

81st ANNUAL READERS POLL

DOWNBEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

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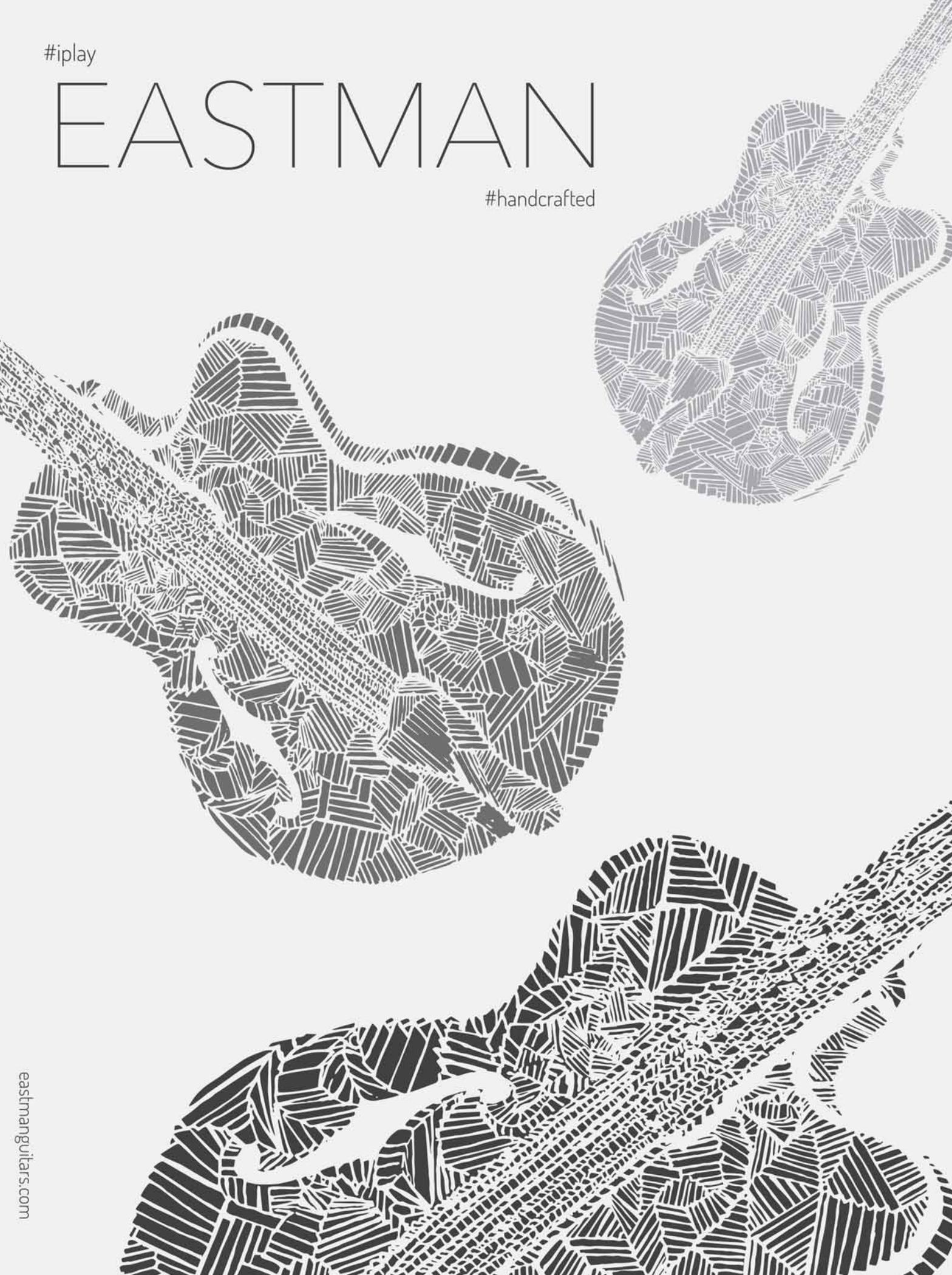


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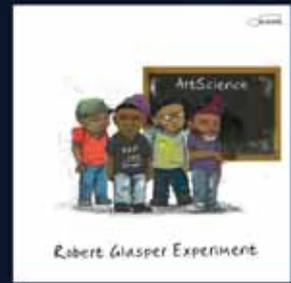
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DECEMBER 2016

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Attacking the 'Data Lords'

BY ALLEN MORRISON

The Maria Schneider Orchestra wins Jazz Album of the Year for *The Thompson Fields*, and the ensemble's visionary leader takes home top honors in the Composer and Arranger categories of this year's Readers Poll.



Maria Schneider (right) conducts her namesake orchestra at the 2015 Detroit Jazz Festival.

Cover photo of Maria Schneider shot by Jimmy & Dena Katz in New York City on Sept. 15.

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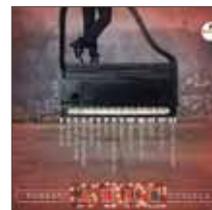
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STEVE NELSON / STEVE WILSON / PETER WASHINGTON

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RENEE ROSNES piano
 STEVE WILSON saxophones & flute
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 BILLY HARPER tenor saxophone
 GEORGE CABLES piano
 CECIL McBEE bass
 BILLY HART drums

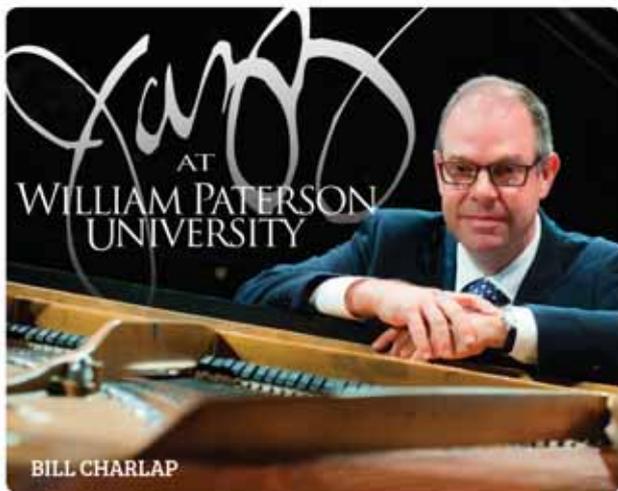


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Seasons Change

IN THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER, WHEN THE THERMOMETER climbs to 95 degrees and I'm sitting in a baseball stadium, watching a pitcher throw a 95 m.p.h. fastball, occasionally I start thinking about snowfall and the holiday season. That's because I'm already pondering which items should be included in DownBeat's annual Holiday Gift Guide. (Santa works on his list year-round, and so do we.)

This year's edition of the Holiday Gift Guide, which begins on page 83, is bigger than ever. The guide is stuffed with a wide array of gift ideas for musicians and music lovers, including instruments, holiday albums, CD box sets, DVDs, coffee-table books and more.

We're particularly excited to showcase the book *Jazz: The Iconic Images of Ted Williams*, published by ACC Editions. Williams (1925–2009) was a frequent contributor to DownBeat, and this hefty, 352-page tome includes many images he shot for the magazine, such as the photo above. Anyone who has visited Chicago in December knows that the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Chicago Avenue is always bustling during the holiday season, as crowds flock to stores, religious services and tourist attractions.

In Williams' photo, musicians Johnny Frigo, Lurlean Hunter and Johnny Griffin are decked out in their winter clothing, seemingly oblivious to the traffic whizzing nearby. Earmuffs are always a nice touch for a saxophonist.

In addition to the Holiday Gift Guide, this issue of DownBeat includes the results of our 81st Annual Readers Poll. We're thrilled to welcome alto saxophonist Phil Woods into the DownBeat Hall of Fame, but it's a bittersweet moment: We wish that Mr. Woods were still with us so that he could enjoy this well-deserved accolade.

Maria Schneider topped three categories in the Readers Poll: Composer, Arranger and Jazz Album of the Year, for the Maria Schneider Orchestra's exquisite disc *The Thompson Fields*. In our cover story, Schneider eloquently discusses artists' rights in the digital age. Anyone who cares about equity for artists should read what Schneider has to say.

We want to hear other musicians' and fans' opinions on this extremely important topic. Please send your emails to editor@downbeat.com. Thanks for interacting with us, and please keep on reading.

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In Praise of Film Scores

I'm writing in regard to John McDonough's comments on the album *Real Enemies* by Darcy James Argue's Secret Society (The Hot Box, November). Something doesn't compute: Mr. McDonough gives the album only 3½ stars, yet compares it to "music for Hitchcock, Frankheimer, Spielberg."

I remember the history of DownBeat critics' "put-downs" in which a soundtrack comparison is considered to be the worst insult that can be made—despite the fact that film scores are one of the great musical genres of the past century. Those comments are akin to a classical music critic dismissing *Daphnis et Chloé* as "just a ballet score."

By the way, comparing a new release to scores by Bernstein, Goldsmith and Williams would be the highest praise one could make; any release worthy of it would automatically merit a 5-star rating.

TOM HUDAK
PORTLAND, OREGON



Jazz Studies in California

We were delighted to receive such great coverage from DownBeat regarding our exciting new RJAM program at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music ("New Horizons in Bay Area," October). We apologize for any offense taken in reference to the offerings of other jazz programs in the Northern California region. There are many fine four-year programs in the area, including at the University of the Pacific, American River College, CSU-East Bay and Sacramento, SF State, San Jose State, Sonoma State, Stanford and others.

We encourage students to look at the many wonderful programs in Northern California and elsewhere as they consider their college choices.

SIMON ROWE
SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

One of the Greats

This letter is about the great vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson ("The 'Always Striving' Bobby Hutcherson: 1941–2016," November).

In March 1996, Hutcherson had just finished playing two superb sets at the Regattabar in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As the crowd dispersed, I asked him if he needed any help hauling out his equipment. "Sure," he said. It's been two decades since that night, but I remember a man that was as kind and empathetic as one could hope to meet.

When I asked Mr. Hutcherson about his friendship with Eric Dolphy, he told me about Dolphy's many phone calls to him: "Sometimes he'd be playing his sax or his flute—and sometimes I'd just hear the birds outside Eric's window," I recall him saying.

The world has lost not only a supreme musician, but a truly wonderful man.

MICK CARLON
CENTERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

Science, Not Art

I couldn't believe my eyes when I picked up the November issue of DownBeat and read John Murph's 4-star review of the Robert Glasper Experiment's new CD, *ArtScience*.

Just a few days before, I had managed to sit through the record, with its maxed-out, auto-tuned, completely unlistenable "vocals," layered over some recycled '70s grooves (circa Herbie Hancock's *Sunlight*). The CD, along with its cutesy booklet, ended up in our garbage can. I sincerely hope that this aberration of a record—and the derivative commercial drivel it contains, which bears no relationship to Art, Science or Experiments—will not start an unholy trend in jazz music.

CSABA SZABO
SEATTLE

Not Enough

Your perfunctory obituary of the great Rudy Van Gelder was disgraceful ("Remembering Rudy Van Gelder, Who Defined the Sound of Jazz," November). You devote so many pages to lesser talents when you have a figure who chronicled the recorded history of jazz for more than six decades. You should be ashamed.

LARRY HOLLIS
HOLLIS5@COX.NET

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



Gerald Albright at the 2016 Légère NAMM Jazz Jam



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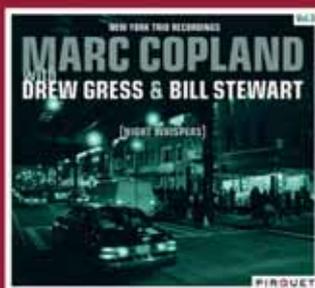


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Bill Carrothers *p* · Gary Peacock *b*
Bill Stewart *dr*

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PIT3037

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Bill Stewart *dr*

Downbeat: ★★★★★

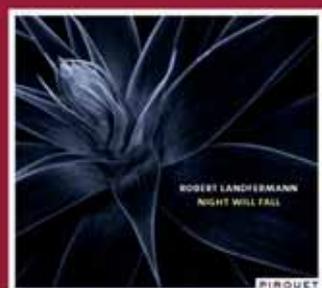


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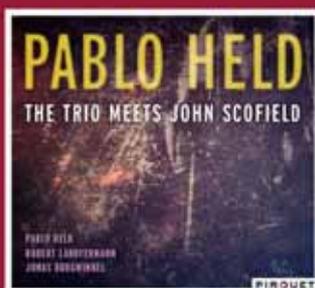


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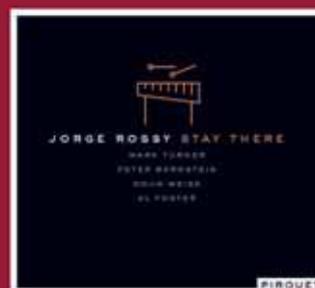


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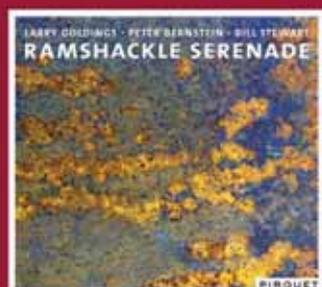
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Peter Bernstein *g* · Doug Weiss *b*
Al Foster *dr*



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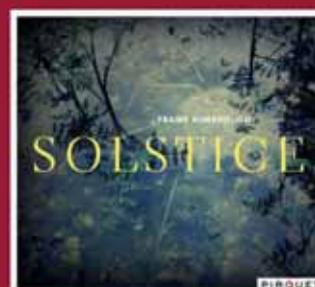
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PIT3047

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Joyce Moreno *voc* · Kenny Werner *p*



PIT3027

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Frank Kimbrough *p* · Jay Anderson *b*
Jeff Hirshfield *dr*

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Beat

Horn of Plenty

After her passing in 2005, pianist-singer Shirley Horn's legacy seems to have receded back into the ether from which she emerged to take her place on the national jazz stage. Memories of Horn have rested in the private thoughts of her fans, with few events to bring her back to national prominence in the years since the release of *But Beautiful: The Best Of Shirley Horn* (Verve) in 2006.

Resonance Records is causing Horn's stock to rise dramatically with a new Horn concert album, *Live At The 4 Queens*. It's a previously unreleased recording of one of the great masters of self-accompaniment and hypnotic vocals—on the cusp of becoming a household jazz name.

For decades, Horn was a civic delight among jazz fans in Washington, D.C., where she lived and raised her daughter. Recordings for Mercury and other labels didn't budge Horn from the "local favorite" category, even though she would go on to headline venues from coast to coast and take home a Grammy for the 1998 album *I Remember Miles*.

Resonance producer Zev Feldman was along for some of Horn's amazing ride. A native of Montgomery County, Feldman had heard Horn at D.C. spots like the Zanzibar, Bohemian Caverns and One Step Down. He later worked for Polygram, interacting with retail businesses and hanging posters in the clubs where Horn worked. "We worked the entire mid-Atlantic circuit," Feldman recalled, "and I was invited to be part of her inner circle—with her musicians and manager, Sheila Mathis. They were very gracious to me."

Live At The 4 Queens presents Horn with her faithful bassist Charles Ables and drummer Steve Williams, at Las Vegas' jazz outpost on May 2, 1988. Resonance owner George Klabin had obtained the tape from broadcaster-turned-impresario Alan Grant, who presented the music at the club. Formidable legal hurdles stood in the way of a proper issue until all of the parties came to agreement.

As with all of Resonance's historic releases, the packaging is elaborate. It includes lavish 56-page booklet containing essays by Horn's associates and admirers. Author James Gavin is one of the booklet's essayists. "One of things I love about the album," he explained, "is that it captures her before her big success—just as she was catching fire. ... This album gets her at the perfect point."

Feldman is clear about the importance of this 1988 concert recording in the overall arc of Horn's career. "It was the beginning of her third act," he asserted. "This was a renaissance period for her, and I think now is a good time to celebrate Shirley."

—Kirk Silsbee



Riffs ›



Long-Form Jarrett: On Nov. 18, ECM will release *A Multitude Of Angels*, a previously unissued set of recordings chronicling a series of pianist Keith Jarrett's solo concerts held in Italy in October 1996. The four-CD set documents four nights of performances from Modena, Ferrara, Turin and Genoa. It marks a significant moment in the development of Jarrett's artistic process, denoting the conclusion of the pianist's experiments with extremely long-form improvisation, in which concerts consisted of two continuous sets. The recordings, which were captured by Jarrett on digital audio tape, boast a pristine audio quality.

ecmrecords.com

Snarky Festival: The inaugural GroundUP Music Festival, hosted by Snarky Puppy (winner of the Jazz Group category in the 2016 DownBeat Readers Poll), will take place Feb. 10–12 in Miami Beach, Florida. The festival will feature sets from Snarky Puppy each day and a lineup that includes David Crosby, Laura Mvula, Chris Thile & Michael Daves, Jacob Collier, Shelly Berg, Terence Blanchard, Charlie Hunter featuring Jeff Coffin, John Medeski's Mad Skillet, Pédrito Martinez, Roosevelt Collier and the Lee Boys, and others. With room for only 1,500 people per day, the event is likely to sell out. The intent is to keep the space comfortable and intimate in order to create an optimal experience for both the audience and artists. The event will serve as the grand finale of the Festival Miami, presented by the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

festival.groundupmusic.net

Flood Relief: The Jazz Foundation of America has pledged to raise \$1 million to aid musicians who are in need of immediate and ongoing help following the recent flooding in Louisiana. The fund will provide financial, medical, housing, legal and mortgage assistance as well as work opportunities for these cases. Immediately following the flood, the JFA team hit the ground in Louisiana, helping to provide basic necessities. Details about how to support the effort can be found on the foundation's website.

jazzfoundation.org/donate

Caught ›



Wayne Shorter performs at the Monterey Jazz Festival in Monterey, California, on Sept. 18.

Shorter, Metheny Play it Cool at Monterey Jazz Fest

JAZZ MASTER WAYNE SHORTER IS NO stranger to the notion of premiering music at the Monterey Jazz Festival.

In 2000, while serving as the festival's commissioned artist, he introduced the large-ensemble, flamenco-flavored suite "Vendiendo Alegria," featuring the brass-charged 20-piece Monterey Chamber Jazz Orchestra. (That tune factored into his 2003 Grammy-winning album *Alegria*, his first studio album in eight years.)

While he wasn't physically present at the fest's 2013 edition, his spirit pervaded. Two of his Monterey-commissioned compositions, "Destination Unknown" and "To Sail Beyond The Sunset," were given debuts by the Shorter-inspired Sound Prints band, led by trumpeter Dave Douglas and saxophonist Joe Lovano, who were recording the group's debut album, *Live At The Monterey Jazz Festival* (Blue Note).

This year, Shorter was in commission mode again, unveiling another cosmic work entitled "The Unfolding," featuring his quartet—pianist Danilo Pérez, bassist John Patitucci, drummer Brian Blade—as well as the 10-piece Monterey Jazz Festival Wind Ensemble conducted by Nicole Paiement. It was jointly commissioned by Monterey, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Poland's National Forum of Music in Wroclaw and Opening Nights at Florida State University.

While Shorter was short of word in introducing "The Unfolding," it played out as a new work of art that defied explanation. Actually, it was inspired by his visit to Stanford University's Linear Accelerator Center that studies subatomic activity, where he met a scientist who

refuted the Big Bang theory in lieu of multiple universes developing in an unfolding pattern. Within Shorter's work, however, there were no big bangs or flip-flapping. Instead "The Unfolding" revealed itself as poetry in motion.

The quartet opened the transcendent piece with a gentle lull of the horns, sounding at first slightly ominous then lyrical and pacific. That was broken by Blade's bash and Shorter's fillips in the midst of a swell of horn-harmony skips. Shorter set up a soprano clarion call that made for a quiet stretch of tension and release. The horns rushed in and soon there was a cacophony of sound—chaos before order was restored by Shorter playing a simple melody. When it was over, the crowd basked in the glow of Shorter's compositional curiosity. The listeners can make the claim of being the first to hear this suite.

Next up was Pat Metheny, with a quartet comprising Gwilym Simcock on piano, Linda Oh on bass and Antonio Sanchez on drums.

While Metheny has been involved in a myriad of stylistic experiments throughout his career, he seemed content to focus on playing unadorned yet fire-fueled songs at Monterey. Sanchez, set up at the front of the stage, played dynamically throughout, and the guitarist, with his head tilted back in a look of ecstasy, scorched the earth with his fast plectrum solos.

A treat for old-time Metheny fans was his inclusion of three tunes from his 1982 album, *Offramp*: "James," "Are You Going With Me?" and the title tune. Songs, period. Catchy, lyrical. Perfect for the surprisingly cool evening.

—Dan Ouellette

Kurt Rosenwinkel Goes DIY, Forms New Label

AFTER RELEASING ALBUMS FOR THE labels Criss Cross Jazz, Verve and Word of Mouth Music, guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel has now formed his own Heartcore Records.

Named after his 2003 Q-Tip-produced Verve album, Heartcore will focus on his own projects as well as those of other artists who share his aesthetic. As the Berlin-based artist explained, “That album *Heartcore* was one of my favorite things that I’ve done; it represents very clearly my attitude towards music, so I thought it was a perfect choice to name the record company that.

“For me, the word Heartcore is a very strong suggestion and a description of what I hold to be dear in music. I see Heartcore as a new brand, if you will. The label will be defined by artists who play what I call Heartcore music, which is music that you find all over the world in different genres and has that same thing in common—whether you call it duende, the blues or soulfulness. It’s about integrity and truth in music. So the idea for the label is to sign artists who I feel embody that concept and that attitude towards music, all being under the umbrella of Heartcore.”

The first release on the Heartcore label will be Rosenwinkel’s album *Caipi* (a shortened name for the popular Brazilian cocktail caipirinha). Ten years in the making, this ambitious project features the guitarist playing nearly all the instruments (piano, synthesizers, drums, bass, percussion) and showcases him prominently on vocals on tunes like the hard-rock-

ing “Hold On,” the ethereal “Summer Song” and the slow ballad “Ezra,” named for one of his sons. The lilting “Little B” is named for his other son, Silas, who was nicknamed Little Bear as a toddler. “My sons are 10 and 12 now, so they’ve been living their whole lives with this music,” Rosenwinkel said. “For years they’d say, ‘When is *Caipi* coming out? When, when, when?’ And I’d always tell them, ‘It’s coming, it’s coming!’ Now that it’s actually here, it’s wonderful to see how that is affecting them and what that means for them to see that whole process and then for it to be finally completed.”

Amanda Brecker (the daughter of Eliane Elias and Randy Brecker) provides lead vocals and Portuguese lyrics on “Kama” and contributes layered backing vocals throughout *Caipi*. Special guest Eric Clapton offers a subtle touch of his signature string-bending on the upbeat pop number “Little Dream.” Rosenwinkel’s former musical partner Mark Turner—who was featured on the 2008 live album *The Remedy*—delivers potent tenor saxophone performances on “Ezra” and “Casio Escher.”

“I had to bring Mark in because that’s such a close, deep relationship that we have,” Rosenwinkel said. “It was very important to me to have that friendship and collaboration represented on the album.”

Regarding his new role as a frontman singing his own thoughtful, metaphysical lyrics, Rosenwinkel said, “Writing songs with lyrics was very much a part of my upbringing. I used to do that a lot. With *Caipi*, the music asked

for that, so you gotta step up to the plate to do what the music asks you to do. Every once in a while there’s a song that comes through that is a lyric song, and this album shaped up to be that way. It’s definitely something different from my other albums, but it was just a matter of doing what the music needed.”

Rosenwinkel will launch Heartcore with the February release of *Caipi*. “The prospect of starting my own business and taking control of my own career is a very liberating feeling,” he said. “I just didn’t want to continue to have gatekeepers or anybody who would tell me what they thought I should do artistically. I make a lot of different kinds of music, and I didn’t want to limit my musical projects by being on a certain type of label. I realized that I was in a position where I could start my own label and be able to do any project that I want.

“A kind of transformation is taking place,” he continued. “It’s been a rebirth for me this year in many ways. I retired from the school where I taught for nine years (Jazz Institute Berlin), I began to manage myself, I started a record company, and now I’m so happy to be putting this music out. This record really represents the balance, for me, of song and singing, playing and soloing.”

Rosenwinkel’s fall tour dates include a residency at Chicago’s Jazz Showcase on Nov. 10–13 and a stint at New York’s Jazz Standard, where he’ll perform as a special guest with the Orrin Evans Trio on Nov. 17–20.

—Bill Milkowski

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VINYL / BY KEN MICALLEF

Netzwerk, Justin Time Records Resurrect Rising Sun

French Guianese native Rouè-Doudou Boicel performed as a globe-trotting trumpeter and percussionist in the early 1970s, eventually landing in Montreal. Finding the city hospitable, Boicel began promoting shows, which led to his launch of The Rising Sun Celebrity Jazz Club in 1975. The tiny bar quickly became the Canadian destination for artists including B.B. King, Nina Simone, Ray Charles, John Lee Hooker, Big Mama Thornton, Sarah Vaughan, Art Blakey and Willie Dixon.

After thousands of shows, the Rising Sun burned down in March 1990, and with it, hundreds of invaluable live tapes succumbed to the flames. Luckily, a few tapes stored in a freezer survived the inferno.

Netzwerk Jazz & Blues and Justin Time Records teamed with digital restoration engineer Bill Szawlowski to bring these recordings to vinyl for the first time. Each LP is pressed on 180-gram vinyl and includes a download card. Three of the releases feature double-LP gatefold packaging; all five include extensive liner notes and song descriptions. All pressings received were flush-flat, with no imperfections or surface goblins.

Recorded in January 1977, **Muddy Waters' *Hoochie Coochie Man***, a double-LP set available for \$26.98, features Waters in raucous form, nearly blowing out his vocal microphone as he commands a hard-charging band of guitarists Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson and "Steady Rollin'" Bob Margolin, harmonica player Jerry Portnoy and piano man Pinetop Perkins, supported by bassist Calvin Jones and drummer Willie Smith. The digitally restored sound is uniformly excellent, and an 11-minute "Kansas City" churns hard.

Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins passed in 1982, but ***Lighthin's Boogie*** (\$26.98), a 1977 performance, shows the muscular guitarist and blues icon playing hard and having the time of his life. Backed by bassist Philip Bowler and multi-genre capable drummer Walter Perkins, Hopkins' visceral performance is full of humor and guitar solos, peppered by the audience's hoots and howls. Songs performed include a stirring "Get Up Off O' Yo," "Hard To Love A Woman," "Mercy," "Cook My Breakfast," Willie Dixon's "My Babe" and Lil' Son Jackson's "Rock Me Baby."

Recorded by Rouè-Doudou Boicel at Montreal's New Penelope Café in



Big Mama Thornton

COURTESY OF NETZWERK RECORDS/JUSTIN TIME

1967, **Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee's *Live At The New Penelope Café*** (\$23.98) showcases the always-reliable folk/blues duo in dynamic form. For those who think Terry and McGhee lack the power of the blues greats, this small café performance proves otherwise. Each song is compact and potent; Terry's howling harmonica fills the holes as McGhee's controlled croon and roaring guitar drive the groove.

The 1980 recording of **Dizzy Gillespie & Friends' *Concert Of The Century—A Charlie Parker Tribute*** (\$26.98) features the fleet trumpeter accompanied by Milt Jackson, James Moody, Hank Jones, Ray Brown and "Philly" Joe Jones in tribute to the saxophone legend. Oddly enough, there's no bebop on this double LP, but instead casual performances of "Blue 'N' Boogie," "Get Happy," "The Shadow Of Your Smile" and others. Moody and Jones outmaneuver and out-burn everyone else, but the garrulous Gillespie acquits himself well on the swinging "Darben The Redd Foxx."

Like much of **Chet Baker's** later work, the 1978 recording ***Love For Sale*** (\$26.98) reveals his beautiful tone and lyrical phrasing. Baker practically shreds on a funky "Love For Sale," steers a race-track-like course on "Milestones," swings on "Oh You Crazy Moon" and avoids a rambunctious saxophonist on "Snowbound." A Record Store Day exclusive is scheduled for release Nov. 26, 2016. **DB**

Hot Jazz Festival Sizzles in New York

LEAVE IT TO MICHAEL KATSOBASHVILI, an ebullient impresario from the nation of Georgia, to keep the fires burning at New York City's Fourth Annual Hot Jazz Festival. The celebration of 1920s and '30s music attracts a cult following of hot-jazz devotees, some of whom arrive decked out in period costumes. This year the festivities took place at a '30s-style pleasure palace called The McKittrick Hotel.

New Orleans-born Sasha Masakowski, daughter of guitarist Steve Masakowski, kicked off the marathon with a swinging set on the outdoor roof garden, Gallow Green. Accompanied by trumpeter Bjorn Ingelstam, New Orleans drummer Don Hicks, bassist Neal Caine and special guest guitarist Mark Whitfield, the 30-year-old singer showcased her relaxed scatting style and behind-the-beat delivery on an easygoing "Exactly Like You." Next, she engaged bassist Caine in an intimate conversation as an introduction to "On The Sunny Side Of The Street" before the band leaped into the buoyant melody of that nugget from 1930.

Whitfield demonstrated his extroverted style on "Caravan," the Juan Tizol-Duke Ellington classic from 1936, which also had Hicks contributing an old-school New Orleans parade beat solo. Masakowski concluded this spirited romp through Ellingtonia with some hot scat exchanges with trumpeter Ingelstam.

On a bluesy "Basin Street," Ingelstam summoned up some growling Bubber Miley-style plunger playing while Hicks went straight for Zutty Singleton on the kit and Whitfield added streams of Wes Montgomery. On her earthy rendition of "St. James Infirmary," Masakowski danced like they do down there below sea level. The quartet closed its set with a rousing version of Paul Barbarin's "Bourbon Street Parade."

Downstairs at The Heath—an indoor stage with a Depression Era ambiance—trombonist Wycliffe Gordon paid tribute to Louis Armstrong with a quintet featuring clarinetist Evan Christopher, pianist Aaron Diehl, bassist Yasushi Nakamura and drummer Lawrence Leathers. Following Diehl's wonder-

ful solo piano intro to Fats Waller's 1929 classic "Honeysuckle Rose," Gordon and company jumped on that lighthearted vehicle, which featured some easy call-and-response between trombone and clarinet. Shifting the mood radically, the ensemble tackled the mournful Andy Razaf-Fats Waller tune "Black And Blue," which Armstrong recorded in 1929 after performing it in an off-Broadway production of *Hot Chocolates*. Gordon's vocals were soulful

and thought-provoking as the lyrics ("My only sin is in my skin/ What did I do to be so black and blue?") took on a profoundly new meaning in these times of racial tension.

Gordon, whose gravelly voiced singing somewhat resembles Satchmo's, added his own homage in "Hello Pops" and closed his set with an upbeat "When You're Smiling," a Tin Pan Alley tune that Armstrong first recorded in 1929.

—Bill Milkowski



Aaron Diehl (left) and Wycliffe Gordon at New York's Hot Jazz Festival

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Brad Mehldau (left), Larry Grenadier, Ambrose Akinmusire, Brian Blade and Wolfgang Muthspiel recorded the album *Rising Grace*.

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Muthspiel Assembles All-Star Ensemble

DUKE ELLINGTON'S SIGNATURE ENCOMIUM, "beyond category"—and the marketing sobriquet "all-star band"—could both be used to describe *Rising Grace*, Wolfgang Muthspiel's second album for ECM. It's a project in which the 51-year-old guitarist, who has recorded almost exclusively in trio, duo and solo contexts for the past two decades, returns to the combo format he presented on the four strong albums that launched his leader career between 1990 and 1993. (See the 5-star review on page 66.)

Muthspiel plays acoustic and electric guitar on a program of 10 originals, joined by new partners pianist Brad Mehldau on piano and Ambrose Akinmusire on trumpet, and old friends Larry Grenadier on bass and Brian Blade on drumset, who joined Muthspiel on *Driftwood*, his 2014 ECM leader debut. The date transpired after three concerts and one rehearsal; the resulting disc's ambiance is meditative, yet optimistic and joyful. Percolating grooves propel the flow; elemental melodies and classical harmonies provide signposts.

"I usually listen to my own things in a self-critical mode, but with this one I had so much fun," Muthspiel said over the phone in early September from his hometown of Vienna, Austria. "There's so much real conversation going on, which I love."

Muthspiel described playing "Intensive Care"—a solemn piece he composed when his newborn daughter was in the hospital with a post-natal condition—for his students at the Hochschule für Musik in Basel, Switzerland, where he is a professor of jazz guitar.

"I told them that if you transcribed every part, every note, you could trace many arrows from an event on one instrument to a clearly related event on another instrument," Muthspiel said. "This cross-referencing quality can only be achieved in improvisation by people who are awake and have their ears open.

Even the cleverest composition cannot achieve this. That's the beauty of jazz."

He summarized the contributions of the participants, including ECM producer Manfred Eicher, calling him "almost a band member" for the way he sequenced the repertoire into "groups of songs that fit together, almost like a drama in three acts." The leader said that Akinmusire offers a "warm, round, flute-like" tone and the ability to "stretch the harmonic environment." In addition to soloistic derring-do, Mehldau's "super-awareness of sound" and "subtle and high-level" comping raises everybody's game.

So does the simpatico, breathe-as-one rhythm section. "Larry and I share a common playlist—a love for songs, Weather Report, classical music and the jazz tradition," Muthspiel said, tracing their recorded history to his 1992 sextet date *Black And Blue*, with Tom Harrell and George Garzone.

Blade contributed to Muthspiel's trio albums *Real Book Stories* (2001) and *Air, Love And Vitamins* (2003) (Quinton), with Marc Johnson on bass, and the singular duo encounter *Friendly Travelers* (Material) in 2006.

"Brian learned to play music in church, where there is a clear function to fulfill," Muthspiel added. "It's a beautiful metaphor for what music can be."

Muthspiel provided some insight into how the title applies to the notes and tones. "To me, music connects us to something spiritual, but completely outside any religion or ideology," he said. "It can express a huge world, bigger and more happening than our world—or perhaps it shows us the possibilities of our world. I don't [ever] consciously say I'm going to write something spiritual. It's not a programmatic thing. But when I sit down on the instrument, often I naturally go there. It's celebrating. Celebrating our existence."
—Ted Panken

Brainfeeder Showcase Fuses Enlightened Funk, Innovative Jazz

AS THE SUMMER SEASON DREW TO A close at the Hollywood Bowl, the Los Angeles Philharmonic—which hosts a series of concerts at the venue from July through September—took a big leap toward attracting future subscribers by presenting a night of music affiliated with Brainfeeder, the record label and collective founded and run by jazz-leaning producer, rapper and filmmaker Flying Lotus.

In only a few short years, L.A.-based Brainfeeder has managed to creatively merge the worlds of electronic dance music and modern jazz. Flying Lotus, born Steven Ellison, is the grandnephew of Alice Coltrane. His label boasts releases from jazz musicians like saxophonist Kamasi Washington and Kneedelus (a fruitful mash-up of the jazz-funk outfit Kneebody and producer Daedelus).

But as they proved over the course of four hours on Sept. 17, Brainfeeder casts a wide net with ample space for goofiness and divine creativity.

Label mainstay Stephen “Thundercat” Bruner, the fleet-fingered bassist and Kendrick Lamar collaborator, seemed the most excited to be onstage. Along with keyboardist Dennis Hamm and drummer Justin Brown, Thundercat went to work on his double-necked electric bass, eliciting woos for his rapid-fire solos while Brown provided energetic drive.

Later, Thundercat plainly announced former Doobie Brother Michael McDonald as his guest. The stunned crowd gave muted applause, hesitant to believe the notorious prankster. McDonald waved and then in a move that not one of the 15,000 fans in attendance could have predicted, the group played through “What A Fool Believes.” It was an honest, straightforward performance of the 1979 yacht-rock hit.

The quartet closed with “Them Changes,” the dance-floor single from last year’s EP *Where The Giants Roam*, leaving many in the audience both bemused and impressed.

Flying Lotus closed out the show. The DJ has always embraced darkness in his productions, using anguished screams and swampy synths to fuel his unique style of electronic music. On his most recent album—2014’s *You’re Dead!*—pianist Herbie Hancock and Thundercat help push the aesthetic toward interstellar swing. Though both collaborators were in attendance at the show, Flying Lotus attempted to carry an entire hour by himself.

But one man and a deck full of electronics wasn’t going to be enough to light up the Hollywood Bowl, so he and a team of video artists including longtime collaborator Strangeloop lit up several hundred feet of the stage’s facade with vibrating fractals and sei-

zure-inducing geometry, encasing Flying Lotus in a wall of projection screens.

Images revolved around the headliner as he pumped his fist and mysteriously operated his machinery, appearing to simultaneously float in space and burst into flames. This was theater, a visually stunning performance with one man standing center stage.

—Sean J. O’Connell



Flying Lotus, founder of the Brainfeeder label, performs at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles on Sept. 17.

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Victor Gould's new album is titled *Clockwork*.

WILLIAM BROWN

VICTOR GOULD

Sonic Complexities

Victor Gould's leader debut, *Clockwork* (Fresh Sounds/New Talent), oozes with the type of compositional splendor that brings to mind the early work of Jason Moran.

Over the course of 10 originals, the 28-year-old Brooklyn-based pianist exhibits a predilection for penning bracing works, often for sextet, on which intricate rhythms lift beguiling melodies that in turn are enhanced by striking harmonies.

Songs like the triumphant title track and the exquisite ballad "Chaoncé" teem with emotional immediacy burnished with an eloquent maturity. Gould expands the music's sonic palette on select tracks by adding strings, flute and percussion.

"I like to write simple tunes, then arrange them—that way I can add sonic complexities to the arrangements instead of the actual songs," Gould explained. "The body of my songs might be more simple than the things that are accompanying it. That's the method of writing I prefer."

A California native, Gould studied at Loyola University New Orleans and earned his undergraduate degree at Berklee College of Music. Later he was accepted into The Monk Institute's graduate program.

During his time in the Crescent City, he

worked with saxophonist Donald Harrison. The Monk Institute afforded Gould opportunities to work with a wide variety of jazz luminaries, ranging from pianist Barry Harris to guitarist John Scofield. One of Gould's biggest takeaways from that experience is acknowledging that there's no finite path to mastering the art of jazz.

"The most important thing I learned was that you can do anything that you want," he said. "At first, that was frustrating but afterwards it became liberating. All these masters would come to teach us, and I noticed that a lot of their views and approaches were opposing each other's. But within all of those contradicting ideas, they all shared this thing about music being their lives; it wasn't just a hobby for them."

At Berklee, Gould met alto saxophonist Godwin Louis, who's featured throughout *Clockwork*. A deep conversation with Godwin about the Book of Revelation inspired the disc's ominous "Apostle John," which is marked by stark front-line horn harmonies from Godwin, trumpeter Jeremy Pelt and tenor saxophonist Myron Walden; propulsive rhythms fueled by drummer E.J. Strickland, percussionist Pedrito Martinez and bassist Ben Williams; and rousing string accompaniment.

The billowing, medium-tempo "Room

416" is another gem, inspired by Gould's years at Berklee and named after the dorm room he shared with Godwin and the late bassist Peter Spear.

The sole non-original on *Clockwork* is Gould's stunning arrangement of Wayne Shorter's "Nefertiti," on which Strickland steers with pulses that fluctuate between stuttering and swinging. The classic also provides a fantastic vehicle for Gould to demonstrate his estimable improvisational acumen. Playing in trumpeter Wallace Roney's band inspired Gould to fully explore "Nefertiti." At the time, Roney was working on *Universe*, a long-form work that Shorter wrote for Miles Davis during the mid-'60s.

"I was really getting deep into Wayne's music," Gould recalled. "With that long-form music, Wayne sort of quotes himself a lot. In order to get some of those references, I had to learn a lot of his songs. 'Nefertiti' is one of the songs that he references in *Universe*."

Gould continues working as a sideman with Roney, Pelt and trumpeters Etienne Charles and Theo Croker. The pianist is also gaining recognition in New York, leading dates at such nightclubs at Smalls Jazz and Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola. With *Clockwork*, his reputation as a composer will surely ascend, too.

—John Murph



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HUNTERTONES

First Ohio, Then the World

For jazz musicians moving to New York City, playing the Village Vanguard, Blue Note or Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola is on the bucket list of dream gigs. But when the band Huntertones arrived in Gotham from Columbus, Ohio, they had more in mind than glitzy marquees and venerated jazz clubs. They were seeking to reach an audience of a slightly larger scope: the world.

After honing their chops while playing house parties at their alma mater—The Ohio State University—Huntertones' Dan White (saxophones), Jon Lampley (trumpet, sousaphone), Chris Ott (trombone, beatbox), Josh Hill (guitar), Adam DeAscentis (bass) and John Hubbell (drums) moved to the Big Apple in 2014. The band played any gig possible to make the rent and practice their art. *Huntertones Live*, which captures their dynamic performance style, features some guest musicians, including keyboardist Theron Brown, a University of Akron alumnus who portrayed Herbie Hancock in Don Cheadle's film *Miles Ahead*.

"Our music grew out of us wanting to play different styles in school," White explained during an interview at the Union Square Barnes & Noble in New York. "We combined the higher-energy material we found in common between different genres, from Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington to D'Angelo, Donny Hathaway and Frank Zappa, while still listening to our heroes: J.J. Johnson, Trane, Joe Henderson and Art Blakey."

Other musicians have taken notice. The band members have worked with diverse array of collaborators, including Jon Batiste & Stay Human (the house band on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*), O.A.R., Snarky Puppy, Gary Clark Jr., Ricky Martin and Umphrey's McGee.

Deftly inserted amid Huntertones' sec-

ond-line grooves and rambunctious horn lines are fusion guitar solos, sousaphone/saxophone/beatbox breakdowns, and the most unusual arrangements of Neil Yong's "Heart Of Gold" and Dave Matthews' "Two Step" ever recorded to digital.

This year, Huntertones' second-line liftoff resonated with New Yorkers, but also residents of Ecuador, Georgia (in the Caucasus region of Eurasia), Bermuda and Africa. After being selected by the U.S. Department of State and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs as part of the American Music Abroad Exchange Program, Huntertones performed at prisons and orphanages, ambassadors' homes, colleges, town squares and at music festivals.

During an appearance at the Annual International Festival One Caucasus (in Marneuli, Georgia), the band saw some unusual instruments.

"The musicians pulled out a sheep's bladder, a bagpipe thing, fretless stringed instruments, and a hand drum with two different tunings on the drum heads," Ott recalled. "They'd spin the drum as they played it. Amazing."

Some children at a Zimbabwean orphanage had a particularly strong impact on the band.

"We set up in a circle and all the kids introduced themselves," White said. "They sang for us before we played for them. That knocked us out. I wasn't thinking about [our] music at all. The goal was to give something and make them happy. The moment we started playing, they were up and dancing."

"These experiences have taught us we're lucky to play music and travel the world," Ott added. "Connecting with cultures through music and seeing how other cultures listen to music, it's very different across the world."

—Ken Micallef

Macy Gray's album *Stripped* was recorded with a single microphone.

NORMAN SEEFF



MACY GRAY

.....

Soulful Ease

Thanks to her smash hit “I Try,” a catchy r&b meditation on breakups driven by a weathered, baby-doll drawl, singer-songwriter Macy Gray became a household name in 2000. The then-32-year-old singer provided an otherworldly alternative to the boy-band pop that was dominating mainstream airwaves at the time. In addition to selling millions of copies of her debut, *On How Life Is*, she defeated a bevy of blondes (Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Madonna, Aimee Mann and Joni Mitchell) to claim the Grammy for the Best Female Pop Vocal Performance.

In the ensuing years, Gray recorded seven more albums, toured major jazz festivals with David Murray’s big band, acted in numerous films (*Idlewild*, *For Colored Girls*) and TV shows, and even participated on *Dancing with the Stars*.

Gray returns to basics with *Stripped* (Chesky), a collection of originals, covers and new arrangements of songs in her catalog. The album debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard Jazz Albums chart. *Stripped* was recorded in two days using a single microphone in an old Brooklyn church. Gray’s soulful warble is the unadorned focal point as she fronts a top-notch band: guitarist Russell Malone, trumpeter Wallace Roney, bassist Daryl Johns and drummer Ari Hoenig.

“I started out doing mostly Sunday brunches,” Gray said by telephone about the start of her singing career. “A piano player [that I knew] was always getting these dinner gigs. I use to follow him around. He needed a singer to get some gigs, so I started singing with him. We would play jazz standards in hotels.”

Gray was 20 years old. She had arrived in Los Angeles as a screenwriting student at University of Southern California. After recording some demos on a four-track machine she found herself pursuing a career as a pop star.

Stripped—an album that mixes jazz elements with tinges of reggae, Americana and rock—will introduce her to new fans. The disc opens with “Annabelle,” a ramshackle shuffle that sets the tone for the program: mellow and strolling with a tender, persisting charm. “I was a little more conscious of hitting the right notes,” she said of the project. “Cause there are no sweeteners or compressors or reverbs. There are no tricks.”

Gray revisits “I Try” on the disc. Driven by a “Poinciana” groove, the tune is a natural fit for a cabaret treatment with Gray leaning in. “Every time I play live, I play that song,” Gray said, conveying gratitude. “People always ask me if I’m sick of it. I’m always really shocked when people know the words. It’s pretty wild to see that—to know that you have a song that’s been around that long.”

Though her band no doubt was familiar with the tune, they were far less familiar with Gray herself. They all met as a group on the first day of the recording. “At first it was a little tense ‘cause none of us knew each other,” she said. “You don’t know if you’re going to see things the same way.”

The group coalesces on the album with a natural grace. Gray and company take an interesting left turn together on Metallica’s moody growler “Nothing Else Matters.” Steady brushes push as the electric guitar strums. Late in the tune, Roney’s trumpet takes the affair into a deeper realm, stretching matters into the ether before trading furtive sighs with Gray. Later on, Bob Marley’s “Redemption Song” finds Gray embracing the coy quaver of her range.

This is far from a vanity jazz project; it’s focused solely on Gray’s artistry. With a soulful ease, Gray solidifies herself as a unique interpreter of popular song with no shortage of charm.

—Sean J. O’Connell



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OLEG BUTMAN

Great Talent, Famous Surname

As the younger brother of saxophonist Igor Butman—Russia’s most famous jazz musician and an artist with an outsize personality—drummer Oleg Butman is certainly accustomed to the heightened expectations of others.

“Ever since we were in school in St. Petersburg, when teachers learned my name, they’d say, ‘Oh, Igor is your brother—he was our star in school,’” recalled Oleg, 50, during this year’s Sochi International Jazz Festival. (A few hours later, in a concert at the Winter Theater, he would propel the trio he co-leads with his wife, pianist-vocalist Natalia Smirnova, as well as an ad hoc ensemble led by Igor, 55.) “They’d ask,

‘Are you the same? Will you surprise us?’”

Oleg implied his response to that question with a brief account of his early career after putting aside the *balalaika* (a stringed instrument) to focus on the drums. As an adolescent, he became obsessed with drums when eavesdropping at listening sessions where Igor and his friends analyzed cassettes of recordings by John Coltrane, Herbie Hancock and Art Blakey.

Not long thereafter, Oleg started playing in Igor’s bands. Oleg also gained bandstand experience with various elders attracted by his swing feel and well-calibrated touch. One was David Goloschokin, a virtuoso improviser on trumpet, saxophone and violin who took the 18-year-

old prodigy to venues from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok.

At 22, Oleg moved to Moscow (following Igor, who had already relocated). There he took a residency at the Blue Bird, Russia’s only seven-days-a-week jazz club. Two years later, at the urging of his brother, who, after matriculating at Berklee College of Music in 1987, had established an American career, Oleg came to the States—first Boston, then New York, which became his primary base of operations until 2008.

On weekends, Oleg played the New York metro area’s Russian restaurant circuit. Weekdays, he established hard-core jazz bona fides, haunting jam sessions at venues like Manhattan’s Smalls and Brooklyn’s Up Over Jazz Cafe, where he played frequently with alto saxophonist Vincent Herring on Monday nights and eventually landed a Thursday sinecure.

Eventually, he began to tour Russia with saxophonists like Wayne Escoffery, Mark Gross and Donny McCaslin, each of whom plays on recent recordings under Oleg’s leadership.

“As a sideman, I was trying to please everyone,” Oleg said, by way of explaining his team-first approach. “It’s important to support the solos and the arrangement, to find the music’s groove and core idea. Sometimes people at concerts say, ‘We want to hear more of *you*’; if I play one solo, it’s not enough. And sometimes Igor tells me to play more, as hard as I can—all your ideas, but with a big attack.

“We’re trying new stuff for the Russian audience,” Butman said of his trio with Smirnova. “They don’t know jazz, but they like hearing Natasha play ballads and fast tunes with passion and great technique, and they see how we’re feeling each other. People love that musical freedom. That’s what jazz is about.” —Ted Panken

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SCHNEIDER

ATTACKING THE ‘DATA LORDS’

BY ALLEN MORRISON | PHOTOS BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ

Maria Schneider's latest work, written for her 18-person jazz orchestra, is titled “Data Lords.” It is, by her own estimation, “very dark, chaotic and intense.”

It could hardly be more different from her critically acclaimed 2015 album, *The Thompson Fields* (ArtistShare), a kind of pastoral symphony recorded by the Maria Schneider Orchestra. That album is a majestic evocation of the natural world and, more specifically, of the spacious Minnesota prairie on which she was raised. By contrast, “Data Lords” was inspired by Schneider’s dystopian vision of an Orwellian future—make that present—in which huge corporate behemoths gather personal information about every citizen and exploit it to reap billions in revenue, while trying to persuade the populace that all will ultimately benefit.

One segment of the citizenry that is decidedly *not* benefiting, Schneider argues, is musicians and songwriters, whose largely uncompensated works are the bright, shiny objects dangled by the corporations in order to bring eyeballs to their websites and smartphone apps.

“Data Lords’ is kind of the opposite of *The Thompson Fields*,” Schneider said on a sunny September morning in the cozy living room of her one-bedroom apartment on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, a stone’s throw from Central Park. “Nature, the country, bird-watching—I was getting into all of that for *The Thompson Fields*. Now I’m so wrapped up in the fight with YouTube and the other music streamers ... well, I don’t want to say that I’m obsessed, but it’s taking over my life, in a way. There’s anger, resentment and shock, and it’s reflected in my work.”

The reception for *The Thompson Fields* has been rapturous. It earned Schneider a Grammy award in the category Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album. She collected a second Grammy for arranging “Sue (Or In A Season Of Crime),” her collaboration with the late David Bowie, bringing her career Grammy tally to five. Earlier this year, she won five citations from the Jazz Journalists Association and topped three categories in the DownBeat Critics Poll: Big Band, Composer and Arranger. Now she has capped a banner year by winning three categories in the DownBeat Readers Poll: Jazz Album (for *The Thompson Fields*), Composer and Arranger.

She hasn’t had much time to bask in her accomplishments, however, because of her absorption in the David vs. Goliath fight to get fair compensation for music creators and end what she calls the “culture of piracy.”

That culture, Schneider asserts, has been fostered largely by Google and the phenomenal success of YouTube, which Google acquired in 2006. She believes that YouTube’s come-one, come-all video bazaar—which makes much of the world’s music available for free—has made it impossible for artists to sell their works for anything close to their true market value. “I have to take time away from my music for this,” she said. “This is a war.”

In this war, Schneider has become the Thomas Paine of digital-age composers, issuing broadsides in the form of white papers with titles like “YouTube: Pushers of Piracy” and “Content ID Is Still Just Piracy in Disguise” (the latter refers to YouTube’s ballyhooed “Content ID” system for identifying copyrighted works on its service).

Schneider testified on behalf of musicians in 2014 before the House Judiciary Committee, which has been conducting a comprehensive review of U.S. copyright law for the last three years. This year she submitted extensive comments to a second public study undertaken by the U.S. Copyright Office.



‘I have to take time away from my music for this. This is a war.’

The subject is complex, but here’s a basic rundown: Congress intended the current law, known as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), to enable Internet services and creative artists to work together to combat online piracy of copyrighted works. But Schneider and other critics say that the law—passed in 1998, the year Google started up—is woefully out-of-date and, essentially, broken.

Under the DMCA’s “notice and takedown” provisions, artists and record labels are responsible for monitoring copyright infringement of their works across the Internet, a burden too great for most artists. It is often described as an impossible game of “whack-a-mole,” as new uploaded videos and MP3s appear faster than artists can identify and report them.

The law lets online services off the hook, because it gives them a “safe harbor” from copyright infringement lawsuits resulting from user-uploaded content.

The net effect, Schneider and other critics say, is that Google and YouTube get to profit hugely from infringement, while the artists, whose music drives millions of users to

Google’s search engine and YouTube’s streaming archive, find it impossible to prevent piracy of their works. The system effectively reduces the value of their life’s work to levels that make it impossible for many musicians to make a living, Schneider says.

As she wrote in her comments to the Copyright Office, “Congress never intended for the concept of a ‘safe harbor’ to undermine the very future of music. But that is what has happened.”

DownBeat had a wide-ranging, 3-hour conversation with Schneider. Here are excerpts:

YOU HAVE BEEN AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST SINCE YOUR 1992 DEBUT, *EVANESCENCE*, AND YOU WERE A PIONEER OF THE FAN-FUNDING MODEL THROUGH YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH ARTISTSHARE, WHICH HAS DISTRIBUTED ALL YOUR WORK SINCE 2004. HOW HAS OWNING ALL YOUR WORK INFLUENCED YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF MUSIC CREATORS?

My father was an inventor, and he worked for a company, Kimberly-Clark, that owned all his inventions. So I was very aware of what it

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TAKING ACTION

When Maria Schneider testified before Congress about the current U.S. copyright law's (DMCA) notice and take-down provisions, she urged legislators to make four major changes:

1) Congress should require streaming services that want protection from copyright infringement lawsuits to effectively educate their users on creators' rights, including a common-sense set of "checkpoints" at the time of upload. Uploaders should have to sign a statement, under penalty of perjury, verifying ownership, permission or precise grounds of "fair use"—just as copyright owners must do for a takedown.

2) The use of fingerprinting technology (like YouTube's Content ID) should be required of all streaming services. Fingerprinting for blocking uploads should be offered to all copyright holders, without discrimination.

3) Companies should be required to use and share the best technologies available to prevent infringement.

4) "Take down" should mean "stay down," so that musicians are not stuck in an endless game of "whack-a-mole."

Schneider and other songwriters have founded MusicAnswers.org to educate and mobilize musicians as well as consumers. "Every musician and fan should sign onto our campaign," she said. "Go to MusicAnswers.org and sign our Declaration of Principles. Google and other large corporations heavily lobby Congress. ... We need everyone on board, so we can become a massive force to be reckoned with."

"The music-buying public needs to understand which music sites to patronize and which to avoid. We care so much about the sourcing of our food and our clothing. We want music fans to be just as careful about the sourcing of their music."
—Allen Morrison

... meant for a man to create something and have pride in his inventions. I grew up with that. I know the incentives that pride of ownership creates. And I remember thinking when I was a kid, "Oh, maybe I can invent something."

... A lot of people invest in a house, and it becomes their main asset. My first big investment was my first record, *Evanescence*; it cost \$30,000 to record. In the old days, record companies took on that financial risk, but these days, most of us do it ourselves.

... My latest record, *The Thompson Fields*, cost \$200,000—what many people pay for a house. It's a massive investment, but I've always counted on my compositions and records to generate royalties, making it a sound investment. My works are my assets. So when massive corporations siphon off the value of my musical assets—well, it's a catastrophic loss, no different than siphoning off someone's 401(k) or stealing their \$200,000 home.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CURRENT COPYRIGHT LAW?

... It's absurd that the Digital Millennium Copyright Act [DMCA] was being drafted before Google even existed. Nobody back then anticipated that a company would intentionally use pirated music and movies as a magnet in order to hoard information about all of us and become the most powerful company on earth—and how that would change the value of that music. It's been nothing less than a massive redistribution of wealth.

IN YOUR WHITE PAPERS CRITICIZING THE ONLINE STREAMING SERVICES, YOU HAVE ESPECIALLY SINGLED OUT YOUTUBE, SAYING IT HAS FOSTERED A "CULTURE OF PIRACY." IS YOUTUBE THE WORST ACTOR AMONG THE

STREAMERS, AND, IF SO, WHY?

Yes, they started it and are still the worst offender. YouTube is the biggest and the first place that almost everybody goes to find music. The very first time I saw it, the first thing I thought was, "How is this legal?" Then I learned how companies like YouTube, with user-generated content, are protected by the "safe harbor" provisions [i.e., immunity from lawsuits] of the DMCA But it's worse than that: YouTube began a propaganda campaign to convince the public that this was good for musicians, and that uploaders were doing them a favor, because they were going to gain fans. This *encouraged* users to upload music without permission. YouTube didn't, and still doesn't, alert them that most of these uploads are illegal.

If everybody gets used to getting their music for free, nobody is going to pay for music anymore. Before Google decided to buy YouTube, a Google executive wrote an internal email saying, "I can't believe you're recommending buying YouTube—it's a rogue enabler of content theft."

YOUTUBE HAS A SYSTEM CALLED "CONTENT ID" THAT IS SUPPOSED TO IDENTIFY COPYRIGHTED WORKS AND ALLOCATE A SHARE OF ADVERTISING REVENUE TO THE OWNERS. WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THEIR CONTENT ID SYSTEM FAILS TO PROTECT CREATORS?

YouTube likes to boast that their Content ID [digital fingerprinting technology] allows artists to block illegal uploads of their work. The system searches for fingerprint "matches" against music they have archived. Wonderful, right? Except that YouTube chooses who gets to use it. I applied, and I wasn't accepted.

But here's the bigger thing: YouTube saw a great opportunity here. They didn't want



Congratulations to **MARIA SCHNEIDER** (MM '85)
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music creators to block their copyrighted work. So they realized they could talk the copyright owners into using fingerprinting technology not to *block* their works, but to *monetize* them. If a user uploads a pirated MP3, say, but the copyright owner has agreed to “monetization,” then YouTube slaps an ad on it and shares the ad revenue. But the problem is there’s very little money to be made after YouTube factors in its costs—but not *your* costs as the creator.

And now there’s so much ripping technology available that people find a video or MP3 they like, and they never return to that YouTube page—they just rip it. Now they think they “own” it and can share it, and nobody’s paying a mechanical royalty. The mechanical royalty has just been obliterated by streaming. ...

To make matters worse, the major record labels agreed to big Content ID contracts. There was so much infringement going on, they probably just felt that, “OK, we might as well make a few scraps off of it.” So now the public and YouTube can justifiably ask, “Well, if YouTube is so bad, why are the big record companies all monetizing through Content ID?” I really wish they’d had the long-term vision to stand up to piracy, rather than give in to YouTube’s scam. They blew it for all of us.

There was, at one time, lots of talk that advertising was going to pay for the making of music. We know now that it doesn’t.

YOU’VE WRITTEN THAT THE SERIOUS MONEY GENERATED BY YOUTUBE IS NOT IN THE AD REVENUE; IT’S BY MINING THE DATA THEY COLLECT.

That’s right. While the creators haggle with YouTube over paltry ad revenues, we’re diverted from the main event: Our music drives billions of users to YouTube’s platform, and the data that Google then gathers from following our fans around the Web is where YouTube’s true value lies. Artists should share in that revenue.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER STREAMING SERVICES, LIKE SPOTIFY? HOW DO THEIR ROYALTY RATES COMPARE TO YOUTUBE?

They are ridiculously low. Many musicians don’t want their music on Spotify, but if their record company controls that decision, they’re out of luck. Also, the major record companies now have a serious conflict of interest, because they took an equity interest in Spotify, giving them a financial stake in perpetuating this system that rips off musicians.

Spotify’s users have unlimited access to most of the music in the world because the major labels handed it over on a silver platter. And that access only costs \$10 a month—unless you’d rather pay nothing at all. That’s ridiculous! At least with YouTube, one can scream, “Theft!” With Spotify, you just want to give up.

Another outrage: All of these companies

collect endless data about our fans, but the artists can’t even know who those fans are.

I understand the power of knowing one’s fans through my great experience with ArtistShare. Why should a service like YouTube, Spotify or iTunes not share the email addresses of our fans?

DO YOU THINK CROWD-FUNDING WEBSITES LIKE ARTISTSHARE CAN WORK FOR ALL MUSICIANS, OR DOES IT REQUIRE A LEVEL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP THAT MAKES IT NOT FOR EVERYBODY?

I can’t really claim to be a pioneer; I was lucky. When my friend Brian Camelio [ArtistShare’s founder] approached me, he knew that I was helping to pay for my records and that I wasn’t making enough money back. This was back in the Napster days.

He knew that the one thing that nobody can pirate is the creative process. His idea was that you not only crowd-fund [a project], but that you share much more than the record: You share the whole process of writing music and making a record. You let people into your world and really create relationships with your fans. If you’re not into fostering those relationships, if you’re just looking for cash for your project, it might not be right for you. But if you’re willing to share with your fans, it’s an amazing business model.

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YOUR WRITING CAN BE AS COMPLEX AND MODERN AS ANYBODY'S, BUT YOU'RE ALSO NOT AFRAID TO WRITE SOMETHING THAT'S BEAUTIFUL, MELODIC AND SIMPLE. DOES THAT REFLECT YOUR PRIORITIES AS AN ARTIST?

I like a wide variety of music. And I never felt the urge to impress people with my music. I think jazz sometimes suffers from that. Young musicians may think they have to have more "thick" harmony, or faster, more complex lines. It's the idea that, to be progressive, you have to "do more," and not realizing that the simplest thing can be very raw and profound. I long ago tried to fight off the "need to impress" demons.

Writing music to poetry, as I did with Ted Kooser's poems [on 2013's *Winter Morning Walks*] drew me out of myself. It took away the judgment and fear I often feel. It became all about trying to do justice to that beautiful poem.

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE A PRETTY FIERCE INNER CRITIC.

Ugh. Terrible. I've been really struggling lately.

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THAT?

I don't know. I'm always trying to deal with it. My only comfort is that I've gone through this every time I've completed a big project I always feel like I'm finished, like I don't have anything else left in me.

As a friend of mine said, it's like soil: You cannot farm a field continually with the same crop. You have to give the soil a rest, change the crop; otherwise, it can't keep giving and giving. We really are like soil.

THE THOMPSON FIELDS HAS A DEEPLY AMERICAN SOUND, ESPECIALLY THE HYMN-LIKE TITLE COMPOSITION. WHAT MAKES IT SOUND AMERICAN?

I don't know where it comes from. I do know that when I was a kid, some of the first classical music that I was really taken with was Aaron Copland, the classic stuff like *Appalachian Spring*. And I love some of the songs of the '60s that have that, too—Laura Nyro's songs, and Jimmy Webb's, like "Wichita Lineman." I love him. I'd love to meet him.

A lot of that music from the early and mid-'60s had something really "American" in it, a joyful optimism and exuberance, and that's in my bones.

My partner, Mark, and I have a place in the country that we visit on weekends. I've been living in Manhattan, and I'm not a city girl. Spending time upstate transported me back into that place I was when I was younger. All of the sudden I was like, "Oh my god, we have to plant milkweed for the monarchs, and investigate about native plants" Then I went back home [to Minnesota]. It reignited that flame inside of me. There's nostalgia there; there's

that open landscape, the influence of the music I listened to then. It brought me back in time, through the lens of big band and jazz. *The Thompson Fields* is my past, through that prism.

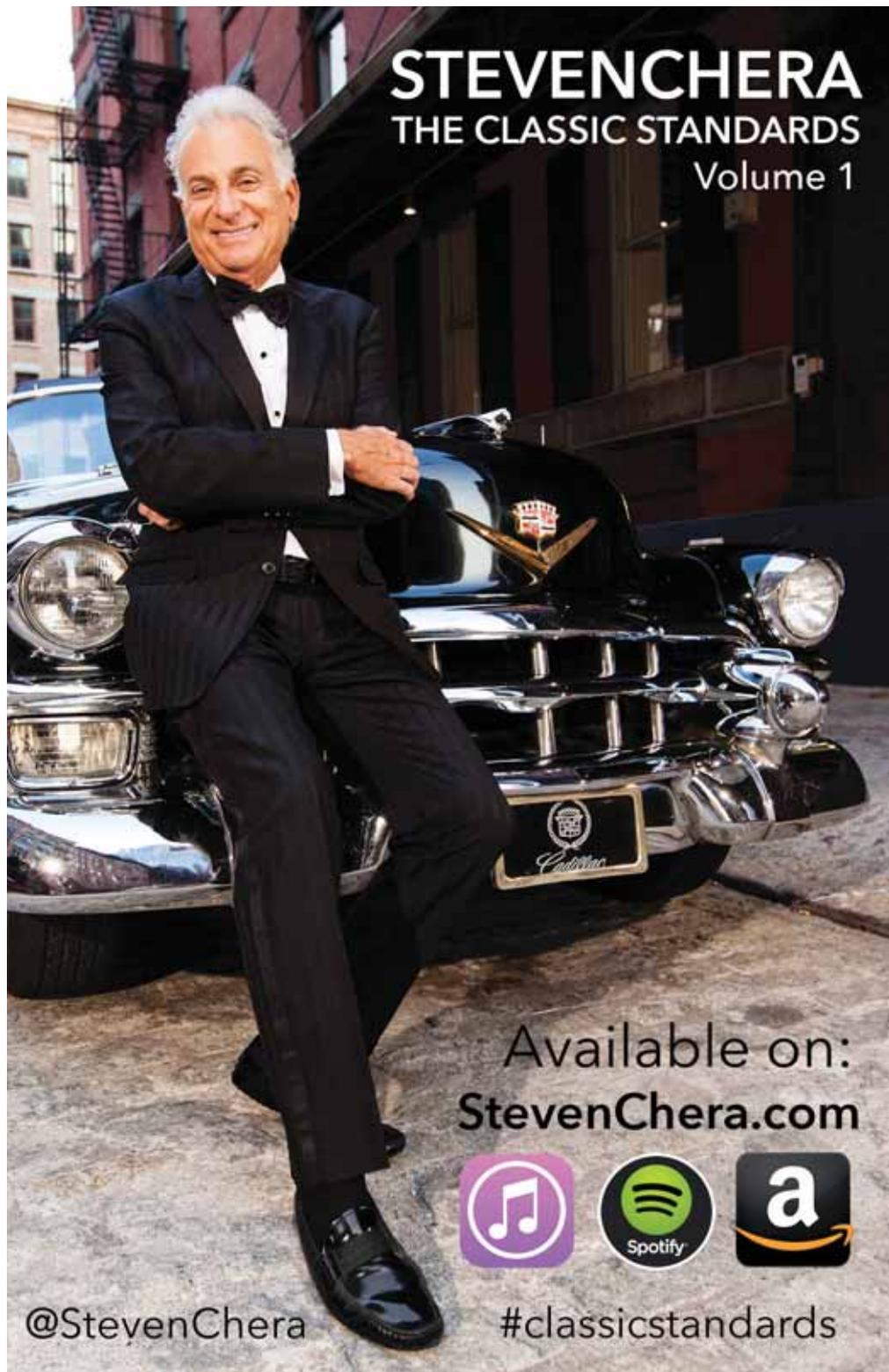
WHAT'S ON YOUR AGENDA FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS?

We're playing the West Coast in February, with dates in California and Oregon. People will definitely hear my new piece, "Data Lords." But first we'll do our annual Thanksgiving week gig at The Jazz Standard [in New York]. I just love doing that. At some point I'd like to

make a live album there.

WERE YOU OVERWHELMED BY THE WARM RECEPTION GIVEN TO *THE THOMPSON FIELDS*?

It's been gratifying, of course, but of all the compliments I've gotten, maybe the sweetest one was this: A musician friend of mine wrote to me that he was driving his 12-year-old son to soccer practice recently and playing *The Thompson Fields* on the car stereo. After a few minutes of listening, his son said, "Wow, Dad, I didn't know there was music that sounded like this." **DB**



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PHIL WOODS

‘A SOLDIER FOR JAZZ’

By Ted Panken | Photo by Steven Sussman

On Sept. 8 in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, in the Poconos, the non-profit organization Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts (COTA), which Phil Woods co-founded in 1978, presented a benefit concert in his honor. The magisterial alto saxophonist (1931–2015), who is the 2016 Readers Poll inductee for the DownBeat Hall of Fame, was designated an NEA Jazz Master in 2007. He earned four Grammy awards and appeared on the cover of DownBeat six times during his 60-plus-year career in the jazz business.

A musician of global impact, Woods moved to the Poconos in 1957, when he settled in nearby New Hope, Pennsylvania, with his new bride, Chan Richardson, who had been the common-law wife of the late Charlie Parker. There they lived until 1968, before Woods moved his family to France for a four-year stay. They divorced in 1973. In 1976, Woods resettled in another Poconos hamlet, Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania, with his new wife, Jill Goodwin.

For the first half of the concert, Goodwin and her brother, Bill Goodwin, Woods’ drummer of choice after 1974, recruited the personnel of the last edition of the Phil Woods Quintet (Brian Lynch, trumpet; Bill Mays, piano; Steve Gilmore, bass; Goodwin, drums; with alto saxophonist Vincent Herring, a one-time Woods student, assuming Woods’ chair), and, as special guests, alto saxophonist and Woods protégé Grace Kelly, vocalist Bob Dorrough, tenor saxophonist Houston Person, trumpeter Randy Brecker and tenor saxophonist Ada Rovatti.

Before the show, several protagonists offered testimonials. “Phil was the greatest lead alto player ever, in addition to all the

great recorded solos,” said Brecker.

“Phil was a master of repertoire,” said Person, whose close friendship with Woods developed on various Jazz Cruises during the 1990s. “He was Quincy Jones’ guy and Oliver Nelson’s guy; that meant something to me. On top of that, he was a nice person, always willing to mentor younger musicians.”

Rovatti testified to the truth of this assertion, recalling that, after touring with Woods in an Italian big band (documented on Philology, the Italian label named for Woods), he wrote a recommendation letter to Berklee College of Music that facilitated her matriculation there. She cited Woods’ Grammy-winning solo on Billy Joel’s 1977 hit “Just The Way You Are” as an instance of his ability “to take a melody and print his signature on it.”

Kelly’s tune “Man With The Hat,” the title track of her 2011 “alto battle” album with Woods, references a much-publicized moment from 2006, when Woods—who had met her earlier that year at the Stanford Jazz Workshop—invited the precocious 14-year-old to join him on a rendition of “I’ll Remember April” at a concert in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. After Kelly’s opening solo, Woods doffed his well-worn black cap and placed it upon her head. “After he soloed, I gave it back, but he said, ‘No, you keep it. It looks good on you,’” Kelly recalled.

“There’s something about the way Phil projects and lays into a note that really sounds like the human voice,” said Kelly in describing his operatic tonal personality. “His sound has so much character. His time is so precise and swinging; he finds the perfect feel at any tempo. He cuts through with this sassiness and greasiness, but mixed with romance and melodicism. There’s a



Woods performs in Copenhagen in 1983.

melodic line in anything he plays, even the more avant-garde things. But he also plays the horn very percussively, utilizing the slap tongue and blending it into his lines—like part horn, part drum.”

Alto saxophonist Jon Gordon, who was 17 when Woods took him under his wing, did not perform at the concert, but had spoken to DownBeat about his mentor a few days after Woods died of complications from emphysema on Sept. 29, 2015. During that conversation, Gordon cited a remark from alto saxophonist-composer-arranger Benny Carter, who first hired Woods for the immortal 1961 LP *Further Definitions* and partnered with him on the albums *My Man Benny, My Man Phil* (1990) and *Another Time, Another Place* (1996): “In the whole history of the alto saxophone, Phil is the one we should all be emulating.”

Gordon described an October 1984 lesson with Woods. “Phil said, ‘Play me the opening of *Rite Of Spring* at the piano.’ ‘Play me Bird’s solo break on “Night In Tunisia.”’ ‘Write a rondo for me.’ He threw stuff at me all day. At the end, he said, ‘I’m going to take you in. You never have to pay me again. But don’t let me down. You’d better know why you’re playing this music. I know too many people who lived and died for it. If you’re not trying to change the world, I’m not interested.’”

In 2007, Bill Charlap, then pianist in the Phil Woods Quintet, said that Woods “played the role of Johnny Hodges for Oliver Nelson’s and Quincy Jones’ ensembles, and for a good reason—he was the master section player and the master improviser.” After Woods died last year, reedist Dave Liebman—an NEA Jazz Master and East Stroudsburg resident—eulogized him as “a jazz warrior” who “cast the mold for lead alto in a big band setting with his sound and phrasing,” and who also, “along with Cannonball [Adderley] and a few others, took [Charlie Parker] to a logical extension, paving the way for [John Coltrane] to go further.”

Still, it is arguable that the figure Woods most closely resembled was Benny Carter (1907–

2003), whom he mirrored as a soup-to-nuts musician in the realms of improvisation, section playing, composition and arrangement. Woods transcribed Carter’s solos as a 12-year-old in his hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts, under the tutelage of local master musician Harvey Larose. Within several years he was playing locally with such teenage associates—and future jazz luminaries—as vibraphonist Teddy Charles, drummer Joe Morello, guitarist Sal Salvador and pianist Hal Serra.

During the summer of 1947, before Woods’ senior year of high school, he and Serra started making “field trips” to New York for lessons with Lennie Tristano. In the fall of 1949, he matriculated at Juilliard as a clarinet major. While immersing himself in the European canon by day, Woods jammed extensively at night, paying the rent with club dates and dance band gigs (most notably with Charlie Barnet). In 1954, he took a steady gig with drummer Nick Stabulas and bassist Teddy Kotick, who joined him for his debut leader recording on Prestige that October, and on three of his five subsequent Prestige sessions through July 1957.

Later in 1954, Woods joined a Monday night band at Birdland led by drummer Jim Chapin and a big band led by Neal Hefti. In 1956, Birdland proprietor Morris Levy hired Woods for a 10-week “Birdland All-Stars” tour as opening act for a lineup that included the Count Basie Orchestra, Sarah Vaughan, Lester Young and Bud Powell. Quincy Jones heard him, and hired him as lead alto saxophonist for the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band on Gillespie’s first international State Department tour. Woods left Gillespie in the spring of 1957, started a popular two-alto combo with Gene Quill, and began his romance with Chan.

Over the next decade, Woods became New York’s first-call studio alto saxophonist, fulfilling that function on perhaps a thousand dates. He uncorked memorable solos on recordings by the likes of Jones, Nelson and Carter, as well as Thelonious Monk, Gil Evans, Clark Terry, George Russell and Benny Goodman.

Busy as he was, Woods grew weary of jingle dates and New York’s tamped-down hardcore jazz scene, and was discouraged by the demise of Ramblerny, the Poconos performing-arts camp where, between 1964 and 1967, he taught students like Michael Brecker, Steve Grossman and Richie Cole.

Woods, Chan and their four children moved to Europe in May 1968, and settled in France, during the student revolution. There, he formed the European Rhythm Machine, a dynamic quartet with either George Gruntz or Gordon Beck on piano, Henri Texier on bass and Daniel Humair on drums. With ERM, Woods received his first invitation to play the Newport Jazz Festival as a leader in 1969.

In 1974, spurred by the ERM experience, Woods approached Goodwin about forming a working band that could develop new arrangements. Thus the Phil Woods Quartet—with bassist Steve Gilmore and pianist Mike Melillo—was born.

In 1976, augmented by guitarist Harry Leahey, the band recorded the double album *Live At The Showboat*, which earned the first of Woods’ three Grammys for Instrumental Jazz Performance. The group’s harmonic palette and rhythmic flexibility broadened after pianist Hal Galper replaced Melillo in 1980; the addition of renowned trumpeter Tom Harrell in 1983 further expanded its sonic possibilities.

Harrell remained until 1990, replaced by trombonist Hal Crook, who was followed in early 1992 by trumpeter Brian Lynch, who played alongside Woods until the group’s final performance on the Jazz Cruise in January 2015. After Galper, the quartet’s piano chair was assumed by Jim McNeely, Charlap and Mays, respectively.

During the final 35 years of his life, Woods also freelanced extensively, performing with an international array of jazz orchestras and engaging in memorable collaborations with, among others, Gillespie and Carter.

“He made the most out of his talent in all conceivable aspects,” Lynch said. “Everything was covered and above reproach—the playing, the writing, the presentation, the way business was done. He was inquisitive, with broad tastes. He was an American epic.”

Speaking to DownBeat in 2007, Woods himself offered an understated, overly modest self-appreciation. “I’m not an innovator,” he said. “I just play songs. I play bebop. I’m influenced by Harold Arlen and Charlie Parker and Jerome Kern and Thelonious Monk. I don’t consider myself in those ranks creatively, though. I keep the flame going.

“I’m happy to be a good player. A pro. I’ve sometimes referred to myself as ‘a soldier for jazz.’ Sometimes I’d like to change persona and make up a whole new self. But it doesn’t seem to work. It’s too late to change.” **DB**



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81st
READERS
POLL

JAZZ ALBUM
OF THE YEAR



1

MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA
The Thompson Fields (ARTISTSHARE)

Maria Schneider's *The Thompson Fields* is an autobiographical work reflecting the bandleader's keen interest in nature. The album comes housed in an elaborate hardback book with extensive liner notes, photographs, maps, fold-out pages and Audubon illustrations of birds. The music reveals a similar connection to the natural world, with songs inspired by specific types of birds and butterflies. Largely inspired by the landscape of Schneider's youth, the album features lovely pastoral moments that enliven the score for a nature documentary that plays in the listener's mind.



2

GRACE KELLY
Trying To Figure It Out (PAZZ)

Grace Kelly, who topped the category Rising Star—Alto Saxophone in the 2016 DownBeat Critics Poll, restlessly explores the common ground between jazz and pop in a musical setting that shifts seamlessly from the Great American Songbook to Top 40 radio. Guest artists include Jon Batiste (harmonica, vocals) and Shayna Steele (vocals).



3

GREGORY PORTER
Take Me To The Alley (BLUE NOTE)

For the follow-up to his acclaimed 2013 album *Liquid Spirit*, Gregory Porter reunites with star producer Kamau Kenyatta for a collection of stirring originals that juxtapose the personal and political. Marrying keen, incisive lyrics with the spirit of gospel and the intimacy of r&b, the album reaffirms Porter's position as one of the deepest, most heartfelt singer-songwriters in jazz.



4

ARTURO SANDOVAL
Live At Yoshi's (ALFI)

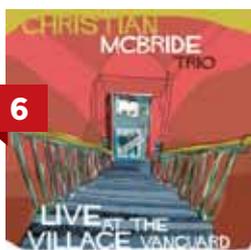
Arturo Sandoval parades through a sizzling live program of his greatest hits, including several homages to his musical heroes. But the 10-time Grammy winner's sparkling trumpet work is the main attraction here as he and his band hurdle through a variety of styles, including trad-jazz, bebop and fusion.



5

JACK DEJOHNETTE/RAVI COLTRANE/MATTHEW GARRISON
In Movement (ECM)

Drummer Jack DeJohnette, who sat in with John Coltrane's quartets in the 1960s, joins saxophonist Ravi Coltrane (the late jazz icon's son) and bassist Matthew Garrison (son of Coltrane bassist Jimmy Garrison) for a potent exploration of originals, contemporary melodies and, of course, touchstones of the Coltrane oeuvre.



6

CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE TRIO
Live At The Village Vanguard (MACK AVENUE)

This record is Christian McBride's paean to New York City's Village Vanguard, the historic jazz club where the bassist first performed as a leader in 1995. Alongside drummer Ulysses Owens Jr. and pianist Christian Sands, McBride exhibits laser-like agility and profound smoothness across a program of nine rewarding tracks, including a feisty take on "Cherokee," for which he received

the 2016 Grammy Award for Best Improvised Jazz Solo. Recorded over three consecutive nights in December 2014, the album is a playful collection of jazz standards, original compositions, pop covers and r&b mainstays. Billie Holiday's "Good Morning Heartache" and J.J. Johnson's "Interlude" rub shoulders with Michael Jackson's "The Lady In My Life" and Rose Royce's 1977 hit "Car Wash."



7

TONY BENNETT & BILL CHARLAP
The Silver Lining: The Songs Of Jerome Kern (COLUMBIA)

Vocalist Tony Bennett and pianist Bill Charlap join forces for a heartfelt tribute to an icon of the Great American Songbook. The duo's nuanced interplay is invigorated by the support of three superb musicians—pianist Renee Rosnes, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington.



8

PAT METHENY
The Unity Sessions (NONESUCH)

The Unity Sessions comprises a heady mix of 13 Metheny originals, a piece co-written with Ornette Coleman and Ray Noble's "Cherokee." Featuring Chris Potter on saxophone and bass clarinet, longtime collaborator Antonio Sanchez on drums and Ben Williams on bass, the album rests on a foundation of unbridled lyricism and dynamic group interplay.



9

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCH.
Live In Cuba (BLUE ENGINE)

This two-disc set presents one of the world's hardest-working big bands performing over three nights to sold-out audiences at Teatro Mella in Havana. Interlacing compositions by JLCO band members with Afro-Cuban classics, the album documents a joyful cross-pollination of two proud musical cultures.



10

ESPERANZA SPALDING
Emily's D+Evolution (CONCORD)

Esperanza Spalding's *Emily's D+Evolution* reflects the bassist/vocalist's early interest in theater, poetry and performance art. The persona of Emily—a character drawn from Spalding's childhood curiosities—re-emerges on this disc to navigate a series of musical vignettes that traverse numerous styles and evoke vivid, cinematic scenes.

11. Charles Lloyd & The Marvels, *I Long To See You* (BLUE NOTE)
12. Chick Corea & Béla Fleck, *Two* (CONCORD)
13. Cécile McLorin Salvant, *For One To Love* (MACK AVENUE)
14. Sonny Rollins, *Holding The Stage: Road Shows Vol. 4* (DOXY/OKEH)
15. Snarky Puppy, *Culcha Vulcha* (GROUNDUP)
16. Bill Charlap Trio, *Notes From New York* (IMPULSE!)
17. John Scofield, *Past Present* (IMPULSE!)
18. Snarky Puppy, *Family Dinner, Vol. 2* (GROUNDUP)
19. Kenny Barron Trio, *Book Of Intuition* (IMPULSE!)
20. Arturo O'Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra, *Cuba: The Conversation Continues* (MOTÉMA)



PROone

S A X O P H O N E S

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81st
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HISTORICAL
ALBUM
OF THE YEAR



1

JOHN COLTRANE

A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters
(IMPULSE!/VERVE)

With the availability of long-lost session reels, *A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters* brings together all existing recordings and written outlines for the first time to paint the most comprehensive picture of John Coltrane's seminal album. Available in CD and vinyl editions, this box set set reproduces one of jazz's most enduring works in a fresh and revelatory light.



2

BILL EVANS

Some Other Time: The Lost Session From The Black Forest (RESONANCE)

Recorded in 1968 in Villingen, Germany, this limited-edition set consists of previously unreleased studio tracks by pianist Bill Evans with drummer Jack DeJohnette and bassist Eddie Gomez in trio, duo and solo settings. The accompanying booklet features interviews with Gomez and DeJohnette, plus photographs from the session.



3

MILES DAVIS

Miles Davis At Newport: 1955-1975 The Bootleg Series, Vol. 4 (SONY/LEGACY)

This four-CD box set comprises live performances by Miles Davis' stellar lineups in 1955, 1958, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973 and 1975. The music traces Davis' stylistic transformation from the ripe romanticism of his '50s cool-jazz phase to the pugnacious intensity of his '70s fusion period.



4

THAD JONES/MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA
All My Yesterdays: The Debut 1966 Recordings At The Village Vanguard (RESONANCE)

This recording of the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra's February 1966 debut at the Village Vanguard (with additional material from later that year) presents the orchestra in fine form, with solos by several of the era's top New York players.



5

JACO PASTORIUS

Jaco: Original Soundtrack (COLUMBIA/LEGACY)

This single-CD package brings together 16 essential recordings from the 2015 documentary about the game-changing bassist, including solo tracks, Weather Report masterpieces and musical collaborations with Joni Mitchell, Ian Hunter and Herbie Hancock. It also premieres three new recordings bearing Jaco's powerful influence.



6

WEATHER REPORT

The Legendary Live Tapes: 1978-1981 (LEGACY)

Weather Report's *The Legendary Live Tapes: 1978-1981* features four discs of unreleased live performances from 1978 to 1981. Formed by former Miles Davis sidemen Wayne Shorter and Joe Zawinul in 1970—and later featuring bassist Jaco Pastorius, drummer Peter Erskine and percussionist Bobby Thomas—the genre-fusing group is heard here in peak form, thanks to soundboard

tapes recorded by longtime live mixing engineer Brian Risner. Produced by Erskine and executive produced by Joe Zawinul's son Anthony, this package showcases Weather Report's expressive power and stylistic flexibility during the prime years of its existence. The collection merges Weather Report classics—"Birdland," "A Remark You Made," "Teen Town"—with live solo and duo tracks captured onstage.



7

STAN GETZ & JOÃO GILBERTO

Getz/Gilberto '76 (RESONANCE)

Getz/Gilberto '76 collects material performed by the celebrated duo of tenor saxophonist Stan Getz and vocalist João Gilberto during a May 1976 residency at San Francisco's Keystone Korner. The supplementary 32-page booklet includes rare photographs and features essays by author James Gavin and bossa nova legend Carlos Lyra.



8

ERROLL GARNER

The Complete Concert By The Sea (SONY/LEGACY)

Pianist Erroll Garner's *Concert By The Sea* (released in 1956) is one of the best-selling jazz albums of all time, and this extended version celebrates its 60th anniversary. The digitally remastered three-CD box set includes 11 previously unreleased tracks and features interviews with the Erroll Garner trio.



9

ELLA FITZGERALD

Jazz At The Philharmonic: The Ella Fitzgerald Set (VERVE)

This comprehensive set compiles all of the Jazz at the Philharmonic performances that Ella Fitzgerald recorded for Verve Records. It includes concerts from 1949, 1953 and 1954, and features appearances by Charlie Parker, Lester Young and Hank Jones.



10

BRAD MEHLDAU

10 Years Solo Live (NONESUCH)

Brad Mehldau's *10 Years Solo Live* brings together 19 performances culled from a decade's worth of European tours. The eight-LP box set (also available on CD) is divided into four thematic subsets—Dark/Light, The Concert, Intermezzo/Rückblick and E Minor/E Major—that explore different facets the pianist's creative approach.

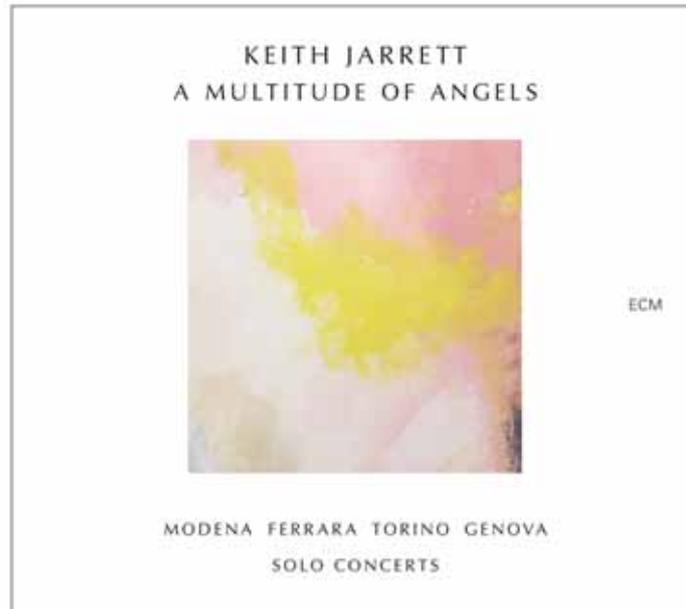
11. Maynard Ferguson, *Live From San Francisco* (OMNIVORE)
12. Billie Holiday, *Banned From New York City Live* (UPTOWN)
13. Abbey Lincoln, *Sophisticated Abbey* (HIGHNOTE)
14. Art Pepper, *Live At Fat Tuesday's* (ELEMENTAL)
15. Sarah Vaughan, *Live At Rosy's* (RESONANCE)
16. Wes Montgomery, *One Night In Indy* (RESONANCE)
17. Charlie Haden & Gonzalo Rubalcaba, *Tokyo Adagio* (IMPULSE!/UMC)
18. Bob Dylan, *The Bootleg Series, Vol. 12: The Cutting Edge 1965-1966* (COLUMBIA)
19. Frank Sinatra, *A Voice On Air (1935-1956)* (SONY LEGACY)
20. Albert Ayler, *Bells/Prophecy-Expanded Edition* (ESP-DISK)

ECM

Music in Movement

A Multitude of Angels

Keith Jarrett
piano



Rising Grace

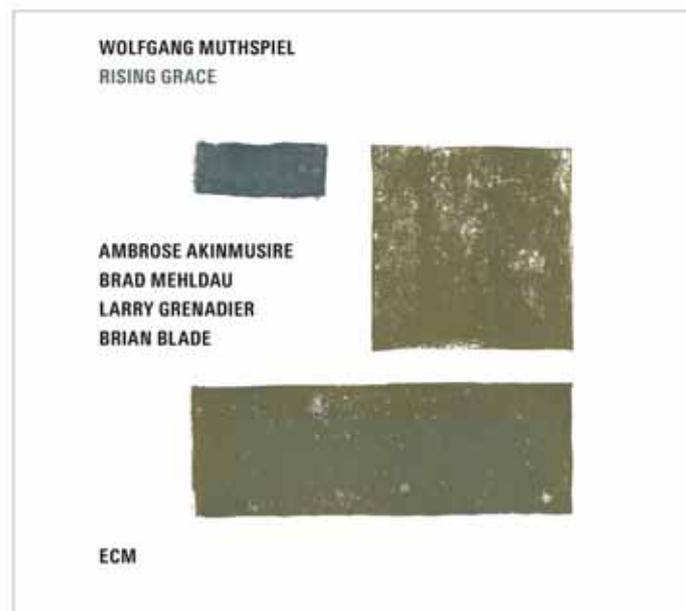
Wolfgang Muthspiel
guitar

Ambrose Akinmusire
trumpet

Brad Mehldau
piano

Larry Grenadier
double-bass

Brian Blade
drums





JAZZ ARTIST



Kamasi Washington performs at the 2016 Pitchfork Music Festival in Chicago.

KAMASI WASHINGTON

By Phillip Lutz
Photo By Michael Jackson

Just Enjoy the Music'

How many musicians have performed at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival, the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival, the Pitchfork Music Festival, the Glastonbury Festival, the BBC Proms and the Newport Jazz Festival—all in one year?

The answer is one: Kamasi Washington, who appeared at those divergent events within a span of less than five months.

Since May 2015, when the imposing saxophonist released his magnum opus *The Epic* (Brainfeeder), he and members of his Los Angeles-based collective, West Coast Get Down, have been traversing the globe, buoyed by social media and a surge in interest among young listeners. That surge has spurred optimistic talk, in outlets from Tavis Smiley's PBS show to the New York Times Magazine, that Washington represented a future for jazz.

But it's still early. Will Washington—who draws from sources as diverse as Snoop Dogg and Pharos Sanders—prove a model for other jazz musicians seeking access to a wider array of stages? And what is his appeal to young people, anyway?

"It's a combination of something that feels familiar and unfamiliar," Washington said.

The familiar part, he explained, focused on celebratory style: "the subtleties, a lot of the ways that we play our phrases, the timing that we use; the sensibility, the nature of the music, playing with people like Snoop, whose music has a party element to it.

"Because it feels familiar, they let their guard down and just enjoy the music."

The unfamiliar part, he said, centered on improvisatory substance: "The actual music is pretty different from what they're used to listening to. They say, 'I never heard music that had so many solos and was moving around so much and felt like it could go anywhere.'

"It changes people's perceptions of jazz."

Changing perceptions, to be sure, is no mean feat. No less a figure than Miles Davis failed to open the floodgates of rock festivals, even after he and his Bitches Brew band gained entry to the iconic Isle of Wight festival, in 1970, and, two decades later, dove into hip-hop, hiring drummer Ricky Wellman, an exponent of early go-go beats, and producer Mo

Bee, who helped guide his last album, *Doo-Bop*, released posthumously in 1992.

But clearly, a symbiosis has been developing between selected elements of the jazz and hip-hop scenes. Washington, for example, played and produced on rapper Kendrick Lamar's Grammy-winning *To Pimp A Butterfly* (Top Dawg) on which jazz pianist Robert Glasper and trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire appeared, as did saxophonist Terrace Martin, a loose associate of West Coast Get Down who recently produced and played with Herbie Hancock.

Drummer Tony Austin, a West Coast Get Down member who has known Washington since high school, pointed to what he regarded as a cultural shift. "We happen to be at the right place in American music at the right time," he said. "We've just gone through a period where it was a very DJ culture. That's still relevant today.

"But what's been missing in music the last decade has been live musicians actually getting up and playing instruments that are amazing. I think in America and around the world that's becoming unique again. Universally, people are ready for it."

For West Coast Get Down, perceptions began changing before the touring began. Pianist Cameron Graves, a collective member who also has played with Washington since high school, said the crowds started building when the band was ensconced on Wednesday and Friday nights at the Piano Bar, the Hollywood haunt that closed in September.

"We started noticing the young people being very interested in what we were playing," he said. "They would just be dancing all night. We were doing this without a DJ, without cover tunes. Most of our tunes were funk-jazz, funk-rock jazz or just plain jazz. We had that place so packed out that the fire marshals shut it down twice."

The crowds have continued to grow, in size and enthusiasm. At rock festivals, Graves said,

KAMASI WASHINGTON



Washington at the 2016 Newport Jazz Festival

“It’s really interesting watching the response. They start bobbing their heads like they would at a pop concert or a rock concert. We engage with them and tell them, ‘This is jazz music.’ And they’re like, ‘What? I like jazz music?’

“The culture is now accepting this thing we’re going to label ‘jazz’ as something that is significant. That’s how you start getting young people involved—people who wouldn’t necessarily be interested in that category. It has to be cool, it has to be relevant.”

At Bonnaroo, jazz has had something of a presence over the years. It hit a peak in 2007, when Blue Note Records sponsored a jazz tent. Among the artists who appeared were pianist Billy Martin and drummer John Medeski, who also played Bonnaroo last year, along with bassist Chris Wood and guitarist John Scofield.

Also at the festival were saxophonist Charles Lloyd and banjoist Béla Fleck.

But this year, according to Robin McNicol, Bonnaroo’s director of programming, organizers decided to raise the stakes when a member of the booking team saw Washington, fully bedecked in “spiritual jazz” regalia, perform at the top of his game. The Bonnaroo staff, which already had been impressed by the buzz surrounding Washington, started brainstorming about who might lead the well-known “SuperJam.” Washington’s name rose to the top.

“He’s an artist’s artist,” McNicol said. “He was great to work with and stepped right up in terms of putting forth a creative vision.”

Washington collaborated with a variety of artists, among them singer Allen Stone, with whom he rendered an appropriately soulful

“The Thrill Is Gone,” and saxophonist Grant Kwiecinski, known as GRiZ, who joined the band for an animated version of Yusef Lateef’s “Morning.” Washington opened the festival with a raucous “Change Of The Guard,” the Tyner-like tune that also opens *The Epic*.

The performances, periodically accompanied by the flash of strobe lights and molded to fit the musical demands of Washington’s collaborators, were, at their core, recognizable as jazz—and, McNicol said, they represented a bracing introduction to the music for many in the crowd, who signaled their enthusiasm.

“They were very well received,” she said.

In October 2015, Washington was also received enthusiastically at the inaugural BRIC JazzFest in Brooklyn, and the following February at a performance in Greenwich Village’s Webster Hall that was originally scheduled for January’s Winter JazzFest but had to be postponed because the saxophonist broke his ankle.

At BRIC, “Kamasi was a big draw,” said Brice Rosenbloom, founder and director of Winter JazzFest and senior music producer at Le Poisson Rouge, where Washington appeared the following night. The BRIC response was especially impressive, he added, because Washington was new to New York, where he had made his debut at a packed Blue Note engagement earlier that year.

Rosenbloom had booked Washington before he saw the saxophonist perform live, his interest having been sparked after listening to *The Epic* and hearing about the saxophonist’s longtime association with his Los Angeles bandmates.

“In a way, I took a chance,” he said. “But it was a wise move. It worked out for everyone.”

“His musical ideas are refreshing in a way that the music is definitely accessible whether you’re really indoctrinated in the jazz world or not. It’s a very pleasing sound that’s easy to understand. And then the way the guys play together is so connected, understanding that *The Epic* is like a live record. It wasn’t overly mastered. What you hear on the record is what you’ll hear in the live setting. That was a bold move. He’s getting an audience that’s giving jazz a first listen.”

Longtime jazz listeners, like those at Newport, have reacted less demonstratively. “When we play these rock festivals and pop festivals, they’re experiencing music a little differently,” Austin said. “They want to get drunk, they want to dance. There’s this fun, interactive thing. Newport is definitely like, they’re there to listen. You see the difference; that doesn’t change the way we play. Our goal is the same. The audience finds a different way to connect.

“Kamasi’s music is very broad. There are a lot of influences. The younger listeners say, ‘I can hear some groove in this; I can kind of bob my head to this.’ The older listeners say,

'This is jazz. The harmonies are complex. The chords are moving around. The song structure is something I'm used to.'

'Hopefully we've created a center point that can bring the new listeners and old listeners together. I've seen that at a lot of the concerts we've played.'

At 91, George Wein, Newport's founder, counts himself among the ranks of older listeners. But he was impressed enough with the buzz to book Washington for two separate days. "He went over well," Wein said.

Though Washington "wasn't known as much in Newport" as he was elsewhere, Wein said that the future held promise. "He may be a star."

At the BBC Proms, the weeks-long annual series at London's Royal Albert Hall, Washington's group, backed by the strings of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and a chorus, was part of a small run of late-night events within the larger run of classical-music concerts. It featured pop groups as well as singer Jamie Cullum, the National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Scotland and the São Paulo Jazz Symphony.

"It was a different kind of energy," Washington said, "a different way of playing. We shifted the dynamics to make it work, and it did. The people were really into it. It was different than playing Glastonbury, where we were pushing the music as hard as we could."

At Bonnaroo, where the musical push was also on, McNicol was not ready to commit to an expanded jazz presence despite Washington's positive reception. Still, she said, festival organizers were entertaining the possibility of having bassist Stephen "Thundercat" Bruner, who appeared on *The Epic*, lead a SuperJam.

Rosenbloom is full of tempered optimism about what Washington meant for the future. "I would like to think he's been a gateway to attract more people to jazz," he said.

For his part, Austin was not yet convinced that the Washington phenomenon will bring jazz back to the center of popular culture. "We're hoping," he said.

In the meantime, concert promoters are trying to snag Washington for 2017 shows, and the members of West Coast Get Down are enjoying career boosts. It's clear that fans of *The Epic* crave more music with a similar flavor.

Graves, who has parlayed his success with Washington into a seat in bassist Stanley Clarke's band, is planning an album that he described as "jazz-metal." He said, "It's like acoustic jazz, but it's so aggressive that it's almost like hard rock."

Bassist Miles Mosley, who has sought advice from Clarke, will release two albums: one made with a full band, and another with Austin, a potentially innovative duo effort that will reveal his bass to greater effect. For some

time, Mosley has been incorporating modifications to the acoustic bass that give it greater clarity at higher volume when electronic attachments are applied. The point, he said, is to increase its possibilities as a solo instrument.

"What's beautiful about being with West Coast Get Down is that no one told you, 'No, stop, that doesn't sound good; don't do that anymore,'" Mosley said. "By working with this collective of musicians, I was able to take the time required to reinvent things." Evidence of the reinvention can be heard on "Abraham," an electrifying single he released in 2015.

As for Washington, he was thinking expansively. "I'm writing and trying to tap into all the ideas I've had over the years," he said. *The Epic*, a three-disc set that employed a 32-piece orchestra, 20-person choir and a 10-piece band, may be exceeded in scope by his next record.

"It was so big and so much, I wondered if it would fit anywhere," he said of *The Epic*. "Now I can kind of do what I want to do, so there's no limitations. Music dictates to me what's going to happen. I'm kind of a conduit; I shape what happens. I don't know exactly what it's going to be, but in my mind and in my imagination I'm imagining more than what *The Epic* was."

Whether he will further expand his audience—or that for jazz in general—is something that cultural arbiters will be watching closely in the years to come. **DB**

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KENNY BURRELL has appeared on so many essential jazz recordings that jazz history and his biography seem to be interwoven. Here Kenny is captured live at the famed jazz club Catalina's with a well-oiled big band made up of some of the West Coast's finest players.



ERIC ALEXANDER is back with another pedal-to-the-metal session featuring his own intense style. An unhackneyed sidest played by a close-knit ensemble of Eric's regular buddies, coupled with the bass-def contributions of the extraordinary BOB CRANSHAW, make for a listening experience not soon forgotten.



TOM HARRELL'S new HighNote release features trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire along with guitarist Charles Altura and others in a selection of imaginative new compositions by Tom with a mesmerizing version of "Body and Soul." Tom's last HighNote CD was in the Top Ten Best Jazz albums of 2015 in the 64th Annual Downbeat Critic's Poll.



If **ABBEY LINCOLN** was overwhelmed by the responsibility of being proclaimed "the last of the jazz singers", she never let it show. She steadfastly maintained her dignified, intensely serious focus and her commitment to music that dug deeper into social issues of the day. This volume of Lincoln at the Keystone Korner puts the emphasis on her own compositions.



With **JERRY BERGONZI** at the helm, you know this isn't going to be your parent's organ & tenor gig. Bergonzi takes these standards down new harmonic paths and uses them as a launching pad for fertile and impressive improvisation. The playing is always intense and distinctive, fresh and spontaneous.



Whether **WALLACE RONEY** performs up-tempo original compositions or mainstream ballads, he is always compelling in his idiosyncratic, post-bop playing. With the Grammy-winning composer/pianist Patrice Rushen on hand with guest reedman Gary Bartz this new recording is a welcome addition to the Wallace Roney discography.



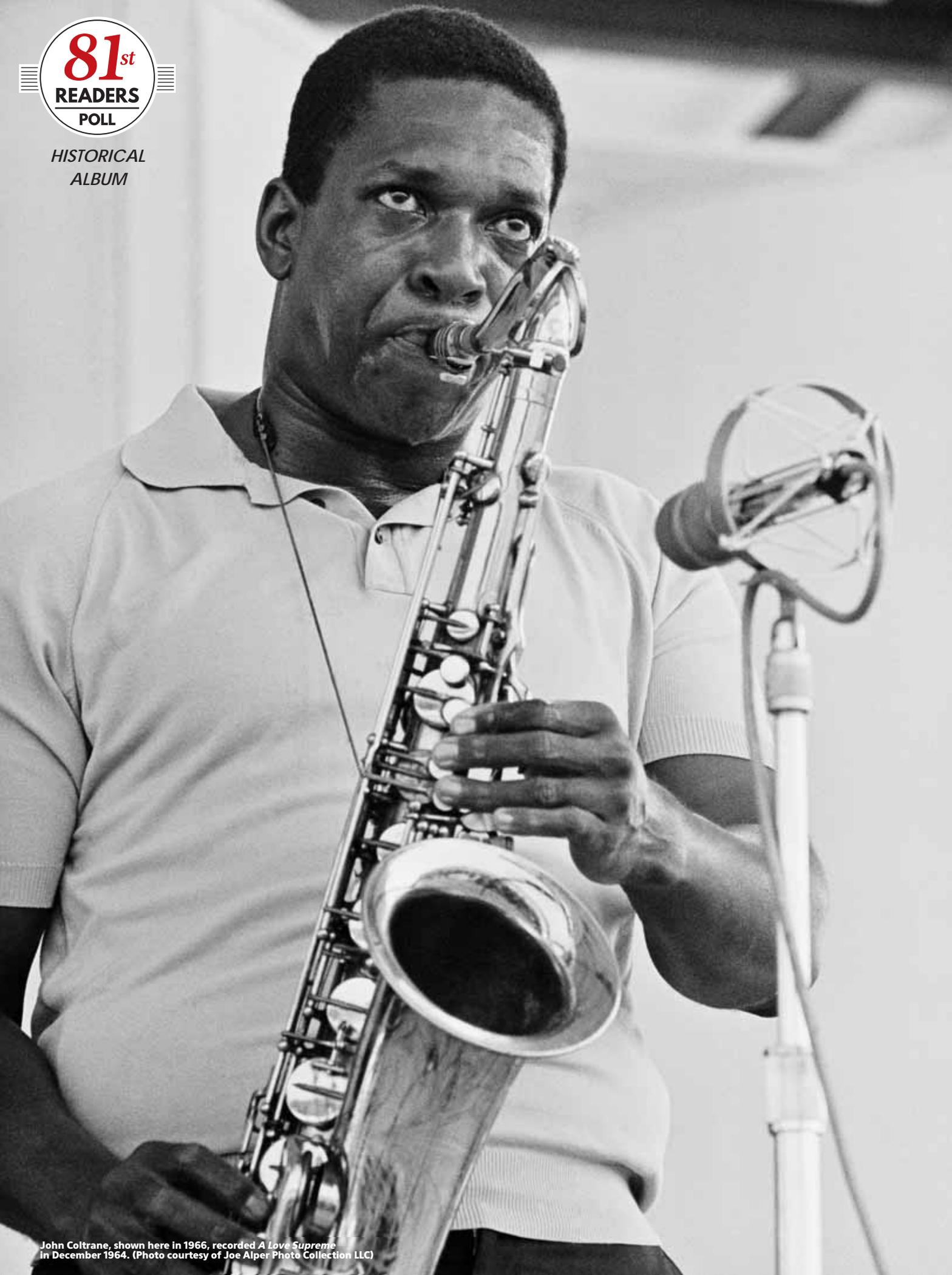
GEORGE CABLES' new album illuminates his gifts as a composer as much as his abilities as a pianist. The sensational vocalist Sarah Elizabeth Charles has written lyrics for some of Cables' instrumental numbers and she joins the ensemble for eight never-recorded songs.



"Chemistry" is an apt title for the latest **HOUSTON PERSON - RON CARTER** duo album. Every tune is imbued with a rare feeling of intimacy and almost telepathic sense of communication. One of the last recordings worked on personally by the late RUDY VAN GELDER, Person and Carter here deliver music-making of the highest order.

81st
READERS
POLL

HISTORICAL
ALBUM



John Coltrane, shown here in 1966, recorded *A Love Supreme* in December 1964. (Photo courtesy of Joe Alper Photo Collection LLC)

'I HAVE EVERYTHING'

John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters*

BY JAMES HALE

What makes a recording resonate with a broad range of fans and continue to attract both repeat and new listeners across decades? What makes John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* continue to speak to us?

Clearly, whether the recording is Miles Davis' *Kind Of Blue*, Keith Jarrett's *The Köln Concert* or *A Love Supreme*, musicianship and compositional quality play a huge role, but each of those artists recorded dozens of times and have deep catalogs. Arguably, some of their recordings contain material that's equal to, or even superior to, those we continue to covet—and purchase repeatedly in various formats.

In 2015, the Verve Music Group and Impulse! Records celebrated the 50th anniversary of the iconic album by releasing *A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters*, which contains the original album, two unreleased mono reference tracks and seven unreleased performances from the original recording sessions. An expanded version also includes a live recording of the *Love Supreme* suite, captured on July 26, 1965, at France's Festival Mondial du Jazz Antibes. *The Complete Masters* was met with widespread praise, and it topped the Historical Album category in the DownBeat Readers Poll.

The spiritual nature of *A Love Supreme* certainly has played a large role in its enduring popularity. The album is, as Coltrane scholar Lewis Porter has called it, “the definitive statement of [his] musical and spiritual aspirations.”

As Porter outlined in his book *John Coltrane: His Life and Music*, the music on *A Love Supreme* suggests “a kind of pilgrim's progress, in which the pilgrim acknowledges the divine, resolves to pursue it, searches, and, eventually, celebrates what has been attained,” and the final movement of the suite—“Psalm”—contains a saxophone solo that is essentially a recitation of the poem Coltrane composed and placed inside the gatefold of the LP. With its recurrent “Thank you, God,” which mirrors the vocal characteristics of black preachers, “Psalm” is a powerful apotheosis that concludes the 33-minute journey begun with Coltrane's opening rubato call to prayer.

That closing section has remained among the most important things I have heard in more than 50 years of musical exploration. While I'm not particularly religious, the purity and sincerity of Coltrane's statement strikes me on a deep level.

I am not alone. Saxophonist Marcus Strickland feels so strongly about *A Love Supreme* that its opening played as his bride-to-be walked down the aisle. It is, he said, “not something of this world” and “one of the greater moments in human history. If aliens come to Earth someday, I hope they hear this and recognize it as a pinnacle of who we were.”

While there is no question that the sheer universal humanity reflected in Coltrane's outpouring on Dec. 9, 1964, is highly attractive in itself, what listeners also continue to hear and experience is the fact that *A Love Supreme* represents the culmination of one man's intensive search for ecstatic expression.

As Porter illuminates in his biography, in November 1963, Coltrane told French journalists Michel Delorme and Jean Clouzet that he felt he had solved some challenges related to writing music that matched his intentions and transcended the limitations of modal forms or chordal progressions: “I'm going to let the nature of the songs determine just what I play.”

Less than a year later, recently settled into relative domestic tranquility with his second wife, Alice, and their two children in Dix Hills on Long Island, Coltrane retreated to a spare room in their house for five days. When he emerged—according to Alice's account in Ashley Kahn's book *A Love Supreme: The Story of John Coltrane's Signature Album*—he knew he had accomplished something monumental. Alice quoted him as saying: “This is the first time that I have received all of the music for what I want to record, in a suite. This is the first time I have everything, everything ready.”

Not only had Coltrane put in the work necessary to take his music to a new level, he knew that his bandmates—pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Jimmy Garrison and drummer Elvin Jones—were ready, as well, completely attuned to how he wanted to express himself through his music. In fact, Tyner told Kahn, the band had played some parts of the suite in concert prior to recording them. (A tape does exist of the band playing “Resolution” at Pep's in Philadelphia on Sept. 18, 1964.)

Another key component in making this album timeless was engineer Rudy Van Gelder, who was ready for Coltrane when the saxophonist rolled up to Van Gelder's New Jersey studio at 7 p.m. that December Wednesday. Tyner had led sessions with Garrison and Jones on the two previous evenings, and on this evening Van Gelder set up Jones' kit close to where Coltrane would stand—an unusual placement that illustrates the engineer's confidence in the skills he had developed over almost two decades of constant work.

Van Gelder, who died last August at the age of 91, had worked frequently with Coltrane between 1955 and 1959 and regularly with him in the early '60s. As the engineer told Kahn, “Coltrane liked the way I recorded, and he said so.”

Veteran record producer Michael Cuscuna noted that what made Van Gelder popular among jazz producers like Creed Taylor and Bob Thiele, who was in charge of *A Love Supreme*, was that he was unafraid of volume. The engineer understood enough about audio dynamics to

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Art Davis (left), Jimmy Garrison and Coltrane in the studio on Dec. 10, 1964 (Photo: Chuck Stewart)

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be able to get a natural sound from musicians, and his ability to capture the sound of a tenor saxophone remains unrivaled. As Kahn noted in his book: "By 1964, Coltrane's favorite engineer had perfected his technique in order to capture as wide a sonic spectrum as possible; in the acoustic setting of a jazz quartet, that meant all the tones and overtones, the timbre and depth that defined each musician's sonic signature."

One of the hallmarks of *A Love Supreme* is the immediacy of Coltrane's horn; it's full-bodied and resonant, and yet nothing of the other instruments is lost in the mix. This is remarkable, given that *A Love Supreme* was recorded in a single four-hour session, live to tape with only two overdubs: a thickening of the vocal chant at the end of "Acknowledgement" and a brief second saxophone at the end of "Psalm" to correct a fault Coltrane had detected. The relatively few false starts or breakdowns are testament to the musicians' sense of purpose. (On the following evening, tenor saxophonist Archie Shepp and bassist Art Davis joined the quartet for alternate versions of "Acknowledgement," which are included on *The Complete Masters*.)

The album of the quartet's music was released just two months after the session, set apart from Coltrane's other LPs by its stark black-and-white cover and the iconic photo of the saxophonist, snapped by Thiele in Van Gelder's parking lot during a 1962 session with Duke Ellington.

Within a year of recording *A Love Supreme*, Coltrane was already moving aggressively in a new direction, adding Pharoah Sanders on saxophone and pushing into more extreme harmonic territory. Less than two years after that, on July 17, 1967, he would be dead from liver cancer.

A Love Supreme, then, stands not just as an apex in Coltrane's career, but also as a demarcation point: Only the most adventurous listeners followed him into the woolly atonality of *Om* (recorded in October 1965) and *Concert In Japan* (recorded in July 1966). Among jazz fans, *A Love Supreme* became a talisman, so much so that Strickland claims that he was first exposed to it in his mother's womb.

"My dad would play it to us [Marcus and his twin brother, drummer E.J.] through our mom's stomach," he said. "When I started seriously listening to it when I was about 11, our dad was like, 'It worked!'"

As a product of the racial turbulence of the '60s, he said *A Love Supreme* also is a powerful reflection of its era: "It reminds me that when words fail, music transcends. To me, it sounds like a human crying through the horn. I feel like I know John Coltrane through this music."

That is, after all, the most you can ask from any piece of art—that it speaks to you, and is both a product of its time and yet universal enough to endure and remain relevant well past its creation.

It is, writes British music scholar Tony Whyton, in his book *Beyond A Love Supreme: John Coltrane and the Legacy of an Album*, "the most canonical of jazz works ... a definitive masterwork."

DB

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JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA



Democracy in Action

BY PHILLIP LUTZ
PHOTO BY FRANK STEWART



THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA opened its season on Sept. 22 with a blizzard of notes—most of them wisely chosen—from seven keyboard wizards.

In a concert titled “Handful of Keys: A Century of Jazz Piano,” the orchestra presented a program that, in familiar JLCO fashion, was both macro and micro in scope—encompassing the historical sweep of pianistic accomplishment even as it gave voice to the pianists’ personal predilections.

From Joey Alexander’s taste for elliptical

statement (revealed by the teenage wunderkind on Bill Evans’ “Very Early”) to Myra Melford’s penchant for percussive effect (displayed by the mid-career pianist on her “The Strawberries”) to Dick Hyman’s flair for superheated stride (exhibited by the octogenarian on James P. Johnson’s “Jingles”), the program supplied a satisfying smorgasbord of jazz piano’s century.

But what was happening around the keyboard generated as much interest as what was happening on it. The arrangements—from



the disorienting time-shifting of trombonist Vincent Gardner's chart for Harry Warren's "Lulu's Back In Town" to the disarming directness of alto saxophonist Sherman Irby's take on Thelonious Monk's "Rhythm-A-Ning"—sparked with originality and spoke with a consistency reflecting the band's ethos.

In a word—or, more precisely, three—that ethos was encapsulated in the opening statement by Cat Henry, vice president of concerts and touring, and in the closing one by Wynton Marsalis, the orchestra's music director. Both invoked the in-house moniker for the Frederick P. Rose Hall, where the action took place: "House of Swing." And swing the band did, to the audience's obvious delight.

Audiences, in fact, have been responding to the band's swing since 1987, when, as a patchwork of Marsalis septet members and survivors of the Duke Ellington and Count Basie bands, it filled a hole in Lincoln Center's summer programming.

The orchestra opens its 29th season showing signs of strength. In this year's Readers Poll, Marsalis once again topped the Trumpet category, while the orchestra topped the Big Band category, following victories in 2013 and '14. And Lincoln Center's commitment to jazz appears firm: The season will be the first full one after a multimillion-dollar renovation of the venue's atrium and other public spaces.

The renovation brings all of the venue's spaces up to the architectural standard of its much-lauded main rooms: Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, the Appel Room and Rose Hall. Nowhere has jazz insinuated itself so successfully in such an august edifice of high culture.

Sitting in the Monk Conference Room in the administrative offices a week before the season-opening concert, Gardner, who joined the band in 2000, and Irby, who returned to the fold in 2005 after a 1995-'97 stint, reflected on the

reasons for the band's good fortune.

"We try to represent the music on the highest level," Gardner ventured, "demonstrating teamwork, democracy, individuality within the context of a collective."

The democratization of the band has been aided by the broadening of its songbook. Once devoted largely to the music of Duke Ellington—"Wynton used Duke's music to showcase Duke's importance to American culture, and to teach the band how to play," Gardner said—the book now includes a growing number of arrangements by the band's members.

Irby likened the process of expanding the book to putting ingredients in a pot of stew. "We're still evolving what we're doing," he said, "but every little piece that people contribute, you add to that pot."

Adding to the pot can be grueling work. Irby said he had labored to finish his chart of "Rhythm-A-Ning" during the wee hours of the morning before the interview. That kind of intense effort was integral to the ensemble parts he created—blistering but impressive as a bed on which 75-year-old pianist Larry Willis could lay his lines. The crowd ate it up.

The other arrangements enjoyed similar acceptance. Among them are saxophonist Ted Nash's raucous, Latin-inflected version of "The Strawberries" and saxophonist Walter Blanding's sonority-rich chart of "Very Early." Trumpeter Marcus Printup, for his part, penned the perfect concert opener, a toe-tapping take on Wynton Kelly's "Temperance."

The expansion of repertoire has paralleled growth in the band's curation activities. Members have identified a demand for their help in guiding the jazz programming at cultural institutions across the country.

Likewise, the band's educational activities have expanded. Drawing on high school students from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, membership in youth orchestras has in the past four years increased to more than 200 in four bands. Band members also oversee numerous youth combos, all of them begun in the past four years.

The activity is not just an end in itself. Beyond spreading the jazz gospel—and helping build the band's profile—it has redounded to the benefit of its core programming.

Case in point: the Sept. 22 concert. Among the standout soloists was Isaiah J. Thompson, who began to show his musical mettle as the first pianist in the JALC Youth Orchestra. A New Jersey native who made his mark in Montclair's Jazz House Kids program—run by singer Melissa Walker, with an assist from her husband, bassist Christian McBride—Thompson is now a student at Juilliard, where Marsalis is director of jazz studies.

"He's fantastic in every way," Marsalis told the audience, in introducing the young pianist.

Thompson did not disappoint. Amid the twists and turns of Gardner's dizzying arrangement of "Lulu," Thompson maintained his center of gravity. He then joined drummer Ali Jackson and bassist Carlos Henriquez in a crisply executed version of Oscar Peterson's "Hymn To Freedom" that evoked the Peterson persona at its most soulful. "We're going to make sure he gets an 'A' for the semester," Marsalis said of Thompson after his performance.

Marsalis addressed the audience from his chair in the trumpet section. Though he has in the past five years increased his authority over JALC affairs after changes in management—he holds the titles of managing and artistic director of the organization, in addition to music director of the orchestra—he yielded to the demands of the music, blending easily with his section mates. And, Gardner said, Marsalis has proved a willing delegator and judicious editor when it comes to others' writing, refraining from imposing his will.

"He offers suggestions for a voicing or clearing up something," Gardner said. "But in the end, if it's your idea or arrangement, he always defers to you."

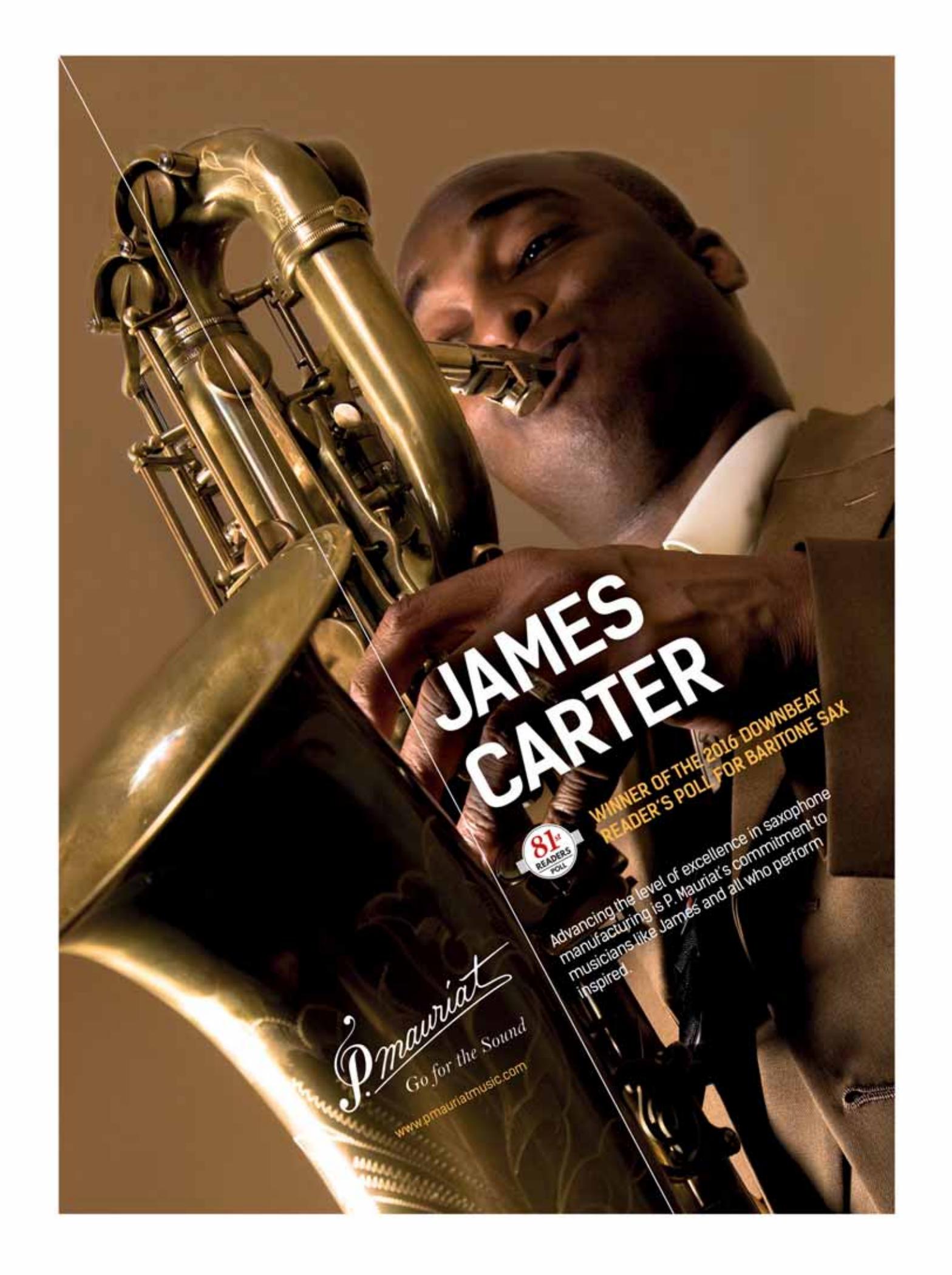
In the management shakeup, Marsalis brought in as executive director Greg Scholl, who once ran the online operations of NBC's television stations. Since then, the band has extended its digital reach, live-streaming concerts like the one on Sept. 22.

Marsalis also hired as director of programming and touring Jason Olaine, whose influence may be felt in edgy programs like the one planned for March 3, 2017, when Dave Douglas will perform at Jazz at Lincoln Center with a small cast that includes fellow trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith, whose aesthetic, eschewing harmonic progression, falls decidedly outside the mainstream.

The edginess is less apparent when it comes to programming the orchestra itself. While a March 17, 2017, JALC concert tantalizingly titled "Free To Be: Jazz Of The '60s And Beyond" will feature new treatments of works by a bevy of the day's giants—like Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane—the schedule offers no sign of engaging the kind of large-ensemble, collective improvisation in the Butch Morris "conduction" tradition, from which Smith emerged.

Ultimately, however, that may be beside the point. The JALC has been able to thrive while making periodic forays outside its comfort zone, incrementally expanding that zone in the process. Faced this season with a host of anniversaries that demand recognition, the orchestra will focus in no small measure on the likes of bebop, Basie and a big holiday show, for which Irby will be the point man.

"Because Duke Ellington is what we built upon, the foundation," Irby said, "it's hard to get too far away from that." **DB**



JAMES CARTER

WINNER OF THE 2016 DOWNBEAT
READER'S POLL FOR BARITONE SAX

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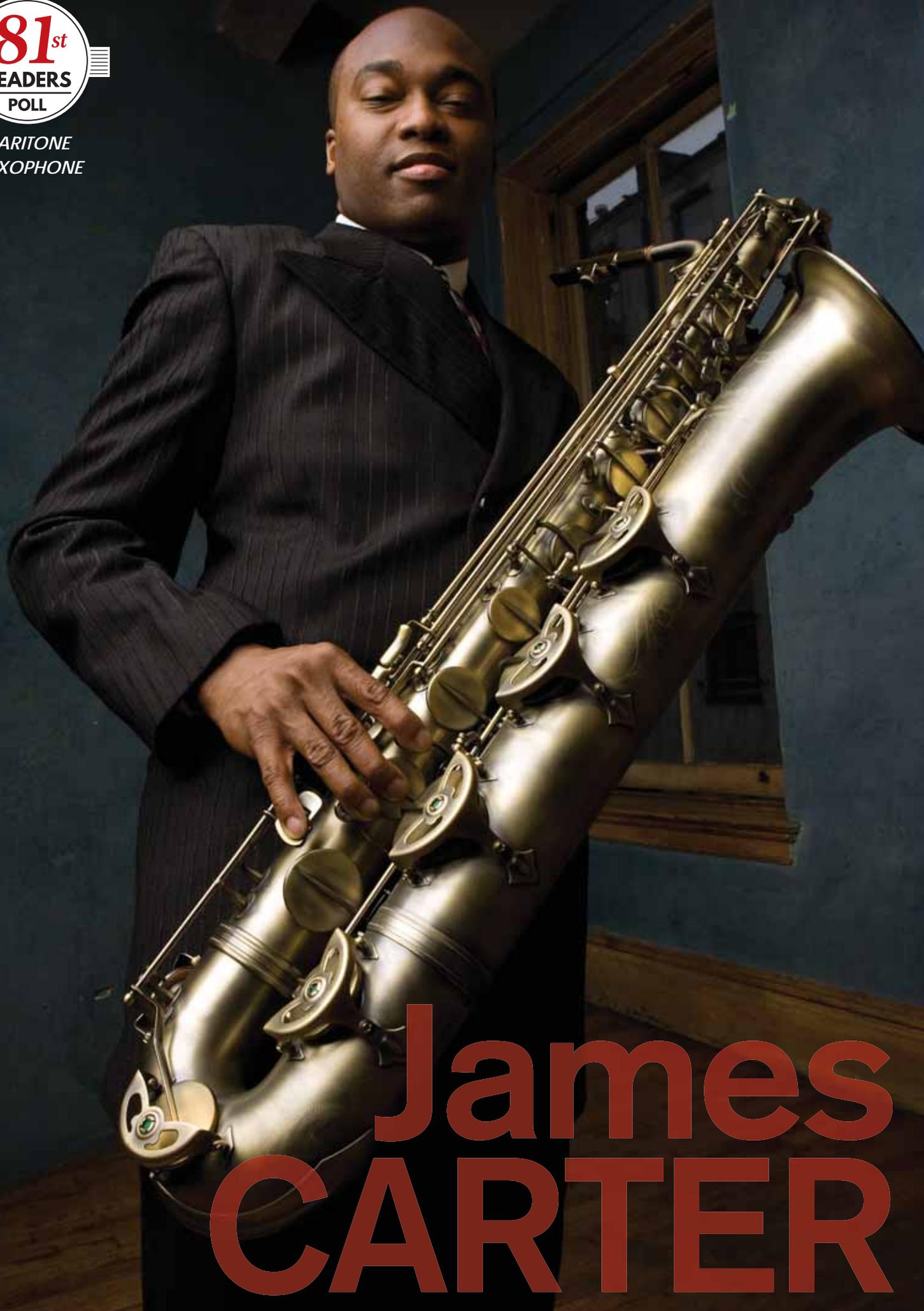
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BY JOHN EPHLAND

PHOTO BY JIMMY & DENA KATZ

James Carter's win in the Baritone Saxophone category of the DownBeat Readers Poll is a testament to his staying power on that horn, despite the absence of robust press coverage or a recent album release. It's hard to believe that this youthful powerhouse on all things saxophone has been at it now for more than a quarter of a century.

Carter's dedication to his craft includes an abiding respect for the artists who paved the way for him to find all manner of expression through his various horns. To gain a sense of his passion for the baritone saxophone, one need look no further than his ongoing and frequently touring organ trio with organist Gerard Gibbs and drummer Alex White (who recently replaced longtime member Leonard King).

"James has always found very unique ways to express himself on any instrument he plays," Gibbs said. "He can play just as aggressive with an attack on an uptempo tune, or he can play tender—just as sweet as a violin. He has the capability of generating those kinds of emotions. The audience doesn't remember all the notes that you play. The audience remembers how they felt."

DownBeat recently caught up with Carter in his hometown, Detroit. It was there that his musical mentor, Donald Washington, got him started on the baritone saxophone, lending Carter his own horn to practice on when he was 11 years old.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE BARITONE SAX THAT GETS YOU GOING?

It's one of those instruments that has a vast range. The tenor is the closest to the human voice in its range, and I think the baritone is its closest neighbor. It certainly has those human tones as well. There's an altissimo [range]—once somebody has the right mouthpiece, it goes beyond belief.

For me, I think of Mr. Hamiet Bluiett the most because he's the one who turned me onto the Lawton mouthpiece I currently play. As a result of that, it has basically become the connection that makes the saxophone a true appendage for me. Whereas, back in the day, I had like three mouthpieces that this one mouthpiece can now do.

YOU'VE USED A FAMILY ANALOGY TO DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BARITONE. IS IT LIKE A BIG BROTHER FOR YOU?

No. I like the grandfather or the wise-man aspect, because I've dealt with wise men who have played this instrument. My musical father and teacher, Donald Washington, is one, a wise, giving individual; [also] Thomas "Beans" Bowles, a Motown legend who played all the bari sax

solos on the Temptations, Martha Reeves & The Vandellas and Diana Ross recordings. Wise individuals, full of knowledge: Cecil Payne, George Favors, Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Douglas Ewart.

WHAT ABOUT FANS' REACTION TO THE BARI?

First and foremost, it's what the music dictates and assigns specific horns for. There's still somewhat of a bias [against] the baritone and bass saxophones, which is ironic, considering that the first saxophone ever made was a bass saxophone, and the other saxes came as a result.

This goes back to the family analogy because family—in the truest sense—informs and inspires different forms of each other. So, my altissimo on my lower instruments is definitely informed by my soprano playing—and vice versa. Trying to get the meat that's not necessarily in the soprano or other upper horns, the baritone gives the gravity to the notes that I have on my soprano. If I need something to sound as full as possible, I go for the baritone or bass saxophone. So they cross-pollinate and influence each other.

IN A 2003 INTERVIEW WITH DOWNBEAT YOU SAID, "WHEN YOU HAVE DIFFERENT ATTACKS IN YOUR ARSENAL, IT'S A MUCH EASIER BALANCING ACT." THE IDEA OF BEING A PAINTER AND HAVING MORE COLORS TO CHOOSE FROM COMES TO MIND.

The painting analogy is definitely cool. You have those different shades, and sometimes maroon doesn't do it. It has to be fuchsia. You've got different tones sonically, just like you do with a color spectrum. Not everybody's turned on by one particular color.

A long time ago, I used to pass behind my mother's china cabinet, and one day as I was playing, [I noticed that] certain china would ring at certain notes. That is basically the equivalent of what an audience is like: Certain people are turned on by certain instruments or certain music, and other people aren't.

Subtle differences are making one piece of china resonate; if I twisted my lip one way, that one would stop and something else would shake. I wouldn't call it a household experiment. It just happened. But it told me that [if you play] the things that carry over more effectively, then the more people would be brought in. Or at least the possibility of that happening would be a bit greater. **DB**



COMPLETE RESULTS

This year's Readers Poll had 29,073 voters. See page 38 for Jazz Album results, and see page 40 for Historical Album results.

HALL OF FAME

Phil Woods	1,350
Wynton Marsalis	1,296
Jack DeJohnette	853
John McLaughlin	772
George Benson	741
Hank Mobley	728
Marian McPartland.....	724
Benny Golson	665
Les Paul.....	663
Mel Tormé	663
Charles Lloyd	568
Bob Brookmeyer	560
Kenny Burrell.....	507
Carmen McRae.....	505
Tito Puente.....	492
Grant Green.....	480
Toots Thielemans	475
Jimmy Heath	460
Kenny Barron	448
George Duke	437
Shirley Horn	429
Paul Bley	396
Don Cherry	392
Pharoah Sanders	388
Dave Holland.....	349

JAZZ ARTIST

Kamasi Washington	1,093
Chick Corea	897
Wynton Marsalis	836
Wayne Shorter	661
Tony Bennett	632
Pat Metheny.....	605
Maria Schneider.....	568
Christian McBride	543
Esperanza Spalding.....	540
Joey Alexander	536
Chris Potter	528
Gregory Porter	525
Charles Lloyd	492
Diana Krall	467
Tom Harrell	456
Vijay Iyer	416
Kenny Barron	401
Brad Mehldau	367
Keith Jarrett.....	364
Jack DeJohnette	360

JAZZ GROUP

Snarly Puppy	1,349
Pat Metheny Unity Group	828
Chick Corea Trio.....	824
Charles Lloyd Quartet	744
Wynton Marsalis Quintet	697
Wayne Shorter Quartet	643
Jack DeJohnette/Ravi Coltrane/ Matthew Garrison	545



Snarly Puppy

©CHRISTIAN THOMAS

Christian McBride Trio	540
Tom Harrell Quintet	489
Keith Jarrett Standards Trio	485
Brad Mehldau Trio.....	476
Ahmad Jamal Trio	461
SFJAZZ Collective	433
The Bad Plus.....	424
Branford Marsalis Quartet	421
Yellowjackets.....	420
Esperanza Spalding & Emily's D+Evolution	415
Preservation Hall Jazz Band....	404
Yijay Iyer Trio	397
Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue	393

BIG BAND

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra	2,632
Maria Schneider Orchestra...2,504	
Count Basie Orchestra	1,703
Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band.....	1,077
Christian McBride Big Band ...	736
Vanguard Jazz Orchestra.....	733
Darcy James Argue's Secret Society	668
Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra	664
Chicago Jazz Orchestra.....	623
Sun Ra Arkestra.....	604
Arturo O'Farrill & The Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra	601
Mingus Big Band	596
Carla Bley Big Band.....	577
Bob Mintzer Big Band.....	575
Dave Holland Big Band.....	508

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Joshua Redman	852
Kenny Garrett	849
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Donny McCaslin	329
Jane Bunnett	324
Ted Nash	304
James Carter	297
Evan Parker	280
Tia Fuller	228

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Kenny Garrett	1,589
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Joe Lovano	1,269
Branford Marsalis	1,207
Joshua Redman	1,081
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Charles Lloyd	896
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Donny McCaslin	552
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Pharoah Sanders	464
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Houston Person	395
Ernie Watts	376
James Carter	299
JD Allen	283
Mark Turner	276
Joel Frahm	265
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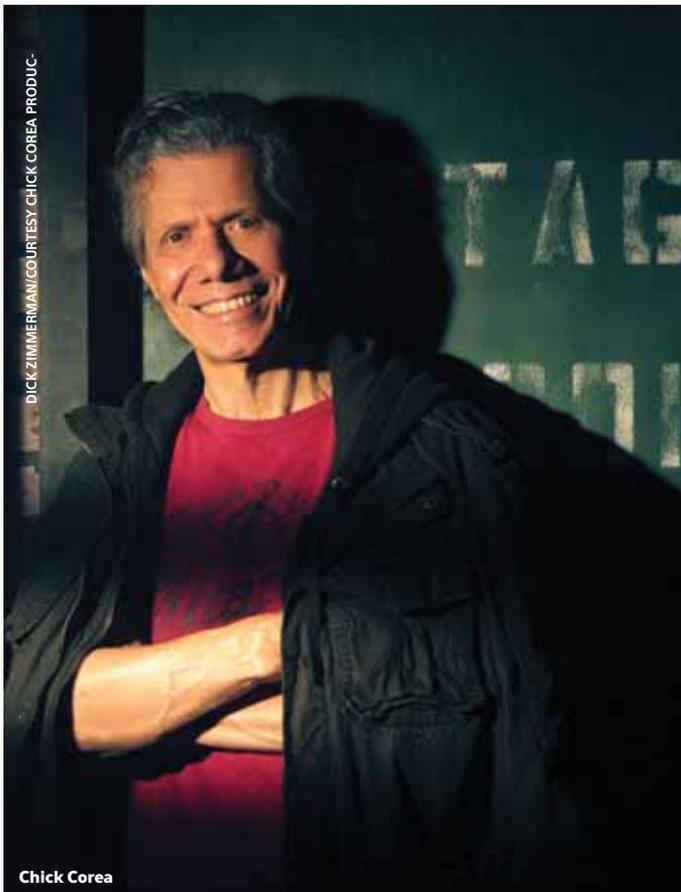
James Carter	2,204
Gary Smulyan	2,048
Joe Temperley	1,705
Ronnie Cuber	1,028
Denis DiBlasio	829
Hamiet Bluiett	812
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Ken Peplowski	1,384
Don Byron	1,104
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DICK ZIMMERMAN/COURTESY CHICK COREA PRODUCTIONS

Chick Corea



JOHN PEBEN

Pat Metheny

Lew Tabackin 956
 Henry Threadgill 848
 Dave Liebman 812
 Ted Nash 707
 Dave Valentin 629
 Elena Pinderhughes 620
 Jane Bunnett 584
 Steve Wilson 551
 Tia Fuller 544
 Holly Hofmann 439
 Ira Sullivan 424
 James Spaulding 396
 Anne Drummond 333
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 Joey Alexander 875
 Kenny Barron 859
 Vijay Iyer 696
 McCoy Tyner 677
 Fred Hersch 603
 Bill Charlap 588
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 Monty Alexander 404
 Jason Moran 357

Craig Taborn 340
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 Matthew Shipp 256
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 Al Di Meola 581
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 Lionel Loueke 415

Stanley Jordan 407
 John Abercrombie 384
 Mike Stern 348
 Marc Ribot 303

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 Esperanza Spalding 1,408
 Dave Holland 1,209
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 Linda Oh 612
 John Patitucci 585
 Rufus Reid 576
 John Clayton 531
 Mark Wade 433
 Avishai Cohen 424
 Larry Grenadier 412
 Victor Wooten 397
 Gary Peacock 348
 Ben Williams 316
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Linda Oh.....	427
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Didier Lockwood.....	412
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Karrin Allyson.....	569
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Ernestine Anderson.....	372
Sheila Jordan.....	353
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Wayne Shorter	1,032
Pat Metheny	968
Ornette Coleman	899
Wynton Marsalis	885
Benny Golson	844
Carla Bley	661
Terence Blanchard	569
Tom Harrell	512
Robert Glasper	485
Vijay Iyer	452
John Zorn	421
Christian McBride	324
Henry Threadgill	303
Bill Frisell	285
Jimmy Heath	285
Darcy James Argue	281
Dave Holland	280
Jim McNeely	256

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Wynton Marsalis	1,409
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Gordon Goodwin	809
Esperanza Spalding	735
Bill Holman	727
Carla Bley	664
Christian McBride	629
Dave Holland	607
John Clayton	461
Vince Mendoza	454
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Diana Krall

MARK SELIGER

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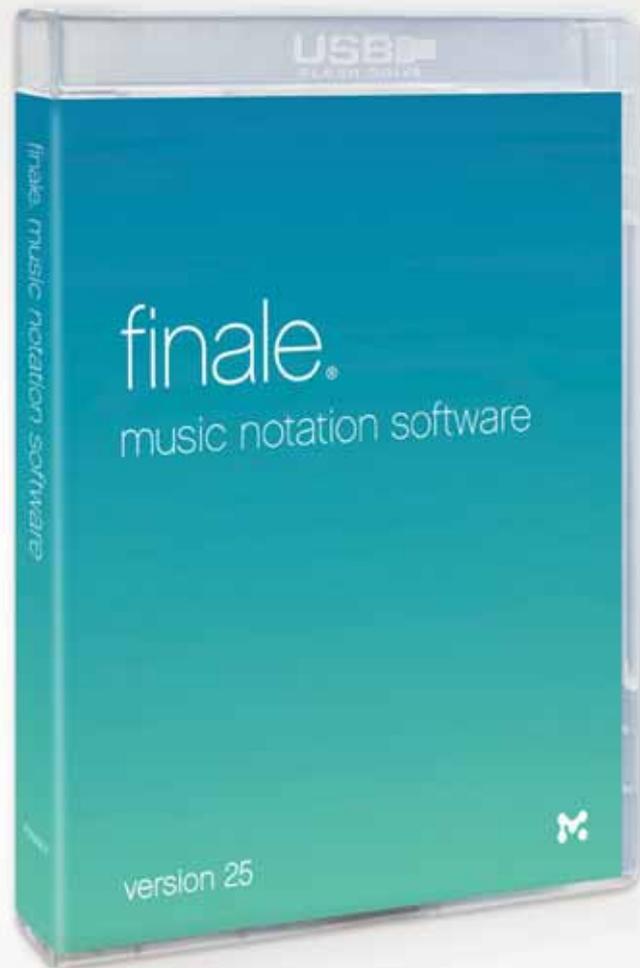
David Bowie	1,187
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Tom Harrell



ANGELA HARRELL

Tom Harrell *Something Gold, Something Blue*

HIGHNOTE 7289

★★★★½

This extraordinary album pairs up two of the finest trumpet players in jazz—70-year-old veteran Tom Harrell and 34-year-old phenom Ambrose Akinmusire—for a beautifully crafted outing on seven Harrell originals and a standard that manage to sound animated and dreamy, bright and gauzy, urgent and enchanting, a contrast of opposites suggested by the title. And while Harrell and Akinmusire are quite different stylistically, the way they braid lines through the same melody becomes so fluid as to render their sounds virtually indistinguishable.

After a while, though, Harrell's coolly bop-pish eighth notes, pert sound, sudden cae-

suras and succinct ideas stand out against Akinmusire's athletic leaps, smears, chirps and glisses. Since the packaging offers no clue as to who is playing when, it's possible that projecting a humble blend without regard to solo credits is part of the point, especially since the players seem to revel in their collective sound.

Whatever the intention, the music is a triumph. Harrell, in his mastery of harmonic nuance, shows himself to be one of the true heirs of Miles Davis. His flugelhorn solo on the fetching, medium-tempo "Travelin'"—driven by guitarist Charles Altura's warmly churning background figure—is a model of lyrical concision. Akinmusire, for his part, unleashes lightning bolts on "Trances," which, like many of the tunes, is powered by a throbbing, hypnotic pulse. This gives the album a slightly exotic feel, enhanced by the appearance of Omer Avital playing oud on the dancing, Middle Eastern-flavored "Delta Of The Nile."

Altura, who played on Akinmusire's brilliant *The Imagined Savior Is Far Easier To Paint*, solos with Jim Hall-like filigree throughout. Drummer Johnathan Blake and bassist Ugonna Okegwo keep a lively conversation going while still leaving lots of space, giving the album a light, floating feel and maintaining rhythmic interest during milder tunes like "Sound Image" and "View."

Okegwo walks jauntily under the short, sweet melody of "The Vehicle," offering a solo that shows off his rich, woody tone. It's a lovely way to close an album that is unpretentious yet quietly masterful, which is not a bad way to think of Harrell himself. —Paul de Barros

Something Gold, Something Blue: Circuit; Travelin'; Trances; Delta Of The Nile; Keep On Goin'; View; Body And Soul; Sound Image; The Vehicle. (67:17)

Personnel: Tom Harrell, trumpet, flugelhorn; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Charles Altura, guitar; Ugonna Okegwo, bass; Johnathan Blake, drums; Omer Avital, oud (4).

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com



Kris Davis
Duopoly
 PYROCLASTIC RECORDS
 ★★★★★

God is in the details. When I started truly focusing on Kris Davis' 2011 solo date *Aerial Piano*, each of the melodies, and then each of the phrases, and finally each of the notes seemed to accumulate additional meaning. That's the case for many jazz albums, but there's something in Davis' music that underscores it. The Brooklyn pianist invests deeply in the character of both boom and plink—you can hear it as she courses through the 16 duets with eight instrumental-

John Scofield
Country For Old Men
 IMPULSE! 002561002
 ★★★★★

Everything about how this album looks on paper screams contrivance; everything about how it sounds proves otherwise. Scofield's forays into non-jazz have all had their fascination, but this may be the most successful. The guitarist takes a batch of terrific melodies from the greater country & western songbook, from Hank Williams to Shania Twain, and reimagines them as small-group jazz tunes. He and his band approach the songs lovingly, but also aggressively, improvising through them and leaving them thoroughly revived.

Few of the adaptations hew to a country rhythm, though the program starts deceptively with the cowboy lope of "Mr. Fool," drummer Bill Stewart throwing in almost corny honky-tonk rimshots, Scofield coiling snake-like lines around the killer melody. Dolly Parton's "Jolene" gets a gorgeous Coltrane Quartet triplet treatment, with keyboardist Larry Goldings helping to push the harmony away from shore. Stewart's antic drumming animates a hilarious version of Merle Haggard's "Mama Tried," on which Scofield's total-package guitar vision is evident, from his pushy melodic improvising to the

ists on *Duopoly*. Whether she's goosing a Billy Drummond tom-tom thud or refracting a Tim Berne sax screech, part of the glory lies in the music's textural minutia.

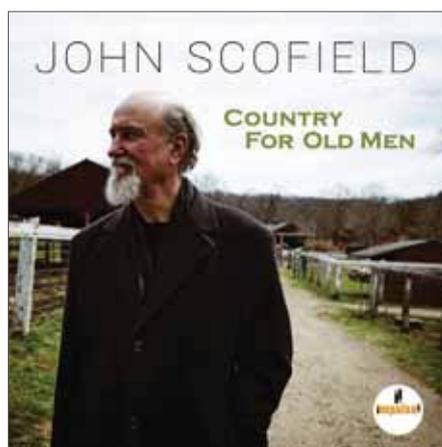
Take "Surf Curl," a fizzy ode to fluidity made with guitarist Julian Lage. Like half the album's tunes, it's a written piece that Davis and partner interpret at will. As each player bounces ideas off the other, the *macro* forces gather into a forceful wash, while the *micro* forces blossom with riveting singularities. It's an approach that brokers a foreground/background blur, and it happens repeatedly as this parade of partners determines how to coincide.

Duopoly's second half is all about pure improv, yet each gambit is architecturally sound enough to satisfy a sense of design. The track "Marcus Gilmore," which features the titular drummer, entices with a fluid exchange around a squirrely motif, and "Don Byron," with the song's namesake on clarinet, is bewitching. Even as a duo with guitarist Bill Frisell ends the disc in a haze, it's hard to decide what to focus on, the aura or the ingredients. A big win-win for those who appreciate process. —*Jim Macnie*

Duopoly: Prairie Eyes; Surf Curl; Fox Fire; Beneath The Leaves; Erol; Dig & Dump; Trip Dance For Tim; Prelude To A Kiss; Don Byron; Tim Berne; Marcus Gilmore; Billy Drummond; Angelica Sanchez; Craig Taborn; Julian Lage; Bill Frisell. (78:52)

Personnel: Don Byron, clarinet; Tim Berne, saxophones; Marcus Gilmore, Billy Drummond, drums; Angelica Sanchez, Craig Taborn, piano; Julian Lage, Bill Frisell, guitar.

Ordering info: krisdavis.net



edge-of-fuzz tone. With ultra-spare backing, he evokes Twain's lovely song, tickling every phrase with some little modification or addition.

Scofield is more melodically reverent on the Carter Family classic "Wildwood Flower," but he's found a treasure trove of material here for which he's perfectly suited. Let's say this could be Volume 1. —*John Corbett*

Country For Old Men: Mr. Fool; I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry; Bartender's Blues; Wildwood Flower; Wayfaring Stranger; Mama Tried; Jolene; Faded Love; Just A Girl I Used To Know; Red River Valley; You're Still The One; I'm An Old Cowhand. (62:27)

Personnel: John Scofield, guitar; Larry Goldings, organ, piano; Steve Swallow, bass; Bill Stewart, drums.

Ordering info: impulse-label.com



Delfeayo Marsalis & The Uptown Jazz Orchestra
Make America Great Again!
 TROUBADOUR JASS RECORDS
 ★★

If there is any irony in this title—a "tarnished slogan ... intended to mask intolerance under the guise of patriotism," according to the press release—it is invisible. While it may be Delfeayo Marsalis' purpose to "take [the slogan] back and run it up the flagpole," it's not clear that this album has anything to say about our present embarrassment, one way or the other.

The Uptown Jazz Orchestra has been a regular Wednesday night attraction in the French Quarter since 2010. It is a crack big band of 20 players that specializes in relatively mainstream swing and blues fare. But this is an odd showcase. There are first the tedious agitprop and rap monologues: "Back To Africa," "Dream On Robben" (about Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned), "Living Free And Running Wild" (a naïve fantasy of pre-Columbian America) and, most grating of all, the title track, a folksy doggerel of patriotic clichés.

More to the band's strength is a trio of simple, more or less indigenous New Orleans riff pieces. Baritone saxophonist Roger Lewis chugs his way through the Dirty Dozen Brass Band's "Snowball," which gathers a nice momentum before it stops. And "Put Your Right Foot Forward" achieves a rolling gospel drive. The best of the three is "Second Line" from Duke Ellington's *New Orleans Suite*. While not prima Ellington, it has an arc of structure and solid clarinet by Gregory Agid. —*John McDonough*

Make America Great Again!: Star Spangled Banner; Snowball; Second Line; Back To Africa; Make America Great Again!; Dream On Robben (Vocal); Symphony In Riffs; Put Your Right Foot Forward; All Of Me; Living Free And Running Wild; Skylark; Java; Fanfare For The Common Man; Dream On Robben (Instrumental). (62:48)

Personnel: Andrew Baham, Scott Frock, Bruce Miller, John Gray, Jamelle Williams, trumpets; Delfeayo Marsalis, Terrance Taplin, Charles Williams, Jeffrey Miller, T.J. Norris, Maurice Trosclair, trombones; Kahri Allen Lee, Jeronne Ansari, Roderick Paulin, Gregory Agid, Scott Johnson, Roger Lewis, Branford Marsalis (3, 10), woodwinds; Kyle Roussell, Meghan Swartz, piano; David Pulphus, bass; Herlin Riley, Peter Varnado, Joseph Dyson, drums; Dee-1 (4, 10), rap, vocal; Wendell Pierce (5), Bruce Miller (8), vocal; UTM Choir (4, 10).

Ordering info: delfeayomarsalis.com

The Hot Box

new releases
in the spirit of jazz

Critics	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	Paul de Barros
Tom Harrell <i>Something Gold, Something Blue</i>	★★★★	★★★★½	★★★★½	★★★★½
Kris Davis <i>Duopoly</i>	★½	★★★★½	★★★★	★★★★½
John Scofield <i>Country For Old Men</i>	★★★½	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★½
Delfeayo Marsalis <i>Make America Great Again!</i>	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★



the music of the esbjörn svensson trio
arranged for orchestra and jazz soloists



the meeting between two of europe's
leading jazz stars: an extremely rare magic



"beautifully played, an infectious, tuneful
and swinging trio album" (the times, GB)

Critics' Comments

Tom Harrell, *Something Gold, Something Blue*

Harrell and Akinmusire are each players of precision and poise, the former smooth and buttery; the latter, more barbed. "Body And Soul" is the chef-d'oeuvre, proving that even the best players need something to work with. —John McDonough

Winning combinations all around: the twin trumpets, the rhythm section, the tunes, the arrangements. Harrell consistently sets himself intelligent challenges and grows in the process. —John Corbett

The way he bends his ostensibly mainstream maneuvers to accommodate leftie notions and prog gambits will forever be its own reward. This pairing with Ambrose Akinmusire is a hoot. —Jim Macnie

Kris Davis, *Duopoly*

Brainy, antiseptic and oddly awkward, like two pre-teens in their first dancing class, neither knowing where the other's about to step. But this is the point, of course. The "compositions" are so faint that Davis and partners seem stranded in parallel universes. —John McDonough

Davis is a talent of major proportions. This obstacle course gives her a changing palette of instruments and sensibilities, two-by-two. Noah, take note. —John Corbett

Pianist Davis, a no-nonsense improviser with a lovely touch, bravely performs one composition and one free piece with eight musicians she's rarely if ever played with. Stuff happens with Craig Taborn and most of the rest, not so much with Billy Drummond and others. —Paul de Barros

John Scofield, *Country For Old Men*

Backstopped by melodies out of rural Americana, Scofield seems to enjoy looking for material in unexpected back roads, à la Sonny Rollins. These go down easily, though there's enough bite and rasp in the aftertaste to keep myth, sentiment and John Ford at bay. —John McDonough

Sco's guitar playing becomes more lyrical with each year, and this dance through country jukebox hits glows with precision and passion. He positions his instrument as a substitute for the human voice (no small goal) and lets it sing. —Jim Macnie

In the same way that he cut to the heart of groove music on *Uberjam Deux*, the ever-searching guitarist here probes the sweet, loping twang of country. A couple of sleepy tracks, but the nod to Johnny and the Hurricanes' 1959 version of "Red River Valley" is a gas. —Paul de Barros

Delfeayo Marsalis, *Make America Great Again!*

Just hearing Trump's motto makes my skin crawl, and out of the cesspool of this year's politics I wonder if anything positive will ever be retrievable from those four words. If possible, Delfeayo's activist tone poem might be the ticket. —John Corbett

I get a kick out the authenticity of his splash, and the fact that he likes to mess around with political dynamics. But it all sees a tad too glib—especially the Op-Ed oratory. —Jim Macnie

The trombone-playing Marsalis brother offers some darkly humorous, vaudevillian New Orleans gris gris to help us get through the 2016 election, in the process introducing crisp delights, wide musical range and bright personalities. —Paul de Barros



Charlie Haden Liberation Music Orchestra *Time/Life*

IMPULSE! B0025671

★★★★★

Time/Life is suffused with the spirit of Charlie Haden, even though the bassist and composer, who died in 2014, is personally present on only two tracks—a sumptuous rendition of “Blue In Green,” from Miles Davis’ *Kind Of Blue*, and “Song Of The Whales,” on which Haden bows in imitation and empathy with the endangered giant mammals—recorded in 2011.

On the three other tracks, Steve Swallow provides an electric bass anchor for the ensemble,

Dwiki Dharmawan *Pasar Klewer*

MOONJUNE 081

★★★★★

This ambitious two-disc set from Indonesian pianist-composer Dwiki Dharmawan is an earful. Across 11 compositions, *Pasar Klewer* manages to incorporate wildly diverse styles of music, all of it filled with great improvising. Eleven international musicians navigate these mostly dense charts, which blend the Gamelan tonal system and traditional Indonesian melodies with the Western diatonic system.

At times, the album can seem like a three-headed monster. For example, the 12-minute title track contains elements of swing, fusion and flat-out jazz; electric guitarist Mark Wingfield’s imaginative playing hearkens back to the 1970s, and later, there are voices heard as if from afar, suggesting a world-music spirit. Elsewhere, bassist Yaron Stavi recalibrates the mood to a softer, more subdued, jazzy sheen, and soon after we are stirred yet again by a new burst of energy from Dharmawan’s uptempo swinging, free-jazz piano frenzy—all of it backed by Asaf Sirkis’ forceful, spot-on drumming. It’s brilliant music that comes close to fraying at the edges, but, in the end, holds together beautifully.

ble, a cohesive unit that projects Haden’s characteristic mix of forbearance and resilience.

As on the five previous Liberation Music Orchestra albums since the ensemble was convened in 1969, pianist Carla Bley wrote the spare yet luminous arrangements. The group sound is so transparent that bandmembers’ individual strengths shine in the colorfully variegated tutti passages.

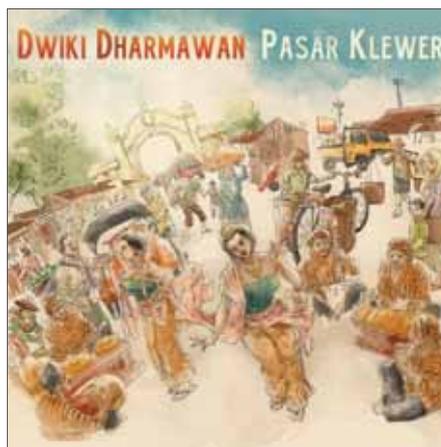
As soloists, however, these musicians offer dramatic contrasts. Tenor saxophonists Tony Malaby and Chris Cheek are as stylistically distinct as, say, Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young. Trumpeter Seneca Black’s shining tone balances Michael Rodriguez’s darker probings, while the low brass of trombonist Curtis Fowlkes, French horn player Vincent Chancey and tubist Joseph Daley add pungency. Guitarist Steve Cardenas warms Bley’s stark piano touches, and Matt Wilson drums sensitively, swinging gently at a slow pace.

Ecology is the album’s stated concern, but mortality is its inescapable subtheme. Haden’s legacy is secure. The Liberation Music Orchestra lives. —Howard Mandel

Time/Life: Blue In Green; Time/Life; Silent Spring; Útvikingsang; Song For The Whales. (53:48)

Personnel: Charlie Haden, bass (1, 5); Carla Bley, piano; Steve Swallow, electric bass (2, 3, 4); Tony Malaby, Chris Cheek, tenor saxophone; Loren Stillman, alto saxophone; Michael Rodriguez, Seneca Black, trumpet; Curtis Fowlkes, trombone; Vincent Chancey, French horn; Joseph Daley, tuba; Steve Cardenas, guitar; Matt Wilson, drums.

Ordering info: impulse-label.com

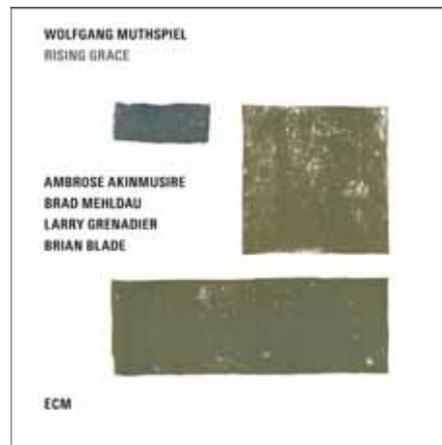


With a career that already spans three decades, *Pasar Klewer* is Dharmawan’s followup to last year’s *So Far, So Close* (also on MoonJune Records). With *Pasar Klewer*, the keyboardist has turned in a truly original work of art. —John Ephland

Pasar Klewer: Disc One: Pasar Klewer; Spirit Of Peace; Tjampuhan; Forest; London In June. (47:06) Disc Two: Lir Ilir; Bubuy Bulan; Frog Dance; Life It Self; Purnama; Forest. (53:00)

Personnel: Dwiki Dharmawan, piano; Yaron Stavi, bass; Asaf Sirkis, drums; udu clay percussion, konakol singing; Mark Wingfield (1, 4, 9, 11), Nicolas Meier (2, 5, 8, 10), guitar; Gilad Atzmon, clarinet (2, 7), soprano saxophone (3, 8); Boris Savoldelli (4, 5), Peni Candrarini (6), vocals; Aris Daryono, vocals, gamelan percussion, kendang percussion, rebab three-string violin (1–3, 6); Gamelan Jess Jegog; I Nyoman Windha, leader (3, 6).

Ordering info: moonjune.com



Wolfgang Muthspiel *Rising Grace*

ECM 2515

★★★★★

There’s an unstated theme of being “together again for the first time” to Austrian guitarist Wolfgang Muthspiel’s beautifully realized sophomore album as a bandleader for ECM.

Muthspiel’s longtime musical associates Larry Grenadier (bass) and Brian Blade (drums) rounded out the trio on *Driftwood*, his bandleading debut for the label from 2014, and on *Rising Grace*, they’re joined by pianist Brad Mehldau (reuniting saxophonist Joshua Redman’s onetime rhythm section) and trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire.

As a unit, these musicians enjoy a five-way interplay on a tranquil, sometimes subtly shimmering canvas. Akinmusire’s long, polished notes glide over Muthspiel’s flowing arpeggios and Mehldau’s carefully constructed chords to create an acoustic soundscape on the title track, which is gently propelled by Grenadier and Blade’s pulsing foundation.

Mehldau penned “Wolfgang’s Waltz” for this three-day recording session in southeastern France and provides an elegant a cappella introduction before offering a nimble solo that frolics among Blade’s crisp brushwork. “Boogaloo” reflects the titular musical and dance style from ’60s filtered through the quintet’s understated aesthetic.

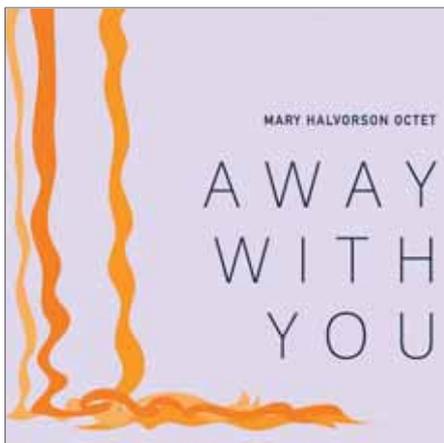
The reflective “Den Wheeler, Den Kenny” was written as a tribute to the late trumpeter Kenny Wheeler, whose 1976 *Gnu High* album on ECM was an early influence on Muthspiel.

Akinmusire often shares the spotlight in his own groups, so it’s particularly nice that he’s frequently given the opportunity to sparkle on *Rising Grace*. —Yoshi Kato

Rising Grace: Rising Grace; Intensive Care; Triad Song; Father And Sun; Wolfgang’s Waltz; Superonny; Boogaloo; Den Wheeler, Den Kenny; Ending Music; Oak. (68:39)

Personnel: Wolfgang Muthspiel, guitar; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Brad Mehldau, piano; Larry Grenadier, bass; Brian Blade, drums.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com



Mary Halvorson Octet *Away With You*

FIREHOUSE 12 24

★★★★★

Mary Halvorson's ensemble has grown with nearly every record, and the trio that recorded *Dragon's Head* in 2008 is now an octet. This reflects the guitarist's restless determination to keep incorporating new sounds and stylistic elements into her music, as well as the fact that she is a musician who likes distinctive musicians. Her latest recruit is steel guitarist Susan Alcorn, who first mastered her instrument playing Western swing before plunging

into the experimental and improvised music scene. Alcorn's C.V. includes work with saxophonist Ellery Eskelin, multi-instrumentalist Joe McPhee and experimental composer Pauline Oliveros; she understands her instrument's potential for pure sound exploration, as well as how to find and share common ground with other instrumentalists.

Halvorson already uses a slide and effects on her own electric guitar to obtain voluptuously warped sounds, and the pedal steel extends that vocabulary. Alcorn studiously avoids idiomatic licks. Instead, she pairs handily with trumpeter Jonathan Finlayson, both of whom play long, swooping lines that contrast with the intricate, interlocking parts Halvorson has assigned to the other horns.

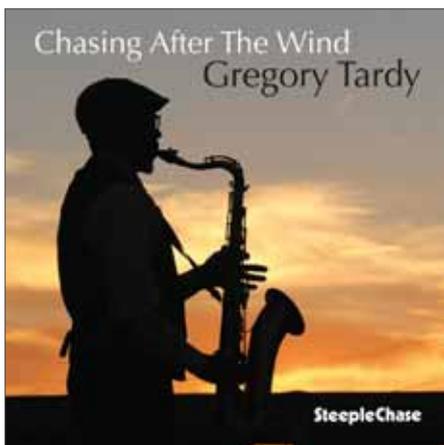
The rhythm section contributes to the unpredictability by switching grooves or dropping out altogether. The music is dense and mercurial, but never cluttered. Alcorn's presence freshens it without lapsing into exotic novelty.

—Bill Meyer

Away With You: Spirit Splitter (No. 54); Away With You (No. 55); The Absolute Almost (No. 52); Sword Barrel (No. 58); Old King Misfit (No. 57); Fog Bank (No. 56); Safety Orange (No. 59); Inky Ribbons (No. 53). (55:26)

Personnel: Mary Halvorson, guitar; Susan Alcorn, pedal steel guitar; Jonathan Finlayson, trumpet; Jon Irabagon, alto saxophone; Ingrid Laubrock, tenor saxophone; Jacob Garchik, trombone; John Hébert, bass; Ches Smith, drums.

Ordering info: firehouse12records.com



Gregory Tardy *Chasing After The Wind*

STEEPLECHASE 31821

★★★★★

Gregory Tardy's belief that "a self-serving life will prove to be empty and meaningless in the end" has led the Crescent City-born saxophonist (currently on the faculty at University of Tennessee-Knoxville) to abet the ensembles of Andrew Hill, Nicholas Payton, Tom Harrell and Elvin Jones—somewhat at the expense of his own fame. To support his early career, he worked in a steel foundry, on a strawberry farm and sold shoes at Kmart—the man's no diva.

Such humility permits ample elbow room for sidemen here, as on his staunch previous SteepleChase releases (plus a brief dalliance with Impulse!), including *The Truth*, *Steps Of Faith*, *The Strongest Love*, *He Knows My Name* and *Hidden Light*.

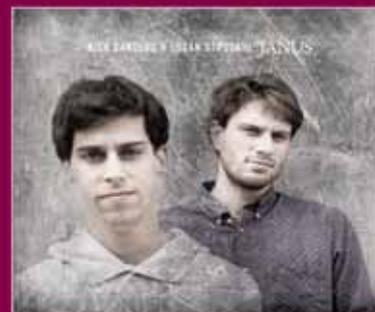
Given he's a cracking player with a wealth to say, this attitude of graciousness is all the more impressive. Take the closing track of his latest album, a terrific trip through "Tune Up." Tardy shares some of the expansive range and grit of tenor saxophonists Ernie Watts and Billy Harper, yet he was a classical clarinetist first, and he pays homage on that instrument to his opera/jazz singer mother on a waltz titled "Companion Of My First Heartbeat." The subtle iridescence of Bruce Barth (along with drummer Jaimeo Brown's cymbals and Sean Conly's rich bass) is heard on a knowing reading of Hill's enigmatic "Ashes" and to sweet effect on Benny Carter's "Janel"; other pleasures include faculty-mate Donald Brown's lilting two-step "A Dance For Marie Do" and Omer Avital's icily mellow "Beauty And The Beast."

—Michael Jackson

Chasing After The Wind: The Evidence Of Things Not Seen; Companion Of My First Heartbeat (Dream Tune For Mom); Ashes; Gabriel's Groove; Chasing After The Wind; Beauty And The Beast; A Dance For Marie Do; Janel; Tune Up. (68:20)

Personnel: Gregory Tardy, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Alex Norris, trumpet; Sam Sadigursky, flute; Bruce Barth, piano; Sean Conly, bass; Jaimeo Brown, drums.

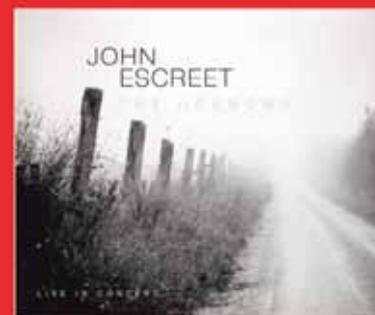
Ordering info: steeplechase.dk



NICK SANDERS & LOGAN STROSAHL *JANUS*

SSC 1469 - IN STORES NOW

Pianist Nick Sanders and saxophonist Logan Strosahl are young musicians from a growing cohort of exceptional artists with access to many streams of influence. Their duo recording *Janus* finds them performing sure, compact pieces that highlight their musical sympathy and dexterity as well as their deep knowledge of music ranging from modern jazz to the avant-garde to Baroque classical music. The resulting music is a fascinating and worldly blend of art music of the highest order.



JOHN ESCREET

EVAN PARKER JOHN HÉBERT TYSHAWN SOREY

THE UNKNOWN

SSC 1473 - IN STORES NOW

Pianist John Escreet has established a deep rapport with his trio-mates bassist John Hébert and drummer Tyshawn Sorey over the past decade. On his new recording, *The Unknown*, Escreet utilizes their unique musical bond and also that of a more recent collaborator, the legendary saxophonist Evan Parker. Taken from live recordings made at European venues Bimhuis and Lantaren Venster, *The Unknown* reveals the incredible vistas that can be discovered between musicians of vast proficiency and trust.



[iTunes.com/NickSanders](https://itunes.com/NickSanders)
[iTunes.com/JohnEscreet](https://itunes.com/JohnEscreet)
www.sunnysiderecords.com



Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra *Basically Baker Vol. 2*

PATOIS RECORDS

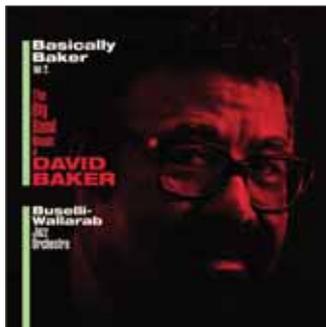
★★★★★

David Baker, who died on March 26 at age 84, was a large ensemble modernist in the tradition established by Duke Ellington and later expanded by the Third Stream school. His compositions number a couple of thousand, and *Basically Baker Vol. 2* is the second album by his Indiana University students and protégés in the Buselli-Wallarab Orchestra to delve into his expansive repertoire.

Most of the music here was written from the mid-1960s to mid-'70s, when Baker was establishing an early, estimable jazz studies program. Employing rich instrumental forces—celeste, bass trombone, French horn, tuba, vibes, guitar and full reed and brass sections—each score on this two-CD set is a unique exploration of a musical idea or two extended to the *n*th degree. Baker's bluesy yet often upbeat themes are all attractive, and his arrangements subject them to numerous changes involving vividly voiced backgrounds in kaleidoscopic counterpoint, dramatic rhythmic shifts, varied dynamics and splashy fanfares. —Howard Mandel

Basically Baker Vol. 2: The Harlem Pipes; The Georgia Peach; Walt's Barber Shop; Soft Summer Rain; Black Thursday; Shima 13; Bebop; Honesty; 25th And Martindale; Kirsten's First Song; Terrible T. (90:56)
Personnel: Brent Wallarab, conductor; Tom Walsh, Bill Sears, Rich Perry, Rob Dixon, Ned Boyd, saxophones; Tim Coffman, Freddie Mendoza, Brennan Johns, trombones; Rich Dole, bass trombone; Celeste Holler-Seraphinoff, French horn; Dan Perantoni, tuba; Luke Gillespie, piano; Jeremy Allen, bass; Steve Houghton, drums; Mitch Shiner, vibes; Monika Herzog, celeste; Tony Kadleck, Scott Belck, Graham Breddlove, Jeff Conrad, Mark Buselli, Pat Harbison, Randy Brecker, trumpets; Dave Stryker, guitar.

Ordering info: patoisrecords.com



Jane Bunnett & Maqueque *Oddara*

LINUS ENTERTAINMENT

★★★★★

With her current band, reedist Jane Bunnett has taken up the classic role of bandleader-mentor, à la Art Blakey and Maynard Ferguson. Maqueque (Yoruba for “the energy of a young girl’s spirit”) is comprised of gifted Cuban women, all under age 30.

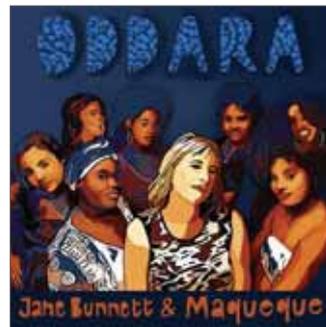
For its sophomore album, five more members contributed original compositions to the recording session. (Bunnett and vocalist emeritus Daymé Arocena did most of the songwriting for the band’s impressive eponymous debut.) “El Chivo,” one of two numbers by percussionist-vocalist Magdelys Savigne, showcases Bunnett’s intense flute and soprano playing and concludes with spirited group vocals. A highlight of Maqueque’s current live show, bassist-vocalist Celia Jiménez’s expansive “La Flamenca Maria” is a colorful mid-tempo song about the scandalous titular character.

If the 2014 album *Jane Bunnett And Maqueque* was the sound of musicians with immense talent and energy, *Oddara* is that same ensemble honed and bonded on the road, continually inspired. —Yoshi Kato

Oddara: Little Feat; Dream; El Chivo; 25 New Moves; Song For You; Power Of Two (Ibeyi); La Flamenca Maria; Eulogy; Trés Golpes-Pa Eleggua; Chagui Guaso; Café Pilon. (53:56)

Personnel: Jane Bunnett, soprano saxophone, flute; Yissy Garcia, drums; Dánae Olano, piano; Melvis Santa, percussion, vocals; Celia Jiménez, bass, vocals; Magdelys Savigne, batá drums, congas; Elizabeth Rodriguez, violin; Daymé Arocena, vocals.

Ordering info: linus.labelstore.ca



Takuya Kuroda *Zigzagger*

CONCORD 00075

★★★★★

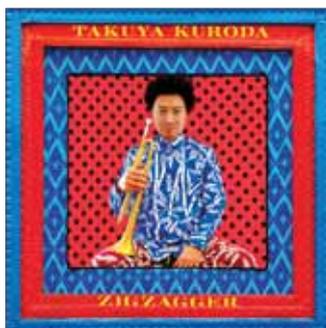
On his fifth solo release, 36-year-old trumpeter Takuya Kuroda dons the cape as Zigzagger, a groovemaster wielding the charms of propulsive funk and hard-bop soul. Kuroda has been an essential component of vocalist José James’ ensemble, but he’s also an accomplished leader. This set of sultry piano dabbles in the Jamesian slow-jam vein, while also branching out into Afropop and dance-floor workouts.

This album has a brassy profile, but it is only Kuroda and trombonist Corey King who fill the section. The two meld nicely on the brisk title track, flying against the tide of Takeshi Ohbayashi’s 8-bit keyboard until the unit builds up an intricate series of bright lines. The lone non-original features the Afropop party masters Antibalas, who tackle “Think Twice,” the Mizell Brothers tune lavishly recorded by Donald Byrd in the mid-1970s. Throughout the record, Kuroda and his band retain their organic chemistry, refusing to sacrifice their engaging charm for too much production flash. —Sean J. O’Connell

Zigzagger: R.S.B.D.; Zigzagger; I Don’t Remember How It Began; No Sign; Do They Know; Thirteen; Little Words; Actors; Good Day Bad Habit; Think Twice. (59:05)

Personnel: Takuya Kuroda, trumpet; Corey King, trombone, voice; Takeshi Ohbayashi, Fender Rhodes, synthesizer; Rashaan Carter, bass, synth bass; Adam Jackson, drums, percussion; Keita Ogawa, percussion; Antibalas: Timothy Allen, guitar; Amayo, congas, vocals; Miles Arntzen, drums; Marcus Farrar, shekere, stick, vocals; Martín Perna, baritone saxophone; Will Rast, keyboards; Jas Walton, tenor saxophone; Nikhil P. Yerawadekar, bass.

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com



Dave Stryker *Eight Track II*

STRIKEZONE RECORDS 8814

★★★★★

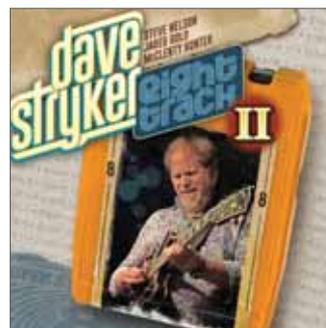
Guitarist Dave Stryker scores big on this follow-up to his 2014 album, *Eight Track*, not only as a player, but as an arranger. He has chosen 11 songs, mostly from the 1970s, that were quite popular in their time, and transforms them into virtually original pieces. He’s joined in the effort by longtime associates Jared Gold on organ and McClenty Hunter on drums. Special guest Steve Nelson adds depth to the material on vibes, both as accompanist and featured soloist.

The Isley Brothers’ “Harvest For The World” opens the album, and is a template for the other pieces. It swings hard. Stryker goes for the classic jazz-blues sound here, but dials up the energy for Marvin Gaye’s “Trouble Man,” with a drive that virtually dares the listener not to dance. The Zombies’ hit “Time Of The Season” becomes a swinging shuffle, with sweetly stinging guitar, but it’s Cream’s “Sunshine Of Your Love” that is the album’s most radically rethought piece. For almost 50 years, its edgy, bone-crunching riff has been instantly recognizable. Stryker chooses to emphasize the blues foundation in another shuffle rhythm here. This is no pale imitation of the original—it’s a gritty, jazzy romp. —Martin Z. Kasdan Jr.

Eight Track II: Harvest For The World; What’s Going On; Trouble Man; Midnight Cowboy; When Doves Cry; Send One Your Love; Can’t Get Next To You; Time Of The Season; Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I’m Yours; One Hundred Ways; Sunshine Of Your Love. (65:51)

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

Ordering info: davestryker.com





Jon Lundbom (center) is the leader of Big Five Chord.

Glimpses into a Grand Vision

Big Five Chord is the primary vehicle for Austin-based guitarist **Jon Lundbom**, and a limited edition four-CD boxed set contains all four digital EPs he released throughout 2016 with this group, a taught and expressive unit featuring kindred spirits Jon Irabagon and Bryan Murray on saxophones, bassist Moppa Elliott and drummer Dan Monaghan.

The release of the boxed set **EPs (Hot Cup Records; 27:42/26:15/26:46/40:43 ★★★★★)** capped a banner year for the ensemble, which in 2016 celebrated its 13th anniversary as a continuous entity. Comprising the EPs *Make The Magic Happen*, *Bring Their 'A' Game*, *Play All The Notes* and *Make The Changes*, the collection is also a welcome expansion to the guitarist's genre-bending body of work and unique history of album production. In 2012, Lundbom worked with Hot Cup Records to release *No New Tunes* exclusively on vinyl and digital download, and the next year, he unveiled *Liverevil* as a live double album. The new box set, available exclusively on jonlundbom.com and hotcuprecords.com, directs all revenue back to the artists, reflecting Lundbom's insistence on equity for artists.

While the leader does occasionally dial up distortion tones and skronk in audacious fashion (as on "Ain't Cha" from *Make The Magic Happen*), he primarily plays with a clean tone, while exhibiting a remarkable fluency and sense of freedom on originals like the swinging "MacGuffin" and the intensely driving "Utile" (from *Make The Changes*) and "Period" (from *Play All The Notes*). Lundbom's obvious love for the melodic free-jazz stylings of Ornette Coleman is apparent from his ambitious and

gripping interpretations of "Law Years" (on *Make The Changes*), "W.R.U." (from *Bring Their 'A' Game*), "Humpty Dumpty" (from *Play All The Notes*) and "Enfant" (from *Make The Changes*).

Throughout the set, Lundbom draws on his broad experience as a sideman and collaborator to add swathes of color from outside the jazz world. In addition to Big Five Chord, he also co-leads the Jon Lundbom/Bryan Murray Quartet with tenor saxophonist Bryan Murray. As a sideman, he has performed with Bryan & the Haggards, Wolfe & the Wayside, Andi Rae & the Back River Bullies, the ICUP Orchestra and Aaron Irwin's Vicious World Project, as well as with Stuart d'Arrietta's theater piece *Belly of a Drunken Piano—The Music of Tom Waits*.

That sense of drama and narrative carries through to Lundbom's latest box set, and the guitarist stakes out some original territory on his rubato "La Bomb" (from *Make The Magic Happen*), which has him exploring freely in the low register as well as on the surging, Lennie Tristano-ish "Wrapped" and the eerie "Worth" (both from *Bring Their 'A' Game*). Irabagon and Murray engage in spirited conversations throughout, particularly on "Comedy Gold" (from *Play All The Notes*) and the fugue-like "Ghost Tattoo" (from *Make The Changes*), both of which are buoyed by the shifting and interactive rhythm tandem of Elliott and Monaghan. This is courageous improvising and syncopated swing from a new crew of like-minded renegades. But those who want to own a physical copy of this boxed set should act fast. There are approximately 100 copies available online. **DB**
Ordering info: jonlundbom.com, hotcuprecords.com

NEW RELEASES

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Released on Pepper Cake Records/ZYX-MUSIC / PEC 2104-2f



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www.rafaelwressnig.com

Eva Novoa:

"Butterflies and Zebras" by Ditmas Quartet



Michaël Attias, alto saxophone
 Eva Novoa, piano & Fender Rhodes
 Max Johnson, bass
 Jeff Davis, drums

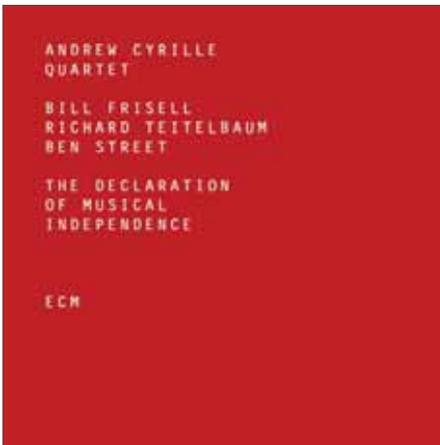
"Her playing and musical direction on this record establish an atmosphere of fecundity..."
 —Matt Mitchell

"Novoa's ectomorphic touch is explorative and exciting"
 —George Harris, Jazz Weekly

"A bold and restless pianist, moving easily between acute precision and painterly fervor. ★★★★★"
 —Josef Woodard, DownBeat



www.freshsoundrecords.com



Andrew Cyrille Quartet
The Declaration Of Musical Independence

ECM 2430

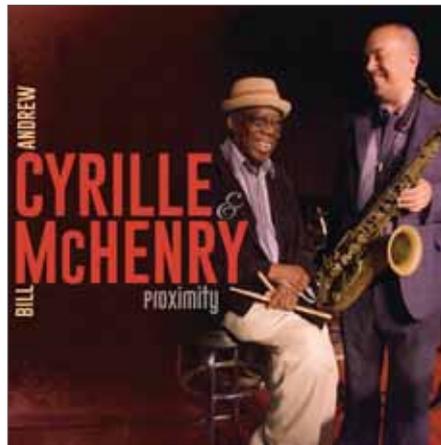
★★★★

Andrew Cyrille & Bill McHenry
Proximity

SUNNYSIDE

★★★

Proximity, the new album by percussion guru Andrew Cyrille and saxophonist Bill McHenry, is unpredictable. It's also more entertain-



ing, if less provocative, than *Declaration Of Musical Independence*, the recording he made with guitarist Bill Frisell, keyboardist Richard Teitelbaum and bassist Ben Street. While both deliver a striking variety of styles, *Proximity*, which may be less ambitious, also feels more organic and less studied.

Both recordings attest to the restlessness of avant-garde rhythm master Cyrille and his knack for making his light, surrounding style a platform for excursions into all manner of different jazz modes. And while *Proximity* bristles with short pieces—you may wish some went on longer—*Declaration* features several tracks that do tend to linger, though not without purpose.

Proximity is more accessible than the more sprawling *Declaration*. On such cuts as Don Moye's "Fabula," a spasming tune from the former album that threatens to fall all over itself but miraculously remains upright, percussion and saxophone seem of one mind. Same applies to "Drum Song For Leadbelly," a catchy rhythmic workout that McHenry tops with one of his most melodic and querulous forays. He and Cyrille make passionate music; may they continue to do so.

But if *Proximity* conjures a conversation you'd love to join, *Declaration* suggests a summit meeting. Cyrille's ECM debut as a leader is a singular affair spanning the spirited launch "Coltrane Time" (a Coltrane tune never recorded by the saxophonist) to Frisell's magisterial "Kaddish" and Teitelbaum's angular, inviting "Herky Jerky." Collectively, the tracks speak to Cyrille's refusal to hew to the familiar and the overtly accessible. It also attests to his trust in his colleagues. —Carlo Wolff

Proximity: Bedouin Woman; Fabula; Drum Song For Leadbelly; Aquatic Life; Proximity; Let Me Tell You This; Broken Heart; Drum Man Cyrille; Double Dutch; Seasons; Dervish; To Be Continued. (38:49)

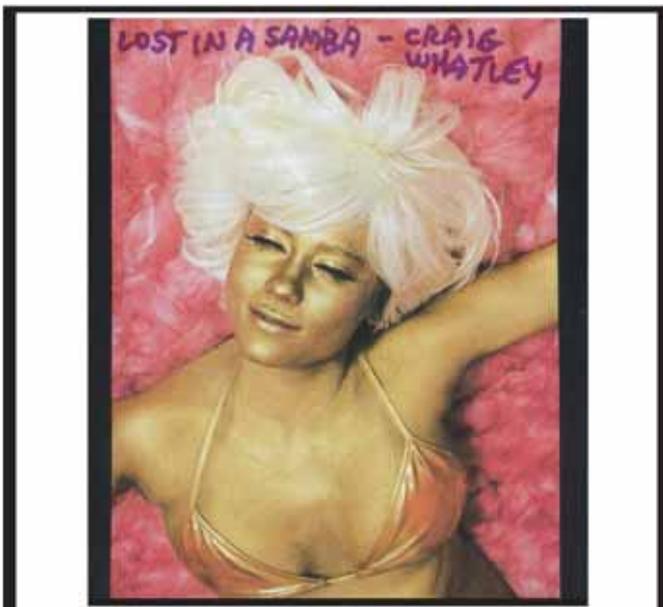
Personnel: Andrew Cyrille, drums; Bill McHenry, tenor saxophone

Ordering info: sunnysidezone.com

The Declaration Of Musical Independence: Coltrane Time; Kaddish; Sanctuary; Say ...; Dazzling (Perchordally Yours); Herky Jerky; Begin; Manfred; Song For Andrew No. 1. (45:36)

Personnel: Andrew Cyrille, drums, percussion; Bill Frisell, guitar; Ben Street, bass; Richard Teitelbaum, synthesizer, piano.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com



CRAIG WHATLEY has been praised by Chick Corea, Prince arranger/pianist Clare Fischer and UNT's jazz head John Murphy. Having schooled, played and recorded with Steve Turre, Marc Johnson, Lyle Mays and many others, this ASF award-winning keyboardist went deaf as of March 2016. On New Years Day 2016, at 90% deaf, he recorded this remarkable 40+ tune live set of mostly original music, his last effort before his deafness. We predict you will be surprised and impressed by *LOST IN A SAMBA*. The 2-CD set can be had for \$20 postpaid by check/cash/m.o. ONLY from: CEW, P.O. Box 150561, San Rafael, CA 94915.

Corey King
Lashes

ROPEADOPE

★★★★

Multi-instrumentalist Corey King found inspiration for his recent album, *Lashes*, in an unexpected location: Berlin. After visiting, King was inspired by the city's rich dance music culture, and became motivated to inject his music with the liveliness and electricity that flourishes in electronic music.

King may be best known in the jazz circuit as the trombone player responsible for licks on the records made by Esperanza Spalding, Christian Scott and Takuya Kuroda, but with *Lashes*, King has ditched the brass instrument to focus on vocals and songwriting. Shockingly, there are no horns on the album; King instead favors a combination of drums, guitar and bass to accompany the experiments in electronica. "Botched Farewell" has a dubby vibe to it, with a walking bass line laying the foundation for King's droned hums. "Parisian Leaves" forgoes any sort of established beat in favor of luscious, textural soundscapes that give the listener a dreamlike experience.

With *Lashes*, King has laid the groundwork for an exciting career as a solo performer and singer-songwriter. By shedding the trombone that brought him to prominence, the artist has crafted a convincing case for the advancement of a jazz-electronica hybrid. —Chris Tart

Lashes: Ibaraki; IF; Midnight Chris; Botched Farewell; Parisian Leaves; Uncle Richie; Climb; Lucky Grey. (35:33)

Personnel: Corey King, vocals, Wurlitzer, programming, synthesizers, tambourine;

Matt Stevens, guitar; Alan Hampton, Vicente Archer bass; Jamire Williams, Justin Tyson, drums.

Ordering info: ropeadope.com



Jonathan Finlayson *Moving Still*

PI RECORDINGS

★★★

This is the Californian trumpeter Jonathan Finlayson's second album as leader, following 2013's *Moment And The Message*, which also came out on the Pi label. Only guitarist Miles Okazaki remains from that album's personnel. The new album's opening track, "All Of The Pieces," features some lyrical, picking on baritone guitar, a warmly romantic piano solo from Matt Mitchell and a dusted, cutting solo by Finlayson. The drums provide a steadily increasing tumbleweed progress, with Craig Weinrib introducing "Flink And Center" with a clattering, talkative display. Needling guitar and piano join in, as the leader adds pointillist stitches. A skittish theme grows, with Mitchell's bass-key line adding drama.

This is organic music, softly complicated in its execution, as each composition follows a continuing thread, accumulating with sensitivity. The structures are challengingly angular, but the band palette is soft and tender. The penultimate "Between Moves" opens with bassist John Hébert soloing, backed by faint guitar, then delicate piano, the bassist introducing some sonorously bowed lines. This beguiling tune is where all draws together.

—Martin Longley

Moving Still: All Of The Pieces; Flink And Center; Space And; Cap vs. Nim; Between Moves; Folk Song. (52:15)

Personnel: Jonathan Finlayson, trumpet; Miles Okazaki, guitar; Matt Mitchell, piano; John Hébert, bass; Craig Weinrib, drums.

Ordering info: pirecordings.com



Gordon Goodwin's Little Phat Band *An Elusive Man*

WINGOOD MUSIC 35453

★★★½

Arranger-composer Gordon Goodwin formed the Big Phat Band in 1999, and it has since become one of the most popular of the current large jazz ensembles. *An Elusive Man* is the first recording by Goodwin's Little Phat Band, an eight-piece group taken out of his orchestra.

The idea of taking a small group out of a big band dates back to at least 1922, when the Georgians were a jazz-oriented septet drawn from the Paul Specht Orchestra. The concept really took off during the swing era, when Benny Goodman and other big band leaders gained an opportunity to play some freewheeling jazz in smaller assemblages.

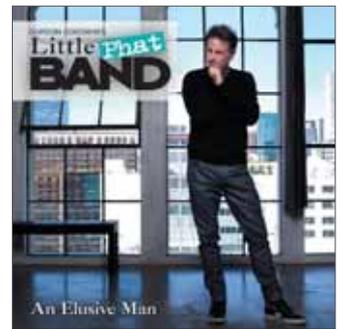
However, the Little Phat Band does not sound like liberated jazz musicians getting to play in a jam session setting. Goodwin's arrangements for his octet are as tight and controlled as what he writes for his orchestra, but are slightly more open to the influences of rock, electric blues and funk. While certainly a worthy project, the album, which is precise but careful, could have benefited from a greater sense of spontaneity and danger.

—Scott Yanow

An Elusive Man: The LP Shuffle; Cot In The Act; Behind You; An Elusive Man; Samba Cya; Garaje Gato; I Know You; Walkin'; In A Sentimental Mood; Why We Can't Have Nice Things. (65:27)

Personnel: Gordon Goodwin, piano, tenor saxophone; Wayne Bergeron, trumpet; Andy Martin, trombone; Eric Marienthal, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone; Andrew Synowiec, guitar; Rick Shaw, bass; Bernie Dresel, drums; Joey De Leon, percussion.

Ordering info: bigphatband.com



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Mercy, Mercy, Mercy!

Erwin Helfer, *Last Call (The Sirens 5024; 59:53 ★★★★★)* Over six decades and close to a score of albums, Erwin Helfer has set himself up as a superior Chicago blues, jazz and boogie pianist. Something of a patchwork, his latest offering stitches together 10 tunes from recent sessions and three songs recorded with storied singer Mama Yancey in 1957 and 1979.

Helfer, at 80 years young, conjures much the same sunny or dark moods cast by his forebears Jimmy Yancey (Mama's husband) and Cripple Clarence Lofton. Solo tracks and those co-featuring Mama are the real delights, with fainter praise going to collaborations with singers Katherine Davis and Ardella Williams and tenor saxophonist John Brumbach.

Ordering info: thesirensrecords.com

Matthew Skoller, *Blues Immigrant (Tongue 'n' Groove 005; 43:50 ★★★)*

A fixture in Chicago since the late 1980s, Matthew Skoller makes the 11 tracks on his fifth album spring forward with verve and craft that's embedded in tradition. Unlike the music, his songwriting often bucks the system by tackling unexpected subjects: greed, green cards, consumerism, the state of blues today.

He's a better harmonica player than he is a vocalist, though his inherent Brooklynese wit enlivens nine tracks, including predictable complaints about flawed relationships. There's modest pleasure to be had in two instrumentals.

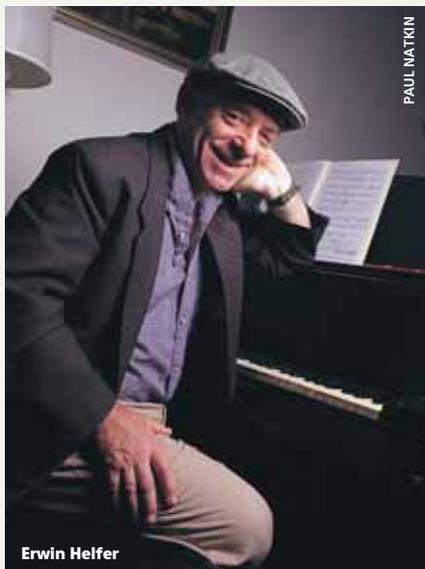
Ordering info: matthewskoller.com

Lurrie Bell, *Can't Shake This Feeling (Delmark 847; 55:40 ★★★★★½)* For a blue-ribbon singer and guitarist in Chicago, Lurrie Bell hasn't had an intermittently successful recording career since he went solo in 1990. His latest, glad to say, is one of his better studio efforts.

Bell's staggered, less-is-more guitar style carries the weight of his expressive powers through a program dominated by fairly obscure numbers from worthies like Little Milton and Willie Dixon. His voice is so rough-hewn that he may have just spat out a mouthful of household bleach. Slow-burning "This Worrisome Feeling In My Heart," one of the few he wrote, is a milestone. Unsung hero: Roosevelt Purifoy on keyboards.

Ordering info: delmark.com

Duke Robillard, *Blues Full Circle (Stony Plain 1392; 51:45 ★★★)* Recorded in part before rotator cuff surgery sidelined him for a year and then finished upon his recovery, Duke Robillard's 37th release unfolds into about an hour of near-solid



Erwin Helfer

entertainment. Setting aside his contrived vocals, there's a load of his excellent guitar work in serviceable new or old original songs buoyed by his tight band. Guest singers Sugar Ray Norcia and Kelley Hunt and guitarist Jimmie Vaughan add to a tune apiece.

Ordering info: stonyplainrecords.com

Robert Finley, *Age Don't Mean A Thing (Big Legal Mess 0534; 35:09 ★★★★★)* Age matters. This 62-year-old ex-soldier and carpenter in Louisiana undoubtedly draws on his life experience and his past romantic-psychological states to put across the original songs belonging to his debut album.

The singer has range, projection, control, confidence and grit—inspirational love affirmation "I Just Want To Tell You" and slow romantic dilemma "Is It Possible To Love Two People?" are outstanding.

Seven other songs may not be killers, but they have in them a similar refinement of spirit and grace natural to both Finley and his Memphis sidemen, including great drummer Howard Grimes.

Ordering info: biglegalmessrecords.com

Miss Tess, *Baby, We All Know (Rights; 41:19 ★★★)* Using a limber, polished voice, Miss Tess renders original songs with a self-possession and naturalness that heralds her third album as one of the most enjoyable from an Americana artist this year. Deceptively laid-back, bluesy "Going Downtown" in particular melts hearts. Her Talkbacks band melds honky-tonk country, Chuck Berry blues and other undiluted American strains.

Ordering info: misstessmusic.com



Tony Moreno Quintet *Short Stories*

MAYIMBA JAZZ

★★★★★

The best short stories draw us into worlds made vivid by the author's technique and imagination. But what persuades us to turn one page and then another, to travel further into this place? My hunch is that we're lured by the confluence of the familiar and the magical.

That applies to drummer Tony Moreno's *Short Stories* as well. Throughout this double album, the music flows between structure and ambiguity. Depending on your proclivity, the impression it creates can be either unsettling or fascinating and unpredictable.

What's beyond question is the talent of these five musicians. Moreno's written intros and endings can slide from one meter to another, unified by themes played by Marc Mommaas on tenor saxophone and Ron Horton on trumpet, who together generate a milky seamlessness that softens the pricklier transitions.

These moments often bookend central sections that follow fairly standard chord movements, as in the hard-swinging "M.O.," or they could dissolve into what sounds like total improvisation, as in "Groveling." This Horton tune begins and ends with sophisticated content, but in the middle everyone is free to play whatever feels right at the moment.

"Groveling" in particular illustrates the only issue I have with *Short Stories*: It sounds as if each musician focuses inwardly without any significant interaction. This would be a problem if the performers weren't so skilled on their own.

That, plus the eyebrow-raising ballad treatment of Ellington's "C Jam Blues," makes *Short Stories* a winner.

—Bob Doerschuk

Short Stories: Disc One: Foxy Trot; Little One, The West's Best; Erroll Garner; 55 Scotch; Susan's Dream; No Blues To You; C Jam Blues. (64:00) Three For D'Reen; Oh Henry; Groveling; El Rey; M.O.; Pueblo De Lagrimas; El Rey Take #2. (65:28)

Personnel: Tony Moreno, drums; Marc Mommaas, tenor saxophone; Ron Horton, trumpet; Jean-Michel Pilc, piano; Ugona Okegwo, bass.

Ordering info: mayimbamus.com

**Justin Swadling
feat. Piatti Quartet**
A Place to Be

33 JAZZ

★★★★½

A bold journey through timbre and texture, *A Place To Be* beds the expressive saxophone of composer Justin Swadling within the remarkable Piatti Quartet. Recorded on vinyl, this foray into fresh sonic territory also features what Swadling calls “extended instrumental techniques,” in which the violins, viola and cello are bowed and “bounced” like a drum, conjuring sounds that flicker between classical, soul and country.

Swadling says this beautiful, melodic work of modern music tells the story of a young man’s search for meaning and fulfillment. The music is aspirational and resolute, swelling only to subside and gather strength for another drive. It resolves strongly.

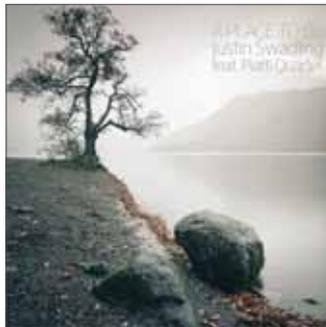
But is it jazz? It seems the only reference is the saxophone as a lead voice; otherwise, this British release defies categorization. It is listening music, first and foremost, and it demands performance. The soundscape Swadling constructs is seamless, and even though he is the prominent soloist, his lines are notable more for their integration into the whole than for high relief. As did Charlie Parker’s work with strings, *A Place To Be* creates a new, distinctive sound.

—Carlo Wolff

A Place To Be: First Light; Breaking Through; Shadows Fall; Is This Forever; Hope Springs; Leap Of Faith; New Life; Until Again; A Place To Be. (42:17)

Personnel: Justin Swadling, alto saxophone; Nathaniel Anderson-Frank, violin; Jessie Ann Richardson, cello; Michael Trainor, violin; David Wigram, viola.

Ordering info: 33jazz.com



Yuhan Su
A Room Of One's Own

INNER CIRCLE MUSIC

★★★★★

Taiwanese vibraphonist Yuhan Su, now based in New York, drew inspiration for her latest album from an essay of the same title by Virginia Woolf. The literary influence is a crucial one. Su, who harbored early aspirations of becoming a fiction writer, carries a distinctly narrative quality into her music. Her new album is a dreamy yet meticulous work, a landscape of foggy, open vistas that compress into sparse and detailed passages. Like the best fiction, it’s entirely enveloping.

Consisting of 11 originals, Su’s album trades between compositions of sprawling width and pieces with tight, geometric density. The three-part “Valedicere” suite is its centerpiece. Full of chiming chords and percussive intrigue, the suite is a rewarding journey through metallic swirls of sound, crisp grooves, thorny melodic cells and driving rock.

“Painter’s Mind,” a tingly, electronics-enhanced number, opens into a chasm of avant-exploration midway through. It’s a bracing deviation from the rest of the program, but a real testament to Su’s expansive compositional talent.

—Brian Zimmerman

A Room Of One's Own: Amulet; Valedicere I; Valedicere II; Valedicere III; No. 13 Waltz; All Kinds Of Dreams; I Do Not Always Understand What You Say. What Is, Is By Its Nature On Display; I Do Not Always Understand What You Say. What Is, Is By Its Nature On Display II; Painter’s Mind; Freezing Point; Anti-Hunger Song. (55:27).

Personnel: Yuhan Su, vibraphone, malletkat, vocals; Matt Holman, trumpet, flugelhorn; Kenji Herbert, guitar; Petros Klampanis, bass; Nathan Ellman-Bell, drums.

Ordering info: innercirclemusic.com



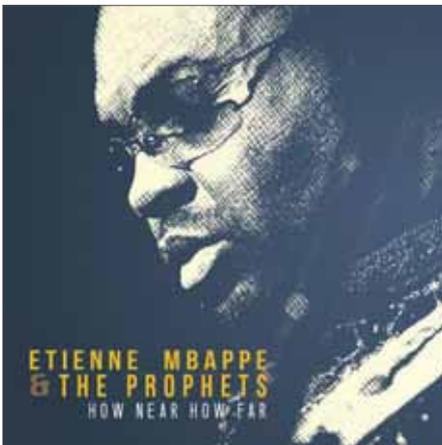
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Etienne Mbappe & The Prophets *How Near How Far*

ABSTRACT LOGIX 055

★★★★

Add Etienne Mbappe to the cadre of Cameroon-born musicians—including saxophonist Manu Dibango and bassist Richard Bona—that brings lyrical fluidity to intricate, grooving jazz. An electric bassist and composer-arranger based in France, Mbappe was Salif Keita's musical director, and has toured with keyboardist Joe Zawinul's Syndicate and the fusion group Steps Ahead. It's easy to make the case that he

deserves a larger audience, and he can gain one with *How Near How Far*, his fourth album as a leader but first on a U.S. label.

With his ensemble arranged and glossily produced to sound larger than it is, Mbappe updates the flashy hooks and punctuations of Jaco-era Weather Report and the violin-inflected front line of the Mahavishnu Orchestra to craft complexly plotted, multi-layered tracks. He's compelling during his occasional breaks and sets strict guidelines for dazzling tutti stop-time passages, as on "Bandit Queen."

Mbappe locks into funk rhythms with guitarist Anthony Jambon and drummer Nicolas Viccaro on "Make It Easy," which turns on a dime into a North African/Middle Eastern motif. Each sideman acquits himself admirably, but the Prophet's strength is its celebratory united front—even when trumpeter Arno De Casanove, tenor saxophonist Herve Gourdikian and pianist Christophe Cravero work against each other. Each of the bassist's songs contains multiple dimensions; he holds them all together, without obvious effort, but firmly. —Howard Mandel

How Near How Far: John Ji; Bandit Queen; Lagos Market; How Near How Far; Make It Easy; Milonga In 7 (To Astor Piazzola); Bad As I'm Doing; Mang Lady; Assiko Twerk; Day Message (To Joe Zawinul); Musango Na Wa. (58:04)

Personnel: Etienne Mbappe, bass, vocal (11); Arno De Casanove, trumpet, flugelhorn; Herve Gourdikian, tenor saxophone; Christophe Cravero, piano; Clement Janinet, violin; Nicolas Viccaro, drums, bottle percussion; Anthony Jambon, guitar.

Ordering info: abstractlogix.com

Till Brönner *The Good Life*

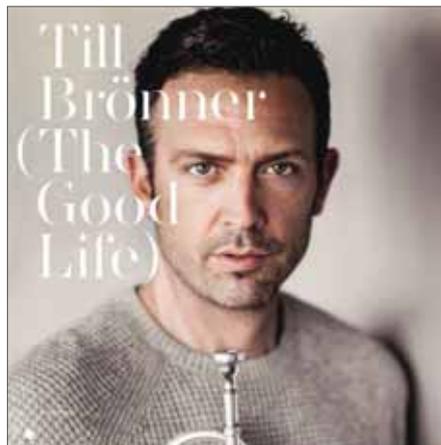
OKEH/MASTERWORKS 88875187202

★★★

Like fellow trumpeter-vocalist Bria Skonberg, who just made her major label debut for the same recording company, German-born Till Brönner is firmly grounded in music that has few champions under the age of 70. His takes on decades-old songs like "Sweet Lorraine," "I'm Confessin' That I Love You" and "For All We Know" are free from either irony or modern convention; his delivery is as unmanipulated and sincere as if the songs had just been written.

Despite his sincerity and craft, your level of enjoyment will depend on how devoted you are to the dreamy, wounded love ballads of Chet Baker—Brönner's most-obvious influence. Like Baker, the 45-year-old Brönner has a feather-soft voice with no grit or edge. Despite its bloodless timbre, it's a pleasant instrument that stays in tune, and Brönner uses inflection to significant advantage.

Refreshingly, he manages to bring something new to "I Loves You, Porgy," which is almost impossible for a trumpeter to deliver without making reference to Miles Davis. Elsewhere, as on the title song and "I'll Be Seeing You," Brönner's trumpet playing stays



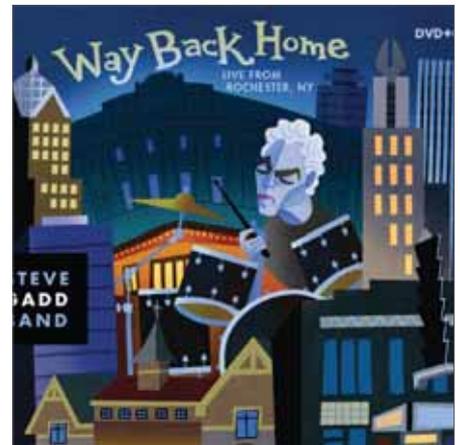
largely in service of the original melodies, leaving the bulk of the improvisational work to pianist Larry Goldings.

Far from an exercise in nostalgia, *The Good Life* sounds like a love letter from Brönner to this material, as well as to those who continue to appreciate delicate, literate songs of romance from another era. —James Hale

The Good Life: The Good Life; Sweet Lorraine; For All We Know; Come Dance With Me; Change Partners; Love Is Here To Stay; I Loves You, Porgy; I May Be Wrong; O Que Resta; I'm Confessin' That I Love You; I'll Be Seeing You; Her Smile; In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning. (60:03)

Personnel: Till Brönner, trumpet, flugelhorn, vocals; Anthony Wilson, guitar; Larry Goldings, piano; John Clayton, bass; Jeff Hamilton, drums.

Ordering info: okeh-records.com



Steve Gadd *Way Back Home*

BFM JAZZ

★★★★½

If you were to place every album drummer Steve Gadd appeared on end-to-end, you would traverse at least one football field before you got to the end of the 1980s. From Van McCoy's "The Hustle" to Charles Mingus, George Benson to Paul Simon's "50 Ways To Leave Your Lover," Gadd has covered more ground than almost any drummer on Earth.

He's versatile but unobtrusive, a groove master who provides the essentials. On this instrumental album—recorded live in Rochester, New York, to celebrate his 70th birthday (his second album to celebrate the milestone)—Gadd unsurprisingly continues that tradition.

Keyboardist Larry Goldings gets a lot of room to shine, kicking off the solos on "Green Foam" with a funky sprint across the Hammond B-3, while his own composition "Cavaliero" is a patient and predatory bolero, creeping on Gadd's steady snare drum. Guitarist Michael Landau adds a greasy crawl to the former, bending high and tight before implying a little slack-key styling to the latter.

The band is happy to show off their versatility, lightly jumping through genres from tune to tune. The oscillating "Desu" leaves plenty of space for Landau to catch fireflies, with Goldings and Johnson laying back. And the band closes with a drummer tune: Buddy Miles' "Them Changes." The band grooves hard, making the most of each spotlight, and Gadd takes a solo that is both precise and playful. This is a birthday party, after all, and the proceedings go down like a slice of cake—fun, a little sweet and a nice finish to richer and more complex fare.

—Sean J. O'Connell

Way Back Home: Green Foam; Cavaliero; Africa; Way Back Home; Bye Bye Blackbird; Desu; Oh, Yeah!; Them Changes. (67:46)

Personnel: Steve Gadd, drums; Michael Landau, guitar; Walt Fowler, trumpet; Larry Goldings, organ; Fender Rhodes; Jimmy Johnson, bass.

Ordering info: bfmjazz.com

Rantala/ Danielsson/Erskine *How Long Is Now?*

ACT 9823

★★★★½

Iiro Rantala is a pianist of broad talents. He studied jazz at Sibelius Academy in Finland (his home country) and pursued an education in classical piano at Manhattan School of Music. He's a player of crisp elocution and succinct vision, and as a composer he's prone to sweet, shapely melodies and wisps of gospel. The music on his latest album—with Swedish bassist Lars Danielsson and American drummer Peter Erskine—draws from all facets of his musical background. Buoyant and bright, it brings together lacy classical motifs, sun-dappled r&b tunes and enthusiastic world grooves with supreme clarity and charm.

This is feel-good jazz, inspiring not for its rhythmic or harmonic complexity but for its effortless composure. "Snapchat" is a defiantly cheery groover, proud to revel in its easygoing sense of time and breezy chord modulations, whereas "Taksim By Night" takes a simple ascending four-note motif and rolls it across a sizzling Middle Eastern rhythm, generating plenty of heat. The power here is achieved through dynamic control and careful articulation, never muscle or force. Simply stated, skillfully wrought, this album will lift spirits.

—Brian Zimmerman

How Long Is Now?: Voyage; How Long Is Now?; Taksim By Night; Little Wing; Trust; Assisi; Kyrie; Each Breath; A Nut; Bruno; Topi; Choral. (57:39)

Personnel: Iiro Rantala, piano; Lars Danielsson, bass; Peter Erskine, drums.

Ordering info: actmusic.com



George DeLancey *George DeLancey*

SELF RELEASE

★★★★

Lucidity and purpose rule the day on this spirited debut by gifted bassist George DeLancey. Ushered in and shuttered all too soon with a prologue and epilogue that seem to answer each other, this eponymous debut never fails to engage.

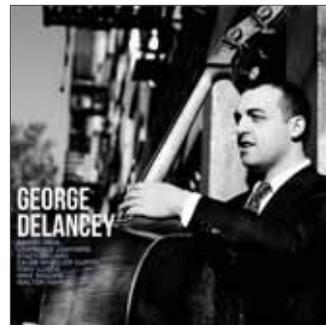
Deploying exceptional players, DeLancey nevertheless commands the forefront; he's the driver here, pushing tunes like the bold "Falling Down" and the impressionistic, call-and-response showcase "Michelangelo" with zest and an unerring sense of drama. His solos are crystalline, his placement precise. All the tunes are originals, and none goes on too long; each soloist knows when to come in and get out.

What's best about *George DeLancey* is its combination of accessibility and surprise. The tunes, which flow into one another with ease (check out the segue from "Lap Of Luxury" into the relaxed and luminous "In Repose"), differ significantly but amount to a nourishing whole. They swing, they're harmonically unpredictable and they're clearly, even luminously, arranged. One can call some tunes Ellingtonian, another Gil Evans-esque, but all are thoroughly DeLancey's. The album, recorded almost three years ago, is a promise of things to come. —Carlo Wolff

George DeLancey: Prologue; Michelangelo; The Demon; Lap Of Luxury; In Repose; Falling Down; Two-Step Away; Complaint; Little Lover; Epilogue. (37:15)

Personnel: George DeLancey, bass; Caleb Wheeler Curtis, alto saxophone; Aaron Diehl, piano; Stacy Dillard, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; Walter Harris, trombone; Lawrence Leathers, drums; Tony Lustig, baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone; Mike Sailors, trumpet, flugelhorn.

Ordering info: georgedelancey.com



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STACIE HUCKEBA

Trey Hensley (left) and Rob Ickes

Trailblazers and Hybrids

In music, mavericks refusing to be limited by category are everywhere. Temporarily or permanently, these musicians disengage from the mainstream and unleash individual human spirit through pointed expression. Several inimitable artists are cited below.

The former a master of dobro, the latter a rising-star guitarist, **Rob Ickes and Trey Hensley** skip out on their bill-paying duties as country session musicians in Nashville for an adventurous side project. Their second album, ***The Country Blues* (Compass 7 4469; 49:34 ★★★★★)**, runs high on terrifically lively string communication. Across the 11-track program Ickes and Hensley set their own mixed-genre template.

Ordering info: compassrecords.com

Dale Watson and His Lonestars, ***Live At The Big T Roadhouse* (Red House 295; 74:50 ★★★★★)** finds the Texans presiding over—no kidding!—"Chicken S#it Bingo Sunday." When not randomly drawing numbers and clowning around, Watson tailors his drilling well-deep voice to "I Don't Rock No Cradle" and other sagebrush favorites made of fused hillbilly, honkytonk, Western swing and rockabilly.

Ordering info: redhousetrecords.com

Despite some 40 albums in his discography, singer and multi-instrumentalist **Karl Blau** is only now receiving wide notice outside his home state of Washington. Ironically titled ***Introducing Karl Blau* (Raven Marching Band 010; 40:53 ★★★★★)** has him tenderly and quirkily wrapping his tonsils around a batch of choice tunes by Townes Van Zandt, Link Wray, Tom Rush and others of the singer-songwriter 1960s and '70s. His sense of

understatement and intimacy leave him in good stead.

Ordering info: ravenmarchingband.com

Daniel Romano is an acquired-taste vocalist with Dylan-esque tendencies and an efficient one-man band. The Canadian's fifth album, ***Mosey* (New West 6331; 49:10 ★★★★★)**, in mono, brims with catchy music that references all manners of American and European pop music of the 1960s and '70s. Romano calls himself a "cultural defeatist," admitting to confusion and anger over modern mores, yet his heavy-hearted lyrics are countervailed by fresh, full-of-life instrumentation.

Ordering info: newwestrecords.com

Also looking to the 1960s are **Charlie Faye & The Fayettes**, who embark from Austin with a self-titled debut (***Self Release* 33:28; ★★★★★**). Lissome Ms. Faye, in good voice, imparts honeyed feeling to fun original tunes suggesting "girl groups" like the Crystals and the Marvelettes. The supporting musicians explore a merger of Motown, Stax and Phil Spector's Phillies label. Dump the synths.

Ordering info: charriefayeandthefayettes.com

True to his First Nations bloodlines, Cree singer-songwriter **Morley Loon**, who died young in 1986, acknowledges the wonderment of nature and its sacred ties to tribal life on the reissue of his 1981 album, ***Northland, My Land* (Light In The Attic FDR 621; 33:00; ★★★★★)**. His gift for melody is obvious in the confident balladry of 11 original tunes that he sings in his native Cree. Arrangements are plain, with Loon's voice and guitar joined by percussion and flute.

Ordering info: lightintheattic.net



Taylor Ho Bynum *Enter The Plus Tet*

FIREHOUSE 12 25

★★★★★

It's a gutsy move to form a 15-piece improvising ensemble this far into the 21st century, but trumpeter Taylor Ho Bynum has been taught to think big. He has been a close protégé of Bill Dixon and Anthony Braxton, neither of whom have let reason, finance or circumstance keep them down. And Bynum has his own well-developed understanding of the power of a clearly communicated grand gesture; he recently toured the West Coast by bicycle, blogging along the way.

A sense of adventure comes into play early, as the group swells from Bynum's rasping cornet to outsized whorls of gruff brass and orchestral strings. The sound grows and grows, clearing a space for the action to come. Once it has been defined, Bynum explores a variety of ways to use it without indulging any compulsion to fill it. The lengthy opener "Sleeping Giant" breaks into pieces, each complete and independent. A pulsing groove propels a string of solos, which in turn gives way to a swampy chorus of plunger-muted horns exchanging froggy retorts before a pleading, soulful melody signals the full ensemble's return.

In the middle of the 20th century, the great big bands weren't just vehicles for entertainment; they expressed the zenith of African American creativeness and enterprise. Bynum has adapted the big band to send some messages about the collective effort, historical awareness, present focus and defiance of convention that it will take to make the world work in this contemporary moment.

—Bill Meyer

Enter The PlusTet: Sleeping Giant; Three (For Me We & Them); That Which Only... Never Before. (43:59)

Personnel: Taylor Ho Bynum, conductor, cornet; Nate Wooley, Stephanie Richards, trumpet; Vincent Chancey, French horn; Steve Swell, trombone; Bill Lowe, bass trombone, tuba; Jim Hobbs, alto saxophone; Ingrid Laubrock, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Matt Bauder, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone; Jason Kao Hwang, violin, viola; Torneka Reid, cello; Mary Halvorson, guitar; Jay Hoggard, vibraphone; Ken Filiano, bass; Tomas Fujiwara, drums.

Ordering info: firehouse12records.com

Michael Blanco *Spirit Forward*

BROOKLYN JAZZ UNDERGROUND

★★★½

There's a deep mystic pull to bassist Michael Blanco's third album as a leader, befitting its otherworldly title. The eight original songs here have a guiding force beyond any one of the band's individual members, a collective energy that churns from within, propelling songs toward a specific end, while allowing for loose, probing discursions.

The bassist is joined here by an all-star ensemble of saxophonist John Ellis, pianist Kevin Hays and drummer Clarence Penn, and together the group reaches ecstatic levels of interplay. Hovering around a stretchy bass ostinato by Blanco on album opener "The Mystic Chord," the group achieves a powerful rhythmic sway, always on the verge of careening into chaos yet holding together through the storm.

Equally cohesive, yet providing sharp contrast, the title track takes its cue from the slick and edgy stylings of Charles Mingus, complete with searing saxophone lines and lopsided swing. And "Reasons To Be Pretty," which features Ellis on soprano, turns the light down to a palliative glow, in which Penn, Hays and Blanco exchange sparse, almost whispered strains of accompaniment. It's in these tender moments that Blanco and crew reveal their innermost strength.

—Brian Zimmerman

Spirit Forward: The Mystic Chord; Notes From The Underground; Song Without Words; Spirit Forward; Acrobat; Last Stable Orbit; Reasons To Be Pretty; The Boulevardier. (50:27)

Personnel: Michael Blanco, bass; John Ellis, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone; Kevin Hays, piano; Clarence Penn, drums.

Ordering info: bjurecords.com



Quinsin Nachoff *Flux*

MYTHOLOGY RECORDS

★★★½

Quinsin Nachoff is adept on the tenor saxophone, but it's clear that the focus here is on his compositions. Nachoff specializes in a kind of exhilarating hybrid of classical music and jazz, and on his latest album, the speed and frequency of the music's hairpin turns—particularly in Matt Mitchell's striking piano playing—are demanding the listener's ear.

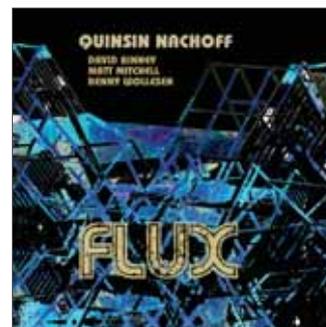
There is clarity in the intent, however. The one-two combo of "Mind's Ear I" and "Mind's Ear II" involve Nachoff and alto saxophonist David Binney seemingly floating over the machinations below. It's always a bold move to merge genre inspirations together, and here many compositions gain additional layers of vigor, with a slight rock or funk edge coming through at times. Yet despite all this, much of *Flux* seems to run together. Its almost suite-like diligence makes for little distinction in songs, as if they wash over one another like an ever-rising tide. And yet the waves keep crashing. The attempt may have been to create a through-line for the album, but what results is more like a dense knot. *Flux* achieves what Nachoff seems to have wanted with this these compositions and accompanists, and it's close to being a great album—if only it weren't so busy.

—Anthony Dean-Harris

Flux: Tightrope; Complimentary Opposites; Mind's Ear I; Mind's Ear II; Astral Echo Poem; Tilted. (52:10)

Personnel: Quinsin Nachoff, tenor saxophone; David Binney, alto saxophone; Matt Mitchell, piano; Fender Rhodes, keyboards; Kenny Wollesen, drums, percussion; Christine Duncan, theremin.

Ordering info: quinsin.com



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Miles Davis

Making Every Second Count

The Miles Davis Bootleg Series continues with **Freedom Jazz Dance: The Bootleg Series, Vol. 5 (Columbia/Legacy 65:10/65:51/63:41 ★★★★★)**. The focus of this set is Davis' Second Great Quintet of the 1960s—with Wayne Shorter on saxophone, Herbie Hancock on piano, Tony Williams on drums and Ron Carter on bass—and the compilation offers listeners a peek inside the recording studio as the group records alternate takes of music immortalized on the albums *Miles Smiles*, *Nefertiti*, *Sorcerer*, *Miles In The Sky* and *Water Babies*.

According to the box set's press release, the occasion for this release is the 50th anniversary of *Miles Smiles*, and toward that end the package contains "every recorded second of the sessions" from the 1966 album, including over two hours of previously unreleased studio recordings that give an inside look into the band's creative process.

For students, fans, lovers of all things Miles, this music is revelatory, a must-have. For more casual listeners, however, there is perhaps a one-time interest, a curiosity easily satisfied. The rating above reflects the viewpoint of the former type of listener, a listener who shares similar passions for the rest of the band, one of the most significant of the 20th century.

The format is fairly straightforward. Session reels precede master takes, with a few exceptions. For instance, the Davis composition "Circle" includes two takes following the session reel, one with the closing theme used on the master take, then excluding the closing theme.

In the case of Shorter's "Masqualero" (the master take coming from the 1967 album *Sorcerer*), there's just an eight-minute

alternate take, while Davis' structurally interesting "Country Son" (the master take coming from the 1968 album *Miles In The Sky*) includes a fascinating eight-minute rhythm-section-only rehearsal.

In addition, there's something called "Blues In F (My Ding)," a home recording with Davis on piano talking to Shorter about a new blues he was apparently developing.

Coming on the heels of 1965's *E.S.P.*, the quintet's first studio album, *Miles Smiles* represented the most radical shift in Davis' small-group music since 1959's *Kind Of Blue*. And while *E.S.P.* was a true departure from the series of studio and (mostly) live recordings that preceded *Miles Smiles*, the concept and chemistry of the band was by then flourishing.

With this series, a listener can start to unpack how all this incredible music was put together, discovering the "breadcrumbs," as liner notes writer Ashley Kahn put it.

But one of the greatest pleasures of listening to this music, apart from Carter's abilities to remain the band's fulcrum, is Williams' role, which is definitive. His varied takes on each and every song become the identifying feature.

Given his history with Davis, a note of thanks must be given to producer Teo Macero, who had a penchant for recording practically anything the trumpeter did in (and out of) the studio.

That, in parcel with Davis' recording aesthetic of experimentation and discovery, must account for why we have this music today. Here's hoping there are more of these "bootlegs" to come. **DB**

Ordering info: legacyrecordings.com



Billy Hart & the WDR Big Band *The Broader Picture*

ENJA 97452

★★★★★

Billy Hart—self-taught drummer for the ages—worked blithely with them all; discographies list well over 100 prominent collaborators. Revered as an empathetic bandmate, Hart has little currency as a composer. Neither prolific nor widely covered, his few leader dates featured pretty tunes that, like those of Jaki Byard, he invests with rich narrative power. Swiss orchestrator Christophe Schweizer corrects the oversight as he and the ubiquitous adventurous WDR ensemble embark on thoroughly examined reflections over Hart's durable tunes.

With the charismatic Hart on kit, the robust West German Radio Big Band waxes boldly panoramic, and Schweizer's charts unfold atlas-like into a full-stretch (80-minute) cinematic love-out, but the spontaneous intuition of rhythm-mates bassist John Goldsby and pianist Frank Chastenier is evident from the mystical opening bars.

Schweizer indulges in a bit of canvas-crowding, however, with the band blazing all out, leaping from one breathless high to the next. But there are oases of calm beauty, such as Johan Hörlen's alto flute gossamer solo on "Lullaby For Imke."

Typically self-effacing, Hart makes his presence felt in subliminal drive and undertow, but does solo briefly over "Teule's Redemption" and "Tolli's Dance." And on closer "Imke's March," he sets the closing jubilant street beat. Quite an earful.

—Fred Bouchard

The Broader Picture: Teule's Redemption; Layla-Joy; Song For Balkis; Reneda; Lullaby For Imke; Tolli's Dance; Naaj; Imke's March. (79:50)

Personnel: Billy Hart, drums; Christophe Schweizer, conductor, arrangements; Wim Both, Rob Bruynen, Andy Haderer, Ruud Bruleis, John Marshall, flugelhorns, trumpets; Johan Hörlen, Karolina Strassmayer, Olivier Peters, Jens Neufang, Paul Heller, reeds; Ludwig Nuss, Andy Hunter, Dan Gottshall, Raphael Klemm, trombones; Mattis Cederberg, bass trombone, tuba; Frank Chastenier, piano; Paul Shighihara guitar; John Goldsby, bass.

Ordering info: jazzrecords.com/enja



Roberto Fonseca *ABUC*

IMPULSE! B002571502

★★★★½

There is something so deep and timeless about the music of Cuba that it lends itself especially well to mash-ups and reinvention. As part of a contemporary lineage that includes Bill Laswell, Dafnis Prieto and Alfredo Rodriguez, keyboardist Roberto Fonseca has a ball on this eighth album, blending the traditional with the new in a way that is both intoxicating and intriguing.

Intoxication is the order of the day on the wild party that is “Afro Mambo,” with its sample of Xavier Cugat’s “Penthouse Mambo,” slurry sound and crazed vocal encouragement. It sounds like a trip back in time to pre-revolutionary times, though channeled through modern electronics.

“Tumbao De La Unidad” messes with time as well, moving from a spectral, heavily modulated electric guitar intro into a soulful vocal by guajira singer Eliades Ochoa, one of the aging masters who joined Fonseca in the Buena Vista Social Club project.

With its sampled street sounds, the brief interlude “Tierra Santa Santiago De Cuba” comes the closest to capturing the spooky aural *mise en scène* of Laswell’s masterful 1999 dub experiment, *Imaginary Cuba*, and this Cuba-of-the-mind fantasy continues on Fonseca’s “Habanera,” where he layers soprano Barbara Llanes’ voice over a sensuous groove and a dark piano vamp.

On “Soul Guardians,” another original composition, the mood shifts to a Spanish variation of hip-hop, with vocalist Alexey Rodriguez Mola name-checking Fonseca against a vocal chorus and churning piano.

Two versions of Ray Bryant’s “Cubano Chant” bookend *ABUC*. The first is a driving arrangement by Joaquin Betancourt that features an 11-piece, brass-heavy band and a sprightly solo by Trombone Shorty, drawing the link between Cuba and New Orleans; the second is a short solo treatment by Fonseca

that moves from 50 seconds of rapid-fire pyrotechnics to a slow chord progression that circles back to the European classics.

For Fonseca, who began composing music at age 14 (and who appeared at Havana’s International Jazz Festival at 15), this album is an extension of an artistic mission to transcend tradition and genre while still making connections that illustrate the rich stew that is Cuba’s musical heritage.

—James Hale

ABUC: Cubano Chant; Afro Mambo; Tumbao De La Unidad; Contradanza Del Espiritu; Tierra Santa; Sagrado Corazon; Family;

Tierra Santa Santiago De Cuba; Habanera; Soul Guardians; Asere Monina Bonco; Despues; Velas Y Flores; Cubano Chant (Piano Solo). (44:42)

Personnel: Roberto Fonseca, piano, keyboards, percussion (8), vocals (2, 13); Javier Zalba Suárez, alto saxophone (4), baritone saxophone (2); Eliades Ochoa, guitar (3), vocals (3); Yandy Martinez, bass (1–7, 9–13), percussion (8); Ramsés “Dynamite” Rodriguez, drums (1–7, 9–13), percussion (8, 13); Lázaro Amauri Oviedo (1), Eddy de Armas Camejo (1, 2), Roberto García López (4), Bobby Campo (5, 7, 8), Manuel “Guajiro” Mirabal (12), trumpet; Troy “Trombone Shorty” Andrews (1), Yoandy Argudin Feffel (1, 2, 4), Sagó Bell (1, 2), Mark Mullins (5, 7), trombone; Policarpo “Polo” Tamayo, flute (11); Yuniet Lombida Prieto, alto saxophone (1, 2); Emir Santa Cruz Hernández (1, 2, 4), Alonzo Bowers (5, 7, 8), tenor saxophone; Ben Ellman, baritone saxophone (5, 8); Joe Gore, guitar (7); Munir Hossn (3, 5), Sekou Bah (10), electric guitar; Daymé Arocena (2), Carlos Calunga (2), Rafael Lay Bravo (7), Roberto Espinosa Rodríguez (7), Bárbara Llanes (9), Alexey Rodriguez Mola (10), Mercedes Cortés Alfaro (12), vocals; Zé Nascimento (3, 5, 10), Yaroldy Abreu Robles (5, 8, 9, 12), percussion.

Ordering info: impulse-label.com

A monster saxophonist and clarinet player – NPR

Of the many stars to have emerged on the jazz horizon during the 90s, one of the most disciplined, emotive, and perhaps underrated is the multifaceted Gregory Tardy – *All About Jazz*

Chasing After The Wind Gregory Tardy

Alex Norris, trumpet
Sam Sadigursky, flute
Bruce Barth, piano
Sean Conly, bass
Jaimeo Brown, drums

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Guitar Hero, Chicago Born

It's hard to reflect on the short life of supremely talented but maddeningly self-destructive guitarist Michael Bloomfield without donning the white coat of a sidewalk psychiatrist. **Ed Ward** resisted that temptation when he wrote *Michael Bloomfield: The Rise and Fall of an American Guitar Hero*, which has been revised and reissued through **Chicago Review Press**.

Ward, a veteran music journalist, frequent contributor to NPR's *Fresh Air* and co-founder of South by Southwest in his hometown of Austin, Texas, is Bloomfield's ardent advocate as well as his biographer.

While the brilliant Chicago-bred bluesman's friends and bandmates recall how "Bloomers" infuriated them with his thoughtless irresponsibility as he wooed them with his charm and generosity, Ward withholds judgment. Bloomfield's once-flourishing career, which effectively ended nearly a decade before his drug-related death in 1981 at age 37, was derailed mostly by bad timing and misguided collaborators in Ward's account. Even in this revised edition, Ward declines to use the painfully obvious modern term for Bloomfield's condition: bipolar disorder. It manifested itself in chronic insomnia, endless self-medication with booze and heroin, disassociation from loved ones and inability to live up to his commitments.

Ward's book was only in print for one week in 1983, a result of the original publisher going out of business, so it's tough to compare the newly released version with the original. There is little here that couldn't have been written 33 years ago, and there's little historical perspective. Still, the author hits all the high notes of his subject's life, and Bloomfield's closest associates, personally and professionally, each have their say.

Bloomfield's story, as told by Ward, is an upscale variation on other rock tragedies of the '60s. The son of a prosperous Jewish-American manufacturer and a music-loving mother, Bloomfield ran the streets of Chicago's North Side until his family moved to north suburban Glencoe when he was 12. His affection for his maid helped draw him toward black culture and eventually the guitar. Awkward and painfully shy, he relentlessly pursued perfection on his instrument, aping the styles he heard on record until he "played 'em as he pleased," to paraphrase one later solo project.

While still in his mid-teens, he began hanging around at inner-city blues clubs, where he found willing mentors among the black musicians and a strong kinship with



Michael Bloomfield at a 1964 demo session

MIKE SHEA/COURTESY CHRISTINE SHEA

white, University of Chicago-based blues lovers. His reputation as a player grew until he was hosting jams and drawing the attention of national talent scouts.

Each new achievement led to questionable decisions. His 1965 session work on Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* brought an invitation to join Dylan's touring band. Bloomfield turned that down to play with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, but he found that role too rigorous and confining.

After relocating to the Bay Area in 1967, he and his lifelong friend, keyboardist Barry Goldberg, formed the Electric Flag, a brilliantly conceived rock-blues-soul-funk outfit that was doomed by Bloomfield's aversion to touring and promotion, plus band members' rampant drug use. Bloomfield torpedoed other projects through the remainder of his life, and ended up a near recluse. Of his death, Ward concludes, "All we know is that Michael Bloomfield found sleep for the last time and, perhaps, as he left this earth, heard the hellhounds' baying receding into the darkness."

Although Ward had immediacy on his side with his 1983 volume, a more complete portrait emerges in Jan Mark Wolkin and Bill Keenom's 2000 oral history, *Michael Bloomfield: If You Love These Blues* (Backbeat). Fans who read both books will come away with new insight into the artist other blues guitarists cite as a primary influence. **DB**

Ordering info: chicagoreviewpress.com



Matt Ulery's Loom/Large Festival

WOOLGATHERING 0003

★★★★★

Bassist Matt Ulery has established himself as one of most rigorous, thoughtful and ambitious figures in Chicago's new jazz scene, a composer with a deep curiosity and an ability to deftly assimilate his wide interests. His new double album, *Festival*, serves as a summation of what he's been working toward the last decade, but it delivers a statement more sophisticated and accomplished than anything he's done yet.

The collection opens with a pair of lushly arranged pieces for jazz orchestra, both featuring rich, lyric solos by violinist Zach Brock, who works with the bassist in the trio Triptych. The orchestra also performs a gorgeous adaptation of the Jimmy Rowles ballad "The Peacocks" and Ulery's own "Hubble," a jittery, contrapuntal wonder that draws upon the composer's growing engagement with contemporary music.

The rest of the album was made with his sturdy, versatile quintet Loom, but those 11 pieces transcend standard post-bop methodology. In addition to his interest in new music, Ulery is deeply invested in Eastern European folk, and he transforms melodies from this tradition into modern chamber-like vignettes. The musicians get plenty of space to improvise, but his composerly voice gets the emphasis.

The final five tunes feature Ulery switching to tuba and keyboardist Rob Clearfield to pump organ, adding a veneer of old-time rusticity; the sound evokes the past, as a soundtrack to a Sunday stroll in the 1910s, but the harmonic language and improvisational shapes are utterly contemporary. —Peter Margasak

Festival: The Peacocks; Hubble; Middle West; Hymnody; A Family, A Fair; Canopy; Etheny; Ecliptic; The Silence Is Holding; Depth Of Winter; Horseshoe; Constituant; Slow It Down. (73:09)

Personnel: Matt Ulery, bass, tuba; Zach Brock, violin (1, 2); Greg Ward, alto saxophone (1, 2); Tim Haldeman, tenor saxophone (1, 2); Mark Hiebert, baritone saxophone (1, 2); James Davis, Chad McCullough, trumpet (1, 2); Steve Duncan, Chris Davis, trombone (1, 2); Rob Clearfield, piano, pump organ; Jon Deitemyer, drums; Yvonne Lam, Aurelien Pederzoli, Dominic Johnson, violin (1, 2); Geoff Bradfield, bass clarinet, clarinet; Russ Johnson, trumpet.

Ordering info: mattulery.com



Enrico Pieranunzi
New Spring: Live At The Village Vanguard

CAM JAZZ 5056

★★★★½

Warning: This review of the latest from Italian pianist Enrico Pieranunzi might read like a one-note melody. But everything that's missing from the text—contrasts, surprises, variety—is abundant in the music itself. There are no weak spots.

No matter what criteria you apply, whether intellectual or visceral, you'll find no blemishes. Which makes writing this as much a challenge as listening to *New Spring* is a delight.

Pieranunzi plays with an alert spontaneity tempered by an intelligence nurtured by his long experience. Though he lights a few fireworks now and then, he prefers underplaying, approaching the performance not as the leader but as a composer, playing his parts in the written sections and thinking from a pianistic standpoint during free sections.

If there's one wellspring nourishing the brilliance of this performance, it's the fullness with which the other musicians understand and embrace this approach.

All four players are fully in the moment—more likely a few moments ahead—reading where their colleagues are going, measuring just how far outside they can venture without disrupting the unity of the quartet's process.

Even more impressively, they do so without compromising their own identities. Saxophonist Donny McCaslin's aesthetic is undeniable—his tone, his poignant downward bends, the hints of rasp. Yet every note, like everything contributed by bassist Scott Colley and drummer Clarence Penn, serves the tune and galvanizes the quartet's extraordinary interactivity.

—Bob Doerschuk

New Spring—Live At The Village Vanguard: Amsterdam Avenue; New Spring; Out Of The Void; Permutation; Loveward; I Hear A Rhapsody; The Waver. (54:01)

Personnel: Enrico Pieranunzi, piano; Donny McCaslin, tenor saxophone; Scott Colley, bass; Clarence Penn, drums.

Ordering info: camjazz.com

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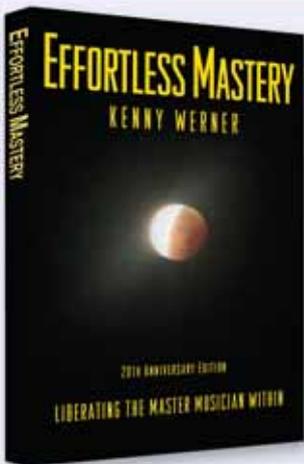
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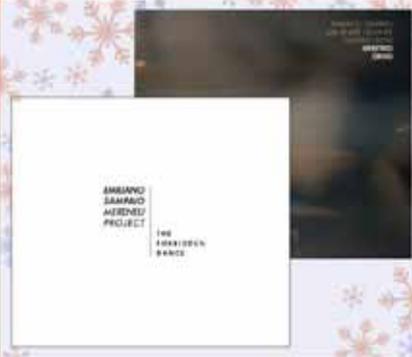


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Diana Krall leads the pack of artists with new & reissued holiday albums

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Yuletide Joy

BY FRANK JOHN HADLEY

One day, the music industry might reduce the scope of its annual late-fall parade of carols and commercial songs, but for now ... rejoice! Gifts of new and reissued albums of varying vibrancy are found amid the spate of stale releases bidding for notice this holiday season.

Australian fingerstyle guitarist **Tommy Emmanuel** gracefully spreads mellow holiday cheer on *Christmas Memories* (CGP Sounds 004; 39:38 ★★★★★). His immaculate technique is equally matched by his lyricism and warmth. But Emmanuel isn't the only excellent guitarist at his orderly Xmas party: Nashville pros Pat Bergeson and John Knowles know their way around the fretboard without grandstanding. Singer Annie Sellick displays confidence in her ability to entertain. Seldom do these players surrender to sentimentality. As songwriters, Emmanuel is responsible for the instrumental title track, and Sellick and Bergeson offer "Let's Make A Christmas Memory"—both pleasant jaunts. Elsewhere, Bergeson introduces blues harmonica to "Amazing Grace." Despite the moss sticking to "White Christmas" and a few other safe picks, this program flows nicely. Also in Santa's big bag: Emmanuel's album *All I Want For Christmas*, first delivered in 2011.

Ordering info: tommyemmanuel.com

Another world-class guitarist decking the halls with composure and with decorum is Laurence Juber, a former member of Paul McCartney's band Wings. **The Laurence Juber Trio's *Holidays & Hollynights*** (Hologram 1601; 33:36 ★★★★★) may be pulled down a bit by threadbare material, but Juber scores high marks for the clarion precision of his playing and for his tasteful arrangements. The acoustic bass and drums are as inconspicuous as the buttons on Santa's trousers. Bonus track "The

Christmas Song," featuring Juber alone with his Martin, ends the album on a note of quiet gaiety. This London native, who's now based in California, also offers exquisite solo guitar work on his 1997 album *Winter Guitar*.

Ordering info: hologramrecordings.com

From the opening bars of "I'll Be Home For Christmas" to the close of "Silent Night," singer and pianist **Tony DeSare's *Christmas Home*** (AJD Entertainment; 42:45 ★★★★★) conveys the joy this talented artist feels for the season. His rich, full voice walks a fine line between heartfelt drama and bathos, but, we're glad to say, it lands on the right side. DeSare is supported by a small orchestra that includes violins, viola, cello, harp, French horn and more. Think of him as a noble progenitor of Frank Sinatra, Johnny Mathis and other crooners. DeSare is a gifted pianist, getting just the right combination of delight and skillful touch on a solo version of "Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy." The two bonus tracks are hardly throwaways. The wickedly clever "18 Versions Of Jingle Bells" is a seven-minute concert performance in which DeSare mimics assorted singers and musical styles. His vocals on the captivating original tune "Christmas For You And Me" showcase an ease of delivery while communicating how deeply he cares about New York during the Christmas season.

Ordering info: tonydesare.com

Two volumes of **Joyful Jazz!—Christmas With Verve!** compile gems from label's extensive vault. **The Vocalists!** (Verve B0025707; 48:51 ★★★★★) begins with Mel Tormé hooking his prize ornament "The Christmas Song" onto the company tree. Also decorating, with stellar renditions of seasonal songs, are herald angels Louis Armstrong (with his zany "Zat You, Santa Claus?"), Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, Peggy Lee, Shirley Horn and Betty Carter. Also in on the fun are modern upstarts



Patti Austin, Diane Schuur, Diana Krall and Norah Jones, the latter showing a lapse in taste by teaming up with Willie Nelson for a corny version of "Baby, It's Cold Outside." Trumpet soloists, here and there, fare well stringing the multicolored lights. But instances of extreme sentimentality are like lumps of coal.

Ordering info: UME.lnk.to/JoyfulJazzVol1

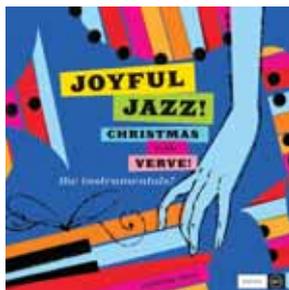
The second Verve collection, **The Instrumentals!** (Verve B0025708; 52:07 ★★★★★½), calls on John Coltrane, Oscar Peterson, Lionel Hampton, Jimmy Smith, Elaine Elias, the team of Roy Hargrove and Christian McBride and other luminaries—all recorded between 1957 and 1996—to promote messages of hope and peace. The highlight? It's hard to beat Trane's perpetually uplifting adaptation of the British folk song "Greensleeves" (aka "What Child Is This?"). Holiday jeer? Rotten chestnuts by smooth operators, such as saxophonist Nelson Rangell's "Let It Snow," evoking GRP sounds from the '90s. Rarity? The previously unreleased "I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm" by the Oscar Peterson Quartet with Buddy Bregman's orchestra.

Ordering info: UME.lnk.to/JoyfulJazzVol2

Available again in the LP format for the first time since its 1965 debut, **Bobby Timmons' *Holiday Soul*** (Prestige 7414; 41:40 ★★★★★) finds the former Art Blakey and Cannonball Adderley sideman (who famously wrote "Dat Dere" and "Moanin'") officiating on piano with swinging authority. The Bud Powell-influenced musician energizes "Winter Wonderland" and seven more selections without seeming the least bit self-conscious about his soul-jazz and blues tendencies. The sound of sleigh bells adds to the yuletide atmosphere.

Ordering info: smarturl.it/Timmons.HolidaySoul

Also returning on vinyl is organist **Don Patterson's *Holiday Soul*** (Prestige 7415; 37:59 ★★★★★). In addition to sharing an album title, both Timmons



Tommy Emmanuel

and Patterson lead trios and benefit from Rudy Van Gelder's fastidious sound engineering. Patterson, then in his late twenties, handles himself competently as an acolyte of Jimmy Smith taking the measure of eight well-trodden tunes. But he doesn't set his sights on B-3 ecstasy. Instead Patterson stays earthbound and even church-serious, notably with slow sermons "Silent Night" and "O Holy Night." Guitarist Pat Martino, then an up-and-comer with blues on his mind, is eminently enjoyable here.

Ordering info: smarturl.it/PattersonHolidaySoul

Now available on vinyl for the first time is **Diana Krall's Christmas Songs (Verve 3758030; 35:10 ★★★★★)**. Eleven years after its CD release, this album has become a paragon of Christmastide jazz singing in the new millennium. Krall is particularly adept at using the reflective side of her sensibility to interpret ballads like "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" and "White Christmas." Her contralto mixes vulnerability and sensuousness, and the music sparkles. Rarely mawkish or bound tight to propriety, Krall gives the impression she genuinely feels the emotion behind the lyrics. Her piano work has something of Nat "King" Cole's touch. And it's laudable that she digresses from the usual ho-ho-hum holiday fare to interpret Irving Berlin's "Count Your Blessings (Instead Of Sheep)" and Frank Loesser's "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?" Raise a mug of holiday cheer to a dozen musicians, including the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra and string players. Yet Krall's best Yule album may be the one she didn't make long ago when in a trio with bassist Ben Wolfe and guitarist Russell Malone—their track (with drummer Jeff Hamilton) on her 1998 EP *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* remains an enduring tease.

Ordering info: UME.lnk.to/DKChristmasSongs

No holiday is complete without hearing some stellar artists from the Beyond category. Check out **The Seraph Choir's Christmas In Africa (North-Star 270; 51:41 ★★★★★)**, reissued after a lapse of a dozen years. The gorgeous singing of these 12 vocalists from Central Africa (fluent in English, French and several African languages) signifies the sacredness of the season. In their hands, a program of popular carols and obscure devotional songs are munificent gifts. Conceptually, this a cappella group, once quite popular in England, belongs to the genre of

polyphonic European choral singing. Only "Unto Us A Child Is Born" has instrumentation—in the form of African percussion. Indeed, *Christmas In Africa* holds the capacity to strike a chord with believers and doubters alike, including escapists who need a special album for their trip to a desert island—or, better yet, an ice floe near the North Pole.

Ordering info: itunes.apple.com/us/album/christmas-in-africa/id303608523

Pay attention to the Cajun band **Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys**, whose ***Party At The Holiday, All Night Long!* (Mamou Playboys Records; 25:19 ★★★★★)** is replete with high-spirited bayou sounds ideal for two-stepping dancers. Riley's singing and accordion work allow him to express his innate admiration for departed greats Clifton Chenier and Buckwheat Zydeco. Not inclined to write his own holiday songs, Riley freshens up interesting songs from the r&b and pop past. These tunes often dwell on a protagonist who is apart from a loved one during the holiday season, but revelry from the band—influenced by rock and country music as well as zydeco—trumps the melancholy of the lyrics. A clear highlight is "Louisiana Christmas Day," drawing from Aaron Neville's version and acknowledging traditional fiddle-accordion virtues. Scrooge alert: A version of George Harrison's "Ding Dong, Ding Dong"—with kid singers helping out—is hellishly repetitious, and Charles Brown's great "Please Come Home For Christmas" has unconvincing guest vocalist Wayne Toups losing his way.

Ordering info: mamouplayboys.com

In Canada, married couple Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy, both fiddlers, supply tidings of comfort and joy to folk-based music on ***A Celtic Family Christmas* (Linus 270245; 42:00 ★★★★★)**. With the greatest of ease, they marshal their virtuosity into Yule exaltations and reveries rich in personality and emotion. Restorations of "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" and the like are performed with an imaginative blend of modernity and Celtic tradition. At times, this well-crafted music evokes Fairport Convention and the Bothy Band. With their musical family in tow, MacMaster and Leahy even make the kid-friendly "The Twelve Days Of Christmas" likeable to adults. **DB**

Ordering info: linusentertainment.com



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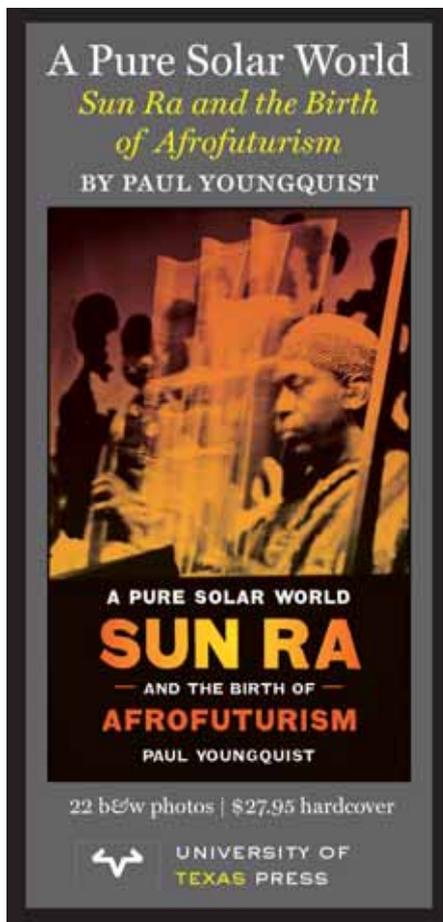


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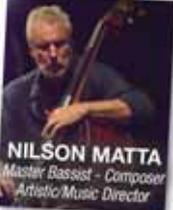
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Paul Gonsalves (left) and Duke Ellington at the 1961 Monterey Jazz Festival

Classic Images

The best photographs linger in the mind even after you shut your eyes. It's the same with great jazz songs, whose melodies seem to stay awhile, even after the last note sounds. In both, there's a sense of eternity, which is why the marriage of the two—as in the jazz images of photographer Jim Marshall—can seem timeless.

Marshall, the only photographer to be honored with a Trustees Award by the Grammy foundation, has long been known for his iconic images of rock musicians, many of which have become signifiers of the music itself—think Jimi Hendrix burning his guitar at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival, or Johnny Cash extending his middle finger to the camera during his 1969 San Quentin Prison show. These photos do more than just document a moment: They capture the spirit of the music itself. That kind of artistry requires more than merely good lighting and the right lens.

Jazz music—with its insistence on spontaneity—thrives on live performance, and during the 1960s, few cultural phenomena better embodied this notion than the Newport and Monterey jazz festivals. Even in those nascent years (the Newport Jazz Festival began in 1954, the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1958), there could be gleaned from these annual gatherings a sense that jazz was speaking to the masses. Few photographers tapped into the zeitgeist of these moments better than Marshall, whose

photos have been collected into a new coffee-table book, *Jazz Festival: Jim Marshall* (Reel Art Press).

Compiled by photographer Amelia Davis, the bulk of the 600-plus black-and-white images within *Jazz Festival* are entirely new, revelatory even to the most dedicated fans of Marshall's work. Carefully catalogued across more than 300 pages, the photos capture in Marshall's typically illuminating style jazz's leading figures of the day—John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Nina Simone, Sonny Rollins—as well as the eager and intriguing crowds that flocked to California and Rhode Island to see them. Essays and introductions by President Bill Clinton and jazz journalist Nat Hentoff brace the reader for exploration, but the photos lend themselves to interminable searching.

Perhaps this is because Marshall's photographs seem to carve out greater slices of time than the mere split-second they document on film. Each image is packed with momentum, capturing a sense of motion, of possibility, of improvisation. In Marshall's shot of Duke Ellington and Paul Gonsalves at the 1961 Monterey Jazz Festival, notice how the image begins to play like a movie in your mind, how you can practically hear Gonsalves' iridescent solo unspooling like a soundtrack, how you can practically envision the action unfolding—Ellington clapping, urging his brilliant saxophonist on. There's life beneath these frozen

moments, an energy preserved.

There's a significance, too, in the way Marshall's photographs tend to soften the sharp cultural divisions of his time. Barriers—between races, between classes, between celebrity and civilian—are broken down under the scrutiny of Marshall's lens. At Monterey in 1963, Marshall captures Miles Davis and Harry James—avatars of different styles, manners and modes—sharing a moment of levity over a cigarette. In a photo from 1961 Dizzy Gillespie, one of bebop's founding fathers, demonstrates a piano figure to Lalo Schifrin, a Jewish pianist from Buenos Aires, who adopted bop's language as his native tongue. The spirit of unity wasn't relegated to the bandstand, either. In photos of the audience—and there are dozens throughout this impressive volume—one can see a sliver of the population choosing to come together despite their differences. In Monterey, black and white audience members seek shelter from the same sun; in Newport, festivalgoers of various backgrounds walk the same cobblestone streets. In these photographs exists real proof of the ability of Americans to heal the wounds of dividedness through music, one of humanity's great unifiers.

People, though, are just one aspect of these festival photos. The landscapes of Monterey and Newport make for equally compelling subjects, and Marshall excels at distilling the essence of



Sonny Stitt at the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival

© JIM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC / REEL ART PRESS

each place into a single image. In Monterey, festivalgoers are seen stuffing pages of newspaper under the brims of their hats to keep the glare off their sunglasses, and in Newport, saxophonist Sonny Stitt leans against the hood of an elegant car, his far-off glance as majestic as the endless sky.

Marshall, who died in 2010 at age 74, started documenting musicians on film while still in high school, first in San Francisco for small-time publications, and later across the country for the likes of Rolling Stone magazine

and Columbia Records. He was known for his forceful personality and voluble presence. His generosity of spirit is reflected in his work, and his photos are a gift to American history.

Marshall had no children of his own, but saw in his sweeping body of work the makings of a legacy. Of a series of photographs of Hendrix taken during the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967—exquisitely framed, expertly developed—he said, “These are my children.”

—Brian Zimmerman

Ordering info: reelartpress.com

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Legends & Legacies

BY JOHN EPHLAND

Filmmakers around the world continue to be inspired by the life stories and hypnotic performances of icons such as Frank Sinatra, Nina Simone and Rahsaan Roland Kirk. Here's a look at some cinematic gems.



COURTESY MVD ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

Janis Joplin, as seen in the documentary *Janis: Little Girl Blue* (MVD)

The Frank Sinatra Collection: *O! Blue Eyes Is Back/The Main Event* (Eagle Rock Entertainment 307699; 103 minutes ★★★★★). This set combines two performances: a TV show (*O! Blue Eyes Is Back*) and a concert (*The Main Event*) from 1973 and '74, respectively. The NBC show was a return after Sinatra's "retirement" in 1971, and it features Hollywood star Gene Kelly. Songs include a medley and duet with Kelly, as well as "Street Of Dreams" and "I Get A Kick Out Of You." Tuxes notwithstanding, the ballads connect.

The Main Event, a concert at Madison Square Garden, was broadcast on ABC, and it includes announcer Howard Cosell, some celebrities amid the 20,000 on hand and Sinatra singing "You Are The Sunshine Of My Life," "My Way" and "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown" (with audience members dancing in the aisles). There are also personal favorites like "The House I Live In," "Angel Eyes" and "My Kind Of Town." Don Costa conducts Woody Herman's Thundering Herd along with New York musicians and a string section. Also available in the series: *At The Royal Festival Hall/Sinatra In Japan* (chronicling concerts in 1970 and 1985) and *Happy Holidays With*

Frank & Bing/Vintage Sinatra (which captures a 1957 TV special with Bing Crosby that was broadcast in color, plus a compilation of black-and-white footage from the 1950s).

Ordering info: amazon.com

***Pride And Joy: The Story Of Alligator Records* (MVD 7493BR; 87 minutes ★★★★★).** This Robert Mugge film (first released in 1992 and now on Blu-ray) is a nice slice of Chicago blues history. The film includes performance clips from the label's 20th anniversary tour in 1991, showcasing artists like Koko Taylor, Elvin Bishop, Lonnie Brooks and Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials. Mugge also offers an inside look via interviews with the artists themselves as well as label founder Bruce Iglauer. The pacing is good, giving us a sense of the party-like feel to the label, as the music and words are intertwined. The bonus material includes audio of 10 more performances from the 20th anniversary tour.

Ordering info: MVDshop.com

***George Crumb: Voice Of The Whale* (MVD 7499D; 54 minutes ★★★★★).** This Robert Mugge film, which was first broadcast on PBS in 1978, offers an inside look into one of America's most original

composers. At certain points, the production feels almost like a home movie (it was "music filmmaker" Mugge's first on the subject, filmed with two color tints), and there are surprising moments that highlight other artists, including fellow composer Richard Wernick. Mugge examines the many sides of Crumb, a Grammy- and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer who combines his deep knowledge with avant-garde approaches, technical skills as a trained musician, and an interest in classical music, various forms of folk music and rural gospel tunes.

A bonus is a performance by the Penn Contemporary Players of Crumb's 1971 piece *Vox Balaenae For Three Masked Players*. Plus, Crumb's demonstrations of unusual sounds on exotic instruments add to our understanding of his unique aesthetic.

Ordering info: MVDshop.com

***All Things Must Pass* (MVD 8724D; 96 minutes ★★★★★½).** This is a history lesson covering the rise and fall of a beloved record store chain, Tower Records, from its early days in Sacramento, California, to opening stores worldwide. Taking its title from a song and album by George Harrison, director Colin Hanks (who worked on the project for seven years) gets at the core of Tower Records' charm. The film explores company founder Russ Solomon's successful, human-centered formula with extensive interviews with not only Solomon but also a number of key employees who stuck around for the ride.

Besides chronicling the rise and fall of various recording technologies and formats from the 1960s to pretty much the present day, the film features interviews with some famous loyalists: Bruce Springsteen, Elton John, Dave Grohl and David Geffen. Video clips and vintage photographs add to the sense of family and its impact on Tower customers.

Ordering info: MVDshop.com

***Rahsaan Roland Kirk: The Case Of The Three Sided Dream* (Arthaus Musik 109252; 107 minutes ★★★★★).** A labor of love by filmmaker Adam Kahan, this documentary provides a welcome look into the too-short life of saxophonist/composer Kirk through home videos, performance footage, interviews with former colleagues and a rare clip of Kirk performing on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. That Sullivan appearance—which featured special guests Archie Shepp, Roy Haynes and Charles Mingus along with regular bandmates—came as a result of Kirk leading a revolt against broadcasters for under-representing blacks on TV; the film also examines an event wherein Kirk and fellow protesters as audience members disrupt *The Dick Cavett Show*.

This is a fascinating portrait of an artist who went blind at an early age yet developed innovative musical approaches, such as playing multiple horns simultaneously, and other techniques of playing—even after suffering partial paralysis. Viewers can experience Kirk playing "Black Classical Music" on

"plantation earth," in this film, which was named Best Documentary at the Pan African Film Festival. (The film can be seen online at monoduo.net.)

Ordering info: amzn.to/2aAkQTm

Bill Evans: Time Remembered (87 minutes ★★★★★). Bruce Spiegel's documentary reveals a side of Bill Evans that encourages an empathic view of the pianist. We get to see and hear how Evans' personal life contributed to his artistry, a story informed by vintage interviews with the pianist. Along with his addictions and troubled marriages, Evans had to deal with the anguish following the suicide of his loving, older brother, who had been an important mentor during his formative years.

The emergence of Helen Keane as Evans' manager is a pivotal moment. Following the success of his trio with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian (and LaFaro's untimely death), Evans was able to not only continue creating but also to astound. The film covers the early years in good detail, including his fruitful alliance with Miles Davis.

Among the interviewees are bassists Chuck Israels, Gary Peacock and Marc Johnson; drummers Paul Motian, Jack DeJohnette and Marty Morell; producer Orrin Keepnews; and singer Tony Bennett, who collaborated with Evans during an important late-inning stretch before the iconic pianist died of various health problems in 1980.

Ordering info: billevanstimeremembered.com.

Janis: Little Girl Blue (MVDvisual 8304D; 105 minutes ★★★★★). Director Amy J. Berg's film provides a truly sympathetic, glowing portrait of Janis Joplin, the rock-and-blues singer who took

the world by storm during the late '60s before her tragic death on Oct. 4, 1970, at age 27. Berg revisits the emerging rock scene in the San Francisco Bay Area during the era when a young Joplin was trying to tear herself away from her backwards life in Port Arthur, Texas. She had a difficult time dealing with fame and other issues, and much of her pain was conveyed through the letters she wrote home. The film addresses her temporary alliance with Ron "Pigpen" McKernan of the Grateful Dead, her decision to interpret Kris Kristofferson's "Me And Bobby McGee" (a major hit), the move to Columbia Records, her struggles with addiction, the back-and-forth with her bandmates, and, of course, her riveting performance at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival.

This documentary, which was broadcast on PBS, features interviews with Kristofferson, Bob Weir, Pink, Melissa Etheridge and Joplin family members. It also includes deleted scenes that were not part of the PBS broadcast.

Ordering info: MVDshop.com

What Happened, Miss Simone? (Eagle Rock Entertainment 307689; 116 minutes/60 minutes ★★★★★). With a title from a quote by poet Maya Angelou, this DVD/CD package captures a significant chunk of the artistic and personal life of Nina Simone. Born Eunice Waymon in 1933, she was thwarted in her attempt to pursue a career as a classical pianist. Later she would mingle that aes-

thetic with her desire to play "civil rights music." Simone struggled to make ends meet, and eventually she wed her manager, Andrew Strand, who is interviewed here, as are her daughter, Lisa Celeste Stroud, and guitarist Al Schackman.

Other interviewees include Newport Festival impresario George Wein, music critic Stanley Crouch and comedian Dick Gregory, who, commenting on Simone's performance of her song "Mississippi Goddam," states, "We all wanted to say it. *She* said it." Performance clips include a visit to the Montreux Jazz Festival. Simone's own voice-over narrative was certainly a factor in this film being nominated for an Academy Award in the category Best Documentary (Feature). The film is bundled with a CD of music from the documentary as well as extra tracks. **DB**

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Next Stop: Otis in 1966

What music fan hasn't fantasized about hopping in a time machine to go hear an icon perform at his creative peak in a small club? Let's start with Muddy Waters in 1954, Miles Davis in 1960, Jimi Hendrix in 1967 ... and Otis Redding in 1966.

Stax offers the next-best thing for devotees of the great Georgia soul singer with *Live At The Whisky A Go Go: The Complete Recordings*, recorded over three nights on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. The box set, remixed and remastered from the original four-track analog tapes, catches the dynamic showman at age 24 in star-making gigs while riding high with *Otis Blue: Otis Redding Sings Soul*, his finest studio album. The six CDs serve up multiple sets recorded April 8–10 before an audience of young hipsters. Nothing's edited out, not even when Redding stops the band in mid-song and tells the crowd, "We're gonna do this over and over again until we get it right on the tape." Then he and his band proceed to nail it on the next take.

You're tableside along with Bob Dylan, Van Morrison and a host of other celebs as Redding

cajoles, kibitzes, confesses, seduces and sings his heart out. Although he was dubbed "Mr. Pitiful" because so many of his songs are slow and sad, the one common thread that runs through his Whisky sets is his steamy sensuality. On "I've Been Loving You Too Long," the ultimate declaration of love as penned by Redding and the Impressions' Jerry Butler, he wails, "I love you with all my heart ... one time I loved you ... two times ... three times ... 10 times! Good God almighty, I loved you." There's not an ounce of pity in that sentiment.

Most Redding studio albums, as well as the *Live In Europe* and *Monterey Pop Festival* discs, featured Booker T. & the M.G.'s, the gold standard for Southern soul. But for the Whisky A Go Go shows, he used his 10-piece regular touring band, which included three saxophones, two trumpets and a trombone. It probably took a road-hardened outfit that played Redding's music nightly to change up the arrangements from one set to the next, likely taking their cues on the fly from the bandleader. It's a good thing they were so adaptable because he performs seven versions of "I Can't Turn You Loose," five of "Good To Me," four of "Respect" and a whopping 10 rendi-



tions of "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" over the course of seven sets. Perhaps the non-Otis-obsessed can make do with the original 10-track, single-disc *In Person At The Whisky A Go Go*, released posthumously in 1968.

But why stop there? And besides, with this guilty-pleasures box set, you get liner notes by Lynell George and Bill Bentley that offer two unique perspectives on the musical and cultural significance of these shows.

With superstardom in his grasp, Redding perished in a plane crash in Dec. 10, 1967, at age 26. And that's the real pity. —Jeff Johnson

Ordering info: concordmusicgroup.com/artists/otis-redding

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Genius at Work

So let's get this straight: seven Ray Charles albums from more than half a century ago, with no added material, pressed on monaural LPs, with most of the songs easily obtainable in multiple formats and re-releases, packaged in a rather plain box, with a suggested retail price of around \$120. And you should buy this because . . . why, exactly?

Well, because it sounds great.

The Atlantic Years—In Mono contains a total of 78 tracks remastered from the original mono analog tapes, pressed on 180-gram vinyl and repackaged in sleeves to faithfully replicate the original LP releases.

A note for older fans: If you thought Charles' early songs popped from your car's dashboard speaker when they came on AM radio or made the joint jump when you dropped a dime in the jukebox, wait until you hear them in this box set.

Hardcore fans who worship the soulful, r&b-belted, jazz-influenced and blues-wailing Charles from the first seven years of his major-label recording career (at Atlantic Records) tend to prefer this material to his subsequent ABC-Paramount years. Granted, at ABC he enjoyed greater commercial success, but often his crossover efforts forced him to stray far from his Southern r&b roots.

Casual fans would be satisfied with any of the numerous CD compilations that compile Charles' best-known songs. But vinyl fanatics and devoted fans will marvel at the *Atlantic Years* set, which contains these seven LPs: *Ray Charles*, *The Great Ray Charles*, *Yes, Indeed!*,

What'd I Say, *The Genius Of Ray Charles*, *The Genius After Hours* and *The Genius Sings The Blues*. Even those last two LPs—which consist of leftover tracks released from the company's vault after Charles flew the coop—are populated with classics of jazz and blues, respectively.

It's mind-boggling to ponder that Charles was merely 21 when he signed with Ahmet Ertegun's label. The blind singer-pianist—whose life story is known not only to music lovers worldwide but also to anyone who saw the 2004 biopic *Ray*, starring Jamie Foxx—immediately produced eminently listenable material for Atlantic. He improved exponentially throughout his seven-year stint.

Of the titles in this set, the LP that spends the most time on a fan's turntable depends more on stylistic preferences than on quality. I've taken an instant liking to *The Genius Sings The Blues*, with a dozen blues songs that range from the Nappy Brown shouter "(Night Time Is) The Right Time" to the country blues of Hank Snow's "I'm Movin' On" to the deep blues of "I Believe To My Soul." But other fans might prefer the all-instrumental, jazz-oriented *The Great Ray Charles* and *The Genius After Hours*. You can't go wrong with *What'd I Say*, with a title track that made him a major star and led to his ABC deal. But you could argue just as passionately for the others as well.

Throw in a 30-page booklet with new text by Charles biographer David Ritz and you have a set that will make Santa a hero with some lucky music fan.

—Jeff Johnson

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TED WILLIAMS, FROM JAZZ: THE ICONIC IMAGES OF TED WILLIAMS (ACC EDITIONS)

Sarah Vaughan backstage at the Chicago Theatre in Chicago, 1948

Williams' Amazing Artistry

Sports aficionados around the world revere Ted Williams (1918–2002), one of the greatest baseball players to ever pick up a bat. Similarly, photojournalism aficionados around the world revere a man with the same name: Ted Williams (1925–2009), one of the greatest photographers to ever pick up a camera.

During his long career, Williams shot major events in sports, politics, culture and music. He photographed Dr. Martin Luther King and many marches of the Civil Rights Movement. He covered the war in Vietnam. He photographed the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City. Williams' images were published in numerous magazines, including *Ebony*, *Look*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Metronome*.

Williams also enjoyed a fruitful relationship with *DownBeat*. He made a big splash with his extensive coverage of the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival. He would go on to provide the photos for some of the most famous *DownBeat* covers in history. Many of those images are compiled in the gorgeous, 352-page coffee-table book *Jazz: The Iconic Images of Ted Williams* (ACC Editions).

When Williams passed away in 2009, he left behind nearly 100,000 prints and negatives. *Jazz* is the first book dedicated to Williams' jazz photography, highlighting dozens of images that have never been previously published. The images are augmented with Williams' own comments as well as analysis from jazz historians and journalists.

Williams proves himself to be just as poetic with a pen as he was with a camera. Here's what he wrote about his portrait of Sarah Vaughan taken backstage in Chicago in 1948: "I was a

student at The Institute of Design at the time, and called Sarah directly at her hotel (possible in those days) and received permission to photograph her in her dressing room for the next issue of a nonexistent college newspaper.

"Dave Garroway (the first *Today* show host) was a well-known Chicago disc jockey then and 'Sissy's' biggest and most vocal fan. When she came onstage, [Garroway] preceded her, scattering rose petals for her to walk on. This got a lot of press locally and did not resonate too well with a few bigots that took notice.

"About mid-week, a group sat in the front row and waited for Sarah to start singing, and proceeded to throw tomatoes at her.

"This photo was taken a few days before that notorious incident."

The book is chock-full of moments that will intrigue jazz buffs. For example, in 1953 at Chicago's Blue Note club, Williams photographed a rehearsal by members of pianist George Shearing's quintet. This resulted in a beautiful portrait of the group's handsome, mustachioed, bespectacled guitarist: Toots Thielemans, who would later become the most famous harmonica player in jazz history.

Williams' 1961 photo of Dizzy Gillespie and Lionel Hampton performing inside a CBS-TV studio captures the excitement and formality of the situation, with both men wearing dress shirts and neckties, Diz's cheeks inflated and Hamp's right-hand mallet a blur hovering above the vibraphone.

Williams' 1956 portrait of singer Carmen McRae has the elegance and sumptuous beauty of a Cecil Beaton portrait. Williams was

equally skilled whether he was shooting a musician onstage or off. For an action shot of organ player Jimmy Smith, Williams bent down close to instrument's keys, giving the viewer a better-than-bird's-eye-view of a master's fingers at work.

Among the *DownBeat* covers reproduced in the book are ones featuring Williams' photos of Oscar Peterson vividly gesturing as he explains a point (Oct. 29, 1959), Art Farmer and Benny Golson laughing together (Sept. 1, 1960) and Ray Charles using an engraved cigarette lighter (Sept. 12, 1963).

Some of these *DownBeat* covers provide fantastic details about what was happening in jazz at the time. The June 30, 1966, cover has a moody shot of Dave Brubeck, hands on piano keys and head bowed. The headline for that cover story is a simple: "Dave Brubeck, Composer." But the same issue contains this screaming headline: "Don Ellis: The Avant-Garde Is Not Avant-Garde!" When Oscar Brown Jr. appeared on the cover of the Dec. 6, 1962, issue, with the headline "Rebel With A Cause," one of the other stories was "Lennie Tristano Speaks Out: What Happened To The Jazz In Jazz?"

The book's index of images is a who's who of the greatest names in jazz—Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Tony Bennett, Art Blakey, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald and Stan Getz among them.

Williams was an important part of jazz history, and this book belongs in the collection of anyone interested in the history of America's greatest art form.

—Bobby Reed

Ordering info: antiquecollectorsclub.com/us

Electrifying Saga

In their thoroughly researched and well-crafted tome, *Play It Loud: An Epic History of the Style, Sound, & Revolution of the Electric Guitar* (Doubleday), former Guitar World editor Brad Tolinski and esteemed music journalist Alan di Perna deflate a few myths while uncovering some unsung pioneers in the development of the electric guitar. While there are those who believe that Les Paul invented the electric guitar (a myth that the charismatic guitarist, showman and lifelong tinkerer may have perpetuated himself), Tolinski and di Perna devote quite a bit of detailed prose about the earlier contributions of Adolph Rickenbacker, Leo Fender and George Beauchamp, the latter who seems to have been ignored by history—until now.

Although there are guitars today that famously bear the names Fender, Rickenbacker and Les Paul, it was Beauchamp who made it all possible with his invention of the electromagnetic pickup, described as the crucial DNA for what would become the electric guitar. Beauchamp is said to have arrived at his breakthrough by asking the simple question, “If you can amplify radio waves, why not amplify vibration waves?” As the authors explain: “The vibrations of the guitar strings cause fluctuations in the magnetic field created by the pickup, which in turn generates an electrical signal that can be amplified.”

Beauchamp applied his new technology to an aluminum cast instrument dubbed “The Frying Pan” (a prototype is enshrined in Rickenbacker corporate headquarters in Santa Ana, California). It is the holy grail among guitar historians. Tolinski and di Perna do give credit to Les Paul for his development of the solid body electric guitar for Gibson, along with his many significant inventions like echo effects, varispeeding and overdubbing.

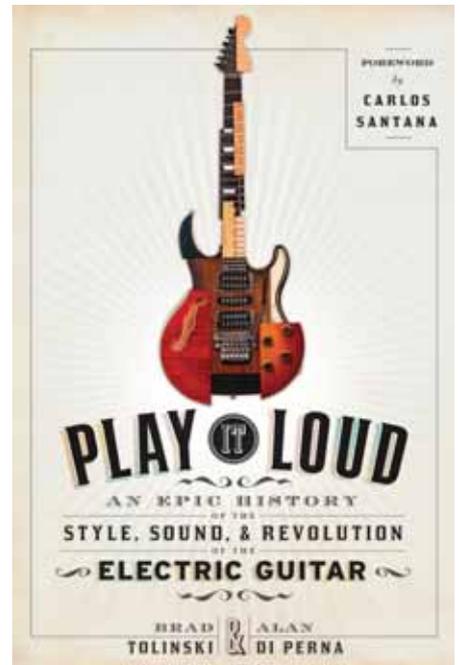
The contributions of Leo Fender with his revolutionary Telecaster guitar are detailed in a separate chapter, with some reminiscing from famed Tele player James Burton, who backed such legends as Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Roy Orbison and also flashed that axe on weekly episodes of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* in the bandstand scenes where Ricky Nelson would croon his early rock ‘n’ roll hits. The Telecaster would subsequently be adopted by such country musicians as Buck Owens, Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings, and by the ‘70s it was the preferred instrument of Keith Richards, Jeff Beck and Roy Buchanan. Another Fender model, the sleek Stratocaster, would attract such six-string icons as Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan and surf-guitar king Dick Dale.

The authors trace the evolution of electric guitar to Chicago with the advent of the electric

blues pioneered by the likes of Muddy Waters and Jimmy Rogers, and to Nashville through the dazzling six-string work of Gretsch guitar virtuoso Chet Atkins. And they note the profound impact that Charlie Christian had on generations of jazz, blues and rock players when he plugged in his Gibson ES-150 with Benny Goodman’s band in 1939.

The electric guitar’s presence at the historic 1967 Monterey Pop Festival and 1969’s Woodstock Music Festival is thoroughly examined, as is Bob Dylan’s controversial decision to “go electric” with a Fender Stratocaster (backed by Mike Bloomfield on Telecaster) at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival.

Elsewhere, the authors offer kudos to the inventive Gibson guitar designer Ted McCarty, as well as to modernist luthiers like Wayne Charvel, David Schecter and Paul Reed Smith. And while acknowledging electric guitar virtuosos like Eddie Van Halen and Steve Vai, they also point out the importance of the guitar in the early punk movement spearheaded by The Ramones, The Sex Pistols, Television and Richard Hell & The Voidoids as well as to the deconstructivists who followed in their wake, such as Marc Ribot,

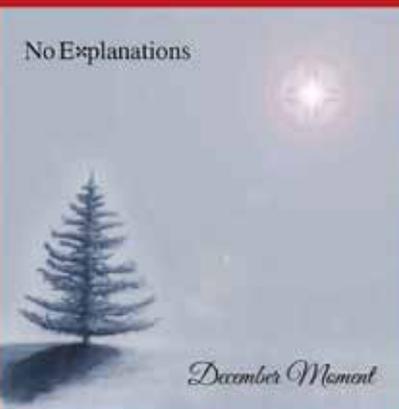


Sonic Youth’s Thurston Moore and St. Vincent.

The exhaustive detail presented here will certainly please gearheads and collectors, but casual readers will also find this a fascinating read, thanks to the authors’ astute examination of the electric guitar’s social impact and cultural implications.

—Bill Milkowski

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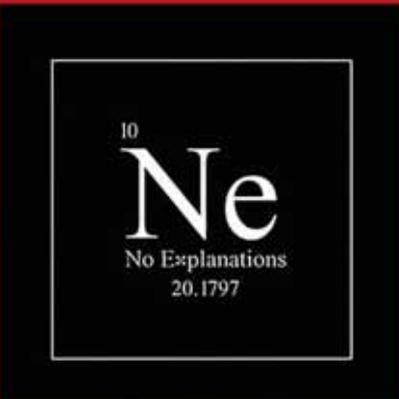
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Motown Treasures

Bluesman John Lee Hooker's version of "The Motor City Is Burning" is not a Motown recording. Neither is the raucous rendition by the MC5, arguably the Motor City's best rock band. Hooker's 1967 lament about Detroit's devastating riots would have been an ill fit for the label's slick r&b sound.

But the riots and their aftermath serve as a jumping-off point for *Motown: The Sound of Young America*, an up-by-your-bootstraps tale of black entrepreneurship in the white-dominated music industry of the 1960s. With more than 1,000 color and black-and-white photographs, this 400-page history deserves an honored space on your coffee table—if you can tear yourself away from the meticulously documented saga of autoworker Berry Gordy's brilliant business strategies and knack for identifying a hit song.

The text was written by Motown historian and former Billboard editor-in-chief Adam White, with assistance by Gordy's top lieutenant, Barney Ales. Published by Thames & Hudson, the book is filled with British spellings and accounts of the Motown company's U.K. releases and tours. Ales' contribution ensures that sales and marketing strategies often over-

shadow the music, although his candid views from the offices of Hitsville, U.S.A., will prove enlightening to industry insiders. The foreword by Rolling Stones mastermind Andrew Loog Oldham recognizes Motown's parallels to the British Invasion. Oldham writes, "The 'crossover' hit, from r&b radio to the Top 40 and back again, became the gold standard, and to the extent that no British artist had ever cracked the American charts consistently, we were crossover artists ourselves."

The book offers other moments of rare insight. In asserting that Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" was a call to attention for the Vietnam generation, White declares that the track was constructed "as if to ensnare the enemy by sound in the jungles of the 22nd parallel (I bet you're wondering how they knew, Victor Charlie). This is Motown for the war in Vietnam or the tear-gassed streets of Chicago during the Democratic National Convention, not for Ed Sullivan or the Copacabana."

The Motown sounds of Mary Wells, Martha & The Vandellas, the Miracles, the Supremes and the Four Tops may not have equaled their counterparts at Stax or other soul/r&b-oriented labels



The Supremes—Mary Wilson (left) Diana Ross and Florence Ballard—pose in the outfits they wear on the cover of their 1964 LP *A Bit Of Liverpool*.

in terms of grit, but they resonated with pop audiences; so much so that Motown became the largest black-owned enterprise in America. The youngsters who populate the pages of Motown—clean-cut young men in colorful matching suits and girl-next-door beauties in white satin and sequins—illustrate just what Gordy and Ales were marketing. The label's later superstars, such as The Jacksons and the solo Diana Ross, were more polished versions of the early hit-makers.

The street riots and their implications for Gordy's make-no-waves business model hastened Motown's escape to the West Coast. Many of the studio musicians who were the unsung backbone of the label's sound declined to come along, and by the late 1970s the label was in full retreat. But the music industry revolution triggered by Gordy and Ales lives on. —Jeff Johnson

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Abundance of Amram

David Amram may not be a household name, but the composer, arranger and French horn player is deeply revered by aficionados who love film, jazz and the intersection of the two. A generous new box set devoted to his work was assembled with assistance from Amram himself, who penned liner notes for the accompanying 60-page booklet.

Released by the Moochin' About label, this five-CD set, *David Amram's Classic American Film Scores*, is all about abundance. It contains music for seven films—*The Manchurian Candidate*, *Splendor in the Grass*, *The Arrangement*, *The Young Savages*, *Pull My Daisy*, *Echo of an Era* and *Isn't it Delicious*—as well as two Broadway productions: *On the Waterfront* and *After the Fall*.

Amram might be best known for his haunting, powerful score to director John Frankenheimer's 1962 classic, *The Manchurian Candidate*, starring Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey and Janet Leigh. That score alone is reason enough to seek out this box, and hot-jazz fans certainly will dig the Dixieland sounds on the soundtrack for another film classic, *Splendor in the Grass*. But pleasures from far more obscure sources abound here.

Echo of an Era, a short documentary from 1956, contains the first recording of legendary pianist Cecil Taylor. The music for Elia Kazan's 1969 film *The Arrangement* has never been available on CD before. Ten years earlier, Amram collaborated with Jack Kerouac on an improvised film titled *Pull My Daisy*. Literary scholars can hear Kerouac's vibrant narration on a mind-boggling 26-minute track here.

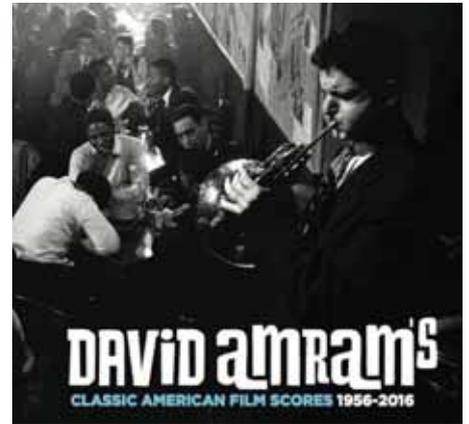
Amram is a man of multitudinous talents. His liner notes reflect the work of a colorful prose stylist, as evidenced by this excerpt from his prologue: "When the films I was lucky enough to score were submitted to record companies, the few that begrudgingly agreed to record them always indicated that there was no market for what I did because it didn't sound like 'movie music,' and that what I did was by definition headed to the landfill."

He's even more wry and humorous when recounting the efforts of meddling producers of an ill-fated Broadway production of *On the Waterfront*, based on a script that predated the screenplay to the 1954 film version. It's a treat to hear Amram's music from films, but hearing his compositions for theatrical productions is even more special; it's like gaining access to his personal audio archives.

The box set also makes a case that the 85-year-old Amram has led a *Zelig*-type exist-

ence. A discussion of his life can easily sound like a name-dropping contest. Photos in this box set's booklet depict Amram alongside Muhammad Ali, Marlon Brando, Bob Dylan and Allen Ginsberg. As a musician, Amram performed with Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton, Charles Mingus and Oscar Pettiford. As a composer, he worked on the world premiere of Arthur Miller's play *After the Fall*, directed by Kazan.

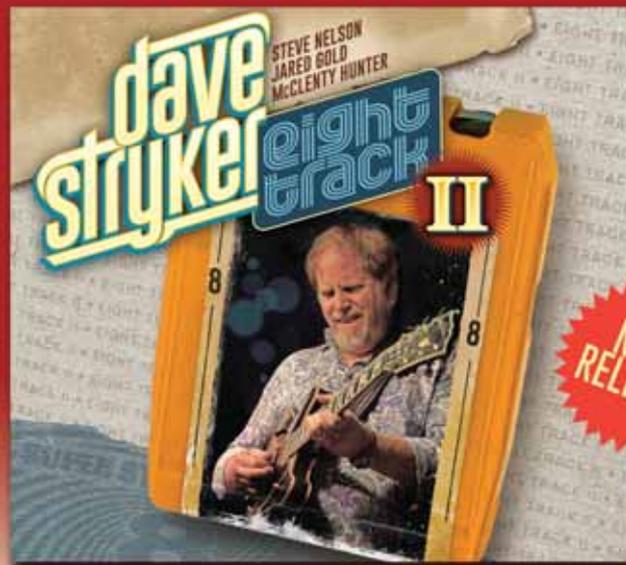
Fans who dig Amram's scores might want to check out another set from Moochin' About: *The New Wave II*. This is a "sequel" to a 2013 box set devoted to music from the French Nouvelle Vague film movement. *The New Wave II* is more international in scope that its predecessor, and quite expansive: eight CDs, scores from 24 films and a detailed 134-page book with notes written by film historian Keith M. Johnston and a foreword by film director Mike Leigh. Noteworthy musicians who show up on this set include Mingus, Billie Holiday, Dave Brubeck, Johnny Dankworth, Cleo Laine, Benny Carter, Gato Barbieri, Helen Merrill, Serge Gainsbourg and Martial Solal.



The box set includes music from the unreleased *Jazz in Camera* (with Donald Byrd); compositions by Michel Legrand; tunes from the sexploitation flick *Satan in High Heels* (with Clark Terry and Doc Severinsen); the Paul Newman/Jackie Gleason classic *The Hustler*; and the innovative U.S. film *The Little Fugitive*, which influenced François Truffaut, a key figure of the French New Wave. —Bobby Reed

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hamiltonstands.com



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Cymbal Conditioner

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Long-Lasting Reeds

Legere's Signature series synthetic reeds for clarinet and saxophone are responsive, durable and highly playable. Made of food-grade polypropylene and featuring a fine microtexture, they are designed to deliver the overtones and color that woodwind players crave, and they last far longer than reeds made from traditional cane. legere.com



Strings & Winder

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Tuning Flexibility

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Pete McGuinness

Big Band Arranging: Reinventing Stephen Foster's 'Beautiful Dreamer'

When thinking of material to arrange for big band, a song from 1865 might not be the first thing that would pop into a modern arranger's head. But in 2009, I received an unusual arranging assignment for a special concert of the Westchester Jazz Orchestra (WJO) directed by Michael Holoher, with the resulting arrangement also being recorded and released later in 2014 by my own big band on the CD *Strength In Numbers* (Summit records). The WJO concert's theme was "Americana," presenting material that was to represent some of the earliest well-known melodies created in this country, going back as far as the 1700s and 1800s. I was to pick a song and reinvent it anyway I liked, as long as it was a truly original and modern take on the material.

Stephen Foster's immortal "Beautiful Dreamer" came to mind as my choice for its lovely and distinctive melody and clear song structure. Right away, I felt I could do something with this classic piece of early American music, and the resulting arrangement was nominated for a Grammy in 2015 in the category Best Arrangement—Instrumental or A Cappella. In this article, I have chosen to focus on a few of the arranging

devices I employed during the creation of the work that give the chart a unique and interesting quality.

One of the first important decisions I needed to make was to impart an overall feeling to the arrangement—tempo, style, any distinctive rhythmic treatment of the melody, soloists, etc. A bright samba groove was eventually chosen, providing a clear contrast to the original's slower tempo/style. The groove itself also suggested ways of treating the rhythmic quality of the melody and other elements of the accompaniment. But I hit a roadblock when I more carefully considered the original song; it was set in a waltz meter and in three-bar phrases. This presented a challenge to make the arrangement's melody work logically in the new chosen context (cut time with four beats per bar set in four-bar phrases). My solution was to stretch the melody to float over the bar line in an effort to better reflect the general melody length of each phrase grouping of the original. In writing the melodic rhythm this way, I also was able to create some interesting syncopated figures, which also implied a three-over-four hemiola. Both ideas seemed to fit well with the chosen rhythmic feeling of a samba, while also trying to approximate the melodic phrase

lengths of the original. See Example 1.

The next challenge had to do with reuse of ideas. Since I planned on using this melodic rhythmic figure at several points in the presentation of the melody (and elsewhere, sometimes used only as a fragment), I needed to find some way to keep the listener's interest, not allowing the music to sound overly predictable. So, I presented the melody in the first "A" section of the melody as simply a solo instrument: soprano saxophone accompanied by the traditional chords. Then, in the second "A" of the form, I kept the melodic rhythm the same as in the previous section, but taking a tip from heroes of mine such as Duke Ellington (think "Concerto For Cootie") and Thad Jones (think "Three And One"), harmonized each melodic note with a different chord based on stepwise bass motions.

The first phrase has a descending bass line/chords moving by half steps (arriving on the "I" chord/C major), while the second phrase ascends (arriving on a surprise reharmonization of A \flat 13 \flat 9). The third is a combination of the two ideas, where the stepwise bass line (first as a pedal, then descending) seems to stop on the reharmonization of B7 \sharp 9, only to resolve back up to the tonic C major, this time voiced in unison—a further surprise after having had so many voicings in this section. This unison C idea is reused at several other spots in the arrangement, including the very last note, as one of several unifying elements. See Example 2.

The sweet-sounding sonority of a soprano saxophone seemed to fit as the best choice to be the main soloist for the melody and as a featured improvisational soloist (played with great musicality on the recording by Dave Pietro). I also knew I wanted to insert the original waltz tempo at the end, as a duet between the soprano sax and piano, so pianist Michael Holoher was chosen as another featured improviser. On my recorded version of the arrangement, Holoher lends a wonderful, harmonically adventurous improvised solo-piano passage midway in the form of the chart that adds refreshing contrast.

This is where the arranger can use the talents of the members of the band to his/her own service; I knew Holoher would create a wonderfully abstract musical fantasy based on elements of the original song. It was the perfect missing piece to the puzzle to make the overall arrangement work well (Holoher, as many of you may know, is himself an excellent composer-arranger).

As both of the main soloists finish their respective improvisational statements, the chart moves into a long repeated vamp section, adding various layers of ensemble and building toward a big shout-chorus-type section at the bridge of the song's form. For the final "A" section of this last chorus, I couldn't resist using a paraphrase of Foster's original presentation. Alan Farnham, fellow arranger and pianist on

Example 1: Recontextualizing the Melody

Example 2: Second "A" Section of the Melody Chorus (Saxophones)

the 2009 WJO concert, provided me with a downloaded PDF file of the original first-edition arrangement written by Foster himself (available from the Library of Congress website), originally published in 1865. As an added surprise, Alan played it himself as an additional/inserted introduction during the 2009 WJO concert on a beat-up old piano he found in the back of the concert hall.

After more careful study of Foster's original, I created the duet melody featuring the two main soloists as both a final "goodbye" to the song and a reminder to the listener of Foster's original vision. One last long ensemble unison C (a unifying element) paired with some fragments of the original melody in the piano, some last gestures from the soprano sax, and one final short C in octaves from the trombones (aka, a "button") concludes the work.

Upon hearing the recording of the arrangement, renowned arranger Bill Holman

responded by writing: "Wonderful writing—Pete extracted more music from the song than most people knew was in there." That, to me, is the joy of arranging. Not only "extracting music from the song," but by finding new ways to present and complement an original. It is also like the old argument we arrangers often have: Is something "arranged" or "recomposed"? Sometimes, it is a bit of both—a truly fun way to honor any great song. **DB**

Pete McGuinness is a tenured assistant professor of jazz composition and arranging at William Paterson University in Wayne, New Jersey. Since 1987, he has been an active New York City-area jazz artist, as a trombonist, three-time Grammy-nominated composer-arranger and award-winning vocalist. McGuinness appears on more than 50 jazz CDs as a sideman and has released four recordings as a leader. He also leads his own quartet and a big band, the Pete McGuinness Jazz Orchestra. His arrangements for jazz ensemble are available through Kendor Music (including this arrangement of "Beautiful Dreamer") as well as Smart Chart Music. This Grammy-nominated arrangement of "Beautiful Dreamer" is found on the CD *Strength In Numbers—The Pete McGuinness Jazz Orchestra* (Summit Records).



JOHN ABBOTT

Roberta Piket

Creating a Convincing Solo Piano Performance

A great deal of jazz piano pedagogy is devoted to playing with a rhythm section. Playing solo piano presents challenges and rewards of its own. In this article I'll discuss some principles to create a convincing, creative, eclectic and (yes!) swinging solo piano performance.

CLARITY & CONSISTENCY

Sometimes when students play solo for me, I'll ask, "Were you playing rubato or in time?" Often they answer, "I don't know!" It's very important to be clear in your own mind about what you are trying to do. Otherwise, it will not be clear to the listener. Playing freely, out of time, can be very effective in creating a mood, so if you're going to stretch out over the time, then take your time. Try to feel phrases, not beats or bar lines. The space between the phrases is important, too.

One of the first rubato interpretations of a standard that caught my ear when I was a student was Wynton Kelly's performance of "Love, I've Found You" from Miles Davis' 1961 album *In Person, Friday Night At The Blackhawk, Volume I* (Columbia). This is a wonderful example of pacing. I have transcribed this arrangement and made it available online at

<http://robertajazz.com/downloads/wynton>.

No transcription can do justice to Kelly's phrasing and dynamics, not to mention his masterful pauses between the phrases. While the transcription will be helpful, I strongly encourage you to listen to the original recording.

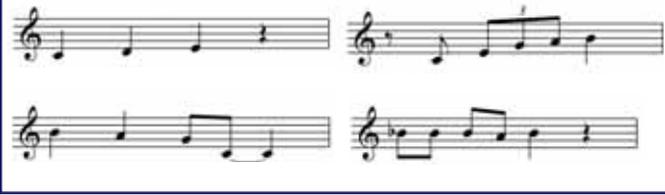
Conversely, if you're playing in time, clarity of tempo is important. Even though you're playing by yourself, you should have the tempo in mind and (silently) count the tune off before you start. The more solid your internal groove, the more relaxed, light and swinging your playing will be. The audience will not even notice that you do not have a bassist and drummer laying down the time.

VARIETY

One of the biggest challenges in doing an entire concert (or a whole CD) of solo piano is to have enough variety. One option is to vary the typical head-solo-head format by using thematic material from the tune to create a "free" improvisation in which you are not necessarily concerned with the tune's chord changes.

Certain tunes lend themselves well to this approach. On my first solo

Example 1: Motives from "Monk's Dream"



piano CD, *Solo* (Thirteenth Note Records, 2012), I chose to open the Thelonious Monk tune "Monk's Dream" this way because, as is typical with Monk's compositions, it has very strong and distinctive motives.

The harmony in this case is derived from an exploration of the melodic themes, as opposed to the traditional jazz approach of improvising over the chords of the tune. I start very simply and sparsely, with one simple motive. The improvisation builds in complexity as I add more motives, using transposition, inversion, retrograde, augmentation, diminution and fragmentation to eventually create a dense contrapuntal effect. Some of the motives I use are shown in Example 1.

Sonic variety is also an important consideration when playing on one instrument. Pianist Richie Beirach is a master at getting different sounds out of the piano by varying touch, dynamics and register. In particular, "Darkness Into Air," from Beirach's *Self Portraits* (CMP, 1992), exhibits a command of the piano's three registers: the bass, the middle and the treble.

On this same recording, the accented, staccato attack of "Grandfather's Hammer" contrasts the lighter sustained ballad approach on "Song Of Experience."

Taking the concept of variety even further, on "A Quiet, Normal Life," Beirach uses the technique of prepared piano, in which objects are placed on and between the strings to drastically change the sound.

LESS IS MORE

In clinics and in my private teaching, it has been my experience that many students overcompensate for the lack of a rhythm section by trying to sound like a whole band. For example, often less-experienced pianists will substitute their left hand for the "missing" bass player, walking a bass line on the piano. This is not particularly effective; the left hand tends to get in the way of the right hand because the contrast in sonority that exists with an actual bass player is obviously missing with the "left-hand bass," so the sound gets muddled up.

To be clear, there are no hard-and-fast rules. Some pianists are able to use the left-hand bass with some success. (An obvious example is the great Lennie Tristano, whose right-hand lines were so strongly articulated that nothing could get in the way, not even a sometimes overbearing left hand.) In my opinion, however, it's a device best used sparingly, if at all, and with great deliberation.

Another left-hand "trap" that students fall into is banging out chords on the downbeat of each measure. While there's nothing wrong with hitting a "one" now and then, too much of this sounds unmusical and may indicate that you are dependent on your left hand to ground the time. In order to break this habit, you will need a strong right hand to express the rhythmic pulse.

Listen, for example, to Bill Evans' solo piano version of "Here's That Rainy Day." While best known for his trio recordings, Evans' understated approach to solo piano on his 1968 Verve album, *Alone*, is very effective. There's no need for a rhythm section or for left-hand bass lines. Evans' right hand provides the rhythmic momentum.

How do you develop a strong right hand and internalize the time in this way? Practice playing eighth-note lines with only the right hand, and record yourself regularly. Pick a simple tune so you can focus on the rhythm, without worrying about complex changes. In fact, you can start by playing over one chord. It can be as simple as a C7 chord. It doesn't

Example 2: Bill Evans' "A Time For Love" Excerpt



matter. When you listen back, are your eighth notes lined up rhythmically? Are they dynamically controlled and even, or are some notes randomly louder than others? Where might you be rushing or slowing down, and why do these tendencies manifest? Are you rushing your trip-lets? Hesitating at an unfamiliar bridge?

Solo piano forces you to be honest with yourself. It is like playing under a giant magnifying glass, where every note counts for more than it would otherwise. You will become hyper-aware of your own flaws, and working on them will make you a better pianist in any situation.

The metronome can be useful as a reference point, but be careful not to become dependent on it.

As your right hand becomes more independent, you will find your left hand is freed up to explore more interesting rhythms. Check out the offbeat accents of Evans' left hand on "A Time For Love" starting at 2:38, from the *Alone* CD. Here's an example of how his extremely independent left and right hands interact at the top of the chorus. I've transcribed the first four bars of this section in Example 2, but the whole chorus is worth transcribing and learning to play.

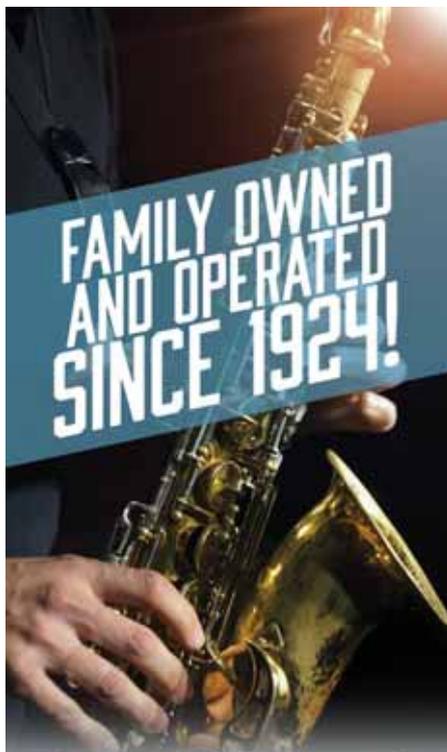
The great thing about playing solo piano is that you have total control, and infinite possibilities: textures ranging from thick block chords to one single line; broad and expansive rubato ballads or swinging burners; dynamics from whisper soft to roaring loud. Enjoy exploring this infinite art form.

DB

Roberta Piket is a pianist, organist, composer, arranger, educator and occasional vocalist living in the New York area. Her most recent CD, *One For Marian: Celebrating Marian McPartland* (Thirteenth Note Records, 2016), features McPartland's compositions arranged for sextet. The group frequently performs in trio and quartet formats as well. Piket's previous two CDs were both solo piano recordings: 2012's *Solo* and 2015's *Emanation (Solo: Volume 2)*. In addition to freelancing, she performs with the quintet of her husband, the drummer Billy Mintz; with saxophonist Virginia Mayhew's quartet; and in a free-improvisation trio with Mintz and saxophonist Louie Belogenis. Visit Piket online at robertajazz.com.

RECOMMENDED SOLO PIANO RECORDINGS

- Gerri Allen, *Flying Toward The Sound* (Motéma Music)
- Richie Beirach, *Self Portraits* (CMP)
- Paul Bley, *Open, To Love* (ECM)
- Alan Broadbent, *Heart To Heart* (Chilly Bin Records)
- Stanley Cowell, *Live At Maybeck Recital Hall* (Concord)
- Bill Evans, *Alone* (Verve)
- Chick Corea, *Piano Improvisations Vols. 1 & 2* (ECM)
- Keith Jarrett, *Facing You* (ECM)
- Russ Lossing, *Drum Music—Music Of Paul Motian* (Sunnyside)
- Thelonious Monk, *Solo Monk* (Columbia)
- Roberta Piket, *Solo and Emanation (Solo: Volume 2)* (Thirteenth Note Records)
- Art Tatum, *Solo Masterpieces (Volumes 1–7)* (Pablo)
- Lennie Tristano, *The New Tristano* (Atlantic Records)



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David Krakauer

David Krakauer's Clarinet Solos on 'Tribe Number Thirteen'

The latest album from David Krakauer's Ancestral Groove, *Checkpoint* (Label Bleu), features two live bonus tracks from the band. This gives us two versions of Krakauer's "Tribe Number Thirteen," allowing us the opportunity to compare and contrast two of the clarinetist's performances on the same composition. Let's examine what makes these performances similar and different. The first transcription is Krakauer's solo on the studio version, and the second one is his live solo.

Two similarities come to mind right away. First, even though there is one fewer soloist on the live version, Krakauer's solo commences at almost the exact same timecode as the studio version due to an extended introduction. I expect this is purely accidental, an interesting curiosity. The other glaring similarity is that both of Krakauer's solos are the same length: 18 bars. The song's form is a six-bar phrase, and Krakauer plays through it three times in both versions. Krakauer is also quite liberal with his use of trills in both performances. Notice that when he plays a long note, he tends to trill it. These trills are generally half and whole steps, though he does do some minor-third trills in his live solo (bars 22, 27 and 31), which is the first difference between these two solos we will take note of.

Another hard-to-miss similarity between these two versions is Krakauer's use of the F fraygish scale (F-G \flat -A-B \flat -C-D \flat -E \flat). This is a scale common in klezmer and Jewish music. It can be thought of as the phrygian mode with a major third, or as the fifth degree of the harmonic minor scale. This scale fits quite well over the F7 and E \flat m7 chords, since these harmonies exist within this scale. In both solos there is a limited amount of chromaticism, and it appears

at roughly the same point. The only harmonies that don't fit into the F fraygish scale are the G \flat and A chords that happen in the fifth bar of the six-measure progression. In both cases when these chords first appear (measures 5 and 23), Krakauer moves out of the F fraygish and inserts notes that fit better on these harmonies. On the G \flat he uses an A \flat instead of the A. A \flat being the second, it sounds more "inside" than the A natural of the fraygish. He also adds an E natural (or F \flat , as written in measure 23) against the A chord, likewise due to it being a chord tone. In the studio, Krakauer continues this chromatic idea into the next bar, whereas in the live version there is only one chromatic passing tone in the next bar (as well as the previous bar).

In both versions, some other chromatics show up, but very few. The studio performance has a couple of C \flat 's in measures 7 and 8, and the live performance has an ascending chromatic line in measure 29. This line is very similar to the repeated lick in bars 5 and 6 of the studio version. So we have Krakauer referencing the studio version in his live improvisation, as if he was aware that both versions would end up on the same album.

Another interesting overlap is Krakauer's first lick. In both performances, he starts with an almost identical idea: four 16th notes starting on beat 2, moving up a step and back down. On the studio recording, he starts on the third, and in the live version he starts on the seventh. Another difference is that in the studio Krakauer takes this motif and repeats it on different scale degrees. He also leaves only an eighth-note space between these iterations, creating a polyrhythm. In the live version, he plays the lick once and moves on, though it does cre-

Studio Version — “Tribe Number Thirteen”

Musical score for the Studio Version of "Tribe Number Thirteen". The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex polyrhythmic structure. It includes six staves of music with various chord markings such as F7, Ebm7, Gb, and A. The tempo is marked as 3:53.

Live Version — “Tribe Number Thirteen”

Musical score for the Live Version of "Tribe Number Thirteen". The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex polyrhythmic structure. It includes five staves of music with various chord markings such as F7, Ebm7, Gb, and A. The tempo is marked as 3:54.

ate a connection between the two versions.

In the studio take, Krakauer revisits polyrhythms. The previously mentioned ascending lick (in bars 5 and 6) is five 16th notes, creating another polyrhythm against the 16th-note subdivision. In the middle of his dense fraggish phrase that runs from the end of measure 13 through the first beat of measure 16, Krakauer does the same thing by playing a pattern that is six 32nd notes. Measure 15 starts with this pattern: G_b-F-A-F-A-F, and though he doesn't always play the phrase verbatim, for the most part he adheres to the rhythm, creating another polyrhythm.

We don't hear such polyrhythmic activity in the live version. But Krakauer does reference the polyrhythmic lick in bars 5-6 in the live recording at the end of measure 29.

A subtle but important difference between these solos can be found in the ways Krakauer

structures them in terms of range. Both versions stay mostly in the middle to lower range for the first chorus. However, in the studio Krakauer moves to a higher range for the middle chorus and then comes down to the range in between the first and second choruses to conclude his improvisation. In the live version, Krakauer moves up a bit in range for the second chorus and up even further for the final chorus.

Both approaches work to create a conclusion, but the live-version ending has a much different feeling. In both versions, Krakauer is the last soloist before the melody comes back in, and both treatments set up the melody; however, in the first case he's transitioning to the melody and in the second making it more of a sharp divide, both to great effect.

DB

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

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Heritage KB Groove Master Archtop

Old-School Quality Lives On

Heritage Guitars' KB Groove Master archtop, named for Kenny Burrell and crafted in one of America's most iconic guitar factories, is a beautiful example of the company's commitment to tradition and quality.

The Heritage story began in 1984 when Gibson decided to close its Kalamazoo, Michigan, plant and move production to Nashville. The idea to launch a new company in the old location came from several employees who chose to not make the move. Heritage was incorporated in 1985 and, having purchased Gibson's original tools and machinery, set up shop in the oldest of the plant's five buildings. According to Pete Farmer, production supervisor and master builder at Heritage, "We build our guitars with the same recipes and in the same kitchen as in the '50s."

Heritage maintains a very basic business philosophy: to design and build handcrafted, high-quality guitars in small batches. The KB Groove Master is part of the company's Hollow-Body Laminated line, but Heritage also offers a higher-priced Super Kenny Burrell model, which is a fully carved guitar.

The design of the KB Groove Master is a bit reminiscent of the early 1950s Gibson EH

series archtop electrics, with a 16-inch laminate maple body, mahogany neck and a single neck-position pickup. Heritage designed the guitar with a shallower body depth of 2¾ inches and a rounded Venetian cutaway. It also features a fixed Tune-o-matic pinned bridge instead of the more traditional wooden floating bridge. Normally, guitars use a solid wood block mounted inside the body to support a pinned bridge. Heritage, however, has designed a unique floating block system that uses a patch suspended underneath the top and does not extend to the guitar's back, allowing the instrument to remain fully hollow. A six-finger tailpiece is another addition to the design. It allows for fine-tuning of individual string tensions, something that Burrell himself uses on his guitars.

The KB Groove Master is an attractive guitar with a nicely figured maple body finished off in a tasteful sunburst with cream-colored bindings that really make the dark, stained wood pop. All hardware is gold-plated, and the rosewood neck features attractive pearl block inlays and Grover Rotomatic tuners. Weighing only 6.6 pounds, this guitar is extremely comfortable to play either sitting or standing. And its 24¾-inch scale length makes easy work of fretting. Not only is the guitar extremely easy to play, it has a voice that is warm and full yet cuts through the band extremely well. The single Seymour Duncan humbucker seems to be a perfect match for the instrument, producing clear notes in every register. The guitar has a surprising amount of acoustic resonance for a laminate.

The Heritage KB Groove Master offers players an opportunity to own a true hand-built guitar at an affordable price. Considering its impressive lineage, this is quite an appealing instrument.

—Keith Baumann

heritageguitar.com



Peter Ponzol ProReed

High-Performance, Long-Lasting

If you're a saxophonist who likes the durability and ever-readiness of synthetic reeds, you should check out the new ProReed for alto and tenor saxophone by mouthpiece merchant Peter Ponzol.

I've had success with synthetic saxophone reeds in the past, so I was eager to play-test ProReeds for alto and tenor. They performed far beyond my expectations. I found that the ProReeds responded with ease and produced a vibrant sound that was noticeably rich in harmonics and surprisingly pitch-steady. I usually prefer medium-strength cane reeds, so I went with ProReeds that had ratings of 2.5 and 3.0 (they are also available in strengths 2.0 and 3.5). I got more use out of the tenor reeds, playing the fourth chair on an acoustic big band gig and doing some horn-section work on a James Brown tribute show.

ProReeds sounded great over the full range of the horn, and they gave me altissimo more body and stability than natural cane reeds. With a little encouragement, they proved willing to follow my cues on bends, growls and other expressive gestures, and a tasteful vibrato came almost naturally. On alto, I was able to make the horn sing while employing a full range of tonal colors, from r&b bright to cool-jazz dark. Resistance was just right—I never got that stuffy or fatigued feeling you sometimes get with synthetics. The reeds benefit from being perfectly flat on the bottom, the result of a planing process that involves a CNC machine and a software program, according to Ponzol.

Ponzol, whose prowess on saxophone is well known, refined the ProReed design until he was comfortable playing one himself. It took him more than 20 years to find the right material—which has properties similar to cane in the way it vibrates—and determine the proper dimensions. Then, he happened to run into Ernie Watts, who has since become Ponzol's number-one endorser. Watts currently uses two ProReeds on tenor: He practices using the prototype Ponzol gave him a year-and-a-half ago, and he performs on a regular production model he's had for one year.

The ProReed works brilliantly and promises to last an extremely long time. With a list price of \$34.95 for both alto and tenor versions, they could also prove to be a tremendous value for saxophonists. Even if you have little interest in reeds made of anything other than real cane, you might be surprised at the level of performance you can get from a ProReed.

—Ed Enright
peterponzol.com





ROLI Seaboard Rise

Unique Expressive Capability

It's not often you get a chance to experience a musical instrument that is completely new—not just to you, but to music itself. ROLI became a major player in the booming alternative control surface market with the introduction of the Seaboard Grand in 2009 and has recently released its new line of affordable Seaboard Rise controllers (25-key, \$799; 49-key, \$1,199). The Rise has much the same playing surface as the Grand, but adds several other controls, while removing the internal sound generation capabilities. So, it can control existing synths in your laptop and your iOS device, as well as ROLI's own Noise and Equator synths.

The playing surface of the Seaboard Rise is a continuous sheet of a soft, rubbery material (silicon), with “keywaves” that rise out of it in the layout of a standard keyboard—but they are more like rounded bumps than actual keys, with playable ribbons that flow directly off the front and back. The keywaves' surface is sleek, soft and luxurious, and it immediately sucked me in. It is also squishy—softer than I thought it would be—which ultimately makes it even more expressive.

Whereas a standard MIDI controller might send velocity and aftertouch information, the Seaboard Rise playing surface sends five different dimensions of expression. These are all sent from the playing surface itself, not additional wheels, sliders, buttons, etc. This is a vital distinction. By controlling these parameters in real time with just your fingers, the Seaboard Rise becomes a unique playing experience. It feels more like a combination of a stringed instrument and a keyboard.

ROLI has named these parameters Strike, Pressure, Glide, Slide and Lift. Strike is akin to velocity, and Pressure is a form of polyphonic aftertouch. Glide will be familiar to anyone who has used a ribbon controller, but the Seaboard Rise takes that further by enabling each note to glide individually to different locations and in different directions. Lift is the release velocity of notes, but being able to press into the keys makes this a much more useful trigger. Slide represents the location of your fingers on the keywaves from front to back, so hitting a note and then sliding forward might open a filter, or sliding back toward you might crossfade a sample or affect any other parameter you choose. When you combine all of these factors at once, you have a level of expressiveness and control that is unprecedented. All of these parameters can send normal MIDI CC numbers for control. And, they can be disabled should you want to use the Seaboard Rise as a more standard controller.

ROLI includes two synths with the Seaboard Rise. Equator is a full-featured synthesizer for Mac or Windows, and it's the same engine that is internal to the Grand series. The 100-plus sounds it comes with are varied, but in general they're designed to take advantage of the Seaboard Rise's capabilities and get you up-and-running and on your way to creating your own. Equator offers a lot of power, featuring three oscillators that have 50 waveforms each, an FM engine, a sample playback oscillator and the ability to import samples. Noise, on the other hand, is more of a playback engine for sounds that ROLI says were created in Equator (some are identical) but with basic tweakability of all the Rise's controls, as well as the five expression parameters of the keywaves, but no sound design.

Using the Seaboard Rise to control third-party synths is still a bit of an adventure, because most still do not recognize MPE (Multi-dimensional Polyphonic Expression). ROLI has joined a group of manufacturers to adopt this standard across the industry, and many of the major players are already involved (Apple, Bitwig, Haken Audio, KMI, Madrona Labs, Moog Music, Roger Linn Design), so I would expect this to become a more common thing in the near future.

The Seaboard Rise invites experimentation in the best way. And considering its expressive capabilities and creative possibilities, it's a steal.

—Chris Neville

roli.com

Finale Notation Software

Upgrade to Horsepower-Boosting Version 25

MakeMusic, creator of the music publishing app Finale, has announced the latest upgrade to its flagship software that was introduced in 1988.

The first thing you'll notice about the new Finale is that now, instead of naming new versions after the years they were released (the last being Finale 2014.5), MakeMusic will simply call the software by its original name—“Finale”—and identify updates by their versions (this latest one is Finale Version 25).

Of foremost importance, Finale is now 64-bit. Previous 32-bit versions could only access a portion of your computer's memory—4 gigabytes of RAM maximum. With modern computing power, even today's mid-tier \$500 PCs have more than 4 gigs of memory, so having a 64-bit application that can access as much available memory as possible is greatly beneficial.

With the increased horsepower, you'll notice that the app is more responsive while editing, and playback is a dream compared to earlier versions. Playing a score with the Human Playback feature enabled used to mean waiting for Finale to compute the playback parameters. Now, with Human Playback enabled, the chart plays as soon as I press the “play” button with MIDI enabled, and with no detectable lag when using some of the more realistic playback libraries. This resulted in a faster turnaround time when auditioning fresh edits.

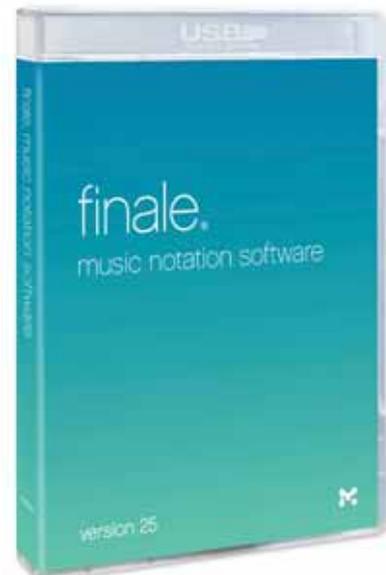
The next major feature is the introduction of ReWire, a third-party solution to slave Finale to other professional DAWs. All the well-known DAWs have ReWire support, and while it was possible to slave previous versions of Finale via MIDI, ReWire is easier to set up and tends to be more reliable on playback. Having ReWire means you can now reliably sync to your host and do extensive MIDI and audio playback work while still having real-time access to Finale. Because of the addition of ReWire, Finale has dropped its movie window (you can now utilize the movie features of whatever DAW you are using).

Other notable new features of Finale include an augmented Garritan library, with more than 100 new additions, including a stunning Concert D grand piano; a new ARIA player; transposed note entry; the ability to create very tall time signatures (popular in large scores); and contoured dash slurs.

While the actual number of improvements here might seem small for a two-year development cycle, their ramifications are quite large in terms of Finale maintaining its standing as one of the go-to notation tools used in everyday music making in the modern studio.

—Matt Kern

makemusic.com



Crescent by Sabian Stanton Moore Collection

Dark Tones With Attitude

Since acquiring Cymbal Masters and the entire Crescent cymbal line in 2015, Sabian has been rolling them out at a feverish pace. One of the “Crescent by Sabian” lines that hit the streets this year is the Stanton Moore Collection, which contains 14- and 15-inch Fat Hats; 16-, 18- and 20-inch Smash Crashes; a 20-inch Pang Thang; and 20- and 22-inch Wide Rides.

When Moore—a versatile drummer and educator with strong ties to New Orleans—initially visualized the line, he wanted to come up with a solution that would cover jazz, funk and more aggressive styles. Some of the hammer patterns are actually based on imperfections that Moore was seeing in Turkish cymbals he was picking up, and these imperfections are responsible for some of the complex, darker tones in the line. The cymbals are traditionally lathed with a wider lathe on the bottom than the top, and with a medium-size bell.

The cymbals are described as “dark” on the Sabian website, but I would put them in the medium-dark category when compared to the entire cymbal universe. The 20- and 22-inch Wide Rides are named so because the aim is for them to serve a wide range of music, from the lighter jazz pairings to the heavier funk styles. They are definitely darker than some cymbals I have played from Sabian’s HH line, but they did have a bright point to them that cuts through an acoustic band easily. Even though they had a nice attack, the cymbals are thin enough to have some wash for crashing and can function as a multipurpose crash/ride. At higher volumes, they still retained their character and did not wash out as thinner cymbals might tend to do.

I hadn’t used a pang cymbal in a number of years, so at first I was expecting the Pang Thang to be a little more “chinese” as far as trashiness goes—but it wasn’t. It sat almost directly in the middle of what a chinese cymbal offers and what the ride cymbal sounds like. It has slightly upturned edges and a touch of trash as you ride on this outer area; then the sound gets a bit more traditional the closer you move toward the bell. I didn’t find it as useful in small group settings, since you need to hit the cymbal relatively hard for the attack/swell/release to speak with its true character. It definitely has its own unique voice—a somewhat dirty attack with a fast release—when playing in amplified environments.

The crashes also had a fast attack and decay while being a touch on the warm side. They proved great for ensemble work where I wanted to play a strong accent, then get out of the way. I did not receive a 20-inch Smash Crash, but from what I can tell, it has an extra set of evenly spaced hammering placed near the edges that I suspect would make it sound a bit more unique compared to the 16- and 18-inch Smash Crashes.

Both the 14- and 15-inch Fat Hats had a strong “chick” when closing with the foot that cut through the sound of a band easily. Even though I liked both sets, the 15-inch set appealed to me a bit more since it had a lower fundamental tone and produced a bit more of the “woofiness” that I love in a hi-hat. It makes for an overall deep, rich tone when playing directly on the cymbals.

You’ve got to love the designations that Moore assigned to the cymbals in this collection: Pang Thang, Wide Ride, Fat Hats, Smash Crash. Even though they may sound a bit Dr. Seuss-like, a certain attitude is required to name your signature line in this manner, and these cymbals reflect that attitude sonically.

—Matt Kern

sabian.com



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RODNEY LEINBERGER

Jeff Kunkel conducts the Montclair State University Jazz Ensemble at a 2015 concert.

Jazz Studies Thrives at New Jersey's MSU

WHEN JEFF KUNKEL, COORDINATOR OF jazz studies at Montclair State University in New Jersey, needed to fill a spot for an adjunct professor of piano, he didn't have far to look. The man who would get the job, Oscar Perez, was teaching a short hop across town, at Jazz House Kids, the youth program run by singer Melissa Clark and her husband, bassist Christian McBride. So, too, were guitarist Dave Stryker, saxophonist Mike Lee and bassist Bill Moring—all of whom also taught at Montclair State.

The hiring of Perez, now in his second year at Montclair State, was no small matter. Kunkel is the only full-time jazz studies professor in the university's John J. Cali School of Music. So it is critical that the adjuncts he employs be fully engaged teachers as well as great musicians.

When Kunkel arrived at Montclair State 19 years ago, he said, the suburban campus had little meaningful jazz presence other than a big band that was having trouble retaining a faculty advisor. Since then, the campus has grown, as has the jazz studies curriculum, which now includes jazz theory, history and performance, as well as two big bands (Kunkel runs the Montclair State University Jazz Ensemble; Moring, the Redhawk Jazz Band), four instrumental combos (Stryker supervises the top group) and a vocal group (the Vocomotion, led by faculty member Holli Ross).

The department of music has become a school of music. And the number of music majors has nearly tripled, to 450. But while Kunkel said there is room for growth in the jazz studies program—the number of majors stands at a modest 26 or so—he is not seeking any radical expansion.

"We're really just part of a big music school," he said. "There's no attempt on our part to have jazz dominate as it does at some schools."

Currently, a slim majority of the music credits that jazz studies majors earn in pursuit of their bachelor of music degrees are in jazz-specific courses—a proportion, Kunkel said, that constitutes a critical mass but is still small enough to satisfy state bureaucrats, who hold considerable sway over matters of curricula at the public university. Music education remains a potent force at Montclair State, reflecting its origins as a teachers' college.

"If we [designed] a curriculum that was suddenly wash in jazz courses like a conservatory," Kunkel said, "we'd run into trouble."

The jazz courses are intimate affairs. On a recent weekday, Perez engaged in an exchange with seven students in attendance at an arranging class. The subject at hand was the creation of contrafacts. Perez—having assigned students to transcribe examples from albums by bassist Steve Swallow and write their own contrafacts—took a seat at the piano and worked his way through the student compositions, offering gentle critiques on the melodies the students had created on the chord changes of tunes like "Take The 'A' Train" and "Night In Tunisia."

Back in his office, Kunkel was assembling parts for a December concert that will integrate Celtic sounds with the MSU Jazz Ensemble. Later in the year, the ensemble will play a concert drawn from more conventional big-band literature. And next summer the university will play host to Jazz House Kids' summer camp.

"Young jazz students need it all," he said.

—Phillip Lutz



MARK DAVIES

Richard Carrick

Composition Chair: Composer, conductor, and pianist Richard Carrick has been named chair of Berklee's Composition Department. Carrick is a 2015–2016 Guggenheim Fellow and co-founder and co-artistic director of the contemporary music ensemble Either/Or. He succeeds Arnold Friedman, who had been the department's chair since 2012. Berklee's Composition Department provides a course of study in all areas of traditional and contemporary musical composition, including writing techniques, orchestration and score preparation; and advanced training in instrumental, choral and musical theater conducting. berklee.edu

Hamp Fest News: The University of Idaho Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival will celebrate 50 years of bringing world-class jazz artists to Moscow, Idaho, Feb. 23–25, with its return to the campus of the Lionel Hampton School of Music within UI's College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences. In addition to nightly artist concerts, the festival features student performances, clinics and workshops for students ranging from elementary school to college.

uidaho.edu/jazzfest

Lewis' Honorary Doctorate: Drummer and composer Victor Lewis will receive an honorary doctorate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Glenn Korff School of Music Jazz Orchestra and Big Band concert on Dec. 8. The concert will be live-webcast at music.unl.edu. Lewis, who was born in Omaha, Nebraska, attended the University of Nebraska as a music major and studied classical percussion. In 2003, Lewis joined the faculty of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he teaches drummers and coaches jazz combos. unl.edu

Midwest @ 70: DownBeat will conduct a live interview with conguero Candido during the 70th annual Midwest Clinic, which takes place Dec. 14–17 in Chicago. Featured performers and clinicians scheduled to appear at the conference include Canadian Brass, the United States Marine Band, Tony Succar, Jovino Santos Neto, Michelle Fernandez Denlinger and Michael Philip Mossman. midwestclinic.org

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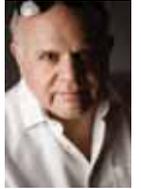
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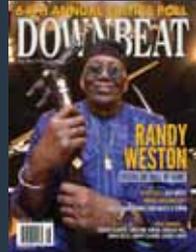
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John Abercrombie

At the 2016 edition of the Detroit Jazz Festival, a few hours before his Sept. 3 concert with organist Jared Gold and drummer Adam Nussbaum, guitarist John Abercrombie, 72, participated in a public Blindfold Test in front of a live audience.

Kenny Burrell

"Get Happy" (*Introducing Kenny Burrell*, Blue Note, 2000/rec'd 1956) Burrell, guitar; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Kenny Clarke, drums, Candido Camero, congas.

Kenny Burrell. As an educated guess, the pianist is Tommy Flanagan. Kenny has a distinctive, lyrical way of sliding into the notes of a phrase. I could hear it in the melody, before his solo. Very bluesy and punchy, and yet lyrical. I've listened to Kenny in different stages, and I saw him live in many settings when I was at Berklee during the '60s, and even the '70s. My favorite record of his was *Guitar Forms*, with gorgeous arrangements by Gil Evans for a smallish big band, with Kenny, Elvin Jones and Ron Carter on bass.

Dave Holland

"The Watcher" (*Prism*, Dare2, 2013) Holland, bass; Kevin Eubanks, electric guitar; Craig Taborn, Fender Rhodes; Eric Harland, drums.

This sound was very prevalent in the '70s. I played in a lot of bands that played music something like this—the fuzzy guitar sound, and no real harmony, just one chord. All the guitar players had discovered how to make their guitar distort by either turning the amplifier up incredibly loud or using devices or pedals, which I find pretty much robs personality. I almost can't tell one from the other unless it's somebody like John McLaughlin with a particular signature. This sounds pretty generic.

Ron Carter/Jim Hall

"All The Things You Are" (*Live At The Village West*, Concord, 1992/rec'd 1982) Carter, bass; Hall, guitar.

That's Jim Hall. The bass player could be Ron Carter. I know that Jim and Ron Carter recorded some duets years ago. It's "All The Things You Are," a tune that millions of people play, and he puts his signature right on it. Like Kenny, Jim had an immediately identifiable sound—it's the way he phrases, the way he plays the melody.

Jimmy Smith

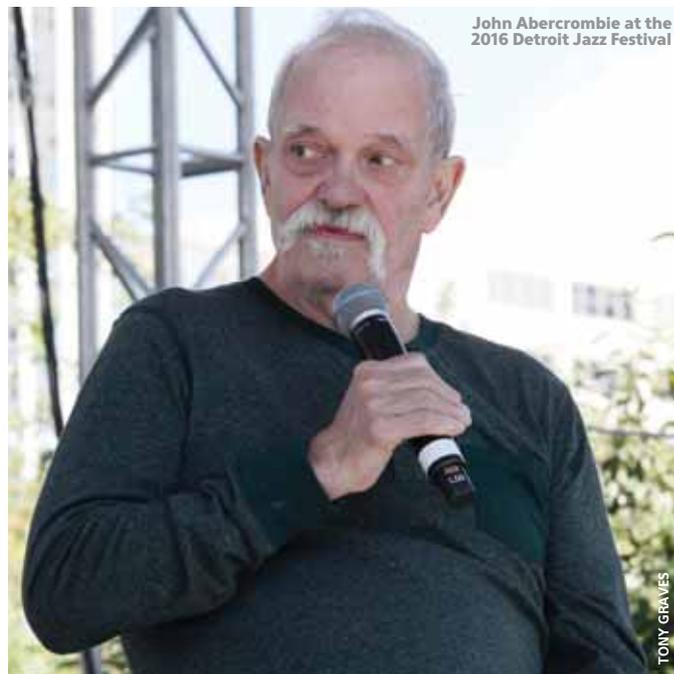
"Tuition Blues" (*Dot Com Blues*, Verve, 2000) Smith, Hammond B-3; Russell Malone, electric guitar; Reggie McBride, bass guitar; Harvey Mason, drums.

I heard George Freeman play a few times with Richard "Groove" Holmes, and something about this reminds me of him. A very bright sound, a little Indian influence—like bluesy Indian. The organ player sounded like Jimmy Smith, but it didn't contain enough signature stuff I'm used to hearing—if it's him, he's playing differently. It is Jimmy Smith? Is the guitarist someone like Thornel Schwartz? More recent than that? [after] That doesn't sound anything like what I know about Russell. To my ear, Russell's conception is usually a little mellower sounding.

Lionel Loueke

"Goree" (*Heritage*, Blue Note, 2012) Loueke, guitar, keyboards; Derrick Hodge, electric bass; Mark Guiliana, drums.

I wish they'd make a commitment to something. It doesn't seem to go anywhere. It took me a second to realize that it was still in 4/4 time. It sounded like they were trying to play something mysterious, something complicated, which I'm all for, but it was ambiguous, and nothing sat right in the time. If that was their intent, they achieved it. I didn't really care for it.



John Abercrombie at the 2016 Detroit Jazz Festival

TONY GRAVES

Dave Stryker

"Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I'm Yours" (*Eight Track II*, Strikezone, 2016) Stryker, electric guitar; Steve Nelson, vibraphone; Jared Gold, organ; McClellent Hunter, drums.

At first I thought the guitar player might be George Benson, not playing quite as many notes as he is wont to play. But when the organ solo started, it sounded more like a working trio—so my guess is Larry Goldings on organ and Peter Bernstein on guitar. My other guess is Dave Stryker, who I know did an album with vibes. Stryker has a very Benson-esque influence—very bluesy, a fat sound. I like this. It's relatively easy to hear, but real intelligent, real clear. I admire that a lot.

Gary Versace

"Lennie's Pennies" (*Reminiscence*, Steeplechase, 2006) Versace, Hammond B-3; Vic Juris, guitar; Adam Nussbaum, drums.

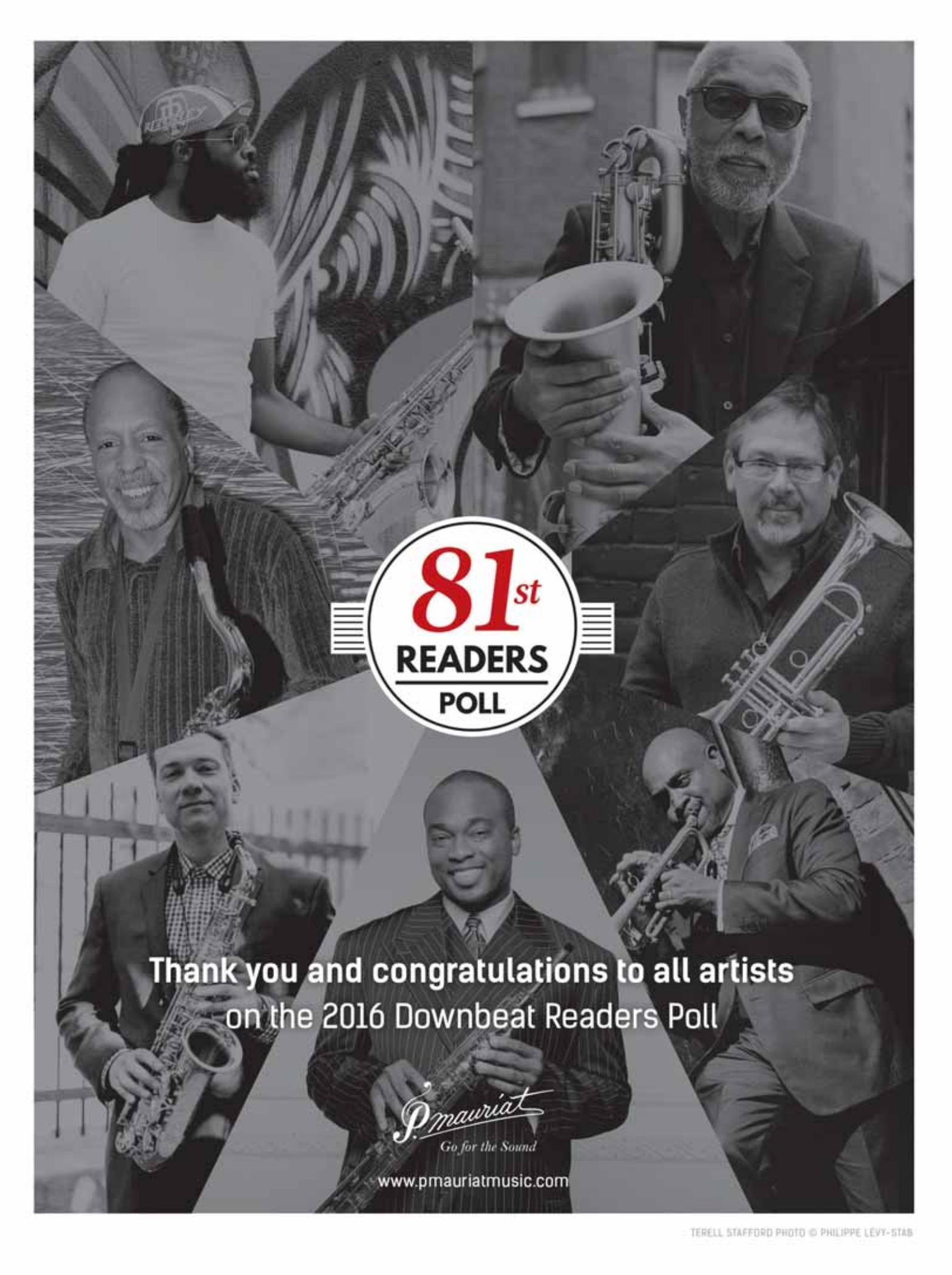
This is the most interesting thing you've played me. They were playing off of each other, trading phrases, really listening. It kept reminding me of different people. A couple of phrases reminded me of [John] Scofield, but that doesn't make sense overall. A couple of phrases reminded me of [Pat] Metheny, too. It's not Peter Bernstein. I even heard a little bit of me! I thought the tune was [sings melody to "It's All Right With Me"], but then they played another head at the end, obviously written on the changes to some standard. Oh, it's by Lennie Tristano? I used to play with a saxophonist, Lenny Popkin, who studied with him and with Warne Marsh. I admire the curve and smoothness of that kind of playing; it influenced me, though Tristano's own playing didn't. [after] Vic Juris is logical, because he and all the guitarists I mentioned are influenced similarly.

Pat Martino

"Oleo" (*Live At Yoshi's*, Blue Note, 2001) Martino, electric guitar; Joey DeFrancesco, Hammond B-3; Billy Hart, drums.

Pat Martino. Probably Don Patterson and Billy James, too, but I'm not positive. He's so good. Nobody gets this kind of forward motion; it feels like the notes are right in your face, and they're going to knock you over. He has a great way of putting the lines together, and they're his lines—he didn't steal them. I heard Pat play when he was 17 and I was 17, and that's enough to want to make you want to give up everything. **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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