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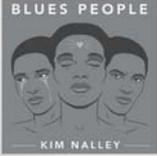
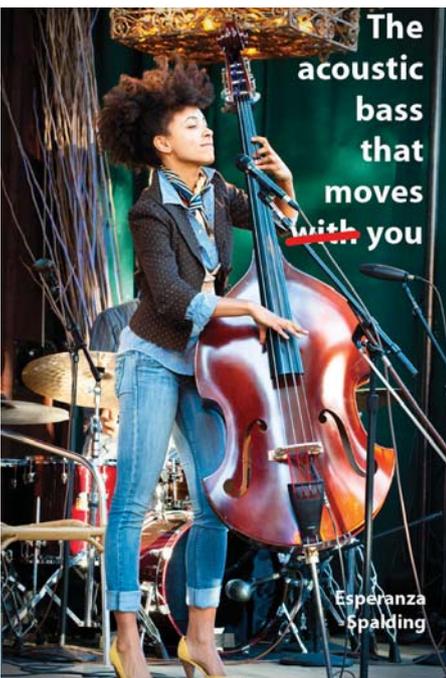
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# galen weston

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Bill Milkowski  
Contributor to Down Beat, Jazzz and author of JACO: The Extraordinary and Tragic Life of Jaco Pastorius

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## JANUARY 2016

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Circulation Manager	Kevin R. Maher
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Bookkeeper	Evelyn Oakes
Bookkeeper Emeritus	Margaret Stevens
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### OFFICES

102 N. Haven Road, Elmhurst, IL 60126-2970  
630-941-2030 / Fax: 630-941-3210  
<http://downbeat.com>  
[editor@downbeat.com](mailto:editor@downbeat.com)

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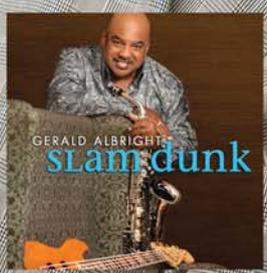


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JANUARY 2016

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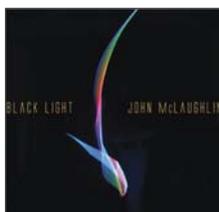
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Charles Lloyd (left) and drummer Jack DeJohnette at the 1966 Monterey Jazz Festival

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Cover photo of Lizz Wright shot by Jimmy and Dena Katz at The Jazz Gallery in New York City. Info for this venue is at jazzgallery.org.



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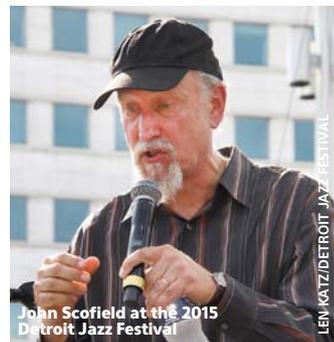
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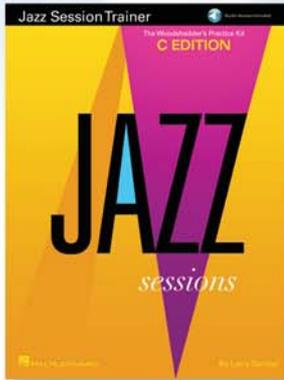
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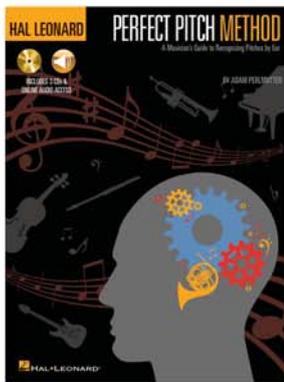
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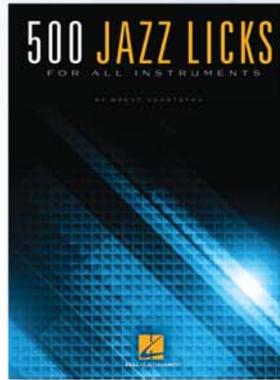
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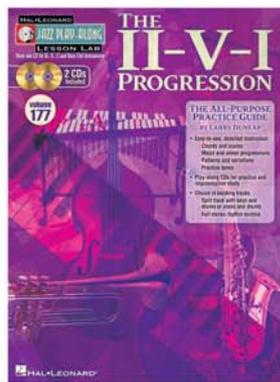
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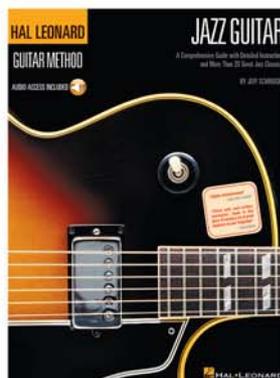


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# Mark Murphy: The Singer's Singer

**MARK MURPHY, WHO DIED OCT. 22**, was the *definitive* jazz singer. Always improvising. Always imaginative. Colorful with a melody. Poetic with a lyric. And always swinging.

A singer's singer. If you looked around at Murphy's gigs, you'd see singers everywhere, listening to the master.

A singer's teacher. You hear in voices, all around the jazz scene and all around the world, Murphy's vocal DNA.

"Stand by the drummer and *listen!*" That's what he told me was the most essential lesson for a jazz singer. "Watch his hands," he said. "Watch what he *does*," he said. "And if you ain't got the rhythm, you should not try to do this!"

I heard Murphy's album *Rah* when it was first released in the 1960s. I was new to jazz, and was just getting to know what the word *hip* meant. I enjoyed the hipness of *Rah*—but Richard Rodgers was not amused by Murphy's composing new lyrics to his "My Favorite Things."

Rodgers felt that Murphy was being disrespectful to the lyrics that Oscar Hammerstein wrote for Mary Martin, and insisted that Riverside re-press the album. (Since then, the album has been re-issued in Japan with Murphy's hipper-than-Hammerstein lyrics resurrected.)

I heard Murphy's album *Bridging A Gap*, his first for Muse, in 1972, and that's when I was staggered by Murphy's art and soul. "I'm Glad There Is You," the last song on the album, opens with him singing the verse quietly, tenderly, with only a guitar, floating freely. Some chords from the keys enter with a pulse, and he sings into and around the pulse. Like Icarus flying skyward, Mark's voice swirls up to the sun, up to the height of his chops, and then, with his wings melting, with a cry in his voice, he falls down to the bottom register, dark and deep into the song. "In this world ... of ordinary people ... extraordinary people ... I'm glad there is," Mark sings, lovingly caressing "you."

I first encountered Mark in the summer of 1975. We talked about what a jazz singer is—or ought to be—for the liner notes to *Mark Murphy Sings*, the album that begins with his vocalese lyrics to Freddie Hubbard's "Red Clay" and ends with his

vocalese lyrics to Herbie Hancock's "Cantaloupe Island."

"A jazz singer is a singer who sings jazz," he said during that conversation—the first of many laughter-filled interviews to follow. And then he offered a how-to on *being* a jazz singer.

"How much I improvise depends a great deal on who is playing for me. I usually state the song first, the way it was written, which is probably, by now, a clichéd way of doing it. But I might approach it differently, do it all out of tempo. I might not sing the melody at all. Then I might put it into tempo and sing just the melody. There's all sorts of ways you can work on the song. Some singers I've heard, they get too far out of the meter, holding the melody, because if they hold it too long, the melody notes fall on the wrong changes.

"So I have to make sure what I do falls on the right changes. I find a pretty infinite number of ways of doing it. And that's another thing about the jazz singer. We do it differently every night. Even the pop material I do, I literally never sing it the same way twice. I do know performers, singers and actors, who do exactly the same thing every night. There used to be a singer who'd sing 'When The World Was Young,' and on a certain word, the tear would fall down her cheek. I'm not like that. I *feel* differently on a different night."

Or, as he said on WBGO 30 years after our first interview, the art of jazz is like chess. You can imagine all the moves ahead, "but it all changes, completely, bar to bar to bar to bar. It's really like dribbling in rhythm on a basketball court." You can head for the basket, "but other players bump you, knock you around."

"Singing jazz, you know the melody, you know the lyrics," Murphy said, "but I don't sing the same solos every night. When you're out there, on a tour, and you're doing different stuff every night, you leave a lot of adrenaline on that stage." In vocal jazz, he said, "the whole thing is highly, constantly, *innovative*. You re-create yourself every night."

During that same 2003 interview, when asked how many albums he's recorded, Murphy said one of his students had count-

Mark Murphy (1932–2015), seen here performing at the Kitano Hotel in New York City on June 6, 2008.



STEVEN SUSSMAN

ed 108. And he made many more recordings after that. I produced four collections of Murphy's songs from his Muse years on eight CDs for the label 32 Jazz, starting in 1997 with *Stolen ... And Other Moments*.

In this remembrance, I had intended to make a Top 10 list of my favorite Murphy albums, but his countless albums are all great and all unique. Some of his best: His wonderful duet project with Sheila Jordan, *One For Junior* (1991). His albums of Nat "King" Cole songs. His albums of Brazilian songs. His album with the Metropole Orchestra, *The Dream* (1995). His early albums *Mark Murphy's Hip Parade* (1960), *Playing The Field* (1960), *Rah* (1961) and *That's How I Love The Blues!* (1963). Or perhaps his best album, *Song For The Geese* (1997). Or the albums I'll call masterpieces, his two albums criss-crossing into songs passages by his favorite author, Jack Kerouac (1981's *Bop For Kerouac* and 1986's *Kerouac Then And Now*).

On his last recording, released Sept. 4, he was a guest on *The Royal Bopsters Project* (Motéma), the debut by the vocal quartet London, Meader, Pramuk & Ross, singing the Holli Ross and Ray Passman vocalese of "Bebop Lives" ("Boplicity") and singing his own vocalese classic, "On The Red Clay." I remember seeing him sing the latter and a whole evening of jazz classics—including his best-loved lyrics of Oliver Nelson's "Stolen Moments"—in a Paris bistro called Alligators. I observed that he didn't sing any tunes from the Great American Songbook. "Not everybody speaks English," said Murphy, "but *everybody* speaks jazz!"

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ANY GUITAR PLAYER."



Frank Sinatra

## Wish Fulfilled

Everything I wished for in a DownBeat magazine came true in the December issue: Tony Bennett graced the cover, and there were marvelous articles by Michael Bourne (“Play for the Moment”), John McDonough (“The Greatest Singer Ever”) and Bobby Reed (“Two Friends United Forever”) on Bennett and the impending Frank Sinatra 100th birthday celebration.

The recognition of today’s big bands made for interesting reading as well, but for my dough, Tony and Frank were the main attraction in this outstanding issue of DownBeat—for which I give thanks.

HERB STARK  
MOORESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

## Without Flaw

Your December issue—with features on Tony Bennett and Frank Sinatra, a tribute to Phil Woods, and your 80th Annual Readers Poll—was flawless. *Wow!*

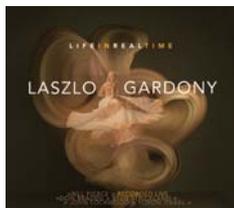
DENNIS HENDLEY  
MILWAUKEE

## Leader Deserves Ink

In your November issue, the 4-star rating given for pianist Laszlo Gardony’s *Life In Real Time* is certainly well deserved, but it’s curious to me that critic Scott Yanow barely spends any time or effort discussing the leader’s contributions to the album. Most of Yanow’s comments relate to the three excellent (yet somewhat underrated) horn players. The review’s only specific comment about Gardony is that he plays a Horace Silver-style solo on “Bourbon Street Boogie.” Let’s not get into the argument as to whether the solo actually has anything to do with Horace (even though it does not).

What’s more important is that so many positive things were left unsaid about the leader’s brilliance: the way he conceived and organized the session; the way he selected and arranged the tunes and—last but not least—the fine taste, time and feeling Gardony exhibits, both as an accompanist and a soloist.

CSABA SZABO  
SEATTLE



It is surprising that DownBeat would afford him a four-part series that, at times, wanders more than enlightens, and could have been edited into a two-page reflection requiring “less effort.”

JON HAZILLA  
PROFESSOR, PERCUSSION  
BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC  
BOSTON

## Billie & Red Together

DownBeat seldom publishes such a petty and vicious review as Bill Meyer’s review of Uptown Records’ Billie Holiday album, *Banned From New York City: Live, 1948–1957* (Historical column, November). Meyer complains that the album’s title is “sensationalistic,” but it came from Holiday’s own lips: She told Gloria Cadena in Newark that she was “banned from New York City.” Meyer also carps that the liner notes reiterate the well-known details of Holiday’s rough life. Kirk Silsbee’s essay provides historic context for the many live recordings Uptown has collected in the album and makes use of previously unpublished interviews and material. Meyer should be that thorough in his critical considerations. He presumes the reader knows everything about Holiday and therefore shouldn’t bother reading the liner notes, but even Holiday scholars would learn something from that essay.

Meyer also finds fault with the inclusion of Red Norvo tracks on the album. But Norvo’s band was on the bill and they performed together, as is clear during the third part of the concert, where Billie is accompanied by both

her trio *and* the Red Norvo group. That adds to the historical presentation and value of the album. Though some of the tracks were previously issued on bootleg and pirate LPs, they were never dated correctly, nor were they ever presented in their entirety. DownBeat readers deserve better from your reviewers.

BOB SUNENBLICK  
UPTOWN RECORDS  
CHAMPLAIN, NEW YORK

## Appreciating Free-Jazz

As a “free-jazz” as well as a bebop and blues musician for over 40 years, I would like to respond to Tony Meyer-Gleaves’ letter in your December issue (“Less Free-Jazz, Please,” Chords).

Yes, free-jazz is just as difficult to play as any other style of jazz or music in general.

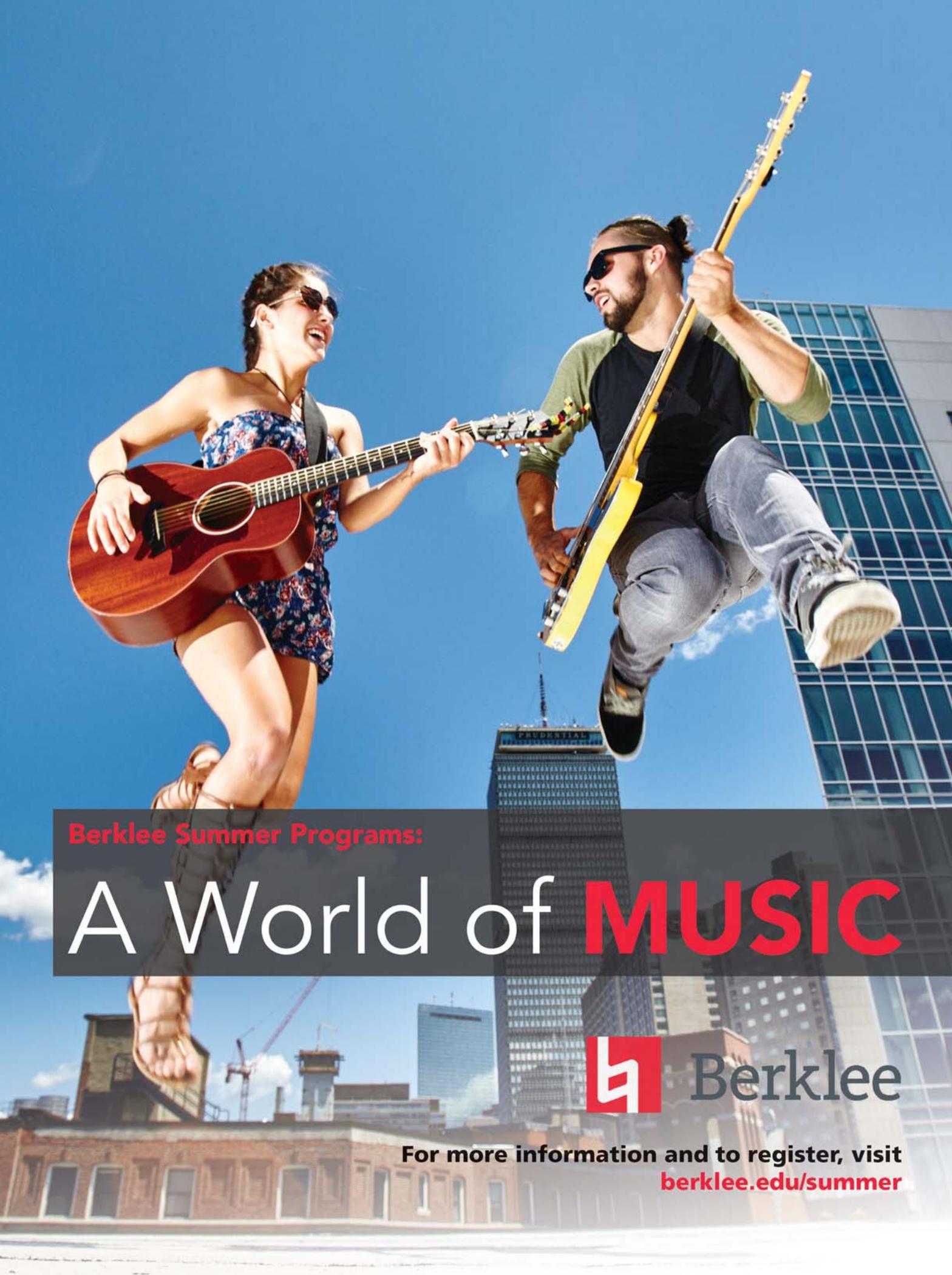
It’s perfectly fine to not like free-jazz, but one should first endeavor to understand it in the context of its logical structural evolution—for instance, from Ellington to Monk to Cecil Taylor. This same process can be illustrated in visual arts by considering El Greco to Cézanne to Picasso. (The African influence is inherent in both examples.)

I, too, have been a DownBeat subscriber since the 1970s, but I have never noticed any prejudice toward free-jazz or any other type of jazz. I personally don’t care if the magazine’s reviewers like something or not. I just want the album brought to my attention so I can check it out and decide for myself.

MARK N. JONES  
CORTLANDT MANOR, NEW YORK

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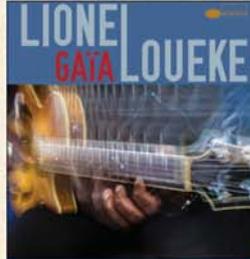
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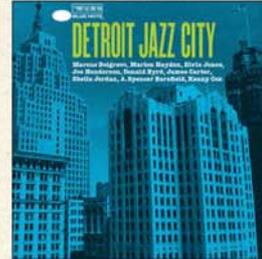
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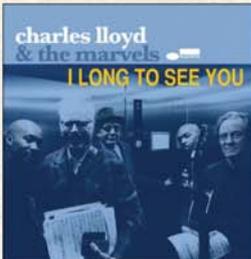
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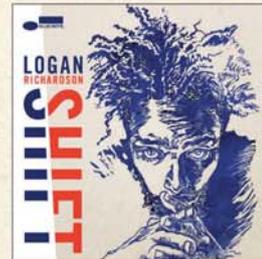
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GOGO PENGUIN  
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LOGAN RICHARDSON  
OUT FEBRUARY 26

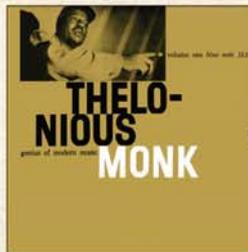
## VINYL REISSUES INCLUDE



MADLIB  
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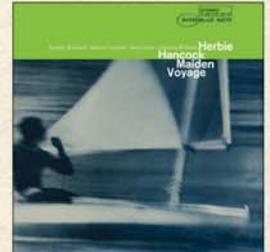
JOHN COLTRANE  
BLUE TRAIN



THELONIOUS MONK  
GENIUS OF MODERN



WAYNE SHORTER  
SPEAK NO EVIL



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MAIDEN VOYAGE

# The

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# Beat

## Vivid *Miles Ahead* Brings Icon to Life

**D**on Cheadle, who portrays Miles Davis in the upcoming film *Miles Ahead*, appears in every scene, a total of nearly 100 minutes of screen time. Within the film's first minute, the illusion of Cheadle as Davis is complete. We forget the actor and feel as if we are in the presence of the iconic trumpeter and composer. Cheadle captures Davis in all his contradictions and moods—sullen and belligerent, sensitive and soulful, capable of being both an effective leader and a willing collaborator, and often surprisingly funny.

The film, which was the closing-night selection of the New York Film Festival in October, is a harrowing, suspenseful portrait of a genius in despair. It focuses on the last days of Davis' self-imposed exile in the late 1970s—and how he managed to emerge from it. Robert Glasper wrote the score, complementing original Davis recordings from various periods of his career, including "So What," "Blue In Green" and "Nefertiti."

Cheadle learned to play some trumpet for the film. "He did that work, and a couple of times in the movie he's really playing," Glasper said. In most of the scenes where Cheadle plays trumpet, however, movie viewers will be hearing the music of Keyon Harrold. "We had Keyon play parts that matched Don's fingering" on screen, Glasper explained.

Among the musicians Glasper assembled for the soundtrack are saxophonists JD Allen, Marcus Strickland and Jaleel Shaw, pianist Taylor Eigsti, bassists Vicente Archer and Burniss Travis, and drummers Kendrick Scott and E.J. Strickland. Glasper handles most of the keyboard parts, sometimes playing in the style of Bill Evans, Herbie Hancock and other historic Davis collaborators, as the occasion demands.

*Miles Ahead*, which is Cheadle's debut as a feature film director, was made for \$8.5 million, a very modest budget by Hollywood standards. Some of the money came from a campaign on the crowd-funding website Indiegogo. Cheadle co-wrote the screenplay with Steven Baigelman (whose credits include the 2014 James Brown biopic *Get On Up*). A theatrical release is planned for April 2016.

The story involves a determined journalist from Rolling Stone (played by Ewan McGregor) who, seeking an interview that he thinks could be Davis' last, forces his way into the Manhattan townhouse where the trumpeter has been holed up, suffering from various ailments and addictions. The two become grudging allies, embarking on a quest to



Don Cheadle portrays Miles Davis in the film *Miles Ahead*.

BRIAN DOUGLAS; COURTESY SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

recover stolen tapes of Davis' recent work. Through frequent flashbacks, we see Davis at key points in his career, haunted by his failed marriage to his muse, the beautiful dancer Frances Taylor (Emayatzy Corinealdi), and creating the music that made him a legend. Cheadle's performance illuminates more than just the drug-addled, reclusive Miles; he conveys the complex emotions of an artist desperate to recharge his creativity.

"I wasn't interested in doing a [typical] biopic," Cheadle said at an Oct. 9 press conference during the film festival. "For me, the mandate was to reach forward," like Davis would have. "I wanted to make a movie Miles would have wanted to star in." How much of the story is true? "I've been in other biopics," Cheadle said, including *Hotel Rwanda*, a performance for which he earned an Oscar nomination. "To some degree it's *all* historical fiction."

In a fantasy closing musical sequence, Cheadle as Miles plays on screen with a band that includes veterans Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter, as well as musicians from a younger generation, including Glasper, Esperanza Spalding and Gary Clark Jr.

"We are trying to erase that sense of time," Cheadle said. "The music is not dead. Miles is not dead. It's the underpinning of a lot of popular music today."  
—Allen Morrison



Allen Toussaint (1938–2015)

©PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

**Final Bar:** Allen Toussaint, the New Orleans-born pianist, singer, composer, arranger and producer, died of a heart attack Nov. 9 while on tour in Madrid, Spain. He was 77. An obituary is posted at [downbeat.com](http://downbeat.com).

More info: [allentoussaint.com](http://allentoussaint.com)

**They All Love Oscar:** To mark the 90th birthday (last August) of Oscar Peterson, the pianist's widow, Kelly, has announced the collection *Oscar, With Love* (Two Lions), which features world-class jazz pianists performing never-before-heard compositions by the master. Ramsey Lewis, Michel Legrand, Chick Corea, Monty Alexander, Renee Rosnes, Bill Charlap, Kenny Barron, Gerald Clayton, Benny Green, Hiromi, Justin Kauflin and others made the recordings on Peterson's personal Bösendorfer Imperial grand piano in his home studio.

*Oscar, With Love* comes out Dec. 11 and will be celebrated that night with a concert at The Royal Conservatory of Music's Koerner Hall in Toronto. In addition, Bösendorfer will release a limited run of Oscar Peterson Signature Edition Pianos equipped with Yamaha Disklavier E3 technology that faithfully reproduces 13 Peterson piano performances captured years ago.

More info: [oscarwithlove.com](http://oscarwithlove.com); [bosendorfer.com](http://bosendorfer.com)

**Larry Rosen, RIP:** Jazz visionary and entrepreneur Larry Rosen died Oct. 9 at his New Jersey home. He was 75 and had been suffering from brain cancer. In 1972, Rosen and musician Dave Grusin formed Grusin/Rosen Productions, which evolved from a freelance production team to the jazz label GRP Records, known for pioneering the all-digital approach to studio recording.



Pianist Michel Camilo (left) at the Blue Note Jazz Club in New York City

DINO PERRUCCI

## Blue Note Jazz Clubs To Open in China, Hawaii & Beyond

**BANKING ON THE PROSPECT OF CHINA** being a new frontier for emerging jazz markets, Blue Note Entertainment Group will expand its Blue Note club empire into Beijing in March 2016, with additional franchises planned within the next three years in Shanghai and Taipei.

To further its growth within the Pacific Rim, another Blue Note club will open early next year in Waikiki, Hawaii—all this in addition to the existing Blue Note venue in New York (which opened in 1981), two Blue Note clubs in Japan (Tokyo since 1988 and Nagoya since 2012) and one in Milan, Italy (since 2003).

"Nothing has been very consistent there as far as presenting jazz," BNEG President Steven Bensusan said of the Chinese market, which doesn't have many jazz clubs. "In essence, with bookings every night, we'll be bringing jazz into a new territory and helping to establish an audience for the music."

The Blue Note Beijing will occupy a 16,000-square-foot basement space in a building that once served as the area's American Embassy. Located near Tiananmen Square, it is currently undergoing major renovations.

In addition to bringing top-tier jazz artists into the club, Bensusan said that BNEG is committed to presenting local musicians on off nights and late nights, much as it does in New York. "But we're also hoping to get some of these musicians to collaborate with the headliners," he said. "It's all a new thing." BNEG is partnering in China with Winbright Culture and Media Co., which specializes in the enter-

tainment and hospitality industries.

As for the Hawaii location, "Waikiki doesn't have any clubs like what the Blue Note will bring in," Bensusan explained. "We've had a lot of support from the city." For the Waikiki venture, BNEG is linking up with Outrigger Enterprise Group, which operates hotels and resorts in Hawaii and other major tourist destinations in the Pacific region and beyond.

Bensusan stressed that BNEG will continue to book all of the acts that perform at Blue Note clubs worldwide, with the stated intention of staying true to jazz. "You won't be hearing hip-hop or J-pop in these clubs," he said. (Bensusan noted that booking policies were a problem with two former Blue Note franchises in Japan in Osaka and Fukuoka, where the license partners had wanted to present music other than jazz.)

The Pacific Rim route that begins in Hawaii and stretches out to various venues in Japan and China in essence sets up a touring network for artists. "We will provide [touring musicians] with longer runs," Bensusan says. "The cost of travel will be reduced and artists will have more shows to play."

Pianist Michel Camilo, who has been performing at Blue Note clubs in New York, Italy and Japan for 30 years, started out as a rookie playing piano for Tania Maria but eventually became a headliner. "Opening up new clubs means I'll be able to play a lot more concerts," he says. "We can make a Blue Note tour worldwide. And like New York, these clubs will become a hangout for musicians." —Dan Ouellette

## Wintsch Explores 'Tiniest' Sounds

Swiss keyboardist Michel Wintsch is among that class of creatively restless musicians for whom the limitations of the piano can be frustrating. For his 2011 album *Metapiano* (Leo), he deployed fascinating preparations to his instrument, and further expanded his sound with homemade devices, electronic manipulations and synthesizer, exploring a maximalist environment for his vibrant imagination.

But for his latest solo effort, *Roof Fool* (Hatology), he took a radically different tack. Using only a grand piano and collaborating with sound engineer Benoît Piccand, Wintsch created an expanded sonic universe that included the various noises created by the physical act of playing piano: his own bodily motion and breathing, the sound of his fingers striking the keys, and the suppression and release of pedals.

As Stuart Broomer mentions in his liner notes for *Roof Fool*, there's a Thelonious Monk recording called "Chordially" in which the pianist's untrimmed fingernails can be heard clicking on the keys. And the grunts and moans of Keith Jarrett that accompany his own playing are well known. But Wintsch isn't interested in accidental or aleatoric sounds. Still, the dazzling play between terse melodic lines, rhythms that flow and then jerk in ever-shifting patterns, and fresh harmonies is at the core of the 14 pieces on *Roof Fool*.

"It's not a concept," said Wintsch. "It's the result of my practice: Working every day on the piano, I often found myself playing with almost no sound, trying to play the tiniest sound but keeping a real energy in the movement—like ghost notes on a guitar—in order to create as much as dynamic range as possible and trying to get away from the often too-clean and well-tempered sound of the piano. Like hands dancing above the piano and barely touching the keyboard. This produces all these sounds, very small and, in a way, expressive, audible for me but not for the audience, which is a few meters away. After a while, it became part of the music, and it appeared to me I should bring these sounds to the listener through amplification."

Those unexpected sounds are meticulously woven into the fabric of Wintsch's playing. His breathing, clacking and thudding feel like part of the dramatic improvisational architecture. "The gestures I use



are rehearsed and worked out, and this is in itself a form of composition," he explained. "The sounds are intimately part of the process, and they are not ancillary. There are also compound objects, fragments of melody, specific harmonies and riffs, which are like vocabulary. All of this is combined—gestures, dance, compound objects, following the inspiration and energy of the movement. Careful listening of all sounds produced through the piano is a perpetual source of inspiration, and in this way, it makes it a partner."

Wintsch has plenty of human partners as well, whether those in his long-running trio with percussionist Gerry Hemingway and bassist Bänz Oester, or his collaborators in the trio WWW: bassist Christian Weber and drummer Christian Wolfarth. That latter trio has been on a tear of late, moving easily between acoustic and electronic instruments. On its recent album *Thieves Left That Behind* (Veto), Wintsch sticks exclusively to electric piano and synthesizer, forging a rich new direction. Both Weber and Wolfarth have worked extensively in experimental circles, exploring electro-acoustic improv, yet in this context they churn out muscular but elastic grooves and rutted landscapes that offer the keyboardist great leeway. The trio improvises everything.

"We practice very regularly, improvising," Wintsch said. "We record and then we listen together. It's part of the process. And during the listening, we talk; we sort out what we like or don't like, confronting our views and deciding what works for our mutual taste and exigency."

WWW moves as a single organism, a true ensemble as opposed to a traditional piano trio. Wintsch embraces a wide array of interests and styles, including the progressive rock he heard while growing up, and he's worked extensively in scoring music for film and theater. "I can't resist quoting Olivier Messiaen: 'I'm like a bee, collecting from as many flowers as possible, and then cooking up my own honey.'" **DB**

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Lew Tabackin's latest release, *Soundscapes*, is a trio album.



## Tabackin Gets Creative in Unique Space

Saxophonist and flutist Lew Tabackin creates miniature compositions inside each piece of music on his new album, *Soundscapes*.

The self-released CD is Tabackin's first recorded session with his longtime trio of bassist Boris Kozlov and drummer Mark Taylor in seven years. The multi-instrumentalist packs 70-plus years of playing into each tune, creating an album that is complex yet straightforward.

Tabackin has been a trio player for decades, but he's best known for his time spent in the big bands of his wife, Toshiko Akiyoshi, from the early 1970s to 2003. Tabackin's attention to narrative playing may have been heightened by the band's Japanese-leaning compositions; he later expanded this concept with study of the programmatic ideas in Japanese music and the shakuhachi, a type of wooden flute. But Tabackin said he's always concentrated on playing more than just the notes.

"I'm trying to tell a story, paint a visual," he said. "There's always a story on my originals, and I try to be faithful to the story and expand the narrative when I play. I like to have some kind of context to it and some meaning."

His latest project was recorded after hours at the Steve Maxwell Vintage and Custom Drums shop in New York City. The band played as they would in a concert setting, minimizing

the number of takes and recording without the luxury of extensive editing.

It all began with some persistent needling by an old friend. Photographer Jimmy Katz, who has known Tabackin for 25 years, approached the saxophonist numerous times to get him to lay down another album. As Katz sees it, the new album, which he co-produced, is a document of Tabackin's playing at a particular point in time. Katz allowed, however, that the recording process makes some musicians anxious.

"What I'm interested in is trying to make it as easy and casual as possible so that people can give the best performance possible," Katz said. "That's really what history and lovers of the music are going to remember; they're going to remember the *great* performance."

Katz talked with Tabackin about various recording options. After settling on the live approach, Katz and Tabackin tested out a variety of spaces before landing on the drum shop. Katz then recorded the trio, completed the rough mixes and shot all the photographs.

"I always ask, 'What is the situation that we could go into with you and your group and have you play at the highest possible level?'" Katz said.

While the space had originally been a recording studio, the store's current setup led to some creative arrangements of the musicians.

"We were huddled together," Tabackin said.

"At one point, we had to reorganize a little bit so [Boris] had room to play his bow. We were closer [together] than when we usually play at clubs."

The recording was not without its musical challenges, as well. Tabackin noted that the office where he played his flute wasn't acoustically bright and lively. Before getting used to the room, Tabackin said he was overplaying, pushing to bring his flute tone up to his high standards.

"Playing flute in a dead room is really quite difficult," Tabackin said. "When you play a note, nothing happens. There's no romance in the note."

He did, however, enjoy an unanticipated musical side effect created by the space. Due to the retail merchandise setting, Tabackin's tenor saxophone tones caused sympathetic vibrations in the surrounding drums, adding "another little perspective," he noted.

While *Soundscapes* is an appropriate record of where Tabackin is as a musician in 2015, the reedist said he really doesn't like to go through the recording process.

"Some people really love to record. I don't. That's why the two CDs before *Soundscapes* were live recordings," he said, noting that regular album releases are a necessity for most artists. "At my age, if you don't [record], people forget about you. You're not on their mind, so you have to represent yourself." —Jon Ross

# Joe Castro Box Set Tells Fascinating Story

Jazz fans who have never heard of Joe Castro might wonder why Sunnyside Records is releasing a six-CD box set of the late pianist's music. It's a valid question, acknowledges Daniel Richard, the veteran producer who assembled *Lush Life: A Musical Journey* after shepherding similar collections for Abbey Lincoln, Charlie Haden and Chet Baker.

It's not as if Castro is an undiscovered Bud Powell or Horace Silver, but he was a likable pianist who made some fascinating recordings with the likes of Zoot Sims, Chico Hamilton, Billy Higgins and Teddy Edwards. Those tapes are released for the first time on the new box set.

A working-class, Mexican-American kid, Castro was a Duke Ellington and Stan Kenton fan who made his living playing in pop-swing bands around the Bay Area. In 1951, at age 23, his band 3 Bees and a Queen was hired to play the Fireman's Carnival in Honolulu. Attending one of his shows was Doris Duke, then a 38-year-old tobacco heiress described in the gossip columns of the day as "the richest girl in the world."

Duke was smitten by the good-looking Castro and they soon became an item. Despite a few breakups, they were together for the next 15 years. Duke, a jazz fan who had taken piano lessons from

Teddy Wilson, set up recording studios stocked with Steinway pianos and fine wines at her mansions in Hawaii, California and New Jersey. The facilities and Duke's clout attracted many famous musicians for jam sessions with Castro at the keys. Some of the best of those sessions make up the first four discs on the new box set.

Sometimes Castro was just the engineer, recording sessions such as the wonderful 1955 tracks by Wilson with an especially lyrical Stan Getz. More often Castro was the house pianist, jamming in 1956 with Zoot Sims, Lucky Thompson and Oscar Pettiford, or rehearsing a new quartet in 1959 with tenor saxophonist Teddy Edwards, bassist Leroy Vinnegar and drummer Billy Higgins.

It would be inaccurate to say that Castro dominated these sessions, but he certainly wasn't out of place. He was grounded in swing-era rudiments, but he was also interested in bebop and even free-jazz.

Duke also funded a record label, Clover Records, for Castro to run. The fledgling company recorded the Joe Castro Big Band, the Joe Castro Trio (with Paul Motian), the Teddy Edwards Tentet and singers Anita O'Day and Kitty White. Despite Duke's millions, however, the label folded, releasing only the first of two



Pianist Joe Castro relaxes (with Harvey the dog) at Doris Duke's Beverly Hills estate known as Falcon Lair, circa 1959.

JAMES CASTRO COLLECTION

big-band records and the first of two albums recorded by White. The second big-band project and Edwards' three-trombone Tentet make up the fifth and sixth discs in the new box.

"Joe was in a tough position," Richard said. "Doris' money opened a lot of doors for him, but when jazz musicians talked about him, they didn't talk about him as a jazz musician but as Doris Duke's friend."

Castro and Duke broke up for good in 1966. Castro married singer Loretta Haddad and went on to live a quiet life in Los Angeles and Las Vegas. Just before he died in 2009, he approached Sunnyside about releasing his private tapes. His son James helped Richard reassemble the pieces of a forgotten story. Richard is constructing a musical chronology online at [joecastrojazz.com](http://joecastrojazz.com). —Geoffrey Himes

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**JAM OF THE WEEK**

# DeJohnette Trio Dazzles in Brooklyn

At the age of 73, Jack DeJohnette is as restless as ever—a veritable whirlwind who, behind the traps or at the piano, retains an insatiable penchant for invention and an irrepressible imagination.

On Oct. 10, both aspects of this singular musical personality came together as DeJohnette, joined by Ravi Coltrane on saxophones and Matt Garrison on electric bass, fashioned a kaleidoscopic soundscape that kept standing-room-only crowds at Brooklyn's ShapeShifter Lab in rapt attention through two solid sets.

As the evening unfolded, the musicians took turns proffering fragmentary statements, some of which proved evanescent while others insinuated themselves into the collective consciousness, coalescing into thoughts that cohered into ideas so striking one can only hope they will be stored for retrieval. (A few days after the show, the trio went into the studio to record tracks for its ECM debut, slated for a 2016 release.)

The choice of tunes served the architecture of the overall experience, its shape shifting along with the general ebb and flow. That held wheth-



Jack DeJohnette (left), Matthew Garrison and Ravi Coltrane perform at ShapeShifter Lab in Brooklyn on Oct. 10.

BILL DOUJHART

er the vehicle at hand was “Atmosphere,” an electro-acoustic exercise that momentarily skirted the bounds of ambient music, or, in another realm, the impressionistic Miles Davis-Bill Evans classic “Blue In Green,” which found its form in DeJohnette’s pianistic musings—all thickly layered clusters and pointillistic arpeggiations.

Occasionally, the shapes grew fat and funky, most notably on Earth, Wind & Fire’s chart-topper “Serpentine Fire,” on which the trio settled into a quasi-’70s groove. Elsewhere, the shapes grew lean and hard, particularly on Charlie Parker’s “Segment,” on which the group swung with abandon. Either way, however, the

groove soon yielded to the demands of the larger project, transitioning into another sonic sphere or dissolving into the ether.

The venue was not incidental to the endeavor. For presentations like DeJohnette’s, where the central dynamic revolves around constant invention, a setting conducive to creation is at a premium.

So it did not hurt that DeJohnette’s gigs at ShapeShifter constituted a kind of homecoming, where the house piano is Coltrane’s Yamaha—donated to the room—and Garrison is the space’s co-founder and presenter.

—Phillip Lutz

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# 3 Cohens, Masekela Celebrate Heritage at South Africa's Joy of Jazz Fest

Call it fate, or call it good programming, but the opening day of the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival in Sandton, South Africa (Sept. 24–26) happened to fall on Heritage Day. On this public holiday, revelers celebrate the diversity of their cultures and creeds—usually with dancing.

As a people, South Africans pride themselves on being part of a “Rainbow Nation,” a country that, despite its turbulent history, has united to form a more tolerant whole. The country has 11 official languages, numerous native ethnic groups and a globe-spanning cuisine. But on Heritage Day, all are proudly South African.

The Joy of Jazz Festival reflected this country's pride in diversity. The roster, for starters, featured artists as varied as the r&b singer Peabo Bryson and avant-garde bassist William Parke, and was rounded out by an eclectic mix of African music icons and American jazz heavyweights, with genres ranging from contemporary smooth jazz to Afrobeat.

One of the more engaging acts of the festival was a family affair featuring the 3 Cohens: trumpeter Avishai, reedist Anat and saxophonist Yuval, whose wife and two children flew in from Tel Aviv to attend the show. For this occasion, the Cohen siblings were joined by New Zealander Matt Penman on bass, American Ulysses Owens Jr. on drums and fellow Israeli Yonatan Avishai on piano.

A highlight of the set was “Family,” a composition written by the trumpeter Avishai for his brother and sister. “I’m very lucky to be doing what I do for a living,” he said before the song began, “but to do it with your family ...”

He didn’t finish, and he didn’t have to. Most in the audience knew exactly what he meant.

But the festival’s brightest moment belonged to South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela, who played to a standing-room-only crowd on closing night.

“I was at the dance clubs, and no one was there,” mentioned one spectator. “All of the young people are here to see Hugh.”

Many of those young people brought the dance club with them. Toward the end of Masekela’s set, a group of audience members started a line dance at the back of the venue. Three steps to left, three to the right, backward, forward, a kick, a pivot—it looked strangely familiar.

Then, it was obvious: They were doing the Electric Slide. But in South Africa, one of the dancers explained, they call it the Codesa dance.

Some heritages are universal.

—Brian Zimmerman



The members of the 3 Cohens—Yuval Cohen (left) with siblings Avishai and Anat—at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival in Sandton, South Africa, on Sept. 25

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Luciana Souza's new album is titled *Speaking In Tongues*.

KIM FOX

## Souza Explores Intriguing Sonic Territory

Luciana Souza figured it was time to throw a changeup. After a series of fine albums with largely the same musicians supporting her, she felt the need to stretch.

"It was time for something new," she said over the telephone from her Los Angeles home, which she shares with her husband (and album producer), Larry Klein, and their young son. "What went before was great, but I needed a clean slate. So that's what the new album is all about."

On the dynamic, overdub-fueled *Speaking In Tongues* (Sunnyside)—what Souza called "a musical inquiry into language and conversation"—the Brazil-born vocalist enlisted artists who hail from different regions of the planet to enliven her wordless vocal excursions. The players included guitarist Lionel Loueke from Benin, West Africa; harmonica virtuoso Grégoire Maret, who was born in Switzerland; Sweden-born bassist Massimo Biolcati; and drummer Kendrick Scott, a Houston native.

"I knew there were lots of possibilities playing with these guys," said Souza, whose voice serves as an improvisational instrument in the mix. "They are all generous, but I needed them to push me. The band offered me more than I had experienced—they were ready, open and unapologetic. Since they had a deep understanding of the limitations of supporting a singer, they poked me and said, 'Don't worry, we'll catch you.'"

After rehearsing in December 2013 and then playing eight warm-up gigs in 2014, they jumped into the studio. The resulting album includes four Souza compositions, Loueke's "A.M.," a Scott tune (co-written with Mike

Moreno), a reflective song by Gary Versace and renderings of Leonard Cohen's poems "Split" and "No One To Follow."

For the sessions, Souza brought in skeletons of compositions with bass lines, melodic phrasings and rhythmic impulses, which were expanded by the band. After that she did something out of the ordinary for her: She baked the tunes further in the studio with the help of Klein and engineer Maxime Le Guil, who added overdubs that extended beyond the boundaries of the original tracks. "I wanted it to be messy, full and dense, but also exciting," she said. "So what we did was clean, select and decide how far we wanted to go. Sonically if it helped the story to be told, I wanted it to be kept in. If the electronics went too far and [something] wasn't comfortable for me, we got rid of it. But there's a big difference between the roughs and the final."

Prior to the recording sessions, Souza spent a lot of time listening to albums by Weather Report. "I was seeking to do what they created," she explained. "They were my muse."

The nine-song *Speaking In Tongues* features such Souza originals as the celebratory "At The Fair," which gets its ebullience from Scott's percussive undergirding and skittering grooves, and the sonically textured "Straw Hat" (a song written for her late father, renowned São Paulo bossa nova guitarist Walter Santos), which soars with a wild harmonica ride by Maret.

Souza often relied upon Loueke as a soundboard in the studio when it came time to make important decisions. In addition to valu-

ing his informed opinion and perspective, she appreciated the guitarist's ability to move freely between acoustic and electric instruments.

"Luciana gave us plenty of room to express ourselves," Loueke said. "We'd record and then add in a lot afterwards to bring it alive more. I just got new equipment, so she gave me the chance to experiment with different sounds, like organ and distortion."

Loueke noted that Souza is willing to take risks and be in the moment. "She jumps immediately wherever you go," he said. "She's not afraid if I play the wrong chord behind her. She's not afraid to get lost. She goes for it."

Souza stumbled onto the introspective, sobering Cohen poems after she had decided that *Speaking In Tongues* was going to be devoted exclusively to wordless vocals. Those two musical recitations give the album another powerful dimension. Souza, in fact, had previously considered devoting an entire project to Cohen's words.

"Leonard is a family friend and had told me once a while ago that he didn't want me to do a whole record of his poems set to music," she said. "So I left that project, but then inside my piano bench I discovered printed versions of his lyrics I had written. I loved them. So I contacted him and he was very generous and sweet and said, 'Do it.' Some people say they don't belong on *Speaking In Tongues*, but I needed to include them because they hit me so deeply. I created simple melodies to let the words speak."

—Dan Ouellette

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CHRISTOPHER DRUKKER

Players >

## ARIEL POCOCK

### Strong Start

Ariel Pocock took a bold chance when sequencing the tracks of her debut album. *Touchstone* (Justin Time) opens with an interpretation of “Exactly Like You” that features just her vocals and drummer Eric Harland’s mellifluous brushwork.

Recorded when she was merely 20 years old, Pocock makes her initial musical impression by singing and scatting confidently and comfortably in an instrumentally sparse setting without the benefit of accompanying herself on the piano, her main instrument.

“That was Matt’s idea to start with ‘Exactly Like You,’” Pocock said, referencing *Touchstone* producer Matt Pierson. “It was very scary to me at first, as you can imagine.”

In addition to Harland, the members of her all-star band for the *Touchstone* sessions were bassist Larry Grenadier, guitarist Julian Lage and tenor saxophonist Seamus Blake.

The hour-long album’s dozen tracks offer a thoughtful variety of standards such as “Devil May Care” as well as more contemporary songs, including Tom Waits’ “Rainbow Sleeves.”

There are instrumental interpretations, notably a quartet version of “All The Things You Are” and a duo reading of “When I Fall in Love” with Grenadier, and an original composition in the form of her sinuous, bluesy “Barrel Roll.”

The program is quite diverse, from Thelonious Monk (“Ugly Beauty/Still We Dream” with Carmen McRae’s lyrics) to singer-songwriter Dayna Kurtz (who penned the

title track). Speaking by phone from her home in Durham, North Carolina, Pocock recalled that she and Pierson “knew that we wanted the album to be something that allowed me to go in a lot of different directions.”

She had considered sequencing the tracks by alternating tempos, but Pierson suggested using the looser measures of moods and themes. Her friends later pointed out that the mid-album sequence of Keith Jarrett’s “Country” and James Taylor’s “You Can Close Your Eyes” formed an Americana mini-block.

“I wanted to have a few standards because they’re fun to play,” she said. “And I’m a jazz pianist. I didn’t want it to be a pop album.”

Pierson convinced her not to record other standards, particularly “Body And Soul” and “Lush Life.” She’d have subsequent opportunities to record those, he reckoned, proposing instead that she explore more recent fare.

A Randy Newman fan, she chose the arguably more age-appropriate tune “Real Emotional Girl.” Pierson also encouraged her to consider Kate Bush’s “Mother Stands For Comfort.”

“At first we were thinking it would be something that I sang. Kate Bush is awesome, but the lyrics are totally off-the-wall,” Pocock explained. “So I said, ‘I don’t know if I want to sing these words. But I love just the vibe that the song has and think it would be a really cool instrumental feature.’”

The daughter of a classical piano playing father and piano teacher mother, Pocock was

raised in the Seattle area. Her introduction to jazz was through CDs of various vocalists she heard as a child, including Ella Fitzgerald, Mel Tormé and Shirley Horn. Pocock incorporated jazz into her piano studies when she was 8 and then started singing after she had joined her high school’s jazz band.

“When I think of Ariel and her music, I really think of her as an artist who’s not fractured in any way,” said Lage, whom Pocock befriended while they were both on the Stanford Jazz Workshop faculty.

An Essentially Ellington competition winner in piano and a recipient of multiple DownBeat Student Music Awards, she earned a bachelor’s degree from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. She moved to Durham in order to teach, gig and plan her next career move.

There’s still a sense of wonder in Pocock’s voice as she reflects on the *Touchstone* recording sessions, which transpired in Manhattan while she was a sophomore at Frost. She invited Lage to participate, and Pierson brought in Harland, Grenadier and Blake.

“I’d been listening to all those people for like 10 years, so I was nervous,” she recalled with a laugh. “But I met them, and immediately they were just so nice. Still, it took me a little bit to get over the feeling of, ‘Oh, they’re just doing me a favor,’ because obviously they’re not.”

“Her demeanor put everyone at ease,” Lage said. “It was very inclusive, which was the reason it felt so good.” —Yoshi Kato



Players >

# CARLOS HENRIQUEZ

.....

## Building the 'Pyramid'

LAWRENCE SUMULONG FOR JALC/BLUE ENGINE RECORDS

The leadoff track of *Live In Cuba* (Blue Engine) by the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra is “2/3’s Adventure,” bassist Carlos Henriquez’s kaleidoscopic portrayal of the *son clave* beat. Composed for the occasion of JLCO’s first-ever visit to Cuba in 2010, as documented on that album, it opens with a call-and-response between swinging jazz and *mambo*, enters the folkloric *guajira* space, leaves room for a mighty bass solo that cojoins the spirits of Cachao and Charles Mingus, transitions back to *mambo*, then concludes with a 6/8 vamp.

JLCO played “2/3’s Adventure” last June during its final concert of the 2014–15 season, billed as “The Music of Puente, Machito and Henriquez.” The bassist was the music director for the event, just as he was for the Cuba concerts, a Rubén Blades-JLCO encounter last fall and a Cachao tribute in 2012. Earlier that June evening, Henriquez debuted “The Bronx Pyramid,” the title track of his accomplished debut album on Blue Engine. On this orchestral iteration, Henriquez reimagined Puerto Rican trombonist Juan Tizol’s “Pyramid,” from a 1938 Duke Ellington recording, framing the exotic melody with a Yemaya-inflected rhythm, an elongated form and orchestral colors evocative of Ellington crossed with Wayne Shorter.

“The pyramid symbolizes where I grew up in the South Bronx—my mom would worry if I left a certain zone in my ’hood,” Henriquez said

after the conclusion of a three-week JLCO tour on which both pieces, and other tunes from *The Bronx Pyramid*, were extensively featured. “But the true meaning is the cultivation of my life, comparing the building of a pyramid to how long it takes to become a full-blown musician.”

The accuracy of Henriquez’s self-description is evident on *The Bronx Pyramid*’s nine originals, infused with an array of idiomatically rendered Afro-diasporic rhythms, strong melodies and demanding bass parts, and also in his quotidian work with JLCO, where he functions as the foundation of the groove, creating full-bodied, erudite bass lines and showcasing formidable improvisational skills on repertoire spanning a century of jazz and Pan-American musical expression.

Originally a guitarist, Henriquez, 36, started playing bass at age 13, taking lessons from iconic local masters like Victor Venegas, Joe Santiago and Andy Gonzalez, and with New York Philharmonic principal bassist John Schaeffer, with whom he would study for 14 years. By 1997, when Henriquez graduated from LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, he was regularly employed in New York, with a c.v. that boasted tenures with Puente, Eddie Palmieri and Celia Cruz.

“Andy played me records and videos, and pointed out what bassists were doing, how the conga relates to the bass,” Henriquez said of

his guru, who brought him to gigs by the Fort Apache Band and Libre, where he sat on the stage, picking up the nuances. On *The Bronx Pyramid*, Henriquez emulates Fort Apache’s m.o. in setting up on-the-dime swing-clave switchoffs within the flow of pieces like “Guarajazz.”

Wynton Marsalis had taken notice, and in 1998, Henriquez gigged consequentially with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra (as it was then called). He spent 18 months in Danilo Pérez’s trio with Antonio Sanchez, and another 18 in Gonzalo Rubalcaba’s trio with Ignacio Berroa. In 2002, Marsalis offered him the JLCO bass chair.

Although the across-the-timeline melting pot of dialects that defined South Bronx musical culture mirrored Marsalis’ New Orleans-descended “all jazz is modern” mantra, Henriquez initially found JLCO’s scope intimidating. “It was tough to learn all this music, but you develop fast,” he said. “Grooves had names I didn’t know, but I heard them so much that they became natural to play. You think quickly and reduce things to their lowest common denominator before embellishing.

“We have 11 arrangers and composers [in the orchestra], each with his own voice. It’s not just Wynton. Once you understand everyone’s logic, it becomes easy. Everyone’s trying to get to one destination, and there are many different roads to get there.” —Ted Panken



Players >

## ADAM LARSON

### *Flexible at Every Level*

DEVIN RODINO

In the midst of his still-young career, saxophonist Adam Larson has had to learn how to choose between the sprint and the marathon.

"I'm a go-getter and I want everything done yesterday," he said on the eve of the release of *Selective Amnesia*, his third recording and first for Greg Osby's Inner Circle Music label. "Some people don't understand completely, but artists are never fully satisfied, which provides the impetus to do more. That can be a detraction as well as a means to work to get better. Perspective is everything."

Larson, who earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, realizes that it can be a "bruising experience breaking in," which can lead to viewing the jazz scene through a distorted lens, looking at the success of others with "jealousy, envy and even disdain," as he writes in the liner notes for

*Selective Amnesia*. It's an impressive album that not only expresses his sense of a newfound personal freedom but also showcases his compositional prowess for lyricism. It features a terrific band: Fabian Almazan on piano and Rhodes, Matthew Stevens on guitar, Matt Penman on bass and Jimmy Macbride on drums.

Born in Illinois and now based in New York, Larson had to work through his "own ego and imposed drama" with his music. By ridding himself of an ego-driven mindset, Larson writes that he wiped clean the memory and discovered "a strange sense of liberation, thus the premise behind the title."

In contrast to writing songs that are built to support blowing sessions, Larson took the opposite approach. "I always try to have a story behind a song," he explained. "Sometimes I'm bored to tears when I hear a band just play one

song after another without interaction with the audience. As a leader I want to make my music be inclusive and not exclusive. You have to give people a way to get into your music—whether it's rebellion or joy—and decide for themselves. By presenting my music with its back-story, I think I gain a point of interest with the audience."

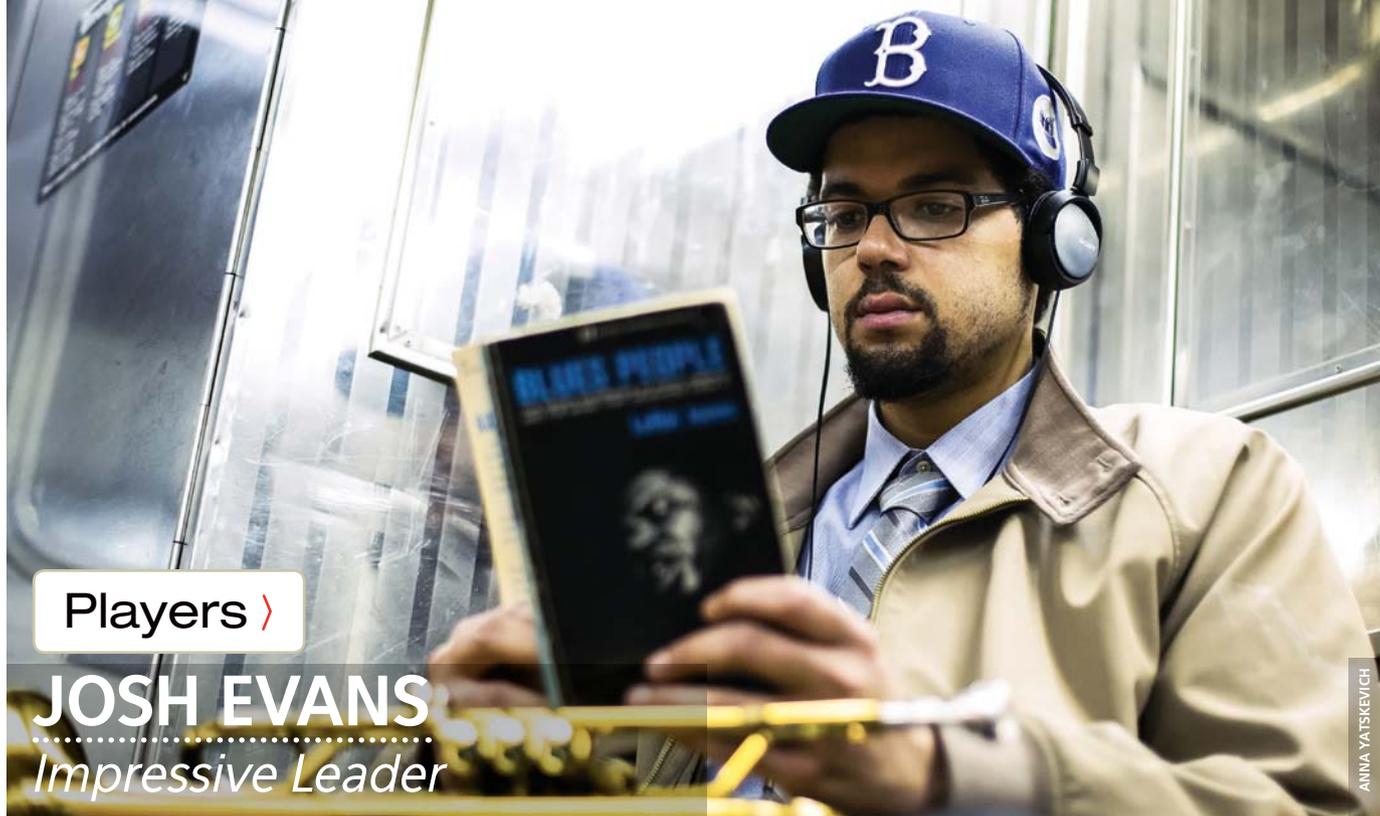
Case in point: the playful song "ShitPay," which features Larson's saxophone swoops and Penman's catchy bass solo. The theme is playing gigs for next to nothing in pay. Rather than roil, Larson took the sentiment into a happy zone. "It was fun to compose that," Larson said. "And I let the audience know it."

Other tunes on *Selective Amnesia* include the swinging joyride "McWendel" (dedicated to two of Larson's mentors, Donny McCaslin and Ben Wendel), the reflective-to-ecstatic "Gratitude" (written with his MSM teacher Rich Perry in mind), the whimsical "The Dope Pope" (based on the animated sitcom *Family Guy*) and the forlorn "Vanished Theories" (inspired by news reports on the mysterious disappearance of Malaysian Airlines Flight 370).

According to Stevens, ensemble chemistry played an important role during the recording of *Selective Amnesia*. "Adam and I have complementary tones, ways of phrasing and interpreting melodies," the guitarist said. "Adam has a lot of energy, vocabulary and urgency in his playing, and I think that sparked a lot of the exchanges between us and the rest of the group."

In his first blogpost for Inner Circle, Larson reflects on his life on the road in regard to presenting master classes and clinics at institutions ranging from elementary schools to universities (his first college-level class came at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 2013). "Contrary to popular opinion, tours *can* and do turn a profit," Larson writes. "I almost guarantee that without management and a lot of hype, a young musician will have a hard time making much on a tour after all the related expenses, by *only* playing clubs. I've found that seeking out educational opportunities to present master classes at universities and high schools has increased earnings for myself and my band members significantly." He noted that on a recent 17-day Midwest tour with his trio (Macbride and bassist Luke Sellick), he did education-oriented sessions 60 percent of the time.

"I enjoy teaching," he said, "and I'm getting better at it. We talk about playing original music and [address] questions on harmony in the younger settings, while at the college level we talk a lot about the biz. Some people have an ego problem about doing elementary-school sessions, but I'm flexible at every level. When the kids are younger, it might be the first time they've ever experienced jazz—and that's a good thing."  
—Dan Ouellette



ANNA YATSKEVICH

Players >

JOSH EVANS  
*Impressive Leader*

Josh Evans' monthly gigs at Smalls in Greenwich Village are casual affairs with a workshop vibe. So no one in the crowd was surprised when, on a temperate Tuesday in October, the trumpeter suddenly asked their indulgence, turned to his band and told them that the opening to the next piece—the title tune from *Hope And Despair* (Passin' Thru), his latest album—should be played rubato.

Nor did the audience pay much heed when he pivoted back in their direction and quietly explained that the piece was “the story of my life.”

The audience stirred, however, when he started blowing. Evans' rubato was no exercise in lush Romanticism, and the piece no facile study in the yin-yang of everyday existence. It was, instead, a rough and somewhat anguished ride—the story of a life more despairing than hopeful, at least on this night, when the soft-spoken Evans let his trumpet do the talking.

“It's what we all should be doing,” Bruce Williams, who played alto saxophone both at the gig and on the album, said in a phone conversation.

The respect implied in Williams' comment was well earned. Evans has, at age 31 built a resume that speaks volumes. At 14, at the Artists Collective in his native Hartford, Connecticut, veteran saxophonist Jackie McLean taught him Charlie Parker tunes. Not long after, the two were sharing bandstands.

Fatefully, McLean introduced Evans to trumpeter Jon Faddis, who in turn invited him to hear the Dizzy Gillespie All-Stars at New York's Blue Note on the day before he turned 16. Evans sat in on “Birks' Works” with James Moody, Slide Hampton and Mulgrew Miller.

“That was the moment when I knew what I wanted to do,” Evans said recently in Manhattan.

While still a teen, he moved to Harlem and

found nightly jams that led to steady gigs, among them stints with top players like saxophonist Benny Golson, with whom he toured Siberia. Before long, he had signed up with drummer Winard Harper for what became a three-and-a-half-year stretch.

Evans' experience with drummer Rashied Ali truly altered his approach.

“I was a bebop guy trying to play changes,” Evans said. “But I moved away from that when I met Rashied. You could play anything over anything. Not that notes didn't matter, but you didn't have to be thinking so squarely.”

Ali took him to nearly 20 countries over

two years, building his creative stamina and freeing him from the rhythmic tyranny of “one, two, three, four,” Evans said. When Ali died in 2009, Evans quit performing and moved back to Hartford. But after nine months and many cathartic, free-blowing sessions alone on the bandstand at Hartford's Bushnell Park, he worked his way back to New York.

In clubs and on record, he wields a horn that, even at its coolest, burns intensely. It is the central element in a voice that seems destined to be more widely heard, not least on the front line of Christian McBride's new, pianoless quartet.

—Phillip Lutz

ALEXIS COLE & BUCKY PIZZARELLI

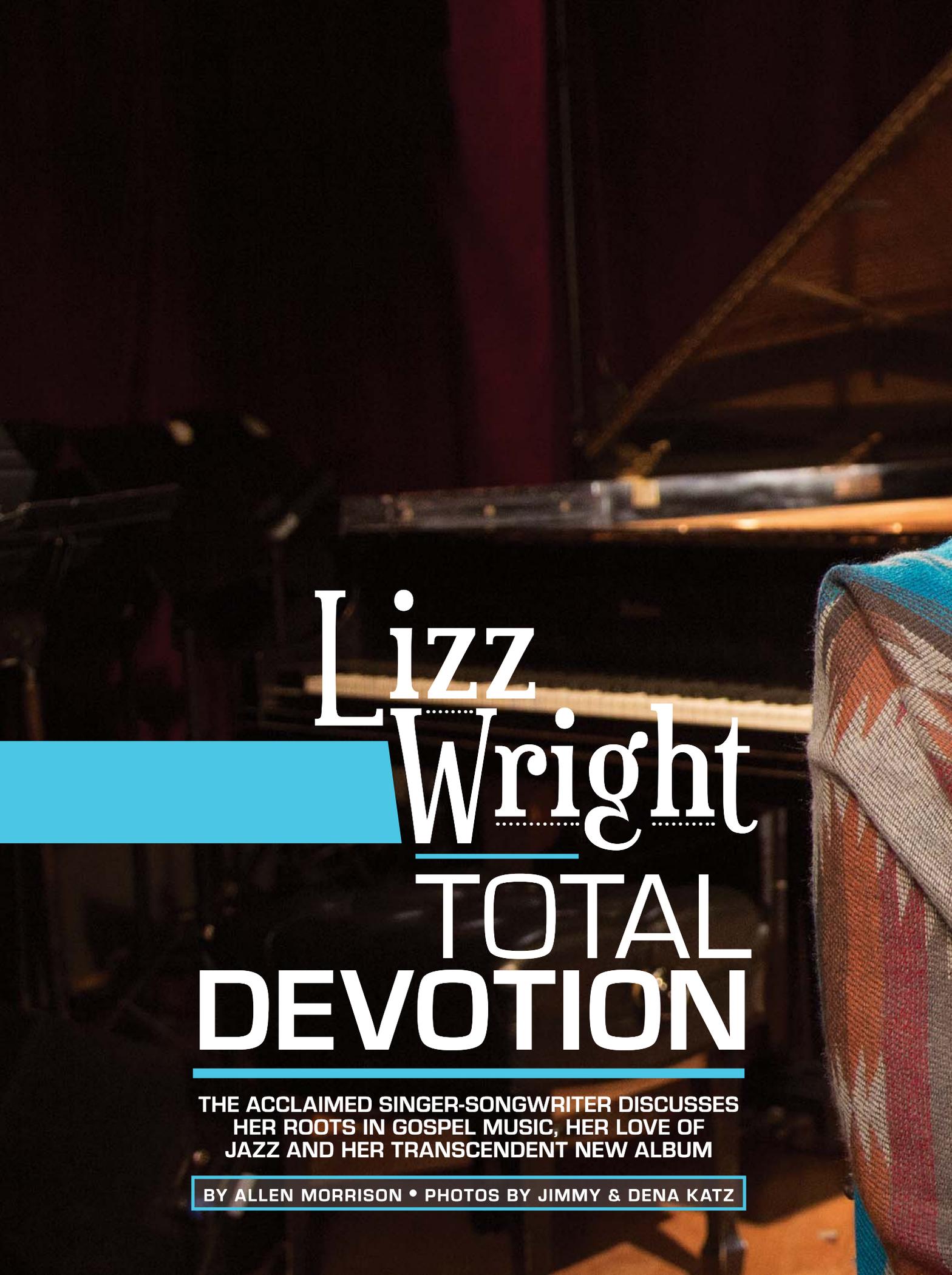
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# Lizz Wright

## TOTAL DEVOTION

THE ACCLAIMED SINGER-SONGWRITER DISCUSSES  
HER ROOTS IN GOSPEL MUSIC, HER LOVE OF  
JAZZ AND HER TRANSCENDENT NEW ALBUM

BY ALLEN MORRISON • PHOTOS BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ



Lizz Wright at The Jazz Gallery in New York City, Oct. 8

**I**n late February 2015, about a week before singer-songwriter Lizz Wright went into the studio to record her fifth album, *Freedom & Surrender* (Concord), her Volvo station wagon skidded across 300 yards of black ice on a mountain curve near her North Carolina home, and headed toward a 75-foot ravine.

Wright described this harrowing, “near-death experience” in a recently published essay:

*I softened my body and rested my hands in my lap. The heavy car floated silently. ... “OK” was the only thing I could get out in a sigh. I was stopped by a young bellwood tree that grew out of the bank like a hook. I slowed my breathing and meditated in suspension. About 20 minutes later, a young neighbor pulled the door open, reaching in with a strong arm to guide my climb out.*

“It was as if it were part of a ballet—everything was moving slowly,” she told *DownBeat* at The Jazz Gallery in midtown Manhattan, where she had just sat for a photo shoot. “I felt weird for about two days. But, in the end, it was really good for me. I remember thinking, as soon as I got back on the ground, that I had to get this record done. I was too untethered from life. I had been in retreat for too long.” She had gone through a period of depression, she said, “but I knew this record would bring me out of it. It was time. It made me feel like I had to be more active in life altogether, and more grateful.”

On the home page of Wright’s website, two striking photographs alternate: one, the cover shot for the album, shows her standing, eyes closed and smiling serenely against a background of clouds; the other is of the delicate pink blossoms of the tree that saved her.

**B**oth earthy and ethereal, the preacher’s daughter from the heart of Georgia can sing jazz with great authority when she chooses to. She has worked with some of the leading jazz artists of the last decade, including keyboardist Joe Sample, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington and soul-jazz singer Gregory Porter. Yet Wright doesn’t consider herself a jazz singer, and for good reason. Her mix of 19th- and 20th-century African American styles, traditional blues, folk and contemporary pop shows the influence of many genres without fitting comfortably into a single one.

Now, after a five-year hiatus—during which she got off the fast track, bought 28 acres in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, suffered some bitter disappointments in love and rearranged her priorities—Wright has emerged stronger, with an album of mostly original

songs that demonstrate a new maturity and a hard-won sense of balance between the secular and the sacred.

*Freedom & Surrender* is her first album since 2010’s *Fellowship* (Verve), a collection of mostly gospel tunes. It’s her first for her new label, and her first time working with bassist-composer-producer Larry Klein, who’s known for his sensitive work with female singers (including Luciana Souza, Joni Mitchell, Tracy Chapman and Madeline Peyroux).

Although it started out as an album of love songs, *Freedom & Surrender* became something deeper and more expressive of Wright’s life and spiritual development. She co-wrote all but three of the disc’s 13 songs, six with Klein and his regular writing partner, David Batteau, and others with J.D. Souther, Maia Sharp and Wright’s longtime writing partners Toshi Reagon and Jesse Harris. The three carefully selected covers are inspired choices: Reagon’s “Freedom,” the doomed British pop songwriter Nick Drake’s ethereal “River Man” and a gospel-flavored arrangement of the Bee Gees’ “To Love Somebody.”

Klein assembled a brilliant band: guitarist Dean Parks, drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, bassist Dan Lutz, percussionist Pete Korpula and keyboardists Kenny Banks and Pete Kuzma, with guest appearances by Billy Childs on Fender Rhodes, Till Brönner on flugelhorn, and Porter, who shares the romantic duet “Right Where You Are.” As in Wright’s live performances, a churchy Hammond B-3 figures prominently in most of the arrangements.

“If I had to summarize her qualities in a word, I’d say she’s an *honest* singer,” Klein said via Skype from his home studio in Los Angeles.

Her co-writer and friend Jesse Harris agreed. When Harris presented Wright with an ASCAP Foundation Jazz Vanguard Award in 2015 for her innovative songwriting, he described her as “the essence of a natural singer. With each breath she takes, warm, joyful and sometimes sorrowful sound comes pouring forth like a stream from every corner of her body. She writes songs in the same way.”

Her gospel roots are evident in everything she sings. “That’s her channel,” Klein said.

“Yeah, that’s probably why I can’t be a ‘jazz

singer,’” Wright explained. “I’ve always got that Southern gospel-blues root thing on it—I can’t get that off! It’s like a good kind of dirt, you know? Not a nasty dirt—a good kind in which you can grow stuff.”

“I think, musically and personally, I stand right in the middle of America,” she reflected. “I know there are pieces of country, folk, jazz, gospel, soul music and blues in what I do, but these styles don’t feel separate to me. They look like the collage of people in my life who have taught me, loved, protected and influenced me.” On the downside, she added, “If you’re this eclectic, you can be made to feel a bit homeless.”

**K**lein, in a sense, gave her a home for all these styles. “*Freedom & Surrender* was initially supposed to be a record of cover songs,” he said. “But Lizz told me, ‘I don’t really want to do that, but the record company wants me to.’ She wanted to write songs about where she was at—at this point in her life—after taking time away from things. And I thought that was a great idea. So I said, ‘Let’s just start daydreaming together about what we’re going to make, let it take shape while we work, and I’ll keep the record company at bay.’” The writing process stretched out over a year-and-a-half, during which Wright made frequent trips to Los Angeles to work with Klein and Batteau.

Singer-guitarist Toshi Reagon has been a friend and mentor to Wright her since her earliest days in New York. Reagon is the daughter of Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock and a charter member of The Freedom Singers, who gained famed singing at civil rights rallies with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1960s.

“The term ‘gospel’ doesn’t begin to describe Lizz’s voice,” Reagon said by phone from her Brooklyn apartment. “Gospel is a 20th-century tradition. Lizz’s singing comes out of a much older, 19th-century way of phrasing. When I first heard her sing, I called my mom, who’s also from Georgia, and I said, ‘Mom, you’re not gonna believe this.’ It’s very rare to hear somebody Lizz’s age sing that way.” Wright is, according to the younger Reagon, one of the few contemporary singers her mother has ever heard who has the sound and tradition that she teaches, despite not having been personally taught by her.

“She also has an *insane* instrument. She sings perfectly—she’s the Serena Williams of singing. I feel like I’m a student when I work with her,” Reagon said.

The spirituality in her music has deep roots. “Growing up,” Wright said, “I was not allowed to listen to any secular music, besides classical music. My only exposure to it was through commercials, TV, classmates. To this day, people talk about r&b, hip-hop, music from the ’80s



Wright's new album is titled *Freedom & Surrender*.

and '90s, and I can't believe that I'm 35 and I still don't know about all the main groups."

The Wrights lived in Kathleen, in central Georgia. Her father, an Air Force veteran, is an aircraft mechanic at Robins Air Force Base and a preacher at the non-denominational Community Outreach Ministries, a storefront church in Montezuma, Georgia. "From 5 years old on," Wright said, "I would sing a song or two at every service, right before Dad would preach." By age 16, she had become the church's musical director.

Both parents are musical, though neither had formal training. "My mother would literally go to the piano and lay her hands on it, feel her way through it, and sing. It was like she was massaging the keys. She does so many technically wrong things, but they work—she's very musical." Wright learned to play piano from the age of 5, writing songs and taking lessons from a Baptist minister.

"My father read all kinds of stories to me, Bible stories and African American folktales. After preaching in church, he didn't have enough. We'd have a little mini-church [service] in the house; it was called family devotion. He'd read a story or parable to me, my sister and brother, and give us parts to play. Now I realize how weird my childhood was. As a child you don't care for those kind of things. But now I thank him."

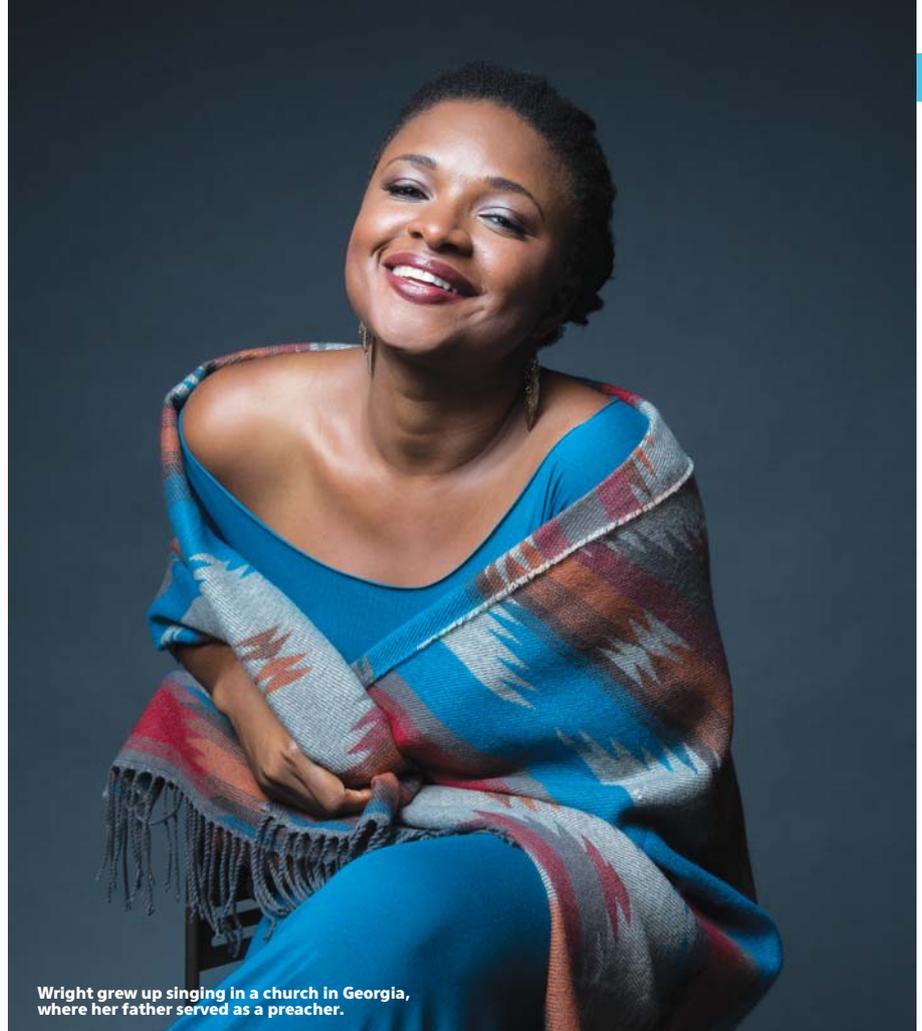
Her older brother is also musically gifted. "He was the first one of us children to start hearing things and figuring out how to play them, knowing nothing about [the piano]. All I knew was Bible stories. I was steeped in Christian logic—miracles, prayers, covenants. So when I saw my brother playing like that, I went in the closet where my daddy prays, and I made a deal with God: 'I will sing for you and play for you. Just teach me how to do that; just give me *that*,'" she laughed.

So how is that deal working out today?

"It's fine! Now, without holding fast to any ideology, I can still say that every prayer is the beginning of your own transformation. So be *really careful* what you ask for. My whole life changed. I started playing all the time. I started listening to [songs] and learning how to play them. Then Dad put me to work in his church."

Being sheltered from the secular mainstream gave her "a hunger for all kinds of music I missed," she said. It may have also caused her to hear things a bit differently from others of her generation. "It allowed me to hang on to an old sound that's really hard to imitate. The old, traditional ways of singing are part of history—that's how people still sing [in Georgia] when I go home."

Wright regards the contemporary gospel movement as her musical salvation. "That period in gospel, the '90s, was amazing," she said. "You had [artists like] Commissioned, The



Wright grew up singing in a church in Georgia, where her father served as a preacher.

Winans, Vanessa Bell Armstrong—a whole world of people who sounded like disco, r&b, even early hip-hop—but they were talking about Jesus. You had a gospel version of every sound and every headliner in secular music.

"But," she added, "when it comes to gospel music, I still like the old stuff. I like it really basic."

**W**right studied music throughout her middle and secondary school years, learned choral conducting and attended state competitions. At Georgia State University in Atlanta, where she studied classical voice, she discovered that her range was wider than she thought. "My teachers always made me sing second soprano," she said. "They said, 'In order for you to have vibrancy and for your tone to be really clean, you need to strengthen the top end of your range.' It helped me, and it made singing low a special treat for me."

It took a while for her parents to warm up to her secular career. "I pulled my life away from them and explored it in secret," she said. At Georgia State, she began to explore the possibilities of combining gospel with secular music. She considered singing love songs on a gospel label, or singing gospel on a secular label; she asked her ministers and friends whether that was possible. She got mixed responses.

Now she sees the distinction as artificial: "I think the secular and the sacred are insepara-

ble in nature." She has tried to balance the two ever since, seeking to avoid "too much leaning in and too much doing without."

In Atlanta she began to hear jazz—on NPR, at first—then at jazz clubs. She sought out fellow students who played it, and asked them what records she needed to study.

"I went around interviewing people with a notebook," she recalled. She began sitting in with local musicians, many of whom shared her background in church music, and joined a gospel group called In The Spirit. The group's manager, Ron Simblist, helped her make a demo and get it to Ron Goldstein, the president of Verve Records. She was 21.

Executives at Verve liked what they heard, agreeing to put her into an artist development program and paying for lessons in New York with Dr. Richard Harper from The New School. He had her singing spirituals in the classical style. She says the work helped her integrate classical technique into singing more secular and contemporary material. "It helped me get more force out of my voice and more stamina," she said.

"Then Norah Jones happened—and people were inspired by that. It was a blessing that she happened before I did, because the palette of what the labels considered workable, and where jazz could go, got broader." It suddenly was acceptable for Wright not to sing straight-ahead jazz. "Norah happened to meet a great need for

comforting music, for gentle stories and music that was related to jazz,” but without what she calls “the studied recall”—harkening back to the spirit and the phrasing of the past while lacking personal authenticity.

“There’s a way to study jazz, and be so exact about what it’s supposed to be, that it feels like you’re visiting a museum, and I can’t take that,” she said.

It’s not that she doesn’t admire artists who mine traditional jazz and keep it alive. “It works for some people. I’m still learning the tradition. But I have a lot of interesting things in my heart and head . . . and I’m trying to say something with my music about what I see and feel right now.”

**W**ith *Freedom & Surrender*, her songwriting has achieved a new level of honesty and accomplishment, encouraged by co-writers of a similar bent, especially Reagon, Harris and now Klein. Her friendship with Reagon is special. “Toshi’s presence in my life is very different from anyone else,” Wright said. “She and her mom—they sound like *home* to me. Toshi’s just honest. There’s a thing about people from Georgia and how they sing, how they sit inside of a tempo in a way that’s *country*. She gets that from her mom, I guess. We write things together that sound like where I came from.”

Reagon’s solo composition “Freedom”—a fervent prayer set to a compelling funky riff—opens the album. “It was written with Lizz in mind,” Reagon said. The song came to her out of the social and racial turmoil of the past year, but it has a special relevance to Wright for more personal reasons. The idea of having “the courage to be free” was a theme Wright began sounding with the very first track of her debut, 2003’s *Salt*.

“I want to be free,” she said, “but I want to keep the continuity with my past. I’d like the people who heard me sing when I was 5 in my father’s church to be like, ‘Yeah, that’s her; she still sounds the same.’”

“Right Where You Are” is a soulful duet with Porter. “I had toured with Gregory in 2013,” she said. “It was kind of an arranged marriage. People were telling me, ‘You have a musical soul mate.’ It was awkward at first. But now that I’ve hung out with him, I understand that.”

While running on Venice Beach one morning, during one of her writing visits to L.A., Wright was thinking about the song when the idea of Porter popped into her head. Co-writer J.D. Souther had wanted to sing the harmony part, “and that would have been fine,” she said. But she had wanted to duet with Porter for a while, and suddenly she could hear it. She stopped in the middle of her run and texted Klein.

They tracked Porter down in Paris and arranged for him to record his vocal at a studio there. “He has so much power and color in his voice—it’s like a place you can walk into—it’s huge. The care he took with the song, and the tenderness in his voice, was a very clear message to me. We are good forever.”

Wright is no longer concerned about whether she’s considered a “jazz singer” or not. She seems grounded in her personal life and in her new creative space.

In reality, she’s part of an old folk and blues tradition. “I’m heavily influenced by jazz—I studied the way Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald delivered lyrics, the pacing and use of space of Shirley Horn. I have borrowed wisdom from a lot of places, but I’m still a storyteller, because that’s what my father is.

“I don’t know how the ‘jazz darling’ thing happened,” she reflected. “I never earned that. I understand the music, have studied it, and I love it. But it doesn’t come out of me like that.” Instead, she thinks of herself as “a people’s singer.”

“I like artists who have careers like Bonnie Raitt and Keb’ Mo’ and Odetta—those are ‘people’s singers’ to me,” she said. “I come from a place where gospel and country, and jazz and blues, can cross, naturally. Because I’m on a jazz label, it’s been a big cloud to run from under. Yet it’s showered me with so many gifts. It’s a strange thing. But the truth is, I can talk to anybody, and I can sing to anybody, and I want to have a song for anybody.”

DB

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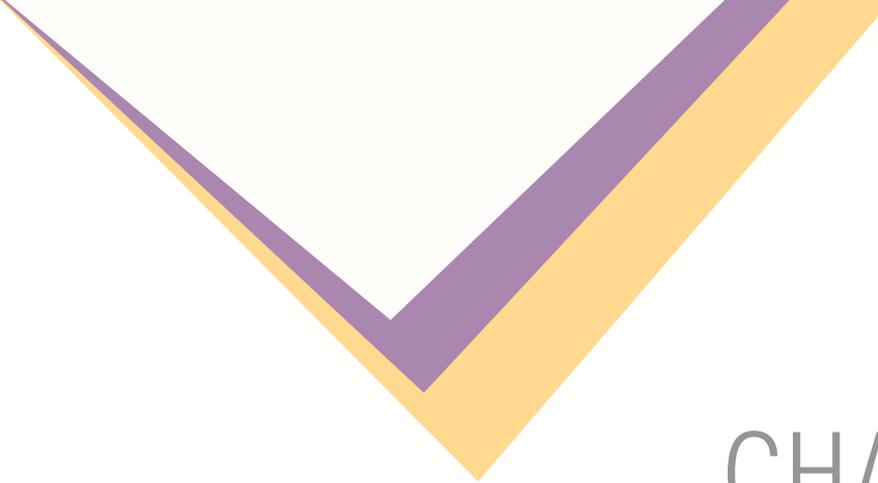
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The advertisement features a large photograph of musician Bakithi Kumalo smiling and holding a double bass. Below this, a row of five different styles of orange and black electric guitars is displayed. The text 'NS DESIGN™' is at the top, 'Bakithi Kumalo' is on the left side of the photo, 'REDEFINING CLASSIC™' is in the center, and the website 'www.NedSteinberger.com' is at the bottom. A small credit 'K-LA Photography' is on the right edge of the photo.



CHARLES LLOYD

‘BLATANT  
TRUTH’

BY JOSEF WOODARD | PHOTO BY CRAIG LOVELL

My experience of writing the book *Charles Lloyd: A Wild, Blatant Truth* (Silman-James Press) entailed a long, strange and circuitous path full of stops, starts and detours along the way to fruition. That path was apropos, given that Charles Lloyd’s long life in and out of jazz has entailed those same qualities. Culled from fascinating, sprawling interviews that took place during a span of more than 25 years (beginning in 1987), this book tells the story of a controversial jazz saxophonist who rose to great heights, leapt away from the upwardly mobile trajectory into a long personal retreat and reframed his narrative in the past quarter-century, earning rights as an *éminence gris*, a revered, old-school jazz hero from a fading jazz generation.

Born and raised in Memphis, the young Lloyd headed west, to study at the University of Southern California. On the “Left Coast,” he found numerous creative musical allies, including drummer Billy Higgins (with whom he would fortuitously connect later in life) and launched his career as a gifted sideman, with drummer Chico Hamilton and then alto sax legend Cannonball Adderley.

Duly propelled into his long (if fitful) life as a leader, Lloyd’s first major band achieved luminous success. He and his quartet—the young firebrand pianist Keith Jarrett, drummer Jack DeJohnette and bassist Cecil McBee—scored one of the landmark commercial successes in jazz history, *Forest Flower*, recorded at the 1966 Monterey Jazz Festival. Released the following year, the

album aligned Lloyd with rock bands of the “Summer of Love” epoch, pushing him into a realm of fame far beyond the usual parameters of jazz.

By 1970, beset by demons of both the internal and external kind (including the persistent accusation that his artistry was a lighter variation of John Coltrane’s work), Lloyd had exited the public discourse, stage left. He pursued a soul-searching hermitage in California, first in Big Sur and then Santa Barbara.

By the 1980s, he was back on the scene, haltingly, driven by the arrival of young French piano virtuoso Michel Petrucciani. In the ’90s, Lloyd became a major presence on the global stage, signing on for a long, fruitful stint with ECM Records, and working with other top-flight artists, including pianists Bobo Stenson, Geri Allen and Jason Moran.

Lloyd is still operating at an elite level, as evidenced by his well-received cross-cultural album *Wild Man Dance* (released by Blue Note on April 14). He was named an NEA Jazz Master in 2015, and, at 77, he has risen to the elevated status of legend—with plenty of songs still left in the fiddle.

Below are two excerpts from the book. The first one addresses a precipitous moment in the saxophonist’s saga, when the incendiary popularity of *Forest Flower*—recorded on the same stage where Jimi Hendrix lit his guitar aflame at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival—launched Lloyd into the stratosphere.



Charles Lloyd at the 2014 Monterey Jazz Festival

Listening with hindsight to the 18 minutes that make up the two-part title track on the album *Forest Flower: Charles Lloyd At Monterey* can be a strangely crystallizing experience. This performance of this tune was a potent, fulcrum moment in Lloyd's musical life and the catalyst for what would become one of the first jazz records to sell 1 million copies as well as the song most likely to be rattling around in the mental recesses of his ever-growing legion of fans—especially his young fans from outside the jazz world.

Lloyd penned the tune, with its gently restless harmonic structure and idyllic spirit, while in Chico Hamilton's group, with whom he performed and recorded it earlier (1963). But in comparison with those earlier performances of it, his 1966 Monterey Jazz Festival rendition, with his band of young virtuosos—Keith Jarrett, Cecil McBee and Jack DeJohnette—turned out to be something altogether different. Although Jarrett steals the show in some ways (as later pianists in Lloyd's groups sometimes have), Lloyd also puts forth a commanding performance on both movements of the two-part tune—its core "Sunrise" section and its extended vamping coda, "Sunset"—with a voice that alternates beautifully muted, searching statements with bursts of boldness.

As Lloyd's manager, the noted record producer George Avakian, wrote in the album's liner notes, "The music speaks for itself—a comfortable cliché, but nevertheless true, for it is a unique and personal music which communicates universally. While it has a distinct individuality—Charles Lloyd has created an expression all his own—it draws on every kind of music imaginable." Well, that may be an overstatement, but in 1966, before the term and concept of "fusion" in jazz were commonplace, the Lloyd quartet's collective vocabulary must have seemed more inclusive than exclusive or locked into any particular *-ism*.

Avakian ends his notes by commenting that, during the Monterey set's finale, "some measure of the joyous atmosphere in the crowd might be inferred by an incident that took place during this final piece [the quartet's spirited version of the jazz standard "East Of The Sun"]: Someone let loose a blue balloon and the crowd happily kept it bouncing in the air throughout the performance. Buoyancy through group cooperation is, indeed, one of the results of the happiness generated by the Charles Lloyd Quartet!" Avakian's use of the words *buoyancy* and *universality* perhaps points toward the potential of this intellectual yet high-energy-espousing band to reach heights of popularity rarely attained by such bona fide jazz musicians.

In 1997, I asked Lloyd about the delicate dance between art and commerce he navigated in the 1960s, especially after his *Forest Flower* album blossomed into a great public forum that created a broad fan base for him and his band.

Did he feel at the time that he was being sucked into some sort of commercial machinery that he wanted nothing to do with?

"Absolutely," he replied, "because the merchants saw something there, in that I had an audience and some appeal ... . It wasn't because they promoted the records—they were shocked that it was selling.

"After [the Monterey Jazz Festival performance], we went to San Francisco ... . I left the horn on the curb. We were at the El Matador in North Beach. Joe Henderson is in the audience, [as were] a bunch of saxophone players and musicians who were all at the festival. I didn't even have my horn, and I wasn't concerned. Jimi Hendrix and I had just been hanging out. I was *ripped-boom*.

"I remember there was all this noise around me and then something happened. When you're in the *now*, there's only now, and I don't know what the commotion was about, but finally Joe handed me his horn. It may have been hours later. I remember he had a really soft setup. When you're in the state that I was in, like Sandoz-altered [referring to Sandoz Laboratories, which produced LSD in the 1940s], I could adjust.

"Bird had to do that all the time, because he was always borrowing someone's horn. You heard the story about Miles and Art Farmer? When Miles was in bad shape, somewhere in the '50s, he didn't have a horn. He would pay Art Farmer to use his horn. He would rent his horn, basically. One night, Art said Miles came to him and said, 'I need your horn. I got a gig.' Art said, 'I've got a gig tonight, too, Miles. I need my horn.' So Miles said, 'Man, I didn't think you were that kind of cat.' Art said, 'Miles, I'm not in the horn-renting business.'

"You have to adjust, so I adjusted to this guy's setup. I like resistance in my setup; it's about wind going through the thing, you know. See, I'm working on the sound. It's all wind. I study the ocean, the sound and how the wind comes off it.

"Coleman Hawkins messed me up ... . He didn't weigh a whole lot, but he could blow you off the stand with such hugeness. ... I couldn't get that sound. Well, I wasn't going to drink that much scotch.

"See, Coleman was out in California, and so was Bird. It was happening out here. Then there was Buddy Collette, playing that alto. Here was



Flying high circa '66: Cecil McBee (top), Lloyd, Jack DeJohnette, Keith Jarrett and George Avakian.

this big guy. I didn't understand. I thought he played like ... [sings] *toot-toot-toot*. I didn't know anything when I was young. Then he'd go to the studio and make some bread and drive around in a Cadillac.

"Youth is kind of a messed-up stage sometimes. I also thought, when I was extremely young, that I wouldn't have a saxophone in my mouth when I'm 50. I thought jazz was a young man's music, it was that 'Live fast, die young, leave a beautiful corpse' idea. The point was, I thought that you had to burn the candle and go ahead and go for it. I'm learning now, more than ever. And I'm closer to finding my sound.

"When I was a kid, the old guys in Memphis used to say, 'You know, it's going to take 30 years.' I would say, 'What are you talking about?' They said, 'You'll find out.' They would talk about Johnny Hodges and people like that. They didn't want me to have delusions of grandeur. What they were really saying was that it takes a long time to get a sound, and then it takes a long time just to understand this campus."

*The two most high-profile periods of Lloyd's career are his rise to fame in the late '60s and then the artistically rewarding era of the '90s through today. The gap between those phases—the "lost wilderness years" of the '70s and early '80s—is now viewed as a mythic period. Odd album projects and curious choices of expression added up to an intriguing interim. The next excerpt explores a missing link in the portrait of a jazz celebrity who has refused to follow a linear, pre-ordained "career" path.*

Viewed as a multi-chaptered tale unto itself, the Charles Lloyd discography tracks the twists of his life's story, post-USC, in interesting and revealing ways. The most productive periods, of course, were the second half of the 1960s and then the extended, and continuing, ECM era—from 1989's *Fish Out Of Water* forward. Primarily, despite occasional special projects, these phases found Lloyd working in the fairly traditional acoustic jazz context of his quartet—sax protagonist up front, with a piano-bass-drums rhythm section in tow.

No such linearity or traditionalism governs the strange—and strangely fascinating, sometimes inscrutable—pathless path (so to speak) of his '70s recorded output. While there are passages of the jazz-fueled Lloyd the world had known from the '60s, that voice was often kept subdued in favor of his Eastern-leaning flute playing, as on *Geeta*, and work with musicians not necessarily practiced in the jazz arts.

His "wilderness years" records ranged from Hollywood slickness in instrumental form (*Weavings*, with a Dorothy Darr painting on the cover and long-haired Lloyd in Native American face paint on the back) to proto-New Age electroacoustic wafting (*Pathless Path*, with Mark Isham on synthesizer and Peter Maunu on guitar, recorded at Santa Barbara Sound in 1979). While Lloyd's '70s musical alliances were largely left in the past once he got back on the trail of his life as a jazz bandleader in the late '80s, there were exceptions, as when Isham hired him to play on the soundtrack to the Alan Rudolph-directed film *Afterglow*, in 1997.

In 1979, as something of a soft opening for his later full-on reentry into jazz proper, Lloyd recorded the album *Autumn In New York*, in connection with Mike Love Productions, for the Destiny Records label.

This is one of the odd, mostly overlooked jewels in his discography, and his only album devoted to traditional jazz standards, such as the title track, as well as "As Time Goes By," "Nancy (With The Laughing Face)," "Stella By Starlight" and "But Beautiful." Interestingly, this artist with such a fragile relationship to John Coltrane also nicely takes on the tender Coltrane classic "Naima." A photo on the back cover finds Mr. Lloyd now having swapped his post-hippie mystical recluse sartorial manners for a sleek, pseudo-film noir gumshoe outfit.

On the album, Lloyd, who had been something of an overqualified musician on other projects and guest shots during the decade, unleashes some of his old jazz fire and lyrical luster, albeit in a perhaps self-consciously straightahead milieu. And there are some intriguing moments with Lloyd's horn weaving and haltingly soaring over tasty string arrangements by the great, underrated composer/arranger/keyboardist Clare Fischer (misspelled as "Claire" in the album's credits). Closing

the album, Fischer's lustrous arrangement of his composition "Pensativa" is, on its own, worth seeking out. Lloyd's back-cover dedication, a harbinger of his music to come, reads, "Special thanks to the tradition of the masters."

During his "wilderness years," Lloyd was also captured for posterity on a number of pop records, including albums by the Beach Boys, with whom he sometimes toured. He can be heard on important Beach Boys albums such as *Surf's Up* and *Holland*, and the later lesser LPs *15 Big Ones* and *M.I.U. Album*...

In the early period of his self-liberation from the jazz scene as such, while "hiding out" in Los Angeles, Lloyd also played on Canned Heat's 1971 album *Historical Figures And Ancient Heads* and the Doors' 1972 *Full Circle*, appearing on "Verdillac" and "The Piano Bird." He also appeared on the 1973 Columbia album *Roger McGuinn*, returning the favor of his friend McGuinn's cameo on Lloyd's 1972 hippie-jazz album *Waves*.

Looking back on his foggy musical doings during the '70s, Lloyd is circumspect, viewing the period as a means to an end whose fruition was still to come. "As a musician, you hear an ideal world. You make these creations... Listen, I bow down to anybody making music, because that's another kind of step..."

"Buckminster Fuller proved, years ago, that there were enough resources to support the population. He had it figured out, with the food thing and all. We could be harmonious..."

"Now, see, before, I was quiet. I was in Big Sur and not bothering anybody. If it's only about yourself, you're missing the point. It's really about the fact that the more you serve, the more it comes. It's like the equation that those boys [the Beatles] made, about 'the love you take is equal to the love you make' [a line from the Lennon-McCartney song "The End"]. All that stuff is true, I come to find out. So when you find that out, why would you want to do all this corporate deviance stuff?"

*[As this 1997 conversation continued, Lloyd discussed his retreat from the world, and revealed his feelings about Petrucciani (1962-'99), who suffered from a genetic disease that made his bones brittle, which made traveling a challenge for him.]*

"I meditated for many years up in a cave in Big Sur. A weird thing happened. I began to not be out of touch, but more in touch than I've ever been when I was in the midst of a New York traffic jam. That's not to say you have to go into a retreat to be peaceful. It was a time in my life when I had to go and do more internal purification, more work on the self and to really investigate. I had seen many of my friends and heroes die at a very early age.



Witness Booker Little [1938-'61].

"I'd been quiet and silent all these years, until Michel [Petrucciani] came around. I couldn't believe it. That was like an apparition. I had been living in a tree in Big Sur. I had a compound at that time, until I had more friends and people. Dorothy painted and she needed a studio. I built a bunch of structures. Dorothy did—she's a renaissance woman. She can build, she can paint, she's an architect. The best cook on the planet. Just love personified.

"She built a beautiful Japanese teahouse for us and a main house. We had guesthouses all over the property. I used to call them Lady Day's House, House of Bird, Bird's Lair, Trane Foundation and stuff like that... Michel stayed in one of these houses. He came over and he had an entourage. Two people had to carry him over, and his brother came over, and then his mother came over later.

"That touched me, because I was not into making music in a public way. I played in the woods and I liked my quiet life. I had come to that thing of inner journey. I have always been about that. I love people, but there's something about me needing solitude. I need to come from deep quiet into activity. I've always had that in my nature. My father was like that. He was filled with solitude, and yet when he would coach his team, he was out there carrying on. So what happened was that during that thing with Michel, I was so touched by him.

"Michel said one time when someone asked if he was still playing with Charles, he said, 'No, it's hard to play with him because you always have to be on your toes. You can't relax. He's always listening to you. I don't like that pressure.' People have counseled me about pressure. I'm the hardest on myself. I think if you do anything you ought to do it full-out. Life is really serious business."

DB

# Kirk Knuffke

# ‘TRUE INDIVIDUAL’

BY KEN MICALLEF | PHOTO BY HYOU VIELZ

Performing with the Matt Wilson Quartet in October at New York City’s Smalls Jazz Club, Kirk Knuffke blew epic cornet, expressing the combination of history, artistic lineage and masterful musicality that has marked his swift ascent from sideman to leader to acclaimed fire-starter.

Accompanied by bassist Chris Lightcap, tenor saxophonist Jeff Lederer and riotous, resourceful drummer Wilson, Knuffke was unruffled by Lederer’s squawks and Wilson’s snare-drum tirades during a selection from Duke Ellington’s *Far East Suite*. Even when the quartet’s eclectic thunder seemed too much for the tiny club, Knuffke fed off the fire, holding his cornet high, releasing rapid-fire dulcet lines that were rhythmically precise, New Orleans funky and full of grace. But while Knuffke’s contributions aligned with the occasionally boisterous outpourings of his bandmates, his beautiful sound—pure tone, burnished timbre, glistening delivery—was more than the sum of its parts. Knuffke’s music is a reflection of his multifaceted personality: part musical sage, part jazz philosopher, a self-taught musician with wide interests, profound insights, endless curiosity and an abundance of good humor.

The Colorado native’s cornet style hints at the lyricism of Bobby Hackett as well as the silken glide of Chet Baker and the fire of Bill Dixon, all generously expressed in the creative free improvisation that has been Knuffke’s primary musical platform. Knuffke’s influences are extensive: He admires New Orleans’ pop star Al Hirt, the “many textures and timbres” of Henry “Red” Allen, “all the sounds Lester Bowie could get” and “the incredibly fast and clean technique” of Freddie Hubbard and Booker Little. Knuffke has proven himself to be more than comfortable in numerous settings—big band, quartet, trio and especially duo. When he climbs on a bandstand, Knuffke doesn’t bring any preconceived notions about style with him, choosing instead to respond to his collaborators generously and openly. He moves effortlessly between free-jazz and straightahead sounds.

“I don’t think they have to be separate,” Knuffke said, regarding “outside” and “inside” styles. “That’s what I aspire to do and it’s

what my heroes do. Look at Joe Lovano, Steve Lacy and Lee Konitz; those guys play completely free and totally over forms and changes, too. But there are definitely guys who don’t do both.

“When I started playing horn, I didn’t have any *idea* about jazz,” he said during a conversation in a park near his Hell’s Kitchen apartment. “I just liked to improvise, because I didn’t know how to read music. Those distinctions are not always helpful, to say that you’re a free player or not. It seems like being a free player shouldn’t have a genre attached; it should be something that everybody does. It should be as natural as anything.”

Since his New York City arrival in 2005, Knuffke has appeared on more than 60 recordings, including six as a leader in 2014 and 2015. Everyone wants to play with him, and often in the duo format. Knuffke has recorded duet albums with vibraphonist Karl Berger, pianist Jess Stacken, contra-alto clarinetist Ben Goldberg, bassist Mike Bisio, drummers Whit Dickey and Mike Pride and organist John Medeski. Knuffke has at least two more duo recordings in the works—one with drummer Gerald Cleaver and another with pianist Frank Kimbrough.

In addition to excelling in the duo format, Knuffke has a penchant for bringing together seemingly disparate musicians to create fresh sounds. Often dedicating his compositions to revered musicians, Knuffke recruits players young and old to forge new alliances within novel environments. In 2013, Knuffke, with guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Matt Wilson, recorded the rugged out terrain of *Sifter* (Relative Pitch). That same year, Knuffke recorded *Chorale* (SteepleChase) with bassist Michael Formanek, drummer Billy Hart and frequent Paul Motian accompanist Russ Lossing on piano. Hart’s performance in particular is a revelation, the drum master finding new layers of expression amid this ECM-like production and approach.

“I thought the lineup on *Chorale* would really work,” Knuffke said. “I’d never made a record with a piano, bass and drums rhythm section. I had played a lot with Russ, a little with Michael and never with Billy. But it worked out so well, and Billy really liked it.



Kirk Knuffke at the Moers Festival  
in Germany on June 8, 2014

“Wingy,’ [written] for trumpeter Wingy Manone, the great one-armed trumpet player, is based on a verbal quote of his,” Knuffke continued. “You can take a quote like a poem, and write a melody using some of the built-in rhythm and inflection. Wingy’s quote is from the book *We Called It Music: A Generation of Jazz* [by Eddie Condon with Thomas Sugrue].”

The all-originals outing *Lamplighter* (Fresh Sounds New Talent), released in 2013, found Knuffke and bassist Stomu Takeishi riding the simultaneous rhythmic waves of drummers Bill Goodwin and Kenny Wollesen, the drumming duo performing on full set and marching bass drum/crash cymbal, respectively.

“Kenny and Bill just did it,” Knuffke said, referring to the drummers’ twin-turbo approach. “Bill is *also* playing a lot of bass drum, so it has this ‘rumbling melodic thunderstorm’ as Bill called it. I wanted tons of bass drum, but sometimes I find bass drum to be something I really don’t like in jazz. It can be distracting. If it’s too high and loud and interferes with the bass instrument, I don’t like it. On *Lamplighter* Kenny plays bass drum and cymbal, and on other tunes, percussion—and Bill plays a full kit. Stomu played acoustic bass guitar, not an upright. The songs were written with Kenny in mind and his street-beat thing. I wanted to make a record that was really groovy.”

The 2014 album *Five* (Steeplechase), a duet between pianist Jesse Stacken and Knuffke, features his cornet in more traditional mode. Covering compositions by Bill Evans and Carla Bley, Knuffke plays conversationally, drawing the listener in with his aching tone, arresting ideas and warm, contemplative delivery. In contrast to most of his contemporaries, Knuffke enjoys performing the material of recent masters. Pure and on-form, *Five* is akin to a recital.

“There aren’t any chord changes or forms on most of the Carla Bley tunes,” Knuffke said, “while Bill Evans’ music is incredibly strict with a lot of chord changes, except for ‘Sugar Plum’—that goes through all 12 keys. It’s really challenging. With the Carla Bley material, once the melody is over it’s open.

“I don’t know why, but almost all the guys I play with don’t play older compositions. They play free or their own music. I keep big catalogs of the music I like. It inspires me. It’s fun to play and it makes you a better player. Writing your own music does, too, but I would hate not to have the experience of playing other people’s music.”

In early 2015 Knuffke released the caravan-like *Little Cross* (Steeplechase), with drummer Hamid Drake and Hammond B-3 maestro Jamie Saft. The trio covered traditional and original material, and the music of Wilson, Wollesen and Henry Grimes.

Most recently, Knuffke fulfilled a longtime dream to bring together frequent Anthony Braxton and Cecil Taylor upright bassist Mark



Knuffke at the Green Mill in Chicago, 2014

Helias and perennial Phil Woods’ drummer Bill Goodwin. *Arms & Hands* (Royal Potato Family) sounds like a New Orleans funeral band in after-hours mode. Additional ringers on board were trombonist Brian Drye, alto saxophonist Daniel Carter and Jeff Lederer on soprano and tenor saxophone. They turned Knuffke’s original compositions into merry-go-rounds of free-ish, swinging joy. Helias’ winding, open-palette style and Goodwin’s avuncular rhythm-as-rollercoaster approach made the perfect match.

“Kirk reminds me so much of the great traditional or mainstream trumpet players I have played with, like Ruby Braff and Bobby Hackett, or Roy Eldridge,” Goodwin said. “Kirk is a pure melodic musician; it’s not about chord changes or hip licks or anything—just a beautiful tone and pure musical ideas.”

The Helias-Goodwin coupling provides playful counterpoint, the pair merging their love for swing while the bassist’s avant tendencies free the drummer to romp and roam.

“Mark sometimes is thought of as an avant-garde guy though he loves to swing and play walking lines,” Knuffke said. “Bill is very much thought of as a straightahead guy but he loves to play free and open.

“We did new things and I always like to do an old tune, too, such as the Ernest Tubbs [country hit] ‘Thanks A Lot,’” Knuffke added. “Some songs are very short and were meant to be springboards and other things are more through-composed, but I always try to have an unknown. That makes it jazz for me.”

Composing and performing in so many contexts, does Knuffke follow any guiding principle?

“If it’s duets with drums or piano, or playing the music of Bill Evans or playing free, what always holds it together is that the approach is unique,” Knuffke replied. “I think about how prolific Picasso was. He would just go into a zone: Everything would be blue, or black and white. But everything was constant—all the time. Steve Lacy

was like that, too. And Lester Bowie, he could play over forms and changes though he played mostly freer stuff. Other people think things should be really specific so people know what to expect. That doesn’t interest me as much.”

Knuffke’s projects include playing in Matt Wilson’s Quartet, Mark Helias’ Quartet, The Andrew D’Angelo Big Band, Charlie Hunter’s trio and quartet, Bill Goodwin’s Ornette (interpreting the music of Ornette Coleman), Michael Formanek’s Big Band (with an ECM album forthcoming), Pierre Dorge’s quartet and New Jungle Orchestra, and Boom Tic Boom, led by drummer Allison Miller, who described Knuffke as a “unique musician for many reasons.”

“Kirk *speaks* through his horn, and it actually feels like he’s having a personal conversation with a person on the other side of the room,” Miller said. “He sounds like himself in any musical situation. Kirk is a true individual.”

Goodwin’s comment that Knuffke is a “pure melodic musician” unknowingly nods to the cornetist’s four-year friendship with Ornette Coleman. Meeting the regal alto player and jazz innovator at Dewey Redman’s final gig on Aug. 27, 2006, the two formed a fast friendship. Coleman invited Knuffke to his home to listen to and play music, which they subsequently did often.

“We would talk about the research he was doing with melodic lines,” Knuffke recalled. “He was trying to free himself from the tonic, working with musical resolution—things I still think about. He would say, ‘There ain’t but two rules about resolution, half steps and whole steps.’ He was also trying to look beyond. You can resolve by a half step or whole step, but what if we tried to not resolve like that? Ornette wrote out lines just by note names, not on staff paper. Just endless combinations of things he would try. He gave a few of those to me and I still work on them. He did that all day, every day. He was also working with the idea of four seventh chords that would equal a 12-tone row.

One time I brought a recording of mine and he listened to the entire CD without saying a word. It was this Zen thing that he could do that; then he shared some thoughts with me. He was very encouraging. He liked my playing, which meant a lot to me.

“Ornette influenced me regarding sound as well,” Knuffke added. “Playing duo with him, it’s that sound you know from records but it was so heart-wrenching and beautiful and honest. It confirmed my belief that *sound* is the most important thing. That’s what happens instantly. Your tone is the lasting impression. Ornette would always say, ‘Never play on a style level.’ You may compose and play other people’s compositions, but I don’t think they need to be in a style, necessarily. If you hear people on the radio playing hard-bop and you can’t tell who anybody is, could this be then or now? That’s more about playing on a style level than being yourself.”

Knuffke grew up in Fort Collins, Colorado, picking up trumpet at 12, then cornet at 13. He played in school jazz combos and orchestra, and played trumpet for the following 10 years, until he met mentor Ron Miles, who gave him a valuable David Monette cornet, which he plays to this day.

Drawn to the idea of improvising as a teenager, Knuffke didn’t initially understand what the process entailed. “When I was 15 I would play duo in the basement of my friend and drummer, Marshall Van Stone, who has since passed away,” Knuffke recalled. “In high school jazz band I tried to improvise on what I thought jazz was. I didn’t know how to read music, and our band director wanted us to improvise over chord changes; it was all Greek to me. But I loved to improvise. I thought Marshall and I should just play and see what happened. We improvised for hours, drums and cornet, and recorded it to cassette. I had never heard of Ornette Coleman. It sounds ridiculous, but I honestly thought we invented free-jazz improvising in Marshall’s basement.”

Arriving in New York City in 2005, Knuffke was befriended by Wollesen, through whom he landed his first major tours and recordings with cornetist, composer and conductor Butch Morris and his Nublu Orchestra. Knuffke worked with Morris for the following six years.

“Kirk got a lot of inspiration from Butch Morris, who challenged you to break out of your musical training and go beyond and find something different,” Wollesen noted. “Kirk’s sound is different from anybody else’s. Kirk has his own voice, which is essential. From a drummer’s point of view he has great time, and he’s inventive.”

“Kirk has an incredible, beautiful time feel,” Wilson commented after the Smalls Jazz Club gig. “That sonic dimension gives him so much ability. He has a string-like quality of sound to his cornet. It’s very warm and it comes at you in a very liquid way. Couple that with his amaz-

ing ability to play a song; that comes from the scholarly aspect of listening to so many great musicians of all genres playing melodies really well. That seems so simple but not many folks have done it to the degree Kirk has. He shapes every note so masterfully, and there’s a lot of detail in his playing. There’s a lot of beauty in the details.”

And like most great musicians, Knuffke is a road dog who documents his work in the studio every chance he gets. He will be touring in 2016 with Charlie Hunter and recording his next album, as well as working on leader projects by

Miller and Wilson. “I’m never too hip to take a gig when I need one,” Knuffke said.

“I’ve even played parades and funerals,” he reflected. “If someone really wants to play with me, that means a lot. I will play with them, and I want them to sound good. Matt Wilson talks about this all the time: helping other people to sound good, reinforcing them. It’s like Thelonious Monk said, ‘Make the drummer sound good.’ Give him space to play, have good time so you work well together. I want people’s music to sound good and I want them to be glad that I am there.”

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 — JON ROSS

★★★★★ 1/2



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 — ALLEN MORRISON

★★★★★ 1/2

"Vibraphonist Joe Locke's latest album is perhaps his finest."  
 — KEN MICALLEF

★★★★★ 1/2



"Allyson may be the perfect singer to reinterpret Rodgers & Hammerstein for a modern, jazz-aware audience."  
 — ALLEN MORRISON

★★★★★

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 — JAMES HALE

★★★★★



"Roberta Donnay has a silky, clean voice that is a small marvel of geniality."  
 — FRANK-JOHN HADLY

★★★★★

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO JOEY ALEXANDER ON HIS ASTONISHING DEBUT YEAR

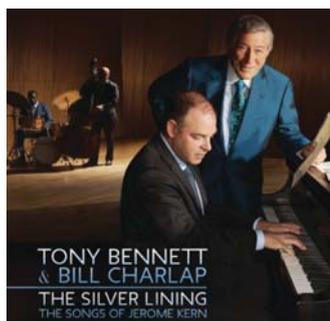


JOEY ALEXANDER MY FAVORITE THINGS

"Miraculously gifted." — BILL MILKOWSKI

# BEST ALBUMS OF 2015

★★★★★  
**MASTERPIECES**



**TONY BENNETT & BILL CHARLAP**  
*The Silver Lining: The Songs Of Jerome Kern*  
 RPM/Columbia Records.....Dec.

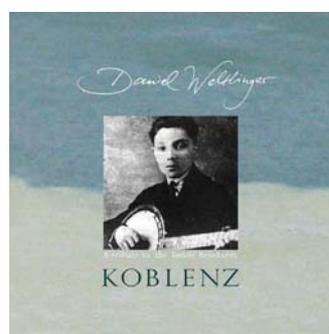
Pianist Bill Charlap and vocal legend Tony Bennett unite for a moving tribute to an icon of the Great American Songbook. Charlap's fabulous playing and Bennett's profound voice are supported by three exceptional musicians: pianist Renee Rosnes, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington. The resulting album is sublime.

**CURREN\$Y**  
*Pilot Talk III*  
 Jet Life .....July

This album is the third and perhaps best installment of an ongoing series of colorful and charmingly funky albums that feature instrumentals from producer Ski Beatz. Curren\$y is the main draw, a playful rapper who is hip-hop's Thelonious Monk.

**DYLAN HOWE**  
*Subterranean*  
 Motorik .....April

Dylan Howe's *Subterranean* embraces sizzling electronics and moody, time-chopping drums. The beautiful, shape-shifting album is colorful and consistently surprising, leading listeners on a journey where the destination is no more important than the ride itself. Stunning, essential.



**DANIEL WELTLINGER**  
*Koblentz*  
 Toca .....Aug.

*Koblentz* makes the case that Django Reinhardt's gypsy jazz is a close relative to klezmer. The songs on this album are an irresistible grouping of Sinti and Roma melodies, flamenco rhythms, New Orleans grooves and Eastern European flourishes. Violinist Daniel Weltlinger is a classically trained musician, but this music transcends boundaries.

**TOM HARRELL**  
*First Impressions*  
 HighNote.....Dec.

*First Impressions* is replete with the kind of detailed and challenging ensemble writing that one usually associates with Third Stream. But trumpeter Tom Harrell has a jazzman's understanding of grooves, and his handling of texture and structure is a balm throughout this program, which reimagines themes by Debussy and Ravel.



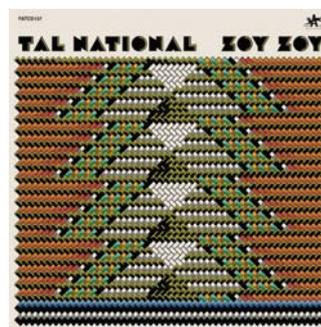
**KENDRICK LAMAR**  
*To Pimp A Butterfly*  
 Top Dawg .....July

A political commentary on racism and capitalism in America filtered through 21st-century black countercultural music, *To Pimp A Butterfly* is more prescient and ambitious than almost anything else out there. The album's massive length complements the weight of its achievement.



**MIT WIND ENSEMBLE & MIT FESTIVAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE**  
*Ininite Winds*  
 Sunnyside .....June

Two MIT ensembles perform with poise and conviction on demanding suites by Guillermo Klein, Chick Corea and Don Byron. The entire celebratory undertaking—world premieres, MIT's debut commercial jazz venture, exemplary playing—merits serious recognition.



**TAL NATIONAL**  
*Zoy Zoy*  
 Fat Cat .....June

Niger's Tal National is an Afrobeat institution in its homeland. *Zoy Zoy*, the band's second international release, is brilliant in its rhythmic complexity. The way this band locks together is uncommon anywhere. It takes a tremendous amount of practice and discipline for musicians to hear each other like this.



**JOSÉ JAMES**  
*Yesterday I Had The Blues: The Music Of Billie Holiday*  
 Blue Note .....May

Marking the centennial of Billie Holiday's birth, *Yesterday I Had The Blues* finds José James embodying the range of human emotions related to love, loss and desire. The smooth-toned vocalist succeeds beyond creating great music; he truly captures the essence of Holiday's spirit.

**VIJAY IYER TRIO**  
*Break Stuff*  
 ECM .....March

Critical to the success of this album is the fact that the Vijay Iyer Trio is, at its core, a working band. Positioning, flow, calibration, order—each is keenly considered here, making *Break Stuff* the trio's most compelling date so far.



## HISTORICAL

### JOHN CARTER & BOBBY BRADFORD

*Tandem*  
Eminem ..... Jan.

### ORNETTE COLEMAN/ HOWARD SHORE

*Naked Lunch: Original Soundtrack Remastered*  
Howe Records ..... April

### BARRY HARRIS

*Barry Harris Plays Tadd Dameron*  
Elemental ..... Oct.

### KEITH JARRETT/CHARLIE HADEN/PAUL MOTIAN

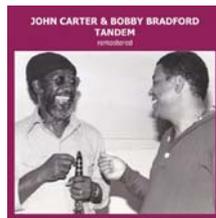
*Hamburg '72*  
ECM ..... March

### LENNIE TRISTANO

*Chicago April 1951*  
Uptown ..... March

### VARIOUS ARTISTS

*The Complete Dial Modern Jazz Sessions*  
Mosaic ..... Feb.



**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
*Jazz In Polish Cinema: Out Of The Underground,*

1958-1967  
Jazz On Film ..... June



## NEW

### JD ALLEN

*Graffiti*  
Savant ..... Aug.

### KARRIN ALLYSON

*Many A New Day*  
Motéma ..... Dec.

### ATOMIC

*Lucidity*  
Jazzland ..... July

### FILIP AUGUSTSON

*Viva Black*  
Found You Recordings ..... Aug.

### BANDA DE LOS MUERTOS

*Banda De Los Muertos*  
Barbes ..... Dec.

### TIM BERNE'S SNAKEOIL

*You've Been Watching Me*  
ECM ..... July

### CHRIS BIESTERFELDT

*Phineas*  
Biest ..... April

### MICHAEL BLAKE

*Tiddy Boom*  
Sunnyside ..... Feb.

### BLUE BUDDHA

*Blue Buddha*  
Tzadik ..... Nov.

### GEORG BREINSCHMID

*Double Brein*  
Preiser ..... May

### JAKOB BRO

*Gefion*  
ECM ..... May

### ZACH BROCK

*Serendipity*  
Criss Cross Jazz ..... Sept.

### MAUREEN BUDWAY

*Sweet Candor*  
MCG Jazz ..... May



### VINICIUS CANTUÁRIA

*Vinicius Canta Antonio Carlos Jobim*  
Sunnyside ..... Sept.

### HUGO CARVALHAIS

*Grand Valis*  
Clean Feed ..... Nov.

### SARAH ELIZABETH CHARLES

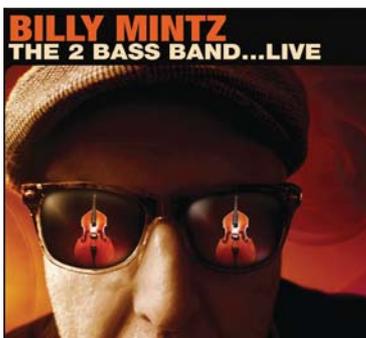
*Inner Dialogue*  
Truth Revolution ..... June

### OTIS CLAY & JOHNNY RAWLS

*Soul Brothers*  
Catfood ..... Jan.

### MATT CRISCUOLO

*Headin' Out*  
Jazzeria ..... July



### MIRANDA CUCKSON

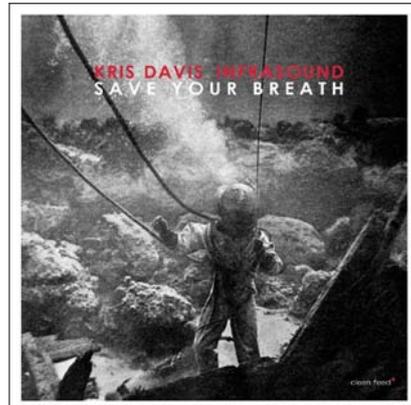
*Melting The Darkness*  
Ulricht Audiovisual ..... April

### ISAAC DARCHÉ

*Team & Variations*  
Challenge ..... July

### STEVE DAVIS

*Say When*  
Smoke Sessions ..... Aug.

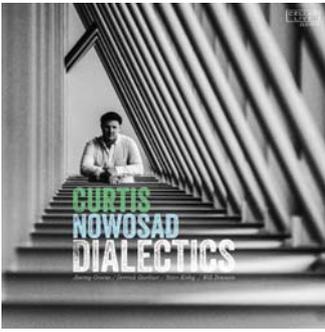


**KRIS DAVIS INFRASOUND**  
*Save Your Breath*  
Clean Feed ..... Aug.

**HARRIS EISENSTADT**  
*Canada Day IV*  
Songlines ..... Dec.

**AMIR ELSAFFAR & TWO RIVERS ENSEMBLE**  
*Crisis*  
Pi Recordings ..... Nov.

**FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS**  
*Hymn For A Hungry Nation*  
Clean Feed ..... March



**BEN GOLDBERG**

*Orphic Machine*

Bag Production Records..... March

**WYCLIFFE GORDON WITH THE DIMARTINO/OSLAND JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

*Somebody New*

Blues Back ..... Oct.

**CHRIS GREENE QUARTET**

*Music Appreciation*

Single Malt Recordings ..... Jan.

**MARY HALVORSON**

*Meltframe*

Firehouse..... Nov.

**JEFF HAMILTON TRIO**

*Great American Songs: Through The Years*

Capri..... May

**ALBERT "TOOTIE" HEATH**

*Philadelphia Beat*

Sunnyside..... May

**JOHN HÉBERT**

*Rambling Confessions*

Sunnyside..... Dec.

**FRED HERSCH**

*Solo*

Palmetto ..... Sept.

**WAYNE HORVITZ**

*Some Places Are Forever Afternoon (11 Places For Richard Hugo)*

Songlines..... Oct.

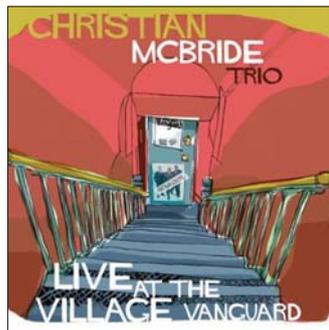
**JULIA HÜLSMANN QUARTET WITH THEO BLECKMANN**

*A Clear Midnight: Kurt Weill And America*

ECM..... June

**KEITH JARRETT**

*Creation*



ECM ..... Aug.

**KOPPEL+COLLEY+BLADE COLLECTIVE**

*Koppel+Colley+Blade Collective*

ArtistShare..... Oct.

**KU-UMBA FRANK LACY & MINGUS BIG BAND**

*Mingus Sings*

Sunnyside..... Sept.

**ANNIE LENNOX**

*Nostalgia*

Blue Note..... Jan.

**JOE LOCKE**

*Love Is A Pendulum*

Motéma ..... July

**LONDON, MEADER, PRAMUK & ROSS**

*The Royal Bopsters Project*

Motéma ..... Dec.

**THE MIKE LONGO TRIO**

*Celebrates Oscar Peterson Live*

Consolidated Artists Productions ..... Jan.

**PETER MADSEN'S CIA TRIO**

*Elvis Never Left The Building*

Playscape..... Feb.

**NILSON MATTA**

*East Side Rio Drive*

Krian/World Blue ..... June

**ROB MAZUREK AND BLACK CUBE SP**

*Return The Tides: Ascension Suite And Holy Ghost*

Cuneiform..... March

**CHRISTIAN McBRIDE TRIO**

*Live At The Village Vanguard*

Mack Avenue..... Dec.

**CHRIS McNULTY**

*Eternal*

Palmetto ..... June

**SOLITAIRE MILES**

*Susie Blue And The Lonesome Fellas*

Seraphic ..... Oct.

**BILLY MINTZ**

*The 2 Bass Band...Live*

Thirteenth Note..... Aug.

**RÓISÍN MURPHY**

*Hairless Toys*

Play It Again Sam ..... Nov.

**SAM NEWSOME**

*The Straight Horn Of Africa: A Path To Liberation (The Art Of The Soprano Vol. 2)*

Some New Music ..... Feb.

**ALEX NORRIS ORGAN QUARTET**

*Extension Deadline*

Brooklyn Jazz Underground.... Sept.

**CURTIS NOWOSAD**

*Dialectics*

Cellar Live..... April



**ARTURO O'FARRILL AND THE AFRO LATIN JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

*Cuba: The Conversation Continues*

Motéma ..... Nov.

**TOMOKO OMURA**

*Roots*

Inner Circle ..... April

**CHRIS POTTER UNDERGROUND ORCHESTRA**

*Imaginary Cities*

ECM..... April

**RIGHTEOUSGIRLS**

*Gathering Blue*

Panoramic/New Focus..... Nov.

**MARCUS ROBERTS AND THE MODERN JAZZ GENERATION**

*Romance, Swing, And The Blues*

J-Master Records..... Jan.

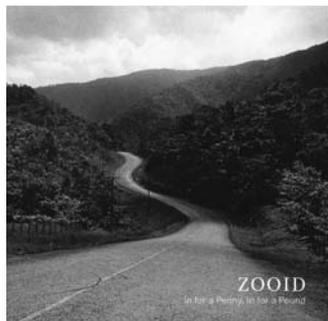
**PETE RODRIGUEZ**

*El Conde Negro*

Destiny..... Sept.

★★★★ 1/2

**NEW**



**WADADA LEO SMITH**  
*The Great Lakes Suites*  
Tum ..... Jan.

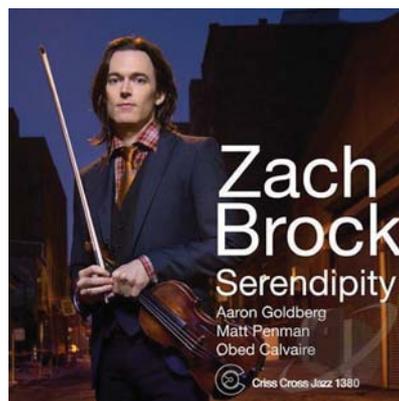
**HENRY THREADGILL**  
**ZOOID**  
*In For A Penny, In For A Pound*  
Pi ..... Sept.

**MATTHEW STEVENS**  
*Woodwork*  
Whirlwind ..... Aug.

**DAVID TORN**  
*Only Sky*  
ECM ..... Aug.

**ZHENYA STRIGALEV'S SMILING ORGANISM**  
*Robin Goodie*  
Whirlwind ..... June

**JOHN TROPEA**  
*Gotcha Rhythm Right Here*  
STP Records ..... Aug.



**CHRISTIAN SCOTT ATUNDE ADJUAH**  
*Stretch Music*  
Ropeadope/Stretch Music ..... Dec.

**DAVE STRYKER**  
*Messin' With Mister T*  
Strikezone ..... May

**ANDY SHEPPARD QUARTET**  
*Surrounded By Sea*  
ECM ..... Oct.

**AKI TAKASE/ALEXANDER VON SCHLIPPENBACH**  
*So Long, Eric!: Homage To Eric Dolphy*  
Intakt ..... Feb.

**JOANNA WALLFISCH**  
*The Origin Of Adjustable Things*  
Sunnyside ..... July

**MATTHEW SHIPP TRIO**  
*The Conduct Of Jazz*  
Thirsty Ear ..... Dec.

**OTIS TAYLOR**  
*Hey Joe Opus/Red Meat*  
Trance Blues ..... Aug.

**DOUG WEBB**  
*Triple Play*  
Posi-Tone ..... July

**ALEX SIPIAGIN**  
*Balance 38-58*  
Criss Cross Jazz ..... June

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY JAZZ ENSEMBLE**  
*Songsmith Collective*  
BluJazz ..... June

**KENNY WHEELER**  
*Songs For Quintet*  
ECM ..... March

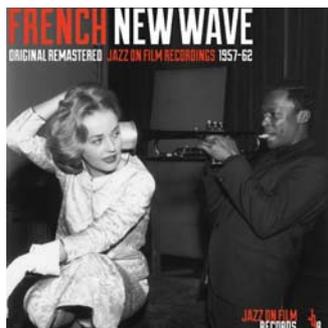
**MARK WINGFIELD**  
*Proof Of Light*  
Moonjune ..... June

**WOLFF & CLARK EXPEDITION**  
*Expedition 2*  
Random Act ..... April

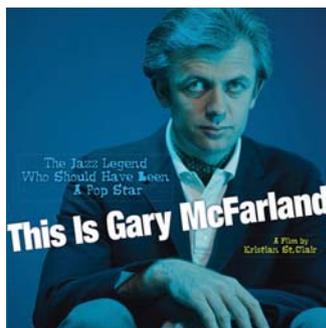
★★★★ 1/2

**HISTORICAL**

**JOHN COLTRANE**  
*So Many Things: The European Tour 1961*  
Acrobat Music ..... May



**JIMMY HEATH**  
*Picture Of Heath*  
Elemental ..... Oct.



**STEVE LACY**  
*Morning Joy... Paris Live*  
hatOLOGY ..... March

Columbia/Legacy ..... Dec.

**PAT MARTINO/JIM RIDL**  
*Nexus*  
HighNote ..... June

**DON PULLEN**  
*Richard's Tune*  
Sackville ..... Jan.

**GARY McFARLAND**  
*This Is Gary McFarland*  
Century ..... April

**SIMON & GARFUNKEL**  
*The Complete Columbia Albums Collection*

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
*French New Wave: Original Jazz On Film Recordings, 1957-62*  
Jazz On Film ..... June



**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
*Two Pianos And Other Pieces, 1953-1969*  
Another Timbre ..... April

**JUNIOR WELLS**  
*Southside Blues Jam*  
Delmark ..... April

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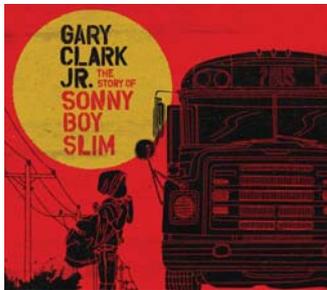
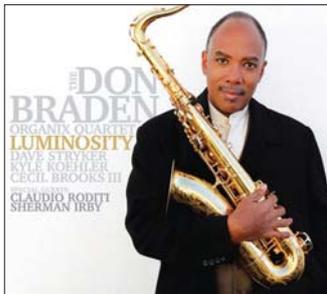
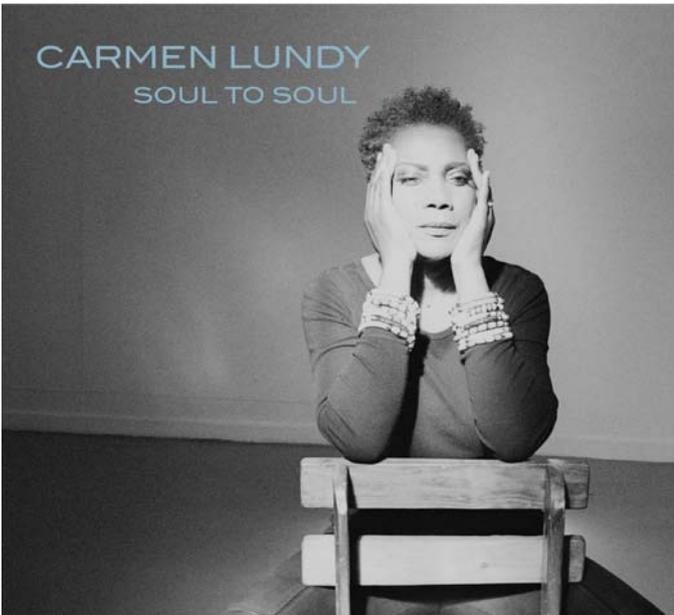


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**GABRIEL ALEGRÍA**  
**AFRO-PERUVIAN SEXTET**  
10  
Zoho ..... Sept.

**ERIC ALEXANDER**  
*The Real Thing*  
HighNote ..... Nov.

**ALL INCLUDED**  
*Satan In Plain Clothes*  
Clean Feed ..... Oct.

**TONY ALLEN**  
*Film Of Life*  
Jazz Village ..... Feb.

**MOSE ALLISON**  
*American Legend: Live In California*  
Ibis Recordings ..... Dec.

**TIFFANY AUSTIN**  
*Nothing But Soul*  
Con Alma Music ..... Dec.

**BABA COMMANDANT & THE MANDINGO BAND**  
*Juguya*  
Sublime Frequencies ..... June

**THE BAD PLUS AND JOSHUA REDMAN**  
*The Bad Plus Joshua Redman*  
Nonesuch ..... Sept.

**ROBIN BANKS**  
*Modern Classic*  
RB Records ..... March

**KENNY BARRON/DAVE HOLLAND**  
*The Art Of Conversation*  
Impulse! ..... Jan.

**DAVE BASS**  
*NYC Sessions*  
Whaling City Sound ..... May

**PAT BIANCHI**  
*Higher Standard*  
21-H Records ..... Sept.

**ERIC BIBB**  
*Blues People*  
Stony Plain ..... March

**ADAM BIRNBAUM**  
*Three Of A Mind*  
Daedalus ..... April

**RAN BLAKE**  
*Ghost Tones*  
A-Side ..... Oct.

**PASCAL BOKAR**  
*Guitar Balafonics*  
Sugo ..... May

**DON BRADEN**  
*Luminosity*  
Creative Perspective ..... Nov.

**JOSHUA BREAKSTONE**  
*2nd Avenue: The Return Of The Cello Quartet*  
Capri ..... Sept.

**ACTION BRONSON**  
*Mr. Wonderful*  
Atlantic/Vice ..... July

**MICHAEL JEROME BROWNE**  
*Sliding Delta*  
Borealis ..... April

**DAN BRUBECK QUARTET**  
*Celebrating The Music And Lyrics Of Dave & Iola Brubeck*  
Blue Forest ..... Aug.

**GEORGE CABLES**  
*In Good Company*  
HighNote ..... Oct.

**ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY**  
*The Hope Of Christmas*  
Manchester Craftsmen's Guild ... Dec.

**EDMAR CASTAÑEDA WORLD ENSEMBLE**  
*Live At The Jazz Standard*  
Arpa Y Voz ..... Nov.

**ETIENNE CHARLES**  
*Creole Christmas*  
Culture Shock Music ..... Dec.

**DAVID CHESKY: JAZZ IN THE NEW HARMONIC**  
*Primal Scream*  
Chesky ..... June

**CYRUS CHESTNUT**  
*A Million Colors In Your Mind*  
HighNote ..... July

**CHICAGO REED QUARTET**  
*Western Automatic*  
Aerophonics ..... Oct.

**HAYDEN CHISHOLM**  
*Breve*  
Pirouet ..... July

**GARY CLARK JR.**  
*The Story Of Sonny Boy Slim*  
Warner Bros. .... Dec.

**FELICE CLEMENTE TRIO**  
*6:35 AM*  
Crocevia Di Suoni ..... June

**NELS CLINE/JULIAN LAGE**  
*Room*  
Mack Avenue ..... Feb.

**ANAT COHEN**  
*Luminosa*  
Anzic ..... May

**AVISHAI COHEN TRIO**  
*From Darkness*  
RazDaz ..... June

**LORIN COHEN**  
*Home*  
Origin ..... Aug.

**GEORGE COLLIGAN & THEORETICAL PLANETS**  
*Risky Notion*  
Origin ..... April

**COLLINA/CERVETTO/PEILLON/BOSSO**  
*Michel On Air*  
ITI ..... Feb.

**ALEX CONDE**  
*Descarga For Monk*  
Zoho ..... June

**CHICK COREA/BÉLA FLECK**  
*Two*  
Concord Jazz ..... Dec.

**DALANNAH & OWEN**  
*Been Around A While*  
Quest ..... Dec.

**GUY DAVIS**  
*Kokomo Kidd*  
M.C. Records ..... Dec.

**DEATH GRIPS**  
*The Powers That B*  
Harvest ..... July

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Expedition XP106w  
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★★★★  
**NEW**

**JACK DeJOHNETTE**

*Made In Chicago*  
ECM..... April

**DELTA MOON**

*Low Down*  
Jumping Jack..... Sept.

**GARRY DIAL/DICK OATTS**

*That Music Always Round Me*  
BCM+D..... March

**AARON DIEHL**

*Space Time Continuum*  
Mack Avenue..... Aug.

**CHRIS DINGMAN**

*The Subliminal And The Sublime*  
Inner Arts Initiative..... Sept.

**ROBERTA DONNAY**

*Bathtub Gin*  
Motéma..... July

**BOB DYLAN**

*Shadows In The Night*  
Columbia..... April

**STEVE EARLE**

*Terraplane*  
New West..... April

**CHAD EBY QUARTET**

*The Sweet Shel Suite*  
Music Lab at Jefferson Center..March

**MARK ELF**

*Returns 2014*  
Jen Bay.....Feb.

**KURT ELLING**

*Passion World*  
Concord..... Aug.

**TINSLEY ELLIS**

*Tough Love*  
Heartfixer Music..... May

**LIBERTY ELLMAN**

*Radiate*  
Pi Recordings..... Oct.

**ESSIET OKON ESSIET**

*Shona*  
Space Time..... Dec.

**ORRIN EVANS**

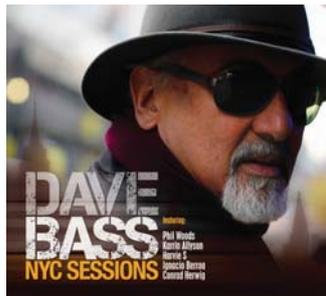
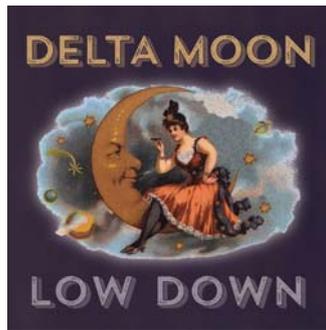
*The Evolution Of Oneself*  
Smoke Sessions..... Nov.

**LORRAINE FEATHER**

*Flirting With Disaster*  
Jazzed Media..... Dec.

**JOHN FEDCHOCK**

**QUARTET**  
*Fluidity*  
Summit..... June



**JOHN FEDCHOCK NEW YORK BIG BAND**

*Like It Is*  
Mama..... Nov.

**HUGO FERNANDEZ**

*Cosmogram*  
Origin..... July

**JOE FIEDLER TRIO**

*I'm In*  
Multiphonics..... July

**BÉLA FLECK/ABIGAIL WASHBURN**

*Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn*  
Rounder..... Jan.

**CHRIS FOREMAN**

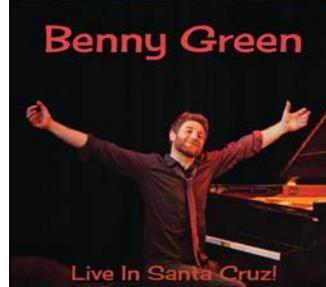
*Now Is The Time*  
The Sirens Records..... May

**JENS FOSSUM**

*Bass Detector*  
Ozella Music..... Aug.

**FRESH CUT ORCHESTRA**

*From The Vine*  
Ropeadope Records..... May



**FRED FRITH/JOHN BUTCHER**

*The Natural Order*  
Northern Spy.....Feb.

**YOSHIE FRUCHTER**

*Schizophrenia: Cantorial Recordings Reimagined*  
BlueThread..... Aug.

**STEVE GADD BAND**

*70 Strong*  
BFM..... May

**LASZLO GARDONY**

*Life In Real Time*  
Sunnyside..... Nov.

**MICHAEL GIBBS AND THE NDR BIGBAND**

*Play A Bill Frisell Set List*  
Cuneiform Records Rune..... Sept.

**MARSHALL GILKES**

*Köln*  
Alternate Side..... May

**AARON GOLDBERG**

*The Now*  
Sunnyside..... April

**MILFORD GRAVES/ BILL LASWELL**

*Space/Time—Redemption*  
Tum..... June

**DEVIN GRAY**

*Relative Resonance*  
Skirl..... Sept.

**BENNY GREEN**

*Live In Santa Cruz!*  
Sunnyside..... Sept.

**MARK GUILIANA JAZZ QUARTET**

*Family First*  
Beat Music Productions..... Sept.

**BUDDY GUY**

*Born To Play Guitar*  
Silvertone/RCA..... Oct.

**SHANA HALLIGAN**

*Back To Me*  
Plug Research..... Nov.

**JAN HARBECK QUARTET FEAT. WALTER SMITH III**

*Variations In Blue*  
Stunt..... March

**ERIN HARPE & THE DELTA SWINGERS**

*Love Whip Blues*  
Vizztone/Juicy Jujū.....Feb.

**JOEL HARRISON 5**

*Spirit House*  
Whirlwind..... Nov.

**PHIL HAYNES**

*No Fast Food: In Concert*  
Corner Store Jazz..... Jan.

**STEPHEN HAYNES**

*Pomegranate*  
New Atlantis..... Nov.

**KEVIN HAYS**

*New Day*  
Sunnyside..... July

**HEADS OF STATE**

*Search For Peace*  
Smoke Sessions..... Oct.

**GILAD HEKSELMAN**

*Homes*  
Jazz Village..... Dec.

**PABLO HELD**

*The Trio Meets John Scofield*  
Pirouet..... April

**MARK HELIAS OPEN LOOSE**

*The Signal Maker*  
Intakt..... June

**VINCENT HERRING**

*Night And Day*  
Smoke Sessions..... July

**FRED HERSCH**

*My Coma Dreams (DVD)*  
Palmetto..... March

**CONRAD HERWIG**

*The Latin Side Of Joe Henderson*  
Half Note..... Jan.



**DARRELL KATZ AND THE JCA ORCHESTRA**  
*Why Do You Ride?*  
 Leo..... Jan.

**KIRK KNUFFKE**  
*Arms & Hands*  
 Royal Potato Family ..... July

**PATRICIA KOPATCHINSKAJA/ MARKUS HINTERHÄUSER/ RETO BIERI**  
*Galina Ustvolskaya*  
 ECM..... April

**DIANA KRALL**  
*Wallflower*  
 Verve ..... (Nov. 2014)

**KARIN KROG/STEVE KUHN**  
*Break Of Day*  
 Meantime..... Aug.

**BRIAN LANDRUS TRIO**  
*The Deep Below*  
 BlueLand ..... Sept.

**DEBORAH LATZ**  
*Sur L'instant*  
 JMP ..... Oct.

**MATT LAVELLE/ JACK DeSALVO/TOM CABRERA**  
*Sumari*  
 Unseen Rain ..... Sept.

**BETTYE LAVETTE**  
*Worthy*  
 Cherry Red Records..... June

**JACQUES LESURE**  
*Camaraderie*  
 WJ3 ..... Oct.

**CHRIS LIGHTCAP'S BIGMOUTH**  
*Epicenter*  
 Clean Feed ..... April

**PETE HERZOG/DENNIS WALKER**  
*Waiting For The Rain*  
 Self-Release ..... May

**GREGOR HILDEN**  
*In Phase*  
 Acoustic Music ..... June

**DRE HOCEVAR TRIO**  
*Coding Of Evidentiality*  
 Clean Feed ..... Nov.

**HAMILTON DE HOLANDA**  
*World Of Pixinguinha*  
 Adventure Music ..... Sept.

**IBRAHIM ELECTRIC**  
*Rumours From Outer Space*  
 ILK ..... April

**MIKKO INNANEN WITH WILLIAM PARKER AND ANDREW CYRILLE**  
*Song For A New Decade*  
 Tum ..... July

**JON IRABAGON**  
*Behind The Sky*  
 Irabagast ..... Oct.

**VIVIAN "YABBY YOU" JACKSON**  
*Dread Prophecy: The Strange And Wonderful Story Of Yabby You*  
 Shanachie..... May

**BOB JAMES/NATHAN EAST**  
*The New Cool*  
 Yamaha Entertainment Group ..... Dec.

**KEITH JARRETT**  
*Barber/Bartók/Jarrett*  
 ECM New Series ..... Aug.

**JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA**  
*Live In Cuba*  
 Blue Engine ..... Nov.

**JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA**  
*Big Band Holidays*  
 Blue Engine ..... Dec.

**RUSS JOHNSON**  
*Still Out To Lunch!*  
 Enja/Yellowbird..... Feb.

**PAUL JONES**  
*Short History*  
 BluJazz ..... March

★★★★★

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**ECHOES OF INDIANA AVENUE (2012)**

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★★★★  
**NEW**

**CHARLES LLOYD**

*Wild Man Dance*  
Blue Note.....June

**RUSS LORENSEN**

*In The Holiday Spirit*  
LML Music.....Dec.

**JOE LOVANO & DAVE DOUGLAS SOUND PRINTS**

*Live At The Monterey Jazz Festival*  
Blue Note.....May

**ROMERO LUBAMBO**

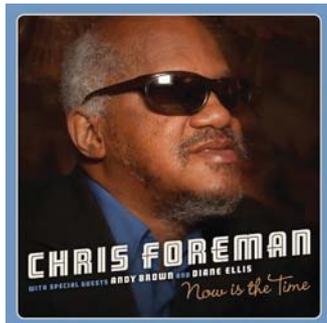
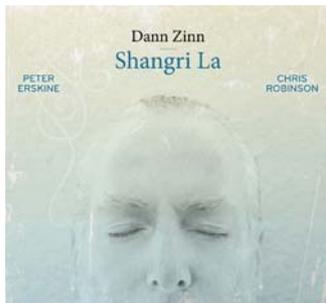
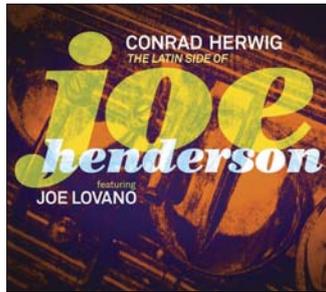
*Setembro: A Brazilian Under The Jazz Influence*  
Sunnyside.....Dec.

**CARMEN LUNDY**

*Soul To Soul*  
Afrasia.....Jan.

**BRIAN LYNCH/EMMET COHEN**

*Questioned Answer*  
Hollistic Musicworks.....Jan.



**MACK AVENUE SUPERBAND**

*Live! From The Detroit Jazz Festival (2014)*  
Mack Avenue.....Dec.

**DOUG MACLEOD**

*Exactly Like This*  
Reference.....June

**RUSSELL MALONE**

*Love Looks Good On You*  
HighNote.....April

**HARVEY MANDEL**

*Snake Box*  
Purple Pyramid.....Aug.

**MICHAEL MANTLER**

*The Jazz Composer's Orchestra Update*  
ECM.....Feb.

**PHIL MARKOWITZ/ ZACH BROCK**

*Perpetuity*  
Dot Time.....April

**BRANFORD MARSALIS**

*In My Solitude: Live At Grace Cathedral*  
Marsalis Music/OKeh.....Jan.

**BRANFORD MARSALIS QUARTET**

*A Love Supreme: Live In Amsterdam*  
Marsalis Music/OKeh.....Sept.

**JASON MARSALIS VIBES QUARTET**

*The 21st Century Trad Band*  
Basin Street Records.....Jan.

**DONNY McCASLIN**

*Fast Future*  
Greenleaf.....May

**MAKAYA McCRAVEN**

*In The Moment*  
International Anthem.....Sept.

**TOM McDERMOTT/ AURORA NEALAND**

*City Of Timbres*  
OPM Music.....Dec.

**BETH McKEE**

*Sugarcane Revival*  
Swampgirl.....Oct.

**MYRA MELFORD**

*Snowy Egret*  
Enja/Yellowbird.....June

**PAT METHENY/JAN GARBAREK/GARY BURTON/SWR BIG BAND**

*Hommage À Eberhard Weber*  
ECM.....Nov.

**RON MILES**

*Circuit Rider*  
Enja/Yellowbird.....Jan.

**MARCUS MILLER**

*Afrodeezia*  
Blue Note.....Aug.

**ROSCOE MITCHELL QUARTET**

*Celebrating Fred Anderson*  
Nessa.....Nov.

**ROSCOE MITCHELL TRIO**

*Angel City*  
Rogue Art.....May

**SAL MOSCA**

*The Talk Of The Town*  
Sunnyside.....Aug.

**MOSTLY OTHER PEOPLE DO THE KILLING**

*Mauch Chunk*  
Hot Cup.....Dec.

**BRAD MYERS**

*Prime Numbers*  
Colloquy.....Sept.

**GREG NAGY**

*Stranded*  
Big O.....July

**LARRY NEWCOMB QUARTET**

*Live Intentionally!*  
Essential Messenger.....Dec.

**PASCAL NIGGENKEMPER**

*Solo: Look With Thine Ears*  
Clean Feed.....Sept.

**PAAL NILSSEN-LOVE LARGE UNIT**

*Erta Ale*  
PNL.....Feb.

**OZ NOY**

*Asian Twist*  
Abstract Logix.....June

**ALICIA OLATUJA**

*Timeless*  
World Tune.....Feb.

**MICHAEL O'NEILL/KENNY WASHINGTON**

*New Beginnings*  
Jazzmo Records.....Feb.

**OZO**

*A Kind Of Zo*  
Shhpuma.....Nov.

**EVAN PARKER/SYLVE COURVOISIER**

*Either Or And*  
Relative Pitch Records.....Jan.

**CHARLIE PARR**

*Stumpjumper*  
Red House.....July

**LISA PARROT**

*Round Tripper*  
Serious Niceness.....May

**BEY PAULE BAND**

*Not Goin' Away*  
Blue Dot.....Dec.

**MARIO PAVONE**

*Blue Dialect*  
Clean Feed.....Oct.

**GARY PEACOCK TRIO**

*Now This*  
ECM.....Sept.

**JEREMY PELT**

*Tales, Musings And Other Reveries*  
HighNote.....April

**CLARENCE PENN & PENN STATION**

*Monk: The Lost Files*  
Origin.....Jan.

**LUIS PERDOMO & CONTROLLING EAR UNIT**

*Twenty-Two*  
Hot Tone.....Aug.



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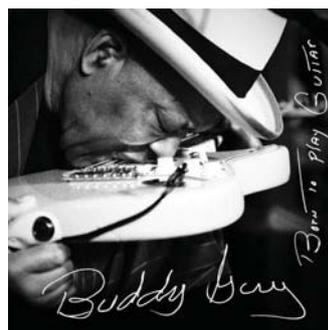
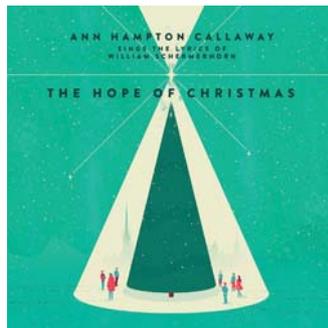
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**IVO PERELMAN/KARL BERGER**

*Reverie*  
Leo Records ..... Jan.

**DANILO PÉREZ/JOHN PATITUCCI/BRIAN BLADE**

*Children Of The Light*  
Mack Avenue ..... Dec.

**ENRICO PIERANUNZI**

*Stories*  
CamJazz ..... Jan.

**JEAN-MICHEL PILC**

*What Is This Thing Called?*  
Sunnyside ..... March

**PITTSBURGH JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

*Joyful Jazz*  
Manchester Craftsmen's Guild... Dec.

**PLUNGE**

*IN For The OUT*  
Immersion ..... Dec.

**POWERHOUSE**

*In An Ambient Way*  
Chesky ..... Nov.

**BILLY PRICE/OTIS CLAY**

*This Time For Real*  
VizzTone ..... Oct.

**DAFNIS PRIETO SEXTET**

*Triangles And Circles*  
Dafnisonmusic ..... June

**SUN RA ARKESTRA**

*Live At Babylon*  
In + Out ..... Dec.

**THE RAGPICKER STRING BAND**

*The Ragpicker String Band*  
Yellow Dog ..... Dec.

**ENRICO RAVA QUARTET WITH GIANLUCA PETRELLA**

*Wild Dance*  
ECM ..... Nov.

**MICHEL REIS QUARTET**

*Capturing This Moment*  
Double Moon ..... March

**THE RENGA ENSEMBLE**

*The Room Is*  
Allos ..... June

**STEVE RILEY & THE MAMOU PLAYBOYS**

*Voyageurs*  
Self-Release ..... Sept.

**EVE RISSER**

*Des Pas Sur La Neige*  
Clean Feed ..... Nov.

**TROY ROBERTS**

*Secret Rhymes*  
Inner Circle ..... Aug.

**PETE ROCK**

*Petestrumentals 2*  
Mello Music Group ..... July

**JASON ROEBKE**

*Every Sunday*  
Clean Feed ..... Nov.

**DAVID ROITSTEIN/LARRY KOONSE**

*Conversations*  
Jazz Compass ..... April

**DEB RYDER**

*Let It Rain*  
Bejeb Music ..... July

**DAVID SANBORN**

*Time And The River*  
Okeh ..... July

**MARTA SÁNCHEZ QUINTET**

*Partenika*  
Fresh Sound New Talent ..... Sept.

**CARLOS SANTANA/JOHN McLAUGHLIN**

*Invitation To Illumination: Live At Montreux 2011*  
Eagle Rock ..... Dec.

**SECRET KEEPER**

*Emerge*  
Intakt ..... July

**SFJAZZ COLLECTIVE**

*Live At SFJAZZ Center 2014: The Music Of Joe Henderson & Original Compositions*  
SFJAZZ Records ..... July

**BOB SHIMIZU**

*Let's Get Together*  
Signal Strength ..... July

**MATTHEW SHIPP TRIO**

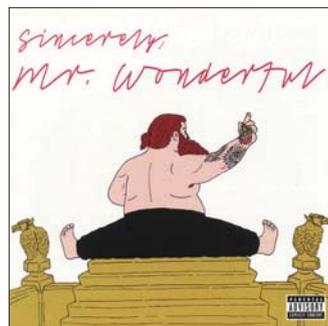
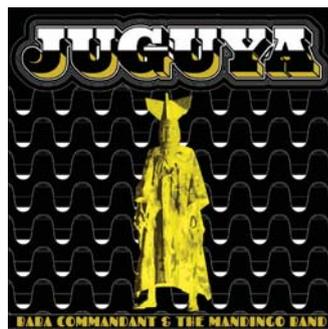
*To Duke*  
Rogue Art ..... Aug.

**BEN SIDRAN**

*Blue Camus (Jazz + Philosophy)*  
Nardis ..... Aug.

**FULVIO SIGURTÀ**

*The Oldest Living Thing*  
Cam Jazz ..... Oct.



**JAMES SINGLETON**

*Shiner*  
Louisiana Music Factory ..... June

**JEREMY SISKIND**

*Housewarming*  
Brooklyn Jazz Underground ..... June

**STEVE SMITH AND VITAL INFORMATION NYC EDITION**

*Viewpoint*  
BFM Jazz ..... Aug.

**JIM SNIDERO**

*Main Street*

Savant ..... April

**EMILIO SOLLA Y LA INESTABLE DE BROOKLYN**

*Second Half*

Self-Release ..... April

**OMAR SOSA**

*Ilé*

Otá ..... April

**LUCIANA SOUZA**

*Speaking In Tongues*

Sunnyside ..... Nov.

**SPOKFREVO ORQUESTRA**

*Ninho De Vespa*

Motéma ..... Feb.

**DAYNA STEPHENS**

*Peace*

Sunnyside ..... Feb.

**GRANT STEWART**

*Trio*

Cellar Live ..... July

**JOHN STOWELL/MICHAEL ZILBER QUARTET**

*Live Beauty*

Origin ..... May

**THE SWAY MACHINERY**

*Purity And Danger*

3rd Generation ..... June

**JACKY TERRASSON**

*Take This*

Impulse! ..... May

**SAMUEL TORRES GROUP**

*Forced Displacement*

Zoho ..... Sept.

**MODOU TOURÉ/RAMON GOOSE**

*The West African Blues Project*

ARC ..... Dec.

**RYAN TRUESDELL GIL EVANS PROJECT**

*Lines Of Color: Live At Jazz Standard*

Blue Note/Artist Share ..... May

**CHICO TRUJILLO**

*Reina De Todas Las Fiestas*

Barbés ..... Oct.

**STEVE TURRE**

*Spiritman*

Smoke Sessions ..... April

**TWIN DANGER**

*Twin Danger*

Decca ..... Aug.

**GEBHARD ULLMANN BASEMENT RESEARCH**

*Hat And Shoes*

Between The Lines ..... May

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

*War Is A Wound, Peace Is A Scar*

Glitterbeat ..... Sept.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

*Low Down (Original Soundtrack)*

Cinewax ..... Oct.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

*Revive Music Presents Supreme Sonacy, Vol. 1*

Revive/Blue Note ..... Nov.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

*New Orleans Brass Bands: Through The Streets Of The City*

Smithsonian Folkways ..... March

**VENTANAS**

*Arrelumbre*

Fedora Upside Down ..... Oct.

**FRANK VIGNOLA/VINNY RANIOLO**

*Swing Zing!*

FV ..... Oct.

**ROSEANNA VITRO**

*Clarity: Music Of Clare Fischer*

Random Act Records ..... Jan.

**CHRIS WALDEN BIG BAND**

*Full-On!*

Origin ..... Jan.

**BRAD WALKER**

*Quintet*

Self-Release ..... Dec.





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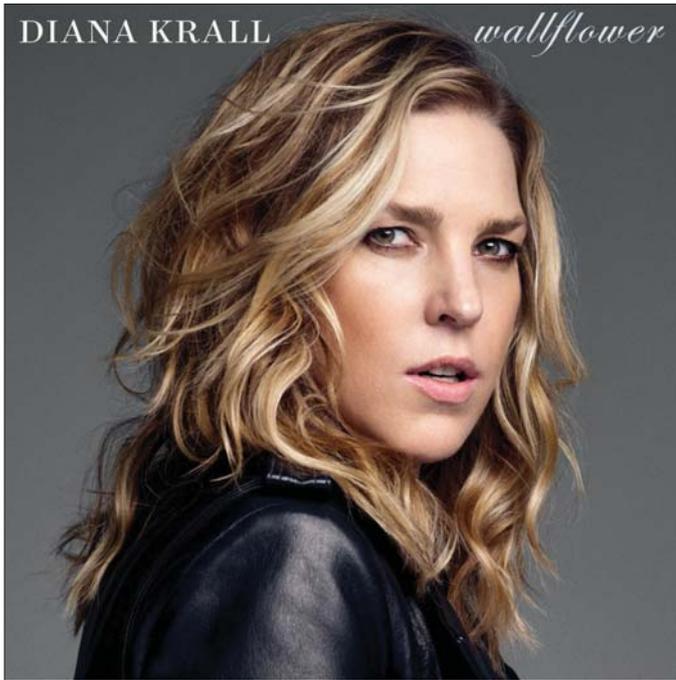
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**NEW**



**WALKING DISTANCE**

*Neighborhood*  
Ropeadope ..... July

**WAYNE WALLACE  
LATIN JAZZ QUINTET**

*Intercambio*  
Patois ..... Oct.

**CHRISTIAN  
WALLUMRØD**

*Pianokammer*  
Hubro ..... May

**CORY WEEDS**

*Condition Blue*  
Cellar Live ..... July

**MARK WEINSTEIN**

*In Jerusalem*  
Zoho ..... Aug.

**WALT WEISKOPF**

*Open Road*  
Posi-Tone ..... Oct.

**KENNY WERNER**

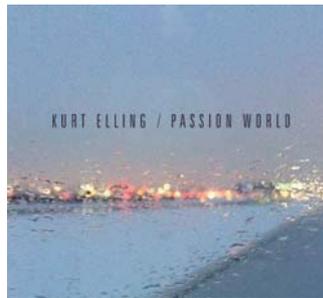
*The Melody*  
Pirouet ..... Aug.

**DAN WILENSKY**

*Made In Portland*  
Polyglot ..... Nov.

**CASSANDRA WILSON**

*Coming Forth By Day*



Sony Legacy ..... May

**STEVE WILSON &  
WILSONIAN'S GRAIN**

*Live In New York: The  
Vanguard Sessions*  
Random Act ..... May



**MARK WINKLER**

*Jazz And Other Four  
Letter Words*  
Café Pacific ..... Nov.

**WOOLEY/REMPIS/  
NIGGENKEMPER/  
CORSAÑO**

*From Wolves To Whales*  
Aerophonics ..... March

**LIZZ WRIGHT**

*Freedom & Surrender*  
Concord ..... Oct.

**GLENN ZALESKI**

*My Ideal*  
Sunnyside ..... May

**JEFFREY ZEIGLER**

*Something Of Life*  
Innova ..... April

**DANN ZINN**

*Shangri La*  
Z Music ..... Feb.

**ZOMBA PRISON PROJECT**

*I Have No Everything Here*  
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**HISTORICAL**

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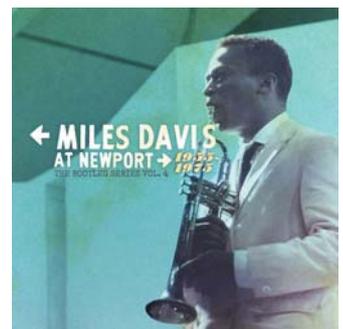
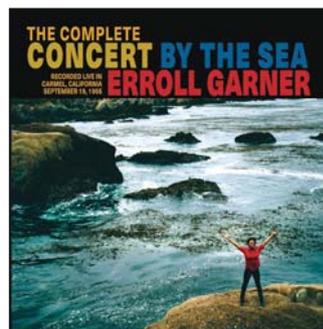
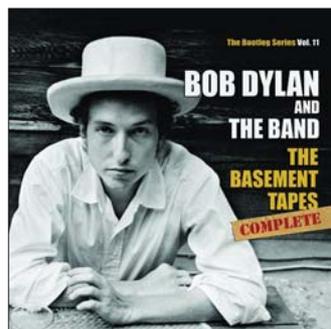
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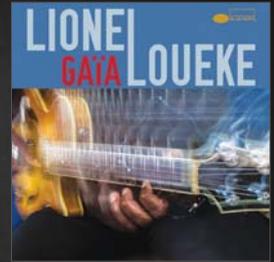
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# REVIEWS >

Lionel Loueke



MATHEU BITTON

## Lionel Loueke GAÏA

BLUE NOTE 4742380

★★★★★

From folksy West African roots tunes to deconstructions of “Nefertiti” and “Naima,” guitarist Lionel Loueke has showed us various sides of his personality since he started making albums. Most of the time, the Benin-born guitar virtuoso blends an ultra-rhythmic approach with a lyricism that allows for both informal poetics and chattering flash. On his fourth album for Blue Note, he throws aggression into the mix and lets a fierce attack have its way. Because it’s a live (in the studio) recording, his deeply connected trio generates an imme-

diacy that should be the envy of working bands everywhere.

Whether giving buoyancy to a fusion-tinged roar, as they do in “Even Teens,” or lacing a harmolodic sensibility through a syncopated groove in the title cut, bassist Massimo Biolcati and drummer Ferenc Nemeth prove that they’re radiant foils for their esteemed mate. The ardor explodes on “Wacko Loco,” a gnarled fiesta that hitches a Mahavishnu vibe with the swampy eloquence of James Blood Ulmer’s *Odyssey* trio. Along the way, the beat becomes paramount. A plucked guitar string works as a hand drum, a bass riff percolates and pops. Melodies dash by, but they’re usually bolstered by an offensive tack, the band pummeling most of its musical elements à la John

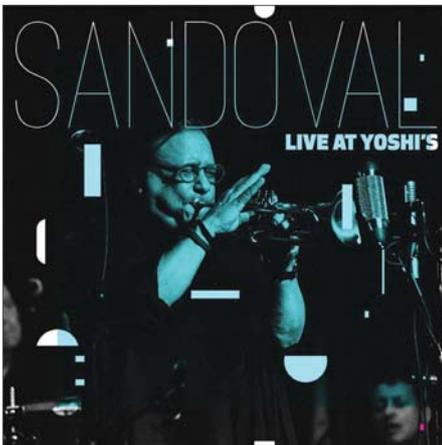
Scofield’s unit circa *Shinola*. “Aziza Dance” banks on grace, but like “Procession,” winds up throwing punches.

To some degree, that may be part of Loueke’s thesis. The earth goddess of the record’s title surely feels how we’ve maimed her Eden of late, and in the disc’s press materials, the guitarist mentions that she’s likely “angry” about it. Loueke is either paralleling her displeasure or defending her against assailants. Except in a few spots—most notably “Rain Wash” and “Forgiveness”—he’s definitely ready to put up a fight. —Jim Macnie

**GAÏA:** Broken; Sleepless Night; Sources Of Love; Wacko Loco; Aziza Dance; Rain Wash; Forgiveness; Even Teens; Gaïa; Veuve Malienne; Procession; How Deep Is Your Love? (55:28)

**Personnel:** Lionel Loueke, electric guitar; Massimo Biolcati, bass; Ferenc Nemeth, drums.

**Ordering info:** [bluenote.com](http://bluenote.com)



## Arturo Sandoval *Live At Yoshi's*

ALFI 1509A

★★★★

If you've seen Arturo Sandoval live, you will recognize that this album faithfully relays both the showmanship and ingenuous emotional punch of the 66-year-old trumpet virtuoso. Whether Sandoval is funk up a Cuban classic like "El Manisero" on synthesizer, channeling Clifford Brown with long, sinuous trumpet phrases on "Joy Spring" or singing praises of Dizzy Gillespie, there isn't any doubt about what this multi-instrumentalist means. What

## Yoron Israel & High Standards *This Moment: Live In Boston*

RONJA MUSIC COMPANY

★★★★

Drummer Yoron Israel and his group, unambiguously named High Standards, revisits four of the nine Stevie Wonder tunes that populated his most recent 2012 CD of Wonder's music, using substantially the same quartet and for the same label. The déjà vu effect is met with assurances from Israel that he has repackaged the material in new arrangements.

Israel and tenor saxophonist Lance Bryant have collaborated on and off for 20-odd years and can lay down a good set. The music here is a case in point: orderly, well structured and agreeably middle of the road, but without distinctive charisma.

Though the tunes are among Wonder's lesser-known pieces, they serve the quartet nicely. "Contusion" is alternately restless and ruminative as it crescendos into a slashing, show-stopping finale that blows up a lot of dust without digging a particularly deep hole. "Creepin'" offers probably the most potential for a jazz quartet, and "Where Were You When I Needed You Last Winter" alternates time signatures before settling into a consistently swinging

he feels is what he plays. And that's nothing to sneeze at.

But sneeze we do, because crowd-pleasers like Sandoval feel less nuanced than most critics are comfortable with. But there is a lot of musical value here, no matter your comfort zone. Highlights include the arrangement of "El Manisero," which finds its way from '70s jazz-funk to a montuno piano vamp. Ditto for "Joy Spring," where Sandoval offers tasty phrases and an intelligent musical narrative.

Other tracks are harder to like. Opener "Second Line" grafts fusion clichés—nasal keyboard portamento, fuzzed up guitar—to a fashionable New Orleans street beat. The bop medley is a graceless exhibition of notes and speed that devolves into an imitation of the late Clark Terry's hilarious "Mumbles."

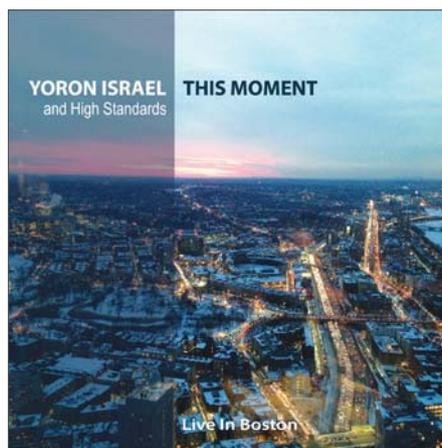
It is possible that in 30 years we'll look back on this album the way we revisit Louis Armstrong, seeing beyond the pandering entertainer who needed to be loved and into the soul of an artist. But right now, it's difficult.

—Paul de Barros

**Live At Yoshi's:** Second Line (Joe Avery's Blues); Bebop Medley; Dear Diz (Every Day I Think Of You); El Manisero; Joy Spring; Sureña; Seven Steps To Heaven. (65:58)

**Personnel:** Arturo Sandoval, trumpet, timbales, vocals (3), piano, keyboards; Dave Siegel, keyboards; Kermuel Roig, piano, keyboards; Rene Toledo, guitar; John Belzaguy, bass, vocals; Johnny Friday, drums; Ricardo "Tiki" Pasillas, percussion, vocals; Carlos Reyes, violin (6).

**Ordering info:** [alfirecords.com](http://alfirecords.com)



trench for the duration.

Israel's own compositions, "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow" and "Her All," are congenial and unobtrusive, while Mulgrew Miller's "Eleventh Hour" is animated by an alert percussive undertow that generates the set's most compelling back-and-forth. Otherwise, a journeyman set on a limited journey.

—John McDonough

**This Moment (Live In Boston):** Introduction; Where Were You When I Needed You Last Winter; Here Today, Gone Tomorrow; Her All; Creepin'; Glory; Passionate Raindrops; Contusion; The Eleventh Hour. (55:42)

**Personnel:** Yoron Israel, drums; Lance Bryant, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Laszlo Gardony, piano; Henry Lugo, bass.

**Ordering info:** [yoronisrael.com](http://yoronisrael.com)



## Tigran Hamasyan *Luys i Lusó*

ECM 2447

★★★★

We all know about New Age music, but maybe we need a category called Old Age: ancient musical traditions repurposed in resonant spaces with fresh Romantic associations and accouterments. On *Luys i Lusó*, pianist Tigran Hamasyan unearths music barely known outside its place of origin, which is Armenia—very mournful and rich melodic music, written by a range of composers renowned in their land including Mesrop Mashtots, Nerses Shnorhali, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, Grigor Pahlavuni and Komitas.

Not being a scholar of their work, I can only relate how this music, which is all arranged by Hamasyan, strikes me. The piano accompaniment is emotive without being agitated or overly gushy, though it seems sometimes quite reduced—perhaps because it often embellishes the standing melodic material rather than playing against it contrapuntally. The voices that Hamasyan plays along with, the Yerevan State Chamber Choir, are gorgeous and beautifully deployed, creating massive clouds around the delicate and melancholic lines.

The modal simplicity detracts a bit from tracks like "Bazum En Qo Gtutyunqd" and the pedal-dominated "Ankanim Araji Qo." But without the choir, on "Hayrapetakan Maghterg," Hamasyan's natural radiance is tender and moving, and in the places that he picks up speed and sounds jazzier—least effective tactic in terms of this project—his own playing is impressive. Some of the choir's harmonic shifts are delightfully unexpected and unsettling, recalling the compositions of Gesualdo, Biber or Kapsberger—all of whom, by the way, are charter members of the Old Age genre.

—John Corbett

**Luys i Lusó:** Ov Zarmanal; Ankanim Araji Qo; Ov Zarmanal (Var. 1); Hayrapetakan Maghterg; Bazum En Qo Gtutyunqd; Nor Tsaghik; Hayrapetakan Maghterg (Var. 1); Hayrapetakan Maghterg (Var. 2); Havoun Havoun; Voghormea Indz Astvats; Sirt Im Sasani; Surt Astvats; Sirt Im Sasani (Var. 1); Orhnyal E Astvats. (75:58)

**Personnel:** Tigran Hamasyan, piano, prepared piano; Yerevan State Chamber Choir, voices.

**Ordering info:** [ecmrecords.com](http://ecmrecords.com)

# The Hot Box

	Critics	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
<b>Lionel Loueke</b> <i>GAÏA</i>		★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★½
<b>Arturo Sandoval</b> <i>Live At Yoshi's</i>		★★½	★★★	★★	★★★
<b>Yoron Israel &amp; High Standards</b> <i>This Moment: Live In Boston</i>		★★★	★★½	★★½	★★★
<b>Tigran Hamasyan</b> <i>Luys i Luso</i>		★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★

## Critics' Comments

### Lionel Loueke, *GAÏA*

Loueke juggles many identities here, from catchy ("Gaïa") to opaque ("Procession"). But the music seems crowded and fragmented. "Rain Wash" and "Forgiveness" offer some quieter thematic shelter. —John McDonough

Great of producer Don Was to feature an uncomplicated trio going for broke. Loueke sounds spectacular chopping and slashing through burbling funk and heavy riffage. File next to your favorite Marc Ribot records. —John Corbett

Loueke is a true original. He's especially powerful when he leaves lots of space ("Sleepless Night," "Sources Of Love," "Forgiveness"), which makes it all the more disappointing when he falls into busy jazz-rock clichés ("Wacko Loco," "Eventeens," "Procession"). —Paul de Barros

### Arturo Sandoval, *Live At Yoshi's*

Alas, what's good in person doesn't always translate well to CD. Too much hokum (please, get to the point on "Seven Steps"), too few true star turns like "Joy Spring." A missed opportunity by a great player. —John McDonough

Not a fan of the synth or singing here, though Sandoval's flight-of-the-bumblebee dexterity is certainly dazzling. This energizing concert loses some oomph in translation. —John Corbett

With its wedding-band groove dynamic, that bebop medley comes off as the most under-baked live track I've heard in ages. Factor in the anachronistic keyboard settings and valentine vocal on the Diz nod, and it was all I could do to sustain focus as the date unfolded. —Jim Macnie

### Yoron Israel & High Standards, *This Moment: Live In Boston*

His drumming is consistently interesting, but little else about this concert recording is more than highly proficient. Stevie Wonder's soul somehow doesn't agree with these jazz arrangements. —John Corbett

The playing is inspired, but the band's chemistry is missing the kind of crackle necessary to make you want to hear this program more than once or twice. —Jim Macnie

This live recital of Stevie Wonder tunes and originals from Berklee instructor and consummate drummer Israel exudes organic warmth and confidence, but there's not a lot of fire, except when pianist Laszlo Gardony is soloing. —Paul de Barros

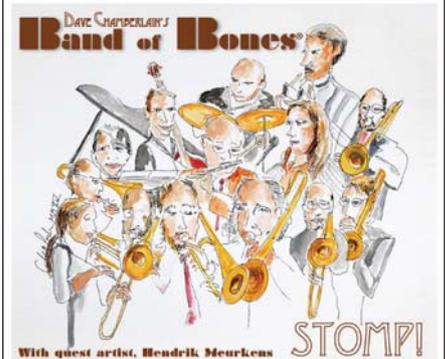
### Tigran Hamasyan, *Luys i Luso*

Hamasyan gently appends improvised counterpoints to a medieval asceticism from a world lit by faith. It is music I find easier to accept in context than recommend with enthusiasm. Should I repent, I'll know where to turn. —John McDonough

It's got an aura that invites you in and never shows you the door. The lyricism Tigran's piano moves put on the table bolsters the ancient hymns and canticles and vice versa. Music to sweep you away. —Jim Macnie

This multi-layered exploration of sacred Armenian music soars when the contrapuntal and conversational writing comes to the fore, but Hamasyan's piano improvisations too often come across as polite noodling. —Paul de Barros

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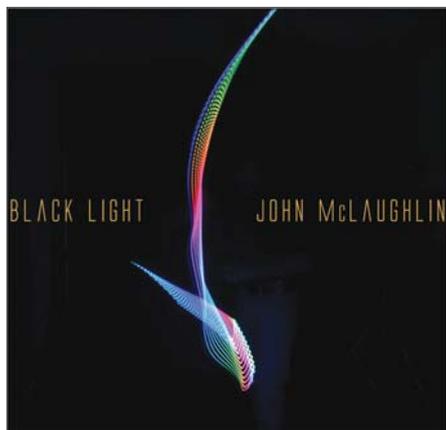
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## John McLaughlin & The 4th Dimension *Black Light*

ABSTRACT LOGIX 050

★★★★½

The late Frank Zappa once said of one-time Mahavishnu Orchestra guitarist John McLaughlin: “A person would be a moron not to appreciate McLaughlin’s technique. The guy has certainly found out how to operate a guitar as if it were a machine gun.”

Forty-some years later, at age 73, the avatar of electric guitar is still operating with the same uncanny proficiency. Several tunes from his latest album—particularly his opening

fusion salvo, “Here Come The Jiis,” and the mind-blowing closer, “Kiki”—feature the septuagenarian six-stringer at the very top of his game.

Pushed by his powerhouse 4th Dimension Band (keyboardist Gary Husband, electric bassist Etienne Mbappé, drummer Ranjit Barot), the once and future guitar god rises to some inspired heights on “Panditji,” dedicated to the late Indian music master and teacher Ravi Shankar. Barot drives this band with an intensely muscular attack, much in the same manner that Dennis Chambers fueled McLaughlin’s The Heart of Things band of the late ’90s.

This fusion juggernaut manages to cool things down a bit on the mellow “Being You Being Me” and the requiem-like synth number “Gaza City,” McLaughlin’s homage to his friend Paco de Lucía, the late flamenco guitar master, on “El Hombre Que Sabia” has him burning with requisite *duende* on nylon-string guitar. And for something completely nouveau, there’s “360 Flip,” which incorporates elements of triphop and electronica alongside McLaughlin’s patented speed licks.

—Bill Milkowski

**Black Light:** Here Come The Jiis; Clap Your Hand; Being You Being Me; Panditji; 360 Flip; El Hombre Que Sabia; Gaza City; Kiki. (46:37)

**Personnel:** John McLaughlin, guitar; Etienne Mbappé, bass; Gary Husband, piano, keyboards, drums; Ranjit Barot, drums, vocals.

**Ordering info:** [abstractlogix.com](http://abstractlogix.com)

## Dave Douglas Quintet *Brazen Heart*

GREENLEAF 1044

★★★★

Trumpeter Dave Douglas’ first album with his current quintet, the elegiac *Be Still* (2012), was dedicated to his mother and centered around traditional hymns and spirituals. *Brazen Heart* has an elegiac bent as well, memorializing Douglas’ older brother Damon, who died in June 2015. And the title track was originally a piece commissioned for large brass ensemble, to be performed on the site of the World Trade Center.

And yet, if there’s a consistent mood to the album, it’s celebratory. Yes, here again are a couple of traditional spirituals (“Deep River,” “There Is A Balm In Gilead”), which give the band a chance to settle into rich, slow blues. But these are the only straight-ahead tracks of the 11 selections here. The remaining Douglas originals show his continued wrestling with form and structure, exploiting the tension between rigorously written passages and free expression.

Even the title track relishes in discontinuities: the repetition of a repeated two-note rising motif, followed by a more ruminative theme reminiscent of the Wayne Shorter-era Miles Davis Quintet. These elements set up and frame



broad-ranging explorations. Similarly, the anthemic line of “Miracle Gro” doesn’t reveal itself for a good couple of minutes, Douglas and tenor saxophonist Jon Irabagon emerging in rough unison.

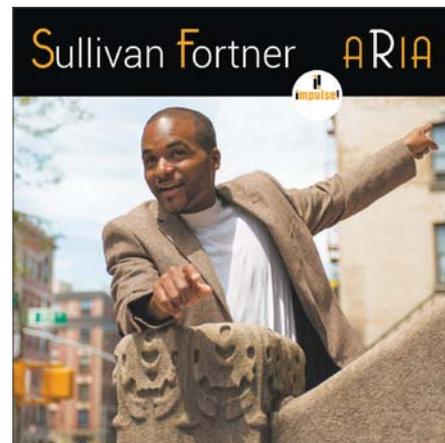
One is often struck by Douglas’ daunting technique and far-ranging imagination, even more so by the sheer beauty of his sound. In the midst of loss, his music continues to affirm.

—Jon Garelick

**Brazen Heart:** Brazen Heart; Deep River; Hawaii Punch; Inure Phase; Lone Wolf; Miracle Gro; Ocean Spray; Pyrrhic Apology; There Is A Balm In Gilead; Variable Current; Wake Up Claire. (64:55)

**Personnel:** Dave Douglas, trumpet; Jon Irabagon, tenor saxophone; Matt Mitchell, piano; Linda Oh, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

**Ordering info:** [greenleafmusic.com](http://greenleafmusic.com)



## Sullivan Fortner *Aria*

IMPULSE! 4735908

★★★★

Twenty-eight-year-old New Orleans native Sullivan Fortner has, to this point, led the kind of career that talented jazz artists had before it became essential to lead your own bands and put out a handful of albums by the time you were in your early twenties. Instead of pursuing that path, the pianist has honed his chops in the employ of leaders like Roy Hargrove, Christian Scott and Stefon Harris, and pursued a post-graduate degree at the Manhattan School of Music. Last year was a breakout one for him, with his victory in the prestigious Cole Porter Fellowship in Jazz award.

For his debut recording, he selected other young players—saxophonist Tivon Pennicott, bassist Aidan Carroll and drummer Joe Dyson Jr.—and went for an ensemble approach, rather than putting himself in the spotlight. Like many debut recordings, *Aria* is filled with bravura turns, and it isn’t until Duke Pearson’s “You Know I Care,” deep into the program, that Fortner throttles back and settles into a spare approach. Even then, he plays a lot of notes, showing a love for two-handed counter movement.

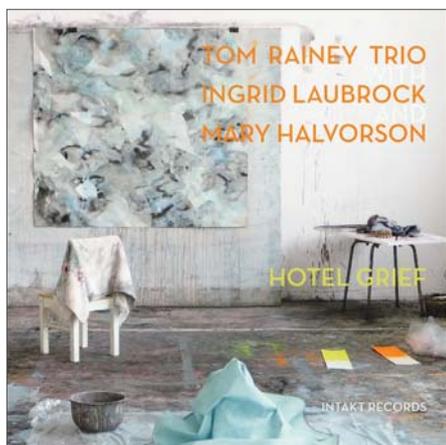
That agility serves him well on pieces like “You Are Special” and his own “Parade,” where he balances rapid, flowing movement with choppy accents, and navigates the surging torrent of Carroll and Dyson. On “I Mean You” he turns it loose, running through a wide range of variations and stressing Thelonious Monk’s melody over the shape of the composition. Fans of Monk’s airiness and wry turns may not love this approach, but Fortner leaves no doubt about his technical prowess. At the other end of the spectrum is a hushed solo take on “For All We Know”—the ideal book-end for all the hyperkinetic playing that precedes it.

—James Hale

**Aria:** Aria; Ballade; Parade; I Mean You; You Are Special; All The Things You Are; You Know I Care; Passepied; For All We Know; Finale. (50:41)

**Personnel:** Sullivan Fortner, piano; Tivon Pennicott, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; Aidan Carroll, bass; Joe Dyson Jr., drums.

**Ordering info:** [impulse-label.com](http://impulse-label.com)



## Tom Rainey Trio *Hotel Grief*

INTAKT 256

★★★★

Drummer Tom Rainey is back with another trip, this time to *Hotel Grief*. This live recording from December 2013 at New York's Cornelia Street Cafe has a presence to it that is its own reward: You feel like you are there, listening in on a three-way conversation, the bandstand not far off.

The presence of Mary Halvorson's electric guitar has the effect of transporting this trio music in subtle, deeply felt ways, and saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock's various tones seem to intertwine with Halvorson's in odd and beguiling ways.

As with any group improvisation, the mettle is in the making. These three have been on multiple tours and have two previous CDs under Rainey's name (including another for Intakt, *Camino Cielo Echo*, as well as *Pool School* for Clean Feed).

*Hotel Grief* reflects their shared time together, exploring a great variety of moods, moments and magic. And while the trio has moments where the music explodes, it's the various quieter ones that are most appealing.

In these soft, discreet intervals, the nuances and deeply shared comfort levels emerge, each of the five tracks providing some sort of variety. Within them, one feels closer to the music, and the whole process of group improvisation seems to open up.

Not that the energy of the music played isn't noteworthy. The first piece, "Last Overture," combines both a subdued series of moments—including some delicate, reflective colors from Halvorson—as well as the trio's out-and-out blasts of energy. Laubrock's tenor leads the charge with a fair amount of shrieking along with more tonal expressions.

On the 17-minute title track, where the solo space is like an open field for any and all to enter,

Laubrock's soprano lines cut through what can feel like clutter. This is not music that is led by any one member. Rather, it is realized as it is created by all three. Rainey's touch on drums is supportive as well as distinctive, his gradual movement between cymbals and drums a showcase of how to listen as well as comment. Nothing surfaces that suggests any form, let alone melody or fixed tempo, but the music is certainly going somewhere. Again, Halvorson's ability to move in and out of conventional guitar playing—strumming chords here, dropping

off a bit of grunge there—is appealing.

Whatever the context and wherever these three take us, one can prepare for the unexpected. Jazz writer Bill Shoemaker makes that point clearly and eloquently in the liner notes: "This is improvised music."  
—John Ephland

**Hotel Grief:** Last Overture; Hotel Grief; Briefly Lompoc; Proud Achievements In Botany; Mr. K.C. (For Keith Copeland). (60:09)

**Personnel:** Tom Rainey, drums; Ingrid Laubrock, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Mary Halvorson, guitar.

**Ordering info:** [intaktrec.ch](http://intaktrec.ch)

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## Outside Voices

Some of jazz's greatest players—Eric Dolphy and Yusef Lateef spring to mind—have peppered their records with oddball instruments, but true specialists in unusual instrumentation are more rare. These five releases all feature out-of-the-ordinary instrumentation, often to outstanding results.

Unusual instrumentation doesn't necessarily dictate an unusual approach. **Paul Hemmings' *Blues And The Abstract Uke*** (Leading Tone 15-006; 57:06 ★★★★★) may be built around his ukulele, but it has a classic feel, with dips into boogaloo, hard-bop and cool jazz. Hemmings' original "Goodbye Lentil" is even somewhat haunting, teasing sounds out of the little chordophone that fit no stereotype. The uke mixes well with the tenor sax and trombone on the gospel revival "Hello Bean," and it stands beautifully on its own over minimal backing on superb renditions of "Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out" and "Sittin' On Top Of The World," the latter of which features Hemmings making hair-raising use of harmonics. It may not have the biggest range, but in Hemmings' hands, the little ukulele belongs.

Ordering info: [paulhemmings.com](http://paulhemmings.com)

**Daniel Smith's *Jazz Suite For Bassoon*** (Summit 656; 40:36 ★★★★★) takes more of a hybrid jazz/classical approach to jazz bassoon. He leans heavily classical on the set of baroque compositions he arranges for himself and a piano/bass/drums trio to open the album; these would likely sound familiar to Purcell and Vivaldi. The middle of the album is devoted to chamber arrangements of Joplin rags, firmly demonstrating Smith's precise technique on his instrument. But the album's most exciting portion is the final title suite, composed by pianist Steve Gray. "Jazz Suite For Bassoon" swings, and it's here that we finally get to hear Smith do extended improvisation. His long, unaccompanied cadenza on the "Allegro" movement is astonishingly complex and fluid.

Ordering info: [summitrecords.com](http://summitrecords.com)

Also bridging the jazz/classical divide is composer and theorist **William Schimmel**, whose ***Theater Of The Accordion*** (Roven 51115; 58:43 ★★★★★) finds him performing almost entirely solo, with the exception of two guest spots by Wynnton Marsalis. The duo takes on "St. Louis Blues" and a portion of Mahler's ninth symphony together, and the former playfully welds Brechtian mordancy to lighter passages of fleet dialogue. On his own, Schimmel is largely immersed exploring



classical themes, interpreting and re-working Strauss, Bartók, Schoenberg, Bernstein and Dvorák, with occasional odd nods to Kurt Weill or Bill Monroe.

Ordering info: [rovenrecords.com](http://rovenrecords.com)

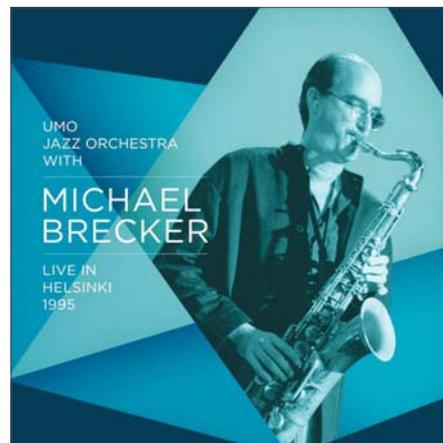
On the wilder side of things, the **Cristina Pato Quartet's *Latina*** (Sunnyside 1415; 36:00 ★★★★★) is built around explosive 6/8 rhythms, and Pato plays her Galician bagpipes (called *gaita*) with bold authority. Her band—bassist Edward Perez, drummer Eric Doob and accordionist Victor Prieto—kicks up a charging racket behind her. But Pato's virtuoso playing is the clear star of the show. The *gaita* typically includes a bass drone, but she often eschews it in favor of greater harmonic freedom, finding a surprisingly violin-like tone. Her melodic lines swoop and flutter, and her command of the instrument's dynamic range is superb; her playing on "Llegará, Llegará, Llegará" is ferocious, while on "Landó: Maria Landó," she concludes a solo with a gentle *legato* trail-off. The *gaita* may never take its place alongside the saxophone as a common jazz lead, but *Latina* is revelatory nonetheless.

Ordering info: [sunnysidezone.com](http://sunnysidezone.com)

**Jen Shyu & Jade Tongue's *Sounds And Cries Of The World*** (Pi 61; 61:00 ★★★★★) ventures deep into the avant-garde, and finds the bandleader playing a closetful of Far Eastern instruments, including the *gat kim* (a two-stringed Taiwanese lute), *gayageum* (a Korean zither), *ggwaenggwari* (a Korean gong) and *kemanak* (a Javanese idiophone), but this unusual menagerie is far outshined by her dominant vocals. The instruments are used less as leads and more for texture, ably merging with her band of Ambrose Akinmusire on trumpet, Dan Weiss on drums, Mat Maneri on viola and Thomas Morgan on bass. The result is a shifting, uneasy soundscape for her sudden octave leaps and searching, melted melodies.

DB

Ordering info: [pirecordings.com](http://pirecordings.com)



## UMO Jazz Orchestra with Michael Brecker *Live In Helsinki 1995*

RANDOM ACT 1018

★★★★½

At any given time, there are dozens of top-flight musicians in transit around the globe, settling down here and there as guest soloists with various ensembles. This is one aspect of music where things don't differ much between the worlds of jazz and classical. In both worlds, the challenges are legion: poorly rehearsed ensembles, indifferent conductors, mediocre compositions or arrangements and the general vagaries of long-distance travel. Is it any wonder that those soloists—even if they generally sound amazing in the studio or fronting their regular groups on their home turf—sometimes sound less than inspiring at these guest appearances?

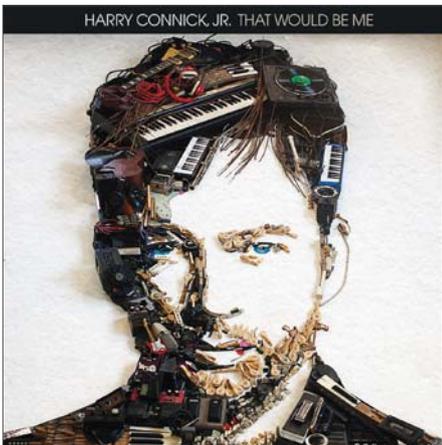
If any of those challenges bedeviled saxophonist Michael Brecker on this 1995 trip to Helsinki to appear with the UMO Jazz Orchestra, he left them behind when he hit the stage. In short, this is one of those performances that made fans love Brecker, and made his premature death—in 2007, at the age of 57—so deeply felt. From his first notes on "Invitation," Brecker never sounds less than fully engaged, playing at the top of his game with gruff muscularity and remarkable facility. Not surprisingly, he sounds most at home on his own compositions—"Slang," "Song For Barry" and "Never Alone"—but he also embraces a pair of Horace Silver compositions, and takes Finnish tenor player Manuel Dunkel to the wall in a fiery duet on "Ginare," the piece that will grab most listeners.

—James Hale

**Live In Helsinki 1995:** Invitation; Slang; Andrea's Song; Nica's Dream; Ginare; The Meaning Of The Blues; The Big Picture; Song For Barry; Nutville; Never Alone. (73:32)

**Personnel:** Michael Brecker, tenor saxophone; Pentti Lahti, Mikko Mäkinen, Teemu Salminen, Manuel Dunkel, Pentti Päivinen, saxophones; Esko Heikkinen, Timo Paasonen, Sami Pöyhönen, Tero Saarti, trumpets; Markku Veijonsuo, Mikko Mustonen, Pekka Laukkanen, Mikael Långbacka, trombones; Seppo Kanttonen, piano, keyboards; Markku Kanerva, electric guitar; Pekka Sarmanto, bass; Pekka Pohjola, electric bass (1, 5, 8); Ricardo Padilla, percussion (1, 4, 5, 8-10); Markus Ketola, drums; Rich Shemaria, conductor.

Ordering info: [randomactrecords.com](http://randomactrecords.com)



**Harry Connick Jr.**  
*That Would Be Me*

SONY MUSIC 88875159132

★★★★

Harry Connick Jr. once accounted for the wild range of genres and sounds on his 2013 release, *Every Man Should Know*, by saying he simply wanted to do what he wanted to do, regardless of his label's expectations. Two years later, he still seems to be prioritizing the value of trying out a new approach over the safety of returning to what's worked in the past.

On his glossy new release, *That Would Be Me*, the new approach in question involved giving up the reins of complete creative control in the studio to collaborate with a pair of producers known more for their work with the likes of Taylor Swift, Adele and Pink than with the New Orleans-based jazz musicians Connick's usual producer, Tracey Freeman, tends to rely on.

Two separate collaborations—with Butch Walker in Nashville, Tennessee, and Eg White in London—yielded a full-on pop album, complete with songs by outside writers with proven hit-making track records.

Genre categorizations aside, the process yielded mixed results, with high points arriving wherever Walker and White's slick stylistic touches deferred to the more organic feel of Connick's voice.

The disc kicks off with the uptempo, big-beat opener, "(I Like To See You) Smile," a Mark Ronson-esque number that establishes Connick's new direction as he rap/scats his way through the climax. It's not as strong as some of the slowed-down blues numbers and ballads, but its intrinsic riskiness deserves credit. Things go up and down from there. Multiple tunes begin with stripped-down intros that mix only Connick's evocative vocals and one instrument. Full of soul and relatively complex lyrical meaning, "Tryin' To Matter" is a highlight that suffers a bit when the poignant admission at the heart of the lyrics gets overshadowed by the sheer mass of glossed-up instrumental production on the chorus.

"You Don't Need A Man" boasts a compelling r&b-flavored swagger. On "Do You Really Need Her," another highlight, Connick sings from the perspective of a father whose daughter has been murdered. The arrangement is toned down and more organic than the rest, giving the plight of the protagonist—and the voice of the singer representing him—top billing.

—Jennifer Odell

**That Would Be Me:** (I Like It When You) Smile; (I Do) Like We Do; Tryin' To Matter; Songwriter; Do You Really Need Her; You Don't Need A Man; You Have No Idea; Where Prisoners Drown; (I Think I) Love You A Little Bit; Every Time I Fall In Love; Right Where It Hurts. (39:46)

**Personnel:** Harry Connick Jr., brass, clapping, drums, French horn, organ, percussion, piano, saxophones, trombone, trumpet, violin, vocals; Wuritzer, Mike Davis, trombone; Mark Braud, Tony Kadleck, trumpets; Geoff Burke, alto saxophone; Jonathan DuBose Jr., guitar; Arthur Latin, drums; Ben Chappell, David Cohen, Patrick Jee, cello; James Boyd, Meghan Cassidy, Vivek Kamath, Remi Pelletier, Robert Rinehart, viola; Helen Paterson, Kotono Sato, viola, violin; Jake Sinclair, bass; Andy Snitzer, tenor saxophone; Alan Stepansky, Nathan Vickery, cello; Butch Walker, guitars, keyboards, percussion, producer, background vocals; The Watson Twins, background vocals; Raymond Weber, drums; Jerry Weldon, tenor saxophone; Eg White, bass, drums, glockenspiel, guitars, organ, percussion, piano, producer, programming, string arrangements, synthesizer, background vocals, vocoder; Hanna Chol, Hannah Dawson, Janice Graham, Lisa Kim, Hyunju Lee, Liz Lim, Beatrix Lovejoy, Joanna Maurer, Annaliesa Place, Sarah Pratt, Suzanne Ornstein, Sharon Yamada, Jung Sun Yoo, Warren Zielinski, violin; Jerry Brown, Michelle John, Christina Matovu, backing vocals.

**Ordering info:** [harryconnickjr.com](http://harryconnickjr.com)

ECM

**Mette Henriette**

**Mette Henriette** saxophone; **Eivind Lønning** trumpet  
**Henrik Nørstebø** trombone; **Andreas Rokseth** bandoneon  
**Johan Lindvall** piano; **Sara Övinge** violin; **Karin Hellqvist** violin  
**Odd Hannisdal** violin; **Bendik Bjørnstad Foss** viola  
**Ingvild Nesdal Sandnes** violoncello; **Katrine Schiøtt** violoncello  
**Per Zanussi** double bass; **Per Oddvar Johansen** drums, saw

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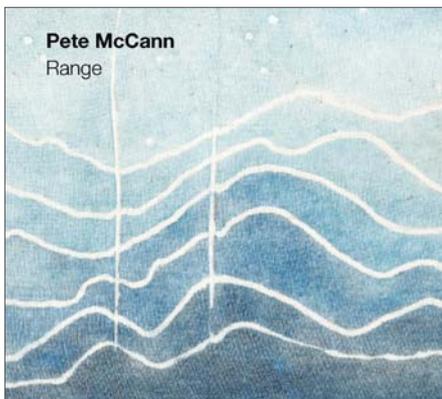
Food

*This Is Not A Miracle*

**Iain Ballamy** saxophones, electronics; **Thomas Strønen** drums, electronics, percussion, Moog, Fender Rhodes  
**Christian Fennesz** guitar, electronics

An album of powerful grooves, evocative textures and exploratory improvisation.





Pete McCann  
Range

## Pete McCann

### Range

WHIRLWIND 4675

★★★★½

A remarkable post-Pat Metheny contemporary jazz guitarist, Pete McCann has flown somewhat under the radar since the '90s, though the quality of his playing and depth of his writing ranks alongside his generational colleagues Ben Monder and Kurt Rosenwinkel. He stakes out highly original territory on his fifth outing as a leader in the company of pianist-keyboardist Henry Hey, alto saxophonist John O'Gallagher, bassist Matt Clohesy and drummer Mark Ferber.

McCann has such command of his instru-

ment that he can go deep in any setting, whether it's the bristling, harmonically challenging opener "Kenny" (his ode to the late trumpeter/flugelhornist Kenny Wheeler), the angular, odd-metered "Seventh Jar," the urgently swinging "Realm" (dedicated to pianist Richie Beirach), the Frisellian heartland ballad "To The Mountains" or the pedal-to-the-metal fusion anthem "Mustard." There's even a 12-tone-influenced piece in the darkly dissonant "Numinous."

Hey is the invaluable utility infielder here, acquitting himself brilliantly on acoustic piano ("Kenny," "Realm," "Seventh Jar"), Fender Rhodes electric piano ("Dyad Changes," "Rumble," "Bridge Scandal") and organ ("Mustard"). Saxophonist O'Gallagher, who plays cascading unison lines alongside McCann on several of the intricate heads here, also delivers outstanding solos on the uptempo swingers "Dyad Changes" and "Realm" and on the raucous "Bridge Scandal." It's a formidable, flexible outfit with a built-in chemistry and an audacious streak.

—Bill Milkowski

**Range:** Kenny; Seventh Jar; Realm; To The Mountains; Mustard; Dyad Changes; Numinous; Bridge Scandal; Rumble; Mine Is Yours. (62:05)

**Personnel:** Pete McCann, guitar; John O'Gallagher, alto saxophone; Henry Hey, piano (1–3); Rhodes (6, 8, 9); organ (5); Matt Clohesy, bass; Mark Ferber, drums.

**Ordering info:** [whirlwindrecordings.com](http://whirlwindrecordings.com)

## Nicole Mitchell/Tomeka Reid/Mike Reed

### Artifacts

482 MUSIC 1093

★★★★

The title of this album suggests a collection of found objects, or perhaps the products of some archeological dig. But while there is definitely some old gold among its nine tunes, which were selected from throughout the history of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), it comes across as more of a cross-generational conversation than a presentation of relics.

For a start, there's the band. Flutist and former AACM president Nicole Mitchell joined the organization in 1995; drummer Mike Reed and cellist Tomeka Reid, who have also held administrative posts, are post-millennial members. They've played in each other's bands for years and have established a foundation for the trust and empathy evident in their playing. But it's new for them to play together as a collective.

At the same time, there's another conversation going on. This one's between the identities of the band members and the imposing material drawn from the songbooks of Anthony Braxton, Air, Leroy Jenkins and Roscoe Mitchell, among others. The material



Nicole Mitchell Tomeka Reid Mike Reed  
Artifacts

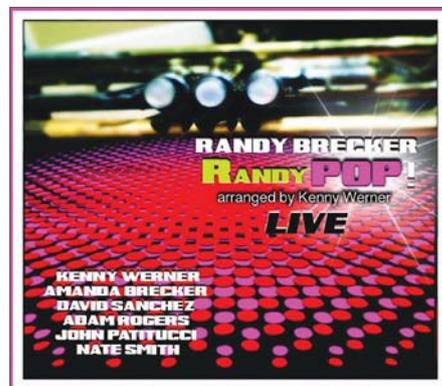
ranges from the haunting solemnity of Amina Claudine Myers' "Have Mercy Upon Us" to the Iberian-tinged vivacity of Steve McCall's "B.K.," but within that broad range, there's still a strong bias toward assertive melody. The performances are pithy and lucid, which makes for satisfying listening, and also makes the record accessible enough to be a good introduction to the avant-garde.

—Bill Meyer

**Artifacts:** Composition 23B; Jo Jar; Bernice/Days Fly By With Ruby; The Clowns; Have Mercy On Us; B.K.; I'll Be Right There Waiting; Munkt Munkt; Light On The Path. (46:17)

**Personnel:** Nicole Mitchell, flutes, electronics; Tomeka Reid, cello; Mike Reed, drums.

**Ordering info:** [482music.com](http://482music.com)



## Randy Brecker

### RandyPOP!

PILOO RECORDS 009

★★★★½

With his younger brother Michael, trumpeter Randy Brecker helped define the sound of early jazz-rock in outfits like Dreams and the Brecker Brothers Band while also accruing an impressive "straight" jazz resume with everyone from Horace Silver and Art Blakey to Charles Mingus.

Here he reprises some of the work from the scores of pop sessions he played through the '70s and '80s. It's a good showcase of Brecker's range, but what's even more impressive is how this septet can stretch out, making the most of their jazz chops while being true to the original spirit of these pop hits.

The astute arrangements by keyboardist Kenny Werner are central to the project, so the band lavishes appropriate attention on the beautifully structured melody of the ballad "Hello It's Me," by Brecker's fellow Philadelphian (and early collaborator) Todd Rundgren, leaving plenty of solo room for the trumpeter and Werner's piano. On the other hand, a piece like "New Frontier," by Steely Dan songwriter Donald Fagen (from Fagen's solo album *The Nightfly*) offers up its idiosyncratic details as food for new harmonic and melodic thought.

Brecker's song introductions on this club date (at New York's Blue Note) are informative and charming, but might have been better left to the liner notes—they're the only thing about the disc that might get tired after a few listens.

—Jon Garelick

**RandyPOP!:** New Frontier; Let Me Just Follow Behind; I Can't Quit Her; Hello It's Me; Ghost Writer; Think!; I've Got a Bag of My Own; Meeting Across the River; Late in the Evening. (77:45)

**Personnel:** Randy Brecker, trumpet; Kenny Werner, piano, keyboards, arrangements; David Sánchez, tenor saxophone; Amanda Brecker, vocals; Adam Rogers, guitar; John Patitucci, bass; Nate Smith, drums.

**Ordering info:** [piloorecords.com](http://piloorecords.com)

## Geof Bradfield Quintet

### Our Roots

ORIGIN 82701

★★★★★

An offer to revisit a classic jazz album for a Chicago concert series led saxophonist Geof Bradfield to return his attention to one of his favorite records. The experience was so good it became the germ for his superb new quintet album, on which he pays homage to the legendary blues and folk singer Lead Belly via tenor man Clifford Jordan, who made a Lead Belly tribute album for Atlantic in 1965.

Bradfield widened the scope for the project, his band tackling a pair of classics by the great Blind Willie Johnson along with a couple of Georgia Sea Island spirituals affiliated with powerhouse singer Bessie Jones. He also included three of his own tunes, each feting musicians who've made an impact on him: Randy Weston, Meshell Ndegeocello and Oliver Mtukudzi are expertly evoked by the melodies and feels, respectively, of "Clinton Hill," "Meshell" and "Mbira Song."

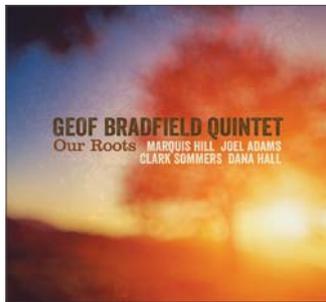
As he writes in his liner notes, Bradfield aimed for arrangements and performances that were "simple and direct," and apart from couple of complex harmonies and an odd time signature, he hits the mark. He deserves credit for refusing to take the obvious route in paying tribute to his influences, coming up with something that says much more about himself than Lead Belly or Clifford Jordan.

—Peter Margasak

**Our Roots:** Adam In The Garden; Clinton Hill; Yellow Gal; Black Girl; Meshell; Before This Time Another Year; Lead Belly; Dick's Holler; Mbira Song; Dark Was The Night, Cold Was The Ground; Motherless Children; Take This Hammer. (61:17)

**Personnel:** Geof Bradfield, tenor saxophone; Marquis Hill, trumpet; Joel Adams, trombone; Clark Sommers, bass; Dana Hall, drums.

**Ordering info:** [origin-records.com](http://origin-records.com)



## Adam Scone

### I Scream Score!

RONDETTTE 1012

★★★★★

A reliably swinging Hammond B-3 specialist with deep soul roots, Adam Scone immerses himself in the old school organ tradition on his third outing as a leader. His is a happy-go-lucky sound that harkens back to the organ lounge days of the early '60s, when the idea of playing a gig was to make people feel good and get them to tap their feet.

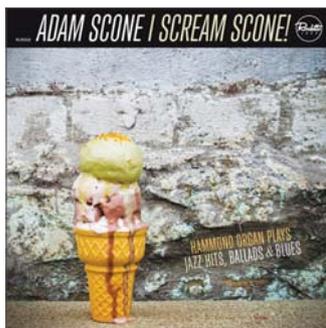
While some of the tunes here—a wildly romping, uptempo rendition of the normally morose "Everything Happens To Me," a funky boogaloo take on Gene Ammons' classic "Red Top" and Scone's burning title track—are jumping, hard driving fare, the organist and his talented crew also settle nicely into Duke Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood" and the 1934 standard "Stairway To The Stars" (aka "Park Avenue Fantasy"), the latter featuring some highly expressive, smoky tenor work from Ian Hendrickson-Smith along with soulful testifying from Scone at the hulking B-3. And they pass the blues test with flying colors on Scone's soul-jazz anthem "What People Do" and an ultra-slow, take-your-time rendition of "Willow Weep For Me."

—Bill Milkowski

**I Scream Score!:** What People Do; Everything Happens To Me; Stairway To The Stars; I Scream Score; In A Sentimental Mood; Red Top; Willow Weep For Me; The Last One. (36:48)

**Personnel:** Adam Scone, Hammond B-3 organ; Ian Hendrickson-Smith, tenor saxophone; John H. Smith, guitar (1, 3, 7, 8); Colby Inzer, drums (1, 3, 6, 7, 8); Matt Chertkoff, guitar (2, 4, 5); Aaron Thurston, drums (2, 4, 5); Dan Muniz, guitar (6).

**Ordering info:** [rondettejazz.com](http://rondettejazz.com)



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# Midnight Specials

**King Louie & LaRhonda Steele, *Rock Me Baby* (Self Release; 48:21 ★★★★★)** The jazz and blues merger by B-3 player Louis “King Louie” Pain and singer LaRhonda Steele is neither predictable nor routine. Pain’s tight, expert activity on the console comes out of Jimmy Smith, yet sounds fresh through the expressive qualities of his dapper swing. Steele has shaped a style that relies on an expansive, creative range sparked with a brazen sultriness. The program doesn’t settle for complacency, with B.B. King’s “Rock Me Baby,” the Isley Brothers’ “It’s Your Thing,” the 1949 Larry Darnell r&b hit “For You My Love,” the standard “Blue Moon” and other surprising covers.

Ordering info: [louispain.com](http://louispain.com)

**Tommy Castro & The Painkillers, *Method To My Madness* (Alligator 4967; 50:07 ★★★★★)** Advocating for blues-rock with a soul dimension since the 1990s, Tommy Castro tours incessantly and records every year or two. The Californian’s latest album represents a high-water mark in his career. Indomitable spirit informs his songs about optimism in dark times or the role of luck in romantic matters—he’s offering some of his catchiest original material ever. Lest anyone question his straight blues skills, he potently surveys B.B. King’s “Bad Luck” and gets down to business on the shuffle “Two Hearts.”

Ordering info: [alligator.com](http://alligator.com)

**Fiona Boyes, *Box & Dice* (Blue Empress 717; 44:17 ★★★★★)** Delighted with her recent acquisition of handsome cigar-box and National Resoelectric baritone guitars, Australian Fiona Boyes puts them to the test on her latest release. Sure enough, those guitars have plenty to say in discourses with her true-blue vocals. Her songs are conduits of flammable or relatively tranquil emotion. Boyes examines Chicago staples “Smokestack Lightning” and “Easy Baby” with a sense of newfound wonder.

Ordering info: [referencerecordings.com](http://referencerecordings.com)

**Sam Butler, *Raise Your Hands!* (Severn 0066; 44:17 ★★)** Producer Brian Brinkerhoff asked the former Blind Boys of Alabama guitarist to dab his gospel-blues touch on spiritual material from secularists like Bruce Springsteen, the Bee Gees, Blind Faith and U2. Butler’s no great shakes as a singer or guitarist, however, and only rallies near the end of the album with a touching version of Curtis Mayfield’s “Wherever You Leadeth.” That’s not enough to rescue the proceedings from the slough of mediocrity.

Ordering info: [severnrecords.com](http://severnrecords.com)



**Jimmy Burns, *It Ain’t Right* (Delmark 841; 58:35 ★★½)** Every word that Jimmy Burns sings on his first Delmark studio record in a dozen years reveals the slow-burning genuineness of an elder who grew up in hardscrabble Mississippi and has since gotten by as a musician and carpenter in Chicago. Like his vocals, Burns’ guitar terminology is purposeful and a treat to hear. The songs, all non-originals, mostly get good grades, among them two Percy Mayfield evergreens and Junior Wells’ “Messin’ With The Kid.”

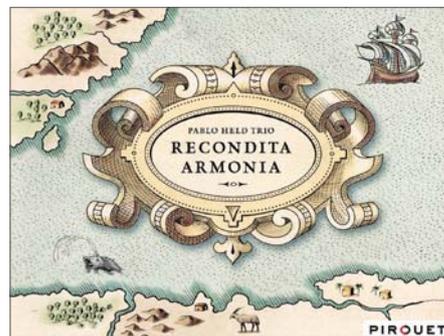
Ordering info: [delmark.com](http://delmark.com)

**Mighty Sam McClain & Knut Reiersrud, *Tears Of The World* (ACT 9033; 50:17 ★★)** Soul blues royalty Mighty Sam McCain believed to the very core of his being that the redemptive power of song was a blessing from the Man Upstairs. Indeed, this posthumous release finds the Louisiana-born singer poignantly pleading for transformation—listen especially for the autobiographical “Somebody Help Me.” Unfortunately, he’s hamstrung by cloddish Norwegian musicians and bland material. Check out McClain’s valuable 1960s collection, *Papa True Love*, and his superlative 1993 album *Give It Up To Love* instead.

Ordering info: [actmusic.com](http://actmusic.com)

**Various Artists, *The Rough Guide To The Blues Songsters* (Rough Guide 1343; 72:18 ★★★★★)** Here’s an outstanding compilation of remarkably clean-sounding 78s by two-dozen black or white songsters of the 1920s. The famous (Charley Patton, Mississippi John Hurt and Lead Belly, among more) show an instinctive mastery in the music’s emotional property and capacity for entertainment. Also triumphing are unknowns such as Louis Lasky, Dick Justice and Lonnie Coleman.

Ordering info: [worldmusic.net](http://worldmusic.net)



## Pablo Held Trio *Recondita Armonia*

PIROUET 3085

★★★★½

German pianist Pablo Held, though only 28, has excelled extensively on record. Alongside three fine releases with his trio and a gorgeous large-ensemble album, *Glow*, his catalog includes last year’s left-field meeting between his trio and guitarist John Scofield. Several of these discs include a takeoff on a classical piece. With *Recondita Armonia*—the title, from an aria in Puccini’s *Tosca*, translates evocatively as “Hidden Harmonies”—Held puts an individual spin on the typical ballad album by drawing on all classical themes. The selections are hip, the explorations ingenious.

Held, bassist Robert Landfermann and drummer Jonas Burgwinkel open by reimagining a piece from *L’Orgue Mystique* by 20th-century French organist Charles Tournemire, who was a celebrated improviser. Oddly enough, the beguiling melody sounds like that of a jazz standard; the trio improvises over a pedal point in the spaces Tournemire left for plainsong and chants, with Landfermann’s dusky tone a sensual draw. The magical atmospherics of Catalan miniaturist Federico Mompou—whose music Held learned by heart growing up, thanks to his pianist father—feel newly minted, given Burgwinkel’s rhythmic textures and Held’s tartly improvised lines.

The trio transforms Scriabin’s mysterious piano piece “Feuillet D’Album” into a richly voiced tone poem, bringing out a world of hidden resonance. “Mountain Horn Song,” from Bartók’s suite *Romanian Folk Dances*, is bewitchingly done, the strong melody providing lyrical grist for Held. Along with the Puccini title tune, the group digs deep into pieces by Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky and Hindemith; but no matter how distinctive the frame, the trio is the picture, always sounding like its ruminative, glowing self.

—Bradley Bamberger

**Recondita Armonia:** Offertoire; Fragments; Prélude No. 3; Feuillet D’Album Op. 58; Mountain Horn Song; Agnus Dei; Interludium No. 5; Recondita Armonia. (44:46)

**Personnel:** Pablo Held, piano; Robert Landfermann, bass; Jonas Burgwinkel, drums.

Ordering info: [pirouet.com](http://pirouet.com)

## John Taylor 2081

CAM JAZZ 7889

★★★★

Pianist John Taylor, who died in July, was a widely versed player whose reputation in Europe was stronger and more fully embraced than across the Atlantic. In the U.S., listeners may have typecast him as a lyrical pianist through his projects for ECM. But there was much more to this British virtuoso, as evidenced by *2081*, which features his gifted singer-songwriter son Alex, drummer son Leo and Oren Marshall on tuba, a refreshingly distinctive bass voice.

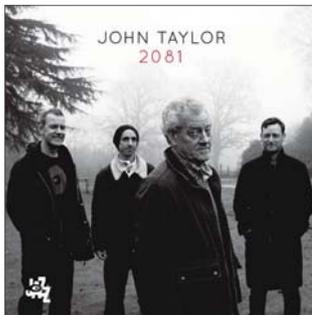
Based loosely on themes from the 1961 Kurt Vonnegut story “Harrison Bergeron,” the song cycle was originally commissioned by the Cheltenham Jazz Festival for an octet, but the lean and provocative quartet gains power in compacted sinew. The pianist flexes his graceful style and improvisational powers within the parameters of the six-piece work, while fully respecting the ensemble ethos. In the opening “Doozy 1,” with its entrancing 7/4 cyclical structure, tuba player Marshall takes off on a fine solo, then veers off into a furtive free zone in duet with drummer Leo before returning to the hypnotic pulse of John’s piano riff. On the title track, Alex wends easily over an odd metric plan, with a sure tone and understated style suggesting Kurt Elling and Theo Bleckmann.

The album ends eerily and wistfully with just a shard of dreamtime vocals and the patriarch fading gently into a hazy distance. This moment is especially poignant given the pianist’s passing not long before the album’s release. Let the John Taylor reappraisal and re-appreciation begin. —Josef Woodard

**2081:** Doozy 1; 2081; Empress; DMG; Deer On The Moon; Doozy 2. (48:07)

**Personnel:** John Taylor, piano; Alex Taylor, vocals; Oren Marshall, tuba; Leo Taylor, drums.

**Ordering info:** [camjazz.com](http://camjazz.com)



## Rob Reddy Bechet: Our Contemporary

REDDY MUSIC 003

★★★★

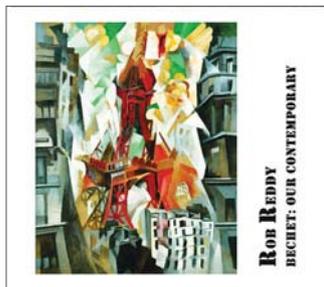
New Orleans great Sidney Bechet wasn’t the person one would expect the eternally forward-looking saxophonist Rob Reddy to celebrate. But he’s not saluting Bechet by merely recreating the late saxophonist’s vintage recordings. As Reddy says in his liner notes, this album is a “respectful attempt to honor Bechet’s place in history as a seriously forward-thinking avant-garde artist.” To that end, Reddy alternates four Bechet tunes with four originals that, in many cases, summon the spirit of Crescent City jazz more than the covers.

Reddy’s “Erasing Statues,” for example, is a lush blues threaded by the bittersweet slide guitar of Marvin Sewell and a garrulous trombone solo by Curtis Fowlkes, and it leads beautifully into the group’s take on Bechet’s “Song Of The Medina.” The leader’s own “Yank” makes another more modernistic reference, with a recurring quote of Monk’s “Well You Needn’t.” By the end, Reddy establishes the ongoing richness of Bechet’s writing as well as its malleability, while also demonstrating that vintage sounds don’t need to belong in a museum. —Peter Margasak

**Bechet Our Contemporary:** Up-South; Petite Fleur; Erasing Statues; Song Of The Medina; Yank; Chant In The Night; Speedy Joe; Broken Windmill. (56:57)

**Personnel:** Rob Reddy, soprano saxophone; John Carlson, trumpet; Curtis Fowlkes, trombone; Charles Burnham, violin; Marika Hughes, cello; Marvin Sewell, guitars; Dom Richards, double bass; Pheeroan akLaff, drums; Lisa Parrott, baritone saxophone (6); Oscar Noriega, clarinet (8).

**Ordering info:** [robreddy.com](http://robreddy.com)



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## Sweet Soul

It's not your father's soul music anymore. Gone are the days when major cities produced distinctive subgenres that will live in perpetuity. The disco, urban contemporary and hip-hop movements, along with cultural homogeneity and technical innovations, have battered away at geographical and social boundaries. The following albums may pay homage to the traditions of Motown, Stax and other early soul powerhouses, but they push the sound into places that their musical forefathers would never recognize.

**Lalah Hathaway, *Lalah Hathaway Live!* (eOne Music 9482; 78:52 ★★★)**

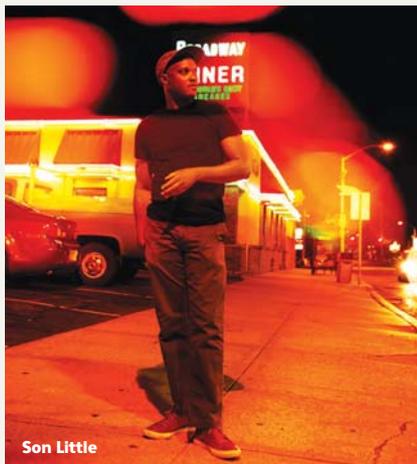
Donny Hathaway's daughter calls the Troubadour in West Hollywood "a sacred space," for it's the club where her late father recorded much of his triumphant 1972 live album. When Lalah Hathaway decided to mark the 25th anniversary of her debut album, she used the Troubadour to record the majority of the tracks. She has always preferred to distance her career from that of her father's, but for the opening track, she faithfully re-creates her dad's tough-love anthem "Little Ghetto Boy." She also shows her amazing vocal range on Luther Vandross' "Forever, For Always, For Love," which she covered in 2004 and received notoriety for holding one note for 17 seconds. Here, the mature, self-assured singer gives the material room to breathe, capturing the essence of these 14 well-chosen songs.

Ordering info: [eonemusic.com](http://eonemusic.com)

**Son Little, *Son Little* (Anti- 87421; 43:01 ★★★★★)** The world has enough neo-soul singers, so it's a relief that the musician formerly known as Aaron Livingston is anything but a knockoff artist. For his full-length debut disc, Livingston, aka Son Little, starts with well-seasoned soul-blues, adds flourishes of hip-hop, alt-rock and reggae and marinates the whole thing in tasty lyrics. The finished dish is entirely his own creation. This Los Angeles-born, East Coast-raised collaborator with the Roots and RJD2 wrote, played, produced and mixed practically the entire album himself, leaving his musical vision unadulterated. Along the way, Little ruminates on the decay of democracy ("Go Blue Blood Red") and more conventional topics such as the curative power of love over alienation ("The River"). The relentlessly innovative Little shows the potential to be an important voice in the evolution of the soul genre.

Ordering info: [anti.com](http://anti.com)

**Angie Stone, *Dream* (Shanachie 5827; 36:39 ★★½)** Half a dozen or more songwriters share bylines on most of



Son Little

these 10 new songs from r&b veteran Angie Stone, but it's doubtful that any would want to claim sole credit for the lightweight lyrics. Cases in point: "Dollar Bill" ("I'm as single as a ..."), "Clothes Don't Make The Man" ("Tell me your name/ Not your brand") and the title cut ("Do he make a mean mimosa?/ Then he lay my body down on the sofa"). Dream executive producer and key songwriter Walter Millsap III, who has worked with Lady Gaga, Beyoncé and Alicia Keys, was clearly more concerned with the groove than the message. But then again, these tunes do have a certain cotton-candy appeal.

Ordering info: [shanachie.com](http://shanachie.com)

**Darlene Love, *Introducing Darlene Love* (Wicked Cool/Columbia; 62:29, ★★★)** Despite a 55-year resume as one of the strongest singers in soul-pop, Darlene Love, 74, has been criminally underappreciated. Her inclusion on *20 Feet from Stardom*, the documentary on female backup singers, seemed only natural. But the voice behind Phil Spector "wall of sound" classics such as the Crystals' "He's A Rebel," the perennial yuletide favorite "Christmas Baby (Please Come Home)" and "Today I Met The Boy I'm Gonna Marry" has a powerful fan in the E Street Band's Steve Van Zandt, who produced *Introducing Darlene Love* as a late-in-life starmaking vehicle. Van Zandt persuaded his boss Bruce Springsteen and Elvis Costello to contribute a couple of tunes apiece, and the album also includes far-flung covers from Jimmy Webb, Joan Jett and Van Zandt, among others. It's an ambitious undertaking—perhaps too ambitious. Van Zandt predictably turns in a Springsteen-esque version of the wall of sound that robs the project of its possible joy and spontaneity. But in the end, Love's vocals are just too powerful to bury under grandiose pretensions. **DB**

Ordering info: [darleneloveworld.com](http://darleneloveworld.com)



## Kenneth Salters Haven *Enter To Exit*

DESTINY 0005

★★★★★

In the raft of drummer-led records, too many lack identity. Not this one. As a formidable double-threat who's both a commanding drummer and compelling composer, drummer Kenneth Salters stands above the fray. With this focused, fully realized debut as leader, Salters delivers with a well-honed concept.

Salter's band, Haven, is made up of first-rate musicians with whom he's worked over the past decade, including the core group of alto saxophonist Myron Walden, tenor saxophonist Tivon Pennicott, trumpeter Matt Holman, guitarist Aki Ishiguro, pianist Brad Whiteley and bassist Spencer Murphy.

Favoring long compositional forms, Salters' music straddles jazz and chamber music with hints of African groove, r&b and downtown underground rock, all with keen attention to rich ensemble textures. Flowing phrases lap over kinetic odd-metered grooves, creating tensions and contrasts that are ultimately quite melodic. An example is the lovely "Flakes," which opens with a 5/4 pattern of brass and harp. Salter's drumming buoys the phrase into a lilting swing while Ishiguro slyly escalates his guitar solo into eruptive shredding.

"Halos & Horns" is plucked from a decidedly different source. The band embraces the Dolly Parton number with a committed gospel-country vibe, respectfully plumbing the tune for its melodic virtue rather than imposing a "hipper-than-the-song" interpretation.

Beautifully balanced between open soloing and concise composition, it's satisfying for both head and heart.

—Jeff Potter

**Enter To Exit:** When You Find Out; Flakes; Stop The Sun; Deception; Halos & Horns; Gymnopédies; #1; Couldn't Be; One Another. (60:01)

**Personnel:** Kenneth Salters, drums; Tivon Pennicott; tenor saxophone; Matt Holman, trumpet, flugelhorn (1–4, 6–9); Myron Walden; alto saxophone, bass clarinet (1, 5–7, 9); Aki Ishiguro, guitar; Brad Whiteley, piano (1–3, 5–7, 9); Shai Maestro, piano (4); Spencer Murphy, bass; Bridget Kibbey, harp (2, 7–9).

Ordering info: [destinyrecords.bandcamp.com](http://destinyrecords.bandcamp.com)

## Sinne Eeg/Thomas Fønnesbæk

*Eeg Fønnesbæk*

STUNT RECORDS 15083

★★★★

Funny how long it takes some superb international jazz artists to crack one's consciousness. Take Denmark's Sinne Eeg. This savvy, polished thirty-something singer has a dozen albums under her belt (small band to symphony), earns an avid following in Europe and Asia and has toured the American West.

On her U.S. album debut—under an unforgiving spotlight of duos with upright bassist Thomas Fønnesbæk—Eeg offers riveting candid, incisive readings of seven standards. The duo's nimble exploratory passages recall those of Sheila Jordan with Cameron Brown, or Dee Dee Bridgewater with Reggie Workman.

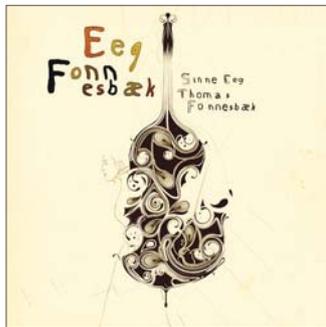
From her opening humming on "Willow Weep For Me," Eeg shows she's steeped in tradition but pushing it in her own direction. With technique and sensitivity aplenty, she touches on Anita O'Day's airy vibrato in "Body And Soul," stretching the title words languidly. An alto slipping into falsetto, Eeg takes charge on a loping "Summertime" her nuanced scat veering amid firm bass arpeggios, and the duo closes on a gracenote—a rare cover of Lorraine Feather's elegant setting of Enrico Pieranunzi's "Fellini's Waltz."

—Fred Bouchard

**Eeg Fønnesbæk:** Willow Weep For Me; Taking It Slow; Evil Man Blues; You Don't Know What Love Is; Summertime; Body And Soul; Beautiful Love; Come Rain Or Shine; Fellini's Waltz. (41:39)

**Personnel:** Sinne Eeg, vocals; Thomas Fønnesbæk, bass.

**Ordering info:** [sundance.dk](http://sundance.dk)



## Kenny Burrell

*The Road To Love*

HIGHNOTE 7284

★★★½

With all due respect to Kenny Burrell, the legendary guitarist's most significant recordings—1958's *Kenny Burrell And John Coltrane*, 1963's *Midnight Blue* and 1965's *Guitar Forms*—all came over half a century ago. So it is understandable that he may have lost some velocity at the age of 84. That said, there are few guitarists half his age on the scene today who could interpret Neal Hefti's "Li'l Darlin'" or Duke Ellington's "Single Petal Of A Rose" with as much meaning and depth as Burrell demonstrates on this live recording.

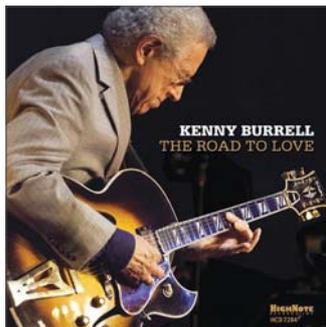
As always, Burrell's inherent bluesiness comes across on these dozen tunes, most notably on Dinah Washington's "Salty Papa" and Jay McShann's "Confessin' The Blues," which he performs on acoustic guitar in tribute to B.B. King. The guitarist also reveals his tasteful, lyrical streak on an intimate acoustic rendition of Jobim's bossa nova "Someone To Light Up My Life." And he takes it home in ebullient fashion on the closing Mercer Ellington anthem, "Things Ain't What They Used To Be."

—Bill Milkowski

**The Road To Love:** Salty Papa; Serenata; Li'l Darlin'; Brush Magic; Listen To The Dawn; Teach Me Tonight; Someone To Light Up My Life; Single Petal Of A Rose; Confessin' The Blues; The Road To Love; Crazy He Calls Me; Things Ain't What They Used To Be. (72:18)

**Personnel:** Kenny Burrell, electric guitar, acoustic guitars (7, 9); Justo Almarino, tenor saxophone; Tom Ranier, piano; Tony Dumas, bass; Clayton Cameron, drums; Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums (15); Barbara Morrison, vocals (15, 17, 18).

**Ordering info:** [jazzdepot.com](http://jazzdepot.com)



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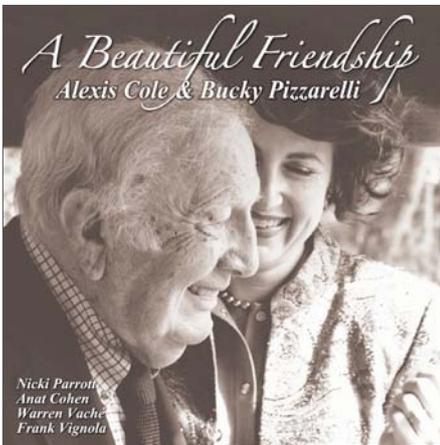


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**Alexis Cole/Bucky Pizzarelli**  
**A Beautiful Friendship**

VENUS 1174

★★★½

Alexis Cole is a tasteful singer with a beautiful voice. While some might still think of her as “up and coming,” her new recording is actually her 11th CD as a leader. She recently concluded a six-year stint as the jazz vocalist for the West Point Military Academy Big Band (the Jazz Knights) and has performed often with veteran guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli since 2011.

*A Beautiful Friendship* features Cole’s ren-

dition of 14 often-played standards. While her vocals mostly hew to melody, she is often full of surprises, particularly in her choice of notes. She swings throughout and sticks to the lyrics except during a few brief scatting passages, such as a half-chorus on “These Foolish Things.”

The supporting cast is stellar, although cornetist Warren Vaché and clarinetist Anat Cohen mostly contribute color and brief solos during their appearances. The 89-year old Pizzarelli, who is still in prime form, is heard throughout, including duets with the singer on “Stardust” and “These Foolish Things.” Pizzarelli, whose beautiful chord voicings extend the George Van Eps legacy, and fellow guitarist Frank Vignola get their share of solo space. In addition to playing bass, Nicki Parrott shares the vocal spotlight with Cole on an eccentric combination of “Blue Moon” and “Moonglow” and a delightful version of “On The Sunny Side Of The Street.”

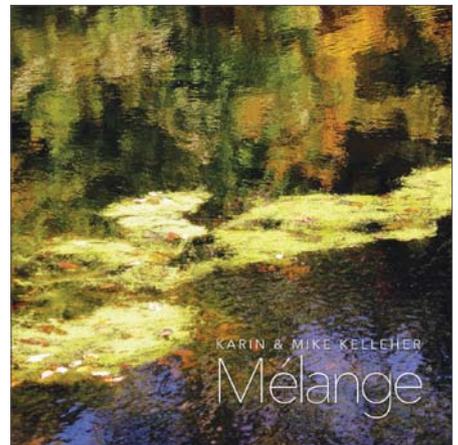
While the performances on *A Beautiful Friendship* are a bit safe, Cole’s vocals are quietly joyful and her interplay with the ageless Pizzarelli is pleasurable.

—Scott Yanow

**A Beautiful Friendship:** A Beautiful Friendship; East Of The Sun; Honeysuckle Rose; I Thought About You; If I Were A Bell; Just Friends; Mood Indigo; Blue Moon/Moonglow; On The Street Where You Live; Stardust; Stompin’ At The Savoy; On The Sunny Side Of The Street; These Foolish Things; Watch What Happens. (54:08)

**Personnel:** Alexis Cole, vocals; Bucky Pizzarelli, Frank Vignola, guitar; Warren Vaché, cornet; Anat Cohen, clarinet; Nicki Parrott, bass, vocals (7, 8).

**Ordering info:** [venusrecord.com](http://venusrecord.com)



**Karin & Mike Kelleher**  
**Mélange**

KELLEHER MUSIC

★★★

The Kellehers are passionate Washington, D.C.-based musicians with feet in jazz and classical camps: Mike—a former White House director of correspondence—sings, scats, strums and composes; Karin plays classical violin in several Maryland symphonies. *Mélange* presents their array of originals, covers and mashups with strings and a rhythm section, with a tone that’s cheery but a style that’s neither fish nor fowl.

Charts lope along with swing feel (Joe McCarthy of Afro Bop Alliance is on drums), but allow only two brief solos for bassist Eliot Seppa and Karin’s eager violin obbligatos. Ensemble counterlines unfurl with grace on “Kyrieosity” and “Claire De Lune” but fumble inconclusively elsewhere.

Bookending the set are Mike’s original vocals “Beautiful Pain” (with oboe filigree) and “My Love Isn’t” (guitar and violin), with clear voice yet oddly forlorn lyrics. His earnest tenor sounds best (think Kurt Elling or Theo Bleckmann) at low volume and intensity on “Ancka’s Dolphin Dance,” the Hancock favorite enriched with fresh lyrics and ripe choral overdubs.

Mike’s upper register tends to be hyper-emotive, à la Ronan Tynan, as on “Black Is The Color” or the rigid, weepy “One Perfect Day.” Some mashups work, as when Gil Evans’ “Moon Dreams” segues nicely into a heady strings-only “Claire De Lune,” with lyrics adapted from Verlaine. But some go silly, as when a hokey “Chantez Les Bas” slides into a Brahms violin tune as a coda.

—Fred Bouchard

**Mélange:** Beautiful Pain; Jeannot; Ancka’s Dolphin Dance; Black Is The Color; Chantez Les Brahms; Giga; Something; Moonlight (aka Moon Dreams); Claire de Lune; One Perfect Day; Kyrieosity; My Love Isn’t. (50:03)

**Personnel:** Mike Kelleher: vocals, compositions, guitar (4, 12); Karin Kelleher, violin, viola; Joanna Owen, violin; Magaly Rojas Seay, viola; Todd Thiel, Peter Klibbe, Gita Ladd, cello; Fatma Daglar, oboe (1); Eliot Seppa, bass; Joe McCarthy drums, percussion; Jim Roberts, guitar (5).

**Ordering info:** [kellehermusic.com](http://kellehermusic.com)

**Gerry Gibbs Thrasher Dream Trio**  
**Live In Studio**

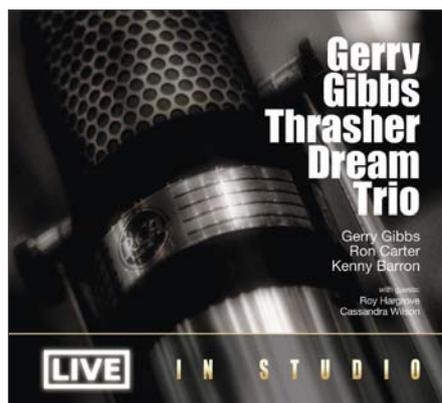
WHALING CITY SOUND 076

★★★

Loosen your tie, mix another Tom Collins, ease back in your Saarinen lounge chair and take a trip back to the 1960s, courtesy of the Gerry Gibbs Thrasher Dream Trio. *Live In Studio* celebrates that narrow sliver at the beginning of the decade, between the launch of the folk revival and the British Invasion. Like the previous Trio release, it was recorded (surprise!) live in a studio, yielding both impeccable production and a sense of being among privileged guests.

The songs selected for this album boast well-conceived, vocal-oriented melodies and sophisticated changes. While this gives the artists solid material to work with, it also encourages them to stick close to the structure. Drummer Gibbs and bassist Ron Carter slip into each song like Audrey Hepburn’s hands into elegant white gloves. Both play fairly busily but never overdo it.

The third member of the trio, pianist Kenny Barron, generally shines, but there are moments where he seems just a hair off. When he lays out the tune at the top of “More,” “Wives And Lovers” and a few other tracks, there’s little to



suggest any fresh direction.

Cassandra Wilson’s vocals transform “The Look Of Love” and “Alfie” into spells of sultry magic. On the latter tune, trumpeter Roy Hargrove mirrors her smoky eloquence with a thoughtful extended solo. Their appearances here and on other tracks add breadth and depth, making *Live In Studio* a worthy time trip after all.

—Bob Doerschuk

**Live In Studio:** Wives And Lovers; The Summer Knows; The Look Of Love; Spartacus Love Theme; On A Clear Day; The Surrey With The Fringe On Top; Alfie; Watch What Happens; Un Homme Et Une Femme (A Man And A Woman); Cast Your Fate To The Wind; What Are You Doing For The Rest Of Your Life; More; Watch What Happens (vocal); Music To Watch Girls By; Girl Talk; Charade. (131:28)

**Personnel:** Kenny Barron, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Gerry Gibbs, drums; Roy Hargrove, trumpet, flugelhorn (5, 7, 11, 16); Cassandra Wilson, vocals (3, 7, 13).

**Ordering info:** [whalingcitysound.com](http://whalingcitysound.com)

## Ella Fitzgerald Live at Chautauqua, Vol. 1

DOT TIME LEGENDS 8001

★★★★

Recently someone on Facebook posted a query: “Who would you choose between Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra?” The first response was quick and brief: “Ella.”

Thanks to Dot Time Records’ new Legends Series, we get to hear one more recording from the First Lady of Song. This live date features material from a July 31, 1968, performance at the Chautauqua Institution in southwestern New York. Singing in an open-air amphitheater, Fitzgerald, 51 at the time, is at the top of her game. With pianist Tee Carson, bassist Keter Betts and drummer Joe Harris, Fitzgerald sings 11 songs covering vast stylistic territory and a wide emotional range. The opener sets the predominant tone—a hard-swinging “It’s All Right With Me” that signals the exuberance, power and playfulness that follows. On a jumping take on Ellington’s “I’m Beginning To See the Light,” she ends on a spectacular note that begins at her toes and soars to the very top of her head. Demonstrating her completeness as a singer, she hushes the crowd with a delicately sung Spanish bolero version of “Watch What Happens.” After saying she “sometimes likes to sing pretty,” she does just that on an interpolation of “Blue Skies.” If you love Ella, you must hear this.

—Bob Protzman

**Live At Chautauqua, Vol 1:** It’s All Right With Me; I’m Beginning To See The Light; Blue Skies/On A Clear Day Medley; For Once In My Life; The Object Of My Affection; Sunny/Goin’ Out Of My Head Medley; Watch What Happens; Midnight Sun; A Tisket A Tasket; The Lady Is A Tramp; One Note Samba. (49:21)

**Personnel:** Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Tee Carson, piano; Keter Betts, bass; Joe Harris, drums.

**Ordering info:** [dottimerecords.com](http://dottimerecords.com)



## Matt Mitchell Vista Accumulation

PI 162

★★★★

Pianist Matt Mitchell enhances a number of contemporary ensembles, like those led by saxophonists Rudresh Mahanthappa, Tim Berne, Dave Douglas and John Hollenbeck. On this, his own two-CD effort, he



extends and expands the keyboard strategy of a Paul Bley or Ran Blake into an ensemble esthetic: ruminating at length on structures that play hide-and-seek with the ear, and giving generous time to his players.

Mitchell likes to thoroughly explore his pieces; the playing times on the cuts range from seven to 16 minutes. But even though each disc clocks in at an average of 47 minutes, a homogenous center quickly forms. With the exception of the vibrant “The Damaged Center,” the tempos are slow or medium.

The similarities require close listening and sometimes the pieces overstay their welcome. Mostly, though, the instrumental interaction is at least interesting, if not rewarding. This might not be an album for digesting in one sitting, but it’s a mature treatise on form and improvisation.

—Kirk Silsbee

**Vista Accumulation:** Disc One: Select Your Existence; All The Elasticity; Numb Trudge; Twouldn’t’ve. (48:30) Disc Two: Utensil Strength; Wearing The Wig Of Atrophy; Hyper Pathos; The Damaged Center. (46:20)

**Personnel:** Matt Mitchell, piano; Chris Speed, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Christopher Tordini, bass; Dan Weiss, drums.

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## Mehldau's Moment

The idea of solo jazz piano recitals probably goes back to Fats Waller and his notoriously well-lubricated debut at Carnegie Hall in 1928. Since then, the concept has reconfigured radically. When Art Tatum took to the big empty stage and began to play a set of popular tunes, he was more or less replicating what he did in saloons up and down 52nd Street, except without the ringing cash registers and customer chatter.

For pianists, that difference in ambience and setting was the critical first step in establishing solo jazz piano as a legitimate art form. But the second, equally significant step was to do what classical composers did at more or less the same time, which was to shift intention from entertaining listeners to exposing them to more elusive profundities. It was no longer about familiar, hummable melodies; it was about inviting audiences to sit still and witness genius in action. The action, in fact, became arguably more important than the results, the music that ended up getting played.

Cecil Taylor set the bar almost unattainably high in this medium, with marathon improvisations that demanded endurance as well as patience and empathy. Later, Keith Jarrett took a different approach, inventing an hour or more of music on the spot, though with sparser textures and elements more melodic than Taylor's.

**Brad Mehldau** has been charting his own course through this challenging land for quite some time, a decade of which is presented on his four-CD release, **10 Years Solo Live (Nonesuch 2-549103; 77-12/76:50/74:34/77:25 ★★★★★)**. With this box set, which is also available as eight LPs, the pianist has earned his place in the pantheon of jazz recitalists. His intensity draws from Taylor, while his lyricism (particularly in contrast to darker elements that might seem inhospitable to clearly articulated melody) reflects some of the Jarrett's sensibility. But Mehldau has also established an identity of his own, whose elements are easy to hear.

The first of these is rhythmic. Taylor often overwhelmed meter in his roaring tonalities. Jarrett plays exquisitely with rubato and silence. Mehldau almost never lets the meter waver. Usually he articulates it in his left hand, with fully chorded eighth-note patterns that might wear out Jerry Lee Lewis. But, having established that pulse, he runs it through a kaleidoscope of alterations: His chords may shrink down to just a



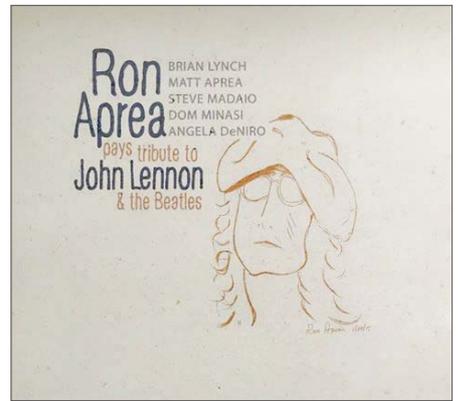
couple of notes, or even one, and then slip into the right hand, this time in the form of a single line, more as a timekeeping device than a melodic statement, the melody surfacing in the left hand.

The influence of minimalism is obvious. But what minimalist composer Philip Glass does with an ensemble, Mehldau does on his own—and with emotional power. The pianist seems to pursue one great mission throughout all this music, which is to explore as deeply as he can that place where sorrow and beauty meet. He achieves this goal with varied levels of success. His exploration of "My Favorite Things" feels unfocused at the top, though eventually he finds a way to generate tremendous momentum, snatching bits of the theme and casting them into the high register of the keyboard, above the roar and rumble of his left-hand foundation.

Much of *10 Years Solo Live* seems to have been fully extemporized, but the best measure of his genius—a deliberately chosen word—might be most apparent when he plays familiar material. He can be darkly humorous, as in the funereal trudge he applies to "On The Street Where You Live." He can render the material unrecognizable, with the delicate waltz that begins "Smells Like Teen Spirit." But sometimes it just doesn't work, like when he smotheres Brian Wilson's "God Only Knows" to the point that references to the composition feel gratuitous.

If you listen to nothing else on this set, listen to his medley of "Bittersweet Symphony" and "Waterloo Sunset." For nearly four minutes, Mehldau tinkers with the four-chord structure of the Verve tune, compressing the progression until it turns into a low tremolo on the root chord, which grows more harmonically complex. Mehldau modulates the volume carefully and sculpts his explorations through different shades and moods, all the while sprinkling the barest hints of the theme across the top of the keyboard. Then, like clouds after a storm, the textures melt away and Mehldau introduces the Kinks' immortal song, playing two verses, the bridge and part of the third verse before bringing this 15-minute epic to an end in a moment of aching, radiant revelation. **DB**

Ordering info: [nonesuch.com](http://nonesuch.com)



## Ron Aprea Pays Tribute To John Lennon & The Beatles

EARLY AUTUMN 1117

★★★★★

Ron Aprea has wanted to record a John Lennon tribute album for some time. Back in 1974, trumpeter Steve Madaio invited him to be part of Lennon's *Walls And Bridges* album, an experience that Aprea colorfully discusses in this album's liner notes. For the new project, the alto saxophonist gathered together an expanded combo to perform eight Lennon/McCartney songs, three songs written solely by Lennon and George Harrison's "Something." Aprea, who wrote all of the arrangements, respects the themes of the original material while stretching the music into the area of creative jazz.

Much of the album alternates between fiery hard-bop and lush balladry. Of the former, "Let It Be" (after an unaccompanied introduction from Aprea) is taken uptempo, "Norwegian Wood" is turned into a jazz waltz with inventive soprano and trumpet solos and "Can't Buy Me Love" becomes a bluesy strut that one could imagine organist Charles Earland recording in the early 1970s. "Imagine" has a reunion between Aprea and trumpeter Madaio. Also included are a rollicking Latin jazz transformation of Lennon's "Whatever Gets You Thru The Night" and a brief closing vocal by Angela DeNiro on "Goodnight."

Aprea, both in his writing and his playing, consistently comes up with fresh ideas, no easy task when working with some of these extremely familiar melodies. He avoids creating an overly predictable tribute and the results are quite rewarding. —Scott Yanow

**Pays Tribute To John Lennon & The Beatles:** Let It Be; Imagine; Norwegian Wood; Yesterday; Happy Xmas; Can't Buy Me Love; Here There And Everywhere; Blackbird; Something; Fool On The Hill; Whatever Gets You Thru The Night; Goodnight. (57:24)

**Personnel:** Ron Aprea, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone; Brian Lynch (1, 3, 6, 8), Steve Madaio (2), trumpet; Bob Millikan, trumpet, flugelhorn (7–11); Steve Greenfield, alto saxophone (7–11); Marc Schwartz, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, flute (7–11); Frank Perowsky, tenor saxophone (7–11); Dom Minasi, guitar (12); Cecilia Coleman, piano; Tim Givens bass; Vince Cherico, drums; George Hooks, percussion; Matt Aprea (4, 5, 7, 9, 10), Maria Irm (2–5, 7–11), violins; Brett Wallfish, Carrie Davids, viola (2–5, 7–11); Sam Quiggins, cello (2–5, 7–11); Angela DeNiro, vocals (12).

Ordering info: [ronaprea.com](http://ronaprea.com)

## Ben Monder

### *Amorphae*

ECM 2421

★★★★½

*Amorphae*, Ben Monder's ECM debut, is the guitarist's sixth album as a leader. For those acquainted with his work, *Amorphae* will no doubt have a ring of familiarity. What makes this album different, though, is the formatting: the way Monder alternates between solo outings, duo settings and trio interplay. He also mixes up the personnel. He uses two legendary drummers—the late Paul Motian and collaborator Andrew Cyrille—separately on selective cuts, as well as synth player Pete Rende. Overall, except for a few brief moments, *Amorphae* (one of a number of made-up titles by Monder here) plays like a guitar suite, the guitarist's reverb-laden sound ever-present.

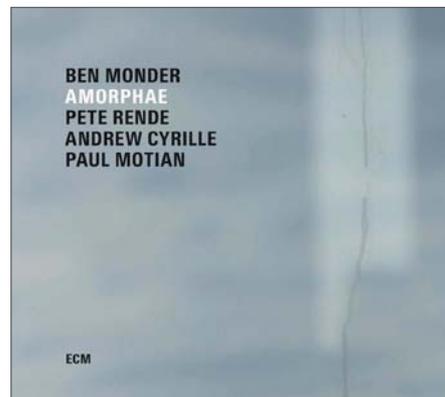
Solo pieces "Tendrils" and "Dinosaur Skies" sandwich six others that, unlike previous efforts, are more improvised than through-composed. While "Tendrils" plays like a bedtime lullaby under an open sky—its soft, lilting, lazy "theme" a mesmerizing recurrence—things pick up immediately with a return to an old standard Monder played with Motian years ago: Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oh, What A Beautiful Morning." Motian's

brushes and hi-hat work embellish Monder's dreamy intro and theme statement en route to one of the album's few turbulent moments, where this tranquil sunrise of a song is taken into stormy weather.

Monder keeps the variations going with "Gamma Crucis," this time playing a Fender Bass VI. This is the first of two trio pieces, with Rende and Cyrille joining in on what has to be the album's trippiest cut. Cyrille gestures slightly on toms and cymbals, and Rende's synth probes and sheens like extensions of Monder's low, spacey lines. The line between "Gamma Crucis" and "Zythum" is impermeable, with Cyrille prodding and plodding a bit more. But the song is still somewhat sonically remote, with Monder and Rende blending their two instruments into an atmospheric sonic bed.

Hearing Motian again with Monder on "Triffids," what with their almost telepathic musical communication, makes one wish there had been a whole album of just their music (this album was originally designed with that purpose back in 2010).

This more improvised album is both very psychological and otherworldly in nature, somehow formless but full of form. It provides a view into Monder's mind as he seems to find ideas and then keeps returning to them.



On "Hematophagy"—which finds Cyrille on probing mallets—the terrain seems to involve no gravity, but the recurrence of guitar and drums gives the song weight. Like its title, "Dinosaur Skies" eventually erupts up and out, with Monder soloing at the close. One moment he's the picture of serenity; the next, a gradual, volcanic disruption. Again, there's no pulse or tempo. Just musical flow, sustain and a mysterious kind of organic unity. —John Ephland

**Amorphae:** Tendrils; Oh, What A Beautiful Morning; Tumid Cenobite; Gamma Crucis; Zythum; Triffids; Hematophagy; Dinosaur Skies. (44:55)

**Personnel:** Ben Monder, electric guitar (1, 2, 5–8); electric baritone guitar (3); Fender Bass VI (4); Pete Rende, synthesizer (4, 5); Andrew Cyrille (3–5, 7); Paul Motian (2, 6), drums.

Ordering info: [ecmrecords.com](http://ecmrecords.com)

## Don Aliquo & The Beegie Adair Trio

### *Too Marvelous For Words*

ADAIR MUSIC GROUP

★★★★

Saxophonist Don Aliquo joins pianist Beegie Adair, bassist Roger Spencer and drummer Chris Brown in an engaging program of standards and songs that *should be* standards. *Too Marvelous For Words* features the kind of group you used to come across in a jazz club and drop in on again and again.

This quartet is never less than pleasant and more often inspired. They don't break ground but they do breathe new life into tunes that have become familiar, like "If You Could See Me Now," "All Or Nothing At All" and "Day Dream."

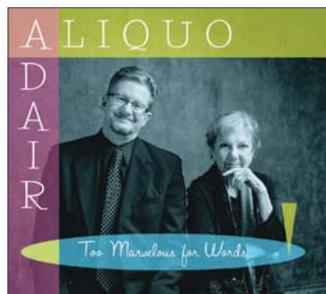
Rather than coast on the familiarity of the material, the group takes chances, replacing bombast with drive on "I Hear A Rhapsody," torching Monk's "Bye-Ya" with rumba fire, delivering "It Never Entered My Mind" with appropriate gravity and turning "Day Dream" into a late-night reverie. Check out the rhythm section on the title track, a tune rendered by everyone from Jo Stafford to Coleman Hawkins. Aliquo builds to a slow burn, paving the way for a pointed, rocking Adair solo. Finally, Brown gets a turn with several pyrotechnical bars. And the whole group walks it home.

—Carlo Wolff

**Too Marvelous For Words:** Johnny Come Lately; This Can't Be Love; Day Dream; Bye-Ya; Isfahan; All Or Nothing At All; I Hear A Rhapsody; If You Could See Me Now; Too Marvelous For Words; It Never Entered My Mind. (70:14)

**Personnel:** Beegie Adair, piano; Don Aliquo, tenor saxophone; Chris Brown, drums; Roger Spencer, bass.

Ordering info: [beegleadair.com](http://beegleadair.com)



## Jeff Benedict Big Big Band Holmes

TAPESTRY RECORDS 76025

★★★½

It is fairly clear listening to this album that the bandleader is a saxophonist, because so many of these arrangements lean on the sax section for unexpected left turns.

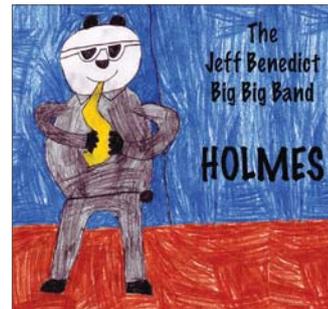
The title track, a squeakily polished second-line bounce, follows Paul Romaine's tasteful drum solo with a funky horn breakdown—just the saxophones honking and swaying away on a rock riff. It's a pleasant bit of whimsy in an otherwise pedestrian set of large ensemble workouts. Pat Metheny's "Jaco" also benefits from the tight saxophone arranging, opening with a hooting fugue, while the sax sections gets to *oom-pah-pah* alone on Michael Brecker's "Delta City Blues." The nearly 80-year-old standard "Easy Living" gets the white tuxedo treatment with frumpy trombones and muted trumpets surrounding Benedict's solo saxophone, placing his chipper swoon into some square confines, while "Caravan" moves with greater urgency. These are good musicians and technically spot-on arrangements, but there is an energy and risk completely absent from the affair. These charts feel designed for the daytime glow of collegiate competitions rather than the gritty allure of a late-night bandstand.

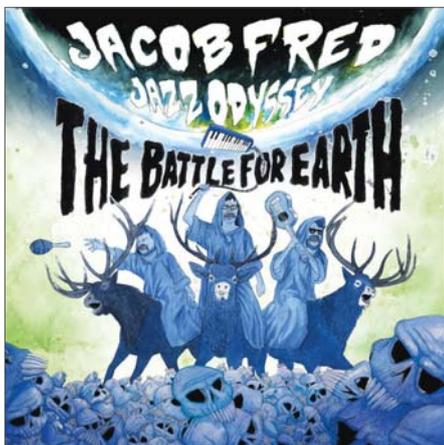
—Sean J. O'Connell

**Holmes:** Come On In!; Bitter Jug; Seven Days; Holmes; Easy Living; Jaco; Young And Fine; Caravan; Delta City Blues; Castle Creek Shuffle; Naima.

**Personnel:** Jeff Benedict, soprano and alto saxophone; Adrian Williams, alto saxophone; Jeff Ellwood, Ken Foerch, tenor saxophone; Charlie Richard, baritone saxophone; Steve Hawk, Jeff Jarvis, Tom Tallman, Frank Rico, trumpet; Paul McKee, Jacques Vovernant, Otto Granillo, trombone; Gerry Amoury, bass trombone; Dave Askren, guitar; Matt Harris, piano; Tim Emmons, bass; Paul Romaine, drums.

Ordering info: [cdbaby.com](http://cdbaby.com)





## Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey *The Battle For Earth*

ROYAL POTATO FAMILY 1520

★★★★½

Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey's new live album blends recent material with vintage pieces from across the ever-morphing band's 21-year recording and touring career. Led by founding keyboardist Brian Haas, the archly named group is an instrumental trio again, having originally started in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as a funk ensemble and subsequently shape-shifting with 16 members across 27 albums. Haas, guitarist Chris Combs and drummer Josh Raymer

recorded *The Battle For Earth* at a Denver club, creating a swirling, circus-like cavalcade of tunes and textures.

Beyond their flair for great song titles—such as “Better Living Through Competitive Spirituality”—Haas and company concoct a sonic galaxy far more kaleidoscopic than might seem doable for a trio. Haas often mans piano and Moog bass simultaneously, adding melodic for lyricism and synths for color. Combs plays six-string and lap-steel guitars, chipping in on synth occasionally. Raymer's meaty drumming rarely settles into one style, incorporating a world of rhythms from one passage to the next. African groove, Caribbean lilt, rock/funk punch and jam-fusion wackiness are subtly woven into the album's sonic fabric.

The band revisits the bulk of the tunes from its 2014 studio release, *Worker*. Shorn of electronic tinsel, the live versions are earthier and far more fun. Though more surface than substance at times, *The Battle For Earth* feels like broad-minded music fanatics having a blast accompanying the silent movie in their heads.

—Bradley Bambarger

**The Battle For Earth:** Better Living Through Competitive Spirituality; Hey Hey NSA; Tetherball Triumph; Let Yourself Out; Betamax; The Finder's Keeper; Appropriation Song; Say Nothing; New Bird; Bounce; Skeeball Over The Ocean/Sean's Song. (61:30)

**Personnel:** Brian Haas, piano; Moog bass, melodica; Chris Combs, guitar, lap-steel guitar, synthesizers; Josh Raymer, drums.

**Ordering info:** [royalpotatofamily.com](http://royalpotatofamily.com)

## Oded Tzur *Like A Great River*

ENJA/YELLOWBIRD 7754

★★★★½

This ruminative quartet illustrates the hot-house atmosphere of the current New York jazz scene—one that has become increasingly international. Tenor saxophonist Oded Tzur, pianist Shai Maestro and drummer Ziv Ravitz all hail from Israel, while bassist Petros Klampanis is Greek, yet they first came together in Brooklyn in 2012. The mournful shapes of Tzur's tender melodies and the inflection of the Middle Eastern scale certainly connect the combo's sound to the Mediterranean, but there's something more interesting at work.

While living in Tel Aviv, Tzur's interest in improvisation led him to Indian classical music, especially the fluid playing of master flutist Hariprasad Chaurasia. Tzur spent years studying this traditional music, painstakingly translating its microtonal approach to the saxophone.

Impressively, the performances of *Like A Great River* eschew glib jazz-Indian hybrids. Rather, Tzur has borrowed more subtly. Structurally, some of the pieces develop from an almost static drone, slowly but surely building in activity, intensity, volume and melodic complexity. “The Dance,” for example, begins with a hushed progression of chords from



Maestro, before the rest of the band tiptoes in. As the performance carries on, it reaches an organic swell, with the whole band churning behind the leader.

The album concludes with a pair of miniatures—the first feels like a scaled reduction of the other pieces, and the second arrives as a kind of terse re-encounter with the opener. Sometimes I wish the group sounded a bit grittier, but Tzur and his colleagues are definitely on to something.

—Peter Margasak

**Like A Great River:** The Dance; The Song Of The Silent Dragon (And The Courage Of His Friends); Tzurkauns; Warrior Elephants Flying In The Moonlight; Child's Dance. (39:35)

**Personnel:** Oded Tzur, tenor saxophone; Shai Maestro, piano; Petros Klampanis, bass; Ziv Ravitz, drums.

**Ordering info:** [jazzrecords.com/enja](http://jazzrecords.com/enja)



## Dan Trudell Trio *Dan Trudell Plays The Piano*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★½

Nobody should be terribly surprised that Dan Trudell plays the piano. True, he's known primarily for his artistry on the Hammond B-3, but since both instruments share the same keyboard, the fact that he knows his way around on both isn't exactly news.

What is news, perhaps, is that Trudell swings just as hard on the acoustic grand as he does on the B-3. Paired with longtime drummer Matt Wilson and young but seasoned bassist Joe Sanders, he delivers a well-balanced set on his new album, which is heavy on familiar titles, sprinkled with a few originals and always oriented toward creating an integrated, unified performance.

The trio dynamic is old-school: Sanders and Wilson play backup roles rather than each taking a third of the pie. They get plenty of solo space, though neither uses it to shoot off fireworks. Even on his showcase tune, the Trudell composition “Jonesin’,” Wilson plays quietly and constructs his statements thoughtfully, with plenty of air around each phrase or accent.

On this as well as every other tune, the spotlight focuses on Trudell. Aside from “McCoy For Now”—which ripples with quartal harmonies, muscular tremolos and other Tynnerisms—*Plays The Piano* is a straightahead celebration. And he has the arrangement aesthetic of a full-time pianist. His harmonic alterations on heads and outros are lush and appealing on “I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart.” His sense of humor is evident, too, in the bass motif that evokes the Habanera from Bizet's *Carmen* on “That Old Black Magic” and the intricately harmonized bridge on the normally romantic “If Ever I Would Leave You.”

Dan Trudell plays the piano? Absolutely.

—BobDoerschuk

**Dan Trudell Plays The Piano:** Isn't She Lovely; I Let A Song Out Of My Heart; McCoy For Now; Jonesin'; That Old Black Magic; If Ever I Would Leave You; A Woman's Worth; Soulvie. (58:10)

**Personnel:** Dan Trudell, piano; Joe Sanders, bass; Matt Wilson, drums.

**Ordering info:** [dantrudell.com](http://dantrudell.com)



## Claire Daly

### 2648 West Grand Boulevard

GLASS BEACH JAZZ

★★★★

Claire Daly, who plays baritone saxophone and flute, will cheer those who appreciate Motown. Subtitled “jazz interpretations of classic Motown 45s,” her 11-track homage revitalizes songs often confined to party centers. And while hers is a conservative selection, Daly’s approach is usually not. Daly has successfully turned Motown into jazz.

Backed by guitarist Jerome Harris, pianist Steve Hudson, bassist Mary Ann McSweeney and drummer Peter Grant, Daly brackets her lively album with The Four Tops’ “Loving You

## Billy Vera

### Big Band Jazz

VARESE SARABANDE 302 067 341 8

★★

Since his first single in 1962, Billy Vera has worked as an actor, music historian, songwriter, producer and performer, even topping the Billboard Hot 100 chart in 1987 with “At This Moment,” a ballad recorded with his long-running band, The Beaters. As much ground as he’s covered, *Big Band Jazz* is new territory, and he positions the album as a tribute to the great mid-20th-century black songwriters that inspired him.

The material is top-notch—it’s impossible to argue with Buddy Johnson’s “Since I Fell For You”—and the band ably handles the arrangements. Unfortunately, the album never rises above a basic level of competence. Vera’s voice is fine, but he lacks the comfort and technique to give a distinctive take on these songs. Jazz is not his primary vehicle, and the improvisational flourishes he does offer are tentative and restrained.

Similarly, the arrangements and recording do little to impart a distinct sense of atmosphere or vision to the proceedings. In popular music, the line between classic and hackneyed is a thin one, and the album is too often on the wrong side, such as when the Ellington/Strayhorn

Is Sweeter Than Ever” and Marvin Gaye’s “Ain’t That Peculiar.” She strips the mawkishness from the Jackson 5’s “I’ll Be There,” restores the rowdiness to the Temptations’ “Cloud Nine” and Latinizes Smokey Robinson and the Miracles’ “I Second That Emotion” in a rendition featuring Grant at his most sparkling.

In addition to celebrating such monster hits, she’s also spotlighted lesser numbers, applying flute to her deft arrangement of Mary Wells’ “The One Who Really Loves You” and a jaunty revamp of the Marvelettes’ “The Hunter Gets Captured By The Game.” Daly also doesn’t shirk from warmth, treating the Miracles’ dreamy “Ooo Baby Baby” with leisurely affection; Harris’s solo is particularly sweet.

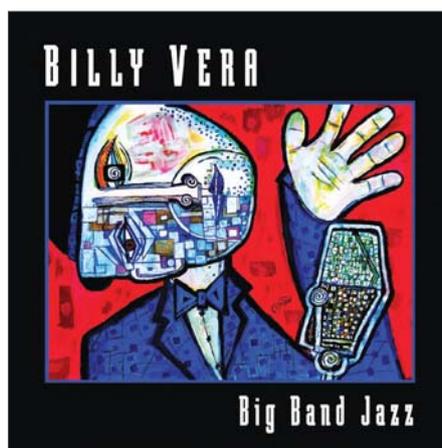
She caps the recording with Gaye’s “Ain’t That Peculiar,” stretching one of the most compact and architectural Motown singles into something both more fluid and more leisurely. The rhythm section works hard, particularly the pushy, florid Grant. Here, Daly’s approach is radical, meaty and successful. She should probe Motown more deeply.

—Carlo Wolff

**2648 West Grand Boulevard:** Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever; I Second That Emotion; The One Who Really Loves You; Ooh Baby; I Want You Back; I’m Gonna Make You Love Me; Cloud Nine; I’ll Be There; The Hunter Gets Captured By The Game; What Becomes Of The Broken Hearted; Ain’t That Peculiar. (61:10)

**Personnel:** Claire Daly, baritone saxophone, flute; Jerome Harris, guitar; Steve Hudson, piano; Mary Ann McSweeney, bass; Peter Grant, drums.

**Ordering info:** [clairedalymusic.com](http://clairedalymusic.com)



classic “Just A-Sittin’ And A-Rockin’” opens with a generically swinging fanfare. The sincerity of the project is never in doubt, but the music never achieves the bite or fluency needed to transcend tribute and stand on its own.

—Joe Tangari

**Big Band Jazz:** If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight); Since I Fell For You; Cherry; When It’s Sleepytime Down South; I Want To Be Loved (But Only By You); My Little Brown Book; Just A-Sittin’ And A-Rockin’; Blue And Sentimental; I’ll Never Be Free; Room With A View; At This Moment (Bonus Track). (32:46)

**Personnel:** Billy Vera, vocals; Ron King, Dan Fornero, Bijon Watson, Darrell Leonard, Wayne Bergeron, trumpet; Bob McChesney, Alex Illes, Andrew Lippman, Rick Bullock, Reggie Young, Andy Martin, trombone; Lon Price, Rick Keller, Jeff Driskill, Tom Peterson, Terry Landry, Sal Lozano, reeds; Mike Lang, piano; Mitch Holder, guitar; Ed Livingston, bass; Bernie Dresel, drums; Tamela D’Amico, guest vocals.

**Ordering info:** [varesesaraband.com](http://varesesaraband.com)



## Oran Etkin

### What's New? Reimagining Benny Goodman

MOTEMA MUSIC 181

★★★★½

Oran Etkin re-imagines the music of Benny Goodman here through a somewhat sardonic postmodern prism. On the one hand, the album seeks to use the Goodman name as a strategic gambit; on the other, it tries to avoid any suggestion of recreation. The result is a tribute to the king of swing without the swing.

Etkin fills that void with a distinctly alternative series of twists on the Goodman repertoire, some quite lovely (“Prelude”), others mischievously quirky (“Dinah”). “Postmodern” is a terribly vague expression, mainly because it doesn’t refer to any specific musical characteristics. Instead, it suggests an *attitude* toward the music. That’s OK, but Etkin often uses it to distance himself from the core elements of the Goodman genre. This gives him license to exercise the various postmodern options of parody, caricature, hyperbole and perhaps a bit of condescension in the slightly cartoonish croak of the bass clarinet.

Etkin flecks his Goodman recastings with flourishes of klezmer (“Be Good Lady”), gospel, New Orleans and recurring motifs from “Sing Sing Sing.” In “Running Wild” we get probably the most direct point of comparative contrast. He exudes speed, energy and a purity of tone, especially in the high register, but his playing has a cool and dainty quality versus the more broad-shouldered heat of the swinging Goodman sound.

Etkin’s virtuosity is precise, wide ranging and impressive, but don’t expect a Goodman sensibility.

—John McDonough

**What’s New?:** Prelude; Dinah; Why Don’t You Do Right?; Running Wild; When Every Voice Shall Sing; What’s New; Brink; King Porter Stomp; After You’ve Gone; Be Good Lady; Where Or When; Sing Sing Sing; untitled improvisation. (56:28)

**Personnel:** Oran Etkin, clarinet, tenor saxophone; Sullivan Fortner, piano; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; Matt Wilson, drums; Charenee Wade (3,9), vocals.

**Ordering info:** [motema.com](http://motema.com)

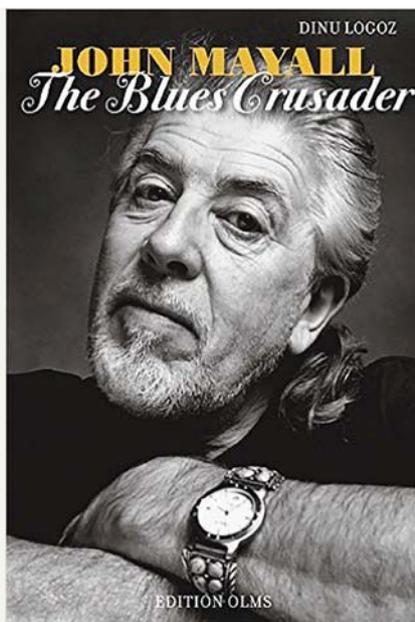
## Room To Move

Many of today's younger music listeners may know John Mayall for the quality of the musicians he hired to fill out the Bluesbreakers, the pioneering band he put together in 1963 after moving down to London from Manchester. Players who passed through the ranks include Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, Ginger Baker, Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, Mick Taylor and dozens of others who helped create the lively British blues scene of the 1960s and early '70s. Mayall's keen ear as a talent scout, combined with his ability to bring out the best in the often-temperamental musicians he hired, made him a mentor to several generations of players that went on to have their own fine careers.

Swiss blues musician and writer **Dinu Logoz** first heard Mayall in the summer of 1967, when a friend played him a copy of *A Hard Road*, the Bluesbreakers' first post-Clapton album featuring a 21-year-old lead guitarist named Peter Green. In his introduction to ***John Mayall: The Blues Crusader (Editions Olms)*** his comprehensive biography of Mayall, Logoz writes that hearing that album was a turning point in his musical life, inspiring him to start investigating and later playing the blues. He became fascinated with Mayall. When the Bluesbreakers' *Crusade* was released a few months later, with Taylor on lead guitar, his interest became a near obsession. He began collecting everything Mayall-related, eventually befriending the man himself. When he realized Mayall's story was going untold, save for the biographies Mayall posted on his websites and the liner notes he's contributed to his 80-plus albums, Logoz began working on the manuscript that became *The Blues Crusader*.

By drawing on his conversations with Mayall, emails he exchanged with past and current Bluesbreakers, his own massive collection of Mayall memorabilia, the autobiographies of Clapton, Fleetwood and Keef Hartley, as well as dozens of reference books, Logoz put together an impressive history of Mayall and his music. The author follows the singer-songwriter from his days of listening to the blues on Voice of America radio when he was a boy, through his early pre-Bluesbreaker bands, and on to the foundation of the Clapton version of the Bluesbreakers.

Mayall, Clapton and Fleetwood describe the tragedies and triumphs of that short-lived group, moving on to the tenure of Green, Taylor and the ever-shifting personnel within Mayall's orbit. It's fascinating to get the stories of Britain's rapidly evolving version of the blues and Mayall's plans to make sure the music moved in new directions on each

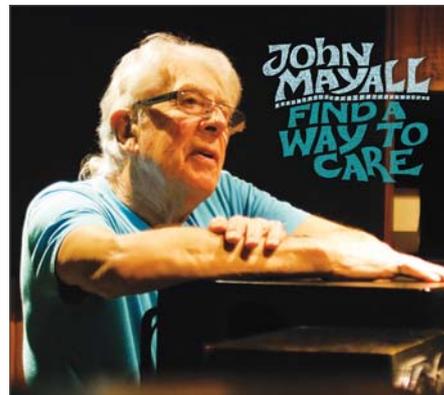


album. Mayall never rehearsed his bands, and his gigs left room for plenty of improvising, but the sound was always cohesive, a tribute to Mayall's skill as a bandleader and the chops of the players he recruited. These early days are the book's most interesting episodes, depicting in vivid detail those times when Mayall's muse took him from London to Laurel Canyon, California, how he delved into jazz, blues-rock and acoustic blues, how he added and dropped horn sections from the band, and how he generally pushed the boundaries of his music. Although he never had a hit record, he created a thriving blues culture in England and introduced several generations of mainstream rock 'n' roll fans to an authentic version of the blues.

Logoz has an encyclopedic knowledge of Mayall, and the 130-plus musicians that have passed through The Bluesbreakers. The details he supplies in the narrative will captivate anyone with a serious interest in the history of the British blues scene and Mayall's contribution to it. But there are long passages in the book that read more like encyclopedia entries; they often slow down the rhythm of the narrative with information that does little to move the story forward. There are pages and pages listing the gigs each version of the Bluesbreakers played. While they give you an idea of how driven Mayall is as a live performer, they don't add much to the story. Near the end of the book, he includes several lengthy, unflattering reviews of Mayall's work in the '90s, perhaps to balance out his often over-enthusiastic praise of Mayall's career, but they're jarring to read and out of character with the tone he takes in the rest of the narrative.

DB

Ordering info: [edition-olms.com](http://edition-olms.com)



## John Mayall *Find A Way To Care*

FORTY BELOW 011

★★★★½

English blues icon John Mayall has nearly 60 albums in his discography, which dates to 1964, so it's easy to forgive him for not changing the formula at 82. His latest, *Find A Way To Care*, revisits familiar territory, yet there's ample reason for longtime Mayall devotees and newcomers alike to add this one to their collections.

Mayall has been enjoying a late-career renaissance since teaming up with Eric Corne and his Forty Below Records. His label debut last year, *A Special Life*, was likely Mayall's best since he officially dissolved his band the Bluesbreakers in 2008. Corne served as co-producer with Mayall and engineer for the impeccably recorded *Find A Way To Care*, which was done at the House of Blues Studio in Encino, California. Although the Bluesbreakers were known as a cradle of guitar heroes (Eric Clapton, Peter Green, Mick Taylor, Andy Fraser and Harvey Mandel, to name a few), current guitarist Rocky Athas is so far down in the mix that you can barely hear him on most cuts.

That leaves Mayall to do most of the heavy lifting on organ, supported ably by Chicagoans Greg Rzaab on bass and Jay Davenport on drums. The seven covers, all well chosen, include Percy Mayfield's horn-powered "The River's Invitation," Lonnie Brooks' hard-rocking "I Want All My Money Back" and British guitar hotshot Matt Schofield's war-between-the-sexes meditation "War We Wage."

The five original songs sometimes fall victim to Mayall's pedestrian lyrics and a tendency to preach. But the best of the bunch, "Ropes And Chains," features some melodic and understated harp work from leader. —Jeff Johnson

**Find A Way To Care:** Mother In Law Blues; The River's Invitation; Ain't No Guarantees; I Feel So Bad; Find A Way To Care; Long Distance Call; I Want All My Money Back; Ropes And Chains; Long Summer Days; Drifting Blues; War We Wage (bonus track); Crazy Lady (bonus track). (46:30)

**Personnel:** John Mayall, vocals, piano, Hammond organ, Wuritzer, clavinet, guitar, harmonica; Rocky Athas, guitar; Greg Rzaab, bass; Jay Davenport, drums; Ron Dziubla, saxophone; Richard A. Rosenberg, trombone; Mark Pender, trumpet.

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## MAGIC OF GIL EVANS

HOW THE MASTER  
ACHIEVED HIS  
SIGNATURE SOUND

BY RYAN TRUESDELL  
PAGE 80

**RALPH ALESSI**  
TEACHING IMPROV AT SIM  
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THE **JAZZ SCHOOL**  
**SIGNATURE**  
**SOUND OF**  
**GIL EVANS**

By Ryan Truesdell





**S**ince the first time I listened to *Porgy & Bess*, Gil Evans' celebrated collaboration with Miles Davis, Gil's music has instilled in me a sense of awe, inspiration and, at times, utter confusion. For years I collected every album I could, trying to fill my ears with every note, sound and color Gil crafted.

To me, it was perfection: an irresistible pairing of lush orchestral colors with the energetic spontaneity of jazz. I'd listen to recordings again and again, trying to unlock the secret to what made Gil's music so magical, but I could never fully grasp everything that was happening. More than a decade later, I came to know Gil's widow, Anita, and their two sons, Noah and Miles, and through their generosity, gained access to Gil's coveted manuscripts. All of his exceptional orchestration, complex rhythms and diaphanous, clustered harmonies were at my fingertips.

As I combed through the scores I had dreamed of studying for years, I gradually began to uncover some of the answers. It was a dream come true, and it kindled my desire to share this veritable textbook of modern composition with the world. This eventually led me to establish the Gil Evans Project ensemble, record our two albums—*Centennial* (ArtistShare) and *Lines Of Color* (Blue Note/ArtistShare)—and perform and share this amazing music that had lived only through our stereos for years.

For this article, I decided to examine "Greensleeves," which Gil arranged for Kenny Burrell's 1965 album, *Guitar Forms*. This arrangement encompasses many elements of Gil's writing that constitute his signature sound, which is part of the reason I chose to record it as a feature for trombonist Marshall Gilkes on *Lines Of Color*. It is a perfect introduction to those unfamiliar with Evans, and may illuminate the facets of Gil's writing that have long drawn admirers to his work.

In this analysis, I plan to examine three key elements of composition (orchestration, rhythm and harmony), explore Gil's approach to each element and discuss how they define his unique, ever-evolving writing style.

## ORCHESTRATION

**T**hough they never met during their lifetimes, Duke Ellington once telephoned to tell Gil he was his "favorite jazz orchestrator," which was high praise coming from someone whose own orchestrational style was so singular. Gil's exhaustive knowledge of each instrument and its capabilities, both in solo and ensemble situations, allowed him to create exotic sounds uncommon in a jazz setting, rendering each arrangement immediately identifiable as his. The instrumentation Gil used for his projects was never traditional, from his use of French horn and tuba with the Claude Thornhill Orchestra in the 1940s, to the addition of double reeds, a variety of flutes and clarinets, harp, percussion and even tenor violin from the 1950s on. In "Greensleeves," the instrumentation is as distinctive as the arrangement itself: five woodwinds (soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone doubling English horn, tenor saxophone doubling bassoon and oboe doubling English horn), French horn, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba and rhythm section (guitar, bass and drums). Introducing non-traditional instruments allowed Gil to transcend the typical "brass vs. reeds" orchestrational technique of big band writing and create a constantly evolving yet seamless palette of sound.

Two orchestrational moments in "Greensleeves" stand out to me as representative of Gil's unique sound. The first is found in the introduction, where Gil brings in the ensemble after Burrell's opening cadenza. Gil layers their entrance, building the introduction harmonically and orchestrationally. He begins with the guitar playing a triad over the bass pedal, then adds an alto and two tenors. He then repeats this configuration while adding two trumpets, French horn and soprano. This is where Gil begins to diverge from traditional orchestration. Typically, the lead voice is given to a trumpet, mainly because its range and timbre will carry the melody over the other instruments. In this instance, Gil chooses to put the soprano saxophone (and eventually the oboe) on the lead voice, above the trumpet. Gil used this technique in a few other arrangements as well, and I'm always surprised by how well it works, even with larger ensembles. In its higher register, the soprano possesses the piercing quality required to cut through an ensemble, but does so in a gentler way. Gil's former assistant, composer Maria Schneider, once told me how Gil had described orchestrating something wherein all the high instruments played in their low register, and the low instruments played in their high register. He told her he wanted it to sound like they were "suffering." The result is remarkably effective—almost painfully beautiful in its intensity. In this instance, choosing to put the soprano on the lead voice has just the opposite effect. Gil wants to have a higher pitch in the chord, but without the brassy, forceful sound of the trumpet in that register. So he softens the overall ensemble, giving it a lighter, airier sound by placing the lead voice in the soprano (see Example 1).

The second orchestrational moment is a short closing figure at the end of the second chorus. When I first heard it, my ears couldn't quite discern the combination of instruments creating the color I was hearing. Finally able to study Gil's manuscript, I learned that Gil has a sustained figure outlining a B7 augmented chord played by French horn and soprano on the top two pitches, both a tenor and trombone on each of the next two, and a tuba on the lowest pitch (Example 2). The moving melodic figure on top is played by both trumpets (in cup mutes) and alto, with the oboe playing the figure an octave above. The oboe gives a little strength to the upper overtones produced by the augmented chord below and gives the moment a bit of shimmer, masking the colors of the individual instruments and creating the impression of a completely new instrument in that one fleeting, unique moment.

## RHYTHM

I'm always astonished by Gil's rhythmic sensibility, at times layering rhythmically complex, seemingly disparate ideas, all while maintaining a veneer of effortless simplicity. Gerry Mulligan once remarked that Gil could write a phrase and make it sound like the player was improvising it, which you can only fully appreciate when you compare the recordings to Gil's original scores.

In "Greensleeves," Gil's main rhythmic motif is the juxtaposition of the 3/4 (or 6/8) time of the original tune and the 4/4 time of his arrangement. Gil hints at this interplay throughout the chart—using dotted quarter notes and an eighth tied to a quarter-quarter rhythm (Example 3)—finally culminating in the ensemble shout chorus. This 18-bar ensemble section is easily my favorite part of the arrangement, and the main reason I never tire of playing this chart.

In Example 4, you see the whole melody of the shout chorus laid out. Notice how he begins to clearly establish the 4/4 feel by placing the first three melody notes on beats 1 and 3, and beat 1 of the next bar. Then, in the second and third bars, he remains in 4/4, while suggesting 3/4 using the aforementioned dotted-quarter-note rhythm. In the ninth bar, Gil seems to turn the tables on us for a moment, essentially turning the beat around. Suddenly it feels like the ensemble is in 3/4 while the rhythm section continues in 4/4. In bar 8, the D<sub>b</sub> on the third beat is what I call a "pivot beat," because it serves a dual purpose. Its first purpose is functioning as the end of a phrase that is clearly in 4/4. However, Gil uses this same beat to change directions, essentially pivoting the next phrase into an implied 3/4 time feel. And while the drums and bass remain in the solid 4/4 feel they've kept throughout, the rest of the ensemble shifts into

Example 1

3/4 for the next four bars. The transition is deft and seamless, and can leave the listener wondering what just happened.

The end of the shout chorus is a bit ambiguous rhythmically, but the ensemble basically reunites in 4/4. I like how Gil lays out the last phrase of the melody (Example 4, second half of bar 14), slowly expanding the rhythm by a small increment for each descending minor triad. First with eighth notes, then a quarter-note triplet, then quarter notes, with a quick eighth-note flourish to bring us to the end of the line. This rhythmic give-and-take, as well as the play between 3

Example 2

Example 3

Example 4

and 4, give the overall melodic line the natural, extemporaneous feel to which Mulligan was referring.

As an exercise, try writing out the entire shout chorus in 3/4. It's unclear if Gil planned it this way, but the whole section fits perfectly in either time signature. Notice the important arrival points all line up with downbeats in 3/4 (marked with an asterisk in Example 4), including the critical "pivot beat" in bar 8, and the final note in bar 16.

We can also find examples of Gil's ability to write natural, spontaneous-sounding phrases on a smaller scale, within the inner parts of the orchestra. The first instance is the bassoon entrance in the second half of the first chorus. The cup-muted brass are holding chords behind the guitar melody when the bassoon emerges in the third bar with an ascending line (Example 5a). The rhythm of the line essentially consists of half notes moving upward in stepwise motion. However, rather than putting the

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half notes on a strong beat, Gil offsets them by an eighth note, causing the pitches to change on the upbeat. Try imagining how this section would sound if the bassoon started its line on beat 3 instead of the “and” of 2 (Example 5b). I like how Gil enhances the improvisatory feel of this phrase by elongating one of the pitches, offsetting the line’s seemingly predictable pattern. After the first three notes of the bassoon line, all enter on upbeats (the A and C# on the “and” of 2 and the B on the “and” of 4), the listener might reasonably expect the next pitch (D) to enter on the “and” of 4 in the fourth bar. However, Gil chooses to hold the third note out (C#) an extra beat, delaying the D to the “and” of 1 of the fifth bar. This apparently insignificant extension of one note in the phrase lends the line a sense of spontaneity, almost giving the impression the musician either made a mistake or was improvising the line along with the band. It’s an ostensibly simple yet truly remarkable use of rhythm that creates unexpected depth within the arrangement.

When Gil reprises this ascending line in the second half of the third chorus (played here by two trombones and French horn), he repeats the melodic line verbatim, with the same pitches and rhythm as before. This time, he alters the rhythm of the sustained chords (played here by the saxophones, anticipating each shift in harmony by an eighth note) and adds an independent line above in the oboe (Example 5c). Notice how the ascending line’s rhythm never coincides or interferes with the

Truesdell conducts his Gil Evans Project ensemble.



MARCSANTOS

rhythms of the other two occurring elements. Each component—the oboe line, the sustained chords in the saxophones and the ascending line in the trombones and horn—functions independently, creating its own autonomous rhythmic and linear melody. When combined, the intricacies of these strong independent parts work together naturally, like the gears of a Swiss watch, propelling us inexorably forward through the phrase.

## HARMONY

**G**il’s harmonic language requires an unusual approach to analysis. Traditional, vertically oriented analysis tends to overlook key aspects of Gil’s writing that define his individual harmonic voice. Gil relied on voice-leading and the melodic line to convey harmony, far more than calculated alterations to common harmonic progressions. As a result, Gil’s music unfolds linearly, effortlessly carrying the listener from one point to the next. His harmonic progressions were so much more than the shifting from one vertical sonority to the next. Each note was labored over, given purpose, and determined by its predecessor and successor, woven into a fabric of linear connectivity, serving melody and harmony simultaneously. Gil’s fidelity to the line can make even the smallest, seemingly insignificant moment strong and memorable, which is one reason his music is so enjoyable to listen to and play.

I’ve always admired the economy of Gil’s writing; how he reuses similar passages within an arrangement, altering each instance slightly. Compare the first voicing of the ensemble entrance in each chorus (Example 6): In the first chorus (with the trumpets and trombones in cup mutes), Gil uses a Gmaj7 to outline the upper extensions of the tonic of Em, laying the harmonic foundation. In the second chorus, he inverts the chord (putting the previous lead note D on the bottom) and adds the tonic to accommodate the added French horn. In the third chorus, Gil uses the same Gmaj7 voicing as in the first chorus, this time putting it in the saxophones rather than the brass. Finally, in the fourth chorus, he combines each permutation of the voicing, keeping the D as the lead voice and adding the fifth note, E. This harmonic repetition in the voicings lends a sense of cohesion to the arrangement, while Gil’s slight variations keep it interesting.

The shout chorus is Gil’s big moment to shine, and to take the most liberties harmonically. Gil immediately alters his previous harmony to

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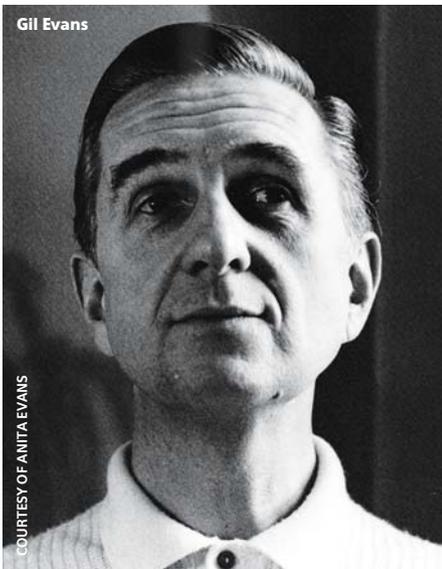
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Gil Evans



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**GIL WAS VERY FOND OF USING CONTRARY MOTION, AND ENJOYED THE PROPULSIVE PUSH AND PULL BETWEEN THE LOWER (OR BASS) VOICE AND THE MELODY.**

strengthen the lines within the inner voices (Example 7). He starts with his Em9 voicing, then raises the bottom three voices up a half step to create an Fdim9 chord, which functions beautifully as a passing chord to the Dmaj7 in bar 3. Also notice in the second bar, Gil chooses to interrupt his chordal planing of the diminished 9th, creating contrary motion in the bottom voice leading to the Dmaj7 by approaching the B from the A on beat 4. Gil was very fond of using contrary motion, and enjoyed the propulsive push and pull between the lower (or bass) voice and the melody.

Another harmonic technique for which Gil was well known was his use of triads. This triadic sound is the very first thing you hear, when Gil has the guitar and saxophones play a root-position A major triad over a B in the bass in the introduction

Example 5a

Example 5b

Example 5c

Example 6

Example 7

(Example 8). In bars 6–8 of the shout chorus, Gil uses this technique again (Example 9), this time using mostly chromatic planing to harmonize his chromatic embellishment of the melody. He starts with Gm/A in

the sixth bar (creating an A7sus(♭9) sound), then chromatically planes that voicing upward until he reaches the G♭/B, which creates a Bmaj9 without the third (the dominant leading back to Em). Gil only alters

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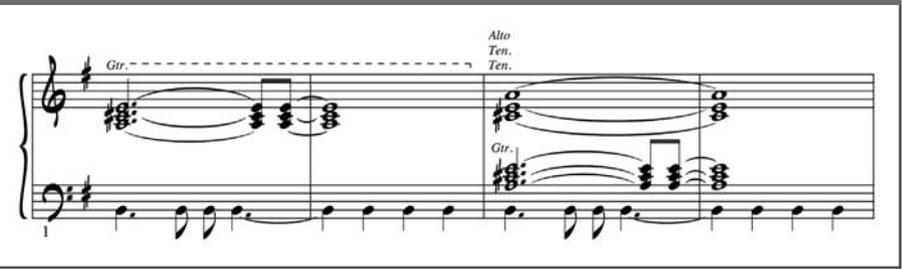


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the chromatic planing in order to ensure the arrival of his desired dominant voicing (whose melody note D<sub>b</sub> perfectly leads into the D natural of the “Greensleeves” melody). Gil utilizes triads again in the last statement of the shout chorus (Example 10) by using a Gm/F# to lead into the Bm(maj7) voicing: B<sub>b</sub> leading to the B, G leading to the F# and D remaining a common tone between them. This briefly tonicizes Bm and prolongs the dominant by alternating between these two chords beneath the diminished scale melody, which concludes by outlining the Gm and Bm triads.

One key harmonic element essential to Gil’s unique sound (which is often overlooked and rarely addressed in composition classes) is his use of what is best described as air or space. This sonic space lets his arrangements “breathe” and provides the music with a certain dexterity and agility, giving the impression that the sounds are suspended in air. In being conscious of the space occupied by each of the independent orchestrational elements, Gil allows plenty of room for the intricate details of the arrangement to be heard with clarity. In most large ensemble writing, you typically find chords with voicings spanning more than two octaves, creating that familiar, full, powerful “big band” sound. In Example 11

Example 8



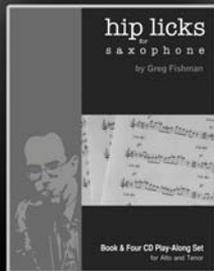
Example 9



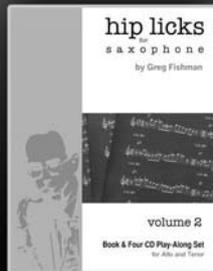
you see two large ensemble voicings, one from Thad Jones (the first chord in the shout chorus to “Cherry Juice”) and one from Billy Byers (the opening chord to his arrangement of “All Of Me”). Thad’s voicing spans over three octaves, and Billy’s is just shy of three octaves. Gil mostly utilizes closed voicings (often with the crunch of a minor sec-

ond), and there is rarely a moment when the ensemble’s sonic real estate occupies more than an octave. In the moments where his voicings do exceed an octave, you can observe his awareness of the relative space occupied by the ensemble in conjunction with the bass voice and solo instrument. This effort to allow space for the sounds, overtones and colors of

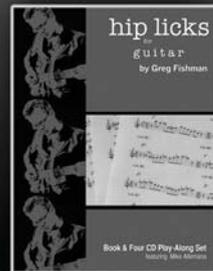
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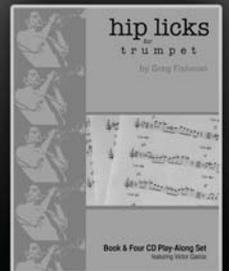
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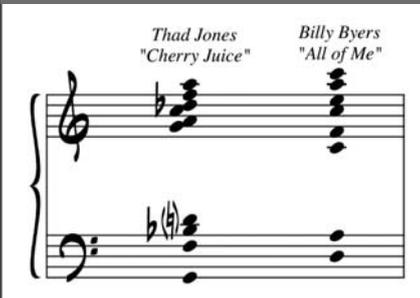
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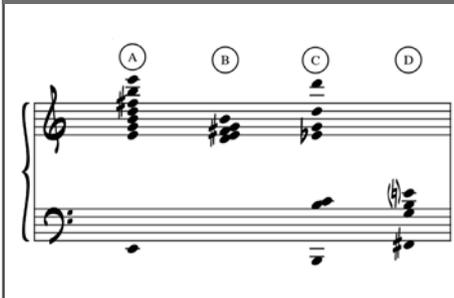
**Example 10**



**Example 11**



**Example 12**



the instruments to blend together creates an aural clarity that can't be achieved with denser orchestrational writing.

In Example 12 you see a few isolated voicings from this arrangement. In the first voicing (letter "A"), even though Gil has the ensemble

spanning two octaves, notice the distance between the tuba (bass note) and the rest of the ensemble—two full octaves. Letter "B" demonstrates his use of closed voicings. Letter "C" has two octaves between the bass and the ensemble again, the melody in octaves, and a fifth between

the melody and inner voices. The final voicing (letter "D") has a minor ninth between the bass and the first-inversion triad in the ensemble. I urge you to play through this and each of the examples presented in the article at the piano. When you do, try to focus less on the notes you are playing, and more on the notes you are *not* playing. Be aware of all the available sonic space around and between Gil's notes.

Gil's relentless pursuit of new sounds and colors yielded a rich and diverse body of work. Even after years of being immersed in his sonic world, I am always discovering new, hidden elements secreted within his writing. I hope further study of "Greensleeves" offers you valuable insight into the seemingly intangible mystery of Gil's genius, and inspires you to seek out new colors, stretch for new harmonies and expand your own sonic world. **DB**

Ryan Truesdell is a Grammy-nominated producer, composer, arranger and director of the award-winning Gil Evans Project. Considered to be the foremost Gil Evans scholar, Truesdell has uncovered more than 60 previously unknown Evans compositions and arrangements. The Gil Evans Project's 2012 debut album, *Centennial: Newly Discovered Works Of Gil Evans*, received unanimous praise from critics and, among its many accolades, received three Grammy nominations and won Evans a posthumous Grammy Award. Their current release is *Lines Of Color: Gil Evans Project Live At Jazz Standard* (Blue Note/ArtistShare). The Gil Evans Project's CDs, as well as study scores and complete sets of parts to many Evans arrangements (including "Greensleeves," discussed in this article), can be found online at [gilevansproject.com](http://gilevansproject.com).

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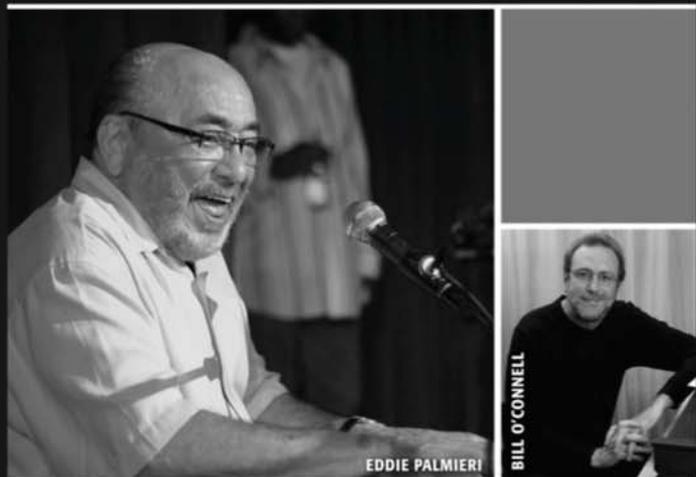
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Trumpeter Ralph Alessi is the director of the School for Improvisational Music in New York City.

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# SIM MENTORS YOUNG PLAYERS

By Bradley Bambarger

**T**he gulf between being a trained instrumentalist and being a creative jazz musician can be wide. That's why trumpeter Ralph Alessi founded the New York-based School for Improvisational Music (SIM) in 2001 as means of inspiring and mentoring young musicians. A partial roll call of alumni attests to the school's success over the past decade-and-a-half: Aaron Parks, Jon Irabagon, Nate Wooley, Brian Landrus, Amir ElSaffar, Matana Roberts—all skillful improvisers who have made a mark on the jazz scene.

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“The goal of SIM is to help give young players the means for putting their fears aside, so that they can deal with the music and collaborate with other musicians in the moment,” Alessi said. “Part of that is empathy, acknowledging that they’re going through what we went through—the good, the bad and the ugly. We focus on the creative process, from composition to rehearsing and performing. We challenge students right off, having them play a concert at the end of their first day with musicians they often just met, and who are likely from the other side of the world. SIM is very much a New York workshop. Music here is made on the edge; that’s what we embrace and impart.”

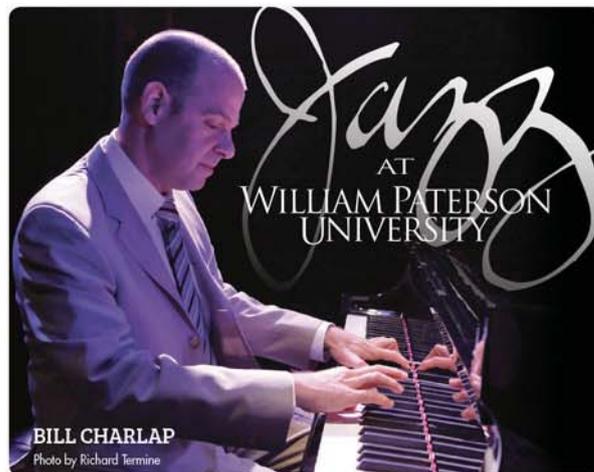
The heart of SIM is a two-week workshop that has been held each August in various Manhattan and Brooklyn locations—starting at the Knitting Factory in Tribeca and moving on to other venues and colleges around the city, including New York University, where Alessi is on the faculty. Most recently, SIM’s base has been the community-oriented Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, with a concert finale at ShapeShifter Lab. With tuition of \$650 for the two-week workshop, SIM includes two master classes per day, ensemble coaching and two private lessons each week, as well as multiple weekly concert performances by faculty and usually 30–35 students in various configurations. Then there are the after-hours benefits of New York City, with students’ post-SIM nights spent seeing shows around town and participating in jam sessions—then feeding on that inspiration in the days ahead.

Last August the core SIM faculty included an exceptional cast of progressive New York jazz musicians: Tim Berne, Gerald Cleaver, Kris Davis, Michael Formanek, Mark Helias and Tom Rainey, with Alessi as director and Andy Milne as assistant director. Andrew Cyrille, Tyshawn Sorey, Art Lande, J. Granelli, Peter Apfelbaum and vocalist Kokayi also came in to lead master classes, while Fred Hersch, Tony Malaby and Brad Shepik gave private lessons along with the core faculty.

“Most students are used to a vision of jazz education that’s more about pristine technique, and that has its time and place,” said Alessi, 52. “But we’re about the principles, skills and aesthetics of improvisation, dealing with the nitty-gritty beyond any particular style or idiom. Although a lot of us on the faculty were deeply influenced by the late-’50s, ’60s and early ’70s avant-garde, we’re not strictly a ‘downtown,’ free-jazz workshop. Most faculty members were formed by the full range of the jazz tradition, and a wide spectrum of other music inevitably gets touched upon, from contemporary classical to other world traditions, even rock. Most important is that the workshop vibe is generous and cooperative. It’s not a cutting competition. Students learn from each other.”

Drummer Kate Gentile first attended SIM in 2007 at age 21, returning to go through the workshop again in 2011. With various summer workshops to choose from, she was drawn to SIM for its faculty. “It was as simple as, ‘These guys are on my favorite records more than the faculty at any other program, so I want to go here,’” Gentile said. “I remember Jim Black—whose concepts as a drummer have influenced my exploration of time and rhythm more than anyone—indulged a barrage of questions from me the first time I was at SIM, often about what he was thinking on records that were, at the time, at least a decade old. I had a multi-page list of questions ready to go, which is hilarious in retrospect. The curriculum covered a lot of ground, whether it was J. Granelli giving master classes about how to practice improvising or Steve Coleman teaching a tune by ear and working on rhythmic cycles.

“But with many of the teachers—like Tim Berne, Michael Formanek, Marc Ducret—I learned so much just from playing with them in lessons or in groups,” Gentile said. “I got to play their music with them, which is an experience you can’t get unless you’re a member of their bands. Little bits of wisdom and guidance in the course of an informal rehearsal or



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Pianist Kris Davis (left), an SIM faculty member, observes a student performance.

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session add up to figuring out how to get inside what they're doing. Those experiences translate now when I play in other people's bands, so that I'm immediately thinking about approaching the music in a way that considers the composer's vision of his or her music."

Trumpeter Wooley, 42, attended the first SIM workshop in 2001, after going through the Banff International Workshop in Jazz & Creative Music in Canada. "A lot of us had been at Banff together that year and felt like SIM was a next step, away from more institutionalized learning about jazz with a capital 'J' and more about, well, we didn't *know*—that was part of the excitement," Wooley recalled. "I appreciated those moments that felt like the students and faculty were engaged in a think tank. It was the first time I could speak candidly about my aesthetics and ideas with a group of musicians that I admired without feeling self-conscious. It's a rare thing, even now, to be able to sit and have a discussion in which such a free range of ideas can be passed back and forth with the idea of the 'profession' being secondary to the joy of making music."

Pianist Davis, who has taught at SIM for several years, said that she has been "amazed and inspired" by the transformation students go through during the workshop's two weeks. "In the first few days, I've seen some students experience varying degrees of apprehension when they try improvising with their peers, unsure what exactly it is they are trying to do or if it's 'good' music," Davis said. "By the end, I have had students tell me that SIM has changed their life, that they stopped judging every musical choice they were making and started listening more deeply to the music that was being made around them. Through that, they experienced a freedom and connection to music making that was exciting and empowering."

Bassist Alex Fournier, 26, came from Canada to SIM in 2013, returning two years later as a workshop intern to aid with administrative and "roadie work." The difference between SIM and other workshops is "this ethos that runs through everything of creative self-reliance," Fournier said. "You have to work out your own decisions, and that's a confidence-builder. I took private lessons then with Tim Berne, Tom Rainey and Mike Formanek, and they all pointed out that everyone is going to have an opinion, but you have the responsibility to follow your inner voice. My education in Toronto was more about fundamentals and demonstrating facility on your instrument. At SIM, I started to learn how complex composition can dissolve into free improvisation. I began writing etudes for myself. And the experience led to an

epiphany about how truly creative music can go beyond the parameters of what we think of as jazz. It can turn sharp corners and doesn't have to be one thing all the time."

SIM has reached beyond New York to conduct workshops at the California Institute of the Arts (Alessi's alma mater), as well as in Norway and Poland. The next step is for SIM to establish its own communal, multi-purpose space, "something that's on the drawing board," Alessi said, "with small, but significant, steps being made."

Pianist Milne has been Alessi's co-director since 2007, with his feel for logistics complementing the trumpeter's big dreams. The two met at Banff in 1990 and subsequently played in bands together. (Milne has also forged ongoing affiliations with younger musicians via SIM; the saxophonist in his group Dapp Theory, Aaron Kruziki, is an alumnus of the workshop.) According to Milne, the SIM method has been fluid by both necessity and design, the pair always learning, adjusting and evolving, revamping the organization and curriculum.

"We added classes on the Alexander Technique last summer, to help musicians be aware of how to use their bodies more effectively," Milne said. "We experimented with a communal repertoire, so that all the groups could explore the same music—faculty compositions and standards—and compare the differing approaches. And it's important that we convey the reality of being a musician today, when you have to have more than one skill to thrive. You have to be prepared to adapt."

For Gentile the lessons of SIM have been enduring, and all-encompassing: "Anytime I play any music anywhere, I'm more aware and in the moment than I was before SIM," she said. "I feel more unlimited and fearless as an improviser. I'm wary of habits and tendencies that can get in the way of real improvising. I'm constantly brainstorming, trying to expand my approach."

"Ralph also gave me the composing bug," Gentile added. "When I took a lesson with him in 2007, I had just written the first tune of mine that wasn't a class assignment. I hadn't tried to play it with anyone yet. I was young and didn't know how to approach improvising on it because there weren't chord symbols. I didn't even know what I would do playing drums on it. Ralph had me play the bass line on piano, while he started improvising these beautiful lines on it. It blew my mind how easy it was for him, and how good it sounded. It was powerful hearing something I wrote played for the first time by someone like Ralph. I became addicted to composing, so now I have more music than I can afford to record, more than I have enough bands and rehearsal time for. It's all Ralph's fault." **DB**

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# Sub-Progressions as Sub-Targets

**SUBSTITUTE CHORD PROGRESSIONS OFFER SOME OF THE** most riveting, colorful moments in jazz. But how do you justify them in theory, much less improve upon them in practice? Here is a most practical path that you can demonstrate to yourself or your students in less than an hour.

Long before encountering substitute chord progressions, most musicians come upon surprise cadences (also known as substitute cadences or sub-targets). Bach chorales are filled with countless superb examples, the simplest of which might be a V chord that instead of resolving to a I chord goes to a vi. Sometimes the chorale might quickly return to the key of the I chord; other times it might turn out that the key center has changed, with what used to be the vi now the new i chord.

To demonstrate surprise cadences, I like to play a bossa nova progression in C major that cadences on C as expected. I ask my students to sing the tonic note (root of the key) to me after the final cadence—*without* my singing it to them. The result looks like Example 1. (Feel free to simplify the rhythms to half notes if needed.)

Less-experienced musicians will often sing the fifth, third or maybe even the seventh or ninth instead of the root of the final chord. Work with them to develop the invaluable skill of hearing tonic: Few bandstand tools are more useful than hearing what key you're in at a given moment.

Once we can all agree on hearing C as tonic at the end of this progression, it's time to demonstrate what a surprise cadence or sub-target sounds like. In Example 2, I play the same opening but end with a two-bar statement in a surprise key, here E $\flat$  major.

Hearing nine beats of E $\flat$  major is usually sufficient to prompt most in attendance to sing the E $\flat$  on their own as tonic rather than C, thus demonstrating that we have successfully modulated to another key. And the movement is quite attractive.

And now the logic of the progression is self-evident: If, while in the key of C, a Dm7–G7 progression is a perfectly fine way of getting to E $\flat$ maj7, then the same Dm7–G7 pairing should be a wonderful means of arriving at E $\flat$ maj7 if we're already in the key of E $\flat$  to begin with. Let's test it in Example 3, where instead of starting in C, we start in E $\flat$ . You can demonstrate the last several bars over and over again: It is a convincing progression.

Let's try one in the other direction on the circle of fifths. Play a ii–V in C that lands on Emaj7, such as in Example 4. Then cross over to the mirror-image of substitute cadence: the substitute progression. If, while in the key of C, the Dm7–G7 progression is a successful approach to Emaj7, then the same Dm7–G7 pairing should be a fine path to Emaj7 if we're already in the key of E to start with. Let's test it in Example 5, where instead of starting in C, we start in E.

Thus a pattern emerges, as illustrated by the chart in Example 6 (at the bottom of the next



Antonio J. García

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page). The left column's sub-target (final chord) is the inverse-equation of the lower-fraction in the right column. A minor third (left side) is inverse to a major sixth (right side), a major third to a minor sixth, and so on. Sub-progressions mirror their sub-target opposites, forever related, equally viable, equally voiceable.

Such "subs" are accepted within the basic progressions of many jazz standards. For example, the ii–V/III–I progression lives within the eighth measure of "Stella By Starlight," where either an A $\flat$ 7 or an E $\flat$ m7–

## Example 1

Bossa ♩ = 170

C: I #iDim ii V I

## Example 2

A $\flat$ 7 sequence leads to a return of the tonic B $\flat$  chord in bar nine (Example 7). If thinking of "Just Friends" in F, the same sequence (now B $\flat$ m7-E $\flat$ 7) in the third and fourth measures leads to the tonic F chord in the fifth bar (Example 8). And the ii-V/ $\flat$ V-I progression is jazz's revered "tritone substitution" (Example 9).

This chart is by no means complete; it simply opens the door to yet more possibilities, including cadencing on minor chords. Any acceptable surprise cadence can reveal an equally acceptable substitute progression within the key of the former surprise.

But its applications are endless. Yes, as a composer or arranger you can learn to employ these colors. But often overlooked is the potential for the improvising jazz soloist, who can extemporize lines in the key of the  $\flat$ III (or any other) to create tension over a basic ii-V progression, landing when ready back in the key of the I chord—whether the accompaniment adjusts to those new tones or not. You'll hear such in the performances of many renowned soloists whose tolerance for dissonance leads to colors that are not always random chromaticism but often *organized* chromaticism, freeing those soloists from the bounds of otherwise-recommended scales for given chords.

After all, if you follow the notion "you can play any note over any chord, so long as you convince me" to its logical conclusion, you arrive at "you can play any chord over any chord" as well.

For more information, including audio examples and written-out voicings of each of the harmonic scenarios above, visit [garcia.music.com/educator/articles/articles.html](http://garcia.music.com/educator/articles/articles.html). **DB**

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### Example 3

### Example 4

### Example 5

### Example 7

Swing (mm. 7-9 of "Stella by Starlight")

### Example 8

Swing (mm. 3-5 of "Just Friends")

### Example 9

(tritone substitution)

### Example 6

Sub-Targets	Sub-Progs
ii V $\flat$ III	$\frac{ii \ V}{VI} \ I$
ii V III	$\frac{ii \ V}{bVI} \ I$
ii V IV	$\frac{ii \ V}{V} \ I$
ii V $\flat$ V	$\frac{ii \ V}{bV} \ I$
ii V $\flat$ VI	$\frac{ii \ V}{III} \ I$
ii V VI	$\frac{ii \ V}{bIII} \ I$



## John Fedchock Big Band Arrangement Designed To Keep Listeners 'Off Balance'

**THE FIRST TRACK ON TROMBONIST AND** composer John Fedchock's latest big band release, *Like It Is* (Mama Records), is a smoldering and sophisticated arrangement of the jam session staple "You And The Night And The Music." Despite the ubiquity of this standard tune, Fedchock turns each phrase in a strikingly fresh manner. When asked how he patterned this complex yet engaging arrangement, Fedchock replied, "I had no specific pattern other than to keep things off balance."

In analyzing Fedchock's interpretation of this Arthur Schwartz standard, I discovered several key themes deserving careful consideration by students of jazz arranging. Initially, the most conspicuous aspects of the arrangement are twofold: a parallel cluster voicing outlining the melody, and the many phrase extensions, which augment the standard 32-bar form considerably. Let's first examine the trio of instru-

ments stating Schwartz's familiar melody—particularly the accompanying harmony parts. This dissonant "grip" voicing (so named for the means by which it moves in uniformity around the piano keyboard) is composed of a lead line supported by two voices, at a major third and perfect fourth below. The jarring inclusion of both harmony parts a half step away from one another provides a unique and biting sonority. Our ears hear the familiar melody line clearly, but it's the unsettling dissonance beneath it that points toward sinister intentions.

In measure 11, we'll see the first of many reharmonization episodes that freely extend the existing melodic phrases. The grip voicing plays a fundamental role in directing the tonality of the phrase extensions. Fedchock explains: "The process for choosing these harmonies came from letting the resulting voicing of the melodic phrase determine what the alter-

nate harmony might be. Because that three-note grip voicing carries certain characteristics, most prominently a half step, there were only certain harmonies or scalar relationships where that half step really meant something in a defining way."

All told, we have seven of these episodes throughout the in-chorus. In the reduction provided, I have noted the "points of departure" with a delta symbol ( $\Delta$ ). This indicates where the standard phrase ends, and where Fedchock's experimentations begin. Back to measure 11: The soli trio lands with a G in the lead voice, and an E $\flat$  and D directly below. Now, while this cluster would be perfectly acceptable within the expected Cm7 chord, Fedchock is searching for a means of abstraction. The rhythm section voices a G phrygian, with the section trombones playing the root, flat-ninth and 11th. Altogether, this spells a Gm11( $\flat$ 9, $\flat$ 6)—

Δ indicates point of departure for phrase extensions  
 \* below rhythm staff denotes analyzed chord symbols not indicated in Mr. Fedchock's manuscript

9 Tenor 1/Trumpet 4/Trombone 1 10 Δ 11 12 13 14

Lead

Counter

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

Harmon Mute

Gphry G/Ab

Octave Unison - 3/1

15 16 Δ 17 18 19 20 21

Lead

Counter

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

8ve Unis. - 2/2

8va D9MA7(#11)

22 23 24 Δ 25 26 27 28

Lead

Counter

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

8ve Unis. - 3/1

CMA7/Ab AbMA7(#9)

29 30 Δ 31 32 33 34 Δ 35 36

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

No Mutes

Gphry B13(#11)

Unis.

Unis.

37 38 39 40 41

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

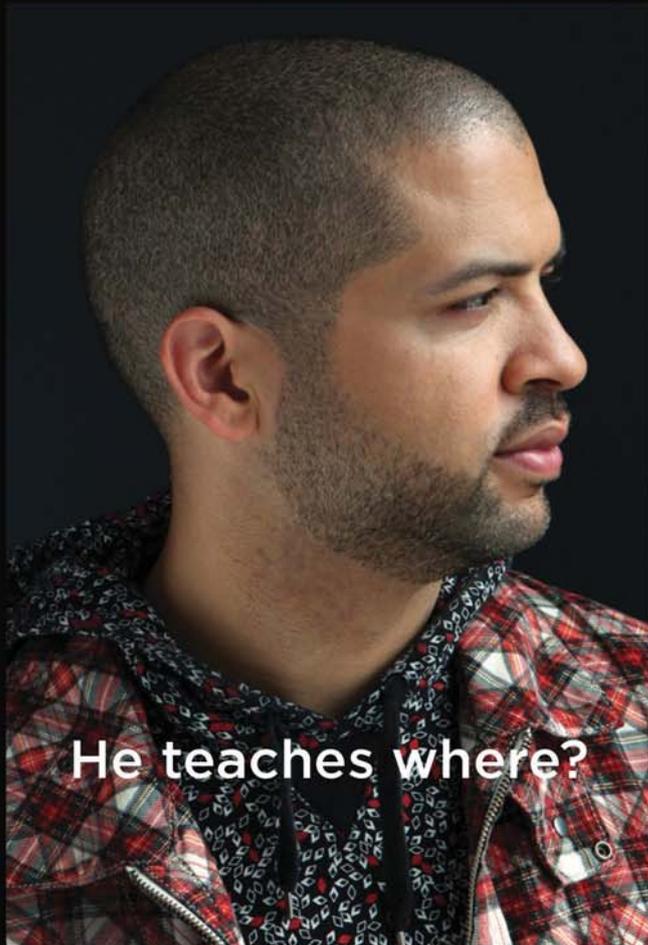
Rhythm

Ebm13 Dmi11(b9) G7(#11) Gb13(#11) FMA9(#11) E7(b9) EbMA9(#11) D'alt D6(b9) CMA7(#11) Ab7(#11) G13(#11) Gb7(#9) F13(#11) Bbm11 A13 Ab13(#11)



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an intensely dark and unsettling chord. We're quickly resolved to a G triad over  $A\flat$ , or  $A\flat(maj7)$ . The trumpets follow, brightening the sonority with their muted timbre, before the saxophones weave a provocative unison countermelody to conclude the episode.

The second phrase (bar 15) follows a similar design to the first, but features subtle differences in the execution. Again, the trio states the melody in their crunchy voicing, beginning here with a syncopation, and proceeding directly through the phrase in a stream of eighth notes. Now, the target melody note is an F, resulting in a  $D\flat$  and C below. Bass and bass trombone anticipate our new harmony with an arpeggio down to low  $D\flat$ . This is followed by pyramid cluster voicings, first in the bones, and again by the muted trumpets, to spell out a  $D\flat(maj7(\#5\#11))$ —an exceptionally bright and complex chord, particularly when we consider that the expected harmony in the tune at this point is simply the minor-IV, or  $Fm7$ . In keeping with the preceding phrase, we are treated to another ultra-hip saxophone countermelody. The total phrase, however, ends up being one bar longer than the previous episode, emphasizing the exploratory nature of these departures.

Preceded by another, more extended bass/bass trombone descending line, the last four measures of the melody are treated as one phrase, whereas we have been previously trained to expect an episode every two measures. This kind of nuanced development keeps the listener on edge—giving us what we expect, but in a new and interesting way. When we prepare to land safely on the parallel major-I chord, we're surprised yet again by an  $A\flat$  root under the  $Cmaj7$  chord, indicated in the piano part as  $Cmaj7/A\flat$ . We might also spell it as an  $A\flat(maj7(\#5\#9\#11))$ .

Theory buffs may have noticed a pattern by now: a complex, non-diatonic chord, removed by an interval of a minor sixth, has replaced all our expected harmonies. However, in the first two episodes, the corresponding scales showed only one degree of deviation from those of the traditional harmony. When asked about his process in selecting these tonal centers, Fedchok said: "It became apparent that other variations of the same notes created an unexpected sound while still making sense with the ear—cadences feel fresh, yet have a strangely familiar sound of resolution. When coupled with unison saxophones outlining the new modal reference, this gives the ear a chance to feel how everything fits together."

Moving into the second "A" section, notice that the three-horn front line has rejoined the ranks of their sections. The saxophones voice the melody now, expanding on the original grip by adding a minor sixth and seventh below the lead line—leading to a  $B7(alt)$  sound—but resolve to more traditional five-part closed voicings for the reharmonized phrase extensions. The trombones and unmuted trumpets chime in with pyramid figures in bars 31–32 and a descending dual-unison line in bars 34–36. While Fedchok continues his abstractions, he's exercising greater restraint here.

In the last phrase of this "A" section (bar 37), we hear the first functional section-writing in the reeds, and two bars later we're treated to

our first ensemble passage. The bass trombone drops into pedals, and Fedchock employs contrary motion to spread the voicing from a 22nd to that of a 35th (almost five octaves). We finally land on the major-I chord in measure 40, marking the first standard-harmony resolution yet, before we're ushered into the "B" section.

We'll get our first sense of a real time-feel from the drums and bass in the bridge. Harmony, though embellished, is rooted in the standard changes, and Schwartz's melody falls where expected, passed between sections in a dizzying blur of unison lines, brass hits and countermelodies. But just when an ensemble passage seems to steer us back to the final "A" section (bar 49—see page 100), we're piloted into another reharmonization episode, first on a D<sub>7</sub> dominant-diminished, and then a G7(alt). Take note of how the countermelodies have developed through the length of the chart. Fedchock reprises the unison sax motif as a cue to narrow the listener's focus towards the familiar material in the final "A" section.

A rowdy two-measure ensemble phrase brings the theme roaring back in a 3-over-4 hemiola. Lead trumpet pivots around top-line G, but a chromatically ascending line in the bass instruments drives aggressively up to V7, resolving to the minor-I on a rhythm break. The soli trio returns for the second phrase of the melody, their unison in stark contrast to the dissonance of the former grip voicing. In measure 59, I spotted an interesting-sounding B<sub>7</sub> in the Trumpet 2 part, over a Dm7(b<sub>5</sub>). Fedchock assured me that it was intentional, and that he used the flat-sixth to imply a G7(alt) sound before moving to the unexpected secondary-dominant b<sub>7</sub>III in bar 60. The sound he creates could be described as a G7sus4(alt)/D—partly modal, and partly functional.

The last formal deviation in this ambitious opening chorus will come in bar 62. This episode is substantially different from those occurring prior, being structurally and harmonically stable. The brass work in block chords to spell a C<sup>o</sup>7 to a Cm7—standard practice for adding interest to a tonic harmony. However, Fedchock has added another flat-sixth to the minor-I, lending an air of uncertainty to the end of the chorus. Saxophones once again weave cryptic melodic lines between brass pads.

A string of altered seventh chords, stamped out by the full ensemble in even half notes (bar 68), signals that we're headed towards a climactic finish. Right on the first measure of the solo section, Fedchock side-steps convention yet again by quoting the melody: "You And The Night," in a brilliant, fully extended series of block chords, ending again on the Cm11(b<sub>6</sub>) chord. "My thought was to send the soloists into the 'night,'" Fedchock said. "I didn't want any bright or sharp sounds—only dark and dense. Therefore, I avoided as many half-step relationships as possible, including internal major sevenths or minor ninths. The flat-sixth adds darkness because of the whole-step relationships to the seventh (notice I did not include the fifth in this voicing), and also alludes to the upcoming C7(alt) sounds in the solo changes."

With these uncommon alterations to otherwise normal voicings, the audience is engaged on multiple levels: harmonic foreshadowing, text painting, recalling elements of the grip voicing—more, in fact, than I could include here. When weighing such seemingly small details against the scope of this arrangement, it's clear that this veteran arranger is very careful in the construction of expectations, and deftly controls the outcomes to keep the listener perpetually in wait for the next resolution. Of course, these devices are revisited throughout the arrangement, and I encourage the reader to examine the shout chorus for further harmonic and formal development. **DB**

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John Lake is a trumpet player and composer residing in New York. He holds a B.M. from the University of Cincinnati and an M.M. from the University of Colorado. In 2014, Lake's electro-acoustic group SHIRLEY released *different-sized cages* (Dazzle Recordings), available at [johnlakejazz.com](http://johnlakejazz.com). He plays XO Brass trumpets and flugelhorns.

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John Fedchock's two 2015 releases are *Like It Is* (Mama), featuring his New York Big Band, and *Fluidity* (Summit), a live session featuring the acclaimed trombonist's quartet. This big band arrangement of "You And The Night And The Music" is available through Jazz Lines Publications ([jazzlines.com](http://jazzlines.com)). John Fedchock plays XO Brass trombones, exclusively. Visit him online at [johnfedchock.com](http://johnfedchock.com).

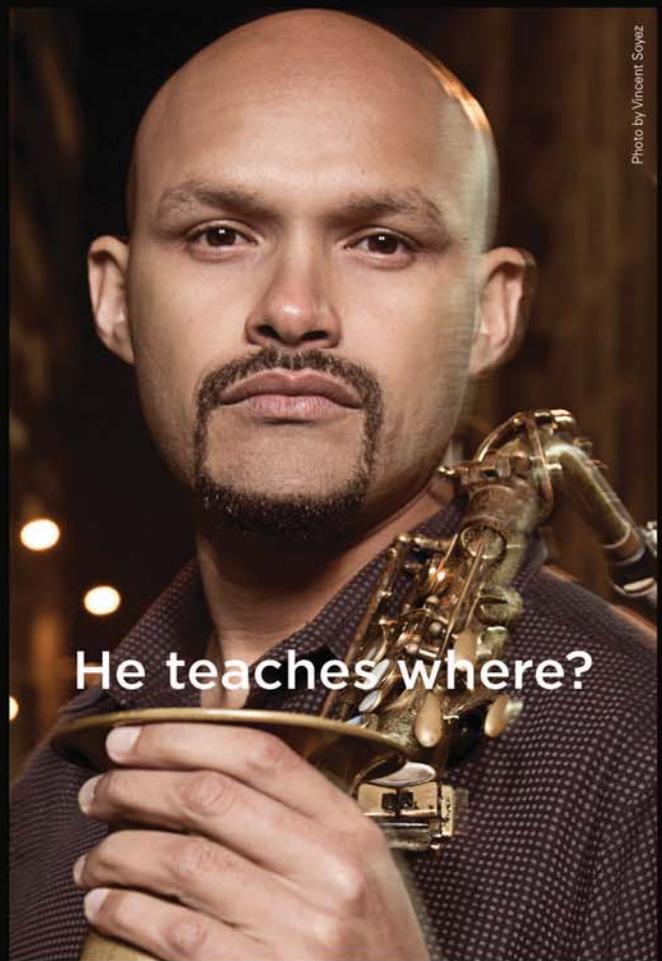


Photo by Vincent Soyaz

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42 Bari Out Unis. 44 45 Bari In 46 Alto 1 Out Unis. 47 Alto 1 In

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

Ab13(#11) G7b9 G7alt G7b9 G13(#11) G13(#11) A13(#11) Ab13(#11)

48 49 Δ 50 51 52 53 8ve Unis. - 2/2 54

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

AbMA7(#11)/G D13(#11) Ab13(#11) D613(#11) Bass Tbn. G7alt. Bs. & Pno.

55 56 57 58 59 8ve Unis. 2/3

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

Cmi13 C#13(#9) D13(#11) Eb13(#11) E13(#11) F7alt. F#7alt. G7alt. Cmi9 Gmi7/C Fmi9 Dmi7b5 Dmi7b5,6

60 61 Δ 62 8ve Unis. - 2/3 63 64 65

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

Eb13(#11) D7alt. Cmi13 B7alt. Bb13(#11) Ab13 G7alt. C° Cmi11(b6) Tbn 1 Out C°

66 67 68 69 70

Saxes

Tpts

Tbns

Rhythm

C° Cmi11(b6) Bb7alt. A7alt. D7alt. Db7alt. Cmi11 Ab13(#9) G13(#11) Cmi11(b6)



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Rick Margitza

JOS L. KNAEPEN

## Rick Margitza's Tenor Sax Solo on 'Change Up'

**SAXOPHONIST RICK MARGITZA'S PLAYING** has always seemed to be a blend of aggressive tenor sound with a more whimsical, Joe Lovano-esque approach—a great combination. On the 2002 album *Jam Session, Vol. 1* (SteepleChase), Margitza performs alongside two other tenor greats: Chris Potter and Larry Schneider. The opening song is a blues written by Margitza called “Change Up.” He takes the third solo on the tune, and his improvisation contains several interesting ideas pertaining to motivic development as well as phrasing and range. Since his improvisation is 19 choruses long, we’ll check out a few excerpts isolating these concepts.

Let’s begin with broader musical concepts first: phrasing and range. In regards to the former, Margitza’s solo contains phrases that are quite long, often going beyond where lines would traditionally resolve. This type of approach is refreshing. Bebop phrasing is important for players to study, but it can also feel stale after a while, and this solo helps open your ears to new possibilities. There are a lot of phrases that are six or seven measures long, with some of them starting well after the chord has changed.

The fifth chorus (see Excerpt 1) shows us the effective use of range. So many tenor sax players are focused on playing in the horn’s upper register. In this chorus, Margitza plays almost the entire time (up until the last measure) without using the octave key. It’s an effective approach because it sounds so different from everything else.

For motivic development—taking an idea and repeating it, a common technique that has long been used in improvisation—we’ll begin with the fourth chorus. At the beginning of the chorus, Margitza

outlines a B $\flat$ min7 chord by descending from the seventh (A $\flat$ -F-D $\flat$ -B $\flat$ ). After he hits the B $\flat$ , he leaps up a major seventh to A and descends again (this time A-F $\sharp$ -D), still landing on a B $\flat$ . The next time he leaps up an octave, though, and outlines a minor triad with the top note acting as the fifth (B $\flat$ -G $\flat$ -E $\flat$ ). The two arpeggios are connected via this octave leap. In addition, as you can see in Excerpt 2, we have the shape of the original motive being more or less preserved, with the actual pitches changing, one of the most common (and again, effective) ways to use motivic development.

The 13th chorus has another great example of motivic development, this time within one of the longer phrases mentioned earlier. Margitza plays a phrase that carries him from the C7 in the fifth measure to the end of the chorus. In the middle of this phrase is a pattern that begins in the key of A $\flat$  on the second scale degree, leaps to the fifth and then arpeggiates down the major triad (B $\flat$ -E $\flat$ -C-A $\flat$ ). The pattern then moves from the root down to the seventh (A $\flat$ -G) and concludes by moving back up to the second (G-B $\flat$ ). Margitza then moves down a half step to A and treats the new note as the second scale degree of a new key, and starts the pattern again. In doing so, the entire pattern is moved down a half step, again preserving the shape, but not the actual pitches, of the original motive. In this case, Margitza begins in the key of A $\flat$  and descends chromatically to F, as can be seen in Excerpt 3.

The last chorus contains another phrase (Excerpt 4) that utilizes motivic development in a long phrase. It begins in the third measure and carries through to the ninth. Towards the

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### Excerpt 1

Excerpt 1 musical notation showing three staves of music. The first staff starts with a G7 chord. The second staff has a C7 chord. The third staff has D7, C7, and G7 chords.

### Excerpt 2

Excerpt 2 musical notation showing a single staff of music with a G7 chord.

### Excerpt 3

Excerpt 3 musical notation showing two staves of music. The first staff has G7, C7, and G7 chords. The second staff has D7, C7, and G7 chords. A fretboard diagram is shown below the first staff with notes 2, 5, 3, 1, 7, 2, 2, 5, 3, 1, 7, 2, 2, 5, 3, 1, 7, and chord symbols Ab, G, and F#.

### Excerpt 4

Excerpt 4 musical notation showing two staves of music. The first staff has G7 and C7 chords. The second staff has G7 and D7 chords.

beginning, Margitza plays a pattern that goes 1- $\flat$ 3-3-5 (G-B $\flat$ -B-D, in this case). He then moves down a whole step and treats the new note (C) as the fifth of a minor triad, which he outlines and which winds up having the root be a whole step below the initial one where Margitza started (F). The line then leaps up a fourth to B $\flat$ , and that note then resolves up a half step (B $\flat$ -B), where the pattern starts again. This time, the key centers are B moving to A.

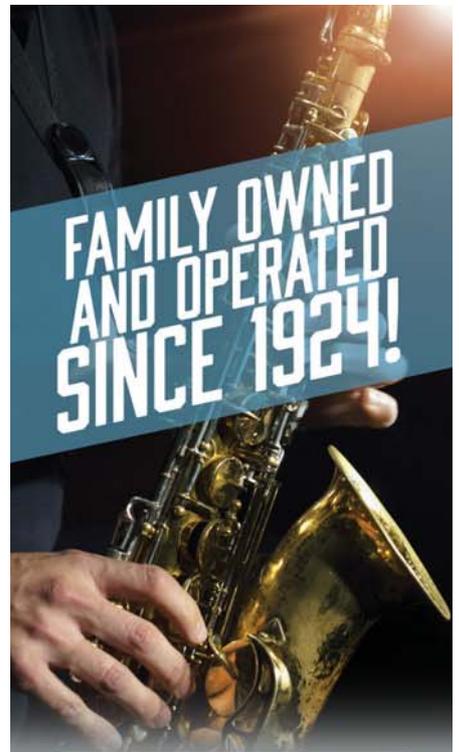
After this repetition, the line continues in the same way but with only the first half of the pattern being played. Instead, where he would have played the triad, Margitza plays the first half of the pattern again (though with an A $\flat$  where the G had been). When he moves down a whole step and outlines a minor triad as before, it is in F once more, making the pattern cyclical.

Another interesting thing to note is how the pattern moves from starting on G to B and then E $\flat$ , all notes found in the G augmented triad of G-B-E $\flat$  (think D#) as well as key centers found in the Coltrane progression. Even if the E $\flat$  portion is only half of the

pattern, this line would work well over Coltrane changes or any time you want to outline a G augmented triad. As mentioned in previous articles of mine, augmented triads can be very flexible as there are only four basic chords (each note within an augmented triad could be considered the root, unless the triad is in a specific context). So this melodic pattern could work in numerous situations.

There are many interesting things happening in Margitza's solo, and only a few are discussed here. You can find a transcription of the entire solo on my website ([mattshevitz.com](http://mattshevitz.com)). The overall harmonic approach is one of altering chords freely, but in a manner that still aligns with traditional jazz harmony, and not in any way that makes the solo overly challenging to listen to. Play through the material provided here (all transposed for B $\flat$  instruments) and focus as much on the melodic tension as you do on the individual notes. That is, after all, their primary purpose. **DB**

Matt Shevitz is a saxophonist and educator based in Chicago, where he is a professor of music at Harold Washington College. Visit him online at [mattshevitz.com](http://mattshevitz.com).



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# Chadwick Folding Bass

## Go-Anyplace Collapsible Upright

In terms of its signature sound and the undeniable impact it makes on music, there is no substitute for the acoustic upright bass. But to players obsessed with its powerful charisma, this blessing can all too often become a curse when faced with the difficulties of traveling with their instrument. Nobody understands this better than Nashville's Charlie Chadwick, who decided to do something about it by creating the Chadwick Folding Bass, offering bassists a full-bodied true acoustic experience in an ingeniously engineered collapsible package.

Chadwick is a professional bass player with plenty of first-hand experience in the frustrations of travel with such a large and fragile instrument. Touring with the likes of Suzy Bogguss, Pam Tillis, Shelby Lynne and Crystal Gayle, he encountered space limitations, baggage fees, damages and the dreaded loaner or rental bass. Although there were already numerous travel bass options available, such as electric uprights and reduced-size acoustics, none offered the same feel and tone as a standard  $\frac{3}{4}$ -sized bass. Chadwick was convinced that there was a demand for a better solution. "I knew there was a need, and I was waiting for someone to do it, but no one did, so I just built one myself," he said.

A tinkerer at heart, Chadwick built his first travel bass in 2003 with a removable bolt-on neck design and actually played it for several years. The drawbacks to this design are that it utilizes separate parts and also requires tools for assembling and disassembling. Chadwick felt there was a need for something more effective, and in 2006 he envisioned the swinging neck design, which uses a hinged joint that allows the neck to fold directly into the back of the bass via a removable panel on the back. Chadwick continued to tweak his new design until a chance meeting with Chinese instrument manufacturer Sam Chen led to the idea of putting this innovative technology into full production.

The Chadwick Folding Bass began actual production in 2009 and utilizes a modified version of Chen's top-of-the-line laminate model SB-100. There are several key features that Chadwick felt were essential to his design, the first being that the instrument should sound and feel exactly like an upright bass. To accomplish this, the body cannot be reduced in size. In addition, assembly/disassembly should be quick and easy without the need for any tools. Lastly, the instrument should be reduced to the smallest possible size without any separate parts to carry. Chadwick solves all these problems in spades with his impressively clever engineering.



Charlie Chadwick demonstrates the folding/unfolding process.



The bass collapses down to the  $\frac{3}{4}$ -size body chamber and is stored in a rugged travel case designed to fit snugly to the instrument. Assembling the bass is surprisingly simple and can be completed in minutes. The back has a removable strip that allows access to the neck, which swings out and locks into place. Also stored inside the body are the fingerboard, endpin and tailpiece along with a removable travel brace to help prevent damage while traveling. After locking in the neck, the ebony fingerboard is quickly attached using slotted connectors and then the tailpiece and endpin are placed onto the bass. The strings are held firmly into place at both the tailpiece and nut so that they do not detach or become tangled. The final step is to position the bridge at the pre-designated markers, tune the instrument up and start playing. I found that it takes about three

passes across the strings to get them up to pitch and stable. There is no doubt that this instrument feels and plays just like an upright bass. In fact, it is totally capable of being played acoustically without a pickup, but Chadwick will install a pickup system of your choice if it is needed. Although the thought of cutting the back of the instrument to make the folding-in process possible may seem a bit scary, Chadwick stresses that it has a minimal impact on the overall tone of the instrument.

The Chadwick Folding Bass is a true marvel of immaculate engineering and a great solution for bass players on the road. At just under 50 pounds, it does not incur overweight fees at the airport and has been described by players as a "life changer" for touring. Chadwick offers the all-laminate model for \$3,800 including custom setup, your choice of strings and shipping. A hybrid solid-top model is available for an additional \$400. This may not replace your 100-year-old carved German instrument, but as Chadwick reminds us, "When you can play the same bass every night, it changes everything."

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: [foldingbass.com](http://foldingbass.com)



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## Casio Celviano Grand Hybrid Digital Pianos

*Acoustic Feel, Advanced Technology*

Casio America is a significant player in the digital piano market, offering a full range of Celviano and Privia models. Now, with its Celviano Grand Hybrid digital pianos, Casio has reached a new level of sophistication in two instruments that are suitable for serious concert performance and professional studio use.

The Celviano Grand Hybrid GP-500BP and GP-300 are Casio's most authentic-sounding and natural-feeling digital pianos to date. The reason they're called "hybrids" is because they combine the advantages of digital technology with the traditional sound and mechanics of acoustic pianos. Short of having actual strings and a soundboard, the two models deliver an experience that's just like that of playing a 9-foot grand. They are a testament to nuanced sound creation and exquisite touch.

The GP-500BP and GP-300 feature new technology that Casio calls AiR Grand Sound Source to recreate the complex, multifaceted sound of an acoustic grand. Every aspect, including sympathetic string resonance, damper resonance and key-off response has been reproduced.

The instruments have three classic grand pianos at the heart of their sound banks: the Berlin Grand (developed in collaboration with C. Bechstein), known for its elegant, clear sound; the Hamburg Grand (based on Steinway grand pianos), which delivers a brilliant, rich sound with plenty of string resonance; and the Vienna Grand (based on Bosendorfer grand pianos), which has a stately, warm tone with an impressive low range. A suite of Casio pianos, keyboards and other instrument sounds is also included.

The full-length keys on the GP-500BP and GP-300 use the same woods, finishes and processes as C. Bechstein grand pianos. A new mechanism that moves like a real grand piano hammer has a noticeable effect on the Grand Hybrid's tactile response.



Both models feature a multi-channel amplification system that creates an immersive sound field like that of a 9-foot grand as it emanates from above and below the soundboard. Headphone mode is included.

One difference between the GP-300 and the GP-500BP is the level of nuanced sound they're able to achieve. The GP-500BP includes mechanical key and pedal sounds, as well as aliquot and open string resonance; plus, a Scene feature on the GP-500BP lets you choose a combination of piano type, hall simulation and effects to simulate historical concert piano environments (or create new ones). The GP-500BP offers a total of 35 tones, while the GP-300 has 26.

Other common features of the Grand Hybrid Pianos include Hall Simulator, 256-note polyphony, five touch-sensitivity curves, Concert Play mode, Duet mode, USB audio recording and 1/4-inch line outputs.

The GP-300 (MSRP: \$3,999) comes in Satin Black Finish, and the GP-500BP (MSRP: \$5,999) is in Black Polish finish.

Thanks to Cordogan's Pianoland in Geneva, Illinois, for accommodating a play-test of the GP-300.

—Ed Enright

Ordering info: [casiomusicgear.com](http://casiomusicgear.com)



## Antigua Pro-One Soprano Saxophone

*Strong Lows, Clear Highs*

Antigua's Pro-One alto and tenor saxophone models, introduced some five years ago, have stood in the top ranks of new professional model horns coming out of Taiwan. Now, Antigua is ready to introduce the Pro-One soprano, long in development and combining many of the great features that have made the alto and tenor models so appealing to serious players.

Featuring a one-piece neck and body design, the Pro-One soprano strikes a strong balance between advanced key ergonomics and a well-designed bore. This results in superb playing facility and a sweet central tone. The instrument offers just the right amount of core resistance and what I like to call "ease of the keys."

During an extended play-test session and a mini-big-band gig, the Pro-One soprano played with a deep, round sound characterized by strong low overtones and clear highs—very reminiscent of French-made instruments. That nasal quality that haunts many sopranos was virtually absent on this instrument. Hybrid rolled tone holes, like those found on the Pro-One alto and tenor, helped give the soprano an even response throughout its entire range.

The Pro-One soprano was remarkably easy to play in tune, some-

thing that's extremely important in picking out a soprano. Running up and down some long scales, I never strayed far from the center of pitch. On the gig, I found myself faced with the difficult task of playing some background passages with clarinet and tenor. The Pro-One did a fine job of blending, both in terms of tone and pitch.

The Pro-One soprano has trident arm keys on the low B and low B-flat, and the low C-sharp has a special arm mechanism to help it close and stay closed. These keys are fully adjustable, so if you get any fluttering in your bell tones, you can actually fix it yourself with the turn of a screw.

The low tones on this horn spoke exceptionally well and could be played whisper-soft when desired. Another important feature that this horn shares with the other Pro-One models is the non-stick G-sharp key mechanism, which never fails.

I found it was nearly impossible to overblow the Pro-One, and it never gave way to undesired shrillness. This is a strong instrument—solidly built, smartly designed and priced to compete.

—Ed Enright

Ordering info: [antiguawinds.com](http://antiguawinds.com)

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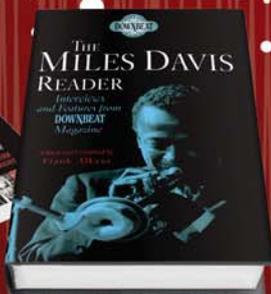
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### 2. Reference Monitors

Pioneer Professional Audio has unveiled its BULIT line of active reference studio monitors. Models include the BULIT5, BULIT6 and BULIT8. Each features improved bass response and reliability, three types of inputs (XLR, TRS and RCA) and built-in equalization.

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### 3. Open Audio Architecture

The Roland M-5000 live mixing console, based on the company's Open High Resolution Configurable Architecture, provides a mix engine of 128 freely definable audio paths. The M-5000 offers an open audio architecture, with support for Dante, MADI, Waves SoundGrid and Reac audio protocols.

**More info:** [rolandus.com](http://rolandus.com)

### 4. Bigger Bottom

Digitech has re-released the DOD Meatbox Subharmonic Bass Synthesizer, which is an update on the original Meatbox from the 1990s. With upgraded features like true bypass, TRS output and a 9-volt power supply, the new Meatbox adds subharmonic enhancement and low-end power to bass guitars, extended-range and down-tuned guitars, synthesizers and drum machines. **More info:** [digitech.com](http://digitech.com)

### 5. Native Bundles

Focusrite has introduced RedNet product bundles for DAW Native users. Each RedNet Native Bundle consists of either a RedNet 1 (eight-channel A-D/D-A interface) or a RedNet 2 (16-channel A-D/D-A interface), a RedNet PCIe card, Red 2 and Red 3 AAX-compatible plugins, and a Sonnet Echo Express SE 1 Thunderbolt chassis.

**More info:** [focusrite.com](http://focusrite.com)

### 6. Abe Mallets

Yamaha has introduced the MKAW series of Keiko Abe signature marimba mallets. Designed with input from Abe, the series features birch shafts (unlike the MKA series' rattan shafts) and includes nine different degrees of soft-to-hard mallets that make it easy for artists to select a voiced set of four for any musical situation.

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# Archive Sheds Light on Garner's Artistry

**FROM HIS PERCH ATOP A PHONE BOOK,** Erroll Garner—short of stature but the most preternaturally gifted of pianists—exuded joy at the keyboard. That joy was reflected in a dizzily mutable style that could, in a flash, shift from angular attacks that skirted the edges of the avant-garde to lushly rolling chords that luxuriated squarely at the center of the mainstream.

“He had complete artistic freedom,” said Geri Allen, the pianist and director of jazz studies at the University of Pittsburgh.

But, as a new archive at the university reveals, the freedom that Garner (1923–’77) enjoyed at the piano was not always matched by freedom to maneuver in the entertainment industry. Together with his manager, Martha Glaser, Garner—like other jazz artists of his era—found himself embroiled in struggles with powerful forces in the industry.

“They would fight tooth-and-nail with record companies, with promoters, with *everyone*, to make sure Garner was getting what they felt he deserved as an artist,” said Michael Heller, a professor in the university’s jazz studies program who is exploring the Garner materials in his course Music, Media, and the Archive: Jazz Collections of Pittsburgh.

Culling evidence from the massive archive is no small feat. Passed down from Glaser and her estate to the university, the archive includes 55 boxes of correspondence, sheet music, posters, legal documents, artifacts and memorabilia. It contains 7,000 photos, 1,200 audio tape reels, 1,000 audiocassettes, 650 acetate discs and 120 films or videos, according to Ed Galloway, the head of the university’s archive center.

Galloway said in an email that the archive’s documents cover a 65-year period, the earliest item being a 1942 selective service card and the latest a bit of correspondence from 2007 containing a royalty check from ASCAP and a list of all the TV programs that played Garner’s most popular composition, “Misty,” as part of their broadcasts.

Written in 1954, “Misty” occupies a special place in the archive and is the subject of some controversy, particularly as it relates to its use in Clint Eastwood’s 1971 thriller *Play Misty for Me*. In correspondence with the film’s producers at the time the film was being made, Glaser registered her dismay about the abbreviated versions of the tune that accompanied the on-screen action.

“She didn’t like that they didn’t have a com-



This photo of Erroll Garner in a recording studio is part of an archive of the pianist’s work housed at the University of Pittsburgh.

ERROLL GARNER ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

plete, full-length version,” said Billy D. Scott, a graduate student who unearthed the correspondence connected to the film.

But a full version of the tune featuring Garner and an orchestra does play during the final credits, and any disagreement had long been resolved by the time Glaser died in 2014, said Susan Rosenberg, Glaser’s niece and the executor of her estate.

The archive could also shed light on the development of Garner’s approach to the keyboard. One element that helped define that approach was his singular use of intros in which he fashioned outrageously free-form flights that segued with irrefutable logic into structured choruses. The intros, and the sensibility behind them, are ripe for analysis, Allen said.

The audio record, reaching back to Garner’s adolescence in his native Pittsburgh, will allow for in-depth research. The oldest tape in the collection, a sextet performance of “Tea For Two” laid down in a Pittsburgh studio in 1937, revealed the joyful Garner already at work, even though he was only 16 at the time it was made.

Despite Garner’s prominence in his day—the archive shows him communicating with global leaders in politics and the arts, from Harry Truman to Duke Ellington—he has, in recent years, been “overshadowed” by some of his contemporaries, according to Allen. The hope is that the archive—aided by the recent reissue, in an expanded form, of his landmark 1955 album *Concert By The Sea* (Sony Legacy)—will help address that situation. The expectation is that Garner will increasingly become a focal point around which the academy and the jazz community can coalesce.

—Phillip Lutz



St. Olaf Jazz Ensemble

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**Cuba-Bound:** The Northfield, Minnesota-based St. Olaf Jazz Ensemble, led by Dave Hagedorn, has accepted an invitation from the Cuban Ministry of Culture to perform a series of concerts in Havana, Cuba, March 20–25. The band’s 21 undergraduate musicians will have the chance to work with Cuban jazz artists and play alongside local ensembles. A patron group will likely accompany the jazz ensemble on its trip, joining the student musicians on historical and cultural tours and attending the band’s performances.

[stolaf.edu](http://stolaf.edu)

**Eastman CD:** *Jazz At Eastman 2015*, a new recording released by the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music, spotlights the school’s student and alumni composers and jazz performers. The CD features the Eastman Jazz Lab Band, the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble, the Eastman Jazz Ensemble and eight Jazz Performance Workshops. The groups were recorded performing 11 original works, including one composition by the late educator Fred Sturm.

[esmrochester.edu](http://esmrochester.edu)

**JEN Speakers:** Bassist Victor Wooten and reedist Tia Fuller will be the featured speakers at the JENeral session and JENerations JENeral session (respectively) during the Jazz Education Network’s 2016 conference, which takes place Jan. 6–9 in Louisville, Kentucky.

[jazzednet.org](http://jazzednet.org)

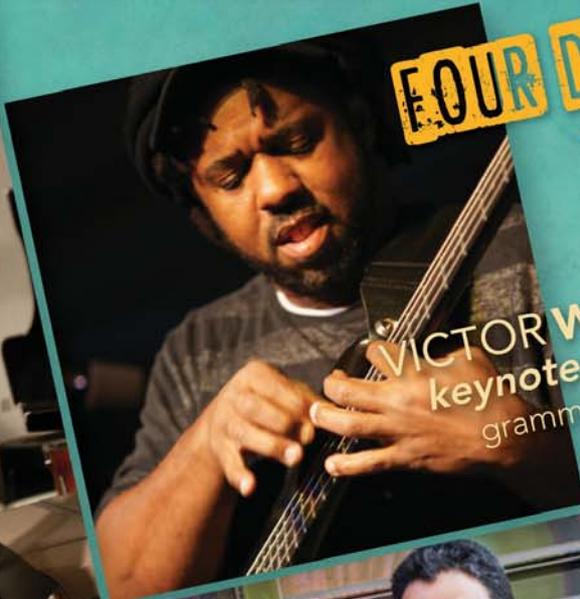
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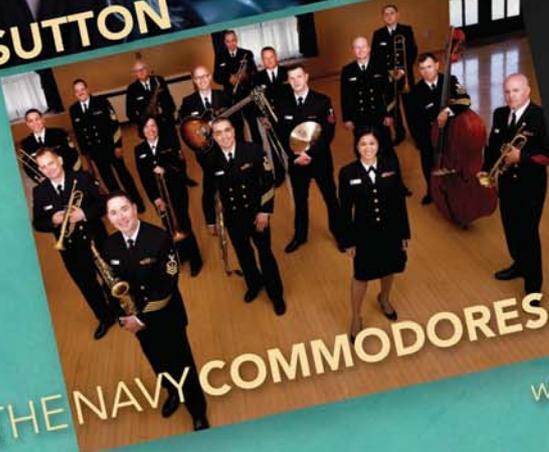
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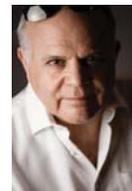
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# John Scofield

A few hours before performing with saxophonist Joe Lovano at the 2015 Detroit Jazz Festival in support of their recent album, *Past Present* (Impulse!), guitarist John Scofield sat down with DownBeat on the Carhartt Amphitheater Stage for a live Blindfold Test.

## Les McCann/Eddie Harris

*"Compared To What"* (*Swiss Movement*, Atlantic, 1969) McCann, piano, vocals; Harris, tenor saxophone; Donald Dean, drums; Leroy Vinnegar, bass; Benny Bailey, trumpet.

More cowbell! Les McCann. When it modulates, it's so happening. And then Eddie Harris comes in. Donald Dean on the drums. This music changed the world. And Leroy Vinnegar on the bass. That's a great track. It's from Montreux, and it's called *Swiss Movement*. "Tryin' to make it real compared to what." Gene McDaniels, I think, wrote this. I just love [Eddie Harris'] music. Everybody listened to Eddie Harris because he could play modern and he could play free and always had a whole lot of soul. And he had a beautiful sound on the saxophone. He wasn't a honker; he had a beautiful, refined tone. I would suggest everybody listen to Eddie Harris because his groove was killer.

## Charlie Haden/Jim Hall

*"The Turnaround"* (*Charlie Haden—Jim Hall*, Impulse!, 2014, rec'd 1990) Hall, guitar; Haden, bass.

I know this song is called "The Turnaround." We used to play that a lot and it's an Ornette Coleman tune. I just assume that it's Pat Metheny playing because he recorded it, but it could be somebody else. [after] I knew it was probably Charlie Haden. Pat Metheny and Jim Hall, I love them both. Jim Hall was probably my favorite guitar player earlier on, and I listened to all his records and got to take lessons from him. I could always tell his playing in a couple of notes—except today. And then Pat, I loved Pat right from the first time I heard him. Before he became famous I heard him in Boston and we became friends up at Berklee. Pat and I were both disciples of Jim Hall's. "Turnaround" is an Ornette Coleman blues that a lot of us musicians love. It's really cool because it's a little different, the last four bars.

## The Tony Williams Lifetime

*"Spectrum"* (*Emergency!*, Polydor/Polygram, 1969) Williams, drums; John McLaughlin, guitar; Larry Young, organ.

John McLaughlin. I got it. [sings along with the guitar part] I know that because that's on a Tony Williams Lifetime record I had back when it was new. That's a cool head. Actually, that's a [McLaughlin] record called *Extrapolation*. ... Oh, it is The Tony Williams Lifetime. Of course, there's organ on there. I listened to that to death. That was part of this movement in jazz, that record with John McLaughlin on it. Tony Williams was coming right out of the Miles Davis Quintet concept with Herbie Hancock and Ron Carter and Wayne Shorter, and it was a great period. I came right after that so those records were very important to me.

## Sister Rosetta Tharpe

*"99 And A Half Won't Do"* (*Gospel Train*, Mercury, 1956) Tharpe, vocals, guitar; Ernie Hayes, piano; Harry "Doc" Bagby, organ; Ernest Richardson, guitar; Lloyd Trotman, bass; David "Panama" Francis, drums.

Now I'm really confused because I know "ninety-nine-and-a-half won't do, tryin' to make a hundred." It's a great song that was made famous by the author, Dorothy Love Coates. And that vocal sounded a little bit like Dorothy but it wasn't the record I know. Wait, don't tell me. She's got a great name. She was a really good guitar player, too. We recorded that



John Scofield at the 2015 Detroit Jazz Festival

LEWIS/DETROIT JAZZ FESTIVAL

on the *Piety Street* record. But we learned it from Dorothy Love Coates. [after] I've always been a gospel fan and I like Sister Rosetta Tharpe. And I just realized I thought it was somebody copying Dorothy Love Coates, but the way Sister Rosetta sings is so one-of-a-kind.

## Sonny Rollins

*"The Bridge,"* (*The Bridge*, RCA Victor, 1962) Rollins, tenor saxophone; Jim Hall, guitar; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Ben Riley, drums.

That's one of the records that all of us have to have: It's called *The Bridge* and it's a Sonny Rollins record. It features Jim Hall on the guitar. I love the records that Jim made back in the '60s or any time in his career when he would play behind the horn player. His playing on this record is great for his solos but also for his comping behind Sonny. He also made at least four or five albums with Paul Desmond the saxophonist, and those are quartet records where he was the comper—you know, bass, drums, saxophone, guitar. The group I'm playing with tonight with Joe Lovano, a lot of what we do was done before by that group and the different groups that Jim Hall [was in]. There aren't that many modern jazz records where the guitar was the comper behind somebody like Sonny Rollins. So, even though [Lovano and I] do it our own way, I really learned to play from [*The Bridge*] and from other Jim Hall records.

## Johnny Vidacovich

*"We Came To Play"* (*We Came To Play*, Trio Records, 2003) Vidacovich, drums; George Porter Jr., bass; June Yamagishi, guitar.

I'm a little stumped here. First of all, I really liked it and I thought, "This is something I play—just guitar, bass and drums—a lot." And I like the way they approached it. The bass player kind of kept it together, and then the guitar player was really nice, he played some real blues. Very honest and heartfelt and good. That's not easy to do, that's for sure. The drummer was very creative and he kept the groove, but he was dialoguing with the guitar player. Is he from New Orleans? Maybe it's Johnny Vidacovich, who's a great drummer from New Orleans who turned me on to New Orleans music to a certain extent. A long time ago I went down and played with Johnny and [bassist] James Singleton. Johnny's a giant drummer. And George Porter Jr. But I don't know who the guitar player is. June? Yeah, June, go for it!

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