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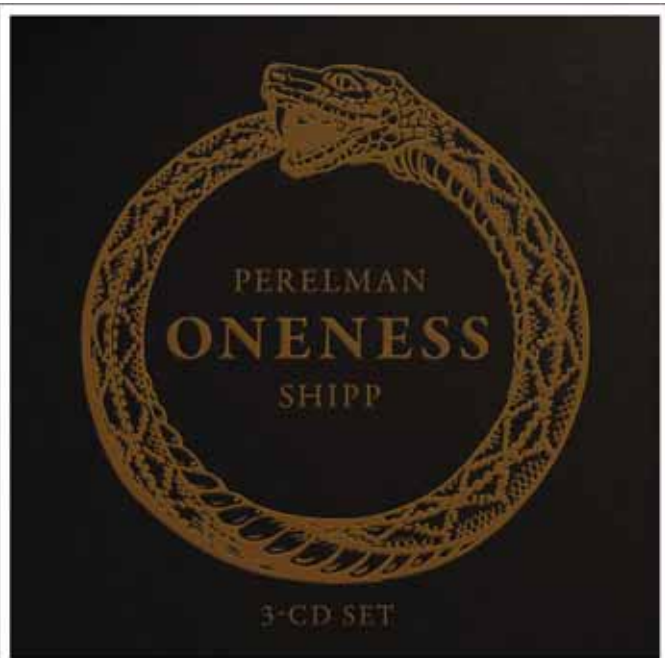
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MAY 2018

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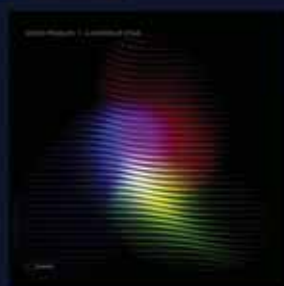


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The **GRAMMY**-winning vocalist releases his stunning fifth studio album, a heartfelt tribute to the legendary singer and pianist **Nat King Cole**. With the help of **six-time GRAMMY-winning arranger VINCE MENDOZA**, and the **LONDON STUDIO ORCHESTRA**,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



TERENCE BLANCHARD LIVE (FEAT. THE E-COLLECTIVE)

Following his powerful album *Breathless*, **4-time GRAMMY-winning trumpeter** Terence Blanchard documents his band **The E-Collective** live in Minneapolis, Cleveland, and Dallas - cities that have been scarred by tension between law enforcement and unarmed African Americans. *Live* features keyboardist **FABIAN ALMAZAN**, guitarist **CHARLES ALTURA**, bassist **DAVID GINYARD JR.**, and drummer **OSCAR SEATON**.



THE NELS CLINE 4 CURRENTS, CONSTELLATIONS

Following the release of Nels Cline's Blue Note debut *Lovers*, the Wilco guitarist pares it down to **The Nels Cline 4**. The 4 features Cline alongside fellow guitarist **JULIAN LAGE**, bassist **SCOTT COLLEY**, and drummer **TOM RAINEY** on a set of seven originals plus one piece by composer Carla Bley. It's a showcase of Cline's versatility that veers from rollicking rock energy to ballads of serene beauty.

MAY 2018

Inside

ON THE COVER

28 Jason Moran & Alicia Hall Moran *State of the Art*

BY GREG TATE

Jason and Alicia Hall Moran have spent years collaborating with world-renowned choreographers, filmmakers, visual artists, furniture makers, poets, scholars and, yes, fellow musicians. The happily married couple sits down with DownBeat for a lively discussion about their individual careers, their label and the oft-overlooked contributions of Black women to jazz.



Jason Palmer will release two live albums this year.

Cover photo of Alicia Hall Moran and Jason Moran shot by Jimmy & Dena Katz in New York. Photos on pages 28–30 shot at The Jazz Gallery in New York on Jan. 29. Info for this venue is at jazzgallery.nyc.

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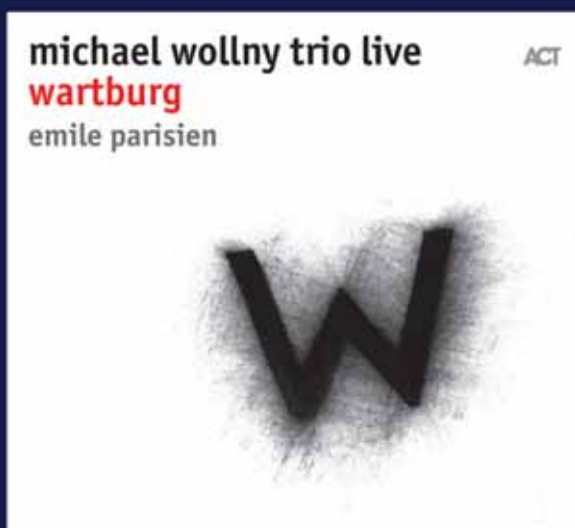
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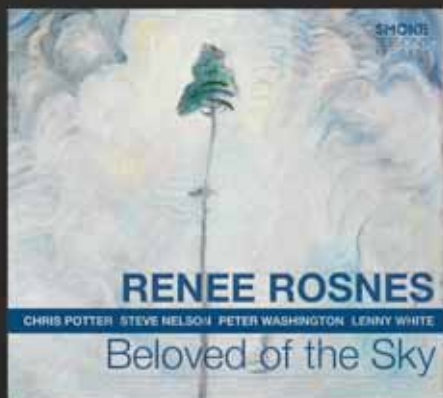


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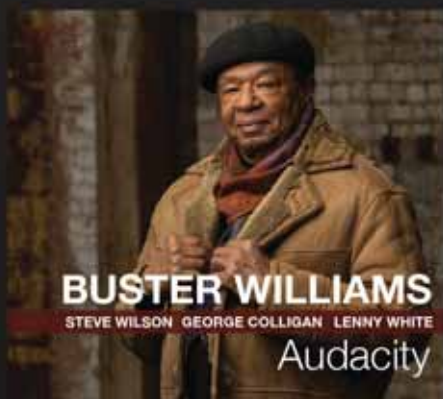




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BUSTER WILLIAMS bass
STEVE WILSON saxophones
GEORGE COLLIGAN piano
LENNY WHITE drums

First Take > BY BOBBY REED



Jason Moran and Alicia Hall Moran discuss her album *Here Today* at Gavin Brown's Enterprise in New York on Jan. 15.

Sensitive Listening Sessions

A GOOD JOURNALIST IS A GREAT LISTENER.

The primary task of a skillful interviewer is not only to ask interesting questions but also to shut up and listen. Many people, in numerous professions, have heard some variation of this expression: "You have two ears and only one mouth, and you should use them proportionally." Nowadays, a lot of TV journalists fail to heed that advice. News flash: Viewers are more interested in the interviewee's thoughts than those of a bloviating, pontificating journalist.

In our cover story, journalist/musician Greg Tate demonstrates that he knows how to ask a great question and then gracefully step out of the way. Tate sat down with the vocalist Alicia Hall Moran and the pianist Jason Moran—two remarkable musicians, who happen to be married.

A talented, sensitive interviewer creates an environment in which the interviewee feels comfortable expressing himself or herself. Tate established an environment in which Alicia and Jason could "go deep" and convey important anecdotes about their lives, their individual artistry and their collaborative efforts with their label, YES Records.

As a reader (and as an editor), whenever I read a fantastic quote from an artist, I envision the setting from which the quote emerged. On TV, sometimes it's a "canned quote" that the artist is simply trotting out again, having said it in previous interviews.

But the truly transcendent quotes are unique ones that emerge naturally from a conversation. We feel that's the case with our cover story on Alicia and Jason.

The moderated conversation with multiple artists is one of DownBeat's journalistic hallmarks. In our April issue, the cover story was an enlightening conversation involving two of The Bad Plus' co-founders—bassist Reid Anderson and drummer Dave King—and the band's new pianist, Orrin Evans. In our March issue, we presented a powerful conversation between Chick Corea and Lionel Loueke.

The aforementioned stories involved musicians who are collaborators. But more intriguing is the roundtable discussion involving musicians who are peers and/or admirers. Over the years, DownBeat has showcased drummers' roundtables for two particularly memorable cover stories. For the November 2009 issue, journalist Ken Micallef sat down with Jeff "Tain" Watts, Lewis Nash and Matt Wilson.

Here's one that was even more impressive: The November 1998 cover story was a conversation with Max Roach, Elvin Jones, Louie Bellson and Roy Haynes. (That conversation was moderated by Ed Enright, who is currently DownBeat's contributing editor.)

In the coming months, DownBeat will publish a special conversation with two superstars from different genres. For now, we're not going to reveal the names of the musicians involved, but rest assured, that story is going to be spectacular. Stay tuned.

Who would *you* like to see on the cover of DownBeat? Tell us about any "dream" conversations that you'd like us to moderate. Send an email to editor@downbeat.com. When it comes to cool ideas for orchestrating discussions involving jazz artists, we're all ears. **DB**

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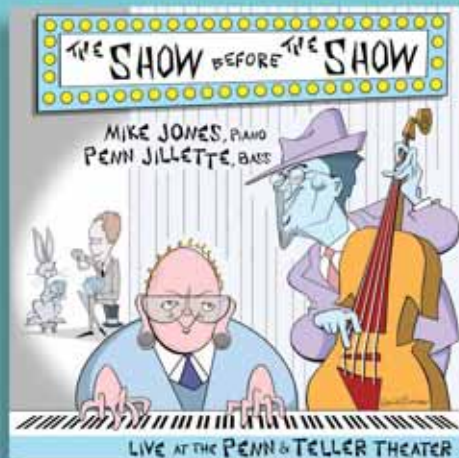
"Now in its 18th year, the Jeff Hamilton Trio makes joyous, unpretentious yet highly sophisticated music inspired by the take-no-prisoners swing of Oscar Peterson."

★★★★ —Paul de Barros, *DownBeat*

"This is as good as it gets in the world of piano trio jazz."

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#1 ON JAZZWEEK CHART



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"Besides serving as the fruit of a stranger-than-fiction yarn, a document of a beautiful friendship, evidence of Jones' strength, and proof that Jillette has evolved into a jam session-ready jazzhead, *The Show Before The Show* is a reminder that jazz is to be enjoyed."

★★★★ —Dan Bilawsky, *All About Jazz*



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Chords & Discords



ARTEMIS bandleader Renee Rosnes (left), Cécile McLorin Salvant, Anat Cohen, Ingrid Jensen, Noriko Ueda, Melissa Aldana and Allison Miller perform at the 92nd Street Y in New York on March 2. To read a review of the concert, visit downbeat.com. This all-star ensemble will perform at the Newport Jazz Festival on Aug. 5.

Equality in Jazz

That workplace harassment and discrimination against women instrumentalists is widespread in jazz is a given. I applaud *DownBeat* for publishing the panel discussion "Seeking Equity" and the First Take essay "Bandstand Equality" in the March issue. Both of these pieces highlight the ongoing and shameful gender bias against women in both jazz education and on the bandstand.

The individuals who participated in the panel discussion—saxophonist Tia Fuller, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, pianist Shamie Royston, bassist Linda May Han Oh and vocalist Sunny Sumter—are, indeed, "five of the top artists in

jazz today." Their comments, along with those of moderator Suzan Jenkins, clarify that more effort needs to be made "for change when it comes to women, equality and jazz."

Gratifyingly, *DownBeat* has in recent years been emphasizing the contributions of women instrumentalists. However, the magazine's editorial masthead remains top-heavy with men. Also, in the August 2017 issue, it appears that among the 155 critics who voted in the Critics Poll, a mere 10 were women. Clearly, *DownBeat* needs to get busy recruiting more female journalists and critics.

W. ROYAL STOKES
ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA

Mighty Horn

In the Chords & Discords section of the April issue, Stephan Braese's letter points out that Jazzmeia Horn's appearance in Orvieto at the Umbria Winter Jazz Festival in late December was *not* her European debut (as was indicated in a review in your March issue). Braese is correct: Jazzmeia performed elsewhere in Europe prior to Umbria. *DownBeat*'s reviewer might have assumed that Orvieto marked Horn's European debut because of information in our festival program and concert notes, which had already been printed prior to her short tour in November.

In any case, due to the importance of and crowd size at Umbria Jazz, Horn's performance in Orvieto could be considered her real "first big gig" in Europe.

I am sure that her incomparable talent will lead her to many other big performances all over the world in the years to come.

ENZO CAPUA, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE OF UMBRIA JAZZ FESTIVAL
NEW YORK CITY

No Respect?

We Rhode Islanders know our state is small in size, but why must we regularly be left to play the Rodney Dangerfield role? How can a state that for 63 years has hosted the Newport Jazz Festival not have one jazz venue worthy of being mentioned in *DownBeat*'s 2018 International Jazz Venue Guide?

The venue Chan's, located in Woonsocket (chanseggrollsandjazz.com), certainly deserves to be on your list. Chan's is just one of many Rhode Island jazz venues.

JOHN A. MURPHY
JAMESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND

Corrections

- Trombonist-composer Steve Turre contacted *DownBeat* regarding the Transcription article in the April issue's Woodshed section. Due to a transposing error, Turre's trombone solo is written an octave lower than what was played on the title track to his 1995 album *Rhythm Within*. Additionally, the transcription contains some incorrect notes and rhythms. *DownBeat* will post a corrected version online.
- In the Reviews section of our April issue, the review of Andrew Distel's *It Only Takes Time* misspelled the name of bassist Carlos Henriquez. On the album's track "Into Each Life," the drummer is George Fludas.
- In the print edition of our April issue, the feature on Walter Smith III should have indicated that his new album, *Twio*, is being distributed by Whirlwind Recordings.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERRORS.

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



Photo credit: Sam Hunter

Steve Hobbs Depends on Yamaha.

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Steve Hobbs

— Steve Hobbs,
Jazz Vibist, Composer and Educator



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Beat

MPS Celebrates Resurgence

Like a lot of well-off young men in the 1950s, Hans Georg Brunner-Schwer was a dedicated audio enthusiast. But while others focused on playback, Brunner-Schwer—a gifted engineer and amateur musician—was far more interested in recording. Further, as a co-director of SABA, an electronics firm founded by his grandfather and specializing in high-end audio and TV components, he was unusually well-positioned to pursue his hobby. So, he built a state-of-the-art recording studio, which he installed in the family estate in Villingen, Germany.

Brunner-Schwer also was a dedicated jazz fan, and in 1961 he convinced Oscar Peterson to visit his home, where he recorded the pianist in performance before a few fellow jazz fans. Peterson, astonished by the fidelity of the recordings, returned regularly to play at the estate. Meanwhile, Brunner-Schwer had launched a small record label, also called SABA. But because Peterson was under contract in the United States, none of the party sessions could be released.

Then, in 1968, GTE bought a majority share in SABA. Brunner-Schwer held on to the music branch, re-christening it MPS, or “Musik Produktion Schwartzwald”—which translates to Black Forest Music Production. At the same time, Peterson was without a recording contract. Returning to Germany to play another of Brunner-Schwer’s parties, he was offered a deal, and MPS had its first jazz star under contract.

As a label, MPS reflected the tastes of its three principal producers: Brunner-Schwer, Joachim-Ernst Berendt and Gigi Campi. Pianists were one of the company’s strong suits; in addition to Peterson, their stable included George Duke, Monty Alexander and George Shearing, as well as European stars like Martial Solal. There were also a number of jazz violinists—Stéphane Grappelli, Don “Sugarcane” Harris, Jean-Luc Ponty—and a host of large ensembles.

Thanks to Berendt, MPS also released a considerable amount of avant-garde jazz. “That was what I always liked about the variety of the catalog,” said Christian Kellersman, creative director for Edel:Kultur, MPS’ current owners. “I think Brunner-Schwer was not really in favor of all of the free-jazz stuff Berendt did, but he was open to do it.”

The label continued down an eclectic path until 1983, when it was purchased by Polydor. Thirty years later, as Polydor (now Polygram) merged with EMI, MPS was put on the market, and acquired by the German media company Edel AG, which hired Kellersman.

The new team has been reissuing CDs from the more than 500 titles in the MPS catalog, painstakingly remastered from the original analog tapes, in high-quality gatefold sleeves with liner notes and the orig-



MPS has released singer China Moses' album *Nightintales*.

inal artwork. Among the most recent batch: *In Tune* by Oscar Peterson with Singers Unlimited from 1971; *Tristeza On Guitar* by Baden Powell; *Soaring* by Don Ellis; and *Albert Mangelsdorff And His Friends*, featuring trumpeter Don Cherry and drummer Elvin Jones.

Recently, MPS also has been signing artists and producing new albums. These range from clarinetist Rolf Kühn—who was signed to the label in the ’70s—to the Norwegian Sami singer-songwriter Mari Boine.

Singer China Moses, whose album *Nightintales* was released on MPS last year, couldn’t be happier with the label’s creative attitude. The daughter of jazz singer Dee Dee Bridgewater, she’s spent much of her musical career, she says, “having people expect a lot from me.”

“This was the first time I had somebody who said, ‘Just be yourself,’” she explained. “We’re not going to tell you to do a straightahead album. We don’t want you to. Your album goes from funk to swing jazz. That’s exactly what this label is about.”

“And I was like, ‘But I don’t scat, and I don’t have perfect tone.’ All of my insecurities, being the daughter of somebody who can scat her ass off and has amazing tone,” she laughed. “And [MPS] was like, ‘Yeah, we don’t care. It’s good. We’re happy.’ And I’ve been their most successful album to date.”

—J.D. Cosidine



Charles Lloyd & The Marvels with Lucinda Williams

Lloyd Collaboration: Charles Lloyd is set to issue *Vanished Gardens*, a follow-up to the Blue Note album he recorded with The Marvels in 2016. The new disc, due out June 8, finds the saxophonist reconvening his ensemble with guitarist Bill Frisell, pedal steel player Greg Leisz, bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Eric Harland. Supplementing the outfit is Americana star Lucinda Williams, who contributes lyrics and vocals to a handful of tracks. The album comes amid a spate of performances marking Lloyd's 80th birthday.

bluenote.com; charleslloyd.com

Crystal Structures: Mack Avenue Records is set to release saxophonist Tia Fuller's *Diamond Cut* on May 25. The album was produced by Terri Lyne Carrington and includes contributions from Jack DeJohnette, Dave Holland, Adam Rogers, James Genus, Bill Stewart and Sam Yahel.

mackavenue.com

Vinyl Renaissance: The annual Record Store Day, which began in 2007 to support independent stores and imprints, takes place on April 21. Special releases for this year's edition of RSD include Ella Fitzgerald's *Ella At Zardi's*, Miles Davis' *Rubberband* EP, a 7-inch version of John Coltrane's "My Favorite Things," a vinyl release of the long player from Hudson (Jack DeJohnette, Larry Grenadier, John Medeski and John Scofield) and a pair of soundtracks—Serge Gainsbourg's *Le Pacha* and Dave Grusin's *The Friends Of Eddie Coyle*.

recordstoreday.com

Final Bar: Journalist **John A. Tynan**, who worked at DownBeat from 1955 to '65, died at age 90. During his tenure as associate editor, one of the most well-known pieces Tynan penned was a zero-star review of Ornette Coleman's *Free Jazz*, published alongside Pete Welding's 5-star review of the album. Tynan, a native of Ireland, later worked in radio and TV. ... **Robert Barry**, a well-respected, under-recorded drummer who worked with Sun Ra during the early stages of the Arkestra and later with Fred Anderson, died Jan. 8 in Chicago. He was 85. ... **Heiner Stadler**, a jazz pianist, producer and arranger who worked with some of the genre's best-known players during the '60s and '70s and ran the Labor Records imprint, died Feb. 18. He was 75.



Saxophonist Ravi Coltrane (left), drummer Terri Lyne Carrington and bassist Esperanza Spalding perform in February at the Biamp PDX Jazz Festival in Portland, Oregon.

Performers Recall Geri Allen's Legacy at Biamp PDX Festival

IN THE PAST, THE FOLKS BEHIND THE Biamp PDX Jazz Festival have booked their annual event around a theme. In 2009, it was a celebration of Blue Note Records' 70th birthday, and in 2011, the festival highlighted collaborations between African-American and Jewish artists, calling that year's run of shows "Bridges and Boundaries."

While the 2018 installment of the Biamp PDX Jazz Festival wasn't organized as such, there was a rough thread that ran through many of the performances that took place Feb. 15–25: celebrating the life and career of Geri Allen. The pianist and composer was set to return to Portland this year to perform at the festival, but those plans were halted by her untimely death last June. Still, Allen's presence was felt throughout the programming, not only during an evening dedicated to her work, but also through appearances by fellow pianists like Ethan Iverson, Abdullah Ibrahim, George Colligan, Marcus Roberts and Tigran Hamasyan.

The performer who provided the most direct and powerful evocation of Allen's spirit as a performer and composer was pianist Darrell Grant at a Feb. 22 performance. An instructor at Portland State University, Grant cites Allen as a major influence on his own work, delighting, as he said from the stage of the Newmark Theatre, in "the way that her music danced." In that spirit, he played with a lightness and a subtle swing, whether that was via a Gershwin-by-way-of-Cecil Taylor original or a positively breathtaking rendition of James Taylor's "Fire And Rain," which was almost Rachmaninoff-like in its romantic warmth.

Following Grant was the rhythm section Allen was supposed to perform with at the festival: bassist Esperanza Spalding and drummer Terri Lyne Carrington. Rather than attempt to fill the sizeable hole left behind by the pianist's

death with another keyboard player, the two performers instead brought along saxophonist Ravi Coltrane. That combination aimed for a celebratory mood with its lengthy performance, wending in the influences of hip-hop and funk into a bop-heavy mix.

Later that evening at the nearby Winningstad Theatre, Allen's name came up frequently during sets by former Bad Plus member Ethan Iverson and a trio led by another Portland artist, pianist George Colligan. The former was on hand for one of his first solo shows since leaving the venerated trio he co-founded in 2000, but there was little in his set that offered any clues as to what musical direction he will head in, apart from his mention of sending in the sheets for his first ever piano concerto. His short set consisted of renditions of '60s pop classics, some standards and the Allen composition "For John Malachi." Iverson approached the entire set with a minimalist's mindset, letting the resonance and overtones of the piano swell through the room, and adding little notes of dissonance to these often-familiar melodies.

The festival's opening performance by the Scott Amendola Trio set an adventurous tone through the drummer's use of squelching electronics and guitarist Jeff Parker's drones amid funk grooves and glassy-eyed jams. Those aspects were driven even harder by the Miles Electric Band, an ensemble that re-creates some of Miles Davis' heaviest, most wicked work from albums like *Bitches Brew*. Their set was explosive, drawing out the more psychedelic elements of the 1970 classics.

Shows like the wild affair that Mostly Other People Do the Killing brought to the event bode well for the future of the Biamp PDX Jazz Festival. Audience reaction to some of those more difficult moments hopefully will inspire even more audacious bookings in the future.

—Robert Ham

Cuber's Trial-and-Error

DURING THE SUMMER OF 1959, RONNIE Cuber made a life-changing decision that put him on his career path. "I was 18, in my last year in high school, and I auditioned for the Newport Youth Band on tenor saxophone," he recalled. "The band director, Marshall Brown, said to me, 'Listen, kid, I got so many tenor players. How about you play a baritone?' I said, 'Well, I don't have a baritone.' And he said, 'If I buy you one, will you play it?'" Then he told me, 'Next week go down to Ponte's Music on 46th Street and they'll have one waiting for you.'"

Cuber became a featured soloist on bari at the 1959 and 1960 Newport Jazz Festivals with Brown's student group. Following big band stints with Slide Hampton, Maynard Ferguson and Lionel Hampton, he joined George Benson's organ quartet and was featured blowing with uncommon facility on 1966's *The George Benson Cookbook*. Cuber's bold, unbridled playing on the opening track, "The Cooker," became something of a calling card, making him a valued sideman and in-demand session player.

Cuber continued to play with blowtorch intensity on albums and tours as a sideman, as well as on 17 albums as a leader, beginning with 1976's *Cuber Libre*. His latest, *Ronnie's Trio* (SteepleChase), pairs the bari ace with a stellar rhythm tandem of bassist Jay Anderson and drummer Adam Nussbaum. The trio delivers blazing renditions of "What Is This Thing Called Love" and Jobim's "So Danço Samba." The lack of a chordal instrument in this setting might recall some Sonny Rollins classics.

"I always liked strong players like Sonny, Hank Mobley, Dexter Gordon," Cuber said. "I tried to copy those guys and it all went into my baritone playing, along with stuff I got from Coltrane and Bird." Cuber explained that he arrived at his sound after trial-and-error with mouthpieces. "One of the guys in the band told me, 'No, man, you gotta get a harder sound, like Pepper Adams.' So I went to the music store and got the largest metal mouthpiece I could find, which was a Berg-Larsen 130/0."

By the time he got with Benson, Cuber was playing a hard-rubber Berg mouthpiece. He later would try a Dukoff 8, which gave him a little more edge. "I played that for a while, but then I thought, 'Maybe there's something out there that gives a little more tone.' So, I tried out this Otto Link 8-star rubber mouthpiece."

By 1989, Cuber would come across his dream mouthpiece. "I went to a gig that Randy Brecker and Bob Berg were playing at Indigo Blues. And after they finished, Bob let me try his tenor mouthpiece, which was made by François Louis. And I said, 'Wow! This is great. I wish I had a bari mouthpiece like this.' So he gave me François' phone number and he sent me the mouthpiece."

Cuber continues to play François Louis mouthpieces to this day to get that edgy attack and clarity in his phrasing. "If I do a project that calls for a not-so-edgy sound, I will switch off to a prototype of the hard-rubber mouthpiece he made for me, which sounds to me like if Stan Getz were to play baritone sax—or if I would try to imitate Mulligan." He applies both approaches on *Ronnie's Trio*, an excellent addition to his expansive discography.

—Bill Milkowski



Baritone saxophonist Ronnie Cuber interprets standards on his new album, *Ronnie's Trio*.

NILS WINTNER, © STEEPCHASE PRODUCTIONS

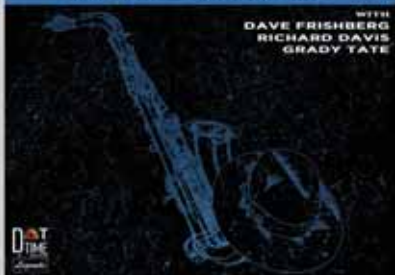
A large advertisement for Sabian's FRX Frequency Reduced Cymbals. The background is a teal-colored image of a cymbal with a hand holding a mallet. The text "DON'T HOLD BACK" is written in large, white, outlined capital letters across the top. Below it, a quote from Gregory Smith (Drummer) reads: "It doesn't matter how hard you play, these cymbals are never too much for the mics onstage or the crowd in the room." The FRX logo is prominently displayed in the center, with "FREQUENCY REDUCED CYMBALS" written below it. At the bottom, a white box contains the text "SEE THE WHOLE STORY AT SABIAN.COM/FRX".

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European Scene / BY PETER MARGASAK

Gropper Wants to Go Deeper

Few cities in Europe today are more cosmopolitan than Berlin.

During the past few decades, the city has attracted a steady influx of adventurous musicians looking for artistic camaraderie, and that's produced a dynamic, artistically bold jazz and improvised music scene with a seriously international tinge. Saxophonist Philipp Gropper is something of an oddity in that regard, because he was born and raised there. In fact, as a youngster falling in love with jazz, he mostly was absorbed by music from America. He vividly recalls seeing performances by Don Cherry, Michael Brecker and Wayne Shorter, but admits he wasn't aware of the music Berlin often is celebrated for—the free-jazz propagated by the FMP label and the cross-stylistic work of its expat community.

That awareness shifted when he started meeting younger players, including colleagues he encountered while working in German youth orchestra BuJazzO, led by Peter Herbolzheimer. In 2003, Gropper formed Hyperactive Kid, one of his first bands, with drummer Christian Lillinger and guitarist Ronny Graupe, two fellow members of the orchestra. It would become one of the most exciting homegrown German bands of the current century.

"We started playing as a trio without bass, because of the joy we felt during our first session, to which the bass player didn't show up," said Gropper, 40.

The musicians threw themselves into the project, slowly establishing themselves as a rising force, tapping into post-bop fundamentals, but pushing forward with punishing rhythms and post-punk noise.

"For years, we tried to play every concert we could, driving around Germany and, later on, Europe in a car. Rehearsing a lot, playing everything by ear, listening to so many recordings in the car, discussing music," the saxophonist said.

The trio, which eventually rechristened itself Gropper/Graupe/Lillinger, carries on to this day—with a new album in the works for 2018. But each member has developed numerous other projects. In recent years, Gropper has delivered his most profound work in a quartet called Philm, which recently dropped the impressive *Live At Bimhuis*.

Gropper works in many disparate contexts, playing in bands led by vibrant German musicians, including bassist Pablo Held and fellow saxophonist Wanja Slavin, in addition to co-leading the electro-acoustic foursome Tau. He knows the struggle in balancing the need to earn a living while developing a genuine musical identity, and said



Philipp Gropper

he was lucky enough to be satisfied in all of the numerous projects he's involved with, while lamenting the inability to go deeper in any of them.

"That is the most depressing part of the jazz world," he said. "I see so much potential in so many groups, if they would only have the chance to work more and play more."

Despite that situation, his primary outlet, Philm—a quartet with keyboardist Elias Stemeseder, bassist Andreas Lang and drummer Oliver Steidle—seems to be reaching its potential. On last year's *Sun Ship* (WhyPlayJazz), he arrived at new heights with a hurtling attack marked by chamber-like interplay and driving, yet fractured, propulsion. Steidle's drumming reflects the lurching complexity of Jim Black's approach, while Stemeseder enhances his elegant piano attack with spacey synthesizer textures and noise. Gropper's sinewy tenor lines toggle effortlessly between post-bop lyricism and experimental, coloristic explorations more in tune with the Berlin underground.

"I am deeply connected to tradition and constantly try to understand and carry forth its liveliness and fire," he said. But it's clear that Philm reflects a forward-looking vision, something open to change. "The sounds that I, as a composer, and we, as Philm, are inspired by become more diverse day by day. We have constant exchanges about recent discoveries. The music—forms and rhythms—I compose and we play are relatively complex. But that only makes sense to me if it's really internalized. The message of joy and adventure has to be so direct that listeners feel it without understanding the theory behind it."

DB

Clement Crafts Duos Disc

LAST FALL, WHEN SEATTLE'S EARSHOT Jazz Festival invited pianist/vocalist Dawn Clement to serve as artist-in-residence, she knew immediately what she wanted to do.

"How about some duos?" she asked.

The result was a dazzling series of duets with vocalist and fellow Cornish College of the Arts instructor Johnaye Kendrick; saxophonist Mark Taylor; veteran trombonist Julian Priester; and pianist/vibist Marina Albero. As a follow-up, the Seattle label Origin has released Clement's fifth album as a leader, an all-duo album titled *Tandem*.

Clement has spent 18 years in her Cornish studio, forging relationships with a generation of students, colleagues and world-famous visitors, including saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen and drummer Matt Wilson.

"I always remind everyone in Seattle how important she is in that town," said Wilson. "We need Dawn Clement in Seattle like we need [trumpeter] Ron Miles in Denver—people who lead."

Born in La Mesa, California, Clement grew up in Vancouver, Washington, singing in church with her siblings—an influence one can hear in the quiet, hymnal quality of some of her originals—and playing in the Fort Vancouver High School jazz band. Soon, she was hitting jam sessions in Portland, where drummer Ron Steen took her under his wing. After high school, a full ride at Cornish kept her in the Northwest, and she was hired there upon graduation in 2000. Two years later, the release of a quartet album with Priester, *Deep End Dance* (Conduit), cemented her reputation.

Though deeply imbedded in Seattle, Clement has been around the block. In 1998, along with Anat Cohen, she was mentored by Jensen in the first Sisters in Jazz program offered by the International Association for Jazz Education, a now-defunct nonprofit organization. In 2015, Clement earned a master's degree in music composition from the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Though she says she has a passion for "harsh, dissonant, aggressive" music, Clement never has turned her back on the simple beauty of a melody.

"Singing was the first form of expression for me," she said. "It's how I first related to jazz."

Her fierce commitment to an approach she calls "genre-inclusive" comes through vividly on *Tandem*. The album includes a collaboration with Wilson on Thelonious Monk's "Bemsha Swing" and a free outing with Priester, "Improv." But her ethereal, singer-songwriter side also shows through on vocal-piano cuts like "In The Wee Small Hours," a gorgeously blend-

ed vocal duet with Kendrick on the ballad "I Think Of You" and a dreamy duet with Wilson on "Stay Awake." The sessions yielded enough material for a follow-up, and she and Wilson already have tracked an anniversary version of Clement's 2008 *Break*, due later this year.

"I'd love to go on the road and just play and sing," Clement said. "Singer-songwriter, free, avant-garde—it's all one person."

—Paul de Barros



Pianist/vocalist Dawn Clement performs with trombonist Julian Priester.

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Anthony Braxton (left), trumpeter Paul Smoker and saxophonist Ari Brown prepare for a gig during a 1993 tour that yielded some of the material on *Sextet (Parker)* 1993.

GLENN M. ITO



Braxton Issues 11-disc Ruminations on Charlie Parker

IN THE EARLY '90S, NOT LONG AFTER HE joined the faculty of Connecticut's Wesleyan University, Anthony Braxton embarked on a deep dive into the work of Charlie Parker.

The dig wasn't a difficult one, as Braxton already viewed the compositions and far-reaching solos of the hard-bop pioneer as foundational to everything modern jazz had accomplished to that point. But in the time following the dissolution of his famed quartet with Marilyn Crispell, Gerry Hemingway and Mark Dresser, Braxton dedicated his free time to closely studying Parker's compositions and the songs he's associated with, working out new, person-

alized arrangements of classics like "April In Paris" and "Klactoveedsedstene."

What resulted from those efforts now can be heard on *Sextet (Parker)* 1993, a voluminous 11-CD set featuring every note of a recording session and a quick European tour that Braxton and a hand-picked cohort of fellow Bird enthusiasts embarked on 25 years ago. For songs that have been burned into the minds of players and listeners for decades, it is a collection that still is full of surprises, even for some of the musicians who took part in the sessions and performances.

"I didn't even remember all of the pieces

that we did," said Pheeroan akLaff, the drummer who appears on all but one disc of the new set, which was released by the Tri-Centric Foundation and New Braxton House Records. "Somehow, I thought we only did seven or eight, but we did a lot of different pieces. And we had more that we could have done."

The sextet, rounded out by bassist Joe Fonda, pianist Misha Mengelberg (who died in 2017), trumpeter Paul Smoker and tenor saxophonist Ari Brown, pulls the easygoing swing of "Bongo Bop" apart like taffy, stretching it out into gnarled fragments. For "Cardboard," the group gives the song a deconstructed Latin swing, with Braxton leading the way on flute. Elsewhere, on tracks like "Blues For Alice" and "Koko," they stick close to the template, expanding on these already energetic and bold melodies with grit and flares of dissonance.

What members of this sextet remember most about their experience playing Bird's tunes with Braxton was how quickly it all came together. True, everyone in the group were veteran players familiar with Parker's work as part of the jazz canon. But jumping into a collaboration with little or no preparation required a leap of faith.

"I never asked [Braxton], 'Why me?'" akLaff said. "I had just started teaching drums at Wesleyan, and he immediately said we must do something together. Was it to fulfill some fantasy of working together after knowing each other for so many years? Was I fresh in his mind because I was around the campus? I don't know. I guess it was important to have the right elements to make this: the right chemistry, the right people, the right music choice."

The band's run in Europe was brief, just a handful of shows in Amsterdam, Zurich and Antwerp culminating in a rapid-fire recording session at Großer Sendesaal WDR in Cologne, Germany.

"We had four days in one of the best studios in the world," Fonda said. "We rehearsed the first day, but otherwise, it all fell into place. Anthony had the charts and everyone was familiar with these tunes; they are all part of us."

Once the European trip had concluded, the six men went their separate ways, never to perform or tour together in this combination again. That is, in part, why *Sextet (Parker)* 1993 is such an important document, especially for the artists whose playing it captured on tape.

"I always felt like the luckiest man alive doing that," akLaff said. "To reflect upon the greatness of one of the masters like Parker with 'Mister Cutting Edge Braxton' himself was everything I could have asked for. This wasn't some jazz club, [where we were] playing a standard or two for people that wanted to tap their foot and smoke cigarettes. This was a huge project."

—Robert Ham

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TOMAS FLINT

Elio Villafranca has recorded his sixth album, *Cinqué*.

Villafranca Recalls a Revolt

FOR FIVE DAYS IN EARLY MAY, CUBAN PIANIST and composer Elio Villafranca set up shop at Brooklyn's Systems Two to record his sixth album, *Cinqué* (ArtistShare), due out March 29. The program contains music he performed onstage at Jazz at Lincoln Center in 2015.

The disc's title refers to Joseph Cinqué (1814–'79), the West African who led a revolt aboard the ship *La Amistad*, which was transporting Cinqué and others who had been captured as part of the slave trade.

"*Cinqué* showcases," Villafranca said, "the cultural diversity of the five Caribbean islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, while simultaneously highlighting the African traditions woven into the fabric of each of these nations."

On board for both the 2015 live performances and the Systems Two sessions was an all-star ensemble: Steve Turre (trombone, conch shells), Greg Tardy (tenor saxophone, clarinet), Vincent Herring (alto saxophone, flute), Freddie

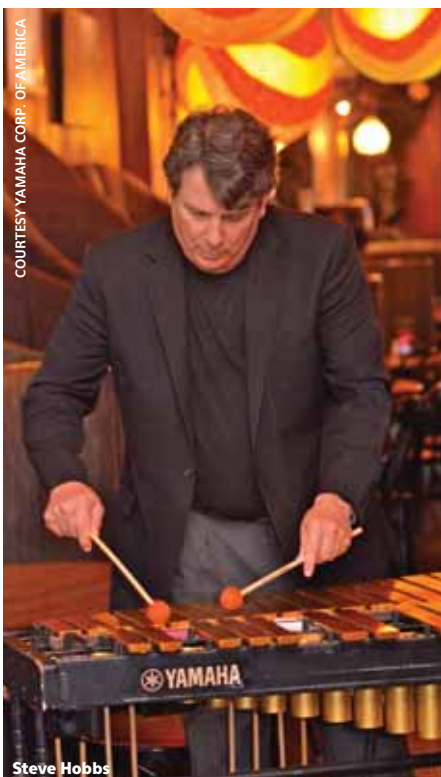
Hendrix (trumpet), Todd Marcus (bass clarinet), Ricky Rodriguez (acoustic bass), Leyla McCalla (cello, banjo, vocals) and percussionists Jonathan Troncoso, Arturo Sable and Miguel Valdes. Drummer Lewis Nash was the only new face to surface for the recording sessions.

"I carefully choose the soloist depending on a particular sound and message I want to create," Villafranca said. "In the section 'The First Colony,' I wanted to represent the first encounter between the Maroons, who were fugitive black slaves, and the few Taino or Arawak people who survived the Spanish invasion by hiding in the hills and creating the first colonies of free people. In this case, I asked Steve Turre to play the shells over the Congo-derived rhythm called the *salve*."

The vibe at Systems Two was serious, yet laced with laughter. Villafranca seemed to spend as much time behind the glass, if not more, conducting from the main mixing board, as he did in the studio at the piano.

During the sessions, Villafranca was never at a loss for where the music should go. He frequently gave the band members verbal directions, spoken but sometimes sung, demonstrating by using mostly non-technical language.

"When I'm composing, I think more like a classical composer than a jazz musician," the bandleader said. "Once this first phase is done, then I consider developing a solo section, backgrounds, and what would be the best instrumentation for the music." —John Ephland



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Steve Hobbs

Hobbs Salutes Hutcherson

WHEN STEVE HOBBS FIRST STARTED PLAYING mallets, he felt a strong connection to the music of vibraphone legend Bobby Hutcherson. "It resonated with me," he said. "I understood it immediately."

Hobbs met Hutcherson while he was an 18-year-old student at Berklee College of Music, and eventually befriended him and came to view him as a role model.

When Hutcherson died in 2016, Hobbs recently had finished recording an album of all-original material with pianist Bill O'Connell, bassist Peter Washington, drummer John Riley and tenor/soprano saxophonist Adam Kolker. Hobbs, who hadn't chosen a title yet, decided to dedicate the album to his late mentor.

During the sessions for *Tribute To Bobby* (Challenge), Hobbs found himself drawn to the marimba—an instrument Hutcherson was known to use—even though he'd intended the album to center mostly on vibraphone. "I'd be standing at the vibes getting ready to record, and at the last minute I kept walking over to the marimba," he said, noting that he appreciates

the instrument's warm sound and highly percussive attack. In Hobbs' hands, the marimba gets an exhilarating, rejuvenating workout.

Released in January, *Tribute To Bobby* hit No. 1 on the JazzWeek charts the weeks of Jan. 12 and Jan. 19. It still was at No. 2 in mid-March. Hobbs already is planning his next recording for Challenge, which he said will be in the salsa-jazz vein. "Last night, I was up until 4 a.m. arranging a really burning version of 'The Rainbow Connection' in 4/4," he said.

Hobbs, who turns 62 in April, is entering an active period. His working quartet with pianist Austin Johnson, bassist Ben Palmer and drummer Todd Proctor will perform March 29 and April 12 at The Red Monkey in Raleigh, North Carolina. Then Hobbs will hit the road for gigs April 15 at Rudy's Jazz Club in Nashville; April 18 at Chaz on the Plaza in Kansas City; April 19 at Ottawa University in Ottawa, Kansas; April 20 at the Green Lady in Kansas City; and April 21 at the Black Dolphin in Kansas City. Gigs also are planned for Philadelphia, Baltimore, Atlanta and Cleveland. —Ed Enright

Cardenas Honors Iconic Mentors

AFTER APPEARING AS A SIDEMAN ON albums by keyboardist Jon Cowherd (*Gateway*) and bassist Ben Allison (*Quiet Revolution*) in the two previous seasons of vinyl releases from Newvelle—the subscription service formed by jazz pianist Elan Mehler and vinyl-loving entrepreneur Jean-Christophe Morisseau—guitarist Steve Cardenas kicks off season three with a leader project titled *Charlie And Paul*. It's a heartfelt tribute to two of Cardenas' mentors: bassist Charlie Haden (1937–2014) and drummer Paul Motian (1931–2011).

With bassist Thomas Morgan emulating Haden's deep tones and sparse lines, and drummer Matt Wilson channeling his inner Paul, the spirits of Cardenas' mentors hover over this stellar quartet outing, which also features saxophonist Loren Stillman.

"Elan and I decided it should be people who played with either both or one of those guys, so there would be a connection," said the guitarist, who was a longstanding member of both Haden's Liberation Orchestra and Motian's Electric Bebop Band.

Stillman played on 2016's posthumously released Liberation Orchestra album *Time/Life* and on 2009's *Paul Motian And Trio 2000 + One*; Wilson also played on *Time/Life*, as well as on the 2005 Liberation Orchestra album *Not In Our Name*; and Morgan played on Motian's final album, 2011's *The Windmills Of Your Mind*.

Cardenas became aware of Motian through his work in the Bill Evans Trio, which the guitarist first heard when he was 18. His Motian epiphany came later that same year: "It was when I heard Keith Jarrett's [1976] *Shades*, when I was in my last year of high school. That's when I was really hit over the head by the beauty of the way those guys play—the openness and fearlessness and creativity."

After spending four years in San Francisco (1988–'92) and two years in Los Angeles (1993–'94), the Kansas City native moved to New York City in 1995.

Two years later, on the recommendation of Pat Metheny, he began playing in Motian's Electric Bebop Band alongside fellow guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel (documented on 1999's *Play Monk And Powell*). He subsequently played on Motian's 2001 album *Europe* and 2002's *Holiday For Strings* alongside guitarist Ben Monder and on 2006's *Garden Of Eden* with guitarists Monder and Jakob Bro.

For *Charlie And Paul*, Cardenas started out with a list of 50 tunes by the two prolific composers, pared it down to 20 for rehearsals and finally narrowed it down to 15 when they went into the studio. They ended up recording 11, but could only fit nine on two sides of vinyl.

Throughout *Charlie And Paul*, melody pre-

dominates. But the album also is marked by the kind of conversational playing that was a signature of both of Cardenas' mentors. "That was a lot of what Paul and Charlie were about," he said. "They're not just backing up the soloists; there's a conversation in the music, there's interaction, there's comments throughout. I love playing that way. I've never been comfortable with the idea of me being the cat out front. I want us to inspire each other and play together."

—Bill Milkowski



Steve Cardenas recently issued a tribute to his mentors, *Charlie And Paul*.

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NUBYA GARCIA

Role Model

When Nubya Garcia plays the tenor saxophone, the first things you notice are her sound and phrasing. She wields a luminous tone, and her languid melodies ride undulating rhythms. She streamlines her improvisations, making economical embellishments to her singable melodies. But when the undercurrents build momentum, Garcia's tone brays into dissonant wails that soon give way to incisive jabs. That kinetic musicality made for a spectacular New York debut at (Le) Poisson Rouge during this year's Winter Jazzfest.

As part of Giles Peterson's British Jazz Showcase, the 26-year-old Garcia fronted a crackling quartet that included keyboardist Joe Armon-Jones, bassist Daniel Casimir and drummer Femi Koleoso. Garcia's forceful set focused on the music from her 2017 debut EP, *5ive* (Jazz re:freshed). Blasting off with an enchanting reading of McCoy Tyner's modal-jazz gem "Contemplation," she buttressed her performance in the post-Coltrane spiritual jazz tradition. But thanks to Koleoso's deft jostling of rhythms that referenced mul-

tiple Antillean pulses, Nigerian Afrobeat and American hard-bop swing, the music conveyed a vibe that was undeniably black U.K. The venue's sold-out crowd showered Garcia with enthusiasm, which she and the band absorbed, recycled and then released with joyous velocity.

The following afternoon, while sipping tea inside the Walker Hotel Greenwich Village, Garcia was still basking in the afterglow of her radiant performance. "It feels so surreal," she beamed. "I was surprised just how accepting everyone was. They were with us throughout the whole gig."

Born to Trinidadian and Guyanese parents, Garcia is part of the platoon of young British artists who are taking the jazz world by storm. Like her contemporaries Shabaka Hutchings (saxophone), Moses Boyd (drums) and Theon Cross (tuba), Garcia's stomping grounds include Jazz re:freshed's Thursday night sessions at the Mau Mau Bar in Notting Hill and South London's STEEZ—venues that usually cater to young, dancing crowds. Those gigs inform the intricate syncopations that sweep her scorching improvisations. Such was

the case with the engrossing "When We Are," the title track of her forthcoming sophomore EP.

"I want to encapsulate dance-floor music's energy," Garcia explained. "The stuff that I've been writing recently is focused on working more with electronics and imagining us playing in places that aren't jazz clubs. I love jazz clubs. But I don't want to only play in jazz clubs for the rest of my life. I want both. There's nothing like a crowd dancing to your music, especially being an instrumentalist. I think it takes the music to what it originally was meant to be, which is dance music."

According to Armon-Jones, Garcia's music has never been just about jazz. "She writes tunes that we can stretch, play around and explore," he said. "They don't have too many rigid parts to them. That allows Femi to be able to put different kinds of beats underneath her songs at any given performance, and it gives the rest of us all kinds of room to really improvise and have fun."

Through music, Garcia explores her West Indian heritage—an excursion that's encouraged by London's mighty Tomorrow Warriors, which she joined before enrolling at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, where she earned a degree in jazz performance. "I think it's about finding a connection to where you come from or where your parents come from," she said of those ethnomusical explorations. "Music is one of the most important ways in which you can do that. The way that music develops from one generation to the next—it's incredible to delve into that journey. I didn't have the opportunity to grow up in Guyana or Trinidad. But those musical journeys just lead me to other avenues like black American swing, which was the first music that I pursued. I think people in London's black music scene are really searching for their cultures. And it's coming out in various ways."

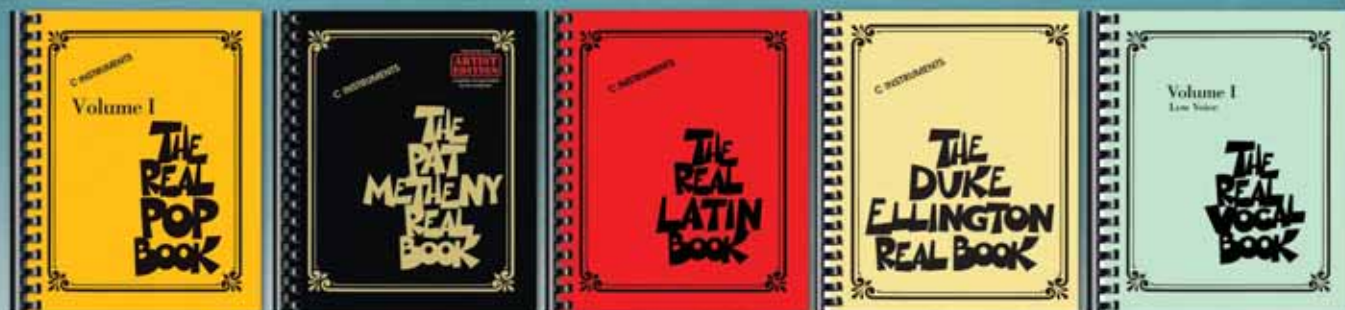
Out of the Tomorrow Warriors arose Nérija, a dynamic ensemble that Garcia co-leads. Consisting of female instrumentalists, Nérija last year received the U.K.'s Parliamentary Jazz Award for "Newcomer of the Year." As in the States, renewed discussions about gender issues in jazz are boiling up in the U.K.

"This year, I want to bring more female musicians together just to have a community," Garcia said. "Someone asked me, 'Who did I look up to as a kid? Was it a black, female saxophonist?' I didn't have anything to say because at the time when I was 13, I wasn't listening to any black, female saxophonists. I think it's crazy not having someone who looks like you to look up to as a kid. It doesn't mean that that's the only focus. But it's great being able to see oneself in someone else. It says, 'I can do that.'"

—John Murphy

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ETHAN GUILLEY

Pianist Greg Spero is the leader
of the band Spirit Fingers.

GREG SPERO

Genuine Synergy

Many fans in the jazz world know pianist Greg Spero for his work touring with the Miles Davis Electric Band, a multigenerational all-star collective led by Davis band alumnus Vincent Wilburn Jr. (who is also Davis' nephew).

But Spero has been equally successful creating music content for TV and film, and touring with the pop stars The Weeknd and Halsey.

Others might know Spero because of his jazz band Spirit Fingers (formerly known as Polyrhythmic), which has amassed hundreds of thousands of views on YouTube.

The 12 Spero compositions on the band's self-titled debut (released by Shanachie) are largely groove-based, with the leader's acoustic piano serving as the main delivery vehicle for melodies both sweet and salty. His bandmates are bassist Hadrien Feraud, guitarist Dario Chiazzolino and drummer Mike Mitchell (aka Blaque Dynamite).

"All music is the same at its core," Spero said, when asked about the multitude of musical styles at his command. "I found this [out] when studying Arnold Volpe next to Radiohead, and Charlie Parker next to Schoenberg," he added, speaking by phone from his home in Los Angeles. "Pop music is simple. Jazz music is complex. Our culture needs something that can be understood within the first five seconds—maybe three. However, that doesn't make it any better or worse than jazz."

"The musical tenets of pop music relate directly to jazz, in all facets, including rhythm, harmony and melody. The past three years working with Halsey—designing all the sounds for the live shows, curating all the live keyboard parts and experiencing the music of all our collaborators—has given me an understanding of the simple side of great music."

Spero certainly doesn't shy away from complexity on *Spirit Fingers*, as the track titled

"being" illustrates. "The time signature is 17/16," he explained. "The melody winds around the chords and rhythm in a complex syncopation. However, over that 17/16 is an elongated backbeat of kick-snare that's shrouded in the complexities. If you sit with it, you can understand that you feel the music much more deeply because of that elongated backbeat. This is the rhythmic concept on which much of The Weeknd's music is based, minus the complexities. You can hear it if you put 'being' next to 'The Hills' by The Weeknd. At its core, we are using some of the same vocabulary, because that's the vocabulary that draws you in and helps you feel the rest of the music."

Spero's bandmates enjoy the challenges inherent in their leader's compositions.

"Spirit Fingers embodies a conceptual mindset that combines elegant and refined writing with utterly flabbergasting musicianship," Feraud said.

Mitchell noted, "It's really great to combine brains with great musicians to challenge the listener to be smarter."

Guitarist Chiazzolino takes a philosophical view of the band's chemistry: "Spirit Fingers' main feature is the interaction—it's a constant conversation, a life experience," he said.

For Spero, the cross-fertilization of jazz with pop is an ongoing process. "I'm working with pop musicians through my video series Tiny Room," he said, referring to clips that are posted at the site tinyroom.live. "I'm bringing pop artists into the studio to collaborate with skilled jazz musicians to create more open, expansive versions of their songs, utilizing tenets of jazz, such as improvisation and harmonic exploration. Being immersed in pop over the years has expanded my vision to see the foundation on which the two musics are built. I'm excited to explore the genuine synergy between the two in their most modern form." —John Ephland



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MUSIC | DIRECT

Karen Souza's album *Velvet Vault* is a mix of pop and rock covers and jazz standards.

KAREN SOUZA

Voice Like Velvet

Karen Souza has a voice that can make any song sound like an intimate confession. "Her voice is like a massage," said Tom "Bones" Malone, the trombonist and former *Saturday Night Live* bandleader, who collaborated with the singer on her new album, *Velvet Vault* (Music Brokers).

Born in the rural La Pampa province of Argentina, Souza got her start singing electronic club music under various pseudonyms. She hadn't considered a career as a jazz singer until she was invited in 2005 to contribute to a Warner Bros. compilation series called *Jazz And '80s*, which reimagined that decade's pop

hits in a variety of jazz settings. The series was an international hit, eventually expanding to include other decades, and Souza found herself tapped repeatedly for her smoky sound, helping turn The Police's "Every Breath You Take" into a mellow bossa nova and Depeche Mode's "Personal Jesus" into a Peggy Lee-style swinging romp.

The success of *Jazz And '80s* helped launch Souza onto the international jazz circuit. *Velvet Vault* was made in a globetrotting fashion, with elements recorded in Brazil, Colombia, New York, Tokyo and Buenos Aires, as well as songwriting sessions in Los Angeles with Grammy-

nominated lyricist Pamela Oland.

Unlike her previous albums, which were dedicated either entirely to originals (*Hotel Souza*) or pop and rock covers (*Essentials* and *Essentials II*), *Velvet Vault* is a mix of both, along with a few jazz standards. The result is a good representation of Souza's live sets, as well as her eclectic tastes.

"The [genres] I love the most have that melancholic thing, you know?" she said, speaking by phone from her home in Buenos Aires. "I can interpret [when I] perform that kind of music."

Souza brings a timeless quality to the material, whether it's a standard like "I Fall In Love Too Easily"—rendered on *Velvet Vault* as a hat-tip to Chet Baker's iconic version, complete with muted trumpet—or a recent indie-rock hit like MGMT's "Kids," which Souza, who also produced *Velvet Vault*, stripped of its original electronic instrumentation and cast as a ghostly piano ballad. "I enjoy those kinds of songs where I can [highlight] the lyrics and give it more power," she explained.

Souza is looking forward to getting back on the road with this new batch of songs from every imaginable genre and era, all brought together in her hushed, samba-tinged style. "A good song, you can sing it in bossa, in jazz, in whatever," she said. "It works because it's a good song."
—Andy Hermann



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Nick Fraser says he'd feel incomplete if he only
 played improvised music.



NICK FRASER

Agile & Prolific

Nick Fraser probably has performed with as many high-profile musicians as any living drummer in jazz—a remarkable track record, especially considering that he never has been based outside of Canada. A Toronto resident since 1995, when he moved from his hometown of Ottawa, Fraser spent years anchoring the rhythm section at the jam sessions for the Ottawa International Jazz Festival. The recurring gig put him on the same stage as Joe Lovano, Roy Hargrove and Wynton Marsalis, as well as hundreds of lesser lights winding down at the end of a night.

That kind of grueling routine would be one thing if Fraser was a drummer whose stock-in-trade was bop-based music, but he usually works in much less structured forms. His own quartet—featuring veteran saxophonist Tony Malaby, as well as Toronto musicians Rob Clutton (bass) and Andrew Downing (cello)—is a thorny improvisational unit. The band's recent album, *Is Life Long?*, is Fraser's second on the adventurous Portuguese label Clean Feed. His trio, which released *Two Many Continents* on Clean Feed in 2015, is rounded out by Malaby and pianist Kris Davis.

Fraser is the co-leader of another wide-ranging trio, *Ugly Beauties*, with pianist Marilyn Lerner and cellist Matt Brubeck. What's more, the drummer's other long-term musical ventures are as a member of Canadian trumpeter Lina Allemano's two free-wheeling bands—the Lina Allemano Four and Titanium Riot—and *Peripheral Vision*, a quartet co-led by guitarist Don Scott and bassist Michael Herring.

"What makes Nick so special is that he backs up his seemingly fearless willingness to push any musical situation into new territory with a rooting in a huge breadth of the jazz and improvised music traditions," Herring said. "He is equally able to draw on bebop, hard-

bop and '60s jazz language as he is free-jazz and improvised music. And he can, and will, turn on a dime between them—often when you're least expecting it."

It's not surprising, then, to learn that Fraser's role models include polymath drummers Joey Baron and Jack DeJohnette, as well as free-jazz titans Gerry Hemingway and Tony Oxley.

"Growing up, I always just wanted to play," Fraser said. "I wanted to know the standards, so I could do a wide range of things. Part of that is just wanting to be able to keep working, but I just wouldn't feel complete if I only played improvised music."

Part of his desire to work as much as possible also contributed to his decision to focus on his work in Toronto, rather than trying to break into the New York scene. As a young man, he had two children—now aged 22 and 17—so he dug in and began to build a network of like-minded collaborators. Fortunately, Toronto's jazz scene was undergoing a sea change, from a preponderance of hard-bop and modal jazz to the rise of young players like Allemano, Herring, Clutton and saxophonist Brodie West.

Fraser caught the wave, forming the co-operative called *Drumheller* with Clutton, West and others, and launching his long association with Allemano and Herring.

"The people I work with have allowed me to develop my own slant on playing," Fraser said. "Whether I'm playing free or more organized music, I try to listen and react in the moment the same way. Both in my playing and my composing, I like to leave a lot of things to chance. I like to be pleasantly surprised by the results."

"Nick has an enormous sound palette and a huge creative sonic imagination," Allemano wrote in an email from Germany, where she spends half her time. "Nick isn't just playing 'drums,' he's playing music." —James Hale

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Jason Moran & Alicia Hall Moran

STATE OF THE ART

By Greg Tate / Photos by Jimmy & Dena Katz

On the 1968 album *Congluptious* by the Roscoe Mitchell Art Ensemble, there's a musical skit titled "Jazz Death?" In it, Lester Bowie encounters a critic from "Jism" magazine who asks, "Is jazz as we know it dead?" After an extended—and lyrically flatulent trumpet fanfare—Bowie replies, "Well, I guess that all depends on, uh, what you know."

What Jason and Alicia Hall Moran, who met while students at the Manhattan School of Music in the mid-'90s, know about the state of the art form has been gleaned from years of intensive work with a staggering range of world-renowned collaborators—poets, scholars, filmmakers, choreographers, furniture makers, visual artists and, yes, fellow musicians. The couple wed in 2003 and now live in Harlem with their twin sons.

Jason began touring and recording with saxophonist Greg Osby in 1997, later signing with Blue Note, issuing an impressive run of releases: *Soundtrack To Human Emotion* (1999), *Facing Left* (2000), *Black Stars* (2001), *Modernistic* (2002) and *Same Mother* (2005). These established his Bandwagon trio—featuring drummer Nasheet Waits and bassist Tarus Mateen—as one of the most daring and resourceful improvisational ensembles on the scene.

Original compositions shared stage and album space with an eclectic bevy of artists the group claimed as fellow travelers: Duke Ellington, Jaki Byard, Sam Rivers, Bjork and Afrika Bambaataa. The 2006 album *Artist In Residence* highlighted a slew of Jason's major commissions, already a staple of his artistic profile, and included music derived from his encounters with conceptualists Adrian Piper and Joan Jonas.







Alicia Hall Moran and Jason Moran
at The Jazz Gallery in New York on Jan. 29

The list of collaborators soon would include other high-profile names on the international art circuit: Kara Walker, Glenn Ligon, Carrie Mae Weems and Julie Mehretu. The in-depth book *Jason Moran*, published in conjunction with a 2018 Walker Art Center exhibition, considers the artist's practice and his collaborative works as interdisciplinary investigations, furthering the fields of experimental jazz and visual art.

While at the Manhattan School of Music, Alicia developed her extraordinary mezzo soprano voice and performance presence into formidable instruments. She also has collaborated on stage with an array of artists from multiple disciplines, including Weems, Bill T. Jones, Charles Lloyd, Adam Pendleton and LaTasha Diggs. She toured with the revival of *Porgy and Bess* in 2013, taking over the lead role from grand dame Audra McDonald. She also has developed several independent projects that feature her own sui generis artsong inventions—the motown project, Black Wall Street and, most recently, *Breaking Ice: The Battle of*

the Carmens.

Alicia and Jason have created work together for a number of institutions and events, including the Venice Biennale, the Whitney Biennial, Harlem Stage, the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

They've also formed their own YES Records label and have released two albums by Alicia—2015's *Heavy Blue* and her latest, *Here Today*. The latter features cover art by Amy Sberald, who recently unveiled her portrait of Michelle Obama at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. Last year alone, Jason released four albums on the label: *Thanksgiving At The Vanguard*, *Bangs*, *The Armory Concert* and *Mass {Howl, Eon}*.

In tandem, the Morans have expanded notions of how much commonality exists between the jazz and operatic traditions, and avant-garde creatives working across the spectrum of disciplines—energetically demonstrating how boundaries between those forms can be transformed, transgressed and on occasion even torched. Upcoming in 2019 is a Carnegie

Hall-commissioned world premiere focusing on Black migration in the United States. Music inspired by terror will be at its core.

In conversation, the two musicians are refreshingly honest about everything: their points of agreement, disagreement and cognitive dissonance; debts owed to forebearers and teachers; and the need to highlight the oft-overlooked contributions of Black women to the modern jazz ecosystem.

YOU HAVE BOTH ARRIVED AT THIS PLACE OF CURATION IN YOUR PERFORMANCE PRACTICE—FREQUENTLY USING COLLABORATIONS TO EXTEND YOUR ETHOS. IT SUGGESTS YOU'VE BOTH COME TO A PLACE WHERE JAZZ AS WE KNOW IT IS NOT ENOUGH AND SINGING OPERA AS WE KNOW IT IS NOT ENOUGH. IT'S ANALOGOUS TO WHAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DOING IN AVANT-GARDE THEATER AND VISUAL ARTS FOR DECADES. I'D LIKE TO HEAR YOU BOTH TALK ABOUT THESE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY FRAMES.

Jason Moran: Only when Alicia showed up did I realize there was a “frame” around jazz—and that it wasn't always a Black frame. So the question became, “What was framing the music?” Was it the times? Was it the musicians? All of that stuff started as we met each other. That kind of thinking has been a big part of the shift for us having a record label. But it's about ownership. I had 18 great, glorious years with Blue Note, but now it's about the next chapter and creating something that we own.

LET'S ALSO TALK ABOUT THE FACT THAT IT IS Y'ALL'S LABEL AND NOT YOUR LABEL, JASON.

JM: Yep. YES [Records] is us. The first record we put out was Alicia's record *Heavy Blue*. But the [collaborators] who have brought us in to work on their projects over the past 10 or 15 years—like Bill T. Jones and Joan Jonas—they roll very differently than musicians. There's a longer process of gestation.

In jazz, you might see the music for the first time five minutes after you get to the studio, and then you're recording five minutes after that. But Bill T. Jones is not just taking his company of 10 people on the road around the world with a set designer and lighting director after five minutes. Joan Jonas is not just coming up with a script and moving all these videos and props around after just five minutes. That was a huge wakeup call, that somebody like Adrian Piper has a critical eye on every piece of language she uses and puts on the wall. I'm hard pressed to find people in my crew who are doing that.

INTERROGATING THE PROCESS ...

JM: When I work with students at New England Conservatory, it is about that interrogation. It's about me going, “Wait a minute, you don't just stumble up into this song and act like it's yours. It ain't that quick and it ain't that easy.” The people you love have made those songs their own through a very different process of interrogation and have a whole language built around that

and a whole movement built around that—people like Cecil Taylor.

CECIL TAYLOR AND SUN RA PUT A WHOLE LOT OF THOUGHT INTO THE PRESENTATION OF THE MUSIC AND HOW THAT PRESENTATION WAS A WHOLE COMMENTARY ON THE FRAME AROUND JAZZ. IT SEEMS LIKE YOU ARE PART OF A REANIMATION OF THE NOTION THAT THE MUSIC CAN ONCE AGAIN PRESENT US WITH A TOTAL PERFORMANCE IN A MORE THEATRICAL OR OPERATIC SENSE.

JM: I'm keenly aware of what's not happening now in my performance canon versus an operatic one. And I knew collaborators would help me get past some of my own hang-ups about the role of performance in my work.

Most musicians are trying to get to the next buck—we do our work to pay the bills. There's a very functional part to being out here playing music. I made certain choices early in my career that meant I had to figure out another way to roll. Like turning down Cassandra Wilson's gig when I was fresh out of college.

WHAT ALARMS DID THAT SET OFF?

JM: I don't even know. I don't even know if I discussed that with you, Alicia.

Alicia Hall Moran: Of course you did, and I was fine with it.

JM: I was learning a lot by being in Cassandra's band because she was teaching me about repertoire and also saying things like, "I don't know what you're playing, man." Her questioning that and really putting me on the spot onstage.

It was shocking and difficult, but I was making my way through it. But I also knew I was putting out my first record on Blue Note and that there was a part of me that was trying to define myself and commit to my first step. I had enough support to know it wouldn't go terribly wrong, and I left the relationship with Cassandra in good standing. Cassandra and Meshell Ndegeocello are two women about whom Alicia said to me early on, "These are the women who are doing the hard work with their groups to produce a sound that's never existed."

AHM: They create a whole space with their voices and can present everything you hear on the album live. You fall in love with them—that's how much they're putting out. But by turning down Cassandra, Jason was also saying, "I'm going to get out of your voice because I have a voice I want to explore." That's how I felt. Because who wouldn't keep a good gig that was bringing you to Japan and salt baths and lots of fun with an amazing band full of really good players? But these people have a voice, and once you play with them, you are in it, and you could stay there.

WHEN DID THE EXTRA-MUSICAL ASPECTS, THE PERFORMATIVE AND THEATRICAL ASPECTS, BECOME ATTRACTIVE TO YOU?

AHM: I would go to hear Jason's band play and I'd say, "Y'all are hot!" But they came out [wearing] these casual, saggy outfits, putting music out

with these not-attractive outfits like they were going on interviews for jobs they didn't want.

I'll never forget, I said, "You know they put a light on you when you're on stage, right? And you know we're sitting here, right? And you're forcing us to look at this but you're acting like we can't see you. This is ugly and you're some handsome guys, so let's turn up the hotness! Because your show starts the second you come out on stage. And nowhere else would this pass." And that is when Jason started thinking about his intros, and using the electronic sounds from video games and asking, "When and where do I use them?" ... So you got the intros to get them on and to get them off. And you get to where you're not embarrassed to say, "We're about to get into something here—watch this!" And I'll take credit for helping to lift them out of that other accidental thing. Because I was in a yearning position—like, he's hot and I want to love this. Desire makes you sensitive to things like that because it's not an intellectual process.

JM: Rarely does a band have eyes in the audience looking at them and not just listening ... scrutinizing what you look like and how that reads to an audience.

AHM: Now in music conservatory, studying opera, I was having my mind blown by having to study the [writers] of the poems that these canonical classical composers had set their music to. Because in the classical tradition, you don't sing

words where you don't know where they came from. You can't just start singing the way you heard Kathleen Battle sing it on the record. You can tell me about the composer and his times and you can tell me about the librettist. You get in front of the class and say, "I'm going to sing something by Mozart, poem by so-and-so." Then you go through the translation word by word.

IN JAZZ DURING THE '80S, THIS BURDEN-OF-HISTORY PROBLEM AROSE, WHERE IT SEEMED LIKE THERE WERE WARRING POSITIONS BETWEEN THOSE WHO WANTED TO DO IT LIKE THE MASTERS AND THOSE WHO WANTED TO INNOVATE.

AHM: You got lucky with Greg Osby because he just took a scissors to all that.

JM: Also seeing and having a relationship with the generation ahead, with Muhal Richard Abrams and the AACM, and recognizing what that was all about. We'd go to those AACM concerts when we were in college, and they were making it themselves, operating on their own dime, not in no jazz club. And they showed there was another tributary where the music was being distributed, and it always felt a different kind of way than going to the Village Vanguard. ...

One thing for [Muhal] was that there was no reason to ever complain. He may have told other people other shit, but his big thing with me was, "No one will ever come into your house

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and take your hands off of your piano.” That’s ownership. ... He was like, “I don’t need you to accept the whole thing. It’s cool, I’m working on my work. And I support your work, too. I don’t need your approval and I support your work, too.” And that’s consistent for that crew.

Those are the kind of people we want to be around—people who focus on the work. Adrian Piper, Joan Jonas. People who despite being overlooked for a very long time get the depth of what we’re sacrificing to make work. And shit is hard. So if we can support each other, then maybe it can get stronger. We take away gems from these collaborations that make us stronger whenever we get up on stage.

AHM: I allow people to change me when I do collaboration. I think sometimes people don’t want to be changed, so those collaborations just become experiences you have. But the ones that hold are when the person wants to be changed. For some people, when they feel their identity slipping away from them, that’s like a death in the night. But that’s where I jump in.

When I went to work with Bill T. Jones, I thought, “This will rip up my voice. OK, so it’s time to get my voice all ripped up.” Because I know who this is and I know what he makes and I love it. And ain’t no other Black woman in this room singing, so this is for me, so give him everything. My voice has an imprint of all these places I’ve been. ...

A few years ago, the artist Simone Leigh told me, “I’ve heard of everybody you’ve worked with but I’ve never heard of you,” and

by the end of that conversation she taught me the word “authorship.” She told me, “You need authorship.” So I’m making a record, so people can hear the voice I have because my voice is dying. I have maybe 10 years left.

HOW DO YOU READ YOURSELVES IN TERMS OF AUTHORSHIP, SIGNATURE, A LEGACY—WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING BETWEEN THOSE COVERS NOW?

AHM: I grew up in my mother’s house, and my mother is a book editor. I’ve seen her throw three-quarters of a manuscript in the garbage and say, “Now, we start here.” And that’s my whole answer to that. Because you overstand what that is—it’s a whole different process.

YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT YOUR VOICE AS SOMETHING THAT’S GOING TO BE LOST—THAT IMPLIES YOU ALREADY HAVE SOME SENSE OF WHAT IT’S GENERATING, WHAT ITS VALUE IS.

JM: Alicia’s two records are hers. They didn’t exist before her, and they took a long time. Time for Alicia to understand why she was singing those songs, why she heard them the way she did in her head and why she hadn’t heard anyone else do that is because they couldn’t. And accepting that those things she heard did belong together—that Stevie Wonder’s “Signed, Sealed, Delivered” does need to meet Carmen, because Black folk do know that history, too. Why do we act like those things are so far apart? And why do we keep them so far apart? Alicia eliminated that with this record in a way I don’t think I’ve ever heard done before.

I’D LIKE TO HEAR YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR FAMILIES’ IMPACT ON YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS AND BEING RAISED TO BE IN SERVICE TO BLACKNESS, TO BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS.

JM: I grew up in the Third Ward in Houston—same neighborhood as Beyoncé and Solange grew up in. I was not aware of how I was being raised until I left. In the ’80s, there was a way that music was used to empower that. You were taught that there were items of our culture to be shared. And every once in a while, your teachers would let you know you were getting something not everyone else was being given—trusting that you wouldn’t [mess] it up.

Just like Andrew Hill would call every once in a while and say, “You know I’m not giving this to everybody,” and then hang up! [laughs] So you knew you were being given items of our culture to be shared later. Be careful when those opportunities show up.

TALK ABOUT THE PROJECT WITH THE CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL KIDS THAT’S COMING OUT.

JM: Willie Pickens—beautiful dude, God rest his soul—saw me at the Chicago Jazz Festival in 2014 and asked me to come see these kids from this South Side after-school music program that his daughter Bethany directs at Kenwood Academy. You saw that the parents were invested and took time to make sure they got to the Kenwood Academy program for three hours, three times a week. I already had this commission in Chicago that I didn’t know what I was going to do with. But seeing those kids I thought, “What if, instead of writing music for some famous saxophonist to come and play—what if I write it for these 40 kids, and they play with my band?”

But then, while I was writing the music, one of the kids in the orchestra was murdered [15-year-old guitarist Aaron Rushing]. He had been in class with them and now he wasn’t there for the concert. It was emotional. Also because it made them think about there being this great concert hall in their city that they had never been invited into. Then I brought them to the Kennedy Center [in Washington, D.C.], and took them into the studio—and paid all the students—and we made a record. It reminded me that when I was in high school I had great things happen—meeting people like McCoy Tyler and Kirk Lightsey. I thought, I hope these kids think that was a cool situation and they remember it 25 years from now.

TALK ABOUT YOUR WORK WITH GEORGIA ANNE MULDROW RE-INTERPRETING MINGUS.

JM: Georgia has this very liberated voice—from the bottom to the top. She understands music unlike anybody else I know, and her voice puts sounds together unlike anybody else I know. She plays some unbelievable piano. ... Georgia Anne really challenges me and the group and the audience when she performs. People don’t

leave the same as when they came in. During our Chicago run, we were in the middle of this Mingus concert and she suddenly pulled up this statement from her depths: "How can you love Black music and not love the Black story?" The band needed to hear that, and the audience needed to hear that, too.

When Alicia came to Manhattan School of Music she didn't know, like I didn't know—because this is another thing not taught in conservatory—how women are eliminated from things from the jump. Point blank. Especially in jazz. She just kept pointing it out to me over and over again.

THAT'S A FLASHPOINT NOW.

JM: And those conversations will continue. But I also feel like for me, now it's also about enabling authors, too. The only reason I'm here is because somebody said, "You should be heard, too." So I better turn my ass right around and keep those doors open.

AHM: You can't keep any of that for yourself. It's such a myth.

JM: Greg, you were a part of the BLEED program Alicia and I did for two weeks at the Whitney Museum. They just asked for me and Alicia to do something, but we brought in 100 other people to present with us over those two weeks. Because we know how important that kind of recognition is for a community.

AHM: And the fact that they asked for both of us allowed us to say, "We're going to make something amazing for you." Because that showed—

THAT IT AIN'T "JAZZ"! [LAUGHS].

JM: And back to that original question of, "Is jazz as we know it enough, or is singing enough?" I feel like the people that we looked at were always showing us that it wasn't enough, and that it really was "beyond category." Like me going with Alicia's mother to meet the painter Emilio Cruz and his wife, Pat Cruz, and them talking about knowing Andrew Hill, and me saying, "Hey, that's my teacher."

AHM: You hadn't met him yet. You met him because of Pat and my mother taking you to meet her, and then Pat introducing you to Andrew Hill. And you don't know how to say it because it was a woman who made it happen.

JM: I think by that time that I had met Andrew through Greg Osby.

AHM: You were one in a billion when you met him with Greg. You got to know the private side of Andrew Hill because of my mother knowing Pat Cruz. That's why I get so ticked off about people saying how things happen. Like in the magazines you'll say, "Well, I met Andrew Hill and he told me ...," and the women will be eliminated. People don't realize if they don't keep the women around and keep them happy, they're going to be locked out of all these opportunities.

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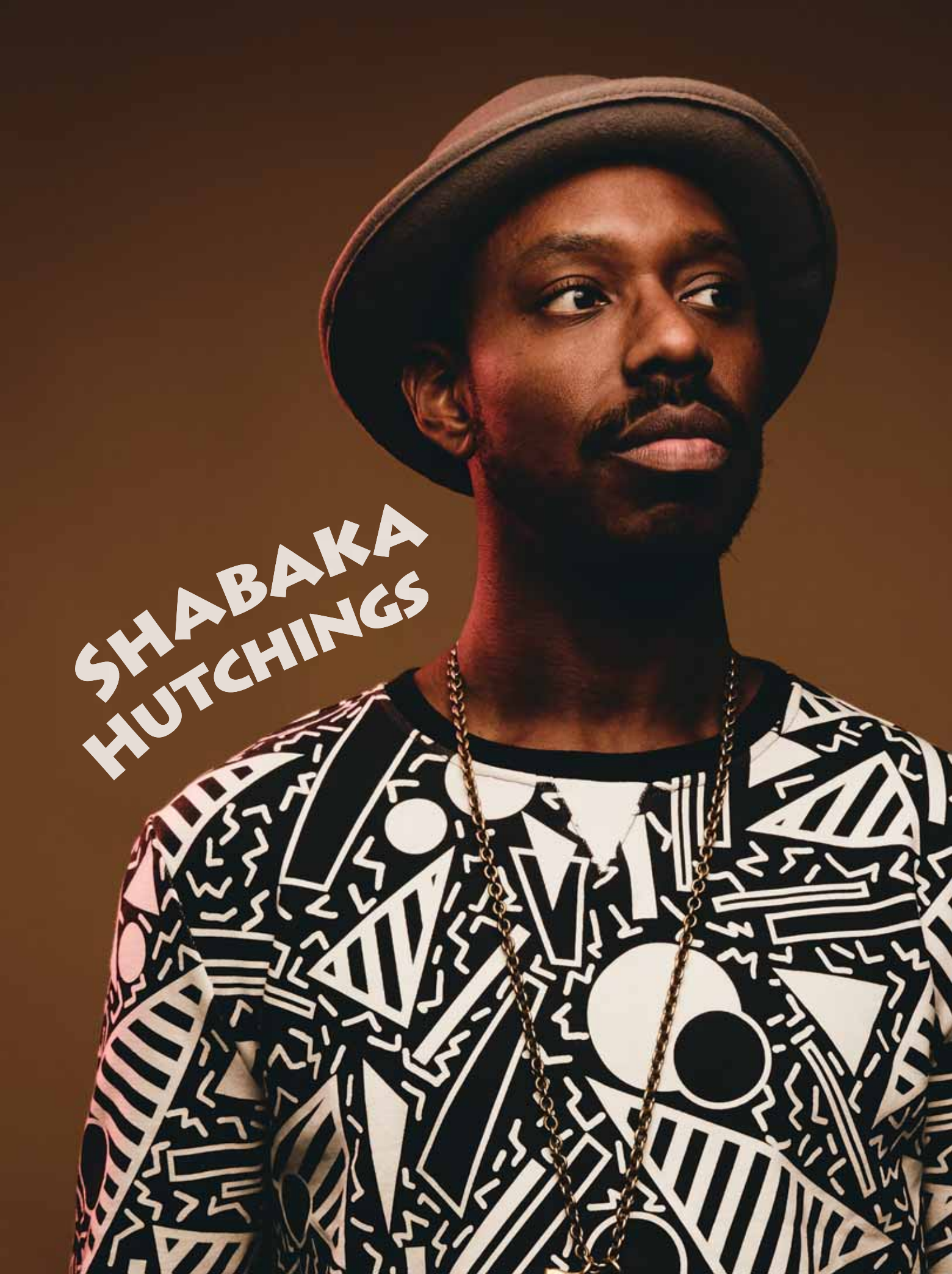
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**SHABAKA
HUTCHINGS**

BRITAIN'S BEST EXPORT

BY DAN OUELLETTE
PHOTO BY PIERRICK GUIDOU

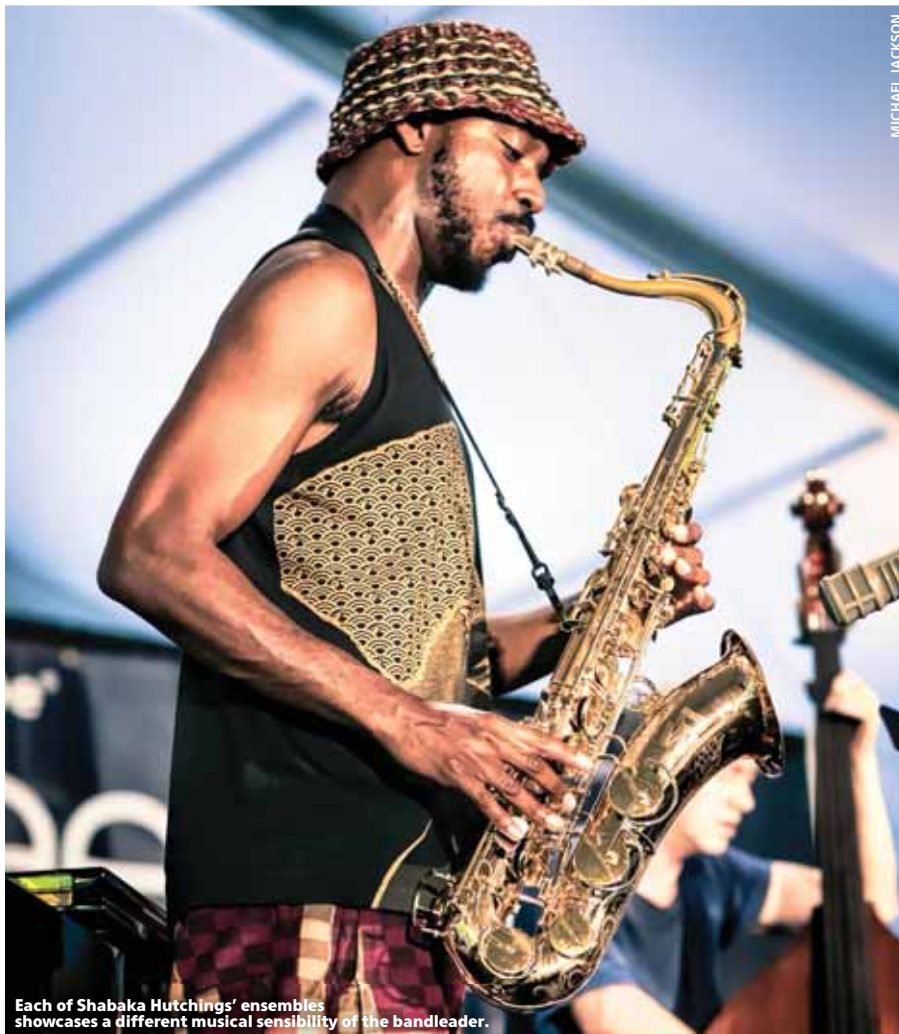
As the buzz around him continues to build, more and more fans in the United States are learning the name Shabaka Hutchings.

The saxophonist/clarinetist/conceptualist, who is at the center of a vibrant, burgeoning jazz scene in London, leads three disparate bands: the unorthodox, risk-taking quartet Sons of Kemet, which just released its rowdy Impulse debut, *Your Queen Is A Reptile*; the England-meets-South Africa ensemble Shabaka and The Ancestors; and the jazz-to-psychedelic improvisation trio The Comet Is Coming.

Hutchings served as the musical director of BBC DJ Gilles Peterson's compelling new compilation *We Out Here* (Brownswood), which introduces such young movers on the British scene as tuba player Theon Cross (a member of Sons of Kemet) and explosive tenor saxophonist Nubya Garcia (see *Players*, page 22). Hutchings takes the spotlight with his eccentric tune "Black Faces, Black Masks," where he overdubs clarinet and bass clarinet for a lyrical snake dance that morphs into a wild chase, pounding with grooves.

While Hutchings is widely respected in Britain as a tastemaker and has become a regular at clubs and festivals throughout Europe, he has remained largely unknown in the United States—until now. Early this year, Impulse Records announced that it had signed Hutchings and that it intends to release all of his bands' projects.





Each of Shabaka Hutchings' ensembles showcases a different musical sensibility of the bandleader.

Hutchings has begun to gain recognition and build audiences at New York venues such as (Le) Poisson Rouge, where he played with Shabaka and The Ancestors during the 2017 Winter Jazzfest. The group appeared at LPR again in August during the Jazz Re:Freshed New York Edition, following a show at the Afropunk Festival in Brooklyn.

This year, Hutchings returned to Winter Jazzfest, where he performed three sets, including one at LPR, where he unleashed a scorching, saxophone-effects burst with the synth-driven *The Comet Is Coming* as part of a British Jazz Showcase presented by Peterson. Two nights later, Hutchings revved up a dance-crazy outing with *Sons of Kemet*. Then, when Rudresh Mahanthappa's Indo-Pak band canceled its festival set due to a family emergency, Hutchings was enlisted for a last-minute saxophone jam at Bowery Ballroom with Donny McCaslin and Lakecia Benjamin.

"This has been great because people are getting to see my different sensibilities that fit into different scenarios," Hutchings said via telephone after returning to London. "Most of the time, musicians come to America and only play in one band, which is limiting. You don't get

to see their other sides. It's been a negotiation in my life to seek out sounds and give people a taste of my musical life, to make a point without being pushy."

Those New York performances helped him and his unconventional ensembles make significant headway with audiences in the States—an exciting development that follows some frustrating roadblocks.

"It's been quite an obstacle for us to play here," said the tall, amiable bandleader during his latest visit to New York in January. "You have to get the funding to come here, and then there's getting the proper visa to play, which costs more than what we'd get paid. But those are the hard first steps, and then the word gets out."

It was at LPR in January 2017 that Hutchings was approached by Impulse A&R executive Dahlia Ambach-Caplin after a set by Shabaka and The Ancestors. "It was an amazing occurrence," Hutchings said. "We talked for a couple of hours about my musical ideas, and then she proposed that I sign all my bands with Impulse."

Hutchings was born in London in 1984 and raised in Birmingham, but at age 6 he was taken back to his parents' native island, Barbados,

where he spent his youth studying both classical music and calypso. He didn't discover jazz until he returned to Birmingham when he was 16. He began to explore jam sessions and soon came under the wing of alto saxophonist Soweto Kinch, who was mixing jazz with hip-hop. Hutchings subsequently dug in and began studying jazz recordings at the city library. Then he advanced to securing a space as a student at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he met many of the young musicians who now are making waves on the London scene.

In 2011, Hutchings formed *Sons of Kemet*. The fiery quartet's 2013 debut, *Burn*, paved the way for the provocative 2015 album *Lest We Forget What We Came Here To Do*, which Hutchings described as a meditation on the Caribbean diaspora in Britain.

"It all started with wanting to do a small gig that was about crowds dancing wildly, and I wanted two drummers who didn't play rhythmically but had a conversation going without playing a groove," Hutchings said. "Then I thought of having a tuba on the front line with me and playing off each other. It is a horn, not just a bass. The personality of the player was important, and the original band member, Oren Marshall, brought a sense of irreverence to the tuba, playing whatever he wanted and going as far out as he wanted. Theon Cross replaced him a few years ago and his background [has] a connection to Caribbean music, so we interact on a level related to Caribbean phrasings."

In an email correspondence with the band, Cross concurred: "Shabaka and I both have Caribbean heritage, and we use the rhythmic cadences found in genres like soca, calypso and reggae as a basis to improvise off of," he said. "Sometimes it may be just between two or three notes, but the big aim is to create interest and tension through rhythm and keep people dancing."

"What we've been doing since the beginning is having four strands traveling simultaneously but not necessarily at the same time," Hutchings explained. "That's taken us into areas we didn't perceive. We're not interested in playing the same old things. We play adventurous music with pure power and fun."

Veteran SOK drummer Tom Skinner added, "There are no extraneous, unnecessary elements. No frills—just melody, bass and rhythm. This kind of raw sound and energy speaks to people in a very basic, human way. It is body music, for dancing, for unity and community. It brings people together."

Your Queen Is A Reptile is a nine-track tour de force that features Hutchings on tenor, Cross on tuba and a two-man drum team of Skinner and Seb Rochford. Current band member Eddie Hick arrived for two tracks to replace Rochford, who left SOK during the sessions.

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Sons of Kemet's *Your Queen Is A Reptile* celebrates a raft of historically important women.

'We need to consider the feminine space and tell women's stories of hope.'

"Call-and-response is occurring between Tom and me," Hick said. "That in turn converses with Theon and Shabaka. It's a four-way conversation. We balance frequencies and timbres on the drums to match different sections of the composition. This creates space to embellish with more abstract rhythmic language."

Your Queen Is A Reptile serves not only as a spirited critique on the opulent lifestyle of England's monarchy but also a celebration of queens of a different sort, whom Hutchings describes as icons of courage and freedom.

"The reason behind my political thinking is the fact that we need to consider the feminine space and tell women's stories of hope," he said. "We need to articulate who we draw our inspiration from on a feminine perspective. I started to think, who are our queens? It's like what Sun Ra said: People who are oppressed have the power to create their own mythological structures. I started thinking of the myths in our society, the royalty that dominates our thinking so that we don't even think of them as myths. Here in Britain, it's all about hereditary privilege just because someone is born into a certain bloodline. As a second-generation immigrant, I have the power to disregard this ridiculous myth and replace it with myths of my own."

The "queens" in Hutchings' worldview include American heroes such as abolitionist

Harriet Tubman, activist and educator Angela Davis, black liberation activist Anna Julia Haywood Cooper and civil rights leader Mamie Phipps Clark—all of whom are referenced in song titles on the new album. Each song title begins with the phrase "My Queen Is ..." The opening track, "My Queen Is Ada Eastman," is a rollicking tribute to Hutchings' great-grandmother, who lived to be 103. "She came back to Barbados from England and held the family together," Hutchings said. "The vocals on the track sung by Joshua Idehen are about the dark, angry times of immigration to England."

Other figures celebrated on the album include Albertina Sisulu, a prominent anti-apartheid leader in South Africa; Yaa Asantewaa, the political and military head of the Ashanti Empire that fought against the British colonial army in 19th century Africa; and Jamaica-born Doreen Lawrence, a police-reform campaigner dubbed by the BBC in 2014 as "the most powerful woman in Britain."

Thematically, Hutchings knew he wanted to honor queens but admitted that he "didn't have a big knowledge of women I could call queen." So, he turned to Facebook and asked for suggestions of powerful women. "I got 400 to 500 responses," he said. "I couldn't be comprehensive, but I went through many stories of

women who inspired me."

One of the more poignant stories on the album is "My Queen Is Nanny Of The Maroons." Its rhythm was spirited to Hutchings after the band finished recording its Angela Davis tune. "We just started a groove, tapping into a vessel of connectivity," he said. "It was the nyahbinghi groove from the Mystic Revelation of Rastafari that was so important in the Caribbean experience; people would gather and play this rhythm for hours and hours in celebration."

It turned out to be the perfect fit for the Maroons story that is about Nanny (1686–1755), the woman who led enslaved people in Jamaica to freedom. They established a community and were never captured or enslaved again. "That resilience, that spirit, really inspires me," Hutchings said. "It's a space where you're constantly aware of living a life that fights for freedom. Nothing can be taken for granted."

In tandem with his explorations of the Afro-Caribbean and South African traditions, Hutchings cites American jazz giants as significant influences on his playing. "At the moment, I've been listening to a lot of Charlie Parker," he said. "But not in the same way as in college when I was trying to learn the stuff he was playing. Now I'm listening to him as a drummer. It sounds like he is sparring, like a boxer. Charlie Parker has been teaching me how to rhythmically spark with my drummers."

On a technical level, Hutchings champions Eric Dolphy: "The first time I heard him play a bass clarinet, I didn't know how he could do it at that level. Then I listened to *Last Date* [1964], which showed me what I could do on bass clarinet and play in a certain way that expressed my personality."

With his divergent musical tastes, Hutchings has made a fresh impact on a generation of jazz Brits who are forging an adventurous style. "Shabaka has played an extremely vital role in the current resurgence of British jazz," Skinner said. "He has paved the way for the new wave of talented young musicians coming out of the U.K. right now. From when we started Sons of Kemet back in 2011, even before, he has had a vision for a new type of jazz music that respects and observes the tradition but is not stuck in the past and is constantly looking to the future. This is a very important thing: to question where you're at and not sit on your laurels. Shabaka is a visionary, and I'm excited to see where he takes it next."

As the end of the interview, Hutchings mentioned that he was eager to get back to work fulfilling a request from a web company to create a playlist of British jazz. "I'm going through all my collections," he said, followed by a slight pause. "Really, there's been a lot of good music that has come from Britain over the years. We'll continue to keep doing that."

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Photo Credit: Jason Kruppa

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DAFNIS PRIETO

‘EXPLODING IMAGINATION’

BY TED PANKEN
PHOTO BY HENRY LOPEZ

DAFNIS PRIETO’S VIVID NEW BIG BAND ALBUM, BACK TO THE SUNSET, ORIGINATED WITH A PHONE CALL.

It was May 2016, a month after the virtuoso Cuban-born drummer-composer published *A World Of Rhythmic Possibilities*, a well-received book that dives deep into his methodologies and aesthetics. On the line was Eric Oberstein, who’d become friendly with Prieto while serving as executive director of the Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance, the umbrella nonprofit that sponsors Arturo O’Farrill’s Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra. ALJO had recorded Prieto’s “The Triumphant Journey” on the 2015 Grammy-nominated album *Cuba: The Conversation Continues*, and “Song For Chico,” which served as the title track for ALJO’s 2008 Best Latin Jazz Album Grammy-winning recording, both of which Oberstein produced.

“I fell in love with ‘Song For Chico’ the moment I heard it,” Oberstein recalled in early February. “Dafnis’ beautiful, lush melodies captured me, and I’ve never met anyone with such an incredible sense of time. His pieces are little journeys that take hairpin turns, but he’s always in control as he takes you down his beautiful path.” Oberstein was looking to branch out, and decided to suss out Prieto’s interest in a collaboration.



Steve Coleman, Brian Lynch and Henry Threadgill all are featured on drummer Dafnis Prieto's *Back To The Sunset*.

TOM SCHWARZ



Before Oberstein finished asking, “What’s your dream project?” Prieto declared, “I want to do a big band with my arrangements.” That aspiration dated back some 30 years to Prieto’s adolescence in Santa Clara, a city of 215,000 in central Cuba, where he was focusing on classical percussion in conservatory and teaching himself to play drums with exercises from a technique book by George Lawrence Stone. Prieto fueled his imagination at performances by the local big band Orquesta La Musica Moderna, propelled by drummer Juan Carlos Rojas (“El Peje”), who would subsequently spend consequential time with pianist Chucho Valdés’ band, The Afro-Cuban Messengers.

“Through them I heard not just Cuban music, but American music and any other kind of music—played well,” Prieto said by phone from his Miami home. “Always in the back of my mind I hoped some day to record my music with that great, rich sound.” And so, with the cessation of funding from his 2011 MacArthur “Genius” award and a substantial corpus of original music from five quartet, quintet and sextet albums on his own imprint, Dafnison, Prieto decided that the prospect of professional support in navigating infrastructure and logistics made this a fortuitous moment to take the plunge.

As spring transitioned to summer and summer to fall, Prieto and Oberstein looked for a narrative thread. Prieto decided to construct a notes-and-tones autobiography through tributes to a Pan-American cohort of heroes who influenced and inspired him.

Three of the nine pieces on *Back To The*

Sunset are features for Steve Coleman, Brian Lynch and Henry Threadgill, who each recruited Prieto for their bands not long after he arrived in New York in 1999. Each of those musicians is also a dedicatee, as are Jane Bunnett, Andrew Hill, David Samuels, Eddie Palmieri, Jerry González, Michel Camilo, Roberto Carcasses, Bebo Valdés and père and fils O’Farrill, one time Prieto employers.

As Prieto composed new charts and expanded older ones, Oberstein tasked himself with financing the enterprise and convening a 17-piece band consisting of five saxophones, four trombones, four trumpets, piano, bass, percussion and Prieto on drum kit. The core members were saxophonists Peter Apfelbaum and Roman Filiú, trumpeter Mike Rodriguez and pianist Manuel Valera, all long-standing friends familiar with Prieto’s vocabulary.

Oberstein announced the project around Thanksgiving 2016 and launched a crowd-funding campaign through the New York-based nonprofit arts service organization Fractured Atlas. They created tiered levels of rewards that, at the Producer level, included access to the recording session. Via this modality, a May 2017 fundraising concert by Prieto’s Si O Si quartet at Manhattan’s Jazz Gallery and several grants, they raised about \$60,000 and decided to self-release the project.

“The recording session was relaxed,” Valera recalled about the August sessions in Brooklyn. “Most of the tunes were two takes, with hardly any overdubs. ... Dafnis’ writing for big band reminds me of the way Thad Jones wrote, where

all the lines could stand on their own. He applies his rhythmic concepts to give the big band forward movement, push-and-pull, similar to those old Cuban bands—less about harmonic complexity than the different sections playing the melodies and rhythms.”

As an example of Prieto’s rhythmic legerdemain, Valera mentioned “Out Of The Bone,” dedicated to Coleman and Camilo, on which, after a stentorian baritone saxophone overture by Chris Cheek, Prieto states a ferocious 7/4 time feel that conveys the illusion that two separate drum kits are in play, or that he perhaps deployed an extra limb—or two—in addressing his instrument.

Prieto first encountered Coleman in Havana in 1996. He made 1997 and 1998 sojourns to the Stanford Jazz Workshop at Coleman’s instigation and played drums on Coleman’s 2003 *Lucidarium*. “Through Steve, I discovered the playing and music of Max Roach, which was huge, and music from South India and Ghana,” he said.

The refracted motif of Dizzy Gillespie’s “Manteca” introduces the album opener, “Una Vez Más,” which Prieto composed for the jazz quartet he played in with Palmieri, Lynch and Boris Kozlov in the early 2010s. Lynch—a co-dedicatee with Palmieri and Tito Puente—follows Valera’s Palmieri refraction with a clarion solo that signifies why he and Prieto have remained close since 1997, when Lynch played a concert at Stanford with him and Yosvany Terry.

“Right away I knew something special was

going on with both guys,” Lynch said. He told Prieto to call if he was ever in New York. Lynch followed through in ’99, hiring Prieto to replace Antonio Sanchez for a band he was leading.

“He had a lot of finesse, obviously a lot of knowledge and understanding of the rhythms from his culture, and a real ear for what the soloist is doing,” Lynch said. “He’s able to pull things into a creative place while respecting the form he’s playing. He plays like a composer, always.”

Both Lynch and Apfelbaum played in Prieto’s early ’00s groups, developing the repertoire that appears on 2005’s *About The Monks*. Apfelbaum emphasized the linear ingenuity of Prieto’s quartet and sextet music, comparing it to a tree with different branches. “Now each line is harmonized and played by a different section comprising four or five instruments, and the tree’s branches are now filled with fruit,” he said of *Back To The Sunset*. The overall effect, he added, is like “seeing a movie that seems familiar, but in 3-D with surround sound.”

Prieto dedicates the title track to Threadgill and Hill. Threadgill uncorks a searingly vocalized alto saxophone solo, marking his second recorded sideman appearance with Prieto, following “Afrotango” on *Absolute Quintet* (2006). Both masters availed themselves of Prieto’s skills in 1999, and Threadgill hired him for his paired 2001 albums *Everybody’s Mouth’s A Book* and *Up Popped The Two Lips*.

“Dafnis operates at a very high level of musicality,” Threadgill said. “He’s able to translate non-percussion ideas into percussion ideas, to look at a piece in terms of the entire picture of the composition and not just his part. As a composer, he has command of the resources he uses and an ability to carry it out.”

Prieto observed that Coleman, Threadgill and Hill “showed the possibility for music to sound like yourself—it doesn’t have to be generic.” He first heard Threadgill’s music during a 1998–’99 sojourn in Canada under the sponsorship of Jane Bunnett that directly preceded his move to New York. “I thought it was surrealist, the music I could hear in my dreams—and when I wake up, it disappears,” Prieto said. “I learned from Henry that each tune should have its own character and intention upon which you put your own voice. You create your own world, which reflects your set of beliefs and structures and content, and it comes through in your artistic vocabulary.”

As he describes in *A World of Rhythmic Possibilities*, Prieto has practiced techniques that evoke a panoply of sounds on his drum kit, endeavoring to make his instrument a vehicle to represent or imitate various Cuban folkloric percussion instruments. He speaks the rhythms, speeds them up and slows them down at will, plays and subdivides any theme on any limb at any time, and deploys the rhythms to

serve synesthetic or abstract imperatives—a notion of visual art, a philosophical principle or the sound of thunder.

His compositional process transpires mostly by ear. “I like scores from classical music, like Bartok’s string quartets or some Stravinsky works,” he said. “It’s like they consist of words, and the game is how you play with those words—you see what results. The quality of the performer is also part of every composition—a melody played by Henry is almost a different melody than the same melody played by someone else.”

Prieto first conceptualized his procedures on mid-’90s tours with Chilean pianist Carlos Maza, an admirer of the M.O. followed by Brazilian composers Hermeto Pascoal and Egberto Gismonti (acknowledged on “Two For One” and “The Sooner The Better,” respectively), whose own drummers played from an orchestrative, textural perspective. As his horizons expanded, Prieto increasingly felt stifled by the absence of a platform in Cuba. Unwilling to play commercial jobs, he left the island, landing in Barcelona, then Toronto, then New York.

After the aforementioned Zoho albums,



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Prieto's dream project has been to convene a big band focused on his own arrangements.

Prieto launched Dafnison in 2008 with *Taking The Soul For A Walk*. "I was basically swiping my credit card, or saving money from the gigs for my own projects, which wasn't easy in an expensive city," he said. "But I wanted and needed my own label. If no one wanted to release my albums, I had to do it myself. It gives me absolute control over the product, from the first note to the last artwork. I have the courage to challenge myself economically to make it happen. I make a record, and I don't know how much I'll make or how much exposure it will get—I depend on an industry that rolls on other principles. ... I always joke, 'I don't need anyone to make myself poorer; I can do that very well.'"

At the beginning of 2018, Dafnison released *Transition*, by the Kairos Sextet, an

ensemble that Prieto assembled during his first academic year (2015-'16) at Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, where he teaches composition, as well as drums and ensembles.

"For me, teaching is one of the highest spiritual paths," Prieto said. "There's the reciprocal relationship of giving and receiving; you feel the students develop through time, and feel their gratitude for what you are giving them, just as I feel gratitude for what the musicians who I honor on *Back To The Sunset* did for me. They see I've done it on my own, and they ask why I did it, what the challenges are, why I made the decisions I made."

Prieto lives 10 minutes from the Fort Lauderdale airport, from which Jet Blue runs

a direct daily flight to Santa Clara, facilitating visits to his mother. But increased proximity to his homeland hasn't resulted in invitations to perform or teach there. "I've never even been invited to play a jazz festival in Cuba," he said. "I wouldn't ever be able to do in Cuba what I've done in the U.S. as a leader and creative musician. In order to work with a Steve Coleman or a Henry Threadgill, to do what I really wanted, I had to come here." On the other hand, he continues: "In Cuba, you can dream about what it's going to be like, but when you get here, it's not what you thought it would be. It takes a lot of time and courage, a lot of strength to keep your belief alive."

For now, Prieto is focusing on the challenge of working with Oberstein to spread the word about *Back To The Sunset*, to book gigs for the orchestra and to find personnel with whom he can tour. Ever the pragmatic risk-taker, Prieto is both optimistic and realistic.

"If the budget allows, I want to use the guys on the record," he said. "But I'm open to using other musicians. To play these pieces, you don't have to be a specialist in Latin music—though you need to be good at rhythm. But this isn't generic music. We're not playing 'El Manicero.' It's completely new material. Besides being strong as a musician, they have to be open-minded in order to accept it and be able to execute it."

DB

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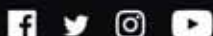


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JASON PALMER

LEARNING FROM EVERYBODY

BY FRED BOUCHARD

PHOTO BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ

The quintet's ablaze, floating ecstatically over waves of cheer and distraction, as uproarious Friday revelers stand toe to toe with the front line.

Regulars jostle amicably in the cramped club, soaking up the notes and nuances. Tempo's up, meter's odd, propelled by Lee Fish's vigorous drumming and the fleet, firm threads of Simón Willson's upright bass.

Wally's Café Jazz Club exudes a joyous, giddy energy, and Jason Palmer is right at home at the Boston venue. He stands erect and observant in the eye of the storm. Streams of straight-eighths pour from his trumpet and weave brief, bright lines with Noah Preminger's sweeping tenor saxophone. Palmer draws easily from many wells—lightning Freddie Hubbard riffs, Kenny Wheeler squibs, sandpapered Don Cherry blasts—all of a piece in his bobbing, lilting narrative. With a smile and a nod, Palmer steps aside as Max Light illuminates floating changes on his guitar.

Wally's is a long, narrow neighborhood bar with a rich history. For 70 years, it has been a forum for jazz and blues (Latin and funk, too) in Boston's South End neighborhood, mere steps away from Symphony Hall and New England Conservatory. Wally's has been key to Palmer's evolving trajectory as student, sideman, leader, teacher, family man and globetrotter. His bands have anchored the club's busy weekly slate since 2002, and he started playing there even earlier than that.



Jason Palmer stands outside of Wally's Cafe in Boston, where he recorded two live albums that will be released by SteepleChase.



Jason Palmer is now in his 10th year of teaching at Berklee College of Music.

"I grew up here over 21 years," Palmer marveled. "Thanks to the [venue's owners, the] Walcott family, we had total freedom to experiment." Wally's was his safety net, crucible, workshop, his weekend tree house. And now it's a key part of his discography. Later this year, SteepleChase will release two separate live albums by Palmer: *At Wally's Vol. 1* and *At Wally's Vol. 2*, painstakingly recorded by Jimmy and Dena Katz, who are frequent DownBeat contributors.

"Despite never living in New York, Jason's going to make his mark," Jimmy said. Indeed, it's already happening: Jason Palmer is in high demand.

He has performed with an array of saxophonists, including Ravi Coltrane, Grace Kelly, Matana Roberts and Phil Woods. Additionally, he's shared the stage with drummers Lewis Nash and Roy Haynes, keyboardist Herbie Hancock, organist Jimmy Smith, trumpeters Wynton Marsalis and Roy Hargrove and hip-hop artist Common.

These days, Palmer regularly plays in pianist George Burton's quintet alongside tenor saxophonist Tim Warfield. That band recently wrapped up a Northeast trek that included dates at Blues Alley in Washington, D.C., Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola in New York, The Side Door in Hartford, Connecticut, and Scullers Jazz Club in Boston.

"Jason Palmer is a significant presence in a new generation of jazzists," Burton said. "Working with Jason is always exciting. As a member of my quintet, he is like the element of water: expressing the feeling in my music with pure empathy that never fails to give me chills."

A recent Burton set unfurled a broad land-

scape, anchored by the leader's piano ruminations, thickened with Pablo Menares' bass and Wayne Smith Jr.'s drums. Palmer and Warfield popped up like mountains or skyscrapers over key stretches. Palmer's peaks arrived on a wry, sassy song with displaced triplets and Brownie jabs; far-reaching chorus trades with soprano on a sultry 5/4 blues; and, on an abrupt encore, a tapestry of quotes woven from Dizzy, Stevie Wonder, "Three Blind Mice" and maybe Freddie Hubbard's intro to "Moanin'."

But his centerpiece was a ballad that rose out of a tart, low-register theme in thirds, through a tangle of nuanced lines, building with steady drama into a lengthy, engaging narrative that topped out over three octaves and several minutes in a near-perfect parabola.

Palmer's a happy man in the middle: crafting a life that combines home and away games with a teaching career and family. He's in year 10 teaching ensembles and trumpet at Berklee College of Music.

YOUTH & SCHOOL

Meet Jason Palmer or watch him play, and free associations sprout up. Quicksilver ideas mirror the alert freshness of a young Ornette in a black turtleneck, or maybe Mercury, the Roman god whose fleet feet and facile fingers reflect an agile spirit passing through. Over a curry dish at Restaurant Kashmir in Boston, Palmer recounted his childhood in High Point, North Carolina.

"I grew up two doors away from John Coltrane's home on Underhill Street," he said. "I started playing in bands in sixth grade. My first choice was saxophone; they were gone by

[the time the teacher got to the letter] 'P,' so my second choice was trumpet. My mother bought me a cornet. I didn't get serious about jazz until junior year when [music teacher] Mr. Morton told us about a new summer camp named for Coltrane.

"My 'aha moment' came when I heard [trumpeter] Clifford Brown play 'Cherokee.' He spoke clear and warm through all registers; that turned something on upstairs. On a purely musical level, I was curious how he could make it speak."

Hoops lost out to the blues in Palmer's life. "I was real serious about basketball," he recalled. "I met a few recruiters, played [Amateur Athletic Union basketball], but then Mr. Morton introduced me to Greensboro Music Academy, and I ended up going three nights a week for two years. Dr. Ronnie Ingle, my first trumpet teacher, wanted me to learn everything: classical études and jazz. He introduced me to more Clifford Brown and Miles Davis, but also Nicholas Payton. He had me pick a solo off [Payton's 1995 album] *Gumbo Nouveau*, transcribe it, put it in [the software application] Finale, and analyze the ideas: 'Whoopin' Blues'—yeah."

Palmer arrived at New England Conservatory at 18, game but green.

"I was kinda naïve and from a new school. I thought solfège was a gym class and bought sneakers. Thank goodness I met John McNeil. He was two teachers in one to me: chops doctor and master improviser."

McNeil showed Palmer the Caruso method regimen, which had helped him rebuild his own career. "Your lips must present a flat surface to the mouthpiece," McNeil explained. "If you don't fix it, it's like trying to bat right-handed with your left hand on top. You can hit the ball, but you'll never get it out of the infield. I told him: 'Continue your playing: It's your highway and we'll build an access road alongside it.'

"He worked on it morning, noon and night. Soon, his embouchure began to shift. I told him it'd take two years, but he did it in 18 months. He took those grueling exercises on faith, and it saved his career. He earned it."

Palmer still uses those Caruso warm-up exercises every day.

"Once he got the essentials down," McNeil enthused, "he became auto-didactic. He could transcribe anything. He listened to everybody: Art Farmer, Dizzy, Freddie, Lee . . . Jason listened hard and learned from everybody. Comes in one day, says, 'What's this absolute pitch I hear about?' I say, 'You can hear anything and tell the note.' 'Really?' he asks, surprised. 'Well, I can do that. Heck, I thought everybody could do that.'"

A quick study, Palmer embraced nuggets of wisdom from icons he encountered and picked up tips from younger musicians, like Grace Kelly. "Grace taught me the importance of bringing joy

to people in many countries,” he said. “No matter how sick or low energy she was, she never folded.”

WRITING & TEACHING

The process of teaching ensembles at Berklee came with a learning curve. “Sometimes we’d have no bass player,” Palmer explained. “So, I started scatting bass, then I bought one and learned it; you watch people, YouTube tutorials, ask questions. Consequently, teaching has caused me to learn how instruments function in a band. Not good enough to hold a gig, but learning note choices and lines helps me teach them what they’re expected to do.” French pianist Domi Degalle, one of Palmer’s former students, is now his bandmate for gigs at Wally’s.

To prepare for work with bandleaders such as Turner and Burton, Palmer said he tries to “memorize as much material as I can, get into the vibe and mindset of songs on records they’re promoting. I try to improvise in ways that I haven’t before, to approach it with a fresh perspective: devices, shrieks, cries, motifs.”

Palmer’s own compositions tend to be brief and brisk, lilting with catchy rhythms and mesmerizing passages that glint with crystal-line logic. His tunes feature forward motion, restlessness, urgency, transparency. He might draw inspiration from a film, such as *Crash* or *Ethos*, or from a performance by an athlete, such as Olympic gymnast Gabby Douglas.

The trumpeter, who recently was selected as a City of Boston Artist in Residence, currently is planning a community service project. “It will be a concert capturing the voices of grieving mothers who have lost their kids to violence,” he said. “It’ll be a collaboration with pianist Kevin Harris, akin to Hermeto Pascoal’s ‘Aura Sound’ portrayals of vocal patterns. My hope is to influence people to put down their guns.”

In 2016, Palmer released an album that reflected his deep interest in mathematics: *Beauty ‘N’ Numbers: The Sudoku Suite* (SteepleChase). “I began more ethereal writing based on numbers and numerical sequences,” he said. “You have to watch that it doesn’t sound robotic. I had to give myself rules to expand the palette with Sudoku, a numbers game based on logical reasoning.”

Beauty ‘N’ Numbers opens with the title track, which is followed by 15 tracks (in 12 different keys). Those song titles, when read in sequence, reveal a humorous message: “Obsessive compulsive disorder is now under control thanks to the guidance of fun and games so if you would allow me to be in the moment.”

Palmer’s fascinating discography (on SteepleChase) includes a trilogy of tributes to vocalists Minnie Riperton, Janelle Monáe and Anita Baker. He hints at future homages to Dionne Warwick and Burt Bacharach, to Chopin, and interests in Ravel and Middle

Eastern music.

It was Preminger who encouraged Jimmy and Dena Katz to record Palmer’s quintet at Wally’s. Jimmy, who has recorded 525 sessions, became engrossed in the lightning setup, the intricate condenser-microphone setup, the rambunctious audience and enthusiastic players. “History will remember the great performance,” he said. “Jason’s extraordinary on any recording, but in this open-ended context, he was very relaxed but played with complete abandon.”

Wally’s patrons can catch Palmer live most

weekends, and now fans around the world can enjoy the sets via webcam.

Preminger sees something profound in Palmer: “Only a select few jazz musicians have the capacity to execute their ideas with a sense of freedom. I’m talking about when freedom of melody, harmony, rhythm and technique are all aligned to create a space where the improviser can release into the unknown. This doesn’t come from practicing. Coltrane couldn’t get there, but Miles could, and so can Jason. It’s the highest level of improvisation.” **DB**



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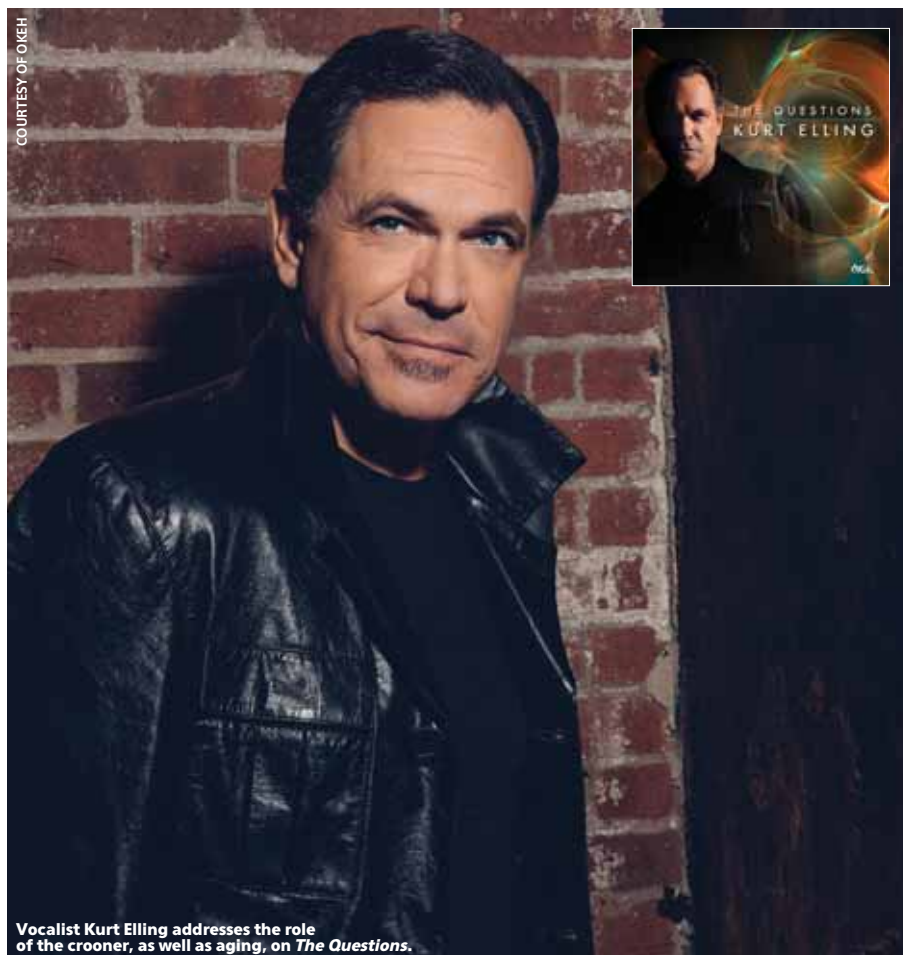
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Vocalist Kurt Elling addresses the role of the crooner, as well as aging, on *The Questions*.

Kurt Elling *The Questions*

OKEH RECORDS/SONY MUSIC
MASTERWORKS 88985492832

★★★★½

The fantastical promise of jazz singers like Billy Eckstine and Johnny Hartman was that everyone, regardless of race or birth, somehow might partake in the small pleasures of the American upper class. A virtuoso African-American vocalist, singing a breezy Broadway hit in a sanguine croon, could push toward something outside of politics, almost outside of time.

Kurt Elling always has taken his cues from singers like these, working with their dialectic of measured masculinity and anti-

quarian charm—and extravagant talent. But his situation is significantly different: An epoch has passed, the tradition has shifted some, jazz's identity is more culturally fixed. And Elling is a white guy, who's as upper-middle-class-seeming as they come.

Still, on albums like *Close Your Eyes*, his 1995 debut, and *The Gate*, a 2011 career highlight, his task has been to somehow carry the softly transcendent theatrics of jazz vocals into the present day. How does that sound in 2018, with Elling now 50 and the fate of a beleaguered nation on his mind?

On *The Questions*, Elling continues his interrogation of that old crooner's role, but—wisely—he's delving into something else, too. That other thing comes to him through Oscar Brown Jr. and Abbey Lincoln, poet-sing-

ers with sociopolitical messages to espouse. (Brown's album *Tell It Like It Is*, from 1963, is an odd kind of forerunner to *The Questions*.) Elling's song choices are a major part of the disc's identity: American folk song, jazz standards and originals that blend famous poetry with his lyrics.

The band is a tightly knit group of A-listers—saxophonist Branford Marsalis, trumpeter Marquis Hill, pianist Stu Mindeman and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, among others. The musicians enjoy a general ease of motion across folk-rock saunters and glimmering post-bop.

Elling leads the album with Bob Dylan's "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" and moves into the dreamy patriotism of Paul Simon's "American Tune." But any consideration of national identity is couched in a broader context. Elling has his mind on aging and senescence, themes that materialize during some of the album's most engaging moments. On "A Happy Thought," he sings the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Franz Wright's free verse—"what frightened me, apparently, and hurt/was being born. But I got over that/with no hard feelings. Dying, I imagine,/it will be the same deal"—over a snaky, propulsive Mindeman melody.

To the extent Elling finds an answer to the questions he poses here—of mortality, futility, membership, disappearance—it comes in the form of fellowship. The Carla Bley composition "Lawns," retitled here as "Endless Lawns," comes with lyrics by Elling, plus verses from Sara Teasdale's poem "Winter Stars." As Mindeman plays the simple chord sequence, Elling sings Teasdale's wistful lines in a spry, ad-libbed rhythm—"Years go, dreams go, and youth goes too./ The world's heart breaks beneath its wars"—but then returns to his own words, with a plea for solidarity: "Come climb the skies with me/Come here." —Giovanni Russonello

The Questions: A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall; A Happy Thought; American Tune; Washing Of The Water; A Secret In Three Views; Lonely Town; Endless Lawns; I Have Dreamed; The Enchantress; Skylark. (65:02)

Personnel: Kurt Elling, vocals; Stu Mindeman, piano; Hammond B-3 (2, 5, 10); Joey Calderazzo, piano (6, 8); John McLean, acoustic and electric guitars; Clark Sommers, bass; Branford Marsalis, saxophones (1, 8); Marquis Hill, trumpet; flugelhorn (6, 7); Jeff "Tain" Watts, drums.

Ordering info: okeh-records.com



Orquesta Akokán

DAPTONE 052

★★★★

"Americans always want to record live," grumbles bassist Jorge Reyes during sessions for Orquesta Akokán's eponymous album. "When we do it, they don't use it anyway."

A Cuban jazz veteran, Reyes has earned his skepticism. But Brooklyn's Daptone Records has sustained a devotion to raw aural textures on its first Spanish-language album, which was recorded in Havana's hallowed Estudios Areito. Just a few mics captured the sound of the room in trib-

ute to the studio's mid-century glory days when Beny Moré and other mambo kings reigned.

Cuban vocalist José "Pepito" Gómez assembled the 16-piece group from musicians based in New York and Havana, including members of Irakere and Los Van Van. Its single, "Mambo Rapidito," presents an uptempo groove with horns in service to rhythm, a "traditional Latin dance band given balls by saxophones and horns," as novelist Oscar Hijuelos once described a classic mambo orchestra. Elsewhere contemporary elements suggest a new golden age of Cuban music. Modern horn voicings sometimes spin the rhythm section, and pianist César "Pupy" Pedrosó drives "Cuidado Con El Tumbador" with springy *montuno* vamps.

If the devil and God are in the details, this lovingly meticulous session must have reached the ears of Areito's ancestors. Listen for their blessings, caught like everything else here, live to tape. —Michelle Mercer

Orquesta Akokán: Mambo Rapidito; La Corbata Barata; Un Tabaco Para Elegua; Otro Nivel; La Cosa; Cuidado Con El Tumbador; Yo Soy Para Ti; No Te Hagas; A Gozar La Vida. (39:34)

Personnel: José "Pepito" Gómez, vocals; Michael Eckroth, piano; Otto Santana Selis, conga, timbales; Eduardo Lavoy Zaragoza Jr., bongo; Cesar Lopez, alto saxophone, flute; Evaristo Denis, baritone saxophone; Jamil Schery, José "El Chewy" Luis Hernandez, tenor saxophone; Yoandy Argudin, Heikel Fabián Trimiño, Carlos "Afrokan" Alvarez Guerra, trombone; Harold Madrigal Frias, Santiago Ceballos Sejjido, trumpet; César "Pupy" Pedrosó, piano (6); Jorge Reyes, bass; Itai Kriss, flute (1, 8); Carlitos Padron, timbales (5, 6); Luis Soto, Eddie Venegas, vocals.

Ordering info: daptonerecords.com

Fire!

RUNE GRAMMOPHON 2197

★★★★½

Like the late, lamented American rock trio Morphine, Sweden's Fire! generates menace on dark reeds, bass and drums. The trio's sixth recording sounds like the soundtrack to a particularly gritty episode of *The Bridge*—a police procedural set in Malmö. Mats Gustafsson's electronics and drummer Andreas Werliin's processed feedback add a droning undercurrent to what already is a sonic landscape that emphasizes an atmosphere of dread. The conclusion of "Up. And Down." turns particularly cinematic with the sound of a man falling and struggling.

Sounds like fun, right? Actually, the relentless energy the trio brings to the music—especially Gustafsson's spirited playing—carries the listener through the darkness to the gorgeous, spare performance of "I Guard Her To Rest. Declaring Silence."

Johan Berthling's doomy, repetitive bass lines on the title track and "When Her Lips Collapsed" anchor Fire! in the work of bands like Black Sabbath and The Stooges, but like Steve Mackay's Albert Ayler-inspired saxophone contributions to the latter's pioneering 1970 album *Fun House*, Gustafsson's wooly



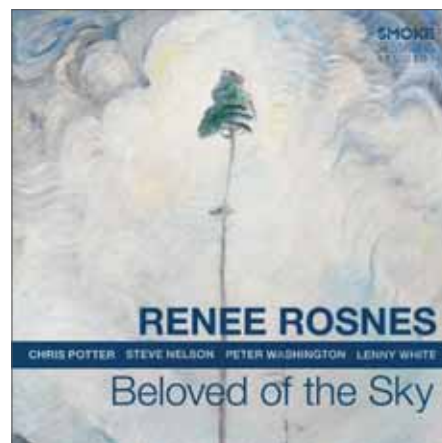
improvisations add a free-jazz layer. His slow build and prolonged bluster on "Washes Your Heart In Filth," played over a compelling rhythmic bed, is a highlight.

At a mere 37 minutes, *The Hands* is stingy, but as a concentrated shot of tension—alleviated only by the balladic conclusion—it succeeds in sustaining a mood. —James Hale

The Hands: The Hands; When Her Lips Collapsed; Touches Me With The Tips Of Wonder; Washes Your Heart In Filth; Up. And Down.; To Shave The Leaves. In Red. In Black.; I Guard Her To Rest. Declaring Silence. (36:42)

Personnel: Mats Gustafsson, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, bass saxophone, electronics; Johan Berthling, bass, electric bass; Andreas Werliin, drums, percussion, feedback.

Ordering info: runegrammofon.com



Renee Rosnes

SMOKE SESSIONS 1801

★★★★½

Ideas like "the splendor of nature" and "the mysteries of the universe" are more easily conjured in the mind of a composer than the eye of a beholder. The composer is Renee Rosnes, who found her idea in a painting of a forlorn tree by Emily Carr, a post-Impressionist artist and fellow Canadian whose work produced the cover art and some of the programmatic content.

Rather than square the tides of the music with particulars of an editorial narrative, better to skip such ambiguities and tend to the performances, which team Rosnes for the first time with drummer Lenny White. The title piece belongs in that column of generic impressionistic ruminations, drifting placidly on the winds of a daydream as if looking for a place to land—though Rosnes and Chris Potter give it the unity of a nice chamber piece. Rosnes is a wonderful pianist who seems to have swallowed the entire history of American music like a baby aspirin. But her range and command tend to conceal a juicy center of individualism.

"Rosie," by Bobby Hutcherson, provides a comfortable, medium-tempo meeting place for all concerned. "Rhythm Of The River" offers a blithe and bubbly vigor, nicely sustained by Potter's bright flute and Rosnes' crisp right-hand lines. Potter unleashes some stormy tenor solo work on "Elephant Dust" and an edgy revisiting of "Black Holes," which he and Rosnes recorded 20 years ago. But the most straightforward offensive comes on "Let The Wild Rumpus Start," another second-time-around piece, which Rosnes made with a similar group in 2009. It's a rousing closer to a thoughtful and varied program.

—John McDonough

Beloved Of The Sky: Elephant Dust; Scorned As Timber, Beloved Of The Sky; Mirror Image; Rosie; Black Holes; The Flame And The Lotus; Rhythm Of The River; The Winter Of My Discontent; Let The Wild Rumpus Start. (60:50)

Personnel: Renee Rosnes, piano, Chris Potter, saxophone; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; Peter Washington, bass; Lenny White, drums.

Ordering info: smokesessionsrecords.com

The Hot Box

Critics	James Hale	Michelle Mercer	John McDonough	Giovanni Russonello
Kurt Elling <i>The Questions</i>	★★½	★★★	★★★★	★★★★½
Orquesta Akokán <i>Orquesta Akokán</i>	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★
Fire! <i>The Hands</i>	★★★★½	★★★★½	½	★★★★
Renee Rosnes <i>Beloved Of The Sky</i>	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★½

Critics' Comments

Kurt Elling, *The Questions*

Some artists make their work sound effortless. Here, Elling seems like he wants to make it obvious just how hard he's working. For those who love the vocalist, this might be essential listening; for the rest, maybe it's just too much. —James Hale

Words speak louder than music here, but Elling speaks them with a clarity that saturates his views on Trump with hues of apolitical pessimism. The melodies tend to be afterthoughts to the verse, but Elling and company deliver with conviction. —John McDonough

Some jazz adaptation magic and much mannered sincerity, with reharmonization making the difference. Without its stalwart Bach chorale progression, "American Tune" turns mawkish, but a guitar-based setting for "Skylark" finds fresh meanings. —Michelle Mercer

Orquesta Akokán, *Orquesta Akokán*

Sharp, taut and focused, José "Pepito" Gómez's band captures the energy and snap of Beny Moré, Perez Prado and other Cuban mambo greats, but the inventive arrangements and superb sound make it all sound fresh. Gómez's vocals are particularly on target. —James Hale

Though wall-to-wall pop vocals crowd out any soloists, the macho brass and reeds phrase hand-in-glove with the congas and drums, creating a communal rhythm engine. —John McDonough

The Cuban mambo of the 1940s and '50s was equal parts dance music and storytelling. That comes through strongly on this all-star debut, thanks to the proclamations of lead vocalist José "Pepito" Gómez, his *coro* and the beat-hugging surge of a 16-piece band. —Giovanni Russonello

Fire!, *The Hands*

Here's how some critics have described *The Hands*: "gruesome," "brutal" and "stagnate." And those were the good reviews. Beyond classification, says one blurb. How about "awful"? —John McDonough

It's a thunderstorm raging over a smoke-spewing coal plant. It's a test of your capacity for existential despair. It's one of the top jazzcore albums of the year. —Michelle Mercer

This album is all body. Its torso says Gwar; the neck and head say Brötzmann; the backside moves like Fugazi or Harriet Tubman. That amounts to an irreverent kind of psychedelic doom metal. Gustafsson's dry wowl is the music's protagonist and its villain. —Giovanni Russonello

Renee Rosnes, *Beloved Of The Sky*

I'm not convinced that the Emily Carr connection Rosnes strives for works, but the music here is so lively and the playing so integrated that thematic connections hardly matter. —James Hale

This mid-career achievement deserves the accolades that critics usually reserve for a female artist's debut or eulogy. Rosnes always had the world at her fingertips; now she has the compositional skill and imagination to transport listeners. —Michelle Mercer

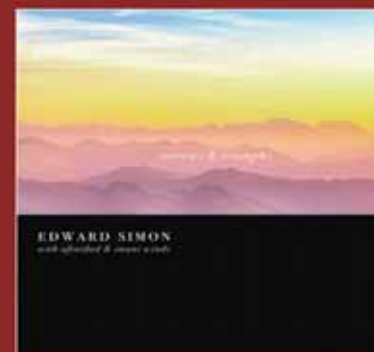
There are few moments of cleanly sorted beauty on this collection. Chris Potter plays a prominent role, but the biggest source of momentum and inexplicable force lies in the shared space between Rosnes' piano and Lenny White's drums. —Giovanni Russonello



ROMÁN FILIÚ QUARTERIA

SSC 1504 - IN STORES 5/11/18

For this project Román Filiú has assembled a stellar cast of musicians. Trumpeter Ralph Alessi has been a frequent collaborator with Filiú, the two having originally met while the trumpeter traveled with Steve Coleman to Havana. Dayna Stephens's sonorous tenor saxophone is a perfect foil for Filiú's alto. Pianist David Virelles has been a long time collaborator. Bassist Matt Brewer was a must for his steady rhythm and expert time, while drummer Craig Weinrib is equally adept in support and widely steeped in rhythmic traditions from all over the world.



EDWARD SIMON SORROWS & TRIUMPHS

1511 - IN STORES 4/20/18

Pianist-composer Edward Simon presents the album *Sorrows and Triumphs*, featuring *Afinidad*, his quartet with alto saxophonist David Binney, bassist Scott Colley and drummer Brian Blade. The richly textured *Sorrows and Triumphs* is also colored by very special guests: vocalist Gretchen Parlato, guitarist Adam Rogers and chamber quintet Imani Winds.

The album's material blends two bodies of work commissioned by Chamber Music of America's New Jazz Works program: the suites *Sorrows and Triumphs* and *House of Numbers*.



iTunes.com/RomanFiliu
iTunes.com/EdwardSimon
www.sanmsiderecords.com



The Genre is Boundless

These four projects—a trombonist's hard-bop excursion, a veteran pianist/composer's chamber jazz, the latest works from a European vintage swing quartet and a computer-aided avant-garde pioneer—are wildly dissimilar. If nothing else, it's a testament to jazz's wide tent in the 21st century.

Michael Dease: *Reaching Out* (Posi-Tone 8177; 55:00 ★★★½) On his 11th album, Dease, one of the most gifted trombonists in jazz, shows he is also a facile composer. His four originals are among the high points of this bracing, straightforward set.

In his notes, Dease expresses the hope that fans "will dig in to under-explored composers of different generations, rather than continuing to exhaust the repertoire of the four to five most recorded jazz musicians." To this end, he includes a mix of jazz and pop covers. The problem, to be concise, is that the pop songs aren't so hot. Paul McCartney's "Live And Let Die" is an interesting choice; but even Dease's fine arrangements of the other two, Extreme's "More Than Words" and Boyz II Men's "Water Runs Dry," can't overcome their essential mawkishness.

Far more nuanced are Cedar Walton's bouncy "Something In Common," trombonist Conrad Herwig's sophisticated "Morning Shade" and an exquisite rendering of Kenny Drew's melancholy "Ballade." Regarding "Blackfoot," a high-speed "Cherokee" contrafact written by Dease's former teacher, Steve Turre, the bandleader notes, "I like to play fast, I do it well, and this is a fast tune, so we took it nearly at max tempo." It ain't bragging, if you can do it, as Dizzy Dean reportedly said—and, boy, can he ever.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com

Alan Pasqua: *Northern Lights* (Self Release; 53:29 ★★★★★) Last year, when pianist Pasqua got the unexpected assignment of composing music to accompany Bob Dylan's Nobel Prize lecture, he was asked to make it interesting, but not too interesting—"not really melodic, not cocktail, not super jazzy, but sort of background-y piano music," as he told *The New York Times*. By contrast, the highly melodic music on Pasqua's new trio album, alternately thoughtful and swinging, is more attention-getting and deserving. After spending a little time with Pasqua, it's hard to get his melodies out of your mind. A veteran of both the jazz and pop worlds who has played with Tony Williams, Dave Holland, Ray Charles and Dylan, Pasqua creates chamber jazz from Americana, pop and classical. "The Turnaround" is clever and full of turnarounds. The title track is evoc-



Michael Dessen

ative and cinematic, so it's no coincidence that Pasqua also works as a composer for Hollywood films.

Ordering info: alanpasqua.com

Echoes Of Swing: *Travelin'* (ACT 9104; 55:30 ★★★½) There are no lack of bands that play vintage jazz of the 1920s-'50s well. But this German-British quartet brings a couple of things to the party that are unique: a spare lineup of alto saxophone, trumpet, piano and drums that leans heavily on the left hand of phenomenal stride pianist Bernd Lhotzky, as he covers for the absence of a bass player; and their enthusiasm for not just recreating vintage sounds but using them as raw materials for ambitiously modern arrangements, played immaculately. Their latest album contains striking originals, surprising re-imaginings of "Where Or When" and "Volare," and deep cuts from Duke Ellington, Coleman Hawkins and even Franz Schubert. How can you not love a group that invents a contrafact to a classic Frank Loesser tune, renaming it "On A Slow Goat To China"?

Ordering info: actmusic.com

Michael Dessen Trio: *Somewhere In The Upstream* (Clean Feed 461; 50:04 ★★★★★) Three master improvisers—Dessen on trombone and computer, bassist Christopher Tordini and drummer Dan Weiss—collaborate with help from a computer that acts both as an electronic roadmap and a fourth improvising group member. Dessen uses a "scorestream" that displays on-screen notations that vary unpredictably each time the piece is performed. The results are startling, from pensive to aggressive, punctuated by moments of cosmic electronica. **DB**

Ordering info: cleanfeed-records.com



Jarrett/Peacock/DeJohnette *After The Fall*

ECM 2590/91

★★★★½

When Keith Jarrett, Gary Peacock and Jack DeJohnette began investigating standards as a unit in 1983, it wasn't about working up clever arrangements or casting tunes in a nostalgic sheen, a practice Jarrett finds appalling. The idea was to approach each composition in the moment, just as the pianist approaches the blank canvas of silence in solo recitals.

At this stage of their collaboration, any new release by the trio will stir a sense of having been here before. Familiar details assert themselves throughout *After The Fall*—Jarrett's love for long, adventurous harmonic territory enabling him to swoop and soar before ending on a gospel lick or a few beats of breath. At times, even this trio falls back a bit on formula. "Bouncin' With Bud," for example, sticks close to what passes for performance practice: theme, everyone plays the hook on the bridge, Peacock lays down a walking pattern, reprise, end.

We know they can conjure magic, too, and they do near the top of "Old Folks." Jarrett comes up with a four-note motif that he weaves into the theme with a kind of effortless reverence, honoring the composition while shining light into its neglected corners.

On a larger scale, "Autumn Leaves" kicks off with the last eight bars of the tune as a piano intro. And during the following 13 minutes, it's turned into a fantasia of similar motivic development, ferocious drum rhythms steaming just below the surface, a reconfiguration and reprise, then a sublime diminuendo and finish. This is real, in-the-moment playing. It deserves—and will reward—serious listening.

—Bob Doerschuk

After The Fall: The Masquerade Is Over; Scapple From The Apple; Old Folks; Autumn Leaves; Bouncin' With Bud; Doxy; I'll See You Again; Late Lament; One For Majid; Santa Claus Is Coming To Town; Moment's Notice; When I Fall In Love. (47:15/58:30)

Personnel: Keith Jarrett, piano; Gary Peacock, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

Arnan Raz *Chains Of Stories*

RABBIT RABBIT RABBIT

★★★★½

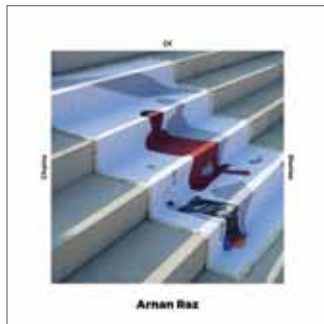
This acoustic quintet album is loyal in its straightahead mentality, but it features a compelling rhythm section that delicately propels the proceedings. Arnan Raz's touch on the tenor saxophone rarely is strained. Each breath is where it needs to be, and the band flows smoothly in his wake. The bandleader is paired with alto saxophonist Eyal Hai for a front line that feels almost like an overdub trick. Their voices mesh seamlessly on album opener "Chains Of Stories" with both horns tapping their mid-range and overlapping like small waves as drummer Dani Danor digs deeper and deeper into the pocket. Midway through "Two Worlds One Soul," Raz and Hai engage in rounds of short phrases and soft mimicry in perfect complement to each other. It is bassist Tamir Shmerling who performs the most ear-catching feats, nimbly exploring on Raz's dreamy "Her Story." But his presence is never more pronounced than on the duet "Ella." Here, the drummer lumbers slowly, the occasional pitter-patter of notes interrupting his perch between downbeats. And while there's no left-field turn on the horizon, that's fine. The results here are concise—but not uptight.

—Sean J. O'Connell

Chains Of Stories: Chains Of Stories; Her Story; We Used To Fly; Two Worlds One Soul; Our Story; His Story; Ella; Soul Talk; Ending. (48:51)

Personnel: Arnan Raz, tenor saxophone; Eyal Hai, alto saxophone; Daniel Meron, piano; Tamir Shmerling, bass; Dani Danor, drums.

Ordering info: arnanrazmusic.com



Darryl Yokley's Sound Reformation *Pictures At An African Exhibition*

TRUTH REVOLUTION

RECORDING 044

★★★★½

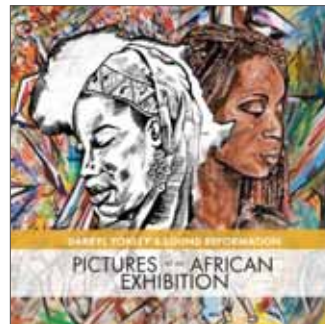
New York saxophonist Darryl Yokley launches his vision beautifully with "First Sunrise," the jubilant opening to *Pictures At An African Exhibition*, a stirring album designed to celebrate African music and art. The album blends travelogue and social commentary in tunes of varying lengths and textures. Drama is common to these compositions, and while the overall message is upbeat, there is turbulence, too. "Genocide March" is a work of bolero rhythm, massed brass and an unusually abstract dialogue between Yokley and pianist Zaccai Curtis. It's dark. But Yokley surges, showing off his range and expressiveness. "The Birth Of Swing" is an especially pictorial cut. Curtis' piano solo here is minimalist and bawdy, and the wind arrangements make this tune, which grounds the album midway, even sweeter.

—Carlo Wolff

Pictures At An African Exhibition: First Sunrise; Migration; Ubuntu; Stories From The Village Elder; Ominous Nightfall; Hunting Natives; The Birth Of Swing; Echoes Of Ancient Sahara; Genocide March; Mines Of Diamond, Crimson And Gold; Cry, The Beloved Country; Blessings From The Benu; New Sunrise. (69:39)

Personnel: Darryl Yokley, alto and tenor saxophones; Luques Curtis, bass; Zaccai Curtis, piano; Ellen Fisher Deeburg, flute; Kenneth Ellison, clarinet; Zachary Feingold, bassoon; David Gibson, trombone; Josh Lawrence, trumpet; Dena Orkin, clarinet; Jonathan Powell, trumpet; Gregory Riley, bass clarinet; Marshall Sealy, French horn; Wayne Smith Jr., drums (7); Marie Trudeau, oboe, English horn; Nasheet Waits, drums; Brent White, bass trombone; Kevin Willois, flute.

Ordering info: trstore.bandcamp.com



Sylvie Courvoisier Trio *D'Agala*

INTAKT 300

★★★★★

Listeners might be accustomed to hearing Swiss pianist Sylvie Courvoisier in a completely improvised setting, taking an abstract form. Her compositions on this set, for which she's enlisted bassist Drew Gress and drummer Kenny Wollesen, encourage rhythmic structures and linear development, even though these often are littered with unusual gaits or startling twists. Each of the nine pieces here have dedicatees, mostly musicians or artists, and mostly deceased (e.g., Ornette Coleman, Geri Allen).

The opening "Imprint Double" is a prime example of Courvoisier's approach, involving a dislocated rolling boogie motion with pools of Satie's luminosity. "Bourgeois's Spider" sports a subtly creeping rhythm, with isolated inside-and-outside piano events. During the album's closing stretch, Gress is given time for invariably sensitive solos, as these numbers possess a looser, less structurally complex nature. The title track's dedication to Allen revolves around an extended bass rumination, supported by Courvoisier's strategic dappling and Wollesen's minimal rubbing and squeaking. A refreshing balance is struck, as Courvoisier makes an imaginative framework, within which her trio runs loose and playful.

—Martin Longley



D'Agala: Imprint Double; Bourgeois's Spider; Éclats For Ornette; Simone; Pierino Porcospino; D'Agala; Circumbent; Fly Whisk; South Side Rules. (53:55)

Personnel: Sylvie Courvoisier, piano; Drew Gress, bass; Kenny Wollesen, drums.

Ordering info: intaktrec.ch

Actual Trio *Act II*

SMASH THE STATE!

★★★★

The second album from John Schott's Bay Area trio starts at an exuberant gallop, as drummer John Hanes lays down a steady rock beat on "Heading Back" for the guitarist to splash colorful chords across, like a graffiti artist tagging a moving train.

An acolyte of John Zorn (whose Tzadik label released Actual Trio's 2015 debut) and Gary Peacock, Schott has a particular gift for wrapping his avant-garde tendencies in accessible packaging, offsetting odd harmonics with a mellow tone that resembles Wes Montgomery by way of Marc Ribot. Only when he's expressing the anxiety of the times, as on the ominous interlude "Shock (11.09.16)," does Schott delve into unvarnished atonality. Elsewhere, *Act II* is more celebration than dirge. Hanes and bassist Dan Seamans complement Schott's laid-back approach perfectly, letting the rhythms wriggle, but never fully letting them off the hook. Thanks to the rhythm section, the smoldering "Actual Strut" is an album standout, especially when Schott interjects some unexpected wah-wah as a playful nod to Hanes and Seamans' groove.

If there's a criticism to be made of *Act II*, it's that few tracks feel as unbridled as "Sworn To Sonny." It's a pleasure to hear how much these performers enjoy playing together, though they seldom seem to push each other beyond their comfort zones.

—Andy Hermann



Act II: Heading Back; I.o.u.S.; Actual Strut; Shock (11.09.16); Bring Yourself Back; Dray Break Express; Are You Trying (To Get Me Killed?); Selfconscious-lee; Bass Song; Sworn To Sonny. (47:50)

Personnel: John Schott, guitar; Dan Seamans, bass; John Hanes, drums.

Ordering info: johnschott.com



Emma Frank *Ocean Av*

SUSAN RECORDS

★★★★

With the rise of such premier acts as Esperanza Spalding, Cécile McLorin Salvant and Jamison Ross, vocal jazz continues to re-emerge as a vital force of creativity, on par with its instrumental counterpart in the genre. And in 2018, Emma Frank, who reaches a sublime new plane of musicality on her excellent third album, is an artist worthy of observation with serious ears.

Joni Mitchell's name gets bandied about when critics talk about modern compositions

walking the line between jazz and pop. And on *Ocean Av*, Frank spiritually embodies the wisdom she's gleaned from the great Lady of the Canyon, both in poise and performance. Perhaps most prominent in this parallel is the incredible ensemble the singer selected to accompany her on 10 songs, which Frank wrote while waitressing and mending a broken heart.

Aaron Parks, who stretches out beyond the baby grand, explores the cool reaches of synthesizer and Fender Rhodes on such tracks as "Magnolia" and "Sunless Morning." Together, Frank's amassed ensemble provides a perfect cloud of contemplative calm during which she recounts her journey from Montreal to the New York area through beguiling compositions. On "One With," "Enough" and "Best Friend," the warmth of Frank's voice is as soothing as Kenny Wheeler's flugelhorn or Jim Hall's guitar, anchored by a lyrical sense of forthcoming. And like the Brooklyn street it's named after, *Ocean Av* expresses a poignant air of serenity amid the bustle of an unsettled existence.

—Ron Hart

Ocean Av: Magnolia; Gradually; Enough; Best Friend; Sunless Morning; One With; Reminder; Ocean Av; Good Morning; Good Night; All That's Good. (39:10)

Personnel: Emma Frank, vocals; Aaron Parks, piano, synthesizer, Rhodes; Franky Rousseau, guitar; Jim Black, drums, percussion; Rick Rosato, bass; Simon Miller, trumpet (1, 2, 9); Pedro Barquinha, OP-1.

Ordering info: emmafrankmusic.com



Christian Lillinger's *Grund*

COR

PLAIST 001

★★★★½

German drummer Christian Lillinger has been attracting plenty of attention for his remarkable skills and vision in recent years—last year he was awarded the prestigious SWR Jazz Prize in his homeland. He leads several distinctive projects, but none has been as consistently satisfying as *Grund*, a multi-limbed organism that allows him to forge a heady meeting place between absorbing improvisational gambits and wonderfully distended compositional conceits that veer well outside of jazz orthodoxy. *Cor* is the fourth and most gripping *Grund* album, where the twinned instrumental pairings help affect a visceral, off-kilter onslaught.

Lillinger designs his jagged compositions as episodic devices, constantly shifting the listener's perception. On the title track, the bassists pluck out a thorny opening theme, while vibraphonist Christopher Dell and saxophonist Pierre Borel trace a serene, looping counter passage that seems to float over the chatter piz. But then gears shift, and Borel and Dell voice a new theme out of which emerges a typically slaloming, halting solo from saxophonist Tobias Delius.

Greek modernist Iannis Xenakis is cited as an influence on "Hiatus," a knotty conversation between thwacking basses and left-end piano jabs that achieve a teetering grace once the drummer enters and the horns blow distant, long tones. Even when the writing veers toward post-bop, the bifurcated rhythms maintain a tension, as on "Carotis," when Delius summons his Ben Webster-meets-Archie Shepp vibe, the rhythmic structures so jittery that nothing is quite what it seems.

—Peter Margasak

Cor: Cor; Hiatus; Welt Am Draht (Lnch); Cube; Carotis; Dralau; Narratum; Plastik; Katrin. (48:18)

Personnel: Christian Lillinger, drums; Pierre Borel, saxophone; Tobias Delius, saxophone, clarinet; Achim Kaufmann, piano, Fender Rhodes; Christopher Dell, vibraphone; Robert Landfermann, bass; Jonas Westergaard, bass.

Ordering info: plaist-music.com

Hailu Mergia *Lala Belu*

AWESOME TAPES FROM AFRICA 028

★★★★½

Hailu Mergia is a key figure from the golden age of Ethiopian pop music. During the 1970s he played organ for the Walias Band, an instrumental group that backed some of the nation's most celebrated singers. The combo also recorded a marvelous instrumental album, *Tche Belew*, which included "Musicawi Silt," a stirring Mergia instrumental that's been covered by Antibalas, Debo Band and others.

After the Walias Band completed a run of U.S. performances in 1981, Mergia decided to stay, settling in Washington D.C., where he drove a cab by day and played keyboards at home. He hadn't performed on stage in years when the Awesome Tapes From Africa imprint rebooted his career five years ago by releasing a spate of older recordings.

Lala Belu is Mergia's first new album in 15 years. Drummer Tony Buck, who's likely best known for playing with The Necks, and bassist Mike Majkowski keep adventurous impulses on a tight leash here. They solo sparingly, but keep brisk time, matching a swaying groove to Mergia's undulating melody on "Tizita" and adding funky backings to a few other tunes.

Mergia stretches melodies into winding



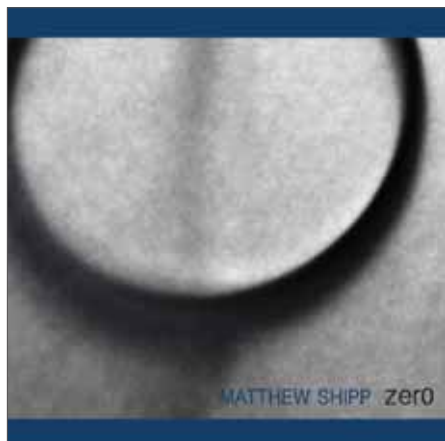
improvisations throughout *Lala Belu*, his extrapolations sounding more rooted in Ethiopian pentatonic structures than jazz changes. When he and his accompanists lean in, the results are thrilling, although squelchy synthesizers drag down the title track, the album's lone vocal number. Despite the misstep, this is an ingratiating record that connects Ethiopian traditions to contemporary grooves.

—Bill Meyer

Lala Belu: Tizita; Addis Nat; Gum Gum; Anchihoyle Lene; Lala Belu; Yefiki Engurguro. (39:24)

Personnel: Hailu Mergia, piano, organ, synthesizer, accordion, vocals; Tony Buck, percussion; Mike Majkowski, bass.

Ordering info: awesometapesfromafrica.bandcamp.com



Matthew Shipp *Zero*

ESP-DISK 5022

★★★★

Matthew Shipp Quartet *Sonic Fiction*

ESP-DISK 5018

★★★★

After a 17-year association with Peter Gordon's Thirsty Ear, during which time Matthew Shipp recorded prodigiously as a leader while curating

the Blue Series, the iconoclastic pianist-composer announced a moratorium on recording for the label with the release of 2017's trio album *Piano Song*. Now, provocative releases on ESP-Disk continue Shipp's prolific streak.

Zero is a striking and typically uncompromising solo recording. While Shipp plays aggressively and with signature acuity on pieces like "Piano Panels," "Pattern Emerge" and the title track, his "Abyss Before Zero" and the harmonically rich "Cosmic Sea" display the thoughtful lyricism of Andrew Hill's '70s solo albums *Faces Of Hope*, *Hommage* and *From California With Love*. "Pole After Zero" injects a forceful swinging momentum into the program. And "Blue Equation," which works through a bluesy motif with myriad variations and abstractions along the way, reveals a hint of Duke Ellington's DNA in Shipp's playing.

Sonic Fiction reunites Shipp with his longstanding rhythm tandem of bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Whit Dickey, and adds Polish woodwind player Mat Walerian (a member of the Toxic trio with Shipp and bassist William Parker). The mysterious opener, "First Step," has Shipp feeding Walerian spikey chords to sail over on alto saxophone as Bisio bows and Dickey colors the proceedings with rubato flourishes. "Blues Addition"

opens with more stirring, Ellington-influenced solo piano by Shipp before he gives way to a conversational duet between Bisio's bass and Walerian's clarinet, which he plays with a keening kind of conviction.

Some of Shipp's most dynamic playing here can be heard on the tumultuous and incendiary "3 By 4," which also finds Walerian wailing in the altissimo range on alto. And the 12-minute closer travels from a tempestuous duet between piano and saxophone to a turbulent trio among saxophone, piano and bass, closing on a simpatico note with a flexible, free-boppish excursion by the full quartet.

With 85 albums under his belt as a leader or co-leader, Shipp has become an elder statesman on the free-jazz scene. His catalog is deep and his influence undeniable, just as Cecil Taylor and Don Pullen—firebrands from another era—had been a generation before.

—Bill Milkowski

Zero: Zero; Abyss Before Zero; Pole After Zero; Piano Panels; Cosmic Sea; Zero Skip And A Jump; Zero Subtract From Jazz; Blue Equation; Pattern Emerge; Ghost Pattern; After Zero. (44:11)

Personnel: Matthew Shipp, piano.

Sonic Fiction: First Step; Blues Addition; The Station; Lines Of Energy; Easy Flow; The Problem Of Jazz; The Note; 3 By 4; Cell In The Brain; Sonic Fiction. (53:59)

Personnel: Matthew Shipp, piano; Mat Walerian, alto saxophone, bass clarinet, clarinet; Michael Bisio, bass; Whit Dickey, drums.

Ordering info: espdisk.com

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Standards, High and Low

Mick Kolassa & Friends, *Double Standards* (Self Release; 54:10 ★★★★★) Based out of Mississippi, graybeard Mick Kolassa puts on a master class in reconditioning songs out of the past, notably classics by his favorites, Willie Dixon and Tampa Red. Singing with rough-grained naturalism, he banks on his charming blues disposition to keep listeners interested in his relaxed storytelling. It's surprising that a dozen friends—from stalwarts Sugaray Rayford and Victor Wainwright on vocals to producer-guitarist Jeff Jensen to unheralded singers Patti Parks, Tullie Brae and Gracie Curran—all are sure-footed, traveling the mined terrain of classic repertory. Kolassa's crackerjack studio crew also includes organ player Chris Stephenson.

Ordering info: mimsmick.com

Albert Cummings, *Live At The '62 Center* (Ivy Music; 77:32 ★★) A virtuosic guitarist mining blues-rock history, Cummings gave it everything he had to ensure that his audience at a Western Massachusetts college show in late 2016 went home happy. Speedy moves over his Stratocaster's fretboard can be showy but, fortunately, he often displayed a strong instinct for emotional resolution. Cummings, an acceptable singer, and his fired-up band revisited material from past records and cemented a link to Southern rock by covering the Allman Brothers' "Midnight Rider."

Ordering info: albertcummings.com

Robert Nighthawk, *The Robert Nighthawk Collection 1937-'52* (Acrobat 3225; 72:36/69:44 ★★½) Few figures in blues history match the stone-cold angst in the singing of Robert Nighthawk, whose Tampa Red-influenced slide-guitar style connected the Delta to post-World War II Chicago. Forty-eight tracks that this rambling man cut for the Bluebird, Chess/Aristocrat, Decca and United labels don't find him operating at a genre-defining level, yet his efforts make for consistently interesting listening. (For Nighthawk's most rewarding blues, go hear *Live On Maxwell Street 1964*). His attendants on these sessions are estimable: among them John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson, Henry Townsend and Willie Dixon. Digital de-noising software helps the music to wear its age lightly.

Ordering info: acrobatmusic.net

Laurie Morvan: *Gravity* (Screaming Wizard 0006; 51:39 ★★½) Blessed with an ear for clarity and lyricism, Laurie Morvan on her fifth straight enjoyable album uses her semi-sweet soul singing voice as a foil to her blues-rock guitar peals of fluid notes. Her dozen thoughtful songs, with slow-sizzling



"Gravity" telling the most convincing story, are confident assertions of standing your ground in worrying relationships. For her studio team, she's sought out several of the most reliable hired guns on the West Coast, like producer-drummer Tony Braunagel and B-3 exponents Mike Finnigan and Jim Pugh. Part-time backup singers wax a strong sense of solemnity or revelation.

Ordering info: lauriemorvan.com

Big Shoes, *Step On It!* (Biglitttle 17002; 44:03 ★★) Big Shoes' second album is stocked with seven top-grade Nashville and Muscle Shoals pros, such as singer-guitarist Rick Huckaby and keyboardist Mark T. Jordan. They aim to please—and do—with a smooth, conventional sound incorporating blues, soul, New Orleans r&b, Little Feat-style rock and everything else they soaked up in service of Bonnie Raitt, Delbert McClinton and many others. Songwriting duties are handled sufficiently by four of the seven band members.

Ordering info: bigshoesnashville.com

Muddy Gurdy, *Muddy Gurdy* (VizzTone 01; 61:27 ★★) Three French musicians known as Hypnotic Wheels, performing on guitar, percussion and hurdy gurdy (a stringed drone instrument), ventured to the Mississippi Hill Country to make this album with representatives of the Burnside, Kimbrough and Thomas families. They needn't have bothered. For all the audio vérité recording on house porches and at Dockery Farms, the music lacks an animated purpose and falls into the bin of ordinariness. Cameron Kimbrough, passionately singing and playing guitar on two tracks, is the album's saving grace.

Ordering info: vizztone.com



Elliot Galvin *The Influencing Machine*

EDITION 1103

★★★★½

Elliot Galvin is the keyboardist with the London-based band Dinosaur. And the outfit's drummer, Corrie Dick, also takes part in Galvin's trio, contributing to the wild and ever-shifting *The Influencing Machine*. The honorary non-saurian here is bassist Tom McCredie, who also doubles on electric guitar. Galvin's third solo effort revolves around a book by English author Mike Jay that delves into the stranger-than-fiction life of conspiracy theorist James Tilly Matthews, who was committed to Bethlem Royal Hospital in 1797 and was the first person to be characterized as a paranoid schizophrenic.

Galvin's music is eminently suited to visualizing such an existence, crammed as it is with mechanical twitchery. Galvin matches romantic acoustic piano frills with convulsive electronic keyboard patterns, steadily becoming less lyrical and increasingly mournful during the opening "New Model Army."

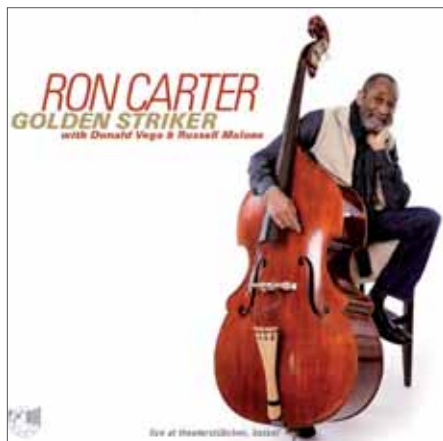
The bandleader has a predilection for radically shifting the emphasis of a composition after only a few minutes of development, preferring compressed arrangements full of impatient detail and always with a surfeit of bright ideas. The dignified intricacy of "Planet Ping Pong" suggests a love of early Queen, with its trebly guitar picking. But the central cluster of tracks sounds like a suite, as Galvin piles up thematic continuances. "Monster Mind" is subverted by a free-running piano solo, but harnesses gripping studio energy.

Galvin's hyperactive album is designed as a single entity, best heard right through in a single session, glorious in its arrestingly planned order of manic development. —Martin Longley

The Influencing Machine: New Model Army; La Machine; Red And Yellow; Society Of Universal Harmony; Planet Ping Pong; Monster Mind; Bikini Island; Bees, Dogs And Flies; Boys Club; Fountainhead. (44:13)

Personnel: Elliot Galvin, piano, keyboards, toys; Tom McCredie, bass, guitar; Corrie Dick, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: editionrecords.com



Ron Carter
Golden Striker: Live At Theaterstübchen, Kassel

IN+OUT RECORDS 77133

★★★★

Emmet Cohen
Master Legacy Series, Volume 2

CELLAR LIVE 062917

★★★★½

Is master bassist Ron Carter now “The Golden Striker?” In an earlier interview, he emphatically proclaimed, “I’m a scientist. I’m not only

a bassist.” And this trio, which includes pianist Donald Vega and guitarist Russell Malone, offers moments of golden improvisation. There also are car crashes, and due to some suspect microphone placement, faulty sounds that don’t put the trio in its best light.

Malone’s and Vega’s sound is solid, but Carter’s bass clearly is the focus. Unfortunately, every fretboard slide, every finger snap and every string run is highlighted almost as loudly as Carter’s magnificent tone. It’s as if the strings alone were mic’d, creating a metallic sound that practically eschews the body of the acoustic bass.

Nitpicking aside, the trio entertains an audience in Kassel, Germany, with enthusiasm on a handful of familiar compositions. Opener “Laverne Walk” is joyous and swing-full, Carter’s introductory melodic line graceful and lithe. The title track is jazz trio perfection with chamber overtones, and “Eddie’s Theme” exemplifies late-’50s walking jazz. Though the trio occasionally sounds under-rehearsed, there’s plenty of pleasure to go around. And thankfully, there’s plenty of Ron Carter to go around, too.

Pianist Emmet Cohen’s *Master Legacy Series, Volume 1* with Jimmy Cobb was a stand-out 2017 release. Still in his mid-20s, Cohen is a superb jazz pianist. And recording with the masters only heightens his own work, inspiring the bandleader to surprising solos and beautiful trio playing.

Along with sparkplug drummer Evan Sherman, Cohen and Carter play with equal respect for each other’s skills, the bassist acknowledging Cohen’s piano profundity; Cohen, supported by Carter’s warm accompaniment, flies over the keyboard in two-handed runs, beautiful ballad playing and soulful, articulate swing.

“All Of You” opens the set, Cohen’s playing jewel-like and light, Carter playing wide whole notes and Sherman swinging brushes. The musical weight and might heard on a rendition of Cedar Walton’s “Hindsight” recalls the Great Jazz Trio, certainly due to Carter’s presence. But Cohen’s dense piano work is equally impressive. The slow-motion reverie of another Walton wonder, “Dear Ruth,” is a master class in timing, tension and release. And Victor Feldman’s classic “Joshua” closes the proceedings, a grand finish to a resplendent recording.

—Ken Micallef

Golden Striker: Laverne Walk; Candle Light; Golden Striker; Samba De Orfeu; Eddie’s Theme; A Nice Song; My Funny Valentine; Cedar Tree. (67:59)

Personnel: Ron Carter, bass; Russell Malone, guitar; Donald Vega, piano.

Ordering info: inandout-records.com

Master Legacy Series, Volume 2: All Of You; Opus One; Hindsight; Holy Land; Dear Ruth; It’s About Time; Any Old Time; Hatzi Kaddish (Intro); Hatzi Kaddish; Light Blue; Ron Carter Speaks; Joshua. (76:00)

Personnel: Emmet Cohen, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Evan Sherman, drums.

Ordering info: cellarlive.com

John Mayall
Three For The Road

FORTY BELOW 018

★★★★½

In the movie *Nothing In Common*, an ad man played by Tom Hanks is interrupted mid-pitch when an airline boss tells him, “Sometimes, I eat my whole meal using my salad fork.” Hanks cracks, “Does that include the soup?”

A more obvious response might be, “Why would you do that?” And that same question is appropriate for John Mayall. His *Three For The Road*, recorded live in Dresden and Stuttgart, Germany, features the Chicago-bred rhythm section of bassist Greg Rzab and drummer Jay Davenport—and nobody else. There are no honking saxes or boisterous trombones and, most significantly, not a single six-string player. In a 2016 interview, the former Bluesbreaker said that after guitarist Rocky Athas missed a flight, the band soldiered on as a three-piece, and he liked the results.

Three For The Road succeeds to some degree because of the strength of the material, particularly Lionel Hampton’s “Ridin’ On The L&N,” which sits alongside some Mayall compositions. But “Congo Square” is crying out for a slide guitarist. Those who’d prefer the bandleader to return to a more traditional lineup might get their wish on an upcoming studio album. But until then, this curiosity will tide them over. —Jeff Johnson



Three For The Road: Introduction; Big Town Playboy; I Feel So Bad; The Sum Of Something; Streamline; Tears Came Rollin’ Down; Ridin’ On The L&N; Don’t Deny Me, Lonely Feelings; Congo Square. (59:12)

Personnel: John Mayall, vocals, keyboards, harmonica; Greg Rzab, bass; Jay Davenport, drums.

Ordering info: fortybelowrecords.com

Laura Perrudin
Poisons & Antidotes

VOLATINE RECORDS

★★★

Even when all the set pieces are strategically in place, sometimes the end result isn’t a win. Such is the case with French multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Laura Perrudin’s booming meditative music. She possesses a fetching voice and the disc’s soundscapes glimmer with fluorescent vividness. But nothing catches fire.

With help from Icelandic producer Valgeir Sigurðsson, who’s worked with Björk, Perrudin crafts hermetic sonic tapestries that place a premium on evocative, mosaic textures. So, to really take in the details, it’s best to listen to *Poisons & Antidotes* on top-shelf headphones with minimum distractions. Even while sealed inside the disc’s transportive realm, concentrating on the music becomes a litmus test; it’s largely hook deficient. Except for the electronica-soul bounce of “The Ceiling’s Maze,” Perrudin’s gossamer harp playing and somnolent serenades often are buried beneath gunky production. Considering she anchors two songs with William Blake’s fantastical poetry, it’s understandable why the music projects such a claustrophobic, yet cinematic, sensation. Sadly, though, nothing emerges to make listeners take note of the lyrical content, which, in the end, makes *Poisons & Antidotes* a hollow music experience. —John Murphy



Poisons & Antidotes: Inks; Le Poisons; The Ceiling’s Maze; The Trap; Diurnal Fireflies; Mesopelagic; The Falling Swans; Auguries Of Innocence; Heliotope; Train; Pavane De La Patte D’oie; Ghosts Song; The Sick Rose. (52:11)

Personnel: Laura Perrudin, all instruments, voice.

Ordering info: lauraperrudinmusic.com



Tania Chen's improvisatory skills perfectly prepare her to perform compositions by John Cage.

Chance and Dreamed Ideals

It would be hard to imagine a pianist better suited to record John Cage's *Electronic Music For Piano* than Tania Chen. In addition to an impressive history of performing and recording Cage's work, the London-based Chen also has released several albums of improvisational and electronic recordings, working with the likes of Henry Kaiser, Steve Beresford and Wadada Leo Smith. And why are improv chops important here? Because, as David Toop explains in the liner notes to **John Cage: Electronic Music For Piano (Omnivore 262; 69:12 ★★★★★)**, although the piano score is fully notated, the composer's instructions for the addition of electronics are "hurried," "cryptic" and "vague."

Fortunately, Chen brought in just the right crew for the project. In addition to Toop, the album also features John Leidecker, an electronic musician better known as Wobbly, and former Sonic Youth guitarist Thurston Moore. The music was recorded as three discrete duets with Chen, and mixed in what might be considered an avant-garde dub style, with tracks added and dropped from the mix, using a "chance-based system" that at one point inserts a three-minute silence. As described, the whole thing might seem more theoretical than musical, but Chen's affinity for the Cageian aesthetic pulls unexpected beauty from its randomness.

Ordering info: omnivorerecordings.com

Anyone who has followed David Byrne's musings on politics and justice can be forgiven for wondering if the singer is putting us on by calling his new album **American Utopia (Nonesuch 565710; 37:17 ★★½)**. But even as he insists that the 10 tunes here are meant to "depict the world we live in now," Byrne nonetheless brushes away suggestions of knowingness and irony. Instead, his goal is to affect an innocent view similar to that of "outsider artists," like cover painter Purvis Young,

a perspective that asks questions but also wonders, as one song does, "Must a question have an answer?"

Unfortunately, the approach occasionally is a stretch even for as practiced a faux naïf as Byrne. "Dog's Mind" tries to defang the menace of fake news and presidential malfeasance by imagining it all through canine eyes, a bit of whimsy that wears thin by the time he sings of "doggie dancers doing doody." Yet the music—a vast, panoramic soundscape of slow-moving synths—is so gorgeously evocative that it's hard to begrudge Byrne his fantasy.

In addition to long-time collaborator Brian Eno, who among other things conjures a deliciously jittery post-modern Afrobeat groove for "It's Not Dark Up Here," Byrne works with XL Records mastermind Rodaiah McDonald and electronic musician Daniel Lopatin (better known as Oneohtrix Point Never). Between them, they provide enough texture and sonic variety to keep these songs interesting, even when the lyrical conceits start to grate.

Ordering info: nonesuch.com

Dreams of an ideal nation apparently also underpin the songs on the new Sidi Touré album, **Toubalbero (Thrill Jockey 442; 54:59 ★★★★★)**, but because he does his singing in a Malian tongue, it's hard for an Anglophone listener to assess the relative eloquence of his sentiments. Still, if his lyrics are even half as graceful and evocative as the playing is, they're bound to be genius. Touré works in the Songhaï tradition, just as Toumani Diabaté and Ali Farka Touré do, and his initial albums for Thrill Jockey reflected the acoustic, singer/songwriter side of that music. But it's when he lets his band cut loose—particularly fuzztone guitarist Djadjé Traoré and n'goni virtuoso Ousmane "Papou" Dagnon—that the music truly sizzles.

Ordering info: thrilljockey.com



François Moutin & Kavita Shah Duo *Interplay*

DOT TIME 9077

★★★★★

In contemporary jazz, few settings are more intimate than a duet between bass and voice. There's something about the wide polarity of the timbres, the spaciousness of the melodies and the clarity of tone that makes for a profoundly emotional listening experience. When done well, a conversation between bass and voice can be transporting. And on *Interplay*, their new album on Dot Time, French bassist François Moutin and American vocalist Kavita Shah achieve exactly that kind of musical deliverance, bringing listeners into spaces of quiet beauty, pensive melancholy and unbridled joy.

The sound of the record is well-balanced, with Moutin's dark, reedy bass acting like a dance partner to Shah's pliant, flickering vocals, which retain a tonal richness even through passages of extreme agility. On the freely improvised "Coming Yesterday," for example, her voice serves as a candescent light that Moutin and guest pianist Martial Solal use as a starting point to discover their own paths through the music. The level of interaction—freely formed yet brilliantly articulated—is stunning.

The album's other guest star, vocalist Sheila Jordan, is a master of the bass-voice duo format, and her appearance on "Peace" is one of the disc's brightest gems. Her emotive, highly musical phrasing entwines thrillingly with Moutin's leaping bass line, which, with its double-stops and wide interval leaps, sketches just enough of the harmony to define the edges of this song's elegant silhouette.

—Brian Zimmerman

Interplay: You Go To My Head; La Vie En Rose; Coming Yesterday; Bliss; Falling In Love; Aigue Marine; Blah Blah; Utopian Vision; Interplay; The Provider's Gone; Peace. (53:08)

Personnel: François Moutin, bass; Kavita Shah, vocals; Martial Solal, piano (3, 6); Sheila Jordan, vocals (5, 11).

Ordering info: dottimerecords.com



Jamie Saft *Solo A Genova*

RARENOISE 088

★★★★½

Jamie Saft's New Zion Trio's set was just about to begin. Alone at the piano, Saft was launching into a ruminating, open-ended rendition of John Coltrane's ballad "Naima," a song that's been "of primary importance in [his] musical development." The version heard on *Solo A Genova* isn't too dissimilar from the version the audience heard at last year's Tampere Jazz Happening in Finland. Rich, wondrous sounds filled (and fill) the air, Saft imbuing those beautiful chords with his own lustrous touch.

Solo A Genova, Saft's first solo piano album in 25 years, is a live recording. Its straightforward vibe, filled with songs by American artists dear to him, is classically driven. Bob Dylan's "Po' Boy" is played close to the vest, but its lollygag stride feel is enough to carry what is essentially a rangy kind of melody with a touch of the mysterious. The perfunctory "Overjoyed" comes off sounding like a well-played high school anthem, Stevie Wonder's song filled with bright colors, but no engaging twists or turns.

So much of *Solo A Genova* is impressionistic, which makes "Overjoyed" stick out like a sore thumb. Saft's almost 13-minute medley of "The New Standard/Pinkus"—songs pulled from previous releases he issued on RareNoise—is typical, the music laced with clanky right-hand moves, undulating chords and a drifts sort of pulse. The blues feeling alone is enough to fill a whole album, Saft playing full-throttle solo piano like his life depended on it. Joni Mitchell, ZZ Top, Charles Ives and Bill Evans are some of the others brought along as platforms for Saft's astounding technique and obvious love of the grand piano; in this case, a Steinway D-274.

—John Ephland

Solo A Genova: The Makings Of You; Human/Gates; Naima; Sharp Dressed Man; Overjoyed; Po' Boy; The New Standard/Pinkus; Blue Motel Room; The Housatonic At Stockbridge; Blue In Green; Restless Farewell. (63:55)

Personnel: Jamie Saft, piano.

Ordering info: rarenoiserecords.com

Lauren Henderson *Ármane*

BRONTOSAURUS 69104

★★★

Lauren Henderson has a soft, seductive voice and puts plenty of feeling into lyrics, whether in English or Spanish. On *Ármane*, her third album as a leader, the singer alternates between swinging numbers, r&b-inflected ballads and Latin pieces.

Portions of *Ármane* might not be engaging from jazz standpoint, apart from Josh Evans' fiery trumpet solo on "El Ritmo." The thoughtful title track and the celebratory salsa number "Todo Tiene Su Finale," though, have their pleasing moments. Overall, the recording likely will be most enjoyed by those who favor quiet sultry vocals over attractive grooves.

—Scott Yanow

Ármane: The Great City; To Wisdom The Prize; Love Is A Losing Game; Let Me Love You; Tanto Amor; The Old



Country; Inside A Silent Tear; El Ritmo; Better Days; Ármane; Open Your Eyes; We're Still Friends; Todo Tiene Su Finale. (65:18)

Personnel: Laura Henderson, vocals; Sullivan Fortner, piano; Nick Tannura, guitar; Eric Wheeler, bass; Joe Saylor, drums, percussion; Nancy Assis, percussion; Josh Evans, trumpet; Godwin Louis, alto saxophone; Terri Lyne Carrington, vocals (2, 9).

Ordering info: laurenhendersonmusic.com

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Pianist Monica Dominique is featured on a box set that anthologizes Swedish jazz between 1970 and 1979.

Swedish Jazz, Excavated

Two decades ago, the Swedish state-run label Caprice Records launched a remarkably inclusive series intended to encapsulate the country's rich jazz history reaching all the way back to 1899, before the genre was recognized as a thing here in the U.S., let alone Europe. But that reach speaks to the wide-eared rigor of this series, which has used a non-hierarchical aesthetic in chronicling the entire sweep of jazz through 10 other volumes. The previous installment in the series, which covered 1965–1969, dropped back in 2005, so it's heartening to see its resumption with the four-disc set **Swedish Jazz History Vol. 11: Jazz Cosmopolit (Caprice 22067; 79:43/79:43/77:38/79:34 ★★)**, which covers the years 1970–1979.

Sweden embraced jazz early on and enjoyed a long tradition of hosting visiting American musicians, and eventually some prominent players settled there—including bassist Red Mitchell and trumpeters Bill Barron and Don Cherry. Naturally, a lot of the music on this set reflects contemporaneous developments in American jazz, whether fusion or pop-inflected sounds, such as the way Georg Wadenius, a one-time member of Blood, Sweat & Tears, sings along with his guitar lines, à la George Benson, on "Birth Cry, Part 1," a 1977 track by Sansara Music Band. Perhaps because of those connections to U.S. performers, the country produced plenty of high-level musicians, and some of the most important are prominently featured: bassist Georg Riedel offers sleek big band arrangements with Radiojazzgruppen on "Svit Cosmopolit," while tenor titan Bernt Rosengren leads a quartet on an unexpected treatment of Ornette Coleman's "Ramblin'." The elegant baritone saxophone hero Lars Gullin, one of the first Swedes to score an American record deal and make inroads in the U.S., also appears with Radiojazzgruppen on a 1976 recording.

Because the music is sequenced in strict

chronological fashion, the set sometimes has the effect of inducing stylistic whiplash, veering from the organ jazz of Takt & Ton to the trad ebullience of Kustbandet to the singular avant-garde guitar explorations of Staffan Harde—and that's just during the first part of disc one.

At the same time, the level playing field for all styles is admirable. The set is packaged with a 188-page booklet crammed with photos, but most of the annotations are in Swedish. There is an overview essay in English by British critic Stuart Nicholson that gamely tries to tie it all together, as well as a brief piece that focuses on the ascent of female jazz musicians in Sweden during this era; these are followed by English-language summaries of longer Swedish pieces profiling saxophonist Lennart Åberg and singer-pianist Monica Dominique. Indeed, both Åberg, who emerged as a dominant, ubiquitous force in Swedish jazz during the '70s—especially through his membership in Rena Rama alongside pianist Bobo Stenson—and Dominique are influential representatives.

Abundantly clear on some of the tracks here is Sweden's importance in pushing post free-jazz sounds, whether the post-Aylersque frenzies of the Mount Everest Trio (which tackles the saxophonist's classic "Spirits"), the white-knuckle complexity of Lokomotiv Konkret, the high-velocity cluster-splatter attacks of pianist Per Henrik Wallin and the strident sprawl of Iskra. Perhaps more importantly, following Cherry's residence in Sweden, the country became a font of groups borrowing elements and ideas from various international traditions, whether Sevda's bracing pan-global concoctions or the Bulgarian themes that turn up in a track by Okay Temiz, a Turkish expat.

New York wasn't the only melting pot during the '70s.

DB

Ordering info: musikverket.se/capricerecords



Michael Wollny Trio

Oslo

ACT 9863

★★★★

Wartburg

ACT 9862

★★★★½

A splendid merger unfolded when ACT label owner and producer Siggie Loch invited Michael Wollny's trio to an Oslo, Norway, studio to record with the Norwegian Wind Ensemble for *Oslo*, an album brimming with lyrical improvisation. A week later, the trio was captured live on *Wartburg*, celebrating ACT's 25th anniversary.

The trio's releases possess a sensibility stemming from European classical and contemporary music as the imaginative Wollny wanders through twisting tonal centers on a nirvana-like quest. *Wartburg's* introductory "Atavus" alludes to J.S. Bach, concluding with impressionistic whole-tone piano flourishes, which then initiate "Big Louise." Its closer, "Make A Wish," also opens *Oslo*, offering heartfelt hues and starker, gradual wind textures.

Oslo's dazzling arrangements include reworkings of compositions by Paul Hindemith and Einojuhani Rautavaara, the bandleader's eloquent simplicity imbuing the piano trio format with a powerful subtlety. The Norwegian ensemble becomes Wollny's canvas as his piano hints at French Impressionism.

Wollny profoundly honors the encapsulated moment, using endings as beginnings and beginnings as endings.

—Kerlie McDowall

Oslo: Make A Wish; Hello Dave; Farbenlehre; Piano Trio, op. 120, Andantino; Zweidrei; Interludium; Roses Are Black; Longnote; Nuits Blanches; Perpetuum Mobile; Cantus Arcticus; There Again; The Whiteness Of The Whale. (57:05)

Personnel: Michael Wollny, piano; Christian Weber, bass; Eric Schaefer, drums, live electronics; Norwegian Wind Ensemble (1, 8, 13).

Wartburg: Atavus; Big Louise; Perpetuum Mobile; Synonym; Interludium; Antonym; Gravité; White Blues; Tektonik; Engel; Make A Wish. (48:46)

Personnel: Michael Wollny, piano; Christian Weber, bass; Eric Schaefer, drums; Émile Parisien, soprano saxophone (8–11).

Ordering info: actmusic.com



Bill Frisell *Music IS*

OKEH/SONY MASTERWORKS 19075815002

★★★★½

Bill Frisell's tenure on the revitalized Okeh imprint, where he has been recording since 2013, has been an intriguing ride.

On a minor scale, it can be seen as a run akin to Neil Young's time on Geffen Records in the way Frisell's deviated from his signature sound on such acclaimed albums as *Guitar In The Space Age!* and *When You Wish Upon A Star*. But *Music IS* undoubted-

ly can be understood as the most Frisellian of these works. Here, the guitarist utilizes a system of electric and acoustic guitars, looping mechanisms, bass, ukulele and music boxes to reflect on his four decades in jazz with the uncanny cool of his best work on ECM and Nonesuch. Matter of fact, Frisell takes it all the way back to 1982 with a reimagining of the title cut to his debut, *In Line*, which, like the two versions of "Rambler" from the 1984 LP of the same name, come across as older, wiser versions of the former iterations.

"Ron Carter," meanwhile, strips away the electrified arrangement of the original from 2001's *Blues Dream* to unearth the weathered grace befitting its legendary namesake, as well as echoing the trio Frisell and Carter would make up with drummer Paul Motian in 2006. The short, sharp licks that punctuate the backwards-masked "Think About It" are reminiscent of the rabble he used while a member of John Zorn's Naked City and were recorded with Frisell's guitar amp placed inside a old upright piano once owned by Keith Moon, Richard Manuel and Ian McLagan.

Elsewhere, the meditative calm of its fellow originals, "What Do You Want?" and "Miss You," echo the beauty of Frisell's 2017 return to ECM, *Small Town*, with bassist

Thomas Morgan. "The Pioneers," from 1999's *Good Dog, Happy Man*, reconfigures the composition as a Takoma Records-style ballad on par with John Fahey's sweetest material. Listeners even get a Hendrix-kissed rewiring of Frisell's interpretation of the "Kentucky Derby" theme, originally arranged for the Hal Wilner/Tim Robbins production of Hunter S. Thompson's *The Kentucky Derby Is Decadent And Depraved*. And major kudos to two of Frisell's longtime friends and collaborators, Lee Townshend and Tucker Martine, who did a masterful job at providing an airtight space for the guitarist to work his magic.

With the exception of perhaps Ry Cooder and Pat Metheny, there aren't many guitar players who express such a mastery of the atmospheric qualities of their instrument, and this incredible journey through the past—like its 2000 solo predecessor *Ghost Town*—does a magnificent job presenting this true American original at his most compelling and contemplative. —Ron Hart

Music IS: Pretty Stars; Winslow Homer; Change In The Air; What Do You Want?: Thankful; Ron Carter; Think About It; In Line; Rambler; The Pioneers; Monica Jane; Miss You; Go Happy Lucky; Kentucky Derby; Made To Shine; Rambler (Alternative Version). (55:35)

Personnel: Bill Frisell, electric and acoustic guitars, loops, bass, ukulele, music boxes.

Ordering info: okeh-records.com

Lewis Porter *Beauty & Mystery*

ALTRISUONI 348

★★★★

Beginning with his solemn, hymn-like "Prologue," Lewis Porter uses the gentle, solo piano waltz to set the stage for the rollout of contrasting moods and sounds that follow on *Beauty & Mystery*.

The bandleader doesn't waste any time: He takes his band into the thick of it with "Birthplace," guest saxophonist Tia Fuller diving in with heated support from a trio that also includes bassist John Patitucci and drummer Terri Lyne Carrington.

"Birthplace," dedicated to John Coltrane, is the first of three selections with links to the genre-defining player. The relaxed swing of "Blues For Trane And McCoy" and the Patitucci showcase "From Giovanni To Jimmy" follow (each song replete with references to Trane's former bandmates, pianist McCoy Tyner and bassist Jimmy Garrison, respectively). All three Porter tunes suggest his longtime affinity for Coltrane through directed, open-ended playing.

The well-covered standard "Bye Bye Blackbird" manages to fly as the recording's most revealing showcase for the trio's medium-tempo swing. But the three covers included here also include a solemn take on Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready," a lovely version of trumpeter Ted Chubb's "1919" and the closing "Day Is Done," a gentle waltz, everything wrapped in easygoing swing. —John Ephland

Beauty & Mystery: Prologue; Birthplace; Bye Bye Blackbird; People Get Ready; Blues For Trane And McCoy; 1919; Chasing Lines; Dazzling Raga; From Giovanni To Jimmy; Day Is Done. (71:01)

Personnel: Lewis Porter, piano; John Patitucci, bass; Terri Lyne Carrington, drums; Tia Fuller, soprano (2), alto saxophone (5).

Ordering info: pbr-record.com; altrisuoni.com



Shinya Fukumori Trio *For 2 Akis*

ECM 2574

★★★★½

For 2 Akis marks the ECM debut of the Shinya Fukumori Trio. This international unit creates spacious dialogues that reveal deep listening on the part of its participants.

Osaka-born Fukumori is a drummer and composer who clearly prioritizes color over traditional timekeeping, leaning heavily on cymbal and brushwork. Matthieu Bordenave produces a light yet textured and authoritative tone with his tenor saxophone, and Walter Lang anchors the proceedings with lyricism and sensitivity from the piano bench.

Fukumori incorporates several Japanese tunes from the Shōwa era (basically post-war folk songs) along with three of his own original compositions and three from Bordenave and Lang. Whereas most of the recording is a study in restraint, the conclusion of "Ai San San" provides a notable moment of welcomed abandon at its climax. And the title track is a short, heartfelt rubato tribute that Fukumori considers representative of the ensemble.

For 2 Akis is a gentle, unique and varied album with few pyrotechnics or big surprises; just three talented and fully engaged musicians playing meaningful tunes with honesty, subtlety and emotion.

—Mark Maxwell



For 2 Akis: Hoshi Meguri No Uta; Silent Chaos; Ai San San; For 2 Akis; The Light Suite; No Goodbye; Spectacular; Mangetsu No Yube; Émeraude; When The Day Is Done; Hoshi Meguri No Uta (Var.). (51:51)

Personnel: Shinya Fukumori, drums; Matthieu Bordenave, tenor saxophone; Walter Lang, piano.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

Avoiding Conventions

More than 40 years since emerging as a solo artist, Pat Metheny remains a towering and influential figure in jazz. His formative years with vibraphonist Gary Burton and his first 11 albums on ECM continue to inform both Metheny's artistic goals and legions of other aspiring jazz artists.

In **Pat Metheny: The ECM Years, 1975–1984** (Oxford University Press), British scholar Mervyn Cooke brings passion and erudite rigor to a thorough examination of the guitarist's body of work, initiated by a then-22-year-old wunderkind who set out to slash preconceived limitations on the electric guitar, and in some cases electric instrumentation, by avoiding conventions established by both fusion acts and bebop torchbearers.

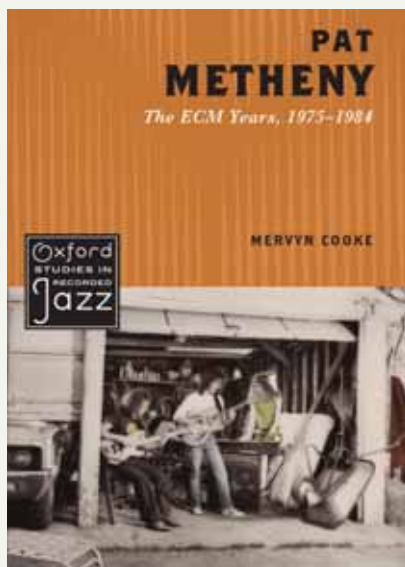
As the book notes, rock did factor into Metheny's music—most explicitly on 1979's *American Garage*—but so did country, avant-garde jazz, film scores, classical, Americana and bossa nova. But Metheny aimed higher than focusing on each idiom singularly; his music often encompassed many of those elements simultaneously, yielding a unique voice that already was apparent on his first solo album, 1976's *Bright Size Life*.

Metheny argued that improvisation and composing were similar activities happening at "different temperatures." Often using film as an analogy, he constantly strove for a "storytelling" aesthetic.

"The idea for me all the way along has been to come up with a narrative, storytelling quality of music that hopefully adds up; once an idea starts, it gets taken to its natural conclusion," Metheny told Richard Niles, a journalist and musician.

That quote is one of many that illustrates Cooke's fastidious research. Divided into six chapters, the book charts Metheny's journey from being a Burton sideman to becoming an ambitious bandleader and composer, his recruitment of otherworldly singers and multi-instrumentalists, as well as a noteworthy simpatico with keyboardist Lyle Mays.

Depending on both the reader's comprehension of music theory and an appreciation of inserting analysis into prose, some of Cooke's effusive investigations into the minutiae of Metheny's music might be alienating. In addition to laborious passages—"The rich harmonies of the opening section, which sets out from diatonic G major but modulates to B major via D_b (=C#) major, are essentially a string of secondary-seventh-based chords interspersed with inversions and relatively consonant slash chords which create a strongly directional supporting bass line (often moving by step) beneath the poignant and lyrical melody"—and Cooke's laser-sharp



dissection of the brooding "September Fittest," from Metheny's and Mays' 1981 *As Falls Wichita, So Falls Wichita Falls*, the book comes loaded with transcriptions. Those types of pedagogical insights likely will delight music students more than pop culture historians.

Still, Cooke provides ample information about Metheny's grueling touring schedule, his admiration for various bandmates and about the numerous guitars he's utilized. Cooke shines light on the guitarist's reverence for pioneering saxophonist Ornette Coleman, as well as for Joe Zawinul's keen embrace of electronic keyboards in creating some of the more sweeping moments in Weather Report's recorded history. The book also examines how geographical locations—such as the open landscape of Metheny's Missouri upbringing and the tranquil oceans he encountered during his studies at the University of Miami—and thought-provoking conversations with film scorer Jerry Goldsmith impacted the picturesque sensibilities of the guitarist's music.

Of course, Cooke touches upon Metheny's professional relationship with ECM's Manfred Eicher. The author reveals that both demonstrated a fanatical attention to sonic detail and dynamics, which initially fostered a fruitful rapport that splintered during the recording of 1984's *Rejoicing*. The book, however, elucidates how Metheny extended his heroic recording legacy on ECM for later works on the Geffen, Warner Bros. and Nonesuch imprints.

Ordering info: global.oup.com

DB



Noah Preminger *Genuinity*

CRISS CROSS 1397

★★★★

One might wonder what words saxophonist and composer Noah Preminger aims to conflate on the cleverly titled *Genuinity*. There's "genuine"; is the other word "affinity" or perhaps "infinity"? Whatever's at the heart of the title, the album is ruled by range, diversity and authenticity.

Bracketed by the defiant "Halfway To Hartford" and the expansive "Acknowledgement," Preminger spans the traditional blues of "My Blues For You," the catchy funk of "TS And Her Spirit" and "Nashua," a tune with a gospel feel on which drummer Dan Weiss displays his dexterity. Save for the blues numbers, the tunes are flexible, shifting meter and tempo to express changeable moods. "The Genuine One," a smoky track highlighting the remarkable concord between Preminger and trumpeter Jason Palmer, and "Nashua," which gives bassist Kim Cass striking melodic latitude, exemplify this approach.

"Halfway To Hartford," "AH" and "Walking On Eggshells" are the most elastic tunes here. And on "Eggshells," Preminger and Palmer seem to chase each other, settling into brief twine, then argument. Palmer declaims first and Preminger deftly navigates the steps Cass lays down. Meanwhile, Weiss, a stickler for the light touch, always seems one step ahead.

"Acknowledgement," the longest track on *Genuinity*, builds slowly and feels like a statement. All over the emotional map, it veers in and out of harmony, unison lines fragmenting to make way for tart Palmer and gutsy Preminger. It might be the album's most ambitious track.

—Carlo Wolff

Genuinity: Halfway To Hartford; The Genuine One; Mad Town; TS And Her Spirit; AH; My Blues For You; Nashua; Walking On Eggshells; Acknowledgement. (62:58)

Personnel: Noah Preminger, tenor saxophone; Kim Cass, bass; Jason Palmer, trumpet; Dan Weiss, drums.

Ordering info: crisscrossjazz.com

Seun Kuti & Egypt 80 *Black Times*

STRUT 163

★★★★½

Black Times crackles with so much combustion that it's nearly uncontainable. Under the leadership of Seun Kuti, Egypt 80 whips up an insistent fist-pumping protest party that sounds tighter, stronger and meaner than it had on the bandleader's previous three discs.

Carlos Santana's flaring electric guitar heightens the intensity during his appearance on the title track, but he's not the only one who showcases improvisational brio. Trumpeter Oladimeji Akinyel's horn spits out a blistering aside on "Kuku Kee Me." Then there are Kuti's growling verses that touch on under-celebrated historical legacies, folkloric Nigerian homilies and transgressions said to have been committed by the Nigerian government. Like his late father, Fela Kuti, Seun brandishes the saxophone more than he actually plays it. But on "Corporate Public Control Department," he squawks a spiky alto solo. Contending with his father's towering legacy is no easy feat, but with *Black Times*, Seun claims Afrobeat's throne with indefatigable fervency and unflinching authority. —John Murph

Black Times: Last Revolutionary; Black Times; Corporate Public Control Department; Kuku Kee Me; Bad Man Lighter; African Dreams; Struggle Sounds; Theory of Goat And Yam. (62:42)

Personnel: Seun Kuti, vocals, alto saxophone, keyboards; David Obanyedo, guitar; Kunle Justice, bass; Oluwagbemiga Alade, guitar; Shina Abiodun, drums; Adebowale Osunnibu, baritone saxophone; Ojo Samuel, tenor saxophone; Oladimeji Akinyele, trumpet; Joy Opara, Iyabo Adeniran, vocals; Okon Iyamba, shekere; Kola Onasanya, giant conga; Wale Toriola, percussion; Carlos Santana, electric guitar (2).

Ordering info: strut-records.com



Roberta Piket *West Coast Trio*

13TH NOTE RECORDS 011

★★★★½

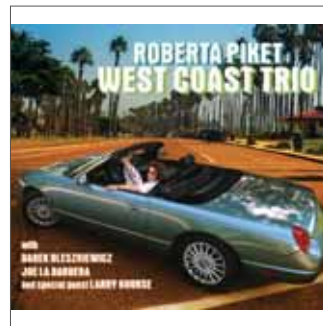
New York-based pianist Roberta Piket toured California in 2017, and while there recorded with a trio—a format she hasn't led in more than a decade. The session also tied her closer to a famous jazz collaboration with the inclusion of drummer Joe La Barbera, who worked with Bill Evans during the late 1970s. But the best parts of *West Coast Trio* are when Piket's own vision comes into focus.

Those high points are her two compositions here. Piket's fine touch comes through on "Mentor," as she leads the trio through surprising shifts in tone. Piket also takes the lead in a conversation with guest guitarist Larry Koonse on her "A Bridge To Nowhere," as her chords contrast his single-note lines. The bandleader also interprets an array of songwriters on the album, adding twists to the varied repertoire. On Richard Rodgers' "Falling In Love With Love," Piket and La Barbera make the most of open spaces. And Piket's assured dynamics shape Chick Corea's "Humpty Dumpty." But the standout interpretation is John Hicks' "Yemenja." The way Piket commands key changes not only attests to her sharp perception, but also how much Hicks himself sorely is missed. —Aaron Cohen

West Coast Trio: Mentor; Falling In Love With Love; A Bridge To Nowhere; Humpty Dumpty; Flor De Lis; Yemenja; My Buddy; Conception; Windmills Of Your Mind. (54:41)

Personnel: Roberta Piket, piano; Darek Oleszkiewicz, bass; Joe La Barbera, drums; Larry Koonse, guitar (3, 8); Billy Mintz, percussion (5).

Ordering info: thirteenthnoterecords.com



YoshimiO/ Ibarra/Lowe *Flower Of Sulphur*

THRILL JOCKEY 456

★★★★½

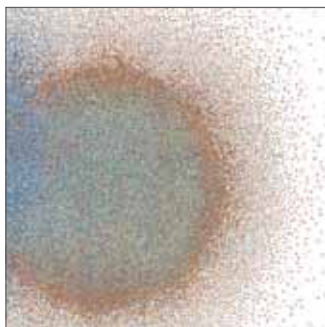
Flower Of Sulphur is a first-time encounter between three improvisers with profoundly different backgrounds. YoshimiO sings, drums and plays other instruments in the long-running Boredoms; Susie Ibarra is a percussionist, educator and composer active in jazz, new music and Philippine kulintang (gong and chime) ensembles; and vocalist and modular synthesizer player Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe started playing terse post-punk with 90 Day Men, but as Lichens and under his own name, has explored trance and devotional states. The three musicians find more common ground in their commitment to improvisation and instrumentation than they do in any particular genre.

YoshimiO is the nexus, holding the music together, her interest in sounds from different cultures, as well as her visceral drumming, connecting with Ibarra. During the record's best moments, it sounds as though YoshimiO is playing with two shadows of herself, albeit shadows with opinions about how to elaborate on what she's playing. But there also are passages where the musicians seem to be marking time while trying to find their way toward the next collective idea. A bit of editing might have yielded a more consistently engaging album, but there's enough here to hope that this won't be the trio's only meeting. —Bill Meyer

Flower Of Sulphur: Aaa; Bbb; Ccc; Ddd. (64:34)

Personnel: YoshimiO, voice, drums, keyboards; Susie Ibarra, percussion; Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe, vocals, modular synthesizer.

Ordering info: thrilljockey.com



Victor Gould *Earthlings*

CRISS CROSS 1398

★★★★½

During his career, pianist Victor Gould has worked with quite a few major names, including Donald Harrison, Wallace Roney, Jeremy Pelt and Jazzmeia Horn. *Earthlings* is his second album as a leader.

Gould's "Spider" is an atmospheric piece that gets a bit too dramatic. Over the bass vamp, the bandleader creates quietly adventurous ideas, while drummer Eric McPherson contributes assertive rhythms. "Rise," although spontaneously improvised by the four musicians (with Kahlil Kwame Bell on congas, but no drums), sounds as if it could have been composed ahead of time, especially when Dezron Douglas enters with a bass line that serves as the piece's foundation.

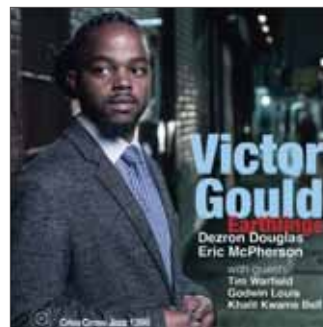
Bobby Hutcherson's moody ballad "Roses Poses" is sensitively interpreted here as well. "Blues On Top," which has both horns playing the melody a half-step apart, features a bitonal feeling throughout the solos and saxophone trade-offs, despite essentially being a straight-ahead blues. An uptempo "Lover" pays tribute to Gould's affinity for Bud Powell, while Dizzy Gillespie's "Con Alma" is given a tasteful treatment, highlighted by a joyful alto solo and Bell's prominence in the ensemble.

The worthy and consistently stimulating album concludes with the peaceful, yet explorative, "Resilience." —Scott Yanow

Earthlings: Farewell To Dogma; Love Vibrations; Earthlings; Spider; Rise; Roses Poses; Blues On Top; Lover; Con Alma; Resilience. (56:50)

Personnel: Victor Gould, piano; Dezron Douglas, bass; Eric McPherson, drums; Tim Warfield, soprano saxophone (1, 3, 7); Godwin Louis, alto saxophone (5, 7, 9); Kahlil Kwame Bell, percussion.

Ordering info: crisscrossjazz.com





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REED SCHOOL »



Brian McCarthy
**WEAVES
PAST
INTO
PRESENT**

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Brian McCarthy (Photo by Seth Cashman)



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CALEB CHAPMAN

Master Class
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IAN MCDONALD

Transcription
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FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS

WHY TALENT ALONE DOES NOT A CAREER MAKE

BY JEFF COFFIN

Whether it's two notes played simultaneously on the piano or a 10-plus-note chord, there is a relationship present between the notes, between the musicians, between the musicians and the notes, and between the musicians, the notes and the listeners. These relationship connections go on and on, not unlike the ripples that occur when you toss a stone into a placid pond.

Relationships are reflected in our daily lives. Sometimes they are complicated with a lot of tension in them, and sometimes they are less complicated with little or no tension. Like a C and a C sharp being played together in the same octave, as opposed to a C and a G in the same octave: One has more tension than the other, but there is still a relationship present in both.

Many young musicians ask me, "How do I make it as a musician?" I tell them I don't think that we ever really do. Maybe a better question is, "How can I have a career in music?" That's where the relationship part comes in. Below are a few ideas about developing relationships and the importance of devoting time to them.

WHY ARE RELATIONSHIPS IMPORTANT? Relationships are the bonds that bring us together or spread us apart. People tend to like being around others who are easy to get along with, fun to hang with, dependable, emotionally stable, kind, giving, helpful and grateful. I have close, personal relationships dating back nearly 40 years with other musicians. A few of these are my dearest and closest friends.

HOW CAN YOU FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS? Being helpful and kind are good ways to start. For example, let's say you move to Nashville to be in the incredible scene that is going on here. You decide to go hear one of our legendary drummers, the great Chester Thompson. At the end of the night, you introduce yourself and tell him you're new in town and that you really dig his playing and hope you can play together someday. You shake his hand and then split.

OK, so you met Chester. He's an awesome guy, but you can imagine he meets a lot of people. What if the scenario went like this: At the end of the night you go up to him and say those same things, but you offer to help him bring his drums to the car when he's done packing up—not to schmooze but because you're a good person and you recognize there is a lot of stuff to pack up and move. I wager there's not a drummer in the world who will say no to the offer of help loading out. By performing acts of kindness, you are developing a reputation, and that reputation

will spread well before you get to where you are going. Being a good person makes a big difference in life. Being a good musician is never enough. You have to be a good person, too. I know a number of great players who don't work much and it has nothing to do with their talent.

DO ALL RELATIONSHIP CONFLICTS NEED RESOLUTION? No. Sometimes the conflict in the relationship is part of the process of learning. Sometimes you will find that relationships fail or end or are no longer what they used to be. You might understand why, but sometimes you might not. What you learn from this process is what's important, and how you reflect it in your personal life can help you see yourself, and others, better.

WHY WON'T YOUR TALENT ALONE GIVE YOU A CAREER? I always say that if you want to be a working musician, being able to play your instrument is a given. Don't think for a minute that because you come out of a great school that you will waltz into town and suddenly get a bunch of work. It doesn't happen that way. You have to work your way into a place, and people need to trust that you will be hanging around for a while and that you are invested in being there. Your attitude and demeanor on and off the bandstand will, most times, determine if you get a second call from someone.

ASK YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIPS. Do you work on your relationships with people? If so, how are you working on them? If not, why not? Is it that you don't know how to, or that you just don't care? Do you express your enjoyment of someone's playing or creative output, or do you stay silent, thinking that you should be the one with the gig because feel you are better qualified than they are? Have you done your homework to know the history of other players in the scene? Get to know people and allow them to get to know you. Asking questions about someone is always far better than talking about yourself. Try talking *with* people, not *to* them. When we make music, we play *with* other musicians, not *to* other musicians.

Just as in any other serious profession, being a successful musician is about being a nice person who works well with others. Our fellow musicians are members of our tribe. And over time, they become part of our family. My greatest influences are not Coltrane, Sonny, Miles, Bird, Ornette, etc., but the people I have worked with throughout my career and the lessons I have learned—and continue to learn—from them about this thing called life.

DB

Visit Jeff Coffin at jeffcoffin.com.



RENE HUEMER

Caleb Chapman

Takin' Care of Business

A few years back, I had the opportunity to perform with Randy Bachman (of Bachman Turner Overdrive and The Guess Who) on his hit “Takin’ Care Of Business.” The song paints the picture of a musician “lyin’ in the sun” and working “at nothin’ all day.” That might have been a little more of the environment in 1973 when the song was written, but it is a new world here in the 21st century. I can tell you from personal experience that the most successful musicians in our

industry are not only some of the hardest workers I know, they are also incredibly savvy when it comes to business.

I think it’s interesting that I’m most often referred to as a musician and educator, but the majority of the work I do has nothing to do with music. Many people are surprised to learn that I spend about 60 percent of my work hours on the business aspects of my various “jobs.” And if you poll those who appear to be doing well in this industry, I think you will find a simi-

lar trend. I am so excited to see several of our leading music schools nationally taking notice of this new reality and including valuable business and entrepreneurship classes in the curricula for their majors.

This need for a core set of business skills is certainly not unique to our industry. No matter what students decide to pursue, to be successful in our digital environment, these abilities are becoming mandatory. As critical as these skills are for students, they are just as important for

career musicians. I know far too many legendary jazz musicians who enjoyed rich careers and now are struggling to make ends meet.

While mastering business requires years of study, I have found that a few key concepts have made all the difference for me. Below I have outlined three that have had a major impact on me. Whether you are a student or a veteran musician, these powerful concepts can be implemented today and will pay big dividends in the long run.

BUILD A TEAM OF MENTORS

Over the last century, jazz mostly has been an aural tradition with concepts being passed from master to student. The best way to learn jazz also happens to be the best way to learn

everyone likes to be asked for their opinion. You might be surprised—as I was with Rick Drumm—as to just who will take you under their wing.

Do this now:

- Identify your weaknesses or areas for improvement.
- Contact experts you know and solicit their help.
- Research potential mentors for additional areas and reach out to them.

NETWORK BY BECOMING AN EXPERT

Business used to be all about “location, location, location.” In the digital age, that has evolved to “network, network, network.” How do you build an effective network? It’s definite-

be known as an expert.

- Learn more about that area or develop that skill to a level that qualifies you as an expert.
- Advertise your willingness to lend that expertise to others.

GIVE MORE VALUE THAN YOU GET

As a rule, I try to always be sure my partners are getting the better end of the deal in our relationship. This could be the musicians I play with, the agents I work with, my record label, my sponsors or whoever. The idea is that if they benefit more from doing business with me than someone else, I will always be their first choice to work with. For example, as a saxophonist, I am lucky to have endorsement deals with several companies. Those companies ask me to mention at clinics that I play their gear in exchange for their support. Many musicians I run into are focused purely on what they are getting in these deals, as opposed to what value they are bringing to the companies.

From the beginning, I chose to focus on what I can offer my sponsors. In addition to their stated request, I also list all those companies on my website with links, tag them in social media posts, hang their banners at my studio, recommend them to other pros and students, list them in liner notes, keep brochures on hand to distribute and include their ads in my event programs. None of these things cost me money or significant amounts of time, but they bring real value to my sponsors. Not only does this mean that I will be one of the last ones to get cut if they need to trim their artist rosters, it also means that I benefit from all kinds of additional perks from those companies as a “Thank you” for my efforts to support them.

Implementing this concept could be as easy as helping a bandleader load out gear at your next gig, referring your band mates for additional work or securing comp tickets to a concert for your agent. The point is to do more than is expected and you will always be in demand. In other words, help first.

Do this now:

- Make a list of the individuals or companies you do business with on a regular basis.
- For each, brainstorm how you can bring additional value to the relationship without incurring a significant burden of cost or time.

Being able to have a career pursuing my passion is something I never take for granted, but it certainly requires dedication to much more than just being a great musician or educator. Take action today on these three concepts and watch your career reap the benefits. **DB**

Seek an expert—or better yet, a team of mentors—to advise you in every aspect of your career.

business skills. Seek an expert—or better yet, a team of mentors—to advise you in every aspect of your career. The first step is to honestly identify any weaknesses or gaps in your abilities. For each of these, consciously seek out someone who can help you improve.

I have been incredibly lucky to get advice from some of the best in the business. For example, one of the first people I sought out was the legendary executive and accomplished drummer Rick Drumm, the former president of D’Addario & Co. and, before that, Vic Firth Co. I have requested his counsel on countless occasions over the last decade. Not only did that coaching help me successfully recover from a major career setback, but Drumm recently became a business partner and helped me raise significant funding for my latest venture. He is just one of the many people I have gone to for help over the years.

Here are some expert types you might want to start with—those with experience in marketing, social media, law, accounting, leadership, health and finance. Begin by taking inventory of any of these specialists you might already know and reach out to them. For the areas where you still lack a mentor, do some research online, as well as reach out to others for help making connections. Don’t be shy about contacting people you don’t know. Successful individuals are typically busy and not all will be willing or able to assist you. But many are eager to pay it forward for the mentoring that they received, and

ly not just about showing up at every local jam session or passing around business cards at luncheons. The best way to network is to become an expert at something and serve as an invaluable resource to those you connect with.

A great example of this is my friend Francisco Torres, a fantastic trombonist and composer who performs with Poncho Sanchez, Gordon Goodwin’s Big Phat Band and many others. He has become recognized as an expert at arranging Latin jazz charts thanks to his work over many years with Sanchez. This led to a contract to write for a Latin-themed TV series for a large studio a few years back. They were so impressed with Torres’ work, they asked him to start working on several other projects outside of the Latin jazz style, which now take up the majority of his time. But all this additional work came to him first because he was known as an expert at something.

Now, the truth is that Torres is an expert at many things, but he became known for his work in Latin jazz. He is a great trombonist and talented arranger, but there are thousands of those. There are significantly fewer who specialize in Latin jazz writing. Even though you might do many things well, it’s important to focus on one thing to be known for. Specialize in a style, a skill or something that few others do, and then use that skill to become a go-to resource. This is the real secret to effective networking.

Do this now:

- Identify an area or areas where you want

Caleb Chapman is the founder and chairman of Caleb Chapman’s Soundhouse, president of the Jazz Education Network and an award-winning musician, author and educator. He is also an artist and clinician for Yamaha, JodyJazz, D’Addario Woodwinds and Alfred Music. For more information on Chapman’s projects and educational innovations, visit ccsoundhouse.com.



Brian McCarthy

SETH CASHMAN

Finding the Better Angels of Our Nature

The American Civil War was the moment when the country would, as Abraham Lincoln foresaw in 1858, “become all one thing, or all the other.” The country was torn apart by its inability to reconcile the meaning of freedom and equality—a feeling that still is relevant and echoed in 2018. If, in my lifetime, we lived alongside people whose parents were slaves, then how far removed are we from the mindset that sought to enslave and segregate before, during and after the American Civil War? Then again, how far removed are we from the spirit that fought for freedom and equality? As William Faulkner once wrote, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”

In my 2017 album *The Better Angels Of Our Nature* (Truth Revolution Records), I dove into reimagining the popular music of the American Civil War using the language of jazz to speak to the full range of human experience. My goal was to create a woven fabric between the past and present with strands of the original holding the musical structure. I wanted to show, musically, how the past continues to present itself in our modern-day culture. For this article, we’ll take a look at a Confederate song, “The Bonnie Blue Flag.” (You can stream my recorded version at brianmccarthyjazz.com.)

In approaching this album, my producer, Linda Little, and I felt it necessary to explore all of the historic material and let the music speak to the difficult subject matter.

RESEARCH

The Library of Congress online resources became one of my most valued connections to the history that lies at the heart of *Better Angels*. Access to Lincoln’s handwritten notes, some of the earliest documented sheet music, published news articles, biographical information on composers—it all helped create a clearer vision of the past. The first thing I did was seek out the earliest known publishing of “Bonnie,” which was in 1861 by Harry McCarthy (no relation). The L.O.C. manuscripts I studied were all in the key of F major, and always in compound duple meter (6/8, in this case). The lyrics clearly are meant to be a rallying cry for the various states of the Confederacy, boasting about their honor, bravery and “the flag that bears a single star.” But many lines are impossible to ignore. The first verse (though later publishings don’t have this) reads: “We are a band of brothers/ And native to the soil/ Fighting for the property/ We gained by honest toil.”

The fact that people were considered prop-

erty in the South is inescapable, and there is nothing honest or honorable in enslavement. Now, I know the counter argument that not all Confederates or Confederate supporters owned slaves, but slave-owning members of the community were what people aspired to be. This is backed up by something in the fourth verse that reads, “Davis, our loved President, and Stephens, Statesmen rare,” with my attention being drawn to the latter of the two.

Alexander Stephens, vice president of the Confederacy, in his infamous “Cornerstone” speech said, “Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery ... is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.”

I have all the pieces I need to reimagine the song. I’m connected ... motivated.

REIMAGINING

I started with time signature, or as I approached it, pulse. Harry McCarthy straight up took the melody, harmony and rhythm of an

Irish drinking song, “The Irish Jaunting Car.” The compound duple meter of 6/8 gives a lot of bounce and drive to the song. (See Example 1 on the following page.)

I decided to put my 2017 version in 5/4 quintuple meter, giving it the spirit of a less common feel and at the same time a fresh take. The 5/4 meter also lets the melody float in these various ways: pulses of two long and two short, two long and one even longer, one long and one shorter, or simply one long. This all creates an asymmetrical melody, while still maintaining a sense of pattern.

Ultimately, I wanted to agitate the song, and what better way to start than with the basic pulse. (It’s mostly in 5/4, with brief hints of a slow 6/4 and bouts of tension-releasing 4/4 simple duple meter.) Near the end of the piece (see Example 2), I created more rhythmic tension with the melody by putting what is essentially a slower 4/4 time over 12 beats of the 5/4 time—eight even pulses of three eighth-notes over 12 quarter-notes of 5/4 (the groups of three being an echo to the original compound duple meter). This technique takes place in two earlier sections—one in the solo backgrounds and one just after the solo ends—essentially designed to foreshadow this moment at the end of the melody.

Harmonically, I wanted to capture the original intended beauty of the song, but transform its familiarity by twisting and warping the color. I started with connections to the original incarnation of “Bonnie.” In 1861, it was in the key of F major, so my 2017 version will be F (notice I didn’t say F major). The 1861 progression of the melody is straightforward, bouncing between the I and V7 chord (F major and C dominant) firmly, in a bright mentality.

Keeping the melodic key center of F, here is where the twisting and warping comes in. You can see (Example 3) how through reharmonization, the F-centric melody moves back and forth between underlying F major and F minor triads within the chosen chords. It’s a representation of the conflict I see inherent in the lyrics: a celebratory pride in the Confederate way of life that builds its cornerstone of society on enslavement. The melody itself extends beyond the original eight-bar phrase shown in Example 1, carrying over the conflict to another section, or, as I see it, another generation.

Example 4 digs deeper into this dark and inescapable aspect. (This section is the overlap of the previous Example 3 at its final F major measure.) Moving the melody into the bass register further darkens the phrase; then, only using echoes of the melody, gives a dissociative feeling to the overall moment. Next, by framing F major with modes of B \flat ascending melodic minor (first and second modes), this darkens the now familiar melody even further. It’s a move right out of the songwriting 101 playbook with a slight twist. Typical harmonic move-

ment in F major is to the IV chord of B \flat major, but by utilizing B \flat ascending melodic minor, what feels natural and expected now is darkened and warped. Finally, the echoed phrase ends with my original major versus minor indecisiveness.

The last reimagining I’ll share with you is Example 5. There are a few things at play. This is still the same original 1861 melody, but with a variety of techniques applied to it (essentially, combining Example 3 and Example 4). The most notable thing here is the sudden key modulation. This whole time, we’ve been F-centric,

but with these four bars, the music is suddenly in a G-centric sound. By abruptly modulating up a whole step, these bars sonically “stand up” from all the others. By combining the original melody with the harmonic function of Example 4 (using ascending melodic minor) and simultaneously using the echoed melody in the bass, the musical conflict is at its climax and at its darkest.

RECAPITULATION

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existence. Jazz is a language capable of dealing with such a complex and difficult subject. The surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in 1865 might have marked the beginning of the end to the institution of slavery in America, but the spirits and mindsets that fought to preserve such oppression and inequality didn't end there. Reconstruction, Black Codes, Jim Crow laws and discrimination all followed, providing outlets for the oppressive nature of too many.

Abraham Lincoln never got to see the changing world he was fighting for, but the closing line from his first inaugural address in 1861 reminds us that we always can appeal to “the better angels of our nature”:

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over

this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.” **DB**

Saxophonist Brian McCarthy is a Selmer-Paris and Conn-Selmer artist. His 2017 album *The Better Angels Of Our Nature* (Truth Revolution Records) finds the roots of jazz in Civil War-era songs and spirit. Starting out with a Vermont Arts Council Creation Grant in 2014, the album received numerous Best Albums of 2017 picks, and is available at truthrevolutionrecords.com and brianmccarthyjazz.com. McCarthy is an adjunct saxophone instructor at University of Vermont and an adjunct instructor of bands at Saint Michael's College in Vermont. Follow him on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook (@BMackJazz).

Example 1

Example 2

Example 3

Example 4

Example 5



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RANDEX COMMUNICATIONS

A recent portrait of multi-instrumentalist Ian McDonald, who was a founding member of the progressive rock group King Crimson.

Ian McDonald's Flute Solos on 'I Talk To The Wind'

It has been almost half a century since King Crimson released its debut album, *In The Court Of The Crimson King*, which combined rock with jazz, classical and folk influences to help spawn what has since been labeled “progressive rock.” No small part of their sound was due to woodwind player, guitarist and Mellotron player Ian McDonald (currently a co-leader of the guitar-driven rock quartet Honey West with Shakespearean actor Ted Zerkowski), whose composition “I Talk To The Wind” provides harmonies that are not your typical ’60s rock. His flute solos navigate these changes with grace and ease.

McDonald solos on the verse progression twice: the eight bars in the middle of the song (starting at the 2:52 mark) and then repeating that form for the fadeout (4:48). Though only four bars long, the progression is basically in two keys: E major (with a jazzy ii-V-I) and the Cmaj7 and Gmaj7 chords, which are more at home in E minor. The sudden shift from E to Cmaj7 leads slowly back to E.

The typical rock musician of the late ’60s might have tried to find one scale to play over the entire progression, or switched from E major to minor pentatonic. But McDonald

does some other very clever things.

Let’s look at his use of arpeggios. This is a time-honored means of outlining harmonies, but on the Gmaj7 in bars 3 and 24 (and the middle of bar 12) McDonald plays a D major triad instead of G. (There is also the D triad with the ninth added in measure 16.) The D natural is in both chords, but the D triad has F# and A, which are the major seventh and ninth of the G chord. Playing this way emphasizes the upper parts of the G, but by not playing a full Gmaj9 lick, it also creates a sort of bitonality.

A similar thing occurs in measures 6, 15, 19, 23 and 31 on the Cmaj7. McDonald tends to play Em and Em7 arpeggios. This is more “inside,” as there is more overlap between those chords. But playing this way means McDonald often avoids the root note; skipping it creates more color in his solo.

Another technique we hear in this improvisation is paraphrasing. Reusing ideas but altering them to fit the chords creates both a sense of continuity and development. Bars 10–12 are a great example. He starts this section with an E major lick. The next bar is the same lick but ending on a G natural, instead of G#. The G fits the second chord (Cmaj7), but the

G# fits the first chord, E. Not changing the D# to fit the second chord at first seems a curious choice. But for the next bar, McDonald does make the D# a D, which fits the Gmaj7, but resolves to a high A, which isn't a chord tone but helps to imply that D/G sound McDonald seems to prefer. It also creates a nice chromatic line on the high notes: G#-G-A.

This continuity/development effect can also be created rhythmically, as McDonald does with polyrhythms. Measures 14-15 are an example, where he plays a repeated phrase

that takes up three 16th notes, starting at a different point in the beat each time.

For the fade, McDonald combines these ideas: playing a polyrhythmic phrase consisting of three 16ths and modifying this lick to fit the changes (starting at measure 34). The tricky part of this is changing in the right place, even while playing a rhythm that is counter to the underlying one. **DB**

Jimi Durso is a guitarist and bassist based in the New York area. Visit him online at jimidurso.com.

Sax Dakota SDT-XR 52 Tenor Saxophone

Highly Responsive, Aesthetically Detailed

The SDT-XR 52 Tenor Saxophone from Sax Dakota is an ergonomically designed, aesthetically detailed and highly responsive instrument. It's the company's top-line tenor, made of raw bronze with a semi-matte Black Onyx finish on the body, bow and bell, and a bright Black Onyx finish on the inside of the bell.

The SDT-XR 52's neck is silver-plated, and the keywork, trim and grille-style keyguards are unfinished, sporting a distinct art deco-like design. The neck and bell are decorated with attractive hand-engraving. The raw bronze body of the SDT-XR 52 is essentially a brass alloy with increased copper content (77 percent), resulting in a smooth and highly resonant sound that's reminiscent of certain post-World War II vintage horns. Playing it, I experienced a pleasing feeling of vibration in the instrument's body, even on upper-stack fingerings.

The SDT-XR 52 responded well and played nicely in tune with two different types of mouthpieces: a hard-rubber Vandoren Jumbo Java #7 and metal Jody Jazz Super Jet matched with #2½ and #3 Vandoren Java Red Box reeds. I got the strongest projection and altissimo response with the metal mouthpiece and #3 reed, and the hard-rubber mouthpiece with #2½ reed was my favored setup for subtone and warmth. The SDT-XR 52 felt consistently reliable in articulation at all volume levels with both types of mouthpieces.

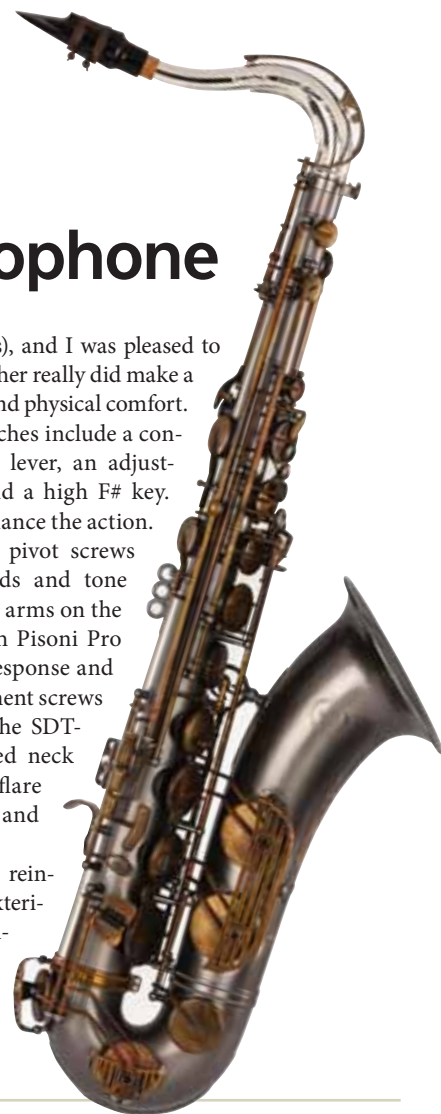
The keys of the SDT-XR 52 are well-placed for ease of fingering and rapid playing. The left-hand little-finger bank is especially nimble. Three neckstrap attachment rings are provided (like on the old

King Zephyr saxophone models), and I was pleased to find that choosing one over another really did make a difference in airstream control and physical comfort.

Additional professional touches include a conveniently located front high-F lever, an adjustable right-hand thumb rest and a high F# key. Stainless steel key rods help enhance the action. Black oxide steel springs and pivot screws team with custom Italian pads and tone boosters. The reinforced double arms on the low C/B/B-flat keys, along with Pisoni Pro key pads, are designed to aid response and ensure consistent tone. Adjustment screws are placed at critical points. The SDT-XR 52 has a specially designed neck taper and a graduated bell flare that begins at the bottom bow and collar.

The SDT-XR 52 comes in a reinforced, vintage-looking tweed-exterior or wood case with a plush interior or blanket for extra cushioning and protection. —Bruce Gibson

saxdakota.com



JodyJazz Super Jet Tenor Sax Mouthpiece

Big Sound, Roaring Response

JodyJazz has expanded its metal Super Jet mouthpiece series—an extension of the company's hard-rubber Jet series—with the addition of the Super Jet Tenor Saxophone model. The Super Jet Alto Saxophone mouthpiece, released last year, was a gas to play, so I was especially eager to test-fly the new Super Jet for tenor.

I tried a 7* and an 8* Super Jet tenor mouthpiece, each accompanied by an "H"-style ligature, mouthpiece cap and drawstring mouthpiece pouch. Like the alto Super Jets, they are handsome works of virgin bell brass and silver plating. They come in a soft purple pouch that professional saxophonists are sure to appreciate.

In play-testing both sizes of the Super Jet for tenor, I was impressed by the immense power and flexibility they provided. I tried them on my vintage Selmer Mark VI tenor and a brand-new Sax Dakota SDT-XR 52 tenor. I paired them with Vandoren Java Red Box #2½ and #3 reeds, as well as a synthetic Peter Ponzol ProReed #3.

I started with the 8* Super Jet and a Ponzol reed on the Sax Dakota, and the volume capacity was incredible. I had to go into a bigger room in order to appreciate the Super Jet's desirable tonal qualities and to fully harness its immense power.

My favorite mouthpiece-reed combination was the 7* Super Jet with the #2½ Red Box reeds—this gave me the most flexible response in lower tones and softer playing, especially on my Mark VI (which I use for most of my professional gigs). This setup gave me the inflection control that I

would want for big band section work and soloing, not to mention the power to really let it rip with a rock group.

Both the 7* and the 8* models articulated and subtuned smoothly and easily. Intonation was excellent throughout, and my altissimo range was bolstered in a major way—playing the Super Jet, you feel like you can wail way up in the stratosphere all night.

Saxophonists desiring that big sound with great response for jazz, smooth-jazz and rock should consider the JodyJazz Super Jet Tenor Saxophone mouthpiece, which is available in the following tip openings: 6 (.090), 7 (.101), 7* (.108), 8* (.116), 9* (.125) and 10* (.135).

JodyJazz achieves consistent quality in the Super Jet series by employing state-of-the-art 3D design techniques, a five-axis CNC machine and hand-finishing.

—Bruce Gibson

jodyjazz.com





Samson AWX Wind Instrument Wireless System

Frequency-Agile UHF Freedom

As a working saxophonist, I have relied on Samson AirLine UHF Wireless since the series made its debut some 18 years ago. The original AirLine UHF Wind Instrument System combined the miniature Samson AH1 wireless transmitter with a Samson HM40 horn microphone, paired with the Samson AR1 receiver. At the time, it was the first wireless system designed for reed and brass instruments that eliminated the need for a bodypack and cables and ran on a single AAA battery. The audio quality and reception were so good that soundmen didn't ever complain to me about having to use it—which says a lot.

That system has worked like a dream and proven to be a huge benefit in musical situations where I don't want to be limited in my stage movement, or in just about any scenario where everyone on stage is miked or amplified. Using the AirLine System, I even discovered that not being glued to a hard-wired mic makes reading from a music stand easier in live situations, especially when multiple pages are involved.

Now, Samson has released the AWX Wind Instrument Micro Transmitter UHF Wireless System as part of the company's new AirLine ATX System (which also comes in headset and lavalier configurations). The AWX Wind Instrument System includes a Samson HM60 condenser microphone attached to a ATX Wireless Micro Transmitter, a lightweight assembly that clips directly to the bell of any saxophone or brass instrument, such as trumpet, trombone, French horn and tuba. The system's rackmountable CR99 Wireless Receiver provides 80 selectable channels, offering frequency-agile operation and allowing users an operating range of 300 feet (line-of-sight).

Preparing the system for a play-test was a snap. It practically calibrated itself via infrared sync. After charging up the transmitter

(which can be done via USB or traditional U.S. and European wall outlets) and plugging in the receiver, all I needed to do is hold the two units in close proximity to one another, press a couple of buttons ("channel" and "select"), and I was ready to connect to my sound system and crank it up. I chose to go with a balanced XLR connection; the receiver also has an unbalanced 1/4-inch line level output.

On a gig, I usually like to do a walkaround through the stage and audience areas after setting up my wireless to make sure it's working everywhere I want it to. With the AWX Wind Instrument System, I was able to clearly see the receiver's audio meter and RF signal meter to check for any indications of signal overload or insufficient RF reception in any part of the venue. After adjusting my gain and volume, and noticing that the RF reception was strong throughout the room, I was ready to rock.

Come showtime, my saxophone sound came through loud and clear, with plenty of tonal detail. Transmission never failed over the course of three sets, even while parading offstage around the room in Mardis Gras fashion. The lithium-ion battery in the transmitter will last eight hours on one charge, so I had no worries about running out of juice during the show.

I was able to fine-tune the mic position (mainly for adjusting "proximity effect") using the integrated gooseneck, which is long, flexible and stable. For volume adjustments, I exercised some control over my output level by pressing the "+/-" buttons on the transmitter. The mute button came in handy more than once.

This new addition to Samson's AirLine series gave me exactly what I needed as a sax player on an all-wireless gig, and the sound quality was outstanding—especially in my wedge.

—Ed Enright

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Rovner Platinum Gold, Van Gogh Ligatures

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OK, saxophonists, admit it: We are always comparing setups with other saxophonists. Like golfers who think they are one new driver away from a better game, we often believe that we are one mouthpiece or reed away from a better sound. But ligatures? Do they really matter that much? The answer is absolutely “yes,” as I found out when I discovered Rovner’s Platinum line of ligatures.

About four years ago, I acquired a used Otto Link Hard Rubber Tone Edge #7 mouthpiece. I felt that it was a good fit for my 1945 Martin Committee III tenor saxophone, but it didn’t include the original Otto Link ligature, so I used another standard ligature from one of my other mouthpieces for a while.

Eventually, I stopped by a local music store (Band Source in Downers Grove, Illinois) to buy that vintage Otto Link ligature. When I arrived, a staff member suggested I try out a range of ligatures they had in stock. So off to the tryout room I went with my tenor and a tray of about 25 ligatures to sample, thinking that I wouldn’t find much difference between them. I experienced a revelation, however, when I heard how different my sound varied with each ligature. I was used to this experience when trying out mouthpieces, but was I surprised that a ligature could make

such a dramatic difference.

Eventually, I got to the Rovner Next Generation Platinum P-2R ligature. I remember feeling like my vintage Martin tenor came alive with a fuller sound. My command of the entire horn was noticeably improved. I still remember that feeling of newfound confidence in my playing. I bought the Rovner Platinum that day, and it has been the only tenor ligature I’ve used since.

Now, Rovner has released two new ligatures for hard-rubber mouthpieces—the gold-plated Platinum Gold and the Van Gogh—and I gave them both a try. The Platinum Gold is very similar to the older Platinum ligature in its elegant, single-screw design. The band that goes around the mouthpieces is wide but has six slits cut in on each side. It is like a very thin metal ribcage around the mouthpiece. The reed is cradled by the end of the ribs, which are rooted in heavy rails. These rails apply the pressure to the very bottom of the ribs; the ribs press against the edge of the reed when the screw is tightened. In contrast to the ribcage, which is deliberately light-

weight, the rails are heavy, which helps to even out the tension changes when you turn the screw. The reed is gripped close to its edges, not across the center. This allows more of the reed to vibrate. The ribcage design is strong enough to securely hold the reed on the mouthpiece without being so heavy that it dampens the resonance of the mouthpiece itself. It is that design that makes me appreciate the free-blowing nature of this ligature and the confidence I feel when playing the full range of the horn, including altissimo notes. The Platinum Gold had a full-bodied core and a somewhat darker, warmer sound than my original Platinum.

The Rovner Van Gogh ligature is a very different style from the Platinum series. It is a fabric-based ligature that snugly fits the mouthpiece. Because it is large, I was worried it would dampen my sound like some leather-wrap ligatures I have tried in the past. However, the Van Gogh VG-2R grips the reed using even less surface area than the Platinum series.

This is another clever design by Rovner. The material is stiff and is designed to grip the sides of the reed; it has a kerf down its center that acts like a hinge, so the center of the ligature never presses against the center of reed and more of the reed is available to produce sound. The single screw with heavy rails allows for the tension to be applied evenly on the reed edges. Overall, this ligature gave a very big sound, which surprised me because the ligature is so large. The Van Gogh’s design minimizes contact with the reed while still holding it securely in place. I would describe the Van Gogh as tonally neutral, but I was able to produce noticeable variations in my sound by adjusting the screw tension.

I am impressed with these two new ligatures by Rovner. They feature smart designs, they’re well built and they help me achieve significant enhancements to my tonal quality and ability to project. Both models are available for soprano, alto, tenor, baritone and bass saxophone, as well as a wide range of clarinets.

—Peter McCormack



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AirLine ATX Series

1. Curved Bari Neck

Oleg's Curved Baritone Neck provides an ergonomic solution for baritone saxophone players. The neck features a tenor-sax-like curve that raises the horn higher than traditional baritone saxophone necks, improving the musician's posture and reducing and preventing pain, nerve damage, and muscle strain in the neck and hands. The acoustically balanced neck—which comes in multiple sizes to accommodate different neck-socket diameters—streamlines airflow through the baritone saxophone, allowing for improved response and projection, better intonation and fewer articulation misfires. In addition to standard lacquer, custom finishes are available, including silver and black nickel.

More info: olegproducts.com

2. Omnibook Colossus

Sonny Rollins Omnibook from Hal Leonard includes note-for-note transcriptions of heads and solos taken directly from recordings of the bebop tenor saxophonist. The comb-bound collection for B-flat instruments features 50 classic tunes associated with Rollins, including "Airegin," "Blue Seven," "But Not For Me," "I Know That You Know," "Just In Time," "Oleo," "On A Slow Boat To China," "St. Thomas," "Sonny Moon For Two," "Strode Rode" and "Tenor Madness." Like all publications in the series, *Sonny Rollins Omnibook* includes chord symbols and metronome markings.

More info: halleonard.com

3. Aerophone in Black

Roland has announced the Aerophone AE-10G in Graphite Black. The digital wind instrument features key buttons that match traditional saxophone fingering. It offers a wide selection of sounds—including multiple types of saxophones, woodwinds and brasswinds—with authentic-feeling response. Many other acoustic instrument sounds are included, as well as synthesizer sounds optimized for breath control.

More info: roland.com

4. Geek Out

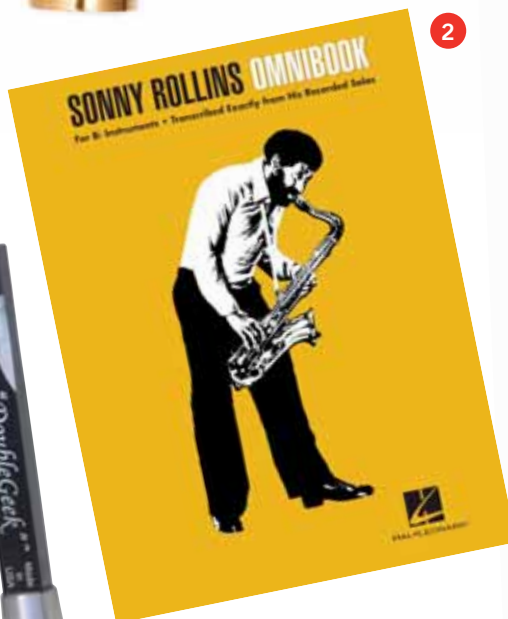
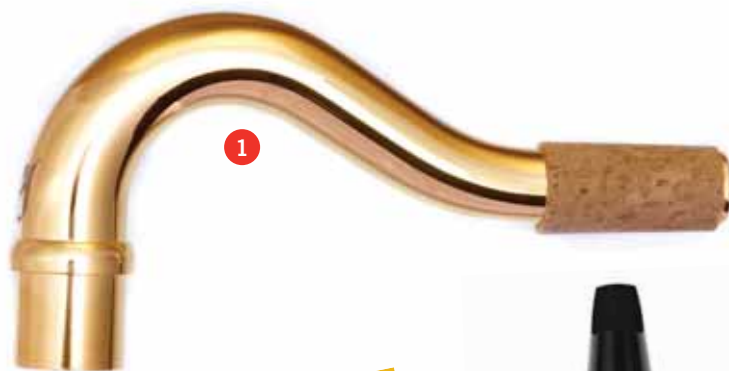
ReedGeek's DoubleGeek Gen2 Set focuses on the needs of the double reed player. It's engineered with two oversized bevels, letting double reed players fine-tune reed spines and corners with ease and efficiency. The Bullet, ReedGeek's latest and most advanced tool to date, features advancements in reed adjustment and maintenance. Utilizing advanced aerospace diamond-like alloys, the Bullet exhibits an edge of 94 RC hardness and is effective on single and double synthetic polymer reeds in addition to natural cane. With a built-in shank file for burnishing and smoothing, every surface of the Bullet can be used for reed maintenance.

More info: reedgeek.com

5. Woodwind Care

On-Stage has added the BSK5600, OBK5600 and BCK5600 Band & Orchestra Care Kits for bassoon, oboe and bass clarinet, respectively. The BSK5600 and OBK5600 come with key oil, duster brush, cork grease and other essential instrument-care items. The BCK5600 features cork grease, key oil, polishing cloth, a chamois neck swab and a rainbow body swab.

More info: on-stage.com





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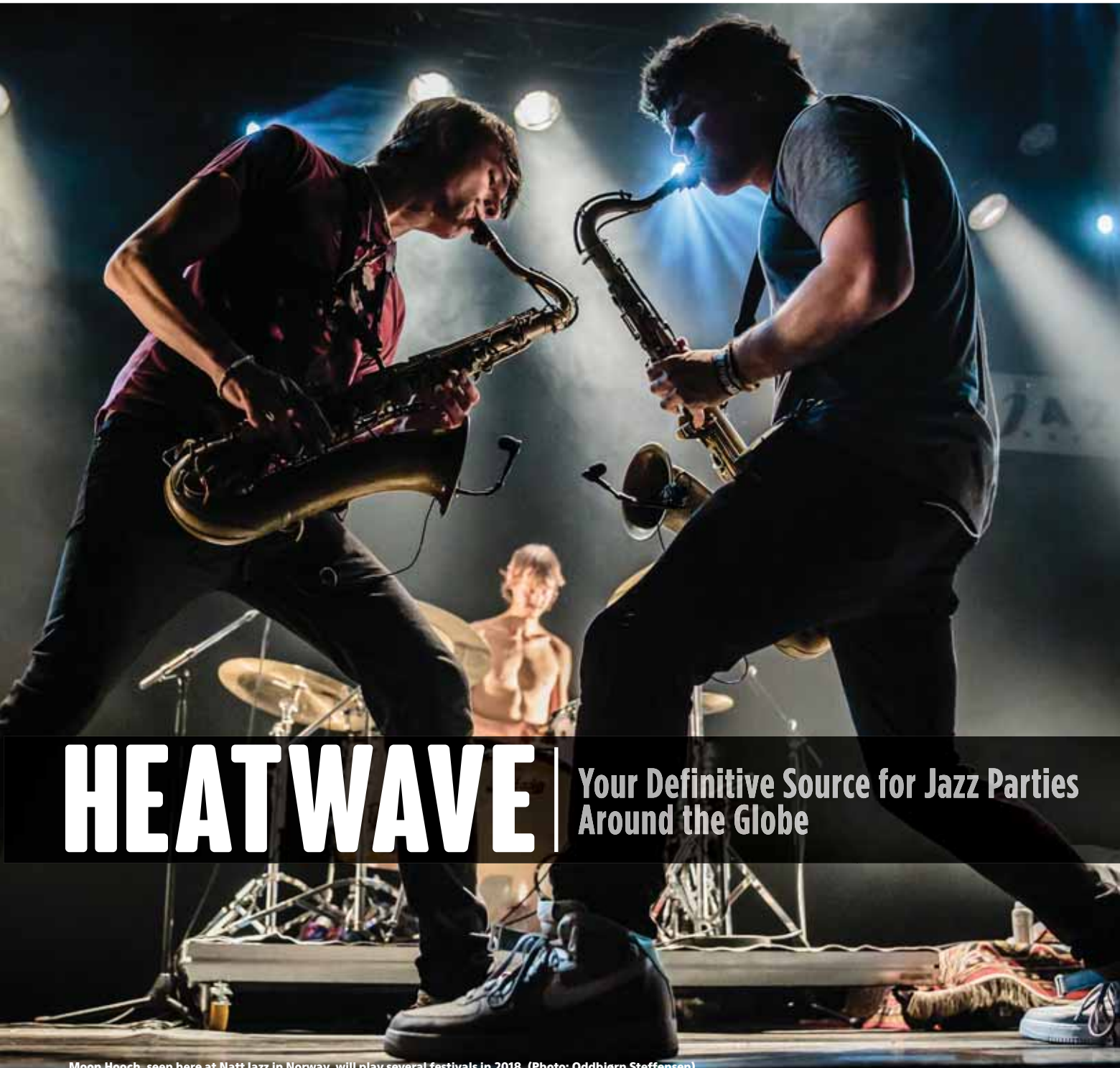
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Moon Hooch, seen here at NattJazz in Norway, will play several festivals in 2018. (Photo: Oddbjørn Steffensen)

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BUILDS ON HERITAGE**
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Vibraphonist Roy Ayers performs last year in Pittsburgh.

PITTSBURGH JAZZ FEST BUILDS ON THE CITY'S HISTORY

Pittsburgh's contributions to the jazz firmament stretch from seminal figures like Roy Eldridge, Kenny Clarke and Earl "Fatha" Hines to modern-day luminaries like Geri Allen, Steve Nelson and Jeff "Tain" Watts. But as the 21st century dawned, the one-time Steel City lacked a major jazz festival.

That began to change one day in 2009, when Janis Burley Wilson, then an executive with the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, met with trumpeter Sean Jones, drummer Roger Humphries and bassist Dwayne Dolphin for a barbecue at Dolphin's Pittsburgh-area home. Jazz advocates all, they cooked up a plan and two years later, the Pittsburgh JazzLive International Festival was born.

"We have a great legacy and history here," Burley Wilson said. "It was the right time to do it."

The inaugural event in 2011 was conceived along the lines of the Detroit International Jazz Festival, but on a smaller scale. "We wanted to make sure the festival had a certain vibe—energetic, easily accessible and free," said Jones, then a professor at Pittsburgh's Duquesne

University.

That vibe persists. At this year's event, now called the Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival (June 15–17), the bulk of the action will take place on three outdoor stages near Liberty Avenue. Though the staging area will be more spacious than last year's location, near Penn Avenue and 9th Street, about 20,000 people are expected to pack the streets to hear the music—for free.

The stages will offer a cross-section of cutting-edge artists, from Cuban percussionist Pedrito Martinez to trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire and saxophonists Donny McCaslin, Kenny Garrett and Miguel Zenón; pianist Emmet Cohen will continue his intergenerational association with drummer Tootie Heath; and singer Gregory Porter, who appeared as a relative unknown at the festival's first installment, will return as this year's Sunday-night closer.

While the bulk of the action will be outside, the festival will kick off indoors on Friday with what Burley Wilson called a "jazz crawl," in which local artists perform in spots through-

out the cultural district. Later that night, jam sessions will be held around town. In between, a ticketed concert at the August Wilson Center for African American Culture will feature bassist Marcus Miller's quintet with Pittsburgh native Brett Williams on piano.

Burley Wilson stressed that the decision to charge admission—even on a limited basis, for the Miller concert and a few ancillary activities—was a recent nod to economic realities, a move that was necessary to keep the quality and quantity of the music at current levels. "These festivals are expensive, and we don't have an endowment," she said. "We rely on foundations and corporate support."

The decision appears not to have dampened the festival's broad appeal. An audience survey revealed that in 2017 about 20 percent of the audience came from areas outside Pennsylvania, primarily Ohio, Michigan and Canada. The audience was divided evenly between men and women and well distributed among age and income groups.

The atmosphere is decidedly festive, but it has its serious side as well. Burley Wilson, the

president and CEO of the Wilson Center, plans to schedule artist talks and master classes in the ultramodern center's various spaces. And, as one of the few women running a major music festival, she said she is "committed to presenting diversity onstage. I've heard many musicians—women jazz musicians—who say they don't get a chance to headline as much as they would like. I always try to present those musicians who are doing great work and just happen to be women."

This year's festival is set to include drummer Terri Lyne Carrington and singer Polly Gibbons, who hails from the U.K. But it might be blues singer Shemekia Copeland who, at a time when women's empowerment is at the forefront of the American consciousness, draws the most attention by virtue of both her pipes and her message.

Backed by her longtime band—lead guitarist Arthur Neilson, rhythm guitarist Willie Scandlyn, bassist Kevin Jenkins and drummer Robin Gould—Copeland will be belting out tunes that address social injustice, like "The Battle Is Over (But The War Goes On)," and domestic violence, like "It Don't Hurt No More."

Such tunes, she said, have been met with gratitude wherever she sings them—including at a separate music series at the Wilson Center. "I hear from women, 'This song saved my life,'" she said. "That's one of my reasons for performing."

Burley Wilson said that the decision to book the award-winning Copeland—who as a young girl sang at Harlem's Cotton Club with her father, legendary blues guitarist Johnny Copeland—was in keeping with the profile of August Wilson himself, a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and Pittsburgh native whose work was inspired by the blues.

"Moving forward," she said, "we'll always have a blues presence at the jazz festival because of the connection with the August Wilson Center. Shemekia's helping us to create that presence."

The festival has a history of regularly addressing social issues, too. Last year at the Wilson Center, trumpeter Jones presented an extended work he wrote based on James Baldwin's incendiary *The Fire Next Time*. This year, bassist Miller, who has been a spokesman for UNESCO's Slave Route Project, said he will draw on his latest album, 2015's *Afrodeezia* (Blue Note), a disquisition on the slave trade that employs African, Caribbean and Brazilian rhythms.

Miller, who previously has performed in Pittsburgh at both the jazz festival and at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, said that audiences in the city have proved a sophisticated lot, hip to what he was trying to say in pulsating tunes like "B's River" and "We Were There."

"In some parts of the States," he said, "they weren't as familiar with some of the African rhythms I'm using. But, of course, not in Pittsburgh."

One tune from *Afrodeezia* that has proved universally accessible is Miller's powerful cover of The Temptations' 1972 hit "Papa Was A Rolling Stone." Miller said he is certain to play the tune at the festival, adding that audiences only familiar with its treatment on *Afrodeezia* will be interested in how it has matured on the road.

"People will be surprised," he said. "The

form has stretched—some things have been shortened because we realized they're not where the juice is. We've also added parts—if somebody played something one night that was inspired, we said, 'That's no longer an improvisation; that's part of the song.'"

Such surprises are built into the festival's DNA, Burley Wilson said: "Our goal is to try and curate an experience that is going to give people an opportunity to learn about someone new and to hear the music that is familiar to them—to give them what they want *and* what they need to hear."

—Phillip Lutz



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Vision Festival in New York

Exit Zero Jazz Festival

Cape May, New Jersey
 April 20-22

The Exit Zero festival is a bi-annual event in Cape May, New Jersey, the nation's oldest seaside resort. Stellar musical lineups are presented at five venues along the Cape May beachfront.

LINEUP: Bria Skonberg, Joey Alexander, Chris Botti, Brian Betz-Denis DiBlasio Quartet, Kali Rodriguez Pena, Baylor Project, Dara Tucker, High & Mighty Brass Band, others.
exit0jazzfest.com

Center City Jazz Festival

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 April 28

The seventh edition of this festival will present concerts as part of Philadelphia Jazz Appreciation Month. Attendees can expect a jam-packed schedule of more than 20 bands performing at several venues, all within walking distance of each other in the heart of Center City. One ticket provides access to all performances.

LINEUP: David Kikoski Trio (featuring Justin Faulkner & Alex Claffy), Marcus Strickland, Arturo Stable, Sharel Cassity, V. Shayne Frederick, Nicole Sapphos, Danny Janklow, Leon Jordan Jr., Yessah Furaha-Ali, Ken Foswer, Lena Seikaly, others.
ccjazzfest.com

Celebrate Mary Lou Williams

Washington, D.C.
 May 5

For the 23rd year, the legacy of pianist, composer, educator, humanitarian and DownBeat

Hall of Fame inductee Mary Lou Williams (1910-'81) will be celebrated. This event will be held at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater. (The Kennedy Center will also present Carla Bley on June 1 and Gregory Porter on June 27.)

LINEUP: Eliane Elias, Anat Cohen Tentet, Amina Claudine Myers Trio.

kenedy-center.org/calendar/event/MSWIL

New York Guitar Festival

New York City
 May (Dates TBA)

Exploring virtually every aspect of the guitar's personality, this festival, which was founded in 1999, has presented many of the world's most influential guitarists at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Sawdust, (Le) Poisson Rouge, Brookfield Place Winter Garden and the 92nd Street Y. From Grammy winners to emerging artists, festival performers have come from all genres: classical, jazz, blues, pop, indie rock, folk and world music, as well as genre-defying innovators. In addition to producing eclectic, multi-genre concerts and radio broadcasts, the festival's Guitar Harvest recording series supports innovative outreach programs in public schools.

LINEUP: TBA. Last year's performers included Julian Lage, Marc Ribot, Lee Ranaldo, Trixie Whitley.
newyorkguitarfestival.org

City Parks Foundation's SummerStage

New York City
 May 17-Oct. 7

SummerStage, a program of City Parks Foundation, is New York's largest free outdoor performing arts festival. Annually, the event



NEIL GRABOWSKY FOR JAZZ HOUSE KIDS

Montclair Jazz Festival in New Jersey

presents more than 100 performances in 18 parks throughout the five boroughs. Since its inception 33 years ago, more than six million people from around the world have enjoyed SummerStage.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Mavis Staples, Robert Glasper Experiment, Vince Giordano & The Night Hawks, Jimmy Heath Big Band, Mulatu Astatke, Roy Ayers with Seun Kuti & Egypt 80, Elvis Costello, Kid Cudi.

summerstage.org

Vision Festival Brooklyn, New York May 23-28

The Vision Festival presents legendary and emerging stars of boundless improvised music. Now in its 23rd year, this multi-arts festival returns to Roulette in Brooklyn. Opening night celebrates Dave Burrell for his Lifetime of Achievement, featuring the pianist in performance with musical associates spanning his 50-plus-year career.

LINEUP: Dave Burrell, Archie Shepp, Ambrose Akinmusire, Nicole Mitchell, Kris Davis, Kidd Jordan, Chris Potter, David Virelles, Jaimie Branch's Fly or Die, Oliver Lake Big Band, Matthew Shipp Acoustic Ensemble, Mary Halvorson's Code Girl, Roscoe Mitchell, Nasheet Waits Equality, Andrew Cyrille, Fay Victor, Hamid Drake, others.

artsforart.org/vf23

Plymouth Rock Jazz Fest

Plymouth, Massachusetts

May 25-27

Plymouth's Spire Center for Performing Arts

is the venue for this Memorial Day festival, which is now in its fifth year. (The event is produced by Johnny Souza, through the generous sponsorship of Eastern Bank.)

LINEUP: Donna Byrne & The Marshall Wood Trio, Stan Strickland Quartet, Alexei Tsiganov Group, Rhythm Future Quartet, Suede.

spirecenter.org/events

Delaney Chevrolet Westsylvania Jazz & Blues Festival

Indiana, Pennsylvania

May 26

The fifth edition of this free festival takes place in IRLM Park. The event has featured nationally and internationally known musicians, regional acts and student musicians playing in a classic American small town.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Laura Ferguson & The Jazz Trip Trio, Seventh Street Stompers, Nevin Saylor Big Band, Reggie Watkins & The Steeltown Horns.

westsylvaniajazzandblues.org

Capital Jazz Fest

Columbia, Maryland

June 1-3

The 26th edition of this festival will take place at Merriweather Post Pavilion and will feature more than 25 national jazz and soul acts on two big stages.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included George Benson, Marcus Miller, Chris Botti, Sheila E, Anthony Hamilton.

capitaljazz.com/fest/2018



Pat Metheny

with Antonio Sanchez, Linda May Han Oh & Gwilym Simcock

Jon Batiste

**Lean On Me: José James
Celebrates Bill Withers**

Artemis

featuring Cécile McLorin Salvant, Renee Rosnes, Anat Cohen, Melissa Aldana, Ingrid Jensen, Noriko Ueda & Allison Miller

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Nicki Parrott at Provincetown Jazz Festival

COURTESY PROVINCETOWN JAZZ FESTIVAL

Michael Arnone's Crawfish Fest

Augusta, New Jersey

June 1-3

For 29 years, Louisiana native Michael Arnone has been bringing the best of New Orleans music and food to the rural and scenic farmlands of New Jersey. With three stages hosting 23 bands, free dance lessons and an extensive menu to choose from, the event offers a wide array of entertainment.

LINEUP: Taj Mahal, Jon Cleary Trio, Samantha Fish, George Porter Jr. & The Runnin' Pards, Tab Benoit, Big Sam's Funky Nation, Bonerama, others.
crawfishfest.com

Burlington Discover Jazz Festival

Burlington, Vermont

June 1-10

Begun as a grassroots event 35 years ago, this festival is now a 10-day celebration welcoming more than 70,000 people to events across the city. The festival's mission is to broaden awareness and appreciation of jazz through live performances, illuminate the art form, educate, and create a city-wide community festival.

LINEUP: Bill Frisell Trio, Chucho Valdés, Leslie Odom Jr., Anat Cohen, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Rhiannon Giddens, Allison Miller's Boom Tic Boom.

discoverjazz.com

Blue Note Jazz Festival

New York City

June 1-30

The Blue Note Jazz Festival features more than 150 shows at multiple venues around New York City during a monthlong celebration of



George Clinton & Parliament Funkadelic

Andra Day

Gregory Porter

Living Colour

Still Dreaming

with Joshua Redman, Ron Miles, Scott Colley and Brian Blade

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COURTESY HUDSON VALLEY JAZZ FESTIVAL



Hudson Valley Jazz Festival

the genre, featuring some of the biggest names on the scene today. Put on by the owners of the Blue Note jazz club, the festival celebrates its seventh anniversary in 2018.

LINEUP: The Bad Plus, Keyon Harrold & Friends, McCoy Tyner, Paquito D'Rivera Ensemble, Jason Stein, Victor Wooten, Pablo Ziegler Trio, Chano Domingues Trio, Sergio Mendes, Average White Band, Sarah McKenzie, others.
bluenotejazzfestival.com

DC Jazz Festival *Washington, D.C.* **June 8-17**

This festival will present a wide array of renowned and resident artists in more than 40 venues throughout the capital city. There will be more than 125 free and ticketed concerts and Meet the Artists events, including the DC JazzFest at The Wharf, which will feature four main stages.

LINEUP: Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Roy Hargrove, Leslie Odom Jr., R+R=Now (Robert Glasper, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Terrace Martin, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge), Ivan Lins, Maceo Parker, Regina Carter, Ben Williams, Oliver Lake Big Band, Terence Blanchard & The E-Collective, Delfeayo Marsalis, Terri Lyne Carrington's Feed The Fire: Celebrating Geri Allen, Melissa Aldana, Edmar Castaneda & Gregoire Maret, Fabrizio Bosso, Jihye Lee Orchestra, Patricia Barber, Kris Funn & Cornerstone, Esther Williams & Davey Yarborough, DC JazzPrix Finalists, more.
dcjazzfest.org

Berkshire Gateway Jazz Weekend *Lee, Massachusetts* **June 14-17**

This event features headline concerts, al fresco jazz, food vendors, a jazz brunch and

more during Father's Day weekend—all in the beautiful Western Massachusetts town of Lee, the "Gateway to the Berkshires."

LINEUP: Frank Vignola Trio, Jeff Holmes Big Band, others.
berkshiregatewayjazz.org

Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania* **June 15-17**

Nearly 20,000 people are expected to pack the streets for this festival's free concerts. The fest will also offer an artist bazaar, a vintage vinyl boutique, food trucks, a craft beer garden, a bar crawl and jam sessions.

LINEUP: Marcus Miller, Kenny Garrett, Gregory Porter, Ambrose Akinmusire, Pedrito Martinez, Donny McCaslin, Terry Lyne Carrington & Social Science, Miguel Zenón, Polly Gibbons, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Emmet Cohen Trio with Tootie Heath, Shemeika Copeland, Yoko Suzuki.

pittsburghjazzfest.org

DuPont Clifford Brown Jazz Festival *Wilmington, Delaware* **June 17-24**

Now celebrating its 30th anniversary, this nationally renowned, free festival draws more than 25,000 residents and visitors from across the country.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Marcus Miller, Hiromi, Rufus Reid.
cliffordbrownjazzfest.com

Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival *Rochester, New York* **June 22-30**

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this event offers multiple genres of creative improvised music. Founded in 2002 and drawing more than 200,000 music lovers annually, the festival presents hundreds of artists at ticketed and free shows at 18 indoor and outdoor venues.

LINEUP: Tower of Power, Terell Stafford Quintet, Joey Alexander Trio, Nicholas Payton, The Bad Plus, Moon Hooch, Melissa Aldana, Matt Wilson's Honey & Salt, Django Bates' Beloved, Brubeck Brothers, Alfredo Rodriguez & Pedrito Martinez, GoGo Penguin, Duchess, Seal, Boz Scaggs, Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Alison Krauss, Lake Street Dive, Jill Scott, Bill Goodwin Trio, Geoffrey Keezer Trio, Joe Locke Group, Jean-Michel Pilc/François Moutin/Ari Hoenig, Vintage Trouble, Junior Brown, Jack Broadbent, more.

rochesterjazz.com

Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival

Saratoga Springs, New York
June 23-24

One of the longest-running jazz festivals in North America, this event presents an extraordinary lineup of legends and emerging trailblazers. Beloved by audiences for its spectacular programming and woodland setting, the festival features two stages, a crafts fair, Southern barbecue and much more.

LINEUP: Chris Botti, Herbie Hancock, José James, Joey Alexander, Anat Cohen Tetet, Gregory Porter, Mavis Staples, Lakecia

Benjamin & SoulSquad, Alfredo Rodriguez & Pedrito Martinez Duo, Keyon Harrold, Jazzmeia Horn, New Orleans @ 300, Evan Christopher, Christian Sands Trio, Jon Batiste with The Dap-Kings, TEN (Terri Lyne Carrington, Esperanza Spalding, Nicholas Payton), Scott Sharrard & the Brickyard Band, Deva Mahal, Jane Bunnett & Maqueque, Jazz Passengers, Mark Whitfield/Ben Allison/Billy Drummond, Sammy Miller & The Congregation.

spac.org

Belleayre Music Festival

Highmount, New York

July-September (Dates TBA)

Founded in 1992, this festival offers a series of concerts between the Fourth of July and Labor Day. It is presented by the not-for-profit Belleayre Conservatory.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Pedrito Martinez, Ricky Gordon Sextet, Nancy Kamen.

belleayremusic.org

Briggs Farm Blues Festival

Nescopeck, Pennsylvania

July 5-8

Since 1998, The Briggs family has hosted one of the nation's most revered blues festivals on its 250-year-old farm in northeast Pennsylvania. Food includes farm-fresh roasted corn and a full array of slow-smoked meats.

LINEUP: Samantha Fish, Amy Helm, Selwyn

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briggsfarm.com

Central PA Jazz Festival

Harrisburg, Mt. Gretna & Hummelstown, Pennsylvania
July 5-8

The 38th edition of this festival, which is produced by the Central PA Friends of Jazz, offers a riverboat cruise, a jazz party, concerts in the Gretna Playhouse, master classes, jam sessions and the annual picnic at Indian Echo Caverns.

LINEUP: Last year's artists included Delfeayo Marsalis, River City Big Band, Joshua Breakstone, Dwayne Dolphin, New World Parade.

friendsofjazz.org

North Atlantic Blues Festival

Rockland, Maine
July 14-15

One of Maine's premier festivals features top-notch blues in a placid setting overlooking the picturesque Rockland Harbor. Located 80 miles north of Portland, the event has been booking regional and national talent for the past 15 years.

LINEUP: Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials, Bobby Rush, Tab Benoit, Wee Willie Walker & The Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra, Lurrie Bell, Mud Morganfield, Slam Allen, Vanessa Collier, Kat Riggins, Monster Mike Welch & Mike Ledbetter, Ilana Katz Katz.

northatlanticbluesfestival.com

 **92Y Jazz In July**
New York City
July 17-26

The 34th annual 92Y Jazz in July festival, with

artistic director Bill Charlap at the helm, is one of New York's longest-running jazz festivals. It features the world's greatest jazz musicians in unique, once-in-a-lifetime performances.

LINEUP: Renee Rosnes, Bill Charlap, Melissa Aldana, Dick Hyman, Aaron Diehl, Houston Person, Mary Stallings, Jeremy Pelt, Jon Faddis, Melba Joyce, Ken Peplowski, René Marie, Mike LeDonne, Eddie Allen, Rodney Jones.

92y.org/jazzinjury

Caramoor Jazz Festival

Katonah, New York
July 21

Now in its fourth year and presented in collaboration with Jazz at Lincoln Center, this festival offers exceptional talent and music to enjoy throughout the stunning gardens and historical venues within Caramoor. A full day of jazz, interactive activities for the kids and an evening headliner are all part of the fun.

LINEUP: Dianne Reeves, Romero Lubambo, Reginald Veal, Terreon Gully, Peter Martin, Benny Green Trio (featuring Veronica Swift) Jane Bunnett & Maqueque, Shenel Johns & Vuyo Satshe, Ulysses Owens Jr., Leonardo Sandoval & Eduardo Belo, Paul Nedzela Quartet, Patrick Bartley Presents the Mighty Cannonball Adderley, Mariel Bildsten Septet, Joel Ross & Immanuel Wilkins.

caramoor.org/events/jazz-festival-2018

 **Litchfield Jazz Festival**
Goshen, Connecticut
July 28-29

Nestled in the picturesque Berkshire foothills, this festival has presented the titans of jazz since 1996. The event offers two full days of cutting-edge music on its Main and Student Stages, with artist talks, arts and crafts



Charles Lloyd's 80th Birthday Celebration

Charles Lloyd & Friends featuring Lucinda Williams with Jason Moran, Marvin Sewell, Stuart Mathis, Reuben Rogers, & Eric Harland

Sangam with Zakir Hussain & Eric Harland

Charles Lloyd New Quartet with Jason Moran, Reuben Rogers & Eric Harland

R+R=Now

Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Derrick Hodge, Taylor McFerrin & Justin Tyson

BADBADNOTGOOD

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Catherine Russell at the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival in New York state

exhibits, food and fun for the whole family.

LINEUP: Jane Bunnett & Maqueque, Orrin Evans, Emmet Cohen Trio with Jimmy Cobb, Yoko Miwa Trio, Trio Da Paz, Dan Brubeck & Friends' Tribute to Dave & Lola Brubeck, Jeff "Tain" Watts Trio, Kris Allen Trio, Doug Munro & Le Pompe Attack featuring the Matthew Westerby Company Dancers.
litchfieldjazzfest.com

Newport Jazz Festival *Newport, Rhode Island* **Aug. 3-5**

Since 1954, the legendary Newport Jazz Festival (now presented by Natixis Investment Managers) has served as the template for music festivals all over the world. Held at Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay, the festival will feature more than 60 acts at Fort Adams State

Park and the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

LINEUP: Charles Lloyd with Sangam (Zakir Husain & Eric Harland), Charles Lloyd New Quartet (Jason Moran, Reuben Rogers & Eric Harland), Charles Lloyd & Friends (Lucinda Williams, Jason Moran, Marvin Sewell, Stuart Mathis, Reuben Rogers & Eric Harland), Ambrose Akinmusire, Gregory Porter, Still Dreaming (Joshua Redman, Ron Miles, Scott Colley & Brian Blade), Roy Hargrove, Andra Day, Rudresh Mahanthappa Indo-Pak Coalition, Mary Halvorson's Code Girl, R+R=Now (Robert Glasper, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Terrace Martin, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge), James Carter Organ Trio, Pat Metheny (with Antonio Sanchez, Linda May Han Oh & Gwilym Simcock), Jon Batiste, Tony Allen, Artemis (Cécile McLorin Salvant, Renee Rosnes, Anat Cohen, Melissa Aldana, Ingrid Jensen, Noriko Ueda & Allison Miller), Michel Camilo, José James, Nate Smith & Kinfolk, Jazzmeia Horn, Matthew Shipp Trio, Grace Kelly, GoGo Penguin, BadBadNotGood, DIVA Jazz Orchestra, Alicia Olatuja, George Clinton, Living Colour, more.
newportjazz.org

Rockport Jazz Festival *Rockport, Massachusetts* **Aug. 4-12**

The seventh edition of this festival features world-class jazz artists performing in the intimate, seaside Shalin Liu Performance Center. Hailed by the New York Times as



JUNE 15-17, 2018 **PITTSBURGHJAZZFEST.ORG**

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PEDRITO MARTINEZ

TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
SHEMEKIA COPELAND

DONNY MCCASLIN



"beautiful to the eye, as well as the ear," the hall offers jazz in an incomparable setting.

LINEUP: Kurt Elling, Joe Lovano, Monty Alexander, Grace Kelly, Harold López-Nussa.

rockportmusic.org

Hudson Valley Jazz Festival

Hudson Valley, New York

Aug. 9-12

This year marks the ninth edition of this event. This festival distinguishes itself with a focus on musicians in New York's Hudson Valley area. The series of shows take place in varied settings.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Wallace Roney, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Lenny White, Mark Egan, Don Braden, Adam Nussbaum.

hudsonvalleyjazzfest.org

Provincetown Jazz Festival

Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Aug. 9 & Aug. 13

Since 2005, this festival has been held in the oldest continuously operated art colony in the United States. The nonprofit festival is planning to donate a portion of the proceeds to worthy causes. Musicians from the United States, Canada, Brazil, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand and Japan previously have appeared.

LINEUP: Cassandre McKinley, Myanna,



Charenée Wade at Charlie Parker Jazz Festival in New York

Tim Ray, Daryl Sherman, John Lockwood, Mark Walker, Bruce Abbott, Fred Boyle, Ron Ormsby, Bart Weisman.

provincetownjazzfestival.org



Montclair Jazz Festival

Montclair, New Jersey

Aug. 11

This annual festival is the biggest free jazz

event in the region—located just 13 miles outside New York City. The festival is held in Nishuane Park and produced by artistic director (and Grammy winner) Christian McBride, and the music education nonprofit organization Jazz House Kids.

LINEUP: Eddie Palmieri, Oliver Lake with Trio 3, Christian McBride, Royal Bopsters.

montclairjazzfestival.org



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Dan Weiss performs at the Litchfield Jazz Festival in Connecticut



Charlie Parker Jazz Festival

New York City

Aug. 23-26

This festival, now in its 26th edition, is New York City's annual salute to the legendary saxophonist, featuring veterans who remember Parker, as well as young jazz musicians who continue to shape jazz. The four-day festival will kick off with a performance at the New School for Jazz

& Contemporary Music on Aug. 23, before moving into the parks near where Parker worked and lived: Marcus Garvey Park in Harlem and Tompkins Square Park on the Lower East Side (summerstage.org).

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Joshua Redman, Anat Cohen, Lee Konitz, Tia Fuller, Lou Donaldson, Terri Lyne Carrington. cityparksfoundation.org/charlieparker

Norfolk Waterfront Jazz Festival

Norfolk, Virginia

Aug. 24-25

Hampton Roads' longest running outdoor jazz festival returns for two nights along the downtown Norfolk waterfront. On summer evenings, fans can enjoy the sounds of smooth-jazz and r&b recording artists. The festival features a variety of seating and ticket options, including the New Journal and Guide VIP Club, reserved seating, designated tent areas, festival lawn seating, fine foods and beverages, plus a festival marketplace with crafts, retail items and more.

LINEUP: Boney James, David Benoit & Marc Antoine, Marcus Anderson, Dave Koz, Norman Brown, Adam Hawley.

festevents.org/events/2018-season-events/norfolkwaterfrontjazzfestival

Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts

Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania

Sept. 7-9

Four decades ago, jazz fans in the Poconos decided to throw a jazz party. Now, that event has become a three-day extravaganza, held rain or shine. Many of the best names in jazz have come to Pennsylvania to perform.

LINEUP: See website. Previous performers include Dave Liebman, 3 Divas, Bob Dorough.

cotajazz.org

Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival

Boston, Massachusetts

Sept. 29

This festival is Boston's biggest block party—a free, annual, outdoor public concert that has delighted hundreds of thousands of music lovers over the years with its variety of jazz, Latin, blues, funk and groove performances. Also a part of the festivities are the Kids-Jam, an instrument petting zoo and an array of food vendors.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include the Chick Corea/Steve Gadd Band, Lizz Wright, Jazzmeia Horn, Camille Thurman.

berklee.edu/beantownjazz

Scranton Jazz Festival

Scranton, Pennsylvania

October (Dates TBA)

This festival began in 2005 at the Hanlon's Grove Amphitheatre at Nay Aug Park. After a major snowstorm damaged the facility in 2007, the festival's organizers moved the event to its present home at the historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel in downtown Scranton, where it has become a permanent fixture on the arts and culture scene. Programming includes jazz, blues and world music.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Stanley Clarke, John Pizzarelli, Eddie Allen Jazz Quintet, Nate Birkey.

scrantonjazzfestival.org

Pittsfield City Jazz Festival

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Oct. 12-13

This year marks the 14th edition of this cultural event in Western Massachusetts. There will be ticketed shows, as well as a number of free events.

LINEUP: Christian McBride's New Jawn, Veronica Swift, others. berkshiresjazz.org

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SOUTH

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



Clearwater Jazz Holiday

French Quarter Festival

New Orleans, Louisiana

April 12-15

This festival, now its 35th year, bills itself as "the world's largest showcase of Louisiana music, food and culture." The event will feature more than 300 acts on 23 stages and cuisine from more than 60 of New Orleans' favorite restaurants. This year, the fest will include new stages, tricentennial celebrations and numerous special events.

LINEUP: Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Irma Thomas, Corey Henry's Treme Funktet, Astral Project, Jon Cleary, James Andrews, John Boutté, Don Vappie & The Creole Jazz Serenaders, Ellis Marsalis Quintet, Evan Christopher's Clarinet Road, Rebirth Brass Band, Gregory Agid Quartet, Helen Gillet's Wazozo Zorchestra, Little Freddie King, Lost Bayou Ramblers, Zachary Richard, Cyril Neville & Swamp Funk, Brass-A-Holics, Chubby Carrier & The Bayou Swamp Band, Alvin Youngblood Hart's Muscle Theory, The Iguanas, Stooges Brass Band, Walter "Wolfman" Washington & The Roadmasters.

frenchquarterfest.org

Seabreeze Jazz Festival

Panama City Beach, Florida

April 18-22

This fest features smooth jazz and classic r&b.

LINEUP: Spyro Gyra, Brian Culbertson, Gerald Albright, Peter White, Boney James, Jeff Lorber, Rick Braun, Richard Elliot, Cindy Bradley, Rachelle Ferrell, Euge Groove, Kool & The Gang, The Commodores, Jeffery Osborne, Peabo Bryson.

seabreezejazzfestival.com

Festival International de Louisiane

Lafayette, Louisiana

April 25-29

Education and community enrichment are at the center of Festival International de Louisiane, a music and arts festival held each year at the end of April in downtown Lafayette. While focused on music birthed in the area, a variety of international perform-

ers are included in this year's festivities.

LINEUP: Marc Broussard, Marcia Ball, Terrance Simien, Sidi Touré, Street Side Jazz Band, Mike Dillon Band, Mydy Rabycad, Jupiter & Okwess, Lisa Leblanc, Sona Jobarteh, Zachary Richard, Making Moves, Lost Bayou Ramblers, Ten Strings and a Goat Skin, Florent Volland, Shauit, Niyaz, Azam Ali, Samantha Fish, Dominique Dupuis, The War and Treaty, Culture, Geno Delafosse & French Rockin' Boogie, Wesli, Innov Gnawa, Vishtèn, Alash, Shodekeh, Doug Kershaw, Steve Riley, Ladama, Curley Taylor & Zydeco Trouble, Frigg, Lee's Golden Dragons, Jeunes Chanteurs D'Acadie, Amythyst Kiah, Socks in the Frying Pan, Feufollet, Glenn David Andrews, Walter Mouton & The Scott Playboys, Blue Monday All-Stars, Grand Nathaniel & The Ghosts, Tonomono, The Huval-Fuselier Cajun Band, Harmonouche, Brass Mimosa, Dans L'Shed, Frenchaxe, Acadiana Youth Symphony Orchestra, Casa Samba, Zydeco Ragin' Steppers, Radio Zydeco, Michael Juan Nunez, Adeline et Les Amis du Teche, Asarts Night Band, Vermilion Express, Ethan Airhart avec Deux Pour La Route and Givers.

festivalinternational.org



Jacksonville Jazz Festival

Jacksonville, Florida

May 24-27

Fans can enjoy concerts spread over 15 city blocks downtown along the St. Johns River. The mix of Grammy winners and rising talent makes this free event a great experience for music lovers who flock to Jacksonville over Memorial Day weekend. This event has been rolling along for more than 30 years.

LINEUP: The Bad Plus, Vijay Iyer Sextet, Jane Bunnett & Maqueque, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Sheila E, Pete Escovedo Latin Jazz Orchestra, Champion Fulton, Chris Thomas Band, The 4 Korners, Lohai, Euge Groove, Jeffery Broussard & The Creole Cowboys, Noel Freidline Quintet with Maria Howell.

jacksonvillejazzfest.com

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Charles Lloyd performs at the
Spoleto Festival USA in South Carolina.

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Spoleto Festival USA

Charleston, South Carolina

May 25-June 10

Established in 1977, the Spoleto Festival USA presents leading artists in classical and popular music, jazz, dance, and theater. The 2018 season includes more than 160 events. This year's robust Wells Fargo Jazz series will present Jon Batiste in two settings, including a collaboration with The Dap-Kings.

LINEUP: Jon Batiste, The Dap-Kings, Fred Hersch Trio, Artifacts (Nicole Mitchell, Tomeka Reid, Mike Reed), Jazzmeia Horn, Chucho Valdés, Trio 3 (Reggie Workman, Oliver Lake, Andrew Cyrille) with Vijay Iyer, Craig Taborn, Ranky Tanky.

spoletousa.org

Atlanta Jazz Festival

Atlanta, Georgia

May 26-27

The Atlanta Jazz Festival, which takes place at Piedmont Park, is celebrating its 41st anniversary as one of the largest free jazz festivals in the country. The festival will feature a Tribute to Women, with female-lead jazz performances on all three stages on May 26.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's lineup included Robert Glasper, Macy Gray, Charles Lloyd, Pedrito Martinez and Marquis Hill.

atlantafestivals.com

Jazz In June

Norman, Oklahoma

June 14-16

Marking its 35th anniversary, this free event returns to Norman for three days of jazz and blues.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Dr. Lonnie Smith, Harold Lopez-Nussa, Ardent Spirits.

jazzinjune.org

Eureka Springs Blues Weekend

Eureka Springs, Arkansas

June 14-17

This event showcases music throughout historic Eureka Springs at a variety of venues. The festival features everything from nationally renowned players like guitarist Eric Gales performing at outdoor venues to homegrown Arkansas talent in area dive bars.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Toronzo Cannon, EG Knight, Mark Shields Duo, Scott Ellison Trio, Pinetop Renegades, Josh Hoyer and Soul Colossal, Cori Jay, Norman Jackson Band.

eurekaspringsblues.com

W.C. Handy Music Festival

Florence, Alabama

July 20-29

Based in the hometown of W.C. Handy, the musician credited with being

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the first person to write down a composition and call it a blues, this festival marks its 37th year with an array of events. While in town, fans can take a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Rosenbaum House, one of the few structures the architect completed in the South.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include The University of Northern Alabama Jazz Combo, Mike Dillon, The Swinging River Jazz Band, Lillie Mae, Col. Bruce Hampton, Tommy Womack, Latimore, Trojan Drive Jazz Band, The Midnighters, Johnny Collier & The Misbehavers, Clara Belle & The Creeps.
wchandymusicfestival.org

Satchmo SummerFest

New Orleans, Louisiana
Aug 3-5

Satchmo SummerFest is the premier festival dedicated to celebrating the life, legacy and music of Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong. The annual event features contemporary and traditional jazz and brass bands, New Orleans cuisine, and seminars about the life of Armstrong and the history of New Orleans music.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers include Stephanie Jordan, Hot 8 Brass Band, Bill Summers & Jazalsa, Meschiya Lake.
satchmosummerfest.org

Amelia Island Jazz Festival

Fernandina Beach, Florida
Oct. 7-14

Held annually in October and headed by Artistic Director Les DeMerle, this festival promotes world-class performers of various jazz styles, including swing, bebop, Dixieland, big band, Latin and contemporary. Concerts are staged in venues around Amelia Island, including the historic seaport of Fernandina Beach. The festival also awards a Jazz Scholarship yearly to an aspiring high school musician.

LINEUP: Requite Trio (featuring Janis Siegel, of Manhattan Transfer), Nanny Assis & John DiMartino, Henry Johnson, El Niño & The Latin Jazz Knights, The Dynamic Les DeMerle Band with Bonnie Eisele, Florida State University Jazz Ensemble.
ameliaislandjazzfestival.com

Mighty Mississippi Music Festival

Greenville, Mississippi
Oct. 11-13

At its core, this festival is centered on the blues, which makes sense given the locale's importance in the development of the genre. But festival planners also want to highlight the ways that the blues wound up influencing virtually every strain of popular music today. Festival attendees can camp out for the weekend and participate in late-night jam sessions.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers include St. Paul & the Broken Bones, Cedric Burnside Project, Duane Dopsie & The Zydeco Hellraisers, Jarekus Singleton.
mightymississippimusicfestival.com

Clearwater Jazz Holiday

Clearwater, Florida
Oct. 18-21

Crowds of more than 35,000 flock to this festival for a vibrant musical lineup that includes jazz, rock, funk, fusion and more. Now in its 39th year, this expansive, festive event is a collaboration between the Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation, Inc., City of Clearwater, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Esperanza Spalding, Medeski, Martin & Wood, Christian McBride, Herbie Hancock, Trombone Shorty, Marcus Roberts, Mindi Abair, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Béla Fleck, Boney James, Brandi Carlile, Lake Street Dive.
clearwaterjazz.com

Jazz for All Ages Festival

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina
Nov. 2-5

Bob Masteller's Jazz for All Ages Festival is a charity event to support the preservation of jazz education in schools. Several scholarships, programs, and instruments are provided to students and schools as a result of this event. Special room rates are available.

LINEUP: Joey Alexander, Christian Tamburr, Clint Holmes, Ronnie Leigh.
jazzforallages.com



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Festival**
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chicagogospelmusicfestival.us

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June 8 - 10
chicagobluesfestival.us

40th Annual
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August 30 - September 2
chicagojazzfestival.us



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A TALE OF TWO CITIES, TWO FESTIVALS

Celebrating their 24th and 22nd anniversaries, respectively, the Lansing JazzFest and East Lansing's Summer Solstice Jazz Festival each have proven staying power.

"When I moved into this part of the city, it was a ghost town," said Terry Terry, founder of the Lansing JazzFest, which runs Aug. 3-4. "This was originally the center of Lansing, along the river; it had the highest concentration of historic commercial buildings. Everything was boarded up."

Terry, who also is president of the Michigan Institute for Contemporary Art, the organization that produces Michigan BluesFest, sees his Lansing event as a success story.

"I moved down here, bought a building, lived upstairs and fixed it up," he said. "There were a lot of artists hanging around. Now, we have a bunch of galleries and artists that've transformed the area."

A part of that transformation was Terry's idea to bring music to that part of the city.

"I started thinking, 'Why don't we do a little jazz festival?' So, we got a permit to close down the street and formed a nonprofit," Terry said about a concept he had back in 1984. The first installment of the jazz festival

came to fruition 11 years later. "What were our assets? We have these cool buildings; we're along a great river; we're near the capitol and a big university."

This year, the festival boasts performances by a wealth of players exhibiting the breadth of the jazz genre. Vocalist Cindy Scott will be accompanied by guitarist Brian Seeger and Latin sounds will be offered by Aguanko, with the wide-ranging Elden Kelly Group and trumpeter John Douglas also set to make appearances.

"We like to mix it up: big band, straight-ahead, a little Latin," Terry said. "And, instead of commissions, we ask musicians to perform something they've written that they've never performed anywhere else. And, because we are always on the first Friday and Saturday of August, people can plan ahead."

The festival founder perceives the event, as well as the burgeoning arts scene, as potential catalysts for community development.

"Over the years, we've had amazing performances from multiple stages that get people up and moving, socializing and enjoying this unique historic environment," Terry said. "After one of the first festivals, someone came in and bought a building. The festival created that sense of urgency. In terms of

age, race, economic background, it's the most diverse cultural event in the greater Lansing area."

Terry estimates that the free two-day festival averages about 5,000 visitors each year. And a determined group of volunteers has helped with organization of the performances. Along with clinics and workshops hosted in surrounding buildings, past performers at the festival have included Stanley Jordan, Eric Reed and the late Mose Allison.

"Last year, we expanded north, got the city to refurbish the streets and sidewalks. We have three stages and a great hosting area for the musicians to hang out," Terry said. "And now, we have upwards of 200-plus volunteers."

The Summer Solstice festival, which is set to run June 22-23, is just a bit newer than Terry's event, but was influenced by something much older.

"Al Cafagna formed the Summer Solstice Jazz Festival in 1996," said Heather Surface, the festival's coordinator. "He was co-chair of the East Lansing Arts Commission at the time. ... Al, who remains a board member, was interested in and drew inspiration from the summer solstice celebrations in Europe."

By 2007, Cafagna and the festival worked with the City of East Lansing to create a partnership with the Wharton Center for the Performing Arts and Michigan State University's College of Music to sponsor, market and co-produce the Summer Solstice Jazz Festival, naming faculty member and bassist Rodney Whitaker its artistic director.

Surface said that 18 performances are set for this year's festival, including concerts with three groups affiliated with the College of Music, including a Saturday performance by Shadakeon. Trumpeter and vocalist Benny Benack will headline Friday night alongside the Lansing Symphony Big Band. Also scheduled to perform at this year's festival are Ritmo and Deon Yates, among others. Artists who previously have performed at the Summer Solstice Festival include Dafnis Prieto, Cyrille Aimée and Jeff Hamilton.

Surface said that due to construction, the festival, which averages about 10,000 attendees each year, will be moved three blocks down from its usual spot in the heart of East Lansing's business district. The free Summer Solstice Jazz Festival features two stages and runs with the support of about 40 volunteers each year.

"The first two festivals went all night, starting at 9 p.m. and lasting until dawn," Surface said. "Since then, it's been a two-day festival scheduled around the summer solstice."

—John Ephland

MIDWEST

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



Chick Corea, Esperanza Spalding and Terri Lyne Carrington will perform at the 2018 Detroit Jazz Festival.

Wichita Jazz Festival

Wichita, Kansas

April 1-8

The 47th annual edition of this festival will include world-famous artists, as well as educational events and a screening of the documentary film *Bill Frisell: A Portrait*. The WSU Jazz Invitational features top high school and college bands in a daylong juried competition.

LINEUP: Eric Alexander/Harold Mabern Quartet, Ben Allison, Brad Leali, Katie Thiroux, Mark Foley, PALO!, Delano Jazz Orchestra.

wichitajazzfestival.com

18th & Vine Jazz and Blues Festival

Kansas City, Missouri

April 19-21

Presented as collaborative effort between the Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley and the American Jazz Museum, this festival offers middle school, high school and college students a chance to learn from established musicians through clinics and evening performances. Tours of the museum also are offered.

LINEUP: See website.

mcckc.edu/programs/music/penn-valley/jazz-festival

Eau Claire Jazz Festival

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

April 20-21

With its re-creation of New York's famed 52nd Street, the Eau Claire Jazz Festival works to craft a setting befitting the hundreds of middle, high school and college students who attend the event.

LINEUP: Bob Mintzer, Bobby Sanabria.

eauclairezjazz.com

Ravinia Festival

Highland Park, Illinois

June-September

One of the oldest outdoor music festivals in the United States, the Ravinia Festival is held each year in Highland Park, north of Chicago. Tony Bennett has a long history of performing at this outdoor venue, which has lawn seats as well as an area of covered, reserved seats.

LINEUP: Trombone Shorty, Snarky Puppy with Damien Escobar and Jacob Collier, Buddy Guy and Jonny Lang, Galactic, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, New Breed Brass Band, Walter "Wolfman" Washington, Cyril Neville, Kermit Ruffins, Tony Bennett, Lara Downes and Theo Bleckmann, Seal, Jill Scott, Lindsey Stirling, Audra McDonald, Angelique Kidjo, Femi Kuti, Steve Martin and Martin Short with the Steep Canyon Rangers, Michael Feinstein and Kristin Chenoweth, Earth Wind & Fire, Gipsy Kings, Johnny Rivers, Jimmy Webb.

ravinia.org

Glenn Miller Jazz Festival

June 7-10

Clarinda, Iowa

The birthplace of Glenn Miller hosts a series of events dedicated to the band-leader's music and legacy. Performers from around the world will be on-hand for concerts hosted at Clarinda High School, as well as other venues across the city.

LINEUP: Glenn Miller Orchestra, Canadian Brass, Bill Baker's Big Band, Tamara Girls High

School Band, Nebraska Brass Band, Adam Swanson, Key of Steam, The GMBS Big Band. glennmiller.org/festival-2

Chicago Blues Festival

Chicago, Illinois

June 8-10

The largest free blues festival in the world will present its 35th annual edition this year. Headliners will perform in Millennium Park's Jay Pritzker Pavilion. On opening night, the festival will celebrate the 65th Anniversary of Delmark Records and the independent label's founder, Bob Koester. (Festival fans also should note that the City of Chicago will present a House Music Festival on May 26, and a Gospel Music Festival on June 1-2.)

LINEUP: Mavis Staples, Corey Dennison Band, Mississippi Heat with Billy Flynn and Giles Corey, Selwyn Birchwood, Willie Clayton, Fantastic Negrito, Kenny Neal, Lurrie Bell and Steve Bell, Jimmy Johnson and Dave Specter, Billy Branch, Billy Boy Arnold, Corky Siegel, Rick Estrin, Sugar Blue.

chicagobluesfestival.us

Twin Cities Jazz Festival

Saint Paul, Minnesota

June 21-23

Now in its 20th year, the Twin Cities Jazz Festival is a free, family-friendly event attracting more than 40,000 attendees. Festival events are held in and around beautiful Mears Park in the heart of downtown Saint Paul's historic Lowertown neighborhood.

LINEUP: Tia Fuller, Dee Dee Bridgewater, others. twincitiesjazzfestival.com

Summer Solstice Jazz Festival

East Lansing, Michigan

June 22-24

This festival salutes jazz as one of America's truly original art forms with a spate of 18 performances during a two-day celebration of the genre. In addition to regionally and nationally recognized performers, the festival includes youth and community education events.

LINEUP: Shadakeon, Benny Benack, The Lansing Symphony Big Band, Ritmo and Deon Yates. eljazzfest.com

Elkhart Jazz Festival

Elkhart, Indiana

June 22-24

Since 1988, jazz legends and fans have gathered each summer for a memorable weekend at the Elkhart Jazz Festival. Combining warm, intimate, small-town hospitality with the excitement of big city jazz, the Elkhart Jazz Festival has become an internationally acclaimed event with more than 100 performers

LINEUP: See website. Last year's perform-

ers included Ramsey Lewis, Ben Folds, Terence Blanchard.
elkhartjazzfestival.com

Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland

Cleveland, Ohio
June 28-30

The 39th annual edition of this beloved festival will take place at Playhouse Square. This year features 13 acts made up of jazz icons with decades of hits, artists at the pinnacle of their craft and emerging talent just beginning to etch their names in the industry.

LINEUP: Snarky Puppy, José James, Leslie Odom Jr., Dee Dee Bridgewater, Joshua Redman, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Terence Blanchard, Grace Kelly, Common, Vinícius Cantuária, DIVA Jazz Orchestra, Brian Simpson's Smooth Jazz All Stars.

tri-cjazzfest.com

Iowa City Jazz Festival

Iowa City, Iowa
June 29-July 1

This free festival has become one of the premier music events for bringing world-class talent to Iowa City. The festival features music on four stages, many food vendors and a dramatic, extensive fireworks display.

LINEUP: Still Dreaming (Joshua Redman, Ron Miles, Scott Colley, Brian Blade), Jane Ira Bloom Quartet, Matt Wilson's Honey & Salt, René Marie and Experiment in Truth, Vincent Herring Quartet, Braxton Cook's Quintet, Hot Tamale Louie, Amanda Monaco Quartet, Behn Gillece Quartet, Steve Kenney's Group 47, United Jazz Ensemble, North Corridor Jazz All-Stars.

summerofthearts.org

Mississippi Valley Blues Festival

Davenport, Iowa
July 6-7

Hosted by the Mississippi Valley Blues Society, this festival aims to instill an appreciation of the blues tradition in a new generation of music aficionados with programs like BlueSKool. Held at LeClaire Park along the Mississippi River, the festival offers a relaxed atmosphere with acoustic and electric strains of the blues.

LINEUP: Walter Trout, Jonny Lang, others.

mvbs.org

Lowertown Blues & Funk Festival

St. Paul, Minnesota
July 20-21

The oldest blues festival in the Twin Cities, the Lowertown Blues & Funk Festival pulls in acts like the Average White Band to perform alongside regional and local talent. Founded in 2003, the festival initially was held in Minneapolis before relocating to Mears Park in 2013.

LINEUP: Ohio Players, Free and Easy, High & Mighty, Scottie Miller Band, Crow, Toronzo Cannon, Chubby Carrier, Marcia Ball.

lowertownbluesfestival.com

Sioux Falls JazzFest

Sioux Falls, South Dakota
July 20-21

This free, annual festival features more than 18 hours of music on multiple stages, as well as with food vendors, beer and wine gardens, arts and crafts vendors and a children's area. The event is held in Yankton Trail Park.

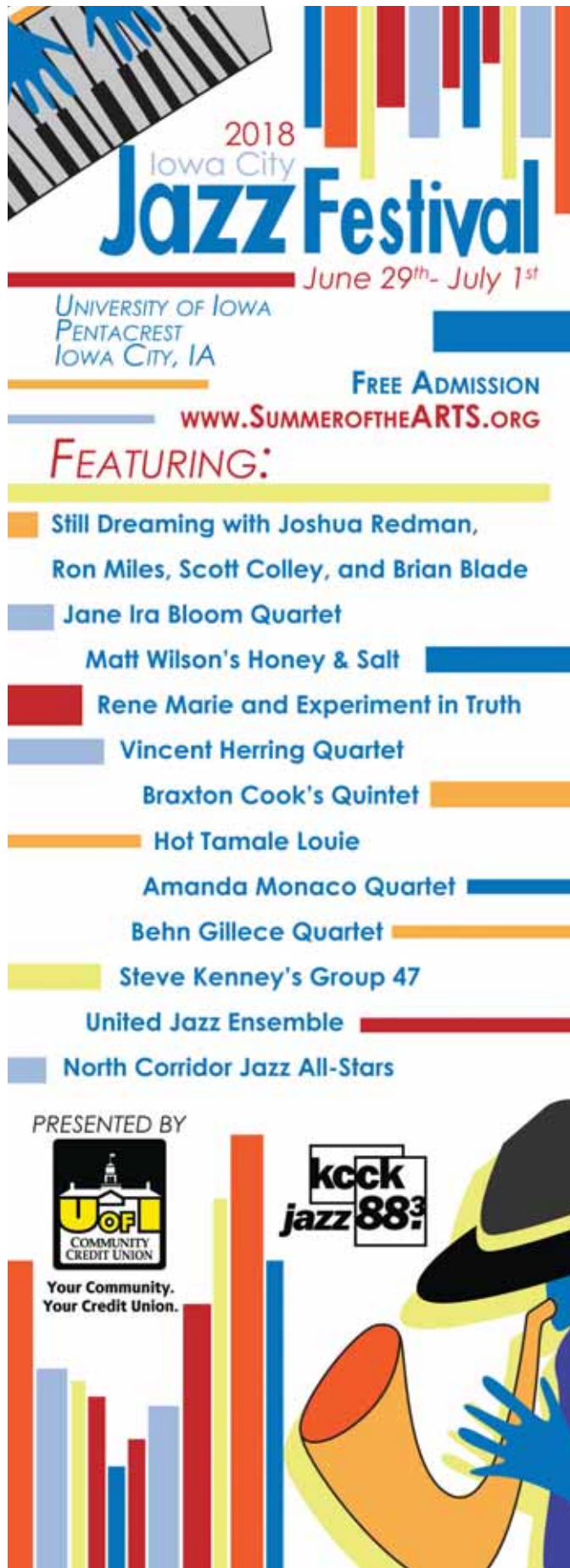
LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Robert Cray, Jonny Lang.



siouxfallsjazzfest.com

Jazz & Rib Fest

Columbus, Ohio
July 20-22

Held along the Scioto River in Ohio's capital, this free festival



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Indiana's Elkhart Jazz Festival was founded in 1988.

ELKHART JAZZ FESTIVAL

features three days of big-name jazz-related players, as well as chicken and ribs prepared by some of the nation's best chefs.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included Kenny Garrett, Maysa, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Miles Electric Band, Rebirth Brass Band. hottribscooljazz.org

Prairie Dog Blues Festival

Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin

July 27-28

Held each year on St. Feriole Island, a piece of land in the middle of the Mississippi River nestled between cliffs and hills, this festival offers blues and roots supplemented by New Orleans tunes, Texas boogie, zydeco and gospel. Barbecue to cajun cuisine and other types of food are available from multiple vendors.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Danielle Nicole, Moreland & Arbuckle. prairiedogblues.com

Iowa Soul Festival

Iowa City, Iowa

August (Dates TBA)

This festival is a celebration that features the dance, music, food and art of the African and African-American communities. The event highlights the positive influences that the culture has on Iowa City, the Creative Corridor and Eastern Iowa. This event will feature locally, regionally and nationally recognized artists.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers include Shade of Blue, Sidewalk Chalk, T.L. Williams & The Storm Chaser Orchestra. summerofhearts.org

Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival

Davenport, Iowa

Aug. 2-4

Focused mostly on the genre's early period, the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival works to honor the legacy of its namesake. At this point, the festival has spanned more years than the cornetist's recording career.

The fact that Beiderbecke's name can still bring crowds to the Rhythm City Casino Resort is a testament to the important work he crafted in just a few years of recording.

LINEUP: The Fats Waller Legacy Band and The Benny Goodman Trio (both featuring Jeff Barnhart) Hal Smith and Dave Bennett, The Fat Babies, Josh Duffee's All-Star Graystone Monarchs, Miss Jubilee & The Humdingers, The Wolverines. bixsociety.org

Lansing JazzFest

Lansing, Michigan

Aug. 3-4

This 24th annual free, outdoor, festival features more than a dozen performances on two main stages, plus clinics/workshops and children's activities. Now known as the "hub of hip," the Old Town section of Lansing is home to historic buildings next to the Grand River and a vibrant nightlife, which now is the festival's backdrop. Mose Allison, Nicole Mitchell and Stanley Jordan are among the international stars who have played this fest.

LINEUP: Cindy Scott and Brian Seeger, Aguan-ko, Elden Kelly Group, John Douglas, others. jazzlansing.com

Chicago Jazz Festival

Chicago, Illinois

Aug. 30-Sept. 2

In honor of the 40th Annual Chicago Jazz Festival in 2018, the Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events will offer a new program to support local venues and jazz-presenting organizations that offer free, public programs. The Chicago Jazz Festival is a free event held in Millennium Park at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Jason Moran, Anat Cohen, Allison Miller, Mary Halvorson, Sonny Rollins, Marquis Hill, Dee Dee Bridgewater. chicagojazzfestival.us

Detroit Jazz Festival *Detroit, Michigan* **Aug. 31-Sept. 3**

Fans can enjoy four jam-packed days of unique programming and more than 60 performances as remarkable and diverse as the genre itself during the world-class, free Detroit Jazz Festival, with shows on four stages.

LINEUP: Chick Corea (Artist In Residence), Esperanza Spalding, Terri Lyne Carrington, Ravi Coltrane, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Nicholas Payton, Chris Dave & The Drumhedz, more.
detroitjazzfest.org

Blues at the Crossroads *Terre Haute, Indiana* **Sept. 7-8**

This family-friendly event will be held near 7th St. and Wabash Ave. It will include food vendors, beer gardens and a Silent Disco.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Eric Stekel, Ian Moore, Ellusion, Jo Marcinek Band.
bluesatthecrossroads.com

World Music Festival *Chicago, Illinois* **Sept. 7-23**

Founded in 1999, this festival has hosted hundreds of performers over the decades. It is presented by the City of Chi-

cago and produced by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included Seun Kuti and Betsayda Machado.
worldmusicfestivalchicago.org

Michigan BluesFest *Lansing, Michigan* **Sept. 21-22**

This festival will bring two days of blues to three stages in the Old Town section of Lansing. In addition to all the music, a wealth of beverage and food options will be available.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included the Jim Shaneberger Band, Karen Lovely and The Flying Crowbars.
michiganbluesfest.com

Ouibache Music Festival *West Lafayette, Indiana* **Sept. 29**

Held at Tippecanoe County Amphitheater in West Lafayette, Ouibache presents a variety of types of music. The event offers camping, two stages of entertainment, swing dancing, and food and beverage vendors.

LINEUP: Andrew Peterson, Blair Crimmins & The Hookers, Christie Lenée, Blind Boy & The CNI Dawg, Big Swing Band, Derek Brown's "BEATBoX SAX"
ouibache.com

Hyde Park Jazz Festival *Chicago, Illinois* **Sept 29-30**

The 12th annual edition of this festival features two full days of free non-stop jazz, with more than 150 local, national and international jazz musicians performing in 12 venues.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Miguel Zenon, Ambrose Akinmusire Nicole Mitchell, Ballake Sissoko.
hydeparkjazzfestival.org

Edgefest *Ann Arbor, Michigan* **Oct. 17-20**

The thematic focus of Edgefest 2018 will be the avant-garde, experimental sounds of Chicago. The roster includes artists who have spent time in the Windy City, inspired by the unique energy of its heterogeneous improvisation scene, including multi-instrumentalist Roscoe Mitchell, who will lead a special 50th Anniversary, all-star edition of the Art Ensemble of Chicago.

LINEUP: Roscoe Mitchell, Don Moye, Hugh Ragin, Fred Barry, Nicole Mitchell, Mazz Swift, Tomeka Reid, Jaribu Shahid, Jason Stein, Fred Longberg-Holm, Harrison Bankhead, Adam Snead, Myra Melford, Joelle Leandre, Dave Rempis, Guillermo Gregorio, Joshua Abrams, Avreeayl Ra, Steve Rush, Ed Wilkerson, Mike Reed.
edgefestannarbor.com



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Kenny Garrett performs during the 2017 edition of the Healdsburg Jazz Festival in Healdsburg, California.

HEALDSBURG FESTIVAL ‘SPIRITUALLY’ IMPORTANT FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Artistically successful jazz festivals offer a point of view that reflects both geographic locale and, when possible, the aesthetic of the programmer.

As the Healdsburg Jazz Festival marks its 20th anniversary June 1–10, its setting in California’s wine country and the vision of founder Jessica Felix are worthy of celebration.

“I can’t believe we made it,” Felix said. “For the 20th anniversary, I decided that it’s going to be a bigger festival than we’ve ever had.”

For opening night, guitarists Bill Frisell and Julian Lage—a native of Santa Rosa, about 15 miles southeast of Healdsburg, who has been playing the festival since his days as a tween prodigy—will perform a pair of shows as a duo.

A double bill on June 2 with the Fred Hersch Trio and Trio da Paz features guest clarinetist Anat Cohen and vocalist Claudia Villela. The opening weekend concludes with tenor saxophonist Charles Lloyd performing a concert to mark his 80th birthday alongside tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, pianist Gerald Clayton, bassist Harish Raghavan, drummer Eric Harland and “surprise guests.”

“If you hold a mirror up to a sign saying ‘Healdsburg Jazz Festival,’ you will see the image of Jessica Felix staring back at you,” Lloyd wrote in an email. “Jessica Felix’s passion for great jazz is palpable and her hospitality is incomparable.”

Lloyd’s first concert in the California city

was in a duo with the late drummer Billy Higgins during 1997, when Felix was testing the waters by booking shows prior to launching the event in 1999.

The lineup this year reflects that kind of history. Included amid the festivities is a mid-week concert by bandleader and Santa Rosa native Adam Theis, who will be performing with his Costa Nostra Strings project. The ensemble will be complemented by guest vocalist and spoken-word artist Emcee Infinite.

A young Theis participated in and helped promote the inaugural festival, Felix said: “I had a truck, and we put Adam’s band on the back and went around town going, ‘Come to the festival.’”

Geri Allen originally was booked for a June 8 performance. The program, initially planned with saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, bassist Dave Holland and drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, has been reimagined as a tribute to the recently deceased pianist-composer. There’s a double bill the following night with the George Cables Trio and a Festival All-Stars group that includes alto saxophonist Bobby Watson, drummer Billy Hart and percussionist Babatunde Lea.

“I had a lot of festival family that I wanted to book this year, so this was one way to include as many as I could,” Felix said.

A pair of high-profile events also is scheduled. “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” a free morn-

ing concert, will showcase the Marcus Shelby Big Band with flutist James Newton, vocalist Ruth Naomi Floyd and the 100-member Freedom Jazz Choir. And Dr. Michael White’s Original Liberty Jazz Band makes a rare West Coast appearance as well.

California’s wine country made the news recently for a rash of fires and mudslides: “It’s very important that people realize that we’re OK and that coming here will actually benefit us, because all the businesses have taken a very big hit after people stopped coming,” Felix said. “We were all hard-hit, and this festival’s going to be important spiritually and economically for the area.”

A Los Angeles native, Felix said she grew up on the late-’60s jazz of Lloyd, John Handy and Pharoah Sanders. She graduated from Sonoma State University and eventually settled in the East Bay, founding the Eddie Moore Festival, before relocating to Healdsburg. A longtime friend of drummer Higgins, she embraced his vision for jazz education and has incorporated that into the festival through local efforts.

“Little by little, she has taken the town of Healdsburg by the hand and elevated their experience and knowledge of America’s indigenous art form, jazz,” Lloyd wrote. “She has teamed up with area schools to introduce it to every age group. This has been a beautiful thing to witness.”

—Yoshi Kato

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



Terrell Stafford (left), John Clayton and Sean Jones perform at Jazz Port Townsend in Washington state.

JIM LEVITT

UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival

Greeley, Colorado

April 19-21

The largest event of its kind in the nation, this festival brings together internationally recognized artists, award-winning clinicians and more than 250 college, high school, and middle school big bands, combos, and jazz vocal groups. Each year, 8,000 participants enjoy performances and the many educational workshops.

LINEUP: Dee Dee Bridgewater, Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band, Aaron Diehl, Tribute to the Brecker Brothers featuring Randy Brecker & Bob Sheppard, Vertical Voices, UNC Jazz Lab Band I, UNC All Angles Orchestra.

uncjazzfest.com

Reno Jazz Festival

Reno, Nevada

April 26-28

For its 56th edition, this hybrid festival/clinic/competition falls under the guidance of Pete Epstein, jazz saxophonist and chair of the University of Nevada-Reno Department of Music. As RJF director, Epstein partners with Adam Benjamin, UNR director of jazz studies (and new RJF associate director), to maintain a blend of educational and concert elements.

LINEUP: Dafnis Prieto, Peter Apfelbaum + The Collective, more.

unr.edu/rjf

Jazz Party Weekend

McCall, Idaho

April 27-29

This 20-hour event, presented by the Shore Lodge and the Sun Valley Jazz & Music Festival, is an intimate journey into the living room of jazz.

LINEUP: Charlie Bertini, Brian Casserly,

Sherrilynn Colby, Danny Coots, Bobby Durham, Brian Holland, Nate Ketner, Jerry Krahn, Eddie Metz Jr., Terry Myers, Russ Phillips, Sam Rocha, Jason Wanner.

sunvalleyjazz.com/mccall

Juneau Jazz & Classics Festival

Juneau, Alaska

May 4-19

This fest presents world-class artists in ticketed and free performances, educational workshops and clinics, and community outreach events. This festival is presented in different locations throughout the community.

LINEUP: Johnnaye Kendrick, Eroica Trio, Rhonda Ross, Richard & Mika Stoltzman, Andrew "Jr. Boy" Jones Band, Luke Fleming, Kate Ransom, Doug Deming & The JewelTones, Gary Motley Trio, Bradley Howard & William Ransom.

jazzandclassics.org

Ballard Jazz Festival

Seattle, Washington

May 16-19

Founded in 2003 as a provincial one-day event, this festival has blossomed to include both locally based and imported talent. The original Jazz Walk still concludes the four-day event but is now preceded by Brotherhood of the Drum, Guitar Summit and main-stage concerts the previous three nights.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included Chico Freeman, George Colligan, Greta Matassa, Marina Albergo, Brad Shepik.

ballardjazzfestival.com

SLO Jazz Festival

San Luis Obispo, California

May 18-19

Now in its fifth year, this festival presents jazz on five stages in Mission Plaza. The

festival's organizers also collaborate with Cuesta College on a Summer Jazz Workshop, which takes place June 18-22.

LINEUP: Sergio Mendes, Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca, Anton Schwartz Quintet, TrioKAIT, Pub Crawlers, more.

slojazzfest.org

Bellevue Jazz & Blues Festival

Bellevue, Washington

May 30-June 3

Some 40 shows are hosted in downtown Bellevue with John Gilbreath, executive director of nearby Earshot Jazz, collaborating to book headliners. Junior, middle school and high school student musicians perform as well as adult professionals drawn from local and national talent pools.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included Catherine Russell, Corey Harris, Radio Raheem, The Rumba Kings.

bellevuedowntown.com

Newport Beach Jazz Festival

Newport Beach, California

June 1-3

This festival hosts world-class acts at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Newport Beach. With an international food court, vendor village and stunning views of the bay, this festival provides the opportunity to enjoy jazz in an intimate amphitheater, or while dancing on the lawn.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included David Sanborn, Kandace Springs, The O'Jays.

festivals.hyattconcerts.com

Healdsburg Jazz Festival

Healdsburg, California

June 1-10

This year, the festival will mark 20 consecutive years of presenting great jazz performances and jazz education in Sonoma County. The milestone anniversary will be celebrated with expanded programming, free community concerts and an unprecedented number of musicians returning to participate. The region continues to recover from the devastating wildfires of October 2017, and as part of the rebuilding and healing process, this festival will contribute to the social, economic and cultural vitality of the area.

LINEUP: Bill Frisell & Julian Lage Duo, Fred Hersch Trio, Trio da Paz with Anat Cohen & Claudia Villela, Charles Lloyd (with Zakir Hussain, Eric Harland, Gerald Clayton, Harish Raghavan & other guests), John Santos Sextet, Marc Cary Trio, Geri Allen Tribute (featuring Ravi Coltrane, Dave Holland & Terri Lyne Carrington), George Cables Trio, Bobby Watson, Azar Lawrence, David Weiss, Billy Hart, Chico Freeman, Marcus Shelby Big Band, Dr. Michael White's Original Liberty Jazz Band,



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Tribute to Geri Allen
Directed by Tia Fuller & Ingrid Jensen
With Terri Lyne Carrington,
Kris Davis, Robert Hurst & others
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Celebrates Bill Withers
Celebrating Michael Brecker
Randy Brecker, Donny McCaslin,
Gil Goldstein, Adam Rogers,
John Patitucci, Antonio Sánchez
Jane Ira Bloom
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Special guests John Clayton,
John Patitucci & Dianne Reeves
Bill Frisell Trio
Anat Cohen Tentet
and Many More Artists



61st Monterey Jazz Festival

SEPTEMBER 21-23, 2018

Tickets Available May 1 / montereyjazzfestival.org

Sylvia Cuenca performs at the Montavilla Jazz Festival in Portland, Oregon.



Adam Theis with The Cosa Nostra Strings.
healdsburgjazz.org

San Francisco Jazz Festival *San Francisco, California* June 5-17

The 36th edition of this festival will present more than 40 shows over 13 days, including tributes to Benny Goodman, Oscar Peterson and Patsy Cline. Venues include the Joe Henderson Lab, Miner Auditorium and Davies Symphony Hall.

LINEUP: Dave Holland, Zakir Hussain & Chris Potter, Anat Cohen, Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band, Chester Thompson Quartet, Irma Thomas, Arturo Sandoval, Marcus Miller, Sergio Mendes, Ahmad Jamal, Tuck & Patti, Julian Lage Trio, Thumbscrew, Kneebody, Kendrick Scott Oracle, Jamison Ross, Jeff Parker, Soweto Kinch, George Cole, Marius Neset, Ken Vandermark & Nate Wooley Duo, Eddie Daniels, Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band, Bill Charlap, Renee Rosnes, Gerald Clayton.
sfjazz.org

Greeley Blues Jam

Greeley, Colorado
June 8-9

Island Grove Arena hosts family-friendly blues along with food and drink selections. An evening of pre-festival activities in historic downtown Greeley precedes it. Kids can learn about the great American art form at the arena's Blues 101 Stage, where they can also acquire a free harmonica (while supplies last).

LINEUP: Devon Allman Project (featuring Duane Betts), Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters, Danielle Nicole, Otis Taylor Band, Victor Wainwright & The Train, Dany Franchi, Chris Daniels & The Kings, Mojomama, Blue Dogs.
greeleybluesjam.com

Playboy Jazz Festival *Los Angeles, California* June 9-10

The Los Angeles Philharmonic Association will present the 40th annual Playboy Jazz Festival at the famed Hollywood Bowl. The festival will feature emerging jazz artists as well as renowned superstars. George Lopez will once again host the event. A special celebration honoring the late Freddie Hubbard will feature Randy Brecker, Nicholas Payton, Jeremy Pelt and David Weiss.

LINEUP: Lee Ritenour & David Grusin, Ramsey Lewis Quintet, Snarky Puppy, Miles Electric Band, Edmar Castaneda Quartet with Grégoire Maret, Daymé Arocena, Monsieur Perine, Roy Gaines, Jazmine Sullivan, Charles Lloyd & The Marvels with Lucinda Williams, Tower of Power, Hubtones with Randy Brecker, Nicholas Payton, Jeremy Pelt & David Weiss, Anthony Hamilton, Count Basie Orchestra (under the direction of Scotty Barnhart), Kneebody, Richard Bona & Mandekan Cubano, LAUSD/Beyond the Bell All-City Jazz Big Band (under the direction of Tony White and JB Dyas).
hollywoodbowl.com

Russian River Blues Festival

Guerneville, California
June 10

This year's festival takes place during the centennial celebration of Johnson's Beach, a popular vacation destination in Guerneville.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Tower of Power, Kenny Wayne Shepherd.
russianriverfestivals.com

Jazz Aspen Snowmass June Experience

Aspen, Colorado
June 22-30

The JAS June Experience includes four nights of headliners at the majestic Benedict Music

Tent in Aspen, plus JAS Cafe shows at the Aspen Art Museum and The Little Nell.

LINEUP: Lizz Wright, Leslie Odom Jr., Lyle Lovett & His Large Band.

jazzaspensnowmass.org/june-experience.html

A Jazz & Dance Party

Olympia, Washington
June 29-July 1

Swing dancers and vintage jazz lovers alike will love this new event. Four bands and seven guest artists will trade licks over the course of the weekend. With a 2,000-square-foot dance floor, dancers and listeners will delight in the music.

LINEUP: Black Swan with Marilyn Keller, High Sierra, Uptown Lowdown, Toni Blodgett, Brian Casserly, Jay Hungerford, Dick Maley, Pieter Meijers, Jimmy Armstrong, John Reynolds.
sunvalleyjazz.com/lacey

Vail Jazz Festival

Vail, Colorado
July 1-Sept. 3

The 24th edition of this festival features more than 70 performances and 200 artists, with a diverse array of performance experiences ranging from an intimate jazz club setting, to a world-class big stage, to a breathtaking open-air venue in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.

LINEUP: Django Festival All-Stars, Tony DeSare & The H2 Big Band, Andrea Motis with Joel Frahm, Nikci Parrot's Tribute to Peggy Lee.
vailjazz.org

Waterfront Blues Festival

Portland, Oregon
July 4-7

Fans can enjoy blues legends, up-and-comers and regional favorites at the 31st annual edition of this festival, held at Tom McCall Waterfront Park. This year's fest will feature more than 100 acts on four stages. Festival proceeds help Oregon Food Bank fight hunger in Oregon and Clark County, Washington.

LINEUP: George Thorogood & the Destroyers, Beth Hart, The Mavericks, Robert Randolph & The Family Band, Marc Broussard, Johnny Rawls, The Motet, Chubby Carrier & The Bayou Swamp Band, Commander Cody, Larkin Poe, Curtis Salgado, Ranky Tanky, Horace Trahan & The Ossun Express, Jimmy "Duck" Holmes.
waterfrontbluesfest.com

Sunset Jazz At Newport

Newport Beach, California
July 11-Sept. 19

Mainstream jazz fans can dine in the intimate Rose Garden of the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa while listening to national jazz and cabaret artists during this series of 11 Wednesday-night concerts.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Ken Peplowski, The Four Freshmen, Tom Kubis Big Band, Barbara Morrison.
sunsetjazzatnewport.com



HOLLYWOOD BOWL



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ANTHONY HAMILTON

SNARKY PUPPY

THE MILES ELECTRIC BAND

THE EDMAR CASTANEDA QUARTET
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LA Phil



Dave Holland (left), Chris Potter and Zakir Hussain perform at the San Francisco Jazz Festival.

New Mexico Jazz Festival

Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico

July 14-29

The 13th edition of this festival will feature concerts and events at indoor and outdoor venues throughout Albuquerque and Santa Fe by major touring artists, as well as New Mexico-based jazz, r&b and Latin music practitioners.

LINEUP: Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Tootie Heath, Charles McPherson, Dee Dee Bridgewater.

newmexicोजazzfestival.org

Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival

Fairbanks, Alaska

July 15-29

The stated goal of this festival is to “free your inner artist” through multidisciplinary instruction, opportunities to perform and arts appreciation. Started in 1980, this gathering has expanded to include classes and workshops in addition to concerts at venues throughout Fairbanks.

LINEUP: See website. Last year’s artists included Greta Matassa, Keith Karns, Eustace Johnson.

fsaf.org

Jazz at the Bowl

Los Angeles, California

July 18-Sept. 5

The Hollywood Bowl, home of the L.A. Philharmonic, continues its Wednesday evening summer jazz concert series.

LINEUP: Jazz at Lincoln Orchestra featuring Lil Buck & Jared Grimes, Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra (featuring Gerald Clayton Trio), Gregory Porter, Savion Glover, George Benson, Ledisi, José James, Taj Mahal & Keb’ Mo’, Melissa Etheridge, Deva Mahal, Queen Latifah, Common, Seal, Corinne Bailey Rae, *The Pink Panther* live score, more.

hollywoodbowl.com

Jazz Port Townsend

Port Townsend, Washington

July 22-29

The Centrum workshop and festival feature 36 internationally known performers

in new and unexpected pairings, hand-picked by Artistic Director John Clayton. Performances take place in the 1,200-seat McCurdy Pavilion in Fort Worden State Park, as well as in intimate venues downtown. This event includes coaching, master classes and other educational components.

LINEUP: Terell Stafford, Jeff Hamilton, Stefon Harris, Matt Wilson, Jazzmeia Horn, George Cables, Gary Smulyan, Taylor Eigsti, Tamir Hendelman, Katie Thiroux, The Baylor Project.

centrum.org/jazz

Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Festival

Port Townsend, Washington

Aug. 3-4

Fans flock to Washington for the largest country blues gathering in the nation. Concerts feature players and music from areas where pre-war country blues developed: the Piedmont region, the Mississippi Delta, Mississippi Hill Country, New Orleans, Texas and more.

LINEUP: Andrew Alli, Roy Book Binder, Clinton Davis, Del Rey, Pat Donohue, Jake Faulkner, Mary Flower, Jimmy “Duck” Holmes, Chaz Leary, Ethan Leinwand, Tim McNameley, Cary Morin, Jonathan Piper, Craig Ventresco, Reverend John Wilkins, Jontavious Willis, more.

centrum.org/port-townsend-acoustic-blues-festival-performances

Telluride Jazz Festival

Telluride, Colorado

Aug. 3-5

The 42nd annual edition of this festival presents jazz, funk, soul and gospel performances in a fantastic natural setting.

LINEUP: Jaimoe’s Jasssz Band, Irma Thomas, Bruce Hornsby, BadBadNotGood, Cory Henry, GoGoPenguin, No BS! Brass Band.

telluridejazz.org

Idyllwild Jazz in the Pines

Idyllwild, California

Aug. 10-12

More than dozen acts will help mark

Idyllwild Jazz in the Pines’ silver anniversary. Located in the San Jacinto Mountains, the setting provides idyllic surroundings in which audiences can enjoy 27 artists on four separate bandstands.

LINEUP: See website. Last year’s artists include Harry Pickens, Marshall Hawkins, Roy McCurdy, Rose Mallett Quartet.

jazzinthepines.com

San Jose Jazz Summer Fest

Aug. 10-12

This festival features jazz, Latin, blues, salsa and r&b. One of biggest music events in Silicon Valley, this event offers kids’ activities; food, wine and microbrews; and after-hours events.

LINEUP: Herb Alpert & Lani Hall, Jane Monheit, Booker T. Jones’ Stax Revue, Yissy & Bandan-cha, Nachito Herrera, Kool & The Gang, Lalah Hathaway, Vincent Herring, Mae Sun, Marcus Roberts, Theo Croker, Emmet Cohen Trio, Kat Edmonson, Makaya McCraven, more.

summerfest.sanjosejazz.org

Montavilla Jazz Festival

Portland, Oregon

Aug. 18-19

This annual event showcases the world-class talents of Portland-based artists who are pushing the boundaries of jazz.

LINEUP: Nancy King with Randy Porter, Dmitri Matheny with Darrell Grant, George Colligan’s Other Barry, Douglas Detrick’s AnyWhen Ensemble, Ryan Meagher’s Evil Twin, Christopher Brown Quartet, James Miley & The Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble.

montavillajazzfest.com

Vail Jazz Party

Vail, Colorado

Aug. 30-Sept. 3

This event features a full lineup of jazz’s finest groups and soloists, joining together in main-stage shows, jam sessions and multimedia tributes to jazz legends.

LINEUP: John Clayton, Jeff Clayton, Terell Stafford, Lewis Nash, Bill Cunliffe, Jeff Hamilton Trio, René Marie + Experiment in Truth, Benny Green Trio, Eric Alexander, Peter Bernstein, Adrian Cunningham, Niki Haris, Tyrone Jackson, Sean Jones, Lyndon Rochelle.

vailjazz.org/vail-jazz-party

Jazz Aspen Snowmass Labor Day Experience

Snowmass, Colorado

Aug. 31-Sept. 2

Held outdoors at Snowmass Town Park, this event takes place in a mountain resort town. The main stage is paired daily with two festival side stages, as well as nightly JAS After Dark musical events.

LINEUP: Gary Clark Jr., Lionel Richie, Jack Johnson, Zac Brown Band, Michael Franti & Spearhead, Fitz & The Tantrums, Bahamas.

jazzaspensnowmass.org/labor-day-experience.html

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summerfest.sanjosejazz.org

DOWNBEAT



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Angel City Jazz Festival

Los Angeles, California

September–October (Dates TBA)

This festival focuses on innovative, highly original artists. The programming includes established jazz artists, as well as emerging talent.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Craig Taborn, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Steve Lehman, Ben Monder.

angelcityjazz.com

Russian River Jazz Festival

Guerneville, California

Sept. 8–9

This festival features jazz, funk and r&b on the river at Johnson's Beach in Guerneville.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Stephanie Mills, Richard Elliot, Norman Brown.

russianriverfestivals.com

Telluride Blues & Brews Festival

Telluride, Colorado

Sept. 14–16

A scenic and intimate music festival, the 25th Telluride Blues & Brews takes place in a picturesque mountain town. The multi-stage celebration offers an eclectic mix of music paired with some of the best craft breweries in the country.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Bonnie Raitt, Taj Mahal & Keb' Mo'.

tellurideblues.com

Monterey Jazz Festival

Monterey, California

Sept. 21–23

Now in its 61st year, the Monterey Jazz Festival is the longest continuously running jazz festival in the world. Nearly 140 performances, panels, conversations, films and exhibits take place over two days and three nights on eight stages at the oak-studded Monterey County Fairgrounds.

LINEUP: Tia Fuller and Ingrid Jensen (Artists-in-Residence), Oscar Hernandez & the Spanish Harlem Orchestra (Commission Artist), Dianne Reeves (Showcase Artist), Wynton Marsalis & The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Jon Batiste & The Dap-Kings, Charles Lloyd & The Marvels with Lucinda Williams; A Tribute to Michael Brecker with Gil Goldstein/Randy Brecker/Donny McCaslin/Antonio Sanchez/John Patitucci/Adam Rogers, Remembering Ray Brown with Christian McBride/Benny Green/Greg Hutchinson & guests, A Tribute to Geri Allen directed by Tia Fuller & Ingrid Jensen, MJF on Tour with Cécile McLorin Salvant/Bria Skonberg/Melissa Aldana/Christian Sands/Jamison Ross/Yasushi Nakamura, José James, Christian McBride Trio, Joey DeFrancesco & The People, Dave Grusin, Thornetta Davis, Veronica Swift, Donny McCaslin Group, Jane Bunnett & Maqueque, Jane Ira Bloom, Fred Hersch, Thumbscrew (Mary Halvorson/Michael Formanek/Tomas Fujiwara), Julian Lage Trio, Lisa Mezzacappa's AvantNOIR,

Cameron Graves, Kristen Strom, Katie Thiroux Trio, KNOWER, Bobby Floyd Trio, more.

montereyjazzfestival.org

Oregon Coast Jazz Party

Newport, Oregon

Oct. 5–7

The 15th edition of this festival presents world-class jazz in Newport, on the central Oregon coast. Fans can expect multiple sets from renowned jazz stars, nightclub performances and educational events.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Houston Person, Russell Malone, Gerald Clayton, Holly Hofmann (music director).

coastarts.org

Palm Springs Women's Jazz Festival

Palm Springs, California

October (Dates TBA)

This festival presents renowned female jazz artists in the resort town of Palm Springs.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Claudia Acuña, Kandace Springs, Jazzmeia Horn, Miki Howard.

palmspringswomensjazzfestival.org

Earshot Jazz Festival

Seattle, Washington

Oct. 14–Nov. 4

The "dean" of Pacific Northwest jazz festivals, Earshot celebrates its 30th anniversary this fall. In addition to booking touring and rising star artists, Earshot has put the spotlight on local artists of national prominence, including vocalist-pianist Robin Holcomb and saxophonist/multi-instrumentalist Briggan Krauss.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists include Hudson, Gregory Porter, Brad Mehldau, Jason Moran, Mostly Other People Do the Killing, Seattle Women's Jazz Orchestra.

earshot.org

Sun Valley Jazz & Music Festival

Sun Valley, Idaho

Oct. 17–21

The 29th edition of this event will celebrate the Great American Songbook, plus vintage jazz, swing, big band, zydeco, blues, stride, boogie-woogie, cabaret, folk and other genres. More than 200 musicians and thousands of fans meet in the beautiful mountains of Idaho.

LINEUP: Barnhart/Midiri Quartet, Black Market Trust, Black Swan Classic Jazz Band with Marilyn Keller, Blue Renditions, Blue Street Jazz Band, Bob Draga, Boise Straight Ahead, Bruce Innes Trio, Carolyn Martin Swing Band, Cocuzzi Trio, Cornet Chop Suey, Yve Evans, Gator Nation, Holland & Coots, Paris Washboard Superswing, Rosie O'Grady's Good Time Jazz Band with Bill Allred, Sun Valley Jazz All Stars, Terry Myers Quartet with Jaimie Roberts, Tom Hook & the Terrier Brothers, Joe Smith & The Spicy Pickles, Gary Ryan, Sherri Colby's Racket Makers & Friends, Tom Rigney & Flambeau, Two-Tone Steiny & The Cadillacs, We Three, Yale Whiffenpoofs.

sunvalleyjazz.com



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 4/26 • KIEWIT CONCERT HALL (OMAHA, NE)
 4/27 • FOLLY THEATRE (KANSAS CITY, MO)

CANADA

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



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Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville (FIMAV)

Victoriaville, Quebec

May 17-20

The 34th edition of FIMAV will offer avant-garde music, visual arts, short films and sound art installations.

LINEUP: William Parker, Fire!, Mats Gustafsson, Walter Boudreau, Rova, Phew, Anna Homler, Mette Rasmussen, Lan Tung, David & The Mountain Ensemble, Audrey Chen, Balazs Pandi, Lori Freedman, Erwan Keravec.

fimav.qc.ca

World Guitar Festival (FGMAT)

Rouyn-Noranda, Northern Quebec

May 26-June 2

The 14th annual edition of FGMAT showcases a wide spectrum of musical styles on stringed instruments.

LINEUP: Joe Satriani and others. See website. fgmat.com

Suoni Per Il Popolo

Montreal, Quebec

June 1-18

Venues for this festival are Casa del Popolo, Sala Rossa, La Vitrola and La Sotterenea.

LINEUP: Milford Graves, Paal Nilssen-Love, Nicole Mitchell, Jaimie Branch, Budi. suoniperilpopolo.org

TD Winnipeg International Jazz Festival

Winnipeg, Manitoba

June 14-24

Since 1990, this annual festival has been presenting dozens of top-tier touring acts at downtown concert venues.

LINEUP: Chris Botti, Jill Barber, The Flaming

Lips, Tune-Yards, Daniel Caesar, others. jazzwinnipeg.com

TD Ottawa Jazz Festival

Ottawa, Ontario

June 21-July 1

This festival attracts hundreds of thousands to hear some of the jazz world's most renowned musicians. Performances take place day and night in indoor and outdoor settings.

LINEUP: GoGo Penguin, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Herbie Hancock, Chris Botti, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Bria Skonberg, Baltic Jazz Trio, Hush Point, Samuel Blazer Trio, Maciej Obara Quartet, Gwenth Herbert, Rotem Sivam Trio, Sun of Goldfinger, Marius Neset, Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Peter Van Huffel's Gorilla Mask, Guillaume Perret: Free, Dan Weiss Metal Jazz Quintet, Jerry Granelli Group with Robben Ford and Bob Lanzetti, Joe Sullivan Big Band, Ernesto Cervini's Turboprop, The Heavyweights Brass Band, Alison Krauss, Boz Scaggs, Francois Bourassa, Ron Artis II & The Truth, Ghost Note, Lake Street Drive, Swing Swing! with Kellylee Evans, Moon Hooch, Michael Greilsammer, Jerry Douglas Band, Banda Magda, ottawajazzfestival.com

SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

June 22-July 1

For more than three decades, this fest has offered jazz, blues, funk, soul, pop and world music.

LINEUP: Kamasi Washington, John Butler Trio, Ben Harper & Charlie Musselwhite, The Flaming Lips, Bonobo, City & Colour. saskjazz.com

TD Toronto Jazz Festival

Toronto, Ontario

June 22-July 1

This festival features more than 100 free performances, as well as new initiatives and some of the biggest names in music.

LINEUP: Herbie Hancock, Gregory Porter, Snarky Puppy, Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Lake Street Dive, Aretha Franklin, Heavyweights Brass Band. torontojazz.com

TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival

Vancouver, British Columbia

June 22-July 1

This festival offers more than 1,800 artists, 300 performances and 35 venues. There are more than 150 free shows, including two huge outdoor presentations downtown and at David Lam Park.

LINEUP: Spanish Harlem Orchestra, GoGo Penguin, Dave King Trucking Company, Dan Weiss, Starebaby, Kamasi Washington, Robert Plant, more. coastaljazz.ca





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Jean-Michel Blais**

June 29



Chris Botti

July 2



Sons of Kemet

July 2



**Dee Dee
Bridgewater & The
Memphis Soulphony**

Memphis Yes I'm Ready...

June 30



**Béla Fleck
and the Flecktones**

July 1



Snarky Puppy

June 28



**Mike Stern/
Randy Brecker Band**
featuring Dennis Chambers
and Tom Kennedy

June 30



Keyon Harrold

June 28



Gogo Penguin

A Humdrum Star Live
Opening act: Moon Hooch

July 1



**Brian Blade
& The Fellowship Band**

July 3

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ottawajazzfestival.com

Photo by Chris Parker

TD Victoria International Jazz Festival

Victoria, British Columbia

June 22-July 1

The 35th edition of this fest will feature jazz, blues and world music by more than 350 musicians from around the world.

LINEUP: Julian Lage Trio, GoGo Penguin, Ghost Note, Vincent Herring Quartet, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Ranee Lee.
jazzvictoria.ca

Festival International de Jazz de Montréal

Montreal, Quebec

June 28-July 7

The world's largest jazz festival has been synonymous with a passion for music for nearly 40 years. For 10 days, Montreal becomes the gathering spot for jazz fans from around the globe.

LINEUP: Sons of Kemet, Chris Botti, Snarky Puppy, Mike Stern/Randy Brecker Band, Keyon Harrold, Moon Hooch, Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band, Ólafur Arnalds & Jean-Michel Blais, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Davina & The Vagabonds, GoGo Penguin, Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Daniel Caesar, Jain, Ian Anderson, Ry Cooder, Ranee Lee, Tom Kenney, Bokanté, Marius Neset, Dennis Chambers, Kamasi Washington, Holly Cole, Beth Hart, more.
montrealjazzfest.com

TD Halifax Jazz Festival

Halifax, Nova Scotia

July 11-15

Now in its 32nd year, this festival makes use of the beautiful waterfront setting of downtown Halifax to present a wide range of performers.

LINEUP: Charlotte Day Wilson, Daniel Caesar, The War On Drugs, others.
halifaxjazzfestival.ca

TD Kitchener Blues Festival

Kitchener, Ontario

Aug. 9-12

This event presents more than 80 international, national and regional acts on six stages. Plus, there are late shows in clubs and restaurants.

LINEUP: Jonny Lang with Rik Emmett and Resolution 9. See website.
kitchenerbluesfestival.com

The Edmonton Blues Festival

Edmonton, Alberta

Aug. 24-26

The 20th annual edition of this award-winning festival will feature the best in blues from around the world.

LINEUP: Booker T., Samantha Fish, Monkeyjunk, Rick Estrin & The Nightcats, Sugaray Rayford, Ben Waters, more.
bluesinternationalltd.com

Pentastic Hot Jazz Festival

Penticton, British Columbia

Sept. 7-9

This event presents traditional jazz bands in five venues, all within close proximity. Audiences are enthusiastically encouraged to dance.

LINEUP: Bria Skonberg, Dave Bennett, Tom Hook, Tom Rigney, more.
pentasticjazz.com

Guelph Jazz Festival

Guelph, Ontario

Sept. 12-16

This festival, celebrating its 25th anniversary, features the best in creative improvised music, and also hosts a free outdoor concert series and an educational colloquium.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included BassDrumBone, Peter Brötzmann, Peggy Lee Octet, MendHam.
guelphjazzfestival.com

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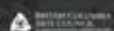
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2018



London
EFG London Jazz Festival
 November 19–25
www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk



Turkey
Istanbul Jazz Festival
 June 26–July 17
www.caz.iksv.org



Belgium
Gent Jazz Festival
 June 29–July 8
www.gentjazz.com



Switzerland
Montreux Jazz Festival
 June 29–July 14
www.montreuxjazz.com



France
International Jazz Festival in Juan-les-Pins
 July 14–22
www.antibesjuanlespins.com
www.jazzajuan.com



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



Spain
Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz
 July 17–21
www.jazzvitoria.com



Austria
Jazz Fest Wien
 June 25–July 10
www.viennajazz.org



Italy
Umbria Jazz-Perugia
 July 13–22
www.umbriajazz.com



Norway
Molde International Jazz Festival
 July 16–21
www.moldejazz.no



Finland
Pori Jazz Festival
 July 14–22
www.porijazz.com



Holland
North Sea Jazz Festival
 July 13–15
www.northseajazz.com



Canada
Festival International de Jazz de Montréal
 June 28–July 7
www.montrealjazzfest.com



USA
Playboy Jazz Festival
 June 9–10
www.hollywoodbowl.com/playboyjazz



USA
Monterey Jazz Festival
 September 21–23
www.montereyjazzfestival.org



USA
Newport Jazz Festival
 August 3–5
www.newportjazzfest.org



Swedish vocalist Viktoria Tolstoy, who has recorded for the ACT imprint, performs at Jazzfest Bonn in Germany last year.

JAZZ IN BEETHOVEN'S SHADOW

Germany's growing love and support of jazz is continuous, and sometimes includes echoes of the nation's estimable musical past.

Such is the case with Jazzfest Bonn, a formidable and relatively young festival on the scene. It celebrates its ninth anniversary this spring, April 26–May 12, in the famed city of Ludwig van Beethoven's birth. Generally, there aren't direct links between Beethoven and Jazzfest—although that might shift in 2020, the year that would mark the composer's 250th birthday. Still, some musical resonance with the immortally beloved Beethoven should be expected.

Peter Materna, founding festival director, noted that “classical musicians look at Bonn in great reverence, since it is Beethoven's place of birth and it exhibits a major classical music scene. Since Beethoven was known to be a great improvisation artist during his lifetime, it is obvious that we have a very enthusiastic audience here. This enabled Jazzfest Bonn to grow from year to year.”

And according to British pianist Django Bates, one of this year's highlighted festival artists, “It's impossible to be in Bonn without thinking of Beethoven.”

The first jazz festival of its size in Germany's former capital city, Jazzfest Bonn grew from a weekend-long event in 2009 to its current three-week span. The 2018 roster includes ever-popular Swedish trombonist Nils Landgren, guitarist John Scofield and Swiss vocalist Andrea Schauer.

Thematic agendas often are woven into the festival's programming. And this year, piano is the thing.

“We invited many extraordinary and distinctive pianists with their bands to the festival,” Materna said. In addition to Bates, who will perform with his trio *Belovèd*, the list includes Julia Hülsmann, Pablo Held, Michael Wollny, Gerald Clayton, Makoto Ozone, Eyolf Dale and Aaron Goldberg.

Bates, whose expressive powers on piano are displayed on 2017's *The Study Of Touch* (ECM), said that “Jazzfest Bonn is presenting a wonderfully varied group of pianists this year and I feel a kinship with all of them. We're all building with the same 88 piano keys and all exploring the infinity that they offer.”

Germany boasts many notable jazz festivals of varying sizes, stylistic leanings and vintage, including the 54-year-old Jazzfest Berlin, the adventuresome Moers Festival and the wide-ranging Jazz Baltica. Add Bonn to that list of German fests worth keeping tabs on.

“The main distinction between Jazzfest Bonn and other [German] festivals is that our concerts take place at 10 different venues throughout the [city],” said Materna. “Each venue is carefully chosen and the music is tuned to the concert location. ... The other major difference is that the concerts are always in a double-concert format. On one evening, two bands can be heard, each for one hour on the same stage. In an ideal situation, I combine a renowned artist with a completely unknown artist. At the same time, the quality of the concerts should be equivalent. Through this, we want to show the concertgoer how complex and diverse this wonderful music can be.”

Materna's philosophy in booking and designing a festival program takes into account

the delicate balancing act of showcasing well-known and emerging artists, as well as of creating a space for various sub-genres.

“It is very important for me to reach as many people as possible,” he said. “In my opinion, this music and the [scope of the] form is so magnificent that I want to inspire others. ... To make this possible, I have to program in a way that less-experienced listeners are able to gain access to jazz. It's an ideal mix for what I want to achieve.”

The prominence of classical music in Germany, Materna points out, also relates to a strong national taste for jazz's sophistication.

“Jazz is highly regarded in Germany. It receives more and more respect, and can be experienced in traditional concert halls more frequently,” he said. “We have a very sensible, culturally disposed and open audience in Germany. Due to the strong presence of classical music in our society, it belongs to our general education to be interested in cultural themes and, in particular, music. Unfortunately, in Germany, jazz music is not publicly subsidized as much as classical music is. But we do hope and campaign for a change here.”

As the festival moves toward its 10th anniversary in 2019, Materna explains that the project is secure in its footing, while still being a work-in-progress.

“We are constantly developing the festival further,” he said. “One of our main goals is to strengthen jazz music with its artistic fascination and connecting quality as an important instrument for integration and togetherness in our society—and to widen the number of fans for this music.”

—Josef Woodard

EUROPE

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



DAVID PELTAN

Bohemia JazzFest in Prague

International Jazz Festival Bern

Bern, Switzerland
March 12–May 19

Jazz, blues and soul are presented during this festival, now in its 43rd year.

LINEUP: Kenny Barron, Benny Green, James Carter, Jacky Terrasson, Clayton Brothers, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Steve Gadd Band, Catherine Russell, James Morrison Quintet, Harry Allen.
jazzfestivalbern.ch

Menorca International Jazz Festival

Menorca, Spain
March–June

This festival is held in various towns around the island, including Ciutadella and Mahón.

LINEUP: James Carter, Kyle Eastwood, The Jazz Fingers, Madrid Hot Jazz Band.
jazzobert.com

Jazz Festival Basel

Basel, Switzerland
April 12–May 16

International jazz artists perform in a number of venues around the city.

Lineup: John Scofield, Eddie Henderson Quartet, Danilo Pérez/John Patitucci/Brian Blade, Anouar Brahem Band, Elina Duni, Stefano Bollani, Lucia Cadotsch, Marius Neset, Eric Bibb.
offbeat-concert.ch

Jazzfest Bonn

Bonn, Germany
April 26–May 12

In addition to presenting world-famous artists, this festival promotes young jazz musicians, giving them the opportunity to perform in Beethoven's birth town. Founded in 2010, Jazzfest Bonn has quickly built a reputation that puts it in league with older European fests.

LINEUP: John Scofield, Michael Wollny Trio, Pablo Held Quartet, Aaron Goldberg Trio, SASKYA, Nils Landgren Quartet, Ed Motta, Incognito, Nils Wülker, Django Bates' Belovéd, Ulita Knaus, Inga Lühning & André Nendza, Julia Hülsmann & Christopher Dell, Lage Lund Trio, Philip Catherine & Martin Wind, Julia Biel, Wolfgang Haffner Quartet, Richie Beirach & Gregor Huebner, LYAMBIKO, Bundesjazzorchester, Eyolf Dale Quintet, Makoto Ozone Trio.
jazzfest-bonn.de

Ulrichsberger Kaleidophon

Ulrichsberg, Austria
April 27–29

This year marks the 33rd edition of this international festival of jazz, improvised music and contemporary composed music.

LINEUP: Matthew Shipp, Sylvie Courvoisier Trio, Va Servito Ben Fresco, North of North, Evan Parker & Matthew Shipp, others.
jazzatelier.at/kal.htm

MaiJazz

Stavanger, Norway
May 4–9

Founded in 1989, MaiJazz (aka the Stavanger International Jazz Festival) is the city's oldest festival.

LINEUP: Chick Corea & Trondheim Jazzorkester, Gregory Porter & Stavanger Symfoniorkester, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Donny McCaslin, Ralph Towner, Moon Hooch, Pixel, Hakon Kornstad.
maijazz.no

Ravenna Jazz

Ravenna, Italy
May 4–13

This festival has expanded its program for its 45th edition: 10 days of music in venues all around town.

LINEUP: Sons of Kemet, Chick Corea, Paolo Fresu, Andrea Motis & Joan Chamorro Group, Manhattan Transfer & Trio, Raul Midón.
ravnajazz.it

Trondheim Jazz Festival

Trondheim, Norway
May 8–13

Launched in 1980 as JazzMazz, this diverse festival focuses on Norwegian and European jazz.

LINEUP: Cécile McLorin Salvant, Gregory Porter, Bill Frisell & Thomas Morgan, China Moses, Donny McCaslin, Chick Corea with the Trondheim Jazzorkester, Armel Dupas Trio, Kari Ikonen Trio, Arild Andersen & TrondheimSolistene, Atomic, Solveig Slettahjell.
jazzfest.no

EUROPAfest

Bucharest, Romania
May 10–19

Jazz, blues and classical concerts by more than 300 artists will be mixed with master classes and workshops.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include the Akakaze Quartet, Cocoon, Sun-Mi Hong.
jmevents.ro

Vicenza Jazz

Vicenza, Italy
May 10–20

The 23rd edition of this festival will present more than 150 concerts.

LINEUP: Ravi Coltrane, Joe Lovano/Dave Douglas Quintet, Sun Ra Mythic Dream Arkestra (conducted by Marshall Allen), Camille Bertault, Raul Midón, Tigran Hamasyan, Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, Enrico Pieranunzi, Seamus Blake, David Virelles, Eivind Aarset, Ralph Alessi, more.
vicenzajazz.org

Newbury Spring Festival

Newbury, England

May 12-26

The 40th annual edition will include classical, jazz and world music.

LINEUP: YolanDa Brown, Clare Teal, Joe Stilgoe, Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers, Kabantu.
newburyspringfestival.org.uk

Sibiu Jazz Festival

Sibiu, Transylvania, Romania

May 17-20

This year's edition will debut the Romanian Jazz Meeting, a launch pad for Romanian musicians who are eager to make inroads worldwide.

LINEUP: Accord Vibes Band, Peter Sarosi Azara, Djazz & Happy Sins, Irina Popa, more.
sibiu jazz.eu

INNtöne Jazzfestival

Diersbach, Austria

May 18-20

This fest fills three stages, and artists also perform at local clubs.

LINEUP: Sons of Kemet, Kamasi Washington, Bobby Watson, Jaimeo Brown, Soweto Kinch, David Murray Class Struggle, Hendrika Entzian Quartet, Chanda Rule.
inntoene.com

Moers Festival

Moers, Germany

May 18-21

This international music festival, founded in 1972, has an associated "improviser in residence" who lives and works in the city for one year.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's performers included Anthony Braxton, Brian Blade.
moers-festival.de

Kerava Jazz Festival

Kerava, Finland

May 25-27

This festival has prospered by presenting a lineup of avant-garde, free-jazz and spiritual jazz for the past two decades.

LINEUP: Rob Mazurek Chicago/London Underground, Svenska Kaputt "Suomi" project.
keravajazz.fi

NattJazz

Bergen, Norway

May 25-June 2

Founded in 1972, this festival focuses on folkloric and contemporary jazz.

LINEUP: Larry Goldings/Peter Bernstein/Bill Stewart, Fire!, Cory Henry & The Funk Apostles, Sam Amidon, Angles 9, Erlend Anneseth Trio, Woody Black 4, Lucia Cadotsch, Cortez, Charlotte Dos Santos, Frode Haltli Avant Folk, David Helblock's Random/Control, Régis Huby, Ola Kvernberg, Lana Trio & Sofia Jernberg, Magic Spirit Quartet, Gard Nilssen's Acoustic Unity, Nils Okland Band, Rohey, Zap Mama.
natjazz.no

Iford Arts Festival

Iford, England

May 25-Aug. 4

This longstanding, multi-genre festival presents a variety of jazz in Iford Manor, a garden-oriented setting near Bradford on Avon.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Leeds City Stompers, Pee Wee Ellis, Heidi Vogel.
ifordarts.org.uk

Roma Summer Fest

Rome, Italy

June 10-Aug. 2

This outdoor festival is held at the Auditorium Parco della Musica.

LINEUP: Pat Metheny, Chick Corea Akoustic Band, Stefano Bollani, Sting, Ringo Starr, King Crimson, Jethro Tull, Luca Barbarossa.
romeing.it/roma-summer-fest

JazzFest Passau

Passau, Germany

June 14-22

Shows take place in the Cafe Museum Passau, and the Rathausinnenhof Passau. Organizers also present shows on several days in August.

LINEUP: Passau Jazz Orchestra, Leo Big Band Passau, Freudenhain Big Band.
cafe-museum.de/jazzfest-passau

JazzAscona/The New Orleans Experience

Ascona, Switzerland

June 21-30

This festival emphasizes New Orleans jazz and food. Some 200 concerts will be presented.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Topsy Chapman, Jon Cleary.
jazzascona.ch

JazzBaltica

Timmendorfer Strand, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

June 22-24

JazzBaltica takes place right next to the Baltic Sea and offers concerts at the beach. A free open-air program is also offered.

LINEUP: Nils Landgren, Jan Garbarek, Paolo Fresu, Donny McCaslin, Candy Dulfer, Eva Kruse, NDR Bigband, Lars Danielsson, Ulf Wakenius.
jazzbaltica.com

Jazz Fest Wien

Vienna, Austria

June 26-July 10

This festival features 12 concert stages in landmark venues like the Vienna State Opera, as well as local jazz clubs.

LINEUP: Cécile McLorin Salvant, Thomas Quasthoff, Caro Emerald, Melody Gardot, Randy Crawford, Kris Kristofferson, others.
viennajazz.org

Istanbul Jazz Festival

Istanbul, Turkey

June 26-July 17

The 25th edition of this festival will present

jazz and other genres that have connections to it, including rock and world music.

LINEUP: Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, others.
caz.iksv.org/en

Ljubljana Jazz Festival

Ljubljana, Slovenia

June 27-30

This event is the recipient of the Europe Jazz Network (EJN) Award for Adventurous Programming. The 59th annual edition of this fest will have indoor and outdoor shows.

LINEUP:

Dave Holland/Zakir Hussain/Chris Potter Trio, Dhafer Youssef 4tet, João Bosco & Hamilton de Holanda, Goran Kajfes, Eli-fantree, Ikui Doki, Rok Zalokar Trio.

ljubljana jazz.si

Jazz à Vienne

Vienne, France

June 28-July 13

Presenters of the 38th edition of this festival encourage fans to enjoy music on multiple stages.

LINEUP: Gregory Porter, Rokia Traoré, Morcheeba, others.
jazzavienne.com

Love Supreme Jazz Festival

East Sussex, England

June 29-July 1

Jazz, funk and soul are offered at this festival, held at Glynde Place, an Elizabethan manor.

LINEUP: Tony Allen, Nubya Garcia, Curtis Harding, Keyon Harrold, Mavis Staples, Yazz Ahmed, Ezra Collective, Moses Boyd Exodus, George Clinton, Elvis Costello, Steve Winwood, more.
lovesupremefestival.com

Gent Jazz Festival

Ghent, Belgium

June 29-July 8

Founded in 2002, this festival in northwest Belgium presents jazz legends and rising stars.

LINEUP: Jason Moran & Bandwagon, Ambrose Akinmusire, Pharoah Sanders with Nicholas Payton, Vijay Iyer Sextet, Dan Weiss, Melanie De Biasio, Paolo Conte, Kandace Springs, Jef Neve, Igor Gehehot.
gentjazz.com

Montreux Jazz Festival

Montreux, Switzerland

June 29-July 14

This festival, which takes places on the shores of Lake Geneva, presents jazz, blues, rock and other genres. Three large venues (Auditorium Stravinski, Montreux Jazz Club, Montreux Jazz Lab) showcase the headliners, and free concerts provide opportunities for emerging artists to shine.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, Stevie Wonder, Kendrick Lamar, Lauryn Hill, Kraftwerk.
montreuxjazzfestival.com



Kongsberg Jazz Festival

Kongsberg, Norway

July 4-7

This festival presents avant-garde and mainstream jazz acts, as well as poetry.

LINEUP: Gregory Porter, Carla Bley Trio, Chick Corea Akoustic Band with Marius Neset, Clashes (Skomsvoll/Hidle/Kornstad/Ensemble Allegria), Erlend Apneseth Trio, Stein Torleif Bella, Charlotte Dos Santos, Gurls, Tom Ibarra, Juno, Goran Kajfe's Subtropic Orchestra, Ola Kvernberg, Helge Lien Trio, Stenson/Christensen/Ljungfist, Hedvig Mollestad, Marius Neset & London Sinfonietta.

kongsbergjazz.no

Copenhagen Jazz Festival

Copenhagen, Denmark

July 6-15

The 40th edition of one of the world's largest jazz festivals takes place in venues all across the Danish capital.

LINEUP: Jeff Beck, Brad Mehldau, Melody Gardot, Tomatito & Michel Camilo, others.

jazz.dk

Lugano Festival Jazz

Mendrisio and Lugano, Switzerland

July 6-7, July 12-14

This open-air, free-admission festival presents 15 concerts of jazz, world music, rock and other genres.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Mike Stern, Randy Brecker, Vinicio Capossela.

estivaljazz.ch

Bohemia JazzFest

Prague, Czech Republic

July 9-17

Beginning in Prague's historic Old Town Square, this traveling, free-admission festival (founded in 2006) also presents outdoor performances in the Czech cities of Pilsen, Liberec, Domazlice, Tabor and Brno.

LINEUP: Mike Stern/Randy Brecker, Bill Frisell Quartet, House of Waters, Enrico Rava, more.

bohemiajazzfest.com

Jazzopen Stuttgart

Stuttgart, Germany

July 12-22

Pat Metheny performed at the inaugural edition of Jazzopen Stuttgart in 1994, and he will return this year.

LINEUP: Marcus Miller, Pat Metheny, Jamie Cullum, Jason Moran & Bandwagon, Christian McBride's New Jawn, Gregory Porter, Stanley Clarke, Quincy Jones, GoGo Penguin, Michael Wollny, Catherine Russell, Moon Hooch, Omer Avital, Allan Harris, Chico Freeman, Kraftwerk.

jazzopen.com

North Sea Jazz Festival

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

July 13-15

This massive festival showcases numerous styles of jazz, as well as funk, soul, salsa, blues and gospel. Programming includes clinics, an educational program and the presentation of the Paul Acket Award for an artist who deserves wider recognition.

LINEUP: Sons of Kemet, Snarky Puppy, Fred Hersch Trio, Marcus Miller, R+R=NOW (Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge & Justin Tyson), Gregory Porter with Metropole Orkest, Pat Metheny (with Antonio Sanchez/Linda Oh/Gwilym Simcock), Joshua Redman with Billy Hart Quartet, Hudson, Angelique Kidjo & Ibrahim Maalouf, Pharos Sanders Quartet, Charles Lloyd & The Marvels, Stanley Clarke Band, Kurt Elling Quintet with Marquis Hill, The O'Jays, Gary Clark Jr., Nile Rodgers & Chic.

northseajazz.com

Umbria Jazz

Perugia, Italy

July 13-22

The Santa Giuliana Arena serves as home to the main events of this festival, now in its 45th year. Special concerts take place at the Morlacchi Theatre, and midday concerts will take place at the prestigious National Gallery of Umbria. There is also a full program of free outdoor concerts.

LINEUP: Kurt Elling, Pat Metheny, Brad Mehldau, Quincy Jones, Gregory Porter, Joshua Redman, Terence Blanchard, Vijay Iyer, Billy Hart, Stefano Bollani, Roy Hargrove, Alfredo Rodriguez, Mingus Big Band, Pedrito Martinez, Joey Alexander, Gilberto Gil, Ivan Lins, Caetano Veloso, Kyle Eastwood, Melody Gardot, Take 6, Massive Attack, David Byrne, The Chainsmokers, umbriajazz.com

Aarhus Jazz Festival

Aarhus, Denmark

July 14-21

Festival venues include the Aarhus Concert Hall, clubs, museums and conservatories.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Pierre Doerge, Stan Getz, Herbie Hancock.

jazzfest.dk

Jazz à Juan

Juan-les-Pins, France

July 14-22

The 58th edition of this festival will once again have a spectacular setting. The main open-air arena has tiered seating with the stage backing on to the beautiful bay of Juan-Les-Pins.

LINEUP: Chick Corea, Marcus Miller Youn Sun Nah, others.

jazzajuan.com

Pori Jazz

Pori, Finland

July 14-22

The 53rd edition of the festival will offer a wide array of international stars and the best of Finnish talent. The main shows take place on several stages in the beautiful Kirjurinluoto Concert Park.

LINEUP: Vijay Iyer Sextet, R+R=NOW (Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge & Justin Tyson), GoGo Penguin, Carla Bley, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, Mavis Staples, Yazz Ahmed, James Blunt, Jessie Ware.

porijazz.fi

Molde International Jazz Festival

Molde, Norway

July 16-21

This festival, which was founded in 1961, is located by a fjord with a beautiful view of hundreds of mountaintops. The festival presents more than 100 free and ticketed concerts in eight indoor and outdoor venues.

LINEUP: Maria Schneider, Stanley Clarke Band, R+R=NOW (Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge & Justin Tyson), Hudson, Donny McCaslin, Allison Miller's Boom Tic Boom, Matana Roberts, Van Morrison, Cezinando, Iiro Rantala/Ulf Wakenius, The Big Yes, Four Brothers, Knut Reiersrud Band, Gurls, Trondheim Jazzorkester & The MaxX, Paal Nilssen-Love XL Unit, Ola Kvernberg, Trondheim Voices, Amanda Delara, Fieh, Ingebjørg



Umbria Jazz 18

45th anniversary

Perugia, July 13-22

QUINCY JONES
ERIKAH BADU
PATTI AUSTIN
TAKE 6
IVAN LINS
ALFREDO RODRIGUEZ
PEDRITO MARTINEZ
JOHN CLAYTON
UMBRIA JAZZ ORCHESTRA
NATHAN EAST
HARVEY MASON
GILBERTO GIL
MARGARETH MENEZES
CAETANO VELOSO
STEFANO BOLLANI
MASSIVE ATTACK
THE CHAINSMOKERS
PAT METHENY
KYLE EASTWOOD
DAVID BYRNE
OS MUTANTES
MELODY GARDOT
GREGORY PORTER
BRAD MEHLDAU
JOEY ALEXANDER
JOSHUA REDMAN
BILLY HART
TERENCE BLANCHARD
VIJAY IYER
MINGUS BIG BAND
KURT ELLING
ROY HARGROVE

... plus many more to be announced.



www.umbriajazz.com



FONDAZIONE DI PATRIMONIO UMBRIA JAZZ



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Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival

Ystad, Sweden

Aug. 1-5

This fest includes 40 concerts in 12 venues, all within walking distance in the medieval town center of Ystad. There will be a special concert on Aug. 5 at Ale's Stones.

LINEUP: Paolo Fresu, Manhattan Transfer, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Youn Sun Nah, Lizz Wright, Nils Landgren, Avishai Cohen (trumpet), Wolfgang Haffner Band, Claire Martin, Jim Mullen, Almaz Yebio, Ellen Andrea Wang.

ystadjazz.se

Gouvy Jazz & Blues Festival

Gouvy, Belgium

Aug. 3-5

This fest, celebrating its 39th anniversary, offers jazz and blues.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Chico Freeman, Benny Golson, Rhoda Scott.

madelonne.be/festival

Jazz Middelheim

Antwerp, Belgium

Aug. 9-12

Jazz, pop and rock are all part of this festival, now in its 37th year. There also will be workshops and an artist-in-residence.

LINEUP: Kamasi Washington, Melanie De Biasio, Philip Catherine, FONS feat.. Logan Richardson, Brussels Jazz Orchestra, more.

jazzmiddelheim.be

Nisville Jazz Festival

Nis, Serbia

Aug. 9-12

Jazz, blues and soul will dominate six main stages and a clutch of smaller venues.

LINEUP: Omar Hakim & Rachel Z, Inner Circle, Matt Bianco, Darko Rundek & Apocalypso, more.

nisville.com

Oslo Jazz Festival

Oslo, Norway

Aug. 11-18

International jazz stars, a festival poet, pop-up concerts, film screenings and local performers are on the menu for this jazz festival.

LINEUP: Tom Harrell, Jacob Collier, Sidsel Endresen & Jan Bang, John Surman, Bugge Wesseltøft, Rebekka Bakken, James Morrison & The Brazz Brothers, British United Vibrations, Torun Eriksen, Four Freshmen, Hovedeen Social Club.

oslojazz.com

Roccella Jazz Festival

Roccella Ionica, Italy

Aug. 12-22

Jazz clinics, main-stage concerts and fringe events will take place in a 3,000-seat open-air amphitheater, a 16th-century convent, a 17th-century chapel and a modern marina in Roccella.

LINEUP: Marc Johnson & Eliane Elias Duo, Matthew Shipp Trio, Baba Sissoko, Dweezil

Bratland, Torhild Ostad/Carsten Dahl.

moldejazz.no

Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz

Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain

July 17-21

For more than four decades, this festival has presented world-class jazz. Organizers of this event seek to present unique collaborations.

LINEUP: Cory Henry, Hudson, Mingus Big Band, Joel Frahm, Avishai Cohen (trumpet), Camila Meza, Seamus Blake, Carla Bruni, Leanne Faine & Favor, Kool & The Gang.

jazzvitoria.com

Nice Jazz Festival

Nice, France

July 17-21

A mainstay of the French Riviera jazz scene for 70 years, this center-city fest showcases performers on two stages at once. There is a total of six stages.

LINEUP: See website. Previous performers include George Benson, Stéphane Grappelli.

nicejazzfestival.fr

Hull Jazz Festival

Hull, Yorkshire and Humber, England

July 19-21

The 26th edition of this festival will feature some of the U.K.'s most exciting jazz talent.

LINEUP: Vimala Rowe & John Etheridge, Denys Baptiste Quartet, Camilla George.

night.org

Langnau Jazz Nights

Langnau, Bern, Switzerland

July 24-28

Over the last 27 years this festival has impressed with an international lineup. With its incorporated jazz workshop, it is a popular meeting point for musicians from all over Europe and the United States.

LINEUP: Christian McBride's New Jawn, Brad Mehldau Trio, Billy Hart Quartet featuring Joshua Redman, Bokanté.

jazz-nights.ch

Heineken Jazzaldia

San Sebastian, Spain

July 25-29

The Heineken Jazzaldia (aka the San Sebastian Jazz Festival) is the longest-running jazz festival in Spain and one of the oldest in Europe. This year's edition will be the 53rd. The festival offers a mix of ticketed concerts and free, open-air shows, with more than 100 acts.

LINEUP: Gregory Porter, Brad Mehldau, Chick Corea, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Carla Bley, Dave Holland with Chris Potter & Zakir Hussain, Kenny Barron, R+R=NOW (Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Taylor McFerrin, Derrick Hodge & Justin Tyson), Benny Green, Jacob Collier, Caetano Veloso.

heinekenjazzaldia.eus

Llandudno Jazz Festival

Conwy, Wales

July 27-29

This festival in a seaside resort town highlights key jazz figures on the U.K. scene.

LINEUP: Gilad Atzmon & Orient House, Iain Ballamy & Huw Warren Duo, Roger Beaujolais' Full House Trio feat. Jim Mullen, Claire Martin, Sara Oschlag featuring Alan Barnes, Dean Masser.

llandudnojazzfestival.com

Jazz em Agosto

Lisbon, Portugal

July 27-Aug. 5

To celebrate the 35th edition of Jazz em Agosto, the Gulbenkian Foundation will present a "Special Edition" program fully dedicated to composer John Zorn's musical universe, with 22 concerts and five films.

LINEUP: John Zorn, Masada, Mary Halvorson Quartet, Julian Lage & Gyan Riley, Kris Davis Quartet, John Medeski Trio, Thurston Moore, Craig Taborn, Milford Graves, Ikue Mori, Brian Marsella Trio, Marc Ribot, Dave Douglas, Barbara Hannigan, Mathieu Amalric, Stephen Gosling, Simulacrum, Highsmith Trio, Insurrection, Trigger, Secret Chiefs 3, Asmodeus, The Hermetic Organ, others.

jazzemagosto.pt

Zappa, Genti Rushi Quartet, Enzo Pietropaoli, Santi Scarcella, Debora J. Carter, Rosalia De Souza Quintet, Dean Bowman/Hamid Drake/ Daniele Sepe, Ray Gelato & The Giants.
roccellajazz.org

Saalfelden International Jazz Festival

Saalfelden, Austria

Aug. 23-26

Last year this festival featured 187 artists from 28 nations performing 37 concerts.

LINEUP: Shabaka Hutchings with Shake Stew, Ulrich Drechsler, Marc Ribot.

jazzsaalfelden.com

Koktebel Jazz Party

Koktebel, Russia

Aug. 24-26

For 15 years, this event on the Black Sea that has brought together jazz enthusiasts from many countries.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Jimmy Cobb, Tom Harrell, Igor Butman.

en.koktebel-jazz.ru

Jazz Festival Willisau

Willisau, Switzerland

Aug. 29-Sept. 2

Contemporary European jazz, pop and folk are the key ingredients in this festival, founded in 1966.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Anthony Braxton, Abdullah Ibrahim.

jazzfestivalwillisau.ch

Scarborough Jazz Festival

Scarborough, England

Sept. 28-30

Programming for the 16th annual edition of this fest includes big bands and tributes to Billie Holiday, Peggy Lee and Wayne Shorter.

LINEUP: Gareth Lockrane Big Band, Atlantic Crossover, Alan Barnes Octet, Woody Black 4, Leila Martial, Dave Newton & Alan Barnes, Stan Sulzmann's Neon Orchestra, more.

jazz.scarboroughspa.co.uk

International Festival of Contemporary Music

Venice, Italy

Sept. 28-Oct. 7

Pianist Keith Jarrett will perform and receive the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement.

LINEUP: Keith Jarrett, Victor Wooten Trio, Sebastian Rivas, Mivos Quartet, Charlotte Testu.

labiennale.org/en/music/2018

Akbank Jazz Festival

Istanbul, Turkey

Oct. 17-28

Launched in 1991, this festival includes concerts, panels, workshops, film screenings and social-responsibility projects (akbankcaz.com).

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Chucho Valdés & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Daniel Herskedal & Marius Neset Duo, Benedikt Jahnke Trio, Mark Guillian.

akbankjazzfestival.com

Baloise Session

Basel, Switzerland

Oct. 19-Nov. 6

For the past 33 years, major stars have been coming to this festival, which features jazz, soul, blues, world music and other genres.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Alicia Keys, Kool & the Gang, Imelda May.

baloisesession.ch

Jazzfest Berlin

Berlin, Germany

Nov. 1-4

This festival, which was founded more than 50 years ago, has featured numerous interesting venues, including a church and an arts academy.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Shabaka & The Ancestors, Tyshawn Sorey, Nels Cline, Ambrose Akinmusire, Michael Wollny.

berlinerfestspiele.de

EFG London Jazz Festival

London, England

Nov. 16-25

One of the U.K.'s landmark musical celebrations, the EFG London Jazz Festival brings the best and freshest music to the streets, clubs and concert halls of London. It features world-renowned musicians and emerging stars from across the globe.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Dee Dee Bridgewater, Kneebody, Robert Glasper, Becca Stevens, Dayna Stevens.

efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk

The poster for Jazz em Agosto 2018 is a vibrant, colorful illustration. At the top, it reads "27 Jul - 05 Aug JAZZ EM AGOSTO 2018 Lisboa". The main title "Jazz em Agosto 2018" is in large, stylized letters. Below it, the "GULBENKIAN MÚSICA" logo is visible. The central focus is a large, ornate frame containing the text "John ZORN Special Edition". Inside this frame, a list of artists and ensembles is provided: John Zorn, Thurston Moore, Milford Graves, Mary Halvorson Quartet, Masada, Mathieu Amalric, Barbara Hannigan, Stephen Gosling, The Hermetic Organ, The Rite of Trio, Nova Express, Asmodeus, Ikue Mori, Simulacrum, Robert Dick, Kris Davis Quartet, John Medeski Trio, Slow is Possible, Highsmith Trio, Dither, Insurrection, Trigger, Craig Taborn, Brian Marsella Trio, Julian Lage and Gyan Riley, and Secret Chiefs 3. The background of the poster is filled with various small, whimsical illustrations of animals and people. At the bottom, it says "JAZZEMAGOSTO.PT" and includes logos for partners and the official radio.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.



Saint Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival

Saint Lucia, Caribbean

May 6–13

This festival will offer ticketed concerts, educational events and free shows.

LINEUP: AZIZA (Chris Potter, Dave Holland, Lionel Loueke & Eric Horland), R+R=Now (Robert Glasper, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Derrick Hodge, Justin Tyson, Taylor McFerrin & Terrace Martin), Jazzmeia Horn, Alfredo Rodriguez, Etienne Mbappe, others.
stluciajazz.org

Rio das Ostras Jazz & Blues Festival

Rio das Ostras, Brazil

May 31–June 3

The 15th edition of this fest will present concerts on three stages around the beautiful landscape of Rio das Ostras. (Also, on Sept 7–9, the festival will have a special edition at Rio de Janeiro for the first time.)

LINEUP: Stanley Jordan, Vanessa Collier, Leon Beal, Azymuth, others.
riodasostraszazzeblues.com

Melbourne International Jazz Festival

Melbourne, Australia

June 1–10

Founded in 1998, this festival features more than 100 shows at over 30 venues. In addition to ticketed concerts, programming includes free events and educational workshops.

LINEUP: Branford Marsalis, Madeline Peyroux, Gretchen Parlato, Sun Ra Arkestra, others.
melbournejazz.com

Jamaica Ocho Rios International Jazz Festival

Ocho Rios, Port Antonio & Kingston, Jamaica

June 3–10

This event includes concerts, workshops, a school band competition and more.

LINEUP: The Jamaica Big Band conducted by

Marjorie Whyllie, Freddy Loco, June Thompson, others.

ochoriosjazzja.com

Devonport Jazz

Devonport, Tasmania, Australia

July 26–29

Celebrating 17 years, this fest showcases jazz and blues in a series of special events, dances, dinners and concerts.

LINEUP: SKETY and others; see website.
devonportjazz.com

Savassi Festival

Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Aug. 3–11

Held at various venues throughout beautiful Belo Horizonte, this festival has a strong focus on educational events and workshops as well as musical performances.

LINEUP: Frederico Heliodoro, Felipe Villas-Boas, Juarez Moreira, Louise Woollet, Duo Desvio, others.
savassifestival.com.br

Red Sea Jazz Festival

Eilat, Israel

Aug. 26–28

The 32nd edition of this festival will once again feature multiple concerts every evening, as well as clinics and nightly jam sessions.

LINEUP: See website. Previous performers include Catherine Russell, Dr. Lonnie Smith.
en.redseajazz.co.il

Curaçao North Sea Jazz Festival

Willemstad, Curaçao

Aug. 30–Sept. 1

Over the course of eight years, this has grown to be the biggest music event in the Caribbean.

LINEUP: Spyro Gyra, Michel Camilo Trio, Jason Derulo, Carlos Vives, Silvestre Dangond, Sean Paul, others.
curacaonorthseajazz.com

KL International Jazz & Arts Festival

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

September (Dates TBD)

The biggest jazz festival in Kuala Lumpur presents concerts in clubs, a theater at the University Malaya and other venues.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include David Sanborn, Lee Ritenour, Tinho Pereira.
klinternationaljazz.com

Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival

Aruba

Sept. 21–22

This event will feature more than 20 performances in a beautiful setting.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Marcus Miller, Roy Hargrove, Maceo Parker.
caribbeanseajazz.com

Jarasum International Jazz Festival

Gapyeong, South Korea

Oct. 12–14

This festival, now in its 15th year, typically includes about 15 venues.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Joshua Redman, Mike Stern, Chucho Valdés.
jarasumjazz.com

Dominican Republic Jazz Festival

Punta Cana, Santo Domingo, Santiago, Puerto Plata and Cabarete, Dominican Republic

Oct. 28, Nov. 1–4

Now in its 22nd year, this festival presents free concerts at several locations. FEDUJAZZ, the non-profit educational organization of the fest, presents a host of workshops.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include Anat Cohen, Esperanza Spalding, Sean Jones.
drjazzfestival.com

Jazzmandu

Kathmandu, Nepal

Nov. 1–6

For more than 15 years, Jazzmandu (The Kathmandu Jazz Festival) has booked outstanding musicians for this fest, highlighting Nepali and other musical traditions.

LINEUP: See website. Past performers include the Claudia Quintet, Trilok Gurtu, Ari Hoenig.
jazzmandu.com

Wangaratta Festival of Jazz & Blues

Wangaratta, Victoria, Australia

Nov. 2–4

This festival presents a diverse, eclectic mix of jazz greats and rising stars.

LINEUP: See website. Last year's artists included Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Ian Moss, Jon Cleary, Spiderbait, Katie Noonan.
wangarattajazz.com

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Music students at Roosevelt University in Chicago learn essential career-building skills.

Roosevelt Stresses Career-Building Skills

MARSHALL VENTE ADDRESSED THE 15 students in his large jazz ensemble at Chicago's Roosevelt University during an afternoon rehearsal in advance of a Feb. 25 appearance at the Elmhurst Jazz Festival. As his horn players practiced their parts, the pianist and bandleader instructed, "Push the time without rushing—it makes it more urgent."

Vente's directive also applies to new jazz initiatives at Roosevelt's Chicago College of Performing Arts. The school recently added a bachelor's degree program that allows music students to pursue interests in related fields. Scott Mason, who directs the college's contemporary music studies program, said the path provides students with more career options.

"The performance degree is great for somebody who thinks that's what they want to do," Mason said. "But most of our alumni are doing a combination of things. Most of them have a day job that might involve teaching music privately, or at a high school or college. We have students who are pretty good engineers who work in a recording studio. The idea is, yes, performance for those who want to do it exclusively, but we like to remind students that they might be doing something in addition to that."

Students at Roosevelt are required to participate in a curriculum that has been launched with the university's Center for Arts Leadership. This program enhances students' career-building skills—such as marketing through social media and preparing them for meeting with their audiences. The center's director, Allegra Montanari, noted that the requirement also reinforces the university's social justice mission in that their performances are held at such ven-

ues as a children's hospital, a homeless shelter and a senior housing center.

"Improvisation is something you have to do by nature in these settings," Montanari said. "When you interact with these audiences, things will change. Jazz students are very comfortable with that."

Roosevelt's jazz program includes opportunities for students to be flexible within the college. Currently, about 30 students are enrolled in its program for a bachelor's of music in jazz performance with an instrumental or vocal concentration. Mason describes Vente's large jazz ensemble and a Latin band directed by drummer Ruben Alvarez as its flagships. But Roosevelt also has a vocal group, New Deal.

The university's jazz program also encourages students to explore Chicago's performance spaces. This urban environment appealed to bassist and bandleader Matt Ulery, who graduated from Roosevelt in 2004.

"Living in the city, I was able to do the school scene, and it was also extremely valuable that I could venture into the city and make those connections," Ulery said.

Vente agreed that Roosevelt's location is an asset. But he also noted the value of the close interaction that occurs daily between faculty and students. "I was writing a chart on 'Witchcraft,' and the [students] I wanted to feature weren't cutting it," Vente recalled. "So, I sent an email to their teachers, [saxophonist] Jim Gailloro and [trumpeter] Victor Garcia, and I said, 'They need help.' They were glad to [help], and it was fabulous, an immediate turnaround. That's how it should work: You can't get upset, but you can help them. That's why we're here."

—Aaron Cohen



Don Glanden

Visiting Scholar: The University of Denver has selected Don Glanden, head of graduate jazz studies at University of the Arts in Philadelphia, as its Visiting Marsico Scholar. Glanden's multidisciplinary residency is set to run May 14–16 and includes workshops, performances and classes with students in DU's Lamont School of Music, as well as Media, Film & Journalism Studies. Coinciding with the residence will be a screening of *Brownie Speaks*, Glanden's 2014 documentary about trumpeter Clifford Brown.

du.edu/lamont

Chicago Jazz: Heather Ireland Robinson is the new director of the Jazz Institute of Chicago. She assumed the post March 1. She follows Lauren Deutsch, who held the position for more than two decades and will continue working with the organization in a part-time capacity as director of artistic collaborations. Robinson is returning to the organization, which was founded in 1969, after having worked as education and community engagement coordinator during the early 2000s. The Jazz Institute supports the genre through education and development with an eye toward building an enduring audience for the music.

jazzinchicago.org

Artistic Edge: Jazz House Kids, a New Jersey arts organization focused on helping children engage with jazz and its history, announced the appointment of Dennis H. Argul as senior director of music and education on March 1. Argul has spent 30 years as an educator in public schools and since 2012 has served as supervisor of music for the Elizabeth Public Schools in New Jersey.

jazzhousekids.org

Altruism: Through a donation from Daniel R. Lewis and M:X, a Miami arts organization, select students participating in the Miami Music Project will receive full scholarships to attend Interlochen Arts Camp. The Michigan nonprofit hosts 2,500 students each summer as they explore music, creative writing, dance, general arts, motion picture arts, theater and visual arts.

interlochen.org/miamimusicproject.org

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Aaron Goldberg

Pianist Aaron Goldberg's sixth leader album, a trio date titled *At The Edge Of The World*, expands a discography that includes close to 100 sideman recordings, including several with guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel and saxophonist Joshua Redman.

Jason Moran

"Handful Of Keys" (*All Rise: A Joyful Elegy For Fats Waller*, Blue Note, 2014) Moran, piano.

Five stars for conception, 4 stars for creativity and adventure, 3½ for execution. The going-for-it element had me excited and smiling, literally on the edge of my seat the whole time. They were fantastically pushing the envelope, and sometimes the envelope sheared a little—rhythmically. The part of me that wants to dance was tripping a bit, which you don't want, since you should be able to dance with a partner. Maybe they made up for it with the adventure.

At one moment, the textural consciousness was so deep that it suddenly called up some emotion from below. It felt like we were taking off in an airplane, then suddenly we're in the sky and it opened. Clearly it's someone interested in the entire history of the music, who spent some time studying the stride pianists, but prioritizes the adventure.

Kris Davis/Craig Taborn

"Love In Outer Space" (*Octopus*, Pyroclastic, 2017) Davis, Taborn, piano.

That had me from the first second to the last—I was in a trance. Magnificent two-piano playing. Selflessness, unity, becoming more than the sum of the parts. It didn't even matter who was playing at a certain point, because it was the mind-meld. 4½ stars for the execution and the conception—and most of all, for the feeling it gives that life is beautiful. I'll guess that it's Craig Taborn and Kris Davis.

Fred Hersch

"Whisper Not" (*Open Book*, Palmetto, 2017) Hersch, piano.

Fred? I'm aware of only one person who plays like this. "Whisper Not" is perfect songwriting—the chord changes scream the melody. No one plays in such a harmonically sophisticated, contrapuntal way in a straight-ahead context, with the exception of Keith Jarrett and Brad Mehldau. Of course, Keith influenced Fred. But Fred has a more Bach-like approach to two-handed improvisation, as you hear particularly at the beginning of this tune—lines, counter-lines, the left hand speaking as melodically as the right hand while serving its functional role.

The main conceptual issue with playing like this is managing risk. How much risk can you take such that you create adventure for yourself and for the audience, but don't fall off the edge of the cliff? Fred goes close to the edge; he doesn't fall, but you feel the tiniest bit of instability. Even though what he's doing is spectacularly sophisticated, and conceptually classically influenced, it still has a raw, organic jazz flavor. 4½ stars.

Manuel Valera

"What Is This Thing Called Love" (*The Seasons*, Mavo, 2017) Valera, piano; Hans Glawischnig, bass; E.J. Strickland, drums.

Five stars. "What Is This Thing Called Love." Definitely somebody of my peer group who loves a lot of the same stuff that I love, who checked out Kenny Kirkland, Mulgrew Miller and Herbie and Chick from *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*, and was influenced by the post-*Black Codes From The Underground* era of Wynton and early Branford. That's fiery rhythmic-percussive piano playing with vocabulary and seriously great phrasing. Talk about playing inside the rhythm section, inside the pocket! This person is incredible.



Aaron Goldberg

Sylvie Courvoisier

"Imprint Double" (*D'Agala*, Intakt, 2017) Courvoisier, piano; Drew Gress, bass; Kenny Wollesen, drums.

I'm not a fan aesthetically of what I'll call "orchestrated surprise" in jazz. It seems antithetical to the idea that jazz is improvisational music. If you're truly improvising, whether group or solo, the music can be full of organic surprises. It's stylistically very variegated.

At the beginning, it sounded like a Duke Ellington rhythm section, then you had 12-tone moments, almost Cecil-ish, and moody music—maybe French—in the middle. They were excellent at creating the various moods; every time I entered one, they forced me out and pushed me into another. The first time it was cool, but when it happened again and then returned to the original mood, I felt manipulated. That's not to criticize the skill of the musicians; it may say more about me than about them. It all had value, but as a whole, it didn't hold my interest. 3 stars.

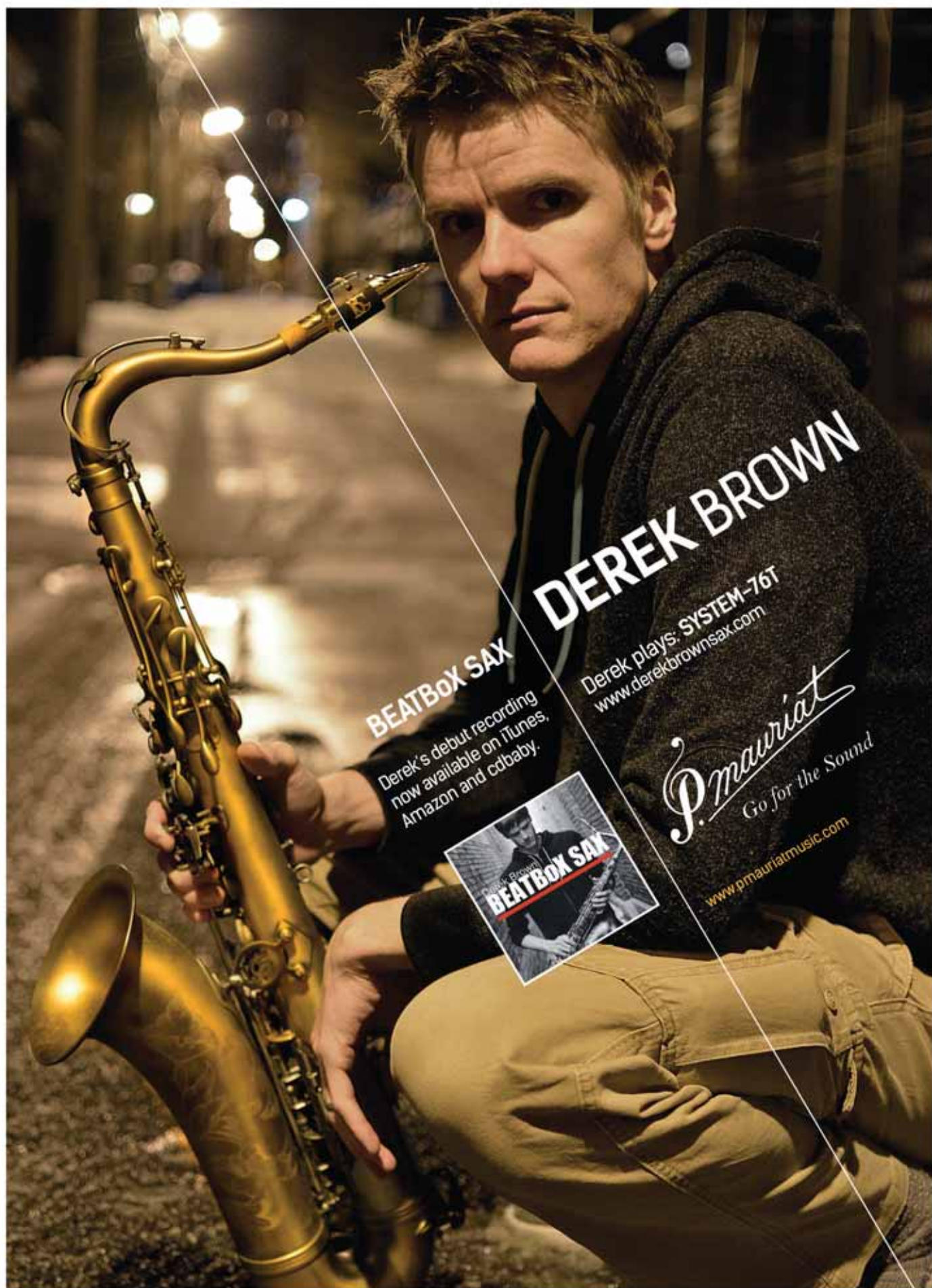
Martial Solal/Dave Liebman

"Lover Man" (*Masters In Bordeaux*, Sunnyside, 2017) Solal, piano; Liebman, soprano saxophone.

The pianist was full of organic surprises. He has a deep knowledge of this classic tune, and can take it literally anywhere. It's full of adventure, which I love. I wasn't convinced by the duet. It felt like two people with slightly different concepts, each doing their thing, and they mesh and it's good, but it could have been greater. 4 stars.

DB

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



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