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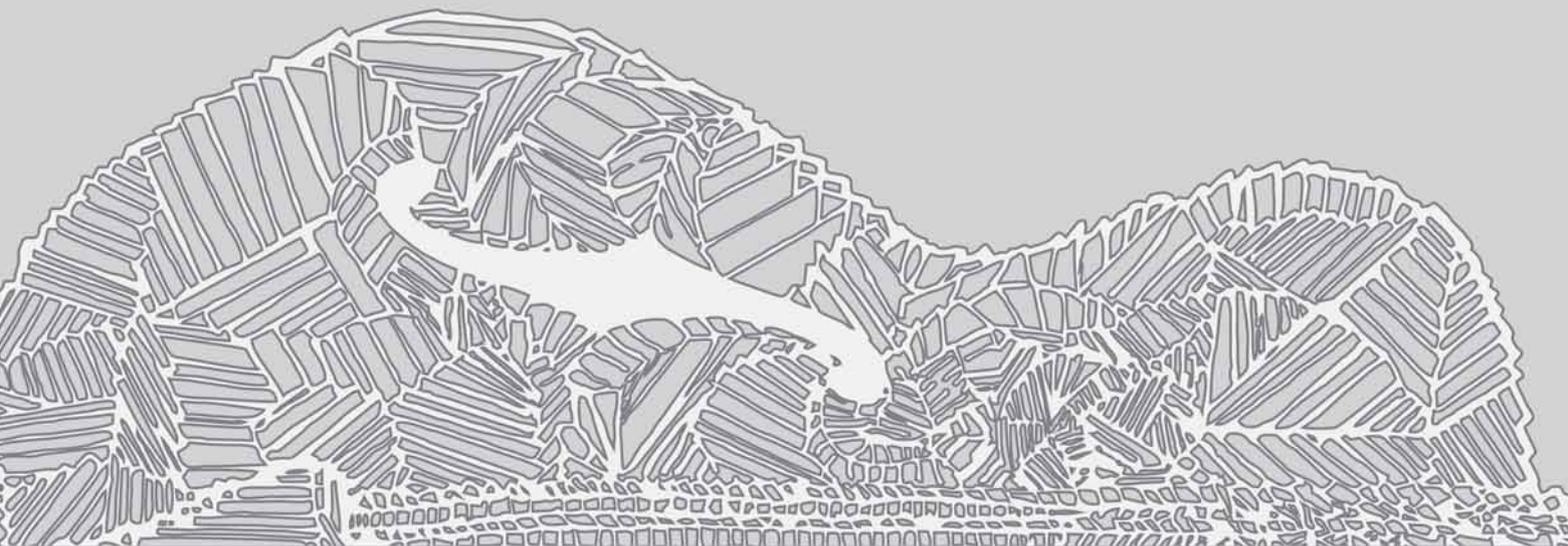
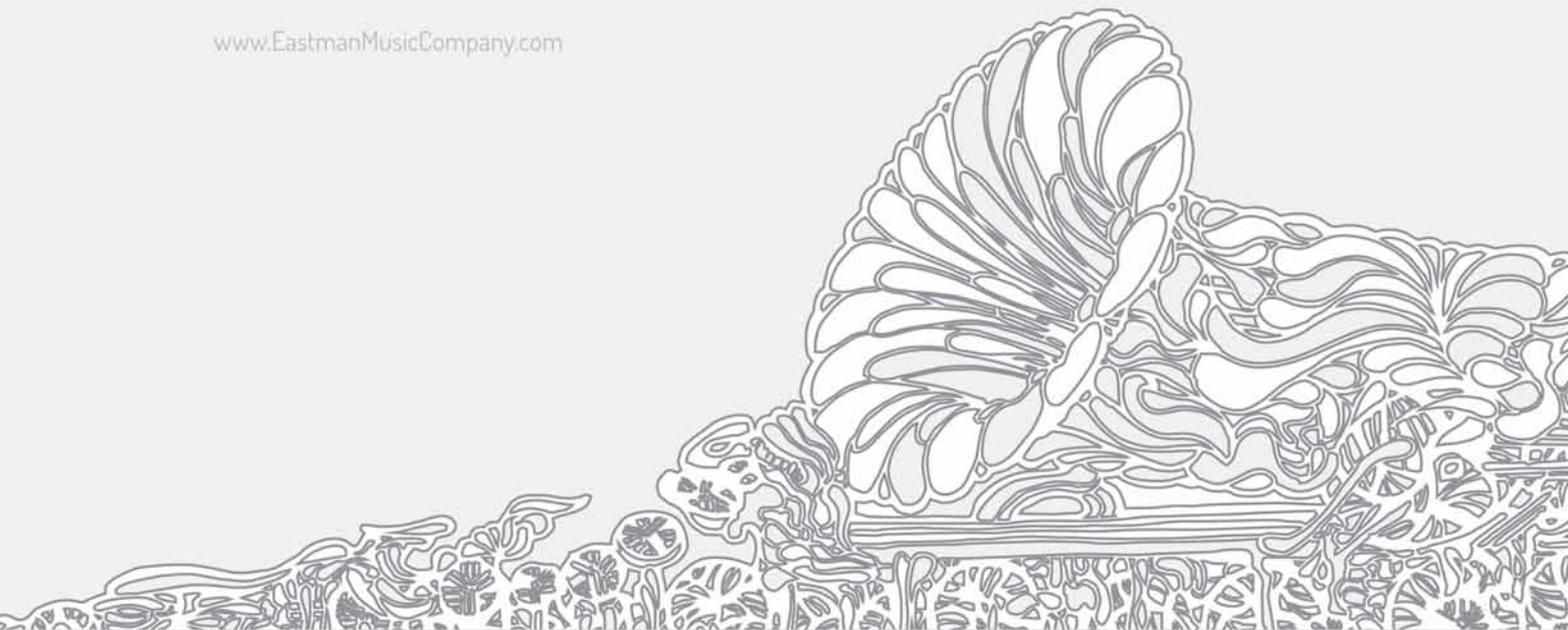
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MAY 2016

# Inside

## ON THE COVER

### 26 Donny McCaslin

#### *Final Magic*

BY PHILLIP LUTZ

Saxophonist McCaslin and his band—keyboardist Jason Lindner, bassist Tim Lefebvre and drummer Mark Guiliana, augmented by guitarist Ben Monder—served as the core ensemble for rock superstar David Bowie’s final album, *Blackstar*. The collaboration’s profound impact is just starting to be understood.

26



Donny McCaslin Group onstage at the 2012 Detroit Jazz Festival: Jason Lindner (left), Tim Lefebvre, McCaslin and Mark Guiliana

Cover photo of Mark Guiliana (left), Donny McCaslin and Jason Lindner shot by Jimmy and Dena Katz at 55 Bar in New York City. Info for this venue is at 55bar.com.

## FEATURES

### 34 Kurt Rosenwinkel

#### *Follow the Vitality*

BY TED PANKEN

### 40 Jeremy Pelt

#### *Collaborative Soul*

BY DAN OUELLETTE

### 44 Allison Miller

#### *The Value of Space*

BY BOBBY REED

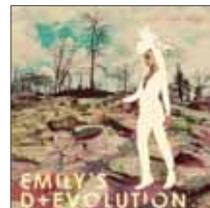
### 91 2016 International Summer Festival Guide



52 Bill Charlap



53 Anthony Wilson



54 Esperanza Spalding



57 Jane Monheit

## SPECIAL SECTION

### 71 Reed School

### 72 Celestial Energy

#### *Talking Influences with Sonny Rollins*

BY JON IRABAGON

### 78 Master Class

BY JOHN WOJCIECHOWSKI

### 80 Transcription

Brian Landrus  
Bass Clarinet Solo

### 82 Toolshed

## DEPARTMENTS

8 First Take

10 Chords & Discords

13 The Beat

22 Players

49 Reviews

142 Jazz On Campus

146 Blindfold Test  
Arturo O’Farrill

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# McCaslin's Modes

AS THE REVIEWS EDITOR OF DOWNBEAT, I RECEIVE HUNDREDS of jazz and blues albums each month. And while this influx of new CDs makes for a rather cramped office (I have stacks of jewel cases taller than some toddlers), it also gives me the ideal vantage point to take stock of the current state of jazz. From here, the future looks bright.

The umbrella of jazz continually grows more expansive, inviting genres like hip-hop and electronica into its shade. Additionally, country, folk and Americana artists perpetually tap into jazz to enrich their sounds. These are all good signs that point to the robustness and flexibility of jazz.

Broad-minded jazz artists are eager to explore the genre's vast landscape—and none more so than Donny McCaslin. The 49-year-old saxophonist has had a breakout year, one that found him inhabiting a variety of roles and speaking an array of jazz lexicons. Last March, as the leader of his adventurous quartet, he released the acclaimed *Fast Future* (Greenleaf), an album that made seismic waves in the jazz world with its audacious combination of jazz and Electronic Dance Music. And as a support player, he held a pivotal position in The Maria Schneider Orchestra, earning a Grammy nomination in the category Best Improvised Jazz Solo for a track on the orchestra's stunning 2015 album, *The Thompson Fields*.

Most recently, of course, McCaslin and his group were tapped by the inimitable David Bowie to provide the music for his final album, *Blackstar*. It was an important moment in music history: a rock icon determined to deliver his last artistic breath through jazz.

Though McCaslin may be leading the charge into a new era, he readily admits that he is indebted to the pioneering jazz composers and artists who came before him. It's only fitting, then, that this issue includes not only a cover story on the Donny McCaslin Group, but also a live review of the saxophonist performing the music of Gil Evans as a member of Ryan Truesdell's large ensemble. The performance, part of the Elmhurst College Jazz Festival in Illinois, featured McCaslin in the dual roles of performer and teacher. Whether on stage or in a workshop, it's clear that the enthusiastic McCaslin is willing to share his hopeful artistic vision with the next generation of jazz musicians.

I am one of thousands of fans who are eagerly awaiting McCaslin's next album. Right as we went to press with this issue, McCaslin signed with Motéma Music, which has scheduled an October release.

"We at Motéma have long been admirers of Donny's masterful sound, his depth of soul, his inventive musicality, and the way his ensemble mind-melds as it improvises with acoustic and electric sounds to carve out new pathways for jazz," said label founder and president Jana Herzen. "He is the type of heart-led innovator we love to support at Motéma."

When the album's ready, Donny, you know where to send it. **DB**



Donny McCaslin performs with the Gil Evans Project in Elmhurst, Illinois, on Feb. 26.

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Gerald Albright at the 2016 Légère NAMM Jazz Jam

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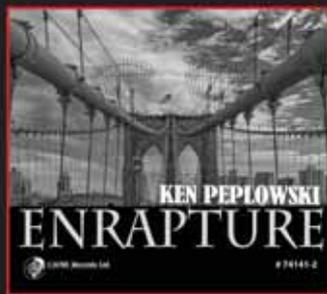


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## KEN PEPLOWSKI

### Enrapture

"The program on clarinetist/tenor saxophonist Ken Peplowski's new album illustrates that he is not only an adventurous, open-minded interpreter but also an insightful jazz historian."

—DownBeat Editors' Pick March 2016



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## Chords & Discords

### Esperanza's Fearless Artistic Vision

While I enjoyed Phillip Lutz's article on Esperanza Spalding ("Inviting 'Emily' Out To Play," April), I was initially disappointed he didn't make more of an effort to describe the music contained on Spalding's new release, *Emily's D+Evolution*. Nonetheless, it piqued my curiosity enough to order a copy. To be honest, my primary reason for purchase was indeed simply that of curiosity; I wasn't really expecting anything more than an over-hyped, yet ultimately unsatisfying, hip-hop/jazz hybrid, à la Robert Glasper.

One listen to the disc made it clear why Lutz refrained from attempted classification, as there aren't enough hyphens to adequately describe Spalding's latest triumph.

Almost immediately, the listener receives a visceral gut check akin to riding a roller coaster from bottom to top in three seconds, only to fly off into space once the apex is reached. What follows is an exhilarating excursion, full of unexpected and unpredictable twists, with some new moment of brilliance at seemingly every turn. As I hung on for dear life, I was awestruck and at times emotionally stunned by the strength and originality of the vocals



Esperanza Spalding

HOLLY ANDRES

and melodies, set to various schizophrenic concoctions of pop, rock, soul, funk and prog.

I must admit, up until now I hadn't really bought into the whole Spalding = genius ballyhoo, but *Emily's D+Evolution* sounds like it was dropped to earth from some distant galaxy. Save for one avant-garde cabaret tune ("I Want It Now"), Spalding's latest creation isn't jazz, or even jazzy, but lives somewhere in the same Beyond category where Sun Ra and Frank Zappa dwell. And although there are obvious touchstones—such as Joni Mitchell and Prince, and even a snippet of Michel Legrand's "Windmills Of Your Mind" at one point—*Emily's D+Evolution* forms a brilliant, unique genre of its own.

GORDON WEBB  
SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA

### Incendiary Ernie

I'm writing about the review of Ernie Krivda's *Requiem For A Jazz Lady* in your March issue. As an ex-Cleveland, I was happy to see Krivda get some recognition; however, the reviewer implies that Krivda is a traditionalist.

While he may have gone in that direction in recent years, readers should know that he was on the cutting edge of the avant-garde in a free-jazz trio led by visionary guitarist Bill DeArango with Skip Hadden (who Bill hooked up with Weather Report) on drums, and no bass. It was incendiary and *loud*.

In the 1970s, they used to open for many acts at the Smiling Dog Saloon and blow the roof off the joint in a way that would make Sam Rivers or Albert Ayler sound tame.

MARK JONES  
CORTLANDT MANOR, NEW YORK

### Miles' Best Work

In your April issue, Allen Morrison's cover story on the new Miles Davis film, *Miles Ahead*, includes several quotes from actor/director Don Cheadle. In perhaps the most revealing quote, Cheadle says, "Our focus was on who

Miles was an artist, not necessarily who he was as a man. I wanted to let the *music* run the show ... ." Fine. That's how it should be. But how then can Cheadle claim to focus on the "music" and not extensively cover the 15-year period that included Miles' two great quintets? Both are generally considered to be among the most important bands in the history of the music. (I can't think of a jazz musician, past or present, who would disagree.) Until and unless that happens, the definitive film about Miles Davis remains to be produced.

BILL BENJAMIN  
BILTMORE LAKE, NORTH CAROLINA

### Correction

■ In the Toolshed section of our April issue, we incorrectly stated that high-end microphone manufacturer DPA was formerly known as Brüel & Kjaer. The correct product designation for DPA's new trumpet microphone is d:vote 4099T.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERRORS.

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Inside >

- 14 / Aruán Ortiz
- 16 / George Coleman
- 18 / Larry Young
- 19 / Ryan Truesdell
- 20 / European Scene
- 21 / PDX Jazz Festival

# Beat

## Cool Personified: Chet Baker on the Silver Screen

There's a scene in *Born to be Blue*, Robert Budreau's new film inspired by the life of Chet Baker, that's set in Birdland, the iconic New York jazz club. Baker (played by Ethan Hawke) is just making his New York debut in the scene, and if the challenge of proving his mettle in the jazz capital of the world weren't enough to make him nervous, he finds himself opening for the Miles Davis/Dizzy Gillespie band—in effect, going up against the two greatest trumpet players in modern jazz.

As jazz history, it's bunk. (The Miles Davis/Dizzy Gillespie band?) But Budreau isn't trying to tell the Chet Baker story; instead, he's telling a different sort of story, one less concerned with the historical specifics of Baker's career than with the psychological forces at play in his life. How is it, the film asks, that Baker could be strong enough physically and psychologically to rebuild his trumpet playing after losing most of his teeth in a beating, and yet remain so insecure about his artistic status that he continually had to retreat into heroin use?

To tell that tale, Budreau alters the chronology, fudges the facts and outright makes things up. For example, not only is Jane (Carmen Ejogo), Baker's love interest in the film, entirely imagined, but so is the movie project Baker was working on when he meets her. To some extent, Budreau can be assumed to think that anyone who wants a factual accounting of the real-life Baker can turn to *Let's Get Lost*, Bruce Weber's 1988 Oscar-nominated documentary featuring the trumpeter himself.

Hawke—who was nominated for an Academy Award for his work in 2014's *Boyhood*—does a commendable job in impersonating Baker. Not only does he convey the glamour Baker once had, but he manages to make us care about the character even as he descends into the depths of junkie desperation. The most credible part of his portrayal comes when Baker, newly clean and trying to reclaim his life, struggles to rebuild his ruined embouchure. Watching him, it's hard not to feel the frustration of finding something that was once so easy suddenly become impossibly hard and painful.

Of course, some of the credit for that also belongs to Toronto jazz trumpeter Kevin Turcotte, who provides all of the film's trumpet parts.



Ethan Hawke stars as Chet Baker in the film *Born to be Blue*.

To make the sound fit with the drama, Turcotte had to alter his tone as well as his improvisational approach. “There was the Chet sound, but there was also the ‘Chet learning how to play after the injury’ sound,” he says. “I might alter how airy or how pinched the trumpet sound might be depending on what stage his chops were supposed to be in.”

Turcotte didn't work directly with Hawke; instead, the music was recorded before filming began, and a video camera recorded Turcotte's performance so Hawke could have a visual reference point. All of Baker's singing, though, was done by Hawke, who prepared for the role with the help of Canadian pianist David Braid.

“Probably the biggest challenge in mimicking Chet's singing style is recreating the higher-pitched color of his voice,” said Braid, who oversaw the film's soundtrack. Braid points to the film's rendition of “I've Never Been In Love Before” as an example of how, as the arranger, he blended the two aspects of Baker's musical personality.

“Ethan's voice resonated much better in A major, but the trumpet sounds much warmer in B-flat,” he says. “So the song starts in A with Ethan singing then moves almost unnoticeably into the standard key of B-flat before the beginning of the trumpet solo.”

Braid isn't worried about being chased down by the jazz police over “historical inaccuracies” in the film. “Not all movies about a jazz icon should necessarily be a documentary,” he says. “I hope jazz die-hards—of which I'm one—will recognize a jazz aesthetic at play throughout this film: in particular, how the writers and actors improvise on a theme in Chet Baker's life.”

—J.D. Considine

Terri Lyne Carrington



TRACY LOVE

**American Music Honor:** Three-time Grammy-winner Terri Lyne Carrington was recognized as this year's Honorary Member at the 42nd Annual Conference of the Society for American Music (March 9–13) during a public ceremony at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The drummer/composer/producer joins a distinguished group of luminaries including Pharoah Sanders, Loretta Lynn, Oscar Peterson, Max Roach, Gunther Schuller and John Cage.

**More info:** [american-music.org](http://american-music.org)

**"Sassy" Recording & Stamp:** Resonance Records, with the cooperation of National Public Radio (NPR), released *Sarah Vaughan—Live At Rosy's, New Orleans* on March 25. The deluxe two-CD set consists exclusively of newly discovered recordings from the singer's performance at Rosy's Jazz Club on May 31, 1978. The U.S. Postal Service honored the legacy of "Sassy," as Vaughan was affectionately called, by issuing a Commemorative Forever Stamp and holding a ceremony at the Sarah Vaughan Concert Hall at Newark Symphony Hall in Newark, New Jersey, on March 29.

**More info:** [resonancerecords.org](http://resonancerecords.org)

**Final Bar:** Singer **Ernestine Anderson** died March 10, at age 87. Her career spanned six decades, including a performance at the first Monterey Jazz Festival in 1958. Anderson earned four Grammy nominations and a spot in the Smithsonian Institution's "Jazz Singers" anthology. ... **Frank Sinatra Jr.**, who helped extend his father's legacy into the 21st century while carving out his own voice as a singer, songwriter and conductor, died March 16 of a heart attack in Daytona Beach, Florida. He was 72. ... Percussionist **Naná Vasconcelos**, master of the single-string *berimbau*, died March 9 from lung cancer in Recife, Brazil. He was 71. ... Drummer **Joe Harris**, one of the last survivors of the bebop era, died Jan. 27 in Pittsburgh. He was 89. A onetime member of Dizzy Gillespie's band, Harris also accompanied Charlie Parker, Ella Fitzgerald, Sonny Rollins and Stan Getz.

## Ortiz Pursues Complex Muse

**AMID GROWING RECOGNITION OF HIS** artistry, Aruán Ortiz achieves a noticeable creative milestone with his new trio date, *Hidden Voices* (Intakt Records), his sixth album as a leader. Unlike Ortiz's previous group recording, 2012's *Orbiting* (Fresh Sound Records)—which found the Cuban-born pianist and composer generously sharing the limelight in a post-bop quartet—*Hidden Voices* demonstrates his deft melding of musical influences and structural conceptualizations, resulting in a brilliant work full of intriguing surprises.

The title *Hidden Voices* alludes to the persistence of cultural traditions in the face of modernity. Ortiz, a native of Santiago de Cuba, the island nation's gateway to the Caribbean, understands the rich musical history from which his own art has evolved. To express the predominant tension between old and new, he utilizes Afro-Caribbean rhythms, in compositional forms and improvisations, as a springboard for his fertile imagination. To navigate the tricky syncopations and quick hopscotching on the album, Ortiz enlisted bassist Eric Revis and drummer Gerald Cleaver, with whom he had worked on two prior occasions. As a trio, they sparkle in settings that often grow increasingly complex as the tunes unfold.

"With *Orbiting*, I hoped to present more ideas on the piano, as well as add rhythmic accents more freely and push the music toward the avant-garde, but we never got that far," Ortiz noted. "When it came time to record *Hidden Voices*, though, I was determined to bring a different focus and a personal approach to the project. I wanted something closer to my roots, but my intention was to manipulate rhythms and create variations from them as a way to translate non-musical information into new musical ideas. This opened the door and allowed me to realize different approaches to composition."

Ortiz pointed to his *Santiarican Blues Suite*, an extended composition for the José Mateo Ballet Theater's ballet *Pagano or Not*—which was completed in 2011 and recorded that year with the Camerata Urbana Ensemble—as a breakthrough for him in terms of updating Cuban folkloric sounds. Santiago de Cuba, the port city of the Oriente province of Cuba, Ortiz explained, was a destination (along with New Orleans) of migrating Haitians, mostly slaves of African descent, in the late 18th century. The African rhythms, chants and dances—mixed with aspects of French culture borrowed from the Haitian plantation owners—became known as *tumba francesa*, a socio-cultural phenomenon that stands as the founda-

tion of much of today's Cuban popular music. To musically narrate the ballet's story of the African Diaspora, Ortiz mined these ancient rhythms "made new," and in doing so re-examined his own musical direction. Ortiz helped imbue subsequent collaborations with flutist Mark Weinstein and AfroHORN, a group led by former Sun Ra Arkestra percussion-

Pianist Aruán Ortiz's new album is *Hidden Voices*.

JIMMY KATZ

ist Francisco Mora-Catlett, with these Afro-Caribbean rhythms as well.

On *Hidden Voices*, however, the underlay of Afro-Caribbean rhythms is extant but not overly apparent. "The record is not exclusively Cuban or Haitian or even derived from those musical forms," the pianist said. In fact, the only track on the album that clearly taps into a rhythmic code is "Caribbean Vortex/Hidden Voices," which features a call-and-response between two claves with Ortiz riffing and improvising on a popular *tumba francesa* rhythm known as *gagá*.

A recipient of a 2014 Doris Duke Impact Award, Ortiz recently put to good use a Composers Now Creative Residency Award at Pocantico Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. In early February, he headlined the Jazz Standard in Manhattan for the first time with his longtime trio mates, bassist Brad Jones and drummer Eric McPherson.

"When I'm into something new, my instinct is to gather even more information," Ortiz said. "The musicians I know and who have played with me keep their ears open because anything can happen. I'm reorganizing what I know right there in the moment, and that's what keeps my music alive and helps me expand my boundaries." —Thomas Staudter

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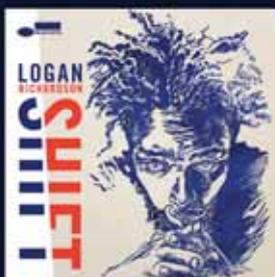
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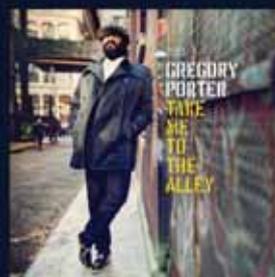
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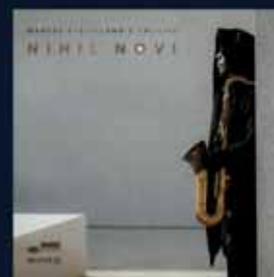
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# George Coleman Seeks Integrity with New Album

**GEORGE COLEMAN IS BACK.** THE NEA JAZZ Master's April release, *The Master Speaks* (Smoke Sessions), marks his first leader recording since 1998. The inspired quartet session with pianist Mike LeDonne, bassist Bob Cranshaw and drummer George Coleman Jr. is only the 10th album led or co-led by the tenor saxophone icon during his 60 years in the jazz business.

"Making records hasn't been my forte," Coleman said a month before his 81st birthday in his Greenwich Village apartment, crammed with CDs, scores, books, a piano and a high-end audio system. "I didn't want to do a record just to do one. I've felt that record producers, once they recoup their money, aren't particularly interested, and the album collects dust on the shelf. But sometimes things are not about money. They're about integrity. This is about people who are really interested in my product and can put it out in a commercial atmosphere."

Coleman was speaking of Smoke Sessions proprietor Paul Stache and his partner, Frank Christopher, who opened Smoke Jazz Club in 1998 on premises formerly occupied by Augie's, where tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander—a onetime Coleman protégé who produced the new CD—frequently performed. Stache booked Coleman for Smoke's debut engagement, and hasn't stopped. When Coleman received his NEA encomium last spring, Stache hosted a celebration. During the proceedings, Coleman played a few inspired duos with LeDonne, cementing a simpatico relationship forged by several encounters during LeDonne's longstanding Tuesday-night Hammond B-3 gig at the club.

"Mike adopted some harmonic things he's heard me do with Harold Mabern," Coleman said, referring to his close friend and frequent musical partner since both were Memphis teenagers at the cusp of the '50s. "He knows how inventive we are on the bandstand. A lot of things I play aren't planned. Some people like to play a piece in a particular key and don't want to explore another tonality. I might modulate a tune through three or four keys. I like playing different tempos, too. That stimulates my mind. A lot of record producers weren't interested in that concept after things moved to so-called fusion, rock, funk, whatever they'd like to call it."

Coleman hews to his stated practice with LeDonne throughout *The Master Speaks*, as he did with Mabern on four essential quartet dates—*Manhattan Panorama* (1985), *Live At Yoshi's* (1987), *My Horns Of Plenty* (1991) and *I Could Write A Book* (1998)—that showcase his muscular yet mellow tone and dance-through-the-beat phrasing. As is often the case, the complexity and erudition of his interpretation belies the functionality of the repertoire, comprising four chestnuts from the Great America Songbook and four originals that Coleman generated during the fortnight before the session.

One of them is "Blues For B.B.," in tribute to the late B.B. King, Coleman's employer from 1953 to 1955. King frequently heard Coleman playing alto saxophone, his first instrument, in the house band at the now-iconic Mitchell's Hotel, where Coleman lived after graduating from Manassas High School in Memphis. Weaned on Charlie Parker, Louis Jordan and Earl Bostic, Coleman received a tenor from King, and soloed on it on King's early hit "Woke Up This Morning."

"B.B. was easygoing and entertaining," Coleman recalled. "He liked our playing jazz tunes before he came on the program." Some were arranged by Onzie Horne, later Isaac Hayes' musical director, who showed the teenage aspirant a thing or two. Another "professor" was Robert Talley, a pianist-arranger who demonstrated to Coleman "things you might learn at Berklee, such as half-diminished chords." He added, "Everything I learned, I'd show the guys I played with."

Three other selections evoke Coleman's 1956-'58 stay in Chicago, where he quickly found a 6-to-9 a.m. engagement with organist Prentice McCrary at Budland, a bar next door to the Pershing Lounge at 64th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue. He recalls his Chicago years as "24 hours a day of music, Polish sausages and barbecue" that "prepared me for

anything I encountered in New York." "These Foolish Things," played duo with LeDonne, evokes Gene Ammons' unparalleled balladry. One can imagine Ammons performing the dueling tenors function with Sonny Stitt, his frequent partner, on Coleman's brisk "Rhythm" variant "Time To Get Down" or, for that matter, "Sonny's Playground," a fast blues in D-flat, "a very difficult key that was one of Sonny's signature things to do."

Coleman said that he might consider a follow-up to *The Master Speaks*—if the album does well. His son expressed the old-school aesthetics that will be in play.

"My dad is a giving person, and he wants the people who listen to his music to enjoy themselves and feel like they're part of something, because they are," said Coleman Jr.

"Whatever you play, you've got to entertain," *père* Coleman interjected.

"Somebody once told me it's not called 'show art,'" his son continued. "George doesn't diminish the sophistication or complexity of what he does musically. He just keeps the crowd in mind. So many times we've done shows where people come up and say, 'I'm not really a jazz fan, but I love what you guys are doing.'"

—Ted Panken





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# In Paris Chronicles Larry Young in the 1960s

**FANS OF LARRY YOUNG (1940–'78) HAVE** reason to rejoice: Resonance Records recently issued the first collection of unreleased work by the organist in 38 years.

Sourced from the French Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF) archives, the two-CD set *In Paris: The ORTF Recordings* was four years in the making. It features sessions from radio studio performances and concert dates that Young did (circa 1964–'65) in several settings while living in the City of Lights. The late Newark, New Jersey, native is heard as a member of the Nathan Davis Quartet featuring trumpeter Woody Shaw and the Jazz aux Champs-Élysées All-Stars as well as leading his own quartets.

"I've really been looking forward to this album," said Brian Ho, a keyboardist based in San Francisco's South Bay area. "In fact, most of the jazz organ community has been talking about it."

*In Paris* is Resonance's first collaboration with France's Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA), the government organization that's caretaker to the recorded and filmed archives of groups such as the ORTF. Jack Diéval's program *Musique aux Champs-Élysées* (formerly known as *Jazz aux Champs-Élysées*) aired on the public radio network Radio Inter from 1952 to 1972 and hosted performances by locally based performers, including tenor saxophonist Davis, and touring ones. Its own All-Stars octet featured Diéval himself on piano and Shaw—who, like Young, hailed from Newark.

The four Nathan Davis Quartet tracks from 1965 showcase Young with tenor saxophone, trumpet and drums. It's the same instrumentation heard later that year on *Unity*, his historic session for Blue Note with Shaw, saxophonist Joe Henderson and drummer Elvin Jones.

"Since there's no guitar, Larry and the drummer are the complete rhythm section" in both the Davis and *Unity* quartets, Ho pointed out. "You can hear the more open sound because there isn't a guitar to fill in the space."

In the trio of All-Star selections, Young is accompanied by two trumpets, two tenor saxophones, piano, drums and conga. On the cuts on which he's the leader, he plays with All-Stars drummer Franco Manzecchi and conguero Jacky Bamboo. For the closing cut, "Larry's Blues," Young switches to piano.

As with Resonance's other archival releases, *In Paris* includes the kind of lengthy liner notes one associates with large box sets. The 68-page book in the CD package features rare photos as well as new essays from or interviews with the likes of Nathan Davis; Woody Shaw's son, Woody III; guitarist and Young bandmate John



McLaughlin; one-time Blue Note labelmate Dr. Lonnie Smith; producer/bassist Bill Laswell; and keyboardist John Medeski.

One of the album's associate producers, John Koenig, penned a piece about Olga Von Till, who studied under Béla Bartók and would later teach both Young and Bill Evans.

"That was one of the biggest revelations of the whole package," said Zev Feldman, the album's producer. "Now we're able to historically draw some parallels between some of the composers she studied with," including Zoltán Kodály and Erno Dohnányi at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, "and Larry's playing style."

Young's musical explorations continue to be influential. "He strayed from the blues and soul-jazz style of Jimmy Smith, Charles Earland and Groove Holmes in favor of a more modal bop approach," Ho said. "Larry also started playing with the use of fourths voicings on organ just like McCoy Tyner did on piano."

*In Paris* marks the beginning of a partnership between Resonance and INA. "Of all the European archives, they have one of the greatest because so many American artists came through and were documented and recorded," said Feldman, noting that Resonance plans to pursue more projects with INA. —Yoshi Kato

# Truesdell's Gil Evans Project Soars at Elmhurst College Jazz Fest

FOR A SMALL CITY, ELMHURST, ILLINOIS, can accommodate some big jazz talent. That was certainly the case on Feb. 26, when the Chicago suburb played host to composer-arranger Ryan Truesdell's scintillating large ensemble, the Gil Evans Project, as part of the Elmhurst College Jazz Festival.

In opening remarks, Truesdell spoke of his pride in the ensemble, whose most recent album, *Lines Of Color* (Blue Note/ArtistShare), was nominated for a Grammy for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album.

Truesdell, however, wasn't the only Grammy nominee on stage that night. Also among the band's ranks was trumpeter Michael Rodriguez, whose *Impromptu* was nominated for this year's Best Latin Jazz Album, as well as saxophonist Donny McCaslin, whose solo on "Arbiters Of Evolution" (from Maria Schneider's Grammy-winning CD *The Thompson Fields*) was nominated for Best Improvised Jazz Solo.

With such talent at his disposal, it's no wonder that Truesdell has become one of the most noteworthy bandleaders of his era, distinguish-

ing himself as a leading authority on the music of Gil Evans, the legendary Canadian composer and Miles Davis collaborator.

Truesdell demonstrates a deep fidelity to his idol's compositional technique, capturing the late master's acute sense of nuance and rich chordal palette. But he also brings a fresh perspective to the music, finding vibrant tonal colors and vital rhythmic structures where Evans and other arrangers may have overlooked them.

In Elmhurst, Truesdell began with a tasteful arrangement of "Lester Leaps In," which appeared on Evans' 1958 masterwork *New Bottle Old Wine*. Here, it was played as a vivacious swing with a searing alto saxophone solo by Davie Pietro.

McCaslin played with fierce dynamism on "Time Of The Barracudas," and Australian trumpeter Mat Jodrell delivered a sublime

performance on "Davenport Blues."

Sitting in on trumpet, guest artist Scott Wendholt was featured on a moving rendition of "Prayer" from Davis and Evans' 1959 album *Porgy & Bess*. The song was part of a four-part *Porgy* suite that also swept augustly through "Buzzard Song," "Gone" and "There's A Boat Leaving Soon For New York." The encore, "Summertime," was sung with unflustered swing by Wendy Gilles. —Brian Zimmerman



Ryan Truesdell (right) conducts the Gil Evans Project featuring Donny McCaslin (left) during the Elmhurst College Jazz Festival in Elmhurst, Illinois, on Feb. 26.

## BRIAN BROMBERG CIRCLES BACK TO HIS DRUM ROOTS ON **FULL CIRCLE**



### BRIAN BROMBERG FULL CIRCLE



A true familial spirit guided him to make an album that returned him to his roots in acoustic jazz. That spirit is that of his father, Howard Bromberg, who inspired both his sons to play drums as well.

*Full Circle* opens and closes with songs originally recorded by the senior Bromberg with a band of friends onto a one-off acetate. Moved by a desire to play with his late father—something he never got to do when he was alive—he copied the platter with a USB turntable then overdubbed himself playing bass in his dad's old quintet.

*Full Circle* features trumpeter Arturo Sandoval; saxophonists Bob Sheppard, Kirk Whalum and Doug Webb; pianists Randy Waldman, Mitch Forman and Otmaro Ruiz; and percussionist Alex Acuña.



# Fataka Brings Free Improv to Next Generation

By its very nature, the practice of free improvisation shuns any sort of cozy fit within the music business. The endeavor is all about music made in the moment—sounds created out of thin air without a roadmap to guide the proceedings. Still, since the discipline first emerged in the late 1960s, there has been no shortage of record labels documenting performances, trying to translate an ephemeral experience into one that can be revisited over and over again. As articulated in his fascinating 2014 book *Records Ruin the Landscape* (Duke University), David Grubbs wrote that “purchasing a CD player and beginning to acclimate myself to living with music in digital form” helped open his ears to the music of Derek Bailey, Evan Parker and Paul Lytton.

The excellent London-based label Fataka Records has carried on a tradition pioneered by imprints such as Emanem and Incus, introducing the finest British improvisers—usually in collaboration with incisive players from around the globe—to a new generation, through graphically imaginative packaging a rigorous commitment to quality performances.

“I think too many recordings of improvised music are too long, too quiet and too boring,” said Fataka’s Trevor Brent with characteristic bluntness. “I dislike the idea that recordings should simply document a live event. I think they should be events in their own right. Having said that, creating an impression of immediacy and physical proximity can be very powerful.”

Brent, 37, grew up in Bristol, where his initial involvement in improvised music focused on presenting concerts by the likes of Parker, Eddie Prevost and John Coxon, a trio whose 2008 concert ended up being the first Fataka release four years later. Since then the imprint has issued a dozen additional titles, each featuring an important London improviser: reedists Parker, John Butcher and Seymour Wright; keyboardists Sebastian Lexer, John Tilbury and Pat Thomas; bassist John Edwards; percussionists Steve Noble, Mark Sanders and Roger Turner; and vocalist Phil Minton. Their partners have included New York pianist Matthew Shipp, German trumpeter Axel Dörner and Korean cellist Okkyung Lee.

Lee praises Brent for going above and beyond in supporting the art. “When each release comes out, I can feel just how proud he is, which can be quite contagious,” she said. “As someone who plays, I tend to get quite skeptical and dazed, but his dedica-

tion to this music doesn’t seem to waver, ever—period.”

As heard on the label’s recent titles, Fataka takes an uncompromising approach to



NATHAN THOMAS

Cellist Okkyung Lee has recorded for the London-based label Fataka Records.

artistic expression. *Muddy Ditch* is a powerful duo effort by Lexer and Noble where meticulously harnessed frictive energy—rubbing, scraping, thwacking—dominates over linear patterns. *Tie The Stone To The Wheel* is a bracing set of duets by reedists Parker and Wright where moments of extended hypnosis explode in high-pitched screams, and guttural long tones erupt in frenetic, terse sallies of tightly intertwined abstraction. The recordings are intensely visceral, putting the listener close to the source in energizing, thrilling fashion.

Four years on, Fataka has managed to break even, which is a remarkable accomplishment for decidedly non-commercial music. Unlike many label owners documenting edgy music, Brent doesn’t frown upon listening to the work digitally. “I like downloads,” he said. “A lot of the attachment to a physical object has to do with the ergonomics of listening. The technology of digital music seems to be geared towards people listening to short songs on the move rather than to long pieces while staying fairly still. Physical objects seem to focus concentration more than digital files, but as everything gets more and more digital and intangible, as it inevitably will, we’re going to have to develop new ways of paying attention. Hopefully we’ll still be able to enjoy sitting down on our own and repeatedly listening to relatively long pieces of recorded music. It’s a strange pleasure, but one I’d find hard to live without.”

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# PDX Jazz Festival Stars Salute Coltrane Legacy

**THE 2016 PDX JAZZ FESTIVAL, WHICH TOOK** place in various venues in Portland, Oregon, from Feb. 18–28, has excelled over the years at historical retrospectives. This year, PDX turned its gaze on John Coltrane, acknowledging what would have been the jazz legend's 90th birthday. The final weekend offered three Coltrane programs: a recreation of the classic 1961 *Africa/Brass* sessions, a concert titled "Universal Consciousness: A Tribute to Alice Coltrane" and a tenor sax jam on Coltrane's tunes. John Coltrane's son Ravi headed up the first two shows.

The *Africa/Brass* sessions opened on Feb. 26 with a spirited quartet set featuring an intense rendition of "Resolution," from *A Love Supreme*, with Ravi on tenor and soprano saxophones, Orrin Evans on piano, Luques Curtis on bass and Mark Whitfield Jr. on drums.

Whitfield played Tony Williams-like riffs with delicious precision. The quartet was then joined by an eight-piece, locally drafted wind ensemble under the direction of Portland bandleader Charles Gray, who had earlier been designated a "jazz master" by the festival.

The two ensembles performed all five

*Africa/Brass* pieces, three from the original album ("Africa," "Blues Minor" and "Greensleeves"), plus the two that surfaced later, "Song Of The Underground Railroad" and "The Damned Don't Cry." As the album title suggests, one of the attractions of this work is its brass instrumentation and the wild, colorful parts written by Coltrane's sidemen at the time, Eric Dolphy and McCoy Tyner. Sadly, the excitement of the writing did not translate well at this performance.

Saturday's tribute to Ravi's mother, Alice Coltrane, had more heart. It featured not only the young Coltrane, but historical Coltrane collaborators Pharoah Sanders (saxophone) and Reggie Workman (bass), plus tamboura player Michael Stirling and harpist Brandee Younger, who supplied the hypnotic swarms of Alice Coltrane's meditative music, as well as some elegantly precise melodic improvisation. Drummer Andrew Cyrille and pianist Geri Allen rounded out the group.

Sanders was transcendent on the ballad "Say It (Over And Over Again)," and when Ravi explained that Charlie Haden's "For Turiya" was written "for my mother," it felt as if we had

Ravi Coltrane performs with an eight-piece wind ensemble and a jazz quartet at the PDX Jazz Festival's celebration of John Coltrane in Portland, Oregon.



been invited to a private family gathering.

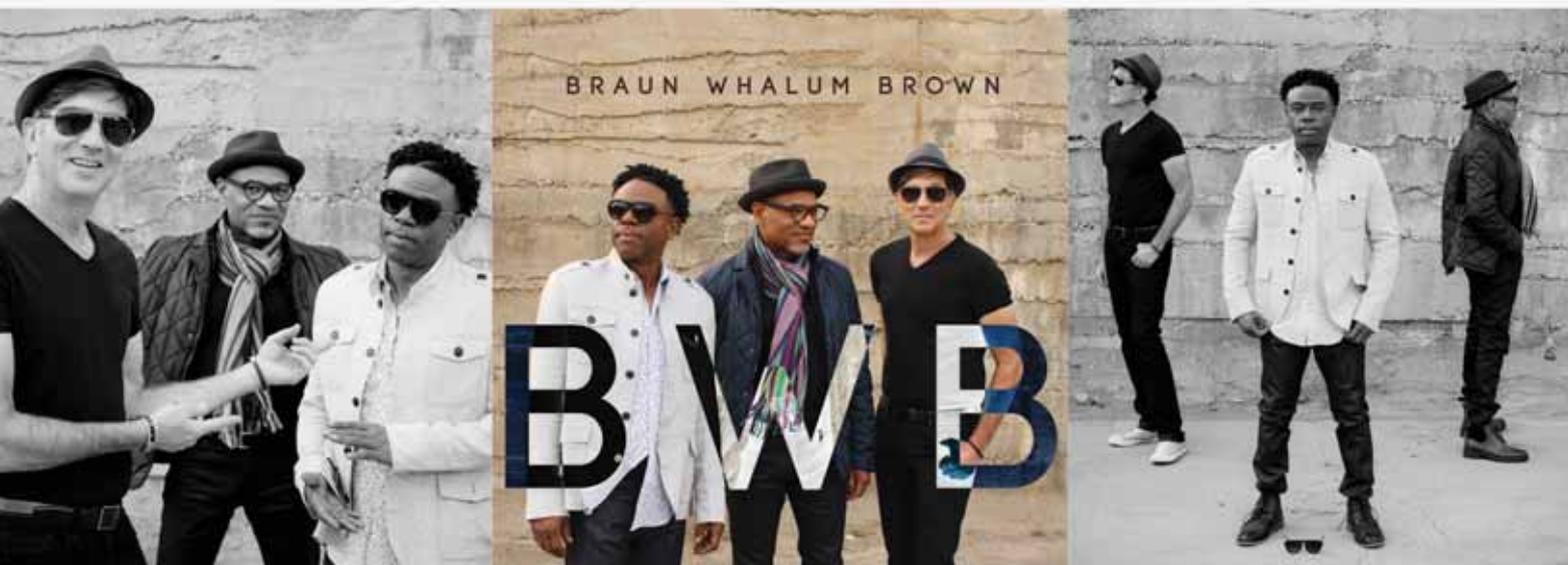
The transfixed full house brought the ensemble back for a well-deserved encore.

As edifying and carefully curated as they were, the grand Coltrane concerts were not the most captivating of the weekend. That feather must surely be placed in the cap of Workman, for his ecstatically beautiful Saturday concert in Alberta Abbey.

—Paul de Barros

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# TROY ROBERTS

## *Upping the Stakes*

Troy Roberts has come a long way—both literally and metaphorically. The saxophonist, who hails from Perth, began his undergraduate studies at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts when he was just 15 years old, thanks to a program that accepted one exceptional young student per year. Surrounded by adults and students at the university level, he got very serious and became obsessed with practicing.

“If I’d stayed in high school, I’m not sure I would have taken music as seriously because my friends from school weren’t into music,” Roberts said. “I was a loner, definitely, in terms of my interest in music.”

Roberts had started on a journey to make his way in the jazz world. After graduating from the University of Miami in 2007, he was kept on faculty much of the next five years, working in Miami and on the road with his band Nu-Jive, among other groups. But some serious encouragement from Jeff Hamilton and Gary Keller convinced him that it was time to make the move to New York and up the stakes of his game.

“I should have moved here a long time ago, but I think everything happens for a right reason,” Roberts said. “A lot of amazing things happened in those in-between years. I’d had a goal in my mind to move here before I turned 30, and I think I physically moved in my stuff two days before my 30th birthday.” He left everything behind to arrive in a city with no gigs and not many friends, wondering if he’d done the right thing.

Roberts’ first gig in New York was for International Jazz Day at the U.N. General Assembly Hall, where he shared a stage with the likes of Wayne Shorter, Zakir Hussain and Vinnie Colaiuta, among others. Roberts had done well in the Thelonious Monk International Saxophone Competition in 2008 and was invited by the Monk Institute to represent Australia in a 2012 star-studded celebration of jazz that is now an annual event. It wasn’t long before the phone began to ring and he was connecting with lots of musicians and jam sessions.

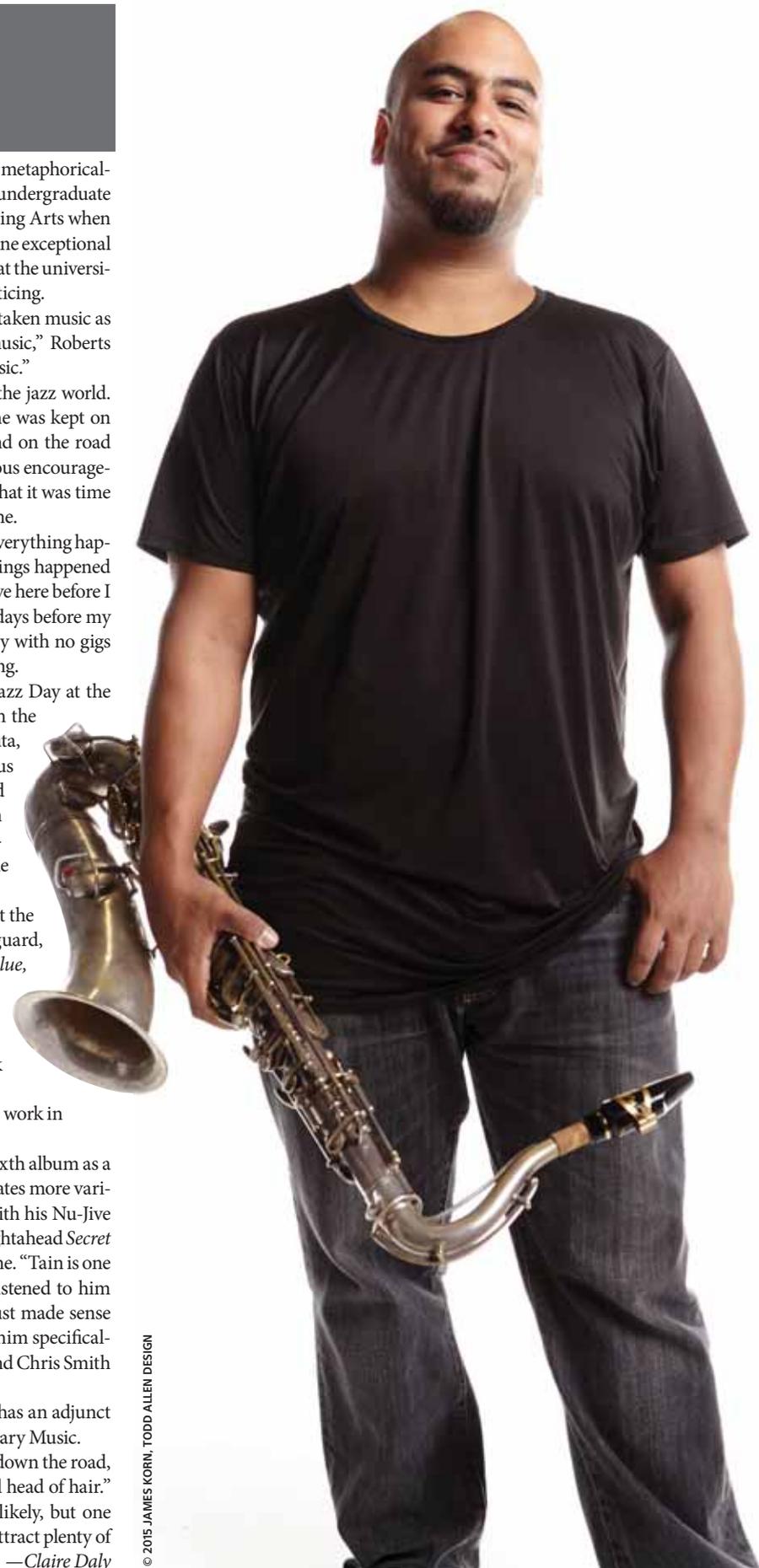
Acclaimed drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts heard Roberts at the Zinc Bar and hired him for a week at the Village Vanguard, which led to Roberts recording as a sideman for Watts on *Blue, Vol. 1* and the upcoming *Blue, Vol. 2* (Dark Key Music). He has been playing with Robby Ameen, Sammy Figueroa, Orrin Evans’ Captain Black Big Band, and he did a stint at Café Carlyle with Kurt Elling as well as some road work with Dave Douglas.

“I’ve come to realize that if you can play, you’re going to work in New York City,” he said.

The release of *Secret Rhymes* (Inner Circle Music), his sixth album as a leader, has led to more work as a bandleader and demonstrates more variety in Roberts’ style. His previous three recordings were with his Nu-Jive band and featured a lively electric sound, but the more straightahead *Secret Rhymes* is something Roberts has wanted to do for some time. “Tain is one of my all-time musical heroes,” he said. “Growing up, I listened to him on countless records. And being in his band recently, it just made sense he’d be on my next record. I wrote a lot of that music with him specifically in mind.” Venezuelan Silvano Monasterios plays piano and Chris Smith holds down the bass chair.

Roberts is extremely busy with gigs nowadays, and he has an adjunct teaching position at The New School for Jazz & Contemporary Music.

When asked what he’d like to see happening five years down the road, the quick-witted Roberts said, “Fitter, slim, taller and a full head of hair.” A complete physical transformation seems somewhat unlikely, but one thing’s certain: Roberts’ intriguing music will continue to attract plenty of interest from fans as well as fellow artists.



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—Claire Daly



## HRISTO VITCHEV

### *Emotional Connections*

For the first time in his career, Hristo Vitchev went the double-album route for his latest release, an impressionistic extravaganza titled *In Search Of Wonders* (First Orbit Sounds Music). It's a quartet project for the Bulgarian-born guitarist, composer, producer, author, painter and record label owner, who released his leader debut in 2009.

Vitchev, now based in San Francisco, is a man who wears many creative hats and has put them all to good use on this album. "I get inspired, not by music, but by a lot of visuals," said Vitchev, whose paintings have adorned the cover for all seven of his independent releases. "I go to museums and check out a lot of art. Landscapes and scenery really inspire me to write music. I [usually] keep writing until I have nothing more to say. When I wrote the music for this latest album, it ended up being so long that it was not physically possible to include all the music on one CD. It's like a snapshot of one particular moment. It represents where I am at this point."

Vitchev's quartet includes Brazilian pianist Weber Iago (aka Jasnam Daya Singh), who has worked with the leader since 2007; bassist Dan Robbins, who has been in the fold since 2009; and drummer Mike Shannon, who joined the group in 2012.

Iago has fond memories of those early days in 2007 when he and Vitchev were sidemen on other people's projects. "While we were in those situations, it didn't take long for us to recognize the potential of a possible collaboration, but nothing was rushed," said the pianist. "So, not quite two years after our initial encounter, Hristo decided he was ready to record his first album—and, boy, he was right. I was graced

with the invitation to be part of that project, which became *Song For Messambria*."

Since then, Vitchev and Iago have worked together in several configurations—quartet, quintet and duo—and toured around the world. "*In Search Of Wonders* tells a story," Iago said. "All of Hristo's albums do; however, what this one does, in a very organic way, is display his mind and soul as he sets out to experience each note he plays as a thing to be marveled by."

Vitchev is a child of the '80s and initially cut his musical teeth on rock bands like Bon Jovi and Van Halen. When he moved to the States, he truly discovered jazz and hasn't looked back since. "I studied jazz with a piano player and I started applying my piano studies to the guitar," Vitchev explained. "Now, every single tune I write is on the piano. By practicing guitar for so many years, you develop muscle memory. I don't even have to think about it and my fingers start moving. But on piano, I have to really think about it and approach it like an arranger. Logically it expresses better what I want to say."

A major factor in Vitchev's success is his close rapport with his gifted band—a dependable cadre of likeminded individuals who fit his semi-classical and atmospheric compositions like a glove.

"Weber lives in Portland, Oregon, and Mike and Dan live in the central coast of California," Vitchev said. "Many of my colleagues ask why I keep a band that's all over the West Coast. Well, it's because these people get it emotionally from the first note. We don't have to explain anything. My pianist is voicing things perfectly and the rhythm section is grooving. No comments need to be made. This is something very special." —Eric Harabadian



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STEVEN SUSSMAN

## WILL VINSON

Londoner at Home in NYC

If the measure of a jazz musician is best gauged by peer respect, alto saxophonist Will Vinson, 38, ranks as one of New York's finest. In a recent conversation, drummer Ari Hoenig, Vinson's employer on three albums and hundreds of gigs since 2004, offered a typical encomium.

"Will is one of my all-time favorites on any instrument," Hoenig said. "He's extremely tasteful and thoughtful, super-fast and smart, a sweet sound, and his intonation and rhythm are very clear. He's a virtuosic player, but technique is something he doesn't think about."

Another advocate is Gonzalo Rubalcaba, who has retained Vinson's services regularly since Yosvany Terry, unable to make several nights of a 2010 quintet date at Manhattan's Jazz Standard, called him to sub. "I knew nothing about Will," Rubalcaba recalled. "Not only did he play the music correctly, like that"—he snapped his fingers—"but what he played provoked the whole band to react."

Rubalcaba produced Vinson's new album, *Perfectly Out Of Place* (5Passion), and features him prominently on the 2015 releases *Suite Caminos* and *Charlie*. On *Caminos*, Vinson unleashes his full complement of chops, executing Rubalcaba's gnarly, "fearsomely difficult" charts with panache and elegance. On *Charlie*, comprising Rubalcaba's reharmonizations of ballads, boleros and blues tunes from the late Charlie Haden's oeuvre, Vinson lets the music breathe, conjuring long, lyric lines that capture the spirit of the songs.

Excepting a "wiggly" uptempo number

called "Stiltskin," Vinson hews to that compositional paradigm on the 10 diverse originals that comprise *Perfectly Out Of Place*, allowing his accomplished bandmates—Rubalcaba (piano and keyboards) Mike Moreno (guitar), Matt Brewer (bass), Jeff Ballard (drums) and a string quartet—to fill in the blanks. "My temperament is that I don't like telling people what do," Vinson explained. "In the best-case scenario they play what's in your head, which limits what you get back. Presenting music that contains as little information as possible to artists I admire enormously—like Gonzalo, or Aaron Parks and Lage Lund on my past records—gives me maximum benefit. They fill in the gaps with something I couldn't possibly have imagined."

Among Vinson's conceptual models were the Pat Metheny Group's *Offramp* and Sting's *The Soul Cages*, albums that he said "start with something that takes you by surprise and goes in the direction you don't expect."

His description of discovering *Offramp* as an introverted 13-year-old London jazzhead, raised on his father's recordings of "musicians who were all dead," illuminates the *Perfectly Out Of Place* title. "I couldn't believe someone so popular was recording weird, mysterious music that spoke to me in such an incredibly evocative way. In England, I always had opinions, but was too shy ever to express them. The same was always the case in music—even as I developed, I never felt like I was part of any kind of scene. But I am unequivocally part of the musical community in New York."

—Ted Panken



## BILLIE DAVIES ‘Twenty Years Stronger’

**B**illie Davies, a Belgium-born drummer whose career path has been as avant-garde as her music, had an existential crisis of sorts before she returned to drumming full-time in 2009.

She'd been working in Northern California as an art dealer—one of many hats that have ranged from DJ to gypsy musician to information architecture IT specialist—when it occurred to her she wasn't sure who she was anymore. Distraught, she picked up the phone and called Serge Vandercam (1924–2005), a Danish visual artist with whom she'd bonded, for advice.

“I just go, ‘Who am I?’” Davies recalled, her voice cracking as if stuck halfway between the onset of laughter or tears.

Vandercam's reply was terse: “You're an artist. Get on with it. Stop whining.” She took it in stride.

“That was such a reinforcement for me,” she explained. “And then a full moon ended up coming and he goes, ‘Come on, Billie. I'll paint; you play the drums.’”

The collaboration yielded a series of wild visual and aural meditations on matters like nature, wisdom, love and transcendence. But it wasn't until 2015 that Davies, now 60, put the results out into the world in the form of *Hand In Hand In The Hand Of The Moon*, an eight-part jazz symphony she recorded in her adopted home of New Orleans last spring.

Full of shifting dynamics and unorthodox riffs on swing, the album sees Davies' quintet share melodic and rhythmic responsibilities almost equally. “Tiburón” evokes darkness through a groove, while horns and bass turn percussive on the skittering “Hand In Hand.”

Reflecting on her decision to wait, re-record the material and release it 20 years after its inception, Davies is positive.

“I was 20 years older, I was 20 years stronger in my [self] expression,” she said, sipping a glass of red wine in her Terrytown, Louisiana, home.

“We've all been so subdued to be fearful of passion and anger and sadness and all this kind of stuff. Passion's everything. ... If you can still have that and you've mastered these channels of energy, then you can just mold them in a certain way into music.”

That ethos, along with a bohemian sense of art as necessity, has driven Davies since childhood, when she regularly joined her jazz-head mother at shows. Davies went on to sing classically, drumming on the side, but things shifted after her teenage years. Her voice changed. She

began exploring Europe. And she maintained a special pride in being a female drummer at a time when they were few and far between.

“There's not enough of us, and we have our own ways of expressing ourselves,” she said, citing her appreciation of Cindy Blackman and Sheila E.

Today, Davies is one of the few female drummers in a leadership role on the New Orleans jazz scene. She describes members of her band, the Bad Boyzzz, as “a family” focused on staging conversation through song.

“In the majority of rehearsals, we end up being able to predict what the people around us are doing,” Bad Boyzzz bassist Oliver Watkinson said. “Billie might play the bass line, for example, and combined with the rearrangement of the horns and how the bass fits into that, makes me view the whole process differently.”

Watkinson noted that whether the band is playing an original or a standard, Davies keeps the role of each musician flexible—an approach that forces players to keep passion and feeling at the forefront of their self-expression.

Davies expressed concern that “jazz is becoming too intellectualized,” but obstructing that process isn't her goal.

“I'm not here to stop it,” she said, smiling pensively. “I just want to strip it down of all the bullshit.”

—Jennifer Odell

Donny McCaslin

# Final Magic

By Phillip Lutz

Photo by Jimmy & Dena Katz



David Bowie cultivated an air of mystery that surrounded him even in death. The evidence is all over his farewell album, *Blackstar* (Columbia)—most explicitly in his last recorded statement, the plaintively rendered, pointedly titled closer, “I Can’t Give Everything Away.”

Still, it was disappointing that Donny McCaslin, who led the band on the album, had, in the wake of Bowie’s passing, been told not to give *anything* away about the time he and the singer listened to the final version of this brilliantly realized work.

“I’m not supposed to talk about it,” McCaslin said, his tone subdued and his gaze averted in a manner uncharacteristic of the physically imposing, normally expansive saxophonist.

Precisely who issued the gag order was unclear; perhaps it was a final flourish Bowie served up from the Other Side. Whatever the case, McCaslin’s initial dismissal was not the last word on the listening session. Pressed on the matter, he recalled its date as a portentous Friday, the 13th of November. He then delivered a morsel about its location:

“It was on Planet Earth.”

Cheeky though that comment seemed, it hinted at something substantive. Bowie, after all, was the otherworldly Starman whose assessment of Planet Earth, viewed from a tin can floating in space, was that it was irredeemably blue. In that context, it was a revelation—and, for his fans, a consolation—that, as time was running out, he had found his emotional grounding on terra firma.



LEN KATZ/DETROIT JAZZ FESTIVAL



Above: Jason Lindner (left), Mark Guilliana and Donny McCaslin at 55 Bar in New York City on Feb. 18. Inset: McCaslin and Tim Lefebvre at the 2012 Detroit Jazz Festival.

“He was so pleased with the record and how it had come out, and that is what sticks with me,” McCaslin said, his voice suddenly robust as he rose from the kitchen table in his Brooklyn apartment. “That day, listening to it all, and talking to him, he was just thrilled.”

On Jan. 10, less than two months after the listening session and barely a month before the conversation in McCaslin’s apartment, Bowie was gone at age 69. But for McCaslin, 49, and his band—Jason Lindner on keyboards, Tim Lefebvre on bass and Mark Guiliana on drums, augmented by Ben Monder on guitar—the collaboration’s impact is just starting to be understood.

“Working with him was a life-changing experience for me,” McCaslin said.

The experience had roots in the early 1990s, when, not long after arriving in New York from Boston, where he had attended Berklee, McCaslin joined Maria Schneider’s big band. On Monday nights at Visiones, the long-departed haunt on Macdougal Street in Greenwich Village, the band was making a name for itself, with McCaslin’s tenor a main attraction.

Over the years, the relationship between McCaslin and Schneider deepened and, on June 9, 2014, it opened a door. Bowie, a fan of Schneider’s, invited her, along with a coterie from the band—McCaslin, Guiliana, trombonist Ryan Keberle and bassist Jay Anderson—to the Euphoria Studios in New York’s Chelsea to workshop his planned single, “Sue (Or In A Season Of Crime).”

Released as the lead single from Bowie’s compilation album *Nothing Has Changed* (Columbia), “Sue” earned Schneider a Grammy in the category Best Arrangement, Instrumental and Vocals. At its core is a wailing McCaslin, who, on Grammy night (Feb. 16), was also basking in both a nomination for Best Improvised Jazz Solo, on “Arbiters Of Evolution,” from Schneider’s *The Thompson Fields* (ArtistShare), and praise for a new version of “Sue” on *Blackstar*.

More than 18 months earlier,

on June 1, 2014, McCaslin and the group were playing Greenwich Village’s 55 Bar when Bowie, ever the man of mystery, slipped in. Tipped off by Schneider, who was with him, he was doing reconnaissance for *Blackstar*. What he heard in that Christopher Street basement—and obviously liked—was the group casually working its way through material from *Fast Future* (Greenleaf), the saxophonist’s third recorded dive into the world of electronica.

After eight albums as a leader of acoustic bands, a skeptical McCaslin had, following discussions with trusted producer and sometime sideman David Binney, come to view the adoption of an electronic aesthetic favorably. “Before I make a record we usually get together and talk,” McCaslin said. “He suggested, ‘You’ve got to make an electric record.’ My initial reaction was, ‘Maybe yes, maybe no.’ But the more I talked about it, the more I thought it was a good idea.”

The talk yielded *Perpetual Motion* (Greenleaf). Released in 2011, it balanced a variety of influences, from polyrhythmic funk and refracted Memphis blues to a kind of impressionism. It also offered evidence that McCaslin’s nascent interest in electronics would be nurtured by Lefebvre and Guiliana, who were joined on the album by Antonio Sanchez on drums and Adam Benjamin and Uri Caine on keyboards. Binney played alto saxophone on one tune.

The album’s promise prompted a similarly oriented follow-up after McCaslin was urged to produce one by trumpeter Dave Douglas, with whom he had, in 2011, been sharing what became his rhythm section—Lefebvre, Guiliana and Lindner—at the Jazz Baltica Festival in Germany. That concert presented material from *Perpetual Motion* and Douglas’ *Keystone* (Greenleaf).

“Dave said, ‘You should go further into electronica territory,’” McCaslin recalled. “I totally agreed. I was feeling that myself, and the end result was *Casting For Gravity*.” The album, also on Greenleaf, completed the electronic palette by dropping into the mix

Lindner’s atmospheric, courtesy of a wall of synthesizers.

Compared with *Perpetual Motion*, 2012’s *Casting For Gravity* made a bigger impression in the music press, and it ultimately led to last year’s *Fast Future*—a deeper, more layered exploration of electronica’s possibilities. Offering a panoply of dance-beat strategies

house, is well placed in relation to “54 Cymru Beats”—referring, in his words, to the “virtuosity of the lines” and the “heavy life” of the melody. “It gets you all around the instrument. The challenge for me is, How do I improvise over that in a way that feels right, considering how jagged the melody is?”

Challenge, writ large, is clearly

**‘We’re not a straightahead group. We’re playing some edgy stuff—we’re pushing boundaries. My overall sense is that he was into that.’**

tempered by an intermittently softer sound, it drew from source material like Los Angeles-based Baths’ “No Eyes,” which McCaslin, conjuring a fusion of his overdubbed horns and Binney’s wordless vocals, transformed into one of his most striking and sensitive covers.

“We wanted something a little more lyrical and deeper into the electronic realm,” McCaslin said.

*Fast Future* indeed points to a future, McCaslin said, mentioning the showpiece “54 Cymru Beats” in this regard. In McCaslin’s treatment, this tune by English artist Aphex Twin (aka Richard D. James) becomes a frenetic yet curiously focused exercise in extreme but purposeful technique, dazzling with its multiphonic cries and intervallic leaps played out in an open harmonic structure.

“It’s a good example,” he said, “of where the music is going now. It’s very electro. I’m getting different sounds on the saxophone. And—I hesitate to say this—it’s almost like bebop, though it’s very different.”

The invocation of bebop, an idiom whose demands have always sat squarely within McCaslin’s wheel-

what’s driving McCaslin to a deeper consideration of electronica, even as he avoids plugging in. “The idea is to keep pushing the envelope, for me not to stay in my comfort zone as an improviser,” he said. “I’m still playing acoustically, not using effects. But it’s pushed me a lot to get into some different areas on the horn. I feel like we’re exploring this intersection of elec-

David Bowie (1947–2016) enlisted McCaslin’s group to play on *Blackstar*.



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JIMMY & DENA KATZ

David Bowie saw the Donny McCaslin Group play at 55 Bar in 2014.

tronica music and improvisation.”

That territory is plainly where Bowie wanted to be in his final effort. “Let’s face it,” McCaslin said, “we’re not a straightahead group. We’re playing some edgy stuff. We’re pushing boundaries, and my overall sense is that he was into that.”

**B**owie, whose passion for jazz started with bandleaders like Stan Kenton and Gil Evans (Schneider’s mentor), no doubt saw McCaslin’s group as a tool for advancing the music. Such a tactic would have been of a piece with his “collagist” mode of operation, said saxophonist Lenny Pickett, who worked with Bowie on two albums—*Tonight* (EMI), from 1984, and *Heathen* (Sony), from 2002—and performed with him on his *Serious Moonlight* tour in 1982.

“David figured out who he’d want to cast and then allowed the people to contribute the way they’d normally contribute,” said Pickett, the longtime music director of the Saturday Night Live Band and a onetime member of the San Francisco Bay group Tower of Power, which McCaslin, a Bay Area native, cited as an early influence.

In figuring out whom he wanted to cast, Bowie by all indications left little to chance. His personnel scouting extended beyond a visit to 55 Bar. Lindner said that Bowie mentioned having seen YouTube videos of the keyboardist’s *Now vs. Now* project. And, he said, Bowie had urged Guiliana to bring the sensibility of his Beat Music project to bear on *Blackstar*.

For his part, McCaslin said that Bowie had praised the group’s treatment of both “54 Cymru Beats” and a piece from *Casting For Gravity*, Binney’s “Praia Grande,” pointing on the latter to a hard-driving vamp whose intensity is echoed if not amplified throughout *Blackstar*. That intensity, Lefebvre said, reflects in large measure the in-studio exhortations of Tony Visconti, Bowie’s longtime producer and a constant control-room presence.

“Tony,” he explained, “would say, ‘Make that more aggressive.’” The band responded with bursts of collective energy.

Nowhere is that more evident than on the *Blackstar* version of “Sue.” The song offers some of the album’s most forceful interplay between the rhythm sec-

tion and Bowie’s voice. Monder’s Fender Stratocaster—an instrument he said he “rarely brought out of the house”—enjoys a potent airing, as do Lindner’s Minimoog Voyager, MicroMoog and Prophet synthesizers.

But among the seven cuts that made the album—perhaps an equal number, according to band members, were recorded and set aside—“Sue,” McCaslin said, proved the trickiest to execute, owing to the specter of Schneider’s version looming in the background.

“David and I were talking about how we could make it different,” McCaslin said. “We were trying to find the right vibe and right form. I remember saying a version featuring his voice, bass and drums—just stripping away everything—would be really cool. We tried that—keeping the form open—and it didn’t really work.”

After experimenting, they tried a more tightly woven sound and then loosened the weave. McCaslin took Schneider’s score, reduced it for clarinet and flutes and, with a bit of editing, produced to great effect the final charts. “I feel like the spirit is really there,”

he said. “It’s a compelling version of the song that’s quite different from hers.”

**T**he other outlier was “Dollar Days,” the only tune, apart from the previously recorded “Sue,” for which Bowie did not provide a demo. Consequently, the experience of processing the material proved more intimate. “We sketched out a little lead sheet and just started to do it,” Monder said, adding that the band untangled the knottiest problems along the way.

“Dollar Days” revealed itself to be one of the more contemplative tunes in the program. With the band gathered in the studio, Bowie strummed guitar, sang what he had of the lyrics and sat with Lindner at the piano, laying out in considerable detail a set of chords whose outline remained largely intact throughout the process.

At one point, rhythmic issues came to the fore, Guiliana said. “It was like, ‘What should the groove be like in the verse, how should the bridge go?’” James Murphy, leader of LCD Soundsystem, who was on hand as something of a facilitator, stepped up and suggested that

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Guiliana use tom-toms.

"David said, 'Yeah, yeah,'" Guiliana recalled. "That was a moment where we were very collaborative, searching together, egoless. That's what ended up on the record. It took us from nothing to a realized take in a day."

Many moments of real-time creation popped up, not least on the multipart title track. A critical issue was maintaining a seamless flow despite the parts' stark juxtaposition of styles. The musicians created the raw material in discrete sections on the spot, and the flow was fashioned during sequencing and mixing in post-production.

"There weren't a lot of takes," Monder recalled. "David said, 'What's going to happen is we're going to do a section and it's going to dissolve and morph into the next section,' which was more like a pop tune, 'then it's going to morph back into the original thing with a stronger beat.' We just sort of improvised a dissolution of the first part, and had everything trail

off. Then we recorded the second section immediately after that separately."

The penning of lyrics called up Bowie's most inscrutable side. On "Girl Loves Me," most notably, he offhandedly warned of mystifying words ahead before introducing bits of futuristic argot from Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*. Concocted nouns like "vellocet" (a fictional chemical) and verbs like "viddy" (to see) turned heads but were so well aligned rhythmically that the song proceeded without a missed beat.

At times, the lyrics were mystifying as much for their outré quality as their obscure meaning. Also on "Girl," a form of a four-letter word that repeats may prove problematic for some mainstream presenters. But it is rendered so urgently—and, like the *Clockwork* lingo, executed with such exquisite rhythmic logic—that it demands to be heard. By all indications, Bowie was beyond caring about issues of propriety.

"It was all about the art for him," McCaslin said. "He was liv-

ing the art. He had placeholder lyrics. As he was listening back, I could see him experimenting with different words. He was fully engaged in the creative process."

Bowie was engaged even when band members were in casual mode. As they were kicking around ideas during a jam on "Lazarus," McCaslin said, Bowie overheard an arpeggiated figure Lefebvre had cooked up. "He said to Tim, 'I like that, can you do that some more?'" Lefebvre responded, and the figure became the starting point for a felicitous intro and outro. "He quickly identifies what he wants, what he likes, and we develop it."

Time, at an obvious premium, was not wasted. Nor was space in the intimate quarters of the Magic Shop in New York's SoHo, which closed in March. "It's drums, keyboard, bass, David," McCaslin said. "I'm in this booth facing straight ahead where David is. Tony's there and it's very like, 'OK, let's go.' We'd play through it once, maybe, and he'd be singing and maybe we'd rehearse and we'd

start with takes. It was pretty much first, second, third take. Then we'd all go and listen. If there were any drummer-bass fixes, which there hardly ever were, that would happen first. Then maybe David would do some vocal things. He never had anything written out."

McCaslin said that Bowie proved especially adroit at form and structure; the frameworks he created on his demos largely held throughout the recording process, as did the rudimentary chords and horn parts. "That being said," he explained, "he was totally open to our input. He encouraged us to essentially go for whatever we were hearing.

"It was never a thing where, 'You guys lay it down and I'll come and overdub the vocal.' He was always in there singing with us, and that was great because his energy—his voice was really strong—and his conviction were always really there. When I listen to it, it's a David Bowie record—those are his songs. But it's also us playing. I'm not trying to do anything other than what I'm hearing."

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part of his evenings working on his acclaimed play *Lazarus*, the hours for recording sessions were a circumscribed 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., during which the band typically produced two songs a day. For jazz musicians used to knocking off long sets in a day, that might seem modest. But the pace never slackened. And Bowie, who in the morning regularly offered comments on the previous day's output, must have been listening at night after he finished working on his play.

For a week each in January and February and three or four days in March, after which *Monder* and McCaslin each spent a day on overdubs, Bowie and McCaslin were in constant email contact. McCaslin furiously wrote charts. And while the emails fell off after the period of recording, they picked up again in the fall as the album release neared. That was on Jan. 8, two days before Bowie died.

"When it was happening," McCaslin said, "he was all the way in."

While Bowie might have been racing against time on the *Blackstar* project, basic elements of his work process mirrored those from Pickett's days. The demo stage had proved "a little secretive," but, once in the studio, "there was a collaborative aspect to it, a fluid thing going," said Pickett, a member of the Borneo Horns, a breakaway unit formed with the other saxophonists on the *Serious Moonlight* tour, Stan Harrison and Steve Elson.

"It's not like doing a Miles Davis album, where the charts are brought in and everybody does what Gil [Evans] wrote," he said. "It's maybe more like one of those Miles quintet albums, where he's telling everybody what he wants as they go along, but Herbie's still being Herbie, Wayne's still being Wayne."

"It's awesome that this has happened for Donny."

McCaslin and the members of the band generally agreed that they would, for the foreseeable future, refrain from playing music from *Blackstar*. The exception would be a 20-artist tribute to Bowie at

Radio City Music Hall on April 1 at which they planned an instrumental version of "Lazarus." Visconti was scheduled to play bass, said Linder, who added that he would take on the harmony parts with his synthesizer while McCaslin handled the melody and solo duties.

Beyond that, McCaslin has signed with the Motéma label, and a new album is slated for October. He's currently composing songs for the project.

As he continues to process the *Blackstar* experience, he is noticing its impact on his material: "Sometimes I'll notice how there's a bass line and a descending part in the harmony and a melody on the top—something simple but so compelling—and it's a reminder to me not to overwrite but to write what I'm hearing."

Eager to illustrate the point, he migrated quickly from the kitchen to the bedroom, where he positioned himself in front of a broken-in Wurlitzer electric keyboard, much, he said, like the one his musician father used back in the day in Santa Cruz. Reading

from a lead sheet, he played a work-in-progress that had the Bowie-like traits he had described.

"The tune should be called 'Bowie,'" he said.

Prominently displayed among the sheets of paper arrayed on McCaslin's stand was music for Stravinsky's *Rite Of Spring*, one of the pieces, he said, from which he derived some small consolation after Bowie's death. "*Blackstar* comes out, I download it, David passes and I can't listen to it," he said. "I felt kind of unmoored, I was in this weird space."

Slowly, he said, he has begun to come out of it, in part by remembering the example set by Bowie, who carried on audaciously despite—or, perhaps, because of—the prospect of his final leave-taking of Planet Earth.

"There was his fearlessness and his envelope pushing," McCaslin said. "He was living life to the fullest, evolving and changing and growing. That reinforces the feeling as an artist to keep going for what I'm hearing and be true to that." **DB**

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# KURT ROSENWINKEL FOLLOW THE VITALITY

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BY TED PANKEN PHOTO BY MICHAEL JACKSON



‘Let your instrument tell you what to do.’



Near the end of Kurt Rosenwinkel's packed master class at Barcelona's Conservatori del Liceu on Nov. 19, a few hours before the guitarist's DownBeat Blindfold/Winefold Test, a student asked advice on the process of finding an instrumental voice. Rosenwinkel told her, perhaps cryptically, "Let your instrument tell you what to do."

A week later, on the phone from his Berlin apartment, he fleshed out that remark. "The instrument is a filter through which your music organizes itself," Rosenwinkel said. "If you're playing guitar, it shows you things based on its nature. If you're playing piano, what you find will organize your music. I don't need the guitar for my musical identity. It's just an instrument, and it happens to be the one I've developed the most or am most known for."

It seemed a curious assertion: Rosenwinkel, 45, has devoted tens of thousands of hours since age 12 developing and refining a technique and conception that a sizable, cross-genre cohort of post-Gen-X guitar practitioners now regard as definitive.

"I have to figure out how to live up to what the songs that come out of me demand without the instrument presenting problems—so that the instrument disappears, as it were, and I feel free musically," he explained. "I love guitar, but I'm very aware of its limitations. Both my parents are pianists; I started piano at 9 and guitar at 12. At a certain point, I chose guitar, because I was better at it. But in many ways playing piano feels more natural, like it's my mother instrument."

Rosenwinkel's remarks offered an interesting window into his activities since the release of the 2012 album *Stars Of Jupiter* (Word of Mouth), a critically acclaimed program of 10 originals for quartet (Aaron Parks, keyboards; Eric Revis, bass; Justin Faulkner, drums) that extends and elaborates upon ideas explored on such early career signposts as *The Enemies Of Energy*, *The Next Step* and *Deep Song*.

For one thing, Rosenwinkel has been working on three separate albums. He describes one, *End To End*, as "my rock album—short songs with lyrics that have typical song forms." Another, seven years in the making and "95 percent ready for mixing," is *Heartcore II—Caipi*, a "Brazilian fantasy" emanating from Rosenwinkel's "idiosyncratic, intuitive relation to Brazilian music" that he describes as a follow-up to *Heartcore*, his electronica-oriented 2003 collaboration with Q-Tip, a friend from his high school days in Philadelphia.

"I never sit down for the purpose of writing music," Rosenwinkel said. "I start playing, and sometimes a ballad comes out, or a 'caipi' or a rock song or a bebop tune. I have no idea what will hap-

pen; I follow what comes. Over the years, I've collected these songs, and it's been interesting to recognize the different homes they enter as they come out of me."

Third is a solo project, distilling Rosenwinkel's solo performance practice since 2010, as demonstrated at a Nov. 18 Barcelona concert, where he deployed laptop, keyboard, Ableton Live software, looping devices and headset to create pungent—if static—bass lines and crisp beats that propelled long, melodic, modulated improvisations.

"Solo guitar is cool, but over 90 minutes I want to hear rhythms, harmony, bass lines and interweaving parts that are impossible for me to do just playing the instrument," he said. "I've discovered and invented ways to use technology to create these worlds—creating song forms and slowly finishing songs on the fly."

As Rosenwinkel continued, it became apparent that the process he follows in the solo space mirrors his predisposition since childhood to create imaginary worlds with music. "Me and my best friend would take tennis rackets and cardboard, put on records, and pretend we were playing guitar and singing," he said. "Then I started to play piano and he started to play drums, and we transferred all that imagination and creativity into playing these instruments. Then I started writing songs. It has gone from there, following that internal impulse to explore and enjoy the journey of getting into music."

This spring, Rosenwinkel will take the next stage of that journey away from Berlin's Jazz Institut, his employer since 2007, where the security blanket of tenure finally became secondary to his teaching obligations, particularly the mandate that he be present for final exams the first two weeks of July, which is prime time on the European festival circuit.

In September, he and his longtime manager-booking agent amicably concluded their professional relationship, leaving Rosenwinkel to handle his own business and investigate a new recording contract. After engaging in serious discussions with a prominent jazz label, Rosenwinkel decided to launch his own label, Heartcore, with *Heartcore II—Caipi*.

"This is a time of change, of reclaiming control over my life, a sort of self-empowerment," Rosenwinkel said. "Even though there was nothing bad about where I was, life starts to change, and you have to follow it where the vitality goes. You have to make moves to get to the comfort zone where you feel healthy and do your best. I've been attuned to that and made moves intuitively throughout my life."

DB

## KURT ROSENWINKEL

For the sixth annual DownBeat Blindfold/Winefold Test at the Barcelona wine club Monvínic, guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel listened to tracks that had been paired thematically with wines selected by sommelier César Cánovas. This lively, unique variation on the Blindfold Test was part of the 2015 Voll-Damm Barcelona International Jazz Festival. In the text below, Rosenwinkel comments on the music, and Cánovas describes the rationale for each wine selection.



Rosenwinkel takes the Blindfold/Winefold Test in Barcelona.

LORENZO DURASO/VOLL-DAMM BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

### Mike Moreno

"One And A Half" (*Another Way*, World Culture Music, 2012) Moreno, electric and acoustic guitars; Warren Wolf, vibraphone; Aaron Parks, piano; Matt Brewer, bass; Ted Poor, drums.

**Wine:** Egon Müller Scharzhoff. "The steep slopes of the river Saar in Germany are home to the Riesling grape, which in the hands of Egon Müller reaches its highest level of excellence, expressed in a refined and precise language. This wine has a beautiful play of textures, and a harmonious combination of tastes and aromas. Its acidity, with sharp, penetrating and rhythmic tones, gives a mysterious feeling of apparent lightness, although in reality it is a wine of density and depth. The wine's aromas are full of refreshing floral and citrus sensations that reflect this refined and precise style."

Gilad Hekselman? Julian Lage? Jonathan Kreisberg? Ah, is it Mike Moreno? [after] I dig the piece very much. I like its open world. They create a beautiful space with the splashing chords, almost like waves crashing on the rocks. It's organized in a natural way, but has a chaotic beauty. Who's the vibraphonist? Warren Wolf? Mike is a great player. I like his tone and diction. He's very clear with what he plays. Beautiful melodies. The guitar is a very staccato instrument, and we're all trying to solve the problem of how to create an atmospheric quality with the lines. Mike uses effects very tastefully—subtle but effective. 5 stars.

### Peter Bernstein/Larry Goldings/ Bill Stewart

"The Danger Zone" (*Live At Smalls*, SmallsLIVE, 2011) Bernstein, guitar; Goldings, Hammond B-3 organ;

Stewart, drums.

**Wine:** Gonzalez Byass Viña AB. "This is a historic wine from a historic bodega. A sherry that comes from the wine tradition of Andalusia, the land of flamenco. A deep, brooding and intense wine that moves you and touches your soul. This sherry Fino-Amontillado is clear, precise, with the tension that comes from its extreme dryness. It is capable of keeping the palate in a fiery tension, which is relieved only by the beauty of its endless aromatic persistence."

That sounds like Peter Bernstein. Certain turns of phrase tip it off. What threw me is the bending, which I don't often hear him do. For a second, I thought of Bobby Broom. Peter has such a stately tone. He plays one note and you hear the whole instrument. There's so much depth in just one note—he's pensive, taking his time with phrases, letting a note trail off or naturally fade away while still holding it . . . The blues is such a great context to let that happen. There's a sad or bittersweet beauty to that. He's so grounded in tradition, and it's so fully alive. Who's the band? Oh, Larry Goldings and Bill Stewart. 5 stars.

### Lionel Loueke

"Chardon" (*Heritage*, Blue Note, 2012) Loueke, guitar; Robert Gasper, piano; Derrick Hodge, bass; Mark Guiliana, drums.

**Wine:** Bouchard Finlayson Pinot Noir. "Bouchard Finlayson began as a collaboration between a South African winemaker and a French winery. It is a fusion wine, merging multiple influences, bringing French winemaking traditions to a South African terroir. The African sun and the cold sea currents of Walker Bay are ideal for cre-

ating this reflection of the elegance and tradition of French wines. A beautiful melody of the perfumes, soft textures and delicate balance of the Pinot Noir grape come together in this harmonious composition."

Adam Rogers? Beautiful song. It's not often you hear a steel-string acoustic guitar on a jazz piece. Julian Lage? No. Got some synths in there. Oh! Lionel? How gorgeous is that song? He's a wonderful writer. Is that Herbie on piano? Aaron Parks? [after] Wow, that sounds beautiful. Gasper produced the record? Kudos. It's lovely. I love the song's harmonic rhythm; that the chords don't always come on the start of the bar. Even though it's in 4/4, maybe one chord will last for three beats and the next chord will last for five beats. It's a plaintive, beautiful, emotive exposition of the melody; he's just letting that melody speak. I recognized Lionel in the sound of the guitar, the way . . . his personality came through. 5 stars.

### Lage Lund

"Straight Street" (*Idlewild*, Criss Cross Jazz, 2014) Lund, guitar; Ben Street, bass; Bill Stewart, drums.

**Wine:** Larmandier Bernier, Champagne blanc de blancs Terre de Vertus. "Pierre and Sophie Larmandier make a precise, unpretentious style of Champagne in which the clarity and sharpness of its citrus and creamy aromas stand out. The vivacity and rhythmic play of the bubbles provide a swing and tension that never get lost in the composition. They blend with the dryness and acidity, bringing dynamism and depth."

Is that Lage Lund? His sound is clear to me. He's very deliberate in his phrases, and his tone

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is centered, very grounded. Also, his technique of playing a melody and then supporting it with chords, wherever he is, with wonderful voicings—he's a master of voice-leading. Also, the way he plays over this faster tempo with a floating quality. The rhythm section is swinging, moving at a certain clip, and he lets his phrases fall loosely, like a throw blanket on a couch. Then, when he gets into the rhythm, it's very in-the-cut, very swinging. He gives himself a lot of space, which is a good reminder for all of us to be generous with your space. 4 stars.

## Michael Gibbs & The NDR Big Band

"On The Lookout/Far Away" (*Michael Gibbs & The NDR Big Band Play A Bill Frisell Set List*, Cuneiform, 2015) Bill Frisell, guitar; Jeff Ballard, drums; Stephan Diez, guitar; Ingmar Heller, bass; Vladislav Sendeci, piano; Thorsten Benkenstein, Ingolf Burkhardt, Felix Meyer, Michael Leuschner, trumpets/flugelhorns; Fiete Felsch, Peter Bolte, Christof Lauer, Lutz Büchner, Thomas Gramatzki, woodwinds; Dan Gottshall, Klaus Heidenreich, Stefan Lottermann, trombones; Ingo Lahme, bass trombone.

**Wine: Domaine de la Janasse Chateauneuf-du-Pape.** "Chateauneuf-du-Pape is one of the oldest and greatest French appellations, and one of the most prestigious wines in the world. Located in the south of France, its wines reflect the warmth and intensity of the Mediterranean climate. The Domaine de la Janasse is a wine that moves forward, filling the composition with new nuances and aromatic notes. This progressive growth adds new instruments, tastes and aromatic registers to create the powerful, resounding sound of a big band."

Bill Frisell. What a happening song! Great arrangement. Great orchestration. Such a wonderful atmosphere. Great combination of musicians, whoever they are. I don't know the song. It almost sounds like Guillermo Klein, but I know it's not. I'm trying to detect whether I think it's an American band or a European band. The drummer makes me think it's a European band. I was thinking it's a West Coast band, at first, because of the way the drummer is playing, but a lot of drummers in Europe have a similar kind of thing. Is it the Metropole? No? Tell me. [*The drummer is Jeff Ballard.*] Well, he lives in Paris. My man! He's from the West Coast. Bill Frisell is a huge inspiration. Two of the most important albums for me are the ones he did in the late 1980s with his classic band of Hank Roberts, Kermit Driscoll and Joey Baron. I heard them play a lot in New York. I also used to hear Bill play with the Paul Motian Trio with Joe Lovano when they were really at their apex, creating the most mind-blowing music we've heard. He's such a singular musician. You can't really figure out what he's doing by looking at his fingers. There's something else going on that's just magic, and you have to be content to leave it a mystery. 5 stars.

## Marc Ribot Trio

"Old Man River" (*Live At The Village Vanguard*, Pi, 2014) Ribot, guitar; Henry Grimes, bass; Chad Taylor, drums.

**Wine: Domaine de la Janasse Wine: Demeter Zoltán Tokaj Dry (MV Store).** "The Tokaj wine region is one of the most historic and traditional wine regions in central Europe. Located in northern Hungary, it is known for its dense, opulent and intensely perfumed sweet wines, made mostly from the Furmint grape. This particular wine represents the more austere version of this classic: a dry wine of apparent simplicity but deep longevity and timelessness, full of complex, subtle and delicate perfumes, discrete nuances with a beauty that we must be careful not to overlook."

"Old Man River." It's a deliberately ugly approach—which has its charms. Is it Mary Halvorson? I like it because it's not trying to be pretty, and the song is very deep, so I find a meaningful relationship between the way they're playing and the song itself. Other than that, I like that somebody is playing a guitar very raw. Who could that be? Marc Ribot. Ah-ha! At first, I thought it was an old recording, because of the guitar sound and the ambient noise and so on, but then, when the band came in, I knew it was present day—probably New York in a downtown dive. Marc has a really strong-and-wrong approach, a wrong-is-right kind of aesthetic, which I love. Not a lot of guys I know play guitar like that. Mary Halvorson was close because she's in Marc's band. I don't want to give stars—music is momentary; it's about what mood you're in as well as something you can objectively state. Maybe it will be 2 stars now and 5 stars tomorrow.

## Jakob Bro

"And They All Came Marching Out Of The Woods" (*Gefion*, ECM, 2015) Bro, guitar; Thomas Morgan, bass; Jon Christensen, drums.

**Wine: Pardas Rosat.** "Ramón Parera and Jordi Arnan are two introverted and thoughtful winemakers. Their vineyards are located in the Catalan region of Penedès, and undoubtedly the Mediterranean character has an influence. But more important are the calm and reserved personalities of the people who make the wine. For their rosé, they use the Sumoll grape, a similarly reserved grape, but one that hides magnificent melodies. It is easy to drink, but requires concentration to appreciate the harmonious simplicity of its structure, marked by a refreshing acidity. We need to smell it a few times and then pause to slowly capture the beauty of its aromatic notes."

Heavily influenced by Bill Frisell, obviously. If you hadn't played Bill Frisell already, I would have guessed him. Did he just quote Coldplay? It's hard to guess, because I hear a ton of Bill Frisell, but I can't find anything else to grab on to. As for the song, I enjoy the idea of having the moving bass line be the only thing that's really moving. Everything else is washy, and the bass line is carrying. I like that aesthetic. As far the drums and the guitar, it's not very distinctive. It's a very general way of playing the tune, just a kind of washy thing, without much character for me to figure out who it is. It's cool. If it was on the radio, I would dig it. I'd probably think, "Who is that? That's somebody who is



very influenced by Bill Frisell." [*after*] I already guessed Jakob a couple of times. He's a wonderful guitarist. When I met him at a little club in Aarhus, he was playing the hell out of the guitar, with such a distinctive sound, such a burning conceptual musical fire within him. I would very much like to hear more of what I heard that first time.

## Russell Malone

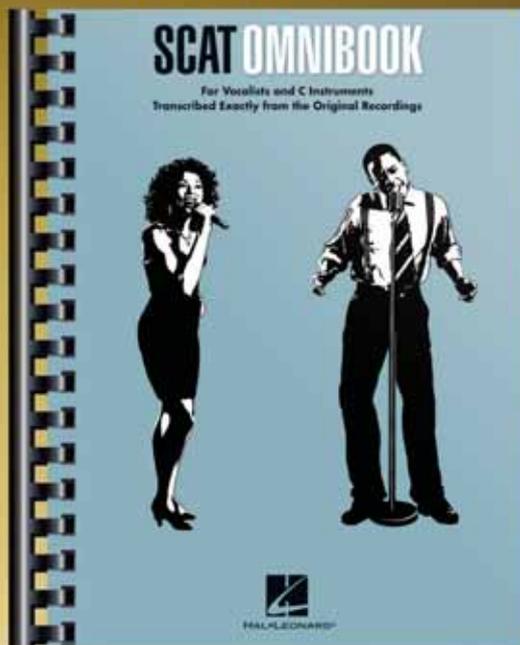
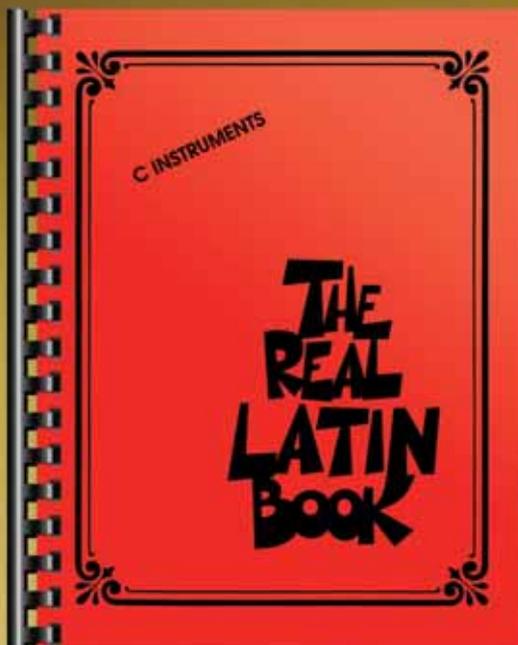
"Soul Leo" (*Love Looks Good On You*, HighNote, 2015) Malone, guitar; Rick Germanson, piano; Gerald Cannon, bass; Willie Jones III, drums.

**Wine: Colet-Navazos Extra-Brut (Xarel-lo).** "This wine was made by adding a small amount of sherry to a Catalan sparkling wine. The idea is to recall the sparkling wines that were once produced in Andalusia. Sergi Colet and Equipo Navazos join together in this wine, which reflects the deep, warm roots of the south, enveloped in the elegant sophistication of a sparkling wine. Intense aromas of Amontillado combine with the rhythm of the acidity and the bubbles."

Great bridge. This reminds me of the Zinc Bar. Is it a live gig? [*No, it's in the studio.*] It's always a challenge to record a song like this in the studio; it's hard to make that *Sidewinder*, party vibe happen. The guitar player's sound is the sound of jazz guitar—a big box, dark tone. I like the way he plays. I like the way he moves. Is it Russell Malone? Ah-ha! It's the deftness. To able to play that [*sings motif*], you've got to know what you're doing. My favorite Russell is his solo stuff. But I've also heard his quartet stuff—which has this vibe to it—when he goes more out on a limb with what he's playing than when he's in his solo vibe. I like the group. I dig the vibe. I love that bridge. Is it his song? [*after*] It's by Mulgrew Miller? It's a great one. 5 stars for my man, Russell. **DB**

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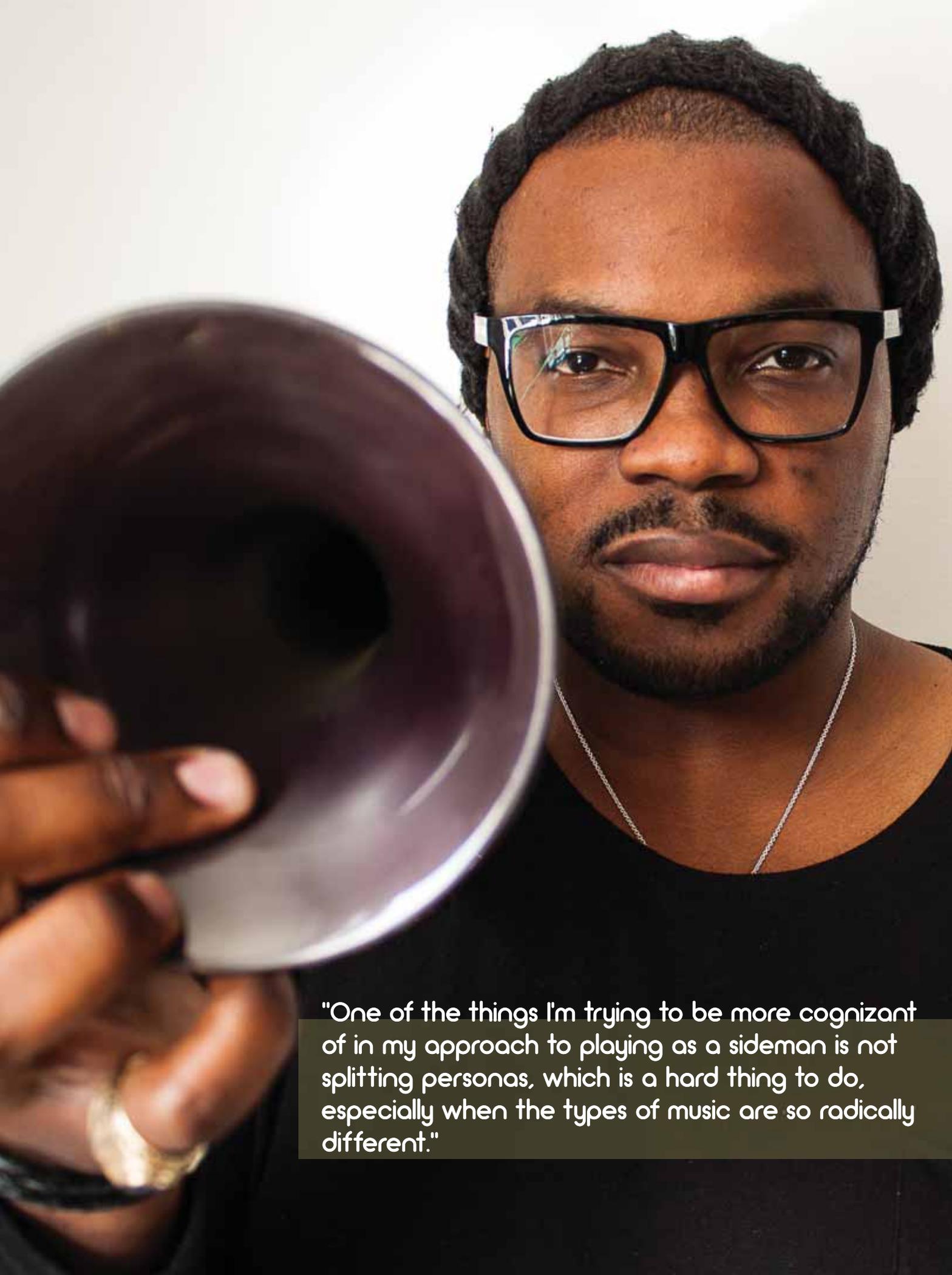
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"One of the things I'm trying to be more cognizant of in my approach to playing as a sideman is not splitting personas, which is a hard thing to do, especially when the types of music are so radically different."

JEREMY PELT

# COLLABORATIVE SOUL

By Dan Ouellette | Photo by Sally Pritchard

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Sitting on a bench in Jazz at Lincoln Center's spacious Ertegun Atrium, overlooking the sparkling lights and dancing water fountains on Manhattan's Columbus Circle, Jeremy Pelt reflects on his career trajectory. At the moment, he's in a week's pause from playing at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola—first as a featured sideman with drummer Joe Farnsworth's straightahead quartet, and then as a supporting quintet member playing bassist Ben Allison's modern music of crossover hybrids.

"At this point in my career, I like to call them 'special guest appearances,'" says the 39-year-old, Harlem-based trumpeter, who has released seven consecutive CDs on HighNote, including his latest, *#Jiveculture*. "I'm limiting my sideman gigs, but it is like a fellowship. For example, I've been playing with Ben's band, and he's on one of my albums. So, it's a good thing."

For the Farnsworth date, Pelt followed the drummer's swing, with muscular, soaring solos on the exclamatory pieces. He bent notes on the lyrical numbers, hushed with the mute on a balladic stretch and then blew with fire on the set-ender, pianist Harold

Mabern's cooker "Rakin' And Scrapin'." Upfront and intense, Pelt gave the impression that he was playing from the soles of his feet up through the bell of his signature black horn.

"Joe is not too imposing, and he doesn't do that many leader gigs," says Pelt (aka YourPeltness, his jocular online nickname). "So you could get the impression that I'm leading the band, but it's all Joe. I've been leading my own bands long enough at this point that I love to defer to the leader. I don't have to think about programming—even though right up to an hour before the show Joe was texting me about what we should play. But I [told him] I didn't know—just go for it and we'll follow."

As for Allison, Pelt met him at one of veteran jazz producer Milan Simich's tribute gigs where the bassist was brought into a band that included two drummers, Matt Wilson and Billy Drummond. "I liked the way Ben handled himself in between two drummers," Pelt recalls. That led to him enlisting Allison for his 2015 album *Tales, Musings And Other Reveries*, which used a double-drum attack with Drummond and Victor Lewis.

Pelt says that his past gigging experience has been instrumental in helping him find a singular voice on the trumpet in any setting, which is on full display with *#Jiveculture*.

"One of the things I'm trying to be more cognizant of in my approach to playing as a sideman is not splitting personas, which is a hard thing to do, especially when the types of music are so radically different," he says. "Ben's music doesn't sound like anything we did with Joe. The challenge is to remain the same yet pliable in both settings. For me, if I don't, I end up having a split personality."

Pelt admits that there were points in his career where he'd tell himself, "I'm going to put on this coat for this gig, and I'm going to put on this other coat for this other gig." It was the same mode of operation for some of the recordings on which he played. "But the older I get and the more comfortable I become about what I do and accept it," he says, "I'll just put on this hat and it's going to have to be just this."

For the *#Jiveculture* sessions, Pelt surrounded himself with good company to take on a new dance-charged adventure—with his chapecau firmly fit. He reunited with pianist Danny Grissett, who has been playing with the trumpeter on and off since 2005. And he once again enlisted the support of Drummond on drums. The X-factor for the new album is bassist Ron Carter, who Pelt says he was "dead set" on convincing to participate.

That firmed up the concept of the new album that Pelt had been formulating. The feel of the album is accurately summed up by its title, *#Jiveculture*, complete with the hashtag, which is the trumpeter's handle for his Instagram account. Even though he recognizes that the word "jive" can have a derogatory connotation, he's dialing back to the '40s and '50s, when it had a completely different meaning: *dance*. "That's what this album is about," he says. "The term *jive* today is so potent with being negative that naturally everyone assumes that's what it means. But I can't help that. Maybe I'm naive, but doesn't everyone know that it's dance music? Whatever, I just forged ahead because that was what was speaking to me."

Born in 1976 in Newport Beach, California, Pelt grew up on the West Coast with summers spent in the Bronx, New York. His youth was trumpet-oriented with an increasing desire to dig deeper. "I was a typical musical geek who had nothing on the ball in a social setting," he says. "In high school, I was a teenage boy who was always inside listening to music. Friends in my California neighborhood were like that, too."

**PELT'S MUSICAL INTERESTS LED** him to enroll at Boston's Berklee College of Music in the '90s, primarily because it offered a degree in film scoring. "I was fascinated by the film



music that Danny Elfman and John Williams wrote," Pelt says. "It was something that I was very interested in."

Pelt tells how he managed to score his one and only gig writing a film score a few years after he arrived on the New York scene in 1998. Director John Harkrider had attended one of Pelt's shows at Small's and was so impressed by the passion visible on Pelt's face that he decided to do a film that was set in a fictional jazz club. "John contacted me and asked if I wanted to act in his film," Pelt says. "He sent me a script with a few lines—not like I was doing *Othello*. But my music was a backdrop to the conversations going on. Dick wanted me to play the entire music from *A Love Supreme*. I told him that John Coltrane was a saxophone player and I play trumpet. I knew Wynton Marsalis had done it, so I knew it could be done, but I never had the desire to do it myself."

He pauses, then adds, "But money talks, and I did it with aplomb."

Pelt parlayed that into scoring the entire film. *All The Beautiful Things* debuted at the 2014 Sundance Festival in the U.S. Documentary Competition program.

Pelt's first professional gig in New York was in the Mingus Big Band, where he linked up with a revolving cast of players such as John Stubblefield, Ronnie Cuber, John Hicks and Boris Kaslov. "The experience was great," he says. "A new kid in town and having an outlet to really stretch out. Once you're past the ensemble parts, you can stretch out just like being in a quartet."

That led to other big band gigs, from Frank Foster's the Loud Minority Orchestra to the Village Vanguard Orchestra (as a first-call sub) to Bobby Short's band. "I needed and accept-

Jeremy Pelt at Black Eyed Sally's in Hartford, Connecticut, in 2012

ed fully and gracefully what was transpiring, which branched off into other opportunities," he says. "And here I am 15 years later still going and growing strong."

*#Jiveculture* represents an important chapter in Pelt's career. It features his swinging, playful, ecstatic trumpeting, not to mention a gorgeous Harmon mute lyricism on the original "Akua," written for his Ghanaian girlfriend. The anchor of the session is Carter's bass. "We got a glimpse of the kind of professionalism that existed in his heyday," Pelt says of his first performance with Carter. "Ron wouldn't let us get away with the kinds of things most people try to get away with today out of laziness. Plus, Ron, having been on thousands of albums as a sideman, approached the rehearsal and recording date with nothing less than the highest respect."

After Pelt's spirited opening number, "Baswald's Place" (with firebrand trumpeting and Carter's deep pulse pushing the tune), the leader decided to pull out an old tune from the bassist's songbook, the swinging "Einbahnstrasse," which Carter had recorded on his 1969 album *Uptown Conversation* with Herbie Hancock and Billy Cobham. But Pelt heard it first on pianist Bobby Timmons' 1966 *The Soul Man* recording with Carter, Wayne Shorter and Jimmy Cobb. "I wanted something that was a complete swing fest from the start to the end," says Pelt, whose interplay with the bassist is a highlight.

Pelt reharmonized the Cole Porter tune "Dream Dancing" and gave it a medium-tempo, soulful groove. "What I had in mind when recording it was the tempo that Ron, Cedar Walton and Billy Higgins played behind Eddie Harris on 'The Shadow Of Your Smile' [from

1965's *The In Sound*]. The groove just stays right there. I knew Ron could do it, and I appreciate Danny and Billy getting it without a conversation. This tempo is often overlooked by my generation and the one that followed. Everyone seems to be in such a rush that no one realizes the foundation."

Drummond, who had played with Carter before, describes the bassist as "the epitome of what we aspire to."

"Ron can be intimidating, but he's really a sweetheart," he adds. "Jeremy knew what he wanted from the session, and Ron gave it to him. It was completely natural. Everyone came to play music, and that's what we did. #liveculture has a great vibe. It's a great snapshot of a great experience."

"Jeremy is a special artist," Drummond continues. "He's a student of the music. He's studied his predecessors. He was willing to be an apprentice, which doesn't happen very often today. As a leader, he has a good sense of his vision."

Grissett, who played and recorded with Pelt in the trumpeter's well-regarded quintet with saxophonist JD Allen, bassist Dwayne Burno and drummer Gerald Cleaver, has seen firsthand how much Pelt has grown as an artist. "Jeremy has matured as a player in ways only brought forth by living," Grissett said. "I hear and feel the triumphs, the failures, the joys and the sorrows of his experiences. In the little over a decade that I have known Jeremy, I've seen him become a husband, a father, lead a great band and deal with the death of one of his band mates [Burno, at age 43 in 2013]. I hear a level of depth in Jeremy's expression that is very different from when I first heard him."

**WHILE PELT HAS OFTEN BEEN** compared to Freddie Hubbard and Miles Davis, he cites trumpeters Donald Byrd and Booker Little as equally important influences. "Donald is increasingly becoming more of an inspiration," Pelt says. "He was someone who was so lyrical in a haunting but beautiful way." As for Little, he says, "People came down on Booker because he was not very heavy on the soulful aspect. But what he didn't possess in soul, he did possess in a lyrical quality that was well past his years. He left here much too early. The dissonance went with his lyricism, and it was as if what he was playing was a premonition that he wasn't going to be here any longer. There was an urgency to everything he played."

In regard to his trumpeter contemporaries, Pelt has many favorites, but singles out two: Keyon Harrold and Ambrose Akinmusire. Harrold, who supplied the trumpet sound in Don Cheadle's new Miles Davis film *Miles Ahead*, is a player in Pelt's estimation who reminds him of Thad Jones: He may not have been the cleanest player on the stand, but he

played with distinction. "Keyon is very raw, and his playing is beautifully raw," Pelt says. "He's like an architect of ideas in the same way as Thad. The way Thad played, you could tell he was thinking of that idea right then, which was different from Freddie and Clifford [Brown], who were going for broke."

Pelt served as a mentor to Akinmusire (who calls him his big brother) and talks with him often on the telephone. "I respect Ambrose for working hard to create his own language," Pelt says. "It reminds me of Clark Terry, who created

his own language. It's exciting to hear Ambrose and what he's coming up with."

Pelt waxes philosophical about the state of jazz when talking about the up-and-comers. Like the career trajectory that he's taken throughout his still-evolving career of studying and playing with iconic musicians, he sees jazz being in good shape for the future. "I'm turning 40, and I look at the other cats I've helped along the way like Ambrose," Pelt says. "So I see that the tradition is coming up in a nice way—in the right way." **DB**

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# Allison Miller

## THE VALUE OF SPACE

By Bobby Reed / Photo by Shervin Lainez

Allison Miller is a master drummer and a monster juggler. In addition to leading her band Boom Tic Boom, Miller frequently collaborates with numerous artists in the jazz and pop-rock world. She has established a strong foothold in both camps, making her a sought-after drummer who's equally comfortable on stage with jazz organ icon Dr. Lonnie Smith or folk-pop singer-songwriter Natalie Merchant. Miller embodies the tireless, never-give-up, hard-work ethos that's required to sustain a healthy career as a jazz musician in 2016.

When she's not on the road, Miller is bolstering her reputation as an acclaimed music educator. She holds adjunct teaching positions at The New School for Jazz & Contemporary Music, Kutztown University and Jazz Camp West. She also teaches privately, gives percussion master classes and leads big band instructional clinics.

Miller's rich discography has expanded with the April 8 release of Boom Tic Boom's adventurous album *Otis Was A Polar Bear* (Royal Potato Family). The disc showcases the musical brilliance of her esteemed bandmates: pianist Myra Melford, violinist Jenny Scheinman, cornetist Kirk Knuffke, clarinetist Ben Goldberg and upright bassist Todd Sicksafoose. The album also highlights Miller's skills as a composer, with 10 original tunes that represent her strongest work to date.

A democratic vibe flows among the members of Boom Tic Boom. Goldberg, who is the newest member of the group, said, "As a bandleader, Allison makes it clear that she wants you to be yourself, and she has somehow structured her composition so that the music comes completely to life when each musician is doing their thing as strongly as possible."

Knuffke—whose warm, burnished cornet tone on "Lullaby For Cookie" is one of the unforgettable moments on *Otis*—echoed Goldberg's sentiment: "The first time I was hired [to perform with Miller], it was to 'fill in' for Jenny Scheinman. A *cornetist* filling in for a *violinist*. That's Allison in a nutshell. I was not hired because I play the cornet—she could have asked another violinist—nor was Jenny first hired because she plays the violin. She was hired because she's *Jenny Scheinman*. For Allison, it's about the person-

alities, not the instrument . . . The parts are written for the characters, and the characters are carefully chosen."

Miller recently became a parent when her partner, Rachel, gave birth to their daughter, Josie. The joyous arrival of a baby girl—and the life-changing effects of parenthood—inspired Miller to write the material on the new album.

In January, DownBeat caught up with Miller at The NAMM Show, an annual trade convention in Anaheim, California, for instrument manufacturers.

### What's the story behind the name of your band, Boom Tic Boom?

Part of it is self-evident, with the "boom" of the bass drum. [The name] is a representation of the lower half of the drum set and the upper half of the drum set. [The name also reflects] how I was influenced by one of my teachers, Michael Carvin. When I would go see him when I was really young—when I had first moved to New York—the thing that pulled me in the most was his use of dynamics. He could play the loudest bass drum that you've ever heard, just one note, and then he would do the quietest roll on the snare drum.

And as a teacher, Michael expressed that it doesn't matter what anyone's done before you—or after you—you just have to learn how to be yourself. Just be yourself. Having him express that to me, and seeing him do that, was mind-blowing and it changed the way I think about music and drumming.

All of my favorite drummers have this "boom" and this "tick"—that dynamic difference.

### Talk a bit about composing material for the specific personalities in Boom Tic Boom.

That definitely happened with this record. No one in my band is *really* a side musician. Everybody's a leader, and they all have personalities like leaders. I can't write a part for Jenny [Scheinman] and say, "Play it exactly like this"; she's not going to do it. She's going to take it and do her own thing with it, and that's what I like. Right before we recorded, we rehearsed at Ben Goldberg's house in Berkeley, [California]. Everybody totally



'MY MUSIC IS SO CONNECTED  
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had input and felt invested in it, in a way that wasn't just as a side musician.

**In the past you've composed a lot of material on piano, but for this batch of songs, you composed on other instruments. For "Lullaby For Cookie," what instrument did you compose that on?**

My voice. About three months before our daughter was born, I had a gig within walking distance of our house. I was walking to the gig. It was really cold, and this melody just popped into my head. I was thinking about Cookie. We called her "Cookie" [when she was] in the womb. And I was thinking, "Wow, I'm about to become a mom. This is *insane*. I love this little thing so much and I've never even met her." I was overwhelmed with emotion. It was a 10-minute walk from the house to the gig. By the time I got to the gig, I had this [melody].

**Compositional ideas can be influenced by a big, life-changing event.**

Yeah, for a lot of drummers who want to compose, I think we're intimidated because there are so many great, knowledgeable composers out there. Earlier on, as a drummer and as a composer, I was a little intimidated by that feeling. But after having a baby and realizing that I have no control over anything—it's just chaos—I thought, "Why not? Why not free my mind of everything and just put whatever comes out of me onto the page. Let's just see what happens." I felt more of a freedom—not even caring what the boundaries are.

**There's a drum solo on "High T," but there aren't a lot of drum solos on the new disc. Was that solo improvised?**

Yeah, I wrote that song, it was written to have a drum solo. I played three different solos, and that was the longest one. Each one was completely different. Hans [Wendl], the producer, was like, "You have to put *that* solo on there. It's like a Zen journey through the jungle. That's the most Zen drum solo I've ever heard." I was like, "OK, I'll do it," even though it makes the song *nine* minutes long.

**You're totally open about discussing certain personal aspects of your life. As you were writing these songs, not only were you becoming a parent—which is a huge thing—you were becoming a parent as a public figure in a same-sex couple.**

My music is so connected to my life, there's no separation. So if I'm going through something in my life, I feel it on the drums. I've never been able to separate the two. My music is not about being gay, but I'm also an activist, and I'm a feminist, and I'm a supporter of gay rights. I used to try to separate those things, but then around 2013, I decided, "Why separate them?" I thought, "If someone in the jazz world is not going to accept me for who I am, it's fine—I just

won't play with them. They wouldn't hire me anyway, so it doesn't matter."

**You've spent a lot of time on the road with non-jazz artists who are excellent songwriters, like Brandi Carlile, Ani DiFranco and Natalie Merchant. What have you learned from them about composing?**

All of those people showed me the value of space in your music. I love space. That's one of the problems that I have with a lot of modern jazz records: There's no space. You can't breathe. Everything is so metronomically perfect and dense. That's not my thing.

I started touring with Natalie when I was 22 or 23. In rehearsals, she'd turn around and say, "Alli, stop doing that *jazz* stuff. There you go, doing your *jazz* stuff." She'd call me the Jazz Ambassador—not that she hates jazz—it's just that every once in a while I would lose the musicality of the song. I would do some crazy fill that would've impressed jazz musicians, but it didn't impress her. It would be right in the middle of an important lyric. So I learned how to play the drums for *that* piece of music, and to not let my ego stick something else in. I learned how to craft my fills musically around the lyric.

**Let's talk about your gear. What's new?**

One thing I'm really into now is these tubes that I bought at the hardware store. I put them into the holes of the drums, and I can blow into the tube and it increases the air pressure in the drum and makes the head raise in pitch. It enables me to play more melodically, which I love.

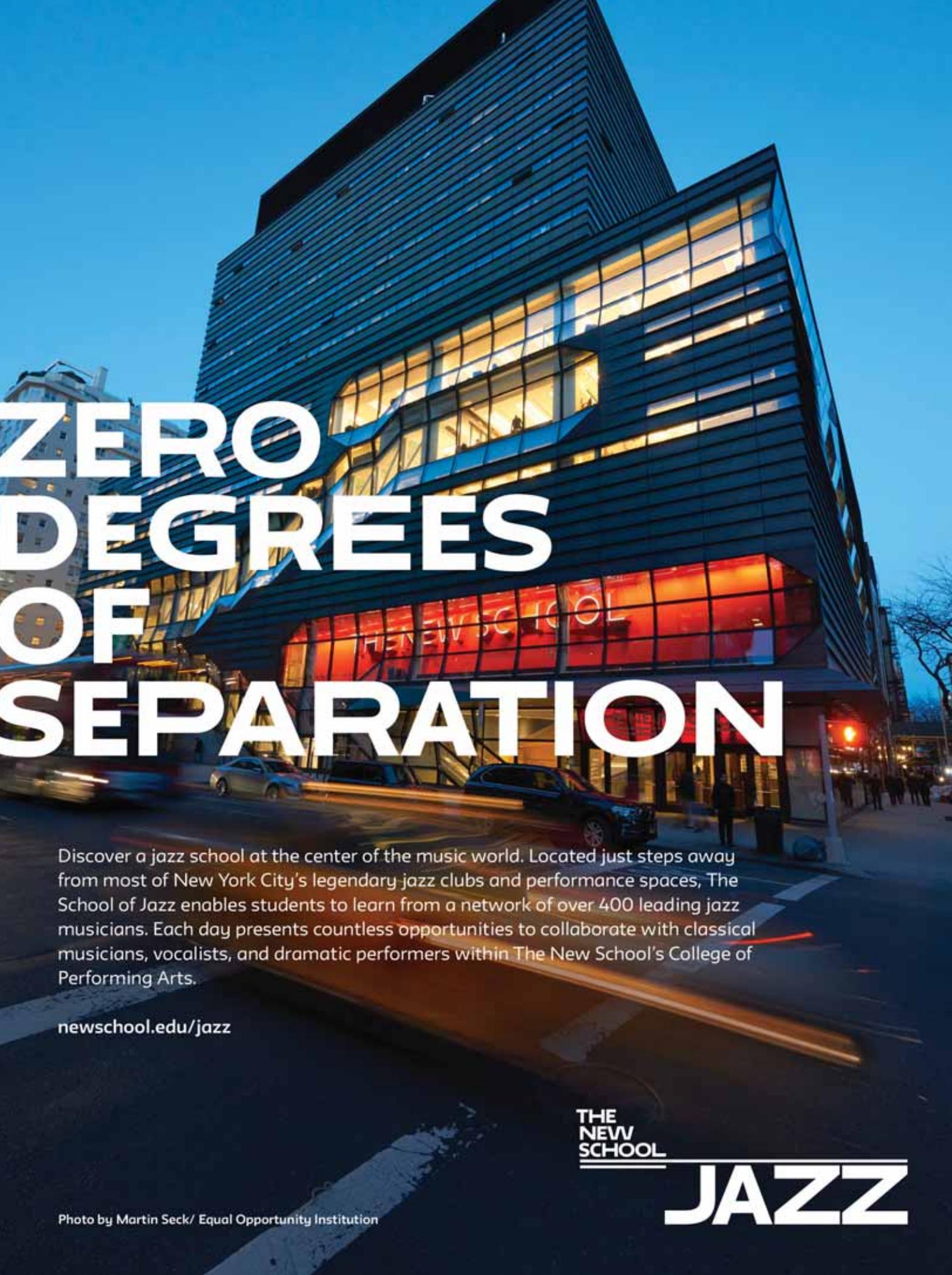
My main ride cymbal is one that I got from this great drummer, Bud Spangler [1938–2014]. Years ago, I was working with this great singer, Kitty Margolis. Bud lent me this cymbal. He had this old Zildjian cymbal that he got as a kid in 1955. He called it "Darth" because it was a very dark cymbal. And it had weird, random holes in it that shouldn't be there. He lent it to me to make this record with Kitty. A couple of years went by, and then he gave it to me.

But for some reason, it my world of cymbal obsession, it ended up in my closet. I wasn't playing it. Then about two years ago, he passed away, and I said, "I *have* to play Bud's cymbal." So I pulled it out of the closet, and it was magic. Now, I will not play anything without that cymbal. It's not perfect. It's got cracks. It's got a little indentation on the side, and I have a paper clip in it to give it a little sizzle. It's gorgeous.

**Do you think of that cymbal as something more than merely an object? Does it have some mojo in it?**

Yes, definitely. That's 100 percent why I pulled it out. I want Bud here with me. I want that spirit.

DB



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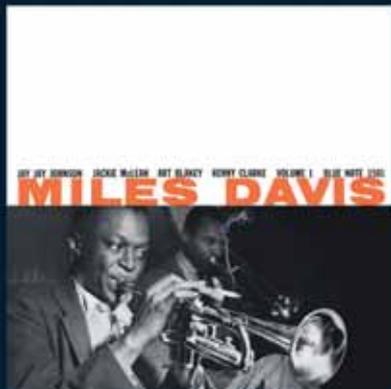
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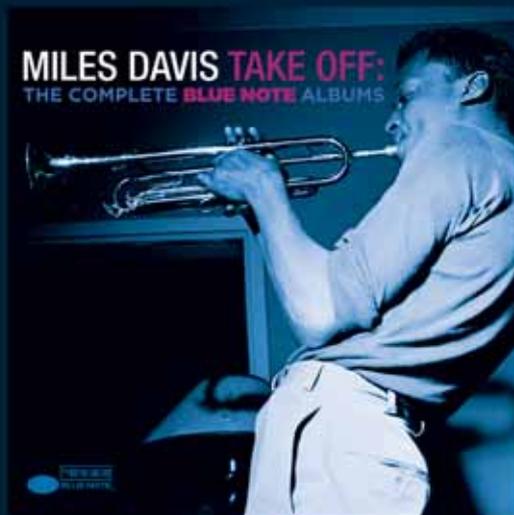
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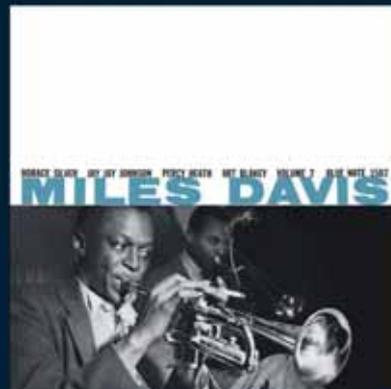
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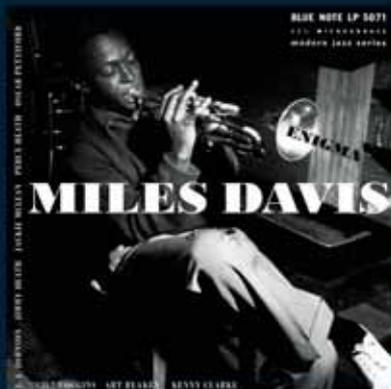
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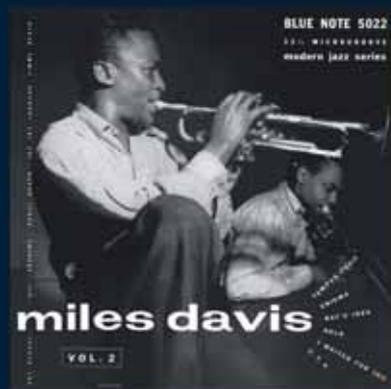
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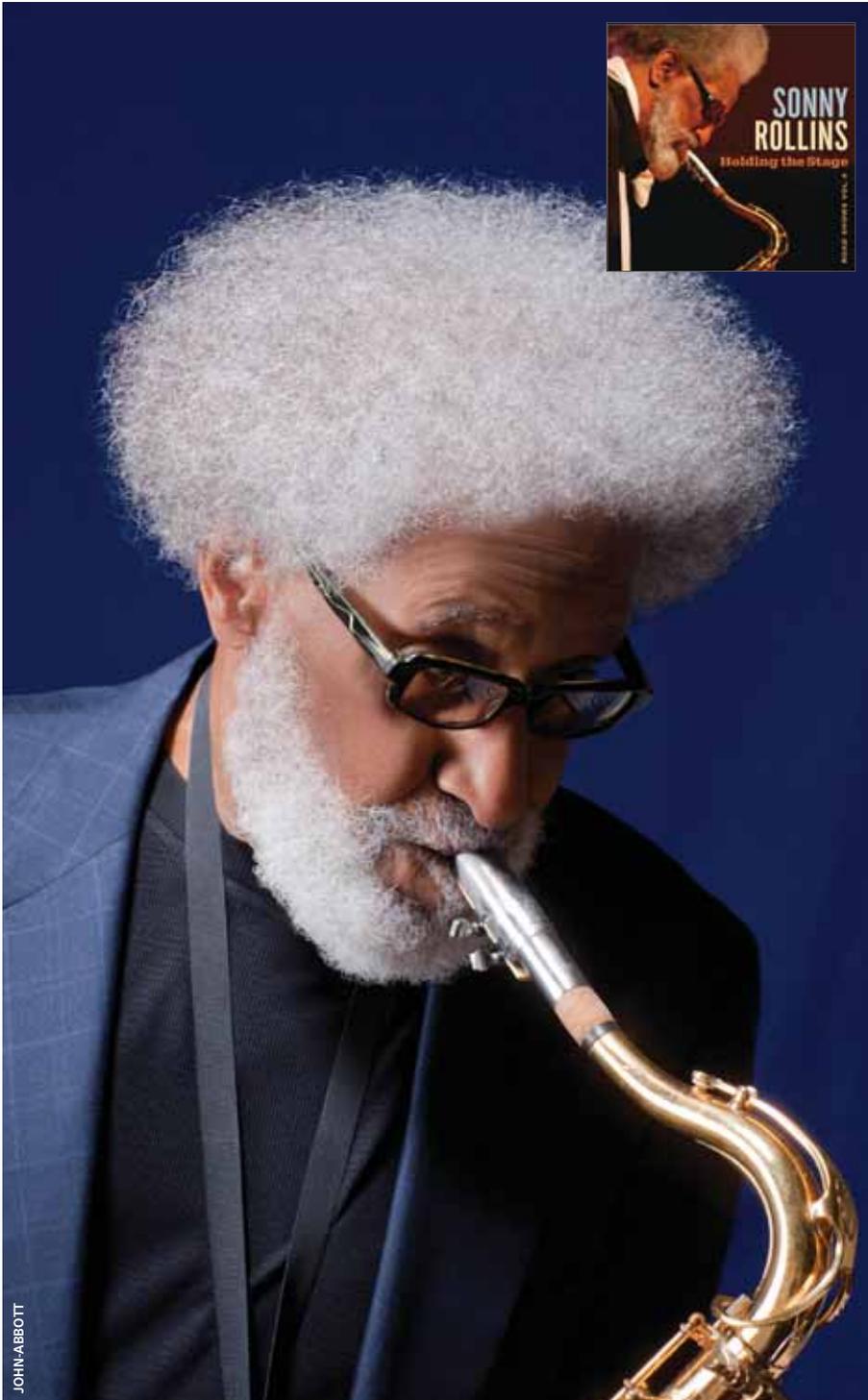
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Inside >

- 54 / Jazz
- 58 / Blues
- 61 / Beyond
- 64 / Historical
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# REVIEWS >



## Sonny Rollins

### *Holding The Stage: Road Shows, Vol. 4*

DOXY/OKEH 88875192752

★★★★½

When I interviewed Sonny Rollins some years ago, he was in a grouchy mood, impatient and fed up with a press eager only to pick nits. “Another chance to cut up Sonny,” he grumbled. Well, not now. Sixty-five years after his first Prestige session, he’s outlived all the complaints. The press is at his feet, and he is enthroned as jazz’s greatest living master emeritus, beyond the reach of any appeal.

That makes the fourth of Sonny Rollins’ *Road Shows* quite a show—surely one of the most essential CDs of the year so far. The later live concert performances that have made up this series have not only shed new light on Rollins’ ability to ride the public moment. They’ve also kept him a force in music, years after retiring from the concert stage.

Although the music covers a period of 33 years, it tracks pretty seamlessly, notwithstanding the 20-year gap between 1979 (“Disco Monk”) and the post-2000 years that occupy most of the CD. Four of the tunes are new to the repertoire, including a buoyant “Professor Paul” and “You’re Mine You.” Four others have only a single previous performance on disc. “In A Sentimental Mood” and “Don’t Stop The Carnival” are the familiar warhorses.

*Road Shows, Vol. 4* also completes Rollins’ famous *Without A Song: The 9/11 Concerts*, his last CD for Milestone Records in 2005, with four unissued pieces. His powerful unaccompanied “Solo” shows that even when set loose on an open range, Rollins still thinks like a songwriter.

—John McDonough

**Holding The Stage: Road Shows, Vol. 4:** In A Sentimental Mood; Professor Paul, Mixed Emotions; Keep Hold Of Yourself; Disco Monk; You’re Mine You; H.S.; Sweet Lailani; Solo; Don’t Stop The Carnival. (73:09)

**Personnel:** Sonny Rollins, tenor saxophone; Clifton Anderson (4, 6, 8, 10), trombone; Bobby Broom (1, 7), Peter Bernstein (2), Saul Rubin (3), guitar; Stephen Scott (4, 6, 8, 10), Mark Soskin (5), piano; Bob Granshaw (1, 2, 4, 6–8, 10), Jerome Harris (5), bass; Jerome Jennings (1), Kobie Watkins (2), Harold Summey Jr. (4), Al Foster (5), Perry Wilson (6, 8, 10); Victor Lewis (7); Kimati Dinizulu (4, 6, 8, 10), Sammy Figueroa (2), Victor See Yuen (4), percussion.

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

JOHN ABBOTT



## Ralph Alessi *Quiver*

ECM 2438

★★★★½

A CD titled *Quiver* on ECM sounds like it might be extra precious, but Ralph Alessi's sophomore outing for the label is as audacious as its outstanding predecessor. In this case, the word evokes more a container for arrows—think straight and true—than an involuntary shudder. The trumpeter seems to have found an ideal venue, his penchant for the oblique statement and ventilated ensemble nicely couched in a pristine recording and a magical ensemble.

## Ryan Keberle & Catharsis *Azul Infinito*

GREENLEAF 1047

★★★★

Let's just call *Azul Infinito* an investment in rhythm. Having been impressed by a variety of South American musical styles since his 1999 arrival in New York, trombonist Ryan Keberle employs a trove of grooves on Catharsis' fetching third album. With a five-piece group that includes singer/guitarist Camila Meza, he celebrates the particulars of each while finding ways to filter them through his own voice.

It's an astute band, or maybe I should say Keberle's arrangements are clever. Because of the crosshatched rhythm patterns and counterpoint gambits, it often feels like this is a larger ensemble—an octet hustling from section to section. Mike Rodriguez's trumpet sidles up to the leader's trombone in all sorts of ways. Think Olu Dara and Henry Threadgill creating sparks in the saxophonist's celebrated Sextett.

Meza's job is to not only effect the emotions of the lyrics, but also to sweeten the improvisation. On the lead track, after the band creates a swirl of Steve Reich-ian sound, Meza coos some delectable lines from poet Manca Weeks, and Catharsis really takes off. Like an unholy alliance of Irene Aebi with Steve Lacy's Sextet

Alessi's compositions have an allusive vibe, less outright statements than skeletons on which the band drapes its sounds. A line emerges, is articulated, added onto, then disappears. The rhythmic concept has the same evanescence. Bassist Drew Gress and drummer Nasheet Waits play beautifully together, rather delicately, falling together rather than locking in, so that the instruments are on an even field, encouraging real improvisational interplay. Pianist Gary Versace, who joined the group in place of ultra-busy Jason Moran, is superb here, as elsewhere. He sneaks a little four-note ostinato into the end of "Shush," musically putting his finger to his lips, while he signals the unexpected harmonic shifts on "Smooth Descent," one of the disc's highest points.

The quality of bold indirectness that makes *Quiver* so exceptional is also integral to Alessi's playing. He can squeeze a run like a lemon, juicing a melody into a little pool of liquid, or he may croon in a vulnerable voice, as on "Heist," growing animated but never brash, always reaching for refreshing notes.

—John Corbett

**Quiver:** Here Tomorrow; Window Goodbyes; Smooth Descent; Heist; Gone Today; Here Tomorrow; I To I; Scratch; Shush; Quiver; Do Over. (56:27)

**Personnel:** Ralph Alessi, trumpet; Gary Versace, piano; Drew Gress, bass; Nasheet Waits, drums.

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



and Jen Shyu with Five Elements, the vocals enhance the music and focus the action.

Bassist Jorge Roeder and drummer Eric Doob are key to this well-designed bustle. Locked tight, they move as one, challenging each other even as their discrete tacks prove complementary. These may be art songs, but they're art songs that invariably yield to next-level propulsion.

—Jim Macnie

**Azul Infinito:** I Thought I Knew (For Pedro Giraud); Canción Mandala; Mr. Azul (For Samuel Torres); She Sleeps Alone (For Sebastian Cruz); Quintessence (For Ivan Lins); La Ley Primera; Eternity Of An Instant (For Emilio Solla); Madalena. (52:53)

**Personnel:** Ryan Keberle, trombone, melodica; Camila Meza, vocals; Mike Rodriguez, trumpet, pandeiro; Jorge Roeder, bass, bass FX; Eric Doob, drums.

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



## Hiromi *Spark*

TELARC 38247

★★½

Some of the world's most popular music relies on bombast, exhibitionist virtuosity and emotional manipulation—Franz Liszt and Black Sabbath qualify—but if this album is any indication, people will still be listening to "The Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2" and "Iron Man" long after Hiromi has been forgotten. The comparisons to classical music and heavy metal are intentional, since the even-eighth-note phrasing of 19th-century European piano music and the locomotive assault of guitar rock appear to lie at the root of Hiromi's style. She can certainly play the piano, but she invests her locomotive rumbles and thumps with little expression, charm or sophistication.

Those qualities do turn up: in her disarmingly straightforward articulation of the pretty, descending melody on "Take Me Away"; in her lilting Vince Guaraldi-like feel on the happy "Wonderland"; in the droll mood of "Indulgence," which recalls the slow-motion backbeats of the Esbjörn Svensson Trio; and in her disarmingly heart-on-sleeve solo on "Wake Up And Dream." But most of the time, Hiromi explores a species of New Age music, powering jejune, greeting-card ideas with a V8 engine. Louder and faster don't always spell *better*, and the long sequences of repeated phrases here, even when interrupted by sudden rhythmic hiccups, feel more like assaults than grooves.

Hiromi is a popular artist who mesmerizes crowds with her dazzling technique and theatrical presentation. If radio still had a mainstream format, "What Will Be, Will Be" would be in heavy rotation. But this fare, though crisply played, is too emotionally obvious for sophisticated listeners of jazz.

—Paul de Barros

**Spark:** Spark; In A Trance; Take Me Away; Wonderland; Indulgence; Dilemma; What Will Be, Will Be; Wake Up And Dream; All's Well. (72:07)

**Personnel:** Hiromi, piano, keyboards; Anthony Jackson, bass; Simon Phillips, drums.

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

# The Hot Box

Critics	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
<b>Sonny Rollins</b> <i>Road Shows Vol. 4</i>	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★
<b>Ralph Alessi</b> <i>Quiver</i>	★★½	★★★★½	★★★½	★★★
<b>Ryan Keberle &amp; Catharsis</b> <i>Azul Infinito</i>	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★
<b>Hiromi</b> <i>Spark</i>	★★★	★★	★★	★★½

## Critics' Comments

### Sonny Rollins, *Holding The Stage: Road Shows, Vol. 4*

Through varying sound quality and degrees of inspiration, Rollins is supremely inventive, even when playing weirdness of his own concoction ("Disco Monk"). The whole program would be worth it just for the six minutes of solo sax, which is otherworldly. —John Corbett

There are ups and downs to be sure, but the downs nonetheless spotlight a voice teeming with vitality, while the ups surge with jaw-dropping authority. —Jim Macnie

At 85, Sonny still brings it. His quirky mix of soaring celebration and interruptive self-reflexivity is still something all his own, as he tosses in allusions to everything from "Pop Goes The Weasel" to "Old Devil Moon." —Paul de Barros

### Ralph Alessi, *Quiver*

Alessi's dry and dreamy trumpet has a see-through transparency to it that is both romantic and wistful, but emotionally austere and laced with inner strains of apprehension. The music has a fairly elegant, if meandering flow about it, all intellect and no flash. —John McDonough

The Brooklyn trumpeter milks the power of silence a bit more than he did on 2013's *Baida*, but his strategies are just as engaging. Though the music is somber, at any given moment the band's action can take on a frolicsome vibe. —Jim Macnie

Alessi's burnished trumpet tone and impressive command are a plus on this meditative, somewhat forlorn quartet outing. Though the energy level could be higher, the music keeps a tight focus on space. The lyrical "Heist" and plush "I To I" are standouts. —Paul de Barros

### Ryan Keberle & Catharsis, *Azul Infinito*

Though Keberle is resistant to labels, this is a lively Latin jazz mixture that skips Cuba and the Caribbean to collect its influences from the South American continent. With no piano, the sound is defined by tight brass ensembles and interplay, sometimes in support of Meza's graceful vocals. —John McDonough

Lots of nuance and contrary motion. Beautiful brass voicings. And Meza's mellifluous voice fuses disparate stylistic elements in a deeply thoughtful way. A very nice surprise. —John Corbett

This intricate, original chamber jazz project by the fine trombonist Ryan Keberle exploring South American composers (with vocals, wordless and otherwise, by Camila Meza) has a light, open and friendly feel. Though some of the tracks don't really light up, many do. —Paul de Barros

### Hiromi, *Spark*

There is a thrashing dazzle about this tightly wrapped power trio that seldom sleeps. Its retreats are strategic, only to marshal the next offensive. There is a precision to its extravagance that pulls it together and gives it solid structure, even though in the end I find more thunder than light in all the dynamics. —John McDonough

Precision + speed ≠ creativity. Lots of energy and arpeggiation, alas much ado. —John Corbett

Her crime has always been sanctioning a heavy-handed approach to what's essentially nimble music. For all her chops when it comes to rendering a musical idea, there's always a disturbing lack of nuance. —Jim Macnie

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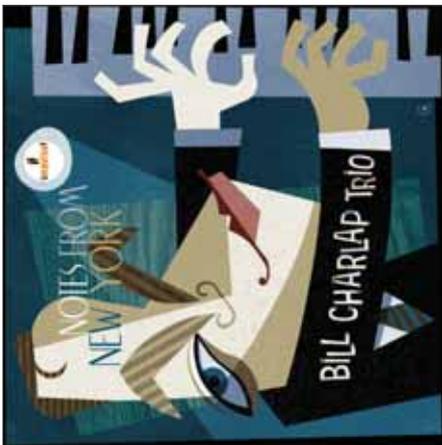
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## Bill Charlap Trio *Notes From New York*

IMPULSE! 00600254777911

★★★★★

Bill Charlap is often described as the epitome of mainstream pianists, in the tradition of iconic players from Art Tatum to Ahmad Jamal. But the term “mainstream” becomes meaningless when one considers Charlap’s technical mastery, his subtlety and his unflagging melodic invention—or should we say, re-invention.

Fresh from the critical and popular triumph of *The Silver Lining*, his Jerome Kern tribute with Tony Bennett, the new album with

his finely calibrated trio (Peter Washington on bass and Kenny Washington on drums) is his first for the newly reinvented Impulse! label. It delivers nine standards, only three of which are widely familiar (“I’ll Remember April,” “A Sleepin’ Bee,” and “On The Sunny Side Of The Street”). The rest of the program is devoted to obscure but delightful songs from the worlds of Broadway, film and jazz.

The album is a master class in, well, class. The opening track, “I’ll Remember April,” is alone worth the price of the album. Starting with its intro, in which Charlap manipulates our perception of where the bar line is, he plays with time and reharmonizes the song in continually surprising ways. Other highlights include Thad Jones’ bouncy, unpredictable “Little Rascal On A Rock” and a joyous excursion into bebop à la Bird with “Tiny’s Tempo.”

Saving the best for last, Charlap’s solo-piano interpretation of “On The Sunny Side Of The Street” challenges our notions of this most familiar song. He plays it very slowly and thoroughly reharmonizes it, turning it into a wistful tone poem loaded with nostalgia for a bygone era.

—Allen Morrison

**Notes From New York:** I’ll Remember April; Make Me Rainbows; Not A Care In The World; There Is No Music; A Sleepin’ Bee; Little Rascal On A Rock; Too Late Now; Tiny’s Tempo; On The Sunny Side Of The Street. (54:01)

**Personnel:** Bill Charlap, piano; Peter Washington, bass; Kenny Washington, drums.

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

## Arturo O’Farrill Sextet *Boss Level*

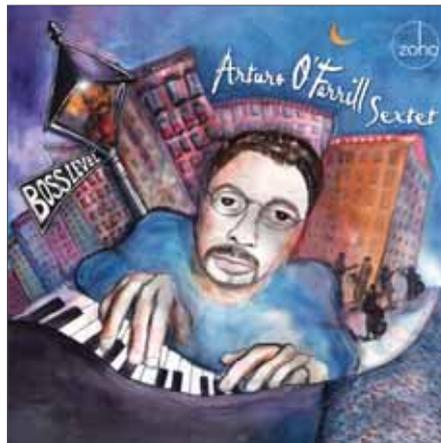
ZOHO 201603

★★★★½

You might expect a recording inspired by a love of video games to sound sterile, antiseptic or cold. This is anything but. A paean to his family’s lifelong love of gaming, pianist-composer Arturo O’Farrill’s *Boss Level* is brimming with visceral appeal and bristling with fresh ideas from a crop of fearless young improvisers: Brazilian tenor saxophonist Livio Almeida, searing guitarist Travis Reuter, bassist Shawn Conley and O’Farrill’s talented sons Adam on trumpet and Zack on drums.

They come charging out of the gate with a vengeance on Arturo’s hard-boppish romp, “Miss Stephanie.” Fueled by Zack’s surging, swinging pulse, it features robust, probing solos from Almeida and Adam, and a distortion-laced legato solo from Reuter. Arturo’s thorny “True That” is almost Ivesian in its craggy abstraction and features some freewheeling explorations from the composer on piano.

Trumpeter Adam contributes the beguiling, melodically flowing piece “The Moon Follows Us Wherever We Go,” which features some beautifully introspective piano work from his father. And drummer Zach opens his “Circle Games” in lockstep with bassist



Conley on a second-line-sounding groove. Reuter’s dense and edgy “V.F.S.” mirrors some of the same qualities of Steve Coleman’s *Five Elements* in its angular rhythmic drive and odd meters. And for a change of pace, they close on a restful note with a sparse, gentle reading of Horace Silver’s “Peace.” From track to track, this daring sextet keeps throwing surprises at you.

—Bill Milkowski

**Boss Level:** Miss Stephanie; True That; The Moon Follows Us Everywhere We Go; Circle Games; Maine Song; Compay Doug; Not Now, Right Now; In Whom I Am Well Pleased; V.F.S.; Peace. (74:16)

**Personnel:** Arturo O’Farrill, piano; Adam O’Farrill, trumpet; Zack O’Farrill, drums; Livio Almeida, tenor saxophone; Travis Reuter, guitar; Shawn Conley, bass.

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



## Alexander von Schlippenbach *Jazz Now! Live At Theater Gütersloh*

INTUITION 71316

★★★★½

Fresh from a sparkling glass-cube opera house in northwest Germany, this sprightly quartet enthusiastically celebrates the crisp, clear-cut spirit of Herbie Nichols, the unbri-dled bass-clarinet braying of Eric Dolphy and their modern ramifications. Alexander von Schlippenbach, veteran pianist and co-founder of the Globe Unity Orchestra, leads his Berlin-based band in exacting concoctions from the rarefied ozone between bop historicity and rollicking free-jazz.

The lengthy album, one in a new series entitled *European Jazz Masters*, brims with three compositions by Nichols, four by Dolphy and five by the stalwart septu-agenarian pianist, with a capper—Monk’s “Epistrophy”—and a coda featuring an interview with Schlippenbach in German.

Easy listening this album is not. Bass solos pop up unexpectedly, and bass clarinet and drums spar but resolve amicably. Originals unfold swiftly: Schlippenbach slides smoothly from the free opener into “12 Bars”; “The Bells Of St. K.” winds up like a crazy clock; and the incendiary “Tropi” downshifts to slow-waltz unison.

Stellar moments abound: Bass clarinetist Rudi Mahall’s wheezing acrobatics stimulate “Serene, and Schlippenbach’s lean piano flickers over snappy brushes on “Every Cloud.”

Excellent acoustics and recording let us gauge heft and sizzle, but this band liberal-ly sprinkles gold dust at our feet. Scoop it up!

—Fred Bouchard

**Jazz Now!** Gold Is Where You Find It; 12 Bars; The Gig; Serene; The Bells Of St. K.; Tropi; Something Sweet, Something Tender; Devices And Desires; Les; Bishop; Every Cloud; Miss Ann; Epistrophy; Interview With Götz Böhler. (79:50)

**Personnel:** Alexander von Schlippenbach, piano; Rudi Mahall, bass clarinet; Heinrich Köbberling, drums; Antonio Borghini, bass.

**Ordering info:** [doublemoon.de](http://doublemoon.de)

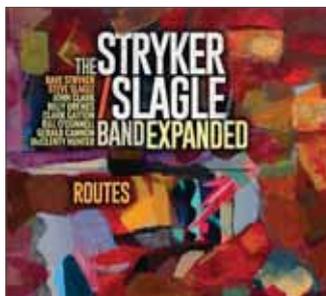
## The Stryker/Slagle Band Expanded

### Routes

STRIKEZONE 8813

★★★★½

Guitarist Dave Stryker and alto saxophonist Steve Slagle have co-led one of the most consistently stimulating jazz groups of the past decade. While the duo has worked together in different settings since the late 1980s, the Stryker/Slagle Band has been recording regularly since 2003.



For *Routes*, a quartet is augmented by three horns and keyboardist Bill O'Connell. Slagle's arrangements give the music the feel of a big band, particularly when the horns are riffing behind one of the co-leaders. While the sidemen have occasional solos, the bulk of the individual improvisations are taken by Stryker and Slagle.

The group performs four originals apiece by the co-leaders, plus a Charles Mingus song. "City Of Angels" begins the program with a medium-tempo jazz waltz. "Nothin' Wrong With It," with its joyful theme, inspires one of Slagle's better soprano solos and an adventurous spot by Stryker. The use of a rhythmic riff and Billy Drewes' bass clarinet in the ensembles clearly enthuse the musicians.

*Routes* is modern straightahead jazz that succeeds on all levels.

—Scott Yanow

**Routes:** City Of Angels; Nothin' Wrong With It; Self-Portrait In Three Colors; Routes; Ft. Greene Scene; Great Plains; Extensity; Gardena; Lickety Split Lounge. (58:17)

**Personnel:** Dave Stryker, guitar; Steve Slagle, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone (2), flute (3, 6); John Clark, French horn; Billy Drewes, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet (2, 3); Clark Gayton, trombone, tuba (3, 6); Bill O'Connell, piano, Fender Rhodes (2, 5, 6); Gerald Cannon, bass; McClenty Hunter, drums.

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

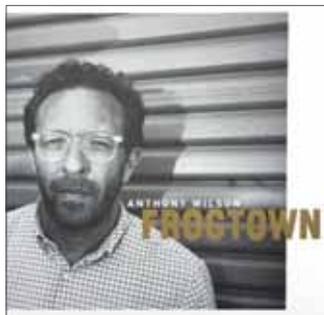
## Anthony Wilson

### Frogtown

GOAT HILL 004

★★★★

The average listener may know Wilson for his work in Diana Krall's band, but he's also made seven solo albums, four with his nine-piece band and three with a trio. He also plays, when commitments allow, with the Gerald Wilson Orchestra, his late father's big band. His desire to explore new avenues of expression led him to start writing songs with lyrics. *Frogtown* is his first album as a singer/songwriter, and as promised, he's found ways to arrange his tunes that will confound expectations.



Mike Elizondo plays a tango-like bass line on "She Won't Look Back," a muted blues that features pianist Patrick Warren scattering flurries of arpeggios to support Wilson's spectral vocal. Saxophonist Charles Lloyd and Wilson exchange phrases on the extended improvisation that opens "Your Footprints," a haunting tune with a cryptic lyric and hints of gospel music. "Our Affair" is a torchy country song, which finds Wilson sliding on guitar while Petra Haden's violin yearns in the background. Wilson sings with a pleasing, low-key rumble that suits the poignant lyric.

—j. poet

**Frogtown:** She Won't Look Back; Frogtown; Your Footprints; Occhi Di Bambola; Silver And Flint; Our Affair; The Cares Of A Family Man; Mopeds; Arcadia; The Geranium; Shabby Bird; I Saw It Through The Skylight; Downtown Abbey. (59:31)

**Personnel:** Anthony Wilson, guitar, vocals; Petra Haden, violin, bird whistle; Mike Elizondo, bass, synth bass; Patrick Warren, piano, organ, pump organ, autoharp, keyboards, samples; Jim Keltner, drums, percussion (1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 12); Matt Chamberlain, drums, percussion (3–8, 11); Charles Lloyd, tenor saxophone (3); Jesse Harris, harmonica (9); Josh Nelson, piano (5, 10); David Rosenboom, trumpet; Bob Reynolds, tenor saxophone; Adam Schroeder, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet.

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

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## Keynotes

With its 88 keys and seven-octave range, the piano puts a veritable orchestra at the fingertips of any player willing to lend it time and attention. It's no coincidence, then, that some of jazz's most iconic composers—Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk, Cecil Taylor—were all master pianists. A wave of new releases has brought the pianist-composer back into focus. Though ranging in style and instrumentation, they can all trace their artistic origin to a bench behind a keyboard.

**Andy Jaffe Nonet + 4, *Arc* (Play-scale 062315; 66:12 ★★★★★)** A trip to Taiwan and an immersion into that country's richly syncretic musical culture were the impetus for *Arc*, an inspired new album by pianist/composer Andy Jaffe. Here, the leader has penned a nine-piece program for a lithe nonet of jazz veterans, including the unflappable trumpeter Wallace Roney and the melodious tenor saxophonist Jimmy Greene. Jaffe, the director of jazz activities at Williams University in Massachusetts, writes with a Gil Evans-like ear for harmony and motion. His songs can move with a springy agility ("Brainworm"), or settle profoundly like a dense fog ("In Case This Is Goodbye"). Others, like "Go Down Moses" (for saxophone quartet), approach the sanctity of a hymn. Whatever the mood, the overall sound is one of graceful precision.

**Ordering info:** [playscape-recordings.com](http://playscape-recordings.com)

Berklee-educated pianist **Julian Shore** shows deep maturity as a composer and bandleader on ***Which Way Now?* (Tone Rogue 58:36; ★★★★★)**. Writing for an assemblage of New York's rising stars—guitarist Gilad Hekselman, saxophonist Dayna Stephens, bassist Aidan Carroll and drummer Colin Stranahan—Shore delivers a deeply felt program of 10 tracks that quietly and inquisitively explores the process of musical discovery. His search has unearthed a litany of musical gems, especially the sprawling title track and serene vocal feature "Alpine." Guest appearances by Godwin Louis (alto saxophone), Noah Preminger (tenor saxophone, clarinet), Jorge Roeder (bass) and Samuel Torres (percussion) add an elegant intensity and strength to the program, which sways in broad strokes from lush, orchestral chamber jazz ("Moss, Mansion, Sandstorm") to ambling Western swing ("Back Home").

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

An elegant stylist with a gifted ear for texture and tension, veteran pianist **Eric Olsen** has recorded 17 musically diverse albums, with artists ranging from saxophon-



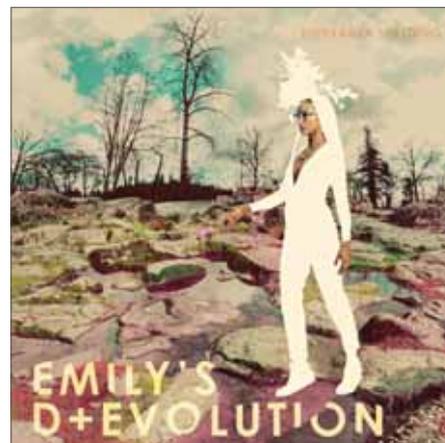
ist George Garzone to opera singer Kevin Maynor. His previous album, *Dyad Plays Puccini*, examined masterworks by the Italian composer through a jazz lens, and ***Sea Changes* (Blujazz 3433; 59:34 ★★½)**, his cerebral new project, is built on a similar framework. The nine-piece program is an eclectic mix of jazz standards (Gershwin's "My Man's Gone Now"), pop mainstays (The Beatles' "Something") and classics of the Western canon (Bizet's "Carmen Prelude"), all of which have been gilded with a bright improvisational luster. He's joined in this effort by saxophonist Don Braden, bassist Ratzo B. Harris and drummer Tim Horner.

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

A deeply personal musical statement, pianist **Joel Weiskopf's** forthright new album, ***Where Angels Fear To Tread* (SteepleChase 31813; 70:31 ★★★★★)**, offers eight probing originals (plus one arrangement of a Bill Evans tune) that were written long before the recording of this CD took place, but that have never appeared on disc. In its scope and degree of variation, the album serves as an autobiography of Weiskopf's musical career. The opening "Patience" evokes the steamy, soul-driven sound of '60s-era Blue Note recordings, which the pianist studied at the New England Conservatory, while "Lonely Song," with its prickly rhythmic texture, was written to induce the feelings of isolation the pianist felt upon first moving to New York in the mid-'80s. A judicious accompanist whose style tends toward warm, enveloping chord voicings, Weiskopf exhibits a knack for clarity and concision on this album, nowhere more evident than on the title track, with its breezy strains of gospel. The church influence is no accident. The pianist, who became a Christian in 1996, wrote the song as a statement of reverence for his newfound faith.

DB

**Ordering info:** [steeplechase.dk](http://steeplechase.dk)



## Esperanza Spalding *Emily's D+Evolution*

CONCORD 38265

★★★★

Esperanza Spalding's biggest gift has always been the joy with which she approaches music. Watching her play and sing is like watching Steph Curry take the ball at mid-court; one gets the impression that there's nothing she can't accomplish.

On *Emily's D+Evolution*, she playfully tries on different personas in her songs—tossing off the kind of wordplay and virtuosity that Prince displayed on *Sign O' The Times*. Like Prince, the meanings of lyrics might seem evident, but there's a slippery element to them that makes you question whether "Rest In Pleasure" is just a frantic, orgiastic song or something deeper.

It's probably no coincidence that David Bowie's longtime producer, Tony Visconti, is behind the soundboard alongside Spalding for eight of the dozen songs. "Elevate Or Operate," with its huge, shifting sound, has the heft, scope and mystery of mid-period Bowie. The spirit of Joni Mitchell is evident, too, especially on "Earth To Heaven," where the bass and vocal parts sound like an outtake from Mitchell's late-'70s work. Another obvious forebear, Jimi Hendrix, is referenced—albeit subtly—in the rock-oriented descending bass line of "Judas."

From the tight, whimsical funk of "Good Lava," with its self-referential vocal hook of "watch this pretty girl flow," to the dramatic Eartha Kitt-like delivery of Anthony Newley's "I Want It Now," Spalding has every element under control. This is proof, as if it's needed, of the power of pure pop played with instrumental prowess.

—James Hale

**Emily's D+Evolution:** Good Lava; Unconditional Love; Judas; Earth To Heaven; One; Rest In Pleasure; Ebony And Ivy; Noble Nobles; Farewell Dolly; Elevate Or Operate; Funk The Fear; I Want It Now. (45:49)

**Personnel:** Esperanza Spalding, bass (1–11), synth bass (12), piano (12), vocals; Matthew Stevens, guitar; Justin Tyson, drums (1, 6, 11, 12); Karriem Riggins, drums (2–5, 7, 8, 10), percussion (9); Corey King, vocals (1, 2, 4–7, 12), trombone (8), keyboards (12), synthesizer (6); Emily Elbert (1, 6, 12), Nadia Washington (2, 5, 7), Fred Martin (11), Katriz Trinidad (11), Celeste Butler (11), Kimberly L. Cook-Ratiff (11), background vocals.

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

## Herlin Riley New Direction

MACK AVENUE 1101

★★★★

The veteran Crescent City drummer pursues a more worldly vision on *New Direction*, his third outing as a leader. Inspired as much by Afro-Caribbean grooves as the music of his native New Orleans, this project has a soulful lived-in feeling while also connecting the dots between cultures.



Accompanied by a young crew—Emmet Cohen on piano, Godwin Louis on alto and soprano saxophone and Bruce Harris on trumpet—Herlin Riley presides as principal composer and conductor from behind the kit, in the great tradition of drummer-led bands. Guitarist Mark Whitfield guests on the catchy title track, and percussionist Pedrito Martinez provides churning Afro-Cuban conga work on three tracks, including the dynamic, clave-fueled “The Crossbar.”

There’s a whole wide world of music here. “Connection To Congo Square” features strains of West Africa (in the polyrhythmic percussive grooves), James Brown (in the bass line, lifted from “I Don’t Want Nobody To Give Me Nothin”) and Charlie Parker (in the fluent alto blowing of Louis). And “Tootie Ma,” the Danny Barker second-line classic, finds Riley revisiting his N’awlins roots with tambourine in hand.

—Bill Milkowski

**New Direction:** New Direction; A Spring Fantasy; The Crossbar; The Big Banana; Shake Off The Dust; Connection To Congo Square; Herlin’s Hurdle; Hiccup Smooth; Harlem Shuffle; Tootie Ma. (63:34)

**Personnel:** Herlin Riley, drums, vocals; Emmet Cohen, piano; Russell Hall, bass; Bruce Harris, trumpet; Godwin Louis, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone; Pedrito Martinez, conga (2, 3, 6); Mark Whitfield, guitar (1).

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

## Three’s Company We’ll Be Together Again

CHESKY 376

★★★★

The so-called “chordless” trio can be a rare and special breed of context in jazz, and the short list of saxophonists who have helmed such lean settings includes Joe Henderson, Sonny Rollins, Joshua Redman and now Javon Jackson.



On *We’ll Be Together Again*, the 50-year-old reedist sounds more mature and poised than ever in the company of bassist Ron Carter (an expert at chordal telegraphy) and drummer Billy Drummond.

A sure but hard-to-define ensemble voice hovers over this relaxed session, recorded using the one-microphone process of Chesky Records’ “Binaural + Series.” The stage, musically and spatially, is set with Carter’s sweet, easy-swinging opener, “For Toddlers Only,” through to the gentle ending note of their balladic take on “But Beautiful,” with Carter keeping a busier presence between Jackson’s lead voice and Drummond’s tasteful brushwork.

Jackson is impressive throughout, flexing imagination while also keeping a graceful cool, restraining the impulse to wail in favor of respecting the chamber-ish air and feel of the trio. As a team, these players triangulate beautifully and poetically.

—Josef Woodard

**We’ll Be Together Again:** For Toddlers Only; Dark Eyes; We’ll Be Together Again; T.J.; Candlelight; My Man Hubbard; Eddie’s Theme; Danny Boy; Epistrophy; But Beautiful. (56:32)

**Personnel:** Javon Jackson, tenor saxophone; Ron Carter, bass; Billy Drummond, drums.

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

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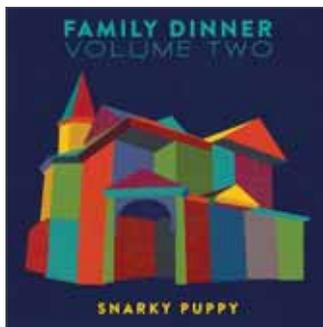
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## Snarky Puppy Family Dinner, Volume Two

GROUNDUP/UNIVERSAL MUSIC CLASSICS B0024506-00

★★★★½

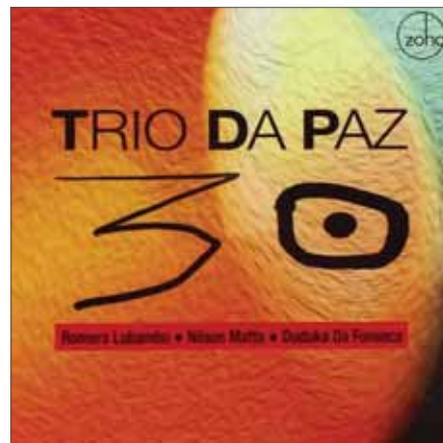
Newcomers to the Snarky Puppy brand will be satisfied with, if a bit bewildered by, the group's latest release, an elaborate and eclectic vocal-based project. To record it, bassist/leader Michael League and company convened in the studio for a week, with special guests from around the world swaddled in interesting arrangements. Some match-making connections work better than others. Vocalist Becca Stevens was paired with the progressive Swedish folk band Väsen, to great symbiotic effect, but the Afro-Peruvian vibrations of the tune "Molino Molero," featuring Susana Baca, slips a bit. And David Crosby's gospel-folk tune "Somebody Home" carries an intriguing prog-folky charm. —Josef Woodard



**Family Dinner, Volume Two:** I Asked; Molino Molero; Liquid Love; Soro (Afriki); Sing To The Moon; Don't You Know; I Remember; Somebody Home. Bonus Videos: Be Still; Fuego Y Agua; Shapons Vindaloo; One Hope; Brother, I'm Hungry (87:16).

**Personnel:** Michael League, bass, vocals; Bill Laurance, Cory Henry, Shaun Martin, Justin Stanton, keyboards; Bob Lanzetti, Mark Lettieri, Chris McQueen, guitar; Jay Jennings, Mike "Maz" Maher, trumpet, flugelhorn; Chris Bullock, tenor saxophone, flute; Robert "Sput" Searight, Larnell Lewis, drums; Nate Werth, Marcelo Woloski, percussion; Jacob Collier, vocals, piano, harmonizer; David Crosby, vocals, acoustic guitar; Becca Stevens, vocals, acoustic guitar, charango; Charlie Hunter, 7-string guitar; Louis Cole, drums; Michelle Willis, pump organ, vocals; Jeff Coffin, tenor saxophone, flute; Carlos Malita, fife, flute, soprano sax; Bernardo Aguiar, pandeiro; Roger Tallroth, parlor guitar, 12-string acoustic guitar; Olov Johansson, nyckelharpa; André Ferrari, percussion; Big Ed Lee, sousaphone; Candy West, Peaches West, Rachella Searight, Susana Baca, Chris Turner, Genevieve Artadi, Laura Mvula, Salif Keita, Carolina Araoz, Bah Kouyate-Kone, Aminata Dante, Amos Gohi Baraon, vocals.

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



## Trio Da Paz

30

ZOHO 201602

★★★★½

This modest and satisfying recording celebrates 30 years of musical camaraderie among guitarist Romero Lubambo, bassist Nilson Matta and drummer Duduka Da Fonseca.

These Brazilians first came together in 1985 and live in New York City, where they continue to spin fresh work spanning samba, bossa nova, ballad and barnburner. All are in evidence on this low-key, occasionally fiery recording.

The album launches with "Sampa 67," a furious Matta homage to his native São Paulo. Like that city, it teems and propels, Lubambo deftly navigating Matta's stop-and-start exploration. Matta's rubato interlude toward the middle further dramatizes the interplay.

Lubambo's "For Donato," a tribute to the great composer João Donato, changes the mood if not the pace. As usual, this singularly agile guitarist is more interested in interplay than individual fireworks. His style is unusual and distinctive: Almost self-effacing, it's integrative rather than showy. The tune also showcases Da Fonseca's rolls and cymbal chokes, as Matta's bass bubbles below.

A trio of pensive tunes follows: "Outono," a shimmering Lubambo piece with a plangent Matta undercurrent; "Alana," Da Fonseca's rhythmically tricky and sweet tune for his daughter; and "Luisa," Lubambo's perfumed, minimalist tribute to his daughter.

There is no theme here, no concept. But there are supple, engaging songs including the one cover, a sparkling update of Baden Powell's "Samba Triste." Here, the samba dominates, not the "triste," and the tune displays Trio Da Paz at its most virtuosic.

—Carlo Wolff



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A boisterous and effusive player, it's hard to say which attribute is more marvelous—the playing or the arranging.  
—DownBeat Magazine ★★★★★

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**30:** Samba 67; For Donato; Outono; Alana; Luisa; Samba Triste; Águas Brasileiras; Sweeping The Chimney; Flying Over Rio; LVM/ Direto Ao Assunto, (45:45)

**Personnel:** Duduka Da Fonseca, drums; Romero Lubambo, acoustic guitar, electric guitar; Nilson Matta, bass.

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

## Logan Richardson *Shift*

BLUE NOTE 00600406671585

★★★★

Along with photographer Reid Miles' iconic cover designs and Rudy Van Gelder's pristine sound, a characteristic of Blue Note Records' best years in the 1960s was the musical cross-pollination of artists. The leaders-as-sidemen approach is in the label's DNA, and it's the formula for success on alto saxophonist Logan Richardson's Blue Note debut.

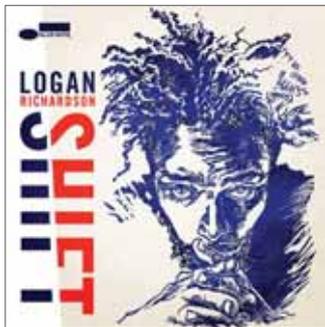
Just as Wayne Shorter or Freddie Hubbard would make their presence felt on those '60s Blue Note records by other leaders, guitarist Pat Metheny is anything but the polite guest on *Shift*. He slashes electric noise across the slowly revealing theme of Bruno Mars' "Locked Out Of Heaven" and unleashes some of his signature spectral sound on the slippery "Creeper." In fact, he plays such a large, often disruptive, role that a lesser player than Richardson might feel like he's being pushed out of the spotlight at his own party, particularly when pianist Jason Moran and drummer Nasheet Waits are also tugging at the listener's attention. But it's hard to overstate the chemistry. Most working bands would be pleased to achieve the kind of dynamic interplay heard here.

—James Hale

**Shift:** Mind Free; Creeper; In Your Next Life; Locked Out Of Heaven; Slow; When I Wake; Imagine; Alone; In Between; Time; Untitled (59:43)

**Personnel:** Logan Richardson, alto saxophone; Pat Metheny, guitar; Jason Moran, piano, keyboards; Harish Raghavan, bass; Nasheet Waits, drums.

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



## Jane Monheit *The Songbook Sessions: Ella Fitzgerald*

EMERALD CITY RECORDS 001

★★★★

Nobody brought more joy or pathos to jazz singing than Ella Fitzgerald, inspiring generations of jazz vocalists. One of them was Jane Monheit, who grew up learning the American popular song canon from Ella's *Songbook* albums. Now Monheit repays the debt, singing favorite Fitzgerald tunes in an album filled with startling invention and beauty.

The album's opening notes—an odd but alluring bass ostinato that paves the way for her sultry cooing of Duke Ellington's "All Too Soon"—announce an intention to design adventurous new settings for these classics charts. The arrangements remain true to the indelible melodies and lyrics but roam freely around their harmonic structures.

Trumpet Nicholas Payton originally intended only to produce and arrange but ended up playing throughout the album, creating a fascinating melodic foil for Monheit. Their two voices entwine in gorgeous melody in a pairing of Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's "Chelsea Bridge" with "In A Sentimental Mood." And no singer could wish for more simpatico backing than Monheit gets from her longtime trio: Michael Kanan on piano and keyboards, Neal Miner on bass and Rick Montalbano on drums.

—Allen Morrison

**The Songbook Sessions: Ella Fitzgerald:** All Too Soon; Somebody Loves Me; Chelsea Mood (Chelsea Bridge/In A Sentimental Mood); Something's Gotta Give; I Was Doing All Right/Know You Now; Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye; Where Or When; Ill Wind; All Of You; I Used To Be Colorblind; I've Got You Under My Skin; This Time The Dream's On Me. (58:42)

**Personnel:** Jane Monheit, vocals; Nicholas Payton; trumpet, piano (11), organ (11, 12); Michael Kanan, piano; Neal Miner, bass; Rick Montalbano, drums; Daniel Sadowick, percussion; Brandee Younger, harp (5, 12).

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



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# The Witching Hour

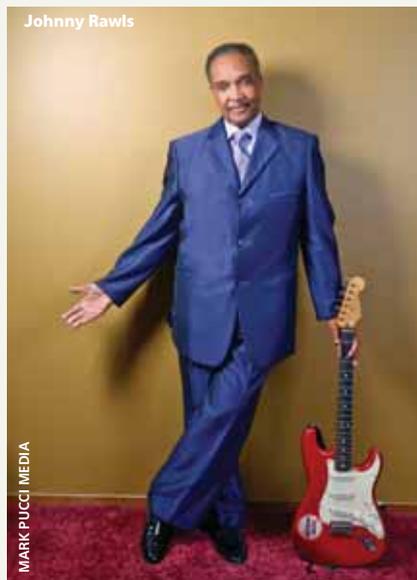
**Various Artists, *God Don't Never Change: The Songs Of Blind Willie Johnson* (Alligator; 41:57 ★★★★★)** Producer Jeffrey Gaskill assembled a squad of leading roots musicians to interpret sacred songs from the repertoire of Texas street-corner reverend and bottleneck guitarist Blind Willie Johnson, who recorded from 1927–30. Tom Waits, matching the chokes, wheezes and all-purpose roughness of Johnson's voice, conjures an imaginary skid-row revival hall while throttling "The Soul Of A Man." Surpassing that, the post-Beat iconoclast packs "John The Revelator" with an apocalyptic fearsomeness. Lucinda Williams stakes a personal claim on the lost-soul lament "It's Nobody's Fault But Mine" and gets emotionally caught up in the fire and brimstone of "God Don't Never Change." Strength and flair exist in Derek Trucks' slide guitar and in his wife Susan Tedeschi's vocal on "Keep Your Lamp Trimmed And Burning." Not to be outdone, singer Jimmy Carter leads the Blind Boys of Alabama through "Mother's Children" with his gospel wisdom outweighing any material wealth. Serving Johnson's memory ably are Lone Justice's Marie McKee and the Cowboy Junkies. Sinead O'Connor and Rickie Lee Jones are less convincing.

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

**Johnny Rawls, *Tiger In A Cage* (Catfood 022; 49:33 ★★★★★)** On his seventh album for Catfood, Johnny Rawls continues with the casual brilliance he displayed on his previous ones. As always, his soul-blues singing holds a singular combination of gentlemanly authority and painfully felt vulnerability on top-grade original tunes and choice covers. Supported by his superb band called the Rays, Rawls addresses a song character's drug addiction on the title track and captures the pure radiance of Memphis soul on "Red Cadillac" (first recorded by him, without the Rays, in 2008). The Mississippi-born vocalist makes intuition and imagination go hand-in-hand when teamed up with singer Eden Brent for the Louisiana swamp tune "Southern Honey." Rawls and company wring fresh dramatic detail out of classics identified with Jackie Wilson, Sam Cooke and the Rolling Stones.

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

**Tim Williams, *So Low* (Lowden Proud 20152; 32:11 ★★½)** Meriting notice south of the 49th parallel, Calgary's Tim Williams folds together assured musicianship and



Johnny Rawls

genuineness as he invitingly traverses a blues landscape peopled by Blind Boy Fuller, Tampa Red, Mose Allison and other inspirers. Individuality comes out through tone and inflection.

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

**The Paul Nelson Band, *Badass Generation* (Friday Music 1168; 48:36 ★★)** Heat-scorched blues-rock from this Johnny Winter understudy with super-abundant guitar technique feels formulaic. Still, Nelson's stringed flamethrower chills long enough to drop lyricism into "Keep It All Together" and a few more otherwise routine songs.

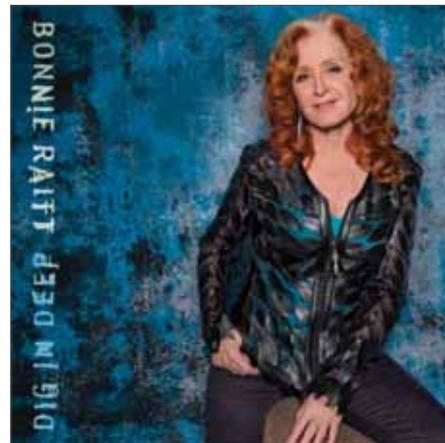
**Ordering info:** [fridaymusic.com](http://fridaymusic.com)

**Albert Collins & The Icebreakers, *Live At Rockpalast* (MIG-Music 90632; DVD 95:00/CDs 37:28/52:55 ★★½)** Counterpointing impassioned vocals and bundles of suspenseful, clipped guitar phrases, Albert Collins and his band with saxophonist A.C. Reed turned in a better-than-good but not excellent performance of blues and funk grooves at a German venue in 1980. Moments of ecstasy spurred by the signature frosty sound of Collins's Telecaster (tuned to uncommon open F minor) are sometimes offset by passages of showy tedium in extended song improvisations.

**Ordering info:** [mig-music.de](http://mig-music.de)

**Blind Alfred Reed, *Appalachian Visionary* (Dust To Digital 048; 67:54 ★★★★★)** West Virginian singer-fiddler Alfred Reed's white folk music of the late-1920s (22 tunes, boasting restored sound) spun stories of life that were as intimate and bracing as those offered by Blind Willie Johnson, Blind Blake and other exemplars active at the time. Set includes 84-page book.

**Ordering info:** [dust-digital.com](http://dust-digital.com)



## Bonnie Raitt *Dig In Deep*

REDWING

★★★★

Twenty albums and 40 years into her career, Bonnie Raitt could be all but forgiven for slipping into comfortable, time-tested grooves on *Dig In Deep*. In fact, the 66-year-old blues-rocker has provided casual fans with little reason to expand their Raitt record holdings since her heyday in the '90s. But *Dig In Deep*, which she produced and released on her own Redwing Records, gives fans something to talk about once again.

When Raitt and her road-hardened supporting players rock out, they don't quite blister the paint. But there's a level of energy on the Raitt-penned "Unintended Consequence Of Love" and "The Comin' Round Is Going Through" that has rarely been matched on her recent discs. Raitt, a gifted interpreter of other writers' material, has her most writing credits (five) in nearly two decades, reflecting the personal nature of this project.

For good rockin', Raitt reflects on how time slips away with "I Knew" ("Time ain't never healed the wound/ Can't think of anything that gets any better 'cause it's old"). On "You've Changed My Mind," taken from a 2010 session, Joe Henry's words help unlock Raitt's emotional paralysis: "A page has been turned, some old fears unlearned/ And I know you've changed my mind." The album closer, "The Ones We Couldn't Be," is about regrets of things left unsaid. It's a haunting reminder to "Try the truth instead/ It may not be enough, but it's a start."

—Jeff Johnson

**Dig In Deep:** Unintended Consequence Of Love; Need You Tonight; I Knew; All Alone With Something To Say; What You're Doin' To Me; Shakin' Shakin' Shakes; Undone; If You Need Somebody; Gypsy In Me; The Comin' Round Is Going Through; You've Changed My Mind; The Ones We Couldn't Be. (52:31)

**Personnel:** Bonnie Raitt, vocals, guitar, piano; George Marinelli, guitar, backing vocals; Mike Finnigan, Hammond B-3 organ, clavinet, electric piano, backing vocals; James "Hutch" Hutchinson, bass; Ricky Fataar, drums, percussion, backing vocals; Jon Cleary, electric piano, backing vocals; Arnold McCuller, Maia Sharp, backing vocals; Joe Henry, Bill Frisell, Greg Leisz, guitar; Patrick Warren, keyboards; David Pitch, upright bass; Jay Bellerose, drums.

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

**Ferit Odman**  
**Dameronia**  
**With Strings**  
 EQUINOX 0024

★★★★

For this Brooklyn-made session, Turkish drummer Odman has assembled an exceptional quartet—trumpeter Terell Stafford, pianist Danny Grissett and bassist Peter Washington—and a crack string sextet for a highly enjoyable set reimagines the compositions/arrangements of the late great Tadd Dameron.

The opener, “On A Misty Night,” is propelled by Odman’s great swing feel, exuding Philly Joe Jones-like smoothness with stirring—yet judicious—interplay on top. Dameron’s best-known number, “If You Could See Me Now,” is enhanced by restless, shifting strings that are intriguing yet never intrusive. “Just Plain Talkin’” gets down to some badass swinging blues, while the gorgeous ballad “You’re A Joy” settles things down to highlight Stafford’s warm tone.

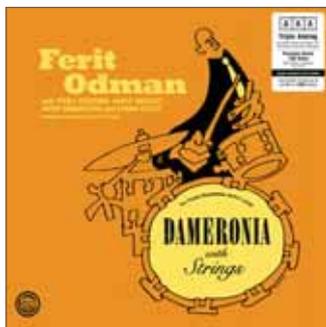
Odman’s disc achieves the best virtues of a “tribute” album: It simultaneously embodies the spirit of the originals while offering new perspectives that help us to appreciate Dameron’s genius—again.

—Jeff Potter

**Dameronia With Strings:** On A Misty Night; If You Could See Me Now; Just Plain Talkin’; Smooth As The Wind; Look, Stop & Listen; You’re A Joy; Our Delight; Soultrane. (42:18)

**Personnel:** Ferit Odman, drums; Terell Stafford, trumpet; Danny Grissett, piano; Peter Washington, bass; Antoine Silverman, Diane Monroe, Tamara DeMent, violin; Chris Cardona, viola; Emily Brausa, cello; Clarice Jensen, cello.

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



**Tord Gustavsen**  
**What Was Said**

ECM 2465

★★★½

The arrangements are so diaphanous, the sonic details so interior, the pacing so torpid that grasping the full elusive beauty of *What Was Said* demands repeated, concentrated listenings. But with each spin, the rewards become exponential.

For inspiration, celebrated Norwegian pianist and composer Tord Gustavsen draws from eclectic yet arcane poetry by the likes of Rumi, Coleman Barks, Kenneth Rexroth and Henrik Ibsen, as well as traditional music of his homeland, to deliver epigrammatic works that bewitch with their emotional clarity and subtle, imaginative realizations.

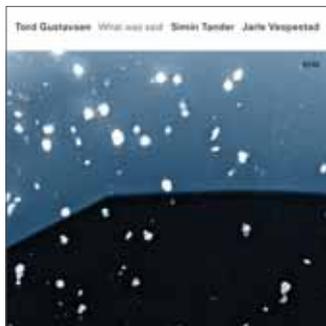
Much of the power comes from Gustavsen’s interaction with Afghani-German singer Simin Tander, who possesses a lissome contralto. Their dialogue drifts across the album with suspenseful melodicism, full of sustained pedal work and bolero-esque improvisations. With themes centering on deliverance and the transcendental, Tander sings most of the lyrics in the Indo-Iranian language of Pashto, which intensifies the music’s transportive mystique. Drummer Jarle Vespestad is also instrumental in the disc’s success, adding soul-stirring tonal and textural colors to “I See You,” and rhythmic fire on the comparatively spry original “Rull.”

—John Murph

**What Was Said:** Your Grief; I See You; Imagine The Fog Disappearing; A Castle In Haven; Journey Of Life; I Refuse; What Was Said To The Rose/O Sacred Head; The Way You Play My Heart; Rull; The Source Of Now; Sweet Melting; Longing To Praise Thee; Sweet Melting Afterglow. (59:50)

**Personnel:** Tord Gustavsen, piano, electronics, synth bass; Simin Tander, voice; Jarle Vespestad, drums.

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





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**Dick Oatts/Mats Holmquist/New York Jazz Orchestra**  
**A Tribute To Herbie +1**  
 MAMA RECORDS 1049

★★★★½

Saxophonist Dick Oatts and arranger Mats Holmquist bring new life to timeless compositions in this robust homage to Herbie Hancock. The “+1” refers to the one original, Holmquist’s engaging “Stevie R.,” a tune that begins cartoonlike and spare, then swells to baroque grandeur. Like all but one of the Hancock tunes, it’s spirited and dazzling.

The sole outlier is the stately “Jessica,” with a yearning soprano saxophone solo by Oatts riding over Holmquist’s plush arrangement; Adam Birnbaum’s piano is ghostly embroidery, and Martin Wind’s bass is haunting.

The nine tracks encompass some of Hancock’s most popular tunes, including the saucy “Watermelon Man,” the rigorously built “Chameleon” and “Cantaloupe Island.” Sparked by the biting horn arrangements that characterize the recording as a whole, Birnbaum’s craggy piano and Mark Gross’s earthy alto saxophone help “Cantaloupe Island” set the tone—and the high bar to which this album consistently rises.

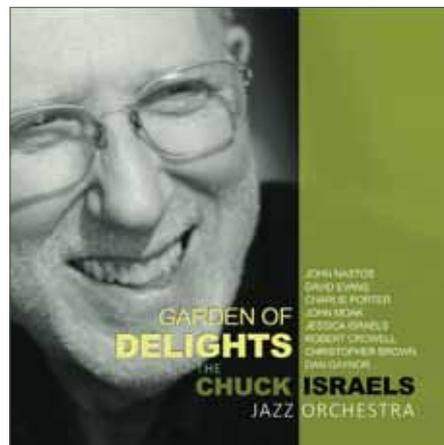
In the liner notes, Holmquist says the album reflects “minimalist compositional techniques.” That would suggest that he makes much of little, and indeed, some of Hancock’s melodies are minimalist in the sense that they’re direct and transparent; they certainly have good bones, as do Holmquist’s arrangements.

—Carlo Wolff

**A Tribute To Herbie +1:** Cantaloupe Island; Chameleon; Dolphin Dance; Eye Of The Hurricane; Stevie R.; Maiden Voyage; Jessica; Watermelon Man; Toys. (73:07)

**Personnel:** Dick Oatts, lead alto saxophone; Mark Gross, alto saxophone; Walt Weiskopf, Robert Nordmark, tenor saxophone; Frank Basile, baritone saxophone; Nick Marchione, Jon Shaw, Tatum Greenblatt, Frank Brodahl, Joe Magnarelli, Jakob Gudmundsson (4), trumpet; John Mosca, Larry Farrell, Steen Nikolaj Hansen, trombone; Max Seigel, bass trombone; Paul Meyers, guitar; Adam Birnbaum, piano; Martin Wind, bass; John Riley, drums; Mats Holmquist, arranger, composer.

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



**Chuck Israels Jazz Orchestra**  
**Garden Of Delights**  
 DOT TIME 9051

★★★★

For some, bassist Chuck Israels will forever be the man who took Scott LaFaro’s place in the Bill Evans Trio. But Israels also founded and piloted the National Jazz Ensemble in the 1970s, and made it an important piece of the jazz repertory movement. Israels is still in the repertory game, but this release makes clear he has no interest in jazz taxidermy.

The Portland-based Chuck Israels Jazz Orchestra, now in its fourth year, is a mid-size band that can swell to big band fullness through the leader’s resourceful writing, or dial down to a soloist and a rhythm section. Their latest album is bright and lyrical, with Israel’s bass serving as the spine of the group.

While the tunes are all Israels originals, a close look shows connections to the history of the music: “Discretion Advised” is a “Sweet Georgia Brown” derivative; daughter Jessica Israels’ soprano vocal on the title track recalls Ellington’s Kay Davis; the pastoral “Chaconne A Son Gout” is a piano homage to John Lewis; and “The Skipping Tune” resembles “Walking Up” by Evans.

Israels uses many blues variations: the hard-edged “Mingus” pushes some of the master’s stylistic buttons (sanctified horn exchanges, colorful block piano chords); the title track is a lope with tough alto sax by John Nastos; and “Clutching” uses a clever metric staircase effect.

There are so many elements at work on this album. They mesh so well together that a serious listener can hear this as the culmination of Israels’ life in music.

—Kirk Silsbee

**Garden Of Delights:** The Skipping Tune; Garden Of Delights; Mingus; Speed Bumps; Natural Beauty; Bluesman’s Holiday; Warming Trend; Double Clutching; Chaconne A Son Gout; Discretion Advised. (53:03)

**Personnel:** Chuck Israels, bass, director; Charlie Porter, trumpet; John Moak, trombone; John Nastos, flute, alto saxophone; David Evans, clarinet, tenor saxophone; Robert Crowell, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet; Dan Gaynor, piano; Christopher Brown, drums; Jessica Israels, vocals.

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

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Grupo Fantasma



## Around the Horn

When people speak of world music, they're mostly talking about percussion-driven music that has its roots in Africa, Arabia, the Caribbean and Latin America. Asia and Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, are often forgotten. In the '80s, early world music bands like 3 Mustaphas 3 gave British and American audiences a taste of Balkan music, as did the Crammed Disc label, with its release of albums by the Gypsy shredders Taraf de Haïdouks. These bands featured brass and woodwind players from traditions outside of the British and American folk and pop mainstream, but folk musicians who play horns can be found everywhere from ancient Egypt to the streets of Havana, São Paulo and New York.

**Grupo Fantasma, Problemas (Blue Corn 1504; 45:00 ★★★★★)** Austin, Texas, hosts a yearly World Music Festival, and hometown heroes Grupo Fantasma often steal the show. With this eclectic collection, they continue their horn-driven exploration of world rhythms. "Otoño" is a slow, dark cumbia driven by eerie, psychedelic organ, surf guitar, subtle brass and bass clarinet. Cuban, Gypsy and Arab elements come together in "Solo Un Sueño," a jam in 6/8, with a syncopated rap delivered by percussionist José Galeano over a stuttering horn section, highlighted by the sax of Eric "Skerik" Walton. Big band brass stab and punctuate the funky bomba rhythm of "Mulato," an irresistible dance tune, with a joyous call-and-response chorus.

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

**Black Masala, I Love You Madly (Self Release; 42:16 ★★★)** Washington, D.C., is a hotbed of international music, and Black Masala's Gypsy-punk/Balkan-funk hybrid draws on the global influences that percolate through their hometown's venues. The title track is a driving romp à la Gogol Bordello. "Bhangra Ramo" combines an electro pulse, spastic electric guitars and blaring horns for a tune that blends swing, funk and the intricate rhythms of bhangra. Kirsten Warfield's rowdy trombone solo sends the Balkan horns on "Haute Cultura" into overdrive. Steve Cunningham's reverber-

drenched trumpet opens "Cool Breeze," then the band jumps into an Afro-Latin groove before returning to close with a Cunningham solo suggesting a midnight reverie in a deserted jazz club.

Ordering info: [blackmasala.bandcamp.com](http://blackmasala.bandcamp.com)

**Zusha, Kavana (Self Release; 31:36 ★★★)** Based in New York City, Zusha plays a hybrid of klezmer music, traditional Hasidic melodies and Yiddish theater tunes. The vocals come from Judaism's tradition of *nigunim*, wordless chants meant to express the inexpressible (also used in Native American and African American faiths). The album was recorded live, on analog equipment, to preserve the intimacy of the music. Sustained notes from the horn section and dub-heavy piano support measured reggae grooves on "Mashiach" and "East Shtetl." The laid-back funk of "Binyan Ariel" is the perfect seedbed for the mournful harmonies of the group's core members: vocalist Shlomo Gaisin, guitarist Zacharia Goldschmiedt and percussionist Elisha Mlotek.

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

**Bixiga 70, III (Glitterbeat; 44:13 ★★★)** Based in São Paulo, this 10-member collective includes four drummer/percussionists and four brass players. Their music is improvised and draws on Brazilian samba and carimbó, Jamaican, African American, Colombian and Ethiopian sounds, as well as jazz and rock. Most of the tracks are built around simple repeating riffs that expand and contract like the ebbing and flowing of an endless rhythmic ocean. A twang-heavy electric guitar sounds like Congolese surf music on "Ventania," and "100% 13" brings to mind the soundtrack for a spy movie set in West Africa. The horns get a chance to shine on "7 Pancadas." The whooshing sound of a tropical breeze lays the background for a slowly unfolding dialogue between trumpets and trombones, while a baritone sax growls in the background. The band doesn't provide any details on which musician plays on which track, preferring to let music speak for itself. **DB**

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



## CAMILLE BERTAULT EN VIE

SSC 1438 - IN STORES 4/15/16

During the late summer of 2015, French vocalist Camille Bertault began utilizing her special talents of solo transcription and vocal dexterity to record herself singing remarkably to famous solos by jazz legends. She made videos of the performances and posted them to Facebook without much thought. The result was an immediate landslide of attention, but more than just acknowledgment of a quirky video, true fans began to call.

That was how Bertault came to the attention of Sunnyside Records. After being introduced, it turned out the vocalist had a recording already in the works; it was just a matter of tweaks and the recording. *En Vie*, was ready for the public.

Bertault has been involved in the Paris jazz scene for some time. In her travels, Bertault was introduced to pianist Olivier Hutman by her friend Sara Lazarus. After a few gigs, they decided to record an album. Hutman assembled the rest of the rhythm section: bassist Gildas Boclé and drummer Antoine Paganotti.

It is her talent, wittiness and magnetizing personality that have brought Camille Bertault to the attention of so many so quickly. Her new recording *En Vie* will not disappoint a public that is excited to hear a new talent who is fast on the rise.

photography: Nikola Cendric



[iTunes.com/CamilleBertault](http://iTunes.com/CamilleBertault)  
[www.sunnysiderecords.com](http://www.sunnysiderecords.com)



## Myra Melford & Ben Goldberg

### Dialogue

BAG 009

★★★★

Both fixtures on the Bay Area improvised music scene, pianist Myra Melford and clarinetist Ben Goldberg have been working in one another's projects for nearly a decade, developing shared sensibility that couldn't be more apparent on *Dialogue*, the first fruit of a duo project active since 2008. Intimacy directs the proceedings on a rich program of original tunes, each performed with chamber-like tenderness.

Most of the tunes rely on pretty melodic exchanges, with tightly knit arrangements demanding a nonchalant precision, but the pair doesn't shy away from moments of turbulence, such as on the pianist's tune "The Kitchen," with its driving left-hand thunder, or the extended-technique pops Goldberg drops into his sorrowful opening lines of "Miniature."

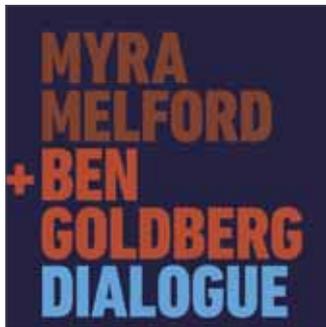
The fleet, lockstep patterns and jagged intervals of Goldberg's "1 Through 8" deliver some of the melodic ebullience of vintage Ornette Coleman, but the great accomplishment here is how Melford and Goldberg evince that collegial vibe while playing seriously deep music. Together, they make it seem easy.

—Peter Maragasak

**Dialogue:** An Unexpected Visitor; Your Life Here; The Kitchen; Miniature; City of Illusion; Moonless Night; 1 Through 8; Be Melting Snow; Passing Phase; Montevideo; 9 + 5; Chorale; Anymore. (55:04)

**Personnel:** Myra Melford, piano; Ben Goldberg, clarinet.

**Ordering info:** [itunes.com](https://www.itunes.com)



## Matthew Hartnett

### Southern Comfort

D2LAL MMC

★★★★

Born in Louisiana and raised in Houston, Texas, trombonist Matthew Hartnett brings a wide range of soulful Southern styles to his playing and composing. His versatility made him a popular sideman for artists as varied as Talib Kweli, Robert Glasper and Kirk Franklin. After moving to New York in 2010, he continued his eclectic approach as a sideman for gospel, hip-hop, funk and r&b artists of all kinds. He puts those varied sounds to use here, leavening them with a bit of New Orleans strut.

The album opens with "I Surrender All," a solemn duet for trombone and gospel organ. Its soulful disposition is a nice contrast to "Summer 2011," a sultry ballad that captures the sweltering feel of a long, humid night, with sparse acoustic piano and melancholy acoustic bass supporting Hartnett's explorations of the deep indigo melody. The closer, "Da Crib," rides a big synth bass line, fractured percussion loops and samples from Hartnett's favorite hits on Houston's Swishahouse label. It's jazz-tinged hip-hop that features LaChrisa Brown's wordless vocals.

—j. poet

**Southern Comfort:** I Surrender All; In & Out; She's In Spain; Summer 2011; Thursday Night; Glory Hallelujah; New Sunlight Lake Charles; No Patience; Pump & Drive; Da Crib. (49:56)

**Personnel:** Matthew Hartnett, trombone; Ondrej Pivec, keyboards; Dmitri Gorodetsky, bass; Adam Jackson, drums; James Lewis, guitar; Brent Birkhead, alto saxophone; Lee Hogans, trumpet; Kenneth Bentley, sousaphone; Lucas Ellman, baritone saxophone; Mario Castro, tenor saxophone; Nate Jones, bass; Jesse Fischer, keyboards, percussion; LaChrisa Brown, vocals.

**Ordering info:** [matthewhartnett.com](https://www.matthewhartnett.com)



## Phil Woods Quintet

### Live At The Deer Head Inn

DEER HEAD RECORDS 05

★★★★

The late, great alto saxophonist Phil Woods appeared on nearly 100 recordings in his brilliant and obviously busy career. But there is something sadly different about this album. It is his last. Stricken with emphysema, with an oxygen tank his constant companion, Woods nevertheless hit the stage of Pennsylvania's Deer Head Inn with his quintet in November and December 2014. He died less than a year later on Sept. 29, 2015, at 83.

But Woods was musically alive at the Deer Head, showing very few noticeable effects from a disease that greatly affects breathing. It was all still there—his famed full sound, hard-swinging, inventive solos, expressive tonal range and effective ensemble playing. He likely inspired the band that night, although this quintet has always been terrifically cohesive. Bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin had been with Woods for some 40 years, and trumpeter Brian Lynch more than 20. Pianist Bill Mays replaced longtime member Bill Charlap several years ago.

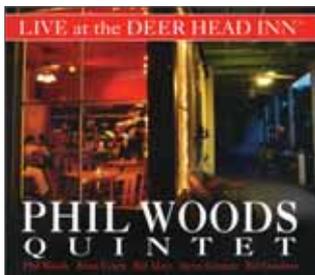
There are many highlights throughout this seven-song set, including the rousing opener, Oscar Pettiford's "Bohemia After Dark." But a true standout is the closer and only original, pianist Mays' "Bick's Bag," features some really nice unison lines between Woods and Lynch.

—Bob Protzman

**Live At The Deer Head Inn:** Announcement; Bohemia After Dark; We Could Make Such Beautiful Music; I've Got Just About Everything; I'm Just A Lucky So And So; I'm A Fool To Want You; Bick's Bag. (59:39)

**Personnel:** Phil Woods, alto saxophone; Brian Lynch, trumpet; Bill Mays, piano; Steve Gilmore, bass; Bill Goodwin, drums.

**Ordering info:** [deerheadrecords.com](https://www.deerheadrecords.com)



## Renku

### Live In Greenwich Village

CLEAN FEED 354

★★★★½

This third album by the Renku trio was recorded in early 2014, at the Greenwich House Music School in New York. The gig was part of the Sound It Out series, and this disc features liner notes by its organizer, Bradley Bamberger. Renku was just reaching its first decade together at that point, and a resultant rapport is clearly evident. Most of the pieces are penned by alto saxophonist Michaël Attias, with a pair from bassist John Hébert, a short tune by drummer Satoshi Takeishi and a lone cover courtesy of Paul Motian.

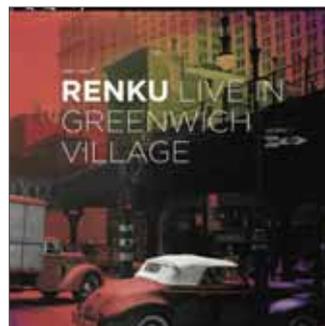
The Renku style recalls the sparse, winding soundscape created by Ornette Coleman's trio on their *Golden Circle* live set from 1965, although only as an initial reference point. The opening "Tapstone" sounds like it's alighting on a dialogue that's already in progress, an exploratory circling among the players, with Attias phrasing precisely, shaping bittersweet, bending lines. Here, the melody adopts a fidgety stutter, Attias negotiating his labyrinthine melody, heating up into contained cries, reined in and released with a rationed intensity. To finish, "Goodbye Rumination" opens with doomy bass bowing, Attias alternating between warm low-note phrases and ripping outbursts.

—Martin Longley

**Live In Greenwich Village:** Tapstone; Renku; The Sunflower; Lurch; Dark Net; Soledad; The Lions Of Cayuga; 70s & 80s Remix; Goodbye Rumination. (63:00)

**Personnel:** Michaël Attias, alto saxophone; John Hébert, bass; Satoshi Takeishi, drums.

**Ordering info:** [cleanfeed-records.com](https://www.cleanfeed-records.com)





## Mary Foster Conklin *Photographs*

MOCK TURTLE 00221

★★★★

Mary Foster Conklin, a seasoned jazz-cum-cabaret performer from the New York area, unveils a charming collection of should-have-been-standards on *Photographs*, her bracing and impassioned new album.

With her dulcet mezzo-soprano and a calm, lilting inflection, Conklin gamely navigates through charts that flit at the Songbook's margins, including gems by Charles Strouse and Neal Adams ("Night Song"), Benny Carter ("Key Largo") and Fran Landesman and Bob

Dorough ("The Winds Of Heaven," "Nothing Like You").

To these and other expertly crafted compositions, Conklin lends a sultry self-assurance in moods both hot and cool, swaggering with a slam poet's sly percussiveness on Joni Mitchell's "Night In The City" and crooning with velvety sophistication on "Moonglow."

A gifted interpreter of lyric, Conklin nonetheless exhibits a slippery handle on pitch throughout much of this disc, her vibrato sometimes loosening the tonal center from its hub. It's a minor complaint—by no means unbearable—and is easily overlooked as she swings heartily across songs like "Long As You're Living" and the gently swaying title track.

More impressive is her ability to hold her own against a crackerjack roster of guest artists that includes Joel Frahm and Houston Person on saxophone, Warren Vache on cornet and John diMartino on piano.

—Brian Zimmerman

**Photographs:** Night In The City; Key Largo; Autumn Serenade; Spring Can You Really Hang You Up The Most; Cinnamon And Clove; Small Day Tomorrow; For No One; Photographs; The Winds Of Heaven; Moonglow; Night Song; Nothing Like You; Long As You're Living. (54:25)

**Personnel:** Mary Foster Conklin, vocals; John diMartino, piano; Ed Howard, bass; Shinnosuke Takahashi, drums; Joel Frahm, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; Warren Vache, cornet; Paul Meyers, guitar; Nanny Assis, percussion; Houston Person, tenor saxophone (7).

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

## Ira Hill *Tomorrow*

IRA HILL MUSIC 001

★★★★½

Barely 20, vocalist Ira Hill shows steady range, tenacity and joyous charm on this fine debut. Upbeat and easygoing, the bantamweight, Phoenix-reared Hill astutely flexes his chops with an eclectic book, backed with alert sidemen and perceptive godmothering by Manhattan Transfer-ite Cheryl Bentyne. Hill easily offsets loose low-register control and fragile quaver with his bright spirits, saucy timbres and unaffected, effortless manner: His opener "Afro Blue" and "April" jump mano a mano with Doug Webb's reeds. His warm if callow "My Funny Valentine" may provoke more heart-throb palpitations than head turning.

Admirable balance is mirrored in Hill's sense of shape: "Estate" opens with low João Gilberto sibilance, soars midway through, and tails with breathy singsong. Easing the lickety-split pedal on "Cloudburst," he tackles dual roles of Jon Hendricks and Dave Lambert as Bentyne elegantly fills Annie Ross' red heels. Hill's melodic resculptings are cool: He emulates Kurt Elling's recitative style on "Tomorrow's Another Day" (and lyrics for Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays' classic "Minuano")



and adopts Mark Murphy's liberating bravado on "You've Proven Your Point." Solo moments shine for bassist Kevin Axt and guitarist Ramón Stagnaro. Hill dives into homework on tributes to Eddie Jefferson and King Pleasure, but he's no rote student; next thing we know, he'll throw spitballs and launch paper airplanes. Watch for this Hill to become mountainous.

—Fred Bouchard

**Tomorrow:** Afro-Blue; I'll Remember April; Minuano; Estate; Cloudburst; Tomorrow's Another Day; My Funny Valentine; Billie's Bounce; Moody's Mood For Love; You've Proven Your Point. (46:04)

**Personnel:** Ira Hill, vocals; John Proulx, piano; Kevin Axt, bass; Dave Tull, drums; Craig Fundyga, vibes (1, 3); Doug Webb, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone (1, 2, 9); Alex Acuña, percussion (1, 4); Ramón Stagnaro, guitar (4); Cheryl Bentyne, vocals (4, 5, 9).

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

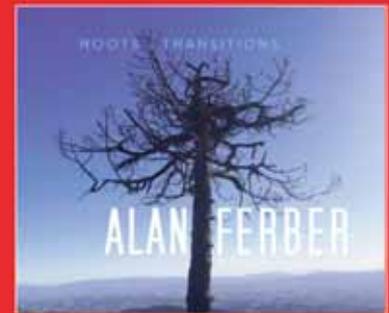


## CHRISTOPHER ZUAR ORCHESTRA *MUSINGS*

SSC 1414 - IN STORES APRIL 1st

Naturally, Zuar was inspired and informed by many of his forebears, including Bob Brookmeyer (Zuar went to NEC in order to study with Brookmeyer), Gil Evans and Thad Jones as well as a multitude of composers from the classical realm. Having always been interested in the intricacies of structure in the world of both classical and jazz music, Zuar's attention was drawn to composition, scoring for orchestral sound with a focus on melodic lyricism and harmonic richness.

Zuar enlisted Mike Holober as producer. The experienced ensemble that Holober helped assemble is truly incredible and features the exceptional vocalist Jo Lawry on four of the pieces.



## ALAN FERBER *ROOTS & TRANSITIONS*

SSC 1452 - IN STORES APRIL 29

After several years of focusing on big band writing, Ferber's return to his long-standing nonet allows a more subtle interaction between individual parts, creating increased intimacy in this intricate new work. For the past 10 years, Ferber has led his nonet made up of five horns and four rhythm instruments, represented here by either Scott Wendholt or Shane Endsley on trumpet, alto saxophonist Jon Gordon, tenor saxophonist John Ellis, bass clarinetist Charles Pillow, guitarist Nate Radley, pianist Bryn Roberts, bassist Matt Clohesy and drummer Mark Ferber. The size of the ensemble allows for a wide variety of tonal colors and textures while being more lithe than a big band.



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**FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT**

"EAST COAST LOVE AFFAIR" (1996)  
BY **KURT ROSENWINKEL**  
20th ANNIVERSARY OF HIS FIRST CD AS LEADER  
KURT ROSENWINKEL (g) with AVISHAI COHEN (b) and JORDI ROSSY (d)

FSNT 016

"This little-known gem captures Rosenwinkel live at Smalls, the famous New York jazz club, with Avishai Cohen on bass and Jordi Rossy on drums. Rosenwinkel's guitar style is distinctive and highly developed at this stage. Only two originals appear? "East Coast Love Affair" and "B Blues"? and both are mesmerizing, though quite similar in tempo and mood. The remainder of the program consists of standards and jazz classics, all interpreted with gusto and originality. Rosenwinkel's chordal mastery is especially evident on the two Thelonious Monk selections, "Pannonica" and "Round Midnight." His Latin reading of "All or Nothing at All," like Mark Turner's version on *Ballad Session*, takes its cue from Coltrane's 1961 version. *East Coast Love Affair* showcases some of Rosenwinkel's finest playing"

—David R. Adler, All Music Guide

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FRESH SOUND RECORDS  
fresh sound NEW TALENT

## Historical / BY KEN MICALLEF

# German Engineering

As record labels cash in on the vinyl craze, re-issuing every title in sight, Germany's MPS Records takes a distinct approach to its 500-title catalog. Reissuing three albums digitally per month, MPS also issues select titles on "audiophile vinyl" and CD—even tape! Upcoming MPS vinyl titles include Baden Powell's *Images On Guitar*, Freddie Hubbard's *The Hub Of Hubbard* and Joe Henderson's *Mirror, Mirror*.

Founded in the late 1950s by industrialist/engineer/pianist Hans Georg Brunner-Schwer, MPS sessions were recorded in his opulent home on state-of-the-art equipment. Oscar Peterson was so impressed with the sound of his 1968 MPS release, *Action*, that he returned yearly to the Villingen studio. Originally known as SABA, the label was renamed MPS Records (Musik Produktion Schwarzwald) in 1968. Its standards of recording and artistry were uniformly high, with artists such as Jim Hall, Mary Lou Williams, Joe Pass, Archie Shepp, Cecil Taylor, Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie all tracking sides for the Black Forest label.

Original MPS releases are difficult to find on vinyl today, none more so than the **Novi Singers' 1968 LP, *Novi In Wonderland* (MPS 4250644885532; 34:47 ★★★½)**. The Polish vocal quartet was wildly popular throughout Europe, their sophisticated harmonies and flowing scat solos imbuing standards and original material with a highly polished, seriously hip sound that still retains its enthusiasm without sounding overtly nostalgic. As with all MPS records, accompaniment is top-flight. *Novi In Wonderland* is no exception, featuring Adam Matyszkowicz on piano, Zbigniew Namysłowski on alto saxophone and Idrees Sulie-man on trumpet.

The result of fortunate circumstances, **Tete Montoliu's *Piano For Nuria* (4250644896064; 36:21 ★★★★★)** occurred when the trio of the Montoliu, bassist Peter Trunk and drummer Albert "Tootie" Heath was held over for their own session after supplying accompaniment for another MPS album, *Ben Webster Meets Don Byas*. The blind Spanish pianist Montoliu remains an underrated artist, and this 1968 offering overflows with his brilliant touch, prodigious technique and unique hard-bop style. The trio sounds fated, and each track—from "Speak Low" and "Stablemates" to the Trunk originals, "Tranquillogy" and "Visca L'Empordà"—is a terrific example of the trio art



(with standout work by Heath).

By the mid-'60s, sitar player Dewan Motihar had lent his aromatic plucking to such soundtracks as The Beatles' *Help!* and Antonioni's *Blow Up*. Sensing the future, MPS producer Joachim-Ernst Berendt joined Motihar with a profound lineup resulting in **Dewan Motihar Trio, Irene Schweizer Trio, Manfred Schoof, and Barney Wilen on 1967's *Jazz Meets India* (4056813009415; 37:31 ★★★★★)**. Performed by Motihar, Schoof (cornet/trumpet), Schweizer (piano), Wilen (tenor/soprano saxophones) and Indian musicians Keshay Sathe (tabla) and Kusum Thakur (tambura), *Jazz Meets India* is light-years from the then-popular use of Indian instruments as "exotica." Over Motihar and his trio's resonant rumblings, Schoof spins and pirouettes, drummer Mani Neumeier approximates the epic swirl of Elvin Jones, and Wilen reflects Coltrane and Shepp with beautifully frenetic soloing. *Jazz Meets India* provides a Rosetta Stone to devour, study and enjoy.

One of the finest composers and arrangers bar none, Belgian pianist **Francy Boland's *Flirt And Dream* (4250644896071; 32:07 ★★★)** is a departure from his earlier big band recordings with drummer Kenny Clarke. Perhaps influenced by John Barry's popular soundtracks to numerous James Bond films, *Flirt And Dream* is awash in swaying strings, bossa nova rhythms and lush melodies. Accompanied by a quintet that included bassist Jimmy Woode Jr. and Clarke, *Flirt and Dream* forgoes the pumping brass and punching dynamics of such Clarke/Boland big band albums as *Sax No End* (SABA) and *More Smiles* (MPS) for sweet songcraft perfectly suited to sipping dry martinis, *Mad Men* style.

DB

Ordering info: [mps-music.com](http://mps-music.com)

## Samo Salamon Baseless Trio

Unity

SAZAS

★★★★½

## Raoul Björkenheim eCsTaSy

Out Of The Blue

CUNEIFORM RECORDS RUNE 413

★★★★½

Guitar renegades Raoul Björkenheim and Samo Salamon have been flying under the radar for years. Both are prolific composers with extensive discographies, and both defy easy categorization through their ambitious experimentation, which encompasses rock, funk, free-jazz and world music.

Slovenian guitarist Salamon is fond of the guitar-sax-drums trio format, explored so successfully for decades by Paul Motian in his trio with Bill Frisell and Joe Lovano. Salamon's first Baseless Trio outing—2015's *Little River*—featured drummer Roberto Dano and saxophonist Paul McCandless. For the group's followup, the adventurous guitarist is joined by the superb London-based saxophonist Julian Argüelles and the highly intuitive, uncommonly melodic drummer John Hollenbeck, composer-leader of the Claudia Quintet. Together they explore myriad textures and moods while engaging in intimate and animated conversations.

*Unity's* opener, "Asking For A Break," is a perfect introduction to the trio's skittish, conversational push-pull approach. Though it begins with strict unison lines between guitar and tenor, the piece evolves into a game of tag between the three participants that builds to some frantic exchanges, concluding with Hollenbeck's eruption on the kit over a guitar-sax ostinato. Call them bilingual or bipolar, this edition of Salamon's Baseless Trio can be as gentle as a Windham Hill record or as hellacious as a grindcore group.

Equally on-the-edge and indefinable is Finnish guitarist Raoul Björkenheim's eCsTaSy. While the quartet, fueled by the muscu-

lar bashing of drummer Markku Ounaskari, explodes with blowtorch intensity on the free-jazz opener, "Heads & Tales," they settle into the infectiously funky second-line groover "Quintrille" with harmonic chemistry. Shifting gears radically, the quartet delves into a meditative soundscape on "A Fly In The House Of Love," which has Björkenheim playing a prepared guitar with alligator clips (an old Fred Frith technique from the '70s). The four collectively explore on the free-jazz freakout "Roller Coaster," recalling some of Ornette Coleman's experiments with his electric Prime Time band, and the album closes with the mesmerizing

African-flavored "Zebra Dreams," which has Björkenheim's prepared guitar sounding like an ancient mbira or thumb piano.

—Bill Milkowski

**Unity:** Asking For A Break; Dawn; Kei's Venice; Holla Back; Soundgarden; Moonless; Seagulls In Maine; Drop The D; Pif; Kei's Secret. (68:23)

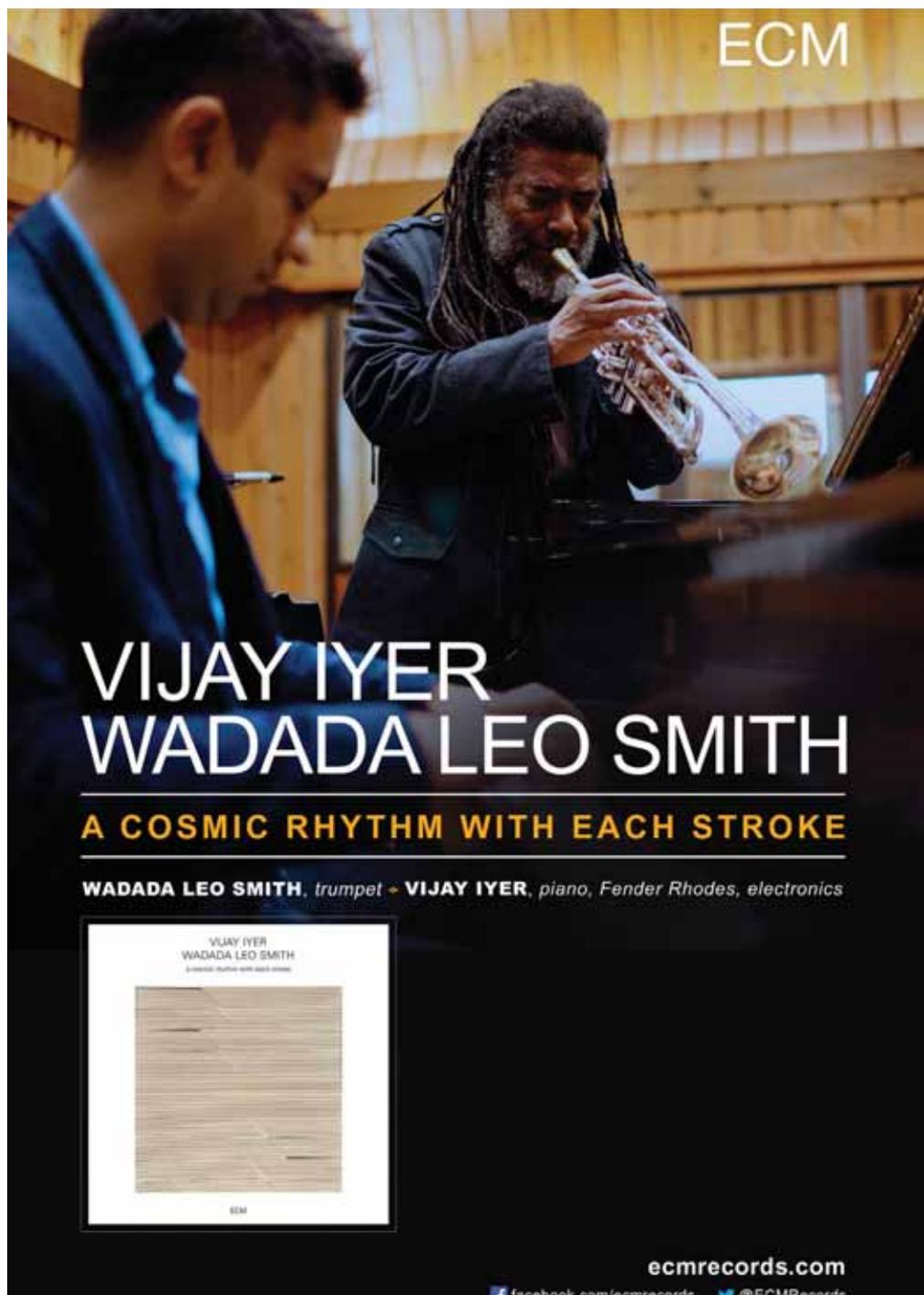
**Personnel:** Samo Salamon, guitar; Julian Argüelles, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; John Hollenbeck, drums.

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

**Out Of The Blue:** Heads & Tales; Quintrille; A Fly In The House Of Love; Uptown; You Never Know; O.L.; Roller Coaster; Zebra Dreams. (41:23)

**Personnel:** Raoul Björkenheim, electric guitar; Pauli Lyytinen, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, bass saxophone; Jori Huhtala, bass; Markku Ounaskari, drums.

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



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WADADA LEO SMITH

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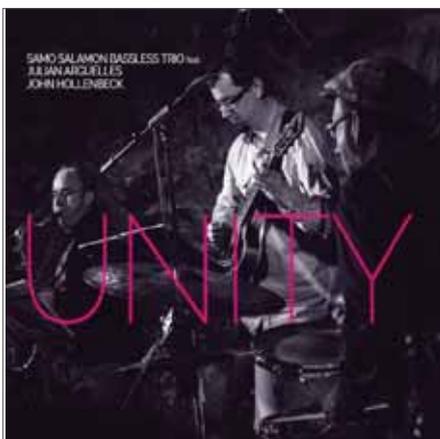
WADADA LEO SMITH, trumpet • VIJAY IYER, piano, Fender Rhodes, electronics



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## Florian Hoefner

### *Luminosity*

ORIGIN 82706

★★★★½

Florian Hoefner is a cerebral and harmonically daring pianist whose style crystallizes around jazz and blues fundamentals, but whose adventurous spirit finds him reaching toward new sonic territory. *Luminosity*, his starkly picturesque new album, makes profound statements from quiet moments.

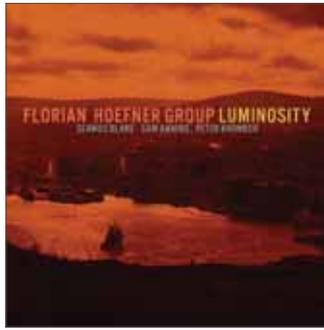
Tranquility and calmness are the operative moods here, with most of Hoefner's solos exhibiting a hushed, soft-spoken quality. On "The Narrows," he crafts a lengthy refrain out of flickering passages in the upper register, the twinkling notes fading in and out like passing thoughts. The title track is similarly airy and free-floating, though jagged atonal passages will occasionally cause ripples. Hastier numbers like "Newfound Jig" and "Elements" move with a fierce determination, feeling animated and brisk despite their complexity. Hoefner's sidemen—saxophonist Seamus Blake, bassist Sam Anning and drummer Peter Kronreif—are an agile and intuitive crew, and their interplay on the stately "North Country," which closes the album, is like a slow, impassioned dance. There is serious density to this music. Prepare to explore it on end.

—Brian Zimmerman

**Luminosity:** The Narrows; In Circles; Luminosity; Newfound Jig; Elements; Reminiscence; The Bottom Line; North Country. (54:42)

**Personnel:** Florian Hoefner, piano; Seamus Blake, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone; Sam Anning, bass; Peter Kronreif, drums.

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



## Bob Wijnen

### *NYC Unforeseen*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★

In his debut as leader, Dutch pianist and composer Bob Wijnen proves that he knows how to write a good blowing tune. He wrote all but one of the tracks on *NYC Unforeseen* and not one of them lacks solid changes or a well-crafted theme. On each he plays with assurance and imagination. But what lingers in the afterglow of *NYC Unforeseen* is a sense of goals not quite fully achieved.

Begin with Wijnen's playing. He clearly knows his way around the keys, and in his solos he finds plenty of ways to thread through and expand on well-voiced harmonies. There's hesitation, though, in his phrasing and rhythm—it's subtle but present enough to very slightly weaken the group's foundation. The mix also feels a little off. Through most of the album, all four instruments seem equally prominent: A tiny cymbal tap is just as present as the solo it's intended to color. On "Treehouse," rather than add texture as guitarist Peter Bernstein and Wijnen stretch out, every element that drummer Billy Drummond plays distracts rather than enhances and battles for the listener's attention.

There are high points here, but hopefully they'll climb a little higher next time out.

—Bob Doerschuk

**NYC Unforeseen:** NYC Unforeseen; Treehouse; The Look Of Love; Baby Steps; Sublime Indifference; E For Eye Opener; Bring It Together; If It's Magic; The Jellyfish Blues (Says Dez). (76:32)

**Personnel:** Bob Wijnen, piano; Peter Bernstein, guitar; DeZron Douglas, bass; Billy Drummond, drums.

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



## Jason Marsalis

### *Heirs Of The Crescent City*

ELM RECORDS 19792

★★★★

For his first foray into composing for a film soundtrack, Jason Marsalis explores the idea of "making the traditional more progressive" within the realm of New Orleans music. It's an idea that reflects themes in Sascha Just's new documentary, *Heirs of the Crescent City*, which tells the story of how three artists—a Mardi Gras Indian chief, a former carnival ball queen and Marsalis himself—maintain and continually update their heritage through art.

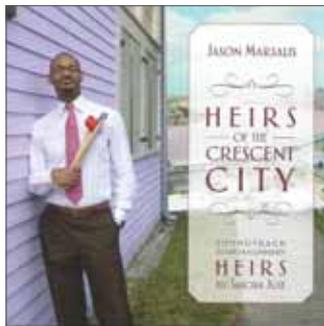
Here, the sounds of Marsalis' hometown take center stage in a way they haven't on his previous albums. The traditional parade-drum part that opens the title track could just as easily have open a traditional brass band parade number. Marsalis shows his dexterity with hand percussion on tracks like the Mardi Gras Indian conjuring "Theodore Shouts," and the steady velocity of "Mardi Gras At The Carnival Ball" evokes the speed and meter of one of the super-krewe parades that rolls down St. Charles Avenue at Carnival time.

—Jennifer Odell

**Heirs Of The Crescent City:** Heirs Of The Crescent City; Theodore Shouts; E.B.'s Magnolia Meter; Indian Red; Mardi Gras At The Carnival Ball; Peace In The Forest; Act 1, Scene 3; The 21st Century Trad Band; The South Is Asleep; Didn't Monk Ramble (Solo); Didn't Monk Ramble (Band); Heirs Of The Crescent City (Reprise). (66:11)

**Personnel:** Jason Marsalis, drums, percussion, vibraphone; Ashlin Parker, trumpet; Joe Goldberg, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Austin Johnson, piano (6, 9); Peter Harris, bass; Geoff Clapp, drums (6, 9); Jasen Weaver, bass (6, 9); Marcus Roberts, piano.

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



## Jessica Jones Quartet

### *Moxie*

NEW ARTISTS 1062

★★★★½

Jessica and Tony Jones have been partners in music and life for upwards of 30 years, which accounts for the easy rapport on display throughout this record. The couple has worked with idiosyncratic avant-gardists and genre mixers on either American coast, including Peter Apfelbaum, Joseph Jarman, Marco Eneidi and Don Cherry. Both Joneses plays tenor saxophone, and on *Moxie* they shift fluidly between unison statements and passages, one player shadowing the other so sympathetically that one forgets it's two musicians. This unity is one of the most attractive things about this album, the fourth CD by their quartet, and it is enhanced by the rhythm section's empathy. Kenny Wollesen and Stomu Takeishi may not have recorded with the quartet before, but they were in an early version of it back in the '80s.

The ensemble's affinity enhances the moments where the music pulls taut or picks up steam. On "Haitian Cotillion," they switch tempos every couple of measures, but it never feels like they are simply flexing muscles. Rather, the jubilant grooves impart the joy of a night of dancing. But the music loses steam when they ease back on the throttle. Their version of Duke Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood" is pretty but easy to ignore; given the melody's potential, one wishes for more.

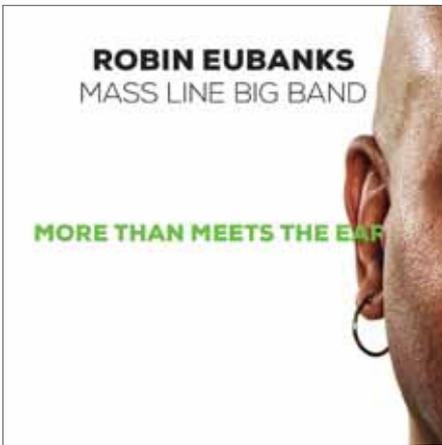
—Bill Meyer

**Moxie:** Moxie; In A Sentimental Mood; Haitian Cotillion; Soft Target; Dear Toy; Clapping Game; Tag On A Train; Manhattan. (52:19)

**Personnel:** Jessica Jones, Tony Jones, tenor saxophone; Kenny Wollesen, drums; Stomu Takeishi, bass.

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





**Robin Eubanks Mass Line Big Band**  
*More Than Meets The Ear*

ARTISTSHARE

★★★

Getting a 19-piece orchestra to move as lithely as a band half its size is a feat that trombonist Robin Eubanks accomplishes several times on *More Than Meets The Ear*. On “A Seeking Spirit,” over a rolling undercurrent set up by bassist Boris Kozlov and drummer Nate Smith, the big band alternates between a contemporary-sounding throb and more traditional swing, the chart making optimum use of the

dynamics of sheer mass. On the closing “Cross Currents,” in an arrangement that would’ve been called a flag-waver during the big band heyday, the group shifts between swing and a more fulsome rhythmic hustle. It’s the sonic equivalent of watching vintage comedian Jackie Gleason dance—the grace of the moves belies the bulk that’s in motion.

“Full Circle” presents a different type of movement, as the arrangement moves seamlessly between a medium-tempo stroll, a propulsive rhythm, a funky middle section and a disruptive close, highlighted by Eubanks’ raucous electrified trombone. The electric horn returns for a Jimi Hendrix tribute, and the band’s ability to be light on its feet pays dividends here.

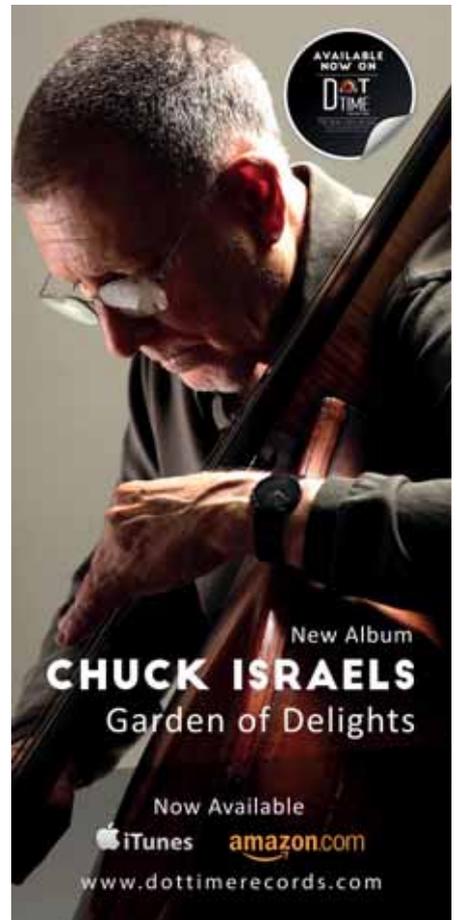
The band is at its best when it’s moving, but the momentum sags a bit through the middle three pieces, and at almost 72 minutes, this is one recording that might’ve benefitted from more judicious editing.

—James Hale

**More Than Meets The Ear:** More Than Meets The Ear; A Seeking Spirit; Full Circle; Bill And Vera; Mental Images; Metronome; Yes We Can—Victory Dance; Blues For Jimi; Cross Currents. (71:42)

**Personnel:** Robin Eubanks, trombone, percussion, conductor; Jason Jackson, James Burton, trombone; Jennifer Wharton, trombone, tuba; Douglas Purviance, bass trombone; Lew Soloff, Alex Sipiagin, Duane Eubanks, Aaron Janik, trumpet; Antonio Hart, Alex Cummings, alto saxophone; Marcus Strickland, Bobby Lavelle, tenor saxophone; Lauren Sevian, baritone saxophone; Glenn Zaleski, piano; Mike King, organ; Boris Kozlov, bass; Nate Smith, drums; David Silliman, percussion.

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



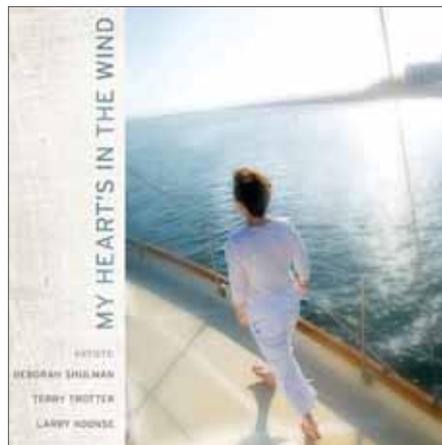
**Deborah Shulman**  
*My Heart's In The Wind*

SUMMIT 671

★★★★

Deborah Shulman is a pure, honey-toned vocalist whose style draws equally from jazz and theater. With a wondrous sense of dynamic control and a clear, lucid diction, the longtime vocal coach has begun to make her mark on the Los Angeles jazz scene, where she performs regularly with the city’s most visible musicians.

Several of those West Coast jazz artists appear on her brave and nuanced new album, *My Heart's In The Wind*. Leading a quintet of guitarist Larry Koonse, drummer Joe LaBarbera, pianist Terry Trotter and bassist Ken Wild, Shulman explores a program of mostly Great American Songbook standards with a jazz singer’s ingenuity and thespian’s expressive range. A hushed, vulnerable take on the Victor Young classic “My Foolish Heart” finds the singer wading deliberately into the song’s undercurrent of romantic naiveté, bringing a carefully crafted emphasis to the lyrics “There’s a line between love and fascination/ That’s hard to see.” She uses the same emotionally attuned approach on Harold Arlen’s “A Sleepin’ Bee,” creating a charming suspense within the opening verse (“When you’re in love and you are wonderin’ if he really is the one/



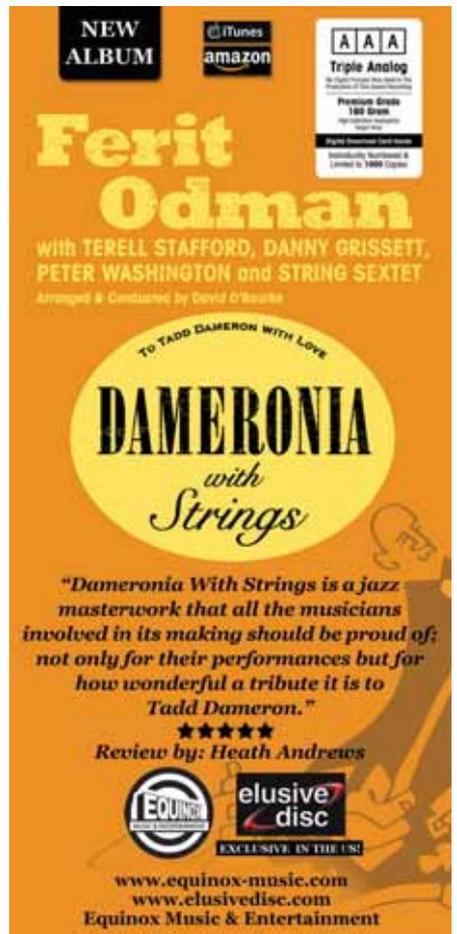
There’s an ancient sign sure to tell you/ If your search is over and done”) that cascades elegantly into the witty final chorus (“A sleepin’ bee done told me, that I’ll walk with my feet off the ground/ When my one true love, I have found”). Such moments of narrative shape and tension are peppered delightfully throughout this disc, and Shulman, a gifted storyteller, brings them to life with a commanding presence.

—Brian Zimmerman

**My Heart's In The Wind:** The Shining Sea; A Sleepin’ Bee; My Foolish Heart; Loving You; My One And Only Love; Never Never Land; Sometime Ago; This Hotel; You Are There; Where Do I Go From Here; Shiver Me Timbers. (52:09)

**Personnel:** Deborah Shulman, vocals; Terry Trotter, piano; Larry Koonse, guitar; Ken Wild, bass; Joe LaBarbera, drums.

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## Albert Murray: A Postscript

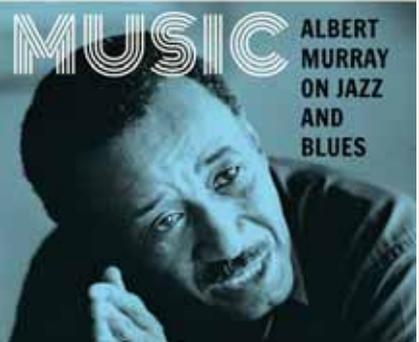
When the Alabama-born, Harlem-based essayist, novelist and co-founder of Jazz at Lincoln Center Albert Murray died in August 2013 at 97, he left behind an impressive oeuvre. His non-fiction works, *The Omni Americans*, *South To A Very Old Place*, *The Hero And The Blues*, *The Blue Devils Of Nada* and *From The Briarpatch File*, all affirm the positive centrality of the black experience in the United States, and counter what he calls the “social science fiction” of black pathology. Those affirmations and counter-statements are extended and refined in *Good Morning Blues*, Murray’s elegant, as-told-to biography of Count Basie, and in his novels—*Train Whistle Guitar*, *The Spyglass Tree*, *The Seven League Boots* and *The Magic Keys*—which chronicle the picaresque and heroic exploits of his main character and alter ego, Scooter, from his plaintive, Gulf Coast origins to his exploits as a bassist in a band not unlike Duke Ellington’s. In all of his works, Murray embraces the wide range of human experience—from André Malraux and Thomas Mann to Ernest Hemingway and Romare Bearden to the blues and jazz.

As brilliant as Murray was, he was not as well known as his fellow Tuskegee Institute graduate, lifelong friend and intellectual fellow traveler, Ralph Ellison. In fact, Murray’s work didn’t appear in print until he retired from the Air Force in 1962, after two decades of service. However, as editor and Murray scholar Paul Devlin in his introduction to *Murray Talks Music: Albert Murray on Jazz And Blues (University of Minnesota Press)*, “[t]his book is at once an addendum to that body of work and an introduction to his canonical text.”

This impressive collection of rare and previously unpublished essays and interviews, published during this centennial year of Murray’s birth, exhibits the full range of the writer’s reflections, musings and declarations about the blues and jazz continuum in a variety of modes, moods and riffs. A 1994 interview with perhaps his best-known student, Wynton Marsalis, is an engaging master-apprentice exposition on jazz aesthetics, in which Murray states that “art is a stylization of raw experience.” Another talk, conducted two years later with Greg Thomas (an independent scholar and former jazz columnist for the *New York Daily News*), finds Murray waxing philosophic about how the concepts of folk art, popular art and fine art represent “three levels of sophistication or technical mastery involved in the processing of raw

editor paul devlin foreword gary giddins  
afterword greg thomas

MURRAY  
TALKS



experience into aesthetic statement.” Murray’s interviews with trombonist Dan Minor, impresario John Hammond and pioneering vocalist/bandleader Billy Eckstine provide more context on Count Basie. And an excellent and impassioned three-way discussion with saxophonist Loren Schoenberg and one-time Murray protégé Stanley Crouch explores Ellington’s canonical artistry.

Three selections in this collection stand out: Murray’s liner notes (surprisingly, the only ones he ever wrote) for *Alvin Ailey Dance Theater Presents: Revelations/Blues Suite, Twentieth Anniversary Album, 1978*, where he brilliantly describes the translation of the blues idiom into modern dance; his 1958 speech in Morocco while stationed in the Air Force, where he passionately described jazz as “the richest and most significant form of artistic expression of the black American sensibility that we have in the United States”; and a 24-page interview with trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie from 1986, which was originally published in a truncated version in Andy Warhol’s *Interview* magazine. In this expanded form, Murray and Gillespie effortlessly trade fours—riffing on their southern upbringing, Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Béla Bartók and the education they received from African-American institutions.

With the forthcoming publication of the first volume of Murray’s non-fiction works from the Library of America—co-edited by Devlin and another Murrayite, Harvard’s Henry Louis Gates Jr.—in October, *Murray Talks Music* may serve as an impressive prelude to that collection. On its own, it is also a compelling and comprehensive work, which will no doubt make Murrayites of us all. **DB**

Ordering info: [upress.umn.edu](http://upress.umn.edu)

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## Bill Dobbins *Composer Series, Vol. 1 & 2* SONS OF SOUND 035/036

★★★★½

Jazz pianist and educator Bill Dobbins is perhaps best known as a fixture at the Eastman School of Music since 1973, with a concentration that includes lots of large-ensemble work. He is also well suited as a player of classical music. So it should come as no surprise that Dobbins' approaches to the music of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, (on *Vol. 2*) and George Gershwin and Clair Fischer (on *Vol. 1*) would be like wearing a familiar, comfortable jack-

et. Listening to Dobbins' playing on these two recordings—solo piano recitals before live audiences on the Rochester campus—one gets a sense of the vast range inherent in his playing.

On *Vol. 1*, listeners will certainly be impressed by the amount of improvisation Dobbins adds to so many of these familiar, ageless themes. Take Ellington's "Band Call," played as a reharmonized swinger that sheds new light on this classic from the post-swing era. But then he can go in another direction, as he does with Gershwin's "Prelude II," the famous solo piano piece that works like a miniature of orchestral splendor and woe.

Likewise, Fischer's "When Autumn Comes" and Gershwin's "How Long Has This Been Going On" are filled with charming moments of gentle, graceful uplift without the need to say everything or extemporize to the fullest. Dobbins' patience with these songs is tangible, like he's been living them his whole life.

—John Ephland

**Composers Series, Vol. 1:** Hoaky Blues; Prelude II; The Man I Love; The House On Summit; How Long Has This Been Going On; Brazilian Waltz; 'S Wonderful; Sleep Sweet Child; Soon; When Autumn Comes; Coco B. (65:31)

**Personnel:** Bill Dobbins, piano.

**Composer Series, Vol. 2:** Band Call; The Shepherd (Who Watches Over The Night Flock); Meditation; Amour, Amour (From The Togo Brava Suite); The Second Portrait Of The Lion; Warm Valley; Johnny Come Lately; Boll Weevil Ballet; La Plus Que Lente; Passion Flower; After All; All Day Long; Lotus Blossom. (61:21)

**Personnel:** Bill Dobbins, piano.

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

## Ole Kock Hansen & Thomas Fønnesbæk *Fine Together/Nordic Moods* STUNT RECORDS 15182

★★★½

The veteran, freshly septuagenarian pianist Ole Kock Hansen and the much younger bassman Thomas Fønnesbæk represent two generations on the Danish jazz scene, united by their thoughtful, sensitive approach to a repertoire that includes a preponderance of Scandinavian folk material. These traditional tunes come from Sweden, Iceland, Finland and Denmark, but have been largely re-christened as jazz, with much of their rustic nature excised.

The opening "Oh, Silent Solitude" develops methodically, phrases carefully placed, resulting in a confident introversion. There's equality between piano and bass, with an occasionally featured dominance rising up from each player during showcase numbers or stretches.

Nothing jars, or challenges, though, and such a calm equilibrium can become a disadvantage over this extended playing time. The set is always tasteful, but never unpredictable, aside from the actual tune-sources, which are highly specialized. "I Strolled Out On A Summer's Day," a Swedish piece from around 1600, sounds more like a wintery tune, with its allur-



ing melancholy. Another Swedish composition, "Nocturne," has Fønnesbæk tolling soft high-bass bell-chimes, while Hansen picks trceries in between one of the most distinctive melodies on the album. Another standout is "Blues For The Lion," strutting playfully as Hansen offers an earthier swing.

—Martin Longley

**Fine Together//Nordic Moods:** O, Tysta Ensamhet; Sofdu, Unga Astin; Den Største Sorg I Verden Her Er Dog At Miste Den, Man Har Kaer; Jeg Gik Mig Ud En Sommerdag; Natten Er Sa Stille, Fine Together; Those Who Were; Bell; Nocturne; My Little Anna; Altid Frejdig, Nar Du Gar; En S Jöman Ålskar Havets Vag; Spring Waltz; Uncharted Land; Blues For The Lion; Afsted, Afsted! Dankse Helte! (71:25)

**Personnel:** Ole Kock Hansen (piano), Thomas Fønnesbæk (bass).

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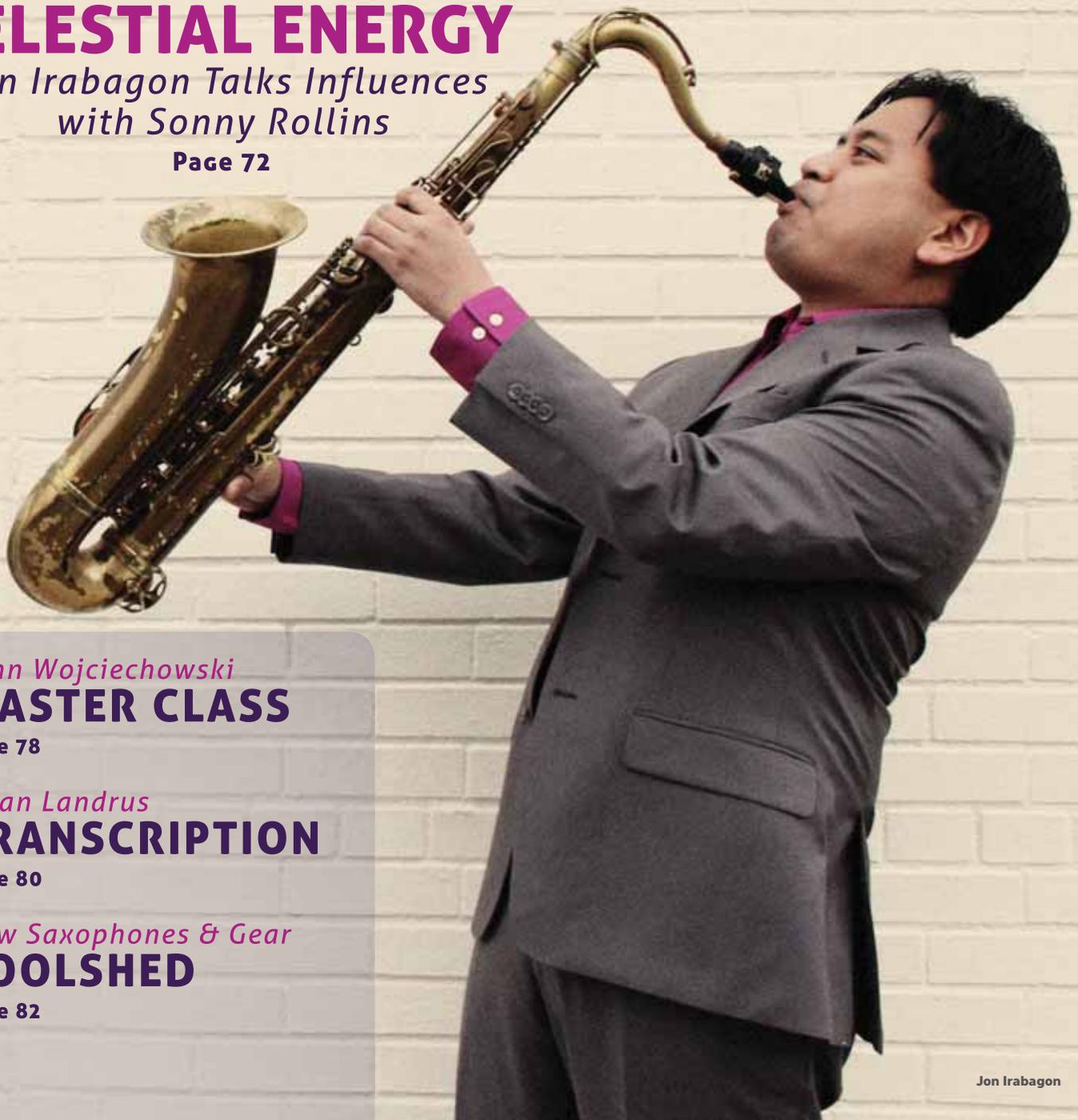
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DOWNBEAT **»** *Guide to Learning Jazz*

## CELESTIAL ENERGY

*Jon Irabagon Talks Influences  
with Sonny Rollins*

Page 72



*John Wojciechowski*

### ▶ MASTER CLASS

Page 78

*Brian Landrus*

### ▶ TRANSCRIPTION

Page 80

*New Saxophones & Gear*

### ▶ TOOLSHED

Page 82



# Celestial Energy

TALKING WITH SONNY ROLLINS  
ABOUT EXPANDING YOUR  
IMPROVISATIONAL INFLUENCES

BY JON IRABAGON / PHOTO BY BILL DOUTHART

**MODERN STUDENT MUSICIANS HAVE WHAT SEEMS LIKE** unlimited resources at their fingertips—books, articles, videos, online clinics and lectures—to help them learn jazz and absorb the wisdom of past and current masters. And yet, transcribing, one of the most traditional ways of learning, still is the most important and efficient method for improving one's tone, time, vocabulary and familiarity with the jazz language. For me, it has been a dominant feature in my creative process. By transcribing, the methods of many of my heroes have been revealed, leading me to ask questions to further my own music. Finding the answers to those questions helps evolve my music into a sound I feel is more singularly my own.

While transcribing Sonny Rollins several years ago, I noticed that in addition to the highly melodic and intricately rhythmic aspects of his solos, there were elements of exploration and risk-taking in his playing that inspired me. This willingness to push the envelope is why I'm writing this article. I'll also give examples from other masters to demonstrate that many of the elite players have not only done the "homework" that teachers talk about (which is definitely important to being able to speak the jazz language) but also have incorporated an extra level of searching and imagination to their quest for a unique, personal sound.

Rollins exhibits his own studied adventurousness during his performance of "Oleo" on his album *Our Man In Jazz* (RCA, 1962). Rollins slams on the brakes after several choruses and (to my ears) magically turns the normal "I Got Rhythm" changes into a slow 12-bar blues for several minutes before returning (magically again) to "Oleo." I cannot think of another recorded instance on any major label where the artist combines two of the most prominent solo forms in jazz and manages to play them so seamlessly together on the same piece.

This realization had a profound effect on my improvisation philosophy. I started formulating questions that would drive what and how I would practice: Did this happen other times, or was that strictly in the moment? Is that something Rollins and others were doing regularly? Did that change his playing and concept moving forward? What was his daily practice routine, and could I emulate that?

Further, it has implications for my current improvising and composing: Is this something I could incorporate into my playing and in my groups? When I practice, can I work on combining forms/songs and stay musical and in the moment? Are there other forms I could combine together and have them work alongside each other? Are there compositional ideas I can take to help give my own music a sense of shifting and combination? My compositions from my trio record with Barry Altschul and Mark Helias, *It Takes All Kinds* (Irabagast Records/Jazzwerkstatt, 2014), are results of this questioning process. By finding and identifying moments of pure improvisation, you can come up with dozens of questions that can generate your new direction, your growing voice.

I had a chance to talk to Mr. Rollins recently, and asked him about his peculiar take on “Oleo.” His answer confirmed my expansive philosophical standpoint: “I try to keep a very open mind about what I’m playing, and if the musicians that I am playing with tend to gravitate towards anything that can be transferrable, I’d like to think that I am able to respond to it,” Rollins said. “My heroes usually played a song without any deviation. Even with the bebop era, those guys were very traditional in that sense. But, the music they were playing suggested freedom. And that was probably what led me to feel that I could play on a form but still be free enough in my improvisation to play a blues against ‘I Got Rhythm.’”

“This is good; I’ve never talked about these things. The spirit of the way Charlie Parker played suggested freedom. And therefore, the next generation after him and so on would be leading in that direction. Being one of the next guys coming up, I certainly felt that way in my conversations. I felt that it would fit—it would be correct—to do this thing that I did on the solo. It is trying to push the tradition forward and still be in the tradition.”

I asked about another recording: a 16-minute version of Charlie Parker’s “Now’s The Time” found on Rollins’ album *Sonny Rollins And Co. 1964* (RCA). The song, normally in F, is done in B here, and Rollins takes a long solo that climaxes in him removing the mouthpiece and neck, playing them alone and putting them back on the saxophone repeatedly. Not only is the choice of key distinctive, but the mouthpiece/neck choice is almost unheard of. “That’s



always good as an improviser, to not imprison yourself in favorite keys, especially these days,” Rollins said. “As far as the mouthpiece thing, all of that had some kind of feeling that there was a lot to be done with that part of the horn. Playing the mouthpiece would put me into a zone where I would have something else interesting to say besides playing the whole saxophone.”

Several questions came to my mind when I first listened to “Now’s The Time”: Did Rollins play the song in B because he knew that he was going to play just the mouthpiece and neck, so when he returned to playing the entire saxophone, the note with no fingers would be the root of the home key? Is there a way I can use this discovery in my playing or composing? How many different kinds of sounds and timbres can I get from experimenting with just the mouthpiece or just the neck?

Rollins’ performance caused these questions to bubble up in my reflections on my own music. I discovered distinctive answers that I experimented with on my current solo soprano saxophone recording, *Inaction Is An Action* (Irabagast Records, 2015), where I play the mouthpiece alone, both with and without the reed, as a partial result of absorbing and reflecting on Rollins’ risk-taking.

Rollins also famously plays on the mouthpiece alone on the album *East Broadway Rundown* (Impulse, 1966) and shrieks and squeals behind Coleman Hawkins on “Lover Man” on *Sonny Meets Hawk* (RCA, 1963), showing that this was a continuum he was working on. “It’s a process,” he said. “You’ve gotta be serious about it, and you’ve gotta give your whole existence to playing your instrument. Gotta be everything in your life. . . . If you don’t become Bud Powell, so what? There’s not going to be many Bud Powells. But maybe we can contribute something else, see?”

While his exploratory inquiry is mainly

what attracts me to Rollins’ improvisations, these extra-musical elements don’t have to be beyond the perceived regular, linear ways of improvising. On the track “Ee-Ah” from *Tour De Force* (Prestige, 1957), Rollins takes a short syncopated phrase and continues to return to it, even as his liquid lines extend outward and grow. The reappearance of the original idea, over and over again, in different parts of the form and seemingly interrupting the overarching flow of his ideas, leads to a swinging, disruptive, quizzical listen. The search and sense of wonder I try to bring to my own playing had me hearing this interruptive phrase as what I labelled a “Rollins stamp,” where, no matter what he was doing linearly, he could just stamp in the original phrase to unsettle the blues form he was playing on.

I wound up taking this idea of a “Rollins stamp” and using it as a partial basis for my long-form duo improvisation with drummer Mike Pride, *I Don’t Hear Nothin’ But The Blues* (Loyal Label, 2010), and its sequel, *Appalachian Haze* (Irabagast Records, 2012). My interpretation of this may not actually be where Rollins was coming from that particular day. What’s important is the idea, the moxie to carry it out and the reverberating implications. From there, a musician can then run with it, explode it outwards and expand it to the *n*th degree.

“Things were percolating around that period, and everybody was trying to search the music,” Rollins said. “The music now has gotten to the point where it could be free. It’s that kind of open thinking which a young improviser has to have in order to be able to improvise today, in 2016.”

Inspired by these Rollins examples, I wanted to find examples of nonlinear, offbeat ideas from other artists that could lead to different paths in my own music. I found that if you’re mindful to watch for these ideas, you can find them in recordings and videos from 50 to 60 years ago, or from musicians playing today.

Transcribing John Coltrane’s work has expanded my conception of the range of possibilities when improvising. On “It’s Easy To Remember” from the 1963 album *More Live At The Showboat*, Coltrane utilizes a call-and-response method of improvisation that he doesn’t apply in many other solos, at least not as explicitly. Eddie Harris uses this same technique extensively on his more funk-based improvisations, like “Listen Here” from *The Electrifying Eddie Harris*. Is there a link between Coltrane’s and Harris’ lines of thinking that we as younger improvisers can catalyze?

Speech, one of the first forms of human expression, has itself been an inspiration for veteran improvisers. The melody to Coltrane’s “Psalm” from *A Love Supreme* (Impulse, 1965) is derived from the poetry that accompanies the



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album notes. Coltrane's melody on "Alabama" from *Live At Birdland* (Impulse, 1964) is allegedly based on a eulogy given by Dr. Martin Luther King. Further along this lineage of combining speech and melodic material, listen to "Pensamento Positivo" by Hermeto Pascoal (*Festa Dos Deuses*, Philips Records, 1992) as well as "Ringing My Phone (Straight Outta Istanbul)" and "Infospace" on Jason Moran's *The Bandwagon* (Blue Note, 2003).

Evan Parker cites Coltrane as a hero, and if you listen to any of Parker's solo soprano saxophone recordings, you'll find that the influence

has been refracted and reimagined to the point that his playing is his alone.

The implications found in the minimalist reorganizations of Roscoe Mitchell's *Noonah* (Nessa, 1977) have changed my conception of repetition and its use in improvisation.

Another innovator who has contributed to my creative trajectory is Steve Lacy, who, in the intro to "Koko" on *Monk's Dream* (Verve, 2000), must be playing the soprano backwards by blowing into the bell. Even if that's not what he's doing, my interpretation of it led me to discovery and subsequent research into how I

could play saxophone backwards. This opened up a whole new approach for me, one I utilized on *Inaction Is An Action*.

All of these instances have led me to pose similar questions to the ones I asked for the Rollins examples above, and the answers to those questions are what fuels my practicing, writing and improvising, as opposed to books or scales.

Wayne Shorter *must* be mentioned in this context. His mysticism and cryptic soloing are fertile ground for finding these hidden possibilities. On Halloween 1967, in Stockholm, Sweden, with the Miles Davis Quintet, Shorter takes a fascinating solo on "Agitation." In Karlsruhe, Germany, that same year, the closing moments of his solo on "Walkin'" added different ideas for my own improvisation conception. Both of these videos are on YouTube; listen to them and see if you can find anything musically or philosophically that you can incorporate into your own playing. Both of these solos influenced my improvising on my album *Behind The Sky* (Irabbagast Records, 2015).

Finding your musical vision and utilizing your imagination are important qualities that play heavily into what you end up improvising and writing. An overarching vision of what can be—what's possible both within and outside the normal, accepted parameters of improvisation—is essential to finding your own voice.

Musicians frequently overlook the abundance of inspiration available in other arts such as literature and painting. I asked Rollins about it, and he said: "I definitely could get a great feeling if I go to a museum and see some of the paintings, and, boy, then I'm right in the zone, I can play forever. It's the same expression that exists for me. All these different kinds of art forms have an energy that you can transfer into your music. A celestial energy. It's always been a part of my thinking. At first, of course, I just listened to music, but then when I began expanding my mind and I began appreciating other things—nature, painting, great sculpture, you know, it's all beautiful. It's all creative expression."

One way to find a personal voice that discovers new terrain is to incorporate a sense of wonder and imagination. As Rollins concluded his conversation with me, I conclude with you: "Music is such a mysterious, magical thing and celestial. ... You want it to be an open sky. You want to get to the source, you see, of you." **DB**

Jon Irabagon, winner of the 2008 Thelonious Monk International Saxophone Competition, has released five of his own recordings on his own label, Irabbagast Records, including *Outright! Unhinged*, which received a 5-star review in *DownBeat*. His recent recordings consist of *Behind The Sky*, featuring Tom Harrell, and *Inaction Is An Action*, an experimental solo soprano saxophone CD. Irabagon currently performs with the Dave Douglas Quintet, the Mary Halvorson group, Rudy Royston's 303 and Barry Altschul's 3Dom Factor, as well as his own groups. He can be reached at [jirabago@yahoo.com](mailto:jirabago@yahoo.com) and followed at [facebook.com/jonirabagonmusic](https://www.facebook.com/jonirabagonmusic). Visit [jonirabagon.com](http://jonirabagon.com) for his upcoming tour schedule.

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## Developing a Voice on Alto & Tenor Saxophones

When I was a kid, my father used to play a lot of recordings by the great organist Don Patterson. Featured on many of those Prestige recordings was Sonny Stitt, who often performed on both the alto saxophone and the tenor saxophone. My father was also a fan of saxophonists like David “Fathead” Newman, so, naturally, as a young saxophonist myself, I thought it was normal to play both the alto and tenor saxophone.

Growing up, I was primarily an alto player, but as early as junior high, I began playing tenor. And I’ve always been drawn to, in addition to the aforementioned Stitt and Newman, players like James Moody, Joe Lovano, Frank Wess, Dick Oatts, Billy Drewes and Chris Potter. These gentlemen not only performed and recorded on both the alto and tenor saxophones throughout their careers, but they all have individual concepts on each of those instruments. They don’t simply sound like an alto player dabbling on tenor, or vice-versa. They have a voice on each saxophone.

Even though for the past 15 years I have identified primarily as a tenor player, I still perform quite a bit on alto and would like to share with you some thoughts on the advantages and benefits of branching out to more than one type of saxophone. Certainly many saxophonists double on soprano, but in this article I will be focusing on playing alto and tenor—two instruments that not too many saxophonists have both of in their arsenal. Many of the concepts I’ll talk about can certainly be applied to the soprano, though.

To perform convincingly on both the alto and tenor saxophone, each instrument requires one to find their own “voice,” as each saxophone behaves in a unique fashion. Perhaps one of the reasons that so few saxophonists perform and record on both tenor and alto is that each instrument requires that you treat it like its own animal. The aforementioned list of saxophonists who perform on both alto and tenor, while they may have a similar harmonic concept between the instruments, each treated the alto and tenor differently. Their timbre is different, and sometimes even the rhythmic and harmonic concepts can be slightly different.

What I have found over the last 25 years of working with both instruments and treating each of them differently is that one can inform the other and influence your concept on each saxophone. I have found that this can be a very powerful and profound path to finding your own voice as a saxophonist.

There are several benefits to studying two or more saxophones. For one, it makes it possible to truly study saxophonists on the instruments that they played on. Instead of transcribing alto players on tenor or vice-versa, you learn the solos on the instrument that they were played on. And you try to mimic not only the notes, but the tone, the style, the inflection, the rhythmic concept, etc. While you could certainly do it the other way, at best you’ll get the notes and maybe the rhythmic approach. But by learning it on the saxophone that it was performed on, you are able to strive to really get inside a player’s concept. There’s a stylistic cross-pollination that occurs from playing and studying various saxophones and saxophonists (e.g., alto players seriously studying Sonny Rollins or tenor players studying Cannonball Adderley).

Studying saxophonists on all of the saxophones means that you’re going to learn more language. And the more language you learn, the more likely you are to find your own voice. Further, the more you know,



John Wojciechowski

### Example 1

### Example 2

### Example 3

CONTINUE THE EXERCISE FOLLOWING THE ABOVE KEY MOVEMENT BY STARTING ON B AND THEN B FLAT

the better able you are to interact with other musicians in this highly interactive and social music.

Lastly, there are economic benefits of being an improviser on multiple woodwinds. The more saxophones (or frankly, woodwind instruments) you can play and improvise competently on, the more marketable you are. A vast majority of the work I do is because I play and improvise on soprano, alto and tenor saxophones as well as flute and clarinet. My sense is that if all I did was play tenor, I'd be sitting home quite a bit.

I have some exercises that focus on sound for each of the saxophones, and they have worked for myself over the years as well as for my students. The idea with these exercises is to gain control of the timbre and idiosyncrasies of each saxophone, establishing a good sound that's even throughout all registers.

The first exercise, which I call "The Hinge" (see Example 1), uses long tones to help develop a very even sound and improve intonation across the entire range of each instrument. The goal is to make a great sound on the initial D. In fact, you want it to be the best sounding D you

can. Strive for great intonation. Keep a tuner handy, and while you can visually check from time to time, I encourage you to use your ears first.

Each time you go back to the original D, your goal is to make it sound exactly like the first one. Do this exercise all the way down to low D, and once you can do that well, reverse the exercise going up to the palm high D.

Example 2 is an overtone exercise that will help you learn where the "cracks" are on each saxophone and how to properly "voice" each instrument. Learning to voice each of the overtones helps not only with intonation, but also to learn where the instrument best resonates.

Fairly quickly, you'll find that where each overtone is voiced is different on each saxophone. Oftentimes, tenor players who play alto without going through this process are used to voicing too far apart, causing a sound that's too spread and "blatty." Conversely, alto players who are new to tenor voice things too close together, causing a stuffy, unfocused sound.

Example 3 is an exercise involving fourths that is designed to help bridge the registers of the instruments and create a cohesive sound in

all registers. This particular exercise has many great applications harmonically, but for our purposes here, it's to strive for an even sound from the bottom of the instrument up into the altissimo register. **DB**

Saxophonist John Wojciechowski, originally from Detroit, has spent the last 14 years performing and teaching in Chicago. In addition to leading his own groups, some of the ensembles and artists he has performed or recorded with include the Chicago Jazz Orchestra, the Chicago Jazz Ensemble, the Woody Herman Orchestra, Charlie Haden and Kurt Elling. Wojciechowski was a third-place finalist in the 1996 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Saxophone Competition. He is currently a member of the Chicago Jazz Orchestra, Dana Hall's spring, the Jeff Campbell Trio (with John Hollenbeck), the Chicago Yestet, Ryan Cohan's The River Sextet and the New Standard Jazz Orchestra. Wojciechowski has appeared on dozens of recordings as a sideman, and has two recordings as a leader: *Lexicon*, released in 2009, and *Focus*, released to critical acclaim in fall of 2015 on Origin Records.

Besides being an active performer, Wojciechowski (a National Board Certified Teacher) is also an educator noted for his versatility, creativity and enthusiasm. He has taught at public schools as well as universities and has appeared across the country as a guest artist, clinician and conductor. He is currently on the music faculty at St. Charles North High School in St. Charles, Illinois, where he teaches jazz bands, band and music theory. His student groups have performed at the IAJE Conference, Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic, JEN Conference and the Illinois All-State Music Educator's Conference. In addition to his public school teaching, Wojciechowski has also taught at Northern Illinois University and Northwestern University.

Wojciechowski is a P. Mauriat artist and a D'Addario Woodwinds artist. Visit him online at [jwojojazz.com](http://jwojojazz.com).



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## Brian Landrus' Bass Clarinet Solo on 'Fields Of Zava'

**B**rian Landrus seems to love the low end. He plays a variety of wind instruments, but tends to pick ones in lower registers, such as baritone and bass saxophones, bass flute and—for “Fields Of Zava” from his latest album—bass clarinet. It’s no wonder the album is titled *The Deep Below* (Palmetto). This transcription is transposed for Bb bass clarinet.

Something I often point out about the improvisations showcased in this column is a soloist’s use of their instrument’s range. This bass clarinet solo is a great example, as Landrus employs a little more than three octaves. It’s also intriguing that he starts at the top, on a C above the staff (this area being revisited midway through in bar 17 of the solo) and eventually ends at the bottom, three octaves down (the lowest note in the solo, and the lowest note on his instrument). This provides a very strong conclusion to his solo.

However, Landrus’ demonstration of expansive range isn’t due to flashiness. Rather, it’s because this improvisation incorporates larger intervals, specifically fourths and fifths, along with some octave displacement. His first line is more scalar; in fact, the first five bars are

really the end of the song’s melody. He ornaments the melody so much that it blurs the distinction of where the melody ends and the solo begins, so I’ve included those bars as part of the solo. But after the double-bar, where the solo proper commences, we start to hear wider intervals. We get a low F, a ninth below the G preceding it. This widening of the interval makes the F not sound so connected to the G, and since it is the root of the chord, it is almost like Landrus is providing a bass accompaniment for himself.

In the next bar, we start to hear lines based around fourths and fifths. At the tail end of beats 2 and 3, Landrus plays descending fourths from F to C to G. With a G played above the F as well, this simple melodic statement covers an octave.

In the next measure this idea is flipped over, going up a fourth from C to F, then up a second to the G. He puts a minor third on top of the G, which gives us a Bb that’s a flat seventh above the C this lick started on. Notice how these lines don’t sound like they contain big jumps, as his choice of intervals makes the wide range sound very melodic, but without the neoclassical vibe



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of sweeping arpeggios.

This motif of G-down-to-F-down-to-C-down-to-G reappears in measures 17, 18, and 20. We also hear variations in bars 12, 13, 15 and 23. The intervallic idea is a whole step down followed by two descending fourths. Landrus plays alterations of this idea, as in the third and fourth beats of measure 11, where the descending fourth precedes the descending whole step. The original lick occurs in the following bar, except that it ends on a descending fifth rather than a fourth. This creates a stronger resolution, as now we have the tonic on the bottom rather than a ninth.

An even wider version of this idea is presented in bar 14. Here, the major second is put in the middle, and instead of two fourths, Landrus plays two fifths. The pair of wider intervals makes this lick span more than an

octave. At the tail end of measure 15, there is the same idea with fourths, only here he continues to stack the intervals: fourth-second-fourth-fourth-second, all ascending. Measure 19 is another good example of taking this motif and reshaping it. Here Landrus starts at a low E<sub>2</sub>, then goes up a fifth and then another fourth (which really is just going up an E<sub>2</sub>5 chord) and then a whole step on top of that. One could say that Landrus often uses these specific intervals (fourth, fifth and major second) like Legos, sticking them together in various ways to fit his fancy. Since two of the intervals are large, and Landrus strings them together—often moving in the same direction—we get sweeping lines that cover a large range very quickly, providing this solo a sense of expansiveness. **DB**

Jimi Durso is a freelance guitarist and bassist based in the New York area. Visit him online at jimidurso.com.

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# Antigua Pro-One Baritone

## Vibrational Freedom & Core Strength

Antigua's Pro-One Baritone Saxophone has arrived, completing the line.

The acclaimed Pro-One series was developed with significant input from Peter Ponzol, a well-traveled saxophonist who has been designing mouthpieces and saxophones for more than 30 years. Ponzol, as anyone who has played his mouthpieces knows, has a profound grasp of saxophone design principles and understands better than most how the instrument's air column vibrates.

The Ponzol-designed neck on the Pro-One gives an improved playing angle and reduces resistance in a way that results in a surprisingly free-blowing bari. The brace that secures the top bow was made in a way that allows more vibrational freedom in a critical part of the instrument, according to Ponzol. These two important design elements get the player off to a great start in terms of response and ease of play.

The entire Pro-One line uses a special brass recipe with a copper content that's higher than normal. This mixture, similar to that of French-made saxophones from the 1950s, results in a warm sound and excellent projection. Over several years of play-testing new saxophones, high-copper brass has become a personal preference of mine.

Another important Pro-One feature is what the manufacturer describes as "hybrid rolled tone holes." That means there is a combination of rolled tone holes on notes from the horn's lower bout to the bell (E-flat, C-sharp, C, B, B-flat and low A) and straight tone holes on the rest of the notes (from low D and E on up). According to Ponzol, this design keeps the sound from spreading too much (a phenomenon he says is common to saxophones with rolled tone holes throughout), and it results in more even, balanced resistance across the instrument's full range. This is the source of the Pro-One bari's core strength, something that's noticeable from the very first note you play. It's one powerful horn.

During play-testing and gigging, I found the Pro-One to be more solidly responsive than any other Taiwan-made baritone sax I've ever tried. Its tone was burnished and brilliant without being the least bit brittle, full of colorful overtones and anchored in an authoritative fundamental tone. Notes leapt out of the instrument like they were spring-loaded, even at subtone volumes.

The Pro-One was a huge success for me in two vastly different settings: an extremely loud rock concert stage and a relaxed big band setting with a mini-

mum of amplification.

I have found that the majority of low-A baris have noticeably unstable and stuffy low B-flats, the result of the bell being extend beyond its "comfortable" range. Not the case with the Pro-One. Antigua has somehow figured out a way to remedy this tricky problem, because the low B-flat felt and sounded as natural as can be and never once failed me during hours of play. This was a rather liberating discovery for me, and it freed me up to focus my mind and ears on more important matters like blending with the section and thinking of cool and appropriate things to play during my solos.

Perhaps the Pro-One bari's solid low B-flat can be attributed to the trident key arms found on the key cups for low C through low A. Floating just above the key cups (and adjustable via a simple screw), these special key arms are designed to reduce key flutter and wobble on the horn's lowest notes by providing just enough pressure to stabilize the vibrations. From what I can tell, they work like a dream on all Pro-One saxophones, but they're especially beneficial on the baritone model.

One of the joys of playing any Antigua Pro-One saxophone is the presence of an ingenious no-stick G-sharp mechanism that never fails. The bari was no exception. This feature doesn't just improve your note-accuracy rating; it's one less thing for the player to worry about and leaves them free to contemplate bigger ideas.

Other features of the Pro-One baritone saxophone include a high F-sharp key, gold-toned vintage brass lacquered body and keys, Pisoni pads with metal resonators, a three-way neckstrap hook and a well-padded canvas case with backpack strap.

A bari as good as the Pro-One has been long overdue in today's saxophone market. Check it out as soon as you get a chance, and see if it suits your needs as well as it did mine.

—Ed Enright

Ordering info: [antiguapro-one.com](http://antiguapro-one.com)



# Eastman 52nd Street Baritone

## Big Sound, Vintage Appeal

I had originally heard of this horn through my friend Paul von Mertens (Poi Dog Pondering, Brian Wilson), who has been playing the 52nd Street alto and tenor saxophones for the past few years. When he finally got his 52nd Street bari last fall, I stopped by to check it out, and was impressed with its playability. When I received the 52nd Street bari used in this review, I contacted von Mertens, as well as DownBeat contributing editor Ed Enright (a Chicago-based baritone saxophonist), and we got together to put the horn through its paces and compare it with von Mertens' 52nd Street bari.

The horn is beautiful. The unlacquered brass body and keys give it a vintage appearance right out of the factory. Even the ligature included with the stock mouthpiece was unlacquered brass—a small touch, but pretty cool. The 52nd Street bari case has wheels that roll easily on flat surfaces, which makes it a lot easier to get to and from gigs and rehearsals with it.

Unlacquered horns are said to resonate more freely than lacquered ones, and that assertion was certainly supported by the sound of the 52nd Street bari. One online description claimed that its tone is “bigger than a vintage Conn 12M, with better overall response and intonation and modern key action.” We didn't have a 12M on hand, but Enright brought his circa-1960 King Zephyr bari, which has one of the biggest sounds I've ever heard. The 52nd Street was comparable to the Zephyr—maybe not quite the same depth of tone, but very close. It is very free-blowing, with a robust, lively sound that keeps its richness throughout the range of the horn, and at all dynamic levels. The tone at pianissimo is every bit as full as the tone at fortissimo, which we all found quite delightful.

Intonation is very good throughout the horn, except that the left-hand palm-key notes were consistently sharp for all three of us. Von Mertens'

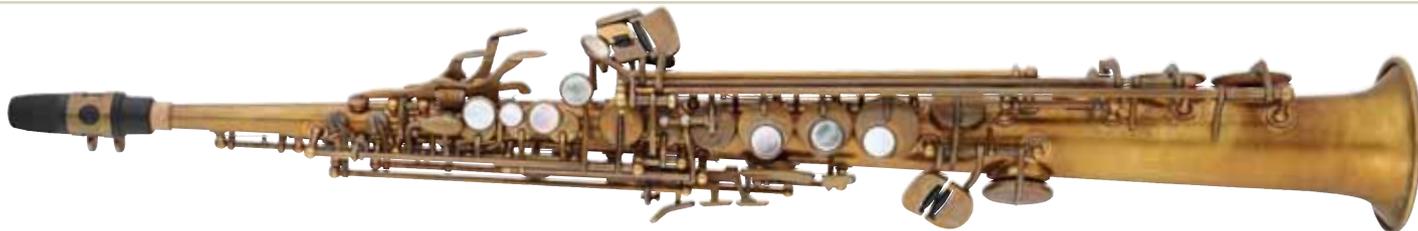
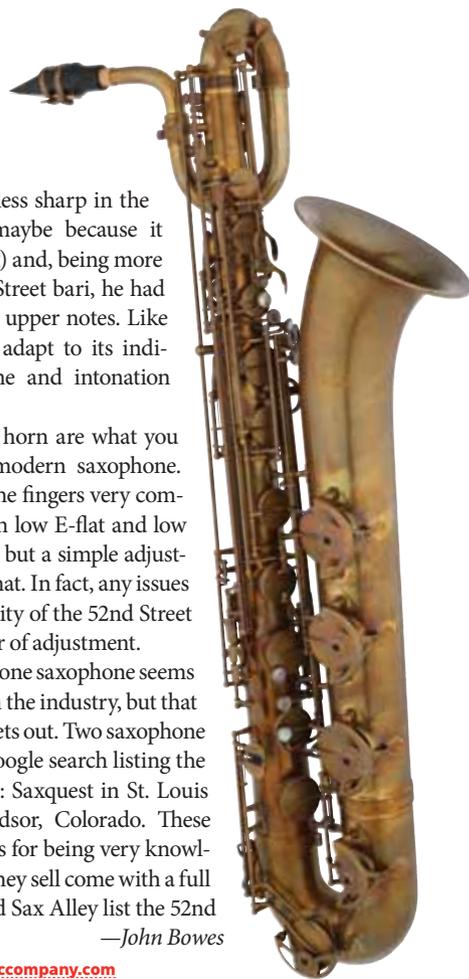
slightly older horn was less sharp in the left-hand palm keys (maybe because it was in better adjustment) and, being more familiar with the 52nd Street bari, he had less of an issue with the upper notes. Like most horns, when you adapt to its individual peculiarities, tone and intonation improve.

Ergonomics on this horn are what you would expect from a modern saxophone. Everything falls under the fingers very comfortably. Rolling between low E-flat and low C was slightly unwieldy, but a simple adjustment should eliminate that. In fact, any issues we had with the playability of the 52nd Street bari were largely a matter of adjustment.

The 52nd Street baritone saxophone seems to be a well-kept secret in the industry, but that should change as word gets out. Two saxophone stores came up in my Google search listing the 52nd Street bari for sale: Saxquest in St. Louis and Sax Alley in Windsor, Colorado. These retailers have reputations for being very knowledgeable, and all horns they sell come with a full setup. Both Saxquest and Sax Alley list the 52nd Street bari for \$6,000.

—John Bowes

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



# Eastman 52nd Street Soprano

## Rich, Responsive, In-Tune

Eastman's 52nd Street line of saxophones, initially released some five years ago and completed in 2015, continues to gain popularity—thanks in part to endorsements from high-profile jazz players like Bob Mintzer. As word continues to spread about the already-established alto and tenor models, the relatively new 52nd Street soprano has started to get some well-deserved attention among players.

The 52nd Street line is known for vintage sound characteristics and appearance. I enjoyed playing the soprano with two big bands and found the sound to be rich and responsive, with excellent intonation up and down the instrument. Blending with clarinets and other saxophones in the section was comfortable, and my soprano solos projected very well over the relatively loud comping of an amplified rhythm section.

The 52nd Street soprano is a one-piece, unlacquered, straight instrument with an antique or “aged” appearance. Eastman product specialist Roger Greenberg explained that a removable double-neck option (curved and straight) was tried and rejected in favor of the superior performance characteristics shown by a straight, one-piece design. He also said that various lacquers were tried, but the raw-brass style was ultimately chosen for its pleasing tone quality, as it produced the longest ring.

The 52nd Street soprano features a combination of straight toneholes from the upper body heading down to five rolled toneholes at the bottom of the horn. Greenberg noted that using all rolled toneholes on the soprano gave it a somewhat stuffy response, and the combination of straight and rolled toneholes produces the superior sound.

A hand-engraved bell lends a distinctive look to the body of the 52nd Street soprano. I found the key placement to be very appropriate for my needs, and the key action is fast and smooth. Solid bracing is especially evident around the left-hand little-finger bank of keys.

Italian leather pads with metal resonators, blue steel springs, upper- and lower-stack adjustment screws, adjustable palm key heights, an adjustable thumb rest and double-braced low C, B and B-flat keys are among the pro features found on the 52nd Street soprano. A front high F “teardrop” key and high F-sharp key are included. And the neckstrap connection ring—a feature not found on my vintage VI—is perfectly placed to balance the soprano in a comfortable and efficient playing position.

The 52nd Street soprano lists at \$3,400. It's a joy to play and an excellent choice for anyone looking for a pro-quality soprano.

—Bruce Gibson

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



## MacSax Artist Series Tenor *Commanding Tonal Presence*

The Artist series of alto and tenor saxophones from Austin, Texas-based MacSax are designed to emulate the vibrant, focused sound of late-'50s vintage French saxophones with the addition of more ergonomic key work and a free-blowing neck designed for powerful projection.

I play-tested the Artist tenor saxophone using my regular setup of a Vandoren Jumbo Java mouthpiece and a Vandoren #3 reed (Red Box). It was a pleasure from the start; in fact, the instrument was hard to put down. The tone quality was rich, and the tenor responded easily in all registers and at all volumes. The keys were located very logically for ideal hand positioning—especially the little-finger keys with their large spatulas.

I used the Artist in a big band and in a combo setting. Intonation was very good, and I could achieve a very powerful sound when needed. The instrument's response was excellent, whether sub-toning during ensemble passages or testifying in the altissimo register during solos. Several fellow band members commented favorably on the instrument's commanding tonal presence.

In the small group setting, I found that the

Artist responded easily whether playing softly or really letting it rip. I didn't even think about needing a microphone to be heard. I found myself using more low-note ideas in solos than I usually do, as the instrument's response was virtually instant. This characteristic of the Artist was also evident during one big band unison figure in particular where low-note fingering patterns can be a challenge. The Artist's easy response and ergonomically angled left-hand little-finger keys made that a snap, even at a very soft dynamic.

The body of the Artist features a ribbed construction and a hand-hammered engraved bell. The keywork—which includes stainless steel rod screws and pivot screws, blue steel springs and Italian Pisoni pads installed with shellac—has a tight, agile feel. The side B-flat and C keys were quiet and sufficiently resistant, a welcome change from what I'm used to dealing with on my Selmer Mark VI tenor. The Artist is quite smooth under the fingers, which really helps in navigating altissimo passages. Exterior appointments of the Artist include genuine mother-of-pearl key touches and a dark vintage gold lacquer finish. —Bruce Gibson

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

## KB Saxophone Services Tenor Necks *Make Your Horn Sing Again*

Kim Bock of KB Saxophone Services has developed a wonderful line of handcrafted saxophone necks that saxophonists would be well advised to check out. The neck is the most critical part of the saxophone, affecting everything from tuning and tone color to overall quality of sound.

Bock originally had the idea to craft new saxophone necks as replacements for the older Super Balanced Action, Balanced Action and Mark VI models from Selmer. Now, he will make a neck for most (but not all) old and new tenors made by Selmer, Yamaha, Keilwerth, P. Mauriat, Eastman and others. He has special gauges to measure the tenon opening, and he'll send them to you to get the exact fit for your particular instrument. He even asked me for the serial number of my Selmer Reference 54, because sometimes companies make subtle changes to their tenon designs over time and the size of the tenon opening changes.

The new KB necks are remarkable as replacement necks, even for new horns. And in most cases, they're going to be better than the originals.

Bock sent me three necks to try: the Canyon (made of brass) and two Redwood models (one brass, one copper). I found advantages to each. The Redwood brass model had a full, meaty sound, closest to my Selmer Reference neck; it was very responsive up and down the instrument with excellent pitch. I found the copper version of the Redwood had a slightly brighter sound with a little buzz, great response and evenness throughout. Saxophonists playing a darker-sounding horn will find that this one can

add some projection and brightness. I found the Canyon to be the most subtle of the three—very even, centered and in tune.

All three necks offered something for everyone. I feel like I could play any of them and be comfortable. All KB necks are handmade, and the Redwood copper is hand-hammered, making it very different than the necks that come standard with the horn you buy.

Traditionally, most necks are put together on a mandrel, where the brass is wrapped around the mandrel and then silver-soldered together. Bock's are two pieces of metal that have identical measurements and wall thickness on both sides and are then silver-soldered.

Finding good vintage necks has become increasingly difficult these days. Having this option is a great opportunity to find the missing link—so you can make your horn sing again.

—Mark Colby

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



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- Alisha Pattillo

Pictured with her PowerBell Tenor - TS4240CBLQ



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## ReedGeek Black Diamond G4 *Refined Reedworking Tool*

ReedGeek has come out with a new and improved version of its “Universal” reedworking tool. Called the Black Diamond G4, this version of the ReedGeek has several new features that make it more effective at flattening reed tables and fixing naturally occurring imperfections to achieve better reed performance.

The Black Diamond G4 has a newly designed length that not only makes it easier to manipulate with the hands, but gives the tool a little extra heft. One important idea behind the ReedGeek’s design is that it should require very little physical pressure to work properly; the tool should essentially do the work for you. I immediately noticed the difference that the extra mass in the G4 made when using long, gentle strokes to flatten the bottom of my reeds.

This new version of the ReedGeek has a corrosion-resistant, shiny black finish that will keep its edges perpetually sharp and clean—which means you’ll always get an even, accurate, non-invasive cut. Underneath this “black diamond” finish, the ReedGeek is still made from high-grade U.S. steel.

Other new features found on the Black Diamond G4 include two new, elongated, contoured bevels that are designed to profile rails and re-contour the spine of both single and double reeds. You get better curvature here than with the previous model, which allows you more accuracy when working the top surface of the reed. I found that it helped me get the job done using fewer strokes, saving time and boosting my confi-

dence level in my reedworking abilities.

The Black Diamond G4’s pencil-eraser tip—which you can use to target very precise areas like the reed windows and the channels between the rails and the heart—has been slightly modified as well. You can use it to “erase” areas of the reed that you don’t want, such as dark spots and nodal points where the reed is a little too thick.

The Black Diamond G4 is a beauty, a valuable tool that you can use to blend and smooth your reeds to your heart’s desire. You’ll notice its benefits right away, especially after leveling the table of your reeds, which goes a long way toward preventing air leakage. It comes in a convenient, protective plastic case and neoprene self-locking bag that suits and fits the device perfectly.

Also available from ReedGeek is a plaque-and-gauge set that helps you figure out when your reed table is sufficiently flat and allows you to measure your mouthpiece facing—so you know exactly where on the reed to focus your attention.

—Ed Enright

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



## JodyJazz Jet Baritone Sax Mouthpiece *Clean & Focused with a Mighty Roar*

JodyJazz continues to develop its popular Jet line of saxophone mouthpieces with the introduction of a new baritone model—one that might help saxophonists overcome some of the instrument’s perceived barriers and ultimately lead to more bari converts.

Like the company’s alto and tenor Jet models, the new bari version is designed to ramp up your projection and boost your ability to “cut” when desired, especially in sonic environments that are challenging for saxophonists. Alto and tenor players who have already caught on to the Jet’s concept have also discovered that it’s capable of so much more, and the bari model is no exception. It is available in size 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 tip openings.

I played the Jet in multiple settings: in the horn section of a classic rock cover band, in a big band and in a New Orleans r&b band (on Mardi Gras). And I used it on two very different baris: a vintage low-B-flat King and a new low-A horn by Antigua. In that time, I decided that I want the Jet to be my go-to mouthpiece whenever I want a little extra oomph or seek a more subtle change in my approach.

First things first: The Jet is indeed capable of a mighty roar, as its name suggests. I not only could achieve extreme volume (especially useful with the rock group), but I could use my chops to put noticeably more emphasis on the high and mid-level overtones in my sound. I was able to be heard over the amplified bass, guitars and keyboards that I’m normally fighting against in that kind of setting. It was a real relief to be heard—and still get a

clean, focused sound—without blowing a gasket in the process.

Unlike some mouthpieces that are designed to achieve extreme effects, the Jet sounds great in the bari’s lower register, all the way down to low B-flat and low A. And, you can get a great tone out of it at low dynamic levels, like when I was playing sweet-sounding passages and blending with four other saxes in the big band. This flexibility is what will make the Jet an attractive piece for working bari players who are called upon to play different roles in various types of ensembles. That, and its affordability.

The ease with which the Jet responds will also make it a great choice for students, especially those who already play saxophone and are making the switch to bari. They will surely experience less of the muddiness and resistance that can discourage young players who are still learning the horn’s idiosyncrasies. Why should anyone suffer through stuffiness (and fatigue) when they could be wailing effortlessly—or subtuning with subtlety—on the Jet for bari? Book yourself a flight and enjoy the ride.

—Ed Enright

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





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The Mouthpiece Manager by Rovner is an easy way to store and display a large number of saxophone and clarinet mouthpieces. A tidy solution to organizing a box, bag or drawer full of loose mouthpieces and ligatures, the U.S.-made Mouthpiece Manager is suitable for woodwind players, band directors, retailers, repair shops and collectors. The lightweight, durable, stackable device (MSRP: \$24.95) fits easily on tables and counters and holds 12 saxophone and clarinet mouthpieces of all sizes in an upright position.

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

## 2. Synthetic European Cut

The Légère B-flat Clarinet European Cut Signature Series represents the next advancement in the company's synthetic reed development. Slightly wider than Légère's original Signature Series and featuring a shorter vamp that provides comfort in the embouchure, European Cut Signature Series reeds fit on a greater number of clarinet mouthpieces designed for the French system. Offering the same durability and playability that the Légère brand is known for, the new clarinet reeds feature an extra band of material along the spine that allows Légère to make them in much higher strengths without compromising their responsiveness and free-blowing characteristics. The company's highly responsive Original Signature Series reeds, known among jazz musicians for their consistency and desirable overtones, continue to be available for soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophone, as well as B-flat clarinet and bass clarinet.

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

## 3. Reserve Soprano, Tenor Reeds

D'Addario Woodwinds has expanded its Reserve Saxophone Reed line with the additions of D'Addario Reserve Soprano and Tenor Saxophone Reeds. Reserve Soprano and Tenor Saxophone reeds each feature seven strengths, ranging from 2.0 to 4.5, including a special 3.0+ (3.25) quarter strength. Each Reserve reed is made using D'Addario's Digital Vamping Process, which precisely measures and cuts every reed to the tightest tolerances. The process improves reed precision, quality and consistency. Suitable for the advancing student and professional, Reserve Soprano Saxophone Reeds are available in boxes of 10, and Reserve Tenor Saxophone Reeds are available in boxes of five; both reeds will be offered in packs of two.

More info: [woodwinds.daddario.com](http://woodwinds.daddario.com)

## 4. Playing Changes with Mintzer

Alfred Music has introduced a new jazz play-along series called *Playing on the Changes*, authored by saxophonist-composer-educator Bob Mintzer. The series includes five books (for C instruments, B-flat tenor saxophone and soprano saxophone, B-flat trumpet and clarinet, E-flat instruments and bass clef instruments) that feature 13 jazz etudes through the various chord qualities found in standards and jazz tunes in all 12 keys. Areas covered include major seventh chords, minor seventh chords, dominant seventh chords (mixolydian, altered dominant and half-whole diminished), minor ii flat-five chords, tritone substitutions and a variety of progressions. The books and DVD come with TNT 2 software, which allows a musician to listen to and analyze the etudes, as well as practice and play on the harmonic exercises by removing Mintzer's saxophone from the mix.

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

## 5. V21 Saxophone Reeds

Vandoren has expanded its V21 reed line to include alto and tenor saxophone reeds. Previously available for B-flat clarinet, V21 reeds utilize a unique conical design and provide saxophone players with a dark, focused sound and an easy yet full-bodied response in all registers, including altissimo. These qualities make V21 reeds suitable for students and professionals looking for more depth and warmth in their sound without sacrificing reed response.

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



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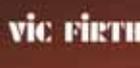
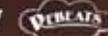
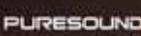
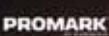
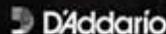
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2016



**London**  
**EFG London Jazz Festival**  
 November 11 – 20  
[www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk](http://www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk)



**Turkey**  
**Istanbul Jazz Festival**  
 June 27 – 28  
 July 11 – 25  
[www.caz.iksv.org](http://www.caz.iksv.org)



**Belgium**  
**Gent Jazz Festival**  
 July 7 – 16  
[www.gentjazz.com](http://www.gentjazz.com)



**Switzerland**  
**Montreux Jazz Festival**  
 July 1 – 16  
[www.montreuxjazz.com](http://www.montreuxjazz.com)



**France**  
**International Jazz Festival In Juan-les-Pins**  
 July 13 – 24  
[www.antibesjuanlespins.com](http://www.antibesjuanlespins.com)  
[www.jazzajuan.com](http://www.jazzajuan.com)



**France**  
**Jazz à Vienne**  
 June 28 – July 15  
[www.jazzavienne.com](http://www.jazzavienne.com)



**Finland**  
**Pori Jazz Festival**  
 July 9 – July 17  
[www.porijazz.com](http://www.porijazz.com)



**Austria**  
**Jazz Fest Wien**  
 June 27 - July 11  
[www.viennajazz.org](http://www.viennajazz.org)



**Italy**  
**Umbria Jazz**  
 July 8 – 17  
[www.umbriajazz.com](http://www.umbriajazz.com)



**Norway**  
**Molde International Jazz Festival**  
 July 18 – 23  
[www.moldejazz.no](http://www.moldejazz.no)



**Spain**  
**Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz**  
 July 12 – 16  
[www.jazzvitoria.com](http://www.jazzvitoria.com)



**Holland**  
**North Sea Jazz Festival**  
 July 8 – 10  
[www.northseajazz.com](http://www.northseajazz.com)



**Canada**  
**Festival International de Jazz de Montréal**  
 June 29 – July 9  
[www.montrealjazzfest.com](http://www.montrealjazzfest.com)



**USA**  
**Playboy Jazz Festival**  
 June 11 – 12  
[www.hollywoodbowl.com/playbojazz](http://www.hollywoodbowl.com/playbojazz)



**USA**  
**Monterey Jazz Festival**  
 September 16 – 18  
[www.montereyjazzfestival.org](http://www.montereyjazzfestival.org)



**USA**  
**Newport Jazz Festival**  
 July 29 – 31  
[www.newportjazzfest.org](http://www.newportjazzfest.org)

DOWNBEAT 2016 INTERNATIONAL SUMMER

# FESTIVAL

GUIDE»



## *FULL THROTTLE!*

Your Definitive Guide  
to Life-Changing  
Fests & Road Trips

**MONTREUX JAZZ FEST CELEBRATES 50 YEARS**  
Page 92

**XEROX ROCHESTER JAZZ FEST SOARS @ 15**  
Page 106

**SPAIN & PORTUGAL: FESTS, FOOD, FUN!**  
Page 132

**HIT THE ROAD FOR COOL COLORADO FESTS**  
Page 117



# MONTREUX: 50 YEARS OF

As it celebrates its 50th anniversary, the Montreux Jazz Festival is in the enviable position of having an exceptionally strong brand that's recognized around the world. Just say the word "Montreux," and music-lovers will conjure up the hip, infectious groove of Les McCann and Eddie Harris doing "Compared To What," guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan blowing minds with his fresh take on the electric blues, Miles Davis pulling a 180-degree turn and performing fan favorites from 40 years past, or Deep Purple's heavy rock documentation of the tragic night in 1971 when the fest's primary venue burned down while Frank Zappa played.



Brad Mehldau (left) and Pat Metheny

© 2007 FEJIM-DANIEL BALMAT

Herbie Hancock



© 1986 EDOUARD CURCHOD



John Tchical

JAN PERSSON



© 2015 FFJM-VINCENT BAILLY



JAN PERSSON

# TRANSCENDENT MOMENTS

BY JAMES HALE

Montreux speaks volumes. Fans who attend this year's historic edition (July 1–16) will once again savor a smorgasbord that includes jazz as well as other genres, including a July 2 set by rock trio Muse, which recently won its second Grammy in the Best Rock Album category for the 2015 album *Drones* (Warner Bros.).

Tourism specialist, gastronome and sometime harmonica player Claude Nobs (1936–2013) launched the festival in 1967—at the dawn of the great festival era, but at a time when jazz was struggling to be heard above Jimi Hendrix, Cream and Jefferson Airplane. Passionate about the music, Nobs was reluctant to view any situation as impossible—a trait that saw his festival grow tremendously over the next four decades.

That first year, Nobs was savvy enough to feature Charles Lloyd's hot young quartet with Keith Jarrett and Jack DeJohnette, but his other choices were not exactly world-beaters. In Year Two, he balanced jazz artists like Bill Evans and Gary Burton with pop stars like Aretha Franklin and Brian Auger & The Trinity. By 1969, he was stacking the deck with rockers John Mayall, Ten Years After and Rory Gallagher's band Taste while building jazz credibility with Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Phil Woods and Clark Terry.

But Nobs was doing more than building cred with those who found their way to his gorgeous setting on the eastern banks of Switzerland's Lake Geneva; he was establishing the Montreux Jazz Festival as a genre-defying tastemaker, starting down the road of producing more than 400 live recordings by everyone from Andrew Hill to ZZ Top and capturing many of those performances on high-quality video. In the early

'70s, those videos could be seen on TV stations across Europe and as far away as the French-speaking regions of Canada. Sending artists like Champion Jack Dupree, Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Sonny Sharrock into living rooms was a radical achievement at the time.

Other festivals sought to be different each year, and often showed reluctance to book the same artists twice. Nobs bucked that trend, establishing long-term relationships with artists like Davis, who appeared at Montreux eight times, Carlos Santana (11 times as a bandleader thus far), Tori Amos (five times), Leonard Cohen, Van Morrison and Luther Allison (four times each). Deep Purple, who immortalized Nobs as "Funky Claude" in "Smoke On The Water," has performed a total of eight times.

Nobs won over musicians with his hospitality, charisma and the gentle pace of life in Montreux when the festival was on. He sat in on harmonica frequently at jam sessions, and hosted lavish events at his chalet in the mountains above the town. As guitarist John McLaughlin told *DownBeat* in the May 2013 issue: "The great festival of Montreux came from Claude's lifelong passion for jazz and blues and has grown from its humble origins to the greatest jazz/blues/r&b/soul/pop/rock festival in the world."

Quincy Jones—who collaborated with Nobs in 1991 to convince Davis to revisit his work with Gil Evans—once called Montreux "the Rolls Royce of music festivals."

Mathieu Jaton, Nobs' successor, said the festival remains "a bubble of time" where visiting artists can relax, mingle with their peers and participate in jam sessions.

"It was always important for Claude to give freedom to the artists," Jaton said. "He felt this

Nina Simone



JAN PERSSON

Stevie Wonder



© 2014 FFJM-MARC DUGREST



Junior Mance (left) and Dexter Gordon

JAN PERSON



Billy Gibbons (left) and Buddy Guy

©2007 FFJM-DANIEL BALMAT

was a time for them to take a break from the road for a few days, to stay in a beautiful hotel, to see all their friends without any outside pressure. It may sound naive, but we have always taken the human approach to music. For us, it is not a product.”

Jaton, who worked with Nobs for 20 years, is committed to fulfilling the founder’s vision for putting artists in comfortable settings and giving festival-goers unique opportunities in numerous locations, such as the 350-seat-capacity Montreux Jazz Club, the 2,000-seat Jazz Lab or the 4,000-person Stravinsky Auditorium. In total, the festival utilizes a dozen venues, including a tour boat on Lake Geneva and two trains.

“Our various venues give us a lot of options,” Jaton said. “We can use our intimate space for big names. We can make things like that happen. It’s not just about money for us; it’s always been about being different—creating a special atmosphere, delivering quality. Those are the kinds of things that differentiate us.”

At press time, Jaton was more than a month away from the April 16 announcement of the festival’s full lineup, and he didn’t want to reveal many details—choosing only to tease with promises of the return of some iconic artists from the fest’s early years: “I can tell you that there are a lot of Montreux’s friends who want to celebrate with us. We were approached by a number of artists who wanted to do special projects to mark our 50th year. Some of the very early performers at the festival will be coming back.”

In addition, Jaton’s team has unveiled a number of special events to mark Montreux’s half-century.

One project—a collaboration of the Claude Nobs Foundation and a technology school based in Lausanne, Switzerland—is an online repository for more than 800 videos recorded at the festival and thousands of hours of audio. Housed at [montreuxjazz.com](http://montreuxjazz.com), the trove of historical material available online reflects the addition of the work to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register, which makes it available to research-

ers and academics in a variety of formats and ensures the recordings are carefully maintained. Visitors to the site can click on various parts of an interactive video and be transported back to 1969 for footage of McCann and Harris’ iconic performance, drop into 1971 to catch Franklin prepping her makeup backstage or zip forward to 2002 to see David Bowie perform a restrained, funky “Heroes” with bassist Meshell Ndegeocello. There are also clips of Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, Dexter Gordon, Nina Simone, Stevie Wonder, Muddy Waters, Elvis Costello and hundreds more.

“This was a long digitization process,” Jaton explained, “and it really represents a worldwide collaboration to archive this material and make it available as an historical document of the last 50 years in music.”

Working with French publisher Éditions Textuel, the festival is also producing a 50th anniversary book, combining the memories of more than 50 artists who have performed in Montreux and photographs from throughout the event’s history. The book will be published June 8.

Yet another collaboration will be a cultural exchange with Brazil, showcasing Swiss and Brazilian artists, including The Young Gods and Nação Zumbi. This program will feature performances in Montreux during this year’s festival and a special Montreux in Rio show in 2017.

As much as Nobs is heralded in Montreux, he might be matched by Freddie Mercury, who is memorialized with a bronze statue in the town. The lead singer of Queen fell in love with the area after the band recorded its album *Jazz* at the festival in 1978, and built a studio there, which remained in the band’s hands until four years after Mercury’s death in 1991. In March, Béjart Ballet Lausanne paid tribute to both Nobs and Mercury by staging Maurice Béjart’s *Ballet For Life* in the Stravinsky Auditorium.

Nobs’ most enduring legacy, beyond the festival itself, is the Montreux Jazz Artists Foundation, which supports competitions and



Sonny Sharrock

JAN PERSON

workshops for young musicians. The annual competition, which recognizes up to four performers in solo piano, voice and guitar, has been awarded to rising young artists like Tigran Hamasyan (2003), Gilad Hekselman (2005) and Dan Tepfer (2006), each of whom has fulfilled that early promise. Since 2014, the foundation has held a weeklong jazz academy to connect young players with established mentors. In 2015, the faculty included Kurt Rosenwinkel, Nils Petter Molvaer and Al Jarreau.

“One of the powers of Montreux is to bring experienced artists around the table,” Jaton explained. “We use our networks to get the best people to work side-by-side with the young kids. Now, we are also bringing in music business experts to talk about how the industry is changing, and show these young people how to market their work in the new environment. We give them all the tools to ensure their art can flourish and be heard.”

While Montreux may not be as old as, say, Rhode Island’s Newport Jazz Festival or California’s Monterey Jazz Festival, it stands alone as having created the model for the contemporary, pan-stylistic music festival. The success of larger, newer festivals like the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal is directly attributable to the path that Nobs blazed in his quaint Swiss town during the Summer of Love.

DB

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## EAST

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

### Exit Zero Jazz Festival

*Cape May, New Jersey*

April 22-24

During this festival (which was founded in 2012), Cape May transforms into a jazz village as fans make their pilgrimage to the little town by the sea to witness world-class jazz.

**LINEUP:** Pat Metheny & Ron Carter, Lisa Fischer Grand Baton, Joey Alexander Trio, John Scofield & Joe Lovano Quartet, René Marie, Pedrito Martinez Group, Son Little, Lee Fields & The Expressions, Joanna Pascale, Brian Betz, Amina Figarova Sextet.

[exit0jazzfest.com](http://exit0jazzfest.com)

### Center City Jazz Festival

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

April 30

The fifth annual edition of this festival will present 20 bands performing at five venues over six hours, all within walking distance of each other in the heart of Center City in Philadelphia. Participating venues are U-Bahn Philly, Time Restaurant, Fergie's Pub, Franky Bradley's and Milkboy Philadelphia.

**LINEUP:** Gretchen Parlato with Taylor Eigsti, Orrin Evans' Captain Black Big Band, Tim Green, Ryan Keberle & Catharsis, Brandee Younger, Ideal Bread with Dave Ballou, Josh Evans, Mike Cemprola, David Gibson, Chris Oatts, Nasir Dickerson.

[ccjazzfest.com](http://ccjazzfest.com)

### New York Guitar Festival

*New York City*

May 8-15

Moving from January to the month of May, the New York Guitar Festival returns in 2016 with an intensely focused week of concert programming from May 8-14, followed by a full day of free workshops, master classes, and panel discussions on May 15. The festival presents a global range of guitar styles and cross-cultural mash-ups. Guitarist and bandleader Joel Harrison curates the Alternative Guitar Summit, and on May 11 there will be a tribute to Joni Mitchell and Carla Bley: Eight improvising guitarists will perform one piece each by Mitchell and Bley.

**LINEUP:** Vernon Reid, Nels Cline, Luther Dickinson, Camila Meza, John Medeski, Elliot Sharp, David Torn, Anthony Pirog, Ben Monder, Patrick Higgins, Min Xiao-Fen.

[newyorkguitarfestival.org](http://newyorkguitarfestival.org)

### Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival

*Washington, DC*

May 13-14

The 21st edition of this Kennedy Center festival includes a staging of the quasi-theater production *A Conversation with Mary Lou Williams*, which premiered at Harlem Stage in 2014. The work features dialogue and vignettes about Williams' life combined with a staged concert featuring pianist Geri Allen and vocalist Carmen Lundy.

**LINEUP:** Geri Allen, Carmen Lundy, Kenny Davis, Kassa Overall, Allison Miller's Boom Tic Boom, Jane Bunnnett & Maquette.

[kennedy-center.org/events](http://kennedy-center.org/events)

### Plymouth Rock Assurance Jazz Fest

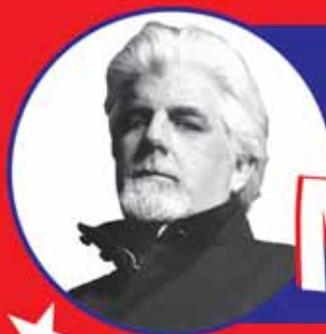
*Plymouth, Massachusetts*

May 27-29

Held in the Spire Center for the Performing Arts, the inaugural edition of this festival features a variety of jazz artists. Saxophonist and flutist

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Greg Abate will lead his quintet on May 27: Jeff Stout (trumpet), Kent Hewitt (piano), Todd Baker (bass) and Gary Johnson (drums). On May 28, the Rich Greenblatt Sextet will perform with Eldar Djangirov (who will be playing a grand piano). The festival closes on the afternoon of May 29 with an open all-star jazz jam featuring Johnny Souza and the Spire House Jazz Band. Lineup: Greg Abate Quintet, Rich Greenblatt Sextet & Eldar, Donna Byrne & The Marshall Wood Trio, Johnny Souza. [spirecenter.org/events](http://spirecenter.org/events)

**Westsylvania Jazz and Blues Festival**  
Indiana, Pennsylvania  
May 28

This free, outdoor festival presents international, national and regional jazz and blues artists in a small-town setting. The day starts early with big band music from top western Pennsylvania schools, builds to headline acts, then extends into the wee hours at venues around town. LINEUP: See website. Previous festivals have featured the Poojie Bell Band with Sean Jones, Elevations with Warren Wolf, Sonny Landreth. [westsylvaniajazzandblues.org](http://westsylvaniajazzandblues.org)

**Blue Note Jazz Festival**  
New York City  
June 1-30

The Blue Note Jazz Festival features more than 150 shows at multiple venues around

New York City for a monthlong celebration of jazz from some of the biggest names on the scene today. Put on by the owners of the Blue Note jazz club, the festival celebrated its fifth anniversary in 2015.

LINEUP: Arturo Sandoval, Joshua Redman Quartet, Christian McBride Quartet, John Scofield with Brad Mehldau & Mark Giuliana, Rosa Passos, Al Kooper, Michael Franks, Nigel Hall Band. [bluenotejazzfestival.com](http://bluenotejazzfestival.com)

**Michael Arnone's Crawfish Fest**  
Augusta, New Jersey  
June 3-5

In 1989, Michel Arnone gathered together 80 Northerners homesick for Louisiana cooking for a crawfish boil. That was the beginning of what has become a major event, with four stages and three days packed with blues, jazz, gospel and zydeco music.

LINEUP: Funky Meters, Marcia Ball, Cowboy Mouth, David Greely Trio, Mike Zito & The Wheel, Brass-A-Holics, Johnny Sketch & The Dirty Notes, Cha Wa, Zydeco Revelators. [crawfishfest.com](http://crawfishfest.com)

**Burlington Discover Jazz Festival**  
Burlington, Vermont  
June 3-12

The tiny town of Burlington absolutely buzzes during this annual festival, which will celebrate its 33rd anniversary in 2016. Headliners perform nightly concerts at the majestic Flynn

Center, and secondary acts set up shop on open-air stages throughout downtown. LINEUP: Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Charenée Wade, Marcus Roberts Trio, Randy Newman. [discoverjazz.com](http://discoverjazz.com)

**Vision Festival**  
New York City  
June 7-12

This multi-festival will feature global artists ranging from new talents to legendary artists in music, dance, visual art and poetry. This year, Arts for Art will honor jazz musician Henry Grimes with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his considerable artistic contributions.

LINEUP: Henry Grimes, Cooper-Moore, Marshall Allen & The Sun Ra Arkestra, Kidd Jordan & Marlon Jordan, Hamid Drake, Jemeel Moondoc, Michelle Rosewoman, Jen Shyu, Geri Allen, Nicole Mitchell, Lisa Sokolov, Tomeka Reid, Andrew Cyrille, Graham Haynes, Charles Gayle, Tyshawn Sorey. [artsforart.org](http://artsforart.org)

**DC Jazz Festival**  
Washington, D.C.  
June 10-19

The DC Jazz Festival is one of the fastest-growing fests in the United States, and it has been hailed by The New York Times as one of the summer's "50 Essential Festivals." The event will include more than 125 performances, both



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**LINEUP:** Kamasi Washington, Eddie Palmieri Latin Jazz Septet, Iqmar Thomas & The Revive Big Band with Talib Kweli, Bilal, & Ravi Coltane, Cécile McLorin Salvant, The Chuck Brown Band, Sharel Cassity, E.J. Strickland & Transient Beings, Fred Foss' homage to

Jackie McLean, the DCJazzPrix finalists.  
[dcjazzfest.org](http://dcjazzfest.org)

**Berkshire Gateway Jazz Weekend**  
*Lee, Massachusetts*  
June 17-19

For the fifth annual edition of this festival, organizers will offer jazz, food and a jazz-themed art show in downtown Lee, located in the scenic Berkshire Hills.

**LINEUP:** Justin Kauflin, others TBA. See website.  
[berkshiregatewayjazz.org](http://berkshiregatewayjazz.org)

**Pittsburgh JazzLive International Festival**  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*  
June 24-26

Celebrating its fifth year, this festival is a jazz party thrown by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

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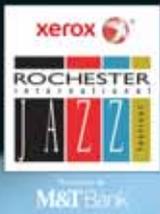
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# XEROX ROCHESTER INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

# JUNE 24 - JULY 2, 2016

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92Y Jazz In July

Last year's festival featured three outdoor stages and jam sessions open to the public.

**LINEUP:** Christian McBride, Revive Big Band, Vijay Iyer & Wadada Leo Smith, Jeff "Tain" Watts Quartet, Davina & The Vagabonds, Nu Grid, Eddie Palmieri Big Salsa Orchestra, Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride and Brian Blade), [pittsburghjazzlive.com](http://pittsburghjazzlive.com)

### Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival

Rochester, New York

June 24–July 2

Celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, the XRIJF is one of the nation's most respected music festivals, presenting a diverse array of creative improvised music. Last year's festival drew almost 200,000 people from all over the world, featuring 1,500 artists from 19 countries over nine days with more than 320 concerts, including 93 free shows.

**LINEUP:** Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride and Brian Blade), Chris Botti, Joey Alexander Trio, Bruce Hornsby & The Noisemakers, Erykah Badu, Grace Potter, Gregg Allman. [rochesterjazz.com](http://rochesterjazz.com)

### Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival

Saratoga Springs, New York

June 25–26

Founded in 1978, this festival has hosted a who's who of jazz greats over the decades, including Miles Davis and Dave Brubeck as well as B.B. King and Ray Charles. Features include an inside seating capacity of 5,200, lawn seating of 20,000, two stages and an idyllic state park setting.

**LINEUP:** Pat Martino Organ Trio, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Lizz Wright, Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride and Brian Blade), Shemekia Copeland, Smokey Robinson, Aaron Diehl Trio, Karrin Allyson, Steps Ahead, Pieces of a Dream, Chaka Khan, Jon Cleary & The Absolute Monster Gentleman, Joey Alexander Trio, Bria Skonberg Quintet, Eric Lindell, Jamison Ross, Alicia Olatuja, Vincent Herring, Lafayette Suite featuring Walter

Smith III and Laurent Coq, Elio Villafranca. [spac.org](http://spac.org)

### Syracuse Jazz Fest

Syracuse, New York

July 2–3

This event has been dubbed "the largest free admission jazz festival in the Northeast." For its 34th annual edition, organizers will present an all-star tribute to jazz vocalist Mark Murphy (1932–2015) as well as Groove Legacy, described as a "Crusaders Salute."

**LINEUP:** Randy Brecker, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, New York Voices, Larry Coryell & The Eleventh House, Michael McDonald, The Mavericks, Groove Legacy, Noteified with Julia Goodwin. [syracusejazzfest.com](http://syracusejazzfest.com)

### The Belleayre Music Festival

Highmount, New York

Dates TBA

A year after skipping the 2015 festival due to rising production and artist costs, the backers of the Belleayre Music Festival are promising a re-invention for 2016. For more than 20 years, the sprawling festival has presented multiple concerts between the Fourth of July and Labor Day.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past lineups have included Pat Metheny, The Cookers, Pedrito Martinez Group, Jason Marsalis. [belleayre.com/summer/summer-concerts](http://belleayre.com/summer/summer-concerts)

### Briggs Farm Blues Festival

Nescopeck, Pennsylvania

July 8–10

For 19 years, organizers have been bringing a packed lineup of blues artists to this farm in northeast Pennsylvania. Food includes farm-fresh roasted corn, which is perhaps worth the price of admission itself, and a full array of slow-smoked meats.

**LINEUP:** Devon Allman, John Primer, Carolyn Wonderland, Cedric Burnside, Nikki Hill, Marcus King Band, Lonnie Shields. [briggsfarm.com](http://briggsfarm.com)



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JULY 29 - 31, 2016

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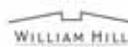


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Hiromi at the 2011 Newport Jazz Festival

### Norfolk Waterfront Jazz Festival

*Norfolk, Virginia*  
July 15-16

The 34th annual edition of this festival will be held in the beautiful setting of Town Point Park, located in downtown Norfolk on the banks of the Elizabeth River.

**LINEUP:** Gerald Albright, Jonathan Butler, Brian Culbertson, Jazz Funk Soul (Jeff Lorber, Chuck Loeb & Everette Harp), Vivian Green, The Sax Pack (Jeff Kashiwa, Jackiem Joyner & Steve Cole).

[festevents.org/events/2016-season-events/norfolkwaterfrontjazzfestival/](http://festevents.org/events/2016-season-events/norfolkwaterfrontjazzfestival/)

### North Atlantic Blues Festival

*Rockland, Maine*  
July 16-17

One of Maine's premiere festivals features top-notch blues in a placid, maritime setting. Located 80 miles north of Portland, the event has been booking regional and national talent for the past 15 years.

**LINEUP:** Blues Caravan, Alexis P. Suter, Toronzo Cannon, Mike Zito & The Wheel, Daughters of Rhythm & Blues, Johnny Sansone Deep Mud Review, Quinn Sullivan, Elvin Bishop, Mick Kolassa.

[northatlanticbluesfestival.com](http://northatlanticbluesfestival.com)

### 92Y Jazz in July

*New York City*  
July 19-28

This annual summer jazz festival, directed by pianist and Impulse! recording artist Bill Charlap, brings together some of the world's best jazz musicians for once-in-a-lifetime performances at 92nd Street Y. Previous shows have explored bebop and Latin jazz; celebrated jazz legend Jimmy Heath and former artistic director Dick Hyman; and sampled the work of great composers, from Cole Porter to Thelonious Monk.

**LINEUP:** Harry Allen, Gene Bertoncini, Anat Cohen, Freddy Cole, Jimmy Greene, Jon Gordon, Dick Hyman, Jon-Erik Kellso, Jeremy Pelt, Ken Peplowski, Houston Person,

Renee Rosnes, Carol Sloane, Rossano Sportiello, Warren Vaché, Steve Wilson.

[92y.org/jazzinJuly](http://92y.org/jazzinJuly)

### Caramoor Jazz Festival

*Katonah, New York*  
July 23

Curated by Jazz at Lincoln Center, this festival brings an eclectic mix of established jazz legends, future phenoms, big bands, and solo performers together for one-of-a-kind artistic collaborations. Now in its 23rd year, this annual festival takes place on 90 historic acres an hour's drive or train ride from Manhattan.

**LINEUP:** Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride and Brian Blade), Ladies Sing the Blues featuring Catherine Russell, Brianna Thomas & Charenée Wade, Evan Sherman Big Band, Etienne Charles & Creole Soul, Jazzmeia Horn, Bria Skonberg. Gotham Kings: Riley Mulherkar and Alphonso Horne.

[caramoor.org/events/jazz-festival-160723/](http://caramoor.org/events/jazz-festival-160723/)

### Newport Jazz Festival

*Newport, Rhode Island*  
July 29-31

Newport Jazz Festival, America's first annual jazz festival created in 1954 by George Wein, has been the setting for countless legendary performances. The Newport Festival Foundation announced in March that bassist Christian McBride has been named artistic director to work alongside, and eventually succeed, Wein as the festival's music curator. At this year's festival, The Bad Plus (joined by Tim Berne, Ron Miles and Sam Newsome) will perform Ornette Coleman's 1972 album Science Fiction. Additionally, bassist Eric Revis will present his new Parallax project with reedist Ken Vandermark, pianist Kris Davis and drummer Nasheet Waits. The festival is held at the International Tennis Hall of Fame and at scenic Fort Adams State Park.

**LINEUP:** Donny McCaslin, Gregory Porter, Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride and Brian Blade), Kamasi Washington, Norah Jones, Steve Coleman & Five Elements, The Bad Plus, John Scofield & Joe Lovano Quartet, Charles



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CHICK COREA  
CHARLES LLOYD  
SCOFIELD/LOVANO  
DAVE LIEBMAN  
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Lloyd New Quartet, Kenny Barron, Monty Alexander, Robert Glasper Experiment, Anat Cohen, Kneebody, Angélique Kidjo, José James, Darcy James Argue's Secret Society, Mary Halvorson, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Galactic, Nels Cline, Jimmy Heath, Joey Alexander, Ben Williams, Stefon Harris, Dave Liebman, Chris Potter/Dave Holland/Lionel Loueke/Eric Harland.  
[newportjazzfest.org](http://newportjazzfest.org)

**Scranton Jazz Festival**  
 Scranton, Pennsylvania  
 Aug. 5-7

When this festival began in 2005, the organizers placed the event at the historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel in downtown Scranton, where it has become a permanent fixture on Pennsylvania's arts and culture scene. The festival has presented some of the finest international, national, and regional jazz, blues and world music artists in the world.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Spyro Gyra, Jon Faddis, The SJF Big Band, Dred "Perky" Scott, Mariko Marcinko Latin Jazz Quintet.  
[scrantonjazzfestival.org](http://scrantonjazzfestival.org)

**Litchfield Jazz Festival**  
 Goshen, Connecticut  
 Aug. 6-7

This festival, set in the picturesque Litchfield Hills, was established in 1996 and now attracts artists and fans from around the world. Along with great music, this year's Festival features the inaugural Scat & Scramble Jazz Brunch to benefit need-based scholarships at Litchfield Jazz Camp. The theme of this year's programming is Generations of Jazz, featuring many exciting collaborations.

**LINEUP:** Andrew Hadro with Tony Malaby, Richie Barshay with Jimmy Greene, Albert Rivera with Paul Bollenback, Daryl Johns with Orrin Evans, Nicole Zuraitis with Dave Stryker, Big Bass Blowout with Avery Sharpe and Matt Wilson, Emmet Cohen with Jimmy Heath, Litchfield Jazz Orchestra with Don Braden, Curtis Brothers with Donald Harrison.  
[litchfieldjazzfest.com](http://litchfieldjazzfest.com)

**Central PA Jazz Festival**  
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
 Aug. 10-14

The 36th annual edition of this festival features a Riverboat Cruise on the Pride of the Susquehanna, a jazz picnic at Indian Echo Caverns, a jazz party with five bands at River City Blues Club, a concert at the beautiful Mt. Gretna Playhouse and much more.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Freddie Cole, George Cables, Eric Alexander, Eddie Henderson.  
[friendsofjazz.org](http://friendsofjazz.org)

**Hudson Valley Jazz Festival**  
 Hudson Valley, New York  
 Aug. 11-14

This festival presents shows in multiple towns and spotlights area jazz artists. Several venues participate.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers include Wallace Roney, Lenny White, Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Dave Liebman, Bobby Sanabria, Arturo O'Farrill.  
[hudsonvalleyjazzfest.org](http://hudsonvalleyjazzfest.org)

**Provincetown Jazz Festival**  
 Cape Cod, Massachusetts  
 Aug. 11-15

This festival, which began in 2005, is held in the a community known as "the oldest continuous art colony in the United States." The festival is a non-profit organization donating a portion of the proceeds to worthy causes. Performers have included musicians from the United States, Canada, South America, United Kingdom, Europe and New Zealand.

**LINEUP:** Billy Stritch, Evan Christopher, Nicki Parrott, Scott Avidon, Fabiano de Castro, Fred Boyle, Ron Ormsby, Bart Weisman.  
[provincetownjazzfestival.org](http://provincetownjazzfestival.org)

**Presents 21 Years – Generations of Jazz**  
**Litchfield Jazz Festival**  
 August 6 & 7, 2016  
 Goshen Fairgrounds, Goshen, CT

**ANDREW HADRO / TONY MALABY**  
**RICHIE BARSHAY / JIMMY GREENE**  
**ALBERT RIVERA / PAUL BOLLENBACK**  
 "BACK AT IT"  
**NICOLE ZURAITIS / DAVE STRYKER**  
**DARYL JOHNS / ORRIN EVANS**  
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**BIG BASS BLOWOUT / AVERY SHARPE**  
**EMMET COHEN / JIMMY HEATH**  
**LITCHFIELD JAZZ ORCHESTRA / DON BRADEN**  
 "EARTH WIND & WONDER"  
**CURTIS BROTHERS / DONALD HARRISON**

Line-up subject to change

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**Litchfield Jazz Camp**  
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Photo: James Korn

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## Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts

*Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania*  
Sept. 9-11

Nearly 40 years ago, jazz fans in the Poconos decided to throw a jazz party. Nowadays that event is a three-day extravaganza. Many of the best names in jazz come to Pennsylvania to perform. This year's activities will certainly acknowledge the contributions of the great Phil Woods (1931-2015), who frequently performed at the fest.

**LINEUP:** See website. Previous editions have featured Dick Oatts, Greg Osby, Dave Liebman, Nellie McKay.  
[cotajazz.org](http://cotajazz.org)

## Pennsylvania Blues Festival

*Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania*  
Sept. 16-18

Blues star Kenny Neal, who played the inaugural edition of this festival in 1992, will be back this year. The fest takes place at Split Rock Resort, which offers lodging. There are other lodging options in the area, too.

**LINEUP:** Kenny Neal, Buckwheat Zydeco, Ronnie Earl, Campbell Brothers, Mikey Junior's Blues Revue, Guy Davis, Blackburn, Toronzo Cannon, Delmark Chicago Revue, Zac Harmon, Harrison Kennedy.  
[pennsylvaniaibluesfestival.com](http://pennsylvaniaibluesfestival.com)

## Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival

*Boston, Massachusetts*  
Sept. 24

Jazz, Latin and blues artists pack three stages in Boston's South End for this one-day festival. In addition to the music, attendees can visit the instrument petting zoo and take a tour of the Lower Roxbury neighborhood, which was once a "jazz mecca." The theme of this year's fest is "Jazz: Peace Supreme."

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers have included Snarky Puppy, Danilo Pérez, Robert Glasper, Meshell Ndegeocello.  
[beantownjazz.org](http://beantownjazz.org)

## Pittsfield CityJazz Festival

*Pittsfield, Massachusetts*  
Oct. 7-16

The 12th annual Pittsfield CityJazz Festival is a signature cultural event of the Fall Foliage season in western Massachusetts. It features mainly acoustic jazz in a variety of settings. There are two ticketed events (headliners on Oct. 13-14), but all the other events are free. Participating venues have an audience capacity ranging from 50 to 750. The annual "jazz crawl" on Columbus Day weekend features the best of the area's jazz performers.

**LINEUP:** U.S. Army Jazz Ambassadors Big Band and others TBA; see website.  
[berkshiresjazz.org](http://berkshiresjazz.org)



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Susan Tedeschi, co-leader of the Tedeschi Trucks Band, at the 2015 edition of the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival



MICHAEL RIEBESHEL

## ROCHESTER BUILDS TO A CRESCENDO

The organizers of the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival want to knock you off your feet. “My goal, every year,” remarked John Nugent, founder, producer and artistic director of the festival, “is to make the audience feel they are part of something that is building to an incredible crescendo—similar to that of a jumbo jet roaring down the runway and then lifting into the sky.”

With this abiding mission in mind, Nugent assembles the expansive, star-studded lineup for the event, which celebrates its 15th anniversary edition from June 24 through July 2. A hugely successful endeavor, the fest turns this upstate New York city into a jazz mecca for nearly 200,000 fans. The enthusiasm of its patrons can be witnessed in a photograph taken last year depicting an aerial view of the massive crowd along Rochester’s East Avenue during a performance by Trombone Shorty.

The festival offers three tiers of participation, with venues all within walking distance of each other. Concerts by headliners take place in the 2,326-seat Kodak Hall on the campus of the Eastman School of Music. “Club series” shows—221 in total this year—are spread out among 13 venues, including the Lyric Theater and Montage Music Hall. And 93 free shows will be held on six outdoor stages.

Separate ticketing is required for the big Kodak Hall concerts (for artists such as Chris Botti, Chick Corea’s trio, the Joey Alexander Trio, Erykah Badu, Gregg Allman, Bruce Hornsby

and Grace Potter), while the “club” shows can be accessed with a festival-wide pass or tickets sold at the door. Nugent explained that more than 3,000 people purchased early bird discount passes at \$180 last October, generating enough revenue right off the bat that he could program the festival without financial worries.

The smaller shows offer a spectrum of sounds by artists from around the globe, with performances by John Abercrombie, Bruce Barth, Cyrille Aimée, Jacky Terrasson, Tord Gustavsen and Pedrito Martinez. There are also opportunities to see marquee artists in relatively intimate settings: John Scofield & Joe Lovano, Nicholas Payton, the Brecker Brothers Reunion Band and Catherine Russell. Roots Americana and world music artists abound across the festival schedule as well.

“I always say that the Rochester Jazz Festival isn’t about the performers who you know, it’s about those who you don’t know,” Nugent said. “We try to present something for everybody, and the best way to achieve this is to just find artists dedicated to a high level of creative music—in whatever style.”

Another key to the success of the festival is having an artistic director who knows the music business from both the bandstand and back office. Nugent—a saxophonist who still performs regularly—grew up in Newfoundland, Canada, studied music at the University of North Texas and spent a few years on the road with the Woody Herman Orchestra. He eventu-

ally started booking international tours for jazz artists and later enjoyed nine years at the helm of the Stockholm Jazz Festival.

After Nugent marshaled a well-received “trumpet summit” tour around the world in 2000, he visited Rochester with Jon Faddis for an educational workshop. During that visit, several local boosters urged him to return and institute a jazz festival to help the city’s economy. Nugent agreed, and using Finland’s Pori Jazz Festival as a template, he was able to align corporate sponsors, elected officials, financial backers and different venue owners to kick off a seven-day event that included Aretha Franklin, Dr. John and Norah Jones.

Sensing the festival’s potential, Nugent joined forces in late 2002 with Marc Iacona, a trumpet-playing local entrepreneur who serves as executive director and co-producer of the event. Together, they have seen the Rochester festival become a beacon of local pride and a summertime destination, generating more than \$140 million for the local economy over the past 14 years—thanks to a well-oiled team and more than 300 volunteers.

“Let’s face it: Rochester is not a major market, but John and Marc have worked to make the festival there one of the best around,” said Botti, who helped inaugurate the Rochester Jazz Festival in 2002 and has returned several times since then to perform. “To get something like this off the ground and have it catch wings is quite an accomplishment.” —Thomas Staudter

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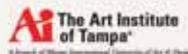
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Atlanta Jazz Festival



Clearwater Jazz Holiday

## French Quarter Festival

New Orleans, Louisiana

April 7-10

This festival is packed with brass bands of all shapes and sizes. A few members of jazz royalty will also performing. The 33rd running of the event will feature more than 1,700 musicians.

**LINEUP:** Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Tuba Skinny, Charmaine Neville, Delfeayo Marsalis & The Uptown Jazz Orchestra, Ellis Marsalis, Kermit Ruffins & The Barbecue Swingers, Hot Club of New Orleans, New Orleans Classic Jazz Orchestra, Corey Henry's Treme Funktet, The Dukes Of Dixieland,

The Dixie Cups, The Doghill Stompers.

[fqfi.org](http://fqfi.org)

## Jazzanooga Music Festival

Chattanooga, Tennessee

April 17-24

This festival presents events throughout the month of April, including an action-packed week April 17-24. Internationally renowned headline acts and local musicians come together for a full, fabulous month of music. Chattanooga is the hometown of legends Bessie Smith, Yusef Lateef and Lovie Austin.

**LINEUP:** Christian McBride Trio, Arturo O'Farrill,

Julian Lage, Chantae Cann, Julie Dexter.  
[jazzanooga.org](http://jazzanooga.org)

## Festival International de Louisiane

Lafayette, Louisiana  
April 20-24

Festival International de Louisiane is a community-based, non-profit arts organization that presents this music and arts event celebrating the French cultural heritage of south Louisiana. Admission is free for this fest in downtown Lafayette, which has been rolling along for 30 years.

**LINEUP:** Alpha Blondy & The Solar System, Chic Gamine, The Garifuna Collective, Daby Touré, Sonny Landreth, CharElie Couture, L'Union Creole (with Pascal Danece, Sunpie Barnes, Cedric Watson & Layla McCalla).  
[festivalinternational.org](http://festivalinternational.org)

## Jacksonville Jazz Festival

Jacksonville, Florida  
May 26-29

This free, Memorial Day weekend festival transforms 15 blocks of downtown Jacksonville into a jazz party with top acts performing on three stages. Over the course of three decades, this event has become one of the largest jazz festivals in the country, offering a fun and vibrant street festival atmosphere.

**LINEUP:** Snarky Puppy, Jon Batiste & Stay Human, Aaron Diehl Quartet featuring Warren Wolf, Benny Golson Quartet, Cyrille Aimée, Yellowjackets, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Charenée Wade, Jamison Ross, Dizzy Gillespie Afro-Cuban Experience, Generation Next.  
[jaxjazzfest.com](http://jaxjazzfest.com)

## Atlanta Jazz Festival

Atlanta, Georgia  
May 27-29

The 39th Annual Atlanta Jazz Festival is the great way to spend Memorial Day Weekend. World-class musicians will perform traditional, contemporary, Latin and hip-hop inspired jazz. Set in beautiful Piedmont Park, fans can shop for art, clothing and jewelry. Plus, there's great food. This free event is presented by the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.

**LINEUP:** Benny Golson, Eliane Elias, Gregory Porter, Jamison Ross, Hypnotic Brass Ensemble, others TBA.  
[atlantafestivals.com](http://atlantafestivals.com)

## Spoletto Festival USA

Charleston, South Carolina  
May 27-June 12

For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto fills Charleston's historic theaters, churches and outdoor spaces with performances by renowned artists as well as emerging performers in jazz, opera, theater, dance and chamber, symphonic and choral music. Spoleto Festival USA is internationally recognized as a premier performing arts festival.

**LINEUP:** Arturo O'Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Or-

chestra, Bohemian Trio, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Freddy Cole Quartet, Jason Moran Fats Waller Dance Party, Randy Weston African Rhythms Sextet, René Marie, Old Crow Medicine Show, Brandi Carlile, Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra.  
[spoletousa.org](http://spoletousa.org)

## Eureka Springs Blues Weekend

Eureka Springs, Arkansas  
June 16-19

Eureka Springs Blues Weekend has expanded to four days to present music all

around historic Eureka Springs. Performances range from Grammy-award winning headliner shows at Turpentine Creek to dance bands in dive bars in the heart of one of the coolest cities in America.

**LINEUP:** Alvin Youngblood Hart, Brick Fields, Damon Fowler, Divas on Fire, George Hunt, Ghost Town Blues Band, Hadden Sayers, Isayah's All Stars, Jimmy Wayne Garrett, John Calvin Brewer Band, The Cate Brothers, Trey Johnson & Jason Willmon.  
[eurekaspringsblues.com](http://eurekaspringsblues.com)



## W.C. Handy Music Festival

Florence, Alabama

July 22-31

With events spread across Muscle Shoals, Florence, Sheffield and Tuscumbia, Alabama, this festival features 10 days of national and regional acts. The event, named from the "Father of the Blues," encompasses a variety of genres and activities. Lineup: See website. Previous performers have included Bay City Brass Band, Fiddleworms, Mars Hill Jazz Band, Danny Gottlieb, Mojo Risin'.

[wchandyfestival.org](http://wchandyfestival.org)

## Satchmo SummerFest

New Orleans, Louisiana

Aug. 4-7

Satchmo SummerFest, which is dedicated to celebrating the life and music of Louis Armstrong, is back in 2016 for its 16th anniversary. The four-day event includes a wide swath of music, focusing on traditional jazz and brass bands. Festival attendees can load up on New Orleans cuisine and gain insight from Armstrong-centric seminars.

LINEUP: See website. Previous lineups have included the Brass-A-Holics, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Joe Lastie, Brass-A-Holics, John

Boutte, Evan Christopher, Charmaine Neville.

[fqfi.org/satchmo](http://fqfi.org/satchmo)

## Mighty Mississippi Music Festival

New Orleans, Louisiana

Sept. 30-Oct. 2

For four years, the Mighty Mississippi Music Festival has been offering Louisianans a fall festival filled with blues, bluegrass and country music. The event populates its two stages from a pool of nationally-known acts and regional musicians. Festival-goers can camp out for the weekend and participate in late-night jam sessions.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's lineup included Old Crow Medicine Show, Chris Stapleton, the Cedric Burnside Project, Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers, Cutty Rye.

[mightymississippimusicfestival.com](http://mightymississippimusicfestival.com)

## Amelia Island Jazz Festival

Fernandina Beach, Florida

Oct. 2-9

Every year, this festival brings exciting jazz to northeast Florida. Swing, bebop, Dixieland, big band and Latin performances are staged at several Amelia Island venues, including historic downtown Fernandina Beach, St. Michael's Church and the Omni Resorts. The festival's artistic director is Les DeMerle.

LINEUP: Houston Person, Bria Skonberg, Dynamic Les DeMerle Band with Bonnie Eisele.

[ameliaislandjazzfestival.com](http://ameliaislandjazzfestival.com)

## Clearwater Jazz Holiday

Clearwater, Florida

Oct. 13-16

Over the course of 36 years, what started as a series of jazz concerts held on the back of a flatbed truck and at venues around the City of Clearwater has evolved into an annual, acclaimed, international music festival that draws tens of thousands of visitors to scenic Coachman Park.

LINEUP: See website. Previous editions have presented Herbie Hancock, Trombone Shorty, Esperanza Spalding, Marcus Roberts, Christian McBride, Bonnie Raitt.

[clearwaterjazz.com](http://clearwaterjazz.com)



**Jon Batiste and Stay Human**  
**Charenée Wade Snarky Puppy**  
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# MIDWEST

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Detroit Jazz Festival

## Ravinia Festival

Highland Park, Illinois  
June 2–Sept. 18

Located north of Chicago in Highland Park, Ravinia offers reserved, covered seating as well as general admission tickets for the spacious lawn area. During this year's season at Ravinia, blues icon Buddy Guy returns in a duo performance with fellow guitar wizard Jeff Beck. Special performances include a Father's Day celebration of Nat King Cole (by pianist Ramsey Lewis and guitarist John

Pizzarelli) as well as pianist Monty Alexander's tribute to Tony Bennett (who will also appear at the fest). Chick Corea will perform with his trio and with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

**LINEUP:** Tony Bennett, Bob Dylan, Mavis Staples, Chick Corea, Joey Alexander, Chris Botti, Dan Tepfer & Ben Wendel, Bonnie Raitt, Buddy Guy & Jeff Beck, Seth MacFarlane, Paul Simon, Diana Ross, John Fogerty, Lisa Fischer & Grand Baton, The Commodores, Seal, Lyle Lovett & His Large Band, Chic featuring Nile Rodgers, Patti LaBelle, Warren Haynes & the Ravinia Festival Orchestra present "The Jerry Garcia Symphonic Celebration."

[ravinia.org](http://ravinia.org)



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[elkhartjazzfestival.com](http://elkhartjazzfestival.com) **downbeat**  
Trombone Shorty and Orleans Avenue  
Joshua Redman Quartet

## Glenn Miller Festival

Clarinda, Iowa  
June 9–12

Fans of traditional jazz can enjoy four days of events, including a music scholarship competition, concerts by bands from across the United States and around the world, historical displays, lectures and panel discussions, a vendor market, picnics and big band breakfasts, and a free concert on the town square.

**LINEUP:** The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra, Tom Daugherty Orchestra, The Tamana Girls High School Band, Swing Esquire Orchestra, USAF Shades of Blue Jazz Ensemble, Adam Swanson, Glenn Miller Birthplace Society Big Band.

[glennmiller.org](http://glennmiller.org)

## Chicago Blues Festival

Chicago, Illinois  
June 10–12

The world's largest free blues festival showcases performers each June on five stages in Chicago's Grant Park. This year's fest will celebrate the legacies of Otis Rush and Chicago's Alligator Records.

**LINEUP:** Shemekia Copeland, Jimmy Johnson, Toronzo Cannon, Fred Wesley & The New J.B.'s, Irma Thomas, Tommy Castro & The Painkillers, Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters, Ed-die "The Chief" Clearwater, Carl Weathersby, Lurie Bell.

[chicagobluesfestival.us](http://chicagobluesfestival.us)

## Summer Solstice Jazz Festival

East Lansing, Michigan  
June 17–18

This fest is celebrating 20 years of the best in local, regional and

national talent. The SSJF is a free event featuring a traditional New Orleans-style second-line parade, an avant-garde jazz picnic and children's activities, with artistic direction by Rodney Whitaker.

**LINEUP:** Karrin Allyson, Ben Williams Quartet featuring Jazzmeia Horn, Marcus Roberts, Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra with Edye Evans Hyde, Michael Dease's Trombone Summit, The Chicago Jazz Orchestra, Gary Motley & Barbara Morrison, Gabriel Brass Band, Lydia Harrell, Bobby Murray Band, Tumbao Bravo, Lady Sunshine and The X Band.  
[eljazzfest.com](http://eljazzfest.com)

### **Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland** Cleveland, Ohio June 23-25

The 37th edition of the Tri-C JazzFest features ticketed indoor events and free outdoor music in Playhouse Square, Cleveland's beautifully restored theater district. Opening night is an 80th birthday concert for Tommy LiPuma featuring Diana Krall, Leon Russell, Dr. John, Al Jarreau and the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra. Terence Blanchard is the artist in residence.

**LINEUP:** Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride & Brian Blade), Cubanismo!, David Sanborn & Maceo Parker, Melissa Aldana & Rosa Passos, Terence Blanchard's E Collective, Dominick Farinacci, BWB, Lalah Hathaway, Brian Culbertson, Big Sam's Funky Nation.  
[tri-cjazzfest.com](http://tri-cjazzfest.com)

### **Twin Cities Jazz Festival** St. Paul, Minnesota June 23-25

The Twin Cities Jazz Festival, established in 1998, is a non-profit organization, with a mission to keep the art of jazz alive and well in the Twin Cities. Held on four stages, the festival hosts the biggest names in jazz, and is one of the largest free, civic events in the upper Midwest, attracting more than 35,000 jazz fans to downtown St. Paul.

**LINEUP:** Ellis Marsalis, Delfeayo Marsalis, Russell Malone, John Pizzarelli, Michael Franti.  
[hotsummerjazz.com](http://hotsummerjazz.com)

### **Elkhart Jazz Festival** Elkhart, Indiana June 24-26

Fans can "set summer to music" at the 29th annual Elkhart Jazz Festival, with three days of music on six stages. This year's festival, an Indiana Bicentennial Legacy event, celebrates Hoosier contributions to the world of jazz—including tributes to Cole Porter and Wes Montgomery.

**LINEUP:** Joshua Redman Quartet, Joan Collaso & The Larry Hanks Trio, Kris Brownlee, Rebecca Kilgore, Rica Obsesion & The Gene Knific Trio, BMR4, The Rad Trads, Blair Clark, Derek Brown BEATBoXSAX, Frank Russell & Elizabeth Mis.  
[elkhartjazzfest.com](http://elkhartjazzfest.com)

### **Mississippi Valley Blues Festival** Davenport, Iowa July 1-2

For 30 years, volunteers of the Mississippi Valley Blues Society have been presenting this lively festival held in LeClaire Park on the banks of the Mississippi River. The 31st edition offers a variety of blues styles in a down-home atmosphere.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers included George Thorogood, Tinsley Ellis, Savoy Brown, Deanna Bogart, Roy Bookbinder, Doug Deming & The Jewel Tones.  
[mvbs.org/fest](http://mvbs.org/fest)

### **Iowa City Jazz Festival** Iowa City, Iowa July 1-3

This free, three-day outdoor festival in the heart of Iowa City features



The poster for the Iowa City Jazz Festival 2016 features a stylized graphic of a hand holding a baton. The main title "IOWA CITY JAZZ FESTIVAL 2016" is prominently displayed in yellow and blue. Below the title, the dates "JULY 1, 2, 3" and "UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PENTACREST FREE ADMISSION" are listed. A list of performing artists includes Poncho Sanchez and His Latin Jazz Band, David Berkman Sextet, Vijay Iyer Trio, Miguel Zenón Quartet, Allison Miller's Boom Tic Boom, Marquis Hill Blacktet, Edmar Castaneda Trio, Akiko Tsuruga, Larry Fuller Trio, Phil Hey Quartet, Damani Phillips Trio, United Jazz Ensemble, and North Corridor Jazz All Stars. Logos for "SUMMER OF THE ARTS" and "UOI COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION" are also present, along with the website "WWW.SUMMEROFHEARTS.ORG".

music on multiple stages across the scenic University of Iowa campus. Food, fireworks and jazz in local clubs round out the fest, which draws over 50,000 fans annually.

**LINEUP:** Vjay Iyer Trio, Miguel Zenón Quartet, Poncho Sanchez, Alison Miller's Boom Tic Boom, Marquis Hill Blacktet, David Berkman Sextet, Edmar Castaneda Trio, Larry Fuller Trio, Phil Hey Quartet, Damani Philips Trio, United Jazz Ensemble, North Corridor Jazz All-Stars, Akiko Tsuruga.

[summerofthearts.org](http://summerofthearts.org)

## Sioux Falls Jazz and Blues Festival

*Sioux Falls, South Dakota*  
July 14-16

The Sioux Falls Jazz and Blues Festival celebrates its 25th year with three days of free entertainment. Featuring music on two stages, the festival also includes food and art vendors, beer and wine gardens, arts and crafts, a 5K run/walk and fireworks.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past headliners include the Neville Brothers, Joe Walsh, Gary Clark Jr., Gov't Mule, Grace Potter, Boz Scaggs, Los Lobos, The Rippingtons.

[jazzfestsiouxfalls.com](http://jazzfestsiouxfalls.com)

## Jazz & Rib Fest

*Columbus, Ohio*  
July 22-24

Columbus' Jazz & Rib Fest has been delivering jazz and rib connoisseurs the finest in music

and barbeque for more than 30 years. This year's fest will feature a diverse lineup of local, regional and international jazz artists on three stages, while barbecue pit masters serve sizzling ribs, chicken and more.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included Terence Blanchard, Brian Culbertson, Earl Klugh, The Soul Rebels, Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Jessy J.

[hottribscooljazz.org](http://hottribscooljazz.org)

## Prairie Dog Blues Festival

*Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin*  
July 29-30

The Prairie Dog Blues Festival is held every year on historic St. Feriole Island, located right on the Mississippi River and nestled between jagged cliffs and green hills. Featured acts perform blues of all sorts—Chicago, Delta, West Coast and much more.

**LINEUP:** Moreland & Arbuckle, Danielle Nicole, Davina & The Vagabonds, Davy Knowles, Devon Allman, Girls with Guitars, Home, Jimmy Nick, Larry McCray, Owen Campbell, Reneé Austin, Sugaray Rayford Band, The Katz Sass.

[prairiedogblues.com](http://prairiedogblues.com)

## Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival

*Bettendorf, Iowa*  
Aug. 4-7

The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival, which this year moves to its new location at the Isle of Capri Hotel and Convention Center, celebrates the musical accomplishments of the cornetist, pianist and composer. Beiderbecke (1903-'31) was born in Davenport, Iowa. Known as "Bix Bash," this fest draws thousands of fans from around the world.

**LINEUP:** Randy Sandke & Dick Hyman,

Dan Levinson's Six Shades of Bix, Dave Bennett Quartet, the Graystone Monarchs, the Rock Island Roustabouts, Miss Jubilee & Her Humdingers.

[bixsociety.org](http://bixsociety.org)

## Lansing JazzFest

*Lansing, Michigan*  
Aug. 5-6

Filling the streets of historic Old Town, this festival features free outdoor concerts on three stages, plus children's activities in the hands-on KidzBeat area. Attendees can find great food and shopping at the vendor court.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers include Austin Howard, Betty Joplin, Chris Lawrence & Linosphere, Dot Org, Endea Owens, Fareed Haque's MathGames, Tony Monaco/Fareed Haque Trio featuring Randy Gelispie.

[jazzlansing.com](http://jazzlansing.com)

## Uptown Jazz & Blues Festival

*Lafayette, Indiana*  
Aug. 27

Established in 2005, this festival has quickly become one of the premier music festivals in Indiana. With nine bands on three stages, the festival features music from local and national artists. Local brews and eateries add to the evening's hip, upscale vibe.

**LINEUP:** Tizer Quartet featuring Eric Marienthal, Liquid Soul, Naughty Professor, Michael Kelsey, The Claudettes, Jason Wells Band, Tuxedo Junction, Caitlin Cotten Combo, Brent Laidler & The Dream Team.

[ujbf.org](http://ujbf.org)

## Chicago Jazz Festival

*Chicago, IL*  
Sept. 1-4



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A favorite Labor Day Weekend tradition, the Chicago Jazz Festival showcases free live performances by Chicago's vast jazz talent alongside national and international jazz artists. The 38th annual event will feature four days of music on up to four stages—including the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included Muhal Richard Abrams' Experimental Band, José James, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Henry Butler & Steven Bernstein.  
[chicagojazzfestival.us](http://chicagojazzfestival.us)

 **Detroit Jazz Festival**  
*Detroit, Michigan*  
 Sept. 2-5

Now in its 37th year, the annual Detroit Jazz Festival is the world's largest free jazz festival, attracting world-class musicians and fans from across the globe. A year-round endeavor, the festival promotes music education in schools, and it creates unique musical events for Detroit-area students. This year's artist-in-residence is bassist Ron Carter.

**LINEUP:** Ron Carter, Jason Moran, John Scofield, Brad Mehldau, Mark Guiliana, Roy Hargrove, George Benson, Freddy Cole, Randy Weston, Terri Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project, Chris Potter Underground Orchestra, Roberta Gambarini & Jimmy Heath, Luciana Souza, Marcus Roberts.  
[detroitjazzfest.com](http://detroitjazzfest.com)

**World Music Festival**  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
 Sept. 9-25

This citywide, multi-venue festival has presented more than 600 artists and ensembles from over 80 countries since it began in 1999. It attracts more than 65,000 concertgoers each year.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Red Baraat, La Santa Cecilia, Mahmoud Ahmed, Aziz Sahmaoui & University of Gnawa, Orlando Julius & The AfroSoundz, Tal National, L. Subramaniam & Fareed Ayaz, Abu Muhammad Qawwal & Brothers.  
[worldmusicfestivalchicago.org](http://worldmusicfestivalchicago.org)

**Michigan BluesFest**  
*Lansing, Michigan*  
 Sept. 16-17

This free outdoor festival has been pleasing blues fans for more than two decades. Set in the heart of Lansing's charming Old Town district, the two-day festival features great music on three stages, plus children's activities, an expansive beverage tent and food and crafts vendors.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Toronzo Cannon, Acme Jam, Thornetta Davis, The Rotations, Matchette & Frog, The 89th Key, Red Herring, Joel Mabus, Good Cookies.  
[michiganbluesfest.com](http://michiganbluesfest.com)

**Hyde Park Jazz Festival**  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
 Sept. 24-25

At the Hyde Park Jazz Festival, jazz fans can enjoy 18 hours of free, nonstop jazz played over two days inside museums, art galleries and architecturally significant venues in the greater Hyde Park area. The fest celebrates jazz's great legacy and bright future on Chicago's South Side.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers include Amrbose Akinmusire, Regina Carter, Henry Threadgill, Whirlpool with Ron Miles, Tomeka Reid, Dana Hall, Laurence Hobgood.  
[hydeparkjazzfestival.org](http://hydeparkjazzfestival.org)

 **Edgefest**  
*Ann Arbor, Michigan*  
 Oct. 26-29

Kerrytown Concert House celebrates the 20th anniversary of Edgefest, its award-winning annual avant-garde jazz festival, featuring an international roster of distinguished and groundbreaking performers.

**LINEUP:** Wadada Leo Smith & John Lindberg, Craig Taborn, David Torn, John Hollenbeck & The Claudia Quintet, Myra Melford's Snowy Egret, William Parker, Conference Call Quartet, Jason Kao Hwang's Burning Bridge, Ingrid Laubrock Sextet, Kris Davis Quartet.  
[kerrytownconcerthouse.com](http://kerrytownconcerthouse.com)

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Chick Corea

Terence Blanchard's E-Collective

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Telluride Jazz Festival

RYAN BONNEAU



Larry Fuller (left), Russell Malone, John Clayton, Howard Levy and Herlin Riley at the Vail Jazz Party



Jazz Aspen Snowmass

# COLORADO JAZZ GETAWAYS

By Yoshi Kato

Among Colorado's beautiful tourist destinations, Vail, Aspen and Telluride host long-running jazz festivals with colorful histories and singular artistic directors.

Before retiring, Howard Stone was a real estate lawyer in Southern California who was a regular supporter of the late Dick Gibson's jazz parties. A visit to Vail with his wife in the summer of 1968 sold him on the area, and in 1995 he founded Vail Jazz, inspired in part by Gibson's communally spirited concerts.

A Washington, D.C.-based pianist and accompanist in the late '70s and '80s, Jim Horowitz had his "aha moment" while attending his first Jazz in Marciac festival. The remote and picturesque French setting was the ideal environment for an annual music celebration, and in Aspen he found a Stateside analog. He relocated there and launched the inaugural Jazz Aspen Snowmass (JAS), then known as Jazz Aspen, in 1991.

Paul Machado, in turn, worked his way up to his current position at the Telluride Jazz Festival. A drummer and percussionist who once toured with alto saxophonist Richie Cole, he began as a volunteer before serving as the festival's stage manager for three years and then taking the reins in 1991. Machado, who serves as town manager of nearby Ophir, reckons he's the only executive director to plow snow in the morning for his day job prior to working on festival business.

Vail Jazz and Jazz Aspen Snowmass present concerts throughout the summer and win-

ter. The latter's JAS Café series takes place over eight winter and six summer weekends, while Vail Jazz produces or co-hosts four series of local indoor and outdoor concerts from late June through early September.

But whether one is heading to Vail, Aspen or Telluride, the flagship events for all three come in glorious festival form.

The JAS June Experience begins June 23 with an indoor concert at the Aspen Art Museum by Grammy-winning vocalist and songwriter Gregory Porter. Rock & Roll Hall of Fame member Diana Ross makes her JAS debut the following night at its signature Benedict Music Tent.

"There's always been an appetite for stars here," said Horowitz, citing B.B. King and Tony Bennett as previous headliners. "From the very, very early days the booking philosophy here was to be diverse, genre-wise—a definite jazz presence but with a wide palette of talent and genres."

Singer-songwriter Sheryl Crow plays the JAS big tent on June 25, followed by bassist Marcus Miller and organist Booker T. Jones the next day. Trumpeter/vocalist Bria Skonberg, a rising star on the New York jazz scene, starts the next extended weekend of live music on June 30 with the first of two consecutive nights at The Little Nell boutique hotel's JAS Café Downstairs @ The Nell. Motown legend Smokey Robinson closes out the June Experience at the Benedict Music Tent on July 2.

The Telluride Jazz Festival celebrates its

40th edition with a star-studded event Aug. 5–7. This year's guest of honor is New Orleans pianist/singer/songwriter Jon Cleary, who will lead his own Absolute Monster Gentlemen band and also perform in a duo with guitarist John Scofield.

Telluride has long had ties to the Crescent City's musical heritage, as witnessed this year by the Cleary bookings as well as the inclusion of the Rebirth Brass Band, Galactic and Kermit Ruffins & The Barbecue Swingers.

"We've even done a New Orleans Day to close out the festival for the past four years," Machado said. "There's a second-line parade at noon, and the whole town comes out in costume and with floats."

Other Telluride acts this year include Lisa Fischer & Grand Baton, Marcus Miller, Jeff Coffin & The Mu'tet and Sobredosis del Sabor. Additionally, student bands will perform.

"We've kept our jazz roots," said Machado, noting that Dizzy Gillespie and the Glenn Miller Orchestra played at the first Telluride festival back in 1977. "But we've expanded [to include more] Latin, soul and r&b."

The Vail Jazz Party is held over an extended Labor Day weekend of Sept. 1–5. Done in the jazz party tradition, soloists mix and match with rhythm sections and small-ensemble house bands in an organized jam-session manner. Some of this year's guests include vocalist Mary Stallings, clarinetist Ken Peplowski and trumpeter Byron Stripling.

It's also the culmination of the 10-day Vail



Tony Bennett in Aspen



DOMINIQUE TAYLOR

Cyrille Aimée (left) and Michael Valeanu in Vail



Fans in Aspen

Jazz Workshop (VJW) program in which a dozen high school students are given full scholarships to study with the all-star faculty: trumpeter Terrell Stafford, trombonist Wycliffe Gordon, saxophonist Dick Oatts, pianist Bill Cunliffe, bassist and workshop director John Clayton and drummer Lewis Nash. VJW alumni include keyboardist Robert Glasper (class of 1997), trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire (class of 2000) and drummer Marcus Gilmore (class of 2002).

“After teaching for a week and being in the trenches, it’s great for us faculty members to let off steam and play when the [Jazz Party] weekend arrives,” Nash said. “And then the students have a chance to play and also interact with all the professionals.”

Given the idyllic surroundings of all three festivals, there are plenty of extra-musical attractions for patrons and their travelling partners. As family-friendly resort areas, Vail, Aspen and Telluride offer a wide variety of low-key and upscale non-festival options.

“People used to be [in Vail] just to fish and hike and ski in the winter,” Stone said. “With the graying of Vail—as well as a lot of other places—more people want to hear and see theater, music and dance. But there are still those great outdoor activities, of course.”

“Telluride is a recreational capital,”

Machado said. “There’s lots of hiking and biking. And the San Juan Mountains in the southwest corner of Colorado is probably the most undeveloped and beautiful portion of the lower Rockies.”

“A typical [JAS] attendee will have a very full day here that may include outdoor activities in the morning or afternoon, such as hiking, golf or tennis,” Horowitz said. “The weather is just perfect for it—dry and in the mid-70s.”

Aspen has classical music, ballet, theater and museum offerings as well as its famed Aspen Institute, Horowitz pointed out. “It was originally known as a ski resort, but it’s become a big center of culture during the summer,” he said. “There isn’t [another] town with a population of 5,000 that has five major not-for-profit organizations.”

During other summer weekends, Telluride hosts festivals devoted to the likes of “art + architecture,” chamber music, theater, hot air ballooning, wine, food and the blues. Gravity Play in Mountain Village also has activities for children, including a bungee trampoline and a ropes course.

The Colorado Ski Museum helps Vail visitors explore the area’s resort and competitive training roots. Epic Discovery at Vail Mountain boasts zip lines, gondola tours and a coaster ride that whisks individuals through the for-

est on tracked sleds. There’s also fine dining at Chef Nobu Matsuhisa’s Matsuhisa restaurant and adventurous eating and optional bowling at böl.

Vail and Aspen are about 125 miles and 225 miles from Denver International Airport, respectively. Local airports also serve both destinations: Eagle County Regional Airport for Vail and Aspen-Pitney County Airport for Aspen. Telluride is accessible from Montrose Regional Airport.

All three fest destinations offer multi-day passes. There are festival discounts with partner hotels for all three cities and car rental or shuttle discounts for Vail Jazz attendees. The Telluride Festival also has a camping option.

In addition to enviable locales, the Colorado festivals also share an aesthetic of being medium-sized events. The tent at JAS can accommodate veritable rock stars but remains at a relatively intimate 2,050-seat capacity. Its indoor venues are in the vein of a traditional jazz club.

“We’re not Newport or Monterey and will never be,” Stone said of Vail Jazz. “That’s not our goal.”

“Other local festivals, like the Telluride Film or Bluegrass festivals, have about 12,000 guests,” Machado said. “We attract around 3,000, but it suits who we are and what we’ve become.”

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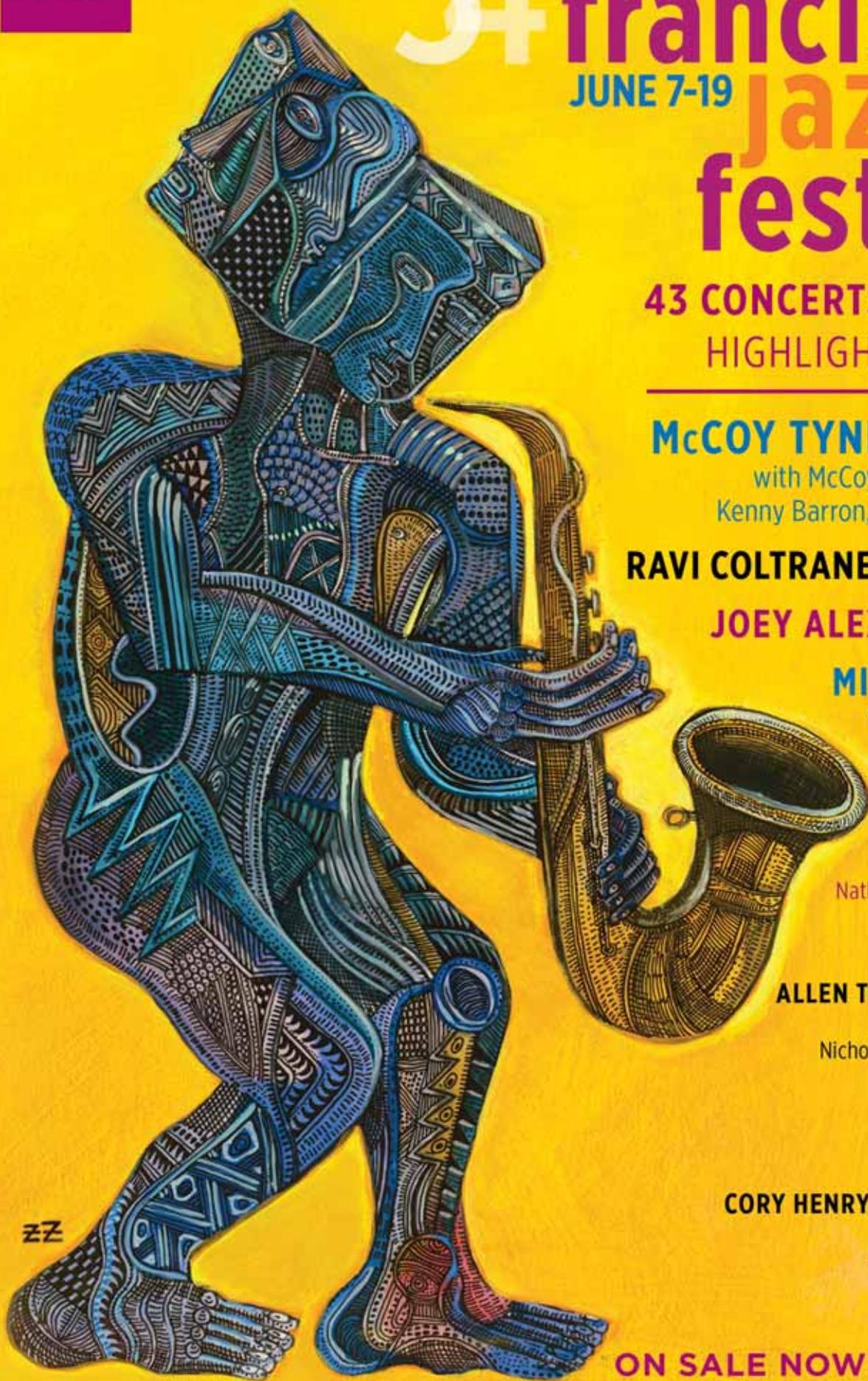
**CLAUDIA QUINTET**

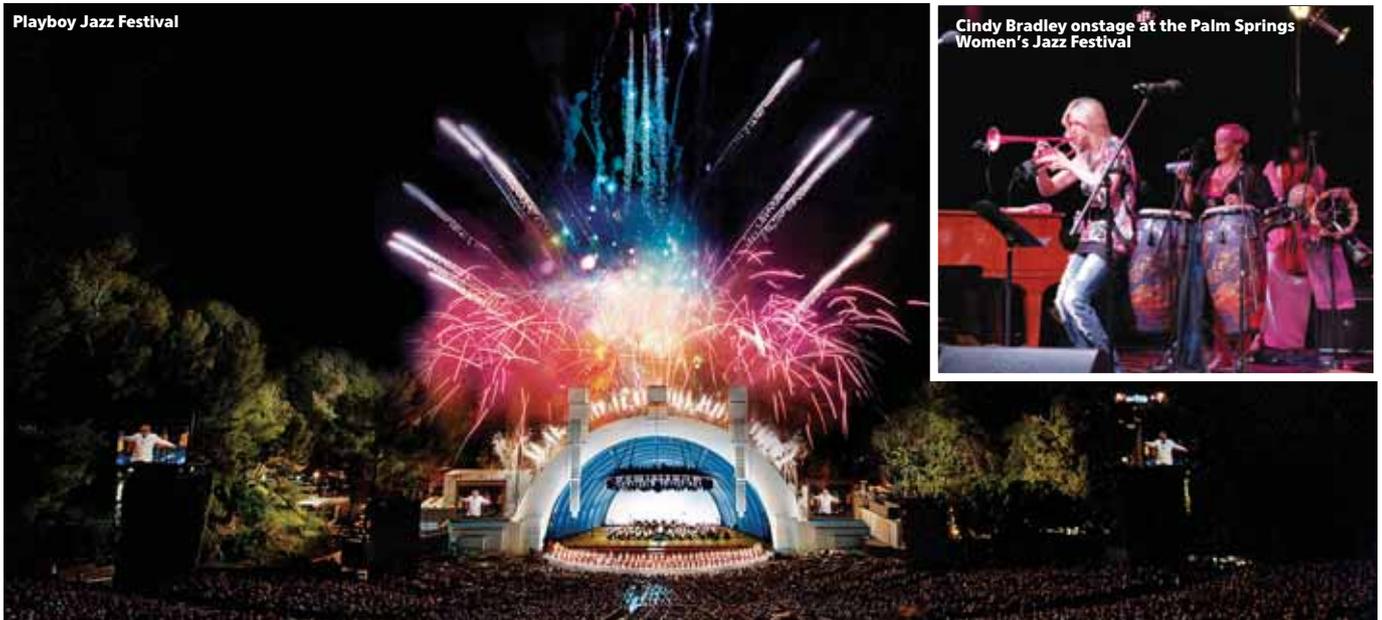
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## UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival

*Greeley, Colorado*

April 21-23

UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival is the largest event of its kind in the nation, bringing together internationally recognized artists, jazz enthusiasts, award-winning clinicians and student groups. Each year thousands of participants enjoy main stage concerts, after-hours sessions, daytime performances and educational workshops.

**LINEUP:** Ellis Marsalis Trio, Joey DeFrancesco, Houston Person, Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra, New York Voices and Tamir Hendelman.

[uncjazzfest.com](http://uncjazzfest.com)

## Reno Jazz Festival

*Reno, Nevada*

April 28-30

For more than 50 years the Reno Jazz Festival has been a showcase for some of the country's most talented and promising student musicians. The festival hosts competitions and clinics, with performances and workshops given by some of the best musicians on today's jazz scene.

**LINEUP:** Snarky Puppy, Lage Lund with The Collective, more TBA.

[unr.edu/rjf](http://unr.edu/rjf)

## Juneau Jazz & Classics Festival

*Juneau, Alaska*

May 6-21

The 30th annual edition of this festival includes 16 days of live performances of jazz, classical and blues in different settings and venues around Juneau.

**LINEUP:** Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn, Mavis Staples, Carolyn Wonderland, Third Coast Percussion Violinist Roman Kim, Richard Dowling, Vega String Quartet, Evan Drachman, Linda Rosenthal, Paul Rosenthal, Maxim Pakhomov.

[jazzandclassics.org](http://jazzandclassics.org)

## Ballard Jazz Festival

*Seattle, Washington*

May 11-14

Four days of music takes place in 15 performance venues, including concerts, educational events and the popular Swedish Pancake Jazz Brunch. The Ballard Jazz Walk incorporates 17 groups in eight venues with fans moving from club to club soaking in all styles of jazz.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included Eric Alexander, Peter Bernstein, David Friesen and Lucas Pino with the No Net Nonet.

[ballardjazzfestival.com](http://ballardjazzfestival.com)

## Sacramento Music Festival

*Sacramento, California*

May 27-30

This festival was born in 1974 as the "Old Sacramento Dixieland Jazz Jubilee." Over the last 43 years, the festival has evolved to include many other styles of music, such as zydeco, Latin, country and bluegrass, along with the classic

**LINEUP:** Austin Morgan, Banu Gibson, Beth Duncan Quintet, Caravanserai, Clint Baker's Hot Five, Crescent Katz, Dave Bennett & Memphis Speed Kings, Fulton Street Jazz Band, Greg Varlotta, Jimmy Pailer & The Prophets, Joy & Madness, Lisa Haley & the Zydekats, Midnight Rose Jazz Band, Paolo Alderighi, Pablo Cruise, Todd Morgan & The Emblems, Tom Rigney & Flambeau, Wonder Bread 5, Zydeco Flames.

[sacmusicfest.com](http://sacmusicfest.com)

## Bellevue Jazz & Blues Festival

*Bellevue, Washington*

June 1-5

This multi-venue festival features headlining ticketed jazz concerts along with free performances by top regional artists at locations throughout downtown Bellevue.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past artists include Branford Marsalis, Charles Lloyd, Terence Blanchard, Dianne Reeves, Poncho Sanchez, Bill Frisell, Hubert Laws, Mingus Big Band.

[bellevuedowntown.com](http://bellevuedowntown.com)

## Newport Beach Jazz Festival

*Newport Beach, California*

June 3-6

Music fans can celebrate the beginning of June with three spectacular days of jazz, soul and r&b music. Attendees can expect a weekend of music, food and fun at the Bayside Resort.

**LINEUP:** Michael McDonald, Brian Culbertson, Peter White, Paul Taylor, Euge

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Flutist Nicole Mitchell (center) onstage at the Angel City Jazz Festival

Groove, Stephanie Mills, Average White Band, Gerald Albright, Jonathan Butler.  
[festivals.hyattconcerts.com](http://festivals.hyattconcerts.com)

**Healdsburg Jazz Festival**  
Healdsburg, California  
June 3-12

The 18th annual Healdsburg Jazz Festival brings a wide array of jazz styles to Sonoma County's beautiful country, located 65 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge. This intimate 10-day festival presents concerts in wineries, theaters, outdoor parks and restaurants. This year's edition features a two-day Billy Hart Retrospective with Ethan Iverson, Ben Street and Mark Turner.

**LINEUP:** Quest with Dave Liebman, Ron McClure & Richie Bierach, Dave Holland, Joshua Redman, Oliver Lake, Eddie Henderson, Chris Potter, Julian Lage Trio, Fred Hersch & Anat Cohen Duo, Joey Alexander Trio, Claire Daly Quintet, Charlie Hunter Trio.  
[healdsburgjazz.org](http://healdsburgjazz.org)

**San Francisco Jazz Festival**  
San Francisco, California  
June 7-19

The 34th annual San Francisco Jazz Festival presents an eclectic lineup of legendary performers and up-and-coming artists from around the Bay Area and around the world. There are 25 concerts over 12 days taking place at the SFJAZZ Center's Robert N. Miner Auditorium, Joe Henderson Lab, Davies Symphony Hall and Herbst Theatre.  
**LINEUP:** McCoy Tyner Tribute with Chick Corea, Kenny Barron, Marcus Roberts, Benny Green & Taylor Eigsti, Joe Lovano with McCoy Tyner, Joey Alexander, Ravi Coltrane, Brian Blade, Roy Ayers, Fourplay, Cory Henry, Stanton Moore, Nicholas Payton, Cyril Neville, Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band, Bria Skonberg.  
[sfjazz.org](http://sfjazz.org)

**Greeley Blues Jam**  
Greeley, Colorado  
June 10-11

The Greeley Blues Jam begins on Friday with family-friendly entertainment, and the party continues in bars and venues throughout downtown Greeley. Saturday's events take place at nearby Island Grove arena with two stages and over 10 hours of continuous music, multiple merchandise and food vendors. Kids can learn about the blues and get a free harmonica at the Blues 101 Stage.

**LINEUP:** Charlie Musselwhite, Tommy Castro & The Pain Killers, Jason Ricci & The Bad Kind, North Mississippi Allstars, Davy Knowles, Chubby Carrier, John Primer with The Delta Sonics, Hazel Miller, Lionel Young Band, Chris Daniels & The Kings, Rex Peoples & X Factr, Jaden Carlson.  
[greeleybluesjam.com](http://greeleybluesjam.com)

**Playboy Jazz Festival**  
Los Angeles, California  
June 11-12

The Los Angeles Philharmonic Association will present the 38th annual Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl. As always, the festival will feature an emerging generation of jazz artists as well as superstars of the genre. Blues fans will want to see the Robert Cray Band honor B.B. King in a special performance with guests Sonny Landreth and Roy Gaines. The festival will be hosted by George Lopez.

**LINEUP:** Cécile McLorin Salvant, Robert Cray, Jon Batiste & Stay Human, Seth MacFarlane, Fourplay, Janelle Monáe, Pete Escovedo Orchestra featuring Sheila E., Juan & Peter Michael, Joey Alexander, The Bad Plus Joshua Redman, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Javon Jackson & Sax Appeal with guests Jimmy Heath, George Cables, Peter Washington & Willie Jones III.  
[hollywoodbowl.com/playboyjazz](http://hollywoodbowl.com/playboyjazz)

**Jazz at the Bowl**  
Los Angeles, California  
June 18-Sept. 17

A beloved institution, Jazz at the Bowl once again presents stars from the worlds of jazz and the blues, guided by the Los Angeles Phil-

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## JAZZ AT THE BOWL



### JUN 11 - Playboy Jazz Festival

Jon Batiste & Stay Human  
Seth MacFarlane  
Cécile McLorin Salvant  
The Bad Plus Joshua Redman  
Joey Alexander Trio  
John Beasley's MONK'estra  
and many others

### JUN 12 - Playboy Jazz Festival

Fourplay Silver Anniversary  
Janelle Monáe  
The Robert Cray Band  
Celebrates B.B. King with special guests  
Pete Escovedo Orchestra  
featuring Sheila E., Juan and Peter Michael  
Javon Jackson and Sax Appeal  
featuring Jimmy Heath  
Christian Scott  
and many others

### JUL 20

Yes We Can Can: An Allen Toussaint Salute  
Dr. John & The Nite Trippers  
The Allen Toussaint Band  
Irma Thomas and Cyril Neville, special guests  
Galactic

### AUG 3

Gladys Knight  
Tower Of Power

### AUG 10

50 Years of Jeff Beck  
special guest Beth Hart plus other surprise guests  
Buddy Guy

### AUG 12/13

An Olympic Carnival with  
Sergio Mendes & 50 Years of Brasil '66  
Herb Alpert and Lani Hall, special guests  
Dianne Reeves and Romero Lubambo,  
special guests  
Hollywood Bowl Orchestra  
Thomas Wilkins, conductor  
Viver Brasil

### AUG 17

The Ultimate Tribute to Ray Charles  
starring Maceo Parker  
featuring a tribute to The Ray Charles Orchestra  
also featuring a tribute to The Raelettes  
Christian McBride Big Band  
Philip Bailey, special guest

### AUG 24

Mega Nova featuring Herbie Hancock,  
Wayne Shorter, Cindy Blackman Santana,  
Marcus Miller and Carlos Santana  
Booker T - Stax Revue

### AUG 28 - Smooth Summer Jazz

George Benson  
Average White Band  
Jeff Lorber Fusion  
To Grover, with Love  
featuring Jason Miles

### AUG 31

The Academy Celebrates  
The Black Movie Soundtrack II  
Marcus Miller  
plus special guests to be announced  
Craig Robinson, host  
Hollywood Bowl Orchestra  
Vince Mendoza, conductor

### SEP 7

Carlos Vives

### SEP 14

Sing the Truth  
plus  
A Tribute to Natalie Cole  
starring  
Patti Austin, Dee Dee Bridgewater,  
Terri Lyne Carrington, Judith Hill & Ledisi  
Freddy Cole, special guest

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Programs, artists, prices and dates subject to change



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Terrell Stafford · Joel Frahm · Bobby Floyd... and more!

harmonic Association's Creative Chair for Jazz, Herbie Hancock. This year's edition features a tribute to pianist Allen Toussaint featuring Dr. John & The Nite Trippers and a celebration of Ray Charles starring Maceo Parker and the Christian McBride Big Band. Another key highlight will be The Academy Celebrates Black Movie Soundtrack II with Marcus Miller.

**LINEUP:** Steely Dan, Dr. John & The Nite Trippers and The Allen Toussaint Band, Gladys Knight, Tower of Power, Jeff Beck with Beth Hart, Maceo Parker & the Christian McBride Big Band with Philip Bailey, Mega Nova featuring Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Cindy Blackman Santana, Marcus Miller & Carlos Santana, Booker T. Stax Revue.

[hollywoodbowl.com](http://hollywoodbowl.com)

## Jazz Aspen Snowmass June Experience

*Aspen, Colorado*  
June 23-July 2

The Jazz Aspen Snowmass June Experience takes place during a two-week period, with opening performances headlining three nights at the intimate Benedict Music Tent on the Aspen Music Festival Grounds. A free lawn party on the music festival grounds takes place each evening prior to the main stage acts, with music, food and more. Additional concerts take place during the two weeks at two local venues, culminating in a closing collaboration concert with the Aspen Music Festival and School.

**LINEUP:** Diana Ross, Sheryl Crow, Booker T. Jones/Marcus Miller, Gregory Porter, Smokey Robinson.  
[jazzaspensnowmass.org](http://jazzaspensnowmass.org)

## Vail Jazz Festival

*Vail, Colorado*  
June 26-Sept. 5

This year, the 22nd annual Vail Jazz Festival brings a summer full of the finest jazz to the ultimate destination in the Colorado Rockies. The festival offers over 50 performances and 150 artists spanning the whole summer calendar. Attendees can expect to experience great jazz with intimate venues and breathtaking views.

**LINEUP:** Monty Alexander, Cécile McLorin Salvant, John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, John Pizzarelli, Michel Camilo, Nicole Henry, Bria Skonberg.  
[vailjazz.org](http://vailjazz.org)

## Waterfront Blues Fest

*Portland, Oregon*  
July 1-4

This four-day festival is produced annually by the Oregon Food Bank to raise funds and awareness to fight hunger in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Festival features include intimate DME Blues Cruises on the Willamette River as well as educational workshops and after hours all-star concerts.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's artists included Gregg Allman, Galactic with



Directed by John Clayton and featuring 35 faculty including

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Gerald Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, Wycliffe Gordon, George Cables, Dee Daniels, Matt Wilson, Terrell Stafford, René Marie, Joe LaBarbera, Gary Smulyan, Sean Jones, Kendrick Scott, George Colligan, Taylor Eigsti, Tamir Hendelman, Christoph Luty, Harish Raghavan, Jeff Clayton, Chuck Deardorf, Randy Halberstadt, Clarence Acox, Dawn Clement, Jon Hamar, John Hansen, Eric Verlinde, Julian MacDonough, Chris Symer, Michael Glynn, Kelby MacNayr, Jake Bergevin, and more.

Macy Gray, Charmaine Neville, Chubby Carrier, Dave Alvin & Phil Alvin, Buddy Guy & Quinn Sullivan, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy.

[waterfrontbluesfest.com](http://waterfrontbluesfest.com)

### Sunset Jazz at Newport

*Newport Beach, California*

July 6–Sept. 14

Mainstream jazz fans from around Southern California will again welcome the unique opportunity to dine in the intimate Rose Garden of the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa while enjoying national touring artists for the 7th Annual Sunset Jazz at Newport Wednesday night summer series.

**LINEUP:** The Ken Peplowski-Chuck Redd Quintet, The Four Freshmen, Byron Stripling–Bobby Floyd Quartet. More TBA.

[sunsetjazzatnewport.com](http://sunsetjazzatnewport.com)

### New Mexico Jazz Festival

*Albuquerque & Santa Fe, New Mexico*

July 15–30

A two-city, collaborative effort between Outpost Performance Space and The Lensic Performing Arts Center, the 11th annual New Mexico Jazz Festival features concerts and events at indoor and outdoor venues throughout Albuquerque and Santa Fe by major touring artists, as well as respected New Mexico-based jazz, r&b and Latin music practitioners.

**LINEUP:** Charles Lloyd with Jason Moran, Reuben Rogers & Eric Harland, Dave Holland Trio featuring Kevin Eubanks, Obed Calvaire & Chris Potter; Booker T & His Stax Soul & Blues Revue; Django Festival Allstars; Pedrito Martinez; Nikki Hill; Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra with Hillary Smith, Route 66 Summerfest.

[newmexicोजazzfestival.org](http://newmexicोजazzfestival.org)

### Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival

*Fairbanks, Alaska*

July 17–31

This festival provides highly qualified guest artists who offer multidisciplinary study and performance opportunities that increase both personal growth and arts appreciation to all participants. The festival's philosophy is to enrich the lives of all attendees by engaging their spirit, intellect and energy in an empowering way.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's artists included Greta Matassa, Clipper Anderson, Darin Clendenin, Keith Karns, Zach Compston, Alex Frile.

[fsaf.org](http://fsaf.org)

### Jazz Port Townsend

*Port Townsend, Washington*

July 24–31

Jazz Port Townsend provides journeyman performers, aspiring professionals and beginning musicians with a perfect venue for fun and learning. Artistic Director John Clayton has picked an outstanding faculty that works directly with attendees to develop their skills.

**LINEUP:** George Cables, Gerald Clayton, Jeff Clayton, Dawn Clement, George Colligan, Dee Daniels, Chuck Deardorff, Taylor Eigsti, Wycliffe Gordon, Randy Halberstadt, Jon Hamar, Jeff Hamilton, John Hansen, Tamir Hendelman, Joe La Barbera, Christoph Luty, Kelby Macnair, Julian McDonough, Rene Marie, Harish Raghavan, Kendrick Scott, Gary Smulyan, Terrell Stafford, Jay Thomas, Matt Wilson.

[centrum.org](http://centrum.org)

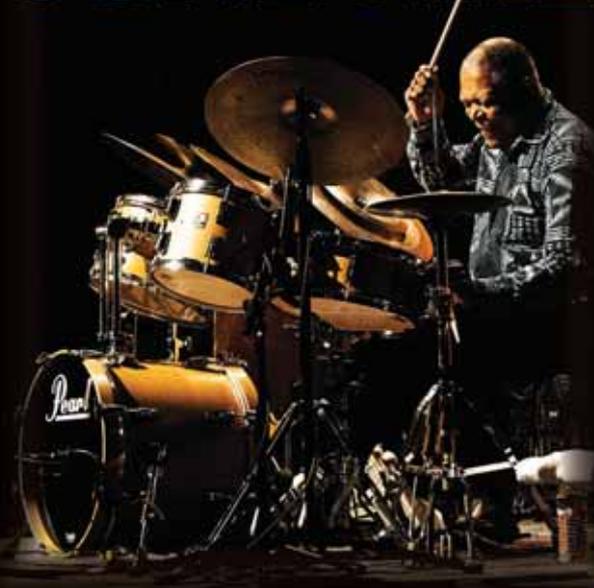
### Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Festival & Workshop

*Port Townsend, Washington*

July 31–Aug. 7

The Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Festival & Workshop is held at Fort Worden State Park, a stunning and inspiring setting. The focus of the workshop is early blues music, including acoustic pre-war (1920s and 1930s) blues. This workshop explores styles

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typified by the different players from various regions (Piedmont region, the Mississippi Delta, Hill Country, Louisiana and Texas). The Acoustic Blues Program Manager is Mary Hilts.

**LINEUP:** See website for details.

[centrum.org](http://centrum.org)

## **Telluride Jazz Festival**

*Telluride, Colorado*

**Aug. 5-7**

The 40th Telluride Jazz Festival celebrates four decades of preserving the artistry of the great American art form jazz in the San Juan Mountains of western Colorado.

**LINEUP:** Marcus Miller, Galactic, Lisa Fischer & Grand Baton, John Scofield & Jon Cleary Duo, Jeff Coffin & The Mu'tet, Jon Cleary & The Absolute Monster Gentlemen, Kermit Ruffins & The BBQ Swingers, Rebirth Brass Band, Nigel Hall Band, Sobredosis del Sabor, Caleb Chapman's Crescent Super Band with Jeff Coffin, Telluride Student All-Stars Jazz Ensemble, Young Razzcals Jazz Project, Stillwater Foundation All-Stars.

[telluridejazz.org](http://telluridejazz.org)

## **San Jose Jazz Summer Fest**

*San Jose, California*

**Aug. 12-14**

The 27th annual San Jose Jazz Summer Fest presents more than 120 performances in downtown San Jose showcasing a diverse array of local and international acts in jazz, blues, Latin, r&b, world and more.

**LINEUP:** Cécile McLorin Salvant, Kermit Ruffins & The Barbecue Swingers, Tony Lindsay, Alfredo Rodríguez, DakhaBrakha, Kahulanui Hawaiian Swing Band, Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir, Soltrón. More TBA.

[summerfest.sanjosejazz.org](http://summerfest.sanjosejazz.org)



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Presented by the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, with the support of underwriter Rev. Carol Stubbs Smith, North Coast Brewing, 2016 Jazz Club, Jazz Hotels, and many businesses & volunteers.

## **Idyllwild Jazz in the Pines**

*Idyllwild, California*

**Aug. 20-21**

More than two dozen bands perform in three venues throughout this annual festival that takes place in the mountains west of Palm Springs. The Festival Marketplace offers a wide variety of art and crafts from local artists as well as a broad range of food and drink options. Both lodging and camping are available near the festival grounds.

**LINEUP:** Charles McPherson, Graham Dechter Quartet, Casey Abrams, Euphoria Brass Band, Marshall Hawkins. More TBA.

[idyllwildjazz.com](http://idyllwildjazz.com)

## **Montavilla Jazz Festival**

*Portland, Oregon*

**Aug. 20-21**

The Montavilla Jazz Festival is an annual summer event showcasing Portland's thriving jazz scene, highlighting the world-class Portland-based artists actively creating new music and pushing the boundaries of jazz. Held in the revitalized Montavilla neighborhood, it also seeks to use the neighborhood festival setting to strengthen and support local jazz.

**LINEUP:** Scott Cutshall Trio featuring Ben Monder & Tony Malaby, George Colligan with the Portland Jazz Composers' Ensemble, The InBetweens, Dan Balmer's Uncontrollable Trio. More TBA.

[montavillajazzfest.com](http://montavillajazzfest.com)

## **Vail Jazz Party**

*Vail, Colorado*

**Sept. 1-5**

The Vail Jazz Party is a gathering of jazz heavyweights, jamming in a variety of styles and formats for five days. Visitors can experience over 35 hours of intriguing combos and choruses, multimedia tributes to jazz legends, and invigorating sets performed by today's iconic jazz stars.

**LINEUP:** Wycliffe Gordon, Jeff Hamilton, Niki Haris, Jerohn Garrett, Lewis Nash, Ken Peplowski, Terell Stafford, Joel Frahm, Mary Stallings, Byron Stripling, Jeff Clayton, John Clayton, Bill Cunliffe, Adrian Cunningham, Bobby Floyd, Diego Figueiredo.

[vailjazz.org](http://vailjazz.org)

## **Russian River Jazz & Blues Festival**

*Guerneville, California*

**Sept. 10-11**

The annual RRJ&B Festival returns to beautiful Johnson's Beach for its 40th Anniversary. The two-day festival hosts the best names in jazz, blues and rock and showcases them on multiple stages in a picturesque venue. Visitors can also expect great dining, shopping and wine-tasting on the river.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers include Buddy Guy, Dave Koz & Rick Braun with Kenny Lattimore, Taj Mahal Trio, WAR, Jackie Greene, Karen Briggs & Mike Phillips, Kyle Eastwood, The Rad Trads.

[russianriverfestivals.com](http://russianriverfestivals.com)

## **Monterey Jazz Festival**

*Monterey, California*

**Sept. 16-18**

The 59th annual edition of this iconic festival will present 100 performances, panels, conversations, films, and exhibits take place over two days and three nights on eight stages at the oak-studded Monterey County Fairgrounds. Special collaborations and commissions have become an important aspect of this famous festival's history. This year's Artist-In-Residence is drummer Terri Lyn Carrington, who will work year-round with young musicians in performances and clinics at the Next Generation Jazz Festival, Summer Jazz Camp and at the Monterey Jazz Festival.

**LINEUP:** Terri Lyne Carrington, Kamasi Washington, Joshua Redman,

Wayne Shorter, Quincy Jones, Pat Metheny, Christian McBride, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin, Joey Alexander.  
[montereyjazzfestival.org](http://montereyjazzfestival.org)

### Oregon Coast Jazz Party

*Newport, Oregon*

Sept. 30-Oct. 2

The Oregon Coast Jazz Party, now in its 12th year, celebrates great live jazz in the beautiful town of Newport, on the central Oregon coast. Visitors can expect multiple sets from renowned jazz stars, nightclub performances and educational events.

**LINEUP:** Terell Stafford, Jeff Hamilton Trio, Rebecca Kilgore, Ken Peplowski, Bruce Barth, Graham Dechter, Lynn Seaton, Akiko Tsuruga.

[oregoncoastjazzparty.org](http://oregoncoastjazzparty.org)

### Angel City Jazz Festival

*Los Angeles, California*

Sept. 30-Oct. 16

The ninth annual Angel City Jazz Festival leans forward to encourage and embrace the metamorphosis of jazz through sounds, ranging from straightahead to free.

**LINEUP:** See website. Previous headliners included Archie Shepp, Ambrose Akinmusire, Wadada Leo Smith, Anthony Braxton, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Nicole Mitchell, Ravi Coltrane, Dave Holland, Vijay Iyer, Greg Osby, Craig Taborn, Bill Frisell.

[angelcityjazz.com](http://angelcityjazz.com)

### Earshot Jazz Festival

*Seattle, Washington*

Oct. 1-Nov. 6

The Earshot Jazz Festival includes more than 50 distinctive concerts and events in venues all around the city. The fest celebrates Seattle's place in the world of jazz with mainstage concerts by award-winning student ensembles and a strong representation by renowned resident artists.

**LINEUP:** Rudresh Mahanthappa, Gebhard Ullmann's Conference Call, Steve Lehman Trio, Craig Taborn/Kris Davis Duo, Scott Dubois Group, Bill Frisell, Joey Alexander, John Scofield, Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra.

[earshot.org](http://earshot.org)

### Palm Springs Women's Jazz Festival

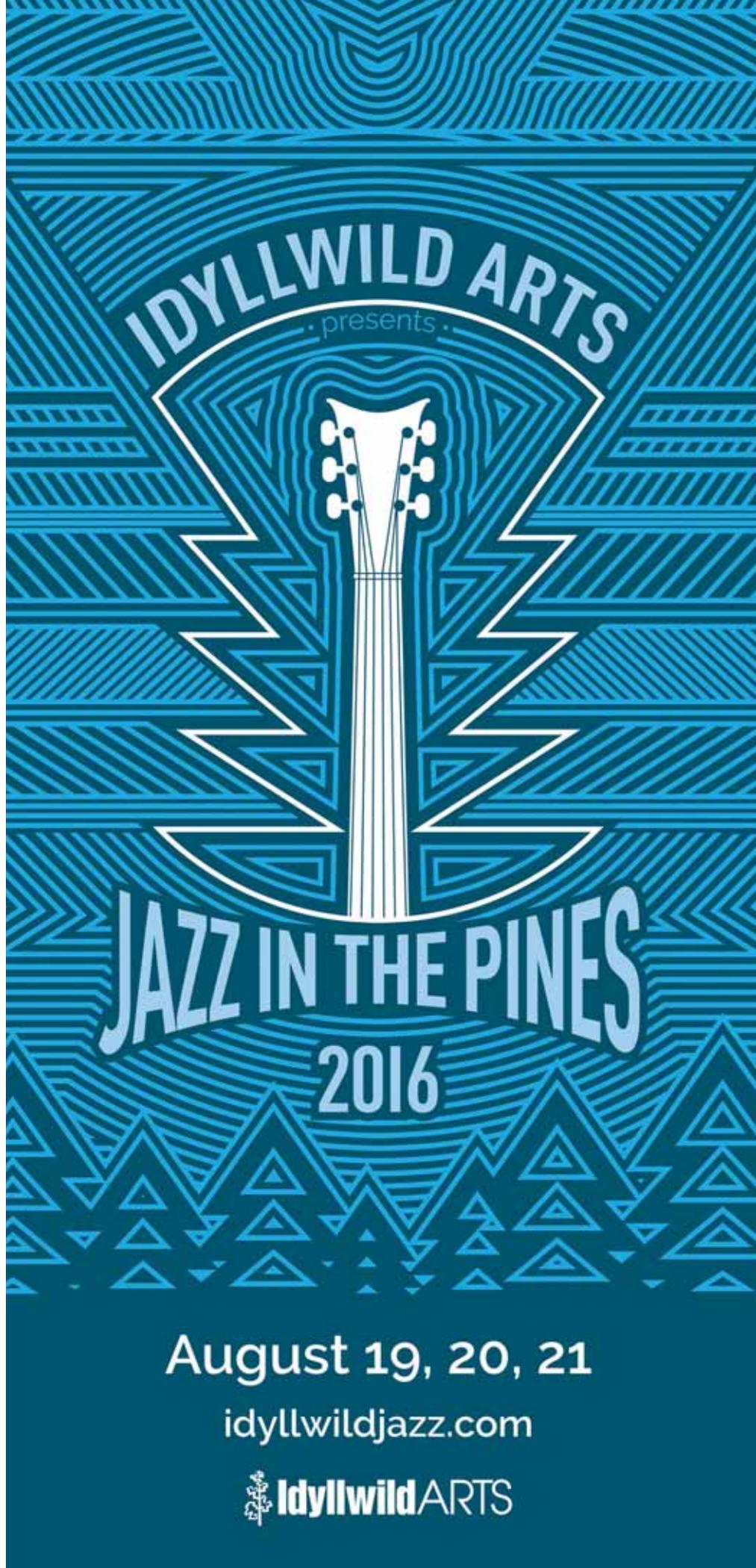
*Palm Springs, California*

Oct. 7-9

Each year over Columbus Day Weekend an extraordinary collection of female jazz musicians gather in the popular resort town of Palm Springs, merging jazz and blues into a compelling musical tapestry.

**LINEUP:** See website. Previous artists include Terri Lyne Carrington, Diane Schuur, Cindy Bradley, Jessie J., Helen Sung, Carmen Lundy, Tia Fuller.

[pswomensjazzfestival.com](http://pswomensjazzfestival.com)



August 19, 20, 21

[idyllwildjazz.com](http://idyllwildjazz.com)

 IdyllwildARTS



## Festival International Musique Actuelle Victoriaville

Victoriaville, Québec

May 19-22

The 2016 edition promises loads of emerging artists, tributes to well-established musicians and never-before-heard projects. A truly international gathering, the FIMAV festival features close to 100 artists from Canada, Sweden, Norway, England, the United States, France, Italy, Ireland, Switzerland and Taiwan.

**LINEUP:** John Zorn, John Medeski Trio, Craig Taborn, Julian Lage & Gyan Riley, Mary Halvorson Quartet, Uri Cane, Kris Davis Quartet, Sylvie Courvoisier & Marc Feldman, Trigger, Asmodeus, George Lewis, Tanya Tagaq with the Element Choir, Lucas Niggli & Andreas Schaerer, Tony Wilson Sextet.

[fimav.qc.ca](http://fimav.qc.ca)

## **World Guitar Festival (FGMAT)**

Rouyn-Noranda, Northern Québec

May 28-June 4

Spanning eight days and featuring more than 40 evening indoor concerts, this world-spanning guitar festival is the only one of its kind in Québec and Eastern Canada. The festival includes free outdoor concerts with performances by both local and international artists and a wide variety of music styles.

**LINEUP:** Steve Vai, Brooke Miller, Frank Gambale, Ayrad, Daniel Lanois, Jesse Cook, Tommy Emmanuel.

[fgmat.com](http://fgmat.com)

## **TD Winnipeg International Jazz Festival**

Winnipeg, Manitoba

June 16-26

Winnipeg's largest downtown music festival offers four days of free concerts in the historic Old Market Square, and even

more concerts in various downtown venues and clubs in the days following.

**LINEUP:** Kamasi Washington, Tedeschi Trucks Band, Matthew Barber, Jill Barber. More TBA. [jazzwinnipeg.com](http://jazzwinnipeg.com)

## TD Ottawa Jazz Festival

Ottawa, Ontario

June 23-July 3

Nestled in the heart of beautiful downtown Ottawa, this festival presents some of the world's most renowned and celebrated artists. This year's edition boasts a special performance by Brian Wilson as part of his "Pet Sounds 50th Anniversary World Tour."

**LINEUP:** Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride & Brian Blade), Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, John Scofield & Joe Lovano Quartet, Kamasi Washington, SFJAZZ Collective, Stacey Kent, Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings, Colin Stetson & Sarah Nuefeld, Charlie Hunter Trio featuring Curtis Fowlkes and Bobby Previte, Dan Brubeck Quartet, Igor Butman & The Moscow Jazz Orchestra.

[ottawajazzfestival.com](http://ottawajazzfestival.com)

## **SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival**

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

June 24-July 3

Celebrating 30 years, the SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival entertains more than 85,000 fans each year with world-class artists from various genres, including jazz, blues, funk, pop and world music.

**LINEUP:** Lauryn Hill, Tedeschi Trucks Band, Metric, Corey Harris. More TBA.

[saskjazz.com](http://saskjazz.com)

## **TD Toronto Jazz Festival**

Toronto, Ontario

June 24-July 3

The TD Toronto Jazz Festival features more than 1,500 musicians performing over 350

concerts. Music fans can expect to discover new artists, explore different genres and attend a live concert surrounded by thousands of fellow jazz lovers. Pop star Sarah McLachlan will perform on June 24 at the Sony Centre.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Robert Glasper, Branford Marsalis, Snarky Puppy, Gary Clark Jr., Christian McBride, Kurt Elling, Jamie Cullum.

[torontojazz.com](http://torontojazz.com)

## TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival

Vancouver, British Columbia

June 24-July 3

With more than 1,800 artists, 300 performances and 35 indoor and outdoor venues, the this festival attracts over half a million attendees to enjoy the best performers from Canada and around the world. The event presents more than 100 free concerts.

**LINEUP:** Gregory Porter, Joe Lovano Quartet, Hiromi, Tord Gustavsen, Lauryn Hill, Oliver Jones Trio, Tedeschi Trucks Band, Jacky Terrasson Trio, Arild Andersen Trio, Peter Brötzmann Full Blast, The Thing, Joe Jackson, Sarah McLachlan, Neko Case/k.d. lang/Laura Veirs with special guest Andy Shauf.

[coastaljazz.ca](http://coastaljazz.ca)

## **TD Victoria International JazzFest**

Victoria, British Columbia

June 24-July 3

The TD Victoria International JazzFest (formerly known as JazzFest International), is a 10-day music festival featuring jazz, blues and world music by Canadian and international musicians. Since its inception in 1985, the festival has been presented and produced by the Victoria Jazz Society.

**LINEUP:** Gregory Porter, Joe Lovano Quartet, Jacky Terrasson Trio, Tedeschi Trucks Band, Joe Jackson, Neko Case/k.d. lang/



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June 29 to July 9, 2016 · 10 days of great music · 3000 musicians · 11 concert halls

## A GLANCE AT THIS YEAR'S LINEUP



JUNE 29 AND JUNE 30  
**MELODY GARDOT**



JUNE 29  
**GREGORY PORTER**



JUNE 30  
**JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA**  
featuring Wynton Marsalis



JULY 1  
**CHICK COREA TRIO**  
with Christian McBride and Brian Blade



JULY 3  
**STACEY KENT**



JULY 5  
**MS. LAURYN HILL**



JULY 1  
**JOEY ALEXANDER TRIO**



JULY 2  
**AVISHAI COHEN TRIO**



JULY 3  
**TORD GUSTAVSEN**  
with Simin Tander and Jarle Vespestad



JULY 9  
**BATTLE OF THE BANDS VIII**

## JAZZ PACKAGES

Want to take your adventure to another level and enjoy the Festival to the fullest? Opt for one of our packages that combine the joys of vacation with those of the Festival! Log on to [montrealjazzfest.com/packages](http://montrealjazzfest.com/packages) to plan your stay! **Starting at \$355** plus taxes, per person, for two nights, double occupancy.

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TICKETS, NEWSLETTER, ACCOMMODATION PACKAGES, UPDATES AND MUCH MORE

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Laura Veirs, Oliver Jones, Downchild Blues Band, Ana Popovic, Moon Hooch, Poly-rhythmics, Soil & Pimp, Busty & The Bass.  
[jazzvictoria.ca](http://jazzvictoria.ca)

 **Festival International de Jazz de Montréal**  
*Montréal, Québec*  
June 29–July 9

Ranked as the world's largest jazz festival by Guinness World Records, the FIJM has been synonymous with a passion for music for over 35 years. The festival presents artists

from 30 countries, more than 1,000 concerts and activities—two-thirds of them free—and attracts more than 2 million visitors to the city.

**LINEUP:**  
Gregory Porter, Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Stacey Kent, Chick Corea Trio (with Christian McBride & Brian Blade), Avishai Cohen Trio, Melody Gardot, Joey Alexander Trio, Vijay Iyer & Wadada Leo Smith, Lauryn Hill, Tord Gustavsen, Bilal, Nir Felder, Battle of the Bands VIII, Noel Gallagher, Florence K, Brian Wilson Presents "Pet Sounds."  
[montrealjazzfest.com](http://montrealjazzfest.com)

## TD Halifax Jazz Festival

*Halifax, Nova Scotia*  
July 13–17

The 30th anniversary edition of this event will feature jazz and other genres, with concerts in a beautiful waterfront setting as well as other venues. Plus there are master classes and the Creative Music Workshop.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Brian Blade, Joey DeFrancesco, Jane Ira Bloom.  
[halifaxjazzfestival.ca](http://halifaxjazzfestival.ca)

## TD Kitchener Blues Festival

*Kitchener, Ontario*  
Aug. 4–7

This festival, one of Canada's biggest blues festivals, has been running for more than 15 years. This year's edition will feature a Gordie Johnson career retrospective and tribute to the music of Bob Dylan.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Mavis Staples, David Wilcox.  
[kitchenerbluesfestival.com](http://kitchenerbluesfestival.com)

## Edmonton Blues Festival

*Edmonton, Alberta*  
Aug. 19–21

Western Canada's premiere blues event celebrates 18 years with multiple concerts at the pristine and party-friendly Heritage Amphitheatre.

**LINEUP:** Shemekia Copeland, Kim Simmons & Savoy Brown, Paul James, Jarekus Singleton, Dwayne Dopsie & The Zydeco Hellraisers, Little Feat, Paul Barrere & Fred Tackett with the New Orleans Connection, Brandon Santini.  
[bluesinternationaltd.com](http://bluesinternationaltd.com)

## Guelph Jazz Festival

*Guelph, Ontario*  
Sept. 14–18

Jazz fans will experience five days of innovative world-class music in one of Ontario's loveliest cities. Heralded as one of the most visionary musical events in Canada, the intimate community-powered Guelph Jazz Festival celebrates the best in cutting-edge jazz and creative improvised music, playing host to unique workshops, panels and lectures.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Evan Parker, Darius Jones, Douglas Ewart & Tomeka Reid, Marc Ribot's Ceramic Dog, Colin Stetson & Sarah Neufeld, Kris Davis.  
[guelphjazzfestival.com](http://guelphjazzfestival.com)

## Pender Harbour Jazz Festival

*Madeira Park, British Columbia*  
Sept. 16–18

This festival, which is celebrating its milestone 20th anniversary, offers free and ticketed concerts. The festival also boasts al fresco dining and indoor events at intimate venues by the sea.

**LINEUP:** Jeff Hamilton, Hugh Fraser, Marc Atkinson, Brad Turner, Kutapiro, Gospel Hour with the Sojourners.  
[phjazz.ca](http://phjazz.ca)

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# FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL MUSIQUE ACTUELLE VICTORIANVILLE

## SPECIAL EVENT

Saturday, May 21, 2016

### JOHN ZORN « Bagatelles » Marathon

SYLVIE COURVOISIER / MARK FELDMAN

TRIGGER

KRIS DAVIS QUARTET

CRAIG TABORN SOLO

JULIAN LAGE / GYAN RILEY

JOHN MEDESKI TRIO

MARY HALVORSON QUARTET

URI CANE / JOHN MEDESKI

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VANCOUVER  
INTERNATIONAL  
JAZZ FESTIVAL



JUNE 24 – JULY 3, 2016

MARQUEE SERIES CONCERTS  
AT THE QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE

Fri, Jun 24

JOE JACKSON

8:00 PM



Sun, Jun 26

MS. LAURYN HILL

8:00 PM



Mon, Jun 27

SARAH MCLACHLAN

8:00 PM



Tue, Jun 28

TEDESCHI  
TRUCKS BAND

8:00 PM



Wed, Jun 29

case/lang/veirs  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST ANDY SHAUF

8:00 PM



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL SHOWS

Jacky Terrasson Trio

Common Grounds with Pacific Baroque  
& Alan Matheson Septet

Tord Gustavsen Hymns and Visions  
with Simin Tander and Jarle Vespestad

VOGUE THEATRE SHOWS

Hiromi: The Trio Project

Oliver Jones Trio

The Legendary Downchild Blues Band

Joe Lovano Classic Quartet

Gregory Porter

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We gratefully acknowledge  
the financial support of the  
Province of British Columbia.



The RED Trio performs with saxophonist Jon Butcher at Jazz em Agosto in Lisbon, Portugal.



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## JAZZ ON VACATION IN SPAIN, PORTUGAL

Europe has always held a special place for jazz musicians, and increasingly, the summer circuit of festivals and educational programs has become the most concentrated—and lucrative—part of the year for many artists. For fans, becoming a jazz tourist for a couple of weeks offers the opportunity to combine sight-seeing and dining adventures with distinctive shows by some of the world's best musicians. A vacation focusing on three festivals in Spain and Portugal—Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz (July 12–16), San Sebastián's Heineken Jazzaldia (July 20–25) and Lisbon's Jazz em Agosto (Aug. 4–14)—would provide an especially diverse experience.

The best way to travel to this region from North America is to fly into Madrid's spectacular Adolfo Suárez Airport, connect to a convenient one-hour flight north to Bilbao and then take the Bizkaibus local transit south into the foothills to Vitoria-Gasteiz. If you're an art or architecture lover, plan an extra day or two in Bilbao, because Frank Gehry's mind-blowing Guggenheim Museum and the overall resurrection of the former foundry city craves your attention. Bilbao is the über-modernist yin to Vitoria-Gasteiz's ancient yang.

Founded in 1181, Vitoria-Gasteiz is the seat of government for the Basque region of northern Spain. The compact nature of the medieval Old Quarter—with its abundance of picturesque Gothic buildings—makes it an ideal walking city. One of the best walks of all is the early evening stroll from the central Parque de la Florida along the beautiful Fray Francisco de Vitoria Ibilbidea toward the Mendizorrotza Sports Center, the jazz festival's main venue. As in all

Spanish cities, the streets come alive after dusk, reflective of the age-old custom of businesses closing for several hours at midday to accommodate the heat. However, Vitoria-Gasteiz's climate is moderate, and the average daytime temperature in mid-July is 78 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Mendizorrotza Sports Center is not the most comfortable venue for jazz, but it is one of the friendliest. Spaniards love to snack between shows, so take your cue from them and pack an Iberian ham sandwich or two. After shows by the likes of Cécile McLorin Salvant, the Joshua Redman Quartet and Kenny Barron with Dave Holland, you'll have more time to stop off for pintxos (tapas) and red wine or beer at one of the many bars that stay open late.

Just 62 miles northeast of Vitoria-Gasteiz lies the coastal city of San Sebastián (Donostia in the local Basque language). Built around the protected La Concha Bay, San Sebastián has one of the country's best beaches and a rich collection of neoclassical buildings—dating to 1813, when British and Portuguese forces burned the stronghold of Napoleon's forces to the ground.

Founded in 1966, Jazzaldia has 17 primary venues. At its heart are the Plaza de la Trinidad with the 1,800-seat Kursaal Auditorium (designed by Rafael Moneo and opened in 1999) and the 104-year-old Victoria Eugenia Theatre on the opposite bank of the Urumea River.

Miguel Martin, director of Heineken Jazzaldia, believes that the festival's open nature is what sets it apart. "It's mainstream and contemporary at the same time, and about 70 percent of our concerts have free admission," he said. "We try to include the more interesting names of the international, European, Spanish

and Basque jazz scenes."

Among this year's 110 Jazzaldia concerts are shows by Diana Krall, Branford Marsalis, Brad Mehldau, Snarky Puppy, Jack DeJohnette, Steve Coleman, John Scofield and Marc Ribot.

For those who wish to complete the jazz trifecta by taking in Lisbon's Jazz em Agosto, there's more than a week to explore various areas—northeast of San Sebastián, across the French border, into the wine-rich region of Bordeaux; southeast to the gastronomic splendor of Barcelona and Spain's Costa Brava; or west to the pilgrim's mecca of Galicia and the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Santiago de Compostela. The possibilities are broad.

Once you've made your way west to Lisbon, a very different approach to a jazz festival awaits at Jazz em Agosto, now in its 33rd year.

"We do not have a commercial focus," said Rui Neves, the artistic director for Jazz em Agosto. "We are interested in new ideas and are very attentive to innovators."

Although the program is not fully set for the 2016 edition, Neves said the fest's 14 concerts would follow his tried-and-true model, which has seen Wadada Leo Smith, Ribot's Ceramic Dog and the RED Trio with saxophonist Jon Butcher headline in recent years.

"We are a relaxed festival," Neves explained, "and our setting in a garden is very peaceful. Everything in Lisbon is very close. There is lots of time to enjoy our splendid Mediterranean food, the contemporary art museum and our climate, which is very much like San Francisco's."

Like all things related to jazz in Portugal and Spain each summer, it's an embarrassment of riches. —James Hale



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# FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE JAZZ DE MONTREAL

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AT THE FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE JAZZ DE MONTREAL!



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- Two nights of luxury hotel accommodation at the Hyatt Regency Montréal on the Festival site
- Three pairs of tickets for selected concerts at the Festival.
- Two meals in selected restaurants on the Festival site.
- Two official Festival T-shirts and programs.

THE TOTAL PACKAGE IS VALUED AT OVER \$4,000

### A GLANCE AT THIS YEAR'S LINEUP



**CHICK COREA TRIO**  
with Christian McBride  
and Brian Blade



**BRIAN WILSON**  
with Al Jardine  
and Blondie Chaplin  
*PET SOUNDS*



**VIJAY IYER +  
WADADA LEO SMITH**



**AVISHAI COHEN TRIO**



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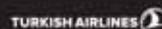
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Official rules: To enter, fill out the online entry form. The Montreal Jazz Getaway contest drawing will take place May 31, 2016. The prize is non-transferable. If winner is unable to accept prize, it will be given to the next name drawn. No substitution or changes are possible. This offer is void where prohibited by law and is subject to all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Taxes are the responsibility of the winner. The rules and conditions of The Montreal Jazz Getaway contest may be changed without prior notice.

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TICKETS, NEWSLETTER, ACCOMMODATION PACKAGES, UPDATES AND MUCH MORE

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# EUROPE

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



## Jazz Festival Basel

Basel, Switzerland  
April 20–May 12

Organizers present an eclectic mix of international duos and tributes in various venues around Basel, including Kaserne Basel, the largest venue in northwest Switzerland for innovative popular music, and Martinskirche, the oldest church in Basel.

**LINEUP:** Vijay Iyer, Richard Galliano & Sylvain Luc, Michael Wollny, Nils Landgren All-Stars & Basel Sinfonietta, Kenny Garrett Group, Iiro Rantala with Marius Neset, Andreas Scharrer & Lucas Niggli, Colin Vallon, Dee Dee Bridgewater & Irvin Mayfield Orchestra, Lars Danielsson/Cecilie Norby, Brad Mehldau Trio, Bobby McFerrin, Gregory Porter, David Sanborn & Christian McBride Group, Salif Keita.  
[offbeat-concert.ch](http://offbeat-concert.ch)

## Trondheim Jazz Festival

Trondheim, Norway  
May 3–8, May 12

This festival is built around the exciting jazz scene in Trondheim and the world-renowned jazz course at NTNU Department of Music.

**LINEUP:** Dee Dee Bridgewater, Trondheim Jazz Orchestra with Sissel Vera Pettersen and John Hollenbeck, Take 6, Elifantree, Eyes of Blue Dog, Trail of Souls, Mats Eilertsen "Memorabilia," Ralph Towner & Paolo Fresu, Kjetil Møster, Marius Neset Quintet with Svante Henryson.  
[jazzfest.no](http://jazzfest.no)

## Ulrichsberger Kaleidophon

Ulrichsberg, Austria  
May 5–7

This year marks the 31st edition of this international festival for jazz, improvised music and contemporary composed music.

**LINEUP:** Circadia (Kim Myhr, David Stackenaes, Joe Williamson, Tony Buck), Katharina Klement & Martin Siewert, Harris Eisenstadt's Canada Day, Will Guthrie, Para (Ingrid Schmoliner, Elena Kakaliagou, Thomas Stempkowski).  
[jazzatelier.at/kal.htm](http://jazzatelier.at/kal.htm)

## EUROPAfest

Bucharest, Romania  
May 12–21

EUROPAfest gathers more than 300 musicians from Europe and around the world each year to present a diverse mix of jazz, blues, pop and classical music in traditional and unconventional venues. Other events include jam sessions, contests, workshops and master classes.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's artists included Hot Club de Bucharest.  
[jmevents.ro](http://jmevents.ro)

## Moers Festival

Moers, Germany  
May 13–16

What began in 1972 as a relatively small open-air festival in the courtyard of Moers Castle has evolved into a major international event in contemporary improvised music. This

festival embodies the willingness to take risks and the courage to explore new territory.

**LINEUP:** Carolin Pook, Harriet Tubman & Cassandra Wilson present Black Sun, Jóhan Jóhannsson, No BS! Brass Band, Subway Jazz Orchestra, Kaja Draksler & Susana Santos Silva, Jeremy Flower, Harold López-Nussa Trio, Tim Isfort, The Liz, Medusa Beats, David Virelles, Dawn Of Midi, Moon Hooch, Lisbon Underground Music Ensemble, Hauschka & Kosminen, Amok Amor, Becca Stevens & Jacob Collier.  
[moers-festival.de](http://moers-festival.de)

## Sibiu Jazz Festival

Sibiu, Transylvania, Romania  
May 23–29

Presenting its 46th edition, this festival is considered unique for its longevity. The first days will host the Sibiu Jazz Festival Competition, which aims to promote young jazz musicians in the country and abroad.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included Island Jazz.  
[sibiujazz.eu](http://sibiujazz.eu)

## Nattjazz

Bergen, Norway  
May 26–June 4

Nattjazz (Nightjazz), which was founded in 1972 is now one of the major jazz festivals in Northern Europe. Curiosity is a permanent state for the festival and its audience. Fans view this festival as a chance to find their new favorite artists or experience differ-

ent types of jazz, while wandering the old sardine factory USF Verftet by the seaside.

**LINEUP:** Lee Ritenour, Rufus Wainwright, Bernhoft & The Fashion Bruises, The Budos Band, Buika, Come Shine & Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, Sarah McKenzie, Real Ones, Bugge Wesseltoft New Conception of Jazz, Ingebjørg Bratland, Adam Baldych & Helge Lien Trio, Sex Mob, Hanna Paulsberg Concept.  
[nattjazz.no](http://nattjazz.no)

### Kerava Jazz Festival

*Kerava, Finland*  
June 3-5

This festival has had the same programming philosophy since 1991: free-jazz, avant-garde, and spiritual jazz.

**LINEUP:** Ken Vandermark/Paal Nilssen-Love Duo, Kari Ikonen & Louis Sclavis special projects.  
[keravajazz.fi](http://keravajazz.fi)

### JazzBaltica

*Timmendorfer Strand-Niendorf, Germany*  
June 23-26

For more than 25 years, JazzBaltica has promoted up-and-coming young artists as well as some of the greatest jazz artists from around the world. JazzBaltica's 2015 festival welcomed a record 13,000 visitors to 12 concerts, eight open-air acts and two children's programs.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past artists include Dave Brubeck, Max Roach, Michael Wolny.  
[jazzbaltica.de](http://jazzbaltica.de)

### JazzAscona/The New Orleans Experience

*Ascona, Switzerland*  
June 23-July 2

Located on the shores of Lake Maggiore in Switzerland, Ascona hosts more than 50 European and American bands and 200 concerts. Officially supported by the City of New Orleans, JazzAscona shares the spirit and the music of the Crescent City with a new project called "The New Orleans Experience—Original Music & Food from Louisiana."

**LINEUP:** Davell Crawford Trio featuring Herlin Riley, Barbara Dennerlein Duo, Glen David Andrews with 2Together, Tremé Brass Band & Shamarr Allen, Palm Court Jazz All Stars, The New Orleans Jazz Vipers, Aurora Nealand & Tom McDermott, Lillian Boutté, Shannon Powell, Teedy Boutté & Paul Longstreth, Anaïs St. John & The Italian New Orleans Jazz Connection, The Carling Family, Paolo Alderighi & Stephanie Trick Double Trio.  
[jazzascona.ch](http://jazzascona.ch)

**Jazz à Vienne**  
*Vienne, France*  
June 28-July 15

Jazz à Vienne was founded in 1981 and takes place over two weeks each summer. Situated in the heart of the city of Vienne, the festival has four stages: le Théâtre Antique, le Club de Minuit, le Jazz Mix and les Jardins de Cybèle.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past headliners have included Miles Davis, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Chuck Berry, Ike Turner.  
[jazzavienne.com](http://jazzavienne.com)

### Ljubljana Jazz Festival

*Ljubljana, Slovenia*  
June 29-July 2

The 57th edition of this festival will take place at five indoor and outdoor stages of the cultural center Cankarjev dom.

**LINEUP:** Omara Portuondo & Diego El Cigala, Hiromi, Nasheet Waits Equality, Thomas De Pourquery Supersonic, Paal Nilssen-Love Large Unit, Kaja Draksler & Eve Risser, Surnatural Orchestra, Gard Nilssen Acoustic Unity featuring Fredrik Ljungqvist, Anna Högberg Attack, En Corps, Marcin Masecki, Samo Šalamon Sextet, Igor Matkovic Quintet.  
[ljubljanajazz.si](http://ljubljanajazz.si)

**Jazz Fest Wien**  
*Vienna, Austria*  
June 27-July 11

Jazz is presented in landmark venues of the historic city of Vienna, including the Vienna State Opera, the neo-Gothic city hall and other unique locations.

**LINEUP:** Snarky Puppy, Brad Mehldau, John Scofield, Kamasi Washington, GoGo Penguin, Jamie Cullum, Burt Bacharach, Bobby McFerrin, Joey Alexander, Cyn-di Lauper, Beth Hart, Ludovico Einaudi, Wolfgang Muthspiel, Incognito.  
[viennajazz.org](http://viennajazz.org)

### Love Supreme Jazz Festival

*East Sussex, England*  
July 1-3

Love Supreme is a camping jazz festival in the U.K. that also welcomes non-campers. An immersive musical weekend, the festival includes four stages along with DJs and club nights, lectures, panels, classic album playbacks, films and more. New this year is a larger camping area with trolley service.

**LINEUP:** Kamasi Washington, John Scofield/Brad Mehldau/Mark Giuliana, Stanley Clarke Band, Grace Jones, Burt Bacharach, Lianne La Havas, Caro Emerald, Kelis, Melody Gardot, Gilles Peterson, Average White Band, Ibrahim Maalouf, GoGo Penguin, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Jacob Collier, The Correspondents, Liane Carroll, Anthony Strong, Femi Temowo & Engines Orchestra Seven, Swindle, Binker & Moses, Riot Jazz Brass Band, Beats & Pieces Big Band, Native Dancer, Partikel's String Theory, Trope.  
[lovesupremefestival.com](http://lovesupremefestival.com)

### Copenhagen Jazz Festival

*Copenhagen, Denmark*  
July 1-10

Since 1979, this festival has been taking over Copenhagen as one of Europe's most important international music events. Programming is based on artistic quali-

ty with a sharp focus on new directions in both Danish and international jazz.

**LINEUP:** Pat Metheny, Branford Marsalis Quartet with Kurt Elling, Burt Bacharach.  
[jazz.dk](http://jazz.dk)

## Montreux Jazz Festival

Montreux, Switzerland  
July 1-16

The Montreux Jazz Festival, one of the most acclaimed fests of all time, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Nestled at the foot of the Alps on Lake Geneva, the convention center hosts two main stages as well as the smaller Montreux Jazz Café and several smaller open-air stages. In addition to paid concerts, the festival hosts a variety of free venues and pop-up events along with themed shows held on boats cruising the lake and train cars traveling the region. Rock band Muse will perform, as well as veteran artists who have played the festival in the past.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Santana, George Benson, Tony Bennett, Herbie Hancock, Joshua Redman, Chick Corea.  
[montreuxjazzfestival.com](http://montreuxjazzfestival.com)

## Kongsberg Jazz Festival

Kongsberg, Norway  
July 6-9

Kongsberg Jazz Festival presents a variety of artists each year in modern jazz, avant-garde and commercial genres.

**LINEUP:** Pat Metheny, Hanna Paulsberg Concept, Skadedyr, Solveig Slettahjell, Knut Reiersrud, Steps Ahead, Melody Gardot, Steve Coleman & Five Elements, Sun Ra Arkestra, Earth Wind & Fire, Beam Splitter, Ellen Andrea Wang, Bobo Stenson.  
[kongsbergjazz.no](http://kongsbergjazz.no)

## Gent Jazz Festival

Ghent, East-Flanders, Belgium  
July 7-16

The 15th edition of the biggest jazz festival in Belgium will take place in the beautiful gardens of the Bijloke site in Ghent.

**LINEUP:** Ibrahim Maalouf "Kalthoum," Kamasi Washington, Jong Jazztalent Gent, Terence Blanchard E-Collective, Kneedelus, Pat Metheny & Ron Carter, John Scofield/Brad Mehldau/Mark Guiliana, Cécile McLorin Salvant, De Beren Gieren, Steven Delano, Balthazar, Flat Earth Society featuring Mauro Pawlowski, Nordmann, Moondog, Jill Scott, Lianne La Havas, The James Hunter Six, Con Brio, St. Germain, Ibeyi, Pomrad.  
[gentjazz.com](http://gentjazz.com)

## North Sea Jazz Festival

Ahoy, Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
July 8-10

At North Sea Jazz, all contemporary styles of jazz—and music related to jazz such as funk, soul, salsa, blues and gospel—are programmed. Special features include clinics, educational programs, an art exhibi-

tion, a festival market and a pre-festival Round Town in the city of Rotterdam.

**LINEUP:** The Roots, Buddy Guy, Snarky Puppy, Diana Krall, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, John Scofield/Brad Mehldau/Mark Guiliana, Earth Wind & Fire, Branford Marsalis Quartet with Kurt Elling, Simply Red, Jill Scott, Gregory Porter, Walter Trout, Chick Corea, Colin Stetson & Sarah Neufeld.  
[northseajazz.com](http://northseajazz.com)

## Umbria Jazz

Perugia, Italy  
July 8-17

Widely regarded as Italy's finest music festival, Umbria Jazz presents musicians from around the world, alongside the best jazz musicians based in Italy.

**LINEUP:** Diana Krall, Buddy Guy, Ron Carter, Chick Corea, John Scofield, Brad Mehldau, Kamasi Washington, Pat Metheny, Stefano Bollani, Enrico Rava, Mika, George Clinton.  
[umbriajazz.com](http://umbriajazz.com)

## Aarhus Jazz Festival

Aarhus, Denmark  
July 9-16

This festival presents eight days of jazz with approximately 230 concerts at 30 different venues around the second largest city in Denmark. Most concerts during the day are free of charge.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers have included, John Scofield, Al Di Meola.  
[jazzfest.dk](http://jazzfest.dk)

## Pori Jazz

Pori, Finland  
July 9-17

The 51st edition will offer an array of international stars and the best of Finnish talent. During the main concerts, music will be played on several different stages in the beautiful and atmospheric Kirjurinluoto Concert Park.

**LINEUP:** Gregory Porter, Snarky Puppy, Larry Coryell & The Eleventh House Reunited, John McLaughlin & The 4th Dimension, Seal, Charles Bradley & His Extraordinaires, Joss Stone, Zappa Plays Zappa, Brian Setzer's Rockabilly Riot!, Beth Hart, Imelda May, Lionel Loueke Trio, Jaga Jazzist, Average White Band, Avishai Cohen Trio, John Grant, John Newman, Bo Kaspers Orkester, Ikonostasis: Ikonen-Moses-Eick, Kalle Kalima's Long Winding Road, Matthew Halsall & The Gondwana Orchestra.  
[porijazz.fi](http://porijazz.fi)

## Bohemia JazzFest

Czech Republic  
July 11-19

Bohemia JazzFest is an admission-free music festival that travels through various cities and towns in the Czech Republic.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included Bill Frisell.  
[bohemiajazzfest.cz](http://bohemiajazzfest.cz)

## Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz

Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain  
July 12-16

This festival presents its 40th anniversary edition in Vitoria-Gasteiz, capital of Basque Country.

**LINEUP:** Pat Metheny & Ron Carter, Jamie Cullum, Jeff Beck, Joshua Redman Quartet, Kenny Barron & Dave Holland, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Taj Mahal, Tom Harrell.  
[jazzvitoria.com](http://jazzvitoria.com)

## Istanbul Jazz Festival

Istanbul, Turkey  
June 27-28, July 11-25

Held every year since 1994, the Istanbul Jazz Festival features jazz, pop, rock and world music performances in different venues in Istanbul. Two festival events happen in the Asian side of the city: a free public event called "Jazz at Parks," and a "Night Out" concept where the audience can attend more than 15 concerts in different locations with one ticket.

**LINEUP:** Branford Marsalis Quartet with Kurt Elling, Antonio Sanchez Quintet, John Scofield, Brad Mehldau, Mark Guiliana, Chic featuring Nile Rodgers, Ernest Ranglin, Cheikh Lo, Courtney Pine, Tony Allen, Alex Wilson, Ira Coleman, Joss Stone, Vintage Trouble.  
[caz.iksv.org/en](http://caz.iksv.org/en)

## Jazz à Juan

Juan-les-Pins, France  
July 13-24

Jazz à Juan takes place under the 100-year-old pine trees of Pinède Gould arena in the French Riviera, presenting a diversity of styles and musicians—from New Orleans to gospel, blues, swing, bebop and modern jazz. Fans can dine in the VIP village at the Jazz Gardens on concert evenings. Around 200 musicians play in the streets and on the squares of Antibes and Juan-les-Pins throughout the festival.

**LINEUP:** Archie Shepp, Charles Lloyd New Quartet, Gregory Porter.  
[jazzajuan.com](http://jazzajuan.com)

## Nice Jazz Festival

Nice, France  
July 16-20

The Nice Jazz Festival began in 1948 as the first jazz festival in the world, with artists such as Louis Armstrong, Stéphane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt performing. Today, the festival mixes jazz with everything from electronica to hip-hop and funk.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's lineup included Jamie Cullum, Charles Lloyd.  
[nicejazzfestival.fr](http://nicejazzfestival.fr)

## Molde International Jazz Festival

Molde, Norway  
July 18-23

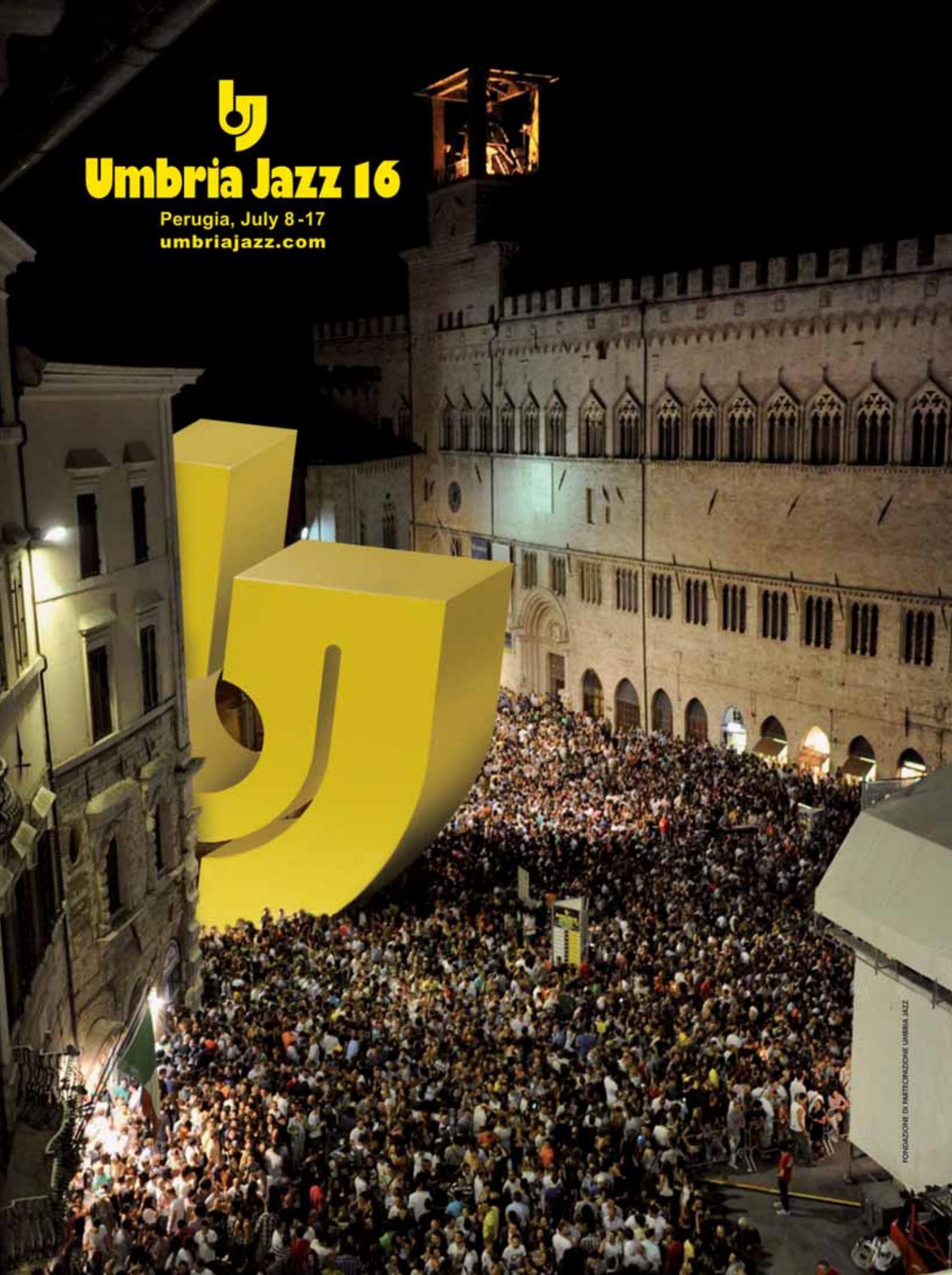
This festival's concerts take place at indoor and



# Umbria Jazz 16

Perugia, July 8-17

[umbriajazz.com](http://umbriajazz.com)



FONDAZIONE DI PATECIZIONE UMBRIA JAZZ

outdoor venues throughout Molde, including the grandiose Molde Cathedral and the new "Perspiration Hall," a New Orleans-inspired club with traditional jazz and creole cooking.

**LINEUP:** Esperanza Spalding, Chick Corea, Ola Kvernberg, Ane Brun, Branford Marsalis Quartet with Kurt Elling, Joss Stone.  
[moldejazz.no](http://moldejazz.no)

## Heineken Jazzaldia

*San Sebastian, Spain*  
July 20-25

The longest-running jazz festival in Spain will present its 51st edition this year. The festival is a mix of ticketed and free concerts, with nearly 100 acts. Last year's audience was estimated at 124,000.

**LINEUP:** Diana Krall, Gloria Gaynor, Branford Marsalis with Kurt Elling, Ellis Marsalis Quartet, John Scofield/Brad Mehldau/Mark Guiliana, Jan Garbarek, Steve Coleman, Jack DeJohnette Trio, José James, Marc Ribot & The Young Philadelphians, Ibrahim Maalouf, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Cyrus Chestnut, Buster Williams, Lenny White, Terje Rypdal + Elephant 9, John Nemeth, Charles Bradley, Bobo Stenson Trio.  
[heinekenjazzaldia.com](http://heinekenjazzaldia.com)

## Langnau Jazz Nights

*Langnau, Switzerland*  
July 26-30

The Langnau Jazz Nights is a unique festival in the heart of Switzerland. With its incorporated jazz workshop, it is a popular meeting point for musicians from all over Europe and the United States.

**LINEUP:** Jack DeJohnette Trio, Mike Stern/ Bill Evans Band featuring Darryl Jones & Keith Carlock, Billy Hart 75th B-Day Group, Kurt Rosenwinkel Trio.  
[jazz-nights.ch](http://jazz-nights.ch)

## Llandudno Jazz Festival

*Conwy, Wales*  
July 29-31

Jazz enthusiasts and lovers of popular music alike will arrive in the seaside resort of Llandudno this summer to enjoy three days and nights of extraordinary performances.

**LINEUP:** Tina May, Art Themen, David Newton, Nicola Farnon, Peter Long, Alan Barnes, Tori Freestone, Clark Tracey.  
[llandudnojazzfestival.com](http://llandudnojazzfestival.com)

## Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival

*Ystad, Sweden*  
Aug. 3-7

This international jazz festival takes place in the small medieval town of Ystad. Concerts are presented at intimate historical venues with 100-400 seats. Quincy Jones is a lifetime honorary ambassador for the festival.

**LINEUP:** Hugh Masekela, Jeff Hamilton, Paolo Fresu, Jan Lundgren, Grégoire Maret, Bill Mays, Joachim Kühn, Dave Liebman,

Avishai Cohen, Adam Baldych, Marlene VerPlanck, Tuesday Night Brass Band.

[ystadjazz.se](http://ystadjazz.se)

## Jazz em Agosto

*Lisbon, Portugal*  
Aug. 4-7, Aug. 10-14

The 33rd edition of Jazz em Agosto will take place in Lisbon, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. There will be a total of 14 concerts and two conferences.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included RED Trio & John Butcher, Lok 03, The Wadada Leo Smith's The Great Lake Suites.  
[musica.gulbenkian.pt/jazz](http://musica.gulbenkian.pt/jazz)

## Nisville Jazz Festival

*Nis, Serbia*  
Aug. 11-14

Six bands perform each evening at two connected stages in the ancient fortress of Nis. There are also many free stages in the fortress and in the city.

**LINEUP:** Al Di Meola, Cyrus Chestnut Trio featuring Lenny White and Buster Williams, Shakatak, Soweto Kinch, Joss Stone, Li Gao Yang Group, Golden Buda Jazz Band, Eyot & Friends, Tango Jazz Quartet.  
[nisville.com](http://nisville.com)

## Oslo Jazz Festival

*Oslo, Norway*  
Aug. 14-20

The 30th anniversary of the Oslo Jazz Festival, known as one of the major jazz festivals in Norway, will present 60-70 concerts covering all styles of jazz in 15-18 venues, including churches, jazz clubs and an opera house. The Nordic Showcase presents concerts by music students and emerging artists.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers include Snarky Puppy, Brad Mehldau, Django Bates, Illinois Jaquet Big Band.  
[oslojazz.com](http://oslojazz.com)

## Saalfelden International Jazz Festival

*Saalfelden, Austria*  
Aug. 25-28

This festival has a reputation as a forum for the most experimental of musicians. This year's edition will host a total of 31 concerts over four days on six stages with a breathtaking view of the Steinernes Meer Plateau.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's musicians included Rob Mazurek and Black Cube, Angelica Sanchez Quintet, Steve Coleman and the Council of Balance, Matthew Shipp, Christian Muthspiel Trio, James "Blood" Ulmer.  
[jazzsaalfelden.com](http://jazzsaalfelden.com)

## Jazz Festival Willisau

*Willisau, Switzerland*  
Aug. 31-Sept. 4

Presenting a melting pot of jazz, rock and other genres, this modern festival takes

place each year in the medieval town of Willisau at the foot of Napf Mountain.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Dave Douglas, Atomic, Los Dos & Orchestra, Ellery Eskelin, Sons of Kemet, The Thick Fingers featuring Peter Brötzmann, Jim Campilongo Trio, Chris Lightcap's Bigmouth, Faster Toller Meier, Michael Wintsch, John Abercrombie Quartet.  
[jazzfestivalwillisau.ch](http://jazzfestivalwillisau.ch)

## Akbank Jazz Festival

*Istanbul, Turkey*  
Oct. 12-23

Celebrating its 26th edition this year, Akbank has hosted prominent international jazz figures and paved the way for emerging and promising next-generation artists. The festival is a versatile organization that presents concerts, panels, workshops, film screenings and social responsibility projects.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's headliners included David Sanborn, Manu Katché, Joe Lovano & John Scofield.  
[akbankjazzfestival.com](http://akbankjazzfestival.com)

## Baloise Session

*Basel, Switzerland*  
Oct. 21-Nov. 8

Fans enjoy the club-like atmosphere of the Baloise Session music festival, where they sit at candle-lit club tables located just a few meters from the stage.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past headliners include Eric Clapton, Iggy Pop, Lionel Richie.  
[baloisession.ch](http://baloisession.ch)

## Jazzfest Berlin

*Berlin, Germany*  
Nov. 3-6

Since its inception in 1964, the Berlin Jazzfest has presented more than 5,100 artists and 1,200 bands from all around the world. With an increasing emphasis on contemporary European jazz, concerts are held at the Haus der Berliner Festspiele along with satellite venues, including a church, jazz club and an arts academy. ARD and Deutschlandradio document the proceedings with simulcasts and live recordings.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Charles Lloyd, Keith Tippett, Louis Moholo-Moholo, Vincent Peirani.  
[berlinerfestspiele.de](http://berlinerfestspiele.de)

## EFG London Jazz Festival

*London, England*  
Nov. 11-20

This festival has long been acclaimed for showcasing a heady mix of talent from around the world. This fest is widely acknowledged for delivering world-class artists and emerging stars.

**LINEUP:** Maria Schneider, Terence Blanchard, Dave Holland, Slowly Moving Camera, Sons of Kemet, Cassandra Wilson, Kurt Elling.  
[efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk](http://efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk)

Thanks to all jazz lovers,  
Akbank Jazz Festival is celebrating its 26<sup>th</sup> year.

12<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> October

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# OTHER INTERNATIONAL

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

## Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

April 16-24

This celebration of jazz also incorporates the indigenous music of Trinidad and Tobago. Sister island to Trinidad, Tobago is the quintessential Caribbean island, with secluded beaches, quaint villages, private villas and award-winning eco attractions that include the Main Ridge Rainforest, the oldest protected reserve in the Western Hemisphere.

**LINEUP:** Lauryn Hill, Etienne Charles, Maxwell and Shaggy, Arthur Tappin and Band, Third World, Roy Cape featuring Blaxx.  
[tobagojazzexperience.com](http://tobagojazzexperience.com)

## Saint Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival

Saint Lucia, Caribbean

April 29-May 8

This festival will feature a multitude of musical performances and art showcases throughout the island. Locations span from Saint Lucia's iconic Pigeon Island National Park, where main stage events kick off on May 6, to various other venues island-wide. An Arts Village with a dedicated site will feature literary, visual and performing arts, while the acclaimed fashion show "Hot Couture" will return with a spotlight on Saint Lucia and the region's cutting-edge style.

**LINEUP:** George Benson, Donald Harrison Jr., Joey Alexander, Kool & the Gang, Marc Anthony, Shaggy, Air Supply, Omi, Kassav.  
[stluciajazz.org](http://stluciajazz.org)

## KL International Jazz & Arts Festival

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

May 26-29

This year the festival will take place at the University of Malaya and offer a variety of styles, including mainstream, smooth and classic jazz as well as other genres.

**LINEUP:** See website. Past performers have included Ahmad Jamal, David Sanborn, Lee Ritenour, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Eric Wyatt, Tinho Pereira.  
[klinternationaljazz.com](http://klinternationaljazz.com)

## Jamaica Ocho Rios International Jazz Festival

Ocho Rios, Kingston, Jamaica

May 29-June 5

Spread across three cities (Ocho Rios, Montego Bay and Kingston), with workshops, a school band competition, jam sessions and free public concerts, the festival is accessible to locals and visitors alike.

**LINEUP:** See website. Last year's performers included Dean Fraser, Lorraine Klaasen, Ginetta's Vendetta and the Jamaica Big Band conducted by Marjorie Whylie.  
[ochoriosjazz.com](http://ochoriosjazz.com)

## Melbourne International Jazz Festival

Melbourne, Australia

June 3-12

This festival takes place in multiple venues, including concert halls, arts venues, jazz clubs and the streets of Melbourne. Diverse programming includes modern masters of jazz, late-night art parties and free events.

**LINEUP:** Esperanza Spalding, Wayne Shorter, more TBA.  
[melbournejazz.com](http://melbournejazz.com)

## Savassi Festival

Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil

July 8-17

Savassi Festival is an annual jazz and instrumental music festival that originated in Brazil in 2003. The three editions this year take place in Uberlândia, Minas Gerais (May 28), Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais (July 8-17) and Rio de Janeiro (July 11-17). Savassi is a matrix of musical activities that includes contests, recordings, artistic collaborations, exhibitions, artistic residencies and a host of live concerts, representing the full spectrum of jazz.

**LINEUP:** Dave Liebman, João Bosco, Sergio Krakowski with guest Edmar Castañeda, Edu Lobo, Guinga, Orquestra Ouro Preto, Chico Pinheiro Quartet, Hércules Gomes, Clarice Assad, Mereneu Project, Gilson Peranzetta e Mauro Senise, Caixa Cubo, Pedro Martins Trio and special guests the Rafael Martini Trio.  
[savassifestival.com.br](http://savassifestival.com.br)

## Devonport Jazz

Devonport, Tasmania, Australia

July 28-31

Celebrating 15 years, Devonport Jazz features a host of Australian and Tasmanian artists in a range of cozy venues in and around Devonport. The festival includes a variety of jazz and blues styles in a series of special events, dances, dinners and concerts.

**LINEUP:** Emma Pask, more TBA.  
[devonportjazz.com](http://devonportjazz.com)

## Curaçao North Sea Jazz Festival

Willemstad, Curaçao

Sept. 1-3

In 2010, the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland gained a younger sister: Curaçao North Sea Jazz. The combination of great music and a tropical atmosphere makes for an unforgettable experience. This has quickly become a marquee musical event of the Caribbean, drawing thousands of fans to Curaçao.

**LINEUP:** TBA. Past performers have included Prince, Mana, Stevie Wonder, Sting, Carlos Santana, Alicia Keys, John Legend, Juanes, Ruben Blades.  
[curacaonorthseajazz.com](http://curacaonorthseajazz.com)



## Rio das Ostras Jazz & Blues Festival

Rio das Ostras, Brazil

Sept. 8-11

During the 14th edition of the Rio das Ostras Jazz & Blues Festival, a selection of top musicians and performers will play on four outdoor stages around the beach and the beautiful landscapes of the city.

**LINEUP:** Robben Ford, Incognito, Omar Hakim, Matt Schofield, Carolyn Wonderland.  
[azulproducoes.com.br](http://azulproducoes.com.br)

## Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival

Oranjestad, Aruba

Sept. 23-24

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, CSJF is a two-day, three-stage event with a food court and an art gallery.

**LINEUP:** Kool & the Gang, Unity, Iza-line Calister, Tony Succar.  
[caribbeanseajazz.com](http://caribbeanseajazz.com)

## Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival

Wangaratta, Victoria, Australia

Oct. 28-30

With more than 200 jazz and blues artists performing a diverse mix of jazz of all styles, this festival hosts a National Jazz Awards competition to encourage and promote young musicians.

**LINEUP:** TBA. Last year's performers included Dave Douglas, Alex Hahn & The Blue Riders, Alister Spence Trio, Arabesk, Ash Grunwald, David Friesen.  
[wangarattajazz.com](http://wangarattajazz.com)

## Dominican Republic Jazz Festival

Puerto Plata, Sosua and Cabarete, Dominican Republic

Nov. 8-12

This festival annually presents a series of free concerts on the north coast. Workshops and clinics for children are offered along with specialized workshops for musicians through FEDUJAZZ, the non-profit education foundation that partners with the festival.

**LINEUP:** TBA. Last year's headliners included David Sánchez Quintet, John Patitucci, Pedrito Martínez Group, Roy Assaf Trio.  
[drjazzfestival.com](http://drjazzfestival.com)



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Director of Jazz Studies Bobby Watson (center) performs with students from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

## Watson Applies Blakey's Approach at UMKC

**SAXOPHONIST BOBBY WATSON** WAS fresh out of the University of Miami when, in 1975, he headed for New York. Barely two years later, he joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. Four years after that, he headed out on his own.

But the Blakey imprint was profound. In Watson's teaching at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (where he is the William D. and Mary Grant/Missouri Professor of Jazz Studies as well as director of jazz studies), he has assumed something of the drummer's legacy, shaping young musicians through his generosity on the bandstand and off.

When Watson arrived at the university in 2000—a kind of homecoming, because he had grown up in the Kansas City area—he had his work cut out for him. The jazz courses were few in number, amounting to what Watson termed “a vanity program” for students at the Conservatory of Music and Dance.

Building the program took time and sensitivity. “I didn't want to just radically make a hard right or left,” he said. “In the beginning, there were compromises.” An early rewrite of the curriculum retained requirements that jazz students attend classical lectures and submit themselves to classical juries. The program took a big step forward when saxophonist Dan Thomas, a part-time professor, became more involved. He and Watson came up with a more extensive curriculum.

Today, UMKC's jazz students need not take

classical courses. About 50 full-time jazz studies majors and another 20 or so non-majors enjoy a full panoply of jazz courses and participate in a dozen or so large and small ensembles.

“From Day 1, they're completely immersed in jazz,” Watson explained.

But classroom work is only half the story; what really sets the program apart is the extent to which the students, in an organized manner, apply what they learn during the day to real-world situations.

“You can't learn this music in a vacuum,” Watson said, adding that, like Blakey before him, he makes sure his charges hang out together. “That's what the Messengers were about.”

In earlier years, he mandated that students attend jam sessions. He even provided an opportunity to do so by inaugurating a weekly session at a spot called Mike's Tavern. Before long, interest in the jazz program grew so much that he was able to discontinue that session.

The UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance Concert Jazz Orchestra was featured on Watson's album *The Gates BBQ Suite* (Lafiya Music). The extended piece honored Kansas City and its contributions to jazz.

Watson relates to his students in a Blakey-inspired manner. “I tell them all the time that our big band is not a class,” he said. “You're in Bobby's band. You have responsibilities. I expect them to prepare like professionals and not be the weak link.”

—Phillip Lutz



Ethan Iverson

MICHAEL PEREZ

**Good Addition:** New England Conservatory's Jazz Studies Department has hired pianist Ethan Iverson, known for his work with the collective The Bad Plus and other prominent jazz groups, to join the jazz studio faculty beginning with the 2016–'17 academic year. “After visiting NEC recently, I was impressed with the level of students and the general commitment to searching out creative music,” said Iverson. “Teaching is something I've been more and more attracted to recently: It is a natural outgrowth of my blog Do the Math. At NEC I expect to grow personally and artistically alongside the students.”

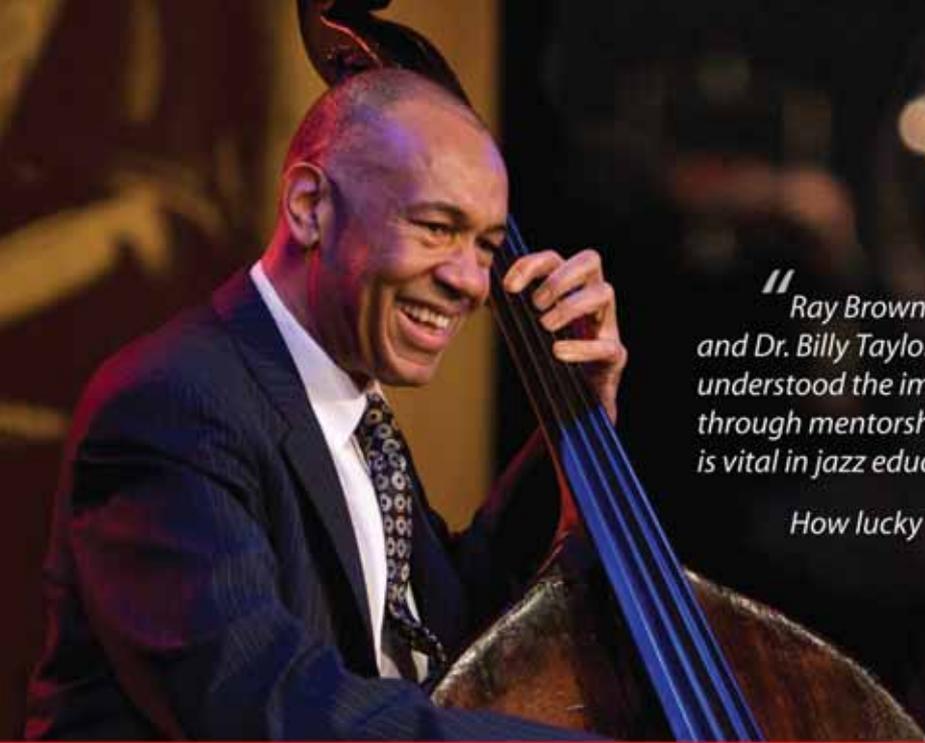
[necmusic.edu/jazz](http://necmusic.edu/jazz)

**Grammy Camp:** The Grammy Foundation has announced that Grammy Camp for talented high school students will be held this summer in three U.S. cities: Nashville, Tennessee, May 31–June 4, hosted by Belmont University; Los Angeles, June 18–27, hosted by University of Southern California Thornton School of Music; and New York, July 31–Aug. 8, hosted by Converse Rubber Tracks. The interactive camps focus on all aspects of commercial music and will feature tracks in production, music journalism, video production and music business.

[grammyintheschools.com](http://grammyintheschools.com)

**CJC Scholarship:** Living Jazz has announced an opportunity to win a scholarship to the California Jazz Conservatory as part of the lineup of prizes for Jazz Search West 2016. The California Jazz Conservatory (formerly the Jazzschool Institute) is a music school offering the aspiring professional a comprehensive four-year degree program culminating in a bachelor's degree in jazz studies. The CJC provides a challenging curriculum of performance, jazz theory and improvisation, ear training, composition, arranging, transcription and analysis, and music history courses, taught by professional artists and educators. Coursework also includes music business, music technology and financial planning.

[livingjazz.org](http://livingjazz.org)



*“ Ray Brown, Clark Terry, Milt Hinton, Billy Higgins and Dr. Billy Taylor are but a small number of jazz icons who understood the importance of advancing this music through mentorship. Relationships with strong mentors is vital in jazz education.*

*How lucky we are that JEN gets it. ”*

*— John Clayton*

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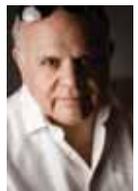
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<b>92nd Street Y – Jazz in July</b> ..... 96 92y.org/jazz	<b>Galaxy Audio</b> .....23 galaxyaudio.com	<b>Roberto's Winds</b> .....53, 55, 57, 59 robertoswinds.com
<b>Akbank Jazz Festival</b> .....139 akbankjaz.com	<b>Gretsch Drums</b> .....37 gretschdrums.com	<b>Rochester Jazz Festival</b> ..... 100 rochesterjazz.com
<b>Amelia Island Jazz Festival</b> .....108 ameliaislandjazzfestival.com	<b>Healdsburg Jazz Festival</b> ..... 125 healdsburgjazzfestival.org	<b>Rovner</b> ..... 80 rovnerproducts.com
<b>Antigua</b> ..... 85 antiguapro-one.com	<b>I. J. F. O.</b> ..... 90 ijfo.org	<b>Sabian</b> ..... 76 sabian.com/en
<b>Atlanta Jazz Festival</b> .....109 atlantafestivals.com	<b>Idyllwild Jazz in the Pines</b> ..... 127 idyllwildarts.org	<b>Sam Ash</b> .....81 samash.com
<b>Beechler</b> ..... 68 beechler.com	<b>Iowa City Jazz Festival</b> ..... 113 summerofthearts.org	<b>San Francisco Jazz Festival</b> ..... 119 sfjazz.org
<b>Blue Note Records</b> ..... 15 bluenote.com	<b>Jacksonville Jazz Festival</b> ..... 110 jaxjazzfest.net	<b>San Jose Jazz</b> ..... 121 summerfest.sanjosejazz.org
<b>Burlington Discover Jazz Festival</b> .....102 discoverjazz.com	<b>Jazz Education Network</b> .....143 jazzednet.org	<b>Smoke Sessions</b> ..... 51, 60 smokesessionsrecords.com
<b>Cannonball Music</b> ..... 11 cannonballmusic.com	<b>Jazz Foundation of America</b> ..... 70 jazzfoundation.org	<b>Sony Music</b> ..... 8 sonymusic.com
<b>Capri Records</b> .....10 caprirecords.com	<b>JJ Babbitt</b> ..... 43 jjbabbitt.com	<b>Strikezone Records</b> ..... 25 davestryker.com
<b>Casio</b> ..... 77 casiomusicgear.com	<b>Jody Jazz</b> ..... 7 jodyjazz.com	<b>Summer Solstice Jazz Festival</b> ..... 114 eljazzfest.com
<b>Catfood Records</b> ..... 68 catfoodrecords.com	<b>KB Saxophones</b> .....29, 87 kbsax.com	<b>Summit Records</b> ..... 69 summitrecords.com
<b>Centrum's Jazz Port Townsend</b> .....124 centrum.org/programs/jazz	<b>L.A. Jazz Philharmonic Association Jazz At The Bowl</b> ..... 123 hollywoodbowl.com	<b>Sunnyside Records</b> ..... 61, 63 sunnysiderecords.com
<b>Chicago Jazz Festival</b> ..... 116 chicagojazzfestival.us	<b>Legere</b> ..... 9 legere.com	<b>Superial Reeds</b> ..... 12 superial.com
<b>Clearwater Jazz Holiday</b> .....107 clearwaterjazz.com	<b>Litchfield Jazz Festival</b> ..... 104 litchfieldjazzfest.com	<b>Syracuse Jazz Festival</b> ..... 97 syracusejazzfest.com
<b>Concord Music Group</b> ..... 18 concordmusicgroup.com	<b>Mack Avenue</b> .....19, 21 mackavenue.com	<b>Telluride Jazz Festival</b> ..... 122 telluridejazz.org
<b>D'Addario</b> .....148 daddario.com	<b>MacSax</b> ..... 75 macsax.com	<b>Tri-C Jazz Festival</b> ..... 115 tri-cjazzfest.com
<b>DC Jazz Festival</b> ..... 95 dcjazzfest.org	<b>Montreal Jazz Festival</b> ..... 129, 133 montrealjazzfest.com	<b>Troy Roberts Music</b> ..... 56 troyroberts.com
<b>Detroit Jazz Festival</b> ..... 111 detroitjazzfest.com	<b>Music Dispatch</b> ..... 39 musicdispatch.com	<b>U.S. Army Band</b> ..... 4 goarmy.com/audition
<b>Dot Time Records</b> ..... 67 dottimerecords.com	<b>New School</b> ..... 47 newschool.edu/jazz	<b>U.S. Army Field Band</b> ..... 56 armyfieldband.com
<b>Eastman Music</b> ..... 2 eastmanmusiccompany.com	<b>Newport Jazz Festival</b> .....101, 103, 105 newportjazzfest.org	<b>Umbria Jazz</b> ..... 137 umbriajazz.com
<b>ECM Records</b> ..... 65 ecmrecords.com	<b>Oregon Coast Jazz Party</b> .....126 oregoncoastjazzparty.org	<b>Universal Music Enterprises</b> ..... 48 umusic.com
<b>Edgefest</b> ..... 114 kerrytownconcerthouse.com	<b>Ottawa Jazz Festival</b> ..... 135 ottawajazzfestival.com	<b>USA Horn</b> ..... 80 usahorn.net
<b>Elkhart Jazz Festival</b> ..... 112 elkhartjazzfestival.com	<b>P.Mauriat</b> .....147 pmauriatmusic.com	<b>Vail Jazz Party</b> ..... 124 vailjazz.org
<b>Entertainment Cruise Productions</b> ..... 5 esp cruises.com	<b>Percussion Marketing Council</b> ..... 89 playdrums.com	<b>Vancouver Jazz Festival</b> ..... 131 coastaljazz.ca
<b>Equinox Music &amp; Entertainment</b> ..... 67 equinox-music.com	<b>Pintch Hard Records</b> ..... 64 lesliepintchik.com	<b>Vandoren</b> ..... 3 WeAreVandoren.com
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	<b>Rhino Entertainment</b> ..... 20 rhino.com	<b>Westville Guitars</b> ..... 24 westvilleguitars.com
		<b>Yamaha</b> ..... 17, 46 usa.yamaha.com

## Arturo O’Farrill

Arturo O’Farrill’s “Best Instrumental Composition” award at the 2016 Grammys for “The Afro-Latin Jazz Suite” from *Cuba: The Conversation Continues* (Motéma) raises the 55-year-old pianist-composer-arranger’s total to three for his musical production with the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra. This is his first Blindfold Test.

### Pepe Rivero Big Band

“Gandinga, Mondongo and Epistrophy with Sandunga” (*Monk And The Cuban Big Band*, Universal, 2013) Reinier Elizarde “El Negron,” bass; Rivero, piano; Georvis Pico, drums; Raul Gil Antillanos, Manuel Machado, Javier Arevalo, trumpets; Julio Montalvo, Julien Ferrer Riol, Dennis Cuni, trombones; Juan Ramon Callejas, Ernesto Millan, alto saxophone; Bobby Martinez, Segundo Mijarez, tenor saxophone; Rafa Serrano, baritone saxophone.

That’s “Sandunga,” the famous Frank Emilio composition. Is it a Cuban big band? Now it’s “Epistrophy.” The bassist is old school, almost Cachao-like in his solo style, not virtuosic, play-a-lot-of-notes nonsense, but connected to the *tumbao*. Is it the pianist’s record? Definitely not Chucho. The playing is modern and lean, not histrionic. Elio Villafranca? Was this recorded in Cuba? Here? Overseas—like the WDR Big Band? Pickup orchestra or real orchestra? Beautiful arrangement, with lots of 16th note syncopations, very difficult to play. Right off the bat I thought a Cuban wrote it—the trumpets, trombones and saxophones are interspersed with high precision, the *timba* and sound of the swing are authentic, plus, let’s face it, not many jazz musicians know what “Sandunga” is. 4½ stars.

### Gonzalo Rubalcaba

“Moore” (*XXI Century*, 5Passion, 2011) Rubalcaba, piano; Matt Brewer, bass; Marcus Gilmore, drums.

Aruán Ortiz? David Virelles? Fringy stuff, fresh and new. I admire it. I have no clue. You can’t play with that much freedom unless you’re really listening. This person is not a replicator, is playing intuitively, in touch with the ebb-and-flow second by second, creating a holistic experience, very in tune with himself as a human being. It’s extremely well-played, but not facility for facility’s sake. 5 stars. Gonzalo has redefined everything he does, which is extraordinarily courageous when you have huge success early on in the game.

### Sullivan Fortner

“Passepie” (*Aria*, Impulse!, 2015) Fortner, piano; Tivon Pennicott, soprano saxophone; Aidan Carroll, bass; Joe Dyson, drums.

It’s pleasurable and nice to listen to, but didn’t challenge me in terms of chords or syncopation. Not that things have to be challenging; it’s stupid to make that an aesthetic reason to listen to something. Good composition; I liked the ending. The piece sounds young and studied. It didn’t sound easy to play. The pianist is very accomplished, a lot of contrapuntal skill. 3½ stars.

### Fabian Almazan

“Jambo” (*Rhizome*, ArtistShare/Blue Note, 2014) Almazan, piano; Sara Caswell, Tomoko Omura, violin; Karen Waltuch, viola; Noah Hoffeld, cello; Linda Oh, bass; Henry Cole, drums; Yosvany Terry, chekeré; Mauricio Herrera, batá.

Histrionic. But there’s a *tumbador* in there. String writing, contemporary language, Cuban-based with a conga part, an awareness of Afro-folkloric layering. When it dips into the harmonic world, the chromaticism is almost Romantic, but there are flourishes, clusters and very avant-garde writing. It’s interesting that the piano is mixed down and the drums are loud—the artist wants the composition to be center. I’ll assume the pianist went to ISA or whichever conservatory, but the cognizant use of rhythm shows he’s spent time playing rhythm-based music, and has a



large repertoire of contemporary-sounding sounds, techniques and voicings. 5 stars.

### Pedro Giraudo Big Band

“Push Gift” (*Cuentos*, Zoho, 2015) Giraudo, bass; Alejandro Aviles, Todd Bashore, Luke Batson, John Ellis, Carl Maraghi, saxophones, woodwinds; Jonathan Powell, Miki Hirose, Mat Jodrell, Josh Deutsch, trumpets, flugelhorn; Ryan Keberle, Mike Fahie, Mark Miller, Nate Mayland, trombones; Claudio Ragazzi, guitar; Jess Jurkovic, piano; Franco Pinna, drums; Paulo Stagnaro, cajon.

There’s something very Argentinian about this, and Spanish at the same time. It starts out with the cajon, a very site-specific rhythm, then a beautiful, classically written fugue in the introduction. The voicings are well-done. Straightahead, lyrical music. I’d say Guillermo Klein or Emilio Solla. Neither? I’ve played with the sax player [tenor soloist John Ellis], who plays beautifully, but I’m blanking on the name. 5 stars.

### Osmany Paredes

“Perla Marina/Longina” (*Trio Time*, Menduvia, 2013) Paredes, piano.

Lovely playing, elegant and simple, but I have issues with the constant arpeggiation in the left hand. Every other chord is rolled. For a minute, I thought of Tete Montoliu. 4 stars.

### Edsel Gómez

“The Chant” (*Road To Udaipur*, Zoho, 2015) Gomez, piano; Areismar Alex Ayala, bass; Bruce Cox, drums; Felipe Lamoglia, tenor saxophone; Roberto Pitre Vázquez, flute; Fabio Tagliaferri, viola; Walimir Gil, flugelhorn.

Alfredo Rodriguez? This is very Cuban, despite the odd meter. Very modern. [clusters] That’s great. Sometimes Cuban music is divided into Afro-folkloric seriousness or heavy-duty hyper-virtuosity. It’s elegantly played, and the rhythm section is good. It’s fun, tongue-in-cheek, clever and in command of its elements. 4 stars.

### Emilio Solla y la Inestable de Brooklyn

“Raro” (*Second Half*, Self Release, 2014) Solla, piano; Pablo Aslan, bass; Eric Doob, drums; John Ellis, Tim Armacost, saxophone, woodwinds; Alex Norris, trumpet; Ryan Keberle, trombone; Meg Okura, violin; Victor Prieto, accordion.

Pablo Ziegler? Pablo Aslan? I’ve heard this; I don’t remember the record. Ah, Emilio Solla y la Inestable de Brooklyn. This was up for the Grammy the year we won it, and it’s extraordinary. This is Emilio at his best. Like a lot of his writing, it has a cinematic edge, with a narrative arc and characters in the music. Emilio has a large story to tell; nothing he writes is simple. When you can be a storyteller as a composer and improvising artist, that’s pretty huge. 5 stars.

DB

The “Blindfold Test” is a listening test that challenges the featured artist to discuss and identify the music and musicians who performed on selected recordings. The artist is then asked to rate each tune using a 5-star system. No information is given to the artist prior to the test.

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