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The Bad Plus // Pete Christlieb

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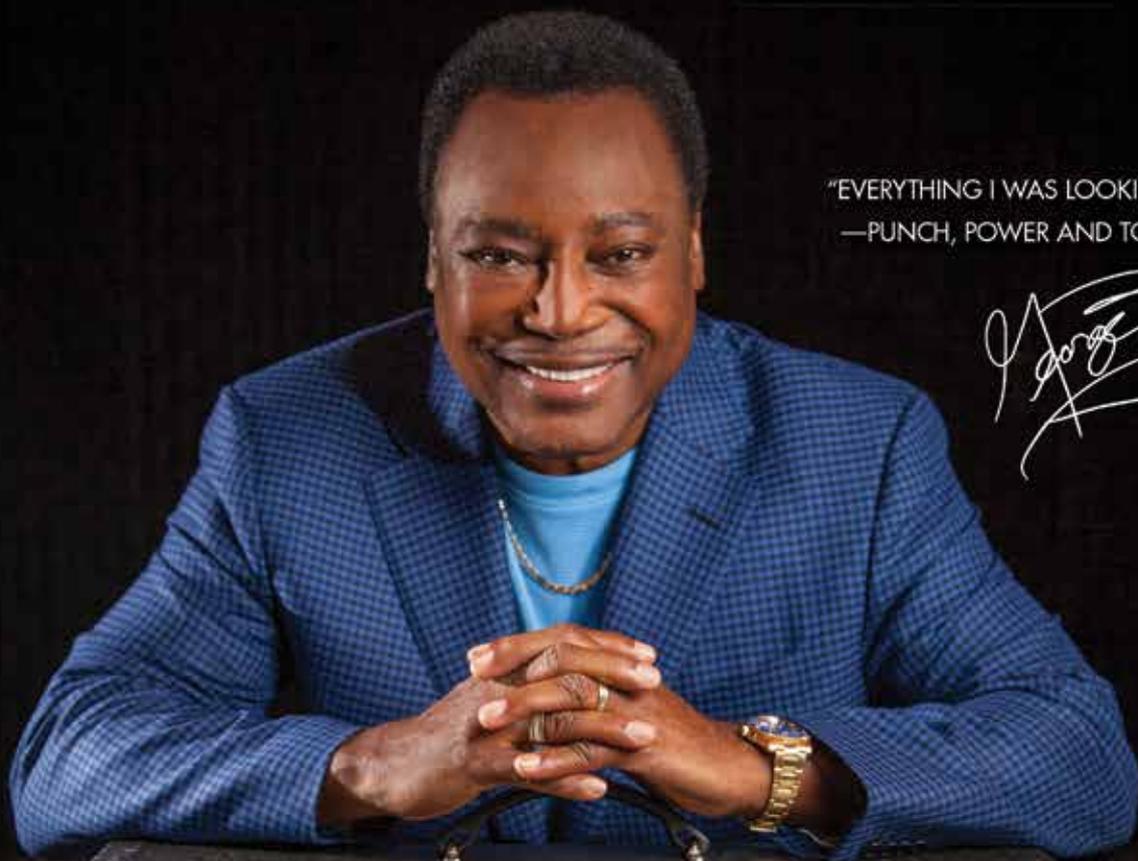


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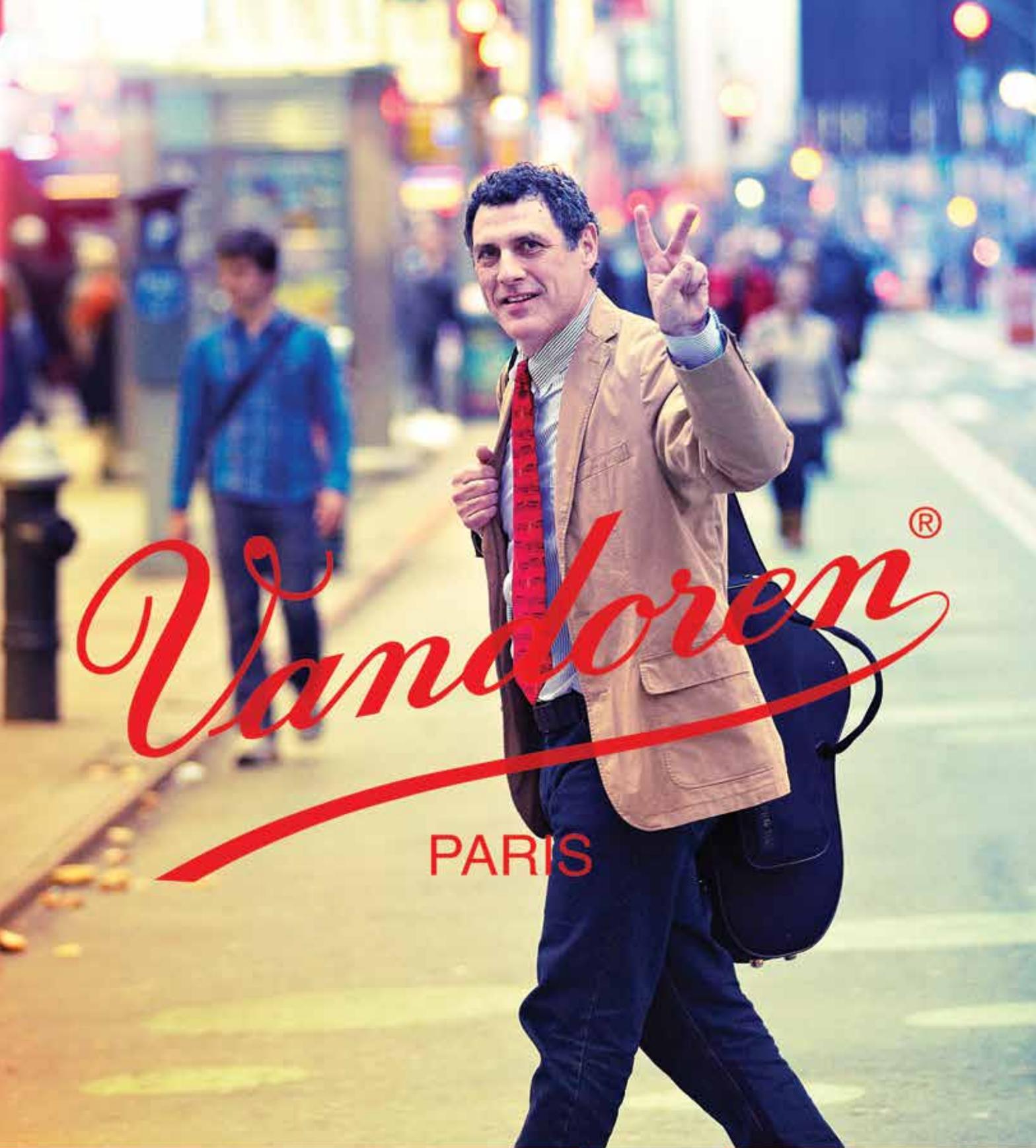


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JANUARY 2013

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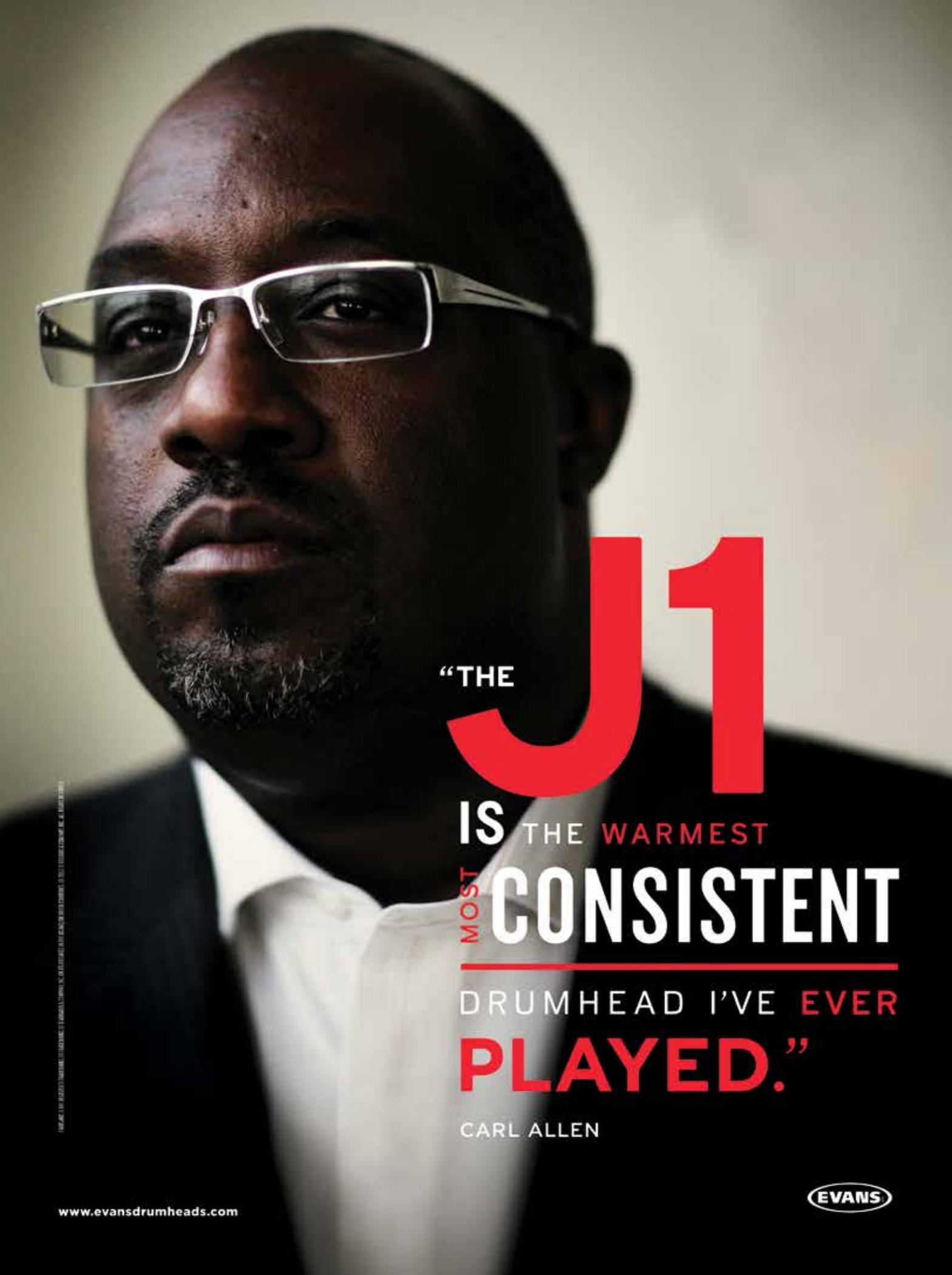
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JANUARY 2013

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BY BILL MILKOWSKI

In an enlightening, wide-ranging conversation, the guitar virtuoso reflects on his bands the Mahavishnu Orchestra and Shakti, as well as *Now Here This*, his new studio album recorded with The 4th Dimension.



The Bad Plus (from left): Ethan Iverson, Reid Anderson and Dave King

Cover photo of John McLaughlin by Steven Sussman

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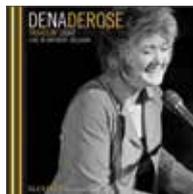
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Bill Charlap and Renee Rosnes



Musical Unions

The dark-haired woman and her muscular spouse stared directly into one another's eyes. Their gazes burned with fierce flames. The right corner of his mouth twitched upward, ever so slightly; in response, she immediately squinted, refusing to blink. Four hands were in constant, blurry motion. Fingers took flight. This dueling couple was so locked in—their concentration was so deep, their facial expressions so penetrating—that everyone in the room felt it. I almost averted my glance because I was witnessing something so powerful, so intimate.

No, this scene wasn't a lovers' quarrel. It was a duo performance by the husband and wife team of Bill Charlap and Renee Rosnes, who faced one another while each played a grand piano. The intricate music they generated was intoxicating. The level of communication that these two virtuosos displayed onstage can only be achieved by players who know everything about one another: temperament, technique, artistic inclinations. I'll never forget that concert. (If you aren't familiar with these pianists' work, check out billcharlap.com and the "Renee Radio" feature at reneerosnes.com.)

Starting on page 38 of this issue is an interview with tenor saxophonist Pete Christlieb and his wife, trombonist Linda Small. These musicians—who laugh easily and clearly enjoy one another's company—drove to their DownBeat interview in Santa Barbara, Calif., in the red Corvette depicted on the cover of their new album, *High On U* (Bosco). The disc is credited to Tall & Small: The Pete Christlieb & Linda Small Eleven Piece Band.

The world of jazz and improvised music is spiced with married couples: Blues guitarists Susan Tedeschi and Derek Trucks tour the globe in the Tedeschi Trucks Band; pianist Eliane Elias and bassist Marc Johnson recently released the excellent album *Swept Away* (ECM); and vocalist/guitarist Stacey Kent and saxophonist Jim Tomlinson soar on one of my favorite CDs of 2012, Kent's *Dreamer In Concert* (Blue Note).

These couples inspire us with their passion for music, and for each other. They may not be as famous as Beyoncé and Jay-Z, but to DownBeat readers, these artists' work is just as important and exciting as that of any power couple in Manhattan, Hollywood, Paris or Washington, D.C.

We'd like to hear your thoughts about your favorite musical couple. Send an email to editor@downbeat.com and "like" us on Facebook. Thanks for your support, and please keep on reading.

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PETE CHRISTLIEB

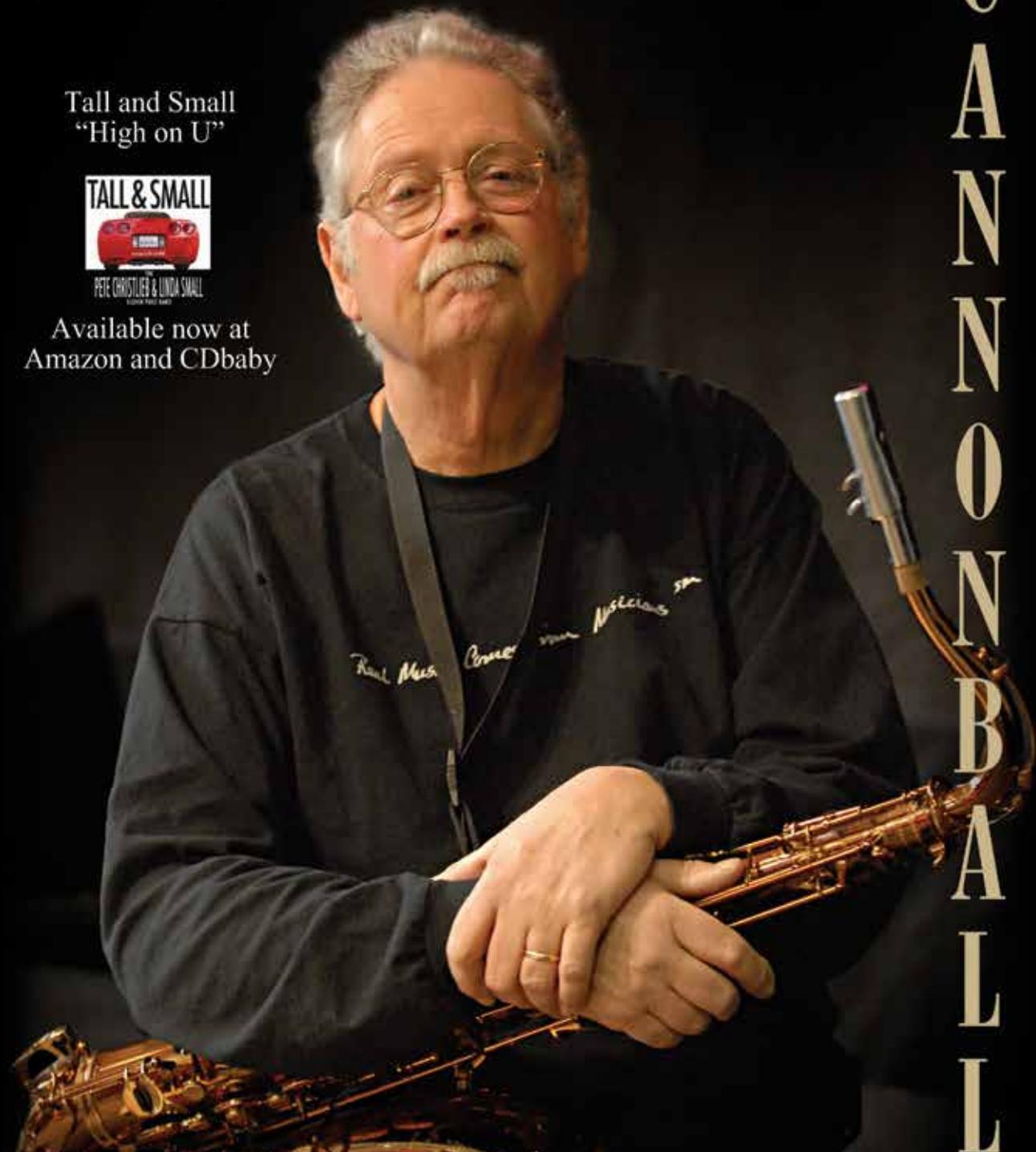
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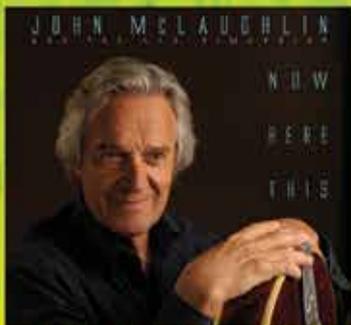


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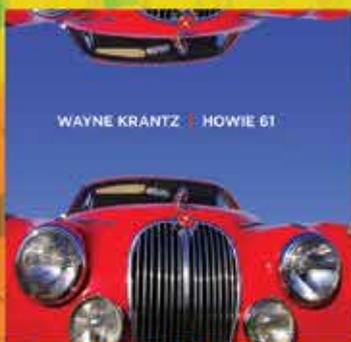
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Jeff Coffin

Don't Dis Coffin

I am writing in response to Bob Herren's letter regarding saxophonist Jeff Coffin being on the cover of the October issue of DownBeat (Chords & Discords, December). Herren's assertions are patently false. This is clearly a case of someone dismissing a very talented artist because of assumptions about the type of music he performs and the lack of association with "true jazz artists." But I would advise Herren to ask Branford Marsalis and Bob Mintzer what they think of Coffin because they have collaborated with him.

Coffin is a saxophonist at the forefront of *music*, and that's probably why Herren got his hackles raised: Any artist who refuses to live in the box labeled "Jazz" is dismissed as an "80-percent player." I hope Mr. Herren can learn to live with the fact that Jeff Coffin doesn't stay awake at night trying to please armchair saxophonists, but rather enjoys making music that isn't confined or defined by others' assertions.

BOBBY FUSON II
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA—LINCOLN

Forget Beyond?

The essay "Beyond Categorization" is a fine piece of writing by Bobby Reed (First Take, November). But to me, DownBeat's Beyond category is a gimmick to cover the full spectrum of sounds that have nothing to do with jazz and blues. I fully appreciate Reed's well-presented point, but the fact of the matter is that over 50 years ago, when I got my first copy of DownBeat—and later subscribed to it—I wanted to read *only* about jazz and blues. Those are still my only interests today.

I'm not interested in any exploration of Beyond music. I struggle enough to bear with free jazz and avant-garde jazz. As everyone knows, jazz is a language with its own syntax and its own constitu-

tive elements, which include improvisation. Most of all, jazz is a *feeling* that should not be confused with other musical forms that include improvisation.

ADRIANO PATERI
MILAN, ITALY

O'Farrill Responds

I want to thank you for the privilege of having my latest album, *The Noguchi Sessions*, reviewed in the Hot Box in your November issue. Hot Box contributors John McDonough, John Corbett and Jim Macnie offered cautious praise for my work. Though not overwhelming, they were supportive, and they understand the need to be proactive in helping keep musicians alive, somewhat compensated and able to continue doing the very thing that keeps the doors of DownBeat open.

That is the exact opposite of Paul de Barros' actions. His words in the Hot Box were incredibly mean-spirited and destructive. They were not written with any advisory comments or thoughtful observations.

So I am left with nearly unanimous praise, from my colleagues and other media outlets—



and one anomaly in the most important and public of jazz musician forums. I've dedicated my life to performing music that is non-commercial, and I've been

recognized internationally and almost unanimously by critics and audiences as a standard-bearer for integrity and an extraordinarily high level of excellence. I appreciate the work of DownBeat, and I hate to see it sullied by such mean-spirited comments.

ARTURO O'FARRILL
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Corrections

- In the December issue, the photo caption on page 110 did not correctly identify saxophonist Vitor Alcântara.
- In the December issue, in the Baritone Saxophone category of the Readers Poll, Scott Robinson was listed twice. His vote total was 549.
- Also in the December issue, on page 56, the list of artists who received votes for the Hall of Fame misspelled the name Jon Hendricks.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERRORS.

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Beats

Toots Turns 90

The harmonicist celebrates at Lincoln Center with a Brazilian-inspired tribute

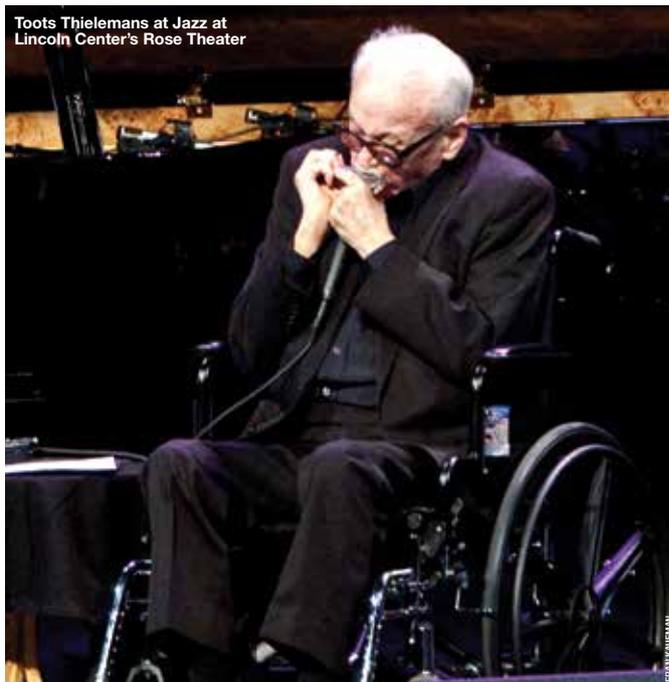
Chromatic harmonica player Toots Thielemans smiled broadly as he was ushered onto the stage of Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Theater on Sept. 30, looking regal as he sat comfortably in a wheelchair. Greeted by an overwhelming standing ovation, Thielemans joked to the appreciative packed house that though his legs weren't working very well, his mouth was doing just fine. Once he began playing, even his ailing lower limbs rose to the occasion as he danced in his seat to the swinging Brazilian rhythms laid down by his colleagues.

The second of two nights celebrating the Belgian-born virtuoso's 90th birthday, which was on April 29, the show began with pianist Kenny Werner's quietly exuberant solo recital of "You Must Believe In Spring." The tune was a Michel Legrand evergreen track featured on Thielemans' 2001 duo recording with Werner. Werner made reference to his lengthy association with Thielemans and how pleased he was that "he still wants to play with me." Joined by bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Rafael Barata, the pianist introduced Bill Evans' classic "Very Early" by proclaiming, "Toots is the only melodic guy who really knows how to play it."

Werner was then joined by two of Brazil's most iconic artists, guitarists/vocalists Oscar Castro-Neves and Dori Caymmi. The pair, both of whom appeared on Thielemans' hugely popular *The Brasil Project* albums, energized the crowd's large Brazilian contingent. They provided a rhythmic reading of Ary Barroso's "Aquarela Do Brasil," the title track of Thielemans' classic album with vocalist Elis Regina that inaugurated his fame as a renowned interpreter of bossa nova. Caymmi spoke reverently of first hearing Thielemans and being moved by his sound in a way that was comparable to his initial exposure to Bill Evans or John Coltrane. He dedicated the next number, "Amazon River," to Thielemans and, following the stirring performance, introduced him "with the utmost joy and honor."

Thielemans wasted no time diving into the music, placing his harmonica between readied lips and microphone and powerfully blowing the opening notes to Caymmi's "Obsession." Thielemans' intense, heart-wrenching sound came further to the fore as he paired with Werner on George Gershwin's "I Loves You, Porgy" and "Summertime," while his bright virtuosity shined on Antônio Carlos Jobim's "Chega De Saudade." The set concluded with pianist Eliane Elias, another guest from Thielemans' *The Brasil Project*, replacing Werner for Jacques Brel's "Ne Me Quitte Pas."

The concert's second half began auspiciously, with special guest Herbie Hancock coming solitarily to the stage and speaking of first hearing

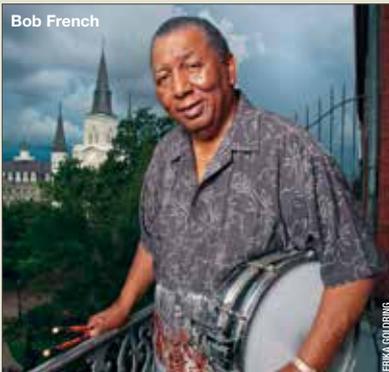


Thielemans. The pianist continued with a story about how Thielemans recommended him for a 1962 gig that they played together in Long Island, N.Y., with an Italian singer. Seated at his trademark Fazioli piano, Hancock then improvised a masterful "Invention For Toots" that gradually built in potent dynamics to exhibit his harmonic and rhythmic genius.

Thielemans joined Hancock for a spontaneous duo improvisation. Subtly constructed around the pianist's "Dolphin Dance," the interaction confirmed Werner's assessment that "Toots is one of the only musicians that, even at 90, is still searching, still breaking the mold." Werner replaced Hancock at the piano to revisit a Frank Sinatra-inspired medley of "All The Way" and "My Way," also from his duo recording with Thielemans.

Elias stretched out with Johnson and Barata for several numbers from her homeland of Brazil. Thielemans then came back to the stage to perform a moving dedication to his wife, "For My Lady," alongside Werner, whose Korg keyboard offered orchestral accompaniment on the grand finale tune, "Bluesette." For an encore, Thielemans delivered an affecting rendition of "What A Wonderful World." With all of the evening's players surrounding him, moved by their presence and one last standing ovation, the NEA Jazz Master dramatically stood up and walked off the stage, his arms encircling the shoulders of his fellow celebrants.

—Russ Musto



French Farewell: Robert “Bob” French Sr., former leader of the Original Tuxedo Jazz Band and a popular radio show host o WWOZ (New Orleans), died Nov. 12 at age 74. French was a fixture in New Orleans jazz history. His 25-year tenure at the helm of the Original Tuxedo Jazz Band constituted an important part of a familial legacy; French took over for his father, Albert “Papa” French, who led the group in the 1950s. He was also well known for his outspoken banter and diverse musical programming on WWOZ, which garnered him local fans such as Branford Marsalis and Harry Connick Jr.

Winter Wonderland: The 2013 NYC Winter Jazzfest will take place on Jan. 11–12 at six venues throughout Greenwich Village: Le Poisson Rouge, Sullivan Hall, Zinc Bar, Bitter End, SubCulture and Bowery Electric. The diverse lineup for the ninth annual fest, which features more than 70 up-and-coming jazz acts and attracts more than 5,000 arts professionals, will include performances by Catherine Russell, Colin Stetson, The Dave Douglas Quintet, Kneebody and Michael Formanek.

House Party: The Louis Armstrong House Museum Gala was held Dec. 4 at the Manhattan Penthouse in New York. The event included a performance by David Ostwald’s Louis Armstrong Centennial Band and honored members of the jazz community who helped to preserve and promote Armstrong’s legacy. Honorees this year were Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation President Stanley Crouch, NEA Jazz Master and saxophonist Jimmy Heath, and Newport Festivals Foundation Chairman George Wein.

Portuguese Pressings: Sintoma Records, a new Portuguese online-based jazz label, has released its first recording: the second album from saxophonist Desidério Lázaro-Samsara. The label will be promoting future releases in 2013 and will be accepting online donations in support of its mission.



Caught Fresh Stockholm Program Packs Swedish Venues

Stockholm is a signpost pointing toward the future of jazz with such established talents as Bobo Stenson, Palle Danielsson and Joakim Milder, as well as up-and-comers like Magnus Lindgren and Cecilia Persson. The city’s Fasching club is an eye-opener, one that was filled to capacity for the 2012 Stockholm Jazz Festival.

Unlike past years, it was a multi-venue (77 total) fall event, with 60 shows in Stockholm on Oct. 1–7 plus 74 shows in other Swedish cities. Sidestepping the past tendency to add pop acts to help manage an overheated budget, fest CEO Lena Åberg Frisk booked an intelligent mix of international jazz with related, relevant shows.

The second night of the festival featured Stenson’s trio with bassist Anders Jormin and drummer John Fält. Hearing Stenson in Fasching’s reverb-free environment was to hear a new Bobo, as the familiar serenity of the music heard on his new *Indicum* (ECM) was upended for the most part.

The next night’s shows included saxophonist Marius Neset’s Golden Xplosion, a good example of how heated Swedish jazz can be. Opening for drummer Al Foster’s new, swinging quartet, Neset’s music sprung from quiet calm to noisy, bouncy, aggressive-yet-focused playing. The band’s rhythmic syntax was unique: catchy but hardly danceable.

At Fasching, drummer Magnus Öström, combined with Swedish group Tonbruket and acoustic bassist Dan Berglund, provided back-to-back shows that were different in scope and approach, but both full of jam-band fever. The novel arrangements included lyrical, quiet moments and a bit of unlikely instrumentation such as pedal steel guitar.

At the decorative Impar Presentar Lupino Live, the Jokrima Trio, led by percussionist/pianist Marilyn Mazur, was a dynam-

ic combo of singing, rough-and-ready beats and effect-laden electric guitar that melded jazz with world music. On Mazur’s spritely “Kildevæld,” Josefine Cronholm’s singing was sweet when it wasn’t supercharged.

At the Konserthuset venue, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington’s band played standard-issue jazz, augmented by her jet-propelled beats and rhythms. Drummer Steve Gadd ripped, rolled, popped and guided a trio as he played the music of ABBA. Later at Fasching, Lindgren led his quartet, with Danielsson on bass, playing music from the reedist’s new CD *Fyra* (Gazell). Melodic and romantic, his music captured the spirit of a campfire meeting.

Vocalist Gretchen Parlato was at Konserthuset the next night, opening for the Stanley Clarke/George Duke band. This historic classical music venue was all eyes and ears as they responded to Parlato’s forceful yet Blossom Dearie-like charm, displayed with snappy pianist Taylor Eigsti in tow. The Clarke/Duke set was eclectic: everything from the signature electric funk of Clarke’s crowd-favorite “School Days” and Duke’s “Reach For It” to two acoustic duets that found the old friends strolling for the blues and “Stella By Starlight.”

The festival ended with multiple appearances by headliner Gregory Porter and the conversational, genre-defying jazz of pianist Cecilia Persson’s Kvintet, as well as the groundbreaking pianisms of Hiromi at the Konserthuset. With drummer Steve Smith sharing his over-the-top-but-amazing language, Hiromi’s playing was anchored by veteran electric bassist Anthony Jackson. She revealed links to the musical tradition with an impeccable fantasia on George Gershwin’s “I Got Rhythm.” Expectedly, the crowd went wild. —John Ephland

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Meland Experiments with Broad Repertory on Hubro

There was nothing unique about Norwegian experimental musician Andreas Risanger Meland starting a record label; artist-run imprints are a dime a dozen. But when Meland launched Safe As Milk back in 1999, he wasn't content to just put out records; he also started a wide-ranging music festival of the same name, a wink to the classic album by Captain Beefheart.

He'd just moved to Oslo, Norway, for college, but he decided to mount the festival in his hometown of Haugesund, which is about 300 miles away. He's done so for 10 consecutive summers, with eclectic lineups including free-jazz icons like Han Bennink and Sidsel Endresen, genre-defying guitarists like James Blackshaw and Oren Ambarchi, and underground-rock heavies like Lee Ranaldo and Charles Hayward.

Meland has poured that diverse aesthetic into his latest and most accomplished label, Hubro,



Andreas Risanger Meland

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which he launched in 2009. "My main goal is to work with music from Norway," Meland said. "It wouldn't make sense to focus only on mainstream jazz because that would become boring in Norway. It's much more interesting to represent the scene in total. There are lots of collaborations between genres in Norway."

While Meland, 33, initially got involved in the music industry on a DIY scale, he eventually landed a full-time job, thanks to an offer

from Rune Kristoffersen, owner of Norwegian label Rune Grammfon. The label was a model for Hubro, with its broad-minded, genre-averse philosophy.

"I was working in a grocery store, and Rune used to come to buy his lunch," Meland recalled. "One day, he asked me to stop by his office to talk about a job opening." He was hired as an assistant, but a few years later he took over for Kristoffersen and became label manager for ECM in Norway. Since 2004, he's also worked for Grappa, a prominent folk label and distributor that enabled him to start Hubro.

Since launching the label, Meland has issued 21 albums from a wide range of musicians, from the atmospheric post-ECM jazz of bassist Mats Eilertsen and pianist Ketil Bjørnstad, to the art-pop of Jessica Sligter, to the experimental folk of Sibjørn Apeland and the trio 1982 to moody piano trios Splash-

girl and Moskus. Just as Rune Grammfon uses a single artist to design all of its album art, Meland has stuck by the design team Yokoland, which gives Hubro a distinctive brand appearance.

Hubro has secured international distribution throughout Europe and North America, but Meland is sober about its business prospects. He doesn't see a bright future for the record business, but that hasn't stopped him from doing all he can with Hubro.

"There's a feeling of not knowing how long this kind of business will be possible to run," Meland said. "This might not last, so let's have a lot of fun while it still exists."

He's got a full slate on deck for 2013, including albums from Eilertsen and Splashgirl, and a new trio featuring the Icelandic guitarist Hilmar Jensson, American bassist Shahzad Ismaily and Norwegian drummer Øyvind Skarbø. **DB**

Saxophonist David S. Ware Dies at 62

Saxophonist and bandleader David S. Ware died on Oct. 18 at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, N.J. The 62-year-old Ware succumbed to complications from a kidney transplant he received in 2009.

Born in Plainfield, N.J., Ware grew up in nearby Scotch Plains. The first words his mother said to him were "Go see the world." (Ware used those words as the title of his 1998 album for Columbia Records.) As a teenager, Ware became strongly influenced by Sonny Rollins' music and later befriended him.

Rollins was a strong advocate for his protégé at several key points during his career. Ware took up his mentor's horn, and while he also made compelling music on soprano saxophone, saxello and stritch, the tenor saxophone was his primary instrument. Rollins taught Ware the art of circular breathing in 1966, and the two saxophonists occasionally practiced together in Rollins' Brooklyn apartment in the '70s.

Ware's artistry was influenced by Rollins' virtuosity and stamina as well as the intensity and spiritual openness of late-era John Coltrane. But even in Ware's early years as a sideman, listeners recognized his broad tone, his rippling, circular breathing-fueled altissimo runs and the clarity with which he devel-



David S. Ware

MARK SHELDON

oped material for others.

After studying music in Boston, Ware moved to Manhattan in 1973, where he participated in the burgeoning loft jazz movement. Within a year of settling in New York, he was a member of pianist Cecil Taylor's big band; he subsequently played on Taylor's *Dark To Themselves* (Enja). In the '70s and '80s, he played with Andrew

Cyrille's Maono, Ahmed Abdullah's Solomonic Quintet and William Parker's Centering Dance Music Ensemble, and also began leading his own groups. Ware eschewed promiscuous collaboration in favor of working with musicians who grasped his concepts.

Although Ware endured serious complications brought on by his immunosuppressant medication, he embarked on an astonishing late-career run of creativity. He took up totally free improvisation with Planetary Unknown, a group that included Parker and keyboardist Cooper-Moore as well as veteran free-jazz drummer Muhammad Ali. Cooper-Moore accompanied the saxophonist at his last public performance, which took place in August 2011.

In addition to revisiting the saxello and stritch late in life, Ware wielded the soprano saxophone to devastating effect on his 2011 disc *Organica (Solo Saxophones, Volume 2)* (AUM Fidelity). Part of that album was recorded during Ware's November 2010 appearance at Chicago's Umbrella Music Festival. When he had finished playing in Chicago, he spoke to the audience, alluding to his declining health with startling good humor. "This body is a vehicle," Ware said, "and I'll be needing a new one soon." **—Bill Meyer**

Buddy Guy



Buddy Guy Receives 2012 Kennedy Center Honor

On Sept. 12, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced that bluesman Buddy Guy is among the 2012 Kennedy Center Honorees. Along with actor Dustin Hoffman, talk-show host David Letterman, ballerina Natalia Makarova and surviving members of the rock band Led Zeppelin, Guy will be recognized at a gala at the Kennedy Center Opera House in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 2.

In keeping with tradition, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will attend the event. Prior to the gala performance, the honorees will be invited to a celebratory dinner at the White House.

“Buddy Guy is a titan of the blues and has been a tremendous influence on virtually everyone who has picked up an electric guitar in the last half-century,” said Kennedy Center Chairman David M. Rubenstein.

Guy, who was born in 1936 in Lettsworth, La., has influenced multiple generations of musicians, thanks to his work as a leader and as a collaborator with artists such as Muddy Waters, Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Known for his signature staccato attacks and unsurpassed showmanship, Guy was also a significant sideman during his tenure at Chicago’s Chess Records, where he recorded from 1960 to 1968. In addition to releasing the hit single “Stone Crazy” on Chess, Guy was the resident guitarist on many of the label’s most significant recordings, including Howlin’ Wolf’s “Killing Floor” and Koko Taylor’s “Wang Dang Doodle.”

Guy left Chess in 1968 and moved to Vanguard Records, where his recordings included *A Man And The Blues* and *Hold That Plane!* Other titles from that era include *Buddy & The Juniors* (Blue Thumb), an acoustic 1970 release featuring pianist Junior Mance and harmonica player Junior Wells; *Buddy Guy & Junior Wells Play The Blues* (1972); and the concert album *Live In Montreux* (1977).

Guy’s recording career quieted in the ’80s, but a turning point was a performance with Clapton during the guitarist’s multi-night run at London’s Royal Albert Hall in 1990–’91. His appearance with Clapton led to a new recording contract with Silvertone Records, and he became one of the top blues artists of the ’90s. His 1991 album *Damn Right, I’ve Got The Blues* earned Guy five W.C. Handy awards and a Grammy for Best Contemporary Blues Album. Guy was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2005. In May, Da Capo Press published his autobiography, *When I Left Home: My Story*.

“I am a simple man blessed to be able to make a living at what I love, and I am a fortunate man to have learned from the best—from men like Muddy Waters—who made me promise to keep the blues alive,” Guy said. “I cannot begin to describe my feelings of deep gratitude to be receiving the Kennedy Center Honor.”

The Kennedy Center Honors medallions for the 2012 artists will be presented on Dec. 1 at a State Department dinner hosted by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The Dec. 2 gala will be recorded for broadcast on CBS as a two-hour prime-time special on Dec. 26. —Hilary Brown

Eberhard Weber Résumé

Eberhard Weber bass, keyboards

W/Jan Garbarek tenor and soprano saxophones, selje flute

Michael DiPasqua drums, percussion

For *Résumé* Weber has returned to recordings of his solo sequences with the Jan Garbarek group and reworked them into an album with its own sense of flow.

Enrico Rava Rava on the Dance Floor

Enrico Rava trumpet; **Mauro Ottolini** trombone, tuba and arrangements; **Andrea Tofanelli** trumpet; **Claudio Corvini** trumpet; **Daniele Tittarelli** alto sax; **Dan Kinzelman** tenor sax; **Franz Bazzani** keyboards; **Marcello Giannini** guitar; **Giovanni Guidi** piano; **Dario Deidda** bass; **Zeno De Rossi** drums; **Ernesto Lopez Maturell** percussions

Enrico Rava’s unique take on the songs of Michael Jackson. Enrico’s trumpet is at its most extroverted here, vaulting above the spirited arrangements.

FOOD Mercurial Balm

Thomas Strønen drums, electronics, percussion; **Iain Ballamy** saxophones, electronics; **Christian Fennesz** guitar, electronics; **Eivind Aarset** guitar, electronics; **Prakash Sontakke** slide-guitar, vocal; **Nils Petter Molvær** trumpet

The singular form-and-texture conscious improvisations here are drawn from live performances in Norway, England and Germany and studio sessions at Oslo’s Rainbow Studio.



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Thelonious Monk Institute
of Jazz International
Jazz Drum Competition
winner Jamison Ross



Monk Institute Resurrects Drum Competition

It had been 20 years since the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Jazz Competition had given the trap drummers their due. But on Sept. 23, the Institute resurrected its Jazz Drums and Composers Competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Jamison Ross, 24, of Jacksonville, Fla., was awarded the top prize of a \$2,500 scholarship and a recording contract with Concord Music Group. Justin Brown, 28, of Richmond, Calif., placed second place, taking home a \$1,500 scholarship, and Colin Stranahan, 26, of Denver came in third, winning a \$1,000 scholarship.

When asked why it took so long to conduct another drum competition, Institute Chairman T.S. Monk assumed much of the responsibility. Monk stated that his reticence was due to the fact that he's a drummer himself, and didn't want to engage in what could be construed as a conflict of interest. "I never wanted it to seem like I was pressing my case for drums," he said, "Now, I think we'll be seeing the drums every four or five years."

During the semifinals, all 12 contestants brought a vast array of technical prowess and a keen sense of compositional guile. The esteemed panel of judges consisted of longtime Monk Institute affiliates Carl Allen and Terri Lyne Carrington, along with Brian Blade, Peter Erskine, Jimmy Cobb and former Thelonious Monk Quartet drummer Ben Riley.

Ross admirably displayed his improvisational acumen and his instantly engaging sense of funk and finesse on Monk's "Rhythm-A-Ning" and on his soul original, "Sandy Red." At the finals, he pared his rhythmic arsenal even more, supporting the accompanying band, com-

posed of pianist Geoff Keezer, bassist Rodney Whitaker and saxophonist Jon Gordon.

Ross' strategy was a risky one considering Brown's combustive dynamism and Stranahan's pneumatic, multidirectional rhythms and textural colorations. However, Ross' gambit worked its charm as he fashioned a Sunday-morning church boogie with the bass drums and handheld tambourine on James Black's "Magnolia Triangle." Whereas the two runners-up had began their recitals with exploratory solo introductions, Ross quickly engaged the ensemble in relaxed, feel-good swing. He reiterated that point on another blues-soaked original, "Shrimp & Grits," by zeroing in on the pleasure principle.

"One thing that I've learned is that when you play music, have fun playing it," Ross explained after the competition. "As a drummer, you're supposed to make everyone around you sound better. That's your job."

Brown's delivered a dynamic solo essay during the finals, initiating a second-line groove loaded with modern serrated embellishments before engaging Keezer in a forceful duet makeover of Sonny Rollins' "Oleo." Stranahan began his performance in a more subtle fashion, accentuating suspended cymbal crashes and brush-stroke dexterity that eventually led to an enticing treatment of Dizzy Gillespie's "Con Alma."

After pianist Yusuke Nakamura of Mikakonojō, Japan, performed his BMI Composer's Award-winning piece, "Heavenly Seven," and a romping performance of "The Blues Is Alright," led by blues guitarist Joe Louis Walker, the competition gave way to a spectacular gala that celebrated "women, music and diplomacy."

With a wide variety of female jazz musicians in attendance—Carrington, pianist Geri Allen, bassist Linda Oh, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, cellist Akua Dixon, saxophonists Claire Daly and Jane Ira Bloom, and singers Nnenna Freelon, Patti Austin, Gretchen Parlato and Roberta Gambarini—the gala kept its focus sharp, paying tribute to Anita O'Day, Astrud Gilberto, Lena Horne, Mary Lou Williams and Ella Fitzgerald. Austin's singing was dazzling on the Fitzgerald staple "Oh, Lady Be Good" and Freelon offered up a sexy rendition of Horne's signature song, "Stormy Weather." The gala's high point occurred when co-host Helen Mirren introduced Aretha Franklin, who sang a gusty rendition of "My Funny Valentine" and a crowd-pleasing performance of "Respect." The Queen of Soul then granted former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright with the Maria Fisher Founder's Award.

Albright delivered one of the evening's most humorous moments when she filled the drummer's chair for a tongue-in-cheek performance of "Nessun Dorma," which featured trumpeter Chris Botti, drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, bassist James Genus and pianist/keyboardist George Duke, who served as the event's musical director.

Monk Institute President Tom Carter explained the connection between the drums and diplomacy by mentioning the organization's increased work with the U.S. State Department and the United Nations. "A few months ago during International Jazz Day, we started the morning in Congo Square, and it was literally through the drumbeat," Carter recalled. "It was obvious at that point that [the drums] were the voice in which we were going to move forward with the competition."
—John Murph



Lura at Istanbul club Babylon

Caught

Istanbul's Akbank Fest Ventures into the Unknown

Even though it featured well-known acts such as alto saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa's Samdhi and Miles Smiles, Istanbul's Akbank Jazz Festival (Oct. 3–21) focused on presenting an eclectic program of artists who are locally based or relatively unheard of. This is what made the multi-venue fest such a treat for fans in search of new music.

Now in its 22nd year, Akbank spotlighted, in its first week, Greek composer/pianist Eleni Karaindrou; an all-star band from the Munich-based ACT record label celebrating its 20th anniversary; punk-fueled Istanbul jazz trumpeter Baristik Mi; Portuguese vocalist Lura; Lebanon-born, France-based quarter-tone trumpeter Ibrahim Maalouf; and the duo of Palestine-born, Paris-based vocalist/oudist/songwriter Kamilya Jubran and Swiss trumpeter/keyboard effects maestro Werner Hasler.

At Akbank Sanat on Oct. 5, Baristik Mi's sextet was composed of two guitarists, an electric bassist, a drummer and a designer who used a computer to display images of the pieces displayed on the back wall as the band played. The music was packed with dynamics, as each tune moved from a dreamy, melodic state with soothing trumpeting into a raw barrage of loud six-string improvisations. In stark contrast, at the club Babylon, the Edinburgh electronica jazz band Hidden Orchestra delivered an unsatisfactory set of floaty, vapid atmospheric music.

In the next two days, two concerts at the multi-tiered Istanbul Lutfi Kirdar theater were remarkable. Karaindrou enlisted the full string Istanbul Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Ender Sakpinar, to perform soundtrack

music she composed for the late Greek filmmaker Theo Angelopoulos; classic cinematic gems such as *Ulysses' Gaze*, *Eternity And A Day*, *The Beekeeper* and *Voyage To Cythera*. Soft-hued colors and rich orchestral textures characterized the through-composed pieces, which told reflective stories with occasional upbeat swings and graceful but sobering waltzes. The house appreciatively gave Karaindrou three encores.

The next evening's ACT Jubilee Night featured the label's "family band," as founder Siegfried "Siggi" Loch called the eight-piece ensemble directed by trombonist Nils Landgren. The set was one of the festival's most outwardly jazz-influenced performances, with a rich variety of the idiom's stripes, from straight-up swing to grooving funk. Rollicking post-bop numbers such as "Zig Zag Blues" featured baritone saxophonist Celine Bonacina. The set concluded with two tunes by the late pianist Esbjörn Svensson, including the spirited "Dodge The Dodo."

At Babylon, Lura won the crowd over with her cooking, African-infused dance tunes. The Jubran/Hasler set was an intimate, gently rhythmic affair, with virtuosic oud playing and compelling, highly political songs based on the lyrics of Arabic poets from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Greece. Jubran perfectly blended poetry with her contemporary oud and electronica performance. Later, at the club Garajistanbul, Maalouf, a dynamic trumpeter who gave his effects-heavy music a decidedly Arabic feel, put on a driving electric show with rocking elements. His searching, lyrical original tune "Beirut" was, like the rest of the festival, a satisfying epiphany of music previously undiscovered. —Dan Ouellette



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Larry Goldings

Serving the Story

There's no limiting Larry Goldings to one musical genre or one instrument. The versatile keyboardist inhabits the worlds of jazz, pop and everything in between, exhibiting a keen sense of what's appropriate in every setting he finds himself.

Goldings' first love is performing and recording with the progressive organ trio he co-leads with guitarist Peter Bernstein and drummer Bill Stewart—longtime band mates since their college years in the late 1980s. A native of Boston, Goldings attended the New School in New York, where he studied piano with Fred Hersch and frequently got together with Bernstein, an Eastman student whom Goldings had known since they had attended a summer music camp together during high school. They played with a variety of drummers on the budding scene that revolved around New York venues such as Smalls, Augie's and the Terrace at the Village Gate until Bernstein eventually introduced Goldings to Stewart, a classmate from Eastman. The trio's most recent CD, *Live At Smalls* (SmallsLIVE), is a homecoming celebration that documents their longstanding rapport and illustrates the artistic growth they've experienced as a group over the years.

It was during his early years in New York that Goldings, who was focused primarily on piano, discovered his affinity for the organ—an instrument with which he has been strongly associated ever since. “A great drummer named Leon Parker was playing on that scene every night with different groups, and his bass player didn't show up one night, so he called me in a panic and asked if I could come and walk bass lines on a synthesizer,” Goldings recalled. “I found an organ sound and said, ‘Oh yeah, I love Jimmy Smith, especially the record he did with Wes Montgomery.’ And that was literally how the seed was planted.”

Goldings became a first-call organist in groups led by the likes of Maceo Parker, John Scofield and Norah Jones, to name just a few. He's played piano in the bands of Jim Hall, James Moody, Matt Wilson and scads more, and in 2011 he released his solo piano album, *In My Room* (BFM Jazz). With an extensive resume as a leader and sideman on dozens of straight-ahead and soul-jazz dates, Goldings has played with many of the biggest names in the industry over the last quarter-century.

Goldings' career hasn't been limited to jazz. He enjoys a strong rapport with artists in the pop and singer/songwriter worlds, most notably as a member of James Taylor's touring band. The 44-year-old genre-hopper relishes



the role of being an accompanist and orchestrator for vocalists, bringing a sensibility that stems from an adolescence spent listening to pop stars like the Beach Boys and Billy Joel.

“I like to be in the spotlight and play my own music and present my own groups, but I also love the challenge of playing other roles,” he said. “You're setting a mood for somebody else, trying to make them sound as good as they can. As long as the music is strong and there's a high level of musicianship going on, I almost don't notice the change in the genre. To me, it's all great music. You are serving a story, really, and that's a great challenge for a guy who's used to just playing in instrumental situations. And when you find the right place to be in those situations, it's very satisfying.”

Since moving to Los Angeles in 2001, Goldings has spent considerable time composing music in collaboration with singer/songwriters. “I've found myself in rooms with unbelievably talented people who have no relation to my old jazz world,” said Goldings. “That's so invigorating to me. I was in my house with [composer] Paul Williams and Lisa Loeb writing a song, and I'm sitting there going, ‘How lucky am I?’ And because vocal music is so much more accessible than instrumental jazz, it's another outlet for me to make a living.”

Goldings also considers himself lucky to work as a writer and producer on recording sessions. He produced jazz vocalist Sara Gazarek's CD *Blossom & Bee* (Palmetto) and has co-produced several albums with vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Curtis Stigers. “Curtis was the

first recording artist who started thinking of me as a writer,” said Goldings, who appears on Stigers' latest Larry Klein-produced release, *Let's Go Out Tonight* (Concord). “He was a fan of my jazz writing, and when he started making records for Concord in the mid-'90s, he sought me out not only as an arranger and player, but as a co-writer, too. That was the spark where I realized it could be fun doing more of this, and it led to other genres with other artists. It's nice that people are thinking of me not just as an organist or a jazz pianist.”

Goldings' writing and playing are featured on a track from vocalist Jane Monheit's latest offering, *Home* (Emarcy). He plays piano and melodica on a handful of tunes from vocalist Melody Gardot's new CD, *The Absence* (Decca). He plays piano and organ on guitarist John Scofield's *A Moment's Peace* (Emarcy), and he has finished scoring the film *Dealin' With Idiots*, written and directed by actor/comedian Jeff Garlin.

Looking ahead, Goldings will travel to Europe with Scofield and drummer Greg Hutchinson in March, and he hopes to tour domestically and record again with his regular trio (currently without a label) in 2013.

At some point, Goldings would like to take a solo piano show on the road. “I think it would help me get back in touch with the piano,” he said. “There's so much freedom in playing solo, but it takes a lot of stamina and creativity to keep a performance interesting for an entire evening. The challenge is a little daunting, but I'd like to take it on.”

—Ed Enright

Mark Guiliana

Individual Soul-Stew

Transcription is a mechanical process in which function follows form, performed with the goal of decoding art. By translating an instrumentalist's solo to paper, players seek to understand its essence, believing that the expression of a musical icon can be alchemized from the ethereal to the concrete. But for drummer Mark Guiliana, it's even more than that.

"Once it's on the page, it's up for grabs," he says, referring to an episode when he transcribed drummer Tony Williams' improvisations on the title track to Miles Davis' album *Nefertiti*. "[After it's on] the page, it's much easier to change its meaning: by playing it slower, or playing it quieter, playing it faster, playing a different orchestration. What Tony played is a fact, but once I transcribed it, that allowed me to inject a bit of my own personality and take it away from just being his property. [Then] I could forget where it's from—its original tempo or dynamic. That's hard to do when you're just listening because you are so attached to the music."

As a player, Guiliana's focus on the nearly subliminal constructs behind rhythm and improvisation has made him increasingly in demand. The prolific drummer has collaborated with dozens of artists, including Lionel Loueke, Brad Mehldau, Meshell Ndegeocello and Gretchen Parlato. Guiliana, 32, shines on saxophonist Donny McCaslin's new album, *Castling For Gravity* (Greenleaf).

Exemplifying one of his favorite words, Guiliana drives McCaslin's vein-coursing acoustic music with a "relentlessness" that's almost maniacal. The drummer, who studied jazz performance at William Paterson University, pares back the heat only slightly on bassist Avishai Cohen's *Continuo* (Sunnyside) and ratchets the fervor to a breakneck yet organic pace with his own group, Beat Music.

"The guys for me are Tony and Roy [Haynes] and Max [Roach], and then Elvin [Jones] and [Art] Blakey and Philly Joe [Jones]," Guiliana says. "But it was never my intention to play that style myself, per se; it was the experience of getting it on the page and analyzing it. There was always other music that felt more natural to me to play, drummers like Chad Smith [of Red Hot Chili Peppers] and Dave Grohl [of Nirvana]—the MTV culture of the '90s."

Another element in Guiliana's drumming, which rarely involves a standard jazz ride pulse, is the '90s electronic music of Squarepusher, Plug and Aphex Twin, much of which was brought to his attention by fellow drummer and programmer Zach Danziger.

"Electronic music has influenced me, among



other ways, in its discipline," Guiliana notes. "Jazz drummers get away with so much. Everyone else is handed a chart, but the drummer is told to 'do your thing.' That can be detrimental to the music. But the intention behind programmed music is as definite as it gets. Playing open, improvised music with that intention has been really important for me.

"What if I use discipline to not move under a solo and let other things develop?" he muses. "When everyone is developing under the soloist, it can dilute the development, or it can be too obvious—the scripted arc of a solo. So I exert discipline to really sit and have more patient development. That discipline is contagious, and it can become hypnotic with the right guys."

Just as his drumming blends genres, Guiliana's fans come from all eras and all styles of music. Even progressive rock.

"In my day, you could like Coltrane or Hendrix, but not both," says former Yes and King Crimson drummer Bill Bruford. "You were either a jazzer or a rocker. The only thing that was certain was that no matter how bad the jazzers were at playing rock, the rockers were worse at playing jazz. But the younger breed, of which Mark is a part, has absorbed the improvisational contours of jazz, blended them with the form and velocity of rock, stirred in a wide spectrum of ethnic listening and reference points, and brought the whole lot to the boil in an utterly individual soul-stew by about the age of 22."

—Ken Micallef



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Matt Ulery

Appreciating Limitations

Bassist Matt Ulery does a balancing act on *By A Little Light* (Greenleaf). Throughout the sprawling two-disc set, moments of jazz improvisation emerge within a chamber music framework. Although he originally composed the pieces for a piano trio, the end result features reeds, strings and vocalists. Buoyant melodies make such complexities sound effortless.

Ulery compares his musical approach to the way he shops for groceries. “My wife and I pay our farmer friends a certain amount of money before they plant the seeds,” he explained. “So when we walk to our farmers’ market, we get this rotating mystery box of vegetables, and that’s my creative limitation for the week. I have kale, potatoes or red onions, and then I figure out what to do with them. A musical style is all about that. Here’s a concept: We’re limited by our instruments, so let’s appreciate their limitations and use them.”

The bassist is discerning about choosing specific limitations. Each of his groups comes with a set of rules. In the quartet Eastern Blok with

guitarist Goran Ivanovic, all of the compositions are tied to Balkan traditions. Loom is Ulery’s jazz-focused band, and that’s where he allows for more solos.

Since Ulery wanted *By A Little Light* to be “lyrical and often ethereal,” he began working on its songs away from his instrument.

“Almost all the music on this record I wrote by singing into my tape recorder, improvising by humming some melody with no words,” Ulery said. “If I improvise a melody and it’s something I can refine with my voice, there’s a possibility I can add lyrics to that.”

Ulery learned the jazz, r&b and pop repertoires from older musicians in his hometown of Rockford, Ill., and started working with them at 14. He moved to Chicago to attend Roosevelt University and began sitting in at jazz clubs such as Andy’s and the Velvet Lounge.

Because Ulery is attentive to Chicago’s flourishing chamber music community, as well as the city’s jazz and folk scenes, he is drawn to



collaborators who ignore genre distinctions.

“In Chicago, the cats who are open-minded good musicians are going to transcend all the segregation in all ways,” Ulery said. “Being positive is always going to transcend that.” —Aaron Cohen



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Maria Neckam

Thinking Structurally

As a high school student in Vienna, vocalist Maria Neckam composed songs on guitar and performed them with her rock band, exploring “love and relationships, all sorts of relationships, and how people work.”

A decade later, on the 2012 album *Unison* (Sunnyside), and on its 2010 predecessor, *Deeper* (Sunnyside)—both consisting entirely of her originals—Neckam examines the same subjects from a pan-stylistic perspective.

Joined on *Unison* by an ensemble that includes pianist Aaron Parks, guitarist Nir Felder, bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Colin Stranahan, Neckam functions as a co-equal instrumentalist and deft storyteller, using a clear, fluid voice to convey raw emotions with philosophical detachment. She dresses the stories with an impressive array of compositional and orchestrative strategies. Some evoke the autobiographical clarity of Joni Mitchell. Three duos with cellist Mariel Roberts nod to the art songs of Mahler and Schoenberg. Another three pieces frame poems by Hafez, Pablo Neruda and Rainer Maria Rilke. Others refract the rhythmic, harmonic and performative pathways established by stars such as Brad Mehldau and Luciana Souza. Whether rendering a lyric or a wordless melody, Neckam unflinchingly follows her line, traversing the tricky time feels with confidence and grace.

“My songs never had typical structures,” Neckam said. “They were always a little weird, even in high school. Writing was a place of refuge, where I could stop thinking or worrying about anything else. But the realities of surviving as a musician in New York mean you have to do all this organizational stuff, and I get so far away from that creative place that I have to force myself to get there. I’m not the kind of organized person who can say, ‘OK, every day, one hour . . .’”

Neckam paused. “I’m also a woman,” she said emphatically. “Usually we’re more emotional, and it’s hard to be so rational about it.” She parsed the remark in Dionysian-Apollonian, left-side/right-side terms: “Often in jazz, singers are so different from instrumentalists. I’ve always struggled with the singer world, which is about emotion and feeling. My dad is an architect, and I think structurally—I love analyzing things. With Indian singers, it all comes together, because everything they sing, they know what it is. It’s like math, all these crazy systems, but they make great music over it—it all works out.

“I grew up around a lot of guys, and I’ve always had a bit of, ‘When it’s too emotional, it’s weak.’ But as I’ve grown, I realize that it’s not weak at all. It’s just different. It’s ideal to have them



both. I love music that surprises me, but it also has to have that feeling, that honesty. I’m always fascinated with how instrumentalists can be virtuosic *and* burn. But with singers, you get this person—it’s their world, and you can dive into it.”

Neckam dove into the world of jazz during her undergraduate years at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. “I loved the freedom and endless possibilities to keep trying new things,” she said. Still, she felt stifled by the local scene. But she remembers attending a gig at the Bimhuis by saxophonist David Binney (accompanied by Morgan and drummer Dan Weiss) and having a realization: “This is why I make music and why I want to keep going.”

In 2006, she moved to New York. After earning a master’s degree at Manhattan School of Music, she gravitated to the scene at the 55 Bar, where she attended Binney’s weekly gigs and soaked up the concepts of such like-minded improvisers as guitarist Miles Okazaki and drummer Jim Black.

“It was very logical, systematic modern jazz with a lot of intellect and complexity, but also catchy melodies—a pop aesthetic I could relate to,” Neckam said, noting that she was then co-leading an electronic pop band.

“I approached my last two CDs, especially *Unison*, more like a composer’s album, and for the next one I want to focus more on singing,” she explained. “Now I’m thinking about doing some covers. I’ve always thought I don’t need to do that because I could write my own music. That’s the masculine side! But honestly, it can be so much fun just to sing someone else’s song. Why not do something I enjoy even if it’s not super-difficult, crazy or unexpected? It doesn’t have to be all so doctrinaire.”

—Ted Panken



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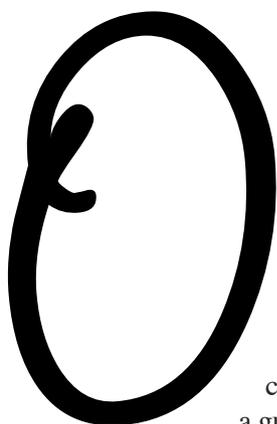
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JOHN McLAUGHLIN

Echoes From Then

By Bill Milkowski /// Photo by Steven Sussman



Onstage at the 2011 Nice Jazz Festival, just down the road from his residence on the French Riviera, John McLaughlin flashed “the look of eagles” as his band lit a fire beneath him. Powerhouse drummer Ranjit Barot set the table with frightening intensity on the kit as the astounding electric bassist Etienne Mbappé grooved mightily, wearing his signature black silk gloves on his fretting and picking hands. Gary Husband (who often doubles on keyboards and drums) comped insistently on an electric piano as the silver-haired, six-string avatar entered the fray, unleashing the type of fretboard pyrotechnics that once caused Frank Zappa to comment, “The guy has certainly found out how to operate a guitar as if it were a machine gun.”

That gig revealed a newfound aggressive edge to McLaughlin’s playing, no doubt spurred on by the incendiary nature of his most potent band in years. And his warm-toned, distortion-laced licks cut through the fusion maelstrom like Thor’s hammer as his band, The 4th Dimension, took off like an Airbus A380 leaving the runway.

A quintessential guitar hero, McLaughlin lit the fuse of the vibrant late-’60s/early ’70s jazz-rock movement with his ripping guitar work on fusion landmarks like Tony Williams Lifetime’s *Emergency!* and *Turn It Over*, as well as a string of Miles Davis albums: *In A Silent Way*, *Bitches Brew*, *A Tribute To Jack Johnson*, *Live-Evil*, *On The Corner*, *Big Fun* (where

he is featured on “Go Ahead John”) and *Get Up With It*. With his band the Mahavishnu Orchestra, McLaughlin created the groundbreaking ’70s albums *The Inner Mounting Flame* and *Birds Of Fire*.

Keyboardist Chick Corea, who played alongside the guitarist on several of those electric Davis sessions and collaborated with McLaughlin four decades later in the Five Peace Band (which toured in 2008, yielding a self-titled live double-CD set in 2009) remarked to DownBeat in 1988: “What John McLaughlin did with the electric guitar set the world on its ear. No one ever heard an electric guitar played like that before, and it certainly inspired me. John’s band, more than



John McLaughlin playing at the Blue Note in New York City on Nov. 16, 2011

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McLaughlin performing with the Mahavishnu Orchestra in the 1970s



my experience with Miles, led me to want to turn the volume up and write music that was more dramatic and made your hair stand on end."

Fellow Brit guitar hero Jeff Beck was more succinct in his praise, declaring McLaughlin to be "the best guitarist alive."

McLaughlin, now 71, was in a reflective mood during an hour-long phone chat from Monaco, where he lives with his wife, Ina, and son. The guitarist spoke with pride about his 16-year-old son, Luke—an aspiring drummer who pleasantly surprised his dad recently by perfecting a "Tutu" groove on the kit, nodding to the title track of Davis' 1986 album. Then McLaughlin reminisced about memorable gigs and unforgettable comrades from throughout his fabled career, and waxed enthusiastic about his new album with The 4th Dimension, *Now Here This* (Abstract Logix).

DownBeat: Looking back, 1969 must have been an incredible year for you. First, you record your debut album, *Extrapolation*, in London in January. A month later, you're living in the States and recording *In A Silent Way* with Miles Davis. In March, you're jamming with Jimi Hendrix at The Record Plant. Then in May, you record *Emergency!* with Tony Williams Lifetime. Then in succession you play on Davis' *Bitches Brew* (Aug. 19 and 21), Wayne Shorter's *Super Nova* (Aug. 29), Miroslav Vitous' *Infinite Search* (Oct. 9 and 10) and Miles' *Big Fun* (Nov. 19 and 28). That's a dizzying array of activity.

John McLaughlin: You're right about

that year. It was intense, but just how I'd imagined New York would be. As an unknown British musician coming to the capital of the world, I was in a situation that was do or die, and I didn't want to die! I'd already started meditating and practicing yoga before I arrived in New York, and more than likely I would've been a nervous wreck without it. But I had done a lot of session work before I came over to the States. I played on stuff with Tom Jones, Engelbert Humperdinck, Petula Clark, David Bowie. I even played on "Winchester Cathedral," which was a big hit in England and the States. This was back in the days when all records were made with everyone together in the studio, including the "stars," and you had to be able to read anything and play it on the spot. I played with the Ray Ellington Quartet, which had the hardest guitar book in the world. I grew up listening to Ray Ellington because his band used to play on a popular BBC radio show in the '50s called "The Goon Show." So gigging with Ray Ellington and doing all that session work was great experience for me.

That said, it was small preparation for playing with Miles and Lifetime. They both must have known, Miles and Tony, just how much I revered them both, and I guess that helped the vibe. When my plane landed in the snow in New York back in January '69, I could have kissed the hallowed ground! That's what it was like for a European jazz musician back then.

The year 2012 marked the 40th anniversary of your John Coltrane-inspired album *Love, Devotion, Surrender*, recorded with Carlos Santana.

Carlos and I go back to '71, when we got to know each other. We started hanging out and playing in '72. We got together at the Montreux Jazz Festival last year, so it was actually the 39th anniversary of playing together. Dennis Chambers was there, of course, and Cindy [Blackman Santana] was there as well, so we had two drummers on a couple of tunes, which made for a nice drum rumble going on. Carlos is so easy to play with because I know him so well, and he knows me so well. We did a lot of tunes from *Love, Devotion, Surrender*, we did some blues, we did a couple of acoustic pieces, just him and me, and of course "A Love Supreme." We also played the Pharoah Sanders tune "The Creator Has A Master Plan," which was really nice. With Carlos, it seems that whenever we start playing together again, the time in between disappears. It's a nice feeling and a powerful element. I just wrote to him and said, "How about we get together down here sometime for some recording?" And I played with Cindy at Montreux again this year. I go there every year, whether I'm scheduled to play or not, because there's always a jam session happening. So this year Cindy was there with ... guess who? Jack Bruce!

With the band Spectrum Road?

Yeah, and I was like, "Hey, I wanna play!" So I went up and jammed with Cindy and Jack, and Vernon Reid playing guitar and John Medeski playing Hammond organ. We played all that Tony [Williams] music, man. Talk about a walk down memory lane!

When was the last time you had played with Jack Bruce?

It must have been the late '70s or early '80s, when he joined Billy Cobham and me for a European tour. Jack and I go back to the mid-'60s, when there were basically two clubs in London: The Flamingo was more r&b/soul, while the 100 Club was more blues. There was always a lot of activity between the two clubs, especially with Alexis Korner around. He was a blues man but loved to have jazz players in his band, too. At some point, every musician in London must have played with Alexis. John Mayall & The Bluesbreakers were also around, and that's when I met Eric Clapton.

Jack played only upright bass then. At that time, it'd be unthinkable for him to play bass guitar. Graham Bond was another personality around, and we all were jamming together off and on. When Graham formed a quartet with Ginger [Baker] and Jack, he invited me in, which was when I quit Georgie Fame's band. Playing with Graham, Jack and Ginger was really special. They were real jazz players who, like me, were playing r&b to survive.

You had another reunion at Montreux a couple years back with Billy Cobham.

Oh, that was far out! As I said, I'm there every year because my family and I are really into hiking and biking, and there are beauti-

ful mountains there. A couple of years back, we were on the other side of [Lake Geneva] on bikes, when I got a call from [Montreux Jazz Festival founder] Claude [Nobs]. He said, "You want to play tonight?" I said, "Sure, but I don't have a guitar with me." And he said, "Oh, I've got plenty of guitars." When I asked him what was up, he said, "I've got Roxy Music playing tonight and the band that's supposed to open up got stuck in Montreal. The plane broke down. So I'm going to call Billy," who lives in Bern, about an hour from Montreux. I told Claude, "Yeah, let's do it." So me and Billy got together, did the fastest sound

check you ever heard, and played for about 40 minutes, just guitar and drums. It was terrific.

Were you improvising or playing Mahavishnu tunes?

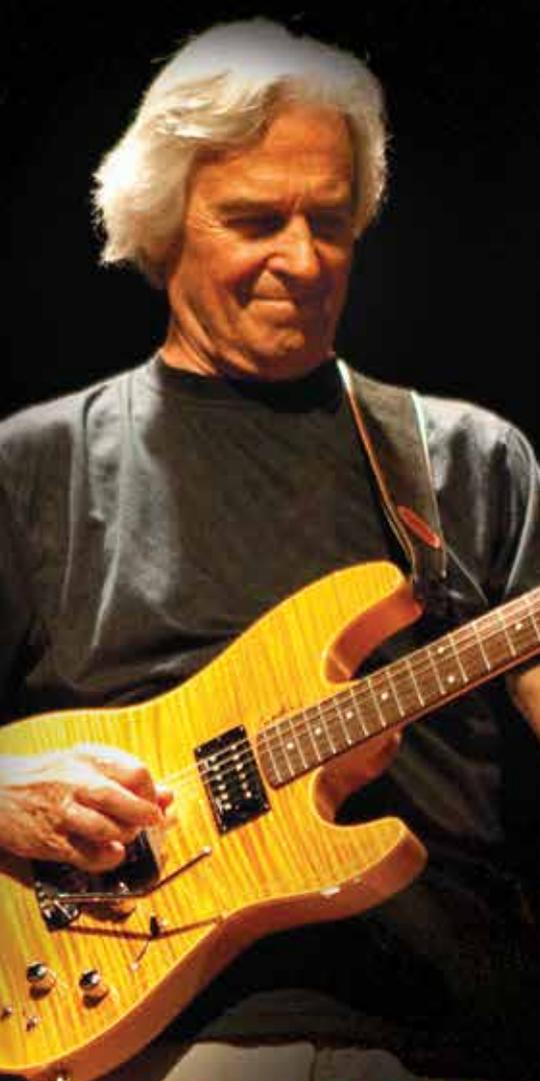
We did a lot of the old tunes. We did "You Know You Know," and we did a variation on "Dance Of Maya." There's a lot of nostalgia in those notes, man. We did some spontaneous stuff right off the bat. Billy's always up for that. You know, that tune from *Jack Johnson* came from a spontaneous jam like that ["Right Off"]. I started this little shuffle and before you know it, Billy's

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**JOHN
MCLAUGHLIN**



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hitting it, and Michael Henderson joins in, and that was it. Miles was in the control room, and he heard what we were doing. So he grabbed his horn and came running into the studio, and it just took off. You start to play spontaneously like that and Billy's all-in. It was so nice to kind of touch base with him again in a musical way. It's funny because I've gotten a few ... very financially interesting offers to put the original Mahavishnu

back together. But I hit 70 in January [2012], and Billy's 69, [keyboardist] Jan [Hammer] is 68, [violinist] Jerry [Goodman] has gotta be 68 and [bassist] Rick [Laird] is 71. And the sight of these old fogeys going onstage and playing that music? I just couldn't see it. Can you *imagine*? I really tried to put it back together in the '80s, about 10 or 15 years after the breakup. But there were strange vibes from Jan. I couldn't even get



The 4th Dimension: Gary Husband (from left) with Ranjit Barot, John McLaughlin and Etienne Mbappé

The Ideal Leader

Gary Husband, who plays piano, synthesizers and drums on *Now Here This* (Abstract Logix), talked about collaborating with guitarist John McLaughlin:

John is the most inspirational leader I've ever had the opportunity to work for. He is the ideal leader, and he embodies the Miles Davis greatness: the intuition, the wisdom and that whole kind of genius.

I recall an occasion while recording *To The One*, a 2010 album on which I also play drums for the last two tracks. The title track had been introduced to me via a demo recording featuring a regular, gentle and steady drumbeat. When we set about recording it, however, John heard a completely different approach, which I was having trouble comprehending—one that involved a constant improvisational flow, modulating and morphing rhythmic variations and interjections all through the piece. It wasn't until John took prime position in front of my drums and proceeded to “conduct” me—in very elaborate, unusual ways—that I achieved my first pass at it. We only did it once. Then I wandered into the control room for a listen, not convinced I'd done anything coherent that would add much value to the piece.

When the playback started, I felt a shock as I slowly realized what a journey the piece suddenly was and how it was transformed by this approach on the drums. I flippantly commented, “John, you just did a ‘Miles’ on me!” He responded with something modest like, “Yeah, sure!” But John really did, because that experience mirrors so closely his famous story about the *In A Silent Way* sessions, where Miles is quoted as instructing John to play the guitar “like he doesn't know how to play it.” Marvelous!

Now we have the new album *Now Here This*, which is basically a “live in the studio” recording. John has a way to test your limits but simultaneously free you up completely. His playing is just as intense, probing and electrifying as it's ever been. It was incredible to witness John just going for it—jumping off cliffs in the music. All the members of The 4th Dimension band admire him so much that we are ready to do whatever is necessary to make that music as great as it can be.

—Bill Milkowski

in contact with him; so that just fell apart. The place that band occupies in the history of jazz-rock is so special. In a way, I feel like it would be spoiling the reputation of the original band. I don't want to go out there just for money. It's gotta be a musical thing.

Well, the Rolling Stones are going out yet again. Apparently Mick Jagger still hasn't gotten enough satisfaction from the previous tours.

Yeah, but they've been playing the same stuff since the '60s ... out of tune and out of time. Sorry. Chick's been out in recent years with Return To Forever, and the Eagles are reuniting for a tour. So you have these reunion things, and they are popular. But I just didn't see it for us. Maybe because I still didn't have any kind of connection with Jan. I've seen him over the years, and he wouldn't even give me the time of day. That's the silliest shit I ever saw. So a Mahavishnu Orchestra reunion? For what? The fact that we ended in controversy and in not a nice way was unfortunate. Of all the groups that I've been in, this is the one that didn't end well. I probably will regret that to the end of my days. But what to do? You gotta go with what you feel.

Meanwhile, you must feel very good about The 4th Dimension and your incredibly hard-hitting new album, *Now Here This*.

I never intend at any point to make a record, but the music comes, and then it's time to record. So here we are with another album. And I love it! We're doing things we never did with Mahavishnu. But it's 40 years later. Hopefully I've improved a little since then. I'm working on it every day. That band was amazing, especially in the early '70s.

But we've got a different thing going with this band. I don't even want to compare the two. It's true [that] there's a certain kind of electric energy with The 4th Dimension band, and there's even a tune called "Echos From Then" that is right up Mahavishnu's street. That's why I gave it that title, because when it came out of my mind, I said, "Wait a minute, this is Mahavishnu deluxe!"

I thought I detected an allusion to "Dance Of Maya" in "Echos From Then."

Oh yeah! I mean, how am I gonna escape that? That's part of my personal history. Or maybe it's making a resurgence in my mind. Because I don't try to stop anything. Basically, I try to get out of the way when I hear musical ideas coming. I don't want to contaminate them. I really try to let the music be the way it wants to be. And that's the way it came out.

The 4th Dimension has been together longer now than the original Mahavishnu Orchestra.

I started [this] band ... even before I did *Thieves And Poets*, which was 2003. It all started when I got an invitation from the French

Cultural Association in La Reunion, an island near Madagascar. They said, "We'd love you to come down and do a couple of concerts with any band that you want." I had been thinking about this formation for several months prior to this invitation. So I went down with Gary Husband, drummer Mark Mondesir and his brother Michael on bass. It didn't work out with Michael so much, but Mark and Gary stayed in the band for a while. But after these gigs, I had commitments with Universal Records, the major one being the symphonic orchestra with acoustic guitar [*Thieves And Poets*]. That was a big

work, that whole album. After that ... it must've been about two years later, I did *Industrial Zen*, and both Gary and Mark are playing some very strong stuff on that one. Gary is a monster: He's such a great drummer but he can play anything on the keyboard. I know I can write anything and he'll get it. Basically, if I can play it, he can play it. Every unison line I write for him he nails very quickly. After *Industrial Zen*, I decided to put this band together and try to work it out in a more permanent way. That's when Hadrien Feraud came in on bass. He had played on two tracks on *Industrial Zen* and joined the band

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on tour in 2008. After Hadrien, Dominique Di Piazza came in for a short spell, and then he took off. So I called Etienne Mbappé. He and I go back a long time: 10 to 12 years. I saw him [playing] with Joe Zawinul, and he was killing with his little black gloves. But at that time he was beholden to Joe, plus he actually has his own band. So I had to wait a few years before I could get him in the band. Mark Mondesir left us about two-and-a-half years ago, and Ranjit's been our drummer ever since. Ranjit played on some tracks on the *Floating Point* album. And since he came in, the band just took off. Ranjit was like the top stone of the pyramid.

You look incredibly fit for your age. It's hard to believe that you're a septuagenarian now.

In my mind, I'm still 29. But I do feel the machine getting a little older. I don't feel any age, really, except when the arthritis hits [laughs] ... and those aches and pains come in. But I make an effort to stay fit. I bike, I swim, I play pingpong, I play tennis, I do meditation, I do yoga. If I didn't, I would probably be dead by now. To play music, you gotta be a little bit in shape; you need some strength. It's not really athletic, but it is physically demanding. I don't know how many more years I've got ahead of me, but whatever happens, I've never felt better than I feel right now.

I understand there's a new Shakti album on the horizon.

Yeah, we did two tours, about six dates in India earlier this year and four dates in Russia in June. And that band never sounded better. That's another band that fits like a nice glove. We can sit down and play together and it just works, especially with Zakir [Hussain]. We've been friends for 43 years, we've been playing together 41 years, and he still amazes me every time he plays. He's phenomenal. But all of them are amazing: Shankar Mahadevan, [U.] Shrinivas, [V.] Selvaganesh ... what a gang! A gang of hooligans—that's what they are! And we haven't done a studio album in ... man, I've lost count of the years.

You guys have such a conversational quality together.

Well, that's what happens. Conversations happen on stage. What are we actually saying when we go up on stage? The only thing we can talk about is our own life, isn't it? About the kind of relationship we have with our own instrument, with the people around us, with the people on stage, even the world at large. Sometimes you go on stage and you're in a funny kind of mood, and the conversation is off. It happens. But I'm so lucky to be playing with these guys. They are so on top of it. It's wonderful.

Do you refer to this band as "Shakti" or "Remember Shakti"?

Remember Shakti will always be Shakti to me. The band never refers to the name "Remember." However, in 1997 when Zakir and I tried to reform the original group, we could never find L. Shankar [the violinist from the original group]. He became somewhat strange towards us over the years in the sense that he never wrote or called. Apparently, he calls himself "Shenker" now, but no one can figure out why. In any event, after the brief appearance of flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia and the first recording [1997's *Remember Shakti*], mandolinist Shrinivas and Selvaganesh joined Zakir and me to form a more permanent band.

It was felt from a marketing viewpoint [by the record company], and by the years that separated the two formations, that it [should] be known as Remember Shakti. Then in 2000, vocalist Shankar Mahadevan became a member, and it's been like that ever since. So this is the lineup we'll have when we go make a new album in March at Shankar's studio in Mumbai. And then we'll have something to tour with in the fall of 2013. I don't know if we'll get to the States with that, but I'm hoping that things loosen up a bit with homeland security so we can come—you know what I'm sayin'?

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The Bad Plus (from left): drummer Dave King, pianist Ethan Iverson and bassist Reid Anderson

THE BAD PLUS

ARTFULLY DRAWN CHARACTERS

By Geoffrey Himes // Photo by Cameron Wittig

The Bad Plus is often described as a jazz-rock trio, but their recent studio album, *Made Possible* (eOne), is the first to use electric instruments. And even on this disc, the electric elements are so spare—a brief burst of electronic drums here, a splash of synth there—that they amount to little more than subtle flavoring of what is still an acoustic piano-trio record. So what explains the band's jazz-rock reputation?

They have covered some rock tunes, but so has pianist Brad Mehldau, and no one calls him a jazz-rock musician. Perhaps the label comes from drummer Dave King's emphatic thump, which often falls into a 4/4 rock feel before moving on to something else. But the three members of The Bad Plus—King, pianist Ethan Iverson and acoustic bassist Reid Anderson—argue that journalists are hearing an unusual theatricality in their jazz and mistakenly calling that rock.

What the three musicians mean by that is they don't take the usual jazz approach of focusing on a couple of closely related themes and collectively working variations on them. Instead, the three musicians develop sharply contrasting elements that collide and either converge or ricochet in different directions, much like stage characters falling in love or fighting.

Moreover, The Bad Plus creates a series of different settings for these collisions, more like a three-act play than the one-act format of head-solo-solo-solo-head. Nursing beers around a table in the rear of the 2A bar on Manhattan's Lower East Side as they explain this, they seem eager to finish each other's thoughts.

"We've had these contrasting characters since the beginning," says Anderson, tall and lean with a salt-and-pepper beard. "We have avant-garde characters and pop characters. We like things that operate independently but always in relation to one another. These electronic things show up as new, minor characters."

"For those contrasts to work," continues King, bald with a buttoned-up black shirt, "the individual elements have to be very clear. That's very important to this band. Monk worked the same way; he had clarity of melody, clarity of hook, clarity of rhythm. His songs weren't blowing vehicles but something stronger."

"A lot of modern jazz is opaque, hiding where the beat is, what the melody is," claims Iverson, bald with black-frame glasses and a tidy goatee. "Monk made it very clear where the beat was and what the melody was; Duke did the same. Because those elements were so clear, they could tell a story. They could be very theatrical."

You can hear these concepts of clarity and theatricality on a tune such as Iverson's "Sing For A Silver Dollar" from the new album. It begins with King's unaccompanied rock pulse, soon confronted by Iverson's rich, romantic piano chords in half and whole notes. As the pianist introduces the melody, Anderson highlights the points where Iverson's character agrees with King's. The drummer shifts to looser, jazzier playing, and that prompts the other two characters to do the same, but Iverson soon pulls King back to the bashing vs. romanticism dialogue.

Then the whole thing falls silent except for the occasional piano tinkle, cymbal taps and high bass notes. A new character—machine-gun-like electronic drums—enters briefly and exits. This appearance prompts a rumbling acoustic drum solo against the piano's stately processional. Back

and forth the characters argue, with Anderson trying to negotiate some common ground.

"That song begins with a Pink Floyd beat that gets loose with odd meters," Iverson says. "Then there's a rubato tune, and those two characters interact a lot. Then there's that open section, like Bernard Herrmann's score for *Vertigo*, which opened up into an atonal, cascading section and ended in a stark place. We get to that place, and then Reid and Dave talk me down."

"That song contains three very Bad Plus zones," King explains. "We start out with this advanced harmonic cycle, but the drum beat is the anchor. Then it shifts into the B section that sounds rubato but actually has a definite rhythm—a rhythm that can't be written but only spoken." (King scats out the syncopated pulse.)

"That's something we use a lot in this band: rhythms that can only be spoken," King continues. "Part C is a Conlon Nancarrow classical thing—pure minimalist color field—and then we go roaring out. It's plotted like a play, but at the same time, it's very improvised. It wouldn't have the same feel if we knew everything that was going to happen."

"Our music is theatrical in the sense that we have really clear characters," Anderson adds. "Unlike a lot of jazz, where the lead role is dominant, our music involves more ensemble acting."

While many jazz musicians seem allergic to ever doing the same thing twice, The Bad Plus realizes that repetition has always been a robust

device in music, from the oldest religious chants to the latest dance hit. Iverson's chord cycle in "Sing For A Silver Dollar" would not have been such a forceful character if it hadn't been repeated so many times with only minor variations.

"That's another bit of theater we use," says Anderson. "In the scope of all the things we're doing, it's powerful to repeat a phrase. Philip Glass once said, 'Familiarity doesn't breed contempt; it can breed love and comfort and adoration.' That's how we feel, too."

"It's easier to write 16 bars of unrepentive music," Iverson argues, "than it is to write two

bars of music you'd want to hear again and again. Sometimes, when we're working with another jazz musician, and we repeat something twice, he wants to move on. And we say, 'No!'"

The Bad Plus attracted a lot of attention for their versions of songs by ABBA, Nirvana, Blondie and Black Sabbath on the trio's first three studio albums: 2001's *The Bad Plus* on the small Fresh Sound label, 2003's *These Are The Vistas* on Columbia and 2004's *Give*, also on Columbia. These weren't covers of hip acts like Nick Drake; these were versions of hits that dominated the airwaves when King and

Anderson (both 42) were kids in Minnesota.

It was a way of saying that the pop music of their youth was just as valid a ground for instrumental improvisation as the pop music of Louis Armstrong's time or of Miles Davis' time.

"If you're an improviser, it's important to be informed by all the music of your generation," says King. "It's to your disadvantage to ignore it. And not just the music of your youth but also the music of your adulthood. I've experimented with electronics; it's another tool I can use. What made the golden age of jazz so powerful was the way it dealt with the pop music of its time; it wasn't dealing with the pop music of a previous era. When you try to appropriate another generation's art forms, you lose the immediacy and thus the potency."

"The three of us are still open to new things," adds Anderson. "The evolution of music has sped up, just like everything else, and everything is right there in front of you. When I hear a gut-crunching synth sound used in the right context, it speaks to me. How can I ignore the way it makes me feel?"

As the band has matured, it has relied more and more on its own compositions. For 2010's *Never Stop* and the new *Made Possible*, the band members wrote 18 of the 19 pieces. On the latest disc, there's a remarkable variety, as if each track were a different script in a theater festival.

Anderson's "Pound For Pound," for example, contrasts a romantic piano ballad with a relaxed march rhythm. King's "Wolf Out" is built around a nervous, agitated two-bar figure that is repeated at different pitches and with different accents. Iverson's "Reelect That" begins with a brisk, post-bop piano improvisation over equally fast and equally improvised brushwork and bass lines. After a series of solos, however, the piece is transformed into stomping circus music.

"Something I'm proud of is that every song is very different," Iverson declares, "as if each one is a different world. We have all these tunes and ways of playing that are radically different from one another. It can be very extreme the way these various forces interact."

"We've been playing together since 1985—27 years," Anderson says. "As a composer, you know what the other two people are capable of, what information they need. You try to give them the right *amount* of information. You need to insert the key that allows us to be improvisers."

"Not all jazz musicians improvise a lot," Iverson asserts. "The Ahmad Jamal Trio didn't. Everyone loves 'Poinciana,' but they don't improvise on it because it requires all those premeditated elements working together to create the mood that makes it work."

"We embrace the entire spectrum," Anderson adds. "Some of our songs have a lot of improvisation and some have very little, but even they wouldn't be possible if we weren't improvisers. It's like folk music; you can represent it on the page, but that doesn't convey how it feels. At our best, our music-making is like folk music."

No matter how much improvisation is involved in a given piece, the democratic give-



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and-take is essential to The Bad Plus' music. You can hear this when the trio moves from the 2A to the nearby Mercury Lounge on Houston Street. It's a boxy rock club with exposed brick walls and a concrete floor without tables or chairs. The floor is packed shoulder-to-shoulder with bodies; it's Sept. 25, the day of the album's release, and the trio focuses on the new material.

Iverson, now in a suit and tie, tells the crowd that "Reelect That" is not "explicitly political." "I reelected my toothpaste this morning," he says. "It's a liberal toothpaste, true, but it's all about choosing the good things in life. The push and pull between the major and minor keys represent the two political parties, while the shifting tonal centers represent the undecided middle. But everyone already knew that, right?"

All the songs are stretched out from their studio versions. Anderson's "In Stitches" is expanded as King's murmuring mallets and Iverson's widely separated piano chords establish an eerie quiet in the club. The attentive crowd provides the sonic space for the players to gradually build the music into a climax of 16th notes before subsiding and building all over again. As they do so, it's impossible to tell who's leading and who's following onstage.

There was a period in the late '90s when Anderson was the bassist on three albums by the Ethan Iverson Trio, while Iverson was the pianist on two albums by the Reid Anderson Quartet. That had been standard operating procedure in the jazz world for decades—to create a combo under a leader's name.

But Anderson's junior-high-school pal King still had one foot in the rock 'n' roll world, and he suggested the three of them should be in a leaderless group with a band name, like the Beatles or Led Zeppelin—or Weather Report. When they formed The Bad Plus in 2000, Anderson was no longer playing in Iverson's band and Iverson was no longer playing in Anderson's band; they all *owned* the band, and that made all the difference in the world.

"The democratic give-and-take of the music is so important to me now," says Iverson, "that I wouldn't make music any other way. It's now inconceivable for me to make a trio record without all three names on the cover. It's hard to see me ever putting out another Ethan Iverson record. That shit is so 20th century, man."

"You have to break down the concept of soloist and accompanist," Anderson adds. "That's not the only way to play jazz. When someone else in the band makes a musical statement, you have to love what he just did. Then you have an array of choices: You can do nothing, you can echo it, or you can go completely against it."

The Bad Plus had plenty of role models for the concept of the democratic jazz combo; two of the most important were drummer Paul Motian (1931–2011) and saxophonist Ornette Coleman. It's significant that the one non-original tune on the new album is Motian's "Victoria."

"I had played that tune with Paul at the [Village] Vanguard," Iverson recalls. "It was a

THE GOOD AXES OF THE BAD PLUS

It's not surprising that The Bad Plus' Dave King uses Zildjian cymbals and Vic Firth sticks; lots of drummers use them. What is surprising is that he uses Ellis Drums, from a shop in Minneapolis. He keeps one kit in New York and another in Minnesota. He used the Midwest kit to record his new solo album, *I've Been Ringing You* (Sunnyside).

"I like the support of a small drum company," King says, "especially one in my own hometown. I like that one guy makes all the drums at Ellis. I like that I know him personally."

In the studio, Reid Anderson plays his Juzek bass, made in the 1930s in Czechoslovakia, but he doesn't tour with it. "Logistically, it's a nightmare to travel with a double bass," he laments, "so I use rentals from the promoters. As long as it's a playable instrument, I'm fine. I don't have a fetish about my instrument."

Anderson recently bought an electric bass, a 1973 Fender Precision bass, to play in the new trio Golden Valley Is Now with King and keyboardist Craig Taborn.

Ethan Iverson prefers to play a Steinway whenever possible. Unless they're really out of shape, he claims, they each have a strong personality. By contrast, he asserts, assembly-line pianos like Yamahas and Kawais are very good, but they can be kind of anonymous.

"I've never really used an electric keyboard in my whole life," he says. "I've tried them a couple times, but I've never used them on an actual gig. Last year we showed up for a show and all they had was an electric keyboard, so we cancelled the gig."

"There are two reasons for this. I never practice on electric keyboards, so I'm not very good at them. I have too much respect for people like Craig Taborn and Django Bates—people in the Joe Zawinul tradition who are really good at keyboards. Also, I feel I have to stick up for acoustic piano. Someone has to say that the piano still has a place in jazz and popular music. Someone has to say that clubs should still have a real piano on hand. I might as well be that person." —Geoffrey Himes

dirge, which seemed to fit. He was one of the most present drummers in jazz history; he always made himself felt. And he brought out the democratic ethos in other musicians; he wouldn't be interested in playing with anybody who wasn't as in the moment as he was."

"Ornette is one of those Stravinskys," Anderson adds. "There are so many examples of jazz musicians covering Ornette's music by playing the head and then improvising on the blues, and that's so *not* what it's about. His music is so singable."

"I used to ask myself, 'If there's a piano solo in a trio, would it be acceptable for me to wait on a floor tom?'" King says. "In Ornette's music, I heard the idea that everyone is throwing down without being polite or rational all the time. That's what we aim for."

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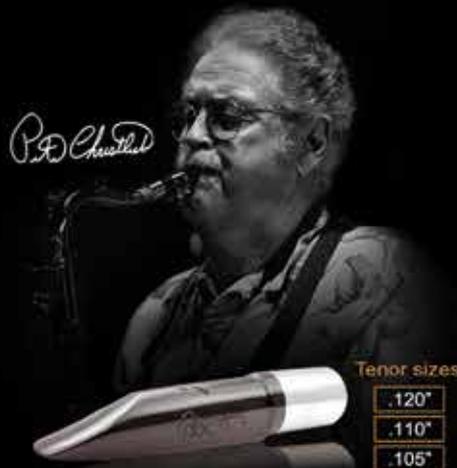
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PETE
CHRISTLIEB

Whip the TIME Around

By Josef Woodard / Photo by Christopher Voelker

For those in the know about all things saxophonic, the name Pete Christlieb registers mightily. He is one of the finest tenor players of the past half-century, but one who remains underappreciated, partly because he is based in Los Angeles.

Christlieb—a veteran of big bands, recording sessions and studio work for TV and film—has a penchant for bringing clarity of vision, technical command and adventurous musicality whenever he goes to work. He burns in bebop mode and waxes gorgeous on ballads.

The saxophonist's 50-year career has included gigs that afforded him uncommonly broad, general public access. One of these, his job in the house band for "The Tonight Show," lasted 20 years. As the late-night talk show was beamed into millions of living rooms five nights a week, it was often Christlieb whose tenor solos would take the show into commercial breaks. Another stellar item on the Christlieb resume is his sax solo on Steely Dan's 1977 classic "Deacon Blues." Although his part was recorded in less than two hours, it has become one of the best-known sax solos in pop music history.

Christlieb also has stepped out to make albums as a leader, often for his own Bosco label (an artist-run label founded before the era when it was commonplace). It began with the impressive *Self Portrait* in 1980, and includes his ambitious 1999 record *For Heaven's Sake* and the fine 2011 CD *High On You*. The latter was recorded by the new elevenet dubbed (with typical Christlieb wit) Tall & Small—a reference to the decidedly tall saxophonist and his wife Linda Small, a fine trombonist and business ally in the art of self-reliant music-making.

One steady collaborator is bassist Jim Hughart, who began working with the saxophonist in the early '70s and has been on most of Christlieb's albums, sometimes doubling as engineer. "I recognized that Pete was one of the best—if not the best—bebop tenor saxophone players I'd ever heard," Hughart says of his first dealings with the young Christlieb. "Pete's a

natural. If he never had a lesson in his life, he'd still be playing better than everybody else."

On a sunny October day, Christlieb and Small sit down for an interview at a restaurant on Stearns Wharf, overlooking the idyllic Santa Barbara harbor. It's the ideal setting for a jazz great out of Southern California, on the other side of the continent from the thrum of Gotham.

High On You features smart charts by Bill Holman, in whose big band Christlieb has long been a member. The program includes Duke Ellington's "Don't You Know I Care"; Sonny Rollins' "Pent-Up House"; a couple of tunes by the beloved Bob Brookmeyer; Holman's own blues, "Bosco Sez"; and the more complexly plotted "Without A Paddle." All in all, it makes a strong statement for a promising band.

Clearly, something fresh is in the works here, and Christlieb seems to have a new zest for the not-necessarily-profitable pursuit of a new jazz band, and more than just a combo. As he says, "For many years, I've been playing in a band in Washington, which belonged to Bill Ramsay and Milt Kleeb: the Ramsay/Kleeb 10-Piece Big Band. They were able to give me some music to get started. That's one of the reasons I wanted to do this. The combination worked very well. You've got trombone, trumpet, four saxes ... actually, we've got five, because I'm standing in front."

Small interjects, with a grin, "It actually was my idea to start a band. He had been playing with Ramsay/Kleeb up in the Northwest, and I said, 'Why don't we do that down here?' He said, 'Well, I don't need to. I've got that going up there.' I said, 'Wait a second. I want to be in the band.' 'Oh, OK.' It didn't occur to him at first that I wanted to play in this band. *Hello!*"

In this group, Christlieb points out, "You've

got 10 voices. That's a hell of a chord. Most of the time, you're trying to preserve the economy and make room for some big sound by sneaking up to it with the arrangements. You don't want to give all the marbles away in the first bar, right? Where's the shout chorus?"

Christlieb, who was born in 1945, followed dutifully in the family business. His father was the respected bassoonist Don Christlieb, a first-call musician in film sessions but also heavily involved in the classical music scene. He was one of the parties, in fact, who helped convince Igor Stravinsky to move to Los Angeles late in his life, and in 1939 helped launch the influential contemporary music-minded "Monday Evening Concerts" series in town.

Stravinsky was often a guest at the Christlieb house, and Pete remembers a fateful rehearsal there for Stravinsky's *L'Histoire Du Soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*), which piqued his interest. As he recalls, "There was violin in it, and I happened to be sitting next to the violin player. I said, 'Oh, I think I'd like to try that.' I was about 7. Then a violin appeared. I played it until I was 12 or 13."

Christlieb the Younger's conversion to the jazz cause began, he reports, "because someone left a Gerry Mulligan record in the house. I listened to that and said, 'Man, that sure beats Vivaldi played over and over again. They sound like they're having a good time. I want to do that.' Mom and Dad were like, 'Maybe it's a rash and it will go away.' I started buying Mulligan records with Zoot Sims on them. And then there was Al Cohn. Same approach, but a totally different flavor, and all of it is good.

"It's just like Warne Marsh," he adds, bringing up his comrade in tenor madness, with whom he collaborated on the 1978 album *Apogee*, in



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addition to other indie albums. "Those records we made together were very unique. He had his own thing and I had my own thing. He was over here and I was over there, but we found a way to work together [and] to communicate."

Christlieb fell deeply into the big band world, starting out as a teenager hitting the road with Woody Herman and continuing with Si Zentner and Louie Bellson, among others. "It wasn't by all-out choice that I ended up playing in big bands," he says. "That's just the way it worked out. The reason I wanted to play jazz is because I wanted to improvise. The feeling of being able to make up your own music as you're going along is wonderful. It's total freedom."

In 1970, Christlieb landed one of the greatest "day jobs" in jazz history, in Doc Severinsen's "The Tonight Show" band. "You go to work at 3 in the afternoon, you rehearse the stuff, you come back at 5:15 and do the show from 5:30 to 6:30, and you're out of there," he recalls. "You make a couple of hundred bucks and you're done. Then you go out and do other things at night. I played at Donte's or something, with Louie Bellson's band or whoever. There were so many bands playing in those days. So I had a steady job."

He looks back with awe and fondness for his years on "The Tonight Show"—an era that was a last stand for big band music on network television on a regular basis. "We were lucky enough to actually be working with an element that afforded us the opportunity to play jazz every night, and Johnny [Carson] was the boss. He loved that band. Johnny wouldn't let anybody replace us with clichéd, mindless, thoughtless music. He had taste. We would have the greatest violinist this week, and then we would have Sonny Rollins and Pavarotti."

Partly as a result of the exposure he got from being on "The Tonight Show," Christlieb fell into the fertile '70s era of session work in Los Angeles. He appreciated the work, even when the day gigging was less than inspiring. He once said that when a producer for a pop record called on him to take a solo, it often meant "playing the melody with a little bit of hair on it."

It was a very different story the night that Steely Dan's Donald Fagen and Walter Becker called, looking for a saxophonist to take flight in a more personal and jazz-colored way.

He retells the "Deacon Blues" story yet again: "It was a 'Tonight Show' day. It was 6:30 and I'm done, and get a call: 'Please come down to the studio. We have something we'd like you to play on.' I didn't know who these guys were.

"So I walked in there and they said, 'We'll play it for you first.' I'm hearing, 'I'll learn to work the saxophone/ I'll play just what I feel/ Drink Scotch whisky all night long/ And die behind the wheel.' I'm thinking, 'Son of a bitch, it's my life story. They're not talking about me, are they? No—don't be silly.' So I go into the studio and the track is rolling. [Christlieb pauses to sing some muffled riffs.] They say, 'Now, you play here.' [He sings some more.] Pretty soon, it was over and they said, 'Thank you.' And I was

out of there. One take. It might have been a little over here and a little over there, but basically, I wasn't in there hammering away. I have worked in situations where you have to be brilliant 66 times in a row."

What could have been a major-label, career-boosting moment—when Fagen and Becker used their clout to produce *Apogee* for Christlieb—turned sour in his mind. He feels that their control-heavy approach robbed the album of what originally had been a fresh, spontaneous spirit.

"It was one of those things where somebody else had another idea of what we were supposed to be doing, and trying their darndest to enforce that," he says. "The next album I did was the 'screw you' album. I was tired of people telling me what to do. I thought, 'I'm gonna start my own shit, and do it.' So I did, with *Self Portrait*."

Christlieb has followed his own path ever since. And he still feels just as excited about jazz as he did when he was a teenager: "Can you imagine what it was like for us in the '50s, driving down the street with the radio on? And on comes 'Milestones.' For solos, Miles comes on and then there's Cannonball. He just nails it. Our heads are turning around, like bobbleheads. And then Coltrane comes on, which was so different and wonderful in its raw, original form.

"[Coltrane's] '50/'60s period—up through *Blue Trane* and *Soultrane* and *Giant Steps* and some other things—meant so much more to me than the final years, when he would just go out and play one tune for three hours. This guy would bash the drums until everybody, including himself, was bloody and deaf. It made no sense to me at all. Everybody was saying, 'Oh, isn't that hip?' But I'm saying, 'I can't hear the goddamn saxophone. Tell that guy to shut up. Take the sticks away from him.' 'But he's Elvin Jones.'"

Christlieb's preferences on Coltrane's work confirm his more straightahead musical attitude. "I like to hear them go through the changes," he says, "and the position he would be in to whip the time around. To me, it's a romance, playing jazz. The people I've always loved have had the flexibility to whip the time around within the time. So an influence might be a great drummer who could put an emphasis in a different place—to make the time do this or make the time do that."

Lately, Christlieb has been venturing into partnerships and endorsement deals. "I have several people who I work for," he explains. "It's kind of a luxury to have a sponsorship. Cannonball is one. They're sending me a new horn. I just finished a development period of a year or so with Drake Mouthpieces. He has put out a Pete Christlieb mouthpiece, which is just now coming out on the market. Those things are exciting. They provide a little revenue."

Small adds, grinning, "So we can play more jazz gigs."

Does it feel to Christlieb as though he is in a new phase in his life and career?

"Definitely," he says. "I'm in a new life. We have a band. We're on a mission to make music, and that's a challenge."

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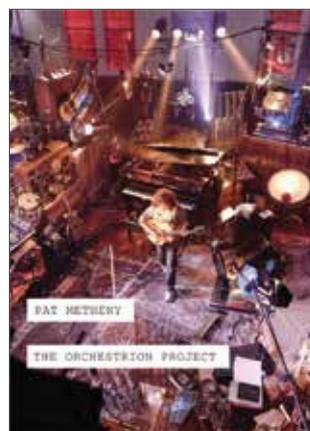
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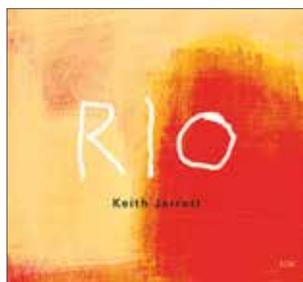
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Pat Metheny
The Orchestration Project (DVD)
Eagle Eye

DECEMBER

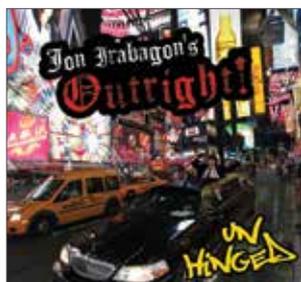
This 110-minute video reveals mad scientist Metheny in his “orchestration lab,” surrounded by a strange collection of acoustic and acoustoelectric instruments that the guitarist mechanically controls using solenoids and pneumatics. Shot in November 2010 (the year Metheny’s *Orchestration* CD was released) at a church in Brooklyn, the film is a spooky yet fascinating sight.



Keith Jarrett
Rio
ECM

FEBRUARY

This two-disc set features 90 minutes of solo-piano music recorded live in Rio de Janeiro in April 2011. Pastel harmonies, svelte harmonic changeups and rhythmic surprises of Brazilian music flavor this brilliant album. Jarrett practices an impressive economy on this gorgeous collection, and his powers of invention have rarely been as acute.



Jon Irabagon's
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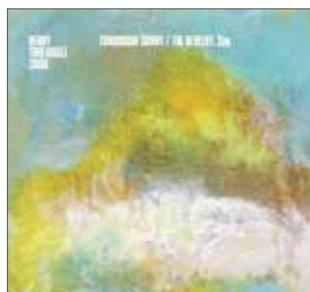
The saxophonist ventures into a tongue-in-cheek hip-hop mentality that’s wry and ostentatious—complete with a 28-member orchestra—yet undeniably smart. *Unhinged* is a comic but impressive outing that teeters between concept blueprint and freewheeling genre drift.



Kat Edmonson
Way Down Low
Spinnerette

JUNE

The sophisticated singer makes her songwriting debut on her sophomore album. Edmonson’s exquisite, rarefied vocals reveal a mesmerizing attention to detail and a willingness to explore vulnerable depths of emotion.



Henry Threadgill
Zoid
Tomorrow Sunny!
The Revelry, Spp

Pi **SEPTEMBER**

With this incarnation of *Zoid*, the uncompromising composer and bandleader has yet again found an ideal vehicle for his ever-evolving ideas regarding interdependence among musicians and thresholds of melodic identity. With Threadgill, the space in between is as important as the sculptural solids of the notes themselves. His flutes have a taciturn grace, while his alto saxophone barks out its passions.



Etta James
Etta James Live At Montreux 1993 (DVD)
Eagle Eye

DECEMBER

This 160-minute DVD is a mind-blowing visual tour de force, focusing primarily on a 1993 concert but also including clips from five others. James’ vocal performance is a mesmerizing melding of sanctified church with rock ‘n’ roll. Each show finds the singer (1938–2012) leading top-notch bands in a series of shows that define what it means to sing the blues.



Marilyn Mazur
Celestial Circle
ECM

MARCH

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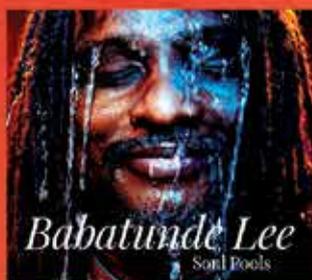


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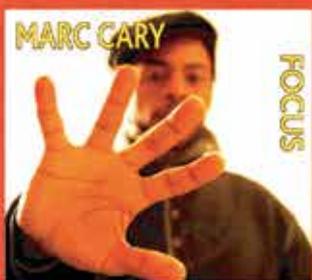
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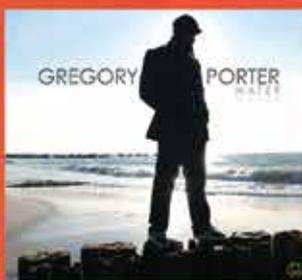
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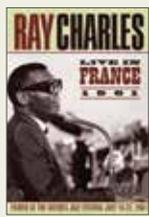
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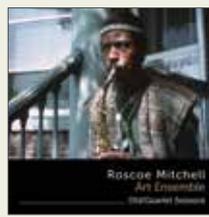
★★★★★ HISTORICAL



Charles, Ray
Live In France 1961
(DVD)
Eagle Rock
FEB.



Hawkins, Coleman
Classic Coleman Hawkins Sessions 1922-1947
Mosaic
OCT.



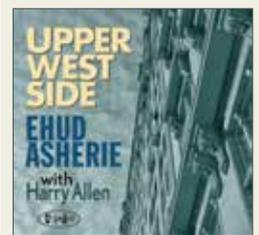
Mitchell, Roscoe - Art Ensemble
Old/Quartet Sessions
Nessa
MARCH



Wolf, Howlin'
Smokestack Lightning: The Complete Chess Masters, 1951-1960
Hip-O Select/Geffen
APRIL

★★★★½ NEW

Andersen, Arild - Scottish National Jazz Orchestra
Celebration
ECM
NOV.



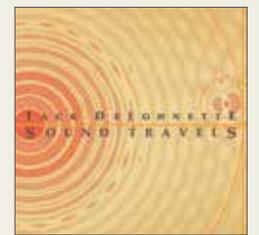
Asherie, Ehud
Upper West Side
Posi-Tone
JUNE

Blake, Ran/ Dominique Eade
Whirlpool
Jazz Project
FEB.

Bragg, Billy/Wilco
Mermaid Avenue: The Complete Sessions
Nonesuch
SEPT.

Carr, Barbara
Keep The Fire Burning
Catfood
OCT.

Cohen, Anat
Claroscuro
Anzic Records
NOV.



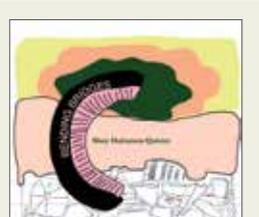
DeJohnette, Jack
Sound Travels
Entertainment One
APRIL

ElSaffar, Amir - Two Rivers Ensemble
Inana
Pi Recordings
JAN.

Floratone
Floratone II
Savoy Jazz
JULY

Fuller, Tia
Angelic Warrior
Mack Avenue
DEC.

Gold, Jon
Bossa Of Possibility
Blujazz
JUNE



Halvorson, Mary - Quintet
Bending Bridges
Firehouse
JULY

Hersch, Fred - Trio
Alive At The Vanguard
Palmetto
NOV.

Ho, Fred
The Music Of Cal Massey: A Tribute
Mutable/Big Red Media
JUNE

Pilc Moutin Hoenig
Threedom
Motéma
JAN.

Irabagon, Jon/Mike Pride/Mick Barr
I Don't Hear Nothin' But The Blues Volume 2: Appalachian Haze
Irabbagast Records
DEC.

Iyer, Vijay - Trio
Accelerando
ACT Music + Vision
APRIL

Lurie, Jessica - Ensemble
Megaphone Heart
Zipa! Music
MAY

McLaughlin, John - The 4th Dimension
Now Here This
Abstract Logix
DEC.

Mehldau, Brad - Trio
Ode
Nonesuch
JULY

Mitchell, Nicole - An Arche New Music Ensemble
Arc Of O, For Improvisers, Chamber Orchestra And Electronics
Rogueart
NOV.

Morgan, Carol
Blue Glass Music
Blue Bamboo
FEB.

Motian, Paul
The Windmills Of Your Mind
Winter & Winter
FEB.

Ortiz, Aruán - The Camerata Urbana Ensemble
Santiarican Blues Suite
Sunnyside
AUG.



Palmer, Jason
Here Today
Steeplechase
MARCH

Perelman, Ivo/Joe Morris/Gerald Cleaver
Family Ties
Leo Records
JULY

Peterson, Ralph
The Duality Perspective
Onyx
OCT.



Porter, Gregory
Be Good
Motéma
APRIL

Return To Forever
The Mothership Returns
Eagle Rock Entertainment
SEPT.

Terry, Yosvany
Today's Opinion
Criss Cross Jazz
AUG.

Rivers, Sam/Dave Holland/Barry Altschul
Reunion: Live In New York
Pi
DEC.



Tigran
A Fable
Verve
MARCH

Sanabria, Bobby - Big Band
Multiverse
Jazzheads
NOV.

São Paulo Underground
Três Cabeças Loucuras
Cuneiform
FEB.

Stylianou, Melissa
Silent Movie
Anzic
JUNE

Talking Cows
Almost Human
Morvin Records
JUNE

Taylor, Otis
Otis Taylor's Contraband
Telarc
APRIL

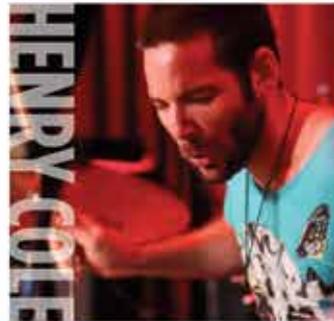
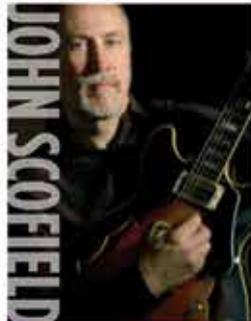
Valera, Manuel
New Cuban Express
Mavo
OCT.

Wolves in the Throne Room
Celestial Lineage
Southern Lord
MARCH

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Wynton Marsalis: The Louis Armstrong Continuum – Music of the Hot Five's and Seven's LIVE at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola*, presented by Jazz at Lincoln Center

Dee Alexander's Funkin' with Electric Soul: A Tribute to Jimi Hendrix and James Brown
at the South Shore Cultural Center, presented by the Jazz Institute of Chicago

Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band presented by the 55th Monterey Jazz Festival

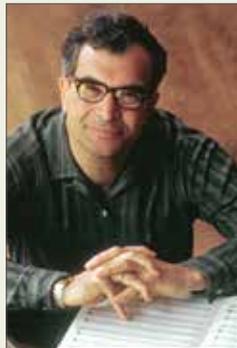
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★★★★½ HISTORICAL



Brubeck, Dave - Quartet
The Columbia Studio Albums Collection: 1955-1966
 Columbia/Legacy **MAY**

Charles, Ray
Singular Genius: The Complete ABC Singles
 Concord **FEB.**

Gerhardt, Charles - National Philharmonic Orchestra
Citizen Kane: The Classic Film Scores Of Bernard Hermann
 Sony Masterworks **JAN.**

Gerhardt, Charles - National Philharmonic Orchestra
Sunset Boulevard: The Classic Film Scores Of Franz Waxman
 Sony Masterworks **JAN.**

Guthrie, Woody
Woody Guthrie At 100: The Woody Guthrie Centennial Collection
 Smithsonian Folkways **SEPT.**

King, Albert
I'll Play The Blues For You
 Stax **OCT.**

Mingus, Charles
The Complete Columbia & RCA Album Collection
 Columbia/Legacy **DEC.**

Oliveros, Pauline
Reverberations: Tape & Electronic Music 1961-1970
 Important **OCT.**

Parker, Charlie
The Quintet: Jazz At Massey Hall
 Original Jazz Classics Remasters **AUG.**

Raksin, David
David Raksin Conducts His Great Film Scores
 Sony Masterworks **JAN.**

Various Artists
Opika Pende: Africa At 78 RPM
 Dust To Digital **APRIL**

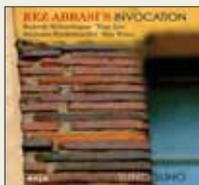
Various Artists
Bambara Mystic Soul: The Raw Sound of Burkina Faso 1974-1979
 Analog Africa **APRIL**

Various Artists
Boddie Recording Company: Cleveland, Ohio
 Numero Group **MAY**

Various Artists
From Straight To Bizarre: Zappa, Beefheart, Alice Cooper And L.A.'s Lunatic Fringe (DVD)
 Sexy Intellectual **DEC.**

Waters, Muddy/ Rolling Stones
Checkerboard Lounge Live In Chicago 1981 (DVD)
 Eagle Rock **DEC.**

★★★★ NEW



Abbasi, Rez - Invocation
Suno Suno
 Enja **MARCH**

Abercrombie, John - Quartet
Within A Song
 ECM **SEPT.**

Abrams, Joshua
Representing
 Eremita **DEC.**

Adasiewicz, Jason - Sun Rooms
Spacer
 Delmark **FEB.**

AIM Toronto Orchestra
The Year Of The Boar
 Barnyard Records **OCT.**

Allen, Harry
Rhythm On The River
 Challenge **APRIL**

Allen, JD - Trio
The Matador And The Bull
 Savant **SEPT.**

Anderson, Clipper
The Road Home
 Origin **JULY**

Anderson, Ray - Pocket Brass Band
Sweet Chicago Suite
 Intuition **SEPT.**

Antibalas
Antibalas
 Daptone **SEPT.**

Antunes, Arnaldo/Edgard Scandurra/Toumani Diabaté
A Curva Da Cintura
 Mais Um Discos **OCT.**

Arnold, Billy Boy
Billy Boy Arnold Sings Big Bill Broonzy
 Electro-Fi **AUG.**



Aslan, Pablo - Quintet
Piazzolla In Brooklyn
 Soundbrush **FEB.**

Avital, Omer
Suite Of The East
 Anzic **AUG.**

Ballister
Mechanisms
 Clean Feed **AUG.**

Barth, Bruce/ Steve Nelson
Three Things Of Beauty
 Savant **SEPT.**

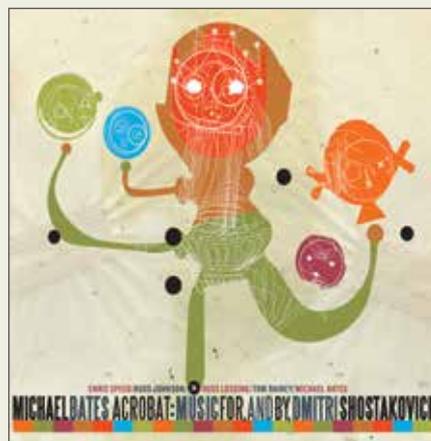


Battaglia, Stefano - Trio
The River Of Anyder
 ECM **MAY**

Berman, Josh - His Gang
There Now
 Delmark **NOV.**

Berne, Tim
Snakeoil
 ECM **APRIL**

Binney, David
Barefooted Town
 Criss Cross Jazz **APRIL**



Bates, Michael
Acrobat: Music For, And By, Dmitri Shostakovich
 Sunnyside **MARCH**

Bisio, Michael/ Matthew Shipp Duo
Floating Ice
 Relative Pitch **DEC.**

Black, Jim - Trio
Somatic
 Winter & Winter **JUNE**

Blake, Dan
The Aquarian Suite
 Bju Records **FEB.**

Blake, Johnathan
The Eleventh Hour
 Sunnyside **MAY**

Breinschmid, Georg
Fire
 Preiser **JULY**

Bro, Jakob
Time
 Loveland **AUG.**

Bromberg, Brian
Compared To That
 Mack Avenue Records **AUG.**

Broom, Bobby
Upper West Side Story
 Origin **AUG.**

Brötzmann, Peter
Solo + Trio Roma
 Victo **NOV.**

Budway, David
A New Kiss
 MaxJazz **MARCH**

Burks, Michael "Iron Man"
Show Of Strength
 Alligator **DEC.**

Butman, Igor - Orchestra
Sheherazade's Tales
 Butman Music **MAY**

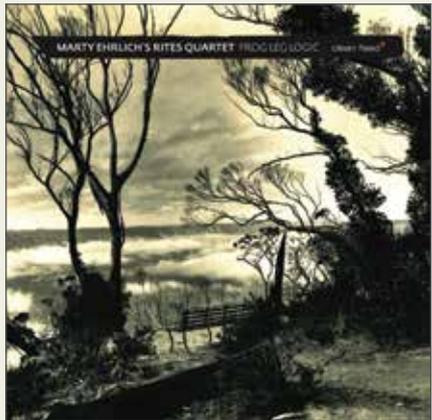
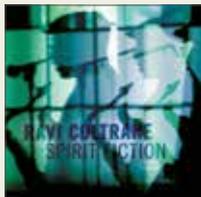


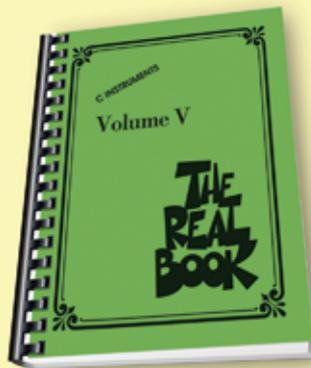
Cherry, Neneh - The Thing
The Cherry Thing
 Smalltown Supersound **OCT.**

Christlieb, Pete/Linda Small
High On You
 Bosco Records **JUNE**

Claire Chase
Terrestre
 New Focus **JUNE**

★★★★★ NEW

<p>Clyne, Anna <i>Blue Moth</i> Tzadik JUNE</p>	<p>Conte, Luis <i>En Casa De Luis</i> BFM Jazz AUG.</p>	<p>Cyrille, Andrew - Haitian <i>Fascination Route De Frères</i> Tum Records JAN.</p>	<p>Di Meola, Al <i>Morocco Fantasia (DVD)</i> Inakustik DEC.</p>	
<p>Cohran, Kelan Philip - The Hypnotic Brass Ensemble <i>Kelan Philip Cohran & The Hypnotic Brass Ensemble</i> Honest Jon's OCT.</p>		<p>Daniels, Eddie/Roger Kellaway <i>Live At The Library Of Congress</i> IPO MARCH</p>	<p>Dirty Three <i>Toward The Low Sun</i> Drag City AUG.</p>	
<p>Colligan, George <i>Living For The City</i> Steeplechase JULY</p>		<p>Corea, Chick/Eddie Gomez/Paul Motian <i>Further Explorations</i> Concord Jazz APRIL</p>	<p>Davis, Jesse - Quintet <i>Live At Smalls</i> smallsLIVE SEPT.</p>	
	<p>Corea, Chick/Gary Burton <i>Hot House</i> Concord Jazz DEC.</p>	<p>Dead Cat Bounce <i>Chance Episodes</i> Cuneiform Records FEB.</p>		
<p>Coltrane, Ravi <i>Spirit Fiction</i> Blue Note AUG.</p>	<p>Coxhill, Lol <i>Instant Replay</i> Nato JAN.</p>		<p>Douglas, Dave <i>Bad Mango</i> Greenleaf Music FEB.</p>	<p>Ehrlich, Marty - Rites Quartet <i>Frog Leg Logic</i> Clean Feed APRIL</p>
<p>Cray, Dan <i>Meridies</i> Origin OCT.</p>	<p>Delbecq, Benoît <i>Crescendo In Duke</i> Nato SEPT.</p>	<p>Douglas, Dave - Quintet <i>Be Still</i> Greenleaf NOV.</p>	<p>Dupree, Cornell <i>I'm Alright</i> Dialtone MARCH</p>	<p>Echoes Of Swing <i>Message From Mars</i> Echoes Of Swing SEPT.</p>
			<p>Earth <i>Angels Of Darkness, Demons Of Light I</i> Southern Lord MARCH</p>	<p>Eisenstadt, Harris <i>Canada Day III</i> Songlines SEPT.</p>



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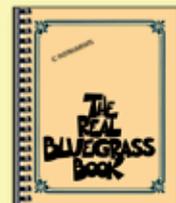
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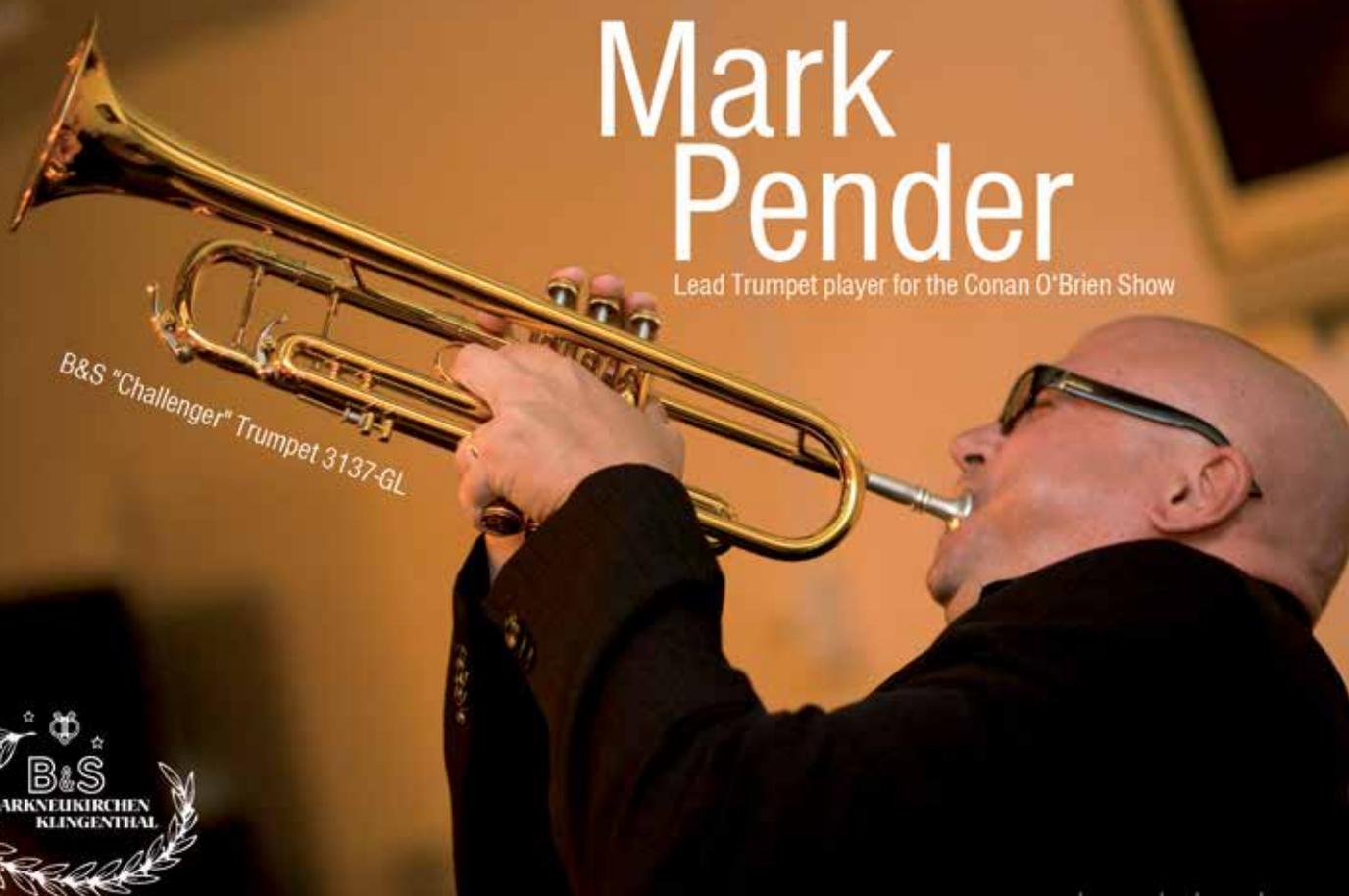
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 <p>Elisha, Ehran/ Roy Campbell <i>Watching Cartoons With Eddie</i> Outnow Recordings APRIL</p>	<p>Fassi, Riccardo - New York Pocket Orchestra <i>Sitting In A Song</i> Alice Records DEC.</p>	<p>Fuller, Curtis <i>Down Home</i> Capri OCT.</p>	<p>Gibbs, Michael - NDR Big Band <i>Back In The Days</i> Cuneiform JUNE</p>	 <p>Hart, Billy <i>All Our Reasons</i> ECM JULY</p>
<p>Flower, Mary <i>Misery Loves Company</i> Yellow Dog FEB.</p>	<p>Fly <i>Year Of The Snake</i> ECM AUG.</p>	 <p>Galper, Hal - Trio <i>Trip The Light Fantastic</i> Origin Records MAY</p>	<p>Giordano, Luca <i>My Kind Of Blues</i> Audacia JUNE</p>	<p>Hawkins, Alexander <i>All There, Ever Out</i> Babel MAY</p>
<p>Ersönmez, Alp <i>Yazısız</i> PMY JAN.</p>	<p>Fresu, Paolo/ Omar Sosa <i>Alma</i> Otá JULY</p>	<p>Gardot, Melody <i>The Absence</i> NOV.</p>	<p>Glawischnig, Hans <i>Jahira</i> Sunnyside APRIL</p>	<p>Gustavsen, Tord - Quartet <i>The Well</i> ECM MAY</p>
<p>Escoffery, Wayne <i>The Only Son Of One</i> Sunnyside AUG.</p>	 <p>Eschrey, John <i>Exception To The Rule</i> Criss Cross FEB.</p>	<p>Gauthier, Jeff - Goatette <i>Open Source</i> Cryptogramophone JAN.</p>	<p>Glover, Savion <i>Fours: Live At The Blue Note (DVD)</i> Half Note DEC.</p>	<p>Guy, Barry <i>Harmos: Live At Schaffhausen (DVD)</i> Intakt DVD JUNE</p>
<p>Escreet, John <i>Exception To The Rule</i> Criss Cross FEB.</p>	<p>Frisell, Bill <i>All We Are Saying...</i> Savoy Jazz JAN.</p>	<p>Gazarek, Sara <i>Blossom & Bee</i> Palmetto NOV.</p>	<p>Goines, Victor <i>Twilight</i> Rosemary Joseph Records OCT.</p>	<p>Halley, Rich - 4 <i>Back From Beyond</i> Pine Eagle NOV.</p>
<p>Evans, Orrin <i>Flip The Script</i> Posi-Tone SEPT.</p>	<p>Germanson, Rick <i>Live At Smalls</i> smallsLIVE SEPT.</p>	<p>Gruntz, George - NDR Big Band <i>Dig My Trane, Coltrane's Vanguard Years (1961-1962)</i> TCB OCT.</p>	<p>Goines, Victor <i>Twilight</i> Rosemary Joseph Records OCT.</p>	<p>Hanslip, Mark/ Javier Carmona <i>Dosados</i> Babel MAY</p>
<p>Evans, Orrin <i>Flip The Script</i> Posi-Tone SEPT.</p>	<p>Germanson, Rick <i>Live At Smalls</i> smallsLIVE SEPT.</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Hosokawa, Toshio <i>Landscapes</i> ECM JUNE</p>
<p>Evans, Orrin <i>Flip The Script</i> Posi-Tone SEPT.</p>	<p>Germanson, Rick <i>Live At Smalls</i> smallsLIVE SEPT.</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Iversen, Anne Mette <i>Poetry Of Earth</i> Brooklyn Jazz Underground AUG.</p>
<p>Evans, Orrin <i>Flip The Script</i> Posi-Tone SEPT.</p>	<p>Germanson, Rick <i>Live At Smalls</i> smallsLIVE SEPT.</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Harrison, Joel - 7 <i>Search</i> Sunnyside JUNE</p>	<p>Jackson, Ali/ Aaron Goldberg/ Omer Avital <i>Yes!</i> Sunnyside MARCH</p>



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★★★★★ NEW

Jackson, Javon
Lucky 13
Solid Jackson
Records DEC.

Jamal, Ahmad
Blue Moon
Jazz Village JUNE

**James, Bob/
Keiko Matsui**
Altair & Vega
eOne Music FEB.

Jarrett, Keith
Sleeper
ECM NOV.



Jazz Soul Seven
*Impressions Of
Curtis Mayfield*
BFM Jazz JULY

**Johnston, Darren -
Gone to Chicago**
The Big Lift
Porto Franco Records JAN.

**Jones, Darius
- Quartet**
Book Of Mæ'bul
AUM Fidelity JUNE

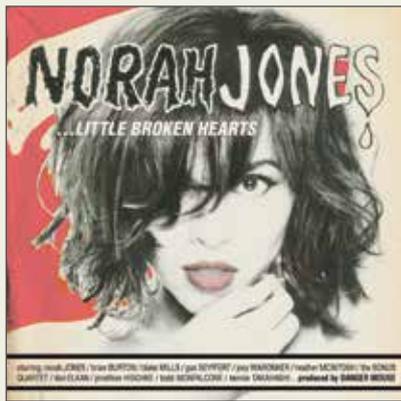
**Jordan, Sheila/
Harvie S**
Yesterdays
High Note DEC.

**Klein, Guillermo -
Los Guachos**
Carrera
Sunnyside AUG.

**Knoxville Jazz
Orchestra**
*Christmas Time
Is Here*
(self-released) DEC.

**Knuffke, Kirk/
Jesse Stacken
- With Kenny
Wollesen**
Like A Tree
Steeplechase AUG.

**Koppel, Aaron
- Quartet**
Multiverse
Chicago Sessions AUG.



Jones, Norah
Little Broken Hearts
Blue Note JULY

Krallice
Diotima
Profound Lore MARCH

Loueke, Lionel
Heritage
Blue Note NOV.

**Kronkvist,
Fredrik**
New York Elements
Connective JUNE

**Loussier,
Jacques - Trio**
*Schumann/
Kinderszenen*
Telarc FEB.

Landrus, Brian
Traverse
BlueLand APRIL

**Lund, Lage
- Four**
Live At Smalls
smallsLIVE OCT.

**Lehman, Steve
- Trio**
Dialect Fluorescent
Pi Recordings JUNE



Lundy, Carmen
Changes
AFP JULY

**Lexer,
Sebastian/
Eddie Prevost/
Seymour Wright**
*Impossibility In Its
Purest Form*
Matchless
Recordings SEPT.



**Lloyd, Charles/
Maria Farantouri**
Athens Concert
ECM JAN.

**Madsen, Peter -
Seven Sins
Ensemble**
Gravity Of Love
Playscape NOV.

**Mallinger, Pat
- Quartet**
*Home On
Richmond*
PJM Jazz MAY

**Lonberg-Holm,
Fred - Fast
Citizens**
Gather
Delmark OCT.

**Marsalis,
Branford
- Quartet**
*Four MFs Playin'
Tunes*
Marsalis Music OCT.

Lossing, Russ
Drum Music
Sunnyside OCT.

Mastodon
The Hunter
Warner Bros. MARCH

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BACKWARD
GLANCES**
SOLO AND QUARTET
ECM

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Mayhew, Virginia - Quartet
Mary Lou Williams - The Next 100 Years
 Renma Recordings **OCT.**

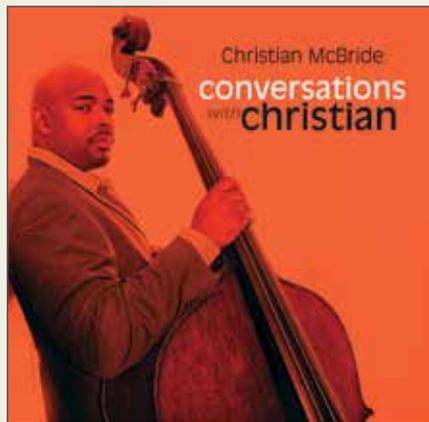


McCartney, Paul
Kisses On The Bottom
 Hear Music/Concord **APRIL**

McCasin, Donny
Casting For Gravity
 Greenleaf **DEC.**

McGarry, Kate
Girl Talk
 Palmetto **SEPT.**

McHenry, Bill
Ghosts Of The Sun
 Sunnyside **FEB.**



McBride, Christian
Conversations With Christian
 Mack Avenue **FEB.**

Mehldau, Brad - Trio
Where Do You Start
 Nonesuch **DEC.**

Metheny, Pat
Unity Band
 Nonesuch **OCT.**

Mintzer, Bob - Big Band
For The Moment
 MCG Jazz **OCT.**

Modirzadeh, Hafez
Post-Chromodal Out!
 Pi **DEC.**

Morris, Joe/William Parker/ Gerald Cleaver
Altitude
 AUM Fidelity **OCT.**

Morrison, James
Snappy Too
 (self-released) **DEC.**



Motian Sickness
The Music Of Paul Motian: For The Love Of Sarah
 Grizzley Music **FEB.**

O'Connell, Bill
Triple Play Plus Three
 Zoho **JAN.**

Odman, Ferit
Autumn In New York
 Equinox **MAY**



Oh, Linda
Initial Here
 Greenleaf Music **JUNE**

Opsvik, Eivind
Overseas IV
 Loyal Label **JULY**

Owens, Jimmy
The Monk Project
 IPO Recordings **APRIL**

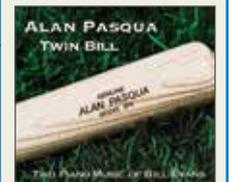
Parker, Evan/ Eddie Prevost/ John Edwards
All Told: Meetings With Remarkable Saxophonists Volume 1
 Matchless Recordings **SEPT.**

Parker, Jeff - Trio
Bright Light In Winter
 Delmark **JUNE**

Parker, William - Orchestra
Essence Of Ellington/Live In Milano
 Centering **DEC.**

Parsons, Alexis
Alexis Parsons
 (self-released) **MARCH**

Partyka Brass
The Day After Christmas
 Mons Records **DEC.**



Pasqua, Alan
Twin Bill: Two Piano Music Of Bill Evans
 BFM Jazz **JAN.**

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Chano Olskaer**
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Gateway Music NOV.



Perdomo, Luis
Universal Mind
RKM JUNE

**Pessi, Giovanna/
Susanna
Wallumrød**
If Grief Could Wait
ECM JULY

**Pozo, Chano/
Dizzy Gillespie**
Chano y Dizzy!
Concord Picante FEB.

Pukl, Jure
Abstract Society
Storyville NOV.

Reed, Eric
The Baddest Monk
Savant JULY

**Reed, Mike -
People, Places &
Things**
*Clean On The
Corner*
482 Music AUG.

Riley, Stephen
Hart-Beat
Steeplechase NOV.

Rishell, Paul
Talking Guitar
Mojo Rodeo JULY



Roney, Wallace
Home
HighNote OCT.

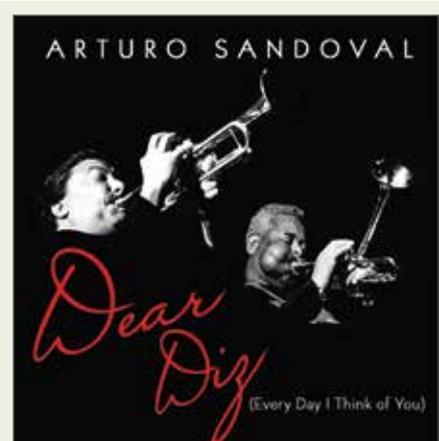
**Rosenberg,
Marlene -
Quartet**
Bassprint
Origin JUNE

**Rubalcaba,
Gonzalo**
XXI Century
5Passion SEPT.



**Rudolph, Adam -
Go: Organic
Orchestra**
*Can You Imagine...
The Sound Of A
Dream*
Meta Records MARCH

**Russell,
Catherine**
Strictly Romancin'
World Village MAY



Sandoval, Arturo
Dear Diz (Every Day I Think Of You)
Concord Jazz AUG.

Sabbagh, Jerome
Plugged In
Bee Jazz JULY

**Schissi, Diego
- Quinteto**
Tongos
Sunnyside OCT.

**Scheinman,
Jenny**
*Mischief &
Mayhem*
(self-released) APRIL

**Schulte, Martin -
NY Quartet**
Pieces Of Astoria
Jazz Haus Musik AUG.

**Sclavus, Louis -
Atlas Trio**
Sources
ECM DEC.

Sertel, Çagri
Newborn
PMY JAN.

**Shelton, Aram
- Quartet**
*Everything For
Somebody*
Singlespeed Music OCT.

Sherman, Mark
The L.A. Sessions
Miles High JULY



**Shipp, Matthew
- Trio**
Elastic Aspects
Thirsty Ear APRIL

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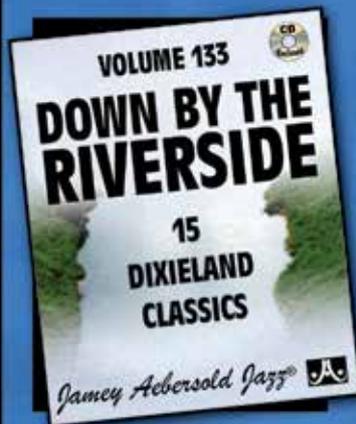
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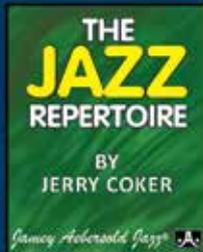


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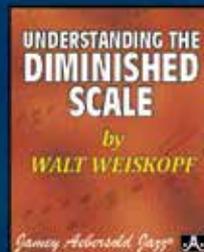
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<p>Sissoko, Ballaké/Vincent Segal <i>Chamber Music</i> Six Degrees FEB.</p>	<p>Stacken, Jesse <i>Bagatelles For Trio</i> Fresh Sound New Talent AUG.</p>	<p>Sultan, Juma - Aboriginal Music Society <i>Father Of Origin</i> Eremita APRIL</p>	<p>Taylor, Ebo <i>Appia Kwa Bridge</i> Strut NOV.</p>	 <p>Thielemans, Toots <i>Yesterday & Today</i> T2 JULY</p>	<p>Ustvolskaya, Galina <i>Composition No. 2 "Dies Irae"</i> Wergo JUNE</p>
<p>Smith, Wadada Leo <i>Ten Freedom Summers</i> Cuneiform OCT.</p>		<p>The Clarinet Trio <i>4</i> Leo Records MAY</p>	<p>Third World Love <i>Songs And Portraits</i> Anzic AUG.</p>		
<p>Smith, Wadada Leo/Louis Moholo-Moholo <i>Ancestors</i> TUM OCT.</p>		<p>The Cookers <i>Believe</i> Motéma SEPT.</p>	<p>Touré, Samba <i>Crocodile Blues</i> Riverboat APRIL</p>	<p>Van Leeuwen, Joep/Gero Körner <i>Jazz Guitar Meets Church Organ</i> Organ Promotion APRIL</p>	
<p>Smulyan, Gary <i>Smul's Paradise</i> Capri APRIL</p>		<p>The Nice Guy Trio <i>Sidewalks And Alleys/Waking Music</i> Porto Franco Records JAN.</p>	<p>Touré, Sidi <i>Koïma</i> Thrill Jockey JUNE</p>	<p>Various Artists <i>African Blues</i> Putumayo JUNE</p>	

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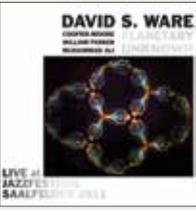


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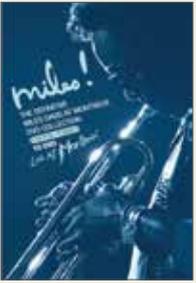
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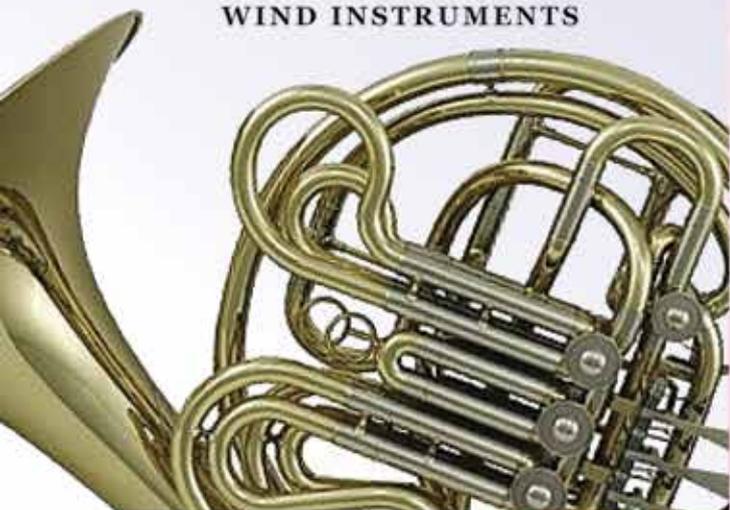
Vincentz, Niels <i>Early Reflections</i> SteepleChase AUG.	Weeds, Cory <i>Up A Step</i> Cellar Live NOV.	Williams, Jeff <i>Another Time</i> Whirlwind Recordings MARCH	Wilson, Matt - Arts & Crafts <i>An Attitude For Gratitude</i> Palmetto APRIL
 Ware, David S. - Planetary Unknown <i>Live At Jazzfestival Saalfelden 2011</i> AUM Fidelity OCT.	Werner, Kenny <i>Me, Myself & I</i> Justin Time JULY	 Whalum, Kirk <i>Romance Language</i> Rendezvous Music APRIL	Wozny, Joanna <i>As In A Mirror, Darkly</i> Kairos JUNE
Weston, Calvin <i>Of Alien Feelings</i> Imaginary Chicago NOV.	Wexler, Judy <i>Under A Painted Sky</i> Jazzed Media MARCH		YOB <i>Atma</i> Profound Lore MARCH
Wexler, Mike <i>Dispossession</i> Mexican Summer AUG.			Zenón, Miguel/ Laurent Coq <i>Rayuela</i> Sunnyside SEPT.

★★★★ **HISTORICAL**

Brubeck, Dave - Quartet <i>Their Last Time Out</i> Columbia/Legacy MARCH	Gerhardt, Charles - National Philharmonic Orchestra <i>Spellbound: The Classic Film Scores Of Miklos Rozsa</i> Sony Masterworks JAN.	
Chapman, Michael <i>Rainmaker</i> Light In The Attic JULY	Gerhardt, Charles - National Philharmonic Orchestra <i>Now Voyager: The Classic Film Scores Of Max Steiner</i> Sony Masterworks JAN.	
Crawford, Hank <i>Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing</i> Masterworks Jazz APRIL	Gordon, Dexter <i>Night Ballads: Montreal 1977</i> Uptown AUG.	
 Davis, Miles <i>The Definitive Miles Davis At Montreux DVD Collection 1973-1991 (DVD)</i> Eagle Rock Entertainment SEPT.	Johnson, Eddie <i>Indian Summer</i> Nessa MARCH	
Freeman, Von <i>Have No Fear</i> Nessa MARCH	Keys, Calvin <i>Shawn-Neeq</i> Tompkins Square JUNE	Lijadu Sisters <i>Danger</i> Knitting Factory APRIL
Gerhardt, Charles - National Philharmonic Orchestra <i>Classic Film Scores For Bette Davis</i> Sony Masterworks JAN.	 Mitchell, Roscoe <i>Before There Was Sound</i> Nessa MARCH	Lijadu Sisters <i>Mother Africa</i> Knitting Factory APRIL
		Mulligan, Gerry - Sextet <i>Legends Live: Gerry Mulligan Sextet</i> Jazzhaus JULY
		Stadler, Heiner <i>Brains On Fire</i> Labor Lab AUG.
		Various Artists <i>This May Be My Last Time Singing - Raw African-American Gospel On 45 RPM, 1957-1982</i> Tompkins Square FEB.
		Pegue, Richard <i>Eccentric Soul: The Nickel & Penny Labels</i> Numero Group MAY
		Ragland, Lou <i>I Travel Alone</i> Numero Group MAY
		Watts, Marzette <i>Marzette Watts & Company</i> ESP NOV.
		Rene, Wendy <i>After Laughter Comes Tears</i> Light In The Attic MAY

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THE PAT
METHENY
GUITAR
WORKSHOP

Story & Photos by Ken Micallef

Where the Action Is

When the 35 guitarists, three drummers, two upright bass players, a pianist and one trombonist arrived in Norwich, Conn., for the second annual Pat Metheny Workshop on Aug. 20–24, they had a specific challenge to meet: mastering a brand-new, 45-minute-long Metheny composition.

“It was all killer, no filler,” says Jamie Anderson, a 22-year-old guitarist from Kansas City, Mo. “Pat didn’t skimp on anything. He was writing comfortably for the assembled musicians, from beginners to more advanced players.”

Gabriel Santiago, a 31-year old guitarist from San Francisco, echoed that statement. “I analyzed it to understand Pat’s harmonic concept. I dissected it in every single way I could, not only by playing it but by figuring out how Pat approached it compositionally.”

After three days of intensive rehearsals, one-on-one critiques, student jam sessions, two Pat Metheny Trio concerts and individual master classes from Metheny, bassist Larry Grenadier and drummer Antonio Sanchez, students performed the 12-page chart to a select audience. The concert was recorded and then edited by Metheny, who awarded each attendee with a finished CD on the fifth and final day of camp. Metheny wrote the piece, simply titled “Camp 2012,” with each student in mind, after perusing online videos and workshop applications.

“This group was uniquely homogenous in what they needed to work on,” Metheny said. “They were a very good example of what I hear 97 percent of the time, whenever I’m around intermediate-level guitar players who are interested in improvising. It’s just about playing with a rhythm section, playing with the metronome and playing in time. I spent a lot of time talking about groove and placement of the beat. Some of the [difficulty is] having to coordinate two limbs, or having to pick and pluck and finger at the same time, but some of it is mysterious. So I wrote

the piece largely to address these recurring problems. Though it is a lot of work for me beforehand, I always get more out of it than anybody else.”

The students enjoyed one-on-one lessons with Metheny, as well as meeting fellow attendees, some of whom came from as far away as Tokyo and Sydney. However, the workshop wasn’t entirely hitch-free. Original sponsor National Guitar Workshop declared bankruptcy 10 days before the scheduled event, jeopardizing students’ tuition costs for hotel rooms, rehearsal spaces and meals. Chick Corea, whose NGW-sponsored workshop was scheduled the following week, was also left in the economic lurch.

Former NGW Artistic Director of the Jazz Summit and Director of Music Tom Dempsey, who acted as conductor and all-around Metheny Workshop coordinator, was blindsided by the announcement, which appeared on NGW’s website without notification to employees.

“For 28 years, NGW had provided life-changing musical experiences for thousands of people from around the world,” Dempsey said. “To know that students who had paid their tuition in full were not going to be able to [attend the workshop] or have any of their tuition immediately refunded was a bitter pill for me to swallow. I knew that enrollment had been struggling, but I was assured that everything was in place to make this year’s workshop happen. In the end, the way Pat approached this year’s program speaks volumes about his commitment.”

Dempsey was out of a job, and Metheny was without financial backing for his work-

shop, but the guitarist refused to cancel the event. Metheny ultimately paid for workshop expenses out of his own pocket.

“It was unacceptable to see all these guys lose thousands of dollars,” he said. “I would rather take the hit. I’m puzzled and very disappointed by it, but I also don’t know that much about it. It’s not easy to do anything in the music world these days, but if you have troubles, don’t tell us [10 days] before the event. I wasn’t going to let the workshop suffer. There was no way I would let that happen. I think Chick felt the same. Sure, it was a drag. While I was staying up for days writing the piece, I was thinking, ‘Not only I am not getting paid for doing this, I am paying to do this!’ But seeing how well everybody did, knowing that everybody is walking out of there with something that none of us will ever forget—it’s totally worth it.”

The workshop was originally scheduled to include guitarist Jim Hall and drummer Jack DeJohnette, who both pulled out when funding was lost. Sanchez, Metheny’s long-time drummer, stepped in at the last minute to complete the rhythm section with Grenadier. The pair addressed not only the technical issues of the Metheny piece but also general philosophical and mental attitudes.

“In clinics, I usually talk about concepts and mentalities,” Sanchez said. “As musicians, we often feel we are destined for greatness, yet here we are playing a wedding in some little joint. I talk about how if you’re playing a wedding, then it’s your time for playing weddings. If you’re destined for greatness, you’ll get there. It’s a step in the road. You have to go through that step and enjoy



Pat Metheny



Larry Grenadier



Antonio Sanchez

it because you cannot afford to waste any time while you're sitting at your instrument. You have to give 150 percent. People who are great always give 150 percent. Never mind the situation; that is the moral of the story."

Sanchez led the three drummers through the difficulties of the Metheny chart during group rehearsals. He later tutored them individually, both in a joint-clinic setting with Grenadier and in a separate drummers-only clinic.

Jonathan Barber, a 22-year-old graduate from University of Hartford's Jackie McLean Institute of Music, took Sanchez's sonic approach

to heart.

"What struck me when watching Antonio and Pat play together was how an important part of his sound is his cymbals, and how clear he is with his cymbal beat," Barber said. "Pat is clear with the textures he wants from the cymbals, and playing Antonio's setup made me understand that each cymbal he uses is meant for something. That was really a revelation."

Grenadier catered his approach to the two bassists present using a multi-pronged curriculum that covering both the physical and mental aspects of the instrument.

"For bass players, there are so many physical issues to deal with," Grenadier said. "We talked about how to learn the instrument more proficiently and how to feel more comfortable on the instrument. We also discussed general things, such as how to deal with different drummers and approaches to rhythm and time, and broader things like what's involved in being a professional musician and having confidence."

"It's very helpful to have a teacher early on so you don't get into bad habits. I try to spot those bad habits as quickly as possible. I also try to personalize [instruction] for each student so I am not giving a standardized lecture on bass playing."

Metheny was undoubtedly the toughest of the three when it came to critiquing the musicians' abilities. During two three-hour-long rehearsals, he asked each guitarist to solo over a series of chord changes, and then he offered his appraisal. "You survived" was one comment Metheny made. "I wouldn't have made those note choices" was another.

"I told them, 'I am not capable of being that diplomatic,'" Metheny said. "As far as I am concerned, we are doing a concert, and you're in my band, and that is how I am going to treat you.' Before the concert I'd ask, 'Let me hear you play this part,' or I might say, 'Don't play here. Play when you solo, but don't play on that ensemble.' At that point, they've had three days to practice. On the first day I said, 'OK, you guys. I stayed up for three days and nights writing this piece. I expect you to stay up for three days and nights practicing it [laughs].'"

Is the sponsor-free workshop the future for jazz musicians and educators? Like home recording and living-room concerts, the responsibility lies evermore with the musician—not the record label, guitar company or booking agent. Perhaps intimate workshops will provide the revenue stream once spawned by major record label deals and global tours.

"It's hard for me to gauge what's really valuable to people in this culture," Metheny mused. "[With these workshops], I'm optimistic over the long run. The true value speaks for itself. I always use the analogy of Bach. At the end of a service, how many people say, 'That was the shit!' Like three? Yet those notes are the greatest notes anybody ever came up with. *That* is the currency that I am lucky to be able to trade in. The rest of it is day-by-day, minute-by-minute, year-by-year."

"So the question you're asking is really a cultural question, not a musical question. I am always going to do my best to find that place where the rubber meets the road on a musical level. That's where the value is. How other musicians are going to address those issues has to do with their ability to pay their rent each month. I am always going to have that right there. It's like constantly looking at a speedometer going down the highway. But mostly I will be looking out the windshield. That's where the action is."

DB



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JAZZ SCHOOL

NEW TRIER
FEST AT 30

“Music Isn’t A Sport”

By John McDonough

The older jazz gets, the younger it looks. You just have to look in the right places, and today, the classroom is the genre’s biggest venue. The kids at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Ill., certainly love it. This February, the school’s annual Frank Mantooth Jazz Festival, named for the late music educator in 2004, will celebrate its 30th anniversary with 40 visiting high school bands and an evening concert by the Count Basie Orchestra.

I attended New Trier in the late 1950s, and I can tell you that the closest the Basie band could have gotten to the music building then was the bandstand in the gym at junior prom. In those days, jazz was an unfit intruder into their sacrosanct canon, partially because it was still popular and profitable. Duke Ellington was at his peak, Miles Davis had signed with Columbia, and Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman were American ambassadors roving the globe. It’s one of the odd mindsets of the cultural academy that something becomes eligible for the curriculum only at the point of its possible extinction.

That began to happen to jazz in the late ’60s, and New Trier responded. Stan Kenton came to the school and wowed the board with a presentation arguing for a place for jazz in the formal curriculum. The jazz program grew rapidly, and by the time Nic Meyer took over as director of jazz ensembles in 2008, it was among the premier public-school curriculums in the country. Since then, Meyer has added an emphasis on improvisation and listening. “The most accomplished improvisers are the most avid listeners,” he said, “but I had no desire to fix something that was not broken. When you’re handed something like that, a big part of your job is just not to screw it up. Preserving the status quo takes energy.”

The program Meyer inherited was largely the work of Jim Warrick, who came to New Trier from Ohio in 1981 and directed the jazz program for 28 years. He added a fourth band to the curriculum. But his most enduring innovation was a festival that focused on second bands and eliminated competition.

“In that first year, I saw the need for a jazz festival,” Warrick said in a phone interview.



“But I had learned to hate the whole competitive scene where everyone brings in his top band. It meant that sophomores and freshmen couldn’t compete fairly. I thought we needed a festival for the second and third bands. I didn’t want music to be a numbers game measured in trophies. The kids are the trophies, not the statues. When you make it competitive, you create winners and losers, and that’s not healthy. Music isn’t a sport.”

Titular awards are given to individual soloists, but as a gesture of achievement, not a spoil of victory. “Clinicians can pick who they want in recognition of reaching a certain standard,” Warrick said. “But it’s not competitive.”

And that’s how it has remained. “Every year these kids come,” Meyer said, “and have this day in a non-competitive environment. This was the philosophy on which we’ve built the festival. There are other non-competitive festivals. But I’m not aware of any that is specifically for second bands.”

For 30 years, it’s also brought students together with major stars, including Maynard Ferguson, Clark Terry, Woody Herman, Dizzy Gillespie and Gordon Goodwin. Over the decades, a history has accumulated. Warrick remembers a 1987 episode when an

exhausted Gillespie arrived after a flight from Australia and a 10-hour drive from Canada. During a long, very soft conga solo, he said, “I was convinced he was sleeping on stage.”

Then there was 1994, when a briefcase was stolen from Mercer Ellington’s green room. It contained his band’s entire payroll, its financial records and medicine for Ellington’s phlebitis. The leader’s health and the band’s existence were suddenly at risk.

“At 1 a.m., I got a call from the janitor who’d found the case behind some bushes,” Warrick said. “Everything was there, including \$5,000 in cash hidden in a false bottom. What amazed me was how much of a gentleman Mercer was through it all. No temper, no name-calling.”

Still on New Trier’s wish list? Big band leader Maria Schneider, The Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra and—don’t be surprised—the Glenn Miller Orchestra. “Road warriors,” Meyer called them. Fortunately, no band has ever lost money during a visit to New Trier. Artie Shaw came close—“too hip for the room,” Warrick said. But both he and now Meyer take pride that the Mantooth Festival has handed a lot a great experiences to students and never handed New Trier a bill. **DB**

David Baker



New Leadership: Indiana University Jacobs School of Music jazz department chair David Baker has stepped down as leader of the school's jazz ensemble. Baker will be replaced by fellow faculty member Brent Wallarab. Wallarab kicked off the 2012–2013 jazz season with a performance by the ensemble on Sept. 17, along with a series of free clinics by guitarist Mike Stern on Oct. 4. Details: indiana.edu

Golden Years: Berklee College of Music Vice President and Dean Larry Monroe will be retiring after 50 years of serving as a global ambassador for the conservatory. Monroe helped establish an international network of Berklee-affiliated schools in 12 countries, including Berklee's new campus in Spain, Berklee Valencia, and was a profound influence on former students such as Branford Marsalis, Miguel Zenón and Donald Harrison. Details: berklee.edu

Chambers Music: Drummer Joe Chambers will join the Rutgers Jazz Ensemble on Dec. 10 at the university's Mason Gross Performing Arts Center. Directed by trombonist Conrad Herwig, the performance will feature music from Chambers' new album, *Moving Pictures Orchestra: Live At Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola*, which was released in April on Savant. Details: rutgers.edu

Famous Faces: The Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and Performing Arts will be holding a "40 Years of 'Fame'" benefit concert on Jan. 28, celebrating the television show and movie that were based on the school. Guests include Paquito D'Rivera, Marcus Miller, Arturo O'Farrill, Jimmy Owens, John Pizzarelli and event honoree Justin DiCiocci. Details: laguardiahs.org

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JAZZ SCHOOL

PROFESSOR PATITUCCI LAUNCHES ONLINE CLASSROOM

Jazz Bass, Anyone?

By John Ephland

His home page says it all: “Online Jazz Bass School with John Patitucci.” You’ve “arrived” at the ArtistWorks Bass Campus, and Mr. Patitucci is there to help “unleash the jazz bass player in you.” The ArtistWorks music school is all about reinvention, and the vision is simple: “Provide a solution to one-sided learning experiences online.”

Founders David and Patricia Butler created ArtistWorks in 2008, with the intention of offering interactive feedback and diligent guidance to players of all experience and skill levels. A key component to this unique learning experience is ArtistWorks’ Video Exchange Accelerated Learning Platform, where all of their visually taught subjects can be learned, from jazz bass and other stringed instruments to classical piano and rock drums to DJ scratching. The programs encompass 14 styles of music.

As for the Jazz Bass School, Patitucci said that it was ArtistWorks that reached out to him initially.

“I checked them out and saw that they were producing a very high-quality online school,” he said. Patitucci worked with ArtistWorks for a year-and-a-half in pre-production, and the school formally launched in July. This program, he said, represents a real break from traditional methods of learning an instrument, and Patitucci was determined to cover all the “bases.”

“Because the curriculum goes from beginning to intermediate and advanced, there’s plenty of information available for a player at any level,” Patitucci explained. “I spent months writing this curriculum, and it took me a week in California to film all the lessons. I also recorded play-along tracks in my home studio and wrote pages upon pages of exercises, which comprise a large method book that’s downloadable in PDF form for each student.” A special bonus to “professor”

Patitucci’s online experience is footage of the bassist performing with pianist Jon Cowherd and drummer Brian Blade.

Patitucci is thoroughly convinced of the methodology for the newly developed Video Exchange Learning program.

“The format is unique,” he said, “because whenever a student needs help with any aspect of the curriculum, they film themselves playing and asking questions with instrument in hand. I receive the video, take my notes, diagnose and answer via a return video. Then, both videos are coupled and placed on the site for everyone to benefit from.

“In addition, students communicate with each other on the site in forums, encouraging each other and asking each other questions. I communicate with the students in the forums, as well. I have a student in Australia who’s a professional bassist and a professor at a university jazz program. Previously, he had to fly to New York or wait until I traveled to Australia on tour to take a lesson with me. Now, he can study hundreds of lessons at his own pace, in his own home, and still get personal feedback from me. He’s a very active participant on the website, and he helps the younger students as well.”

A casual glance at the Lessons Lists shows how detailed the course descriptions are. Subjects include a wide array of issues: dealing with calluses, blisters and muscles; bass sound production; working with major and minor octave scales; ear training and rhythm exercises. All of these educational

topics are approached in depth for each of the three levels of difficulty—beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Given that Patitucci had been around prior to the onset of Internet-related education, it was relevant for him to compare this new approach to the methodology behind his more traditional teaching.

“The world is completely different now,” Patitucci said. “There were far fewer materials available to learn how to play jazz music. We learned from listening to records, going to hear live music, and trial and error. The technologies that young people manipulate with ease nowadays didn’t exist when I was growing up.”

The curriculum currently is designed for an acoustic bass. Because Patitucci’s career also included a significant amount of electric bass-playing, he’s also considering a lesson plan for that demographic.

“Eventually, I will also put together a full curriculum for electric bassists who are looking to learn jazz,” Patitucci said. “Currently, Nathan East is on our site teaching pop and rock styles on electric bass.”

Patitucci recently completed a European tour with the Wayne Shorter Quartet, and he appears on the saxophonist’s forthcoming album, *Without A Net* (Blue Note). When asked how he navigates his career as an educator with his busy life playing, recording and touring, Patitucci said that he’s constantly juggling his priorities, which include a teaching position at Berklee College of Music’s online

John Patitucci



BOB MOCLEMANN

Global Jazz Institute and a burgeoning career as a composer.

“The nice thing about Berklee and ArtistWorks is that my schedule is pretty flexible,” he said. “I’m an artist in residence at Berklee and teach a one-week residency each month. My ArtistWorks teaching can be done from home or on the road.” With the proliferation of technology these days, the fact that all

of Patitucci’s work can be conducted online is just as convenient for the bassist as it is for all of his students.

“In the 1980s,” he said, “I released two instructional videos and I’ve been teaching and giving master classes for decades. I feel I have had a chance to learn a lot about education because I have been teaching most of my life.”

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JAZZ SCHOOL

MANHATTAN
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30 Years of Jazz

By Michael Gallant

Located on Broadway at the southern edge of Harlem, the Manhattan School of Music in New York celebrates three decades of outstanding jazz education this year—though jazz masters have been honing their craft at the landmark institution for twice as long.

“In the 1940s and ’50s, there were no jazz programs anywhere—just some commercial ‘dance band’ programs,” said drummer Justin DiCioccio, associate dean and chair of the jazz arts program at MSM. “The program here was classical, but many of the students who came to the Manhattan School were jazz musicians. John Lewis was a classical composition major here. Max Roach was a classical percussion major. Dick Katz was a piano major.”

Other then-rising jazz masters such as Ron Carter, Donald Byrd and Yusef Lateef also studied classical music at the school. They laid the foundation for monumental jazz careers beyond the classroom, helping to prompt the creation of an official jazz program. Dick Lowenthal was appointed as the program’s first director in 1982.

MSM’s jazz program was one of the first developed within a conservatory, said DiCioccio, who has taught at the school since the jazz program’s inception, joined the faculty full-time in 1992 and took over leadership seven years later. The program originally focused primarily on the big band tradition and combo playing. Though big bands and combos continue to be key to MSM’s curriculum, DiCioccio has spent his tenure shaping a new perspective that he hopes will carry the school into its next three decades and beyond.

“Our whole curriculum is based on the philosophy of the complete artist musician of the 21st century,” DiCioccio said. “That artist is equal parts performer, writer and pedagogue—three leaves of the same clover.” In practical terms, this philosophy lets DiCioccio easily answer the inevitable question from parents and prospective students as to whether one can earn a living in jazz.

It’s a philosophy that’s based not in theory, but in practice. “We try to give our students tools they need to create a life in music.”

UNIVERSITY OF THE ROAD, THE STREETS, AND THE JAM SESSION

MSM’s philosophy has manifested in a program that incorporates a deep education in the history, theory and execution of jazz, but also real-life learning when it comes to jam sessions, gigging and playing multiple styles of music. In 1999, percussionist Bobby Sanabria was recruited to lead the MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, an explosive ensemble that plays around New York and has recorded two critically acclaimed albums on the Jazz Heads label. The ensemble will be performing at Dizzy’s Club Coca-Cola, part of Jazz at Lincoln Center, in April 2013 as part of the MSM Jazz Arts 30th Anniversary Festival.

Also performing at the festival will be various MSM combos and the MSM Chamber Jazz Ensemble, which will perform saxophonist Oliver Nelson’s album *The Blues And The Abstract Truth*. Rising-star alumni will also perform on a dedicated “Emerging Artists Night.” MSM will further be honoring its anniversary with a Harlem House Party Piano Night featuring solo piano played in stride, boogie-woogie and honky-tonk styles; a big band swing dance; and a cross-genre performance of “Ask Your Mama!” written by Emmy-winning composer Laura Karpman. Based on the Langston Hughes poem “Ask Your Mama! 12 Moods For Jazz,” the multimedia show will feature the MSM Chamber Sinfonia,

singers Jessye Norman and Nnenna Freelon, and hip-hop band The Roots.

New Yorkers eager to hear MSM’s students put their lessons into practice didn’t have to wait until 2013 to catch something special—thanks to MSM’s Jazz Philharmonic Orchestra. “On Oct. 19, we put on a concert of Duke Ellington’s masterpieces with strings,” DiCioccio said. “Not a lot of people can afford to get a symphony orchestra and jazz big band together. Plus, the music is very challenging and takes a lot of rehearsing. No one can afford to do it—but we can. This institution is like a workshop. We don’t have to play it safe here, and we should never be playing it safe, anyway.”

DiCioccio added that pushing for innovation at MSM is one of his perpetual goals, especially when embracing the unexpected.

“We’re always going in new directions, not only in straight-ahead jazz, but also with classical styles and world music, mixing chamber ensembles with classical and jazz students,” he said. “Jazz should never be predictable. If it’s predictable, it’s not jazz.”

FINDING MANHATTAN

If you judge a jazz program by its alumni, MSM has a lot to be proud of. In addition to numerous finalists and winners of the annual Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Competition, six graduates have been named NEA Jazz Masters. Pianist Jason Moran and saxophonist Miguel Zenón were both recently awarded MacArthur Fellowships.

Vocalist Jane Monheit, who graduated in 1999, came to the Manhattan School due to its location and to study with Peter Eldridge. After seeing Eldridge sing with the New York Voices and attending one of



BRENNAN/TON

Bobby Sanabria conducts the MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, October 2012



LEWIS ADAS/STEVIA

Justin DiCioccio (left) conducts saxophonist Jonathan Ragonese and the MSM Jazz Orchestra in the 50th-anniversary celebration of the movie *West Side Story*, November 2012

his master classes, she knew that he was the teacher she was looking for.

"The faculty were all working musicians who were out playing gigs and living the life that students like me wanted," Monheit said. "It was a very interesting dynamic, where we could learn from them about the music and talk about real life at the same time. They were our teachers but, in a lot of ways, they were soon to be our contemporaries as well."

For Monheit, the value of MSM came not only from its location and faculty, but also her peers. "I made wonderful friends and met my husband there," she said, referring to drummer and bandmate Rick Montalbano. "We were

treated with respect, not like a bunch of kids. The faculty was tough on us because we needed it, but they were truly supportive when we needed it as well."

Vibraphonist Stefon Harris began studying at MSM in 1992, after transferring from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. "Eastman did not have a jazz program at the time, and since the Manhattan School had both classical and jazz, I decided to transfer," Harris said. He finished his studies five years later, earning an undergraduate degree in classical performance and a graduate degree in jazz performance.

Harris describes his time at the school as

essential to his artistic development. "There were no barriers between the jazz and classical departments," he said. "Even though I was a classical major for my undergraduate degree, I was allowed to take classes in the jazz program. I had private lessons from faculty in both departments, so my education was a truly musical one, not just an education in style."

Like Monheit, Harris credits his teachers—among them saxophonist Bobby Watson, vibraphonist Joe Locke and pianist Jaki Byard—and his outstanding classmates such as pianist Jason Moran and saxophonist Myron Walden, for helping him grow, in both the classroom and on the bandstand.

"Programs like these cultivate the younger audience for jazz, as well as another generation to play the music," Monheit said.

Harris echoed the sentiment. "The Art Blakeys of the world are not here with us anymore, and there aren't many bands in which young musicians can be mentored," he said. "Institutions like the Manhattan School are charged with the responsibility of not just being institutions of notes and tones, but institutions of culture as well."

JAZZ CIRCA 2050

Looking 30 years into the future, DiCioccio hopes to continue the school's commitments to tradition and innovation. "I want to see us embracing digital technology and talking about how the 21st century has changed every aspect of our musical lives," he said. He pointed out that digital media have not only changed the way that music recordings are disseminated, but also how compositions and arrangements are created and edited, shared and sold.

"How does all of this influence jazz?" DiCioccio asked. "Also, how do electronic instruments and synthesizers fit into jazz, if they do at all? We've created courses in film scoring where we teach students to use digital technology. They're writing pure jazz scores for films, but using electronics to do it, merging synth-based scores with acoustic sounds." MSM students currently collaborate with film students at the partnering Columbia University and New York University film schools to bring picture and sound together on projects.

"A lot of people say that the digital era destroyed music, but we want to see it as something that creates new possibilities," DiCioccio continued. "Saying yes to all of this while embracing the traditions of the music that we teach—that's a direction I hope the school will continue exploring in the years to come."

The final ingredient of DiCioccio's vision for the next three decades of jazz at MSM? "A continued reminder to students that nobody can take your dream away from you," he said. "You can give it up, but the key to success is to work a little harder than everybody else and pay attention to detail. Nobody is responsible for that other than you."

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Essential Elements of Great Drumming

What is the role or responsibility of the drummer? Having been a student of the drums for most of my life, and one who listens to and appreciates a broad palette of styles, I can honestly say that there are some things that seem to apply across most genres of music.

Here are some of the essential elements that are important to cultivating your craft.

Time Versus Feel

Particularly in jazz, time has to be felt more than heard. One should not have to play loud to feel the time. Most musicians expect drummers to have good or great time. But having great time does not always mean that the music feels good. One can have perfect “metronomic” time, but it feels horrible, stiff. In certain genres of music (e.g., jazz, soul, r&b), there is sometimes a rolling, forward motion with the time that helps to make the music feel good. Am I advocating that it’s OK to have bad time? No! However, having perfect time does not always equate to the music feeling good. There are three ways of keeping time:

- 1) Behind the beat (which is not the same as dragging).
- 2) Down the middle of the beat (in the center of the pulse).
- 3) Ahead of the beat (which is not the same as rushing).

As drummers, we must know the differences between these three ways of keeping time, and we must be able to properly execute each one.

Another aspect of time is knowing where your focal point is. The focal point is where one builds their time, the center of gravity around which everything else revolves. For many jazz drummers it is their ride cymbal, whereas for many r&b, pop, funk and gospel drummers the focal point is the bass drum and the backbeat of the snare drum. Where is your focal point?

Dynamics

Dynamics can make or break the sound and vibe of the music. Contrary to what many musicians believe, playing too soft can be almost as bad as playing too loud. I did say “almost.” When speaking with non-drummers about what they like or dislike about drummers, dynamics is at the top of the list. Great dynamics are often a sign that one is listening. I recall many years ago, shortly after I joined Freddie Hubbard’s band, I asked him how I was doing and he told me, “Yeah, Carl, it’s cool, but you play every room the same. It doesn’t matter if we’re playing a club for 100 people or outdoors for 5,000 people. You have to learn to play the room. The acoustics in every venue are different.” This is when I started exploring ways to develop my touch so that I could deal with the various venues differently.

Practice playing with a wide range of dynamics so that when you’re playing with other musicians, it becomes second nature to you. Private practice determines public performance.

Balance

Creating great balance means not only great time and dynamics but also listening to what’s going on around you. Often when there is an issue with one’s time, we just say either it’s rushing or dragging without being specific as to which limb is committing this crime. When I hear drummers play quarter notes on the bass drum who are not used to doing it, usually the bass drum is ahead of the ride cymbal. Remember the focal point? This is, in part, a balance issue. An obvious form of balance has to do with dynamics. Example 1 is an exercise that I use to help work on balance between the limbs. It’s important that nothing changes but the patterns on the snare drum.

Concept/Style

This is so personal but also important. For many jazz drummers, part of one’s style comes from the ride cymbal. Every drummer’s ride cymbal has a “shape” to it. Philly Joe Jones’ ride was built more on the triplet feel, whereas Billy Higgins’ ride pattern had more of an angular feel to it. Another area where we develop our concept is through building vocabulary on the instrument. How do we do that? In part through listening to others, stealing ideas and making them our own. Music is a language, and we must build our vocabulary in order to converse with others. Drummers must develop comping patterns. Some great compers in the history of jazz drumming include Art Taylor, Philly Joe Jones, Billy Higgins, Al Harewood, Ed Thigpen, Mel Lewis, Louis Hayes, Frankie Dunlop and Mickey Roker.

I like to listen to great piano players like Duke Pearson, McCoy Tyner, Red Garland, Bill Evans and Oscar Peterson and pay attention to their left hand, which is also comping. Example 2 includes a few comping patterns that you can use in practice and on the bandstand. Make up your own based on these patterns.

Technique

The purpose of having great technique is to allow to you to play what you hear and feel. If what you’re hearing is limited, having lightning-speed chops will only make your ideas sound corny. This takes us back to developing your vocabulary, which gives you a starting place for making great music.

Grip/posture

We limit ourselves by playing with bad posture. Years ago, I used to play leaning forward



Carl Allen

and bending over the drums. I was on a gig once in New York City and Art Blakey had come by to hear me. As he walked past the stage, he stopped and pressed his hands against my chest and back and said, “Sit up, you’ve got plenty of time to bend over.” That moment put me on a path to playing with better posture, which helped my grip, which in turn gave me better control to play better dynamics and a wider range of tempos.

Musical Aptitude

Great musicians make smart choices when they play. This is in part due to their musical aptitude. How does one develop this? Through a lot of listening, trial and error. Understand the importance of knowing what to play, what conceptually fits within the style/concept of the song and with whom you’re playing. If it’s jazz, make it swing. If it’s funky, make it groove.

Attitude

I once heard someone who wasn’t a musician say that “attitude determines approach and approach determines success or failure.” How cool is that? I have learned that when you have a great attitude when playing music, it feels so much better. My friend (pianist) Mulgrew Miller says that music should always be singing and dancing. This is part of what our job is. Help other people feel something. Treat people and the music with love and respect, and it’ll take you a long way. Oh yeah, this is part of what drummers are supposed to do: Make it dance!

DB

VISIT CARL ALLEN ONLINE AT CARLALLEN.COM.

Example 1: Time Table

Drum Set  Ride cymbal pattern continues through all exercises below.

A



B



C



D



E




Example 2: Comping Patterns

Drum Set  Ride cymbal pattern continues through all exercises below.

A



B



C



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Trumpet Players & Solid Fundamentals

Preparing Yourself for Performance In High Altitudes

Traveling to different parts of the country and the world to perform is an experience shared by musicians at all levels of proficiency. Differing climates—from desert to tropical—with extreme temperature change can create a litany of problems. For wind players and singers, some of the most common and persistent problems occur in high altitudes.

It is inevitable that you will notice changes in your body and how your energy is exerted when you travel to high altitudes. There are a lot of common-sense preventative measures that will aid in coping with the difficulties encountered by all musicians, especially by wind players and singers.

Maintaining hydration is perhaps the most important factor in staying healthy in higher altitudes. By the time you feel the effects of dehydration, it is probably too late to recover quickly. I increase my water intake two to three days before heading to the mountains and drink twice as much water as usual while I am there.

Consumption of alcohol, caffeine and use of sedatives and tobacco should be avoided. The

effects of alcohol are amplified because of changes to the flow of oxygen in the bloodstream. Anything that has an effect on respiration and hydration, which are both critical to wind players, will result in diminished ability to perform.

The intensity of the sun increases as you ascend in altitude. If you are performing outdoors, sunscreen and hats (and perhaps sunglasses) are a must. Keeping your lips from drying and cracking is also very important. Lip balm with a high sun protection factor (SPF) works best.

Being physically fit certainly helps, but it won't completely alleviate the effects that high altitudes have on the body. I have traveled to perform in the Vail, Colo., area for more than a decade, and since losing weight and becoming much more physically fit in recent times, I have noticed that the effects were noticeably lessened.

These common-sense coping measures for high-altitude areas are very helpful, but they are not enough to guarantee that you'll be on your "A" game during your entire performance. One important factor to consider is that the higher

you are above sea level, the lower the density of the air. Not only is your body affected by the lack of oxygen and moisture in the air you breathe, but the sound that you are accustomed to producing and hearing at lower altitudes is drastically changed. With this change, many of us inadvertently make radical adjustments in our methods of tone production and phrasing to recreate the sound to which we are accustomed. Sound is projected much more efficiently in air with less density and moisture, so you must learn to resist the temptation to overcompensate for the disappearing acoustic cocoon of your sound.

A few days before traveling, add a specific series of exercises to your warmup routine, and do not stray from them. Long tones and lip slurs are a great place to start. In order to stay consistent, use a method book such as Max Schlossberg's *Daily Drills and Technical Studies for Trumpet*. The long-note drills on the first few pages of the book are excellent.

First, play a series of long tones like you normally would, paying particular attention to how

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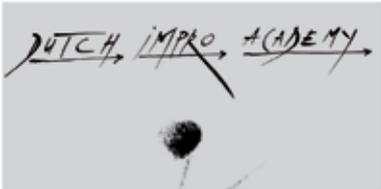


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everything feels and sounds. Then use a couple of foam earplugs and repeat the exact same exercise. With the earplugs in, most of what you will hear is internal vibration as opposed to the sound coming from outside your body. Try to emulate the exact feeling you had playing the long tones without them. Do this with several exercises so you can establish a confident understanding of how to play a bit more "by feel." To make the earplug-exercise experience more musical, find a short piece you are very comfortable with from Jean-Baptiste Arban's *The Art of Phrasing* or a jazz standard (preferably a ballad) that you like.

We would all like to arrive at our high-altitude performance destination 24 to 36 hours early to adjust to the new conditions. But most of the time, we arrive the evening before or the day of the gig and have to adjust quickly.

Upon arrival, start drinking water. Put in the foam earplugs and play the exact set of long-note drills you played in the days before your departure. Although the lack of oxygen may make you feel a little winded, try your best to emulate how it felt to play in your home climate. Remove the earplugs and repeat the process. At first, it helps to point your bell at a reflective surface to get instant feedback on what is happening. As you start to feel comfortable with your different sound without making unnecessary adjustments, gradually move away from the reflective surface. Stay relaxed and think only of projection, not volume. Although it will sound and feel different, these preparatory measures will greatly enhance your ability to perform in this challenging situation. **DB**

JAZZ TRUMPETER KIRK GARRISON IS AN ACTIVE MUSICIAN, COMPOSER/ARRANGER AND EDUCATOR RESIDING IN THE CHICAGO AREA. HE IS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR AT DEPAUL AND CONCORDIA UNIVERSITIES AND IS SPONSORED BY DENIS WICK MOUTHPIECES AND MUTES/DANSR USA. FOR CLINICIAN INFORMATION, EMAIL GARRISON AT KIRKGARRISON@ATT.NET.

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Lyle Mays

Lyle Mays' Piano Solo on 'Chorinho'

“Chorinho,” from Lyle Mays’ 1990 album *Street Dreams* (Geffen), is a fast-paced chord progression performed on multiple overdubbed keyboards.

The solo is played on acoustic piano, and Mays contributes to the dizzying effect with a dense improvisation of near-constant 16th notes that span a range of more than three octaves. The left hand does very little during this solo, probably because of the existing thickness of the backing parts, so only the right hand is presented here.

For the first four measures, Mays sticks with the C major scale (the song is in the key of C), which makes it simpler to play long strings of notes and creates a more consonant sound. Mays breaks it up a bit with a C major arpeggio in measure 2 and some large interval leaps, such as the 12th in measure 3 and the sixth in measure 4. But in measure 5 we hear the first deviation from C major, a chromatic passing tone between G and F, and with the E natural afterward, we hear a string of four notes from the chromatic scale, a foreshadowing of something we’ll hear much more of later.

The next deviation from the C major scale happens with a G# in the following measure, creating an A harmonic minor lick. In the next measure he flats the seventh (B \flat) to give us F major over its corresponding ii-V (or it could be considered C mixolydian on the Gm7 and

C7). Each is only a one-note deviation from the original key, but both D and F are raised in the descending line starting on the B7(\flat 9) in the second half of measure 8, producing an E harmonic minor scale. These alterations give us the third and fifth of the B7, while retaining the \flat 9 (C) and \flat 13 (G) altered tones that make it sound more connected to the original key of C.

For the remainder of this measure and the next two bars, we hear more of this technique of making adjustments to the C major scale to better fit the changes. But in the second half of measure 12, Mays brings back his chromatic idea from measure 5, playing the chromatic scale from A down to F#. It’s also especially poignant since it runs from the fifth to the third on the same chord (triad over seventh), only a whole step up.

Two measures later, Mays takes this idea further, playing a chromatic line from F all the way down to B, covering half an octave, and then reverses it in the next measure, climbing a fifth in half steps from D up to A in the next bar. And at the end of this bar, he references another previous idea by playing an E \flat arpeggio that goes from the third to the root one octave above, the very same arpeggio he played on C at the beginning of this solo. He also plays a C arpeggio again in measure 25, but here Mays starts on a low C and runs it all the way up to a high C a full three octaves above.

1:15

5

8

11

14

17

20

23

26

29

32

35

38

Chord symbols: C/E, Dm/F, C/G, G#07, Am7, D7, G/B, C/Bb, Am7, G#07, Gm7, C7, F#m7(b5), B7(b9), Cm7(b5), F7, Em7, C07, Bm7, E7, A/C#, D/C, G7/B, Em7(b5), C/Bb, F/A, E/G#, F07, C/E, F#m7(b5), B7, Eb/G, D/F#, Dm/F, Em7(b5), A/C#, D/C, Bm7(b5), F7, Gsus/C, G/B, Bb7, Am7, D7sus, D7, Gmaj7, C#m7(b5), F#7, D/F#, F#sus2, Db/F, Bm7(b5)/D, G/B, G7, C/E, Dm/F, C/G, G#07, Am7, D7, G/B, C/Bb, Am7, G#07, Gm7, C7, Fmaj7, Bb7, C/E, Dm/F, C/G, G#07, Am7, D7, Dm7, Ab/C, Bb7, Em7, Bb7, Ab7, Db/Ab, F/G

Mays starts reusing the chromatic lines as well, and they become quite common from bar 14 on. We hear them in measures 17, 21 and in 23 the longest one yet, spanning a sixth from D down to F. Also the D \flat to G crossing the bar line from 23–24, and the F to A (a minor sixth) over the bar line from 29–30. Then Mays returns to smaller runs in measures 32 and 33–34, and in bar 35 he plays the line from G to E twice. This is the same string of notes (but in a higher octave) that he used to introduce us to this sound.

In bar 36 we hear another long chromatic

line spanning a minor sixth. As we approach the end, Mays again returns to a shorter run (the A to C in bar 38), but then for the final phrase gives us a fourth down (A to E) in the penultimate measure and then climbs from C up to A (another sixth) for the conclusion, jumping a minor third to end on the root note C. It's fascinating how he takes this simple idea and slowly develops it over the course of this solo. **DB**

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Fender GB Hot Rod Deluxe Combo

The Guitar Man Picks His Amp

Fender and George Benson have gotten together to produce the GB Hot Rod Deluxe George Benson signature guitar amp. Featuring cleaner tone, a lighter cabinet and a high-powered 12-inch Jensen speaker, this 40-watt combo delivers on its promise.

Most people don't readily associate Fender with Benson, who is best known for playing Ibanez guitars. But Benson has always maintained a connection with and a strong respect for Fender amps.

The GB Hot Rod Deluxe is based on Fender's standard Hot Rod Deluxe amp but with three significant modifications. The first is in the preamp stage, where Fender replaced one of the three 12AX7 tubes with a 12AT7, resulting in a cleaner, crisper tone with enhanced headroom before distortion. The second is the addition of a 100-watt Jensen CK-12 speaker, which again provides the amp with a cleaner sound over the stock Celestion speaker. The third upgrade is in the cabinet, which is constructed from solid pine instead of particleboard, reducing the weight by 3 pounds.

Built on the same chassis, the GB Hot Rod Deluxe features two 6L6 power tubes and the same control panel layout as the standard Hot Rod Deluxe. The panel is conveniently built into the cabinet's top for easy accessibility. There are two inputs onboard, with input one being the standard and input two featuring a lower impedance and sensitivity to accommodate guitars with active electronics. Benson actually uses the lower impedance input even though his guitar is not active, favoring the darker tone and lower gain it provides. Like the standard Hot Rod, the Benson model has two channels, normal for clean playing and drive for crunch and distortion. A master volume knob and "more drive" selector provide plenty of control over the distortion

characteristics. Even though Benson himself does not utilize the drive channel, he felt that it was important that Fender include it in the amp.

After playing several guitars and working two gigs with the GB Deluxe amp, I was convinced that this amp is significantly cleaner and warmer than a standard Hot Rod. It definitely works great for jazz, and the drive channel lets you rock out when the set turns from big band swing to Motown and disco. And I love the retro look.

The GB Hot Rod Deluxe Amp is an impressive product and a truly successful collaboration between a great artist and legendary company. At a street price of around \$899, this one is definitely worth a look for guitarists in need of a solid "working" amp.

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: fender.com



Bari Woodwinds Hybrid Mouthpieces

Where the Rubber Meets the Metal

The new Hybrid Stainless Steel alto saxophone mouthpiece from Bari Woodwinds saved me from the horrors of a bad PA on a recent combo gig.

On the surface, it was an easy job, playing standards for a wine-tasting soirée in a fairly large room. Once we got going, though, I discovered that the portable sound system we were using didn't have enough power to handle an electric keyboard input and my sax mic at the same time—it kept fading in and out from one instrument to the other, making for a horribly inconsistent mix. It threatened to be a long night.

My solution was to disconnect my mic and play acoustically. I switched out my hard rubber vintage mouthpiece for the Hybrid Stainless Steel model, and with a little effort I was able to project enough to fill the entire room and be heard clearly over the rhythm section of keyboard, electric upright bass and drum set. I could

hear my sound reflecting off the back wall of the venue—a good sign that I wasn't being buried. And I was pleased to notice that I still sounded like my regular self on alto.

With its metal chamber and hard rubber exterior, the Hybrid Stainless Steel provides both power and tone—a highly desirable combination that works to your advantage in soft and loud environments. It gives you flexibility of sound from dark to bright, so it works just as well for traditional swing and bebop as it does for fusion and contemporary r&b styles. You get the extra mass of a metal piece, yet it feels in your chops like the old-school rubber mouthpieces that have been my preference on alto for a long time.

The Hybrid Stainless Steel mouthpiece is available in a number of facings: 5 (.072), 6 (.077), 7 (.082) and 8 (.087) for alto; and 5* (.085), 6 (.090), 6* (.095), 7 (.100), 7* (.105), 8 (.110), 8* (.115), 9 (.120), 9* (.125) and 10 (.130) for tenor. Bari Woodwinds also makes Hybrid Gold mouthpieces for alto and tenor.—Ed Enright

Ordering info: bariwoodwind.com

Keilwerth Dave Liebman Soprano Sax

Signature Specifications

Keilwerth has developed a customized soprano saxophone in conjunction with jazz artist Dave Liebman, who has played the company's horns for 30 years. Built to the veteran saxophonist's specifications, the new JK1300-8DLS-0 Liebman Signature Model is a one-piece straight horn that incorporates design innovations that affect the sound, feel and look of the instrument.

The foundation of the new design is a slightly larger bore. Its conical shape tapers inward at the end, and the bell flares out wider than a standard soprano's. These alterations fundamentally change the instrument's resonance, so you get a more open, warmer, well-rounded sound that has more body and not as much nasal tone. All of the models in Keilwerth's pro soprano line are now based on this new bore.

A distinguishing feature of the Liebman soprano is its handmade keywork. The tension is set fairly loose, as Liebman wanted the horn to feel broken-in right out of the box. The high F# and side F# keys have been reshaped to be more pronounced and sit higher up for better economy of movement.

Keilwerth put cork pads on all the palm keys, the upper auxiliary keys and the octave key. They don't stick, they're quieter and they seal well. All of the key-regulation spots on the horn are supported by a long-lasting synthetic cork. The octave pip has been flipped from the bottom to the top side of the horn, which prevents spit from running into it. A black synthetic material under the thumb rest provides extra cushioning—which makes a huge difference if you prefer to play without using a neckstrap.

The hand engraving on the Liebman soprano includes Liebman's signature, a yin-yang symbol and Keilwerth's "JK" logo—all of which stand out nicely against the horn's vintage finish.

A special-order item that takes about three months to produce and ship, the JK1300-8DLS-0 comes in an exclusive case that features Liebman's signature. A soprano sax stand from K&M is also included, along with key clamps and a personal letter of thanks from Liebman. A regular-production model (JK1300-8DL-0) has the same bore and keywork but doesn't include Liebman's engraved signature, the cork pads or the special case and accessories.

Keilwerth's regular pro soprano sax—which now features the new bore but not the Liebman keywork and accessories—is available in gold lacquer (JK1300-8-0), black nickel (JK1300-5B-0) and vintage (JK1300-8V-0). —Ed Enright

Ordering info: buffet-group.com



Yamaha YCL-621 Bass Clarinet

Woody & Alive

Yamaha's YCL-621 professional bass clarinet is not only an ideal instrument for wind ensemble players and sax section doublers, it's also perfect for jazz soloists.

The YCL-621 features a two-piece grenadilla wood body and nickel-silver keys, neck and bell. It has a machined bore and straight tone holes with a tapered undercut for consistent response throughout the instrument's range. Metal inner tenon sleeves improve sealing and tonal response; ball joint key connectors allow for ease of assembly and lessen the chances of damaging the instrument while putting it together; and blue steel needle springs and white leather button-type pads guarantee durability of regulation. This is a solid, professional axe that's built with some of the finest materials available. And, boy, does it play.

The instrument felt so comfortable under my fingers and responded with such immediacy that performing on it was an inspiring and rewarding experience. I used the YCL-621 on two shows in two very different environments, and during both performances I couldn't have been more confident in my ability to play accurately and sound good. One was a big band gig where some Nelson Riddle-like arrangements called for bass clarinet doubling in the bari sax part. The other was a big-production rock concert featuring a full contingent of strings and winds.

My Vandoren B45 mouthpiece and a #3 Vandoren ZZ tenor saxophone reed proved to be a great setup on the YCL-621. I had a huge dynamic range to work with—this bass clarinet can crank out double-forte or whisper pianissimo at the drop of a downbeat—and all of

the notes spoke with ease from low E-flat up through the throat tones, smoothly over the break and skyward above high C. The tone was woody and alive, excellent for doubling lines with the bassist, harmonizing with other clarinets in the section or standing out alone in counterpoint passages. I even took a solo on the YCL-621 and was able to make it swing and bop with precision and expression. Best of all, I could be clearly heard on an instrument that's often discernible only in the pin-drop quiet of church and chamber settings. —Ed Enright

Ordering info: yamaha.com



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More info: tedklummouthpieces.com



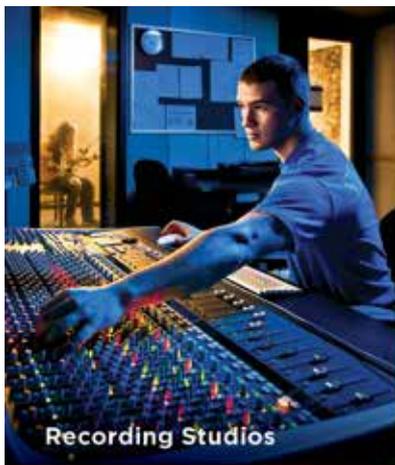
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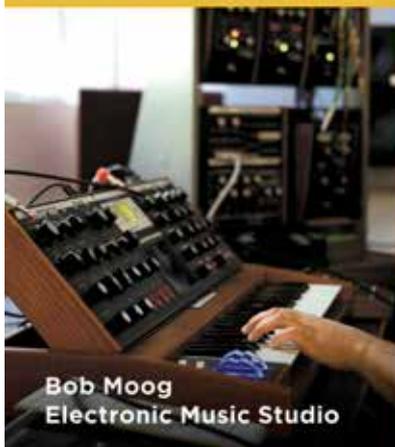


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Gretsch Drums has introduced four new practice pads modeled after the company's Round Badge. They feature a silica-gel surface with a dense wood base and include a pad mount insert that fits standard practice-pad stands or cymbal stands. A non-skid foam rubber backing allows the player to use the pads securely on a flat surface. They are available in 6- and 12-inch versions and two different colors schemes: orange-on-black or gray-on-black. More info: gretschdrums.com



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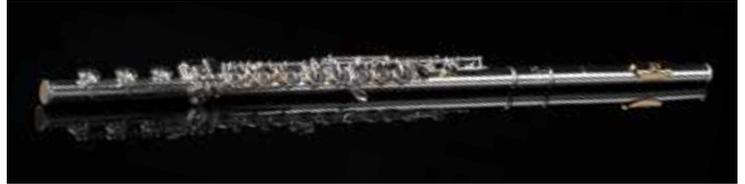
Casio's Privia PX-150, PX-350, PX-750 and PX-850 (pictured) digital pianos offer enhanced keyboards and powerful sound engines. The instruments feature light-weight, stylish designs, a redesigned 88-note Tri-sensor Scaled Hammer Action Keyboard and a new proprietary sound source, "AiR" (Acoustic and intelligent Resonator).

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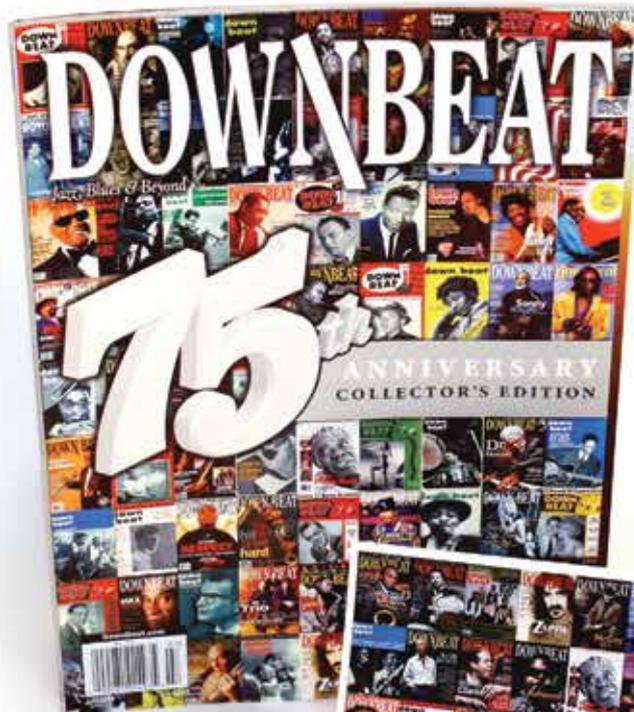
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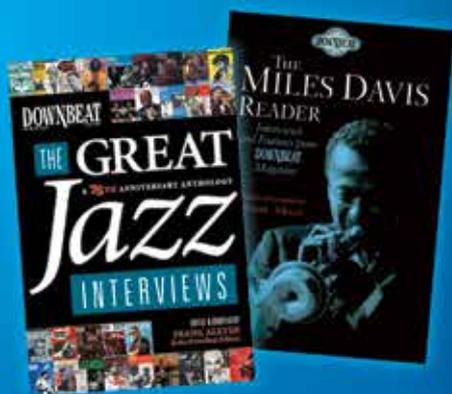


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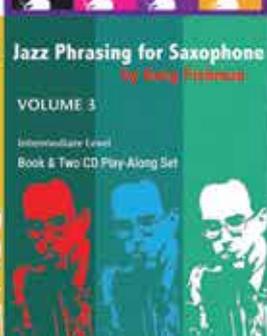
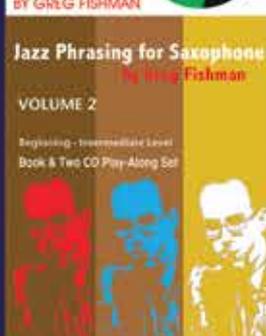
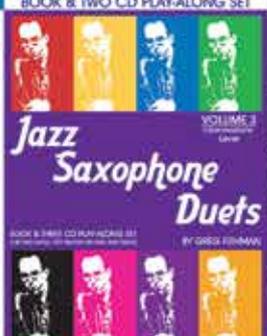
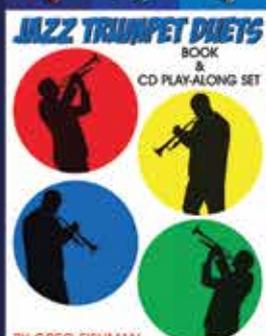
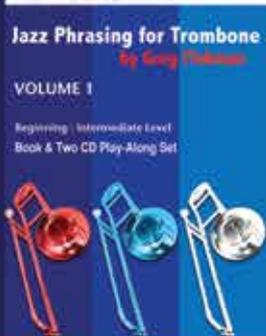
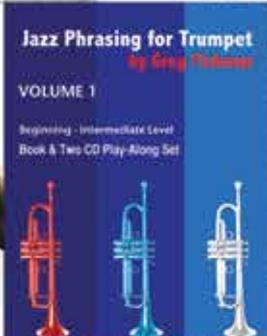
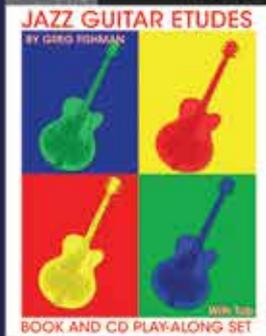
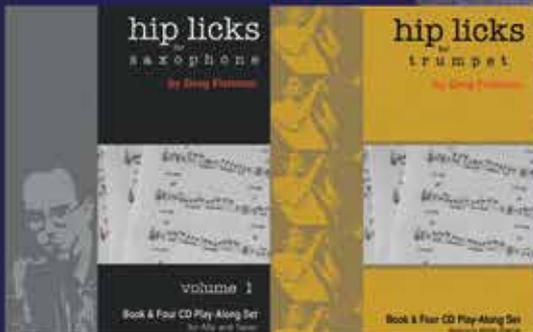
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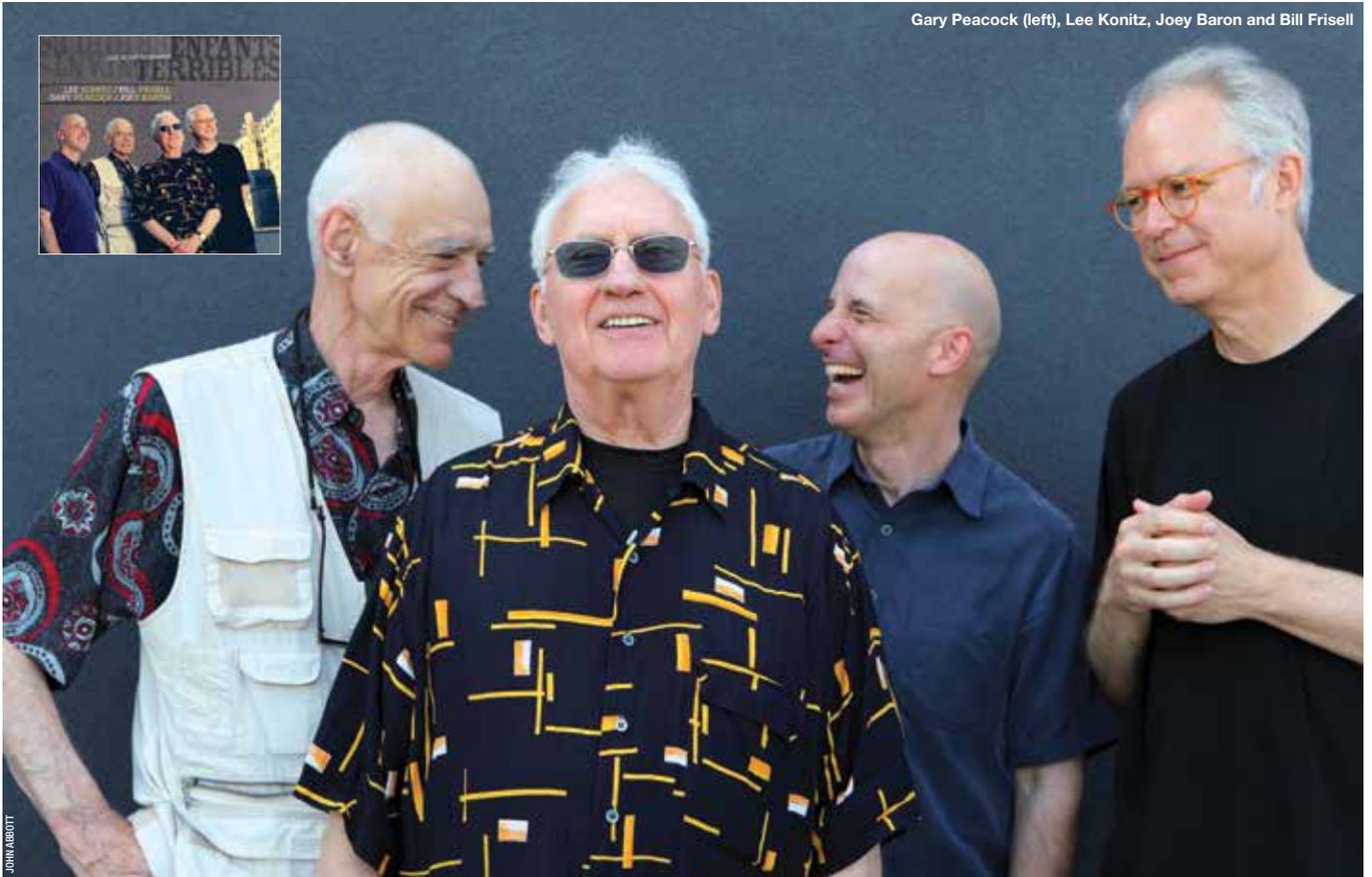
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Gary Peacock (left), Lee Konitz, Joey Baron and Bill Frisell

**Lee Konitz/
Bill Frisell/
Gary Peacock/
Joey Baron**
*Enfants Terribles:
Live At The Blue Note*

HALF NOTE 4552

★★★★★

Lee Konitz's existential approach to improvisation is a bold invitation to failure, and I've watched him fall flat on his face more than once. It's just not possible to be brilliant and original every moment, a high bar he seems to hold up for himself, with his anti-lick, anti-drama, avoid-the-familiar-at-all-costs credo. But the 85-year-old

alto man brought something extra to the party at Manhattan's Blue Note in June 2011 that feels akin to glee—surprising, given his usual severity. When he careens into the room with some glossy high notes over Gary Peacock on “Stella,” then leaps up to a fat altissimo, Konitz sounds like a kid on the playground, shouting, “Hey, I’ve got an idea!”

Konitz's tone has more body and burr than it's shown lately, too, even though his mood, as always, is pure subjunctive, a weird blend of the very deliberate and the very tentative, as if he were thinking out loud. It's an approach that results in some

abstract music at the start, as the quartet meanders polyphonically through an unrecognizable “What Is This Thing Called Love” that ends with Konitz and Bill Frisell playing a note-perfect rendition of the saxophonist's famous contrafact, “Subconscious Lee.” Only snippets of the melody turn up on “Body And Soul,” too, but the feel is one of adoration. By “Stella,” the band appears to have decided to swing, and “I’ll Remember April” furthers the rhythmic focus, as Joey Baron, until now spare and minimal with gorgeously ringing tom toms, dives into an eighth-note Latin beat.

Baron shines throughout, return-

ing to minimalist toms to tap out allusions to the melody of “I Remember You.” Frisell, who, like Konitz, doesn't so much attack notes as enter them, turns all staccato and lively here, tossing in a sudden “blat” and a Hawaiian vibrato twist, then Baron and Peacock and Konitz have a sweet three-way. The set ends with “I Can't Get Started,” Peacock adding a springy solo and Frisell capping the evening with glassy cascades. —Paul de Barros

Enfants Terribles: Live At The Blue Note: What Is This Thing Called Love; Body And Soul; Stella By Starlight; I'll Remember April; I Remember You; I Can't Get Started. (60:30)

Personnel: Lee Konitz, alto saxophone; Bill Frisell, guitar; Gary Peacock, bass; Joey Baron, drums.

Ordering info: jazzmart.com



George Schuller's Circle Wide *Listen Both Ways*

PLAYSCAPE 053112

★★★★

Glee can be tough to articulate, but it's unmistakable in "Edwin," one of several impressive tracks on Circle Wide's third album. George Schuller's quintet enhances the piece's Ornette Coleman vibe, and takes its free-bop buoyancy to a place where esprit speaks volumes. A key jazz attraction is the resounding joy of teamwork, and "Edwin" stands as a superb example, indicative of the band's camaraderie, and the album's personality.

Free-bop is term that fits Schuller's work nicely. Other groups led by the drummer, such as the Schulldogs and Free Range Rat, have made point of settling the "in and out" conundrum with judiciousness, their cagey compo-

Ben Holmes Quartet *Anvil Of The Lord*

SKIRL 20

★★★★

On his sophomore release, Ben Holmes shows the deft imagination that's mandatory for today's top brass. With his quartet the Brooklynite fashions a lovely sax-less sound, subtly informed by his interest in Jewish and Gypsy musics, but without any forced eclecticism.

The nod at those influences is most evident in "Otesánek," also a showcase for Holmes' bright, nimble trumpet, and the brooding "Malach Hamvois," but little Klez-modal flavors sneak into much of the outing. Trombonist Curtis Hasselbring eats it up with a gorgeous sound, rather soft but very precise.

Working through nine engaging Holmes originals, the quartet approaches the music according to post-bop conventions—nothing unusual in format or instrumental role, but there's a freedom for them to open up. The laid-back feel, which is fostered between bassist Matt Pavolka and drummer Vinnie Sperrazza, is key to the outfit's communicative aplomb.

The sound of trumpet and trombone is the

sitions pushing the pleasures of swing while warmly embracing abstraction. From the Bobby Hutcherson Blue Notes to the David Murray Black Saints to the bulk of the Fresh Sound/New Talent titles, the best-of-both-worlds approach has been compelling, and as Schuller's album title indicates, he's raising a stick toward this balance. "A Map Would Help" is both tumultuous and adroit, with the constant spills landing exactly where they're supposed to.

A deep bond is formed by the front line of saxophonist Peter Apfelbaum, guitarist Brad Shepik and vibraphonist Tom Beckham. Each has a personal style that pinpoints the freedom-swing blend the boss is shooting for, so there's seldom a moment when someone feels at sea. On "Bed Head" they roll and romp through a curved melody, and their individual clamor buddies up to that of its neighbor. A unity of purpose flows from this music.

The move that hits me hardest is Apfelbaum's decision to use his melodica on Carla Bley's "Jesus Maria." Floating above Beckham's eerie vibes and Shepik's minimal strings, the theme resonates anew, the texture of the melody generating a forlorn sense of solitude. Last time out Circle Wide tipped a hat to Keith Jarrett's American Quartet, with the leader citing that band's ability to simultaneously sound loose and tight.

—Jim Macnie

Listen Both Ways: Could This Be The Year?; Store Without A Name; Better Than Prozac; Edwin; Jesus Maria; A Map Would Help; Newtown; Bed Head. (70:28)

Personnel: George Schuller, drums, bells; Peter Apfelbaum, tenor saxophone, melodica; Brad Shepik, guitar; Tom Beckham, vibraphone; Dave Ambrosio, bass.

Ordering info: playscape-recordings.com



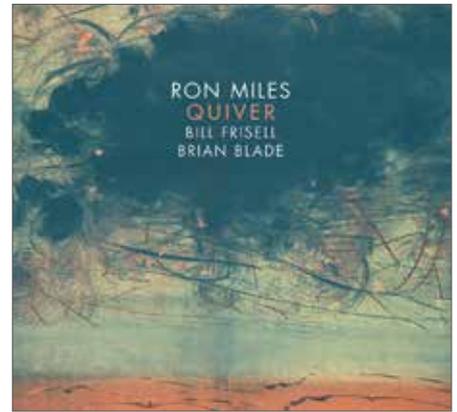
signature on *Anvil Of The Lord*. With a slight West Coast touch, Holmes and Hasselbring enjoy entwining contrapuntally. Whether moving together and apart on "A Doodle For Rhapsody" or engaging in polyphonic free-play on the aggressive title track, they respect the fun job of working it out together.

—John Corbett

Anvil Of The Lord: A Doodle For Rhapsody; Magic Mondays; Moved Like A Ghost; Kingston; Otesánek; The Anvil Of The Lord; Malach Hamvois; Song For Creel Thompson; Nada V. Armitage. (58:05)

Personnel: Ben Holmes, trumpet; Curtis Hasselbring, trombone; Matt Pavolka, bass; Vinnie Sperrazza, drums.

Ordering info: skirlrecords.com



Ron Miles *Quiver*

ENJA/YELLOWBIRD 7728

★★★½

Ron Miles and Bill Frisell intend this one to be a sequel to their 2001 CD, *Heaven*, but expanded from a duet to include drummer Brian Blade. Miles, whose cool liquidity has remained a Denver export for most of his 30 years of recording, compiled these nine pieces from studio sessions and three club performances. They have a welcoming openness and eccentricity.

Miles likes to tinker with antique vehicles. Like *Heaven*, which included an unexpected treatment of "King Porter Stomp," *Quiver* reaches back into the '20s to play the revisionist game. There is Duke Ellington's "Doin' The Voom Voom," which is refracted through a contemporary lens without blocking its direct sightlines to 1929. From the Bix Beiderbecke-Bing Crosby-Paul Whiteman songbook, "There Ain't No Sweet Man..." is transformed from '20s kitsch into a contemporary stroll in which Miles circles from Beiderbecke to Lester Bowie and back again, encompassing lyricism and burlesque.

Where no specific old piece is at hand, Miles relies on the educated guest, as in "Guest Of Honor," in which he imagines himself composing in the manner of Scott Joplin. The melodic line conveys a strong sense of the sweeter side of Joplinesque formality and logic.

But Miles is focused on the past only incidentally. Most of the pieces are his. "Bruise" opens like a cautious cat, then finds footing while always seeming to look around corners. Blade shadows the staccato and angular theme with a complementary outline of rim shots, rolls. There's an almost tongue-in-cheek wit beneath the hide-and-seek ensemble formality. In between, the solo interludes sustain the quirky charm of the piece. "Rudy Go Round" has a similar allure. The bebop line by Miles is convincing, though his trumpet is a bit too lean and laid-back to talk the real bebop talk.

—John McDonough

Quiver: Bruise; Queen B; Mr. Kevin; There Ain't No Sweet Man That's Worth The Salt Of My Tears; Just Married; Doin' The Voom Voom; Days Of Wine And Roses; Rudy-Go-Round; Guest Of Honor. (66:20)

Personnel: Ron Miles, trumpet; Bill Frisell, guitar; Brian Blade, drums.

Ordering info: enjarecords.com

The Hot Box

CD ▾	Critics ▶	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
Konitz/Frisell/Peacock... <i>Enfants Terribles</i>		★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★
George Schuller <i>Listen Both Ways</i>		★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★
Ben Holmes Quartet <i>Anvil Of The Lord</i>		★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★½
Ron Miles <i>Quiver</i>		★★★½	★★★★½	★★★★	★★½

Critics' Comments

Lee Konitz/Bill Frisell/Gary Peacock/Joey Baron, *Enfants Terribles*

An all-star quest for the freedom in the familiar. Pressure is low, rules a work in progress, connections where they happen in these candlelit conversations mediated only by the ghosts of the composers. Konitz and Frisell are wonderful, floating into one another like clouds. —John McDonough

To emerge from the spill zone of recent Konitz releases, a disc's gotta have something extra-special. Here's a case where everything works—Frisell and Konitz winding and unwinding lines, Baron in a relaxed space, Peacock looming large. The saxophonist's lost some of his liquid mercury, but he's so resourceful and soulful it's a joy. —John Corbett

I saw a couple of these shows, and recall rewriting down the word "fugue" in my notebook. The quartet's ideas flow like a brook, bouncing off rocks, splashing, and spilling forward. This music is all about grace. —Jim Macnie

George Schuller's *Circle Wide, Listen Both Ways*

About 30 reputable but ho-hum moments pass before things spring to life with "Edwin," a one-off original from 1960 inspired by the soft lines of Jimmy Giuffrè's "Four Brothers." Similar resolution on "Bed Head" before it crumbles like a cookie. Considerable promise, much of it breached in well-crafted blandness, however. —John McDonough

Some cool moves, shuttling between feels, downshifting as opposed to always stepping on the gas, *Circle Wide* couches serious aspirations in a coy sense of humor, softly jokey, delivered with a light touch. Can see why Schuller likes Carla Bley: same tactic, but he's not as strong a composer, so the droll sometimes loses its motor. —John Corbett

This playful cracked jazz set is just wonderful, especially the way the band flows so naturally from inside to outside. Tom Beckham's aggressively clanking vibes are a delight. Other drummers note how warmly Schuller has recorded his drums. —Paul de Barros

Ben Holmes Quartet, *Anvil Of The Lord*

Intimate and resourcefully shaped brass ménage à deux offers variety of ensemble textures and interplay, with bass and drums responsive partners. Eastern Europe patois and minor keys amount to nothing exotic in these tidy but transparent originals. Playing is clean, thoughtful, and swings occasionally. —John McDonough

Just a smidge on the academic side, but the interplay between the leader and trombonist Curtis Hasselbring is flat-out remarkable, and the music lifts off when they're dancing. It also picks up steam when Holmes' affection for klez comes up. —Jim Macnie

Holmes distills Balkan influences to an emotional core forging playful free jazz that is both lyrical and muscular. His rich, round trumpet sound and immaculate articulation are something to behold, especially when he's double-soloing with trombonist Curtis Hesselbring. Even better, this music swings hard. —Paul de Barros

Ron Miles, *Quiver*

Miles has created a context in which everyone sounds tops. Bass-less can translate into baseless, but not here—the bottom end is perfectly managed as needed by Frisell and Blade is a veritable jet propeller, so motivation is also no sweat. I haven't heard Blade sound so good, in fact. —John Corbett

It's the loosest album in Miles' discography and therefore the most pleasurable—a big win in my book. The trumpeter has previously seemed tentative, and as authority blends with intuition, that is definitely eradicated in this unique trio. —Jim Macnie

Miles' rich, luxurious sound, especially in the low register, is extraordinary, but his severe, lean solo ideas here feel odd with Blade and Frisell's lightly-carried wit. Reviving a retro piece like "Doin' The Vroom Vroom" is fun, but why a cool-jazz scalar solo? "Queen Bee" sounds more like the quietly yearning Miles I know and like; ditto for the celebratory "Just Married." The rest doesn't gel for me, as much as I respect these guys. —Paul de Barros

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Graham Dechter *Takin' It There*

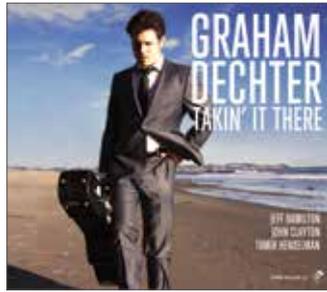
CAPRI 74117
★★★★½

Los Angeles guitarist Graham Dechter wowed listeners with his 2009 debut as a leader, *Right On Time*, and he hits it out of the park again with his sophomore release, *Takin' It There*. The collection leans more toward classics than originals, but Dechter's musicianship and arrangements are full of life. A sprightly arrangement of "Hocus Pocus" combines Dechter's nimble performance with his rare and sophisticated sense of swing. An extended intro underscores the strong relationship between Dechter and his band, which includes John Clayton and Tamir Hendelman. Clayton's blues "Grease For Graham" sees Dechter having a little fun with bent notes and trills. On Jobim's "Chega De Saudade," Dechter plays off Hendelman, the guitarist issuing a series of melancholy lines before blazing out on his own with the melody as it becomes increasingly jubilant. Dechter's "Together And Apart" moves between mournfulness and joy, though it never takes off in flight as so much of the rest of the disc is able to do. —Jennifer Odell

Takin' It There: Road Song; Be Deedle Do; Chega de Saudade (No More Blues); Together & Apart; Takin' It There; Father; Grease For Graham; Hocus Pocus; Come Rain Or Come Shine; Amanda/Every Time We Say Goodbye. (66:16)

Personnel: Graham Dechter, guitar; Tamir Hendelman, piano; John Clayton, bass; Jeff Hamilton, drums.

Ordering info: caprirecords.com



Houston Person *Naturally*

HIGH NOTE 7245
★★★★

Those who are taken with just about anything Houston Person plays will find a whole lot to love about his latest effort. And if you're not familiar with Person, *Naturally* would be a great place to begin being captivated by his inimitable lyricism and phrasing, and his big, lush, supple and inviting tone. Joining Person on this date are Cedar Walton (with whom Person has played since the 1950s but hasn't recorded with for 30 years), bassist Ray Drummond and drummer Lewis Nash. *Naturally* contains a mix of standards and lesser-known tunes. But regardless of the material's familiarity, Person's stamp is all over it.

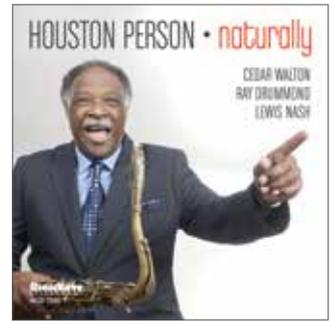
Masters of their craft make what they do seem so effortless and natural, and that's certainly the case here. The melody to "That's All" has plenty of delicacy and tenderness, and on his solo Person employs a mix of single-note runs, scoops and other vocal inflections, and fleet flights of fancy. His phrasing always has a vocal quality: He pleads and cries out on "My Foolish Heart," while on "How Little We Know" you can almost hear the lyrics. Person isn't all about romanticism, however; he really starts to dig in and put in some work about four choruses into "Bag's Groove." It's on this tune, which opens the disc, where Drummond and Nash immediately show off their musicality, class and taste. Walton is great throughout and is a nice compliment to Person. His solos, such as on "Namely You" and the rarely heard Johnny Hodges/Duke Ellington composition "It Shouldn't Happen To A Dream," are master classes in understated elegance. Put simply, *Naturally* is a gem.

—Chris Robinson

Naturally: Bag's Groove; That's All; How Little We Know; Namely You; My Foolish Heart; Red Sails In The Sunset; Don' Cha Go 'Way Mad; It Shouldn't Happen To A Dream; Sunday. (52:23)

Personnel: Houston Person, tenor saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Ray Drummond, bass; Lewis Nash, drums.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com



Bill McHenry *La Peur Du Vide*

SUNNYSIDE 1331
★★★★½

Appearing with the Jakob Bro Quartet at last year's Copenhagen Jazz Festival, tenor saxophonist Bill McHenry played lyrical solos that provided a stark contrast to his rather unusual facial expressions. As his eyes literally rolled back in his head, McHenry looked ill, but his warmhearted accompaniment and soft, textural playing belied his out-of-control exterior.

The contrasts continue on *La Peur Du Vide*, a live set recorded at the Village Vanguard in March 2012. Joined by bassist Eric Revis, pianist Orrin Evans and drummer Andrew Cyrille, McHenry performs four original compositions, ranging from swinging and expansive ("Siglo XX") to avant-garde ramblings ("Trillard") to a pretty ballad ("Today"). McHenry is at his rich and full-bodied best throughout, his deep, barrel-chested tone and precise melodies delivered with a refreshing sparseness of notes.

Referencing saxophonists from Charlie Rouse to Ben Webster to John Coltrane, McHenry's sound is as lovely and his style is ethereal. But here, McHenry is also trapped between two worlds: the straight and the avant-garde. Pianist Orrin Evans furthers the division, often banging free note clusters willy-nilly during solo stretches, providing more disruption than cohesion. Drummer Andrew Cyrille enlivens the cracks in style, his great wisdom apparent in every jarring rhythm and swing aside. But the sum effect is one of musical dislocation, of four musicians not quite on the same page. The music alternately jolts and jumps, soothes and gallops. McHenry's gentle demeanor somehow holds it all together. —Ken Micallef

La Peur Du Vide: Siglo XX; Today; Recognition; In Sight; La Peur Du Vide; Trillard. (49:09)

Personnel: McHenry, tenor saxophone; Eric Revis, bass; Orrin Evans, piano; Andrew Cyrille, drums.

Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com



Evan Parker/ Georg Graewe *Dortmund Variations*

NUSCOPE 1026
★★★★

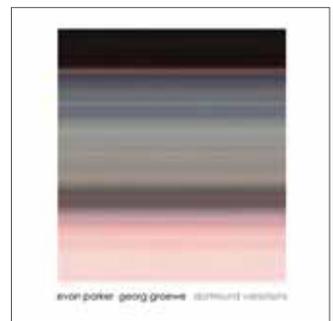
British saxophonist Evan Parker is 12 years older than German pianist Georg Graewe. And a dozen years separate the recordings of their two albums together.

Parker is part of two different partnerships, the Schlippenbach Trio and the Parker-Guy-Lytton Trio, that have cultivated a fantastical level of attunement by working together often over several decades. But with Graewe, a broad timespan seems to have fostered another highly productive form of acquaintance. They can't exactly be said to be strangers, and part of the appeal of *Dortmund Variations* is the common cause they find in contrapuntal improvisation. The three long pieces on this CD (four if you buy the download) proceed with an effortlessness that belies their complexity. It never feels like one is hanging back and supporting the other; their playing is nimble and unhesitant, advancing in quick flurries and elaborately articulated phrases that fit together marvelously even though the music is entirely improvised. They aren't anticipating each other's moves so much as finding out together the depths of their rapport. —Bill Meyer

Dortmund Variations: Dortmund Variation I; Dortmund Variation II; Dortmund Variation III. (74:40)

Personnel: Evan Parker, tenor saxophone; Georg Graewe, piano.

Ordering info: nuscoperec.com



Bobby Hutcherson
Somewhere In The Night

KIND OF BLUE 10102
 ★★ ★



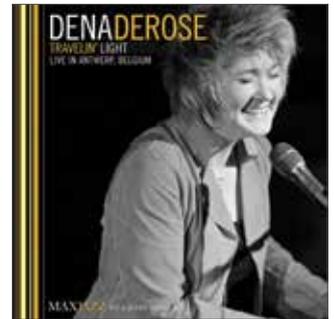
Bobby Hutcherson teams up with Joey DeFrancesco as he did on the organist's 2005 disc, *Organic Vibes*, even revisiting some of the same material. This live date was captured at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola three years later. The rapport that the legendary vibraphonist shares with DeFrancesco is intact, best demonstrated here on "My Foolish Heart," on which Hutcherson's glowing melody floats beautifully across DeFrancesco's simmering accompaniment.

Hutcherson is in splendid form, still capable of hammering out zig-zagging phrases as evident on the sizzling take of his classic "Little B's Poem" and the brisk reading of Duke Ellington's "Take The Coltrane." He also remains suspenseful on mid-tempo material as demonstrated on the delightful John Coltrane gem "Wise One." While Hutcherson may have gotten top billing, it becomes quickly evident that he's entering DeFrancesco's realm. DeFrancesco's trio mates—guitarist Peter Bernstein and drummer Byron Landham—round out the ensemble. Throughout, there seems to be a game of peek-a-boo played on the part of Hutcherson. Often, he enters the compositions at the head, makes a succinct statement and disappears, giving the platform for DeFrancesco to play some soulful and virtuosic improvisations. —John Murph

Somewhere In The Night: Teddy; Little B's Poem; Skj; Take The Coltrane; Wise One; Somewhere In The Night; My Foolish Heart; S'Wonderful. (69:30).
Personnel: Bobby Hutcherson, vibes; Joey DeFrancesco, Hammond B3 organ; Peter Bernstein, guitar; Byron Landham, drums.
Ordering info: kindofbluerecords.com

Dena DeRose
Travelin' Light

MAXJAZZ 507
 ★★ ★★



Dena DeRose is a fine song stylist. That may not sound like much, but it's remarkable. Legions of singers contort their voices into hornlike permutations, hell-bent on deconstructing and reconstructing existing material, so it's refreshing to hear a vocalist who sounds not only natural but also inevitable. She's also a fine piano accompanist, and the results, not only sound unavoidable but as though they can scarcely be improved upon. In musicality and taste rather than style, she's an heir to Jeri Southern. Her voice would fit into a coffee mug, but DeRose's direct expression and musical acumen make her special.

This is her first solo recording, before a pin-drop-quiet audience in Antwerp. It's a program of familiar and lesser-known-but-worthy songs, and she invests them with small but meaningful gestures: laying out for a bar of finger-snapping to emphasize the time on the title number or gliding over descending harmony notes. Smooth glissing and unison piano/voice choruses are all the more impressive because she doesn't call attention to those devices. Cabaret laments like "Portrait In Black And White" and the contemplative "Why Did I Choose You?"—with their melodrama and repeated dramatic pauses—would earn more plaudits at the Gardenia Room than the Blue Note. —Kirk Silsbee

Travelin' Light: Nice 'N Easy; 'S Wonderful; Two Different Worlds; East Of The Sun (And West Of The Moon); Portrait In Black And White; Why Did I Choose You?; How Little We Know; Travelin' Light; Blue In Green; I'm Old Fashioned; I Never Told You; Twilight World; We Will Meet Again. (63:10)
Personnel: Dena DeRose, vocals, piano.
Ordering info: maxjazz.com

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Pancho Molina/Elias Meister *Open For Business*

EMPM 001

★★★★★

One of the thrills of *Open For Business*, the daring, playful debut from Chilean drummer Francisco “Pancho” Molina and German guitarist Elias Meister, is in watching Meister as he morphs from track to track. On the album-opening “Ulises,” he drops a rubbery, unflappably rhythmic afrobeat riff. “Ticket To Timbuktu” finds him starting his solo with crunchy, frustrated grunge-rock chords. “Samurai Tale” calls for chicken-scratch funk patterns. And the Frisell-like “Loose Blues” sends him soaring to greasy, down-home heights. Abetted by bassist Ben Street, keyboardist Leo Genovese, tenor saxophonist George Garzone and Molina, Meister sees each tune as an opportunity to be a

Kat Parra *Las Aventuras De Pasión!*

JAZZMA1004

★★★★★

Pan-ethnic material from singers is au courant, and in San Francisco Bay-area vocalist Kat Parra, the trend has a stylish proponent. While her expression is jazz, Parra’s touchstone is Sephardic music—to which she adds Afro-Cuban, Caribbean and New Orleans elements. She co-produced this rich and festive outing with trombonist Wayne Wallace, who also arranged. They’ve concocted a well-seasoned musical stew here, and their instincts for songs, soloists and treatments are awfully good. The rhythm songs are percussion-driven. The one questionable entry is Erik Satie’s “Gymnopedie No. 1,” which functions better as a reflective piano meditation than a halting vocal. Parra has a lyrical alto voice that dips into a slightly husky contralto and soars to pure head tones. She’s a very good rhythm singer, with facility for many different forms. The melodic contours that she spins on “Call Your Name” are graceful and natural: On the bolero “Lo Siento Mi Vida,” she’s dramatic without being histrionic.

—Kirk Silsbee

different six-stringer.

But not an overpowering vision. Even at its most unpredictable, Meister’s playing never distracts from the other players or the tunes themselves. The tense “Samurai Tale” is marked by a partially minimalist melody and a powerful Garzone solo that cycles through lazy long tones, avant-garde squiggling, thick r&b licks and unstable John Coltrane queries. Built on an enigmatic 6/8 groove, Meister’s “Time Traveler” reveals a Fender Rhodes oration that bounces from sticky, stuttering lines to warm, mysterious harmonies and long, prickly rambles. “Bedstuy Facilities,” so named for the Brooklyn apartment where Molina wrote his share of the compositions on *Business*, rides a sleazy swing beat through a hip, stylish head. And “Loose Blues” lights a fire under its soloists in the form of Genovese’s heated organ invocations. A reformed rock drummer—his old band, Los Tres, made platinum albums in Chile—Molina is pointedly subtle throughout the album, prodding and pushing his band mates but never taking center stage himself.

The standout cut is Meister’s ballad “All My Life,” which opens with just under a minute of gorgeous, droney solo guitar. Once things get moving, Garzone and Meister conjure different melodies simultaneously, each one caressing the other in a nostalgic dance.

—Brad Farberman

Open For Business: Ulises; Bedstuy Facilities; Ticket To Timbuktu; Time Traveler; Samurai Tale; All My Life; Loose Blues. (44:09)

Personnel: Francisco “Pancho” Molina, drums; Elias Meister, guitar; George Garzone, tenor saxophone; Leo Genovese, piano; Fender Rhodes, Hammond B3 organ, E harpsichord, Taisho harp, Surma flute; Ben Street, bass.

Ordering info: eliasmeister.com



Las Aventuras De Pasión: Iko Iko; Diezochoc Anyos; Call Your Name; La Comida de La Manyana; Morenika; Lo Siento Mi Vida; Yo M’Enaori D’Un Aire; Oye Papi; Durme, Durme; Nature Boy; Man On A Wire/Gymnopedie No. 1. (52:54)

Personnel: Kat Parra, Mochi Parra (4), vocals; Mads Tolling, Lila Sklar, violin (3, 6); Emily Onderdonk, viola (3, 6); Renata Bratt, cello (6, 7, 10); John Worley, trumpet (1, 8); Wayne Wallace, trombone (1, 8); Masaru Koga, shakuhachi (7); flute (10), soprano saxophone (5), alto saxophone (1); Murray Low, piano (1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11); Michael Hatfield, marimba (2, 6); José Roberto Hernández, guitar (2, 9); David Belove, electric bass (11, 8); Sam Bevan (2), Chris Lopes (3, 5), acoustic bass; David Pinto, baby bass (9); Paul van Wageningen (1, 3, 8), Curt Moore (5), drums; Dana Pandey, tabla (7); Michael Spiro, congas, batá, percussion (2, 4); Colin Douglas, batá, percussion (4); Matt Lucas, batá, percussion (4); Michaelle Goerlitz, congas, percussion (1, 3, 6); Katja Cooper, darbuka, riq (5); Raúl Pamirez, cajón, checko, quijada (9); Pat Parra, Wendy Waller, Rafael Castro, coro vocals (1, 4).

Ordering info: katparra.com



Michael Formanek *Small Places*

ECM 2267

★★★★★

This music plays like one long song, with pauses. Michael Formanek’s group with alto player Tim Berne, pianist Craig Taborn and drummer Gerald Cleaver is a mesmerizing unit, a collective whose musical syntax continues to suggest there aren’t four musicians here but one. Think of Wayne Shorter’s ongoing band with Danilo Perez for reference.

When I reviewed their first CD, 2009’s *The Rub And Spare Change*, I mentioned that the music “works on you incrementally, to the point where you forget where you started and only know of what you’re hearing at the moment.” That’s exactly what continues to take place with *Small Places*. The title refers to what Formanek says the album is about: “the things within the thing.” The nooks and crannies are where the music takes place, so you want to eavesdrop as much as possible. Examples abound on *Small Places*, a cycle of eight Formanek songs even more developed than the six he offered from *The Rub*. “Slightly Off Axis” begins as a quiet duet between Formanek and Taborn, as if to further the fevered dream of the building swinger “Rising Tensions And Awesome Light.” But once again, as the “axis” begins to tilt, time seems to be standing still, and the dialog between players continues to be everything, what came before and any future music to be heard mysteriously occupied. Berne’s echo-y alto lines mirror Taborn’s toward song’s end, in this, a kind of elegy to night, or a strange dream, or a longing heart. Recurring patterns—as with the closing, building statements of “Rising”; the whimsical here-and-there statements of “Pongs”; the loose-limbed frame that holds the laconic “Seeds And Birdman” together—are like gathering points as the quartet moves towards and away from them.

—John Epland

Small Places: Small Places; Pong; Parting Ways; Rising Tensions And Awesome Light; Slightly Off Axis; Seeds And Birdman; Wobble And Spill; Soft Reality. (71:21)

Personnel: Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Craig Taborn, piano; Michael Formanek, double bass; Gerald Cleaver, drums, shruti box.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

Salute to Pepper Adams' Works

In spite of a low-profile career and a relatively early death, baritone saxophonist Pepper Adams has attracted a number of avid, well-placed fans. For example, in Canada, bandleader Denny Christianson helped keep Adams' name alive after the saxophonist's death in 1986, releasing two albums featuring him as guest soloist, and now jazz historian Gary Carner has fulfilled a 28-year project to celebrate Adams' life and music. Carner, who is also a wine broker, has put together a tribute that is multifaceted enough to rival a Disney film launch: an annotated discography, concerts paired with wine tastings in 30 cities, a five-volume virtual box set and two CDs.

Joy Road: The Complete Works Of Pepper Adams (Motéma 98-102; 75:30/66:43/69:36/64:36/60:40 ★★★★★) and its component parts is a massive undertaking for a composer whose output comprises 43 pieces. Pianist Jeremy Kahn plays a principal role, leading a traditional trio on Volume 1, and a quartet featuring contemporary baritone virtuoso Gary Smulyan on Volume 4, as well as accompanying singer Alexis Cole on Volume 5. A well-travelled journeyman, Kahn played one concert with Adams, and crossed paths with Carner after being given lead sheets to about half of the saxophonist's compositions. Bankrolled by Carner, he led bassist Rob Amster and drummer George Fludas into the studio in 2006 to record 14 pieces he had arranged for the occasion.

One of the most eloquent soloists in the immediate post-bop years, Adams helped take his instrument from the rhythm section to the front line, and his compositions were written as vehicles for his own horn. As Carner points out, about half of the 43 were written during the time when Adams was a soloist-for-hire from 1977-'83. Kahn's approach on Volume 1 is to tackle them head-on, tinkering with tempo or adding new introductions, as required. Some, like a peppy "Valse Celtique," reveal little of the composer's personality, except that he had a particular affinity for waltz time. Others, like "Ephemera," which Adams considered his masterpiece, show an artist who could transfer his own considerable improvisational gifts into compelling songs.

When Smulyan joins Kahn's trio, sparks really fly. On pieces like "Dylan's Delight," which Kahn arranged to reflect Adams' tenure with Charles Mingus, Smulyan's ability to jab and weave through multiple tempo changes reflects his debt to the older bari master. Like Adams, Smulyan's tone is cutting, but filled with subtle variations. The ballad "Julian," Adams' tribute to Cannonball Adderley, fits the big horn like a bespoke suit, and Smulyan fills



Gary Smulyan

COURTESY GARY SMULYAN

every seam with emotion.

Atlanta pianist Kevin Bales takes a much different sonic approach, using fluid guitarist Barry Greene as his main soloist. Greene's floating approach to "Lovers Of Their Time" illustrates Adams' ability to create structures that appear to hover, while the samba "Bossallegro"—a favorite form of Adams'—shows the complexity of his melodies. On "Claudette's Way," Bales and Greene build tension through restraint, while bassist Rodney Jordan works Adams' melodious changes.

Featuring bassist Dennis Irwin in one of his last recordings, Volume 3 fleshes out 11 of Adams' songs, utilizing a sextet that includes trumpeter Joe Magnarelli, trombonist John Mosca and baritone saxophonist Frank Basile in the front line. A sideman for Michael Bubl , Dave Holland, Joe Lovano and others, Basile has followed Adams and Smulyan into the baritone sax chair of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, co-led by Thad Jones and Mel Lewis during Adams' time. While the sextet format might be closer to how Adams envisioned these tunes being performed, the larger lineup obscures some of the intricacies of the structures on display in the trio and quartet settings. Still, as a blowing session, this contains several highlights, and Irwin sounds exceptional.

Volume 5—which, along with a sampler, is available as a physical CD—takes the most risks. In addition to commissioning poet Barry Wallenstein to write lyrics to seven of the pieces, Carner requested that Kahn re-arrange several ballads with faster tempos. Some of Wallenstein's wordplay is overwrought but Cole's voice makes it go down easy. No bari here, but the twin tenors of Pat LaBarbera and Eric Alexander sound sweet, especially on a rocking re-imagining of "Julian."

DB

Ordering info: motema.com

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Hans Theessink & Terry Evans: *Delta Time* (Blue Groove 2220; 58:25 ★★★★★) While the basic idea of covering old blues songs echoes innumerable sessions, the singing and guitar playing duo of Hans Theessink and Terry Evans has delivered an exceptional album of enduring worth. Aided in spots by Ry Cooder and backup singers, they render classics bound to Tampa Red and Jimmy Reed with a world-wise intensity and sense of truth. Theessink's songs in the traditional country blues style receive the same artful treatment. Evans, raised in Mississippi, owns a voice that is well nigh miraculous, full of assurance and plenary power.

Ordering info: terryevansmusic.com

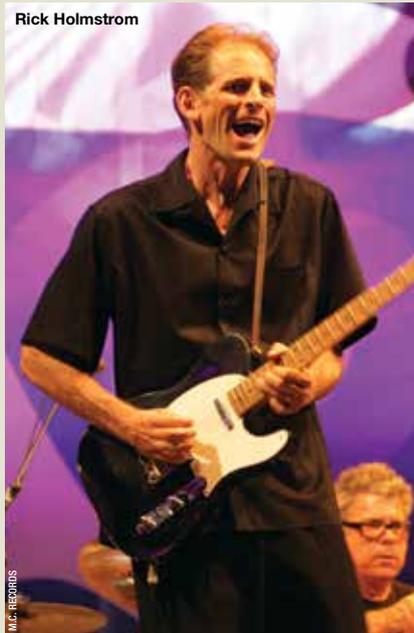
Rick Estrin & The Nightcats: *One Wrong Turn* (Alligator 4950; 50:01 ★★★½) Rick Estrin's deft hand at drawing out the acidic humor of his songs' lyrics by way of his tight, crimped and unusual singing voice makes his third album fronting the Nightcats yet another addicting treat for listeners who "get it." No one skews ordinary assumptions about life and relationships as entertainingly as this Californian wise guy. He's also a superlative harmonica player, and his band rates among the best in the business. Guitarist Kid Andersen, praise him, takes leave of his senses powering a retro-rocket tune he calls "The Legend Of Taco Cobbler." A second pleasing sideshow has drummer J. Hansen singing his tough-minded manifesto "You Ain't The Boss Of Me."

Ordering info: alligator.com

Dave Fields: *Detonation* (Fields Of Roses 884501; 63:15 ★★★★★) Where most blues-rock guitarists with a raging fever for Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Beck strike self-indulgent poses as swashbucklers, Dave Fields stands apart as a flamboyant entertainer whose songs about "napalm loving" and false prophets have a vividness that seems fresh and true. The highlight of this David Z-produced album is "Pocket Full Of Dust," a powerful testament to the strength of his talent for using voice and guitar to cauterize emotional hurt.

Ordering info: davefields.com

Rick Holmstrom: *Cruel Sunrise* (M. C. 0070; 50:33 ★★★★★) With his first headlining album since 2007, Rick Holmstrom—also Mavis Staples' bandleader—constructs an exemplary showcase for his formerly underappreciated charisma. The fetching tones of Holmstrom's vocals combine with the warm atmospheric of the rhythm section to lure us into emotionally involving original tunes that have his guitar cutting as sharply as the thorns of a honey locust tree. Staples is his fellow supplicant on "Lord Please." The *Deluxe Edition* (M. C. 0071; 50:33/43:12 ★★★★★) adds a dozen evocative instrumental tracks, some



with bassist Jeff Turmes on saxophone.

Ordering info: mc-records.com

Guitar Mikey & The Real Thing: *Out Of The Box* (Earwig 4965; 70:34 ★★★½) Given his latest recording, Mikey McMillan—a Canadian with Chicago blues experience now living in Clarksdale, Miss.—is better off conjuring up his own blues-rock hybrid than expressing fealty to tradition. His reedy, light but attractive tenor, his acceptable guitar work and his decent songwriting, however, can't sustain 15 songs for more than an hour. A good 40-minute album lies herein, starting with the progressive blues "Back To You."

Ordering info: earwigmusic.com

Tommy Schneller: *Smiling For A Reason* (Cable Car 0311-37; 46:59 ★★★★★) The entertainment value of this release soars whenever German saxophonist Tommy Schneller makes like a 21st century Junior Walker or King Curtis as the horns and a rhythm section jump the blues with flair. He's also a fun singer, an English-speaking Lower Saxony hybrid of Taj Mahal and Dr. John. Bonus: Henrik Freischlager stimulates a listener's temporal lobe with his guitar magnetism.

Ordering info: cablecarrecords.de

Elliott Sharp's Terraplane: *Sky Road Songs* (Yellowbird 7724-2; 52:41 ★★★½) It's not crazy to use the name Elliott Sharp in the same sentence with the name Hubert Sumlin. Guitarist Sharp uses Sumlin on one track, "This House Is For Sale," and it's storytelling of the most compelling sort, a vocal by Eric Mingus gravy. Not a sucker for the same old shuffles, Sharp keeps things edgy and probing in his songs, ready to call on baritone saxophonist Alex Harding and trombonist Curtis Fowlkes.

Ordering info: yellowbird-records.com



Jacob Garchik *The Heavens: The Atheist Gospel Trombone Album*

YESTEREVE RECORDS 04

★★★★½

I am a sucker for solo efforts, but had no idea this brief but perfectly formed outing was one until I looked for other personnel credits. I figured Jacob Garchik had gathered five or six other atheist tailgaters who love gospel. That he put everything together in his apartment studio in Brooklyn, multitracking trombone, sousaphone, baritone horn, slide trumpet and alto horn, is, frankly, remarkable.

Although the text from such as Stanley Crouch, Einstein, Woody Allen, Mark Twain and the Bible accompanying each track is merely ancillary to the sounds, the commentary gives deft insight into Garchik's wit and worldview. "Digression On The History Of Jews And Black Music," extrapolating from Crouch's ruminations on the topic, is one of the livelier pieces, reminding of Garchik's experience with upbeat brass bands. A volley of stammering trombones back in the mix introduces another battalion of trombones nearer to the ear. Anchored by nimbly articulated sousaphone, various banks of bones oppose each other. When the sousa breaks into cut time, you're gonna shake your booty, then there is a nice modulation.

No doubt Garchik has put some time in on all these horns. His tone is full and in command on every instrument, notably the bluesy slide trumpet that heralds "This Song Is The Center Of The Universe." This is followed by the gorgeous title cut: "When you look at the stars, what do you see?" asks Garchik. The buoyant-as-clouds lament has shades of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and seems more like the musings of agnostic rather than atheist, proving that soul and intellect aren't always mutually exclusive. "Creation's Creation" pays succinct tribute to Stephen Hawkins' scientific explorations into the formulation of the universe.

—Michael Jackson

The Heavens: Creation's Creation; The Problem Of Suffering; Optimism; Dialogue With My Great-Grandfather; Digression On The History Of Jews And Black Music; This Song Is The Center Of The Universe; The Heavens; Glory/Infinity/Nothing; Be Good. (26:13)

Personnel: Jacob Garchik, trombone, sousaphone, baritone horn, slide trumpet, alto horn.

Ordering info: jacobgarchik.com

The Bad Plus
Made Possible

EONE 2392

★★★★

Dave King
I've Been Ringing You

SUNNYSIDE 1336

★★★★½

You gotta love these guys, the way they keep at it, having come up with one of the most distinctive group sounds in music, let alone jazz. And *Made Possible*—their eighth studio recording—is just one more example of how a standard, mostly acoustic piano trio can not only remain relevant and interesting but also continue to be a showcase for what's possible in jazz, all three members contributing new material.

Listen to "Sing Out For Silver Dollar," for example. It's got the recurring (some might say monotonous) piano lines and thumping bass and drum beats. Seems like there's not a lot going on melodically, either. But, after repeated listens, little gem-like features emerge. When pianist Ethan Iverson throws in a few classical flourishes, the band makes an indeterminate interlude in between everything that lacks a beat, color, you name it, and that segue becomes a nifty bridge. Ditto for "For My Eyes



Only," its desultory cadence full of feeling, the slouching rock clock an opening for not only Iverson but bassist Reid Anderson and drummer Dave King to run around. The 14-minute-plus "In Stitches" is the perfect followup to the uptempo party feel of "I Want To Feel Good Pt. 2." They close with a bit of calm, visiting Paul Motian's lovely ballad "Victoria." Full of attitude, rambling, brainy yet brawny, The Bad Plus continues to reorganize what a song is, maybe what a big chunk of jazz is.

Dave King's *I've Been Ringing You* is just as adventurous in exploring the realm of what a piano jazz trio can do. And with a set of standards, no less. With equally simpatico mates

in pianist Bill Carrothers and bassist Billy Peterson, King leads this group into very idiosyncratic treatments of seven chestnuts along with the group's meditative title tune. But unlike other off-kilter approaches, these guys somehow manage stay close to the tune's origins, reflecting more on the makers, perhaps.

Beginning with Gordon Jenkins' "Goodbye," that ethereal mood created with this song of lament is furthered by an equally spacious rendering of Ornette Coleman's "Lonely Woman." Listeners may think of how drummer Motian was capable of reinventing his early experiences with Bill Evans taking standards in novel, pleasurable new directions. Carrothers' light touch is formal but it's quirky, it's forceful but it's mainly light. Everything fits, and King's playing echoes Motian but still maintains his own signature stylings, e.g., the way he punctuates their uptempo take on Cole Porter's "So In Love." Echoes of The Bad Plus emerge with a relatively raucous rendition of "People Will Say We're In Love."

—John Ephland

Made Possible: Pound For Pound; Seven Minute Mind; Re-Elect That; Wolf Out; Sing For A Silver Dollar; For My Eyes Only; I Want To Feel Good, Pt. 2; In Stitches; Victoria. (57:50)

Personnel: Reid Anderson, bass, synthesizers, electronics; Ethan Iverson, piano; Dave King, acoustic and electronic drums.

Ordering info: eonemusic.com

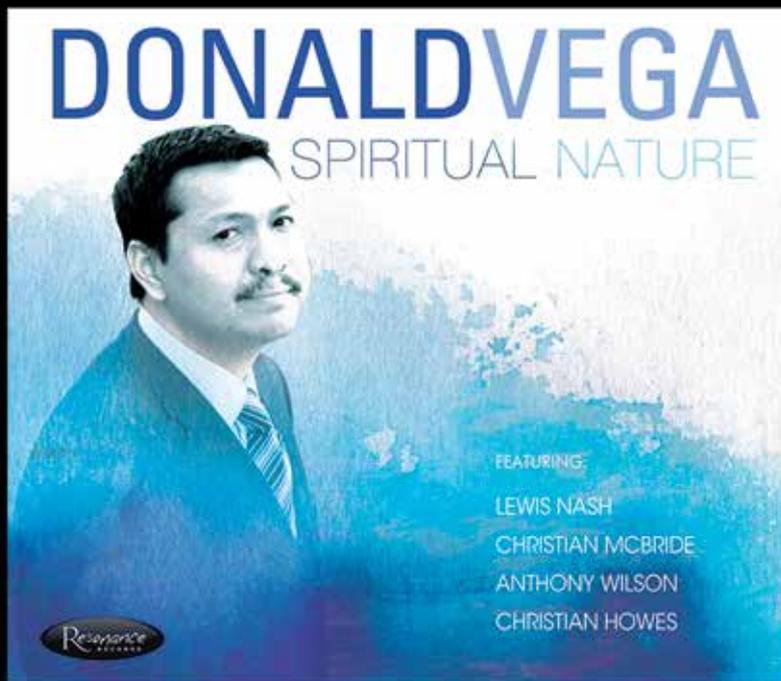
I've Been Ringing You: Goodbye; Lonely Woman; So In Love; Autumn Serenade; If I Should Lose You; People Will Say We're In Love; This Nearly Was Mine; I've Been Ringing You. (38:45)

Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com



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Oregon Family Tree

CAMJAZZ 5046

★★★★½

The music begins in a celebratory mood with this latest edition from the legendary Oregon. Still trailblazing, the group that fell between the cracks of jazz and everything else many moons ago is revisiting the *Family Tree* with 12 varied originals, seven of which come from their putative leader, guitarist/keyboardist Ralph Towner. While its music is always a treat, this release is a mixed bag.

Joining Towner are original co-founders Glen Moore on bass and reed player Paul McCandless along with percussionist Mark Walker, a different-generation player who's stayed the course longer than any other drum-

mer since original member Collin Walcott died in 1984. All of which makes for one of the best group sounds around. Typically, Towner provides the most memorable music here, beginning with the lively "Bibo Babo" and "Tern." McCandless' oboe joins with Towner's classical guitar to state the "Bibo" theme, that familiar busy yet engaging writing priming the pump for brief solos, the Latin feel of "Bibo" giving way to the jazzier, more elevated "Tern." Here we get the best hearing of Towner's magic as this swinging melody carries the day. Walker's on traps, McCandless switches to soprano sax and Towner at the piano. Moore sneaks in a brief solo before the band takes off. It's over too soon, the tempo perhaps a bit too brisk, the solos once again too brief, the pace almost obscuring the song's lovely, distinctive lines. Then the music slows a bit with a series of more reflective tunes, the waltz "The Hexagram" hearkening back to the band's early days when a more baroque, chamber-like feel permeated the writing. "Creeper" is a bouncer number with Towner at the synths, but the music is still played at, in this case, a relaxed rock gait. McCandless' bass clarinet here isn't as busy as is his wont with the lighter horns. The solemn title track is well-played but is without any stirring moments, while the modal swing of "Stritch" suggests something to come but then suddenly ends. —John Ephland

Family Tree: Bibo Babo; Tern; The Hexagram; Creeper; Jurassic; Family Tree; Stritch; Mirror Pond; Moot; Julian; Max Alert; Carnival Express. (60:58)

Personnel: Paul McCandless, oboe, bass clarinet, soprano sax, flute; Ralph Towner, classical guitar, piano, synthesizer; Glen Moore, bass; Mark Walker, drums, hand percussion, drum synthesizer.

Ordering info: camjazz.com

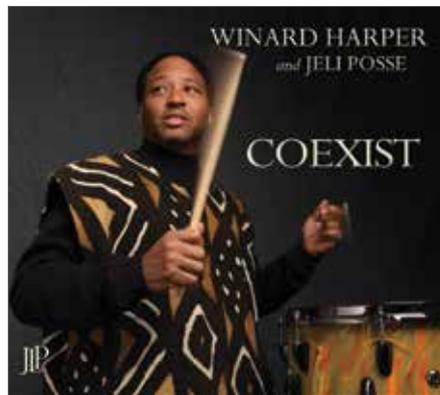
Winard Harper And Jeli Posse Coexist

JAZZ LEGACY PRODUCTIONS 1201018

★★★★★

When it comes to post-Motown hard-bop drumming, Winard Harper is one of his generation's greatest standard bearers. Oftentimes, Harper's goal seems plain and simple—propel the ensemble with a dynamic sense of swing.

On *Coexist*, Harper delivers a scintillating set of mostly modern hard-bop numbers, played with imagination. It's always a delight to hear George Cables' catchy gem "Helen's Song," and here Harper brings out some of the composition's inherent r&b qualities by underscoring it with nicely placed backbeats, while the horn-heavy ensemble articulates the melody with enormous focus and guile. "Dedicated To You" comes to life wonderfully, thanks to trombonist Michael Dease's sumptuous arrangements and Jovan Alexandre's soulful tenor saxophone. The best moments occur on Harper's originals on which he incorporates African percussion. The funky "Jeli Posse" showcases Harper's mastery at the balafon as well as Mark Gross' serpentine alto saxophone improvisation. Harper uses the balafon

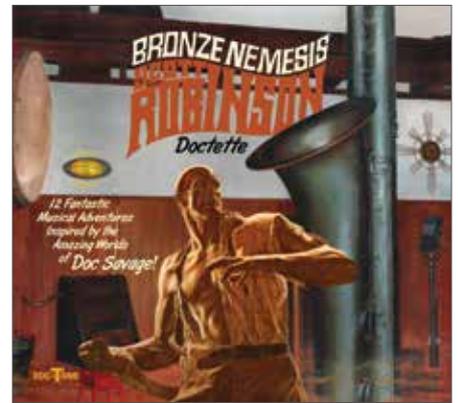


to greater use on the stunning "Ummah" as his snaky phrases intertwine with Abdou Mboup's talking drums and Roy Assaf's declarative piano accompaniment underneath an evocative melody. —John Murphy

Coexist: Something Special; Helen's Song; Ummah; Amazing Grace; Hard Times; In A Sentimental Mood; Get Tough; Bientot; Triumph; Dedication To You; Coexist; Jeli Posse. (63:38)

Personnel: Winard Harper, drums, percussion, balafon; Bruce Harris, trumpet, flugelhorn; Jovan Alexandre, tenor saxophone; Michael Dease, trombone; Roy Assaf, piano; Stephen Porter, bass; Frank Wess, tenor saxophone and flutes (6, 10); Mark Gross, alto saxophone (5, 12); Sharel Cassidy, alto saxophone (8); Tadataka Unno, piano (4, 5, 6); Allonne Faye, percussion and djembe (1, 2, 3, 8, 12); Abdou Mboup, percussion, talking drums, and bongos (2, 3, 8, 11, 12); Jean Marie, percussion (3, 11, 12).

Ordering info: jazzlegacyproductions.com



Scott Robinson Doctette Bronze Nemesis

DOC-TONE 01

★★★★½

"The Metal Master" is a typical tune from saxophonist Scott Robinson's *Bronze Nemesis*. After Robinson announces the name of the piece, trumpet and tenor sax combine for an ominous melody over muttering piano and fluttery cymbals. Next, instruments are traded in for a piece of metal, which is scraped for the next 40 seconds. These first two sections repeat in anticipation of a giddy funk groove spearheaded by elastic double bass. Five minutes later, an avant-garde percussion segment takes over; metal is manipulated, gongs are struck. Then it's back to the funk section before the percussion passage closes things out. The circumstances of the disc's conception are also unprecedented. Inspired by the Doc Savage pulp novels of the early 20th century, each title on *Nemesis* is also the title of a Savage book. After choosing 12 titles, Robinson wrote the music, and came up with a cast to help record the suite.

Nemesis is also a showcase for Robinson's prowess on a number of wind instruments. Robinson states the theme of "The Secret In The Sky" through sly, rich-toned alto clarinet. "Fortress Of Solitude" is an opportunity for him to improvise tonally on the bass saxophone. On "Land Of Always-Night," he sticks to flute. And on "The Man Who Shook The Earth," he breaks out the contrabass sax.

Also making a cameo is the late bassist Dennis Irwin, who passed away two days prior to the recording. He is heard on "The Golden Man," a sophisticated solo performance recorded live in 2001. —Brad Farberman

Bronze Nemesis: Man Of Bronze; The Secret In The Sky; He Could Stop The World; Fortress Of Solitude; Mad Eyes; The Metal Master; The Golden Man; Land Of Always-Night; The Living Fire; The Man Who Shook The Earth; Weird Valley; The Mental Wizard. (62:41)

Personnel: Scott Robinson, tenor saxophone, bass saxophone, euphonium, slap-stick, gong, egg shaker, photo-theremin, fish rattle, bird whistle, alto clarinet, Moog Vanguard theremin, small bell, chime tree, Moog Model 201 theremin with Maestro sound system, vibes, timpani, wind machine, Korean gong, moaning, vocals, big red bell, Chinese cymbals and gongs, oscillating metallic sonic-dispersion plate, boing box, giant Chinese barrel drum, tambourine, magic wand, metal, flute, alto saxophone, hi-hat, Hammond organ, contrabass saxophone, mezzo-soprano saxophone, octavini; Randy Sandke, trumpet, moaning, metal; Ted Rosenthal, piano, electronic harpsichord, moaning, metal; Pat O'Leary, bass, moaning, metal; Dennis Mackrel, drums, little bell, moaning, tubes, metal, treme terra; Dennis Irwin, bass (7).

Ordering info: scienson.net

Brazil's Experimental Party Music

Few Brazilian stars of the '70s have gotten less attention in the United States than Tim Maia, the singer who almost singlehandedly introduced uncut soul and funk to his homeland. When he was 17, he moved to the United States and became obsessed with r&b, and he took it home when he was deported in 1964. ***The Existential Soul Of Tim Maia: Nobody Can Live Forever* (Luaka Bop 80899 0067; 63:59 ★★★★★)** ought to rectify the situation, because at his best—like one the irresistible opening track “Que Beleza,” with its psychedelic Ernie Isley-style guitar leads—he can rival his American peers. Most of the 15 tracks on this compilation are drawn from a strange year-long period in his brief career when he was involved with a religious cult and made two very hard-to-find self-released albums, giving short-shrift to his earlier, more successful material, but it's all compelling, a mix of humid funk and sultry soul in sung in English and Portuguese.

Ordering info: luakabop.com

Milton Nascimento, on the other hand, was embraced in the States right out of the gate, largely because of the rich harmonies employed in gorgeous compositions. The first two songs on his recently reissued 1967 debut album ***Milton Nascimento (Abril Coleções 978-85-7971-514; 33:42 ★★★★★)***, “Travessia” and “Três Pontas,” have since become jazz standards. The album, which features stunning arrangements by Eumir Deodata and pitch-perfect instrumental support by Tamba Trio—and is the first in a deluxe 20-volume reissue series of the singer's work packaged in gorgeous hardbound books—already finds him bridging bossa nova, Brazilian popular music, jazz and the sophisticated side of the Beatles in a way that was all his own.

Ordering info: colecões.abril.com.br

On Mariene De Castro's latest album ***Tabaroinha* (Universal Brazil 60252788476; 49:33 ★★★½)**, this former singer in Timbalada harks back the vintage sound of '70s samba, recalling the sounds of Beth Carvalho and Alcione. Amid percolating grooves, sweet-toned cavaquinho and piquant guitar licks, and occasional strings, her full-bodied voice soulfully and forcefully drives the proceedings, whether on classic samba de roda or in nods to Northeastern baiões. Most of the material is new, with a sprinkling of standards by the likes of Dorival Caymmi, Luiz Gonzaga and Martinho da Vila.

Ordering info: dustygroove.com

There's a touch of Os Mutantes on the lovely, low-key ***Gambito Budapest* (YB**



Music 078; 41:34 ★★★★★), a homemade duo project between Orquestra Imperial vocalist Nina Becker and her husband, drummer Marcelo Callado. Strip away the Portuguese lyrics and there's not much on this CD that sounds Brazilian about the record, except for the jacked-up forro of “Essa Menina,” but who cares when the melodies are so hooky and elegant? The couple plays almost everything themselves, trading vocals and harmonizing with an elusive intimacy: one of the year's best pop efforts.

Ordering info: yb.com.br

Bnegão, a former member of the popular Rio De Janeiro group Planet Hemp with Marcelo D2, moves further from his hip-hop roots on ***Sintoniza La (Coqueiro Verde; 38:38 ★★★★★)***, the new album with his band Seletores De Frequência, where he hectors more than he raps. On most of the tracks the band summons the sound of Recife mangubeat pioneer Chico Science, serving up a hard-hitting funk with occasional digressions into reggae, and, on “Subconsciente,” ham-fisted hard rock/punk. It's party music with some serious backbone.

Ordering info: coqueiroverderecords.com

On his new album ***Tropicalia Lixo Lógico (Tropicalia Junk Logic) (Passarinho 0001; 50:58 ★★★★★)***, Tom Zé follows up albums dissecting samba, pagode and bossa nova with one about the musical movement that established him more than 40 years ago: Tropicalia. As usual, Zé does not bother departing from his long-standing musical trademarks—mordant humor, a predilection for cavaquinho licks and lots of twisted noises—in analyzing the movement, but leaving aside his usual tricky wordplay the music hits the mark, even if you have no idea what he's singing about. Even at 76 he remains as sharp and musical as ever.

Ordering info: dustygroove.com

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Jacám Manricks *Cloud Nine*

POSI-TONE 8098

★★★★★

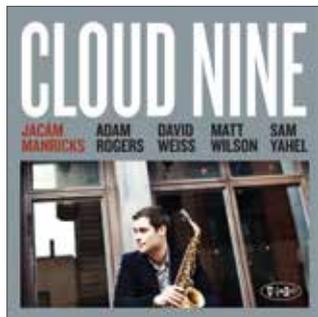
If you are looking to gift a hip jazz CD that won't offend yet will impress, here is a contender. Matt Wilson has little to prove other than his usual sensitivity and responsiveness, and Sam Yahel's organ provides the shag-pile on which everything rests. Australia-born alto saxophonist Manricks has a Sri Lankan/Portuguese background and both jazz and classical forebears in the family, so is steeped in cultural interchange; his artistry possesses old-soul provenance. Subtle metrical shifts abound, and the title piece has punning implications of 9/8. Yahel does a superb job imbuing the Finnish Hymn "Ystava Sa Lapsien" with a haunting, elegiac quality. Wilson whips up a quiet storm in back to stem any syrup as Adam Rogers, the consummate sideman, drop shadows.

On "Any Minute Now," a phrase syllabically repeated in various modulations, Yahel drops a fragment of "If Only I Had A Brain," after the leader's bouyant, well constructed solo and a passing suggestion of the Harold Arlen melody in Rogers' foray. —Michael Jackson

Cloud Nine: Cloud Nine; Ystava Sa Lapsien; Any Minute Now; Take The Five Train; Cry; Alibis And Lullabies; Serene Pilgrimage; Loaf; Luiza. (47:26)

Personnel: Jacám Manricks, alto saxophone; David Weiss, trumpet; Adam Rogers, guitar; Sam Yahel, organ; Matt Wilson, drums.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com



Marco von Orelli 6 *Close Ties On Hidden Lanes*

HATOLOGY 709

★★★★★

It's rare to encounter a debut album marked by the poise, vision and ambition that distinguishes *Close Ties On Hidden Lanes*, the superb new album by Swiss trumpeter Marco von Orelli, but there's no missing that this is a musician with loads of ideas. After listening to the album's eight meticulously crafted, deftly arranged originals, it comes as little surprise that Orelli is fluent in jazz tradition and contemporary music. He employs 12-tone writing in his theme for the epic "Narragonia," but he gives his excellent ensemble plenty of space in the extended passages of collective improvising, while the episodic "Marsala's Strandgut" recalls the buoyant post-Stravinsky chamber-jazz feel pioneered by Dutch bassist Maarten Altena.

On other pieces Orelli is content to juxtapose and collide disparate disciplines with jazz tradition; compact horns—the leader joined by trombonist Lukas Briggen and bass clarinetist Lukas Roos—shape a sneaking, elegant melody line over a fat groove before dissolving into an effective patch of free improv, with one player at a time picking up the compositional thread. "Poetry" takes its inspiration from a visual poem by Man Ray, with the musicians playing Morse code like tones that morph from terse coldness to vocalic shapes, until some of the band actually does use their voices. Pianist Michel Wintsch is a secret weapon, alternating between shaping Orelli's structural ideas, adding oblique harmonies and extra rhythmic bounce, or enhancing textures and mood with judiciously deployed synthesizer. —Peter Margasak

Close Ties On Hidden Lanes: Prolog; Marsala's Strandgut; Urban Ways; Poetry; Narragonia; Sweet Lotus Suite; Rrrr; Maris. (56:30)

Personnel: Marco Von Orelli, trumpet; Lukas Briggen, trombone; Lukas Roos, bass clarinet; Michel Wintsch, piano, synthesizer; Kaspar von Grünigen, bass; Samuel Dühler, drums.

Ordering info: hathut.com



Dan Block *Duality*

MILES HIGH RECORDS 8620

★★★★★

For his fifth album as a leader, Dan Block has embraced vulnerability, pairing his superlative clarinet and saxophone abilities with a range of other instruments played by pianists Ted Rosenthal and Rosanno Sportiello, vocalist Catherine Russell and others. Their stripped-down interpretations of standards have no safety net. The trick of the album is for Block to be engaging and rhythmic on a reed instrument. Sometimes, as with Russell on "If You Could See Me Now," this seems a bit more of a challenge than with a bedrock instrument like the bass. Block's use of a range of winds goes beyond the simple idea of doubling; each instrument he pulls out is played as convincingly as the previous one. Block's tenor is a deep, round, enveloping sound. It's a perfect counterbalance for Russell's vocals, but it can also match the depth of Hudson's bass. His clarinet is smooth and soothing, given an anachronistic touch by Matt Munisteri's steel guitar. "Chorino For Dennis" and "Out Of Touch," the only two originals on the album, show Block backed by harmonic instruments. The first tune, written for the late bassist Dennis Irwin, is a Brazilian samba, with Block's clarinet accompanied by Paul Meyer's nylon-stringed guitar; on "Out Of Touch," Block, now on bass clarinet, is joined by Munisteri. On these pieces, Block is given a strong harmonic and rhythmic base—something he has to conjure up on most of the CD. Block's originals allow him to focus less on keeping things together and more on playing the tune, but his interaction with melodic instruments in a duet setting that makes *Duality* special. —Jon Ross

Duality: Long Ago and Far Away; I'm Bringing A Red Rose; Chorino For Dennis; If You Could See Me Now; Out Of Touch; Pitter Panther Patter; Lyric Waltz; In The Dark; My Own Morning; The Jazz Samba; I'll Build A Stairway To Paradise. (51:31)

Personnel: Dan Block, saxophones, clarinets; Scott Robinson, saxophone, clarinet; Catherine Russell, vocals; Paul Meyers, Saul Rubin, guitar; Matt Munisteri, steel guitar; Mark Sherman, vibraphone; Ted Rosenthal, Rosanno Sportiello, piano; Lee Hudson, bass; Tim Horner, drums.

Ordering info: milesighrecords.com



Weasel Walter/Mary Halvorson/Peter Evans *Mechanical Malfunction*

THIRSTY EAR

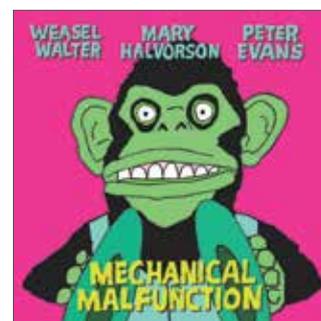
★★★★½

On the heels of last year's excellent *Eclectic Fruit*, drummer Weasel Walter, guitarist Mary Halvorson and trumpeter Peter Evans do not slow down and outdo themselves with an effort that reveals even more focus and an extended palette of moods. In all likelihood, this is the result of a concerted decision to bring compositional elements rather than to wholly deal with pure improvisations, even though the structures are quite loose and a couple bookending collective explorations are added for good measure. The fixed elements seem to neither restrict the trio nor confine the musicians to predictable patterns. To the contrary, they seem to give them a new momentum and Walter, Halvorson and Evans often engage in headlong sprints towards a cliff but miraculously manage to avoid the crash by performing an impressive balancing act. Packed with distortions, skittish runs, angular riffs, or statements that are enhanced by a great attention to details and evolve into intense build-ups or swells, the compositions display some jerkiness or machine-gun fire without being devoid of humor. —Alain Drouot

Mechanical Malfunction: Baring Teeth; Vektor; Broken Toy; Klockwork; Freezing; Malfunction; Organ Grinder; Interface; The Last Monkey On Earth; Bulging Eyes. (54:09)

Personnel: Weasel Walter, drums; Mary Halvorson, guitar; Peter Evans, trumpet.

Ordering info: thirstyear.com



Michael Benedict & Bopitude
Five And One

PLANET ARTS 3101219

★★★★

At this point it's a little quaint to revisit the hard-bop canon of the 1950s with anything other than reconstruction in mind. Between Blue Note, Prestige and Savoy, the era was well documented and defined. Drummer Michael Benedict, a good in-the-pocket exponent, leads a quintet of burners on some of the better, yet seldom-addressed material from the post-bop years. The results are enjoyable, heartfelt and even a little surprising.

Except for Nat Adderley's venerable "Work Song," the tunes are overlooked gems. Tunes with inviting changes by J.J. Johnson, Thad Jones, Hank Mobley and Sonny Stitt are of the time and place. Two by latter-day composer/arranger Gary McFarland are recast so as to enlarge the program. Bobby Watson's fine "As Quiet As It's Kept" is the most contemporary piece, and right at home. Benedict doesn't try to overpower the band or douse the proceedings with long drum solos. Except for the occasional short solo, he's happy supplying the groove, stoking the time, sticking the backbeat, shading with cymbals and serving the music. The soloists are incisive, pithy and nimble. Pianist Bruce Barth has more harmonic vocabulary to choose from than, say, Horace Silver or John Lewis, yet he doesn't jar with his choices. Especially invigorating is Gary Smulyan's uptempo tearing through a couple of choruses with only Benedict behind him on Silver's "Infra-Rae." —*Kirk Silsbee*

Five And One: The Eternal Triangle; Three And One; Compulsion; As Quiet As It's Kept; An Oscar For Oscar; Work Song; Enigma; Train Samba; Infra-Rae; Last Rites For The Promised Land. (59:36)

Personnel: Chris Pasin, trumpet, flugelhorn; Brian Patineau, tenor saxophone, Gary Smulyan, baritone saxophone; Bruce Barth, piano; Mike Lawrence, bass; Michael Benedict, drums.

Ordering info: planetarts.org



Reggie Quinerly
Music Inspired By Freedman Town

REDEFINITION MUSIC

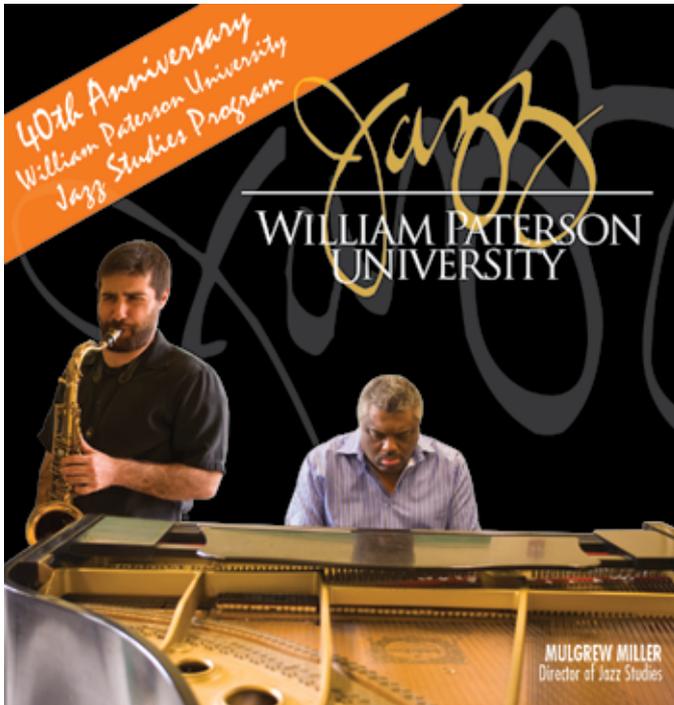
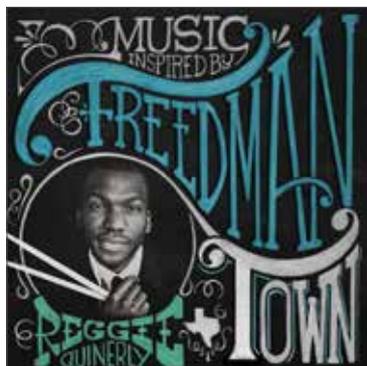
★★★★½

Following the Emancipation Proclamation, newly freed slaves in Houston came together to create a community they called Freedmantown. Drummer Reggie Quinerly's disc pays tribute to Freedmantown in a soulful set of mostly originals. The bright shuffle of "#13 A Corner View from Robin Street" starts things off swinging. Guitarist Mike Moreno's long and melodic lines are a perfect match for the relaxed "Live From The Last Row," and pianist Gerald Clayton shows his excellent comping skills. Quinerly's drumming is tight, clean and crisp. The album closes with an uptempo take of "I'm Old Fashioned," featuring inspired and burning solos by Clayton and Tim Warfield, and "Sentimental Journey," again highlighting the bluesy work of the pianist and saxophonist. The infectious and celebratory "Freedmantown" features vocalist Enoch Smith Jr., who I would've liked to have heard more from here. —*Chris Robinson*

Music Inspired By Freedman Town: #13 A Corner View from Robin Street; Live From The Last Row; Freedmantown; Fenster; Freedmantown Interlude; #2 Xylent Letters; A Portrait Of A Southern Frame; The Virginia Gentleman; Victoria; I'm Old Fashioned; Sentimental Journey. (56:49)

Personnel: Reggie Quinerly, drums; Tim Warfield, tenor saxophone (1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11); Matt Parker, tenor saxophone (3, 7); Antoine Drye, trumpet (3, 7); Corey King, trombone (3, 7); Mike Moreno, guitar (2, 4, 6, 11); Gerald Clayton, piano (except 3, 5); Vicente Archer, bass (except 9); Enoch Smith Jr., vocals, piano, organ; Sarah Elizabeth Charles, vocals (9).

Ordering info: reggiequinerly.com



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Reuben Wilson Trio Revisited

AMERICAN SHOWPLACE MUSIC

★★★

Organist Reuben Wilson's *Revisited* is an enjoyable and funky disc by a fine organ trio. Wilson's easy blues "Here We Go" starts things off. Guitarist Bob DeVos takes the first solo, which he begins in the lower register. He gets higher and higher with each chorus, creating tension and drama. Wilson is also great here, and the way he builds his solo off of little ideas, runs with them, and introduces counter ideas is just how any blues musician would draw it up. The trio lays "See See Rider" over an infectious quasi-second-line feel that is the perfect foundation for DeVos' chordal statement of the blues workhorse's head. The soul-jazz groove on Wilson's "A Good Idea" is straight nasty. Wilson, who generally holds back from unleashing the power of his instrument, is a bit more up front here with big chords and sustained notes. An additional highlight of *Revisited* is the mixing and mastering, as Wilson's B3 sounds huge, biting and electric.

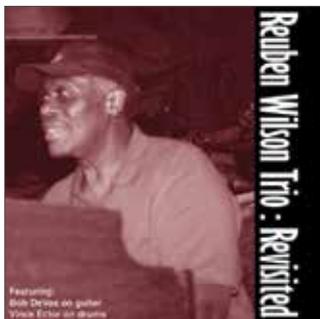
A couple minor issues detract from the album. Wilson kills it on Denzel Best's uptempo "Wee," but the time never locks in. The album closes with Jimmy Smith's "Back At The Chicken Shack." The bluesy and greasy shuffle is a head-bopping way to close, but the solos are a tad predictable in their line shape and phrase length. On this type of album, one almost comes to expect a "take me to church" moment, but one didn't quite happen—things here are a bit more subtle.

—Chris Robinson

Revisited: Here We Go; The Shuffle; See See Rider; Moonlight In Vermont; A Good Idea; Misty; Wee; Back At The Chicken Shack. (42:55)

Personnel: Reuben Wilson, organ; Bob DeVos, guitar; Vince Ector, drums.

Ordering info: cduniverse.com



Pharez Whitted For The People

ORIGIN RECORDS 82624

★★★½

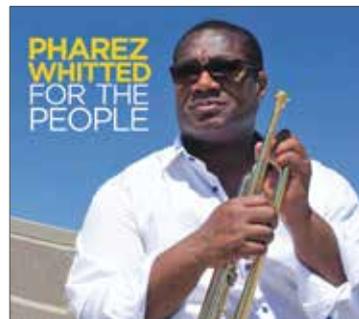
"Watusi Boogaloo," the first track on Chicago-based trumpeter Pharez Whitted's fourth album, starts things off with a funky, in-the-pocket groove; the exceptional guitarist Bobby Broom sets up a one-note, rhythmic vamp before Whitted and saxophonist Eddie Bayard ascend and descend, navigating a medium-tempo, spiraling figure. It's a laid-back melody, deliberately navigated with ease, giving the tune a light, casual nature grounded in a permeating rhythm, but the playing is full of energy. The feeling of a casual rhythmic momentum engulfs the rest of the album, which is composed of all original tunes. Whitted has two superb conspirators in Broom and Bayard, both of whom bring dynamic interpretations to each tune. Many of the compositions fall in the middle of the road, tempo-wise, and these are where Whitted is best. The trumpeter does slow things down toward the middle of the album, but the unbridled energy and engaging playing remains. "Sad Eyes" is the best of the ballads; Whitted matches up with Broom on the melody, giving Bayard room for a soprano counterline. "Hope Springs Eternal," the last tune on the disc, sums up the band's approach in a relatively succinct package. Bayard, Broom and Whitted all take lengthy, explosive solos after reading down a funk-inflected melody.

—Jon Ross

For The People: Watusi Boogaloo; If They Could Only See; Another Kinda Blues; Freedom Song; For the People; It Is What It Is; Sad Eyes; Keep The Faith; The Unbroken Promise; Venture; Hope Springs Eternal. (66:11)

Personnel: Pharez Whitted, trumpet; Eddie Bayard, saxophones; Bobby Broom, guitar; Ron Perrillo, piano and keyboards; Dennis Carroll, bass; Greg Arty, drums.

Ordering info: origin-records.com



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Fatoumata Diawara

Fatou

WORLD CIRCUIT/NONESUCH 531209

★★★★

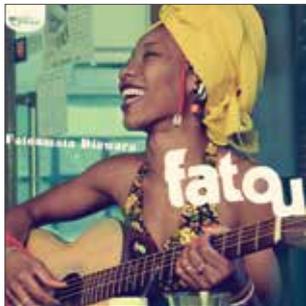
Born in the Ivory Coast to Malian parents in 1982, Fatoumata Diawara took a circuitous path toward music, but her debut album proves that she ended up in the right place. Growing up in Bamako, she pursued dance and acting, and she eventually moved to Paris to join the marionette street theater company Royale de Luxe, where she began singing. Diawara has gone on to perform with Herbie Hancock and Orchestre Poly-Rythmo De Cotonou among others. But Diawara's work with Malian singer Oumou Sangare resonates most on *Fatou*, which includes a song written for her musical mentor—"Makoun Oumou." The affinities with Sangare reside primarily in the subjects of Diawara's humanist songs, which seek compassion for the weak, the unwed and the outcast. There's more than a touch of Wassoulou singing in her forceful but pretty voice, yet Diawara's songs embrace an accessible, pop-soul flavor that seamlessly juggles Mande traditionalism, afrobeat, funk and folksy balladry. Most of the tracks feature lean arrangements with guitar, bass and percussion, but some songs add spare embellishment, whether on electric guitar or ngoni and kora. Tony Allen, Toumani Diabate and John Paul Jones make cameos, but no one steals the spotlight from the singer.

—Peter Margasak

Fatou: Kanou; Sowa; Bakonoba; Kèlè; Makoun Oumou; Sonkolon; Alama; Bissa; Mouso; Willé; Boloko; Clandestin. (43:58)

Personnel: Fatoumata Diawara, vocals, guitar, calabash, shaker; Moh Kouyate, electric guitar; Ousmane Keita, kamel ngoni (1); Boris Persikoff, keyboard (1); Alioune Wade, bass (1, 10); Guimba Kouyate, guitar (2, 10); ngoni (5, 6, 11); Seb Rochford, drums (2, 3, 5, 11); Sonny, bass (2); Sola Akingbola, percussion (3, 4, 8, 9); Hilaire Penda, bass (3, 5, 9, 11, 12); Madou Kone, calabash (4); Jon Grandcamp, drums (4); Leon Richard, bass (4); John Paul Jones, bass (6); Thomas Grommaire, guitar (8); Papius, bass (8); Tony Allen, drums (9); Toumani Diabate, kora (10); Jon Grandcamp, drums (10); Francis Arnaud, drums (12).

Ordering info: nonesuch.com



Jesse Fischer & Soul Cycle

Retro Future

OBLIQSOUND 31

★★½

Brooklyn-based keyboardist, producer and engineer Jesse Fischer plays with astounding energy; creative ideas seem to issue forth from his hands to his instruments at a geyser-like rate. But he and his young band, Soul Cycle, are at their best when they show restraint, letting a rhythm drive its way toward some resolution. On *Retro Future*, that economy appears on "Cyberphunk," a swirly, atmospheric piece punctuated by a voiceover about the electronics-driven "world war ... about information" taken from the cult movie *Sneakers*. Here, Fischer opts for the warm sound of a piano, putting his skills as a player in front of his apparent curiosity as an engineer. He digs into the melody without letting it be consumed and overrun by constantly changing programmed drum beats. A welcome spare instrumentation also backs vocalist Chris Turner on his neo-soul and acid-jazz-influenced "Electric Ladyland."

Too often, though, the compositions are overpowered by a surfeit of beats and sounds, all fighting to take the listener's ear in different directions. The slick opener, "Tanqueray And Tonic," and its spacey follow-up, "Moon Ship," have so much going on rhythmically that at times they feel like props for Fischer's engineering know-how. —Jennifer Odell



Retro Future: Tanqueray & Tonic; Moon Ship; Aquarius; Digital Savanna; Cyberphunk; Electric Ladyland; Gotham Underground; Midnight Dancer; Keep The Faith; Landslide. (50:27)

Personnel: Jesse Fischer, Rhodes, organ, Moog, kalimba, melodica, glockenspiel, keyboards, choir vocals, vocoder, juno, shaker, triangle; Brian Hogans, flute, alto sax, Rhodes; Jean Caze, trumpet, flugelhorn; Corey King, trombone; David Linaburg, guitar; Solomon Dorsey, bass, key bass, Moog bass, choir vocals; Gabriel Wallace, drums; Shawn Banks, percussion.

Ordering info: obliqsound.com

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Historical | BY DAN OUELLETTE

Garbarek, Rypdal Sets Reveal Early ECM Saga

Dial back 40 years and witness jazz undergoing yet another evolution with a provocative strain of original music streaming from Norway (and Sweden) via Munich, Germany, on the burgeoning ECM label. While ECM continues to marvel today with a rainbow of creativity, it also unleashes a series of reissue box sets, called Old & New Masters. The latest two editions of the series focus on Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek and guitarist Terje Rypdal, who were influenced by—and performed with—such expatriates as George Russell and today continue to break new sonic ground for ECM.

Garbarek's *Dansere* (ECM 2146-48; 42:15/46:07/38:37 ★★★★★) offers an intriguing view of his transformation from an avant-garde painter of sounds on 1971's *Sarti* to an upbeat bound in lyricism on 1973's *Witchi-Tai-To* to the darker, Nordic folk-influenced poetic journey on 1975's *Dansere*. The common denominators in the three outings are Swedish pianist Bobo Stenson and Norwegian drummer Jon Christensen. *Sarti* largely resides in an abstract soundscape ripe with dissonances, sparseness and grit. Garbarek leans back on his tenor with an elemental gusto, especially on the title track where he shrieks, wails and yearns while Stenson supports with jarring stabs at the keyboard and a gentle pianism. Appearing on only this Garbarek disc of the boxed set, Rypdal rips with a knife-edged fury as the entire quintet plays like an out collective. The most noteworthy tracks here include the short "Close Enough For Jazz" with Garbarek on bass saxophone dueting with bassist Arild Andersen, the scurrying "Irr" and the spacy "Fountain Of Tears—Part I and II," where Garbarek settles the tumbling and rushing with a peaceful flute close.

The Garbarek-Stenson quartet (with Swedish bassist Palle Danielsson replacing Andersen) plays it straight and fast on *Witchi-Tai-To* (the best disc of the batch) with covers of tunes by Carla Bley, Carlos Puebla, Don Cherry and the title track, a Jim Pepper composition. That tune starts off as a splendid piano exercise by Stenson. Two years later, Garbarek shifted his attention again with *Dansere* by infusing some of the pieces with a Nordic folk sensibility, most obviously heard on "Lokk," a tune based on a Norwegian cattle call arranged by the leader who plays his tenor saxophone with long, lonely tones. Also folk-influenced is the short "Skrik & Hyl" ("Cries & Confusion"), which is delivered as a tenor-arco bass duet.

On Rypdal's *In Studio & In Concert* (ECM



Terje Rypdal

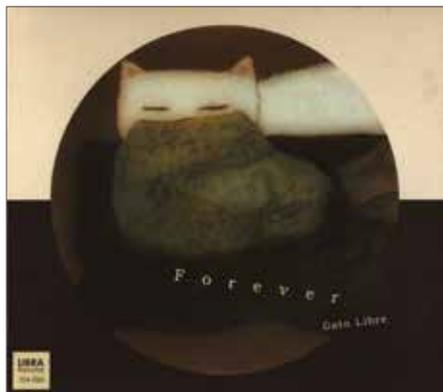
2136-38; 41:08/46:17/68:00 ★★★★★), his jazz-rock guitar talents are on full display as well as his composition finesse. The first two discs complete the re-release of his 1975 double-album, *Odyssey*, which was truncated when it was first issued as a single CD. Back in the mix is one of Rypdal's most famous tunes, "Rolling Stone," which clocks in at close to 24 minutes as an arena-sized, prog-rock excursion with the guitarist soaring above his solid rhythm section.

Throughout the album he plays gracefully yet powerfully with equal measures of anguish and rumination. While the meditative "Adagio" is compellingly cinematic with his single-note ecstasy, "Over Birkerot" rocks out with a bracing apocalyptic depth that features Rypdal dueling with electric bassist Sveinung Hovensjø. Highlights of pause include the "Better Off Without You" lament and the lyrical gem of the bunch, "Ballade," featuring trombonist Torbjørn Sunde.

The fresh surprise of the Rypdal box is the previously unreleased *Unfinished Highballs*, a 1976 Swedish radio recording with the Swedish Radio Jazz Group big band. With the voluminous horn and woodwinds and the bold orchestration, Rypdal takes a different tack in the midst of swinging tempos and horn swells, playing tenderly and exclamatory. Released from his largely color-and-texture duties on *Odyssey*, keyboardist Brynjulf Blix gets to expand his voice too with a grooving electric piano solo on "The Golden Eye" and a solo organ muse on "Dine And Dance To The Music Of The Waves."

Even with the setting foreign from what Rypdal was used to, he still speaks loudly, especially on the rocker "Talking Back," propelled by his electric guitar fuel. **DB**

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com



Gato Libre

Forever

LIBRA 104-030
★★★★½

Natsuki Tamura/Satoko Fujii

Muku

LIBRA 102-031
★★★★★

Listening to husband-wife team Satoko Fujii and Natsuki Tamura improvise, either alone together or as part of the quartet Gato Libre, provides a window into their relationship and unique world of sound. That world extends to Catalan romanticism and to textural whispers.

Muku, which features seven compositions by Tamura, begins with plaintive, grainy trumpet and moves to a combination of puckered breath and full keyboard runs. Fujii has a broad repertoire of techniques, stretching from spare, resonant gestures to fulsome, propulsive chords. She can surprise, as on “Dune And Star,” with a sudden rhapsodic flourish or a woody, choked-note rejoinder to her partner’s tart turn of phrase. The aptly titled “Galvanic” moves in a more aggressive direction, blending stabbing trumpet bursts with dissonant, pointillistic piano. On “Patrol,” Fujii’s strategy is to counter Tamura’s stealthy, seven-note theme with an extended improvisation that seems disconnected but develops to reveal a logical connection back to the head.

Most of the compositions on *Muku* are knottier and more discordant than the eight Tamura pieces on *Forever*, which are filled with wistful bowed bass, bright guitar and spectral accordion chords. The structures are relatively simple, built on a shifting ostinato or broadly spaced single notes. On “Moor,” “Waseda” and the title piece, Tamura makes sweeping references to Spanish music, calling to mind some of Miles Davis’ *Sketches Of Spain*. Adding to the dominant feeling of melancholy is the fact that this was founding member Norikatsu Koreyasu’s last recording; he died within days of the performance. His beautiful tone is a highlight. —James Hale

Forever: Moor; Court; Hokkaido; Waseda; Nishiogi; Japan; World; Forever. (59:30)
Personnel: Natsuki Tamura, trumpet; Satoko Fujii, accordion; Kazuhiko Tsumura, guitar; Norikatsu Koreyasu, bass.
Muku: Dune And Star; In Barcelona, In June; Muku; Galvanic; Patrol; In Paris, In February; Clone. (43:50)
Personnel: Natsuki Tamura, trumpet; Satoko Fujii, piano.
Ordering info: librarecords.com

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Jessica Pavone *Hope Dawson Is Missing*

TZADIK 7727

★★★★½

Although violist Jessica Pavone is well known as a genre-averse improviser, working regularly with Anthony Braxton, Mary Halvorson and Taylor Ho Bynum, she's always devoted a good chunk of time to composition, and her latest effort continues a steady growth curve. *Hope Dawson Is Missing* is a song cycle that warps lines between classical chamber music and pop like its instrumental predecessor *Songs Of Synastry And Solitude*, but this time out Pavone has written lyrics to seven of the eight pieces, abstractly addressing what she calls "these of destruction and rebuilding, migration, falsities and undeniable truths."

Those words are voiced by Emily Manzo, a superb classical pianist who also works in art-pop, who brings a measured approach to the composer's melodies. Pavone's writing for the Toomai String Quartet, on the other hand, is formal and accomplished, yet it flows from pop-like accessibility to rich contrapuntal explication. Guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Tomas Fujiwara complement those sounds, underlining certain pieces with rhythmic firepower, contrasting colors and added heft, yet they never upstage the string core of the performances.

—Peter Margasak

Hope Dawson Is Missing: Hope; Providence; Dawn To Dark; If You Can't; Plutonium; Jump To The Thunder; Deconstruction, Reconstruction; And At Last. (40:19)

Personnel: Pala Garcia, violin; Erin Wright, viola; John Popham, cello; Andrew Roitstein, double bass; Mary Halvorson, guitar; Tomas Fujiwara, drums; Emily Manzo, voice.

Ordering info: tzadik.com



Jacques Schwarz-Bart *The Art Of Dreaming*

NAIVE 64006

★★★★½

This is the domestic release of an album that bowed in Europe earlier this year. A better-than-respectable *tour de force* by French tenor saxophonist Jacques Schwarz-Bart, it serves as his introduction to the American audience.

Schwarz-Bart is featured with a capably pliant rhythm section of pianist Baptiste Trotignon, bassist Thomas Bramerie and drummer Hans Van Oosterhout. Schwarz-Bart conceived the 10 pieces as a musical rumination on the meaning and methodology of mystic writer Carlos Casteneda, for which he can be forgiven. By any other name, this is a tenor workout by a journeyman player on modal and free frameworks. At his best, Schwarz-Bart taps into a fluid source of inspiration that has him navigating loose and lucid. But as a saxophone showcase, the rewarding trio gets short-changed.

Schwarz-Bart has an airy but full-bodied sound. He's an expressionist, but even though the structures are minimal, he's no abstractionist. Lyricism abounds, and he spins melody like thread out of a sewing machine. Bar lines are disregarded, and Schwarz-Bart's liquid overblowing acts as graceful accenting. He plays pretty—pure and simple.

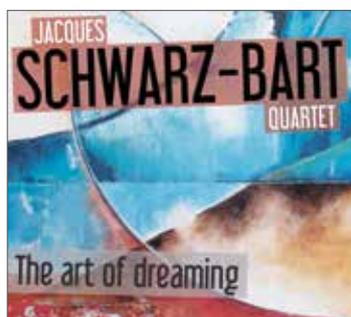
Trotignon delivers such tantalizing piano work—like the unaccompanied chorus on "DLO Pann"—that his playing begs for more exposure. His few features serve as much-needed relief from the near-overload of Schwarz-Bart's rich yet high-caloric improvisation.

—Kirk Silsbee

The Art Of Dreaming: Blues Jonjon; It's Pain; Peyoti; Moods; Now; Lullaby From Atlantis; Massasoit; DLO Pann; Emile; Voir. (58:16)

Personnel: Jacques Schwarz-Bart, tenor saxophone; Baptiste Trotignon, piano; Thomas Bramerie, bass; Hans Van Oosterhout, drums.

Ordering info: aztecmusicque.com



Sean Wayland *Click Track Jazz: Slave To The Machine Volumes 1 And 2*

SEED MUSIC RECORDS 019

★★★★★

Australian pianist Sean Wayland has released nearly a record a year since 2000, but the sprawling *Click Track Jazz* shows Wayland at his most prolific. The two discs meld straight-ahead acoustic with fusion, a combination that turns out to be more of a peaceful coexistence than a battle. While much of the EWI-driven sounds harken back to 1980s experimentation, the amalgamation works well in this context.

Volume one opens with the effervescent "Belt Parkway," a tune that sets the tone for the rest of the collection. With a bit of help—Wayland showcases no less than four drummers, four bassists, three guitarists and a host of other musicians—he lays down broad acoustic piano chords to propel the frantic, busy EWI melody, then taking the mantle for an acoustic piano solo, his style evolving from hammered single notes to glistening runs. When Mark Shim returns for his EWI solo, this technological leap forward seems fitting. Wayland composed most of the tunes, the majority of which are frenzied, bubbly flits of modern jazz, branching out to many different musical avenues in one song. The general pace makes tunes that don't follow this driving idea stand out. In "Devotional," Wayland puts vocalist Kristen Baradi amid a sensitive mixture of acoustic piano and electronic whirs and beeps.

—Jon Ross

Click Track Jazz: *Slave To The Machine Volumes 1 And 2:* Disc One: Belt Parkway; Boxing Day; Conglomerate; Funkify Sesame Street; Marshmallows; Devotional; Compression Is Your Friend; I Still Got It; Ditty; Oh Yeah; Flypaper; Solo Piece; China Takes Over; Stop I Want To Get Off (7:1:04). Disc Two: 2012; Neu Neu; Giant Steps; Waiting For The Computer To Take Over; The Show Must Go On; QY70; Rotovibe; Technocalypse; Mark Is Enough; Special When Lit; Superarc; Neu Neu Blow; I'll Face Ya (62:18).

Personnel: Sean Wayland, piano, keyboards; Kristen Baradi, vocals; Mark Shim, EWI; Donny McCaslin, alto saxophone; Orlando Leflemming, Matt Penman, Jeff Hanley, Matt Clohesy, bass; Michael Voleanu, Wayne Krantz, James Muller, Nate Wood, guitar; Mark Guiliana, Keith Carlock, Jochen Rueckert, Andrew Gander, drums.

Ordering info: seanwayland.com



Roni Ben-Hur/ Santi Debriano *Our Thing*

MOTEMA MUSIC 95

★★★★★

Guitarist Roni Ben-Hur, bassist Santi Debriano and drummer Duduka Da Fonseca have worked and played together for years, but *Our Thing* marks their first recording as a group.

Mesmerizing and softly propulsive, the disc speaks to a unique combination of creative concepts and influences. From the artists' respective globe-spanning backgrounds to their individual interests, which have ranged from samba to bop to free-jazz and beyond, the lineup alone promises well-executed, left-of-center ideas. Although the project was born out of collaborations between Ben-Hur and Debriano at an annual jazz camp they co-lead in France, Da Fonseca adds a necessary depth to the group's overall sound. One of his best moments is on the tango "Milonga For Mami," built around a regimented marching drum beat over which various percussive voices shake, rattle and roll in fits and starts, creating multidimensional layers within the song. A long, slow whistle connoting a departing steam train reflects the group's attention to curious, but fitting, details.

—Jennifer Odell

Our Thing: Green Chimneys; Milonga For Mami; Our Thing; Fotografia; Afrosopic; Anna's Dance; Isabella; Earl's Key; Suave; Ela E Carioca; Let's Face The Music And Dance. (66:43)

Personnel: Roni Ben-Hur, guitar; Santi Debriano, bass; Duduka da Fonseca, drums and percussion.

Ordering info: motema.com



Jeff Davis
Leaf House

FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT 407

★★★

Drummer Jeff Davis' *Leaf House* begs a question: Is it a fresh statement by a composer and trio with something new to say, or does it betray its influences a bit too much?

The impact of Vijay Iyer's outfit is felt, as approaches by several piano trios on ECM, such as Bobo Stenson's. Davis' group, rounded out by pianist Russ Lossing and bassist Eivind Opsvik, specializes in that integrated approach in which it is not always clear who is soloing or accompanying, who is setting the agenda or providing answers. The title track recalls Iyer's trio, from the heavy thumping and driving bass line paired with the jabbing and piercingly dissonant piano figures, to the implied meter, to the thick texture and roiling feel. Lossing's lines are angular and jaunty, and the space he adds between phrases allows Davis and Opsvik to take over momentarily. "Overath," "Catbird" and "Saints Albert" almost feel like a single 18-minute piece, dominated by Opsvik's dark bass solo. "Transitional Whales" is a tale of two tracks. The first half finds Opsvik brushing long and soft arco lines out of time with Lossing and Davis augmenting the sparse atmosphere with light piano filigrees and quiet tom hits. It's similar to what was heard on "Catbird." Halfway through, they introduce new material in a quick tempo and this transition doesn't make sense.

—Chris Robinson

Leaf House: Leaf House; Faded; Overath; Catbird; Saint Albert; William Jacob; Transitional Whales; Lion Mouth. (53:47)

Personnel: Jeff Davis, drums; Russ Lossing, piano; Eivind Opsvik, bass.

Ordering info: freshsoundrecords.com



Laverne Butler
Lost And Found Again

HIGH NOTE 7239

★★★★½

Laverne Butler's CD appearances are so scarce—this is only her fifth in 20 years—that I had to remind myself that I was *not* about to address the late LaVern Baker of r&b legend.

Butler's voice and instincts are rooted in this jazz-pop tradition of Dinah Washington and Nancy Wilson. Like them, she slides seamlessly between one and the other. Her intonation is bright and sophisticated with darkish overtones. Her sound and songbook would be at home in the East Side cabaret scene. Butler can do a blues, of course. But when she does "The Bluest Blues," a bit of Dizzy Gillespie hokum from the early '50s, she drapes it in extra layers of virtuosity and artifice, as if it not to be taken too seriously. The jazz-pop vocal sound is best showcased when the material is the best. As before, Butler offers a mix of pedigrees, but by and large they serve each other well, largely because she resists overselling and caricaturing the lyrics. "Any Place I Hang My Hat Is My Home" occasionally winks but never becomes coy, while her middle and brisk tempos glide in an unforced manner. "Smile," normally done as a lament, swings with a gentle pulse that never squeezes the words.

—John McDonough

Lost And Found Again: Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home; Be A Sweet Pumpkin; I've Told Every Little Star; Everybody's Somebody's Fool; The Bluest Blues; Travelin' Light; That's All; Be Anything (But Be Mine); In My Own Little Corner; I'll Never Be Free; Smile. (62:17)

Personnel: LaVerne Butler, vocals; Houston Person (3, 7, 9, 11), tenor saxophone; Bruce Barth, piano; Ugonna Okegwo, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com



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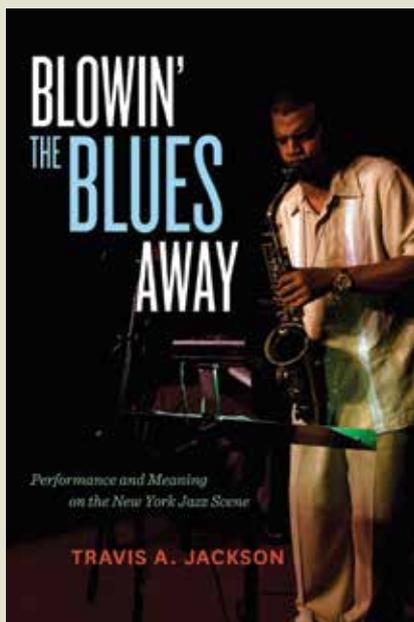
Scholarly Take On '90s New York Jazz Scene

During the 1990s, Travis A. Jackson, now a professor of music at the University of Chicago, conducted field research on the New York jazz scene. The results, *Blowin' The Blues Away* (University of California Press), is a new landmark in scholarship that uses ethnomusicology to analyze how jazz musicians work, and their cultural sources. Throughout the book, Jackson balances his detailed analysis with a wider overview of critical and historic discourse while also providing ample space for musicians to speak for themselves.

Jackson's book follows a couple other significant studies that take a deep look at how jazz musicians create their art, and the cultural circumstances that lead them there—particularly Paul Berliner's *Thinking In Jazz* and Ingrid Monson's *Saying Something*. While these predecessors took a broad and historical view, *Blowin' The Blues Away* delves into a single localized scene during a particular time. Jackson's concentrated scope allows him to bring in more details not just about the performances, but also how all the interactions among musicians, critics and audiences shape jazz improvisation.

Jackson sat in on recording sessions that James Williams, Steve Wilson and Peter Bernstein led, and released as albums in the mid 1990s. Throughout this chapter (entitled "In The Studio And On Stage"), Jackson includes clear diagrams and detailed explanations of how the instrumentalists set up in the studio, how their collaboration changes during the course of the recording and provides the musicians' explanations of why they made their decisions. Essentially, this chapter takes a similar approach—and adds personal dimensions to—a DownBeat "Transcription" section but with the focus on the recording process as much as notes on a page. Williams, who died in 2004 (at age 53), deserved more attention during his brief lifetime, so it's bittersweet to read about the recording of his *Truth, Justice And The Blues* CD. The pianist is presented as a model for a bandleader who brings his own concepts and efficient work ethic to the studio while also constantly encouraging and engaging challenging ideas from his first-rate young sidemen.

Along with delving into how the musicians themselves shape their end results, Jackson contends that their interaction with audiences are crucial components of shaping a blues-derived jazz aesthetic (primarily in the chapter, "Jazz Performance As Ritualized Activity"). Using his field work as an observer at such clubs as the Village Vanguard, Jackson details how



a set of expectations among everybody in a venue can oftentimes frame the shape of a tune itself. In one example, Kevin Mahogany alters his pitch in response to goading from the audience on "Since I Fell For You." Jackson illustrates the shared cultural codes that made such a shift happen. Jackson argues that it is only through looking at all of the elements of a jazz performance (rather than just the recording, or the stage) that one can study the music. He writes, "it is more accurate to see jazz's primary meanings as contextual, as process-oriented rather than that product-oriented." Jackson also illustrates how the musicians' construction of a tune's form is a response to their performance spaces using another diagram, this one with cocentric circles. These graphics, as well as Jackson's arguments, should be debated among jazz majors, graduate students and professors for years to come.

While Jackson was conducting his research, a shouting match flared up among different camps of jazz historians, and has persisted in some corners today. Terry Teachout and Richard M. Sudhalter in particular chastised Stanley Crouch and Albert Murray for proposing that jazz is primarily African American music, rather than American music, and thus ignored white contributions. Jackson describes this fight in his chapter, "History And Memory." As opposed to some of these partisans, Jackson presents a considerate and thoughtful case that jazz has always been tied to the black experience—including its enduring connections to music from African American churches and blues. Ultimately, though, the music's practice remains, as Jackson writes, "decidedly oriented more toward the future than the past." **DB**

Ordering info: ucpress.edu



Alexander Von Schlippenbach *Schlippenbach Plays Monk*

INTAKT 207

★★½

For jazz pianists, paying tribute to Thelonious Monk is an almost inescapable exercise. For Alexander Von Schlippenbach, it's also become familiar, given that he's already recorded all of the Monk catalog. Yet the challenges never change: How do you honor this unique legacy? And where do you find the line between that and your own voice?

Schlippenbach Plays Monk doesn't quite find that place. It's not a matter of musicianship. He possesses a full command of the keys and a temperament that's easy to recognize. But for a clue on why his exertions here aren't ultimately satisfactory, I look back to the first Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition. One of the judges, Barry Harris, spoke to a young aspirant who had just been eliminated. Harris noted that people forget that Monk wrote and played for dancers. If Harris spoke for the consensus, Schlippenbach's victory would have been doubtful. Monk swung, spoke with an unprecedented harmonic concept, and humor and sadness were intrinsic to his work. These elements are missing in Schlippenbach's conception. In their place, he brings an academic perspective that borders on severe.

On the seldom-heard Monk composition "Locomotive," he begins with a heavy tread that settles into a slow, ambling stride; it seems intended to evoke the title rather than the substance of the piece. Over this, Schlippenbach floats airy upper-register lines that suggest Satie more than swing. You hear this as well in the shift from prickly seconds in the verse to a delicate melodic figure on the bridge, before he hits a decisively Monkish II-V-I at the end, as if in afterthought. Similarly, his "Epistrophe" feels strangely dispassionate, and he addresses almost somberly, with the same absences of dynamic contrast and tonal nuance. —*Bob Doerschuk*

Schlippenbach Plays Monk: Reverence; Work; Interlude I; Locomotive; Introspection I; Introspection II; Coming On The Hudson; Interlude 2; Epistrophe; Interlude 3; Reflections; Interlude 4; Interlude 5; Brilliant Corners; Interlude 6; Interlude 7; Pannonica; Interlude 8; Played Twice; Epilogue (58:20)

Personnel: Alexander Von Schlippenbach, piano.
Ordering info: intaktrec.ch

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Gerald Clayton

On Sept. 22, 2012, DownBeat hosted a live Blindfold Test for the 17th consecutive year at the Monterey Jazz Festival, and this time the artist in the hot seat was Gerald Clayton. The pianist listened to a range of music in front of an audience of 400 people at the Dizzy's Den venue. Included in the crowd was Gerald's father, bassist John Clayton.

Keith Jarrett

"New Dance" (*Sleeper*, ECM, 2012, rec'd 1979) Jarrett, piano; Jan Garbarek, soprano saxophone; Palle Danielsson, bass; Jon Christensen, drums.

It's Keith Jarrett. He was the first person who came to my mind. As soon as you hear that singing voice, that's a big clue. Keith is one of the masters, and that singing voice is evidence that he's so free and open when he's improvising. He's expressing himself 100 percent, to that point of not being able to hold back. I admire him for that. It's a constant reminder that when you're performing, you're essentially naked in front of the audience. There's an intensity, a fire here, which makes me think this is Keith in the '70s or '80s. This song is basically a one-chord vamp where he takes all these different angles and hangs all these different textures on that one chord.

Geri Allen

"LWB's House" (*Geri Allen & Timeline Live*, Motéma, 2010) Allen, piano; Kenny Davis, bass; Kassa Overall, drums; Maurice Chestnut, tap percussion.

I'm stumped. I wish I could have heard a proper solo in this. I know there's a tap dancer. The pianist feels very free to take it out and play avant-garde. It's played not inside but angular, and the pianist even flubs notes—that is part of the expression—which I dig because it feels so free. It could be Danilo [Pérez] or [Jason] Moran, but I know it's not them. It was interesting hearing where the band was going, doing that cacophony, speeding it up, and then it was over. [after] It was Geri Allen? I should have known that. I love Geri. She uses all the colors. She has a very open palette. And using the tap dancer. She's always thinking about other possibilities in her music.

Oscar Peterson

"Cool Walk" (*Time After Time*, Pablo, 1991) Peterson, piano; Joe Pass, guitar; Dave Young, bass; Martin Drew, drums.

That's Oscar Peterson. There's only one person who paints a picture like that. You can tell by the way his left hand hits those notes. It's so strong. There are certain parts of his vocabulary that are very distinct. It took me a minute to be absolutely certain that it wasn't another pianist who is influenced by him. This was really inspiring. Oscar has a lot to say, and he is swinging hard. Oscar Peterson is one of the big reasons why I play piano. My first loves on the instrument were Oscar albums like [1962's] *Night Train*. I listened to them a million times.

Alfredo Rodriguez

"Qbafrica" (*Sounds Of Space*, Mack Avenue, 2012) Rodriguez, piano; Peter Slavov, bass; Francisco Mela, drums.

At this point I'm guessing. At first I'm hearing something like Chick Corea's melodic arpeggios. There are inside lines, then bursts of putting your arm down on the piano, which is something that Jason Moran might do. But I don't hear him playing a melody like that. There's a jumping back and forth between the melodic and the rumble/avant-garde. Part of me wants to guess Jacky Terrasson, but maybe it's one of those new pianists that I don't know that much about. So I'll guess Alfredo Rodriguez. [after] Wow, I didn't know he went all the way out there. I liked the way Alfredo played very inside and then the next moment played thunder. A balance between has to be done in a tasteful way. He's really stretching between those two expressions here, all in the same solo.

Gerald Clayton taking the Blindfold Test at the 2012 Monterey Jazz Festival



Piano Red

"Atlanta Bounce" (*Atlanta Bounce*, Arhoolie, 1992, rec'd 1972) Piano Red, piano, vocals.

Well, that was recorded this year [audience laughter]. Um, by a pianist from Europe [more laughter]. I have no idea. This is testing my knowledge of the roots. Is this someone from New Orleans? This is one of those barroom pianists who has that sound. I dug it. When you hear folk music or indigenous music, you feel the rawness and a realness that you can't deny. This guy meant it. He kept saying, "Get with it." I dig it, but I haven't spent much time with this kind of music.

Bud Powell

"Dance Of The Infidels" (*The Amazing Bud Powell, Vol. 1*, Blue Note, 2001, rec'd 1949) Powell, piano; Sonny Rollins, tenor saxophone; Fats Navarro, trumpet; Tommy Potter, bass; Roy Haynes, drums.

That's Bud Powell playing some bebop. It's as distinctive a language as there is. He *is* bebop. I was fortunate to get a lesson from Mulgrew Miller a long time ago. At the time, I just knew some blues scales and really only knew Oscar Peterson. Mulgrew eloquently and sensitively pointed out that Oscar Peterson is one way to play, but there are also lots of other ways. He said, "Take, for instance, Bud Powell, who had a whole different approach and melodic sensibility." So I went there and saw how Bud and Bird and Dizzy weren't just playing blues scales over chords. They were masters of weaving in between changes and had a distinct melodic vocabulary. And I could hear Bud Powell's low-toned singing voice here.

Brad Mehldau Trio

"Got Me Wrong" (*Where Do You Start*, Nonesuch, 2012) Mehldau, piano; Larry Grenadier, bass; Jeff Ballard, drums.

That's Brad Mehldau. He has an unmistakable sound. This tune is in 7, and he's just floating over it in such a natural way. I think this is Larry Grenadier on bass and Jeff Ballard on drums. I saw Brad playing the *Where Do You Start* album at the [Village] Vanguard. He's a genius and one of my favorite players. It's like he has two brains to be able to do this counterpoint thing, where his left hand is saying something completely different from his right. I have a friend who babysits Brad's daughter, and he told me that Brad stays in his studio and plays Bach for six hours. So it's understandable how his left hand is so developed. He brought in a new feel and sound in jazz. I don't know a single modern pianist who hasn't taken something from Brad. I told him that I should be arrested for all the stuff I've stolen from him.

DB

THE "BLINDFOLD TEST" IS A LISTENING TEST THAT CHALLENGES THE FEATURED ARTIST TO DISCUSS AND IDENTIFY THE MUSIC AND MUSICIANS WHO PERFORMED ON SELECTED RECORDINGS. THE ARTIST IS THEN ASKED TO RATE EACH TUNE USING A 5-STAR SYSTEM. NO INFORMATION IS GIVEN TO THE ARTIST PRIOR TO THE TEST.



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