOT of the chord you are hearing.

Now you know that you are hearing a D Major Seventh chord:



D Major Seventh Chord

Perfect Pitch tells you the EXACT chord – BY EAR.

Relative Pitch tells you the KIND of chord – BY EAR.

Working together in many ways, **Perfect Pitch** and **Relative Pitch** give you the complete picture of the notes, chords, melodies, harmonies, and progressions that create all music.

And you get this all BY EAR.

LEARN MORE on our WEB SITE – *Experience YOUR OWN Perfect Pitch and Relative Pitch . . .*

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JazzWorks

Taking It Up A Notch

Just as in sports, the ability to excel early in music is viewed as being linked directly to longer-term success. If you haven't made your mark by the time you're old enough to vote, common perception goes that you're destined for a life on the sidelines. Judy Humenick, the founder of JazzWorks—an Ottawa-based jazz education non-profit—begs to differ. She's an enthusiastic proponent of lifelong learning.

The Saskatchewan native established the program in 1994, with the idea of offering adults the opportunity to study alongside gifted teens and seasoned clinicians like Ottawa bassist John Geggie. Since then, JazzWorks has attracted more than 1,000 students and featured instructors that include saxophonists Ted Nash, Don Braden and Donny McCaslin, percussionist Aldo Mazza, and trumpeters Kevin Turcotte and Jim Lewis. Some core members of the faculty have been with the program since the beginning.

"What we offer is closer to sharing than teaching," said Humenick. "JazzWorks provides a creative, safe atmosphere where we can challenge participants to go deeper into the music than they might have previously."

In recent years, the program welcomed as many as 93 participants, ranging in age up to 84, and 17 instructors.

One of the keys to JazzWorks' success is that the program takes students and instructors far outside their comfort zones, into a summer camp setting in the Laurentian Mountains 90 minutes north of Montreal. Operated by the Canadian Amateur Musicians, the Lake MacDonald Music Centre can seem as foreign to hotel-hopping musicians like Nash as it can to amateur saxophonists escaping from a public service cube farm. Singer Kellylee Evans, a self-proclaimed musical late bloomer who tried her wings at JazzWorks in 1999, five years before placing second behind Gretchen Parlato in the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition, credited the camp setting with imparting a lesson that went far beyond vocal exercises.

"I'm a city girl, so the prospect of going to summer camp was not exciting for me," she said. "What I found was an incredibly safe place where everybody shared. The chance to break bread with people of all different ages and experiences, to go swimming together, that gave me a feeling of community. What I've discovered since then is that you need that at every stage of your development. The camp made me feel like, I can do this, and it made me look for that sense of community as I've grown my career."

Prospective JazzWorks adult campers submit audition tapes and are sorted into combos, based on experience and instrumentation. Three high school music students, who attend on scholarships, are chosen through the MusicFest Canada program. Experience also determines which of three steams of improvisation study will be followed. Master classes begin each morning, and workshop discussions cover topics ranging from jazz history to how to build a set list and extended performance techniques.

Veteran saxophonist and JazzWorks faculty member Rob Frayne points to the workshops as a unique source of the kind of intangible musical knowledge that only comes from rubbing shoulders with seasoned players. "Just little things like tonguing techniques and reed choice, those are things I didn't find out about in school. Those are practical insights you only pick up through experience, and JazzWorks opens the door into that."

Vital information and experience are also shared at the nightly jam sessions, a camp feature that Evans remembered as being essential for helping her gain the confidence to pursue a music career. Like camp itself, the jam sessions defied expectations. "Rather than being competitive, I discovered how nurturing they can be," she said.



"I think one of the great things about the atmosphere is that there's no vibe," said Frayne. "Even for a beginner, having the cushion of better players around you frees you to take chances you might not take in other settings. Plus, hearing someone like Donny McCaslin or pianist Dave Restivo play next to you for three days tends to wear off on you; it takes your playing up a notch, regardless of where you start."

For Gretchen Schwarz, a middle-aged pianist who had never written a song, the challenge of the JazzWorks camp was enough to ignite her composing chops. "Something happened," she said. "I felt free enough to let my ideas flow, and it was magical. It was especially magical hearing other people play what I'd written."

Those types of stories are fulfilling for Humenick, who has seen the JazzWorks summer experience extend into the fall and beyond. "From the beginning, we've held monthly jam sessions at various restaurants and clubs in Ottawa. Those are now more popular than ever, drawing up to 60 people, and the quality of the music played just keeps going up, too."

In 2007, JazzWorks initiated a composers symposium to allow participants to develop their music, and off-season master classes have been staged in conjunction with Canada's National Arts Centre and the annual concert series curated by Geggie.

For Ottawa, a city that—in spite of being home to artists like Evans, Frayne, Geggie and pianist D.D. Jackson—has never had enough of a jazz community to sustain a full-time performance venue, JazzWorks is paying dividends.

"At last summer's TD Ottawa International Jazz Festival, 15 JazzWorks alumni led their own bands," said Humenick. "That included every size of venue right up to Kellylee Evans on the mainstage. Overall, there are hundreds of musicians playing in bands now—in Ottawa and other places—who have sprung out of our program, including Kellylee, who's headlining all over the world. When I look back over the past 18 years, it's the connections that people make on their own that is the most gratifying."

As a business, JazzWorks has now expanded well beyond its initial decade, when Humenick funded the program herself. In 2004, it was incorporated as a non-profit, opening the way to receive funding from various levels of government, and last year it became a registered charity, enabling Humenick to look to other sources of individual support.

"When I think of our successes, I think of the transformative experiences we've witnessed. For example, last year we had a student who used to be a professional drummer—in France. After coming to summer camp he started taking lessons again for the first time in 40 years. As adults, we are never too old to learn."

—James Hale

bass or drums). Previous experience in jazz is not necessary.

Faculty: Tina Clausen, Ned Wilkinson, Brian Hamada, James Miley, Jamey Simmons, Rob Tapper, John Strickler.

Cost: \$315 tuition; \$220 room and board.

Contact: (417) 873-7296; music.drury.edu/jazz.

Interlochen Arts Camp Jazz Program

Interlochen, Michigan

June 25–July 16, July 17–August 8

This three-week camp offers students in grades 9–12 an opportunity to experience a comprehensive set of jazz offerings that will take their improvisation and performance skills to a new level and feature daily master classes, sectional and combos.

Faculty: Bill Sears, Lennie Foy, Michael Kocour, Luke Gillespie, Frank Portolese, David Hardman, Robbie Smith.

Cost: \$4,575.

Contact: (800) 681-5912; admission@interlochen.org; camp.interlochen.org.

Janice Borla Vocal Jazz Camp

Naperville, Illinois

July 17–22

This one-week intensive gives aspiring jazz vocalists a chance to study with acclaimed professional jazz artists. Focus on solo vocal performance and improvisation; curriculum includes vocal jazz techniques, styles and repertoire, improvisation, master classes, student jam sessions, faculty artist performances and more. Students ages 14–adult are welcome.

Faculty: Janice Borla, Jay Clayton, Rosana Eckert; also Dan Haerle, Bob Bowman, Jack Mouse, Art Davis.

Cost: \$625 for commuters. \$925 for residents.

Contact: Janice Borla, (630) 416-3911; janiceborla@mac.com; janiceborlavocaljazzcamp.org.

Keith Hall Summer Drum Intensive

Kalamazoo, Michigan

June 14–19, June 19–24

Students of all ages learn different aspects of jazz drumming including tunes, drum choir ensemble and performances with professional rhythm sections at a local jazz club. Held on the campus of Western Michigan University, this camp is held in two segments for players at different skill levels.

Faculty: Keith Hall, Matthew Fries,

Phil Palombi, others.

Cost: \$450 plus room and board.

Contact: (201) 406-5059; keithhallmusic.com; keith@keithhallmusic.com.

McNally Smith College of Music–Jazz Workshop

St. Paul, Minnesota

June 25–30

Open to musicians of all skill levels, this camp offers an immersion in jazz and improvisation through ensemble training, improvisational theory and technique, master classes and jazz history.

Faculty: Scott Agster, Jerry Kosak, Sean McPherson.

Cost: Registration \$400, lunch \$60, housing \$400, airport pick-up \$50 (if received by March 31).

Contact: (800) 594-9500; sean.mcperson@mcnallysmith.edu; summercamps.mcnallysmith.edu.

Music for All Summer Symposium

Muncie, Indiana

June 20–25

The camp offers several different areas of study, including concert band, percussion, marching band, color guard, orchestra, drum major and jazz band. The Summer Symposium also offers a Leadership Weekend Experience (June 18–20). Open to high school students.

Faculty: TBD.

Cost: Super Saver (past participant) fee \$489, early bird registration (before March 31) \$539, full fee \$599 (after March 31).

Contact: (800) 848-2263; musicforall.org/what-we-do/summer-camp.

Northern Illinois University Jazz Camp

DeKalb, Illinois

July 17–22

This camp is for jazz musicians of all skill levels who want to focus on a creative approach to improvisation and ensemble playing. Camp-goers will attend rehearsals, seminars on jazz styles and business of music, instrument master classes, jam sessions, sectionals, group classes and more, all taught by NIU jazz faculty alumni and students. This camp is for students who have completed grades 8–12.

Faculty: Ron Carter, NIU faculty and graduate students.

Cost: \$460 early bird (June 1).

Contact: Renee Page, (815) 753-1450; niu.edu/extprograms.

2011 mpulse

Summer Jazz Institute

July 17-30, 2011

for high school students

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July 3 - 16

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Trombone Institute

July 10 - 30

Musical Theatre Workshop

July 17 - 30

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Performing Arts
Technology Camp
Summer Dance Institute
Vocal Arts Institute
Jazz Institute (NEW)



Andrew Bishop

For more information, please visit
music.umich.edu/mpulse
mpulse@umich.edu
866-936-2660



University of Michigan School of
Music, Theatre & Dance





2011 SUMMER JAZZ IMMERSION PROGRAMS

jazz camp
ages 12-17

Week 1, July 17-22
Week 2, July 24-29

jazz residency
ages 18 and up

Week 3
July 31-August 5

- Personalized curriculum
- Focus on improv and combo playing
- Study with world-class faculty, including George Cables, Marcus Belgrave, Taylor Eigsti, Julian Lage, Madeline Eastman, Ethan Iverson, Joe Lovano, Judi Silvano, Jimmy Heath, Ndugu Chancler, Albert "Tootie" Heath, and more

Register online at www.stanfordjazz.org
or call 650-736-0324

Northwoods Jazz Camp

Rhineland, Wisconsin

May 11-14

Students learn improvisation, jazz vocabulary, repertoire, big band reading and interpretation, jazz theory and history. They play and perform with the eight professional faculty members each night in concert, with a big band the final night. Students must be 21 and over unless accompanied by an adult.

Faculty: Kim Richmond, Clay Jenkins, Scot Whitfield, Lee Tomboulia, Tom Hynes, Jeff Campbell, Tim Davis and Betty Tomboulia.

Cost: Student single occupancy room, \$795; student double occupancy room, \$665.

Contact: Holiday Acres, (715) 369-1500; northwoods jazzcamp.com; jazzkim@kimrichmond.com.

Oakland University Regina Carter Workshop

Rochester Hills, Michigan

May 22

Oakland University alum and artist-in-residence Regina Carter brings her technical proficiency and improvisational gifts to students May 22 for a one-hour jazz violin workshop that explores surprising jazz combinations on a typically classical instrument. Following the workshop, Carter will perform a concert for attendees.

Faculty: Regina Carter.

Cost: \$20, including post-workshop concert.

Contact: Miles Brown, (248)-370-2805; brown239@oakland.edu.

The Roberto Ocasio Latin Jazz Music Camp with Bobby Sanabria

Cleveland, Ohio

July 11-16

Students in grades 8-12 playing any instrument are invited to attend this camp, which focuses on playing, composition, improvisation, rhythms, styles, history and culture. Artist-in-residence Bobby Sanabria will conduct master classes based upon his work with legendary figures including Tito Puente, Dizzy Gillespie and Mario Bauzá.

Faculty: Various.

Cost: \$500.

Contact: (440) 572-2048; trof@robertocasiofoundation.org; robertocasiofoundation.org.

Simpson College Jazz Combo Camp

Indianola, IA

June 12-17

Students participate in daily classes of jazz theory and composition, improvisation, master classes and jazz listening with each day capped by a faculty combo concert.

Faculty: Dave Camwell, Jim Oatts, Jason Danielson, Jon Kizilarmut, Seth Hedquist, Dave Kobberdahl, Dave Altemeier, John Benoit, Eric Kreiger.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: Dave Camwell, (515) 961-1575; simpson.edu/music/camps/jazz.

Steve Zegree Vocal Jazz Camp

Kalamazoo, Michigan

June 26-July 1

This camp at Western Michigan University targets high school and college students,

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and Justin DiCioccio, Chair of the Jazz Arts Program, are proud to cohost the 2011

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or visit umanitoba.ca/summer

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teachers, professional and amateur singers along with rhythm section players.

Faculty: Steve Zegree, Michael Wheaton, Duane Shields Davis, Diana Spradling, Ly Tartell, Peter Eldrige, Gary Fry.

Cost: \$495 plus room and board.

Contact: wmugoldcompany.com/camp.

Summer Jazz Workshops

Louisville, Kentucky

July 3-18, July 10-18,

July 2-3, July 9-10

This camp features two week-long sessions and three two-day sessions. Participants receive master classes on their instruments, ear-training sessions, concerts by the all-star faculty, jazz theory classes and small group/combo rehearsals. All ages/abilities welcome.

Faculty: Jamey Aebersold, Hunt Butler, Steve Allee, Rufus Reid, Dave Stryker.

Cost: \$500 plus dorm accommodations and meal plan.

Contact: (800) 456-1388 ext. 5; Jason Lindsey, jason@jazzbooks.com.

Summer with the Jazz Masters Program

Cleveland, Ohio

June-July 2011

Summer jazz studies program held at Cuyahoga Community College with weekly guest artists, workshops, clinics and performances. Program has about 30 students, age 12-18.

Faculty: Steve Enos, Ernie Krivda, Dave Sterner, Demetrius Steinmetz and Tri-C Jazz Studies Artist(s)-in-Residence.

Cost: \$350.

Contact: Steve Enos, (216) 987-4256; Stephen.Enos@tri-c.edu.

Tritone Jazz Fantasy Camp Cool at the Lake

Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin

July 10-15

Designed for adult players (21 and over) looking to spend a week in a total-immersion jazz playing experience regardless of ability or skill level. Instrument and vocal master classes, small-combo and large ensemble playing, theory and improv and an intimate meet-the-artists session.

Faculty: Gene Bertocini, Ron Blumeneau, Mike Hale, Tom Hampson, John Harmon, Zach Harmon, Janet Planet, Mike Washatka.

Cost: \$775 (tuition only), \$1,075 (tuition and meal plan). Note: On-site lodging for 2011 is sold out.

Contact: (585) 377-2222; tritonejazz.com/camps/bjorklunden.

University of Central Oklahoma Jazz Guitar Workshops

Edmond, Oklahoma

June 20-24, July 11-15

Open to all ages with one year or more of guitar experience. Incorporated into the program is the university's Jazz Lab, a state-of-the-art learning center and recording studio during the day that turns into a live music club at night.

Faculty: Danny Vaughan.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: Brian Gorrell, (405) 359-7989; briangorrell@ucojazlab.com.

University of Central Oklahoma Modern Recording Technology

Edmond, Oklahoma

July 11-15

The spectrum of audio recording techniques are taught, including measurement of sound, distortion, signal flow, transducers, microphones, bit resolution, analog vs. digital technique, modern sound editing and effective use of using software and plug-ins. Space is limited. Early application encouraged.

Faculty: Brian Gorrell.

Cost: Varies.

Contact: Brian Gorrell, (405) 359-7989; briangorrell@ucojazlab.com.

University of Michigan MPulse Jazz Institute

Ann Arbor, Michigan

July 17-30

Students attending MPulse will receive training provided by the university in improvisation, listening, jazz history, applied instrument training, theory and musicianship. Students participate in small group performance and creative collaboration with other MPulse sessions. MPulse is open to students who have completed grades 9-11 during the 2010-2011 academic year and are selected through auditions.

Faculty: Andrew Bishop (director) and various School of Music faculty.

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Eric Harland Ferenc Nemeth Massimo Biolcati Reuben Rogers
Francesco Martinelli

August 2-7

Marco Tamburini Jeremy Pelt Michael Blake Pietro Tonolo
Achille Succi Greg Osby Peter Bernstein Pietro Condorelli
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summer.usc.edu/guitar

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- @USC Summer

To learn more about the USC Thornton Studio/Jazz Guitar program, go to www.usc.edu/music or call (213) 740-7399.



Cost: \$1,750.
Contact: (866) 936-2660; music.umich.edu/special_programs/youth/mpulse.

University of Missouri Kansas City Jazz Camp

Kansas City, Missouri
June 26-30
The UMKC Jazz Camp brings world-renowned performers and jazz educators to Kansas City with talented instrumentalists and vocalists ages 14 and up. Camp directors Bobby Watson and Dan Thomas work with distinguished clinicians to provide insight and inspiration to student combos. The week features combo rehearsals, coaching sessions, master classes, theory and improvisation classes.

Faculty: Bobby Watson, Dan Thomas.
Cost: \$350; \$320 if registered and paid by April 13.
Contact: Julie Koch, (816) 235-2741; kochjc@umk.edu; conservatory.umkc.edu/cmda/jazzcamp.cfm.

University of Missouri, St. Louis Jazz Combo/Improvisation Camp

St. Louis, Missouri
June 12-17
Students from beginner to advanced experience jazz improvisation and combo playing, master and jazz theory classes, jam sessions and daily concerts.

Faculty: Jim Widner, Dave Pietro, Dave Scott, Scott Whitfield.
Cost: \$299.
Contact: Stephen Smith, (314) 516-5948; umsl.edu.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha's Jazz Workshop Summer Camp

Omaha, Nebraska
June 19-24
Designed for students and band directors from middle school through adults, attendees take classes in improvisation, jazz theory, jazz history, big band and combos. The Jim Winder Big Band is featured nightly.

Faculty: Jim Widner Big Band featuring Dave Pietro, Kim Richmond, Chip McNeil, Darren Pettit, Gary Anderson, John Harner, Mike Vax, Dave Scott, Jim Oatts, Scott Whitfield, Paul McKee, Pete Madsen, Tom Matta, Ken Kehner, Rod Fleeman, Jim Widner, Gary Hobbs.
Cost: \$330 tuition.
Contact: Pete Madsen, (402) 554-2297; petermadsen@uomaha.edu; unojazzcamp.com.

The University of Toledo 2011 Summer Jazz Institute

Toledo, Ohio
June 19-25
The UT Summer Jazz Institute offers an instrumental jazz, vocal jazz and teacher training program designed to provide fundamental, intermediate and advanced jazz experiences for high school, undergraduate and graduate college students, and teachers desiring to refine and develop the pedagogy.

Faculty: Jon Hendricks, Vic Juris, Claude Black, Gunnar Mossblad, Norm Manschroder, Stephanie Nadasian, Mark Byerly.
Cost: Varies by program.

Contact: (419) 530-2448; jazz@toldeo.edu; summerjazz.utoledo.edu.

Western Illinois University Summer Jazz Camp

Macomb, Illinois
June 26-July 1
Instruction includes ensemble, sectional, solo opportunities and optional private lessons led by instructors and clinicians including Western Illinois University School of Music faculty.
Faculty: Various.
Cost: TBD.
Contact: (309) 298-1505; wiu.edu/summermusiccamps; sm-camps@wiu.edu.

SOUTH

Juilliard Summer Jazz Residency in Atlanta

Atlanta, Georgia
June 20-24
This program is for disciplined students ages 12-18 who are passionate about jazz. It is designed to give young jazz musicians a taste of what a Juilliard Jazz student's life is all about: refining technique, performance, and broadening understanding of various jazz styles.
Faculty: Various members of the Juilliard Jazz Division faculty, Juilliard students.
Cost: TBD.
Contact: (581) 882-387; juilliard.edu/summer/jazz.html.

Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana
July 6-24
Students will receive beginner and advanced instruction in piano, bass drums, percussion, guitar, brass and woodwind instruments. The camp employs the services of leading New Orleans jazz educators and performers. Students must be 10-21 years old, actively involved in a music education program in school (or have a private instructor) and have studied their instrument for at least two years.
Faculty: Wycliffe Gordon, Norma Miller, Edward "Kidd" Jordan, Clyde Kerr Jr., Marlon Jordan.
Cost: Determined by residency, student status and program.
Contact: (212) 987-0782; jazzcamp@louisarmstrongjazzcamp.com; louisarmstrongjazzcamp.com.

New Orleans Traditional Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana
June 5-10
Students are immersed in the jazz of New Orleans beginning with guest lecturers followed by beginner and advanced group instruction. Highlights include performing at Preservation Hall, nightly jam sessions, sitting in at jazz venues in the French Quarter and a final camper performance at the Bourbon Orleans hotel.
Faculty: Connie Jones, Otis Bazzoon, David Sager, David Boeddinghaus, Don Vappie, Matt Perrine, Gerald French, Banu Gibson, Leah Chase.
Cost: \$1,500, includes tuition, six days hous-

ing, breakfast and lunch.

Contact: Banu Gibson, executive director, (504) 895-0037; neworleanstradjazzcamp.

North Florida Music Camps
Jacksonville, Florida

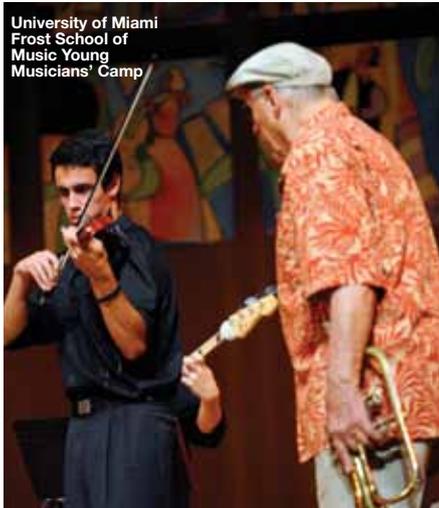
July 3-7

Held at the new Fine Arts Facility at the University of North Florida, this five-day intensive music performance camp is for students in entering grades 8-12 or those currently enrolled in a junior college music program. Campers must have a minimum two years experience on their instruments. Students receive instruction in music theory, improvisation and participate in jazz ensembles and combos.

Faculty: University of North Florida faculty and various guests.

Cost: \$360, tuition and meals only; \$495 tuition, meals and room.

Contact: (904) 620-3841, mdickman@unf.edu; northflmusiccamps.com.



University of Miami Frost School of Music Young Musicians' Camp

University of Miami Frost School of Music Young Musicians' Camp

Coral Gables, Florida

June 20-July 1, July 5-July 22

Students will study all aspects of jazz, participate in ensembles and jam sessions while hearing world-class faculty perform. Open to instrumentalists and vocalists from elementary through high school. An Honors Jazz Program is offered, which is open to all including strings and voice, upon audition.

Faculty: Ira Sullivan, Lisanne Lyons, Brian Murphy, Felix Gomez, Sandy Poltarack, Ed Maina, Rob Friedman, Jackson Bunn, Raina Murnak.

Cost: Varies.

Contact: Sarah Neham Salz, (305) 238-8937; youngmusicianscamp@gmail.com; youngmusicianscamp.com.

University of North Carolina Wilmington Summer Jazz Workshop
Wilmington, North Carolina

July 17-22

This workshop is geared toward ninth through 12th grade students and covers virtually every aspect of jazz studies including music theory and jazz history.

Faculty: Frank Bongiorno, Tom Davis, Steve

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Bailey, Joe Chambers, Bob Russell, Jerald Shynett, Andy Whittington.

Cost: \$475 for tuition, housing and three daily meals during the workshop.

Contact: Dr. Frank Bongiorno, (910) 962-3395; uncw.edu/music.

University of North Texas Jazz Combo Workshop

Denton, Texas

July 17-22

The Jazz Combo Workshop is open to musicians of all levels (minimum age 14) and provides comprehensive studies in jazz combo playing and improvisation.

Faculty: Ed Soph, Lynn Seaton, Stefan Karlsson, Steve Jones, Brad Leali, Mike Steinel.

Cost: \$495 (plus room and board).

Contact: Mike Steinel (940) 565-3758; michael.steinel@unt.edu; jazz.unt.edu.

University of North Texas Jazz Winds Workshop

Denton, Texas

July 11-16

The UNT Jazz Winds Workshop provides saxophone, trumpet and trombone players ages 14 and older with a comprehensive and intensive curriculum devoted to jazz. Working

in an intimate setting with master educator/performers, students will study topics including big band performance, jazz improvisation and combos, sight-reading and basic jazz style.

Faculty: Mike Steinel, Jay Saunders, Rodney Booth, Brad Leali, Shelly Carroll.

Cost: \$495 (plus room and board).

Contact: Mike Steinel (940) 565-3758; michael.steinel@unt.edu; jazz.unt.edu.

Lynn Seaton Jazz Double Bass Workshop at the University of North Texas

Denton, Texas

June 13-17

Instruction in this intensive workshop includes upright technique, bass line development, theory and jazz bass history, in addition to performance in bass ensembles and a rhythm section, which will be coached.

Faculty: Lynn Seaton.

Cost: \$495 (plus room and board).

Contact: Lynn Seaton, (940) 369-7639; lynn.seaton@unt.edu; jazz.unt.edu.

University of North Texas Vocal Workshop

Denton, Texas

June 19-24

Participants are immersed in every aspect of vocal jazz from coached solo and ensemble performance to improvisation, pedagogy and theory. Writers pursue a separate track; their work will be performed and recorded. Educators (both vocal and instrumental) may attend a daily class devoted to vocal jazz directing, programming and sound equipment.

Faculty: Paris Rutherford, Rosana Eckert, Jennifer Shelton Barnes, Rodney Booth, Gary Eckert.

Cost: \$495 (plus room and board).

Contact: Paris Rutherford (940) 368-0773; paris.rutherford@verizon.net; jazz.unt.edu.

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WEST

Brubeck Institute Jazz Camp

Stockton, California

June 26-July 2

This camp at the University of the Pacific offers students in grades 8-12 instruction in big band, combos, improvisation, master classes, jazz history and theory. Master classes taught by professional jazz musicians are held daily.

Faculty: Tim Acosta, Chip Tingle, Patrick Langham, Kristin Florek, Aaron Garner, Chris Amberger, Rick Lotter, Steve Homan.

Cost: Overnight resident, \$650; commuter, \$550.

Contact: Steve Perdicaris, (209) 946-2416; musiccamp@pacific.edu.

CSN/Tom Ferguson Jazz Combo Camp

Las Vegas, Nevada

July 19-23

This one-week program at the College of Southern Nevada is open for vocalists and

instrumentalists of all abilities and ages and is designed for improving improvisation, theory and jazz choir skills. Musicians from top jazz bands and Las Vegas shows play side-by-side with students. Daily faculty performances are a highlight of the camp.

Faculty: Dick McGee, Walt Blanton, Matt Taylor, Bob Bonora, Chris Davis, Gary Queen, Dave Loeb, Mark Wherry.

Cost: \$175.

Contact: Carolyn Barela, (702) 651-4110; carolyn.barela@csn.edu; csn.edu.

**Centrum's Jazz Port
Townsend Workshop**
Port Townsend, Washington
July 24-31

This workshop is open to musicians high-school age and older. Participants receive daily coaching in a small-group setting from world-class faculty. Master classes, theory and special topics classes and performances by faculty and guest performers are included.

Faculty: John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, Paquito D'Rivera, Benny Green, Bill Holman, George Cables, Stefon Harris, Matt Wilson, Gary Smulyan, Terrell Stafford, Jiggs Whigham, Bruce Forman, Tamir Hendelman, Christoph Luty, Jeff Clayton, Dee Daniels, Gerald Clayton, Joe Sanders, Walter Smith III, Arthur Hamilton, Sunny Wilkinson, Dan Balmer, Chuck Deardorf, Clarence Acox, Randy Halberstadt, John Hansen, Doug Miller, Dawn Clement, Byron Vannoy, Tom Wakeling, Kelby MacNayr.

Cost: \$745 tuition; \$525 room/board.

Contact: Gregg Miller, (360) 385-3102 ext. 109; gmiller@centrum.org; centrum.org/jazz.

**Eastern Washington University Jazz
Dialogue High School Summer Camp**
Cheney, Washington
July 31-August 6

This instrumental and vocal camp includes daily big bands or jazz choir, 12 levels of jazz theory and improvisation, master classes on every instrument, small groups or vocal solos, listening sessions and faculty concerts. Students entering 9th grade through college are eligible to attend. Camp registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Auditions for ensembles take place upon arrival at camp.

Faculty: Rob Tapper, Todd DelGiudice, Andy Plamondon, Dave Cazier, Kristina Ploeger, Steve Treseler, Vern Sielert, Don Goodwin, Brian McCann and more.

Cost: \$540 includes all meals, housing and T-shirt.

Contact: Rob Tapper, (509) 359-7073; rtapper@ewu.edu; ewu.edu.

**Eastern Washington University
Jazz Dialogue Middle
School Summer Camp**
Cheney, Washington
July 23-28

This instrumental educational experience includes daily big bands, six levels of jazz theory and improvisation, master classes each day, small-groups, listening sessions and evening concerts featuring faculty and staff. Students entering 6th grade through 9th grade are eligible to attend. Camp

registration is on a first come-first serve basis. Auditions for ensembles take place upon arrival at camp.

Faculty: Mike Bryan, Rob Tapper, Don Goodwin, Brian McCann.

Cost: \$445 includes all meals, housing and T-shirt.

Contact: Rob Tapper, (509) 359-7073; rtapper@ewu.edu; ewu.edu.

Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival
Fairbanks, Alaska
July 17-31

This multi-disciplinary study and performance festival at the University of Alaska features

artists-in-residence and guest artists for opera and musical theater, choral groups, creative writing, filmmaking and visual arts. This two-week camp is for adults ages 18 and up.

Faculty: Vince Cherico, Josh Davis, Vardan Ovsepiyan, Giacomo Gates, Ron Drotos.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: (907) 474-8869; fsaf.org.

Great Basin Jazz Camp
Twin Falls, Idaho
July 11-15

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Jazz Aspen Snowmass
 Aspen, Colorado
June 27–July 2

Entering its 16th year, JAS unites the finest graduate-level jazz artists with the world's jazz legends. JAS Academy Summer Sessions was created in 1995 out of the collaboration between JAS and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. The academy coincides with the JAS June Festival—giving participants the opportunity to meet and work with artists who play the festivals and providing students more public exposure while they are in the Aspen area.

Faculty: Christian McBride, Loren Schoenberg.
Cost: Scholarship. Visit website for application.
Contact: (970) 920-4996; jazzaspen.org.

Jazz Camp West
 La Honda, California
June 25–July 2

Jazz Camp West is an eight-day jazz immersion program for instrumentalists, vocalists and dancers. The camp includes workshops, personalized instruction, student performances, faculty concerts, late-night jams and more than 100 courses from which to choose. The camp hosts 250 participants of all ages and levels. Students ages 14–adult welcome.

Faculty: Michael Wolff, Kellye Gray, in addition to 45 all-star faculty.
Cost: \$965–\$1,150, based upon accommodations.
Contact: Stacey Hoffman, (501) 287-8880; stacey@jazzcampwest.com; jazzcampwest.com.

Juilliard Jazz Workshop
 at Snow College
 Ephraim, Utah
July 11–16

This workshop provides students the opportunity to dramatically improve their skills through access to exceptional faculty and an intense focus on the key issues of instruction including big band and combo, master classes, listening



sessions, private lessons, music technology and improvisation. It will also prepare students for a future in music by teaching them essential skills and giving them the opportunity to meet artists that have already succeeded in the business. Students will have an opportunity to attend two concerts presented by the workshop faculty.
Faculty: Carl Allen, James Burton III, Etienne Charles, Ron Blake, Benny Green, Rodney Jones, Ben Wolfe.
Cost: \$490 (tuition), \$300 (room and board).
Contact: (435) 283-7472; sherry.nielson@snow.edu; snow.edu/music.

Mammoth Lakes Jazz Jubilee Jazz Camp
 Mammoth Lakes, California
July 10–17

The Mammoth Lakes Jazz Jubilee Jazz Camp is open to students ages 13–17, and all instruments are welcome, but limited to 42 participants. The camp focuses on improvisation, both collective and individual, and campers perform several times in the Mammoth Lakes Jazz Jubilee. No audition; first-come, first-served.
Cost: \$625.
Faculty: Bill Dendle, Corey Gemme, Anita Thomas, Jason Wanner, Eddie Erickson, Shelley Burns, Beth Good-

The School for Improvisational Music

WORKSHOPS FOR STUDENTS

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- SIM WEST COAST June, 2011
- SIM ITALY TBA, 2011
- SIM BROOKLYN INTENSIVE July 27 – August 15, 2011
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Ralph Alessi (trumpet/director) **Andy Milne** (piano, assistant director) **Tim Berne** (saxophone) **Jim Black** (drums) **Uri Caine** (piano) **Samir Chatterjee** (tablas) **Steve Coleman** (saxophone) **Ravi Coltrane** (saxophone) **Tom Rainey** (drums) **Drew Gress** (bass) **Mary Halvorson** (guitar) **Billy Hart** (drums) **Mark Helias** (bass) **Fred Hersch** (piano) **John Hollenbeck** (drums) **Vijay Iyer** (piano) **Kneebody** (band) **Tony Malaby** (saxophone) **Jason Moran** (piano) **DJ Olive** (turntables) **Josh Roseman** (trombone) **Brad Shepik** (guitar) **Tyshawn Sorey** (drums) **Ben Street** (bass) **Anne Waxman** (alexander technique)

The Center for Improvisational Music is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the teaching and advancement of improvised music.

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fellow, Lee Westenhofer.
Contact: Bill Dendle,
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 mammothjazz.org.

**Mel Brown Summer
 Jazz Workshop**
 Monmouth, Oregon
July 31–August 6

Participants perform in both large and small jazz ensembles and attend seminars that cover various topics including theory, history, improvisation, the music business and music technology.

Faculty: Stan Bock, Renato Caranto, Keller Coker, Robert Crowell, Clay Gilberson, Carlton Jackson, Warren Rand, Derek Sims, Tim Gilson and Chris Weitach.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: (503) 838-8275; melbrownworkshop@wou.edu;
 melbrownjazzcamp.com.

**Sacramento Traditional
 Jazz Society Youth
 Jazz Camp**
 Pollock Pines, California
August 7–13

A full week of camp in Sly Park, with outstanding faculty and counselors, focused on improvisation, instrumental/vocal technique

and small-band performance. Traditional jazz and swing music is emphasized. No audition to apply. Open to ages 12–18.

Cost: \$600.

Faculty: Rusty Stiers, Bria Skonberg, Terry Myers, Anita Thomas, Greg Varlotta, Jason Wanner, Bob Phillips, Eddie Erickson, Lee Westenhofer, Shelley Burns, Ed Metz, Bill Dendle.

Contact: Bill Dendle,
 bdendle@winfirst.com;
 sacjazzcamp.org.

**Sacramento Traditional
 Jazz Society Adult
 Jazz Camp**
 Pollock Pines, California
July 31–August 5

A full week of camp in Sly Park, with outstanding faculty and counselors, focused on improvisation, instrumental/vocal technique and small-band performance. Traditional jazz and swing music is emphasized. No audition to apply. Open to ages 18 and above.

Cost: \$800.

Faculty: Rusty Stiers, Bria Skonberg, Terry Myers, Anita Thomas, Greg Varlotta,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 98



Cuong Vu, trumpet

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For further information, contact Professor David Demsey, coordinator of jazz studies, at 973.720.2268 or e-mail demseyd@wpunj.edu

Jazz Institute at Proctors

Learning To Play By Ear

D'Angelo, an eighth grader who looks more like a football player than a musician, is about 16 bars into his solo on "Pass The Peas," when he stops, looks to his left at no one in particular, and flashes a huge grin before continuing. It is an endearing moment, one that defines the joy of spontaneous creation, and the audience roars its approval. D'Angelo is one of 60 students at the final performance of the Jazz Institute at Proctors, a 10-day camp in Schenectady, N.Y. for students of any age. There are jazz camps all over the world during the summer months, but this one is unique: every aspect of the performance is accomplished through listening, with no written music. At the end of the camp, the students will play for 90 minutes, completely by ear, music by Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, the World Saxophone Quartet, Benny Golson and the Rebirth Brass Band.

The current incarnation of Jazz at Proctors has existed since 2006, a collaboration between Keith Pray and Arthur Falbush. Pray is a professional jazz saxophonist who also teaches music in the Schenectady City School District. Falbush is a veteran trumpet player who has toured with Mercer Ellington and now teaches jazz at SUNY Oneonta in upstate New York. The two met in 2001, when both were assigned to teach at the Summit School in Queens. They were the instrumental directors at the special education school, and taught one day per week for a few hours. They soon discovered that they both had a passion for jazz and a similar philosophy concerning how it should be taught. The experiences of both men have led them to the conviction that jazz is best learned through imitation of the masters.

"The importance of learning by ear is the simple fact that if you know how to listen and think for yourself, you have a large advantage over many people, especially in an age where the education system has been turning out students who can't think for themselves and can't problem solve," Pray said. "Kids are very good at learning and accessing information, but fewer and fewer people can actually use their skill set to solve problems in their lives. The camp is about showing the students what is possible, then helping them explore those possibilities. We don't teach theory or use written music, but we do teach them some of the basic notes, idiomatic phrases and stylistic techniques that work traditionally and encourage them to play those notes and techniques with their own voice. It is about



increasing their awareness and allowing them to make choices that immediately affect the music they are playing. We hope that they then take these skills and apply them to everything they do, in or out of a classroom."

Falbush emphasizes his belief that in addition to teaching the students to use their ears, their responsibility is to instill a passion for the music, learning and achievement.

"We knew above all the program had to be fun and challenging and that our curriculum should reflect how jazz had been taught before academia became involved," he said. "Over the years, I've had the good fortune to talk to many of my musical heroes and ask them how they learned. Without exception, the answer was by ear and on the bandstand. So this is the path we tried to take. The other ingredient was passion. I always think of a quote by the mythologist Joseph Campbell, 'Preachers err by trying to talk people into belief; better they reveal the radiance of their own discovery.' I knew that if Keith and I could first get the kids to buy into the passion that we have for music and learning, that they would follow us anywhere we took them musically. And so far, that's been the case. So instead of teaching scales and chords, we teach melody and harmony, phrasing and nuance—which is the poetry that is built out of scales and chords. So many times in school, jazz is taught so that the theory comes first before the music. But inspiration comes from the music, not from the theory."

Jazz at Proctors exists through the auspices of the Proctors Theater in Schenectady, N.Y., a beautifully restored theatre that houses the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra, the Northeast Ballet and many touring productions. Proctors has a strong educational outreach program focusing on the integration of the arts into area schools, and Jazz at Proctors is part of their Summer Adventures program for kids aged six and above. Jessica Gelarden, the Summer Adventures director, works closely with the jazz faculty each summer. In the early years of the camp, all publicity was done through Proctors. There were 17 students in 2006, the result of a cap that had been placed on a previous incarnation of the camp. At that time, kids between the ages of 13 and 18 were invited to apply. As the camp has progressed and word of mouth has spread through the area, the camp has grown quickly, with 75 students attending last year.

"It is our duty as educators to use what we are passionate about (jazz) to light a fire in students so that they can use that fire to discover their own passion and run with it," Falbush said. "It started as a way to teach jazz, but we quickly realized it was much more important than that. American music, of which jazz is a central part, philosophically embodies the best of what we are and hope to be. That idea is to take the tools you have and use them to survive in the world in order to carve out your own identity."

Pray adds, "The students at our camp are

thrown into a survival situation: 10 days of rehearsals, a 90-minute concert at the end, no written music and students ranging from ages 7–59, all ability levels, students from all over the area (city, suburban, rural) and students with special needs in one room figuring out that in order to ‘survive’ they have to learn to work together, ask for help, help each other, communicate, and step up to the plate and give in to the process of learning by ear. Although the process is not new, this may be the first camp of its kind, as we take anyone and everyone and teach them to make music together.”

Pray notes that the level of the students has generally been very mixed. There are no audition requirements and no recommendation letters required, so students of any age and ability level are welcome. Last year’s camp included a 7-year-old guitarist and a 59-year-old saxophonist. Diversity and inclusion are important elements of the experience; Pray and Falbush want to involve as many kids as possible. For last summer’s camp, Pray’s school district in Schenectady awarded a grant that allowed 24 students to attend free of charge, even covering the cost of transportation. The purpose of the grant is to improve the literacy of at-risk students through exposure to jazz. Because of this, there are high school aged students with a high degree of proficiency sitting next to kids who are just starting to play an instrument. Amazingly, this works, and all of the students, regardless of level, grow and develop during the two weeks.

Pray describes the first rehearsal of camp each year as “chaos,” as the students feel their way through their first musical experience that does not include printed music. The first three days of the camp are the toughest as the instructors introduce the music to the students and begin to teach parts. It is a grind that Pray and Falbush know will pay off during the second week.

One of the most exciting aspects of the camp is the music itself. “The music selected for the camp is always directly from the jazz greats, not easy versions of them,” Pray said. “We teach the songs from the recordings and then alter them to fit our ensembles. Through the song selections we try to teach the students that being different is something to be proud of.”

This summer will mark the sixth time that the camp has existed in its current format. When asked about goals for the future, both instructors tell me that they want keep their numbers growing, as long as the facilities, faculty and equipment allow it. The goal is simple: to reach as many kids as possible. They also want the students to bring their enthusiasm for the music back to their school music programs. Both men hope that this type of teaching will become part of school music programs throughout the United States, and know that the best way to make this happen is to demonstrate their own success through the accomplishments of the students.

— Todd Kelly



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Photo of Mary Lou Williams courtesy of Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies

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at 402-554-2297 or
petermadsen@mail.unomaha.edu

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Contact: Bill Dendle, bdendle@winfirst.com; sacjazzcamp.org.

San Jose Jazz San Jose, California Dates TBD

In its 15th year, San Jose Jazz provides students with two weeks of intense jazz music instruction and playing in various areas of jazz: theory, small ensemble, big band, master classes, instrument-specific instruction, arranging and other areas. Students should have basic playing knowledge on their instruments. This is not a camp for people who have never played before.

Faculty: Kristen Strom, Dave Gregoric, Wally Schnalle, Jeff Lewis, David Flores, Scott Sorkin, Seward McCain, Pascal LeBoeuf, Matt Davis, Oscar Pangilinan, Michelle Hawkins.

Cost: \$650 for San Jose Jazz members' children and grandchildren; \$700 for non-members.

Contact: Brian Brockhouse, (408) 288-7557 ext. 2342; brianb@sanjosejazz.org; sanjosejazz.org.

School for Improvisational Music West Coast Intensive

Los Angeles, California
June 20-24

Focused on helping students grow as creative beings through a better understanding of improvisation and creative music, the SIM Intensive combines master classes, group and open rehearsals and jamming with classes in technique culminating in faculty and student concerts. The camp takes place at Cal State Northridge.

Faculty: Ralph Alessi, Tony Malaby, Andy Milne, Drew Gress, Mark Ferber.

Cost: \$700.

Contact: schoolforimprov.org.

Stanford Jazz Workshops, Jazz Camp and Jazz Residency

Palo Alto, California
July 17-22; July 24-29; July 31-August 5

SJW welcomes students of all skill levels to both its jazz camp and jazz residency. The jazz camp is for instrumentalists/vocalists ages 12-17, and the jazz residency (held the final week) is designed for adults. See website for information on additional evening and private courses.

Faculty: TBD. Previous faculty included Wycliffe Gordon, Ray Drummond, Branford Marsalis and Joshua Redman.

Cost: \$995 jazz camp, \$1,095 jazz residency; add room and board.

Contact: (650) 736-0324, info@stanfordjazz.org; stanfordjazz.org.

University of Northern Colorado Jazz Camp

Greeley, Colorado
July 17-22

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jazz listening as well as nightly faculty combo concerts and performances by the Colorado Jazz Orchestra.

Faculty: Dana Landry, Erik Applegate, Jim White, Clay Jenkins, Don Aliquo, Paul McKee, David Caffey, Andy Dahlke, Nat Wickman, Dave Stamps, Kevin Whalen and Steve Kovalcheck.

Cost: TBD.
Contact: (970) 351-2394; uncjazz.com.

University of Southern California Guitar Seminar Los Angeles, California July 3-30

This four-week intensive seminar is designed to prepare high school guitarists for successful college and professional careers. Classes meet five days a week for five-and-a-half hours a day, during which students study music theory, improvisation, technique and sight reading. The seminar also includes master classes with distinguished studio and jazz guitar faculty of the USC Thornton School of Music, field trips to renowned jazz venues in Los Angeles and numerous student performances.

Faculty: Frank Potenza, Richard Smith, Bruce Forman, Steve Trovato, Pate Kelley, Tim Kobza.
Cost: \$5,000 four-weeks; \$2,500 two-weeks excluding room and board.
Contact: (213) 740-7399; guitar@usc.edu; summer.usc.edu.

Vail Jazz Festival Summer Workshop Vail, Colorado August 27-September 5

This intensive 10-day workshop provides dedicated high-school age jazz musicians from the United States and Canada the opportunity to study the piano, bass, trumpet, drums or sax at the highest level. Its teaching philosophy stresses learning by transcribing the performances of the masters in order to understand technique. The workshop combines the rigors of study with the beauty and grandeur of nature.

Faculty: Clayton Brothers Quintet; John Clayton, Jeff Clayton, Terrell Stafford, Bill Cunliffe, Lewis Nash.
Cost: Scholarships are available once accepted.
Contact: (888) VAILJAM; (888) 824-5526; vjf@vailjazz.org; vailjazz.org.

Yellowstone Jazz Camp Cody, Wyoming July 10-15

The 24th annual Yellowstone Jazz Camp is for students entering high school as well as adults. Students participate in one of three big bands and one of six jazz combos. Classes in theory and improvisation are also offered. In residence is the Yellowstone Big Band, which presents two concerts during the camp and at the Yellowstone Jazz Festival in Cody on July 16.

Faculty: Neil Hansen, Art Bouton, Greg Yasinitzky, John Harbaugh, Mike Hackett, Aric Schneller.
Cost: \$595.
Contact: Neil Hansen (307) 754-6437, neil.hansen@northwestcollege.edu; northwestmusic.org.

INT'L

Dutch Impro Academy Amsterdam, the Netherlands August 21-27

Techniques of free improvisation under the auspices of the Dutch masters are the focus of this academy. Music reading is not required for participants, although some coaching sessions may focus on composition. The week concludes with a concert at the Bimhuis in Amsterdam followed by a gig the next day at ZomeJazzFietstour (SummerJazzCycleTour).

Faculty: Wolter Wierbos, Bart Van Der Putten, Anne La Berge, Eric Boeren, Mary Oliver, Han Bennink.

Cost: 950 including room and board (approximately \$1,250).

Contact: info@dutchimproacademy.com; dutchimproacademy.com.

International Music Camp, Summer School of Fine Arts International Peace Gardens (North Dakota and Manitoba border) July 17-23

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John Cooper - trumpet
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Contact: (701) 838-8472;
internationalmusiccamp.com.

JazzWorks 2011

Lake McDonald, Quebec, Canada

August 18-21

JazzWorks is an intensive, combo-based learning opportunity for adult jazz musicians (beginner through professional) and advanced high school musicians. Learn jazz theory and technique from highly innovative Canadian jazz musicians and special guests. The program includes master classes, improvisation and original composition workshops, combo rehearsals and faculty-guided jam sessions.

Faculty: Frank Lozano, Rémi Bolduc, Dave Restivo, Jim Lewis, Nancy Walker, Christine Duncan, Jean Martin, Nick Fraser, Kevin Barrett plus John Geggie, Artistic Director.

Cost: \$395 fee plus meals/accommodation.

Contact: (613) 523-0316;
jazz@jazzworkscanada.com;
jazzworkscanada.com.

Juilliard Winter Jazz School at Trinity

Melbourne, Australia

July 4-8

Located at Trinity College, the University of Melbourne, this one-week residential program is for dedicated students aged 15-18. Winter Jazz will give young jazz musicians the opportunity to focus on public performance for jazz orchestra and small ensembles. The program is open to students Australia-wide and internationally.

Faculty: Carl Allen, Director of Jazz Studies at Juilliard.

Cost: \$1,490.

Contact: jazz@trinity.unimel.edu.au;
trinity.unimelb.edu.au/jazz/about.

Keep An Eye Summer Jazz Workshop

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

June 27-July 1

This advanced-level weeklong workshop, led by faculty of New York's Manhattan School of Music and the Amsterdam Conservatory, includes private lessons, ensembles, workshops, master classes, lectures and concerts.

Faculty: Justin DiCioccio, Luis Bonilla, John Riley, distinguished jazz faculty from Amsterdam Conservatory, special guest artist Dick Oatts.

Cost: 480 euro (about \$775).

Contact: Sigrid Paans, Sofia Chanou; summerjazz@cva-summerjazz@ahk.nl;
conservatoriumvanamsterdam.nl.

KoSA Cuba

Havana, Cuba

March 6-13

The KoSA Cuba One-week Study Program and Fiesta del Tambor allows students of all ages and skill levels to be immersed in Cuban rhythms, music and culture while taking classes in conga, bongo, timbales, bata, drum



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Faculty: Giraldo Piloto and his band Klimax, Julio Lopez Sanchez, Jean Roberto San Cristobal, Panga, Yaroldy Abreu, Adel Gonzales, Oliver Valdez.

Cost: Varies by package.

Contact: (800) 541-8401; info@kosamusic.com; kosamusic.com.

The MacEwan Summer Jazz Workshop

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

August 14-19

The workshop is designed for students 13-20 years of age who are serious about music. The workshop will provide students with an opportunity to learn, rehearse and perform jazz in combo and big band formats.

Faculty: Grand MacEwan University faculty.

Cost: \$395.

Contact: Brenda Philp, (780) 497-4303, philpb@macewan.ca.

The Phil Dwyer Academy of Musical and Culinary Arts Summer Music Camps

Qualicum Beach, British Columbia, Canada

July 18-22, July 25-30,

August 1-11, August 8-13

The PDAMCA is composed of four week-long specialty jazz camps that focus on master classes, big band and combo participation, ear training, theory and performance. Instruction is tailored to specialty and skill level. Students also participate in the culinary arts program and under their tutelage of professional chefs.

Faculty: Ingrid Jensen, Phil Dwyer, Christin Jensen, Jon Wikan, Dee Daniels, Ian McDougall, Mark Fewer.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: info@pdmca.com; pdmca.com.

Siena Jazz Summer Workshop

Siena, Italy

July 24-August 7

Aimed at experienced young jazz musicians, this two-week workshop accepts a maximum number of 120 students with previous performance experience in jazz ensembles. Curriculum focuses on instrument and ensemble performance. Students will attend two instrumental and two jazz combo classes every day, six days per week, in addition to Jazz History and Musical Forms Analysis (second week).

Faculty: Renowned musicians, many from Italy.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: info@siennajazz.it; siennajazz.it/en.

University of Manitoba Summer Jazz Camp

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

August 14-20

This week-long camp welcomes players of all ages and abilities. The instrumental program is based on the small ensemble setting. Students will study rhythmic interaction, dynamic interplay, call and response and improv.

Faculty: Steve Kirby, Jimmy Greene, George Colligan, Quincy Davis.

Cost: \$380 CDN+GST, subject to change.

Contact: Warren Otto, w_otto@umanitoba.ca, (888) 216-7011 ext. 6037; umanitoba.ca/summer.

Veneto Jazz Summer Program

Bassano del Grappa, Italy

July 11-22

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Faculty: Adam Holzman, Cameron Brown, Jeff Hirshfield, David Stryker, Dave Glasser, Brandon Lee, Amy London.

Cost: TBD.

Contact: lucast@newschool.edu; newschool.edu/jazz.

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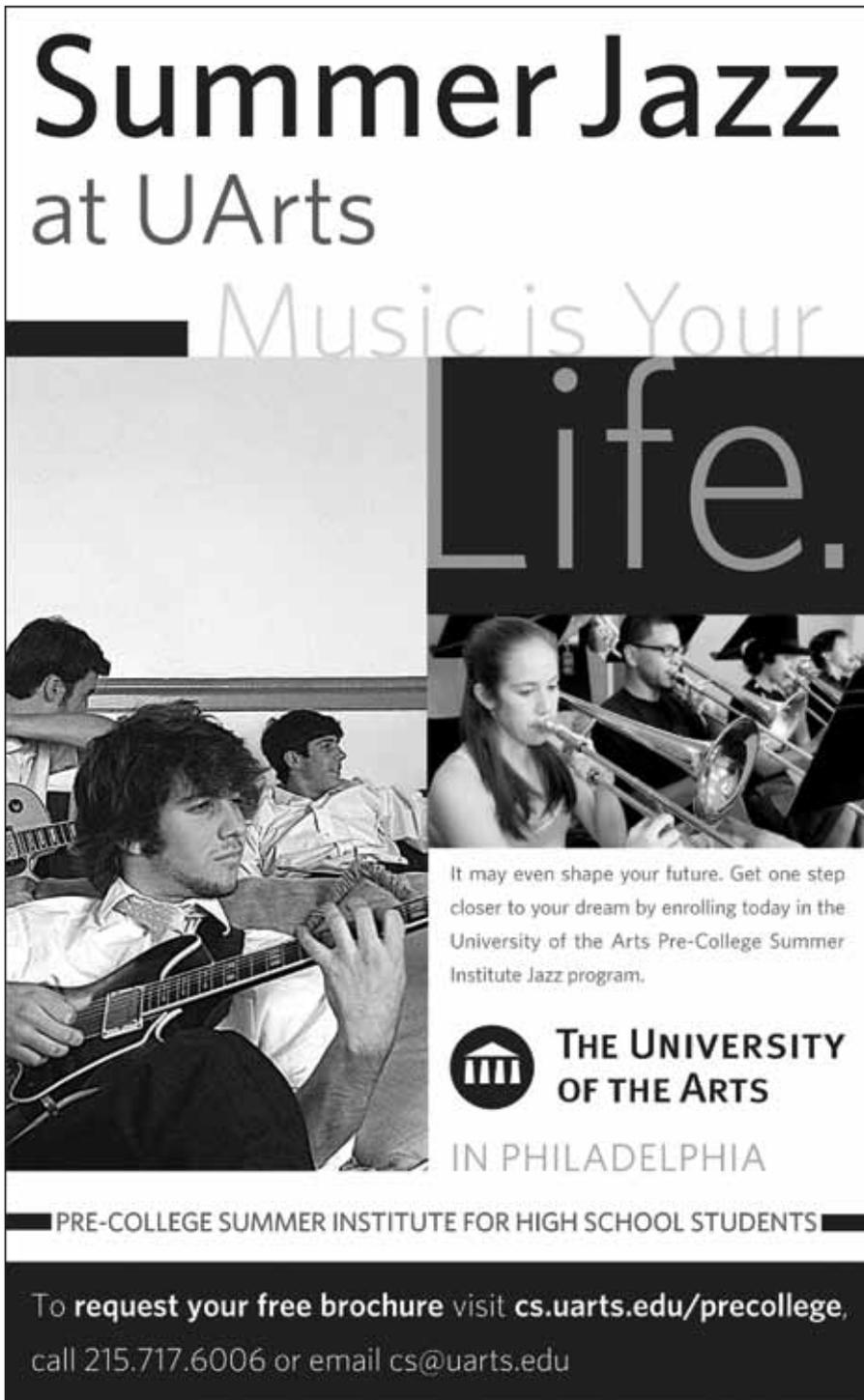
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Billy Martin

Notes From Camp MMW: The Conversation

First off, I would like to say that I am as much a student as I am a teacher. And if someone held a gun to my head and forced me to make a choice, I would choose to be the student. That's why my students hear me say often: "I am a student for life." If I can't learn and grow—what's the point?!

When discussing musical improvisation I like to start simply by saying it's a conversation.

This conversation may be with one or more musicians, a soloist communicating with their audience or the soloist conversing with themselves. In this case we need to think of ourselves as composers. When we play we are culling sounds from our vocabulary. We are arranging sounds compositionally to communicate something. This something can have specific meaning or mean nothing at all. As an instrumentalist this "something" is often abstract and has no definite meaning. (Personally, I like to leave the "meaning" up to the listener). We (Medeski Martin & Wood and other like-minded musicians) call this "spontaneous composition." This is just a more meaningful word for improvisation or jamming.

A lot of our musical vocabulary comes from listening to and observing other music. It's often an aural experience like listening to records or going to a performance. I specifically have gained a lot of vocabulary from oral traditions such as Brazilian and African music. We imitate what we hear because we fall in love with it—especially in our early development. Babies and children learn this way. They listen and then try to communicate with sound vocally and end up communicating directly long before it's time to go to school.

As we grow and start mixing all these influences, there comes a time to start experimenting and developing a more personal language. This new approach to musical language often comes from within and less from outside influences. This is the artist's way. (Most children have this figured out—then the adults screw them up with formalities and they have to re-learn what they had all along!) The artist often needs solitude to figure this out. Think John Coltrane (alone in his room practicing for weeks at a time) or Sonny Rollins (playing on the Williamsburg Bridge). Within this soli-

tude we can develop and practice who we really are. We can get to know ourselves this way without distraction. I believe soloing to be the most direct and powerful way of developing your own voice, style and language. There is no hiding behind anything here. You are the music—all of it! This type of soloing is most often practiced as improvisation. This is experimental in nature and requires some serious dedication or discipline.

One of the methods I use to help develop my musical vocabulary is called "String of Phrases"—a term I coined for any instrumentalist to use as a means of conjuring sound into phrases. It is a linear process and a good experiment for beginners who are just getting into the soloing realm. In words: Play—don't play—play—don't play, etc. Or: Make a musical gesture followed by an equal amount of space (silence) and repeat that pattern while making contrasting statements each time you make sound. This is the "conversation" I was talking about. Think "call and response" or "tension and release." The most important thing to remember is leaving space between each statement. The silent space is as important as what you played. That balance between sound and no sound is very powerful. It defines even the most abstract, messy thing you are capable of and makes it coherent. The listener will hear it—you will hear it—and learn from it. With space between words we understand what is being said. This is articulation.

One more thing: It is very important to not preconceive any ideas. We must be in the moment. We must not be thinking ahead or behind too much or we will lose that magic of creating something fresh. We need to react to what we just heard and not think too much about it. The more we do this the more surprises we experience. If you want people to understand you, you must leave some space between words and phrases. Finally: Listen to what you are doing and react to it. It's a conversation. Tell us a story! **DB**

DRUMMER/PERCUSSIONIST BILLY MARTIN'S MOST RECENT EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVOR IS AN INSTRUCTIONAL DVD CALLED *LIFE ON DRUMS* (VONGOLE). IN ADDITION TO HIS ONGOING WORK WITH THE BAND MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD, MARTIN HAS STARTED A NEW GROUP CALLED WICKED KNEE WITH STEVEN BERNSTEIN, CURTIS FOWLKES AND MARCUS ROJAS (VISIT THEM ONLINE AT WICKEDKNEE.COM). EVERY SUMMER, MARTIN TEACHES STUDENTS AT CAMP MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD, HELD IN THE CATSKILL MOUNTAINS OF NEW YORK.

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Woodshed | **SOLO**
BY JIMI DURSO



Ray Anderson's Idiomatic Trombone Solo On 'My Wish'

Last year trombonist Ray Anderson and reedman Marty Ehrlich co-led a quartet and released the CD *Hear You Say*, a live performance from Willisau, Switzerland. Backed only by bass and drums, there is the challenge, and freedom, of soloing with no chordal accompaniment. Presented here is Anderson's solo on his gorgeous ballad "My Wish." The tune is a slow 3/4, but because of the quantity of triplet-based rhythms, it has been transcribed as 9/8 for ease of reading.

Anderson's improvising is very idiomatic to the trombone. He often slides into notes from below, especially at beginnings of phrases (as in

measures 10, 11, pickup to 21, 22, 27, 29 and 36), though we hear him doing this in the middle of phrases as well (6, 7, 8, 32–33). He connects notes with legato slides (18, 19, 34, 35), and in measures 23 and 24 slides across such a range as to make it near impossible to reproduce on any other instrument, and quite difficult to notate (treat what's written in these measures as an approximation of the sounds he makes).

For the most part, Anderson sticks close to the chords. He tends to end phrases on chord tones, though it's surprising how often he comes to rest on root notes. In measures 4, 9, 10, 15, 18 and 22 the phrases end on roots, and in measures

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2:11 Eb Bb13 Cm Ab7(#11) Fm

6 C7+ B7(#9) Bb7 Ab C7(#9)

11 (8) Ebmaj7 Dm9 Eb7 Ab7 Dbmaj7

16 Bb7+ Eb Bb13 Cm Ab7(#11)

21 Fm C7+ B7(#9) Bb7

25 Abmaj7(#11) Eb7+ Eb7+ Bb7(#9) Eb7+

31 Abm7

11–13 Anderson leans on the ascending root sequence in parallel with the bass. It’s an interesting choice since it doesn’t help the listener to discern the harmonies. But for the stretch from 22–34 Anderson stops putting so much emphasis on roots. Maybe this is what makes the penultimate phrase ending on the Ab root in measure 35 sound so final.

Anderson does make scale choices that help define the harmonies. A wonderful example can be found in the motif he uses for measures 5–8. The lines all climb from around middle C up to a high Ab. The first one, over the F in the bass, gives us all the elements of Fm9 (fifth, seventh, root, ninth, third), but played as a scalar run it implies F dorian. For the next measure, though still starting on C (in this case the root), Anderson jumps instead to E natural, the third of the chord, and then climbs up the rest of a C altered dominant scale to the Ab (the sharp fifth). For the B7 Anderson also starts on the root and then jumps to the third, and then continues through the fourth and fifth of B mixolydian before continuing chromatically to the sixth, which is the same Ab (enharmonically, G# is the sixth of B). By adding an extra note he creates more

rhythmic energy, which sets up the next measure, where he starts lower (on the sixth of the Bb7) and then runs the entire Bb mixolydian scale from root to root, making the sound of Bb7 very clear. It’s also quite effective that this run ends a whole step higher than the last three, but then resolves down to the same Ab in the next bar, where the chord is also Ab.

Another great scale choice is the Eb major pentatonic in measure 17. Not only does this make the Eb major tonality clear, but also provides a bluesy quality.

The final seven measures are another wonderful example. Measures 31–33 contain only Abm7 chord tones, and in the next two measures all Anderson adds are a sixth and second to fill out the dorian scale. He ends with a very peculiar idea, using the sixth, root and fifth. Though all of these are in the dorian scale, playing them together in this way makes the lick sound more like major pentatonic rather than minor, which helps set up the return to the Eb major tonality at the top of the next chorus. **DB**

JIMI DURSO IS A GUITARIST AND BASSIST IN THE NEW YORK AREA. HE CAN BE REACHED AT JIMIDURSO.COM.

Pro Tools 9 *Open to the World at Large*

Pro Tools has been the de facto industry standard in professional digital recording almost as far back as the industry has existed. In many ways, Pro Tools 9 is the most important product release in the line since 1991, when it first introduced multi-track recording software and changed its name to Pro Tools. From its initial release in 1989 as Sound Tools, this has been a piece of software that has defined trends in the industry, and eventually transformed the recording process and production techniques at their core. As it became more and more the standard of professional studios, the home recording market was largely ignored by Digidesign. In order to use Pro Tools at all, you had to purchase extremely expensive Digidesign hardware, which put it out of reach for even mid-level studios. When that market exploded in the '90s, they made some late attempts to join in by releasing stripped-down versions of their software with M-Audio interfaces, and had some success, but Pro Tools had become in our industry what Microsoft was to computer software and what AT&T was to telecommunications—the Evil Empire. It was thought that Digi showed no real interest in cultivating the project studio, composition houses, or MIDI studios, and was only interested in the highest of the high end. As more and more quality interfaces started to flood the market and software competitors caught up and in some cases surpassed the capabilities of PT, there were questions about whether or not the flagging large studio system could keep them afloat at all.

Avid stepped in and purchased Digidesign in 1995, and many thought this would either be the death knell of Pro Tools as it was integrated into Avid's video editing software, or a completely new direction for the software. At first, neither happened. For a few years, Avid stayed out of Digidesign's business altogether it seemed, and Pro Tools forged ahead using the same strategies as before, but behind the scenes there were major plans in progress. This first became evident with the release of version 8 in 2008, which finally upgraded the compositional and MIDI toolset to a professional level. They also included a large set of virtual instruments—this was a major departure for Pro Tools, and signaled the sea change that was to come. In 2010, Avid completely removed the Digidesign name from PT, and with version 9, it has decided to open up this software to the world at large.

First of all, they have discontinued all the stripped-down versions—LE and M-Powered are gone. The biggest news of all is this: It will run with third-party audio hardware—and not



some hobbled “lite” version, either—a fully functional, well-equipped version. The same version, in fact, that runs on the Pro Tools 9 HD systems—although the HD systems have more capabilities out of the box. The track counts are healthy in a third-party system, allowing for 32 channels of I/O and 96 simultaneous playback and recording tracks at 48K—and you can record at sample rates up to 192K, with reduced track counts. The HD systems double these track limits, and increase voiceable tracks to 512. There are 256 busses available—quite an upgrade from LE's 18, or even PT 8 HD's 128.

MIDI implementation is also more robust, with 512 MIDI tracks and 64 instrument tracks available. There are a good complement of virtual instruments included, but if you really want the best that Avid has to offer, you'll want to look at the Instrument Expansion Pack. This includes five additional virtual instruments optimized for PT, designed with AIR technology. Structure is their sampler, and version 1.1 includes a 17.5 GB library and natively supports Kontakt, Giga, Samplecell and EXS formats. I found it was very capable, although I wished for it to be a little less resource-intensive—very useful to be sure. Strike 1.5 is a drum sampler and performance creator a la BFD that includes 30 GB of great sounding samples. Velvet mimics the gamut of electric pianos convincingly. Transfuser is a real-time groove-creation tool that adds some sorely missed functionality to PT that is center to a lot of modern pop composition. Lastly, but certainly not least, is Hybrid, a programmable synth that sounds great out of the box, and offers some impressive depth of programmability—I'll spend a lot of time playing with this one. These instruments are a nice

addition to the PT9 basic setup.

PT9 is stereo only, whereas the HD systems can mix up to 7.1 surround, but if you really need the horsepower and surround capabilities of an HD system running on your own hardware, they have made the Complete Production Toolkit available, which increases your track limits to HD levels and adds surround support, as well as VCA track mixing, advanced video editing and virtually every other component of the HD system to yours, with the exception of specific TDM functions. The toolkit is expensive at \$1,995, but that could be a lot cheaper than replacing all of your high-end converters with HD hardware.

Getting back to the base package, there is a ton of functionality here that was either a paid add-on before, or not available at all. Delay compensation is now standard in both versions. This has been a major request from the non-HD user base for years. Avid is also signaling its commitment to opening up the platform by including OMF/AAF and MP3 export standard, which used to be a paid option. There are really so many features that are now standard issue, it feels like a different program altogether from LE and M-Powered.

Avid has adopted the iLok for copy-protection, which makes it easy to move between systems and platforms. No longer will you have to wait to get back to the studio (or buy a separate interface) to do that quick edit on the plane—have iLok, will travel.

I installed PT9 on both a Windows 7 and a Mac OSX 10.6.5 system, and the install went without a hitch. It took a little while for me to tweak each system so that Pro Tools would run smoothly, but once I did I was thrilled and amazed to open up an existing PT session on my

RME hardware and have it work just as if it never left the original box (once I reconfigured the outputs, of course). It worked well on both platforms, although to me the Mac seemed a little snappier. This could also be a function of the different system architectures, and both were very stable. Pro Tools is still a resource eater, and it may tax your system more than another DAW, but most modern professional computers are well suited to this kind of work, and with the right optimization, you can get things flowing very well.

The MIDI and compositional aspects of PT are still not up to par with Logic or Cubase, but they are gaining steadily, and I felt less inclined to leave the PT environment to work with MIDI issues as I might have in the past. Virtual instruments still draw too much power, but less so than even in version 8, and hopefully Avid will accelerate Pro Tools' traditionally slow maintenance update schedule to address some of these small issues quickly.

But where Pro Tools 9 really shines is no sur-

prise—audio recording and editing. This program is a beast for all your audio burdens, and it feels slick and professional from the get-go. The interface has been tweaked and is extremely configurable to make your workflow sing. All of the strengths of previous versions are here, and many are updated. At \$599 list, and with affordable upgrade paths from all previous versions, Avid is keeping Pro Tools at the top of the heap.

—Chris Neville

Ordering info: avid.com

Gretsch Catalina Birch Euro-Fusion Shell Pack

Built For Power

Gretsch's Catalina Birch delivers cutting attack coupled with a powerful, low fundamental tone. Excellent build quality, high-end features, and an affordable price make the Catalina Birch a major contender in the highly competitive mid-price market. The drums feature all birch shells, tom isolation mounts, low-mass mini lugs, and a choice of sparkle and pearl wraps or high gloss lacquer finishes.

My test kit was the "Euro-Fusion" shell pack, and featured 10- by 8-inch and 12- by 9-inch toms, a 16- by 16-inch floor tom, 22- by 18-inch bass drum and a 5.5- by 14-inch wood snare drum. The walnut burst lacquer was beautiful and was finished flawlessly. The 100-percent birch seven-ply shells have 30-degree edges, which give them a slightly warmer sound without sacrificing attack.

The Catalina Birch kit tuned up very easily right out of the box. The 22 by 18 bass drum is a force to reckon with! Simply put, it is a cannon—lots of attack and punch, coupled with deep bass that will rattle your body. The 10 by 8 and 12 by 9 toms have a lot of attack, and a very clear, focused tone. Positioning of the toms was easy thanks to the slick ball-and-socket double tom mount. The 16 by 16 floor tom has similar sound characteristics to the toms coupled with a powerful low-end tone. The snare drum sounds good in a variety of tuning ranges. Cross-sticks are cutting, and the drum is sensitive at quiet volumes. It can produce a cutting crack when called for, but never without compromising the tone. The strainer works very smoothly.

The sizes available for the Catalina Birch are somewhat limiting. In particular, I'd like to see a choice of smaller bass drum sizes. All that is available is the massive 22 by 18. It's too powerful for most low-volume musical situations. The only available floor tom size is 16 by 16. Snare drums are available in a 5.5-inch



and 6.5-inch depth.

The kit was a lot of fun to play live. I took it out on a job that required styles ranging from classic rock and soul to jazz and big band. The toms cut through volume, but did so without loss of tone. The snare responded easily to everything from light jazz comping to heavy 2 and 4 backbeats. The Catalina Birch excels particularly well at rock and any kind of music requiring a heavy bass drum. The bass drum is very difficult to control for lighter "feathering" or any lower-volume playing.

I only have a couple of minor complaints with the kit. The factory heads are a thin, single-ply Evans/Gretsch heads that just didn't do the toms justice. No matter what tuning range they were in, the result was always a thin sound with a lot of overtones. Medium-weight Remo

Ambassadors solved this problem, and brought out the depth and added the punch and clarity I was looking for. Any high-quality head that's similar should give you the same result. The factory bass drum and snare heads were fine. The isolation mounts on the 10-inch and 12-inch toms choked the drums a bit due to their design. The mounts attach at the rims, but also have a rubber contact point on the side of the drum that cuts resonance somewhat.

The Gretsch Catalina Birch gives you serious features and sound for the money and will please everyone from a starter to a gigging professional. The lack of available bass drum sizes make versatility somewhat limited, but then again, that's not what they are designed for.

—Ryan Bennett

Ordering info: gretschdrums.com



[1] POP BLOCKER

JZ Microphones has launched the JZ/ PF pop filter, designed to reduce plosive sounds coming at the microphone capsule without altering the sound source's harmonic content.

More info: jzmic.com

[2] VIBRANT VIBRATOS

V-Moda's new Vibrato noise-isolating in-ear headphones are crafted from zinc alloy and feature a Kevlar fabric cable with a three-button remote and microphone. The headphones have a geometric design and solid, durable feel. Constructed with an 8mm dynamic HD neodymium driver, the Vibrato delivers vibrant bass, midrange and highs.

More info: v-moda.com

[3] VAULTING AHEAD

Zildjian's Gen16 Digital Vault series offers high-resolution acoustic samples of the company's master reference cymbals, along with limited-edition cymbals never before available to the public. Each cymbal was hand-selected from the vaults at the company's Norwell, Mass., workshop and recorded by percussion sampling guru John Emrich. Powering the Gen16 Digital Vaults is a custom version of FXpansion's BFD Eco.

More info: gen-16.com

[4] CHEERS TO 20

Sabian has released a new 20th-anniversary version of the B8 Pro Cymbal. It's not only richer sounding and opens up when hit hard, but now it also gives up the goods when played lightly. The cymbal features a brilliant finish and a two-year warranty.

More info: sabian.com

[5] TUNED BY THE SUN

Tascam's TC-1S is the company's first solar-powered instrument tuner. It charges its battery from a bank of solar cells on the front panel, while a USB input is available for quick charging when in the dark. The tuner is wrapped in a shockproof silicon cover and is available in six colors with a strap and clip that keep it charging all day long.

More info: tascam.com

[6] KING OF THE BANJOS

Recording King's RK-R35 Madison banjo is built around a three-ply steam-bent maple rim. It features a maple neck with an adjustable two-way truss rod and a comfortable rosewood fretboard. The banjo boasts a maple resonator with a hand-rubbed brown matte finish.

More info: recordingking.com

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Julia Easterlin (left), Enrico de Trizio, Chueho Valdés, Katie Bilinski and John Hull



Chris Potter

Berklee Students Connect with Cuban Counterparts During Havana Visit

Berklee College of Music professor Neil Leonard and four students in his electronic production and design department have broken new ground, not on the Boston campus, but in the Caribbean. Cuban-American relations have loosened up on the cultural front so it's not as difficult for American artists to travel to the island. The Berklee students and professor landed in Havana last December, not long after Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra made the trip.

Leonard wanted the pupils in his Interarts Ensemble—bassist Kate Bilinski, guitarist John Hull, singer Julia Easterlin, pianist Enrico de Trizio—to be exposed to what he called “manifestations of interdisciplinary art and those wonderful Cuban artists who work across disciplines.”

The Cuban trip, which Leonard planned with help from the Laboratorio Nacional de Music Electroacústica, turned out to be successful beyond his expectations.

“I’ve been to Cuba a number of times and had amazing experiences,” he said upon his return to Berklee. “But this was the highlight of my 25 years of encounters with Cubans, all packed into one week, sharing it with young musicians who were making their first contact with Cuba.”

Going in, Leonard was concerned about how well his students would collaborate with students at the prestigious Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) on pieces intended for a concert, but ultimately, he said there was no problem: “They were ambassadors for the arts and did everything possible to be welcoming and appreciative of the Cubans.”

Under the Havana moon, the students mixed music, dance, poetry and spirituality. A highlight of the ISA show was Bilinski and Hull on iPads manipulating and incorporating samples from the Cubans into the electronic music tradition, especially as ISA has just a fraction of the tech-

nology available at Berklee. Hull said, “It was cool to see how interested the ISA students were in the live performance software and controllers we were using.”

Days before a final concert at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Leonard had requested of his crew that they become aware of the artistic milieu in Havana.

“I didn’t want them to try to become amateur specialists in Cuban music so much,” Leonard said. “I wanted them to allow themselves to be open to and partially inspired and influenced by the city of Havana.”

Toward that end, de Trizio went to a ceremony held at a castle and taped the shouts of a soldier leading a procession of marchers.

“As a composer, I’m always fascinated by paradoxes,” de Trizio said. “In this case, it’s a march, but the guy screamed a very nice melody then ‘silencio!’ and I ended up writing a lullaby.” As for lyrics, he and Easterlin adapted an Eliseo Diego poem about Havana’s impressive old architecture. “Silencio” turned up as one of the short vignettes written by the students for the Museo concert’s feature piece “Nuestro Tiempo” (“Our Times”).

After that show, the Berklee gang went to the home of master percussionists the Arango brothers, who were hosting a Yoruban holiday celebration in honor of the deity Changó. “I had chills when the entire patio of musicians erupted in a ritual chorus complete with beautiful harmonies,” Bilinski said.

Of other activities during the hectic week, there was a memorable visit with Chucho Valdés. De Trizio tried out his Steinway, with Easterlin singing. Thrilled by their music, Valdés took over on the keys and unleashed his own “Chucho’s Steps.” “We were in his parlor,” Leonard recalled, “listening to Chucho do his thing from three feet away. There’s nothing like that!”

—Frank-John Hadley

Potter Class: Chris Potter will perform with the Jazzschool Studio Bands of Berkeley, Calif., at the nearby El Cerrito High School Performing Arts Theater on March 20. The bands, under Keith Johnson’s direction, will perform Potter’s compositions along with other pieces for large ensembles.

Details: jazzschool.com

Northwest Cool: The Washington State University Jazz Big Band has released the *Kinda Fabulous* CD. The disc features three songs by ensemble director Greg Yasinitzky as well as “Ofuscato” by saxophonist and WSU student Adam Donohue.

Details: libarts.wsu.edu/music

TCU Spotlight: The Texas Christian University Jazz Ensemble has released the two-disc set *LimeLight* (Sea Breeze Vista). Director Curt Wilson’s big band includes interpretations of Gerry Mulligan and Frank Foster compositions as well as two pieces by TCU alum Mario Cruz, who also plays tenor saxophone on the date.

Details: music.tcu.edu

Jazz Talks @ UCLA: Seattle’s Experience Music Project will host its annual Pop Conference at University of California—Los Angeles, Feb. 25–27. The event will include lectures on the development of Los Angeles’ free-jazz scene and the economics of touring to support improvised music. Multireedist Vinny Golia will respond to these topics.

Details: empsfm.org

Indiana Win: Guitarist and University of Indiana graduate student Jeff McLaughlin’s ensemble has received the first Emerging Jazz Artists Project Award, which Owl Studios established for jazz students at the university’s Jacobs School Of Music. McLaughlin’s group recorded its first album in December at the studio, scheduled for release later this year. McLaughlin also serves as an assistant instructor in the department.

Details: music.indiana.edu



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Roberta Gambarini

At the 2010 Umbria Jazz Festival in Perugia, Italy, Roberta Gambarini returned to her homeland and took her first DownBeat Blindfold Test in front of a live audience at the grand concert hall Teatro Morlacchi. She took the listening test right before her performance there, responding first in English then translating into Italian.

Dinah Washington

“Destination Moon” (from *Dinah Washington: Jazz Profile*, Roulette/Blue Note, rec'd 1962, 1997) Washington, vocals; Fred Norman, arranger; others not listed.

This is an easy one. What can I say? It's Dinah Washington. She's up there in the pantheon of the greatest of the greats. What I learned from Dinah Washington, who I listened to hard, was that she had great diction. She's one of the best in that way along with Nat “King” Cole and Frank Sinatra. When I learn a song, I want to be sure of the words, and she was great with that. She was just 39 when she died. It was a different time, and it was so much harder.

Abbey Lincoln

“Wholly Earth” (from *Wholly Earth*, Verve, 1998) Lincoln, vocals; Marc Cary, piano; John Ormond, bass; Alvester Garnett, drums; Daniel Moreno, percussion.

This is another easy one. It's Abbey Lincoln. What year was this? '98? I like this a lot, but I love Abbey's earlier albums like *It's Magic* and *Abbey Is Blue* with the great Kenny Dorham. Abbey has a special place in the world of singers because she's also a songwriter and lyric writer. Her lyrics have a lot of character. She's not always talking about romantic subjects, but also about life, various issues and politics. I admire her very much for this reason. She's a great storyteller. As for her band here, I know most of these guys, and they're great, too.

Melody Gardot

“Who Will Comfort Me” (from *My One And Only Thrill*, Verve, 2009) Gardot, vocals, guitar; Larry Goldings, Hammond organ; Bryan Rogers, tenor saxophone; Patrick Hughes, trumpet; Ken Pendergast, bass; Charlie Patierno, drums; Paulinho Da Costa, percussion; Larry Klein, backing vocals.

I'm on tour a lot, and when I can, I always try to see other acts. I saw Melody Gardot for the first time in Germany. She's a good example of a singer who has the contemporary tendency in modern music to tell a story by mood, putting a beat onto a song and bringing in different styles like gospel and other genres to captivate the audience. It's like Norah Jones. They relate a flavor of the song. So Melody is telling a story, but not like someone like Dinah Washington. She told a story that went word by word, that constructed a phrase so perfectly. Dinah was more like an instrumentalist, telling the story within the song.

Jane Monheit

“I Didn't Know About You/All Too Soon” (from *Home*, Emarcy, 2010) Monheit, vocals; Michael Kaman, piano; Mark O'Connor, violin; Frank Vignola, guitar; Neil Miner, bass; Rick Montalbano, drums.

At first I thought it was the Cannonball Adderley introduction to “Save Your Love For Me” with Nancy Wilson. But then I heard this young singer, who I know because we were both in the 1998 Monk Competition [which Teri Thornton won]. Jane Monheit is another example of a fine singer who uses a beautiful mixture of technique and style from another genre, another stylistic world—in this case cabaret. So what Jane brings is an ornamentation to a tune that is one of the greatest songs in the jazz canon. I guess this is another way for jazz to cross over to a popular audience, to make the song more fluid, more attractive. But it has an opposite attitude to what Dinah Washington does with the song, which is to dive into the heart of it.



VARTOVSANFRONT/REX PHOTOS

Luciana Souza

“House” (from *Neruda*, Sunnyside, 2004) Souza, vocals; Edward Simon, piano.

I don't know who this is, but I can make some guesses. One thing—but I'm not 100 percent sure—is that I don't think this is an American-born singer. I might be wrong. This could be Luciana Souza. It is? I know Luciana, and she's a wonderful singer. I could hear something in her pronunciation that made me think she wasn't originally from the U.S. Luciana has great intonation. Is this her track with Herbie? No? Oh, it's the *Neruda* album. I only know a few tracks from that album, but she sounds great, as does Edward Simon. What's also impressive about Luciana is that she comes from the full spectrum of a vocalist. She's a musician and a composer.

Herbie Hancock/Christina Aguilera

“A Song For You” (from *Possibilities*, Hear/Hancock/Vector 2005) Hancock, piano; Aguilera, vocals; Michael Bearden, keyboards; Nathan East, bass; Teddy Campbell, drums; Bashiri Johnson, percussion.

It's Herbie, and he's killing here. But when I first heard this, I was perplexed. Why Christina? When I listen to this track, which I love, for some strange reason my ear migrates to the accompaniment of Herbie, which is amazing. Christina is a pop singer, straight up, so she sings with a different kind of attitude and intent. What's different also is that the best kind of jazz singer will be a part of the band, which is not happening here. She's a great pop singer, but what attracts me the most is the way Herbie plays beneath her. Years ago, I played with Herbie once, with Michael Brecker, John Pattitucci and Brian Blade at Princeton.

Lena Horne

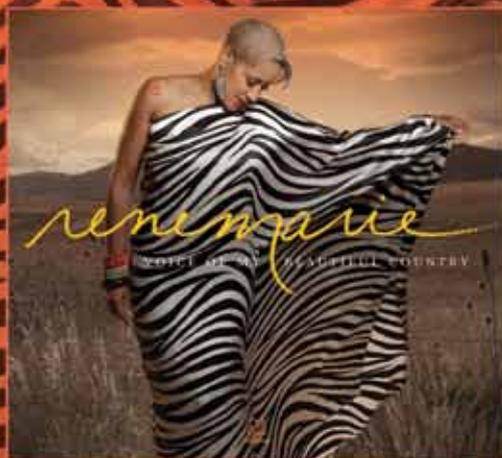
“I Feel So Smoochie” (from *Lena Horne Sings: The M-G-M Singles*, Verve/Hip-O-Select, rec'd 1947, 2010) Horne, vocals; Luther Henderson, orchestration; others not listed.

I should know this. It's a tune from the '30s or '40s that someone recorded recently. I think it was Jeanie Bryson. But I don't know who this is. At first, I thought maybe it was Hank [Jones], but it's not. This is Lena Horne? Really? I should have got that. I thought this was great, but I'm more familiar with Lena Horne later in her career than this recording. I wasn't prepared to hear this sweetness. There's a brilliance in her voice—a light and lovely feel that I don't associate with her. But I loved it. **DB**

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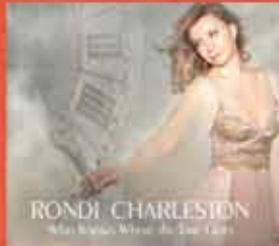
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