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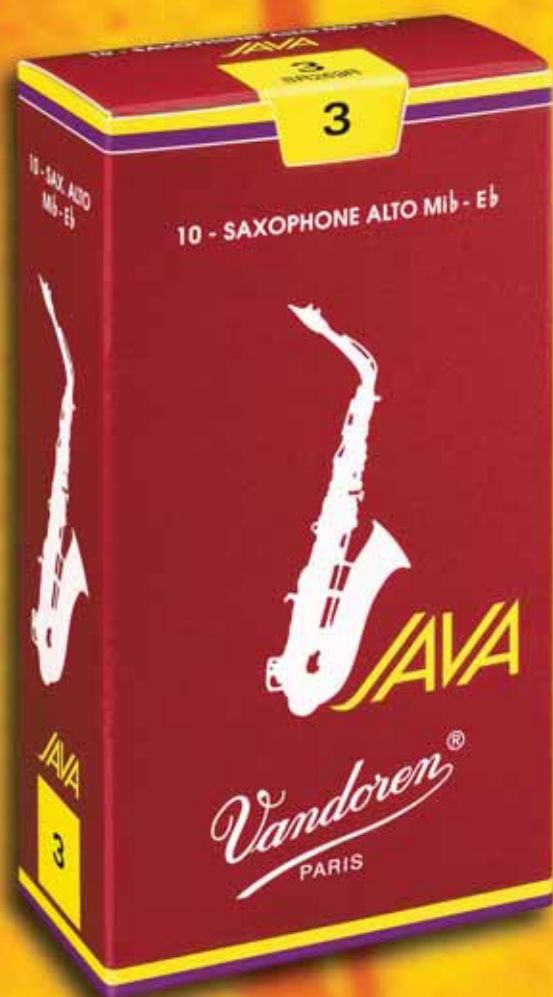
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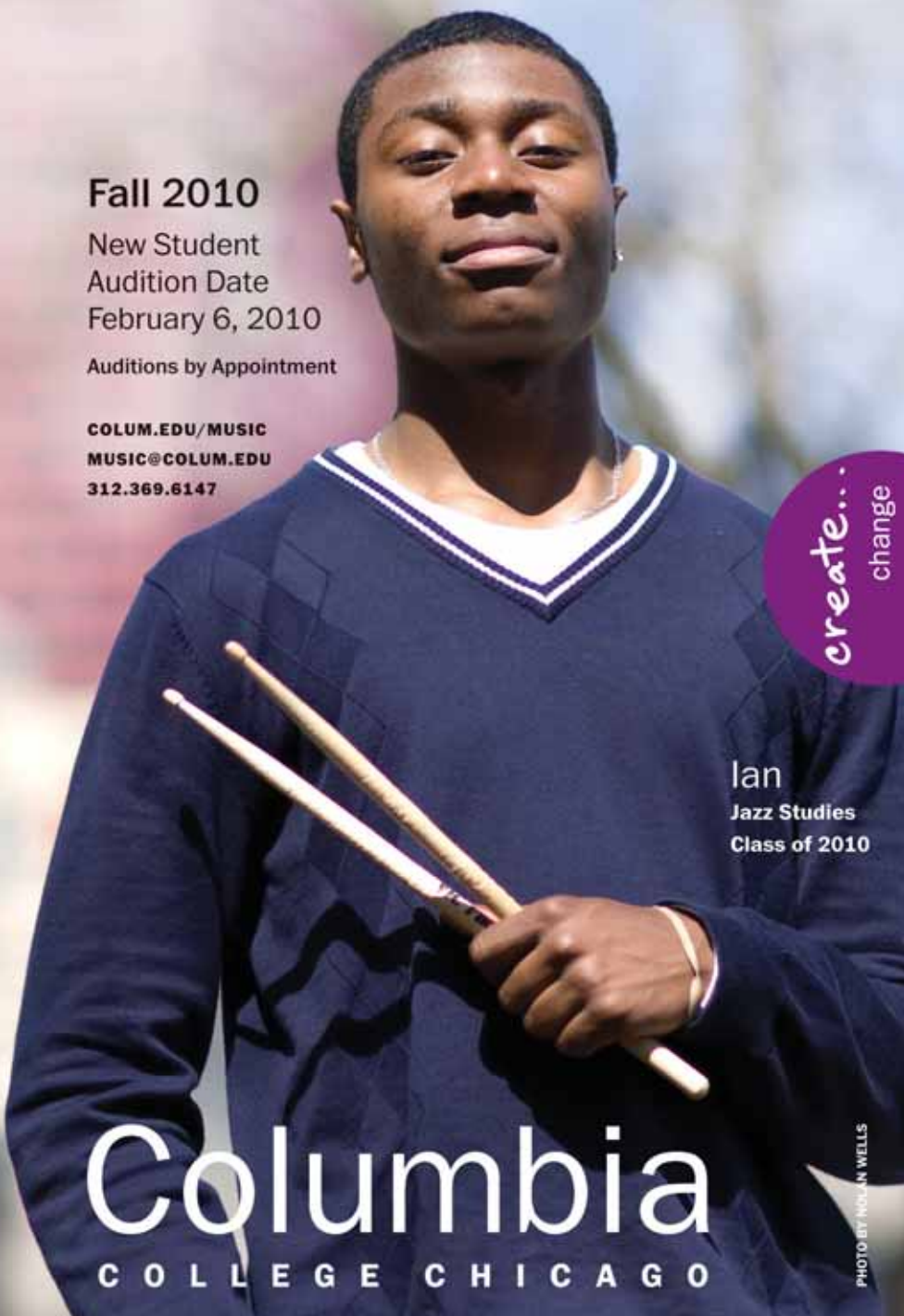
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CHRIS 'PEANUT' WHITLEY

Corey Harris

74TH ANNUAL READERS POLL

28 Paquito D’Rivera
Clarinetist of the Year | By Ted Panken

In his predisposition to present repertoire drawn from a pan-American stew of musical flavors, Paquito D’Rivera has made an enormous impact on the development of jazz thinking over the past two decades. His multi-cultural production hews to the esthetic imperatives that guided Cuba’s incomparable musicians before the revolution terminated the casino-fueled economy that had provided them gainful employment and offered them first-hand contact with international musicians. One continuity that links D’Rivera to his Cuban antecedents is his formidable command of all his instruments, not least the clarinet, as evidenced by his victory in this year’s DownBeat Readers Poll.

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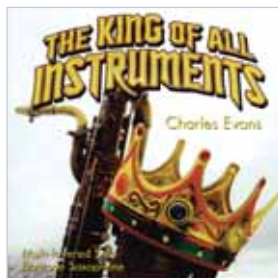
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Bridging The Gap

When Paquito D’Rivera was asked to discuss his personal history and reflect on the trajectory of his career, he found himself wanting to talk about music education. Getting right to the point, D’Rivera offered some words of wisdom and encouragement to music teachers working in schools and studios today.

“Let’s always keep in mind that teaching is a two-way street,” said this month’s cover subject, who began developing his virtuoso woodwind chops as a child prodigy growing up in Cuba. “Be firm, but flexible; be humble about the fact that we don’t know

everything. Be ready to hear students’ opinions and maybe change some of your own. Think about the lamentable ‘music gap’ between jazz, classical, Latin and pop forms, and let’s try to bridge it. The great Duke Ellington said that there is only two kinds of music: good and ‘the other stuff.’ So whatever your preferences are, don’t ignore the other types of music and learn from them.”

During his interview with DownBeat writer Ted Panken, D’Rivera also cautioned against laziness among music educators and students. “Don’t teach bad habits, only good ones,” he said. “You must know the rules before you can break them, so don’t teach ‘wrong is right.’ Wrong is wrong, period! Maybe people like Thelonious Monk could get away with it, because he had great talent and a unique genius. But there was just one Thelonious Monk, and he used to play mostly his own compositions. Improvised music is about taking risks, but never look toward imperfections as accomplishments. Swinging hard, fast sight-reading and good intonation are not contradictory terms, either.

“Encourage your students to be better than what we are,” D’Rivera continued. “If you do not know something, don’t hesitate to recommend someone else who knows. Honesty and integrity are the key elements to being a great educator. There is always something new to learn. Never forget that when you think you are a finished musician ... you are finished!”

D’Rivera remembered that a few years ago, Gunther Schuller, the American composer/conductor/instrumentalist and jazz scholar, put forth an idea to create a music school for professional musicians. “Not to play like Jascha Heifetz, but to play the violin so you can do a jingle in the morning, and then the opera, and learn to improvise a little bit,” D’Rivera clarified. “The art of improvisation is a mystery for classical musicians. I remember the face of terror on a very fine young trombonist—I wanted him to play not in a jazz style, but on top of a montuno that I was playing with the rhythm section: *whaap-whaap, ping-ping-ping, whapp*, from A-flat to B-flat. That’s it. He looked at me so terrorized, like he saw Adolf Hitler or something! But that is something that is missing in the music schools, on both sides. Of course, nobody paid attention to Gunther Schuller. But that was a great idea: to open a music school where people learn how to play Brahms and how to play Monk.”



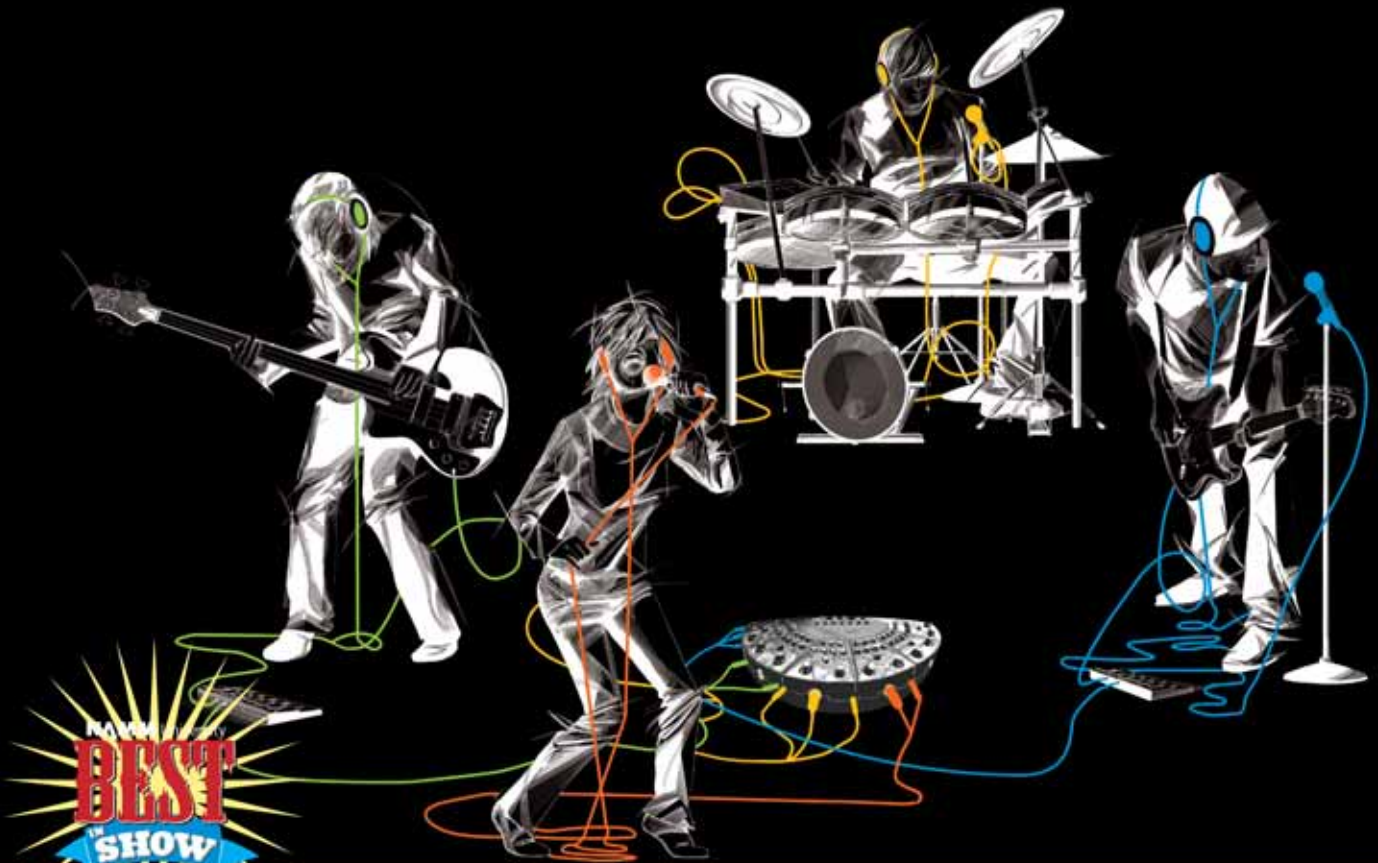
Paquito D’Rivera: “Wrong is wrong”

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Guide For Singers

It's wonderful that you print the Student Music Guide (October), but you need clearer information for those students wanting to pursue a vocal jazz performance major. The guide is more for instrumentalists. It's so hard to find out which schools offer vocal jazz as a major; even if they have vocal ensembles, that doesn't mean they have a major. Please include this information in the future.

Diana Emlet
dianaemlet@comcast.net

Pres @ 100

This year is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great Lester Young. It would be appropriate and right that DownBeat commemorate this important event.

Franco Buzzi
Locarno, Switzerland

[Editor's note: We're honoring Young's memory by reprinting Nat Hentoff's classic DownBeat interview with Pres on page 48 of this issue.]

Where's Bill Harris?

I commend DownBeat's Hall of Fame veterans committee members for redressing some regrettable slights ("Critics Poll," August). But I would like to remind you of trombone great Bill Harris. Woody Herman said that Harris was his favorite musician. Please give a thought to adding your voices to Herman's and mine.

William Willeford
Atlanta, Ga.

Memories of Merritt

I was delighted to read that Jymie Merritt is

still going strong ("The Beat," October). Merritt had been out of sight but not out of mind, as far as my mind is concerned. I enjoyed his live performance—and my very first attendance of a jazz concert, at age 15—at the Kurhaus in Scheveningen/The Hague in Holland. Enjoyed is an understatement. I was totally thrilled and have been a great jazz fan ever since. Maybe Merritt will enjoy seeing his autograph from Feb. 3, 1962; it is still carefully kept. I wish him a happy and healthy life.

Tom Spiero
tspiero@euronet.nl

Providence Experience Fills Educational Gaps

From Aug. 3–15, we worked with a number of children in Providence, R.I., and introduced them to our "Jazz is a Rainbow" musical theater project. We brought an excited gaggle of them to George Wein's Festival 55 at Newport. For virtually all of them, it was their first exposure to live jazz and, indeed, the first time they had heard the names Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith or any name connected with jazz. In fact, our endeavors in Providence and other cities have led us to the chilling discovery that virtually none of the predominantly African American and Hispanic children knew much of anything about the cultural, political or social history of America.

As you might imagine, our hardy busload of children sporting their bright "Birds: Kids To Newport" jerseys represented virtually the only group of young children at the festival. But festival-goers who heard these kids at a local mall singing "Take The A Train" while on lunch break from their rehearsals should know their joy was real. And they now know a lot more about themselves and their cultures and their country than they did before. Our schools have an obligation to tell every single child not only about the Obamas but also about Paul Robeson and Fanny Lou Hamer, not only about Martin Luther King but also about Miles Davis, Ossie Davis, Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith.

Mike Palter
capeann1@verizon.net

Corrections

Kat Edmonson's name was misspelled in the review of her disc, *Take To The Sky* ("Reviews," October).

The reviews of the Sonare TRB-500/600 and B&S eXquisite trumpets listed company web sites in the wrong order ("Toolshed," November).

DownBeat regrets the errors.

Have a chord or discord? E-mail us at editor@downbeat.com.



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- Paquito D'Rivera

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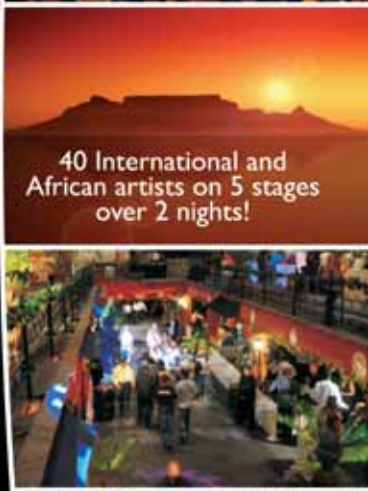


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NEWS & VIEWS FROM AROUND THE MUSIC WORLD

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Club Sounds Captured

Small venues issue their own indie label jazz discs

The jazz club Smalls typifies a recent trend in the music industry: It will begin releasing live recordings culled from its busy schedule of bookings. The club in New York's Greenwich Village isn't alone. Even with the retail music market in sharp decline, a small number of venues have found a niche recording, producing and pressing jazz albums.

Smalls' label, SmallsLive, is issuing a handful of albums by Peter Bernstein, Steve Davis, Ryan Kisor, Dave Kikoski and Kevin Hays. The label will rely in part on analog technology to create a vintage sound. It will release the albums as CDs and press a limited number of high-end vinyl LPs. But the imprint will focus on digital distribution.

"We just want to try to avoid having hundreds of plastic items sitting around in a warehouse," said Michael "Spike" Wilner, a part owner of the club since 2007. "The old model of printing up hundreds of CDs and trying to mail them to distributors for Europe and Japan is finished because no one buys CDs anymore. We can eliminate and save costs by just accessing the vast resources at our disposal through the Internet."

The Dakota Jazz Club and Restaurant in Minneapolis has a similar plan in place, right down to the label's name: Dakota Live. The imprint debuted in the early 2000s; its fourth album, Benny Green and Bucky Pizzarelli's *Benny & Bucky Live At The Dakota*, arrived in June. Dakota Live intends to significantly increase its catalog, releasing up to four albums a year.

"We used to have lots of artists that came through here who were on RCA or Verve or Blue Note or Columbia," said Lowell Pickett, one of Dakota's owners. "And that's less the case now. There are still a number of great artists who don't have multi-record deals with large labels and who are interested in increasing their recorded output. We can produce recordings here for relatively modest cost because



Taylor Ho Bynum

MICHAEL JACKSON

we're not renting studio time."

George Klabin, president of nonprofit Resonance Records, endorses the concept, saying it represents the future of retail for jazz albums. After the economy recovers, Klabin wants to convert a 5,500-square-foot building in Los Angeles to a performance venue.

"The way that most jazz records are going to be sold, and the way they seem to be sold now, is through performances," Klabin said. "Because what happens at a performance is you capture the moment, and a listener's impulse is to buy the record by the performer."

Half Note Records, the house imprint for the Blue Note club in New York, provides perhaps the best example of this business model. Half Note began life in the 1980s and has received four Grammy nominations. The label maintains a high-profile roster (McCoy Tyner, Arturo Sandoval) and focuses on live recordings. In addition to New York, the Blue Note markets the albums at its venues in Japan and Italy. "This business model comes out of the dismantlement of the larger system," said Jeff Levenson, a former executive with Warner Bros. and Sony, who has helmed Half Note since 2003.

The Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, an arts school and performance venue in Pittsburgh, Pa., operates the MCG Jazz imprint. The label boasts a large catalog that has earned four Grammy Awards. Marty Ashby, executive director, speaks of the challenges, and potential rewards, facing the industry nowadays.

"There's a great opportunity for record labels, presenters and educational institutions for jazz now because all of the formulas are broken," Ashby said. "If those entities can all come together now in a meaningful way, we can have a tremendous impact on the future of this music."

Firehouse 12, a performance venue in New Haven, Ct., operates a label that shares its name. While the venue houses a recording studio, owners Nick Lloyd and Taylor Ho Bynum want a separate identity for the imprint. The label, which began in 2007, has a half-dozen releases but plans to put out five more this year, including albums by Myra Melford, Bill Dixon and Bynum.

"A music performance is a social event," Lloyd said. "It's a different experience than the event of listening to an album. Those two ways that we consume music are just enormously different processes for a listener."

Not every venue makes recording a priority. Shanghai Jazz Restaurant Bar in northern New Jersey features a half-dozen live releases that include albums by Marian McPartland, John Pizzarelli, Junior Mance and the late Earl May. Owner David Niu has no plans to produce more than one release a year.

"What we like is to celebrate the feeling of certain nights here," Niu said. "It's not done from the revenue point of view. If it were done from the cold, financial point of view, I would do none of these."
—Eric Fine

Riffs



Big Band Douglas: Dave Douglas has recorded his first big band disc, *A Single Sky* (Greenleaf Music). The recording is a collaboration with arranger/conductor Jim McNeely and the Frankfurt Radio Bigband. **Details:** greenleafmusic.com

Miles Big-Boxed: A 70-CD boxed set of Miles Davis' complete recordings on Columbia will be released on Nov. 24. The collection also includes a previously unreleased DVD of the Miles Davis Quintet in 1967. **Details:** legacyrecordings.com

Mayoral Praise: Boston Mayor Thomas Menino proclaimed Oct. 18–24 to be the city's "Hot and Cool: 40 Years of Jazz at NEC Week." The proclamation commemorated the New England Conservatory's anniversary of its jazz program. **Details:** newenglandconservatory.edu

Williams' Monk Win: Bassist Ben Williams won the Thelonious Monk Institute International Bass Competition on Oct. 11 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. A full story about the competition will appear in the January 2010 issue of *DownBeat*. **Details:** monkinstitute.org

Bassist's Memories: Bassist Brian Torff has published his memoir, *In Love With Voices* (iUniverse). Along with describing his own work, the book includes portraits of such colleagues as Frank Sinatra, Benny Goodman and Mary Lou Williams. **Details:** briantorff.com

RIP, Eddie Higgins. Pianist Eddie Higgins died of lung and lymphatic cancer on Aug. 31 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He was 77. Higgins spent many years leading a trio at Chicago's London House and also recorded with Coleman Hawkins, Wayne Shorter and Lee Morgan.

Bill Bruford Announces Retirement, Releases Autobiography

In early 2009, Bill Bruford announced his formal retirement from public performance and recording. The drummer's official statement coincided with the release of his first book, *Bill Bruford: The Autobiography* (Jaw Bone).

As Bruford describes himself in the book, he's been a longtime jazz head who became famous in progressive rock circles for his drum work with innovative groups like Yes and King Crimson. Bruford made his mark as a composer and bandleader with his fusion band, Bruford. He later formed an even more straightahead jazz ensemble, Earthworks, which remained his primary musical project throughout the remainder of his career.

Several years ago, Bruford established his own record labels: Winterfold highlights his numerous musical projects up to around 1987; Summerfold encompasses his more recent, usually jazz-oriented projects. This September, Summerfold released *Skin And Wire*—featuring Bruford with the PianoCircus ensemble performing compositions by Colin Riley—his final CD of fresh material. Bruford's reasonings for retiring are spelled out in the book, and in an interview he's excited to talk about his ultimate recording (even if *The Autobiography* does include a self-deprecating chapter entitled, "Do You Like Doing Interviews?").

"The album was midway between programmed sources that were replaced by live performances, live performances that gave rise to further programming ideas, treatments of existing performances, pure live performance, and all possible blends in between," Bruford said. "All audio sources were up for grabs to be enhanced, twisted or destroyed at will. Nothing was sacred, and nothing was written to fit a pre-determined style. The end result is sort of an audio stream of consciousness, quite trippy, at times dreamy. I like this twilight world between the computer-assisted performance and the performance-assisted computer. If I were 23, that's where I'd live. But I'm not nifty enough with a computer."

Knowing it was to be his last-ever recording,



Bruford reflected, "I was focused—it was some tricky shit. I wanted it to be as good as anything I've ever recorded. They say you should play every gig as if it were your last ... it was my last! Let's not get too sentimental about this. I was around for a bit, and now I'm not. Music has been great to me, but I know when to quit."

Winterfold also released an in-concert recording, *In Tokyo*, featuring Bruford and former Yes keyboardist Patrick Moraz. The album documents the two previous albums the pair created, *Music For Piano And Drums* and *Flags*.

"It's the best live recording of us you'll hear by far, and makes a great companion to the two studio albums," Bruford said. "Patrick was road-testing the Kurzweil technology of the day, and you can hear him putting it to its limits."

Bruford admits he has not composed any new music since last year or so yet still plays daily. "Drumming keeps me active, alert and on this planet," he said. "I have known I would retire at 60 from the year dot. What I'll do next is now a private matter, but I sincerely hope it involves less time at the computer. Being a musician is, by definition, a horribly self-centered sort of pastime, and I need to redress a balance. That would involve doing things for other people."

—Robert Kaye

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EUROPEAN SCENE

By Peter Margasak

Jazz's roots in Europe are strong. This column looks at the musicians, labels, venues, institutions and events moving the scene forward "across the pond." For questions, comments and news about European jazz, e-mail europescene@downbeat.com.

Saxophonist Kornstad Goes Solo in Oslo

Over the last decade saxophonist Håkon Kornstad has emerged as one of Norway's most original and daring musicians. Like many Norwegians he's worked in myriad contexts—from the free improvisation of Tri-Dim to the funky post-Miles Davis fusion of Wibutee to tender duets with pianist Håvard Wiik—but in recent years the musician has carefully pared down his activities and concentrated his interests.

His stunning new album, *Dwell Time* (Jazzland), was recorded in Oslo's Sofienberg Church with nothing but his various wind instruments and a looping machine (an old Electrix Repeater). Each piece was creat-

ed spontaneously, with the grainy tonal richness of his saxophone and the clanks of his keys filling the resonant sound field. On some pieces, like the aptly titled "Noir" or the meditative "Oslo," Kornstad sampled low-end patterns and mouth pops and turned them into cycling grooves and riffs to elaborate over with both gorgeous melodic counterpoint and atmospheric textures.

Kornstad first performed solo in Bergen, Norway, in 2003 and described the experience as "a little horrifying, but it went really well and it was a lot of fun."

Initially, he stuck exclusively to an all-acoustic approach, but with time he began to incorpo-

rate the looping technology he'd used in Wibutee for a number of years, but he never forsake the sound of his instrument.

"The saxophone has so many timbres and variations in itself, so I'm going to continue to keep the sound kind of dry and not very treated," Kornstad said. "Then you can have a greater sense of what the saxophone can do. I love to put together acoustic saxophone sounds, but loop them, and use them for beats or riffs or whatever."

While melodic or structural kernels remain with Kornstad from gig to gig, he prefers to keep any such idea vague.

"It's like grasping a particular moment," Kornstad said. "I like



things to be a little vaguer for me so that I need to improvise to make it right. For the looping part there's a kind of stream-of-consciousness approach, where I play something and when I find something I like I'll loop it and continue on top of it." **DB**

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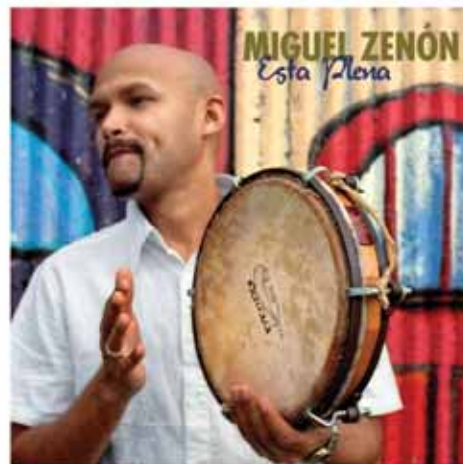
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Bassist John Lee Launches New Label

A solo piano disc filled with hymns will usher in a golden age of jazz recording if bassist John Lee has his way. With a focus on nurturing recording careers, Lee has released Cyrus Chestnut's *Spirit*, along with albums by The Heath Brothers (*Endurance*), trombonist Steve Davis (*Eloquence*) and alto saxophonist Sharel Cassity (*Relentless*), on his new label, Jazz Legacy Productions.

Lee, a member of the Dizzy Gillespie All-Star Big Band, knows founding a label committed to the long sell is an anachronistic way of doing business in a world of instant gratification. But Jazz Legacy will present jazz titans and relatively unknown musicians.

"We're at a point now in jazz where a lot of our history is not being documented as it was in the old days when there were lots of record contracts," Lee said. "Our goal is to document more of our history."

To attain this idea while keeping costs down, the bassist insists on pre-production meetings for each record to plan out the date to the smallest detail. "I'm not interested in doing blowing sessions where we bring a quartet in and they play tunes all day," he said.

Lee also envisions offering health insurance and pension plans to his artists, even bringing an assortment of merchandise to the label's web site. "I don't want it to be one dimensional," he said. "We want to build a nice catalog, and we want it to help build careers."

Recording for a professional musician made things easy for Cassity.

"There's no pressure to do anything you don't want to do," Cassity said. "He knows which cats would like to play together and what stuff they'd like to play."

While Cassity is most at home performing

bebop, she understands her next record may not be full of straightahead tunes. "John has been really adamant about picking out the different sides of all the musicians that people don't normally hear," she said.

Lee's experience as an artist and producer of myriad musical styles stood out to the young trombonist Mike Dease, who performed on Cassity's album and will enter the studio as a leader next year. "While he's got the chops and the technique to blow you away with virtuosity, he also understands how sim-

ple and understated elements can support and lift up a production," he said.

Jazz Legacy Productions will also issue records by the group One for All, pianist Randy Weston and saxophonist James Moody in 2010. With each artist Lee will remain true to his mission of creating a historical record for jazz.

"If this was 30 years ago, musicians would consistently record throughout their whole career," Lee said. "To me, that's what we're missing."
—Jon Ross

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Wayne Krantz

Guitarist Wayne Krantz Returns to the Studio After More Than a Decade

New York-based guitarist Wayne Krantz recently released *Krantz Carlock Lefebvre* (Abstract Logix), his first CD release in 15 years.

"I became discouraged with a record label's ability to get records in stores," Krantz said, regarding his longstanding refusal to release recordings via normal channels. "I was disillusioned with working really hard on a record and people not being able to find it. There is literally no income to be made with most record deals if you are talking about records that are not pop hits. It seemed like I should be able to make income from recordings, and that people should be able to find the records."

So about 10 years ago, the guitarist designed waynekrantz.com as an Internet meeting place to download unreleased live recordings and lessons, listen to Krantz discourse about things of interest, as well as purchase his older recordings, including those recorded during his 10-year residency at Manhattan's 55 Bar. Krantz's new album and affiliation with an independent label place him back in the record stores.

"This record is considerably more compositional than where I was between '99 and 2004," Krantz said. "After exploring music created spontaneously in a live setting I started to get hungry for more composition. And I wanted to incorporate singing—I couldn't do that spontaneously."

Playing melody and rhythm at once, Krantz, bassist Tim Lefebvre and drummer Keith Carlock work within a unique improvisational framework (including apparent instant composition) honed during countless nights at the 55 Bar.

"We can all keep track of form and complicated rhythmic action," Krantz said. "We're invested in always trying to uncover the freshest stuff. None of us are just playing what we know, or playing what sounded good last night. It has a jazz esthetic to it in this effort to uncover the moment by not relying on cliché, vocabulary or certainty."
—Ken Micallef

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BEYOND JAZZ... AND MORE...

JazzWerkstatt's Berlin Festival Veers from Reverential to Bold

In three years JazzWerkstatt has not only emerged as a top-tier jazz label with a strong focus on its German talent but now as a noteworthy jazz festival. Still in its infancy, A European Jazz Jamboree Berlin (held mostly at the Kino Babylon theater) placed strong emphasis on the label's roster with the theme "Composers & Improvisers" as it ran from Sept. 18–23.

The theme itself risked being didactic but given its cherry-picked honorees—Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, Thelonious Monk, Duke Ellington, Don Cherry, Benny Goodman, Fats Waller and Wayne Shorter—it had a left-to-center cachet and idiomatic breadth.

As surefooted as Wolfgang Schmidtké's tenor and soprano saxophone were during his Celebration of Shorter, his performances too often felt like recitals as he fronted a quintet, sonically patterned after Miles Davis' mid-'60s quintet. Schmidtké's frontline partner, trumpeter Matthias Schriefl, proved a bit more daring during some of his whispered, percussive solos as he challenged Freddie Hubbard's memory.

Piano legend Dave Burrell—one of two American musicians—suffered a similar fate as his solo treatments of the music of Ellington and Monk resembled academic master classes more than bona fide jazz concerts. Burrell's halting, percussive approach and rhythmic elasticity make him the ideal choice to pay homage to those composers, especially Monk. Nevertheless, his quaint renditions of "Round Midnight," "It Don't Mean A Thing" and "Lush Life" never quite caught fire.

Pianist Ulrich Gumpert's Workshop Band fared slightly better with Mingus. During performances of "Moanin'," "Fables Of Faubus" and "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat," it took a while for the musicians to break free from mimicry. But when horn players Ben Abarbanel Wolff, Christian Weidner, Henrik Waldsoff, Martin



Klingeberg and Christoph Thewes engaged in some collective improvisation, the music began to embody the spirit of Mingus as individual personalities emerged.

Indeed, collective improvisation was the common denominator for many of the German musicians, especially during Silke Eberhard and Potsa Lotsa's rousing send-up to Dolphy. A horn quartet led by alto saxophonist Eberhard and featuring tenor saxophonist Patrick Braun, trumpeter Nicolaus Neuber and trombonist Gerhard Gschlössl, Posta Lotsa brought sparkling imagination, collective improvisational zing and humor to the proceeding as they delved into Dolphy classics such as "Hat And Beard," "Straight Up And Down" and "Burning Spear" with no one playing bass clarinet or flute. A reason why the group's performance was so magical was that none of the members seemed intent on playing Dolphy but rather playing his music.

Jürgen Scheele's Independent Jazz Orchestra delivered the 90-minute "The Earth Is A Drum," a suite of newly composed material dedicated to Cherry. Again, a huge part of its success was that none of the trumpeters—even the standout soloist Jen Winther—came out rocking a pocket trumpet. Also Scheele's deft compositions steered clear of harmolodic parroting. The

ensemble took full account of Cherry's legacy of world music seeker with absorbing compositions such as "Nature Song," "Dance Of The Molecules" and "Inner Earth," which stretched and modulated from free-jazz to Afro-Latin, New Orleans stomps, Scandinavian and Middle Eastern drones and modern big band blast.

But Uri Caine—the other American musician—provided the festival one of its truly standout performances, mainly because he wasn't paying tribute to any specific jazz luminary. Instead, he and his avant-funk trio Bedrock concentrated on their new disc, *Plastic Temptation*. While Caine wasn't necessarily building musical temples for Monk or Ellington, enormous historical heft always grounded his music. So when Caine, bassist Tim Lefebvre and drummer Zach Danziger embarked on their retro-electro jaunts, historic guideposts—ranging from swing to post-bop to soul jazz to fusion to modern jazz to DJ culture—popped up at unexpected times. When they brought out guest vocalist Barbara Walker, they uncorked the chitlin' circuit soul-jazz of vintage Marlena Shaw, Jean Carne and Dakota Staton—the kind of stuff that most crusty jazz purists would rather hide underneath the rug. But Bedrock was there to pay tribute to that jazz legacy as well.

—John Murph

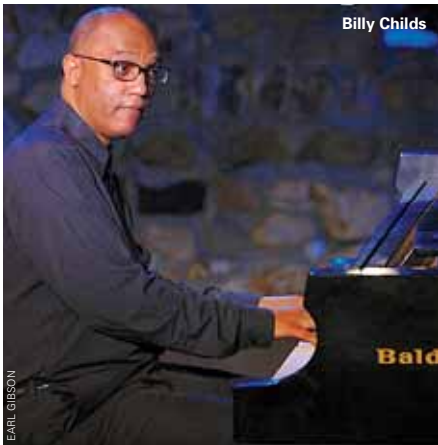
California's Angel City Jazz Festival Asserts Avant Heritage

When Cryptogramophone CEO Jeff Gauthier and impresario Rocco Somazzi mounted a one-day new music marathon last year, it was sparsely attended and scarcely noted. This year they doubled down, making the Angel City Jazz Festival (ACJF) a two-day-and-night affair, held in the spacious John Anson Ford Theatre. In that short period, ACJF has become the de facto avant-garde conclave in Los Angeles.

Not only did the festival attempt to take Los Angeles' new music temperature, Gauthier and Somazzi opened the bill up to eastern outfits led by pianists Satoko Fujii and Wayne Horvitz and trumpeter Dave Douglas (whose Greenleaf label took part in the sponsorship). Guitarist Jeff Parker was the featured guest of the Nels Cline Singers and drummer Billy Hart gloriously anchored Bennie Maupin's Eric Dolphy-cen-

tered band.

A free-range sense of heritage asserted itself over the weekend. Bay area clarinetist Ben Goldberg's quirky trio played only Thelonious Monk. Horace Tapscott's inclusive vision was present in reedman Jesse Sharps' Gathering ensemble. Douglas' band deliciously channeled Lester Bowie's brass torrents. Drummer Alex Cline and his brother guitarist Nels Cline



essayed Joe Zawinul tunes—with sonic density and a butt-shaking groove, respectively. Maupin’s Dolphyana tacitly alluded to the reed and flute master as it exerted its own identity.

Fujii veered from percussive calamity to plaintive lyricism, remaining a thoughtful improviser throughout. Bassist Mark Dresser’s homecoming maintained ensemble cohesion through his stalwart arco work. Gathering vocalist Dwight Tribble made full use of the amphitheater’s acoustics with his ever-expansive baritone-tenor. Flutist Thomas Stones offered a counter voice of purity. Billy Childs fielded his ambitious Jazz Chamber Ensemble with some new faces. The Eclipse quartet acquitted itself

admirably, supplying moving string color to a jazz counterpoint. Douglas’ Brass Ecstasy touched on Salvation Army and New Orleans polyphony. Only pianist Larry Karush’s recital elicited scratched heads. Opening with a self-absorbed tai chi routine, his acoustic piano recital had little sense of dynamic or thematic ingenuity.

Alex Cline’s sextet had an orchestral sweep, in part due to the twin keyboards of Wayne Peet and Dave Witham. Cline’s injection of color and drama mark him as the complete trap drummer/percussionist. Horvitz’s Gravitas Quartet had alternate glide and groundedness, due to cellist Peggy Lee. Trumpeter Ron Miles brought blues fundament to “You Were Just Here.” Nels Cline and Parker sounded like brothers born of different mothers, exploring textures and sonics as much as picking and strumming. The inclusion of organist Larry Goldings and his trio was curious, though it did provide well-played mainstream relief. Motoko Honda’s Cage-like piano—with plucked strings and hammered notes—owed much to 20th Century classical music. Her stage mate, butoh dancer Oguri, beguiled with movements that defied the body’s limitations.

While attendance never exceeded half of the 1,200-seat capacity of the outdoor amphitheater, Gauthier and Somoza pulled off an unqualified artistic triumph. —Kirk Silsbee

Indy Jazz Fest Focuses on Artistry, Not Marquee Names

This year’s Indy Jazz Fest (IJF) had new ownership, a new location and a new time of year. The lineup was a pure jazz hit, even if a lack of marquee names may have contributed to lower turnouts.

David Allee (owner of The Jazz Kitchen club), Al Hall and Rob Dixon of Owl Studios set up Indy Jazz Fest LLC to run the festival earlier this year. The group staged the event Sept. 19–26 in various Indianapolis venues with two days of music at The Lawn at White River State Park.

Trumpeter Mark Buselli, of the Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra, held his CD release party for his Owl disc, *An Old Soul*, at The Jazz Kitchen. He crammed in an 18-piece big band (“no room for the strings,” he said) to showcase this album, which features Buselli’s arrangements. The band also picked up the pace of Charles Mingus’ “Fables Of Faubus.”

The festival hit a high point with David Baker’s Freddie Hubbard Tribute concert at the Madame Walker Theatre. The evening was more of a celebration of Hubbard the songwriter than Hubbard the trumpet player, although the four-trumpet jam on “Hub-Tones” soared. Big names also turned out to join Indy-area vets as



Nicholas Payton, Randy Brecker, James Spaulding, Derrick Gardner, Pharez Whitted and Steve Allee honored the legendary trumpeter.

White River State Park had an audience of 6,000 compared to last year’s 14,000, though previous years also featured such famous crossover artists as Buddy Guy and Patti LaBelle. Still, the crowd was treated to a solid jazz lineup. A group of 150 danced through the rain during Branford Marsalis’ 65-minute set. They stopped whenever drummer Justin Faulkner flexed his muscle and during a beautiful version of “Blossom Of Parting.”

—Matthew Socey

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RICHARD CONDE

Melissa Walker 🎷 Breathing Strength

In 1961, Albert Walker, a defensive end for the Edmonton Eskimos who had suffered a grievous injury the previous football season, earned a Comeback Player of the Year award for his return to all-pro form. If a jazz magazine's annual polls offered a similar category, his daughter, singer Melissa Walker, would be this year's hands-down winner.

This past September, Walker's intense reading of Peter Gabriel's "Don't Give Up" concluded her set at Birdland, celebrating the

release of *In The Middle Of It All* (Sunnyside), her first disc since 2001. Surrounded by her A-list ensemble from the date—Gregoire Maret, Adam Rogers, Xavier Davis, Christian McBride and Clarence Penn—Walker hinted at her back story.

"Over the last last five years, this song took on special meaning," she said. "Sometimes you find yourself in the middle of more than you know. But you never get more than you can handle."

In late 2004, Walker, a rising

star on the strength of three strong recordings for Enja over the preceding decade, suffered a hemorrhage of the vocal cord and was placed on complete rest, forcing her to cancel a lengthy summer tour and a busy schedule of voiceover work. She recovered and was performing again when, in early 2006, her vocal cord collapsed, placing all plans on hold.

"It was a very long journey," Walker said over lunch the week before the Birdland gig. "The only thing worse than a collapsed vocal

cord are two collapsed vocal cords, where you need a tracheotomy to breathe."

During the interview, Walker penned talking points in a notebook, a habit she developed while convalescing. "Christian [McBride] had to have all of my phone conversations," she said, referring to her bassist-husband, who handled her communications with the outside world during this period. "When I got fitted for my wedding dress, I couldn't talk to the person. Every aspect reminded you of what



PETER PURGAR

Jason Rigby 🎷 Sailing Above 'Stella'

While saxophonist Jason Rigby is becoming known for his own compositions, one of the main things he obsessed over as he developed his own voice was listening to legends like Sonny Rollins deliver their signature interpretations of standards.

"When Rollins plays on a standard, he plays it so honestly that he convinces people that it is his composition," Rigby said. "I'm always fascinated with artists who are so compelling in what they play that you're convinced that he must have written it. When I'm playing anything like 'Stella By Starlight,' I try to imagine that I composed

the piece—that I'm inside it with all the harmonics and that I have this strong connection with what's going on inside the song."

Still, when Rigby does play "Stella By Starlight," it would only be at an informal jam session: His discs—*Translucent Space* and *The Sage* (both on Fresh Sounds)—concentrate on his own compositions. Within these modernistic pieces, Rigby's burly tenor tone and searching improvisations recall the expressionistic flights of Ornette Coleman and Joe Henderson. Both discs also feature his core working band of bassist Cameron Brown, pianist Mike

Holober, trumpeter Russ Johnson and drummers Gerald Cleaver and Mark Ferber.

A military brat born in Japan and who lived with his parents in Hawaii before moving to Cleveland, Rigby began playing the alto saxophone when he 9 years old. He cites Coleman Hawkins as his first jazz obsession. "It was the sound; it was the phrasing," Rigby said. "The record that I heard was 'Body And Soul.' His playing almost sounded like a deep cello—very personal, very warm."

After working in various Cleveland-based outfits, Rigby attended Ohio's Youngstown State

you weren't doing. Then one day, it appeared, like it had just been sleeping.

Sometimes life isn't pretty, she observed. "But can you rise above that and move yourself forward? I urgently needed to tell this story, and I wanted to be back in the kitchen making music."

Much more than an inspirational feel-good story, *In The Middle Of It All* is one of the strongest vocal offerings of recent vintage. McBride and producer Penn's arrangements contain a level of detail characteristic of pop with voicings and rhythms that create an open, 21st century feel. Walker, her chops undiminished, interprets a cohesive suite of songs drawn primarily from the lexicon of American folk and blues.

"After all the problems she endured, she stopped worrying about what the jazz police might think," said Penn, a participant on each of her albums.

Indeed, the anxiety of influence that occasionally cropped up on Walker's earlier dates is absent—in telling her stories, Walker references Carmen McRae, Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughan, Shirley Horn and Betty Carter, assimilating their vocabulary into her own argot.

"I've listened to them over and over, and they are going to come up," Walker said. "But I let it go, and I just let them become my friends. Here I was less concerned with my jazz element. Conceptually, from start to finish, this is a

University and earned a Bachelor's of Music degree. He later moved to Chicago for a brief stint at DePaul University before moving and eventually settling in New York 1998. While he's still mapping a formidable solo career, he also brings his compositional thoughts to courses he teaches at New York's City College, where he at one time assigned his students to create small improvisational works based on poems of Khalil Gibran and his wife, Lauren Riley Rigby.

Rigby says that creativity is paramount when it comes to instructing his students, even when it comes to the rudimentary.

"There is a steep learning curve in so many respects—harmony,

more holistic album. I worked really hard with Christian and with Clarence to edit out all the things that I would have put in because I felt I had to."

Walker came to jazz relatively late. The biracial child of psychologists, she and her two sisters were the ones who integrated their school in Marquette, Mich., which she calls, "a violently racist community for us where Cher's 'Half-Breed' song was our neighborhood anthem." The family moved to Edmonton after her father's death in the early '70s.

"Music was our salvation," Walker said. "Living in that hostile environment, we had to be everything to each other, and then we lost our anchor, leaving a white mother and three children who are clearly people of color. In Edmonton, I was embraced by a lot of wonderful people, but the music was all rock-based, except for folk influences like Carole King and James Taylor, and classical music. When I found Dinah and Billie Holiday in high school, I felt like I found home."

As for future plans, Walker said she's looking forward to having a robust performance career but is prepared to go wherever life takes her. One reason is the burgeoning influence of Jazz For Kids Inc., the non-profit music education organization that she founded in 2002. "From giving music to so many people, I'm at a more peaceful place," she said. "I feel fulfilled."

—Ted Panken

history," Rigby said. "That's the homework side of it. But the most important thing is that whatever the students are doing that they always do it creatively. I don't support aimless practicing."

Rigby doesn't support aimless idol worship when it comes to his own music, either. Though he does sound humble after discussing how much he gleaned from Rollins, Hawkins and the legends he heard in his formative years.

"I'm not really out there to try to do something different," Rigby said. "I'm just trying to pare everything down and come up with something that's very honest and direct—whatever that is."

—John Murph

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Greg Malcolm Tracing Lacy

All the John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk and Miles Davis tributes on the market could tile a wall, but New Zealand-based guitarist Greg Malcolm is one of the handful to honor Steve Lacy. Malcolm recently released *Leather And Lacy* (Interregnum), which reproduces his all-Lacy set at the 2006 Wellington Jazz Festival.

Prior to that show, New Zealand's mainstream jazz scene may never have heard of Malcolm. Although he has toured improv venues in Europe since the '90s, his main gigs have been with underground noise musicians or children's concerts at a public library near his Christchurch home. But just as Lacy's exile from New York City's jazz scene helped shape the singularity of his music, Malcolm's estrangements of geography and affiliation have nourished his idio-



CHRIS ANDREWS

syncratic talent. After several years of playing indie-rock, experimental and children's music in his homeland, in the '90s Malcolm spent two

formative sojourns in Berlin.

"I arrived to a scene with a long history of free and experimental music," Malcolm said. "I saw and

met players like Wolfgang Fuchs and Conny Bauer, and younger players like Axel Dörner and Tony Buck, all incredible musicians with

Mike Melito Upstate Bop

Drummer Mike Melito admires the relaxed brand of swing and bluesy compositions that typify hard bop, so much so that he believes today's artists omit a crucial rhythmic element that distinguishes this music, apart from the challenging harmony and technique.

"The main thing with hard bop that really gets me, and why it's definitely different today than it was back in the '50s, is the intensity levels were greater back then," Melito said. "The rhythm sections weren't as on top of the beat. Right now, if you go hear most guys, everything sounds pushed. Everybody tries to get so much fake forward motion."

With little fanfare Melito has carried on hard bop's behind-the-beat tradition for roughly 25 years. Growing up in Rochester, N.Y., he learned many of his lessons

onstage. He backed the late Joe Romano, a saxophonist with Buddy Rich and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, before performing throughout upstate New York with artists such as tenor saxophonist J.R. Monterose.

Melito's education culminated with a careful study of hard bop recordings, especially the classic albums Blue Note released in the mid-1950s and early 1960s. While drummers like Philly Joe Jones, Art Taylor, Jimmy Cobb and Art Blakey played forcefully, Melito said they also had a knack for restraint—for playing "under" soloists rather than overwhelming them.

In addition, drummers of this era mastered the art of "tippin'."



RICH PARRUCK

That is, while accompanying a soloist, they would emphasize the ride cymbal more than the snare and bass drums. "The ride cymbal was very relaxed, and the pattern of the ride cymbal stayed straight. It didn't get nutty," Melito said. "That fascinated me because it never

sounded boring."

Melito spotlights this style on his fourth self-released album, *In The Tradition*. The session pairs the drummer's homegrown rhythm section with out-of-towners such as tenor saxophonist Grant Stewart, bass player Neal

strong concepts about music and a huge knowledge of improvised and experimental music.”

The synergy of this community contrasted with his experience at home.

“In New Zealand, being isolated and spread out, people work in a more hermit-like way, which of course creates some great and highly personal music.”

But where the audiences at home were often baffled by Malcolm’s use of extended techniques and his penchant for playing tunes culled from Ornette Coleman, Charlie Haden, and compilations of wax cylinders of ethnic music, German audiences found his preference to tether noise to sturdy melodies quite refreshing.

Malcolm first learned about Lacy’s music while in Berlin. The guitarist would play it while busking on the streets or in a group with Tony Buck. But he was unhappy with the results and shelved them for a decade. Except for “Blues For Aida” and “Prayer,” he didn’t return to the material until he received his invitation from the Wellington Jazz Festival.

“I found that in 10 years, the tunes had worked away in my head, forming connections,” Malcolm said. “I can remember thinking

hard about how to approach these tunes when I first played them, but in the time away from them they seemed to sort out their own approach. Lacy talks about tight corners. I wanted to see what happened when I tried to steer my rig, which drives a little like a truck on ice, through some of those tight corners.”

That concept also figures into Malcolm’s technique of playing three guitars simultaneously. Two guitars wired with contact mics sit on the floor; he vibrates them with fans or the rhythms of his stomping feet. The guitar in his hands is a custom-made, hollow-bodied instrument with sympathetic strings in its interior, and five pickups, some of which amplify the springs and wires he hangs off the guitar’s neck. The CD/DVD *Some Other Time* (Kning Disk), his newest release, reveals not only the bodily contortions he must execute to make it through a song but also how musically essential and non-gimmicky this approach has become.

“Sometimes I think that the improvisational elements in my music come more from the unstable nature of my setup than any conscious decision to reinvent the tunes on each passing.” —*Bill Meyer*

Miner and trumpeter John Swana. By including bop tunes like Sonny Clark’s “Junka,” Hank Mobley’s “Hankerin’” and Tadd Dameron’s “Good Bait,” Melito not only preserves a rhythmic approach, but also a repertoire.

“The melodies were very lyrical, and they were a little more accessible in some ways,” he said. “The bebop melodies were a little bit faster. Hard bop had more blues influence. There wasn’t as many notes in the heads. Every note in hard bop during the ’50s meant something.”

Stewart, a frequent collaborator, said Melito plays an unsung role in the jazz world.

“He’s a great drummer, but he also has a strong concept musically, which is very important,” Stewart said. “He’s important for the music in general, because outside of New York City you don’t hear a lot of guys playing like that. I don’t feel

like he’s trying to recreate the music. It’s very much a living thing when I play with him.”

Melito anchors the house band at Rochester’s Strathallan Hotel, a venue that books musicians such as guitarist Peter Bernstein and saxophonists Eric Alexander, Vincent Herring and Stewart. Not surprisingly, the drummer expresses concern about the legacy of hard bop, especially when he observes the scene in the big city downstate.

“I see the music in New York City has changed a lot,” Melito said. “Every time I come down it’s a little more out, and drummers are bashing more. I only see about 15 or 20 guys that play hard bop authentically. I think the reason why is because it’s not really being taught in schools, it’s not really being mentioned in colleges. Heck, I’ve run into people that teach jazz history who don’t even know who Sonny Clark is.” —*Eric Fine*



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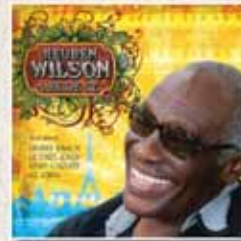
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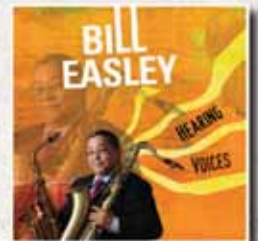
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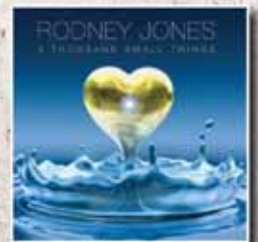
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My true story of Perfect Pitch by David-Lucas Burge

IT ALL STARTED when I was in ninth grade as a sort of teenage rivalry... I'd slave at the piano for five hours daily. Linda practiced far less. Yet somehow she always shined as the star performer at our school. It was frustrating. *What does she have that I don't?* I'd wonder. Linda's best friend, Sheryl, bragged on and on to me, adding more fuel to my fire. "You could never be as good as Linda," she would taunt. "Linda's got Perfect Pitch." "What's Perfect Pitch?" I asked. Sheryl gloated about Linda's uncanny abilities: how she could name exact notes and chords—all BY EAR; how she could sing any tone—from memory alone; how she could play songs—after just hearing them; the list went on and on... My heart sank. Her EAR is the secret to her success I thought. How could I ever hope to compete with her? But it bothered me. Did she really have Perfect Pitch? How could she know notes and chords just by hearing them? It seemed impossible. Finally I couldn't stand it anymore. So one day I marched right up to Linda and asked her point-blank if she had Perfect Pitch. "Yes," she nodded aloofly. But Perfect Pitch was too good to believe. I rudely pressed, "Can I test you sometime?" "OK," she replied.

Now she would eat her words...
My plot was ingeniously simple...
When Linda least suspected, I walked right up and

challenged her to name tones for me—by ear. I made her stand so she could not see the piano keyboard. I made sure other classmates could not help her. I set up everything perfectly so I could expose her Perfect Pitch claims as a ridiculous joke. With silent apprehension, I selected a tone to play. (She'll never guess F#, I thought.) I had barely touched the key. "F#," she said. I was astonished. I played another tone. "C," she announced, not stopping to think. Frantically, I played more tones, skipping here and there all over the keyboard. But somehow she knew the pitch each time. She was AMAZING. "Sing an E," I demanded, determined to mess her up. She sang a tone. I checked her on the keyboard—and she was right on! Now I started to boil. I called out more tones, trying hard to make them increasingly difficult. But each note she sang perfectly on pitch. I was totally boggled. "How in the world do you do it?" I blurted. "I don't know," she sighed. And that was all I could get out of her! The dazzle of Perfect Pitch hit me like a ton of bricks. I was dizzy with disbelief. Yet from then on, I knew that Perfect Pitch was real.



"How in the world do you do it?" I blurted. I was totally boggled. (age 14, 9th grade)

I couldn't figure it out...
"How does she DO it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why can't everyone recognize and sing tones by ear? Then it dawned on me. People call themselves musicians, yet they can't tell a C from a C#? Or A major from F major?! That's as strange as a portrait painter who can't name the colors of paint on his palette. It all seemed so odd and contradictory. Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack. You can be sure I tried it out for myself. With a little sweet-talking, I got my three brothers and two sisters to play piano tones for me—so I could try to name them by ear. But it always turned into a messy guessing game I just couldn't win. Day after day I tried to learn those freaking tones. I would hammer a note over and over to make it stick in my head. But hours later I would remember it a half step flat. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't recognize or remember any of the tones by ear. They all sounded the same after awhile; how were you supposed to know which was which—just by listening? I would have done anything to have an ear like Linda. But now I realized it was way beyond my reach. So after weeks of work, I finally gave up.

Then it happened...
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Once I stopped straining my ear, I started to listen NATURALLY. Then the simple secret to Perfect Pitch jumped right into my lap. Curiously, I began to notice faint "colors" within the tones. Not visual colors, but colors of pitch, colors of

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sound. They had always been there. But this was the first time I had ever really "let go"—and listened—to discover these subtle differences.

Soon—to my own disbelief—I too could name the tones by ear! It was simple. I could hear how F# sounds one way, while Bb has a totally different sound—sort of like "hearing" red and blue!

The realization struck me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart

could mentally hear their masterpieces—and know tones, chords, and keys—all by ear!

It was almost childish—I felt sure that anyone could unlock their own Perfect Pitch with this simple secret of "Color Hearing."

Bursting with excitement, I told my best friend, Ann (a flutist).

She laughed at me. "You have to be born with Perfect Pitch," she asserted. "You can't develop it."

"You don't understand how Perfect Pitch works," I countered. I sat her down and showed her how to listen. Timidly, she confessed that she too could hear the pitch colors. With this jump start, Ann soon realized she also had gained Perfect Pitch.

We became instant celebrities. Classmates loved to call out tones for us to magically sing from thin air. They played chords for us to name by ear. They quizzed us on what key a song was in.

Everyone was fascinated with our "supernatural" powers, yet to Ann and me, it was just normal.

Way back then, I never dreamed I would later cause such a stir in the academic world. But when I entered college and started to explain my discoveries, professors laughed at me.

"You must be born with Perfect Pitch," they'd say. "You can't develop it!"

I would listen politely. Then I'd reveal the simple secret—so they could hear it for themselves.

You'd be surprised how fast they changed their tune!

In college, my so-called "perfect ear" allowed me to skip over two required music theory courses. Perfect Pitch made everything easier—my ability to perform, compose, arrange, transpose, improvise, and even sight-read (because—without looking at the key-board—you know you're playing the correct tones).

And because my ears were open, music sounded richer. I learned that music is truly a HEARING art.

Oh, you must be wondering: whatever happened with Linda? I'll have to backtrack...

Flashback to my senior year of high school. I was nearly 18. In these three-and-a-half years with Perfect Pitch, my piano teacher insisted I had made ten years of progress. And I had. But my youthful ambition wasn't satisfied. I needed one more thing: to beat Linda. Now was my final chance.

The University of Delaware hosts a performing

music festival each spring, complete with judges and awards. To my horror, they scheduled me that year as the grand finale.

The fated day arrived. Linda gave her usual sterling performance. She would be tough to match, let alone surpass. But my turn finally came, and I went for it.

Slinking to the stage, I sat down and played my heart out with selections from Beethoven, Chopin, and Ravel. The applause was overwhelming.

Afterwards, I scoured the bulletin board for our grades. Linda received an A. This was no surprise.

Then I saw that I had scored an A+.
Sweet victory was music to my ears, mine at last! —D.L.B.



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- "Someone played a D major chord and I recognized it straight away. S.C., bass
- "Thanks...I developed a full Perfect Pitch in just two weeks! It just happened like a miracle." B.B., guitar/piano
- "It is wonderful. I can truly hear the differences in the color of the tones." D.P., student
- "I heard the differences on the initial playing, which did in fact surprise me. It is a breakthrough." J.H., student
- "It's so simple it's ridiculous." M.P., guitar
- "I'm able to play things I hear in my head. Before, I could barely do it." J.W., keyboards
- "I hear a song on the radio and I know what they're doing. My improvisations have improved. I feel more in control." L.B., bass guitar
- "It feels like I'm singing and playing MY notes instead of somebody else's—like music is more 'my own'." L.H., voice/guitar
- "What a boost for children's musical education!" R.P., music teacher
- "I can identify tones and keys just by hearing them and sing tones at will. When I hear music now it has much more definition, form and substance. I don't just passively listen anymore, but actively listen to detail." M.L., bass
- "Although I was skeptical at first, I am now awed." R.H., sax
- "It's like hearing in a whole new dimension." L.S., guitar
- "I started crying and laughing all at the same time." J.S., music educator
- "I wish I could have had this 30 years ago!" R.B., voice
- "This is absolutely what I had been searching for!" D.E., piano
- "Mr. Burge—you've changed my life!" T.B., student
- "Learn it or be left behind." P.S., student...

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Paquito *D’Rivera*

Makes The Notorious ‘Black Stick Of Death’ Sound Effortless

By Ted Panken // Photos by Jimmy Katz

Relaxing in his dressing room at Manhattan’s Blue Note a few hours before hitting the bandstand with his quintet, Paquito D’Rivera quoted Cuban folklorist-writer Lydia Cabrera, who went to study in Paris in the 1920s and started missing her native land. “She said, ‘I discovered Cuba from the bank of the Seine River,’” he recalled. “I discovered Latin America on the banks of the Hudson River.”

The discovery process began in 1980, when D’Rivera, on tour with Irakere, ran up a down escalator in the Madrid airport to escape his Cuban handlers and famously defected. “Spain was my first Latin jazz gig,” he said. “Irakere was just a dance band that played some concerts—Cuban music mixed with classical and rock. But in Spain, I met up with a group of Argentineans, Brazilians and Uruguayan musicians—they played *samba*, *tango* and

some *candombe* from Uruguay. I started learning all those styles. Then here in New York, I had the opportunity to work with the Brazilians, who are people not from another country but another planet. I have dedicated a big part of my career to Brazilian music. But I also like Venezuela, and Argentinean *tango* and Mexican *huapango*, too.”

D’Rivera wore a red guayabana shirt, crisply pressed black pants and well-shined black shoes. His face revealed deeply chiseled embouchure lines from a lifetime spent blowing on his array of wind instruments—he made his public debut as a six-year-old curved soprano saxophonist, graduated to clarinet a few years later and started investigating the alto saxophone at age 11.

Deploying excellent English, he continued his account of becoming a polylingual musician. “In fact, this started in Cuba,” he

Clarinet

544 Paquito D’Rivera

- 408 Don Byron
- 326 Anat Cohen
- 312 Eddie Daniels
- 307 Buddy DeFranco
- 186 Ken Peplowski
- 143 Chris Speed
- 94 Gianluigi Trovesi
- 81 Louis Sclavis
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said. "I composed one of my most popular pieces, 'Wapango,' in 1970 for the Carlos Azerhoff Saxophone Quartet. Later, I arranged it for strings and jazz groups and all that. For Irakere, I wrote 'Molto Adagio,' which is the second movement of the Mozart Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, arranged in a bluesy way. I like doing all those hybrids. Now I prefer to have around me people who want to analyze all types of music and try to play them correctly. It's like being in a school, but a mutual investigation. I am just the director."

In his predisposition to present repertoire drawn from a pan-American stew of musical flavors, addressed with attention to a full complement of idiomatic detail, D'Rivera—who spent his first decade in the United States working extensively with trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and employed such avatars of hybridity as Danilo Perez and Edward Simon in the piano chair in various '90s iterations of his quintet—has made an enormous impact on the development of jazz thinking over the past two decades. The nine-time Grammy winner and NEA Jazz Master will receive honors from WBGO/Jazz 88.3 FM (Newark, N.J.) for his artistic and humanitarian contributions to jazz this November when the radio station holds its annual Champions of Jazz benefit concert.

D'Rivera's multi-cultural musical production hews to the esthetic imperatives that guided Cuba's incomparable musicians before the revolution terminated the casino-fueled economy that had provided them gainful employment and offered them first-hand contact with international musicians. This reality came forth in a conversation several years ago with the late Israel "Cachao" Lopez, who was playing bass when D'Rivera performed Weber's clarinet concerto with the Havana Symphony at age 12. "In our day," Cachao said, "the CMQ radio station and clubs like the Tropicana brought in artists from all over the world. You had to be ready to play with them all. Paquito follows that tradition. It's his opinion as well as ours that the musician has no borders. Nationalities are not important."

Another continuity that links D'Rivera to his Cuban antecedents is his formidable command of all his instruments, not least the clarinet, as evidenced by his victory in this year's DownBeat Readers Poll. Pianist Bebo Valdes—like Cachao, a friend of D'Rivera's saxophonist father Tito from the 1930s—once said: "Paquito is a great soloist on both instruments in any genre or style. He plays the saxophone divinely, with a really high range. But the clarinet is a thousand times more difficult than the saxophone, and I consider Paquito's execution as good as any I've seen in my life."

TED PANKEN: *You like to quote a Frank Wess quip that the clarinet, which is made of five pieces, was invented by five men who never met. However, by your account in your mem-*

oir, My Sax Life, you've had two extremely good instruments. In 1959, your father got you a Selmer, and then in 1997, you ordered a custom-made clarinet.

PAQUITO D'RIVERA: I used Selmers all my life, because my father was the representative of the company in Havana. He ordered for me a covered-hole Centered Tone Selmer. Covered-hole because I was very skinny, my fingers were thin, and he was concerned that I would not be able to cover the holes. That instrument is now in the Smithsonian Institute. Together with that, he ordered the open-hole model, which he gave me when I knew the fingering of the instrument. That's the clarinet I played until 1997, when Luis Rossi, from Santiago, Chile, made for me this wonderful instrument that I play now, which is made not out of black wood, but rosewood.

The great Al Gallodoro, who passed away a couple of years ago, called what I play the "smart man clarinet." It's an instrument with seven rings and an articulated G-sharp on the left hand, like a saxophone. It's very comfortable. Benny Goodman used it for a little while, and also Artie Shaw, but the instrument never had success for some reason. I've gotten so used to it that for me it's very hard to play a regular, 17-key clarinet.

TP: *Which jazz clarinetists did you hear and assimilate when you were young?*

PD: Benny was the first American musician who impressed me—that concert he recorded in Carnegie Hall in 1938, with Lionel Hampton and Ziggy Elman, Harry James, and the wonderful Teddy Wilson. Then Artie Shaw, and of course, Jimmy Hamilton from the [Duke] Ellington band. But Benny playing swing—my father never used the word jazz, only "swing," even if it was Ornette Coleman—but also Benny's rendition of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. It was very illuminating at that tender age, that Ellington concept that there are only two kinds of music—good and the other stuff.

I tried to assimilate the different styles by copying them. I copied Benny with the soprano. Later on, my father came home with a 78 recording of Buddy DeFranco playing "Out Of Nowhere." [*sings solo*] When Buddy started improvising, I said, "Wow! What is that? A clarinet playing bebop?" I'd already heard Dizzy and Bird, but a clarinet was not supposed to do that. What I heard in my ears was Jimmy Hamilton and Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw. So this guy is going *do-pe-do-de-diddle-pla ...* with a clarinet! Wow, what a surprise! So I started trying to copy Buddy DeFranco. It's normal to try to copy your idols when you are a kid. But my first idol was Benny, and he still is today. Sound is the main thing in music, and he had that characteristic clarinet sound.

TP: *You wrote that your progression was from soprano to clarinet to alto saxophone, and that*

your father taught you alto saxophone with the Marcel Mulé method, the French school.

PD: Yes. The French School was very strong in my formation. My dad had the *Conjunto Sinfónico de Saxophones*—Symphonic Group of Saxophones—in 1943, I believe. That was the year after Marcel Mulé was appointed professor of saxophone at the Paris Conservatory and founded his saxophone quartet. He started bringing all those books, and the pieces that were written for Marcel Mulé by Jacques Ibert, Eugene Bozza and many others. I grew up listening to and playing that music with a pianist friend of my father. It's hard to explain why French music is so influential on my style, but I feel it. Maybe in using the staccato a lot when blowing the saxophone. Most jazz players play legato lines. Very few use the staccato—Wynton Marsalis, Claudio Roditi, I can't think of anyone else. It comes from classical training.

TP: *You've said that it was your father's ambition for you to be a clarinetist in the symphony orchestra.*

PD: Yes, I did it for a while. But I like improvised music, and didn't feel happy in the orchestra as a main gig. So I did it for a while, and I did some chamber music, which I enjoy even more than the symphony. I went with my father to play in stage bands, with the second or first clarinet. Even in cabarets. When I started

playing the alto, at 11 or 12, I'd go to a cabaret that had a variety show, and my father would say, "Please let the kid play the show." And the guy was happy. "OK!" He'd go to the bar and I'd play the show for nothing.

It was important to my father that I learn how to play in a section, not only by myself. He'd bring home the third alto book for me to learn the notes. I did different types of things, as did many Cuban musicians, who had to do any type of music for surviving. I still maintain that tendency. Of course, improvised music, jazz, is my favorite, but I love playing other things. I love the complexity of Igor Stravinsky's music. Bartok. Certain composers are more appealing to some jazz people because they are the hippest. But how do you explain what is more hip? There is something hip about Stravinsky. Brahms is a hip composer. Milhaud. Ravel. Debussy. They have more affinity with the jazz language.

TP: *When you played jazz early on, was it on clarinet or saxophone?*

PD: Mostly on the saxophone. I was into Charlie Parker then, and later on, Paul Desmond. Jackie McLean I liked also—it's amazing how he could swing playing one note, even if he played it out of tune!

TP: *In a New York Times performance review, Ben Ratliff wrote: "No performer should be at*

full voltage all the time, and the clarinet subdues Mr. D'Rivera's super-abundant energy." Is that a remark you can relate to?

PD: I think that's right. When you maintain the same energy all the time, it can be boring. The alto and clarinet have totally different personalities. It's two instruments that are cousins, like Palestinians and Israelis. They don't get along! Clarinet players that try to play the saxophone with the same concept, it's not going to work. My father was a saxophone player, and didn't know how to play clarinet. Later on, he bought one and learned to play it. I'm not sure who taught him. But suddenly, he showed up at home playing the clarinet, then he showed me how to play.

TP: *Was there a clarinet tradition in Cuban music?*

PD: Yes, there was a clarinet tradition that was lost. The clarinet was never a soloist. So it's a tradition, but not a strong tradition of clarinet playing there.

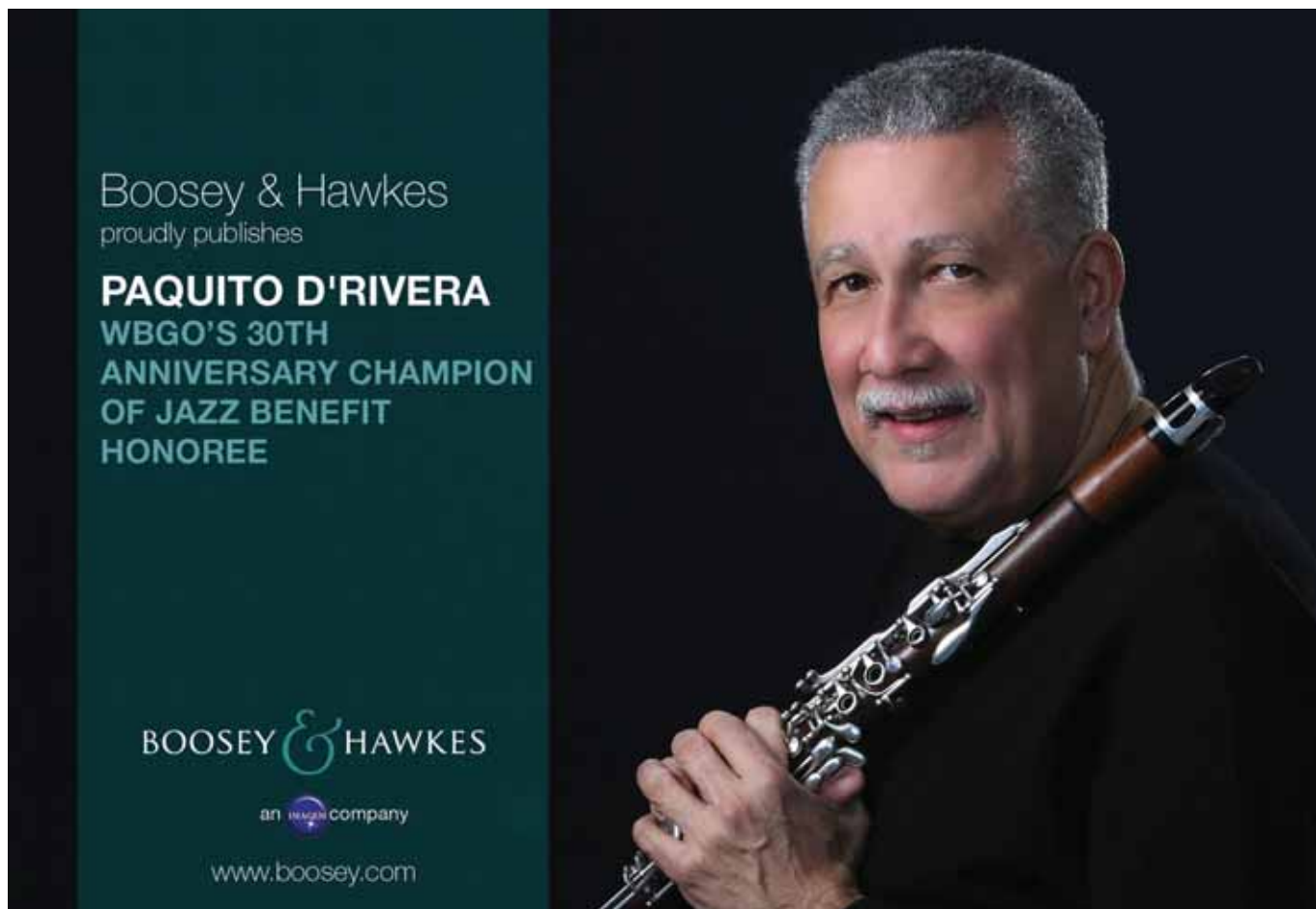
TP: *So for you as a young person, the clarinet was more a window into classical music.*

PD: Classical and some swing also, because of Benny Goodman.

TP: *Can we say that the alto saxophone was more your improvising instrument?*

PD: Yes, especially because of Parker.

TP: *How did your sensibility on the clarinet*



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PD: More and more. [Trumpeter] Mario Bauza gave me a clarinet and a mouthpiece when I came here; after my ex-wife sent me my old Centered Tone Selmer from Cuba, I gave it back to him. Mario and Dizzy said, "You should play the clarinet more; there's not too many clarinet players around." The scene for the clarinet was not very encouraging. It still is not. It's improving, but there are still very few of us. It's too much sacrifice for something that people really don't feel. It's easier to feel the sound of the flute.

TP: Do you mean feel physically?

PD: Both physically and musically. To make the clarinet sound hip in the world of modern jazz, it takes double or triple or quadruple the effort than with the saxophone. For that, you have to love the instrument. You buy a flute and go *fhwooo*—it's hip already. Only the sound of the wind, *fhwooo*. It swings already, like a trombone. The trombonist goes *bwooh*, and it swings, like a baritone saxophone. But to make a soprano swing, it's a pain in the ass!

An LP that inspired me to play the clarinet again was *Breaking Through* by Eddie Daniels, with arrangements by the great Argentinean composer-arranger Jorge Calandrelli, who arranged for Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett and so many others. Jorge told me about it. I hadn't heard of Eddie Daniels in years, just from playing tenor with Thad Jones and Mel Lewis. I didn't know that he played the clarinet. I felt so inspired. Wow! Clarinet again! Mario and Dizzy were right. So I started playing it more and more. Eddie gave me the encouragement that I needed. He started getting big after that. He revolutionized the clarinet world.

TP: A common theme from your musical partners is that, for all your extreme technique, you're also a very spontaneous player who doesn't repeat solos, plays fresh things, remains in the moment.

PD: I agree. Many young players—and among them many young Cuban players—have a tendency to overuse technique. Weapons are to use when you need them. You use technique if you need it to play a certain thing. If not, it sounds like an imposition. It's supposed to sound effortless. Some people use it and try to make it look harder than it really is.

TP: In *My Sax Life*, you convey a conversation with Maraca Valles, the Cuban flutist, where he offers an opinion that the quality of aggressiveness you just mentioned among younger Cuban musicians reflects the tension and generalized anxiety in their lives. At the end of last year, you debuted your first Cuban band since moving to the States.

PD: That was a fantastic thing, to work with people like Charles Flores, the wonderful bass player, who has worked with Michel Camilo. Manuel Valera played piano—his father is an old friend of mine. We have a very good guitar



player and singer (a tenor) who came from Canada, Mario Luis Ochoa. Ernesto Simpson, a great drummer. Pedrito Martinez was singing and playing percussion. Pedrito is one of the most talented Cuban musicians around. He plays the percussion instruments beautifully, and he is one of the few Cuban percussionists who understand Brazilian music. They are cousins, but I remember a Cuban entertainer in Spain who told me, "Cubans don't understand samba, and Brazilians will never understand clave."

TP: Why?

PD: Nobody can explain that to me. I don't see any reason. We are cousins. Even the same African religions and all that. But Pedrito can play the *bandera* very well. Pedrito understands any type of music very easily, and especially Brazilian music.

It's hard to maintain that band, though. If you live in Miami or in Cuba, you have Cuban musicians all over the place, but here you don't

have 10 Cuban trumpet players and four bassists. You only have one or two. So I only do it once in a while. My goal is to do a Cuban big band one day. Mostly we played modern Cuban music. It was an experiment. I wanted to feel it, and it was very nice. One day I will organize it again. I want to record. But I have to work with my regular quintet. I am in love with that band, too.

TP: Did you play percussion instruments when you were younger?

PD: I think most Cuban musicians know how to play a little bit. I know how to play a conga, for example. Or a bongo. For five minutes. After that, I look for someone else. Folkloric rhythms were part of the decor. It was on the radio, with my mother sewing and cooking and listening to Celia Cruz, and *danzones* and so on.

TP: How is your relationship with the younger musicians who grew up under Fidel Castro? For example, at the beginning of the '90s there

was sniping between you and pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba. I know that's long in the past ...

PD: Yes, it's in the past. Now I understand them. They are sick and tired of listening to talk about politics and all that. They want to keep that behind them. It's a totally different way of thinking. They grew up with that thing there, and they have ties with it. In my opinion, they see Cuba like a total disaster, but it's like home. Then they come here, and this is different. They don't have—and this is an assumption—the intention to change that for a better life. They want to help their family, send some money, send some medicine. They have no intention to protest, to denounce the atrocities—and I understand it. These new kids ignore the government. I cannot do it!

TP: With the transitions that have occurred in Cuba over the past few years, what would you like to see transpire?

PD: A normal country. That's all we want.

TP: By what process? What's a realistic scenario?

PD: With these people, there are no realistic ways. They don't want to recognize the reality. So the realistic thing, no. I think the ideal thing is what happened in South Africa, what happened in Czechoslovakia, and what happened in Spain. Forget what happened, let's start something new, blah-blah-blah. Czechoslo-

vakia had the Velvet Revolution, and the country is working perfectly. The same thing with Spain and in South Africa. At least they didn't kill each other or anything. But in Cuba they don't want to change anything. People love to put words in their mouth. "No, they are going to change." "No-no, I've been telling you for 50 years, we are not going to change nothing. We are going to perfect this piece of shit." So predicting what is going to happen, nobody knows. It's too complicated. So like Americans say, let's hurry up and wait.

TP: Romero Lubambo once remarked, "Paquito always brings you to your limit, and then past it." I suppose the corollary is that you're as demanding of yourself.

PD: Musicians sometimes don't know how good they are. I force myself also to do things, and they force me to do things because they are high quality. When you are over 50 years in a profession, and you look back and see that your work has been fruitful, and you have conquered the love and respect of your peers, it's an accomplishment. Those are my friends, part of my family, my musical family, the people who work with me. I learned a lot from Claudio Roditi, for example, and also from Fareed Haque, the guitarist, and from Michel Camilo, who knows Venezuelan music so well. Also Oscar Stagnaro, my bass player, who is

my scout.

TP: You launched your imprint, Paquito Records, last year with Funk Tango, which won a Latin Grammy. Will there be a followup in the catalogue?

PD: My second project will be *Benny At One Hundred*. Actually, "Benny At One Hundred" is the name of the first movement of a sonata that was commissioned by the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival. The first movement is dedicated to Benny Goodman, and it's dedicated to his centenary, which is this year. I'm planning to go to the studio at the end of November and record that movement and other pieces.

When my father played me that LP, *Benny Goodman At Carnegie Hall*, that changed my life until today. Jazz is still my favorite activity in my life. For me, it used to have a political connotation—I wanted to play only jazz in Cuba to contradict what the establishment said. But I love improvising. It's the result of a multinational country. The result is a multinational style of music, and you can add anything, and if you keep the spirit of this music, it still is called jazz.

I love what Herbie Hancock said many years ago. When he was asked what is jazz, he said, "something impossible to define and very easy to recognize." **DB**

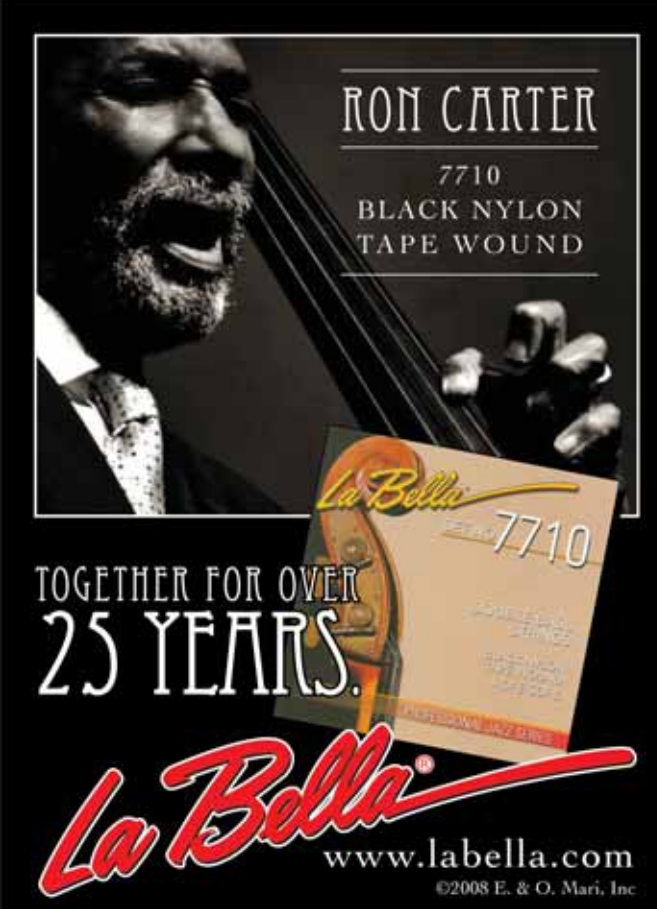


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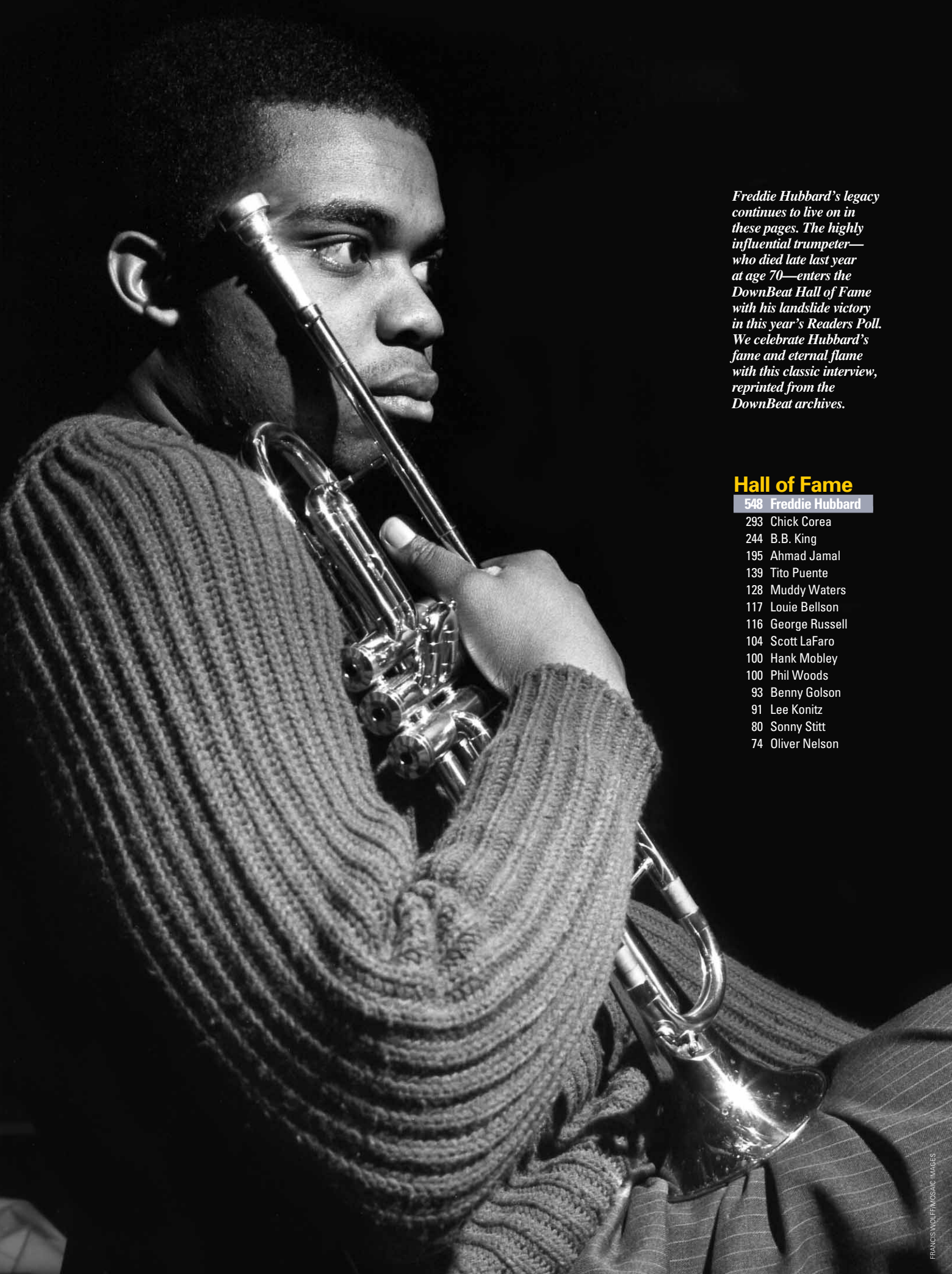
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Freddie Hubbard's legacy continues to live on in these pages. The highly influential trumpeter—who died late last year at age 70—enters the DownBeat Hall of Fame with his landslide victory in this year's Readers Poll. We celebrate Hubbard's fame and eternal flame with this classic interview, reprinted from the DownBeat archives.

Hall of Fame

548 Freddie Hubbard

- 293 Chick Corea
- 244 B.B. King
- 195 Ahmad Jamal
- 139 Tito Puente
- 128 Muddy Waters
- 117 Louie Bellson
- 116 George Russell
- 104 Scott LaFaro
- 100 Hank Mobley
- 100 Phil Woods
- 93 Benny Golson
- 91 Lee Konitz
- 80 Sonny Stitt
- 74 Oliver Nelson

Toward Completeness

By Dan Morgenstern // December 1, 1966

When the talk turns to trumpet players these days, it doesn't take long before the name Freddie Hubbard is mentioned. With his bold attack, bright and brassy tone, and adventurous ideas, this young man with a horn from Indianapolis is most decidedly a trumpet player in the grand, expressive tradition of his instrument.

"A trumpet is a trumpet," Hubbard said recently. "If you're going to play a bugle, that's one thing, or if you're going to play a cornet, that's another approach, but the trumpet—well, there's a certain thing that you have to get. It's brass, and you have a brass mouthpiece against flesh, and if you just try to hum a note and then play it, that's not tone quality. There's a certain amount of control involved.

"Some of the trumpet players," he continued, "who are playing so-called avant-garde or whatever-you-call-it music fail to realize that it's still a trumpet. It's not that you have to play with a straight 'legit' tone, but you still try to get the body out of the horn."

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from this attitude that Hubbard is a musical conservative. To the contrary, he is intent upon widening the effective scope of the trumpet, to do "some things that I know are not the normal kind of trumpet playing, technically speaking.

"A lot of the things I play are not 'normal' for the trumpet ... they might be more like a violin or piano. I'll try something, and people will say, 'Man, you sound like a tenor sax; what are you trying to do?'"

But Hubbard, who at 28 has behind him considerable playing experience in a variety of musical settings, does not allow such occasional resistance to frustrate him unduly.

"When you're young and playing your own ideas, they are not always taken for granted. People seem to say they're going to listen to this for a period of time before they accept it."

Nor is he unaware of the musical trap of "getting hung up in your own thing." He wants "to be a musician," and this means "to be able to do

anything I'm capable of and have it accepted."

He explained: "If Count Basie called me for a gig, I'd want to be able to fit and project my own things, and if I'm playing with Friedrich Gulda, I'd want to be able to do that, or with Elvin Jones or Art Blakey or Manny Albam—and still, it would be me. It can be done."

Currently, Hubbard is a member of drummer Max Roach's quintet but works and records with his own group when Roach lays off. In his quintet he often uses men from Roach's group, such

as pianist Ronnie Mathews and alto saxophone-flutist James Spaulding, a boyhood friend and longtime musical associate from Indianapolis. Prior to joining Roach, the trumpeter spent considerable time with Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

"I'm having quite an experience playing with Max," Hubbard said. "He knows such a wide area of music—dynamically, musically and in terms of drums. He doesn't drown you out, like most drummers do; they tend to overplay, because they don't know the timbre of the instrument.

"Max has all this in his head. I'm a spoiled trumpet player in terms of drummers, because, after working with Max, Art, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Clifford Jarvis ... you get to playing with some of the young cats, and you don't feel there's any bottom with them."

Finding the right drummer for his group has been a problem. "It's almost like asking too much," the trumpeter said, "because it's age and experience that's involved, and I've always been looking for a young drummer with the maturity of the masters."

At the time of this interview, however, Hubbard had just finished rehearsing for a record date with a young drummer from Indianapolis, Ray Appleton, and was enthusiastic about his work:

"I think he's what I've been looking for—not because he's from my home town, but because he seems to take all the important things into consideration—bottom, beat, pulse. We grew up together; he's younger than Spaulding and myself and used to come to sessions and listen. He always wanted to play, but he didn't know too much then. Later he went with Buddy Montgomery to San Francisco, and I heard him out there recently. He sat in, and I hired him."

Coincidentally, Hubbard made his first record with vibraharpist-pianist Buddy Montgomery and his brothers, guitarist Wes and bassist Monk. "I was 18 and thrilled to death," he recalled, "but I think the date that really got

Hall of Fame

Legends in jazz, blues and beyond can be elected into the DownBeat Hall of Fame by way of the annual Readers Poll (designated by "R"), Critics Poll ("C") or Veterans Committee ("V"). It all started in 1952 with the readers; the critics got into the game later, in 1961. The veterans started last year. With this month's addition of Freddie Hubbard, there are 119 DownBeat Hall of Famers, listed below in chronological order of their induction.

1952	Louis Armstrong R	Cecil Taylor C	1994	Dave Brubeck R
1953	Glenn Miller R	Woody Herman R		Frank Zappa C
1954	Stan Kenton R	King Oliver C	1995	J.J. Johnson R
1955	Charlie Parker R	Paul Desmond R		Julius Hemphill C
1956	Duke Ellington R	Benny Carter C	1996	Horace Silver R
1957	Benny Goodman R	Joe Venuti R		Artie Shaw C
1958	Count Basie R	Rahsaan	1997	Nat "King" Cole R
1959	Lester Young R	Roland Kirk C		Tony Williams C
1960	Dizzy Gillespie R	Ella Fitzgerald R	1998	Elvin Jones C
1961	Billie Holiday R	Lennie Tristano C		Frank Sinatra R
	Coleman Hawkins C	Dexter Gordon R	1999	Betty Carter C
1962	Miles Davis R	Max Roach C		Milt Jackson R
	Bix Beiderbecke C	Art Blakey R	2000	Lester Bowie C
1963	Thelonious Monk R	Bill Evans C		Clark Terry R
	Jelly Roll Morton C	Art Pepper R	2001	Milt Hinton C
1964	Eric Dolphy R	Fats Navarro C		Joe Henderson R
	Art Tatum C	Stephane	2002	John Lewis C
1965	John Coltrane R	Grappelli R		Antonio Carlos
	Earl Hines C	Albert Ayler C		Jobim R
1966	Bud Powell R	Oscar Peterson R	2003	Wayne Shorter C
	Charlie Christian C	Sun Ra C		Ray Brown R
1967	Billy Strayhorn R	Sarah Vaughan R	2004	Roy Haynes C
	Bessie Smith C	Zoot Sims C		McCoy Tyner R
1968	Wes	Stan Getz R	2005	Steve Lacy C
	Montgomery R	Gil Evans C		Herbie Hancock R
	Sidney Bechet C	Lionel Hampton R	2006	Jackie McLean C
	Fats Waller C	Johnny Dodds C		Jimmy Smith R
1969	Ornette Coleman R	Thad Jones C	2007	Andrew Hill C
	Pee Wee Russell C	Teddy Wilson C		Michael Brecker R
	Jack Teagarden C	Jaco Pastorius R	2008	Joe Zawinul C
1970	Jimi Hendrix R	Kenny Clarke C		Jimmy Blanton V
	Johnny Hodges C	Woody Shaw R		Harry Carney V
1971	Charles Mingus R	Chet Baker C		Erroll Garner V
	Roy Eldridge C	Red Rodney R		Jo Jones V
	Django Reinhardt C	Mary Lou		Jimmie
1972	Gene Krupa R	Williams C		Lunceford V
	Clifford Brown C	Lee Morgan R		Keith Jarrett R
1973	Sonny Rollins R	John Carter C	2009	Hank Jones C
	Fletcher	Maynard		Oscar Pettiford V
	Henderson C	Ferguson R		Tadd Dameron V
1974	Buddy Rich R	James P.		Freddie Hubbard R
	Ben Webster C	Johnson C		
1975	Cannonball	Gerry Mulligan R		
	Adderley R	Ed Blackwell C		

me started was the one I made with Paul Chambers, Cannonball Adderley, Wynton Kelly and Jimmy Cobb [*Go!*, a 1959 Vee Jay LP issued under bassist Chambers' name]."

By that time, Hubbard had left Indianapolis, and today he looks back on his early years in that Midwestern city with mixed emotions.

There are good memories:

"I'll never forget the club called George's Bar on Indiana Ave., a street where everybody would come out on weekends in their best attire and go from club to club. That was the thing. A few of the guys and Spaulding and myself

formed a group called the Jazz Contemporaries. We'd rehearse and rehearse, and finally we got the job at George's Bar, and all the musicians, like James Moody and Kenny Dorham and many others, would come by and listen when they were in town. That was an inspiration."

But other recollections are less happy:

"I went to a mixed high school outside my own neighborhood. You might say I was almost transplanted. I was integrating a high school for the first time and growing up with Caucasians ... which was quite a different experience.

"A lot of times, I would be the only Negro

kid in a class, and the vibrations I felt, I think, made me sort of a rebel ... so I didn't dig a lot of subjects, like American history and math—mainly because of the teachers and the kids."

But one subject was not affected. "Music always held out, no matter what I was in," he said. "Music was it."

He tried for a scholarship to Indiana Central College, but though he had an A average in music, his major, his overall academic average was too low to qualify him. Instead, he enrolled at Jordan Conservatory, a branch of Butler University in Indianapolis.

"Everything was good, I was taking harmony, theory, private instruction on trumpet," he said. "But then, after the first semester, the dean tells me I have to take a test in other subjects. So I get all my books out, my electricity books, my algebra books, and go through them in a couple of days, which was a heavy thing."

Hubbard was told that he had failed the test.

"Even my teachers tried to keep me in," he recalled. "They knew I didn't have any money, that my mother was poor, and that I was gigging trying to get some money for her. But they put me out because my point average wasn't high enough, academically."

The young man accepted this turn of events, fortified by a maxim taught him by his father, which, he said, he often recalls when confronted with the lack of acceptance for the music he plays, a music that, like so many musicians of his generation, he doesn't like to call jazz. "I am what I am; otherwise, I place myself as nothing—that was one good thing my father taught me," Hubbard said.

His thoughts on jazz are centered on the stigma that, he feels, is still attached to the word, at least in the United States.

"It's American music," he said, "because you have different ethnic groups involved in it, but the word jazz seems to be a dirty word. I think the hangup is what Americans associate with the word, and I don't know why they're trying to oppress this music. The word doesn't mean a thing. I play all sorts of music. Louis Armstrong doesn't play 'jazz,' he plays music that makes you grin and feel happy."

Hubbard is distressed, also, at the lack of acceptance for jazz among Negro audiences:

"They'd better wake up, and I'm saying this in all sincerity, because we created this thing, and they can't even accept it. Colored people can't dig Charlie Parker; they're so busy listening to cornball crap. Real music swings, you can dance to it—if you can dance."

He is not, however, putting down other types of music. "I like classical music, I like commercial jazz, I like television music. It's all part of what's happening, and I'm going to get with everything I can get with. I want to check out everything, I'm not going to be limited."

To prove his point, his next recording venture is going to be different from what he has attempted before.

"I'm doing mostly short things," he said,

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“and the majority of them will be of a commercial type—just to see what I can do with it. It’s the most popular thing today ... Little Anthony and the Imperials used to do it a long time ago; all of a sudden, the name put to it has changed, and it’s accepted.”

Hubbard said he was strongly influenced by Sonny Rollins, with whom he worked shortly after coming to New York City. “He has been my greatest inspiration,” Hubbard said. “When I worked with him, I learned more than I ever learned, because I never knew what he was going to do next. And he’s *rooted*—I’ve heard him sound like Coleman Hawkins, which is pretty hard to do.”

Another musician Hubbard greatly admires is Thelonious Monk. “I’d like to study Monk,” he said, breaking into his characteristic, infectious laugh. “Study trumpet with Monk—hah! If he could take the time ... Monk told me something once at the Five Spot; he said that everybody’s playing chords, but Sonny Rollins is playing *ideas*. ‘That’s all you’ve got to do,’ he said. ‘Don’t just play chords, you’ve got to play some ideas.’”

Since much avant-garde jazz is based on playing without chord progressions, and since Hubbard was involved in two of the key recording dates of the “new music”—Ornette Coleman’s *Free Jazz* and John Coltrane’s *Ascension* (he pointed out the solo credits for himself and trumpeter Dewey Johnson were erroneously reversed on the Coltrane record’s line notes)—his ideas about musical “freedom” are of interest.

“*Ascension* was still based on scales,” he said. “At least, it was based on just playing without any vibrations from the other musicians.

In other words, we knew when we had to build something off a certain scale or something. It wasn’t just playing—at least, that’s what I got out of it.”

Hubbard said he believes that this kind of music doesn’t work unless one is working with musicians “who feel the same vibrations.” In his own recorded work, both with pianist Herbie Hancock and on his own album *Breaking Point*, this was the case, he said, and there were certain basic guidelines as well.

“I had a certain mode that I was playing off,” he explained, “and we built on that mode. We would take the notes in that scale and expand on it. For example, if it was an A major 7th chord with a raised 5th, we might play in a key of A, which is an extension of the chord, and then, from there, we might go F/G/A-flat/D-flat/D/E and play off any of those notes ... you might hit a particular note and then go off into another chord, but still, it made sense, because the piano player was listening.

“It’s not like just playing anything that comes into your mind, and that’s where the mistake is made, I think. A lot of guys are talking about ‘freedom,’ and it’s not really freedom. Freedom is just a word; it’s what you make it, and a lot of the things guys are playing just don’t make

musical sense to me, when they’re just *playing*.”

Hubbard also said he feels that there is a certain danger in pursuing music without any rules or standards: “If they don’t watch out, this so-called freedom music will be overrun by people who know nothing about chord progressions, melody, tone quality and basic musical background.”

As for himself, Hubbard said, “I make dates with certain people who know something about music, but I’m not going to make it with anybody who I feel doesn’t know anything about the background of music. You have to know

something about what you’re doing.

But Hubbard is no dogmatist and wants it understood that this “is a very touchy subject, because everybody has their own ideas about what type of music they want to hear.” It is his own musical standards he is concerned with.

About the future course of music, Hubbard says that “nowadays you have to be able to do almost anything, because anything might happen—it’s in the air.” Whatever it might be, Hubbard aims to be ready to play “with just about everybody and still be able to sound like me.”

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- 119 Bud Shank
- 116 Gary Bartz
- 109 Anthony Braxton
- 101 David Binney

Get Kenny Garrett talking about matters musical, and the conversation will undoubtedly lead to a discussion of melody, rhythm and harmony, but also the spirit that moves the notes on the page. Endlessly curious, it's Garrett's nature to look at all sides of an equation, weighing every nuance, every detail, until he finds the key to fruition. This sense of curiosity is Garrett's *modus operandi*, his restless mind constantly on the lookout for new sounds, new inspirations and new worlds to conquer.

"When I recorded *Beyond The Wall* I went to China to study the music, then I went back again to learn the language," the 48-year-old alto/soprano saxophone player said from his home in Glen Ridge, N.J.

Dedicated to pianist McCoy Tyner, *Beyond The Wall* (2006) was the result of months of intense preparation. But that's standard for any of Garrett's 11 albums, and one of the reasons he has produced some of the most critical jazz of the past 20 years. From his 1984 Criss Cross debut, *Introducing Kenny Garrett*, to his 2008 Mack Avenue live recording, *Sketches Of MD Live At The Iridium*, Garrett's music personifies what great jazz is all about: maintaining tradition and paying tribute to masters past while expanding the art form's boundaries by incorporating fresh strains into its ever-churning melting pot. And Garrett blows an exceedingly mean alto to boot.

"I'm always interested in checking out other kinds of music," Garrett said, catching a mental wave. "Lately I've been listening to and learning Japanese folk songs. It's a different approach. And I'm actually trying to read Japanese. I've heard these old Japanese folk songs before, but they're resonating a little differently with me now. I was recently in Azerbaijan while on tour with Chick Corea (as part of the Five Peace Band). I checked out the local music scene there. When I was in Israel I got some Arabian type music. I listen to African music, it just varies. That departure helps me come back to jazz. If you listen to jazz constantly over the years, then move away and return to it, you gain a different appreciation."

Finding a different appreciation, a different perspective, seemingly fuels all of Garrett's projects from his ongoing performance collaboration with tenor saxophonist and musical soulmate Pharaoh Sanders (on *Beyond The Wall* and *Sketches Of MD*) and his streamlined funk/jazz (*Happy People*) to his exploration of

ethnic music and his knockdown-drag-out hard-blowing rituals (*Black Hope*, *African Exchange Student*, *Standard Of Language*). Currently writing for his next record (to be released on Mack Avenue), Garrett talks fast and furious about what moves him most: "shifting energy."

"I'm an early riser; that's when I like to get up and write," he said. "I like to do things earlier. I practice in the morning, too, but I shift the energy between writing, playing and listening."

Subjects, plans and processes spill from Garrett's lips like water from a fountain. Whether discussing his practice routine ("If there's something I can't do, that's when I play classical or practice *25 Daily Exercises for Saxophone* by Hyacinthe Eleanore Klose"), Pharaoh Sanders ("We have similar paths of exploring music"), his fruitful Motor City upbringing ("There was something in the water") or playing John Coltrane's soprano saxophone, Kenny Garrett's restless nature is the only clue to his otherwise very private personality.

"Growing up in Detroit and being exposed to so many different genres, there is a spiritual emotion or stream that I connect with whether it's Japanese music or Chinese opera or gospel," Garrett said, elucidating his method of locating the spirit common to all music. "The stream is this feeling I get from music. But sometimes other people don't hear that. People ask me, 'You really hear Chinese opera? You understand that?' It feels like gospel to me, but that stream isn't the same for everybody. It's just what that emotion conjures up for me, and that is what I go for. Just like when I play 'Akatonbo,' which is a Japanese folk song, or if I'm listening to John Coltrane. It conjures up the same emotion for me."

Garrett attended McKenzie High School in Detroit, where his teacher and mentor Bill Wiggins turned him on to saxophonist Hank Crawford. But even before that, his tenor-playing father clued him in to Stanley Turrentine, John Coltrane, Maceo Parker and Joe Henderson.

"There was a Dairy Queen on Mack Avenue in Detroit," he recalls. "A radio in the window was playing jazz. My father asked, 'Who is that playing?' I remember that like it was yesterday. It was Stanley Turrentine. 'Everybody has a sound,' my father said, and subconsciously I always wanted to work on my sound. When I first came to New York, people wanted me to play tenor, but I wanted to get a fuller sound on the alto."

Garrett joined Mercer Ellington's Orchestra directly after high school in 1978; nearly four years later he moved to New York, joining Mel Lewis' big band at its Monday night residency at the Village Vanguard.

"Finding my own sound was a developing thing," he said, "and sticking to the sound that

I was hearing internally. I didn't realize I had an individual sound until one day the lead alto player with Ellington played a tape and it dawned on me, 'Wow—that is my sound.' There are two kinds of sounds, good sounds and unique sounds. Some people have to decide if they want a good sound or a unique sound. Jackie McLean had a unique sound. You hear different guys, and they all have a different sound. For me, it was a conscious effort not to come up with an individual sound but a good sound."

Often practicing seven hours a day, though without a standard system or regimen, Garrett developed his gritty tone and powerful alto style by examining it (typically) from all angles. Johnny Hodges, Grover Washington (on Johnny "Hammond" Smith's *Breakout*) and Hank Crawford's album *It's A Funky Thing To Do* ("Parker's Mood") were prominent influences.

"Being around the players in the Ellington band, we talked a lot about sound," Garrett recalled. "The main thing, and there aren't any secrets to it, you basically have to practice long tones. You have to hear a sound you want. Once I found that sound, it was just a matter of time to get some music to go with it. It was a conscious effort, but also unconscious. I wasn't looking for my own sound every day. I was just thinking, 'How can I get a good sound or the sound that I hear in my head?'"

Ultimately, Garrett never modeled himself after any a particular musician. Trumpet player (and teacher) Marcus Belgrave was as important to his development as shedding sounds and styles from the acknowledged alto and tenor heroes. Working on music for his next record, studying Japanese folk songs and lifting his horn (or as often working on piano) as the mood hits him, this energetic, enigmatic musician follows a concerted path of self exploration. Trane would understand.

"I played Trane's soprano in high school," Garrett said, still sounding surprised. "A drummer friend, Bill Roberts, would say, 'John Coltrane is my uncle.' 'Yeah, right,' I'd say. I thought it was hilarious, but I'd go over to his house and play the soprano he had there. One day he calls me and says, 'I'm over at my cousin Ravi's house.' At that point it dawned on me. I was really playing John Coltrane's soprano!"

"I admired Coltrane but I didn't want to be him," Garrett continued. "When I consider my approach, I always knew that I had a chance of finding myself. That is the hardest thing in jazz, finding yourself. I never wanted to be anyone, not Coltrane, as much as I love him, or anyone else. There is a place Coltrane goes, and I understand that place and I try to go to that place, but it's not because I am trying to play like Coltrane. I understand it. I relate to it. But I can be Kenny Garrett 24/7." **DB**

Complete Results

Jazz Artist

- 227 **Sonny Rollins**
- 217 Herbie Hancock
- 200 Chick Corea
- 180 Pat Metheny
- 147 Wayne Shorter
- 144 Wynton Marsalis
- 126 Keith Jarrett
- 107 Hank Jones
- 97 McCoy Tyner
- 91 Ornette Coleman
- 86 Joe Lovano
- 85 Kurt Elling
- 80 Phil Woods
- 79 Branford Marsalis
- 73 Brad Mehldau

Jazz Album

- 452 **Sonny Rollins, Road Shows, Vol. 1 (Doxy/Emarcy)**
- 223 Roy Hargrove Quintet, *Earfood* (Emarcy)
- 198 Dave Holland Sextet, *Pass It On* (Dare2)
- 176 James Moody/Hank Jones, *Our Delight* (IPO)
- 162 Jim Hall/Bill Frisell, *Hemispheres* (ArtistShare)
- 156 Joe Lovano, *Symphonica* (Blue Note)
- 136 Danilo Perez, *Across The Crystal Sea* (Decca)
- 130 Rudresh Mahanthappa, *Kinsmen* (Pi)
- 128 Joshua Redman, *Compass* (Nonesuch)
- 115 Kurt Rosenwinkel, *The Remedy* (ArtistShare)
- 102 E.S.T., *Leucocyte* (Emarcy)
- 102 Charlie Haden Family & Friends, *Rambling Boy* (Decca)
- 98 Dee Alexander, *Wild Is The Wind* (BluJazz)
- 81 Jeff "Tain" Watts, *Watts* (Dark Key)
- 79 Donny McCaslin, *Recommended Tools* (Greenleaf Music)

Historical Album

- 823 **Miles Davis, Kind Of Blue 50th Anniversary Edition (Columbia/Legacy)**
- 540 Bill Evans Trio, *Sunday At The Village Vanguard* (Riverside/Kennpnews Collection)
- 249 Return To Forever, *The Anthology* (Concord)
- 224 Dave Brubeck, *Live At Monterey Jazz Festival, 1958-2007* (Monterey Jazz Festival)
- 170 Lester Young, *The Lester Young/Count Basie Sessions 1936-1940* (Mosaic)
- 163 Anthony Braxton, *The Complete Arista Recordings* (Mosaic)
- 151 Nina Simone, *To Be Free* (Columbia/Legacy)
- 143 Art Tatum, *Piano Starts Here* (Sony Classics)
- 138 Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, *Showtime At The Spotlite: 52nd Street, New York City, June 1946* (Uptown)
- 125 Charlie Parker, *Washington D.C., May 23, 1948* (Uptown)
- 117 Ornette Coleman, *Town Hall, 1962* (ESP-Disc)
- 106 Herbie Hancock, *Then And Now* (Verve)
- 88 Benny Goodman, *The Columbia and OKeh Benny Goodman Orchestra Sessions* (Mosaic)
- 74 Miles Davis, *Broadcast Sessions 1958-'59* (Acrobat)
- 34 Lucky Thompson,

New York City, 1964-'65 (Uptown)

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- 302 **Pat Metheny Trio**
- 246 Keith Jarrett Trio
- 222 Branford Marsalis Quartet
- 202 Wayne Shorter Quartet
- 159 Dave Holland Sextet
- 138 Roy Hargrove Quintet
- 133 Yellowjackets
- 123 SFJAZZ Collective
- 122 Sonny Rollins Group
- 118 Phil Woods Quintet
- 114 Brad Mehldau Trio
- 113 Medeski Martin & Wood

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- 353 Count Basie Orchestra
- 298 Mingus Big Band
- 257 Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
- 233 Dave Holland Big Band
- 161 Carla Bley Big Band
- 160 Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra
- 127 Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra
- 113 Vanguard Jazz Orchestra
- 100 Bob Mintzer Big Band
- 93 Gerald Wilson Orchestra
- 92 Charles Tolliver Orchestra

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- 231 Terence Blanchard
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- 130 Enrico Rava
- 109 Jon Faddis
- 91 Kenny Wheeler
- 84 Ingrid Jensen
- 84 Terell Stafford

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- 311 **Robin Eubanks**
- 305 Wycliffe Gordon
- 278 Steve Turre
- 267 Bob Brookmeyer
- 218 Curtis Fuller
- 200 Slide Hampton
- 154 Delfeayo Marsalis
- 153 Conrad Herwig
- 150 Raul de Souza
- 120 Roswell Rudd
- 101 Ray Anderson
- 100 Steve Davis

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- 916 **Wayne Shorter**
- 524 Branford Marsalis
- 266 Dave Liebman
- 185 Joshua Redman
- 177 Ravi Coltrane
- 144 Chris Potter
- 132 Jane Ira Bloom
- 92 Steve Wilson
- 89 Anat Cohen
- 82 Sam Rivers
- 79 Evan Parker
- 78 Roscoe Mitchell

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- 571 **Sonny Rollins**
- 358 Wayne Shorter
- 321 Joe Lovano
- 294 Branford Marsalis
- 241 Joshua Redman
- 239 Chris Potter
- 135 Charles Lloyd
- 127 Eric Alexander
- 119 James Moody
- 98 James Carter
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- 71 Mark Turner

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- 666 **James Carter**
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- 227 Hamiet Bluiett
- 173 John Surman
- 167 Howard Johnson
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- 141 Claire Daly
- 137 Mats Gustafsson
- 131 Scott Robinson
- 122 Vinny Golia

- 59 Carlo Actis Dato
- 57 Alex Harding

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- 351 **Hubert Laws**
- 317 James Moody
- 306 Charles Lloyd
- 263 David "Fathead" Newman
- 224 Frank Wess
- 189 Nicole Mitchell
- 171 Dave Valentin
- 160 Lew Tabackin
- 126 Sam Rivers
- 110 Henry Threadgill
- 98 Jane Bunnett
- 87 James Newton

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- 252 McCoy Tyner
- 210 Ahmad Jamal
- 197 Dave Brubeck
- 182 Hank Jones
- 136 Kenny Barron
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- 98 Cecil Taylor
- 96 Jason Moran
- 69 Randy Weston

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- 469 Dr. Lonnie Smith
- 266 Larry Goldings
- 261 John Medeski
- 240 Jimmy McGriff
- 125 Sam Yahel
- 114 Barbara Dennerlein
- 109 Gary Versace
- 104 Amina Claudine Myers
- 80 Wayne Horvitz
- 76 Tony Monaco
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- 718 Herbie Hancock
- 201 Lyle Mays
- 185 Craig Taborn
- 173 Uri Caine

Diana Krall



JOS KNAEPEN

Robin Eubanks



MARK SHELDON

Wayne Shorter



JOS KNAEPEN

Herbie Hancock



JOS KNAEPEN

Jack DeJohnette



MARK SHELDON

Sonny Rollins



JOS KNAEPEN

Kurt Elling



JOS KNAEPEN

157 John Medeski
 110 Larry Goldings
 106 Hiromi
 103 Geoffrey Keezer
 78 Alan Pasqua
 58 Matthew Shipp
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186 John Patitucci
 127 William Parker
 105 Gary Peacock
 103 Avishai Cohen
 98 George Mraz
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176 Antonio Sanchez
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 152 Jeff Hamilton
 131 Lewis Nash
 97 Eric Harland
 96 Billy Hart
 96 Matt Wilson

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 56 Matt Moran

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 163 David Murray
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 (violin)
 90 Erik Friedlander
 (cello)

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 519 Tony Bennett
 347 Bobby McFerrin
 190 Mark Murphy
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 128 John Pizzarelli
 126 Mose Allison
 120 Andy Bey
 116 Jamie Cullum
 115 Kevin Mahogany
 96 Jimmy Scott
 93 Freddy Cole

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615 Christian McBride
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 323 Dave Holland
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 315 Brian Blade
 248 Jeff "Tain" Watts
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 296 Ithamar Koorax
 235 Dianne Reeves
 185 Nancy Wilson
 155 Dee Dee Bridgewater
 147 Roberta Gambarini
 124 Abbey Lincoln
 112 Luciana Souza
 110 Dee Alexander

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- 262 Buddy Guy, *Skin Deep* (Zomba)
- 232 Taj Mahal, *Maestro* (Heads Up)
- 138 Susan Tedeschi, *Back To The River* (Verve Forecast)
- 102 Shemekia Copeland, *Never Going Back* (Telarc)
- 85 Irma Thomas, *Simply Grand* (Rounder)
- 58 Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials, *Full Tilt* (Alligator)
- 54 Joe Louis Walker, *Witness To The Blues* (Stoney Plain)
- 34 Rory Block, *Blues Walkin' Like A Man* (Stoney Plain)

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- 417 Wayne Shorter
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- 236 Wynton Marsalis
- 186 Terence Blanchard
- 173 Dave Holland
- 156 Carla Bley
- 137 Ornette Coleman
- 120 Gerald Wilson
- 115 Dave Douglas
- 84 Bob Brookmeyer
- 79 Joe Lovano

Blues Artist/Group

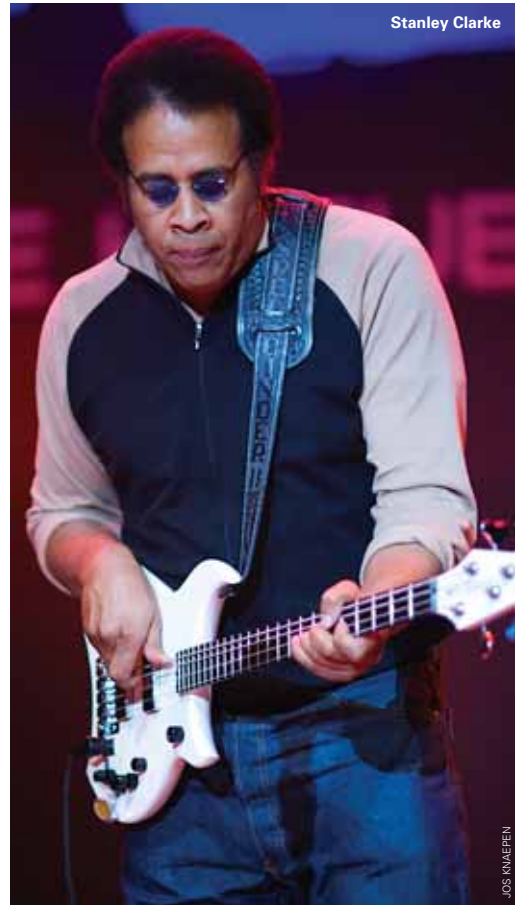
- 511 B.B. King
- 299 Derek Trucks
- 262 Eric Clapton
- 239 Buddy Guy
- 201 Dr. John
- 200 Taj Mahal
- 198 Etta James
- 134 James Blood Ulmer
- 119 Keb' Mo'
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- 516 B.B. King, *One Kind Favor* (Geffen)
- 445 Wynton Marsalis/Willie Nelson, *Men With The Blues* (Blue Note)
- 348 Derek Trucks,



Stanley Clarke

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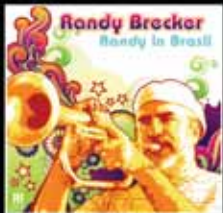
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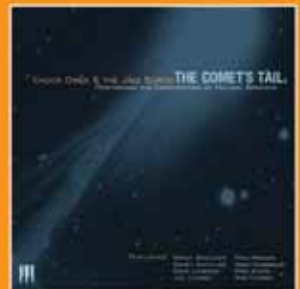
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CHRIS "PEANUT" WHITLEY

Corey Harris

My Song, My Blues

By Frank-John Hadley

The first half of the 1990s was a blues bonanza, with the mainstream media and general public cottoning to 12-bar music in a mighty big way that hasn't been matched since. Smack dab in the middle of things was singer-guitarist Corey Harris, just beginning his commitment to the musical form that is the very heart of American culture.

Onscreen and off, Harris was central to Martin Scorsese's documentary *Feel Like Going Home*, the flagship of the popular seven-film PBS television series *The Blues*. As a performer, he packed clubs like Isaac Tigrett's "original" House of Blues in Cambridge, Mass.—the upscale blues joint that attracted coast-to-coast notice with its grandiose opening ceremonies and its 100 percent blues booking policy. Harris and three other strikingly talented young African-American musicians—Guy Davis, Alvin Youngblood Hart and Keb' Mo'—were widely identified as the future hopes of the blues.

"I think a big part of the excitement was just good timing," Harris said in a deep voice from his home in Virginia. "The Robert Johnson boxed set and that kind of thing set it up for us." He dispelled the romantic notion that he had sprung fully formed out of nowhere. "Overnight sensation takes you a few years. That's how it was. When I was in New Orleans playing on the street and when I was in Cameroon playing, and all the years before that, I wasn't thinking, 'Oh, I'm going to get a record on Alligator and tour the world.' I just wanted to make the music be as good as it could be. So much else followed."

What followed for Harris, once the hoopla attending the release of his debut album *Between Midnight And Day* (1995) subsided, was his staying on the leading edge of blues while he deepened his understanding of its language and its origins. He brought an uncanny charisma to his singing, guitar playing and songwriting. By the start of the new millennium, this scholarly, bearded and dreadlocked musician had tightened a Gordian knot binding blues, reggae, New Orleans brass music and the modern and ancient sounds of mother Africa.

On the new album *blu.black*, like his previous Telarc release, *Zion Crossroads*, Harris puts his mind and heart to work on original tunes that catch a warm Jamaican breeze. "*blu.black* is the latest chapter in the story," Harris said, "I look at all of my [nine] records as one body of work, so this is another way to express the blues."

"Reggae is blues," Harris affirmed. "Musically it's blues, and if you listen to the foundation of reggae artists, they're blues fans and they even talk about blues in their songs. Bunny Wailer talked about the blues. Bob Marley talked about the blues. I know Curtis Mayfield was a big impression on reggae back in the day."

Pianist Henry Butler, at his place in New York, said he was in agreement with his friend and occasional collaborator. "Basically, Corey's right. He hears reggae as blues. We sometimes think that when you change the rhythm, that the form actually changes, but it does not. If it's a blues form, it's a blues form."

Alligator Records founder Bruce Iglauer, important to the early stages of Harris' career, commented from his office in Chicago: "The thing I've learned from Corey is that his definition of blues is pretty much any music from the African diaspora. Any music that came from Africa to the Western Hemisphere is as much the blues as 12 bars and three chord changes from the Mississippi Delta."

On the new album, Harris winds sunny melodies and variations through original songs and reggae poet Burning Spear's "Columbus." He chariots up to Zion Gate with sweet good cheer or charming pleas for understanding. "I listen to the music," he said, "and I get whatever musical groove I want, and then I just hum to myself until the right melody comes along. [Sometimes] you got to think about it, but other times the thoughts will just come. In general, yeah, *I want to have melody*, because I know that's what locks people in. I know that no matter what locks me in, even though I dig Cecil Taylor or whatever, I love the melody."

Chris "Peanut" Whitley—who produced *blu.black*, played the keyboards and partnered with Harris at songwriting—spoke about the music and Harris using the opaque Jamaican patois: "It's a metamorphosis," he said. "Original, diversity, eclectic. People take what they like and feel, mon. We're two peas of a pod, as irie [excellent] as they come."

Lyrics extol Rastafarianism and messiah Haile Salassie. "If you dig the melody," Harris mentioned, "after a while the words are going to creep on you and you'll be like, 'Oh, OK!'" About his Rastafarian faith: "What appeals to me is the universality of it, [how] African people, no matter where they are, can

relate to it. It's something that is an inspiration, most definitely, and the people I play with for the most part share in that inspiration with me." Long alert to social justice, sometimes the catalyst of his songwriting, he spoke of "having a sense of right and wrong and trying to express that as best I can and live it."

Raised in Denver, Harris developed an interest in the riddims of Trenchtown when he was in his early teens. "It started through my sister's Peter Tosh and Bob Marley records," he recalled. "Also the pastor of our church was from Jamaica and he would talk to me about reggae and give me some records." Harris played reggae albums as a student DJ at Bates College in Maine, but it was a trip to Cameroon for studies in linguistics that really kindled his interest in Jamaica's popular music.

"Reggae is big in Africa, so that was further exposure and it's still continuing," Harris said. "A lot of people are surprised that I am playing this type of music, but even when I was doing acoustic blues, I was listening to reggae and checking on the music and the message of the music."

For years, Harris has traveled to Bamako. "It was an inspiration to see the international outlook people in Mali have with regard to blues. People know B. B. King and John Lee Hooker. They also know Jay-Z and Brand Nubian. The tour guide who picked me up one time was listening to Bobby Bland and Otis Redding. You can even go to places and see graffiti on the walls that lets you know these people are into music from across the Atlantic."

In recording studios in the American southland, Rounder producer Scott Billington took measure of Harris' maturation as an Afrocentric musician. "With the *Downhome Sophisticate* [2002] and the *Daily Bread* [2005] albums, Corey opened up and tapped into a lot more than blues. It was a kick and an adventure to collaborate with him on *Daily Bread* as we developed the album's musical palette. There are African motifs, a killer ska beat and some wild guitar sounds, all used in the context of his original

songs. He makes it all work; nothing seems out of place."

Billington continued: "With his *Mississippi To Mali* album [2003], Corey assumed the role of a modern Alan Lomax. The difference is that Corey was not only documenting the musical bridge he had discovered but also collaborating musically with Ali Farka Toure, Ali Magassa and Souleyman Kane in Mali, and with Sam Carr, Bobby Rush and the Rising Star Fife & Drum band in Mississippi. Again, it's a unique person who can wear both hats."

Naturally enough, elements of African music turn up all through *blu.black*. As an example, Harris pointed to the reggae song "Babylon Walls." "The riff is something I've learned from Mali, and I just made it into a one-drop and added a skank [accents on the off-beats] and bass line."

Samba Touré is one of the leading musicians in Mali who stays alert to Harris' musical developments. He e-mailed: "Ali Farka Toure said that American bluesmen only have leaves and branches, but in Mali we have the trunk and roots. I played *Mississippi To Mali* loud in my car. Corey Harris' recordings are great. I'd like to play blues with an artist like Corey Harris. I can hear that Corey Harris has his roots here. After all, he's an African, no?"

Harris said he was secure with his sense of musical identity. "I know that whatever I play, that Africa's coming out. You can't get away from where you're from. I can pretend all I want that I'm something else, but no matter what, it's going to come through. The point is to know that the music that we play, it can go home. When I go to Mali, I don't have to study and change up my plans. I just play like I am."

Harris assessed that "there are very few of us, musicians or otherwise, over here checking out African music and [able to] talk about it with any degree of familiarity. So I'm someone who's changing that with what I do. I try to establish bridges between the continents and its music. Blues, what we have established in the West as an art form, is the foundation of black music."



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Among those few having sure footing on that bridge of his is a certain horn player in New York. "Olu Dara has the same vision," said Harris. "He's definitely someone who's an inspiration because you hear him and he's all over the map in a way, but he's rooted at home at the same time." Dara played wood trumpet on *Downhome Sophisticate* and contributed vocals, trumpet and acoustic blues guitar to *Daily Bread*.

"Corey's music represents the beginning of the world to me because it has to do with African music and the original blues in Mississippi," Dara said. "He's rare. He can speak the ancient musical languages, take a guitar and go from the Nile to the Mississippi. He's a master of it all."

The Big River, of course, runs right through New Orleans. Harris lived there in the early 1990s before his career caught fire. "New Orleans is the northernmost point of the Caribbean," he said. "You look at the culture and the history and the people. It's one of those cultural hot spots for black folk, for Africans. It was definitely an influence listening to brass bands and knowing so many people."

Billington commented about Harris' stay in Louisiana. "I think living there may have given Corey a better context for his music, because he got to play it as part of a living tradition—New Orleans culture is part of the African diaspora. As far as Corey's relationship with pure New Orleans music is concerned, you can hear that it's taken up permanent residence in his imagination, and that he calls it up when he needs it. If he wanted to sing old Creole songs, he would sound like the real deal."

In Louisiana, Harris encountered a real kindred spirit, someone he runs across on the road a few times each year. "Henry Butler is the man, for sure, and I did an album with him [*Vu-Du Menz*, Alligator, 2000]. He's someone who has been a big influence on me for his awareness of what he's doing and the scope. He doesn't just deal with the jazz. He doesn't just deal with the blues and with the gospel. Henry takes it all in, just like Olu Dara and myself, like New Orleans music. That's something I really respect. I even had a term for Henry—he's a 'downhome sophisticate,' also the name of the record I put out. Henry's someone who can go everywhere."

Informed by his recent albums, by YouTube and MySpace, people attending Harris' concerts these days know they're not going to hear heaps of what they know as the blues. "I'm not on a nostalgia trip or anything," Harris said. "I'm trying to express myself with my heritage. This isn't real living blues time anymore. Blues time was back when the greats like B. B. King—he's still with us—and those who passed away like Son House, R. L. Burnside or Muddy Waters lived. Still, blues is an undercurrent in everything we do. It informs us." Whether solo or with his Virginia-based band, Harris usually will perform a conventional, recognizable blues before the night's done; even *blu.black* closes with the advertised, starkly titled song, "Blues."

Anyone who longs for the 1990s, when Harris played only acoustic blues, should take note of his recent blues partnership with harmonica player Phil Wiggins. Wiggins, who'd worked for 34 years in an acclaimed acoustic Piedmont blues duo with now-deceased guitarist John Cephas, said he was ready for a change:

"With Corey, I can think in terms of playing countermelodies and harmonies and other things in terms of accompaniment and not worry so much about overpowering him like with John," he said. After noting Harris' virility as a singer and guitarist, Wiggins continued talking on his cell phone from Virginia: "Corey is versed in all those different styles of the music of the African diaspora and within the Piedmont and Delta blues stuff that we play. There are really subtle influences of all that. There's that African music feel as well."

Has Corey Harris, at this juncture of his blues journey, found his creative voice yet? "I don't think I'm ever going to get there," he answered. "It's like there's always work to be done. I feel like I'm always learning something and I definitely know what my parameters are, what I can do, and what my strengths are, and what I want to say. All that's pretty much decided; I am who I am. But as far as expressing it, I'm always keeping my ears open when I travel and trying to listen to new things and meet new musicians. So, I would say I'm a student of what I do." **DB**

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Lester Young: A Full Story

By Nat Hentoff // March 7, 1956



This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lester Young, one of jazz's most stylized and influential tenor saxophonists, who died in 1959 just a few months short of his 50th birthday. In honor of his centennial, we reprint this classic DownBeat interview from March 7, 1956, a time when "Pres" was at the very height of jazz stardom.

On a recent Saturday afternoon at his home in St. Albans, Long Island, Lester Young was alternately watching television and answering questions. Making coffee was Mary, Lester's wife; also present was the astute, outspoken Charlie Carpenter, Lester's long-time friend who has been with him since 1946 and has been his manager since 1948.

Lester had recently recovered from an illness. He looked to be in good health, was much more relaxed than he usually is in interviews, and his answers were lucid and carefully thought out before they were delivered. A few days after this interview, Lester made a record session for Norman Granz with Vic Dickenson, Roy Eldridge, Teddy Wilson, Gene Ramey, Freddie Green and Jo Jones. He played so well that Granz delayed his departure from New York so that he could record Pres again, this time with Wilson, Ramey and Jones. In both his current conversation and music, then, Lester indicates that he is finding some of the inner peace and confidence for which he's been searching a long time. These are some of the subjects Lester talked about:

Autobiography

"I was born in Woodville, Miss., not New Orleans. The family moved to New Orleans after I was born and stayed there until I was 10. I remember I liked to hear the music in New Orleans. I remember there were trucks advertising dances and I'd follow them all around.

"I was raised up in a carnival, a week in each town. I liked it, but in the wintertimes, my father, who was in charge of the band, wanted to go down South. I didn't like the idea and I'd run away.

"I've been playing music ever since I was 10. I started on the drums, but it was too much trouble to carry the traps. So I switched to alto. Frankie Trumbauer and Jimmy Dorsey were battling for honors in those days, and I finally found out that I liked Trumbauer. Trumbauer was my idol. When I had just started to play, I used to buy all his records. I imagine I can still play all those solos off the record. He played the C-melody saxophone. I tried to get the sound of a C-melody on a tenor. That's why I don't sound like other people. Trumbauer always told a little

story. And I liked the way he slurred the notes. He'd play the melody first and then after that, he'd play around the melody. I did like Bud Freeman very much. Nobody played like him.

"I played in my father's band until I joined the Bostonians, an outfit from Salina, Kan. I was with the Bostonians for about two or three years when I was around 16 and 17. We played through North and South Dakota and Minnesota. Sometimes I used to go back to my father's band.

"After the Bostonians, I played with King Oliver. He had a very nice band and I worked regularly with him for one or two years around Kansas and Missouri mostly. He had three brass, three reeds and four rhythm. He was playing well. He was old then and didn't play all night, but his tone was full when he played. He was the star of the show and played one or two songs each set. The blues. He could play some nice blues.

"As for how I went with Basie, I was playing at the Cotton Club in Minneapolis. I used to hear the Count on his broadcasts when I was off from work. I used to hear his tenor and I knew they needed a tenor player. Everything was fine with the band but the tenor player. I sent Basie a telegram and asked him if he could use a tenor player. I was in my 20s by this time. He's heard of me because people had gone up to Minneapolis for various shows, and Minneapolis was the winter quarters for the band I was with.

"So I joined Basie. It was very nice. Just like I thought it was going to be. Jo Jones came into the band after I did. I've always liked his drumming. He did a lot of things then that the modern drummers do now.

"I remember Buster Smith. I played with him in the 13 Original Blue Devils led by Walter Page. They came to Minneapolis while I was there and they had a sad tenor, too, so I joined them. Buster used to write all the arrangements and he could play crazy alto and clarinet. Oh, he could blow.

"I played with Fletcher Henderson for a short time when Coleman Hawkins left. I had a lot of trouble there. The whole band was buzzing on me because I had taken Hawk's place. I didn't have the same kind of sound he had. I was rooming at the Hendersons' house, and Leora Henderson would wake me early in the morning and play Hawkins' records for me so I could play like he did. I wanted to play my own way, but I just listened. I didn't want to hurt her feelings. Finally I left and went to Kansas City. I had in mind what I wanted to play, and I was going to play that way. That's the only time that ever happened, someone telling me to play differently from the way I wanted to."

Tenors, etc.

"Herschel Evans was a Hawk man. That was the difference between the way we played. He played well, but his man was Hawk like my man

at the beginning was Trumbauer. As for Coleman Hawkins, I used to ride in Hawk's car. He plays fine. He was the first to really start playing tenor. I thought Chu Berry played nice, too. He was on a Coleman Hawkins style. I think he got the job with Henderson after I left. Ben Webster had a taste of it, too. I think Ben plays fine, too.

"Of the newer tenors, I like all them little youngsters. I like to hear them play. About the finest I heard them play is on that 'Four Brothers' record. Do I hear my influence in what they play? Yes, I hear a lot of little things from what I play, but I never say anything. I mean I hear a lot of little riffs and things that I've done. But I don't want it to sound like I think I influenced everybody."

The Functions of a Rhythm Section

"The piano should play little fill-ins. Just nice little full chords behind the horn. I don't get in his way, and I let him play, and he shouldn't get in mine. Otherwise, your mind gets twisted. That's why I always let my little kiddies play solos. That way they don't bother me when I solo. In fact, sometimes I get bawled out by people who want to hear me play more, but I believe if you're paying a man to play, and if that man is on the bandstand and can play, he should get a chance to tell his story.

"An example of the kind of pianist I like is Gildo Mahones, who plays with me a lot. He never gets in your way. Some pianists just run all over the piano when you're playing, and that's a drag. I like John Lewis' playing very much. The Modern Jazz Quartet is very nice, but they have to play some place where it's quiet so you can hear them. The little things they play are their own. It's something new. I've never heard anybody play like that but them.

"A bass should play nice, four-beat rhythm that can be heard, but no slapping. I can't stand bass players when they slap the strings. I love bow work. It's very nice on ballads. But not all bass players can play good with a bow, and yet it's so nice to have one who can in a small group. I like Johnny Ore, who has worked with me a lot.

"On drumming, I don't go for the bombs. I want the drummer to be straight with the section. He's messing with the rhythm when he drops those bombs. In small groups, I like the drummer to play a little tinkety-boom on that one cymbal, four beats on the pedal. Just little simple things, but no bombs.

"The Basie rhythm section was good because they played together and everybody in it was playing rhythm. They played for you to play when you were taking a solo. They weren't playing solos behind you.

"On a date, I play a variety of tempos. I set my own tempos and I take my time. I wish jazz were played more often for dancing. I have a lot of fun playing for dances because I like to dance, too. They rhythm of the dancers comes back to

you while you're playing. When you're playing for dancing, it all adds up to playing the right tempo. After three or four tempos, you find the tempos they like. What they like changes from dance date to dance date."

Advice to Young Musicians

"A musician should know the lyrics of the songs he plays, too. That completes it. Then you can go for yourself and you know what you're doing. A lot of musicians that play nowadays don't know the lyrics of the songs. That way they're just playing the changes. That's why I like records by singers when I'm listening at home. I pick up the words right from there.

"Every musician should be a stylist. I played like Trumbauer when I was starting out. But then there's a time when you have to go out for yourself and tell your story. Your influence has already told his."

Dreams

"If I could put together exactly the kind of band I wanted, it wouldn't be a great big band. I'd have a guitar that just played rhythm—like Freddie Green. I'd have three more rhythm, a trumpet, trombone, baritone and myself. Frank Sinatra would be the singer. But that's kind of way out. That'll never happen.

"I'd also like to make some records with strings, some soft ballads. And if we did jump tunes with strings, the strings would play some whole [notes] in the background. I was supposed to make some records with strings in California. It still might happen. I'd maybe also like to make some more records with Billie [Holiday], but that would be left up to her."

Conclusions

"I think they'll all be finally coming back to swinging and to dancing to music again. A lot of the things now are just novelties. For me, the music has to swing first.

"I'd like to hear nice big bands with a variety of music that people can dance to and good soloists. I myself, though, wouldn't like to play in a big band. You don't get a chance to play. You walk to the mic for your eight bars or 16 bars, and then you sit down. You're just sitting there and reading the music. There are no kicks for me that way.

"After all these years, there's still kicks for me in music. I don't practice because I think I've been playing long enough. But I love to play.

"Let me ask *you* something," Lester said at the door. "Do you like Dixieland?"

"Yes, if it's good," I said.

"Same with me," said Lester.

"The only thing in music he can't stand," Charlie Carpenter pointed to Lester, "is hillbilly music."

Lester nodded.

"And radio and TV jingles?" I added.

"Yes, indeed," Lester laughed. "Those and hillbilly music." **DB**

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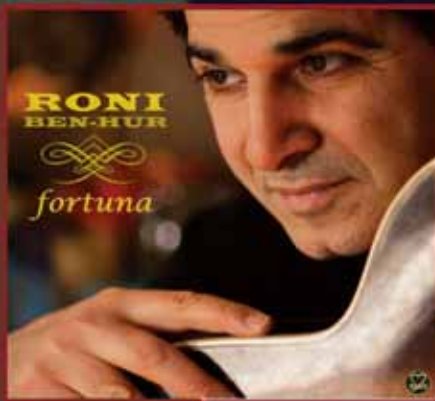
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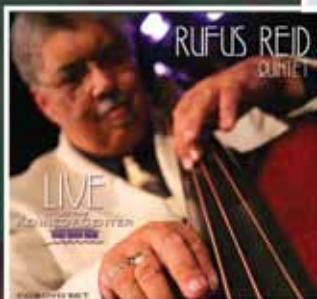
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Yuletide Jams

Carla Bley jump-starts a new holiday tradition

By Jon Ross

Composer and pianist Carla Bley stopped celebrating Christmas 20 years ago. Instead of placing packages under a tree or preparing a smorgasbord of delicacies—all memories she held from her childhood growing up in Oakland, Calif.—Bley now spends a quiet evening at home with her partner, electric bassist Steve Swallow.

“I decided to stop having a tree and stop having presents,” Bley said. “Steve and I just drink a bottle of very good wine, and that’s our whole holiday celebration.”

Though she no longer observes Christmas traditionally, Bley has a deep affinity for seasonal carols. Last December, Bley, Swallow and bass trombonist Ed Partyka’s brass quintet journeyed to Europe, performing her arrangements of carols. After the string of concerts, the group entered a studio in France to record *Carla’s Christmas Carols* (ECM), a 12-tune tribute to the holiday. “O Tannenbaum,” “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” and other Yuletide classics, along with two Bley originals—the triumphant “Hell’s Bells” and the reverential ballad “Jesus Maria”—are featured on the disc.

One of her goals for the album was to package the omnipresent language of Christmas in a thoughtful format. Musicians tend to take a light approach to holiday fare, sacrificing musicality for fluffy tunes, Bley said, adding that *Carla’s Christmas Carols* is different. These songs are serious jazz music.

“Like Tin Pan Alley, Christmas also had its share of people writing stuff who were very good at writing,” Bley said. “Usually musicians, when they do a Christmas album, they’re either dressed in Santa Claus suits or have rein-

deer all over the cover. Probably if I had done it 20 years ago, I would have been wearing a Santa Claus suit.”

Bley penned arrangements of her carols whenever she had the chance—during a calm moment on the road with her big band or after a long night rehearsing—and came up with pieces based on traditional renderings of the music. She then enlisted musicians in her band to play out the parts. Finally, she was ready to take the carols out on the road.

While Swallow was worried listeners coming from a rich Christmas tradition would balk at anything but faithful reproductions of the carols, the majority of the concerts were a rousing success.

“They might have been offended by Carla’s willingness to displace the carols from their usual context, but fortunately that wasn’t the case at all,” Swallow said. “They would have been bitterly disappointed if we would have played impeccable five-part harmony versions of the entire Christmas canon.”

A composer in his own right, Swallow knows harmony and rhythm is usually more important than melody in the jazz hierarchy. “Jingle Bells” and the rest of the tunes that Bley arranged are basically all melody, which was a nice change of pace for the bassist.

“These Christmas carols have endured because the melodies are so strong and evocative and singable. I’ve always tried to be a melodist when I play, but this reminded me that that’s a worthy goal,” he said, adding that listeners searching for holiday party music might be looking in the wrong place. “Carla’s take on these songs is as deadly as the rest of the stuff

she’s done over the years.”

Electric bass is still maligned in some acoustic jazz circles, and Swallow had no idea what reception his instrument would receive from the brass players. After a short period of adjustment, the musicians embraced the bass, which creates a sound that mixes well with brass. “There can be an edge to the sound of an electric instrument that seems especially suited to blending with brass,” Swallow said.

Writing for piano, electric bass and a brass quintet allowed Bley to juxtapose rich, textured passages with open blowing sections backed by Swallow’s acrobatic walking bass lines. Partyka assembled his quintet expressly for the concerts, looking for artists who were equally comfortable improvising on chord changes and playing in a classical style.

“The program that Carla wrote has some very jazz- and blues-oriented moments, but it also has some of the chorales and fanfares that require the group to really play like classical orchestral musicians,” Partyka said. The quintet meshed so well that the musicians have kept playing together and are currently in the studio recording non-Christmas compositions.

“Steve and Carla gave us the inspiration to really become a brass group, to become a working ensemble,” Partyka said.

Bley has only performed her take on the season for European audiences, but she hopes her new CD will take hold in the United States. If American audiences embrace the music, these arrangements may ultimately usher in a new holiday tradition for the composer: touring. “I hope to tour every Christmas with this music,” she said. “I would love that.”

DB

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Tom Ball: *'Tis The Season* (Dog Boy 08; 47:03) ★★★½: Many years ago John Fahey set the bar high for steel-string solo guitar holiday music. Using a 1936 Gibson, Ball comes close for his fealty to strong melodies, disciplined imagination and ability to draw out the warmth of carols and little-known traditional folk material from America and Europe. Neither sentimental nor showy, this Californian with long service to folk and blues makes songs like "Renaissance Fantasia" and "The First Noel" worth hearing all year long.

Ordering info: tomball.us

Krisanthi Pappas: *You And Me By The Christmas Tree* (Music Box 1225; 56:28) ★★★½: The title suggests this Boston-based jazz singer is peddling romantic yuletide slush. Not so. That charming original song the album is named after and secular holiday favorites like "Let It Snow!" benefit from a lovely voice imbued with a freshness of spirit. Not always a wholesome Santa's helper, she flaunts a sensual side making over "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" as a blues. Pappas only disappoints when she hushes up so her efficient sidemen can solo.

Ordering info: krisanthi.com

Typhanie Monique & Neal Alger: *Yuletide Groove* (Tyme 002; 62:10) ★★★½: The jazz team of vocalist Monique and guitarist Alger make merry with B-3 player Tony Monaco, trumpeter Victor Garcia and other friends in Chicago. Alas, their sled skids and hits rough bare ground because Monique's singing sometimes sounds, to this Scrooge's ears anyway, contrived. JAQ's beatbox puts a curious, entertaining twist on "Little Drummer Boy."

Ordering info: tymoneal.com

Continued on page 60



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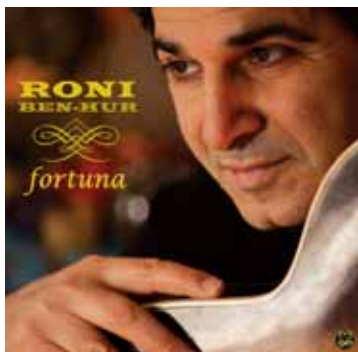
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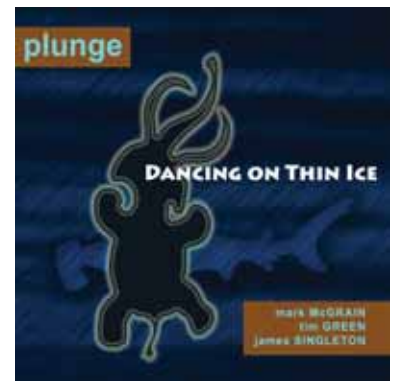
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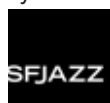


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HOLIDAY MUSIC

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Alexis Cole: *The Greatest Gift* (Motema 26; 54:46) ★★★ Benefiting the World Bicycle Relief project, vocalist Cole and her jazz friends (including Don Braden, Christian Howes, Alan Ferber), plus St. Paul's Children's Choir and the St. James Quartet, celebrate the sanctity of the season with busy but serviceable arrangements of 14 seasonal songs. Secure in her religious faith, Cole really gives it her all singing the spiritual "Rise Up, Shepherd, And Follow," supported by Indian classical musicians.

Ordering info: motema.com

Kermit Ruffins: *Have A Crazy Cool Christmas!* (Basin Street 0109; 59:52) ★★★½ Trumpeter Ruffins is the right guy to lead a "crazy cool" New Orleans Christmas parade through the recording studio. He has the technique, church-derived soulfulness, wit and Louis Armstrong-like bonhomie to relume faded tree lights like "Winter Wonderland" and "Silver Bells." His perfectly imperfect singing is charm personified. Ruffins found the right revelers: Trombone Shorty, pianist Matt Lemmler, Rebirth Brass Band and, among others, "Little Drummer Boy" Herlin Riley.

Ordering info: basinstreetrecords.com

Eddie Allen: *Jazzy Brass For The Holidays* (DBCD 003; 45:33) ★★★½ Trumpet player Allen has conviction in what he's doing. Refusing to stoop to weak sentiment, he communicates his sense of uplift when refurbishing "We Three Kings," "O Holy Night" and a dozen more classics. All the while his fellow brass players—Cecil Bridgewater on trumpet, W. Marshall Sealy on French horn, Clark Gayton on trombone—sound just as involved and confident. They're on a little wintry voyage of discovery with streams of ideas articulated with spirit and concision.

Ordering info: eddieallen.net

Ray Charles: *The Spirit Of Christmas* (Concord 31671; 47:30) ★★★ Charles sustains mood with singing of such grace and individuality that you might believe this wonder-worker was able to drive the horse-drawn sleigh he's holding the reins to on the cover of this 1985 release. The big band swings, but syrupy strings, backup singers, synthesizer and cookie-cutter blues guitar are distractions. Santa dropped off the bonus track—Brother Ray and



Betty Carter's sublime "Baby, It's Cold Outside" (1962)—at the wrong address.

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com

Frank Sinatra: *Christmas With Sinatra & Friends* (Concord 31672; 36:47) ★★★ Why not skip this new compilation of Reprise tracks from the 1960s and stick with *Christmas Songs By Sinatra* (Columbia, late-1940s) and *A Jolly Christmas From Frank Sinatra* (Capitol, 1950s) or settle for Ol' Blue Eyes' sprawling 2004 *The Christmas Collection?* You'll miss a tune apiece from other superior carolers Rosemary Clooney, Mel Torme, Tony Bennett (with Bill Evans, from the mid-1970s) and the "Cold Outside" couple, Ray Charles and Betty Carter. No Bing Crosby, though.

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com

Hot Club of San Francisco: *Hot Club Cool Yule* (Azica 72242; 51:21) ★★★½ Gypsy swing holiday albums are about as rare as Christmas stockings hanging on the Wailing Wall. But here's an enjoyable one from a string band that claims it's duty-bound to do the X-mas

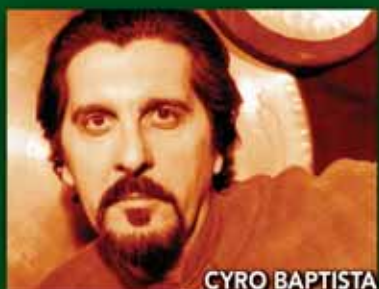
album their heroes Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli never made. Presumption aside, the quintet draws listeners in with loads of foot-tapping charm and swing. Good to hear some unexpected material like show tune "March Of The Toys" and the Appalachian hymn "I Wonder As I Wander" next to intelligent, fresh arrangements of "The Christmas Song" and "Auld Lang Syne."

Ordering info: azica.com

The Texas Gypsies: *Every Kind of Christmas* (Twig 001; 33:31) ★★★ From the Dallas-Fort Worth area, this unusual acoustic swing group connects Western swing, Tejano music, Gypsy jazz, flamenco and even vintage Italian pop as they wrap standards and their own tunes for a place under the trimmed tree. Best of all is guitarist Erik Swanson's Bob Wills-inspired "Christmastime In Texas," the fiddle of Mark Menikos swinging with declarative abandon. Grinch alert: Some of the vocals shouldn't be heard outside a shower stall, 'tis the season or not.

DB

Ordering info: texasgypsies.com



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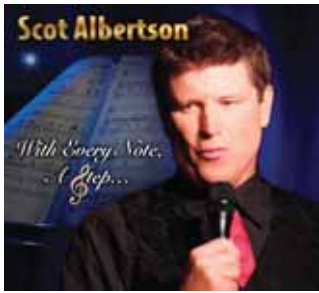
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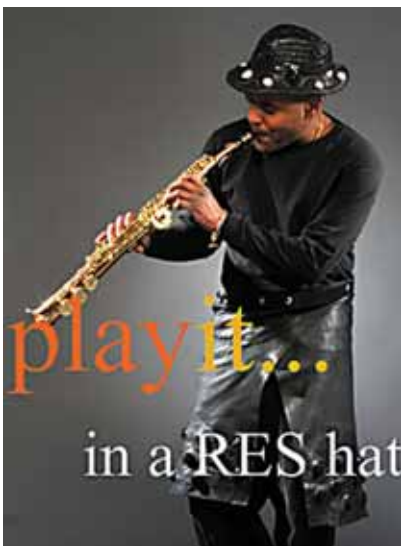
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Reviews

Masterpiece ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★ Good ★★★ Fair ★★ Poor ★

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Dafnis Prieto Si O Si Quartet

Live At The Jazz Standard NYC

DAFNISON 002

★★★★

Love it when a working band gets captured on a hot night. Jazz boasts several superb live discs, and the Cuban drummer's decision to document his foursome's controlled delirium was a wise move that adds another title to the list. Prieto has made some exciting albums previously, but those who catch him on a regular basis know that the bandstand is where the real action is.

Lots of the drummer's music has an architectural feel. Check the arrangements of his cello and violin quintet, or the horn-heavy maneuvers of his sextet, and you'll hear little that's off-the-cuff. The Si O Si Quartet uses intricate designs as its bedrock, too—cross-hatched rhythmic lines that employ an array of pan-Caribbean grooves are basically Prieto's signature. But it's more freewheeling; the leader's rambunctious nature behind the traps is symbolic of this unit's attack. They're a smaller bunch, and therefore a lot more agile. In their own way, they're a blowing band.

The fervor found in "Ilu-Uli" is a good example of what I'm talking about. The broken-beat landscape demands utter focus by each band member, but the solos by pianist Manuel Velera and saxophonist Peter Apfelbaum have a careening quality, spilling forward, boosting the leader's bustle and creating the feel of short excursions. The roller coaster ride of "3 Poems 1 Song" is similar; Valera's emphatic right-hand jitters give way to an engaging ramble, and the reed player's soprano pecking turns into a dynamic spray of lines. With Prieto bringing everything to a boil underneath them, there's a steady sense of hubbub in the air.

A couple of poetic ballads helped break the



fever. Prieto has spent time under Henry Threadgill's spell, and "Thoughts" is a dirge built on a lyrical drone that's not unlike Air's "Paille Street." "Seven By Seven" is just as moody. Its ghostly tone is matched by a swooping theme for a pair of melodicas, and bassist Charles Flores gets to prance through the mystery a bit.

Virtuosity can sometimes be a drag, but during the last few years, and on this album in particular, Prieto has proven that he's expert at calibrating his incredible chops to suit the tune at

hand. Turn up the volume on Si O Si's work and discover what happens when judiciousness and exhilaration make a deep connection.

—Jim Macnie

Live At Jazz Standard NYC: Si O Si; Claveteo; Seven By Seven; Ilu-Uli; Just Go; 3 Poems 1 Song; Me Neither; Thoughts; Intro Absolute; Trio Absolute. (74:29)

Personnel: Dafnis Prieto, drums, vocal, clave; Peter Apfelbaum, tenor and soprano saxophones, bass melodica, percussion; Manuel Velera, piano, keyboard, melodica; Charles Flores, acoustic and electric bass.

» Ordering info: dafnisprieto.com

Donny McCaslin

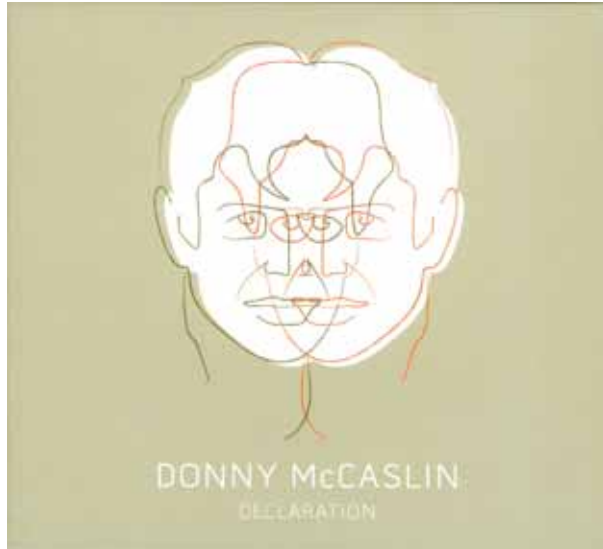
Declaration

SUNNYSIDE 1218

★★★★½

An engaging change of pace after last year's rugged pianoless trio outing, McCaslin's *Declaration* sets his bluff tenor sax in a bed of brass, much of it low and warm (marvelous tuba), plus electric guitar. McCaslin's time with Maria Schneider shows here, especially in the way he advances compositions with solos, instead of merely decorating them, but also in the way the ensemble breathes. The improvising isn't always as captivating as the writing, much of which is rhythm-inspired—is rhythm the new harmony?—with Latin, rock and the angular zigzag of fusion informing much of the proceedings. McCaslin's brawny, vibratoless sound and declarative, bowlegged delivery can be refreshing, but he sometimes falls into practiced permutations as he chews off a thousand staccato notes.

The opening track, "M," inspired by Brazilian guitarist Egberto Gismonti, features an attention-grabbing augmented-fifth interval that gently resolves in the next phrase. Built over a quick guitar vamp and brooding trombone, the tune builds as McCaslin rises to throaty squalls, then subsides. Hand drummer Pernell Saturnino livens up "Fat Cat," which features more strong brass writing, especially at the end, with piano and bass weaving lines beneath. The title track has a gorgeous, brass choir feel, with a stately backbeat, prefiguring the folk/gospel feel of the final cut. More good brass in the darkly driving, mildly ecstatic "Rock Me," as McCaslin takes the rhythm role,



with brass churning beneath him. McCaslin's lyrical waltz for his mom, "Jeanina," gives guitarist Ben Monder a chance to flow and glow; "Late Night Gospel," also in three, has a memorable theme.

Elsewhere, the album feels either bland or a trifle forced, with solos that are rarely as interesting as the writing, though the wonderful Scott Colley makes a nice turn on bass on the cleverly hesitating "Uppercut." "2nd Hour" sports an oddly long silence after the drum solo, as if someone missed a cue. Overall, a solid effort. One hopes McCaslin will continue to write more for large ensemble.

—Paul de Barros

Declaration: M; Fat Cat; Declaration; Uppercut; Rock Me; Jeanina; 2nd Hour; Late Night Gospel. (63:44)

Personnel: Donny McCaslin, tenor saxophone, alto flute (1, 8); Edward Simon, piano, organ (5); Ben Monder, guitar; Scott Colley, bass; Antonio Sanchez, drums; Pernell Saturnino, percussion (2); Alex "Sasha" Sipiagin, trumpet, flugelhorn (1, 2, 3, 5, 7); Chris Komer, French horn (1, 2, 3, 5); Marshall Gilkes, trombone (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8); Marcus Rojas, tuba (3, 5, 7, 8), bass trombone (10); Tatum Greenblatt, trumpet (1).

» Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com

Chris Potter Underground

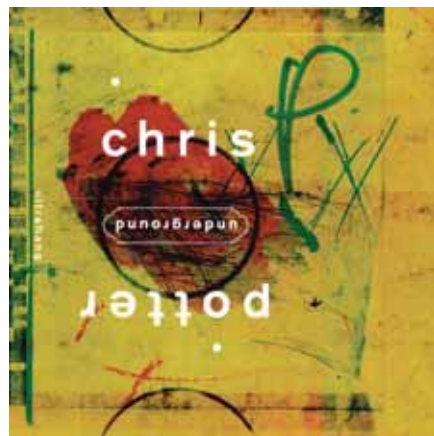
Ultrahang

ARTISTSHARE 167281226

★★★★

The third offering from this fine, funky working band may come as a revelation to folks who haven't kept tabs on the ubiquitous Mr. Potter. Potter's playing, and especially his writing with Underground, has a gritty, aggressive edge that is sometimes tempered in other contexts. I could be completely wrong, but it has the feel of a project he'd always wanted to do, but had held back for commercial reasons. Then again, there's no reason it shouldn't be well received, knife's edge and all.

The compositions are full of tonky backbeats and prog complexity, often conjuring M-



Base in the shifting accents, but adding a sweaty element, made swamplier by Craig



Randy Brecker

Nostalgic Journey: Tykocin Jazz Suite

SUMMIT RECORDS 527

★★★★

In the long, well-intended history of aligning the spontaneity of jazz with the formalities of classical music, the predicament lies in finding the linkages between two disparate idioms without sacrificing mutual integrity.

Composer-pianist Wlodek Pawlik and Randy Brecker tackle the problem in this moderately interesting suite of nine parts. Since all suites are obliged to offer some justifying metaphor of "inspiration," the conceit of *The Tykocin Suite* concerns Brecker's efforts to find a genetic match for his brother Michael, a search that took him to the small town in northeastern Poland named in the title. All that said, Pawlik's music reconciles the jazz-classical dilemma by turning to a third form where all options are fair game—the spirit of the film score, a field where Pawlik has some experience.

Much of the material here sounds like music in search of a scene—or suggestive of scenes past. The work opens with a whisper as soft piano notes fall like leisurely drops of dew, then gather into gentle, lyrical little pools. It fills the air with a childlike innocence, not unlike Elmer

Taborn's fabulous Rhodes, which is the defining feature of the band. Taborn covers the bass role with ease, pushing and punching the funky substrate. On "Rumples," you could be forgiven for insisting that there was a heavy electric string bass in the mix. But he also works the lighter, airier chords brilliantly, switching back and forth between the two modalities deftly on "Time's Arrow." Doesn't hurt that Nate Smith's drumming is so hand-in-glove with Taborn. They frequently break into a raucous, joyful funk. Free of ulterior motive, full of posterior motive.

Not to downplay the rest of the band. Adam Rogers is wonderful and equally versatile, moving between front and background, chord and line; he avoids the sillier, showier end of fret pyrotechnics for a deeper musicality and

The HOT Box

Bernstein's sparse overture to *To Kill A Mockingbird* but without its thematic interior. This flows into a dark string sequence in a minor mode suggesting some invisible and dangerous uncertainty. Finally in the third sequence, we get a sense of physical movement and action with the piano adding a percussive power that leads to a grim finality. Through it all neither Brecker nor any jazz sensibility is evident.

The trumpeter then emerges on "Nostalgic Journey," custodian of a rather stark theme set in a brief but nicely integrated supportive ensemble comprising the Pawlik trio and the philharmonic. When the strings move to the background, Brecker and the trio come forward and the music becomes a straight, if reflective, jazz turn. His trumpet climbs with the orchestration to a stately but emotionally circumspect climax, as if to respect the work's more formal leanings.

The pace loosens up on "Let's All Go To Heaven" (after a rather plodding theme) and especially "Blue Rain," giving Brecker his best solo moments. He plays with the precision and poise of the pro he is. Same for Pawlik, who offers a light and fluent piano touch. The orchestra stirs in with a few terse background riffs and response figures, much the way a traditional big band might, but the trio remains the principle vehicle. Brecker is languid and warmly romantic on "No Words," where the strings serve a more conventional role. "Magic Seven" is mostly a punchy trio vehicle after a brooding but absorbing orchestra intro. Overall, a good but not groundbreaking effort to serve two musical masters. —John McDonough

Nostalgic Journey: Tykocin Jazz Suite: Introduction (Movement 1, Movement 2, Movement 3); Nostalgic Journey; Let's All Go To Heaven; Piano Introduction To No Words...; No Words...; Magic Seven; Blue Rain. (68:39)

Personnel: Randy Brecker, trumpeter; Wlodek Pawlik, piano; Pawel Panita, bass; Cezary Konrad, drums; the Podlasic Opera and Philharmonic of Bialystok (Poland).

» Ordering info: summitrecords.com

bond with the band. On the title track, little wacky guitar lines jump out like jacks in the box, and when he digs in for a long spot on "Facing East," he doesn't waste a note in the solo's construction. Potter's saxophone and occasional bass clarinet (less the ideal instrument for these waters, fine for slower moments like the Bob Dylan cover "It Ain't Me, Babe," a sweet change-up) is hefty and rhythmically acute to command the stage. He opens a few tracks by himself, and the substance of his tenor sound is immediately apparent. As if we didn't know already. —John Corbett

Ultrahang: Ultrahang; Facing East; Rumples; It Ain't Me, Babe; Time's Arrow; Small Wonder; Boots; Interstellar Signals. (62:29)

Personnel: Chris Potter, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Craig Taborn, Fender Rhodes; Adam Rogers, guitar; Nate Smith, drums.

» Ordering info: artistshare.com

CDs	CRMCs »	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
Dafnis Prieto Si O Si Quartet <i>Live At Jazz Standard NYC</i>		★★★★	★★★½	★★★★	★★★½
Donny McCaslin <i>Declaration</i>		★★★	★★★½	★★★	★★★½
Randy Brecker <i>Nostalgic Journey: Tykocin Jazz Suite</i>		★★★	★★½	★★	★★★
Chris Potter Underground <i>Ultrahang</i>		★★½	★★★★	★★★	★★½

Critics' Comments

Dafnis Prieto Si O Si Quartet, *Live At Jazz Standard NYC*

Prieto is one of the new breed, for whom a huge variety of world-inspired polyrhythms seem to come as naturally as breathing. I like his range here—mysterious to romantic to playful—especially the Latin permutation of Indian taal (spoken rhythmic patterns). Far from being a drum-heavy drummer's album, the soloist who really sparkles is pianist Manuel Valera. Soulful feel all around. —Paul de Barros

When nothing exceptional is happening elsewhere, remarkable things are often going on at the drums. The composer/drummer has laid out a frequently fast track crowded with self-serving booby traps, and runs the course with stunning precision and accuracy with time to spare for plenty of clever asides. A virtuoso turn of speed, dazzle and density. —John McDonough

Prieto's busy fidget was never the right fit with Threadgill, for me, but the drummer is completely confident at the wheel of his own group, and his integration of Latin and hip new jazz materials is coherent and tight. All members' versatility helps keep the program absorbing throughout. —John Corbett

Donny McCaslin, *Declaration*

McCaslin is ambitious as a player, bandleader, writer, arranger, the whole nine yards. And he's got plenty to offer on all fronts in this expansive project, which focuses on the writer-arranger part of the equation—color and texture rich!—but gives him room to stretch as well. —John Corbett

McCaslin has built an often stately nest of brass for his strapping tenor on several of these originals. But his scale-based rigidity, while accomplished, seems forever caught in an athletic variation of Coltrane. He soars mechanically one minute, bottoms out the next, with an unvaryingly dense and stony rigor. In his way, though, he nails what he seeks. —John McDonough

McCaslin's growing all the time, and the brass charts he negotiates on this disc still allow room for that prowling tenor sax of his. He's cribbed a couple ideas about design from his occasional boss, Maria Schneider. But he's also made an individualistic statement. Though there are moments when the tunes seem intricate for intricacy's sake, they're usually fun. Especially if you turn it up. —Jim Macnie

Randy Brecker, *Nostalgic Journey: Tykocin Jazz Suite*

Even the warmth of Brecker's tone (and his lyricism on "No Words") isn't enough to have this orchestral extravaganza draw you back all that often. Composer Pawlik's episodes drift along, lacking the kind of melodic impetus or forward motion to be truly compelling. It's the "too pretty" syndrome—polite playing without the necessary depth. —Jim Macnie

Brecker is playing great and Pawlik integrates orchestral and jazz elements with subtle sophistication—nothing awkwardly "hybrid" here. But apart from the sweet ballad "No Words," Pawlik's musical ideas hold less interest than the album's moving back story: a Polish ancestral homecoming for a bereft brother. —Paul de Barros

The parts of Pawlik's suite that are unabashedly neo-romantic classical have more inherent interest than the rather everyday jazz components (orchestral ornamentation and all), though Brecker sure sounds spry on the acoustic jazz vehicles "No Words..." and "Blue Rain." —John Corbett

Chris Potter Underground, *Ultrahang*

Often lurching, tight, punchy, in your face. Wheels spinning like crazy; but the music oddly in place despite the power blowing. Admirers of the genre will admire this Potter CD. Pardon my dissent. Command, rooted more in coercion than persuasion; the music, a chant rolling on square wheels. Warm, laid-back ballad playing, though, on "Babe." —John McDonough

All props to the intra-band unity. It takes lots of precision to make kinetics crackle like this. But the bigger question is whether kinetics can carry the day. In all this future funk, I'm missing some of the more graceful grooves—go ahead and call it swing—that were once found in Potter's pieces. —Jim Macnie

Chris gets funky, but most of this frantic, double-clutching music, well-made as it is, just twists around in its own current. Dug the bass clarinet on Dylan's "It Ain't Me, Babe," though, and "Boots" is a sho'nuff grinder. —Paul de Barros

Mike Mainieri

Mike Mainieri is available for master classes/clinics/workshops.

Mike's career spans 6 decades as a performing artist, composer, arranger, bandleader, producer and President of his own record label, NYC Records Inc.

As bandleader of Steps Ahead for 30 years, he is still active touring with the seminal group, which in itself has been a workshop in progress. At last count, more than 40 musicians have performed with the Steps Ahead. He has held master classes, clinics & lectures worldwide and performed in the educational field with small ensembles & big bands.



See Mike's complete bio and discography at www.mikemainieri.com

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JAZZ

by Bill Meyer

Braxton Business

It was clear by the time that Anthony Braxton stopped recording for Arista in 1980 that his objectives could not be realized through the standard music business model. Braxton has generally pursued several lines of inquiry at once. In 2006 he brought one to a close with *9 Compositions (Iridium)* (Firehouse 12), which presented the last compositions of his Ghost Trance Music, a system that explores notions of pulse, simultaneity and organized democracy. All these records save one deal with the question of where to go post-Ghost Trance.

That one is the splendid *Creative Orchestra (Köln) 1978* (hat**LOGY** 2-644; 51:58; 52:23) ★★★★★½, which has just been reissued. This is a live counterpart to the original Creative Orchestra Music, with hungry young talent like Marilyn Crispell and Ned Rothenberg standing alongside already celebrated veterans like Leo Smith and Kenny Wheeler. Bob Ostertag's electronics add a deeply otherworldly mirage effect to music that boldly but lovingly extends the examples of Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus and John Phillip Sousa.

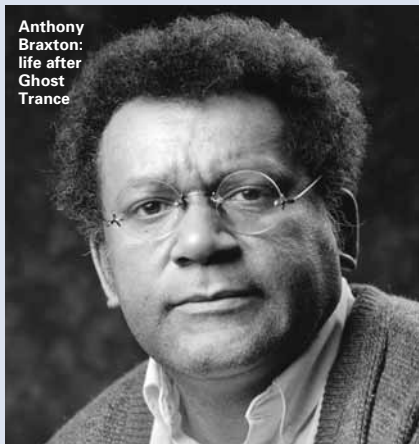
Ordering info: hathut.com

While Braxton's current music draws freely upon non-jazz vocabularies, jazz remains an essential component of his musical DNA. *Standards (Brussels) 2006* (Amirani 014; 67:27; 48:59; 60:57; 62:18; 64:22; 58:13) ★★★★★½, recorded five months after the Iridium date, drinks deeply from history's well. The six-CD box finds Braxton fronting an Italian rhythm section on tunes by Woody Herman, Wayne Shorter, Eric Dolphy and the Gershwin brothers. He may challenge notions of what you can do with a standard, but the quartet is swinging and soulful throughout.

Ordering info: amiranirecords.com

In 2007, Braxton accepted invitations to appear with two established large ensembles. The esteemed Italian Instabile Orchestra plays host on *Creative Orchestra (Bolzano) 2007* (Rai Trade 0013; 68:45) ★★★★★, which was recorded at the Alto Adige Jazz Festival in June 2007. The material is drawn from Braxton's back pages—the most recent work first appeared in 1992—but their assembly reflects the Ghost Trance pattern of mixing compositions together. The music ranges from suave sauntering to chamber mysteries to roiling maelstroms, all rendered with a deep respect that never gets in the way of the orchestra's essential vigor.

Anthony Braxton: life after Ghost Trance



COURTESY OF LEO RECORDS

Ordering info: italianinstabileorchestra.com

Braxton went to Ontario to realize the operatically inclined vocal music on *Creative Orchestra (Guelph) 2007* (Spool 30; 66:46) ★★★. The AIMToronto Orchestra was formed especially for this performance, but there's no beginner's hesitation in the dense woodwind textures, arrhythmic percussive figures and clanking electric guitar punctuation they bring to this jagged and forbidding music.

Ordering info: spoolmusic.com

At first glance, *Toronto (Duets) 2007* (Barnyard 308; 47:46; 45:44) ★★★★★, which was recorded one day later, looks even more forbidding. Each of its two CDs includes one long track for Braxton on soprano, soprano and alto saxophones and Kyle Brenders, Braxton's student and the director of AIMToronto Orchestra, on soprano, tenor and clarinet. But each piece is lean and lucid, wringing maximum benefit from the contrast between Braxton's coarse tone and Brenders' smoother voicings.

Ordering info: barnyardrecords.com

Braxton's future, as represented on *Quartet (Moscow) 2008* (Leo 518; 73:02) ★★★★★½, extrapolates past practice into the digital present with something called Diamond Curtain Wall Music. The distinguishing characteristic of this system is a laptop computer running SuperCollider software, which is programmed to respond to the musicians with tones that function as suggestions to alter the course of their improvisations. It's hard to say exactly what triggers the computer but its interventions, which often resemble guitar feedback, never seem inappropriate. The quartet, which includes guitarist Mary Halvorson, bassoonist Katherine Young and Taylor Ho Bynum on five different brass instruments, plays with astounding empathy and endless ideas.

DB

Ordering info: leorecords.com

**Evan Parker
Electro-
Acoustic
Ensemble**

**The Moment's
Energy**

ECM B0013023
★★★★



What constitutes music? In other words, what gives music that quality, that audible something that tells you you aren't just listening to ... someone talking, car traffic, a plane flying overhead?

Banter about such things occurred whenever classical composers started getting creative around the turn of the century before last. And, of course, Elvis started something else again. Not to mention jazz, Charlie Parker and his ilk. And let's not forget the likes of free-jazz and literal noise as music in avant-garde pop and rock circles. Whatever free-jazz was back then, it has morphed into many things, and British reed player Evan Parker has been around long enough to now be considered a veteran of the "genre." *The Moment's Energy* is the latest edition of his Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, an ensemble that sidesteps the heat and light of

refracted tonal instruments for something altogether different. Instead of just musical instruments used in a variety of ways, the Electro-Acoustic Ensemble prides itself in being an equal-opportunity sound machine, at least when it comes to acoustic and electronic instruments.

On board are a host of kindred spirits, 14 in all, including long-time colleagues Philipp Wachsmann (violin, live electronics),

Barry Guy (bass) and Paul Lytton (percussion, live electronics). *The Moment's Energy*, the group's fifth album, amounts to a combination live and studio recording, seamless in execution across eight selections, including the title piece, an extended commissioned work.

Speaking of live versus in-the-studio, one might wonder if these sound collages have more impact, meaning and entertainment value if experienced in the moment, so to speak, live and in-person. As the material plays out on this recording, the combined shrieks and coos; steely electronics as well as ethereal ones; piano twinklings; sudden percussive crashes; scampering twitches; sustains and brief staccato episodes ... all of it may cry out for a visual equivalent, if only in one's mind or imagina-

tion. With seven sections of *The Moment's Energy* (I through VII) followed by a coda of sorts with "Incandescent Clouds," what really happens may depend on the listener's ability to engage in these sonic explorations. And what makes "II" distinct from "III"? The earnest, sincere and able execution of this material by seasoned and well-trained artists suggest "a new chamber orchestra" (especially now that the ensemble has grown from its original sextet size). There is cohesion and a kind of forward movement here. And their edginess spills over into a kind of frolicking playfulness light years from the energy of so-called free-jazz.

The melding of *The Moment's Energy's* composed and "processed" improvised energies begs the question of repeat performances. Imagine the concert where an avid fan yells out for an encore of "IV." —John Ephland

The Moment's Energy: I; II; III; IV; V; VI; VII; Incandescent Clouds. (67:06)

Personnel: Evan Parker, soprano saxophone; Peter Evans, trumpet, piccolo trumpet; Ko Ishikawa, sho; Ned Rothenberg, clarinet, bass clarinet, shakuhachi; Philipp Wachsmann, violin, live electronics; Agusti Fernandez, piano, prepared piano; Barry Guy, bass; Paul Lytton, percussion, live electronics; Lawrence Casserley, signal processing instrument; Joel Ryan, sample and signal processing; Walter Prati, computer processing; Richard Barrett, live electronics; Paul Obermayer, live electronics; Marco Vecchi, sound projection.

» Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

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BLUES

by Frank-John Hadley

West Coast Strut

Joe Louis Walker: *Between A Rock And The Blues* (Stony Plain 1345; 63:13) ★★★★★ Walker has the gift of centering emotion in his high, go-for-broke voice and his guitar with authority, energy and impeccable control—he's been an outstanding blues and soul-blues musician for decades. Leading such New England-based cohorts as producer Duke Robillard, and two ex-Roomful of Blues horn players, Walker rolls along in grand form with no allowance for false sentiment. "I'm Tide" surges with blues, rock and soul all entangled. The blues ballad "Hallways" carries such naked, devastating honesty about the pain caused by infidelity that his performance is absolutely stunning. Two tracks with guitarist Kevin Eubanks and Bay Area musicians are exciting but run too long with bursts of guitar bombast.

Ordering info: stonyplainrecords.com

The R&B Bombers: *Bad Behavior* (Flying Fortress 100002; 64:19) ★★★ Don't be scared off by the cover photo of a young woman sporting a kitschy 1950s-style look who stares provocatively as she mouths what might be an ice cream bar. Southern California's answer to Roomful of Blues, the Bombers are back in action with their little big band jump-blues excitement after many years off the scene. Front man Joe Wilson passes the test as a capable singer (and sometime harp player) whose r&b song-writing reflects his fondness of smutty dumb fun and, for the better, his crooked-smile appraisals of romantic shenanigans. "The Sancho Song," a highlight, finds Wilson and tenor man Craig Thomas singing in mutual frustration over getting the boot by a two-timing wife/girlfriend. Throughout the album, the rhythm section and four horns adhere to the swinging verities with vigor and interest. A hidden track showcases doggy-style blues.

Ordering info: mspace.com/rbbombers

J. Hansen: *Give The Drummer Some* (Greaseland 010; 35:48) ★★★ On his self-released debut, Hansen the rhythm dynamo with Sacramento's fine Nightcats band steps forward into the limelight as singer, songwriter, top banana. With his fellow 'Cats, he shows juvenile delinquent attitude when lighting the short fuse of the rockabilly tune "Firecracker" and gives his comedic all applying fishing metaphors to an added pursuit of a stripper in the



Joe Louis Walker:
go-for-broke blues

ROBIN PORITZ/WALKER

Chicago blues stomp "Wigglin' On The Pole." Daring to take songs to the edge of parody, Hansen also succeeds with his imaginative stabs at old medicine-show hokum, '50s r&b, blues rock, country and gospel-rock.

More info: rickestrin.com

Jeff Golub: *Blues For You* (E1 Music 4540; 52:00) ★★ The smooth jazz guitarist shows a pleasant, mildly interesting interpretive approach to loaners from blue-bloods Lightnin' Slim, Mose Allison, Percy Mayfield (not Curtis, as listed), Freddie and Albert King. His efforts, though, are eclipsed by pitiful vocalists Marc Cohn, John Waite and rocker-with-a-Dylan-fixation Billy Squier.

Ordering info: e1entertainment.com

Big Pete Pearson: *Finger In Your Eye* (VizzTone/SWMAF 05; 41:57) ★★★; *The Screamer* (Modesto Blues 00001; 43:51) ★★★ Pearson, in Phoenix, filters the raw bravura of his singing into a personal approach to Chicago blues that complements the stylings of two different sets of local accompanists. Finger has Pearson moving beyond self-awareness into a place that few bluesmen ever reach—wisdom. He's right there from the get-go of "Heartaches," with harp player Bob Corritone and visiting guitarist Duke Robillard in perfect assent. The Screamer adds horns and benefits from the work of guitarist Mike Howard and a pretty fair B-3 player named Joey DeFrancesco. On both albums, though, septuagenarian Pearson's sexy come-ons fall flat.

DB

Ordering info: bobcorritone.com;
modestobluesrecords.com

Henry Threadgill Zooid

This Brings Us To,
Volume 1

PI 131

★★★★½

Following an eight-year absence from making studio recordings (with the exception of the vinyl-only 2003 release *Pop The Tape, Stop*), the singular Henry Threadgill has made the gap pay off; his new album with his long-running quintet Zooid is a masterpiece of thorny interplay, colliding themes and deeply focused improvisation. The combo's scientific moniker isn't superfluous, as it refers to a cell with independent movement within an organism, and the leader's compositions operate in the same way. For these six compositions Threadgill has developed a series of three-note interval chunks each assigned to a musician, a tactic that generates multi-linear activity and charged interactions within each peripatetic piece.

However schematic that description may sound, the music is downright sanguine. The band has worked together for years, which clearly enables them to navigate these procedures with stunning fluidity and provocation, with contrasting rhythms, timbres and melody lines all jostling with one another. Parsing foreground



and background activity is useful here; the complex, rumbling grooves of drummer Elliot Kavee cling to a steady pulse, but they also provide commentary and fierce rhythmic disruption.

The frontline of Threadgill and guitarist Liberty Ellman (as well as Jose Davila when he's

playing trombone rather than his main axe, the tuba) spins dense, intersecting lines of fractured melody and kaleidoscopic harmony, perpetually stoked and chopped by the roiling lines and tonal stabs of acoustic bass guitarist Stomu Takeishi and the rubbery blurts and knotty lines of Davila. As with most of Threadgill's output since he formed Very Very Circus in the late '80s, it's very dense stuff leavened by an undeniable airiness in the attack, with an acute use of lowest lows and highest highs in the band's tonal arsenal. There's a surfeit of rich ideas to digest here, but absorbing them is pure pleasure.

—Peter Margasak

This Brings Us To, Volume 1: White Wednesday Off The Wall; To Undertake My Corners Open; Chairmaster; After Some Time; Sap; Mirror Mirror The Verb. (39:05)

Personnel: Henry Threadgill, flute, alto saxophone; Liberty Ellman, guitar; Jose Davila, trombone, tuba; Stomu Takeishi, bass guitar; Elliot Humberto Kavee, drums.

» Ordering info: pirecordings.com

Charles Evans

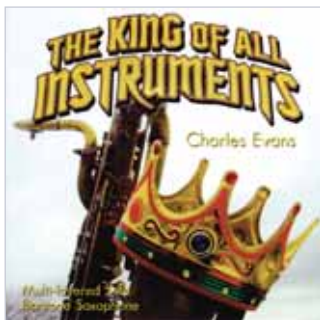
*The King Of All
Instruments*

HOT CUP 084

★★★★★

There is evidently a lot at stake here for Charles Evans, musically and emotionally, evidenced by heart-on-sleeve liner notes penned by the baritone saxist, paying tribute to his father, Clarence, and mentor David Liebman.

The amusing chutzpah of the title comes as no surprise given its release on Moppa Elliot's label (of Mostly Other People Do The Killing), but this is no macho ego trip. The disc opens unexpectedly with a polyphonous lullaby, multi-tracked baritones hamonizing against each other in the pleasant mid range of the instrument. What immediately registers is, indeed, Evans' respect for his instrument. "On Tone Yet? Part I" is more restless. As one suddenly irascible bari line goes off, ending in a squawk, it is picked up by a plaintive third voice, vented notes recalling effects at the beginning of Stravinsky's "Rite Of Spring." Unpredictable use of silences and bent notes here. The fugue-like, slightly ominous beginning to "The Friend" includes low-register motifs with long-note counter-harmonies in all



registers; tinges of Balkan music mix in from a central bari track that threads its way through a thicket of arching tonality.

"It's The Right Toe, Bro" gets down to business with multiphonics and initially offers respite from overdubbing, revealing what is possible using split-tone techniques rather than layered tracks. When another bari layer does enter, it sounds

shockingly like a patch from an Arp synth, or some electronic device, rather than a horn. One of Evans' Siamese baris does some bludgeoning throat singing at the rear while upfront a more tempered, notey improvisation occurs, but it doesn't meander mechanically. Evans seeks effective contrasts and linear interest and lingers upon a folksy melodic idea that the other voices seem happy to concur with.

My highest marks are for originality and audacity, but there is a more profound inner communion here.

—Michael Jackson

The King Of All Instruments: On Tone Yet? Part I (Mover's Move for Annie); On Tone Yet? Part II; On Tone Yet? Part III; Junie Part I: The Father (for Clarence Evans); Junie Part II: The Friend (for Clarence Evans); It's The Right Toe, Bro (for David Liebman); A Deya In The Life Of A Mulligan; Mother And Others (for Genevieve Evans and Jenifer and Jim Besten); What Would Of Ives (for Bill Zaccagnini). (49:41)

Personnel: Charles Evans, multi-tracked solo baritone saxophone.

» Ordering info: hotcuprecords.com

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Vijay Iyer Trio

Historicity

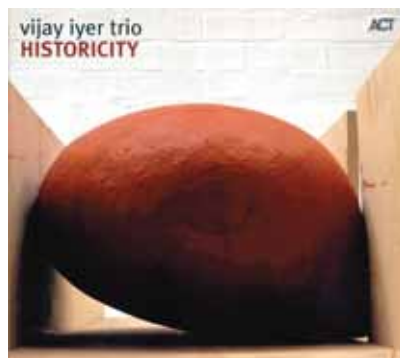
ACT 9489

★★★★

A kind of dialogue—ever in flux, constantly probing, frequently morphing, informed by disparate traditions but pushing toward new paradigms—is at the heart of the per-

formances on pianist Vijay Iyer's trio outing with bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Marcus Gilmore. In the liner notes, Iyer describes that dialogue, on the cover tunes, as "a conversation between the original work and something else entirely." But there are also conversations here between form and freedom, light and dark tonalities, and, as the title suggests, jazz history and future jazz.

Take Leonard Bernstein's "Somewhere," from *West Side Story*, for instance: Iyer elongates and extends the melody over Crump's rising-and-falling line and Gilmore's pulsating, oddly accented beats. The trio plays with other pop tunes, too—a reconfigured version of Stevie Wonder's "Big Brother" over chunky, halting rhythms; MIA's hip-hop "Galang"



redone as a sort of spiky acoustic electronica; Julius Hemphill's rootsy "Dogon A.D." benefitting from bowed-bass grinding; Andrew Hill's "Smoke Stack," a rumbling ramble that works itself into loose-limbed swing; and a sticky, funky run through Ronnie Foster's "Mystic Brew."

Iyer's original compositions, too, including older, reconstituted pieces "Trident: 2010" and "Segment For Sentiment #2," which opens with an extended bass reverie, make effective springboards for these musicians. The title track, an Iyer composition, sets the stage for everything else here, as the leader's free-range piano relentlessly tangles with and untangles from his independent minded rhythm-section players. —Philip Booth

Historicity: Historicity; Somewhere; Galang [Trio Riot Version]; Helix; Smoke Stack; Big Brother; Dogon A.D.; Mystic Brew [Triaxation Version]; Trident: 2010; Segment For Sentiment #2. (61:54)

Personnel: Vijay Iyer, piano; Stephan Crump, bass; Marcus Gilmore, drums.

» Ordering info: actmusic.com

David Friesen

Five & Three

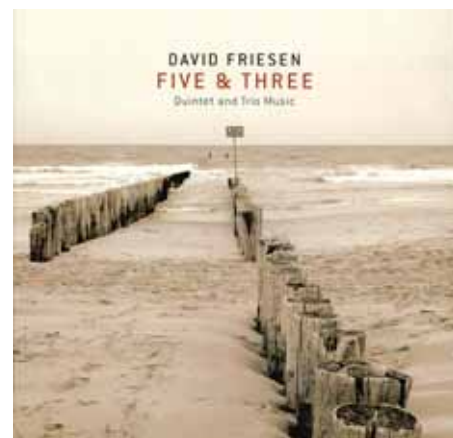
ITM 14124

★★★★

It has been more than 30 years since bassist David Friesen's first solo recordings pegged him as a worthy, chops-heavy peer of Stanley Clarke, Miroslav Vitous and Jaco Pastorius. While he has steered away from the kind of name recognition those fellow bass icons of the '70s have achieved, he has continued to evolve a signature tone and technique that are accentuated by his electric Hemege upright instrument. It's a resonant yet dry sound that has a powerful physical presence, particularly on the six trio tracks on *Five & Three*, where it is framed by piano and tenor saxophone. Surrounded by a larger ensemble, Friesen has the ability to float above the band while still driving it hard.

The decision to divide the double CD between studio trio recordings and live performances by his quintet creates an attractive balance, and provides a wide range of options for the 14 original compositions.

A native of the Northwest who has chosen to remain there, Friesen's harmonic tapestries seem to reflect seascapes and rugged geography. His ballads, most notably "You And You Alone," are filled with color and texture, ideal vehicles for Rob Davis' grainy tenor and Dan Balmer's spectral guitar. But, no surprise for a



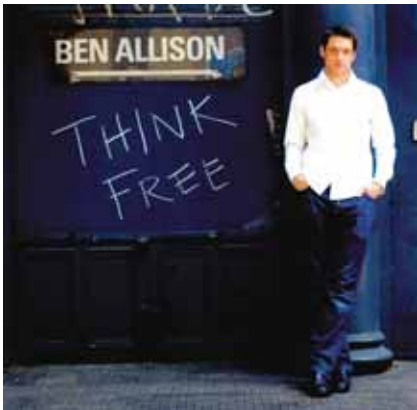
bassist of his vintage, Friesen can also bring the funk, as he does on "Within These Walls," abetted by Balmer and the squalling twin tenors of Davis and John Gross.

Five & Three is an effective showcase for the talent living in and around Portland, and a welcome postcard from a bassist who too often flies under the radar. —James Hale

Five & Three: Disc 1: Goal In Mind; In My Heart; Blue 10; Every Other Time; You And You Alone; Z; Shu Wen (54:52). Disc 2: Later In The Day; The Last Goodbye; Sunset Blue; Only Just Yesterday; Wrinkle; Within These Walls; One Moment In Time (51:26).

Personnel: David Friesen, Hemege bass; John Gross, tenor saxophone; Rob Davis, tenor and soprano saxophone; Dan Balmer, guitar; Gary Hobbs, drums; Charlie Doggett, drums; Greg Goebel, piano.

» Ordering info: davidfriesen.net



Ben Allison

Think Free
PALMETTO 2140
★★★★½

It's been a while since an album projected as powerful a sense of well-being as *Think Free*, which with its languid modal melodies and coolly reflective themes has the quality of a watercolor in motion. Ben Allison has again changed playing partners: the bassist and his terrific regular guitarist Steve Cardenas are joined here by violinist Jenny Scheinman, trumpeter Shane Endsley and drummer Rudy Royston. Having performed together in various combinations before, they sound completely relaxed even as they pursue ways into each other's individual styles.

Think Free doesn't have the angular thrust of *Cowboy Justice* or the percussive pop of *Little Things Run The World*, the breakthrough albums that lifted Allison from the ranks of the proficient to the ranks of the inspired. Both of those recordings featured the great Ron Horton; as strong a player in the Dave Douglas mode as Endsley is, he doesn't yet have the lyrical depth or narrative gift of his predecessor. But the floating ease with which the tunes on *Think Free* unfold, whether painted with minimalist strokes or dappled with edgy electronic voicings, provides its own rewards.

The songs include impressive new originals like "Platypus," which makes the most of the offbeat textures created by Scheinman's singing/stinging tones and Endsley's burnished effects, and upgrades of songs from previous Allison albums including "Peace Pipe," on which a plucking Scheinman wittily simulates a *kora*. With Allison cementing the sound with his thick, pliant tone and rock-steady pulse, his partners always have a formidable center to play off of. It's a free-thinking unit, all right, but there's never a moment when it doesn't know where it's going. —Lloyd Sachs

Think Free: Fred; Platypus; Broke; Kramer vs. Kramer vs. Godzilla; Sleeping Giant; Peace Pipe; vs. Godzilla; Green AI. (45:31)

Personnel: Ben Allison, bass; Steve Cardenas, guitar; Shane Endsley, trumpet; Jenny Scheinman, violin; Rudy Royston, drums.

» Ordering info: palmetto-records.com

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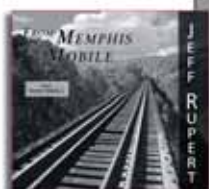


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BEYOND

by Frank-John Hadley

Opening R&B Vaults

The Marvelettes: *Forever* (Motown/Hip-O B0011516; 78:39/73:59/72:17) ★★★★★ In the early '60s, The Marvelettes were Motown's contribution to the "girl groups" craze that spiritedly defined rock 'n' roll between Elvis Presley and the Beatles. Originally plucked from a high school near Detroit, the four vocalists brought r&b grit and gospel fervor to the six LPs and 26 extra tracks that fill this set. They sounded nothing like the groomed, sweet-sounding Supremes. Does anyone not obsessive about Motown need to hear three CDs? Yes. Aural pleasures extend from the hits "Beachwood 4-5789," "Don't Mess With Bill" and "Please Mr. Postman" to those rare tunes from the label's cadre of talented songwriters. Fascinatingly, we can follow the gradual development of the famous "Motown Sound." But disc two has the spotty 1963 album *On Stage: Recorded Live*. Despite personnel changes, the Marvelettes soldiered on for a few more years on Motown, so expect a follow-up volume.

Ordering info: hip-oselect.com

Betty Davis: *Nasty Gal* (Light in the Attic 046; 39:46) ★★★ Davis, who was romantically involved with Miles Davis and Jimi Hendrix, roars and screams in the role of a lusty Amazon doing sexual gymnastics to the P-Funk-meets-Sly Stone hard funk from her North Carolina cousins. The sonic blitz subsides briefly for the contemplative ballad "You & I," with Miles Davis on horn and Gil Evans providing the brass arrangement. Unlike Donna Summer and her cooing faux-orgasms, Davis was too scary and raucous for any sort of commercial success in 1975 and *Nasty Gal* sank like a stone. It now wickedly resurfaces with a 30-page booklet that includes spicy lyrics and photos.

Ordering info: lightintheattic.net

Various Artists: *Take Me To The River* (Kent Box 10; 76:16/74:59/79:52) ★★★★★½ This 75-track compilation from England—subtitled *A Southern Soul Story 1961-1977*—highlights that special blend of blues, gospel and country achieved by church-trained singers recording for Stax, Goldwax, Hi, Excello, Fame, Atlantic and

The Marvelettes: grit and gospel fervor



COURTESY UNIVERSAL MUSIC

other storied labels during the Civil Rights era and afterwards. Otis Redding, Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Al Green, Wilson Pickett and James Carr—aided by stellar musicians and songwriters—take their secular music right up to heaven's door. Percy Sledge, William Bell, Candi Staton, O. V. Wright, Millie Jackson, Joe Tex and Denise La Salle are conversant with ecstasy and represented by one song per artist. Listeners will also be introduced to obscure artists worth hearing, like Paul Kelly and Jimmie Braswell. While most of the soul music selected for these three discs is timeless, a definitive Southern soul collection would not neglect magic-makers Syl Johnson, Nappy Brown, Mighty Sam and Bobby Bland. The 72-page booklet delights for its details and organization.

Ordering info: acerecords.com

Little Richard: *Live At The Toronto Peace Festival 1969* (Shout! Factory DVD 826663; 30:00) ★★★★★ About the time D. A. Pennebaker filmed this concert, the crazy-haired wild man of '50s rock 'n' roll was enjoying a career rejuvenation as a Reprise recording artist. Shrieking vocal intensity is an earmark of his unbelievable style on "Lucille" "Long Tall Sally" and seven more favorites that get pulverized. There's not much of his manic piano pounding because he elects to stand, dance and strip off his gaudy shirt and white shoes. Of course he hurled them into the crowd.

DB

Ordering info: shoutfactory.com



Josh Berman

Old Idea

DELMARK 588

★★★★

On his first album as a leader, Chicago cornetist Josh Berman wastes no time establishing the rules of his highly distinctive game. In unison with tenor saxophonist Keefe Jackson, he opens *Old Idea* with a terse four-note phrase and a jaunty trio, followed by a series of brisk, jagged notes, a sudden slowdown of spare, isolated notes and a long, sighing tone. Nothing if not a tactician, Berman views the playing field as a kind of maze to work his way through, changing tempos and tonalities as he goes. Stop-start patterns yield to radiant melody, staccato jabs to arcing trills, tumultuous passages to coolly swinging ones.

If much of modern music is about tension and release, the heady originals Berman lays down with his closeknit quintet are about tension and more unresolved tension, but in disarmingly relaxed and unhurried fashion. Berman's unison lines with Jackson are stately and measured even when they pull apart; in a potato sack race, these guys would come in dead last. Vibraphonist Jason Adasiewicz lends bluesy shimmer even when providing kinetic jolts. The bass and drums of Anton Hatwich and Nori Tanaka fade in and out of the frame, sometimes commenting from a distance and sometimes drawing the spotlight.

Beautifully recorded by Tanaka, *Old Idea* boasts a kind of post-chamber sound that reflects a keen awareness of space and silence. When given an opening, the gutsy Jackson engages in breathless onrushing narratives, and Berman allows his lyrical streak to race past his affection for taut, off-center phrasing. But the songs don't allow anyone the luxury of staying in one mode for long. A late bloomer who didn't play the horn seriously until college, Berman is playing a game of catch-up with a kitchen sink style that has rec room appeal. (Available on CD or LP.) —Lloyd Sachs

Old Idea: On Account Of A Hat; Next Year A; Let's Pretend; Nori; Next Year; Almost Late; What Can?; Db; Next Year C. (50:56)

Personnel: Josh Berman, cornet; Keefe Jackson, tenor saxophone; Jason Adasiewicz, vibraphone; Anton Hatwich, bass; Nori Tanaka, drums.

» Ordering info: delmark.com

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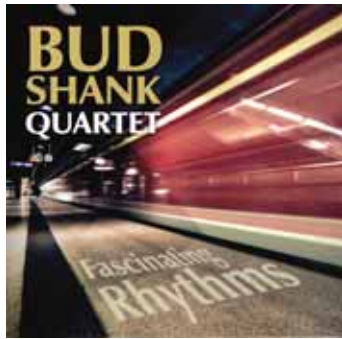
Fascinating Rhythms

JAZZED MEDIA 1045

★★★★

After he left the Stan Kenton band in 1952, alto saxophonist Bud Shank worked with a black bandleader named George Redman, whose outfit played for dancers. “Honk and stomp” was the way that Shank referred to that music, grateful for the liberating effect it had on his playing. This album shows how, at the end of his life, Shank again reveled in that carefree quality: strong-arming chords, dancing (and stomping) over the changes, spraying fusillades and wide-open vibratoed trills. His tone became blowtorched and his playing became feral and loose, even sloppy. Shank was grasping for a second liberation—this time rhythmic and aural. His longtime fans may have missed the poised lyricism of the Pacific Jazz-era Shank, but they would also know that Shank diligently remade himself into a hard player.

This live outing, shortly before Shank’s death, captures his swan song at the Jazz Bakery in Culver City, Calif. The stellar rhythm section of pianist Bill Mays, bassist Bob Magnusson and drummer Joe LaBarbera



supports Shank, suggests new avenues and spars with him. It also shares the fun. Mays and company deconstruct the *montuno* to “Manteca” after the alto has romped all over it and dance through a treatment of “In Walked Bud,” which traverses 3/4, 4/4 and 5/4. Mays’ work can subtly veer from melancholy to joy to blues grit, sometimes with-

in the same solo. LaBarbera is a model of percussive invention yet never neglects his time-keeping and shading duties.

Though health problems plagued him, Shank pressed on, as though music were oxygen. Shorty Rogers’ gorgeous Shank feature “Lotus Bud” is refashioned into a staccatoed lament, with a hard-swinging “No More Blues” grafted onto the end. “Over The Rainbow,” so easy to play for hand-wringing pathos, instead is diced into a waltz and rendered with arpeggiated swagger. In the end, Shank took no prisoners and asked for no sympathy.

—Kirk Silsbee

Fascinating Rhythm: Chicane; Over The Rainbow; Fascinating Rhythm; Lotus Bud/No More Blues; In Walked Bud; Lover Man; Manteca. (78:35)

Personnel: Bud Shank, alto saxophone; Bill Mays, piano; Bob Magnusson, bass; Joe LaBarbera, drums.

» Ordering info: jazzedmedia.com

Sharel Cassity

Relentless

JLP 0901001

★★★★

Any chauvanist jazzers who still believe blowing post-bop saxophone is the preserve of the male of the species haven’t heard young guns Grace Kelly and Tineke Postma. Sharel Cassity is another no-nonsense lady of the horn, and this is a crackling release with a New York tight sextet, plus guests, anchored by session vets Dwayne Burno and E.J. Strickland.

Six cuts on this not overlong CD are Cassity originals, save for her arrangement of Charles Tolliver’s “On The Nile” and a tribute to the leader by her partner, trombonist Michael Dease, whose solos are a highlight—check his lovely tone, timing and range on “Still.”

“Say What?” could be Cassity’s response to sexist presumptions, her beautifully rounded soprano jumping out of the speakers unannounced, showing off articulate phrasing and ability to gearshift while maintaining the integrity of a driving line. Given her mentors have included Steve Wilson and Vincent Herring, no surprise Cassity’s solos have an



insurgent quality, tune titles further hinting at a determined forward motion. But she has a sense of when to suspend a thought or emotion, as on the outro to “Still” and the faintly Traniish “Love’s Lament,” on which her deep blue alto wanes with gorgeous melancholy.

“Song Of Those Who Seek” is Cassity’s cleverest composition structurally and is impeccably navigated, though elements within it recall something you may have heard before. Cassity’s inquisitive legato solo features a passing “If I Should Lose You” quote, but she never loses her train of thought; Dease muddies his pretty tone with harmon mute, and there is a glittery solo from Evans. Cassity offers warm flutework elsewhere, but her uptempo alto is the star of the show on a barreling “No Turning Back” on which Pelt and Evans get to butter their chops, too.

—Michael Jackson

Relentless: Say What?; Still; Relentless; Call To Order; Love’s Lament; Song Of Those Who Seek; No Turning Back; On The Nile. (46:09)

Personnel: Sharel Cassity, alto and soprano sax, flute; Jeremy Pelt, trumpet; Michael Dease, trombone; Orrin Evans, piano; Dwayne Burno, bass; E.J. Strickland, drums; Thomas Barber, flugelhorn; Andres Boyarsky, tenor sax; Don Braden, alto flute.

» Ordering info: jazzlegacyproductions.com



Lisa Sokolov

A Quiet Thing

LAUGHING HORSE RECORDS 1013

★★★★½

What’s a nice Jewish girl doing in DownBeat? If it’s Lisa Sokolov, the New York artist is playing piano and singing—more specifically: she’s unveiling her compositions and covering classics, stretching the sound of her own voice, and approaching the art form in distinct and personal fashion.

While the CD title’s suggestion of hushed intimacy is borne out on several tunes, this disc (her fifth as a leader) is sometimes upbeat, forceful and occasionally experimental. Including solo performances, various duos, trio and quartet, *A Quiet Thing* maintains a solid consistency thanks to Sokolov’s emotive delivery and unusual approach.

There are a few original songs of note, quality interpretations of material by Billy Strayhorn, Ashford & Simpson and Kern & Hammerstein, a smart adaptation of text by Federico Garcia Lorca and even the reworking of an old Jewish prayer. “Dream Haiku” is a gentle duet in the studio with pianist John DiMartino, and Sokolov’s son Jake plays cello on the Yom Kippur traditional “Kol Nidre.” There are live tracks scattered amid these studio recordings, and on her solo version of “Old Man River” Sokolov goes off on a tangent—name-checking other memorable vocal divas with convincing results.

Throughout the collection the supporting musicians make valid contributions, especially violinist Todd Reynolds, bassist Cameron Brown and drummer Gerry Hemmingway. Clearly, Sokolov is an earnest and talented singer/musician who can handle the burdens of a vocal showcase regardless of the instrumentation. Give her at least one good listen.

—Mitch Myers

A Quiet Thing: My One And Only Love; Succotash, You Go To My Head; You’re All I Need To Get By; Lush Life; Kol Nidre; Ol’ Man River; Dream Haiku; She Is Standing; El Silencio; Walk In Beauty; A Quiet Thing. (45:31)

Personnel: Lisa Sokolov, vocals, piano; Todd Reynolds, violin (2, 9, 10); Cameron Brown, bass (2, 5, 9); John DiMartino, piano (3, 8); Kermit Driscoll, electric bass (4); Gerry Hemmingway, drums (2, 9); Jake Sokolov-Gonzalez, cello (6).

» Ordering info: lisasokolov.com

Icons Return

The fourth series of Jazz Icons' DVD releases of vintage television broadcasts may lack some of the star power of earlier releases, but it resurrects some journeyman performances from the pre-fusion era.

From a George Wein-produced European tour that finds Art Blakey leading a band other than the Jazz Messengers (his quintet is billed as Art Blakey & His New Jazzmen) **Art Blakey: *Live In '65* (Jazz Icons 119017; 51:05) ★★★½** provides a rare glimpse of under-sung, Paris-based tenor player Nathan Davis and square-peg pianist Jaki Byard, whom Blakey had admonished at an earlier gig for playing too far outside. Little matter, since the focus is primarily on a muscular 27-year-old Freddie Hubbard, who is at the top of his game.

Art Farmer: *Live In '64* (Jazz Icons 119019; 64:05) ★★★ captures an exceptional quartet—with Jim Hall, Steve Swallow and Pete LaRoca—at the end of a six-month run of work, and the intimate BBC presentation is ideal. It's no problem that the band members look as charismatic as young bankers; this is a session for close listening, particularly to the inventive lines of Farmer and Hall. The arrangements are tight, despite knotty compositions like "So In Love" and "The Bilbao Song."

Recorded at shows a month apart in Belgium and Sweden, **Erroll Garner: *Live In '63 & '64* (Jazz Icons 119021; 62:58) ★★★** provides a well-rounded picture of why Garner is often cited as an influential bridge between the pre- and postwar eras. He balances the rhythmic elements of stride with the flourishes of bop, and does it all with effortless showmanship. Accompanied by his longtime trio mates—bassist Eddie Calhoun and drummer Kelly Martin—he floats through a diverse selection of songs that shows his versatility, humor and winning idiosyncrasies.

Harmonic invention never goes out of style, so Coleman Hawkins was anything but an anachronism in the early '60s, although his power was beginning to dim. **Coleman Hawkins: *Live In '62 & '64* (Jazz Icons 119020; 137:12) ★★★½** illustrates his slow decline. While his energy is high and creativity flowing at a Belgian festival in 1962, two years later he seems incapable of tying his ideas together into seamless solos. Drummer Kansas Fields goes the energy on the first program while Jo Jones glides like a greyhound on the later show. Bassist Jimmy Woode is solid on both, although the superior sound of his instrument on the



Erroll Garner: influential versatility

DOWNBEAT ARCHIVES

'64 BBC broadcast is a highlight. The contributions of Harry "Sweets" Edison balance out Hawkins' challenges on the later show.

Brawny and blustering, the 16-piece Herd is almost too much for the BBC's microphones on **Woody Herman: *Live In '64* (Jazz Icons 119016; 57:22) ★★★**. Tenor saxophonist Sal Nistico is consistently excellent, as is drummer Jake Hanna, in a program that emphasizes soulful pieces like Mingus' "Better Git Hit In Your Soul" and Oscar Peterson's "Hallelujah Time." Herman fans who believe this mid-'60s unit is underrated have no shortage of proof here. The camerawork is energetic and the director is right on top of the action.

Always an engaging performer, in spite of whatever personal issues confronted her, Anita O'Day faced the challenge that many vocalists did as the era of the singer-songwriters dawned. **Anita O'Day: *Live In '63 & '70* (Jazz Icons 119015; 53:45) ★★★½** finds the vocalist at two Scandinavian concerts seven years apart performing more or less the same show. In November '63—with a jittery pickup trio behind her—her bop material strikes the right, edgy note, and the cameras capture her vivacious nature. By 1970—with "Yesterday" the only song from the '60s in her repertoire—the band is more confident, but the performance lacks flair.

Two sets from Paris' Salle Pleyel make up **Jimmy Smith: *Live In '69* (Jazz Icons 119018; 85:39) ★★★** and while the '70s are just a month away, the organist's trio makes no concessions to the decade just past. Guitarist Eddie McFadden plays in a restrained, bluesy style with a biting tone and drummer Charles Crosby is unobtrusively propulsive. Smith's highly varied fingering, active bass accompaniment and effective use of dynamics illustrate why few players could touch him on the B3. **DB**

Ordering info: jazzicons.com

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A celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the release of João Gilberto's debut album, "Chega de Saudade" (1959), which included the original recordings of "Bim Bom" and "Ho-ba-La-La."

Ithamara Koorax, acclaimed as one of the world's top jazz singers, has recorded with such giants as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Luiz Bonfá, Ron Carter, Larry Coryell, John McLaughlin, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, and now she teams up with legendary guitarist **Juarez Moreira**, one of Brazil's best musicians ever, for this historic project.



Liner notes by renowned jazz historian **Ira Gitler** detail the recording history of each song, and explore Gilberto's historical significance as a great innovator of jazz and world music: "Ithamara is gifted with a fabulous vocal instrument, and the innate intelligence of how to use it to convey feelings from the heart and soul. A sublime set that could be called "music for unwinding," "day or dusk dreaming," or "loving." Ithamara is an enchantress."

Koorax, who has consistently been named among the Top Female Vocalists in DownBeat's Readers' Poll since 2000, is formidable in partnership with **Moreira**.

The CD is also notable as the second release in Motéma's "Jazz Therapy" series, benefitting the **Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund** of Englewood Hospital and Medical Center which partners with The Jazz Foundation of America to provide free medical care and screenings to musicians in need.

www.koorax.com | www.myspace.com/ithamarakoorax
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Lisa Hilton

Twilight And Blues

RUBY SLIPPERS PRODUCTIONS 1012

★★★½



Blue is the unofficial motif of the 11th recording led by Southern California pianist Lisa Hilton, and that theme extends well beyond funky opener “Pandemonium.” Hilton, an underrated player with a deeply expressive style of coaxing sounds from keys and offering rich melodies and improvisations, seems to be in a contemplative mood, and an appealing impressionism runs through these original compositions and interpretations of pop tunes.

That pensive, laid-back approach undergirds several pieces that are imbued with nostalgia for the late '60s and early '70s—or at least for that era's ideals. Joni Mitchell's “Woodstock” has Hilton's lines roaming atop pliable rhythms provided by drummer Lewis Nash and Larry Grenadier; the bassist turns in a haunting extended solo. Marvin Gaye's “What's Going On” is delivered twice, with trumpeter Jeremy Pelt and tenor saxophonist J.D. Allen bringing out the tune's poignancy in both versions. And Hilton, sans band, salutes Janis Joplin with the stair-stepping “Kozmic Blues.” But the melancholy and mellow runs deep here with the leader's gorgeous “Turbulent Blue” and “Blue For You,” and a pretty solo-piano version of the Mancini/Mercer standard “Moon River.” —*Philip Booth*

Twilight And Blues: Pandemonium; Woodstock; What's Going On/Extended Take; City Streets; Turbulent Blue; Twilight; Kozmic Blues; Blues For You; Moon River; What's Going On. (50:34)

Personnel: Lisa Hilton, piano; Larry Grenadier, bass; Lewis Nash, drums; Jeremy Pelt, trumpet; J.D. Allen, tenor sax.

» Ordering info: lisahiltonmusic.com

Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey

One Day In Brooklyn

KINNARA RECORDS 0001

★★★½



The 15-year-old Tulsa based JFO trio, formerly a mainstay in acid-jazz circles, has expanded to a quartet with the addition of lap steel guitarist Chris Combs and changed bassists with the arrival of Matt Hayes.

The lap steel has a huge impact, its melismatic sound echoing an oud on Abdullah Ibrahim's Middle Eastern homage “Imam,” then sighing gracefully during The Beatles' “Julia.” The climactic dynamics, anthemic melodrama and impulsive, erudite pianism remind of the Bad Plus.

“Drethoven” is a portmanteau title conflating classical influences with Dr. Dre. Diced backbeats from Josh Raymer and see-sawing riffs from pianist Brian Harris work up a serious, metrically forceful stew with lap steel an effective, sitar-like background texture. Harris is busy with lots of potent ideas, in particular a striking moment halfway through when he dissonantly mirrors a strong phrase in both hands. The counterbalancing, more classical strain provides a dramatic alternative to the Dre-like thunder.

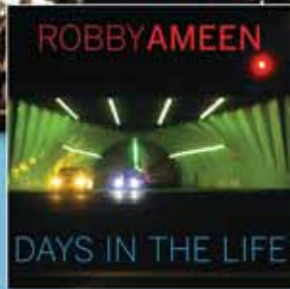
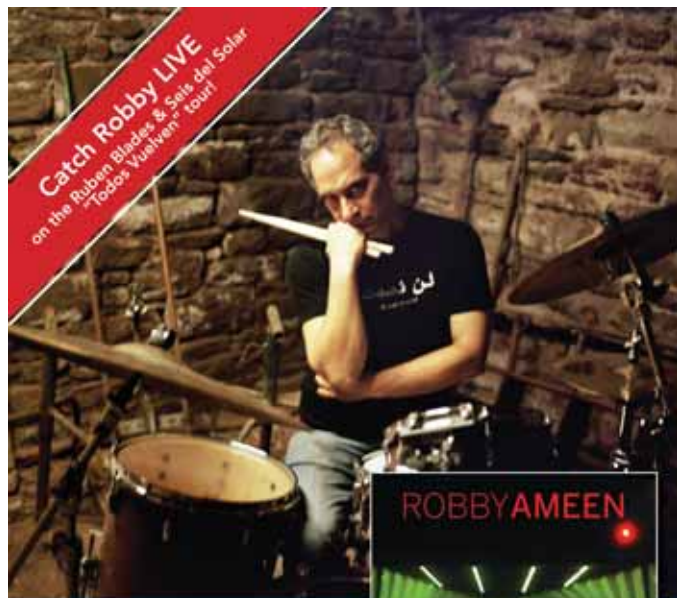
The disc concludes with a deft and cheeky nod to Monk, a witty segue given the power of the previous track, with Combs adding a dreamy Hawaiian slack-key esthetic, which might have made Thelonious smile.

—*Michael Jackson*

One Day In Brooklyn: The Black And Crazy Blues/A Laugh For Rory (For Joel Dorn); Country Girl; Julia; Imam; Drethoven; Four In One. (35:08)

Personnel: Brian Haas, piano; Josh Raymer, drums; Chris Combs, lap steel; Matt Hayes, double bass.

» Ordering info: jfo.com



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JaLaLa

That Old Mercer Magic!

DARE RECORDS 200206

★★★



That sing-songy band name is eminently appropriate for the three ladies whose names it mashes together. To delve into the Johnny Mercer songbook, Manhattan Transfer's Janis Siegel enlisted her "two favorite singers"—Transfer co-founder Laurel Massé and New York Voices' Lauren Kinhan.

The M.O. here will be familiar to fans of the ensembles in which the members spend most of their time: a nostalgic sense of hip, marrying finger-snapping swing with a champagne cosmopolitanism reminiscent of penthouse-set Hollywood musicals from the 1930s. The trio's accompanists aid in constructing that ambiance, especially the ever-witty Matt Wilson on drums and guitarist Frank Vignola.

The one major misstep is on the group's attempted update of "You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby," littered with stuttering sampled interjections added by someone billed as "DJ Sugarkone," all over a soulless Mardi Gras groove. The record recovers quickly, however, with Siegel shimmying over her entire range on a lively "Jeepers Creepers," and maintains that momentum throughout.

—Shaun Brady

That Old Mercer Magic!: Spring, Spring, Spring; You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby; Jeepers Creepers; My Shining Hour; Accentuate The Positive; Dream; I'm Old Fashioned; Riding On The Moon; Moon River/Moon Country; Have You Got An Castles Baby?; Too Marvelous For Words; The Dance Of Life. (52:30)

Personnel: Janis Siegel, Laurel Massé, Lauren Kinhan, vocals; Cindy Cashdollar, pedal steel; David Finck, guitar, bass; Frank Vignola, guitar; Yaron Gershovsky, piano; Aaron Weinstein, mandolin, violin; Sara Caswell, violin; Lew Soloff, trumpet; Margot Leverette, clarinet; DJ Sugarkone, samples; Rich Zukor, djembe; Eric Elterman, hand claps; Matt Wilson, drums.

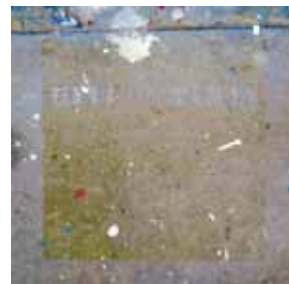
» Ordering info: darerecords.us

Led Bib

Sensible Shoes

CUNEIFORM 283

★★★½



This London quintet has been stirring up a fuss in its homeland in the last couple of years, and Led Bib's U.S. debut certainly brings the ruckus. While there are traces of the pensive rumination British jazz introduced in the '70s, along with a distinctly European prog-rock feel here and there, the dominant character of the music points to the most rigorous stripe of New York's downtown improv scene. Led Bib's drummer and primary composer, Mark Holub, is originally from the States, but as whole the group digs too deep into a post-Tim Berne/Jim Black attack for one individual to claim responsibility.

On most of the tracks a fierce rhythmic section—Holub's pummeling drumming, complemented by the intricately slaloming bass lines of Liran Donin and hyper-charged electric keyboard playing of Toby McLaren—plays with subtle displacements and polyrhythmic tricks like a mischievous cat toying with a wounded mouse. With the exception of ballad-feel pieces like the plaintive "Early Morning" or the elegant "Water Shortage," the pieces here are in constant motion. From the high volume to the sonic density to the kinetic energy, Led Bib rarely let the listener come up for air; they practically grab the listener by the collar and demand full attention.

—Peter Margasak

Sensible Shoes: Yes, Again; Squirrel Carnage; Early Morning; Sweet Chili; 2.4:1 (still equals none); Call Centre Labyrinth; Water Shortage; Flat Pack Fantasy; Zone 4. (58:45)

Personnel: Mark Holub, drums; Liran Donin, bass; Toby McLaren, keyboards; Pete Grogan, Chris Williams, saxophones.

» Ordering info: cuneiformrecords.com

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memphis

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—Cadence Magazine

mario pavone's double tenor quintet



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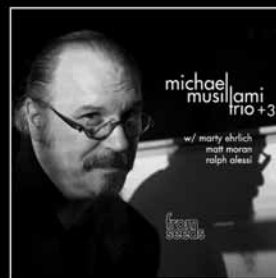
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The Big Four Quintet

Sanctified

TUB THUMPER 2002

★★★

Like the three-piece Ben Folds Five, the Big Four Quintet seems to set up a punch line by virtue of its name. Yet the occasional sly jab is just one part of the picture painted by this Crescent City outfit.

Each track of *Sanctified* unfolds like a panorama seen from the window of a train, beginning with the idyll of "Aarcia's Moods." The opening moments feature J.B. Biesmans on flute, blowing alone, then over filmy, free-tempo chords on bass and Rhodes. When the groove kicks in, we're into a five-beat vamp, E-minor to F, back and forth, that rolls us toward the '60s. The title song follows, with another two-chord pattern played dreamily on electric piano—until a seven-bar horn line blares over a trudging beat and what sounds like a bunch of guys getting punched in the gut. A vocal line, accessible melodically but cryptic lyrically, threads after that from straightforward verses into a diminished-chord bridge and back, as if from sunlight into mist and sunlight again.

And so it goes. The instrumentals take us to the retro-funk well again and again, with themes stated by horns in unison or octaves. Presumably Biesmans plays these simultaneously, given their bellow and bray in the fashion of Rahsaan



Roland Kirk; once he cuts down to one instrument, his solos can be fleet and ferocious, especially on soprano. Now and then they tweak the formula; "Ambient Groove" opens with a percussion interlude that's all chimes and tinkles, rattles and whispers, which veers into a steamy organ-and-flute jam. But by and large, whether fusing Les McCann and bossa nova on "Las Niñas De La Mancha" or milking the wah-wah pedal on "Brownies For Dinner," the instrumentals maintain an aggressively retro reference.

The vocals, though, are less predictable. "The Dun" is ominous, filled with shadowy silences between a thumping tom, a scraped bass ostinato and an elusive story about a "man on a silver mountain." Things get darker still on "The Wake," again with bowed upright and muffled drums, this time framing a tale of urban woe that Tom Waits might have written in the St. James Infirmary. "Communicate," conversely, is a street party, with a drum-strut beat and an amen corner shouting behind a lyric that promises repeatedly to "get that feeling." On that point, BFQ succeeds, not so much through its playing as its suggestions. —Robert L. Doerschuk

Sanctified: Aarcia's Moods; Sanctified; Seeing Angels at Sunset; The Dun; Ambient Groove; KidK; Communicate; Las Niñas De La Mancha; The Wake; Brownies For Dinner. (46:08)

Personnel: J.B. "The Hurricane" Biesmans, vocals, flute, woodwinds; Bird Stevens, bass, backing vocals; Dr. Basie J., vocals, keyboards; Franky Gomez, vocals, drums, percussion; Mo Gomez, guitars, backing vocals; Our Kids, backing vocals, weird stuff.

» Ordering info: tubthumperrecords.com

OslanDailey Jazztet

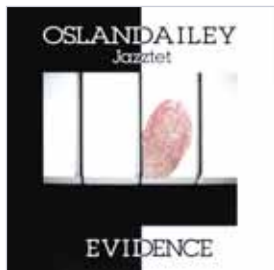
Evidence

SEA BREEZE 3090

★★★

Everything about this recording by the Kentucky-based quartet co-led by reed player Miles Osland and pianist Raleigh Dailey is outsized: at almost 77 minutes, the disc pushes the limits of CD technology, there are two sets of liner notes and the band covers a lot of stylistic territory. That their reach sometimes exceeds their grasp is, inevitably, no surprise. There's an extremely solid, normal-sized CD here; you just have to hunt for it a little.

Despite the band's name, it's drummer John Willmarth who grabs the ear most frequently, vigorously driving the rhythm on the powerful trio of up-tempo pieces that begins the session, creating a chattering counterpoint to Osland's raw sax on "Flashpoint" and setting a relaxing pace on "Forgetting," the sole ballad. His high profile also spotlights some weaknesses, including his somewhat ham-handed touch on Keith Jarrett's "Long As You Know You're Living



Yours," which craves Paul Motian's original minimalism. In yet another example of over-reaching, Willmarth's drum solo on a lengthy version of Ron Carter's "R.J." extends the performance past where producer Osland might've stepped in.

Another Jarrett composition, "Spiral Dance," is nicely scrappy, and Carla Bley's "A.I.R. (All India Radio)"—one of two live "bonus" tracks—maintains a compelling modal pulse under Dailey's evocative solo.

By contrast with the remainder of the CD, the pair of concert tracks illustrates another example of why big is not necessarily better. The studio session—cut at the University of Kentucky, where all four members of the group teach—features a recording approach that stretches the band's sound, accentuating the drums, but rendering the piano somewhat thinly and making Osland's flute on "Forgetting" unattractively nasal. —James Hale

Evidence: Evidence; Title Goes Here; Mode Three; Long As You Know You're Living Yours; Forgetting; Eighty-One; The Letter "E"; Spiral Dance; A Long Way (To Go); R.J.; Flashpoint. (76:57)

Personnel: Miles Osland, saxophones, flute; Raleigh Dailey, piano; John Willmarth, drums; Danny Cecil, bass.

» Ordering info: seabreezejazz.com



Lars Danielsson

Tarantella

ACT 9477

★★★½

This is one for devotees of the "gloom school" (an affectionate genre-ization for pastoral, twilight music, often emanating from Scandinavia). Reknowned Swedish bassist Danielsson has assembled an impressive international cast: pianist Leszek Mozdzier is Polish; trumpeter Mathias Eick, Norwegian; drummer Eric Harland from the U.S.; and guitarist Parricelli, a Brit. Each musician commits to the leader's vision with personal agendas checked at the studio door (Harland, for instance, often surrenders sticks for brushes and deploys hand drums on the Indian-flavored interlude "1000 Ways").

Danielsson produced the CD with the pellucid sound layering associated with ECM (the ACT label, incidentally, is also based in Munich). This can occasionally be cloying, as on "Fiojo," where the landscape is showered with numbingly consonant piano twinkles. Though Danielsson carefully curates his pallet of tone colors, there are intriguing shifts in the music.

The sketch-like pieces are particularly effective, such as the atmospheric "Introitus" with its ingenious mélange of textures, during which the harpsichord sounds like a kora and Eick's flute-like trumpet conjurs mournful wolves on a snowy hilltop. Mozdzier has a crystalline, classical touch, and he and Danielsson dance together on the title piece, on which the bassist sounds superbly muscular. Eick heightens the drama repeatedly with his smudgy, seductive trumpet, irrigating your ear canal with his honeyed subtone on "Across The Sun," which, with help from Harland's cymbals and Parricelli's acoustic guitar, presents a stunning desert mirage. On "The Madonna" the bass is gigantic and assured, but for the "Traveller's Wife" Danielsson dazzles alone on cello, revealing his considerable emotional range. —Michael Jackson

Tarantella: Pegasus; Melody On Wood; Traveller's Wife; Traveller's Defense; 1000 Ways; Ballet; Across The Sun; Introitus; Fiojo; Tarantella; Ballerina; The Madonna; Postludium. (57:36)

Personnel: Lars Danielsson, double bass, cello, bass violin; Leszek Mozdzier, piano, celesta, harpsichord; Mathias Eick, trumpet; John Parricelli, guitar; Eric Harland, drums, percussion.

» Ordering info: actmusic.com

The Latin Giants of Jazz

¡Ven Baila Conmigo!
(Come Dance With Me!)

GIGANTE RECORDS

★★★½



Organized in 2002, The Latin Giants of Jazz represented the revitalization of the Afro-Cuban big band music of Tito Puente, Machito and Tito Rodriguez.

Three recordings in, the band still demonstrates a passion for the tradition and an authentic sound.

Unlike some other concert-oriented big bands, the Latin Giants are built for feet, and the rhythmic melodies of these canciones de amor are designed to get bodies moving. Still, there's no overlooking the artful cross-cutting of horn sections against one another and the rhythm section. And plenty of impressive solo work is to be found here: Tenor saxophonists Mitch Frohman and Peter Brainen trade off on "Cookin' The Mambo"; Frohman stretches out on flute on "Gua Cha Rumba"; alto saxophonist Bobby Porcelli takes center stage on the montuno "Cannology"; and all four of the trombonists step out on the title track, one of several featuring Vazquez's intoxicating call-and-response with the background singers.

—Philip Booth

¡Ven Baila Conmigo!: Lo Que Traigo Es Salsa; Ven Baila Conmigo; I Still Love You; Gua Cha Rumba; Ahora Mismo; Tengo Que Conformarme; Cookin' The Mambo; Dime Quien Eres; Si El Mar Se Volviera Ron; Incredible; Cannology; La Batidora Meneadora; Cuando Suenan Los Cueros. (73:08)

Personnel: Kevin Bryan, John Walsh, Pete Nater, Richie Viruet, Guido Gonzalez (11), trumpets; Bobby Porcelli, Todd Bashore, Lawrence Feldman (11), alto saxophones; Mitch Frohman, Peter Brainen, tenor saxophones; Pete Miranda, baritone saxophone; Sam Burtis, Reynaldo Jorge, Lewis Kahn, Noah Bless, trombones; Sonny Bravo, piano; Gerardo Madera, bass; George Delgado, John Rodriguez, Jose Madera, percussion; Frankie Vazquez, Cita Rodriguez (5), lead vocals; Cita Rodriguez, Marco Bermudez, George Maldonado, Willie Martinez, vocals.

» Ordering info: latingiants.com

Jackie Ryan

Doozy!

OPENART 07262

★★★★



Jackie Ryan invests her persuasive phrasing and power pipes into a double-CD that shows off her warmth and enthusiasm for quality tunes. The first favors up-tempo blues and swingers, the second ballads, with some stretch beauties that feature pianist Cyrus Chestnut and tenor stalwart Eric Alexander. Ryan's compelling, sometimes strongarming, way with emotion-drenched ballads, slow/fast turnarounds and vintage "come-on" tunes flirts with impressive highs and avoids lapsing into coyness or overkill.

With her established affinity for blues with backbeat, Ryan covers black composers with flair (two each by Benny Carter and Oscar Brown, neglected goodies from Nat Cole and Billie Holiday.) She's not into scat, but pens and sings a creditable vocalese on Carter's solo of the title tune, and takes a handsome turn on his pretty "Summer Serenade." Ryan handles Mexican and two Carioca classics by Jobim straightforwardly with feeling (no spice) with classy assists from guitarist Romero Lubambo.

—Fred Bouchard

Doozy!: Disc 1: Doozy!; You'll See; Caminhos Cruzados; Do Something; With The Wind And The Rain In Your Hair; Speak Low; I Must Have That Man; Dat Dere; Beautiful Moons Ago; My, How The Time Goes By (49:41). Disc 2: Opportunity Please Knock; I Haven't Got Anything Better To Do; Brigas Nunca Mais/A Felicidade; Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most; Solamente Una Vez; Summer Serenade; Get Rid Of Monday; Midnight Sun; Tell Me More And More And Then Some; Some Other Time (54:42).

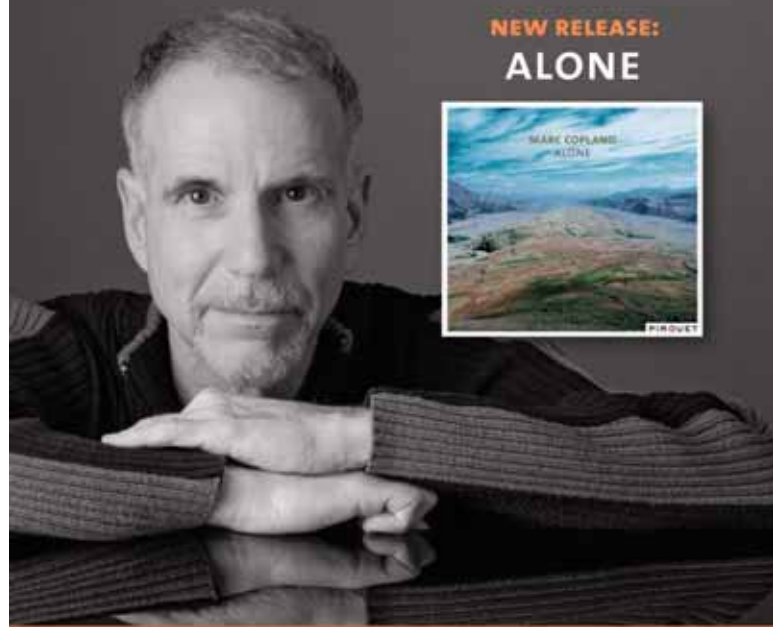
Personnel: Jackie Ryan, vocals; Cyrus Chestnut, piano; Eric Alexander, tenor saxophone; Jeremy Pelt, trumpet, flugelhorn; Carl Allen, Neal Smith, drums; Ray Drummond, Dezron Douglas, bass; Romero Lubambo, guitar.

» Ordering info: openartproductions.com

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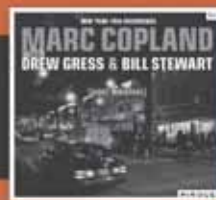
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Aaron Koppel Quartet

Falling Together Falling Apart

CHICAGO SESSIONS 01V06

★★★★½

Falling Together Falling Apart showcases guitarist Aaron Koppel's writing and arranging skills ahead of his playing. This translates into

more solo time for what amounts to more than a quartet with pianist Matt Nelson, drummer Robert Tucker and bassist Graham Czach being joined by alto saxophonist Greg Ward and tenor saxophonist Geof Bradfield on selected cuts.

The Chicago Sessions record label presents Chicago jazz artists with a focus on new compositions. *Falling Together Falling Apart* is no exception. Across 10 originals, the emphasis is on group interplay, with active basslines and lively arrangements, the material basically straight-ahead jazz once the band gets through each song's introductory statements. Among the standouts is pianist Nelson, who gets the nod more often than not. His close connections with Czach form the basis of many songs, among them the serene ballad "The Bad Decision" and the lively multi-layered "The Big Tease," which opens the album. There are those moments when Koppel's arrangements threaten to tie a song in knots, as with the busy, chase-your-tail scenario on "Falling Apart." Nelson's departure



be used to people dancing at their shows. "Electric Cowgirl Boogaloo" is just such a number, featuring some bouncy funk swing with saucy playing from Ward along with lots of spritely lines from Czach, his bass playing a driving if delicate force. In the end, what makes this disc enjoyable is the way the 26-year-old Koppel takes a conventional form (mainstream jazz) and makes something of it, breaking up the material, avoiding the tendency to just write blowing vehicles and, when his own guitar isn't happening (e.g., "Falling Together," "Our Tribe"), letting his sidemen take most of the spotlight.

—John Ephland

Falling Together Falling Apart: The Big Tease; Ten Year Reverie; Electric Cowgirl Boogaloo; Falling Apart; The Bad Decision; Toumani; Falling Together; Old Man New Tricks; Our Tribe; Gidderfiddle Blues. (67:59)

Personnel: Aaron Koppel, electric guitar; Matt Nelson, piano; Graham Czach, bass; Robert Tucker, drums; Greg Ward, alto saxophone; Geof Bradfield, tenor saxophone.

» Ordering info: chicagosessions.com

Hemispheres

Crossroads

SUNNYSIDE 1235

★★★★

Although ostensibly a collective, Hemispheres is Bay Area percussionist Ian Dogole's project, continuing his 30-year pursuit of fusing ethnic rhythms with improvisation. Here, he focuses most of the attention on the combined wind instruments of veteran musical globetrotter Paul McCandless and Sheldon Brown. Whether blending soprano saxophone and bass clarinet or clarinet and English horn, that front line is seldom less than enthralling.

What is less engrossing is the bloodlessness of pieces like "Intro To Katrina," a cascading kalimba solo by Dogole, or Brown's "Fathers And Sons," both of which seem like overly familiar exercises in folkloric exposition. While the tone is pretty and the technique nimble, Dogole's four-minute workout on the hang—a gamelan-style hand drum with Swiss origins—doesn't sustain much interest. After so many fusions of Eastern European, North African, Southeast Asian and Scandinavian folk tradi-



tions with jazz, it's difficult to transcend the level of sounding like a demonstration record and making the music seem organic.

Far more successful is what the quintet does with Ralph Towner's aptly named "The Glide" and Woody Shaw's sprightly "Katrina Ballerina." On both, Dogole plays just cajón and cymbal, and his light, swift touch creates the image of a

tap-dancer, stepping deftly in time with the reeds. On "Zarbi," the sole live performance among the nine tracks, the band expands to a sextet with the addition of Hossein Massoudi on vocals and tombak. A sudden 90-degree into polytonality, it ends *Crossroads* on a pleasantly hypnotic note, blending Massoudi's warm voice with the textures of the reeds and the circular rhythms of Dogole, bassist Bill Douglass and pianist Frank Martin.

—James Hale

Crossroads: The Glide; Fathers And Sons; Golden Heart/Guiding Spirit; Intro To Katrina; Katrina Ballerina; Spirits Of Another Sort; Running Shadows; Mirror Images; Zarbi. (57:59)

Personnel: Ian Dogole, cajon, dumbek, cymbals, global drum set, kalimba, hang; Sheldon Brown, clarinet, piccolo, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Bill Douglass, bass; Frank Martin, piano; Paul McCandless, soprano saxophone, English horn, bass clarinet; Hossein Massoudi, vocals, tombak.

» Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com

from the song in a literal solo provides some welcome contrast.

There are a fair number of introspective moments on *Falling Together Falling Apart*, thanks again to Nelson's knack for getting off the beaten path, but there is the occasional up tune that suggests these guys might



Kelly Joe Phelps

Western Bell

BLACK HEN 0053

★★★★½

Jazz bassist turned folk bluesman Kelly Joe Phelps is best known as an unusually literate singer/songwriter whose lyrics are accompanied by enlightened guitar explorations. But his first all-instrumental album in a 15-year recording career—a compelling, if admittedly challenging, collection of soundscapes both spacious and intimate—moves his music far above and beyond the Fred MacDowell-inspired folk extrapolations of his previous work.

Using a variety of acoustic guitars and an even wider assortment of eccentric tunings and alternate chord choices, Phelps imbues *Western Bell* with a live, first-take feel and an improvisational immediacy. Although there is no shortage of virtuosic playing, in both fluid and fractured form, his guitar work often seems more intent on stating possibilities than in making declarations.

The title track, a sort of 21st Century ragtime waltz that gracefully enters but exits on an assortment of dissonant harmonics, sets a tone for the music that follows while also previewing its pattern of deconstructed minimalism. Several songs—such as "The Jenny Spin," with his lap steel creations conjuring up melodies more implied than actually played while bells float by in the distance, and "Blowing Dust 40 Miles," where contrasting skeletal lines attempt to coalesce—are almost interactive as they require assembly by the listener.

Others like "Blue Daughter Tattoo," with Phelps fingerpicking his way through the history of the West, and the 12-string lullaby "Hometown With Melody" are ego-free exercises in personalized guitar genius. All are musically mesmerizing and emotionally evocative as Phelps artfully embellishes his present identity while elevating expectations for his future work.

—Michael Point

Western Bell: Western Bell; Sovereign Wyoming; Blowing Dust 40 Miles; American Exchange Hotel; Hometown With Melody; Hattie's Hat; The Jenny Spin; Murdo; East To Kansas; Blue Daughter Tattoo; Little Family. (45:20)

Personnel: Kelly Joe Phelps, 6- and 12-string guitars, lap steel guitar, bells.

» Ordering info: blackhenmusic.com

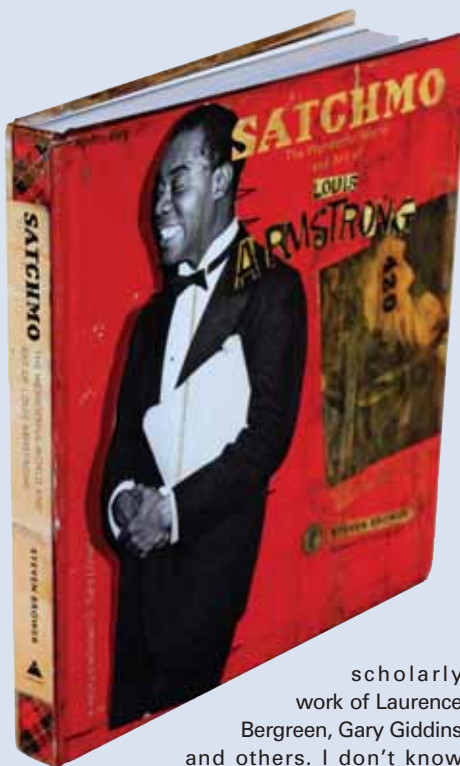
Gathering Satchmo

Louis Armstrong wielded two shiny instruments during his life: a trumpet and a pair of scissors. Both are showcased with uncommon care in these two unexpected arrivals.

In *Satchmo: The Wonderful World and Art of Louis Armstrong* (Abrams), author Steven Brewer gathers into book form well over a hundred of the seven-inch reel-to-reel tape boxes that Armstrong accumulated in the last 20 years or his life. In addition to containing much of his private music collection, each of these boxes became a personal scrapbook of remembrance onto which Louis would cut out and affix, often with arbitrary caprice, pictures of himself, friends, newspaper clippings, telegrams and occasional handwritten jottings. Sometimes it might be just one or two photos. In others he would carefully snip separate letters, words, phrases, faces and shapes from any source at hand and Scotch tape them into asymmetric but clearly considered layouts. It was a hobby.

Ever since Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso began pasting found scraps onto their canvases around 1911, the collage has been a recognized art. Whether Armstrong's intent was art, memoir, or merely at-home amusement, the space afforded his collages here by Abrams certainly invites us to see them as art. There is no clear visual style or method. Sometimes the markings of the tape manufacturer peek through on the boxes. As often as not, they are covered with layers of masking tape. And age has added its own touch to the textures of these half-century old designs, as the Scotch tape has grown dry and brownish and the newsprint has faded.

Messy? Yes. Ambiguous? Perhaps. Art? Who knows. But strangely interesting, certainly colorful to the eye, and above all highly personal, intuitive and intimate. And imagine my surprise when I spotted on page 181 a reference to a performance in Highland Park, Ill., in the summer of 1959 that I actually attended with my high school girlfriend, Sandy McCoy. Readers also get a few spreads from Armstrong's scrapbooks done in a similar collage style, half a dozen album covers and several pages of personal letters. Browner breaks the material into decades and provides a routine, if serviceable, bio text that cherry picks the more



scholarly work of Laurence Bergreen, Gary Giddins and others. I don't know whether I'd buy this for myself.

Like many art books, though, I'd welcome it as a gift.

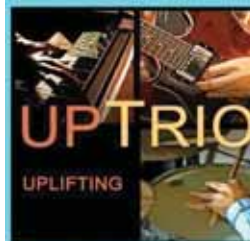
Ordering info: abramsbooks.com

But I would buy **Louis Armstrong: Fleischmann's Yeast Show** (Jazz Heritage Society 5289147; 1:13:49; 1:05:56) ★★★★★ in a shot. This two-fer sheds fresh light on a storied but somewhat neglected corner of his career—the mid 1930s. In April 1937 Armstrong's star power was incandescent enough for J. Walter Thompson to hire him to be the first black artist ever to host a sponsored network program. The show, Harlem, had an all-black cast and would feature Armstrong for 13 consecutive Fridays. The first of two CD provides all 24 Armstrong performances from the six surviving Harlem programs. They are uniformly and spectacularly majestic. The companion CD offers quite a different and much less public view of Armstrong, permitting us to cozy up alongside him at home as he reminisces into his beloved tape recorder, often with wife Lucille beside him. Spanning the early '50s to 1970, Louis talks with friends, tells stories, goofs up a joke, burps, and in one amazing instance puts on a 1923 recording of "Tears" he made for Okeh with King Oliver and plays trumpet with the disc. Charm and love abound everywhere.

DB

Ordering info: jazzheritage.com

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Superscope Elevation: Audio Software For The Rest Of Us

Superscope Technologies, well known for its line of professional portable audio recorders, has recently released its first software product, Elevation. Available for Macintosh and Windows, Elevation provides a useful set of digital audio tools for musicians, educators and students. Designed to enhance the learning process and maximize practice time, Elevation allows you to manipulate, store and organize digital audio, as well record directly to disk.

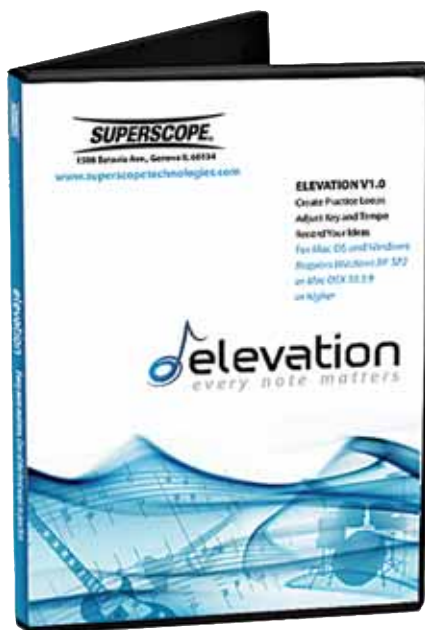
The Superscope name has been around since 1954, when the company introduced its first product, a cost-effective process for generating wide screen motion picture prints. Superscope achieved moderate success within the film industry until a visit to Japan led to a deal for the exclusive U.S. distribution rights for Sony's tape recorder line. In 1964, Superscope acquired a small hi-fi company called Marantz.

Superscope/Marantz has undergone many changes over the years, eventually selling off much of its assets to focus on the professional audio recording market. Their pro line of hand-held cassette recorders and later their portable CD recorders became standards in the broadcast and music industries. It is only natural that Superscope enter the software market in order to stay competitive with the current technology trends.

Elevation is a fairly straightforward package with a surprisingly simple interface. "The majority of our customers are educators and musicians who do not want complicated software but still need the productivity and quality that Elevation delivers," said Tim Smyth, product leader. "It looks simple because it is supposed to."

The program opens to a main library window that lists your audio files. From here you can easily play a file or import from CD or disk file. Elevation also reads your track info so that the album name, artist and genre are all brought in upon import to allow for efficient cataloging and retrieval of library files. Disk files can also be added by a simple drag and drop into the window.

Getting audio in was remarkably easy, and Elevation supports AIFF, WAV and MP3 formats. It does not support Apple's AAC encoding, so if your iTunes library is not in MP3, you will not be able to directly import your AAC files from iTunes. I did find it a little frustrating



that I could not simply access my previously stored audio files since Elevation must rewrite them into its own library. Once imported, the program allows you to organize your music by title, artist, album or genre. You can also alter any of these tags and add track notes with a mouse click. As with other music library programs, Elevation allows for the creation of custom playlists.

The real power of Elevation is in the program's DSP processing capabilities. Library files can be manipulated to play back with alterations in both tempo and pitch independently. In fact, audio can actually be slowed down to 25 percent or sped up to 200 percent with amazing clarity. "We wanted to make sure that the quality of our audio processing was the best possible," Smyth said. To accomplish this goal, Superscope turned to iZotope. I was quite impressed with how good

the quality of the slowed down audio was, particularly with uncompressed AIF or WAV files. There is almost no degradation, even at 25 percent. Add in Elevation's 10-band equalizer and balance adjustment slider, and you have one of the best learning and transcription tools out there.

In addition to the tempo and pitch functions, Elevation also allows you to apply voice reduction to a track, which eliminates most of the vocal track from the mix. However, unlike other programs, Superscope allows you to play back with vocals eliminated or just with vocals isolated. This is a great learning tool for voice teachers and students. To further enhance productivity, Elevation offers the ability to set markers for creating loops for practicing or transcribing. Start and end points can be set in a timeline window or a wave form display for exact positioning. Snapshots provide the user with the ability to save a file's custom DSP settings including loops, tempo, pitch and EQ. These snapshot files can also be exported or added to a playlist and burned to CD, useful for sending practice files to students. Another interesting feature is the ability to attach digital sheet music from a scanned image or notation program to any library file.

Superscope has also built some basic recording capabilities into Elevation. Provided you have an audio interface, a track may be recorded in 16- or 24-bit. Interestingly, the track may be recorded individually or with an existing library file as accompaniment.

Overall, Elevation is an extremely useful package and one of the best software slow-downers I have seen. This feature alone is worth the \$179 price tag, but Elevation gives you a lot more. And best of all, you do not need to be an engineer to use it.

—Keith Baumann

» Ordering info: superscopetechnologies.com

SpiderCapo: Cool Tunings Unlocked

Creative Tunings has opened a new world of guitar tuning possibilities with its ingenious SpiderCapo, featuring individual string *capo-ability*. Sizing up just a bit larger than a standard capo, the sleek black piece fastens to the fingerboard of any guitar—acoustic steel, nylon, or electric—with just a few turns of a screw knob. After tightening on a fret position, the player can select any combination of the unit's six individual "fingers" to capo down certain strings while leaving others open, making hundreds of different string tunings possible.

I tried the SpiderCapo on my acoustic and electric guitars. I started with a second fret modal DADGAD tuning by turning down the fingers along the second, third and fourth strings and leaving the first, fifth and sixth open. Using the helpful starter charts that come with SpiderCapo, I was soon moving up and down the neck positioning for Phrygian, major, drop tune and even pedal-tone tuning.

It didn't take me long to discover that I could play the guitar fretboard *below* the capo on whatever strings were left open. I also found that it's easy to select/deselect any of the SpiderCapo's six fingers on the fly, so I was able to make quick changes to my tuning configuration in the middle of a song without interruption.

Adjusting to the SpiderCapo was no trick-

ier than trying out a different style of pick. The bracing technique is just a few turns more than clamping down a standard capo, and the individual fingers move laterally with a nudge to line up accurately with any varied string scale. The polymer plastic and metal construct of the capo is true. Organic ox leather is used for the end pieces, keeping a protective, snug fit to the neck. The individual plastic capo "fingers" (which resemble spider legs) require some acquaintance, but a few seconds of simple adjustment opens the gates to unlimited options of open string tunings and alternate chord voicings.

Setting up all over the neck and playing above and below the capo felt both daunting and exhilarating. The SpiderCapo is quite a tool, a portal to expand your alternate tuning



options without ever de-tuning your guitar.

—John LaMantia

» Ordering info: spidercapo.com

Sabian 3-Point Ride: Sound Surfaces

The latest from Sabian's Vault series is the 3-Point Ride cymbal, the result of a collaboration with jazz drummer Jack DeJohnette.

The 3-Point Ride features three different playing surfaces on the topside of the cymbal. The outside edge and inside section of the cymbal are lathed. The middle surface is an unlathed section that Sabian calls a "control ring." The idea is that you get three distinct sounds depending on which surface is played. The mini-cup bell is very small, keeping the cymbal's sound focused.

Sabian has achieved a modern, versatile sound with these cymbals while retaining vintage roots and hand craftsmanship. The top of the cymbal features small peen hand-hammering, while the fully lathed bottom of the cymbal features large "jumbo peen" hammering, similar to Sabian's Artisan line. The two 3-Point Rides I tested were amazingly



consistent, considering the amount of work done by hand. Sonic characteristics were remarkably similar; the only difference between them was pitch.

The sound of the unlathed "control ring" is

exactly as the company describes: articulate, dry and focused. The lathed surface around the edge produces a darker, washier sound. The inside lathed surface produces a glassy, breathy, hollow sound that provides an interesting color choice. The mini-cup bell is barely useable due to its size, but would work well for quieter applications. The only drawback I found with the 3-Point Ride is the cymbal's lack of crashability, mainly due to its weight (2,500g). Sabian describes them as medium-thin, but they are too heavy for that classification. Shoulder crashing them produces a dry, "tong" sound.

Sabian has largely succeeded at producing a cymbal that combines many different distinct sounds into one package. The 3-Point Ride works well for jazz, fusion and a range of other musical applications. It is offered only in a 21-inch size and is available in natural or brilliant finish.

—Ryan Bennett

» Ordering info: sabian.com

1 Continental Case

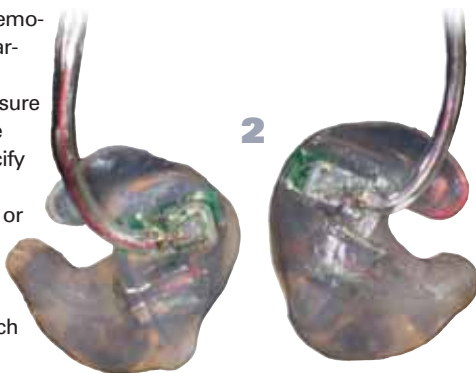
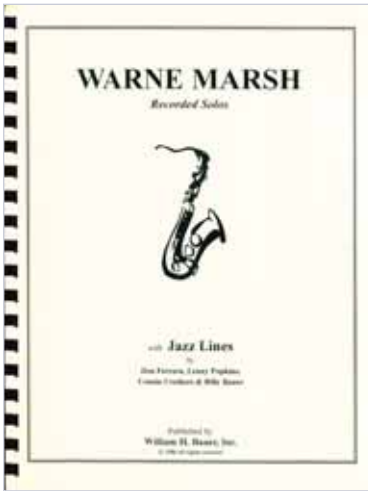
Reunion Blues has introduced a rugged, refined RB Continental guitar case, designed to outperform common wood and plastic cases. The RB Continental is made with a water-resistant ballistic exterior that surrounds a new, lightweight Flexoskeleton protection system of high-density foam and EVA impact panels that offer enough protection to survive a 40-foot drop without so much as a nick or scratch. Inside the case, a velvet tuck interior lining, solid-cell neck brace suspension system and thick softmesh-lined side panels cradle the instrument. Its roomy exterior pockets, Zero G palm-contoured handle and hideaway backpack straps are designed for getting around in the gigging world.

More info: rbcontinental.com

2 Earphones Upgraded

Sensaphonics has created field-replaceable cables for its ProPhonic 2X-S and 2MAX dual-driver custom earphones. The new cables are a tour-grade, dual-conductor design, featuring a memory-wire insert at the earpiece end and a split adjuster (zipper) to ensure a secure fit behind the head. Users may specify either matte silver or black, in lengths of 52 or 60 inches. Unlike friction-fit systems, the new Sensaphonics cable is secured to each earpiece with a nylon screw, eliminating any chance of it being accidentally pulled out. The new field-replaceable cables are included as standard on all new ProPhonic 2X-S and 2MAX earphones; pricing remains unchanged.

More info: sensaphonics.com



3 Bauer's Books

Looking for a challenging woodshed workout? Take a crack at the numerous educational jazz publications available through Billy Bauer's Music, a company dedicated to the presentation, preservation and publication of transcribed solo and musical works and texts. Intending to preserve transcriptions of recorded solos and the works of great jazz artists for future generations, the legendary guitarist began William H. Bauer Publishing Co. in 1951 and spent more than 35 years developing his Guitar Instructor Series of books. Visit the company's online store to purchase recorded jazz lines, instruction manuals and more by artists like Lennie Tristano, Lee Konitz, Warne Marsh and Connie Crothers.

More info: billybauermusic.com

4 For Tight Spots

On-Stage Stands has introduced the TM01 microphone table and stand clamp. The TM01's design helps mount microphones horizontally or vertically on round, cornered or flat surfaces. It also works for miking an acoustic guitar or getting a drum mic into a tight spot. The flat side mounts securely to table tops, while the V-shaped side grips mic stands and trusses.

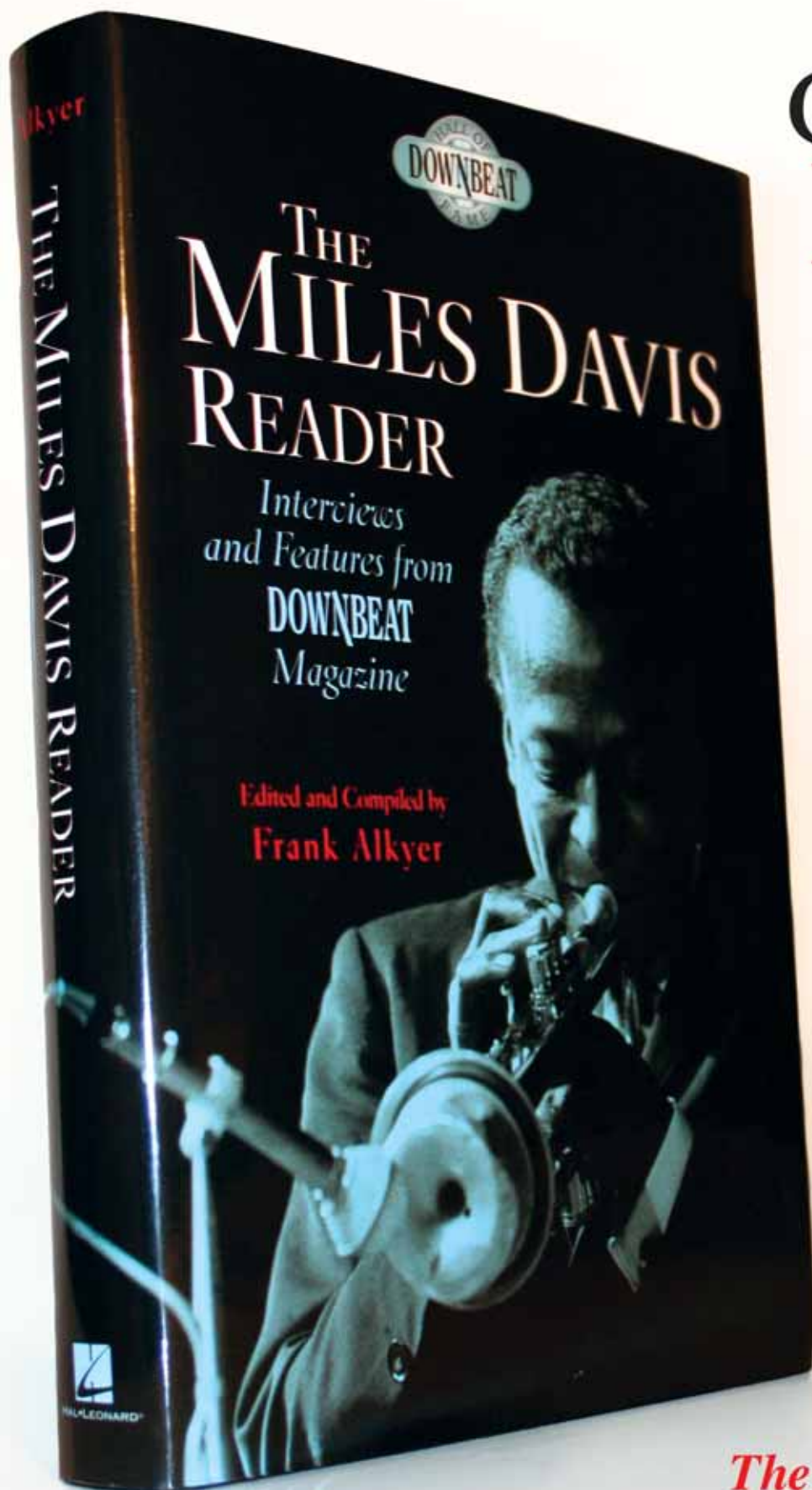
More info: onstagestands.com

5 New Portability

Akai has launched the LPK25, a USB-MIDI controller for musicians and producers. Each model measures less than 13 inches across and weighs less than 1 pound to fit easily into a laptop case, backpack or messenger bag.

The LPK25 is made up of 25 miniature velocity-sensitive keys with synth action. The controller requires no software driver installation of wall power for operation.

More info: akaipro.com



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'Red Top' Blues Variations

There are seemingly infinite ways to vary blues chord progressions. You can find some of the most delightful examples of chord reharmonization within the rendition of "Red Top" recorded on Dexter Gordon's *Sophisticated Giant* album.

Here are some of the harmonic tools used to present three very different, yet complementary, sets of B \flat blues changes in the opening minutes of this track. A triangled number on the lead sheet highlights each tool, with the basic I, II, IV and V chords noted below the staff:

- 1)** Tritone substitution: A chord (E \flat 9) is approached by a dominant chord a half-step higher (E9). That chord is a tritone away from the usual dominant approach-chord (B \flat 7) and shares its third and seventh (D and A \flat /G \sharp).
- 2)** Half-step planing: Approaching a chord by the same quality of chord a half-step away.
- 3)** "Bird" major: In Charlie Parker-esque "Bird"

blues (such as "Blues For Alice"), the I and IV chords are often major rather than dominant, brightening the key of the blues by one flat.

- 4)** Diatonic planing: Walk up the modes of the major scale, in this instance I Aeolian (B \flat maj7), ii Dorian (Cm7) and iii Phrygian (Dm7).
- 5)** "Every ii can have its V." Expand any V chord (G \flat 9sus) by adding its preceding ii (D \flat m9).
- 6)** This descending progression is common in such tunes as "Hit The Road, Jack."
- 7)** Arrive at a bass-tone a half-step higher (B) than expected (B \flat). Instant brightening of key!
- 8)** "Every V can have its ii." Complementary to Tool #5 above. Compare measure 1 with measure 12/beat 4 through measure 13, and you'll recall that the E9 in measure 13 is a tritone-sub approach to the E \flat 9. If you were to view the E9 as a V chord, what would be its partner ii chord? The Bm7 preceding.
- 9)** Harmonic enclosures: Just as you can melod-



ically enclose a pitch (with appoggiaturas and escape tones), you can harmonically enclose chords. At the same time that Gm7 planes to F \sharp m7 and then Fm7, the A7 and B7 enclose B \flat 7; and the Em7 and F \sharp m7 enclose Fm7.

10) A \flat VII \rightarrow I progression (D \flat to E \flat , if you were to temporarily call E \flat the I instead of the IV it is), common à la "Stella By Starlight."

11) Surprise minor: Instead of the expected dominant quality.

12) Pedal tone: Four bars of F bass as a dominant function build up tension to the next chorus.

13) Triad over foreign bass: G/B \flat sounds like a B \flat 13 (\flat 9) without a seventh. G/E sounds like a B \flat 13 (\flat 9, #11) without a seventh. Both function here as the I chord, with just enough spice.

14) Tritone bass movement: Changing from B \flat to E to B \flat sustains the feel and function of the initial B \flat bass, heightening the tension before resolving to the IV chord (E \flat).

15) A ii-V one half step higher than the target: The Em9-A9 would typically resolve to a Dmaj9 chord, but instead land on D \flat Maj9. The higher ii-V momentarily brightens the key. This technique is often used to reharmonize jazz standards' solo sections. If the target is considered "I," then the ii-V is of the key of \flat II.

16) Interrupted progression: No one would blink at a typical iii-VI-ii-V progression (Em9-A9-Dm9-G9). But the major chord in measure 31 (D \flat Maj9) interrupts it. Similarly, measure 33's B \flat Maj9 interrupts Dm9-G9-Cm9-F9.

17) In contrast to these highly arranged initial choruses, this uninterrupted iii-VI-ii-V eventually sets up Gordon to solo over the swinging rhythm section in the next chorus.

Many other variations on blues progressions are possible. For a concise look at 17 different 12-bar blues, see page 35 of Jamey Aebersold's free *Jazz Handbook* (downloadable and orderable from jazzbooks.com). **DB**

Composer/trombonist Antonio García can be contacted via his web site, garciamusic.com.

Example 1

MEDIUM SWING, TWO-FEEL $\text{♩} = 108$

A

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

B \flat 7 E9 \triangle E \flat 9 Cm7 F \flat B \flat 6 F \sharp m7 \triangle Fm7 B \flat 7

E \flat 7 Cm7 F7sus \triangle B \flat Maj7 \triangle Cm7 \triangle Dm7 \triangle D \flat m9 G \flat 9sus \triangle

Cm7 F9 B \flat 7 A \flat 9 G \flat 9sus \triangle F9sus \triangle Bm7

B

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

E9 \triangle E \flat 9 A \flat 13sus \triangle Gm7 C7 E \flat 7 A7 F \sharp m7 B7 Fm7 B \flat 7 D \flat 9

E \flat m9 \triangle Cm7 F7sus \triangle B \flat Maj7 E \flat m9 A \flat 13 Dm7 G \flat 9 D \flat m7 G \flat 13

F9sus \triangle F7alt.

C

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

STOP TIME \triangle G/B \flat \triangle G/E \triangle G/B \flat E \flat m9

TWO-FEEL \triangle E \flat m9 A9 D \flat Maj9 \triangle Dm7 G9

B \flat Maj9 Cm7 F9 Dm7 G7sus Cm7 F7sus

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Woodshed

Tina Brooks' Tenor Sax Solo on 'Good Ole Soul'

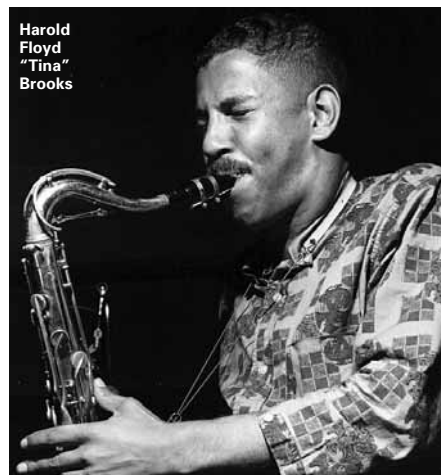
Tenor saxophonist Harold Floyd "Tina" Brooks is an unsung hero of jazz. Despite the fact that he recorded with many well-known jazz musicians—such as Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Jimmy Smith, Kenny Burrell and Jackie McLean—Brooks remains unknown to a large percentage of jazz fans.

This solo on "Good Ole Soul" is from *True Blue*, the only album Brooks recorded as a leader that was released during his lifetime (1932–1974). Brooks' style is solidly based in the blues, and this solo is no exception. For almost every A section of this AABA form he utilizes the C blues scale. However, the usage of the blues scale is limited to the first two bars of the section and the remaining measures are filled with jazz chord/scale vocabulary taken from such sources as the jazz melodic minor and half/whole diminished scales.

One example of the former can be found by looking at the second occurrence of the Cmin7 in the first A section, where Brooks repeatedly uses a B-natural and not a B \flat as the chord symbol indicates. The latter occurs in the first couple of measures of the B section of the same chorus, where Brooks uses the B \flat half/whole diminished scale resolving to the root of the Emin7. There are many possible reasons for this harmonic move: B \flat half/whole diminished could also be D \flat , E, or G half/whole diminished; in addition, it could also be B, D, F, or A \flat whole/half diminished, giving us eight possible explanations. The most likely reason is that since the line resolves to an E, a note emphasized in the B \flat half/whole diminished scale, Brooks thought of using B \flat half/whole diminished and simply ended his line where it was harmonically convenient.

Aside from utilizing scales such as these, one can find motivic development in any Tina

SOLO
by Matt Shevitz



Harold Floyd "Tina" Brooks

FRANCIS WOLFF/MOSCAL IMAGES

Brooks solo. The easiest places to see this are those spots where he uses the blues scale, such as the first few measures of the second chorus. Another place where motivic development can be found is in the first three measures of the second B section. In this case the motive is the leap from C down to A \flat . Brooks continues with this idea by moving it down diatonically so that it consists of B \flat and G and then alters it to fit the chord progression by playing B and G over the Emin7.

These two concepts, jazz chord/scale vocabulary and motivic development, are general ones that every jazz musician should study to help establish their own ways of improvising over a progression. Tina Brooks was able to accomplish this masterfully, making his recorded solos more than worthy of analysis. **DB**

Matt Shevitz is a saxophonist and educator based in Chicago. He teaches at Harold Washington College, where he is also the Music Program Coordinator. Shevitz's work on Tina Brooks was completed as a part of his doctoral degree, which he earned in May 2009 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. For more information on Matt go to mattshevitz.com.

The musical notation shows a tenor saxophone solo in 4/4 time. It features several measures with chord symbols: Eb7, Cmin7, G7, and Emin7. The notation includes a sequence of notes that correspond to the blues scale and half/whole diminished scales mentioned in the text.

9 B^bMINT
13
17 CmINT
21 B^b7
25 E^bMINT
29 G7
33 CmINT
37 G7
41 DmINT
45 CmINT
49 CmINT
53 CmINT
57 CmINT
61 E^bMINT
65 CmINT
69 CmINT
73 CmINT
77 CmINT
81 CmINT
85 CmINT
89 CmINT
93 CmINT
97 CmINT
101 CmINT
105 CmINT
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solo continues

NS

Double Bass

5 DERHAK (Moe) PAUL TURNER (Annie Lennox)
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 VID YOUNG (Steve Coleman) TONY CIMOROSI (F
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The 'Purdie Shuffle' and the Price of Fame

Bernard Purdie is one of the most recorded drummers of all time. He is also one of the most copied. His distinctive "Purdie Shuffle" groove appears on countless rock tracks, including Steely Dan's "Home At Last" and "Babylon Sisters," as well as many other jazz and pop classics. Purdie's grooves have influenced numerous drummers. Jeff Porcaro, the original drummer of the group Toto, explains in detail in a YouTube video how he used the "Purdie Shuffle" as the basis for the beat he created for the 1982 Grammy-winning hit song "Rosanna."

Purdie is not only one of the most copied drummers; I believe he's one of the most sampled. Sampling and copying are not the same. Sampling takes place when a recording artist or producer lifts a portion of another recording for his own use, most often combining it with other original or appropriated elements to become something new. Sampling is usually carried out through use of a sampler, which can be a hardware device or software program that actually copies portions of a previously recorded track.

With all this derivative activity, does Purdie have any rights in his "Shuffle," especially when its use generates income for someone else? Certainly there are rights in samples that are used for economic gain. In fact, the only situation where a sample would not require permission and payment is where the material sampled is not protectable.

But in many cases, Purdie does not even own the samples of his drumming; the label for which he recorded owns them. If there's an underlying copyright in the sample, the law would consider it an "arrangement" paid for by



BILL PEJICE

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Bernard Purdie

DOWNBEAT ARCHIVES

the label and owned by them. In fact, in many recording sessions each musician is required to sign a form acknowledging that any materials created by the musician are owned by the label.

Hip-hop artist Dr. Dre sampled Ron Carter's bass intro to the Johnny "Hammond" Smith CTI recording "Big Sur Suite." A deal was eventually made for compensation, but it went to the label, which had an obligation to Hammond as the leader but not to Carter, who was a sideman. The publisher of the underlying composition (written by Hammond) also got a share of the pie.

Is Purdie's "Shuffle" even copyrightable? Probably not. Purdie's brilliant drum beat is short, and cases exist that have refused to give "short phrases" of content copyright protection. Also, Purdie's beat in every case has been recorded. Sound recordings (not to be confused with musical composition) were not subject to copyright protection prior to Feb. 15, 1972, when many of Purdie's records were made. Some recordings made prior to 1972 may be protected under state law, but not under the federal copyright law. For recordings after 1972, a recent case held that a drum track (one that was less inventive than Purdie's "Shuffle") could possibly receive copyright protection as a recording.

But whether or not it is actually protectable, we should consider whether Purdie's work should be protected. Should drummers be able to take beats from Purdie, Max Roach, Buddy

Rich or Elvin Jones and incorporate them—sometimes note for note—into their own style, transforming it into something new? After all, using the masters' licks is part of the jazz tradition, and it allows the music to grow while retaining its roots to the past.

As long as an artist does not sample a sound recording of Purdie's beat but merely plays it themselves, adapting it to their own composition or creation, they have little to worry about from a legal point of view—even if they copy the beat exactly. And Purdie himself is thriving. Producers continue to hire him to record as a sideman and as a leader. He is also a popular clinician and equipment endorser. Sony Music recently reissued Purdie's classic 1967 solo album *Soul Drums* on CD, with previously unreleased bonus tracks recorded in 1969 for an intended followup LP. In a recent New York Times story on Purdie and the "Shuffle," he said he was flattered by the versions he's heard by other drummers. However, if you want to hear the real thing live, you'll have to go to see Purdie on Broadway in the pit band for *Hair*, where his shuffle and its variations turn up at least half a dozen times. **DB**

Alan Bergman is a practicing attorney—and jazz drummer—in New York who has represented the likes of Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette, Joe Lovano, Dreyfus Records, Billy Taylor and the Thelonious Monk estate. To contact him, go to alanbergman.com.

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South Florida's Jazz Composition Center Honors Brecker

While the jazz world heralded Michael Brecker for his talents as a soloist, some contend the late tenor player never received his due as a composer. Chuck Owen looks to rectify this discrepancy on a new album, *A Comet's Tail* (MAMA/Summit), a big band tribute to Brecker's tunes. The project is also part of his mission as director of the Center for Jazz Composition at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

"Michael Brecker was such an amazing tenor player that I felt people overlooked his at times stunning ability as a composer," Owen said. "In the shadows were some gorgeous compositions that I really thought deserved to be brought to folks' attention."

The center at USF, which served as one of the album's producers, spotlights the unsung role of composer/arrangers and looks to provide a focal point for an otherwise solitary vocation. Still in its nascent stages, the center includes a research department charged with assembling an archive. It also sponsors symposiums, concerts and an international competition.

"Composers, almost by definition, are folks that live in isolation," Owen said. "But there's a real need for composers to connect at times: to stimulate each other, come up with new ideas and on occasion collaborate on projects. More attention could be paid to the value of the role of the composer/arranger. Whether it's historically looking back at the importance of some of the great composers and arranger or looking forward to the impact that composers and arrangers might have in the future for jazz artists. Both of those ends are things we want to explore at the center."

Vancouver, British Columbia-based arranger Fred Stride received \$2,500 for winning the center's 2006-2007 International Jazz Arranging Competition for his arrangement of Brecker's "Peep," the first track on *A Comet's Tail*.

"There is nothing like it," Stride said of Owen's program. "Because most composers function in a vacuum I feel that what Chuck is trying to do down there is just like a godsend in that there's now a place to go. You're surrounded by like-minded people."



Chuck Owen

COURTESY CHUCK OWEN

Owen earned a bachelor's degree from the University of North Texas and a master's in orchestral conducting from California State University, Northridge, before working as a freelance pianist and composer in Los Angeles. He established the University of South Florida's jazz studies department in 1981 and served as its director until the late 1990s. He founded the Center for Jazz Composition in 2004. He has recorded three previous albums with the Jazz Surge, a 17-piece big band that appears on *A Comet's Tail*.

Owen not only wanted to interpret Brecker's music through the lens of a big band, but also with a varied cast. The center commissioned arrangements from Gil Goldstein and Vince Mendoza, which appear alongside those of Stride and Owen. The guest soloists include Joe Lovano, Dave Liebman, Mike Mainieri, Mike Stern and Randy Brecker.

The eight tracks on *A Comet's Tail* span Brecker's career. Apart from the technical aspects of the compositions, Owen admires their emotional impact. "Michael seems to have a big romantic streak in his writing, and I really like that," Owen said. "With all the chromaticism and angularity you find in the outer surface of his playing and in his writing, there just seems like this huge heart that comes out of it."

While arrangers typically use compositions as a flash point for their own variations, Owen expressed reluctance to do so with Brecker's music. "Michael's pieces always sounded almost perfect in some ways," Owen said. "I found not only compelling melodies and harmonies in Michael's tunes, but I found that the whole arrangement itself was so tightly and beautifully constructed in almost every case that I didn't want to mess with a lot of that. It was a surprise to me, and I noticed that most of the other arrangers had treated the tunes the same way."

—Eric Fine

School Notes



Andrew Speight (left) teaching Kyle Henry and Kevin Brewer

Stanford Jazz Online: Stanford Jazz Workshop, the jazz education non-profit founded in 1972 at Stanford University, has produced six educational video clips that are now live on its web site. These videos, which were filmed at the workshop's flagship jazz camp and jazz residency summer programs, represent the organization's first foray into video content for the web. The clips feature faculty Andrew Speight and Victor Lin along with such guests as Barry Harris, Tootie Heath and Jason Moran. **Details:** stanfordjazz.org

Northwest Releases: Central Washington University's Jazz Band One has released its debut disc, *In A Mellow Tone* (Sea Breeze Vista). Chris Bruya directs the big band. Also, Mt. Hood College's Jazz Band and Combos under Susie Jones' direction have released *2nd Time Around* on the same label. **Details:** seabreezerecords.com

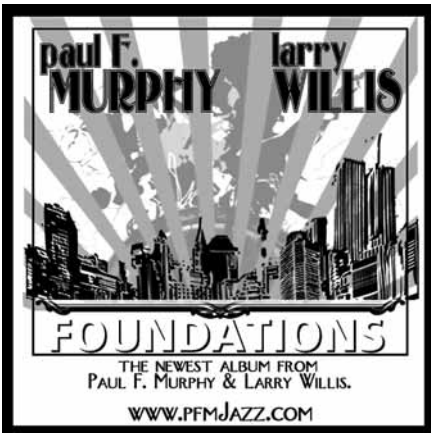
Wheeling's Road: The Wheeling High School Jazz Band I under Brian Logan's direction recently finished its disc, *Dear Old Stockholm*, which includes guest appearances from saxophonist Mark Colby and trumpeter Rob Parton. The band's busy year also included summer performances at the Montreux, Umbria and Chicago jazz festivals. **Details:** whs.d214.org

Dr. Harris: Emmylou Harris received and honorary doctorate from Boston's Berklee College of Music at the Strictly Bluegrass Festival in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park on Oct. 4. **Details:** berklee.edu

Michigan Beats: Western Michigan University's Advanced Jazz Combo has released the disc *Rhythm Spirit* (Sea Breeze Vista). Performing under Scott Cowan's direction, the ensemble performs a set of standards as well as student trumpeter Terrence Massey's "The Water And The Wade." **Details:** wmich.edu

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Shortly after his triumphant quintet performance on the Waterfront Stage at the 2009 Detroit International Jazz Festival on Labor Day weekend, veteran alto saxophonist Charles McPherson came to the Talk Tent to be blindfolded live in front of a packed house.

Charles Mingus

“Boogie Stop Shuffle” (from *Mingus Ah Um*, Columbia/Legacy, 2009, rec'd 1959) Mingus, bass; Booker Ervin, tenor saxophone; John Handy, alto saxophone; Jimmy Knepper, trombone; Horace Parlan, piano; Dannie Richmond, drums.

Oh, my goodness. I haven't heard this record for years. The sound is marvelous—it sounds better now than it did back then. Well, it's Charlie Mingus and this is one of his originals. It's a boogie, which is part of the title. And that's Booker Ervin on the tenor. The alto is either Shafi Hadi or John Handy. Mingus sounded great—the whole band did, with Dannie on drums. I worked with Mingus for 12 years. I learned a lot from him compositionally. He was difficult to work with; he was very frank and confrontational. He said exactly what he felt all the time. He was a taskmaster, but he also liked chaos at the same time. He was a brilliant man. John did a great job interpreting Mingus' music. He's one of the great alto players. He had just the right feel for this composition. This is a great record.

Hank Mobley

“Bossa De Luxe” (from *Hi Voltage*, Blue Note, 2004, rec'd 1967) Mobley, tenor saxophone; Jackie McLean, alto saxophone; Blue Mitchell, trumpet; John Hicks, piano; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

This is Jackie McLean on alto. I know Jackie's style and his sound. Everyone has a sound, just like everyone has a recognizable voice. Someone calls you on the phone, you answer and you know who it is by the voice. That's the way Jackie was with his saxophone. The tenor player throws me. But I like the song, and they all played it well. It sounds like there's a minor half diminished in there which means the fifth is flatted. Every now and then it seemed like some of the horn players didn't flat that note. Other than that, it's a nice song. The mood is dark, which is nice. If I rated it—I don't like to rate songs, but if I did—it would be four stars out of five. That was Hank Mobley? Wow. Blue Mitchell? Wow. It was recorded in 1967? Well, I was too young then.

Frank Morgan

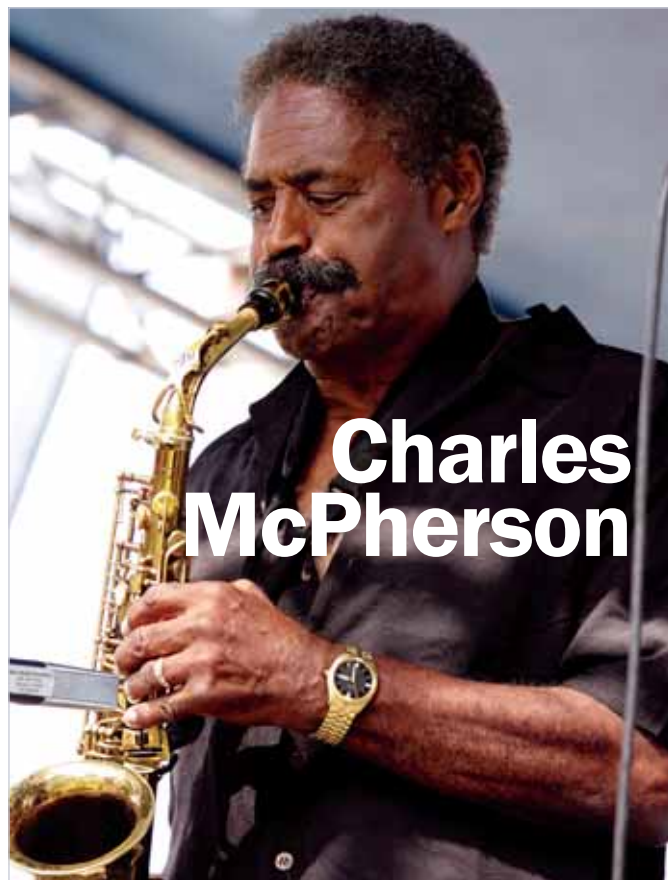
“Nefertiti” (from *Raising The Standard: Live At The Jazz Standard, Vol. 2*, High Note, 2005) Morgan, alto saxophone; George Cables, piano; Curtis Lundy, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

It's a Wayne Shorter tune. The alto player, I'm guessing, is Art Pepper, but no, it's not him. Is this Frank Morgan? There was something about the way he blew his horn, about his upper register playing. This is a very beautiful tune. Frank played it with a lot of sensitivity. He interpreted it beautifully. He played the melody the way Wayne Shorter meant. He got what the song was about. I love the mystery in the song and Frank's playing.

Ornette Coleman and Prime Time

“Street Blues” (from *Tone Dialing*, Harmolodic/Verve, 1995) Coleman, alto saxophone; Dave Bryant, keyboards; Ken Wessel, Chris Rosenberg, guitars; Bradley Jones, acoustic bass; Al MacDowell, electric bass; Denardo Coleman, drums, programming; Badal Roy, tablas, percussion.

It's Ornette Coleman and I'm thinking that the guitar player is ... Lee Ritenour, no ... Pat Metheny. It's not? I recognized Ornette's sound. There it is again: the voice. But to me, hearing him on that song doesn't feel like it's in Ornette's comfort zone. It's not that he didn't do OK in this setting, but it felt like he wasn't totally comfortable because it's not necessarily in his genre. I could be wrong, but that's how this felt. So, hey, maybe I'll get beat up in the parking lot by one of the guitar players. I can't be Mr. Nice Guy all the time.



ANDREA CANTER

Greg Osby

“Shaw Nuff” (from *St. Louis Shoes*, Blue Note, 2003) Osby, alto saxophone; Nicholas Payton, trumpet; Harold O'Neal, piano; Robert Hurst, bass; Rodney Green, drums.

That's Bird's “Shaw Nuff.” I liked the arrangement, how he changed it in an artful way. It was novel. The alto player had a great feeling in the way he played the head and the melody. But, again, I feel like this kind of music isn't necessarily in his comfort zone. I like what he does here, but I'd rather hear him playing what he really likes to play, which I feel would be in a different genre. It's Greg Osby? I know he has respect for bebop and that he's informed by it. But there are other comfort zones for him. Still, he did a great job. I'm glad a young guy like him has even attempted a tune like this and then has the imagination to alter it the way he did.

Lee Konitz

“Topsy” (from *Lee Konitz With Warne Marsh*, Koch Jazz, 1999, rec'd 1956) Konitz, alto saxophone; Warne Marsh, tenor saxophone; Sal Mosca, piano; Billy Bauer, guitar; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Kenny Clarke, drums.

I'll bet this is Lee Konitz. If not, it's someone very much influenced by him. And the tenor: Was that Warne Marsh? I can hear Lee's sound. He's light, airy, and his approach is very different from mine. It's delicate, more ethereal. It's his saxophone voice, and that's the way he is as a person—quiet, doesn't talk much, doesn't talk loud. You are what you are. I like his approach to this tune, and I like how he and Warne interacted. I listened to Lee and Warne a lot when I was a kid. These guys are older than me. It was recorded in 1956? I really was a kid then. **DB**

The “Blindfold Test” is a listening test that challenges the featured artist to discuss and identify the music and musicians who performed on selected recordings. The artist is then asked to rate each tune using a 5-star system. No information is given to the artist prior to the test.



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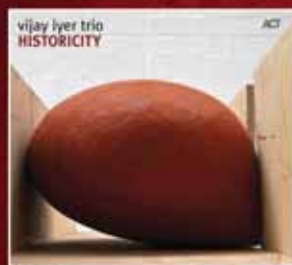
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