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Festival Guide

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Reggie Workman teaching with the John Coltrane Ensemble
Photo by Michael Kirby Smith
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NORAH JONES DAY BREAKS (DELUXE EDITION)

The **9-time GRAMMY Winner** releases a new **Deluxe Edition** of her acclaimed album *Day Breaks*. The expanded track listing features nine additional songs recorded live in New York City, including songs from *Day Breaks* like "Flipside" and "Peace," as well as fan favorites like "Don't Know Why" and "Sunrise."



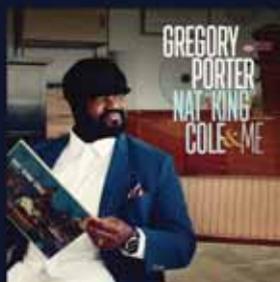
CHARLES LLOYD NEW QUARTET PASSIN' THRU

NEA Jazz Master saxophonist and musical truth-seeker **Charles Lloyd** reconvenes his remarkable New Quartet with pianist **JASON MORAN**, bassist **REUBEN ROGERS**, and drummer **ERIC HARLAND** and takes us on another mystical journey with this live recording of Lloyd's original compositions.



BLUE NOTE ALL-STARS OUR POINT OF VIEW

With its latest iteration, the **Blue Note All-Stars** take listeners on an exuberant musical exploration, while making their mark on the future. The supergroup features modern-day luminaries **ROBERT GLASPER**, **AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE**, **MARCUS STRICKLAND**, **LIONEL LOUEKE**, **DERRICK HODGE** and **KENDRICK SCOTT**, with guest appearances by **WAYNE SHORTER** and **HERBIE HANCOCK**.



GREGORY PORTER NAT KING COLE & ME

The **GRAMMY-winning** vocalist releases his stunning fifth studio album, a heartfelt tribute to the legendary singer and pianist **Nat King Cole**. With the help of **six-time GRAMMY-winning arranger VINCE MENDOZA**, and the **LONDON STUDIO ORCHESTRA**, Porter revisits some of Cole's most cherished classics such as "Smile," "L-O-V-E," "Nature Boy," and "The Christmas Song."



TROMBONE SHORTY PARKING LOT SYMPHONY

Shorty's **Blue Note-debut** captures the spirit and the essence of The Big Easy, while redefining its sound. Blazing through 70s Funk, Rock, Hip-Hop and R&B, **Parking Lot Symphony** also delivers fresh covers of **The Meters'** "It Ain't No Use," and **Allen Toussaint's** "Here Come The Girls."



TONY ALLEN THE SOURCE

With his **Blue Note-debut**, *The Source*, Nigerian drummer **Tony Allen** sees a childhood dream come true. Allen says this is the "best in my life," and with a career spanning over 50 years, that's quite the confession for the **Afrobeat pioneer** and former **Fela Kuti** fixture. *The Source* represents Blue Note's classic era while symbolizing the label's innovative present.

NOVEMBER 2017

Inside

ON THE COVER

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Finding Affirmation

BY PHILLIP LUTZ

The alto saxophonist discusses his trio album *Agrima*, which he recorded with the Indo-Pak Coalition (guitarist Rez Abbasi and drummer/percussionist Dan Weiss). Mahanthappa's ambitious new work reflects his decision to work with a broader sonic palette while merging multiple musical styles.



Mark Gulliana performs at the North Sea Jazz Festival on July 10, 2016.

Cover photo of Rudresh Mahanthappa shot by Jimmy & Dena Katz in New York City on Aug. 17.

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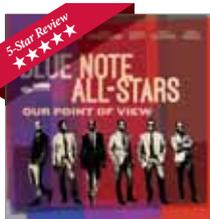
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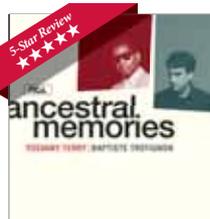
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Albright

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at the top of his game.*

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Mercedes Abal (left), A.J. Hill and Chad Bernstein of the Spam Allstars perform in Bayfront Park on Feb. 25 during the Miami Downtown Jazz Festival.

PHIL AVELLO

Helping Artists in Need

THERE WAS MUCH JOY AND SORROW during the production cycle for this issue of DownBeat. We loved assembling our Fall/Winter Festival Guide, but during the weeks leading up to press time, Mother Nature heaped misery on millions.

When Hurricane Harvey hit Texas and Louisiana, our immediate concern was for the health and safety of all our contacts in the line of the storm—musicians, educators, schools, retailers and business associates, as well as our own friends and relatives. As the cleanup and recovery efforts for Harvey continued, another natural disaster happened when Hurricane Irma struck Florida. Again, our immediate concern was for people's safety.

New York-based journalist Dan Ouellette wrote an excellent article that we posted on our website Sept. 7, titled "Educators, Aid Workers Gauge Harvey's Impact on Musicians." For that article Ouellette interviewed a few people, including Houston-based jazz educator José Diaz (a member of the DownBeat Jazz Education Hall of Fame) and Wendy Oxenhorn, executive director of the New York-based nonprofit organization Jazz Foundation of America. JFA helps musicians year-round, but it always faces a flurry of requests for aid when a natural disaster hits.

Oxenhorn was in touch with numerous musicians immediately after Harvey. "We're hearing that all they've owned has been washed away," she said. "That alone will take its toll, but we need a whole different set of funding to put them back to work and replace the [gigs] they

had so that they can pay their rent and feed their families."

Right after Harvey, the JFA staff began helping victims of Irma. Music venues, recording studios and thousands of homes have been damaged. Much work needs to be done, and many musicians need your help. On page 72 of this issue, you'll see a public service ad for JFA. The organization helps musicians overcome problems related to housing, food, instrument repair and other essential needs. To make a donation, go to jazzfoundation.org. (There's also a link to the site in Ouellette's web article.)

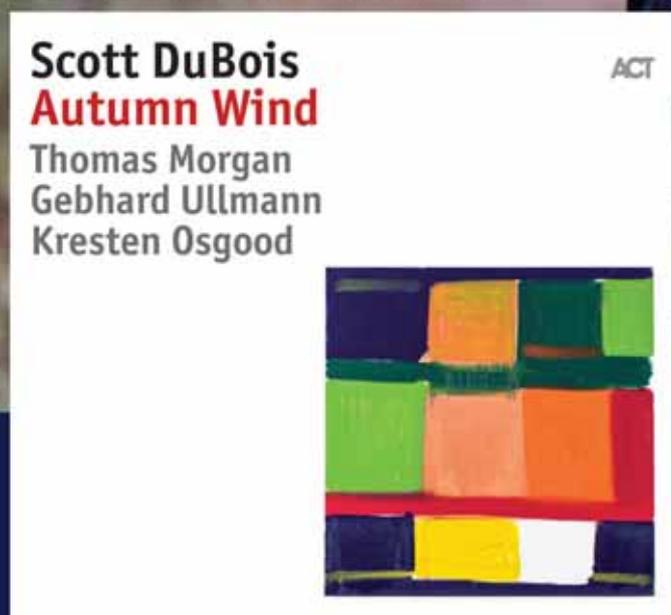
After our initial shock regarding these hurricanes, we thought, "How will these storms and flooding affect the scheduled events that are described in our Fall/Winter Festival Guide?" So we reached out to industry professionals in Texas, Louisiana and Florida. We heard from many who had suffered a variety of setbacks. But we also heard some good news.

Steve Weinberger, CEO of Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation, said, "Our thoughts are with all those who suffered loss. We were very fortunate. Clearwater Jazz Holiday's home in beautiful Coachman Park surfaced with minimal impact. We should be in great shape for Clearwater Jazz Holiday on Oct. 19–22."

We hope that *all* the events listed in our Festival Guide will go on as planned. The world needs a big dose of that joy that is so abundant at a jazz festival. But without working musicians, there wouldn't even *be* any festivals. So let's all get together to help musicians in need by making a donation to JFA. Thanks. **DB**



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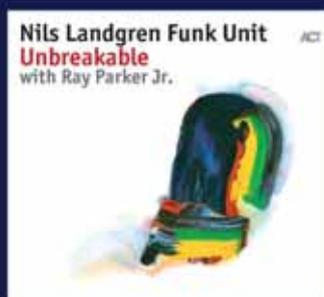
Scott DuBois / guitar & conductor
 Thomas Morgan / bass
 Gebhard Ullmann / tenor sax & bass clarinet
 Kresten Osgood / drums
 with string and woodwind octet

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Chords & Discords



Thoughts & Words

I just read journalist Yoshi Kato's cover story on Ambrose Akinmusire in your September issue.

I'm a bit perplexed by the blurb "Intellectual Renegade" on the cover of the issue, as well as the title of the accompanying article, "The Thinker."

What are those terms referring to? There is nothing in the article that substantiates or even refers to any sort of intellectual adventurism.

CLAY HAGEN
MINNEAPOLIS

Rest Assured

I have been a DownBeat subscriber for more than 50 years, and I still look forward to each issue. In the past few issues, I've noticed that one of my favorite writers, Hot Box critic John McDonough, has been appearing less frequently. McDonough's reviews and articles are informed by his knowledge, insight and dry wit. I hope his work will not disappear from the pages of DownBeat.

BOB HOFFHEINS
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA

Editor's note: John McDonough contributes to The Hot Box in this issue (see pages 54–55). As we explained in the First Take section of the October issue, DownBeat has added some new voices to The Hot Box. This means that McDonough won't be in The Hot Box for every single issue, but his work will certainly not disappear from our pages. We love his writing just as much as you do.

Larry Elgart & His Manhattan Swing Orchestra. The song, which reached No. 31 on the Billboard pop charts, was a medley of swing tunes, including "In the Mood," "Cherokee," "American Patrol," "Sing, Sing, Sing," "Don't Be That Way," "Little Brown Jug," "Opus #1," "Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart" and "String Of Pearls."

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Corrections

- In the October print edition, a combined review of Mario Pavone's *Vertical* (Clean Feed) and the Mario Pavone Dialect Trio's *Chrome* (Playscape) was illustrated with the wrong album cover. It should have been illustrated with the cover for *Chrome*, as shown here.



- In the Historical column of the October issue, a review of the reissue for Myra Melford's *Alive In The House Of Saints* (hatOLOGY) misstated the album's original release date. It was released in 1993.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERRORS.

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



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chris botti

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crosscurrents with dave holland & friends

Sun, Nov 5 @ 7 PM
Indian music meets jazz with Zakir Hussain, Dave Holland, Shankar Mahadevan and more!



john mclaughlin & jimmy herring

Fri, Nov 10 @ 8 PM
Guitar virtuosos from Mahavishnu Orchestra and Widespread Panic.



ella & dizzy the centennial celebration

Sun, Nov 12 @ 7 PM
Gregory Porter (above), Lizz Wright, Regina Carter, Valerie Simpson, Randy Brecker, Sean Jones and the Christian McBride Big Band salute Ella Fitzgerald and Dizzy Gillespie and celebrate the Ella songbook.

Manhattan Transfer
Sat, Nov 4 @ 7:30 PM

Hiromi & Edmar Castaneda
Sun, Nov 5 @ 3 PM

Christian McBride & Dianne Reeves: One on One
Fri, Nov 10 @ 7:30 PM

Dorthaan's Place Jazz Brunch
Kevin Mahogany
Sun, Nov 12 @ 11 AM & 1 PM

Sarah Vaughan Int'l Jazz Vocal Competition

Sun, Nov 12 @ 3 PM
Guest judges include TS Monk, Ann Hampton Callaway, Will Downing, Vanessa Rubin and WBGO's Gary Walker

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Beat

Farewell to a Humble Giant

Guitarist-composer John Abercrombie will be remembered as a swinging, lyrical, tastefully understated improviser in the tradition of his own personal guitar hero, Jim Hall. A restlessly creative spirit whose prodigious output during his long relationship with ECM Records included 25 releases as a leader, Abercrombie died from heart failure on Aug. 27 at age 72 following a long illness.

From his fusion-tinged debut with ECM, 1975's *Timeless* (featuring a Tony Williams Lifetime-styled organ trio with keyboardist Jan Hammer and drummer Jack DeJohnette), to his elegant swan song for the label, the ironically titled *Up And Coming* (featuring pianist Marc Copland, bassist Drew Gress and drummer Joey Baron), Abercrombie left a rich recorded legacy. He was also a member of the cooperative trio Gateway with DeJohnette and bassist Dave Holland, recorded intimate duets with pianists Richie Beirach (1988's *Emerald City*) and Andy Laverne (1994's *Nosmo King*), bassist Don Thompson (1991's *Witchcraft*), drummer George Marsh (1989's *Upon A Time*) and most famously with fellow guitarist Ralph Towner (1976's *Sargasso Sea* and 1981's *Five Years Later*). The guitarist worked as a sideman with Chico Hamilton, Gil Evans, Gato Barbieri, Billy Cobham, Jan Garbarek, Charles Lloyd, Paul Bley, Dave Liebman, Dr. Lonnie Smith, John Surman and Kenny Wheeler and also played in a celebrated guitar trio with Larry Coryell and Badi Assad.

Born on Dec. 16, 1944, in Port Chester, New York, Abercrombie picked up the guitar at age 14, inspired by Chuck Berry. He later came under the spell of jazz guitarists like Barney Kessel and Tal Farlow and attended the Berklee College of Music from 1962 to 1966. He made his first appearance on record in 1968 with the organist Johnny "Hammond" Smith, playing alongside veterans Houston Person and Grady Tate on *Nasty!*

In 1969, he joined the seminal fusion band Dreams (formed by brothers Randy and Michael Brecker and featuring drummer Billy Cobham) and in 1971 appeared on Barbieri's influential album *Under Fire*. Abercrombie later joined Cobham's powerhouse fusion band, appearing on

MICHAEL JACKSON



John Abercrombie (1944–2017)

Riffs >



Pat Martino

Martino Returns: Half a century after his breakthrough release, Pat Martino is back with a brand new studio recording, *Formidable*, the guitarist's first album in 11 years, is scheduled for release on Oct. 20 on HighNote Records. Martino's core trio—featuring Pat Bianchi on organ and Carmen Intorre Jr. on drums—is here augmented by saxophonist Adam Niewood and trumpeter Alex Norris. The group will explore music from the new CD in a series of upcoming shows, including a stop at the Jazz Standard in New York City Nov. 9–12. A European tour is scheduled for April 2018.

jazzdepot.com

Songwriting Contest: The International Songwriting Competition (ISC) has announced its Jazz judges for the 2017 competition. Tapped to judge the Jazz category this year are Danilo Pérez, Billy Cobham, Lonnie Liston Smith and Vijay Iyer. Also participating on the panel is John Burk, president of the Concord Label Group. Established in 2002, ISC is the world's largest songwriting competition, receiving up to 20,000 entries from all over the world and representing all genres of contemporary music. A total of 71 winners in 23 categories share more than \$150,000 in cash and prizes, including an overall Grand Prize consisting of \$25,000 plus merchandise and services.

songwritingcompetition.com

Celtic Collaboration: The newly formed artistic partnership of Hothouse Flowers frontman Liam Ó Maonlaí and Grammy-winning jazz vocalist Cassandra Wilson—forged at the Irish Arts Center's 2016 Ireland Rising concert and deepened in the center's acclaimed Masters in Collaboration residency program last November—will play at Dublin's Olympia Theatre (Nov. 3), Largo at the Coronet in Los Angeles (Nov. 8) and The Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago (Nov. 10). The string of performances will be followed by an exclusive return engagement to the Irish Arts Center in New York City (Nov. 12). In a press statement, the center said the pairing of Wilson and Ó Maonlaí provides "a home for the expression of shared narratives that bring people together." irishartscenter.org

1974's *Crosswinds* and *Total Eclipse* and 1975's *Shabazz*. He debuted as a leader on ECM with 1975's *Timeless*, which was fueled by such blazing tracks as Hammer's "Lungs" and "Red And Orange," and that same year recorded the first Gateway album for the label (the trio would reunite 20 years later for the albums *Homecoming* and *In The Moment*). In 1977, he released the brilliant and spacious solo album *Characters*, which had him overdubbing acoustic and electric guitars and mandolins.

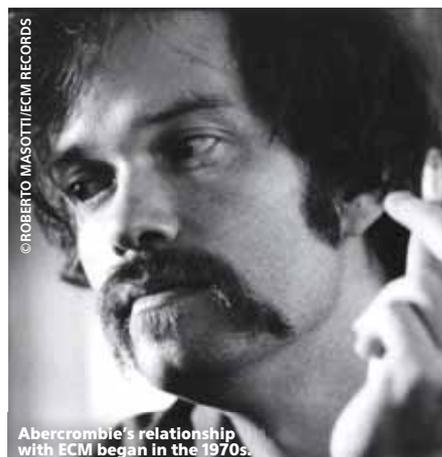
Abercrombie's explorations on guitar synthesizer in the mid-1980s (something that fellow guitarists Pat Metheny, John McLaughlin and Allan Holdsworth were also swept up in) proved fertile on 1984's *Night* (with Hammer, DeJohnette and Michael Brecker), 1985's *Current Events* (with bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Peter Erskine) and 1987's *Getting There* (with Johnson, Erskine and Brecker). In the early '90s he recorded a series of albums for ECM with organist Dan Wall and drummer Adam Nussbaum (1992's *While We're Young*, 1993's *Speak Of The Devil* and 1994's *Tactics*) before forming a quartet with violinist Mark Feldman, bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joey Baron, resulting in three superb ECM releases: 2000's *Cat 'n' Mouse*, 2003's *Class Trip* and 2006's *The Third Quartet*. A subsequent fourth quartet release, 2009's *Wait Till You See Her*, had bassist Thomas Morgan replacing Johnson in the lineup.

Pianist Marc Copland, who played saxophone (as Marc Cohen) alongside Abercrombie on a 1973 album entitled *Friends*, ended up playing on the guitarist's last two albums as a leader, 2013's *39 Steps* and 2017's *Up And Coming*.

"To my mind, John was his generation's Jim Hall," Copland said. "His playing was always oriented around interplay with others, harmonic richness and flexibility, and tended more towards understatement at a time when so many guitarists were moving in the opposite direction.

"Like his music, John never aggressively sought the limelight; he simply tried to play the best notes he could. John was a real listener. He showed me by example early on that complementing other players to create a group sound and feel—with interplay—can make a band sound larger than the sum of its parts. And it's immensely satisfying on a very deep level. Some ideals John and I had in common [as musicians] included sharing and interplay; not using music to attract attention to one's self; listening first, and then contributing; being open to whatever might happen and being flexible enough to follow the vibe on any given tune wherever it goes, even when—or especially when—it leads to some totally unexpected place."

Fellow guitarist John Scofield, who collaborated with Abercrombie on the 1990 standards album *Solar*, posted this on Facebook: "Sad to report that our dear friend John Abercrombie



Abercrombie's relationship with ECM began in the 1970s.

died yesterday. He was a really great musician, guitarist and composer. I've never met a nicer person. I met John in 1974. He was already established and I was a rookie. He treated me as an equal when he didn't have to and made me feel at home in the big city when I was new. The world won't feel the same without him."

Guitarist Rale Micic organized a 2016 ArtistShare guitar tribute to Jim Hall that resulted in an album titled *Inspired*, upon which Abercrombie appeared alongside Peter Bernstein and Lage Lund. "John was one of my heroes," Micic said. "I grew up listening to his music. Even before I knew much about jazz, my cousin played me his record *Night*, and I was immediately fascinated by how different and beautiful it was. I think John really personifies how wide a spectrum of jazz guitar can be. It was an honor to play with John and record *Inspired* with him. He was in good health and great spirits for the session. He played one of the most gorgeous pieces of music I have ever heard, a solo version of 'Embraceable You,' which closes the album. It was pure magic—lyrical, open, inviting yet personal, in the moment ... the essence of what I loved about him the most."

Guitarist Rudy Linka, a native of Prague and longtime New Yorker who studied with Abercrombie at The New School in 1986 and later invited him to play on 1992's *Mostly Standards*, 1999's *Emotions In Motion* and 2003's *Lucky Southern*, said, "John was such a warm, funny and truthful person, and I think it comes through in his music. Many of his compositions are almost like children's songs—beautiful and delicate—and his improvisations are so abstract, melodic, loose and swinging at the same time. This maybe sounds easy but it's one of the hardest things to do and even harder to copy. We spent so much time together playing, touring and recording, celebrating holidays and birthdays, and he was the one who made me feel that New York is my home. John was a true original musician as well as a person. I am sure that time will show what a giant he was in the world of improvised music." —Bill Milkowski

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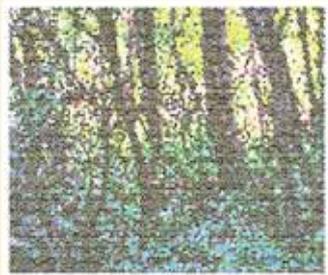
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Miles Mosley performs at the Detroit Jazz Festival.

TONY GRAVES, DETROIT JAZZ FESTIVAL FOUNDATION

Artistic Connections Thrive at Detroit Jazz Fest

DURING BASSIST MILES MOSLEY'S second performance at the 2017 Detroit Jazz Festival, he credited it with being "the first festival with the vision" to book headlining sets for not one but three of the bandleaders within his prolific, fusion-oriented jazz collective, the West Coast Get Down.

Showcasing Mosley, tenor saxophonist Kamasi Washington and keyboardist Cameron Graves—all stars on Los Angeles' burgeoning jazz scene—in multiple formats over the course of the weekend was a prime example of the festival's commitment to a visionary programming approach. Staged in downtown Detroit Sept. 1-4, the free, four-day event also featured what would have been three roster-shifting performances by Wayne Shorter had the last day's program not been cut short by impending thunderstorms.

Even without the planned North American debut of Shorter's work *Emanon*, audiences got a rare chance to experience what felt like an extended musical conversation between Shorter and a mix of collaborating voices from across a wide swath of the contemporary jazz world. In other cases, the bill featured innovative work that offered new perspectives on familiar sounds.

The critical acclaim Washington garnered for his 2015 opus *The Epic* (Brainfeeder) ushered in new recognition for his vibrant L.A.-based jazz community. But Mosley's multiple performances in Detroit presented a different take on similarly rooted music. Whereas Washington frequently borrows inspiration from '70s soul-jazz, Mosley's Detroit performances featured tight funk motifs, a few pop-styled hooks and plenty of wild, bowed bass solos. Taken together over the course of the weekend, the collective's four performances presented listeners with an

uncommonly holistic sampling of a far-flung regional scene.

As regional music goes, Detroit got its due as well. During a soulful, often stunning set on the festival's final day, Regina Carter performed music from her new Ella Fitzgerald tribute, *Ella: Accentuate The Positive* (Okeh), on which she revisits some of the singer's less-celebrated work. Her band transformed Fitzgerald's somewhat buttoned-up "I'll Never Be Free" into a blues-inspired vehicle: Carter's long, shimmering lines soon gave way to high-register flutters and, finally, to the kind of knock-out resolutions that hit you straight through the heart.

Later, Chicago-born guitarist Marvin Sewell's breezy arrangement of "Judy" highlighted his and Carter's shared affection for interpreting jazz through a filter of gospel, blues and soul. But it was the Detroit-centric crowd sing-along Carter guided the audience into at the end of "Undecided" that most attendees likely carried with them as the festival came to a close. Carter explained that she wanted to incorporate a different feel into the tune. The first hints of Carter's changeup came a few minutes into the tune when keyboardist Xavier Davis, turning to his Hammond B-3, gently delivered a veil of soul-jazz.

The set ended with a nod to the victims of Hurricane Harvey in the form of a New Orleans-inspired tune, complete with a "Saints" reference, written by Carter's drummer, Alvester Garnett, after Hurricane Katrina.

Shortly afterward, pianist Jason Marsalis' set was interrupted as storm clouds darkened the skies and the festival canceled its remaining acts. Despite the early ending, the weekend offered a rare showcase of connections across genres, regions and sources of inspiration.

—Jennifer Odell



Pianist Fabian Almazan poses with the packaging of some Biophilia albums.

Biophilia Mixes Music, Environmentalism

FABIAN ALMAZAN CAN'T REMEMBER A time when he *wasn't* drawn to nature. The Cuban-born, Miami-raised pianist can only surmise that he was born with an innate attraction to the living world. What he *can* recall is a feeling of being out place in that world—in more ways than one.

"In school, teachers were kind of shocked when I brought up the fact that I cared about the environment and played jazz and classical music," he said. "Those things just weren't encouraged in young, Hispanic men."

The lack of encouragement clearly didn't prevent Almazan from blossoming as an artist, nor as an environmental advocate. Now 33, the Grammy-nominated pianist is the owner and founder of Biophilia Records, the first jazz label dedicated to sustainable and environmentally friendly record production. Launched in 2011 and operated mostly from Almazan's Harlem apartment, the label oversees production, manufacturing and distribution for a stable of artists that includes singer-songwriter Charlie Christenson, composer-arranger Kyle Saulnier, vocalist Andréa Wood and bassist Linda May Han Oh, who is also Almazan's fiancée. The label has already been met with widespread critical success. To date, it boasts 13 albums on its website, including *Alcanza*, a June 2017 release by Almazan's group Rhizome that received a 5-star rating in the September 2017 issue of *DownBeat*.

But for Almazan, critical achievements are

secondary to the label's ecological mission, which is to educate music fans about the environmental costs of consumerism, especially in the jazz industry, which is still heavily invested in material products. Vinyl and CDs still have their place in jazz culture, said Almazan, but the production of those items can be inefficient. With Biophilia, he hopes to confront the notion of material waste in the music industry head on.

"We have to do something so that we're at least trying to attain knowledge about the environment and improve it," he said. "I think if we look at the problem and say, 'This is too complicated,' or, 'We should back away from this because it's just frustrating'—I don't think that's the right solution."

Almazan's personal solution starts with album distribution. At Biophilia, the process is entirely digital. With every purchase of a Biophilia album, a customer receives an exclusive download code, which can be used to redeem the album's audio on Bandcamp in his or her preferred format. "We can have [sample rates] as high as 192 kHz, which is a much higher resolution than CDs," he explained.

Each album also comes paired with a paper Biopholio, a double-sided, 20-paneled origami packet that is meant to replicate the look and feel of a CD case. The Biopholios are made entirely of Forest Stewardship Council-certified paper and are hand-folded and printed using plant-based inks. They often include liner notes by the artist and accompanying artwork.

What's more, artists signed to the label commit to volunteering for local organizations that promote environmental causes.

Desmond White, a bassist and composer from Australia, released his second album for the label, *Glace*, in July 2017. And while he wasn't particularly engaged with environmental issues in his youth, he found himself drawn to green living after moving to America.

"Coming from Australia, it was a bit of a shock here sometimes," he said, "especially with the level of consumption and packaging. You buy a coffee and you get half a tree in napkins."

White felt reassured to find a home for his album that was as committed to sustainability as he was, and he is grateful for the tireless support that Almazan poured into the production and distribution of *Glace*. "Fabian has been more supportive than anyone I've ever known toward my music," he said. "He really goes beyond his means to cater our roster of artists. He's remarkable."

White also believes that, with its focus on community building and inclusion, the label is the perfect incubator for musical creativity.

"The artists that I've met on the label have the same distinctions that Fabian has: talent first of all, but also a burning creativity combined with selfless empathy that is not always part of the package for a jazz musician," he said. "I think artists on this label have broad tendencies toward empathy and interaction."

Rewarding as the process is, the responsibilities of running an independent label—especially for a touring musician like Almazan—can be draining. At the height of a production cycle, Almazan finds his priorities stretched thin. "[Running a label] is one of the biggest sacrifices I've ever taken from the piano," said Almazan, who, in addition to managing Biophilia, serves as the keyboardist for trumpeter Terence Blanchard's E-Collective band and is a member of drummer Mark Guiliana's acoustic quartet. "For six months of the year, it takes over my life completely. There is a lot of sleep deprivation."

For Almazan, the ends are well worth the exhausting means, especially in this time of political turmoil, in which support for both environmental services and the arts are being siphoned from federal programs. Coming full circle, he wants to do his part to ensure that young people who are passionate about the arts and the environment will find a community they can belong to and a society that cares.

"It just felt like something I absolutely had to do," he said. "I think the most important thing is to make sure that younger generations see that we care. Because there's nothing sadder to me than someone dismissing the whole [notion of climate change] to a 7-year-old. Climate change will not really affect us. It's going to affect our children. It's a crime to not face the reality of our situation."
—Brian Zimmerman

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European Scene / BY PETER MARGASAK



Olie Brice

ALEX BONNEY

Brice's Free-Jazz Ascension

London native Olie Brice—who spent a number of years as a rudimentary guitarist emulating the experimental rock of Sonic Youth, Can and the Velvet Underground—embarked on his career as a jazz musician rather late in life. After some encouragement from his partner, who knew about his fascination for the double bass through a budding interest in free-jazz, he decided to rent an instrument when he was 22 before choosing to invest in a purchase a few months later. He soon began a crash course not only on the double bass itself, but also into the full diapason of jazz history.

"By the time I took up double bass I was a huge fan of [John] Coltrane, [Charles] Mingus, Ornette [Coleman], [Eric] Dolphy, [Albert] Ayler and [Thelonious] Monk, but I didn't really know anything about jazz harmony or earlier jazz," Brice said. "I realized pretty quickly that to play the bass the way I imagined, I needed a much stronger grounding in jazz, and I started immersing myself in the history, studying theory and harmony and fell in love with the whole music—getting seriously into Louis Armstrong, Lester Young, Ben Webster, Don Byas and Billie Holliday."

His first real instructor was Steve Berry, the bassist in London's Loose Tubes, and along the way he took private lessons with some classical bassists in London, as well as a memorable one-off study with Mark Helias. Otherwise, Brice has learned through trial-and-error, often on the bandstand.

After a few years, he followed his partner to Bath, in England's southwest, where he got the kind of rigorous working experience he needed—such as playing standards in local restaurants or performing in wedding bands—before returning to London, where he jumped head-first into the improvised music scene. By the start of the current decade, he began turning up on recordings by strong players—such as Neil Metcalfe, London expat Ingrid Laubrock and Nat Birchall—with increasing frequency. Before long, drummer Mark Sanders

introduced him to the explosive Polish saxophonist Mikolaj Trzaska, which led to a working band called Riverloam Trio, and those connections led to work with fellow Pole Waclaw Zimpel, American reedist Ken Vandermark and German trombonist Johannes Bauer. Yet as much as Brice has thrived in such blustery, high-energy settings, he's at his best in slightly more controlled settings, such as a versatile, slinking trio with Berlin-based saxophonist Tobias Delius and Sanders or an improvised duo with the German pianist Achim Kaufmann, as heard on last year's *Of Tides* (Babel).

Still, Brice's best work has been with his quintet, which recently released its second album, *Day After Day*. The band originally included Zimpel, who played on the combo's 2014 debut *Immune To Clockwork* (Multikulti), but the current lineup is British, with reedists George Crowley and Mike Fletcher, cornetist Alex Bonney and drummer Jeff Williams. Brice's tunes are ebullient and dynamic, harking back to the rhythmic invention of Monk and brassy power of Mingus, but with plenty of space for spontaneity. On the soaring title track, there is no missing the influence of Jewish liturgical music. "The material is mostly very loose and open to interpretation. Live, it's different every night. There are also small bits of information—for example, graphic scores for horn backings—that might crop up at any point in the set, triggered by any of the horn players."

Ultimately, Brice doesn't see the point in differentiating his work using written material from all improvised settings. "I feel like they're part of the same thing, really," he said. "As improvisers we're always generating and developing material, and whether some of it is predetermined is a question of the best way to achieve a specific aim rather than a bigger ideological or aesthetic decision. The important ideological and aesthetic stuff—freedom, swing, improvisation, personal sound, emotional honesty—should [always] be there." **DB**

Tangents



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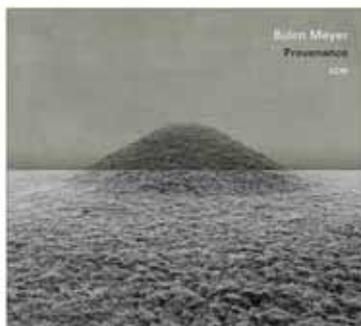


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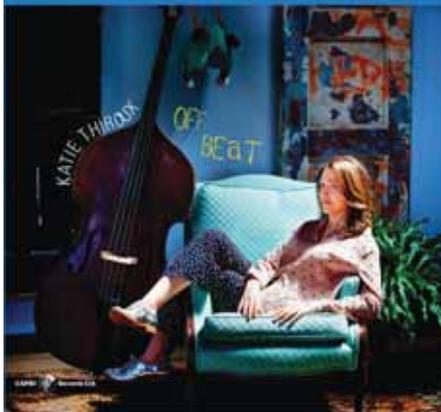
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Mica Bethea with his big band.

Bethea's Inspirational Journey

AFTER LYING UNCONSCIOUS IN A HOSPITAL for more than a week, Mica Bethea finally awoke from the car crash that left more than 90 percent of his body paralyzed. He was returning to classes at the University of North Florida (UNF) in 2005 when he was rear-ended by a semi-trailer truck. His life and the lives of all those around him changed forever.

After thousands of hours of rehabilitation and technological strides in music software, the composer/arranger eventually returned to finish his degree and embark on a career fronting a hard-charging big band. Bethea recently released *Stage 'N Studio*, an ambitious double-disc set featuring his eponymous big band performing a program of arrangements and originals, both in the recording studio and onstage in front of an audience.

It was years before Bethea was able to return to school. But his return to music came much sooner than that. "I got my first laptop six months after the accident," Bethea explained during a phone call from his home in Jacksonville, Florida. "I started uploading all my CDs. I listened to music nonstop. It was all I had. I heard a raw instrument every day in college. To go from that to the only thing being digital audio, that's when I realized the difference. It felt very anti-septic. I needed that feel of being a musician, being around a horn, feeling the vibrations."

During the lengthy rehabilitation process, he used his time to hone his compositional voice and find his sound. "I developed an appreciation for more ranges in style and instrumentation," he said. "I was listening to [a variety of] music, ranging from Brian McKnight to classical orchestral works, romantic stuff, Rachmaninoff and James Brown. My palette really expanded because I wasn't working 40

hours a week. I was lying in a hospital bed in my dad's living room."

Using an electric wheelchair, Bethea eventually returned to school and finished his degree by writing and arranging on his computer, the keystrokes providing an outlet to express the sounds in his head. By the time he had worked up to his master's degree, he had written his own book of big band charts. An immensely outgoing personality, Bethea had no problem recruiting a band that fit his vision.

"Mica is very cognizant of the tradition," said Dennis Marks, bassist and associate professor of jazz studies at UNF. "At the same time, he's always looking to explore different sounds and new possibilities. He has a very rich harmonic vocabulary that he can draw upon to be very creative and fresh."

After a successful studio session with the band, Bethea decided to record a live date with most of the same tunes.

The band's rendition of "Stormy Weather" illustrates Bethea's knack for crafting intelligent arrangements for a large ensemble. Vocalist Linda Cole gives an impassioned take on the meteorological love song over Bethea's languid arrangement, the drums are awash in delicacies and a sparkling electric keyboard drifts around the moody tune.

Bethea is a smart, sensitive composer/arranger living in an era in which software tools have allowed him to achieve immense success. "Medically, I can't play anything," he said. "Learning something like Finale [music notation software] is akin to saying, 'You're going to learn Japanese but you can't speak it. You can only write it down.' It's been harder to find my voice but it has also strengthened my resolve."

—Sean J. O'Connell

Players Forge 'Bicoastal' Partnership

WHEN THE BICOASTAL COLLECTIVE launches into a tune, audience members soon get the sense that they're being pulled into a distinctive sonic space. The ensemble features five saxophones, four trumpets and four trombones, in addition to a rhythm section of guitar, bass, drums and piano. At this year's San Jose Jazz Summer Fest, the band played some of the music from their new album, *Bicoastal Collective: Chapter Five* (OA2 Records), and got a standing ovation.

The bandleaders, baritone saxophonist Aaron Lington and trumpeter Paul Tynan, met while working on their master's degrees at the University of North Texas. They began playing together in local clubs, discussing ways of writing arrangements that would emphasize the unique qualities of their instruments. After graduating, each took a teaching job—Lington at San Jose State University and Tynan at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia—but they stayed in touch.

"We wanted to explore the modern post-bop sound together," Lington said. "When I received grant money from SJSU to make an album, I asked Paul to come out. After we finished recording [*Cape Breton*, a 2005 Aaron Lington Quintet album featuring Tynan], we decided to continue collaborating on a new record every two or three years, with different size groups—all original music and arrangements. I convinced him to take a sabbatical to make *Bicoastal Collective: Chapter One*. We put together a horn-driven, 10-piece chamber ensemble with guys from all over the country. We split the compositional and arranging duties between us."

Tynan received a grant that allowed him to live and work in California while the album was being written and recorded. "Since we were familiar with each other's sound and sense of harmonics and melody, working on the album was wonderful," he recalled. "I spent 14 months out here playing music, composing, arranging and avoiding the Canadian winter. We called it *Chapter One* because we knew it was going to be an ongoing project."

Each of the group's albums—which are all on the OA2 label—has explored a different aspect of arranging. *Chapter Two* was a quintet recording, with guitarist Scott Sorokin, inspired by American and Irish folk melodies. *Chapter Three* was a blowing session featuring a sextet; *Chapter Four* was a soul/jazz outing with Tony Genge on Hammond B-3 organ, while *Chapter Five* allowed the leaders



Bicoastal Collective leaders
Paul Tynan (left) and Aaron Lington

to write big-band charts, heavy on the brass.

"We're good friends, which makes collaborating easier," Tynan said. "We text and call each other on FaceTime almost every day. We talk about our kids and our musical ideas. The main thing is keeping it interesting, providing challenges that force us to adapt our skill sets and think of new ways of arranging that will have interesting outcomes."

Lington and Tynan both explained that teaching allows them the freedom, and income, to pursue their muse and continue their artistic growth. "I would not have the experience I have without my own excellent teachers," Lington said. "They passed on part of their style and the cultural legacy of jazz to me. To not pass it on to anyone else would be shameful. Teaching allows me the flexibility to perform and continue learning. I started out playing classical music, but jazz lured me away with its improvisation and its extended aspect of harmony."

Canada's travel-grant programs allow Tynan to go where the work is, even across borders. "My colleagues cover classes for me if I have gigs, and I do the same for them," he said. "The administration supports us as artists. They want us to play as much as we can. I was studying classical trumpet in Sweden when I met Tim Hagans. He made me want to play jazz. I started hanging out with young Swedish players, listening to Django Bates, Ornette Coleman and Eberhard Weber. That was it for me."

—j. poet

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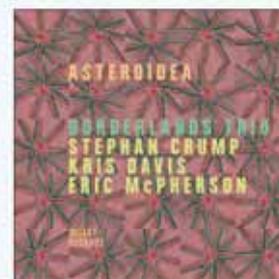
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ARUÁN ORTIZ CUB(AN)ISM
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Allison Miller, leader of Boom Tic Boom, performs at the Chicago Jazz Festival on Sept. 2.

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Chicago Jazz Festival Spotlights Hometown Talent

WOODWINDS ICONOCLAST ROSCOE

Mitchell celebrated 50 years of recording. Trumpeter Jon Faddis reveled in Dizzy Gillespie's big band charts from the late 1940s and early '50s. And drummer Allison Miller's Boom Tic Boom whipped up a storm of precise compositions and free improvisation. It all happened on the main stage of the 39th Annual Chicago Jazz Festival, held Aug. 31–Sept. 3 in downtown Millennium Park.

The free festival, curated by the non-profit Jazz Institute of Chicago, attracted tens of thousands to day-long programming at three side stages as well as evening concerts in the Frank

Gehry-designed Pritzker Pavilion.

In performance, Chicago native Mitchell, a longtime professor at California's Mills College, was in a take-no-prisoners mode. Blowing high and fast, the 77-year-old squeezed squeals and squiggles from his soprano saxophone on a low-key melody, leading into unaccompanied solos by his crew and collective improvisations that ranged from delicacy to rage.

Miller's Boom Tic Boom was comparatively more structured, its tunes constructed around complex meters and unusually long, quirky lines. Miller doesn't let energy flag, remaining hyper-attentive to pianist Myra Melford,

violinist Jenny Scheinman, clarinetist Ben Goldberg, trumpeter Kirk Knuffke and bassist Todd Sicksafoose, who projected good humor even when abstracting basic material. Melford's full-on keyboard attacks drew gasps, Scheinman won over the crowd with gritty fiddle strokes, Goldberg wowed with his E-flat contra-alto instrument and Knuffke showed his mastery of timbre.

Highlights by locals included 90-year-old guitarist George Freeman's set, bass clarinetist Jason Stein's trio Hearts & Minds and cornetist Josh Berman's foursome with alto saxophonist Darius Jones, bassist Jason Roebke and drummer Michael Vatcher.

Vocalist Dee Alexander, regarded as the Second City's Sarah Vaughan, delighted in an "Ellebration" of Ella Fitzgerald's centenary, in which she was joined by fellow Chicago singers Frieda Lee, Spider Saloff and Paul Marinaro, as well Sheila Jordan (who had her own hour, accompanied by pianist Steve Kuhn's trio).

There was also a tribute to prairie poet Carl Sandburg, commemorating 50 years since his death. It was led by drummer Matt Wilson, who steered his Honey and Salt ensemble through spoken-word segments. Canadian Dawn Thomson, who plays guitar in the group, offered folkish vocals in contrast to the sophisticated instrumental offerings by multi-reedist Jeff Lederer and cornetist Ron Miles. Elsewhere, pianist Jason Moran presented a multimedia concept piece marking Thelonious Monk's 100th year.

But the fest's most thrilling, thoroughly modern jazz was delivered by Faddis and his orchestra of four New York ringers and Chicago stalwarts. They had bonded in one rehearsal. The trumpeter—a teenage protégé of Gillespie—conducted with confidence and perfect comedic timing. An ace instrumentalist, Faddis expressed himself brilliantly on Gillespie's "Tanga."

Faddis also employed his incomparable upper-register chops to fine effect on "A Night In Tunisia" (otherwise a feature for the four-piece trombone section); "Things To Come," on which alto saxophonist Antonio Hart was voracious, churning chorus after chorus; and "Manteca," a showcase for bassist Todd Coolman, drummer Ignacio Berroa and pianist Willie Pickens, who, at age 86, is one of the Windy City's most prized jazz stars.

Like Pickens, much of the homegrown talent featured at the Chicago Jazz Festival is little-known beyond the city. Not all great musicians tour the world. But listeners should be grateful for such excellent opportunities to check out great scenes like the one in Chicago. Three festival sets were broadcast live by local radio station WDCB, and more are being produced for eventual airing on the Jazz Network, distributed by WFMT. —Howard Mandel

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Rudy's Showcases Jazz in Nashville

AFTER 10 GREAT AND SIX NOT-SO-GREAT years as software designers for a Nashville healthcare company, Adam Charney and Mike Braden were laid off unexpectedly. They'd become friends after Charney had moved from upstate New York and Braden from New Orleans. So they started thinking about the next step they'd take, knowing only that they'd take it together.

Braden loved to cook; the kitchen was where he unleashed his creativity. And Charney loved to play jazz guitar. He'd gigged in his spare time and developed an especially tight relationship with saxophonist Rudy Wooten of Nashville's celebrated Wooten Brothers.

A new vision for their future quickly took shape. "When I lived in New York City for a couple of years, I loved going to small jazz clubs," Charney said. "Smalls [Jazz Club] was my favorite. I always thought it would be so cool to have something like Smalls in Nashville."

"We started thinking, 'Hey, we're smart enough. Maybe we could do this,'" Braden added.

The pair saw opportunity in the fact that Nashville has been exploding in size and diversity lately. The city is overflowing with great musicians, many of whom have backgrounds in jazz.

They found a perfect space in The Gulch, one of the city's trending neighborhoods. Once they'd signed the lease, they designed and oversaw construction inside. They selected all the furnishings personally—carpets from Turkey, tapestries from India, ceiling lights through Ebay, cozy mismatched couches and easy chairs. The house drums were donated by Pearl, the bass amp by Henriksen Amplifiers. A Kickstarter campaign funded purchase of a Steinway grand for \$50,000. Blown-up photos of Miles Davis, Charlie Parker and other musicians watch over the space. Braden built a

menu around his family's creole cuisine—Doc Braden's Seafood Pie is just one highlight.

And they named it after Charney's friend Rudy Wooten, who died in 2010.

Since opening in May, Rudy's Jazz Room has offered live music seven nights a week. Outstanding local talent is usually featured, and Wednesdays are set aside to honor the Wooten family, with guitarist Regi welcoming guest players and maybe one or two of his

brothers for a night of jamming.

For drummer/percussionist Roy "Future Man" Wooten, the story behind Rudy's is inspirational. "The idea of having this club in his name, I could feel it for him, what it means inside," he said. "I always think about what it would have meant to my mom and dad and Rudy if they were alive and could see the love that he had for music translated into this."

—Bob Doerschuk



Mica Bethea

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Remembering Walter Becker: A Maverick in Plain Sight

CONSIDERING HIS STATUS AS CO-FOUNDER of one of America's major pop bands of the past half-century, guitarist Walter Becker was always something of an enlightened misfit. Enabled and enhanced by his longstanding creative collaborator, Donald Fagen, the dark-minded yet lighthearted Becker helped create the unique phenomenon that was—and is—Steely Dan.

The band, born of a songwriting partnership forged while Becker and Fagen were students at Bard College, resulted in a stunning string of albums in the '70s, climaxing with the masterpieces *Aja* and *Gaucho*, and, after a two-decade hiatus, returning grandly with the powerful *Two Against Nature* in 2000, and winning the 2001 Album of the Year Grammy for their efforts.

This summer, Becker was in absentia at significant Steely Dan shows, including at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles and Citi Field in Queens, New York. On Sept. 3, the word came: Becker was gone, from an undisclosed health problem.

Now, the fate of the Dan is up in the air, possibly facing a forced retirement scenario.

Fagen stated after Becker's death, "I intend to keep the music we created together alive as long as I can with the Steely Dan band."

During an interview for a *DownBeat* cover story in 2003, upon the release of what turned out to be their final album, *Everything Must Go*, Becker and Fagen sat on a couch in a swanky Santa Monica hotel, riffing off each other's comments like old friends. In speaking about the central influence of jazz on their work, and their desire to forge new territory in the early '70s, Becker said, "We wanted to recast some of the harmonic stuff and some of the other aesthetics of jazz, like solos. The drama of the solo playing that was going on was pretty uninformed at the time, with a wall of notes coming out without any structure. ... Even just the idea that the different instruments had particular roles in the combo and particular areas of concern was not as commonly understood as you would think, at that point."

Becker was a maverick. He was also a thoroughly music-loving, humble and self-effacing brand of genius.

In 1994, Becker came out with *11 Tracks Of Whack*, his first solo album. It was a dramat-



Walter Becker (1950–2017)

ic pivot point for himself and Steely Dan. The band had plotted its return from oblivion, and Becker was emerging from a dark period.

In an interview at the time, he remembered the painful process of making *Gaucho*, exacerbated by his plunge into drug addiction and other self-destructive afflictions. "I was at a point where I could either continue on the path I was going on, but not for very long," he laughed, "or I could make an abrupt change of course and perhaps persist a little bit longer. ... So I moved to Hawaii and stopped smoking, stopped drinking and stopped taking all kinds of drugs."

Later in the '90s, he got a place in New York City and began writing in earnest again with Fagen, with Grammy-anointed results. In describing their creative bond, Fagen spoke about their unique partnership as writers and co-conspirators. "Our writing is intuitive," he said. "It's nothing much planned about it, in the sense of thinking about the listener. ... Some writer mentioned that it's a combination of all the things we like. I think that's true."

Becker expanded on the idea of the band "getting away with it," scoring hits on a pop radio landscape: "These songs weren't jazz, per se. ... We just thought that, since we liked them, that other people would like them, in spite of the stylistic difficulties or the arcane lyrics or any of those things. We thought there would be people out there—we didn't know exactly how many, but we figured enough—who would go for this thing."

As it turned out, there were more than enough fans willing to "go" for Steely Dan's inimitable style, and now the world at large—and particularly the large, cross-generational, cross-demographic legion of Steely Dan aficionados—is mourning a world without Walter Becker.

—Josef Woodard



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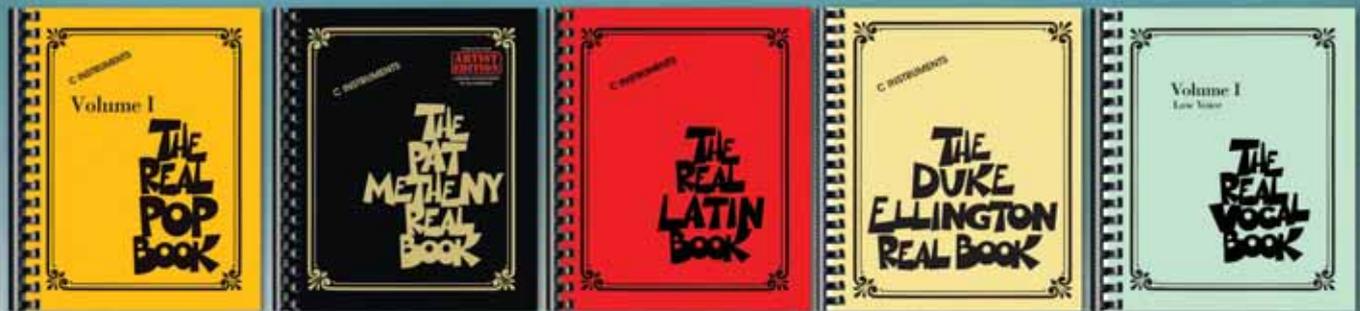
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Jamey Haddad (fourth from left) with musicians who play on his new album, *Under One Sun*

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JAMEY HADDAD

Eclecticism & Unity

In separate interviews before and after the Great American Eclipse on Aug. 21, DownBeat caught up with Jamey Haddad, who shed light on his recent album *Under One Sun* (Oberlin Music), the product of what the renowned percussionist-drummer-educator calls a “world music collective.” Haddad recruited artists from multiple countries to join him in a celebration of longtime friend and collaborator Billy Drewes. The saxophonist composed all the music on the album.

Under One Sun features bassist Roberto Occhipinti, pianist Leo Blanco, tabla player Salar Nader, accordionist Michael Ward-Bergeman, percussionist Luisito Quintero and Ali Paris, who plays *qanun* and sings. Also on-board are trombonists Jay Ashby and Lee Allen (who, along with Haddad, are both on the faculty at Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio), some Oberlin Conservatory brass students and the all-female Moroccan ensemble Hadra des Femmes de Taroudant.

So how was this eclectic lineup assembled? Haddad had played with each of the musicians, but most had never played with each other. “I chose the personnel,” he said, “and pretty much which tunes. I presented the suggestion that we record all of Billy’s music on our first project. The hardest person to convince was Billy.

“We have players spanning five decades in age, and each one of them brings something special to the project.” Haddad, who was born in

Cleveland and is of Lebanese descent, went on to explain why each collective member was necessary—all speak a common musical language on instruments that are aesthetically rooted in other cultures but shrouded in the spirit of the jazz tradition.

“Of course, there was also a practical bond that united many of us,” he added. “Ali, Michael and Leo all have ties to Berklee [College of Music]; Billy and I also [have ties] there from the early ’70s.”

Multi-instrumentalist/composer Drewes, a longtime member of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, has toured, recorded and/or played with a huge array of jazz artists, including Herbie Hancock, Bill Frisell, Lyle Mays, Anat Cohen, Tom Knific and Myriam Alter.

The fact that his music is a good fit for Haddad’s collective is a reflection of Drewes’ ongoing love of and involvement with music from many cultures.

And so, for Haddad, it was an easy decision to focus on Drewes’ music. “All the players in the band write beautifully,” Haddad said. “But they all gave it up to Billy and his compositions. I had always thought his music could be orchestrated by a group of this nature because his writing is so genre non-specific.”

Under One Sun is full of resonant, timbral expressions, bright and yet moody at times, tender but occasionally ferocious. It’s jazz in the essential sense of collaboration and improvisa-

tion, but it is also intercontinental—and almost otherworldly at times.

Haddad also recently recorded with another eclectic ensemble, Bokanté, which released *Strange Circles* (GroundUP Music) in June. That band includes Snarky Puppy members Michael League (baritone guitar and bass), Bob Lanzetti (guitar) and Chris McQueen (guitar), along with Malika Tirolien (vocals), Roosevelt Collier (lap steel and pedal steel guitars) and three percussionists: Haddad, André Ferrari and Keita Ogawa.

Haddad made a name for himself gigging as a drummer and percussionist with the Paul Winter Consort, Yo-Yo Ma, Nancy Wilson, Esperanza Spalding and, for more than 20 years, Paul Simon. “Before I started playing with Paul Simon, I was playing drums and some percussion in David Liebman’s group for 11 years,” he said. “That was a hard-hitting and fun gig for me. The music really helped me form my voice.”

But even before Liebman, there was another major influence. “When I was still a student at Berklee, [trumpeter] Claudio Roditi suggested that [drummer/percussionist] Airtó Moreira try out a group of young players from Boston,” he said. “So, John Scofield, Kenny Werner, Rick Kilburn and I rehearsed and went on the road with Airtó. Airtó really kicked my ass.”

Haddad’s rich musical history continues to be written: hard-hitting, ass-kicking, inspirational and innovative. —John Ephland

Kate Gentile's new album is titled *Mannequins*.

KATE GENTILE

Free of Limitations

On her new album, *Mannequins* (Skirl), drummer Kate Gentile matches through-composed compositions with open improvisation, the resultant playfulness owing as much to New York's polyglot jazz scene as Toronto's metal-and-punk circuit.

"When I think of freeness in music, I think of the second Miles Davis Quintet as much as music that is entirely improvised," said the 31-year-old Buffalo native. "The goal of jazz is to be free within the form, or not free depending on the context, but to be free of limitations and just be inventive."

Gentile fulfills that goal on *Mannequins*, an open-ended recording on which she plays drums and vibraphone, alongside Jeremy Viner (tenor saxophone, clarinet), Matt Mitchell (piano, keyboard, electronics) and Adam Hopkins (bass). Perhaps it's her drum chair orientation, or her punk-and-metal background, but Gentile's music is charged yet soothing, each churning track like an exposed ripple that perpetually changes shape.

"My compositions are the result of free-improvisation and developing raw materials in a more abstract way," Gentile said. "Also, SIM [School for Improvisational Music]—where Ralph Alessi, Tony Malaby, Jim Black and other great musicians in the Brooklyn scene focus on open improvisation—has influenced all the ways I think about music, as well as the work of Tim Berne, Marc Ducret and Autechre."

Mannequins includes studio performances and electronic post-production treatments.

"It's 80 percent live, while taking advantage of the studio," Gentile said. "Cardiac Logic" morphs from entirely acoustic to entirely electronic. I emailed the MIDI files to Matt and he designed electronic sounds in Ableton Live that blended into his improvisation. My composed drum part matches the electronics, and after we recorded with the click I lined it up with MIDI

and played with the gradually fading-in electronics and fading-out acoustic instruments."

"Hammergaze" is a disorienting series of bell and gong tones that recalls a hall of mirrors set to sound.

"I overdubbed layers of percussion and Matt processed them," Gentile explained. "We took a combination of processed and unprocessed sounds and combined them backwards, trans-

posed and manipulated them to create different atmospheres."

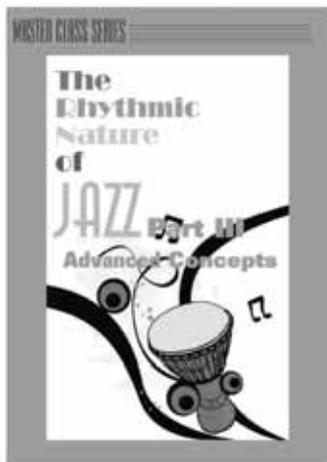
A graduate of Eastman School of Music (earning a double degree in jazz performance and music education), Gentile plays a standard four-piece drum set with hi-hat and two cymbals; her extended kit includes Tibetan nipple gong, tiger gongs, almglocken, wood blocks, temple blocks, vibraphone, cowbells, chains, rattles, shakers. She plays a Flexitone, which she described as "a piece of metal with a couple beaters on either end; you bend the metal, which changes its pitch; you shake it and the beaters strike the metal."

Gentile plays on new recordings from Mitchell's Pouting Grimace, guitarist Dustin Carlson's Air Ceremony, guitarist Álvaro Domene's jazz/metal trio and Snark Horse, a collaborative duo with Mitchell and a rotating performance cast including guitarists Mary Halvorson and Ava Mendoza, trombonist Ben Gerstein and saxophonist Jon Irabagon. Each Snark Horse composition consists of a single bar of music.

"The bar is looped and improvised on," Gentile said. "They are all really weird and intense bars. It made me realize that if you repeat something enough times and it's singable, it's easy for the audience to latch onto. It's been eye-opening in that way. It's surprisingly successful."

—Ken Micallef

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STEFANO BATTAGLIA

.....

Creation Without Compromise

The 52-year-old, Milan-born pianist Stefano Battaglia currently resides with his wife and family in “an ancient farmer house in an ancient court” outside Siena, Italy, where this summer he taught two piano classes and two ensemble classes at Siena Jazz Summer Workshop for the 29th consecutive year.

The sessions transpired in SJSW’s well-equipped three-floor facility, whose High Modernist design aesthetic contrasts intriguingly with the distressed red brick exterior, situated within a 16th century Medici fortress. That ancient-modern binary is an interesting way to consider what Battaglia does on his latest ECM album, *Pelagos*, a melody-rich two-disc

solo piano recital on which he refracts traditional Mediterranean, Ottoman-Arabic and West African musical dialects through a sensibility informed by extensive experience as a master practitioner of modern jazz and the Euro canon across a Bach-to-Berio timeline.

“My ideal is to play music not connected just with a precise age, but that primitive players could play,” Battaglia said after morning classes midway through the week. “Of course, it’s impossible; since I play piano, I have too much information about harmony. I am strongly connected with Romanticism, too, and with Baroque and contemporary music. But sometimes I try to create unsophisticated rooms. Dance. Just the

sound, the rhythm. Then put it in dialogue with Schubert or a great composer like this.”

Titled for a Greek island whose name translates as “open sea,” *Pelagos* is Battaglia’s sixth solo album since 1987. He deployed a *tabula rasa* process in generating four hours of music from which producer Manfred Eicher culled the two-hour, 17-track final cut. Battaglia said the narrative follows “a common denominator of migration,” as implied by songs like “Lampedusa,” for the Sicilian island; “Halap,” for the Hungarian mountain range; “Ufratu” for the Euphrates River; and the traditional Libyan song “Lamma Bad Yatahanna.”

“In solo performance, I have the feeling of creation, with no compromises,” Battaglia said. “I combine different languages and idioms, composing in real time from the first note until the end without any preexisting plan.” Such a notion might seem to go against the compositional imperatives that inspired the melodic flow Battaglia generates with bassist Salvatore Maiore and drummer Roberto Dani on *Pelagos*’ three ECM predecessors—*The River Of Anyder*, *Songways* and *In The Morning*. On the latter album, the trio interprets repertoire by American songwriter Alec Wilder.

“I feel like Wilder’s music is my music; there is no distance,” Battaglia said. “I can feel a deep connection with the wild primitive nature of America, the Indian native roots and harmonic sophistication, like Bernstein or Gershwin.”

Battaglia intended to teach his students life lessons learned from his early choice to pursue the improviser’s path. “It’s important to give responsibilities to young people. They have to trust themselves, or there is no chance to develop. Even when I was 12, I had to make decisions. Maybe wrong decisions. *Tabula rasa*—to me it’s the truth. Me and the music.” —Ted Panken

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Krystle Warren, who grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, is now based in Paris.

MATTHEW PLACEK

KRYSTLE WARREN

.....
'Complexity in Simplicity'

Sometimes the best way to forge a new sound is to dig into the past and pull out a style so old it sounds radical again. That's what Krystle Warren has done for her new album *Three The Hard Way*, a set of 10 original songs planted in the soil of pre-Ray Charles gospel-blues. In contrast to her first two albums, which were smart, infectious pop informed by jazz, this record is stripped down to Warren's barbed-wire guitar, her stomping drums and her mesmerizing alto voice—which sounds like a ghost lost in the backwoods of 1941.

"Nowadays," she said via Skype from her neighborhood outside Paris, "when you can produce all manner of sounds by pushing a button, the most radical act is to go back in time to making music by hand. For a species accustomed to hearing Britney Spears after she's been Auto-Tuned, the sound of the Swan Silvertones singing like one voice without any tricks can be eye-opening. Even for those who have been listening to me for a while, this album has been a shock. But there's a complexity in simplicity."

Ben Kane, a mixer/engineer/producer who won a Grammy in the category Best R&B Album for his work on D'Angelo's *Black Messiah* (RCA), asked Warren if she'd like to work with him. She jumped at the chance and sent Kane a slew of demos. Most of the songs were in her comfort zone of folk and soul, but what caught the producer's attention was "Thanks And Praise," a gospel number that Warren sang over spare guitar chords so slowly and tenderly that it could be a love song. That was the point.

"I wrote that for my better half, the woman I married four years ago," Warren explained. "I wanted to write a song that could be about God but could also be about someone. If you listen to it the right way, all gospel music can be heard as love songs. It's a wonderful genre to fool around

with; it shouldn't be put into a box. God can be anyone and not just anything."

A native of Missouri, Warren grew up attending the Shalom Missionary Baptist Church in Kansas City. A rebellious adolescent, she wasn't a fan of the sermons and commandments, but she loved the music. It was there that she learned to sing with a full, lustrous tone and to stay on pitch within stacked harmonies.

Warren left a fledgling career as a singer-songwriter and an interpreter of jazz standards to move from Kansas City to New York in 2002. It was there she met legendary producer Joe Boyd, who recruited her for *Way To Blue*, a tribute to Nick Drake, and then for a tribute to another fallen folk icon, Kate McGarrigle (*Sing Me The Songs*). During the recording sessions for latter, she met McGarrigle's son, singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright, who hired her as an opening act and harmony singer for an 11-month tour of Europe and North America in 2012.

Meanwhile, Warren had recorded her debut album in New York, and the label Because Music (based in Paris and London) offered to release it. So she went to Paris in 2008, thinking it would be a short trip; however, she fell in love with the City of Lights and with one woman in particular—so she stayed. These days, Warren enjoys visiting the States periodically, but she doubts she will ever live there full-time again. She has a similar attitude toward jazz.

"My relationship to jazz is complicated," she said. "There are many jazz musicians in my life who wonder why I don't delve into it wholeheartedly. But I don't consider myself a jazz singer. When I think of the sultry tone of Cassandra Wilson, I wish I could do that, but I'm too rough around the edges. But jazz has improved my musical vocabulary and has given me a much broader palette." —Geoffrey Himes

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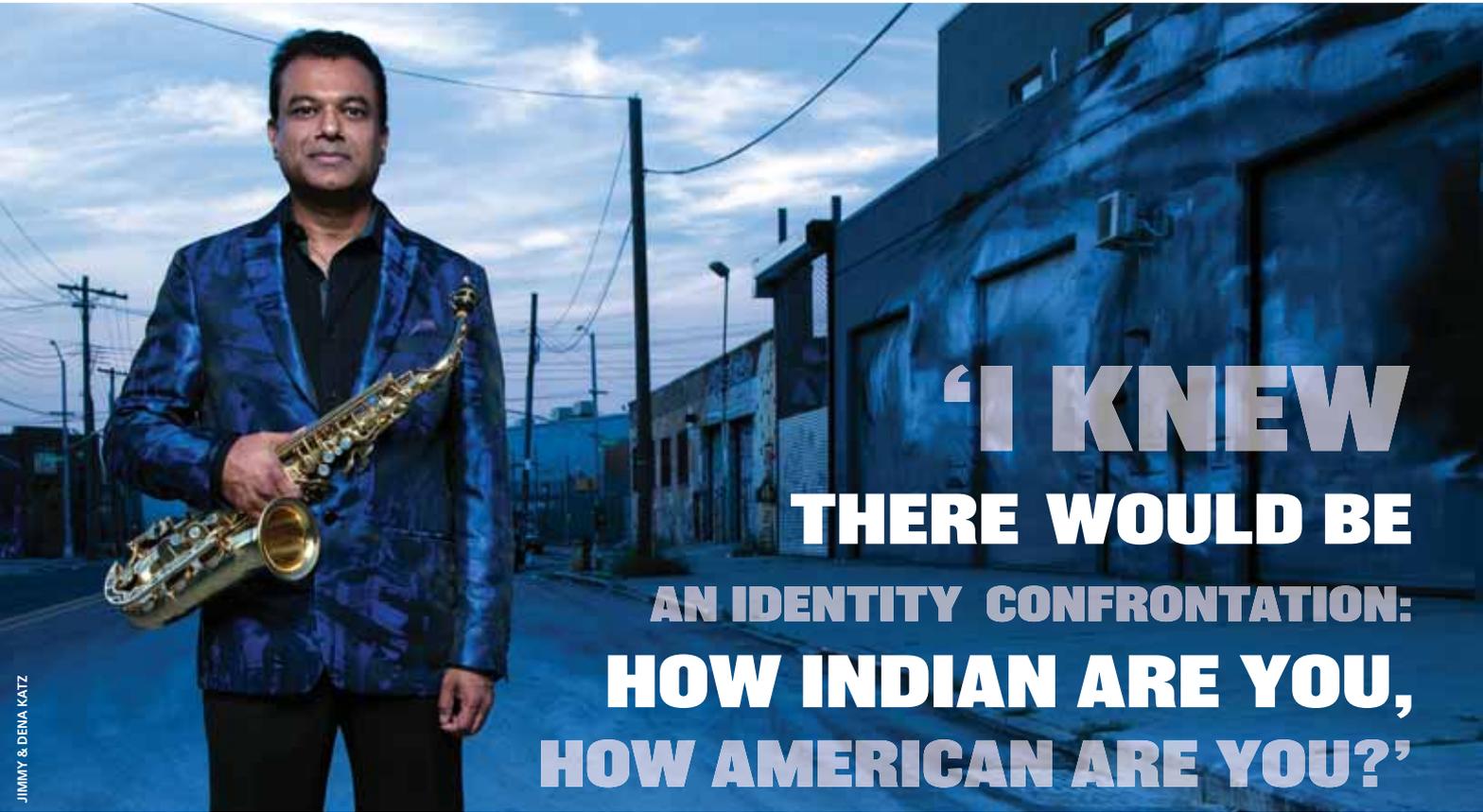
BY PHILLIP LUTZ | PHOTO BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ

FINDING AFFIRMATION

Milling around the bandstand on a cool and cloudy August day, **RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA** and his band, the Indo-Pak Coalition, seemed out of their element. Sandwiched between artists who hewed closely to the conventions of mainstream jazz, they were debuting at Connecticut's Litchfield Jazz Festival with an update of their decidedly unconventional East-West cultural synthesis. Some quizzical eyes greeted them.

"We were a bit tripped out at first," the alto saxophonist said in a follow-up phone call after the appearance. "We'd never played Litchfield before, and the audience was really there to hear things that are straightahead."





‘I KNEW THERE WOULD BE AN IDENTITY CONFRONTATION: HOW INDIAN ARE YOU, HOW AMERICAN ARE YOU?’

JIMMY & DENA KATZ

But Mahanthappa and his bandmates—Rez Abbasi on electric guitar and Dan Weiss on drum set/tabla hybrid—forged ahead. Drawing on their album *Agrima*, out Oct. 17, they deployed a potent mix of fresh tunes and a new, expansive electronic sound—opening with the meditative “Alap,” moving with a jolt into the episodic raga-rock of “Snap” and taking a breather with the laconic “Showcase” before diving into the premiere of the prog-rock-inspired title track.

The set retained the Indian-hued underpinnings of ragas and talas—rhythmic systems based on repeated beat cycles—for which the group is known. At the same time, it revealed a palette broadened by an overlay of digitally distorted, delayed and doubled pitches driven by a dexterous display of percussive ingenuity that deepened the rhythmic mix. All of which lit a fire under the audience—and achieved one of Mahanthappa’s main goals.

“My ideal is that anyone can relate to this music,” he said.

Seated at the dinner table in his suburban New Jersey home a few days before the Litchfield gig, Mahanthappa suggested that reaching people had not always been a top priority. In 2008, the last time the Indo-Pak Coalition released an album, *Apti* (Innova), the music—an unadorned amalgam of alto saxophone, guitar (or sitar-guitar) and tabla—

reflected a more traditional subcontinent sensibility. By Mahanthappa’s own account, the sound was motivated in no small measure by a need for ethnic validation.

“I was much more concerned with whatever I thought authenticity meant at that moment—being true to my culture, trying to stay within certain artistic boundaries I thought it was important to show,” he said. “And it was a time I felt like I had to prove something—how much I knew about Indian music, or something like that.”

The phase, he said, was in part a reaction to his upbringing in Boulder, Colorado, where he hadn’t heard much music from India. “The only Indian music I ever heard in the house was temple music, like Indian spirituals, essentially,” he said. “And that was stuff my mom played as she was cleaning the house. So getting into Indian music was something that didn’t happen until college and after, and more out of trying to figure out who I was, identity-wise.”

In 1993, Mahanthappa visited India with a band from his undergraduate alma mater, the Berklee College of Music. “I got to see some music there that was really life-changing,” he said. “Some Indian classical concerts blew my mind. Every city we were in I would go to the record store and buy as many CDs and cassettes as possible.”

The trip, which was the first time he had been to India without his parents, raised not

only his musical awareness but his consciousness about some personal realities as well. “I hadn’t been in 10 years,” he said, “so I was going to have to deal with these relatives I hadn’t seen, who were all going to ask me why I didn’t speak my parents’ language. I was nervous like crazy.”

“I knew there would be an identity confrontation: ‘How Indian are you, how American are you? How does any of this work?’ That trip really kicked my ass in a lot of good ways.” One was in sparking the emergence of an exploratory Indo-infused jazz given voice in 1994’s *Yatra* (Red Giant), his recording debut.

Mahanthappa played music from *Yatra* off and on for years—while working and studying in Chicago, where he earned a master’s degree from (and later taught at) DePaul University, and even after he moved to New York in 1997, when it crept into his playlists at downtown spots like Detour and the Internet Café.

It also informed a collaboration he began with pianist Vijay Iyer, whom he had met through saxophonist Steve Coleman. The association produced a duo album, *Raw Materials*; Iyer’s *Blood Sutra*; and Mahanthappa’s *Black Water*, *Mother Tongue* and *Codebook*. Those albums employed South Indian sounds faithfully but well within a jazz environment.

The balance was about to shift. While at Berklee, his older brother had turned him on to Kadri Gopalnath, who helped integrate the saxophone into Carnatic music with innovative

fingerings and embouchure techniques. Mahanthappa picked up on those techniques and, having secured a grant, studied and eventually recorded with Gopalnath on a heavily Carnatic septet album, 2008's *Kinsmen* (Pi).

Following in short order was *Apti*, which, thanks to its instrumentation, brought the element of Indian authenticity even more to the fore. Executing the music with a singular dynamism—countermelodies flew and rhythms shifted with such abandon that they threatened to spin out of control—the trio impressed audiences wherever they played.

But the musicians, a restless lot to be sure, began to think more expansively. When, after the Verona Jazz Festival in 2009, Weiss expressed a desire to introduce elements of the drum set to keep up with his bandmates, a transformation began to take hold—one that would bring greater volume, density, color and, ultimately, improvisatory freedom to the proceedings.

“Rudresh and Rez played with so much energy that the tabla wasn't enough,” Weiss recalled. So before the soundcheck at the 2009 Montreal Jazz Festival, he rigged a perch behind the tabla that allowed him to get a foot on the bass drum pedal while using a stick on the snare drum at his side. The change was unplanned; the impact—sonically and visually—was immediate.

“We just winged it,” Mahanthappa said. “And the gig was totally awesome. That sprouted a whole other growth in what the band could do.”

Mahanthappa had already been working on enhancing the use of a harmonizer, reverb triggers and the like. The effects were heard on *Samdhi* (ACT), on which Mahanthappa's laptop and saxophone share space with an electric guitar, electric bass, drums and Indian percussion. Recorded in 2008 but released in 2011, the album grew out of a Guggenheim grant that sent him to India.

“The idea,” he said, “was to go study this stuff [Indian music] and also learn some electronics software and take all these things I learned from pure Indian classical music and graft them onto essentially an ensemble that has nothing to do with Indian music. It was the jazz-rock fusion band I had wanted since I was a kid.

“The album flew under the radar. But a few people have it, and I am definitely proud of it. I really wanted to get back to that. I also wanted to explore what we were all working on sonically.”

Abbasi, who had used electronics sparingly on *Apti*, was diligently working on his looping and all sorts of programming. The aim was to increase his versatility, which was critical in a group without a bass.

“It was an unorthodox kind of a situation,” Abbasi said of the lack of a bass. “It impinges but it also sometimes can help my freedom as a soloist.” Equally important, enhanced electronics could help in creating backgrounds. “It becomes a comping tool. I'm comping texturally as well as harmonically. ... Once you feel comfortable not having a bass player there, then you can really deal with the music.”

Another adjustment, Abbasi explained, was to Weiss' new mix of percussion. “These are odd-meter tunes, sometimes playing with tabla, sometimes playing with drums,” he said. “The dynamic between drums and tabla is so huge that a band like this really benefits from going on the road.”

The Indo-Pak Coalition has been on the road off and on since debuting at Joe's Pub in New York in 2005. The bonds they have developed are reflected in ways big and small—even in song titles: “Snap” connotes the notion of having a close connection to people, according to Mahanthappa. “I was thinking of the three of us as a band,” he said.

At Litchfield, the tune—coming after and contrasting with the rubato opening of “Alap”—had fingers snapping and eyes popping as Weiss migrated from a tabla-playing lotus position to a traps-playing position on a stool. While the traps' timbral qualities suggested a shift in emphasis from the Eastern to Western end of the cultural spectrum, the rhythmic cadences retained Carnatic echoes. So, too, did the scalar material from which the band drew.

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Dan Weiss (left), Rudresh Mahanthappa and Rez Abbasi are the Indo-Pak Coalition.

'Is there a huge difference between Joe Satriani and Allan Holdsworth and John Scofield? I'm not sure.'

Mahanthappa found wanting in many bands that attempt a cultural synthesis. “We’ve seen these Indo-jazz projects where we have this raga and the harmony is built in the same way it’s built off of a major scale. And it ends up sounding really stupid.”

Mahanthappa, the director of jazz studies at Princeton University, also faulted facile commentary on Indian music’s influence on jazz artists. He noted, for example, that, while much in John Coltrane’s work suggests familiarity with Indian music—“Impressions,” for example, seems to impose raga-like rules about the directionality of notes—scholarly research on the subject is somewhat lacking. “It’s just too easy to say Coltrane was influenced by Indian music, and leave it at that,” he said.

Mahanthappa also resisted simplistic conclusions about the antecedents of his own music, particularly in his collaborations with Iyer. In this regard, he cited guitarist John McLaughlin’s *Shakti* as “the real deal”—likening it to an “Indian classical ensemble that happens to have a guitarist in it, and a guitarist who plays chords”—but not a major influence on his work.

“There was a time when people were trying to draw a through-line from McLaughlin to what Vijay and I were doing,” he said, “and it was important for us, for me, to say that, ‘No, I listen to Charlie Parker, Trane, Monk.’”

As immersed as he is in Indian tradition,

his playing these days fully acknowledges his debt to Western influences. Prominent among them is Parker himself, who inspired 2015’s evocative—but not imitative—*Bird Calls* (ACT), which won Mahanthappa the DownBeat Critics Poll award for Jazz Album of the Year in 2015.

His position at Princeton, where he spends as many as three days a week, also brings him in contact with Western trend-makers like Steve Mackey, a free-thinking rock guitarist by trade who teaches classical composition and has written a well-received orchestral work for guitarist Bill Frisell.

Such influences are discernible, if oblique, on *Agrima*. The song “Showcase,” Mahanthappa said, “is raga-oriented for sure. But the way I’ve treated it”—the way it’s broken up in terms of intervals—“is more 20th-century classical.” Built on a simple melody Mahanthappa first laid down on an iPhone voice recorder, it has an open chord structure and loping attitude that provides plenty of space for stretching out Western-style.

The Western influence is even more pronounced on the title track, “Agrima.” Composed just before the recording session started at Brooklyn Recording in April, the tune takes off with a rapid-fire, synthesized head that, despite markers of an Indian mindset—the melody features a metric mutability that invites the listener to break it into groups of

three, five or seven—also evokes popular song. “It’s got this really rock melody,” Mahanthappa said, “almost like a Nirvana tune.”

Mahanthappa plays through a flanger, Abbasi has his distortion full-on and Weiss, who had not fully abandoned the tabla on any tune leading up to “Agrima,” finally does so—playing only the drums for the duration of the piece, and attacking them with a ferocity that, for Abbasi, apparently took some getting used to.

“Dan has this rock side; I wanted to take advantage of that vocabulary as well,” Mahanthappa said. “When we first started playing the music, Rez was playing like the old Indo-Pak. I was like, ‘Dude, we want to hit hard. This song is not like that.’ And Dan actually said to him, ‘Can you think more like a rock vibe?’”

The vibe, Mahanthappa said, represents a return to his youth, dating back to the summer of 1987, when he was a high school student in a summer program at Berklee listening to guitarists from the world of progressive rock. “That stuff was unbelievable,” he said. “It made me want to practice as much as Coltrane and Michael Brecker did.”

That memory came back to him recently listening with his young son to guitarist Joe Satriani. “That’s not jazz,” he said. “That’s instrumental rock. But he’s improvising. He’s playing his butt off. So I was having this conversation with myself: ‘What’s the difference between Joe Satriani and Allan Holdsworth and John Scofield? Is there a huge difference? I’m not sure.’ Ultimately the aesthetic is not that different and the elements of improvisation and the ratio to composition are pretty similar.”

Mahanthappa’s affirmation of the rock world is not limited to the aesthetic. When it comes to selling his work, he has, through his website, tried to reach listeners on a platform called Topspin that’s geared mainly toward rock musicians. He has avoided crowd-funding concepts that focus on behind-the-scenes activity.

Instead, he is offering *Agrima* online for a nominal fee with a few provisos: “I’m not giving you the play-by-play of how this project is coming together, but I am saying, ‘Here’s an album I put a lot of time and energy into and you can have it for two dollars. But I would like to stay in better touch with you. Email address, Facebook-follow, Twitter-follow, whatever.’ It avoids the subscriptions services and iTunes.” He will also avoid the manufacture of CDs, opting instead to press 500 or 600 vinyl records that will produce premium sound and give more prominence to the graphic design of the package.

“The way the album is being released is almost as important as the fact that the album is being released,” he said. “It’s a big audience-building experiment, no question about

it. And it's exciting. I'm not necessarily trying to change the paradigm for how jazz musicians put their music out to the world, but the indie-rock guys and the hip-hop guys have been doing this for years, and successfully."

While the project is being financed in part by a grant from Chamber Music America and research money from Princeton, it has an extra-musical commercial side. Mahanthappa will be selling socks, shirts and, possibly, bottle openers and shot glasses—some of which will sport a slightly abstracted bird as a logo. The design, he said, "is coming from a rock aesthetic. It's a look and brand identity as well."

When it comes to marketing himself, issues of identity—particularly where ethnicity is concerned—have not always worked to his advantage. Problems cropped up when he was working regularly with Iyer and club owners would resort to what Mahanthappa called the "you guys" phenomenon.

"I noticed that I would do a gig with him as a leader and be a sideman in his band, and it would be very difficult to go back to the same venue and get a gig of my own," he said. "It would be, 'Oh, you've just been here with Vijay.' I would be, 'Really?' If we didn't happen to be the only two Indian guys playing this music, at least at that time, I don't think that would have been an issue.

"So I began to wonder. I had a lot of my own

music and a lot of my own identity to get out to the world. If that was going to make it difficult then I needed to make my own thing."

Mahanthappa's own thing has of late included collaborating with Indian partners on multidisciplinary projects, which in turn have produced material he has reimagined on *Agrima*. "Rasikapriya" and "Revati," which appear back-to-back on the album, come from *Song Of The Jasmine*, a suite he wrote for the Ragamala Dance Company. The piece had its premiere at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 2014.

The suite—which involves shifting ragas, tempos and textures—featured Mahanthappa on alto saxophone and Abbasi on guitar as well as a Carnatic flutist, violinist and percussionist. When the music is adapted for the trio, the strictures imposed by the choreography are loosened and the space for improvisation expands accordingly.

In tone, texture and temperament, the new album is something of a leap from the dance-company suite and *Bird Calls*, just as those two projects are disparate in nature. But Mahanthappa said that the experience of working on the two simultaneously offered him "some revelations about clarity" that informed *Agrima*. "They changed my perspective of writing," he explained. "I realized that clarity doesn't mean simplicity. You can write some-

thing that has a lot of depth and isn't cluttered by complicated stuff. I think that's something that carried forward into this album."

Having scheduled an appearance for the Indo-Pak Coalition on Oct. 21 at the BRIC Jazz Fest in Brooklyn, Mahanthappa expects to book gigs with the group starting next spring. Given the changing political culture in Washington and around the country, though, he is not altogether sanguine about what will await him. He hopes that the presence of a band like the Indo-Pak Coalition will send a message.

"Getting out there with a group that is so blatantly multicultural and representing what immigrant America yields is really important," he said. "I'm the son of Indian immigrants, Rez is the son of Pakistani immigrants, Dan is Jewish American" with immigrant roots. "And here we are playing music that was born and bred in America. If we can do that night after night, that can create a sort of dialogue about what is American, what is valid artistically."

On a personal level, Mahanthappa—who has topped the Alto Saxophone category in the DownBeat Critics Poll for three consecutive years—can claim a certain validation as well.

"Feeling accepted by a large jazz community is great," he said, "especially when I thought of myself as an outlier for so long, as that weirdo, that Indian saxophonist—not an accepted member of the genre." DB

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JOHN McLAUGHLIN'S STATESIDE FAREWELL

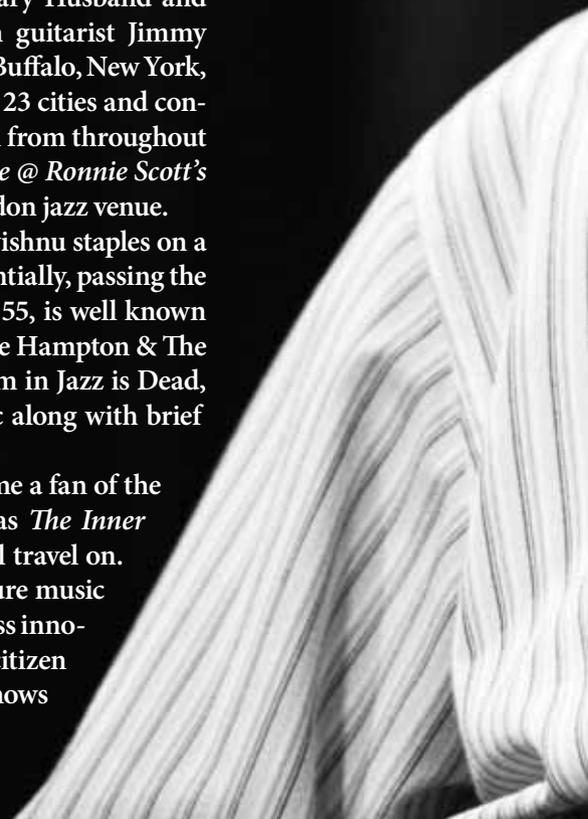
BY BILL MILKOWSKI | PHOTO BY ALESSIO MILAN

With his upcoming fall tour of the United States, guitar god **John McLaughlin** is bidding a fond farewell to touring in the country that embraced him with unabashed enthusiasm when he arrived with the Mahavishnu Orchestra in 1971.

For his final Stateside jaunt, McLaughlin and his 4th Dimension band (drummer Ranjit Barot, keyboardist-drummer Gary Husband and bassist Etienne Mbappé) will share the bill with guitarist Jimmy Herring's group, The Invisible Whip. Launching in Buffalo, New York, on Nov. 1, the Meeting of the Spirits Tour will visit 23 cities and conclude in Los Angeles on Dec. 9. McLaughlin will play material from throughout his career, including songs that appear on his new album, *Live @ Ronnie Scott's* (AbstractLogix), recorded with the 4th Dimension at the London jazz venue.

By inviting Herring to join him on several familiar Mahavishnu staples on a third set each night of the upcoming tour, McLaughlin is, essentially, passing the torch to the Fayetteville, North Carolina, guitarist. Herring, 55, is well known among jam-band fans. He was a charter member of Col. Bruce Hampton & The Aquarium Rescue Unit and has performed with Billy Cobham in *Jazz is Dead*, Phil Lesh & Friends, *The Other Ones* and *Widespread Panic* along with brief stints in *The Allman Brothers* and *the Grateful Dead*.

"John is an icon," said the soft-spoken Herring, who became a fan of the Mahavishnu Orchestra in 1979 after hearing albums such as *The Inner Mounting Flame* and *Birds Of Fire*. "He paved the road we all travel on. He didn't compromise his vision and he has always played pure music for all the right reasons. Not many have done that. He's a fearless innovator who knocked down the walls between genres. He is a citizen of the world and his music reflects that. John's body of work shows [us] that beauty, peace and harmony is the way.







ALESSIO MILAN

Ranjit Barot (left), Etienne Mbappé, Gary Husband and John McLaughlin of the 4th Dimension

“When word came that John wanted us to play with him on his farewell tour of America, I was stunned. I am so grateful for this incredible opportunity to be a part of something so special.”

British-born Husband, a longtime drummer for the late, influential guitarist Allan Holdsworth, was recruited by McLaughlin in 2005 to play keyboards for a concert on Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean. The following year he released *A Meeting Of Spirits—Interpretations of The Music Of John McLaughlin*, a brilliant solo-piano reimagining of some of McLaughlin’s most potent compositions. Husband began playing in the 4th Dimension in 2007, primarily on keyboards, but he has also frequently engaged in some fierce drum duels with Barot onstage. Husband’s years with McLaughlin have given him a deeper understanding of the musician he regards as a visionary improviser and “sheer god of music,” and he suspects that both Miles Davis and Tony Williams were tuned into the guitarist’s unique gifts early on.

“There was no doubt that they knew John was a total game-changer—continually breaking the mold, reinventing, merging, juxtaposing elements and carving out a whole new expression for himself,” Husband explained. “At the core there was this deep, magnificent truth—probing yet knowing all at the same time, with such immense surety and this unshakable commitment behind every angular phrase, nuance or statement. His emotional reach, the greatness of his unique timing and the placement of his phrasing, his eloquent and poetic improvisational endeavor each time—a real story and journey in every solo—this is a big part of what he brought to music.”



INA McLAUGHLIN

Jimmy Herring (left) and McLaughlin will unite for the Meeting of the Spirits Tour, kicking off Nov. 1.

Husband was quick to add, “I feel extremely emotional about this subject of John retiring. It hits me hard. What I hear, what I witness onstage, and what you hear from him on this new live album of ours—that intense, blisteringly joyous spirit, unleashing with such astonishing purpose and passion everything he brings forth on that guitar: Does that sound like an artist ready to hang it up? I know John has pain issues associated with, and exacerbated by, playing. But as far as I’m concerned, I really couldn’t hear a more visceral, determined, intense, shining beacon of a spirit emanating from him in the way we know him playing now.”

“And at the root of my feeling is that it probably would represent the end of this beautiful union of a band we have,” he continued. “I’ve never known a band like this, and I know that brothers Ranjit and Etienne feel exactly the same. John has afforded us such an expansive luxury, such a freedom and ongoing platform to participate as freely, personally and as creatively as we all do. All those great musicians from all of John’s past bands—all of us are inexplicably blessed.”

Born in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, England, McLaughlin soaked up American blues, Spanish flamenco and South Indian veena music as a youngster before coming under the sway of jazz guitar greats Django Reinhardt and Tal Farlow by age 15. After moving to London, he worked in a succession of bands through the early to mid-’60s—from Alexis Korner to Georgie Fame’s Blue Flames, the Ian Carr Trio and The Graham Bond Organisation, while also doing pop and rock session work (including recordings by Petula Clark, Tom Jones, Engelbert Humperdinck and The Rolling Stones). He also played in the house band at Ronnie Scott’s club.

Before leaving the U.K. for the U.S. he recorded his debut album as a leader, 1969’s *Extrapolation*. Within a few months of arriving in New York on Feb. 3, 1969, McLaughlin had gigged with drummer Tony Williams’ Lifetime band; recorded the Lifetime album *Emergency!* with Williams and organist Larry Young; jammed with Jimi Hendrix at the Record Plant; and participated in Miles Davis’ landmark

recording *In A Silent Way*.

By 1971, after forming the Mahavishnu Orchestra with keyboardist Jan Hammer, violinist Jerry Goodman, bassist Rick Laird and drummer Billy Cobham, he became the new avatar of guitar, blazing the jazz-rock trail before the term “fusion” was popular. Three separate incarnations of that powerhouse band whetted fans’ appetites for instrumental virtuosity at extreme volumes.

McLaughlin has turned his attention to acoustic guitar on various occasions throughout his illustrious career, including his Indian flavored Shakti ensemble of the mid-’70s, The Trio (with Al Di Meola and Paco de Lucia) and his Belo Horizonte ensemble of the early ’80s. Through the ’90s he toured and recorded with his Heart Of Things quintet (with Gary Thomas, Jim Beard, Matt Garrison and Dennis Chambers) and also with The Free Spirits (with Chambers and Joey DeFrancesco) before forming his current 4th Dimension Band in 2007.

Shortly before McLaughlin turned 75 on Jan. 4, the guitar hero and longtime resident of Monaco announced that his fall tour of the States would be his last. A factor in this momentous decision was an arthritic condition in his hands.

DownBeat caught up with McLaughlin by phone at his home on Aug. 9. Below are edited excerpts from the conversation.

DownBeat: Hi, John. How are you feeling?

John McLaughlin: Pretty good. The hands are a little cause for concern. But I’m hanging in there. I’m under doctor’s orders; it’s arthritis and there’s no cure for it, really. You can just slow it down. I have one of the greatest rheumatologists in Europe and he’s really working on it. So he gets me cooking and it means having cortisone injections in the hands before a tour, which is not very pleasant. But it really works—the magic of cortisone!

So you’re doing performance-enhancing drugs?

That’s it! You’ve got me.

I remember you explaining that your mother had crippling arthritis and this might be an inherited condition.

Absolutely, yeah. And that’s why the American tour is it for me. Because the situation is deteriorating. Short of a miracle, I think that’ll probably be it in terms of touring. Simply because, if I take a tour and I have a “really bad hair day” and cannot play, it’s a big problem for a lot of people—especially the musicians, but the promoters and the audiences, too. It’s now too big of a risk. It’s not dangerous; it’s just risky. I don’t want to let people down. So I’m not retiring; I just have to quit touring. To do an odd gig somewhere is one thing, but a whole tour is

another. I’m going to continue to play at home. The day I stop making music is the day I keel over. And you can pick me up and send me to the crematorium.

So you want to go out on top of your game, not with any subpar performances.

That would be a kind of betrayal to the fans, to the people who come to hear the music. They don’t want to hear you having problems. I watched Usain Bolt doing this last race in London the other night at this track meet on TV. After the race, which he lost to the American [Justin] Gatlin by three one-hundredths of a second, Usain said in the press conference, “You know, it’s time. I’m 31 years old.” So I think I’m really lucky. I’m more than twice as old as that and I’m still going for it.

In a French TV interview that is posted on your website, you explained that you were doing this farewell tour because you felt you had “an unpayable debt to America.” Can you expound on that?

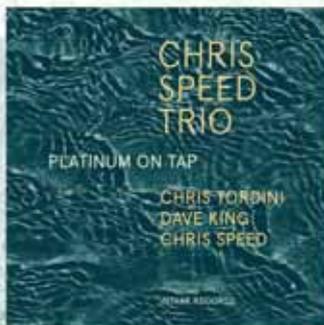
I think I love America more than a few Americans do. I mean, you have to take into account that since the age of 12, when I got exposed to the Mississippi blues ... that was America to me. That music was just a total revelation to me. And while eventually I was going through the flamenco phase and the Django



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Miles Davis (left) in the studio with McLaughlin



Reinhardt jazz phase, hearing Miles and his gang and Coltrane and Cannonball and all these heroes—that was America to me. And I dreamed, as a European or Englishman, of one day being in America, playing in America. And ... dreams do come true.

Then after two years with Tony [Williams], and Miles giving me the order, “Now it’s time to put your own band together,” [I formed the] Mahavishnu [Orchestra]. The way that Mahavishnu came out with a bang and the way that people received us in America—how can I ever pay that debt back? I know I’m extremely fortunate. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time, but then extremely fortunate to find myself in front of American people who were so wide open to innovation and new music.

Can you recall your first days in America?

Vividly. I was so excited. When I arrived in New York, I got off the plane ... and I could’ve kissed the ground. I’m not exaggerating. The only other time that I had that feeling was when I arrived in India for the first time. Just love ... that’s all it is.

Where did you stay when you first came to New York?

Dave Holland was staying in Mike and Randy Brecker’s one-bedroom apartment in Manhattan. He was there when I arrived to play with Tony, so I kind of bunked down with Dave in Mike and Randy’s place because they were on tour with Horace Silver ... luckily.

On this upcoming tour, will you be playing

more Mahavishnu tunes than you did on the Ronnie Scott’s live recording?

Oh, yes. I want to play them because that’s part of my history. I love that music. Even though it’s 45 years old it’s still very relevant to me. I’m hoping it’s going to be relevant to other people, but we’ll see. And I want to play the great tunes like “Eternity’s Breath,” “Earth Ship,” “Lila’s Dance” and, of course, “The Dance Of Maya.” I’m really excited to play them with Jimmy because he’s playing his ass off.

Actually, the idea for this tour really stems from an experience I had with Jeff Beck in the ’70s. On that tour Mahavishnu would do a short set, then he’d do a short set, then we’d both come on stage—two drummers, two bass players, two keyboard players—and we’d just hit it and just rock. And to do that kind of thing with Jimmy Herring and his band is going to be exciting. It’s really hats off to America for me and a great big thank-you, my gratitude for everything that America has given me.

Sonny Sharrock said that there are certain tunes like “Giant Steps” and “A Love Supreme” that are vehicles, and if you jump on them, they take you over. Is that true of you with “Meeting Of The Spirits” or “Hope” or “Dance Of Maya”? Are these vehicles that almost take you over?

Absolutely. They’ve got their own momentum. There’s a few Mahavishnu tunes that have that. There’s another one that’s got that kind of momentum and we don’t even play a solo. It’s called “Resolution.” There’s some kind of immanence about it. It’s a little dark but it’s

very immanent. ... I gotta play that. I gotta play “Hope,” I gotta play the “Trilogy” [from *The Lost Trident Sessions*]. “Meeting Of The Spirits” has got something, too. Those arpeggios start and it’s just like, “Go, man, go! And fly!”

Do you find that you have a different relationship with these vehicles over time?

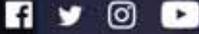
Of course. I see them retrospectively, musically. But in the past months ... it sounds ridiculous, I know ... I’ve gotten my Mahavishnu book out just to go back and look at those scores. The thing is, after 45 years, you forget a lot. That’s a lot of water under the bridge. And a lot of music on top of it. So I bought my book with all the scores in it. I didn’t have a copy. Just thank all gods that Warner Bros. Publishing had made the suggestion that I do a book with mini scores. Without that I would be floundering, absolutely. Because there’s some crazy music from that period.

I forget because it’s so long ago, plus every day is a new day and I’ve got new stuff coming into my head so I forget about the older stuff. I know it’s there, it’s part of my history and I wouldn’t play the way that I do if all of that hadn’t happened. It’s all part of my database, if you will. But I’m looking at this music now and I’m saying, “Holy shit! What was I thinking?” And I wasn’t even on drugs ... So right now I’m brushing up on all the polyrhythms and funny harmonies in there. In terms of improvisation, I’ve learned a lot over the years. So whereas the atmosphere will be the same, hopefully, musically it will be a little richer. I’m going to do my best. If I’m there, man, I’m going to give it 110 percent.

JAN PERSSON



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Rudresh Mahanthappa Depends on Yamaha

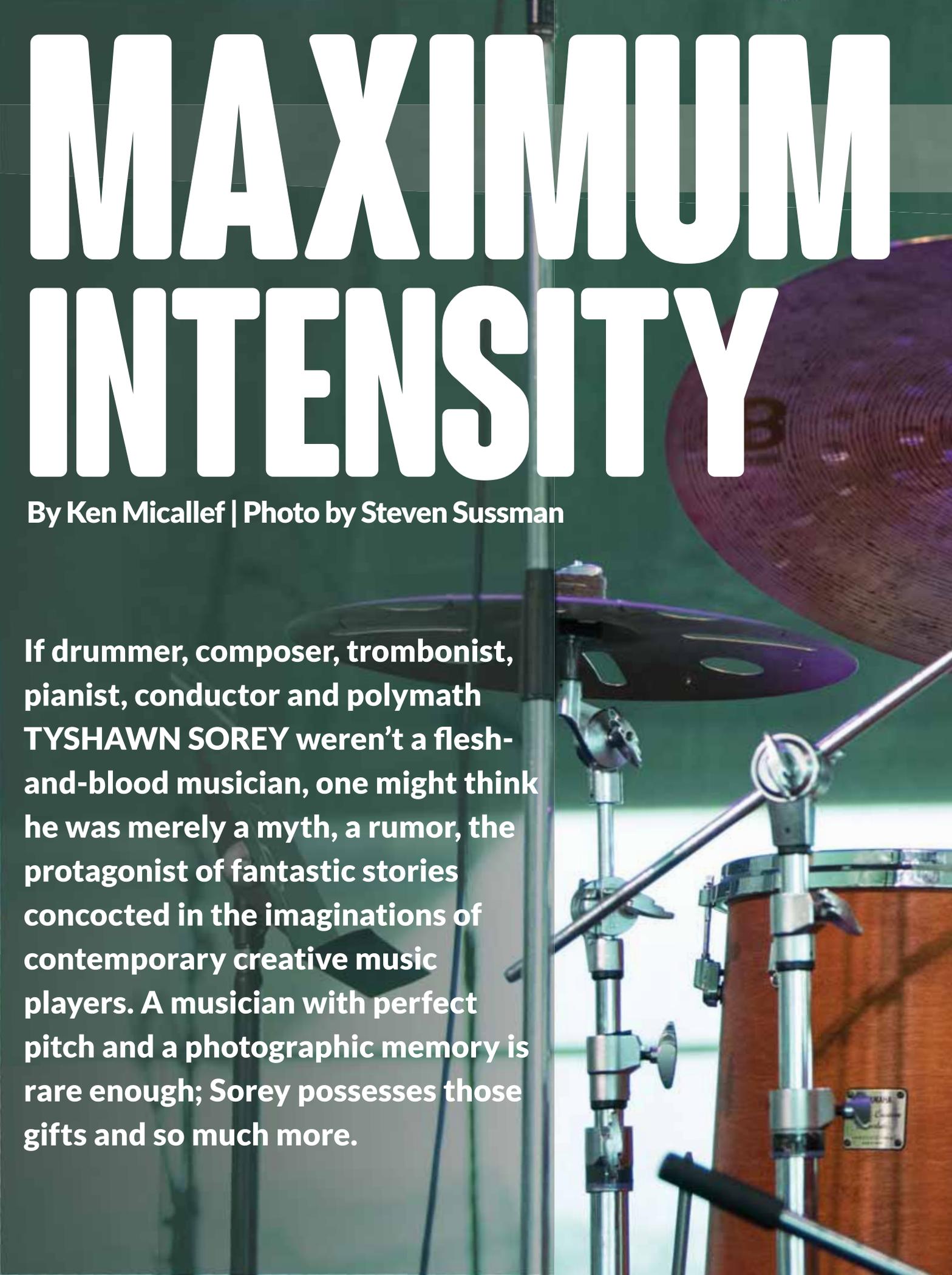
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Rudresh Mahanthappa

- #1 DownBeat Critics Poll "Alto Saxophone Player of Year" 2011-2013, 2015-2017
- #1 DownBeat Critics Poll "Jazz Album of the Year" 2015 (*Bird Calls*)
- #1 DownBeat Critics Poll "Rising Star Composer" 2015
- #1 NPR Critics Poll "Jazz Album of the Year" 2015 (*Bird Calls*)
- #1 Village Voice "Best Jazz Artist" 2015

Rudresh K. Mahanthappa

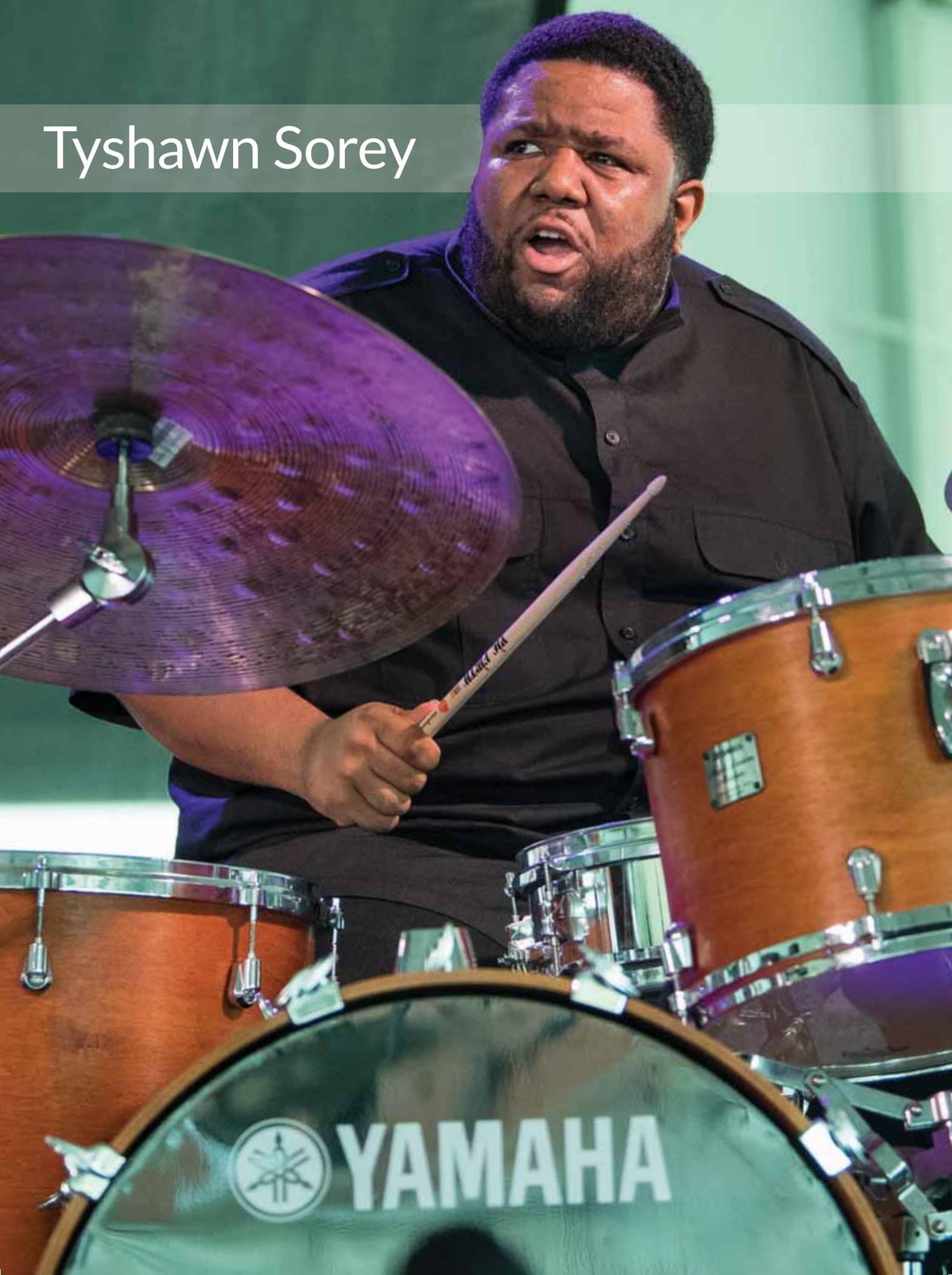
MAXIMUM INTENSITY



By Ken Micallef | Photo by Steven Sussman

If drummer, composer, trombonist, pianist, conductor and polymath **TYSHAWN SOREY** weren't a flesh-and-blood musician, one might think he was merely a myth, a rumor, the protagonist of fantastic stories concocted in the imaginations of contemporary creative music players. A musician with perfect pitch and a photographic memory is rare enough; Sorey possesses those gifts and so much more.

Tyshawn Sorey





Tyshawn Sorey stands at the center of a percussion cage, an assemblage of cymbals, bells and drums.

Consider a tale from longtime Sorey collaborator, pianist Vijay Iyer, with whom the drummer/composer has recorded numerous outings, from 2001's *Blood Sutra* to 2017's widely praised ECM release *Far From Over*. "The first time I heard Tyshawn was in 2000 when he came over for a session," Iyer recalled from Banff, Canada. "He took a long time to set up his drums. I was in the next room. Suddenly I heard him playing my piano. I thought, 'I recognize that. It's me!' He was playing a solo from one of my records. Then he played Stockhausen's 'Klavierstück,' a famously difficult piano piece, from memory. Then he played a serial 12-tone improvisation using just six fingers. He was about 20 then. He was this kid who had sort of figured it out on the piano using whatever bizarre technique he'd made up. I'm on the same planet with this guy? I can't believe it."

Grammy-winning pianist and International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) member Corey Smythe, joined by Sorey and bassist Christopher Tordini, recorded the drummer's 2017 release, *Verisimilitude* (Pi Recordings), as well as the earlier Pi albums *Alloy* and *The Inner Spectrum Of Variables*.

"Tyshawn will concoct strategies like playing older pieces back to front, using a succession of pitch and rhythm and dynamic information [from the composition], but not glued to a grid," Smythe said. "Or play every measure as written but the measures proceed in reverse order. Or he will carve some path where we play

from measure 13 to measure 28; then on the third beat of measure 28 we'll repeat that to the top of the piece. I marvel at what he is capable of, and he's usually coming up with these paths for long pieces; [it's] not a one-page chart—it's a 35-page chart. And he doesn't reference a physical copy; he plays it from memory. Sometimes he will play a half-hour-long piece of music backwards, from memory. How is that even possible?"

Comments from friends and former instructors are equally telling, surprising and significant.

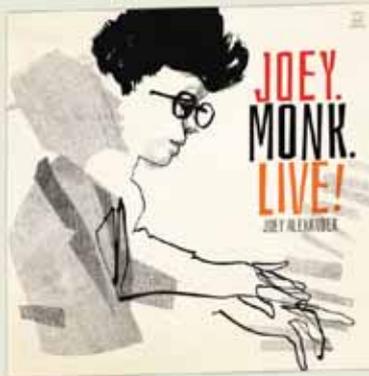
"When I met Tyshawn I thought he was a trombone player," recalled Ralph Peterson Jr., one of Sorey's instructors at William Paterson University. "Then I heard him play piano, then eventually drums. Tyshawn was in possession of certainly an anointed, if not savant-like, gift. Wherever he sat down, it was only a matter of minutes before he figured out the instrument. Drumwise, he had interests in both the traditional and the experimental. Because he has this incredible ear, he could hear something and mimic it just based on what he heard, without understanding the conceptual reasoning of why and where things are played. That's like a kid with a handgun not understanding what bullets do."

Having recently succeeded Anthony Braxton's chair at Wesleyan University in Connecticut (and adopting the title The John Spencer Camp Assistant Professor of Composition and Creative Musics), Sorey is a seasoned veteran in contemporary classical, avant-garde and free-jazz circles. His many per-

formances as leader and sideman at The Stone in New York have confirmed his status as intellectual improviser and a gritty, rhythm-ripping, drumming revolutionary. At a roiling 2014 Stone set with pianist Dave Burrell and bassist Henry Grimes, Sorey used a squeaking bathroom door as colorful interjection as intensely as he hard-boiled the trio's rhythmic grid like some combination of pounding tidal wave and silken, after-the-rain flowing mist. Sorey's collaborators at The Stone, elsewhere and on recordings include Braxton, Wadada Leo Smith, Steve Coleman, John Zorn, Steve Lehman, Dave Douglas, Samo Salamon, Sylvie Courvoisier and Marilyn Crispell.

At concerts, fans and critics have marveled at Sorey's piano playing, his intense drumming, his creative trombone work and his version of Butch Morris' "conduction" language (as performed with his Autoschediasms for Creative Chamber Orchestra). His discography has made significant contributions to the 21st century creative music lexicon. *Verisimilitude*, *That/Not* (2007), *Koan* (2009), *Oblique-I* (2011), *Alloy* (2014) and *The Inner Spectrum Of Variables* (2016) have moments that are peaceful, and other segments that invoke a brooding soundtrack recording. Frequently consisting of slow-tempo piano-and-bass arrays punctuated by gentle and/or explosive drum set and percussion, the albums create an alternate chamber-like universe; they reward close, repeated listening. Where Sorey's compositions end and his trio's improvisations begin is a frequent point of debate for his enthusiastic followers.

"If one is trying to constantly decipher what



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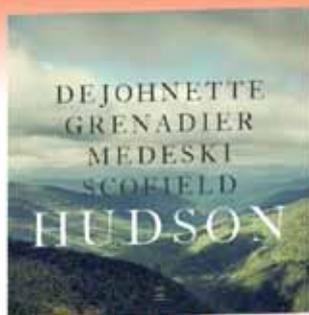


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Sorey conducts *Autoschediasms For Creative Orchestra* at the Ojai Music Festival in Ojai, California, on June 9.

is composed and what is improvised then they're missing the entire point of the scope of the music," Sorey said from Wesleyan. "[My recordings] are about the entire sonic palette. If you just listen to the music for what it is and appreciate the entire palette, and not worry about what percentage is improvised versus composed, [you'll] definitely understand it much better. I'm not interested in having musicians or listeners hear the seams. I want them to appreciate the entire work for whatever it is."

Contemporary classical music seems to inform his compositions, whether it's Smythe's evolving piano lines or the leader's own percussion flourishes; however, Sorey disagreed with that particular assessment.

"I've never looked at it as being derived necessarily from contemporary classical music," he said, "although a lot of what I do is influenced by that as well as the work of the AACM, which is highly influential on all of the work I've presented—even as a drummer. I've worked with a lot of the AACM members, including founding members. I see my work as an extension of what they've done, which in many respects is a response to the racial underpinnings of what African Americans were supposed to 'present,' which was playing standards or popular music in clubs. That was something [the AACM] didn't stand for.

"People see it as problematic for [black composers] engaging with musicians like Stockhausen or Xenakis or contemporary classical composers," Sorey continued. "It's OK for white American musicians to participate in contemporary classical music and put that into their work. But when it came to someone like Anthony Braxton or George Lewis incorporating that in their music, it was seen as illegitimate. The idea of a black composer is not really taught; you seek it out yourself. My idea of that was writing tunes and jazz but when I listened

to this other world of music created by African Americans I was surprised. That [AACM members] composed music with such self-determination, vigor and commitment, and also in the improvisational components of it, how much rigor was involved, that told me I can do this, too. I realized my vision in my early 20s and I've hopefully been maturing since then. I see my work as an extension or some kind of contribution to the AACM in terms of the legacy of radical black composition and creative music as a whole."

Sorey's music can sound desolate, wistful, fearful, calming, ecstatic, ominous. "The new record is arid in its tone," he said. "*Verisimilitude* has a very dark aura in terms of what is happening in the music and how much space it has."

The inherent dichotomies in Sorey's compositions are quite striking. "The relationship between consonance and dissonance is something I explore quite a lot in my music," he said. "I'm inspired by different periods of classical music but also what happens in oblique ways of creating music, such as in the folk-rock of Joni Mitchell, the way that she moves through her material on a harmonic level. Her music [transcends] category. There's that relationship between typical harmonic style in so-called rock music but then her mobility between different [genres], like recording the album *Mingus*. She's an example of using harmonies in a way that is unique and personal and not necessarily standard."

Raised on the rough-and-tumble streets of Newark, New Jersey, Sorey was precocious, playing trombone first, followed by piano, then drums. He earned a bachelor's degree in jazz studies from William Paterson in 2004, where he was mentored by, among others, master drummer and longtime Vanguard Jazz Orchestra member John Riley.

"Tyshawn was already an advanced player, but raw," Riley recalled. "He'd had exposure to

some pretty wild music so his mind was wide open. We talked about sound and playing less densely, because everything he played was bold, strong and maximum intensity. He definitely stood out as an unusual and advanced musician, and he was super hungry. We talked about touch, playing with less density but with the same commitment. He's always been a little bit of an anarchist. He absorbed things very quickly then took them further."

Sorey attended Wesleyan from 2009 to 2011, working on his master's in composition with Braxton, Alvin Lucier, Ron Kuivila and Jay Hoggard. He also studied West African and Japanese taiko drumming. Sorey received a DMA (doctor of musical arts) in composition from Columbia University this May, studying with Fred Lerdahl and George Lewis.

From the standard four-piece drum kit he uses for typical cash-and-carry live gigs, Sorey has expanded his rhythm palette to an immense "cage setup" that he plays in contemporary classical settings (such as the recent Ojai Music Festival, where he is an annual presence) as well on his self-released, upcoming *Koan II* record (with Stephen Haynes, trumpet, cornet, E-flat alto horn, soprano trumpet, didgeridoo, percussion; Ben Gerstein, trombone, melodica; Todd Neufeld, acoustic and electric guitars, percussion; Zach Rowden and Mark Helias, bass; Joe Morris, bass, electric guitar; and Carl Testa, bass, electronics).

Sorey has numerous current projects: preparing *Koan II* for release, composing a commissioned piece dedicated to the Black Lives Matter movement, working on a piece written for tenor vocalist Lawrence Brownlee as part of a project for Opera Philadelphia and Carnegie Hall, finishing a solo piano album, and his faculty work instructing young minds at Wesleyan. The term multitasking doesn't even hint at his diverse productivity.

How can Sorey bring young creative musicians to his way of inclusive thinking, influenced by Braxton's ideal of "world creativity"?

"All of the masters from Armstrong to Parker were interested in other forms of music," Sorey said. "Charlie Parker wanted to study with Varese and was inspired by Stravinsky. Duke Ellington always had an interest in classical music expression. We should be interested in other forms of music and grow from that. Even if we don't want to play it, at least get the information. People shouldn't be closed-minded and go with set-in-stone definitions of what constitutes jazz. Who can define jazz? It doesn't belong to any one person. The ideas belong to those who want to express those ideas. But when terms are defined for everyone, then the whole concept of what you're trying to develop becomes watered down; it becomes something else that's the opposite of what you're trying to do." **DB**



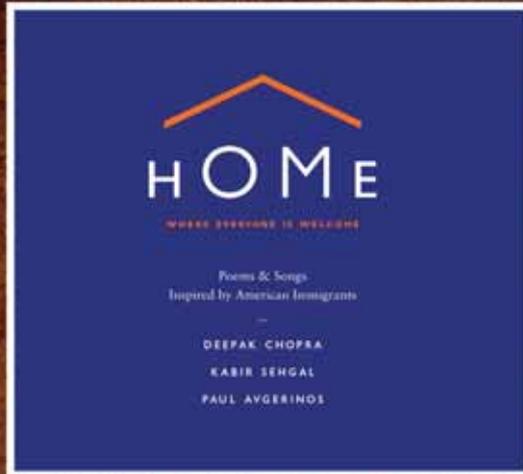
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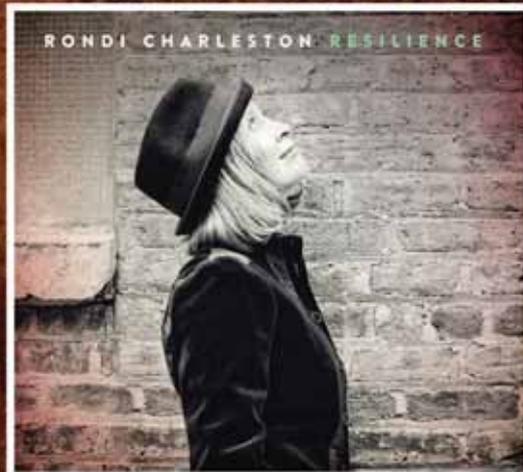
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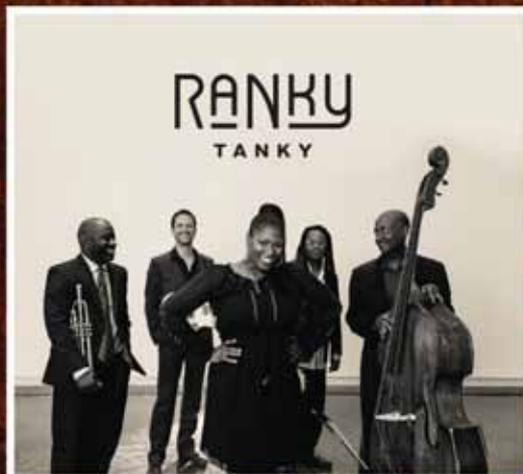
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'UNINHIBITED CORY HENRY SOUND'

BY DAN OUELLETTE | PHOTO BY KELLY DAVIDSON

During the July 25, 2016, broadcast of NBC's *The Tonight Show*, host Jimmy Fallon turned the spotlight onto a guest sitting in with the house band, The Roots. He asked the youngster on the Hammond B-3 organ if he had any tricks. So, with the overhead camera trained on the full spread of the keys, Cory Henry dazzled the 30 Rock studio audience and TV viewers alike by showing exactly what he could deliver on the bulky, old-school instrument: incredible speed, rich tonal colors, exciting rhythms and bouncing bass lines, all played with an expression of absolute elation. Fallon, who just about fell off his chair, propped up a copy of *The Revival* (GroundUp), Henry's newest album at the time, and exclaimed, "He's a magician!"

More than a year later, sitting in the church/rehearsal room of the three-story house he owns in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood in Brooklyn, not far from where he grew up, the laid-back Henry describes the sequence of events that led to that opportune moment. "I was playing a trio set at the Jazz Standard with Eric Harland and Mike Lee," he says. "I didn't even know Jimmy was there. He was hanging out in the back. Not long after I was contacted by his show's talent manager, who was looking for musicians to sit in with the band from time to time. The person had to OK it with The Roots, but they knew me—I had spent time with them. So I did the show and everyone loved it."



Sharay Reed (left), Adam Agati, Cory Henry, Nick Semrad and TaRon Lockett are The Funk Apostles.

Henry produced a video of the entire event, from arriving and hanging backstage to the “phenomenal” (Fallon’s descriptor) performance that’s up on YouTube.

It might have been a revelation to the millions who tuned in that night, but the 30-year-old Henry had already been a major support-team player on the scene since saxophonist Kenny Garrett enlisted him when he was 19 years to play in his band for three years. Perhaps his biggest exposure came with his five-year-plus stint as the keyboardist (on tour) and B-3 maestro (in the studio) for Snarky Puppy, which earned him three Grammy awards.

Today, he calls himself a free man ready to make his 30s a breakout decade under his own leadership of the Funk Apostles. The day *DownBeat* caught up with Henry, he was heading to the Blue Note for a 12:30 a.m. pop-up “revival” show that would feature him playing a B-3 duo with his band’s drummer, TaRon Lockett.

Less than a week later, the bandleader would be hustling to assemble his fellow Funk Apostles—Lockett, guitarist Adam Agati, keyboardist Nick Semrad and bassist Sharay Reed—for a summer tour that would stretch from California to Tokyo and Seoul to Italy. Currently in demand on the international festival circuit, Henry and his band will appear this fall at the Barcelona Voll-Damm Jazz Festival; the Monte Carlo Jazz Festival; the Jazznojazz Festival in Switzerland; the EFG London Jazz Festival; and Germany’s Deutsches Jazzfestival Frankfurt. Next spring, they’re booked for the French Quarter Festival in New Orleans.

The two-year-old band has recorded its first album, *Chapter 1: The Art Of Love*, planned for future release on Henry’s homespun indie label Wild Willis Jones Records. Unlike *The*

Revival—an all-instrumental effort that highlighted his virtuosity on the B-3—*Chapter 1* features Henry’s vocals. The program is a gospel-soul-funk journey with touches of jazz in the analog-recorded mix. Keyboard-wise, he mainly sticks to Wurlitzer electric piano, hauling out the B-3 for only one track.

Henry became immersed in music when he was 2, playing an old Hammond A100 at home. By the time he was 4, he was playing the organ at his church, Unity Temple, rocking in the devotional gospel sound. By age 5, he was honored with the title Master Cory.

When he was 6, Henry’s mother (a gospel musician) died at the age of 25. He was raised by his father, who passed away at age 40 when Henry was only 12. Later, while living with his grandfather, Henry began making the rounds playing different church revivals and concerts.

“I was a kid soaking it all in,” Henry recalled. “When I left my parents’ church and joined my godfather’s church when I was 14 or 15, I started playing jazz with guys there. It was a big deal. When I was in the 9th grade, the bandleader Nadale Ravenell at Benjamin Banneker Academy suggested I check out Art Tatum. I went to Tower Records in Times Square, bought a double CD of his music, listened to it and transcribed it. I went to school, played basketball, then went home and shed on my keyboard and sometimes on the organ.”

He eventually discovered the music of Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Oscar Peterson and figured out how to translate what they were playing to the B-3. “I didn’t listen to organ players like Jimmy Smith or Joey DeFrancesco or Dr. Lonnie Smith till I was in my mid-20s,” he said. “That got my ears on, and I realized I had to start shedding some more.”

Henry graduated to the big time when he got to play at the Ron Grant & Friends Sunday night r&b/soul/gospel open mic at the Village Underground. “I had been sneaking in since I was 16, and finally two years later I got the chance to finally play,” he said. “So one night Kenny Garrett came in when I was playing soul music, and afterwards he talked to me about how he was wanting to do something different with his music. So I agreed to join him.”

After his three-year stint with Garrett, Henry met up with the Snarky Puppy collective. He played the B-3, Moog synthesizer and an assortment of keyboards with the group, but after five to six years, he opted out. “I’d always wanted to do my own thing,” he said. “I had recorded one album, *First Step*, then *Christmas With You* and a single, ‘Leave Me Alone.’ But I wanted to find my own uninhibited sound.”

That desire led to *The Revival*, which captures Henry conjuring up personal B-3 renderings of gospel songs, soul beauties like Stevie Wonder’s “All In Love Is Fair,” pop standbys like the Beatles’ “Yesterday,” a B-3 romp through John Coltrane’s “Giant Steps,” the rowdy original “Naa Naa Naa” and even a song composed by his godfather, “Old Rugged Cross.”

For the *Chapter 1: The Art Of Love* r&b project, Henry recorded all the music with the Funk Apostles at Studio C in Williamsburg direct to tape. “It was like it was made in 1974,” he said. “We were all in the same room, and we used a lot of first takes. I wanted it to sound classic the way the greats did. It’s an amalgam of r&b, soul and funk. We didn’t hold anything back and the creativity in the songs stuck.”

Case in point: The first tune, “Trade It All,” features a catchy lyricism that breaks into a swirling jazz interlude fueled by a stretch of trading keyboards, with Henry on Wurlitzer and Semrad on Prophet ’08 synth. Other tunes include jazz tags, like the Wurlitzer-with-distortion break in the percussive “Our Affair” and the gospel-fueled “Give Me A Sign,” with its fiery guitar solo and churchy B-3.

But the biggest surprise is the debut of Henry as a talented and soulful singer. “I always liked singing in the church choir, but when I left the church, I got very timid,” he said. “I built up my shell, but I’m breaking out of it because I like singing, because it helps to communicate things I’ve never been able to communicate on my instruments.”

As for Henry’s future as a B-3 wiz, he said, “Some people may be disappointed that I’m not playing much on this album. But I was on a track to step away from the organ for a lot of different reasons. It’s hard to get a B-3 on the road. They’re very old instruments, and I can’t play mine everywhere I go. And I don’t like the new ones. *The Revival* was a remarrying to the organ, but this is the next step. It’s a new kind of revival for me.”

DB



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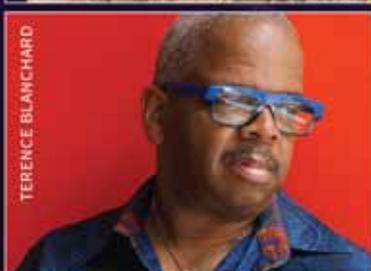
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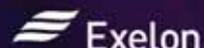
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Tyshawn Sorey (left) Vijay Iyer, Graham Haynes, Mark Shim, Steve Lehman and Stephan Crump

© LYNN HARTY/ECM RECORDS

Vijay Iyer Sextet *Far From Over*

ECM 2581

★★★★½

Pianist Vijay Iyer is all about high velocity, dense harmony and heavy, sculptural left-hand playing. As an improviser he's more interested in solid bone structure than melodic narrative. That's all fine—actually, it's remarkable—but how could it have gotten so popular? What is it in Iyer's sound that explains his broad appeal?

I think it has something to do with the balance he strikes between grounded power and frictionless flow. Somehow, it suggests questions that go beyond the music. For him, the jazz combo is an experimental space, where the limits of collective strength and individual action can be tested.

Iyer has worked with large ensembles here and there, but most of his recordings have been

with his longstanding trio or, further back, quartets. *Far From Over* introduces the six-piece band he's been leading for the better part of the last decade. Naturally, some things are lost: *Far From Over* doesn't have the blanket fluidity that marks the trio albums, especially *Accelerando* and *Break Stuff*. Instead, we get a new kind of pounding urgency: the odd-metered onslaught of the title track; the rough-shod funk of "Into Action"; the swarming and charging "Down To The Wire."

The sextet's two saxophonists—Steve Lehman on alto and Mark Shim on tenor—contribute mightily to the group's coarsened aesthetic, but it's the trumpet of Graham Haynes that makes the biggest impact. He has a way of slowing the sextet's surge, remolding and stretching it without causing attenuation.

You'll hear it on "Into Action," when the stippled and dissonant melody opens onto a low-slung backbeat from drummer Tyshawn

Sorey: Haynes improvises straight down the seam of the chord changes, with a phrasing and a swagger that's all his own. And it's there again on "Poles," when a shapely solo from Lehman hits its jagged climax; Haynes picks things up with a late-'60s Miles Davis coolness, pulling the piece to a crepuscular resolution.

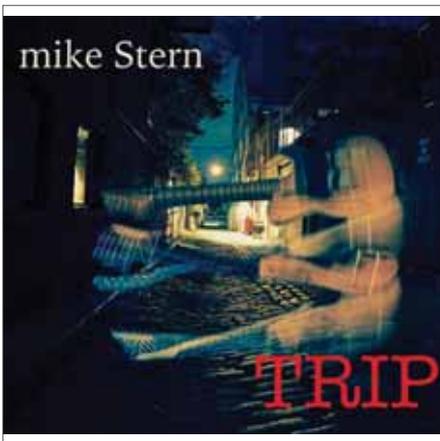
Transitions like those are only possible because of Iyer's longtime rhythm team: Sorey and bassist Stephan Crump. Both players know how to create a deep and reliable pocket without staying on a single, explicit pattern for very long—and they bring that variegated sensitivity to every track on the album.

—Giovanni Russonello

Far From Over: Poles; Far From Over; Nope; End Of The Tunnel; Down To The Wire; For Amiri Baraka; Into Action; Wake; Good On The Ground; Threnody. (57:49)

Personnel: Vijay Iyer, piano, Fender Rhodes; Stephan Crump, bass; Tyshawn Sorey, drums; Steve Lehman, alto saxophone; Mark Shim, tenor saxophone; Graham Haynes, cornet, flugelhorn, electronics.

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Mike Stern *Trip*

HEADS UP INTERNATIONAL 00010

★★★★★

Most people are lucky to bounce back from one near-disaster; two career-saving resurrections are almost unheard of. Guitarist Mike Stern overcame drug addiction in the mid-'80s, but that pales in comparison to his comeback from an accident on a New York City street in July 2016. Stern broke both arms, but more significantly sustained permanent injury to his picking hand. Two surgeries repaired some of the damage, but he now has to glue his pick to his

Tony Allen *The Source*

BLUE NOTE 602557810912

★★★★★

Tony's Allen's self-taught approach to jazz drumming was a little like someone on another planet building a Buick from an instruction manual: Given Allen's distinct culture and raw materials, his design was bound to handle differently. Hearing recordings by Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones and Max Roach as a kid in Nigeria, Allen was thunderstruck by their sophisticated jazz rhythms. Lacking any models for hi-hat drumming in Lagos, he says he picked it up from Roach's instructions in a *DownBeat* article. Allen would go on to use jazz and funk to rearticulate West African rhythms, forging that sound into Afrobeat as a member of Fela Kuti's groups.

The Source, Allen's first full-length album for Blue Note, is an original hybrid of jazz and Afrobeat that capitalizes on both styles' classic sense of cool. Recorded in an analog Paris studio, the album includes Parisian jazz musicians on five horns, piano, keyboards and bass, with the Cameroonian Indy Dibongue on guitar.

The album's most imaginative element is Allen's drumming, with his beats launching and landing in unpredictable places. Listen

fingers to play with his renowned speed and finesse. Not content to ease back into the lime-light, Stern returns with an all-star cast of collaborators who date all the way back to his debut with Miles Davis in 1981.

In some ways, this seems like a retrospective of Stern's career, beginning with the steaming, boppish themes of "Half Crazy" and "Scotch Tape And Glue," the latter featuring a turbulent solo by saxophonist Bill Evans and galloping drum accompaniment by Lenny White. Davis alums Stern and White combine again for "Screws," with Wallace Roney sounding like latter-day Davis. Miles' specter also appears on "Blueprint," a minor blues with longtime Stern ally Randy Brecker providing the trumpet lead. The title composition and "Whatchacallit" are pure Stern: delightfully off-kilter funk with frequent bandmate Bob Franceschini playing his distinctive power tenor and Dennis Chambers driving the beat.

—James Hale

Trip: Trip; Blueprint; Half Crazy; Screws; Gone; Whatchacallit; Emilia; Hope For That; I Believe You; Scotch Tape And Glue; B Train. (66:06)

Personnel: Mike Stern, guitar, vocals (7); Randy Brecker (2), Wallace Roney (4, 11), trumpet; Bob Franceschini (1, 6), Bill Evans (3, 10), tenor saxophone; Jim Beard, keyboards (1, 2, 4–8), piano (3, 5, 9–11), Hammond B-3 organ (2, 9); Victor Wooten (1), Tom Kennedy (2, 6), Teymur Phell (3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11), Edmond Gilmore (5, 9), bass; Dennis Chambers (1, 2, 6), Lenny White (3, 4, 10, 11), Will Calhoun (5, 9), Dave Weckl (8), drums; Arto Tunçboyacıyan (1, 2, 4, 7, 8), Elhadji Alioune Faye (10), percussion; Leni Stern, n'goni (7, 9); Gio Moretti, vocals (7).

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com



to him push grooves around the kit on "Life Is Beautiful." In the African tradition of social music, Allen is conversational with the band, greasing horn riffs and linking Mathias Allamane's jazz bass to Dibongue's guitar. He does it all with a stretch-the-beat delivery free of any anxiety of reception. —Michelle Mercer

The Source: Moody Boy; Bad Road; Cruising; On Fire; Woro Dance; Tony's Blues; Wolf Eats Wolf; Cool Cats; Push And Pull; Ewajo; Life Is Beautiful. (64:13)

Personnel: Tony Allen, drums; Mathias Allamane, bass; Indy Dibongue, guitar; Jean-Philippe Dary, keyboards; Yann Jankieliewicz, soprano saxophone; Nicolas Giraud, trumpet; flugelhorn; Jean-Jacques Elangue, tenor saxophone; Remi Scuito, baritone saxophone, alto saxophone, flute; Daniel Zimmermann, trombone, tuba; Damon Albarn, piano (8); Vincent Taurelle, clavinet (11).

Ordering info: bluenote.com



Jane Ira Bloom *Wild Lines*

OUTLINE 143

★★★★½

Not unlike the hermetic poet Emily Dickinson, whose work presumably inspired or is somehow represented in this music, Jane Ira Bloom doesn't tell us much about her intentions here, other than to offer a rather cryptic subtitle: "Improvising Emily Dickinson."

What we *do* have are two CDs. The first is a collection of 14 "original" chamber pieces—I'll explain the quotes presently—with an unexplained appearance at the end by Richard Rodgers on "It's Easy To Remember." It's lovely work indeed from one of our finest soprano saxophonists. Some tunes have the bravado of a fanfare. Others have a somber reflective quality.

But then there's the second CD, which is a bit of a puzzle. Each of the 14 pieces is repeated virtually verbatim along with brief, tacked-on bites of Dickinson poetry read with intimate elegance by Deborah Rush. But without a bridge between the music and the recitation, it all becomes something of doleful homework assignment associating one to the other through some thread of intent.

Then there's the "original" music. Yes, it's all the work of Bloom—except that half the pieces ("Other Eyes," "Singing The Triangle," "Mind Gray River," "Big Bill," three others) are peeled off her previous album, *Early Americans*, which was equally lovely but opaque in its intentions. Not to be too critical, but if this music is intended to convey Emily Dickinson, what was half of it doing on an unrelated project? —John McDonough

Wild Lines: Improvising Emily Dickinson: Disc One: Emily & Her Atoms; Alone & In A Circumstance; Other Eyes; Singing The Triangle; Dangerous Times; Mind Gray River; One Note From One Bird; Cornets of Paradise; A Star Not Far Enough; Hymm: You Wish You Had Eyes In Your Pages; Wild Lines; Say More; Bright Wednesday; Big Bill; It's Easy To Remember. (55:44) Disc Two: Wild Lines, Emily & Her Atoms; Alone & In A Circumstance; One Note From One Bird; Dangerous Times; A Star Not Far Enough; Singing The Triangle; Mind Gray River; Cornets Of Paradise; Other Eyes; Say More; Hymm: You Wish You Had Eyes In Your Pages; Bright Wednesday; Big Bill; It's Easy To Remember. (61:46)

Personnel: Jane Ira Bloom, soprano saxophone; Dawn Clement, piano; Mark Helias, bass; Bobby Previte, drums; Deborah Rush, vocals.

Ordering info: janeirabloom.com

The Hot Box

Critics	Giovanni Russonello	James Hale	Michelle Mercer	John McDonough
Vijay Iyer Sextet <i>Far From Over</i>	★★★★½	★★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★
Mike Stern <i>Trip</i>	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★
Tony Allen <i>The Source</i>	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★½
Jane Ira Bloom <i>Wild Lines</i>	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★½

Critics' Comments

Vijay Iyer Sextet, *Far From Over*

Iyer extends his composing to encompass horns, but he continues to write from the rhythm up. Spanning electronica and elegy, this is tough music for hard times. —James Hale

Modern jazz in peak form: agile, odd-metered grooves, horn-driven harmonies that advance the rhythmic agenda and solos that serve the higher cause. Navigating strong emotions with as much sensation as reason, this music makes close listening cathartic. —Michelle Mercer

This program scatters in diverse directions, from lunar atmospheric to some flame-throwing acrobatics. The clashes come mainly out of the long rapport between reedists Mark Shim and Steve Lehman. A worthy, if not always pretty, shift for the gifted pianist. —John McDonough

Mike Stern, *Trip*

There's plenty of funk on *Trip*, but it doesn't dig any kind of deep trench. That's OK: The twisty melodicism that guides both Stern's songwriting and his improvising will carry things far enough. —Giovanni Russonello

At festival hotels I've often seen Stern swimming in the pool like a happy child: floating face to the sun, then plunging down to hang improbably long at the bottom. Lucky for us, *Trip* has a similar vibe, with Stern diving headlong into this gleaming music. —Michelle Mercer

Stern, who came to fame in the slipstream of Miles Davis' fusion comeback, tackles his own comeback here. Flanked by bilingual pros, the concepts are tight and lucid. For all the slip, slide and buzz of fusion, they score some crack pieces. —John McDonough

Tony Allen, *The Source*

Allen has a full-kit command and a boundless array of affinities. We've known these things for decades, but now it's clearer than ever. *The Source* is infectious. —Giovanni Russonello

Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers meet Afrobeat. The anthemic horn riffs and Cameroonian guitarist Indy Dibongue's contributions generate excitement, but there's little melodic development. Somewhere, though, Buhaina is dancing. —James Hale

There's more Delta than Lagos in this high-strutting band. The eager charts never stop moving, and Allen's alert drumming stays hand-in-glove with the straight-talking soloists. —John McDonough

Jane Ira Bloom, *Wild Lines: Improvising Emily Dickinson*

Bloom plays the soprano with a combination of evenness and irony, like Emily Dickinson wrote poetry. The tunes and the improvisations stand on their own, evoking the source document without bending back in time. —Giovanni Russonello

A worthy companion to Fred Hersch's exploration of Walt Whitman and Matt Wilson's more recent celebration of Carl Sandburg. Bloom's playing is frequently remarkable, but the concept doesn't sustain itself over two discs. —James Hale

Dickinson's brisk, rhymed lines are an unlikely choice for jazz adaptation, but Bloom hears music in the poet's unique syntax. The revelation is Dawn Clement's piano, always ready with the lyricism or structure the moment needs. —Michelle Mercer

SMOKE
SESSIONS
RECORDS

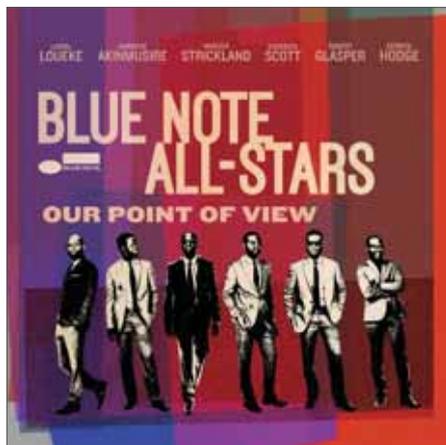
NEW THIS FALL



JOHNNY O'NEAL piano & vocals
BEN RUBENS bass
ITAY MORCHI drums
with special guests
ROY HARGROVE trumpet
GRANT STEWART tenor saxophone



VINCENT HERRING saxophones
CYRUS CHESTNUT piano
YASUSHI NAKAMURA bass
CARL ALLEN drums
with special guests
NICOLAS BEARDE vocals
RUSSELL MALONE guitar
STEVE TURRE trombone
BRAD MASON trumpet
SAM DILLON tenor saxophone



Blue Note All-Stars *Our Point Of View*

BLUE NOTE B0741SRNLV

★★★★★

Every so often, Blue Note Records gathers some of its most renowned talents to come together as a unit and record a snapshot of its current aesthetics. It's a tradition that traces back to the mid-'40s when Alfred Lion assembled the *Blue Note Jazzmen* series, which featured Art Hodges, Sidney De Paris, James P. Johnson and Sidney Bechet. Three decades later came the 1976 double LP *Blue Note Live At The Roxy*, which showcased such esteemed artists as

Chris Speed Trio *Platinum On Tap*

INTAKT 294

★★★★½

Because he's been a key member of such cutting-edge combos as the Claudia Quintet and Jim Black's Alas No Axis, it's tempting to expect saxophonist Chris Speed's own group to be equally edgy. But in a weird way, the most radical thing about the Chris Speed Trio's second album is how traditional it sounds.

For instance, not only is there a rendition the Hoagy Carmichael chestnut "Stardust," but Speed offers a solo worthy of Lee Konitz, setting a thoughtful, harmonically probing line at a deliberate pace and with plenty of well-placed pauses. Bassist Chris Tordini follows with a similarly stately and considered solo. Even more impressive, Speed's own tunes are delivered with the same sense of economy and attention to melodic potential, from the aching melancholy of the album-opening "Red Hook Nights" to the waltz-time wit of "Pretty Much," which flirts with the conventions of the Great American Songbook while coquettishly keeping its distance.

As much as Speed keeps his own playing at a steady simmer—even the altissimo shrieks on his version of Albert Ayler's "Spirits" seem somehow understated—he

Carmen McRae and Alphonse Mouzon.

Now comes the latest edition of the Blue Note All-Stars with the release of the scintillating *Our Point Of View*. This new ensemble—consisting of Robert Glasper, Kendrick Scott, Lionel Loueke, Derrick Hodge, Ambrose Akinmusire and Marcus Strickland—actually formed three years ago to honor Blue Note Records' 75th anniversary. *Our Point Of View* marks the first official All-Stars release under the presidency of Don Was, who took over the reins from Bruce Lundvall six years ago.

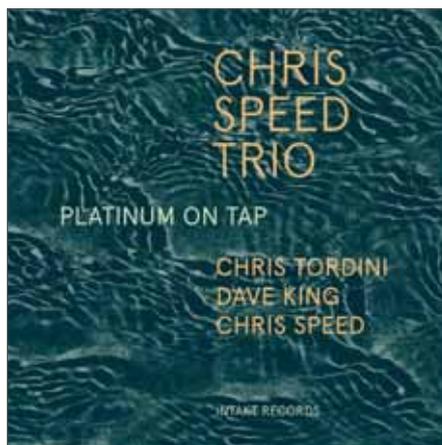
The program is superbly dynamic, ranging from Hodge's chamber-like "Second Light," on which Akinmusire's muted trumpet issues a languid melody across an orchestral accompaniment, to the billowing "Message Of Hope," on which Loueke and Glasper engage in subtle antiphony under the front line's see-sawing melody. Upping the ante on the torch-bearing conceit is the guest appearance of Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter on an ingenious makeover of Shorter's "Masquelero." The result is a cross-generational dialog that exemplifies the label's living legacy.

—John Murph

Our Point Of View: Bruce's Vibe; Cycling Through Reality; Meanings; Henya; Witch Hunt; Second Light; Masquelero; Bay-inah; Message Of Hope; Freedom Dance; Bruce The Last Dinosaur. (90:00)

Personnel: Robert Glasper, piano; Fender Rhodes (7); Derrick Hodge, bass; Kendrick Scott, drums; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Lionel Loueke, guitar; Marcus Strickland, tenor saxophone; Herbie Hancock, piano (7); Wayne Shorter, soprano saxophone (7).

Ordering info: bluenote.com



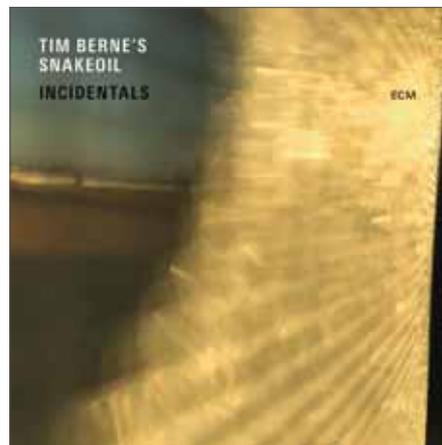
gives a free hand to Tordini and drummer Dave King, and it's the relentless churn of their rhythm work that keeps all the quiet from seeming soporific. Like Speed, they keep their dynamics warm and low-key, but it's their restless improvisation we hear in the space between Speed's terse phrases, and that balance of energies is what makes *Platinum On Tap* so unassumingly subversive.

—J.D. Considine

Platinum On Tap: Red Hook Nights; Arrival High; Buffalo; Crossface Cradle; Pretty Much; Crooked Teeth; Platinum On Tap; Stardust; Torking; Spirits. (45:12)

Personnel: Chris Speed, tenor saxophone; Chris Tordini, bass; Dave King, drums.

Ordering info: intaktrec.ch



Tim Berne's Snakeoil *Incidentals*

ECM 2579

★★★★★

Incidentals is alto saxophonist and composer Tim Berne's fourth album with his Snakeoil band, and his 52nd release since his 1979 debut. It starts with "Hora Feliz" ("Happy Hour"), four minutes of atmospheric to which producer-guitarist David Torn contributes subtle asides, his distinctive guitar sound spliced into a thickly voiced, moderately paced 16-bar legato theme. That melodic material recurs throughout the subsequent tracks, flowing from the solo and collective improvisations that are the project's substance.

Berne's statements often start as laconic inquiries, but usually turn urgent or, as on "Prelude One," sardonic. On clarinets, Oscar Noriega shadows the leader or comes from an oblique, squiggly angle; pianist Matt Mitchell's accompaniment is always an active contrast; Ches Smith drums emphatically and colorfully, although mixed at a distance from the front line; and guitarist Ryan Ferreira steps from the background with Jimi Hendrix-inflected electronics on "Stingray Shuffle."

All together, these players construct and explore a huge sonic palette. The tracks tend to accrue power, steamrolling forward with occasional surprising interludes of decompression. Such music is not "free" as in "random," but created by musicians freely taking advantage of whatever they care to. The results are mystifying and beautiful—at times forceful, at others sorrowful and resigned.

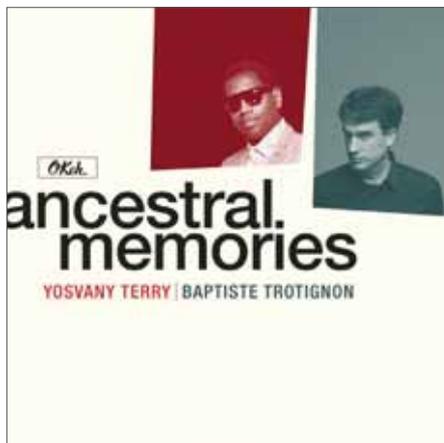
The album is not easy listening. It bespeaks serious intent and the determined application. The title must be ironic. There is nothing merely incidental about it.

—Howard Mandel

Incidentals: Hora Feliz; Stingray Shuffle; Sideshow; Incidentals Contact; Prelude One/Sequel Too. (64:06)

Personnel: Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Oscar Noriega, clarinet, bass clarinet; Ryan Ferreira, electric guitar; David Torn, guitar (1, 3); Matt Mitchell, piano, electronics; Ches Smith, drums, vibraphone, percussion.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com



Yosvany Terry/ Baptiste Trotignon *Ancestral Memories*

KEH
★★★★★

Jelly Roll Morton proclaimed that jazz must contain “tinges of Spanish” from the Caribbean. But on this propulsive and profound CD, the Cuban-American saxophonist-composer Yosvany Terry and the Paris-born pianist Baptiste Trotignon—inspired by the music of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, New Orleans and Cuba’s Oriente Province (where Terry’s grandmother is from)—show that jazz

can swing with a French-Caribbean accent, too.

Buoyed by Terry’s brother Yuniore on bass and Jeff “Tain” Watts on drums, the leader’s piercing and poignant saxophone lines and Trotignon’s elegiac and engaging pianism imbue the album’s 10 selections with island-breezed joie de vivre.

The tracks range from the anthemic opener “The Call,” which soulfully syncopates with a 6/8 feel, to the finessed funk of Terry’s title track and “Lost Souls.” They’re contrasted by the medium-tempo musings on Trotignon’s “Reunion,” named after a French island in the Indian Ocean; the impressionistic ballad “Hymn”; and the equally sensitive “Bohemian Kids,” with Terry playing like Sidney Bechet on soprano. Trotignon’s “Basta La Biguine” is a festive, calypso-like send-up of Cole Porter’s “Begin The Beguine.” On “Erzulie,” titled after the Haitian goddess of love and prosperity, Watts, the most valuable player of these sessions, morphs, transforms, states and counter-states all of the rhythms and grooves of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora.

—Eugene Holley Jr.

Ancestral Memories: The Call; Ancestral Memories; Reunion; Bohemian Kids; Basta La Beguine; Erzulie; Minuet Minute; Hymn; The French Quarter. (59:47)

Personnel: Yosvany Terry, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, chikere; Baptiste Trotignon, piano; Yuniore Terry, bass; Jeff “Tain” Watts, drums.

Ordering info: okeh-records.com

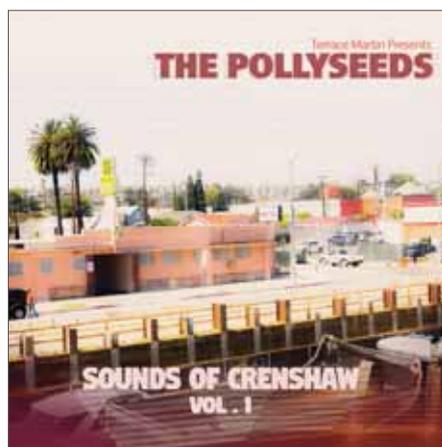
Terrace Martin presents The Pollyseeds *Sounds Of Crenshaw Vol. 1*

ROPEADOPE
★★★★½

Sounds Of Crenshaw Vol. 1 is the new album by Terrace Martin, who produced and played on the batch of 13 new tracks that are in line with last year’s *Velvet Portraits*. The album is credited to The Pollyseeds, a collective of producers, musicians and creators who aim to pay tribute to the past using the tools of the future. Through this lens, Martin and company tackle r&b, gospel, soul-jazz and hip-hop in ways that feel both nostalgic and fresh at the same time.

A cut like “Mama D/Leimert Park” is Martin at his best as a bandleader and player. He plays everything on it, including MPC3000, Minimoog, Korg Kronos and his trusty vocoder, which has become a staple in Martin’s arsenal of keyboards of late, especially during performances alongside Herbie Hancock.

When Martin does deviate from his own material, he’s applying his laid-back Los Angeles sound to Janet Jackson’s “Funny How Time Flies,” which features keyboardist Robert Glasper. Fellow L.A. native Kamasi Washington joins Martin by contributing some soul-jazz bliss to “Believe” and atmospheric



tenor texture to “Chef E Dubble.” A number of vocalists—Rose Gold, Wyann Vaughn, Chachi and Preston Harris—are also featured on the album, although it generally feels more compelling when the instrumentalists are kept at the forefront.

—Chris Tart

Sounds Of Crenshaw Vol. 1: Tapestry; Chef E Dubble; Intentions; Funny How Time Flies; Mama D/Leimert Park; You And Me; Believe; Up And Away; Wake Up; Your Space; Feelings Of The World; Reprise Of Us; Don’t Trip. (53:39)

Personnel: Terrace Martin, Minimoog, Keyscape, alto saxophone, Prophet synthesizer, vocoder, LM-1 drum machine, Korg Kronos, MPC3000, percussion; Marlon Williams, guitar; Robert Glasper, keyboards, piano; Kamasi Washington, tenor saxophone; Craig Brockman, Fender Rhodes; Wyann Vaughn, Rose Gold, Chachi, Preston Harris, vocals; Robert “Sput” Searight, Curlee Martin, drums; Brandon Eugene, bass; Adam Turchi, baritone saxophone; Trevor Lawrence, drum programming; Kenneth Crouch, piano.

Ordering info: ropeadope.com



MARTIAL SOLAL & DAVE LIEBMAN *MASTERS IN BORDEAUX*

SSC 1489 - IN STORES NOW

The meeting of two musical giants is a pretty common thing these days. Far more uncommon is the first collaboration of two musicians from different generations and continents. That is precisely what is so unique and wonderful about the recent partnership of French piano legend Martial Solal and American saxophone giant Dave Liebman and their new recording, *Masters In Bordeaux*. Solal is arguably the most important name in jazz from Europe. The 90-year-old pianist has been at the cutting edge of jazz music since the 1950s, as one of the first Europeans to master the bebop language.

Twenty years Solal’s junior, NEA Jazz Master Liebman has been a force in the spread of the music. His mastery of the saxophone and his musical eclecticism have made him a role model to many younger players.



ALAN FERBER BIG BAND *JIGSAW*

1494 - IN STORES NOW

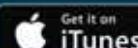
The band features saxophonists John O’Gallagher, Rob Wilkerson, John Ellis, Jason Rigby and Chris Cheek; trombonists Ferber, John Fedchock, Jacob Garchik and Jennifer Wharton; trumpeters Tony Kadleck, Scott Wendholt, Alex Norris and Clay Jenkins; and the rhythm section of Anthony Wilson on guitar, David Cook on piano and keyboards, bassist Matt Pavolka, drummer Mark Ferber and additional percussion by Rogerio Boccato.

Picking originals or pieces by his peers, Ferber has generated arrangements that evolved on the bandstand, informed by the response of bandmates and audiences.



iTunes.com/MartialSolal
iTunes.com/AlanFerber

www.sunnysiderecords.com



Big Bands, Big Ideas

Jazz orchestras sometimes rely on inspiration from unlikely sources. These four albums—two domestic, two German—derive influence from noir-ish film characters, the natural world and cherished jazz figures.

Tim Hagans & NDR Bigband, *Faces Under The Influence: A Jazz Tribute To John Cassavetes* (Waiting Moon Records; 78:58 ★★★★★½) Trumpeter Tim Hagans (veteran of bands led by Stan Kenton, Thad Jones and Dexter Gordon) presents an ambitious suite that portrays characters in the dark, furtive films of indie film godfather John Cassavetes. We dive into Manhattan's dingy bars and boudoirs, where strivers and lowlifes struggle poignantly with inner conflicts and lash out with cocky humor, emotional immaturity and ill-suppressed violence. Hagans casts members of the NDR Bigband (Hamburg Radio Jazz Orchestra) as specific characters in Cassavetes' films. Very effective are alto saxophonist Fiete Felsch as the seductive Lelia (*Shadows*), tenor saxophonist Christof Lauer as jittery Moskowitz (*Minnie & Moskowitz*) and pianist Vladislav Sendecski as hollowed-out Mabel (*Woman Under The Influence*). Hagans himself shines as the braying Richard Forst in *Faces*. Hagans' suite underscores the sadness and confusion, empathy and hope in Cassavetes' gritty works with accuracy and honesty.

Ordering info: timhagans.com

Ed Neumeister & The NeuHat Ensemble, *Wake Up Call* (MeisteroMusic 0017; 67:16 ★★★★★½) Concerned over intolerance suffered by today's minority communities and the ills of climate change, veteran trombonist Neumeister offers *Wake Up Call*, nudging his steadfast ensemble through challenging, knotty constructs. Neumeister presents his complex, multifaceted charts over eight tracks, long on granular textures, sectional interplay and tight motivic kernels. "Birds Of Prey" doesn't soar; it plods like a jungle elephant walk. On "Dog Play" and "Reflection," dense sectional foliage mixes uneasily with measured solos for Billy Drewes' peaked clarinet and Rich Perry's tender/tough tenor. Eventually, moments of swing shine through: "Deliberation" features Mark Gross' amiable alto and the leader's "yah-yah" plunger trombone, while "Locomotion," an Ellingtonian bolero propelled by John Riley's malleted drumming, stirs up Dick Oatts' stepping-stone tenor and more of the leader's trombone. In all, Neumeister delivers formulaic lessons to cure strained times.

Ordering info: edneumeister.com



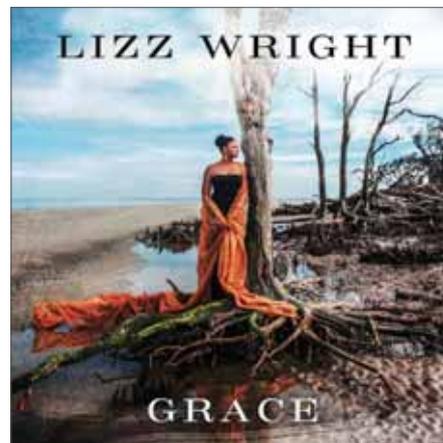
Sammy Nestico & The SWR Big Band, *A Cool Breeze* (SWR Music; 64:52 ★★★★★) On *A Cool Breeze*, the indefatigable nonagenarian Sammy Nestico wails on unflinchingly upbeat charts from his tenure as arrange for Count Basie's Band (1967-'84). Germany's SWR Orchestra returns for their fifth reunion with chartmeister Nestico (of TV jingle and high-school jazz band fame), and the resulting album finds them roaring across pages of the swing/bop playbook ("Along Came Betty" with badass backbeat, "Round Midnight" backlit with passing tones), as well as various oldies ("Frankie & Johnny," "Moonlight On The Ganges") and many Vegas-ready originals. Nestico crafts his danceable charts with the precision of Leroy Anderson and the humor of Neal Hefti.

Ordering info: swrbigband.com

John Vanore, *Stolen Moments: Celebrating Oliver Nelson (Acoustical Concepts 53; 49:22 ★★★★★)* Oliver Nelson's brilliant saxophone and prolific composing were widely admired and imitated. For John Vanore, trumpeter and Woody Herman alum, devotion leans toward canonization on *Stolen Moments*, which features dutiful, anodyne takes on Nelson's durable originals and wide-ranging scores.

But Vanore's meticulous, spacious charts, fleshed with French horns replacing lower reeds, don't always ignite his all-star bandmates. The famed title track has so-so solos and closes solemnly. But there are bright spots: The centerpiece, "El Gato," gathers steam with Latin gusto and Bob Mallach's gritty tenor; Dave Ballou's trumpet enlivens "St. Louis Blues"; and Steve Wilson's alto adds bright moments throughout. Nelson's signature "Blues And The Abstract Truth" goes 6/8 with fresh ideas, and folk song and gospel cameos pick up the pace as encores. **DB**

Ordering info: johnvanore.net



Lizz Wright *Grace*

CONCORD RECORDS 482

★★★★★

Lizz Wright singing Americana is a no-brainer. Her espresso-flavored alto seems to have emerged from the rural Georgian soil on which she grew up. She possesses a passionate yet plaintive delivery, and her unadorned tone embodies the American folk aesthetic.

By teaming up with producer Joe Henry, Wright triumphs. She imbues her material with emotional immediacy and something close to giddy excitement, all while remaining true to herself. The joy that she brings to the gospel classic "Singing In My Soul" is so contagious that you'll probably have trouble moving on to the next tune—you'll be listening to it repeatedly. Once you do proceed, more jewels will be discovered, such as Wright's transfixing reading of "Stars Fell On Alabama," on which she slowly caresses the evocative, amorous lyrics atop Marc Ribot's shimmering guitar and Kenny Banks' smoldering organ.

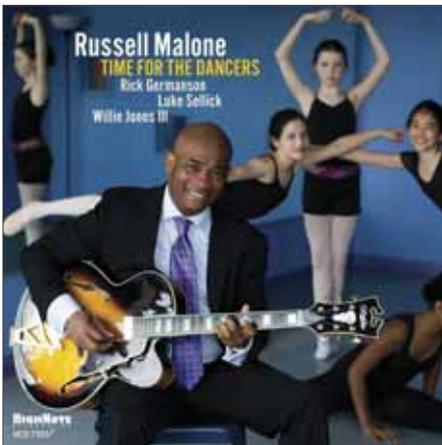
Wright also astonishes on her moving, almost confessional renditions of k.d. lang's "Wash Me Clean" and Bob Dylan's "Every Grain Of Sand." And while she's joined by gospel backup singers on the sensual "Seems I'm Never Tired Lovin' You" (famously recorded by Nina Simone) or Ray Charles' "What Would I Do Without You," Wright sounds so wonderfully in her element that the results are transcendental. The deep resonance of her alto never overwhelms the clarity of her diction, nor does it diminish the emotional conviction she kindles with each song's thematic intent.

—John Murph

Grace: Barley; Seems I've Never Tired Lovin' You; Singin' In My Soul; Southern Nights; What Would I Do Without You; Grace; Stars Fell On Alabama; Every Grain Of Sand; Wash Me Clean; All The Way Here. (4:3, 4:4)

Personnel: Lizz Wright, vocals; Jay Bellerose, drums, percussion; David Piltch, bass; Chris Bruce, Marvin Sewell, Marc Ribot (7), guitar; Kenny Banks, piano, Hammond B-3 organ; Patrick Warren, keyboards (4, 9, 10); Valorie Mack, Cathy Rollins, Artia Lockett, Angela Jenifer, Sheree-Monique, K. Heshima White, Ted Jenifer, Kevin O'Hara, vocals (2, 5, 6).

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com



Russell Malone *Time For The Dancers*

HIGHNOTE 7305

★★★★★

Russell Malone has always gone his own way as a guitarist and bandleader, embracing blues, r&b, gospel and pop influences. Most of all, he loves a good melody. With this, his third album for HighNote, Malone continues to take a stand for lyricism and mainstream swing.

His musical choices—both of material and the way he phrases a line—combine harmonic sophistication and unpretentious, down-home soul. You hear elements of Wes Montgomery,

Kenny Burrell, Jim Hall and George Benson—he's learned from the best—but he injects every tune with his own irrepressible personality.

With his excellent regular working quartet—featuring pianist Rick Germanson, bassist Luke Sellick and drummer Willie Jones III—Malone produces another highly eclectic set, covering jazz tunes both famous and obscure, pop standards, a TV theme song (José Feliciano's "Chico And The Man") and his own originals, which range from the funky to the reflective.

Beautiful ballads also abound: Peggy Lee's gorgeous "There'll Be Another Spring," a poignant solo version of Billy Joel's "And So It Goes" and Malone's elegiac "Flowers For Emmett Till." Another notable original, "The Ballad Of Hank Crawford," dedicated to the great soul-jazz alto player, is a stately 6/8 Chicago blues into which Malone injects some meaty block chords. Although piano makes a cameo appearance near the end, the guitarist mostly solos against a stark backdrop of bass and drums. With a talent like Malone playing the electric blues, that's quite sufficient.

—Allen Morrison

Time For The Dancers: Time For The Dancers; Leave It To Lonnie; The Ballad Of Hank Crawford; There'll Be Another Spring; Pocket Watch; Theme From Chico And The Man; And So It Goes; Little B's Poem; Flowers For Emmett Till. (48:51)

Personnel: Russell Malone, guitar; Rick Germanson, piano; Luke Sellick, bass; Willie Jones III, drums.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com

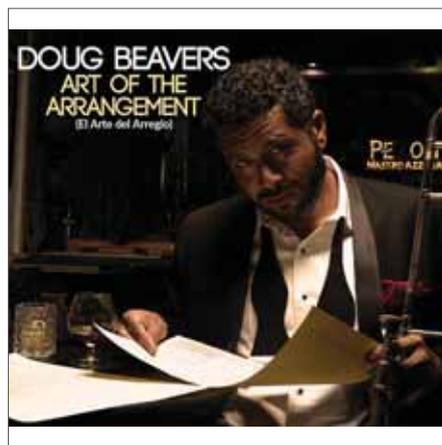
Doug Beavers *Art Of The Arrangement*

ARTISTSHARE

★★★★★

A big band playing Afro-Cuban music—such as the one trombonist Doug Beavers leads on his second ArtistsShare album, *Art Of The Arrangement*—is almost by definition a well-organized, smoothly virtuosic unit. The conventions of the "Latin" style are many, with those concerning rhythm especially firm. The embodiment of traditions and regeneration of their life is required. Then there's the matter of respecting specificities of certain Afro-Cuban sub-genres or beloved performances. Certain details distinguish these pieces, but their shared elements include soaring vocals, background choruses, surging horn lines and personal expressivity. To serve each song and also bring out its individuality, call the arrangers.

Beavers, who won a 2006 Grammy for his work with pianist Eddie Palmieri, succeeds splendidly here, with a village-worth of musicians lending themselves to his orchestral concept. Expert percussionists layer the polyrhythms, which never stop. Renown singers cast their romantic phrases over flowing beds of melody, brass-and-reeds accents, suspenseful pauses, irrepressible clavé and elegant



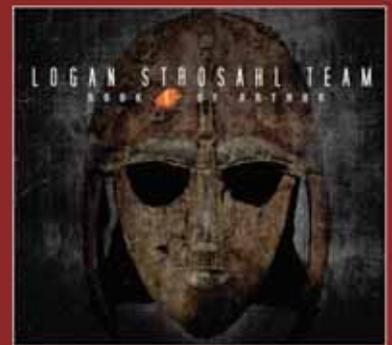
piano passages, which blend in a heady swirl.

—Howard Mandel

Art Of The Arrangement: New Rhumba (For Gil Evans); El Truquito; Estoy Como Nunca; Para Bailar El Montuno; De Repente; Perico Pereji; Siempre; Montara Elegua; Sunflowers; Suave Asi; Barra Limpia; Gate C13. (72:06)

Personnel: Doug Beavers, trombone, arrangements; Todd Bashore, Ivan Renta, Mitch Frohman, David DeJesus, saxophones; Raul Agraz, Hector Colon, Frank David Greene, Pete Nater, John Walsh, Thomas Marriott (12), trumpets; Ray David Alejandro, Max Seigel, Beserat Tafesse, trombones; Eric C. Davis, Justin Mullens, French horns; Oscar Hernandez, Yessonn Villamar (1, 7, 8, 11), Zaccai Curtis (9, 11), piano, keyboards; Luques Curtis (1, 8, 9, 12), Jerry Madera, Maximo Rodriguez (7, 11), bass; Luisito Quintero, Camilo Molina, George Delgado, Johnny "Dandy" Rodriguez, Jose Madera, Roberto Quintero, percussion; Herman Olivera (3, 4), Frankie Vazquez (2, 6), Jeremy Bosch (5), Cita Rodriguez (5), Marco Bermudez (10), Carlos Cascante (7, 11), Pedro Martinez (8), vocals; Marty Sheller (3), Angel Fernandez (4); Oscar Hernandez (5); Ray Santos (6); Gonzalo Grau (7); Pedro Martinez (8); Jose Madera (10), arrangers.

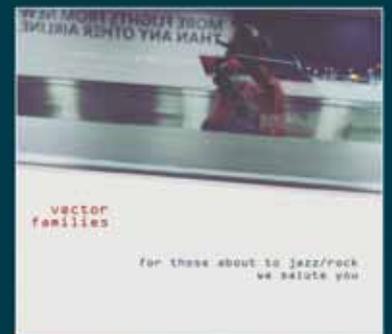
Ordering info: dougbeavers.com



LOGAN STROSAHL TEAM *BOOK I OF ARTHUR*

SSC 1493 - IN STORES NOW

Like most jazz musicians, Strosahl has examined the full scope of the jazz tradition to inform his own approach to the music. He has, however, gone a few steps farther. Strosahl's admiration for the polyphonic music of the 16th and 17th centuries has shaped his compositional technique, and his knowledge of the classical canon, modern composition, and an array of improvised music has been translated to a large musical "toolset." He makes use of this toolset with his "Team," made up of tenor saxophonist Sam Decker, clarinetist Michael Sachs, trumpeter Aquiles Navarro, pianist Nick Sanders, bassist Henry Fraser and drummer Connor Baker.



VECTOR FAMILIES FOR THOSE ABOUT TO JAZZ/ROCK WE SALUTE YOU

1488 - IN STORES NOW

Vector Families is a three generations group of forward thinking musicians from the diverse Minneapolis / St. Paul music scene who have converged to deliver **For Those About to Jazz/Rock, We Salute You**.

Drummer/composer Dave King is no stranger to the world of collaboration and eclecticism. Bassist Anthony Cox was an obvious choice for any project and a chance to record with him would be special and long overdue. But so would working with the polymath and guitar genius Dean Granros, a Minneapolis creative music legend who has experimented in jazz, psychedelic rock and new music. The Vector Families lineup is completed by the fantastic saxophonist Brandon Wozniak.



[iTunes.com/LoganStrosahl](https://www.tunes.com/LoganStrosahl)
[iTunes.com/VectorFamilies](https://www.tunes.com/VectorFamilies)
www.sunnysiderecords.com





Katie Thiroux *Off Beat*

CAPRI RECORDS

★★★★

How do some acoustic bassists manage to sing and play at the same time? Maybe if we asked Katie Thiroux, she'd let us in on the secret. Or maybe such mysteries are best left unsolved, so that we may marvel all the more at her split-brain virtuosity throughout *Off Beat*.

As a singer, Thiroux draws mostly from the post-bop, non-vibrato hipster school. Yet she animates her lines with well-placed nuances. On "Why Did I Choose You?," with only piano

accompaniment, she gets deep inside the lyric, not through emotional excess but with tiny details, giving a little emphasis to the "w" on "When I lost my heart" and then elongating the "i" in the word "lovingly" a few moments later. Pianist Justin Kauflin follows her free-tempo phrasing flawlessly and conforms his solo to the mood they set together. It's a stunning duet.

This tune testifies to Thiroux's knack for finding great material in obscure pages of the Great American Songbook. Her deadpan humor on the title track dovetails with an arrangement that's obviously inspired by the fluttery bits of Pete Rugolo's charts for June Christy's 1960 recording. "Brotherhood Of Man," an ironic showstopper from *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying*, transforms into a gospel sizzler.

If there is a weaker moment on *Off Beat*, it could be in "When The Wind Was Green." Even without reference to Frank Sinatra's untouchable version, the bass-and-clarinet arrangement doesn't provide emphatic support. Even so, she pulls it off enough to merit kudos for both concept and execution. —*Bob Doerschuk*

Off Beat: Off Beat; When Lights Are Low; Why Did I Choose You?; Slow Dance With Me; Brotherhood Of Man; Ray's Idea; Some Cats Know; When The Wind Was Green; Happy Reunion; Willow Weep For Me. (49:36)

Personnel: Katie Thiroux, bass, vocals; Ken Peplowski, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Roger Neumann, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Justin Kauflin, piano; Matt Witek, drums.

Ordering info: caprirecords.com

Steve Smith and Vital Information NYC Edition *Heart Of The City*

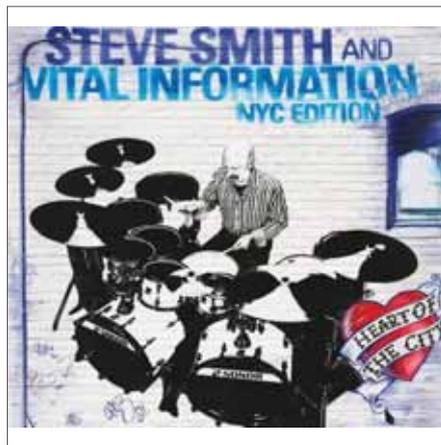
BFM JAZZ 302 062 430 2

★★★

Heart Of The City is a robust album spanning the "ins" and "outs" of jazz. Even traditional jazz gets a fresh twist from drummer Steve Smith and his core NYC Edition of Vital Information, featuring Baron Browne (bass) Mark Soskin (keyboards) and Vinny Valentino (guitar). George Brooks layers tenor and alto saxophone over the wild "Charukeshi Express," and alto saxophonist Andy Fusco drives a steroidal version of John Coltrane's "Mr. P.C." and the gentler title track.

Though steeped in funk and pop, this band stretches far beyond those genres. Tracks like "Open Dialogue" and the interludes "City Outskirts East" and "City Outskirts West" incorporate Indian drum and konnakol, a form of vocal percussion popular in Carnatic music. These successful experiments attest to Smith's restless intellectual appetite, expanding his jazz vocabulary.

Guitarist Valentino puts a Philly soul spin on "Mr. P.C.," the album's opener, and Soskin's arrangement of "Rhythm-A-Ning" deepens the mix, braiding piano and drums to make the Monk tune fresh again. "Eight + Five" is



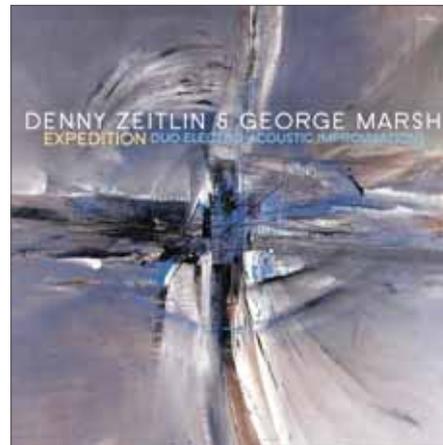
a rhythmic exercise showcasing Smith's command of time and Browne's round bass, and Valentino's deft single-note lines put the "heart" in the title track. Picking Cole Porter's feathery "I Love You" for the midway point—it's a stylish version, thanks to the dependable Valentino—was an inspired choice.

—*Carlo Wolff*

Heart Of the City: Mr. P.C.; Rhythm-A-Ning; Eight + Five; Bugalulu; Heart of the City; City Outskirts East; I Love You; I'm An Old Cowhand (From The Rio Grande); City Outskirts West; Open Dialogue; Charukeshi Express; Cherokee (Indian Love Song). (59:55)

Personnel: Steve Smith, drums, konnakol; George Brooks, alto, tenor saxophone; Baron Browne, bass, vocals; Andy Fusco, alto saxophone; Mark Soskin, acoustic piano, Fender Rhodes; Vinny Valentino, electric guitar.

Ordering info: bfmjazz.com



Denny Zeitlin & George Marsh *Expedition*

SUNNYSIDE

★★★

Pianist Denny Zeitlin and drummer George Marsh have been working together for five decades, but they have been reviving their old partnership with a particular intensity since 2013. Zeitlin's approach to electronics harks back to the sonic palette of the late 1970s and early 1980s, influenced by the even earlier 1960s experiments of Wendy Carlos, where actual acoustic instruments are emulated by synthesizers.

Zeitlin is still playing acoustic piano as the core of these very visual pieces, while Marsh sets up a rolling pulse to support Zeitlin's near-orchestral impersonations. The cloaked synth sounds suggest the artificial presence of flutes, trumpets, basses and electric guitars. The listener might wonder whether Zeitlin is actually using his old gear from many decades ago, so time-warping is the experience.

The pieces sound like they are composed, but are actually the result of spontaneous interaction. "Shards Of Blue" has a warbly trumpet sound, then a fluty solo amid swirls of pseudo-bass, but with some sensitive acoustic piano lines weaving their way through the ensemble.

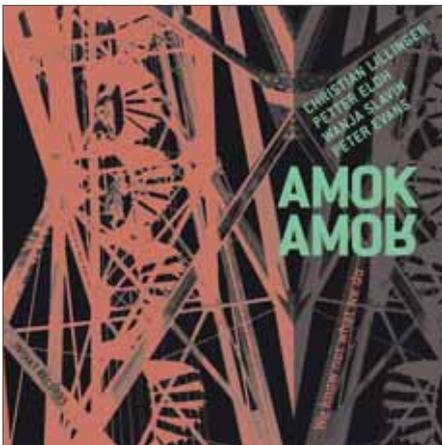
Zeitlin has a well-defined sense of imagery, as "Lives Of Clowns" invokes a capering circus feel. His would-be film soundtrack moves into "Spiral Nebula," with its ghastly choral mimicry, but a more successful cluster can be found toward the album's end, with the urgent scamper of "Shooting The Rapids" and the moody, stalking bass line of "Watch Where You Step," with its stuttering keyboard figures and skittering drums.

—*Martin Longley*

Expedition: Geysers; Thorns Of Life; Traffic; Shards Of Blue; Lives Of Clowns; Spiral Nebula; Shooting The Rapids; One Song; The Sentinel; Watch Where You Step; Not Lost In The Shuffle; The Hunt; Expedition. (75:00)

Personnel: Denny Zeitlin, piano, keyboards, hardware, virtual synthesizers; George Marsh, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: sunnysidezone.com



Amok Amor *We Know Not What We Do*

INTAKT 279

★★★★★

On its second album, this virtuosic quartet plays with time and rhythm as if coding a computer program. The core of Amok Amor resides in Berlin, and together, drummer Christian Lillinger, Swedish bassist Petter Eldh and reed player Wanja Slavin have clearly developed an astonishing connection, playing with a locked-in fury that's almost frightening. They're joined here by the New York polymath trumpeter Peter Evans, who makes stop-on-a-dime post-bop seem like child's play.

The album opens with the trumpeter's "Pulsar," a lurching, stomping dynamo in which the drummer heaves to and fro with a fractured groove. Evans and Slavin blow mind-boggling unison lines over and around the rhythmic armature, never losing the thread, even as Lillinger plays sizzling extended cymbal drones near the song's end.

Other tunes cleave closer to post-bop in their melodic shapes, but the way the quartet dices them up couldn't sound more contemporary and electric. The off-kilter time signature of Lillinger's "Enbert Amok" makes the horn patterns sound like they were being transmitted through a windy valley, with a shuddering quality seeming to break them up. But then the same rhythm plays out on the drummer's hi-hat, and the quartet settles into a jittery groove for some inspired improvising.

Subtle electronic enhancements add swirled timbres to Slavin's "Jazzfriendship" and "A Run Through The Neoliberalism," but the members of Amok Amor are so disciplined and precise that they could most certainly simulate those effects acoustically, and with uncanny results.

—Peter Margasak

We Know Not What We Do: Pulsar; Body Decline; Brandy; Alan Shorter; Trio Amok; Enbert Amok; The New Portal; Jazzfriendship; A Run Through The Neoliberalism. (46:58)

Personnel: Christian Lillinger, drums; Petter Eldh, bass; Wanja Slavin, alto saxophone; Peter Evans, trumpet.

Ordering info: intaktrec.ch

Rob Luft

Riser

EDITION 1095

★★★★½

23-year-old Londoner Rob Luft has delivered the most fully-realized and rewarding debut album from a guitarist-composer since Julian Lage's 2009 outing, *Sounding Point*. Like Lage, Luft was a teen prodigy, performing at age 15 with the National Youth Jazz Orchestra. Eight years later he has concocted a remarkably original statement that highlights his prodigious chops and his singular gifts as a composer-arranger and sonic provocateur. He's backed in his first effort by an accomplished crew of keyboardist Joe Webb, bassist Tom McCredie, drummer Corrie Dick and secret weapon Joe Wright, whose blustery tenor saxophone infuses these 10 tracks with muscularity and daring.

The title track has Luft switching to acoustic guitar and arpeggiating behind Wright's warm-toned tenor before the piece opens up to an infectious West African Highlife feel, with the guitarist cleverly muting his strings for a kind of kora effect.

Luft and Wright unite on some tight unisons on the breezy "Beware," which features a lyrical, cascading solo by the guitarist. "Dust Settles" is Luft's power ballad, replete with req-



uite sparks at the crescendo, and "Shorty" showcases Wright's audacious tenor skronking. The suite-like "We Are All Slowly Leaving" opens on an introspective note with solo acoustic guitar, then gradually builds to an intense dance pulse with some audacious blowing by Wright and some ambient-noise textures by the intrepid guitarist.

—Bill Milkowski

Riser: Night Songs; Riser; Beware; Slow Potion; Different Colours Of Silence; Dust Settles; Shorty; Blue, White And Dreaming; St. Brian I; We Are Slowly Leaving. (49:29)

Personnel: Rob Luft, guitar; Joe Wright, tenor saxophone; Joe Webb, Hammond B-3 organ, piano, harmonium; Tom McCredie, bass; Corrie Dick, drums.

Ordering info: editionrecords.com



The Road They've Taken

Rick Estrin & The Nightcats, *Groovin' In Greaseland* (Alligator 4977; 54:39 ★★★★★)

Four albums since taking over bandleading duties from Charlie Baty, Rick Estrin reigns as the hippest hepcat in all of blues land. He marries harmonica wizardry and vocals of inspired weirdness to wry, mock-peevisish songwriting on interpersonal matters that vex him to no end. Guitarist Kid Andersen keeps his level of creative energy as high as Estrin's, as on the distorted fuzz-tone instrumental salute to Link Wray called "MWAH!" The lithe antics of keyboardist Lorenzo Farrell, new drummer Alex Petterson and guest bassists (including the fabled Jerry Jemmott) provide refurbished groove-life to the conventional rhythmic conventions of Chicago and West Coast blues.

Ordering info: alligator.com

Doug MacLeod, *Break The Chain* (Reference 141; 48:12 ★★★★★)

Doug MacLeod, a craftsman of rare skill and sagacity, shares more than a few dramatic affinities with past greats as he offers his own creative parameters to the common 12-bar language. On his ninth studio effort, the Californian's distinctive, well-regulated singing and note-bending on classic guitars stimulate the keening hopefulness at the core of 11 lyrical originals performed solo or in duets, trios or quartets with five assured sidemen, including his son Jesse on guitar. One topical spoken track, "What The Blues Means To Me," affirms life's light amid the darkness.

Ordering info: referencerecordings.com

Greg Sover, *Songs Of A Renegade* (Grounded Soul; 40:43 ★★★★★)

Promising young vocalist and guitarist Greg Sover, operating in Philadelphia, is a highly charged interpreter of blues-rock who employs a thunder-and-lightning style for most of the originals on his debut album. A different musical personality, a more soulful one, emerges when he dials down the aggressive fury to put across the undisguised blues "After Me" and two tuneful hybrids, "Déjà Vu" and "Cherie."

Ordering info: gregsover.com

Jonny Lang, *Signs* (Concord 00525; 47:21 ★★★★★)

Now in his mid-thirties, Jonny Lang returns to recording after a four-year hiatus as a musician full of reconstituted feeling for the blues. He's particularly convincing when using an economy of style to skirt sentimentality in the original ballad "Bring Me Back Home." Sometimes, though, his enthusiastic singing and guitar work seem either excessive or forced in expression.

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com



Doug MacLeod at the 2015 Blues Music Awards

ARILYN STRINGER

Julian Fauth, *The Weak And The Wicked* (Electro-Fi 3452; 72:00 ★★★★★)

Torontonian Julian Fauth's personable vocals and spry blues piano push his tunes about North American folk heroes and villains along in a mostly relaxed manner, encouraging listeners to note the timelessness of stories about John Henry, Casey Jones, an unidentified Holocaust survivor and others. Depth of shade comes with occasional infusions of harmonica, guitar, trumpet and background singing.

Ordering info: electrofi.com

Mighty Joe Young, *Live From The North Side Of Chicago* (Rock Beat 3386; 41:06 ★★★★★)

At the Wise Fools Pub in 1978, Joe Young places emphasis on threadbare material like "I Can't Quit You" and "Stormy Monday Blues." The 50-year-old singer and guitarist is in good form, sweating with passionate purpose, as pianist Lafayette Leake and the others keep up with him in pleasing the exuberant crowd.

Ordering info: rockbeatrecords.com

Eli Cook, *High-Dollar Gospel* (C. R. 8 Records; 46:29 ★★★★★)

With his fittingly pockmarked voice and virility on guitars, Eli Cook sizes up the old blues music he so clearly values. A 31-year-old Virginian, he boosts his cache by personalizing Muddy Waters' "Can't Lose What You Never Had" and making his own "Mixing My Medicine" ring with earnest conviction. Other tracks on his sixth album lodge sub-currents of his sharp interest in the 1970s blues-rock guitarist Robin Trower and the more recent grunge-rock band Soundgarden. But he oversteps believable emotion coddling Bob Dylan's "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight." **DB**

Ordering info: elicook.com



Dee Dee Bridgewater *Memphis . . . Yes, I'm Ready*

DDB RECORDS/OKEH RECORDS 88985 40611

★★★★½

Jazz artists making r&b albums can sometimes yield the same dicey results as pop musicians plunging into jazz. Soul music—which often eschews prolix improvisations, advanced harmonies and protean rhythms in favor of succinct, hook-laden melodicism—can challenge the best-intentioned efforts of jazz musicians.

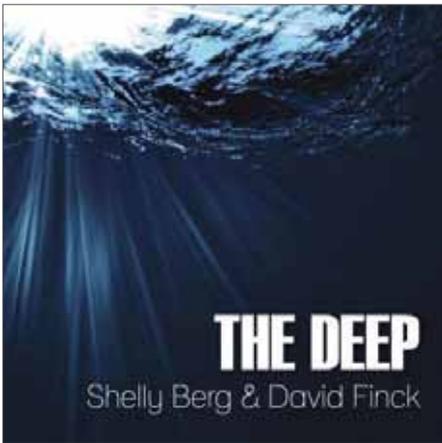
But for the incomparable Dee Dee Bridgewater, soul music isn't foreign territory. Her albums in the late '70s and early '80s leaned more toward soul-funk than the straight-ahead jazz that has defined her recent artistry. On *Memphis . . . Yes, I'm Ready*, she approaches soul, blues and gospel classics with gleeful enthusiasm. She enlisted soul-jazz saxophonist and Memphis native Kirk Whalum as co-producer, and the two recruited a mighty team of Memphis-based musicians such as legendary organist Charles Hodges, trumpeter Marc Franklin and keyboardist John Stoddart to inject some hometown authenticity into the proceedings. With Memphis being her birthplace, Bridgewater also brought a heightened level of personal poignancy.

But listeners don't need to be privy to Bridgewater's backstory to enjoy this album, thanks to her salty reading of Ann Peebles' "I Can't Stand The Rain," a touching rendition of the Otis Redding-associated "Try A Little Tenderness," an inventive makeover of Elvis Presley's "Don't Be Cruel" and a smoldering take on the Staple Singers' "Why?" —John Murph

Memphis . . . Yes, I'm Ready: Yes, I'm Ready; Giving Up; I Can't Get Next To You; Going Down Slow; Why (Am I Treated So Bad); B.A.B.Y.; The Thrill Is Gone; The Sweeter He Is, I Can't Stand The Rain; Don't Be Cruel; Hound Dog; Try A Little Tenderness; (Take My Hand) Precious Lord. (60:02)

Personnel: Dee Dee Bridgewater, vocals; Kirk Whalum, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone; John Stoddart, keyboards, Lawrence "Boo" Mitchell, electric bongo, sizzle cymbal, tambourine; Charles Hodges, Hammond B-3 organ; Jackie Clark, bass; Gary Goin, guitar; James "Bishop" Sexton, drums; Marc Franklin, trumpet; Lannie McMillan, Kirk Smothers, tenor saxophone; Kameron Whalum, trombone; Kevin Whalum, Jeanine Sharisse Norman, Candice Rayborn-Marshall, Stax Music Academy, background vocals.

Ordering info: okeh-records.com



Shelly Berg & David Finck
The Deep
 CHESKY 387
 ★★★★★½

Back in 1999, pianist Shelly Berg made a lasting impression with his album *The Will: A Tribute To Oscar Peterson*. On it, he approached Peterson's virtuosity and sense of swing on his own terms, performing a series of stunning solos. The album's release added momentum to Berg's significant careers as a pianist, educator and accompanist-arranger for singers.

From much more recent times, *The Deep* is

Behn Gillece
Walk Of Fire
 POSI-TONE 8173
 ★★★★★½

This recording tips its hat to bop in accessible tunes like the Milt Jackson homage "Bag's Mood" and the Jazztet-flavored "Break Tune," but doesn't get stuck in tradition. In 10 original compositions, vibraphonist Behn Gillece covers samba, the blues, ballads and the abstract. His skill in varying texture, configuration and approach make his third Posi-Tone album as a leader unexpectedly stimulating.

While most of the tunes call for Gillece and his six gifted associates, two feature a hornless quartet: "Reflective Current," a mellow work expressing the New Jersey native's feel for nature, and "Celestial Tidings," the joyously abstract track that caps the recording on a graceful note.

"Reflective Current," a plush ballad meditating on Gillece's home near the Delaware River, is not only very pretty, it's a nice break for music fans who still listen to albums in sequence. Bassist Clovis Nicolas is especially expressive, and keyboardist Adam Birnbaum's unusual chording is limpid and rich. Gillece turns in a lovely solo, playing off drummer Jason Tiemann's tasteful brushwork.

quite a bit different from *The Will*. Teamed with bassist David Finck (whose musical closeness to Berg often makes it seem as if he is the pianist's third hand), the program falls into different, if often overlapping, categories. There's a gently swinging version of "Dindi," the original "For John Lewis" (which does not sound at all like Lewis), Bill Evans' "Peri's Scope," a brief "Solar," the swing era standard "Just You, Just Me" (which is taken slower than usual) and Berg's complex cooker "Lunar." The duo also engages in beautiful ballad interpretations of "Why Did I Choose You," Henry Mancini's obscure "Whistling Away The Dark" and "If You Never Came To Me," three songs on which Berg embraces the melody and keeps it close by.

It is actually the other five performances that are of greatest interest. Berg and Finck create atmospheric, picturesque and generally unpredictable music on four of the pianist's originals and Enrico Pieranunzi's mysterious-sounding "Fellini's Waltz." And while this generally restrained and thoughtful set would have benefitted from the inclusion of an uptempo romp or two, the interplay between Berg and Finck is exquisite.

—Scott Yanow

The Deep: Fellini's Waltz; Solar; For Gunther; Dindi; For John Lewis; Peri's Scope; Why Did I Choose You; Glacier Lake; 3rd World; Whistling Away The Dark; Lunar; If You Never Came To Me; The Deep; Just You, Just Me. (66:44)

Personnel: Shelly Berg, piano; David Finck, bass.

Ordering info: chesky.com



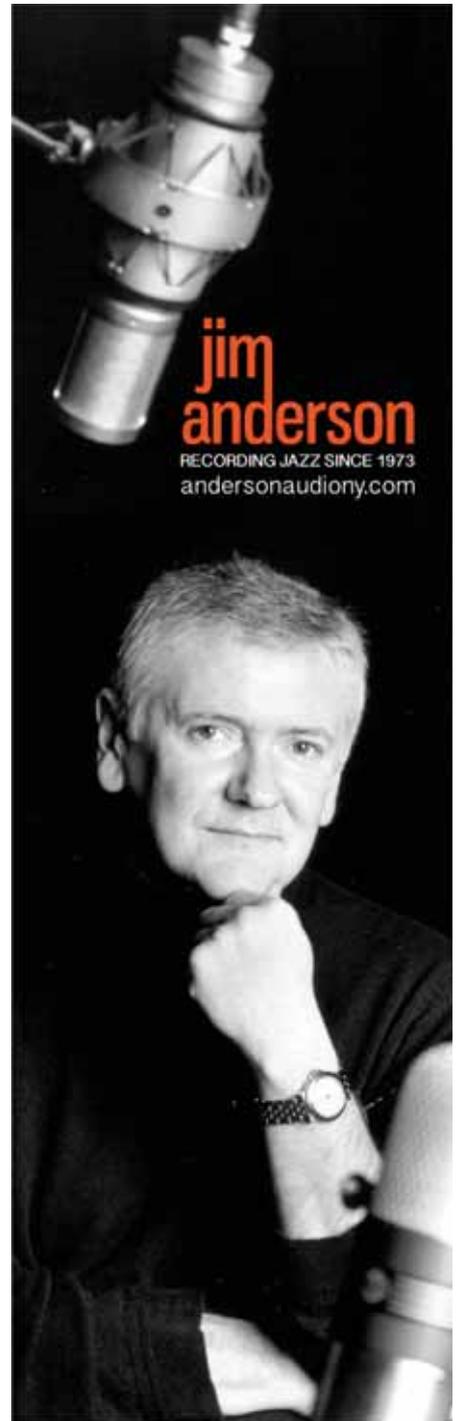
Other highlights include the bossa nova "Fantasia Brasileira," featuring deft horn accents and a spirited trombone solo by label mate Michael Dease; label mate Walt Weiskopf's soulful saxophone on the Jackson tribute; and "Battering Ram," a pushy track designed to show off everyone, including trumpeter Bruce Harris at his hottest.

—Calo Wolff

Walk Of Fire: Walk Of Fire; Fantasia Brasileira; Bag's Mood; Dauntless Journey; Battering Ram; Reflective Current; Something New; Specter; Break Tune; Celestial Tidings. (56:11)

Personnel: Behn Gillece, vibraphone; Adam Birnbaum, piano; Michael Dease, trombone; Bruce Harris, trumpet; Clovis Nicolas, bass; Jason Tiemann, drums; Walt Weiskopf, tenor saxophone.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com



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Miranda Lee Richards

Country Roads, Take Us Home

We have many terms for the music that has descended from traditional folk, bluegrass and country music. Call it alt-country, Americana, cosmic American music or something else, but the music gets harder to pin down with each passing year as its many streams join and re-join in different configurations.

One record that offers a nice distillation of all those streams is ***Transient Lullaby* (Red House Records 301; 46:57 ★★★½)** by the husband/wife duo **The Master-sons**. The title alludes to their nomadic life of touring (on their own and with Steve Earle's band), which has found them living and traveling all over the country. Chris Masterson and Eleanor Whitmore sing most of the album in unison or close harmony, and Whitmore's fiddle playing provides an expressive third voice. The duo's left-leaning politics guide several songs, including "You Could Be Wrong," written in response to Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk Kim Davis' refusal to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples, and the feminist anthem "Don't Tell Me To Smile."

Ordering info: redhousetrecords.com

In the context of 2017, it's impossible not to hear the political moment seething below the surface of **Rod Melancon's *Southern Gothic* (Blue Elan; 38:47 ★★★½)**. The Louisiana songwriter is a storyteller at heart, but in his tales of heroin addicts, prisoners and soldiers returning home, our present moment is thoroughly felt. "Praying For Light" puts a spin on the familiar country music theme of place-based identity, following the narrator as he prepares his multi-generational home for a storm, knowing that he can't afford to rebuild if it's destroyed. Melancon is at his most effective on the snarling, ragged trio of rock songs that opens the album.

Ordering info: blueelan.com

While Melancon's songs happen close to the haunted soil of his home state, San Francisco's **Miranda Lee Richards** appears to be orbiting Earth on ***Existential Beast*, (Invisible Hands Music; 48:05 ★★★)**, an album that puts the "cosmic" in cosmic American music and whose philosophical lyrics earn its title. Even at

its most upbeat, this is a dark record with strong psychedelic overtones that follow her from style to style, whether she's doing a near-acapella chant on "Back To The Source" or adding a spoken-word coda over the roiling jangle of "Golden Gate."

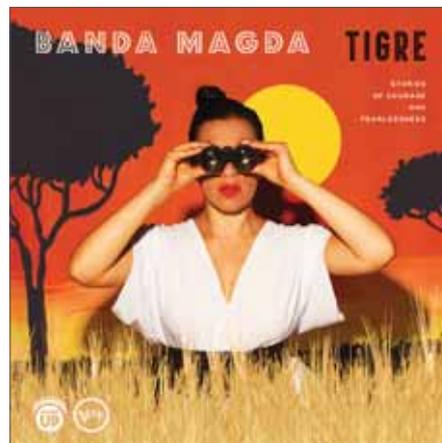
Ordering info: invisiblehands.co.uk

Further down the California coast, **CALICO the Band** offers a more down-to-earth album of traditional songs concerned with relationships on ***Under Blue Skies* (California Country; 52:54 ★★★½)**. The band's name is short for California Country, and that's appropriate, given that the Southern California milieu of Manda Mosher and Kirsten Proffitt clearly informs their music. Proffitt's "The 405" revolves around fighting through traffic to reach her boyfriend on the titular highway, an L.A. subject if there ever was one. But there's also a certain feel to the music—especially in the jangling guitars—that recalls The Eagles and Firefall.

Ordering info: calicotheband.com

It's not always necessary to update the sound to bring a sense of modernity to music rooted in tradition. Apart from the clever grafting of mariachi horns onto a bluegrass undercarriage on "Santa Fe," **Steve Martin & The Steep Canyon Rangers' *The Long-Awaited Album* (Rouder; 38:56 ★★★½)** mostly accomplishes this through a strong sense of irreverence, as one might expect from a project involving Martin. He's been putting his banjo playing on records since the 1970s, but it's only during the past decade or so that he's really buckled in for a music career. The several songs featuring his own voice are the goofiest ones here, but he mostly hands the microphone to Woody Platt, who ably handles the less on-the-nose humor and storytelling of the rest of the album. Along the way, there's plenty of room for high-speed banjo, mandolin and fiddle leads, highlighted by a quartet of ebullient instrumentals. "Promontory Point" brings things to a meditative close, making it clear that Martin's banjo playing is worth listening to regardless of his fame. **DB**

Ordering info: rouder.com



Banda Magda Tigre

VERVE/GROUNDUP

★★★★

Magda Giannikou has been playing classical piano and jazz since she was a child. Intent on becoming a film composer, she studied scoring in Athens before moving to Boston to continue her studies at Berklee. While pursuing her post-graduate degree, she met four like-minded musicians and put together a world music band, intent on blending the sounds of an orchestral string ensemble with the rhythms of South America, Africa and Eastern Europe. On *Tigre*, Banda Magda does all that and more.

Layers of African percussion, with playful triangle accents, lift up Giannikou's buoyant vocal on "Tam Tam." The track has a syncopated pulse that's equal parts samba, cumbia and reggae. "Vem Morena" is a forró, a forceful style from Northeastern Brazil that's given an interesting twist by having cellos play the part usually taken by the zabumba (bass drum). Giannikou's rapid-fire delivery of the tongue-twisting lyric adds another rhythmic element to the mix.

She sings "Le Tigre Malin" with a breathless energy that complements the tune's lively hybrid of flamenco, gypsy jazz and soft Latin pop, while waves of spacey pedal steel and shimmering vibraphones color "Venin," the only track on the album without a string section. It's anchored by the clacking, clattering percussion track and Giannikou's intense vocal. *—j. poet*

Tigre: Tam Tam; Coração; Ase Me Na Bo Overture; Ase Me Na Bo; Muchacha (Ojos De Papel); Vem Morena, Chanson Lev; Reine De Bois; Le Tigre Malin; Narration; Le Tigre Malin; Le Tigre Malin; Reprise; Venin; Thiamandi. (39:40)

Personnel: Magda Giannikou, piano, accordion, vocals; Jordan Perlson, Engin Gunaydin, drums; Marcelo Woloski, Keita Ogawa, James Shipp, percussion; Andrés Rotmistrovsky, Or Bareket, bass; Ignacio Hernandez, Bob Lanzetti, Ricardo Vogt, guitar; Justin Stanton, Mike Maher, trumpet; Chris Bullock, woodwinds; Michael League, baritone guitar, bass; Mika Mimura, vibraphone, marimba; Maeve Gilchrist, lever harp; Max ZT, hammered dulcimer; Ayumi Ueda, Giorgia Renosto, Annette Philip, Débo Ray, Juan Andres Ospina, vocals; Leni Stern, ngoni; Maria Im, Curtis Stewart, Brooke Quiggins Saulnier, Sami Merdianin, violin; Lev Zhurbini, Irena Mornchilova; Maria Jeffers, Sam Quiggins, Colin Stokes, cello.

Ordering info: bandamagda.com



Henri Texier

30 Ans

LABEL BLEU

★★★★

Henri Texier has been closely associated with Label Bleu from its inception. So when the French imprint celebrated its 30th anniversary with a landmark concert at la Maison de la Culture d'Amiens, it was natural that they picked the veteran bass player to lead the show.

The set list features a well-balanced program of Texier's most memorable compositions for the label. To revisit them, he assembled a sextet consisting of multi-instrumentalist

Michel Portal, pianist Bojan Z, guitarist Manu Codjia, alto saxophonist Thomas de Pourquery and drummer Edward Perraud.

The band opens with the anthem-like "Colonel Skopje," which underlines Texier's mighty and commanding sound. Portal's and De Pourquery's intertwined saxophones provide some powerful improvisations. The electric "Mucho Calor" brings a tidal wave of rock energy before a respite, "Don't Buy Ivory Anymore," a ballad that exemplifies Texier's political and environmental outspokenness and a major feature for Bojan Z and Codjia.

Portal's bandoneon haunts the only piece that Texier didn't pen: Francis Pichon's "Y'a Des Vautours Au Cambodge?," which was used for the soundtrack for Bertrand Tavernier's movie *Holy Lola*. The trademark "Desaparecido" is a most potent showcase for the group's lyricism. The musicians bring the proceedings to a majestic close with another familiar composition: The utterly joyous "Noises" has Portal's animated clarinet cutting through and suggesting a connection with the New Orleans tradition.

—Alain Drouot

30 Ans: Colonel Skopje; Mucho Calor; Don't Buy Ivory Anymore; Barth's Groove; Y'a Des Vautours Au Cambodge?; Desaparecido; Noises. (70:31)

Personnel: Henri Texier, bass; Michel Portal, clarinet, bass clarinet, soprano saxophone, bandoneon; Thomas de Pourquery, alto saxophone; Manu Codjia, guitar; Bojan Z, keyboards; Edward Perraud, drums.

Ordering info: label-bleu.com

Jessica Molaskey

Portraits Of Joni

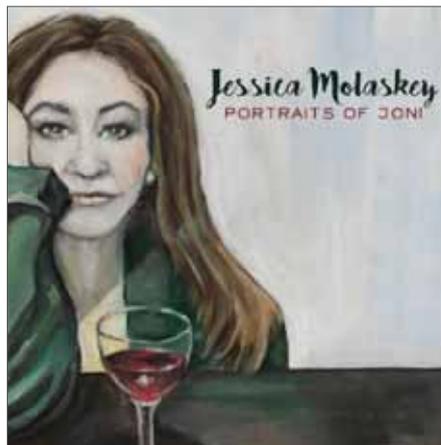
GHOSTLIGHT DELUXE 83347

★★★

Jessica Molaskey's smooth, warm voice is an appropriate vehicle for recasting the tunes of Joni Mitchell, whose work from the late 1960s and '70s is handled here with respect and fidelity to the original. At least in spirit. Because while Molaskey's treatment buffs Mitchell to a beaded gloss, it sacrifices some of the original material's spikiness in the process.

Beautifully produced by Molaskey and co-produced by her husband, John Pizzarelli, this debut album from Ghostlight Deluxe is a Great American Songbook-style project and a very polished attempt to honor a genre-bending Canadian singer-songwriter whose career has traversed spare folk, angular pop and even jazz.

Among Molaskey's most entertaining interpretations are a jaunty take on "The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines," which is sparked by Randy Brecker's muted trumpet, and a mildly funky version of "In France They Kiss On Main Street," distinguished by the twine of Pizzarelli's electric guitar and Larry Goldings' organ. Some tracks don't fare as well, like a "Raised On Robbery" that's too stripped down and a "Circle Game" that's a bit jerky despite the interplay of



keyboardist Julian Waterfall Pollack and bassist Leo Traversa.

Still, this album is a beautiful revival of one of the most original figures in second-generation rock 'n' roll.

—Carlo Wolff

Portraits Of Joni: Help Me; Dreamland/Carey; A Case Of You; The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines; Marcie; In France They Kiss On Main Street; The Last Time I Saw Richard; Raised On Robbery; Little Green; Circle Game/Waters Of March; All I Want/Blue; Chelsea Morning/Aquelas Coisas Todas; Both Sides Now; Big Yellow Taxi. (56:20)

Personnel: Jessica Molaskey, vocals; Harry Allen, tenor saxophone; Helio Alves, piano; Randy Brecker, trumpet; Duduka Da Fonseca, drums, percussion; Larry Goldings, piano, organ; Gary Haase, Mike Kam, bass; Kevin Kanner, drums; John Pizzarelli, Madeline Pizzarelli, guitar; vocals; Julian Waterfall Pollack, keyboards; Leo Traversa, electric bass.

Ordering info: ghostlightrecords.com

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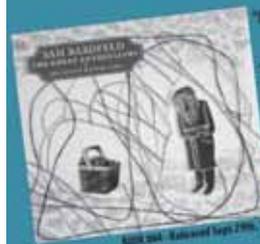


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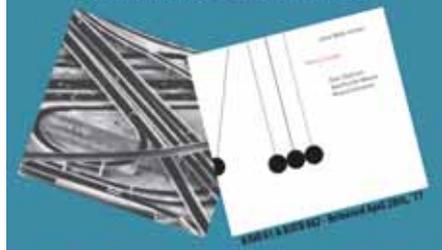


"My advice? Go where he goes."
—The Atlantic, *Billboard* 200

"Bardfeld has a loose arm and a mercurial mind." ★★★★★
—Paul de Barros, *Downbeat* Magazine

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—G. Leander Williams, *Time Out New York*

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DOWNBEAT ARCHIVES/R. HOWARD

Bebop Derivatives

The various musical trajectories of the players who shaped and, in turn, were shaped by the bebop insurgency of the late 1940s often took unexpected creative arcs. Several new releases of historic material trace different routes through the jazz mainstream.

Commanding bassist **Oscar Pettiford** (1922-'60) held down the bottom alongside Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker on 52nd Street. A decade later, he led his own mid-size bands to critical acclaim and the admiration of musicians. ***New York City 1955-1958 (Uptown 27.87; 78:40/79:32 ★★★★★)*** collects six previously unavailable radio broadcasts from Birdland to shine a needed spotlight on Pettiford's unjustly forgotten nonet, big band and sextet outfits. Collective personnel amounts to a Who's Who of Big Apple jazz, with distinctive charts by Gigi Gryce, Lucky Thompson and Benny Golson. The groups swing with hard elegance and engaging compositions. Pettiford indulges his pizzicato cello as a feature, with orchestral color added by French horns and Betty Glamann's decorous harp. A contemporary arranger could build a fascinating tribute around this band's book.

Trumpeter **Kenny Dorham** (1924-'72) was a second-wave bopper who developed into a fine stylist with a warm, personalized sound. The two broadcasts that make up ***K.D. Is Here—New York City 1962 & 1966 (Uptown 27.85; 73:49 ★★★★★)*** bracket his second, brief Blue Note tenure. The album nicely complements Uptown's previous *The Flamboyant, Queens, NY, 1963 Featuring Joe Henderson* release; like its predecessor, it's a gem. Two under-appreciated saxophonists—altoist Sonny Red and tenorist Joe Farrell—give the front lines youthful punch and verve. Dorham had taken on modal tunes, but flag-wavers like "Straight Ahead" show he could still burn through a tricky head. Dorham never wore the trum-

pet crown, but the underlying pathos in the otherwise plucky reading of "The Shadow Of Your Smile" reveals an emotional communicator who did it with a light touch.

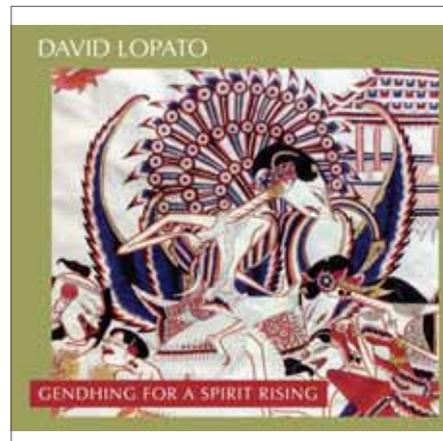
Ordering info: uptownrecords.net

Though he led and co-led a clutch of hot dates for Prestige and other labels in the '50s, bop trumpeter **Idrees Sulieman** (1923-2002) mostly recorded as a sideman (with Coleman Hawkins, Dexter Gordon and the Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band, among others). He moved to Europe in '59, and ***The 4 American Jazzmen In Tangier (Groovin' High/Sunnyside 4752; 60:00/41:22 ★★★)*** was subsequently taped in a North African radio station. Clarity of ideas and superb execution mark Sulieman's playing, but Florida pianist Oscar Dennard is the surprise, with his percussive chords that always seem to elevate the tunes. Buster Smith's melodic drums enlarge the music beyond the spoty sound limitations.

Ordering info: sunnysidezone.com

Tenor saxophonist **Joe Henderson** (1937-2001) had come through the bands of Dorham and Horace Silver, navigating modern jazz in the '60s through its post-bop derivatives. 1973's ***Elements (Jazz Dispensary; 73:49 ★★★★★)*** catches him having fun with the "cosmic jazz" vogue of the era. Unlike most who tediously wove reed tapestries, Henderson sidesteps the "sheets of sound" torrents and plays pointedly shorter clusters and fragments—free-associating, with a barbed tone. **Alice Coltrane** supplies atmospheric harp and substantial solos, as well as broadly supportive piano work, while Charlie Haden's bass grounds the music. Spacey textures from Kenneth Nash's manifold percussion and Michael White's violin contrast with Henderson's resolute expression. **DB**

Ordering info: jazzdispensary.com



David Lopato *Gendhing For A Spirit Rising*

GLOBAL COOLANT 02

★★★★½

A two-CD set, David Lopato's *Gendhing For A Spirit Rising* is unlike anything you are likely to hear this year (or any year). A multi-instrumentalist and composer, Lopato is also a syncretist who manages to combine elements of modern jazz, Western classical music and, most obviously, Javanese gamelan.

Unlike many experiments with musical fusion, Lopato's music is the genuine article, his interest in Javanese gamelan dating from the mid-1970s. And it shows. The gamelan vibe is heard in earnest on "Ladrang," a piece that combines the essence of gamelan's dreamier, mesmerizing aspects with a more Western sensibility via a memorable theme that's both driving yet tuneful. It's an ensemble number that puts its emphasis on repetition, a feature of gamelan's dizzying ways with pulse and rhythm. The blend of the Middle East and South India surfaces with the lively "Jakshi," a tune in 7 that, while it includes improvisation, comes across as more conventional, almost folkloric.

Jazz returns center stage with "This Life," an uptempo swing tune that includes another beboppy head along with some lyrical lines from Lopato. Tom Rainey's drums add just the right percussive flair. There's also strong work turned in by violinist Mark Feldman, reedist Marty Ehrlich and bassist Ratzo Harris. Indeed, it's when Lopato jumps off the piano stool that some true blending of genres emerges, a heating up as jazz and gamelan show their affinities.

—John Epland

Gendhing For A Spirit Rising: Disc One: Ladrang; This Life; Jalan Jiwa; Gendhing. (43:38) Disc Two: Beboppin' With Bella; Jakshi; Suite 911: Ambush And Aftermath/Peace March. (35:23)

Personnel: David Lopato, piano, keyboards, vibraphone, marimba, glockenspiel, Sundanese kendhang, gongs, hand claps; Marty Ehrlich, alto, soprano saxophone (2); Mark Feldman, violin (2); Lucas Pino, soprano saxophone (8), clarinet (5-8); Bill Ware, vibraphone (5, 8); William Moersch, marimba (1, 4); I.M. Harijo, Javanese rebab (4); Erik Friedlander, cello (1, 3, 4); Ratzo Harris, acoustic bass; Tom Rainey (2), Michael Sarin (3, 5-8), drums; Anne Stebinger (4), Mark Perلمان (1, 3), Javanese hand drums; John Hadfield, percussion (6).

Ordering info: davidlopato.com



Brooklyn Raga Massive *Terry Riley In C*

NORTHERN SPY

★★★★½

Terry Riley's *In C*, composed in 1964, was a watershed for minimalist music. The piece consists of 53 musical cells, each one a simple melodic phrase just minutely different from the next. Players are encouraged to repeat as well as improvise over each cell, on whatever instrument they want, for however long they please. In classical music, this level of autonomy was nearly revolutionary. The year after *In C* turned 50, Malian musicians in the Africa Express collective recorded a version in the style of traditional West African music. And now, there's a raga version.

Brooklyn Raga Massive is best known for hosting jam sessions at some of the most prestigious local venues, including Celebrate Brooklyn, Pioneer Works and Lincoln Center. Recorded live at Joe's Pub in Manhattan, Brooklyn Raga Massive's *Terry Riley In C* is the group's latest release. Predictably, it differs from the source material. Riley's original 1968 recording is faster and more energetic. While Riley and his ensemble play each note clearly and discretely, BRM frequently blends the notes of each cell together, so that sustain is freely flowing in every direction. Occasionally, this made it difficult to distinguish between cells; often it sounded like they were creating brand new melodic cells altogether (not that Riley would have minded). Sitar, bansuri, oud and other traditional Indian instruments—not to mention jazz representatives like guitar and upright bass—are thoroughly sonorous, right up to the applause 75 minutes in. —Eli Zeger

Terry Riley In C: Raga Bihag Alap; Cells 1–8; Cells 9–11; Cells 12–13; Cells 14–16; Cells 17–21; Cells 22–27; Cells 28–34; Cells 35–41; Cells 42–47; Cell 48; Cells 49–53 (Jhalla). (75:00)

Personnel: Neel Murgai, sitar, vocal; Arun Ramamurthy, Trina Basu, Ken Shoji, violin; Andrew Shantz, Timothy Hill, vocals; Josh Geisler, Eric Fraser, bansuri; Sameer Gupta, Roshni Samlal, tabla; Kane Mathis, oud; Adam Maalouf, cello; Michael Gam, bass; Lauren Crump, cajon; David Ellenbogen, guitar; Max ZT, hammered dulcimer; Vin Scialla, riq, frame drum; Aaron Shragge, dragon mouth trumpet

Ordering info: brooklynragamassive.bandcamp.com

Bruce Harris

Beginnings

POSI-TONE

★★★★

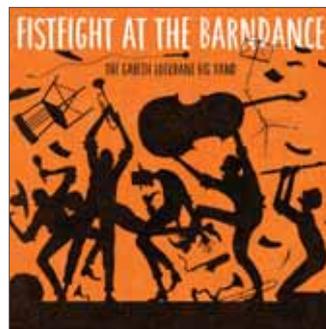
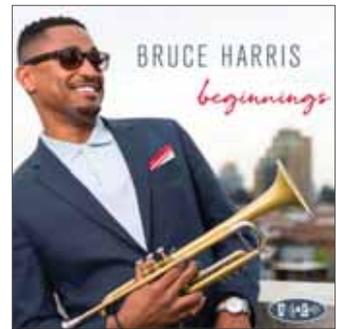
While a growing trend in jazz today is to steer clear of the past, trumpeter Bruce Harris instead relishes in it with an unabashed exuberance on his energetic new album.

Marking his debut as a bandleader, the New York native has already established himself on the jazz scene, sharing the bandstand with the likes of Barry Harris, Myron Walden and Herlin Riley. In 2013, Harris was tapped by Wynton Marsalis for the Broadway musical *After Midnight*, and has been a mainstay at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Undoubtedly drawing from his own beginnings in the Bronx, where he used to listen to his grandfather play alto saxophone, Harris chooses selections that highlight the saxophone—played here by a rotating crew of Dmitry Baevsky, Frank Basile, Andy Farber, Grant Stewart and Jerry Weldon—supported by pianist Michael Weiss, bassist Clovis Nicolas and drummer Pete Van Nostrand. On a take of Harold Arlen's "Ill Wind," Harris' muted horn lingers inside the haunting lyrics, giving ample room for his trumpet and Weldon's tenor to dance. —Shannon J. Effinger

Beginnings: Ask Questions; Ill Wind; Mr. Blakey; Snowbound; The Step; Do U Lie?; Una Noche Con Francis; So Near, So Far. (47:00)
Personnel: Bruce Harris, trumpet; Dmitry Baevsky, alto saxophone (1, 7); Andy Farber (3, 5, 7, 8); Jerry Weldon (2), Grant Stewart (3, 5), tenor saxophone; Frank Basile, baritone saxophone (1, 3, 7); Clovis Nicolas, bass; Michael Weiss, piano; Pete Van Nostrand, drums.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com



Gareth Lockrane Big Band

Fistfight At The Barndance

WHIRLWIND RECORDINGS

★★★★½

British flautist Gareth Lockrane leads an air-tight 20-piece ensemble through an 11-song program that compresses a century's worth of big band history into an hour of dynamic new music.

As a composer, Lockrane boasts an impressive musical vocabulary, drawing proportionately from jazz's fringe and center. Ellington and Basie are clear stylistic influences, but

equally prominent are the designs of Eric Dolphy and Frank Wes. Most importantly, the album title is a tribute to Lockrane's late father, a U.K. blues musician whose signature rolling harmonica riff inspired the title track, a crisp yet deeply felt tune that's full of crackling energy.

From the Golden Age balladry of "We'll Never Meet Again" to the 1970s lope of "Stutterfunk," *Fistfight At The Barndance* covers a vast and harmonically rewarding range. —Brian Zimmerman

Fistfight At The Barndance: Fistfight At The Barndance; Do It; We'll Never Meet Again; On The Fly; Stutterfunk; Forever Now; Aby/Tinia; Roots; Mel's Spell; One For Junia; 5B3 Boogie. (60:17)

Personnel: Gareth Lockrane, flutes; Steve Fishwick, Henry Collins, Andy Greenwood, Tom Walsh, trumpets; Sam Mayne, James Gardiner-Bateman, Graeme Blevins, Nadim Teimoori, Richard Shepherd, woodwinds; Mark Nightingale, Barnaby Dickinson, Trevor Mires, Barry Clements, trombones; Mike Outram, guitar; Ross Stanley, keyboards; Ryan Trebilcock, bass; Ian Thomas, drums; Hugh Wilkinson, percussion.

Ordering info: whirlwindrecordings.com



Brandon Seabrook *Die Trommel Fatale*

NEW ATLANTIS RECORDS

★★★★½

The aura surrounding New York guitarist Brandon Seabrook's *Die Trommel Fatale* is one of German Expressionism, but his music is equally concerned with hardcore thrash metal, free improvisation and electronic abstraction.

These are the diverse elements, but Seabrook's highly controlled, manic concoction refines all parts into a disciplined collage. In other words, the pieces luxuriate in the freedoms and textures of chaos, while being point-

Markus Reuter/ SONAR/Tobias Reber *Falling For Ascension*

RONIN RHYTHM 018

★★★★½

If you set aside considerations of popularity and commercial success, this album represents something of a supergroup, with outstanding musicians coming together to make synergistic magic. The results are enjoyable without being particularly notable.

This is primarily a meeting of minds between Reuter and SONAR: leading prog-rock guitarist meets leading minimalist rock group. Put out by Nik Bärtsch's Ronin Rhythm label, Reuter and SONAR mostly talk at each other, with little possibility for enlightenment.

The differing styles and concepts turn out to be pleasant acquaintances, not intimates. Each of the generically titled tracks is full of prog grooves, with Reuter's Robert Fripp-influenced lead voice adding a new element to SONAR's conception. Each is an exercise in basic song form parsed through odd meters and shifting pulses. ("Condition I" lays out the aesthetic with a riff laid over an eighth-note beat, which is gradually and cyclically foreshortened via a diminishing numerator.)

Electronicist Tobias Reber adds complexity via digitized textures, and Reuter explores

edly directed and coordinated, in a fashion pioneered mainly by saxophonist-composer John Zorn.

The title is translated from German as "The Fatal Drum," ostensibly being concerned with percussiveness. (The album features twinned drum kits—without cymbals—manned by Sam Ospovat and Dave Treut.) In actuality, the dominant voices are Seabrook's multiplied guitars, and the electronic and vocal manipulations of Chuck Bettis. An orchestral undercurrent is provided by Marika Hughes (cello) and Eivind Opsvik (bass).

The doubled drums provide a micro-detailed thunder (or thin clatter), combining strength and finesse. "Abscessed Pettifogger" has a sheer confrontational potency, a gutsy complexity to its gush of activity. The careening momentum of "The Greatest Bile" is interrupted for completely solo bass and cello episodes. Toward the end, when the disturbing voice of Bettis returns, the mood can only be described as electro-Brechtian. These stunning pieces are startlingly spiky, manic almost beyond control.

—Martin Longley

Die Trommel Fatale: Clangorous Vistas; Emotional Cleavage; Abscessed Pettifogger; Shamans Never R.S.V.P.; Litany Of Turncoats; The Greatest Bile Part 1; The Greatest Bile Part 2; Rhizomatic; Quickstep Grottesquerie; Beautiful Flowers. (40:27)

Personnel: Brandon Seabrook, guitar; Chuck Bettis, throat, electronics; Marika Hughes, cello; Eivind Opsvik, bass; Sam Ospovat; Dave Treut, drums.

Ordering info: newatlantisrecords.bandcamp.com



dissonance that stands at a tangent from the main path. That path can be gripping at any tempo or in any meter, like on "Condition IV" and the extended coda, "Unconditional." But the music depends so much on pure repetition and on basic additive minimalism that the level of interest and satisfaction comes down to how inspired the riffs are, rather than the quality of structural thinking or playing.

—George Grella

Falling For Ascension: Condition I; Condition II; Condition III; Condition IV; Condition V; Condition VI; Unconditional. (69:00)

Personnel: Markus Reuter, Touch Guitars U8, soundscapes; Stephan Thelen, Bernhard Wagner, guitars; Christian Kuntner, bass guitar; Manuel Pasquinielli, drums; Tobias Reber, electronics.

Ordering info: roninrhythmrecords.bandcamp.com



Laura Campisi *Double Mirror*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★

Laura Campisi is something else, an unusual jazz vocalist/songwriter from Palermo, Sicily, by way of New York City, with avant-garde leanings. On her debut album she attempts something fairly daring: singing against a stark background of electric bass and drums. While the great Sheila Jordan and a few others have sung and recorded in vocal/bass duos, a vocal trio of this sort, without a chordal instrument to cushion the vocalist, is a tricky format that calls to mind piano-less saxophone trios. For the singer, it's like working without a net and requires, among other things, collaborating closely with the bassist to suggest the harmonic changes.

Fortunately, Campisi pulls it off, thanks to her sweet-toned, sturdy voice, precise pitch, lilted delivery and first-rate support from two duos: Ameen Saleem on bass and the estimable Greg Hutchinson on drums; and the Italian duo of Gianluca Renzi on electric bass and Flavio Li Vigni on drums.

Campisi is well known as a singer of Sicilian songs; she has also gained experience singing jazz in Europe, America and South America. On this album, she sings seven of her own moody, interesting compositions and an eclectic mix of standards (Porter, Gershwin) and contemporary pop (Björk, Jeff Buckley and even Lou Reed's "Venus In Furs"). Her takes on "Love For Sale" and "I Loves You, Porgy" and Björk's "Hyperballad" are worth hearing, as are her own compositions, which range from introspective to sexy to surreal.

—Allen Morrison

Double Mirror: Chorus Angelorum; Love For Sale; Luckier; Hyperballad; Ironman; Nardis; The More You Know; I Loves You, Porgy; Here Where I Stand; Venus In Furs; Mojo Pin; Al Risveglio; Morningside. (50:40)

Personnel: Laura Campisi, vocals; Ameen Saleem, double bass; Gianluca Renzi, electric bass; Greg Hutchinson, drums; Flavio Li Vigni, drums; Zach Brock, violin (2); Giovanni Falzone, trumpet (3); Jonathan Scales, steel pan (5); Martin Pantyrer, baritone saxophone (9); Vincent Herring, alto saxophone (12); Emilio D. Miller, percussion (13).

Ordering info: lauracampisi.com

Johnny O'Neal In The Moment

SMOKE SESSIONS 1707

★★★★½

There's something endearingly old-fashioned about Johnny O'Neal. As a pianist, he's a throwback to the virtuosity of Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson; as a singer, he evokes the suave, romantic masculinity of Joe Williams or Nat "King" Cole.

In The Moment, O'Neal's first studio album in 15 years, is both a celebration of that aesthetic, and an object lesson in its limitations. Sure, he pours on the charm when tossing off the Williams number "She Doesn't Know (I Love Her)," but what he delivers is more artful phrasing than interpretive insight. And while "The Folks Who Live On The Hill," one of two solo piano turns, wonderfully showcases his melodic invention, "Please Be Kind" is nearly undone by his penchant for pianistic flash.

Where the album shines brightest is when he turns to r&b. O'Neal manages to make Earth, Wind & Fire's "After The Love Has Gone" and The Stylistics' "People Make The World Go 'Round" sound like jazz standards, while his trio maintains a comfortable middle ground between swing and soul.

—J.D. Considine

In The Moment: Sweet Monk; Guilty; Churchill Grounds; Saving All My Love For You; After The Love Is Gone; She Doesn't Know (I Love Her); Slow Hot Wind; Please Be Kind; The Folks Who Live On The Hill; CGLS; People Make The World Go 'Round; Sunday In New York; Trav'lin' Light; Just A Dream (On My Mind); Being In Love With You; Tropical Breeze. (71:54)

Personnel: Johnny O'Neal, piano (except 13), vocals (2, 6, 7, 13, 15); Ben Rubens, bass (except 8, 9); Itay Morchi, drums (except 8, 9); Roy Hargrove, trumpet (1, 2, 6, 12, 13); Grant Stewart, tenor saxophone (1, 2, 6, 12, 13).

Ordering info: smokesessionsrecords.com



Dave Stryker Strykin' Ahead

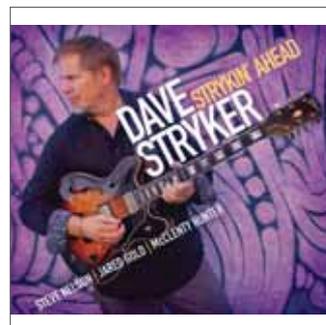
STRIKEZONE 8815

★★★★

Dave Stryker is a multi-talented and creative jazz guitarist, with a body of work that comprises fusion, funk and straightahead. His earliest influences were the blues masters Freddie King, Albert King and B.B. King, as well as the pre-pop Eric Clapton, and he counts "Brother" Jack McDuff and Stanley Turrentine among his mentors.

On his new album, Stryker performs four originals and five covers, including Wayne Shorter's "Footprints," Billy Strayhorn's "Passion Flower," Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring," the Broadway showtune "Who Can I Turn To," and the bebop classic "Donna Lee." Overall, the album casts a clear, warm glow, with plenty of cohesive interplay between Stryker, organist Jared Gold and drummer McCleenty Hunter. Vibraphonist Steve Nelson augments the group with superb improvisations and chordal collaboration. While influenced by many jazz guitarists, Stryker remains true to his own vision. Wes Montgomery and Kenny Burrell may be touchstones, but Stryker forges his own sound throughout. He tours frequently, so if you have the opportunity to see him, don't miss it.

—Martin Z. Kasdan Jr.



Strykin' Ahead: Shadowboxing; Footprints; New You; Passion Flower; Strykin' Ahead; Blues Down Deep; Joy Spring; Who Can I Turn To; Donna Lee. (59:44)

Personnel: Dave Stryker, guitar; Jared Gold, organ; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; McCleenty Hunter, drums.

Ordering info: davestryker.com

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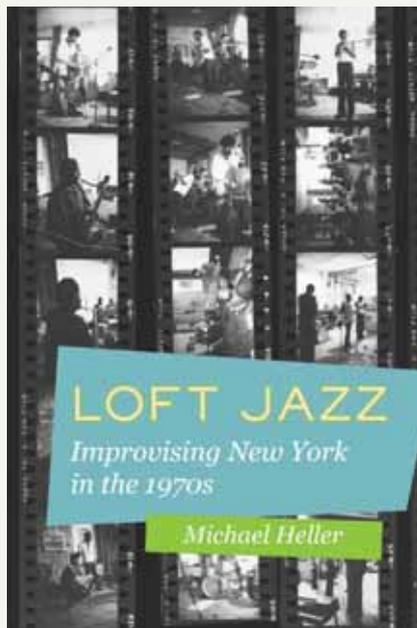
Lofty Dreams in the Big City

New York City's Loft Jazz scene, which flourished in the 1970s in Lower Manhattan, casts a fascinating mystique. It tells the story of various jazz artists creating their own performance and recording opportunities in the face of economic turmoil and diminishing prospects in the mainstream jazz scene. Instead of relying too much on the established record and club industry, musicians such as Sam Rivers, Burton Greene, Billy Bang, William Parker and Cooper-Moore created their own venues by moving into large, abandoned, deindustrialized warehouses and factories that provided ample space to make music on their own accord, which often involved inexpensive concerts and long, collaborative jam sessions.

Michael C. Heller brings plenty of analytical verve to that period as he attempts to reconstruct that scene's arc with ***Loft Jazz: Improvising New York in the 1970s*** (University of California Press). But he does so without glamorizing the structural environments of the performances and socio-economic climate that prompted many artists to take such quixotic routes. Nor does he portray any musician associated with the Loft Jazz scene in a hagiographic manner. Heller's scholarly approach gives readers insight into the various socio-political, economic, racial and artistic touchstones that helped shape the scene, while also providing analysis on New York City's gentrification efforts beginning in the late '70s, which transform the social fabric of Lower Manhattan.

The book is divided into two parts—Histories and Trajectories—with individual chapters exploring the notions of freedom, deindustrialization and the legacy of Loft Jazz. Because of Heller's ethnomusicological background, his writing can appear overly academic; each chapter begins with effusive expositions concerning the methodologies behind the research and various ideological concepts.

That may certainly hinder readers hoping for a more straightforward recollection, but Heller does provide vivid portals into the scene's history. The opening chapter, "Influences, Antecedents, Early Engagements," is particularly illuminating, as it tells of how precursors to Loft Jazz—such as Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), St. Louis' Black Artists Group (BAG), Charles Mingus and Max Roach's Jazz Artists Guild, Bill Dixon's historic 1964 "October Revolution in Jazz" and the Jazz Composers Guild—informed many of the scene's artistic goals. The chapter gives great detail of the rise of the New York



Musicians Organization, a loose-knit group that included James DuBoise, Sultan, Milford Graves and Rashied Ali, who banded together in protest of the 1972 Newport Jazz Festival being relocated to the Big Apple. Much of the complaints around the Newport Jazz Festival centered on the fact that it was presenting the music in such institutions as Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall and the Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall instead of communities in which more black people lived.

The chapter entitled "Freedom" is also quite gripping, as it discusses the dueling approaches of collectivism versus communalism in terms of how various musicians approached their business strategies, artistic pursuits and economic survival strategies. Other self-explanatory chapters—"Community," "Space" and "Archives"—provide rich insights into how various musicians interacted with one another and the wider New York community. There are also explorations into gender politics (particularly concerning the musical aspirations of women in the Loft Jazz scene) and the nature and importance of recording and archiving for historic purposes.

Heller wisely eschews codifying the music in the scene as one distinct idiom. While the Loft Jazz scene is commonly associated with the avant-garde, especially "energy music," Heller notes that many musicians exhibited catholic tastes, which also included swing and bebop. Still, the book might resonate a little more if he attempted to illuminate how the diverse music *sound-ed* as much as he did on the various factors that created it.

Ordering info: ucpress.edu



Wooten/Chambers/ Franceschini *Trypnotyx*

VIX RECORDS

★★★★½

While the brief "Take Off" sets the stage, it's track number two that gets things flying. "Dc10" is a marvelous mashup of music, vocals, spoken-word and special effects that sets the tone for *Trypnotyx's* high-energy aesthetic. This is electric bassist Victor Wooten's 10th recording and first in five years, and it finds him leading a trio with drummer Dennis Chambers and reed player Bob Franceschini. But of course Wooten has more in store: There's the added presence of singer Varijashree Venugopal and comedian/sound-effects artist Michael Winslow.

From track to track, the music just seems to—excuse the pun—fly by. The beboppy "Liz & Opie" offers some serious drumming from Chambers, whose large, energetic sound is recorded with a restraint that lets us hear the detail as much as the heat of his playing.

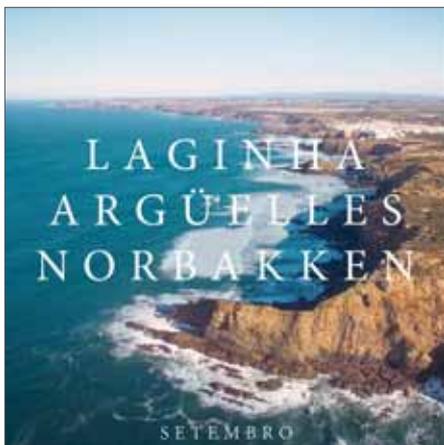
But *Trypnotyx* is a showcase for all three main players. "Cruising Altitude" eases the pace a bit, its slow, grinding funk a chance to hear some delicate plucking from Wooten and soulful horn from Franceschini. By the time we get to "Funky D," with Winslow talking about "gettin' that funky beat," the method becomes clear: This is party music with style. It's lightweight yet polished in the best sense—artful, precise, focused and persistent.

That said, the program drags at points, the exhilaration felt with "Take Off" settling into a kind of midair malaise. "A Little Rice And Beans" is a nice workout but feels like a detour. Ditto for the generic ballad "Caught In The Act." "Cupid," meanwhile, has a memorable melody and message, furthered along by Franceschini's soaring flute. —John Ephland

Trypnotyx: Take Off; Dc10; Liz & Opie; Cruising Altitude; Funky D; The 13th Floor; A Little Rice And Beans; A Soul Full Of Ballad; Caught In The Act; One Hand; Trypnotyx; Final Approach; Cupid; Landing. (66:40)

Personnel: Victor Wooten; electric bass, acoustic bass, drum programming, effects; Bob Franceschini, tenor saxophone, flute, EWI, Roland Aerophone; Dennis Chambers, drums.

Ordering info: vixrecords.com



Laginha/Argüelles/ Norbakken

Setembro

EDITION 1099

★★★

This beguiling trio brings together three beautifully measured musicians from across Europe to create sounds of a deeply meditative, lyric nature, forging disparate approaches into a ruminative statement that succinctly expresses many of the guiding principles of jazz from the continent. Most of the pieces were composed by the Portuguese pianist Mário Laginha, who brings a stately elegance to the proceedings,

Vivian Buczek

Ella Lives

PROPHONE 168

★★★

In the year of her centennial, there are many recordings being made that pay homage to the mighty Ella Fitzgerald. Although she is impossible to top, the best of these new projects cast a new light on the First Lady of Song and her artistry.

In the liner notes of *Ella Lives*, the fine Swedish vocalist Vivian Buczek states that Fitzgerald was her main inspiration for becoming a jazz singer. That influence is obvious. Buczek has a pleasing voice, never falters on long tones and is perfectly in tune. However, throughout much of the album, she simply sings the set of warhorses fairly straight, keeping her improvising to a minimum. While Buczek scats a little on “It’s Alright With Me” and “Lady Be Good” and imitates a horn for a couple of choruses on “Things Ain’t What They Used To Be,” she mostly plays it safe.

Pianist Martin Sjostedt contributed the arrangements, which utilize vibraphonist Mattias Stahl on six of the 11 songs and one or two horns on six numbers. Some of the pieces (particularly “Yesterdays,” “Caravan,” the beginning of “Lady Be Good” and “Tenderly”)

carving out space with chords that seem to hang in the air. His shapes are often delivered in unison with British saxophonist Julian Argüelles, who first made his name in the influential band Loose Tubes, and has remained a key figure on the London scene in the decades since. In some ways, the wildcard is Helge Andreas Norbakken, a Norwegian drummer conversant in world music and free improvisation.

On the pianist’s spry “Fisicamente,” Norbakken’s largely cymbal-free patter seems to use frame drums to simulate the pulsing and chattering of Indian tabla, while his partners play buoyant grooves that more explicitly spell out time. The music tends toward tuneful introspection, with a post-fusion aesthetic that wouldn’t have sounded out of place on ECM in the 1980s. There are thrilling moments when the trio shakes free of its restraint and polish, such as “Serralves,” a surging piece that toggles between twitchy motion and freedom. A piece like “Coisas Da Terra” is more driving and propulsive, but the airiness of Argüelles’ soprano and the shuffling piano patterns make it all feel rather weightless. It’s lovely, but I wish there was more friction.

—Peter Margasak

Setembro: Mãos Na Parede; Fisicamente; O Primeiro Dia; Serralves; Perto De Alguém; Coisas Da Terra; Hugger Muger; Yada Yada; Horn Please; Lugar Bem Situado. (TK:TK)

Personnel: Mário Laginha, piano; Julian Argüelles, soprano, tenor saxophones; Helge Andreas Norbakken, drums.

Ordering info: editionrecords.com



are adventurous, while others are more predictable. The music swings well, the musicianship of the instrumentalists is excellent and the vibraphone adds a lot to some of the ensembles.

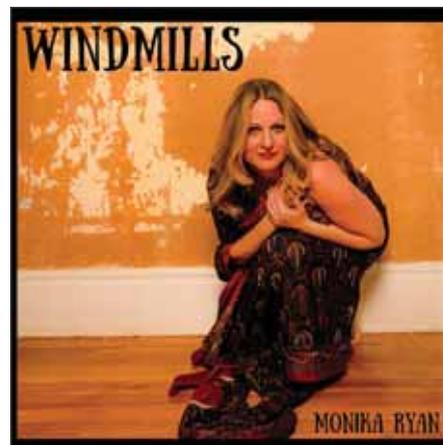
It all makes for a pleasant set of music. Perhaps next time Buczek will take some chances and dig into songs that afford more freedom.

—Scott Yanow

Ella Lives: You’d Be So Nice To Come Home To; Yesterdays; Prelude To A Kiss; The Man I Love; It’s Alright With Me; The Very Thought Of You; Caravan; Lady Be Good; Tenderly; Misty; Things Ain’t What They Used To Be. (67:53)

Personnel: Vivian Buczek, vocals; Martin Sjostedt, piano; Niklas Fernqvist, bass; Johan Löfcrantz Ramsay, drums; Mattias Stahl, vibes; Fredrik Lindborg, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone; Peter Asplund, trumpet, flugelhorn; Karl-Martin Almquist, tenor saxophone.

Ordering info: naxosdirect.com



Monika Ryan

Windmills

335 RECORDS

★★★★½

Long ago Marilyn and Alan Bergman had the good sense to attach their wise and worldly words to the music of a few jazz-literate composers. I’d wager that that’s why, among the few songs that have made it into the shrinking canon of modern jazz standards in recent decades, Bergman tunes have an unusually high presence.

On *Windmills* singer Monika Ryan gives us a small songbook of this material. Like most standards with a jazz pedigree, none of these were instant hits, even though some were from popular films. But some of them we heard so often from so many different artists over so long a time that we couldn’t remember when they weren’t standards. Ryan is a versatile vocalist and works the material in that chic space where the frontiers of jazz, theater and cabaret converge. The actress in her wrings a brooding, aching drama out of “The Summer Knows” and “The Windmills Of Your Mind,” while the jazz singer in her glides over “Cinnamon And Clove” like a Brazilian breeze.

She aligns nicely with her supporting septet, though it prefers to accompany lightly without the firm footprint of a full ensemble. Instead Ryan shares different songs with individual soloists. Keith Loftis’s soprano seasons “Windmills,” while trombonist Clark Gayton contributes poised solos on “Cinnamon” and “I Have The Feeling I’ve Been Here Before.” And Brad Goode’s muted trumpet on “So Many Stars” boils softly under the churning rhythm, implying a concealed potency that never steps fully into the open. They provide the jazz sensibility that Ryan draws on.

—John McDonough

Windmills: The Windmills Of Your Mind; Cinnamon And Clove; The Summer Knows; I Have The Feeling I’ve Been Here Before; Moonlight; What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life; So Many Stars; Where Do You Start; His Eyes, Her Eyes; Love Like Ours. (47:30)

Personnel: Monika Ryan, vocals; Keith Loftis, saxophones; Brad Goode, trumpet; Clark Gayton, trombone; Nick Rolfe, keyboards; David O’Rourke, guitar; Rene Hart, bass; Alvester Garnett, drums.

Ordering info: monikaryan.com

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DRUM SCHOOL



THE SPACE BETWEEN

THE NOTES

By Mark Guilliana
Page 74

MASTER CLASS
By Jerome Jennings
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PRO SESSION
By Billy Jones
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TRANSCRIPTION
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TOOLSHED
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Drum School

DEVE

with the

By Mark Guiliana

LOPING a strong RELATIONSHIP

Space Between the Notes

Photo By Shervin Lainez

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MODERN MUSICIAN IS TO PLAY WITH A STRONG GROOVE AND MAKE THE MUSIC FEEL GOOD. THIS REQUIRES A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF RHYTHM AND THE ABILITY TO PLAY A CONSISTENT PULSE IN A WAY THAT BEST FITS THE MUSIC.

Pulse, or tempo, refers to the speed at which a passage of music is played, and that speed is defined by the space between the notes. Developing a strong relationship with this space is essential in order to play a solid pulse.

An effective way to get to know this space is by exploring various subdivisions or rates. The more ways we can organize this space, the more confident and personal our groove will become.

A strong and inspiring feel is only the beginning. It is the choices that we make—what to play, what not to play, dynamics and sound—that will begin to identify our musical personalities.

Let's explore ways to not only build a confident pulse, but to also create unique and personal statements on the drumset.

THE LOOP

When I was younger, my pulse was fairly consistent, as long as I was playing one rate for an extended period of time. However, anytime I needed to switch to another rate, the overall feeling of what I was playing would suffer because I hadn't yet developed a strong enough relationship with each rate individually to be able to move between them with confidence. Improving this area of my playing quickly became the priority of all my prac-

ticing, and I found that the more simple the exercise, the more effective the results.

The exercise shown in Example 1 on page 78, which we will refer to as The Loop, has been the template for the majority of my practicing over the last 15 years. The Loop features three different rates: eighth notes, triplets and 16th notes. In this example, each rate is to be played for one measure each, but in your own practice, you may choose to play each rate as long as you'd like.

This is a simple concept, but that doesn't mean it is easy. Every time I sit down to work on this I discover new ways in which it can be improved: more relaxed, more precise, more confident, etc.

Start slow and focus on precise placement of each note. It may be more helpful to internalize where the notes "belong" at a slower tempo since there is more space between the notes. However, it is also very important to explore how The Loop feels and sounds at a wide variety of tempos, as they will all have their own unique challenges.

(Although our goal in these exercises is to play with precision, it doesn't always mean that precise placement is the most musical choice. By having a strong connection to where the notes "belong," we can use our intuition and taste to place them where we believe it best fits the music.)

The Mark Guillana Jazz Quartet's new album is titled *Jersey*.



The key to moving between the rates with accuracy is internalizing where the second note of each belongs. The first note of each rate is always the same (the downbeat), so it isn't until we hear or play the second note that the rate can be identified. If the second note is where it belongs, we are set up to play the remaining notes of the rate with accuracy as well. By examining these rates with great detail, we can start to gain confidence in our note placement and overall groove.

With this in mind, let's play The Loop

again, but this time with only the first two notes of each beat. See Example 2.

Although we are essentially still playing the same exercise, a completely new feeling is created by removing some notes. This idea of leaving space opens a new door of musical possibilities.

LEAVING SPACE

One of the most musical decisions we can make is to leave space. Silence is an incredibly powerful tool, and what you choose not to play is as valuable a musical choice as any-

thing you choose to play.

A strong inner pulse is the key to leaving space. We don't want to have to play all of the notes in order to keep a consistent pulse. We have to work hard to make the notes that we don't play of equal value as the the notes that we do play.

Each rate has a finite amount of ways to leave space within one beat. There are four different ways to play one beat of eighth notes, eight different ways to play one beat of triplets and 16 different ways to play one beat of 16th notes. These variations can all have a unique impact on the music, and it is important to develop a strong relationship with each individual option. Quite often, we play things that are the most comfortable to us, so we need to try to get equally as comfortable with all of them. The more options we have, the better.

With the combination of a strong inner pulse and deep understanding of each rate and its variations, you are on your way to start creating your own phrases inside the music.

CREATING YOUR OWN PHRASES

There are two different ways you can build your own phrases: composition and improvisation. You may decide in advance what you choose to play (composition), or you may create new phrases in the moment (improvisation). Using The Loop as our template, employ as many different rate variations as you can while creating new phrases. The more of your

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Jerome Jennings

THE BEAST

JEROME JENNINGS



THE BEAST

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—Keaton Lamle, *Modern Drummer Magazine*

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—Mike Greenblatt, *Classicalite.com*

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—NPR Jazz Critics Poll and *New York Magazine*

"Best debut of 2016."

—*New York City Jazz Record*

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MARK GUILIANA

EXPLORING YOUR CREATIVITY ON THE DRUMSET



Drummer-composer Mark Guiliana is the author of *Exploring Your Creativity on the Drum Set* (Hudson Music), which addresses themes presented in this article. The Mark Guiliana Jazz Quartet's new album, *Jersey* (Motéma), features saxophonist Jason Rigby, pianist Fabian Almazan and bassist Chris Morrissey. Along with leading his own acoustic and electric groups, Guiliana has performed/recorded with Brad Mehldau, David Bowie, Donny McCaslin, John Scofield, Meshell Ndegeocello, Lionel Loueke and Gretchen Parlato. Visit him online at markguiliana.com.

own personality you can inject into this exercise, the more you will learn about the musical statements that are unique to you. Examples 3–6 show what The Loop can sound like as we start to leave space.

There are many new territories to explore from here, but a logical next step would be to move these ideas around the drumset. By changing the orchestration of these phrases, you can create a wealth of new emotions using this simple template, and in doing so get yourself closer to making statements that are truly yours. Examples 7–10 show some orchestrated versions of the previous examples.

Let's be clear that although these examples are beginning to look like potentially useful musical phrases, they are still being constructed inside the confines of a restrictive exercise. Of course, your expression should not be limited to The Loop. Explore how switching between the rates in different places can expand your vocabulary. As you build the confidence to create phrases this way in a musical situation, notice how these choices are affecting the music and your fellow musicians.

The absolute priority is to support the music the best you can at every moment. But with a confident pulse, the ability to leave space and a creative mind, these tools may well lead you on the path to creating a new language that communicates the true you.

As the late Fred Rogers, host of the long-running children's TV show *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, once said: "Discovering the truth about ourselves is a lifetime's work, but it's worth the effort." **DB**

Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



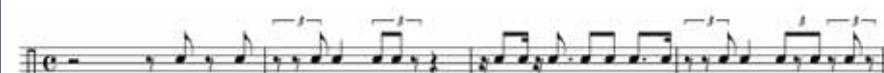
Example 4



Example 5



Example 6



Example 7



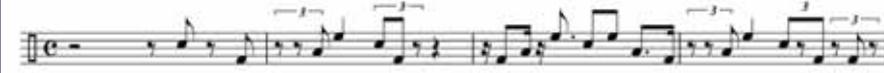
Example 8



Example 9



Example 10





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Success Is in the Callback

Drummers across generations and geographical locales ask my advice on what it takes to make that move to New York and maintain a consistent stream of work in the field. They ask questions like: How do I create a steady flow of income? How do I get nice gigs? What's the formula? Is there a formula? Depending on what stage one is in his or her career, the questions and challenges are different.

One of my objectives before and after moving to New York 15 years ago was to play the drums as much as possible with whoever would allow me to a share the bandstand. But I was never gratified with merely getting the initial call. One credo that I have lived by is, "Success is in the callback." Part of being a sideman is about creating a feeling, a vibe that bandleaders want to be associated with.

Regardless of whether one is still in school or is already established on the scene, all drummers need to create a system that can fortify our skills, ultimately maximizing our chances of supporting ourselves playing drums. There

are underground "rules" that can make all the difference when it comes to being a drummer who works never, once in a while, sometimes, often or all the time.

One key to getting and keeping a gig lies in performing like a pro on the bandstand. There are three absolutes that I have imparted to my students (and readily apply to my own practice as a drummer) in order to stay sharp on the bandstand: groove, sound and vocabulary.

GROOVE

Groove has to do with two things: 1) The feel of the music in a literal sense; and 2) The vibrations you, the player, give off before, during and after the gig. The first example of feel is in conjunction with personal reference points and selflessness from you, the drummer.

Personal Reference Points (PRPs) are concepts, grooves and genres that you have checked out, learned and can call upon instantly. The musical setting determines the PRPs from which the drummer can draw.

Simply stated: The more music you check out, the easier it will be for you to oscillate between different styles. You will have a very large palette of colors to put on folks' music. Oftentimes, bandleaders will instruct the drummer to "play a different groove" or "try something else." I don't believe that emulating your favorite drummer is wrong, but here's the catch: Check out as many drummers and musicians as possible. Add to what you already have together. Eventually you will develop an individual sound. This way you can draw upon what seems to be an infinite number of PRPs. This is a lifelong journey. It's also a humbling one.

SOUND

I can not stress enough the importance of sound. You've got to invest time, research and money to produce the right sound for the gig. Producing a nice sound has little to do with volume and more to do with touch, feel and control. A nice touch also helps out in many areas of play, such as:

- Navigating through challenging music.
- Keeping the groove from feeling heavy and weighed down.
- Getting the best and most sound out of the instrument.
- Hearing everything happening on the bandstand.
- Shaping the music.

Be aware of your touch, and practice it (on all limbs) daily. Practice playing concepts, rudiments, grooves and book exercises loudly and softly.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary involves the linguistic approach we use to communicate on the bandstand. It means playing the right feel (groove) and using the right sound. Embody the essence of each tune you play. Be able to express yourself if given the chance to solo. For example, knowing the lyrics to each tune will help you shape it better. Understand that our feel, sound, comping and solo choices should have a direct relationship with the melody (if there is one) and what's happening on the bandstand. You may not get a chance to solo, and that's fine. Service the music. Consequently, the drumming language we use on the bandstand should reflect the music we are playing.

Develop a relationship with your instrument. Woodshed consistently, every day, without distractions. Turn off your phone, television and computer during your allotted shed time. There's a difference between messing around, practicing and shedding. If you are serious, consistent and organized with your practice, you'll see results. As you become more busy, and are on the road, shed time becomes more limited. Organizing your shed time before you get very busy is the key. Therefore, create personalized warmups, or, as I like to call them, "hotel room hand and foot exercises," to keep in shape.

Sight-read at least 20–30 minutes daily. Reading music has a lot to do with muscle memory training. It's important to keep your eyes moving, and sharp. Even though you may not read much on gigs, you may very well get called to perform a gig where reading is required. You never know how close you are to getting a call reading for a Broadway play, a big band hit, a singer with charts, etc. There are many drum pedagogy books for sight-reading available.

Rudiments are to drummers what scales and intervals are to horn players. Know them. Be able to call upon rudiments in performance through the subconscious mind. It's all right to have specific rudiments that you are more attached to than others. Work on those rudiments and the ones that are less familiar. The key is to execute them naturally. Don't force them.

When it comes to chops and facility, it's not about being the fastest or flashiest drummer in the world. One of the ultimate goals of any musician is to be able to play what he or she hears on command. It's dangerous for your mind to completely eclipse your hands. Therefore, you should spend time working out new ideas.

Fall in love with and learn as many musical genres and subgenres as you can in order to interpret music in the proper style. Today, many jazz artists go between five or six genres of music in one show, sometimes in one tune. Put more focus on groove concepts than soloing concepts. To groove a style, it helps to have an understanding of the culture these genres come from. Once a drummer gets a handle on various groove concepts, they should be able to oscillate between different styles seamlessly.

Familiarize yourself with the art of brushwork. Using brushes is its own art form, one that many believe is dying. Musically, brushes are a color and a concept. Some gigs require a very low volume. The bandleader may want you to only use brushes in some situations.

ESTABLISH YOUR PRESENCE

Most college towns have some sort of musical scene, the size and culture of which will vary. Get to know local musicians and learn the repertoire they like to play. Don't be too quick to jump on the bandstand and hit. Observing the culture is extremely important. Take time to understand the temperament and protocol. Most students think that they should start hitting the scene after graduation, but actually they should start before getting out of school. We all must make time to go out and perform at jam sessions and hear local performances.

Some people are overly competitive and will not befriend people who play the same instrument. This is a misguided thought. In double-booking situations or times when you get called but can't make the gig, recommend someone. This is one way to make friends and establish a good reputation.

GIG ETIQUETTE

Always call back people who call you for a gig ASAP. If you are unavailable for the job, still call back ASAP, no more than 24 hours later. Some bandleaders reach out via email, Facebook, Instagram or through other social media platforms. Return messages swiftly.

You may be overseas or out of your country of residence when you receive the call. Again, get back ASAP. We live in the modern technical age of information. Inquire and take advantage of communication services like Skype and FaceTime. Make sure to check your voicemail often, at intervals of no longer than 48 hours. If you can't contact the bandleader/

manager within 48 hours, be sure to apologize for the tardy response.

Believe it or not, getting a gig or receiving a callback doesn't always depend upon your musical ability. Let's think empathetically for a moment. Imagine what a bandleader feels arriving to the gig and the drummer is set up and ready to play. He or she is relieved! Let's say you are one hell of a musician, but you constantly show up late to the gig. In some cases a bandleader has signed a contract with the booking party and if the band starts late, the account and possibly future gigs could be terminated. Where does this leave you? No more future bookings, your pay may get docked and the band is uptight. The music may suffer for it. I have heard a booking agent tell a bandleader, "Never hire that guy again." Worst of all, your reputation is sullied. But sometimes you can't help being late. Unforeseen occurrences happen. We are not perfect. If you feel like you may be late to a gig, contact the manager/bandleader as soon as you know you are, or may be, running behind schedule. You may believe that you might not be late. Call anyway.

BALANCE

Whether you are in school, have a family, or hold down a full-time or part-time job, balancing life's multiple demands is critical if you want to work more.

Organize and prioritize your time. Don't get caught up in the pains of trying desperately to do everything, perfectly, now. Don't stress about getting a "big gig" or playing with famous musicians. As far as I'm concerned, every gig that you commit to is the "big gig."

Bring an urgency and joy to every bandstand you are blessed to be on. Enjoy the journey, not just the destination. Play as much as possible and relentlessly work towards improving. Remember, 99 percent of the time, getting "the call" is based on your reputation. **DB**

Drummer Jerome Jennings is an international artist and educator whose sound reflects a connection to the swing tradition, soul music and hip-hop. He conducts clinics and educational youth outreach in conjunction with Jazz At Lincoln Center's Jazz for Young People program, and he works as an instructor and ensemble leader for Jazz At Lincoln Center's Youth Orchestra programs. In addition, Jennings serves as a teen mentor, ensemble coach and drum instructor for the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and he is a drum instructor and ensemble leader for Jazz House Kids, a community arts organization based in New Jersey. In 2004, Jennings graduated from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School for the performing arts. In 2007, he earned a master's degree from The Juilliard School, where he became the first Jazz Studies recipient of the Morse Fellowship, a program that brings the performing arts to New York City school students and their classroom teachers in annual artist residencies. Recently, he was appointed as Resident Director of The Juilliard Jazz Orchestra. Jennings has performed/recorded/toured with Christian McBride, Sonny Rollins, Hank Jones, Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Hamiet Bluiett, Benny Golson, Freddy Cole, Paula West, Ernestine Anderson, Catherine Russell, Davell Crawford, Houston Person, Henry Butler, Slide Hampton, The Count Basie Orchestra, Gerald Wilson, Tim Reis, Bernard Fowler, Benny Powell, The Mingus Big Band, Ronnie Mathews, Curtis Fuller, Valery Ponomarev and others. His debut recording as a leader, *The Beast* (Iola Records), was released last year. Visit him online at jeromejennings.com.

Drums Plus 1: Equal-Partner Duets

The concept of a duo recording is not a new one. However, the project that I have been conceptualizing for years and that has finally come to fruition with the release of my new CD, *3's A Crowd* (Acoustical Concepts Recording), is novel in that each track places the drums in dialogue with only one other instrumentalist.

The challenge for me was to raise the drums from its traditional role of accompaniment to that of equal partner to the other voice. With this freedom comes the responsibility to musically and artistically shape the form of each composition.

Communication and empathy became the threads that are the essence of the project, an empathy supported by the presence of long-time friends, musical colleagues and, now, recording collaborators. Allow me to take you on this conceptual and artistic journey of elevating the role of the drums and bringing this project to life.

First and foremost comes experimentation: sitting behind the drums, taking stock of the hundreds of sounds you have at your disposal and working with the drum kit while trying your best to discard preconceived notions and limitations on your creative thinking. You must unclutter the mind, release judgments and begin improvising with the vast palette of textures and techniques formed at the intersection of the instrument's potential and your knowledge.

I've always found this exercise to be both a lot of fun and enlightening. Soon, your brain starts to catalog each sound and remember how you discovered it, allowing you to call on it when the moment is right. This might take some time, but once you master this approach, choosing what sounds you want happens in a fraction of a second. When engaged in this exercise, always think compositionally, letting one idea connect to another. You will notice that you begin to create motifs and phrases, some of which can turn into a complete musical composition.

Deciding precisely which implements to use is what I call choosing your "color tools." This goes well beyond the function of time-keeping. Examples of color tools include the obvious (drumsticks, brushes and mallets) to the somewhat more obscure: for example, hot rods (thin dowels bunched together that create a sound between drum sticks and brushes) and brooms (straw from a broom bound together in two sets).



In the world of fine art, sometimes the artist will just put the brush on the canvas and start painting, letting the brush lead the way, just going with the flow. We can take this same approach when sitting behind the drums. Experiment with this approach until you get comfortable with the process, then start improvising. You will notice motifs and themes developing. Try connecting these

motifs and develop them first into simple phrases, then longer phrases. Assess the style and direction in which you're headed, and start to develop these ideas into a composition. But try to think song-like. Remember, you're not just a timekeeper, you're a spontaneous creator.

I started this kind of experimentation back in music school, where I would get togeth-

er with like-minded musician friends, including guitarist Jimmy Bruno (now a world-renowned jazz recording artist) and bassist Vince Fay (now an in-demand session player in New York City) and play jazz standards, but soon we would move into experimenting by thinking of and adapting sounds as textures, shapes, colors and so on. We were all reaching for different sounds, whatever we could coax out of our instruments, which would turn into a fun, productive and wonderful learning experience.

The Making of *3's A Crowd*

Drum tuning was an important consideration for this recording as the exposure of the drums as a co-melody voice made demands

Track 1, "3's A Crowd," George Young, alto saxophone: Here, I really wanted to complement the timbre of the alto saxophone so I decided to use the brushes, but I played them as if I were using drum sticks. Though this track was written out, it afforded plenty of space for improvisation. Listen for the back-and-forth improvised conversation between the alto sax and drums in the middle of the tune.

Track 2, "Song For Meg," Tony Micelli, vibraphone: I used brooms on this track since they give more of a dense sound than brushes, but a sound softer than drumsticks. This track is in 3/4 time and is rather light and airy. A highlight of the tune is the improvised

es used in a staccato fashion, while maintaining an equal balance in texture and dynamics.

Track 7, "Gone Now," Tyrone Brown, bass: Dedicated to our late friend and colleague, world-renown jazz violinist John Blake, this is a very interesting piece. It was fully written out and contains a number of different time signatures throughout. I was the only one to improvise on this tune. My goal on this tune was to not make the different time signatures a distraction for the listener, and I think we accomplished that.

Track 8, "Monotony Of Hazards," Stu Reynolds, bass clarinet: On this track, the combination of the timbre of the bass clarinet and my use of yarn mallets on the drums deliver an exotic flavor. Both of us improvise at different times throughout the piece.

Track 9, "Chant Of The Soul," Scotty Wright, vocals: This is an emotional and moving piece that was completely improvised. The connection we had on this track was like a conversation from our souls.

Track 10, "Ellie's Dream," George Genna, piano: This tune is special to me. I wanted to capture my dog Ellie's sounds and movements when she is dreaming. When you listen to the track you can hear the brush swishing on the snare drum's head like the sound you hear when your dog kisses and breathes into your ear.

Deciding precisely which implements to use is what I call choosing your 'color tools.' This goes well beyond the function of traditional timekeeping.

beyond the traditional role of timekeeper and accompanist. The implements (drum sticks, brushes, etc.) I selected were influenced in part by which instrument I was paired with on a particular track to support the kind of intimate communication the project called for.

Given that the album was recorded on both the East and West Coasts, my producer, John Vanore, was able to conceptualize a mic technique that could work in different studios, enabling us to convey the identity of the music and the intimacy of the drums, in kind of a cinematic way, capturing the music as if one were watching the duos being recorded. Matching the drum sounds at the different studios was crucial. This was particularly challenging since I used a different set of drums on each coast.

Of course, a huge consideration was deciding who I wanted to record with and what qualities I sought to bring to such a unique project. The players had to be creative, top-notch artists who could take up this challenge with integrity and an open mind.

Once I decided on the musicians, the next step involved logistics, namely, working on the availability of the players, since each track entailed a separate recording session. This became a bit of a scheduling challenge, and though it took more than one year to complete this project, it all worked out beautifully.

section that features the vibes and the drums at separate times.

Track 3, "The Call," John Vanore, trumpet: Since this tune is basically a series of trumpet calls, I used the hot rods, as their percussive sound seemed to match well with the timbre of the trumpet.

Track 4, "John Cage Scared My Dog," Mick Rossi, piano: Based on John Cage's concept of "chance art," Mick and I totally improvised this one. When improvising a track for a project like this, the players have to be cognizant of the tune's length/duration. This took complete concentration, intense listening and deep communication between the two players.

Track 5, "For John And Elvin," Gary Meek, tenor saxophone: This track is dedicated to the late great tenor saxophonist John Coltrane and his wonderful drummer, Elvin Jones. I chose to use drumsticks on this cut to complement the timbre of the tenor sax and to try and reproduce the excitement that those two iconic artists generated when they played together in a duo setting.

Track 6, "Just Above The Clouds," Kenny Stahl, flute: The rhythmic nature of the Latin feel on this track called for brush-

Life is for learning

The well-known adage "life is for learning" is extremely relevant to the creation of this challenging duo project. The experience working in this intimate setting has enhanced the relationships between all of the musicians who participated. As for myself, it has awarded me the opportunity to grow as an artist and a person.

Hopefully, you now have some insight into how I conceived of and recorded the *3's A Crowd* duo project. To create this kind of project, hone your skills on your instrument, think outside the box and record with great musicians who you can trust musically. But most of all, have fun and then go for it. **DB**

Billy Jones is a drummer based out of Philadelphia and Monterey, California, who has played with a diverse range of jazz artists, including Grover Washington Jr., Little Jimmy Scott, John Blake, Dennis Di Blasio, Stanley Clarke, Eddie Gomez, Jeremy Steig, Cecil Bridgewater, Jimmy Bruno, Howard Alden, Tom Scott, Gary Bartz and The Glenn Miller Orchestra, among others. He has also performed with Sammy Davis Jr., Don Rickles, Sid Caesar, Jay Leno, George Carlin, Bill Cosby, Michel LeGrand, Steve Martin, Petula Clark, Eddie Murphy, Mickey Rooney, Crystal Gayle, The Temptations, Patti LaBelle, Robert Goulet, Neil Sadaka, Gregory Hines, Sid Caesar, The Fifth Dimension, Mitzi Gaynor and Joan Rivers. Jones' most recent album is the duo project *3's A Crowd* (Acoustical Concepts Recording); five bonus tracks from the recording sessions are available for free download at billyjonesdrums.com.

Roy Haynes' Drum Set Solo Trading on 'Rhythm-a-Ning'

Jazz legend Roy Haynes began his long and illustrious career more than 72 years ago. Now nearing age 93, Haynes remains as busy as ever, headlining major jazz festivals, clubs and even TV appearances with his aptly named Fountain of Youth band. A pioneer of the drum set, and one of history's most influential jazz drummers, Haynes maintains a consistent reputation as an open-minded musician with an undeniable style.

In 1994, Haynes received the Jazzpar Prize from the Danish government to travel to Europe for a series of concerts. These shows were recorded and later released under the title *My Shining Hour* (Storyville). For these dates, instead of bringing in a band from the United States, Haynes opted to employ some of Europe's best jazz musicians. Joining him in concert were saxophonist Tomas Franck, pianist Thomas Clausen and the late great bassist Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen. As an ensemble they focused on standard repertoire, including songs written by some of Haynes' former employers. One such composition, "Rhythm-a-Ning," by Thelonious Monk, includes an exciting and varied set of trading between Haynes and Pedersen.

Although trading fours, eights and even entire choruses between a drummer and ensemble members is common practice, it's rare to hear an acoustic bassist and drummer trade eights exclusively. Even more infrequent is hearing them trade at a tempo well over 250 beats per minute for a total of five choruses. That alone sets the stage for an interesting musical conversation between these two masters. The following transcription shows Haynes' portion of the exchange, which consists of 10 eight-bar sections (each of them numbered for easy reference).

Pedersen starts the trading off with a simple groove that sets the stage for Haynes' response. Having been one of the early developers of bebop drumming, Haynes' style, although modern, always has a piece of history at its core. His first choice is a call-and-response sequence starting in measure 2, focusing on downbeats while resolving itself to upbeats. This is a simple exercise in tension/release by way of rhythmic displacement, but his phrasing and inner dynamics are what give



this trade so much shape and color.

Listening to Haynes, you hear a wide variety of sounds being pulled out of each instrument on his drum set. Whether those are muted strokes produced by driving the bead of the stick into the head, high-pitched rim shots used to punctuate certain phrases or stick-on-stick accents that offer a more "woody" staccato effect, Haynes enjoys a number of creative possibilities.

Another example of Haynes' approach to textural drumming can be found in the third chorus of his trading. Haynes uses his left hand to mute the strokes of the right stick while lifting his hand off when he desires an open tone. This effect can also be heard in the fourth, sixth and seventh trade at various points. It is a similar approach to that of a conga or timbales player in an Afro-Cuban percussion section. At times, he also takes this a step further and uses his stick instead of his hand to stop a sound. These are known as dead strokes and can be found in measures 5-7 of the eighth trade. In this section he plays an open sound and then a dead stroke with his opposite hand as moves down the toms. When pressure is

applied to the head, these can also be used to bend the pitch of a drum.

Haynes is a master of the inner dynamics of phrasing. This is certainly true of his hands, but also true of his feet. In the sixth trade, Haynes sets up a groove between the bass drum and snare in response to Pedersen's funky bass line. At first, you can miss the crescendo that is happening underneath the groove, but it's there and it raises the intensity level slowly as the beater opens up against the bass drum head. This type of control would be difficult at a medium tempo, let alone at 260 beats per minute. That's the level of detail in his playing that separates him from so many others.

Roy Haynes is the personification of style and class, and an absolute icon to so many in the jazz world. Having performed with everyone from Louis Armstrong to Chick Corea, Haynes is the ultimate example of how to keep an open mind and an open heart in life and in music. **DB**

Jeffrey Lien is a professional drummer, private instructor/clinician and writer living in Nashville, Tennessee.

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MUSIC | DIRECT

1. *mf*

(snare off from this point forward)

2. *f* *mp*

3. *mf*

4. *p* *f*

5. *sfz* *mp* *mp* *mp* *f*

6. *p*

7. *ff* *mf* *f*

8.

9.

10. *f*



Canopus R Type Snare

Projection Power, Aggressive Attack

Canopus has introduced R Type, a wood-shell snare drum for players who find themselves in high-volume performance situations, giving them another option when considering a metal-shell type of sound. This drum could easily be used in any type of funk/fusion amplified atmosphere and fit right in stylistically.

The R Type comes with a variety of options. There are two choices for sizes (6.5 by 14 inches or 5.5 by 14 inches), two choices for lug color (black nickel-plated solid tube lugs or chrome-plated solid tube lugs), two choices for counterhoops (die cast or steel) and three choices for finish: Turquoise Metallic, Sakura Metallic and Gun Metallic.

The shell, which is what gives this drum its true character, is made of 10-ply American maple. That's what supplies the R Type with its projection power. Even though this drum does have exceptional projection, I found it to be flexible when trying different types of heads and tunings for different playing situations when less volume was needed.

The Type R ships with Canopus' Red Lock One Point Tuning Lock, a small red plastic bolt that is secured to the tension rod where it meets the lug. The idea being that when a drum is hit very hard, detuning is possible in the area where the stick meets the counterhoop, and as a result, these tension rods are more likely to come loose over time. Red Lock secures this area so drummers playing in the upper volume levels will have fewer issues with tuning.

On other Canopus products, Red Bolt is usually paired with Bolt Tight. Bolt Tight is a system of leather washers created by Canopus that are used to diminish overtones and other issues associated with metal-to-metal contact between the tension rod and the counterhoop. For the Type R

drum, maximum overtones were desired, so while it does not ship with Bolt Tight, it can be bought separately if more overtone control is desired.

I received a 6.5-by-14-inch drum with die cast hoops and chrome-plated solid tube lugs in Turquoise Metallic. The drum is visually striking with its metallic finish and rounded tubes, and the visuals really help sell the sound that Canopus is going for. I was glad they sent a 6.5-inch version, as I have always loved the sound of deeper snares.

Having the die-cast counterhoops option was also a big selling point to me, as I do enjoy the somewhat more controlled sound that die-cast provides, especially with a drum as live as this one, versus a steel counterhoop and its more open, sustained sound. The die-cast is a really nice match with this setup.

Playing wise, this drum has an amazingly consistent sound. If you play the drum with a stroke that is even in velocity and approach, you will be rewarded with a sound that is fat yet has an amazing attack. Metal shells can sometime leave me cold compared to a classic wood shell (depending on the drum, of course). But the Type R seems to be a nice combination of both worlds as it offers that aggressive attack yet still has some substantial body to it.

—Matt Kern

canopusdrums.com/en

Berklee Press

Drum Methods

Elevate Your Playing with 2 Classic Books

Drummers, here are two essential method books recently reissued by Berklee Press that should be on the music stand in your practice room or studio.

First, let's look at *A Manual for the Modern Drummer*, written by Alan Dawson and Don DeMicheal. Now in its second edition, this classic book was originally published in 1962. The goal of the authors—one a widely influential percussion teacher who is a Berklee legend (Dawson), the other a well-liked DownBeat editor during the 1960s who played vibraphone and drums professionally (DeMicheal)—was to give drummers a strong foundation in the concepts and rhythms that the dance band/jazz drummer uses, and to help the drummer be as musical as any other player on the bandstand.

The book is divided into three parts. The first deals with the fundamentals of cymbal beat interpretation, left hand with cymbal beats, brushes, feet patterns, hi-hat beats, and coordinating feet with hands.

The second part is all about dance band drumming. In this section the authors give valuable insight on blending with other instruments, using the bass drum as a time-keeping device, equipment, meter/song forms and chart interpretation. Also included are descriptions and notated



examples of dance beats. Will you know what to play when the leader calls a two-beat, waltz, Viennese waltz, lame duck/shuffle, various world rhythms in odd time signatures (5/8, 7/8, 9/8), tango, beguine, bolero, conga, rumba, samba, calypso, mambo, cha cha cha, merengue or nanigo? This section, which packs a lifetime of experience into one chapter, will help to prepare you. If you read the descriptions, internalize the patterns with patient practice and cross reference with recordings, you will be ready.

The third and last section of *A Manual for the Modern Drummer* deals with jazz. It includes a historical review of jazz drumming and an interesting theory about the development of the jazz drum solo. Also included are descriptions and brief transcriptions of prolific drummers. There are accent patterns, rhythm patterns and coordination exercises. All are designed to help develop a fluid comping and soloing vocabulary.

The next method book is *Mastering the Art of Brushes* by Jon Hazilla, originally published in 2000. Are you a beginning brushes player who only learned one pattern that sounds stiff and lacks groove? Is it difficult for you to embellish and fill within a pattern without disrupting the time flow and groove? Are you the seasoned pro who seeks new patterns and wants to be liberated from technical limitations? The concepts, patterns and technical exercises in this book will free you from your current limitations and allow you to explore and create your own personal style.

To notate horizontal brush stroke patterns, the author uses a two-tone system where the left hand is black and the right hand is grey. This makes it very easy to follow. Included with each pattern is a notated measure of the rhythm that helps you play the desired sound and duration for each

hand. Each pattern also has a play-along track. First you hear four bars of the drum pattern, followed by four bars of bass and drums, then the drums drop out for four bars and you continue to play with the bass.

After several repetitions, I was amazed at how relaxing these patterns are to play. Circles, heart shapes, half circles and windshield wiper strokes all start to flow if you patiently put in the repetitions.

The section on wrist calisthenics will some day be a game changer for me. Instead of a vertical stick approach, singles and doubles are played with a lateral motion. The right hand starts at one o'clock moving to seven o'clock and back. The left hand starts at eleven o'clock and moves to five o'clock and back. Each lateral full stroke produces two sounds. With mastery, the possibilities are endless.

Mastering the Art of Brushes and *A Manual for the Modern Drummer* both contain technical calisthenics. But most appealing to the novice and the seasoned pro alike is their focus on playing musically, understanding the past and having the technical freedom to become part of the future generation of great players. Use them to elevate your playing. —Steve Hawk
halleonard.com



Sabian XSR Cymbals

3 New Models Beef up Budget Line

Sabian has added three models to its XSR family of cymbals, which give drummers higher-end features and high-quality sound at a budget-friendly price. The XSR family already consists of several different rides, crashes, hi-hats and a Chinese cymbal. The three new models I tested were a 22-inch Ride, 17-inch Fast Crash and a 19-inch Fast Crash.

The XSR 22-inch Ride has a brilliant, polished finish and a tight lathing pattern. Its weight is on the medium side, with a nice balance of clarity, brightness, stick definition and controlled wash. There's randomized light hammering on the entire top and bottom surfaces of this cymbal, and even on the bell. Right off the bat, I was impressed at how it can cut through stage volume without sounding too harsh. Hammering patterns definitely help mellow out this cymbal. Stick definition is impressive, and the bell has a very cutting, focused sound, but not too bright. You can crash somewhat on this ride, but it's very controlled—which can be a good thing. You can really play hard on it and it never loses its composure. Softer, intricate stick-

ing patterns are no problem due to the excellent definition and stick clarity.

The 17-inch and 19-inch XSR Fast Crashes follow similar physical and tonal characteristics. Again, randomized light hammering helps mellow out potentially harsh or piercing frequencies. Both of these cymbals are at a nice weight and are rather thin at the edges. The crash sound itself has a quick, controlled decay, but you get a nice cutting shimmer of white noise. The 19-inch Fast Crash has a much darker sound, with a longer decay, as you would expect from a large crash. The 17-inch Fast Crash is brighter, with a much quicker decay. These crashes have no problem cutting through a lot of sound, despite their medium weight.

With the XSR line, Sabian has created cymbals that give drummers access to sounds and features normally costing twice as much. And these three new models are no exception. (MSRPs: XSR 22-inch Ride, \$229.99; 17-inch Fast Crash, \$154.99; 19-inch Fast Crash, \$179.99). —Ryan Bennett
sabian.com

1. Heat-Treated

Promark has turned up the heat with its new FireGrain drumsticks. A heat-tempering process transforms ordinary hickory drumsticks into precision tools with high durability. Featuring a normal weight, balance and feel, FireGrain sticks let drummers hit harder and play longer. They are available in Classic 7A, 5A, 5B and 2B versions as well as Forward and Rebound 5A and 5B Acorn models. **More info:** daddario.com

2. Locking Brushes

Bopworks' new Spread-lok brushes feature .012 wire, the traditional gauge of most vintage brushes. Their textured handles and ability to "lock" at a 2-inch or 4-inch spread enable drummers to set and maintain their preferred brush width while playing. Bopworks has also added Memphis R&B and Rhythm & Groovz models, which bring larger diameters to the company's stick lineup. **More info:** bopworks.net

3. Reading Rhythms

The Coryvo app for iOS and Android devices (mobile and tablets) can generate randomized rhythmic scores to aid in musicians' sight-reading development. More than 60 presets are offered, from eighth notes in 4/4 to polyrhythms in 19/16, and users can also create their own custom settings. Coryvo features an interactive playback interface that allows users to play the score, with or without a click, while also enabling looping of specific measures. **More info:** coryvo.com

4. Deep Bass, Crisp Highs

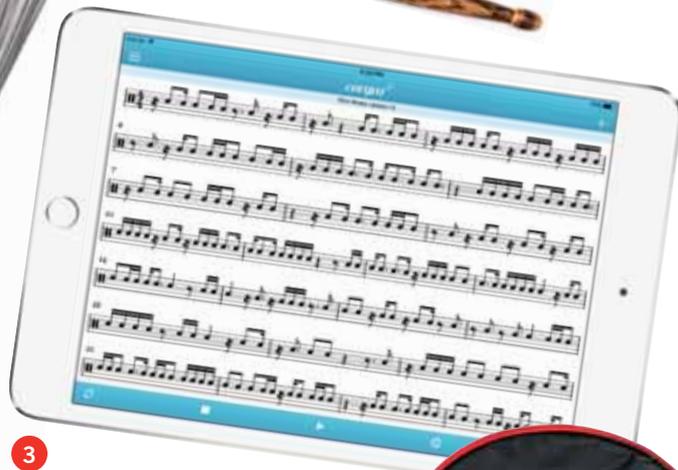
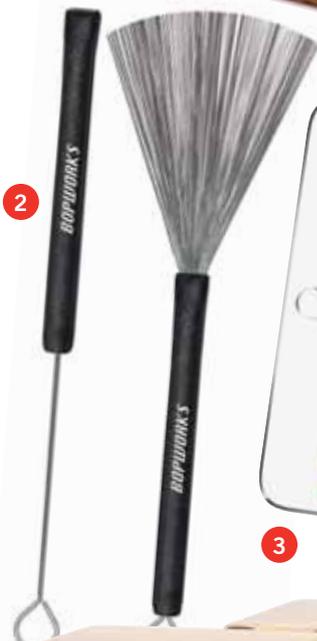
A Tempo's Performance Cajons offer pro features at a reasonable price. Hand made in Peru, the new drums have solid wood frames made of Monterey pine. They utilize A Tempo's signature dovetail joinery and furniture-grade construction to provide superior strength and fit. Another common feature throughout the line is A Tempo's proprietary playing surface, which brings out deeper bass tones and crisper highs. All A Tempo Performance Cajons have heavy-duty rubber feet and ergonomic cut-outs. **More info:** rbimusic.com

5. Pad Power

Tama's Powerpad bags are made with a semi-hard cushion consisting of four separate layers, each made from materials that help protect equipment. The inner surface features a soft flannel material to prevent scratching, while the outer surface utilizes high-density nylon with a water-repellent finish. The latest additions to the Powerpad line include the Drum Throne Bag (which can also be used to store a snare drum and stand), the Stick and Mallet Bag and the Designer Stick Bag. **More info:** tama.com

6. Versatile Kit

Yamaha's Tour Custom Maple drum set is designed for working drummers who seek a versatile, durable kit for recording and live playing. The sets are constructed with 100-percent maple six-ply shells using the company's proprietary staggered diagonal seam shell construction, resulting in a thin shell that will stay round. **More info:** usa.yamaha.com



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Zildjian

A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and glasses is playing a saxophone on a stage. He is looking to the right. In the background, there is a white wall and a music stand with sheet music and a microphone.

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DOWNBEAT 2017-'18 FALL/WINTER

FESTIVAL

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25 YEARS OF BRILLIANCE



Paquito D'Rivera performed at the Miami Downtown Jazz Festival on Feb. 25.

Frost Students Enliven Miami's Jazz Scene

Despite the millions of tourists who flock to Miami each year, the city's jazz scene has had its share of ups and downs. International acts frequently travel through the major venues in town, but jazz clubs and festivals dedicated to jazz in Miami have faced economic challenges (just like their counterparts around the country). Fortunately, Miami residents get a steady diet of jazz concerts and broadcasts, thanks to the hard work of the faculty and students at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, as well as the staff at local jazz station WDNA (88.9 FM).

Last year (as it had done for decades), Frost presented Festival Miami, a series of dozens of shows that took place over a three-week period and featured artists such as Snarky Puppy, Becca Stevens and Tiempo Libre. Frost is taking a different approach for its 2017-'18 season, as Shelly Berg, dean of music, recently explained to DownBeat.

"It's a transition year for us, after 30-some years," Berg said. "We used to have our festival in

the off-season, but Miami has gotten busier, and now there is no off-season. And trying to promote 25 concerts in 30 days was very taxing on everybody. We thought we would spread out our performances over a season, from September through April. And we are asking faculty to help us bring in prominent guest artists throughout the year, instead of just for one month."

Called the "Frost Music Live! Signature Series," the season will include many noteworthy events, such as bassist Dave Holland and the Frost Concert Jazz Band performing the music of the late Kenny Wheeler (Jan. 25, 2018), reedist and conductor Christine Jensen leading the Frost Studio Jazz Band in a concert of her compositions (Feb. 17) and drummer Dafnis Prieto (who is a Frost faculty member) collaborating with the Frost Salsa/Caribbean Jazz Orchestra (April 19).

Luckily, Berg can draw on his immensely talented student musicians and instructors, as well as the vast musical experience and connections

of the latter. Although jazz is a large portion of the emphasis at Frost, classical and mainstream pop are well presented. Graduate students in the school's Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra provide heavy lifting in multiple disciplines, and have supported artists such as Dave Grusin and Gloria Estefan. It also serves as the resident orchestra of the Jazz Roots series (founded by the late Larry Rosen), which is presented at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, located downtown.

"In November," Berg said, "we'll have a big Ella tribute and [plan to bring in] a bunch of stars: David Alan Grier, Niki Haris, Clint Holmes. This season we have Sir James Galway doing a concert with the symphony, and John Beasley [conducting] his MONK'estra."

Berg explained the school's approach: "If you're going to spend the money, time and effort to bring in these marquee artists, the real win is when they collaborate with students. Last year we sent almost the entire Mancini Orchestra out to L.A., where John Williams and Quincy Jones conducted them. They've performed live film scores—*The Pink Panther*, *Star Wars*—and *House of Cards* music. They've done television specials with Bobby McFerrin, Chick Corea and Terence Blanchard.

"One of the interesting things about Miami is the students are working all the time with the pro scene, many of whom are alums of the school. I know because I'm often calling students to see if they can play with me or others on behalf of the school, and they often say, 'I wish I could, but I have a gig,'" Berg said with a laugh.

Frost students and instructors get their own dedicated jazz hour at WDNA on a show titled *UM Frost Jazz Hour*. This weekly live performance and broadcast, held every Thursday in the WDNA Jazz Gallery (2921 Coral Way), is free and open to the public. The shows are also broadcast on WDNA's video Livestream channel (livestream.com/WDNAradio).

Additionally, WDNA's DJs include musicians like Andy Harlow and Sammy Figueroa.

In February, WDNA presented its first Miami Downtown Jazz Festival, which featured two days of music, with performances by the Paquito D'Rivera Sextet, Hubert Laws, Jane Bunnett & Maqueque and others.

"The inaugural Miami Downtown Festival was a great success, and we're looking forward to the 2018 edition being just as exciting," said Maggie Pelleyá, general manager for WDNA. "We haven't announced the full lineup yet, but we'll have a performance by Arturo Sandoval and many other great artists."

WDNA also presents jazz concerts during the year, and shows this fall include vocalist and bassist Nicki Parrott (Sept. 30) and pianist Roberto Magris (Dec. 8), whose new album is a sextet project recorded in 2016 and titled *Live In Miami @ The WDNA Jazz Gallery* (JMood).

—John Radanovich



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January 14 to 22, 2018

JazzCuba.com



Kris Davis (left), Linda May Han Oh and Andrew Cyrille perform at Winter Jazzfest in New York City.

Frost Music Live!

Coral Gables, Florida

September 2017–April 2018

The acclaimed Frost School of Music at the University of Miami hosts an annual season with more than 25 concerts. Attendees can enjoy the talents of award-winning Frost student ensembles, esteemed Frost faculty artists and world-renowned guest artists and musicologists. The Frost Music Live! series expands the university's prior month-long event, which was called Festival Miami. For more info, see the Frost Music Live! website or frost.miami.edu.

LINEUP: Sir James Galway, Dave Holland, Christine Jensen, John Beasley, Dafnis Prieto, Frost School's Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, Frost Symphony Orchestra, Frost Wind Ensemble, Frost Concert Jazz Band, Frost Studio Jazz Band, Frost Opera Theater, more. frostmusiclive.com

Angel City Jazz Festival

Los Angeles, California

Oct. 1–15

The 10th annual edition of this festival includes a celebration of the centennial of Thelonious Monk's birth. Angel City features major national and international artists along with top local musicians at a variety of notable venues across Southern California.

LINEUP: Dee Dee Bridgewater, DJ Logic, Mark de Clive-Lowe, Elliott Sharp, Mostly Other People Do The Killing, MAST, Deantoni Parks, Steve Lehman, Burning Ghosts, Dan Weiss, Craig Taborn, Matt Mitchell, Ben Monder, Trevor Dunn, Jeff Parker, Adam Rudolph's Moving Pictures, Go: Organic Orchestra featuring Bennie Maupin, Jonah Levine, Mark Dresser 7, Peter Evans, Taylor Ho Bynum, Jaimie Branch, Being and Becoming, James Leary Bass Choir, Dwight Trible's Cosmic Vibrations with Brent Jennings. angelcityjazz.com

MEMPHO Music Festival

Memphis, Tennessee

Oct. 6–7

The founders of the MEMPHO Music Festival are committed to making this event an integral part of the Memphis cultural scene for years to come. MEMPHO has been created to blend today's best sounds with Memphis' storied musical heritage. The goal is to offer a festival experience filled with music, food and nature that appeals to fans of all ages. MEMPHO will be held at the 4,500-acre Shelby Farms Park, one of the largest urban parks in America, just minutes from downtown Memphis.

LINEUP: Booker T. Stax Revue, Steve Cropper & Friends, Robert Randolph & The Family Band, Anderson .Paak, Jason Isbell & The 400 Unit, Southern Avenue, Dan Luke & The Raid, others. memphofest.com

Oregon Coast Jazz Party

Newport, Oregon

Oct. 6–8

This festival celebrates great live jazz—and the dedicated fans who love it—in the beautiful town of Newport, on the central Oregon coast. The fest features multiple sets from renowned jazz stars, nightcap performances and educational events.

LINEUP: George Cables Trio with Essiet Okon Essiet & Victor Lewis, Gerald Clayton, John Clayton, George Colligan, Jeff Hamilton, Holly Hofmann, Russell Malone, Thomas Marriott, Greta Matassa, Mary Ann McSweeney, Houston Person, Chuck Redd, Ryan Shaw, Mike Wofford, more. oregoncoastjazzparty.org

Pittsfield City Jazz Festival

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Oct. 6–15

Two marquee events for the 2017 edition of this festival reflect a remarkable range

and diversity—from the rapidly rising young vocalist Veronica Swift to a centennial celebration of Dizzy Gillespie. The festival will include the annual "jazz crawl" on Columbus Day weekend, the Jazz Prodigy concert on Oct. 11, jazz brunches and more.

LINEUP: Veronica Swift, A Celebration of Dizzy Gillespie, more. berkshiresjazz.org

Duck Jazz Festival

Duck, North Carolina

Oct. 7–8

The Town of Duck brings jazz to the Duck Town Park annually on Columbus Day weekend. Fans can enjoy live music from a variety of jazz performers, with two stages at this non-ticketed festival. Fans can extend their Outer Banks stay to enjoy jazz-themed events and promotions taking place throughout Duck businesses and beyond. Food and drinks will be available to purchase from various town eateries, and chairs will be available for rent. The festival will be held rain or shine.

LINEUP: Marquis Hill Blacktet, Mint Julep Jazz Band, Davina & The Vagabonds, The Rad Trads, Robert Jospé Express–Trio, The Second Marine Aircraft Wing Jazz Ensemble, First Flight High School Jazz Band. duckjazz.com

Amelia Island Jazz Festival

Fernandina Beach, Florida

Oct. 8–15

Held annually during the first week of October and headed by Artistic Director Les DeMerle, this festival promotes world-class jazz in various styles, including swing, bebop, Dixieland, big band, blues, Latin and contemporary. Concerts are staged in venues around Amelia Island, including the historic seaport of Fernandina Beach. The festival awards a Jazz Scholar-

ship yearly to an aspiring high school musician.

LINEUP: Nestor Torres, the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band featuring Bonnie Eisele, Trio Caliente, more. ameliaislandjazzfestival.com

Earshot Jazz Festival

Seattle, Washington
Oct. 8–Nov. 12

The 29th edition of this fest presents more than 50 distinctive events in venues all around the city. The festival brings jazz greats from around the world into creative collaboration with area artists, including main-stage concerts by award-winning student ensembles and a strong representation by renowned resident artists. There will also be collaborations with the Polish and Romanian Film Festivals.

LINEUP: Hudson, Gregory Porter, Jason Moran Bandwagon + Horns, Brad Mehldau solo, The Bad Plus, Monk on Monk, Marquis Hill Blacktet, Ranky Tanky, Elliott Sharp, Jameel Moodoc, Ballake Sissoko & Vincent Segal, Danilo Pérez PanaMonk, Mark Guiliana Quartet, Steel House with Brian Blade, Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra with Wycliffe Gordon, The Baylor Project, Briggan Krauss, Giulia Valle, Satoko Fuji, Lucian Ban, Amina Figarova, Naomi Moon Seigel, a centennial celebration of Thelonious Monk, Robin Holcomb Trio, The Black Rock Coalition, Burnt Sugar Arkestra, Kassa Overall, Matt Wilson's Multiple Personalities, Dawn Clement, more. earshot.org

Rehoboth Beach Jazz Festival

Rehoboth Beach, Delaware
Oct. 12–15

Now in its 28th year, this lively festival presents shows in multiple venues.

LINEUP: Rick Braun, Norman Brown, Richard Elliot, Nick Colionne, Eric Darius, Lalah Hathaway, Pieces of a Dream, Larry Graham, Paul Taylor, Brian Simpson, Club Phred, Will Donato, JJ Sansaverino, Boney James, Peter White, Marc Antoine, Maysa, Art Sherrod Jr., Steve Cole, Four80East, Matt Marshak, Kim Waters, Gerald Veasley, Lindsey Webster, Keiko Matsui, Euge Groove. rehobothjazz.com

Edgefest

Ann Arbor, Michigan
Oct. 18–21

Kerrytown Concert House presents the 21st annual Edgefest, with the theme Drums Along the Edge! This year the festival invites ensembles led by and featuring many distinguished drummer/composers from the world of creative music.

LINEUP: Hamid Drake, Pheeroan AkLaff, Andrew Drury, Allison Miller, Tom Rainey, Tomas Fujiwara, Harris Eisenstadt, William Hooker, Gerald Cleaver, Jon Taylor, more. edgefestannarbor.com

Sun Valley Jazz & Music Festival

Sun Valley, Idaho
Oct. 18–22

Attendees from all 50 states, every Canadian province and several foreign

countries flock to this festival, which was founded in a spirit of appreciation for jazz by Tom and Barbara Hazzard. The annual festival is now in its 28th year.

LINEUP: Barnhart/Midiri Quartet, Blue Renditions, Blue Street Jazz Band, Bob Draga & Friends, Boise Straight Ahead, Bruce Innes Trio, Carolyn Martin Swing Band, Cocuzzi Trio, Cornet Chop Suey, Yve Evans, Gator Nation, High Sierra Jazz Band, Tom Hook, Jacob Miller & The Bridge City Crooners, Jerry Krahn Quartet, Ivory & Gold, Kings of Swing, Midiri Brothers Sextet, Paris Washboard, Pearl Django, PBJ (Paul Reid, Brian Casserly, & Jim Lawlor), Gary Ryan, Sherri Colby's Racket Makers & Friends, Side Street Strutters with Meloney Collins, Sun Valley Jazz All Stars with Marilyn Keller, Terry Myers Quartet with Jaimie Roberts, Tom Rigney & Flambeau. sunvalleyjazz.com

Champaign-Urbana Jazz Festival

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois
Oct. 19–22

The third annual edition of this festival continues to expand. It features a jazz brunch, the Young Artist Series, jazz lectures and a VandoJam session.

LINEUP: Victor Bastidas "De Paises Project," Tom Lippincott, Rachel Therrien Trio and Chris Madsen. cujazzfest.wixsite.com/cujazzfest

Clearwater Jazz Holiday

Clearwater, Florida
Oct. 19–22

This festival is a collaboration between the Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation Inc., City of Clearwater, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall. The 39th annual edition is presented by HCI Group Inc. Crowds can enjoy a diverse musical lineup, from jazz to jam, funk, fusion, classic Motown artists and more. On Oct. 21 there will be a special tribute to Weather Report and a Late Night Party dockside aboard *The StarLite Majesty* featuring The Strut Band.

LINEUP: James Hunter Six, Erica DiCeglie, The Temptations, The Four Tops, Jon Cleary, Scott Bradley's Postmodern Jukebox, Helios Jazz Orchestra, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Alex Harris, La Lucha featuring Jeff Rupert & Marty Morell, The Players School of Music featuring Peter Mongaya & Friends, Michael McDonald, Kenny Loggins, Jason Miles Presents "Celebrating the Music of Weather Report" featuring Jeff Coffin, Carter Beauford, Philip Dizack, Shaun Martin, Mino Cinelu, Gerald Veasley and Karen Briggs, Avett Brothers, Mama's Batch, Anderson East, Honey Island Swamp Band, REH/CJH Youth Jazz Band. clearwaterjazz.com

Texas Jazz Festival

Corpus Christi, Texas
Oct. 20–22

More than 60 bands will perform on four stages, including the brand-new

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ELMHURST COLLEGE
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ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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elmhurst.edu/jazzfestival



Saxophonists Ravi Coltrane (left, foreground) and Pharoah Sanders at the 2016 PDX Jazz Festival in Portland

Solomon Ortiz Dance Stage.

LINEUP: Papa Chapa Quintet, Prime Time Jazz John Magaldi, Jeff Lofton, Claudia Melton/Dallas, Europa, One Accord Gospel Group, Cat's Don't Sleep, N.O. Hustlers Brass Band, Kyle Turner, Freddie Martinez, William Skrobarczyk, Dirty River Dixie Band, Zenteno Spirit, Lyrical Byng, Another Level, Cruise Control, Alex Garibay & What is Hip, The Rockoholics, Latin Talk, Latin Heart/Joe Revelez, Greg Abate/George Prado, Powerhouse Big Band, Beverly Houston, Beto & The Fairlanes, UIW Jazz Band/Jim Waller, Stephen Richard, Johnny P & The WiseGuys, Biohazard Brass Band, Melina, Tom Braxton, Tim Gonzales, Islander Jazz Band, Ric Cortez Latin Jazz Project, Fort Sam's Own 323d Army Band, Glynn Garcia/Little Big Band, Carolyn Blanchard Sextet, Big Al, Adeline Cuesta, Sauce Gonzales Westside Sound, Zarabanda, Leticia Rodriguez, Alfinque, Latin Playerz/Henry Brun, Timberos Del Norte, Tiburon, Galvin Quintet, Liscano Quintet, Mike Guerra/Trisum, Veterans Funky Jazz Band, Del Mar Jazz Band, Eddie Olivares Jr. Quartet, Tony Campise Tribute Band, Latino Blue USA/Joe Gallardo.
texasjazz-fest.org

TD James Moody Jazz Festival

Newark, New Jersey
Nov. 4-12

Now in its 20th year, this annual festival held at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center will be a celebration with "a little magic, a little mystery and a whole lot of great music," according to Grammy-winning bassist Christian McBride. Guitar great John McLaughlin will perform at NJPAC as part of a tour that he has said will be his last one of the United States.

LINEUP: Christian McBride & Dianne Reeves, John McLaughlin & Jimmy Herring, The Manhattan Transfer, Ella & Dizzy: The Centennial Celebration (featuring Gregory Porter, Lizz Wright, Regina Carter, Valerie Simpson, Randy Brecker, Sean Jones and the Christian McBride Big Band), Hiromi with Edmar Castaneda, Crosscurrents: Zakir Hussain & Dave Holland, Chris Botti, Grupo Niche/Willy Chirino, Kevin Mahogany, Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition.
njpac.org/buy-tickets/moodyjazz

Exit 0 Jazz Festival

Cape May, New Jersey
Nov. 9-12

Festival producer Michael Kline has assembled a world-class lineup of award-winning artists for this fest. On Nov. 9 there will be a special benefit concert for Music Connects, the non-profit, educational outreach arm of the festival: Titled "A Night in New Orleans," the show will feature The Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Terrance Simien & The Zydeco Experience.

LINEUP: Michael Pedicin (Artist-in-Residence), Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band, Gregory Porter, Pedrito Martinez Group, Arturo O'Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra, Jazzmeia Horn, Lizz Wright, Spuyten Duyvil, Fourplay, New Breed Brass Band, Terrance Simien Zydeco Experience, Bluebone, Matt Cappy, Cintron, Eddie Morgan & Rek'd 4 Jazz, Etienne Charles & Creole Soul, Sasha Masakowski, Ranky Tanky, Brother Josphus & The Love Revolution.
exit0jazzfest.com

Otis Taylor's Trance Blues Festival

Boulder, Colorado
Nov. 11

This event unique will feature workshops (from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) with blues musician Otis Taylor and several visiting artists, as well as an evening concert (beginning at 7 p.m.) with Taylor, guest artists, and select participants.

LINEUP: Otis Taylor, Marcella Simien, C.J. Chenier, Anne Harris, Cassie Taylor, Brandon "Taz" Niederauer, more.
trancebluesfestival.com

BSBI Jazz Festival

Manchester, Connecticut
Dec. 2-3

The second annual edition of this festival, presented by Beth Sholom B'Nai Israel, will be held in historic Cheney Hall and bring a variety of established and emerging jazz musicians to Central Connecticut.

LINEUP: Greg Abate, Avery Sharpe, Alex Nakhimovsky, Robin Lyn Treger, Riverboat

Stompers, Dianne Mower, Norman Johnson, Atla & Matt DeChamplain, Arti Dixson, more.
myshul.org/events/jazz2017

JazzFest at Sea

Cruise leaving from Miami, Florida
Jan. 3-14, 2018

This cruise presents concerts of traditional 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. Shows are presented in an intimate, jazz-club atmosphere limited to 250 guests. In addition to concerts by internationally acclaimed artists, the cruise presents opportunities for amateur musicians to jam with the pros. (Only those who book with Cruise & Vacation Depot or an approved agency will be allowed to participate.)

LINEUP: Houston Person, Allan Vache, Duke Heitger, Harry Allen, Danny Coots, Frank Tate, Rebecca Kilgore, Rossano Sportiello, Bill Allred, Johnny Varro, Warren Vache, Yve Evans, Howard Alden, Butch Miles, Mike Pittsley, Mark Shane, Charlie Silva, Banu Gibson.
jazzfestatsea.com

Winter Jazzfest

New York City
Jan. 10-17, 2018

Held in the global capital for jazz, this festival presents an incredibly diverse spectrum of music. This year's Artist-in-Residence is flutist Nicole Mitchell. Also, there will be a continued focus on musical projects pertaining to social justice, a special focus on the British jazz scene (featuring the BBC's Gilles Peterson) and a tribute to the late Geri Allen. Label showcases will be hosted by ECM Records, OKeh, Motéma and more.

LINEUP: The 2017 edition included dozens of artists, including Pharoah Sanders, Donny McCaslin, Bill Frisell & Thomas Morgan, Amina Claudine Myers, Marc Ribot & The Young Philadelphians, Kneebody, Dave Douglas, Kandace Springs and Mary Halvorson Octet.
winterjazzfest.com

Tucson Jazz Festival

Tucson, Arizona
Jan. 11-21, 2018

The fourth HSL Properties Tucson Jazz Festival is one of the few U.S. jazz festivals held in January, when it's warm and sunny in southern Arizona. The Downtown Jazz Fiesta presents free concerts on eight stages throughout downtown Tucson.

LINEUP: Warren Wolf with the UA Studio Jazz Ensemble, Arturo Sandoval with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Sheila E., Hypnotic Brass, The Hot Sardines, Matt Holman, Lew Tabackin, Bill Charlap, Diane Schuur, Ernie Watts, The Mingus Dynasty, Tucson Jazz Institute Ellington Band, Spyro Gyra, Wycliffe Gordon, Jay Leonhart, more.
tucsonjazzfestival.org

Charleston Jazz Festival
Charleston, South Carolina
Jan. 18-21, 2018

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: Kenny G, Nnenna Freelon, Charleston Jazz Orchestra, Charleston All-Star Youth Jazz Orchestra, more.
charlestonjazz.com

Blue Note at Sea

Cruise leaving from Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Jan. 27-Feb. 3, 2018

Featuring a star-studded lineup at sea, this cruise presents more than 20 acts representing a great variety of jazz styles, as well as comedian Alonzo Bodden. Music on Blue Note at Sea is presented "show style," meaning that each night there will be two main shows in the largest venue on the ship. Half of the guests will attend the first show and then proceed to the Main Dining seating for dinner; the other half of the guests will dine first and then attend the second show.

LINEUP: Chick Corea, Marcus Miller, Robert Glasper, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Lalah Hathaway, Leslie Odom Jr., David Sanborn, Charles Lloyd & The Marvels, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Don Was, Alonzo Bodden, Ambrose Akinmusire, Vicente Archer, Bill Frisell, Wycliffe Gordon, Eric Harland, Derrick Hodge, Geoffrey

Keezer, Billy Kilson, Greg Leisz, Lionel Loueke, Damion Reid, Reuben Rodgers, Kendrick Scott, Marcus Strickland, Ben Williams.
bluenoteatsea.com

The Jazz Cruise

Cruise leaving from Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Feb. 3-10, 2018

This cruise leaves Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with stops in New Orleans and Cozumel, Mexico. There will be nearly 100 jazz musicians on the ship, as well as jazz historian Dick Golden and comedian Alonzo Bodden.

LINEUP: Shelly Berg (Music Director), John Clayton (Big Band Director), Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Herlin Riley, Kurt Elling, Randy Brecker, Monty Alexander, Arturo Sandoval, Marcus Miller, Joey DeFrancesco, John Pizzarelli, Jeff Hamilton, Jeff Clayton, Gerald Clayton, The Cookers, New York Voices, Wycliffe Gordon, Anat Cohen, Lewis Nash, Nneena Freelon, Roberta Gambarini, Benny Green, Houston Person, Terell Stafford, Robin Eubanks, Sean Jones, Will Lee, Dick Oatts, Tom Kennedy, Renee Rosnes, Gary Smulyan, more.
thejazzcruise.com

Berklee High School Jazz Festival

Boston, Massachusetts
Feb. 10, 2018

Berklee College of Music hosts its High School Jazz Festival at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. The largest event of its kind in the United States, the annual festival is free and open to

the public. Big bands, combos and vocal jazz ensembles will perform and compete throughout the day. Additionally, there will be performances by Berklee College of Music faculty, tours of Berklee's campus and open jam sessions.

LINEUP: Berklee ensembles, high school ensembles from around the country, plus special guests.
festival.berkleejazz.org

Newport Beach Jazz Party & Big Band Blowout

Newport Beach, California
Feb. 15-18, 2018

The 18th Annual Jazz Party will return to the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa and feature a closing big band each of the four nights. Artists will perform in various mix-and-match duo, trio, quartet and quintet settings for outdoor afternoon sessions and in the hotel's restaurant and Grand Ballroom for the evening concerts. A motto for this festival could be "One Last Time." Producers Joe Rothman and John McClure presented both the West Coast Jazz Party (1995-2009) and the Newport Beach Jazz Party (2001-'17). Although the 2017 party had its best attendance ever, the producers plan to go out on a high note with one last party celebrating these beloved events, which have presented shows by some 400 artists over the years.

LINEUP: Ken Peplowski, John Clayton, Lewis Nash, Scott Hamilton, Houston

Thurs. Jan. 11



Hypnotic Brass

Fri. Jan. 12



The Hot Sardines

Sat. Jan. 13



Arturo Sandoval

Sun. Jan. 14



Sheila E.

Thurs. Jan. 18



Diane Schuur

Fri. Jan. 19



The Mingus Dynasty

Sat. Jan. 20



Spyro Gyra



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charlestonjazz.com



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charlestonjazz.com



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Greg Osby and Anat Cohen at the Angel City Jazz Festival in Los Angeles

MYLES REGAN

Person, James Morrison, Butch Miles, Chuck Redd, Tamir Hendelman, more.
newportbeachjazzparty.com

Biamp PDX Jazz Festival Portland, Oregon Feb. 15-25, 2018

PDX Jazz celebrates Black History Month by presenting living legends, established stars and emerging jazz artists in classic venues located in numerous eclectic neighborhoods. Fans can enjoy world-class jazz, restaurants, Willamette Valley wines, coffee, micro-brews and more. The festival will include tributes to singer Al Jarreau and drummer Art Blakey (as well as the Jazz Crusaders' legacy).

LINEUP: Terri Lyne Carrington, Esperanza Spalding, Ravi Coltrane, Darrell Grant, Luciana Souza, Lisa Fischer, Regina Carter, Bill Frisell, Dave King Trio, Julian Lage Trio, Scott Amendola, Ben Allison, Charles Tolliver & Music Inc., Jazz By Five, David Sánchez, George Colligan, Miles Electric Band, Charles Gayle, Tigran Hamasyan, Jazz Epistles: Abdulah Ibrahim & Ekaya and Hugh Masekela, Ethan Iverson, Russell Malone, Marcus Roberts Trio, Vocalese Tributes to Jon Hendricks and Eddie Jefferson with Kurt Elling, Allan Harris, Richie Cole, Ernie Andrews, Barbara Morrison, Charnett Moffett, Amina Figarova, Art Abrams, Rachel Flowers, more.
pdxjazz.com/pdx-jazz-festival

San Jose Jazz Winter Fest San Jose, California Feb. 15-25, 2018

A counterpart to San Jose Jazz Summer Fest, this festival features concerts by international jazz stars as well as student bands and master classes. The 2016 edition included The Jazz Beyond series, which was co-curated by Universal Grammar and featured artists who are pushing the boundaries of jazz, soul and hip-hop.

LINEUP: Last year's lineup included artists such as John Scofield & Joe Lovano, Regina Carter, Nicholas Payton,

Delfeayo Marsalis and Kneedelus.
sanjosejazz.org

Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival Moscow, Idaho Feb. 22-24, 2018

Presented by the Lionel Hampton School of Music at the University of Idaho and celebrating its 51st edition, this festival offers competitive student performances, educational workshops and outstanding student performers during the evening concerts. Educators are invited to bring their students.
LINEUP: Last year's lineup included artists such as Esperanza Spalding, René Marie, the Lionel Hampton Big Band, New York Voices.
uidaho.edu/class/jazzfest

Elmhurst College Jazz Festival Elmhurst, Illinois Feb. 22-25, 2018

Many of the best collegiate groups in the country will converge on the Elmhurst College Campus for four days of performances and educational sessions during the 51st edition of this world-class festival. 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 concerts that will be remembered for years to come.

LINEUP: Maria Schneider Orchestra, Arturo O'Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra, Sean Jones, Jiggs Whigham, Matt Wilson.
elmhurst.edu/jazzfestival

DeMiero Jazz Fest Edmonds, Washington March 1-3, 2018

The 42nd annual edition of this non-competitive vocal jazz festival will feature daytime performances on Friday and Saturday from 60 choirs of all ages. Each night will have a concert with world-class jazz musicians as guest artists. New this year is the Thursday

Music Intensive (a day of concentrated clinics and master classes for only 10 groups).

LINEUP: René Marie, Dee Daniels, more.
demierojazzfest.org

Next Generation Jazz Festival presented by Monterey Jazz Festival

Monterey, California
March 9-11, 2018

Each spring, the Monterey Jazz Festival invites more than 1,300 of the nation's top student musicians to play at the Next Generation Jazz Festival (NGJF). One of the most inclusive festivals in the United States, the 48th NGJF will welcome middle school, high school and collegiate groups of every kind: big bands, combos, vocal ensembles, vocal soloists and conglomerate bands. From more than 70 finalists and 130 performing groups, the best will win a spot at the 61st Monterey Jazz Festival, to be held in September 2018. Check the website for an announcement about the Artist-in-Residence.

LINEUP: Past performers have included ensembles from throughout California, as well as Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and other states.
montereyjazzfestival.org

Knox-Rootabaga Jazz Festival

Galesburg, Illinois
April 2018 (Dates TBD)

Hosted by Knox College and the Galesburg community, this festival presents three days

of concerts and workshops. The festival is held in the birthplace of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Carl Sandburg and is named for his 1922 children's book, *Rootabaga Stories*.

LINEUP: Last year's lineup included artists such as the Gretchen Parlato Quartet, Victor Garcia Organ Quintet, Knox College faculty members and others.
knox.edu

New York City Jazz Festival

New York City
April 8, 2018

Hosted at the world-famous Apollo Theater, the New York City Jazz Festival gives instrumental and vocal jazz ensembles the opportunity to perform as part of a ticketed daytime performance, receive comments from a panel of vocal and instrumental jazz experts, have a private clinic with one of them and attend an evening performance of select professional and amateur musicians.

LINEUP: Past editions have included artists such as Stefon Harris, Kurt Elling and Paquito D'Rivera.
mcp.us/nyc-jazz-festival/

French Quarter Festival

New Orleans, Louisiana
April 12-15, 2018

An exciting showcase of Louisiana food, music and culture, this festival presents more than 2,000 musicians on 23 stages,

60 food vendors from well-known local restaurants and numerous special events.

LINEUP: Past editions have included artists such as Ellis Marsalis, Cory Henry, The Revelers and Cowboy Mouth.
fqfi.org/frenchquarter

Miami Downtown Jazz Festival

Miami, Florida
April 13-14, 2018

Presented by radio station WDNA, this festival returns to beautiful downtown Miami with a stellar lineup of local and national musicians and a piano competition open to Florida students. For updates, check the festival website and wdna.org.

LINEUP: Arturo Sandoval, tributes to NEA Jazz Masters Dr. Lonnie Smith and Todd Barkan, more.
miamidowntownjazzfestival.org

Eau Claire Jazz Festival

Eau Claire, Wisconsin
April 20-21, 2018

The 52nd annual edition of this festival will welcome more than 120 high school bands for two days of concerts and educational sessions. Participating venues are located in the city's vibrant downtown area and on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

LINEUP: Last year's lineup included artists such as Doc Severinsen and Carl Allen.
eauclairjazz.com

biamp.
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Saxophonist James Carter leads his organ trio at the 2016 edition of the Tampere Jazz Happening in Finland.

TJH Reaches Ideal Size

The Tampere Jazz Happening has been living up to its name and creating a buzz for 36 years, not only as the primary jazz festival in Finland but as an event that draws fans from around the world. Its reputation got a significant boost this year when the European Jazz Network (EJN) gave the festival the prestigious “Adventurous Programming” award.

Additionally, at the annual music industry conference known as jazzahead! (held in Bremen, Germany, in April), the designated country-in-focus this year was Finland. Before being officially celebrated for the EJN award, Tampere Jazz Happening (TJH) Artistic Director Juhamatti Kauppinen could be found at a pre-show reception, serving as the DJ and spinning an array of impressive Finnish jazz platters.

“I try to spread what jazz I know,” Kauppinen said, “and to show the audience different kinds of music. Almost from the beginning, world music has also been part of our festival program. I want to [present] some newcomers and some legends. I try to keep the programming as wide as possible. Of course, the main thing is new, fresh things—what’s happening in the world of jazz at the moment.”

Tampere is Finland’s second largest city. The festival has flourished there, and nowadays it is part of a group of risk-embracing festivals that host jazz and creative music, such as Austria’s Saalfelden, the Moers festival in Germany, Lisbon’s Jazz em Agosto, Nattjazz in Bergen, Norway, and FIMAV in Victoriaville, Quebec.

The event began humbly in 1982 as an outgrowth of the Jazz Society Break’s programming, with shows in various venues around the city. Its current setting has a wonderful ambi-

ence, with performances held in two historic, adjacent brick buildings, the Telakka and the Paakahuone. Festivalgoers shuffle back and forth between stages, many of them thankful for the short trek, given the wintry conditions of a Finnish November.

When Kauppinen took over the reins of the artistic director role in 2002, one of his goals was to lure a new, younger audience, partly by instituting free concerts at the beginning and end of the festival. The opening now belongs to select acts from a featured country: Last year, it was Sweden. This year’s edition, to be held Nov. 2–5, will focus on Estonia. Next year it will be Austria.

The 2016 program offered an impressive balance of luminosity and bracing edginess. American acts included the Steve Lehmann Octet, elder statesman Charles Lloyd and a stirring finale by Dave Holland’s band Aziza (featuring Chris Potter). From the Finnish front, we heard pianist Aki Rissanen, saxophonist Pepa Päivinen, guitarist Raoul Björkenheim and tenor saxophonist Esa Pietilä, winner of the annual Yrjö Award, presented early in the festival weekend.

Asked for a list of highlights in this year’s edition, Kauppinen pointed out several highly anticipated shows. The Fifth Man, an electro-acoustic band led by saxophonist Evan Parker, will make its first visit to Tampere, and another intriguing saxophonist, Shabaka Hutchings, will appear in two settings. Swiss trombonist Samuel Blaser brings his group Early in the Morning, with reedist Oliver Lake as special guest. Drummer Tony Allen will perform material from his recent EP, *A Tribute To Art Blakey* (Blue Note). Repeat visitors include

ambitious saxophonist Steve Coleman and the jazz-meets-post-rock pianist Nik Bärtsch.

Appearing on Nov. 5 will be New Zion Trio, with pianist Jamie Saft, bassist Brad Jones and respected veteran drummer Hamid Drake, who described the band as “improvisers who love reggae and players of reggae who love to improvise.”

Drake is very familiar with the Jazz Happening’s virtues, having played there numerous times since 1994 when he was in trumpeter Don Cherry’s group Nu. Subsequently, the drummer has appeared in Tampere with Peter Brötzmann, David Murray, the Chicago Tentet, his own groups and more.

“The Jazz Happening is one of the most unique festivals in Europe—perhaps even the world,” Drake said. “It exudes a wonderful aesthetic of diversity among musical and cultural lines. Anyone who attends the festival will bear witness to this and be thankful for it. The organizers feel that it is their responsibility to have and maintain a diverse palette. It is through the combination of progressive and historical expressions that they are able to convey the natural spirit of artistic culture and improvisation.”

All is well in Tampere, but don’t expect any imminent expansion plans. “At the moment, I’m satisfied with the festival,” said Kauppinen, “It’s almost totally sold-out. And I think the size is good. There are three stages near each other, so it’s easy to change the stages, and to go wherever you want. For me, it’s perfect at the moment.

“I think small is beautiful. I don’t like those knotty kinds of big, huge festivals so much. For me, this is better. Small things. Our audience likes that, too.”

—Josef Woodard



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Marcus Miller at Baloise Session in Basel, Switzerland

Hong Kong International Jazz Festival

Hong Kong, China
Sept. 30, Oct. 5-7

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, this festival brings together renowned musicians from around the world to play alongside local young musicians on various stages. In addition, attendees can participate in workshops and other educational initiatives.

LINEUP: Alan Kwan, Patrick Lui Quartet, Hang Em High, EYOT, Samba Jazz Collective, Maxime Bender Universal Sky, J.A.S.S., Cannonball, Born To Be Blue Quartet, Mathias Heise Quadrillion, Jazvolution.
hkijf.com

Agharta Prague Jazz Festival

Prague, Czech Republic
Oct. 2-Nov. 15

This festival is held in the Lucerne Music Bar and the Agharta Jazz Centrum, a jazz club located in the basement of a building constructed in the 1400s. The festival presents a mix of European and American acts.

LINEUP: Original Vintage Orchestra, LacoDeczi & Celula New York, Candy Dulfer, Dean Brown Band, more.
aghart.cz

Enjoy Jazz

Heidelberg, Mannheim, Ludwigshafen, Germany
Oct. 2-Nov. 17

This festival, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary, typically presents one concert per evening per city. Among the legendary artists who have played this event is Ornette Coleman.

LINEUP: Vijay Iyer Sextet, Donny McCaslin, Archie Shepp, Shabaka & The Ancestors, Brad Mehldau, Eric Schaefer & The Shredz,

Egberto Gismonti & Maria João, Wolfgang Muthspiel Quintet, Richard Bona Mandekan Cubano, Amok Amor, Gonjasufi, BadBadNotGood, Gerald Clayton Trio, Giovanni Guidi, Gianluca Petrella & Louis Sclavis, Somi, Youn Sun Nah, Tarkovsky Quartet mit Couturier, Lechner, Larché & Martinier, Mammal Hands, Ida Lupino, Ilhan Ersahin's Istanbul Sessions, Avishai Cohen Quartet, Django Memories Quartet featuring Biréli Lagrène
enjoyjazz.de

Angra Jazz Festival

Angra do Heroísmo, Terceira Island, Azores, Portugal
Oct. 4-7

Founded in 1999, this festival takes place on Terceira, a beautiful, small island. For the past 18 years, many of the world's most important jazz musicians have played at Angrajazz (aka the Angra Jazz Festival).

LINEUP: Matt Wilson Quartet, Yilian Cañizares Quintet, Jon Irabagon Quartet, Orquestra Angrajazz, Baptiste Trotignon & Minimo Garay, Charles Tolliver Tentet, Ensemble Super Moderne.
angrajazz.com: visitazores.com

Stockholm Jazz Festival

Stockholm, Sweden
Oct. 6-15

This is one of Sweden's oldest festivals and one of Stockholm's biggest cultural events. It has a reputation as one of Europe's best-run festivals. Since 2012, the festival has been held indoors on the finest stages in Stockholm.

LINEUP: Roy Hargrove Quintet, Diane Reeves, Vijay Iyer Sextet, Maria Schneider & Bohuslän Big Band, Tigran Hamasyan, Hiromi with Edmar Castañeda, Al Di Meola World Sinfonia, Benja-

min Koppel/Scott Colley/Brian Blade Collective, Horncraft, Tenor Madness, Anna Louise & The Fellas, Hasse Ling & His Syncopators of Swing.
stockholmjazz.com/english

Padova Jazz Festival

Padova, Italy
Oct. 7-14

This festival will celebrate its 20th edition with a series of concerts by world-class musicians. Guitar legend Pat Metheny will be in Padova rehearsing for his European tour, which will begin in Padova. He will perform with his band and participate in an onstage conversation.

LINEUP: Pat Metheny (with Antonio Sanchez/Linda May Han Oh/Gwilym Simcock), Mike Applebaum, Sergio Cammariere, Eric Reed Trio featuring Piero Odorici, more.
padovajazz.com

Jazzmandu

Kathmandu, Nepal
Oct. 12-18

Key attractions for this famous festival are a verdant valley, centuries-old palaces and pagodas, packed crowds in unique venues, and the mixing of musical traditions from around the world. Jazzmandu (aka the Kathmandu Jazz Festival) will celebrate its 15th year with a special lineup.

LINEUP: Filtron M, Samuel Wootton's Toy Story, Julia Sarr Quartet, Palouse Jazz Project, Cadenza Collective, more.
jazzmandu.com

Canterbury Festival

Canterbury, United Kingdom
Oct. 12-Nov. 4

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. The 200 performances and events include jazz, classical music, world music, contemporary dance, visual arts, comedy, theater, walks, lectures and more.

LINEUP: Imelda May, Chris Ingham Quartet, Katy Windsor & Ginger Bennett Jazz Trio, Jacqui Dankworth & Craig Ogden, Mary Black, Christ Church University Big Band, Hamish Stuart Band, Alex Rose, Trio Apaches, Harvey & The New Wallbangers, Budapest Cafe Orchestra, London Philharmonic Skiffle Orchestra, Newton Faulkner, Ruby Turner, more.
canterburyfestival.co.uk

Barcelona Voll-Damm Jazz Festival

Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain
Oct. 17-Dec. 19

This legendary festival is a two-month marathon extravaganza with a variety of music, plus a very special interest in oe-

nology and gastronomy. It is run by The Project, a leader in the concert industry.

LINEUP: Diana Krall, Chick Corea/Steve Gadd Band, Avishai Cohen, Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Lila Downs, Trombone Shorty, Maceo Parker, Barbara Hendricks, Hiromi & Edmar Castañeda, Kamasi Washington, Ambrose Akinmusire, Cory Henry, Chris Dave, Chano Domínguez & Stefano Bollani, Fred Hersch, Rebecca Martin, Cyrille Aimée, Logan Richardson, Shai Maestro, Aaron Goldberg, The Bad Plus, Miguel Zenón, Eliane Elias, Daymé Arocena, Marco Mezquida, Andrea Motis, Carles Benavent, The Waterboys, Julia Holter, Tony Visconti & Woody Woodmansey's Holy Holy, Tomatito, José Mercé, Estrella Morente, Niño Josele, Rocío Márquez, Antonio Carmona, Chicuelo, more. barcelonajazzfestival.com

DølaJazz Lillehammer Jazz Festival
Lillehammer, Norway
Oct. 19-22

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: Arild Andersen Trio, Erik Løkra Volunteer Quartet, Maren Selvaag Trio, Jacob Young, Trail of Souls, Sarah McKenzie, Confusion, Bendik Hofseth Kvartett, more. dolajazz.no

Skopje Jazz Festival
Skopje, Republic of Macedonia
Oct. 19-22

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: Performers in last year's festival included artists such as Julian Lage, The Thing and the Marcin Wasilewski Trio with Joakim Milder. skopjejazzfest.com.mk

Jarasum International Jazz Festival
Gapyeong, South Korea
Oct. 20-22

Held on an island on the Bukhan River, this event has been recognized as the best festival by the Korean Culture Ministry. The 15 host venues are located in a beautiful natural setting. Each year, Jarasum Jazz has a program that focuses on a partner country, and this year the spotlight is on Israel. Other attractions of the festival include a children's program, films and a farmers' market.

LINEUP: Lee Ritenour & Dave Grusin, Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Joshua Redman Trio (with Reuben Rogers and Kendrick Scott), Dino Saluzzi Group, Avishai Cohen Trio, Mike Stern Band (featuring

Dave Weckl/Randy Brecker/Tom Kennedy), Eli Degibri Quartet, Pablo Held Trio, Jacob Young, Fabrizio Bosso Quartet, Mario Laginha Trio, Yuri Honing Acoustic Quartet. jarasumjazz.com

Baloise Session
Basel, Switzerland
Oct. 21-Nov. 9

Baloise Session presents a unique atmosphere: Seated in an elegant club-like setting at round, candlelit tables, the audience is just a few meters away from the stage. For the past 32 years, major stars have been coming to this popular Swiss boutique-music festival, which features jazz, soul, funk, blues, world music and many other genres.

LINEUP: Gilberto Gil, Amadou & Mariam, Chris Rea, Imelda May, Alicia Keys, Kaleo, Ásgeir, Tim Bendzky, Max Giesinger, more. baloisession.ch

JazzUV Festival
Xalapa, Mexico
Oct. 24-29

The mission of this festival is to promote jazz as a platform for dialogue and collaboration, and to celebrate cultural diversity in a setting of equality. The festival is supported in part by the Center for Jazz Studies of the University of Veracruz, the Academic Area of Arts, the IVEC, Secretariat of Culture, IBERMUSICAS and the Institute of Youth of Quebec.

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Jarasum International Jazz Festival in Gapyeong, South Korea

LINEUP: Donald Harrison Quintet, Michael Dease Quintet, Martha Gómez, Gentiane MG Trio, Henry Cole.

uv.mx/jazzuv/festival-jazzuv

Bologna Jazz Festival

Bologna, Italy

Oct. 26–Nov. 19

This festival will focus on the mixing of modern jazz language and contemporary sounds, including hip-hop and electronica. Its program will feature many world-class artists.

LINEUP: Chick Corea/Steve Gadd Band, Lee Konitz Quartet, Yellowjackets, Miguel Zenón Quartet, Tim Berne's Snakeoil, Barry Harris Trio, Paolo Fresu Devil Quartet, Matthew Herbert, Enrico Rava, Giovanni Guidi, Bassdrumbone, Steve Lehman & Sélébéyone, The Claudia Quintet. Ralph Towner, Brian Auger's Oblivion Express featuring Alex Ligertwood, more.

bolognajazzfestival.com

Guinness Cork Jazz Festival

Cork, Ireland

Oct. 27–30

In addition to presenting world-famous headliners, this festival, which is celebrating its 40th edition, offers numerous free events and activities, including outdoor shows, a Jazz Bus, a Record & CD Fair at the Unitarian Church, a jazz parade, a food fair and a gospel service. The Jazz Festival Club shows at the Metropole Hotel aim to re-create the ambience of Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London.

LINEUP: Kenny Garrett Quintet, Nicholas Payton, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Monty Alexander Trio, Michael Wollny Trio, Sue Rynhart Trio, Ronnie Scott's All-Stars, Imelda May, Sarah McKenzie, Scott Hamilton & The Champion Fulton Trio, more.

guinnessjazzfestival.com

Dominican Republic Jazz Festival

Santo Domingo, Santiago, Sosua, Puerto Plata & Playa Cabarete, Dominican Republic

Oct. 29–Nov. 5

The 21st edition of this festival, presented by FEDUJAZZ and the Ministry of Tourism, will present concerts in beautiful locations.

Marco Pignataro, who is managing director of the Berklee Global Jazz Institute, serves as artistic advisor to this festival.

LINEUP: Sean Jones, Anat Cohen with the Berklee Global Jazz Ambassadors, Alain Mallet, Jonathan Suazo, Edmar Colon, El Eco with Guillermo Nojehowicz featuring Marco Pignataro, Brian Lynch, Helio Alves, Kim Nazarian & Fernando Huergo, Roni Eytan Quartet, Trío da Paz, Guy Frómata Trío, more.

drjazzfestival.com

Berlin Jazz Festival

Berlin, Germany

Oct. 31–Nov. 5

The 54th edition of this festival will include performances by more 150 musicians hailing from numerous countries. This is the third and final year that British writer Richard Williams will serve as the festival curator. Williams has given this year's edition a title that nods to a quote from Ornette Coleman: "In All Languages."

LINEUP: Ambrose Akinmusire, Michael Wollny, John Beasley's MONK'estra, Nels Cline, Tyshawn Sorey, Steve Lehman & Sélébéyone, Shabaka & The Ancestors, Dr. Lonnie Smith Trio, Punkt.Vrt.Plastik: Kaja Draksler/Petter Eldh/Christian Lillinger, Empirical, Amir ElSaffar + Zinc & Copper, Ingrid & Christine Jensen with Ben Monder, Amirtha Kidambi & Elder Ones, Geir Lysne + NDR Bigband, Trondheim Voices + Kit Downes, René Urtreger, Mônica Vasconcelos, more.

berlinerfestspiele.de

Roma Jazz Festival

Rome, Italy

November (Dates TBD)

This celebration of jazz in Italy's capital brings revered Italian artists together with international stars. Founded in 1976, the festival offers diverse programming and has presented such music legends as Miles Davis, Sarah Vaughan, B.B. King and Bob Dylan.

LINEUP: Last year's lineup included artists such as Joshua Redman, Jacob Collier, Richard Galliano, John Scofield, Enrico Rava, Giovanni Guidi and Omar Sosa.

romajazzfestival.it

Jazznojazz Festival

Zurich, Switzerland

Nov. 1–4

In its 19th year, this festival will offer more than 20 concerts featuring jazz, funk, fusion and soul. And for the first time ever, the festival will be hosting exclusive Late Night Sessions, so that fans can keep the party going into the wee hours.

LINEUP: Cécile McLorin Salvant, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Marcus Miller, Stanley Clarke, Kamasi Washington, Billy Cobham, Nils Landgren Funk Unit, Yellowjackets, Abdullah Ibrahim, Blood, Sweat & Tears, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles.

jazznojazz.ch

Tampere Jazz Happening

Tampere, Finland

Nov. 2–5

Founded in 1982, the Tampere Jazz Happening brings together the most interesting artists of modern jazz from Finland and from abroad. In 2017 Tampere Jazz Happening was honored by the European Jazz Network for its continuous bold and innovative programming, its ability to stimulate new and original projects linking local and international musicians, and its commitment to broaden the horizons of jazz, maintaining quality at the highest levels.

LINEUP: Steve Coleman & Five Elements, Tony Allen, Kirke Karja Quartet, Kadri Voorand Duo, Heavy Beauty, The Comet Is Coming, Sid Hille & Foreign Friends, Njet Njet 9, Jukka Eskola Soul Trio, Shabaka & The Ancestors, Jojo Mayer/Nerve, Adele Sauros Quartet, Eero Koivistoinen Quartet, Virta, Sunna Gunnlaugs Trio with Verner Pohjola, Samuel Blaser, Oliver Lake, Eric Truffaz Quartet, The Fifth Man, Trail Of Souls, Knut Reiersrud, Solveig Slettahjell, Thomas de Pourquery & Supersonic, Nik Bärtsch's Mobile, New Zion Trio with Hamid Drake, Dhafer Youssef, Lucia Cadotsch, more.

tamperemusicfestivals.fi/jazz/en/

Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival

Wangaratta, Victoria, Australia

Nov. 3–5

This festival features nine venues, gourmet food and wine, markets and

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Tia Fuller (center) performs at the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival.

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LINEUP: Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Jon Cleary, Ian Moss, Spiderbait & Wang Horns, Katie Noonan/Karin Schaupp, Kari Ikonen Trio, Jen Shyu, Aron Ottignon Trio, Caiti Baker, Kevin Borich, Bridie King, James Morrison/Paul Grabowsky/Kram, Tony Gould & Mike Nock, more. wagarattajazz.com

Akbank Jazz Festival

Istanbul, Turkey
Nov. 3-19

Launched in 1991, this festival not only hosts prominent jazz figures from across the world but also presents emerging and promising next-generation artists. The festival includes panel discussions, workshops, film screenings, concerts and social responsibility projects.

LINEUP: Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya and Hugh Masekela, Henri Texier Hope Quartet, Bonobo, Wolfgang Muthspiel Trio, Amina Figarova Sextet, Alfredo Rodriguez Trio, Ala.Ni, Red Baraat, Emir Ersoy Quartera featuring Türkü Turan, Daniel Herskedal & Marius Neset, Nicola Cruz, more. akbankjazzfestival.com

Leverkusener Jazztage

Leverkusener, Germany
Nov. 4-16

Founded in 1980, this festival has become one of the largest cultural events in Germany, drawing artists from a variety of genres and countries.

LINEUP: Marcus Miller, Maceo Parker, Chris Thile & Brad Mehldau, Nils Landgren Funk Unit, Albert Lee, Kennedy Administration, Max Giesinger, Gov't Mule, more. leverkusener-jazztage.de

Festival de Jazz de Montevideo

Montevideo, Uruguay
Nov. 6-8

Festival performances are held all around Montevideo, with the Teatro Solís as the main venue. There are also shows and jam sessions in restaurants and bars with local and international artists playing together. This festival also includes free workshops.

LINEUP: Mario Laginha & Pedro Burmester, Diego Piñera Trio, Javier Colina & Josemi Carmona, Gino Sitson, Luca Ciarla, more. jazztour.com.uy

EFG London Jazz Festival

London, United Kingdom
Nov. 10-19

One of the UK's landmark musical celebrations, this festival is celebrating its 25th edition. It brings the best and freshest music to the streets, clubs and concert halls of London, featuring world-renowned musicians and emerging stars from across the globe.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock, Miles Mosley, Pat Metheny, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Pharoah Sanders, Chris Thile & Brad Mehldau, Terence Blanchard, Robert Glasper, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Eliane Elias, Mike Stern, Jaimeo Brown, Marcus Miller, Abdullah Ibrahim & Hugh Masekela, Tomasz Stanko, Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Zakir Hussain with Dave Holland and Chris Potter, Fred Hersch Trio, Michael Wollny, Kirk Lightsey Trio, The Haywood Sisters, Moon Hooch, Becca Stevens, Bill Laurance, Harlem Gospel Choir, Matthew Stevens, Knowler, Keith Tippett Octet with Matthew Bourne, Nicole Henry, Camila Meza, Tony Kofi & The Organisation, Wolfgang Muthspiel Trio, Mark Guiliiana Jazz Quartet, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Ben L'Oncle Soul, Polly Gibbons, Dayna Stephens, Darcy James Argue's Secret Society, Jazzmeia Horn, London Jazz Orchestra, more. efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk

Jazzdor Festival

Strasbourg, France
Nov. 10-24

The 32nd edition of this fest will present dozens of concerts in multiple venues around the city of Strasbourg.

LINEUP: Fred Hersch Trio, Ralph Towner, Paolo Fresu Devil Quartet, Samuel Blaser Quartet, Celea/Parisien/Reisinger featuring Dave Liebman, Louis Slavis & Benjamin Moussay, Joachim Kuhn New Trio, Daniel Humair New Quartet, James Brandon Lewis

& Chad Taylor, Dave Douglas & Chet Doxas Riverside Quartet featuring Carla Bley, more. jazzdor.com

Vilnius Mama Jazz Festival

Vilnius, Lithuania
Nov. 15-19

Founded in 2002, this festival introduces Lithuanian audiences to talented jazz musicians and provides a forum for young artists to participate in collaborations.

LINEUP: Performers at past editions of this festival include artists such as Ambrose Akinmusire, Oregon, Avishai Cohen, Terence Blanchard, Steve Coleman, Ernie Watts and Miguel Zenón. vilniusmamajazz.lt

Christmas Jazz of Jazzkaar

Tallinn, Estonia
Nov. 24-Dec. 11

Christmas Jazz is a two-week international event that features a variety of programs held at churches, clubs and concert halls.

LINEUP: Stacey Kent, Simone Phillips, ALA.NI, more. jazzkaar.ee

Deutsches Jazzfestival Frankfurt

Frankfurt am Main, Germany
Nov. 25-29

Founded in 1953, this is one of the oldest jazz festivals in the world and is known for presenting unique collaborations.

LINEUP: Craig Taborn Quartet, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Cory Henry & hr-Bigband, Shabaka & The Ancestors, Danilo Pérez/John Patitucci/Brian Blade, more. jazzfestival.hr2-kultur.de

Riviera Maya Jazz Festival

Playa del Carmen, Mexico
Nov. 30-Dec. 2

The 15th edition of this festival presents jazz under the moonlit sky, on the beach, for free. This edition is dedicated to Fernando Toussaint (1957-2017), a writer, musician and producer who served as director for this festival.

LINEUP: John McLaughlin & Jimmy Herring, Chick Corea & Béla Fleck, Iliya Kuryaki & The Valderramas, Aguamala, Wallace Roney, Memo Ruiz Big Band, Gipsy Kings, more. rivieramayajazzfestival.com/2017

Umbria Jazz Winter

Orvieto, Italy
Dec. 28, 2017-Jan. 1, 2018

The 25th edition of Umbria Jazz Winter will include more than 100 events. Festival concerts take place in numerous venues, and there will be music at the Ristorante San Francesco, the perfect place for the festival's Jazz Lunches and Dinners and for the special dinner with music on New Year's Eve. Orvieto's magnificent cathedral will once again be the setting for a Mass for Peace with gospel singers on the afternoon of New Year's Day. In addition to world-class jazz, the city of Umbria has beautiful architecture and renowned food and wine.



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LINEUP: Jason Moran, Marc Ribot, Gilberto Gil, Danilo Rea, Enzo Pietropaoli, Rita Marcotulli, more.
umbriajazz.com

Festival Internacional de Jazz de Punta del Este
Finca El Sosiego, Punta del Este, Uruguay
Jan. 4-7, 2018

Founded in 1996, this festival takes place in the countryside, where the musicians are surrounded by a beautiful, natural environment. It features artists from all over the world in an easygoing setting.

LINEUP: Jason Marsalis, Paquito D'Rivera, Jon Irabagon, David Feldman, Popo Romano, Pipi Piazzolla/Nicolás Mora, Grant Stewart, Chris Cheek, Yasushi Nakamura, Neal Smith, Donald Vega, Brandon Lee, Jon Cowherd, Rodney Jordan, Stephen Riley, Boris Kozlov, Rudy Royston, George Colligan, Nicole Glover, Emmet Cohen, Clovis Nicholas, Pete Van Nostrand, Bruce Harris, Chano Domínguez, Alex Brown, Zachary Brown, Eric Doob, Diego Urcola.
festival.com.uy

Panama Jazz Festival
Panama City, Panama
Jan. 15-20, 2018

This festival expects to draw more than 30,000 fans from all over the world for its performances and educational activities. With more than 30 concerts, 70 master classes and a music therapy symposium, this festival has become one of the most important cultural events in the region. Pianist Danilo Pérez serves as a UNESCO Artist For Peace, Cultural Ambassador to the Republic of Panama, Artistic Director of the Berklee Global Jazz Institute and Artistic Director of the Panama Jazz Festival.

LINEUP: Performers at past editions of this festival have included artists such as Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Chucho Valdés, Ellis Marsalis, Randy Weston, John Scofield, Omara Portuondo and Benny Golson.
panamajazzfestival.com

Havana International Jazz Festival
Havana, Cuba
Jan. 17-21, 2018

The 33rd edition of this festival has been expanded to five days to include more artists, with a lineup that will include many musicians from the United States. At the 2016 edition, Chucho Valdés performed, as did more than 50 bands from 30 nations.

LINEUP: Performers at past editions have included artists such as Terence Blanchard, Bobby Carcassés, Arthur O'Farrill, Harold López Nussa, Roberto Fonseca, Aldo López Gavilán and Alejandro Falcón.
jazzcuba.com

Port-au-Prince International Jazz Festival

Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Jan. 20-27, 2018

This festival will offer a vibrant mixture of jazz and Haitian music, with more than 30 concerts in 10 venues around the sunny capital, followed by jam sessions every evening. And for the first time, the festival will end at the Royal Decameron Beach resort.

LINEUP: Kenny Garrett, Norman Brown, Emilie Claire Barlow, Michael Brun, Leila Pinheiro, Dominique Di Piazza, Beethova Obas, Ram, more.
papjazzhaiti.org

Winter Jazz

Prøehallen, Valby, Copenhagen, Denmark
Feb. 2-25, 2018

This festival features hundreds of concerts all across Denmark.

LINEUP: DR Big Band & Palle Mikkelborg, Sinne Eeg Group, more.
jazz.dk

Oscar Peterson International Jazz Festival
Niagara Wine County, Ontario, Canada
Feb. 16-18, 2018

Pianist Renee Rosnes will serve as the artistic director for the inaugural edition of this

festival, which is named for the Canadian jazz pianist and DownBeat Hall of Famer Oscar Peterson (1925–2007). The fest will take place in the rural setting of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The festival's artistic producer is Peterson's widow, Kelly Peterson, who has been active in preserving his legacy.

LINEUP: Check website for announcement.
opjazzfest.org

Dubai Jazz Festival

Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Feb. 21-23, 2018

This award-winning festival, which routinely draws capacity crowds, offers exceptional production values and has become a highlight of the Dubai entertainment calendar.

LINEUP: Performers at past editions have included artists such as Stanley Jordan, Archie Shepp, Esperanza Spalding, Jamie Cullum, Sean Jones and Jane Monheit.
dubaijazzfest.com

Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival

Jakarta, Indonesia
March 2018 (Dates TBD)

The same organization responsible for festivals such as Java Rockin'land, Java SoulNation and Soundsfair also presents this acclaimed event.

LINEUP: Past editions have included artists such as Nicholas Payton, Arturo Sandoval, Chick Corea, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Dewa Budjana, Dira Sugandi, Adinda Shalahita and Adra Karim.
javajazzfestival.com

Fiesta Del Tambor

La Habana, Cuba
March 4-11, 2018

This annual Cuban festival of rhythm and dance includes an immersive percussion and drum workshop presented by festival sponsor/collaborator KoSA Cuba.

LINEUP: Mark Guiliana, Craig Haynes, José Eladio Amat, Will Calhoun, Dafnis Prieto, Aldo Mazza, Delvis Ponce, Eduardo Sandoval y Habana Jazz, Julito Padrón, Emilio Martini y Natural Trio, more.
fiestadeltambor.cult.cu
fiestadeltamborpopular.com

Cape Town International Jazz Festival

Cape Town, South Africa
March 23-24, 2018

This festival is known for its star-studded lineup, which includes a balance of South African musicians and international artists. Often referred to as "Africa's Grandest Gathering," this festival is held on five stages at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. It is the largest music event in sub-Saharan Africa.

LINEUP: Performers at past editions have included artists such as Rudresh Mahanthappa, Darren English, Gretchen Parlato, Lizz Wright, Victor Wooten, Cassandra Wilson and Gerald Clayton.
capetownjazzfest.com



Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah (foreground) and flutist Elena Pinderhughes at the 2015 EFG London Jazz Festival

EFG London Fest on the Rise at 25

The EFG London Jazz Festival is one of the world's largest and most ambitious festivals, sprawling across the city and inhabiting multiple venues. The festival's 25th edition, to be held Nov. 10–19, will reflect its steady expansion in locations, scale and artistic scope.

John Cumming is one of the festival's three directors, and his involvement dates back to the beginning. He programmed the Bracknell and Camden festivals (from 1975 and '78, respectively), both of which formed the roots of the LJJ, when it became a London-wide event in 1993. The festival was created by Serious, one of the U.K.'s leading promoters of jazz, global sounds and crossover classical music. The aim was to showcase London's status as a major world city, mixing up starry names with emerging talents and combining indigenous artists with international touring acts.

"One big challenge was to make an impact with what [some might see] as a niche art form in a very large city," Cumming said. "So we let the city speak to us, taking the festival into the outer boroughs as well as the obvious central venues, and responding to new initiatives that appear. This year sees the return of the festival to venues in Croydon, for example."

The festival has expanded its collaborations with orchestras, cultural institutes and foreign embassies, leading to an increase in artists arriving from Scotland, for instance, as well as mainland Europe and the Americas. "This has been an evolutionary process," Cumming said.

"Nothing happens overnight. The festival has expanded steadily in terms of scale, and this in itself has been in response to audience demand."

Other steadily heightened aspects, over the years, include master classes, panel discussions, kids' sessions and mass audience-participation events. The broadcasting of festival concerts is at its highest level, not least through the coverage on BBC Radio 3 and, more recently, the digital radio station Jazz FM.

"We've also seen other opportunities emerge: a strong film program with the Barbican cinema, and an increasing use of visuals within the concert program," Cumming said. "Some interesting projects have developed with galleries, especially the Royal Academy. This year sees our first foray into listening sessions, with [a focus on] classic albums."

A significant portion of this year's program is billed as "25 For 25," a series of specific commissions to mark the festival's anniversary. Not least of these is "Thelonious Monk At 100," a run of concerts that examines specific albums by the pianist, with a band headed by pianist Jonathan Gee and saxophonist Tony Kofi.

"There's a lot of other commissioned pieces," added Cumming. "For example, a commission for Terence Blanchard and the BBC Concert Orchestra, shared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Philharmonic Hall in Wroclaw, Poland; a commission for Dave Maric, Phronesis and the Engines Orchestra, shared with Cheltenham and Manchester Festivals; a new collaboration between [pianists] Keith

Tippett and Matthew Bourne; and a series of 25 one-page scores, which could be notated, graphic or [anything] in-between."

Over the last quarter-century, many legends have graced the festival's stages: Wayne Shorter, Carla Bley, George Russell, Michael Brecker, Randy Weston, Cecil Taylor and Sheila Jordan. In November, the festival will present dozens of artists, including Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Pharoah Sanders, Chris Thile and Brad Mehldau, John Surman, Jaimeo Brown, Chucho Valdés and Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Zakir Hussain with Dave Holland and Chris Potter, Henri Texier and Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles.

Tippett has a long history with the LJJ and its predecessors. This year, he will play on the opening night, with his octet, and in a duo with Bourne. "I've admired and enjoyed Matthew's playing for some time," Tippett beamed. "I really enjoy piano duets: In the past, I've done extensive concerts with Howard Riley and Stan Tracey. I have wonderful memories of Bracknell, glorious summer evenings, wonderful music—truly a golden period."

When quizzed about the festival's future, Cumming is characteristically optimistic. "I think that the shape is robust, but it can always be augmented and reinvigorated as opportunities arise," he said. "That's in the nature of the music, finding new ideas in terms of commissioning and learning work. For instance, it would be great to find an unusual indoor space that could be adapted for special projects."

—Martin Longley



Dr. Gordon Vernick, coordinator of jazz studies, conducts the GSU Jazz Band at the Rialto Center for the Arts in Atlanta.

GSU Trains Jazz Entrepreneurs

IN THE MID-2000S, DR. GORDON VERNICK started to see a shift in the priorities of his students at Georgia State University. A trumpeter and longtime coordinator of the jazz studies program at the Atlanta institution, Vernick began noticing that many of his students weren't entering college with a goal of simply getting better at their instrument; they had arrived at GSU with a firm grasp of marketing and production abilities, and were looking for even more guidance.

"They have a different skill set from when I came to school," said Vernick, who added that he graduates a handful of jazz studies majors each year. "They have a more realistic approach to what they're going to do—as opposed to just playing the saxophone."

Vernick helps these students become technically proficient players, but students can also expand their horizons, thanks to the school of music's music technology and music management programs, along with the GSU's new Creative Media Industries Institute.

In these technology, management and media industries classes—which jazz studies majors pursue as elective courses—students can learn about marketing, production and film-scoring techniques. Vernick knows the days of completing music school and waiting for a bandleader to swoop in with a tantalizing job offer are long gone. He said these courses outside the jazz-performance realm help students become more complete performers.

"The marketing and entrepreneurial part is way more important," he said. "My contribution to that part of their career is making them better musicians so they can make better musical decisions."

The Creative Media Industries Institute isn't solely tied to the school of music, but jazz

studies majors benefit from courses taught at the state-of-the-art facility, said Steve Jones, who is helping get the institute up and running. The institute's cutting-edge technology is possible due to a \$22.8 million gift to the university—money that is earmarked for creating an interdisciplinary training ground that, in part, will provide skilled workers to meet Georgia's ever-growing film demands.

"We are going to have technology here that is not really available anywhere else," Jones said. "That's one of the lures we will have for industry. In return for using our technology, they're going to have to help us train the students."

The institute currently offers majors in media management and video-game development and design. The plan is to significantly enhance the program in coming years.

"We see it becoming an entrepreneur incubator of student business ideas," Jones said. "We're going to partner with industry, and bring industry into the institute. Our students will be working side by side with them and learning how to develop start-up businesses."

On a national level, GSU officials have spent the last decade elevating the school's profile as a top urban university. The City of Atlanta's resources are a key part of the university's culture. Students participate in a handful of jam sessions at music venues around the city, and Vernick funnels university-specific work to his musicians, letting them learn the "real-world" skill of how to negotiate a gig.

"I have kids now who are basically running their own little booking agency," Vernick said.

As the school of music and the Creative Media Industries Institute continue to evolve, Vernick plans to further integrate these types of lessons into the foundation of his jazz studies program.

—Jon Ross



The D'Addario Foundation supported FiddleFest 2017 in New Jersey.

Foundation Grants: The D'Addario Foundation has completed its grant application review process for the second time this year, having received a record number of proposals. D'Addario committed more than \$237,000 in monetary and product support to programs in 35 out of the 50 United States, bringing the total for 2017 to more than \$480,000. Some of the programs receiving first-time grants include A Child's Song (Colorado), Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula (California), Eastman School of Music RocMusic (New York), Lone Star Youth Orchestra (Texas) and Price Hill Will—MYCincinnati (Ohio). Continued support was awarded to many programs, including those the foundation considers its premier partners: Education through Music (New York), the People's Music School (Chicago), OrchKids (Baltimore), Austin Classical Guitar (Texas), Bloomingdale School of Music (New York) and Soundscapes (Virginia).

daddariofoundation.org

Academic Accreditation: Vienna, Austria-based Jam Music Lab has attained university status and is now a fully accredited academic institute. Offering bachelor's and master's degrees in music and music education, Jam Music Lab University specializes in jazz and popular music, with an emphasis on practical experience and employment opportunities. Courses are held in German and English. The university recently added Austrian trumpeter Thomas Gansch and Colombian bassist-composer Juan Garcia-Herreros to its faculty.

jammusiclab.at

Lenfest Center Inaugural: In one of the first public performances at the new Lenfest Center for the Arts in New York, Columbia University School of the Arts will present the Art Ensemble of Chicago on Oct. 6. Joining Art Ensemble members Roscoe Mitchell (flutes, saxophones), Famoudou Don Moye (drums, percussion), Hugh Ragin (trumpet), Tomeka Reid (cello) and Junius Paul (bass) for the concert will be original member Joseph Jarman, who will be performing his poetry, long an integral part of the band's shows.

lenfest.arts.columbia.edu



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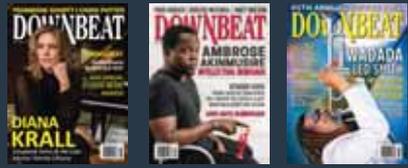
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Odean Pope

Throughout his career, Philadelphia-raised tenor saxophonist Odean Pope has advanced the music in contexts ranging from Jimmy McGriff's B-3 landscape, to the remarkable '70s band Catalyst, to drummer Max Roach's final quartet. Pope has recorded as a leader in a variety of contexts, ranging from saxophone trios to his roaring Saxophone Choir, which released the strong album *The Saxophone Shop* (Soul Note, 2010). On the occasion of his first Blindfold Test, we sat down with Pope preceding a roof-raising performance by his Saxophone Choir (presented by CapitalBop) as part of the 2017 DC Jazz Festival in Washington, D.C. Pope eschewed the star system.

Benny Golson

"Shade Of Stein" (*Complete Argo/Mercury Art Farmer Benny Golson/Jazztet Sessions*, Mosaic, 2004) Golson, tenor saxophone; Wynton Kelly, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Jimmy Cobb, drums.

That was Benny Golson. When I was growing up, I lived one block from Benny Golson, and I'm very honored, very humbly blessed to be raised in that particular time. John Coltrane was living on 33rd Street ... we were all living in north Philly. The most profound information I got from John Coltrane and Benny Golson was they would pass their compositions down to me. Benny Golson was influenced at that time by Lucky Thompson. He has one of the greatest musical minds this country has produced.

Gary Bartz

"Dahomey Dance/Tunji" (*Coltrane Rules: Tao Music Warrior*, Oyo, 2011) Bartz, alto saxophone; Barney McAll, piano; Greg Bandy, drums; James King, bass.

He's from the John Coltrane school; that was a tenor saxophone. Is it Wayne Shorter? [after] An alto player! Well, that's unusual to hear an alto player sound like that! That was a very fat sound for an alto; "Dahomey Dance" was the tune and you could tell that he was influenced by John Coltrane. You could hear the dynamics, the harmonic concepts, the rhythmic concepts. The improvisation concepts definitely had a lot to do with John Coltrane. I heard Gary Bartz play "Giant Steps." I witnessed him playing that in person and he was so close to John Coltrane that if you closed your eyes you would have thought it was John Coltrane. Gary Bartz is one of the profound players and he has a very fat and distinctive sound. Most alto players don't play like that.

Cannonball Adderley Quintet

"Jeannine" (*Norman Granz, Jazz At the Philharmonic: Paris, 1960*, Concord/Pablo) Adderley, alto saxophone; Nat Adderley, cornet; Victor Feldman, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums.

That sounds like Cannonball. Today, it's hard to identify a lot of individuals. Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Paul Gonzales ... right away you know who it is. John Coltrane, of course, Joe Henderson ... I knew that was Cannonball right away.

Joe Lovano Us Five

"Blessings In May" (*Cross Culture*, Blue Note, 2013) Lovano, tenor saxophone; James Weidman, piano; Esperanza Spalding, Peter Slavov, bass; Francisco Mela, Otis Brown III, drums; Lionel Loueke, guitar.

Joe Lovano. When he was a featured guest soloist with the Saxophone Choir, he had his identity. I went to see him in Philadelphia last week, and I could hear his identity. He plays a certain way, and very few people play that way; his harmonic concept, his rhythmic concept, his melodic concepts are very identifiable to me. I did an interview maybe 35 years ago in New York City and when I came out from doing the interview, Joe Lovano was sitting outside. I didn't know who he was, and he said, "Mr.



Odean Pope at the 2017 DC Jazz Festival

Pope, I'm one of your great admirers, I'm Joe Lovano." And then a couple of years later I couldn't believe his growth. We recorded a live recording at the Blue Note [2006], and Michael Brecker was the guest soloist one night, James Carter the second night, and Joe Lovano was the soloist for the third night. [The album] *Locked And Loaded* is one of my precious gems.

Charlie Haden with Michael Brecker

"Young And Foolish" (*American Dreams*, Verve, 2002) Haden, bass; Brecker, tenor saxophone; Brad Mehldau, piano; Brian Blade, drums.

It sounds like Ravi Coltrane. It might not be him but it sounds like him. My approach to playing a ballad is to listen to the great singers, like Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Eckstine. ... I try to emulate the concepts and the ideas of a great human voice because the tenor saxophone is the closest instrument to the human voice.

To hear somebody play a ballad like that, they've put a lot of discipline, hard work and a lot of thought into it, and have listened to a lot of different kinds of instrumentations

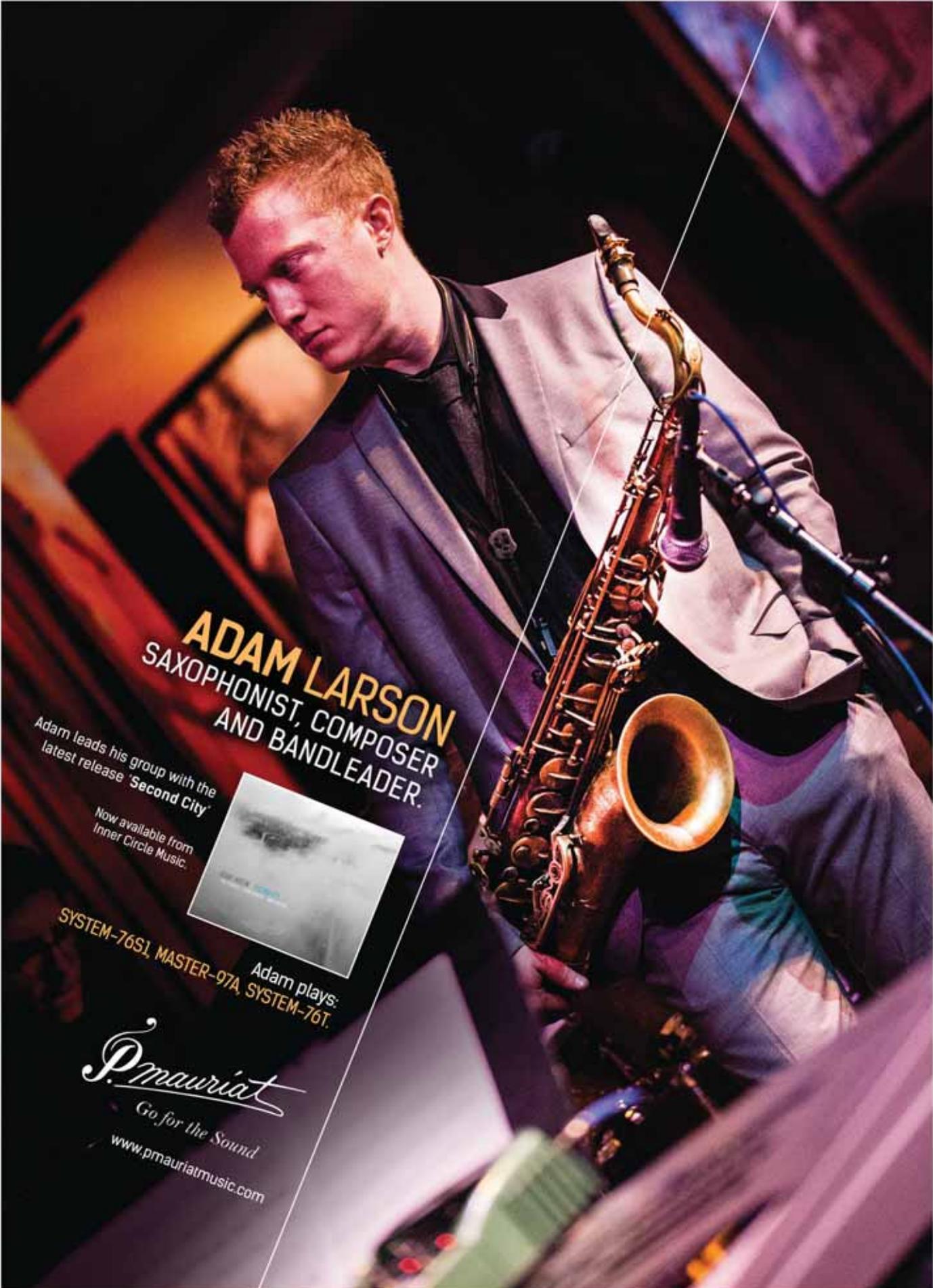
Most people can play fast, but playing a ballad requires a lot of imagination, and above all, you have to have many different kinds of expression—like you're telling a story. Lester Young one time said, "You're playing, but what is your story?" Playing a ballad to me is very, very deeply rooted in the spiritual aspect of what we do. You have to have some concept about the spiritual aspect in order to play a great ballad.

JD Allen Trio

"Fatima" (*Victory!*, Sunnyside, 2011) Allen, tenor saxophone; Gregg August, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

It's a very different kind of concept, to play with just bass and drums. I thought that tenor player did a tremendous job, an incredible player. He has a lot of beautiful ideas and concepts and he handled that very well. [after] I know JD Allen, and he will, at some point, play as a guest with the Saxophone Choir. He's one of the upcoming great, great players. **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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