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FALL/WINTER  
FESTIVAL GUIDE

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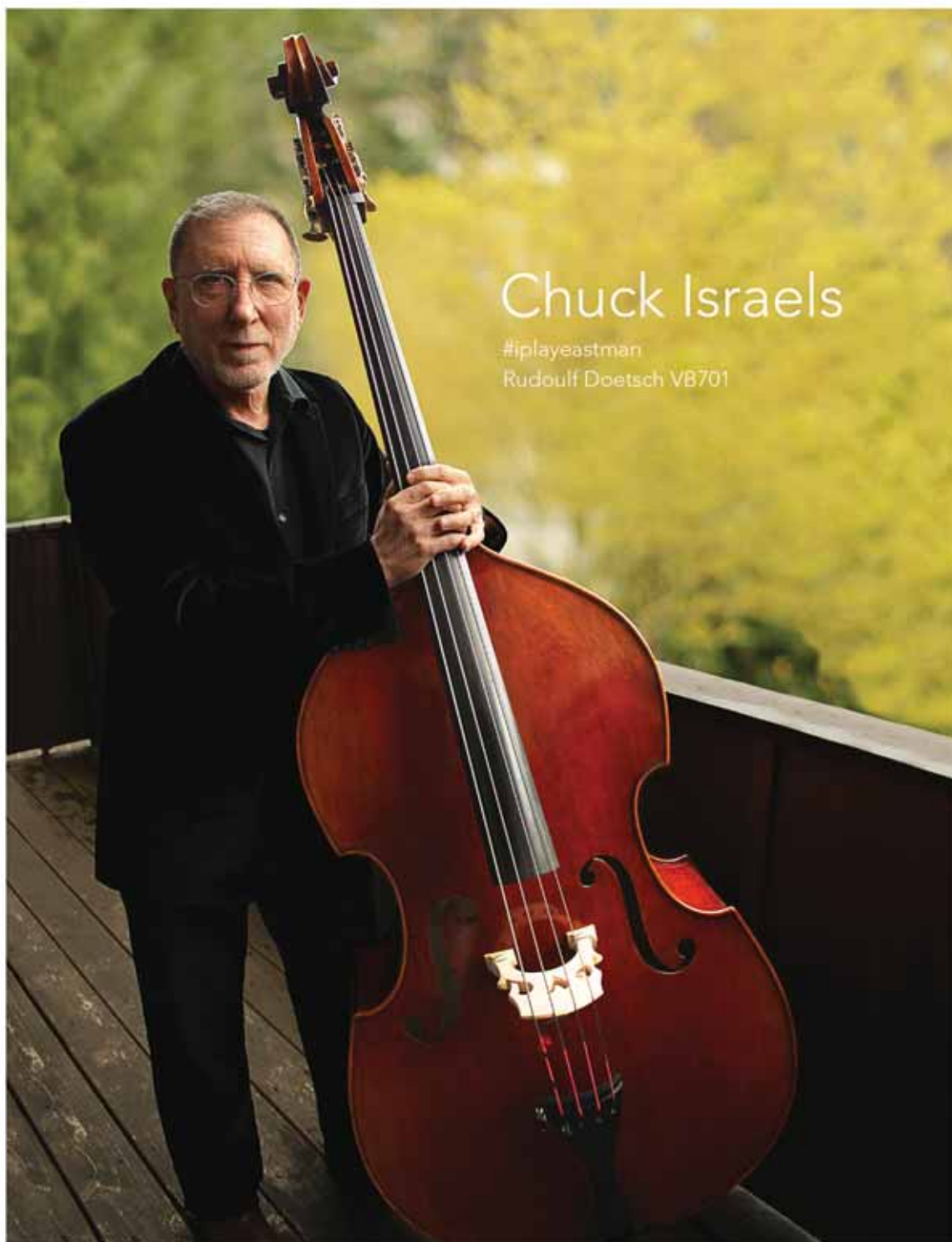
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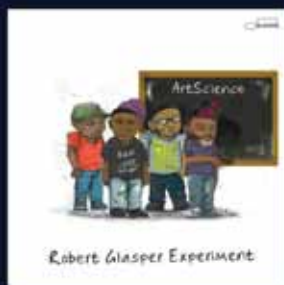
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NOVEMBER 2016

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BY PHILLIP LUTZ

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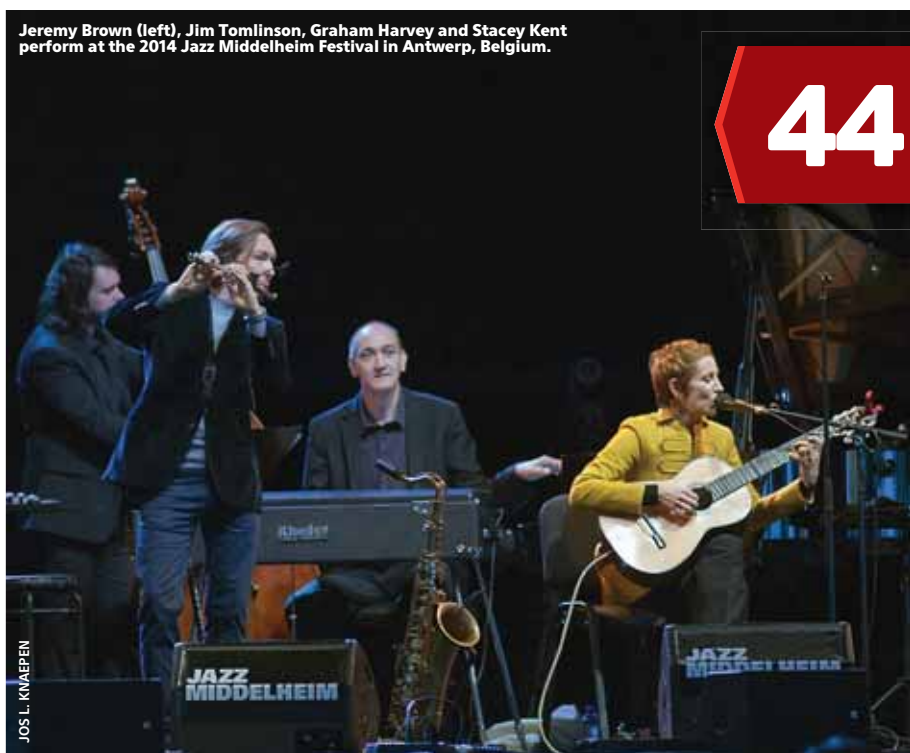
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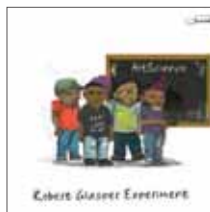
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Jeremy Brown (left), Jim Tomlinson, Graham Harvey and Stacey Kent perform at the 2014 Jazz Middelheim Festival in Antwerp, Belgium.

Cover photo of Wadada Leo Smith shot by Jimmy and Dena Katz at the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona, New York, on Aug. 8. Info for the museum is at [louisarmstronghouse.org](http://louisarmstronghouse.org).



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Gerald Albright

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Danny "Capeman" Ray,  
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Friday, November 18 at 8pm



### Sarah Vaughan Celebration

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## First Take > BY BRIAN ZIMMERMAN



Wadada Leo Smith

## Sound & Vision

**ALTHOUGH PRIMARILY AN AUDITORY ART FORM, JAZZ IS A** story that has been told through iconic images. Think of all the great jazz stories that have been conveyed through photographs: Dexter Gordon wreathed in a cloud of smoke at the Royal Roost, as captured by Herman Leonard; John Coltrane, deep in thought, worrying his lip on the cover of *Blue Train*, as immortalized by Francis Wolff; and, of course, the historic summit known as *A Great Day in Harlem*, wherein Art Kane photographed an amazing array of jazz titans, including Sonny Rollins and Benny Golson.

For our cover story on Wadada Leo Smith ("National Treasure," page 30), journalist Phillip Lutz explores the trumpeter's thrilling quest to transform the landscapes of the natural world into sound—a feat he accomplishes admirably on a new album, *America's National Parks*. The feature is illustrated by a series of illuminating portraits by longtime DownBeat contributor Jimmy Katz. Our cover shot—depicting a pensive Smith—seems to nod to a famous photo of Miles Davis, whose steely finger-to-the-lips gaze was eternalized by Jeff Sedlik. During Katz's photo session with Smith, the trumpeter did the gesture spontaneously, without any prompting. The resulting image is magical.

The portrait of a luminous Smith on pages 30–31 was taken at the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona, New York. As a joyous Smith sits at Satchmo's desk, there's a framed photo nearby. It depicts Armstrong in 1970 entertaining a group of youngsters on the house's stoop. On page 32, you'll see a transcendent shot in which Katz and Smith create a wonderful homage to that image.

Both the visual and musical aspects of jazz serve the same purpose: to preserve the music so that future generations can move it forward. That's clearly one of the goals of the Louis Armstrong House Museum, which will present a gala on Nov. 9 at New York's magnificent Capitale (130 Bowery). The evening will include cocktails, dinner, an awards ceremony and a special performance by the Catherine Russell Septet.

Like almost everything else associated with Armstrong, it's guaranteed to be picturesque.

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## Chords & Discords



### Disappointed with DownBeat

I have been a DownBeat reader since 1956. However, these days I am finding it hard to read about the music I seriously love, because your articles are more about rock 'n' roll. I know you are capable of doing much better.

Enclosed are some photos, compliments

of me, including shots of performances at the Chicago Jazz Festival and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. These photos are of African American jazz artists—something that's been missing in DownBeat.

ALVIN CARTER-BEY  
ALCABEY@ATT.NET

### Aesthetic Commentary

In the Players profile of David Gilmore (March), I was surprised to see him state, "Now you have African Americans as well as Indian Americans bringing their own aesthetic to jazz." This statement doesn't acknowledge that jazz began as an African American art form, or that jazz has continually changed as part of a continual change in African American aesthetics over the decades.

Also, Gilmore's comment that "rhythm is still largely unexplored territory in jazz" fails to acknowledge the historical rhythmic importance of jazz music from its conception—let alone the rhythmic developments over time.

DAVID HAMILTON  
MINNEAPOLIS

Williams was introduced into the band. What beautiful memories!

DEE CUNNINGHAM  
SAN FRANCISCO

### More for the Hall?

Congrats to all the winners in DownBeat's 64th Annual Critics Poll (August). Thank you for John McDonough's wonderful tribute to songwriter, pianist and actor Hoagy Carmichael, creator of the timeless songs "Stardust" and "Georgia On My Mind." He is a most deserving inductee into the DownBeat Hall of Fame!

In the Chords & Discords section of that issue, you published a letter lobbying for singer Anita O'Day to be added to the Hall of Fame.

That made me think of jazz singer Peggy King, who, at age 86, is still performing at local venues in Pennsylvania. Another candidate is big band singer Harry Prime (age 96) who sang with orchestras led by Tommy Dorsey, Randy Brooks, Jack Fina and Ralph Flanagan. Cheers to them all and thanks to the DownBeat Veterans Committee. Hopefully your Hall of Fame will be expanded to include more musicians from the glorious days of big bands.

HERB STARK  
MOORESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

### Good Times

A long time ago, when I was 17 years old, my boyfriend took me to Wallichs Music City in Hollywood, California. The store had booths where people could listen to records, and it was at Music City that I was introduced to the recordings of Miles Davis. I knew immediately that I was hearing something special.

After high school I moved to San Francisco. There I saw many jazz greats at the Jazz Workshop, including Miles Davis on the night Tony

Have a Chord or Discord? Email us at [editor@downbeat.com](mailto:editor@downbeat.com) or find us on Facebook & Twitter.





Gerald Albright at the 2016 Légère NAMM Jazz Jam



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# The

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# Beat

## Bunnett Continues Cuban Journey

When most folks go on vacation, they might bring home a shot glass or a snow globe. After soprano saxophonist/flutist Jane Bunnett and her trumpeter husband, Larry Cramer, first visited Cuba in 1982, they returned with the inspirational seeds that would bloom into her musical legacy.

"Whereas Americans on the East Coast went to Miami, Canadians would go to Cuba," the Toronto native said in an interview conducted at the Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, California. "They opened up tourism to Canada partly because Pierre Trudeau had opened trade relations between the two countries.

"So Larry and I went to Santiago for something like \$359 for a week—hotel, three meals a day and airfare," she continued, prior to the last show of the summer tour with her all-female Cuban band Maqueque. This wasn't a musical trip, but Bunnett and Cramer did take their horns.

The band at the hotel outdoor bar was the ultimately the catalyst that would lead to her and Cramer's pursuit of a fused Afro-Cuban and jazz style. Members of the 18-piece group noticed that she and Cramer were seated in the front row with their respective instruments and invited them to the bandstand to jam, becoming fast friends.

"When we came back from the trip, three weeks later we turned around and went to Havana at their suggestion," Bunnett recalled. New musical connections were established there, as well, particularly with the dockworkers, who were also masters of rumba.

"We started talking about this idea, and eventually the idea became a reality," she said of *Spirits Of Havana*, the album that was released in 1992 after three years of planning and eventual recording in Havana. The album, which received a deluxe 25th anniversary reissue in June, created opportunities for her artistically.

These days, Bunnett is bringing the next generation of Cuban musicians to North American and European audiences, thanks to a pair of albums (the 2014 disc *Jane Bunnett And Maqueque* and the new release *Oddara*). The young, dynamic members of Maqueque don't have as many opportunities to play at home as their male counterparts.

"There's still a stigma about all-female bands—corny, cheesy, soft," Bunnett said of the six-piece ensemble. "But every time this group gets in front of an audience, we win people over just because of the sheer joy the group transmits on the bandstand."

—Yoshi Kato



Jane Bunnett



**O.P. Commemorated:** Pianist Willie Pickens joined organizers of Hungary's Louis Armstrong Jazzfestival this summer in unveiling a stone sculpture of Oscar Peterson (1925–2007) near the water-stage of B  nk Lake where concerts take place. It joins a statue of Armstrong as well as a statue of Hungarian-American jazz clarinetist/producer/critic Joe M  r  nyi, who played in Armstrong's All-Stars group from 1967 to '71. Also present at the unveiling were drummer Alvin Queen, who played in Peterson's last trio, and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra pianist Dan Nimmer. The festival, which presented American and European artists during its 12th edition June 24–26, awarded Louis Armstrong Memorial Prizes to Pickens and organist Joey DeFrancesco.

[jazzfestival.hu](http://jazzfestival.hu)

**Coleman Celebrated:** The label Song X Records is assembling a box set titled *Celebrate Ornette* for a fall release. The set will document a 2014 concert at which Ornette Coleman performed, along with music from the late icon's memorial service. The lavish box will include four LPs, two DVDs, three CDs, a 24-page booklet, a poster and a 10-page memorial booklet signed by Coleman's son, Denardo. Among the more than 20 artists who appear on the set are Ravi Coltrane, David Murray, Bill Laswell, Branford Marsalis and Bruce Hornsby.

**Jensen Sisters Collaborate:** Trumpeter Ingrid Jensen and her sister, saxophonist Christine Jensen, have recorded the album *Infinitude*, which will be released by London-based Whirlwind Recordings on Jan. 27. Other players on the album include guitarist Ben Monder, bassist Fraser Hollins and drummer Jon Wikan.

[whirlwindrecordings.com](http://whirlwindrecordings.com)

**Palmieri Birthday Gig:** NEA Jazz Master Eddie Palmieri, who turns 80 on Dec. 15, will celebrate the date with a concert at New York's 92Y featuring his octet. Earlier this year, Palmieri reprised a version of his landmark 1971 album *Harlem River Drive* at the Red Bull Music Academy Festival; the concert is slated for broadcast on Voice of America on his birthday. [92y.org](http://92y.org)

## Motor City Magic

**JAZZ IS URBAN MUSIC, AND NO FESTIVAL** feels quite so urban as the Detroit Jazz Festival, which took place over Labor Day weekend on three stages in the concrete environs of Hart Plaza, adjoining the Detroit River, and on a single stage three blocks north on Cadillac Square.

At this annual festival, the shows overlap, so it behooves attendees both to strategize and be quick on their feet if they want to hear a good percentage of the offerings of the extraordinary, trans-generational array of performers who descend on the Motor City for this all-killer, no-filler free event. In the past, the festival has attracted an informed, multicultural audience, and this year was no exception.

On Sept. 3, the second day of the 37th edition, DownBeat's correspondent—in town to conduct a Blindfold Test with guitarist John Abercrombie on the Absopure Waterfront Stage—was able to catch several outstanding performances.

After portions of a well-wrought two-part tribute to Afrofuturist Detroit pianist Kenny Cox (1940–2008)—who documented only a small portion of his musical production on three cusp-of-the-'70s albums for Blue Note and Strata-East—I transitioned to the Carhartt Amphitheater Stage for a concert featuring pianist Randy Weston and his long-time associate T.K. Blue in collaboration with the Wayne State University Big Band, trained by DJF artistic director Chris Collins.

It was Weston's second collaboration with the WSU big band, which interpreted trombonist Melba Liston's arrangements of "Blues To Africa," "The Healers," "Little Niles" and "Hi-Fly," and Blue's arrangement of the rhythmically gnarly "African Village, Bedford-Stuyvesant" with clarity, precision and focus, propelled by a strong student drummer.

Weston, who recently turned 90, treated his own iconic compositions as sources for creative invention, not repetition, in the manner of his muse, Duke Ellington. Weston also channeled Ellington's orchestral pianistic approach, addressing the keyboard with a succession of free-associative melodic declamations drawn from the lowest bass to the highest treble register.

In functioning with the inexperienced rhythm section, Weston took charge of the flow more explicitly than when bassist Alex Blake and percussionist Neil Clarke are playing in his African Rhythms band. Yet he was continually in the moment, particularly when dialoguing



Alfredo Rodriguez performs at the Detroit Jazz Festival on Sept. 3.

with or comping for Blue, whose kinetic improvisations evoked a refracted blend of Bird, Cannonball, Benny Carter and Jackie McLean.

After a smooth-as-butter solo by a student baritone saxophonist on the penultimate number, "Hi-Fly," fellow nonagenarian Jimmy Heath joined Weston for the proceedings, uncorking a melody-drenched three-chorus solo.

I hustled back to Absopure Waterfront in time to hear 30-year-old pianist Alfredo Rodriguez's "American trio" (Bulgarian bassist Peter Slavov and Puerto Rican drummer Henry Cole) play three selections from *The Invasion Parade*, his second album for Mack Avenue.

Now an entity of several years standing, the trio displayed telepathic simpatico, engaging in heady polyrhythmic dialogue between Rodriguez and Cole—triangulated by Slavov—on "Invasion Parade," then rendering the standard bolero "Veinte A  os (Twenty Years)" with nuanced collective dynamics that showcased Rodriguez's finely calibrated touch and voice-leading abilities.

After the third selection, Rodriguez announced that the trio would play several tunes from his current release, *Tocororo* (Mack Avenue). The group launched into "Yemaya" with a real-time re-harmonized chant that he complemented with subtone piano passages.

I wanted to stay, but to do so would mean missing an all-star band at the Wayne State University Pyramid Stage under the putative leadership of pianist Stanley Cowell, but also including trumpeter Charles Tolliver, tenor saxophonist Billy Harper and a slightly younger but highly experienced rhythm section comprising bassist Jay Anderson and drummer Carl Allen. So off I went. Such is the nature of this exhilarating, expertly curated festival.

—Ted Panken



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Bobby Hutcherson (1941–2016)



# The 'Always Striving' Bobby Hutcherson: 1941–2016

## VIBRAPHONIST AND MARIMBA PLAYER BOBBY

Hutcherson passed away on Aug. 15 surrounded by family in the living room of his longtime home in Montara, California. He was 75.

A pioneer of his instrument, he enjoyed a five-decade career that encompassed straightahead post-bop, free-jazz and fusion styles.

While still in junior high school, Hutcherson walked by a record store in his native Pasadena, California, that was playing the *Miles Davis And The Modern Jazz Giants* version of "Bemsha Swing" with Davis, Milt Jackson, Thelonious Monk, Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke.

"I turned around and went in, bought it and probably wore it out eventually from playing it so much," Hutcherson said in 1996 interview. "I just fell in love with how Milt played his instrument and all his ideas."

After gigging at school dances and a coffee shop on Sunset Boulevard, he joined a band led by multi-reedist Charles Lloyd and another led by tenor saxophonist Billy Mitchell and trombonist Al Grey. Mitchell and Grey offered Hutcherson work in New York, so he left life as a college student in Southern California to move to Manhattan at age 19.

Gigs with saxophonist Jackie McLean and a contract with Blue Note followed. Hutcherson recorded as a bandleader and sideman (with the likes of McLean, Lee Morgan and Tony Williams) for the prestigious label from 1965 to '77 and again in the mid-'80s and 2014.

"Bobby's actually the only guy who made records for all five different regimes that have existed here," said Don Was, president of Blue Note. "First for Alfred Lion and then Francis Wolf when he took over."

Hutcherson continued to record for Blue Note when it was under the leadership of Dr. George Butler in the 1970s and later did a duo album with McCoy Tyner (*Manhattan Moods*, 1994) and some other dates during the Bruce Lundvall era. "And then he did a record for us [*Enjoy The View* with David Sanborn, Joey DeFrancesco and Billy Hart] a couple of years ago," Was noted. "So he is as Blue Note as you get."

"When you listen to his Blue Note output, as a body of work—including the session work that he did for [Eric Dolphy's] *Out To Lunch!* and all that—Bobby was always striving for something new and just out of reach, trying to get there. He never settled."

Vibraphonist Gary Burton only met Hutcherson in person a few times over the years, "backstage at an occasional jazz festival," he said. "Professionally, I always considered Bobby to be the other vibist from my generation with an important musical identity."

"You could say we came from two different schools of mallet playing: Bobby was the modern, contemporary descendent of Milt Jackson's very popular style. I took a pianistic approach using four mallets and went in a very different direction, instrumentally speaking," Burton added.

DeFrancesco wrote of Hutcherson's passing in an Instagram post: "Such a big inspiration to us all musically, I feel extremely fortunate that we had a wonderful association over the past 15 years. We recorded three albums together and played countless gigs together, all over the world. Those memories will be with me always."

After co-leading a quintet with tenor saxophonist Harold Land back in Southern California from 1967 to 1971, Hutcherson bought a home in the Pacific coastal town of Montara. Situated about 20 miles south of San Francisco and active on the local scene, he was such a Bay Area institution that he played in the inaugural San Francisco Jazz Festival (née Jazz in the City) and the San José Jazz Festival in 1983 and 1990, respectively. He was also a founding member of the SFJAZZ Collective, which was established in 2004.

"The [player] is facing you always, so you get to see the facial expressions, and you get to see the note happen," said Hutchinson, an avid boater, discussing the visual appeal of his chosen instruments in 1997. "It's almost a wave effect, which comes through the ocean and finally gets to where it's headed and hits the shore."

At the Aug. 31 memorial service for Hutcherson in nearby Half Moon Bay, SFJAZZ founder and Executive Artistic Director Randall Kline described three of his friend's personal traits: generosity, grace and spirit. "He was caring and mischievous, too," Kline recalled.

A love of family was reflected in Hutcherson's music. He penned pieces for his wife, Rosemary ("Rosie," from *Manhattan Moods*), and son ("Teddy"—also the name of his brother—heard most recently on *Enjoy The View*). His ballad "Little B's Poem" was named for another son, Barry, who drummed with his father.

On Oct. 23, SFJAZZ, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Monterey Jazz Festival and the Healdsburg Jazz Festival are co-producing a Bobby Hutcherson Memorial Benefit Concert at the SFJAZZ Center to help defray the Hutcherson family's medical costs. Participants will include Tyner, DeFrancesco, John Handy, Paula West, George Cables, Renee Rosnes, Peter Erskine, Donald Harrison, Mary Stallings, Brian Blade and the SFJAZZ Collective.

—Yoshi Kato

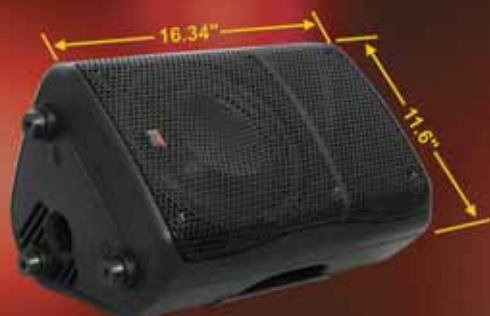


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## European Scene / BY PETER MARGASAK

# Trost Records Fuses Punk Ethos with Jazz Artistry

"I've always released music that effects me in some kind of way, no matter what genre," said Konstanin Drobil, the Vienna native behind one of Europe's most adventurous and uncompromising labels, Trost Records, with a stable that includes European heavyweights like Peter Brötzmann and Mats Gustafsson, Japanese reedist Akira Sakata and American reedist Ken Vandermark. "Could be indie '60s pop or crust-punk tape or noise. But today it is free-jazz and improvisation."

When he first got involved with Trost, which was started in 1991 as a cassette label focusing on underground Austrian punk music, Drobil hadn't fallen for free-jazz, but as the '90s stretched on, his mindset changed. By the mid-'90s the enterprise began releasing music on vinyl and CD, and by 1997, it launched a distribution service built mostly around American indie rock imprints—a source of revenue that kept the label sustainable. Along the way he began hearing new strains of aggressive improvised music, with an energy and integrity he connected to punk.

In 1997 he organized a concert for the Swiss noise-rock band Alboth and its drummer Michael Wertmüller passed him a demo for a new project called Sprawl that featured the legendary German free jazz saxophonist Brötzmann. Drobil loved the project and released its debut on Trost. He spent the next decade learning about and developing a greater love for free-jazz, but it wasn't until 2011 that Trost jumped into the fray to focus on such sounds.

Drobil had been thinking about reissuing classics from the German free-jazz label FMP on vinyl, and his initial meetings with label head Jost Gebers and Brötzmann—perhaps the imprint's most prolific and important artist—were met with caution, but eventually he prevailed, paying licensing fees up front and using high-quality pressings and packaging.

In 2011 the Trost sub-label Cien Fuegos dropped three early Brötzmann classics in limited edition runs that quickly sold out and convinced Gebers and Brötzmann to continue the project. The label has since reissued 13 albums and one single from FMP, with four new titles due this winter.

As he gained Brötzmann's trust with the reissues, Drobil was more excited about producing new recordings. "I think it's important to make those key albums available for younger fans, but my passion lies in releasing current work of artists I like."



Mats Gustafsson

LISA NORDWALL

He's now released multiple recordings by the saxophonist in different configurations beginning with the impressive 2013 five-CD set *Long Story Short*, which documented the 70th birthday celebration of Brötzmann. That relationship has brought in a growing number of artists into Trost's orbit, including the Swedish reedist Gustafsson, who now lives in Austria. In fact, Trost helped him launch a label to release music by the Thing—Gustafsson's trio with bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten and drummer Paal Nilssen-Love.

"I find it very inspiring to work with serious people like Konstantin," said Gustafsson of the partnership. "They are very dedicated and doing the business side of it very well. Trost is all in there, keeping the engine up to date and active." Gustafsson, who also runs a used vinyl website for Trost called *discaholic.com*, was recently feted with his own box set on Trost that documented a celebration of the reedist's 50th birthday last year, *MG50: Peace & Fire*, which includes performances from many musicians on Trost's roster, including Vandermark, Swedish percussionist Sven-Åke Johansson, Austrian electronicist Christof Kurzmann and Viennese DJ Dieb13.

Drobil is proud of the fact that his relationships are built upon trust. "With a growing number of artists you can't be real 'friends' with everyone, but we still don't see the need for contracts," he said. "Either we trust each other or not."

DB





# ELEW Rejoins 'Jazz Republic'

**ERIC LEWIS, WHO GOES BY THE "ROCKJAZZ" NAME OF ELEW,** has rejoined the jazz world 11 years after quitting it in anger. The protean pianist's re-entry is the powerful and passionate *And To The Republic*, his first recording for Sunnyside.

His bile bubbled up shortly after the virtuosic and inventive Lewis won the 1999 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition. Despite that, he couldn't get a recording contract even though he'd already launched an impressive jazz resume working for the likes of Wynton Marsalis, Cassandra Wilson and Jon Hendricks.

So he developed "rockjazz," his name for an aggressive overlay of jazz style on rock 'n' roll material. ELEW releases his rockjazz records through Ninjazz Entertainment LLC, his production company (he also makes films; he's working on his second, *Passages*, which he describes as a "supernatural ninja movie" with Harry Lennix, an actor who animates the title track of *And To The Republic*).

Recorded with bassist Reginald Veal and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, the album is dazzling and ornery, interspersing homages to such inspirations as Elvin Jones, Ornette Coleman and Thelonious Monk. It also features a ravishing update of "My Favorite Things."

The "republic" ELEW conjures is the jazz universe. "The republic is essentially the people that allow for the jazz industry to exist," he said. "The musicians are part of the republic, too; so are the connoisseurs and the critics, the writers, the radio broadcasters."

The animosity he felt toward the jazz republic has passed. "That's why this album is called *And To The Republic*," ELEW explained. "It's a mixture of the echoes of the former displeasures on both sides combined with a gesture towards unity. It's basically me acknowledging that I've come to recognize the flaws ... but it was still upon me to figure all that out."

Among his key activities over the past three years: DJing jazz in clubs.

"I have learned to understand that jazz DJs aren't so different from a club DJ in the sense that we all want music that we [can] spin for our audiences," he said. "The music that we spin for the audiences has to serve the quality of the venue, the quality of the crowd, and people have come to prefer and patronize the venue. I got it wrong the first year when I was starting out, people giving me a chance to spin. I felt like I was 13 years old again, learning how to improvise."

Eventually, he smoothed out, learning to play to—and for—the crowd. "I began to put 2 and 2 together and realized, I guess that's why I didn't get a record deal. They didn't trust that they could put me in a studio and I could come out with an album that jazz DJs would want to play."

—Carlo Wolff

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Thollem has been described by composer Terry Riley as "a true original" and "an astounding pianist who understands the huge scope of the instrument". His pianistic style draws on the full spectrum of classical and jazz styles, and Joan Jeanrenaud, former cellist of the Kronos Quartet – who penned the liner notes for this release – explains why Thollem's new CD is unmissable: "Listening to Thollem McDonas play the piano is an astonishing experience. He has an innate ability to compose transcendent music using the piano as his expressive voice and to explore the depth and range of the instrument like no one else".



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# Giordano's Future in the Past

## IN ADDITION TO CONDUCTING HIS 11-PIECE

Nighthawks orchestra two nights a week at The Iguana Club in New York, Vince Giordano has been busy building an amazing resume. Giordano and members of Nighthawks have appeared on the soundtrack of *Boardwalk Empire* and films such as *The Aviator*, *Finding Forrester* and *Revolutionary Road*. The multi-instrumentalist and smooth-crooning jazz historian has snagged a Grammy, scored silent films and recorded dozens of albums. His versions of tunes from the Rodgers and Hart songbook are featured in director Woody Allen's latest nostalgia epic, *Café Society*.

For serious fun, Giordano plays an aluminum upright bass and bass saxophone and owns perhaps the largest collection of '20s-to-'40s jazz sheet music in the world. But first and foremost, Giordano is a bandleader. That life is chronicled in the Hudson West Productions documentary *Vince Giordano—There's a Future in the Past*.

"We never close," Giordano says when contacted by phone. "I go from 8 in the morning till 2 in the morning. Every day. Seven days a week. Occasionally peace breaks out in my life. Some people say I play an instrument, but I really play the telephone."

## Was recording the *Café Society* soundtrack a typical session for you?

Not typical. I've been working for Woody Allen since *Zelig*; we broke out on *Sweet & Lowdown*. Woody's production team wanted 16 tunes from the '30s, all Rodgers and Hart. They said, 'The setting is a posh nightclub, so you can't play crazy jazz.' It's supper-club jazz. Our wonderful pianist, Mark Shane, was able to get that Fats Waller/Count Basie/Earl Hines feel of the 1930s. And we had our two guitarists, Vinny Raniolo and Chris Flory, with Chris Gelb on drums. I played upright bass. Basically we were scoring without seeing the film.

## How did *There's a Future in the Past* come about?

It was filmed over three years, and it shows the trials of trying to keep an 11-piece 1920s and '30s band going in the 21st Century. We've been doing it for 40 years, and it's a lot of hard work: schlepping, dealing with equipment breakdowns, club owners, clubs closing, musicians retiring. But there's the good stuff: *Boardwalk Empire*, a Grammy for *Finding Forrester*. Some of it pays off. Somebody called me Sisyphus, the cat who rolls a boulder up a mountain every day. The next morning he wakes up and



the boulder is at the bottom of the mountain. Again. It's something like that.

## What keeps you going?

What we do is near impossible. It's a unique thing to have an 11-piece band playing the music of the '20s, '30s and '40s twice a week in Manhattan. We play Fletcher Henderson, Bix Beiderbecke, Jelly Roll Morton, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Benny Goodman.

## You've collected more than 60,000 charts, all stored in your home.

The idea of collecting this music is rescuing it. I've been on a mission since the 1970s to buy collections. I've cleared out three movie theaters, raided basements and attics full of charts. To have the music is a wonderful thing. You can transcribe some of this stuff off the record, but if you have the actual charts it makes it a lot easier. The publishers no longer have the music, though they own it. I'm often called to reproduce the "original sound," so charts help.

## How do you play the old arrangements?

I key them into Sibelius [notation] software. Often the old arrangements need some seasoning: We syncopate them, insert hot solos. For *Boardwalk Empire* they had me transcribing Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet solos. And we have no problem interpreting those original solos.

## You play so many instruments: upright bass, tuba, banjo, bass saxophone. What's your main instrument?

I wish the bass saxophone was my main instrument. Like I said, my main instrument is the telephone, lining up work. Being a bandleader is like herding cats and putting out little brush fires.

—Ken Micallef

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# Thielemans Remembered as Pioneer

**TOOTS THIELEMANS, WHOSE EXCEPTIONAL skill on the chromatic harmonica helped popularize the instrument in the jazz world, died Aug. 22 in Brussels. He was 94.**

Throughout his prolific career, Thielemans toured and recorded with artists from a wide range of genres, including jazz legends Charlie Parker and Ella Fitzgerald, fusion icon Jaco Pastorius, and pop idols Paul Simon and Billy Joel.

Among his many accolades were numerous wins in DownBeat polls, most recently topping the Miscellaneous Instrument category in the 2012 and 2011 editions of the DownBeat Readers Poll.

Born Jean-Baptiste Frédéric Isidore Thielemans in Belgium in 1922, "Toots," a nickname he would later legalize, began studying the harmonica at age 3, and by 17 was also a proficient guitar player. He became interested in jazz after hearing records by Django Reinhardt and saxophonist Parker. In the years following World War II he worked as an accompanist to vocalist Edith Piaf and violinist Stéphane Grapelli, and in 1950 he embarked on a European tour as a guitarist with the Benny Goodman Sextet.

After immigrating to New York City in

1952, Thielemans received a rare opportunity to play alongside Parker, sitting in with the saxophonist's venerable All-Stars ensemble, which at the time included a young Miles Davis. The early collaboration would prove a catalyst in Thielemans's career.

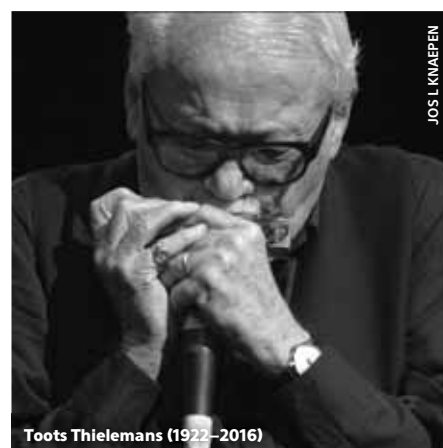
In the years following, he would lend his melodic ingenuity to albums by jazz masters such as Bill Evans and Kenny Werner.

Thielemans was also an accomplished composer and arranger. Among the most famous of his compositions is the jazz standard "Bluesette," which he wrote in 1961 and has now become a jazz standard.

Two examples of his work that have been widely heard via television are his harmonica on the theme song for the children's TV series Sesame Street and his whistling in a TV advertisement for Old Spice cologne.

Harmonicist Grégoire Maret, who won a Grammy Award for his contributions to Pat Metheny's 2005 album *The Way Up*, expressed condolences for Thielemans on social media.

"It is with great sadness that I learn of Toots Thielemans' passing," Maret wrote in a Facebook post. "He was a great friend and mentor to me. We will all miss him dearly.



Toots Thielemans (1922–2016)

JOS L KNAEPEN

Miss his kindness as a human being, his generosity and genius as a musician. He was probably the first true musician to play the chromatic harmonica. But no matter what instrument he played or whistled, he was a true innovator, and of the highest musical order. All that mattered to him wasn't technique or virtuosity but music, and to touch hearts... He will be missed tremendously in that place of his; between a tear and a smile.

"I love you, Toots, and I miss you already." **DB**

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# Lloyd Marks Milestone at Oslo Fest

**THE FOURTH NIGHT OF THE 30TH ANNUAL OSLO JAZZ FESTIVAL**

(Aug. 14–20) centered on a particularly riveting set by headliner Charles Lloyd, who was celebrating a return to a memorable site. The performance marked the 50th anniversary of the saxophonist's legendary concert, recorded in this city, that became the 1966 album *Charles Lloyd Quartet Live In Europe*. Then, as now, he was surrounded by 11 Edvard Munch paintings in the historic 500-seat University Aula (Universitetets Aula) on the campus of the University of Oslo.

Lloyd's ensemble marked the significance of the occasion with a poignant opening salvo. The musicians entered piecemeal, with the first sounds coming from Jason Moran's piano as he played a slow, searching rubato. Bassist Harish Raghavan and drummer Eric Harland entered and added their own gentle touches.

Soon they were joined by Lloyd, who sauntered across the stage playing his tenor soft and tender. As he strolled, his parched yet warm tones eased the ensemble into a tranquil swing. Moran's tone lined up with Lloyd's in this acoustically pristine auditorium, and their matching golf caps were a stylistic augment to an obvious musical sympatico.

The song was Lloyd's "Prayer," and the quartet seemed content to tease something out of its sweet melody. The saxophonist took his time moving about the stage as if he was in a fashion show, his sophisticated headgear augmented by sneakers.

Musical free-play ensued with Lloyd's "Requiem," a new tune sporting a flexible meter and shifting key center. Harland's skittered lightly across his array of cymbals, but he was anchored—as was the rest of the band—by Raghavan's steady pulse. With no announcements or casual banter from the stage, the band proceeded into a medium-tempo swinger that provided much-needed sweetness. Moran's ruminative solo glid-



ed into a slow trio groove, with Lloyd eventually adding his own mournful tones. The song became a dirge en route to a slow march, and built to a crescendoing release.

Lloyd switched to flute for an uptempo number that emphasized hand claps and audience participation, with Moran venturing under the lid of his piano on occasion to pluck a few piano funky chords. On the following tune, a swinging waltz with a straightforward melody, Lloyd remained on flute, playing like a latter-day pied piper. The band cooled things off with a take on Thelonious Monk's "Monk's Mood," which prompted a standing ovation.

A final number, Lloyd's "Tagi," found the members in recitation and rubato mode, playing it soft once again. During his solo, Lloyd clung to one repeated note, evoking the honky-tonk vibe of the early rock 'n' roll saxophonists.

—John Ephland

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# Remembering Rudy Van Gelder, Who Defined the Sound of Jazz

**RUDY VAN GELDER, THE RECORDING ENGINEER** who cultivated an amateur passion for jazz into a legendary career—during which he worked with Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk and Wayne Shorter, among others—died Aug. 25. He was 91.

Considered by some critics to be jazz's most influential recording engineer, Van Gelder oversaw a number of the genre's most significant recordings, including Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* and Davis' *Bags Groove*.

Born in 1924, Van Gelder began his foray into jazz recording during the early 1950s, during which time his base of operations was his parents' living room in Hackensack, New Jersey.

After a recording session with saxophonist Gil Mellé was purchased by Blue Note Records producer Alfred Lions, Van Gelder's reputation as a skilled and sonically attentive engineer began to spread, and by the end of the decade he had raised his profile dramatically, collaborating on numerous landmark albums by Prestige, Verve, Impulse! and, most prominently, Blue Note.

By 1959 Van Gelder had quit his day job—he worked full-time as an optometrist for 13 years—and moved his recording studio to a house in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, where he continued to monitor recording sessions by jazz icons.

Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Horace Silver, Wes Montgomery and Joe Henderson recorded albums there in the 1950s and '60s, and toward the end of the century, Van Gelder supervised recording sessions with Cedar Walton, McCoy Tyner and Ron Carter.

Van Gelder received a Lifetime Achievement Award from DownBeat for his contributions to jazz, and in 2009 he was named both a fellow of the Audio Engineering Society and a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master.

Bassist Ron Carter, whose album *Chemistry* with saxophonist Houston Person was among the last to be recorded by Van Gelder, spoke of his deep admiration for the late audio engineer.

"Rudy was really a scientist, and I appreciated his interest in trying to make the bass sound on disc as well as it good as it did to our ear,"



Rudy Van Gelder (1924–2016)

Carter told DownBeat in August. "I haven't seen that kind of pure dedication in a very long time .... To know that he closed his eyes for the last time ... well, there will not be another Rudy on this planet."

DB

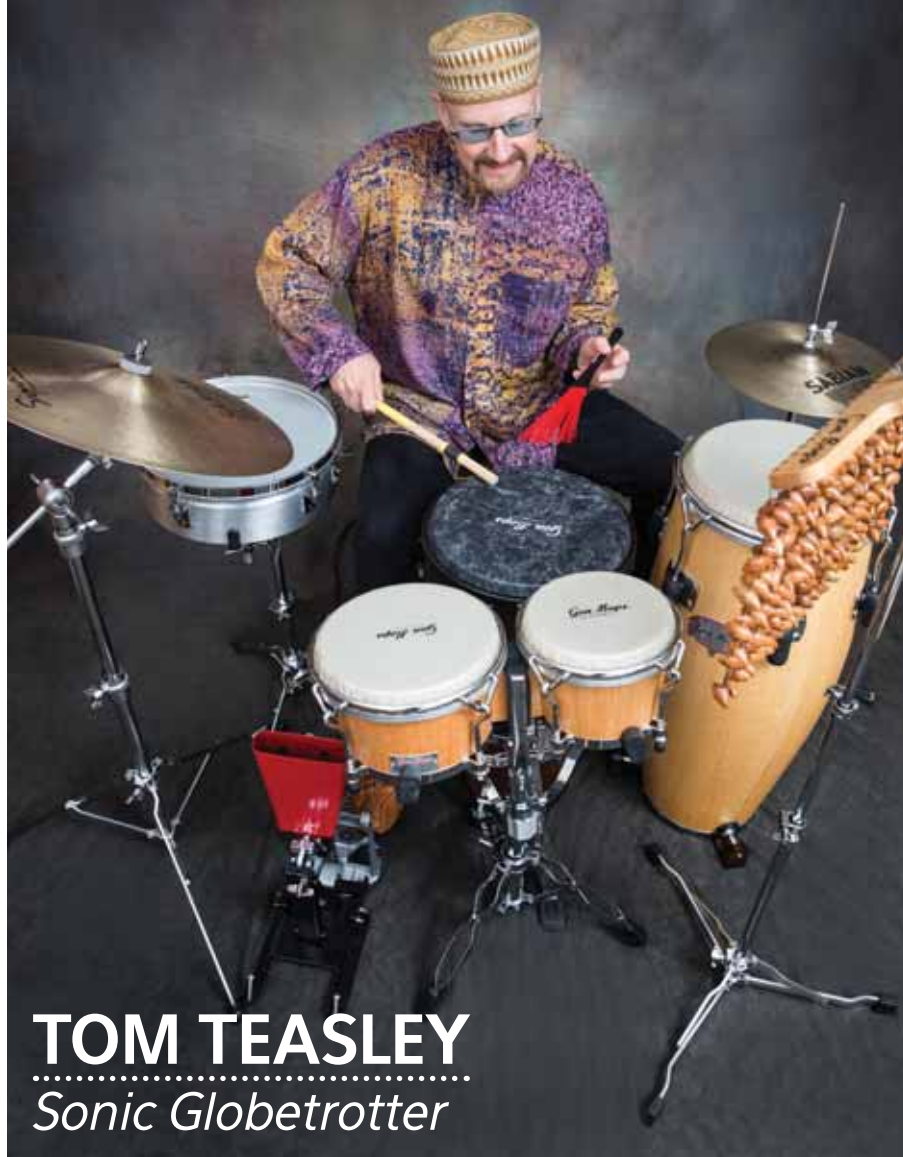
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## TOM TEASLEY

### Sonic Globetrotter

**T**he first time I heard a fife and drum corps, I got hooked by the sound of the snare,” said renowned drummer and percussionist Tom Teasley. He began drum lessons as a teenager and before he had even graduated from high school he was already a professional musician, playing in nightclubs in Washington, D.C.

“I wanted to be a classical percussionist,” he recalled. “I studied at Baltimore’s Peabody Conservatory, working in jazz bands at night to support myself. When I finished school, I toured with jazz musicians, often finding myself in New Orleans. The drummers there had those African and Caribbean influences that make their music unique. I wanted to be a jazz drummer, but seeking out lessons from African percussionists changed my direction. From there, it was on to explore drumming from India, the Middle East

and the rest of the world. Global rhythms and hand drumming became my passion.”

While Teasley was exploring the world, he was also taking lessons from jazz great Joe Morello, famous for his stint in the Dave Brubeck Quartet. “I began applying the concepts Joe taught me to the plethora of world music instruments I was discovering. I see the drum kit as America’s contribution to world percussion. The tom toms are from China, the cymbals from Turkey, the snare and bass drum from Europe—but they come together in a unique American way. I combined my jazz, blues and world music impulses by replacing the bass drum with a [Brazilian] *pandeiro*, the floor tom with a timbale, the snare with a djembe. Even though I was using instruments, rhythms and techniques that might sound exotic to western ears, the DNA was always American.”

That sensibility is at the heart of *An American Approach to World Percussion* (Alfred Music), Teasley’s instruction manual for drummers interested in world music. “It’s a task-specific workbook, combining my studies as a classical percussionist, my years of studying jazz drumming with Morello and my love of world percussion,” he said.

“It’s aimed at drummers and percussionists conversant with jazz and classical music who want to apply that knowledge to world music. It comes with an instructional DVD with an hour of instructional footage.”

Teasley’s hybrid drum kit and ability to combine world music and jazz has led to a multifaceted career. He has performed as a solo artist, contributed sound design to a number of theater companies in the D.C. area and provided live soundtracks for silent films from the 1920s.

He recently released *Eastern Journey*, his ninth album. “The compositions were written for a play that follows a monk traveling from China to India,” he explained. “It draws on Chinese music and instruments. I use a Chinese dragon drum, the oboe-like *bawu* and the *kouxian*, a jaw harp, as well as my hybrid drum kit. I recorded it after I got back from a trip to Korea; some of the music is inspired by the collaborations I did there. It has more of a jazz flavor than my last couple of records.”

The DC Jazz Festival invited Teasley to put together a trio to combine his hand-drumming expertise with jazz. He recruited saxophonist Marshall Keys and pianist Allyn Johnson (director of jazz studies at the University of the District of Columbia) for a program of bebop standards, Iraqi folk songs and free improvisation: “We drew inspiration from Randy Weston’s work with the *gnawa* musicians of Morocco and the songs I learned while touring in Iraq. We also did spontaneous compositions based on drum loops I’ve created.”

Teasley put together a quartet for a retrospective concert honoring the music of Weather Report that took place at the Smithsonian in August. “I played percussion, Harold Summey was on drums, Charlie Young [artistic director of the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra] was on sax, and Allyn Johnson played piano. We were able to work with Wayne Shorter’s original transcripts from the Library of Congress and did a few of our own.”

Perpetually honing new projects, Teasley will collaborate with reed specialist Seth Kibel for an upcoming performance at the Washington Jewish Music Festival. “We’ll be combining klezmer and Arabic music, again with a jazz sensibility, and I’m adding percussion to a vocal ensemble from Howard University called Afro Blue, with Cyrus Chestnut on piano,” he said. “In a sense, my music is coming full circle, back to the blend of jazz and world rhythms that inspired me when I started playing.” —j. poet





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# PETE McGUINNESS

## Vocal Identity

During day one of his two-day residency in June at Mexico's Xalapa International Jazz Festival, trombonist Pete McGuinness conducted a master class on "All The Things You Are," demonstrating multiple permutations and possibilities by which an improviser can, as he put it, "show the beauty of the song's chords in an artful, creative way."

"I like to do many things," McGuinness—an assistant professor of Music at William Paterson University since 2011—told his audience. "I play trombone. I sing. I write big band music."

On the following evening, about 1,000 enthusiastic locals in the central plaza of Xalapa's Parque Juárez heard McGuinness display those skills and actualize his stated principles with an

ensemble culled from faculty and students at Xalapa's conservatory.

After "First Flight," the title track from his debut big band album in 2007, McGuinness called his as-yet-unrecorded arrangement of "May I Come In?" He uncorked a smooth-as-molasses trombone solo, then applied his mellow tenor voice to the lyric, showing why he received a 2015 Grammy nomination (in the category Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals) for "What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life?" from his disc *Strength In Numbers* (Summit).

Arranging is his first love, and the notion of running a big band is a lifelong obsession. His father—a DJ in Connecticut during the '50s and '60s—was a swing era devotee, and

McGuinness raided his library, getting hooked on LPs by Glenn Miller, Basie, Ellington and Billy May. "The sound of the trombone in harmony"—particularly Kai Winding's four-trombone group—drew McGuinness to the instrument. Hearing Slide Hampton's *World of Trombones* at 13 sealed the deal.

After attending New England Conservatory and the University of Miami, McGuinness moved to New York in 1986 and earned a master's degree at Manhattan School of Music. From 1988 to 1990, he enrolled in the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop, where his teachers were Bob Brookmeyer and Manny Albam.

"Bob challenged us to get beyond writing good intros and sax solis, and get out of our comfort zone—try things you hadn't thought of," McGuinness said.

Singing entered the mix after 1990, when McGuinness immersed himself in Chet Baker's 1958 LP *It Could Happen To You*. "Chet had the most pure, beautiful sound I'd ever heard," he said. He memorized Baker's scat solos, "so in-tune, swinging, the syllables sounding like a horn." At an informal gig, "just for kicks," he decided to sing "It Could Happen To You" and to render Baker's solo verbatim.

As we spoke 26 years later, McGuinness—whose 2013 combo album, *Voice Like A Horn* (Summit), showcased his mastery of vocal improvisation—was preparing for forthcoming engagements with the Royal Bopsters, the vocal quartet, in which he recently assumed Darmon Meader's chair. "It's a serious group, and we're shooting for the stars," McGuinness said. "Darmon is superb; I have big shoes to fill. I write for and sing in the group, but I don't play trombone. This is my focus now." —*Ted Panken*

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Singer Clara Moreno's new album nods to the classic LP *Samba Esquema Novo*.

LAMB TAYLOR

## CLARA MORENO

### *A Foot In Two Worlds*

For Clara Moreno, it seemed natural to become a singer. “I never chose, really,” she said via Skype from her São Paulo living room, with a friend nearby to provide occasional translation. Moreno was trying to convey just how inevitable a career in music had seemed to her when she was a little girl.

She was a child of Brazilian pop (MPB) royalty: Her mother and father, Joyce Moreno and Nelson Angelo, are two of Brazil’s most highly regarded singer-songwriters. Growing up in 1970s-era Rio de Janeiro, it was normal for musical superstars like Milton Nascimento and Egberto Gismonti to drop by the house and jam nightly. She inhaled music.

“I started singing at age 6,” she recalled. “My mom sent me to Paris when I was 18 to see if I really wanted to do this.” She stayed for six years, studying with Christiane LeGrand (composer Michel’s sister), one of France’s leading jazz vocalists and the original lead soprano of The Swingle Singers. Upon returning to Brazil at 25, she recorded her first album at the invitation of Márcio Menescal, son of bossa nova pioneer Roberto Menescal. The younger Menescal is a founding member of the Brazilian musical group Bossacucanova, leaders of the style known as “nova bossa nova,” which combines traditional bossa nova with DJs and electronic dance beats. From its beginnings in Brazilian dance clubs, the genre sparked a revival of interest in bossa nova in Europe and the States.

“At the time, I was into electronics, I was a clubber, and now I have an adolescent son,” she laughed. “I grew up, and my music grew up, too.” Moreno has a foot in both musical worlds: the bossa nova milieu of her parents’ generation, and the “nova bossa nova” movement. She eventually found her true musical identity in straightahead, small-group Brazilian jazz.

Hence her seventh album, *Samba Esquema Novo* (De Novo) (translation: “New Style

Samba—Again”), which has just been released on Far Out Records. It reimagines a seminal 1963 album (*Samba Esquema Novo*) by the influential singer-songwriter Jorge Ben (who later changed his surname to Benjor).

Moreno may be the perfect artist to reinterpret Benjor’s music. His original “Rhythm & Samba” style mixed traditional samba with African and North American jazz, blues and funk. Moreno’s singing is all about compelling, must-dance-this-out rhythms.

She recorded the project with her touring band—pianist João Cristal, bassist Thiago Alves, drummer Paulinho Vicente and trombonist/arranger Paulo Malheiros—after honing a modern interpretation of Benjor’s material for six months in jazz clubs. Once they were ready, they recorded the album live in the studio in one week.

Throughout the disc, Moreno employs trombonist Malheiros as a duet partner, weaving her sultry alto into and around the band’s compelling samba jazz grooves. The album also features delightful vocal duets with Brazilian singers Simoninha and Jair de Oliveira.

As a youngster, she soaked up the sounds of a jazz icon: “I very much like Bill Evans, the pianist. I know every solo he did in his life. I’m sure he never imagined this little girl in Brazil hearing his albums every night when I went to sleep, and every morning when I woke up.”

Why reinvent classic Jorge Ben? “The original *Samba Esquema Novo* album was very simple and very popular. But many people don’t realize that it is one of the first albums of Brazilian jazz music. It is very precious to me. It was the birth of a new music. I want to pay tribute to it because the young people have forgotten this music. It is the treasure of my country. We have so much trouble in Brazil. I want to focus on the best things we have.”

—Allen Morrison

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# PABLO HELD

## Pursuing Risks

German pianist Pablo Held has secured an ascending status in the ranks of thoughtful, distinctive young players. He is driven by a desire to grow, dodge complacency and find new ways to integrate his two loves—jazz and classical music—as represented on his 2015 album, *Recondita Armonia*, with imaginatively revisited classical works adapted for an innova-

tive new piano trio concept.

Held's latest release, *Lineage*, his eighth for the Pirouette label, is another impressive field report from a restlessly creative artist with virtuosic skill. His playing seizes attention, with its unusual intervals and note choices, angular phrasing and organically probing search-and-rescue style of development.

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Starting out young may have stoked a sense of adventure in Held's music. The pianist, who turns 30 in December, founded his ongoing, empathetic trio with bassist Robert Landfermann and drummer Jonas Burgwinkel when he was 19, while studying jazz in Cologne with legendary pianist John Taylor (1942–2015).

Held sought out his trio mates in Cologne at a time when they were one of the hottest rhythm sections around, and they quickly became creative allies and friends. Ten years and eight albums later, Held said, "The trust we have in each other really shows itself in the music. We can easily understand what each other is doing."

Soon after forming and settling into their collective voice, Held and his bandmates grew restless. "We felt good," Held remembered, "but it became too much of the same thing, and we wanted to feel challenged and to be in the moment each time we played. So we decided to abandon every arrangement and every set list that we had. From that point, which was around 2008, we decided to have no set list."

"I might play one phrase and that might remind the other guys of a really big piece that we used to play, and that then triggers different kinds of reactions by the guys. But I always know what to play with them, although we always try to challenge each other and go for the risk, and not the routine."

Held, who makes his New York debut on Oct. 25 at the German Consulate, raised his international reputation two years back via the album *The Trio Meets John Scofield*, recorded in a special concert in Cologne. The pianist was given carte blanche to invite a guest of his choice and, as a longtime Scofield fan, tentatively sent out an invitation. The result is a fascinating blend of musical voices from different but compatible aesthetics. Another of Held's evolving relationships is with saxophonist Chris Potter, with whom the trio played for the second time this fall.

At this juncture, Held is excited about future prospects. "I feel really privileged being a part of the Pirouette family," he said. "I don't think I would be where I am now without them. I'm also thankful for the people I've met—playing with John Scofield and Chris Potter. I'm curious about what's next. I think this is very important for a musician or an artist in general—to be curious. I try to stay that way." —Josef Woodard



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# WADADA LEO SMITH NATIONAL TREASURE

By Phillip Lutz  
Photography by Jimmy & Dena Katz





**Wadada Leo Smith had been dodging thunderstorms all afternoon. Up to the minute of his evening performance in the John V. Lindsay East River Park in New York, angry August clouds hugged the river behind the park's band shell, casting shadows on the lonely souls waiting for the show to begin.**





Wadada Leo Smith (center) entertains children, including his granddaughter, Jaya Smith-Tavaris (red dress, with trumpet), on the steps of the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona, Queens, recalling a similar photo of Armstrong from 1970.

**B**ut just as the trumpeter took the stage, the clouds parted, a brilliant moon appeared and, as if by providence, the park—a sliver of green squeezed between the river and an infamous stretch of the FDR Drive abutting lower Manhattan—took on an otherworldly glow that mirrored the music to come.

For the occasion, Smith had chosen “Pacifica,” a tripartite composition that appeared on *Spiritual Dimensions* (Cuneiform Records) in 2009. That version—featuring the iteration of Smith’s Golden Quintet that included Vijay Iyer on piano, John Lindberg on bass and, on drums, Pheeroan akLaff and Famadou Don Moye—was rendered robustly, if in abbreviated form.

In the park, the opportunity to stretch out presented itself, and Smith—along with longtime associate Velibor Pedevski on electronics and, on guitars, Brandon Ross and Doug Wieselmann—fashioned a dynamic performance that abjured harmonic movement but prized structure, abstraction and drama. As the performance unfolded, an unlikely cohort of working-class strivers and hedge-fund bohemians emerged from the surrounding neighborhood to listen.

“There’s some magnetic quality in his sound you can’t ignore,” said Iyer, a frequent collaborator.

The setting could hardly have been more appropriate. The score, which Smith pulled out in his New Haven duplex two days after the performance, recalled the moonlit East River. Written in Smith’s unique pictorial language, Ankhration, it depicted light reflecting on water of varying depths. Each level, denser than the one above it, allowed less light to penetrate; each potentially had an analog in sound.

The nature of those sounds depended on the raw material from which each musician drew. Pedevski, known as Hardedge, mined a battery of digitally manipulated sonic bits, generating a kaleidoscopic range of colors that shifted with the improvisatory flow. Cued by Smith, he led the transitions in and out of the prelude and postlude while the guitarists added textural density to the churn.

Smith, who cut a formidable figure in black, slashed his way across the roiling soundscape, alternating between languid long tones and bursts of tightly packed phrases that dissolved in a meditative, muted denouement. By that point, he had conjured a discomfiting world of sound and fury, tempered by weighty silences. All of which spoke volumes about his concerns.

Parkland, it turns out, has been high on Smith’s list of concerns. As he approaches his 75th birthday on Dec. 18, Smith has chosen again to grapple with a subject of societal import. The result is *America’s National Parks* (Cuneiform), a six-part disquisition on the state of the nation, its open spaces and the closing of its collective mind, scheduled for release on Oct. 14.

Like *Ten Freedom Summers*—Smith’s 2012 take on critical moments in civil rights history—*Parks* seems destined to raise the consciousness of those who experience it. And like *Freedom Summers*, a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize, it promises to raise some hackles along the way.

For the project, Smith has employed the current version of the Golden Quintet, with Lindberg, akLaff, Anthony Davis on piano and, on cello, Ashley Walters, whose addition to the group has broadened its sonic possibilities considerably.

“It’s a different band now, completely,” Smith said during an interview at his New Haven home. “The cello plays both the bass and the treble register, making for this eerie possibility, this unlimited way of voicing stuff.”

Working from scores that combine Smith’s adaptation of standard notation with his symbolic language, the ensemble at times skirts the edge of conventional expression. Case in point: Davis’ pianistic declarations on “Yosemite: The Glaciers, The Falls, The Wells And The Valley Of Goodwill 1890,” which render the majesty of the parks’ natural wonders with the kind of capacious American sound to which Aaron Copland might relate.

The suite also nods to convention in passages of quiet contemplation, notably Smith’s muted solo, unaccompanied, on “Yosemite” and the plaintive cry with which he ends his ode to a pioneering black musicologist in “Eileen Jackson Southern 1920–2002: A Literary National Park.”

But, as his titles suggest, Smith hardly buys into any officially approved narrative. In substance and style, he presents the sort of alternate view to which he has long adhered. “I challenge the idea that the parks are just natural phenomena with trees and lakes and deep rivers,” he said. It is a challenge he levels up front, in the album’s opener, “New Orleans: The National Culture Park USA 1718.”

“I say that New Orleans is a national culture park because in America the first community that developed culturally was New Orleans,” he said. “They had the first opera houses and theaters, the first patrons of arts in America. So why not think of that whole city as a common cultural beacon that happened spontaneously, with all the contradictions of human rights that were taking place there?”

The piece does not offer a postcard reality of tourists happily listening to “When The Saints Go Marching In.” If anything, it suggests a Big Easy dirge, hauntingly filtered through the sensibility of a skeptic.

That tone holds in what may be the suite’s most searing statement, “The Mississippi River: Dark And Deep Dreams Flow The River—A National Memorial Park c. 5000 BC.” More than a half-hour in length, it unleashes the full force of the quintet en masse, reveling in acute dissonance as it reveals the river’s secrets.

“‘The Mississippi River’ talks about the dropping of black bodies into that water,” he explained. “The idea is that it’s supposed to be a dumping ground that hides them, but when the bodies get bloated they float back up. Nothing can really be hidden, even though the criminal mind believes it has the power to outwit everything else and do the impossible.”

Smith’s views on racism are derived from close observation. He was born in 1941 near a bayou on the outskirts of Leland, Mississippi, in a culturally rich if economically poor area called Black Bay. At the time, Jim Crow was in full force, and it had an impact on a young African-American man with a creative bent.

“When you’re born in a society of segregation, in Mississippi, where every institution in that society is forbidden for you, some kids lose it at some point,” Smith said. “But some with the glow in the eye keep moving. You find a way to express it. I did through music.”

He had help: Celebrated blues players, like B.B. King and Little Milton, visited his home, courtesy of his stepfather, Alex “Little Bill” Wallace, a well-known guitarist who had a pioneering radio show and helped book performers in the region. And Smith learned quickly, leading a band by age 13 and playing the circuit not long after.

But, despite a certain deference shown him as Wallace’s stepson, he



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was also subject to indignities. At one Mississippi supper club, between Leland and Greenville, he was among the black musicians whom the white owner routinely gathered in the kitchen, lined up and paraded to the bandstand with orders not to look sideways at the white clientele.

Smith was able to escape some of that, and build his jazz chops, after he joined the band of singer Al Perkins, who played parts of the Midwest and hired bebop-playing musicians from Chicago. But Smith found he needed to spread his wings further, and to do that, he joined the U.S. Army in 1964.

After being posted near his old stomping grounds in Arkansas and Louisiana, as well as Missouri, he re-upped and was sent to Europe. But he also encountered conflict there. While the Army musicians were generally competent, they didn't take to his developing aesthetic. And their objections became personal.

"The pieces I would write had no harmonic progression," he said. "None of them had this II-V-I relationship or this eight-bar or 12-bar or 16-bar blues. It was all music with the implication of freedom. People disliked me because of what I did.

"When they forced me to play in their context, I would play the melody but I would not play the harmonic progression. And what I played made sense, so there was a lot of confusion around me. The bandmaster would single me out as a bopper, even though I wasn't playing bop.

"Ultimately, the guy called me a Mississippi dirt farmer."

But all that was about to change. As his tour of duty came to a close, a fellow traveler gave him Anthony Braxton's contact information in Chicago. Leaving the service in 1967, Smith headed to the Windy City and was soon running through Ornette Coleman tunes with Braxton.

A few weeks after arriving in Chicago, Smith noticed a poster in his North Side neighborhood: Saxophonist Joseph Jarman, a key member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, was performing at a coffeehouse. Smith hatched a plan to meet him.

"On the day of the performance," Smith said, "I got there two hours early. I thought maybe I could hear the sound check. As I walked up to the building, there were Lester Bowie and Roscoe Mitchell, both on motorbikes—Lester with his short pants on and his sandals, looking wild and creative, cigar in his mouth and trumpet in his backpack, looking like an outsider; Roscoe, with a vest on, looking the same way."

Immediately, he said, the trumpeter and the saxophonist started opening up and invited him to a kind of rehearsal session the following Saturday at AACM headquarters on Cottage Grove Avenue. There, the welcoming spirit morphed into something closer to a "hazing process."

Smith recalled that he watched from the sidelines as a trumpeter was having trouble negotiating one of AACM President Muhal Richard Abrams' pieces. "Muhal said to me, 'Hey, did you bring your horn? Go get it.' I got it. He said, 'Play that.' I played it. Everybody in the band turned around and looked to see who that stranger was who was playing that part."

He was invited to participate in the public performance the following Sunday. The trial by fire continued.

"The moment I started soloing," he said, "they all walked off stage and left me there. I realized it was a test. They stood right at the edge of the stage and talked loud enough for me to hear them. I'm playing and getting angrier and angrier, and I play harder and harder because at this point in the back of my head I'm thinking that these guys are disrespectful and I'm going to stop them from talking. And I did. That's what they did to outsiders."

But, he added, once a player was accepted—and, at the time, about two dozen were—he was embraced. "You lose your outsider status because you have to create your own ensemble. You have to play your own music; the bylaws say you cannot play standards. And you can say to Muhal, Roscoe, whoever, 'I'd like to have you play.' They can't say no."

While Smith was early to the AACM scene, he missed Jack DeJohnette, who had already decamped for New York by the time the



"My grandkids are my future," says Smith (right), seen here with his granddaughter, Jaya Smith-Tavaris.

trumpeter arrived in Chicago. Nonetheless, the drummer, discussing the scene in the early days, confirmed that the AACM was open to artists like Smith with singular visions.

"The guys who had a goal and knew what they were doing and weren't moved by the status quo found a way to make things happen," he said. "Muhal created the AACM as an alternative for musicians looking for another way of presenting a full spectrum of written composition. So there was room for that in Chicago. It turned out world-class musicians, and Wadada was definitely one of them."

Despite their shared AACM roots, Smith and DeJohnette did not work together until 2000, when both were living in the Hudson Valley.

"He had a different approach to music and writing, different ideas about rhythm and sound," DeJohnette said. "And he also had the element of Chicago. I was interested in his approach to music—space, and the concept of writing suites, movement kind of pieces with room for improvisation."

The two musicians finally connected when Smith formed the Golden Quartet, with Davis and Malachi Favors on bass. More recently, in 2014, DeJohnette was recruited for Smith's *Great Lakes Suite* (Cuneiform), with Lindberg on bass and Henry Threadgill on woodwinds. In between those dates, in 2009, the trumpeter and the drummer took a duo turn with *America* (Tzadik), a wide-ranging exercise in binary interplay.

That album is notable, among other reasons, for its allusions to Miles Davis, with whom DeJohnette played in the electric period, circa 1970, and Smith claims a musical kinship. Like Davis, Smith has become widely admired for the elasticity with which he treats space on a musical canvas. Smith has spent time exploring that, and other elements, of the Davis oeuvre. In 1998, seven years after Davis' death, he joined guitarist Henry Kaiser on *Yo Miles!* (Shanachie), the first of a series of albums that were part of that exploration.

"The most dramatic thing in the world is to hear a sound and throw a space in there and allow that space to go past the idea of a rest," Smith said. "Then if you are clever, creative and have enough courage to hit the right sound afterwards, it magnifies that space. That's why I say Miles was one of the most dramatic players ever. He dramatized the space and



cloaked it in mystery.”

But for judicious use of space, Smith may be at his most effective when delving into his own psyche unencumbered. That is what he has done with *Alone: Reflections And Meditations On Monk* (TUM). A solo trumpet outing devoted to Thelonious Monk, the album, a cogent mix of originals and Monk tunes, is due in 2017.

By Smith's own account, his love of Monk has generally been a private affair but one he has pursued avidly. “The artist that I'm closest to in life is Thelonious Monk,” he said. “Most people would never know that.” *Alone* will represent the first time he has dug into the composer's work with the intent of documenting it for public consumption.

“I wanted to make all my Monk pieces have a certain kind of feeling in them,” he said. “So what I did after the melody was make improvisational structures. I didn't use harmonic progressions. I wanted to have an improvisation off of Monk's music that allowed me to express it in a different way than a harmonic way.”

At this point in his life, Smith's homages are not stopping at Monk. This year and last, he laid down tracks for *Nagwa* (TUM), which includes pieces dedicated to Coleman, John Coltrane, Billie Holiday and Smith's onetime drummer, Ronald Shannon Jackson. The album, he said, grew out of a longstanding desire to record with bassist Bill Laswell in his New Jersey studio.

“I have always liked how he manipulated stuff after the fact without losing the intent of the composer,” Smith said.

The album, he said, also reflected a wish to return to the multiple-guitar format. In it, he mixes and matches four distinct voices on the instrument: Kaiser, Ross, Michael Gregory Jackson and Lamar Smith, his grandson, who takes impressive flight on the smoking opener, “Ornette Coleman: In The Twenty-first Century, America—Part 1 And Part 2.”

The presence of his grandson is no small matter. Even as Smith remains a font of fresh ideas—a three-year, \$275,000 grant from the Doris Duke Foundation will help pay for new projects like *Create*, a showcase for his recent output planned for April next year at Firehouse 12 in New Haven—he is looking to his legacy.

“My grandkids are my future,” he said.

But, as his body of work makes clear, it is a future about which he is concerned. While he hopes that young activists will make the world safer—he has dedicated the postlude of a new oratorio, *Rosa Parks*, to the Black Lives Matter movement—he is hardly sanguine.

The oratorio, slated for its premiere at Dave Douglas' Festival of New Trumpet Music (FONT) at the New School on Sept. 24, ends with a spoken challenge he has assigned himself the task of delivering: “We know how to stop/ the killing of our children./ Can anyone help us?/ Can you?”

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# JOSHUA REDMAN & BRAD MEHLDAU FLOATING & FLYING

BY JOSEF WOODARD | PHOTO BY MICHAEL WEINTROB





Chemistry between musicians can be elusive yet also easily detectable. Like-minded and like-skilled musicians can get together and generate solid, proficient results, but without that spark of telepathy. Time logged playing together can help, as can shared artistic values. But those factors still don't guarantee the rare, magical convergence of forces that create something greater than the sum of its parts.

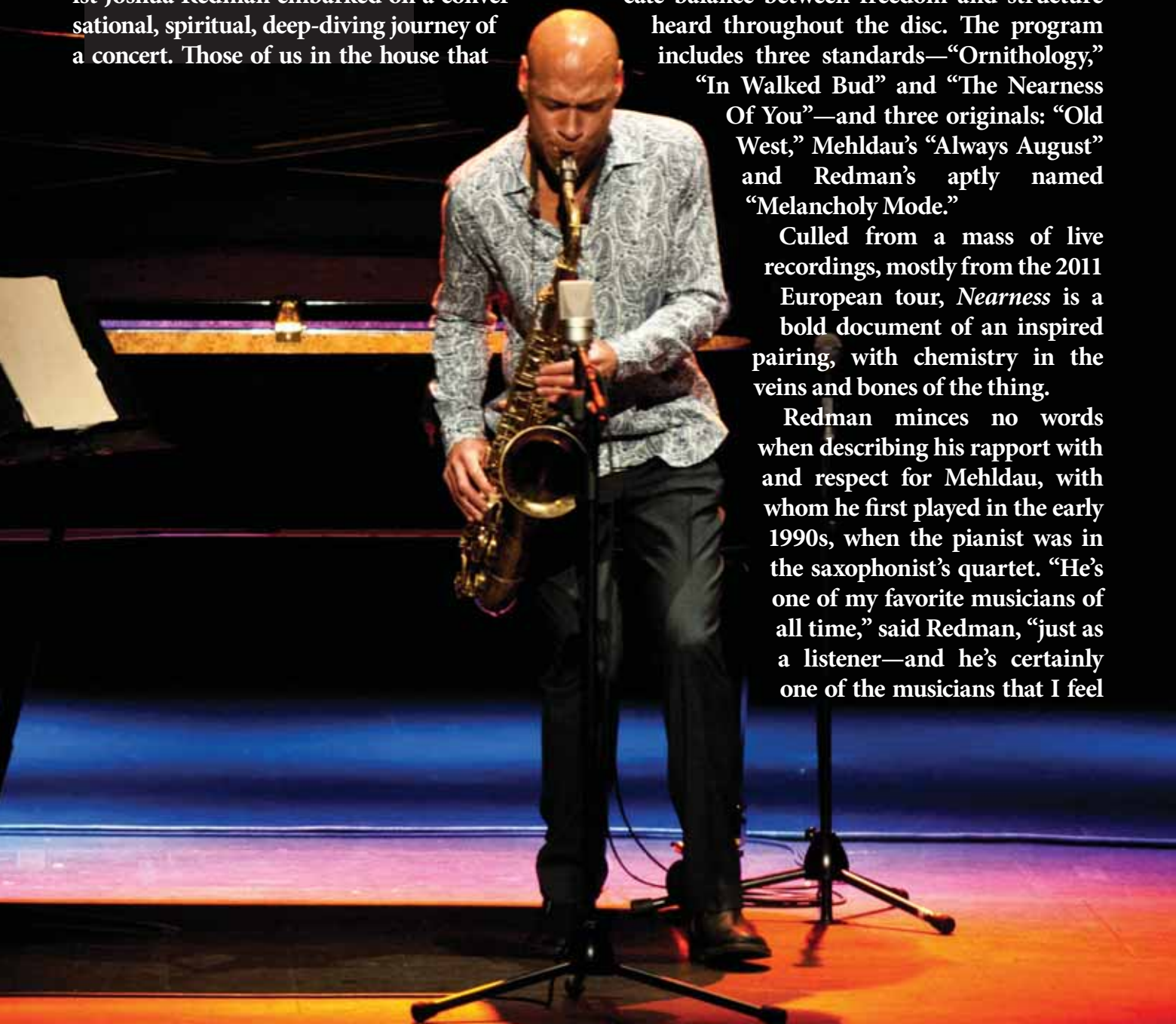
One particularly memorable example of such success occurred on July 7, 2011, in an 18th century church in Kongsberg, Norway. It was on that date that pianist Brad Mehldau and saxophonist Joshua Redman embarked on a conversational, spiritual, deep-diving journey of a concert. Those of us in the house that

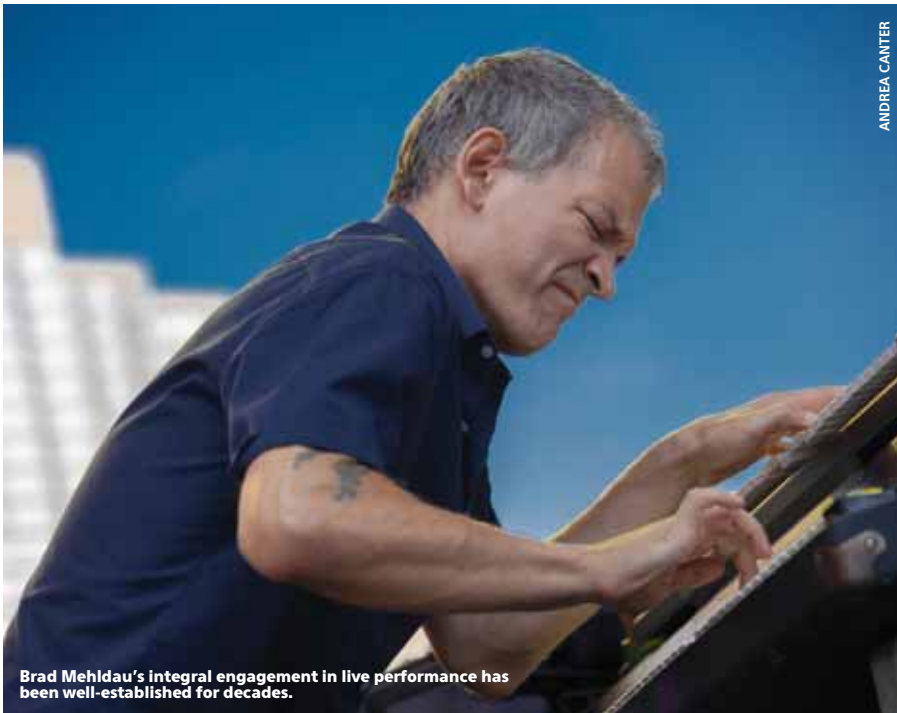
night were duly transfixed and transported. Part of the Kongsberg Jazz Festival, the show took place during a brief but powerful duo tour. The players took time out from their individual careers to rekindle a nearly 20-year-old musical relationship in the most direct format possible: They sought to maximize the power of two.

That crystallizing set in Norway was documented for posterity, and one tune—Mehldau's glowing original "Old West"—now appears as the dynamic closing track on *Nearness* (Nonesuch), a fascinating new album by the duo. The tune, as reinvented in Kongsberg, embodies the delicate balance between freedom and structure heard throughout the disc. The program includes three standards—"Ornithology," "In Walked Bud" and "The Nearness Of You"—and three originals: "Old West," Mehldau's "Always August" and Redman's aptly named "Melancholy Mode."

Culled from a mass of live recordings, mostly from the 2011 European tour, *Nearness* is a bold document of an inspired pairing, with chemistry in the veins and bones of the thing.

Redman minces no words when describing his rapport with and respect for Mehldau, with whom he first played in the early 1990s, when the pianist was in the saxophonist's quartet. "He's one of my favorite musicians of all time," said Redman, "just as a listener—and he's certainly one of the musicians that I feel





Brad Mehldau's integral engagement in live performance has been well-established for decades.

closest to, as a player. We've always had a really special connection. There is a real chemistry and empathy that we have for each other, musically.

"Part of that has to do with the fact that we both value many of the same things. We both love a lot of the same music. We share certain approaches as jazz improvisers—the most important of which is this very deep and constant listening at every moment, and a desire to interact and converse within the music. We both have a very conversational approach as improvisers."

"We developed together," said Mehldau, "so some of Josh's musical blueprint is on me, as well. A feeling for the blues and swing, certain things that we take from pop music, a bit of wonkiness, a sense of humor—we share all those things. So when we go to play, we're starting from that point.

"In fact, one challenge with Josh for me is to not get too comfortable and just sit back. A bit of that is fine, but I don't want to become complacent with him—no matter how good it feels."

On a sunny mid-August afternoon, the affable Redman met with *DownBeat* for an interview in Albany, near his home in Berkeley, California, at Flowerland, a hip nursery-meets-coffeehouse. At the time, Redman was preparing for a mini-residency at the Monterey Jazz Festival, where he would play with The Bad Plus (a collaboration captured on the riveting 2015 album *The Bad Plus Joshua Redman*, from which his solo on "Friend Or Foe" nabbed a Grammy nomination for Best Improvised Jazz Solo). Elsewhere at Monterey, he would perform with his group Still Dreaming (a tribute to the '70s/'80s group Old

and New Dreams, which included his father, Dewey Redman, on saxophone); and with his long-standing quartet, which includes pianist Aaron Goldberg, bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Gregory Hutchinson.

Redman's shared history with Mehldau goes back to the early '90s, when Mehldau played in young lion Redman's "dream team" quartet, alongside bassist Christian McBride and drummer Brian Blade—all musicians who have gone on to become titans of their respective instrumental domains in jazz.

Of this budding super-group, Redman said, with a dose of self-deprecation: "We were just a bunch of kids with bad-fitting suits and a lot of adrenaline. I realized immediately how lucky I was just to be able to do this, period—to be able to have a career in music and tour with the people I was playing with. But I immediately realized that this band was not going to be together that long. For me, they are three of the geniuses of this music. These are three of the greatest cats of our generation."

Ironically or not, it was in this fearsome foursome that the birth of a mutually sensitive twosome commenced. "When you're playing in a classic jazz quartet configuration, the instruments do have their traditional roles," Redman said. "The saxophone is a soloistic instrument and the piano is soloistic, but also harmonic, comping, and we know what the bass and drums do. But there was this thing that Brad and I got into from the beginning, even playing quartet. He listens so deeply to everything that's happening and finds a way to voice his chords in a way that is so conversational and also complementary. I found myself always responding to him when I was playing, when I

was improvising."

After Mehldau left Redman's group, the pianist embarked on his own illustrious solo career, mostly in a trio context. Along the way, he helped redefine the modern jazz piano trio paradigm, and made the jazz world safe for Radiohead covers. His range of projects since the late '90s has also included ambitious solo piano work—sweepingly documented on last year's four-disc compilation *10 Years Solo Live* (Nonesuch)—as well as sideline projects like the semi-electric, semi-pop-flavored *Largo* (2002), and his recent electro-acoustic duo project Mehliana, which pairs plugged-in keyboards with the nimble drumming and electronics of Mark Guiliana.

Mehldau's expansive 2010 album *Highway Rider*, an elaborate project outside of the typical trio/solo format, officially brought him back in collaborative touch with Redman, and Mehldau went on to produce Redman's orchestral project *Walking Shadows* in 2013. In between came the duet encounter. They talked about one day going into the studio for a few days to lay down repertoire from their tours, but instead decided to investigate the bounty of live recordings from the 2011 tours, thus digging for existing gold. They found plenty.

Concerning the lurking live tape archive created five years before its eventual release, Mehldau explained: "We had in the back of our mind that it might be a record, but also had discussed a studio recording. We felt strongly after listening that live was the way to go, because so much of the excitement of the music for both Josh and I was wrapped up in the white heat of the live performance."

Recalling the Kongsberg event, Mehldau said, "That's a nice church. I remember it well. Also a nice festival. Not to get gushy, but I feel so lucky to play in all of these different venues from which we culled the recording. Some are less ideal acoustically than others, but they all had a vibe, and of course, a lot of that has to do with the audience. I remember fantastic audiences for all these concerts."

As natural as the deep link may be between these players, the tradition of piano-saxophone duets is one seldom visited. Given that paucity, it may be reasonable to say that *Nearness* is the first high-profile, major-label piano-sax pairing on record since Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter put out their sublime tête-à-tête on the 1997 album *1 + 1* (Verve), nearly 20 years ago.

"Duo is unique," he continued. "Josh and I are feeding off each other mostly, with the awareness that we are always each other's foil in this context, and there is no other wall to lean on. Then we go from there. Herbie and Wayne, Sonny, McCoy, Monk, Trane—I hear all those guys and many others in there, for sure. But in terms of the duo setting specifically, it's fun and challenging for us to just start from scratch





Joshua Redman views his dialogue with Mehldau as a continuation of a connection with serious roots and future possibilities.

right there: ‘What are we going to do together, right now, in this moment?’”

“There’s no shortage of saxophone influences on both of us, and piano influences on both of us,” Redman noted. “Some of my biggest influences are not saxophonists, but pianists. Yes, Herbie and Wayne come to mind. Steve Lacy and Mal Waldron did some stuff. I’m sure it’s been done a lot, but it’s not like I can think of touchstone records or even performances that I’ve seen of sax and piano duo.

“It never went across my mind that I didn’t have a reference point for it. But I feel that the reference point is all the music that I’ve come up listening to and that Brad has come up listening to, and all the saxophonists and pianists that we both love, and the great jazz groups that we both love, and the great music outside of jazz that we both love.”

Zooming in on key points on *Nearness*, I asked Mehldau about the specific tune “Old West,” from Kongsberg, which, more than the other tracks on the album, seems to epitomize the idea of a springing out of a structural basis, from which the pair departs and morphs into new terrain. Does that piece illustrate a certain freedom-within-structure impulse of this duo? “For sure,” he said. “This is something Josh and I got into more and more in the live setting. I’m doing kind of free-association with the tonal centers, listening a bit where Josh’s line is going and then putting something new under him every so often, shifting the sand under him. And he hears it, and recalibrates,

often in the middle of an idea. That’s very fun and rewarding.

“For me, that kind of approach represents a lot of what’s special about playing with Josh, especially in the duo setting, which I would call the process of ‘listening back.’ You feed an idea to the other player, then see how he responds, and that response is something that he is in turn feeding back to you. And so on, back and forth, until it feels less like a game of catch and more like the ball is always in the air, floating, and you’re just tapping it quickly. There’s a floating, flying aspect to it. Hard to put in words.”

One of Redman’s finest performances on the album is “The Nearness Of You,” which ends with a touching, three-minute saxophone cadenza that conveys the breadth—and circular breathing aspect—of his ability to sustain musical momentum in an unaccompanied format. He has occasionally given solo sax concerts, at Wigmore Hall in London and at San Francisco’s Grace Cathedral, for instance, but is hesitant to fully commit to the format. “I don’t want to hear myself playing by myself,” he said. “The greatest joy, for me, in playing music, is connecting and communicating with other musicians and hearing musicians play and being a part of the music that they’re creating. With solo, that opportunity does not exist.”

Redman can be self-effacing at times, as is the case with his wary review of that “Nearness” cadenza. “In a duo format,” he noted, “most of the time, I’m playing, and Brad’s also playing. But maybe there is more opportunity in that

format than others to have times when it’s just me playing. Generally, it’s not a very pretty picture. I guess I took a fair number of cadenzas over the course of the tour.

“There was something special about that performance of that song. Brad identified it immediately. He’s a master ballad player and has recorded a lot of great ballads. But initially, we also thought, ‘It’s too long. It’s almost 17 minutes. We can’t put this on an album.’ But we kept coming back to it. He played such a gorgeous intro. I’m relatively satisfied with the way I took the melody. I love playing ballads and I think I’ve become a better ballad player as time has gone on.

“That performance seemed to cast some sort of spell. There was also something about that piano, a very good piano, and the sound of the recording, the sound of the hall just really worked. At the end, I just went on one of my little improvisational cadenza tangents and, I guess, found a way to resolve it. It resolved itself without too many bones being broken.”

Mehldau’s integral engagement in live performance has been well-established for decades, and given particular credence by the release of two important live albums in as many years—his multi-disc retrospective of live solo shows over a decade and his new duo documentation.

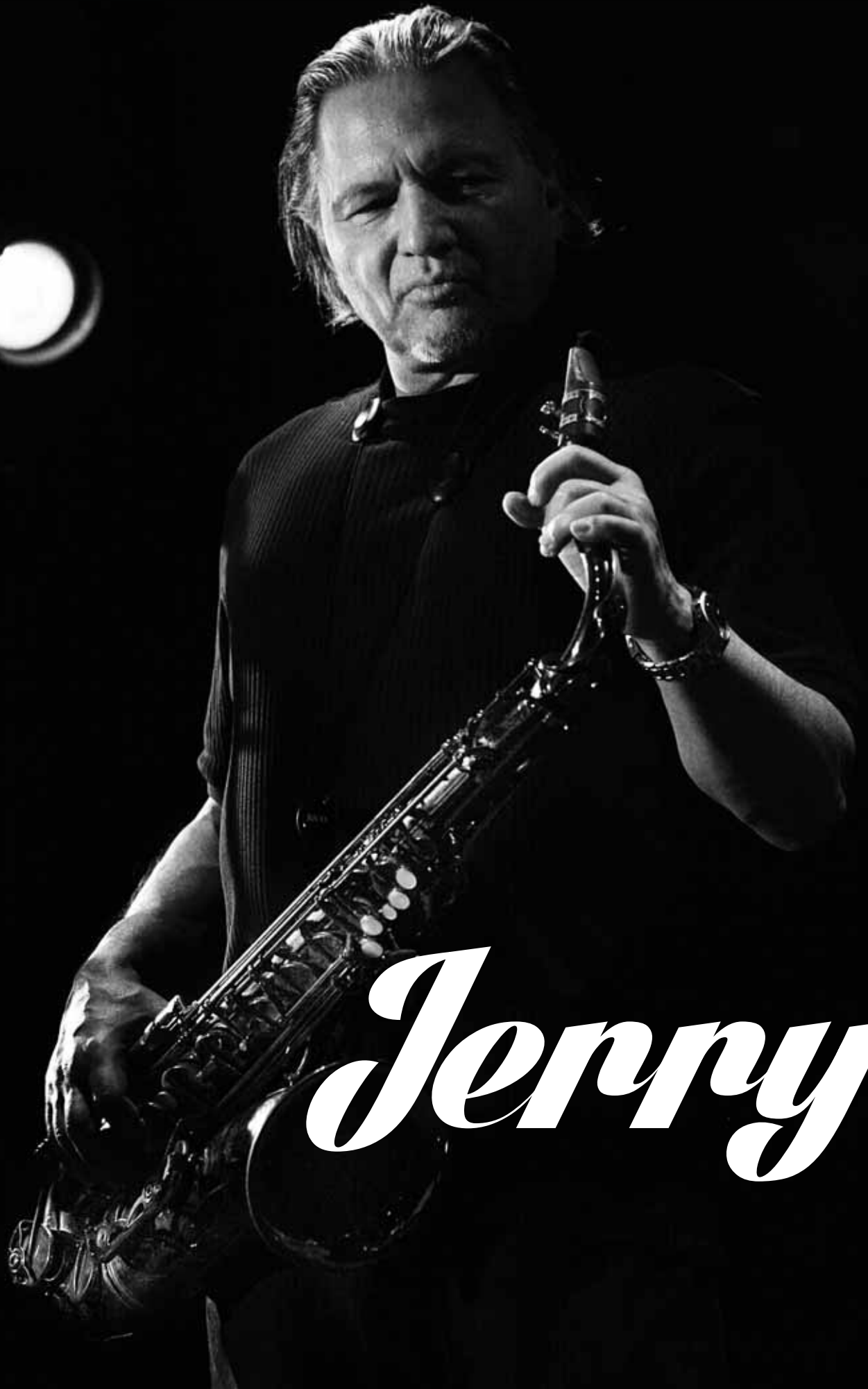
Is there something about the live experience that brings out rich musical resonances?

“Yes, and it has to do with the audience,” he said. “Music is made to be shared with the listener, and I really do feel more and more that the listeners are participating in the process. It sounds a bit mystical or maybe like mumbo jumbo, but the listener ‘listens back’ to what we are doing, in the same way I described before—giving us more ideas, which we in turn give back to them. At least that’s how I believe it to be. They give something back ... by their presence, their consciousness, their active listening. It is powerful stuff.”

The duo adventure continues with touring this fall and beyond to coincide with the album’s release. Redman views the ongoing dialogue as a continuation of a connection—and a personalized way of communicating—with serious roots, and future possibilities. With Mehldau, he said, “We found this give-and-take, this kind of elasticity and conversational approach, which we developed early on. Once we had a chance to play duo, that was magnified exponentially, because then it was just the two of us.

“I tend to be attracted to musicians who value that; a lot of the musicians that I play with do value that. I have that with many of them. With Brad, maybe it’s just that much more natural and fluid, and also fluent. It’s like we’re both very conversational and we’re always talking to each other in the music and having this dialogue. And in many ways, we speak the same language.”

DB



*Jerry*



**J**erry Bergonzi is a purist. He deeply loves the saxophone and enjoys practicing, excited at the thought of being able to do something musically that he could not previously do. He reharmonizes standards by stretching chord progressions beyond their furthest reaches because he wants to challenge himself as a soloist.

For Bergonzi, it is all about the music. Accolades and glory are far from his mind. In a world that rarely recognizes such dedication, he has carved out a life in Boston, where he can compose music, play a weekly gig with his quintet and teach at New England Conservatory with no curriculum restrictions. He travels about 130 days a year performing. All this he balances with a rich family life: He and his wife, the accomplished pianist Jeri DiMarco Bergonzi, have two children.

# *Bergonzi*

## THE MYSTIC

*By Claire Daly | Photo by Antonio Porcar Cano*

Bergonzi is a mystic and one of the finest saxophone players of our time—maybe even a guru. Just don't ask him to agree with you on any of that. He claims, "Out of all the sax players in the world, I am one of them. How great is that?" He grew up alongside famed Boston teacher Charlie Banacos.

Later he toured and recorded with Dave Brubeck's band from 1973 to '76, and then 1978 to '81. His method books are acclaimed and widely used. Nowadays he travels the world under his own steam, largely through the strength of his reputation and well-regarded discography.

His new album, *Spotlight On Standards* (Savant), is a trio date with his touring bandmates Renato Chicco (organ) and Andrea Michelutti (drums). The program includes brilliantly reharmonized standards such as "Witchcraft," "Stella By Starlight" and "Come Rain Or Come Shine," plus four originals.

DownBeat caught up with Bergonzi in Boston for a wide-ranging conversation.

## TELL US ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE.

When I was 8 years old, I was given a music aptitude test in school. They played the lowest note on the piano and then the highest note and asked the class if the second note was higher or lower than the first. Fifty percent of us got it right, and they said we were musically gifted. They asked, "What instrument do you want to play?" and I said, "The trumpet!" And they said, "No, according to the test, you'd be better suited to play the clarinet." The marching band needed clarinet players.

So I went home every day for three months saying, "Mom, buy me a clarinet." After a couple of months, she bought me a \$17 U.S. Army metal clarinet. I took a lesson from Sam Goldberg, who was the shoe salesman downstairs. He played "The Bear Went Over The Mountain." I never forgot it.

If you put an instrument in front of me, I'm going to learn how to play it. We had a piano in the house. My brother bought an upright bass from my uncle upstairs and quit after a week, so I learned how to play it. I got an alto sax at 11 and a tenor at age 12.

My uncle was a jazz musician, so my first record at 8 years old was Lester Young with Count Basie and the KC Seven. Then it was this one called *Little Band, Big Jazz* with Buddy Collette, Stan Levy, Conte Condoli. I liked this stuff and listened to it all the time.

About then, Miles Donahue came by with an Art Blakey record, a Sonny Rollins record and a Miles Davis record: *Steamin'*. That was all I wanted to hear. Trane with Miles. I used to go to a record store that had listening booths and get a stack of LPs. They never minded—they knew I was going to buy something. I made a little money caddying and I practically owned the whole Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside and

Impulse catalogs.

In high school I studied with Joe Viola and would go to the Jazz Workshop to see music all the time. I heard John Coltrane there a half a dozen times. I couldn't believe it—the place wasn't even packed. He was with McCoy [Tyner], Elvin [Jones] and Jimmy [Garrison].

In 1963 I heard him with Roy Haynes at Newport. Woody Herman and Count Basie played that day and then Trane comes on and it's like somebody yelled, "Fire!" They're leaving in droves.

## CAN YOU RECALL ANY OTHER MEMORIES ABOUT COLTRANE?

He didn't talk between tunes. It was just music. He wasn't trying to sell you anything. Elvin had a smile on his face that was three feet wide. Even though it was heavy, it was light. You know how some people get militant or muscular? This was not muscular.

To me, one of the reasons Coltrane was a messiah was not only did he have this powerful music but there was something feminine in it, too. As strong as it got, it was always attractive. A lot of people who try to follow in his footsteps only get the masculine thing and it just doesn't work. There's so much sentiment there, and sensitivity. Then he could go play "Chasin' The Trane" and it's ripping your intestines out. He had it all.

I talk about the four aspects of music; it's like astrology. Fire, water, earth and air. *Fire* is will, intention, energy, enthusiasm. It's raw energy and spirit. *Water* is emotion. We clothe our notes in emotion and the higher aspect of water is inspiration. Inspired notes. *Earth* is technique, groove, time. *Air* is intellect. You can see how it's the predominant aspect now. Today everybody is so intellectual. The higher octave of this is intuition, and that's what we want to get to. Everybody has four—some are a little deficient in one area and strong in others.

## TALK ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LEGENDARY BOSTON TEACHER CHARLIE BANACOS.

I was—and am—Charlie's best friend. I met him in high school. We went to Lowell State Teachers College in 1965, where they used to kick me out of the practice rooms for practicing jazz. The head of the music department stuck his head in and said, "Let somebody serious about music practice in here." I was practicing bebop licks. Having said that, I probably would have thrown myself out because I sucked—but that's why people practice.

I'd meet Charlie there and we'd practice every morning from 6 to 9 a.m., just playing tunes like maniacs. I might skip classes and keep practicing because I hated school.

I would go to Charlie's house. I had an apartment for \$10 a week with a pay phone in

the kitchen. I'd come home from college and practice like a maniac. Charlie and I would hang out, we'd practice all day, and do gigs. He had a piano at his house and his mother would come home from work and we'd be lying down taking a nap and she'd step over us. We'd play tunes and I'd say, "Hey Charlie, what was that?" and we'd share information. There were no jazz teachers at that time. If you'd want to take a jazz lesson, they'd say, "Listen to records and learn tunes," so I did. This is 1966, '67, '68.

Charlie said, "I've got this gig in New Hampshire. It's four nights a week, playing behind singers, belly dancers, strippers, whatever—we just play tunes. You want to play bass?" So I got an electric bass, bought an amp that day and went to the gig. It got to the point where I was doing pretty well.

That gig finished and I went and played with Miles Donahue at the Holiday Inn for six nights a week. I was saving money because I wanted to play tenor saxophone. I moved to New York after that.

## WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE IN NEW YORK LIKE?

I moved in with Harvie S. I played tenor saxophone. Then I moved to 28th Street for \$75 a month with Art Baron, who was on the road with Duke Ellington. The good news is it had a sink. I'd practice 24/7 plus sessions.

Then I moved around the corner to this place that had three lofts. We played sessions every day. Lovano had moved down from Boston and if I said, "Hey, Steve [Slagle], I'm doing a session tomorrow," then he, Lovano, Billy Drewes and maybe another guy would show up. We'd have drums, bass and maybe five saxophone players. It was crazy. Sometimes Scofield would be there, Dave Liebman, Steve Grossman, Greg Herbert, Bob Berg.

Brecker never played sessions there, but I'd go and play with Mike at his loft. We'd practice together and I'd practice with Berg or Liebman. It was a great situation. We played all the time.

That's where I met people that I've networked with all my life. People say, "How do you survive in this business?" It's *all* networking. I never had a manager, never had a promoter; I'm *really* underground and I'm never out of work. I've got too much work. I'm an underground dude working.

## WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "UNDERGROUND"?

One of the reasons I like being on the road is nobody knows who I am. I love being anonymous. The music is underground. I exist on this other tier and I love it ... To me the greatest music happens on that tier—under the radar where it's just music.

Nothing is going to affect my career. I make recordings year after year. No matter what I do,



I get a hit and I get to first base. I get another hit and I'm running to the next base and it's first base again. I'm always on first base, no matter what happens.

### WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

It's my karma. I'm happy at first base. [Astrologically] I'm a Fifth House person. That means expression. Fame? *Pfffft*. I just want to play the saxophone and improvise and sing through my instrument. All I want to do is play.

I love to practice, and I don't practice to get better. That's my secret. I practice because I like practicing. People say, "Do you do yoga?" I say, "Yeah, every time I take out my instrument."

I get in that zone physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually. That's yoga. Union. I'm in it. That's why we all play music. We're addicted to the present tense. It's not "Let's talk about me"; it's about being in the zone.

I'm not a master. Music is the master; we're all students. What is great music? It's not something that's more complex or more sophisticated. It's something that just is. It's pure.

Music is a disease. You're born with it—you can't get rid of it. It's terminal. You die with it so you might as well give it everything you've got.

### DO YOU MAINTAIN A PRACTICE REGIMEN WHEN YOU TRAVEL?

When I'm on the road, I practice in my mind, which is the same thing to me. I'm a diligent practitioner. I'll sit there with my eyes shut for an hour and practice something [mentally] and then, as soon as I pick up the saxophone—*boom*—I can play it.

### I RECENTLY HEARD YOU, GEORGE GARZONE AND JOE LOVANO PLAY TOGETHER. IT WAS SO SPECTACULAR BECAUSE IT WAS THREE UNIQUELY DEVELOPED TENOR VOICES.

We learned how to develop our sound on the bandstand. Now they learn to do it in a practice room and it's a little different. But you said something—*development*. Who's my favorite tenor player today? The last one I heard. It can be a student, a guy on a record.

When I was a kid, I had an agenda. I wanted to sound like this guy, or that guy, and I'd be with them six months or a year or two. Now I don't have an agenda. I could listen to Albert Ayler one day, Wayne Shorter the next, Ben van Gelder the next. I mention this because at some point in your development, you realize that you can't do everything. This is why I brought this book out here [Dane Rudhyar's *An Astrological Mandala*]. Every time I read this, I think, "That's the way I feel about playing music."

"A man on a magic carpet hovers over a large area of land: the ability to expand one's consciousness by stabilizing one's point of view

at a higher level."

Basically, it's saying you can't have multiple points of view. You can't be Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, Stan Getz or whoever.

"This is the paradox that confuses so many minds. As long as the intellect restlessly searches for new horizons, it is confused by its searching." ... You can't be free if you're trying to do everything. You have to be true to you and you get free.

I've always wanted to write a book called *Jazz Yoga* because that's what we do when we're playing any instrument. It's breathing.

Somebody interviewing me once said, "We heard that you like to teach. Do you like teaching more or playing more?" I told them, "Would I like to talk about sex as much as I like to have sex?" Now, I like talking about sex. It's fun to talk about, but *having* sex is a different experience. You want to talk about music or play music? *Hello?*

### WHAT OTHER TEACHERS INFLUENCED YOU?

Madame Challoff. I took three piano lessons from her that changed my life—the only three piano lessons I ever took. She had me play a Bach Two-Part Invention. I'd play the left-hand part and the right hand would finger the notes in the air and say them out loud or sing

them. What she had me do was visualize playing music. I'm practicing all the time, visualizing things. I used to go to her meditation group at her apartment. I remember meeting Herbie Hancock up there, Chick Corea, everybody. She was amazing. A total mystic.

I went to Joe Allard for three lessons. For 59 minutes he would talk about the Red Sox and in one minute he would tell me something that I would pay for 10 lessons for. Today, I tell these kids something that took me 30 years to learn and they look at their watch and are like, "OK, we have five minutes. What else?"

We had to figure it out. There was something great about that. We unlocked a lot of the codes.

I'm always practicing something. To me, it's like research and development. Being recognized for being a developer doesn't even occur to me. I could care less about it as long as I'm able to live a quality life and play gigs and keep working on my art form. There's no end to it. Mastery? No such thing. Music is the master, we're the students, so you keep refining, you develop and you become more aware.

You get more selective about what it is that you want to play. In being selective about what you want to play, you become more unique. I mean, I could play "Yakety Sax," but that's not what I want to play. *This* is who I am; *this* is what I want to play.

DB

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# STACEY KENT

# TRUST YOUR HEART

BY BOBBY REED | PHOTO BY NICOLAS NODLAND

Stacey Kent has a secret weapon. His name is Jim Tomlinson.

In the years since the release of Kent's 1997 album *Close Your Eyes* (Candid), which was a big hit in England, the vocalist has steadily built a fan base around the world. Today she is able to tour on nearly every continent. Her partner in all these endeavors has been British saxophonist Tomlinson, who is her husband and her musical director.

Kent's latest album is *Tenderly* (Okeh), on which she is accompanied by Tomlinson (tenor saxophone and alto flute), Jeremy Brown (bass) and legendary Brazilian musician Roberto Menescal, who played guitar and arranged all the material. This exquisite album, produced by Tomlinson, merges a bossa nova aesthetic with Kent's minimalist approach to standards such as "Embraceable You" and "Only Trust Your Heart."

On July 3, the perpetually charming Kent wowed a full house at the Théâtre Maisonneuve during the Montreal Jazz Festival. Her set included carefully nuanced renditions of standards such as "Tangerine" and "The Very Thought Of You" (both of which are on *Tenderly*), as well as compositions by Marcos Valle, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Serge Gainsbourg.

Earlier that day, DownBeat caught up with Kent and Tomlinson backstage at the venue for a lively conversation.

**TALK ABOUT THE MOMENT THAT YOU MET ROBERTO MENESCAL. I KNOW YOU MET HIM SORT OF BY COINCIDENCE, BACKSTAGE DURING AN ALL-STAR CONCERT IN BRAZIL.**

**STACEY KENT:** Sometimes in life you meet someone in the most unexpected way. They come in your life around a cor-

ner and it becomes a life-changing experience. This was one of those moments for me. Roberto's now an important force in my life, not just in my musical life but in my personal life, as a very inspiring person who came along.

**TALK ABOUT WORKING WITH MENESCAL AND HOW YOU ENDED UP WITH THE TRACKS WE HEAR ON THE ALBUM.**

**JIM TOMLINSON:** This was a first for Roberto, so we pretty much gave him carte blanche to suggest and pick the songs.

**SO HE HAD NEVER DONE AN ALBUM OF TUNES FROM THE GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK?**

**JT:** One of the things that's nice about this is that we all sort of have a mentoring role for each other. It's Roberto's first standards album, so we're kind of mentoring him through that, and he's mentoring us through the making of an album that is intimate and sort of vocal-and-guitar dominated, which we've never done.

**SK:** Roberto came and joined us for [the recording sessions for 2013's] *The Changing Lights*. That was a Brazilian-inspired album. He played on "O Barquinho," and he played on one of Jim's compositions, "A Tarde," which he particularly loved. We're playing, we're talking, and he said, "You know, it would be my dream to make a standards album with you." This is where it all started to emerge. He said, "Let's go back to a Barney Kessel/Julie London-type record." We weren't going to revisit those songs because we have our own thing, but he wanted to steal from that universe.





I'm very grateful to Roberto because he made me sing songs that I wouldn't have necessarily chosen, like "There Will Never Be Another You." Roberto ended up choosing maybe 11 out of the 12 songs [on *Tenderly*].

One that was my choice was "If I'm Lucky," a song that was sitting on our piano back home for so long. I knew I wanted to record it but I didn't quite know how. Sometimes a song just sits in the wings, waiting for the right moment, and this was the right moment.

#### TELL ME ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING ALBUM.

**SK:** It's kind of funny that it comes right after [*Tenderly*] because this was my most intimate album, with just four [musicians]—and now we're going to make an orchestral album.

#### WITH WHAT ORCHESTRA OR WHAT STRINGS?

**SK:** Well, there's a lot of stuff that's still up in the air, but the album will come out in the autumn of 2017. We just finished an orchestral [engagement] with the Bordeaux Symphony Orchestra, which was absolutely phenomenal, and we also tour a fair amount with the Quatuor Ébène string quartet. They're a classical quartet. They approached us a few years ago, when we were all under the umbrella of EMI. Jim and I were

on Blue Note, and they were next door on EMI Classics and they said to their producer, "We'd like to make a Brazilian-based album, a bossa type album, and it would be our dream to have Stacey Kent on the record." Well, I happened to be in the building, in the Blue Note office next door, so the producer went, "Wait one minute," and he brought me to the office [*laughs*]. That was just auspicious timing.

#### FOR THE NEW ALBUM, WILL YOU RECORD WITH THAT QUARTET?

**SK:** It's us with a full orchestra. ... Sony France came to us and said, "We want you guys to make an orchestral album." So we said, "Yeah, we're ready. We've done some arrangements [at concerts] with the Bordeaux Symphony already, so we're well prepared."

#### HOW HAVE YOU MANAGED TO BUILD A FAN BASE IN SO MANY COUNTRIES?

**JT:** For anyone who is smart enough to have a master plan and the drive to the follow through on something, the last thing they would have a master plan about is becoming a jazz musician. There are plenty of things you can do that are more secure, and more rewarding financially. Our career has grown in an organic way, from being students in London, developing a follow-

ing around London, expanding that [by] developing a following around the U.K., and getting some offers to do concerts on the continent, getting recordings. It's just kind of happened that way, without any great planning.

Stacey has a voice that is unlike anybody else's and is very natural, and it's instantly recognizable. That has helped us to have a fan base which has remained consistently loyal.

**SK:** Because we travel as a couple, it makes touring a whole lot easier. Jim and I can stay on the road a long time if we want because, at end of the day, I'm not calling home long-distance with my heart being torn between being home and being on the road. I'm very happy on the road because I love making music and I get to do it with my best friend.

We've played in over 50 countries. When we go to Lithuania for the first time, or go to Tbilisi for the first time, it's so exciting. We go to Serbia, we go to Budapest, we go to all of these places and we meet people living similar lives to us, and it's so cool to connect.

#### STACEY, I BELIEVE YOU SPEAK FRENCH, PORTUGUESE, ITALIAN AND GERMAN. CAN YOU SING IN ALL THOSE LANGUAGES?

**SK:** I speak in those languages, but I don't sing in [all of] them. English is my first language. I

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grew up speaking French; it was in the house because of my grandfather who lived, for much of his youth, in France, so I was fluent as a kid. Then I went to college and I studied Italian, Portuguese and German. ... When I'm in those countries, I speak to them in their language, but I don't sing to them in their language. The only languages I sing in are French, English and Portuguese, which lend themselves to the kind of music that I play.

#### DO YOU SING IN PORTUGUESE WHEN YOU'RE IN BRAZIL?

**SK:** I certainly speak to them in Portuguese, and I'll sing a little bit in Portuguese. ... We've done many tours in Brazil. Early on when we went there, there were two journalists—in different cities—who both said to me, "We can feel how much you love our music." These people are very proud of their music and their heritage. They said, "We know how much you love our music because you sing these songs in English." For them it's more exotic to hear me sing a standard, or one of their standards, in English.

#### TELL US ABOUT HOW YOU TWO MET.

**JT:** I had graduated [from Oxford University], and Stacey was [in Oxford] visiting friends who were on an exchange program from Sarah

Lawrence [College], and she'd also graduated. We met through friends in common, and we had a similar story in that we both finished our degrees, and we had a hankering to continue the music that we'd been doing informally. ...

And when we met, we had both already applied to do a one-year post-graduate course in jazz and studio music at the Guildhall [School of Music & Drama in London]. So it was one massive coincidence. Our lives just converged and we met and it was instant. It was love at first sight.

#### JIM, DID YOU APPLY FOR THAT ONE-YEAR COURSE THINKING THAT YOU'D BECOME A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN?

**JT:** I had a band in college. I met some other musicians from Oxford who had a residency at the Ritz Hotel in London, and I was subbing in that band, on weekends sometimes. When I graduated and I was moving to London, I thought, "Well, if I'm going to try to make a go of this, I should probably study music so that I'm not winging it completely."

That was my plan: Just to do a year of music and see what happened. I had a degree to fall back on. And then I met Stacey. That was it.

#### STACEY, DID YOU DREAM OF HAVING A CAREER AS A VOCALIST?

**SK:** No, at that point, it was so far away from being a possibility. I had finished my degree [in comparative literature at Sarah Lawrence College], and I had already started my master's. But I just wanted to take some time off. ... I *still* wasn't really taking a break, because I was going to take this course [at the Guildhall]. I had so many romantic images of England. I thought, "I'll just get on buses and trains and go see all these places and experience things that I've only ever read about. I'll go [take] this course, I will mess around in music, learn what I can, for the enjoyment of it—and then after college, I'll go home to America and continue on my academic path." And then I met Jim.

There's one little coincidence, which was very helpful. So we met in Oxford. We both accidentally happened to [enroll in] the same course in the same year and we both loved it. London is vast. We both rented apartments near Guildhall so that it would be an easy ride into the school. Our apartments were *one block* away from each other. I mean, people were coming from north, south, east and west of London to get into the Guildhall and we were on the same bus route. Ridiculous, right? I [often] wanted to be on the same bus that Jim was on to get home. So, if he wasn't already at the bus stop, I would just hang out and miss my bus. I would wait for him.

**DB**



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# REVIEWS >

Catherine Russell



## Catherine Russell *Harlem On My Mind*

JAZZ VILLAGE 579004

★★★★

*Harlem On My Mind* is very much a period collection, but one that smartly avoids fetishizing its kitschier period totems. Catherine Russell may wish she was born a generation or two earlier, but she has enough respect for jazz's Golden Age not to patronize it with that smirk of postmodern condescension. She treats her material with the articulation and theater of a cabaret singer, and the rhythm and sparkle of a jazz artist.

Russell's *Harlem* is painted in broad strokes that touch on numerous genres. First, there are the Songbook standards, though the only Uptown connection I see in "Don't Take Your Love From Me" seems to be that Lena Horne recorded it early on. But there is "Swing! Brother, Swing!" a period novelty we remember mainly because Billie Holiday recorded two versions in the '30s. The darkest and most melancholy of the songs is "You're My Thrill," which beautifully echoes Holiday again, though from her late-'40s Decca years.

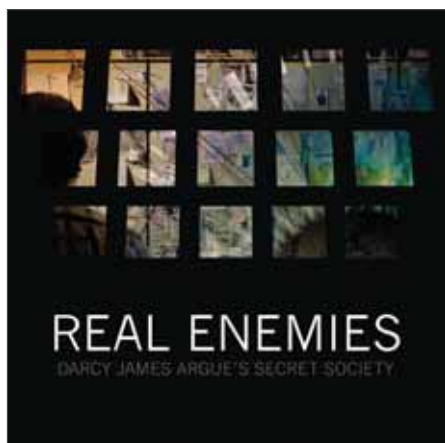
The *Harlem* that evolved into doo-wop and r&b in the '50s showcases a more bluesy Russell in "Talk To Me, Talk To Me" and "I Want A Man." And just for fun, Russell tosses in a couple of uncharacteristic antiquities from the '20s. "You've Got The Right Key But The Wrong Keyhole" reaches back to an 1924 pairing of Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet. And "Goin' To Town" is an Ellington Cotton Club gumdrop, which may be a sentimental favorite. Her famous father, bandleader Luis Russell, recorded it in 1931.

—John McDonough

**Harlem On My Mind:** Harlem On My Mind; I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me; Swing! Brother, Swing!; The Very Thought Of You; You've Got The Right Key But The Wrong Keyhole; Don't Take Your Love From Me; Blue Turning Grey Over You; You're My Thrill; I Want A Man; When Lights Are Low; Talk To Me, Talk To Me; Let Me Be The First To Know; Goin' To Town. (52:20)

**Personnel:** Catherine Russell, vocals; Matt Munisteri, guitar, banjo (5), music director (1, 7, 9); Mark Shane, piano; Tal Ronen, bass; Mark McLean, drums; Jon-Erik Kellso (2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12), Alphonso Horne (2, 4, 8, 10, 12), trumpet; John Allred, trombone (2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12); Andy Farber, Mark Lopeman, Dan Block, saxophones (2, 4, 8, 10, 12); Fred Staton, tenor saxophone (6).

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



**Darcy James Argue's  
Secret Society  
Real Enemies**  
NEW AMSTERDAM  
★★★★

*Real Enemies* is a multimedia piece that addresses the perniciousness of conspiracy theories and the way they seep into our social fabric. When New York composer Argue premiered it last fall at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, he conducted his large ensemble while surrounded by 15 screens beaming images of J. Edgar Hoover, bee hives, Oliver North, the World Trade Center towers and other puz-

**The Bad Plus  
It's Hard**  
OKEH/SONY MASTERWORKS 889853371426  
★★★★

There's never been any problem with The Bad Plus participants—they're each terrific in their own right, and together they've created something very much their own, in terms of sound and repertoire. Ethan Iverson is one of the pianists everyone needs to be paying attention to. He's ultra-inventive, funny, informed, articulate and sensitive; when the band needs a push to get over any hump, he's the one for the job.

But choice of material has been the stumbling block for me. In the past, it's seemed like a ploy. Though tricks of that sort don't always work, they do seem to have been successful in The Bad Plus' case. But getting people to listen by covering recognizable pop songs is not always a recipe for exciting music. On *It's Hard*, they do it beautifully, and make it sound easy.

Drummer Dave King stands out with his light touch and urgency. The trio plays "I Walk The Line" in a fluctuating tempo between walking and sprinting, King's brushes darting around like a kid in the backyard. The most difficult transformation is that of material with strong lyrical association, like TV On The Radio's "Staring At The Sun," or Barry

zing political flash points, sketching a timeline of dubious truths and questionable lies. Throughout this 12-piece program (which takes cues from Schoenberg's 12-tone methodology), you can hear the tick of a doomsday clock that Argue also referenced onstage. The schizoid whispers and manic crescendos are potent enough to conjure an active state of paranoia, ideal for an examination of all things sinister.

Argue's arrangements glow with subtleties and resound with punch. The momentary clunkiness that bubbled up in his earliest pieces has been smoothed out by an ever-developing eloquence, especially in a narrative sense. The grace of tracks like "Who Do You Trust?," "Apocalypse Is A Process" and "Dark Alliance" unfurl with a newfound articulation. Solos are better integrated; the action moves from Point A to Point B with a deeper clarity. Secret Society is composed of key New York improvisers, and it's terrific to hear them in full blush.

—Jim Macnie

**Real Enemies:** You Are Here; The Enemy Within; Dark Alliance; Trust No One; Silent Weapons For Quiet Wars; Best Friends Forever; The Hidden Hand; Casus Belli; Crisis Control; Apocalypse Is A Process; Never A Straight Answer; Who Do You Trust?; You Are Here. (78:46)

**Personnel:** Darcy James Argue, composer, conductor; Dave Pietro, Rob Wilkerson, John Ellis, Carl Maraghi, woodwinds; Seneca Black, Jonathan Powell, Matt Holman, Nadje Noordhuis, Ingrid Jensen, trumpet, flugelhorn; Mike Fahie, Ryan Keberle, Jacob Garchik, trombone; Jennifer Wharton, bass trombone, tuba; Sebastian Noelle, guitar; Adam Birnbaum, piano, FM synth; Matt Clohesy, bass, bass synth; Jon Wikan, drums, cajón, misc. percussion; James Urbaniak, narration (12, 13).

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



Manilow's detestably saccharine "Mandy." On the latter, Iverson milks it just enough, but holds the kitsch from overflowing, hanging onto the emotional reins to better reveal the melody. And the program could hardly kick off better than with a tough version of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' "Maps," on which the trio maintains its own timelines, building to a climax that concedes nothing to cute conceptualism.

—John Corbett

**It's Hard:** Maps; Games Without Frontiers; Time After Time; I Walk The Line; Alfombra Magica; The Beautiful Ones; Don't Dream It's Over; Staring At The Sun; Mandy; The Robots; Broken Shadows. (49:00)

**Personnel:** Ethan Iverson, piano; Reid Anderson, bass; Dave King, drums.

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



**Donny McCaslin  
Beyond Now**  
MOTÉMA 211  
★★★

As most of the jazz world knows by now, reed man Donny McCaslin was recruited by David Bowie to play on what would turn out to be the brilliant English rock icon's final album, *Blackstar*. Obviously inspired (and perhaps a little starstruck), the saxophonist has released an homage that fuses Bowie's rich electronic textures, tightly controlled dance beats and noir, tense moods with his own freewheeling sax improv, playing a repertoire that includes originals as well as tunes by Bowie and Brian Eno and younger artists like Deadmau5, Mutemath and The Chainsmokers.

It's a radical and daring departure for McCaslin, and also a gesture that feels genuine and sweet, given Bowie's sudden, shocking death. But its claustrophobic rhythmic packets and operatic triumphalism are tiresome. And though McCaslin often plays with compelling lyricism, none of the tracks comes up to the level of "Dollar Days," on *Blackstar* itself.

McCaslin addresses that problem directly by inviting vocalist Jeff Taylor to sing Bowie and Eno's opaque "murder mystery" song, "A Small Plot Of Land." Aided by the hauntingly reverbed guitar of Nate Wood, Taylor conjures the ghost of Bowie nicely, but this merely underscores the weakness of a project so overwhelmingly inspired by someone else's sound. Does that mean McCaslin shouldn't have made this album? Absolutely not. There's real emotional clarity here. More jazz players should try crossing barriers like this, dipping into contemporary pop repertoire, whether they entirely succeed or not.

—Paul de Barros

**Beyond Now:** Shake Loose; A Small Plot Of Land; Beyond Now; Coelacanth 1; Bright Abyss; FACEPLANT; Warszawa; Glory; Remain; New York City. (63:03)

**Personnel:** Donny McCaslin, tenor saxophone, flute, alto flute, clarinet; Jason Lindner, keyboards; Tim Lefebvre, electric bass; Mark Guilliana, drums; Jeff Taylor, vocals (2); David Binney, synthesizer, vocals (5, 9, 10); Nate Wood, guitar (2).

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



# The Hot Box

Critics	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
<b>Catherine Russell</b> <i>Harlem On My Mind</i>	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★½	★★★★
<b>Argue's Secret Society</b> <i>Real Enemies</i>	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★
<b>The Bad Plus</b> <i>It's Hard</i>	★★★	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★½
<b>Donny McCaslin</b> <i>Beyond Now</i>	★★	★★★★½	★★★★½	★★★

## Critics' Comments

### Catherine Russell, *Harlem On My Mind*

Believable olde timey blues-jazz songbook, executed on a high level. If you're not expecting anything more than pastiche, it's right on. I'd turn to the originals, myself. —John Corbett

Ya gotta have brass to bring swag to these uptown swing tunes. Russell does, and it goes well with her heart-on-sleeve moments. —Jim Macnie

Russell inhabits these vintage songs so plausibly they feel simultaneously old and new, thanks to the clarity and theatricality of her delivery. 1950s fare like Little Willie John's "Talk To Me" and Dinah Washington's "Let Me Be The First to Know" brings it all home. —Paul de Barros

### Darcy James Argue's Secret Society, *Real Enemies*

Something between a classical suite and a film score. The provocative motifs seem in search of images that aren't there. But the spoken interpolations distrust the music to make its emotional points. Music for Hitchcock, Frankheimer, Spielberg. —John McDonough

A truly unusual mix of materials, from arch-seeming contemporary classical to atmospheric jazz to Latin. The creepy paranoid feeling is pervasive and haunting. Never tasted anything quite this flavor. —John Corbett

Telegraphic tattoos, swirling horn lines, electric textures and snippets of ominous public addresses impart dark urgency to Argue's apocalyptic message about the times we live in. Yet he doesn't miss the irony that he and his band are also "conspirators." —Paul de Barros

### The Bad Plus, *It's Hard*

As jazz persists in isolating itself in an opaque repertoire of its own "originals," The Bad Plus connects its originality to existing material, sometimes with irony or humor. I find neither in this tune-book that mixes offbeat indie rock with pop. But the usual smoke and fire keep things lively, even as it strains to break loose from its orbit. —John McDonough

As thick as the action gets, there's a music-box vibe to a few of these covers. It's odd, fetching and underscores the pith of their pop fascination. —Jim Macnie

Ligeti and Lennie (Tristano) feel like TBP's main squeezes on this occasionally over-agitated effort, as the trio fractures time even while pianist Ethan Iverson lays down flat-out gorgeous lines. —Paul de Barros

### Donny McCaslin, *Beyond Now*

McCaslin's tribute is undoubtedly sincere, but it finds its principal expressive modes in dense hollering passages or somber dirges, neither of which convey enough of a jazz feeling to conceal the music's crossover ambitions. —John McDonough

Totally understand McCaslin's desire to prolong the Bowie association, and if you dig Jason Lindner's synthetic sound, then you'll find much to enjoy here. McCaslin sounds great when he uncorks all the way, but the scripted melodies are a bit tepid. —John Corbett

Rock on. Been hoping a jazz guy would do Bowie's "Warszawa" since '77. Team Donny made it worth the wait, and this is one of his strongest discs. —Jim Macnie

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## Robert Glasper Experiment *ArtScience*

BLUE NOTE 602547970503

★★★★★

*ArtScience*, the new disc from the Robert Glasper Experiment, signals a welcomed change. Instead of frontloading the music with esteemed hip-hop and soul singing guests, as the group did on its previous two *Black Radio* releases, the Experiment offers a self-contained program that bristles with newfound spark. The absence of the high-profile special guests gives the ensemble more room to exhibit its incredible chemistry.

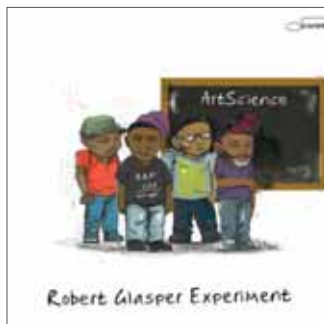
The Experiment's musical formula has pretty much stabilized, and it proves as intoxicating as it did when it first appeared on the modern jazz/hip-hop radar. With nods to such jazz-funk heroes as Herbie Hancock, Patrice Rushen and George Duke and such contemporaries as The Foreign Exchange, Thundercat and KING, *ArtScience* boasts tight grooves, strong melodies and rhythmic hooks. The effervescent "Day To Day" and the dreamy "Let's Fall In Love" are two of the best originals from the Experiment songbook yet. *ArtScience* radiates with execution, musicianship and joyous aplomb.

—John Murph

**ArtScience:** This Is Not Fear; Thinkin' Bout You; Day To Day; No One Like You; Tell Me A Bedtime Story; Find You; In My Mind; Hurry Slowly; Written In Stone; Let's Fall In Love; Human. (70:34)

**Personnel:** Robert Glasper, piano, keyboards, Fender Rhodes; Derrick Hodge, electric bass; Mark Colenburg, drums; Casey Benjamin, saxophone, vocoder, keyboards, vocals; Jahi Sundance, turntables, whistle (1, 11, 12); Michael Severson, guitar (4, 7, 9, 10).

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



## Bro/Morgan/Baron *Streams*

ECM 2499

★★★★½

Danish guitarist Jakob Bro creates magical music, impossible to categorize or capture. The songs on *Streams* are best described as jewels revolving in mid-air, reflecting and refracting light.

Bro refers to his compositions as "moods and textures," and bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Joey Baron freely explore these vistas with endless freedom. "As a group we've been working more on ideas based around different time feelings as well as steady pulses," Bro says. Those "pulses" are the essence of the trio's dialog. Melodies erupt as if already written, many sounding oddly familiar.

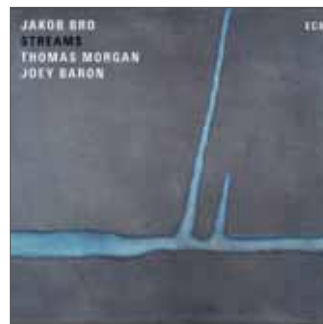
Bro phrases a faintly Elizabethan-style melody in "Full Moon Europa," accompanied by Morgan and Baron's high-toned plucking and delicate cymbal shading. The song deflates—a ghoul-like mood entering, rim shots and cymbals exploding, guitar chords resounding and ringing. A feeling of chaos informs the improvisation. Every song on the album unfurls in a similar fashion: Simple, familiar melodies are declared and deconstructed, delicately and urgently, with awe and solemnity. "Shell Pink" has the sweetness of a simple folk song; "Heroines" recalls a lost melody, recognizable but tough to identify. The beauty of *Streams* is in its unknowingness, its sense of wonder and possibility.

—Ken Micallef

**Streams:** Opal; Heroines; PM Dreams; Full Moon Europa; Shell Pink; Heroines (Var.); Sisimiut. (48:11)

**Personnel:** Jakob Bro, guitar; Thomas Morgan, bass; Joey Baron, drums.

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



## Honey Ear Trio *Swivel*

LITTLE (I) 106

★★★★★

## Lean *Lean*

MUSIC WIZARDS

★★★★½

Drummer, composer and bandleader Allison Miller moved to New York two decades ago, patiently establishing herself as versatile accompanist in numerous contexts. She initially gained recognition as reliable percussionist for lots of high-profile singer-songwriters,

including Ani DiFranco, Natalie Merchant and Brandi Carlile, but over the years she's increasingly devoted herself to her driving inspiration: jazz and improvised music.

Among her most satisfying work are new albums by two very different saxophone trios, both of which operate as collective enterprises.

*Swivel* is the second album by Honey Ear Trio, which formed in 2011 with bassist Rene Hart and reedist Erik Lawrence. Jeff Lederer replaced Lawrence two years later, and the music on the new album proves he's found a sweet spot in the group, nimbly working within the tradition as established by Sonny Rollins in the '50s, as well as forcefully pushing against it.

Bassist Hart has developed a sharp ability to augment his double bass with effects pedals and a looping setup, which allows the group to pivot from the grinding opening track, Miller's "Arby," to his own tender "Silent Stairs," which melds timeless tenor balladry with atmospheric electronic effects.

Cornetist Kirk Knuffke expands the group to a quartet on a few pieces, whether injecting an exquisite lyricism to Miller's beautiful "Lullaby" or ripping through the bebop energy of "Speak Eddie," which the drummer composed for West Coast skinsman Eddie Marshall. Miller plays with a mix of abandon and precision—through the entire album it lifts the proceedings.

Lean employs essentially the same instrumentation, although Simon Jermyn plays electric bass rather than a pedal-manipulated upright, but its sound couldn't be further from Honey Ear Trio. As with Hart in the other trio, Jermyn does more than lay down bass lines, using a volume pedal to meticulously create ambient swells and melodic bloopers that set the tone on Miller's opening tune, "Spotswood Drive." The saxophonist's "Electric Sun" delivers a soul-streaked pop melody over a restrained groove.

Lean conjures a much different evocation of the saxophone trio, one that largely eschews its heritage in favor of a thoroughly contemporary sound loaded with hooks and pop-like concision—but as with Honey Ear Trio, there's no missing how locked in the musicians are, and how they lift one another up. Together, they only bolster the case for Miller's continued creative ascendance.

—Peter Margasak

**Swivel:** Arby; Silent Stairs; New Work; Evidence; Changeling; Lullaby; Squeaky Toy; Stanley's Package; Because; Speak, Eddie; Falling. (54:39)

**Personnel:** Allison Miller, drums, percussion; Jeff Lederer, saxophones; Rene Hart, acoustic bass, electronics; Kirk Knuffke, cornet (3, 6, 10).

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

**Lean:** Spotswood Drive; Electric Sun; Lean; Olney; Bunker; Otis; Comptine; Fast Fish. (57:19)

**Personnel:** Allison Miller, drums, bike, effects; Jerome Sabbagh, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Simon Jermyn, electric bass, effects.

**Ordering info:** [lean2.bandcamp.com](http://lean2.bandcamp.com)





## Orrin Evans #knowingishalfthebattle SMOKE SESSIONS 1608

★★★★

Between the hashtag title, the David Bowie cover and the presence of not one but two guitarists, it's tempting to see #knowingishalfthebattle as the musical equivalent of the midlife-crisis sports car. After all, with 20-odd albums under Evans' belt, it's not hard to imagine the 41-year-old pianist pursuing a change of pace.

But the magic thing about this album is the way these changes let Evans be himself. It helps that Evans' accompanying guitarists—

Kurt Rosenwinkel and Kevin Eubanks—are products of the same Philadelphia scene as Evans himself. When the three play together, as on “Heavy Hangs The Head That Wears The Crown,” they couldn't sound more different, with Eubanks working the volume pedal to conjure a Hendrixian soundscape, Rosenwinkel adding enough processing to sound synth-like and Evans skittering around the edges of his keyboard. Listen past the tonal differences, though, and it's astonishing how closely their ideas echo and intermingle.

Likewise, the Bowie tune—“Kooks,” from 1971's *Hunky Dory*—isn't there to give Evans a chance to rock, but to show what a great jazz tune was hiding beneath all that glam. (Singer M'Balía Singley, who worked with Evans in the group Luv Park a decade ago, is winningly sultry here.) Even the title tune, which samples, distorts and otherwise manipulates Evans' piano, is not evidence that he's moving into electronica, but an example of a proud father letting his son, Matthew, do some remixing.

—J.D. Considine

**#knowingishalfthebattle:** #knowingishalfthebattle; Calls; When Jen Came In; Chiara; Kooks; You Don't Need A License To Drive; Half The Battle; Heavy Lies The Head That Wears The Crown; Doc's Holiday; Slife; That's All; Zeni Be; #knowingishalfthebattle (Snarky). (72:47)

**Personnel:** Orrin Evans, piano; Fender Rhodes; Luques Curtis, bass; Mark Whitfield Jr., drums; Kurt Rosenwinkel (3, 4, 5, 7, 8), Kevin Eubanks (2, 6, 8, 9, 10), guitar; Caleb Curtis, alto saxophone, flute (2, 9, 12); M'Balía Singley, vocals (5, 11).

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

## Paolo Fresu & Omar Sosa Eros

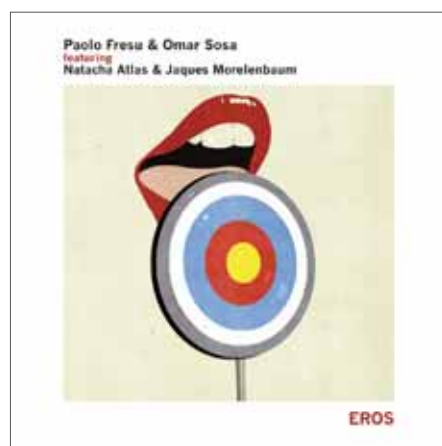
OTÁ 1029

★★★★½

Omar Sosa is an expressive and passionate pianist, a creative spirit who deserves a category all his own. Every new album is an adventure and, while he's based in jazz and the Afro-Cuban tradition, he never confines himself to a single style. Classical music, electronica, reggae, samba, West African and Arabic sounds and rhythms percolate through his playing. He's a subtle artist, and *Eros* is another example of his ability to evoke emotion with quiet intensity.

Paolo Fresu, the Italian trumpeter and flugelhorn player, has been a frequent Sosa collaborator for the past decade and shares his discreet approach. Together, they dance through the mix, drawing you deeper into the music with each sublime phrase.

“Teardrop/Ya Habibi” features the velvet ululations of Natacha Atlas, supported by Fresu's muted trumpet, Sosa's sparse piano and sustained synthesizer clusters. Jaques Morelenbaum plucks his cello to produce reggae-like accents on “Zeus' Desires,” and Sosa's synthesizers add the sounds of finger snaps, heartbeats and toy xylophones to complement the Fresu's flamenco flavored trumpet.



Elsewhere, Fresu's flugelhorn, Morelenbaum's cello and Sosa's acoustic piano play tranquil intertwining melody lines to open “What Is Inside/Himeros,” before a muffled bass line from Sosa's synthesizer blossoms to support his romantic left hand chord clusters.

—j. poet

**Eros:** Teardrop/Ya Habibi; Sensuousness; Zeus' Desires; Brezza Del Verano; My Soul, My Spirit; La Llamada; What Is Inside/Himeros; Who Wu; Eros Mediterraneo; Fradelo; What Lies Ahead; Why; Kypris. (67:47)

**Personnel:** Omar Sosa, acoustic piano, Fender Rhodes, MicroKorg, samplers, multi-effects, percussion, vocals, programming; Paolo Fresu, trumpet, flugelhorn, multi-effects, percussion; Natacha Atlas, vocals; Jaques Morelenbaum, cello; Quartetto Alborada: Anton Berovski, violin; Sonia Peana, violin; Nico Ciricugno, viola; Piero Salvatore, cello.

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



**SCOTT TIXIER / COSMIC ADVENTURE**  
SSC 1445 - IN STORES NOW

Violinist Scott Tixier has found himself in many eclectic musical settings, from Anthony Braxton's recent opera Trillium J, sideman gigs with Natalie Cole, Christina Aguilera, and Gladys Knight to two years of touring with soul legend Stevie Wonder, not to mention his work in film and television. For the past 10 years, Tixier has been developing a new sound inspired by these collaborations both inside and outside of the jazz world, making him a multidimensional musician with a new voice on jazz violin.

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[www.sunnyvalleyrecords.com](http://www.sunnyvalleyrecords.com)

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JOHN ABBOTT

Scott Morgan

## Gentlemen Prefer Song

The current market share for male jazz vocalists is pretty slim. Just a few men can headline across the country. For every Kurt Elling or Gregory Porter, there are 10 men trying to bust out of the "local act" yoke. In the absence of a Billy Eckstine or a Mel Tormé, the field is open. The following group of men wrestle with artistic identity, repertoire and style.

Domestic jazz audiences should know singer-guitarist **Allan Harris's** name, but he's had trouble carving out a distinctive artistic profile. With ***Nobody's Gonna Love You Better*** (Love Productions 234289; 46:12 ★★★★★), Harris indulges a concept album, subtitled "Black Bar Jukebox Redux." His songs recall that era when black lounges in urban cities were cozy places for drinking, dancing and romance. Harris is an engaging baritone-tenor who knows his way around blues-based material. Though his slow, sensuous "I Remember You" is a jewel, the swinging organ treatment of Jimi Hendrix's "Up From The Skies" is emblematic: meat-and-potatoes groove that will have you out of your seat.

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

Swing doesn't come as easily to **Steven Davis**. His ***The Way You Look Tonight*** (Self Release; 27:10 ★★★★★) seeks to reconstitute some of Sinatra's Capitol Records epoch. Where the Chairman of the Board glided through "Come Fly With Me," Davis strains over the booting horns. He has a pleasant baritone-tenor, but his phrasing has a pre-digested air; you know every accent before it comes around the corner. Even Andy Farber's reverent charts and a great studio orchestra can't lift this past an earnest-but-limited homage. When you've heard Sinatra define swinging big-

band pop, it's hard to settle for a facsimile.

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

Swing might not be **Scott Morgan's** hole card (though he turns in a respectable showing on a bright "It's You Or No One") on ***Songs Of Life*** (MirandaMusic 1024; 59:24 ★★★½). He's most comfortable within the Great American Songbook, and that suits his buoyant tenor. If incisive rhythm isn't his strong suit, he sings in tune and his subtle turns—a short gliss or a well-formed melismatic ending—are musically sound. Fred Hersh leads the backing trio, and the accompaniment is predictably marvelous. Joel Frahm's tenor saxophone makes brief and pointed additions to a few numbers, and Janis Siegel's second voice on "I'll Follow" (which Hersh co-wrote) offers Morgan a fuller-toned foil.

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

The unclassifiable **Peter Eldridge** doesn't skimp on the emotion, or the impulse for musical adventure. His ***Disappearing Day*** (Sunnyside 1458; 46:16 ★★★★★) is a musical safari, and he usually goes after big game. He writes much of his own music, and his songs straddle several genres. He's extending the singer-songwriter ethos of the early '70s, wedding highly personal lyrics and folksy tunes with elements of rock, electronica and exotica. There's an unmistakable current of psychedelia, via spacey instrumental interludes and Eldridge's wavy-toned passages. Anat Cohen's clarinet solo on "Forever Blue" is measured by comparison. He may not be a jazz singer, per se, but Eldridge certainly takes big risks. Though the results can be gratifying, be prepared for a wild ride. **DB**

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



## BadBadNotGood IV

INNOVATIVE LEISURE

★★★★½

BadBadNotGood's rise to stardom is founded on bringing a jazz sensibility back to hip-hop. The trio's first two records were mostly jazzy remakes of hip-hop classics, and *III* was a dark blend of that sound with electronic production. *IV* sees the group producing the first complete snapshot of what they're fully capable of: a holistic grasp of the realms of jazz, soul, electronica and hip-hop.

The trio expanded to a quartet with this record, with saxophonist Leland Whitty joining Matthew Tavares on keys, Chester Hansen on bass and Alexander Sowinski on drums. They're equally capable of operating in avant-garde territory (such as on the opener, "And That, Too") and psychedelic space (as on "Speaking Gently"). And on the title track, the band hops all over the energetic spectrum, beginning with drum-and-bass percussion and ending with a lengthy solo piece from Whitty.

When the now-quartet isn't laying down its own timeless grooves, it's inviting noteworthy performers to join in on the chemistry. "Time Moves Slow" features vocalist Sam Herring of the indie band Future Islands, and saxophonist Colin Stetson is heard on "Confessions Pt. II." Producer Kaytranada lands a feature on the trippy beat "Lavender"; rapper Mick Jenkins brings the rhymes to "Hyssop Of Love"; and singer Charlotte Day Wilson brings buttery vocals to the soulful "In Your Eyes."

While guests are allowed their time to shine, the spotlight is truly on everybody, which is part of what makes this group so special in a circuit of bands named after individuals.

—Chris Tart

**IV:** And That, Too; Speaking Gently; Time Moves Slow; Confessions Pt. II; Lavender; Chomp's Paradise; IV; Hyssop Of Love; Structure No. 3; In Your Eyes; Cashmere. (50:33)

**Personnel:** Matthew Tavares, keyboards; Chester Hansen, bass; Alexander Sowinski, drums; Leland Whitty, saxophones; Sam Herring (3), Mick Jenkins (8), Charlotte Day Wilson (10), vocals; Colin Stetson, saxophones (4); Kaytranada, electronics (5).

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





## Bill Evans *Rise Above*

VANSMAN RECORDS

★★★★½

Bill Evans had two challenges when producing this ambitious project: The saxophonist had to find his place as an instrumentalist in an album that mostly features guest vocalists, and he also had to ensure that a small legion of musicians who recorded at six studios in four separate states sounded like a collective unit.

The Chicago-area native succeeded on both accounts, and the result is a cohesive and upbeat album with nine songs and an instru-

mental track that would pair nicely with a road trip where speed limits don't matter. The uplifting Hammond B-3-infused title track was co-written by Warren Haynes, who contributes both vocals and tangy lead guitar, and Ryan Cavanaugh's banjo is a key element in the album's "soulgrass" sound—an aesthetic that Evans has been espousing for over a decade.

Tim Cabrone's fiddle plays the same role on "Love Is Working Overtime," an unhurried Gregg Allman vocal showcase. It's also one of three tracks to exploit the rock solid team of keyboardist Marco Benevento and drummer Joe Russo. Evans draws on his own history for the heavier horn-buoyed rocker "Love Game," which is highlighted by a heroic guitar solo from Mike Stern, his frequent co-bandleader and fellow Miles Davis band alum.

—Yoshi Kato

**Rise Above:** Right Lady; Rise Above; Love Game; Love Is Working Overtime; Everybody's Lookin' (For Somethin' They're Missing); Slow Rollin' Ride; Tales Of A Shiny Devil; Strange Neighbors; Them Changes; Every Once In A While (Things Got To Give). (54:27)

**Personnel:** Bill Evans, saxophones, keyboards (3, 8), lead vocals (10), background vocals (4–6, 10); J.J. Grey (1), Warren Haynes (2), Murali Coryell (3, 5), Greg Allman (4), Anders Osborne (6), Josh Dion (8, 9), lead vocals; Vaneese Thomas (1, 2, 4), Murali Coryell (5, 10), Josh Dion (5, 10), Mitch Stein (5), Nick Piccininni (5, 10), Anders Osborne (6), backing vocals; Warren Haynes (2), Jake Cinninger (7), lead guitar; Mike Stern (3), Jake Cinninger (7), guitar solo; Scott Metzger (1, 4, 6), Mitch Stein (8–10), guitars; Mitch Stein, rhythm guitar (2, 3, 5, 7); Marco Benevento (1, 4, 6), Rob Aries (5, 7), keyboards; Danny Louis, B3 organ (2, 9); Dave Anderson (1–4, 6–10), Etienne M'Pappe (5), bass; Joe Russo (1, 4, 6), Josh Dion (2, 3, 5, 7–10), drums; Roger Squitero, percussion (1, 4, 6, 9); Ryan Cavanaugh (2, 3, 5, 7–9), Nick Piccininni (10), banjo; Nick Piccininni, fiddle intro (4); Tim Carbone, fiddle (4, 7, 10).

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

## Tierney Sutton Band *The Sting Variations*

BFM JAZZ 24342

★★★★

For many, Sting qualifies as a guilty pleasure. Despite drafting exceptional sidemen like Branford Marsalis and Kenny Kirkland, and collaborating with arranger Gil Evans, a lot of music fans can't get past his peroxide-pop days. But refusing to fully embrace Gordon Sumner means giving short shrift to some of the most literate songs of the past 30 years. His essence is the co-mingling of socially relevant lyrics and his love of classic British poetry. Merging rhyme, rhythm and rational thought, his best songs sound timeless.

All of that makes Sting a natural followup subject for singer Tierney Sutton, who paid tribute to Joni Mitchell on *After Blue* (BFM Jazz, 2013). While her Mitchell homage featured guest musicians like Hubert Laws and Peter Erskine, *The Sting Variations* brings her back to the fold of her longtime band, with pianist Christian Jacob, bassists Trey Henry and Kevin Axt and drummer Ray Brinker.

From the introduction of "Driven To Tears"—a variation of the atmospheric opening segment of Miles Davis' "So What"—it's clear that Sutton is approaching these 14 compositions as jazz vehicles rather than as pop songs



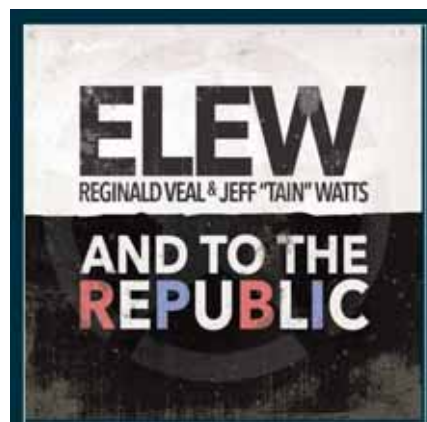
that lend themselves to a jazzy treatment. Her strength throughout the album is her ability to climb inside Sting's lyrics, performing them as much as singing them. The purity of her tone is an ideal match for lyrics that harken back to Shakespeare and William Blake.

—James Hale

**The Sting Variations:** Driven To Tears; If You Love Someone, Set Them Free; Seven Days; Shadows In The Rain; Walking In Your Footsteps; Fragile/The Gentle Rain; Message In A Bottle; Fields Of Gold; Fortress Around Your Heart; Language Of Birds; Every Little Thing He Does Is Magic; Every Breath You Take (Lullaby); Synchronicity; Consider Me Gone. (66:55)

**Personnel:** Tierney Sutton, vocals; Christian Jacob, piano; Trey Henry, acoustic bass (3), electric bass (2); Kevin Axt, bass (1, 2, 4–14); Ray Brinker, drums.

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



ELEW / AND TO THE REPUBLIC

SSC 1460 - IN STORES NOW

After years of distancing himself from the jazz world, ELEW has decided to make a return in a remarkable triumvirate featuring bassist Reginald Veal and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts. His new recording, *And To The Republic*, features the forceful pianist's fantastic prowess expressed in the genre that he first caught the attention of the listening public with, mainstream jazz. The recording is a sincere olive branch to jazz purists and the jazz community that he had spurned earlier.

The choice to return wasn't one of necessity. ELEW has been successful throughout his career, which continues to branch into many streams. His intention in releasing this new recording is to reengage with the world that inspired him initially, to play with masters of the craft and to pay homage to his heroes, especially his former employer, drum legend Elvin Jones.

Who better to fill the role on drums than the great Jeff "Tain" Watts? He is a true disciple of Elvin Jones and has the power, drive and knowledge within the full scope of jazz, having been part of the Young Lions generation led by Wynton and Branford Marsalis. The fantastic Veal has just as distinguished a résumé, being another Marsalis alumni and Elvin Jones protégé.

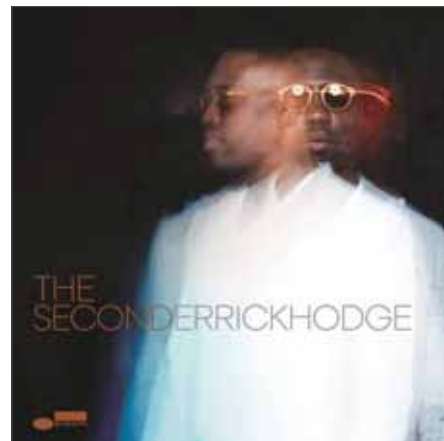


iTunes.com/ELEW  
www.sunnysiderecords.com





Lil' Ed (second from right) and the Blues Imperials



## Derrick Hodge *The Second*

BLUE NOTE 00602547746627

★★★★★

On his second studio album, Derrick Hodge opted out of the full band approach, instead playing all instruments and vocals himself, with just a few exceptions. The resulting album bears a sonic cohesion that touches on many of the hats Hodge wears: He's a bassist in one of modern jazz's most interesting acts, a session player on some of the decade's best hip-hop and, to top it all off, an underrated composer. *The Second* follows Hodge's knack for experimentation without molding those trials into anything that resembles the pop landscape he's dabbled in before.

The album is also chock-full of little experimental nuggets. "World Go Round" utilizes multiple bass tracks, snaps and handclaps to create one of the album's most unassumingly catchy numbers. Hodge plays around with ambient soundscapes on "Transitions," and later expands upon that vibe with "Heart Of A Dreamer."

On "For Generations," he employs a few of New York City's finest in trumpeter Keyon Harrold, trombonist Corey King and tenor saxophonist Marcus Strickland for a playful, drumless track that harks back to the classics with a new Harlem twist.

By hardly utilizing anyone else's playing but his own, Hodge was able to refine his sound and execute his compositions wonderfully. If his debut album, *Live Today*, was an introduction, then *The Second* is what happens when Hodge settles into the composer chair to really create some magic.

—Chris Tart

**The Second:** The Second; Transitions; Song 3; You Believed; World Go Round; Heart Of A Dreamer; Underground Rhapsody; Clock Strike Zero; For Generations; Don Blue; Going; From Me To You. (53:31)

**Personnel:** Derrick Hodge, bass, drums, electronics, vocals; Mark Colenburg, drums; Keyon Harrold, trumpet (9); Corey King, trombone (9); Marcus Strickland, tenor saxophone, (9).

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

# Singing on Solid Ground

**Bobby Rush, *Porcupine Meat* (Rounder 1166100065; 56:59 ★★★★★)** Bobby Rush's definition of the blues, as defined by this recent New Orleans session with Scott Billington producing, is broad enough to contain strong elements of soul and funk and even a snip of hip-hop. The venerable veteran sings with an unerring emotional direction, trafficking per usual in erotic pleasures of the flesh ("Night-time Gardener," for one) and confronting injustice ("I'm Tired," "Got Me Accused").

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

**Barrelhouse Chuck, *Remembering The Masters* (The Sirens Records 5025; 42:43 ★★½)** On his latest release, Barrelhouse Chuck, a stout-hearted warrior of Chicago piano blues and boogie-woogie, spreads the love around for role models like Sunnyland Slim, Little Brother Montgomery, Pinetop Perkins and still-active Erwin Helfer. Deftly played original homages and classic material regenerate the aura of those masters. Longtime friend Billy Flynn adds guitar or mandolin to most tracks, and pianists Lluís Coloma from Spain and Chicago's Scott Grube appear on a song each.

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

**Lee Moses, *Time And Place* (Future Days 630; 33:47 ★★½)** The late soul-blues man Lee Moses, whose only album was ignored upon its release in 1971, had special gifts as a singer that showed themselves in his swing-for-the-fences delivery and his forays into the deepest pockets of unconscious confidence or anxiety. In a New York studio, the unjustly obscure Georgian rules over nine songs, including his raw love testimonial "Every Boy And Girl." Moses didn't move mountains like Otis Red-

ding or James Brown, but he came close.

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

**Lil' Ed, *The Big Sound Of Lil' Ed And The Blues Imperials* (Alligator 4972; 52:50 ★★½)** Loyal to the outrageous slide-guitar of Chicago blues exemplified by his uncle J.B. Hutto and Alligator's first signee, Hound Dog Taylor, Lil' Ed and his band pack the songs of their eighth album with all the piping-hot, controllable energy we've come to expect. The socially observant "Troubled World," at once forceful and quiet in orientation, is a star of the first magnitude.

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

**Lew Jetton & 61 South, *Rain* (Coffee Street; 37:43 ★★½)** Key to the appeal of Lew Jetton, an underappreciated singer and guitarist in western Kentucky releasing just his third album in 20 years, is his integration of true intent and heaps of heart. He's comfortable with straight blues, Southern blues-rock, soul-blues, even blues-gospel. The melodic hybrid "Lay Me Down" is the real triumph, dispensing homespun finality on life from a viewpoint of age and experience.

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

**David Bromberg Band, *The Blues, The Whole Blues And Nothing But The Blues* (Red House 297; 57:51 ★★½)** Rather than deliver paint-by-numbers performances, the bandleader infuses his songs and treatments of mostly familiar historic blues fare with conviction. Still, Bromberg's part-comedic singing voice isn't for everybody. Throughout, blue-ribbon producer Larry Campbell and the backup musicians transmit on his wavelength. **DB**

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





## Three Reeds Quintet *Across Two Centuries*

TO BE JAZZ  
★★★★★

Three reeds are capable of lots of vibration, so the chief task facing soprano saxophonist Dave Liebman, alto saxophonist Federico Benedetti and bass clarinetist Romano Pratesi as they approached this recording was to organize their powers to transcend the sum of their parts. Compositions by Duke Ellington, Lee Konitz, late Italian singer-songwriter-actor Lucio Dalla and Richie Beirach contribute to the success of this album, as do pieces by Benedetti and Liebman. But harmony in the broadest sense makes *Across Two Centuries* more than simply an exercise in who can blow the most notes.

Acting as a unified section rather than jam-session headhunters, the three front-line reedists use call-and-response techniques and sonic alchemy to create tension, ensure variety and sustain attention. Liebman's fertile imagination and ferocious but also playful virtuosity guide the proceedings without dominating them. Benedetti is a stimulating partner, often breaking into energized expression. Pratesi tends to underscore or offset the two higher horns, rather as reedist Bennie Maupin trailed beneath the surfaces of *Bitches Brew*. They are well served by the fluid, emphatic accompaniment of Paolo Ghetti on bass and Mauro Beggio on drums.

Each player is featured in turns. Ghetti bows a drone under Liebman's keening wooden flute foray to open "Pablo's Story," which Benedetti then turns into something like a tango; Pratesi's solo ties together all his registers. All three horns combine warmly on the riff of Ellington's "Blue Rose," and a Benedetti-Liebman duet is a highlight of "Thingin'."

—Howard Mandel

**Across Two Centuries:** *Across Two Centuries*; *Boo Doo*; *Pablo's Story*; *Like A Monkey In A Rocket*; *Blue Rose*; *Brite Piece*; *Thingin'*; *Blindfold Test*; *Caruso*; *Pendulum*. (56:31)

**Personnel:** Dave Liebman, soprano saxophone; Federico Benedetti, alto saxophone; Romano Pratesi, bass clarinet; Paolo Ghetti, double bass; Mauro Beggio, drums.

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

## Allison Adams Tucker *WANDERlust*

ORIGIN 82718

★★★★★

A powerful singer with an attractive voice, Allison Adams Tucker has always been interested in different languages and cultures. The San Diego-based vocalist has visited more than 15 countries in her life thus far, and she has clearly learned a great deal from the experiences. On *WANDERlust*, her third album, she celebrates not only the music of diverse regions, but also the concept of embracing the unfamiliar.

*WANDERlust* features Tucker singing in multiple languages: English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French and Japanese. While some of the performances hedge closer to folk music than to jazz, Tucker always displays a jazz sensibility, improvising and emoting in ways that uplift the music.

Keyboardist Josh Nelson is an important force on this set as an accompanist and as an occasional soloist. There are also strong contributions from the alternating guitarists Romero Lubambo, Mike Moreno and Stephane Wrembel. Saxophonist Chris Potter makes welcome appearances on four songs, playing three different reed instruments.

From the brave and confident unaccompa-



nied opening of "When In Rome" to the dramatic "Cinema Paradiso" and the atmospheric "Mediterráneo," Tucker not only knows her material very well but is able to hold listeners' interest with her subtle but inventive ideas, no matter what the language.

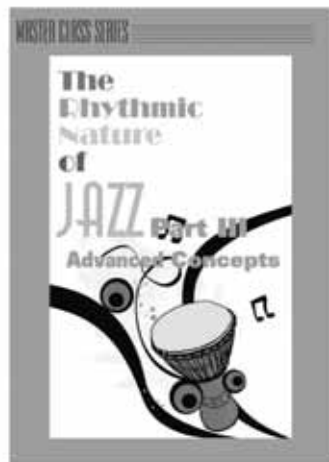
—Scott Yanow

**WANDERlust:** *When In Rome*; *Vuelvo Al Sur*; *A Thousand Years*; *Águas De Março*; *Cinema Paradiso*; *Soul Le Ciel De Paris*; *Mediterráneo*; *Pure Imagination*; *Takeda Lullaby*; *Wanderlust*; *Better Days Ahead*. (54:35)

**Personnel:** Allison Adams Tucker, vocals; Josh Nelson, piano, electric piano, organ; Scott Colley, bass; Antonio Sanchez, drums; Rogério Boccato, percussion; Romero Lubambo (1, 2, 4, 5, 9), Mike Moreno (3, 7, 10, 11), Stephane Wrembel (3, 6), guitar; Chris Potter, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, flute.

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

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[www.focusyearbasel.com](http://www.focusyearbasel.com)

## Strings: Shredded & Bowed

72-year-old guitar hero **Jeff Beck** recalls the power and glory of his 1968 debut *Truth* on **Loud Hailer** (ATCO R2 555546; 45:01 ★★★★★). With the snarling, Cockney vocals of Rosie Bones, whose socio-political lyrics address several ills of today's cruel world, Beck delivers signature tones and stunning solos on his 11th studio album. He unleashes with bluesy abandon on "The Revolution Will Be Televised" and "Live In The Dark," then summons up ugly tones on the grungy instrumental "Pull It." "Thugs Club," which contains some pointed commentary directed at David Cameron, George Bush and Rupert Murdoch. "Right Now" offers the classic, ballsy Strat-to-a-Marshall sound with some nasty wah-wah work to boot.

The doo-wop/r&b flavored "Shame" features Beck's most liquid, vocal-styled phrasing on the album, and the politically tinged funk throwdown "O.I.L." features some wicked slide guitar work at the tag.

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

Following in Beck's footsteps is Frank Zappa's former "stunt guitarist" **Steve Vai**, a chopsmeister of the highest order who also possesses a keen ear for tone, a mastery of effects and an adventurous sense of orchestration. His two-CD set **Modern Primitive/Passion And Warfare 25th Anniversary Edition** (Epic Legacy 889053090201/8890530909202; 70:01/76:08 ★★★★★½) is an astounding document of extreme six-string work covering a wide range of expression.

*Modern Primitive*, recorded between the ages of 23 and 26, is the missing link between Vai's 1984 independently released debut *Flex-Able* and his 1990 major label release, *Passion And Warfare*. Previously unreleased, *Modern Primitive* features such ambitious experiments as "Bop!," created with a jazz scat patch on his Roland guitar synthesizer to create the effect of the Swingle Singers jamming with Zappa, and a 13-minute operetta in "Pink And Blows Over, Pt. 2." Vai's six-string virtuosity is on full display on the multi-layered guitar opus "Dark Matter," while several vocal tunes—"Mighty Messengers," "The Lost Chord," "Fast Note People"—feature mind-blowing guitar solos.

Vai's 1990 magnum opus *Passion And Warfare* sounds as brilliant and original today as it did 26 years ago. From the anthemic opener, "Liberty," to the Whitesnake-ish "Erotic Nightmare" and the Hendrixian "The Riddle," Vai's six-string work is jaw-dropping.

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

French violinist **Dominique Pifarély**



Jeff Beck

strikes an avant-garde note with his quartet on **Tracé Provisoire** (ECM 2481 4781796; 63:31 ★★★★★½). With pianist Annonin Rayon, bassist Bruno Chevillon and conversational drummer/colorist Francois Merville, Pifarély and his crew put a premium on space, Zen-like delicacy and dark dissonance on this quintessential ECM outing. The quartet alternates between navigating knotty heads and floating freely on rubato explorations and ambient sections. And they swing in edgy, Monk-ish fashion on the jazziest track, "Le Regard De Lenz." Between the tightly executed through-composed sections and the freewheeling improvis, this quartet covers some of the same ground as their American counterparts, the Sylvie Courvoisier-Mark Feldman quartet.

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

Rising-star French violinist and New York resident **Scott Tixier** swings with rare authority and ingenuity on **Cosmic Adventure** (Sunnyside 1446; 46:36 ★★★★★½). Paired on the front line by harmonica virtuoso Yvonnick Prene, Tixier swings hard right out of the gate on the opening "Maze Walker," which also features a churning undercurrent courtesy of percussionist Pedrito Martinez. Drummer Justin Brown fires up the band with his unrelenting swing factor and interactive aplomb on the Trane-inspired "Mr. Tix" and the burning "Nil's Landing." And special guest Chris Potter contributes a brilliant tenor solo on the driving closer "Beam Me To Mars." An invigorating set from the future of jazz violin.

DB

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





## Nicholas Payton

### Textures

PAYTONE

★★★★½

*Textures* is another intriguing chapter in Nicholas Payton's unpredictable recording career; he continues to challenge hard-wired expectations based upon his mid-'90s dates as a post-bop trumpeter. Ever since his 1999 disc, *Nick@Night*, Payton has been inching away from that aforementioned template. Four years later, he drew a bold line in the proverbial sand with 2003's *Sonic Trance* that hinted at more contemporary artistic pursuits. That latter disc also anticipated the music of other jazz-schooled artists such as Robert Glasper, Karriem Riggins and Jamire Williams. Several years after that, Payton began showing greater interests in beat making, singing and playing the keyboards than he did with solely being recognized as a trumpet virtuoso.

Here, Payton collaborates with New Orleans-based painter Anastasia Pelias on nine evocative soundscapes. He abandons the trumpet altogether in favor of keyboards and a laptop computer. As Pelias created abstract works, Payton mirrored her brush strokes and color palettes with impressionistic evocations, often marked by haunting chords, cardiac beats and spare melodicism. On songs like the hypnotic "Smooth" and shimmering "Wet," Payton develops chords that faintly recall those by the late Joe Zawinul. But underneath some of the other tunes, such as the quiet-storm glow of "Silky" and the serrated "Greasy," he crafts funky rhythmic undertows that point more in the retro robo-funk direction of Dâm Funk. The rewards of such pieces as "Soft," with its lazy Leon Ware-like melody, and "Hard," with its hammer-jack rhythm and searing guitar-synth passages, will multiply with each repeated listening.

—John Murph

**Textures:** Smooth; Sticky; Silky; Fuzzy; Hard; Wet; Rough; Greasy; Soft. (43:55)

**Personnel:** Nicholas Payton, all instruments.

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

## Hamasyan/Henriksen/Aarset/Bang

### Atmosphères

ECM 2414/15

★★★★★

Manfred Eicher, ECM's maestro, convened this quartet of subtle, subdued improvisers—pianist Tigran Hamasyan, trumpeter Arve Henriksen, guitarist Eivind Aarset and electronicist Jan Bang—for a single recording session in June 2014.

The three Norwegian musicians had previously worked together in various combinations on label projects, but not with Armenian-born, Los Angeles-raised Hamasyan, who was at the time writing choral arrangements for his ECM album of Armenian sacred music. Their one-day collaboration resulted in two CDs' worth of vivid sonic creations that suggest northern climes (mountains, forests, waters), spiritual quests and airs of foreboding.

The 15 tracks, related by moods and materials, completely ignore conventions of classical, jazz, electronic or indigenous folk music, offering instead technologically enabled cross-cultural fantasies that progress through the gradual accretion of gestures and timbral contrasts. Compositions by the 20th-century Armenian monk and musicologist Komitas are referenced but dissolve in the otherwise open, improvisa-



tory format.

Everything relies on minor modes, restrained lyricism and the players' spontaneous interactions.

"Shushiki," alluding to "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," has moments of childlike playfulness, but most pieces evoke a sense of awe at majestic if elusive forces, and acceptance of them.

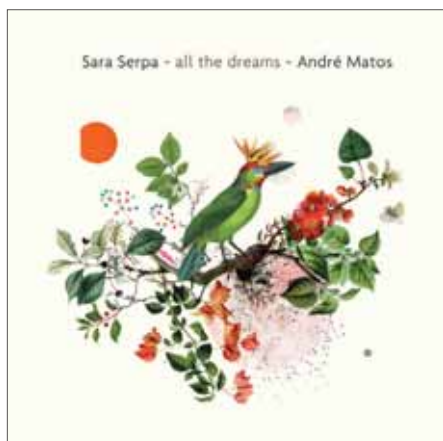
—Howard Mandel

**Atmosphères:** Disc One: Traces I; Tsrani Tsar; Traces II; Traces III; Traces IV; Traces V/Garun A. (58:40) Disc Two: Traces VI; Garun A (Variation); Traces VII; Traces VIII; Shushiki; Hoy, Nazan; Traces IX; Traces X; Angel Of Girona/Qeler Tsoler. (74:16)

**Personnel:** Tigran Hamasyan, piano; Arve Henriksen, trumpet; Eivind Aarset, guitar; Jan Bang, live sampling, samples.

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





**Sara Serpa/André Matos**  
*All The Dreams*  
 SUNNYSIDE 4028  
 ★★★★★

**Sara Gazarek/  
 Josh Nelson**  
*Dream In The Blue*  
 STEEL BIRD MUSIC  
 ★★★★★½

In a duo, there's no place to hide. Like partners in a three-legged race, the musicians are utterly co-dependent; if one goes down, the other is going down, too. In this pair of albums by two young, exceptionally accomplished singers and their accompanists, the chemistry and teamwork are close to perfect.

Although both albums refer to dreams in their titles, *All The Dreams*, the second collection of duets by vocalist Sara Serpa and guitarist André Matos, is the dreamier of the two. The musicians, who came from Portugal to study at Berklee and New England Conservatory, are serious about their flights of fancy.

On the album's 14 tracks, the duo consciously evokes unconscious states. Matos' delicate, lyrical electric guitar, intricate and hypnotic, is the perfect foil for Serpa's most-

ly wordless vocals, which are cool, calm and precise. More so than on their acclaimed 2014 duo debut, *Primavera*, Serpa and Matos use the studio as an instrument, employing echo effects and overdubs judiciously to create their soundscapes.

They round out their duo sound with keyboards, electric bass and the restrained, highly effective synth contributions of keyboardist Pete Rende and drummer/percussionist Billy Mintz.

The West Coast duo of singer Sara Gazarek and pianist Josh Nelson, by contrast, is rooted in jazz tradition.

The pair have been working together since 2002, and their long partnership yields exquisite fruit in *Dream In The Blue*. Gazarek has many gifts as a singer: pristine tone, creative and confident scatting and the ability to sell a dramatic lyric without a trace of affectation. Nelson's piano accompaniment is remarkably in-the-pocket, and his solos, brimming with ideas, are as compelling a reason to listen as Gazarek's vocals.

Even though it is entirely composed of vocal-piano duets, the duo's album is more varied and consistently interesting than might be expected. That's partly due to a diverse, well-chosen repertoire that includes pop treasures like their medley of "Blackbird" and "Bye Bye Blackbird," swinging standards like "No Moon At All" and contemporary choices like Laura Mvula's "Father Father." It's also due to the sonically rich, immaculate production of veteran producer and engineer Al Schmitt.

—Allen Morrison

**All The Dreams:** Calma; A La Montagne; Estado De Graça; Story Of A Horse; Programa; Agua; Nada; Night; Hino; Lisboa; Espelho; Os Outros; Postlude; AmlaC. (43:31)

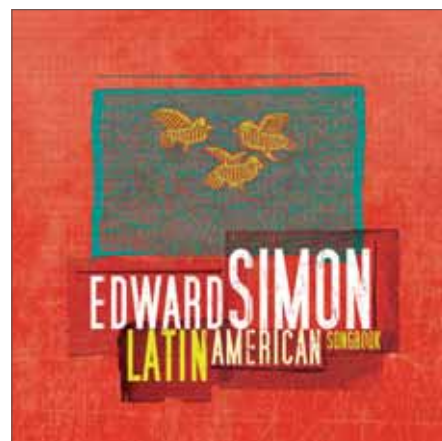
**Personnel:** Sara Serpa, vocals, piano, Fender Rhodes; André Matos, guitar, electric bass, percussion; Pete Rende, synthesizer; Billy Mintz, drums, percussion.

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

**Dream In The Blue:** Blackbird/Bye Bye Blackbird; O Pato; Sunny Side Of The Street; All Again; I Can't Make You Love Me; Mood Indigo; No Moon At All; Petit Papillon; I Don't Love You Anymore; Father Father; Behind Me; Cello Song/Without A Song. (54:14)

**Personnel:** Sara Gazarek, vocals; Josh Nelson, piano.

**Ordering info:** [saragazarek.com](http://saragazarek.com), [joshnelsonmusic.com](http://joshnelsonmusic.com)



**Edward Simon**  
*Latin American Songbook*  
 SUNNYSIDE 1418  
 ★★★★★

Versatile pianist-composer Edward Simon used some of the music he heard as a child growing up in Venezuela as a starting point for this aesthetically satisfying collection of Spanish and Portuguese standards. In his liner notes, he explains that he also chose numbers that he heard and played later in life, assuring that the album represented a broad survey of countries.

To that end, his selections span composers from Argentina (Astor Piazzolla, Ariel Ramírez), France (Carlos Gardel), Puerto Rico (Rafael Hernandez), Chile (Violeta Parra), Brazil (Antonio Carlos Jobim) and Cuba (Martin Rojas). Though Simon garnered a well-deserved reputation for his technical faculties, he pushes the lyrical side of his playing to the fore throughout the album.

The trio highlights the best in its members' playing. Drummer Adam Cruz's brushwork is frequently mesmerizing, and bassist Joe Martin's soloing shines on Ramírez's "Alfonsina Y El Mar" and Rojas' "En La Orilla Del Mundo." Uptempo numbers—Piazzolla's "Libertango," Hernandez's "Capullito" and Jobim's "Chega De Saudade"—are crisply articulated. With Gardel's "Volver" and Parra's "Gracias A La Vida," Simon displays a mature romanticism that never veers into histrionics, all the while remaining grand and sophisticated.

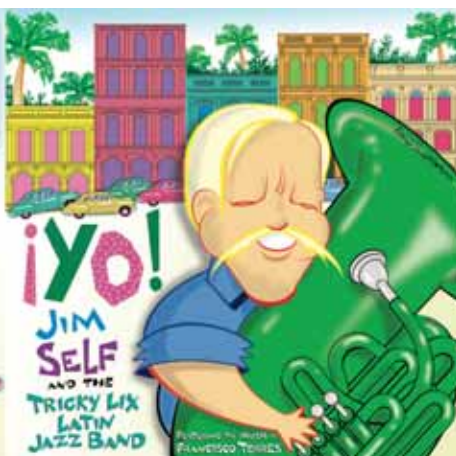
At seven tracks, *Latin American Songbook* seems as if it could be just the opening chapter of a series of such projects. Hopefully Simon has more past and recent memories that expand into other countries that he, Martin and Cruz can capture on future volumes, à la Ella Fitzgerald's own seminal songbook series.

—Yoshi Kato

**Latin American Songbook:** Libertango; Alfonsina Y El Mar; Capullito; Volver; Gracias A La Vida; Chega De Saudade; En La Orilla Del Mundo. (54:59)

**Personnel:** Edward Simon, piano; Joe Martin, bass; Adam Cruz, drums.

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







## Studio Cuts: Tales of the Tape

**Ready Take One (Legacy 88985363128; 66:01 ★★★★★)** is the followup to last year's reissue of **Erroll Garner's *The Complete Concert By The Sea***, which contained previously unreleased material from 1955. The "new" album features 14 studio tracks with drummers Jimmie Smith and Joe Cocuzzo, bassists Earnest McCarty Jr., Ike Isaacs, George Duvivier and Larry Gales and percussionist Joe Mangual.

The energy of these cuts is palpable, along with the included studio chatter. Six previously unreleased Garner songs include "High Wire," "Wild Music" and "Chase Me," along with typically sassy takes of "I'm Confessin' (That I Love You)," "Satin Doll" and "Misty." Garner's musical approach flirts with formula as the program makes it way, lessening the music's initial impact, but his wild, idiosyncratic handling of standards "Night And Day" and "Stella By Starlight" maintain that razzle-dazzle.

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

**Betty Davis, *The Columbia Years 1968–1969* (Light In The Attic 135; 46:57 ★★★★★)** Mostly produced by Miles Davis (Betty's partner at the time) and Teo Macero, this new release recalls a similar project of the time, *Jamming With Edward!*, an album that contained the best of the Brit-rocker bluesmen—The Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger, Bill Wyman and Charlie Watts, as well as Ry Cooder, Nicky Hopkins—incognito.

In this bizarre case, singer Betty's voice is sultry, funky and searching. Aiding the cause (seemingly in disguise) are Jimi Hendrix colleagues Billy Cox and Mitch Mitchell, but also jazzers Herbie Hancock, John McLaughlin, Wayne Shorter and Larry Young, among others. Covers of Jack Bruce's "Politician Man" and John Fogerty's "Born On The Bayou" hang on her ability to sustain musical interest as she stretches the songs like taffy. Macero, as one of the occasional

voices heard in the studio, ends it all, remarking, "Very good."

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

The value of **John Coltrane's** mono recordings for **Atlantic Records, *The Atlantic Years—In Mono* (Atlantic/Rhino 0081227946401; 228:29 ★★★★★)** can bring back memories for some. For many, mono was still the name of the game when these albums were made. Atlantic's Tom Dowd was recording in both formats, and the stereo versions of these recordings can sound somewhat unnatural next to the more integrated sound of mono. With the exception of *Olé*, all these albums were recorded at Atlantic Studios (with master tapes still fresh from their initial use). It was a studio where, unlike jazz labels such as Prestige, Blue Note and Savoy, a singles/pop/crossover/radio mindset affected the acoustics.

In a lavishly illustrated booklet, writer Ashley Kahn's liner notes mention that the mono masters of *My Favorite Things*, *Coltrane Jazz* and *Coltrane's Sound* were lost due to a fire. With no alternate takes and presented verbatim as the albums were originally issued song-by-song, there is certainly a warmth, clarity and sense of wholeness that can give new fans a fresh way of listening to Coltrane.

Astounding to realize, this music was recorded as the saxophonist was ending his highly influential tenure with Miles Davis and during an incredibly creative period of just a little more than two years, from January 1959 to May 1961. Following Rhino's 1995 release of *Coltrane's The Heavyweight Champion: The Complete Atlantic Recordings*, this latest box set—reviewed here in the six-LP 180-gram vinyl—is also available as a six-CD version (minus the original album cover art and 7-inch 45rpm single).

DB

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

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## Stephan Crump's Rhombal

PAPILLON SOUNDS

★★★★★

The adventurous composer-bassist Stephan Crump shares the weight of *Rhombal* amicably and dynamically with drummer Tyshawyn Sorey, trumpeter Adam O'Farrill and tenor saxophonist Ellery Eskelin.

While this is clearly Crump's album, it's also a blend of four distinct personalities, each able to navigate rapidly mutating tunes.

Crump sequences this homage to his deceased brother with care and an element of surprise. As a result, *Rhombal* bristles with the unexpected and the lively. The nine tracks work as a whole; they also work individually, spanning the leisurely "NoD For Nelson," the dirge-like "Grovi," the boppish "Skippaningam" and "Esquima Dream," a snappy showcase for Sorey at his funkiest, with a tightly braided O'Farrill-Eskelin front line. Crump's music is original, so you don't spend time spotting the influences. It also feels lived-in and warm, particularly in the longer tunes like the alternately devotional and sassy "Loose Bay" and the similarly bifurcated "Pulling Pillars—Outro For Patty." This group plays complex music freely, easily and memorably.

—Carlo Wolff

**Rhombal:** NoD For Nelson; Grovi; Skippaningam; Loose Bay; Esquima Dream; How Close Are You; Tsch; Birdwhistle; Pulling Pillars—Outro For Patty. (59:37)

**Personnel:** Stephan Crump, bass; Ellery Eskelin, tenor saxophone; Adam O'Farrill, trumpet; Tyshawyn Sorey, drums.

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



## Jason Roebke Octet Cinema Spiral

NO BUSINESS 86

★★★★★

You can't surprise people by doing the same thing twice, so Jason Roebke has resisted the temptation to make another album just like his octet's marvelous debut.

The Chicago bassist spent a decade showing the town his exemplary skills as an instrumentalist and accompanist, but even long-term fans were pleasantly astonished by the tonal richness of the arrangements on *High/Red/Center* (Delmark).

But the octet, having established its mastery of Mingus-like large ensemble jazz, has moved on. The material that Roebke has composed for *Cinema Spiral* is not as immediately ingratiating, but ultimately no less rewarding. This time the melodies stop and start, ducking into improvised passages and giving way to lengthy exchanges between players. The opening "Looking Directly Into The Camera" proceeds in suitably cinematic fashion. It unfolds episodically, the players straying from the original theme and searching for a way back. With *Cinema Spiral*, the bassist's music has become more mercurial, changing in tone and velocity both within and between pieces, and stymying complacency in the process.

—Bill Meyer

**Cinema Spiral:** Looking Directly Into The Camera; Focusing; For A Moment; Getting High; People Laughing; Waiting; L'acmé. (52:42)

**Personnel:** Jason Roebke, bass; Greg Ward, alto saxophone; Keefe Jackson, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, contrabass clarinet; Jason Stein, bass clarinet; Josh Berman, trumpet; Jeb Bishop, trombone; Jason Adasiewicz, vibraphone; Mike Reed, drums.

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



## Whit Dickey/Kirk Knuffke Fierce Silence

CLEAN FEED 376

★★★★½

This intimate multi-generational meeting between New Yorkers Kirk Knuffke (cornet) and Whit Dickey (drums) was recorded in Brooklyn last year, and is dedicated to the stickman's departed brother Don.

The session marks a significantly restrained and subtle approach from Dickey, when compared with his more turbulent work with Matthew Shipp and David S. Ware.

The soundstage for the drums is massive, with the elements of Dickey's kit arranged carefully around the stereo field. Knuffke stands in the center, his breathy pointillism always dancing around, alighting to coincide with each drumming emphasis. Knuffke might be an abstract painter, but his actual tone and phrasing often inhabit the oldest regions of the jazz tradition. Dickey's skins have a tuned musicality.

"Step Back," as with most of the pieces, is a dialog with ample pauses, space being paramount. The pair is in no hurry, circling each other warily, as if immersed in a courtship dance ritual. "Leave It To The Wind" is even more spacious, as Knuffke moves cautiously and Dickey splashes with faint brushwork, the pair lingering in deep agreement.

—Martin Longley

**Fierce Silence:** The Calling; Fierce Silence; Step Back; Stalker; Lodestar; Quarry; Bone; Legba's Dance; Leave It To The Wind; Ashes. (46:00)

**Personnel:** Kirk Knuffke, cornet; Whit Dickey, drums.

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



## Jochen Rueckert Charm Offensive

PIROUET 3095

★★★★½

Cologne-born drummer Jochen Rueckert is yet another reason jazz is no longer an exclusively American art form. Rueckert arrived stateside in 1998 and has worked with dozens of notable U.S. musicians; he continues to play with Ben Monder, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Chris Potter, Sam Yahel, Mark Turner and Tim Hagans, among others. He's recorded two albums, and even found time to pen a travel book, *Read The Rueckert—Travel Observations and Pictures of Hotel Rooms* (iBooks). *Charm Offensive* continues in the vein of Rueckert's earlier albums: airy compositions full of improvisation and melodies that have a habit of insinuating themselves deep in your head.

The album's assembled cast brings power and intuitive grace to Rueckert's tunes. Tenor saxophonist Mark Turner and guitarist Mark Moreno are excellent foils and interpretive craftsmen throughout, while bassist Orlando le Fleming performs in lockstep fluidity with the drummer's spiraling rhythms.

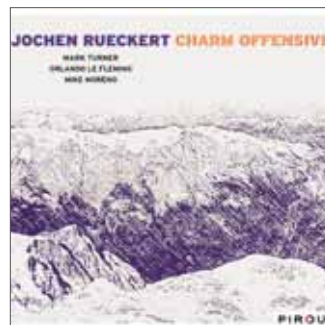
The tunes are sly insinulators—infused with old-school swing and angular melodies—but they're guided here with leavened gravitas. Rueckert remains charming, and cleverly offensive.

—Ken Micallef

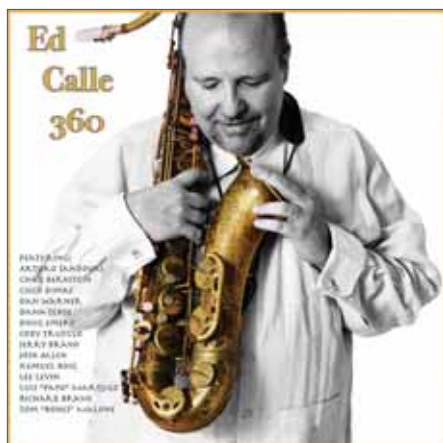
**Charm Offensive:** Stretch Mark; 5-Hydroxytryptamine; Aussenposition; Parasitosis; Eunice Park; The Alarmists; Purring Excellence; Charm Offensive. (53:22)

**Personnel:** Jochen Rueckert, drums; Mark Turner, tenor saxophone; Mike Moreno, guitar; Orlando le Fleming, bass.

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







## Ed Calle 360

MOJITO RECORDS

★★★★½

Remember the saying, “Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach”? Well, reedman Ed Calle is an exception to the rule, because this professor at Miami Dade College can most certainly do *both*.

Dr. Calle, who teaches classes in music business, will surprise many with how prolific he has been. His publicity reveals that he has made or appeared on 1,200 albums and 9,000 singles. And he made some winners, too, earning five Grammy nominations in the Latin jazz category. Last year, he won a Latin Grammy for Best Instrumental Album.

A hard-blowing tenor saxophonist who adds clarinet, soprano and baritone on his new release, the Venezuelan-born Calle is one of a handful of contemporary reedists who cross stylistic boundaries from bebop to straight-ahead, swing to funk. Among the 14 players in Calle’s band, trumpeter Arturo Sandoval is the best-known sideman, but trumpeter/vocalist Luis “Papo” Marques also contributes a strong performance. The second star soloist is an excellent young drummer named Lee Levin, a member of Sandoval’s band.

Calle leans primarily to contemporary in his playing, with a tight, piercing sound. He loves to swing (the opening title tune is a burner, and later he takes “Half Turn” at even a faster pace), and displays a sense of humor on a hokey tune titled “Hammocks Hoedown.” Switching to clarinet, he bops along merrily, getting a humorous contribution from the trombonist.

—Bob Protzman

**360:** 360; Dancing On A Cloud; Monk’s Mode; Waltz For Sydney; Half Turn; Lala Land; Until The End Of Never; One For JJ; +/- 3; Pooch Patrol; Hammocks Hoedown; Pooch Patrol (Alternate Take). (58:13)

**Personnel:** Ed Calle, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone, clarinet; Kemuel Roig, piano; Josh Allen, Jerry Bravo, (11), bass; Lee Levin, drums; Dan Warner, guitar, banjo; Eddie Trujillo, guitar (9); Richard Bravo, percussion; Luis “Papo” Marquez (3), Francisco “Cisco” Dimas (6), Arturo Sandoval (8), trumpet; Tom “Bones” Malone (12), Dana Teboe (3, 6, 8), Chad Bernstein (8), trombone; Doug Emery, organ (6).

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

## Lucy Woodward Til They Bang On The Door

GROUNDUP 602547917096

★★★

It’s been six years since vocalist Lucy Woodward released a record. Considering the meticulous arrangements and dense orchestration on this newest release, Woodward may have needed every day of those six years to complete this project.

She enlisted production and instrumental help from the Snarky Puppy collective with bassist Michael League and keyboardist Henry Hey serving as co-producers. League and Hey are no strangers to laying it on a little thick, and on this disc the spoon can stand straight up on its own.

Nearly every song on this album has the grandiosity of a Bond theme. Album opener “Ladykiller” arrives fast with a “come hither” snarl punctuated by beefy brass and some frenetic guitar work. Songs like “Kiss Me Mister Histirionics” and “Live Live Live” place Woodward’s coy, bubblegum vocals right where the VMAs might look for them. This is glittery pop with Woodward’s unapologetic coming across as Britney Spears-meets-Sondheim.

There is a theatrical bend to nearly every lyric, and while the arrangements are quirky and dense, they are not strong enough to counteract Woodward’s breathy ingénue vibe.

A trombone choir makes “Too Hot To Last” a curiosity, while album closer “The World We Knew (Over And Over)” segues from chamber orchestra to bright brass to swooning choir with some tchik-a-tchik guitar keeping time for good measure.



There is a lot of hard work evident on this record (as there is with much of the pop charts) but unfortunately all of that gloss can’t lift Woodward’s voice above the oversaturated market for “sexy pop singers.”

The hooks don’t linger and the super disco breaks aren’t offering anything new. Woodward can belt out a tune but hopefully next time she will reach beyond pop radio’s hypnotic but trite appeal.

—Sean J. O’Connell

**Til They Bang On The Door:** Ladykiller; Kiss Me Mister Histirionics; Be My Husband; I Don’t Know; Interlude: Hush; Too Hot To Last; Never Enough; Live Live Live; Free Spirit; Interlude: Afterglow; If This Were A Movie; Interlude Afterglow; The World We Knew (Over and Over). (50:45)

**Personnel:** Lucy Woodward, Everett Bradley, vocals; John White, Lucy Howling, Sheryl D’Singer, background vocals; Natalia Paruz, musical saw; Chris McQueen, guitar; Nick Marchione, Mike Maher, Jay Jennings, trumpet; Todd Low viola; Tim Lefebvre, Michael League, bass, vocals; Katie Kresk, Rachel Golub, violin; Henry Hey keyboards, vocals; Cory Henry, organ; J. Walter Hawkes, Alan Ferber, Natalie Cressman trombone; Dave Eggar cello; Brian Delaney, Zach Danziger, drums; Chris Cheek, tenor saxophone; Bridget Cady, soprano saxophone; Chris Bullock, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone.

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

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**DOWNBEAT**



## The Orbit of Ra

Just about two decades on from the publication of John Szwed's definitive Sun Ra biography *Space Is The Place: The Lives And Times Of Sun Ra*, **Paul Youngquist** has written what could be described as an enhancement, an expansion, or even a fictionalization of the majestic Saturnian jazz composer and keyboardist.

In the spirit of Ra's own curious mixture of sly humor and social critique, swing and cacophony, "out there" nonsense and alternative business sense, the accepted rules of biographer behavior are deliberately suspended. In ***A Pure Solar World: Sun Ra and the Birth of Afrofuturism*** (University of Texas Press), Youngquist's self-appointed mission is to set Ra's existence in relation to the times of his rise, and to look at external influences, as well as internal.

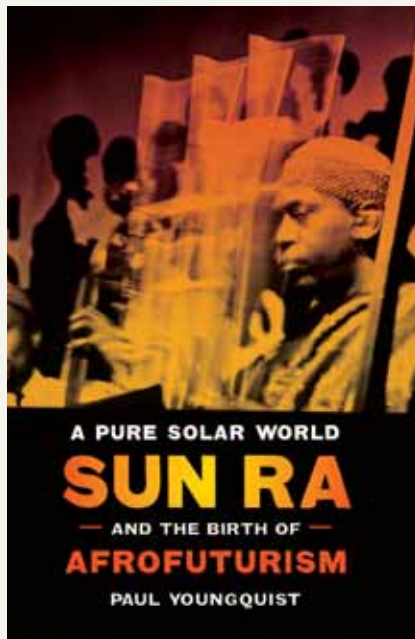
After all, Ra was politically minded, but not in the usual sense. The very essence of his sonic explorations is political, whether manifested in personal or societal manner.

The narrative follows Ra from Saturn (his self-described spiritual birthplace) to Birmingham, Alabama (his geographic birthplace), to Chicago and onward, specializing in the tangential introduction of mini-episodes that approach his life and work from less expected areas.

The 1940 novel *Native Son*, by Richard Wright, is woven in as a way of illustrating conditions on the South Side of Chicago, but this seems to be a self-conscious device rather than a direct Ra link. There are also sharp jump-cuts to discuss Ra's poetry, perhaps analyzing too deeply, and taking his wordy playfulness a touch too seriously.

The "L" train in Chicago is amusingly linked to El Saturn Records, the innovative independent record label on which Ra recorded several noteworthy albums. Youngquist uses the conceit as yet another shift, this time to talk about the label's business practices, which stressed the sale of LPs at gigs, eschewing conventional distribution. This was way back in the late 1950s, and the commercial outlook has now come full circle.

Youngquist's book almost seems to be auditioning as a movie treatment, describing in great detail certain events where there is no precise documentation. He re-creates entire happenings, such as a Washington Park bench encounter in Chicago between Ra, leafing through a stack of arcane tomes, and a Nation Of Islam member. The sequence is penned in an imagined fashion, but can't help possess-



ing the authority of fact.

In this regard, it can be difficult for the reader to retain a constant awareness that conjecture is present on a frequent basis. There is also a dramatization of Ra's 1941 court appearance as a conscientious objector, featuring embellishments that burrow into his presumed emotional state at that time. And then, the Sputnik satellite is launched in 1957, and Ra's space place becomes a realistic proposition.

It seems as though Ra is barely cold in his grave, and is being "imagined" even while his Arkestra is still a pulsing, living entity. Youngquist, to be fair, is actively aiming for such a quality. He seems to be set on surrounding Ra with symbolic discussions that are hoping to deepen the reader's knowledge of his relevance and significance within jazz, art, poetry and black cultural and political life itself.

As the book flits from place to space and back again, we can grasp what Youngquist is seeking, and even if he's failing, or digressing, or making connections that don't quite fit, he can be encouraged for this fresh way of evaluating an artistic existence.

The book reverberates with the mixed terrain of Ra's own music, changing several times within the course of each chapter.

It's about legend-building, and no matter how well-documented an artist's life is, with each passing decade, the details recede even further into the distance. Particularly for an artist who grew up on Saturn.

Ordering info: [utpress.utexas.edu](http://utpress.utexas.edu)

DB



## Joey Alexander *Countdown*

MOTÉMA 202

★★★★½

Pretend you know nothing about Joey Alexander. Forget for a moment that you probably have sneakers older than him. While it might be impossible to set aside what you already know about this 13-year-old pianist after the wave of publicity that accompanied his Grammy-nominated debut recording, it's worth your time to open your ears and listen.

What you hear is likely no more astounding than what Montrealers heard when a 14-year-old Oscar Peterson landed his own weekly radio program, or what Sam Rivers' fans heard when 13-year-old Tony Williams joined his band. While there's a certain stiffness to Alexander's playing—not necessarily a rote regurgitation of well-learned moves, but a definite mirroring of other's styles—there is no doubting his advanced technical facility.

Along with that yet-to-come personal voice, Alexander has something else in common with other prodigies. Like Hiromi, James Carter and other one-time *enfants terrible*, he has the desire to show it all on his early recordings, pulling out every lightning move he's learned and jamming in as many notes as he can. The tumultuous introduction to the title piece may leave you breathless. When he does create breathing room, as on Wynton Marsalis's wistful "For Wee Folks" and his own "Soul Dreamer," it's possible to hear how his style might develop. At this point, there's no question that Alexander is immensely talented. Following his journey as he matures, develops his own signatures and expands his repertoire promises to be as fulfilling as it was to watch Peterson, Williams and other phenoms in their prime.

—James Hale

**Countdown:** City Lights; Sunday Waltz; Countdown; Smile; Maiden Voyage; Criss Cross; Chelsea Bridge; For Wee Folks; Soul Dreamer; Freedom Jazz Dance. (72:00)

**Personnel:** Joey Alexander, piano; Chris Potter, soprano saxophone (5); tenor saxophone (10); Larry Grenadier, bass (3–6, 8, 9); Dan Chmielewski, bass (1, 2, 7); Ulysses Owens Jr., drums.

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





## Ibrahim Maalouf *Red & Black Light*

IMPULSE!

★★★★

First impressions can be misleading. “Free Spirit” opens this album with a burst of chirping synths, followed by a funky groove with a Rhodes piano solo—a one-two punch that will leave many listeners ready to dismiss the track as a dollop of smooth jazz. But things get quirky past the one-minute mark, as a bouncy 7/8 synth line is dropped over a stomping, straight-four funk groove. The sound may be smooth, but Ibrahim Maalouf ensures it never slips into easy listening.

Still, it’s hard not to wish for a bit more from *Red & Black Light*. The Lebanese-born, Paris-based Maalouf is a virtuoso trumpeter, with deep roots in both Western and Arabic classical music. He likes to stay in the instrument’s lower register, where his tone takes on a rich, almost vocalized quality, and his fluidity on the four-valve quarter-tone trumpet goes well beyond anything Don Ellis did. When he’s front and center on a tune, as he is on the slow-grinding “Escape,” his playing can be riveting, both in terms of the emotional power he pulls from *maqam* (traditional Arabic melodic modes) and the jaw-dropping technique he displays.

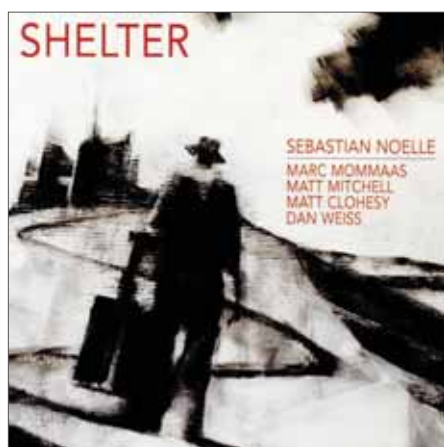
But this band seldom burns as brightly as his playing does. Stéphane Galland’s drumming is a definite plus, making funk and odd-metered time seem compellingly kinetic, but guitarist François Delporte adds little more than bursts of rock-style power, while Eric Legnini’s layered keyboards are as pretty as they are toothless. Those who know Maalouf through such prior albums as *Wind* and *Kalthoum* will sorely miss the likes of Mark Turner and Larry Grenadier.

—J.D. Considine

**Red & Black Light:** Free Spirit; Essentielles; Goodnight Kiss; Elephant’s Tooth; Red & Black Light; Escape; Improbable; Run The World (Girls). (42:06)

**Personnel:** Ibrahim Maalouf, trumpet; François Delaporte, guitar; Eric Legnini, keyboards; Stéphane Galland, drums.

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



## Sebastian Noelle *Shelter*

FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT 494

★★★★

Considering the presence of pianist Matt Mitchell and drummer Dan Weiss on this third album by guitarist Sebastian Noelle, listeners might expect to hear some challenging sounds, loaded with a complicated edge. Unfortunately, Noelle has a predilection for a bloated post-Metheny guitar sound that’s full of excess reverberation and washed-out pastel colors.

Noelle is a German living in New York City, perhaps most familiar as a member of Darcy

James Argue’s Secret Society, where he tends to be more concerned with riffing rock propulsion. Here, Noelle is surprisingly bland, making a billowing negotiation of his original melodic themes, following mathematical progressions, but without the hard attack employed by the godfather of such constructions, Tim Berne. The structures are tangled, but Noelle’s sonic textures defuse any tension.

This album surely features some of Mitchell’s most lyrical playing, and there’s ultimately too much flowery wandering here, although Noelle becomes a touch tougher on “Rolling With The Punches,” his hyperactive progressions eventually returning to restfulness. On “Home In A Strange Land,” Weiss maintains a complex clicking pattern, in tandem with his relaxed cymbal splashes. The theme of “Another Spring” has the deeply feathery tenor saxophone of Marc Mommaas allied closely to the guitar and piano lines.

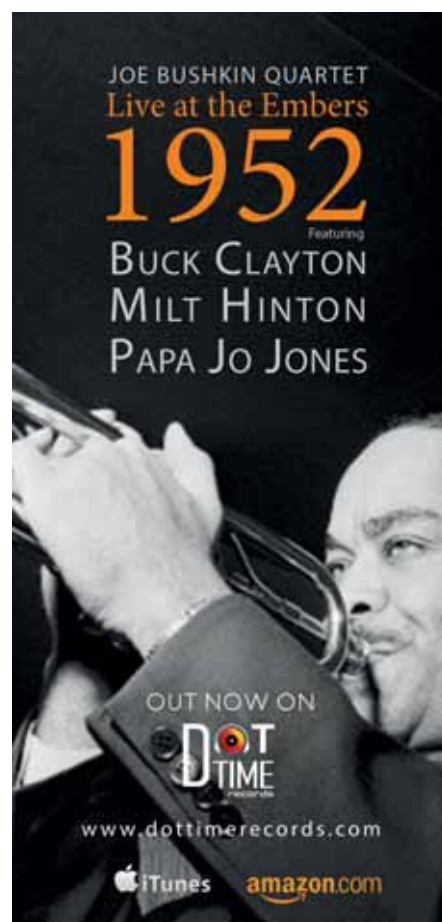
The influence of Weiss spreads throughout “Ahir Bhairav,” which, steeped as it is in classical raga material, forces a different approach—well needed by this point in the album.

—Martin Longley

**Shelter:** Seven Up; Home In A Strange Land; Another Spring; Rolling With The Punches; Day Off; Unlikely Heroes; Mirror Lake; Ahir Bhairav; Naphta Vs. Settembrini; You’ll Never Know. (67:00)

**Personnel:** Sebastian Noelle, guitar; Marc Mommaas, tenor saxophone; Matt Mitchell, piano; Matt Clohesy, bass; Dan Weiss, drums.

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



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[www.raphaelwressnig.com](http://www.raphaelwressnig.com)



## Mats Eilertsen *Rubicon*

ECM 2469

★★★★

Norway's Trygve Seim is having a busy year, most recently marked by his lead role in *Rumi Songs*, a collection of compositions based on the works of Rumi, a 13th-century mystic poet. Joined by Tora Augestad (vocals), Frode Haltli (accordion) and Svante Henryson (cello), Seim composed the album's tracks in addition to playing tenor and soprano saxophones.

Recorded in February of last year, the album was just recently released in conjunction with a performance at the Oslo Jazz Festival.

*Rumi Songs* is topically heavy and musically light, with the exception of a few moments that Seim kicks into high gear. While "In Your Beauty" basks in ambience and love, "When I See Your Face" settles into some intense dueling between Seim and Haltli.

With lyrics translated into English, the album will act as the gateway for many to discover the words of Rumi. On "The Guest House," Augestad urges you, via Rumi, to invite every emotion as a welcomed guest, for even sorrow serves a meaningful purpose: making a human stronger and priming him for happiness once again.

Norwegians paying homage to a Persian poet with 55 minutes of bliss is the kind of far-reaching concept you can expect from Manfred Eicher and company in 2016. *Rumi Songs* is carefully thought-out and executed by a roster of veterans in their craft, creating a kind and relaxing collection of songs that dwell in love and bliss.

But if the album leaves you pining for something a bit more traditional or, to be completely blunt, *jazzy*, then turn to bassist Mats Eilertsen's *Rubicon*. On this release, you'll hear the familiar sound of Seim's saxophone, but in the context of a septet that includes clarinets, marimba, vibraphone, piano and drums. The album is cut from the same musical cloth as *Rumi Songs*: gentle, beautiful and whimsical. However, with deeper grooves and the lack of vocals, instruments are able to do the talking. "Balky" sees the band rise together to create devastating sounds. The dueling saxophones of Seim and Eirik Hegdal work up to cry-like bursts that writhes the listener's mind. "September" is marked by noteworthy guitar work from Thomas Dahl and hypnotic marimba sounds from Rob Waring.

While these two records exist for very different reasons, they both stand as exemplary pieces for Norway's contemporary jazz offerings. Seim proves his versatility not only as a saxophone player, but also as someone who is able to spearhead a project of *Rumi Songs*' magnitude while also playing his role as an equal member of *Rubicon*'s septet.

—Chris Tart

**Rumi Songs:** In Your Beauty; Seeing Double; Across The Doorsill; The Guest House; Leaving My Self; When I See Your Face; Like Every Other Day; The Drunk And The Madman; Whirling Rhythms; There Is Some Kiss We Want. (53:51)

**Personnel:** Trygve Seim, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Tora Augestad, vocals; Frode Haltli, accordion; Svante Henryson, strings.

**Rubicon:** Canto; Cross The Creek; March; Lago; Balky; BluBlue; Wood And Water; September; Reminiscent; Introitus. (53:56)

**Personnel:** Mats Eilertsen, bass; Trygve Seim, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Eirik Hegdal, soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet; Thomas Dahl, guitar; Rob Waring, marimba, vibraphone; Harmen Fraanje, piano, Fender Rhodes; Olavi Louhivuori, drums.

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



## Trygve Seim *Rumi Songs*

ECM 2449

★★★★½

## Mike Jones Trio

### *Roaring*

CAPRI 74142

★★★★½

The cover art of Mike Jones' latest album captures the lighthearted spirit of the music therein, featuring an animated scene in which Jones and his bandmates—bassist Katie Thiroux and drummer Matt Witek—dance the Charleston. This is fitting, since Jones and company swing their way through 10 tunes originating in the Roaring '20s (hence the album title).

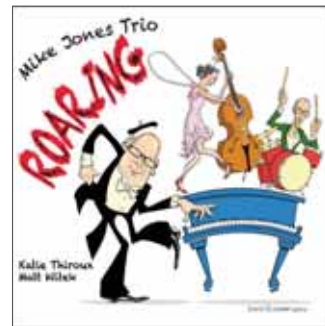
Notwithstanding his day job as the "house" pianist for magicians Penn & Teller, Jones does not need any sort of musical legerdemain to entertain. He plays well, and has chosen bandmates who share his musical vision. The trio opens with a straightforward, no-nonsense swing on the chestnut "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," then decompresses for a laid-back take on "If I Had You." Later, the group embarks on a rollicking romp through Irving Berlin's "I'll See You In Cuba," which captures the lighthearted playfulness found in the lyrics to this anti-Prohibition song. While never straying from their roots, Jones, Thiroux and Witek save the blues for last, with a strong workout on "Am I Blue?" The playing answers the title's question, with an unequivocal "yes."

—Martin Z. Kasdan Jr.

**Roaring:** Yes Sir, That's My Baby; If I Had You; I'll See You In Cuba; Home; Mean To Me; I Found A New Baby; Me And My Shadow; What'll I Do; I Can't Believe You're In Love With Me; Am I Blue. (61:52)

**Personnel:** Mike Jones, piano; Katie Thiroux, bass; Matt Witek, drums.

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



## Manu Katché *Unstatic*

ANTEPRIMA/NAXOS

★★★★½

While the contours of this music seem all too familiar, drummer-composer Manu Katché has managed to forge a musical identity all his own. With material that refuses to flag, his style uniquely incorporates decades-old elements:

catchy syncopated beats, a formal instrumentation, even a dance aesthetic. *Unstatic* adds Norwegian bassist Ellen Andrea Wang to the mix, which helps to cement the album's mostly medium-tempo grooves.

Utilizing a front-line horn section of saxophonist Tore Brunborg and trumpeter Luca Aquino, with the addition of trombonist Nils Landgren on five tracks, Katché maintains a horn-driven style that continues to lace his melodies and measured drumming, while pianist/keyboardist/organist Jim Watson furthers *Unstatic*'s funky easy-listening vibe.

Katché's taut arrangements, as on "Blossom" and "Trickle," offer measured, relaxed tempos and playing, the former featuring soft vocalizing from Wang and Katché, while the latter airs out the leader's ability to throw down a melody of real substance.

—John Ephland

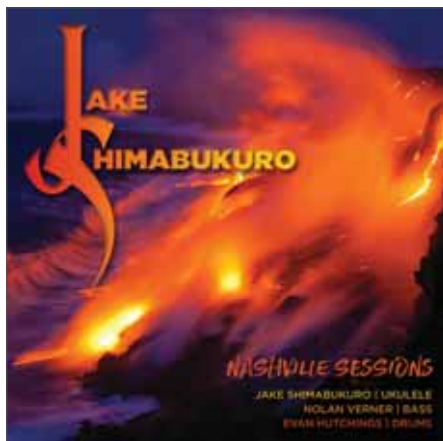
**Unstatic:** Introducción; Unstatic; Flame & Co; City; Blossom; Daze Days; Rolling; Ride Me Up; Trickle; Out Of Sight; Presentation. (50:43)

**Personnel:** Manu Katché, drums, vocals (5); Ellen Andrea Wang, acoustic bass, vocals (5); Jim Watson, piano, keyboards, organ; Tore Brunborg, saxophones; Luca Aquino, trumpet; Nils Landgren, trombone (1, 2, 5, 7, 11); Abraham Rodriguez Mansarroll, Joel Heirrezuelo Balart, Inor Esteban Sotolongo Zapata, percussion (1).

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







## Jake Shimabukuro Nashville Sessions

JS RECORDS

★★★★

An album's title doesn't always do justice to the music it offers. Take the newest release from ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuro. Where just two words captured the essence of Bob Dylan's *Nashville Skyline*, Shimabukuro's *Nashville Sessions* might just as easily have been recorded anywhere in the country. True, drummer Evan Hutchings is a Music City resident. But Nolan Verner is Shimabukuro's regular bassist and presumably available to track pretty much wherever they decide to.

So forget the title. What can we say about the music? Well, first of all, it confirms Shimabukuro's reputation as the master of the ukulele. The instrument's chief limitation is that it has only four strings; you won't find juicy Joe Pass voicings here. Instead, Shimabukuro works with what he has, building hooks on sequences of fourths and fifths or within arpeggiated figures, some of them delicate, others executed crisply at hyper-speed tempos, often in shifting meters.

The problem here is that more could have been done with this idea, especially on less fully realized tracks. Behind most of the one-chord ukulele solo on "Blue Haiku," Verner sticks to the root of the tonic, anchoring it perhaps more than necessary instead of responding to the ideas Shimabukuro tosses out, while Hutchings lays back on drums, playing lightly, almost never hitting the toms.

Now, back to that title. Shimabukuro is a world-class artist. We can only hope that a second visit to Nashville will involve making fuller use of its resources.

—Bob Doerschuk

**Nashville Sessions:** Disc One: Hemiola Blues; 6/8, Man Of Mud; Galloping Seahorses; Motown; Celtic Tune. (37:27) Disc Two: Tri-tone. (Excerpt From Byron Yasui's Ukulele Concerto—Campanella, First Movement); Blue Haiku; Ballad; F Minor; Kilauea. (41:32)

**Personnel:** Jake Shimabukuro, tenor ukulele, baritone ukulele, soprano ukulele, electric ukulele; Nolan Verner, bass; Evan Hutchings, drums, percussion; Chris Carmichael, strings (6, 9).

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

## Eric Hargett Trio Steppin' Up

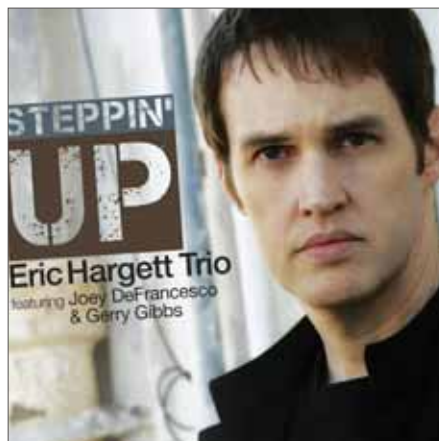
WHALING CITY SOUND 083

★★★★½

Eric Hargett, who makes his debut as a leader on *Steppin' Up*, has plenty of background playing in jazz, r&b and funk groups. Originally from Houston, the low-reed specialist met drummer Gerry Gibbs in San Antonio. After moving to Los Angeles, he took vibes lessons with Gerry's father, Terry Gibbs.

Much of *Steppin' Up* is reminiscent of the early George Benson albums that featured baritone saxophonist Ronnie Cuber and organist Dr. Lonnie Smith. Hargett's own guttural baritone style recalls both Cuber and Pepper Adams. He also plays his lighter-toned tenor on a few numbers. Organist Joey DeFrancesco, who is brilliant as usual, plays organ and electric keyboards on one song apiece, while Gibbs is supportive and driving on drums.

The title cut, a funky medium-tempo blues with an infectious boogaloo rhythm, was written as a direct tribute to Cuber. Thelonious Monk's "Hackensack" has DeFrancesco sounding effective on piano with bassist Hamilton Price making his one appearance of the date. Hargett is boppish in his solo, tossing in some heated double-time runs.



The program concludes with "Sunday Fog," the most adventurous performance of the set. DeFrancesco flies pretty freely over Gibbs' drums during his improvisation, and Hargett stretches himself a bit on tenor.

*Steppin' Up* is an excellent offering from Hargett, whose playing (particularly on baritone) shows a lot of potential for the future.

—Scott Yanow

**Steppin' Up:** Steppin' Up; West; Hackensack; Woody's Dream; Baretta; You Don't Know What Love Is; Brunswick Avenue; Pacific Voyage; Myra's Song; Sunday Fog. (57:16)

**Personnel:** Eric Hargett, baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone, keyboards, vibes; Joey DeFrancesco, organ (3), electric piano (8); Gerry Gibbs, drums; Hamilton Price, bass (3).

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

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# Rhythmic Independence & Musicality on the Drum Set

It is hard to imagine a pattern played on the drum set that does not require a certain level of rhythmic independence. However, there are other styles of drumming that are pretty much linear, and do not require much more than basic coordination to execute them.

There are many styles and different levels of drumming. There are different approaches and understandings about the functionality (role) of a drummer within the different styles of music, including the most personal styles of playing, which add an even wider spectrum of drumming possibilities and rhythmic innovation.

This article is going to focus on rhythmic independence and how to gain control while playing independent patterns—synchronizing them all together in order to make music with them, which is the optimum goal. Call it “playing rhythmic independence in a musical way.”

All of the examples that I have included are excerpts from my book *A World of Rhythmic Possibilities*, available at Dafnison Music ([dafnisonmusic.com](http://dafnisonmusic.com)).

Let me start by presenting the rhythm of the rumba clave, which

is the main pattern we are going to use throughout these examples. I’m going to notate the pattern in one bar, with four fundamental pulses (beats), so its basic subdivision is going to be in 16th notes. This rhythm has mostly been played starting in two different places: either on the “3” side, or the “2” side. It is important to understand that these two ways of starting the pattern do not make two different patterns, but the same pattern starting in two different places, if we simply divide the pattern in half.

Examples 1 and 2 show the rumba clave pattern in 4/4 (16th-note subdivision), and the two fundamental ways of starting this pattern.

Example 1 starts on the “3” side, and Example 2 starts on the “2” side.

The next step is to add another pattern to play simultaneously with this clave pattern. I’m going to choose the rhythm of the *cáscara*, which is a pattern that has been walking side by side with the clave for many years. This pattern is rhythmically related to the clave, to the point that we can see that the *cáscara* pattern as an extension of the clave pattern, or the clave pattern as a rhythmic simplification



of the cáscara. Let's play the two patterns simultaneously, as shown in Example 3.

As you can see, I have included accents in the cáscara pattern. These accents are fundamental to the pattern, and should be played in order to bring out the subtle character of this pattern.

A very good practice of rhythmic independence between these two patterns can also be achieved by displacing one of the patterns. This time, let's displace the cáscara pattern by a quarter note. This

means that we are going to start the clave pattern in the first beat, and the cáscara pattern on the second beat. See Example 4. You can also feel free to experiment displacing the cáscara to the third and fourth beats of the bar.

It is important to understand that all of these patterns are anchored in a strong and clear subdivision. The more control we have manipulating these subdivisions, the stronger the sense of groove we can bring to these patterns. These examples can be challenging to

**Example 1**

**Example 2**

**Example 3**

**Example 4**

**Example 5**

**Example 6**

**Example 7**

**Example 8**

**Example 9**

**Example 10**

**Example 11**

**Example 12**

**Example 13**

**Example 14**

**Example 15**

**Example 16**

**Example 17**

**Example 18**

anyone, and the only way to step forward with them is by approaching the learning process with discipline and patience.

A good tip to quicken this process is to play the clave to the point where you don't have to think about it, therefore you will be playing the pattern without paying that much attention to it. It is also very important to realize that "independence" happens in the brain, and that's why we don't need to be seated in front of the drum set to practice any of these patterns—you can practice them tapping your lap, or by simply moving the tip of your fingers.

What we are really doing is training the brain to organize and synchronize these patterns first, so that we can perform them accurately in our limbs. Our limbs are just following the signal from the brain.

Now that we have been able to play these two patterns simultaneously while changing their starting points, let's move to our next step, which is playing other patterns with the clave. This step brings more rhythmic complexity, because we are going to use the snare, the bass drum and the hi-hat, while playing the clave pattern with our right hand.

Let's pick a basic example from the book *Stick Control for the Snare Drummer* by George Lawrence Stone and translate its sticking to the drum set. We are going to play the basic pattern called a "paradiddle" (which I'm sure many of you already know). We are going to apply what the right hand plays on the bass drum, then the left hand will stay as is (playing on the snare with the left hand). The hi-hat will be playing on every downbeat as quarter notes (the hi-hat part isn't notated on the following examples), and then we will play the clave pattern in the right hand. See Example 5.

Let's include the use of syncopation within these independence exercise. It is important to understand that the ability to establish a

good feel or groove in a rhythm depends on how well we are able to manipulate its subdivisions (downbeats and upbeats). This happens whether we are playing a fast tempo or a ballad, and it will certainly help to make a more musical, relaxed and fluid performance on these or any other patterns.

For Example 6, we are going to simply displace the same paradiddle pattern by a 16th note, as notated.

Next, let's play the same syncopation exercises, but this time with the cáscara pattern on the right hand. See Example 7.

After playing the examples above, you should be ready to make any combination as desired. For example, let's play a combination of eighth notes and upbeats (syncopation) with the clave pattern starting on the "2" side, as shown in Example 8.

I consider these examples to be much more than just combinations of sticking patterns adapted to the drum set. They are compositional rhythmic phrases that can bring beauty and elegance to your playing.

In fact, these are not mere exercises, but rather a key to opening the door to an infinite amount of rhythmic possibilities that each drummer can use as a source for creativity, while accomplishing the technical ability to execute them.

These are just a few examples, but any drummer can adapt these examples to other rhythms they like and use most frequently, like swing, shuffle, funk, rock, etc.

Being musical is not only a natural condition someone possesses, but a quality that can be practiced and enhanced at all times. This is a subject that refers to the quality and the control with which something is played, but it also refers to how we listen while playing, our perception and awareness of rhythms, and how well we fulfill the intention behind what we play.

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For example, if we play a rhythm, we should also try to bring a character to that rhythm, a certain attitude that will reflect a specific rhythmic intention. This intention can be roughly described in two ways: the feel of the pattern (for example, being in swing feel, straight feel, half time, etc.) and the actual rhythmic content of the pattern. It also relates to the use of specific musical techniques that will enhance the performance and interpretation, such as dynamics, textures, touch, accents, embellishments, rhythmic fluidity, lengths of rhythmic phrases, etc.

All of these different techniques and qualities can and should be added to the examples mentioned in this article. The optimum

approach to these examples is to play with rhythmic fluidity and a strong sense of groove, and listening to the dynamic balance between all of the parts—while giving yourself the freedom of changing back and forth from one example to another.

Be interactive—add embellishments and improvisation—as if you are in fact creating music. The key point to this approach is very simple: Listen openly to everything that you play from the beginning so that you get used to making music at all times, even while practicing.

Another suggestion that comes to mind is vocalizing these patterns: replicating the sounds of the drums in your head (or out loud)

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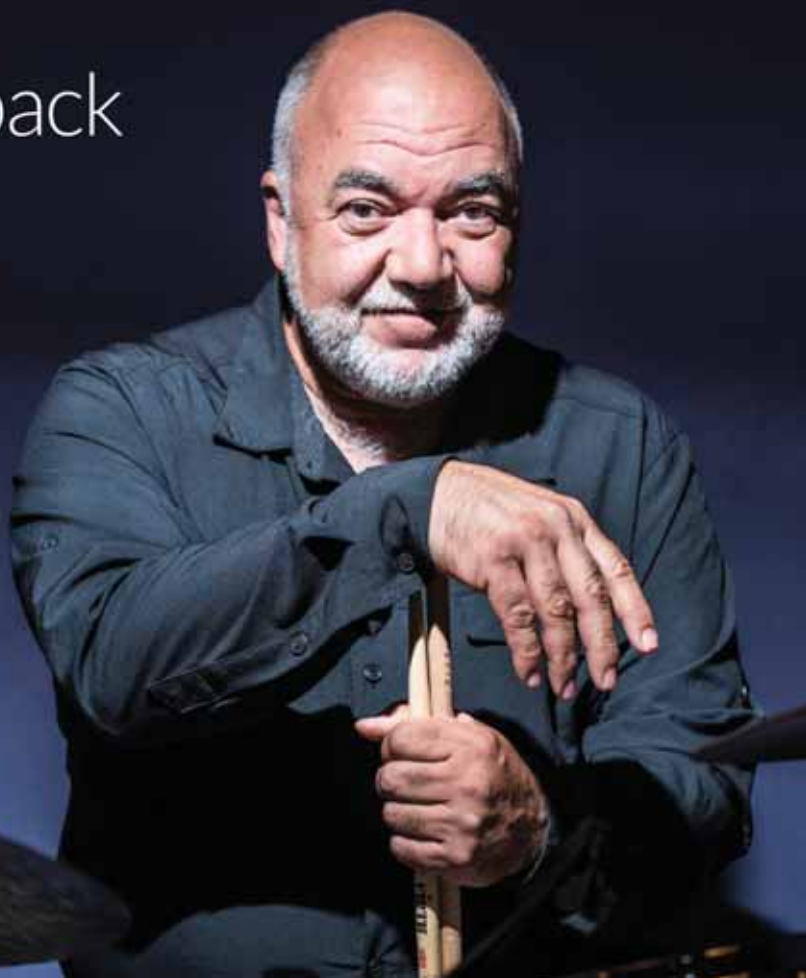
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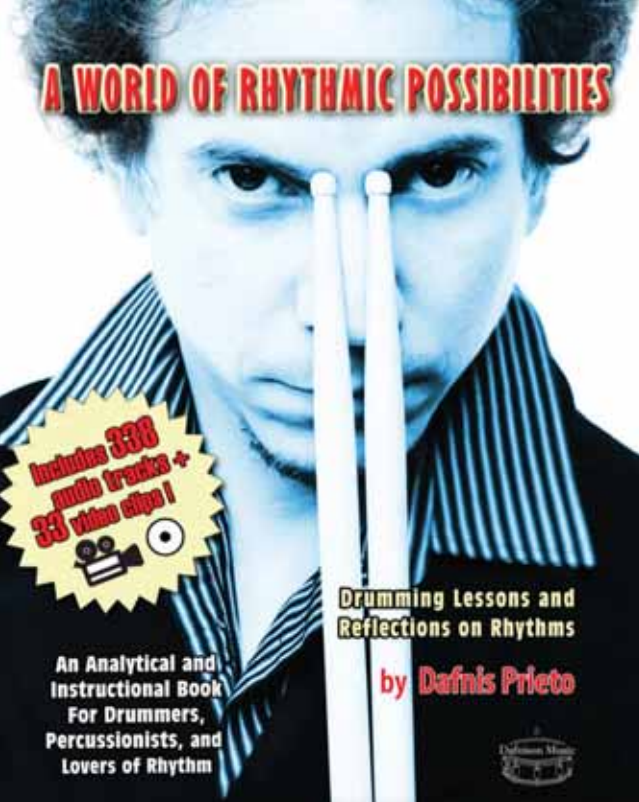
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while clapping the clave, the cáscara or any other pattern. This rhythmic vocalization will greatly help to internalize (rhythmically and sonically) these or any other rhythmic independence patterns.

Next, I would like to present some more examples from my book, this time from the chapter titled "Max in Clave."

Example 9 shows a drum break that Max Roach played in the song "Klact-Oveeds-Tene" (Take B alternate) from the collection



*Charlie Parker: The Dial Masters—Original Choice Takes* (Spotlite). The tune starts off with an eight-bar intro followed by a drum break. This break repeats twice and is originally played by Roach on the snare and bass drums. He also plays some kind of double rim-shot flam on the snare.

Let's look at the same rhythmic structure, but now written in 16th-note subdivisions and without the flams, in a two-bar phrasing pattern. See Example 10.

Now, let's play the same rhythmic phrase simultaneously with the clave pattern. See Example 11.

This example has great compositional potential because it can be divided into two fundamental themes. Theme #1 is shown in Example 12; theme #2 is illustrated in Example 13.

Example 14 shows the break with the two themes as they appear in their original form.

Moving further, we can change the order of these two themes, while keeping the same two-bar phrasing pattern.

The original Roach break was in the following order: 1-2-2-1. But we are now going to change the order to 1-1-2-2, 2-2-1-1 and 2-1-1-2, as shown in Example 15, Example 16 and Example 17, respectively. (The note in parentheses represents the beginning of each theme.)

As you can see, we are indeed experiencing astonishing rhythmic independence combinations by simply changing the order in which we play the two themes.

If you are able to play these examples, it means that you already have the ability to take this information to the next level, which is being interactive (using improvisation), musical (using dynamics, accents, etc.) or creating any other kind of variations.

I would like to close by presenting a well-known theme that was also played by Roach, titled "For Big Sid," in clave.

The "Big Sid" theme is a beautiful rhythmic phrase adapted to the drum set by Roach from the song "Boff Boff (Mop Mop)," composed by saxophonist Coleman Hawkins. While playing this theme, Roach would improvise with endless variations, creating a form similar to call-and-response, most of the time keeping the hi-hat on the second and the fourth beats as in the swing feel.

Example 18 is a variation of the "Big Sid" theme that I recreated, this time playing on the snare and the bass drum, the hi-hat on all quarter notes, and the clave (2-3) with the right hand.

The very core of this lesson is based on the belief that rhythmic independence is just a means to an end, by which I mean you should try to make music out of these rhythmic examples and not just treat them as exercises.

Practicing these examples with a focused intention will not only lead to many other rhythmic possibilities, but also to a very enjoyable musical performance on the drum set.

DB

Cuban-born drummer Dafnis Prieto's revolutionary techniques and compositions have had a powerful impact on the Latin and jazz music scenes, nationally and internationally. Since his arrival in New York in 1999, Prieto has worked in bands led by Henry Threadgill, Steve Coleman, Eddie Palmieri, Chico and Arturo O'Farrill, Dave Samuels & The Caribbean Jazz Project, Jane Bunnett, D.D. Jackson, Edward Simon, Michel Camilo, Chucho Valdez, Bebo Valdez, Roy Hargrove, Don Byron and Andrew Hill, among others. He has also led his own ensembles—

including various duet, trio, quartet, quintet and sextet configurations, plus a small big band—and has released six albums as a leader, including his most recent album, *Triangles And Circles* (Dafnison Music, 2015). As an educator, Prieto has conducted numerous master classes, clinics and workshops throughout the world. He served on the jazz studies faculty at New York University from 2005 to 2014, and in 2015 he joined the faculty of University of Miami's Frost School of Music. Prieto has received numerous commissions, grants and fellowships from such institutions as the MacArthur Foundation, Chamber Music America, Jazz at Lincoln Center, East Carolina University, Meet the Composer and the Doris Duke Foundation. He is founder of the independent music company Dafnison Music, which this year published his analytical/instructional book *A World of Rhythmic Possibilities: Drumming Lessons and Reflections on Rhythms*. Prieto's lessons offer substantial detail on technique, while adding insight into the spiritual and emotional aspects of drumming. The book references online audio and video clips that can be accessed as supplemental material. Visit Prieto online at [dafnisonmusic.com](http://dafnisonmusic.com).

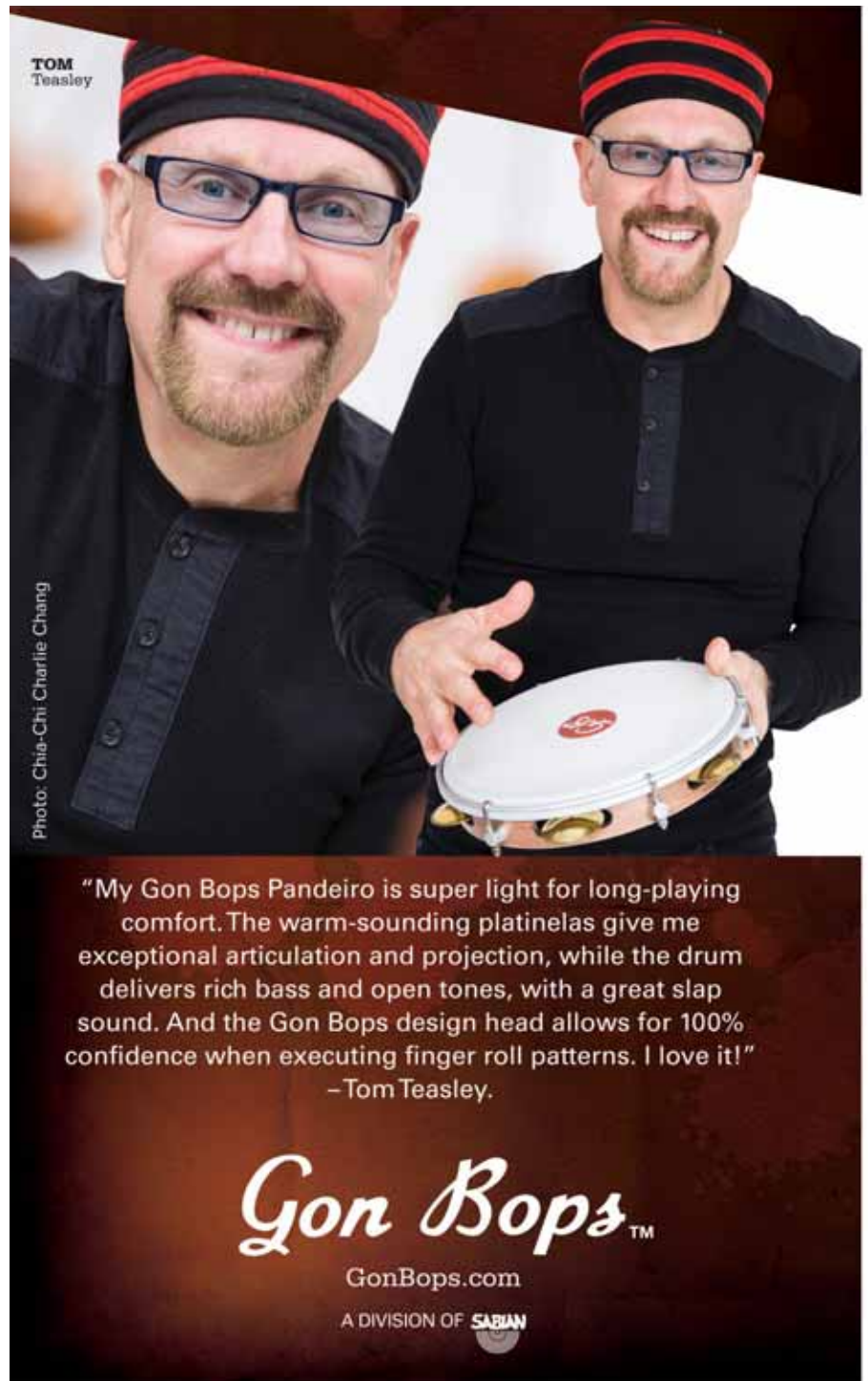


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## Rhythmic Approaches To Improvisation

The essence of jazz music, and the art of creative improvisation, has always been synonymous with the freedom of artistic expression. As a performer of any style of music, the development of vocabulary, independence and the flexibility to hear and execute musical ideas is fundamental to that very freedom of expression. This article is going to address a few rhythmic approaches to improvisation that drummer Scott Neumann and saxophonist Tom Christensen—co-leaders of the New York-based quartet Spin Cycle—utilize and continue to work on in developing greater performance flexibility and freedom with improvisation.

### EIGHTH-NOTE POINT SYSTEM

One way to develop rhythmic flexibility with musical ideas is to master the ability to play and hear the displacement of these ideas starting from all of the eighth-note locations in a particular time signature. In Example 1, while playing in a medium-tempo 4/4 jazz swing-feel, play, clap or sing the three-note rhythmic idea. First, you should play the idea starting on beat 1, then move the starting point over an eighth note and begin the same idea on the “and” of beat 1.

Continue on, practicing starting the idea on beat 2 and eventually playing the idea beginning from all eight eighth-note locations in a 4/4 measure. Though the idea might have the same note values and articulation, it has a different feeling of tension, release and resolution from each of the eighth-note starting locations. Some beginning and ending points have the feeling of anticipation, while others have a “pushing forward” feeling and some have a grounded feeling of landing squarely on the beat.

By practicing this displacement, one will notice that certain starting locations may feel less comfortable, and because of that awkwardness, you may naturally avoid starting ideas from that spot in the measure.

This can hold true no matter what rhythmic idea you play or time signature the idea is being played in.

While a drummer who is not bound by the specific harmony of a song might practice this on any tune, other players must pay attention to chords in each bar. For this reason, starting to explore this concept on a simple tune such as a blues or modal piece is probably a good idea. Due to the fairly straightforward rhythmic aspect of this concept, applying it to most standards will come quickly. The most liberating aspect of an exercise like this one is that it forces an improviser to pay attention first to rhythm and then secondly to abandon many of the rhythmic clichés he or she might rely on.

The rhythmic, melodic and harmonic ideas one can displace are endless. Try using ideas with different subdivisions (triplets and dotted notes) and rhythmic mixtures. Start with simpler one- and two-beat patterns before trying this with longer ideas. Example 2 uses a four-note, two-beat pattern with a dotted quarter note starting the idea. Once again, displacing this idea to another eighth-note location in the 4/4 time signature gives the pattern a completely different feel.

### APPLYING SUPERIMPOSED RHYTHMS

Let’s take the idea of a repeated rhythm starting on different eighth-note locations one step further. Superimposing one rhythm over another results in what is known as a hemiola. One common hemiola superimposition is to use a 3/4-metered idea superimposed over a harmonic sequence or tune that is in 4/4. This concept becomes really interesting when combined with harmonic and melodic material, which further strengthens the rhythmic displacement. An example of this concept is to use four-note groupings that repeat in sets of three, which gives the feel-



First staff of musical notation, showing a sequence of eighth and quarter notes with rests.

First staff of musical notation, showing a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes in 4/4 time.

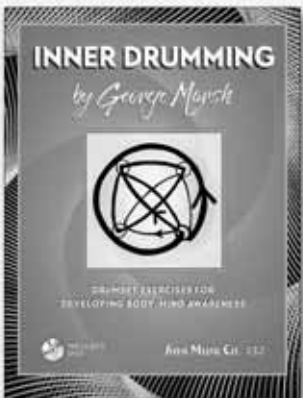
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The first staff of music is in 4/4 time, treble clef, and key of D major. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D4, an eighth note E4, and a quarter note F#4. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note B4. The third measure contains a quarter note C5, an eighth note B4, and a quarter note A4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note G4, an eighth note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The fifth measure contains a quarter note D4, an eighth note C4, and a quarter note B3. The sixth measure contains a quarter note A3, an eighth note G3, and a quarter note F#3. The seventh measure contains a quarter note E3, an eighth note D3, and a quarter note C3. The eighth measure contains a quarter note B2, an eighth note A2, and a quarter note G2. The piece ends with a double bar line.

The first staff of music is in 4/4 time, key of D major (one sharp). It contains four measures: Measure 1 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note E4, and a quarter note F#4. Measure 2 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. Measure 3 has a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. Measure 4 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The staff ends with a double bar line.

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ing of playing three-bar phrases in 3/4.

Example 3 shows a basic rhythm in 3/4 that repeats over 4/4. The melodic and harmonic material can be played over D minor and comes from adding an extra chromatic note to the melodic minor scale. Using these two devices together has the effect of not only obscuring the rhythm but also the harmony. This can be interesting as long as you work on resolving it properly and use it in a musical way. It is also critical to practice starting and ending the hemiola on different beats so that you aren't just "plugging it in," but making sure that it is a flexible part of your improvising vocabulary.

To demonstrate this, in Example 4 we take the material in Example 3 and then displace it by one eighth note, beginning the idea on the "and" of beat 1 instead of on the downbeat.

When first learning to use rhythmic displacement, it is a good idea to write out the rhythms to see how they play against the original time signature of the tune you are playing. Once you have the basic idea worked out, applying it to a song with simple harmony is the next step. The key is learning to hear the harmonic rhythm of the song as your rhythmically displaced idea shifts over the top of it. After practicing it in a more calculated way (e.g., in two-, four- and eight-bar cycles and starting on different beats) you will find that you have the ability to start and end it in anyplace you hear and for as long as you want.

Example 5 is an illustration of how a horn player might approach doing a longer superimposition, superimposing 5/4 over 4/4. The example uses a four-note pattern grouped in 2/4 and then 3/4, and the same harmonic and melodic material as in Example 3.

Example 6 demonstrates the displacement of this idea beginning on the "and" of beat 1.

### ODD TIME SIGNATURES

The superimposition/displacement idea has equally vast applications in odd-meter time signature playing as well. One rhythmic idea frequently used in odd-meter improvisations is the superimposition of an even-beat/duple rhythmic idea. Example 7 demonstrates a 2/4 rhythmic idea and its superimposition over two measures of 5/4. These even-beat, more duple-feeling superimpositions are a little easier to hear over the odd time signatures, as they have an alternating, shifting quality from measure to measure.

In Example 8 there is a different duple feeling superimposition over 7/4. To be economical with space, we are only going to present examples with the superimpositions starting on beat 1. However, you should practice displacing these rhythms, and other duple-based rhythms, to other areas of the time signature and make sure that you hear the phrasing of the idea as it plays out over the time signature, the longer portions of the musical form and/or

song that you are playing the ideas over.

Though there is no end to the possibilities, in our final examples we will demonstrate odd time superimposition over odd time signatures. Phrasing-wise, the relationship of the superimposition to the time signature is more difficult to hear. In Example 9 we return to an earlier idea and take the 3/4 idea from Example 4 and play it over 5/4. And, finally, Example 10 shows a variation of the 3/4 superimposition idea as it is played in 7/4 time. In this example, the order of the melodic cells has been changed for greater contrast with the 7/4 time signature.

### PRACTICE TIPS & APPLICATION

Since the combinations are endless, it is a good idea to pick a few of the devices that you like and really learn to use them in a diverse and musical way, rather than to try to master every possible combination of displacements over time signatures. It is best to practice these ideas very slowly with a metronome. Modern-day metronomes and smartphone metronome apps allow for audible marking of different subdivisions of the various odd time signatures, which will help immensely with hearing the phrasing. For practicing the rhythmic ideas with harmonic structures or song forms, we recommend making play-alongs in an application like Garage Band or Logic. Or, record yourself (with a metronome) playing the harmonic information at the piano and use that recording for practice.

As you work on this material, keep in mind a few overarching principles of making good music. Adding rhythmic displacement to your vocabulary shouldn't be viewed as a device to plug into your solos to make them a little hipper or modern sounding, but rather as a way of further expanding your ability to be expressive and complement the people you are playing with. Spend time listening to players who use these devices and how they fit them organically into their solos so that they are natural extensions of their other ideas. As a musician mentor of ours once said, "Music is so much larger than we are." It is that lifelong pursuit of improving in the performance and understanding of the art that leads us on this beautiful journey. **DB**

Saxophonist Tom Christensen and drummer Scott Neumann are 30-year veterans of the New York jazz scene and co-lead the project Spin Cycle with guitarist Pete McCann and bassist Phil Palombi. Their self-titled debut CD on Sound Footing Records, along with other information about the band, can be found online at [spincyclemusic.org](http://spincyclemusic.org). Christensen can be heard most recently on Rufus Reid's Grammy-nominated CD *Quiet Pride*, David Liebman's *A Tribute To Wayne Shorter* and on Ryan Truesdell's Grammy-nominated *The Gil Evans Project—Lines Of Color*. He is the co-founder of Sound Footing Records and is currently on the faculty of The Fieldston School in New York City. Visit him online at [tomchristensenmusic.com](http://tomchristensenmusic.com). In addition to Spin Cycle, Neumann leads and composes for his bands Neu3 Trio and Osage County. As a performer, he has toured Europe, South America and Asia with such luminaries as David Liebman, Madeline Peyroux and the Woody Herman Orchestra. Neumann is on the faculty at Lehigh University, where he serves as director of drum set studies. Visit him online at [scottneumannmusic.com](http://scottneumannmusic.com).



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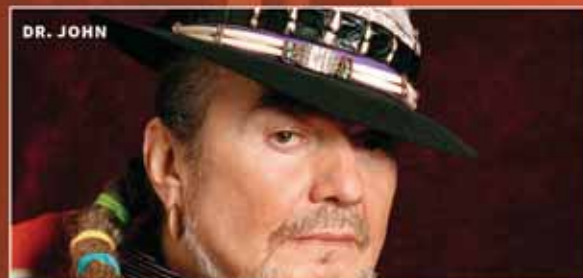
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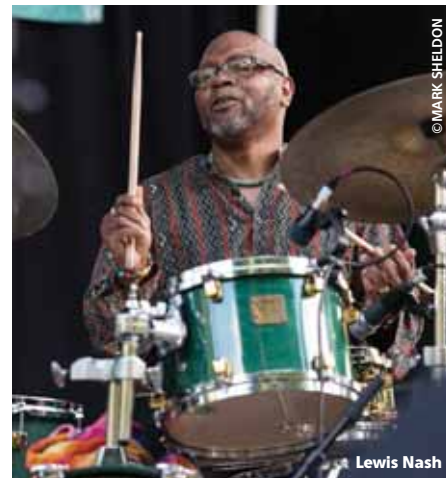
## Drum School Woodshed **SOLO** BY JEFFREY LIEN

# Lewis Nash's Drum Solo on 'Jitterbug Waltz'

**L**ewis Nash is a champion of adaptability. No better case can be made for his unique ability to stretch musically than in his work with saxophonist Steve Wilson on their 2014 duo recording *Duologue* (MCG Jazz). On their version of Fats Waller's "Jitterbug Waltz," Nash creates an engaging solo that showcases his various strengths as a drummer.

One of Nash's greatest assets is his ability to shape and manipulate time. Interweaving throughout his solo is a musical conversation developed between swung and straight eighth-note rhythms. Starting in measures 1–17, Nash alters the swung eighths of Wilson's final lines directly into a succession of straight eighth notes. To break up this static sound, Nash places syncopated ride cymbal punctuations. Creating even more texture, Nash shifts between single strokes and buzzed strokes on the snare drum in a nod to New Orleans second line. More trading of these ideas occurs between measure 33–34 and 35–36. In measure 37, he adds to the intensity by pushing the straight eighth notes even further ahead on the beat.

Nash's style of soloing often draws upon the compositional tool of theme-and-variation. Creating one- and two-bar phrases, Nash aims to develop simple rhythmic motifs into broader statements throughout his solo. Using repetition to his advantage, he draws the listener into familiar territory before inviting a new idea to counter the statement. This can be seen in measures 2–5 and 13–16. In a similar arc as the melody, Nash crafts a phrase starting in measure 21 that descends from the ride cymbal to the floor tom and back up through the toms. Nash restates the idea in measures 22, 23 and 24, while adding only slight modifications for texture. As a logical conclusion, Nash takes away the quarter note on beat 4 that stopped the previous phrase and allows the triplets to flow through the length of measures 25–27. In mea-



© MARK SHELTON

Lewis Nash

sure 28, he makes a sudden shift by replacing the triplet phrase with 16th notes, reminiscent of Elvin Jones' style of playing.

Known for his quick reflexes and agility on the drums, Nash uses his speed as a means to shape interesting musical ideas. A common feature in Nash's soloing is his use of "cross-overs," the action of one hand crossing over another in an effort to reach the other side of the drum set without alternating sticking. This can be heard in measures 25–28 when he moves from the floor tom to the high tom.

In addition to his technical skills, Nash is known for his use of dynamics. In measure 61 and 62, he restates a motif introduced earlier in his solo, but does so in a slow decrescendo. When it sounds like he can't get any softer, he shifts away from his hands directly to his feet, feathering the bass drum and lightly splashing the hi-hat to close the solo.

DB

Jeffrey Lien is a drummer, private instructor and writer based in Nashville. The owner and operator of DrumChartPro.com, he serves the worldwide drum community with expertly crafted drum transcriptions. Lien is also a drum set clinician throughout the U.S. He endorses Vic Firth drumsticks and brushes.

A musical score for a drum solo. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff starts with a tempo marking of ♩ = 210 and a dynamic marking of mf. The notation includes various drum symbols: a snare drum (indicated by 'x' marks), a ride cymbal (indicated by 'z' marks), and a floor tom (indicated by 'o' marks). The second staff continues the pattern with more complex rhythmic figures. The third staff shows a transition to a different rhythmic pattern. The notation is written in a standard drum notation style with stems and flags.

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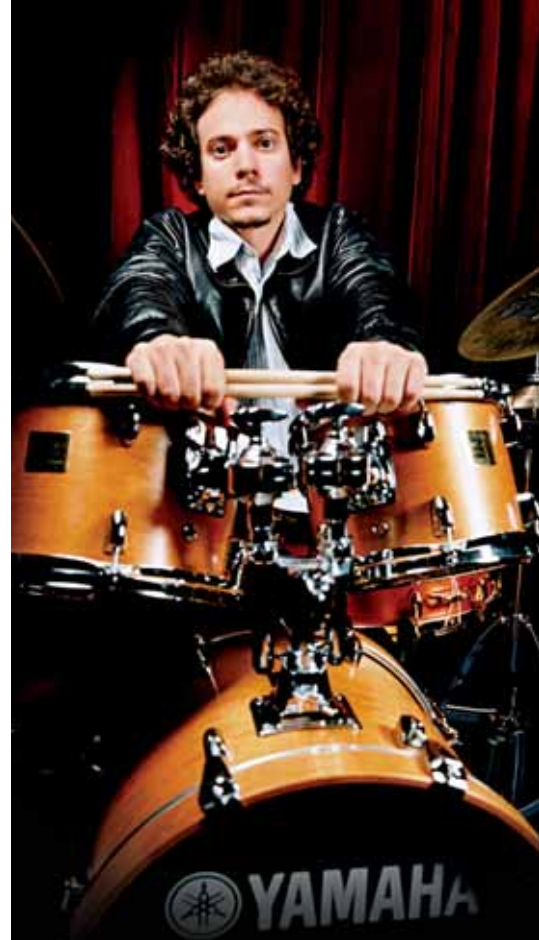
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13 *f*

17 (swung)

21 *mf*

25

29 (straight until cue) *f*

33 (swung) (straight) (swung)

37 (straight)

41 (swung) *f*

45

49 *p*

53 *mf*

57

(straight to end)

61

DRUM SET NOTATION KEY

Floor Tom Snare Rim Mid Tom High Tom Ride 1 Ride 2 Crashed Ride

High Hat High Hat Splash Bass Drum

# LP Peruvian Cajons

## *Resonant & Cutting*

**L**P is offering some exciting options from its extensive line of cajons. The four models in this review include the smaller-sized, budget-friendly Peruvian Chico Solid Pine Cajon; the large Peruvian Ultra-Bass Cajon; the visually stunning Peruvian Solid Wood Brick Cajon; and the Peruvian Solid Walnut String Cajon. All four are made in Peru, which is widely recognized as the birthplace of the instrument. I was able to play-test them on a steady gig of mine that regularly calls for cajon.

The Peruvian Chico Solid Pine Cajon (LP8800PS) is relatively small in size and price, but tone and quality don't suffer. The sides, bottom and top are all made of solid American pine, and the front playing surface is laminated higerilla (a Peruvian tonewood). The overall quality of sound and volume that this cajon puts out is impressive. Because of the size, the bass tone is more of a tenor tone, but very resonant. The top of the playing surface provides a dry, cutting snap that can keep up in a variety of situations.

The Peruvian Ultra-Bass Cajon (LP8800LB) is more of a Caribbean-style cajon, according to LP. The body is made of laminated pine, and the playing surfaces are made out of higerilla laminate. Twice as long as most cajons, the extra space coupled with inner sound baffling enhances low end and bass effects. This cajon is a lot of fun to play, with bass that gets down into subwoofer territory. Both the front and back are playing surfaces—a cool feature. The back playing surface is smaller (about  $\frac{2}{3}$ -sized), with the bass port underneath. It's a little higher in pitch and is a great contrast in sound to the front surface. I would consider this a specialty instrument to have as an option along with your existing cajon. There are no wires in it, so it has a very open, woody tone coupled with the deep bass.

The Peruvian Solid Wood Brick Cajon (LP8800B) looks as good as it sounds. The top and sides are made with a beautiful mosaic of walnut, mahogany and almond wood assembled in an extraordinary cubical pattern. The front surface is higerilla laminate. The body of this cajon is slightly wider than normal, giving you a deeper and woodier sound, but with plenty of snap at the top of the playing surface. The sound really works well in quiet, more acoustic situations without amplified instruments.

The Peruvian Solid Walnut String Cajon (LP8800WS) is another visually striking cajon, albeit more subtle than the Solid Wood Brick model. The sides and top are made out of solid walnut, with an almond wood inlay, and the front surface is higerilla laminate. To me, this is the pinnacle of what a cajon should sound like: deep but controlled bass, and a very present woody tone coupled with a cutting, dry snap at the top of the playing surface. Out of the four reviewed, this one was my favorite. It blends in with many different types of acoustic situations, yet stands out on its own in executing what a cajon should do.

The cajon has come a long way in the past 15 years. What started out as a humble packing-crate-turned-instrument in South America has now become an established part of the percussion family. These four LP cajons work in a variety of situations for any percussionist and are all highly recommended. Prices range from from \$215 to \$554, and a carrying case is included with each model.

—Ryan Bennett

[lpmusic.com](http://lpmusic.com)





# Evans Calftone Drum Heads

## *Vintage Tone, Modern Design*

Evans is offering a synthetic alternative to old-school calf skin drum heads. The company's new Calftone heads are designed to embody the vintage look and sound of natural skin but with improved consistency, better overall fit and a wider tuning range.

All Calftone heads are made from a single ply of mylar and are treated on the top with a textured film that resembles calf skin. The 14-mil (14/1,000 of an inch) bass drum heads are thicker than the tom and snare heads. For a perspective comparison, standard single-ply heads are 10 mil, while heavy-duty single-ply heads are 12 mil. What you gain with the thicker 14-mil film is durability, the ability to play louder and a more pronounced fundamental pitch.

Calftone bass drum heads and 16-inch tom heads are available in three different versions: EMAD Calftone, EQ4 Calftone and Evans '56 Calftone, each of which is fitted with parent company D'Addario's 360 Level Technology. My personal favorites are the Evans '56 Calftones.

You can use the Calftone bass drum head (available in 16- to 26-inch sizes) on the front resonant side without any dampening to produce a "boom" that sounds like your favorite vintage jazz and early rock recordings. It already has enough built-in dampening from the textured treatment and the thickness of the ply. Playing the drum "open" makes it louder and easier to hear on stage. Next, try putting a Calftone head on the batter side of your bass drum as well. For larger bass drums, you might want a little dampening to control the sustain. Try a felt strip going across the 1 o'clock and 5 o'clock positions. Or simply roll up a small towel and place it between your pedal and the drum head. Now you really have that classic "boom" sound.

The Calftone toms have films that are only 7 mil thick. But the textured Calftone treatment adds durability and reduces some of the higher overtones for an equalized musical tone. The thin ply also allows you to tune the drums to higher pitches without choking the drum's resonance. They respond quicker than heavy heads and are more sensitive and articulate when playing softly. The Calftones toms play very much like calf skins. They have a musically balanced tone. The attack is mellow, yet clear and in the front of the sustain and decay. They are durable enough for moderate hitters. Heavy hitters will most likely play through them. Tom and snare heads come in 8- to 18-inch sizes.

Like the toms, the Evans '56 Calftone snare drum is also 7 mil. The drum is articulate and sensitive to soft playing. It will also have fewer overtones and less sustain than a traditional single-ply coated head.

Now let's talk about brush response. The textured film is durable. Unlike a traditional coated head that has a rougher surface when new and wears off to eventual smoothness, the Calftone surface never seems to wear off. The striations on the surface of the head are pronounced enough to provide even-sounding legato strokes of moderate volume levels. But the legato stroke on the Calftone is not as loud as a traditional coated head.

With a moderate investment, drummers can change the sound of their kit and come close to the experience of playing genuine calf skins with Evans Calftone heads. — Steve Hawk

[evansdrumheads.com](http://evansdrumheads.com)



## Yamaha Recording Custom Series

### *Updating a Classic Drum Kit*

Yamaha has reintroduced its iconic Recording Custom series, often called the most recorded drum kit in history. Introduced in 1975, when it was known as the 9000 series, the original Recording Customs quickly became an industry standard, and their all-birch design helped to shape the modern drum set as we know it today. Jazz and pop drumming icon Steve Gadd, a Yamaha player since 1976, worked with Yamaha over a period of three years to refine and improve the reissue of the Recording Customs.

The new Recording Custom kits feature six-ply North American birch shells with a 30-degree bearing edge that delivers a sharp response. According to Yamaha, birch shells are a good choice for recording because they reduce unwanted noise and don't tend to interfere with the resonance of other drums when set up in close proximity. Birch has a lower fundamental tone than the more traditional maple, giving it a distinct sound. In order to maximize the attenuating properties of the birch, Yamaha increased the weight of the lug. This ensures optimum sustain for the core sound, producing a crisp, articulate tone.

The Recording Custom kit comes in four colors, including solid black, classic walnut, surf green and real wood. The bass drum hoop is a natural wood finish. The hoops are triple-flanged steel, and the lugs extend the entire length of the drum, with a design that is definitely a nod to the original Recording Custom series.

I play-tested a six-piece Recording Custom kit with a 20- by 16-inch bass drum (18-, 22- and 24-inch bass drums are also available). The toms were 10 by 7.5 inches, 12 by 8 inches, 14 by 14 inches and 16 by 16 inches. The bass drum came with a metal lift to which the pedal attaches. This design element helps the beater strike the center of the drum and gives the kick a punchier sound, according to Yamaha. This is the first time I have played a 20-inch kick on a lift, and I had mixed feelings about it.

The bass drum had a deep, punchy sound right out of the box, and the entire kit was a breeze to tune. The toms had a nice interval between them, and the tone was rich with a quick decay. All the mounting hardware is rock-solid, and I was glad to see the floor toms using actual floor-tom legs.

The new Recording Custom snare definitely has a Gadd-like flair, as it has a more than casual resemblance to the classic Ludwig Supraphonic snare, but with a Yamaha twist. It's a 14- by 5.5-inch, 1.2mm aluminum snare drum with a Q-type strainer choice of 10- or 20-strand snare wires. It has a beautiful crack and solid tone that matches the rest of the kit wonderfully. Recording Custom snares are also available in brass and stainless steel.

With this inspiring reissue, it's safe to say the Recording Customs are back in a strong way and looking to keep their title as the most recorded drum set ever.

[usa.yamaha.com](http://usa.yamaha.com)

— Matt Kern

## 1. Taking Command

Alesis has introduced the Command electronic drum kit, featuring the company's patent-pending Mesh drum pads to deliver an authentic feel with a realistic drum sound. The Command kit includes two 9-inch dual-zone rack toms and an 11-inch dual-zone floor tom. The Alesis Advanced Drum Module features 70 drum kits with more than 600 sounds and 60 play-along tracks. [alesis.com](http://alesis.com)

## 2. Easy Adjustments

Grover Pro has released the ITaP (Independent Tension and Pressure) system, which allows drummers to easily adjust the distance of their snare cables from the snare head. For players, ITaP means that snare pressure (or sound quality) can be adjusted independently of the snare tension (or sensitivity). [groverpro.com](http://groverpro.com)

## 3. Prolonged Life

Sound Synergies' PROcussionCare WearBarrier is a conditioning and maintenance formula that preserves the like-new feel and sound of a drum head for up to four times longer. WearBarrier was created to prolong performance life, increase rebound and provide the ideal sonic response for drum heads, drumsticks and mallet tips. [soundsynergies.net](http://soundsynergies.net)

## 4. Improved Grip

CooperGroove drumsticks, made from American hickory, have a grooved handle design that lets air get between the skin and the wood, helping to keep drummers' hands dry. Players using CooperGroove sticks have noticed an improvement in grip and sensory feedback and a decrease in hand cramps and tingling sensations. [coopergroove.com](http://coopergroove.com)

## 5. High SPL Mic

Audio-Technica has added the ATM230 hypercardioid dynamic instrument microphone to its Artist series. With a proprietary capsule designed to excel in high SPL applications, the ATM230 is ideal for capturing drums and percussion. It delivers full, well-rounded audio with exceptional low end. [audio-technica.com](http://audio-technica.com)

## 6. Drum Machine Realism

Singular Sound, maker of the BeatBuddy, has added a user-controllable human parameter to its pedal-controlled professional drum machine. The "sobriety function" is part of a larger update to the BeatBuddy that adds several new features requested by the BeatBuddy fan base, such as hands-free folder navigation and extensive new MIDI controls. The BeatBuddy uses 24-bit recordings of real drummers, and beats are non-quantized, so it never sounds like a machine. More than 200 songs in 21 genres are available right out of the box, along with 10 different drum kits, and the possibilities for expansion are nearly limitless. [mybeatbuddy.com](http://mybeatbuddy.com)







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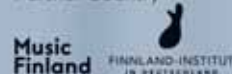
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# FESTIVAL

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Kevin Mahogany performs with Ronnie Cuber and Randy Brecker at the 1996 Elmhurst College Jazz Festival.



Ryan Truesdell's Gil Evans Project plays the festival in 2016.



Doug Beach (right) directs the Elmhurst College Jazz Ensemble with Clark Terry in 1995.



DAVID GROSS

Elmhurst College student musician Jennifer Marshall in 2010.



COURTESY ELMHURST COLLEGE

Denis DiBlasio (left) and Byron Stripling onstage at the Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel in 2000.



DAVID GROSS

Eric Marienthal in 2010





BRIAN ZIMMERMAN



Nicolas Payton (center) with Howie Smith (left) and Denis DiBlasio in 1997

COURTESY ELMHURST COLLEGE

# 50 Years of Greatness

## Elmhurst College Jazz Festival celebrates milestone

By Ed Enright

**T**he Elmhurst College Jazz Festival has been presenting concerts by top-tier jazz artists and drawing enthusiastic audiences for the past five decades—all in the name of education. The student-run annual event, which is primarily a learning experience for the hundreds of visiting college-student musicians who come to the school's suburban Chicago campus to perform and be adjudicated by a panel of discerning pros, has evolved over the years to include a weekend-long concert series featuring some of the jazz world's most noteworthy and exciting practitioners.

This year's edition, which runs Feb. 23–26 at Elmhurst College's Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel, will celebrate the event's 50th anniversary. That's a major milestone for any jazz festival, let alone a collegiate one. Organizers are programming more concerts and inviting more adjudicators than usual in an effort to make it a memorable experience for all involved.

Ticketed concert showcases will feature Dee Dee Bridgewater, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, the Bill Holman Big Band and the Patrick Williams Big Band.

The adjudication panel will consist of pianist Michael Abene, baritone saxophonist Denis DiBlasio, tenor saxophonist Pat LaBarbera, trumpeter Bobby Shew, trombonist Andy Martin, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Dennis Mackrel, in revolving roles. They will be listening with a critical ear to performances by some 25 visiting collegiate bands over the course of the weekend. Adjudicators will also critique five visiting high school bands and lead clinics with students and directors during the festival's high school invitational portion.

These visiting artists join a long lineage of high-profile judges and showcase performers that has included Clark Terry, Jimmy Heath, Gary Smulyan, David Baker, Dizzy Gillespie, Marian McPartland, Jamey Aebersold, Bob Brookmeyer, Cannonball Adderley, Joe Lovano, Louie Bellson, Bob Mintzer, the

Count Basie Orchestra, the Maria Schneider Orchestra, Ryan Truesdell's Gil Evans Project, The Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra, the Mingus Big Band and scores of other jazz royalty who have blessed the chapel with their presence over the years.

The entertainment portion of the 2017 festival will kick off with a Thursday-night gala concert featuring Bridgewater backed by the Elmhurst College Jazz Band. It's a reprise appearance for the vocalist, who has not only performed at the festival in the past, but went so far as to bring the esteemed Elmhurst College Jazz Band with her to perform on the main stage of the Chicago Jazz Festival in 2001. Although Bridgewater was unable to confirm it, there's a consensus on campus that Bridgewater first appeared at an early incarnation of the festival in 1968 as a visiting student with the University of Illinois Jazz Band.

After an afternoon of collegiate performances the following day, concerts will continue with a Friday-night jam session featuring

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a septet of this year's adjudicators, each of whom has served the festival in the past. Later that night, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra will perform, keeping alive the festival's long-running tradition of presenting the nation's top big bands.

A Saturday morning master class with all seven adjudicators will give visiting students an opportunity to learn directly from the masters. Then, following another day and early evening of more collegiate performances, the Patrick Williams Big Band will play the nighttime concert.

More collegiate performances happen Sunday prior to a late-afternoon appearance by the Bill Holman Big Band that will include an original composition the festival commissioned the veteran composer/arranger to write in honor of the 50th anniversary. After the show, the Holman piece will become part of the library of the Elmhurst College Jazz Band for the student ensemble to study and perform in the future.

Such a large, ambitious undertaking requires leadership and vision. That comes from Doug Beach, director of jazz studies at Elmhurst College and the man who has nurtured and expanded the festival since officially taking the reins in 1978. Although he wasn't involved in the festival's founding—that happened 10 years earlier, when it was part of a larger, nationwide competition called the Intercollegiate Jazz Festival (later known as the American College Jazz Festival), which fizzled out after its 1973 edition—Beach has been responsible for maintaining the supreme level of talent, the high standards of adjudication and the easygoing, non-competitive vibe that have consistently drawn large audiences, attracted some of the best college jazz ensembles around and given the event its distinct identity.

When asked how he manages to pull it off every year, Beach defers to his student managers and their army of volunteers. "My name is there as the director of the fest, and I've got to do all this planning, getting these artists all lined up, but beyond that, the kids here just take ownership of it," said Beach, who first attended the festival as an audience member when he was in high school, and returned as a performer with the Millikin University Jazz Band in 1973. "They're so proud of the festival, they're not going to let the event down. And it's a learning experience: They learn a lot about how to run a major event, how to be a good host to the visiting schools, how to be a good host to the public that's coming in, and how to be a good host to our artists. Jim Cunningham—who ran the festival before I did—his guiding principle was that you treat the artists as you would like to be treated if you were going somewhere as a guest. And that's what we've always lived by."

Beach built upon the model established by Cunningham, who, while dean of students in the early 1970s, kept the festival running as its own entity and helped to set its non-competitive mission in motion once it became independent from the national network of festivals that spawned it. "I've just changed a few things," Beach said. "The big judges concert used to be on Sunday night, and there would be great musicians—Louie Bellson, Clark Terry, Gary Smulyan—there in the chapel, which seats about 900 people. And I remember looking out there and saying, 'This is a great performance going on here. There should be more people here. How do we make that happen?'"

"I thought if I could get a little sponsor money, that would give me more freedom. We could bring in bigger names, draw more people, and everybody wins. You get another pro concert in addition to the judges' performance, and bigger crowds coming to hear it. The students play for bigger crowds, too, and they also get to hear the professional group."

"There was a board of trustees member who went to the college president to get me more support, and the president encouraged the development office to help me get some sponsors. So, we went for an additional evening of pro concerts, and it worked: The people came, the kids got to hear, and we didn't go in the hole. With that bit of success, I felt we could go a little further a couple years later, and we sold more tickets. Now, the ball is rolling and people know to come."

"I also had this vision of trying to present acts that you aren't neces-

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sarily going to hear anywhere else in Chicago. Bill Holman's band, for example, had never performed east of the Mississippi the first time they came. And Patrick Williams has never brought his band out this way. I always try to present something that the college kids who are participants are going to benefit from hearing."

Participating students also benefit directly from the pages of detailed comments noted by the adjudicators during their performances. Adjudicators point out the strengths and weaknesses of ensembles, individual players and their directors in writing, giving specific advice on ways they can improve. They don't pick an overall winner, as many collegiate jazz festivals do, but they nominate college big bands and combos for Outstanding Group awards (announced at the end of the festival) and individual students for Outstanding Musicianship and Outstanding Composer/Arranger awards (presented at the end of each day). This year, because of the larger number of adjudicators, there will be no Outstanding Group awards; however, Beach said that members of each participating ensemble will receive a special 50th anniversary plaque.

Adjudicators acknowledge that they always look forward to the experience.

"It is the most comfortable situation that I have encountered in all my 50 years of doing adjudications and clinics," said Shew. "And just look at the performers Doug has brought in—this list is impressive beyond belief. That he continues to bring me back every few years is an honor indeed."

Bridgewater has performed at the festival on three separate occasions, each time backed by the Elmhurst College Jazz Ensemble. "What Doug Beach is able to get out of the kids who play in his bands is quite exceptional," she said. "I'm quite impressed with them. It has become kind of a tradition at Elmhurst that their big band has to be at the 'A game' level."

Reid voiced his appreciation for the musicians he has performed with and served with on the festival's adjudication panel. "The festival has always featured artists who are in the trenches, really creative artists," he said. "It's more aligned with the realities of what I think is good for the students who are aspiring to play. They can hear artists they normally don't get to see and get blown away, perhaps, and hopefully that will inspire them to continue."

DiBlasio described the festival as a comfortable hang that feels like a reunion of sorts. "It's like coming back home again," he said. "When Doug told me I'm going to be working with Bobby Shew—do you know how many hours of laughs that is? It's like a party. The kids play, and they all sense it's a fun thing. That's what attracts me to the whole thing."

Special events leading up to the 50th edition of the Elmhurst College Jazz Festival

include the publication of a book that examines its history and presents photographic flashbacks from the festival archives. Elaborate artwork created by former Elmhurst College Jazz Ensemble member Bethany Norman (class of 2009) that decorates the Hammerschmidt Chapel during jazz season, along with the 2017 festival poster (a commissioned work by caricaturist Roger Warrick), will be part of an exhibition that opens Jan. 21 at the nearby Elmhurst Art Museum.

Beach—the recipient of a 2015 DownBeat Jazz Education Achievement Award—said he

is looking forward to reconnecting with many of the jazz artists and band directors he has worked with during his long tenure at Elmhurst College. He admires the commitment to jazz education that each of them has demonstrated. "Everybody that is coming this year has been here before—some of them many times," he said. "But they were all chosen because they are not only great musicians, but great educators and role models for the students. Once they're here, it will be pretty easy for the students to have direct contact with those pros. It's always been that way."

DB

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# UNITED STATES

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## Oregon Coast Jazz Party

*Newport, Oregon*  
Sept. 30-Oct. 2

Now in its 13th year, this festival takes place in the beautiful town of Newport on the central Oregon coast. The event presents multiple sets from renowned jazz stars as well as nightcap performances and educational events.

**LINEUP:** Terell Stafford, Ken Peplowski, Bruce Barth, Graham Dechter, Jeff Hamilton Trio, Rebecca Kilgore, Lynn Seaton, Akiko Tsuruga, more.

[coastarts.org](http://coastarts.org)

## Angel City Jazz Festival

*Los Angeles, California*  
Sept. 30-Oct. 16

The Angel City Jazz Festival balances established artists with emerging talent, with a focus on West Coast creative jazz. Festival emphasis is often on the more improvisational, avant-garde, "out" and free-jazz sounds.

**LINEUP:** Pharoah Sanders with Adam Rudolph & Brahim Fribgane, Gurrisonic Orchestra with Don Byron performing Ornette Coleman's *Skies Of America*, Craig Taborn & Kris Davis, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Steve Lehman Trio, Mary Halvorson's Thumbscrew, David Binney Trio, Ingrid Laudbrock & Tom Rainey, Julian Lage, Samuel Blaser & Gerry Hemmingway, more.

[angelcityjazz.com](http://angelcityjazz.com)

## Baltimore Jazz Festival

*Baltimore, Maryland*  
Oct. 1

The inaugural edition of this free fest

will showcase Charm City's vibrant jazz scene. The event will be held at Druid Hill Park from noon to 8:30 p.m.

**LINEUP:** Art Sherrod Jr., The Greg Hatza ORGANization, Clarence Ward III, Rumba Club, Hot Club of Baltimore with Alexis Tantau, the "Baltimore Legends,"

[baltimorejazzfest.com](http://baltimorejazzfest.com)

## Amelia Island Jazz Festival

*Fernandina Beach, Florida*  
Oct. 2-9

Situated on the northeast Florida coast, this festival presents a variety of jazz, including swing, bebop, Dixieland, big band, Latin and contemporary.

**LINEUP:** Houston Person, Bria Skonberg, Trio Caliente, the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band featuring Bonnie Eisele.

[ameliaislandjazzfestival.com](http://ameliaislandjazzfestival.com)

## Duck Jazz Festival

*Duck, North Carolina*  
Oct. 7-9

The 10th annual Duck Jazz Festival presented by PNC takes place on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. A jam session, movie and jazz events throughout Duck lead up to a full day of jazz on two stages at this free, non-ticketed outdoor festival.

**LINEUP:** Frank Vignola, Marquis Hill Blacktet, Davina & The Vagabonds, The Rad Trads, Robert Jospé Express Trio, The Second Marine Aircraft Wing Jazz Ensemble, more.

[duckjazz.com](http://duckjazz.com)

## Earshot Jazz Festival

*Seattle, Washington*  
Oct. 7-Nov. 11

The 28th edition of this festival will include more than 50 concerts and events in venues all around the city.

**LINEUP:** Rudresh Mahanthappa, Vijay Iyer & Wadada Leo Smith, Steve Lehman Trio, Kris Davis & Craig Taborn Duo, Kris Bow-ers, Jaimeo Brown Transcendence, Sofia Rei, Takuya Kuroda Group, Dave Douglas with The Westerlies, Bill Frisell, more.

[earshot.org](http://earshot.org)

## Pittsfield City Jazz Festival

*Pittsfield, Massachusetts*  
Oct. 7-16

In 2009, the founders of this festival established an independent identity as a non-profit organization, Berkshires Jazz Inc., whose mission is to present jazz performances and promote jazz education throughout Berkshire County.

**LINEUP:** Scott Robinson Quartet, Karin Allyson with the U.S. Army Jazz Ambassadors Big Band, more.

[berkshiresjazz.org](http://berkshiresjazz.org)

## Clearwater Jazz Holiday

*Clearwater, Florida*  
Oct. 13-16

Crowds relish in this popular fest's colorful musical lineup, from jazz to jam, funk, fusion and more.

**LINEUP:** Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Daryl Hall, Kool & The Gang, Commodores, more.

[clearwaterjazz.com](http://clearwaterjazz.com)

## Rehoboth Beach Jazz Festival

*Rehoboth Beach, Delaware*  
Oct. 13-16

Held across five venues in Rehoboth Beach, Lewes and Dewey Beach, this festival is now in its 27th year.

**LINEUP:** Patti Austin, Kim Waters, Brian Simpson, Eric Darius, Ramsey Lewis, John Pizzarelli, Najee, BWB, J.J. Sansaverino, Will Donato, InGratitude, Jeffrey Osborne, Gerald Albright, The Rippingtons, more.

[rehobothjazz.com](http://rehobothjazz.com)

## TD James Moody Jazz Festival

*Newark, New Jersey*  
Oct. 15-Nov. 20

This festival presents numerous concerts, panel discussions and workshops at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. The concert



on Nov. 17, titled "GRP Revisited: Honoring Larry Rosen," will feature saxophonist David Sanborn and guitarist Lee Ritenour.

**LINEUP:** Omara Portuondo, Roberto Fonseca, Anat Cohen & Regina Carter (Oct. 15), Wynton Marsalis, Catherine Russell, Angélique Kidjo, Patti Austin, Talib Kweli, Andy Ferber & His Orchestra (Nov. 1), David Grusin, Lee Ritenour, David Sanborn, Phil Perry & Yellowjackets (Nov. 17), Christian McBride Trio, Dianne Reeves, Lisa Fischer & Sheila Jordan (Nov. 19), Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition (Nov. 20).  
[njpac.org](http://njpac.org)

### Sun Valley Jazz & Music Festival

*Sun Valley, Idaho*

**Oct. 19-23**

Contemporary jazz, swing, vintage jazz, blues, cabaret, Western Swing, big band, zydeco and gypsy jazz will be among the styles presented at the 27th annual edition of this festival.

**LINEUP:** Barnhart/Midiri Quartet, Black Swan Classic Jazz Band, Blue Renditions, Blue Street Jazz Band, Yale Whiffenpoofs, more.

[sunvalleyjazz.com](http://sunvalleyjazz.com)

### Texas Jazz Festival

*Corpus Christi, Texas*

**Oct. 21-23**

This festival celebrates its 56th year of showcasing musicians from around

the country as well as local talent on its three stages in Heritage Park.

**LINEUP:** Kirk Whalum, Bayou City Brass Band, SanGabriel Seven, Beto & The Fairlanes, Ernie Garibay & Cats Don't Sleep, Tom Braxton, Kyle Turner, Joel Dilley, Latin Talk, Stephen Richard, Leticia Rodriguez.  
[texasjazz-fest.org](http://texasjazz-fest.org)

 **Edgeland**  
*Ann Arbor, Michigan*  
**Oct. 26-29**

Presented by the Kerrytown Concert House, Edgeland is an award-winning annual avant-garde jazz festival exploring work by composer-performers based in the United States and beyond. Organizers have titled the 20th anniversary edition "20 Years at the Edge."

**LINEUP:** Wadada Leo Smith & John Lindberg, Kris Davis Trio, Sylvaine Hélay's Spring Roll, TranceFormation: A Tribute to Connie Crothers, John Hollenbeck's Claudia Quintet, Ingrid Laubrock's Serpentes, David Torn's Nohband + Craig Taborn, Conference Call Quartet, Jason Kao Hwang's Burning Bridge Ensemble, William Parker Quartet, Northwoods Improvisers Trio, Trio 3, Stephen Rush, Tad Weed's Freedom Ensemble featuring Vinny Golia, The University of Michigan Jazz Ensemble.  
[edgelandannarbor.com](http://edgelandannarbor.com)

### Otis Taylor's Trance Blues Festival

*Boulder, Colorado*

**Nov. 5**

The highlight of this unique event is an evening performance after a day of public workshops and jams for musicians and fans of all levels and ages who wish to see and/or learn from bluesman Otis Taylor and his band.

**LINEUP:** Otis Taylor Band with special guests Rex People, Mato Nanji, Marcella Simien.  
[trancebluesfestival.com](http://trancebluesfestival.com)

### Exit Zero Jazz Festival

*Cape May, New Jersey*

**Nov. 11-13**

The fall version of this multi-venue fest presents three full days of performances featuring a wide array of jazz and other musical genres.

**LINEUP:** Wynton Marsalis, Cécile McLorin Salvant & The Aaron Diehl Trio, Jon Regen, Omar Sosa Jog Trio, Davis Rogan, Squirrel Nut Zippers, Philadelphia Funk Authority, Davina & The Vagabonds, more.  
[exit0jazzfest.com](http://exit0jazzfest.com)

### Frank Morgan Taos Jazz Festival

*Taos, New Mexico*

**Nov. 16-19**

Presented by Taos Jazz Bebop Society, this festival includes four venues in the mountain town of Taos. Two elder statesmen of bebop

## University of Idaho

Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival



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The Claudia Quintet at the Angel City Jazz Festival in Los Angeles

will collaborate this year: singer/songwriter/pianist Bob Dorough and guitarist Al Schackman.

**LINEUP:** Grace Kelly Quartet, Reggie Austin/Lorca Hart Trio, "What Happened Miss Simone?," Bob Dorough Quartet with Al Schackman.  
[taosjazz.org](http://taosjazz.org)

## JazzFest at Sea

*Cruise leaving from Miami, Florida*  
Dec. 6-16

This cruise presents concerts of traditional jazz, classic jazz, swing and other styles. The MSC Divina will depart from Miami and head to the Southern Caribbean for a memorable trip filled with jazz concerts, afternoon sessions and other fun activities. In addition to concerts by internationally acclaimed artists, the cruise presents opportunities for amateur musicians to jam with the pros.

**LINEUP:** Allan Vache, Duke Heitger, Harry Allen, John Altman, Danny Coots, Paul Keller, Banu Gibson, Paolo Alderighi, Russ Phillips, Stephanie Trick, Davey Jones, more.  
[jazzfestatsea.com](http://jazzfestatsea.com)

## Tucson Jazz Festival

*Tucson, Arizona*  
Jan. 12-22, 2017

The HSL Properties Tucson Jazz Festival presents concerts featuring many styles of jazz in historic downtown Tucson.

**LINEUP:** George Benson, Dee Dee Bridgewater, John Pizzarelli, Kamasi Washington, Tower of Power, Anat Cohen & Howard Alden, Armen Donelian, Storm Large, Tucson Jazz Institute Ellington Band with Lewis Nash.  
[tucsonjazzfestival.org](http://tucsonjazzfestival.org)

## Winter Jazzfest

*New York City*  
Jan. 13-17, 2017

Since its 2005 inception, Winter Jazzfest has expanded from a one-day festival to multiple days and numerous venues, showcasing hundreds of artists and attracting thousands of attendees each year.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Kamasi Washington, Bill Laswell, Vijay Iyer, Butler/Bernstein & The Hot 9, Christian McBride, more.  
[winterjazzfest.com](http://winterjazzfest.com)

## Festival Miami

*Coral Gables, Florida*  
Jan. 19-Feb. 11, 2017

The University of Miami's Frost School of Music, with presenting sponsor UHealth, presents the 33rd annual edition of this festival. The event includes 25 to 30 concerts each year. Educational components such as master classes, open rehearsals and hosted conversations with artists are also presented.

**LINEUP:** Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, Tiempo Libre, The Pop Ups, Frost Flute Ensemble, Alicia Hall Moran/Shelley Berg, Frost Concert Jazz Band, La Santa Cecilia, Quattrosound, Emily Estefan, Jon Secada, Bruce Hornsby, Kevin Kenner, Frost Wind Ensemble, Becca Stevens, The O'Connor Band, Frost Symphony Orchestra, Snarky Puppy.  
[festivalmiami.com](http://festivalmiami.com)

## The Charleston Jazz Festival

*Charleston, South Carolina*  
Jan. 20-22, 2017

This festival presents world-class musicians as well as local talent. Jazz fans flock to Charleston to celebrate the Holy City's rich jazz heritage and thriving jazz scene.

**LINEUP:** The Manhattan Transfer, Take 6, the Charleston Jazz Orchestra, the Charleston All-Star Youth Jazz Orchestra, more.  
[thecharlestonjazzfestival.com](http://thecharlestonjazzfestival.com)

## Miami Beach Jazz Festival

*Miami, Florida*  
Jan. 25-30, 2017

The third annual edition of this fest unites an array of international talent.

**LINEUP:** Daniel Zamir Quartet, Sinkope, Philippe Leone, Markus Gottschlich Trio and guests, Joe Carter Trio, James Morrison.  
[miami-beach-jazz.com](http://miami-beach-jazz.com)

## The Jazz Cruise

*Cruise leaving from Fort Lauderdale, Florida*  
Jan. 28-Feb. 4, 2017

Since its founding 16 years ago, the Jazz Cruise has been dedicated to straight-ahead jazz. It unites fans and artists from around the globe for a week at sea.

**LINEUP:** Marcus Miller (Special Host), Al Jarreau, Jimmy Cobb Trio, Freddy Cole Trio, Eddie Daniels, Lewis Nash Trio, Houston Person Quartet, Paquito D'Rivera Quartet, Eliane Elias, Take 6, Cyrille Aimée, Niki Haris, Clint Holmes, René Marie, Superband (Randy Brecker, Mike Stern, Bill Evans, Tom Kennedy, Dennis Chambers), Clayton Brothers Quintet, John Pizzarelli, Jeff Hamilton Trio, Benny Green Trio, Grégoire Maret Trio, Shelly Berg, Bill Cunliffe, Alle Farnham, Jimmy Greene, Eric Marienhal, Dick Oatts, Bob Sheppard, Gary Smulyan, Ken Peplowski, Ernie Adams, Joe LaBarbera, Dennis Mackrel, John Riley, John Fedchock, Wycliffe Gordon, John Allred, Robin Eubanks, Tony Kadlec, James Morrison, Bria Skonberg, Jennifer Wharton, Liesl Whitaker, Jay Anderson, Chuck Bergeron, David Finck.  
[thejazzcruise.com](http://thejazzcruise.com)

## The Contemporary Jazz Cruise

*Cruise leaving from Fort Lauderdale, Florida*  
Feb. 4-11, 2017

The Contemporary Jazz Cruise presents more than 20 acts representing a variety of styles, from legends such as pianist Chucho Valdés to ascending stars such as saxophonist Grace Kelly. The cruise ship leaves from Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

**LINEUP:** Marcus Miller (Special Host), Pat Metheny (San Juan Guest), Terence Blanchard, Robert Glasper Trio, Gregory Porter, Diane Reeves, Chucho Valdés, The Bad Plus, Joshua Redman, Lalah Hathaway, David Sanborn, Wycliffe Gordon, Billy Kilson, Ben Williams, Geoffrey Keezer, Reuben Rogers, Greg Hutchinson, Aaron Goldberg, Peter Martin, Alex Han, Grace Kelly, The Ronnie Scott's Club Quintet, Alonzo Bodden.  
[thecontemporaryjazzcruise.com](http://thecontemporaryjazzcruise.com)

## Berklee High School Jazz Festival

*Boston, Massachusetts*  
Feb. 11, 2017

Berklee College of Music hosts its High School Jazz Festival at the Hynes Convention Center. The fest is free to the public. Big bands, combos and ensembles will perform, as well as jazz stars such as Sean Jones and Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah.

**LINEUP:** Sean Jones with Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Berklee ensembles, various school ensembles from around the country.  
[festival.berkleejazz.org](http://festival.berkleejazz.org)

## San Jose Jazz Winter Fest

*San Jose & Palo Alto, California*  
Feb. 14-26, 2017

This concert series showcases a diverse array of world-class jazz giants and leading-edge artists. Jazz Beyond, co-presented by Universal



Grammar, features rising stars pushing the boundaries of jazz, soul and hip-hop. The event includes a Mardi Gras Gala, All-Star Jazz Jams, Club Crawls and Next Gen performances.

**LINEUP:** Roy Ayers, The Cookers, Kim Nalley & Kenny Washington, Mary Stallings, Donny McCaslin, Ron E. Beck & Tony Lindsay, Villalobos Brothers, Akiko Tsuruga, more.  
[sanjosejazz.org](http://sanjosejazz.org)

## Portland Jazz Festival

Portland, Oregon  
 Feb. 16-26, 2017

The PDX Jazz Festival is a multi-venue series of jazz events dedicated to preserving America's indigenous art form by presenting internationally recognized jazz masters alongside local jazz musicians. A series of jazz education programs celebrate Black History Month with outreach that extends into Portland's schools and neighborhoods. The 2017 festival will celebrate the centennials of Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie through specially curated programs.

**LINEUP:** Maria Schneider Orchestra, Branford Marsalis with Kurt Elling, John Scofield, Roy Ayers, Heath Bros. Monkestra, T.S. Monk, John Abercrombie, Ralph Towner, Yellowjackets & Mike Stern, Amina Claudine Myers, Bill Mays, Sax Appeal, The Cookers, Joey Calderazzo with Dave Binney, Farnell Newton, Mel Brown Big Band featuring Jon Faddis.  
[pdxjazz.com](http://pdxjazz.com)

## Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival

Moscow, Idaho  
 Feb. 23-25, 2017

Since the 1960s, this event has been one of the largest educational jazz festivals in the world, and it is also one of the oldest. With more than 400 student performances, a dozen world-class jazz artists on four main stages and nearly 100 workshops, clinics and special exhibits, the festival honors the history of jazz and one of its most honored artists, Lionel Hampton.

**LINEUP:** All-Star Quartet featuring Josh Nelson, Graham Dechter, Katie Thiroux and Kevin Kanner plus special guests Ignacio Berroa, Vern Sielert and Dave Hagelgan; Lionel Hampton School of Music Jazz Band 1 directed by Vern Sielert with special guests Ignacio Berroa and Dee Daniels; Justin Kauflin Trio; Ignacio Berroa Quartet; Monty Alexander, John Clayton and Jeff Hamilton; Tower of Power; Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival Big Band with special guests Warren Wolf and Barbara Morrison; Cherry Poppin' Daddies.  
[uidaho.edu/jazzfest](http://uidaho.edu/jazzfest)

## Elmhurst College Jazz Festival

Elmhurst, Illinois  
 Feb. 23-26, 2017

For five decades, many of the best collegiate groups in the country have converged on the Elmhurst College campus for this annual festival of performances and educational sessions. In celebration of the festival's 50th anniversary, this student-run event will present concerts by world-class musicians, many of whom



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are making return visits to the fest. Student musicians will be surrounded by some of the most accomplished professional jazz musicians in the world to create an unparalleled learning environment and a series of exciting concerts.

**LINEUP:** Dee Dee Bridgewater, Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Patrick Williams Big Band, Bill Holman Big Band, Michael Abene, Denis DiBlasio, Pat LaBarbera, Dennis Mackrel, Andy Martin, Rufus Reid, Bobby Shew.  
[elmhurst.edu/jazzfestival](http://elmhurst.edu/jazzfestival)

## Newport Beach Jazz Party

*Newport Beach, California*  
 Feb. 23-26, 2017

This 17th annual edition of this event will take place at the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa with an emphasis on big bands. The fest features outdoor sessions during the day and concerts in the ballroom at night, plus Saturday and Sunday champagne jazz brunches.

**LINEUP:** Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra, Frank Capp Juggernaut Orchestra, Butch Miles, Shelly Berg, Larry Fuller, Jeff Hamilton, Scott Hamilton, Harry Allen, more.  
[newportbeachjazzparty.com](http://newportbeachjazzparty.com)

## Miami Downtown Jazz Festival

*Miami, Florida*  
 Feb. 24-25, 2017

Presented by WDNA 88.9 FM Public Radio, this festival presents internationally acclaimed artists and local musicians in several down-

town Miami venues and at the beautiful Bayfront Park Amphitheater by Biscayne Bay.

**LINEUP:** Paquito D'Rivera Quintet, University of Miami Henry Mancini Orchestra, Kevin Mahogany, South Florida Jazz Orchestra, Ed Calle Mamblue, Dafnis Prieto Sextet, Brian Lynch Miami-New York-Caribbean connections, NexGen musicians, more.  
[miamidowntownjazzfestival.org](http://miamidowntownjazzfestival.org); [wdna.org](http://wdna.org)

## Next Generation Jazz Festival presented by Monterey Jazz Festival

*Monterey, California*  
 March 31-April 2, 2017

Each spring, more than 1,300 of the nation's top student musicians come to this festival, which welcomes middle school, high school and collegiate big bands, combos, vocal ensembles and conglomerate bands. From more than 130 groups, the best win a performance slot at the Monterey Jazz Festival in September 2017.

**LINEUP:** Terri Lyne Carrington (Artist in Residence). Past performers have included ensembles from throughout California, as well as Florida, Michigan and Oregon.  
[montereyjazzfestival.org](http://montereyjazzfestival.org)

## Knox-Rootabaga Jazz Festival

*Galesburg, Illinois*  
 April 6-8, 2017

Hosted by Knox College and the Galesburg community, this festival presents three days of concerts and workshops. Held in the birthplace of writer Carl Sandburg, the festival is named for his 1922 children's book, *Rootabaga Stories*.

**LINEUP:** Victor Garcia Organ Quintet, Gretchen Parlato Quartet, Knox Alumni Big Band, Faculty & Friends Combo, Knox Jazz Ensemble.  
[knox.edu](http://knox.edu)

## French Quarter Festival

*New Orleans, Louisiana*  
 Apr. 6-9, 2017

A showcase of Louisiana food, music and culture, this fest presents more than 2,000 musicians on 23 stages, plus 60 food vendors from local restaurants and numerous special events.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included The Revelers, Delfeayo Marsalis, Cowboy Mouth, John "Papa" Gros, Bag of Donuts.  
[fqfi.org/frenchquarter](http://fqfi.org/frenchquarter)

## New York City Jazz Festival

*New York City*  
 Apr. 8-9, 2017

Held at Harlem's iconic Apollo Theater, this festival gives instrumental and vocal jazz ensembles the opportunity to perform in a ticketed daytime recital, receive comments from a panel of esteemed jazz experts, have a private ensemble clinic session, and attend an evening concert featuring select professional and amateur musicians.

**LINEUP:** Stefon Harris & Blackout. Past performers include New York Voices, Kurt Elling, Janis Siegel, Paquito D'Rivera, more.  
[mcp.us/nyc-jazz-festival/](http://mcp.us/nyc-jazz-festival/)

## Eau Claire Jazz Festival

*Eau Claire, Wisconsin*  
 Apr. 21-22, 2017

The 51st annual edition of this festival will welcome more than 120 high school bands for two days of education, performances and concerts. Participating venues are located in the city's downtown area and on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Jimmy Heath and Stefon Harris.  
[eauclairejazz.com](http://eauclairejazz.com)



Taylor Ho Bynum (right) with young musicians at the Edgefest Parade.



COURTESY EDGEFEST



COURTESY EDGEFEST

# Edgefest Now Bigger Than Ever

**A**nn Arbor's Edgefest will celebrate its 20th anniversary Oct. 26–29, quite a feat for a small festival that grew organically. Most events will take place at the 110-seat Kerrytown Concert House (KCH), which is located at the north end of the downtown area and was integral to getting the festival started.

In 1996, Dave Lynch, a copy editor, and two comrades, Damon Stanke and Jules Ryan, got tired of driving to Victoriaville, New York or Chicago to hear the music they loved: adventurous jazz. “In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Ann Arbor earned a reputation for being edgy,” said Lynch, who is often considered as the founder of Edgefest but is quick to credit others as well. “But at the time, we were wondering where the cutting edge was.”

Their first stab at presenting music was to book alto saxophonist Tim Berne. From then, the word got out that Ann Arbor was a perfect landing spot for bands touring the Midwest. They needed a home and found a receptive ear in Deanna Relyea, founder and director of KCH, to launch the Jazz at the Edge series.

In the fall of 1997, the organizers faced a conundrum when three major bands expressed interest in playing Ann Arbor on the same day. Edgefest was born. From noon to 2 a.m., the city enjoyed a smorgasbord of concerts with baritone saxophonist Charlie Kohlase, ROVA Saxophone Quartet and Dave Douglas' Tiny

Bell Trio. “Without Deanna, nothing would have happened,” Lynch explained. “She had the venue, the sponsors and the donors.”

Soon after, Lynch joined the KCH staff as festival artistic director, and the event progressively added more days. Following the 10th edition, he left to embrace a full-time copyediting career, and Relyea took over as she felt she had developed enough connections and a deep appreciation for the music. “I am a singer with a classical background, and when I started KCH we presented some jazz, but they were mainstream artists,” she said. “[Now] it's about supporting forward-looking music and musicians who take risks.” Under her leadership, the event added one extra day and a parade in 2007. “It is symbolic of what the festival is about: community and outreach,” she said. “It's fantastic to see kids from middle school playing Sun Ra with [trombonist] Steve Swell or [trumpeter] Wadada Leo Smith. It is also a bow to New Orleans and the marching band tradition.”

When one is asked about Edgefest, the two words that keep coming back are “community” and “family.” “It's a good place to play to the audience and to meet people,” said saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock, who first played Edgefest in 2013 with the LARK Quartet. “You get a rare opportunity to talk to other musicians, to the organizers and to the fans. There is a family component built in.” This year, she will lead her own project, Serpentes, featuring unusual

instrumentation (koto, tuba and electronics are in the mix) and a new compositional approach.

In addition to Laubrock, KCH will bring a stellar lineup to celebrate the anniversary in style. “This year is special: Every act could be the headliner,” Relyea said. The lineup includes trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith and bassist John Lindberg, Trio 3, bassist William Parker, drummer John Hollenbeck's Claudia Quintet, and pianists Kris Davis and Craig Taborn. Berne will be back performing with guitarist David Torn at Club Heidelberg, where it all started.

The festival was able to afford this thanks to new grants or “celebration money,” as the artistic director calls it. Relyea said, “The [Robert D.] Bielecki Foundation gave us a grant to work toward sustainability and will match what we get in admissions up to \$10,000. We plan to use the money for the festival and also to present music during the year.”

Another key to the fest's success has been the collaboration between KCH and the Dept. of Jazz & Contemporary Improvisation at the University of Michigan, as well as faculty members such as pianist Stephen Rush, professor of Performing Arts Technology, who will collaborate with John Hollenbeck. “U of M supports the festival with student activities or funding for master classes,” said Relyea. “Students can rub shoulders with experienced artists. It's an excellent opportunity for students and the university's brilliant faculty.” —Alain Drouot



ROBERTO SERRA

Children of the Light at the Bologna Jazz Festival in Bologna, Italy

## Jeonju Sori Festival

*Jeonju, South Korea*

**Sept. 29-Oct. 3**

This festival showcases various foreign traditional music styles and world music, with an emphasis on Korean traditional music, including Pansori. The goal is to promote musical exchange among the styles.

**LINEUP:** Yann-Fanch Kemener Quartet, Romengo, Juan Carmona, The LutoSlavs, Suhail yusuf khan, Vishal Nagar, ISIM Trio, Beste Kalender, Po you set, Arzu Aliyeva ensemble, Piji, Zheilai, Gao Ying, Dickson dee, Whiri TU Aka, Bang Sumi, Shin Jaehyun, Lee sungheon, Jang jaehyo, Yoo insang, Lee changseon, Lee jeongseok, An iho.

[sorifestival.com](http://sorifestival.com)

## Jarasum International Jazz Festival

*Gapyeong, South Korea*

**Oct. 1-3**

Held on a beautiful island on the Bukhan River, this festival includes 15 venues located near natural surroundings, such as a mountain and a river, but it is also positioned near the town. Jarasum Jazz organizes an annual project, or "Focus Program," which features musicians from a partner country. This year, five French musicians will help celebrate the 130-year friendship between France and Korea.

**LINEUP:** Caetano Veloso with Teresa Cristina, Oregon, Lucky Peterson, Henri Texier Hope Quartet, Manu Katché, Bugge Wesseltuft's New Conception of Jazz, Adam Baldych & Helge Lien Trio, Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Dainius Pulauskas Group, Elephant 9, Three Fall & Melane.

[jarasumjazz.com](http://jarasumjazz.com)

## Agharta Prague Jazz Festival

*Prague, Czech Republic*

**Oct. 5-Nov. 7**

This festival is held in the Lucerne Music Bar and the Agharta Jazz Centrum, a jazz club housed in the basement of a building constructed in the 1400s. The lineup includes a mix of European and American acts.

**LINEUP:** Magnus Öström, Electro Deluxe, Dean Brown, Michael Landau Group, Carl Verheyen Band, Mike Stern & Dave Weckl Band.

[aghartazc](http://aghartazc)

## Stockholm Jazz Festival

*Stockholm, Sweden*

**Oct. 7-16**

This is one of Sweden's oldest festivals and one of Stockholm's biggest cultural events. It has a solid reputation in the music world and is considered one of Europe's best-run festivals. Since 2012, the festival has been held indoors on the finest stages in Stockholm.

**LINEUP:** Avishai Cohen, Archie Shepp, Abdullah Ibrahim, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Meshell Ndegeocello, Tia Fuller, Cory Henry, BJ The Chicago Kid, Hailu Mergia, Cyrille Aimée; plus Swedish artists such as Malena Ernman, Gustav Lundgren, LSD, Lina Nyberg, Bobo Stenson, Mathias Landæus, Naoko Sakata, Karin Hammar, Magnus Lindgren.

[stockholmjazz.com/english](http://stockholmjazz.com/english)

## Akbank Jazz Festival

*Istanbul, Turkey*

**Oct. 12-23**

The 26th annual edition of this festival offers a wide palette of musical colors for Istanbul-based music enthusiasts from Oct. 12-23, and then affiliated campus concerts will take place in a wide range of Anatolian cities from Oct. 24-Nov. 4.

**LINEUP:** Ron Carter Golden Striker Trio, Fatih Erkoç, Tony Allen, Imany, Ferit Odman, Tulug Tirpan, Okay Temiz & Juan Garcia Herreros.

[akbanksanat.com](http://akbanksanat.com)

## Angra Jazz Festival

*Angra do Heroísmo, Portugal*

**Oct. 13-15**

The 18th annual edition of this festival takes place at Terceira Island in the Azores. The city of Angra do Heroísmo has been classified as World Heritage Patrimony by UNESCO. Over the years,



a great number of the world's most important jazz musicians have played at this festival.

**LINEUP:** Christian McBride Trio, The Cookers, Orquestra Angra Jazz, Desidério Lázaro Subtractive Colors, Ralph Alessi Baida Quartet, Charenée Wade Quartet.

[angrazjazz.com](http://angrazjazz.com)

## Døla Jazz Lillehammer Jazz Festival

*Lillehammer, Norway*

**Oct. 13-16**

Founded in 1978, this event has grown to become one of the most prominent jazz festivals in Norway—not necessarily because of its size, but because it offers an intimate listening experience, with the audience close to the musicians.

**LINEUP:** Gregory Porter, Olga Konkova Trio, Ninjabeat, Oslo Groove Company, Kristin Sevaldsen Band, Freedoms Trio, Ytre Suløens Jazz Ensemble, Audun Trio, Hans Mathisen Quintet, Duplex, Moose Patrol, Hedvig Mollestad Trio, Pust.

[dolajazz.no](http://dolajazz.no)

## Skopje Jazz Festival

*Skopje, Republic of Macedonia*

**Oct. 13-16**

Established in 1982, this festival is one of the leading music events in the Republic of Macedonia. Past lineups have included many jazz styles and performances by American and European jazz artists, representatives of Latin American and African music, as well as the best Macedonian jazz musicians.

**LINEUP:** Bojan Z, Julian Lage Trio, Vinicius Cantuaria, Marcin Wasilewski Trio with Joakim Milder, Joss Stone, Made To Break, The Thing, Goce Stevkovski Septet with Dzijan Emin, Evans/Dahl/Dunkelman—Pulverize the Sound, Thomas De Pourquetry "Supersonic."

[skopjejazzfest.com.mk](http://skopjejazzfest.com.mk)

## Canterbury Festival

*Canterbury, United Kingdom*

**Oct. 15-Nov. 5**

Canterbury Festival is Kent's International Arts Festival, the largest such event in the region. The festival attracts an audience of more than 60,000 fans of all ages to free and ticketed events, drawn from across Kent, London and the South East. The 200 events and performances include jazz, classical music, world music, contemporary dance, visual arts, comedy, theater, walks, lectures and more.

**LINEUP:** Gilbert O'Sullivan, KD Jazz & Dance Orchestra, The Endellion String Quartet, Will Todd, The Jive Aces, Geno Washington and the Yo Yo's, Frankie Gavin and De Dannan, Ivo Neame Quintet, Stile Antico, Oysterband, Brendan Power, Threex, Barry Douglas, Orphan Colours, Claire Martin and Joe Stilgoe, Paprika, Richard Navarro, Southern Tenant Folk Union.

[canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://canterburyfestival.co.uk)

## POA Jazz Festival

*Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil*

**Oct. 16-23**

In addition to concerts by renowned na-

tional and international artists, this event promotes jazz in public schools with master classes for young students.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Milton Nascimento, Jonathan Kreisberg, Nelson Ayres with Fábio Torres, Sachal, Bianca Gismonti Trio, Marlui Miranda, Swami Jr, New York Gypsy All-Stars, John Surman.

[poajazz.com.br](http://poajazz.com.br)

## Jazzmandu

*Kathmandu, Nepal*

**Oct. 20-26**

In its 14th installment, Jazzmandu, the Kathmandu International Jazz Festival, will attract musicians from around the world for performances in spectacular venues across this historical city.

**LINEUP:** Janysett McPherson, Angie Takats, Rocket Men, Cadenza Collective, AfuriK, Mn'JAM Experiment, more.

[jazzmandu.org](http://jazzmandu.org)

## Baloise Session

*Basel, Switzerland*

**Oct. 21-Nov. 8**

This festival offers a unique, club-like atmosphere. Fans are seated at tables with candlelight, positioned only a few meters from the stage.

**LINEUP:** Past performers have included Ray Charles, James Brown, Deep Purple, Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton, Gloria Estefan, Iggy Pop, Toto.

[baloisession.ch](http://baloisession.ch)

## Barcelona Voll-Damm Jazz Festival

*Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain*

**Oct. 24-Dec. 16**

Founded in 1966, this event is one of the oldest festivals in Europe and has presented legendary artists such as Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Sarah Vaughan, Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins and Ornette Coleman. An indoor festival featuring more than 100 concerts, this event attracts devoted fans enjoy world-class music as well as Barcelona's great oenophile and gastronomic experiences.

**LINEUP:** Chucho Valdés/Joe Lovano, Los Van Van, Bill Frisell, Jack DeJohnette/Ravi Coltrane/Matthew Garrison, Madeleine Peyroux, Cyrille Aimée, Hiromi, Avishai Cohen, Barbara Hendricks, Michel Legrand, Michael Feinstein, SFJAZZ Collective, Daymé Arocena, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Dino Saluzzi, Terence Blanchard, Robert Glasper, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Michel Camilo-Tomatito, José Mercé, Vicente Amigo, James Rhodes, Craig Taborn, Fred Hersch, Guillermo Klein, The Bad Plus, Dhafer Youssef, Asaf Avidan, Raynald Colom, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Marc Copland/John Abercrombie, Andrea Motis, Royal Southern Brotherhood, Kyle Eastwood, more.

[jazz.barcelona: barcelonajazzfestival.com](http://jazz.barcelona:barcelonajazzfestival.com)

## Deutsches Jazzfestival Frankfurt

*Frankfurt am Main, Germany*

**Oct. 26-30**

Founded in 1953, this is one of the oldest

jazz festivals in the world and is known for presenting one-of-a-kind projects. The entire festival is broadcast on the radio (hr2-kultur), and video of some performances is streamed online at [concert.arte.tv/de](http://concert.arte.tv/de).

**LINEUP:** Django Bates & hr-Bigband, Chucho Valdés/Joe Lovano Quintet, Phronesis, John Scofield, Hyperactive Kid, Myra Melford, Thomas de Pourquetry & Supersonic, Frankfurt Organic Electro Experience + Bodo Kirchhoff, Julia Hülsmann Trio feat. Theo Bleckmann & Ben Monder, Aziza, Matthew Bourne, Brandt Brauer Frick.

[jazzfestival.hr2-kultur.de](http://jazzfestival.hr2-kultur.de)

## Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival

*Wangaratta, Victoria, Australia*

**Oct. 28-30**

This festival allows jazz and blues enthusiasts to enjoy a jam-packed weekend of music, nature, food and wine. A world-class music program is complemented with an abundance of fun tourist experiences.

**LINEUP:** Melissa Aldana, James Morrison, The Bamboos, Joe Chindamo, Geoff Achison, Ronan Guilfoyle Trio, Andrea Keller, Wilson-Manning-Southwell, Shannon Barnett, Hetty Kate, The Pierce Brothers, Leigh Carriage, Bustamento with Nicky Bomba, Three Kings, Psycho Zydeco, Bridie King & The Boogie Kings, Luke Howard Trio, Anton Delecca Quartet, Horns Of Leroy, Jamie Oehlers & Tal Cohen, Dig We Must, Joseph O'Connor Trio with Scott Tinkler, Dixie Jack, Adam Simmons & Nick Tsiavos, Kimba Griffith, Monique Dimattina, Kellie Santin, Miwjj Sextet, Spirograph Studies, High Society Jazz Orchestra, Route 61, more.

[wangarattajazz.com](http://wangarattajazz.com)

## Guinness Cork Jazz Festival

*Cork City, Ireland*

**Oct. 28-31**

This event, which was founded in 1978, is Ireland's largest jazz festival. The diverse lineup features hundreds of musicians at 60 venues.

**LINEUP:** Robert Glasper Experiment, Jacob Collier, Booka Brass, Brian Deady, Loudon Wainwright III, Justin Kauflin, James Taylor Quartet, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Dick Oatts All-Stars, Jason Marsalis Vibes Quartet, Sheryl Bailey Quartet, Hot Club of Cowtown, Beate Hlavenková, more.

[guinnessjazzfestival.com](http://guinnessjazzfestival.com)

## Berlin Jazz Festival

*Berlin, Germany*

**Nov. 1-6**

Berliner Festspiele hosts the 53rd edition of Jazzfest Berlin, which includes unique performances that were developed specifically for the festival and will be performed there for the first time. Additionally, there will be first-time collaborations between numerous musicians.

**LINEUP:** Joshua Redman & Brad Mehldau, Matana Roberts, Michael Schiefel, Wood & Steel Trio, Julia Hülsmann Quartet & Anna-Lena Schnabel, Mette Henriette, Wadada Leo Smith's Great Lakes Quartet, Mary Halvorson & Ingrid



MICHELE GIOTTO

Kurt Elling at the Padova Jazz Festival in Padova, Italy

Laubrock, Oddarrang, Globe Unity Orchestra, Myra Melford's Snowy Egret, Ingrid Laubrock & Aki Takase, Yazz Ahmed's Family Hafla, Achim Kaufmann + 7, Angelika Niescier/Florian Weber Quintet, Nik Bärtsch with the hR Big Band, Jack DeJohnette/Ravi Coltrane/Matthew Garrison, Aki Takase & Charlotte Greve, Lucia Cadotsch Trio, Wadada Leo Smith & Alexander Hawkins, Julia Holter with strings, Steve Lehman Octet, Eve Risser's White Desert Orchestra. [berlinerfestspiele.de/jazzfestberlin](http://berlinerfestspiele.de/jazzfestberlin)

## Tampere Jazz Happening

*Tampere, Finland*

Nov. 3-6

The 34th annual Tampere Jazz Happening will fill the venues of the Tullikamari Square with performances by some of the finest musicians in contemporary jazz. This year, the lineup focuses on combining jazz and spoken word.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Omar Sosa/Trilok Gurtu/Paolo Fresu, Tampere New Jazz Collective, David Murray Infinity Quartet & Saul Williams, Paal Nilssen-Love Large Unit, Mats Gustafsson, Colin Stetson & Sarah Neufeld, Ginger Baker Jazz Confusion, Carla Bley, Hedvig Mollestad Trio. [tamperemusicfestivals.fi/jazz](http://tamperemusicfestivals.fi/jazz)

## Bologna Jazz Festival

*Bologna & Ferrara, Italy*

Nov. 3-20

Highlights of this festival include concerts

that are exclusive to Italy or Europe, such as Uri Caine and Paolo Fresu with strings. The festival will focus on historical and contemporary giants of the post-bop tradition.

**LINEUP:** Barry Harris, Samuel Blaser Trio, The Cookers, Randy Brecker & Balaio, Aziza (featuring Dave Holland, Chris Potter, Lionel Loueke, Eric Harland), Julian Lage Trio, Kronos Quartet, Jeremy Pelt Quintet, Uri Caine & Paolo Fresu with the Alborada String Quartet, Buster Williams Quartet, Steve Coleman & Council of Balance, Azymuth, Gianluca Petrella & Giovanni Guidi with Louis Sclavis & Gerald Cleaver, Trio Bobo, more. [bolognajazzfestival.com](http://bolognajazzfestival.com)

## L Leverkusener Jazztage

*Leverkusener, Germany*

Nov. 4-13

Founded in 1980, this festival has become one of the largest cultural events in Germany. With crowds of more than 20,000, Leverkusener is a well-attended and eclectic event that draws artists from a variety of genres and countries.

**LINEUP:** Gregory Porter, Jacob Collier, Walter Trout & Band, Popa Chubby, Candy Dulfer, Stefanie Heinzmann, Myles Sanko, Al Di Meola, Stanley Clarke Band, Filou, WDR Big Band featuring Mokhtar Samba, Billy Cobham, Robert Glasper Experiment, Lucky Chops, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Gregor Meyle, Max Mutzke, Andreas Kümmert, Henrik Freischlader Trio, Incognito, The Brand New

Heavies, Tingvall Trio, Noise Adventures. [leverkusener-jazztage.de](http://leverkusener-jazztage.de)

## Jazzdor Festival

*Strasbourg, France*

Nov. 4-18

Jazzdor Festival will celebrate its 31st anniversary with nearly 30 concerts in more than 10 venues around the city of Strasbourg. The festival features a balanced lineup with some big acts and a lot of young musicians from the United States and Europe, plus premieres, meetings and workshops.

**LINEUP:** Joshua Redman & Brad Mehldau, Gonzalo Rubalcaba Quartet, Mary Halvorson & Noël Akchoté, Ingrid Laubrock Anti-House, Sylvie Courvoisier Trio, Yuko Oshima & Hamid Drake, David Murray/Geri Allen/Terri Lyne Carrington, Dave Douglas New Sanctuary, Julian Sartorius, Anouar Brahm Quartet, Bojan Z & Nils Wogram, Naissam Jalal & Rhythms of Resistance, more. [jazzdor.com](http://jazzdor.com)

## Dominican Republic Jazz Festival

*Santo Domingo, Santiago, Puerto Plata & Cabarete Beach, Dominican Republic*

Nov. 8-12

For this 20th anniversary, the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival will be dedicated to women jazz musicians. This event is known for its legendary performers, seaside locale, tropical climate, Caribbean culture and a Latin take on the international jazz scene. The festival is free, but VIP tickets are available, enabling priority seating, complimentary beverages, and other festival perks, with proceeds benefiting the music foundation FEDUJAZZ.

**LINEUP:** Berklee Global Jazz Institute Ambassadors featuring Joanne Brakeen, Lili Haruvi Quintet and Pat Pereyra; Tia Fuller Quartet and Sabrina Estepan; Global Jazz Institute Ambassadors featuring Terri Lyne Carrington and Eñerolisa y su grupo de Salve; Quinteto de Patricia Zarate; "Special Quartet" featuring Geri Allen, Terri Lyne Carrington, Ingrid Jensen, Linda Oh. [drjazzfestival.com](http://drjazzfestival.com)

## Padova Jazz Festival

*Padova, Italy*

Nov. 9-12

This festival's creative programming involves three levels: Main concerts with national and international stars are held in the Teatro Verdi, concerts focusing on pianists take place inside historical buildings, and there is a double bill in a jazz-club setting every day.

**LINEUP:** Ernst Reijseger/Harmen Fraanje/Mola Sylla Trio, Roy Paci & Mauro Ottolini band, Kenny Garrett Quintet, more. [padovajazz.com](http://padovajazz.com)

## EFG London Jazz Festival

*London, United Kingdom*

Nov. 11-20

This festival brings world-class jazz to the





FELIX CORONA

Joe Lovano (far right) performs with Berklee Global Jazz Institute musicians during the 2014 Dominican Republic Jazz Festival.

# Festive Activism

Several factors distinguish the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival's 20th anniversary edition, which runs Nov. 8–12, from its predecessors.

For one thing, the festival has expanded. In contrast to prior iterations that transpired solely on the Dominican Republic's north coast—in Puerto Plata, Sosua and Cabarete—this year's event will open in Santo Domingo, the nation's capital, and then proceed 100 miles north for a night in Santiago, the country's second most populous city, before settling into its customary locale for the remaining three nights.

For another, women will be the bandleaders on all 10 shows. Headliners include bassist/vocalist Esperanza Spalding with her Emily's D+Evolution project; a collective quartet comprising drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, pianist Geri Allen, trumpeter Ingrid Jenson and bassist Linda Oh; saxophonist Tia Fuller with a quartet; and saxophonist Patricia Zarate with a quintet. Carrington and pianist Joanne Brackeen will lead separate concerts of their music performed by an ensemble culled from the Berklee Global Jazz Institute. Rounding out the program are Israeli saxophonist Lihi Haruvi, herself a Berklee alum, and Dominican singers Pat Pererya and Sabrina Estepan.

The all-female concept was the brainchild of saxophonist Marco Pignataro, BGJI's managing director, who assumed artistic director responsibilities this year. "It was an excellent idea," said María Elena Grateaux, who serves as president of the festival and FEDUJAZZ, its nonprofit educational foundation. "We want

to promote gender equality, and nonviolence against women," she noted, mentioning that hundreds of women have died due to domestic violence in the Dominican Republic.

Grateaux, a lawyer, first became involved with DRJF as a volunteer 10 years ago, assumed legal counsel responsibilities in 2011 and became president in 2013, after festival co-founder and artistic director Lorenzo Sancassani was appointed the Dominican Republic's minister of tourism. Under her leadership, the festival has formed an alliance with the BGJI, which now sends its students to run workshops and classes with children in the public schools of that area of the north coast, where luxury resort hotels stand across the road from impoverished barrios. Each artist's contract includes a stipulation to conduct at least one workshop in addition to his or her concert.

"We want to emulate the social component of the Panama Jazz Festival, and the profound influence that the festival and [its partner, the Danilo Pérez Foundation] have developed with children through music," Grateaux said.

"María Elena has a philanthropic outlook in the way she manages the festival," said Pignataro, who first performed there in 2004. "She put together a committee of successful professionals who want to help the local scene through the music and the education, trying in their own way to do what Danilo [Pérez] is doing in Panama. They have an early school where they give private lessons to little students from the community, and do this outreach work, and then the festival is the big event that

combines everything together.

"She has a very clear agenda. She understands the power this music has to create momentum in her community as a powerful tool for social change. She connects with that power, and likes the idea of having artists give an example and a sort of alternative model. That's why she nurtured this relationship with Berklee. I come to the Dominican Republic two or three times a year, and I spend time with the teachers and the organization, and help select artists who are people you want to have around. María Elena has brought a vision that wasn't there before. She helped make a local, regional festival become an international event."

The first three editions of the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival transpired in July and December of 1993, and in the fall of 1994, when Sancassani and Gary Malik Harris booked several local bands along with headliners Mark Egan, David Spinozza and Leni Stern to perform on the beach of Cabarete. After a five-year hiatus, DRJF resumed in 1999 (featuring David Sánchez, T.S. Monk, Bill Summers and Jason Marsalis) and has continued without interruption.

With consequential sponsorship from the Ministry of Tourism, and private entities like Jet Blue, Ron Macorix and BanReservas, DRJF remains entirely free. "People come from all over the country, including families who discovered jazz through the festival and now bring their kids," Grateaux said. "It's a nice experience for the artists, too, to be able to give back to the kids as well as play on a very big stage."

—Ted Panken



Chris Cain (foreground) at the Festival de Jazz de Montevideo in Montevideo, Uruguay

streets, clubs and concert halls of London, featuring international stars and emerging artists. The festival also includes free stages, workshops and family events.

**LINEUP:** Wayne Shorter, Robert Glasper Experiment, Jan Garbarek, Brad Mehldau & Joshua Redman, Madeleine Peyroux, Kandace Springs, Bugge Wesseltoft and many more.  
[efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk](http://efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk)

## Festival de Jazz de Montevideo

*Montevideo, Uruguay*  
**Nov. 14-17**

Performances take place all around Montevideo, with the Teatro Solís as the main venue, plus jams in local restaurants and bars featuring local and international artists collaborating. The festival also includes free workshops.

**LINEUP:** Carlos Bica & João Paulo Esteves da Silva, Ruben Rada, Francisco Fattoruso, Ben Van den Dungen, Residents of the Future, Fabrizio Mocata & Paul Wertico.  
[jazztour.com.uy](http://jazztour.com.uy)

## Vilnius Mama Jazz Festival

*Vilnius, Lithuania*  
**Nov. 17-20**

This festival, which offers a variety of jazz styles, has been held in the capital since 2002. Each year, the goal of the festival is to introduce interesting international jazz phenomena to Lithuanian audiences and to provide an environment for young artists to participate

in national and international projects.

**LINEUP:** Past performers include Chick Corea, Bill Frisell, Marcus Miller, Christian McBride, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Robert Glasper.  
[vilniusmamajazz.lt](http://vilniusmamajazz.lt)

## Christmas Jazz of Jazzkaar

*Tallinn, Estonia*  
**Nov. 25-Dec. 11**

Held in Tallinn (the capital of Estonia), Christmas Jazz is an international, intimate and serene-sounding festival during the holidays. Organizers present numerous concerts at churches, clubs and concert halls.

**LINEUP:** Take 6, Wayne Krantz Trio, more.  
[jazzkaar.ee](http://jazzkaar.ee)

## Riviera Maya Jazz Festival

*Playa del Carmen, Mexico*  
**Late November**

At this festival, which was founded in 2003, jazz buffs can see artists perform under the stars on Playa del Carmen's beach Playa Mamitas.

**LINEUP:** Past performers include Sheila E., Hendrik Meurkens with Gabriel Espinosa.  
[rivieramayajazzfestival.com](http://rivieramayajazzfestival.com)

## Havana International Jazz Festival

*Havana, Cuba*  
**Dec. 15-18**

During the 32nd edition of this globally renowned celebration of Latin music, attendees will see jazz greats from

Cuba as well as many other nations.

**LINEUP:** Chucho Valdés, Arthur O'Farrill, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Jessy J, Sandy Shore, Roberto Fonseca, Michael Lington, Harold Lopez-Nussa, Wayne Wallace, more.  
[jazzcuba.com](http://jazzcuba.com)

## Umbria Jazz Winter

*Orvieto, Italy*  
**Dec. 28-Jan. 1, 2017**

The 24th edition of this fest includes more than 100 events in the beautiful town of Orvieto, which is rich in history and art. The goal of the program is to create a musical mix that can be appreciated by both well-informed jazz lovers as well as those who are new to the music. Venues include the magnificent cathedral, plus the Teatro Mancinelli, the Palazzo del Popolo and the Palazzo dei Sette. There will also be music at the Ristorante San Francesco, which hosts a special dinner with music on New Year's Eve.

**LINEUP:** Christian McBride, John Patitucci, Ryan Truesdell, Steve Wilson, Lewis Nash, Paolo Fresu, Allan Harris, Chihiro Yamanaka, more.  
[umbriajazz.com](http://umbriajazz.com)

 **Festival Internacional de Jazz de Punta del Este**  
*Finca El Sосiego, Punta del Este, Uruguay*  
**Jan. 4-8, 2017**

The festival has been held since 1996 in the middle of the countryside, surrounded by a nature. It features musicians from all over



Chucho Valdés and members of Txarango with fans at the Barcelona Vull-Damm Jazz Festival in Barcelona, Spain



© LORENZO DUASO BARCELONA VULL-DAMM JAZZ FESTIVAL

the world in an easygoing setting. The event also includes barbecues and special meals.

**LINEUP:** Paquito D'Rivera, Diego Urcola, Grant Stewart, Orrin Evans, Ken Peplowski, Walt Weiskopf, Alex Brown, Duduka da Fonseca, Maucha Adnet, David Feldman, Leroy Jones, Victor Provost, many more.  
[festival.com.uy](http://festival.com.uy)

## Panama Jazz Festival

*Panama City, Panama*  
Jan. 10-14, 2017

The Panama Jazz Festival, held in the City of Knowledge, is the most important annual event for the Danilo Pérez Foundation, which positively transforms society through music by working with young people throughout the year.

**LINEUP:** Esperanza Spalding, Children of the Light, the John Patitucci Electric Guitar Quartet, Terri Lyne Carrington, Berklee Global Jazz Institute, Roni Eytan Quartet, Dianne Reeves, Left-eris Kordis Quartet, Romero Lubambo, more.  
[panamajazzfestival.com](http://panamajazzfestival.com)

## Winter Jazz

*Prøhallen, Valby, Copenhagen, Denmark*  
Feb. 3-26, 2017

This festival features 500 concerts, 100 venues and 25 independent organizers from all across Denmark. The combination of the festival's length and its countrywide aspect makes Winter Jazz an opportunity to see many international stars as well as award-winning Danish musicians.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Dr. Lonnie Smith, Jakob Bro/Thomas Morgan/Joey Baron, Aarhus Jazz Orchestra featuring Kurt Rosenwinkel, Tortoise, The Residents.  
[jazz.dk](http://jazz.dk)

## Dubai Jazz Festival

*Dubai, United Arab Emirates*  
Feb. 22-24, 2017

This festival, which routinely draws capacity crowds, offers high production

values, stunning sets and dramatic lighting, all of which make it a standout on the Dubai entertainment calendar.

**LINEUP:** Past performers include Santana, Sting, John Legend, Esperanza Spalding, Lindsey Stirling.  
[dubaijazzfest.com](http://dubaijazzfest.com)

## Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival

*Jakarta, Indonesia*  
March 4-6, 2017

The same organization responsible for festivals such as Java Rockin'land, Java SoulNation and Soundsfair will present the 12th annual edition of Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival.

**LINEUP:** Kurt Elling, Joey DeFrancesco Trio, Chris Botti & Sting, Yellowjackets, Monty Alexander, BadBadNotGood, Candy Dulfer, Boney James, Eric Benét, Robin Thicke, David Foster & Java Jazz Friends, Tony Monaco, Hiatus Kaiyote, Jacob Collier, Indonesian All Stars, MLD Jazz Project, Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club, Patti Austin with Jazz Orchestra of Concertgebouw, Ron King Big Band, Seun Kuti & Egypt 80, Dewa Budjana, more.  
[javajazzfestival.com](http://javajazzfestival.com)



## Cape Town International Jazz Festival

*Cape Town, South Africa*  
March 31-Apr. 1, 2017

This festival boasts five stages with more than 40 acts, and the programming is evenly balanced between South African artists and international artists. More than 37,000 fans are expected to attend during the two show days. Affectionately known as "Africa's Grandest Gathering," this is the largest music event in sub-Saharan Africa. This South African-produced festival is held at the Convention Centre.

**LINEUP:** Last year's lineup included Lizz Wright, Meshell Ndegeocello, Victor Wooten, Cassandra Wilson.  
[capetownjazzfest.com](http://capetownjazzfest.com)

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- Peter Zak
- Mike Karn
- Nicolás Mora
- Pipi Piazzolla
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# University of the Pacific Fosters Collaborations

**AS OF THE CURRENT 2016–17 SCHOOL** year, the University of the Pacific (UOP) in Stockton, California, is offering a four-year Bachelor of Music (B.M.) degree in Jazz Studies.

“The B.M. is considered a professional degree,” said Patrick Langham, Director of Jazz Studies at UOP’s Conservatory of Music, “whereas a Bachelor of Arts—which we’d been offering since we launched the jazz program in 2006—is a much more liberal arts degree.

“In addition to music, [students] would be encouraged to take courses in psychology, for example, or other areas,” he continued. “They had a concentration in jazz but would also have a secondary area of interest that’s not music-related.”

Now undergraduates can choose to major in either performance or jazz composition and enroll in classes that are part of the conservatory’s Music Management minor. Those include studio recording techniques and Music Industry Analysis.

“There’s been a lot of program development, and the Jazz Studies department has definitely grown,” said pianist Randy Sandoli, a 2010 UOP Jazz Studies graduate who was part of the inaugural class in 2006.

Now a Lecturer of Jazz Studies at his alma mater, Sandoli noted that students have frequent opportunities to perform at venues in downtown Stockton.

The highest profile of such establishments is the Take 5 Jazz Club. Weekly concerts by students, faculty members and visiting artists are presented there, thanks to a partnership

between Valley Brewing Company, UOP’s The Brubeck Institute and UOP itself.

Langham is currently also the interim director of The Brubeck Institute. It’s a logical role for him, given that the two-year Brubeck Fellows and the Conservatory’s Jazz Studies undergraduates are like scholastic relatives. (The five students in the Brubeck Fellowship study and perform together as a quintet.)

“In the beginning, there wasn’t much interaction between the two programs,” Langham recalled. “We’ve gotten a little bit wiser; we saw that that interaction is key to making both programs strong and healthy.”

Brubeck Fellows now play in UOP ensembles. Fellows might also “mentor teach” freshman bands, according to Langham. “Brubeck Institute students also play secondary instruments like flute or clarinet in some of our Pacific combos,” he said.

Brubeck Fellows often attend music schools in Manhattan or Boston after finishing their two years in Stockton. But Langham has been noticing a mini-trend wherein Fellows have stayed on campus to continue in the Jazz Studies program.

“They make friends and connections, and they understand how the program works,” he said. “And then they figure, ‘If I stay here a little bit longer, I can finish up a degree.’ We’ve made a fast track for them. We have a separate honors degree plan where any advanced student, whether Brubeck Fellow or not, can be tested and get credit and graduate on a three-, rather than a four-, year plan.” —Yoshi Kato



**Alpert Foundation Gift:** Los Angeles City College Foundation has received a \$10.1 million gift from The Herb Alpert Foundation, creating an endowment that provides low-income and financially challenged music majors tuition-free attendance, additional private lessons and further financial aid to enable them to succeed in their community college experience. Support extends to all music majors, whether enrolled in the two-year certificate programs or in the applied music major program that prepares students for pursuing a four-year music degree. In 1946, LACC became the first college in the United States to offer a major in jazz.

[herbalpertfoundation.org](http://herbalpertfoundation.org)

**Growing Faculty:** Kutztown University of Pennsylvania’s jazz studies program has appointed two new faculty members. John Riley, author of the book *The Art of Bop Drumming*, will teach applied drum set. Nate Radley, whose latest recording is *Morphoses* (Fresh Sound/New Talent), will teach applied jazz/rock guitar and direct the newly formed Commercial Music Ensemble as part of KU’s new bachelor’s degree program in commercial music. They join a faculty of Scott Lee (bass), Cathy Chemi (voice), Adam Kolker (saxophone), Dan Neuenschwander (trombone), Neal Kirkwood (piano/vibes) and Kevin Kjos (trumpet/director). [kutztown.edu](http://kutztown.edu)

**New Monk 7:** Seven international student jazz musicians have been selected for the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA Class of 2018. Each will attain a master of music in jazz performance degree from the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music after completing the two-year program in spring 2018. New ensemble members who started this fall include pianist Glenn Tucker of Ypsilanti, Michigan; bassist Luca Alemanno of Lecce, Italy; drummer Anthony Fung of Richmond Hill, Canada; alto saxophonist Alexander Hahn of Orange, California; tenor saxophonist Julio Flavio Maza Galvez of Lima, Peru; trombonist Jon Hatamiya of Davis, California; and vibes player Simon Moullier of Paris, France. [monkinstitute.org](http://monkinstitute.org)



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## Aaron Parks

Pianist Aaron Parks, 32, has been a force in jazz since he joined Terence Blanchard 15 years ago, as was most recently demonstrated on his 2013 solo CD, *Arborescence* (ECM), and on his influential 2008 Blue Note CD, *Invisible Cinema*. This was Parks' first Blindfold Test.

### ELEW

"My Favorite Things" (*And To The Republic*, Sunnyside, 2016) ELEW, piano; Reginald Veal, bass; Jeff Watts, drums.

Eric Lewis? He sent up a line, and then started hammering out these octaves repeatedly in this way I've heard him do many times at different jam sessions. To me, it was too much of a good thing. It started with the melody, then immediately off to the races with a bunch of different stuff, then the melody again, then a bunch of a different stuff. At the beginning, I wasn't so into it. In the middle I was like, "All right, get in there, absolutely." At the end it lost me again. We had already reached the pinnacle. We didn't need more. The trio felt like piano with bass and drums that happened to also be there. I loved the drummer—super-happening and swinging. I could hardly hear the bass over the voicings.

### Joey Alexander

"Soul Dreamer" (*Countdown*, Motéma, 2016) Alexander, piano; Larry Grenadier, bass; Ulysses Owens, drums.

Interesting approach to articulation. The pedaling is inconsistent—a lot of notes and chords end up shorter, jarringly so, than I expect in a song like this, which has a flowing energy. There are some Glasperisms; this person has listened to and absorbed some of that stuff. Then at the end of the form there's the unexpected, Chick Corea-ish double-the-bass melody. A nice modern piano trio track. I'm not sure how I liked it. It just all sort of happened, and I didn't feel particularly taken with or intrigued about what was going to happen next.

### Renee Rosnes

"Lucy From Afar" (*Written In The Rocks*, SmokeSessions, 2016) Rosnes, piano; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; Peter Washington, bass; Bill Stewart, drums.

The rhythm from the piano feels good, and the piano solo kept to the point—a refreshing length. A hip ending as well. It felt like everyone was on the same mission and were going for it together.

### Edward Simon

"Volver" (*Latin American Songbook*, Sunnyside, 2016) Simon, piano; Joe Martin, bass; Adam Cruz, drums.

Funky intro. I know the melody, but can't place it. It's a tango. It's a tricky arrangement, and I feel this is maybe a third or fourth take, so the rhythm feels on the grid, as sometimes happens when you're trying to play a lot of written-out stuff correctly. But there's a lot that I really like. The pianist's touch. The motivic development. The voicings, the harmony, these phrases that pop out and emerge. I hear elements of Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Danilo Pérez shining through somehow, especially at the beginning. Oh, it's Ed Simon. I love Ed. I used to listen to him a lot, especially before I joined Terence's band. Now the drumming is funky. Could be Adam Cruz, who I've always loved, but has really shined for me in recent years.

### Matthew Shipp

"In A Sentimental Mood" (*To Duke*, RougeArt, 2014) Shipp, piano; Michael Bisio, bass; Whit Dickey, drums.

This reminds me of *My Name Is Albert Ayler*, where he goes through standards like "I have something to say about your American Songbook!" Actually, the piano player is playing it pretty close to the



vest, staying centered amidst all the chaos. There's something mantric about it. The simplicity reminds me of Mal Waldron, and the three-note groupings remind me of Vijay Iyer, but the touch doesn't sound at all like him. The approach felt earnest and honest, like somebody talking about a sentimental mood that had basically crossed over the line into madness. It didn't feel ironic.

### Bruce Barth Trio

"Almost Blue" (*Live At Smalls*, SmallsLive, 2010) Barth, piano; Vicente Archer, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

The piano is soft in the mix. This feels like a live record. Whoever this is seems most comfortable playing fast. At the beginning, it wasn't particularly gelling with the rhythm section, but everybody wanted to swing and then they got there. It's a roaming left hand—always wanting to say something, like another melodic voice wanting to enter the picture. Fun track.

### Kris Davis

"Twice Escaped" (*Waiting For You To Grow*, Clean Feed, 2014) Davis, piano; John Hébert, bass; Tom Rainey, drums.

Nice touch right off the bat. Committed to the single-note piano line idea. I love the drummer. Is it Marcus Gilmore? Oh, is this Kris Davis? She has a certain flow that I recognized when she went into time. I appreciate the clarity of her tone. I love the bassist, too, with the muscular tone and multi-functional approach, taking care of different parts simultaneously. I love the whole thing. It felt like everybody was listening and playing together, and was very happening when it went into time. Very cool.

### Rob Clearfield

"Islands" (*Islands*, Eyes and Ears, 2016) Clearfield, piano, organ; Curt Bley, bass; Quin Kirchner, drums.

The head was mellow, flowing and songful, but now it's linear madness on the solo—a totally different song. Then back to the head. This feels forced, like something needs to happen. It's a pet peeve when people set up a mood and subvert it on the solo. The head has these Glasper-ish, Bruce Hornsby-ish chords, some pretty harmony that I wish I'd had a chance to hear come through in the blowing. **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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