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# WAYNE SHORTER A FINAL INTERVIEW

Eric Reed Kendrick Scott Dave Liebman Blindfold Test



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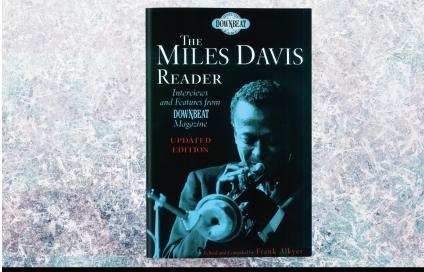
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**ON THE COVER** 

## 22 Wayne Shorter

#### A Final Interview

BY MICHAEL JACKSON

Sadly, the formative giants of jazz are passing the torch and joining the ancestors. But such cliché and dwelling on pantheons wouldn't interest the late Wayne Shorter. Thus, don't unduly mourn Shorter's transition, which occurred on March 2, at the age of 89, after an extended period of ill health. Instead, celebrate his terra firma triumphs, while squinting at the night sky, awaiting the explosion of a supernova.

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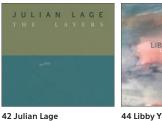
61 2023 International Jazz Festival Guide



"Does the water take the shape that the fish makes, or does the fish make the shape that the water takes?" the perpetually searching maestro said in one of his last interviews. Cover photo by Jimmy and Dena Katz



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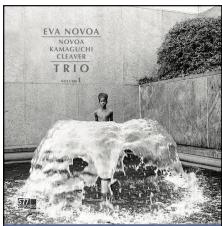


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First Take > BY JOSEF WOODARD

## An Inspired Traveler's Finalé

NEWS OF JAZZ TITAN WAYNE SHORTER'S passing triggered shockwaves of remorse and reminiscence around the jazz world, and wherever art matters. Shorter found himself in high-profile and world-traversing settings during his storied musical life, as a central force in the mid-'60s Miles Davis Quintet (arguably the finest quintet in jazz history) and then in the louder yet artistically profound Weather Report (arguably the greatest "fusion" band in history). Early work with Art Blakey, various and sundry solo projects over 60 years and signature cameos with Steely Dan and Joni Mitchell were also components of his planaverse master plan.

Still, though hugely influential as a composer, player and creative thinker, Shorter eluded any easy description or professional strategy. He maintained a calm humility and an aura of detachment through the public glare. He was a "mysterious traveler," to quote his title composition of the classic Weather Report album.

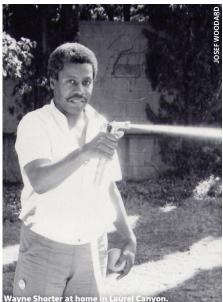
hamlet of Santa Barbara, and Shorter being on Shorter's youthful comic book fixation. the very short list of world-class jazz musicians calling Los Angeles home since the 1970s, we he would soon stop performing. While his connected for interviews on numerous occa- normally upbeat and mischievous spirits sions. The meetings took place at his house off were somewhat muted, he remained not only Laurel Canyon Boulevard, not far below Frank exuberant but excited about his grand proj-Zappa's hilltop compound, and later, at the ect-in-progress, then taking shape in his maghouse he shared with his wife Carolina in the ical music room. Hollywood Hills.

Canvon interview. He posed as his mother and I was dazzled by the West Coast prewet."

Years later, in the Hollywood Hills, I soon after takeoff, killing his second wife, Ana that makes someone else feel comfortable." Maria, and his niece.

were usually timed with forthcoming releases - Weather Report's Sportin' Life, Phantom Navigator, the masterful High Life, Footprints *Live!*, *Without A Net* — but Shorter was never one to stick to a script or play by the promotional rules of any system, instead choosing his

Our final meeting, in 2018, was on the cusp of the three-disc Blue Note album Emanon -



Being based in the Southern California a package including a graphic novel, echoing

At the time, Shorter's health was failing and

It was his first opera, which became ... I took the accompanying backyard photo- (Iphegenia), in collaboration with Esperanza graph of Shorter, grapefruit in one hand, water- Spalding. The genre-defying and inventiveing nozzle in the other, at the end of a Laurel ly meta-minded opera premiered late in 2021, yelled from the living room, "Wayne, watch miere in Santa Monica, a year later. Wayne, the what you're doing! You're getting the paper opera composer, had finally basked in the most appropriate spotlight.

In 1987, Shorter spoke about the imporshowed Shorter the photograph, recently redis- tance of being creatively free-spirited and resiscovered. He smiled wistfully and said, "Oh, tant to complacency: "If you're comfortable, yeah, it was before TWA happened. I remember you're not really progressing, going through that little jacket." He was referring to the trag- growing pains. You have an element that's ic JFK-to-Rome TWA flight, which went down always conducive to placing you in a certain era

I heard Shorter's 21st century free-spirited The ostensible reasons for our interviews quartet at the Panama Jazz Festival in 2013, where health issues sent him briefly to the local hospital. But he still performed, playing with focused fire and his usual searcher's probity. His musical muse pulled him ever forward, into new horizons and ever-evolving perspectives.

In 2018, Shorter offered up a succinct life own ever-curious, ever-changing swirl of ideas. axiom: "I like to think about, 'There's no such thing as a beginning or an end. It emerges."

It's fitting. Wayne Shorter has emerged. DB

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#### Chords ි Discords

#### Lovin' Lakecia I

Thank you very much for turning the lamplights and my attention on to alto saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin in DB's February issue. Not familiar with her and her music, I became curious and got the chance to see her live at Bonn's wonderful Harmonie Music Club yesterday evening. It was one of the best concerts I have attended in recent times. She was everything that Frank Alkyer's online Editors' Pick review and the magazine's portrait promised — and much, much



more. Her band, especiallv drummer EJ Strickland. was fantastic. The range and intensity of the music was boundless and impressive, as was her stage presence and the way she dealt with the audience and communicated her musical vision, sociopolitical issues and gender agenda. By the way: I brought my copy of DB's February issue to the club. she signed it and vowed: "I haven't seen it yet!"

CLEMENS ZAHN COLOGNE, GERMANY

#### Lovin' Lakecia II

J. SCOTT LANE VIA EMAIL

BRYAN AAKER VIA EMAIL

Lovin' Keith, Too

saw Keith 12 times total.

Aardvark Appreciation

Reading the article on Lakecia Benjamin, who I had listened to before, made me rush to hear her new work (and get introduced to Terri Lyne Carrington, too) and donate to her music through Spotify. I learned to read sheet music and started playing alto sax during the pandemic, but listening to Benjamin is like hitting a few tennis balls and trying to relate to Serena Williams. Same instrument, same rules, vastly different entanglements and denouement.

Michael Jackson, I wanted to write and

thank you for your great work in my new

DownBeat (February). Keith Jarrett is such a great artist and truly important to us listeners. I personally saw him in nearly every

iternation he created. I even sat next to him

while Dennis Russell Davies performed one

of his solo piano pieces (In The Light era). I

chestrator. It's hard to think he is not perform-

ing anymore, but it's easier now that you've

allowed us to hear his most recent thoughts.

Thank you so much for assigning Frank-

John Hadley to write the feature story on my

Aardvark Jazz Orchestra in the March issue

of DownBeat. Frank did a marvelous job cap-

turing the essence of the band and our music as we celebrate our 50th year. Having na-

tional recognition is very much appreciated,

Solo, duet, both guartets, trio and as or-

especially in such a venerable publication as yours.

MARK HARVEY MUSIC DIRECTOR THE AARDVARK JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### Oh No, Breau

It's obviously Lenny Breau — no "x" at the end, as published in the Blindfold Test (February DownBeat). He's a Canadian treasure, and we take his name being spelled correctly very seriously. Perhaps too many holiday parties at the expense of proofreading.

As usual, however, lots of good reading in the February issue, particularly the article on Ahmad Jamal. He's a particular favorite of mine.

GERALD BAILIE OTTAWA, CANADA

#### **U.K–Chicago Connection**

Here in the U.K., many of us listen online to Late Night Chicago Radio with Denny Farrell. His laid-back, laconic style is so reminiscent of those Voice Of America broadcasts by Willis Connover way back in the 1950s — only hipper! I'd love for DownBeat to do a feature on him. His choice of music is exquisite.

LANCE LIDDLE BEBOP SPOKEN HERE

#### **Corrections & Clarifications**

In the February issue, our Eliane Elias feature said the Bossa Nova was born in Bahia, Brazil. It was born in Rio de Janiero. Also, Elias clarified that the late Chick Corea truly gave her a gift when he performed on her Grammy-winning album *Mirror Mirror*.

Have a Chord or Discord? Email us at editor@downbeat.com or find us on Facebook & Twitter.



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## Cory Wong's Funky Pep Rally

modern day practitioner of the "chanking" rhythm guitar method developed by James Brown sideman Jimmy Nolen — championed by The Meters' Leo Nocentelli and carried on by Nile Rodgers, Paul Jackson Jr., Dean Brown, Hiram Bullock and John Scofield (who actually recorded a funky instrumental called "Chank" on A Go Go, his 1997 collaboration with Medeski, Martin & Wood) — Minneapolis-bred Cory Wong is less interested in showy single-note flurries than solid pocket playing.

"When I was young, I was playing high-velocity, energetic punk rock music and ska music," he said. "My favorite bands as a kid were Green Day and Blink 182. They played with so much force. I remember videos of Green Day, just watching Billie Joe Armstrong really hammering his guitar, his arm moving up and down super fast. Or going to see punk bands like Rancid hitting hard and going fast. And if you watch the way that I play now, it's kind of like somebody from a punk rock band playing Nile Rodgers or Prince guitar parts."

You can hear that aggressive, clean-toned Stratocaster attack on Wong's recently released *The Power Station Tour*, a live document from a 2022 tour with his ultra-tight, nine-piece horn band. A cursory listen might strike some old-school funk fans as a present-day take on Average White Band, The Brecker Brothers Band or Tower of Power. But the pristine, tightknit sound is only part of the package with a Cory Wong show. In concert he stalks the stage on spidery legs with unbounded energy, mouth agape, like an exuberant cheerleader at a funky pep rally. Add in the element of balloons (with strobing lights inside) being tossed around the crowd, like at a recent Brooklyn Bowl gig, and you've got a real rave.

"I've always been an entertaining guy," said the 38-year-old guitarist-composer-producer-bandleader. "And when I play live, I feel like I'm somewhat of a conduit for the general public to get an idea of what guitar music or instrumental music is. I'm giving them music with different chord changes than they're used to or different rhythms and types of melodies and chord extensions than they may have heard. So I'm kind of a gateway to jazz for some people. And then on the other side, I'm being a gateway for the jazzers into the idea of entertainment. Because a lot of jazz folks just get up and play their music and they don't think about it in terms of a show that gets put on. And I feel like I can really come with an entertainment value that's also a little more purposeful in the way that it's presented. Because the whole thing for me is that it's just a total blast to play."

A member of the extremely popular and slightly off-beat collective Vulfpeck, Wong also fronts the offshoot group The Fearless Flyers (with Vulpeck bassist Joe Dart, Snarky Puppy guitarist Mark Lettieri and drummer Nate Smith). But of late he has been enjoying some extended road time fronting his namesake group, which has grown to 12 pieces.

A product of the fabled Minneapolis music scene, Wong grew up with the sounds of Jesse Johnson, Morris Day and the Time, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis and, of course, Prince. In fact, he had a memorable encounter with The Purple One that may have sent him on his current musical path. As he recalled, "I was playing in this group called Dr. Mambo's Combo down at a club called Bunker's in downtown Minneapolis, and one night we got word, 'OK, Prince is coming down. He wants to see how everybody plays.' So I'm playing, I see him walk into the room and then I really start digging into my Prince thing, trying to sound just like him. And (drummer) Michael Bland and (bassist) Sunny T, who are the rhythm section of Prince's New Power Generation, both kind of look at me and go, 'Hey, knock it off!' And I'm like, 'What do you mean?' And Michael says, 'If Prince came down here to listen to somebody sound like Prince, he'd just get up here and play. So quit trying to sound like him and start sounding like you.'

"And that was interesting to me," he continued. "It sort of gave me permission to do my own thing. So I leaned into it. I'm doing my clean Strat sound, doing the double-stop thing, doing the really rhythmic, percussive thing, like Nile Rodgers meets punk rock. And after I get off the stage, Prince comes up and shakes my hand and he says, 'Wow, you got a really nice sound ... a unique sound. Nice job. Keep it up.' And still to this day, any time that I have a bad day thinking about my guitar playing, if I'm sick of hearing myself, I just think back to that moment that was kind of a catalyst to really help me discover my sound."

After his youthful infatuation with Green Day and punk music, Wong drifted into a deep Pat Metheny phase that lasted through his college years. "I spent so much deliberate practice time learning the Metheny thing," he said. "I wanted to be Pat Metheny." But he also checked out John Scofield, Joe Pass and George Benson. Today Wong's style is a composite of all those players along with the Minneapolis funk style he came up playing and bits and pieces of what he culled from his father's massive record collection while growing up. "He had the entire CTI catalog, the entire ECM catalog, a lot of classic Blue Note albums. He had all kinds of jazz fusion stuff. ... I found it all so interesting because it had a similar energy to the music that I was really into.

"So it's been a journey over the last maybe seven years of honing in my voice on the instrument and trying to continue to develop it and mature it and make sure that it doesn't become a meme of itself. Because sometimes when you have something that's very signature, sometimes it can all of a sudden, after many years of doing it, begin to sound like a parody of itself."

Aside from hitting the road with his band, playing 150 concerts a year, the guitarist also hosts his *Wong Notes* podcast, where he interviews other guitarists he admires. There are 70 episodes, to date, available on Spotify, Apple and Google.

"These guys are my heroes, and there are questions that have been burning in my brain since I was a teenager," he said. "And to have a podcast now, I finally get to ask them."

-Bill Milkowski





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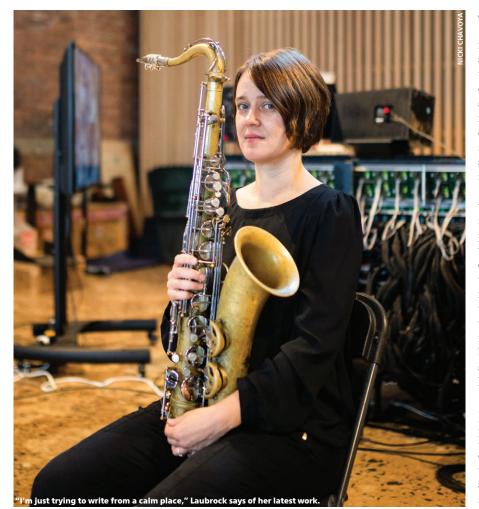
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## Ingrid Laubrock's Quiet Place

**THE LINES BETWEEN JAZZ AND CLASSICAL** used to be more stark, but they were never seamless — even before composer and theorist Gunther Schuller coined the term "Third Stream" in a 1957 lecture at Brandeis University, attempting to will into existence a new style that combined classical orchestration with jazz improvisation.

In the 21st century, musicians move freely between realms, playing in orchestras or string quartets sometimes and in jazz ensembles other times, and improvisation (or "indeterminacy," to use John Cage's preferred term) is embraced in almost all musical genres. Ensembles like Alarm Will Sound, Brooklyn Rider, Wet Ink and Yarn/Wire make music that, heard without preconceptions, could be avant-garde jazz or modern composition or some mix of the two.

Saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock, born in Cologne, Germany, but a resident of New York for 15 years, lives in the blurry zones between genres. In addition to her own wide-ranging catalog as a leader, she's played with a broad spectrum of others, including Anthony Braxton, Nate Wooley, the British post-jazz group Polar Bear and even legendary U.K. punks Crass. She looks for fluidity and openness from collaborators and from herself.

After arriving from London in 2008, Laubrock made her name with small groups like Paradoxical Frog, a collective trio with pianist Kris Davis and drummer Tyshawn Sorey, and Anti-House, a quintet featuring Davis, guitarist Mary Halvorson, bassist John Hébert and drummer Tom Rainey. Halvorson, Davis and Rainey (to whom she's married) would become crucial collaborators, each playing in the others' ensembles and developing a collective aesthetic of barbed melodies, sudden harmonic lurches and unpredictable, but still somehow cyclical, rhythms.

Then, in 2018, she released *Contemporary Chaos Practices* (Intakt), featuring two extended compositions for the EOS Chamber Orchestra and four soloists: Laubrock, Halvorson, Davis and trumpeter Nate Wooley. The ensemble featured nearly three dozen instrumentalists and eight vocalists, and required two conductors. That was followed by 2020's *Dreamt Twice, Twice Dreamt* (Intakt), a double disc on which the same five compositions were interpreted by EOS and by a six-member group including violin, accordion, keyboards, harp and electronics.

"I feel like it is good to have pretty specific notation in place for some things to get the full amount of color," Laubrock says of working with the orchestra. "If I'm writing for a large group of classically trained musicians, I really notate a lot, and the improvisations are guided by hand signals. ... The challenge is kind of bridging it so it doesn't just sound like, here's a saxophonist playing over a classical orchestra, but to integrate that sound world more into my own sound and make it a little bit more seamless."

When assembling the musicians for these two albums, Laubrock worked with violinist Erica Dicker, "an amazing violinist, a principal violinist in this case, who lives between two worlds; she works on Anthony Braxton's projects." Once Laubrock had a list of players she wanted, they devised a questionnaire to determine their degree of flexibility: "We knew they were great contemporary classical musicians, but we also wanted to make sure they were open to improvisation and open to explorations of sound, because not all contemporary classical musicians are. ... It's important to me that there is not this kind of feeling of hierarchy."

Laubrock's new album, *The Last Quiet Place* (Pyroclastic), is performed by a small group with Brandon Seabrook on electric guitar, Michael Formanek on bass, Rainey on drums, Mazz Swift on violin and Tomeka Reid on cello. The music unfolds slowly, like a room that constructs itself as you walk through the door. The strings (often including Formanek's bass) groan and sing, while Rainey's drums tap at everything, testing it for stability. Seabrook's guitar vacillates between Bill Frisell-ish calm and Nels Cline-like disruption. Laubrock's in the middle of it all, not so much leading as dictating the rules of the game and then letting everyone play.

The pieces were originally written for guitar, saxophone, bass and drums, "but I kind of arranged and stretched them and added long sections," she explains. The arrangements are stricter than they seem on first listen; she describes them as giving the band, "a different task on every piece, and I guess the collaboration in a sense is when they improvise parts, that is what they are contributing."

In the press materials for *The Last Quiet Place*, Laubrock talks about seeking calm when composing, but the music retains the complexity of her previous work and even possesses, at times, a nerve-jangling quality. "I don't think I'm actually trying to write calm music," she clarifies. "I'm just trying to write from a calm place, where I allow the music to come to me, similarly to when I'm improvising. It's like I'm in the zone, to talk about it in a sports term. It's quite comparable, where you're strangely still inside, and you have this focus that is coming from a deep and calm place. It doesn't mean that the music can't be dense and multilayered." —*Phil Freeman* 



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**DAVID HAJDU, THE EMINENT BIOGRA**pher, cultural historian, music critic and journalism professor, has heeded T.S. Eliot's dictum that "old men should be explorers."

Toward his self-assigned imperative, Hajdu has generated a satirical novel (*Adrienne Geffel: A Fiction*, W. W. Norton & Co.) and a graphic nonfiction book addressing the parallel lives of three transgressive figures from vaudeville days.

He's also established a consequential oeuvre as a songwriter on three albums, most recently *The Parsonage* (Sunnyside), a poly-genre song cycle sung by Theo Bleckmann and Alicia Olatuja tracing the cultural currents that streamed through a single East Village townhouse over a 115-year timespan. He assigned each song to a different composer, asking them to configure a small chamber ensemble — pianist Dan Tepfer, cellist Erik Friedlander, bass clarinetist Carl Maraghi and bassist Sean Smith — in different combinations as they "refracted and reflected the past to their contemporary sensibilities."

"I've thought and cared about the craft of songwriting since my earliest memories of listening to the radio," Hajdu said. As he approached his 60s, he took up the challenge of applying what thought into action.

"A big benefit is that it helps my writing, my work as a critic and as an educator, because it's deepened my understanding of the creative process and what it takes for the people I'm writing about as a critic to do what they do."

Hajdu pinpointed seeing an old photograph of a hi-fi store in his neighborhood that's now occupied by a phone business as this project's gestational moment. "It was kind of a lightning bolt — that structure reflects the times," he said. "Everyone had hi-fi systems; now everyone has a phone." As he researched buildings sufficiently palimpsestic to sustain a song cycle, Hajdu focused on 64 East 7th St., where, as an NYU undergraduate in the mid-1970s, he'd frequented a popular used bookstore called Books'N Things whose proprietor related a moment when Lou Reed sang in the back of the store with poet Marianne Moore (referenced in Bleckmann's "Lou Reed Was Very Well Read").

"This structure was at the heart of so many moments in New York's cultural, social, political and aesthetic history," Hajdu said. "For some reason, it reflected what was going on at the time while also influencing the city around them, but in a different way each time — all these completely different phases emanating from the same physical space."

Hajdu embarked on the libretto in late 2018, trying "to conjure each era in the cadence and style." After completing it in six months, he presented the texts to the composers, "keeping my fingers crossed that they'd choose the one I secretly wanted them to choose."

As Hajdu had hoped, Regina Carter picked "Sailing To The Sunday School Picnic." Her poignant, ragtime-infused elegy and Tepfer's solo piano improvisation evoke the wreck of a steamboat that caught fire and sank on New York's East River in 1904, when the area was predominantly German. It took the lives of 1,021 people, among them the wife and daughter of the parsonage pastor who'd chartered the doomed steamboat.

Most of the Germans had moved uptown by 1920, when Russia-born Alexander Brailovsky, who ran a print shop and a Communist newspaper behind a stationery store in the back of the building's storefront, was arrested (soon exonerated) after witnesses to a Wall Street bombing that killed 300 people spotted him laughing nearby. Hajdu describes "Ballad Of The Man Who Laughed," scored by Rosnes, as "a vigorous Russian rallying cry."

Fast-forward to 1960, when polymath Black World War II veteran Bill Mackey (partnering with Max's Kansas City owner Mickey Ruskin) opened a coffeehouse called Les Deux Mégots. By 1962, the establishment was hosting poetry readings documented on mimeographed copies of the manuscripts and distributed to its audience. Hajdu's text for "Translation: Two Cigar Butts" collates lines from those 'zines, a process mirrored by composer Ted Hearne, whose sound collage includes sampled and electronically modified recitations by Allen Ginsberg.

By 1964, the premises housed the Paradox (evoked in "East In The Village" by Kirk Nurock), a popular macrobiotic restaurant run on communitarian principles, where Loudon Wainwright worked the cash register and Yoko Ono waited tables and tied herself in a burlap bag in an early performance art piece. By the early '70s, nihilist counterculture currents were ascendent in the form of the Living Light commune, trashed it, as represented in Tepfer's improvisation.

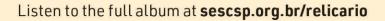
Darcy James Argue's spiky "Glamour And Standing" is a musical analogue to Hajdu's account of the commodification of the area during the 1980s. A few years ago, the building was gut-renovated and on the market for \$18.6 million, a figure that titles the final song.

"This is essentially a 21st century chamber jazz record," said Hajdu, who is currently working on a book about A.I.-generated art and music. "We wanted to have a strain of contemporary adventurism, open-endedness, experimentation. It's a bit of a wiggy project, and all the composers and musicians were up for that." —*Ted Panken* 



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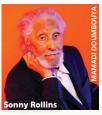
#### Riffs >



**Honor Society:** Composer and orchestra leader **Maria Schneider** will be inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters during its annual Ceremonial on May 24. Founded in 1898, the Academy represents an honor society of the nation's leading creative thinkers. Among the 300 members, there are now 48 members from the field of music, including previous honorees Wynton Marsalis and Henry Threadgill.

**Audio Illuminations:** ECM has launched Luminessence, a new audiophile vinyl-reissue series geared to showcase jewels of the label's deep catalog in elegant, high-quality editions. Launching the series are **Kenny Wheeler**'s *Gnu High* and **Nana Vasconcelos**' *Saudades*, recorded in 1975 and 1979, respectively. <u>ecmrecords.com</u>

**Sonny Sells:** Reservoir has acquired the publishing and recorded rights of **Sonny** 



Rollins. The 92-year-old tenor saxophonist and jazz luminary has recorded more than 60 albums across seven decades and wrote such jazz standards as "St.

Thomas," "Oleo," "Airegin," "East Broadway Run Down," "Tenor Madness" and "Doxy."

reservoir-media.com

#### Modern Jazz Hitmaker: When Burt



**Bacharach** passed on Feb. 8 at the age of 94, he left behind a wealth of music pulled into jazz. According to critic John McDonough, no other modern popular composer

created more hits that became jazz repertoire. JazzStandard.com lists at least four of his tunes. Tom Lord's Jazz Discography also includes "Alfie" (245 recordings), "The Look Of Love" (240), "Close To You" (172) and "A House Is Not A Home" (112).



## **Worldly Jazz Adventuring**

**COMPOSER, PIANIST, ACCORDIONIST AND** bandleader Ben Rosenblum's musical purview is, by nature, a worldly one. Although American jazz is a birthright and central force in his work, the element of travel and cross-cultural influences inform his creative venturing. That much is amply evident on the new album by Rosenblum's Nebula Project, *A Thousand Pebbles*, a tapestry into which sounds and modes from Eastern Europe, northern Brazil and points Afro-Caribbean and Celtic, not to mention his native New York, are integrally woven.

Rosenblum notes that "in some ways, the Nebula Project is my take on the classic hard-bop jazz format pioneered by people like Art Blakey, Oliver Nelson and Clifford Brown/Max Roach. Growing up, these were the records I loved and listened to the most. As I've grown and discovered so many other styles that I connect with, I wanted to create an ensemble that could capture the power and vitality of those hard-bop recordings with the flexibility to bring in sound palettes from a myriad of different world musics and other genres."

While the album's material spans music written a decade ago up through very recently, Rosenblum offers that "the larger narrative is very strongly tied to the experience of the pandemic. Many of the songs deal with nostalgia, and looking back at a time or place that no longer exists, at least not in the same way."

The title piece, "A Thousand Pebbles," is a three-part suite that Rosenblum, who grew up in a half-Christian/half-Jewish household, sees as "a reflection of various childhood experiences, in particular the juxtaposition of going to synagogue and singing hymns in middle school." In other stops along the album's travels, he says, "I imagine 'Catamaran' as a journey away from home, following the internal thoughts of multiple people leaving to start life in a new place."

'The Bell From Europe" is based on a poem

by Weldon Kees that poignantly captures his experience of a changed Europe post-World War II. "During the pandemic, there was so much talk about how the world would never be the same, and I think I couldn't help but tap into that space as I composed and arranged the music for this recording," he says.

Incorporated into the album's concept and end result is a summation of Rosenblum's broadly based musical education and explorations. "Growing up in New York," he says, "I've always been surrounded by global music traditions at the highest level. Early experiences going to hear Indian classical music and dance concerts, Japanese koto ensembles and Brazilian music primed my ear to be always searching for inspiration from different parts of the world.

"One of my favorite albums growing up was Les Mysteres des Voix Bulgares, a collection of Bulgarian folk and polyphonic choir music. I've since gone on to record renditions of music from those albums, and the song 'Bulgares' on the newest album is a composition dedicated to that group." He adds, not incidentally, "When I picked up the accordion, my musical world expanded instantly."

Life and the world are opening up for Rosenblum, who, on the life front, recently got married, and looks forward to touring distant lands.

"It is always a priority for me to bring jazz music to communities that do not have many opportunities to interact with the genre otherwise, and also for me to go to places where I'm exposed to cultures and musics that shape me. It's a dream to collaborate across genres with people from all over the world. It would be amazing for the Nebula Project to work with an Irish uilleann pipe player, a ska singer, a Malian kora player or a Bulgarian gadulka expert.

"The possibilities are endless, and I feel that I am just at the beginning of a long musical journey." —Josef Woodard

## Lucy Yeghiazaryan's Raw Solitude

**NEARLY THREE YEARS AFTER THE WORLD** locked down, artists continue exploring resonances of solitude in their music. On her February release *Lonely House* (La Reserve), Lucy Yeghiazaryan probes acute feelings of disbelief, exhaustion, boredom and sadness, as well as profound changes in self-acceptance, perspectives on aloneness and how she approaches her craft.

"I've made some big changes from pre-COVID to post-COVID Lucy," says the Manhattan-based singer. Allowing those changes to enter every corner of her artistry, she enters a new realm of intimacy and disclosure.

Developed over many months, *Lonely House* features an exposed dialogue between Yeghiazayran and her longtime collaborator, pianist and composer Mike Kanan. Known for deep musical phrasing and a penchant for conversational improvising, Yeghiazaryan reveals another layer of expression on *Lonely House* — one that's equally musical, but more personal. Determined to hold sonic space for her proclivities and imperfections, she finds sound amid silence and evolution in solitude.

"We're living in an age where you can edit out and you can present a falsified product," she says. "And I wanted [this record] to be very raw." The artists rehearsed for months, leaving long stretches between sessions due to the pandemic. But even sporadic interactions proved motivating for Yeghiazaryan, who praises Kanan as "the most cushiony, comfortable accompanist."

After hearing its 1959 rendering on Abbey Lincoln's *Abbey Is Blue* (Riverside), the title track would inspire the entire album. "It has such a heavy mood to it," says Yeghiazaryan. "And it describes the experience of living in an apartment in New York so acutely: What does it feel like when inanimate objects become living somehow when you're all by yourself? I thought, I gotta put out a record."

She began collecting songs that felt related thematically, exploring the myriad emotions she felt while hunkered down in Harlem. "Cottage For Sale" echoes the melancholy mood of discord and separation many couples experienced. "It had been years since I heard a track that made me cry," she says, "but it brought tears to my eyes." When friends, neighbors and colleagues left the city, she grappled with feelings of envy, channeling them satirically through "It's So Peaceful In The Country." Her slow swing delivery of "Easy Street" provides a truthful account of her thoughts when clubs and venues began to reopen.

A false starkness belies layers of activity and intention across *Lonely House*. Yeghiazaryan opted out of using studio booths. "Traditionally, all the big Blue Note records were done in the main room. And I've [recorded] my last couple projects in the main room." After the session, she found she couldn't rely on edits to manipulate the



sound. "Everyone's bleeding into everyone else's microphone — I couldn't even get the sound of the piano pedals out," she says.

But the rawness of each track becomes a comment on the era. Errors and uncertainties, together with a strong desire to reach out and connect with other people, have become an intrinsic part of pandemic culture.

Arrangements solidified over time. "Every time [Mike and I] met, our mood was different and the tunes sounded different," says Yeghiazaryan, "but it slowly settled in." She views their joint approach to arranging as minimal. But even minimalism requires action. And as a result of certain subtleties, surrealism pervades the music.

Of the album's near dozen compositions, few would become gig tunes. "Most of these, I don't perform live," says Yeghiazaryan. "I learned them for the record." Consequently, the music moves at a similar tempo from one track to the next, the most lively being a medium-swing arrangement of "Ill Wind." Admittedly, she felt nervous before the release date. "It's very exposed and I was worried that people wouldn't find it interesting," she says. "I find that a lot of entertainment has to be overly stimulating today to catch any kind of attention." So far, however, album reception has been positive.

"I think the following that I have, as small as it may be, likes me because I don't edit," she says. "I'm keen on presenting vocal performance on a record as if it were live. I'm committed to that cause because the greats who made this music what is was did that. It was raw and it was real. I want to continue the tradition in that sense."

Lonely House signals a new invention of Yeghiazaryan's artistry. "This [record] is the first example of me exploring the lyric and allowing it to influence what I was singing," she says. "This album gave me the opportunity to discover myself as an English-speaking singer, where everything was built around the lyric rather than the other way around."

Through *Lonely House*, Yeghiazaryan invites listeners to reconnect with themselves: "You find a whole new world when you're silent with yourself. You just have to give yourself time to start hearing the things within that silence."

—Stephanie Jones

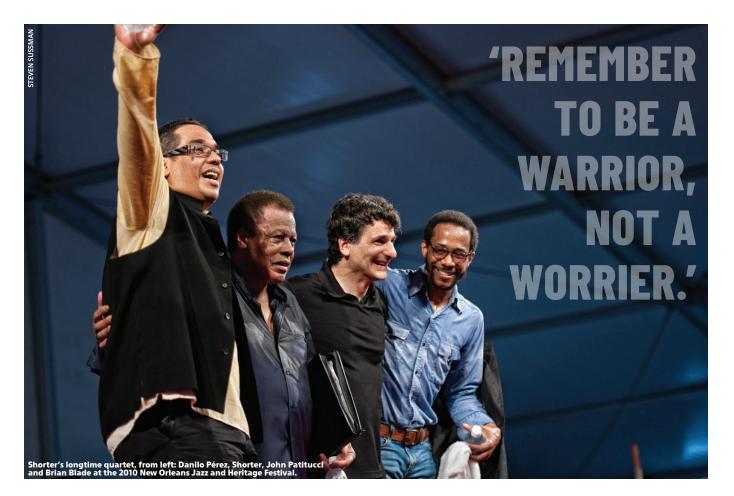




#### Wayne Shorter Story and photo by Michael Jackson Intervention Story and photo Backson Story and photo Backson Story and photo Backson Bac

Sadly, the formative giants of jazz are passing the torch and joining the ancestors. But such cliché and dwelling on pantheons wouldn't interest **Wayne Shorter**, despite the DownBeat Hall of Famer's fascination with mythology.

> is interstellar career threaded through a brief stint with Maynard Ferguson, four formative years with Art Blakey, six with Miles Davis — concurrent to mining a deeply personal (and influential) leader career at Blue Note then fusing global sounds with Weather Report and delving into further synthetic flavors alongside the sonic subtleties of Brazil before cracking his modus operandi even wider with decades of daredevil acoustic improv in the new century, and then an operatic finale. Despite all this, Shorter was, beyond music, fundamentally a humanist. A science fiction freak as a kid in New Jersey, "Mr. Weird" and "Mr. Gone" discovered Buddhism at 40, but had ever been searching for "other ways" to navigate life's puzzles and postulations.



Clues to his unquenchable curiosity can be traced in myriad compositional conceits, pregnant with ominous musing, that bespeak the saxophonist's boundless quest and embrace of rebirth: "Someplace Called 'Where," "More Than Human," "Fee-Fo-Fi-Fum," "On The Eve Of Departure." Thus, don't unduly mourn Shorter's transition, which occurred on March 2, at the age of 89, after an extended period of ill health. Instead, celebrate his terra firma triumphs, while squinting at the night sky, awaiting the explosion of a supernova — to reference one of Shorter's most exploratory, least tethered sessions from 1969.

The following is one of the maestro's last interviews, a phone conversation that began as a discussion of crucial Shorter collaborator and pianist Danilo Pérez for the May 2022 DownBeat cover. DownBeat found Shorter, despite the discomforts of dialysis, to be utterly lucid — contemplating intimate details of his incandescent career — and fearless. Shorter's responses have been edited for space, clarity and continuity.

Michael Jackson: I'm wondering how the premier of your opera *Iphigenia* went? Wayne Shorter: Well, the New York Times and other newspapers ... they used the word "landmark." They even compared it to Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* — [with] the impact, the road that's it's on. So they seem to think it's a doorway into something.

**Jackson:** Well, that will work for you, won't it? And Frank [Gehry, who designed the sets] was in attendance?

**Shorter:** Yeah, he was there at the end, too, taking bows. And the conductor, he was the director of the L.A. Phil at one time, and some other people, I couldn't see them all; we were all on stage together.

#### Jackson: And was it sold out?

**Shorter:** Oh, yeah, sold out. In fact, people were standing outside still trying to get in, waiting for a loose ticket here and there, y'know.

**Jackson:** That's amazing. Must have taken you back, to, well, I was going to say Weather Report days, but that doesn't quite make sense.

**Shorter:** No, this is another hallway, unvisited. ... Before he died, Miles Davis called me. He also wanted to do [an opera] rendition, as if Gil Evans was still around. But he called, asking me to write something ... *Tosca*, the opera *Tosca* and some of the other operas he wanted to get into. Then he passed away.

Jackson: I was thinking back to the first time

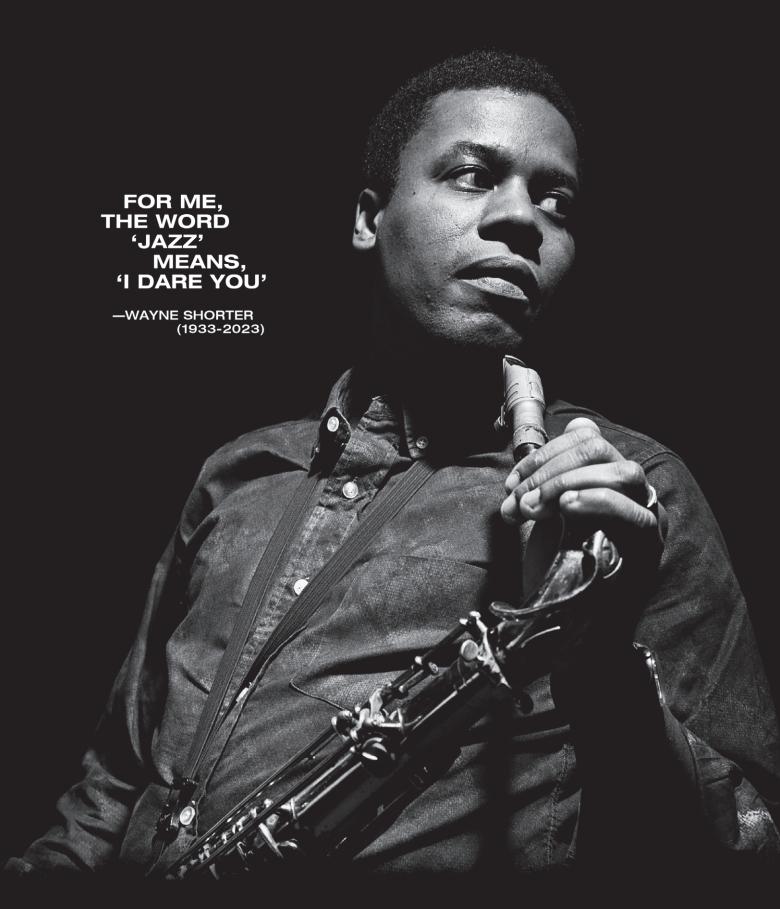
I saw you perform with Weather Report in Manchester, U.K., 1980 ... Jaco [Pastorius], Joe [Zawinul], Peter Erskine, Robert Thomas Jr. I think that was the first time a laser was used for onstage special effect. **Shorter:** Oh, yeah-yeah, I remember!

#### Jackson: Was that your idea?

**Shorter:** The laser? No, all I was into was doing the performance ... just like with Herbie Hancock's "Rockit," those robots they used on the video, that was somebody's idea, a guy from Scotland. Other people tried to take credit, including management, but Herbie reached out beyond the management handcuff. They were against it, but when it was a hit, they were all for it, took their 10 or 15 percent.

**Jackson:** I was but a twinkle in my father's eye during your Jazz Messengers era, but they were some heady days, eh? Art Blakey was a progressive, pushy leader.

**Shorter:** Art and his family knew about a lot of things. "Don't worry about Fidel Castro, watch out for Papa Doc in Haiti," he'd say. We went to Algeria. Things happened there, man, with the French gendarmes and all that, the French colonists. We played a concert, and in the middle, Art went to the microphone and said [*Shorter offers a gruff-voiced Blakey*]



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## **The Newark Flash**

By the time the so-called riots of 1967 engulfed Wayne Shorter's native Newark, New Jersey, the saxophonist had established a life well outside the war zone. A globetrotting 33-year-old, he was working at the pinnacle of the jazz world in Miles Davis' groups and as a leader with a recording contract on Blue Note.

But even as his reputation grew, Shorter never strayed too far from his spiritual roots. For all the serenity of his demeanor and the discipline of his art, his output was imbued with the radical instincts reflected in the events of '67. And while those instincts were sometimes expressed in oblique and epigrammatic terms, their origins were not abstract.

As an African American born in 1933 and growing up in the hardscrabble Ironbound District, he would have seen firsthand the inequities of life beyond the general privations of the Depression. Even as both his parents toiled at blue-collar jobs — his father welding at a factory, his mother sewing for a furrier — both would have been largely shut out from city largesse because of their skin color. The city power structure would not undergo meaningful change until the post-'67 period.

Shorter found refuge — and, perhaps, a kind of rebellion in the satisfaction that expression through the visual arts could provide. He made no secret of his fondness for fantasy, especially superheroes, and he drew them incessantly. He would become a superhero of sorts to legions of fans by painting on an aural canvas, though his drawings were good enough to win a citywide contest that gained him admission to Arts High, a locus of educational innovation.

At Arts High, where he is said to have begun as a somewhat indifferent student, one teacher, Achilles D'Amico, helped change his life. A local legend, D'Amico had an expansive approach to teaching music that was instrumental in Shorter's decision to become involved in the school's rich music program. In it, he could compare notes with like-minded students who went on to fruitful, if lesser-known careers — musicians like saxophonist Harold Van Pelt, who became a stalwart on the R&B scene, and pianist Richie McCrae, who distinguished himself as an exponent of soul-jazz.

Meanwhile, Shorter would be heir to the outsize legacy of another student whose stature would rival his own: Sarah Vaughan. Though she was nearly a decade older than Shorter, he surely would have heard of her exploits at the school, where she was enrolled until her closely watched career began its rapid upward trajectory.

That success could have served as a model. As Shorter entered his teens, Vaughan had already made her mark as a member of Billy Eckstine's vaunted big band. Formed in bebop's early years, the band featured a constellation of the music's most celebrated players, among them Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, whose revolutionary style, musical and otherwise, became a lodestar for the young Shorter. Reshaping his look and sound, he became known for sporting high-bebop fashion with a musical flare to match. At some point, Shorter acquired the moniker The Newark Flash.

Beboppers could be heard around Newark in venues big and small. Most of the marquee names played the 2,000-seat Adams Theatre. Practitioners of this new music also played smaller spots, where they might be freer to indulge their artistic and other appetites than in some of the higher-profile clubs across the river in New York. If the youthful Shorter had the wherewithal, this hipper scene would have been available to him at celebrated spots like Llovd's Manor, on Beacon Street, where Gillespie, Davis and other jazz luminaries sometimes hung their horns.

As a practical matter, Shorter's instincts were most productively nurtured on the bandstand with freethinking local bandleaders who booked dates in New York but leaned heavily on the circuit of spots in secondary cities with bustling scenes, like Newark. Notable among those leaders were the twin Phipps brothers, saxophonist Bill and pianist Nat, who formed the Nat Phipps Big Band, a way station for some of the era's most adventurous musicians. One, trombonist Grachan Moncur III, would later hire Shorter — along with Herbie Hancock, Cecil McBee and Tony Williams - for his own Blue Note album.

Influences beyond the strictly musical were also part of Newark's cultural milieu. Most famously, Amiri Baraka, a direct contemporary of Shorter's, was becoming known around town as a young poet with revolutionary aspirations and a taste for jazz.

Alternately known as Leroy Jones or Leroi Jones, Baraka, who would later contribute to DownBeat, had an interest in cultivating associations with musicians and, well into his later years, could be heard swapping stories with top players between sets in stately venues like the Newark Museum, a world apart from the one in which he and Shorter operated as young men.

Mainstays of that world are long gone, and parts of Newark have never recovered from the events of '67. At the same time, the city has regained some of its jazz luster with the founding of radio station WBGO, new presenting clubs and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, where Shorter appeared in 2017 to receive the key to the city from a representative of Mayor Ras Baraka, Amiri's son.

That a Baraka was mayor was indisputably a sign of progress, and the gesture was a welcome one. But it merely confirmed that if, as Amiri once wrote, "the music reflects the people," then a native son named Shorter did very well by his hometown friends, fans and family. —*Phillip Lutz*  *impersonation*], "Ladies and gentlemen, we are unable to continue the concert because of a certain situation. ..." Art had all these big words. He'd found out they'd raised the ticket price so high, regular Algerians couldn't get in. [In protest] we walked out the dressing room to the cars waiting. It was wall-towall people steaming with anger at us. Art had a Koran under his arm and went under the name Abdullah Ibn Buhaina. They'd say, "What's your name?" He'd state, "Abdullah Ibn Buhaina!"

**Jackson:** Was that during the Algerian War of Independence with France?

Shorter: Yes, 1959, when I got in his band. As Art left the room the promoter said, "You'd better stay in there, they're very angry. We don't know what they're gonna do." Art said to us - [and] I'd just got out of the Army, by the way - he said, "Gentlemen, are you ready to die?" I'd got that Army thing, I said, "Yeah!" And Art said, "Wayne, you walk beside me." They were raising their fists and spitting at us. That night we went to a restaurant and all these little soldiers, walking around with machine guns, they knew who we were, but knew we were Americans. Art had a valet, they detained him at the airport. ... He had a nose like a hook, and they thought he was Algerian. We saw cannons and bombs over the mountains. [Ahmed] Ben Bella fighting for freedom from France ... boom-boom went the bombs!

**Jackson:** Not exactly "halcyon days" with Blakey in the early days then, but that was an organization with a mission.

**Shorter:** Once, we were at the Village Gate and here comes Robert Mitchum and Shirley MacLaine walking in, and Blakey got on the microphone: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are blessed with the company of [composer] Samuel Barber." He'd been standing against the wall unnoticed. A lot was happening then: Leonard Bernstein going to the Five Spot, congratulating Ornette Coleman on accomplishing something musically.

**Jackson:** Hard-living days, though. I recall, I believe from Michelle Mercer's book *Footprints*, something about you and Zawinul — Was it cognac-infused? — falling flat on your faces? And what about that showdown at Slugs' [the notorious New York saloon where Lee Morgan was murdered], where you had recourse to pull out the hammer you kept in your sax case, right?

**Shorter:** That was McCoy Tyner's gig. We were there six nights, and this gang came in from Brooklyn, the doors swinging, you know, like the Wild West. They came in real quiet and lined the walls. I had a hammer

in my saxophone case and a big, *long* screwdriver, and Roy Haynes had these big *long* drumsticks made for the big tenor drums in marching. You can knock somebody out with those drumsticks! And McCoy and Ahmed Abdul-Malik on the bass, had something, too. Roy spoke up, "We know that some people are here to turn the place out. We don't know what the reasoning is, but we're here to tell you, we came prepared." He took those big drumsticks from behind his back, I reached in my sax case, took out this hammer and the screwdriver; next thing we saw the doors were swinging again, they were on their way out.

**Jackson:** But you didn't feel quite out of the woods at the end of the night, if I recall.

**Shorter:** I walked down the street to get a taxi, and I heard footsteps behind me. There's a guy who worked at Slugs, C Sharp, he lived across the street, and on pay night they





mugged him, took his horn, the money, everything. So I got under a streetlight in the rain, and I took the hammer out again and said [*in malevolent voice*], "I'm gonna get me somebody tonight!" Ha-ha! The footsteps disappeared, and I went and got my taxi.

Jackson: "Footprints" could have been "Footsteps." Shorter: All of this fantasy and ideas is how we make metaphors in



the music. We did it a lot in the quartet with Danilo, Brian [Blade] and John [Patitucci]. I'd hear stories about Danilo growing up and Brian, I'd call him "razor blade," he's sharp on the drums, man. And John, he worked on my *Phantom Navigator* album [Columbia, 1986] at Chick Corea's Madhatter Studios. He'd tell us about his family and how his mother knew how to make lasagna.

We'd have dinner at his house with Chick. Chick and I had camaraderie. We never talked about religion — Scientology, Christianity or anything like that. Whenever we saw each other, we'd make musical noises — *oom-cha-gat, da-da, oom-cha-gat.* Yay, Chick! His mother cooked lasagna, too. She'd call him, [*sings*] "Chickie-Chickie-Chick! Chick-ie, Chick-ie!"

We all met at the jam sessions with Tito Puente, the Latin bands, along with Count Basie and all that; there was Chick and Ray Baretto at Birdland and Joe Zawinul would come in off the road from Dinah Washington.

**Jackson:** Dinah was not to be trifled with, from what I've heard — or her father, for that matter. Jimmy Cobb told me once that he was married to Dinah, and I said, "Hmm, I don't see that listed in her Wikipedia bio anywhere." To which Jimmy responded, "Put it this way, whenever I went back to her place and bumped into her father, I had to tell him we were married!"

**Shorter:** Curtis Fuller, the trombonist, told me that when he was working with Quincy Jones' big band, they all went to Dinah's wedding to a young Mexican actor. He was in the movie *12 Angry Men* with Henry Fonda. At the time, that *Flower Drum Song* was a big hit, and all the girls from the musical were at the reception getting around the groom. Dinah walked over into the center of the girls and said to the star, Nancy Kwan, "Aloha, bitch!" Ha-ha! "Get your hands off my man, aloha!" Dinah knew how to swing. If she got angry, she couldn't stop swinging. Her voice, her sentences, they had that musical swing. Miles was like that, too. He didn't talk much, but whatever he said had a swing to it.

Someone would come in the dressing room unwarranted and Miles would say, [*gruff-voiced Miles impression*] "How did *you* get in here? Get him outta here!"

Jackson: I had a similar experience with Jimmy Smith, I was intro-



"Comfort has never sounded better" **Ozzie Melendez** 

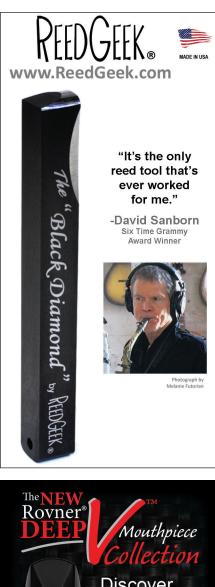
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duced to him in the green room as the guy from DownBeat. He wasn't well, had a newspaper over his head at the time and grunted, "DownBeat? Get the fuck outta here!" Later we spoke on the phone, and he offered, "If I was Miles Davis, muthafucka, I'd shoot you!" Shorter: I knew Jimmy Smith pretty well. He said he would never smoke, drink or get involved with drugs. We flew to Japan for a concert that was cancelled because of a typhoon and had to fly back to the U.S. together. He was smoking and hitting the scotch. On another occasion we were at Ronnie Scott's Club. George Harrison was there, and Roberta Flack. I think Dizzy Gillespie was on the stand with Stan Getz. Jimmy was at the bar holding court, showing people his karate moves. He'd put his foot way up in your face — "Haaaaaa!"

**Jackson:** It didn't matter that you'd met Jimmy before. He was, "You're not Leonard Feather!" Miles was not impressed with hearsay either, so I gather.

**Shorter:** Here's the way Miles would ask about somebody. ... He'd hear about somebody that he should investigate. "Everybody's talking about this new guy on the saxophone. You gotta check this guy out." And Miles would say, "Well that's all right, but can he *see*?" They didn't know what he was talking about.

#### Jackson: Can he scan the dots, right?

**Shorter:** Because everybody who worked with Miles and Gil Evans, that big band stuff, you had to read. Philly Joe Jones could read good. Miles could read. But one night he was talking to Trane at the Blue Coronet in Brooklyn. We were up on the bandstand doing a new tune I wrote called "Paraphernalia," and he read the music but was stumbling a bit in memorizing it. He stopped the band in front of the people — and this was the only time he had done this — held the music up and said, [*another Davis impression*] "Let's start it again." I mean, they called him a king, but that would have been considered vulnerable. He was a human being.

Beethoven suffered a lot writing what he did, but you hear schools and professors say, "This was pure genius. This music came from above." Had you heard Beethoven himself, it would have been: "Man, I was in trouble. I was fighting this stuff!"

**Jackson:** Two watchwords that come up in reference to the sonic adventures with your last, long-running quartet are "zero gravity" and "optimistic chaos."

**Shorter:** Optimistic chaos is a term Frank Gehry came up with. I lived at Frank's place in Santa Monica with my wife and Esperanza [Spalding] for three months. I was working



on an ending to the opera, and said, "I want the ending to be like chaos, all kinds of *brrr*, *brrr*, *brrr*." And Frank said, "You mean like optimistic chaos?" So I'm working on that now for a classical pianist I've been asked to write things for in Holland. He doesn't improvise, so I'm working with optimistic chaos. But I'm writing out everything that he could choose to play. There's 10 other instruments with him and the piano.

**Jackson:** [Gehry] had this fad of making fish-shaped structures at a certain point in his career but failed to unite the concrete tail with the head of the fish for this important project in Japan. Ultimately he decided to make the building snake-like, despite what had been commissioned. It's been lovely talking to you, as a non-sequitur, which I'm sure you'll approve, I recall you once said, "Water is something a fish knows nothing about."

**Shorter:** Yes, but does the water take the shape that the fish makes, or does the fish make the shape that the water takes?

#### POSTSCRIPT

It was always both intriguing and entertaining to converse with Wayne Shorter and to listen to his visionary music. Forlorn fans can take heart from some of his last words, "Remember to be a warrior, not a worrier." He communicated that message to Rob Griffin, his road manager and audio engineer for 30 years, just 10 days before passing away in Los Angeles. Griffin worked on Shorter's final album, *Live At The Detroit Jazz Festival* (Candid), an all-star affair with Terri Lyne Carrington, Leo Genovese and Esperanza Spalding, earning Genovese a 2023 Grammy for Best Improvised Solo.



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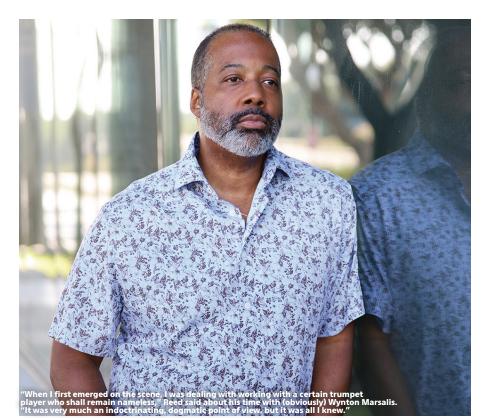
# THE LIBERATION OF ERIC REED

BY BILL MILKOWSKI PHOTOS BY KEITH WILSON

## The pianist has lived with a secret. He decided now is the time to talk about it.

A s a piano-playing prodigy, Philadelphia native Eric Reed performed gospel music in his father's church at age 5. By 7, he began formal study at Philadelphia's Settlement Music School, and four years later, after his family moved to Los Angeles, he studied at the Richard D. Colburn School of Performing Arts, where he would eventually meet Wynton Marsalis during a workshop. By 18, Reed began subbing in Marsalis' band, replacing Marcus Roberts in the trumpeter's renowned septet the following year. Reed then worked briefly as a sideman with Freddie Hubbard and Joe Henderson before returning to Marsalis' group, subsequently appearing on 1992's *Citi Movement*, 1993's *In This House, On This Morning*, 1996's *Jump Start And Jazz*, 1997's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Blood On The Fields* and 1998's *Standard Time, Vol. 5: The Midnight Blues.* Reed also recorded first six albums as a leader during his tenure with Marsalis, including 1993's *It's All Right To Swing* and 1994's *The Swing And I,* both titles reflecting the pianist's urgent desire to fit in with the whole somewhat revisionist agenda of the Young Lions.

Through his formative years with Marsalis, his emergence as a leader on the New York jazz scene and the 30 albums that he made under his own name, Reed kept a secret that plagued him. Now, with the release of *Black, Brown & Blue*, his heartfelt tribute to jazz masters who came before him, the 52-year-old pianist has decided it was time to talk about it. Reed's 31st as a leader and fourth for Smoke Sessions marks the first album that he has recorded while being completely open about his bisexuality, resulting in what he calls his most autobiographical release to date. As he stated in label's press release: "It's time for me to just go ahead and be completely authentic in every aspect of my life. That includes being more open about my sexuality and proactively moving into



spaces connected with the LGBTQ+ community. Those aspects of my life were becoming more bold and more broad, and I could no longer keep them on the margins."

In this phone interview, conducted in late February, Reed was calling from Knoxville, Tennessee, where he's been teaching at the University of Tennessee since August 2020.

**Bill Milkowski:** How could an album of standards also be the most autobiographical record of your career to date?

**Eric Reed:** I knew that for this project I was doing for Smoke Sessions, I wanted to keep it simple. I pulled out songs that had been in my songbook for some time. And, again, I was trying to take these standards and make them more personal, but I also reached out to some other repertoire to sort of help me tell this story that I wanted to tell. Because so many things were happening all at once. Last June, when I made this recording, was also when I started talking about my sexuality to my family, starting with my mom.

That conversation was very revealing and it was also a little traumatic, which is to be expected. But it put me in a place of wanting to just face my fears and deal with all my insecurities. And so, having those first conversations with my mom about the entire spectrum of my sexuality was tough, but also something that I needed to do. Because I finally had to acknowledge that I could no longer hide my truth or protect people from my truth.

And around the same time, as I was planning the music for this recording, some of these songs started to come to me. Bill Withers' "Lean On Me" is one of the first songs I learned how to play with two hands. And songs like Horace Silver's "Peace" and McCoy Tyner's "Search For Peace" seemed appropriate, considering the times that we're living in now. I think we're all searching for that and trying to find at least some modicum of peace, even if it's just in our own little comforts.

Buster Williams' composition "Christina" is part of my resume from working for some years in his band Something More. And Benny Golson's tune "Along Came Betty" is something that I've always wanted to do with a kind of straight-eighth feel. These are songs that have stayed with me over time, so it's autobiographical in a very direct sense but also in an abstract sense. Because I'm trying to galvanize and bring together all of the elements of my personal past and my musical past.

Milkowski: So that gospel element that seeps through on certain tunes, like on Wayne Shorter's "Infant Eyes" and "Lean On Me," is part of your own personal journey?

**Reed:** Absolutely. Always. Because it's never left me. I've never made any conscious or explicit attempt to separate gospel from jazz and classical from R&B. For me, at this point in my growth, I just want to play music and not spend so much time codifying and labeling, if I can help it.

I wish that's something that I could have thought about 20, 30 years ago, when I first got into this industry.

When I first emerged on the scene, I was

dealing with working with a certain trumpet player who shall remain nameless. It was very much an indoctrinating, dogmatic point of view, but it was all I knew. I'm not making excuses, but I was a perfect candidate for that environment because I had grown up as an American under the cloud of religion and white patriarchy. So I was perfectly primed for just falling into another version of it, except run by a Black person.

**Milkowski:** At that point in your fledgling career, you were probably more concerned about swinging than any existential questions.

**Reed:** I was more concerned about swinging than anything else at all, period. Because I was told to believe that this was the way to go, that commercial music was trash. No fusion, no backbeat. And I'm 17, 18 thinking, "OK, this guy must know what he's talking about. He's made a lot of money. He's paying me a lot of money. He's on all these magazine covers. People are always asking him questions. The microphone is always in his face. He's running this, he's running that. He's famous. So what the fuck do I know? I'm only 17. I'm going to push back against that?"

And it took me years and years and years to finally acknowledge that I was unhappy, that I was confused, and that I had felt betrayed by people close to me.

**Milkowski:** Given your very complicated relationship with the Black church, it's interesting to see that some of that gospel element come out on your new record.

Reed: It's such an intrinsic part of my musicality, so that's never going to go anywhere. Regardless of the trauma that I experienced as a young queer Black kid growing up in the church and in the neighborhood — and let me tell you, the homophobia that runs rampant through the Black community is absolutely mind-boggling - the music itself was really where I felt most comfortable, even though many of the lyrics in these songs were quite traumatic. I mean, if you think about something like "Amazing Grace," one of the most popular hymns ever written, it goes: "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." So let's just stop there. I mean, a wretch? Some of these lyrics are just so problematic. There's another song called "We're Blessed" by a woman named Dr. Margaret Douroux that goes: "We're blessed. We've got shelter, clothing, food and strength. We don't deserve it but yet we are blessed." You're trying to tell me that no person on Earth deserves to eat every single day? To be clothed, to be fed? I've got a problem with that.

Milkowski: There's a gentle vibe that permeates Black, Brown & Blue. Both "Peace" and "Search For Peace" are extremely gentle pieces, as are Buster Williams' "Christina" and Buddy Collette's "Cheryl Ann." And your interpretation of Duke Ellington's "I Got It Bad (And That Ain't Good)" feels like you're exploring the mystery and allure of that beautiful tune.

**Reed:** Yes, I've spent so much time just trying to uphold that philosophy of, "Swing, swing, swing, gotta swing hard!" that I really needed to explore other sides of myself.

**Milkowski:** Two of your albums from the early '90s actually had that word "swing" in the title.

it. Because this whole experience is definitely going to inform my next project, which is definitely going to be original music for sure. I got a lot of stories to tell.

**Milkowski:** Reggie Quinerly, who plays drums alongside bassist Luca Alemanno throughout this album, contributed the tune "Variation Twenty-Four," which has a very zen-like calm about it. It's got that dramatically unhurried quality, like a Betty Carter ballad tempo.

## *'I don't have to hide anymore. I don't have to hide who I am. I don't have to hide how I feel.*

**Reed:** Exactly. *The Swing And I* and *It's Alright To Swing.* Because at that time, I believe it was honest. It wasn't just a matter of parroting somebody else's vision, although at times it did feel that way, for sure. But to a certain degree, I did believe in it. Otherwise, it wouldn't have come off very effectively. And while I did believe in it, I just didn't allow myself to expand beyond it.

So this album, *Black, Brown & Blue*, is me at a very chill place. I don't feel as though I have anything to prove anymore with regard to whether or not I can swing or whether or not I can play the piano. So I can explore the love that I've had for '70s R&B, which is why I included Stevie Wonder's "Pastime Paradise" and Bill Withers' "Lean On Me," and used two singers on those tunes who are not jazz singers at all [minister Calvin B. Rhone, a mentor to Reed, and David Daughtry, a gospel singer and Pentecostal worship leader of the West Angeles Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles].

We've always wanted to work together, and I found them very inspiring. So this album manifests the breadth of my musical acumen. But again, it aligns with where I am personally and spiritually and emotionally and psychologically ... being in therapy and unpacking all that stuff, and being in a new relationship now. I can't remember the last time I was in a relationship. It must have been 16, 17 years ago when I divorced my ex-wife. After that, I figured I was just done with relationships, that I'm not supposed to be in them, that I suck at them. And then, bam! Two months ago, I meet this guy who is nowhere near my age. So it's presenting all kinds of challenges and questions and risks. And I'm here for all of

**Reed:** Yeah, that's totally him. And that's how he is as a person as well. He and Luka, who wrote that composition "One For E" for me, are both very important to me, particularly at that time we recorded this album. Because it was probably just a day or two before when I had that traumatic conversation with my mother, and then we went into the studio. So they were right there with me when I began to open up.

They're both much younger than me, and that generation is more on the tolerant side, unlike my generation and older generations. These younger folks, the Millennials and Gen Z-ers, they're like, "Yeah, whatever floats your boat. Do your thing." They saw me as a person, not just as a musician. They're much less judgmental than my generation was, and it's beautiful to watch.

So now I feel as though I can just live, I can just exist, I can just be. And these younger musicians have allowed me this. Even some of the older musicians who are becoming more aware of my situation have been very affirming. They're like, "Hey, Eric, we love you, do your thing, glad you're happy."

Oddly enough, I've not received any harsh looks or comments or pushback. I'm sure there's comments behind my back; there always have been. But I can't worry about that: I'm too busy being free.

**Milkowski:** You made a very thoughtful, very powerful statement in the liner notes to *Black*, *Brown & Blue* and included a kind of roll call of your elders and contemporaries who have helped you in your career. It seems that you have a nice support group out there.

**Reed:** Yeah, I really do. I'm in a very good place.

And I found it in a rather unlikely way, because I thought that I would be forever connected to a previous employer.

You know, the idea of doing something else, I didn't really think much about it. I didn't think that it would ever manifest. And here I am some 30 years later on a completely different path, and still searching. I'm still looking for musical inspiration, and not just inside of jazz. I'm really allowing myself to explore what's going on, and I spend a good deal of time with younger people and listen to their music — not that easy to do.

Just from a musical standpoint, these Gen Z-ers and younger Millennials are not so much into harmony. There's a lot of three- and four-chord bands out there. Their lyrics, though, are incredible. They're writing about some very powerful content and thoughts.

**Milkowski:** Another musical influence that's been significant and ongoing for you in your career is Thelonious Monk. You did records dedicated to him — 2011's *Dancing Monk* and 2012's *The Baddest Monk* — as well as performing Monk tunes throughout your career. So it's kind of appropriate that your new album ends with Monk's "Ugly Beauty."

**Reed:** Totally. "Ugly Beauty" is one of those haunting Thelonious Monk compositions that ... it's onomatopoeia. It sounds ugly in some spots and then there's a great deal of beauty in other spots. But overall, everything Monk wrote has so much beauty in it, even inside of the dissonance. "Ugly Beauty," for me, has represented sort of an ugly duckling [that transforms] into the graceful swan kind of thing, dealing with my own images and low self-esteem.

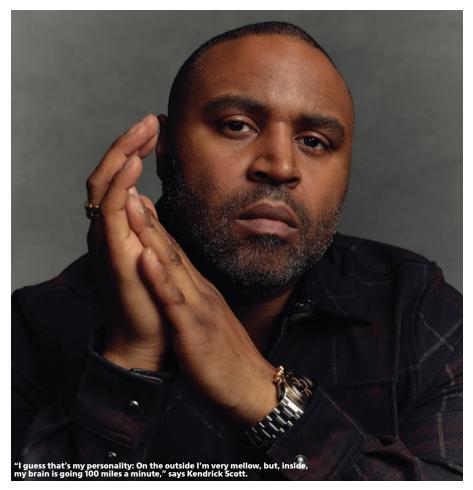
So "Ugly Beauty" is almost a theme song for me. Because there was so much ugliness in my life that I still have to unpack. And every time I unpack something, I find something beautiful in it. I'm like, "Wow, this happened to me, and this was really kind of fucked up." But the other side of it is this beautiful side of what I learned from the experience ... what the pain taught me, what the trauma taught me, what the experience taught me. They always say, "If I knew then what I know now," and it's such a cliché. But I feel as though I'm in my second 20s now, and there's so much that I did not know in my first 20s.

You don't know what you don't know. So here I am learning all these things about myself, learning these things about my personality, about my artistry, about my sexuality. And "Ugly Beauty" is sort of like the beginning of me saying, "I don't have to hide anymore. I don't have to hide who I am. I don't have to hide how I feel. I don't have to mask what I look like. This is it." And you might think it's ugly, but that's on you. Because I think it's beautiful, and I'm going to present it.



# BY ALLEN MORRISON | PHOTOS BY JUSTIN BETTMAN KENDRICK SCORE of the second secon

Kendrick Scott loves harmony at least as much as he loves rhythm, possibly more. "To me, one of the most beautiful things in music is harmony, like pianos and guitars," the drummer and composer says. "The lush feeling of harmony is neck-and-neck with rhythm for me. I think I'm a weird drummer in that way. Melody is always king, but I feel like harmony is the emotional content of the music."



fter four albums with his group Oracle, which relied heavily on the textures of keyboards and guitar, it was no small thing for Scott to record his first trio album, just drums, saxophone and bass. Of course, any jazz drummer who is tempted to go that route would be well advised to travel with musicians of the caliber of Scott's collaborators: Walter Smith III on tenor and Reuben Rogers on bass.

The classic saxophone trio is one of the purest and most bracing expressions of jazz. It's not a music in which to lose oneself; it's the antithesis of "ambient." It demands the listener's attention and active participation — and a particular kind of participation, to fill in the missing pieces, to hear the harmony that is mostly implied. It makes extraordinary demands on the players to sound complete in themselves.

This is what Smith, Rogers and Scott achieve on *Corridors*, Scott's new Blue Note album. The music was commissioned by Rio Sakairi of New York's Jazz Gallery, where it was first performed in September 2021. The band played the material live only one other time prior to the recording, at New York's Blue Note.

*Corridors* avoids a common trap of saxophone trio recordings: a certain sameness of presentation from track to track. Here Scott's haunting ballads are accompanied by his quiet vocals, high-energy jaunts played with Scott's trademark finesse, musical palate cleansers involving multitracked saxophones and bass, and one well-chosen cover: a magically in-the-pocket reading of Bobby Hutcherson "Isn't This My Sound Around Me," featuring a killer saxophone solo by Smith.

Scott is one of the most introspective and restrained drummers in jazz. His playing is exceptionally fluid and subtle. He is also a sophisticated composer whose hooky melodies lean towards the poetic and spiritual. He and Smith met as teenagers a week before both entered Houston's famed High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. They were classmates of Beyoncé and Robert Glasper. "All the other drummers gravitated toward him," recalls Smith, the celebrated tenor saxophonist, who now serves as chair of woodwinds at Berklee College of Music. "We always wanted to know what he was listening to. He was a tastemaker for us."

After attending Berklee on scholarship, Scott moved to New York in 2003 and began playing with Terence Blanchard, who became a mentor and encouraged him to become a bandleader. He has also worked extensively with Charles Lloyd, Robert Glasper, Gretchen Parlato and many other A-list jazz artists. *Corridors* is his sixth album as a leader.

The U.S. Virgin Islands-born Rogers, also a

veteran of the Charles Lloyd Quartet, is a few years older than Scott and Smith. He gushes about the trio's results: "I like the simplicity of the songs," he relates. "They have good melodies, accessible harmony and good rhythm. Kendrick has a knack for doing that."

As Smith says, "Kendrick and Reuben have two of the best feels in the business."

Scott spoke via Zoom from a hotel room in Padova, Italy, where he was on a short tour with Slovenian saxophonist Jure Pukl. The interview has been edited for clarity.

**Allen Morrison:** Why did you decide to make the *Corridors* album with a saxophone trio?

**Kendrick Scott:** Throughout the pandemic, collectively something was taken away from everybody. For me it was travel, playing music and being able to share my gift with people. ... I was thinking about what was lost. My band Oracle is centered around guitar and piano. So I just wanted to take that away, and say, OK, how can I address this loss in musical form? A lot of this record is about that — facing those shadows I've been running from while I'm out here on the road and having fun.

When we think of "corridors," we normally think of transience. But in my New York apartment, I have a long hallway. The album is named after that. ... [During lockdown] this place of transience became a place of stagnation.

**Morrison:** And out of this feeling of stagnation came this creative outpouring.

**Scott:** Well, "a wall becomes a bridge," which was the name of my last record. Sometimes it's great for an artist to sit still and just make art. In the beginning, I wasn't all that inspired, to be honest, but I was happy that Rio Sakairi from The Jazz Gallery commissioned me to write something, and I just pushed through it.

**Morrison:** You have said that on this record you wanted to "zoom out" from the personal and write from a more universal perspective.

**Scott:** With the first song, "What Day Is It?" I had to imagine everybody feeling that same funk that I was feeling, sitting in their apartments, having this "groundhog day" effect. ... I wanted to create music that was for everybody, not just for me.

**Morrison:** How does that feeling manifest in the music? It could have been a slow, stuck-in-the-doldrums kind of song, but it's not — it's high-energy, frenetic.

**Scott:** I guess that's my personality: On the outside I'm very mellow, but, inside, my brain is going 100 miles a minute.

**Morrison:** So do you consider this your "pandemic album"?

Scott: Yeah, it turned out to be that. It's funny —

I was thinking it was gonna be something else. It just came this way. Everything I had written down — I did none of it. [*laughs*]

**Morrison:** The album has a strong, sad theme in "One Door Closes, One Door Opens." Did that beautiful, sad melody come out of your experience of lockdown in New York? What was your life like during that time?

**Scott:** I pretty much stayed in my apartment in Harlem. I was paranoid about leaving. The bless-

**Morrison:** It helps to have partners on tonal instruments who can really suggest the harmony.

**Scott:** Right. What happens in chordless groups is that a veil is taken off. You can actually hear what Reuben is playing, and what Walter is playing in a different light. Once you remove that veil you start to appreciate each instrument in a different way. It's like this new treasure that you found, but it's been there the whole time.

### 'How can I set the stage, think cinematically?'

ing was I had some work teaching at Manhattan School of Music, via Zoom. For a while, teaching was one of my only connections to the world. It was amazing to work with my students, but it was also a little maddening because I knew exactly what each day would be like.

I never had a nine-to-five before. It was really weird for me. My ritual was walking every morning to Riverbank Park, going up to the lighthouse and coming back, trying to get my mind right for the day, then teaching most of the day. And practicing — my neighbors heard a lot of drums during the pandemic.

#### Morrison: This was in early 2020?

**Scott:** Yes. Oracle had just finished our first European tour. We came back just before the pandemic hit. I didn't leave home after that — my mother forbade me! [*laughs*] I hardly left the apartment until the summer of 2021, when I did a tour of Europe.

**Morrison:** Was it a challenge to work without one of your beloved chordal instruments?

**Scott:** For me the challenge was providing the emotion that chords and harmony bring into the music. When you hear the harmony, it makes [the emotion] so evident. Aaron Parks calls it "invisible cinema" [the title of the pianist's Blue Note Records debut]. I always think about that when I play. How can I set the stage, think cinematically? As a drummer in a band without chordal instruments, I feel I have to set the stage even more. What does harmony sound like when it's not there? That's what I'm trying to create in this band.

Morrison: They say there's no place to hide in a duo; but the same is true in a chordless trio. Scott: Absolutely. I listened to so many chordless groups, like Sonny Rollins, Ornette [Coleman]. I really loved Joe Lovano's "Trio Fascination" with Elvin [Jones].

**Morrison:** Did you write differently knowing that it would just be the three of you?

**Scott:** In some ways, yes; in some ways, no. All of the melodic pieces [usually] just come to me, and I just sing them, like "One Door Opens, Another Closes." The song "A Voice Through The Door" came to me while I was in the shower. I stopped the water, grabbed my phone, and I just sang it. Afterward, I said — "Whoa! That's a whole tune!"

Hopefully, you write a great enough melody and song that it could work in any type of group. Other tunes took more time. With "What Day Is It?" I was thinking, what would it feel like to write more rhythmically — to write a song without harmony?

#### Morrison: Yet it's not devoid of harmony.

**Scott:** Right, not at all. It's still there. It definitely has a key center and all that. It's interesting for me to explore how far my compositional skills will take me versus my talent at drumming. My drumming is up here [gestures with one hand at the top of his head], and my compositional skills are down here [places the other hand near his chin]. And it's like, "C'mon, man, we can do it!" [laughs]

**Morrison:** Were any of the songs written for a larger group, then adapted for the trio?

**Scott:** No, they were all written for the trio. I did think about my voice, though. I don't think of my voice like "I'm the singer in the band." I think of it as a texture. I use it intermittently — it adds another element to the band, kind of a haunting element. I don't want my voice to be out front because I hate my voice. But [mixed down low] it gives some insight into the way I'm hearing music and the vibe I'd like to create.

**Morrison:** It's very effective and original — I can't think of any other drummers who do that. **Scott:** I can't do my "Jamieson Ross," so I'll just hum in the background. [*laughs*]

**Morrison:** Some of the songs are quite singable. Is it important to you to write melodies that can be sung?

**Scott:** Yes. That's probably the most important thing out of everything: I always want somebody to go home singing it. The earworm. Pat Metheny said there are books for rhythm and harmony, but not for melody.

**Morrison:** In his 2009 New York Times piece "Five Drummers to Watch," jazz critic Ben Ratliff described your compositions as "slow-moving, harmonically sophisticated, twice-removed pop." Do you agree with that description of your songs?

**Scott:** I was just watching an interview with Billy Hart [in which he says] we just have these categories. We call it "pop music" because we don't have any other words to describe it. Earworms ... OK, that's what I'm trying to write. So I take that as a compliment. I have this saying, "Simplicity breeds complexity."

**Morrison:** Your previous albums were produced by [bassist/composer] Derrick Hodge. Now you're producing yourself for the first time what was that like?

**Scott:** Derrick was the best producer. He's my brother and helped me solidify my vision. Why now? This time I wanted to do it more spontaneously, and it was a back-to-basics record. I didn't need that much direction. It was really freeing.

Morrison: When you put out *A Wall Becomes A Bridge*, you spoke about overcoming insecurities. Was that still an issue with this new album? **Scott**: It's always an issue. I decided to talk about it more. I'm in therapy. You have to use that. And teaching is interesting. The more you teach, the more you have to dig deepesr and tell people the truth. It's about overcoming fears, not denying them. You use those bricks in the wall to create the bridge. And the music is also therapy. I have a lot of mantras I use, but the main one is "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace." I'm always asking myself, "Am I being a catalyst for change?"



## A Masterpiece \*\*\*\* Excellent \*\*\*\* Good \*\*\* Fair \*\* Poor \*



#### **Christian McBride's New Jawn** Prime MACK AVENUE

 $\star$   $\star$   $\star$   $\star$   $\frac{1}{2}$ 

The vibe of this sequel to the 2018 eponymous release by Christian McBride's vigorous piano-less quartet nods more explicitly to the cracked sidewalks of post-bop. Whereas the first included just one non-original, Prime offers cheerfully angular tunes by Ornette Coleman, Larry Young (via Woody Shaw) and Sonny Rollins as well as a titular homage to Eric Dolphy. It also begins and ends with fullon, minute-plus free-for-squalls (on the smartly titled "Head Bedlam").

Yet the ensemble feels tighter than ever, and solos, nakedly exposed over bass and drums only, are succinct and stay on message. Strickland, in particular, never seems to waste a note. He wrote the fetching title track, which - now jagged, now flowing - floats over McBride's nervous upbeat, forging ahead, mid-register, with throaty tenor saxophone tone and edgy ideas. Strickland's sonorous bass clarinet perfectly embodies the mood of Waits' rubato childhood reverie "Moonchild."

Is there a more exciting trumpeter out there than Josh Evans? Stuffing ideas into smeared and blatty, smashed-up phrases on Young's zippy "Obsequious" and his own "Dolphy Dust," Evans sounds like a bumblebee bent on sipping all the nectar from every flower, yet somehow managing to keep his balance on the way out. McBride's Ellingtonian poem "The Lurkers" (muted trumpet and bass clarinet) showcases the bassist's bow, creating spooky suspense and drama, hovering.

Coleman's jaunty 14-bar calypso "The

Good Life" has McBride plucking fast and high, with drummer Nasheet Waits lightly tapping his toms for a sweet ring. Rollins' "East Broadway Rundown" starts tense, with McBride repeating a single plucked note, then sliding into a swinging walk. Later he slows things down with double-stops and launches a brilliant solo that alludes to the melody's jagged intervals. A bluff 'n' gruff Strickland recalls the tune's composer, doubling back on his ideas.

This is wonderful, joyful music, recalling an era when jazz was pushing at its edges with bursts of freedom. Very welcome.

-Paul de Barros

Prime: Head Bedlam; Prime; Moonchild; Obsequious; The Lurkers; The Good Life; Dolphy Dust; East Broadway Rundown. (54:34) Personnel: Christian McBride, bass; Josh Evans, trumpet; Marcus Strickland, tenor saxophone (2, 4, 6–8), bass clarinet (1, 3, 5); Nasheet Waits, drums

Ordering info: mackavenue.com



Bobo Stenson Trio Sphere

Waxing delicate is a dangerous game for improvisers. Moving slowly and yielding to silence can either feel informally profound or charmingly listless. Spending time with Bobo Stenson's previous albums has been revealing in this realm, because the Swedish pianist's trio is dedicated to a tranquility that's usually bolstered by a low-key radiance, and while tedium occasionally raises its head, seldom do their hushed phrases arrive without rewards.

Julian Lage The Layers BLUE NOTE \*\*\*\*

*View With A Room*, Julian Lage's previous album for Blue Note, was widely acclaimed as a breakthrough, in part because of the way it contrasted his quietly virtuosic playing with the more coloristic approach of fellow guitarist Bill Frisell. *The Layers*, recorded during the same sessions, might seem a continuation, but Lage considers it a "prequel" — an intermediate step between the trio dynamic of his first Blue Note outing, *Squint*, and the quartet sound of *View*.

"Everything Helps," which kicks off *The Layers*, starts with a mournful, two-chord guitar motif reinforced by a funky groove from bassist Jorge Roeder and drummer Dave King. Frisell doesn't enter until after the head, and even then his role is largely secondary, fleshing out harmonies and using his bright, effects-laden sound for textural contrast against Lage's classically dark tone. By contrast, "Tributary," the previous album's opener, starts with Frisell. Again, his stomp-box flavored sound is bright and shimmery, a contrast to Lage, but Frisell's accompaniment is given freer range, acting more as counterpoint than a secondary color. Roeder also takes more of a melodic role, landSphere reminds us that shaping a sustained mood is a longtime Stenson goal. His current associates, bassist Anders Jormin and drummer Jon Fält, are united when it comes to servicing this vision. Blending originals with pieces by Alfred Janson, Per Nørgård, Sven-Erik Bäck and Jean Sibelius, their latest program splits the difference between folkish and formal, coming up with a sobriety built on a steady stream of reflection.

That sedate composure evaporates here and there. "The Red Flower" swoops and glides, even while inching along. And there's a beautiful buoyancy to Jormin's "Kingdom Of Coldness" — like "You Shall Plant A Tree," it's a place where calibration really works. But such animation is absent from the bassist's nod to Charles Ives, which suffers from mild stasis. And there are a few other moments when inertia gets a grip on the music's flow — as if the trio believed any grand gesture might distort a truth they're delivering.

These frailties are few, though. Ultimately it's ensemble intimacy making their tender improvs so bewitching. *—Jim Macnie* 

Sphere: You Shall Plant A Tree; Unquestioned Answer–Charles Ives In Memoriam; Spring; Kingdom Of Coldness; Communion Psalm; The Red Flower; Ky And Beautiful Mrs. Ky; Valsette Op. 40/1; You Shall Plant A Tree (var.). (48:00) Personnel: Bobo Stenson, piano; Anders Jormin, bass; Jon Fält;

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com



ing regularly on the roots but stitching tuneful tidbits into his line. Both performances are admirable, but there's more flow to "Tributary."

"Double Southpaw," a duet between Roeder and Lage's acoustic, is stunning in a way nothing on *View* was, particularly when the bassist slips double-stops beneath the guitarist's chords. And then there's "Mantra," where Frisell's harmonics and effects neatly intertwine with King's pulse. *—J.D. Considine* 

**The Layers:** Everything Helps; Double Southpaw; Missing Voices; This World; Mantra; The Layers. (24:54)

**Personnel:** Julian Lage, acoustic and electric guitar, Bill Frisell, acoustic and electric guitar (except 2); Jorge Roeder, bass (except 4); Dave King, drums (except 2, 4).

Ordering info: bluenote.com



#### Kurt Elling & Charlie Hunter SuperBlue: Guilty Pleasures EDITION \*\*\*<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

Each track on singer Kurt Elling's newest release with guitarist Charlie Hunter and drummer Nate Smith, *SuperBlue: Guilty Pleasures*, opens with a rhythmic signal: a rap on the rim, a kick against the skin, a thwack on a string. These salvos ignite the momentum of each tune — no question that what comes next is going to be decisive, powerful and groove-heavy.

The album's modern funk-rock sound is not so much a departure for Elling as the next step in his ongoing foray into the essence of American musical forms. It's also the second such collaboration between Hunter and Elling for Edition Records; their first, the 2021 LP *SuperBlue*, set in motion the pair's hip-hop-inspired confab. This time, though, the album is a quick six-track EP, the setup a simple trio featuring drummer Nate Smith and each song a cover pulled from the American collective mind.

It includes a gospel-pulsing remake of Eddie Money's "Baby Hold On"; a jazz jumble of the Eddie Kendricks hit "Boogie Down"; and a growling blues understanding of AC/ DC's "Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap." The juxtaposition of these particular tunes, which hail from the 1960s through the '70s, with those of two contemporary songwriters fosters observation on how jazz has evolved under hip-hop's influence: Smith's "Bounce," the album's only instrumental, is at once smooth and sharply cadenced, and Elling's amped redux of PJ Morton's "Sticking To My Guns" channels both the energy of freedom and the noise of revolt.

Of note, it's rare that Elling records with such a streamlined ensemble. You can hear how readily his vocal presence expands to fill the waiting space. —*Suzanne Lorge* 

Ordering info: editionrecords.com

**SuperBlue–Guilty Pleasures:** Baby Hold On; Wrap It Up; Boogie Down; Bounce; Sticking To My Guns; Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap. (22:05)

**Personnel:** Kurt Elling, vocals; Charlie Hunter, guitar; Nate Smith, drums.



Critics	Paul de Barros	Jim Macnie	J.D. Considine	Suzanne Lorge
Christian McBride's New Jawn Prime	****1/2	****	****	****
Bobo Stenson Trio Sphere	**1⁄2	***	****	***½
<b>Julian Lage</b> The Layers	****	***½	****	****
Kurt Elling & Charlie Hunter SuperBlue–Guilty Pleasures	**	***	***	***½

#### **Critics' Comments**

#### Christian McBride's New Jawn, Prime

Their hard-driving nu-bop is laced with Philly grit, and wherever they swerve on this thing, precision and fireworks follow them. Special thx for "East Broadway Rundown." -Jim Macnie

The cool thing about McBride's New Jawn is the way it teeters between post-bop and New Thing as if the gap between traditional and progressive '60s jazz never happened. I love how Marcus Strickland's bass clarinet pivots between melody and bass roles. -J.D. Considine

It's hard not to feel excitement when listening to McBride and the New Jawn thundering like a subway train leaving the station, promising transport to unvisited musical places. The sophisticated horn synchronizations, zigzagging improvisations, whimsical dance breaks and introspective respites - all you'll want to do is ride along. -Suzanne Lorge

#### Bobo Stenson Trio, Sphere

Some of these quietly interactive conversations emit the secretive blue fire of the best Scandinavian jazz, and bassist Anders Jormin is exquisite, but too much just proceeds oh, so slowly and remotely. Sigh. -Paul de Barros

There's a haiku quality in Stenson's music, not because his line is spare and his harmony minimal, but because his playing prizes suggestiveness and emotional allusion. But it's the way Anders Jormin frames Stenson's ideas that truly makes this album sing. -J.D. Considine

From a place of temperamental restraint, Stenson turns out spontaneous panoramas of cool beauty - this solemnity is all the more affecting for his precise, contemporary vocabulary. The -Suzanne Lorge group's motion, reflexive and yielding, supports a clean melodicism.

#### Julian Lage, The Layers

Another triumph for the Lage-Bill Frisell team. At times, Lage recalls the warmth and harmonic agility of Brazilians like Baden Powell, but with an Americana twang. -Paul de Barros

Call it a little icing on the cake. Last fall's View With A Room was fertile enough to yield extras, and the band's pastoral vibe gets tweaked a bit on this scrumptious EP. —Jim Macnie

Lage's latest writing resounds with compositional refinement and melodic vibrancy. Relying on the harmonic opportunity that four-handed playing affords, the guitarist disrupts any expected musical patterns with well-placed deviations. —Suzanne Lorge

#### Kurt Elling & Charlie Hunter, SuperBlue – Guilty Pleasures

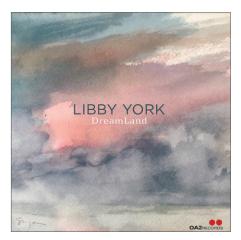
Maybe it's not fair, but despite his stylistic accuracy and some occasional irony, Kurt Elling can't sell backbeat soul music any more than Elvis could do finger-popping jazz. But, hey, Nate Smith? Almost worth the trouble (but not quite). –Paul de Barros

Every time I think there's a calculated kitsch in these covers, the musicians kick in harder and the music flies. But like that of Bruce Springsteen, Elling's soul expressionism is just a little too-too. The leer in "Wrap It Up" works nicely, though. –Jim Macnie

You may quibble with his taste, or ask why he imagines Eddie Money's "Baby Hold On" is worth covering. Still, there's no denying the pleasure Elling finds in Al Jarreau's joyful "Boogie Down" or the funkiness he elicits from the AC/DC rocker "Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap." -J.D. Considine

### THE SOUND OF SMOKE





Libby York DreamLand OA2/ORIGIN \*\*\*\*1/2

Is it damning with faint praise to say that this is grown-up jazz? Too much female jazz singing seems to slide from Betty Boop pyrotechnics straight into "Gloomy Sunday" croaking without much happening in between.

The lovely thing about Libby York is that she seems like an adult artist without letting responsibilities weigh down joyousness and pleasure in the song. York knows that her responsibility is *to* the song, and on material

#### Bill Warfield and the Hell's Kitchen Funk Orchestra Time Capsule PLANET ARTS \*\*\*\*

*Time Capsule* is the third CD by Bill Warfield's Hell's Kitchen Funk Orchestra since 2016. Warfield's ensemble consists of 10–11 pieces with two trumpets, three reeds, sometimes a trombonist, guitar, piano, organ, bass and drums. Although its name may lead one to think that it is an inflexible or at least predictable funk band, the leader's arrangements and the group's repertoire is much more wide-ranging than one might expect.

Five of the 12 performances on *Time Capsule* have vocals by Chrissi Poland. She has a strong and versatile voice, although it is obvious that her background is more in soul/R&B than in jazz.

Otherwise the main focus is on the often-rollicking band. While Chick Corea's "Light As A Feather" gets a welcome revival, the ensemble really has a great time romping on "Cold Sweat/Got The Feeling," Joe Zawinul's "Man In The Green Suite" and the leader's catchy boogaloo blues "Zoe's Dance."

Organist Paul Shaffer sounds at home in

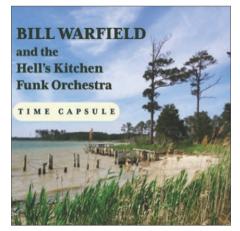
as potentially arch as "Rhode Island Is Famous For You" or the trickier "This Happy Madness" she delivers the lines with an almost discursive straightforwardness that enhances rather than deadening the impact.

She's picked a remarkably good crew for this latest sail out into the bay. Randy Napoleon, who helps with production, has a sophisticated touch but never drifts into that "lounge" style that overtakes pianists charged with accompanying cool singers, and York is in the line of June Christy and Chris Connor.

Whitaker, who has a lot to do on the drummer-less tracks, is a model of tasteful restraint, while Hall, when he comes in on "Throw It Away," generates maximum impact by not being there from the start.

York's voice is in splendid shape, but it's the vigor and judgement of her storytelling that makes this one rather special. She's worked a relatively quiet passage up till now, but unlike those singers who, to vary the image, go up like a rocket and come down like the stick, she's pacing herself beautifully. —*Brian Morton* 

DreamLand: Hit The Road To Dreamland; This Happy Madness; Mountain Greenery; Cloudy Morning: Throw It Away; Rhode Island Is Famous For You; Still On The Road; When October Goes; Moon Ray; An Occasional Man; Something Cool; It's Love. (56:24) Personnel: Libby York, vocals; Randy Napoleon, piano; Rodney Whitaker, bass; Keith Hall (5, 9, 10, 12), drums. Ordering info: originarts.com



this band. Other key soloists include pianist Cecilia Coleman, altoists Matt Hong and Lou Marini, baritonist Kurt Bacher, tenorman Dave Riekenberg and guitarist Matt Chertkoff. Warfield also has his spots, blasting in the stratosphere and taking the second version of "Alfie" as an instrumental. —Scott Yanow

Time Capsule: I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free; Light As A Feather; Alfie; Cold Sweat/I Got The Feeling; Just My Imagination; Man In The Green Shirt; Please Send Me Someone To Love; Zoe's Dance; Finale/Let It Go; Chain Reaction; Alfie; Cold Sweat. (75:04)

Personnel: Bill Warfield, Matt Owens, John Eckert, Colin Brigstocke, trumpet, flugelhorn; Charlie Gordon, trombone, bass trombone; Matt Hong, Dave Riekenberg, Kurt Bacher, Pete Brainin, Lou Marini, saxophones; Matt Chertkoff, guitar; Cecilia Coleman piano; Paul Shaffer, organ; Steve Count, bass; Scott Neumann, drums; Chrisis Poland, vocals.

Ordering info: planetarts.org



Munir Hossn/Ganavya sister, idea ROPEADOPE \*\*\*\*½

*sister, idea* is an achingly vulnerable record that captures the lived experiences, cultural traditions and spirituality that Munir Hossn and Ganavya bring to their artistry. Born from voice notes that the two shared with each other over WhatsApp during the pandemic, the album is a mix of call-and-response and mind-meld compositions that give us an intimate look into their creative and personal relationship.

Hope is the overarching theme, with "esperanca" ("hope" in Portguese) and "hope is the thing with feathers" (named after the poem by Emily Dickenson) bookending a series of songs on which Hossn and Ganavya support each other through heartbreak, isolation and grief during the pandemic. In "brother, idea," Ganavya holds space for Hossn as he navigates a series of difficult losses in his life. "Do you see yourself as divine?" she asks (reminds) him, her voice a persistent bright light floating atop Hossn's lilting acoustic melody. The foil to this song is "sister, idea," where Hossn's plucky, folk harmony elevates Ganavya's ethereal vocals.

Ganavya spontaneously sings in Tamil, her mother's native tongue, in their rendition of the popular Cuban song "quizas, quizas, quizas (para Patricia Camacho)." Her expressive vocals and Hossn's heavy, somber guitar move gracefully through pain, loss and acceptance as grief gives way to hope and light.

sister, idea is a series of intimate letters between kindred spirits. It tackles love and loss and how we connect with the world. Gananvya's devotional vocalizations and evocative lyrics complement Hossn's soulful melodies influenced by his African, Italian, Middle Eastern and Brazilian roots. *—Ivana Ng* 

**Personnel:** Munir Hossn, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, electric bass; Ganavya, voice, double bass.

Ordering info: munirhossn-ganavya.bandcamp.com

sister, idea: esperança; brother, idea; what do you do?; quizas, quizas, quizas (para Patricia Camacho); el juego; sister, idea; hope is the thing with feathers (for Camille Colatosti); a la ya, lilac wine (for Charlotte Brathwaite). (27:35)



Diego Rivera Love & Peace POSI-TONE ★★★★

An inventive cool-toned tenor who is also quite fluent on soprano, Diego Rivera recorded his sixth CD as a leader, *Love & Peace*, in 2021 after surviving a two-month battle with COVID. Although one might be reading too much into his performances on this set, a definite happiness is felt in his playing, which was probably joined by a sense of relief.

While some of the titles are political in nature, there is nothing downbeat or world-wea-

#### **Tyler Mitchell Octet** Sun Ra's Journey Featuring Marshall Allen CELLAR MUSIC \*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>

That there are abundant intergalactic intimations on *Sun Ra's Journey Featuring Marshall Allen* is inevitable, given the presence of saxophonist Allen and bassist Tyler Mitchell. Both had long and productive tenures with the Arkestra, and the evidence of that is most immediate and flowing on "Love In Outer Space." Much of the magic here emanates from Allen's electronic wind instrument, which is all the more remarkable when you consider he is 97 years old. Age is clearly only a number for this formidable composer and performer.

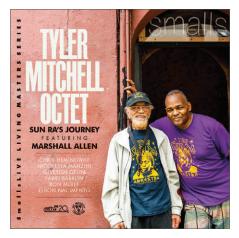
But more than recapturing the essence of their days with the man who claimed to come from Saturn, Allen and Mitchell bring a fresh aspect to the dozen tracks here, and a trained musical ear is not necessary to discern the touches of Fletcher Henderson on "Cosmic Hop" and "Bouncing At Smalls."

Among the album's stellar (or should we say interstellar?) moments is the keyboard wizardry of Farid Barron, and his romp on "Velvet" is a tantalizing rosary of brilliant notes, all of which are emblazoned and extended by ry about these performances. In contrast, most of the music is full of joy as Rivera and his topnotch quartet revitalize the straightahead jazz tradition. They perform eight of the leader's originals, two standards, and Chilean composer Violeta del Carmen Parra's "Gracias A La Vida," popularized in the U.S. by Joan Baez.

On the happy opener "Lovely," Rivera sounds effortless playing double-time runs. "Ganas" utilizes Latin rhythms that inspire Rivera's heated soprano playing. "Gracias A La Vida" and "La Malinche" both have the feel of tangos, with the latter being romantic and a bit melancholy. In contrast, "Soul Purpose," inspired by the music that Rivera heard in Black churches, is celebratory and spirited with some of the wildness one associates with Charles Mingus.

Of the other pieces, the biggest surprise is an uptempo version of John Coltrane's "Alabama" after an opening tenor cadenza. In addition to the leader's consistently inventive solos, pianist Art Hirahara is a strong asset throughout as a swinging soloist and an alert accompanist, with bassist Boris Kozlov and drummer Rudy Royston mostly uplifting the music in their supportive roles. —*Scott Yanow* 

Love & Peace: Lovely: Ganas; Gracias A La Vida; Soul Purpose; Anticipation; Alabama; Composure; Simón; La Malinche; Battle Fatigue; Peace. (57:40) Personnel: Diego Rivera, tenor saxophone; Art Hirahara, piano; Boris Kozlov, bass; Rudy Royston, drums. Ordering info: posl-tone.com



Giveton Gelin's searing trumpet obligatos.

Allen's "New Dawn" is a lovely ballad that possesses flavors from the past and futuristic sonorities, and if the intention here is to feature a sound reminiscent of Johnny Hodges and then John Gilmore, they succeed, as they do superbly throughout this Sun Ra revival. —Herb Boyd

Sun Ra's Journey: Care Free; Velvet; Free Ballad; Dancing Shadows; Eddie Harris; Discipline; Bouncing At Smalls; Skippy; New Dawn; Cosmic Hop; Love In Outer Space; Fate In A Pleasant Mood. (54:54)

Personnel: Tyler Mitchell, bass; Chris Hemingway, tenor saxophone; Nicoletta Manzini, alto saxophone; Giveton Gelin, trumpet; Farid Barron, piano; Wayne Smith, drums; Marshall Allen, EWI; Ron McBee, percussion; Elson Nacimento, percussion.

Ordering info: cellarlive.bandcamp.com

Saxophonist Jasper Dutz lead alto for Afro Latin Jazz debuts his ballads project *Ever After* inspired by the late Jimmy Heath



#### Ben Rosenblum piano & accordion

John Koozin bass Connor Parks drums



jasperdutz.bandcamp.com



#### Leap Day Trio Live At The Café Bohemia GIANT STEP ARTS \*\*\*\*

Recorded on Feb. 28 and Feb. 29, 2020, the gutsy, glorious album *Live At The Café Bohemia* pays homage to a storied New York club with daring, absorbing music. This is the evolution of exploratory stuff the Café Bohemia was known for when it was Charlie Parker's hang and Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers recorded there.

Parsing each of its nine tunes would diminish the satisfaction this long recording provides. Hear drummer Matt Wilson's "Dewey Spirit,"

#### Margherita Fava Tatatu INDEPENDENT RELEASE \*\*\*

Italy native Margherita Fava's debut album features refreshing cover versions of Thelonious Monk's "Rhythm-A-Ning" and the Kern-Hammerstein chestnut "All The Things You Are," but it's her six originals that make the album memorable. The form of this piano quartet is conventional (no surprise instruments or effects here), but the music feels fresh and new.

Driven by Fava's piano, with Greg Tardy on flute-like clarinet, "Bird Of Passage" is as much a rhythm section showcase as a solo display. The tune ebbs and flows, the players circling each other to rope in the listener. The song is partially composed, largely improvised and altogether seamless.

The multi-part, multi-mood "Resilience" finds Tardy on tenor saxophone, laying the foundation as Fava churns below him. Different rhythm lines add to the drama, and Fava tickles the tune to a close.

"Restless Mind" is the most abstract and daring track on this edgy, confident debut. Fava leverages her left hand in her solo, a gem of purpose and strength. It's enthralling to hear her his homage to mentor Dewey Redman; "Ghost Town," featuring saxophonist Jeff Lederer at his most lyrical; and "Gospel Flowers," a showcase for Lederer's command of breath.

The best example of this trio's ferocity may be "Strival For Survival." Lederer launches it with coiled, thick runs, ascending to supersonic embouchure-stretching before it begins its descent. Wilson and Jones provide the necessary rumble. Even silence is dramatic here.

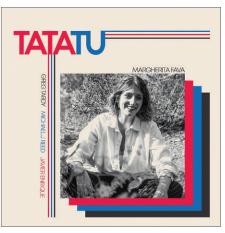
The album closes with the burly "For Friends," an occasion for Lederer to evoke the great tenor blowers of the past. Circular breathing, overblowing, honking — he integrates them all into his expressions. There's plenty of yawp and skronk, like his inspiration Albert Ayler used to display. At the same time, a bluesy sensibility grounds this group. No matter how "out" the improvisation, the Leap Day Trio finds its way home.

The Greenwich Village club reopened four months before this recording after being closed for 60 years. This album, beautifully produced by the band and engineer Jimmy Katz, seats you at a choice Café Bohemia table.

-Carlo Wolff

Live At The Café Bohemia: Dewey Spirit; Leap Of Faith; The Dream Weaver; Ghost Town; Strival For Survival; Leap Leap; Wind Spirit; Gospel Flowers; For Friends. (68:27) Personnel: Mimi Jones, bass; Jeff Lederer, tenor saxophone; Matt Wilson, drums.

Ordering info: giantsteparts.org

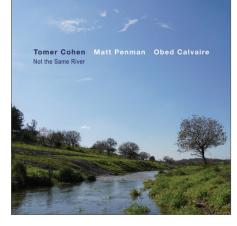


pace Reed and Enrique, quite the energy source themselves. Fava grounds the tune as Tardy spins lines of varying lengths and intensities.

"Hard To Say" begins with a circular, repeated Fava figure bedding Tardy's clarinet in a tune that unfolds like a conversation. A very pretty way to end such a well-rounded album. Don't miss Mark Stryker's succinct and insightful liner notes. —*Carlo Wolff* 

**Tatatu:** Face Off; Tidal Waves; Rhythm-A-Ning; Bird Of Passage; Resilience; All The Things You Are; Restless Mind; Hard To Say. (45:40)

Personnel: Javier Enrique, bass; Margherita Fava, piano; Michael J. Reed, drums; Greg Tardy, tenor saxophone, clarinet. Ordering info: margheritafava.com



#### Tomer Cohen Not The Same River HYPNOTE \*\*\*½

Although Israeli guitarist Tomer Cohen's debut album is out on the Belgian Hypnote label, certain ECM-ish qualities and resonances are hard to avoid. Among those echoes are a minimalist typeface and a nature-themed photograph gracing the cover — and, more importantly, musical echoes of such classic ECM guitar trio models as the Gateway albums (with John Abercrombie, Dave Holland and Jack DeJohnette) and Pat Metheny's own debut album, *Bright Size Life*, the renewably important influence in modern jazz guitar trio mode.

Raised on a kibbutz in Israel, Cohen, now all of 25, is now very much plugged into life in New York, studying at the New School and circulating with high-level Gotham musicians, including his superb trio-mates here: the poetic and flexible drummer Obed Calvaire and nimble bassist Matt Penman.

Folk elements and Middle Eastern/Israeli musical characters variously interact with Cohen's jazz foundation, as heard on the tender title track opening the set, the odd-metered "Connecting Dots" and the alternately pensive (with shades of Jim Hall and Gabor Szabo) and energetic trio discourse of "Empty?"

The quirky rhythmic puzzle in the 7/4 "Probably More Than Two" trips up foursquare groove analytics, but nonetheless contains an essential quality of moody introspection and searching harmonic voice heard more directly in the lilting "Sunrise" and the balladic finale, "First Laps." Cohen's first lap, solo discography-wise, makes a strong artistic statement, but one that also entails critical restraint and an organic melodic impulse at the center of his musical being. He's one to watch and listen for. —Josef Woodard

Not The Same River: Not The Same River; Connecting Dots; Hithadshut (Regeneration); Empty?; Pastures; Sunrise; Probably More Than Two; First Laps. (48:21) Personnel: Tomer Cohen, guitar; Matt Penman, bass; Obed Calvaire; drums.

Ordering info: hypnoterecords.com



Frank Gratkowski/ Simon Nabatov Tender Mercies CLEAN FEED \*\*\*\*

Luís Vicente 4tet House In The Valley

From its first batch of 2023 releases, here are a pair of contrasting albums from the Portuguese label Clean Feed.

Frank Gratkowski and Simon Nabatov are both entrenched in the Cologne scene, and have frequently played together in various settings. The live recording *Tender Mercies* was made in January 2022 at The Loft, one of Germany's leading alternative jazz and improvisation venues, which has its own in-house studio feeding into the performance space. Gratkowski commands an impressive array of alto saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet and a pair of flutes, changing his rate of rapidity with harsh clucks, high blasts and a curved hardness. Nabatov operates as a complete ensemble, his piano given to the many roles of rhythm, soloing and rainfall patterning.

The pair pace out notes and phrases in a careful relationship, Nabatov rippling high and thundering low, Gratkowski probing the limits of his horns. Reed friction and spittle-passage are closely caught by the microphones, as a gentle inquiry grows towards a scamper. Flute brings a spell of softness, then bass clarinet rips with percussive jaggedness, raw and writhing out of its restraints. Nabatov drops nervy patterns, and the duo possesses the powerful dexterity of dancing beasts. Gratkowski frequently switches horns during a piece, chasing an ideal palette. Nabatov splits his brain completely, setting out divergent lines with each hand, which of course complement or contrast with each other continually.

House In The Valley finds two Americans in

Portugal, tenor saxophonist John Dikeman and bassist Luke Stewart, joining up with trumpeter Luís Vicente's 4tet, which also includes the Dutch drummer Onno Govaert. It's another voluble live set, this time captured in Caldas da Rainha in July 2021. These are Vicente compositions, but largely having the feel of old-school free-jazz, very deftly organized.

House In The Valley has a big, tough sound. Dikeman indulges in cerebral roughhouse, while Govaert's drums are full-on, lashing and shimmering cymbals, kicking bass drum and rampaging sticks. Stewart is continually on the run, extremely low and fulsome in his strumming ecstasy. The second track has a firecracker bluster from the leader, with Stewart brutally at one with his instrument. A measured construction moves to a riled-up awakening, then a slow-motion passage with sparse horn-smears, and ultimately an acceleration to a climax delivered. This is Vicente at his most aggressive, his solo and trio works tending toward quiet tranquility. -Martin Longley

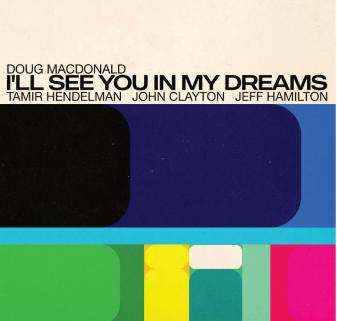
Tender Mercies: Turn Of Events; Tender Mercies; Safe Home; Cagey, Layers Of Disguise; Surfaces; Disgruntled Settlement. (49:57) Personnel: Frank Gratkowski, alto saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet, flutes; Simon Nabatov, piano.

House In The Valley: Anahata + Little Dance; Luísa's Laugh + House In The Valley. (67:15) Personnel: Luís Vicente, trumpet; John Dikeman, tenor saxophone; Luke Stewart, bass; Onno Govaert, drums. Ordering info: cleanfeedrecords.bandcamp.com

dougmacdonald.net

### New Releases From Dmac Music





#### Blues / BY FRANK-JOHN HADLEY

### A Good Case of the Blues

**45:50** ★★★★) Peter Case, often called a folk musician but really unclassifiable, has long been on close terms with the blues, from his days as a street performer in San Francisco in the 1970s through decades of a successful solo career. Among his 16 albums are tributes to Mississippi John Hurt and Sleepy John Estes. His new blues-tinged release features his distinctive singing, with its quality of emotional authenticity and his little-known piano playing (only one song centers on guitar, his primary instrument). At the keyboard, Case induces his own spare style, hitting just the right note of suspense, drawing inspiration from Thelonious Monk, Jimmy Yancey and session great Paul Griffin. He on occasion brandishes a blues harmonica. Not touring during the pandemic allowed the former power-pop hitmaker to give extra care to songwriting; the resulting tuneful songs tell of his instinct for conjuring poetic lyrics about idyllic escapes from conformity, romantic longing or reshaped memories. Ordering info: sunsetblvdrecords.com

Matt Andersen: The Big Bottle Of Jov (Sonic; 50:13 \*\*\*\*) Nova Scotia-based Matt Andersen's voice is trademarked by a bluesy soulfulness that anchors the genremixed music on the latest in a long string of albums he's made since the mid-aughts. Not given to histrionics, his singing has a breadth and constancy. Andersen's credibility as a blues guitarist is in good standing, too. Still another strong suite is composing. "How Far Will You Go." spurred by a killer riff, works as a call for a troubled person; just as appealing are several songs sizing up love. Three members of the gospel-trained singing Smith family are positioned in arrangements for maximum effect. They and the rest of Andersen's working band, which includes two keyboardists. sound modern and classic (evocative of the "Tulsa sound," etc.) at the same time.

#### Ordering info: sonicrecords.ca

Jimi "Primetime" Smith & Bob Corritore: The World In A Jug (VizzTone/ SWMAF; 42:12 \*\*\*\*) Near the high end of the best blues partnerships today, Jimi Smith and Bob Corritore have the songs of this archival collection - recorded at four sessions in recent years — carry solos and dialogs that show their unwavering commitment to Chicago blues. Singer and guitarist Smith has sterling pedigree: he grew up on the Chi-town scene in the '70s as the son of drummer-singer Johnnie Mae Dunson and as a guitar student of giants Jimmy Reed and Eddie Taylor. Throughout the album, he projects an absolute naturalness in complaints about soured romance. Corritore, who earned his stripes playing in Chicago clubs of the '70s and '80s,



brandishes his harmonicas with complete assurance. Songs penned by Smith or his mother are worthy of their talents. Nice surprise: a revival of Rex Garvin's '60s R&B single "Soul Food."

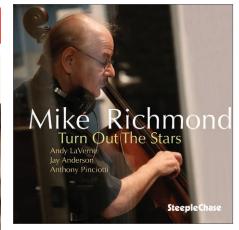
#### Ordering info: swmaf.org

The Cash Box Kings: Oscar's Motel (Alligator: 39:53 \*\*\*\*) The Cash Box Kings — a well-regarded old-school Chicago blues band founded by harmonica man Joe Nosek in 2001 and co-led by singer Oscar Wilson since 2007 — emphasize fun on their 11th album. That's all well and good - enjoy Howlin' Wolf-esque party romp "Oscar's Motel" and humorous "I Can't Stand You," where Wilson exchanges acidic guips with singer Deitra Farr. But the band makes its lasting impression channeling a deep sense of pained history into the music: "Nobody Called It The Blues" goes back to the cotton fields, and slow blues "Trying So Hard" packs a forlornness worthy of Muddy Waters. The album is tarnished just a bit by the wear on 60-something Wilson's vocal cords and Nosek's indifferent singing on "Hot Little Mess"

#### Ordering info: alligator.com

John Lee Hooker: Burnin' (Vee Jay/ Craft; 68:05 \*\*\*<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>) This reissued album, geared toward dancers in 1962, may not be gold-standard Hooker, but it's worth checking out. The icon's earthy voice casts its spell, and guitar lines get down to business. Motown's Funk Brothers, including bassist James Jamerson and two saxophonists, join in. To their credit, they aren't thrown off by Hooker's musical guirks, "Boom Boom" is the famous pop and blues chart hit, here in both its stereo and mono versions, as are 10 more songs. Hearing is believing: Latin-flavored "Keep Your Hands To Yourself," modeled on The Champs' 1958 #1 hit "Tequila," has fearsome and possessive Hooker warning guys to stay away from his gal as she does the Watusi. DR





#### Mike Richmond Turn Out The Stars STEEPLECHASE \*\*\*\*

Playing cello, rather than his regular bass, allows Mike Richmond to play "on top," and with considerably more freedom.

The lineage of jazz cellists is a curious one, solidly established by Oscar Pettiford, Ray Brown and Ron Carter, but more recently taken up by the avant-garde. Given the focus here on Bill Evans material, it's tempting, if idle, to wonder what Scott LaFaro might have done with this material on the smaller instrument, had he taken that path. Idle, because Evans' music sits most comfortably in the piano trio idiom and it's always been hard (and sometimes unrewarding) to transfer it to other forces.

Richmond has no qualms, though, and with Evans expert Andy LaVerne on the strength, he produces an album of interpretations that start with the elegantly sympathetic — "Waltz For Debbie," "Turn Out The Stars" — and reach for the revelatory on pieces like "Peri's Scope" and "B Minor Waltz," which seem to be reinvented rather than merely "covered"; the latter is re-conceived as a Czech folk tune in memory of bassist George Mraz, who passed away a few months before the recording was made.

LaVerne is as excellent as his pedigree and billing would seem to promise, and both the doughty Anderson (who's been handed Richmond's regular gig) and Pinciotti play with insight and unfailing taste.

Stay tuned for the closing version of "You Must Believe In Spring," a tune Evans recorded only once, but made his own. The minor-key feel of the vamped coda is like Bill's spirit, back in the room. —*Brian Morton* 

Ordering info: steeplechase.dk

Turn Out The Stars: Mean To Me; Waltz For Debbie; Bill's Hit Tune; B Minor Waltz; Peri's Scope; Turn Out The Stars; Orbit (Unless It's You); You Must Believe In Spring. (62:00) **Personnel:** Mike Richmond, cello; Andy Laverne, piano; Jay Anderson, bass; Anthony Pinciotti, drums.



#### Sanah Kadoura Duality INDEPENDENT RELEASE \*\*\*\*

What a miracle to have Lebanese-Canadian drummer/bandleader Sanah Kadoura with us. I don't use "miracle" lightly: In 2017, Kadoura suffered a near-fatal brain injury that delayed, then profoundly informed, her debut album, the electrifying *Hawk Eyes* (2018).

One can draw a straight line from that roving album to her sophomore release, *Duality*. The nine compositions therein unveil a newly streamlined compositional voice, brought to life

by a taut band of Canadian and New York musicians. In "The Seer, The Soarer," a nearly neoclassical duet between soprano saxophonist Stacy Dillard and trumpeter Rachel Thierren eases into swaggering improvisations over Kadoura's hip-hop inspired backbeats. "Zaytoon" is a modal homage to Kadoura's native Lebanon, crowned by Dillard's intricate solos and scatting by vocalists Parham Haghighi and Joanna Majoko. The stately, somber title track takes flight during an epic duet between Dillard and clarinetist Virginia MacDonald, the latter an album standout for her eloquent, boundlessly creative solos.Kadoura chucks a curveball with "Rise," a neo-soul anthem and the only album number with lyrics.

Duality's genre syncretism is so seamless as to occasionally feel reverse-engineered. I'm somewhat more partial to the un-self-conscious rawness, and wildness, of *Hawk Eyes*. But for many listeners, *Duality* will decisively signal Kadoura's arrival as a bandleader of command, clarity and serious composerly chops.

—Hannah Edgar

Personnel: Sanah Kadoura, drums; Stacy Dillard, soprano saxophone; Rachel Therrien, trumpet, flugelhorn; Virginia MacDonald, clarinet, Joanna Majoko, vocals; Michael King, piano; Jonathan Michel, bass; Parham Haghighi, vocals; Flavio Silva, guitar. Ordering info: sanahkadoura.bandcamp.com

#### Mimi Fox Organ Trio One For Wes ORIGIN

Mimi Fox's One For Wes pays praiseworthy respect to Wes Montgomery for the jazz guitarist's centennial birthday. Sonic and performative attention to detail shine on the album's eight tracks. However, in reflecting on Fox's trio arrangement for this record — clean and softly buffed guitar, organ and drums — as well as music by Montgomery's own trio of the same makeup, it feels difficult not to conclude that this instrumental arrangement struggles to thrive as a gripping listening experience when confined to the studio.

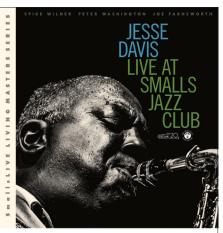
There's nothing wrong with slower, more minimalist jazz, as heard through the serenity Fox cultivates on the legato, brushstroke-laden "Judy's Song." Nor is there a lack of energy, as "Mr. White's Blues" and "Pack Of Lies" each provide lively grooves and more instrumental activity. On the latter, Lorca Hart moves far more around the kit, playing a very satisfying potpourri of drum colors amid songs that, by contrast, lean more on negative space to leave an emotional impression. The album even unveils a third dimension of variation in the final two tracks, "For Django, Avec Amor" and



the Beatles/Simon and Garfunkel dual medley of "In My Life/Old Friends."

Switching to acoustic guitar, Fox presents crisp and refreshing palate cleansers against the warmer tonality meant to salute Montgomery. Still, despite the poised musicianship heard throughout, *One For Wes* feels better suited for live performance heard in an intimate lounge while sipping a beverage of matching warmth and/or kick, while soaking up equal parts music and atmosphere. *—Kira Grunenberg* 

One For Wes: Mr. White's Blues; Moanin'; Blues For Les; Judy's Song; Pack Of Lies; Blues For Us; For Django, Avec Amor; In My Life/ Old Friends. (48:39) Personnel: Mimi Fox, electric and acoustic guitar; Brian Ho, Hammond B-3 organ; Lorca Hart, drums. Ordering info: originarts.com



Jesse Davis Heard on the recent release "The SmallsLIVE Foundation Living Master Grant presents Jesse Davis" on the Cellar Live label!



### Those who play them, know!

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Duality: The Gemini's; The Seer, The Soarer; Duality; Hidden Realities; Interlude–Old Friends; When It's Time; Zaytoon; Dijon'dres Dea; Rise, (36:25)



#### Tammy McCann Do I Move You? INDEPENDENT RELEASE \*\*\*½

Chicago vocalist Tammy McCann flexes her fusion muscles on her John Clayton co-produced LP *Do I Move You?* However, fusion doesn't speak solely to musical styles, as McCann delivers consistently emotive performances across 10 songs that also cover a wide range of sentiments, questions and experiences.

The title track leans into longing with an emotionally heated edge, and Fareed Haque's precise guitar work shines with pointed tonality between McCann's sultry verses. "Save Your Love For Me" also speaks from a romantic vantage point, but on the latter, McCann exercises performative nuance with a more demure, but no less affective, performance by contrast. The song's production also helps underscore its softer emotional tone, as more reverb around the guitar, Tom Vaitsas' piano and McCann's vocal decay give the music a more delicate personality overall.

McCann's decision to include a rendition of War's "The World Is A Ghetto" takes the record on an unapologetic detour from the smoothness of jazz and blues to the punctuation of percussive tones and a sobering melody bearing a flash of exposed sadness. McCann's clear delivery of the titular refrain is immensely satisfying opposite "Che" Rhymefest's spoken-word feature, which is praiseworthy for its lyrical honesty.

That McCann embraces even more contrast by placing Nina Simone's anguished "Blackbird" back-to-back with the Beatles' hope-laden track of the same name showcases how deliberate she was in the crafting of this album — one that exudes a confident blend of creativity and prudence. —*Kira Grunenberg* 

Ordering info: tammymccann.com

#### Marc Ducret Palm Sweat: Marc Ducret Plays The Music Of Tim Berne SCREWGUN/OUT OF YOUR HEAD \*\*\*1/2

On *Palm Sweat*, French guitarist Marc Ducret joins the growing company of musicians who have recorded a complete album of Tim Berne's music. The alto saxophonist's labyrinthine compositions, and his forceful performances, could be daunting challenges for interpreters, who must not only make themselves at home with demanding material, but also propose a conception independent from the originator's.

Ducret, however, was not intimidated. He has been performing in Berne's groups for more than 30 years, which is plenty of time to find ways to assert his personality within them. As he prepared to leave New York ahead of the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, Berne handed him some sheet music of the pieces had been recorded previously. Ducret had plenty of time to figure out what he wanted to do with them. The result is not an album of guitar solos, but an ambitious multifaceted statement that has used a collage approach, studio resources and contributions from wind and string players.

Saturated power chords open "Gurls/Palm Sweat/Mirth Of The Cool," which is one of three lengthy tracks that use overdubbing and cut-and-paste assembly techniques to reimagine Berne's music as bristly prog-rock. Initially

#### **Various Artists** *Transmissions From Total Refreshment Centre* <sup>BLUE NOTE</sup> **\* \* \***<sup>1/2</sup>

Made up of seven tracks from seven distinct units, these songs transmit from *Total Refreshment Centre*. Located in London, the space has been home to a variety of sounds collected under labels like jazz and hip-hop, but one also gets the sense that the most important genre is community.

Founder Lex Blondin established the center to connect artists to others, providing performance space and a recording studio, as well as a location for artist workshops. The music emanating from that community is represented in this compilation, which ranges across the many soundscapes but lands deep in the heart of rhythm and groove, a consistent vibe.

—Joshua Myers

**Personnel:** Betamax, drums; Danalogue, keyboards; Tom Herbert, bass; Poppy Daniels, trumpet; Keiron Boothe, vocals;



sounding like shattered-and-reassembled heavy metal, it shifts to decaying long-tones, and then stacked-up, cleanly articulated permutations of pole-vaulting intervallic leaps. On "Rolled Oats," which appears twice, Ducret uses an acoustic guitar to undertake more pithy and concentrated explorations. The tonal palette he uses is very much his own, and how much a listener enjoys this record may hinge upon how much they appreciate his taste in fuzztones and other effects. —*Bill Meyer* 

Palm Sweat–Marc Ducret Plays The Music Of Tim Berne: Curls/Palm Sweat/Mirth Of The Cool; Rolled Oats 2; Shiteless 1; The Iceman; Stutter Step; Rolled Oats; Shiteless 2; Static; About This Recording; (S7:20)

Personnel: Marc Ducret, electric and acoustic six- and 12-string guitars, four- and six-string bass guitars, prepared guitar, daxophone, percussion, daf, chains, suitase, voice, handclaps; Fabrice Martinz, trumpet, piccolo trumpet, flugelhorn, tuba; Sylvaine Hélary, alto flute; Christiane Bopp, trombone; Bruno Ducret, cello, voice, handclaps.

Ordering info: outofyourheadrecords.com

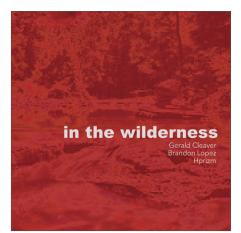


Byron Wallen, trumpet; Oli Langford, violin, viola; Danny Keane, cello; Tony Kofi, baritone saxophone; Tom Skinner, drums; Kielan Sheared, acoustic bass; Jake Long, drums; Tamar Osborn, baritone saxophone; Amané Suganami, synthesizer, Artie Zaitz, guitar; Twm Dylan, bass; Oli Haylett, guitar drone; Jonathan Enser, trumpet Miryam Solomon, vocals; Matt Davies, drums; Alex Hewes, double bass; Lyle Barton, piano; Rosie Turton, trombone; Jansen Santana, percussion; Joseph Murgatroyd, bass clarinet; Nick Richards, alto saxophone; Roman Klobe-Baranga, bass; Szabolcs Bognar, piano, synthesizers; Moses Yoofee, Rhodes, synthesizers; Noah Slee, vocals; Aduni Guedes, percussion, vocals; Ziggy Zeitgeist, drums; Nick Walters, trumpet; Neue Grafik, keyboards; Brother Poetrait, vocals; Xvngo, tenor saxophone; Akerya Seymour, voice, piano; Will Miller, sampler, trumpets, synth, piano; Lane Beckstrom, bass; Peter Manheim, drums; percussion; Jeremy Cunningham, drums, electronic drums; Sen Morimoto, saxophone.

Ordering info: bluenote.com

Do I Move You?: Grandma's Hands; Don't You Know I Care?; Do I Move You?; The World Is A Ghetto; Canaan Land; Save Your Love For Me; Feelin' Good; Blackbird (Nina Simone); Blackbird (The Beatles); A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing. (41:59) **Personnel:** Tammy McCann, vocals; Fareed Haque, guitar, sitar; Tom Vaitsas, Fender Rhodes, piano; John Sutton, bass; Samuel Jewell, drums; "Che" Rhymefest, spoken word (4); Justin Dillard, Hammond B-3 organ (1, 5); Kahil El'Zabar, cajón, talking drum, shakere (1, 4, 8); Richard Christian, tabla (4).

**Transmissions From Total Refreshment Centre:** Visions; Closed Circle; Crescent (City Swamp Dub); Eloquence; Isa; Black; Plight. (39:55)



Gerald Cleaver/Brandon Lopez/Hprizm In The Wilderness POSITIVE ELEVATION \*\*\*

#### East Axis No Subject MACK AVENUE/BROTHER MISTER \*\*\*\*

Detroit native Gerald Cleaver has been one of the most resourceful, versatile drummers in jazz and improvised music for three decades now, a musician of remarkable openness and curiosity who has routinely pushed against the strictures of his post-bop roots. Over the years he's easily moved between swing-based, free improvisation and electronic experiments and more, deploying an unimpeachable sense of pulse, a dazzling color palette and distinctly compositional thinking, in various admixtures. Two recent titles featuring his playing demonstrate his range, one trafficking in electronics and hip-hop style production, while the other finds him injecting swinging propulsion within a fully improvised collective.

In recent years Cleaver has fully embraced electronic music, dropping a series of recordings that reveal his gifts for meditative ambient sounds. *In The Wilderness* is a collective effort with double bassist Brandon Lopez and producer Hprizm, a founding member of the Antipop Consortium as High Priest and a core member of saxophonist Steve Lehman's spectral jazz-rap project Sélébéyone.

The sonic foundation comes from an improvised performance by the trio at the Forward Festival in New York in 2019, but the sounds have been heavily processed and chopped up by Hprizm, although there are some sections that go largely untouched, like "Mainsource C1." In most cases, though, the producer isolates and loops particular passages forged by his partners, such as the visceral, sawing arco pattern and the thudding breakbeat that throbs at the center of "Hallucinate," with Hprizm ladling spaced electronic tones over the groove. The album is primarily a showcase for the producer's vision, but regardless of how radical those transformations get there's no missing the deep pockets Cleaver carves, although elsewhere they're couched within a volatile, shape-shifting flow that would never cycle without an electric shift or tough accent.

His playing arrives in unmediated form on *No Subject*, the terrific second album by the collective quartet East Axis, with multi-instrumentalist Scott Robinson filling the chair previously occupied by Allen Lowe. Cleaver possesses a close rapport forged over decades with pianist Matthew Shipp, who shares the drummer's commitment to innovation formed within the crucible of tradition, and together with bassist Kevin Ray, they pull patterns, melodies and grooves out of the air.

The rhythm section is sleek but strong enough to support Shipp's most bruising left-handed clusters. Robinson — a wildly flexible musician who's just as at home in the meticulously arranged music of Maria Schneider and the high-octane drive of the Mingus Big Band as he is blowing alongside Roscoe Mitchell is kind of the group's secret weapon, unleashing an array of horns in addition to his tenor saxophone that alternatively feeds the quartet's engine, slows it down or contributes contrapuntal variety. On a piece like the brooding "Sometime Tomorrow," Robinson gravitates toward a more serene lyricism, while his searing overblowing on "Decisions Have Already Been Made" pushes things into pure conflagration. —Peter Margasak

In The Wilderness: Mainsource A; T Top; Hopoff; Rama; Blowback; Hallucinate; Mainsource C; GLP3; GLP1; GLP; Ono; Mainsource C1. (40:00)

Personnel: Hprizm, electronics; Brandon Lopez, bass; Gerald Cleaver, drums.

Ordering info: perecs.com

**East Axis:** At the Very Least; I Like It Very Much; Somebody Just Go In, Please; Sometime Tomorrow; Decisions Have Already Been Made; Metal Sounds; Excuse My Absence; I Take That Back; To Be Honest; Word And Respect; See What You Think; No Subject. (69:37)

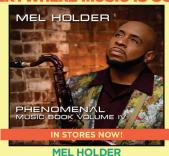
**Personnel:** Gerald Cleaver, drums; Kevin Ray, bass; Scott Robinson, tenor saxophone, alto clarinet, tarogato, trumpet, slide cornet; Matthew Shipp, piano.

Ordering info: mackavenue.com

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Arranged by Michel Freidenson Produced by Arnaldo DeSouteiro

#### Indie / by anthony dean-harris

### Individualistic Endeavors

There's something strikingly individualistic about this month's independent releases: big band albums with particular arrangements working with and against history, a chordless trio with big ideas, a singer-songwriter seemingly bigger than genre constrictions, globetrotting guitarists who strive to find bigger things in their instruments. There is an attempt at grandiosity when adding to a century-old genre, especially when doing it without major support outside of one's immediate community. Such an endeavor is big in itself, irrespective of the resulting artistry.

Drummer Steve Fidyk leads the Live Wire Broad Band on his fourth album as a leader, *Red Beats* (Blue Canteen; 55:32  $\star \star \star \frac{1}{2}$ ). a surprisingly strong big band album. It has some swing and bounce to it that gives it a bit of that cut above the rest. It bends the boundaries of the genre, though it doesn't necessarily break them. Moments like the pointedly meandering guitars near the end of "Churn" or Brian Charette's organ solo on "Loopholes" in time with guitarist Michael Kramer's arrangements give the idea that maybe there's a little more to this group and their arrangements than meets the eye. Fidyk's pulling ideas from everywhere to craft a big band album with a forward-thinking sound, and it shows. The new-age synths melding with his drum solo at the end of "Food Court Drifter" aren't the kind of sounds you hear every day. Ordering info: bluecanteenmusic.com

Multi-instrumentalist Jay Lawrence's Payin' My Dues (Jazz Hang; 58:01 \* \*<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>) is a rather conventional big band album. It's not breaking any boundaries with the format or trying to do anything more than swing, which might just be enough for some folks. Even the ensembles run at Bossa Nova, "Cai Dentro," doesn't move the needle much past capital "P" Pleasant. There's a sheen of the conventional in its production, like in the chronological journey "Precipice Of Eternity" that at times sounds like it's someone who misheard all the wrong lessons about '90s hip-hop through a game of Telephone. For swingers who want to cut a rug with safety scissors, "My Winsome Consort" has you covered to the point that Kenji Aihara's very nimble guitar solo unfortunately can't raise the energy past tepid.

#### Ordering info: jazzhangrecords.com

Harare, Zimbabwe-born, Toronto-based guitarist **Matt Greenwood**'s **Atlas (Independent Release; 48:21 \*\*\*\*)** definitely has a good idea of what a hook is. It doesn't take long into its 48-second intro, "Constellations," where one is wanting more and is ready for the ride Greenwood is taking us. These smart compositions seem to know exactly where to start and stop, and he seems to always have the right drummer to pull this off,



particularly in Dhaivat Jani on the bulk of the middle of the album. It's a balanced, contemporary kind of guitar-led album akin to Gilad Hekselman, Mike Moreno, or Rotem Sivan.

#### Ordering info: mattgreenwood.bandcamp.com

Bassist **Max Johnson**'s trio album **Orbit Of Sound (Independent Release; 49:46**  $\star \star \star 1/2$ ) alongside tenor saxophonist/flutist Anna Webber and drummer Michael Sarin is a neat, tight, lean collection of five compositions that feel directed in their free improvisation. Sprawling tunes like "Over/Under" or the 16-minute "The Professor" have their weighty sections and turns after their crescendos, but it's neither stuck on tracks as much as it isn't searching for a point. Johnson's compositions are clear in their form, and Webber and Sarin are capable accompanists who can build on these ideas so that the three of them can make truly gripping music.

#### Ordering info: maxjohnson.bandcamp.com

British multi-instrumentalist Oscar Jerome's sophomore album, The Spoon (Independent Release; 47:53 \*\*\*\*), feels like an album right in line with work from King Krule, Jonah Yano or Frank Ocean. It's the kind of genreless release the kids are listening to these days that can only be birthed from catholic ears and interests. That raucous energy shutting down "Feed The Pig" is perfect, and Theo Erskine's saxophone is that boisterous, full sound. The drums, whether from Ziggy Zeitgeist, Ayobami Salawu or Sam Jones, are flavors of perfect boom-bap, like sea salt, onion salt and garlic salt. Gareth Lockrane's flute on "Channel Your Anger" and "Hall Of Mirrors" is the fluttery energy that demands attention. This is the kind of ensemble production that is so well made, it's part of what defines the year in which you heard it. DR Ordering info: oscarjerome.bandcamp.com



#### **Zy The Way** A Different Destiny JAZZY COUSCOUS \*\*\*<sup>1/2</sup>

After working the Taipei jazz circuit for more than three years, this Taiwanese/American sextet released *A Different Destiny*, its first non-single release, in February. It's a tight one. There are just three songs on this EP, five if you count the two reinterpretations of opener "Small Stars" — one house remix and one reorchestrated version featuring TPO, a Taipei-based jazz orchestra directed by Zy The Way reedist Jim Geddes.

But this half-hour debut punches far above its weight. Written by pianist Matthew Fullen and arranged collectively by the group, the three compositions on *A Different Destiny* are based upon excerpts from a poetry collection compiled by Confucius in the 5th century B.C.

Zy The Way's reimaginings imbue these ancient texts with a fizzy cosmopolitanism. "Small Stars" is the clear stunner, the swaying serenity of Caitlin Magee's dreamy vocals (the whole album is sung in Chinese) and Fullen's piano ostinatos betraying tension brewing just below the surface. They occasionally crest in the form of a brambly solo by Fullen and indignant interruptions by Geddes' contrabassoon, his playing on flute and saxophone overdubbed throughout the track. Gebbes' woodwind layers also sheathe "Joyful Gentleman," the ensemble evoking the poem's smiling, tender verses with a breezy 6/8 lilt. The bebop-like syncopations of "Rainbow" make way for various instrumental solos over a walking groove plucked out by bassist Derrick Lin and lithe fills from drummer Steven Ma.

The whole endeavor might seem overly manicured were it not so dang infectious.

—Hannah Edgar

A Different Destiny: Small Stars; Joyful Gentlemen; Rainbow; A Different Destiny; Small Stars (redux #1); Small Stars (redux #2). (33:32)

**Personnel:** Caitlin Magee, vocals; Jim Geddes, woodwinds, effects; Matthew Fullen, piano; Derrick Lin, bass; Steven Ma, drums; Bruce Tsai, poetry reading, visuals.

Ordering info: jazzycouscous.bandcamp.com



Jake Baldwin Misc. Items SHIFTING PARADIGM \*\*\*\*

These compositions are refreshing. Emotionally driven, but not tied down into any single emotion, *Misc. Items* delivers a beautiful collection of music.

This is Twin Cities trumpeter Jake Baldwin's second album as leader, the follow-up to his 2021 debut *Where You're Planted*. The drummer

#### Ethnic Heritage Ensemble Spirit Gatherer: Tribute To Don Cherry SPIRITMUSIC \*\*<sup>1/2</sup>

Through a steady churn of personnel, Chicago percussionist Kahil El'Zabar has maintained his trio Ethnic Heritage Ensemble for five decades, clinging to a model rooted in the thumb piano-driven innovations of the great Kelan Phil Cohran. While no lineup has ever matched the lyric interplay achieved with reedists "Light" Henry Huff and Edward Wilkerson Jr., the group has been a pivotal part of its leader's output.

In February 2022, El'Zabar, trumpeter Corey Wilkes and baritone saxophonist Alex Harding (the lineup since 2019) convened to pay homage to metamusician Don Cherry, with the added assistance of Los Angeles singer Dwight Trible and keyboardist David Ornette Cherry, the honoree's oldest son, who himself passed away in November of last year at age 64.

For those familiar with Ethnic Heritage Ensemble, there aren't too many surprises. The group tackles a number of post-bop standards by Cherry, Ornette Coleman, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders, while the leader's original tunes generally adhere to hypnotic meditations built around kalimba ostinatos, although pieces like "Bop On" and "Evocation" deliver loose-limbed free-bop.

There are moments of tender beauty, such

from that album, Adam Harder Nussbaum, is joined by Toivo Hannigan on guitar, with bassist Cody McKinney rounding out that band. All the compositions are Baldwin or Hannigan originals. But here, Baldwin is the only horn player. And there is no piano.

As Baldwin relays in the album's notes, the choice of electric bass absent the piano gave space for the "openness and spatial textures" of these compositions. Hannigan's phrasings and Baldwin's inviting trumpet lines pull the listener into that haptic embrace.

Composed by Hannigan, "Garfield Ave" measures up to the demand that we feel, without being demanding.

*Misc. Items* feels less miscellaneous than an intentional effort marking not only a transition to a new sound, but one that is marking a unique terrain of feeling and texture. In inviting us to reach and touch, Baldwin is asking us to surrender to the soft power of sound.

—Joshua Myers

Misc. Items: To No One's Surprise; Garfield Ave; Big Baby; Holds Water; Bad Wolf; Dune; Doomsday Blues; Manipedi Pt. 1; Manipedi Pt. 2; Misc Items. (46:50) **Personnel:** Jake Baldwin, trumpet; Toivo Hannigan, guitar; Cody McKinney, electric bass; Adam Harder Nussbaum, drums. **Ordering info:** shiftingparadigmrecords.com



as the sorrowful trumpet line that cuts through the keening baritone explorations following Trible's velvety vocalese turn on "Lonely Woman," but too often the performances meander, with the contributions by Cherry never entirely gelling with the trio and Trible's lugubrious delivery sounding tired more than solemn. El'Zabar has shown an impressive spark on his last couple of records, but the lack of focus here suggests that he's nearly exhausted this trio's possibilities. —*Peter Margasak* 

Personnel: Kahil El'Zabar, percussion, balafon, kalimba, voice; Corey Wilkes, trumpet, spirit bowls, percussion; Alex Harding, baritone saxophone; Dwight Trible, voice; David Ornette Cherry, piano, melodica, douss'n gouni.

Ordering info: spiritmuserecords.com



Spirit Gatherer-Tribute to Don Cherry: Don Cherry; Lonely Woman; Evocation; Degi-Degi; Sketches Of A Love Supreme; Bop On; Holy Man; Well You Needn't; The Opening; Harvest Time; Spirit Gatherer. (75:37)

#### REED SCHOOL Woodshed > MASTER CLASS



Adam Larson advises sax players to practice intervals and overtones.

### Integrating Large Intervals into Your Saxophone Solos

The octave key is God's gift to the saxophone and saxophonists, alike. The saxophone's range has been a point of fascination for me from the time I first began my journey toward becoming a professional saxophonist. In this day and age, most saxophonists have cultivated a sound that is inclusive of a nearly four-octave range, crafting melodies and ear-turning lines that span the full potential of the instrument.

My approach to practicing and integrating large intervals into soloing — through tried-and-true pedagogy developed over nearly 15 years of private instruction — consists of a heavy dose fundamental technical exercises that can be creatively applied and integrated over any song you may be working on. At the very worst, you will become a better saxophonist; at best, you may find yourself approaching improvisation in a way that mirrors some of our favorite saxophonists, both current and of the past.

As a young saxophone player, I can remember being drawn to technical studies, as they always provided me with instant feedback. I was either getting better at them or I wasn't, and it helped inform the next practice session. My first saxophone teacher, Larry Harms, taught me a way of working through interval training that has become one of the primary ways I have practiced during the technique portion of my practice routine for nearly 20 years. Using the "four directions" approach, I worked my way through practicing intervals all ascending, all descending (while ascending), ascending/descending (up/down) and descending/ascending (down/up) starting with diatonic thirds, going all the way through octaves.

The concept is rather easy when applied to diatonic thirds but gets progressively more difficult as applied to larger intervals. Take Figure 1 (up/down fourths diatonic to C major) as a good example: If you practice up/ down fourths, your ear is more than willing to accept a descending or ascending interval such as a third if you're not careful. Working your way through all of the intervals in major and melodic minor scales will help you feel comfortable with integrating larger intervals into your playing. As you go through the various intervals and modes of harmony, be sure to practice with clarity in mind and with a metronome marking that reflects that goal.

Working through intervals through the full octave in all four directions will take a considerable amount of time but is well worth the effort. It's also crucial to having success in the next, arguably more difficult step, which introduces the altissimo range. I'm frequently asked how to get better at the altissimo range of the saxophone, and my answer invariably falls into three distinct categories: overtones, technical exercises and fingering system. The latter is the one that everyone would like to believe is the solution to all of their problems. Unfortunately, the most boring of the threeovertones is both most important and most often overlooked.

Most saxophonists will be familiar with the quintessential text on the topic by Sigurd Rascher called Top-Tones for the Saxophone and I, too, worked out of this book as a young student. Like altissimo, I have found it imperative to consider the context in which we practice overtones. Most all saxophonists can relate to practicing overtones by playing the fundamental and producing the series of partials that exist in the overtone range for each note from the fundamental. After taking a lesson with Ben Wendel as a green freshman at MSM in 2008, he showed me a context in which to practice overtones via scales that required me to access the overtone series of multiple notes within a single scale to successfully play said scale.

Figure 2 is another exercise that I've found helpful to put overtones in another range of the saxophone. Start by playing palm D natural, and once you have your desired sound, without re-articulating, taking a breath or moving your embouchure, switch to fingering a G natural with the octave key. The goal should be to have the two pitches sound as close to the same as possible. As you make the switch from palm D to G natural, the pitch is likely to be very sharp, or, as you make the switch to fingering G natural, you end up producing the note G instead of the intended overtone. If the result is the former, typically this indicates biting and/or too much pressure being applied as you make the switch. If the latter, this usually indicates there is not enough support to move the air the way it needs to in order to produce the palm D sound. You can repeat this exercise throughout each of the palm keys, as well as below palm D for many half-steps. If you've ever heard a Michael Brecker solo, you've no doubt heard masterful examples of using these techniques in a highly melodic fashion.

Getting your intervals and overtones together gives you the best chance at putting it all together — to fully integrate the written range of the saxophone with the lauded altissimo register. The first thing I encourage students to do is to attempt practicing any of the diatonic or chromatic intervals into the altissimo. If you've never tried playing intervals in this range, you will learn several things about yourself very quickly. Every horn has different tendencies for intonation/tuning that correlate to various alitssimo fingering systems. Take careful note as to which movements produce the most troublesome spots, and shed those in a glacially slow manner.

Assuming that you've put in the work on the intervals and overtones, it's time to put some imagination into how you can use all of these elements as a part of your improvisation. I often tell my students when something becomes "easy," it is up to them to make it more difficult. For nearly everyone, the B-flat major scale would fall into the "easy" category and is a perfect place to begin conjuring up some ways to make practicing this scale more difficult. In Figure 3, you'll see the B-flat major scale written descending in the staff — a sound everyone has played too many times to count. In Figure 4, you'll see the same B-flat major scale descending but via an interval system that makes playing the scale extremely difficult. The system shown is to play the lowest available note of the scale — in this case B-flat below middle C - followed by the next descending note in the scale (concert A), played a seventh above (A in the staff). This system is repeated for the next two notes and then moved to E-flat in the staff and repeated until the tonic is repeated in the altissimo register. The shorthand naming of this system is "descending major scale by ascending diatonic seventh" and is barely usable on anything other than, perhaps, a ballad. However, in the next example (Figure 5), you'll see the same system with an adjustment that makes it a little more user-friendly. This system I refer to as "up a diatonic seventh, down a scale step."

At worst, you will become a stronger saxophonist if you choose to spend time with this information. At best, you might end up using it in your improvisation. Figure 6 shows the first of the two systems as applied to a ii-V-I progression in the the key of C. In measure 1, the first four descending notes of D dorian are played, followed by the first four descending notes of G7 and finally the first four notes of C major, descending. You'll notice that the hardest part of these three measures is moving from measure 1 to 2 - and for that, there is an easy harmonic fix via tritone substitution. In Figure 7, Db7 has been subbed for G7, and thus the voice leading makes it much easier to move between all three measures. Applying this concept over ii-V-I changes in the context of a tune can be a highly effective way of hearing the success, potential and viability of the sound. Figure 8 shows the system applied to a form based on the first 12 measures of the bridge to "Cherokee," a standard that many great saxophonists have been known to burn on. With the assistance of some rhythmic creativity and tritone substitution, the system effectively outlines the harmony, utilizes the full range of the instrument and provides some fresh melodic content.

It is not the intent to exclusively apply a single system to intervals while improvising. Rather, the goal should be to internalize interval study so deeply that you are able to create lines, motifs and improvisatory statements freely. This can only be done through diligently practicing all of the concepts thus discussed.

As one example of integrating a plethora of large intervals over the form of a commonly known standard, I have included the first 14 measures of an etude from my 2018 publication entitled *Leaps and Sounds: 12 Contemporary Etudes for Jazz Saxophone*, written over the changes of "Alone Together" (see Figure 9). It includes dozens of examples of integrating large intervals in a logical and melodic manner, and I hope this helps you on your journey toward mastering the range of the saxophone. DB



#### Figure 2



#### Figure 3



### Figure 4

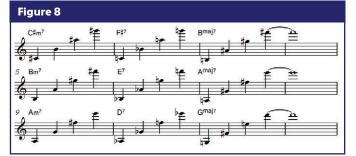


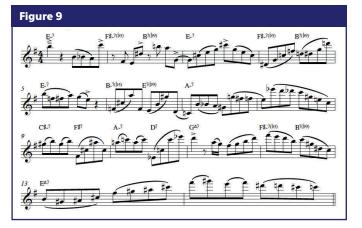


### Figure 6









Adam Larson is an American saxophonist, composer, educator and author currently residing in the Kansas City area. Larson holds BM and MM degrees in jazz performance from The Manhattan School of Music and was a part of the vibrant New York jazz scene for 11 years before relocating in 2019. Larson has been invited to present master classes on music business, improvisation and composition at more than 100 universities across the globe. He has recorded eight albums and maintains an active touring schedule playing his original music. Larson manages a diverse private lesson studio of online students in the U.S. and abroad, and he has authored 12 jazz etude books and created an online master class dedicated to developing technique called "Lightning-Fast and Crystal-Clean." Visit his website at adamlarsonjazz.com.

#### REED SCHOOL Woodshed > SOLO BY JIMI DURSO



### Henry Threadgill's Alto Sax Solo on 'Award The Squadtett'

hen the topic of wind player Hernry Threadgill is brought up, it's often for his compositional skills, which are certainly laudable. But that doesn't mean his improvisational abilities aren't worth a listen, or even a close examination. Here we have Threadgill's alto saxophone solo on "Award The Squadtett," from 1987's Easily Slip Into Another World (RCA Novus), transposed here for instruments pitched in E-flat. This section starts out in the key of A-flat major (concert B), somewhat of a difficult one for saxophone. It does modulate down to G, but then back to A-flat (and back to G again). The changes are mostly the same (your standard I-IV-ii-V, but without the VI in the A-flat major part), so it could appear to be a study in navigating a difficult key.

Except Threadgill doesn't play the same licks in the two keys, or even demonstrate any bad-ass chops across the keys. His solo moves in more of a stream-of-consciousness manner to its conclusion. But there are noteworthy elements that he develops through this improvisation.

For example, Threadgill starts out play-

ing one note (D# on the alto) for a full three bars, and then decorates the note with a half-step approach. Then we move into scalar motion (quoting the melody in measures 5–7). In bars 7 and 8 he kicks off the scales with ascending fifths. I've heard this called musical gravity, where a large leap in one direction is often countered with scalar motion in the opposite direction.

But not always. Threadgill starts violating this "rule" in bars 17–18, where we get leaps down and up. He did set this up by starting to incorporate larger intervals, like the minor third in bar 11, the fourths in the following measure, consecutive thirds in bar 15 and then a seventh in 16. So when the 10th and 11th show up in measures 17–18, they're not a total departure, more of an exaggeration.

Threadgill brings us back to scalar motion immediately. There are some larger intervals, though nothing more than a fifth, and the next line descends from a high F# to a low C, spanning two-and-a-half octaves. Having just come from the altissimo A-flat, Threadgill has just laid out the entire range he's using in this three-bar run.

Consecutive large intervals resurface in bar 26, and then Threadgill goes back to a mixture of small and large ones, exploring most of the horn's range in the process. Then, starting in measure 38 we get these massive leaps from below the staff to far above it, and those extreme intervals are not connected through any scalar motion. Threadgill is almost playing counterpoint with himself within the line, but in the highest, lowest and middle registers of his instrument.

This is really the climax of his improvisation. The final five bars have large intervals, but compared to what we just heard, they don't sound as large, though the squealing timbres he gets still keep the energy up (how would one even notate those sounds?). Threadgill has taken us on a journey from stepwise motion to intervallic jumps to compound (and ultra-compound) intervals. And he wraps it up with a tetrachord (four consecutive notes of a scale) and an octave jump. **DB** 

Jimi Durso is a guitarist and bassist based in the New York area. He recently released an album of Indian classical music played on the string bass, titled *Border Of Hiranyaloka*. Find out more at jimidurso.bandcamp.com.



#### Eastman Winds ETS852 52nd Street Saxophone Ergonomic, Fat-Sounding Premium Tenor Designed in Collaboration with Bob Mintzer

**E** a stman Winds has further refined its 52nd Street saxophone into a high-end artist instrument with the introduction of the ETS852, developed exclusively with jazz artist Bob Mintzer. The highly responsive new tenor features premium specs and has a powerful core sound that's solid and complex enough to satisfy the demands of advanced players and capture the attention of serious jazz listeners in any size room.

The 852 tenor features the exclusive DS Mechanism found on Eastman's 800 series Rue Saint-Georges saxophones, which makes the keywork precise and stable. The model also includes design elements found on Eastman's 600 series 52nd Street saxophones, including a large bell flare, rolled-style tone holes and the signature 52nd Street unlacquered finish.

In their mission to create the perfect tenor, Mintzer and the Eastman team designed a new tenor saxophone neck, designated as "M" for Mintzer, to pair with the 852 and give players a broader, more open neck option. The new model comes equipped with the new M neck, along with the standard 52nd Street "S" neck, giving players more choices and expanding their overall tonal palette.

"The neck is critical for sure," said Mintzer, who has been an endorser of 52nd Street saxophones for 10 years. "The difference was, it was a little freer blowing but very rich in sound. I found some of the other necks we tried to be a little bit too resistant. There's that sweet spot where it's not too free-blowing, but you're not killing yourself to execute things, and I think we found a nice, happy medium."

Ryan Richman, vice president of Eastman Music Co., described the 852 as "very open, free blowing, and fat and round sounding. At one point during the development process, Bob said to me, 'I just want the notes to fall out' of the saxophone. So we worked on making it more open and more free blowing without losing the center core."

Eastman's 800 series of professional saxophones feature a variation on the rolled-style toneholes that have been on 52nd Street models since their debut in the early 2010s. "We draw the metal up, flatten the chimney of the tonehole and put a crown or roll on top that will add some mass and give you a wider surface for the pad to sit upon," Richman said. "But we only do it on the bottom half of the 852. Where the righthand stack is offset from the upper stack where the action is balanced, that's where we start adding the rolled-style toneholes. We've taken them off the top of the instrument. Bob felt that it had better response in the high register by removing some of the weight from the top."

The other great feature of the 852 is the ergonomics of its keywork. "It has this clever new key system that Eastman developed with a flute maker from Wm. S. Haynes," Mintzer said. "There's a huge difference between this new key system and any other saxophone I've ever played. It's super comfortable, quiet and smooth." The instrument features extra key padding to minimize mechanical noise and quell unwanted vibrations.

Mintzer and Eastman also experimented with different size bells, settling on a slightly larger bell than other models in the 52nd Street line. There are also some differences in the materials used to craft the

horn's hand-hammered, braised sheet-brass body, neck and bell. Those changes were made to help replicate the sound of vintage pre-war American-made saxophones that many professional players seek, according to Richman.

"The 52nd Streets in general have a big bottom, and I think the slightly larger bell takes that even further," Mintzer said. "The low notes just pop out, and the horn has this massive sound without having to work too hard. I conduct the WDR Big Band, and the conductor's podium is pretty far away from the trumpets, who are up on a riser in the back. And those guys were commenting on how my sound projects and how big it seems from even way back there. That's always a good sign."

Eastman's 852 52nd Street tenor is made in a company-owned manufacturing facility in Bazhou, China, which allows for a level of quality control that's appropriate for such a finely appointed instrument.

With a street price of just over \$5,000, the Eastman ETS852 52nd Street tenor saxophone is a steal of a deal for professional players who want a

reliable instrument that will inspire them to new creative heights.

"I'm looking to play a saxophone where I'm not thinking at all about the instrument, where I'm just kind of feeling the music without one iota of thought about the horn," Mintzer concluded. "In order to have that happen, you have to have an instrument that works extremely well, easily, and smoothly. I've played all kinds of different instruments, from the good old Conn 10Ms to vintage Selmer Mark VIs that I played for years — but this horn really allows me to forget about the fact that I'm playing a saxophone." —*Ed Enright* eastmanwinds.com

#### **REED SCHOOL** Toolshed > GEAR BOX

#### **1. Find Your Perfect Reed**

D'Addario Woodwinds' online Reed Finder is an interactive tool designed for saxophonists and clarinetists to find the perfect reed for their set-ups. In partnership with Cartful Solutions, D'Addario designed a recommendation engine that sifts through hundreds of reed possibilities to align with each player's needs. Players answer a series of questions about their instrument, playing conditions and style, allowing the Reed Finder to generate the list of ideal reeds. Questions cover instrument type, genre, ensemble type, desired tone and mouthpiece brand. Users receive their results with a "Best Match," as well as other viable options. More info: daddario.com

#### 2. Save Your Thumb

Key Leaves' Rulon saxophone rest is a compact, ergonomic device that replaces the traditional saxophone thumb hook, reduces pain and makes saxophones easier to hold for players with a wide variety of hand and finger sizes. The Rulon reduces hand stress and fatigue with a hookless, adjustable rest plate that promotes a neutral and relaxed hand position. It screwmounts quickly onto the sax, and players can adjust it left for large/extra-large grips or right for small/extra-small grips. It's is available in 24 karat gold plate, lightweight carbon fiber, engraved raw brass, classic black plastic or a wood trial version. The Rulon fits Selmer, Yamaha and most other makes of soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophones; sizes for Yanagisawa and Cannonball saxophone are available in raw brass. More info: keyleaves.com

#### 3. Chro Harp Method

Sher Music has released a new, expanded version of its comprehensive *Method for Chromatic Harmonica*. The 240-page book includes a play-along CD download to practice with. Each track features one version with author Max De Aloe playing the tune or exercise, and one without. Full of tunes to practice (including two Toots Thielemans solos), arpeggio and scale studies, sound production tips and special harmonica techniques, *Method for Chromatic Harmonica* contains hundreds of exercises to develop technical proficiency and melodic fluency in every key.

#### More info: shermusic.com

#### 4. Cleaner, Drier Gear

Superslick's new Silk Swabs are woven from 100% Habotai silk and utilize lead-free weights. The swabs are soft, absorbent and gentle, and are washable and reusable. They are safe to use on the outside and inside surfaces of woodwind instruments, necks and mouthpieces. **More info:** americanwaymktg.com

#### 5. Presto Protection

Gator Cases' new Presto series are crafted with molded ABS plastic to support delicate horns and string instruments. Featuring a pewtercolored exterior, the cases protect instruments from drops and bumps while also sporting a professional appearance. They are available for trumpet, alto saxophone, trombone, French horn and violin. More info: gatorcases.com



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Mike Stern and Bill Evans in concert at Jazzfest Bonn.



### AGE, A NUMBER ... TO CELEBRATE

**F** or many, it's been a long, hard winter, and we could just as easily be talking about Los Angeles as the Midwest or Canada with this year's crazy weather patterns. But the budding trees of spring are giving way to what we all hope is an endless summer, one packed with sun, fun and festivals.

In the following pages, there are just a few (more than 130) suggestions of what to do on the festival front this summer, all packed with common themes — great locales, food, drink and, especially, music.

This year's jazz festival circuit is chock-full of special events, with artist dedications and anniversary celebrations aplenty.

For starters, the Umbria Jazz Festival, that granddaddy of Italian jazz festivals, celebrates its 50th anniversary this summer in the heart of Perusia. What began as a little experiment in an area off the beaten path of jazz has become one of the world's true showcases for the art form, as you will read on page 92.

Umbria is not alone in celebrating 50 years. Ulrichsberger Kaleidophon in Ulrichsberg, Austria, has staged 37 festivals, but was organized 50 years ago. And another Italian fest, Ravenna Jazz in Ravenna, Italy, also raises the flag on its 50th anniversary.

A handful of other festivals join in with 40-year anniversaries, including the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival in Vermont, the French Quarter Festival in New Orleans, the San Francisco Jazz Festival and the TD Victoria International Festival in Canada.

Turning 30 this summer, we have the Guelph Jazz Festival in Canada and the North Atlantic Blues Festival in Rockland, Maine.

Those celebrating their silver jubilees (25th anniversary) include the Menorca Jazz Festival in the Balearic Islands of Spain, the Enjoy Jazz festival in Heidelberg, Germany, the Twin Cities Jazz Festival in St. Paul, Minnesota, and the Healdsburg Jazz Festival in California. Check out the terrific feature on page 84 about Healdsburg, its founder Jessica Felix and its current artistic director, Marcus Shelby.

Other events with a little something extra to cheer about include the Rochester Jazz Festival in New York at 20, and three other festivals celebrating their 10th anniversaries: Montavilla Jazz Festival in Portland, Oregon, as well as the Berkshire Gateway Jazz Weekend and the Springfield Jazz & Roots Festival, both in Massachusetts.

Not to be left out, there are momentous celebrations on the artist side, too. The Indy Jazz Festival will celebrate the centennial of guitar legend Wes Montgomery, a favorite son of Indianapolis.

Trumpeter Steven Bernstein celebrates the 25th anniversary of his band Sexmob with a tour that will be hitting several stops on the festival circuit.

And Shakti — that amazing musical amalgamation formed by guitarist John McLaughlin and percussionist Zakir Hussein — will be celebrating the group's 50th anniversary with tour stops around the globe.

Finally, at the end of this year's Monterey Jazz Festival, Tim Jackson, its longtime artistic director, will step down. He and his team deserve our thanks for doing amazing work out there in Northern California, and chances are very good that the festival will send him off with an event to be remembered for the ages. **DB** 

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#### Pittsfield CityJazz Festival Pittsfield, Massachusetts April 21-30

A combination of free and ticketed events, Pittsfield CityJazz Festival features marquee talent, rising artists, young prodigies and local groups. Most events are free, with reduced prices for students and educators. The capstone event occurs on Aprril 30, and celebrates International Jazz Day.

LINEUP: Ticketed events: Anton Kot (who headlined the Litchfield Jazz Festival at the age of 20) brings his quartet with Don Braden; The Emmet Cohen Trio with "boss tenor" Houston Person will cap the festival on International Jazz Day. Free events: local artists populate the annual Jazz Crawl; a new jazz prodigy appears, violinist Conor McMillen; a jam session and swing dance round out the 10-day festival. berkshiresjazz.org

#### Delaney Chevrolet Westsylvania Jazz and Blues Festival Indiana, Pennsylvania May 26-27

Friday night, indoor ticketed headliner. Saturday, open-air festival free to the public includes educational, regional and national acts in both jazz and blues. The fest happens about an hour outside of Pittsburgh, so come hear great American music in a great American town.

LINEUP: Previous acts have included Sean Jones, Poogie Bell, Sonny Landreth, Shawn Maxwell, Richie Cole, Warren Wolf, The Commonheart, Hugo Cruz, The New Mastersounds, Joanna Connor, The Gentlemen Brawlers and others. westsylvaniajazzandblues.org

#### Blue Note Jazz Festival New York New York, New York May 31-July 2

With jazz at its vibrant core, Blue Note Jazz Festival in New York has maintained its historical excellence while providing audiences with a range of dynamic, culturally rich experiences and top artistry. The festival offers unforgettable shows by outstanding jazz, soul, hip-hop, R&B and funk players, trailblazers and influencers.

LINEUP: Pat Metheny, Chucho Valdés & Paquito D'Rivera, Ron Carter, Soulive, Talib Kweli & The Whiskey Boys and Harlem Gospel Choir. More to be announced. bluenotejazzfestival.com

#### Burlington Discover Jazz Festival Burlington, Vermont June 7-11

Burlington Discover Jazz Festival — produced by the Flynn and presented by New England Federal Credit Union — marks its 40th year, bringing together local and touring artists to celebrate community and the future of jazz. The festival features free events citywide, student bands, waterfront concerts and marquee performances at the Flynn.

**LINEUP:** Lakecia Benjamin is curating the 2023 festival. Best New Artist Grammy-winner Samara Joy opens the festival on June

7. Local singer-songwriter Myra Flynn plays the Flynn Main Stage on June 11. flynnvt.org

#### Berkshire Gateway Jazz Weekend Lee, Massachusetts

June 9-11

A combination of indoor and outdoor, free and ticketed events, this 10th annual Berkshire Gateway Jazz Weekend takes place in downtown Lee, "the Gateway to the Berkshires." There's al fresco jazz in the park in front of the iconic Lee Congregational Church, where the ticketed concerts take place. Jazz brunches and other special events are on the festival's home page.

LINEUP: Headliners include Alexis Cole with the Amherst Jazz Orchestra and Roberta Donnay and the Prohibition Mob Band. berkshiresjazz.org

#### Vision Festival New York, New York June 12-18

Vision Festival celebrates its 27th annual event with in-person and online performances at Roulette Intermedium and The Clemente in New York City. Bassist Joëlle Léandre will be honored for her lifetime of achievement.

LINEUP: Joëlle Léandre Lifetime Achievement, Gerald Cleaver's Black Host, Mark Dresser Septet, Mike Reed's Separatist Party, William Hooker's The Black Lives Suite, 75 Dollar Little Big Band, Hear In Now Extended, Kahil El'Zabar Ethnic Heritage Ensemble Don Cherry Tribute, Hamid Drake's Turiya: Honoring Alice Coltrane. artsforart.org/vision.html



Great music on the coast of Maine. Concerts to be held at the historic Camden Opera House, Camden Amphitheatre and Village Green, as well as receptions at harborside fine dining restaurants. Homey inns and bistro hotels, too — all within walking distance of this famously picturesque harbor.

LINEUP: Bill Frisell Trio, Grace Kelly, Staci Griesbach, UMaine Jazz Ensemble, Myles Kelly Trio and more. jazzinjunecamdenme.com

#### Syracuse Jazz Fest Syracuse, New York June 20-24

The 37th annual edition of this free-admission jazz festival returns to downtown Syracuse June 20–24. Three outdoor stages, 20 clubs, 30 groups and free admission to all events. This year's festival is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Ramsey Lewis, Joey DeFrancesco and Dr Jazz.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock, Gladys Knight, Spyro Gyra, Tower of Power, Post Modern Jukebox, Tuba Skinny, and SOMETHING ELSE! (featuring Vincent Herring, Randy Brecker, James Carter, Paul Bollenback, Dave Kikoski, Essiet Essiet, Jeff "Tain" Watts. syracusejazzfest.com

#### Clifford Brown Jazz Festival Wilmington, Delaware June 21-24

The Clifford Brown Jazz Festival is the largest free jazz festival on the East Coast. This year's festival will kickoff at the UAE Amphitheatre. The main stage opens on Wednesday with star-studded lineups. Following the main stage performances, jam sessions are hosted in local establishments.

LINEUP: Past lineups include Diane Reeves, Kenny Barron, Roy Haynes, Kirk Whalum, Jazzmeia Horn, The Bad Plus, Terri Lyne Carrington, Chucho Valdés and Chien Chien Lu. cliffordbrownjazzfest.org

#### **CGI Rochester International** Jazz Festival Rochester, New York, USA

#### June 23 - July 1

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the nine-day CGI Rochester International Jazz Festival is one of the world's leading jazz events, drawing 210,000-plus people annually to see more than 1,750 legendary artists and rising stars from around the world. The festival features more than 300 ticketed shows, free shows, nightly jam sessions and jazz workshops at some 20 venues around the city.

LINEUP: Pat Metheny Side-Eye, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Bonnie Raitt, Keb' Mo', Omara Portuondo, Bruce Hornsby & The Noisemakers, St. Paul & The Broken Bones, Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes, Artimus Pyle Band Celebrating Lynard Skynard. Pedrito Martinez, Matthew Whitaker, Samara Joy, Nduduzo Makhathini, Kurt Rosenwinkel Quartet, Houston Person & Eric Person "Person2Person," Christian Sands Quartet, Ms. Lisa Fischer, Joey Alexander Trio, Lionel Loueke & Gretchen Parlato, Tatiana Eva-Marie, Curtis Stigers, Gabrielle Cavassa, Camille Thurman with the Darrel Green Quartet, Chris Whiteman Trio, Tommy Gearhart, Cory Weeds Quartet, Tia Fuller Quintet, Tommy Smith, Nick Finzer Sextet, Chris Lewis & the Jon Ballantyne Trio, Neil Swainson Trio, Marc Broussard, Vincent Peirani, Chris Minh Doky All Stars, Bill Frisell Trio, Dear Marian: Laura Dubin Trio Plays Marian McPartland, NYChillharmonic. Joe Robinson. Catherine Russell. Los Angeles Jazz Orchestra, Richie Goods/ Chien Chien "Connected," Albino Mbie, B.D. Lenz Group, Victoria Victoria w/Charlie Hunter, Glen David Andrews, The Bossa Nova Wave Diego Figueiredo + Ken Peplowski, David Hazeltine Quartet, Emilie-Claire Barlow, The Baylor Project, Akiko Tsuruga Organ Group, Deanna Witkowski Plays Mary Lou Williams. Peter Johnson & Tommy Smith, Dawn Thomson & Gary Versace, Erez Aviram Ensemble,





Olli Hirvonen Group, Joona Toivanen/Jazz & Fly Fishing, Ralph Alessi "This Against That." Mark Guiliana Quartet, Diana Herold & Helium, Alexi Tuomarila Quartet, Jontavious Willis, Helen Sung Quartet, Joel Frahm Trio, Big Lazy, Luis Deniz Quartet, Dave Restivo Trio + Christine Jensen, Harry Allen Trio, Bill Goodwin Trio. Steve Smith & Vital Information. Vicki Kristina Barcelona, Celebrating Toots Thielemans with Kenny Werner & Gregoire Maret, American Patchwork, Bassel & The Supernaturals, Glen David Andrews, Mark Kelso & the Jazz Exiles. Los Angeles Jazz Orchestra. Airmen Of Note, Durham County Poets, Soul Stew, Al Chez & The Brothers of Funk, Eldorado Slim Featuring Scott Sharrard of Little Feat. rochesterjazz.com

#### Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival Saratoga Springs, New York June 24-25

The 46th edition of this legendary event features newly minted Grammy winners Bonnie Raitt, Samara Joy and Snarky Puppy, along with a stellar lineup. Two days and nights, two stages, artisan crafts, artist signings all on the majestic grounds of the Saratoga Performing Arts Center.

LINEUP: Bonnie Raitt, Snarky Puppy, Pat Metheny Side-Eye, Angelique Kidjo, Cory Wong, Tower of Power, St. Paul & The Broken Bones, Hiromi, Chucho Valdés Quartet, Cindy Blackman Santana Band, Samara Joy, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Emmet Cohen Trio, Claudia Acuña, Jupiter & Okwess, Melissa Aldana, Mark Guiliana, Carolyn Wonderland, Glen David Andrews, Nduduzo Makhathini, Skidmore Jazz Institute Faculty All-Stars Centennial Celebration of Wes Montgomery, Tito Puente & Dexter Gordon featuring Clay Jenkins, Jimmy Greene, Michael Dease, Dave Stryker, Bill Cunliffe, Todd Coolman and Dennis Mackrel. spac.org

#### LuLu Fest Lenox Lenox, Massachusetts July 14-15

Master classes, intimate dinner jazz and a headline concert, all featuring first-call, women-led bands. LuLu Fest had its genesis in Kingston, New York, where it spent 12 years as the Wall Street Jazz Festival. After morphing into LuLu Fest and spending seven years in Austin, the program is expanding to the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts.

LINEUP: Sara Caswell, Mary Ann McSweeney, Peggy Stern, Suzi Stern. Iulu-fest.com

#### North Atlantic Blues Festival Rockland, Maine July 15-16

Celebrating the 30th North Atlantic Blues Festival, held overlooking the picturesque Rockland Harbor, top names in blues music have been featured at this prestigious East Coast festival. Vendors will be selling a wide array of food, drinks and crafts. Saturday evening, Main Street is closed to traffic for the NABF Club Crawl.

LINEUP: Gabe Stillman, Jontavious Willis, Bernard Allison, Selwyn Birchwood, Shemekia Copeland, Chris Gill, Jureesa McBride with special guest Paul Nelson Kenny, Blues Boss Wayne, Joanna Connor, Mr Sipp, Southern Hospitality featuring J P Soars, Damon Fowler and Victor Wainwright. northatlanticbluesfestival.com

#### 92NY Jazz in July Festival New York, New York

July 18-27

New York City's longest-running jazz festival returns for five concerts on July 18, 20, 25, 26 and 27 under the helm of artistic director Bill Charlap. Jazz in July features one-night-only concerts encompassing a range of jazz styles in one of New York's most acoustically acclaimed halls.

LINEUP: Dee Dee Bridgewater, Aaron Diehl, John Scofield, Renee Rosnes, John Pizzarelli, Nicholas Payton, Bill Charlap Trio. 92ny.org/jazzinjuly

#### Springfield Jazz & Roots Festival Springfield, Massachusetts

#### July 21-22 This 10th annual free music festival features

regional, national and international musicians, youth arts groups, music education and family arts activities, all celebrating music of the African diaspora. Drawing visitors from throughout the Northeast to downtown Springfield, it unites the region's diverse cultural communities through music, arts, education and revelry.

**LINEUP:** Past performers have included Terri Lyne Carrington, Elio Villafranca, Tia Fuller, Joey DeFrancesco, Daymé Arocena, Etienne Charles, Pedrito Martinez, Claudia Acuña, Cory Henry & the Funk Apostles, Sweet Honey in the Rock and Taj Mahal. springfieldjazzfest.com

#### **Litchfield Jazz Festival**

#### Washington, Connecticut July 28-30

Set in the picturesque Litchfield Hills, the Litchfield Jazz Festival has been presenting high-quality music featuring top jazz artists and up-and-coming musical talent since 1996. Litchfield Jazz Festival offers a fun weekend of live music, art exhibits, artist talks and more.

**LINEUP:** Brandon Goldberg Trio with Goldberg, Ben Wolfe, Jimmy Macbride and special guest Don Braden; Ehud Asherie Trio with Asherie, Dezron Douglas, Jason Brown; Steve Nelson Quartet with Nelson, Rick Germanson, Charles Goold, Kiyoshi Kitagawa; Champion Fulton Trio with Fulton, Hide Tanaka, Fukushi Tainaka; Peter Bernstein Quartet with Bernstein, Sullivan Fortner, Doug Weiss, Al Foster Latin Jazz Brunch with David Dejesus Latin Jazz Band with Dejesus, Luques Curtis, Zaccai Curtis, Joe Beaty, Dave Ballou, Marcos Torres. litchfieldiazzfest.com

#### **Northeast Jazz & Wine Festival**

#### Syracuse, New York

#### **July 28-29**

Jazz and wine are the perfect pairing. Enjoy continuous music on three stages, great food, drink and fun in the heart of downtown Syracuse during Artsweek, the city's "festival of festivals."

LINEUP: Recent lineups include Camille Thurman, Raul Midon, Ricky Alexander, Jackiem Joyner, Delfeayo Marsalis, Huntertones, Will Donato and Althea Rene. nejazzwinefest.org

#### **Berkshire Jazz Showcase**

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

#### July 8

An all-day, free outdoor concert that presents a variety of jazz artists who make the Berkshires their home. Despite their prominence, there are few main stage events where local artists are featured. This event offers an opportunity for tourists and locals alike to discover the jazz art that abounds in the Berkshires. BYO blanket and chairs.

LINEUP: To be announced. berkshiresjazz.org

#### **Provincetown Jazz Festival**

#### Cape Cod, Massachusetts

#### July 31 & Aug. 7-8

Since 2005, the Provincetown Jazz Festival has been held in the oldest continuous art colony in the United States. The festival is a non-profit organization donating a portion of the proceeds to worthy causes including Jazz in the Schools. Musicians from the United States, Canada, Brazil, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand and Japan have appeared at the Cape Cod festival.

LINEUP: Brian Charette, Lisa Liu, Zahili Gonzalez Zamora, Lori Colombo, Ryder Cory, Jordan Young, Steve Ahern, Dennis Faherty, Matt Hutchinson, Steve Hambleton, Fred Boyle, Ron Ormsby and Bart Weisman. provincetownjazzfestival.org

#### **Newport Jazz Festival**

Newport, Rhode Island

#### **Aug. 4-6**

Celebrating its 69th anniversary this year, the legendary Newport Jazz Festival features more than 60 artists across three days in an idyllic setting: Fort Adams State Park on Narragansett Bay in Newport, RI. Come experience the granddaddy of American music festivals.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock, Jon Batiste, Joe Russo's Almost Dead with Kamasi Washington, Diana Krall, Thundercat, DJ Pee.Wee (Anderson. Paak), Big Gigantic Does Jazz, Soulive, Samara Joy, Mood Swing, Big Freedia, Christian McBride's Jam Jawn, DOMi and JD Beck, Cimafunk, Charles Lloyd New Quartet, Butcher Brown, Scary Goldings, Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, Shahzad Ismaily, Alfa Mist and more. newportjazz.org

#### **Scranton Jazz Festival**

#### Scranton, Pennsylvania

#### Aug. 4-6

The 18th annual Scranton Jazz Festival takes place in downtown Scranton, Pennsylvania, during the first full weekend of August. This international festival presents award winning jazz, blues and world beat artists featured on a main stage, clubs, restaurants, bars and coffee houses. The city resembles a mini New Orleans for three days.

LINEUP: Past performers include Spyro Gyra, Manhattan Transfer,





Fri, Jun 2 @ 8PM An evening with jazz guitarist, NEA Jazz Master and 10-time GRAMMY<sup>®</sup> winner **George Benson**.

#### sarah vaughan international jazz vocal competition

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Randy Brecker, Average White Band, Dave Liebman, Stanley Clarke, Chuck Mangione, Shemekia Copeland and The Four Freshmen. scrantonjazzfestival.org

#### **Hudson Valley Jazz Festival**

#### Hudson Valley, New York

#### Aug. 9-13

The 14th season for The Hudson Valley Jazz Festival delivers a fiveday series, one that has hosted Wallace Roney, Buster Williams, Lenny White, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Dave Liebman and John Abercrombie. The festival's goal is to celebrate the American music of jazz via the region's musicians. There are great players from Albany to Warwick to Newburgh, Sugar Loaf, Woodstock, Suffern. New Paltz. Port Jervis and Fair Oaks. Performances are held in a variety of settings in several towns in the valley. The focus is on helping to raise the profile of artists deserving wider recognition.

LINEUP: To be announced. hudsonvalleyjazzfest.org

#### **Montclair Jazz Festival**

Montclair, New Jersey Aug. 12 - Lackawanna Block Party Sept. 9 - Downtown Jamboree

The award-winning Montclair Jazz Festival, curated by Christian McBride, is the largest free jazz festival in the New York City region, attracting 25,000-plus fans. The two-day event features world-class performers, regional favorites and emerging musicians on multiple stages in downtown Montclair. The festival is presented by BDP Holdings and produced by Jazz House Kids.

LINEUP: Past artists have included Monty Alexander, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Artemis, Danielle Ponder, Christian Mc-Bride, Eddie Palmieri, The Baylor Project, Alicia Olatuja, Jose



James, Matthew Whitaker and Immanuel Wilkins. montclairjazzfestival.org

#### **Bousquet Mountain Jazz Festival**

#### Pittsfield, Massachusetts Aug. 19

Taking place at the base of Pittsfield's historic Bousquet Mountain Ski Area, the festival presents main-stage performers as well as rising artists in a vibrant, verdant setting. Mainly outdoors, it's

LINEUP: Dominique Eade Quartet headlines this year's festival. Others to be announced. Last year's inaugural festival included Ted Rosenthal, Scott Robinson, Emily Braden and The Lucky Five. berkshiresjazz.org

BYO blanket, chairs. Food and beverages available on-site (only).

#### **Charlie Parker Jazz Festival**

Marcus Garvey Park, Harlem, NYC and Tompkins Square Park, East Village, NYC Aug. 25-27

This free festival celebrate Charlie Parker with emerging artists and jazz legends bringing live music to the neighborhoods where he lived and worked.

LINEUP: To be announced. charlieparkerjazzfestival.org

#### **DC** JazzFest

Washington, District of Columbia Aug. 30 - Sept. 3

DC JazzFest celebrates all things jazz over Labor Day weekend, with dozens of concerts in venues citywide with its marguee weekend, DC JazzFest at The Wharf, Sept. 2–3, on two outdoor stages. Home to D.C.'s longest operating open-air fish market, The Wharf has transformed into the city's most exciting waterfront destination.

LINEUP: Gregory Porter, NEA Jazz Master Kenny Garrett, NEA Jazz Master Charles Lloyd, 2023 multi-Grammy Award Winner Samara Joy, NEA Jazz Master and 2023 Grammy Award Winner Terri Lyne Carrington's New Standards, Omar Sosa Quarteto Americanos, 2022 DCJazzPrix Winner Julieta Eugenio Trio, 2023 DCJazzPrix Finals and more. dcjazzfest.org

#### Lenox Jazz Stroll

Lenox Massachusetts Sept. 15-16

Located in the heart of the Berkshires, the Lenox Jazz Stroll is a free community-based music festival produced by Mill Town Foundation that features national artists and local favorites in the historic village of Lenox, Massachusetts.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups have included Ray Anderson's Pocket Brass Band, Ted Rosenthal, Mukana, Dominique Eade, Armen Donelian Trio, Nelson Patton, Kris Allen and Jonathan Barber. lenoxiazzstroll.com

#### **Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival** presented by Citizens Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Sept. 15-17

Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival is a weekend of jazz, blues and soul music. Tickets on sale April 1. VIP and group sales available.

LINEUP: Gregory Porter, Keyon Harrold, Vanisha Gould, PJ Morton, Kurt Elling, Chelsea Baratz and more. pittsburghjazzfest.org

#### JazzFest at Sea

Roundtrip New York, New York (10-Night Canada/New England Cruise) Oct. 15-25 If you're a fan of early jazz, this is one of the premier jazz cruises of the year departing from New York for an amazing jazz cruise to Canada and New England for 10 nights — all presented in an intimate jazz club atmosphere limited to 200 guests.

LINEUP: Allan Vaché, Houston Person, Warren Vaché, Harry Allen, John Allred, Dan Block, Danny Tobias, Randy Reinhart, Banu Gibson, Ted Rosenthal, Mark Shane, Yve Evans, Charlie Silva, Brian Nalepka, Tardo Hammer, Kevin Dorn, Danny Coots, jazzfestatsea.com

#### TD James Moody Jazz Festival Newark, New Jersey November

The 12th annual TD James Moody Jazz Festival will present dozens of free and tickets events. This annual event offers programs that combine jazz luminaries in collaboration with artists known for R&B, poetry, hip-hop and more.

LINEUP: The past lineups have included Chris Botti, Christian McBride, Dianne Reeves, Maria Schneider and more. njpac.org

#### Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival Annapolis, Maryland Nov. 3-12

The Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival returns for its second year bringing world music and jazz artists and historians to Annapolis on the Chesapeake Bay. The event features concerts and lectures with lively discussions, free and ticketed events for adults and children during day and evening hours at multiple sites in Eastport, the "Left Bank" of Annapolis. Paulina Phillips and Theresa Sise co-founded and produced the new event with an amazing team of volunteers.

**LINEUP:** Past lineups include the Unified Jazz Ensemble featuring Sarah Larsen, Renée Collins Georges & Georjazz and the Juanito Pascual Trio. <u>annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com</u>

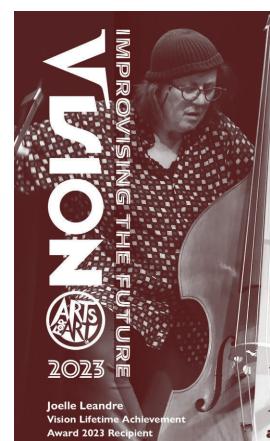
#### Manchester CT Jazz Festival Manchester, Connecticut Dec. 2

The 8th Annual Manchester CT Jazz Festival is presented by Beth Sholom B'nai Israel in historic Cheney Hall, 177 Hartford Rd. The festival brings a mix of internationally renowned and regional musicians to central Connecticut. The event offers both in-house seating and virtual options.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups include Sheila Jordan, Karrin Allyson, Abraham Burton, John Patitucci, The Brubeck Brothers, Brian Charette, Avery Sharpe, Valery Ponomarev, Eric Alexander, Jonathan Barber and Greg Abate. manchesterctjazzfest.com <section-header>

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### DC TAKES THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

DC Jazz Festival (DCJF) at the Yards, when Sunny Sumter first recognized that the festival had ascended beyond being a local event; it had elevated to headliner status within the international jazz festival ecosystem. That year's lineup boasted such heavy hitters as Gregory Porter, Kenny Garrett, Youngjoo Song, Jacob Collier and the Robert Glasper Experiment, among more than 125 performances at more than 40 venues throughout Washington, D.C.

"We brought a lot of international talent that casual jazz fans don't come to see," remembers Sumter, who then served as DCJF's executive director. She's now the festival's president and CEO. "Many people in the crowd didn't know some of the performers. But by the end of that festival, they were hooked."

Six years later, the DC Jazz Festival continues hooking major crowds of both casual and hardcore jazz fans with its exemplary lineup. For this year's Labor Day weekend extravaganza at the Wharf waterfront, both Garrett and Porter will return. Also featured will be Terri Lyne Carrington, Samara Joy, Charles Lloyd, Dave Holland, Warren Wolf, Omar Sosa, Leigh Pilzer and Veronneau. Orrin Evans will also be there, concluding his two-year stint as the fest's artist-in-residence.

During Evans' first year, he led his Captain Black Big Band and invited Dianne Reeves to sing; it was their first musical encounter. He also hosted various jazz workshops, master classes and jam sessions around the city. This year, Evan will curate his Generations series, in which he'll pair seasoned musicians with burgeoning hopefuls.

"What makes jazz such as cultural phenomenon is the passing of the baton from one generation to the next," Sumter says. "So, this year, we are going to present Orrin with Benny Green, Patrice Rushen and other legendary pianists performing this incredible Generations project."

One of the missions Evans set for himself as artist-in-residence is to break down barriers within jazz. "Those barriers could be generational, ethnic or gender," he says.

Two years ago, the DC Jazz Festival moved its headquarters to Arena Stage's Mead Center for American Theater. That significantly bolstered its programming that includes educational components (DC JazzBops!, Jazzin' InSchool and Jazz and Go-Go) and the DCJazzPrix, an international band competition that awards \$15,000 as a grand prize, complemented with business development and career impact services. This year also signals the festival's evolution into a year-long presenting enterprise.

Sumter believes that the festival's founder, Charles Fishman — a Grammy-winning producer, who served as Dizzy Gillespie's personal manager — always envisioned it becoming a year-long presenter. When Fishman launched the festival in 2005, it was branded the Duke Ellington Jazz Festival until 2009.

"When Charlie was on the road with Diz, he would go to all these great jazz festivals around the world," Sumter says, "He knew a lot of the festival presenters and recognized that they were not just throwing festivals; the organizations had become jazz beacons in their respective communities."

Sumter recalls that it was Fishman's idea to incorporate educational programming because he felt like the elementary, high school and college kids in the District were not receiving proper knowledge about jazz history, particularly the city's own renowned legacy, which includes such trailblazing icons as Duke Ellington, Shirley Horn and Dr. Billy Taylor all the way up to modern day renegades like Marc Cary, Meshell Ndgeocello and Ben Williams.

DC Jazz Festival also makes use of one of the District's most fascinating features — its international embassies. In the past, it has partnered with many including those of Japan France, South Africa, Sweden, Canada, Germany, Morocco and Turkey to present riveting cosmopolitan cultural exchanges. This year, it's entered a partnership with the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba to showcase virtual activities and cultural exchanges performances opportunities with Cuban musicians playing in the District and American musicians traveling to the island nation.

While D.C. is certainly a cosmopolitan city, it's still considered Chocolate City to many longtime residents, even though its once-Black majority population has reduced to 41.4%, according to the U.S. 2020 Census Bureau.

"I was born and raised in Washington, D.C.," Sumpter says, "And it will always be Chocolate City to me. There are many generations of Black Washingtonians who will never leave this city. There is some real beauty in that."

It's not lost on Sumter that the DC Jazz Festival is one of the few in the country that's led by an African American. Willard Jenkins, its esteemed artistic director, is also Black. "I feel so proud to lead this festival alongside Willard and celebrate who we are as Black people," Sumner says. "We love our Blackness."

"Now everybody comes to our party," Sumter continues. "We love our white, Hispanic and Asian friends, because everybody can play. But our mission to remind people that jazz — this amazing music — is a Black American artform. —Iohn Murph

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#### SOUTH

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#### French Quarter Festival presented by Chevron

#### New Orleans, Louisiana April 13-16

French Quarter Festival presented by Chevron, the largest free festival showcasing Louisiana music, food and culture, celebrates its 40th anniversary. Experience cuisine from more than 60 local restaurants and dance to the beat of 270-plus acts across 20 stages.

LINEUP: The Soul Rebels featuring Big Freedia, Ani DiFranco, Samantha Fish, Irma Thomas, Louisiana's LeRoux, Erica Falls, Big Chief Monk Boudreaux and the Golden Eagles, Rebirth Brass Band, Flow Tribe, Jon Cleary & The Absolute Monster Gentlemen, Rockin' Dopsie Jr. & The Zydeco Twisters. frenchquarterfest.org

#### Jacksonville Jazz Festival Jacksonville, Florida May 25-28

For more than 40 years, the Jacksonville Jazz Festival has brought music lovers together and will return this Memorial Day Weekend. Experience downtown Jacksonville, Florida, as it comes alive with two stages of free, live entertainment along the St. Johns River.

LINEUP: To be announced. Previous lineups have included Herbie Hancock, Patti LaBelle, Stephanie Mills, Jeffrey Osborne, Lalah Hathaway, Sheila E., Stanley Clarke and more. jacksonvillejazzfest.com

#### **Spoleto Festival USA**

Charleston, South Carolina May 26 - June 11

Each spring, Spoleto transforms Charleston, South Carolina, into a global epicenter for the performing arts, offering more than 100 performances in music, dance, theater and opera. The Wells Fargo Jazz series assembles a wide range of top artists, reflective of Spoleto's ethos of creative innovation.

LINEUP: Quentin Baxter Quintet (Quentin Baxter, Charlton Singleton, Mark Sterbank, Demetrius Doctor, Rodney Jordan) with special guests Bobby Watson, Dan Wilson and Gino Castillo; Abdullah Ibrahim and Eyaka; Henry Threadgill Zooid; Kris Davis Diatom Ribbons (Kris Davis, Terri Lyne Carrington, Val Jeanty, Julian Lage, Trevor Dunn); Immaunel Wilkins Quartet; Courtney Bryan. spoletousa.org

#### Atlanta Jazz Festival Atlanta, Georgia

#### May 28-30

The 46th Atlanta Jazz Festival will return to Piedmont Park Memorial Day weekend. The Atlanta Jazz Festival is one of the largest free jazz festivals in the country and is known for discovering talented up-and-coming artists. The focus for 2023 will continue to be entertainment, education, food and fun.

LINEUP: Lakecia Benjamin, Tony Hightower, David Sánchez, Samara Joy, Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Sélène Saint-Aimé, Brandee Younger, Javon Jackson and the Gospel according to Nikki Giovanni, José James, Stanley Clarke, Satya, James Francies, Brenda Nicole Moorer, Chief Xian aTunde Adjuah (formerly Christian Scott), Ledisi. atljazzfest.com OCTOBER 19–22, 2023 • THE SOUND AT COACHMAN PARK • CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

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#### Satchmo SummerFest presented by Chevron New Orleans, Louisiana

Aug. 5-6 The 23rd annual Satchmo SummerFest presented by Chevron celebrates the life, legacy, and music of New Orleans' native son, Louis Armstrong, at the New Orleans Jazz Museum at the Old U.S. Mint. The beloved festival is a summer tradition that delivers two full days

of live entertainment and local cuisine.

LINEUP: To be announced. satchmosummerfest.org

#### Savannah Jazz Festival Savannah, Georgia Sept. 19 - 24

This 41-year-old festival is an iconic regional event featuring world-class blues and jazz with more than 20 performances during the week (most are free).

LINEUP: The lineup will be announced in May. Past performers include Ray Charles, Nancy Wilson, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Robert Lee Johnson. savannahjazz.org

#### Amelia Island Jazz Festival Fernandina Beach, Florida Oct. 1-8

Situated 30 minutes from Jacksonville, the festival presents a variety of world-class jazz. Past performers include David Sanborn, Ramsey Lewis, Mindy Abair, Spyro Gyra, Marcus Printup, Richie Cole, Buckwheat Zydeco, Randy Brecker and Delfeayo Marsalis.

LINEUP: Steve Tyrell, LPT All Star Sal-

sa Band, Longineu Parsons, the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band with Bonnie Eisele. More to be announced. ameliaislandjazzfestival.com

# Clearwater Jazz Holiday

Clearwater Jazz Holiday is back home in Coachman Park with an exciting new amphitheater this year. This collaboration between the Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation Inc., the City of Clearwater, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall sets the stage for this year's 44th celebration. Crowds will relish in this popular fest's colorful musical lineup from jazz to jam, funk, fusion and more.

LINEUP: To be announced.

<u>clearwaterjazz.com</u>

#### **The Jazz Cruise**

Departing from Miami, Florida Jan. 18-25, 2024

Since 2001, The Jazz Cruise has presented the very best straightahead jazz in the world in a setting like no other. Featuring nearly 100 top-notch jazz musicians and more than 200 hours of music, presented festival-style over seven jam-packed days. Discover why The Jazz Cruise is known as "The Greatest Jazz Festival at Sea."

LINEUP: Artemis, Chucho Valdés, Paquito D'Rivera, Kenny Barron, Christian McBride, Catherine Russell, Kurt Elling, Jazzmeia Horn, Herlin Riley, Eliane Elias, John Pizzarelli, John Clayton, Sean Jones, Randy Brecker, Wycliffe Gordon, Jeff Hamilton Trio, Emmet Cohen and more. thejazzcruise.com



#### The Smooth Jazz Cruise: 24.1 Sailing

Departing from Miami, Florida Jan. 25 – Feb. 1, 2024

A seven-day, smooth-jazz cruise sailing the Caribbean, featuring more than 30 noted contemporary jazz artists performing a variety of concerts, many of which present the musicians in never-seen-before collaborations. A legion of loyal fans call this week of non-stop music The Greatest Party at Sea.

LINEUP: Rick Braun, Boney James, Marcus Miller, Brian Culbertson, Candy Dulfer, Jeffrey Osborne, Richard Elliot, Jonathan Butler, Grace Kelly, DW3, Vincent Ingala, Peter White, Mindi Abair, Eric Marienthal and more. thesmoothjazzcruise.com

#### The Smooth Jazz Cruise: 24.2 Sailing

#### Departing from Miami, Florida Feb. 1-8, 2024

A seven-day smooth jazz cruise sailing the Caribbean, featuring more than 30 noted contemporary jazz artists performing a variety of concerts, many of which present the musicians in never-seen-before collaborations.

**LINEUP:** Rick Braun, Boney James, Marcus Miller, Brian Culbertson, Candy Dulfer, Jeffrey Osborne, Jonathan Butler, Richard Elliot, Grace Kelly, DW3, Vincent Ingala, Peter White, Mindi Abair, Eric Marienthal and more <u>thesmoothjazzcruise.com</u>

#### **Botti at Sea**

#### Departing from Miami, Florida Feb. 8-15, 2024

A new cruise program featuring a broad range of top-drawer entertainment, all in the spirit and under the direction of trumpeter Chris Botti. While musical experiences form the core of the program, Botti has infused performers and events from other entertainment genres. When viewed together, the cruise reflects the style, stature and stardom of the host.

**LINEUP:** Chris Botti, David Foster, Katharine McPhee, Gregory Porter, Melody Gardot, Lisa Fischer, Keb' Mo', Lior Suchard, Alonzo Bodden. <u>bottiatsea.com</u>

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JacksonvilleJazzFest.com



# DETROIT JAZZ FEST SOLDIERS ON, DREAMS BIG

**THE DETROIT JAZZ FESTIVAL, THE LARGEST** free jazz festival in the world, remains resolutely jazz. You'll not find Tangerine Dream or Bruce Springsteen on the bill. Thus attendance at its four outdoor stages is healthy, knowledgable and navigable.

"Thirty years ago, the metrics suddenly jumped 20 percent, but it would be mathematically impossible to get 1.5 million people in that area during the festival," said Chris Collins, DJF Foundation president and artistic director. "We decided to get honest, remove the hyperbole and hired a company to count the crowd. We get between 325,000 and 350,000 attendees over the four days, plus 2.5 million live streamers in 42 countries."

When DownBeat called Collins, he was outside Milan with Italian bassist/composer Robert Mattei, pianist Lorenzo Blardone and drummer Massimiliano Salina, who will bring their collaboration to the festival, much as Collins did with Omar Sosa and the Havana-Detroit Project and last year's Tottori-Detroit Reunion, which connected with Japan.

"I'm a big fan of regionalism," said Collins,

"There are so many regions around the world that have their own take on the jazz tradition and have evolved identifiable stylistic traits within the music. A cross-fertilization of cultures brought to Detroit enriches the patron experience."

That regionalism pertains pointedly to home base, too. "I read a Phil Woods interview in DownBeat where Woods emphasized young talent should create a scene in their own area, be that Kansas City, Chicago, St. Louis or Detroit, they didn't have to move to New York to move the needle forward on the art form."

So what is the essence of Detroit jazz?

"Growing up around here, the melodic and harmonic language and craft of bebop, that's one of the prime parts of the style, so musicians have to know that. But this is a blue collar town so folk are working all kinds of jobs. The whole feel, vibe of the R&B and Motown greats, that simplicity musicians are aware of and strive for, that groove-oriented approach. Then there's a healthy dose of free and post-avant garde, other ambitions that are about developing a unique voice, interaction and communication, without skipping over feel and craft." Bassist Marion Hayden has hardly missed playing the festival in the past quarter century and agrees that the festival has a special homegrown, yet far from provincial, character.

In 2019, Hayden was musical director for veteran Detroit vocalist Sheila Jordan, still touring relentlessly at 94. "Sheila is an incredible artist, had the audience eating out of her hand," recalled Hayden, "I also sat in with Johnny O'Neal and Mulgrew Miller, a beautiful set at the Pyramid Stage, four hands on the piano."

Hayden has helmed her all-female quartet Straight Ahead since the '90s: Alina Morr, Gayelynn McKinney and Kym Wright; and worked under several festival artistic directors, including Frank Malfitano and Terri Pontremoli.

DJF strives to make things as easy as possible for performers. "We provide artists with a multitrack recording of their sets and publishing assistance if they are interested," Collins said. The latter provision led to a recording of the late Wayne Shorter's 2017 appearance with Terri Lyne Carrington, Esperanza Spalding and pianist Leo Genovese, who won a 2023 Grammy for Best Improvised Jazz Solo on Shorter's album *Live At The Detroit Jazz Festival*.

Despite formative creative triumphs, however, the DJF's fate was precarious when Ford Motor Co. pulled sponsorship in 2005. Enter Gretchen Valade, a jazz lover, Carhartt heiress and chairwoman of Mack Avenue Records. She founded the Detroit International Jazz Festival Foundation, which took over production and management, fueling a complete renaissance.

"She opened one of the best jazz clubs anywhere also," Cleveland tenorist Ernie Krivda told DownBeat, "The Dirty Dog Jazz Cafe (in Grosse Pointe), where musicians are treated with respect and provided with luxurious quarters, fabulous food and a first rate piano." Hayden goes further, "During the pandemic Gretchen provided free meals to out-of-work musicians."

After a storied life, the woman Collins dubbed a "jazz angel" and Krivda refers to as "the patron saint of Detroit jazz" passed last December at 97. She'd survived the pandemic and helped the DJF hurdle that disaster with defiant custom streaming/broadcasting studios purpose-built in the Marriott HQ. The Gretchen C. Valade Endowment for the Arts, in cahoots with the festival non-profit Foundation, the continued largesse of independent donors and corporate sponsors such as Rocket Mortgage seem set to maintain the phenomenal programming that annually refutes what Collins calls the "one size fits all" format of other festivals.

Collins divulged that this year's Artist in Residence will be drummer and homeslice Karriem Riggins, and, since three out of four of the 2023 NEA Jazz Masters are from the Motor City, Louis Hayes, Regina Carter and Kenny Garrett will each be celebrated with feature sets. —*Michael Jackson* 



# MIDWEST

#### This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



#### **Ravinia Festival**

Highland Park, Illinois June 6 - Sept. 10

Ravinia is North America's oldest and one of its most programmatically diverse outdoor music festivals, presenting more than 100 summer events in myriad genres, including jazz, and featuring acclaimed artists from around the world. These concerts run the gamut from Kurt Elling to Chicago to the annual summer residency of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

LINEUP: Michael Feinstein & Jean-Yves Thibaudet; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Expanded featuring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus with interludes by Ayodele Drum & Dance and a jazz trio; Maria Schneider Orchestra; Ravinia Jazz Scholars; Elvin Bishop & Charlie Musselwhite; Buddy Guy; George Benson; Kurt Elling with Steans Institute Jazz Directors Billy Childs, Rufus Reid and Steve Wilson, plus Sara Caswell and Christian Euman; Shakti and Béla Fleck–Shakti: 50th Anniversary Tour featuring John McLaughlin, Zakir Hussain & Shankar Mahadevan. ravinia.org

# Chicago Blues Festival

June 8-11 The largest free blues festival in the world returns to Chicago with four days of top-tier talent performing in Chicago's Millennium Park and citywide. Three stages set up across Millennium Park will welcome 45 performances and more than 250 artists celebrating the city's renowned blues legacy. Guests can enjoy an enhanced food experience provided by Eleven North Hospitality in Millennium Park, as well as a large-scale, historic blues photography installation curated by Praize Productions, one of the Chicago companies in residence at Millennium Park this summer. The Chicago Blues Festival is presented by the Department

of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

LINEUP: Los Lobos, Blind Boys of Alabama with Bobby Rush, Mud Morganfield, John Primer & The Real Deal Blues Band, Jimmy Burns Band, Sugaray Rayford, Jontavious Willis, Vasti Jackson, Eddie Cotton, O.B. Buchana, Super Chikan and more. Commissioned projects include the Centennial Tribute to Albert King featuring Donald Kinsey, Larry McCray, Rico McFarland, Carl Weathersby and Tony Lorenz; a Delmark Records 70th Anniversary Celebration; and a "Women in Blues" tribute featuring Deitra Farr, Katherine Davis and Sugar Pie DeSanto. chicagobluesfestival.us

#### Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland Cleveland, Ohio June 22-24

Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland, presented by KeyBank, brings the world, featuring artists from Africa to New Orleans. With icons such as Herbie Hancock and Trombone



DOWNBEAT

Millennium Garages

## MILLENNIUM PARK AND NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

A CALLER

And don't miss the return of these iconic music fests:

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CHICAGO BLUES Thursday–Sunday, June 8–11

CHICAGO HOUSE Saturday, June 24

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Shorty, crazy-good bass players like Richard Bona and Christian McBride and singers such as Angélique Kidjo and Samara Joy.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock; Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue; Angélique Kidjo/Richard Bona Presents ASANTE Trio Featuring Osmany Paredes and Ílario Bell; Dominick Farinacci and Triad/Braxton Cook; Christian McBride/Samara Joy; Dan Wilson featuring Jennifer Hartswick–7 Decades of Wonder: The Genius of Stevie featuring Braxton Cook, Norman Brown, Gerald Albright; Steve Smith and Vital Information with Manuel Valera and Janek Gwizdala. tri-cjazzfest.com

#### Twin Cities Jazz Festival St. Paul, Minnesota

June 23-24

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Twin Cities Jazz Festival held in Mears Park, downtown St. Paul and in more than 25 venues around the city. In partnership with several local schools, more than 100 youth bands perform at the festival and attend master classes and clinics. All performances, master classes and clinics are free and open to all.

LINEUP: Christian McBride, Paquito D'Rivera and the Dizzy Gillespie Afro-Latin Experience, Davina and the Vagabonds, Camille Thurman with the Darrell Green Quartet and more than 250 Minnesota jazz musicians. twincitiesjazzfestival.com

#### Iowa City Jazz Festival lowa City, lowa June 30 - July 2

Three days of live jazz performances and delicious dishes. Enjoy the music from two stages, which showcase a variety of well-known musicians and up-andcoming talent alongside national and international artists to encourage and educate jazz audiences of all ages.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past performers include Cory Wong, John Daversa, Camille Thurman, Terrance Simien & the Zydeco Experience, SuperBlue with Kurt Elling featuring Charlie Hunter, Jane Bunnett and Maqueque, Danilo Pérez Trio and Jane Ira Bloom Quartet. summerofthearts.org/sota-events/ iowa-city-jazz-festival

#### **JazzFest Michigan**

#### Lansing, Michigan Aug. 3-5

JazzFest Michigan takes place in the streets of Old Town surrounded by art galleries, unique retail stores and grand architecture. The experience offers everything from local favorites to national acts. Join music lovers who come for the melodies, food and craft vendors, beverage tent, children's activities and more.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups have included Walter White, Pickle Mafia,

# KARR RIGG 2023 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE



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# LABOR DAY WEEKEND

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- Dominick Farinacci and Triad
- Samara Joy
- Christian McBride
- Dan Wilson: 7 Decades of Wonder: The Genius of Stevie
- Braxton Cook
- Norman Brown
- Gerald Albright
- Steve Smith and Vital Information: Steve Smith (Drums), Manuel Valera (Keys), Janek Gwizdala (Bass)

#### Get tickets and passes at tri-cjazzfest.com



Tiffany Gridiron, Eldon Kelly and more. micharts.org/jazzfest-about

#### Chicago Jazz Festival Chicago, Illinois Aug. 31 - Sept. 3

The Chicago Jazz Festival is a Labor Day weekend tradition that promotes all forms of jazz through free, high-quality music programming. The festival showcases Chicago's local talent alongside national and international artists to raise awareness and appreciation for one of the city's most beloved art forms. The festival is produced by DCASE and programmed by the Jazz Institute of Chicago.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past performers include Dianne Reeves, Ramsey Lewis, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Christian McBride, Eddie Palmieri and Dee Alexander. chicagojazzfestival.us

#### Detroit Jazz Festival Detroit, Michigan Sept. 1 - 4

The Detroit Jazz Festival is the largest free jazz festival in the world. The festival is also a major tourist attraction for the City of Detroit, with nearly 30 percent of its audience coming from out of state.

LINEUP: To be announced. The 2022 lineup included Artist-In-Residence Chucho Valdés, Dianne Reeves, Abdullah Ibrahim, Vijay Iyer, Nubya Garcia and Ambrose Akinmusire. <u>detroitjazzfest.org</u>

#### St. Charles Jazz Weekend St. Charles, Illinois Sept. 7-10

St. Charles Jazz Weekend is a four-day event that showcases and promotes live jazz music at different St. Charles establishments. An array of venues will take part in this year's event featuring numerous jazz groups which have included Grammy award-winning saxophonist Frank Catalano and Grammy-nominated artist and trumpeter Victor Garcia.

LINEUP: To be announced. stcjazzweekend.com

#### Michigan BluesFest Lansing, Michigan

#### Sept. 14-16

The Michigan BluesFest turns Turner Street of Old Town into a stage for one of the largest, most diverse blues festivals in mid-Michigan. Outstanding talent. from local favorites to national acts, entertains music lovers. The festival includes food and craft vendors, a beverage tent, children's activities and more.

LINEUP: Gina Garner, Crossroads Resurrection, Brotha Earth, Twyla Birdsong, Kathleen Murray & the Groove Council. micharts.org/about-bluesfest

#### Hyde Park Jazz Festival Chicago, Illinois Sept. 23-24

The 17th annual Hyde Park Jazz Festival is a free community celebration of jazz on the south side of Chicago featuring the best of Chicago, national and international artists performing in 13 unique venues across the neighborhood.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups have included Regina Carter, Miguel Zenón, Craig Taborn, Randy Weston, Henry Threadgill, Anat Cohen, Christian Sands, Ambrose Akinmusire, Dee Alexander, Dana Hall, Tomeka Reid, Makaya McCraven, Marquis HIII, David Virelles, Charles McPherson, Samara Joy and more. hydeparkjazzfestival.org

#### Indy Jazz Fest Indianapolis, Indiana Sept. 23 - Oct. 1

A blend of indoor and outdoor concerts, Indy Jazz Fest celebrates artists from throughout the world of jazz with a special focus on Indianapolis' rich jazz heritage. This year IJF celebrates Wes @ 100, tributes to Indy's own Wes Montgomery on his 100th birthday.

LINEUP: Full line-up to be announced. A sneak peek includes Pat Metheny Solo; Kurt Elling/Charlie Hunter's SuperBlue; and the Indianapolis Jazz Collective featuring Russell Malone. indyjazzfest.net

#### Edgefest

#### Ann Arbor, Michigan Oct. 18-21

Kerrytown Concert House presents the 27th annual four-day festival Edgefest: an exploration of new music, improvised and composed. A diverse and deeply inclusive roster of innovative artists (local to international, emerging to established) who have survived the pandemic constraints bring their new and inspirational music and collaborations to Edgefest's eager audiences. Performances take place at KCH, at a downtown church and at Trinosophes in Detroit. Maste classes and discussions take place along with a middle school residency that culminates in the Edgefest Parade on Saturday at noon around the Kerrytown's historic downtown neighborhood.

LINEUP: Tomeka Reid Quartet and Hemphill Stringtet; Alexander Hawkins; Joe McPhee; Luke Stewart Quartet; James Brandon Lewis with Chad Taylor; Kaleigh Wilder; Piotr Michalowski; Andrew Bishop; James Ilgenfritz Sextet (Steve Rush, Marc Hanford, Marion Hayden, JovVia Armstrong, Ian Antonio); Teiku (Josh Harlow, Jonathan Taylor, Rafael Statin, Peter Formanek, Jaribu Shahid); Michael Malis premieres a composition for large ensemble; Satoshi Takeishi/Shoko Nagai Duo; Northwoods Improvisers Sextet (Mike Khoury, Mike Johnston, Nick Ashton, Dominic Bierenga-Donavan); Tim Haldeman/Jesse Kramer Duo. More to be announced. kerrytownconcerthouse.com/edgefest

#### CU Jazz Festival

PRESENTED BY

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois Oct. 26-29 Now in its ninth season, CU Jazz Festival presents four days of musical events including jam sessions, live art presentations, nightly featured performances and the festival favorite jazz brunch. The festival hosts local and nationally celebrated artists performing in such intimate venues as the Champaign Public Library, Allen Hall and the Krannert Center.

**LINEUP:** To be announced. Past performers have included Mai Sugimoto, Menjunje, Dan Loomis Job's Trials and Jocelyn Gould. **cujazzfest.wixsite.com/cujazzfest** 



2023 IOWA CITY

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# HEALDSBURG'S ARTISTS-**RST VISION AT 25**

THE IDEAL JAZZ FESTIVAL SHOWCASES ITS locale while presenting thoughtfully conceived concerts and events. Since 1999, the Healdsburg Jazz Festival has produced live music in California's picturesque Wine Country that's reflected the aesthetic points of view of founder Jessica Felix (1999–2020) and artistic director Marcus Shelby (2020-present).

For its silver anniversary, which runs June 17-25, HJF continues to offer music by locally, nationally and internationally based artists, including a special tribute envisioned and realized by Felix. Over a brunch of Cajun and Creole cuisine at Brenda's Oakland in early March, she reflected on the history of the festival while delving into her contribution to this year's edition and looking to its future. The interview, conducted on her 74th birthday, reflected the 2023 HJF's "Past, Present and Future" theme.

As co-founder of the Oakland-based Jazz in Flight organization, Felix presented house concerts for a decade starting in the late '70s and co-produced the Eddie Moore Jazz Festival for another five years after that. Relocating to the small town of Healdsburg (population around 11,000), she planned to focus on the jewelry she designed and created for the Art and All That Jazz studio.

"I did it because I lived here," she said, of the inaugural HJF. "I didn't move to Healdsburg intending to start another festival."

In its first year, the festival began modestly with four shows over four days, including quartets led by Bobby Hutcherson and Billy Higgins. Since then, it's had enough of a legacy to feature artists such as Hutcherson, Charlie Haden and Geri Allen and, poignantly, later pay tribute to them with special memorial concerts.

For June 25, Felix has assembled organist Brian Ho, tenor saxophonist Azar Lawrence and alto saxophonist Gary Bartz to honor both Pharoah Sanders (a veteran of the 2000 HJF) and Joey DeFrancesco (who performed in 2019). It's a double bill with vibraphonist Joel Ross' group that also pays homage to DeFrancesco's 2019 album In The Key Of The Universe (Mack Avenue), which featured Sanders.

A connection to both In The Key Of The Universe and the late DeFrancesco's sole HJF appearance is Billy Hart. This year will be his 14th Healdsburg appearance, making him the de facto house drummer. Hart's first HJF was in 2003, and he was on the bandstand when The Cookers played their first-ever concert in 2007. He was also the subject of a 40-year retrospective in 2016 where he performed the material from four of his albums with many of the original sidemen.

"Jessica, she's an angel — a jazz angel," Hart declared by phone from Boston. "It's undeniable how much she loves the music. And that comes across, especially to the musicians."

By contrast, clarinetist/multi-reedist Anat Cohen has only participated in one HJF. But that 2016 duo concert with Fred Hersch has become part of history. "I remember how charming the

whole area was," Cohen recalled, in a phone interview from her home in Brooklyn. "And Jessica was enthusiastic, as always, even as she was trying to take care of a million things at once."

With the headliners' permission, the concert was recorded by live sound engineer Steve Moon. It was subsequently released in 2018 as Live In Healdsburg (Anzic Records).

Then, at the end of August 2020, it was announced that Shelby would take the reins from Felix. "He's the right person to follow me," Felix said of the well-regarded double bassist, bandleader, composer and educator. "I've admired what he's been doing."

"We had a good transition, and Jessica's work continues to be foundational to the organization," Shelby said. He was first introduced to her in the '90s when he was a member of Black/ Note, and she booked the young Los Angeles area supergroup for the Eddie Moore Festival at Higgins' suggestion.

A decade later, "I had been pitching her an educational program about Harriet Tubman, and that turned into 10 years of educational programming at Healdsburg Jazz," Shelby revealed.

"Marcus was very good in helping me put on a two-hour Evolution of Contemporary Jazz Drumming Zoom presentation" that streamed early into lockdown, Hart said. "He's knowledgeable about the music and interested in the history."

"Healdsburg Jazz, under Jessica, was a model festival," Shelby said. "Our festival flows a little bit differently. My experiences in the arts have been in the multi-artistic universe where music intersects with theater, dance, film, poetry and other art forms."

The HJF now has a Poet Laureate (Enid Pickett) and will screen the 2022 documentary (John) Santos-Skin to Skin, followed by a performance by the Bay Area conguero and his group.

"Since Jessica was based in Healdsburg, she had a very personal perspective as a local," Shelby said, when asked about maintaining the festival's local flavor. "I've been going up there for 10 years. And when I became artistic director, I started spending more time there with different goals - to find community partners, whether the schools, small businesses or local government."

One through-line between Felix and Shelby is forward-thinking booking. HJF had Esperanza Spalding's quartet in 2009 and Joey Alexander's trio in 2016. This year, vocalist Samara Joy will perform at the festival's Father's Day concert a booking secured before she became a surprise double Grammy winner in February.

"Jessica maintained a commitment to bringing high-quality acts to Healdsburg, and she was also very pro-artist," Shelby said. "The way she curated the concerts - making sure that the music was respected and heard in the right venue and that there was a sort of educational aspect to it — I'm keeping all of that." -Yoshi Kato

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DIANNE REEVES

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JAZZ

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#### Reno Jazz Festival Reno, Nevada April 27-29

Reno Jazz Festival at the University of Nevada, Reno, welcomes students, instructors, performers and fans for three days of live concerts, coaching and workshops with big-name artists. Fully in-person, the festival aims to inspire and educate the next generation of jazz artists.

LINEUP: Marquis Hill–New Gospel Revisited; Joel Ross + The Manzanita Quintet; the university's premier jazz ensemble, Jazz Lab I; Festival house band featuring Caroline Davis, Tal Cohen, Richard Giddens and Tina Raymond; the Reno Jazz Orchestra; Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice Quartet; 16plus workshops featuring Johnaye Kendrick, George Colligan, Dawn Clement and more. unr.edu/rif

#### **Greeley Blues Jam**

#### Greeley, Colorado June 2-3

Voted many times as the best blues festival in Colorado by the Colorado Blues Society, the Greeley Blues Jam has been rocking for 18 years. The festival takes place in a beautiful (and shady) park on Saturday, June 3. Enjoy wonderful food vendors, beverages and merchandise with two stages, so the music never stops. Bringing in the best of blues from all over the country as well as the best blues performers in Colorado, the festival has onsite camping for both tents and RVs (with hookups). On Friday night, June 2, there is a free concert on the downtown plaza from 6 to 9 p.m. followed by Colorado musicians in every bar and restaurant in the downtown area. Also, enjoy an after-party in the Event Center this year.

LINEUP: Tab Benoit, Carolyn Wonderland, Southern Avenue, Matt Anderson, Willie Mae (Erica Brown), Three Shots, Racing With the Sun, Proxima Parada Band. greeleybluesjam.org

#### Subaru Newport Beach Jazz Festival Newport Beach, California

#### June 2-4

The 27th annual festival will feature a mix of contemporary jazz, r&b and soul music including Boney James, Gerald Albright, Rick Braun and others. The festival is held on the Back Bay of Newport Beach with three stages of music, after parties and terrific vendors.

LINEUP: Boney James, Gerald Albright, Rick Braun + Richard Elliot, Rebecca Jade, Eric Darius. festivals.hyattconcerts.com

#### San Francisco Jazz Festival San Francisco, California June 7-18

The 40th San Francisco Jazz Festival presents 40 concerts in 12 days in three venerable venues in San Francisco's Hayes Valley neighborhood.

LINEUP: Delvon Lamar Organ Trio, Jacob

Collier, Al Di Meola, Sunda Manning, Brandon Goldberg, Samara Joy, Cindy Blackman Santana, Donald Harrison, Charles McPherson, Malika Tirolien, Ben Williams, Pasquale Grasso, Gerald Clayton, Ambrose Akinmusire, Joel Ross, Emmaline, Paula West, Orchestra Gold, Charlie Musselwhite and more. sfjazz.org

#### Healdsburg Jazz Festival Indianapolis, Indiana Sept. 23 - Oct. 1

Healdsburg Jazz celebrates the 25th Anniversary Healdsburg Jazz Festival honoring the past, present and future and presenting the hottest artists today that represent a range of genres. Organizers are pairing music with food, wine, film, spoken word and visual arts, creating nine days of live music in wine country.

LINEUP: Dianne Reeves; Samara Joy; Bill Frisell Trio; Joel Ross Quartet; Dr. Michael White Septet featuring Donald Harrison; John Santos Sextet; Charles McPherson Quintet featuring Terell Stafford; Stella Heath; Howard Wiley Quartet; Camille Thurman with Darrell Green Quartet; Martin Luther McCoy; Carlitos Medrano; Grupo Falso Baiano; Lorca Hart Quartet; Tiffany Austin Freedom Jazz Choir. The festival is also planning a tribute to Joey DeFrancesco and Pharoah Sanders featuring Gary Bartz, Azar Lawrence, Marc Cary, Billy Hart, Brian Ho, Munyungo Jackson, Nicholas Bearde,

# 9 days in wine country



DIRECTOR MARCUS SHELBY

**25th anniversary:** past | present | future

# DIANNE REEVES SAMARA JOY BILL FRISELLTRIO

Healdsburg Jazz hosts world-class music at resorts, wineries and theaters in the heart of Sonoma County's storied wine country.

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#### Hollywood Bowl Jazz Festival Los Angeles, California

#### June 17-18

The Hollywood Bowl Jazz Festival returns for a music-filled, two-day celebration driven by top acts in jazz and more.

LINEUP: Kamasi Washington, Leon Bridges, West Coast Get Down, St. Paul and The Broken Bones, Digable Planets, Poncho Sanchez, Aziza, The Soul Rebels with Big Freedia, Samara Joy, Lionel Loueke and Gretchen Parlato, Boukman Eksperyans, Butcher Brown, Andrew Gouché and Prayze Connection, Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance Ensemble at UCLA, The Cardinal Divas of SC, LACHSA Jazz, LAUSD Beyond the Bell All-City Jazz Band and more. Arsenio Hall hosts. hollywoodbowl.com/concerts-andevents/hollywood-bowl-jazz-festival

#### JAS June Experience Aspen, Colorado

#### June 22-25

The JAS June Experience consists of multiple staggered shows daily, taking place at 12 venues, allowing attendees the opportunity to stroll around and enjoy a full night of diverse music genres and settings. The June Experience offers a premium on intimate gatherings, spontaneous listening choices, movement and discovery.

**LINEUP:** Galactic, Ruthie Foster, The Greyboy Allstars with Karl Denson, Eliane Elias, Ve-

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ronica Swift, Ms. Lisa Fischer & Grand Baton, Naturally 7, Rebirth Brass Band, Monophonics, Big Sam's Funky Nation, Tony Monaco B3 Trio, Black Joe Lewis & the Honeybears, Cha Wa, Django Festival Allstars, Tuck & Patti, Katie Thiroux, Kevin Burt, Lucia Micarelli & Leo Amuedo and Chinobay Afro-Jazz Fusion. jazzaspensnowmass.org

#### Stanford Jazz Festival Stanford, California

June 23 - Aug. 5

Reflecting the diversity and brilliance of the top artists in jazz, the Stanford Jazz Festival offers more than 30 performances on the campus of Stanford University.

LINEUP: Sullivan Fortner, Dayna Stephens, Terell Stafford, Dena DeRose, Patrice Rushen, Carmen Staaf, George Cables, Taylor Eigsti, Dawn Clement, Naomi Siegel, Anat Cohen, Dafnis Prieto, Sheryl Bailey, Caroline Davis and more. stanfordjazz.org

#### Jazz In The Pines Festival Idyllwild & Temecula, California July 3-15

The Jazz In The Pines Festival returns building a bridge between professionals we've loved for years and the next generation of jazz artists. The festival centers around the students of Idyllwild Arts. It will feature 13 venues hosting 27 public performances, master classes and podcast live recordings.

LINEUP: John Daversa, Marshall Hawkins' Seahawk MOJO, Euphoria Brass Band, Joshua White, Sherry Williams, Yve Evans, Rose Colella, Tom Hynes, Bob Boss, Frank Fontaine, Rick Shaw, Tina Raymond & The Idyllwild Arts All-Star Student Jazz Combo. jazzinthepines.com

#### Vail Jazz Festival



Vail Jazz Festival returns to the Colorado mountains for its 29th edition. This summer-long celebration of jazz features big-name touring musicians, free local community shows, intimate club-style concerts and the five-day jazz party over Labor Day Weekend. Tickets and passes are on sale now.

LINEUP: Wycliffe Gordon, Lakecia Benjamin, Tony DeSare, Sullivan Fortner Trio, Tony Monaco and more. vailjazz.org/live-performances

#### Centrum Jazz Port Townsend Port Townsend, Washington July 24-30

This immersive workshop is open to instrumentalists and singers high school-aged and above. Approximately 200 participants focus on developing improvisational skills in a small group setting. Master classes and performances are given each day by over 30 world-class faculty, all hand-picked by Artistic Director John Clayton. The week culminates in a series of concerts in which all participants have an opportunity to perform.

LINEUP: John Clayton, Tia Fuller, David Sánchez, Marlon Martinez, George Cables, Obed Calvaire, Gary Hobbs, Miles Okasaki, Gary Smulyan, Randy Porter, Dawn Clement, Chuck Easton, Wycliffe Gordon, Lewis Nash, Jon Hamar, Jeff Hamilton, John Hansen, Terell Stafford, Matt Wilson, Sachal Vasandini, Randy Halberstadt and more. centrum.org/jazz-port-

townsend-the-workshop

#### Centrum Acoustic Blues Festival Port Townsend, Washington

#### July 31 - Aug. 6

Led by Jontavious Willis, Centrum offers daily classroom instruction in traditional acoustic blues, its history, songs and styles as well as technical skills, movement forward and how to play well with others in the form. Afternoons include panel discussions on relavent topics and evenings present faculty concerts celebrating various regional styles both traditional and those moving the genre forward.

LINEUP: Jontavious Willis, Andrew Alli,

Benjamin Hunter, Big Jon Atkinson, Chaz Leary, Corey Ledet, Dave Steele, Ethan Leinwand, George Aschmann, Hubby Jenkins, Ian B. Walters, Jerron Paxton, Justin Golden, Lloyd Buchanan, Mark Puryear,

#### Mary Flower, Nick Pence, Phil Wiggins, Rev. Robert Jones, Rodrigo Mantovani, Shari Kane, Shirley Smith and more. centrum.org/port-townsend-acousticblues-festival-workshop

#### San Jose Jazz Summer Fest San Jose, California Aug. 11-13

San Jose Jazz Summer Fest returns with three days and 10-plus stages of international stars, regional favorites and emerging artists playing jazz, blues, r&b, Latin, soul, New Orleans and more. It's more than music with tasty food, wine and microbrews, family fun and after hours events.

LINEUP: To be announced. The 2021 lineup included Stanley Clarke, Durand Jones & the Indications, Lee Fields, Charlie Wilson, Ledisi, Omar Sosa and Ladysmith Black Mambazo. summerfest.sanjosejazz.org

#### **Telluride Jazz Festival**

#### *Telluride, Colorado* Aug. 11-13

An immersive music experience in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, Telluride Jazz Festival ranks among the most scenic music events in the world. Add the intimate format and outdoor recreation activities and the result is an experience unlike anything else that brings audiophiles from around the world. LINEUP: Gregory Porter, St. Paul & The Broken Bones, Tower Of Power, The Soul Rebels, Jamison Ross, Butcher Brown, Lady Wray, Keyon Harrold, Takuya Kuroda, Tuba Skinny, Shamarr Allen, The Legendary Singing Stars and more. telluridejazz.org

#### Montavilla Jazz Festival Portland, Oregon Sept. 1-3

The 10th Montavilla Jazz Festival celebrates Portland's thriving scene, highlighting the world-class talents of Portland-based artists actively creating new music and exploring the boundaries of jazz. This year's event will feature concerts at numerous venues around the city of Portland.

LINEUP: To be announced. Previous artists include Nicole Glover, Mel Brown, Charlie Porter, Nancy King, Darrell Grant, Kerry Politzer, Noah Simpson, Blue Cranes, and Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble. montavillajazz.org

#### **New Mexico Jazz Festival**

#### Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Statewide, New Mexico Sept. 8 - Oct. 1

Founded in 2006, The New Mexico Jazz Festival is a collaborative project of the Outpost Performance Space in Albuquerque and the Lensic Perform-

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George Cables, piano John Clayton, bass Obed Calvaire, drums Dawn Clement, piano Chuck Easton, theory Tia Fuller, alto sax Michael Glynn, bass Wycliffe Gordon, trombone Randy Halberstadt, piano Jon Hamar, bass Jeff Hamilton, drums John Hansen, piano Gary Hobbs, drums Kelby MacNayr, drums René Marie, vocal Marlon Martinez, bass Lewis Nash, drums Miles Okazaki, guitar Randy Porter, piano David Sanchez, tenor sax Gary Smulyan, baritone sax Terell Stafford, trumpet Chris Symer, bass Jay Thomas, trumpet Sachal Vasandani, vocal Eric Verlinde, piano Matt Wilson, drums Martin Wind, bass And more ....



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ing Arts Center in Santa Fe. An exciting destination event, the festival features local and world-renowned artists and jazz masters, art exhibits, films and more throughout the state.

LINEUP: Christian McBride; Spanish Harlem Orchestra; Ranky Tanky; Lisa Fischer. More to be announced. newmexicojazzfestival.org

#### Telluride Blues & Brews Festival Telluride, Colorado

Sept. 15-17

Renowned as one of the most scenic and intimate music festivals in the country, Telluride Blues & Brews Festival offers world-class music with breathtaking mountain peaks for a backdrop. Located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, the weekend also features family activities, yoga, outdoor recreation, camping and more.

LINEUP: To be announced. Previous artists include The Allman Brothers Band, Lou Reed, B.B. King, Robert Plant, James Brown, Joe Cocker, Etta James, John Fogerty, Willie Nelson, ZZ Top, B-52s, Joe Walsh, The Black Crowes, Peter Frampton, Steve Winwood, Taj Mahal, Bruce Hornsby, Sharon Jones, Buddy Guy, Ceelo Green and more. tellurideblues.com

Monterey Jazz Festival Monterey, California Sept. 22-24

The Monterey Jazz Festival is the longest continuously-running jazz festival in the world. Over 75 performances take place over two days and three nights on five stages at the oak-studded Monterey County Fairgrounds. MJF66 will be Tim Jackson's final year as artistic director.

LINEUP: Headliners include NEA Jazz Masters Herbie Hancock, Dianne Reeves, Charles Lloyd and Terri Lyne Carrington, along with Thundercat, Samara Joy, Snarky Puppy, John Scofield (Showcase Artist), Terence Blanchard, Lakecia Benjamin (Artist-in-Residence), Ambrose Akinmusire (Commission Artist), Jamie Cullum and more to be announced. montereyjazzfestival.org

#### **Earshot Jazz Festival**

Seattle, Washington Oct. 7 - Nov. 5

Seattle's major annual jazz festival is celebrating its 35th year with 50 events over 30 nights, in venues around the city, rain or shine.

**LINEUP:** Hiromi's Sonicwonder; Gretchen Parlato & Lionel Loueke; Georgia Ann Muldrow; Harriet Tubman, Chief Xian aTunde Adjua; The Bad Plus and Marc Ribot's Ceramic Dog; John Escreet; Zoh Amba; Anat Cohen with Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra; Thom-

# vailjazz.org/vail-jazz-party



as Marriott & Roy McCurdy; resident artist, Skerik; and more. earshot.org

#### **Sun Valley Jazz & Music Festival**

Sun Valley, Idaho Oct. 18-22

Celebrating the history of jazz, attendees come in from all 50 states, many Canadian provinces and several foreign countries for live performances of America's music.

LINEUP: Baker Boys with Katie Cavera, Blue Renditions, Blue Street Jazz Band, Boise Straight Ahead, Carl Sonny Leyland & Friends, Carolyn Martin Swing Band, Brian Casserly (Guest Artists: John & Kristy Cocuzzi), The Dave Bennett Quartet, Shaymus Hanlin (Guest Artist: High Street Party Band), Hot Jazz Collective, Kings of Swing, Jerry Krahn Quartet, Midiri Brothers Septet, Professor Cunningham & His Old School, Side Street Strutters with Meloney Collins, Tom Hook & the Hounds, Tom Rigney & Flambeau. sunvalleyiazz.com

facebook.com/sunvalleyjazz

#### Frank Morgan Taos Jazz Fest

#### Taos, New Mexico

Nov. 8-11

This 9th annual Taos Jazz Festival is in tribute to the late, great saxophonist Frank Morgan, who called Taos home.

**LINEUP:** Grace Kelly (mentored as a teenager by Frank Morgan); Taos Jazz Allstars featuring pianist George Cables, drummer Louis Hayes, tenor saxophonist Doug Lawrence and bassist Terry Burns; Red Hot & Red (a Native American jazz trio); and more to be announced. taosjazz.org

#### **Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival**

#### Moscow, Idaho

#### April 2024

The Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival is one of the largest educational jazz festivals in the world. Since the 1960s the festival has brought jazz masters together with elementary, middle school, high school and college students at the University of Idaho, to share and celebrate jazz, a truly American art form.

LINEUP: Past lineups included Ella Fitzgerald, Gerry Mulligan, Dizzy Gillespie, Elvin Jones, Freddie Hubbard, Dianne Reeves, Stan Getz, Carmen McRae, Joey DeFrancesco, Benny Green, Abbey Lincoln, Hank Jones, Roy Hargrove, Diana Krall, Wynton Marsalis and Sarah Vaughan and, of course, the eponymous Lionel Hampton and his New York Big Band. uidaho.edu/class/jazzfest



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# UMBRIA JAZZ FESTIVAL CULTURE REMAINS RELA- of artists appearing in Perugia's summer gath-

**JAZZ FESTIVAL COLTORE REMAINS RELA**tively young, by most accounts birthed by promoter George Wein with the Newport Jazz Festival in 1958, soon followed by the Monterey Jazz Festival — which now sports the imprimatur as the oldest continuously-running festival. But Europe, long a critical and even umbilical aspect of jazz's support system, wasn't far behind in establishing a continually expanding universe of important jazz festivals. This year, the list of fests attaining the lofty feat of the 50-year mark is one of the world's finest examples of jazz festival life: Umbria Jazz Festival.

To get to the Umbria festival, many fly to Rome and head north. A two-drive takes you to the lush hills of the Umbria region, and up a particular hill where Perugia sits in its scenic, old worldly splendor. There, for 10 July days, the city is consumed with jazz and related musics, and fans, musicians, passionate observers and casual tourists, taking in music from the large arena to the historic Teatro Morlacchi (circa 1781), a fine museum and outdoor stages about the town. (The separate, shorter Umbria Jazz Winter festival, celebrating 30 years this winter, takes place in Umbria's Orvieto).

From the festival's beginning in 1973, the principal architect and mover/shaker has been veteran director Carlo Pagnotta. In a recent interview, he deflected praise for his own initiatives, insisting that, "if, after 50 years, Umbria Jazz has arrived at this point, it is because we have all worked well [together], and I am very proud of this accomplishment."

Over the past half century, the expansive list

of artists appearing in Perugia's summer gathering is essentially an index of important jazz musicians — along with many pop and so-called "world music" artists. On the as-yet unfinished 50th anniversary festival roster, running July 7 through the 16, is a list including Herbie Hancock, Brad Mehldau, Branford Marsalis, Danilo Pérez with John Patitucci, John Cruz, Bill Frisell, Gerald Clayton, Kenny Barron, Miguel Zenon and Luis Perdomo, Brandee Younger, Chano Dominguez with Flavio Boltro, Ben Harper, Joe Bonamassa, Paolo Conte, Stewart Copeland, Rhiannon Giddens and Samara Joy, who has been an artist-in-residence in Perugia for the past two summers.

Pagnotta acknowledges that the festival's success and legacy owe much to the insistence on aesthetic quality control, balanced with carefully tending a bottom line with more popular, sometimes commercial choices. And the antique beauty of the setting is an ideal backdrop. "Umbria Jazz enjoys its place in the world of jazz thanks to its winning formula," he says. "It has been written that in the 10 days of the festival it is, in fact, three festivals in one: number one, the main stage; secondly, in theaters, clubs and the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, the most important museum in Umbria; and third, free concerts on three different stages that maintain the formula of the original festival in the '70s."

Free concerts, in fact, account for the seminal stage of the festival's life, when Pagnotta was president of the Jazz Club Perugia (for the historical record, that organization grew out of the '50s-based Hot Club). At the outset, Pagnotta explains, "I presented the local government, Regione Umbria, with a proposal for an international jazz festival. The formula for the festival which began in 1973 was for free concerts held every day in different Umbrian towns. The '70s were the years of youth protests which grew out of control, and so we were forced to suspend the festival in 1978.

"We began again in 1982 with a new formula, with both paying and free concerts, and year after year we grew to the point of being invited, in 1990, to become part of the European Jazz Festivals Organization, which later became the International Jazz Festivals Organization."

Along the winding and ever-adapting path of the festival's history, Pagnotta has been up close and personal with the changes in jazz and its makers and facilitators. Looking back, he says, "There are so many memories, but I would just like to cite George Wein, the maestro of us all, who taught us how to organize a festival. I had the privilege of meeting George at the beginning of the '60s. I also have many nostalgic memories of the musicians — many are friends — who have left us, the latest being the legendary Wayne Shorter, who performed at the very first Umbria Jazz festival with Weather Report."

Putting the festival's long history into perspective, Pagnotta comments, "During all these years we have seen the steady growth of Italian jazz, which has arrived late with respect to many European countries. I hope that Umbria Jazz will continue in this way, and I like to think that, in my small way, I have contributed to the growth of jazz in Italy." —Josef Woodard





London **EFG London Jazz Festival** November 10 - 19 www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk



Istanbul Jazz Festival July 3 - 18 www.caz.iksv.org/en



Switzerland **Montreux Jazz Festival** June 30 - July 15 www.montreuxjazz.com



France Jazz à Vienne June 28 - July 13 www.jazzavienne.com



vitoria gasteiz Spain

Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz July 3 - 8 www.jazzvitoria.com

**PORI JAZZ** 

Finland

July 7 - 15

www.porijazz.com

**Pori Jazz Festival** 



Austria **Jazz Fest Wien** www.viennajazz.org

sea Jazz

Holland

North Sea Jazz Festival

July 7 – 9

www.northseajazz.com

NN north



Italy **Umbria Jazz** July 7 - 16 www.umbriajazz.com



Canada **Festival International** 

de Jazz de Montréal June 29 - July 8 www.montrealjazzfest.com



Norway **Molde International Jazz Festival** July 17 - 22 www.moldejazz.no



USA Freihofer's Saratoga **Jazz Fesitival** June 24 - 25 www.spac.org



USA **DC Jazz Festival** August 30 - September 3 www.dcjazzfest.org



USA **Monterey Jazz Festival** September 22 - 24 www.montereyjazzfestival.org



USA **Newport Jazz Festival** August 4 – 6 www.newportjazzfest.org



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### CANADA

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#### Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville Victoriaville. Québec. Canada

May 15-21

The 39th edition of the Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville will include world premieres, world-renowned musicians, visual arts, experimental films and a circuit of sound art installations in public spaces. FIMAV is a laboratory of all avant-garde art forms — a world of audacity.

LINEUP: Poil Ueda, Ikue Mori, Zou Amba (Bhakti), Emlie Škrijelj/ Tom Malmendier (Les Marquises), Camille Brisson/Isabelle Clermont (Collectif Tendancielle), Joe Sorbara/Matthias Mainz (Aurealities), Fred Frith (Drawing Sound), Simon Hanes (GNR8RZ), Noorg, Guy Thouin & L'Ensemble Infini, Tashi Dorji/Dave Rempis, Lori Freedman (BeingFive), Elliott Sharp/Colin Stenson/Billy Hart/ Payton McDonald (Void Patrol), François Houle/Kate Gentile/Alexander Hawkins, Nina Garcia/Arnaud Rivière (Autoreverse), John Zorn New Music for Trios, John Zorn New Masada Quartet. fimav.qc.ca/en

#### TD Victoria International JazzFest Victoria, British Columbia June 22-July 2

Experience 11 hot days and nights of the coolest music in town at the 40th edition of TD Victoria International JazzFest. Join us for the longest-running, multi-day professional music festival on Vancouver Island, featuring more than 70 performances of jazz, blues, world music and more on various stages around Victoria.

**LINEUP**: Chris Botti, Snarky Puppy, BADBADNOTGOOD, Sona Jobarteh, Jamison Ross, Nik West, Brandee Younger Trio, Emmet Cohen Trio, LowDown Brass Band, Isaiah Collier & The Chosen Few, The Ostara Project, Brekky Boy, Malika Tirolien and more. jazzvictoria.ca

#### d Ottawa Jazz Festival

#### 🕂 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

June 23-30

Spanning all genres and inspirations of jazz, Ottawa Jazz Festival has been a trailblazer in presenting the nuances of music for more than 40 years. This involves creating, developing, producing and presenting music events that include artists with international reputations as well as new and emerging talent.

LINEUP: TuBari, Gentiane MG, Zoh Amba, The NYChillharmonic, Will Bonness Quintet, Lord Huton, Mary Margaret O'Hara, TEKE::TEKE, U.S. Army Jazz Ambassadors Big Band, Pedrito Martinez Group, Aline Homzy, Mary Ancheta Quartet, Laufey, Little Animal!, Melody Gardot,



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#### TD Toronto Jazz Festival Toronto. Ontario

#### June 23-July 2

The 36th annual TD Toronto Jazz Festival celebrates the best jazz and jazz-related music from across Canada and around the world. Enjoy a selection of ticketed concerts in some of the city's finest venues, and 100-plus free admission, outdoor concerts.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock, George Benson, Ashanti, Brad Mehldau Trio, Avishai Cohen Trio, Melody Gardot, Snarky Puppy, BAD-BADNOTGOOD, Cimafunk, Colin Stetson, Haviah Mighty, Pedrito Martinez, Kokoroko, Malika Tirolien, Theon Cross and more. torontojazz.com

#### Vancouver International Jazz Festival

Vancouver, British Columbia

June 23-July 2

The 38th Vancouver International Jazz Festival kicks off summer with more than 50 free and ticketed performances of programming over 10 days. Opening weekend includes free Downtown Jazz outside the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the festival culminates on Canada Day weekend with shows across Granville Island.

LINEUP: Chris Botti, BADBADNOTGOOD and Arooj Aftab/ Vijay lyer/Shahzad Ismaily performing Love in Exile. coastaljazz.ca

#### Festival International de Jazz de Montréal Montréal, Québec, Canada

Lune 29-July 8 Every year for 10 days, the French-speaking metropolis of North

America becomes a unique site designed to meet festival goers' needs, where fans of all types of jazz-related music rub shoulders with aficionados of the genre. Fans can enjoy great music, delicious food, wonderful architecture, ticketed concerts and free outdoor shows.

**LINEUP:** Diana Krall, Melody Gardot, Herbie Hancock, Buddy Guy, Marisa Monte, Stacey Kent Trio, DOMi & JD Beck, Rodrigo y Gabriela, Snarky Puppy, Avishai Cohen Trio and more. montrealjazzfest.com/en-ca

#### **TD Kitchener Blues Festival**

Kitchener, Ontario Aug. 10-13

Experience the TD Kitchener Blues Festival in downtown Kitchener. The festival offers more than 80 international and Canadian artists on six stages with after shows in clubs and restaurants.

LINEUP: To be announced. kitchenerbluesfestival.com

#### BC Smoke Shop Harbour Blues 'n Roots Festival Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

August 24-27

Celebrate the end of summer on a high note at the BC Smoke Shop Harbour Blues 'n Roots festival, showcasing "music in all shades for your soul" in the genres of blues, roots, world and more on the outdoor stage at Ship Point in Victoria's Inner Harbour and Hermann's Upstairs.

**LINEUP:** To be announced. The 2022 lineup included Ruthie Foster, Alex Cuba, William Prince, AHI, George Leach, Lindsay Beaver and Calum Graham. jazzvictoria.ca/harbour-blues/harbour-blues-lineup

#### Festi Jazz International de Rimouski Rimouski, Québec, Canada Aug. 31-Sept. 3

The 37th edition of the Festi Jazz international de Rimouski offers an effervescent and enriching intimate experience. In the heart of the city, be rocked by the waves that will take listeners close to talented, renowned artists. Enjoy this unique festival with friends or family during the labor day weekend.

LINEUP: To be announced. Previous lineups have included Dizzy Gillespie, Christian McBride, Stanley Clark, Robert Glasper, Julian Lage and The Brooks. festijazzrimouski.com

#### Pentastic Jazz Festival Penticton, British Columbia

#### Sept. 8-10

Celebrating its Silver Jubilee, Pentastic Jazz Festival boasts an all-star lineup with four venues to showcase them. Transportation shuttles are available.

LINEUP: Tom Hook and the Hounds, Dave Bennett Quartet, Tom Rigney & Flambeau, Groovus, Professor Cunningham, Dave Bennett & the Memphis Speed Kings, le dixieband, Carolyn Martin's Swing Band & South Okanagan Big Band. pentasticjazz.ca

#### **Guelph Jazz Festival**

#### Guelph, Ontario, Canada

#### Sept. 14-17

The Guelph Jazz Festival is celebrating its 30th anniversary season, featuring world-class artists from the regional, national and international fields of creative improvised music at ticketed indoor and free outdoor concerts.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups include Natural Information Society (Community Ensemble with Ari Brown), GEORGE, Land of Kush, Sand Enigma, Lido Pimienta and more. guelphjazzfestival.com

#### IF

#### Guelph, Ontario, and online Oct. 20-21

Improvisation Festival (IF) celebrates improvisational works by bringing together local and global performers across a range of disciplines: music, dance, theatre, poetry, visual arts, filmmaking and more. Through captivating performances, radio broadcasts, digital streams and community collaborations, IF engages thousands of people internationally to imagine (and re-imagine) our world.

LINEUP: To be announced. Past lineups have included William Parker, Wadada Leo Smith, Evelyn Glennie, Susan Alcorn, Lorna Crozier, George Elliott Clarke, Joyful Joyful, Markus Floats, Olivia Shortt, Gordon Grdina, Anh Phung, Matthew Cardinal, Pantayo, Sarah Pagé and more. improvfest.ca



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# INTERNATIONAL

#### This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



#### Menorca Jazz Festival Menorca, Balearic Islands, Spain Feb. 26-May 20

The Menorca Jazz Festival reaches its 25th anniversary with a luxury lineup — big international names such as Brad Mehldau, Eli Degibri and Emmet Cohen meet artists from Spain, such as Antonio Lizana or Carlos Sarduy.

LINEUP: Alternatilla All Woman Jazz Band, Brad Mehldau Trio, Antonio Lizana Quintet, Carlos Sarduy Quartet, Jazz Al Cinema, Emmet Cohen Trio, Eli Degibri Quartet, Naomi & Her Handsome Devils, The Stockholm Swing All Stars, more.. menorcajazzfestival.com

#### Crossroads

#### Emilia-Romagna, Italy March-July

A traveling festival, moving from town to town all across the Emilia-Romagna region, with more than 60 concerts involving over 450 artists.

LINEUP: Bruce Forman, Bobby Watson, Ana Carla Maza, Joscho Stephan, David Hazeltine, Dave Holland, Joey Baron, Amaro Freitas, Sarah Jane Morris, Paolo Fresu, Uri Caine, Romero Lubambo, Toninho Horta, Fabrizio Bosso, Julian Lage and more. crossroads-it.org

#### Festival Jazzkaar or Tallinn International Festival Jazzkaar

#### Tallinn, Estonia April 23-30

Jazzkaar, the biggest jazz festival in the Baltic region held in Estonia every year since 1990, serves as a prime location in the Telliskivi Creative City — a former industrial quarter full of boho-style creative hubs, cafes and studios. In 2023, the festival will take place for the 34th time, celebrating with a program that includes the world's leading jazz musicians and outstanding new Estonian jazz artists.

LINEUP: Mike Stern Band featuring Dennis Chambers, Leni Stern, Bob Franceschini and Chris Minh Doky; Ben Wendel Group; The Baylor Project; Dawda Jobareth/Stefan Pasborg Duo; Jorge Luis Pacheco Trio; Karja/ Renard/Wandinger Goes XL; Sara Correia; Steve Coleman and Five Elements, more. jazzkaar.ee

#### Ulrichsberger Kaleidophon Ulrichsberg, Austria April 28-30

The 37th edition of Ulrichsberger Kaleidophon will present a mix of jazz, improvised music and contemporary composed music. Besides the 11 concerts, there will be an exhibition of photos and posters from the 50-year-history of Jazzatelier.

LINEUP: Frank Gratkowski/Achim Kaufmann/ Wilbert de Joode/Tony Buck; Phil Minton & Carl Ludwig Hübsch; The Sea Trio–Masahiko Satoh/ Otomo Yoshihide/Roger Turner; In Memoriam Global Village & Günter Baby Sommer; Sylvie Courvoisier Trio; Last Dream of the Morning– John Butcher/John Edwards/Mark Sanders. jazzatelier.at/kal.htm

#### Jazzfest Bonn Bonn, Germany May 1-14/Aug. 26-27

Jazzfest Bonn aims to promote young jazz musicians and give them the opportunity to present their music alongside international stars in Beethoven's birthplace. Established 2010, Jazzfest Bonn has grown into a renowned festival and a melting pot for highclass jazz from Germany, Europe and abroad.

LINEUP: Florian Weber & Dogma Chamber Orchestra; Thomas D & The KBCS; Sendecki & Spiegel; Thärichens Tentett; Ida Nielsen & The Funkbots; Jacob Karlzon Trio; Judith Hill; Portugal/Negrón van Grieken/Muche Gramss; Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio; Brad Mehldau Trio; Jakob Manz & Johanna Summer; The Baylor Project; double feature Simon Nabatov and Matthias Schubert/Ralph Alessi; Fuchsthone Orchestra; Bobby Sparks PARANOIA; Post Koma; Philip Lassiter; The Prince Experience–Vince Mendoza & WDR Big Band. jazzfest-bonn.de

#### Ravenna Jazz Ravenna, Italy May 4-13

Ravenna Jazz celebrates its 50th edition with a program covering many styles from straight to electro jazz, world music, blues and more.

LINEUP: Irene Grandi, Hugo Race, Matteo Mancuso, Susana Baca, Neue Grafik, Italian Jazz Orchestra and more. crossroads-it.org/ravenna-jazz

#### New Conversations–Vicenza Jazz Vicenza, Italy May 10-20

Vicenza Jazz 2023 will be focused on women's contribution to improvised music. With some 150 performances, there will be space for male performers, too.

LINEUP: Abdullah Ibrahim, Nicole Mitchell, Myra Melford, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Anne Paceo, Rachel Eckroth, Jan Garbarek, Trilok Gurtu, Hamid Drake, Marc Ribot, Donny McCaslin and more. vicenzajazz.org

#### **Trondheim Jazzfestival**

Trondheim, Norway May 10-14

Since 1980, Trondheim Jazzfestival has delivered first-class jazz to Trondheim, a city with one of the most exiting, high-profile jazz scenes in Norway. Each year the festival presents a wide program with up to 60 concerts for more than 10,000 attendees.

LINEUP: Billy Cobham Spectrum 50 Band, Irene Reig Trio, Les Amazones d'Afrique, Majken Christiansen, Stian Carstensen & Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, more. jazzfest.no

#### **Moers Festival**

Moers, Germany May 26-29 Established in 1972 with two main stages,



Perugia, July 7-16 2023







the festival focuses on artistic work within the field of exploring digital possibilities.

LINEUP: Kenny Garrett, Billy Hart Quartet featuring Ethan Iverson, Seabrook Trio, Moerser Jazz Quartett, Mark Ernestus' Ndagga Rhythm Force, Ensemble Icosikaihenagone Vol. II and more. <u>moers-festival.de</u>

#### Nattjazz Bergen, Norway

May 26-June 3

Nattjazz (established 1972) swings into action in late May every year, and over the course of nine nights more than 60 concerts are presented.

LINEUP: Susanne Sundfør, Louis Cole, Eliades Ochoa, Stanley Clarke, Selma French, Rachel Eckroth, Eivind Austad Trio, Rolanda Luna Trio and more. nattiazz.no

#### Ascona Jazz Festival Ascona, Switzerland

#### June 22-July 1

Ascona, Switzerland's tourism hotspot, since 1985 has hosted top New Orleans artists and bands as well as European groups. Officially supported by the City of New Orleans, the festival offers 200 concerts — from trad-jazz to funk, in the idyllic setting of Lake Maggiore.

LINEUP: New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, Nicholas Payton, Davina and the Vagabonds, Stanford Jazz Orchestra ft. Wayne Bergeron, Vanessa Collier, Wes "Warmdaddy" Anderson Group and more. jazzascona.ch

#### JazzBaltica

### Timmendorfer Strand, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany June 22-25

JazzBaltica transforms the Maritim Seehotel Timmendorfer Strand and the surrounding beach park into a maritime setting for jazz music right by the sea. The festival's artistic director is Swedish trombonist Nils Landgren. Over an extended weekend, both stars and upcoming talents perform on five stages in around 30 concerts. LINEUP: Martin Wind, Karin Hammar Fab4, Rita Marcotulli, Tingvall Trio, Eva Klesse Quartett, Andreas Motis, David Helbock, Camille Bertault and more. jazzbaltica.com

#### Sicilia Jazz Festival Palermo, Sicily, Italy

#### June 24-July 3

Fondazione Brass Group, which once welcomed Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins, hosts more than 100 concerts across the centuries-old venues Palermo has to offer. Perhaps the most important big band festival in Europe, Sicilia Jazz, focused on Sicilian jazz talent as well as big band music, unites culture, food and swingin' jazz.

**LINEUP:** Marcus Miller, Gregory Porter, Manhattan Transfer, all featuring Orchestra Jazz Siciliana. <u>siciliajazzfestival.com</u>

#### Jazz à Vienne Vienne, France June 28-July 13

Since its creation in 1981 by Jean-Paul Boutellier, the Festival Jazz à Vienne has celebrated the world of jazz during the first two weeks of July. Each year, more than 200,000 festival-goers come to meet the 190 bands performing on the four stages.

LINEUP: Marcus Miller + guests, Ezra Collective, Joe Bonamassa, Joe Louis Walker, Norah Jones, Mavis Staples, Pat Metheny and more. jazzavienne.com

#### Montreux Jazz Festival Montreux, Vaud, Switzerland June 30-July 15

Montreux Jazz Festival is held annually in Montreux, Switzerland, across two weeks in July. Now in its 57th year, the festival draws 250,000 music lovers from all across the world to the Lake Geneva shoreline.

LINEUP: Bob Dylan, Buddy Guy, Chris Isaak, Gilberto Gil, Iggy Pop, Jacob Collier, Janelle Monáe, Joe Bonamassa, Jon Batiste, Lionel Richie, Marcus Miller, Mavis Staples, Nile Rodgers, Norah Jones, Pat Metheny, Seal, Simply Red. montreuxjazzfestival.com

#### Vitoria-Gasteiz Jazz Festival Vitoria-Gasteiz, Basque Country, Spain July 3-8

Musicians at the Vitoria-Gasteiz Jazz Festival take risks, create because they need to, are willing to learn, speak through their work and constantly challenge jazz fans.

LINEUP: Maria Schneider, Brad Mehldau Trio, Christian McBride's New Jawn, Kandace Springs, Immanuel Wilkins 4tet, Samora Pinderhughes 5tet and more. jazzvitoria.com

#### **Gent Jazz**

# Ghent, East-Flanders, Belgium July 5-15

Gent Jazz takes place at the cozy garden of the historic Bijlokesite in Ghent, Belgium. The festival welcomes young adventurers, hipsters and all music lovers to experience unique concerts.

LINEUP: Norah Jones, Gregory Porter, ZAZ, Branford Marsalis Quartet, Snarky Puppy, Joe Bonamassa, Mavis Staples, Marcus Miller and more. gentiazz.com

#### A to JazZ Festival

#### Sofia, Bulgaria July 6-9

A to JazZ is the most significant open-air jazz festival in Bulgaria with 50,000 people attending over four days. It features 20 acts, all-nightlong jam sessions, showcases, kids educational programs, art-market and conference panels.

LINEUP: Judith Hill, Lakecia Benjamin, EVDN, Krista and more. atojazz.bg

#### 🛛 Istanbul Jazz Festival



Istanbul Jazz Festival has happened each in July since 1994. It's a broad-spectrum event that brings together music lovers and musicians, supports jazz musicians in Turkey and encourages new productions.

LINEUP: Lizz Wright, Youn Sun Nah, Kovacs, The Lumineers, Alfa Mist, Mammal Hands, Fatoumata Diawara and more. caz.iksv.org

#### NN North Sea Jazz Festival Rotterdam, the Netherlands July 7-9

NN North Sea Jazz Festival is the largest indoor music festival in the world, known globally as the event where the past, present and future of jazz are featured within three days.

LINEUP: Alabaster DePlume; Andrew Cyrille Quartet; Bill Frisell FOUR featuring Greg Tardy, Gerald Clayton and Johnathan Blake; Buddy Guy–Damn Right Farewell; Jasper Blom Quartet with Pablo Held; Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis; Kenny Barron Quartet; Linda May Han Oh; Maria Schneider & the Oslo Jazz Ensemble present "Data Lords"; Mavis Staples; SuperBlue: Kurt Elling & Charlie Hunter with special guest Huntertones Horns; Terri Lyne Carrington/New Standards; Van Morrison; Anna Webber Simple Trio; Fred Hersch, Drew Gress, Joey Baron; Jan Garbarek; Jill Scott; Kenny Garrett Quintet; Marcus Miller; The Staples Jr. Singers; Tom Jones; Branford Marsalis Quartet; EZRA Collective; Hermeto Pascoal; Kandace Springs; Lizzo; Oded Tzur Quartet; Pat Metheny Side-Eye; Samara Joy; Son Little; Stanley Clarke N'4Ever and more. northseajazz.com

#### Perugia, Italy July 7-16

Umbria 's 50th anniversary events will follow a format introduced some years ago: There are many different kinds of music for everyone, but the festival's soul is inextricably tied to jazz and its storied history. The program will reflect this and include not only the many forms of jazz, but also pop, rock, soul, reggae, blues and more. Hear established stars and newcomers, together with iconic figures of pop and Black music, and jazzmen experimenting with fascinating new projects. The festival's current format made its debut in 2003 as "three festivals in one." interconnected by a basic idea: to bring together the different souls of Umbria Jazz and retrace its history.

LINEUP: Brad Mehldau, Branford Marsalis, Rhiannon Giddens, Snarky Puppy, Ben Harper, Stewart Copeland, Paolo Conte, Mika, Stefano Bollani, Kyle Eastwood, Paolo Fresu, Enrico Rava, Fred Hersch, Joe Bonamassa, Bill Frisell, Samara Joy, Ranky Tanky and more. umbriajazz.com

#### **Aarhus Jazz Festival**

#### Aarhus, Denmark July 8-15

Aarhus Jazz Festival is a popular annual festival presenting all types of jazz, whether you are looking for traditional, swing, experimental or modern. There are more than 300 concerts at 40 venues all over the city during the festival week. Many daytime concerts are free of charge.

LINEUP: Curtis Stigers, Jakob Bro, Tower of Power, Vivian Buczek, Aarhus Jazz Orchestra, SHARE Improfest and others. jazzfest.dk

#### **Bohemia JazzFest**

#### Prague, Plzen, Liberec, Hluboka nad Vltavou, Prachatice, Domazlice and Brno,Czech Republic July 10-18

The 18th edition of Bohemia JazzFest begins in Prague's historical Old Town Square. This free-admission festival travels throughout Czechia.

LINEUP: Mike Stern Band, Abdullah Ibra-

him, Veronica Swift, Carles Benavent, Tino di Geraldo & Jorge Pardo and more. bohemiajazzfest.cz

#### Jazz A Juan

Antibes Juan-les-Pins, Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, France July 10-21

The international jazz festival of Antibes Juan-les-Pins is Europe's longest-running jazz festival. Enjoy concerts in the Gould pine grove by the Mediterranean sea.

LINEUP: To be announced.

<u>jazzajuan.com</u>

#### Birmingham, Sandwell & Westside Jazz Festival Birmingham & Sandwell, England July 14-23

Running since 1985, Birmingham, Sandwell & Westside Jazz Festival is England's longest-established jazz and blues festival and one of Europe's biggest free jazz parties. The festival presents more than 200 performances alongside workshops, talks, exhibitions and master classes and almost all of it is free to attend. The festival is organized by Big Bear Music, one of the U.K.'s longest-running independent record labels and booking agencies.

LINEUP: To be announced. birminghamjazzfestival.com

#### Molde International Jazz Festival aka Moldejazz Molde, Norway

July 17-22

Moldejazz bills itself as the oldest continuously running jazz festival in the world. Six days during July, the festival arranges 100 concerts at nine stages.

LINEUP: Snarky Puppy, Marcus Miller, Kurt Elling, Samara Joy, Hedvig Mollestad (artist In residence), Dave Holland New Quartet, Kris Davis & Craig Taborn Duo and more. <u>moldejazz.no</u>

#### San Sebastian Jazz Festival (Jazzaldia)

#### San Sebastian, Basque Country, Spain July 21-25

The San Sebastian Jazz Festival was founded in 1966. It is the oldest jazz festival in Spain and one of the oldest in Europe. The festival hosts around 100 concerts on stages across the city, some are free and others are ticketed, and some are in the open air.

**LINEUP:** To be announced. jazzaldia.eus/en

#### Langnau Jazz Nights

Langnau, Bern, Switzerland July 25-29

Langnau Jazz Nights is a unique festival in the heart of Switzerland. Over the last 30 years it





has impressed with an international, highly acclaimed lineup as well as an amazing atmosphere. With its incorporated jazz workshop, the festival is a popular meeting point for musicians from all over Europe and the U.S.

LINEUP: Avishai Cohen Trio "Shifting Sands," John Scofield's "Yankee Go Home," Lynne Arriale Trio, Emile Parisien Sextet "Louise," Ingrid Jensen & the LJN faculty, Yellowjackets, Kurt Rosenwinkel "Caipi" and Lakecia Benjamin "Pursuance." jazz-nights.ch

#### **Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival** *Ystad, Sweden* Aug. 2-5

Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival is a four-day event that presents 25 concerts, a jazz parade, Next Jazz Generation concerts, JazzKidz concerts and jam sessions. All venues are within walking distance in the medieval town center.

LINEUP: Jan Garbarek, Trilok Gurtu, Bill Charlap, David Wong, Carl Allen, Kyle Eastwood, Rhoda Scott, Sisters in Jazz, Marilyn Mazur, Nils Landgren, Bohuslän Big Band, Elaria Orchestra and more. ystadjazz.se

#### Gouvy Jazz & Blues Festival Gouvy, Belgium

Aug. 5-7

Situated in Belgium on the northern border of Luxembourg, this festival, with its combination of tranquility and good music, enriches the Belgian Ardennes region. This year, Saturday is dedicated to bebop with the Sunday dedicated to blues.

LINEUP: To be announced. madelonne.be

#### Nišville Jazz Festival Niš, Serbia

#### Aug. 10-13

Nišville is an annual summer music festival in the Ancient Fortress of Niš. From the festival's beginning in 1995, its concept has been based on presenting the "traditional" jazz forms alongside a fusion with the ethnic tradition from the different parts of the world.

LINEUP: Thana Alexa ONA featuring Anthonio Sanches, Tricky, Ida Nielsen & Funkbots, Asian Dub Foundation, Mauro Sigura Quartet & Luca Aquino. More to be announced. nisville.com

#### Jazzfestival Saalfelden Saalfelden, Austria

#### Aug. 17-20

The Jazzfestival Saalfelden offers about 60 concerts over four days. Every year, it welcomes 200 artists at 13 locations in the city, in the woods and fields and offers musical walks in the mountains.

LINEUP: To be announced. Early announcements include Lukas König, Andreas Schaerer, Ralph Mothwurf, Brekky Boy, Leo Genovese and Michiyo Yagi. jazzsaalfelden.com

#### Jazz District Festival #5

Paris, France Aug. 26-27

Jazz District Festival #5 is the 5th edition of the jazz festival organized by the Art District Radio web radio. It is a friendly event in the heart of the Longchamp estate park of the GoodPlanet Foundation.

LINEUP: To be announced. jazzdistrict.info/

#### Rumori Mediterranei International Jazz Festival Roccella Jonica, Calabria, Italy

Aug. 26 - Sept. 3 This festival is based on tributes to Ital-

ian-American jazz musicians with original productions centering around such artists as Joe and Scott LaFaro, Tony Scott, Sal Nisticò, Conte Candoli, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang and Frank Sinatra. The festival includes a section dedicated to innovative jazz and young musicians.

LINEUP: Jazz Back to Grammo; Tribute to Clark Terry; Leon in jazz; Lino Patruno Jazz Show; Rachel Gould Quintet; Jim Rotondi Quintet; Mat Maneri Quartet; Joe Lovano & Nebrodi Band; Lewis Porter Quintet; Giosè Rimanelli Project; Greta Panettieri Quartet; Charles Lloyd Trio and more. roccellajazz.org

#### Jazz in the Park Cluj-Napoca, Cluj, Romania Sept. 1-3

Jazz in the Park's 11th edition, held in Cluj-Napoca's Ethnographical park during the first weekend of fall, will feature established artists and up-and-comers with plenty of engaging activities and experiences for attendees.

LINEUP: The Cinematic Orchestra, Billy Cobham, Fun Lovin' Criminals, Martina Topley-Bird, The Heliocentrics, Mansur Brown, Ada Milea, Tatran, Mork, Daykoda, 7th Sense, JazzyBit and more. jazzinthepark.ro

#### **Enjoy Jazz-Festival for Jazz and More**

#### Heidelberg, Mannheim, Ludwigshafen, state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, southwest Germany October

The 25th edition of Enjoy Jazz will be celebrated with weeks of day-to-day concerts from music legends and young talents.

LINEUP: To be announced. enjoyjazz.de

#### **Angrajazz Festival**

#### Angra do Heroísmo, Terceira Island, Azores, Portugal October 4-7

Angrajazz holds its 24th edition. In the past, many of the most important national and international jazz musicians have played the festival, making it is an excellent reason to visit the classified World Heritage City of Angra do Heroísmo, explore the Azores Islands and listen to great jazz.

**LINEUP**: Orquestra Angrajazz, Coreto Porta-Jazz, Renee Rosnes Quintet, Immanuel Wilkins Quartet and more. <u>angrajazz.com</u>

#### Stockholm Jazz Festival Stockholm, Sweden

Oct. 13-22

Spreading jazz to more than 60 venues around Stockholm, this one of Sweden's oldest festivals and one of Stockholm's biggest events with more than 200 concerts in 10 days.

**LINEUP:** This year's lineup includes 30 Years of e.s.t. (Esbjörn Svensson Trio) as well as Avishai Cohen Trio. Complete lineup to be announced. <u>stockholmjazz.se</u>

#### Baloise Session Basel, Switzerland

#### Oct. 19-Nov. 9

The Baloise Session is a boutique music festival of a special kind. Sit in the exclusive, feel-good ambience, at a candlelit club table, just like in the legendary New York night clubs. Experience musical highlights with a mix of rock, pop, soul, jazz, world, blues, singer-songwriter and more.

LINEUP: To be announced. baloisesession.ch

#### **Belgrade Jazz Festival**

Belgrade, Serbia Oct. 25-29

Known for bold programming and intense creative energy, the 39th edition will present musicians on the leading edge of jazz from America and Europe. Belgrade is one of Europe's most fascinating cities, and the festival vibe is always electric.

LINEUP: To be announced. bjf.rs

#### EFG London Jazz Festival London, United Kingdom November

The EFG London Jazz Festival is the capital's biggest pan-city music festival, taking place annually in November. Delivering world-class artists and emerging stars, the festival continues to take jazz to a massive audience, in one of U.K.'s landmark music events.

Line-up: To be announced. efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk

#### **Zurich Jazznojazz Festival**

#### Zurich, Switzerland Nov. 1-4

Nov. 1-4

The international festival is a mix of urban jazz, soul-funk sounds and jazz fusion grooves. Four nights of awesome music with true musical pearls featuring some 15 concerts at Gessnerallee Zurich.

**LINEUP**: To be announced. jazznojazz.ch

#### **Jazzfest Berlin**

#### Berlin, Germany Nov. 2-5

Presenting both renowned innovators of jazz and improvised music as well as emerging pioneers with backgrounds in a great diversity of traditions, Jazzfest Berlin has earned acclaim as a platform for creative border-crossings and transcultural collaboration. Founded in 1964, the festival celebrates its 60th edition as a kick-off for the anniversary year.

LINEUP: To be announced. berlinerfestspiele.de/de/ jazzfest-berlin/start.html

#### **Roma Jazz Festival**

Rome, Lazio, Italy Nov. 2-26

The Roma Jazz Festival, founded in 1976, calls itself a courageous festival, capable of experimentation and creative impetus with its own vocation to research new projects and sounds.

**LINEUP:** John Scofield, Avishai Cohen, Judith Hill, Yellowjackets, Stanley Clarke, Tony Levin, Jose James, James Brandon Lewis, Hamid Drake, Shabaka Hutchings.

## **OTHER INTERNATIONAL**

#### Jamaica International Ocho Rios Jazz Festival 2023 Ocho Rios, Jamaica

UCIO RIOS, Jair

The Jamaica International Ocho Rios Jazz Festival, founded by Sonny Bradshaw, is celebrating its post-COVID renewal this year at Island Village in Ocho Rios.

LINEUP: Delfayo Marsalis, Jamaica Big Band, Dean Fraser, Myrna Hague, Instrumental Sounds Of Praise, Seretse & Friends, Alpha Boys Band, Majid. ochoriosjazzja.com

#### Festival International Canarias Jazz & Más Islas Canarias

#### June 30-July 23

The Festival Internacional Canarias Jazz & Más is held every year in July and travels throughout the Canary Islands, filling theaters and emblematic squares.

LINEUP: Metropol Orkest featuring Kandance Spring, Kurt Elling featuring Charlie Hunter, Salvador Sobral, Manu Katche, Richard Bona Trio, Jazzmeia Horn and more. canariasjazz.com

#### **Devonport Jazz**

#### Devonport, Tasmania, Australia July 27-30

Celebrating 22 years of fantastic jazz and blues, Devonport Jazz features a host of Australian artists in venues in and around Devonport, in Tasmania's stunning North West.

**LINEUP:** To be announced. **devonportjazz.com.au** 

#### Jazzmandu 2023

Kathmandu, Nepal Nov. 2-9

Jazzmandu is an annual gathering of worldclass musicians and music-hungry audiences in one of the most unique cities on the planet.

LINEUP: To be announced. jazzmandu.com

#### Festival Internacional de Jazz de Punta del Este

#### Punta del Este, Uruguay Jan. 4–8, 2024

This outdoor festival, which was founded in 1996, takes place in green pastures among horses and cows.

LINEUP: Monty Alexander, Mccoy Tyner, Kenny Barron, George Cables, Harold Mabern, Al Foster; Ben Riley, Roy Haynes, Tootie Heath, Ron Carter, Christian Mc Bride, Benny Golson, Paquito D'Rivera, Michael Brecker, Phil Woods, Clark Terry, Jon Faddis, Roy Hargrove, Diego Urcola. festival.com.uy





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Jazzfest Bonn Extended 26./27. August 2023 THE PRINCE EXPERIENCE Vince Mendoza & WDR Big Band

> More Information: www.jazzfest-bonn.de



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# Blindfold Test > BY TED PANKEN

# Dave Liebman

A t76, soprano and tenor saxophonist Dave Liebman — an alumnus of bands led by Miles Davis and Elvin Jones, leader of too many bands to name and too many albums to count, distinguished educator, author, pedagogue, NEA Jazz Master and polio survivor — continues to explore and expand his horizons, as evidenced by the recent releases *Live At Smalls*, a ferocious scratch-improvised quintet encounter with mid-career practitioners Peter Evans, Leo Genovese, John Hebert and drummer Tyshawn Sorey, and *Now Two*, an incantational meeting with Sorey and percussionist Adam Rudolph. This is his third Blindfold Test.

#### **Chris Potter**

"Klactoveedsedstene" (*Got The Keys To The Kingdom*, Edition, 2023) Potter, tenor saxophone; Craig Taborn, piano; Scott Colley, bass; Marcus Gilmore, drums.

It sounds like Sonny Rollins. I don't know the tune. The drummer is really loose — great groove, great control of the language (in this case, the hardcore bebop language), breaking it up from the start. The saxophonist interpolates their own stuff, to a point, and is very true to the language. Fantastic playing. My compliments to them. Maybe Joshua Redman? [*afterwards*] Chris has great control of several languages.

#### **Roscoe Mitchell/Milford Graves**

"Steady State" (Flow States, ScienSonic, 2020) Mitchell, sopranino saxophone; Graves, drums.

Is it a sopranino? That's completely foreign to my experience. This person has a lot of stuff down on the instrument. Music is color, rhythm, form and harmony. This piece is strong on the color, which means sound. You don't look for G7, G pentatonic and all that. Maybe you'd like to hear a change of texture for a full musical experience. But it's very interesting. The drummer has the right vibe: rolling, very sympathetic to what's happening. They're professional free players. You hear the dedication.

#### Ingrid Laubrock/Andy Milne

"Boulder Fall Ejecta" (*Fragile*, Intakt, 2022) Laubrock, soprano saxophone; Milne, piano. Great playing, particularly in the unison, where you can really hear the writer's intention. They moved around pretty well; in fact, maybe a little too much — 5 minutes, four different ways to play. The presentation could have been leaner; especially after the piano starts, the soprano player could wait a little longer between ideas — they'll eventually get to the stuff we're listening to, anyway. [*afterwards*] Ingrid sounded great. She was a student; I'm proud of her.

#### Joe Lovano/Jakob Bro

"As It Should Be" (Once Around The Room: A Tribute To Paul Motian, ECM, 2022) Lovano, tenor saxophone; Bro, electric guitar; Larry Grenadier, Anders Christiansen, Thomas Morgan, acoustic bass; Joey Baron, Jorge Rossy, drums.

Great track. Frisell and Lovano? Not Frisell? But it's Lovano. Nice head. Nice development by Joe. Joe can be lyrical and intense at the same time. It's one of his secrets. He's like that as a person also. Except towards the end, where he starts burning a little bit, it's a pretty mellow track. Very well played, and even though it seemed improvised from the start, Joe kept control of everything.

#### Christian McBride's New Jawn

"Obsequious" (*Prime*, Mack Avenue, 2023) McBride, bass; Marcus Strickland, tenor saxophone; Josh Evans, trumpet; Nasheet Waits, drums; Larry Young, composer.)

Ornette influence, obviously. The tenor player had to deal with what the trumpet laid down, very strong — formidable. But he took his time, and



then left that space and started doing straight ahead jazz — covered a whole bunch of bases. Impressive playing. Great drummer.

#### **James Brandon Lewis**

"Womb Water" (*Eye Of I*, Independent Release, 2023) Lewis, tenor saxophone; Christopher Hoffman, cello; Max Jaffe, drums.

Excellent drummer. Sounded like three people playing together. The tenor player finally got out of one way of playing and into the harmonics and multiphonics that are played so much now, which was a great break, and stayed there 'til the end, which was good judgment. This has no changes, but color; not real melodies, just textures. Beautiful player.

#### **Eric Alexander**

"Eddie Harris" (*Chicago Fire*, High Note, 2014) Alexander, tenor saxophone, composer; Harold Mabern, piano; John Webber, bass; Joe Farnsworth, drums.

Swinging. When you play blues-type stuff, the material is pretty obvious; it's how you do a lot with a little. This tenor player played the shit out of the double-timing that he did, and he turned me around with a riff in fourths that he might have found in my book. Great sound. [*afterwards*] It had the Eddie Harris vibe for sure. Eric Alexander is *very* good, well versed in the past and — up to a point — the present. He likes to be secure. I like to be insecure ... musically.

#### JD Allen

"Down South" (Americana, Vol. 2, Savant, 2022) Allen, tenor saxophone; Charlie Hunter, guitar; Gregg August, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

Chain gang shit! There's a vibe here. I like the tenor player. A little out of tune, but that's something we all suffer from at times. It's a little predictable, but on the other hand, it's a trancey thing where they play over a simple vamp, which you're allowed to do. It doesn't always have to be deep.

#### Sam Newsome/Jean-Michel Pilc

"Giant Steps" (Magic Circle, Independent Release, 2017) Newsome, soprano saxophone; Pilc, piano.

I've done two or three concerts with Sam. When he plays, you have nothing to say afterwards. Plus, he can play straightahead. The piano player reminded me of John Blum, who I played with recently; he's absorbed Cecil Taylor as an influence, which I haven't heard too much of. An educated listener would quickly identify this as "Giant Steps," and what they did with it is an occasion for celebration. At first it was a bit of a comic relief, but it was great when they got into it. I liked the melody at the end. No waiting for the rests. Why have rests? You do them anyway!

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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