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BY JOSEF WOODARD

This fiercely independent jazz band, currently riding high with world tours and a quickly expanding discography on its own GroundUP label, has become a model of self-reliance.

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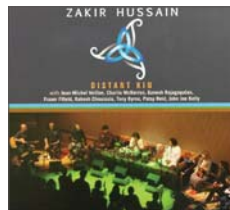
Randy Brecker performs with the Concert Jazz Band at the University of Missouri at Columbia on Nov. 7, 2015.

KEVIN MATHEIN/IMIZOU CREATIVE

On the cover, Snarky Puppy bandleader Michael League (front), with his bandmates (back row, from left): Mike “Maz” Maher, Nate Werth, Shaun Martin; (middle row, from left) Jay Jennings, Jason “JT” Thomas, Justin Stanton and Chris Bullock. Photo shot by Jimmy and Dena Katz at ShapeShifter Lab in Brooklyn on Sept. 17, 2015.



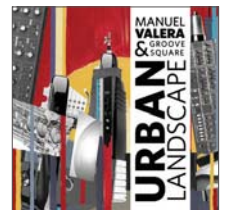
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Snarky Puppy and collaborators who
play on *Family Dinner, Volume Two*

STELLA K

Let's Get Together

WE LIVE IN A TIME OF DISUNITY AND strife. Today's news headlines are often about tensions between two groups who cannot see eye-to-eye, whether it's politicians accusing each other of misdeeds or community activists at odds with the local police department.

Some of these divisive issues are extremely serious, while others amount to petty bickering. Whether the problem is large or small, it seems that a solution could be found—or maybe some progress would be made—if the two parties could just reach some kind of common ground and *listen* to one another. Perhaps our civic leaders should look to artists for examples of how people from diverse backgrounds can work together toward a common goal.

One of the key community builders in jazz today is drummer Mike Reed (who is profiled in this issue). He wears many hats. Reed founded the wonderful, adventurous Chicago jazz venue Constellation; he is also founding director of the Pitchfork Music Festival and the programming chair of the Chicago Jazz Festival. In each of these roles, he works to bring people together. During a recent interview with Senior Contributor Aaron Cohen, Reed said, "The thing I discovered about myself ... the thing that I'm most interested in, is getting people together and being a part of it."

That desire to unify people is manifest in his programming at Constellation, where

he strives to get young audience members and young musicians in the same room with revered veterans like Roscoe Mitchell and Wadada Leo Smith. Such gestures help eliminate the perception that there's a "generation gap" between older and younger musicians.

As Reed told Cohen, if you want to get to know someone better, invite them over for dinner. And that's exactly what the band Snarky Puppy has done, particularly with its acclaimed album *Family Dinner, Volume One*, and the new release *Family Dinner, Volume Two* (described in our cover story). The above photo of Snarky Puppy & Co. brings to mind the phrase "It takes a village." Depicted in this photo are band-leader Michael League (crouching in front, with a cajon) and the "family" of musicians who made the new album. Collaborators included Becca Stevens, Väsen, Susana Baca, Charlie Hunter, Salif Keita, Knowler, Jeff Coffin, Laura Mvula and David Crosby.

We certainly don't intend to belittle the extremely challenging problems that our civic leaders face nowadays. But maybe, just *maybe*, if they look at what artists like Snarky Puppy are doing, they'll work a bit harder on bringing people together.

Let us know what you think about the role of jazz in unifying people. Post on our Facebook page or email us at editor@downbeat.com. Thanks for interacting with us, and please keep on reading.

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Woods' Final Bow

Thank you for your tribute to Phil Woods (The Beat, December). My wife and I saw his final concert, on Sept. 4 at MCG Jazz in Pittsburgh. I first discovered Woods' artistry on some Monk recordings I bought in the late '60s, and I have been a fan ever since.

During that Pittsburgh concert, as brilliant as his playing was, Woods seemed labored at times. On at least one occasion it seemed as if he just stopped playing and turned the music over to the orchestra. (This was a *Charlie Parker With Strings* concert.) That led me to wonder if he had planned on retirement earlier, or

if he made his retirement announcement on the spur of the moment. At several points he reminisced about his career with wonderful stories. He described his love of Dizzy Gillespie and his work with him—quite the opposite of his feelings toward Benny Goodman, primarily based on his being a sideman on Goodman's U.S.S.R. tour.

All in all, it was a wonderful night and we were honored to be there and hear him. It left us with memories that will stick with us forever—seeing and hearing this wonderful artist swinging so perfectly.

BOB & DIANE ANDERSON
MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA



Phil Woods at his final concert, Sept. 4, 2015

NATE GUIDRY

Underrated Trudell

As a long-time jazz fan and reader of DownBeat, I just can't believe the disconnect that some of your reviewers have regarding straight-ahead, swinging jazz. It seems like the "cool" thing now is to be "out" and to say, "To heck with tradition." One recent example is Bob Doerschuk's review of the Dan Trudell Trio's album *Dan Trudell Plays The Piano* in your January issue. If you're into traditional jazz, there's no way that's only a 3½-star album! At the very least, it should get 4½ stars. Every song on the album stands on its own.



In the April issue, I noticed that the Blindfold Test with vibraphonist Warren Wolf did not include any selections by one of the greatest vibes players of all time, Tito Puente. When I looked at the other tracks included in the Blindfold Tests for the year, I noticed there were no selections by Latin Jazz artists. This is an egregious and disheartening oversight. Please stop treating Latin Jazz in a token manner and start including it in the Blindfold Test.

MARCELLA JENKINS
MARCELLAJENKINS@YAHOO.COM

Editor's Note: Our December 2015 issue included a Blindfold Test with Pete Escovedo & Sheila E. in which they were asked to comment on Tito Puente's "3-D Mambo" and Machito's "Cannonology."

Perhaps reviewers should designate their genre preferences because otherwise they might turn people off to fantastic listening opportunities.

KEVIN MCINTOSH
STERLING HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN

Remembering Mark Murphy

The great jazz singer Mark Murphy departed this life on Oct. 22, leaving a legacy of fantastic recordings that we will always treasure (First Take, January). Michael Bourne said it well in his First Take essay: Murphy was "a singer's singer." We shall not see his like again.

JACK WHITLINGER
APOLLO, PENNSYLVANIA

Where's the Latin Jazz?

I just browsed through most of the 2015 issues of DownBeat, give or take one or two.

Charity Case

In your October issue, the review of Mark Ribowsky's book *Dreams To Remember: Otis Redding, Stax Records, and the Transformation of Southern Soul* made a reference to Redding's participation in the 1967 Monterey International Pop Festival. I'd like to offer some details.

All the proceeds from the festival did indeed go to a charitable fund that continues to receive revenue from CD and DVD sales, licensing of film/audio clips, etc., which supports a variety of educational and artist-development programs. All the musicians who performed at Monterey were told in advance that their time was to be donated, and they all agreed. The festival could not have happened without the bands waiving their fees. The only artist who was paid was Ravi Shankar, whose

deal was made prior to the involvement of festival producers Lou Adler and John Phillips.

My brother Harvey and I are co-authors of the authoritative history of the festival, *A Perfect Haze: The Illustrated History of the Monterey International Pop Festival*. I call our book authoritative because Mr. Adler gave us unprecedented access to his exhaustive files, correspondence, legal contracts and other ephemera, which document the event's charitable directive.

KENNETH KUBERNIK
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

In the Doghouse

I just read the results of the Readers Poll in your December issue. Snarky Puppy?!? Maybe when my fellow readers were voting in the Jazz Group category, they thought they were voting for the band with the cutest name.

JOHN BARRETT
ATLANTA

Accentuate the Positive

It's sad to see readers spending time and energy to rip magnificent artists like Charles Lloyd and Mary Halvorson in the Chords & Discords section in recent issues of DownBeat. Everyone is certainly entitled to their own opinion, and even critics famously disagree on artists and music at times. But why go through the trouble of writing a letter to the editor in order to slam artists that so many others love? Innovative musicians like Lloyd and Halvorson should be celebrated for what they bring to jazz, which is one of the key reasons I have subscribed to DownBeat for years.

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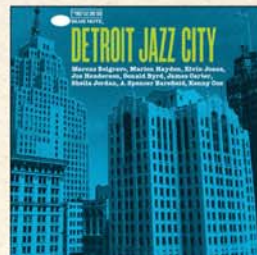
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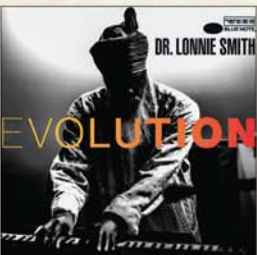
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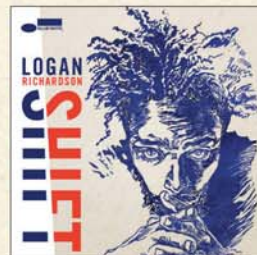
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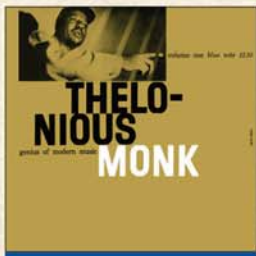
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Beat

Horn Wins Monk Institute Jazz Vocals Competition

Distinguishing superb scatting from the superfluous kind was part of the task for the expert judges at this year's Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Vocals Competition. The victor, Jazzmeia Horn of Dallas, demonstrated her talents in traditional singing as well as the more difficult art of scatting.

On Nov. 14 at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall, 11 hopefuls took the stage, each of them launching into intricate, wordless improvisations that more often proved far more prolix than profound.

Dee Dee Bridgewater—who served as a judge alongside Patti Austin, Al Jarreau, Freddy Cole and Luciana Souza—commented that honing the art of scatting takes a long time.

"When you're young, scat-singing is more of an idea instead of an art; you get better the more you do it," Bridgewater explained. "You have to grow into it and develop your phrasing. The younger singers seem to create their scat vocals before they even get on stage; so it's not really improvisation and communicating with the musicians on stage. Scatting needs to come out of the musical conversation, in real time."

As winner of the Monk Competition, Horn received a \$25,000 scholarship and a record deal with Concord Music Group.

The second-place finalist—Veronica Swift of Charlottesville, Virginia—received a \$15,000 scholarship. Third-place finalist Vuyolwethu Sotashe, who hails from Mthatha, South Africa, received a \$10,000 scholarship.

During the semifinals, Horn immediately established herself as a favorite by delivering a bristling reading of Monk's "Evidence," on which she spat out crisscrossing passages with the rhythmic flow of a freestyle rapper. The 24-year-old singer was clearly in a Betty Carter state of mind, as she embodied the icon's playful sense of daringness, even mimicking some her body movements. Horn exhibited a flair for singing rhythmically complex lines in ballad form with her alluring rendition of Jimmy Rowles' "The Peacocks," before explicitly paying her debt to Carter with

From left: Vuyolwethu Sotashe, Veronica Swift, Jazzmeia Horn, Quincy Jones, Gretchen Parlato and Luciana Souza at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood on Nov. 15



COURTESY STEVE MOUNDER/THELONIOUS MONK INSTITUTE OF JAZZ

a frisky take on her composition "Tight."

The next day, at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Horn dazzled even more. Before closing her finalists-round performance with a glowing rendition of Herb Ellis' "Detour Ahead," she brought a timely sociopolitical undercurrent to the evening by first singing James Weldon Johnson's "Lift Ev'ry Voice And Sing" before segueing into a barrelhouse makeover of Bobby Timmons and Jon Hendricks' "Moanin'." Here, Horn went far beyond recital mode by imbuing the material with unflinching conviction.

The event also included a moving tribute to music industry icon Quincy Jones, who received the institute's Humanitarian Award. A rotating cast of stars paid their respects with performances of songs related to Jones, ranging from the instrumental themes for TV shows (*Sanford and Son* and *Ironsides*) to jazz standards ("Come Fly With Me," sung with gusto by Seth MacFarlane) to the Michael Jackson hit "Human Nature," highlighted by Wayne Shorter's inquisitive soprano saxophone

—John Murphy

Arianna Neikrug



“Sassy” Winner: Arianna Neikrug took first place in the 4th Annual Sarah Vaughan International Vocal Competition, held Nov. 15 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. The Miami-based vocalist, originally from Los Angeles, will receive an exclusive recording contact with Concord Records, a \$5,000 cash prize and a performance slot at the 2016 Montreal Jazz Festival. The second-place winner was Angela Hagenbach from Kansas City, who was awarded a \$1,500 cash prize, and the third-place winner was Nicole Zuraitis from Brooklyn, who received a \$500 cash award.

More info: njpac.org

Staples on Film: *MAVIS!* is the first documentary on gospel/soul legend and civil rights icon Mavis Staples and her family group, The Staple Singers. Directed by Jessica Edwards, the film will premiere on HBO on Feb. 22 (check local listings for show times). It features live performances, rare archival footage and conversations with friends and contemporaries, including Bob Dylan, Prince, Bonnie Raitt, Chuck D, Sharon Jones and Jeff Tweedy.

More info: mavisstaples.com

Monterey on Tour: The Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour 2016 will play 28 shows from Jan. 14 to March 13. This year’s all-star band includes guitarist/vocalist Raul Midón, saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, trumpeter Nicholas Payton, pianist/musical director Gerald Clayton, bassist Joe Sanders, drummer Gregory Hutchinson (January and February dates) and drummer Kendrick Scott (March dates). The 17-city tour includes a five-night run at Birdland in New York City (Feb. 2–6).

More info: montereyjazzfestival.org

Salvant, Rosenwinkel Stun in Barcelona

UNLIKE OTHER FAMOUS JAZZ FESTIVALS that present multitudes of master practitioners in a compressed amount of time, the Voll-Damm International Jazz Festival of Barcelona proceeds at the stately pace of a late supper in the Catalan capital, allowing its audience a chance to savor the intricacies of each artist with the same intensity that local residents apply to consuming food and wine.

The 47th edition opened on Sept. 26 with a concert by Diana Krall, and entered high gear on Oct. 22 with Chick Corea and The Vigil, presenting between four to six bands a week during the ensuing timeframe. Among them have been a cohort of world-class pianists—Danilo Pérez with the Children of the Light Trio; trios led by Uri Caine, Stefano Bollani and Giovanni Guidi; diasporic explorations by young Cubans Roberto Fonseca and David Virelles; and two concerts apiece by Cuban maestros Chucho Valdés and Gonzalo Rubalcaba.

Another highlight was a Nov. 19 performance at BARTS, a performance space on the Parallel, where singer Cécile McLorin Salvant and her trio performed for a packed house.

Road-tested and synchronous after three weeks into a zig-zagging tour of Europe, pianist Aaron Diehl, bassist Paul Sikivie and drummer Lawrence Leathers took the stage and played a brisk chorus on Lerner and Loewe’s “On The Street Where You Live,” setting up Salvant’s tour de force reading. She inhabited the lyric with a cabaret singer’s finesse and dramatic anima, but improvised upon it with a jazz singer’s swing and gusto, inflecting each syllable with proper emphasis, juxtaposing purrs and hollers as the lyric demanded, moving smoothly through her capacious range.

Salvant applied similar aesthetics to the remaining 13 songs, stamping her personality on a century’s worth of American repertoire with an in-the-moment, all-jazz-is-modern sensibility without ever descending into mannerisms or irony for irony’s sake.

She addressed Bert Williams’ tragicomic 1906 hit “Nobody,” blues queens Bessie Smith (“What’s The Matter Now”) and Blanche Calloway (“Growlin’ Dan”), Judy Garland (“The Trolley Song”), Blossom Dearie (“When In Rome, Do As The Romans Do”), Burt Bacharach (“Wives And Lovers”), Argentine lyricist Felix Luna (“Alfonsina Y El Mar”) and the well-crafted, torchy, Salvant-penned lament “Look At Me.”

It was unclear how fluent in English Salvant’s listeners were, but they hung on her every syllable throughout, captivated by her warm, direct, unaffected stage presence and



Kurt Rosenwinkel performs at the 47th Voll-Damm International Jazz Festival in Barcelona.

the universal language of masterfully rendered notes and tones.

Salvant is Salvant in whatever context she performs, but it must be noted that the trio functioned collaboratively throughout the proceedings, alert to her every cue, and soloing creatively within whatever idiom was in play, a single example being Diehl’s blues-drenched, locked-hands solo on “Growlin’ Dan.”

On the previous two evenings, on the other side of town, in L’Auditori at Barcelona’s Conservatori Liceu, Artistic Director Joan Cararach had booked guitarists Marc Ribot and the Young Philadelphians (Jamaaladeen Tacuma, G. Calvin Weston, Mary Halvorson) and a solo concert by Kurt Rosenwinkel.

For Rosenwinkel, “solo” did not mean unaccompanied. As denoted by two numbers titled “Imaginary Friend” and “Imaginary Friend’s Friend,” he surrounded himself with a laptop, a keyboard, various looping devices and a headset, deploying the gear to create pungent—though static—bass lines and beats that framed long, melodic improvisations.

At the beginning, Rosenwinkel created a drone with a South Indian connotation, then began guitar ruminations that morphed into the motif of “You’ve Changed,” upon which he piggybacked into a stream of melody within which could be detected fragments of “Without A Song” and “Jitterbug Waltz.” On “Path Of The Heart,” from 2010’s *Our Secret World*, he improvised over self-generated clave beats with characteristically luminous tone, which also animated a reading of Monk’s “Ugly Beauty,” which he introduced with upper-partial overtones.

Later, he created a kind of quasi-charanga band, setting up an Afro-Cubanistic 6/8 beat that framed a flowing guitar solo that complemented flute-like synth lines created by his unparalleled left hand. It was melodic playing at the Sonny Rollins-John Scofield level; it seemed he could continue all night long and the audience would still be captivated. —Ted Panken

Blue Note Stars Set Sail

FOR SEVEN DAYS IN LATE OCTOBER/EARLY NOVEMBER, ONE OF the hippest jazz clubs on the planet was no jazz club at all, but rather Cunard Line's flagship *Queen Mary 2*, during the inaugural Cunard/Blue Note "Jazz at Sea" festival, during a transatlantic crossing from Brooklyn to Southampton, England.

Accompanied by label president, bassist/producer Don Was, the musicians onboard included some of Blue Note Records' biggest names: singer Gregory Porter, pianist Robert Glasper, and the Blue Note 75th Anniversary Band, an all-star group featuring Glasper, bassist Derrick Hodge, drummer Kendrick Scott, guitarist Lionel Loueke, saxophonist Marcus Strickland and trumpeter Keyon Harrold (subbing for Ambrose Akinmusire). Other players onboard included drummers E.J. Strickland and Mark Colenburg, pianist Fabian Almazan, keyboardists Michael Aaberg and Federico Peña, guitarist Mike Moreno and bassist/singer Alan Hampton.

The inspiration for the partnership was Cunard's, according to Stanley Birge, vice-president of Cunard, N.A., who explained that by booking jazz stars, the passenger ship line, long known for its cultural programming, is trying to appeal to current customers but also to attract a new generation to the cruise line.

The experiment got off to rather a shaky start after dinner on the first evening, on the stage of the ship's 1,094-seat Royal Court Theatre. Was appeared in his usual shades, dreadlocks and cowboy hat. "How many of you are familiar with Blue Note Records?" he asked. A smattering of applause. "How many are jazz fans?" Another smattering.

The atmosphere seemed tense as the band came out and silently took their places, no one knowing how this would fly with the passengers. They launched into Ornette Coleman's "Turnaround," with a series of playful solos that sometimes left conventional tonality behind. Somewhere



Gregory Porter performs aboard the *Queen Mary 2*.

Caught >

COURTESY CUNARD LINE

between a quarter and a third of the audience headed for the exits.

Porter won over plenty of new fans with his compelling shows, and by the time the 75th Anniversary Band took the stage again a few nights after its first performance, the players had made a few adjustments, incorporating familiar jazz standards like "So What?" to meet the audience halfway. "I thought they were most generous in understanding that a large portion of the audience was uninitiated," Was said. "They played half of *Kind of Blue* last night!" he laughed. "It was really fun."

On the question of whether the paring of Blue Note and Cunard would win new customers to Blue Note or help the label sell more CDs, Was was thoughtful. "My overall feeling ... is that selling records to consumers is not a viable business anymore. So this is a radical, futuristic model for how everybody can make a little bread, and you can bring in new people to hear the music."

Cunard has scheduled two more transatlantic crossings aboard the 2,500-passenger ocean liner in 2016: westbound departing Southampton on Aug. 1 (with Loueke and Herbie Hancock) and eastbound from Brooklyn on Oct. 26 (with Porter and other musicians). —Allen Morrison

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Parks Hones 'Storytelling' Skills

It's the last day of November, and Aaron Parks is home in Brooklyn. He's enjoying his first day off in the last two months after a jammed-packed tour of Europe with James Farm, the collective quartet he's a member of with saxophonist Joshua Redman, bassist Matt Penman and drummer Eric Harland, as well as

On Oct. 12, Parks and Danish tenor saxophonist Christian Vuust released the sublime duo album *Storytelling*, an intimate, melodic gem that combines Danish traditional music with American standards. The Denmark-based Vuust, who was in New York on a two-month residency in 2013, met Parks when he

duo on "Summer Beyond" and it felt good. That's when he proposed to make the duo album. When we recorded in Copenhagen, we didn't do any rehearsing. We just brought tunes in—mostly Christian, who brought in Danish tunes. I brought in "Foolin' Myself," which we had performed with his band, as well as the standards "Ghost Of Yesterday," the Gershwins' "The Man I Love" and "Gone With The Wind." But it was his brainchild. I was just trying to figure out where we were and what service I could give so that I could join the party.

In the album's liner notes, Christian advises musicians to become good storyteller—specifically, to develop the story that lies hidden in every good song, make the story their own and invest in the attempt to communicate the story to the listener."

That's a priority to both of us. I've always thought in terms of narrative in my music. What we're doing is to stay true to the essence of what these songs are, how we can continue the story, to follow through. Not to assert yourself. The story is there, so let's follow it naturally.

Did Christian talk with you beforehand about the meaning behind the Danish songs you played? He said that he felt you "somehow intuitively understand the musical nuances and the artistic messages in the Danish standards."

He told me a little about the lyrics. But more so, he talked about the mood, the essence. Sometimes I wasn't sure if my version was right, but I went on without knowing.

Christian said that when you toured Denmark in October, several people from the audience asked him, "How can Aaron play the Danish songs so well, not having grown up with this music?" He told the people it was because you had a unique artistic sensitivity.

The Danes grew up with these songs, so I end up playing them a little bit differently. They're beautiful songs that I treat with care. I noticed people coming up to me and saying, "I've never heard this song this way. I didn't know it could be done this way." They were pleased. That's what I love about Denmark. It has a great tradition of singing old folk songs. When I was at a master class at Engelsholm [Castle], at the beginning everyone sang three or four songs from the *hojskole* songbooks of Danish tunes. Everyone knows them and they are sung all the time. I love that tradition.

—Dan Ouellette



Aaron Parks performs at Smalls Jazz Club in New York on Dec. 4, 2015.

STEVEN SUSSMAN

spending off-tour dates jamming with Tunisian oud player and singer Dhafer Youssef with the intention of recording together in the future.

Today is supposedly a "down" day, except that Parks has decided to call a rehearsal at his apartment for his eclectic quartet Little Big, comprising guitarist Greg Tuohey, bassist Anders Christensen and drummer Darren Beckett, in preparation for a two-night engagement at Smalls Jazz Club in Greenwich Village. It's a band whose members, while conversant with improvisation-fueled jazz, spend much of their time playing in rock groups and alt-country settings. "This band is one of my top priorities in the coming year," Parks says. "I've written a couple of new songs for it and I'm repurposing some old songs for it. I want to see how it grows and I'm planning on releasing a Little Big album in 2016."

Parks also notes that in October he recorded a trio album with Ben Street and Billy Hart for ECM—a follow-up of sorts for his brilliant solo label debut, 2013's *Arborescence*. It's another one of Parks' high priorities.

enlisted him along with Jeff Ballard and Ben Street to record his *Urban Hymn* album. Vuust described why he and the pianist clicked: "Aaron has an undogmatic, open, yet personal approach to a song. He is a non-lick player; he is true to the song. It's all about the song. This inspires me a lot."

The *Storytelling* package includes a CD and 44-page hard-cover booklet with the song lyrics—in English as well as Danish—along with Vuust's commentaries. Parks interacted with Vuust again when the pianist was a faculty member and artist in residence for two-and-a-half months at JazzDanmark in Copenhagen, where he composed music and performed with Danish jazz musicians. During the end of his stay, he and Vuust recorded *Storytelling*.

What attracted you to doing an album with Christian?

I liked the way he played—to the point, to the center. And his tone is beautiful and warm. When we toured his *Urban Hymn* album, we'd

Berlin Jazz Fest Balances Tradition, Adventure

Caught >

ONE DISTINGUISHING ASPECT OF THE BERLIN JAZZ FESTIVAL IS ITS rotating director's chair, which makes for an ever-shifting change of the aesthetic guard every few years. This year's new director was British journalist Richard Williams, who follows on the heels of more recent directors Bert Noglik, Nils Landgren and Peter Schulze.

For the festival's 51st edition, which ran Nov. 5–8, Williams stated that his intention was “to ask what jazz is, and what it can become.” To that end, he put on a strong, provocative and varied program, rising to the challenge of juggling musical adventures with comforting traditions.

Listeners got a taste of the delicate balance on opening night, which commenced with the abstract and largely improvisational Berlin-based Splitter Orchestr giving a powerful yet detailed reading of guest composer George Lewis' “Creative Construction Set.” The strongest show of the festival, however, was a masterful performance by trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, who led his quartet (with special guest vocalist Theo Bleckmann) for the closing set on Nov. 8.

Also on opening night, singer Cécile McLorin Salvant demonstrated the kind of jazz intelligence and theatrically tinged dynamism that makes her one of the most exciting new vocalists on the scene. Another potent young voice, virtuosic French accordionist Vincent Peirani, mixed up musicality and post-fusion fodder. Of the British music in the mix, impressive young trumpeter Laura Jurd's Dinosaur offered up some savory, funk-fueled neo-fusion grooves, while Dylan Howe's Subterraneans took on David Bowie's “Berlin”-era repertoire.

The geo-cultural GPS then moved from the British Isles to the Puerto Rican/New York City scene, via the vibrant alto saxophonist and concep-



tualist Miguel Zenón and his “Identities Are Changeable” project. And on Nov. 7, Charles Lloyd brought his cross-cultural “Wild Man Dance” project to a crowd of eager listeners. Opening for his set was the supple and dazzling Tigran Hamasyan Trio.

But this reviewer was pulled away by the lure of catching the remarkable Paal Nilssen-Love and his Large Unit, one of the most stellar examples of a free-improvised big band project. They have invented their own sense of groove, removed from any other group's, and reached new heights and new ambient dimensions in the process. The unfolding here-and-nowness of the set proved fairly overwhelming. —*Josef Woodard*

Artists Reflect on Allen Toussaint's Legacy

RARELY HAS A SINGLE ARTIST CONTRIBUTED IN SUCH A VAST AND lasting way to both the New Orleans music canon and the larger scope of American r&b, jazz and rock as Allen Toussaint did over the course of his decades-spanning career. That fact became even more poignant in the wake of his death on Nov. 10, as musicians from New Orleans and beyond paid tribute to his life's work.

Within hours of receiving news that Toussaint, 77, had died of a heart attack while on tour with his band in Madrid, artists began to light up social media. Many of them shared personal thoughts about the titan the music world had lost.

Among them was Meters bassist George Porter Jr., who marveled at

Toussaint's ability to help artists “find stuff in themselves that they didn't know was there.”

“Your talent as a musician and a producer has been a major role model in how I approach my own music and how I interact with other musicians on stage and in the studio,” Porter wrote. “You are a true legend and have left a legacy like no other.”

Delfeayo Marsalis, who worked in Toussaint's studio as a high school student,

called Toussaint “a great mentor with a generous heart” who “was able to capture the joy, intrigue and exuberance of New Orleans music over the course of six decades.”

Pianist Lawrence Sieberth spoke in more specific terms about Toussaint's approach to interpreting music.

“You can't play an Allen Toussaint song with a chord sheet. It's the spirit. That's it completely. It's a certain level of freedom and putting your heart into the music. It's not about regurgitating the music; it's about letting it flow through you.”

In lieu of a jazz funeral, Toussaint's family opted to host a visitation followed by a tribute and memorial service that drew thousands to the Orpheum Theater in New Orleans on Nov. 20.

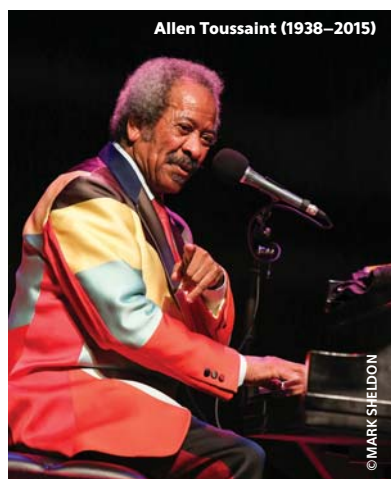
Following an emotional performance of “Let's Live” by Cyril Neville, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu addressed the somber audience.

“Losing Allen is New Orleans' musical Katrina,” he said. “We'll recover, but it will never be the same.”

The next three hours featured moving tributes from artists such as Dr. John, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Jimmy Buffett, Boz Scaggs, Elvis Costello and many others.

After a sermon, the pianist's longtime reed player Brian “Breeze” Cayolle performed a plaintive rendition of “Ave Maria.”

The event concluded with the musicians returning to the stage for an emotional performance of “I'll Fly Away.” Finally, pallbearers followed members of the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Trombone Shorty and other players in a processional out of the auditorium. As they reached the street, hundreds of mourners fell in line behind them, breaking into song as the casket was ushered past Canal Street to Toussaint's final resting place. —*Jennifer Odell*



Players >

MIHO HAZAMA

Logical Concepts

When Miho Hazama headlined at Jazz Standard on Sept. 30 with her 13-piece chamber band *m_unit*, she proved herself an engaging new voice on New York's jazz scene. The 29-year-old composer and arranger—who grew up in Tokyo and now lives in Harlem—represents the next generation of large ensemble leaders, ably joining the ranks of such established orchestra leaders as Maria Schneider and Ryan Truesdell.

In fact, Schneider in many ways has served as a mentor. “Maria has helped me a lot, including helping me to get my first dream show at Jazz Standard,” said Hazama, who graduated with a master’s degree in composition from the Manhattan School of Music (where she studied with Jim McNeely) in 2012. “I met Maria at MSM where she taught a master class ... I gave her my first CD [2013’s *Journey To Journey*] and she loved it. Since then, she has supported and encouraged me.”

Hazama, whose second album is the spirited *Time River* (Sunnyside), has been garnering impressive stature as a composer. Last year

she won the 16th Annual Charlie Parker Jazz Competition Prize for her work “Somnambulant,” and the year before she received the Japanese 24th Annual Idemitsu Award—the first time a jazz composer has won the prestigious prize. In 2011 she received an ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Award.

Hazama’s music is complex, teeming with unexpected twists and jolting turns as well as pockets of frenzy that lead into wonder. Case in point: “The Urban Legend,” the uplifting opening tune of *Time River*. It has an element of swing in 5/16 time but also features horns darting over lush strings, a scampering rhythm that leads to a rolling piano solo and a tenor saxophone sprint before the band returns to the tune’s catchy motif that appears, disappears and reappears throughout the song. “The inspiration for this comes from the music I compose when I travel,” Hazama said.

Hazama didn’t fully plunge into jazz until she came to New York, focusing primarily on the compositional aspects of the music. “I chose

to be a composer because I was interested in geometry and logical concepts I could explore,” she explained.

Even so, in delving into math-inspired jazz, Hazama concluded that her music needed a more soulful depth. “The first time I showed some of my earlier music to my mother, she was shocked,” she said. “I realized that I have to keep in mind that I want to entertain as well as be an artist. ... Instead of focusing on harmony only, I needed to keep melody in mind to make my music memorable to the listener.”

As revealed in her Jazz Standard show, Hazama exudes confidence. She doesn’t shy away from asking marquee artists to guest on her recordings. For *Journey To Journey*, she enlisted Stefon Harris and Steve Wilson. For *Time River*, she brought in Joshua Redman and Gil Goldstein—both musical heroes.

Hazama’s musical introduction to Goldstein came from listening to his production and arrangements on Michael Brecker’s 2003 Quintet album *Wide Angles*. While she was working as an arranger/orchestrator with Ryuichi Sakamoto, she discovered that he had worked with Goldstein and knew him well. So she emailed him and sent him a copy of her first album. He replied with a link to a YouTube song he performed that reminded her of a song she had written but never recorded. “It’s one of my favorites that I had written for a quintet, so I rewrote it so that he could play it with *m_unit*,” she said. Goldstein takes the accordion spotlight on the emotive “Under The Same Moon,” which he also performed with *m_unit* at the Jazz Standard.

“Miho wants to make her big band not sound like a big band,” Goldstein said. “She brings the aesthetic and sensibility from Mike’s work to herself, and she’s special in how she knows how to compose the licks and nuances. She does what all grown-up composers do: express a distinctive idea and develop and unfold it. It’s that unfolding that makes her part of that young generation of artists that are wiser than their years. A lot of jazz musicians are interested in covering old territory, but she’s someone who’s taking the development of jazz a step further into the future. She’s so gifted, she could write a piece for 12 accordions and it would sound great.”

Hazama wanted to close *Time River* with something that originated outside the realm of jazz. She opted to turn the alternative metal band A Perfect Circle’s gripping tune “Magdalena” into a wildly hook-laden, swinging take with an exciting, jump-for-joy ending. “Almost all the songs on my album are in a minor key, so I wanted to end in a major key and have lots of bright colors,” she said. “I wanted to make a closer, like a bonus track. So this is perfect. It’s the happiest song ever.”

—Dan Ouellette



Players >

CHRISTIAN HOWES

Purpose & Power

For Christian Howes, jazz defies definition. The violinist's new album, *American Spirit* (Resonance Records), is a beautifully eclectic work that speaks to his disdain for pedantic debates over what jazz is. It's also a celebration of the United States' deep musical heritage, influenced by Howes' U.S. State Department visit to strife-torn Ukraine in 2014.

"No matter what opinion you have on whatever issue, you should feel proud that you are American," said Howes. "If we focus on the things we share, the qualities we agree are important, then we can get rid of some of the polarization, the nitpicking. Which is the same thing I'm saying about music. Why are we nitpicking about what's jazz and what's not jazz?" he said. "It's about music, and music is about spirit."

Mixing traditional jazz, modern jazz, r&b, blues, folk and classical music, Howes' new CD represents an effort by the 43-year-old to come to terms with changing life priorities. The married father of two is a critically acclaimed jazzman with a diverse musical range comparable to that of Jean-Luc Ponty. He also is an educator committed to breaking down established notions about the violin's role in improvising and composition.

From age 5, however, the prime focus of Howes' upbringing in Columbus, Ohio, was preparing for a career as a classical violinist. Then, at 19, Howes' life took an unexpected turn: He was arrested for LSD trafficking and sentenced to spend six to 25 years in jail. It was a frightening development. But being incarcerated expanded his understanding of humanity, and it broadened his musical palette. Playing a range of tunes for the prison church congrega-

tion gratified a long-suppressed urge to explore different musical styles.

He was released after four years on good behavior. Soon afterward, he decided to reject an offer of full-time employment with the Columbus Symphony to throw himself into gigging at local clubs and restaurants.

For a State Department concert in Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, Howes and a youth orchestra teamed up to perform Scott Routenberg's "Concerto For Jazz Violin." It was a tense time, as a violent, deadly battle raged between government forces and pro-Russian rebels. Howes was astounded as spectators, giving the orchestra and him a standing ovation, suddenly broke into a rendition of Ukraine's anthem of solidarity.

Back in the studio, Howes focused on short solos rather than virtuosic displays when recording *American Spirit*.

"The desire [during the sessions was] to express exactly what needs to be expressed and nothing less," said bassist Ben Williams, part of a lineup that included pianist Josh Nelson, organist/pianist Hamilton Hardin, drummer Gregory Hutchinson and vocalist Polly Gibbons. "A lot of music today is a little too self-gratifying."

For Howes, the album speaks to music's purpose and power: "When I was younger, it was all about climbing the ladder of success and proving myself. Now, I want my energy directed toward something bigger, something meaningful. If I play music, there's a bigger reason [for doing it]. It's about creating meaning for people, it's about making people feel good. It's about expressing humanity." —Michael Barris



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**DORAN /STUCKY/
STUDER/TACUMA:**
Call Me Helium

Christy Doran (g), Erika Stucky (voc),
Jamaaladeen Tacuma (b), Fredy Studer (d)

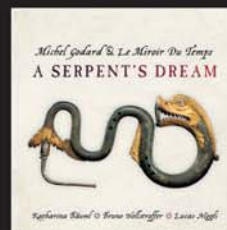
"A mix of effortlessness and madness, that is essential for a homage like this"
(STEREO)



Double Moon Records
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**GOODMAN-
BORDENAVE
QUINTET:**
Inverted Forestium

Geoff Goodman (g), Matthieu Bordenave (sax), Gerhard Gschössl (tb), Andreas Kurz (b), Bastian Jütte (d)

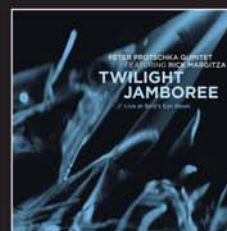
"These are just plain enjoyable tunes"
(Dave Sumner – Bird is the Worm)
"Subtle and graceful listening jazz"
(Chris Spector – Midwest Record)



Intuition
INT 34402
MICHEL GORD:
A Serpent's Dream

Michel Godard (serpent, b), Katharina Bäuml (shawm),
Brunno Hellstroffer (theorbo), Lucas Niggli (d, perc)

"It's impossible not to be charmed."
(Stuart Broomer – The Whole Note)



Double Moon Records
DMCHR 71161
**PETER PROTSCHKA
QUINTET FEAT.
RICK MARGITZA:**
Twilight Jamboree

Peter Protschka (tp, flh), Rick Margitza (ts), Martin Sasse
(p), Martin Gjakonovski (b), Tobias Backhaus (d)

"A very fine bop date"
(Robert D. Rusch - Cadence)
"Killer stuff done just right"
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Players ›

PIXEL
Seeking Joy

Now promoting its third album for Cuneiform, *Golden Years*, Norway's award-winning band Pixel continues to build momentum. Double-bassist/vocalist Ellen Andrea Wang, drummer Jon Audun Baar, trumpeter Jonas Kilmork Vemøy and saxophonist Harald Lassen tore things up at last fall's Stockholm Jazz Festival, playing to a full house at the jazz club Fasching. With members composing music for the band, their unique blend of danceable jazz with indie pop and rock continues to include tight arrangements, ample room for blowing and fetching vocals.

All four have careers and collaborations of their own, with everyone approaching 30. But, as Lassen, who came up with the title for *Golden Years*, noted, "The music is about staying young." Regarding the follow-up to 2014's *We Are All Pixels* and 2012's *Reminder*, he said, "This is the best record we've made so far, and, for sure, they are golden years for us."

The members of Pixel are longtime students and fans of American jazz. They are also, naturally, students of Norway's jazz history, and they're ready to make their own mark in that great lineage. "We have had a really strong jazz scene in Norway for the past 40 years," Lassen said. "People are *still* talking about Jan Garbarek and his group with Arild Andersen. But we are ready to change that." (His bandmates chuckled in delight at that statement.)

Indeed, Pixel wants to distance themselves from the stereotype of what fans have come to think of as "Nordic jazz." "We're something else," Wang said with a broad smile. "With our

music, we want to challenge the [notion that] Nordic jazz is introverted, self-important. We like more the joy in the music, and to have the connection with the audience and to play with more energy. We're singing, everybody."

While early on Wang was more central to Pixel's sound, *Golden Years* reflects a collective quartet sound. Nowadays each member has an equivalent role. "Vocals can be added as an instrument [by everyone]—not like a singer in front of the band, but they become a part of the band that is natural," Wang said. "All the instruments have an important voice in Pixel."

The band—whose busy schedule includes shows at Ronnie Scott's in London (Jan. 4) and Bimhuis in Amsterdam (Jan. 5)—are road warriors whose malleable songs evolve over the course of a tour. The compositions are also transformed during the recording process.

"Last year [2014] was a very productive year for us," Vemøy said. "We had almost 100 concerts, so we got to play a lot together. *Golden Years* was recorded in five days. With this record, we wanted to take everybody's ideas, not throw anything away before it was tested out and tried; and we were very open to each other."

The conversation concluded in Fasching's backstage green room with a discussion about recording a live album that would capture the onstage spontaneity for which Pixel is known. Wang sees performing their songs live as an opportunity for refinement: "This is the fun part," she said, "knowing it can always get a little better."
 —John Ephland

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COLIN LINDEN

Prism of the Blues

LAURA GODWIN

It can take ages to become an overnight success in Nashville. Case in point: guitarist Colin Linden. A longtime Music City fixture, he's toured with Bob Dylan and Emmylou Harris, led two trios whose critical successes predated the current Americana boom and built a reputation as a multi-instrumentalist and producer blessed with taste and integrity.

"I've played on 400 albums," he insists over the buzz and clatter of coffee machines and conversation at the cafe Eighth and Roast. "But I've only recently been given the chance to record frequently with musicians who are really experienced. Working with [music director] Buddy Miller on the *Nashville* TV show has made it possible."

ABC's country music prime-time soap has put Linden on the fast track to opportunity. "I'm the performance supervisor," Linden says. "I play about 75 percent of the guitar you hear on the show. When we go on the road, I play with almost all of the actors. I like to think I'm involved pretty deeply in developing the nuance that the cast members bring to their roles."

These developments are like the ignition switch on a vehicle Linden has been building since his formative years in Toronto—the scene that spawned Robbie Robertson, Amos Garrett, Amos Wilcox and other blues-inflected guitarists who nourished him as a singer and player.

Linden sees everything he plays through the prism of the blues. This perspective is also largely what drew him to bassist John Dymond and drummer Gary Craig, his musical associates for more than 25 years. (Keyboardist Richard Bell was an equally vital part of the

group until his death from multiple myeloma in 2007.) Sticking with the same players for so long involves walking a wire between playing intuitively and lapsing into predictability; thus far, according to Craig, they've kept their balance.

"There's nothing more valuable than having many, many years of playing with people you can relate to," the drummer says. "I've gotten to know Colin's phrases and motifs. When I hear them coming, I can accompany them however I want because I know how they're going to happen."

It took longer for the trio to come up with a name than to establish their synchronicity. Known now as The Rotting Matadors, they hold the center on Linden's latest album, the superb *Rich In Love* (Stony Plain). Enhanced by guest appearances from harmonica Charlie Musselwhite, keyboardists Reese Wynans and Tim Lauer and vocalist Amy Helm (daughter of Levon), the program moves from slinky and soulful on "I Need Water" to roadhouse raw on "The Hurt" and Delta deep on the title track. And yes, a current of blues flows from track to track; that wellspring is far from dry.

"I'm touched by the music of the past," Linden says. "The great blues artists are like mountains: You can build the biggest city you want next to them, but it'll still be dwarfed by Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, Son House, Willie Lee Brown and Reverend Gary Davis. I'm a forward-looking guy. I want to do better than I do now. But always, I do my best to represent my heroes, too."

—Bob Doerschuk



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Snarky Puppy members Jay Jennings (left), Mike Maher, Jason Thomas, Michael League, Nate Werth, Shaun Martin, Chris Bullock and Justin Stanton

Snarky Puppy

A FRIENDLY, FUNKY MONSTER

BY JOSEF WOODARD | PHOTO BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ

Snarky Puppy has become a monster—albeit a friendly, funky monster—and all through its own fiercely independent means and devices. This jazz band out of University of North Texas, formed in 2002 and now riding high with world tours and a quickly expanding discography on its own GroundUP label, has become a model of self-reliance. Rare in the jazz world is the DIY success story that results in a truly global reach. After doggedly working just beneath the radar for years, Snarky Puppy has hit it big, with a Grammy award (Best R&B Performance for “Something,” featuring vocalist Lalah Hathaway, from the 2013 album *Family Dinner, Volume One*), strong sales for 2015’s band-plus-orchestra CD *Sylva* (with the Metropole Orkest) and a victory in the Jazz Group category of the 2015 DownBeat Readers Poll. Additionally, *Sylva* is nominated in the category Best Contemporary Instrumental Album for the Grammy Awards that will be presented on Feb. 15.

In a way, the band’s new theme song could be

“Sleeper,” from 2014’s *We Like It Here*, which starts slowly before kicking into a higher, groove-consuming gear. The band boasts a personally tended, organically grown, very enthusiastic fan base, a phenomenon that invites comparisons to Phish and Dave Matthews Band.

Snarky Puppy’s new album, *Family Dinner, Volume Two*, is decidedly homegrown yet wildly ambitious, with a diverse roster of guests that includes vocalists David Crosby, Susana Baca, Becca Stevens and Salif Keita, as well as guitarist Charlie Hunter and saxophonist Jeff Coffin.

The new album also marks the band’s entry into the major-label world, via an interesting partnership. Michael League, the band’s powerhouse yet soft-spoken leader, is quick to explain that Snarky Puppy was not “signed by” a major label, and that the album is issued on the band’s own imprint, GroundUP, but will be distributed by Universal Music Classics. It’s an important distinction—one in keeping with his overall vision and career goals.

“We’re still independent, 100 percent—you don’t give that up easily after 12 years,” League said. “That has given us a lot of leverage over any negotiations that have taken place with majors, because they know walking into the situation that we’re not in a position where we really need them. That’s great, because then you can really talk as peers, and not as suits and plebeians.”

All of these converging energies and spotlights stoke a basic question among critics and fans who have only recently heard about the band: Just who and what is this thing called Snarky Puppy?

For newbies, the best introduction to the band is to attend one of its concerts, where the infectious energy, ambience, groove power and tunefulness come through—especially when the crowd is stocked with avid believers. In September, the band was greeted by a sold-out house—an increasingly common experience for them—at the 1,700-seat UCLA Royce Hall, a few days after they made their first main-stage appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival. (The band’s previous Monterey shows were in the much smaller Garden Stage.)

Indeed, Snarky Puppy’s steep ascent in the last couple of years can be gauged by venue sizes. In the past, performing in Los Angeles meant a gig at the showcase club The Mint, whereas this year the band played the massive Hollywood Bowl during the Playboy Jazz Festival.

The band duly rocked Royce Hall in a show that was opened by another young band drawing on fusion sounds: Kneebody. Much of the Snarky Puppy material, stretched and altered to suit the moment of this show, was from the band’s last “normal” instrumental album, *We Like It Here*, including the jazz-rocky jabs and intricacies of “What About Me?” and the more balladic and soothing contours of “Kite.”

Stylistically, Snarky Puppy cuts a unique profile. While the term *fusion* seems appropriate—especially regarding the interplay of electric bass, crunchy-toned electric guitar and keyboard heat on retro synths and keyboards and a powerful drum/percussion force in the rhythm section—there are strong elements of a little big band, clearly reflected in the arrangements for horns. Elements of African and Latin music, plus plenty of ’70s funk and soul-jazz, are in the mix as well, and the melodic and even romantically inclined instincts and sometimes mini-epic structures of League’s compositions are reminiscent of the Pat Metheny Group. (Metheny has proudly expressed his admiration for Snarky Puppy.)

While in Los Angeles, League sat down for a long interview over an Iron Duke Stud-Finder beer at Good Microbrew & Grill in the hip neighborhood Silver Lake. Midway through the interview, our server came by, gazed at my recorder and asked who League was connected with. “Snarky Puppy,” she mused, “I’ve heard of that. Is



Snarky Puppy’s Chris Bullock (left), Justin Stanton, Mike Maher, Michael League, Bob Lanzetti and Mark Lettieri perform at the Vogue Theatre in Vancouver, B.C., on Nov. 23.

ANDY HAWKES

that a web comedy?” “No,” he said with a smile, “but it could be. We just played at the Hollywood Bowl. Maybe you saw our name advertised.”

As it turns out, the name Snarky Puppy was stolen from his brother when League needed to advertise his new project for a humble college gig in a pizza parlor basement. The unlikely moniker has attained its own cruising altitude as a band name, a reference to a sound—and, yes, a brand. But it resonates with the music to which it is attached, both accessible and muscular, a kindly creature with a potential bite.

Putting the band’s story-so-far in a compact nutshell, founder-bassist-arranger-composer-CEO League said, “I started with my buddies, and we just played local gigs for free. We made a little record in a local studio and booked a tour, which was more like a college road trip. And that begat another tour and another tour and then we made another record. Then, it started snowballing.

“Man, I sent emails to every booking agency and every management company and every record label I could think of. Nobody cared. When you do that for seven years and you start to have some success, you start to realize, ‘We actually don’t need those things.’ That’s when I started to feel like the Catalans or the Quebecois feel: ‘We are independent. That’s who we are.’”

Saxophonist Chris Bullock recalled the many rough and lean years before the recent upturn. “It had been a slow burn for a long time,” he said. “For so many years, we were grinding on the road, playing our music in front of *empty* rooms—or rooms with the same number of people that there are onstage and finding hippie houses, anywhere we would crash just to save some money, because we weren’t making any playing gigs.” Fast-forward to now, and

this nine-piece-plus band is making ends more than meet and plotting its future moves.

High on the list of League’s influences, in terms of what grew to be the Snarky Puppy jazz-funk sound, were keyboardists Bernard Wright and Don Blackman.

“Really, the school that I think Snarky Puppy comes from, if you want to nail it down—while the Metheny Group is definitely an influence and Weather Report is definitely an influence—we’re more from the school of Don Blackman,” League said. “He played with Miles and loads of people, and had a solo career. But my mentor is a guy named Bernard Wright, who also recorded with Miles. He grew up as one of the Jamaica boys, with Marcus Miller and Lenny White. So Nard was my mentor. Donald Blackman was Nard’s mentor and a guy named Weldon Irvine was Donald Blackman’s mentor.

“It all goes back to this Jamaica, Queens, black thing of really knowing jazz but also really knowing how to groove and how to play r&b. It’s this weird school that is super unknown, but its influence is felt second-hand, in a big way.”

League grew up listening to Led Zeppelin, a band he described as one of his biggest influences, but he was drawn to the groove element of a variety of genres. “I grew up with James Brown and Stevie Wonder and Zeppelin, and groove and pop bands,” he said. “But also, I was in jazz school and loved the jazz thing. So there definitely was an element of wanting to blend those things, but that real black American music—that thing didn’t happen until our third or fourth year. That was a whole new world for me.”

Tapping into the musical languages and structures of pop and r&b has always been a part of League’s m.o. as a composer, and band



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conceptualist. “In today’s world,” he says, “with peoples’ attention spans and aesthetics and preferences, you’re already swimming upstream with a band without a vocalist. So we do everything we can to provide motifs and making sure that the grooves are always interesting, that the melodies are always singable and catchy, and that compositionally, there is lots of stimuli—for us, as well as the listener.”

He paused to clarify the point. “I don’t ever follow the listener,” League said. “I feel very strongly in the idea that the artist should lead the listener and not follow. But when I say these things about the music being accessible or catchy, I mean that as much for us as for the audience. We’re guys who, when we get in the van, we don’t turn on a modern jazz album. We listen to Led Zeppelin, CSNY, Smashing Pumpkins and Michael Jackson.”

Diversity of tastes and skill sets comes naturally to the musicians in the band’s stable. Trumpeter/keyboardist Justin Stanton admits that the band is “a multi-headed beast. We have a lot of interests, so we just try to cram it in as best we can. We get bored easily.” From a more practical, on-the-job perspective, League comments, “We’re all session guys, too, and are sidemen for anyone from Erykah Badu to Kirk Franklin to Justin Timberlake, to jazz guys, like Wayne Krantz.”

In terms of its current personnel list, Snarky Puppy is, by its nature, a malleable and changeable beast, with musicians shifting in and out of a given tour or album project. “Over the course of 2015,” League says by way of an example, “probably 25 guys will have played gigs as Snarky Puppy. But maybe 13 do the records.”

League said that the expandable personnel strategy was “totally born out of necessity. When we were first getting started, I said yes to every gig. That’s one of my things in life: I feel like everything is an opportunity, and I don’t like the possibility of an opportunity lost.

“I would say yes to gigs and then guys couldn’t make it. I’d have to find another guy, who learned the music and played the gig. I figured, ‘Well, shoot, he’s already done all the work and sounds great. So the next time the guitar player can’t do it, I’ll invite him. Or maybe we’ll have both of them, anyway.’ We just kind of accumulate members as we meet guys who fit the ethos and have a great attitude, who are responsible, play great and can groove and interact. They should have that two-minded thing, with jazz interaction but also the sensibility of ‘I like to play a song.’”

Keeping that critical balance of jazz fluidity

and supportive song-consciousness is a key factor in what gives the band its identity—amidst the admitted swirl of confusion over what to call and where to put the band in the musical landscape. “When people call us a fusion band,” League says, “I kind of cringe a little bit, because a lot of what people consider fusion is not something I would like. But when they call us jazz, I feel like that’s a little more accurate, but I still don’t feel like that’s really right.

“I guess we’re more similar to the Jazz Messengers or Mingus or Ellington or the Hot Seven than we are to modern-day jazz guys. In that way, I think we are jazz, because we’re taking the jazz tradition and doing our thing with it, which relates to today.” But he draws the line when

solid week of work at the Sonic Ranch studio outside of El Paso, Texas. By the time *Family Dinner, Volume Two* is released on Feb. 12, another album will ostensibly be “in the can.” That’s the way this band rolls, and keeps rolling.

One of the distinguishing points of the album still in progress is its old-school methodology in the studio. They planned to track 21 songs in a week in Texas, to be whittled down to the finished album, with no guest vocalists or orchestra involved—and also no live audience or film crew on hand, features of the band’s earlier three albums.

Whereas the first *Family Dinner* was recorded in the theater setting of the Jefferson Center in Roanoke, Virginia, the new *Volume Two* went down a different path. Hunkering down at the increasingly popular Esplanade studio in New Orleans, the band rehearsed its various songs and invited its guests over the course of several days, leading up to the tracking before a live audience.

Bullock said that “the whole band arrived about five or six days before all the guest artists showed up. We started rehearsing and learn-

ing all the music, figuring out who was going to play what, and how. As the artists started showing up, it was really cool. We had created this schedule that allowed them to have a lot of free time, so they could come and rehearse their tune and then be free to go do what they wanted.

“But what ended up happening, the end result, was that the artists stuck and hung and were vibing and sitting in on everyone else’s rehearsals. So there was this really beautiful energy off everybody together, in the room, creating this thing together. It added to the energy.

“David Crosby was someone who stayed for every moment he could sit in a room and watch people making music. He was there, laughing, acting like a kid, having fun and cracking jokes. It was just a cool energy, because everyone stuck around and wanted to be a part of the process, and witness what everyone else was doing. It created that family vibe—not to be cheesy, but it felt like that by the end of the week when it came time to actually record the music in front of the studio audience.”

League explained that during the sessions, “Every last person was of the same mind. When everyone was together in the room, everybody just changed. It was crazy. There are no green rooms, so nobody had any privacy. At the studio, there is the main studio space and then a kitchen downstairs, which was like the green room. Everyone was together.

“At any given point during the day, you’d

“We’re taking the jazz tradition and doing our thing with it.”

—Michael League

it comes to applying the band’s approach directly to the modern jazz scene, as such, adding, “We improvise all the time, and every night we play each song differently. But all of the improvisation is built around serving the composition.”

Two of the longer-standing core members of the band are Stanton and saxophonist Bullock, both of whom eased into the Snarky slipstream while attending UNT, after intending to head into possible careers as teachers and/or bandleaders in academic settings.

Dazzling keyboardist Cory Henry has been in the fold about five years, and by now has cemented his place in the ranks. This year, he is slated to release two albums of his own on the GroundUp label. Henry, who wears his vintage influences of Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Bernie Worrell and Billy Preston well on Hammond B-3 and his Moog, asserts, “Snarky Puppy is a mixture of so many different things. It can be anything on any given day, because the band plays so much. And within that freedom, in a way, we all still practice restraint. We let the music grow freely.”

The recent spate of upward mobility for the band has been greeted thankfully, but resting on laurels or slowing up the ambitious pace is anything but an option in the organization. Following a dense fall tour of Europe and the Northwest, and a three-day break for Thanksgiving, the band dove into the studio to begin work on its next album, settling in for a

walk downstairs and Crosby would be singing a song on the couch and Olov [Johansson] from Väsen would be playing nyckelharpa and Jacob Collier would be playing melodica. It was crazy. I don't even know how to explain it. It was like camp."

While *Volume One* mostly stuck to an r&b-driven "sophisto-soul" format, the new *Family Dinner* ventures out into the world, to the Peruvian chanteuse Baca, the Swedish folk-rock group Väsen and, with Keita, to Mali (where League traveled to record Keita in his home studio).

Keyboardist Henry felt that the sessions were one of the most creative projects in which he has participated. "It was a world full of people with the concept of no boundaries, mixing textures and creating colors that are vibrant and new," he remembered. "The band stretched as far as we could to make each song as different stylistically as you can, while still making it feel good."

Snarky Puppy, a 21st-century wonder in the extended quarters of the jazz scene, may be—along with groups like Kamasi Washington's West Coast Get Down collective—harbingers of new musical models rising up for the vast talent pool of young musicians facing a fragmented music business.

Stanton pointed out that "the model is so



Snarky Puppy at the 2015 Montreal Jazz Festival

different from bands that were similar to us in the '70s and even the '80s, in the financial state of things in music and how it is supported. I feel like, in a lot of ways, we've had to rely on our own inventiveness, in a way, and just persevere to try to make things work and push things forward on our own.

"Luckily, it has caught on. We don't take any of that for granted. We want to just keep the momentum going as much as we can and keep making music together, because we enjoy doing it. As cliché and cheesy as that sounds, that's why everybody is doing it."

League views the long haul and rapid rise of the band in a late-blooming, positive light. "From the very beginning," he said, "if we had

a stylist and a branding agent and a manager and handlers, all this kind of stuff, advisors, little musical Karl Roves behind the scenes ... I don't think we'd be the band that we are.

"I feel very fortunate that we had this incubation period where no one knew about us and no one cared. We were able to kind of grow like a fungus, in whatever direction that we grew in. Then, by the time anyone found out about us, we know who we are. This is who we are. We know because we have years behind us, being ourselves. We tried all these things and they didn't work, musically. *These* things work, musically, and we love these things.

"So I'm glad now, in retrospect, that no one cared about us."

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Paquito D'Rivera at the 2015 Barcelona Jazz Festival (Photo: Lorenzo Duaso/Voll-Damm Festival Internacional de Jazz de Barcelona)

PAQUITO D'RIVERA

ANSWERING YEYITO

BY TED PANKEN | PHOTO BY LORENZO DUASO

In the years since DownBeat profiled Paquito D’Rivera in 2009, the 67-year-old clarinetist/saxophonist/composer/arranger has further expanded an already formidable resume. Over the intervening six years, D’Rivera released six albums—most recently *Aires Tropical* (Sunnyside)—each documenting a fully realized project with a distinctive character unto itself, unified by his brilliant musicianship and tonal charisma. He earned a 2011 Grammy for Best Classical Contemporary Composition for “Panamericana Suite,” and a Latin Grammy for Best Latin Jazz Album for the CD bearing that title, while *Song For Maura*, from 2013, won that year’s Grammy for Best Latin Jazz Album, an honor also bestowed upon it by the 2014 Latin Grammy Awards.

D’Rivera continues to compose, to perform as a soloist with orchestras and ensembles around the world, and, most importantly, to present repertoire spanning his 35 years as a bandleader with his virtuoso working quintet (Diego Urcola, trumpet and valve trombone; Alex Brown, piano; Oscar Stagnaro, bass; Eric Doob, drums).

D’Rivera was about to embark on a road trip with that unit when DownBeat met him in early November at the New York office of Sunnyside Records, the distributor

of his new album, *Paquito And Manzanero*, comprising primarily Brown’s inspired arrangements of songs by iconic Mexican composer Alejandro Manzanero.

After a week of concerts in Florida and Louisiana, D’Rivera would visit the Miami Book Fair to discuss improvisation and the lasting power of classics in music and literature with Ilan Stevens, the translator of *My Sax Life*, his picaresque, poignant, amusing memoir. The intention was to publicize a new epistolary memoir, *Letters to Yeyito: Lessons From a Life in Music* (Restless Books), in which D’Rivera repurposes and recontextualizes material from *My Sax Life* and its 2011 follow-up, *Portraits and Landscapes*, but also adds much that is fresh. The episodes are responses to a letter that D’Rivera received in Cuba a half-century ago from a young correspondent named Yeyito asking the then-16-year-old first-call musician—who was already well known on the island as a member of the Teatro Musical de Havana—for tips on pursuing a career in music.

“Yeyito made a mistake,” D’Rivera recalled. “He never wrote the return address. After *Portraits and Landscapes* came out, a friend called and said, ‘I want you to write a book of letters to an aspiring musician, a young student.’ This became a great opportunity to answer Yeyito’s question.”

DownBeat: The first chapter of *Letters to Yeyito*, "Sherlock Holmes in Havana," is a vivid account of the day you met Dizzy Gillespie, whose presence permeates the book.

Paquito D'Rivera: Part of that story is true, part is my invention. Dizzy showed up with Arturo Sandoval at a grocery store in my neighborhood in Havana and left me a note. The *bodeguero* asked if I'd received it. I thought it was a joke. "There was a black guy here dressed like Sherlock Holmes." I said, "Shit, that must be Dizzy Gillespie." Of course, the *bodeguero* had no idea who Dizzy Gillespie was. Meeting Dizzy marked my life. After I came here, he and Mario Bauza kept urging me to play clarinet, which I'd put away for years, and he gave me approval for the Pan-American thing I was doing.

In the U.S. I had an opportunity to create a world for myself learning about the rhythms from Latin America and South America, helped by people like Oscar Stagnaro, who is from Peru, in the middle of South America, so he knows Brazilian music, the Andean thing, *cumbia* from Colombia. I learned Venezuelan waltzes from the guitarist Fareed Haque from



D'Rivera at the Cologne Philharmonic Hall on Feb. 11, 2015.

Chicago, who was playing waltzes by Antonio Lauro that I'd heard classical guitarists play in Havana. On my third record I recorded "Wapango," which is a Mexican rhythm. That's when I started playing Brazilian music, too. I love Brazilian music; it's the most perfect combination of melody, rhythm and harmony in one style.

Much of *Letters to Yeyito* is about travel. How often were you able to get off the island before you defected?

The first time I went out after they took power was in 1968, when we went to Eastern Europe. Wherever we arrived, the chief of the delegation kept all the passports. You couldn't decide on your day off, "I am in Russia; I am going to take a ferry to Finland." It's very different to travel as an independent person.

What do you think would have happened if you'd stayed in Cuba?

I am sometimes a little polemical. If you're polemical in this country, your problem can be personal with people who don't like your invective or have a different opinion, but that's about it. But being polemical in a totalitarian system can be fatal. So what would have happened to me is unpredictable, because when I see something I don't agree with, I have to say it. I did that when I lived there. I didn't get in trouble because I was a popular musician with Irakere and had many friends, but that was going to end any minute. Chucho [Valdés] once told me: "Man, you have to stop all this bullshit; now

Deep Connection

In his memoir *Letters to Yeyito* (Restless Books), Paquito D'Rivera details his life and musical experiences in the form of letters to a fan named Yeyito. The book chronicles everything from his youth in Cuba to his work as a sideman for Dizzy Gillespie. In the following excerpt, D'Rivera describes his friendship with the Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante.

It all began one afternoon at the end of the '60s at the Antillas Bar of the Hotel Habana Libre [the old Hilton]. The bar is located at the entrance of the Salón Caribe, where the show goes on every night. ...

Since it was still early, the bar was deserted. I was alone on one of the wicker stools drinking a Cuba libre. There were only a couple of Canadian tourists sipping their mojitos slowly and ceremoniously at the small tables, when my friend Nicolás Reinoso walked in hastily. Without even saying hello, taking advantage that the barman was far from us catering to the tourists, Nicolás looked around, took a book from his pocket, and passed it to me.

"Take a discreet glance at this book," he said. "If you're interested, take it home, but return it as soon as you read it. It belongs to a friend from the Spanish embassy."

The book was *Tres Tristes Tigres* by Guillermo Cabrera Infante, who, like many other persona-non-grata authors unwelcomed by the cultural authorities of the

island, was forbidden. You could only acquire it through someone who brought it from the outside, said El Negro, although it was us who were on the outside of everything.

Chino Infante's emblematic novel became a true symbol to young people like me who tried uselessly to reconstruct and build over the ruins of Havana, the hallucinatory environment that the writer from Gibara described so masterfully in those pages. Since that time, the tribulations of Bustrofedón, Arsenio Cué, the Star, and the rest of Infante's characters remained forever encrusted in my mind.

That is, until November 1981, when Dizzy Gillespie hired me for a European tour that included a couple of nights at the famous Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London. I knew of cinematographer Jorge Ulla's relationship with the almost mythological G. Cain, Cabrera Infante's pseudonym when he wrote for *Carteles* magazine. It was Ulla who gave me his telephone number in the city of Sherlock Holmes, where he lived.

"Hello ... Miriam, it's me, Paquito, inviting you to Dizzy's show at Soho's Ronnie Scott's."

I left the names of Mr. and Mrs. Cabrera Infante on the guest list that evening. At the end of the show, the couple came backstage to meet Dizzy Gillespie, a legendary character for Cabrera Infante, who was always a modern jazz lover.

"We almost didn't get in!" said his charming wife, Miriam.

"It was sold out," Guillermo added. "And

they listed our names as Mr. and Mrs. Elefante!"

This made Dizzy laugh. He never learned the writer's name and always called him Señor Elefante. Two days later, an extensive and beautiful article from Cabrera Infante about our presentation in the club was published in an important London newspaper.

My admired fellow countryman would later write several notes for the back covers of my records and the prologue for the Spanish edition of my first book, *My Sax Life*. In the form of revenge, as he used to say, I then wrote a piece for three basses called "*Tres Tristes Tigres*." One of the basses was Cachao, and it was recorded on my album *40 Years Of Cuban Jam Session*, a fun Miami project in which our common friend Andy García played the bongos.

The last time I saw Cabrera alive was at the end of a concert with Yo-Yo Ma in London. His health was already in decline, and his demeanor was fragile and painful. He hugged me, and while he did, the image of that November 1981 evening at Ronnie Scott's came to mind. It had marked the beginning of a beautiful and lasting friendship, one that flourished from my deep admiration and originated at the bar of the magical city the author of *Vista del Amanecer en el Trópico* (*A View of Dawn in the Tropics*) so passionately loved and to which he sang praises through time and space like no one else did, "with a tiger's voice and an elephant's memory," until the very day of his death. **DB**

calm down, do your work.” I said yes, because Chucho and Oscar Valdés had taken me out of involuntary retirement and put me to work again in Irakere. For two years I did nothing, and they paid my salary. I knew sooner or later I’d get in trouble, so it was about time to leave.

You ran up a down escalator in the airport in Madrid. Did you plan the method of escape?

Well, not the entire thing, because I was never in that airport before. But for the first time I had my alto with me. I always put the saxophone in the big cases where they put all the instruments. I said I took it to do repairs or something like that.

But you improvised the “how.”

The how, yes. My mother and father already lived here for many years, so part of the thing was already taken care of. Part of it was going to the American Embassy with a passport. I had a visa that said I was in America before [with Irakere in 1978 and 1979], a visa in Angola during the war and a visa for the Soviet Union. The Consul said, “You are going to tell me that you are not a spy?” “I am a saxophone player!” “But you were already in New York.” I was scared to shit, waiting that week. Then they called my mother and said, “OK, his visa is approved.”

What’s the back-story for *Paquito And Manzanero*? It has a straightforward jazz flavor.

Two producers in Mexico—Eugenio Elias, a symphonic trumpet player, and Maribel Torre—called to talk about a project with Armando Manzanero. I love his compositions and I like his personality. The first thing they said was, “We don’t want strings, we don’t want bolero and we don’t want a percussionist. We want a CD that sounds as if Manzanero was born in New Orleans—a pure jazz CD.” That’s why I used Carlos Henriquez on bass and Antonio Sanchez on drums. I didn’t have time to write the arrangements, so Alex Brown did them. Manzanero was happy.

Your recent album *Aires Tropicales* is the latest on which you present Cuban styles from different eras. You perform with a string quintet of Cubans living in Spain. Were you playing much Cuban music when you lived in Cuba?

Not really. A writer named Lydia Cabrera went to Paris to study, started thinking about the beauty of Cuban culture and became a folklorist. She wrote, “I discovered Cuba at the banks of the Seine River.” The same thing happened to me here. In Cuba, I wanted to do American music.

Your CD *Jazz Meets The Classics* also features your group.

I think the first time I mixed one style with the other was when I arranged Mozart’s “Adagio” for Irakere. The melody suggested a blues. Ever since, I like to imagine a European composer being born in Latin America. How about if Chopin was born in Brazil? In those days they didn’t have the percussion instruments we inherited from Africa. I am sure if Chopin heard these versions of “Fantasia Impromptu” or “E-Minor Prelude,” he would like it because of the New World rhythms.

It and your album *Live Tango* were recorded in concert. Is there a difference for you between the studio and performance contexts?

It’s two different animals, and I prefer the organized animal—the studio. But if you record live, it’s important to rehearse well. That way you make less mistakes.

Some musicians feel the important thing is not whether you make a mistake, but where you go with it. You’re not of that opinion.

No. Jazz is about improvisation, and in improvisation you take risks. That is why classical musicians are afraid of improvising on a recording. It’s always possible you will have an accident because of the spontaneity. But you cannot make something beautiful of the accident. It’s not horrible, but it’s nothing to celebrate.

With the thawing of U.S.-Cuba diplomatic relations, is there a possibility that you’ll go to Cuba?

No. I don’t trust these people. The same people who destroyed that country with that ideology say, after 57 years, they are going to fix the country. That doesn’t make sense. The first thing when you want to fix something is to hold elections, call other people to fix the country, not the same ones who destroyed it. It’s better there for American business people, but not for my family.

You write so vividly and nostalgically about your 32 years in Cuba, it’s as though you’re still living it.

My biggest nostalgia is for what they have destroyed—the democratic mentality of our people. Cubans haven’t exercised their vote since 1952. They don’t feel the nostalgia for voting or electing their own people. They are happy to receive something, anything.

Is it important to you to play with Cuban musicians, as on *Aires Tropical* or an engagement several years ago at Dizzy’s Club?

Both were a lot of fun. Always the Cubans have their own thing. There’s common roots, common language, like bebop players who know quotes and clichés from that era.

Lately I have to say that I’ve received with joy notice of a few young people in Cuba who played my music at graduation recitals. That was not happening five years ago. I have to confess I was happy. So things are changing, except the government.

You’re going to be invited sometime.

Probably, yes. Fifty-six years is too many years with the same people giving orders. I am sure something is about to happen, but I don’t know what. In the meantime, I live in this beautiful city that I love. **DB**



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Randy BRECKER 'WE LOVED THE FUNK'

BY TERRY PERKINS
PHOTO BY STEVEN SUSSMAN

It's noon on a crisp November Sunday on the campus of the University of Missouri at Columbia, and Randy Brecker is well into a busy day of events. It's part of a four-day whirlwind of workshops, master classes, lectures and rehearsals leading up to a performance with the university's Concert Jazz Band and then a lecture the following day.

Invited to campus as part of the Chancellor's Distinguished Visitor's Program, Brecker has already shared breakfast with a group of jazz grad students and faculty before kicking off a master class on the topic of "Entrepreneurship in the Music Business."

It's certainly an appropriate subject for Brecker, who over the course of five decades has become one of the most genre-defying trumpet players on the planet. He earned his straight-ahead and bop credentials in the 1960s playing with Clark Terry, Duke Pearson, Horace Silver and Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

Brecker then became a pioneering figure in jazz-rock and fusion—playing with guitarist Larry Coryell and his Free Spirits band, recording with Blood, Sweat & Tears and founding the band Dreams with his brother Michael. He went on to achieve worldwide popularity by blending funk

and r&b with the Brecker Brothers, first in the mid-'70s and then again in the early '90s.

Brecker's work as a studio musician is mind-boggling. He's added his trumpet and flugelhorn to more than 1,000 recordings by a diverse range of artists. The massive list includes Charles Mingus, Carla Bley, Frank Sinatra, Bruce Springsteen, James Brown, Parliament/Funkadelic, Dire Straits, Lou Reed, Steely Dan and Frank Zappa.

Brecker has released more than a dozen recordings as a leader, the latest of which, *RandyPOP!* (Piloo), nods to his early career as a session musician—but offers a tremendously satisfying twist. The repertoire on *RandyPOP!* includes famous hits to which Brecker contributed, such as Todd Rundgren's "Hello, It's Me" and Paul Simon's "Late In The Evening," but all the material is performed with terrific new arrangements written by keyboardist Kenny Werner. The album was recorded live at New York's Blue Note with an incredible band that included Brecker, Werner, David Sánchez (tenor saxophone), Adam Rogers (guitar), John Patitucci (bass), Nate Smith (drums) and the leader's daughter, Amanda Brecker (vocals).

During the master class in Columbia, Brecker took the audience on a journey back to his musical roots in Philadelphia—listening to his father play recordings by Clifford Brown, playing free-form duets with his brother Michael in the bathroom ("great acoustics!") and being exposed to r&b music watching early episodes of *American Bandstand* (then based in Philadelphia) on TV.

Brecker reminisced about musical turning points in his life, such as meeting David Sanborn; he described exacting takes in the studio during the recording sessions for Steely Dan's 1980 album *Gauche*; and he threw in lessons on double-tonguing and techniques for building velocity and increasing air capacity.

During a break after the master class, Brecker, whose 70th birthday was quickly approaching, reflected on the relationships and opportunities that have shaped his long, unique career.

What was the turning point when you began to seriously consider a career as a musician?

The Stan Kenton band camp was a pivotal point. My teacher was Marvin Stamm, who was five years older than me. He led our particular band. Peter Erskine, who was seven years old, was at camp. Peter's father was the camp doctor. And his older sister was around, and she loved Marvin. I'll never forget, the band was pulling away and Marvin was waving goodbye to her, and she was at the curb crying because he was leaving. And I said, "This is what I want to do the rest of my life." That's my first conscious recollection of that. At that camp, when I saw all the guys in Kenton's band and their garrulous nature and the way they dressed—little things like that created an impression on a 15-year-old. I said, "This is it." I met all these great musicians, and I never looked back.

At that camp you met David Sanborn. That was certainly a fortuitous meeting.

Isn't that wild? I remember saying, "We'll stay in touch." And we did. I went to Indiana University and Dave went to Northwestern, but we'd meet up every year at the Notre Dame Jazz Festival. He won the saxophone award, and we really did stay in touch. When I moved to New York, he was then playing with the [Paul] Butterfield Blues Band. And I started playing

with Blood, Sweat & Tears, and we'd run into each other at all the so-called jazz-rock clubs.

We had a similar conception, and when we met up in New York we would practice together. We had small apartments, so we would hire practice rooms. He would go in one room and I'd go in the other, and I would hear him practice and he'd hear me. Conceptually, we had a lot of similar tastes. We were among the first jazz-rock horn players, I guess.

In addition to Sanborn, pioneering fusion players like Larry Coryell also influenced you.

When I was 19, I was chasing my first girlfriend out to Seattle. She lived in Olympia, and I took some creative writing courses at the University of Washington. I met Larry that summer, and we played together quite a bit. He doesn't get enough credit. He really created that whole movement. He had so much technical proficiency on guitar but he had that Texas thing going, too. He knew a lot of the guys in the rock bands, and I'd follow him around. We used to go hang out with Jefferson Airplane, and they were heavy into Gil Evans. Larry had this group called the Free Spirits with Jim Pepper and Bob Moses, and there were sessions all the time at a place called The Scene. Jim Pepper was also a great influence on my brother. So it was a really exciting period.




Michael Brecker (left), Randy Brecker and Mike Stern at the 1993 Monterey Jazz Festival

When your brother, Michael, came to New York, you began playing together in the band Dreams.


I came in 1966 and Mike came in 1969. I had been out on the road with Horace Silver playing with Billy Cobham, and Horace decided to break up the band. So we came back to New York with our tails between our legs. By then, Mike had met this great trombone player, Barry Rogers, who in turn had met two singer-songwriters, Jeff Kent and Doug Luban. They were looking for a trumpeter and a drummer. And I said, "Well, me and Billy just came into town!" That's how the band Dreams started.

We became the house band at the Village Gate. And we'd open the show for comedians and eventually got signed to Columbia Records. Billy was just on fire back then. He really created that style of jazz-rock drumming. John McLaughlin stole him from us so we eventually broke up.



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Dreams and that regular Village Gate gig helped open the door to session work.

We became known as an entity—and that was a good thing. Later guys caught on and if they had a horn section, they gave it a name, like the Uptown Horns. A lot of contractors and musicians came down to hear us. And that did open a lot of doors for session work, plus we got signed to Columbia.

What events led to the creation of The Brecker Brothers?

After Mike came to town, I thought, “I’ve got to put Sanborn and Mike together as a horn section.” That was one of the impetuses for me to start writing my own music. By 1974, I had written nine arrangements with us as the horn section. We were rehearsing with ex-members of Dreams—Will Lee on bass and Don Grolnick on keyboards—and had befriended Steve Kahn and a young drummer, Chris Parker.

And a guy named Steve Backer called me up. He had just signed a production deal with a new label, Arista, which was led by Clive Davis, who had previously signed Dreams to Columbia. And Steve said, “If you call this band the Brecker Brothers, we’ll sign you and you won’t have to do a demo.” At first I said, “No, it’s supposed to be a Randy Brecker album.” But it was just too good of an opportunity, and I finally relented.

The Brecker Brothers Band moved jazz fusion toward r&b and funk.

We were r&b fans, it was as simple as that. We came up with this r&b background, so we were funk guys. For lack of a better term, we loved the funk. Also, with Dreams, we had run into Parliament/Funkadelic and George Clinton, and had played on their records, and had done some sessions with James Brown with Fred Wesley. So our music had that element, and people thought that we were black. It was kind of like the second Average White Band. People would show up at gigs and say, “Where are the Brecker Brothers?” We’d say, “We’re the Brecker Brothers.” They’d look at us aghast since we were white kids ... until we started to play.

How did your new album, *RandyPOP!*, come about?

Originally it was my wife’s [Ada Rovatti] idea, and I kind of I pooh-poohed it. Years ago she said, “You’ve been on so many recordings. Why don’t you record some of those hits but redo them?” Then Jeff Levenson from the Blue Note also came up with the idea, and actually helped me put it together. We had done a previous project with Rosanne Vitro called *Delirium Blues*, where she took some of her favorite tunes and had Kenny Werner revamp them. I thought his arrangement of “What Is Hip” by Tower of Power was brilliant.

So I said, “Let’s call Kenny.” And he did

such a great job interpreting these tunes and putting a new slant on them. And Jeff really helped put the band together, and they were really off the charts. Nate Smith, Adam Rogers, John Patitucci, David Sánchez and my daughter, Amanda, singing some really hard stuff. She’s had a nice career on her own and that was the first time we actually worked together.

What’s your next project?

I haven’t really formulated it yet. It’s a long process these days, and I’m quite involved with playing, teaching and trying to be on

the road less since I have a 7-year-old daughter. So a lot of it is taken up with family time, plus I’m trying to spend more time on the horn when I’m home. I’m thinking of doing something straightforward. I’ve never really done a small-group record of just jazz standards. There always seems to be some kind of production or some kind of bigger hoopla in mind, so I’d like to just do something simple—go in the studio with a rhythm section, me playing trumpet and flugelhorn, and just nail some tunes and call it a day. That’s what’s swirling in my mind. So that’s probably going to happen. **DB**

Ches Smith The Bell Craig Taborn Mat Maneri

Ches Smith drums, vibraphone, timpani
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MIKE REED'S

GRAND VISION

BY AARON COHEN | PHOTO BY MICHAEL JACKSON

There was no subtlety to an incident that drummer Mike Reed and his People, Places & Things band endured on April 3, 2009, during a European tour. As they were en route to Krakow, Poland, a train conductor mistakenly (or perhaps purposely) told them to disembark and change trains in the Czech town of Prerov. For the next few hours, the group had to seek shelter from a neo-Nazi mob. Reed's recent artistic response to that blunt attack is a multilayered project that reflects his perceptive intelligence, his musical ambition and his deep commitment to unite people.

Reed, who has described the Prerov altercation in detail on his website (mikereed-music.com), draws on it for a new project, *Flesh and Bone*. Drawing inspiration from diverse sources—including Amiri Baraka's declarations alongside the New York Art Quartet—Reed assembled an instrumental sextet that is augmented by spoken-word performers. When the *Flesh and Bone* project made its world premiere at the Art Institute of Chicago on Nov. 20, the performance did not incorporate any ostensible musical or verbal statements about the incident in Prerov. Instead, Reed used the neo-Nazi encounter as an opportunity to examine numerous topics, including war, immigration, jazz history, contemporary African American struggles and the works of author Ta-Nehisi Coates and painter Archibald Motley.

Despite the heavy subject matter, Reed did not temper his upbeat tone at the Art Institute, even if that initially seemed to contrast with Kevin Coval and Marvin Tate's pointed verbal deliveries. Their words navigated through such themes as police killings, cultural blending and the threat of fascism. The band responded with a propulsive drive akin to Charles Mingus' take on swing before the horns veered into a collective improvisation reminiscent of classic New Orleans jazz.

The encore served as a memorial to pianist Allen Toussaint, who had passed away on Nov. 10. Ultimately, it all fit musically and thematically. The concert could be read as this band's way of showing that cross-cultural harmonies offer the best kind of resistance to authoritarianism.

"Over the last few years, there's been a backlash, a re-meeting with the realities of what it means to be people of color in the United States," Reed said. "That's a product of how quickly [an event] can be captured nowadays and [spread] all over the world as if it's happening for the first time. The [Prerov incident] is shocking to 17-, 18-, 19- or 20-year-olds. But I'm saying, 'No, what did you think the world is like?' So with this project, it's *not* about me retelling the story. I can tell it: 'This is what happened.' But what it's *about* is, 'What are you able to reflect on and discuss?'"

That question also encapsulates Reed's work as an artist, organizer and club owner. He was speaking in an office at Constellation, the venue he opened in 2013 in Chicago's Roscoe Village neighborhood. It's a bustling hub. In less than three years, Constellation's performance areas have hosted a slew of global artists while also providing a performance space for young locals to jam or premiere their compositions.

The venue's success keeps him busy. It has often been up to Reed to find last-minute piano tuners or the best price for the bar's lime supply. His unflappable demeanor prevents everyday commotion from devolving into chaos. He does not need to speak loudly to explain that all of this is his way of building an enduring community.

"The thing I discovered about myself ... the thing that I'm most interested in is getting people together and being a part of it," Reed said. "It's how I make bands, it's how I play the drums. I'm not out there being a fancy soloist and being on top. I pull together these aggregations. I have these places where people come together."

An inclusive spirit also runs throughout the recent *People Places & Things* disc, *A New Kind Of Dance* (482 Music). As Reed mentions in the album's notes, the inspiration was the late Ornette Coleman's 1976 album *Dancing In Your Head*; his own wholly unpredictable music inspires the same kind of psychic choreography.

A New Kind Of Dance draws connections between old and new experiences. Reed, 41, grew up just north of Chicago in the diverse, multicultural town of Evanston, Illinois. His childhood memories include attending a free concert by drummer Hamid Drake and listening to blues musicians Billy Branch and Carl Weathersby talk to his elementary school class. Reed received a drum set at 13, but his parents encouraged him to play sports instead of music. A record collector with a pronounced interest in hip-hop, Reed said, "I thought for a second I'd be a DJ."

Leaving home to attend the University of Dayton gave him the freedom to focus on performing, but he also felt out of place among students who had concentrated on music much earlier in their lives. But what may have been a disadvantage turned into an opportunity.

"When I got to college and I could do what I wanted, I [realized I] was behind," Reed recalled. "So I had to book a gig if I wanted to play. So that's where that started. I want to play, these guys are cool, they want to play, so let's get a gig."

When Reed returned to Chicago in the 1990s, he discovered numerous other opportunities. He worked blues gigs and played "Volare" for Italian weddings in the suburbs. Legendary saxophonist Von Freeman (1923–2012) showed him how to respect a ballad and to this day, Reed's melodic brushwork on the cymbals is as commanding as his roaring dynamics across the kit.

By the end of the decade, Reed decided to focus on his own music and began presenting concerts with like-minded colleagues in small rooms around Chicago. He began regular sessions at the Hungry Brain in 2001. Flutist Nicole Mitchell became one of Reed's frequent collaborators—she appeared on his 2006 collection of duets with various artists, *In The Context Of* (482 Music). She vividly remembers the first time she heard him perform. "I thought he was so creative, the way he found different types of sounds he could create on a drum set," Mitchell said. "Han Bennink and other people in Europe were doing something similar, but not many were using those extra sounds in the way Mike was. Mike had a different aesthetic: Some humor came out with sounds he created, and there were different textural things, like adding pots and pans and toys. He could also groove and do all those things you'd want a drummer to do."

Mike Reed is a drummer, bandleader, club owner and festival presenter who consistently exudes a communal vibe.



Along with expanding his technique, Reed began formulating a new concept for collective arranging about 12 years ago with Loose Assembly. This plan involved creating a kind of spontaneous composition, but crafting it from a working unit's inherent chemistry. Youthful energy inspired everyone. Cellist Tomeka Reid recalled, "At the time, I always felt that everyone seemed so pre-formed, but we were really all learning together, which was a beautiful thing." That process turned into the epic title piece to 2010's *Empathetic Parts* (482 Music), a multi-themed composition that flows through several directions for more than a half hour.

Saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell also performs on *Empathetic Parts* and has become a regular collaborator with Reed. Other jazz veterans have brought him into their projects. Last October trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quartet included Reed for a performance at the University of Chicago's Logan Center. Smith's series of long and short notes doesn't always rely on strict metrical counts, and Reed reworked this concept in a way that intentionally obscured who was creating the basic pulse.

"Mike was so magnificent, we didn't have to rehearse," Smith said. "His musical personality has the courage and character to contribute his portion, and when you give him the score, he can design his music around that score. Most drummers could not have done what he did without causing a great deal of conflict or being lost most of the time."

Reed followed Roscoe Mitchell and Smith's lead through his membership in the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, serving as vice chairperson from 2009 to 2011. Nicole Mitchell and Tomeka Reid also served as AACM executives and pay tribute to the organization on the recent *Artifacts* (482 Music), which presents interpretations of compositions from such alumni as Amina Claudine Myers,

Anthony Braxton and Fred Anderson, whose photograph hangs above Constellation's bar.

Reed diligently maintains the AACM's legacy of artist entrepreneurs such as Anderson. In December, he reopened the Hungry Brain. He also continues to run the Pitchfork Music Festival, a three-day indie-rock event that brings 60,000 people to the city's Union Park. Typically, Reed stays in the background; Pitchfork president Chris Kaskie described Reed's leadership approach as "removing his own self-interest for the greater good."

"We try to do things that speak to people who have a similar aesthetic and then connect them," Reed said. "What it really comes down to is wanting to get people together."

Reed's involvement with large outdoor concerts and small venues has certainly given his organizational work a large profile. But his ongoing encouragement of young artists may have the most lasting influence. One of his groups that performed at Constellation last summer was an ensemble of about 10 musicians exploring big band repertoire, from Count Basie to Sun Ra. The event was called a Rent Party—a nod to informal Harlem apartment gatherings from decades past—because it raised funds for a few minor repairs to the building. Along with Reed's longtime partners, he also invited such players as saxophonist Irving Pierce, who is just a couple of years out of high school.

"If you want to [build relationships with] people who are operating in the same fashion, you have to invite them over," Reed said. "Invite them over to dinner. So, yes, there is a thought to fostering a welcoming environment, an entry point. There are gaps [between] generations of people, which have done bad things to the audiences and the music. So I'm trying to keep that as a flow, for other people who were mile-markers along the way." **DB**



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— San Jose Mercury News



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1.17	University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ
1.22	University of Central Arkansas	Conway, AR
1.23	Carver Community Cultural Center	San Antonio, TX
1.24	UC Berkeley	Berkeley, CA
1.25	Kuumbwa Jazz Center	Santa Cruz, CA
2.2-6	Birdland	New York, NY
2.9	Wilbur Theater	Boston, MA
2.11	Ferguson Center	Newport News, VA
2.12	McCarter Theatre	Princeton, NJ
2.13	Purchase College	Purchase, NY
2.14	Jim Rouse Theatre	Columbia, MD
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3.12	Krannert Center	Urbana, IL
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DOWNBEAT 2016 INTERNATIONAL

JAZZ VENUE

GUIDE

SHOW TIME!

193 CLUBS WHERE MUSIC THRIVES

Our annual Jazz Venue Guide is your passport to awesome music rooms around the globe. On the following pages, the listings are divided by geographic region, and a music note beside a venue name indicates there is an advertisement for that establishment within this guide. Interspersed among the listings are features on five venues: Blues Alley in Washington, D.C. (page 42), Murry's in Columbia, Missouri (page 48), The Royal Room in Seattle (page 52), Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill in Montreal (page 57) and The Jazzkeller in Frankfurt, Germany (page 62).

BLUES ALLEY @ 50: A JAZZ ICON FLOURISHES

By Michael J. West

While every major city in the world has a jazz club, only a handful of cities have a venue that has entered the realm of the *iconic* jazz club. New York has Birdland, the Blue Note and the Village Vanguard; Chicago has The Green Mill; London has Ronnie Scott's. It's only fitting that Washington, D.C.—the capital of the country that gave birth to jazz—should have its own iconic club: Blues Alley. Located in the Georgetown neighborhood, Blues Alley has hosted the most revered names in jazz.

Wynton Marsalis recorded an album at Blues Alley. So did George Shearing. So has Pat Martino. For decades, Ahmad Jamal rang in the New Year from the venue's bandstand. Drummer Roy Haynes and trumpeters Terence Blanchard and Roy Hargrove currently play Blues Alley every year. And in 2015, the famous club celebrated its 50th anniversary.

The ambiance of the venue is a strong part of its enduring appeal: red-brick walls festooned with musical instruments and photos of jazz musicians, all visible by virtue of the stage lights and candles on the club's small, elegantly draped tables. Entrees on the dinner menu are named after artists who have played Blues Alley (Sarah Vaughan's filet mignon, Stanley Turrentine's crab cakes). Hollywood set designers couldn't have conceived a more perfect example of a great jazz club, and as such it attracts a diverse clientele of not only local music lovers but tourists from around the world.

"People will come to Washington and say, 'I've been told to come to Blues Alley,'" said owner and executive director Harry Schnipper. "People make reservations and don't even ask who's performing."

That kind of prestige is belied by Blues Alley's location. Yes, it's in Georgetown, but its name is no accident: It is literally an alley dwelling, a 200-year-old former carriage house that's tucked behind the neighborhood's main drag. To find it, one has to know where to look.

An out-of-the-way location is precisely what Tommy Gwaltney—who opened Blues Alley in 1965—was looking for. Gwaltney, a clarinetist and vibraphonist who'd been working on the trad-jazz circuit since the



Dizzy Gillespie at Blues Alley, 1986

MICHAEL WILDERMAN

'40s, had ambitions for a club, but nothing terribly fancy. He just wanted an inexpensive place where he could serve drinks, jam with his buddies and bring in his heroes from the circuit on weekends.

He got exactly what he wanted. The likes of Pee Wee Russell, Maxine Sullivan and Wild Bill Davison held the bandstand on Saturday nights. On weeknights, the owner doubled as the bandleader, putting a loose ensemble called the Blues Alley Cats through their hot jazz paces for hours at a time. It was Gwaltney who, in 1966, made the first recording at the club: the aptly titled *This Is Blues Alley*.

The club retained that character for roughly its first decade. The headliners grew in stature, with pianist Earl Hines and trumpeter Roy Eldridge taking the stage. A group of regular customers, not large but loyal, began circulating there—though they weren't necessarily customers for the music. "It was ... a moderately successful jazz joint," John Bunyan, who would eventually buy the club, remarked in 2002, "but was more popularly known in Georgetown as a drinking establishment as opposed to a venue for jazz artists. The bartenders were the main feature and not the music."

That began to change in 1973, when

Blues Alley Youth Orchestra



Bunyan bought Blues Alley and began to contemporize its bookings. Old-school jazz still had a place, with headliners that included Teddy Wilson and Gwaltney himself. Local acts were welcome, too, including a house band led by guitarist Danny Gatton. But bebop vibraphonist Milt Jackson also began to appear regularly, as did legends like Horace Silver and Art Blakey. Fusion, then making inroads to the pop charts, made its presence known as well, in artists like guitarist Larry Coryell and his Eleventh House project.

It took about five years for Blues Alley to build its reputation as a great spot for jazz in Washington. But in the intervening period, many of the city's other dedicated jazz venues closed, shrinking its competition; the Kennedy Center, which had opened in 1971, offered jazz, but it was slow to establish itself. More importantly, in 1978, legendary trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie was wowed by the club when he played there, and spread the word among his peers that it was *the* place to play in D.C. Huge stars such as Marsalis, Jamal and Sonny Rollins became regular performers there.

By the time of Blues Alley's 20th anniversary celebration—which featured Sarah Vaughan, Tony Bennett, Buddy Guy, and Mel Tormé—its stellar reputation among jazz musicians, fans and tourists was completely secure. It has remained so ever since, even through another ownership change—Schnipper purchased the club in 2003—and it continued to attract major players to its bandstand. Marsalis's 1986 concert album, *Live At Blues Alley*, has entered the jazz canon; the singer Eva Cassidy (1963–'96) made a similarly titled album in 1996 that helped lead to her worldwide fame. In 2011, Martino's quartet made another successful recording there with *Undeniable: Live At Blues Alley* (HighNote).

"It's one of the greatest jazz clubs in the world," said trumpeter Brian Lynch, who's performed there frequently in his projects

with pianist Eddie Palmieri. "I treasure a place like that so much because there's so few of the old-school clubs that have that kind of historic continuity."

Another artist who reveres the venue is saxophonist Joe Lovano, who played Blues Alley in 2013 as part of the Grand Slam Quartet with guitarist Jim Hall, bassist George Mraz and drummer Lewis Nash. "That was such a special, intimate [show]," Lovano recalled. "It's rare to have a club ... that's created not only for us as players but also for fans—one that feels so comfortable and where you can hear the music unfolding in a really intimate way."

Blues Alley has outstanding shows scheduled throughout 2016. The month of March will offer a special focus on jazz guitar, including performances by Stanley Jordan, Kevin Eubanks and Peter White, as well as Mike Stern and Four Generations of Miles ensemble. In April, Schnipper will produce a week-long series focusing on Japanese musicians (in partnership with the Embassy of Japan). Among the performers will be up-and-coming composer and bandleader Miho Hazama.

In addition to presenting terrific shows, Blues Alley has a deep commitment to jazz education. In 1985, Gillespie suggested that Bunyan establish a youth orchestra, asking, "How are you going to develop new jazz audiences and artists if you don't take the initiative to cultivate the talent yourselves?" Thus the nonprofit Blues Alley Jazz Society was born, as was the Blues Alley Youth Orchestra. The band consists of local student musicians between 14 and 17 years old. Auditions are held every fall. The orchestra performs several times a year throughout the area, including a Christmas performance at Blues Alley.

Schnipper became executive director of the Jazz Society in 1993, 10 years before taking over the venue. "There's all these outstanding university programs around the country, that are filled with accomplished student musicians," he pointed out. "Well, those students didn't just



fall out of the sky! There's a provenance here, and that provenance is the people we work with on the front line of jazz." Schnipper has expanded the nonprofit component to include a summer jazz camp, founded in 2000 (the alumni of which are often recruited for the Youth Orchestra); and the Big Band Jam, an annual jazz festival by and for students, which began in 2005. Last year, the festival's guest-artist-in-residence was trumpeter Sean Jones, and this year, that role will be filled by multi-instrumentalist Andrew White. (The Big Band Jam will take place April 18–30.)

"I'm very passionate about this [mission]," Schnipper said, "allowing a child in the metropolitan area to be able to not only be exposed to jazz music, but also have an opportunity to perform in world-class venues."

Jazz bassist Michael Bowie serves as director of both the Youth Orchestra and the summer camp. "I'm not the head chef," Bowie said modestly. "I'm just the line cook." The bulk of his job, he explained, is building the band's book: "You want the kids to know that they're the best of the best, so it's got to be better than what they get in the schools."

Bowie expressed great pride in the young musicians who participate. "The quality of the students just gets better and better every year," he said. "These days it sounds like a *real* big band, and a pretty good one—and then you realize that these kids are 15, 16, 17 years old." His opinion is shared by those in the know: In January of 2015, the Blues Alley Youth Orchestra swept six of the seven award categories at the Essentially Ellington Regional High School Jazz Band Competition.

Schnipper—who was the co-recipient of the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival's 2015 Jazz Educator of the Year award (shared with Ellis Marsalis)—has helped create a unique situation in D.C. He said, "You tell me another for-profit jazz club in America that has their own orchestra, their own summer camp, and their own children's jazz festival—because I haven't heard about it. We are clearly doing something right." **DB**

United States

EAST

CONNECTICUT

Firehouse 12

45 Crown St.
New Haven, CT
(203) 785-0468

firehouse12.com

Firehouse 12 is an award-winning bar, state-of-the-art recording studio and unusually intimate music venue located in New Haven's historic Ninth Square District that has booked artists such as John Zorn, Satoko Fujii and Ralph Peterson.

The Side Door Jazz Club

85 Lyme St.
Old Lyme, CT
(860) 434-0886

thesidedoorjazz.com

The Side Door Jazz Club opened its doors in 2013 when Ken Kitchens refurbished the Old Lyme Inn. The inaugural performance was George Wein and his Newport All-Star Band and The Side Door has hosted world-class jazz artists ever since. The Gary Smulyan Trio is scheduled for Feb. 19.

MARYLAND

An Die Musik Live!

409 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD
(410) 385-2638

andiemusiklive.com

This venue is housed on the second floor of a historic townhouse sandwiched between the Mount Vernon neighborhood and Downton Baltimore. An Die Musik Live! has music several nights each week and has presented shows by Dave Douglas and Warren Wolf.

Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club

7719 Wisconsin Ave.
Bethesda, MD
(240) 330-4500

bethesdabluesjazz.com

Located in the historic Bethesda Theatre, this supper club sits 500 and books various performers nearly every day of the week. Among the artists who have appeared recently are Larry Carlton and Joe Louis Walker.

MASSACHUSETTS

Chianti Tuscan Restaurant & Jazz Lounge

285 Cabot St.
Beverly, MA
(978) 921-2233

chiantibeverly.com

This is the go-to spot for jazz in Beverly. Chianti is continuing the work of beloved jazz

club owner Sandy Berman by presenting shows by the best regional and national artists six nights a week.

Lilypad

1353 Cambridge St.
Cambridge, MA
(617) 955-7729

lilypadinman.com

Now in its 10th year, Lilypad remains one of the best venues Cambridge has to offer by bringing a wide variety of musical, comedy and spoken-word performances acts to the city.

Regattabar

1 Bennett St.
Cambridge, MA
(617) 661-5000

regattabarjazz.com

Regattabar is a 220-seat venue that hosts artists both in and outside of the Boston scene. It has been named best jazz club in Boston as well as New England by numerous publications.

Scullers Jazz Club

400 Soldiers Field Rd.
Boston, MA
(617) 562-4111

scullersjazz.com

Scullers Jazz Club has been a hot spot for jazz in Boston for the past 26 years. Upcoming shows include New York Voices (Feb. 12-13) and blues pianist Marcia Ball (Feb. 18).

Wally's Café Jazz Club

427 Massachusetts Ave.
Boston, MA
(617) 424-1408

wallyscafe.com

Wally's Café is among the oldest family-owned and operated jazz clubs in existence. Founded in 1947, this venue provides a forum for local music students to hone their craft.

NEW JERSEY

Robin's Nest Rhythm & Blues

3103 Tremley Point Rd.
Linden, NJ
(908) 275-3043

robinsnestrhythmandblues.com

Robin's Nest, which refers to itself as "a slice of Mississippi in the heart of New Jersey," is open six days a week and has theme nights such as Wednesday Blues Party, Thursday Funk R&B and Sunday Cool Jazz.

Shanghai Jazz

24 Main St.
Madison, NJ
(973) 822-2899

shanghaijazz.com

Entering its 20th year, Shanghai Jazz is a club and restaurant that



Trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis at Scullers Jazz Club in Boston

ROBERT FESTA

emulates Shanghai, China, "the Paris of the Orient," in the 1920s and '30s. The club presents local and world-class jazz artists six nights a week.

Trumpets Jazz Club

6 Depot Square
Montclair, NJ
(973) 744-2600

trumpetsjazz.com

Trumpets, now in its 30th year, features jazz five nights a week as well as blues, world and sometimes even classical. Starting in 1985, Trumpet's has been a main stop in New Jersey for local and national acts alike, such as Houston Person and Ragan Whiteside.

NEW YORK

55 Bar

55 Christopher St.
New York, NY
(212) 929-9883

55bar.com

Billing itself as "a Prohibition Era dive bar," the 55 Bar is a basement gig spot in Greenwich Village that hosts funk, blues, but especially jazz. Recent performers have included Amy Cervini and David Binney.

Birdland

315 W. 44th St.
New York, NY
(212) 581-3080

birdlandjazz.com

An iconic name in the history of the jazz, Birdland is in its third incarnation and continues to book the top acts in jazz on a nightly basis. The Mack Avenue Super Band will have a residency Jan. 26-30.

Blue Note

131 W. Third St.
New York, NY
(212) 475-8592

bluenote.net

With a bandstand that has been

graced by Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Peterson and Sarah Vaughan, the Blue Note continues to present legends to this day, along with up-and-comers, with performances every night.

Club Bonafide

212 East 52nd St.
New York, NY
646-918-6189

clubbonafide.com

Club Bonafide stands on 52nd Street, famous for being the home to many jazz clubs of the Golden Age of jazz (such as The Onyx, 3 Deuces, and 21 Club). Co-owned by musician Richard Bona, this venue has presented artists such as Chuchito Valdes, Ofer Assaf and Davi Vieira.

Cornelia Street Café

29 Cornelia St.
New York, NY
(219) 989-9319

corneliastreetcafe.com

This Greenwich Village landmark has been serving the arts community since 1977 with performances by jazz and folk musicians, as well as poetry readings. Concerts in January include Stephan Crump, Jeremy Powell and Benoît Delbecq.

Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola

10 Columbus Circle, 5th Floor
New York, NY
(212) 258-9595

jazz.org/dizzys

A venue inside Jazz at Lincoln Center, Dizzy's has 140 seats for patrons to come and see renowned jazz acts such as Chris Potter, Paquito D'Rivera, Nicholas Payton and Dick Hyman.

Fat Cat

75 Christopher St.
New York, NY
(212) 675-6056

fatcatmusic.org

Fat Cat's known in New York for its late-night jam sessions held after midnight and hosted by a

different artist every night. The club also hosts two shows each evening featuring artists and ensembles from across the country.

Iridium

1650 Broadway
New York, NY
(212) 582-2121
theiridium.com

The longtime weekly residency of guitar great Les Paul helped popularize the Iridium, which has presented jazz legends such as the Jazz Messengers and Charlie Haden, as well as the best players on the scene today.

The Jazz Gallery

1160 Broadway, 5th floor
New York, NY
(212) 242-1063
jazzgallery.org

The Jazz Gallery is open Thursday through Saturday and serves as an incubator of experimentation and collaboration for innovative jazz musicians.

Jazz Standard

116 E. 27th St.
New York, NY
(212) 576-2232

jazzstandard.com

Every Monday since 2008, the Mingus Big Band has held court at the Standard. The rest of the week is filled with performances by touring artists such as Lionel Loueke, Joey DeFrancesco and Matt Wilson.

Le Poisson Rouge

158 Bleecker St.

New York, NY
(212) 505-3474

lepoissonrouge.com

Located on the same site where the Village Gate once stood, Le Poisson Rouge has been described as a "multimedia art cabaret" and has hosted jazz acts such as Anthony Braxton and Bill Frisell. Upcoming shows include Dan Tepfer (Feb. 8) and Gregory Porter (Feb. 13).

Mezzrow

163 W. 10th St.
New York, NY
(646) 476-4346

mezzrow.com

Named for clarinetist Milton "Mezz" Mezzrow, the club is a jazz listening room and lounge located in the heart of Greenwich Village. It focuses on solo piano shows and duo shows by artists such as Johnny O'Neal and Peter Bernstein.

Minton's

206 W 118th St.
New York, NY
(212) 243-2222

mintonsharlem.com

Minton's is the revival of the legendary jazz club called Minton's Playhouse. World renowned for being the birthplace of bebop, the bandstand presented such luminaries as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Kenny Clarke. Minton's reopened in 2013 and is opened five days a week.

ShapeShifter Lab

18 Whitwell Place
Brooklyn, NY

(646) 820-9452

shapeshifterlab.com

ShapeShifter Lab is a large space in Brooklyn offering nightly live shows by the likes of Ravi Coltrane and Johnathan Blake.

Smalls

183 W. 10th St.
New York, NY
(212) 252-5091

smallslive.com

Smalls hosts performances every night of the week, which can be attended in person or viewed via live stream on the club's website. Recent performers include Willie Jones III, Melissa Aldana and Brian Lynch.

Smoke

2751 Broadway
New York, NY
(212) 864-6662

smokejazz.com

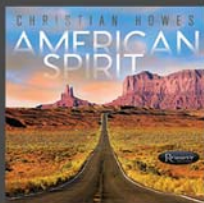
A little more than 50 can be in attendance seven nights a week at this candlelit supper club, which is evocative of an earlier age. Smoke's schedule includes artists such as Emmet Cohen, Russell Malone and JD Allen.

The Stone

Avenue C at 2nd St.
New York, NY
(212) 473-0043

thestonenyc.com

The Stone is composer John Zorn's performance space that focuses exclusively on the music. Hosting mainly experimental and avant-garde acts, The Stone is a not-for-profit that welcomes all ages and books performances on a curatorial basis.



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[See "Player Profile" feature in this issue.]

George Klabin is the founder and president of Resonance Records, and an esteemed audio engineer who has recorded such jazz heavyweights as Dexter Gordon, Bill Evans, Keith Jarrett, Albert Ayler and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra.

[See "Recording School" feature in this issue.]



George Klabin
President of Resonance Records

HISTORIC DISCOVERIES



Wes Montgomery
One Night In Indy
[Available 1/15/16]

Recorded live in Indianapolis on January 18, 1959, only the fourth full album of previously unissued music by **Wes Montgomery** since 1968. Transferred from a tape provided by photojournalist Duncan Schiedt, this CD (also available as a limited edition 12" LP) is the only known recording of Wes with Chicago piano legend Eddie Higgins, plus drummer Walter Perkins.



Stan Getz & João Gilberto
Getz/Gilberto '76
[Available 1/29/16]

Tenor titan **Stan Getz** & the legendary bossa nova icon **João Gilberto** reunite in 1976 with previously unreleased recordings from Keystone Korner featuring pianist Joanne Brackeen, bassist Clint Houston and drummer Billy Hart. Deluxe CD with a 28-pg booklet of essays by author James Gavin, bossa nova pioneer Carlos Lyra & more. Follow-up to one of the bestselling jazz albums ever, *Getz/Gilberto* (1964). [CD & LP]



Stan Getz
Moments In Time
[Available 1/29/16]

Newly discovered music by the **Stan Getz** Quartet with pianist Joanne Brackeen, bassist Clint Houston, and drummer Billy Hart, recorded live in 1976 at Keystone Korner. The 28-pg booklet includes essays by jazz journalist Ted Panken, Steve Getz, band members, and producers Zev Feldman & Todd Barkan, plus rare photos. Cover art by the Japanese artist & designer Takao Fujioka.



Thad Jones/Mel Lewis
Orchestra
*All My Yesterdays:
The Debut 1966 Recordings
at the Village Vanguard*
[Available 2/5/16]

First official release of the Opening Night February 7, 1966 (& March 21, 1966) recordings endorsed by the **Thad Jones/Mel Lewis** estates. Deluxe 2-CD set includes an extensive 116 page book of liner notes & rare photos, and commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Opening Night with a special event at the Village Vanguard on Feb. 8, 2016.



Larry Young
*In Paris: The ORTF
Recordings*
[Available 3/11/16]

In partnership with INA, this is the 1st release of all previously unissued material by **Larry Young** in nearly 40 years. Features live & studio recordings from Paris in 1964-1965 with Nathan Davis, Woody Shaw, Billy Brooks and a host of notable Parisian jazz musicians. Includes a 68 page book of liner notes with essays, interviews & rare photos. [Deluxe 2-CD & 2-LP Sets]

The Village Vanguard

178 7th Ave. S.
New York, NY
(212) 255-4037
villagevanguard.com

Known for many for its reputation of being a launchpad for many jazz greats, the Vanguard is now in its 80th year and is still the spot to see the best in jazz, from veterans to young stars.

PENNSYLVANIA

Chris' Jazz Café

1421 Sansom St.
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 568-3131
chrisjazzcafe.com

This venue presents more than 500 performances a year, featuring the likes of Ravi Coltrane, Dave Douglas and Pat Martino, for audiences of all ages. Open jam sessions happen each Monday night.

Deer Head Inn

5 Main St.
Delaware Water Gap, PA
(570) 424-2000
deerheadinn.com

Deer Head Inn boasts the title as "the oldest continuously running" club in the United States and is known as the "Home for Jazz in the Poconos." This venue served as the location of pianist Keith Jarrett's live album At The Deer Head Inn. Performers in January will include Bill Washer, Spencer Reed, and Katie Baker & Vic Juris.

MCG Jazz

1815 Metropolitan St.
Pittsburgh, PA
(412) 323-4000
mcgjazz.org

MCG Jazz's mission is to preserve, present and promote jazz and has done so since 1987 with educational programs, an archive of over 300 jazz CDs and its 350-seat music hall in Pittsburgh. Past performers include Kenny Barron and Branford Marsalis. Jack DeJohnette and Savion Glover will perform there on Feb. 26.

South Jazz Parlor

600 N Broad St.
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 600-0220
southrestaurant.net

South Jazz Parlor hosted a weekly residency by jazz pianist Orrin Evans, which featured performers like Marc Cary, Jeremy Pelt and Renee Rosnes.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Blues Alley

1073 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, D.C.
(202) 337-4141
bluesalley.com

Since 1965, this legendary club has hosted hundreds of jazz musicians—from Charles Mingus to Wynton Marsalis to Stanley Jordan. The club continues to book jazz approximately 360 nights a year. The venue has also helped promote jazz education.

Bohemian Caverns

2001 11th Street NW
Washington, D.C.
(202) 299-0800
bohemiancaverns.com

Bohemian Caverns first became a hot spot in D.C. area by hosting acts like Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington. Today, although still underground, the venue is in limelight, presenting artists like Ron Carter, Pharoah Sanders and Jeremy Pelt.

KC Jazz Club at The Kennedy Center

2700 F Street NW
Washington, D.C.
(202) 467-4600
kennedy-center.org

One of several venues inside The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the intimate KC Jazz Club has a capacity of 160 and has presented artists such as Carmen Lundy and Grace Kelly. Pianist Jason Moran is the Kennedy Center's artistic director for jazz.

Twins Jazz Lounge

1344 U Street NW
Washington, D.C.
(202) 234-0072
twinsjazz.com

Located along the famous U Street Corridor, Twins presents local, regional and international acts as well as fine dining, with a menu that has American, Ethiopian and Caribbean cuisine. Eugenie Jones will play two sets on Feb. 14.

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What and who do you think about from the road? "Goin' Home" explores that longing for home that everyone on the road experiences. As the members of the band tour this fall and winter, they are composing new music around this theme. As they each launch new albums, and new tours, this is a once-in-lifetime chance to see this ensemble.

TICKETS: MCGJAZZ.ORG



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Harold Jones — Drums
Marshall Wood — Bass

With much love and appreciation,



Tony Bennett



Pianist Bruce Barth (foreground), bassist Rodney Whitaker, drummer Dana Hall, trumpeter Terell Stafford and saxophonist Tim Warfield perform at Murry's in Columbia, Missouri, on Nov. 4, 2012.



MURRY'S: JAZZ IN A COZY SETTING

There may not be a more unlikely location for a successful jazz venue in the Midwest than Murry's in Columbia, Missouri. The combination club/restaurant is located in a nondescript strip mall between an insurance office and a dry cleaner—more than two miles south of Columbia's bustling downtown district.

But last year, Murry's co-owners Bill Sheals and Gary Moore celebrated the club's 30th anniversary, and during those three decades, the intimate venue has hosted a who's who of jazz notables. The list includes legends like Tommy Flanagan, Von Freeman, Phil Woods, Billy Higgins and James Williams, and contemporary players such as Terell Stafford, Brad Mehldau and Christian McBride.

The co-owners became friends in the early 1980s, when Sheals hired Moore as a bartender at a Columbia club. The two also shared a love of jazz—although of very different styles.

"I'm a St. Louis guy, and grew up listening to musicians like Julius Hemphill and Oliver Lake on the local scene," Moore said during a break between afternoon and evening sets at Murry's by Rufus Reid's Out Front Trio with Tia Fuller. "But Bill came from more of a big

band background."

"Give me Glenn Miller—morning to night," Sheals interjected.

Despite their stylistic differences, both agreed they wanted to start a restaurant/music club in Columbia that featured a quality menu and jazz on a regular basis. After searching almost a year for a downtown spot, Sheals and Moore eventually found a home for Murry's. Although the out-of-the-way location wasn't ideal, they were determined to make the new venue work.

Murry's opened on July 1, 1985, billing itself as a place with "Good Food, Good Jazz." The tasty menu soon attracted attention, but it took several months to get the musical element in gear.

"We had some musicians who were local and others come in from Kansas City and St. Louis, but getting national acts here was hard," Moore recalled. "So we asked a friend of ours, Jon Poses, to help out."

Poses, who had moved to Columbia from New York City in the late '70s as a graduate student at University of Missouri's journalism school, had become director of jazz programming at a local public radio station.

Poses brought pianist James Williams to play at Murry's in September 1985, and since then he's booked more than 200 national acts

into the venue, which now seats 125 guests.

At first, national acts were booked only on Saturday evenings, and music started later in the evening to avoid conflicts with patrons who were looking for a great meal but were unwilling to pay a cover charge. The Saturday night series eventually ended in late 1994.

By then, Poses had decided the time was right to start an annual jazz subscription series in Columbia. He called it "We Always Swing," and it debuted in 1995 with six concerts. By 1998, Poses was again presenting concerts at Murry's—but this time on Sundays and as part of the series.

"We had been closed on Sundays, because Missouri license laws [regarding the sale of alcohol] made it too expensive to stay open," Sheals explained. "But that changed, and we talked to Jon about doing Sunday shows here."

Today, it's the special Sunday "We Always Swing" 3:30 and 7 p.m. sets featuring national musicians that have put Murry's on the map. The 2016 lineup includes Warren Wolf (Jan. 24), Danilo Pérez (Feb. 28), Aaron Diehl (March 13), Champion Fulton (April 3) and The Bad Plus with Joshua Redman (April 17).

"People love it," Moore said. "The other thing that's cool is that the musicians love it, too. We've had everyone from Toots Thielemans, Bobby Watson, Joey Calderazzo, Matt Wilson and Brad Mehldau say how much they enjoy the club's incredibly intimate atmosphere."

"It doesn't hurt that we feed 'em well," Sheals added with a laugh. —Terry Perkins



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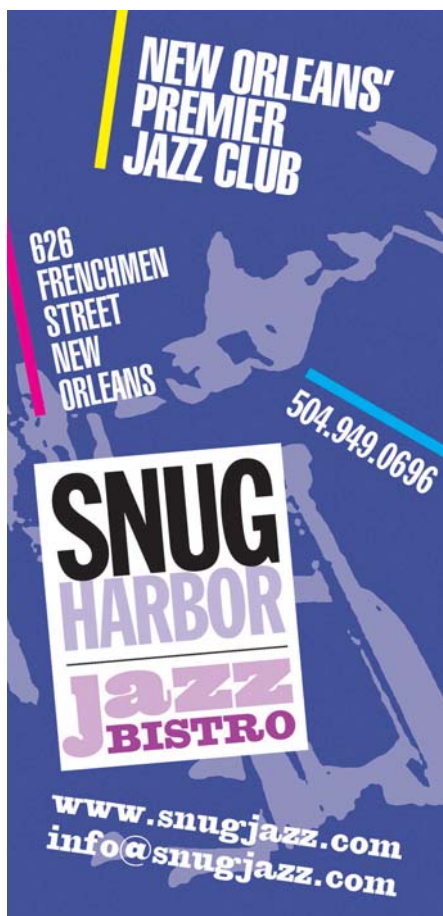
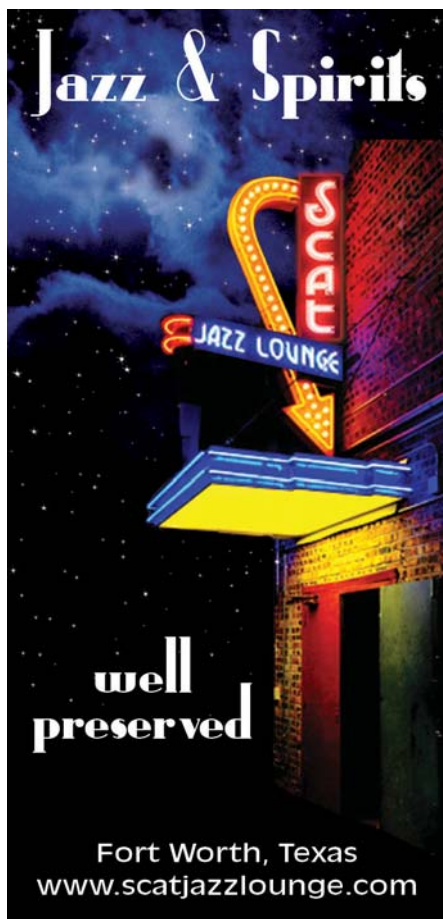
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SOUTH

FLORIDA

Bradfordville Blues Club

7152 Moses Lane
Tallahassee, FL
(850) 906-0766
bradfordvilleblues.com

This juke joint, which is located among fields and oak trees, has hosted bluesmen Bobby Rush, Jimmy Rogers and Big Jack Johnson.

Heidi's Jazz Club

7 North Orlando Ave.
Cocoa Beach, FL
(321) 783-4559
heidisjazzclub.com

Heidi's presents jazz five nights a week. Local and regional artists play on Fridays and Saturdays, while Heidi's Open Jam Session is held every Sunday.

GEORGIA

Churchill Grounds

660 Peachtree St.
Atlanta, GA
(404) 876-3030
churchillgrounds.com

Jazz greats such as Donald Harrison, Freddie Cole and Chico Freeman have played this Atlanta venue. It held the Harper Family Jam Session every Thursday night in November and December.

Velvet Note

4075 Old Milton Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA
(855) 583-5838
thevelvetnote.com

Located just outside of Atlanta, this venue has hosted Christian McBride, Diane Schuur and Lew Soloff. The open mic jam session happens every Thursday night.

LOUISIANA

Blue Nile

532 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 948-2583
bluenilelive.com

The Blue Nile, which was once the Dream Palace, is one of the oldest music clubs on Frenchmen Street. Local, national and internationally famous bands perform seven nights a week on two stages.

d.b.a

618 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 942-3731
dbaneworleans.com

d.b.a. is home to an assortment of local blues, jazz and brass bands who play nightly, as well as a bountiful bar with 20 beers on tap.

Fritzel's European Jazz Pub

733 Bourbon St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 586-4800
fritzelsjazz.net

Fritzel's been around for nearly 50 years and is the oldest club in New Orleans. Located in a building built in 1831, Fritzel's features traditional and Dixieland jazz.

The Maison

508 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 371-5543

maisonfrenchmen.com

Located on the famous Frenchmen St., The Maison has three stages that host performances of various musical acts and genres seven nights a week.

The Maple Leaf Bar

8316 Oak St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 866-9359

mapleleafbar.com

Operating for more than 40 years, this venue presents local and nationally known acts playing jazz, blues, funk, r&b, rock and zydeco.

Irvin Mayfield's Jazz Playhouse

300 Bourbon St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 553-2299

irvinmayfield.com

Owned and named for Grammy-winning trumpeter Irvin Mayfield, the Jazz Playhouse is located within the Royal Sonesta Hotel. In addition to Mayfield himself, recent performers include the Adonis Rose Quartet and Leon "Kid Chocolate" Brown.

Palm Court Jazz Cafe

1204 Decatur St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 525-0200

palmcourtjazzcafe.com

The Palm Court has been called a "mecca for jazz" in the French Quarter. It offers traditional jazz five nights a week.

Preservation Hall

726 St. Peter St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 522-2841

preservationhall.com

This French Quarter landmark books over 350 nights of jazz performances a year, including those from the world-famous Preservation Hall Jazz Band. The building itself dates back to the 1800s.

Prime Example

1909 N Broad St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 701-9007

primeexamplejazz.com

Prime Example showcases New Orleans jazz artists, including Donald Harrison and Nicholas Payton, with two shows a night most Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and the occasional special Saturday show.

Snug Harbor Jazz Bistro

626 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 949-0696

snugjazz.com

This venue has presented jazz acts for more than 30 years, booking artists like Dr. Lonnie Smith and Donald Harrison, with music every night of the week.

Spotted Cat

623 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 943-3887

spottedcatmusicclub.com

The Cat, as its known to locals, is the spot to see local blues and jazz acts. The venue hosts performances every day of the week, typically with three acts per day.

Three Muses
536 Frenchmen St.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 252-4801
3musesnola.com

Three Muses presents jazz six nights a week alongside a diverse array of internationally inspired dishes by Daniel Esses.

Tipitina's
501 Napoleon Ave.
New Orleans, LA
(504) 895-8477
tipitinas.com

Named for the song by New Orleans icon Dr. Longhair, Tipitina's began as a neighborhood juke joint and is now one of best-known clubs in New Orleans, in part for its Tipitina's Foundation, which provides instruments to local schools.

MISSISSIPPI

119 Underground
119 S. President St.
Jackson, MS
(601) 352-2322
underground119.com

This venue is the spot to see local and regional jazz and blues acts like Jesse Robinson, who

performs every Tuesday.

Ground Zero Blues Club
252 Delta Ave.
Clarksdale, MS
(662) 621-9009
groundzerobluesclub.com

Known by many for its Oscar-Owinning co-owner, longtime Mississippian Morgan Freeman, this venue is located at the birthplace of the delta blues.

NORTH CAROLINA

Beyù Caffé
335 W. Main St.
Durham, NC
(919) 683-1058
beyucaffe.com

This venue combines a coffee shop, restaurant, bar and jazz club. Fred Wesley & The New JBs recently played there.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The Jazz Corner
1000 William Hilton Pkwy.
Hilton Head Island, SC
(843) 842-8620
thejazzcorner.com

The Jazz Corner is an award-winning jazz room located in the popular vacation destination of Hilton Head Island. The venue books acts seven nights a week with many weekly residencies. Internationally ac-

claimed vocalist René Marie will perform on Feb. 13.

TENNESSEE

Alfred's on Beale
197 Beale St.
Memphis, TN
(901) 525-3711
alfredsonbeale.com

Located on the famous street for blues, Beale Street, Alfred's opened in 1986 and is the home of the Memphis Jazz Orchestra.

The Jazz Cave
1319 Adams St.
Nashville, TN
(615) 242-5299
nashvillejazz.org

The Nashville Jazz Workshop (which presents shows at The Jazz Cave) serves as a gathering place for musicians, students, and jazz fans, who can attend concerts or take jazz vocal and instrumental classes.

TEXAS

Carmen's De La Calle
320 North Flores
San Antonio, TX
(210) 281-4349
carmensdelacalle.com

This Spanish restaurant hosts jazz performances each Thursday, with other nights dedicated to flamenco and world music.

Cezanne
4100 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, TX
(713) 522-9621
cezannejazz.com

This jazz club presents jazz on Friday and Saturday nights, spotlighting regional talent. The Dennis Dotson Quartet with Peggy Stern will play on Jan. 29.

Elephant Room
315 Congress Ave.
Austin, TX
(512) 473-2279
elephantroom.com

The Elephant Room is a basement jazz bar serving up a wide variety of local jazz and blues acts. Recent performers include Dr. James Polk and Elias Haslanger.

Scat Jazz Lounge

111 W. 4th St.
Fort Worth, TX
(817) 870-9100
scatjazzlounge.com

This venue is located in the basement of the historic Woolworth building, in the heart of downtown Fort Worth's Sundance Square. It features straight-ahead jazz showcases by local, regional and national acts six nights a week. The Chris Milyo Big Band recently performed there.

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Keyboardist Wayne Horvitz (left) performs at his club The Royal Room with saxophonist Skerik and cellist Peggy Lee.



ROYAL ROOM: SEATTLE STYLE

Touring musicians will tell you Seattle has one of the country's finest jazz clubs—Dimitriou's Jazz Alley—and Emerald City players are lucky to have their own showcase in the cozy Belltown boîte called Tula's. But pianist, composer and bandleader Wayne Horvitz, who moved to Seattle from New York in 1988, thought there was something missing. Four years ago he decided to remedy that with The Royal Room.

"I wanted something that felt more like a community place, a place that mostly served local music but was nice enough that people on tour could come through," Horvitz explained.

Known for an eclectic body of work that includes the chamber opera *Joe Hill*, rock and funk groups like Pigpen and Zony Mash, an avant-garde trio with the late Butch Morris and manning the keyboards in John Zorn's Naked City, Horvitz came up in the 1980s as part of New York's "downtown" scene. The Royal Room was partly inspired by the Tin Palace, an East Village club located down the street from CBGB's.

"It was a hang," said the animated, 60-year-old musician. "That's kind of what I had in mind."

The concept has caught on. Over the years, The Royal Room has hosted the likes of Bill Frisell, Bobby Previte, Allison Miller and Nels

Cline, but also served as a "project room," as Horvitz likes to call it, for Seattle-based artists such as violist Eyvind Kang, French horn player Tom Varner, trumpeter Cuong Vu and funky sax man Skerik. On any given night you might hear alt-country, blues, rock, jazz, avant-garde classical music or—on alternate Mondays—Horvitz's Collective Music Ensemble, a "conduction" project inspired by Horvitz's old bandmate Morris.

But the town's best young straightahead improvisers can be found there, too, particularly at the 10 p.m. Monday "Monk Jams," or the club's "Home for the Holidays" series featuring local youngsters shaped by the city's renowned high school jazz band programs.

Ensclosed in the corner of a building owned by a venerable African-American social club, the Royal Room is in Columbia City, a recently gentrified neighborhood full of bars and restaurants about five miles south of downtown. The triangular, 2,500-square-foot spot is actually three venues in one: a performance space with a large stage and a score of four-seater dinner tables; a full-service bar, with extra seating at high counters; and a corner area sometimes curtained off for late-night sessions like the Monk Jam. With revealed brick and wood surfac-

es, antique-looking ceiling lamps and windows to the sidewalk, the Royal Room has a warm, welcoming feel. Many nights there is no cover charge.

Horvitz says running the club is "the hardest thing I've ever done in my life," thanks to the meager margins and precarious economics of a small venue. The Royal Room accommodates 120–150 guests, and a few bad nights can add up quickly. But his partners in the venture, Steve and Tia Freeborn, have extensive business experience, having run Seattle's fabled OK Hotel, where everyone from Nirvana to Charles Gayle used to play. Despite the challenges, Horvitz and the Freeborns have kept the place afloat. They've also earned the loyalty of the community.

"People stop me in elevators downtown and say, 'You're Wayne Horvitz!'" the pianist said with a smile. "I'm always hoping they're going to say how much they like my music, and they say, 'Thank you so much for the Royal Room.' That's one of the things that keeps me going."

It keeps the scene going, too.

"You can fail gracefully there," said Skerik. "I really see it in the lineage of the Knitting Factory and the OK Hotel, a very cool extension of that."

The venue accommodates musicians with a Steinway piano, full drum kit, Hammond B-3 organ, Fender Rhodes, Wurlitzer piano and a Clavinet keyboard.

"I'm not smart enough to solve the problem of a local drummer being able to make a living wage," Horvitz joked, "but if they play here, at least they're not going to have to drag their drums to the car at 2 in the morning."

—Paul de Barros



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ILLINOIS

Andy's Jazz Club

11 E. Hubbard St.
Chicago, IL
(312) 642-6805

andysjazzclub.com

Now in its 40th year, this Loop jazz club presents many of Chicago's top jazz artists and covers a range of styles from traditional jazz and swing to bebop, fusion and Latin jazz. A Spotlight Performer series showcases some of today's most in-demand touring musicians. Regular local performers include the Bobby Broom Trio, Chris Foreman & Soul Message and the Eric Schneider-Pat Mallinger Quintet.

B.L.U.E.S.

2519 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL
(773) 528-1012

chicagobluesbar.com

Located in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, B.L.U.E.S. is a welcoming space for seasoned blues fans and first-time patrons. The bill is filled with local favorites like John Primer, Eddie Shaw and Pistol Pete.

Buddy Guy's Legends

700 S. Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL
(312) 427-1190

buddyguy.com

Seven nights a week, Buddy Guy's world-renowned club hosts blues artists of all shapes and sizes, including Vance "Guitar" Kelly and the Backstreet Blues Band, Marty Sammon Blues Band, and Guy himself, who holds a nearly month-long residency each January.

Constellation

3111 N. Western Ave.
Chicago, IL

constellation-chicago.com

Located on Chicago's Northwest side, Constellation was founded in 2013 by drummer/composer Mike Reed. Constellation's mission is to present progressive performance and forward-thinking music with a focus on jazz, improvisation and contemporary classical.

The Green Mill

4802 N. Broadway Ave.
Chicago, IL
(773) 878-5552

greenmilljazz.com

This historic establishment, which maintains an authenticity

of the '30s and '40s in its vibe and decor, books the best in local, regional and national talent, covering a broad spectrum of jazz styles. The club is also the longest continuously running jazz club in Chicago. Recent headliners have included Patricia Barber, Bob Mintzer and Ed Petersen.

The Iron Post

120 S. Race St.
Urbana, IL
(217)337-7678

facebook.com/theironpost

This college-town watering hole is a hidden treasure that books music nearly every day of the week—mostly of a jazz persuasion.

Jazz Showcase

806 S. Plymouth Ct.
Chicago, IL
(312) 360-0234

jazzshowcase.com

Founded by impresario and NEA Jazz Master Joe Segal, the Jazz Showcase has presented some of the best acts in jazz since 1947. Visiting artists frequently play extended engagements, like Roy Hargrove—who led his quintet there for a week leading up to New Year's Eve.

Kingston Mines

2548 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL
(773) 477-4647

kingstonmines.com

Kingston Mines is a well-known blues bar that's been kickin' since 1968. This joint hosts live blues on two stages, seven days a week until 4 or 5 a.m. Li' Ed & the Blues Imperials play Jan. 22–23, and Billy Branch headlines Jan. 29–30.

SPACE

1245 Chicago Ave.
Evanston, IL
(847) 492-8860

evanstonpace.com

SPACE prides itself as not being easily pegged as a jazz or rock club. This intimate venue presents top acts like Gary Burton, Stanley Clarke and The John Scofield & Joe Lovano Quartet, who will perform Feb. 5.

INDIANA

Chatterbox Jazz Club

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Indianapolis, IN
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chatterboxjazz.com

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MICHIGAN

Baker's Keyboard Lounge

20510 Livernois Ave.
Detroit, MI
(313) 345-6300

theofficialbakerskeyboardlounge.com

Boasting the title of the world's oldest operating jazz club, this Art Deco-style, 99-seat club with a piano-shaped bar began presenting pianists in 1934 and has hosted a who's who of jazz luminaries ever since. Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davis, Oscar Peterson, Maynard Ferguson, Modern Jazz Quartet and Nat "King" Cole all played this room during their day.

Bert's Market Place

2727 Russell St.
Detroit, MI
(313) 567-2030

bertsentertainmentcomplex.com

Located in Detroit's Eastern Market District, Bert's is a one-stop shop for those seeking entertainment. Part soul food restaurant, part cocktail lounge and part theater, Bert's hosts jazz every Thursday and Friday and blues every Saturday. James Carter, Marcus Belgrave and Johnny O'Neal have all made recent appearances.

Cliff Bell's

2030 Park Ave.
Detroit, MI
(313) 961-2543

cliffbells.com

Cliff Bell's originally opened in 1935 and has maintained its Prohibition-era vibe since it reopened in 2005. Hosting mostly local acts, the club is located in the heart of Detroit's entertainment district and is just around the corner from Woodward Ave., Comerica Park and Ford Field. Terence Blanchard and his quintet The E-Collective take the stage for two sets on Jan. 24.

Dirty Dog Jazz Cafe

97 Kercheval Ave.
Gross Pointe, MI
(313) 882-5299

dirtydogjazz.com

The Dirty Dog Jazz Café is an English-styled pub that has hosted greats of the Detroit scene and beyond, like Johnny Bassett, Johnny O'Neal and Freddie Cole. Today, acts like Thornetta Davis, Charles Boyles and Jason Marsalis grace the Dirty Dog stage.

Jazz Café at Music Hall

350 Madison St.
Detroit, MI
(313) 887-8500

jazzcafedetroit.com

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Kerrytown Concert House

415 N. 4th Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI
(734) 769-2999

kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Home of the internationally acclaimed Edgefest jazz festival, Kerrytown is an 110-seat venue a few minutes from Michigan Stadium. Kerrytown brings established jazz acts like Dave Liebman and Dave Douglas,

as well as classical and cabaret artists.

MINNESOTA

Dakota Jazz Club

1010 Nicollet Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 332-5299

dakotacooks.com

The premier spot for jazz in the Twin Cities, the Dakota opened 30 years ago and became a national jazz venue in the late 1980s when it booked the likes of Ahmad Jamal and McCoy Tyner. Today, the Dakota hosts performances every night and presents top acts like Kurt Elling and Roy Haynes.

Upcoming shows include Bill Frisell (Feb. 20) and the Rebirth Brass Band (Feb. 25).

MISSOURI

The Blue Room

1616 E. 18th St.
Kansas City, MO
(816) 474-2929

club.americanjazzmuseum.org

The performance space of the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City's 18th & Vine district hosts multiple jazz performances each week. Big bands perform the last Monday of every month, and a Latin jazz/salsa series gets shaking on the last Thursday of every month.

Ferring Jazz Bistro

The Harold & Dorothy Steward Center for Jazz

3536 Washington Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 571-6000

jazzstl.org

Part of the new Harold & Dorothy Steward Center for Jazz, the revamped Jazz Bistro hosts local and national acts in a state-of-the-art venue that seats 200. Upcoming performances includes Branford Marsalis (Feb. 8-10) and Dave Liebman Expansions (April 23).

Murry's

3107 Green Meadows Way
Columbia, MO
(573) 442-4969

murrysrestaurant.net

Murry's, which opened its doors in 1985, is a 130-seat venue that promises its patrons "Good food, good jazz and good people." Pianist Tom Andes performs there frequently both in a solo and trio setting. Murry's has served as the main concert space for the "We Always Swing" Jazz Series since 1997. Ravi Coltrane, Terell Stafford, Harold Mabern and Joey DeFrancesco are a few of the internationally recognized artists who have played there.

OHIO

BLU Jazz+

47 E. Market St.
Akron, OH
(330) 252-1190

blujazzakron.com

BLU Jazz+ is a music venue and photography gallery, with a kitchen and full-service bar, located in the historic arts district of downtown Akron. The venue is open Wednesday through Saturday and presents local and internationally known jazz artists, such as Houston Person, Ken Peplowski, Gary Smulyan and Bill Cunliffe.

Nighttown

12387 Cedar Rd.
Cleveland, OH
(216) 795-0550

nighttowncleveland.com

Named in reference to the red-light district in James Joyce's Ulysses, Nighttown is an Irish-styled pub and restaurant that recently turned 50. Nighttown brings jazz to Cleveland by booking national and international acts like the Wallace Roney Sextet and Hugh Masekela.

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Saxophonist Houston Person at the Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill in Montreal, 2015

SHARONNE COHEN

UPSTAIRS JAZZ: MONTREAL INSPIRED

The Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill cooked up a special musical feast to mark its 20th anniversary in November. The 11-night mini-festival offered a diverse program illustrating the club's tradition of highlighting local as well as international artists playing a broad range of styles.

Entrepreneur and jazz aficionado Joel Giberovitch founded Upstairs (ironically located *downstairs* at 1254 McKay in downtown Montreal) in 1995. He was only 23. Inspired by a trip to New York City to explore legendary clubs such as Bradley's and the Village Vanguard, his vision soon became clear: creating a great jazz club where the music and musicians would be appreciated and respected.

With a booking ratio of 80 percent artists from Quebec and the rest of Canada, and 20 percent international artists, the club sustains strong programming throughout the year, partnering with the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal during the summer with its own consistently solid series.

One of the oldest jazz clubs in Canada, Upstairs presents jazz 363 nights a year. Featured artists have included Barry Harris, Dr. Lonnie Smith, The Heath Brothers, Sheila Jordan, Azar Lawrence, Dave Liebman and Jimmy Cobb, as well

as rising stars such as Gilad Hekselman, Mark Guiliana and Christian Scott.

Giberovitch has invested much into the sound, feel and design of the club. This cozy, wood-paneled semi-basement (capacity: 70), located in a nearly century-old building, offers great acoustics and a well-balanced sound system. A custom Yamaha drum set (inspired by the kit Elvin Jones played) is available to performers, as is a newly installed, sumptuous sounding Steinway B. (The Upstairs piano is tuned at least once a week.) Record sleeves of timeless jazz albums and portraits of jazz giants adorn the brick walls.

There is also a real attempt at Upstairs to optimize the audience's listening experience. The kitchen is located at the back of the club, and when the musicians are playing the staff makes every effort to keep things as quiet as possible—even refraining from shaking martinis and making cappuccinos during solos.

Among the club's milestones, Giberovitch recounts its initial transition from a piano bar to a jazz club charging a ticket price (initially set at \$2); the addition of Chilean-born chef Juan Barros to the team (a jazz fan who has been passionately running the kitchen for the past 18 years); the club's 10-year anniversary, marked by the acquisition of a Yamaha

C3 piano; and the purchase of the building housing Upstairs, solidifying its future.

Upstairs also maintains relationships with the city's music schools; McGill's jazz students perform early sets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, while Concordia University hosts an afternoon jam session on Wednesdays.

Closing the 20th anniversary festivities on Nov. 22 was a soulful exchange between veteran saxophonist Houston Person and versatile Montreal pianist Julie Lamontagne.

"It's like the old clubs used to be," said 81-year-old Person. "It's got that intimate feeling. The audience is *right there*; they're very attentive, very aware of what's going on. And it's still a lot of fun."

Jean-Michel Pilc, who also played at the anniversary festival, praised Upstairs for its great appreciative audience and warm vibe. "It's musician-friendly," he said. "Everyone on staff is a music lover. And it feels like home, musically and otherwise."

A screening of director Guylaine Dionne's documentary film about the club on Nov. 16 was followed by a spirited jam session led by in-demand drummer Jim Doxas, who has been holding down the Monday night jam session for the past decade.

It was a night of genuine camaraderie, providing one of the anniversary's highlights: a 30-minute rendition of Sonny Rollins' "Tenor Madness" featuring 10 horn players crowding the stage, eager to share in this unique, uplifting moment—a memorable celebration of the club and the city's vibrant jazz community.

—Sharonne Cohen

WEST

ARIZONA

Elliott's On Congress

135 E. Congress St.
Tucson, AZ
(602) 795-0464
elliottsoncongress.com

This restaurant offers an exotic take on American fare and hosts the Jazz Guild Jam each Monday night.

The Nash

110 E. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, AZ
(602) 795-0464
thenash.org

Named for Phoenix native Lewis Nash, who recently appeared with the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz UCLA Ensemble, The Nash is owned by Jazz in Arizona, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve the culture of American music. The venue hosts classic jazz, new music concerts, performances by student musicians, local pros, touring artists and weekly jazz jam sessions, as well as workshops, master classes and clinics.

Pastiche

3025 N. Campbell Ave.

Tucson, AZ
(520) 325-3333
pastiche.com

Located right down the street from the University of Arizona campus, Pastiche presents weekend jazz performances, with the Pete Swan Trio appearing each Friday and the Pete Swan Quartet each Sunday. The restaurant features an extensive lunch, dinner and bar menu.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society

311 Miranda Road
Half Moon Bay, CA
(650) 726-4143

bachddsoc.org

The Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society is a nonprofit organization that has been presenting jazz, classical and world music at the Douglas Beach House since 1964. McCoy Tyner, Anthony Braxton, Jimmy Heath, Dave Douglas and Larry Coryell are just a few of the jazz artists who have appeared during the last 50 years.

Kuumbwa Jazz Center

320 Cedar St.
Santa Cruz, CA

(831) 427-2227

kuumbwajazz.org

Dating back to 1975, Kuumbwa Jazz is nonprofit community organization that presents acts like Chris Potter, Pat Martino and Christian Scott in a 200-seat venue. Upcoming shows include Booker T. Jones (Feb. 5), the Gary Peacock Trio (Feb. 15) and Regina Carter (Feb. 29).

Savanna Jazz

1189 Laurel St.
San Carlos, CA
(415) 279-8259

savannajazz.com

Formerly located in the Mission District of San Francisco, this venue has moved about 25 miles south and is now located in San Carlos. The venue is operated by guitarist and author Pascal Bokar, who has performed at the club and presented shows by international stars such as Dave Liebman and Cedar Walton. The venue now bills itself as the "No. 1 Jazz Club in Silicon Valley."

The Sound Room

2147 Broadway
Oakland, CA
(510) 496-4180

soundroom.org

This all-ages Oakland listening room is home to the nonprofit

Bay Area Jazz and Arts Inc., whose mission it is to present and promote jazz as an art form in the Bay Area. Harvey Wainapel, Frank Jackson and the Peter Smith Trio have all graced the stage in recent months.

Yoshi's Oakland

510 Embarcadero West
Oakland, CA
(510) 238-9200

yoshis.com/oakland

Yoshi's started in 1972, seats 310 patrons and serves as the premier location in the Bay Area for live jazz and Japanese cuisine. Roy Ayers, Chris Potter and Herb Alpert are just a few of the names that grace Yoshi's event calendar.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Baked Potato

3787 Cahuenga Blvd.
Studio City, CA
(818) 980-1615

thebakedpotato.com

Opened in 1970 by Don Randi of The Wrecking Crew, The Baked Potato is the go-to place for fans of jazz and stuffed baked potatoes. On Jan. 26, Brian Charette plays with Doug Webb, Will Bernard and Tom Brechtlein.



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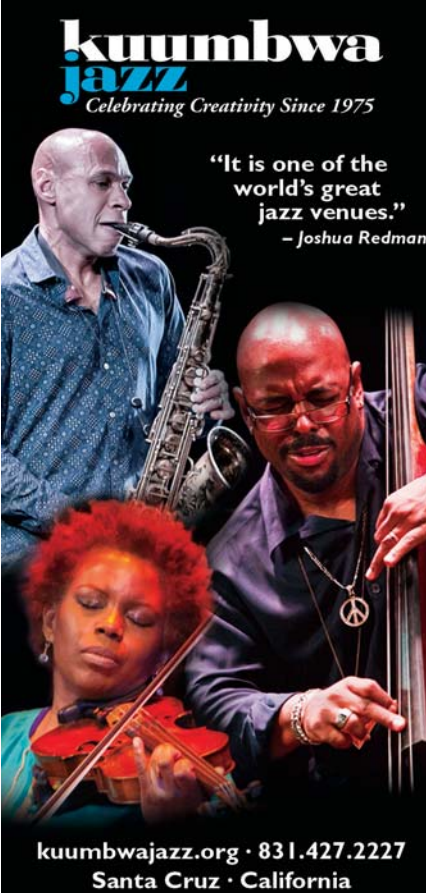
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4.9.16

Kenny Barron Trio
4.18.16

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Guitarist Larry Carlton at the Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, California

R.R. JONES

Lobero Theatre

33. E Canon Perdido St.
Santa Barbara, CA
(805) 966-4946

lobero.com

Originally built in 1873, the Lobero Theatre is the oldest running theatre in the state, hosting acts like Clark Gable, Ingrid Bergman and Igor Stravinsky. Starting in 1949, the Lobero Theatre began showcasing jazz performers like Dave Brubeck, Herbie Hancock, and Wayne Shorter. Upcoming shows include the Mack Avenue Superband (March 31) and the Kenny Barron Trio (April 18).

Upstairs at Vitello's

4349 Tujunga Ave.
Studio City, CA
(818) 769-0905

vitellosjazz.com

Vitello's was once the hangout of Frank Sinatra and the Rat Pack, but now the E Spot Lounge, located just above the Italian restaurant, serves as a venue for jazz, blues, Latin and r&b.

Blue Whale

123 Astronaut E. S. Onizuka
Street #301
Los Angeles, CA
(213) 620-0908

bluewhalemusic.com

Steve Coleman and Kendrick Scott have played this space for live jazz and art in the Little

Tokyo neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Catalina Bar & Grill

6725 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA
(323) 466-2210

catalinajazzclub.com

Situated on the famous Sunset

Boulevard, Catalina Bar & Grill has lived up to own motto of "nothing but the best in jazz" over the years by booking jazz acts like Dizzie Gillespie, Art Blakey, McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Max Roach, Wynton Marsalis and many more.

Vibrato Grill Jazz

2930 N. Beverly Glen Circle
Los Angeles, CA
(310) 474-9400

vibratogrilljazz.com

Legendary Trumpeter Herb Alpert's own L.A. restaurant presents acclaimed artists like

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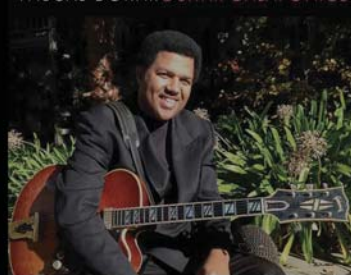
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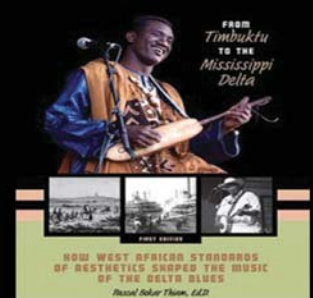
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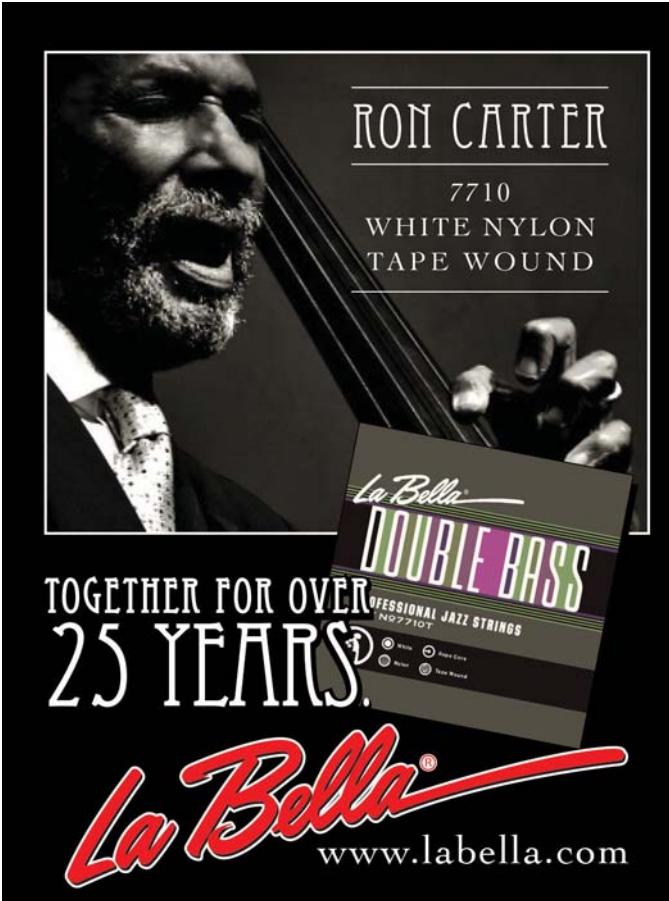
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Dazzle

930 Lincoln St.
Denver, CO
(303) 839-5100
dazzlejazz.com

Jazz acts like Don Byron, Monty Alexander and Chris Potter take the stage at Dazzle in Denver seven nights a week.

El Chapultepec

1962 Market St.
Denver, CO
(303) 295-9126

thepeclodo.com

This well-known nightclub features regular live jazz, late hours and Mexican chow served on paper plates—right down the street from Coors Field. Monday is jam session night.

Nocturne

1330 27th St.
Denver, CO
(303) 295-3333

nocturnejazz.com

Billed as a “a modern jazz & supper club,” Nocturne presents jazz Tuesday through Saturday, featuring local and national talent.

NEW MEXICO

Outpost

210 Yale SE
Albuquerque, NM
(505) 268-0044

outpostspace.org

Outpost is a nonprofit, member-supported performing arts center that offers educational programs to both children and adults as well as hosting more than 100 shows a year featuring artists in jazz, blues, folk and world genres.

OREGON

Jimmy Mak's

221 NW 10th Ave.
Portland, OR
(503) 295-6542

jimmymaks.com

Portland's signature club in the artsy Pearl District hosts local talent as well as national acts such as George Colligan and Hailey Niswanger.

Wilfs Restaurant & Bar

800 NW 6th Ave.
Portland, OR
(503) 223-0070

wilfsrestaurant.com

A restaurant that has been in business for more than 40 years, Wilfs presents jazz Wednesday through Sunday. Ron Steen and Kerry McCoy performed there recently.

WASHINGTON

Boxley's

101 W. North Bend Way
North Bend, WA
(425) 292-9307

boxleysplace.com

Boxley's is a nonprofit venue that provides a showcase of student ensembles during weekdays. Regional and national artists play on the weekends, including such acts as Bryan Carter, Katy Bourne Quartet and Jay Thomas.

Dimitriou's Jazz Alley

2033 Sixth Ave.
Seattle, WA

(206) 441-9729

jazzalley.com

Dimitriou's has been serving up jazz and r&b in Seattle for more than 30 years. Upcoming performances include Tower of Power (Jan. 21–24), Sonny Fortune (Feb. 16–17), Kurt Elling (Feb. 18–21) and Pat Martino (Feb. 23–24).

Egan's Ballard Jam House

1707 NW Market St.
Seattle, WA

(206) 789-1621

ballardjamhouse.com

Egan's offers the Seattle community more than the average jazz club. During the day, the club opens its doors for rehearsals and workshops. In the evening, Egan's presents local acts, student ensembles and open jam sessions.

The Royal Room

5000 Rainier Ave S
Seattle, WA

(206) 906-9920

theroyalroomseattle.com

With a grand piano, a generous stage and a comfortable neighborhood feel, The Royal Room welcomes patrons of all ages to dine and hear live music seven nights a week. When local artists perform, there is no cover charge. The venue also presents nationally touring acts, such as Allison Miller and Bobby Previte, and it presents shows as part of the Earshot Jazz Festival.

Tula's

2214 Second Ave.
Seattle, WA

(206) 443-4221

tulas.com

One of the venues for the Earshot Jazz Festival, Tula's hosts jazz seven nights a week. The month of December included 12 nights of big band performances.

International



The Jazz Dock in Prague

ARGENTINA

Notorious

Av. Callao 966
Buenos Aires
54 11 4813 6888
notorious.com.ar

This stylish, intimate joint is one of Buenos Aires' premier jazz venues. Up front you can buy CDs of various music genres, while in the back the restaurant-café (overlooking a verdant garden) hosts live shows nearly every night.

Thelonious Club

Jerónimo Salguero 1884
Buenos Aires
54 11 4829 1562
thelonious.com.ar

Named for legendary jazz pianist Thelonious Monk, this club is one of the few places to hear first-rate jazz in Argentina. Thelonious features live jazz bands Wednesday through Sunday nights.

AUSTRALIA

505
280 Cleveland St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales
61 422 583 190
venue505.com

Opened in 2010, 505 was developed as an artist-run performance/workshop space for Sydney-based musicians and theatrical performers. Created as a meeting place for artists

from the two mediums to see each other's work and initiate collaborations, 505 features jazz, funk and other genres.

Bennetts Lane
25 Bennetts Lane
Melbourne, Victoria
61 3 9663 2856

bennettslane.com
Bennetts Lane is actually two venues providing music seven nights a week. The original venue has hosted both jazz and non-jazz artists alike, a few examples being Prince, Wynton and Branford Marsalis. The "Jazz Lab" has presented Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Kurt Elling.

Bernie's Jazz & Piano Café
92 Abbott Street
Cairns, Queensland
61 7 4041 4603

berniesjazz.com
Bernie's brings local and traveling acts to Cairns from Tuesday to Sunday each week.

Foundry616
616 Harris Street
Ultimo/Sydney
02 9211 9442

foundry616.com.au
Founded in 2013, this is a key venue for the Sydney International Women's Jazz Festival. Recent performers include Michael Griffin and the Nick Mancini Trio.

The Sound Lounge

City Road and Cleveland St.
Chippendale, New South Wales
61 2 9351 7940
sima.org.au

One of a handful of venues affiliated with the Sydney Improvised Music Association, this café-style lounge seats 120 patrons. SIMA hosts a jazz night every Friday and Saturday, booking Sydney-based and visiting performers.

AUSTRIA

Blue Tomato
Wurmsergasse 21
Vienna
43 1 985 5960

bluetomato.cc
The Blue Tomato, which has been in business for more than 30 years, offers both an indoor and garden space. The venue presents myriad artists from jazz, classical and other genres.

Jazzit
Elisabethstraße 11
Salzburg
43 662 883264

jazzit.at
For 35 years, Jazzit has been the place in Salzburg to see the best in avant-garde and improvised jazz. Henry Threadgill, Cecil Taylor and Lester Bowie have all played there.

Jazzland

Franz Josefs-Kai 29
Vienna
43 1 533 2575
jazzland.at

The oldest jazz club in Austria, Jazzland opened in 1972. The venue has presented top Austrian players as well as hundreds of artists from the States.

♪ Porgy & Bess

Riemergasse 11
Vienna
43 1 512 88 11
porgy.at

Porgy & Bess showcases jazz performers each day of the week. It has presented Rudresh Mahanthappa, Wadada Leo Smith and Béla Fleck. Joe Locke and his quartet perform Jan. 27.

Stockwerk Jazz

Jakominiplatz 18
Graz
43 316 821433
stockwerkjazz.mur.at

Operating for more than 20 years, this serious Austrian jazz club has hosted Taylor Ho Bynum & Tomas Fujiwara, Rova Saxophone Quartet and Michael Zerang in recent months. Jemeel Moondoc Quartet performs Jan. 30.

Treibhaus
Angerzellgasse 8
Innsbruck
43 512 572000



Ernie Watts is one of the hundreds of jazz musicians who have played The Jazzkeller over the decades.

COURTESY THE JAZZKELLER

JAZZKELLER: EUROPE'S OLDEST

The Jazzkeller is the last jazz club standing in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and most likely the oldest one in Europe. Its history is one of survival—and one that draws several parallels with that of post-World War II Germany.

The club was founded in 1952 by trumpet player Carlo Bohländer, who discovered in the still-damaged city center the ideal cellar to open a venue inspired by the French Existentialists, which he ended up calling *Le Domicile du Jazz* (or Jazz House). Early on, it thrived on the heavy presence of American soldiers, including members of the U.S. Army Big Band located in nearby Wiesbaden. Saxophonists Leo Wright, Joe Henderson and Don Menza, bassist David Friesen and French horn player David Amram were among those who frequented the club and rubbed shoulders with locals during the 1950s and '60s.

When the bulk of U.S. troops departed, *Le Domicile du Jazz*—which had by then become the Jazzkeller—maintained its wonderful

ambiance but offered jazz more sporadically. In 1977, with the Mangelsdorff brothers (legendary trombonist Albert and saxophonist Emil) at its helm, the club regained some of its jazz luster. But it was in 1986 that it changed ownership one last time to become the Jazzkeller we know today.

"I was living in Berlin at the time and could not find an investor there to open a jazz club," said Eugen Hahn, the current and enthusiastic owner. "My friend at Timeless Records in Holland—and others who knew that I was looking for a place—brought that location to my attention." Hahn hailed from East Germany, where he was known as a jazz and rock bass player as well as a music promoter.

When Hahn took over, the Jazzkeller began offering music almost every night—in an area not known for nightlife. "Frankfurt is not a town full of tourists—it's a business city," said Kerry Johnson, Hahn's wife, an American who helps him run the venue. "With its skyscrapers,

people believe it's like New York, but the city is usually pretty empty after 7:30 p.m."

Like many clubs around the world, the Jazzkeller is not impervious to changing tastes and the need to be profitable. The main focus is still on the bebop tradition, but the schedule has over the years become increasingly inclusive and now offers blues, as well as Latin and Brazilian music. In addition, Fridays are devoted to DJ sets. "I call it 'dancing for adults,'" said Hahn. "The place is always packed."

The owners have reasons to be hopeful. "We have been able to attract a younger audience in recent years," said Johnson. "We benefit from several music conservatories within the larger metropolitan area. We have the HR Radio Big Band and Jazz Band, as well."

In a town dominated by high finance, Hahn and Johnson's sense of community makes the Jazzkeller a refreshing oasis. Patrons can order food from Bidlabu, a restaurant located next door that emphasizes regional ingredients.

Plus, musicians are deeply fond of the basement venue's atmosphere. "Eugen Hahn's love and dedication to the music is rare," said saxophonist Rick Margitza. "He treats the artist with respect and makes us feel completely welcome. Hanging with him after the gig over a whiskey or two is one of the things I always look forward to, [mainly] because of the amazing stories he tells."
—Alain Drouot

treibhaus.at

Treibhaus, which is German for greenhouse, is just that, a greenhouse. It presents numerous genres of music and has hosted jazz icons Ravi Coltrane, Jack DeJohnette and Steve Coleman.

BRAZIL

Bourbon Street Music Club

Rua dos Chanés, 127 – Moema
São Paulo
55 11 5095 6100

bourbonstreet.com.br

For more than 20 years, this venue has brought the atmosphere of New Orleans' Bourbon Street to the streets of São Paulo.

The Maze

Rua Tavares Bastos 414/66
Catete

Rio de Janeiro
55 21 2558 5547

jazzrio.com

The Maze is a bed-and-breakfast, an art gallery and a restaurant, as well as a concert venue. It books local jazz acts multiple nights each month.

Miranda

1424 Avenida Borges de Medeiros
Lagoa

Rio de Janeiro
55 21 2239 0305

mirandabrasil.com.br

This acclaimed Rio eatery hosts local and international acts like Nigerian guitarist/singer-songwriter Omara "Bombino" Moctar and Swiss soul singer Marc Sway.

CANADA

Frankie's Jazz

765 Beatty St.
Vancouver, British Columbia
604-688-6368

frankiesitaliankitchen.ca

Frankie's provides a relaxing atmosphere where one can hear local and international talent four nights a week while enjoying Southern Italian cuisine and newly inspired dishes. The Oliver Gannon Quartet plays Jan. 30–31.

L'Astral

305 Ste. Catherine St. W.
Montreal, Quebec
(514) 288-8882

sallelastral.com

Since 2009, this venue has presented acts like Kawandak, Yannick Rieu and Jesse Mac Cormack in its 320-seat performance space.

The Rex Jazz & Blues Bar

194 Queen St. W.
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 598-2475

therex.ca

The Rex has been the place "where jazz lives" in Toronto since 1992. Wynton Marsalis, Kurt Elling and Dave Douglas have played there.

Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill

1254 MacKay St.
Montreal, Quebec
(514) 931-6808

upstairsjazz.com

Joel Giberovitch's basement-room club has developed a strong reputation as a great listening venue. This club just turned 20, making it one of the oldest in Canada, and presents jazz up to 363 nights a year. The Paulo Ramos Brazilian Jazz Quartet plays on Jan. 22, and on Feb. 6 the venue presents a quartet performance by Fraser Hollins, Brian Blade, Jon Cowherd and Joel Miller.

Yardbird Suite

11 Tommy Banks Way
Edmonton, Alberta
(780) 432-0428

yardbirdsuite.com

Run by volunteers, the venue, which opened in 1957, has been at its current location for 30 years. Jam sessions occur on Tuesday nights, while international, Canadian and Edmonton-based jazz artists perform weekly. The Yardbird Festival of Canadian Jazz is held every November.

CHINA

The Cotton Club

No. 1416 HuaiHai Road
Shanghai
86 21 64377110

thecottonclub.cn

This club bills itself as one of the first clubs to bring jazz to China after a 40-year absence that followed the Shanghai jazz boom of the 1930s. It features a revolving cast of instrumentalists and singers.

Fringe Club

2 Lower Albert Road, Central
Hong Kong
852 2521 7251

hkfringeclub.com

Built in an early 20th century dairy shop, a hodgepodge of jazz acts and genres can be heard at this intimate club. The space is part of the Fringe Club network of art, music and theater spaces.

JZ Club

46 Fuxing West Road
Shanghai
021 6431 0269

jzclub.cn

With its atmospheric lighting, red lamps and high-quality jazz, JZ Club offers its patrons a little flavor of "old Shanghai." Performers from around the globe regularly perform at the club. On weekends, the JZ Latino Project and JZ All Star Big Band frequently take the stage.

COSTA RICA

Jazz Cafe

Carretera Interamericana, next to Banco Popular
San Pedro, Montes de Oca Canton
506 2253 8933

jazzcafecostarica.com

Located right outside capital city San José, this 220-seat club attracts locals, tourists and expats. Nearing its 20th year of operation, guests come here for the diverse booking of jazz, blues, salsa and rock.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Agharta Jazz Centrum

Zelezna 16
Prague
420 222 211 275

aghart.cz



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Fernando Soria Ensemble at La Casa del Mendrugo in Puebla, Mexico

PABLO RUIZ FLANDES

This Old Town club plays host to Prague Jazz Festival shows. Housed in the basement of a 14th-century building, the venue includes an extensive CD and merchandise shop.

The Jazz Dock
Janackovo Nabrezi 2
Prague
420 774 058 838

jazzdock.cz

It's all in the name. Part indoor, part outdoor, this modern club on the Vltava River presents an array of acts from around the globe. Larry Goldings' trio with Peter Bernstein and Bill Stewart performs Feb. 9.

Lucerna Music Bar
Stepanska 36
Prague
420 224 225 440

musicbar.cz

Take 6, Straight No Chaser and Maceo Parker are some of the U.S.-based acts who have played this established, energetic club that hosts talent from around the world.

DENMARK

Copenhagen Jazzhouse
Niels Hemmingsens Gade 10
Copenhagen
45 3315 4700

jazzhouse.dk

This historic club, which was recently renovated, focuses on European talent.

Jazzhus Montmartre
St. Regnegade 19A
Copenhagen
45 31 72 34 94

jazzhusmontmartre.dk

Dexter Gordon and Ben Webster once made this club their base of European operations. The venue opened a renovated space in 2010 and continues its tradition of hosting top-notch musicians.

ENGLAND

The 606 Club
90 Lots Road
London
44 0 20 7352 5953
606club.co.uk

As a strong supporter of the music scene, Steve Rubie opened this spot in 1976 while pledging to only book British musicians. This treasured Chelsea spot has upheld that policy through the years.

Cafe OTO
18 - 22 Ashwin St.
Dalston
London
44 20 7923 1231
cafeoto.co.uk

This venue focuses on experimental sounds and music that's outside the mainstream. Concerts happen almost every night and the daytime cafe has a lunch menu.

Jazz Cafe
5 Parkway
London
44 20 7485 6834
thejazzcafelondon.com

The Jazz Cafe has a capacity of 420 and has played host to Jose Feliciano and Bobby Womack.

PizzaExpress Jazz Club
10 Dean St.
London
44 20 7437 9595
pizzaexpress.com

Located in the basement of PizzaExpress restaurant on Dean St., this venue has played host to acts like Norah Jones, Amy Winehouse and Walter Smith III.

Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club
47 Frith St.
London
020 7439 0747
ronniescotts.co.uk

Started by English saxophonist Ronnie Scott in 1959, this club is the premiere jazz spot in London's Soho district. The Mingus Big Band

performs Jan. 25–30, and Lee Ritenour Quartet plays Feb. 4–6.

The Vortex
11 Gillett Square
London
020 7254 4097
vortexjazz.co.uk

Long-established in North London for more than 20 years, the Vortex is a beacon for contemporary jazz. The club regularly features world-class artists from the U.K. and overseas. Dave Liebman & Liam Noble perform Jan. 28.

FINLAND

Rytmihäiriöklubi / Juttutupa
Säästöpankinranta 6
Helsinki
358 20 7424240
juttutupa.com

Rytmihäiriöklubi has been an important part of the jazz scene in Helsinki since 1997. It is located in the restaurant Juttutupa, which was founded in 1908. A wide range of jazz styles are presented, with an emphasis on young Finnish musicians. Through the years many international jazz artists have played, including Tim Hagans, Jim Beard, Wayne Krantz, Marc Ducret and Ingebrigt Håker Flaten.

Storyville
Museigatan 8
Helsinki
358 50 363 2664
storyville.fi

This old coal cellar sits below a Cajun and Creole eatery and hosts jazz four nights a week. Open until 4 a.m., Storyville presents a wide variety of acts from Dixieland to swing and blues to rock.

FRANCE

Duc Des Lombards
42 Rue des Lombards
Paris

1 4233 2288

ducdeslombards.fr

Located in the heart of Paris, this jazz club and restaurant has hosted Wynton Marsalis, Biréli Lagrène and Ahmad Jamal. There are shows six nights a week and after-hours jam sessions on Friday and Saturday.

Le Caveau de la Huchette
5 Rue de la Huchette
Paris
4326 6505

caveaudelahuchette.fr

Housed in a building dating back to the 16th century, Le Caveau de la Huchette, this underground jazz club opened in 1946. Greats like Lionel Hampton, Count Basie and Art Blakely have played here.

New Morning
7-9 Rue des Petites Écuries
Paris
33 1 45 23 51 41

newmorning.com

Since 1981, this Parisian mainstay for jazz has hosted Art Blakey, Chet Baker, Charlie Haden and non-jazz acts like Bob Dylan, Taj Mahal and Prince.

Sunset-Sunside
60 Rue des Lombards
Paris
33 0 1 40 26 46 60

sunset-sunside.com

Since 1983, this venue has been a proponent of French jazz artists as well as welcoming foreign acts. Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock and Lee Konitz have all played there, and today performers like Martial Solal can be found on the bill.

GERMANY

A-Trane
1 Bleibtreustraße St.
10625 Berlin – Charlottenburg
49 30 3132550
a-trane.de

One of the venues that presents Jazzfest Berlin shows, the A-trane opened in 1992 and has presented Lee Konitz, Herbie Hancock and Diana Krall.

Aufsturz
Oranienburger Straße 67
Berlin
49 30 2804 74 07

aufsturz.de

Aufsturz is a jazz club, gallery, bar, recording studio and lecture hall. It opened in 2004 and hosts a weekly swing dance party as well as live performances by players from the local, national and European jazz scenes.

B-Flat
Rosenthaler Ste. 13
Berlin
49 30 2833 123
b-flat-berlin.de

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1995, B-Flat has hosted Harry Conrick Jr., Don Braden, Aki Takase and Mal Waldron. A jam session takes place every Wednesday.

Jazz im Prinz Karl

Gradmann Weg 7
Tübingen
07 07 1376 01

jipk.net

Since 1977, this venue has brought acts like Dexter Gordon, Chet Baker, Woody Shaw, John Scofield and Sun Ra to this picturesque university town.

Jazzkeller

Kleine Bockenheimer Str. 18a
Frankfurt
49 69 288537

jazzkeller.com

This basement grotto, started by German trumpeter Carlo Bohländer, has been Frankfurt's gateway for jazz for more than 60 years and is open five nights a week. Upcoming shows include the Harold Mabern Trio featuring Joe Farnsworth on Jan. 26.

Quasimodo

Kantstraße 12A
Berlin
49 30 318 045 60

quasimodo.de

Quasimodo, which likens itself to the Jazz Café in London, has been presenting jazz for almost 50 years. One of the main hubs for jazz in Berlin as well as Europe, Quasimodo is a "student pub with cabaret" that was associated with the European free-jazz of the late 1960s and is one of the venues of Jazzfest Berlin today.

Stadgarten

Venloer Straße 40
Köln
49 0221 952994 0

stadgarten.de

With more than 400 events a year, Stadgarten's primary focus is jazz acts.

Unterfahrt

Einsteinstrasse 42
81675 Munich
49 0 89 448 27 94

unterfahrt.de

Ernie Watts and Ravi Coltrane—along with many local, national and European acts—have played this staple in the Munich jazz scene. Joyce Moreno & Kenny Werner will perform on Feb. 5.

GREECE

Half Note Jazz Club

Trivonianou 17
Athens
30 21 0921 3310

halfnote.gr/eng

Half Note has been visited by influential American jazzmen Dexter Gordon and Steve Lacy, but regularly presents Greek luminaries like Mimis Plessas

and Kostas Hatzis.

HUNGARY

Budapest Jazz Club

Hollan Erno Utca 7
Budapest
36 70 413 9837

bjc.hu

This has hosted a bevy of Hungarian and international acts nightly for the last six years. The Budapest has jam sessions three nights a week and classical music every Sunday.

ISRAEL

Shablul Jazz

Airport Hangar 13
Tel Aviv
3 546 1891

shabluljazz.com

For over a decade, Shablul Jazz has provided a forum for jazz in Tel Aviv. Alongside many jazz performers, Shablul also books rock, funk, soul, Brazilian and world-music acts.

ITALY

Alexanderplatz

Via Ostia, 9
Rome
06 39721867

alexanderplatzjazzclub.com

Alexanderplatz got its start in 1984, making it the oldest running jazz club in Italy. Located just a short walk away from St. Peter's Basilica, Alexanderplatz is also a restaurant and recently presented Steve Turre.

Cantina Bentivoglio

Via Mascarella, 4/B
Bologna
051 265416

cantinabentivoglio.it

A jazz club, restaurant and wine cellar, this venue has a 150-person capacity, and it offers traditional Bolognese cuisine and more than 400 types of wine. It hosts nearly 300 musical performances each year.

Jazz Club Ferrara

Via 167, Rampari di Belfiore
Ferrara
39 339 788 6261

jazzclubferrara.com

Situated within St. John's Tower, this club has presented jazz since 1999. Riccardo Zegna, Bill Carrothers and Dena DeRose have all been guests on Ferrara's stage.

La Salumeria Della Musica

Via Pasinetti 4
Milan
02 5680 7350

lasalumeriadellamusic.com

This Milano jazz club opened in 1994 and since then has seen the likes of Norah Jones, Pat Metheny, Branford Marsalis, Bill Frisell and Phil Woods, as well

as many established Italian acts.

JAPAN

Alfie Jazz House

6-2-35 Roppongi
Hama Roppongi Bldg. 5F
Tokyo
81 3 3479 2037

homepage1.nifty.com/live/alfie

The creation of the late Motohiko "Toko" Hino—Japan's greatest drummer during the 1970s and brother of trumpeter Terumasa Hino—Alfie's is the jazz hotspot of Tokyo's Roppongi district.

Body And Soul

6-13-9 Minamiaoyama
Tokyo
81 3 5466 3348

bodyandsoul.co.jp

This club is small in size but it packs quite a punch. Located in the Minato City section of Tokyo, Body And Soul is open six days a week and has two shows a night featuring mostly local talent, but touring international acts come through on a monthly basis.

Jz Brat

26-1 Sakuragaokach
Shibuya
Tokyo

81 03 5728 0168

jzbrat.com

Jz Brat sits on the second floor of the Cerulean Tower, the tallest building in Tokyo's Shibuya shopping district. The club focuses on jazz, but has also seen rock, house, r&b and even hip-hop acts on its stage.

Shinjuku Pit Inn

2-12-4 Accord Bldg. B1
Shinjuku shinjuku-ku
Tokyo

81 3 3354 2024

pit-inn.com

Shinjuku Pit Inn considers itself to be more of a listening room than a club; it is to Tokyo what the Village Vanguard is to New York. Featuring mostly local talent, the Pit has been known to have international acts jam alongside their Japanese counterparts.

MEXICO

La Casa del Mendrugo

Calle 4 Sur 304, Centro Histórico
Puebla de Zaragoza, Puebla
+52 222 232 5148

casadelmendrugo.com

La Casa del Mendrugo dates back to the 15th century. Now the house serves as a restaurant, gallery, museum and jazz lounge where tourists and locals can hear live jazz within a piece of Puebla's history.

Zinco Jazz Club

Calle Motolinia 20, Centro

Mexico City
52 55 5512 3369

zincojazz.com

Located in a basement in the city's historic center, Zinco is a supper club that presents a variety of genres, including jazz and funk. The Zinco Big Band performs regularly.

THE NETHERLANDS

Bimhuis

Piet Heinkade 3
Amsterdam
31 20 788 2150

bimhuis.com

Bimhuis was started in 1973, but moved into its new, futuristic home next to the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, a contemporary classical venue, in 2005. Bimhuis presents more than 300 concerts each year, billing local, European and international artists, as well as having the prestige of being a co-founder of the Europe Jazz Network. Hamid Drake will perform on Jan. 23.

Jazz Café Altó

Korte Leidsedwarsstraat 115
Amsterdam
31 20 626 3249

jazz-cafe-alto.nl

Amsterdam's Jazz Café Altó has been serving the city's jazz scene for more than 50 years and is a cozy joint in the Grachtengordel neighborhood, the same area of the infamous Anne Frank house.

NORWAY

Victoria Nasjonal Jazz Scene

Karl Johans Gate 35
Oslo
47 23 89 69 23

nasjonaljazzscene.no/en

There is room for 300 patrons at Norway's most prominent proponent of jazz, the Victoria Nasjonal Jazz Scene. Victoria has featured Snarky Puppy, Johnmasi Washington and the John Scofield/Joe Lovano Quartet.

PORTUGAL

Hot Clube de Portugal

Praca de Alegria 48
Lisbon
351 21 361 9740

hcp.pt

This venue was started in 1948 by broadcaster Luís Villas-Boas, the first person to play jazz on Portugal's airwaves in 1945. In 2009, Hot Clube was forced to move locations because of flood damage, but this institution still maintains its music school and exciting calendar, which has included Sarah Vaughan, Charlie Haden and Benny Golson. In December, Bruno Pernadas

played every Wednesday night for the weekly jam session.

RUSSIA

Igor Butman Jazz Club at Polyanka

Bolshaya Polyanka Street, 27
Moscow
7 926 262 35 95

butmanclub.ru/index_en.html

This venue, run by saxophonist Igor Butman, helps spotlight jazz in Russia, and it has a counterpart club at Taganka.

Igor Butman Jazz Club at Taganka

Verkhnyaya Radischevskaya St., 21
Moscow
7 495 792 210 9

butmanclub.ru/taganka/en

Igor Butman's club at Taganka is bigger than its counterpart at Polyanka and features concerts by small combos and orchestras performing jazz, fusion, funk, soul and ethnic music.

JFC Jazz Club

Shpalernaya St. 33
St. Petersburg
7 812 272 9850

jfc-club.spb.ru

JFC might be on the small side, but it's style is inspired by New York. It's a top spot in the cultural capital of Russia to hear modern jazz, but it also features blues, bluegrass and other styles.

SCOTLAND

The Jazz Bar

1A Chambers Street
Edinburgh
44 0 131 220 4298

thejazzbar.co.uk

In addition to jazz, this Edinburgh club also features funk, fusion, soul, blues, roots and acoustic music performed by U.K. acts and international touring bands. The club has multiple shows every night of the week.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Orbit

81 De Korte St.
Johannesburg
27 11 339 6645

theorbit.co.za

The Orbit traces its origins to a small social club started in Troyeville, Johannesburg, in the early 2000s. Now, more than a decade later, it's a "space where musicians reach new heights with unlimited creative spirit."

Straight No Chaser

79 Buitenkant St.
Cape Town
27 76 679 2697

straightnochaserclub.wordpress.com

This club was started by two musicians, takes its name from a Thelonious Monk song and models itself after the Village Vanguard, Ronnie Scott's and Smalls.

SPAIN

Cafe Central

Plaza del Angel 10
Madrid
34 913 69 41 43

cafecentralmadrid.com

In nearly 35 years of hosting concerts and extended engagements, this Art Deco café and has presented well over 10,000 performances.

Harlem Jazz Club

Carrer de Comtessa de Sobradriel 8
Barcelona
34 933 10 07 55

harlemjazzclub.es

The oldest concert hall in Barcelona opened in 1987. Over the years, this club has featured acts of every genre, including blues, funk, swing, modern jazz and soul.

SWEDEN

Fasching

Kungsgatan 63
Stockholm
46 8 20 00 66

fasching.se

Known locally as Scandinavia's largest organizer of jazz, Fasching opened in 1977. The club also serves as a venue for the Stockholm Jazz Festival.

Glenn Miller Cafe

Brunnsgatan 21
Stockholm
46 8 10 03 22

glennmillercafe.com

This small cafe is not only a great spot for jazz, it is also a restaurant and bar. Its name is an obvious tribute and the club has become a staple for jazz in Scandinavia.

SWITZERLAND

Marian's Jazz Room

Engenstrasse 54
Bern
41 31 3096 111

mariansjazzroom.ch

From September to May, Marian's hosts two concerts a day (except Sundays and Mondays). Located in the Innere Enge Hotel, the club started in 1992.

THAILAND

Saxophone Pub

3/8 Phayathai Rd. Victory Monument
Bangkok
+66 022 465 472

saxophonepub.com

A popular club for jazz and blues since 1987, the Saxophone Pub is visited and enjoyed by both Westerners and locals alike. Thailand's best in jazz—including Koh Mr. Saxman, T-Bone Band and Neung Jakkawal Bang—have all taken the stage.

TURKEY

Nardis Jazz Club

Kuledibi Sok. No:14
istanbul
90 212 244 6327

nardisjazz.com

This club seats 120 and features various kinds of jazz every night of the week, from straightahead to ethnic jazz.



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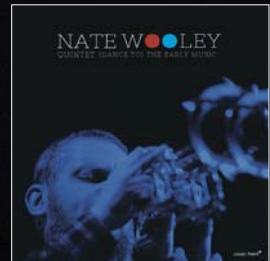
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REVIEWS >

Nate Wooley



Nate Wooley Quintet (Dance To) The Early Music

CLEAN FEED 350

★★★★★

Trumpeter Nate Wooley was a kid when he first heard Wynton Marsalis' *Black Codes (From The Underground)*. Like many jazz fans, he was floored by the creative frenzy of the (then) young phenom's band. Through the years Wooley became increasingly impressed with the group's nuanced methodologies. Now, after developing his own impressive approach to improv, he tackles nuggets from some early '80s Marsalis classics, including 1986's *J Mood* and 1982's *Wynton Marsalis*. Thanks to imaginative arrangements and adventurous playing, this music is revitalized in Wooley's hands.

Wooley's own work isn't usually associated

with classicism or repertory, but those who follow his music likely know of his diverse interests. He's an expert in extended techniques, is fluent in myriad outside lingos and uses overt swing when the notion strikes him; in even the most experimental moments, his lyricism and harmonic expertise are obvious. Here, those skills serve Marsalis tunes that were written in the shadow of Miles Davis' second classic quintet, and the updates are loaded with the kind of maneuvers that keep ears perked. The push and pull of "Delfeayo's Dilemma," the textural brocades of "Skain's Domain," the lithe minimalism of "Blues"—each is a hook to woo listeners into the action.

The quintet is marked by Josh Sinton's bass clarinet and Matt Moran's vibraphone; their blend distinguishes the band's sound to a degree. Each gets ample space to stretch on

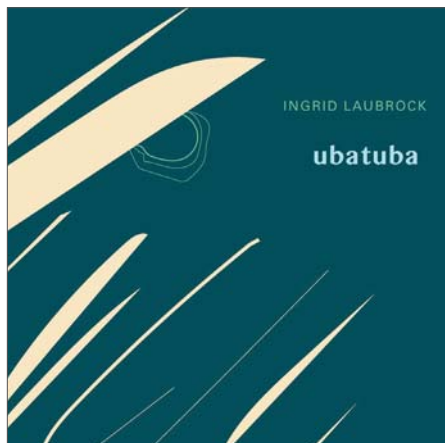
Early Music. Moran's buoyant glide rides a near rampage from drummer Harris Eisenstadt on "For Wee Folks" and Sinton's expressive rumination bubbles up on "Phryzzinian Man."

The group's last outing, 2011's (*Put Your Hands Together*), reminded listeners just how tight they are, but the gregariousness and groove of Marsalis' tunes puts their enviable chemistry in an even more compelling light. This is the kind of repertory project that illuminates the interpreter more than the original source. —Jim Macnie

(Dance To) The Early Music: Hesitation; For Wee Folks; Blues; Delfeayo's Dilemma; Phryzzinian Man; On Insane Asylum; J Mood; Skain's Domain; Hesitation/Post-Hesitation. (56:39)

Personnel: Nate Wooley, trumpet; Josh Sinton, bass clarinet; Matt Moran, vibraphone; Harris Eisenstadt, drums; Eivind Opsvik, bass.

Ordering info: cleanfeed-records.com



Ingrid Laubrock *Ubatuba*

FIREHOUSE 12 04-01-22

★★★★

Ingrid Laubrock has been on my watch list for the last five years. Born in Germany but based in Brooklyn, she's a saxophonist of substance and a bandleader who's willing to do things her own way. *Ubatuba* is an excellent showcase for her forceful independence.

In brief notes, Laubrock describes some of the music as "like a big living organism waltzing over the listener." It's an apt image, partic-

Joey DeFrancesco *Trip Mode*

HIGH NOTE 7281

★★★★

Here is a kind of *curriculum vitae* of Joey DeFrancesco's assorted and considerable talents that include—beyond the obvious on the Hammond B-3—side trips into trumpet, piano, keyboards and vocals. In fact, we hear most of it happening all at once on "The Touch Of Your Lips," where he overdubs and accompanies his own coolly passive voice with both trumpet and piano. An organ solo would have given him a full house. He has performed often enough on trumpet on past CDs so that his journeyman skills there are neither a surprise nor a revelation. But his brief Miles-esque solo here has nice flickers of unexpected spice. He's good.

He enjoys similarly lush and lyrical conversations with himself on trumpet and piano on "Arizona Sunrise" and "On Georgian Bay." He then vamps both muted and open on "What's Your Organ Player's Name," first to a pingy keyboard overdub, and then to a funky B-3 accompaniment with some catchy hooks tossed in.

Most of the tunes are by DeFrancesco. "Cuz U No" is a slow and soulful blues. "In That Order" and the title track are boppish and swinging, full of long, rippling lines that bubble like a thick sauce. They summarize the pol-

ularly on "Any Breathing Organism," an ambitious and challenging start to the CD. Long tones are assembled into clusters and chords, making a sort of tide-pool of sound, mouth noises claustrophobically recalling Roscoe Mitchell's haunting piece "Tnoona."

Laubrock isn't afraid of stasis, but she's got a band that's capable of exploding, as on "Hiccups," where drummer Tom Rainey is positively fissile, or "Any Many," which gathers itself into a gently ambling proposal.

The compositions are exceedingly well integrated into the improvising, enough so that it's often hard to tell where the seams are. Add the tuba (convincingly manned by Dan Peck) and the slightly circus-like feel of the charts, and Henry Threadgill is inevitably conjured.

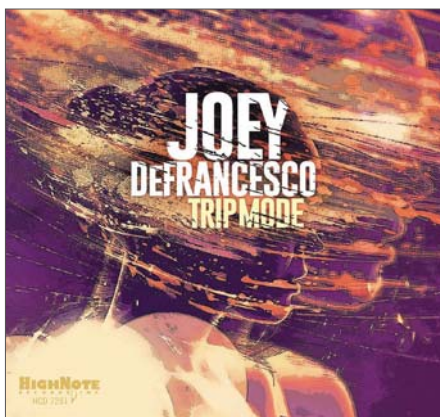
Indeed, I hear more of his influence here than Anthony Braxton, with whom Laubrock has worked extensively. It's a pleasure to hear Tim Berne's alto saxophone sounding wonderful in tandem with Laubrock and trombonist Ben Gerstein.

—John Corbett

Ubatuba: Any Breathing Organism; Homo Diluvii; Hiccups; Hall Of Mirrors; Any Many; Hypnic Jerk. (56:06)

Personnel: Ingrid Laubrock, tenor saxophone, alto saxophone; Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Ben Gerstein, trombone; Dan Peck, tuba; Tom Rainey, drums.

Ordering info: firehouse12records.com



ish and fizz that routinely animate his B-3 style at medium to fast tempos. But pay attention as well to the very fine guitar work on each by Dan Wilson, who catches much of the classic Christian-Kessel-Malone lineage in his fingers.

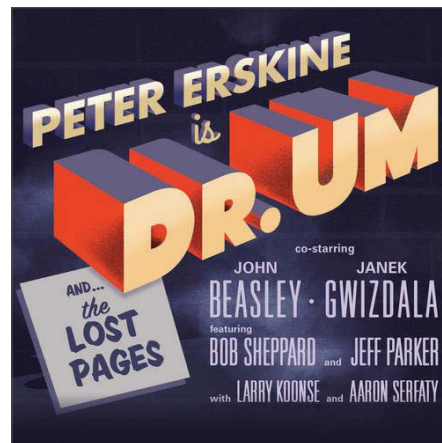
Most of DeFrancesco's cooking is done on the organ, of course, where for the last two decades he has been almost a one-man sustaining presence on an instrument whose future has sometime seemed in doubt.

—John McDonough

Trip Mode: Trip Mode; Who Shot John; Arizona Sunrise; In That Order; Cuz U No; On Georgian Bay; The Touch Of Your Lips; Traffic Jam; What's Your Organ Player's Name. (58:22)

Personnel: Joey DeFrancesco, organ (1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9), piano (3, 6, 7), keyboards (9), trumpet (3, 6, 7, 9), vocals (7); Dan Wilson, guitar (1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9); Mike Boone (3, 6, 7, 9), bass; Jason Brown, drums.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com



Peter Erskine *Dr. Um*

FUZZY MUSIC 021

★★★★

Peter Erskine has wanted to record an album of funky, jazz-rock grooves harkening back to his days with Weather Report and Steps Ahead for a long time. That's a good idea, but he has dressed it up as a cartoonish concept album in which he takes on a fictional persona—"Dr. Um" (get it?)—who takes the listener back in time to that fusion-laden era. The program is bookended with radio-play-like spoken word segments intoned by Erskine's longtime theatrical friend, Jack Fletcher. The result is a nostalgic journey that overemphasizes Erskine's keyboard player and co-producer John Beasley and winds up feeling a bit suburban.

When Erskine steps forward as a composer—and, occasionally, soloist—the music is more substantially of the moment. His "Hawaii Bathing Suit" has a crisp island groove that propels Bob Sheppard's athletic tenor saxophone, and "Little Fun K" reprises that happy, finger-popping mood with a sweetly descending melody line and a zesty blues guitar solo by Jeff Parker. Erskine's composition "Northern Cross," which he recorded with Steps Ahead, captures a spirit of playfulness while maintaining its gravity.

But the nasal keyboard sounds and grand gestures of "Borges Buenos Aires" feel dated, as does the sappy, let's-jazz-the-classics "Mahler." Joe Zawinul's mysterious "Speechless" has dramatic heft, but Janek Gwizdala's electric bass and Beasley's keyboards feel like they would be more at home on a WR tribute album.

A trip through old landscapes can be invigorating, and on this album, it is—when everyone's playing for real instead of pretending the whole thing is a conceit.

—Paul de Barros

Dr. Um: You're Next; Lost Page; Hawaii Bathing Suit; Borges Buenos Aires; Little Fun K; Mahler (Ich Bin Der Welt Abhanden Gekommen); Sage Hands; Okraphilia; Speechless; Sprite; Northern Cross; You Awake. (60:57)

Personnel: Peter Erskine, drums, percussion; John Beasley, keyboards; Janek Gwizdala, electric bass; Bob Sheppard, tenor saxophone (2, 3, 7); Jeff Parker (5, 8), Larry Koonse (10), guitar; Aaron Serfaty, percussion (2); Jack Fletcher, voice (1, 6, 12).

Ordering info: petererskine.com

The Hot Box

Critics	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
Nate Wooley Quintet <i>(Dance To) The Early Music</i>	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★½
Ingrid Laubrock <i>Ubatuba</i>	★★★½	★★★★	★★★½	★★★★
Joey DeFrancesco <i>Trip Mode</i>	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★½
Peter Erskine <i>Dr. Um</i>	★★★	★★★½	★★½	★★★

Critics' Comments

Nate Wooley Quintet, *(Dance To) The Early Music*

Perhaps the first jazz album specifically premised on patricide. By itself, it comes off as a mix of interesting if off-center chamber jazz and avant-garde performance art. Taken with Wooley's notes, though, it's about a man measuring himself against the boy he once was and symbolically consuming the father figure who once inspired him. —John McDonough

Friends close, enemies closer. A surprising conceit, very earnestly approached, tackling the music on its own terms but coming from the creative mindset that Marsalis once sought to abolish. Wooley's assertive voice rings loud and clear. —John Corbett

This swinging, high-level "inside-outside" jazz featuring Wooley's brisk, rangy trumpet lines pushes at the edges of the ecstatic, elastic, soulful environment Marsalis created with his early tunes. A lovely idea, beautifully executed. —Paul de Barros

Ingrid Laubrock, *Ubatuba*

The feel is experimental, nervous, heaving and programmatic, with breath the object of its concern. Can sound like a practice class. But it's mostly lucidly composed and played in an expressionistic spirit with a subversive and risky appeal. —John McDonough

Adore the drones that set the stage on this program, but the rabble-raising is a smidge too acidic—it gets claustrophobic quicker than I thought it might. Big plus: the textural breadth that reminds you of its presence with regularity. —Jim Macnie

Chattering, chuffing, overblowing, prying between notes, playing just above silence, wheedling in the altissimo—it can all sound like clinical inventory in less musical hands. But Laubrock tells dramatic stories in poetic periods of breath. —Paul de Barros

Joey DeFrancesco, *Trip Mode*

All good variety, but his burners burn so white-hot that I find myself waiting around for them, be it the hard funk "Traffic Jam" or a classic sprint like the title track. —John Corbett

Hard swinging, of course—that's why he gets out of bed in the morning. And a little bit of adventure, too. But it's no earth-shaker, just an inspired blowing session. —Jim Macnie

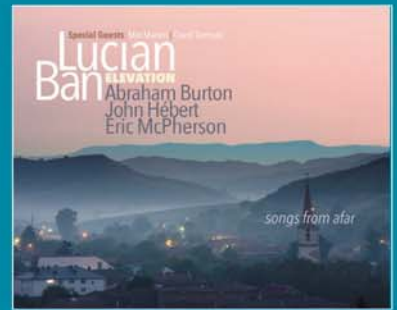
There aren't many musicians who could play organ, piano, trumpet and also sing on an album without giving the impression that it's all about them. But DeFrancesco pulls it off. Timeless masterpiece? No. But a hell of a nice ride. —Paul de Barros

Peter Erskine, *Dr. Um*

The touch is light and cagey and the tinkle of the electronics restrained. It lacks that sense of guilty pleasure that tends to compress such genres into witless ostinatos. But Erskine has broadened the palette and added a touch of maturity to the mix. —John McDonough

Much musicality in a slightly mushy context. Slack tracks like "Sprite" jostle with killers, treading water where others dive deep. —John Corbett

Playing's fine, but the tunes are trite. And the echoes of Weather Report ape the aspects of the band that never turned me on—the pop veneer, the sweet melodies, the tail-wagging funk. —Jim Macnie



LUCIAN BAN ELEVATION SONGS FROM AFAR

SSC 1387 - IN STORES 1/22/2016

Featuring saxophonist Abraham Burton, bassist John Hébert and drummer Eric McPherson with special guest violist Mat Maneri, **Songs From Afar** incorporates their extensive knowledge of modern jazz and creative music with the astonishing voice of Transylvanian folk singer Gavril Tarmure to create a program of music with a unique identity that spans continents and styles. **Songs From Afar** represents two traditions, two musical worlds, and many musical elements coming together to fashion a unique identity that truly spans continents and styles.



FRED HERSCH WITH CHARLIE HADEN & JOEY BARON SARABANDE (REMASTERED)

SSC 1432 - IN STORES 1/22/2016

THIS IS A REISSUE, A RE-MASTERED EDITION OF FRED HERSCH'S TREMENDOUS **SARABANDE** RECORDING FROM 1987, WHICH FEATURES THE RECENTLY DEPARTED LEGEND CHARLIE HADEN ON BASS AND THE OUTSTANDING DRUMMER JOEY BARON.

"I knew that Charlie was in town in December, 1986 so I put together two days in my studio to record **Sarabande**...

Though — unfortunately — this trio never played a live gig after the recording, I felt like the three of us danced through the music together in a very special way on this album. This re-issue is dedicated to Charlie Haden, one of the most important figures in jazz and a truly great artist."

— Fred Hersch, May, 2015



iTunes.com/LucianBan
iTunes.com/FredHersch
www.sunnysiderecords.com





Enrico Pieranunzi *Proximity*

CAM JAZZ 5055

★★★★½

Pianist Enrico Pieranunzi has established himself over 40 years as a star of Italian and international jazz. He possesses an appreciation of classic beauty and eagerness to experiment, technique to realize whatever he imagines, depth of feeling and flawless taste, as well as sparkling touch, mastery of impressionistic harmonies and rhythmic flexibility.

A former classical prodigy, pedagogue and colleague of Chet Baker, Charlie Haden and

Kenny Wheeler/ John Taylor *On The Way To Two*

CAM JAZZ 7892

★★★★

Trumpeter Kenny Wheeler and pianist John Taylor were musical partners and best friends for 50 years, and one could sense the depth of their relationship any time you mentioned one to the other. That they died just 10 months apart—Wheeler at 84, Taylor at 72—makes this 2005 set of duets an exceptionally bittersweet recording.

What bound them together is woven throughout these 10 pieces: Taylor loved the harmonic possibilities in Wheeler's writing, while the trumpeter felt that the pianist's support allowed him to go places he couldn't on his own. It's all there on "Canter #2," in Wheeler's cracked notes, high, breathy calls, balletic leaps and tumbling glissandos, underscored by Taylor's sprightly two-handed accompaniment. On "Close To Mars" the highlight is the way the pianist's sharp, percussive accents seem to anticipate where the trumpeter is headed, even though his way through the melody is anything but predictable.

Three improvised miniatures push deeper into the way they approached working together. Taylor reaches inside the piano—strumming zither-like colors on "Sketch No. 1," playing

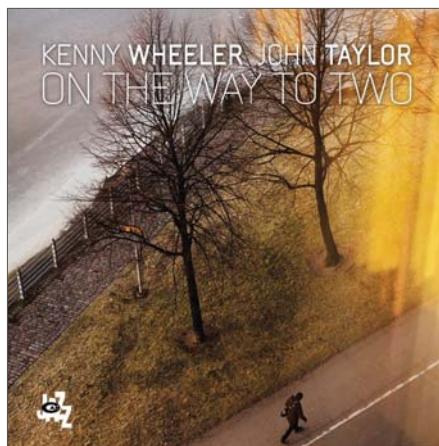
Kenny Wheeler, among others, Pieranunzi in *Proximity* lets his young bandmates go where they may, guiding gently from within the ensemble rather than imposing his will. Such freedom within frameworks inspires cornetist/trumpeter Ralph Alessi, who is prominent, and saxophonist Donny McCaslin in compelling contrast. Bassist Matt Penman is extraordinarily sturdy—there's no drummer but momentum never flags—and his solos shine softly.

There's little in the way of blues connotation, but otherwise the album's emotional spectrum is wide. "(In)Canto," in 6/8, sets a sadder-yet-wiser mood that carries past "Line For Lee" (on which Pieranunzi reveals his debt to Bill Evans) to the tender "Sundays," featuring McCaslin's soprano and Alessi's flugelhorn. "Within The House Of Night" is the darkest piece here, and "Five Plus Five" the most Ornettishly playful. Pieranunzi is inside the piano, working the pedals as well as plucking the strings, while Alessi riffs with a vocal-like timbre, and McCaslin blows as if testing his horn's odd nooks. The quartet abstracts this theme to its limit, but reconvenes in an instant to where they started. Nice move, and certainly worth hearing again. —Howard Mandel

Proximity: (In)Canto; Line For Lee; Sundays; Simul; No-Nonsense; Proximity; Within The House Of Night; Five Plus Five.

Personnel: Enrico Pieranunzi, piano; Ralph Alessi, trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn; Donny McCaslin, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Matt Penman, bass.

Ordering info: camjazz.com



woody percussion on "No. 2" and creating an electronic-sounding whisper on "No. 3"—and Wheeler responds with muted lines that display both his melancholic and whimsical sides.

Billy Strayhorn's "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing" offers an exquisite parting gesture, their years of working together evident in the way they explore the composition.

Too short at less than 45 minutes, *On The Way To Two* is an impressive portrait of a beautiful friendship. —James Hale

On The Way To Two: Canter #2; Fedora; Sketch No. 1; Quiso; Who Knows?; Sketch No. 2; Close To Mars; Fortune's Child; Sketch No. 3; A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing. (44:44)

Personnel: Kenny Wheeler, trumpet, flugelhorn; John Taylor, piano.

Ordering info: camjazz.com



Ochion Jewell Quartet *VOLK*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★½

Aaron Vinton's bold graphic cover art for tenor saxophonist Ochion (pronounced "Ocean") Jewell's *VOLK* is arresting to the eye, but the rich folk-flavored music contained within is multifariously arresting to the ear.

"Arresting" is an unfortunate choice of adjective, since part of the production proceeds for this album came from an out-of-court settlement with the NYPD (who, I guess somewhat sarcastically, are thanked for contributing). In a case of mistaken identity, Jewell was attacked by plainclothes officers and an attempt was made to frame him for drug possession. The resulting anxiety from the assault informs the music here, which dwells on the heritage of Jewell's Appalachian origins, as well as other musical traditions from around the globe, including Andalusia, North Africa and the Ukraine.

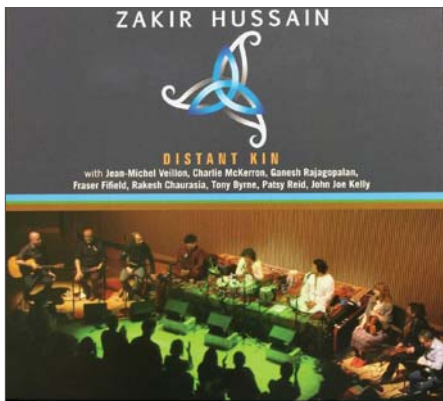
There's a remarkable equilibrium of folk, classical, jazz and improv elements. Case in point: "Give Us A Drink Of Water," which toggles between sections inspired by Hindemith and Stravinsky, Coleman Hawkins and zithering Moroccan music (brought to life by Dawn of Midi pianist Amino Belyamani). Other compositions have a pastoral or communal air—"Gnawa Blues" and "The Master" feature Benin's Lionel Loueke on guitar and Pakistani-American drummer Qasim Naqvi plying West African cross rhythms.

Only "Radegast," with its anguished abstraction, suggests Jewell's bitter recollection of his victimization. Still in his late 30s, he is quite the chameleon, but his tasteful multicultural quartet successfully weaves a broad harmonious tapestry. —Michael Jackson

VOLK: At The End Of The World, Where The Lions Weep; Pathos/Logos; Kun Mun Kultani Tulisi; Give Us A Drink Of Water; Pass Fallow, Gallowglass; Radegast; Gnawa Blues; The Master; Oh Shenandoah; Black Is The Color (Of My True Love's Hair). (62:37)

Personnel: Ochion Jewell, tenor saxophone; Amino Belyamani, piano; Sam Minaie, bass; Qasim Naqvi, drums; Lionel Loueke, guitar (7, 8).

Ordering info: ochionjewellquartet.bandcamp.com



Zakir Hussain *Distant Kin*

MOMENT
★★★★★

Percussionist Zakir Hussain has done more to popularize Indian classical music and expand its vocabulary than any other artist on the scene today. Always on the lookout for unique opportunities, the tabla player accepted an invitation from the Scottish Arts Council to put together a band to perform a fusion of Celtic and Indian music.

The collaboration was successful, so Hussain took the band on the road. This album, recorded live during two concerts at

San Francisco's SFJAZZ Center, is a product of that tour. Rakesh Chaurasia's *bansuri* (bamboo flute) plays Indian scales, then Charlie McKerron's fiddle comes in to lay down a Scottish air on "Jig O' Beer & Chai." The sound is harmonically congruent with Hussain's tablas, which add jig time accents that augment the jaunty flow as the tempo accelerates.

Fiddler Patsy Reid's "The Baby Tune" opens with her fiddle exchanging phrases with Ganesh Rajagopalan singing an Indian scale; she continues to trade licks with Rajagopalan's Indian violin without missing a step. The last track, "Encore: Making Music Revisited" begins with Tony Byrne's exquisite fingerpicking on the Scottish tune "St. Kilda Wedding," a slow beautiful ballad.

Hussain solos briefly before the ensemble shifts into "The Dirty Bee" to deliver a joyous finale. It sounds improvised and free, and despite the chorus of nine instruments, the music flows with one harmonious voice.

—*j. poet*

Distant Kin: Jig O' Beer & Chai; Celnataka; Trinkamp/Tajir; Waterman's; The Baby Tune; Michael's Matches/Rakesh's Bansri; Watergirl And Then Some; Encore: Making Music Revisited. (53:36)

Personnel: Zakir Hussain, tabla, percussion; Tony Byrne, guitar; Fraser Fifield, pipes and whistles; Rakesh Chaurasia, bamboo flutes; Jean-Michel Veillon, flute; Patsy Reid, fiddle; Ganesh Rajagopalan, violin; John Joe Kelly, bodhran; Charlie McKerron, fiddle.

Ordering info: momentrecords.com

Kim Nazarian *Some Morning*

KIMJ MUSIC
★★★★★

Singer Kim Nazarian believes in taking her time. Though this album comprises several sessions that were recorded between 2008 and 2014, it was worth the wait.

Nazarian possesses an easy-on-the-ear alto with a strong upper register, accessed by impressive glissandi—all the more impressive because she does it sparingly. Her vocalese exchange with John Pizzarelli on the Benny Goodman-associated trifle "Gotta Be This Or That" will bring knowing smiles to jazz ears.

The set is finely produced, with a rotating cast of excellent players. Extended listening allows savoring of pretty instrumental voicings and nice features like Alexa Still's quietly sublime flute obbligatos to Paquito D'Rivera's clarinet solo on "Tell Him I Said Hello." An imaginative treatment of Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do" shows the clarity of her voice, emphasized next to a lyrical trombone solo from Jay Ashby.

Nazarian's pretty tones on her own folksy "All In My Heart" glide with Barbara Bürkle's organic background vocal complements. Two rubato originals, "Still Life" and the title track, have lovely accompaniment but tend to drag aimlessly. These are small caveats to an effort



that isn't just a statement—it's an achievement.

—*Kirk Silsbee*

Some Morning: Robbin's Nest/Boneology; Tell Him I Said Hello; Gotta Be This Or That; All In My Heart; What'll I Do; Still Life; Some Morning; So In Love; If It's Magic; Que Sera, Sera; Road To Kursk. (48:21)

Personnel: Kim Nazarian, vocals; Sean Jones, Steve Hawk, trumpets (1, 11); Jay Ashby, trombone (1, 5, 10, 11); Alexa Still, flute (2); Paquito D'Rivera, Anna Nelson, clarinet (2); Jesse McCandless, bass clarinet (2); Mike Tomaro (1, 11), Greg Nazarian (10) saxophones; Mark Soskin, piano (1, 3, 10, 11); Mark Shilansky, piano (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9); Alon Yavnai, piano (6); Gary Burton, vibraphone (7); Marty Ashby, guitar, percussion; Caitlin Merhtens, harp (8); Jiro Yoshida, guitar (4); John Pizzarelli, guitar, vocals (3); Dwayne Dolphin, bass (1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11); Leo Traversa, bass (2, 4, 5, 6, 8); Roger Humphries, drums (1, 3, 10, 11); Jamey Haddad, drums (2, 4, 5, 7, 8); kalimba (10); Alysia Tromblay, Peter Eldridge (7); Jay Ashby, Barbara Bürkle (4); Ian Ashby (10), background vocals.

Ordering info: kimnazarian.com



PAQUITO & MANZANERO
PAQUITO D'RIVERA PLAYS THE MUSIC
OF ARMANDO MANZANERO
SSC 4557 / In Stores January 22, 2016

PAQUITO D'RIVERA: soprano sax & clarinet
DIEGO URCOLA: trumpet
ALEX BROWN: piano
CARLOS HENRIQUEZ: double bass
ANTONIO SANCHEZ: drums
special guest **ARMANDO MANZANERO:** voice

"The music of Mexican composer, singer and pianist Armando Manzanero has been a mainstay of the Great Latin American Songbook. His work has long transcended the borders of the Spanish-speaking world. His songs have been interpreted by artists as disparate as Elvis Presley, Andrea Bocelli with Christina Aguilera, and Tony Bennett; they have been played in instrumental arrangements by orchestras and even jazz big bands.

In Paquito & Manzanero, Cuban saxophonist and clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera and his quintet approach ten classics by maestro Manzanero with the "how" of Latin Jazz and by doing so they make them new again.

Don't expect the obvious. D'Rivera is an early champion of true Latin jazz. In any given piece, his pan-Latin approach might draw from an Afro-Cuban music style — but can just as easily cite Argentine tango, Venezuelan waltz or Mexican huapango.

Here, the arrangements by long-time D'Rivera collaborators Alex Brown and Diego Urcola (on "Contigo aprendí") re-imagine Manzanero's songs in unexpected terms. "Amanecer," a bolero from the 1977 telenovela "Corazón Salvaje," is here a sunny baião, but "Te Extraño" is permeated by the melancholy of tango. "Somos Novios," which Perry Como sang as "It's Impossible," takes on a restless, odd-metered Latin groove, while "Voy a Apagar La Luz" becomes a club fast-set bebop burner.

Maestro Manzanero has heard countless versions of his songs, "but when musicians of such magnitude get involved with my music, it's something very gratifying," he says. "And when someone in jazz is interested in one my songs, it means to me that that's an important song."

—*Fernando González*



Mike Holober *Balancing Act*

PALMETTO 2258

★★★★★

Pianist-composer-arranger Mike Holober presses seven of his closest associates into startlingly creative service on *Balancing Act*, an emotionally persuasive album of six originals and two pop covers.

Holober's octet, also called Balancing Act, develops an unusual and successful stylistic mesh. Each player gets to shine, whether it's Jason Rigby, whose tenor saxophone and clarinet forays are impassioned and virtuosic; Brian Blade, whose swirling drums are always on point; Marvin Stamm, the expectedly deft trumpeter and flugelhornist; or vocalist Kate McGarry, in lead or augmentative role.

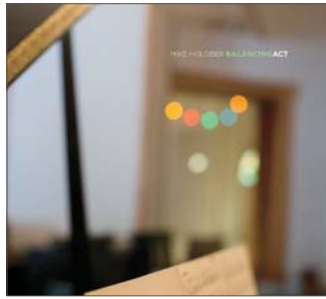
Holober's stimulating tunes are unpredictable, often starting one way and ending another. More straightforward are the interpretations, including a lovely take on Billy Joel's "Lullabye: Goodnight My Angel" and a saucy rendition of the signature Janis Joplin tune "Piece Of My Heart." Both album and group are above all supple. And while the music appeals to the intellect, it's also physical; you never know what kind of voicing you might hear.

—Carlo Wolff

Balancing Act: Book Of Sighs; Idris; Lullabye: Goodnight My Angel; Grace At Sea; Piece Of My Heart; Canyon; Sighs Matter; When There Were Trains. (63:04)

Personnel: Mike Holober, piano; Brian Blade, drums; John Hebert, bass; Kate McGarry, vocals; Dick Oatts, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute; Mark Patterson, trombone; Jason Rigby, tenor saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet; Marvin Stamm, trumpet, flugelhorn.

Ordering info: palmetto-records.com



Scott Hamilton & Jeff Hamilton Trio *Live In Bern*

CAPRI RECORDS 74139

★★★★★

A mainstream dream team, this pair doesn't get together as much as you'd imagine (they first recorded together on *Tenorshoes* in 1979). Their latest is a varied helping of relentlessly swinging, unpretentious standard fare recorded at Marian's Jazzroom in Bern, Switzerland.

Scott fronts Jeff's trio of Israeli pianist Tamir Hendelman and bassist Christoph Luty. The bassist's drive is notable on "There'll Be Some Changes Made," which pairs Scott with Jeff's stellar brushes. A prime example of Jeff's trademark push and good-time feel occurs on his uncomplicated original "Sybille's Day." If you couldn't blow your gasket with this team behind you, you'd best hang up your horn.

The ever-insouciant Scott never unduly rushes, so no surprise that his ace-in-the-hole is ballads. "Soul Eyes" features the saxophonist at his most fulsome and sincere, while "Ballad For Very Tired And Very Sad Lotus Eaters" is perfect for his yawning, vintage tone.

—Michael Jackson

Live In Bern: September In The Rain; All Through The Night; Watch What Happens; Soul Eyes; This Can't Be Love; There'll Be Some Changes Made; Sybille's Day; Key Largo; Woody'n You; The Champ; Ballad For Very Tired And Very Sad Lotus Eaters; You And The Night And The Music; Centerpiece. (65:38)

Personnel: Scott Hamilton, tenor saxophone; Jeff Hamilton, drums; Tamir Hendelman, piano; Christoph Luty, bass.

Ordering info: caprirecords.com



Eric Bibb/JJ Milteau *Lead Belly's Gold*

STONY PLAIN 1387

★★★★★

Without Huddie Ledbetter (aka Lead Belly,) there would have been no folk revival, so it isn't hyperbolic to call this album *Lead Belly's Gold*. The songs Bibb chose to perform are all well-known standards. Some, like "House Of The Rising Sun," "Rock Island Line" and "Goodnight, Irene," have become major hits for other artists over the years. Fans of bluegrass, folk and blues will know the rest.

Lead Belly was best known for his charismatic stage presence, powerful vocals and larger-than-life sound. Bibb doesn't try to recreate Lead Belly's aesthetic, but his understated performances have a respectful authority of their own. He brings a quiet intensity to "Goodnight, Irene," singing the Lead Belly lyrics that have been edited out of the hit versions—"If Irene turns her back on me, I'm gonna take morphine and die"—and includes three songs he wrote as a tribute to Ledbetter, including "Swimmin' In A River Of Songs."

Bibb's erudite liner notes are just as affecting as his renditions of Lead Belly's songs, naming him one of American folk music's most important and innovate artists. It's recognition that's long overdue.

—j. poet

Lead Belly's Gold: Grey Goose; When That Train Comes Along / Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; On A Monday; The House Of The Rising Sun; Midnight Special; Bring A Little Water, Sylvie; Where Did You Sleep Last Night; When I Get To Dallas; Pick A Bale Of Cotton; Goodnight, Irene; Rock Island Line; Bourgeois Blues; Chauffeur Blues; Stewball; Titanic; Swimmin' In A River Of Songs. (55:00)

Personnel: Eric Bibb, vocals, acoustic and electric guitar, 12-string guitar, 6-string banjo; J. J. Milteau, harmonica; Larry Crockett, drums; Big Daddy Wilson, Michael Robinson, backing vocals; Gilles Michel, bass; Glen Scott, drums, bass, Wurliizer; Michael Jerome Brown, 12-string guitar, mandolin.

Ordering info: stonyplainrecords.com



Josh Berman Trio *A Dance And A Hop*

DELMARK 5021

★★★★★

Josh Berman's first two solo albums foregrounded a dialogue between his individual voice and larger contexts. On 2009's *Old Idea*, you could hear him establishing his voice within the setting of the 21st-century Chicago avant-garde jazz scene;

2012's *There Now* set up an exchange between that voice and another local scene, the Austin High Gang of the 1920s. Something similar is at work on *A Dance And A Hop*, but this time the focus has zeroed in on the cornetist's instrumental, compositional and improvisational approaches.

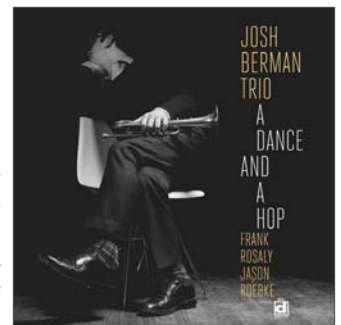
For the first time, Berman leads an ensemble without a chordal instrument, or even another horn. All 11 compositions are his, and each is compact, clocking in between three and five minutes. Such pith demands that listeners pay attention to the details of the music, and there's plenty to find there. But while the emphasis here is on Berman's sound and ideas, their expression would be impossible without the contributions of bassist Jason Roebke and drummer Frank Rosaly. On "Your Uncle," the bassist shifts effortlessly between shadowing the cornet's lines and proposing alternatives to them, while Rosaly's brushes-on-snare accompaniment keeps up a quiet but endlessly varied commentary on the proceedings. They don't just play Berman's music, they complete it.

—Bill Meyer

A Dance And A Hop: Hang Ups; Blues; Wooden; Time/Trouble; Your Uncle; Mint; That's Now; Luggage; Bridges; Today's Date; Cold Snap. (43:59)

Personnel: Josh Berman, cornet; Jason Roebke, bass; Frank Rosaly, drums.

Ordering info: delmark.com



Saxophonics

Francesco Bearzatti Tinissima 4et, *This Machine Kills Fascists* (CamJazz 7893; 48:28 ★★★★★) In what must be one of the more unorthodox tributes to great American folk icon Woody Guthrie, the versatile Italian saxophonist Francesco Bearzatti tips his head and hat towards Guthrie with a set of original songs with the subject in mind. With *This Machine Kills Fascists* (so named for a phrase Guthrie wrote on his guitar), Bearzatti creates an evocative sound world, from the gospel-colored "Okemah" to the song-slinging of "Long Train Running." Vocalist Petra Magoni cameos on "One For Sacco And Vanzetti" and the song set closes with the sole Guthrie-penned tune, the classic "This Land Is Your Land," done up Bearzatti-on-Bourbon-Street style. A landscape of Americana intriguingly filtered through jazz *Italiana*.

Ordering info: camjazz.com

Dave Wilson Quartet, *There Was Never* (Zoho 201512; 65:34 ★★)

With his fourth album, Dave Wilson, on tenor and soprano saxophones, puts a strong foot forward, backed by a tight and raring-to-go rhythm section of young pianist Bobby Avey, bassist Tony Marino and drummer Alex Ritz. From the tricky, pulsing energy of the opening "The Time Has Come," on which the saxophonist brandishes his big tone and easily tumbling facility, to the simple folk theme of "On The Prairie," *There Was Never* makes a varied and mostly powerful impact.

Ordering info: zohomusic.com

Nicole Glover, *First Record* (Self Release; 46:34 ★★½) In the notes for her impressive debut album, the young Oregon-based saxophonist Nicole Glover name-checks the great Wayne Shorter, recalling his advice to her to become a "leader" and an "individual." As is evident on this eight-track song set, Glover took that advice to heart, carving out a sound all her own while capturing certain Shorter-esque touches along the way. Her cool, probing sense of phrasing and conceptual breathing gives her solos distinction.

Ordering info: nicoleglover.com

Mark Hauser Quartet, *It's All About The Journey* (betersound;



Nicole Glover

CYPRESS-CHVATAL JONES

63:15 ★★★★★) Swiss alto saxophonist/reed player Markus (aka Mark) Hauser gets around, stylistically and in terms of his varied life in music. At various times he's been a sideman, bandleader, educator and even designer of mouthpieces. His long list of collaborators includes Billy Joel, Airto Moreira and New Orleans drummer Johnny Vidacovich, and he has channeled his long, influential love of Art Pepper into a 2006 album, *A Tribute To Art Pepper*. Not surprisingly, hints of his affiliations and affinities tend to weave through the tracks of his latest album. Shades of Pepper shine through the fiery cool energies of this disc.

Ordering info: markhauser.ch

Kirsten Edkins, *Art & Soul* (Self Release; 48:54 ★★½) Kirsten Edkins, a strong saxophone voice from the West Coast, shows her strengths and versatility on *Art & Soul*. Along the way, Edkins, sounding assured and adventurous-within-limits on tenor, soprano and alto, showcases some of the finer jazz players hailing from Southern California, including former mentor (and the album's producer) Bob Shepard, pianist/B-3 master Larry Goldings and guitarist Larry Koonse. At times, Koonse sidles up to the leader's voice, in classic tenor/guitar melodic muscle fashion reminiscent of the Scofield/Lovano team spirit.

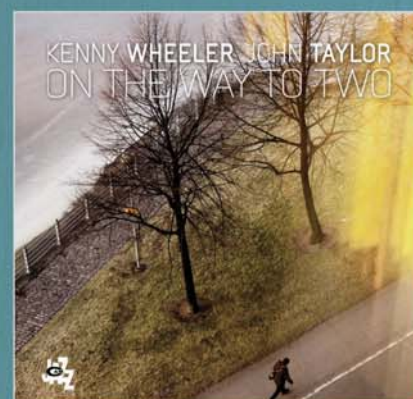
While her writing reflects an awareness of contemporary jazz notions, we also get a sense of historical grounding in deeply-rooted jazz idioms, from the soul-jazz of opener "Big B" to the Horace Silver-esque hard-bop of "No Ordinary Joe" (dedicated to another important California-based musician, drummer Joe La Barbera). *Art & Soul*, amply blessed with technical prowess, innate swing and more, is a robust debut statement worth celebrating. **DB**

Ordering info: kirstenedkins.com



ENRICO PIERANUNZI PROXIMITY

RALPH ALESSI - DONNY MCCASLIN
MATT PENMAN



KENNY WHEELER JOHN TAYLOR ON THE WAY TO TWO



FRANCESCO BEARZATTI TINISSIMA 4ET THIS MACHINE KILLS FASCISTS

IN STORES NOW AND AVAILABLE
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www.CamJazz.com

Amina Figarova

Blue Whisper

IN + OUT 77128

★★★★

If jazz artists continue to compose and play the kind of beautiful, exciting and highly listenable music that Amina Figarova delivers here, casual jazz fans may have a reason to get serious.

Blue Whisper is more about sound and feeling than cumbersome solos and note-filled melodies. The Azerbaijan-born composer and pianist gives us 10 songs that express a wide spectrum of emotions, with music that is often lovely and lively, begging you to sing or hum along. A product of both classical and jazz training, Figarova is not only a gifted composer, but also a complete pianist. She seems always to play the perfect passage, whether in a lead or supporting role.

The leader, however, fully shares the spotlight with her cohesive ensemble, which includes such standouts as Wayne Escoffery on tenor saxophone and Anthony Wilson on guitar. Playing together, they create a joyful, full-bodied sound. From the first notes of the first tune to the affecting final measure—you'll want to hear it all. —Bob Protzman



Blue Whisper: Blue Whisper; Moving Upwards; Hear My Voice; The Hustler; Pictures; Marians; The Traveler; Moonrise; Juno; Hewa. (62:59)

Personnel: Amina Figarova, piano; Bart Platteau, flutes; Alex Pope Norris, trumpet, flugelhorn (except 8); Ernie Hammes, flugelhorn (8); Wayne Escoffery, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone (1, 2, 7, 9); Marc Mommaas (3–8, 8, 10), tenor saxophone; Luques Curtis (1–3, 5, 7, 9, 10), Yasushi Yakamura (4, 6, 8), bass; Jason Brown, drums; Anthony Wilson, guitar (5); Sarah Elisabeth Charles, vocals (10); Salhiya Bilal Tumba, Shamiyl Bilal Tumba, spoken word (3).

Ordering info: inandout-records.com

Clare Fischer

Out Of The Blue

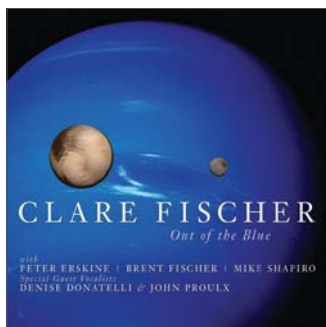
CLAVO 201509

★★★★½

Out Of The Blue is a labor of love for bassist and percussionist Brent Fischer, but it's also an invaluable archive for the jazz-listening public. Brent, son of the late composer Clare Fischer (1928–2012), put together the album after digging through his father's library of unpublished material. As he puts it in the liner notes, he discovered "one great find after another."

The result is a collection of unreleased material and a smattering of standards that reinforce Clare's brilliance as a composer and arranger. Many of the tunes had been previously recorded in one form or the other. "Two For The Road," for example, is a solo piano reading based on a previously written orchestral version, while "Love's Walk" is a trio rendition of a solo piece. Clare's attentive, authoritative piano playing anchors the album with the seamless addition of other musicians. To paint a complete picture of his father's works, Brent arranged the laid-back and funky "Love's Walk," "49 (Larry Ford)" and the title track, which features vocalese performances from Denise Donatelli and John Proulx.

—Jon Ross



Out Of The Blue: Love's Walk; Tema Do Boneco De Palha (Theme Of The Straw Doll); When You Wish Upon A Star/Someday My Prince Will Come; Starbright; Two For The Road; Cascade Of The Seven Waterfalls; Out Of The Blue; Millbrae Walk; Amor Em Paz; Squatty Roo; Nuages; Novo; 49 (Larry Ford); Carnaval/A Felicidade/Samba De Orfeu. (71:22)

Personnel: Clare Fischer, keyboards; Brent Fischer, bass, percussion; Peter Erskine (1, 4, 7, 11, 13), Mike Shapiro (2, 6, 8, 14), drums; Denise Donatelli (7), John Proulx (7), vocals.

Ordering info: clarefischer.com

Manuel Valera & Groove Square

Urban Landscape

DESTINY 0006

★★★★

Following up last year's solo piano record *Self Portrait*, Manuel Valera makes a hard left turn on *Urban Landscape*, a groove-oriented funk-fusion project that has the gifted Cuban keyboardist manning a bank of retro synths. He is accompanied in this pursuit of pocket playing by a stellar crew of New Yorkers, including guitarist Nir Felder, electric bassist John Benitez, saxophonist John Ellis and killer drummers E.J. Strickland and Jeff "Tain" Watts.

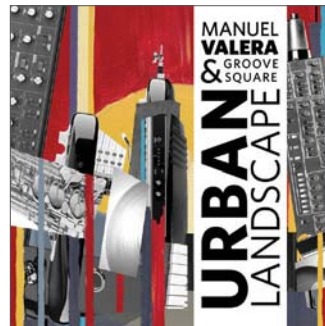
The album opens on a soulful note with "121st Street," a buoyant funk number that falls between vintage Joe Sample and Grover Washington Jr. "Coming Down" is a more take-no-prisoners offering paced by Watts' funky drummer pulse and a labyrinth of difficult unison lines by Ellis, Valera and Felder. "Gliding" is a mellow waltz-time ballad that highlights the remarkably lyrical harmonica playing of Grégoire Maret and also features suitably warm solos by Valera on Fender Rhodes and Felder on guitar. Highly recommended for fusion fans.

—Bill Milkowski

Urban Landscape: 121st Street; Coming Down; Gliding; All Around You; Geometrico; Five Reasons; Never Absent; As I Listen; Little By Little; New Ways. (73:22)

Personnel: Manuel Valera, Fender Rhodes, Minimoog Voyager, Prophet 08, Hammond B-3 organ; John Ellis, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Nir Felder, guitar; John Benitez, bass; E.J. Strickland, drums (1, 3, 4, 6–9); Jeff "Tain" Watts, drums (2, 5, 10); Grégoire Maret, harmonica (3, 6); Paulo Stagnaro (4), Mauricio Herrera (5), percussion.

Ordering info: destinyrecordsmusic.com



Sam Sadigursky

Follow The Stick

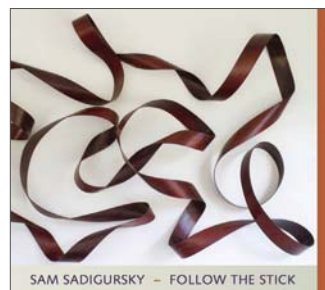
BJU 056

★★★★½

Sam Sadigursky has been earning Gotham spurs for over 15 years as a reedman of substance for thinking bands (e.g., Darcy James Argue's Secret Society and Jamie Baum's septet), a leader of chamber ensembles and a composer of poetic rambles. His new clarinet combo—with a fresh, edgy rhythm team of Bobby Avey on piano and Jordan Perlson on drums and frontline mate vibist Chris Dingman—offers ruminative, sweeping, mournful charts that allow stretches of loose development.

It takes guest trumpeter Jason Palmer's playful presence to jumpstart his few tracks: the quasi-boppish "Do The Dance" nods askance at Dizzy Gillespie's "Ow!" with flamboyant Gershwin-esque noodling; legato horns bubble exuberantly on "Life's Flowering" over Perlson's restless mallets, while trumpet and drums wholly dominate "Math Music," the galumphing closing tune. Otherwise, a placid, sometimes ominous, calm pervades the session.

Sadigursky presents an engaging musical persona: a composer of suave and awkward pieces, a multifaceted yet reticent player and a leader who yields ample space to his mates while feeling his way toward some brave new vernacular. —Fred Bouchard



Follow The Stick: Fast Money; String Of Pearls; 3+2; Mule; Do The Dance; Austerity Measures; Looks Can Be Deceiving; Reach; Life's Flowering; Deadly Sins; Touché; Heart; Math Music. (75:26)

Personnel: Sam Sadigursky, clarinet, bass clarinet (6, 9, 11, 12); Chris Dingman, vibraphone, marimba (11); Bobby Avey, piano; Jordan Perlson, drums, percussion; Jason Palmer, trumpet (2, 5, 9, 13); Ljova, viola (7).

Ordering info: bjurecords.com



**Robert Irving III
Generations
Our Space In Time**
SONICE PORTRAITS JAZZ 1222
★★★★★

Our Space In Time addresses such themes as the links between artists past and present, the balance of legacy and innovation, the significance of our current moment and the process of moving ahead. Robert Irving III, an under-promoted Chicago-based pianist and composer, has created a suite-like album that explores these concepts in progressive yet accessible contemporary jazz.

As a member of Miles Davis' 1981 comeback band and later Davis' music director, Irving rode a post-fusion wave when it was being supplanted by the Marsalis-led revival of hard-bop. Here he resurrects an alternative strategy that Wayne Shorter proposed in albums like *Atlantis* and *High Life*: tightly knit, complex charts for small ensembles that are flexible enough to couch striking personal statements but catchy enough to comfort audiences with an identifiable thread.

Irving writes close parallels for his three capable horn players and directs his rhythm section's approach, leaving openings for his deft, light-fingered pianism. "Poznan Dream," evokes an airy wistfulness that recurs later in the ballad "Octobre." Scott Hesse's guitar skitters through the saxophones on "Generations," and is generously featured on "Maat." "Energy," suggestive of McCoy Tyner, packs punches with Laurence d'Estival Irving's fervent saxophone wail.

The band's response to the issues raised by its leader is to play together, in the moment.

—Howard Mandel

Our Space In Time: Poznan Dream; Generations; Energy; Aurora Australis (Interlude); Our Space In Time; Roads Less Traveled; Octobre; Maat; Amor Incondicional (Interlude); Every Today. (74:23)
Personnel: Robert Irving III, piano, vocals; Laurence d'Estival Irving, alto saxophone (3, 7); Scott Hesse, guitar (2-4, 7, 8, 10); Rajiv Hallin, soprano saxophone, flute; Irvin Pierce, tenor saxophone (1, 2, 6, 10); Emma Dayhuff, bass, (2, 8, 10); Charles "Rick" Heath IV, drums (1, 3).

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

Luis Muñoz
Voz
PELÍN MUSIC
★★★★★

This music by the Costa Rican drummer Luis Muñoz, highly refined and subtle in detail, envelops one in aural pleasure. Surrender is the only option.

Muñoz, who also produced, orchestrated and arranged, has delivered an exceptional recording in the poetic and alluring *Voz*. It highlights three singers: the dusky Magos Herrera, from Mexico; the lighter-voiced Teka Penteriche, from Brazil; and Claudia Acuña, a Chilean of more conversational style. More than a mere star vehicle, *Voz* expresses a musical community.

The songs are intimate and expressive, the voicings delicate. Jonathan Dane, a trumpeter of lean and soulful line, shines on "Quisiera," a showcase for Acuña and Penteriche, and on the shadowy "Journey Of Saint Augustine," a tune embedding his mute among the careful bass of Brendan Statom and the tiptoe guitar of Daniel Zimmerman.

Name-checking isn't the point, however. The point is to luxuriate in one of the most attractive Latin American albums of the year.

—Carlo Wolff



Voz: Preludio Y Fin; Manantial; Argentina (Vocal Version); Journey Of Saint Augustine (Trio Version); Pasión; Testamento/ Más Allá (Vocal Version); Amarilis (Quartet Version); Quisiera; Amanecer Luminoso. (44:35)

Personnel: Luis Muñoz: drums, percussion, keyboard and melodica; Ramses Araya: bongos and congas (1); Kevin Winard: percussion (5); Brendan Statom: acoustic bass (1, 3, 4, 7, 8); Tom Etchart: electric bass (2) and acoustic bass (6); Randy Tico: bass (5); Adam Asanow: piano (1, 3, 5, 9); George Friedenthal: piano (6); Jonathan Dane: trumpet (1, 4, 6, 7, 8) and flugelhorn (3); Ron Kalina: chromatic harmonica (2, 5); Narciso Sotomayor: electric guitars (2); Daniel Zimmerman: acoustic guitar (4, 7); Chris Judge: acoustic guitar (5, 6, 8); Magos Herrera: Lead vocals (1, 3, 6, 9); Teka Penteriche: lead vocals (2, 5, 8) and background vocals (2); Claudia Acuña: lead vocals (8); Lois Mahalia: background (2); Andy Zuñiga: background vocals (2); Jana Anderson: background vocals (5); Victor Martén: background vocals (5).

Ordering info: luismunoz.net

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In Good Hands

Anthony Geraci & the Boston Blues All-Stars, *Fifty Shades Of Blue* (Delta Groove 0171; 54:18 ★★★★★) A charter member of Sugar Ray & the Bluetones has been the consistently excellent pianist in New England over the past quarter century. Recording a rare headliner session, the Rhode Islander channels deeply personal currents of feeling through his dexterous investigations of the keyboard on a strong cache of 13 original tunes.

Ordering info: deltagroovemusic.com

Georgie Bonds, *Hit It Hard* (Roadhouse Redemption; 54:49 ★★½) For his third album, Georgie Bonds—back in action after several surgeries—sings lyrics to passable original songs with an authenticity that proves this Philadelphian, who used to shoe horses for a living, has unflappably weathered his life's travails. It's no easy feat to signify one's individuality treating Blind Willie Johnson's gospel blues "The Soul Of A Man," but he does, terrifically.

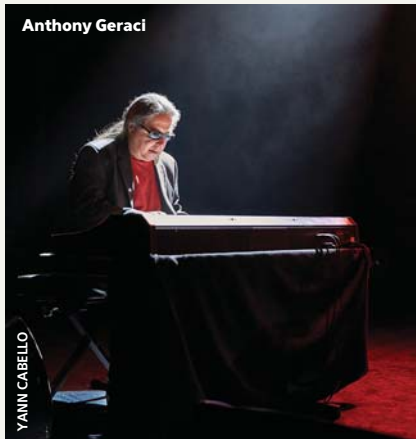
Ordering info: roadhouseredemption.com

The Jimmys, *Hot Dish* (Brown Cow 003; 60:28 ★★★★★) Wisconsin's seven-piece club band, helmed by deft singer-keyboardist Jimmy Voegeli, makes a good case for international notice behind the rousing entertainment of their third record since forming in 2008. They run the stylistic gamut—jump blues, shuffles, boogies, golden-era r&b, even New Orleans traditional jazz—using an honest, crisp expressionism that pegs them as eccentrics of a particularly interesting sort.

Ordering info: thejimmys.net

Reverend Freakchild, *Hillbilly Zen-Punk Blues* (Treated & Released 006; 37:33 ★★½) Screwball album title and *nom de blooze* notwithstanding, the Reverend isn't prone to breaking free of conventional blues habits. Three albums into his career, the Colorado singer and guitarist imposes easygoing, secure-within-himself moods on most of his own tunes and on Mississippi Fred McDowell's "I Wish I Was In Heaven Sitting Down" and Reverend Gary Davis' "It's Gonna Be Alright."

Ordering info: treatedandreleasedrecords.com



Anthony Geraci

Mighty Mike Schermer, *Blues In Good Hands* (VizzTone 1040; 52:42 ★★★★★) Mighty Mike Schermer revives on his fifth solo release the same gift for top-grade entertainment that informed his previous ones. Disciplined in his emotion, this first-call sideman for Marcia Ball and other worthies doesn't make a big deal of his excellent guitar technique, keeping his lead lines eloquent on 13 sturdy originals.

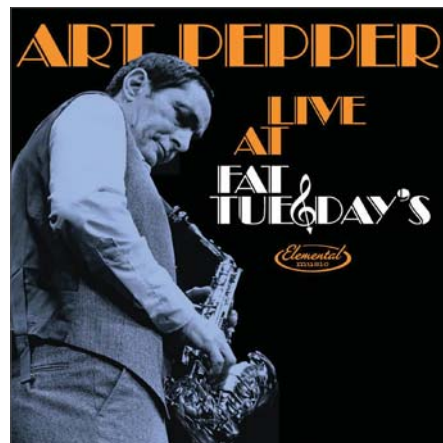
Ordering info: vizztone.com

Ernest James Zydeco, *Automatic Harvester* (Jam Rat 004; 50:10 ★★★★★) Ernest James, a singer and dazler on accordion, keyboards and guitars, leads one of the few Creole r&b-style bands outside the Bayou State. Beyond the zydeco good times, James delivers blues of suitable purpose and intensity, notably the harrowing "Jack Ride, Jimmy Roll," which tells of a murderer on the run in the antebellum South.

Ordering info: ejzydeco.com

Dave Alvin & Phil Alvin, *Lost Time* (Yep Roc 2447; 43:55 ★★★★★) On many tribute albums, musicians simply run through roots classics rather than provide their own flavors of expression. The Alvin brothers, with Dave's distinctive high baritone voice and Phil's blasting guitar to the fore, have no such trouble. They find new pockets of anxiety in James Brown's "Please, Please, Please," assess Willie Dixon socially aware boogie "Sit Down, Baby" and swingingly smooth out the lust that naturally pervades Big Joe Turner's "Cherry Red Blues." **DB**

Ordering info: yeproc.com



Art Pepper *Live At Fat Tuesday's*

ELEMENTAL 5990427

★★★

Alto saxophonist Art Pepper's extraordinary late-career comeback after years of imprisonment remains one of jazz's great redemption stories, and this live session from 1981 is a welcome addition to the collection of music he recorded near the end of his life. It's also a welcome reminder of the intimacy musicians and audiences shared at Fat Tuesday's, the New York City club that was a regular stop for Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Freddie Hubbard and others. Those at the front tables literally sat at the feet of the musicians, and the exchange of energy created by that proximity is much in evidence here.

While best remembered as a hard-core bopper, by 1981 Pepper had incorporated some of the fire and extended techniques of the avant-garde into his playing. As a result, the opening "Rhythm-A-Ning" is filled with Coltrane-esque cries. Drummer Al Foster—who was about to rejoin Miles Davis for the first phase of his remarkable comeback—is the ideal accompanist, playing free behind Pepper's choruses and then swinging hard behind Milcho Leviev's piano solo.

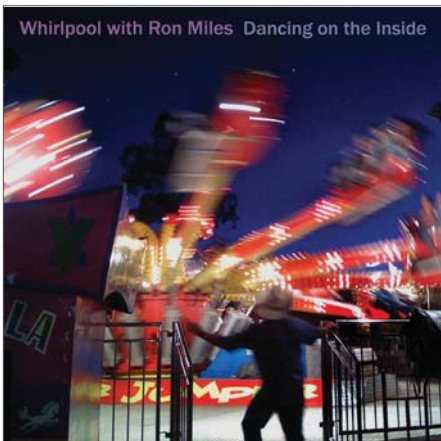
On the ballad "Goodbye," which the former clarinetist Pepper relates to his early love of Benny Goodman, the contemporary influence appears again, allowing him to move easily between tender passages and raw asides. Stretching out on "Make A List, Make A Wish" Pepper is particularly energized, expanding his second solo through twisting choruses.

For any other group of disparate musicians, this might be just another night in a friendly club, but Pepper's perilous past and palpable urgency made every night sound like it could be his last.

—James Hale

Live At Fat Tuesday's: Rhythm-A-Ning; What Is This Thing Called Love?; Goodbye; Make A List, Make A Wish; Red Car. (70:43)
Personnel: Art Pepper, alto saxophone; Milcho Leviev, piano; George Miraz, bass; Al Foster, drums.

Ordering info: elemental-music.com



Whirlpool With Ron Miles *Dancing On The Inside*

EARS & EYES 15-032

★★★★½

Charles Rumback *In The New Year*

EARS & EYES 15-038

★★★★★

Drummer Charles Rumback is a ubiquitous presence within the diverse Chicago music

scene, a figure in demand due to his versatility and good taste. But as he often works within collectives and generously spends time as a sideman, knowledge of his talent hasn't spread nearly as far as it should. The drummer stepped up his game in 2015, releasing a slew of recordings that suggest that he should be more than a Chicago treasure. Whirlpool is one of those collectives—a nimble trio with instrumentation modeled on the great trio led by Paul Motian, Rumback's most profound influence as a drummer. Alto saxophonist Caroline Davis and guitarist Jeff Swanson don't sound anything like Joe Lovano and Bill Frisell (the other members of that Motian trio), but they share the same telepathic rapport, navigating original tunes with empathy and grace.

While playing in Denver in 2013, the group invited the lyrical cornetist Ron Miles to sit in for a few tunes during a gig, and they clicked so much that the trio asked him to play on the entirety of its latest album. *Dancing On The Inside* makes clear that their connection is potent. Miles and Davis sound wonderful together on the frontline, shaping unison lines with a lush warmth. Swanson fills in lots of space with his moody arpeggios and tingling runs, and Rumback demonstrates a simultaneous crispness and draggy bottom that pushes and prods his cohorts away from glibness.

The drummer orchestrates a darker, more somber sound on his terrific quintet album *In The New Year*, for which he composed the lion's share of the music. Guitarist Jeff Parker is a key factor in the mahogany timbre of the band, adding melancholy and bittersweet harmonies behind the sweet-sour braid of Caroline Davis' alto saxophone and Jason Stein's bass clarinet. Throughout the recording, Rumback invests significant energy in texture and color, providing a hefty presence that adds depth to the proceedings, and bassist John Tate does an excellent job in his role as timekeeper. The album ends with a gorgeous reading of Andrew Hill's late composition "Tough Love," which offers a pervasive air of melodic beauty with a steady, unerring undertow of tension. These qualities masterfully complement one another here, but they're also indicative of the entire collection.

—Peter Margasak

Dancing On The Inside: Dancing On The Inside; Deciduous; The Ocean Knows; Remedies; All Of Your Secrets; The Crew; Right Where; Ridges. (42:35)

Personnel: Charles Rumback, drums; Caroline Davis, alto saxophone, vocals; Ron Miles, cornet; Jeff Swanson, guitar.

Ordering info: earsandeyesrecords.com

In The New Year: In The New Year; Right Reasons; Convulsive; Dragons In Denver; Portrait Of Lorena; Peaceful Giant; Ash Wednesday; Tough Love. (52:43)

Personnel: Charles Rumback, drums; Caroline Davis, alto saxophone; Jeff Parker, guitar; Jason Stein, bass clarinet; John Tate, bass.

Ordering info: earsandeyesrecords.com

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UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Pickin' Parlor

From folky strums to lightning-fast rolls, plenty of albums in and beyond the roots-music spotlight are grounded in acoustic guitar and banjo. Here are five diverse releases that might inspire you to strum along.

John Jorgenson, *Divertuoso/From The Crow's Nest* (Cleopatra Records 44; 48:24 ★★★★★) On sheer scale, this three-CD package demands attention. And, given the breadth and depth of Jorgenson's artistry, that attention is well merited. Each of these discs showcases his mastery in a distinctive genre: *Returning* (52:22) concentrates on his well-documented exploration of Parisian swing, and *Gifts From The Flood* (88:31) offers music inspired by his various electric guitars. *From The Crow's Nest* stems from a reunion of J2B2, an all-star ensemble featuring multi-instrumentalists Herb Pedersen and Jon Randall along with bassist Mark Fain. Jorgenson draws heavily from the steady bluegrass of The Dillards, maintaining moderate velocity and favoring melodic invention over fireworks.

Ordering info: cleorecs.com

Steve Forbert, *Compromised* (Rock Ridge 61439; 79:13 ★★) Like most singer-songwriters ambling down the Americana highway, Steve Forbert makes no claim to instrumental virtuosity. He is, however, a seasoned balladeer with a distinctive vocal and lyrical style, both of which exploit the genre's tolerance for idiosyncrasy. This means, for example, that Forbert can sound like he's being strangled, at times to the point of incomprehensibility. On "You'd See The Things That I See (The Day John Met Paul)," he gargles the word after "I'm glad I'm not your ..." in a way that's impossible to decipher, at least to this reviewer. Given the band's lackluster performance, the occasional wordplay and unorthodox rhymes are hardly redemptive.

Ordering info: steve-forbert.mybigcommerce.com

Findlay Brown, *Slow Light* (Dead People's Choice 016; 36:25 ★★★★★) More compelling and certainly more decipherable is this latest from British-born/Brooklyn-based singer-song-



writer Findlay Brown. He self-accompanies on guitar with assurance, shifting from delicate fingerpicking to gentle strums depending on the material.

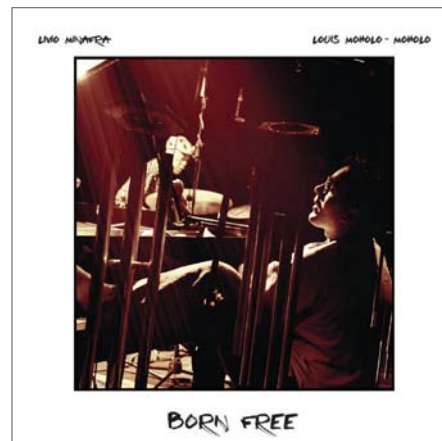
Ordering info: dpc-rec.dk

Steve Martin/Edie Brickell, *So Familiar* (Rounder, 11661-37395; 34:14 ★★★★★) On their second outing, Martin and Brickell nudge their musical partnership to a higher level of communion. Once again Martin confirms his bona fides as a banjo maestro, but that's not the album's main goal. More impressive is their co-writing. Unlike Brown's cosmic meditations, these songs recount stories of love with disarming lack of affectation. Brickell sings unflinchingly with taste, letting the words speak for themselves within well-conceived arrangements. As for Martin, his presence is more subliminal; in fact, he might have sat out entirely on "I Had A Vision" and let the song speak just as eloquently with a bit less clutter.

Ordering info: rounder.com

Béla Fleck, *Drive* (Rounder 45:24 0255 ★★★★★½) Rounder's reissue of this monumental album reminds us how high Fleck, Washburn and their colleagues set the bar for acoustic music some 30 years ago. Each player—fiddlers Mark O'Connor and Stuart Duncan, mandolinist Sam Bush, guitarist Tony Rice, dobro phenom Jerry Douglas and bassist Mark Schatz—is unsurpassed even now. These guys seem to strain against the tempo, never rushing but bristling with an almost impatient intensity. Compositionally, Fleck exploded any notion on this album that bluegrass was forever strait-jacketed in its four-beat and three-chord form. This was, is and probably always will be state of the "unplugged" art.

Ordering info: rounder.com



Livio Minafra/Louis Moholo-Moholo *Born Free*

INCIPIT 203

★★★

In a meeting of generations, elder statesman drummer Louis Moholo-Moholo joins the young, aggressive Italian pianist Livio Minafra for six live free-improvisation duets culled from three European performances. The differences in age dissolve within the first few phrases; there's a deep connection here.

Though free-form playing depends upon a mutual response to ideas, it's uncanny how often this duo seemingly comes upon the same ideas simultaneously. The two artfully take their excursions through thematic and textural terraces that lend each piece suspense and satisfying "compositional" arcs.

Moholo-Moholo made a mark in the mid-'60s when, relocating from his native South Africa to London, he became a force in integrating African elements into British jazz. Becoming increasingly immersed in free-jazz, he frequently engaged in duets with pianists, including the album *Remembrance* (1989) with Cecil Taylor.

Here, the drummer morphs in and out of time and into free canvases, with textured waves that are powerful and decisive, yet sensitive and never overwhelming. He frequently makes painterly use of dowel sticks, using their legato attack to create singing musical phrases.

From the rumbling, ever-growing pedal-point surge of "Canto General" to the humorous syncopated brio march of "Foxtrot," this one-minded duo is a mini-orchestra.

—Jeff Potter

Born Free: Canto General; Angel Nemali; Flying Flamigos; Kanya Apho Ukhona; Foxtrot; Canto General (Take Two). (40:29)

Personnel: Livio Minafra, piano, bells; Louis Moholo-Moholo, drums.

Ordering info: egeamusic.com

Galen Weston

Plugged In

BLUJAZZ 2015

★★★

Galen Weston, who is based in Toronto, is a fusion guitarist with a passionate sound. During the first 15 years after he graduated college, he had a successful career as a businessman, eventually forming his own internet company. Three years ago, after participating in a jam session, he realized how much he had missed playing guitar, and returned to music. After extensive woodshedding, he recorded *Plugged In*, his debut album.

Joined by an attentive rhythm section and alto saxophonist Richard Underhill, Weston performs 10 originals, Keith Jarrett's "Country" and the standard "Like Someone In Love." A fiery and sometimes intense soloist, Weston's playing is often rock-oriented, particularly on the opening "Funk Opus #2," a high-powered jam. He displays more subtlety and a different tone on the lyrical medium-tempo ballad "Song For Daphne" and hints at George Benson on "The Yellow Guitar" (more than he does on the catchy and funky "Bensonite").

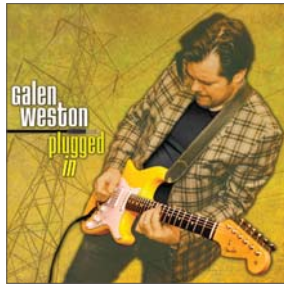
Technically skilled and displaying his own personal voice as a soloist, Weston is an impressive guitarist, even if his originals are not particularly memorable. His playing will be of strongest interest to fans of blazing rock guitar.

—Scott Yanow

Plugged In: Funk Opus #2; Song For Daphne; Bensonite; The Yellow Guitar; Rose Garden; Country; Galen's Vice—A Tribute To The 80s; Austin; Tasteless; Like Someone In Love; Late And Never; Rock Jam. (76:34)

Personnel: Galen Weston, guitar; Matt Horner, piano; David Woodhead, bass; Al Cross, drums; Richard Underhill, alto saxophone; Rick Shadrach Lazar, percussion; Lenka Lichtenberg, vocals; Simeon Abbott, keyboards (1).

Ordering info: blujazz.com



Tom Collier

Across The Bridge

ORIGIN 82703

★★★½

Since 1997, Origin Records has stood steadfast as a bulwark for West Coast jazz and classical musicians, and mallet-meister Tom Collier splendidly fills both categories. As chair of percussion studies at Seattle's University of Washington, he's performed with major symphonies as well as Earl "Fatha" Hines, Frank Zappa, Peggy Lee and Cal Tjader. (He lately recorded mallet transcriptions of two-piano Mozart and Haydn pieces for Origin's classical division.) Here Collier brightly reflects on a well-spent West Seattle childhood, joined by master guitarists Bill Frisell and Larry Coryell (themselves with Seattle roots), who alternate or double with the tart electric plectra of Dan Dean, Collier's musical partner for the past 40 years.

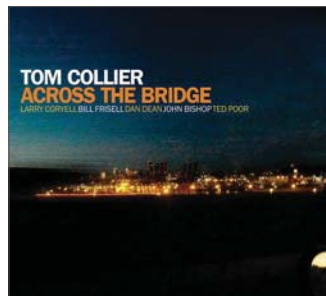
We hear no shortage of notes, ringing arpeggios or positive vibrations in this relaxed and funky set. Of special swagger is the stretch "Beach Drive," which features some stop-time turnoffs for drummer Ted Poor. "Gold 'N' Blues" lopes along with Coryell's bright guitar splashes, and Frisell lashes out on "47th 'N' Hudson." Throughout, Collier tap-dances lightly between woody solos and crisp, whispery comping. The final title track sprinkles Asian spice on a bluesy line, and we're home after a scenic ride.

—Fred Bouchard

Across The Bridge: The Junction; Beach Drive; Gold 'N' Blues; The Admiral's Point of View; 47th 'N' Hudson; Genesee; Harmonious Effusion On Olga Street; Fauntleroy Mist; Across The Bridge. (56:24)

Personnel: Tom Collier, vibraphone, marimba; Larry Coryell, guitar (1, 3, 6, 9); Bill Frisell, guitar (2, 5, 8); Dan Dean, bass, guitar (3, 4, 7); John Bishop, drums (1, 3, 6, 9); Ted Poor, drums (2, 4, 5, 7, 8).

Ordering info: originarts.com



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Noah Preminger *Pivot: Live At The 55 Bar*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★½

On the cover of his latest album, 29-year-old saxophonist Noah Preminger stands outside Greenwich Village's 55 Bar, suited and booted and appearing poised to herald a slick set of New York jazz.



On back of the CD is a picture of a fire bucket, a clue to the incendiary music within.

There is uncompromising candor in Preminger's approach to the pair of compositions that make up this album: Bukka White's "Parchman Farm" and "Fixin' To Die Blues" (each track runs beyond 30 minutes). Preminger confesses an obsession with Delta blues, drawn to its emotional honesty. Certainly, after the bellowing two-horn entry, his full-bore blowing isn't interested in regaling the cramped 55 crowd with tidy licks. Bassist Kim Cass and veteran Canadian drummer Ian Froman stoke the flames while Preminger and trumpeter Jason Palmer take turns with extended forays. Initially, promising up-and-comer Palmer quotes "Manteca" and Rollins fragments, but soon finds ways to navigate the white water set up by the rhythm section. Froman and Cass are not stopping on ceremony, pushing Palmer and Preminger beyond the prosaic, each horn matching their relentless flow.

—Michael Jackson

Pivot—Live At The 55 Bar: Parchman Farm Blues; Fixin' To Die Blues. (63:33)

Personnel: Noah Preminger, tenor saxophone; Jason Palmer, trumpet; Kim Cass, bass; Ian Froman, drums.

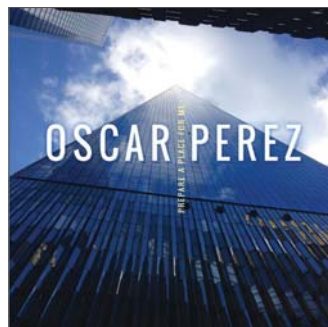
Ordering info: noahpremier.com

Oscar Perez *Prepare A Place For Me*

MYNA

★★★★

"Just Everything," the delicate opening track to Oscar Perez's third album, is a bit of a false promise. By the solo section, the pianist is forging full speed ahead, creating a stream of swinging melodies atop the frenetic drumming of Alvester Garnett and the steady bass of Thomson Kneeland. The tune slows down a bit, and gets less aggressive, but Perez has already revealed himself. While his statue of a rollicking, hard-driving pianist who packs as many notes as he can into solos is never quite front and center again, the music on *Prepare A Place For Me* makes sure that kinetic energy and excitement is always close to the surface.



Perez is also joined by alto saxophonist Bruce Williams on a number of tunes, including the soaring "Song For Ofelia" and the playful "Mushroom City." Williams is an excellent interpreter of Perez's direction and the two play well together, whether creating a tuneful ballad or a thorny, winding uptempo piece.

On of the record's standouts is a Flamenco-tinged version of "Round Midnight" that gives the oft-heard tune an exciting new feel, illustrating Perez's aptitude for inspiring arrangements. "The Nearness Of You" also receives a silky, luxurious piano update.

—Jon Ross

Prepare A Place For Me: Just Everything; Round Midnight; Headin' Over; Snake Charm; Message To Monterey; The Nearness Of You; Prepare A Place For Me; Mushroom City; Song For Ofelia. (59:07)

Personnel: Oscar Perez, piano; Thomson Kneeland, bass; Alvester Garnett, drums; Bruce Williams, alto saxophone.

Ordering info: mynarecords.com

Ike Sturm + Evergreen *Shelter Of Trees*

KILDE

★★★★½

Bassist-composer Ike Sturm, who has served as musical director for the jazz ministry at St. Peter's Church in the heart of midtown Manhattan since 2004, offers a deeply personal statement with this collection of sacred music (dedicated to his late father, trombonist-composer-educator Fred Sturm) that speaks directly to the heart. Vibraphonist Chris Dingman and pianist Fabian Almazan supply a shimmering quality throughout, and bristling solos are added by alto saxophonist Loren Stillman and guitarist Jesse Lewis on uplifting pieces like "Rejoice," "River," "Renew" and the dynamic title track. And Sturm exhibits an accomplished arranger's touch on these 10 compelling pieces, particularly in his use of the angelic vocals of Melissa Stylianou, Chanda Rule and Misty Ann Sturm. Their religious messages on tunes like "Guide," "Sanctus" and "Psalm 23" may be off-putting to non-believers, but the sound of their crystalline voices uniting in song is undeniably beautiful.

Those with open hearts and minds may be profoundly moved by these seraphic sounds and divine sentiments.

—Bill Milkowski



Shelter Of Trees: Rejoice; River; Origins; Turning Point; Shelter Of Trees; Guide; Renew; Sanctus; Family; Psalm 23. (58:40)

Personnel: Ike Sturm, bass, composer; Loren Stillman, alto saxophone; Fabian Almazan, piano; Chris Dingman, vibraphone; Jesse Lewis, guitar; Jared Schonig, drums; Misty Ann Sturm, vocals; Chanda Rule, vocals; Melissa Stylianou, vocals.

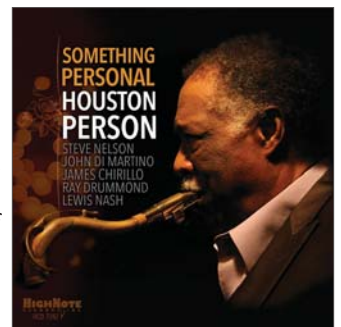
Ordering info: ikesturm.com

Houston Person *Something Personal*

HIGH NOTE 7282

★★★★½

Despite his name, Houston is not a Texas tenor but was born in South Carolina 81 years ago. A producer of other artists—such as Bill Hardman, Dakota Staton, Charles Brown and vibraphonist Johnny Lytle—Person knows how to call a session, make everyone feel relaxed and get the best out of them. That's certainly the case on *Something Personal*. "The Second Time Around" and the "Way We Were" (the latter a vehicle for Person's most obvious antecedent, Gene Ammons) are suggestive of Person's long career beyond the passing of his musical partner Etta Jones in 2001. There's always the sense with this ballad-heavy repertoire that songs have to resonate on a deeply personal level.



Vibraphonist Steve Nelson adds harmony to Person's regular pianist John di Martino and is featured to succinct effect on a bossa-driven "Change Partners" (Person joins on the bridge for a nimble solo). Due to the lush sound, perfection and taste of drummer Lewis Nash, bassist Ray Drummond and guitarist James Chirillo (on four cuts), plus Person's breezy loyalty to the letter of the impossibly nostalgic melodies, this collection is an especially swingin' brand of dinner jazz.

—Michael Jackson

Something Personal: The Second Time Around; Crazy He Calls Me; I'm Afraid The Masquerade Is Over; The Way We Were; Guilty; Change Partners; Teardrops From My Eyes; Something Personal; On The Sunny Side Of The Street; I Remember Clifford. (60:13)

Personnel: Houston Person, tenor saxophone; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; John di Martino, piano; James Chirillo, guitar (2, 4–6); Ray Drummond, bass; Lewis Nash, drums.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com

Charles Ruggiero
As Heard On TV
 RONDETTE 1014

★★★½

From Bob James to Quincy Jones, great jazz melodists have paid the rent with TV themes for decades. But a full set of TV show themes as the launching point for a modern jazz record? That's a completely different game.



But drummer Charles Ruggiero seems to have had fun putting together a DVR's worth of melodies that would satisfy any couch potato. The result is a bizarre universe where every TV theme sounds like it was recorded in Rudy Van Gelder's New Jersey studio circa 1965.

"Bewitched" bounces on Ruggiero's nimble brushes with a muted Alex Norris on trumpet dancing throughout. A soul-jazz rendition of the "Law & Order" theme is laugh-out-loud funny when soprano saxophonist Stacy Dillard gives off a siren-like wail mid-solo. And the "Game Of Thrones" theme is drenched in the aquatic modalism of Herbie Hancock's "Maiden Voyage," serving as a "listen to this" kind of moment to share with non-jazz fans. For purists, this may be a polarizing record, but it has the potential to lure those drawn by the familiar to explore a full set of well-executed small combo jazz. A noble goal. —Sean J. O'Connell

As Heard On TV: Bewitched; Law & Order; Moonlighting; The Bugs Bunny Show; Game Of Thrones; iCarly; Good Times; The Honeymooners. (42:36)

Personnel: Charles Ruggiero, drums; Jeremy Manasia, piano; Mike Karn, bass; Ian Hendrickson-Smith, flute (1), alto saxophone (5, 6, 7); Alex Norris, trumpet (1, 6); Stacy Dillard, soprano saxophone (2), tenor saxophone (8); Laura Mace, vocals (6).

Ordering info: rondettejazz.com

No BS! Brass Band
Brass Knuckles

SELF RELEASE

★★★½

In music, very little matches the combined energy of the relentless rhythms of a drum corps and the solid funk of New Orleans-style brass band. But when you add that to the hitting cadences of rap and hip-hop, it can be exhilarating and exciting.



That's why the name of this band and the title of this record is most appropriate. The No BS! Brass Band—based in Richmond, Virginia—plays all of these 11 tracks with power and conviction.

The talented ensemble was assembled by founders Reggie Pace (trombone) and Lance Koehler (drums), and nearly every member of the group has had conservatory training. Their eclectic musical style draws on elements from a vast range of artists, including James Brown, John Coltrane, Michael Jackson and Led Zeppelin, but their signature sound is completely original.

The music steps hard like the best high school and college marching bands. It is immediate and fresh, jumping right out of the speakers.

—David Kunian

Brass Knuckles: 3 AM Bounce; Act Like You Know; The F.O.O.L.; Tyrannis; Brass Knuckles; Out Of Time; What Now; Get Slow; Nailbiter; Trifling Woe; I40W. (43:03)

Personnel: Lance Koehler, drums, vocals; Stefan Demetriadis, contra; Reggie Chapman, Dillard Watt, bass trombone; John Hulley, trombone; Bryan Hooten, trombone, vocals; Reggie Pace, trombone; David Hood, alto saxophone; Sam Hoff, Taylor Barnett, trumpet; Marcus Tenney, trumpet, vocals; Rob Quallich, lead trumpet.

Ordering info: nobsbrass.com

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Promising Forecast

The velocity of many, if not most, of the live tunes from **Weather Report, *The Legendary Tapes: 1978–1981*** (Legacy 88875141272; 61:14/60:41/62:58/62:29 ★★★★★) may be the defining characteristic of this particular edition of the band. By 1978, co-founders Joe Zawinul (keyboards) and Wayne Shorter (saxophone) already had electric bassist Jaco Pastorius on board, but now the percussion was driven by drummer Peter Erskine and Robert Thomas Jr. (who appears on roughly half of these 28 cuts).

Starting with “8:30,” the pace of this collection is nothing if not frenetic. Along with the ever-present world-music influence on tunes like the lively, grinding “Sightseeing” and an extremely wound-up “Badia” (heard in medley with “Boogie Woogie Waltz”), there’s a sleight-of-hand bebop vibe to this music, Pastorius skating and gliding with his four-to-the-floor swing.

Two of the discs come from the group’s 1978 tour as a quartet, the other two from tours in 1980 and ‘81, including their entire 1980 album *Night Passage*. Most of the cuts are from dates in Japan, but others include concerts in London and some U.S. cities.

“Fast City” on the third disc, Duke Ellington’s “Rockin’ In Rhythm” (also on Disc Three) and “Directions” (which closes this set) are inspired and energizing, the latter given a major facelift from its more rock-oriented roots. Interspersed are dreamier, more melodic tunes like “A Remark You Made,” Pastorius’ “Three Views Of A Secret” and “Brown Street.” These more intimate tunes offer a refreshing contrast to the more steely-eyed music for which Weather Report was known. The group is more exposed here, more revealing in its continual rediscovery.

Ordering info: legacyrecordings.com

Home movies, interviews and live concert footage illuminate a fascinating life on **JACO: The Film (JP 1002; 117:00/100:00 ★★★★★)**, a new docu-



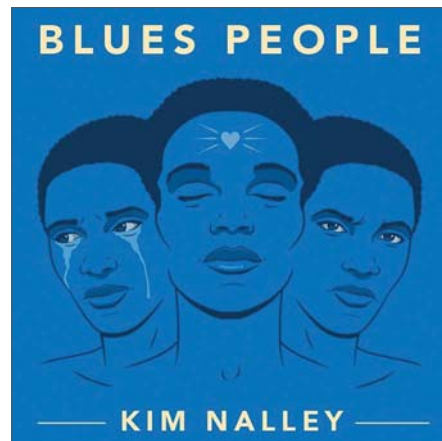
Joe Zawinul (left), Wayne Shorter, Peter Erskine and Jaco Pastorius

mentary on the legendary bassist produced by Metallica’s Robert Trujillo and Jaco’s eldest son, John Pastorius IV. Directed by Paul Marchand and Stephen Kijak, this two-disc set also includes many outtakes, with even more interviews. Shorter, Erskine and Joni Mitchell offer the most empathic, insightful quotes, while Carlos Santana, Flea, Sting, Bootsy Collins, Jaco biographer Bill Milkowski and Mike Stern chime in to sing praise on Pastorius. Filmed with a creative mix of animation, photos and video, the feeling is one of celebration despite the honest handling of Pastorius’ tragic demise. Disc Two brings us up to date with a 2015 tribute show at the Hollywood Bowl.

Ordering info: jacothefilm.com

JACO: Original Soundtrack (Columbia/Legacy 88875141332; 75:07 ★★★★★) gives us a peek into the music behind the movie, and the album’s funky pop resides in a different neighborhood from Weather Report’s jazzier feel. With 16 tracks, including selections from Weather Report, Mitchell, Flea and Ian Hunter, this is a great place to hear the bass maven playing with Herbie Hancock (“Continuum,” “Liberty City”), Hubert Laws, Jack DeJohnette (“Crisis”) and Hunter (“All American Alien Boy”). Pastorius and Don Alias’ mesmerizing “Okonkole Y Trompa” (featuring French horn) and Pastorius’ “Portrait Of Tracy” are also highlights.

Ordering info: legacyrecordings.com



Kim Nalley *Blues People*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★

With her vaunted 3 1/2 -octave vocal range, San Francisco jazz mainstay Kim Nalley is the musical equivalent of the pitcher with a 102-mph fastball. While the baseball flamethrower is usually relegated to the closer’s role, Nalley brings the heat through every moment of her new 14-song workout, *Blues People*.

The album’s title and concept are inspired by *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*, a 1963 study of African American culture and its impact on society by Amiri Baraka (writing as LeRoi Jones). Nalley covers the full range of the black experience, from the field worker (“Summertime”) to the high achiever (“Movin’ On Up”), from the profane (Bessie Smith’s “Sugar In My Bowl” and the Dinah Washington number “Trombone Song”) to the sacred (two versions of the Mahalia Jackson gospel standard “Trouble Of The World” and a haunting “Amazing Grace”).

Two Nalley originals allow the singer to weigh in on hot-button social issues. The blues-rocker “Big Hooded Black Man” is about racial stereotyping in general and the Trayvon Martin killing specifically, and the contemplative “Ferguson Blues” pays homage to Michael Brown as it asks why no police officers are ever arrested.

Nalley has been performing several of these songs live for years, notably the album closer, Bob Dylan’s “I Shall Be Released.” It’s one of the album’s chief strengths, but it’s also a sad reflection on the state of the music industry that a voice as big and bold as Nalley’s has gone unrecorded for such long stretches. —Jeff Johnson

Blues People: Summertime; Big Hooded Black Man; Trouble Of The World (Acoustic Version); Listen Here!/Cold Duck/Compared To What?; Movin’ On Up; Never Make Your Move Too Soon; Sugar In My Bowl; Trombone Song (Big Long Sliding Thing); Ferguson Blues; Trouble of the World (Organ Version); The Chair Song (If I Can’t Sell It); Sunday Kind Of Love; Amazing Grace; I Shall Be Released. (71:29)

Personnel: Kim Nalley, vocals; Tammy Hall, piano, organ; Greg Skaff, guitar; Michael Zisman, bass; Kent Bryson, drums; Bryan Dyer, background vocals.

Ordering info: kimnalley.com

East West Quintet

Anthem

SELF RELEASE

★★★★½

Like their Brooklyn-based brethren Snarky Puppy, the East West Quintet is a clever, highly disciplined instrumental unit (actually a sextet) that marries visceral rock with jazzy improvisation and other disparate elements into an intriguing brew. "Draft," for instance, opens with a minor key, chamber-like refrain from pianist Mike Cassidy, who is soon joined by trumpeter Phil Rodriguez and saxophonist Dylan Heaney layering close harmonies on top while Jordan Perlon beats a rapid-fire pulse underneath. Midway through, Simon Kafka joins the fray on heavily distorted guitar. You're already juggling about four or five motifs on the opening track alone. Surprises like that abound on this genre-busting debut.

While keyboardist Cassidy is the principal writer on this project, guitarist Kafka contributes the thoughtful composition "Interstellar," which has a slight ring of Steve Winwood's "Can't Find My Way Home." Heaney's lone composition, "Action Figure," jumps from formidable ZZ Top crunch chords to sheer grindcore maelstrom. Cassidy's other noteworthy composition, the oddly affecting waltz "White Lodge," patiently builds to a cinematic crescendo of horns and twangy guitar before closing out the collection with ambient music swirls. —Bill Milkowski

Anthem: Draft; Next; Interstellar; Collider; Action Figure; Experiment No. 3; Something; White Lodge. (45:30)

Personnel: Dylan Heaney, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone; Phil Rodriguez, trumpet; Simon Kafka, guitar; Mike Cassidy, piano, keyboards; Benjamin Campbell, bass; Jordan Perlon, drums.

Ordering info: eastwestquintet.com



Dave Chamberlain's Band of Bones Stomp!

BB PRODUCTIONS

★★★★

As the guitar and saxophone were to the 20th century, the trombone will be to the 21st: the instrument that pushes the music and focuses it in many different ways and genres.

Bonerama and Trombone Shorty are establishing it as a rock instrument, and in the world of big band, Dave Chamberlain's Band of Bones is reasserting its power.

Their new record shows just how versatile the trombone can be. The band is both tight and crisp and almost Basie-esque on the opening cut, "King Porter Stomp," but they also keep it nimble and light while backing up vocalist Kat Gang on "The Sweetest Sounds." The arrangements are fine on the most part, with an inventive take on Strayhorn's "A Flower Is A Lovable Thing" that adds a new rhythm and subtle Latin feel.

The album's one flaw is that it sounds too clean. Audiences would welcome more grit. Despite that, *Stomp!* is a great showcase for an instrument that is poised to have its day in the sun. —David Kunian

Stomp! King Porter Stomp; Sambatropolis; The Sweetest Sounds; A Flower Is A Lovable Thing; Flat Black; Band Of Bones Blues; Chega De Saudade; Delilah; Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby; Pavane & Stomp; Amazing Grace. (61:47)

Personnel: Dave Chamberlain, trombone, flute, vocals; Hendrik Meurkens, harmonica (2); Kat Gang, vocals (3); Kenny Ascher, piano; Jerry DeVore, bass; Mike Campenni, drums; Chernbo Corniel, congas, percussion (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10); Charley Gordon, Sara Jacovino, Nate Mayland, Matt McDonald, Mark Patterson, Chris Rinaman, trombone; Max Seigel, Dale Turk, bass trombone.

Ordering info: bandofbones.com



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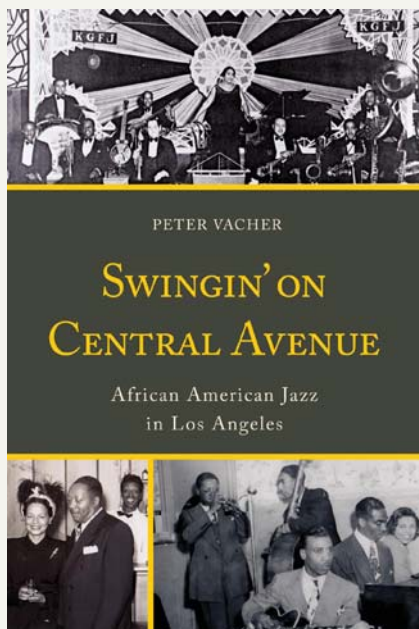
Main Stem

In the first half of the 20th century, Central Avenue was the vibrant hub of black Los Angeles. Art Tatum, Billie Holiday and Big Joe Turner were just a few of the visitors who spent meaningful time there, as did the Ellington, Basie and Lunceford bands. The street hosted fabulous floorshows at the Club Alabam, gestated Wynonie Harris and Jimmy Witherspoon's stage skills, united Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray in musical combat and saw Jack McVea formulate "Open The Door, Richard." But the scene was all but dead by 1950, when restrictive housing covenants eased and the action drifted west.

Jazz's critical arm was slow in recognizing the area's importance to the music. Patricia Willard's informative liner notes to the *Black California* LP compilation (Savoy 1980) signified a musical Atlantis ripe for rediscovery. Musician autobiographies by Charles Mingus, Red Callender, Buddy Collette, Roy Porter and Marshall Royal gave firsthand accounts of their times on L.A.'s Main Stem. Bette Yarbrough Cox's *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall* (BEEM '96) most effectively chronicled the early years, and RJ Smith's *The Great Black Way* (PublicAffairs '06) further fleshed it out with a real-life gallery of the Avenue's more fascinating characters.

Now we have Peter Vacher's *Swingin' On Central Avenue: African American Jazz in Los Angeles* (Rowman & Littlefield). Vacher is a senior British jazz journalist who has specialized in the music of the era, and he knows that for every Mingus, Nellie Lutcher and Gerald Wilson, there were at least two dozen journeymen players who were not only handmaidens to the giants, but who led their own fascinating careers. Vacher profiles 16 of them, taking us deep into Central's tall weeds.

In doing so, the author has rescued a clutch of instrumentalists from obscurity. They include trumpeters Andrew Blakeney, George Orendorf, Red Mack Morris, Isadore "Monte" Easter and Norman Bowden; trombonist Streamline Ewing; saxophonists Floyd Turnham, Caughey Roberts and Chuck Thomas; pianists Betty Hall Jones and



Chester Lane; drummers Monk McFay, Jesse Sailes and Red Minor Robinson; and bassist Billy Hadnott.

Many Central Avenue players were transplants with considerable experience. Hadnott had taken Walter Page's place in the Bennie Moten Orchestra and was in Harlan Leonard's band. Roberts played in Buck Clayton's Shanghai band and with Fats Waller before Basie called him in '42. And Ewing tells of a post-war period when he shared an apartment with Collette where Charlie Parker once visited.

Vacher has also collected a substantial number of rare photographs: a T-Bone Walker jam session, Kid Ory's band at the Cricket Club, the Les Hite Orchestra in performance, Gerald Wilson at Shepp's Playhouse and Dizzy Gillespie and Lester Young at Philharmonic Hall. But perhaps the most impressive aspect of this book is how the musicians survived after the '40s heyday. Pianist Lane and trombonist Ewing played many years at Disneyland with trumpeter Teddy Buckner. After retirement from Douglas Aircraft, bassist Hadnott picked and chose his jobs, like the World's Greatest Jazz Band. Red Mack went into real estate.

Vacher has given us a valuable addition to the Central Avenue library, as rich in personal experience as it is broad in range.

DB

Ordering info: rowman.com



Hot Jazz Jumpers The Very Next Thing

ON THE BOL 0002

★★★★

Nick Russo, the guitarist-banjoist at the helm of Hot Jazz Jumpers, covers wide swaths of jazz history with his playing. As a sideman, he's worked with artists all over the jazz spectrum, from Jimmy McGriff to Mark Turner to Vince Giordano. It should come as no surprise that for his latest release, which trains its eye on hot jazz, Russo and his band (vocalists Betina Hershey and Miles Griffith, with percussionist David Pleasant and numerous guests) bring a decidedly unorthodox approach.

The album covers a number of hot jazz staples ("Back Home Again In Indiana," "Jock-A-Mo," "Sweet Georgia Brown") with characteristic sweetness and swagger, but it's not short on flashes of muscularity and grit. On "Caravan," Griffith—whose voice combines the finesse of Jon Hendricks with the passion of Leon Thomas—unleashes a sweltering vocal solo that shreds through a thick, jangly layer of electric guitar and tambourine. Elsewhere, the group gets bluesy with a rendition of Muddy Waters' "I've Got My Mojo Working" that pits Hershey's soaring vocals against Pleasant's rumbling toms. Other treats include two classics—"In A Mellow Tone" and "Ain't Misbehavin'"—and a forward-looking free improvisation between Russo and Griffith.

A bonus DVD includes 11 live recordings as well as behind-the-scenes footage and interviews, providing a fascinating look into a "hot" jazz band that really brings the heat.

—Brian Zimmerman

The Very Next Thing: Back Home Again In Indiana; Freight Train; Caravan; You Are My Sunshine; Nobody But My Baby Is Getting My Love; In A Mellow Tone; Jock-A-Mo (DVD Version); Dirty 40; Sweet Georgia Brown; Manhã De Carnaval; Jam For Lenny; Ain't Misbehavin'; I've Got My Mojo Working; When The Red, Red Robin; This Little Light Of Mine; Jock-A-Mo (Studio Version); Russo Griffith Free Improv. (76:00)

Personnel: Nick Russo, guitar, tenor banjo, resonator, baritone resonator; Betina Hershey, guitar, vocals (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12-16); Miles Griffith, vocals (3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15-17); David Pleasant, harmonica, drums (1-5, 7, 9, 11-16); Essiet Essiet (1, 3, 7, 13, 14); Marnadou Ba (2, 4, 15, 16), bass; Gordon Au, trumpet (1, 3, 14); Josh Holcomb, trombone (5, 11); Dennis Lichtman, clarinet (14); Mike Russo, guitar (8).

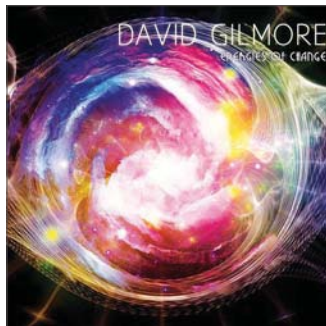
Ordering info: hotjazzjumpers.com

David Gilmore *Energies Of Change*

EVOLUTIONARY MUSIC 002

★★★★½

David Gilmore, a multifaceted guitarist known for his affiliations with the M-Base Collective, saxophonist Don Byron and percussionist Trilok Gurtu, is a thoughtful composer and ambitious performer. With his fourth release, he adds bandleading instincts to his already impressive list of talents and accomplishments.



He doesn't skimp on the compositional offerings—seven of the nine numbers are impressive originals. The title track, which opens the album with broad, flowing strokes, sets the stage for pensive alto saxophone and bass clarinet solos by reedist Marcus Strickland and extended explorations by Gilmore and pianist Luis Perdomo.

Two non-originals serve as an illuminating foil to Gilmore's pieces. "Over Shadow Hill Way," written by the guitarist's one-time bandleader, Wayne Shorter, features excursions by Strickland (again on soprano) and Perdomo. "Revelations" provides a reflective setting—Gilmore with acoustic guitar arpeggios and drummer Antonio Sánchez on brushes. It's a nice outlier in both instrumentation and mood. —Yoshi Kato

Energies Of Change: Energies Of Changes; Rajas Guna; Dance Of Duality; The Seeker; Sacred Pause; Over Shadow Hill Way; Awakening; Revelations; Trick Of I. (63:12)

Personnel: David Gilmore, guitars; Marcus Strickland, alto saxophone (1), bass clarinet (1), tenor saxophone (2, 7, 9), soprano saxophone (3–6, 8); Luis Perdomo, piano (1–7, 9); Ben Williams, double bass; Antonio Sanchez, drums; Kofo Wanda, talking drum (3).

Ordering info: cdbaby.com

Romain Collin *Press Enter*

ACT 9583

★★½

Jazz continues to be claimed, if only as a reference point, by musicians whose backgrounds and impulses are far from its origins. French pianist and composer Romain Collin has studied at Berklee, graduated from the Monk Institute and toured internationally with Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter. Yet on *Press Enter* he seems more interested in producing slick settings—"sound designs"—for second-rate soundtracks and semi-classical pop albums than in engaging with the spontaneity, invention, improvisation and vocabulary from which jazz grew.



Purveying ersatz minimalism ("99"), vainglorious repetition ("The Line") and cloying sentimentality ("Holocene"), Collin may be trying to be commercial. I don't think it works. On "Clockwork," rippling figures, entry-level chromatic licks and a portentous bass part set up an interesting single-note foray, but the rippling never stops.

A few tracks indicate what Collin *could* do. On "Webs," for example, he emerges for an unexpectedly celestial episode starting with a stunning long line, beautiful clusters and chords—which are quickly subverted by the heavy-handed rumblings that end the piece. —Howard Mandel

Press Enter: 99; Clockwork; Raw, Scorched And Untethered; Holocene; The Kids; Webs; San Luis Obispo; Event Horizon; The Line (Dividing Good And Evil Cuts Through The Heart Of Every Human Being); Round About Midnight. (46:12)

Personnel: Romain Collin, piano, sound design, programming; Luques Curtis, bass; Kendrick Scott, drums; Mino Cinelu, percussion (9); Megan Rose, vocals (1, 8); Jean-Michel Pilc, whistles (5); Grey McMurray, guitar (4); Laura Metcalf, cello.

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Recording School

SOUND ADVICE ON PRODUCING JAZZ RECORDINGS

BY GEORGE KLABIN

I have a great deal of experience with all aspects of jazz recording—as engineer, producer, and lately, as a curator and restorer of rare old recordings from as far back as the 1950s.

I would like to share some sound advice on producing jazz recordings and also discuss how we restore and improve the sound of old analog tapes in preparation for release on Resonance Records.

There are several principles I adhere to when I consider producing a jazz artist for our label. First and foremost is the concept that the final product should be an accurate representation of the “art” of the musician, part of the artist’s legacy, a work to be proud of at any time in the future. It should reflect the state of their musical soul at the time it was recorded.

A good producer emulates the listener who is going to buy the final recording. His job includes knowing which is the best take, checking for technical issues and, most of all, feeling when the recording is “locked in”—when it transports the listener. The producer is also the organizer, a chef who brings together the right ingredients to make the music the best that it can be and get the best possible performances from the artists. This would involve selection of the musicians and the music to be recorded.



Vocalist Polly Gibbons (left) and keyboardist John Beasley have recorded themed albums for Resonance Records.

The Producer's Role

Jazz is at its best when all the musicians are musically “talking and listening” to each other in each moment. It’s the producer’s responsibility to help create an environment where such “magic” can happen. To me, this means:

- Not making commercial goals more important than the artistic ones, or trying to “sell” records with choices that compromise the outcome and do not serve the musician.
- Choosing music, whether originals or standards, with the following qualities: melody, harmony and rhythm, so that it becomes a challenge for the musicians on the recording. It is my personal belief that the music is more important than the musician. Take a great artist and give him mediocre music to play, and he will struggle. Take a mediocre musician and give him inspiring music, and he will play at his best (whatever level that may be).
- Not allowing individual solos to last for more than about 2 minutes. We’ve all heard recordings with 5- or 10-minute solos, and we’ve all gone to clubs and heard each tune take 15 minutes because every one of the musicians takes a long, self-indulgent solo. After three or four choruses with only three or four chords in a repeating pattern, the clichés and licks abound as the player literally is struggling to be original. That’s not going to produce the best results in the studio. It also turns off potential new jazz fans.
- Always having arrangements and a concept. No jam sessions, please! It could be as simple as a head chart, or as elaborate as a complete arrangement with individual parts by a real jazz arranger, which allows producer and artist to

outline and structure a concept and treatment of each tune rather than throwing it together at the session. Be prepared, and treat the project as a concept. However, once in the studio, flexibility is important to allow changes to occur, since arrangements serve as a framework, not an absolute.

- Choosing musicians who are truly compatible musically and personally. One weak link breaks the chain and brings down the entire recording. Sometimes artists want to use their buddies, or musicians to whom they owe a favor. This is not a good idea unless those people are truly compatible on the same high level with the artist. Where feasible, I surround the artist with virtuoso-quality compatriots who will challenge them, which helps bring out the best.
- Treating everyone with respect. If the producer is unhappy with some aspect, take the particular player aside in private and discuss it in a positive manner. Musicians are artists and sensitive beings. Be kind, mature and helpful. As I say, “Choose love, not fear.”
- Taking time in the studio to assure that each musician can hear himself and the others clearly in the headphone mix. For Resonance Records recording sessions, we use separate multi-channel headphone mixers made by MyMix and very high-quality Sony MDR-7506 professional headphones.
- Always checking the tuning of instruments before each take. The tuning of stringed instruments is especially susceptible to drift. If using a piano, have it tuned before each session. A bad-sounding instrument is counterproductive. Make sure the studio or recording area is at a comfortable temperature and that humidity

levels remain as stable as possible.

As a producer, I like to create a theme for the production. It can be anything from a tribute such as John Beasley’s *Letter To Herbie*, Toninho Horta’s *To Jobim With Love*, Donald Vega’s *With Respect To Monty*, Angela Hagenbach’s *The Way They Make Me Feel* (songs by Michel Legrand, Johnny Mandel and Henry Mancini), Polly Gibbons’ *Many Faces Of Love* (songs about five stages of love) or Christian Howes’ *American Spirit* (eclectic mix of Americana music).

This can add appeal for the listener, and the planning and thought it involves helps crystallize the overall project.

Getting a Good Sound

In getting a good recording sound, which is more important: the instrument, the microphone or the performer?

The performer is obviously first, as he or she produces the sound from the instrument. The instrument is second, as a bad one can really ruin the sound. Finally, it’s the mic. Why last? Because of the literally hundreds of different ones available, many will serve equally well, with one huge caveat: How are they positioned?

Proper mic technique is more important than the mic itself. Of course, it’s essential to know when to use a dynamic or a condenser microphone, or what pickup pattern is ideal for recording any given instrument. But choosing a \$3,000 mic over a less expensive one is not necessary to achieve optimum results. I have used most of the great so-called “classic” microphones (starting in the mid-1960s), and I can tell you that with advances in technology, there

are mics that cost \$250 that sound every bit as good as the far more expensive models. And, classic microphones have to be maintained and heavily restored as the parts age and sound quality degrades.

Here is what I want out of a microphone:

- Low distortion, essentially inaudible.
- As flat a frequency response as possible.

Most mics have a rise somewhere in the high end. The precise non-flat portion of the spectrum gives a mic most of its sound character, along with other aspects like the type of sound capture element.

I like to use Earthworks brand mics in certain instances such as recording a piano. I know that the sound of these mics will be essentially flat and unchanged because they are designed as calibration microphones.

- To me, mic position is more important than any other issue when

recording instruments. This is an area where experience is necessary, as it involves understanding the acoustics of the space the instrument is in, the pattern setting of the mic, placement distance and other such mechanical issues.

Sound Restoration

Resonance Records is actively involved in searching for and finding rare, never-before-released recordings of the icons of modern jazz. To date, we have released such important discoveries as *In The Beginning* and *Echoes Of Indiana Avenue*, which are the earliest known recordings of Wes Montgomery; John Coltrane *Live At Mitten Hall*; *Live At Art D'Lugoff's Top Of The Gate*, a prime 1968 Bill Evans live recording; *Pieces Of Jade*, rare recordings of Scott LaFaro; and *Manhattan Stories*, rare live recordings of 1965 concerts by Charles Lloyd. In the next 12 months we will release more rare old recordings by Larry Young, Shirely Horn, Sarah Vaughan, another previously unreleased Bill Evans Trio studio recording from the '60s, and a concert of Stan Getz with João Gilberto. In all cases, these were recorded directly to mono or stereo 1/4-inch tape.

The source recordings are often from live performances and are not studio quality. The tape has aged and may have dropouts, hiss, issues with uneven sound levels and poor balance between instruments, or other technical deficiencies.

In many cases, with the expertise of our engineer, Fran Gala, we can substantially restore or repair these deficiencies, making the end product more listenable. Gala has done a superb job of learning to utilize all the new

digital software that has allowed us to clean, improve and even save extremely rare recordings—many of which had never been heard after they were recorded and stored, often under less-than-ideal conditions. In all cases, our philosophy is to proceed with the same attitude as with new recordings: Honor and respect the legacy of the artist, and do not release material that does not represent the artist properly.

There are some very time-consuming methods we use to achieve these goals. Let me elaborate on a few examples.

Mic position is more important than any other issue when recording instruments.

After we convert the audio to digital format in ProTools, we use these main software packages specifically for sound improvement: Izotope RX Advanced, Izotope Ozone, HOFA IQ-EQ and Melodyne Studio.

Izotope modules are our “Swiss army knife” for restoration, and we use them more than any other program. They offer a huge array of choices to improve sound, and can deal with everything from analog or digital distortion, to removing discreet unwanted sounds in the middle of other wanted sounds, to removal of all hiss from old tapes (improving the signal-to-noise ratio tremendously without reducing high frequencies). It allows us to visualize the sound so that the engineer can “paint” out sections in the same area and leave the surrounding areas intact, or replace the removed portion with a segment from an adjacent area.

An interesting example of Izotope RX use was when we encountered a stereo track from a studio recording made in the 1950s that contained, at two points in one song, a burst of about 10–15 seconds of the noise of a drill, such as would be used on a wall in a room adjacent to the studio. Thanks again to audio “superman” Gala’s expertise and experience, this annoying noise was completely removed without negatively impacting the musical sounds that occurred in the same period of time. It was truly as if the drill had never existed.

HOFA EQ is a special equalizer that also includes a spectrum analyzer to visualize the entire sound spectrum and allows changing settings to correct or emphasize any portion of the audible spectrum. It even allows a setting that is able to limit the volume of a precise portion of sound when it reaches a certain volume. One

could boost the volume of a particular frequency only if it reached a certain level, and not below that level, or stop equalizing the sound if it went above a certain level. Most old tapes or audio cassettes have lost high-frequency response from aging. The equalizer is an essential tool in sound restoration when used properly.

Melodyne Studio is a fascinating piece of software. It was originally developed to correct the tuning of a single sound, such as a vocal. It visualizes the sound as discreet “blobs” that can be moved up or down to vary the pitch,

stretched or squeezed to change duration; even the vibrato portion of the note may be changed. Several years ago, the software was improved to visualize the sounds in a polyphonic view, frozen as a series of notes that extend from the bottom low-frequency area to the top high-frequency area. Now we can change a single portion of a harmonic sound, such as one note in a piano chord, without affecting

the others. Any sound may be removed, tuned, stretched or have its volume changed.

We realized that this new ability allowed us to find and manipulate any portion of the sound in a given instant of time. So, let’s say that there was a quartet playing, and the trumpet solo was not loud enough. It is possible to find those notes and selectively make them louder by increasing the size of the notes, without changing any other sounds. Even the harmonic portions of a sound appear as separate tones that also may be changed, to preserve the overall sound character of the entire note being played. This is very sophisticated, time-consuming work, but the results can be spectacular.

These software programs are very powerful and can also be misused. It takes time, trial-and-error and patience to get the most out of them. But, in our case, Gala has spent years with them and is now very fluent in their use.

I hope that what I have imparted in this article will be useful to those who would like to produce live jazz, or improve the quality of older tapes. **DB**

Producer, engineer and label owner George Klabin fell in love with jazz at the age of 6, when he first heard boogie-woogie. He became an avid modern jazz record collector by age 14. While in college, Klabin was head of the jazz department at Columbia University’s WKCR-FM radio station and produced several shows during 1965–1969, including the Sunday-night program “Jazz Til Midnight.” In 1969 he opened Sound Ideas Studios in Manhattan with violinist Harry Lookofsky, eventually taking over Capitol Records’ abandoned studios and refitting them. For 12 years, the studio recorded such luminaries as James Brown (five albums for Polydor), Walter Murphy (the number-one hit “A Fifth Of Beethoven”), Luther Vandross, Meat Loaf, Janis Ian, Leonard Cohen, Barbra Streisand, Billy Joel, Manhattan Transfer, the Brecker Brothers and Mark Murphy, as well as all the Denon Jazz records of the late '70s and numerous Strata East releases. In 2005, Klabin founded the non-profit Rising Jazz Stars. In 2007, he founded Resonance Records to find and support deserving jazz virtuosos and add to the recorded legacy of important historical figures in modern jazz. Contact him at george@resonancerecords.org.



Pete Karam

Making a Mix Template Keeps You Focused on Creativity in the Studio

In the record-making world, nothing has a bigger effect on how a song will sound than the mix. And in the mix, you have hundreds of choices to make. What kind of reverb to use and how much? How many of the recorded mics should I use on the kit? What's the best combination of those mics? Where should I pan the guitars? Is the voice too loud? Is the solo too quiet? Am I getting all the bass notes?

It's all this that makes mixing my favorite thing to do. The balance of instruments and the

way they are treated can take the recording in as many directions as you can imagine.

I think of mixing as an artistic job, not a technical one. When it comes time to mix, you want to jump right in and be creative and free from the technical world. In order to do that, you have to be organized. Get the technical side out of the way so you don't constantly find yourself stopping to add buses, sends, auxes and effects, and trying to remember what bus is for the drum reverb and what bus is for the vocal delay. And what was that great reverb set-

ting I used last month?

If you find yourself in these types of situations, you should think about making a mix template. It will keep your focus on the song and not the building of your mix session. Over the years I have built, rebuilt and refined my template. It's the starting point for every session I do, and it's an essential part of my mix setup.

A mix template is the foundation of your mix session. In my template, I have effect returns routed and ready to go with reverbs, delays, chorus, etc. Some are mono, some are

stereo. I have auxes set up for sub-grouping instruments. Again, already routed, and in some cases with plug-ins set.

Next, I have my master section, with master faders loaded with my go-to plug-ins and some additional options standing by. All of that is sent to a stereo track, where I print the mix back into the session. Finally, I have several VCA faders set up and labeled.

This template is how I start every mix. It's how I get to the creative part faster. I should note that not everything in my template always gets used. But in my mind, it is better to have it ready than to stop and add more buses, auxes and effects.

Making a template is simple. It's taking what you already do and organizing it into a blank, clean session. You can get a head start by basing your template on a past mix. Just remember to delete the old automation. Your template should be specific to your tastes and workflow. Take what I have as a suggestion to start or modify your own.

To start, I want to organize and name all the buses in the I/O setup. Regardless of which DAW (Pro Tools, Digital Performer, etc.) you're running, the I/O can be the messiest part of mixing "in the box" (entirely within a computer). Keeping it organized will save you from scrolling through a mess of unlabeled buses when assigning sends and routing channels.

In my setup, I have eight mono and four stereo buses for reverb (simply named RVB1, RVB2, etc.) and eight mono and four stereo buses for delay (DLY1, DLY2, etc.). Not all mono buses are for mono effect returns (auxes). I'll use six as mono-to-stereo plug-ins on their respective aux. I also have buses dedicated for chorus, distortion (mono and stereo), sub and micro shift. In addition, I add generic FX auxes (named FX1, FX2, etc.) to customize based on the current mix.

A big part of my workflow is mixing through sub groups, so I add several stereo buses (named DRUMS AUX, BASS AUX, etc.). All my audio will be routed to these sub groups. The sub groups are then sent to the master section (named 2MIX) and finally to a print bus, where I record the mix to a stereo track. While in the I/O setup, I also add additional generic buses, just in case. As you can see, I like having a lot of buses. Anything to avoid the I/O setup during the mix.

After all the buses are named, the next step is to create the aux returns for the effects, sub groups, master section and print track, and also the master fader, VCAs and stereo audio track for printing the mix.

Name everything, route the ins and outs, and solo-isolate everything. I also color-code each channel by type. It makes finding things easier, especially in large sessions. When I have parallel auxes, like the DRUMS and 2MIX auxes, I make a group for each.

Next, you want to add your plug-ins. This is completely based on personal preferences. Going back to old mixes to see what you use most is a great way to do this. For instance, if you always have a vocal sub group with a cer-

existing mix to the current one. It's something I find very useful.

A template is also useful in tracking sessions. Generally, at a recording date, the final mix won't be first in your mind. You are concerned with how the drums sound, the leakage in the piano, why the guitar amp is still buzzing, etc. But all the decisions you make during the recording will ultimately affect the mix, good or bad. ("Fix it in the mix," anyone?)

Your monitor and reference mixes will have a big influence on how the band thinks they are playing, and which take is best. And if the singer isn't happy with their sound, you're in for a long night.

The final mix will be different, but a good

reference mix is essential as you work on the project. It can establish sounds that will carry through to the end. I have worked sessions where the producer has asked to put the drums in a specific space to influence how the drummer plays.

A ready-to-go set-

up that you can quickly import to any session is an invaluable tool to have, especially during a recording session, when time is always tight. When the band loves how they sound, it will bring out their best.

Mix templates are unique to each mixer. I'm constantly updating mine to reflect my current work. Plus, I find the consistency and familiarity from session to session helps me work more efficiently. And most of all, it helps me focus on what matters.

In today's in-the-box world, more and more responsibility is placed on the engineer. You are not just the mixer, but also the assistant, tech, studio manager and owner. So, being able to work efficiently and independently is essential. Having an organized mix setup will not only help you save time—it will help you get back to what you really wanted to do in the first place: mix. **DB**

A ready-to-go setup that you can quickly import to any session is an invaluable tool to have when time is tight.

tain setting, incorporate it into your template. I like having the option to try several things quickly, so I have a bunch of reverbs—short and long, plates, halls and rooms. I do the same with the delay returns. Not every effect is always used, but I still have them in my template. It's all about having the variety to quickly try things out and keep the mix going.

The majority of the sub groups start with no processing, and most of them are treated on a per-song basis. However, with the DRUMS AUX, I usually use some kind of parallel processing. I have a fader dedicated for each treatment.

The sub groups are a great way to treat a change to, say, the horn mix—like if you want to clean up an overall issue or get a certain type of sound on the instruments as a section. For instance, I like to add a touch of compression to the horn mix to help it gel together. Or maybe I have a combination of bass mics and DI and just want it all to sound a bit brighter (I will do that on the BASS AUX group).

Finally, it's on to the master section, where I go with the philosophy, "a lot of a little." I have three 2MIX auxes (clean, compressed, distort), and they blend together to feed the master fader. The master fader has its processing in from the start. It is routed to the stereo mix track. That means I am listening through the track on input. The advantage is it allows me to A-B the old and new mixes, or reference an

Pete Karam is a multiple Grammy Award-winning audio engineer who has worked in and out of recording studios for more than 20 years. He has engineered a wide variety of projects, from albums with Pat Metheny, Ray Charles, John Mayer, Antonio Sánchez, Eliane Elias, Gary Burton and Eric Clapton to movies such as *Team America*, *Hairspray*, *Shrek* and *The Bucket List*. Karam has also worked in TV/radio/web post-production for brands such as Nike, Rolex, Microsoft, Samsung, Listerine, Schick, Xarelto, Abilify, Macy's and T. Rowe Price. He has recorded and mixed numerous Broadway cast albums, including *Hairspray*, *Jersey Boys*, *Leap of Faith*, *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* and *Martin Short: Fame Becomes Me*. Karam has recorded dialogue for animated movies including the *Shrek* series, *Madagascar*, *Piglet's Big Movie*, *The Emperor's New Groove* and *Yes, Virginia*. Visit him online at petekaram.com.



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David Murray's Tenor Sax Solo on 'Flowers For Albert'

In 1994, the Jamaican ska group The Skatalites brought in a number of guest artists for its 30th anniversary album *Hi-Bop Ska* (Shanachie). One was jazz tenor saxophonist David Murray, who played on his own composition "Flowers For Albert." Murray had recorded this in 1974 on his album of the same name, but originally it was done more like an avant-garde bossa nova. For this recording, it was played as a Jamaican ska.

As Murray plays through the chord sequence (I-IV-V in A \flat , with the \flat VII and \flat VI added in) four times, he uses a number of musical elements to build his solo. First, let's consider his note choices. For the first chorus, Murray uses almost no chromatic tones, even when the

non-diatonic chord show up. He does play the C \flat in bar 7, which is the fifth of the F \flat chord, but he uses it as part of an F blues lick (F minor being the relative of A \flat major), so it doesn't sound divorced from the key.

In the next chorus, however, Murray leaves the key of A \flat major and plays more notes relating to E (enharmonic F \flat) when that chord occurs in bar 15. At the end of this chorus, he also gives us a lydian flavor with the D natural on the A \flat chord in bar 17, which sets up the D naturals that happen on the E \flat chord in measure 27. This note would have sounded very dissonant against the D \flat chord, but on these harmonies it sounds sweet. He also brings in the flat-7 of A \flat on the G \flat chord in measures 22 and 30, the final

two choruses, where it is the root note; during the first two choruses he stayed within the A_♭ major scale for this harmony. So, as the solo goes on, he introduces more chromatics.

Murray also puts his extended range to work in helping to move this solo along. Though the first eight bars encompass a span of two octaves, in the next eight he adds another fifth to the top end of that, and for the next eight he takes it up an additional octave-and-a-half and spends much of this chorus up here. For the last eight, Murray brings it down from the stratosphere to wrap things up.

Rhythmic density is a third technique that creates push-and-pull within this improvisation. Murray uses it in conjunction with his range, playing the effects of one off the other. The first chorus is predominantly eighth notes, and in the second chorus Murray plays long strings of 16ths. For the third round, Murray reduces speed and plays notes of longer duration. Because he has jumped up into the upper range of the horn, holding these high notes creates more drama. For the final chorus, as he comes back down in range he also returns to playing dense strings of 16ths.

Another interesting aspect of Murray's solo is his use of anticipation. In the ska rhythm, chords are played on the offbeats by the guitar and piano. This means that the chord for each bar is played on the "and" of 4. Given this, it's surprising how often Murray anticipates the 1, playing on the "and" of 4 and holding into the next bar, as is common in other styles (anticipating measures 7, 19, 21, 22 and 23), since this puts the chord tone of the upcoming chord on

the previous harmony. One reason this doesn't sound jarring is that these anticipations are still diatonic to the key, and so are extensions of the chords. For example, the A_♭ anticipating measure 7, which is the third of the F_♭ coming up, is the ninth of the G_♭ that it is played on, so it's not that "out" of a note.

In fact, Murray's variation of accentuating both chord tones and extensions adds a lot of color to this solo. He will often stress chord tones—such as in bar 21, where he leans on the root of the E_♭ (which, incidentally, was played as the ninth of the D_♭ in the previous bar, anticipating this chord change)—but will also lean on tones more divorced from the underlying harmony. At the very start of his solo, Murray plays the G natural on the A_♭ chord. It's the major seventh, but it's played against the rhythm section stating just the triad. We also get ninths, such as the E_♭ he lands on squarely on the D_♭ chord in the middle of bar 8. We even get an 11th at the beginning of measure 19, which is the root of the key, and so is still an "in" note even though it's a non-chord tone.

Although Murray's solo here is mostly diatonic, he creates tension-and-release by varying how closely related to the chord his melody notes are. And to give it a sense of completeness, he brings the improvisation to a close on the root of both the chord and key on the downbeat of the final measure, which is actually the beginning of the first chorus for the next soloist. **DB**

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



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La Bella Olinto

Spot-on Vintage P-Bass Tone

La Bella's new Olinto Bass is not just your typical P-Bass clone. Using a 1963 P-Bass as its template, every Olinto bass is made to order and handcrafted by master luthier Mas Hino. The body is hand-carved. The flatsawn maple neck is hand-carved. The pickups and strings are hand-wound. This is no cookie-cutter instrument.

When I removed it from its case, I had in front of me a natural wood beauty, with golden hardware and strings (yes, golden strings) and a deep gold-anodized pickguard. I was a bit surprised to discover my tester to be fretless, but that just added to the intrigue and beauty of the instrument.

This customized Olinto featured a hand-selected natural walnut body and a Madagascar rosewood fingerboard. The fingerboard came from stock normally reserved for classical guitars, and its veins were multi-colored and lovely running down the fingerboard—truly an artisanal piece. The neck came from a hand-selected piece of flatsawn maple. That's how it was done back in '63, and flatsawn necks seem to have more warmth than their more stable and brighter quartersawn counterparts, according to La Bella. It's a cliché to say that a bass plays like butter, but believe me, this Olinto is smooth, comfortable and fast.

Let's talk strings. The beauties that came on the Olinto are La Bella 760Gs, wound from golden alloy and covered with white (clear) nylon. The strings were nicely pliable and easy to play, which is saying something when you are dealing with a heavy-gauge string (.060–.115, in fact). These strings had a wonderful warmth, as well as the desired “mwah” you expect from a fretless. They were a bit light on output, but that's nothing a nice off-board preamp or an amp with plenty of headroom can't cure.

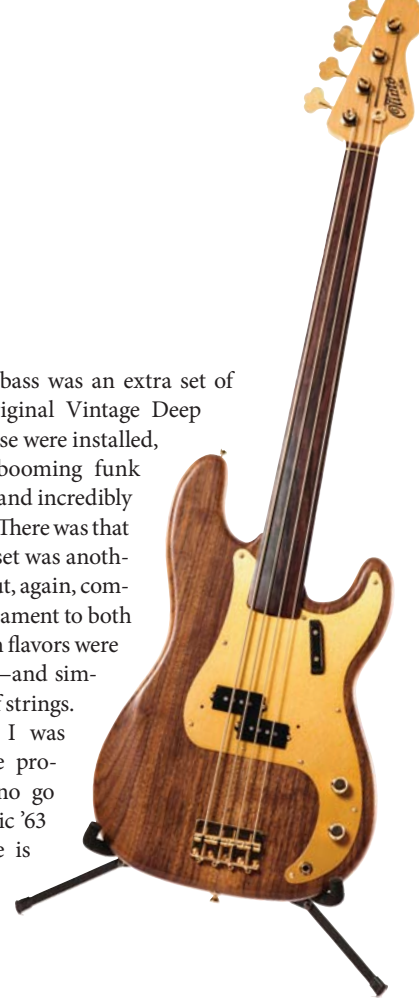
Also included with the bass was an extra set of strings, La Bella's 1954 Original Vintage Deep Talkin' Bass Flats. When these were installed, the Olinto turned into a booming funk machine with hotter output and incredibly punchy attack and response. There was that '63 P-Bass tone—wow. This set was another heavy gauge (.052–.110), but, again, completely playable. That is a testament to both the bass and the strings. Both flavors were fantastic, but very different—and simple to attain with a change of strings.

Regarding the pickup, I was amazed to learn about the process La Bella and Mas Hino go through to recreate the classic '63 split-coil pickup. Every one is handwound by Mas on his Singer sewing machine, using the same slow, scatter-wound technique used in the '60s.

While there are a lot of wonderful P replicas out on the market, La Bella's Olinto really makes a statement.

—Jon Paul

Ordering info: labella.com



Universal Audio Apollo 8p

Track Larger Projects Through Classic Preamp Emulations

The Apollo 8p from Universal Audio is an upgrade to the company's Apollo 8. It's a professional-grade A/D and D/A conversion unit with onboard processing that runs Universal Audio plugins in order to take some of the processing load off of your computer's CPU.

The Apollo line focuses on providing processing power and I/O (preamps and such) in a single unit. The Apollo 8p sports the most current UAD-2 DSP Quad core processing engine and eight preamps (the Apollo 8 had four). But these are not normal preamps—they are made specifically for tracking preamp emulations from Neve, API and Universal Audio.

The Apollo 8p has redesigned A/D and D/A conversion, giving the unit an increased dynamic range as well as lower Total Harmonic Distortion. Upgrades have been made to the front panel, with new features such as alt speakers, dim, mono functions and input and output monitoring capabilities.

All Apollo units come with the Console software, a virtual mixer that is used for tracking sessions and sits between your hardware and your DAW. Put your favorite tape emulation, tube preamps and EQ plug-ins on a channel. Then, route your reverb to the monitor sends, and save all your settings and routing configurations for later use. The Console software is a handy piece of software that should save you time in the long run.

I currently have an Apollo Duo and was sent two Apollo 8p models to test-drive. For the first time, I was able to try my hand at linking multi-



ple units together. You can connect up to four Thunderbolt Apollos and six UAD-2 devices total. By simply connecting the units together via a Thunderbolt cable, the Apollos are able to self-adjust the slave/master settings and automatically link themselves together. There is no messing around in software/hardware menus trying to assign slave and master settings; the units figure it out and adjust themselves. At most, I had to reboot the computer when trying different configurations of chaining in order for all the settings to take. And once they are all linked, all the units and processing cores show up automatically in the UAD Meter and Control Panel program on your computer, so you can monitor whatever load you are placing on the unit via plugins.

Picking up where the popular Apollo 8 left off, the Apollo 8p is an amazing piece of engineering.

—Matt Kern

Ordering info: uaudio.com

Samson SR450/SR550 Headphones

Accurate, Detailed Reproduction

Samson has been providing audio solutions for more than 25 years, offering innovation and quality at competitive prices. Recently, the company has been in the process of reworking its headphone line, and the new SR450 and SR550 models are the beginning of this effort. Considering their extremely attractive price tags, these headphones deliver impressively accurate and detailed reproduction in a durable and comfortable package.

In moving forward with its headphone line, Samson set some specific goals. According to Sean Meagher, director of marketing, “We want to be taken seriously as a headphone brand.” Samson strives for a flat reference sound on all its headphone models.

The SR450 and SR550, which list at \$29.99 and \$39.99, respectively, share the same specifications and utilize the same internal components. The main difference is that the 450s are an on-ear design, while the 550s provide an over-the-ear fit. They are both constructed from lightweight, durable, flexible plastic that conforms to the shape of your head for comfortable extended use. On the inside are 40mm drivers with rare earth magnets that produce a full-range 20Hz–20kHz frequency response.

Both models fit nicely and are reasonably comfortable, with leather cushioned ear pads. Although I personally prefer the 550, the choice would certainly be up to the individual user. Over-the-ear phones also offer superior isolation from outside noise as compared to on-ear models.

Both the 450 and 550 performed surprisingly well for such low-priced headphones. The tonal reproduction is extremely flat, without the bass accentuation and treble harshness that are common on many budget-priced headphones. Subtle details come through nicely, and they can be worn for extended periods without experiencing ear fatigue. Even though they share identical specs, I found that the SR450 and SR550 actually sound different, with the 450s producing slightly more bass response. This is due to the variance in the cup size and placement on the ear.



Samson markets the SR450 and SR550 as entry-level phones for studio and mobile use. At these prices, you would be hard pressed to find a better option.

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: samsontech.com

Zoom UAC-2 USB 3.0 Audio Converter

Big Studio Sound, Small Box

Zoom’s UAC-2 Audio Converter is a portable, high-resolution two-channel interface that features top-shelf components and USB 3.0 speed. The UAC-2 is part of the company’s second generation of recording interfaces, following the TAC line—one of the industry’s first interfaces to feature Thunderbolt connectivity.

USB 3.0 capability is at the heart of the UAC-2, providing the ability to run at resolutions up to 24-bit/192kHz with almost no discernible latency. USB 3.0 is 10 times faster than USB 2.0 and runs six times faster than FireWire. In addition, it allows the UAC-2 to operate on bus power alone, with no need for external power. The UAC-2 uses high-quality Burr Brown PCM 4202 analog-to-digital converters and AKM AK4396 digital-to-analog converters along with 4x upsampling to assure clean, noise-free audio.

The UAC-2 lives up to its plug-and-play promise. Connect the device via the included USB cable to your USB 3.0-equipped computer, install the drivers and you are ready to record. The UAC-2 is also compatible with older USB 2.0 devices. The interface will operate with your favorite DAW software, and it comes bundled with a copy of Cubase LE8.

According to Zoom Vice President of Brand Engagement Micah Eberman, simplicity, versatility and speed/low latency were key considerations when designing the UAC-2. Its front panel is straightforward,



with two combo XLR/TRS inputs. There is also a Hi-Z switch for connecting instrument-level devices, and even a MIDI in and out port. On the output side, there is a volume control for the monitor outs and a headphone jack with its own volume, as well. The ability to monitor the audio directly from the interface offers latency-free listening, which is absolutely critical when recording. The UAC-2 can also be connected to an iPod utilizing an adapter cable and external power supply.

I found the quality of the recorded audio to be extremely good on the UAC-2 and was impressed with its accuracy and ease of use. Available for a street price of \$249, the UAC-2 is a solid all-in-one solution for home recording and mobile applications.

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: zoom.na.com

RECORDING SCHOOL Toolshed > GEAR BOX

1. USB Mic

Audio-Technica has released the AT2020USBi cardioid condenser USB microphone featuring iOS compatibility. Modeled after the AT2020, this digital-output mic features an A/D converter to deliver high-resolution articulation and intelligibility that's suitable for home studio recording, field recording, podcasting and voiceover use. **More info:** audiotechnica.com

2. Fully Loaded Interface

Steinberg's UR242 audio interface features DSP power, class-compliant support for iPad, MIDI input/output, studio-grade converters and discrete Class A analog D-PRE microphone preamplifiers. The unit comes with a free Cubase AI download, providing a comprehensive set of tools for recording, mixing and editing audio. **More info:** steinberg.net

3. Dynamic Phrase Synth

The kaossilator 2S from Korg has been redesigned to feature unlimited undo/redo functionality and the ability to export multi-track audio data for immediate use within Ableton Live for a seamless production interrelationship. The palm-sized synthesizer/loop recorder, which features a touchpad interface, makes it possible for serendipitous phrases and sudden ideas to be easily incorporated into song production. **More info:** korgusa.com

4. Mixer-Controller

Akai Professional's MIDImix is a compact, high-performance mixer that also has the ability to control a user's DAW. The MIDImix includes eight individual line faders and a master fader, 24 control knobs arranged three per channel, and one-to-one mapping with Ableton Live. **More info:** akaipro.com

5. Smart Monitoring

Genelec's 1234 Smart Active Monitoring System is designed to achieve accurate and powerful sound reproduction in demanding recording and mixing environments. It has a system frequency response from 29Hz to 21kHz and is capable of delivering 125dB SPL at 1 meter through a combination of efficient Class D amplifiers. The 1234 SAM is supplied with a RAM XL remote amplifier module. **More info:** genelecusa.com

6. Suite Speakers

IMS Technologies' Christopher Speakers are three-way system mastering speakers featuring a transmission-line design. They use extra-large magnets and large voice coils for accurate audio reproduction. **More info:** imstechnologies.net



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The LACM Summer Jazz Camp Big Band performs with trombonist Andy Martin.

COURTESY LOS ANGELES COLLEGE OF MUSIC

LACM Offers Large Scope, Small Classes

SIZE IS ONE OF THE MANY FACTORS THAT prospective students consider in their search for a post-secondary music school. For those who fear getting lost in a large, impersonal institution, Dave Pozzi, the dean of faculty and students at the Los Angeles College of Music (LACM), believes his school in Pasadena, California, has no equal.

“In some classes, teachers outnumber the students,” Pozzi said, citing a horn band course with seven instructors and three students. “Our average student/teacher ratio is three to one.”

Housed in two buildings near the Foothills Freeway in historic Old Pasadena, LACM provides students close proximity to Los Angeles’ sprawling music community, with its myriad opportunities, in a small-scale setting.

“Because of that smaller student body, the learning environment at LACM is an ideal space for students to connect with and be known by their teachers,” added Jerry Watts, who chairs the bass department.

Founded in 1996 as the Los Angeles Music Academy, LACM has 160 students enrolled in four programs: bachelor of music, bachelor of arts, associate of arts and a one-year diploma program. The LACM Online program offers guitar and drum certificate courses, and the school also runs summer and weekend programs with specific concentrations.

Approaching its 20th anniversary, the school has recently undergone widespread expansion, adding concentrations in brass/woodwinds, songwriting and the business of music to existing majors in bass, guitar, drums, vocals, music production and recording, and composition for visual media. Significant new hires include Grammy winner David Joyce as

vocal department chair, former ASCAP executive Ron Sobel as music business advising chair and longtime Norah Jones collaborator Adam Levy as head of the guitar department.

After living and teaching in New York City for a decade, Levy said one of the factors that attracted him to LACM was the way the school integrates individual instrumentation study. “There is lots of cross-pollination in the classes,” Levy wrote in an email. “That gives all students a chance to appreciate the perspective of other instrumentation and vocalists, and to make music in the types of situations they’re likely to encounter later as working professionals.”

Since joining the school last fall, Levy has staged master classes with jazz guitarists Anthony Wilson, Doug Wamble and Jeff Parker, and exposed students to a range of other players, including Maroon 5’s James Valentine.

For Joyce, who has worked as a studio singer and producer with musicians like Natalie Cole, David Byrne and Burt Bacharach, the attraction to LACM was the opportunity to focus on artistry.

“My first take when this offer came up was, ‘I don’t want to just turn out new candidates for *The X Factor*,’” Joyce said. “I want to help turn out artists with different areas of expertise.”

Another goal of his is to expand the jazz focus at the institution.

“I knew that jazz was already a big part of LACM, largely because of Tierney Sutton’s position on the faculty,” said Joyce, “but I want to go beyond that to bring in jazz ensemble classes and set really high standards in terms of artistic integrity. I look for singers who are really open to learning and motivated to bring artistry to everything they do.” —James Hale



Educators Dr. Marcello Cavazos (left), Joseph Strohl and Dr. Jeremy Earnhart with Music & Arts’ Vincent Chiappone.


COURTESY YAMAHA

Horn Repair Program: Yamaha Corporation of America has donated more than \$66,000 worth of wind instruments in need of repair to the Arlington Independent School District in Arlington, Texas. The district is offering the first high school program in the country to provide students with professional-level, hands-on instruction in refurbishing instruments. Yamaha donated mellophones, trumpets, sousaphones, saxophones, a marching tuba and a trombone to support the program, which is a public-private partnership between the school district and band-and-orchestra retailer Music & Arts. Initially, the program will be housed at Bowie High School and will eventually move into the district’s new \$32 million fine arts center. **More info:** usa.yamaha.com

Potter at New Trier: The Chris Potter Big Band will headline the 33rd Annual New Trier Jazz Festival on Feb. 6 at the school’s campus in Winnetka, Illinois. The ensemble, which consists of some of New York’s finest creative musicians, will join Potter in performing the saxophonist’s original compositions for large ensemble. New Trier’s advanced jazz ensemble will play a set to open the concert following the academic portion of the day-long festival. **More info:** ntjazz.com

Top Rating: Jazz St. Louis, known for its free educational programming and student enrichment programs, has received a four-star rating for exceptional non-profit management. The analysis was conducted by Charity Navigator, a national evaluator of non-profit organizations. Since 2000, more than 170,000 elementary, middle and high school students have been touched by one of the many aspects of Jazz St. Louis’ comprehensive programming.

More info: jazzstl.org

A man wearing a dark suit, a dark hat, and sunglasses is playing a gold saxophone. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the instrument and his hands against a dark background.

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Terri Lyne Carrington

Drummer, composer, producer and Grammy winner Terri Lyne Carrington bedrocks her forward-looking musical output with an exhaustive knowledge of the roots and branches of jazz, world music and technology. She plays an array of instruments on her new CD, *The Mosaic Project: Love And Soul* (Concord). This is her first Blindfold Test.

Ali Jackson

"Ali Got Rhythm" (*Amalgamations*, Sunnyside, 2013) Jackson, drums; Aaron Goldberg, piano; Carlos Henriquez, bass.

It's swinging hard. Something in the ride cymbal pattern reminds me of Ali Jackson. I love his forward motion on the beat. It doesn't feel rushed, but it's real edgy. I tend to play more behind the beat than that, but I appreciate when somebody does it well. Usually I'd rather listen to something that was done when the style was fresh, cutting-edge, pushing a boundary, but musicians who preserve a style from another time period are playing an important role. 3½ stars overall; 4½ for Ali, because I could pick up his ride cymbal.

Kendrick Scott

"Never Catch Me" (*We Are The Drum*, Blue Note, 2015) Scott, drums; John Ellis, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Mike Moreno, guitar; Taylor Eigsti, Fender Rhodes; Joe Sanders, bass.

The toms and snare sound like Kendrick Scott, but the bass drum sounds heavier than Kendrick's. Some things remind me of Eric Harland, and there's a beat I've heard Jamire Williams play—there's a school of drumming that's pulled from the same sources. I enjoyed the counterpoint between the two melodies. I like the piano sound. The drums are featured, but aren't overwhelming. It's nice to hear something in 4. So much music now is in odd time signatures, which I like playing, too—but you have to balance it. I would buy this track for sure. 4 stars. [after] Kendrick's playing has grown. His articulation, ideas, everything feels more intentional.

Jeff "Tain" Watts

"Brilliant Corners" (*Blu*, Vol. 1, Dark Key, 2015) Watts, drums; Troy Roberts, tenor saxophone; David Budway, piano; Neal Caine, bass.

Jeff Watts. From the first beat. Jeff has a distinctive way he plays that swing-funk thing. His triplet is very distinct. With the metric modulations, the tune sounds like either something by [Thelonious] Monk that he arranged or wrote in Monk's style as a tribute. I'm not crazy about the sound of the recording, though it has a certain rawness I like, with everyone playing in a room. At one point, he started playing a hi-hat, and it was overwhelming. I don't know who the tenor player is, but he sounded great. The piano solo was great. 4 stars. The playing is strong enough that I can get past the sound.

Antonio Sanchez

"Fall" (*Three Times Three*, CamJazz, 2014) Sanchez, drums; John Scofield, guitar; Christian McBride, bass.

That's Antonio. That little sound, the bell. [bass solo] During the ostinato, I couldn't tell it was Christian, but the solo tells me. It sounds amazing. I'm used to hearing Sco play more lines; this is a pastoral sound. Antonio is playing very cinematically and texturally. I love the sound of the recording and his drums—full and powerful, so balanced. 5 stars. The song itself sucks you in; it isn't over-arranged, and it's the right combination of players. Antonio masterfully took up the right amount of space without overplaying. What he played was tasty, but also meaningful.



Terri Lyne Carrington

©2015 MARK SHELDON

Lewis Nash

"Y Todavía La Queiro" (*The Highest Mountain*, Cellar Live, 2012) Nash, drums; Jimmy Greene, tenor saxophone; Jeremy Pelt, trumpet; Renee Rosnes, piano; Peter Washington, bass.

That song took me back. At first I wasn't sure it was Lewis Nash, with the fingers on the drums (though I've seen him do that), but I knew it was him when he picked up the sticks. He's steeped in the bebop tradition, and plays it in a way that sounds modern and has an excitement factor. It's the ferocity he puts on the tempo, undeniable, like a train. The track is a drum feature, done live, and it's so well-executed... just great drumming. He's a master at what he does. 4½ stars.

Myra Melford

"First Protest" (*Snowy Egret*, Enja-Yellowbird, 2015) Melford, piano; Tyshawn Sorey, drums; Ron Miles, trumpet; Liberty Ellman, guitar; Stomu Takeishi, bass guitar.

The drummer likes Jack DeJohnette. The sound of the snare makes me think of Brian Blade, though it's a little more on top, and the ride cymbal is brighter. I gravitate to this kind of drumming. It doesn't feel lick-oriented. It feels organic, open, like you're playing off what you're hearing, as opposed to things in your repertoire. When the piece started, the piano soloing with the drums, I thought it would stay in the vein of contemporary classical musicians who also improvise, but then it entered an area where I heard M-Base inflections—someone who has gone through that camp or been influenced by it. I like the loosey-goosey effect in this player's groove as opposed to some others from that school. 4 stars.

Brad Mehldau/Mark Giuliana

"Luxe" (*Mehliana*, Nonesuch, 2014) Mehldau, synthesizers, keyboards; Giuliana, drums, electronics.

I'd never heard Brad play electronic instruments; I'd never know it was him if I didn't know the record. I like it. Some elements remind me of Weather Report, a little Joe Zawinul creeping in. Mark is a strong, well-rounded drummer. I like the minimalism of the groove: I only heard the toms a few times in the piece, and he *really* held my interest with just the kick-snare and a hi-hat in the pattern, [keeping] a relentless feeling to the groove while improvising inside of it. His choices never took away from what's making me dance to the track. I like the '70s lope that pops into the beat. 4 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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