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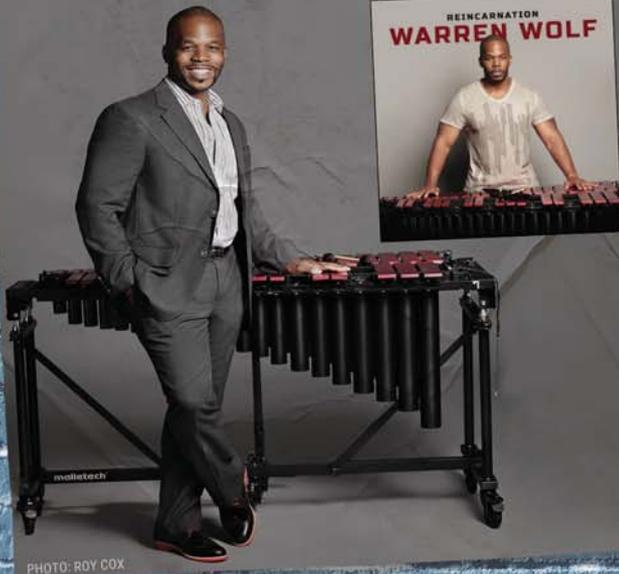


PHOTO: ROY COX

CHRISTIAN McBRIDE

The Movement Revisited: *A Musical Portrait of Four Icons*

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McBride pays homage to four key Icons of the Civil Rights Movement in this sweeping four-part suite.



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AARON DIEHL

The Vagabond

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— THE NEW YORK TIMES

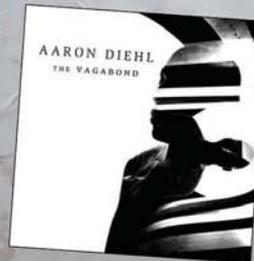


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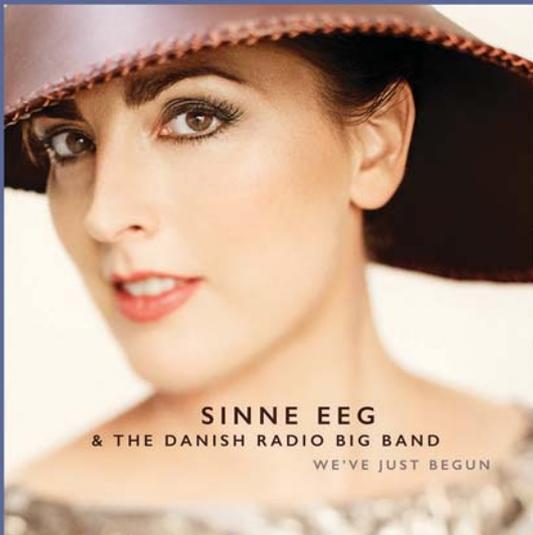
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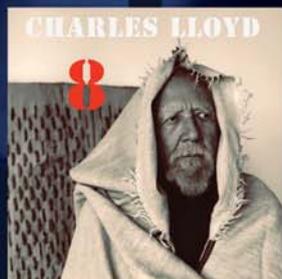


WE'VE JUST BEGUN

Available Everywhere February 21, 2020

"The Danish jazz singer, an established star in Europe, checks all the boxes: burnished tone, perfect intonation, swing, unerring taste and an adventurous streak. She is a complete musician." DownBeat Magazine ★★★★★

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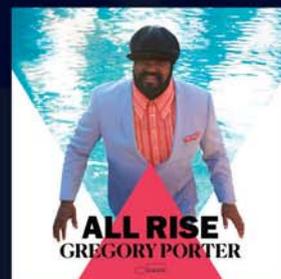
CHARLES LLOYD
8: KINDRED SPIRITS
(LIVE FROM THE LOBERO)

Jazz legend **CHARLES LLOYD** celebrated his 80th birthday in 2018 with a grouping of musical friends including guitarist **JULIAN LAGE**, pianist **GERALD CLAYTON**, bassist **REUBEN ROGERS**, and drummer **ERIC HARLAND**, with special guest organist **BOOKERT. JONES**. **8** commemorates the first 8 decades of Lloyd's remarkable journey and arrives in a limited-edition deluxe box set that includes 3-LPs, 2-CDs, and a DVD, along with a 96-page hardcover book and 2 photo prints, as well as standard LP/DVD, CD/DVD, and digital versions.



BILL FRISELL
HARMONY

Acclaimed guitarist **BILL FRISELL** makes his Blue Note debut with **HARMONY**, a gorgeous and evocative journey across the landscape of American music of the last century featuring vocalist **PETRA HADEN**, cellist & vocalist **HANK ROBERTS**, and guitarist, bassist & vocalist **LUKE BERGMAN**.



GREGORY PORTER
ALL RISE

2-time GRAMMY Award winner **GREGORY PORTER** follows his loving tribute to Nat "King" Cole with a return to his deeply soulful original songwriting on **ALL RISE**. The album is a potent mix of jazz, soul, blues, gospel, and pop featuring longtime bandmates pianist **CHIP CRAWFORD**, bassist **JAHMAL NICHOLS**, drummer **EMANUEL HARROLD**, augmented by a horn section, string orchestra, and a dynamic production aesthetic courtesy of **TROY MILLER**.



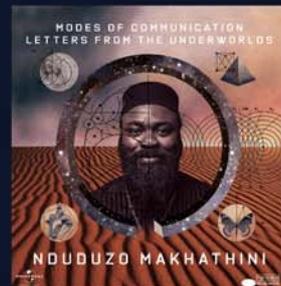
KANDACE SPRINGS
THE WOMEN WHO RAISED ME

Singer and pianist **KANDACE SPRINGS** pays tribute to the great female singers who influenced her growing up with this stirring collection of songs by Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Carmen McRae, Roberta Flack, Dusty Springfield, Astrud Gilberto, Bonnie Raitt, Sade, Lauryn Hill, Norah Jones, and Diana Krall. Produced by Larry Klein, the album features guest appearances by **NORAH JONES**, **CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE**, **DAVID SANBORN** & more.



CHET BAKER SINGS
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NDUDUZO MAKHATHINI
MODES OF COMMUNICATION

After collaborations with Wynton Marsalis and Shabaka Hutchings, the visionary South African pianist and composer **NDUDUZO MAKHATHINI** is set to release his Blue Note debut **Modes of Communication: Letters from the Underworlds**, an expansive album in which lyrical, plaintive horns mingle with percussion, pained yelps and urgent lyrics in a musical exploration of ancestral realms.

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MARCH 2020

Inside

ON THE COVER

22 Pat Metheny *'I Have Never Resisted What I Love'*

BY SUZANNE LORGE

The guitarist, composer and bandleader explores new sonic territory on *From This Place*, which features his quartet plus the Hollywood Studio Symphony conducted by Joel McNeely. Metheny recruited Gil Goldstein and Alan Broadbent to write arrangements for the strings, resulting in one of best albums of his long career.



JIMMY & DENA KATZ

22

Pat Metheny reaches new heights on his latest album, *From This Place*.

Cover photo of Pat Metheny shot by Jimmy & Dena Katz at The Jazz Gallery in New York on Dec. 10. Info for this venue is at jazzgallery.nyc.

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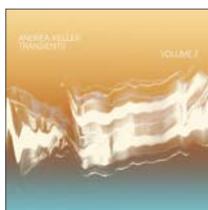
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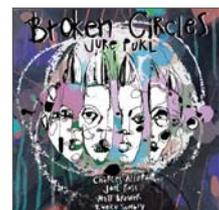
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Michele Rosewoman



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If you hear the new Yamaha SLB300 with your eyes closed, you'll swear it's a vintage double bass, thanks to its rich vibrato and natural resonance. But unlike an acoustic upright, its slim body folds up and fits into a small case that you can easily carry from *gig* to *gig*. Play it and you'll become a believer.

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Tim Jackson, The Monterey Jazz Festival



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The Choice To Sing

IMAGINE ATTENDING A JAZZ FESTIVAL AND SEEING AN ALL-star band with trumpeter Nicholas Payton, saxophonist Camille Thurman, pianist Diana Krall, bassist Ben Williams and drummer Jamison Ross. If this quintet tackled a program of standards, the level of musicianship would be stunning. Who wouldn't want to see these instrumentalists in action and watch the fireworks fly? As a significant added bonus, every musician onstage could take a turn as lead vocalist.

All of these players have proven themselves to be excellent practitioners of their instruments, and all have developed their vocal talents, too. (Some fans might think of Krall as a gifted singer who plays piano, rather than a gifted pianist who sings. When Sir Paul McCartney was working on his 2012 album of standards, *Kisses On The Bottom*, he recruited Krall to play piano and write arrangements—a testament to her superb talents.)

In this issue of DownBeat, Williams discusses his decision to contribute vocals to his new, socially conscious album, *I Am A Man*. The winner of the category Rising Star-Bass in the 2015 DownBeat Critics Poll, Williams has been widely praised for his skills on the instrument and has toured the world with superstar guitarist Pat Metheny. But for his new project, Williams wanted to share a different side of his artistry. He told journalist Geoffrey Himes, "People may see you do one thing and they categorize you as that—but I don't think of myself as one thing." Many artists share this sentiment.

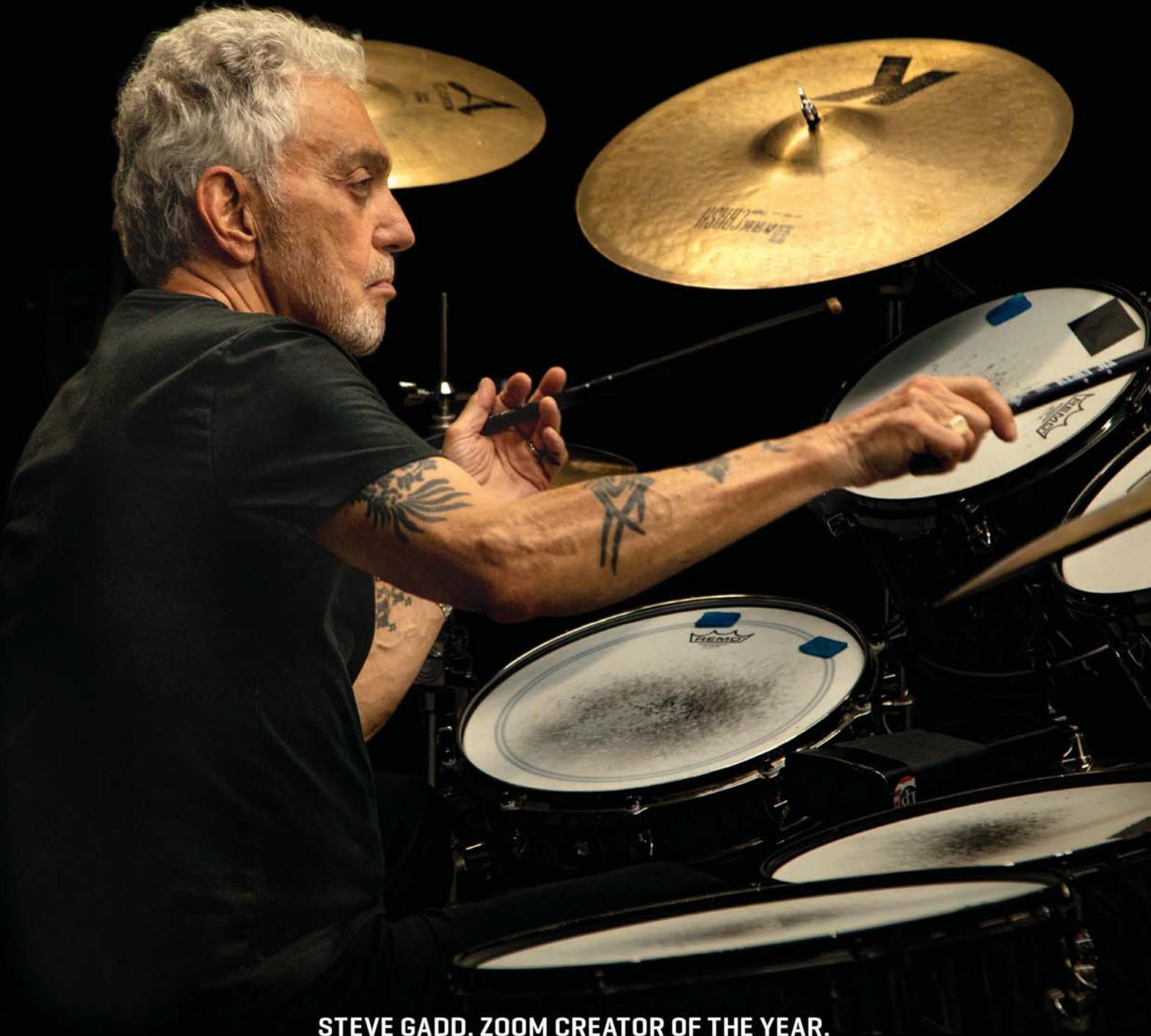
In this issue of DownBeat, we've got articles on two musicians—Bria Skonberg and Benny Benack III—who have one foot in the world of vocals and one foot in the world of trumpet artistry. Both are young and wonderfully talented. Both are entertainers pursuing the path of Louis Armstrong. (No pressure, folks.)

Let us know what you think about artists who showcase their instrumental and vocal skills. Who are your favorites? Who is doing it exceptionally well, and who is stumbling?

Also, send us your thoughts about our new column, Reclaimed Soul, penned by radio producer/host Ayana Contreras (see page 18 in The Beat). In our goal to present "Jazz, Blues & Beyond," this column shines a spotlight on brilliant musicians whose artistry fits well alongside the steady diet of jazz that DownBeat readers enjoy.

We welcome compliments, constructive criticism and even angry rants. Send an email to editor@downbeat.com, and please put "Chords & Discords" in the subject line. Thanks.

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Chords & Discords >

Reflecting on the Term 'Jazz'

I'm writing in regard to your cover story on Nicholas Payton in the February issue. Personally, I think Mr. Payton is a little too full of self-importance in thinking he can redefine the name given to black improvised music. Maybe he ascribes dirtiness to it. I would argue it is the only American art form and a name that stands for freedom of expression, speech and liberation.

KEVIN FAILONI
KFAILONI@COX.NET



Preserving Cover Art

I am a lifetime reader of DownBeat, first buying it on the newsstand, and then becoming a subscriber in 2001. DownBeat is a superior music magazine, and I have long admired its contents and cover photography.

I have archived between 100 and 200 of the magazine's covers, and I've framed a few of them. When I received the January issue—with Bird, Blakey and Brubeck on the cover—I wanted to frame it. But, alas, your magazine recently started using non-removable address labels. Forget framing.

I urge DownBeat to return to peel-off labels. They have always worked well and made collecting your cover art a pleasure. It can be done. Guitar Player magazine just went back to peel-off labels.

Keep the best music magazine coming!

DOUG RONCO
DRONCO@ROADRUNNER.COM

Editor's Note: It's great to hear from someone who agrees with us that DownBeat covers are works of art suitable for framing. We'll be happy to ship you a pristine copy of the January issue (without a label on it).

Liberal Mindset

In your February issue, I found Dan Darragh's letter in the Chords & Discords section to be comical ("Keep it to Yourself"). He's not really complaining about political comments from artists; he's complaining about "left-wing" comments. It is my belief that it's more the rule than the exception that a true artist is by definition liberal-leaning, especially one who engages in improvised music.

In my life's experience, I've come across musicians who are philosophically more conservative than me, but by and large, the others have been progressive and accepting/embracing of diversity. These people are not "left-wing," which can be interpreted as a derogatory description, but rather liberal, and open to all walks of life.

JIM FISK
JIMFISK2000@YAHOO.COM

Lobbying for Bill

DownBeat needs to add Bill Milkowski to the critics who write in The Hot Box. I like John McDonough, James Hale and Paul de Barros, too. But Bill would make a really big impact on that section of the magazine. In my opinion, his reviews are the best in the business.

I was just reading the February issue of DownBeat, and Bill's review of *Is That So?*—the new CD by John McLaughlin, Shankar Mahadevan and Zakir Hussain—is great, of course.

MICHAEL WEIR
MELBOURNE, FLORIDA

Motor City Memories

I enjoyed Carlo Wolff's review of the Detroit Jazz Festival in your November issue, but he didn't mention two of the best performances of the event.

On Sunday afternoon, Pat Metheny and Ron Carter played a program of guitar-bass duets. Nearly all the tunes were either pop or jazz standards, and the interplay between the two brought new life to them. It was an unusual and delightful pairing.

Sunday evening, Dee Dee Bridgewater performed with the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, and you could easily see how much fun everyone on stage was having. The joy with which they played was contagious.

EDWARD KIMBALL
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Corrections

■ DownBeat's review of Welch Tuning Systems' Artistry Series drum sets (Toolshed, February) incorrectly stated that the company's drum shells are made of six-ply maple. WTS uses eight-ply maple on its toms and kick drums, and 10-ply maple on its snares.

DOWNBEAT REGRETS THE ERRORS.

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JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

The

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Beat

Whitaker Explores Ellingtonia on Latest Disc

For bassist Rodney Whitaker, making an album is a serious endeavor. “Recordings are diaries of where you are in your life,” Whitaker told DownBeat. “But they’re also about doing research. And doing research, then being able to communicate and talk about it, that’s a beautiful thing for me.”

That was basically the plan when Whitaker recorded *All Too Soon: The Music Of Duke Ellington* (Origin), a project preceded by no less than 20 years of reflection. The seed was planted during his long stretch on bass with what then was called the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. The big band performed Ellington’s repertoire, and Whitaker had access to two tremendous sources of insight: music director Wynton Marsalis and baritone saxophonist Joe Temperley (1929–2016).

“Joe was instrumental in getting me to think about Ellington’s music,” Whitaker said. “Joe had a chance to play with Duke a little bit; he replaced Harry Carney in the band when Harry got sick, just before Duke died. But he came to really understand how to phrase. I would ask Joe tons of questions about Ellington’s music from that perspective. With Wynton, it was more philosophical and historical, like, ‘What was Duke trying to say here?’ So, I had both of these mindsets as I approached the project.”

That—plus his long run teaching jazz double-bass and directing jazz studies at Michigan State University—informed Whitaker’s decision to go beyond the tunes and honor Ellington’s commitment to finding the best players and encouraging them to express themselves. “My idea was to make it more like a cutting session, like just picking up ‘Sweets’ Edison, Ben Webster and those guys,” he explained. “So, we talked about the melodies being a certain kind of way. And I did want the heads to be played correctly, because the



JESSICA D. COWLES

On his latest album, Rodney Whitaker pays tribute to Duke Ellington.

theme is the most important thing that locks the nonmusician to the music. But not at any point did I [direct] how someone should improvise.”

Whitaker and the band did come up with arrangement ideas, though. While building on the Ella Fitzgerald treatment for “Caravan,” Whitaker had the idea of adding the bass line from Dizzy Gillespie’s “Tin Tin Deo.” And on “Perdido,” rather than let each soloist take a complete chorus or two, everyone took just four bars in sequence, in effect creating one big line collectively, before tying it into a long unison passage. “That’s a line that Clark Terry originally wrote for Duke,” Whitaker explained. “Then Gerald Wilson did the arrangement. We were joking around in the studio when someone said, ‘Do y’all know this line?’ Everyone did, so I said, ‘Let’s put it in the tune.’”

This spontaneity proved contagious. “I wasn’t thinking at all about taking things too far out,” said Karriem Riggins, who plays drums on

all but two of the album’s 12 tracks. “I listen to a lot of that music, as well as trying to create a new sound. So, I feel like all the tradition is in me. Putting that all together in the soup is the way to make it hip.”

That energy, in turn, fed back to Whitaker. “That’s the power of having young cats in the band,” he said. “Young musicians play so much better than we did when I was young. They’ve been exposed to more information and heard more recordings. Somebody said to me once that the guys who grew up in the ’50s and ’60s played with more humanity. But that was just how guys grew up then, with a different view of life. We didn’t have computers and iPhones. Young people today spend more time with themselves than we did. You just have to accept that things change.

“It’s not like 1956,” Whitaker said, pausing and laughing knowingly. “Although sometimes it feels like it is. But that is a whole ‘nother story.”

—Bob Doerschuk

Riffs >



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Vic Juris (1953–2019)

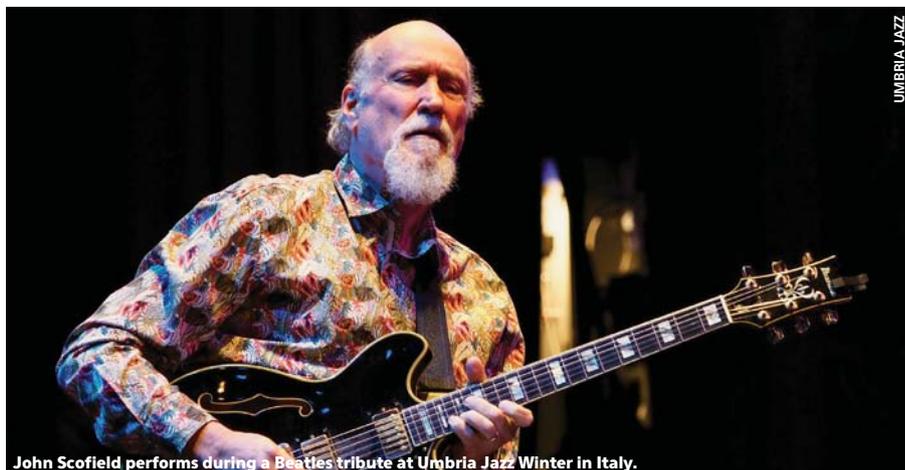
Final Bar: Guitarist Vic Juris, who played on dozens of SteepleChase albums during a career that stretched back to the 1970s, died Dec. 31 in New Jersey after battling cancer. He was 66. With an unflinching grace on guitar, Juris was able to move through genres fluidly. An affinity for expanding the boundaries of jazz was omnipresent in Juris' work. In addition to his time on the bandstand and in the studio with collaborators such as Dave Liebman and David Amram, the guitarist was a committed educator, working at The New School, Rutgers University and other institutions of higher learning. On March 6, The Rutgers Jazz Ensemble and guitarist Dave Stryker are set to hold a memorial concert for Juris on its New Jersey campus. Admission ranges from \$5 to \$15.

masongross.rutgers.edu

NAACP-Nominated: The 51st NAACP Image Awards is set to air on BET on Feb. 22. The awards show, which has categories covering everything from film and TV to literature and music, includes a jazz category. This year, the five nominees for Outstanding Jazz Album are Jazzmeia Horn's *Love And Liberation*, Nathan Mitchell's *Soulmate*, Najee's *Center Of The Heart*, Vanessa Rubin's *The Dream Is You: Vanessa Rubin Sings Tadd Dameron* and David Sánchez's *Carib*. naacp.org

Swiss Swing: JazzFestival Basel returns to Basel, Switzerland, for its 30th installment. The concerts, which run April 19–May 17, will feature sets by a mix of ensembles and performers, including Cécile McLorin Salvant, Shabaka & The Ancestors and Julia Hülsmann Women Octet. offbeat-concert.ch

In Memoriam: Acclaimed German pianist Wolfgang Dauner died in Stuttgart on Jan. 10. He was 84. Dauner recorded for the ECM and MPS labels, played in the krautrock group Et Cetera and performed frequently with guitarist Larry Coryell.



John Scofield performs during a Beatles tribute at Umbria Jazz Winter in Italy.

UMBRIA JAZZ

Umbria Embraces Pop

IN CONTRAST TO THE SUMMER EDITION OF the Umbria Jazz Festival, Umbria Jazz Winter in Orvieto, Italy, usually drives straightahead, programming jazz with minor twists. So, it was a stretch to open the festival, which ran Dec. 28–Jan. 1, with music that has its roots in classic pop. But on opening night, the audience embraced a doubleheader jazz homage to legendary pop artists: Italian singer Mina Mazzini and The Beatles. Judging by the resounding crowd approval, it turned out to be programming genius.

In the Teatro Mancinelli, renowned Italian pianist Danilo Rea and his trio paid tribute to Mina, the nonconformist queen of Italian music who dominated the country's charts in the '60s and '70s. Rea took on her lyrical "Grande Grande Grande," the swinging "Se Telefonando" and the Brazilian-tinted "La Banda." The pianist's allure came from hinting at Mina's melodies and capturing the emotion in her music, while at the same time using the tunes for spirited improvisation.

"The Magic and Mystery of the Beatles" was a colorful trip through their music that was smartly arranged by maestro Gil Goldstein, who conducted the Umbria Jazz Orchestra and Orchestra da Camera di Perugia. It was a grand affair that featured guitarist John Schofield and began with "Golden Slumbers" and moved into "Let It Be," with Scofield taking the lead and closing the piece with a jolting guitar solo. There was a lot of chart reading that stiffened the first part of the performance, but that loosened with "Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey," as Sco faced the audience for the first time.

Particularly impressive was the band/orchestra's creative take on "You Won't See Me" from *Rubber Soul*. But at times, the orchestra sat out as Scofield, Goldstein on keyboards (and accordion), Jay Anderson on bass and Lewis Nash on drums played as a rousing quartet.

The standing ovations for both segments of the evening showed that the right kind of pop music in the right hands makes for great jazz.

Both shows were performed three times, as were most sets at the festival.

Two members of the new crew of jazz pianists, Isaiah J. Thompson and Sullivan Fortner, played to sold-out audiences in Palazzo del Popolo spaces—each showing his unique take on melding tradition with modernity in their trios. Thompson played in a range from thunder to ragtime, while Fortner also performed with swinging beauty on a New Orleans gumbo tune, a fetching rendering of Duke Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood" and a dedication to trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire that he said "popped out of nowhere" while he was practicing Charlie Parker's "Yardbird Suite" in 3. But the special revelation of Fortner's shows was Michela Marino Lerman, the fast, bebopping tap dancer who dazzled the crowd.

Behind the main-stage action, Motown cover band the New Orleans Mystics and the San Francisco-based blues band Mitch Woods & His Rocket 88s kept the dance flame flaring for the lunch and dinner crowds at Ristorante al San Francesco. After the Roman Catholic high mass on Jan. 1 at the magnificent Duomo di Orvieto—a Gothic cathedral considered to be one of the most beautiful churches in Italy—the Every Praise & Virginia Union Gospel Choir, featuring J. David Bratton, rocked the house with its soul-stirring, jazzy and funky music.

Also on New Year's Day at Palazzo del Pop, a trio of vibraphonists—Joel Ross, Warren Wolf and Joe Locke—played in what promised to be a vibes smash. But the summit started out with a crash, as if it were a Locke showcase where he took the reins and mainly had the younger players comping while he sped his way through "Bags' Groove" and "Maiden Voyage." After that, there was more equity in the leads and improvising, beginning with Wolf's sublime reading of "Body And Soul," and the most successful tune of the show, "Centerpiece," led by Ross, while Wolf and Locke played delicious harmonies on the theme.

—Dan Ouellette

Price/Vilray Duo Seeks Timelessness

ARTISTS COMPULSIVELY FIND NEW WAYS of bridging past and present. On their debut album, *Rachael & Vilray* (Nonesuch), singer Rachael Price and guitarist, singer and composer Vilray proffer a way of connecting not-quite-the-past with not-quite-the-present, resulting in a timeless quality.

“We were trying to avoid sounding like a jazz album from today,” said Vilray, “but also trying to avoid sounding like a jazz record from the ’30s.”

Vilray, who composed the 10 original tunes on the 12-track recording, mined repertoire of the 1930s through the late ’50s for inspiration; despite its referencing different eras, he and Price aimed for cohesion. “It all feels like it’s part of the same record,” he said. “It’s got a vibe from top to bottom.” *Rachael & Vilray* includes an appearance from pianist Jon Batiste and horn-section arrangements from saxophonist/clarinetist Jacob Rex Zimmerman,

Price and Vilray, who met as students at New England Conservatory, achieved the sweet spot for their sound working with engineer Dan Knobler. He secured a tight room where the artists could play all together, recording only a couple takes per tune. From the outset, the duo rejected the notion of recording a “nostalgia album,” according to Price, who serves as lead vocalist for NEC-born rock band Lake Street Dive. “It also can’t sound super-modern, because that would be too jarring,” Vilray said. “It’s a fine balance.”

The artists themselves struck a balance that reflects give-and-take during the creative process, a departure from Price’s more open-ended process with Lake Street Dive. “This band is kind of a different thing,” she said. She cites an example of their push-pull challenge dynamic on a tune Vilray had written with Fats Waller’s vocal in mind. Price chose to channel someone else’s.

“I wanted to be more like Doris Day because I don’t sing like Fats Waller,” she said. “That’s not somebody I would try to emulate.” In that way, Price feels she turned the creative challenge back on her partner, who received her interpretation and responded.

A more personal challenge for Price was embodying the essence of a singer’s individual contributions without imitating their sound. “I try to picture the energy that they were feeling when they were [recording] for the first time,” she said. “They were probably going into the studio and producing sounds that were new to them. So, it’s important to me to make sounds that feel new to me.”

Vilray’s desire to compose music that could serve singers from past eras compelled him to write new lyrics that referenced starched collars and the Lindy Hop. But as much as he might have sought to exclude lyrics that reflect the current era, he can’t escape his own experiences. Though



Rachael Price (right) of the band Lake Street Drive teamed up with Vilray for a new duo album.

JONNO BATTMAN

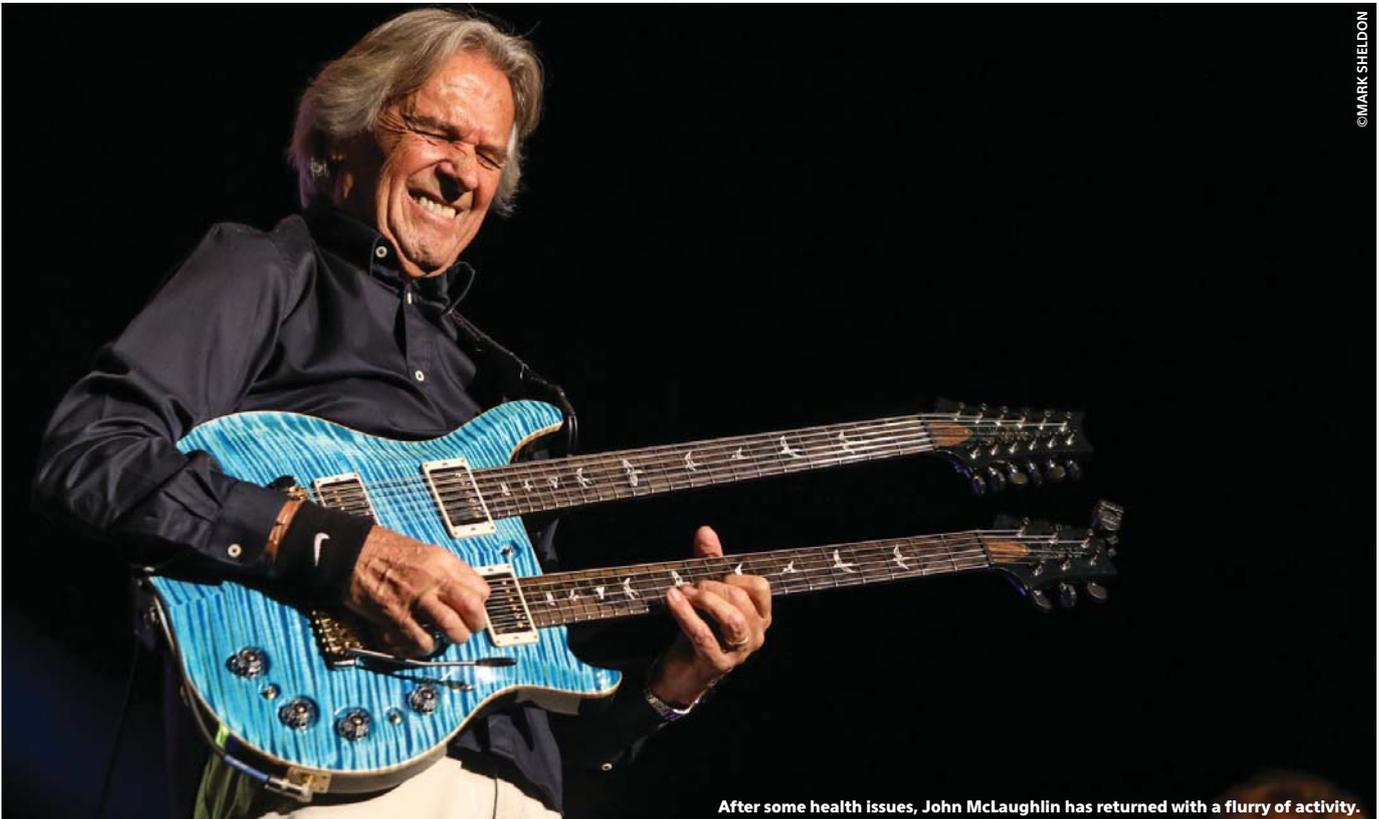
not explicitly stated, a powerful topic pervades “Alone At Last,” one that hadn’t held much of a thematic spotlight during the ’30s: social anxiety.

While he asserts anxiety and panic disorders have existed long before they received an entry in the DSM, Vilray admitted few pre-war lyricists likely wrote about them in the way does. “That’s a very different song, in terms of the writing,” he said. “That was an ‘of my life’ love song. I wasn’t writing that for anybody else. Probably, the word ‘agoraphobic’ wasn’t on everybody’s lips [in a pre-

vious era], but I was still trying to think of it in terms of timelessness.”

For the duo, their not-quite-current, not-quite-vintage intention proved both challenging and truly rewarding. “I don’t think I was expecting people to like it that much,” Price said, laughing. “This is the music that I love. When we started doing it together, I really just envisioned it as something I was doing for myself, and I’d found a person who loved it as much as I did.”

—Stephanie Jones



After some health issues, John McLaughlin has returned with a flurry of activity.

McLaughlin Goes on the Road Again

IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN DownBeat's November 2017 issue, guitar legend John McLaughlin lamented the fact that a progressive arthritic condition in his right hand was forcing him into semi-retirement. As he said at the time, before embarking on his Meeting of the Spirits tour with fellow guitarist Jimmy Herring: "The American tour is it for me, because the situation with my hands is deteriorating. Short of a miracle, I think that'll probably be it, at least in terms of touring."

Fast-forward two years and it seems that McLaughlin has gotten his miracle. Following a triumphant European tour in the fall of 2019 with his 4th Dimension Band and some concerts in Asia in January 2020 with a new edition of his band Shakti, the guitarist-composer-bandleader is on the road again. He also recently finished the soundtrack for an upcoming movie (the New York-based film noir *Abandoned Heights*, directed by Jack Stallings), and he has a new album, *Is That So?*, an East-meets-West project with tabla maestro Zakir Hussain and one of India's foremost singer-composers, Shankar Mahadevan.

While this recent flurry of activity is nothing that McLaughlin could have anticipated two years ago, he has returned to the scene with renewed energy and optimism. "It's really amazing," he said in a phone interview from his home in Monte Carlo, where he has resided for the past 37 years. "A couple of years back, I was like, 'Well, maybe now it's going to be over soon, but I've had

a good ride.' But I'm still here!"

By getting an injection in his hand every three months and following the advice of Dr. Joe Dispenza (the internationally known lecturer, researcher, workshop leader, author and educator), the guitarist has been rejuvenated. "Don't ask me to undo the cap off a bottle with my right hand—I don't have the strength for that," he laughed. "But for playing, it's amazing ... like nothing ever happened to me."

McLaughlin also spoke with great enthusiasm about a renaissance of Shakti, the pioneering '70s East-meets-West group that in 1998 morphed into Remember Shakti. "Since we lost Srinivas [the late mandolinist, who died in 2014], we've been kind of in disarray," he explained. "We had been playing on and off for 14 years together, so it was difficult. And in putting the group back together, we decided we were not going to go look for another mandolin player. So, we have a violin player now, just like the original '70s Shakti band. He's a great player named Ganesh Rajagopalan. The band is marvelous and we were very excited to do those gigs in Asia."

Meanwhile, *Is That So?* finds the guitarist crossing that East-West divide in new and adventurous ways. Six years in the making, the new album has McLaughlin surrounding Mahadevan's magnificent voice with complex orchestral harmonies that he meticulously pieced together via multiple keyboard overdubs. As he explained, "Around the time of the last

Remember Shakti tour, in 2012, I got this bug in my mind: 'What if I take one of Shankar's improvisations on a bhajan, one of the lovely devotional songs of India, and apply harmony to it?' It's just a fascinating challenge. And to work with Shankar's voice ... I mean, what a dream. It really began just absolutely as an experiment. And from the very first moment, all I had to do was follow his voice and my own heart."

The process began with Shankar singing traditional bhajans and alaps on top of a droning tamboura, recorded on a separate track. "Once you remove the tamboura, the sky's the limit, harmonically speaking," said McLaughlin, who deftly incorporated complex polyphony and rich moving harmonies around the vocals. "Shankar's voice is so lovely and he's so soulful," he said. "And growing up with the music of Bill Evans, Miles Davis, Gil Evans, Duke Ellington, as well as classical music, the harmony of the West has been part of my life. And it's thrilling to hear this Western harmony with his wonderful voice. It's really my world and his world coming together."

"It's really been an adventure for both of us," McLaughlin said of his collaboration with Mahadevan, who has attained superstar status in India's film industry. "We both love it so deeply and it's so meaningful because it's coming from such a profound and personal place. And I feel deep down that when people hear the music, they'll respond to the beauty in it."

— Bill Milkowski

Le Boeuf Crafts Complex Musical Landscapes

REMY LE BOEUF TURNED TO AN oft-tapped source—the 19th-century tales of the Brothers Grimm—to gather grist for the musical narrative in the instrumental title suite for *Assembly Of Shadows* (SoundSpore), his new big band album. Like singer-songwriter Cécile McLorin Salvant's unrecorded and more transgressive song cycle *Ogresse*, the suite is about a girl who ventures away from the safety of home and hearth into the unruly forest.

"I like the structure of stories and the challenge of telling them with music," Le Boeuf said in early November at his Brooklyn apartment. He referenced an earlier string quartet based on the Grimms' "Hansel and Gretel," and another five-part suite based on Franz Kafka's short story "A Dream," which is the centerpiece of the 2016 Le Boeuf Brothers release, *Imaginist* (New Focus/Panoramic). On that project—which featured strings by the Jack Quartet—the leader played alto saxophone, oboe and bass clarinet, alongside his identical twin, Pascal Le Boeuf, on piano.

"I molded and shaped the story over the past couple of years," Le Boeuf, 33, said of the current work. "I wanted it to be flexible, something that could maybe be turned into a ballet."

When applying for the 2016 grant from the American Composers Forum through the Jerome Foundation that allowed him to embark on creating *Assembly Of Shadows*, Le Boeuf submitted a recording of the album-opening "Strata," originally a 2015 commission from the Keio Light Music Society in Japan. The album's second track is Le Boeuf's arrangement of Ornette Coleman's "Honeymooners" (prepared for a Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra concert as a feature for reedist Ted Nash), on which the saxophonist uncorks a darting, episodic soprano solo that interacts seamlessly with the backgrounds and themes of the composition.

As Le Boeuf molded and shaped, he fulfilled commissions from the BMI Foundation, SFJAZZ, the New York Youth Symphony and vocalist Sachal Vasandani. Then he assembled an 18-piece orchestra, calling musicians he has played with in one context or another since 2004, when he moved from Santa Cruz, California, his hometown, to attend Manhattan School of Music. Meanwhile, he addressed the "tremendous financial challenge" of recording a project of this scale, using his own savings, as well as a grant from the Copland Fund, a micro-grant from Young Arts and donations from a GoFundMe campaign.

Asked what qualities he seeks from person-



Remy Le Boeuf has received many commissions in recent years, fueling his ambitious work as a composer and arranger.

nel, Le Boeuf replied, "In general, I want people to be familiar with classical and jazz traditions, since both are so important in my music, which is especially challenging. Everyone's part is an individual voice, so I demand interpretative flexibility—you have to be fully engaged and independent the whole time."

"Remy's writing is rich and delicate, and needs a lot of intricate dynamics, phrasing, sound color and articulations in order to dance, to come alive," said Philip Dizack, who plays two unfettered trumpet solos on the album. "He created a landscape for me, knowing some of the ways I can play. When we were in college, he was writing simple, beautiful, personal melodies—it's amazing to hear how [his work has] blossomed and culminated in this environment."

Assembly Of Shadows is Le Boeuf's second leader outing, following the spring 2019 release *Light As A Word* (Outside in Music), a program of originals interpreted by tenor saxophonist Walter Smith III, pianist Aaron Parks, guitarist Charles Altura, bassist Matt Brewer and drummer Peter Kronreif—all old friends. They sustain a conversational attitude in which Le Boeuf's distinctive dark-hued instrumental voice emerges with clarity and focused intention.

The 2019 releases also bolster a discography that includes four recorded collaborations with his twin.

"Our albums together were very rewarding," Le Boeuf said. "I love playing with Pascal because he creates a composition behind each solo. He's not a traditional improviser, which makes it fun to improvise with him. But here I'm coming back more to my roots. Because I'm not balancing my voice with my brother's, I can be more unabashedly who I am." —*Ted Panken*

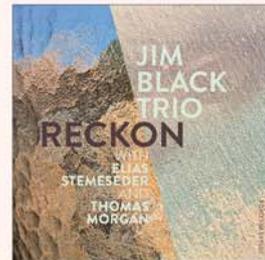
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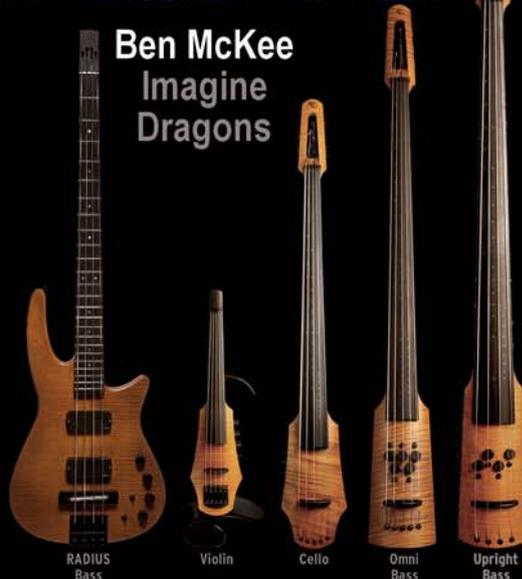
ALY KEÏTA – JAN GALEGA BRÖNNIMANN – LUCAS NIGGLI KALAN TEBAN
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'People' Was No Accident

By 1972, Eddie Kendricks, the Temptations singer who led the ensemble through classics like "Just My Imagination," was ready for a new sound.

The vocalist's first solo effort, 1971's aptly titled *All By Myself*, still hued toward classic Motown, so when Kendricks was set to record its follow-up, *People ... Hold On*, he enlisted a new raft of players to back him.

The Young Senators toured extensively with Kendricks during his early solo performances, despite not having played on his 1971 disc. The Washington D.C. ensemble's contributions to *People*, though, would help move the singer into a new stage of his career. It also marked a change for Motown Records (and its affiliate labels, Gordy and Tamla), the company Kendricks had released music through for more than a decade.

People was issued on Tamla in late spring 1972, about a year after Marvin Gaye's opus, *What's Going On*. And while Kendricks' album wasn't as sizeable a hit as Gaye's, *People* managed to spawn a major single, the 7-minute workout "Girl You Need A Change Of Mind."

"We took Motown away from the Motown Sound," Young Senators percussionist Jimi Dougans, 74, said recently about the pivotal 1972 Kendricks album. "If you listen to any Motown records, they had a certain rhythm, a certain groove. ... They locked into that, and that's the Motown Sound. Even the producer [of *People*], Frank Wilson, said, 'We wanted to get away from that.'"

At the time, The Young Senators only had issued a 7-inch single. But Dougans' chops noticeably propel "My People ... Hold On," a statement-making cut laden with avant-echo and phasing famously sampled by hip-hop producer J Dilla on his 2005 album *Donuts*. Even with the song's liberal use of effects, the percussionist noted, "It's a subtle, a very subtle sound We all were on one accord. That made it nice and sweet."

In the wake of the 1967 riots, Detroit was a murkier place than it had been back in 1959, when Motown was born. And perhaps because of the unrest, the label finalized its move from Detroit to Los Angeles in 1972. Members of the imprint's venerable Funk Brothers session band got pink slips, and Marlene Barrow-Tate—a member of The Andantes, a band that sang backup on recordings by The Four Tops, The Supremes and countless other acts—told the Detroit Metro Times in 2013 that the singers picked up their final paychecks in January 1972. It was the same month that *People ... Hold On* was recorded. The album also was one of the last Motown works recorded at the label's famed Studio A. "They brought us to Detroit ... West Grand



Boulevard. Down in the basement—we called it the Snake Pit," Dougans said about the studio from where dozens of hits emerged. "It was a ton of snow outside, knee-high. Wasn't nobody on the streets; we were the only ones."

But the energy in the studio was high.

"One session, 'Girl You Need A Change Of Mind,' was at three o'clock in the morning, when everybody's supposed to be asleep," Dougans continued. "We were up. The engineer was up. Producers were up. Eddie was up recording."

Motown had enjoyed stratospheric success, finding an uncanny ability to cross over. But *People*—accented with a heavy swing—seemed less pop-oriented. If Motown had been The Sound of Young America, this music was the sound of the streets, and the title was no accident. *People* was one for the people, not for Middle America. Tracks like "If You Let Me" and "Eddie's Love" showcased slinky two-step rhythms and horn charts steeped in an urban sound that never were intended to appeal to every demographic in America.

While The Young Senators didn't record on Kendricks' later albums, the group would go on to become a fixture of Washington's vibrant and percussive go-go music scene. Kendricks (1939–'92) broke through as a solo artist with hits like "Keep On Truckin'" and "Goin' Up In Smoke" later in the decade. And *People ... Hold On* remains an exciting testament to Kendricks' experimentation with a younger band.

"We put our foot in it, man, and that's what it was," exclaimed Dougans, who remains active today. "We would put all our essence [into the recording]. We used to pray before we played What we prayed for is what we got."

DB

Ayana Contreras hosts *Reclaimed Soul* on WBEZ and Vocalo Radio in Chicago.



RAYON RICHARDS

Singer and trumpeter Benny Benack III is one of the few male vocalists of his generation who's mining the elements of traditional jazz.

Benack Launches 'A Lot Of Livin' To Do'

ALMOST EVERYTHING ABOUT BENNY BENACK III, THE 29-YEAR-old trumpeter and vocalist, suggests that he arrived from a different era. There's his name, of course, along with his smooth, polished voice, which brings to mind a number of old-school singers, including Mel Tormé, an uncommon reference point among today's cohort of young jazz musicians.

As the emcee for Postmodern Jukebox, a music collective that recasts top-40 hits through a swing prism, Benack also channels a long-gone period when jazz functioned as dance music. And on top of all that, he sometimes peppers his performances with vocalese.

But even if he seems like something of a throwback, his music is uniquely modern. Benack's second leader date, *A Lot Of Livin' To Do*, stands out as a distinct statement in the jazz world. For one, there aren't many musicians at the moment who both play a horn and sing. But what's more, Benack is one of the few male vocalists younger than 30 who's mining the elements of traditional jazz.

"There's really not that many of us," Benack, who's based in Harlem, observed during a recent telephone interview.

Benack is no slouch on the trumpet, either—his bright tone recalling Clifford Brown—and on his new album, he sings and plays in about equal measure.

"With this new record, Benny is carving his own way and sound, and influencing a whole new generation of emerging jazz singers," said drummer/producer Ulysses Owens Jr., who's contributed to both of the bandleader's albums.

But when he settled in New York, Benack decided not to market himself as a singer; he wanted his peers to take him seriously as a trumpeter. It wasn't until he began touring with Owens that Benack started singing again. The drummer had heard an audition tape, and encouraged him to sing live.

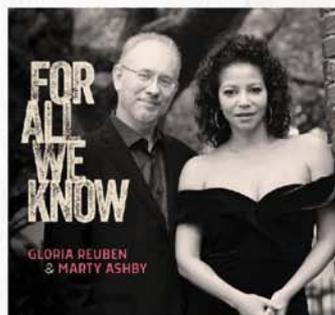
Benack doesn't make a distinction between his singing voice and his trumpet, though. "To me, it's really kind of one voice," he said. Perhaps that's why vocalese appeals to him. Benack doesn't borrow from past solos, working out the lyrics, melody and phrasing on his own. And one of the highlights on *A Lot Of Livin'* is the bandleader and Veronica Swift engaging in some adventurous vocalese and scatting on the standard "Social Call."

As Benack plots his next move, he has his eye on recording an album of duets, à la Tony Bennett, though he imagines that such a project is at least a few years off. "I need to still get my music out there and hit the pavement with a few records before I start wistfully looking back and making duet albums."

Benack knows his strengths, and wistfully looking back, it seems, is what he was made to do.

—Matthew Kassel

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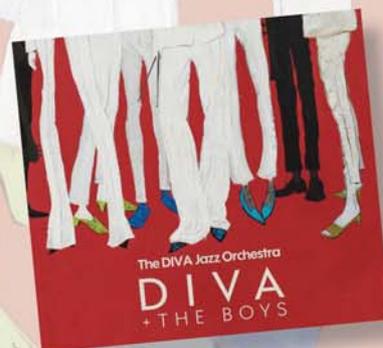
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Gerald Cleaver Bridges the Divide Between Structure and Freedom



Drummer Gerald Cleaver works with some of today's most fearless musicians.

DRUMMER GERALD CLEAVER UNFAIRLY has been pigeonholed as a free-jazz player for much of his career, though his efforts as a bandleader and composer provide much more than that.

Live At Firehouse 12 arrives a dozen years after the agile hard-bop sextet Violet Hour made its debut on *Gerald Cleaver's Detroit*. For those more accustomed to Cleaver's free drumming, it might come as a shock. Surrounded by bassist Chris Lightcap, pianist Ben Waltzer, saxophonist and clarinetist Andrew Bishop, tenor saxophonist JD Allen and trumpeter Jeremy Pelt, the bandleader takes his combo through five soulful originals informed by classic '50s tropes, characterized by a deceptively fluid, post-bop expressionism and fine-tuned interplay. The polyphony and pulse-quickening tempo shifts on a piece like "Silly One" rely on high-wire chemistry among band members, with heady stop-on-a-dime groove alterations that sound deceptively easy in the hands of these players.

The music on *Live At Firehouse 12* (Sunnyside) actually was recorded in 2006, before the band entered the studio for its first album, but it's only now seeing the light of day. The drummer came across the recording on his computer, reviving his love for the project, which ends a five-year hiatus with a series of gigs in East Lansing and Ann Arbor, Michigan, and at Smalls in New York during January.

"For three months, I really listened to it and I realized in certain ways it was a lot freer and reflected the nature of that band [more than *Detroit*]," Cleaver said recently. "It just went into hibernation. We all really love playing with each

other, and all of my projects are sort of rolling things that I like to revisit from time to time."

Cleaver long ago achieved elevated status as one of the most versatile drummers in jazz and improvised music, a performer blind to the often-arbitrary lines that distinguish schools of musical thought. He sounds just as comfortable and authoritative in bands that swing as he does in groups that play abstractly, and he's been gracefully straddling those aesthetic worlds since emerging from his native Detroit in a late-1990s band led by bassist Rodney Whitaker.

Allen was only 16 when he first worked with Cleaver in that band, and they've maintained a deep connection ever since.

"Gerald is a perfect example of the Detroit style of playing jazz, at least the generation that I came up in," Allen said. "He walks in all of the styles of jazz. Once we were playing with Jeremy Pelt somewhere in Germany, and this person from the audience comes up to Gerald after and said, 'Gerald, I'm so surprised to hear you play straight-ahead jazz.' Gerald calmly replied, 'It all comes from the same source; it's all one.' He's my prototype for drummers."

While Cleaver is a ubiquitous collaborator, working with some of today's most fearless musicians—including saxophonists like Angelika Niescier and Ivo Perelman, pianist Craig Taborn and bassist William Parker—he's been judicious as a bandleader.

"At this point, I'm only doing things that I love, and I don't feel a pressing need to be a leader in a strict sense," he said. "That frees me up. Being a sideman informs me just as much as plumbing the depths of my own individual cre-

ativity. Given the amount of experience I have and where I'm at in my career, honestly, I don't feel any difference between the leader projects I do and the sideman projects I do, because everyone that hires me, hires me for *me*. I'm able to express myself in a really honest fashion."

For Cleaver, working with other leaders is just as gratifying as his own projects, which also include the bruising, rock-flavored Black Host, which formed around 2011, and Farmers by Nature, his protean improvising trio with Taborn and Parker that was inaugurated in 2007.

"From my perspective all of the projects run into one another," Cleaver said. "With any ensemble, I put myself into a different context, like a game. In free playing—which is a term I don't really like, although I don't have an alternative—everything comes to mind, all types of music within that spontaneous creation: swinging, density, melody, harmony. These are all things that I'm doing, but it's just coming from the drum set. I'm hearing those sorts of things and I'm applying them to different contexts."

Still, in early 2020 Cleaver will unveil a new side of his ever-evolving practice with *Signs* (577)—an album of electronic music he created in his Brooklyn home—where aqueous textures, peripatetic rhythms and colliding melodic impulses blend with the same multifarious aesthetic of his work behind the kit.

"I always liked the sound and the possibilities that were achieved by electronic music, so it was something I needed to learn," Cleaver said. "I felt I had a pretty good handle on actual interaction with human beings, so I was trying to expand my palette and put my voice into this type of technology. My dabbling with electronic music goes back to Black Host, but I was at a very basic level when I did that, so this is a full realization of that aspect of my music-making."

Cleaver also plans to work on new recordings by Black Host—a hard-hitting quintet with guitarist Brandon Seabrook, bassist Pascal Niggenkemper, pianist Cooper-Moore and saxophonist Darius Jones—as well as a new trio with Seabrook and bassist Brandon Lopez. But recently, he seemed most animated by reconvening the Violet Hour ensemble.

"Each player has developed, and they're in a different place, so it's exciting to go back and have that familiarity, but be able to start from where they are now and hopefully go into new territory," the drummer said. "We're still a tribe, and I'm really excited to see where we'll be now. I have no doubt that it will be different, even with a lot of the same material." —Peter Margasak

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Pat Metheny at The Jazz Gallery in New York on Dec. 10

Pat Metheny

'I HAVE NEVER RESISTED WHAT I LOVE'

BY SUZANNE LORGE

PHOTOS BY JIMMY &
DENA KATZ

During the first day of recording for *From This Place*, guitarist Pat Metheny's new album on Nonesuch, the 20-time Grammy-winner heard something that wasn't there. "It was on the second take of the first tune," he recalled in a recent interview in midtown Manhattan. "I thought, 'Oh, I know what to do with this.'"

What Metheny heard was strings. An orchestra. Not as mere sweetening behind a soloist, as on many "with strings" albums, but as a vital compositional element enhancing the improvisations and ensemble playing of his quartet. In the way that CTI Records used strings on LPs in the 1960s and '70s, when arranger Don Sebesky would take a jazz instrumental riff and blow it up to symphonic proportions.

"I always thought it was a kind of avant-garde idea to get Herbie [Hancock] and Ron [Carter] and Grady [Tate] and orchestrate it," Metheny explained. "What Sebesky did with the Herbie voicings—I thought, 'Wow, that is such a great idea.' And I've drawn on that idea many times over the years, not necessarily the

way it manifested here, with a huge orchestra. But this album is overtly CTI."

One of the elements that made the CTI approach to orchestration so innovative back in the day was the use of multiple tracks to overdub strings on recordings of the best improvisational musicians of the post-bop era. In the label's heyday, founder Creed Taylor turned out enormously popular jazz albums showcasing the talents of greats like George Benson, Hubert Laws, Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine and Milt Jackson. These albums, though commercially successful, generated considerable disapproval among jazz critics who were put off by some of their frictionless sounds. It was during these years that Metheny, a teen prodigy on jazz guitar, was coming of age musically.



Over the course of his career, Metheny has edged closer to the orchestral vision reflected on his latest release, *From This Place*.

Metheny acknowledged the aesthetic rift over CTI and, without specifying, admitted that he has had trouble listening to some orchestrated jazz albums. Metheny is not alone here—jazz instrumentalists in general have an uneasy relationship with strings albums, a reflection, perhaps, of a traditional divide between the jazz and classical worlds. Orchestral musicians, predominantly classical in musical orientation, don't groove or improvise, so what can they bring to a jazz record?

Over the course of his career, as he edged closer to the orchestral vision reflected on *From This Place*, Metheny has explored how strings might fit into a jazz setting. He worked with the London Orchestra on 1992's *Secret Story*, for instance, and included synthesized string parts on *Beyond The Missouri Sky (Short Stories)*, a duo project with bassist Charlie Haden released in 1997. There were the film soundtracks: *The Falcon and the Snowman* in 1985, *Passaggio Per Il Paradiso* in 1996 and *A Map of the World* in 1999. Then, in 2010 and 2012, respectively, he released *Orchestrion* and *The Orchestrion Project* (Nonesuch), experimenting with a full panoply of mechanized instruments controlled through his guitar. But none of these efforts reached the scale or complexity of the arrangements on the new release, in what Metheny describes as a culmination of several of his musical ambitions. "[This] is one of the records I've been waiting to make my whole life," he wrote in the liner notes.

By the time Metheny brought his regular ensemble—drummer Antonio Sánchez, bassist Linda May Han Oh and pianist Gwilym Simcock—into the studio to record the album, the four musicians had spent thousands of hours playing, talking and laughing together as they toured the world. Metheny knew them all well, both as musicians and as people: He had been working with Sánchez since 2000, Oh since 2012 and Simcock since 2016. Over time, proximity fostered perceptivity: "One of us can sneeze and the other three would find the chord in it," Metheny joked. "We were so tuned into each other as a band."

A pivotal conversation with famed bassist Ron Carter drove home to Metheny how valuable this kind of rapport is to a jazz ensemble. The two had been touring internationally as a duo, affording Metheny the opportunity to query the elder statesman about his time with the Miles Davis Quintet. (Carter was the legendary group's bassist from 1964 to '68.) One thing in particular puzzled Metheny: Why did the quintet always play standards on their live gigs rather than the revolutionary material that they were recording?

Carter's reply changed Metheny's view of ensemble playing—and the way he would proceed with the then-upcoming album. By playing standards night after night, Carter explained, the quintet was developing a vernacular that Davis would then apply to the original studio material. In this way, Davis would

bring the best of both worlds to the recording: the implicit understanding of the familiar and the exciting freshness of the new. Hearing about Davis' approach to recording "really was a breakthrough conceptual moment for me," Metheny said.

Judging by the output of Metheny's many long-standing collaborations—most notably, his four decades of work with pianist Lyle Mays—one could argue that Metheny is well-schooled in the musical synergisms that develop over time on the bandstand. But a synergistically produced strings album, if it worked, would be breaking new ground.

"That [group connection] is what the core of this album is," Metheny said. "And to have that morph into this larger thing—I mean, I've certainly never done a record like that. And I can't think of any other record like that. It's kind of unusual."

Sánchez, who has played in a number of Metheny's groups, spoke of how the leader's approach to *From This Place* differed from that of the previous albums they have recorded together.

"We all thought it was going to be a quartet record, and then Pat told us that he was hearing something bigger on it," Sánchez said during a phone interview. "If we had known that there was going to be an orchestra there, we would have completely changed our plan. But since we were recording as a quartet, we were playing exactly the way that we would if we were

playing live. Then [Pat had] the brilliant idea to bring in arrangers, who tailored the [orchestrations] to what we played. It was very interesting—I've never seen anything like that before."

Initially, Metheny had planned to write all of the orchestrations himself. It made sense: By the time of the first session, he already had penned the 10 original songs in the program, decided what tempos he wanted and assigned solos, keeping the strengths of each band member in mind. The arrangements were notated in the music program Sibelius, and the guitarist was forming notions about what the orchestra could add to his compositions. As always, Metheny was meticulously prepared.

'ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT BEING A MUSICIAN IS THAT WE'RE TRADING IN A CURRENCY THAT'S ACTUALLY TRUE.'

"Whatever people's perception of my thing is—yes, I do play the guitar—my main gig for 45 years has always been as bandleader, or bandleader-slash-composer. I write 90 percent or more of the notes that we're going to play," he said. "My job has mostly been about finding context for the musicians that I admire to sound great in. For me, it's been a process of understanding what that is."

Metheny's first sketches for the orchestrations "were fine," he said. "They were kind of straight up and down, right down the middle of what we were playing. Then I thought, 'I'm missing an opportunity here. There are people who do [orchestrations] 48 out of 52 weeks a year. So, why not bring those voices in?'"

In particular, he wanted the voices of Gil Goldstein and Alan Broadbent, two formidable pianists with impressive credits as arrangers and sidemen. Both rose to prominence in the 1990s for their arranging work on high-profile jazz or traditional pop albums, and both went on to win Grammys for their arrangements. Importantly, both "know how to play rhythm, how to play in time, how to make stuff groove," Metheny said. In other words, they offered more than mere sweetening.

Metheny divided the tunes to be orchestrated between the two arrangers—keeping one and change for himself—and assigned Goldstein "America Undefined," the epic 13-minute com-

position that would become the opening track. "I gave Gil the super-hard things," Metheny commented, noting the arranger's skill in working with rhythmic complexities. "And there's some really hard music in there."

Goldstein wouldn't disagree. "The first piece was the hardest," he said, speaking by phone from his Long Island home. "I went to [Pat's] studio in his New York apartment, and when he played it for me, I understood absolutely nothing. I couldn't get what time signature it was in, and the pitches were eluding me. It seemed so sophisticated, and I was getting more and more into a panic as the track went on. Then the end part came—that long vamp.

It was pretty empty, with just the band, like a trio, not even with Pat in it. It was just a blank canvas."

To fill that canvas, Goldstein began with a subtle sweep of violins supporting the quartet as the individual players developed Metheny's engagingly chromatic theme. By mid-tune the orchestra has taken up this theme, now punctuated with electronic reverberation, rattling percussion, distant voices and clanging bells. Despite the gathering momentum, however, the expected triumphant final cadence never arrives; instead, the instruments stop speaking to each other and scatter, and the musical statement dissolves in a free outro. Undefined, yes—and brilliant.

"Honestly, [making this album] is kind of a dream come true for me," Goldstein said. Strong praise, given that he and Metheny have played together on scores of projects since they first met as students at the University of Miami in the early 1970s.

"The first three days I was in Florida, I heard Jaco Pastorius play at a club in Fort Lauderdale, and then I heard Pat play in a class on jazz composition," Goldstein recalled. "My whole experience of the world changed in those three days."

Upon graduating, Goldstein soon established himself as a successful player in New York, working with the likes of guitarist Pat

Martino and saxophonist Lee Konitz, among others, including the up-and-coming Metheny. "Gil was the original piano player in my original band, and I had to decide between him and Lyle [Mays]," Metheny said, referring to The Pat Metheny Group, formed in 1977. "It was a tough decision."

Goldstein recalls that Metheny had complimented his arranging skills in their early Miami days—a foreshadowing, perhaps, of the turn his career would later take. In 1983, Goldstein joined the Gil Evans Orchestra as its regular pianist, and in that rich musical environment, he started to write for horn sections. Before long, he was scoring and arranging for film and TV projects. It was around this time that Metheny, noting Goldstein's growing success as an arranger, asked if he also wrote for strings, suggesting that Goldstein might orchestrate *Secret Story*.

"I stupidly said that I haven't done so much [with strings], which was the wrong answer," Goldstein said, ruefully. "He hired the great Jeremy Lubbock to orchestrate it, and I ended up playing those arrangements on tour. But I was always very sad that I reacted with such a bad instinct. So, I've always been waiting for this [new] record."

For the album's title track, Metheny turned to Broadbent for the arranger's refined understanding of what strings can do harmonically. "Alan got the tunes that were more in the Nelson Riddle or Leonard Rosenman area," he said, referring to two of the most prominent orchestrator/composers of the mid-20th century.

Like them, Broadbent is prolific, having created the orchestral settings for dozens of successful albums featuring celebrity pop and jazz singers, including Barbra Streisand, Linda Ronstadt, Natalie Cole, Michael Bubl , Michael Feinstein, Shirley Horn, Sheila Jordan and Diana Krall. But Broadbent also excels at the small group format: For decades he arranged for and played in Haden's celebrated Quartet West.

Broadbent borrows from both of these environments for Metheny's album. On "From This Place," for instance, his shimmering symphonic passages augment Meshell Ndegeocello's pure vocals without subverting the song's message. Given the weightiness of the lyrics—references to injustice, resistance, despair, hope—anything heavier than the most respectful touch would be too much. But Metheny's solo on the tune—an isolated, lamenting line—is all the more heartbreaking against the color of the orchestra's swelling harmonies. In this case, Broadbent's hand masterfully moves the drama of the piece forward.

"Alan and Gil are heroes for me. What they both brought to this, I can't even say," Metheny said. "When I got the first demo charts back,



Bassist Linda May Han Oh called Metheny “a force of nature” while discussing the bandleader’s detailed vision.

I practically started crying. They were just so advanced and so awesome.”

Metheny knew that the charts, based on the live feel of his quartet, needed a particular sound from the orchestra, one that supported the emotional heft of the material. He received some bids from European orchestras; by reputation, European orchestral players, with their exacting approach to a score, are some of the best in the world. But again, Metheny was hearing something different.

“There is willfully a kind of Hollywood component to this album,” he observed. “I have never resisted what I love, and I love that very American film score sound.”

To achieve that sound, Metheny hired the Hollywood Studio Symphony, conducted by Joel McNeely. Recorded on the same Los Angeles sound stage as the music to the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, the album’s final tracks thrilled Metheny. “The orchestral days out [in L.A.] were just pure joy,” he said. “It was one of the best experiences I’ve ever had as a musician.”

For Metheny, what distinguished the L.A. orchestra from others was not just the players’ technical expertise and their familiarity with American grooves, but also their understanding of the emotional nature of his composi-

tions. “This music is hard, and I really demand an emotional connection [to it] from everyone, including the orchestra,” he said. “The first thing I did at the session was get up and talk to them about what this is.”

Even as bassist Oh admires Metheny’s attention to the tiniest details in his music (and seeks to emulate it), she commends the emotive impact of his large-scale vision. “Pat has always been known for writing very cinematic pieces,” she said. “His music is always about drama, full of emotion. I think people need that right now, to be honest. He is such an incredible force of nature.”

The album’s cover art depicts a dark tornado swirling ominously close to the viewer, an apt symbol for Metheny’s take on the current social climate. He wrote the music for the title tune—the seed thought for the album—the day after the 2016 presidential election, in the early morning hours. The song’s lyrics (written by Alison Riley) convey that the future is uncertain; despite this, the protagonist affirms love and freedom as resolute guiding principles. In the relentlessly beautiful sonority that Metheny champions throughout the album, this is the idea that predominates.

“I’ve always been tuned into the forces that form our culture, and those forces absolutely

make the new album what it is,” he said. “But years from now, these forces will be incidental to what the record is. I’ve been using this analogy: The diamonds that exist in the world were formed by dirt and all kinds of funk, right? But we don’t remember the dirt and the funk—we only remember the diamond. And in this case, ‘dirt’ is the operative word. There’s a lot of dirt [in the culture] right now ... but one of the great things about being a musician is that we’re trading in a currency that’s actually true.”

As an improvisatory musician, he went on, “you must be in the time you’re in. Otherwise [the music] doesn’t have the authenticity, truth and power that fuels what it sounds like. When I think about my favorite musicians, each one of them has been really of the time that they’re in, creating something that goes way beyond that.”

He cited Hancock as an example: “If you just say ‘Herbie,’ in that name you get a whole sonic world that includes everything about who he is. There’s a sound component to it, but how it relates to the larger culture is also interesting.”

Even as he parses the cultural climate of today, Metheny prefers to focus on the ever-green nature of music, on that which defies time and place. No amount of technical knowledge about harmonic substitutions, rhythmic displacement and metric modulation will lead to transcendence on the bandstand, he explained. Instead, he acknowledged the importance of an elusive factor: “It’s the merging of consciousness on this side and the soul on that side. It’s really unknowable. But there’s a poetry in that, [and it] informs every aspect of our humanity.”

Shortly after the album’s Feb. 21 release, Metheny’s quartet will embark upon a three-continent tour. They’ll hit some shores they haven’t yet visited as a band—Cuba and Oh’s native Australia. If they play material from the new album, it will be without strings: It’s too expensive to jet an orchestra around the world, and the music is too complex for a regional orchestra to pick up quickly. Metheny expressed doubt that he would ever be able to mount an orchestral tour for *From This Place*.

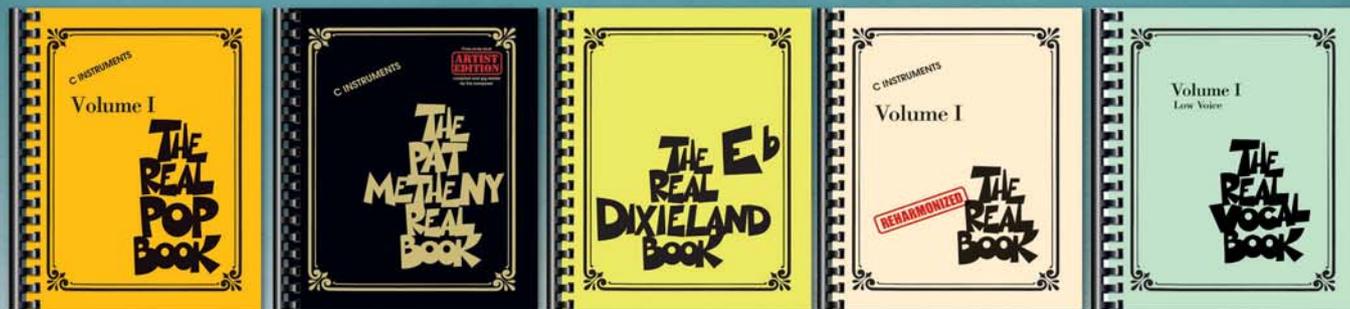
Metheny will travel abroad for a large part of 2020 with his various ensembles, each with its own ethos. In the spring, he’ll tour Europe with his Side-Eye trio, a showcase for young talents, this edition of the band featuring pianist/keyboardist James Francies and drummer Marcus Gilmore.

He’s looking forward to the continuation of another project, too. “[Ron Carter and I] are still going to do more gigs. It’s great playing with Ron,” he said. “If I had to pick 20 all-time favorite records, he’s on 12 or 13 of them—and not just the Miles stuff. We get to hang out a lot when we’re traveling, and he’s very happy to talk about his memories of things.”

And for Metheny, those memories stand out as diamonds in the funk. **DB**

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BEN WILLIAMS

RIGHTEOUS VOCAL POWER

BY GEOFFREY HIMES PHOTO BY JANETTE BECKMAN

Ben Williams was completely mesmerized by *13th*, director Ava DuVernay's 2016 documentary about mass incarceration and racial inequality. The jazz bassist was especially intrigued by a still photograph depicting a 1968 strike by Memphis sanitation workers. In the picture, black union members are picketing on the city's sidewalks, walking past a gauntlet of bayonets held by white National Guardsmen. Around each protester's neck hangs a placard bearing this phrase in bold capital letters: "I Am A Man." It became the title of Williams' new album.

“After watching the movie,” Williams recalled, “I researched a little more, and realized that was why Martin Luther King was in Memphis when he got shot. The visual of this long picket line of all these men carrying the same sign reminded me of how we use hashtags today, how we all adopt a phrase to sum up how we feel.”

The photo conveys an intense level of dignity: The way the men walked in dark suits and fedoras reinforced the message on the signs they carried. Those four words distilled a long list of grievances—underpay, racism and working conditions—into a concise demand for recognition and respect as human beings. It was a demand the city's government had been unwilling to meet.

“I wanted to address the social climate and deal with injustice,” Williams explained, “but I wanted to take another route and not come from a place of protest. I wanted to go into the minds and the spirits of the people who were protesting, to really deal with the humanity of those black men who had to remind society that they are men, that they are human beings. I wanted to dig into that phrase and what it means. What did it mean to them? What does it mean to me?”

The picket signs were a testament not only to the power of a union but also to the power of language. When Williams, 34, decided to make the struggle for equal rights the central theme of his third album, the bassist figured he would have to take a lesson from those signs and make language a major means of expressing himself. He would have to step forward as a singer for the first time in a recording studio.

Williams won the 2009 Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Jazz Bass Competition and had



Ben Williams' *I Am A Man* is issued on Rainbow Blonde, a new label founded by vocalists José James and Taali and engineer Brian Bender.

then, as a member of guitarist Pat Metheny's Unity Band, cemented his reputation as one of his generation's finest bassists. But with *I Am A Man*, he emerges as a lead singer. He's asking listeners to shift their focus from his dexterous fingers to his unproven pipes.

"When I started doing this project, I was writing mostly instrumental tunes," he said, "but I realized I could only express certain things with words. People may see you do one thing and they categorize you as that—but I don't think of myself as one thing. I can't say I ever imagined I'd be doing this, but when it started moving in this direction, I wasn't afraid to go with it. This is the first time anyone, including my own mother, really has heard me sing."

His initial idea was to compose instrumen-

tal music inspired by social issues (and he still hopes to release those pieces later in 2020), but Williams couldn't keep lyrics out of his new project. He considered hiring established singers to handle the vocals. So, as he had in previous collaborations with vocalists, Williams created demos on his home computer, playing all the instrumental parts and singing all the vocal parts himself. But when he started playing the demo tracks for colleagues, he got an unexpected reaction.

"The first person who really heard these songs was José James," Williams said. "I was on the road with his Bill Withers project, and we were just sitting around. I played Jose one of the demos, and he said, 'You're singing that song? You have a nice voice; you should sing more.'"

But Williams wasn't ready to share his vocal

talents. His own band had Chris Turner handling the singing, both on older songs and on songs from the new album. But one night, the bassist had just finished a new song and was aching to try it out.

"There wasn't time to teach it to Chris," Williams recalled, "so I said, 'I'll just try it.' It was scary. It was one of those moments where you just take that plunge and jump off the cliff. 'Don't overthink it,' I told myself. 'Just go ahead and do it.' I always say, 'The higher the risk, the higher the reward.' It went well enough that I said, 'Let's keep doing this and get better at it.'"

It wasn't the only transition happening in Williams' career. He was signed to Concord Records, which had released his acclaimed first pair of albums—*State Of Art* (2011) and *Coming Of Age* (2015)—but now, when it came to record labels, Williams "felt the arrows pointing in a different direction." Meanwhile, James, singer Taali (aka Talia Billig) and recording engineer Brian Bender were forming a new record company, Rainbow Blonde, and they invited Williams to join the roster. Williams was a fan of Bender, for his ability to give jazz albums by Nate Smith and Kris Bowers the raw, old-school presence of Al Green or Earth, Wind & Fire. Bender wound up the engineer and programmer on *I Am A Man*.

"I wanted to change everything about my career—how I made records, what they sounded like," Williams said. "I knew I couldn't do this album the way most jazz records are recorded, two or three days in the studio, where you're just capturing a performance. There was a lot of production on even the demos, and I knew I couldn't replicate that in two or three days with my band. The timing of the new direction, and the new label, all came together."

To assemble the pieces, the bandleader brought four-fifths of his road band into Bender's L.A. studio (himself, saxophonist Marcus Strickland, guitarist David Rosenthal and drummer Justin Brown), along with guest vocalists Kendra Foster, Muhsinah, Wes Felton and Niles. Handling the keyboards was Williams' old Juilliard classmate Kris Bowers, now based in southern California, where he works on film scores.

"I thought [Bowers] would be a perfect fit," Williams said, "because he's coming out the jazz harmonic tradition, and a lot of these songs are about capturing a sound and a feeling. As a film scorer, that's what your job is."

The core of the new album is a group of three consecutive songs about young black men being killed. This almost-cinematic trilogy begins with "Take It From Me," written and sung by Williams over a herky-jerky drum part from Brown and inside a dense, murky sound design by Bender.

"I think Justin is one of the best drummers of our generation," Williams said. "He listens to

a lot of music. When you go on the road, you learn how diverse each guy's musical taste is. With Justin, you can hear the influence of the great drummers, but you also hear the influence of hip-hop, r&b, gospel. When he plays a groove, it has that J Dilla feel, like it's just off the grid a little bit, which gives it its character. It feels like our generation."

"The vocal material felt strong, fresh and honest," Brown said. "I kept my ear open to what he was saying musically and emotionally as a vocalist, so I could allow myself to be

Emmett Till," Bob Dylan's composition that laments the brutal 1955 murder of a 14-year-old African American boy in Mississippi. The heinous crime—and the fact that the murderers were found not guilty in a trial—fueled the civil rights movement. Williams' version frames the story with strings, flute, blues guitar, funeral-procession drums and gospel harmonies, as if it were a bonus track on Marvin Gaye's landmark *What's Going On*.

Williams originally wrote the arrangement for the Congressional Black Caucus' annual jazz

differently, and the thing that ties it all together is the sound of the blues."

"It's important for jazz musicians to approach any style of music with the same respect and intrigue as they would jazz," Bowers asserted. "There are times on an album like this where one can impose complex jazz harmonies or improvisation over the r&b/funk/hip-hop sound, but simplicity and part-specificity are also very important in those genres. There's an art to playing the same exact part repeatedly and focusing on making it feel as good as possible. So, it's important for jazz musicians to not mistake that simplicity with something being 'easy,' or 'boring.' If you don't bring the same energy to a simple r&b/hip-hop part as you would playing on a more complex jazz composition, the music will suffer."

Prior to this project, Williams had written many songs that featured vocals, but previously he had focused on the music and let his collaborators handle the words. This time around, because this was his project and because he felt so strongly about the message, he wanted to write the lyrics himself. He found it as challenging as learning a new instrument, and he drew inspiration from his favorite songwriters: John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Joni Mitchell, Bill Withers and, above all, Marvin Gaye.

"Especially with this subject matter," Williams said, "Marvin was very helpful in finding new ways of talking about serious issues. He showed us how you can talk about spirituality while wrapping it into a love song. You can fall in and out of spirituality just as you can fall in and out of love. As I looked into the soul of the black American male, the words started to write themselves."

Perhaps the most ambitious lyric on Williams' new album is "If You Hear Me," the confessions of a troubled soul who has some hard questions for God. Over horns and a string quartet swooning in a minor key, and accompanied by jittery drums and guitar, Williams sings with a ghostly echo straight out of *What's Going On*. "If you are who they say you are, the truth, the life, the way," his narrator asks the deity, "why is there so much suffering? Do you hear me when I pray?"

"One of the topics I wanted to address on this album," Williams explained, "is spirituality, which has been so essential to the black American experience. We've needed it in our tumultuous experience in this country. Usually you only hear about it from those who are certain. But I wanted to talk about it from the uncertain side. I wanted to go into the mind of the person who looks out the window, who believes in God, but who doesn't always feel that love and protection. Maybe people don't want to talk about it, but that's an idea I wanted to express: Why are our lives like this?" **DB**

'AS I LOOKED INTO THE SOUL OF THE BLACK AMERICAN MALE, THE WORDS STARTED TO WRITE THEMSELVES.'

open to where the music needed to go. I always pay attention to the song titles. Like the song "March On," that statement felt like an encouragement to keep pushing yourself and not to give up in a time of struggle. So, that's the energy I tried to put into the groove."

For "Take It From Me," Brown's push-and-pull beat reflects the anger and sadness that accompanies murder. As Williams' bass and Bowers' piano reinforce the dangers and alienation of America's urban streets after midnight, Williams' bleary voice laments, "Take it from me: The world is out to get us."

That gives way to Niles' rap segment—a father schooling his son on the realities of racism and violence. A piano solo brings in the sound of a police siren, a car pulling over, a door opening and a woman's voice on a phone, saying, "I thought you would be home by now, but I haven't heard from you."

"Take It From Me" is followed by the track "Come Home," which opens with Rosenthal's distorted rock 'n' roll guitar riff, supported by Williams' fat electric bass line. A woman's voice, perhaps the daughter of the earlier woman on the phone, sings, "Will Daddy come home? Is he safe?"

"Take It From Me" and "Come Home" are linked, absolutely," Williams said. "I wanted to address police brutality, but I wanted to find creative ways of telling these common stories. So, I tried to focus on the family surrounding the victim. Every few weeks or so, you see another black man being shot by the police. You develop this anxiety in the back of your head: Will I be next? But it also creates anxiety in the people around them, the wives and children, who absorb those images on TV."

The trilogy climaxes with "The Death Of

concert on Sept. 21, 2017. He was part of a program titled "The Protest Anthology," featuring everything from Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and Max Roach's *Freedom Now Suite* to "The Death Of Emmett Till" and Common's "Letter To The Free." Other participants included Strickland, trumpeter Nicholas Payton, singer Jazzmeia Horn, pianist Christian Sands and tap dancer Jason Samuels Smith.

"The show was fantastic, an amazing group of musicians," Williams recalled. "I love doing arrangements; I love to reimagine standards and give them new life. 'Emmett Till' has such a familiar melody that you can do so much to that song without obscuring it. I wanted to give it a millennial air and yet keep that church element to it. Those hip-hop and r&b influences often find their way into my arrangements, because I like to connect the dots, if the DNA of the music suggests it."

Just as jazz musicians of the '30s and '40s used swing rhythms and Broadway tunes as raw material for their elastic arrangements and improvised solos, it makes sense that today's jazz musicians use funk rhythms and hip-hop storytelling. And just as it was crucial for that older generation to respect their source material while finding ways to reimagine their rhythms and harmonies in contemporary ways, it's just as important for today's players.

"The adjustments that a musician or dancer makes moving from one style of music to another are always informed by the rhythms between the bass and the drums," Strickland said. "Charlie Parker's language on the alto saxophone is fluid and engaging of the harmony, while Maceo Parker's language on the same instrument is more abrupt and punchy. Bass and drums are what makes us dance and sing



Saxophonist Eric Alexander regards his playing as "well-spoken, with melody at the center."

Eric Alexander

'ALWAYS ADVENTUROUS'

By Dan Ouellette Photos by Steven Sussman

Eric Alexander doesn't understand how people can get bored. "There are so many things to do, and there's so little time to do them," said the prolific 51-year-old tenor saxophonist, who admits that he's lost track of how many leader albums he has recorded.

His discography includes at least 43, beginning with his debut, *Straight Up*, released by Delmark in 1993. Over the decades, he's cut impromptu sessions for the Japanese labels Alfa Jazz and Venus, and he has enjoyed stints on Criss Cross Jazz, Milestone and his current home, HighNote.

"I remember all the sessions," he said. "But for a lot of them in Japan, I didn't have artistic control. Even so, I'm always adventurous when I play. I'm not necessarily hyper-aggressive and challenging from beginning to end because that's not me. That's not who I am. I like to play pretty and perfect. I see my playing as well-spoken, with melody at the center."

Alexander, who was based in Chicago for years, now lives in the upper Bronx neighborhood of Riverdale amid historic mansions, elite private schools and the fortress-like structure for the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations. His apartment (compete with a garage underneath) is a comfortable home with a piano and electric keyboard in one spacious room that stretches out to a long dinner table, with a view of a wooded area adjacent to Van Cortland Park. It's near the northernmost stop on the New York City subway system's 1 train. On a good day, he explained, he can hop on the 1 and arrive at Smoke jazz club, one of his main gigging venues, in about 30 minutes.

His career has generated some entertaining anecdotes, including one about an early session as a sideman at legendary recording engineer Rudy Van Gelder's studio. "I didn't know who Rudy was except for the fact that he had a reputation for being nasty," he said. "I adjusted the microphone for the saxophone, and he came running in and said, 'You son of a bitch. Don't you ever touch my equipment.'"

Shortly after that learning experience, Alexander drew the attention of the jazz world at the 1991 Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Saxophone Competition. Among the five finalists, he had the penultimate performance slot; after his showcase, he thought he was the best: "I sat in the audience thinking I was going to win, and then I watched Joshua Redman come on as the last finalist. Right then I knew that I didn't win, that I'd come in second place. I didn't feel like he outplayed me, but he was smarter, more clever. He played a varied program, where I had played stone-cold bebop. I think the judges wanted to see something else."

His gorgeous, lyrical new HighNote album, *Eric Alexander With Strings*, is a dream come true—even though the process of recording and releasing it has been a haul. It serves as a career landmark and perhaps a turning point. "I consider it as a gift that came into my life, even if the music was recorded seven or eight years ago," he



Alexander's latest album references the tradition of bebop musicians recording "with strings."

explained. "The strings part of the album came later. I didn't even know if this was going to come to fruition, and now here it is."

Singer Diane Armesto first met Alexander at Birdland in the early 2000s when he was playing a sideman gig with guitarist Pat Martino. She was so impressed by Alexander that she invited him to fill in for her original tenorist at a session that would yield her *Ballads With Strings, Volume II*. He contributed a solo to her rendition of "Blue And Green," and she penned lyrics for one of his originals, "Gently And Sincere."

At Armesto's request, Alexander and his working quartet—pianist David Hazeltine, bassist John Webber and drummer Joe Farnsworth—set up shop at Systems Two Recording Studio in Brooklyn for several sessions from December 2011 through January 2012. Armesto sang vocals for a still-unreleased album, but she liked Alexander's playing so much that she recorded instrumentals by the band, too.

During the course of that recording, Alexander made a passing comment. "I said that my dream was performing with strings someday," he said.

Armesto, who's involved in the New York real estate business, decided to finance a project to make Alexander's dream a reality. She got Alexander's quartet into a studio and had them focus on songs that were not classics. "They're semi-uneearthed gems that haven't been very well-covered," the saxophonist said.

After those dates were completed, Armesto contacted Dave Rivello, a professor at the Eastman School of Music, to begin arranging music with 13 strings, plus flute and French horn, based on what the band already had recorded.

Alexander was transfixed by the results. "Dave did a spectacular job, not only doing things with taste and correctness, but he was also really hearing where the quartet was moving with the harmonic framework of these tunes," he said. "In jazz, the music is an amorphous, living creature. Rhythms change, harmonies change, but Dave adjusted to the surroundings. He heard everything that we were doing and encapsulated that

in his arrangements."

What Alexander and his crew did was, in his words, "reverse the role."

"If I were playing live with an orchestra and listening to the harmony the arranger had created, I'm going to react to that," he. "We're just switching it. I've already created the harmony with the quartet, and Dave is reacting to us."

Rivello, who recorded the strings not long after Alexander's sessions, expressed excitement when Armesto recruited him to compose arrangements around the studio dates. "I responded to them and reacted to what Eric and the rhythm section were playing," he said. "I was making a soft-pillow bed to lay all the music down on."

The balladic album opens with a beauty, the Alexander original "Gently," where the strings provide a lush ornamentation to the quartet's Latin-tinged reading. The conductor and arranger noted that "Gently" was his favorite track to work on. "There's such great harmonic language that creates a flow," Rivello enthused.

The band also interprets two Henry Mancini compositions and makes gold out of Horace Silver's "Lonely Woman" (which has the same title as Ornette Coleman's standard). Also in the mix is the double-time vibe of "Some Other Time," by Leonard Bernstein, from his 1944 show *On The Town*, with a quietly muscular tenor solo. Alexander's favorite tune on the new album is the walking ballad "The Thrill Is Gone"—not the B.B. King classic, but a '30s tune written by Lew Brown and Ray Henderson that was recorded by Rudy Vallée, Bing Crosby and Chet Baker. "That's the best tune ever," Alexander said. "No one ever plays it anymore. It has such a good feeling, like a combination of melancholy and 'Lonnie's Lament' from John Coltrane's *Crescent* album."

"Eric's approach to the slow tunes is no brainier," said Farnsworth. "These tunes were slow-pitch lobs. He knows how to play pretty. You can tell he's listened a lot to Frank Sinatra. He also learned from his mentor Harold Mabern how important it is to know the lyrics that go to the melody. I didn't realize strings would be added.

But I know Diane, and she has good taste. She's clear about getting what she wants."

"Eric plays with force and is highly skilled in many different aspects of the tenor saxophone," said Hazeltine. "There wasn't a grand plan in my mind. It was just playing a lot, often off the cuff. It was all about playing something pretty for Eric to play on. When it was decided to release some of these tunes, we realized that we were presenting the gentle side of Eric."

Alexander said that he loves to play full-throated like his heroes Dexter Gordon and Gene Ammons. But there's more in his style that he gleaned from jazz elders during his Chicago days. "When I was starting to develop my own style on tenor, I went to see Johnny Griffin at the Jazz Showcase, and I asked him how he was getting his sound that I could hear it in the back of the club," he recalled. "Mr. Griffin paused and then answered, 'Subtone all over the horn and Ben Webster.' So, that became my end-all, biblical power phrase to guide my life in my tenor sound—'subtone.' You can play at a louder volume, but you can get just as compelling a sound at a low volume. Also, you can play it pretty at triple forte, unless you want it to be ugly. And I have learned to make it ugly. But I go for the beautiful sound. George Coleman once told me these words of wisdom: 'brightness and mellowness,' which I thought about for the next 10 years."

Based on his concerts and discography, Alexander frequently has been categorized as a muscular flamethrower. But he's quick to point out that most of his albums include a slow melody or two and that he even recorded a 2013 HighNote album made up of afterglow ballads. "It's called *Touching*, but people didn't touch it," he quipped. "I could play ballads all night."

As is the case with many saxophonists' orchestrated albums, *Eric Alexander With Strings* was recorded by a leader who's very familiar with *Charlie Parker With Strings*. "I was talking with Al Foster once, and he told me if there was one record he could listen to the rest of his life it would be Bird's *With Strings*," Alexander recalled. "I've heard that from other people, too. Branford Marsalis and I were talking about finding the ways to listen to jazz to absorb modern music. He said that if you just learn about Bird's *With Strings*, you've got it for real."

Another recording that had a big impact on Alexander is *Clifford Brown With Strings* (1955), arranged by Neal Hefti. "I didn't have a lot of money when I was growing up, so I wasn't able to amass a huge record collection," he said. "In college I'd go to the library, pull an album out, stick a cassette in and listen. I listened to Clifford Brown a million times on that cassette."

Alexander also dived into songbooks with orchestral arrangements, including classics by Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Carmen McRae, Dinah Washington and Nancy Wilson. "I think of all these great instrumentalists that played all those

years with Nelson Riddle,” he said. “It was a great period in American music history. There was a standard of excellence with the material, the talent and the maturity of the players. No overdubs. All live with Frank on a stool while Nelson conducted, and it was a master work in one take.”

With Strings continues a phase of bold career moves by Alexander. In 2019, he released *Leap Of Faith* through the nonprofit organization Giant Step Arts, founded by photographer and recording engineer Jimmy Katz. In a conversation with Alexander at a music salon years ago, Katz expressed his admiration for the saxophonist, but he also offered a blunt assessment. “I told Eric that he’s recorded 30 albums and they all sound the same,” Katz, a regular contributor to *DownBeat*, recalled. “Let’s do something different.” His idea was to strip Alexander’s quartet down to a trio of musicians with whom he hadn’t previously played—bassist Doug Weiss and drummer Johnathan Blake.

Alexander balked at first: “I kept saying no for years. One, I was under contract with HighNote, and two, I didn’t necessarily like the idea of doing a record where [the result] would be copies of the CD for me to sell. That didn’t sound appealing to me. My entire experience of recording as a leader was to be taken care of by a label. I’d get paid, and they did the marketing.”

But with the shifting tides of the music industry, the deal with Katz was on. The icing was that all eight tunes in that program were Alexander’s compositions—a first for him. The album was recorded live in 2018 at the Jazz Gallery in New York. “I figured on *Leap Of Faith*, the material was something I believed in and wouldn’t be faking,” he said. “I dislike playing without a pianist because I prefer hearing chords when I’m playing. So, it was a challenge to play the harmony and manipulate it.”

Alexander pulled out some surprises for the set, including the bass-bowed “Magyar,” based on a reduction from Béla Bartók’s “Music For Strings, Percussion And Celesta,” and the hip “Mars,” with the harmonic power borrowed from pop star Bruno Mars’ hit “Finesse.” Alexander was turned on to the song by one of his two sons, and he essentially made a contrafact on the tune. The firebrand tune “Second Impression” (which Alexander said is a bit misleading because a different original with that same title already has been recorded) lasts for 13:28 and is essentially Alexander blowing without stop. The origin of that outburst? “On the last day of the session I decided to bring in a synthesizer player and a guitarist. Jimmy said no because he wanted this to be a trio album,” Alexander said. “We got in a big fight over that, so when I finally launched into that tune, I was pissed off. No one else solos because it was my way of working out my anger.”

Despite that squabble, Alexander credits Katz for taking him out of his comfort zone. “Jimmy did a great job,” he said. “He caught [the

trio] in action ... and he [pulled] me out of where I had been.”

Following these two breakthrough albums, Alexander hinted that his next HighNote album, which already has been recorded, also offers a new twist. “I’ve been interested in playing pop tunes, like a tune by Lionel Richie,” he said. “I know the bebop Nazis—which I’m not a member of—will be coming after me for not playing standards. But those were just the pop tunes of the day. The material of today can’t be judged for its relative worth or lack thereof

based on the context of where it first appears. So, if you turn on the radio and hear Taylor Swift singing over this insipid beat with a jerky synthesizer groove, that doesn’t mean there’s not a genuine tune in there.”

So, is Alexander selling out? “I can assure you there are tons of good pop tunes out there,” he asserted with a chuckle. “I can assure you that if I play something in a club—that the younger people in the club know—then you can do whatever you want, because you’ve earned their musical trust.”

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Bria Skonberg

BY PHILLIP LUTZ
PHOTO BY DARIO ACOSTA

DIGGING INTO TENSION



PEERING OUT THE WINDOW OF HER PRACTICE ROOM HIGH ABOVE THE EAST RIVER IN NEW YORK, BRIA SKONBERG FELT THE SPIRIT MOVE HER.

Raising her trumpet, she let loose her trademark clarion call—seeming, in the process, to blow away the cares of a decade that saw her alternately feted as the hope of hot-jazz and faulted for not being shackled to it.

“Playing trumpet is the greatest stress reliever in the world,” she said with a half-smile, exhaling generously.

Generosity has been a defining trait of Skonberg’s decade—from the gastronomic delicacies she laid out for a visitor in the waning days of 2019 to the cornucopia of musical offerings that flowed from her horn since she arrived in New York in 2010, armed with an encyclopedic knowledge of traditional jazz built largely on bandstands throughout the West.

Then 26 years old, the native of Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada, quickly became a fixture on the

stages of the Big Apple’s trad-jazz scene—catching the eye and ear of the scene’s stalwarts, like fellow trumpeter Warren Vaché. A onetime teacher and longtime colleague of Skonberg’s, Vaché remains impressed with her sound and savvy.

“She’s a very conscientious young lady with a strong conception,” he said. “And, like most young people these days, she’s very aware of the public, of social media and promotion.”

Within two years of arriving in New York, Skonberg had parlayed those assets into contracts for albums that, like her live shows, attracted audiences intrigued by the spectacle of a young Canadian woman who tapped into the soul of Louis Armstrong. Skonberg had found her comfort zone and, by all indications, could have prospered there in perpetuity.





Bria Skonberg adventures beyond her trad-jazz roots on *Nothing Never Happens*.

“That’s not why I came to New York,” she said. “I keep doing a lot of things, but all the time still reaching, learning.”

With *Nothing Never Happens*, her latest release, Skonberg does just that. Like her most recent albums—2016’s *Bria* and 2017’s *With A Twist*, which featured urbane partners like accordionist and arranger Gil Goldstein, pianist Sullivan Fortner, bassist Scott Colley and drummer Matt Wilson—the disc explores new stylistic territory even as it keeps faith with the old.

At the same time, the new album provides a measure of social content—an element she said was necessary in the post-2016 world but was lacking on her previous recordings. Given the marketplace demands of big-label production—her last two albums were on Sony Masterworks and OKeh—she self-released the new album.

“My last album was about love and adventure, not without its own depth,” she said. “But to put out another album at this time that doesn’t at least acknowledge what’s going on—that you’re working through it and giving other people a chance to also process it through listening—is a waste of time.”

The process of getting *Nothing Never Happens* released involved some speed bumps. An attempt at crowd-funding was hindered when the platform through which the album was being financed went bankrupt. However, the steps of assembling the release allowed Skonberg to connect with her fans and shape the final product more directly than she had in years.

The change is evident from the album’s title—a cryptic double-negative that contrasts with the straightforward titles of her recent albums. The new album’s cover art, likewise, is a departure: Rather than a photo of Skonberg, the image is a faceless, slightly abstracted female figure painted by a friend, Lisa Lockhart.

The shift also is clear in the choice of personnel. Unlike her recent albums, her core working group—pianist Mathis Picard, bassist Devin Starks and drummer Darrian Douglas—carries the load. Guitarist Doug Wamble, organist Jon

Cowherd and saxophonist Patrick Bartley augmented the unit on select tunes.

When Douglas first played with Skonberg seven years ago at New York’s swank Café Carlyle, the playlist consisted largely of unreconstructed early jazz. But, he said, Skonberg has since then expanded her repertoire and approach to encompass more originals and greater stylistic freedom. The transition, he said, was natural and maybe inevitable.

“It’s been kind of a gradual thing,” he said. “People like musicians to fit into these neat little boxes—you only play trad music, you only play music from 1964, whatever—but that’s just not realistic. We grow up listening to music from the ’20s through the current day. It’s difficult to express only one kind of music when you’ve heard Boyz II Men and Louis Armstrong, or Tupac and Baby Dodds. She does a great job of merging everything she’s ever heard.”

Perhaps the clearest manifestation of this idiomatic mixing is found in Skonberg’s mashups, the melding of songs from the 1920s and ’30s with those from the ’60s or later. On *Nothing Never Happens*, “Blackbird Fantasy” mixes Duke Ellington’s “Black And Tan Fantasy” with Paul McCartney’s “Blackbird.”

Musically, Skonberg said, the process of combining tunes starts with her sitting at the piano, digging into the basic elements of Western music to understand the interrelationships of the pieces at hand: “My mashup process is to analyze the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic content and see where they tie in. It’s a puzzle—I dig puzzles.”

On “Blackbird Fantasy,” the resulting synthesis recalls the gritty chill of Ellington’s slow blues more than the delicacy of McCartney’s ballad, especially when Skonberg gives free rein to her inner growl in a cupped solo that echoes, if faintly, Arthur Whetsol’s 1929 version.

But the lyrics, all McCartney’s, adapt easily to the new setting—owing largely to Skonberg’s vocal, equal parts poignant and piquant.

“Blackbird Fantasy,” she said, was inspired by educational outreach she undertook through a

program sponsored by Jazz at Lincoln Center. In it, she made presentations to schoolchildren on jazz and democracy, the Harlem Renaissance and the civil rights era.

“As a Canadian coming to the States,” she said, “it was—and is—such an education and a humbling thing to be trying to relay this information through song to the next generation, people who are the descendants of these exact movements.”

Skonberg’s social concerns drive other tunes on *Nothing Never Happens*, perhaps none more directly than “Villain Vanguard.”

“The album,” Skonberg said, “came out of the white noise about two years ago—information, all the stress of current social events, media, etcetera. I knew that I needed to create space to process these things. So, I created a lot of space in my schedule to process feelings. My writing process is to be in front of my keyboard and just be quiet and wait to see what comes out. And the first thing that came out was ‘Villain Vanguard.’”

The immediate impetus, she said, was the women’s march that took place the day after the 2017 presidential inauguration: “That definitely was what that song was about—re-enacting a march scene, a protest scene. And I urge my players to make it personal.”

Liberated from trad-jazz trappings, on this particular number the players unleash their collective id atop Douglas’ throbbing pulse, a ticking time bomb broken only by a free middle section straight out of the avant-garde playbook. Amid the cacophony, Skonberg’s horn leads the way.

Picard focused on the tune’s kinetic nature as it hurtles through the bridge and into the free section, which ultimately transitions back to the melody. “In that part, it was about moving together, moving forward into this other part of the song. It had to do with some of the feelings of #MeToo, and we were just channeling through her that feeling.”

While Skonberg had formed musical bonds with other female players—she led a classic-jazz band consisting of all women, Mighty Aphrodite, from 2005 through 2011—she hadn’t been moved to social action. But post-2016, she has joined saxophonist Roxy Coss’ Women In Jazz Organization, an advocacy group. And she makes a point of reaching out to young female jazz musicians, offering encouragement.

“Only in the last year or two, I feel like I’ve been proactive about it,” she said.

Skonberg’s activism extends to other issues, like gun violence. She has played the Instrument of Hope, a trumpet made of brass and bullet casings created by ShineMSD, a charity formed by students and parents from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, the site of a 2018 massacre. The goal is to raise awareness and money for the organization.

“This gives me a chance to talk about it and play,” said Skonberg, a product of public schools

who often speaks in them through programs like Jazz at Lincoln Center's.

She played the trumpet as a member of the Monterey Jazz Festival touring band for a month of concentrated concerts last spring. Along with pianist Christian Sands, the music director, the tour included singer Cécile McLorin Salvant, saxophonist Melissa Aldana, bassist Yasushi Nakamura and drummer/vocalist Jamison Ross.

The Instrument of Hope trumpet's origin added a layer of meaning to the music, though Skonberg's presence itself lent the tour a distinct historical dimension, Sands said. She introduced the language of traditional jazz to the proceedings—most pointedly, perhaps, in a tribute to pioneering female musician Valaida Snow (1904–'56), who sang and played multiple instruments, including trumpet.

Sands, who played classic jazz with Skonberg nearly a decade ago, said she brought a growing maturity to that language: "She has evolved from where she was, within the stylings, the trad-jazz style, and also creating her own." Her arrangements, he added, were very complex. "As a pianist, you're going through a lot of different motions. It was a welcome challenge."

Skonberg said the experience of the tour has stayed with her: "Musically it evolved every night. It had a musical effect on me in that it gave me confidence to dig into tension a little bit more. I love how it enabled me to stretch."

But Skonberg's stretching has not always been welcomed. Along with the raves, a few reviewers have suggested that, as pop interpreter, social commentator and trumpet virtuoso, she wears too many hats. Some have said her work lacks stylistic cohesion.

Skonberg defended as genuine her "revisiting nostalgia in a way that appeals to a larger group of people outside of the jazz scene, and to me first," and offering social commentary "to reflect what's happening in the world, or at least your view of it, so that other people can have the same experiences."

"I definitely stand by the things I've done," she said. "I do think this is authentic."

Looking forward, the trumpeter is preparing for a quartet appearance at Zankel Hall (within the Carnegie Hall complex) as part of the Joyce and George T. Wein Shape of Jazz series; her first full symphonic collaboration, with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra; and an Aretha Franklin tribute with the American Pops Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Meanwhile, she was formulating educational programs for the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Queens and the New York Hot Jazz Camp, which she co-founded and directs. All in all, it was a full plate that reflected a consistency of voice and a commitment to keep spreading her talents widely—and wisely.

"I like being put into a lot of different experiences," she said. "I like being a wild card." **DB**

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Pianist Jen Allen is set to issue *Sifting Grace* through Outside In Music, a media company helmed by trombonist Nick Finzer.

SUPPORT IN ALL DIRECTIONS

Trombonist Nick Finzer, 31, has a thriving career as a leader, accompanist and acclaimed educator at the University of North Texas. But back in 2012, just out of a master's program at The Juilliard School, he was having trouble finding a label that would

meet his timeline for a debut album.

"I was young and fresh and eager," he said over coffee at a Manhattan patisserie in December. "So, I put it out on my own." That led to some self-education in the art of marketing, which Finzer used to maximum effect

helping a few friends release their albums. By 2016, "It was like, 'I guess we can create a label out of this.'"

The label was dubbed Outside in Music, and Finzer's debut album, *Exposition*, which he had released in 2013, became the OiM catalog's first listing. Colleagues signed on to the label and brought other artists with them. What began as a trickle of releases has grown to a steady stream: The label has about 60 CDs, and a clutch of digital-only collections, out or set to be released.

OiM, which now includes a subsidiary label called Next Level, positions itself as multifaceted media company for jazz musicians—many of them young—who lack the will or the means to navigate the world of promoting one's career in the digital age. OiM provides a range of artist services (including management and consultation), while simultaneously maintaining and marketing its catalog.

"We focus on a digital-first approach and a content approach," Finzer explained. "We encourage artists to co-release things—digital and physical—to make sure things can exist in all places, meaning streaming, physical stores, YouTube"—anywhere, in fact, where the music can be heard and an artist's brand built.

Though OiM can aid artists in all phases of their projects, the company typically becomes involved after the tracks have been recorded. Thinking holistically, OiM offers services variously executed in-house or through a network of select vendors. But OiM is flexible; clients can pick and choose among services and bring in vendors with whom they have a preexisting relationship.

Paul Nedzela, a baritone saxophonist with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra who knew Finzer primarily from the big-band scene, retained OiM after mixing and mastering what would become his debut album. A quartet effort titled *Introducing Paul Nedzela*, the 10-track collection was teased with a digital release of the swinging single "Lisa" in June 2019, a month before the full album was released.

"Nick really took the reins," Nedzela said. "He has an idea of what the state of the music is like right now, what the business is right now. He's got his finger in a lot of pies and has an idea of what you have to do to tap into the new scene, from a recording standpoint."

OiM handled the album's social media posts. It wrote a one-page press primer that complemented a full release by an outside publicist with whom OiM coordinated. OiM

also hooked up vendors for the design and printing of the package, arranged distribution of physical and online copies, and negotiated the tricky path to a slot on Spotify's State of Jazz playlist for "Bernard's Revenge," a hard-driving track from the album.

"The fact that it got picked up got me more exposure than I would have without him doing that stuff," Nedzela said.

Like Nedzela, Jen Allen—a pianist who teaches at Trinity and Bennington colleges—came to OiM with her tracks already laid down. Unlike Nedzela, however, she hadn't met Finzer. In fact, even though they've performed with some of the same artists, Allen and Finzer never have met in person. It is a very modern take on the business relationship—but one that has worked.

"Nick's really organized and very thoughtful about what he's doing," Allen said. "There are a lot of things that have come my way through Outside in Music."

For Allen, the process began with questions OiM asked about her work, a step that Finzer argued helps shape a profile useful for social and other media. OiM arranged gigs and turned Allen's photos into art for the cover of her album *Sifting Grace*, slated for a Feb. 21 release on Next Level. The quartet recording features excellent musicians: Kris Allen (saxophone), Marty Jaffe (bass) and Kush Abadey (drums).

Sifting Grace could presage a more extensive collaboration with OiM, she said, citing the possibility of a big band album in a year or two. For that, she said she might call on OiM to aid in the recording process itself: "That would be ideal. In a project like that, it needs a lot more input from other people."

Whether the project is big or small, Finzer encourages artists to put themselves out there. Abundance is key to being noticed in the multiplatform marketplace, he said, and if that means issuing an instructional video, a digital release of a holiday song or a standards CD as a means of drawing listeners to work that more closely reflects an artist's unique vision, so be it.

Finzer practices what he preaches, functioning, he said, as a de facto "guinea pig" for OiM services. The release of his next CD, *Cast Of Characters*, on Feb. 28, will be his fifth since he graduated from Juilliard. He also has produced four digital-only collections and a well-received educational series on YouTube that has boosted the global audience for both his teaching and his music. All of which has informed the OiM experience today—and, potentially, for the future.

"I feel like the industry is probably ready for another shift soon," he said. "I don't know what it is, but I want to be ready."

—Phillip Lutz

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© MARK SHELDON

Brian Lynch's new big band release is a double album that reflects his love of literature.

SELF-ENABLING BIG BAND PRODUCER

Last January, Brian Lynch, 63, took the first sabbatical semester of his eight-year professorship at Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. Over the next six months, the master trumpeter-composer worked on his first big band album, composing, recording and mixing the nine compositions that constitute *The Omni-American Book Club: My Journey Through Literature In Music*, out now on his own label, Hollistic MusicWorks.

Dialogue is key. The works, propelled by an array of beat signatures—hardcore swing to bolero to hardcore clave—distill in notes and tones the core ideas of a cross-generational, polyethnic cohort of 18 authors who have inspired Lynch and informed his worldview.

Each track is dedicated to two writers. The leader uncorks a string of authoritative solos in his singular harmonic argot, exchanging ideas with guest soloists Regina Carter (violin), Dave Liebman (soprano saxophone), Jim Snidero (alto saxophone), Orlando “Maraca” Valle (flute) and Dafnis Prieto (drums).

Most prominent in the authorial mix is Albert Murray (the co-dedicatee, along with Ta-Nehisi Coates, of “The Struggle Is In Your Name”), whose 1970 collection, *The Omni-Americans*, contends that black culture is a fundamental component of what “American-ness” means. Lynch has refined that hybrid principle through the fluent multilingualism of his musical production, informed by consequen-

tial end-of-the-’80s apprenticeships with jazz giants Horace Silver and Art Blakey, and parallel two-decade stints as co-equal bandmate to Phil Woods and Eddie Palmieri. Both veterans played on the 2006 album *Simpático* (an ArtistShare release credited to The Brian Lynch/Eddie Palmieri Project), which won a Grammy for Best Latin Jazz Album. Lynch received a Grammy nomination in the same category for his 2016 release, *Madera Latino: A Latin Jazz Perspective On The Music Of Woody Shaw* (Hollistic). His 22 prior albums include several low-budget jazz recordings.

“The discipline I gained through making, in one afternoon, albums that could stand the test of time—recording directly to two-track,

no mixing—was invaluable,” Lynch said a few weeks after *The Omni-American Book Club* earned Grammy nominations for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album and Best Instrumental Composition (“Crucible For Crisis,” on which Prieto and Valle perform). “After the good result from *Simpático*, on which I was free to do as I wanted, I decided to enable myself as a producer, as well as a player, composer and bandleader.”

For this latest project, Lynch said he wanted “a theme that connects to the causes and contexts that drive my music.” He found it during conversations with co-producer Kabir Sehgal, himself an admirer of writer Murray’s works. “If there’s one thing I love as much as music, it’s reading,” Lynch said. Determined to complete the work during the term of his sabbatical, Lynch “didn’t even fund-raise, but just barreled all the way through.”

The core sessions were recorded at Frost’s Austin L. Weeks Center, with additional recording done at six other studios.

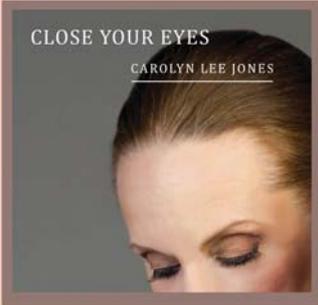
That the project cohered so successfully testifies to Lynch’s hard-earned expertise in matters of production. “Brian knows his business,” said Gary Keller, a Frost faculty colleague whose saxophone exchanges with Liebman on “The Trouble With Elysium” are an album highlight. “It was hard music, but everyone was up to the task.” Fourth trumpet Alec Aldred, a Frost alumnus, noted Lynch’s “amazing attention to detail—he was great at communicating with everyone and navigating how to most efficiently get through the music.”

“I recorded methodically to make sure that, at the end, I’d have options to ‘cut the film,’ so to speak,” Lynch said, noting he Skype-produced Liebman’s session, which transpired in Pennsylvania, and that saxophonist Donald Harrison and Valle recorded their parts in New Orleans and Havana, respectively. The time-intensive process was facilitated by access to Frost’s first-rate studio facility and on-site recording engineer Chris Palowitch. Lynch praised the high level musicianship of an orchestra of local pros and Frost students, alumni and faculty. “Everyone was paid as if they were young musicians in New York,” he said. “It’s a professional project. Nobody was doing this as part of schoolwork.”

Indeed, Lynch considers “the idea that you can produce your own stuff”—the 21st century notion of musician-as-entrepreneur—as central to his pedagogical mission. “We’re teaching more than just chords and scales at Frost,” he said. “I imbue that you can’t wait for someone to discover you; you should take it into your own hands. All my students know their way around the studio, know how to record themselves. If you’re able to put out a professional product, that’s your calling card. First of all, it’s got to be good. But also know what’s going on in the business.”

—Ted Panken

Carolyn Lee Jones

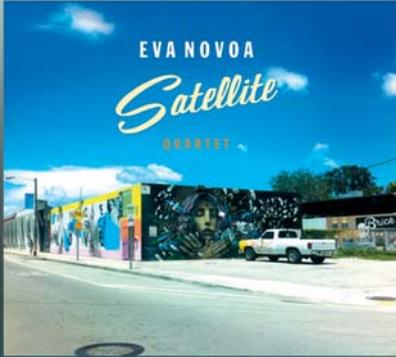


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PAAL NILSSEN-LOVE



PETRA CVELBAR

The prolific Paal Nilssen-Love runs his own label, PNL Records.

PNL IN PERPETUAL MOTION

A few years ago, the Norwegian drummer Paal Nilssen-Love—a former member of groups like Atomic, The Thing and the Peter Brötzmann Chicago Tentet—purchased an apartment in Lisbon, Portugal. After returning from a tour in Japan with reedist Ken Vandermark this past December, he spent nearly a week there, the longest stretch he'd slept there since acquiring the home. Nilssen-Love's schedule usually includes more than 200 days gigging around the globe each year. And since 2007, he's run PNL Records, his own label, releasing more than 40 titles by projects and ad hoc pairings he plays in, including *EthioBraz*, a collaborative album between his muscular big band, called Large Unit, the Ethiopian ensemble Fendika and a couple of musicians from Brazil. "It's a lot of work, but in the long run, it's absolutely worth it," he said nonchalantly during a recent phone interview from Japan.

Thanks to the internet, he said the label could operate from anywhere, which is good because he's rarely home. "Traveling with him on a regular basis, it's clear that he is always working," said Vandermark, one of his most frequent collaborators over the past two decades. "The only time he ever takes a break is directly after the concerts. From when he wakes up until then, he's on the phone or computer, and often he gets back to work when we return to where we're staying at night. From a physical standpoint, I don't know how he does it. No one

works harder than Paal, day after day, year in and out."

Nilssen-Love lives and breathes music, whether that means pouring every ounce of his energy into performances that leave him drenched in sweat or collecting records of all stripes and styles of music. "There are so many recordings being put out today, so you've got to be conscious about every factor involved in releasing a CD," he said. From the beginning of PNL, he partnered with Norwegian sound artist Lasse Marhaug, whose striking graphic-design work has given each title a distinctive look and the entire catalog a unifying aesthetic. Marhaug also mixes and masters many of the releases, each gorgeously packaged in thick and glossy gatefold sleeves harking back to the glory days of the LP.

Still, for Nilssen-Love the music comes first, and it was a desire to take control of his output that primarily motivated him to start PNL. "I realized it would be much easier if I ran a label myself, because if any mistakes happen, if it's late or delayed, then it's my own fault and I know what is going on," he said. "I realized there were more tapes of my music that I wanted released, so if this stuff was all going to come out. I had to do it myself."

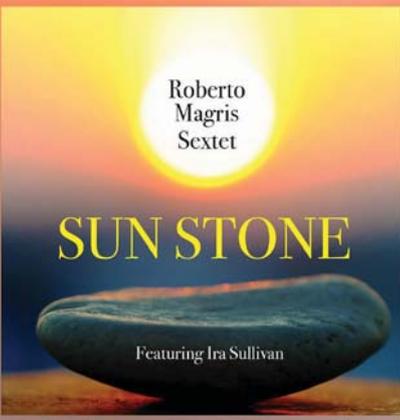
Over the years, the label has released numerous titles from many of the drummer's working bands, whether the rangy free-jazz of the Frode Gjerstad Trio, the jagged, brassy

Large Unit, or his early post-bop collective The Quintet—featured in a recent archival box set. But the bulk of the titles document his extensive improv work with the likes of Vandermark, Joe McPhee, Akira Sakata and Arto Lindsay, among others.

Like all labels today, PNL has been affected by streaming and illegal downloads. "A couple of years ago I found out about some guy in Russia who had uploaded quite a few of the CDs that could be downloaded for free," he said. "A contact in Russia got in touch with him, and the guy told him that I could fuck myself because I'm making enough money on touring and CD sales!"

Still, the drummer remains unbowed in his commitment to physical documentation of his work. "In the very beginning, I didn't have any proper distribution, but I was thinking, of course, I have the best distribution because I'll have these CDs on every single gig," he said. "If I'm doing 170 gigs and they're always there, then that's pretty good distribution." With eight titles under his belt in 2019, Nilssen-Love already has big plans for 2020 with new albums by the Gjerstad trio and Lean Left (a quartet with the drummer, Vandermark, and The Ex guitarists Andy Moor and Terrie Hessels), as well as a new solo album produced by Marhaug. "I want to use the studio in a completely different way—let's call it moving microphones and moving drums." —Peter Margasak

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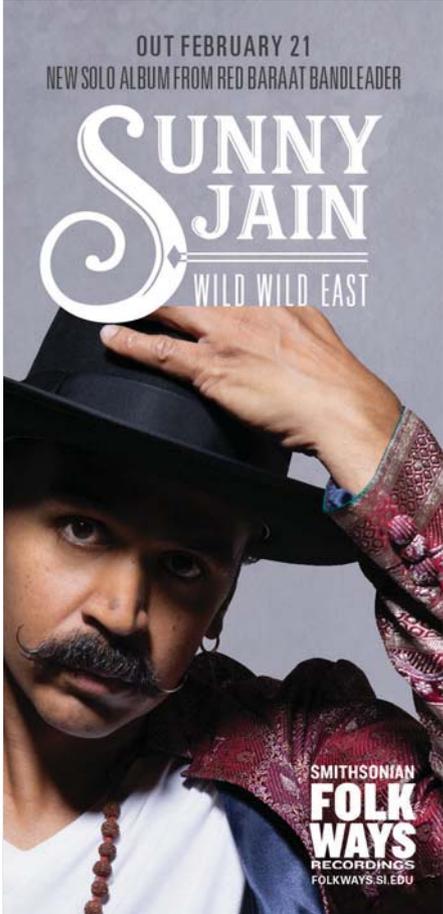
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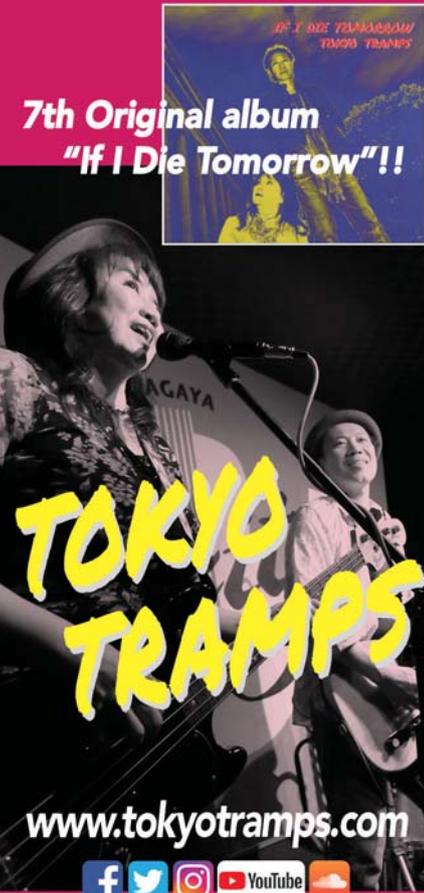
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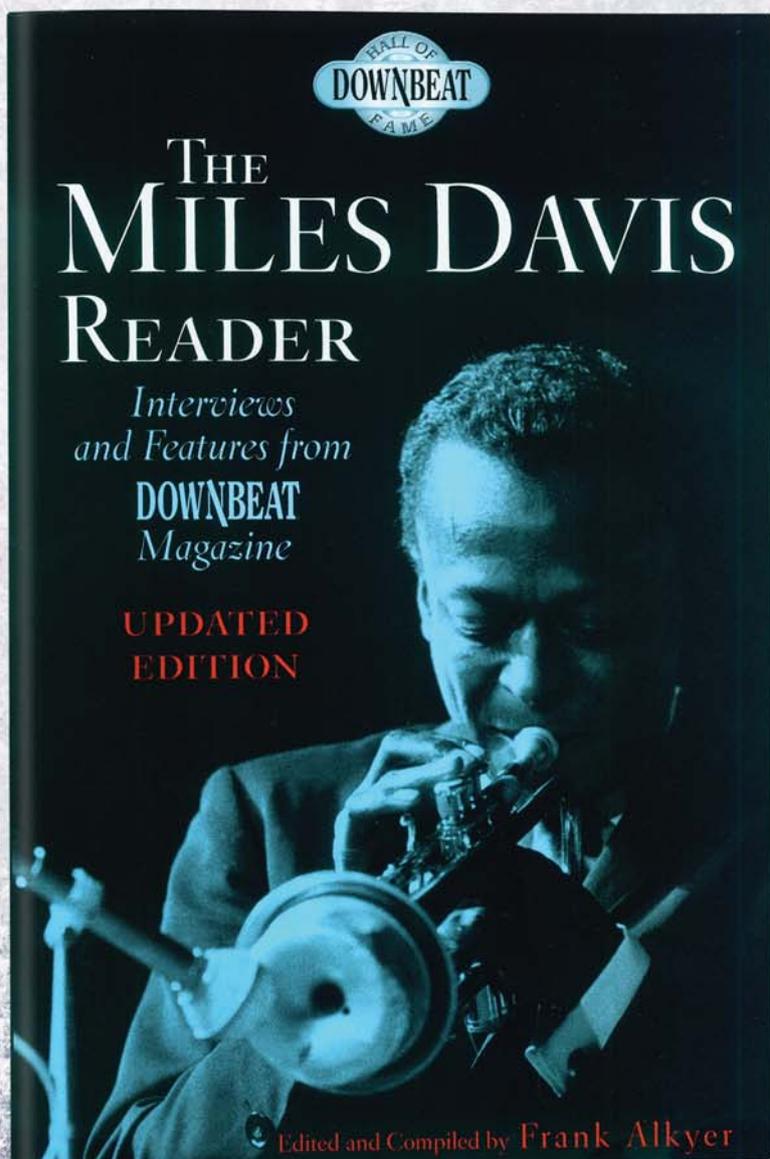
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Karrin Allyson (center) traces the American suffragette movement on *Shoulder To Shoulder: Centennial Tribute To Women's Suffrage*.

Karrin Allyson Sextet *Shoulder To Shoulder: Centennial Tribute To Women's Suffrage*

EONE 46222

★★½

The women's suffrage movement came to a head 100 years ago with the ratification of the 19th Amendment on Aug. 18, 1920. In the years leading up to that landmark expansion of voting rights, commercial radio and propagandistic anthems played a big role in the campaign.

With *Shoulder To Shoulder: Centennial Tribute To Women's Suffrage*, vocalist Karrin Allyson—a straightahead singer of indisputable chops, who has been blending the flavors of blues and camp since the late 1980s—explores those century-old songs with an expert sextet. John

Daversa arranged the antique songs, and he augments Allyson's band throughout with a string quartet. A roll call of stars, from Harry Belafonte to Lalah Hathaway and Veronica Swift, handle guest vocals, singing and also reading political speeches by historical figures.

The album closes with two Allyson originals, including "Big Discount," on which she and the emcee Rapsody attack the gender pay gap. It's an acknowledgment that the struggle continues apace, and it nudges this album into conversation with guitarist Marc Ribot's *Songs Of Resistance 1942-2018*, a collection of reworked folk songs and labor anthems, as well as new material. But that was a gnarly, more blatantly aggrieved album.

The music on *Shoulder To Shoulder* remains caught between the scriptedness of musical theater and the small-scale staginess of cabaret;

there's limited space for Allyson or her bandmates to dig in and fly off the hinges.

Hardly anything spills over here—not the energy of the band, and only rarely the past into the present—and the historical material feels stuck in a display case. —Giovanni Russonello

Shoulder To Shoulder: Centennial Tribute To Women's Suffrage: Preamble; The March Of The Women; The Great Convention; Susan B. Anthony (1873); I'll Be No Submissive Wife; Frederick Douglass (1888); Anti Suffrage Rose; She's Good Enough To Be Your Baby's Mother; Elihu Root (1894); Columbia's Daughters; Sojourner Truth (1851); The Promised Land; Winning The Vote; Alice Paul (1921); Way Down Below; Big Discount. (50:24)

Personnel: Karrin Allyson, vocals; Ingrid Jensen, trumpet; Mindi Abair, alto saxophone; Helen Sung, piano; Endea Owens, bass; Allison Miller, drums; Regina Carter (15), Abigail Young, Arianne Urban, violin; Yael Hyken, viola; Olivia Culpo (12), Ashley Garritson, cello; Mariea Antoinette, harp (1); Veronica Swift (7), Denise Donatelli (3), Madeleine Peyroux (3), Rosanne Cash (4), Harry Belafonte (6), Peter Eldridge (9), Lalah Hathaway (11), Pauline Jean (12), Antonia Bennett (12), Emily Estefan (12), Kate Reid (12), Kurt Elling (13), Julie Swidler (14), Rapsody (15), vocals; Kait Dunton (2, 10, 15, 16), organ and Rhodes; Ragan Whiteside (3), flute; Members of Frost Woman's Chorale and guests.

Ordering info: karrin.com



The DIVA Jazz Orchestra *DIVA + The Boys*

MCG JAZZ 1047

★★★★

The concept of women killing it on anything but piano and vocals still was a novelty to some people when drummer Sherrie Maricle and Stanley Kay founded The DIVA Jazz Orchestra in the early '90s. Today, with innovative bandleaders like Mary Halvorson and Terri Lyne Carrington in the spotlight, an all-female-by-design ensemble seems almost anachronistic. Time to invite the boys in, says bandleader Maricle.

Enter Claudio Roditi and three other instru-

mentalists, who joined DIVA in 2017 for a concert at Pittsburgh's Manchester Craftsmen's Guild. If there still are doubters in 2020, hearing Roditi exchange solos with saxophonist Roxy Coss on a warm, swinging version of Tom Jobim's "A Felicidade" or clarinetists Ken Peplowski and Janelle Reichman zip through Benny Goodman's "Slipped Disc" should put sexist tropes to rest.

Those types of insider/outsider combinations add a degree of frisson to the concert, as well as increasing the size of the band to 19. Even at that size, DIVA is a relatively lithe unit—witness the light touch on the Brazilian tune "Estate." One thing that sets DIVA apart from other big bands is Maricle's feathery approach to drums, which might be a benefit on sambas, but a shortcoming when the temperature rises and more horns are added to the mix. On those pieces, the band sounds top-heavy, without a well-defined foundation, and there's a skittery similarity across the group's entire book. —James Hale

DIVA + The Boys: Slipped Disc; A Felicidade; Deference To Diz; Noturna; The One I Love Belongs To Somebody Else; Piccolo Blues; Estate; Bucket O' Blues. (51:35)

Personnel: Tanya Darby, Jami Dauber, Rachel Therrien, Barbara Laronga, trumpet, flugelhorn; Claudio Roditi, trumpet; Jennifer Krupa, Linda Landis, Jay Ashby, trombone; Leslie Havens, bass trombone; Alexa Tarantino, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, flute, clarinet; Scheila Gonzales, alto saxophone, flute, clarinet; Janelle Reichman, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Roxy Coss, tenor saxophone, flute, clarinet; Leigh Pilzer, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet; Ken Peplowski, clarinet; Marty Ashby, guitar; Tomoko Ohno, piano; Noriko Ueda, bass; Sherrie Maricle, drums.

Ordering info: mcgjazz.org

Kassa Overall *I Think I'm Good*

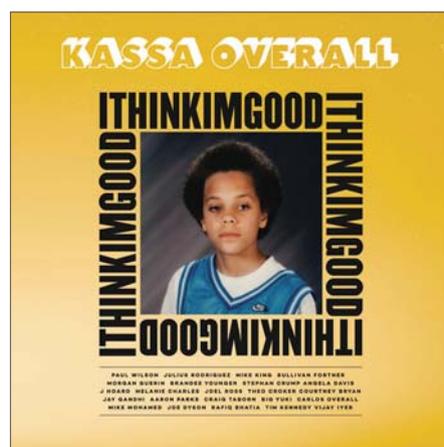
BROWNSWOOD 0219

★★★★

Jazz and hip-hop recently have further intertwined, with jazz acts like Makaya McCraven and Mark de Clive-Lowe sampling their own live performances before reprocessing the results. This jazz plays the studio as much as the instrument. And this is where drummer and producer Kassa Overall excels.

Honing his talents while playing for the likes of Vijay Iyer and Christian McBride, Overall always has brought hip-hop's flavor to his playing. And with his debut—2019's *Go Get Ice Cream And Listen To Jazz*—Overall playfully melded synthwork with polyrhythm and horn-laden melody. On his second LP, *I Think I'm Good*, Overall finds the sweet spot between politically infused hip-hop and languorous jazz.

Exploring the racialized hierarchies of the American prison system on tracks like "Visible Walls" and "Please Don't Kill Me," the bandleader pieces together a fractal soundscape of clattering percussion, snatched lines of vocals and glimpses of ethereal harmony to create a convincing image of incarceration's chaos. The fragmentation of the songs can make for a jarring listen, but when Overall allows himself room, as on



"Show Me A Prison," his arrangements are enveloping and engaging.

Unlike the hesitancy depicted in the record's title, *I Think I'm Good* is a confident and breathlessly experimental effort; here, Overall is more than good. He is, perhaps, even great.

—Ammar Kalia

I Think I'm Good: Visible Walls; Please Don't Kill Me; Find Me; I Know You See Me; Sleeping On The Train; Show Me A Prison; Halfway House; Landline; Darkness In Mind; The Best Of Life; Got Me A Plan; Was She Happy (For Geri Allen). (39:53)

Personnel: Kassa Overall, drums, vocals, drum machine; Paul Wilson, electronics, synths, vocals; Joel Ross, vibraphone; Morgan Guerin, saxophones, bass, electronics; Theo Croker, trumpet; Vijay Iyer, Julius Rodriguez; Aaron Parks, Sullivan Fortner, Craig Taborn, Mike King, piano/keyboards; Melanie Charles (4), J Hoard (4, 6), Dr. Angela Davis (6), vocals; Brandee Younger, harp.

Ordering info: brownswoodrecordings.com



Jim Snidero *Project-K*

SAVANT 2185

★★★★½

Project-K is a procession of Korean cultural references processed through the performance prisms of Jim Snidero and Dave Douglas. Such inside stuff likely will be lost on listeners unfamiliar with the source material. But works like these are understood in the larger world on other terms, no different from Ellington's *Far East Suite* or Brubeck's various *Impressions* recordings. In this case, the principal splash of local color comes from the occasional twang of the native zither-like gayageum. Beyond that, the music roams freely and welcomes all inferences.

Korea is not necessarily a pretty place, and neither are some of Snidero's tone pieces. "DMZ" tries in musical terms to represent the dissonance that hovers at the point where North and South Korea meet. The two horns shadow each other at first in close formation, then shout back and forth in short bursts that collapse into incoherent discord. Another distinctive piece is "Mother." Whatever its reference might be, its main thematic material carries a sense of profound uncertainty and looming danger, with percussive stings suggesting a Bernard Herrmann score for Hitchcock. Snidero and Douglas solo plaintively with pianist Orrin Evans' menacing undercurrent. It's the most interesting composition here.

Snidero's alto provides a steady lead through some spiky moments, and Douglas offers the level ballast of a sensitive alter-ego. The echo of their interaction on "Seoulful" has an almost classical precision and balance. "Goofy" is a relatively traditional jam session, bookended by some ascending scales. Douglas confines himself mostly to low- and middle-register warmth and fluency. Overall, a good date anchored by some moments of smart composition. —John McDonough

Project-K: Han; DMZ; Jeju; Mother; Jenga; Seoulful; Goofy; Han O Bak Nuyn. (53:40)

Personnel: Jim Snidero, alto saxophone; Dave Douglas, trumpet; Orrin Evans, piano; Linda May Han Oh, bass; Rudy Royston, drums; Do Yeon Kim, gayageum.

Ordering info: jazzdepot.com

The Hot Box

Critics	James Hale	Ammar Kalia	John McDonough	Giovanni Russonello
Karrin Allyson Sextet <i>Shoulder To Shoulder</i>	★★★½	★★★½	★★★	★★½
The DIVA Jazz Orchestra <i>DIVA + The Boys</i>	★★★	★★★½	★★★★	★★★½
Kassa Overall <i>I Think I'm Good</i>	★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★
Jim Snidero <i>Project-K</i>	★★★★	★★★★	★★★½	★★★½

Critics' Comments

Karrin Allyson Sextet, *Shoulder To Shoulder*

As a non-American, I find it difficult to relate to the specifics cited here, but the spirit expressed instrumentally is universal. Sung, Jensen and Miller sound particularly inspired. —James Hale

A beautifully crafted collective tribute to the protest songs of the suffrage movement. Although the record strays toward stage musical monologuing at times, highlights come from Daversa's tasteful arrangements when they're not overridden by moral messaging. —Ammar Kalia

Part documentary, part agitprop, part original-cast musical, Allyson's unusual revue catches the period flavor of the late-19th century debate over feminism with an all-star lineup that adds political backbone to entertainment. In its way, a contemporary piece, too. —John McDonough

The DIVA Jazz Orchestra, *DIVA + The Boys*

Luscious big-band arrangements propel this tasteful homage to the swing tradition. While the standards here are artfully rendered, the orchestra could afford more experimentation in its ranks to avoid this seeming like a mere anthology. —Ammar Kalia

An excellent big-band set from DIVA with some of the brightest sparkle coming from guest Peplowski. His poise and mastery radiate cool authority, while the saxophone chases on "Bucket O' Blues" showcase the band's own in-house authority. —John McDonough

The DIVA team is one of the most locomotive large ensembles in jazz, and it sounds as comfortable and cohesive as ever in conversation with four guest craftsmen. —Giovanni Russonello

Kassa Overall, *I Think I'm Good*

Doomy and draggy. With the exception of Guerin's ecstatic saxophone, this sounds like the hip-hop equivalent of a late-'70s jazz-rock fusion recording. All the right sonic moves, but no ingenuity. —James Hale

A study in the art of tactical distraction. Alas, all the production sorcery, electronic voodoo and chopping-block trickery on earth can't camouflage the creative musical vacuum of this one-note hip-hop hullabaloo. —John McDonough

Overall tunnels into his love for hip-hop without needing to sit at the feet of J Dilla, nor to leap for '90s cliché or trap cachet. The result is a deeply personal album that feels like a mixtape, and comes closer to hip-hop's inward-looking, slurry zeitgeist. —Giovanni Russonello

Jim Snidero, *Project-K*

Kim's gayageum is wonderfully disruptive, especially when paired with Evans' piano, but she's used too sparingly. Snidero and Douglas also sound great together. —James Hale

A country that's spawned some of the world's biggest pop hits and some of its most intricate folk music, Korea is an apt focus for the restlessly inventive Snidero. He does the broad scope of the music justice, from meditative opener "Han" to K-pop cover "Jenga." —Ammar Kalia

This big-eared alto saxophonist continues to push himself, and to keep brilliant company while doing it. Snidero goads his bandmates into intense exchanges over bristling post-bop compositions, but some of this album's finest moments come when Kim's gayageum takes the spotlight. —Giovanni Russonello



STORYTELLERS LUCIANA SOUZA

AND THE

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ARRANGED AND CONDUCTED BY

VINCE MENDOZA

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Renowned arranger Vince Mendoza presents each song in this collection with an enlightened score that springs from his profound understanding of orchestration, coloring, and his exceptional ability as a composer.

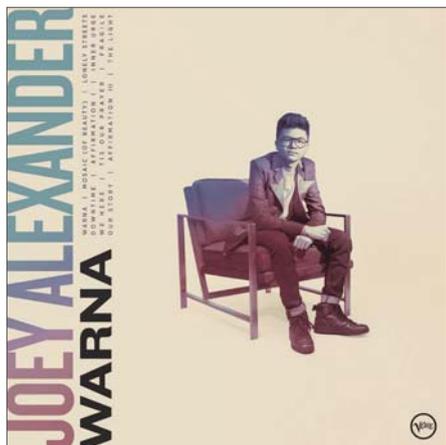
Here, the listener is rewarded with a recording that is essential and truthful, where joy and sorrow, loss and love are stories articulated in ways that reach incomparable beauty.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SEBASTIÃO SALGADO
JURUÁ RIVER, STATE OF AMAZONAS, BRAZIL



Sunnyside

www.sunnysiderecords.com



Joey Alexander *Warna*

VERVE 848839

★★★★

Pianist Joey Alexander's fifth release since his auspicious 2014 debut as a bebopping child prodigy, *Warna* marks the 16-year-old's development into adolescence. Now that the novelty that accompanies all prodigies is wearing off, listeners are presented with an album that seems poised to stand on its own artistic merits; it's not just "pretty good for a kid."

The pianist is at his best when flying across the keyboard on uptempo numbers—like

Jimmy Cobb *Remembering U*

JIMMY COBB WORLD 1001

★★★★

There's more than a little history behind *Remembering U*. The disc finds veteran drummer Jimmy Cobb (87 at the time of this recording) bringing a lifetime of swing to bear. But the sessions also were among the last recorded by trumpeter Roy Hargrove; the album itself was the final project for legendary engineer Rudy Van Gelder.

Moreover, the record doesn't disappoint. Although there's nothing earth-shaking about the performances, the music is masterfully played and full of rhythmic vitality. Cobb's touch is light but authoritative, and he maintains an engagingly conversational approach with his trio. On the bluesy "Cobb's Belle," the drummer pulses a minimal hi-hat figure behind a solo from bassist Paolo Benedettini that quietly pushes and pulls against the flow; the two parts sound of a piece. Similarly, the trio's take of Michael Jackson's "Man In The Mirror" gets its groove from the synergy between Cobb's understated boogaloo and pianist Tadataka Unno's crisp, gospel-schooled chording.

Cobb and Hargrove go way back—the drummer first heard him when the trumpeter was just a kid in Dallas—and their rapport is obvious in

the opening title track—or in his spirited run through the changes of Joe Henderson's "Inner Urge," where bassist Larry Grenadier and drummer Kendrick Scott are eager and potent collaborators. Alexander's duet with percussionist Luisito Quintero, "Our Story," also stands out. But most of the songs here gesture toward bouncy evocations of Ahmad Jamal or floating ballads and waltzes that land with less confidence. Alexander's crisp touch and clever turns of phrase still are there, but he still seems to be finding his way through the feeling of subtler rhythmic forms; his melodramatic interpretations of ballads are a bit overwrought. But there are some fascinating moments throughout *Warna*, where Alexander seems to break through these veneers and into new spaces of interaction with his triomates, as on "Affirmation III."

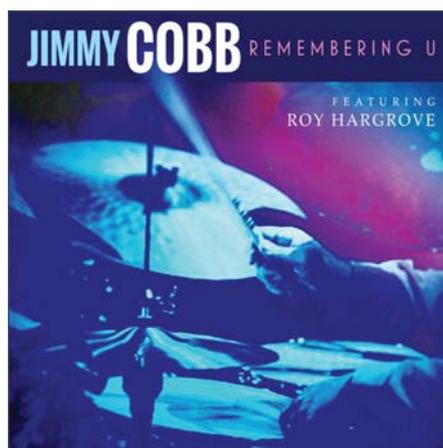
All told, Alexander's effortless pianism always hits the right notes, even when a few wrong ones might do him some good. And although he's still learning to connect to the emotional depths of the blues, his breezy, playful curiosity—evident throughout *Warna*—is deeply refreshing.

—Alex W. Rodriguez

Warna: Warna; Mosaic (Of Beauty); Lonely Streets; Downtime; Affirmation I; Inner Urge; We Here; Tis Our Prayer; Fragile; Our Story; Affirmation III; The Light. (62:15)

Personnel: Joey Alexander, piano; Larry Grenadier, bass; Kendrick Scott, drums; Luisito Quintero, percussion (1, 4, 10); Anne Drummond, flute (7, 12).

Ordering info: vervelabelgroup.com



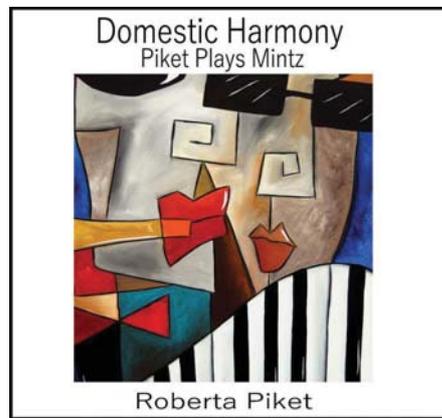
the way Cobb's ride regularly anticipates accents in Hargrove's solo on "Eleanor." But it's the bluesy "Willow Weep For Me" that throws the brightest sparks, with Cobb laying back just enough to ensure that the pocket is deep and soulful, while Hargrove's vocabulary of staccato pops and vocalized smears takes full advantage.

—J.D. Considine

Remembering U: Eleanor; Pistachio; Man In The Mirror; Remembering U; JC's AC; Composition 101; I Just Can't Stop Loving You; Willow Weep For Me; W.K.; Cedar's Rainbow; I Don't Wanna Be Kissed (By Anyone But You); Cobb's Belle. (64:16)

Personnel: Jimmy Cobb, drums; Paolo Benedettini, bass; Tadataka Unno, piano; Roy Hargrove, trumpet (1, 5, 8), flugelhorn (1); Javon Jackson, tenor saxophone (1).

Ordering info: cdbaby.com



Roberta Piket *Domestic Harmony: Piket Plays Mintz*

13TH NOTE 012

★★★★½

Originally cut as an intimate birthday gift, this solo piano album is Roberta Piket's tribute to the work of her husband, jazz composer and percussionist Billy Mintz. Now that she has decided to release it to a wider audience, listeners can witness the poignant sound of the pair's mutual admiration.

The 10 compositions here allow Piket to demonstrate her range through heartfelt ballads, idiosyncratic post-bop, and even some blues and stride. This is a testament to Mintz's creativity as well—oftentimes, these genres each crop up multiple times during a single piece, as on "Shmear" or "Blinds Eye." Piket seems to delight in these surprising turns, bouncing deftly from mood to mood, always unafraid to improvise assertive flourishes along the way. The album is also full of warm and touching gestures where Piket's affection for the tune's composer is easy to hear: in the gentle harmony of the opening track, "Ghost Sanctuary," or in her sweet rubato lilt throughout "Looking Down At The Stars." Piket even takes a turn as a vocalist on "Destiny," conveying deep longing on a lyric that touches on love in difficult times. For the album's closer, "Cannonball," Piket's right hand dances through the quirky blues melody, foregrounding the playfulness of Mintz's compositional approach.

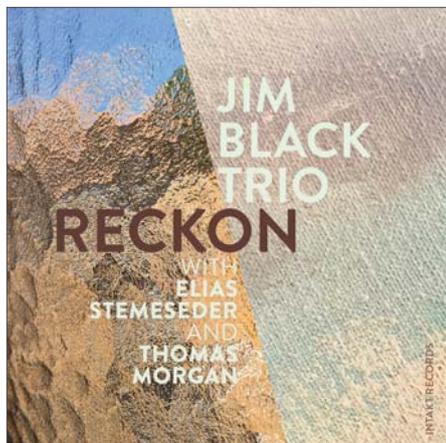
It's a rare treat to hear such a thorough exploration of one composer's work by someone who knows it so well. Of course, Piket has been doing this for decades—she plays in Mintz's regular bands, which has played most of these tunes countless times during their years together. In this format, though, we can hear how much these two artists have taught one another along the way.

—Alex W. Rodriguez

Domestic Harmony: Piket Plays Mintz: Ghost Sanctuary; Beautiful You; Looking Down At The Stars; Shmear; Flight; Destiny; Your Touch; Blinds Eye; Ugly Beautiful; Cannonball. (54:08)

Personnel: Roberta Piket, piano, vocals (6).

Ordering info: thirteenthnoterecords.com



Jim Black Trio

Reckon

INTAKT 334

★★★★

Gordon Grdina's Nomad Trio

Nomad

SKIRL 044

★★★

The delightfully clanky attack of drummer Jim Black is one of the most distinctive sounds in contemporary jazz, a visceral driver that

stands out immediately. In lesser hands such an idiosyncratic aesthetic could fail to meld into different settings, but Black always tempers his approach to enhance his surroundings. He's at his best on *Reckon*, the fourth recording from his superb trio, a group that has eschewed most of the format's standard vocabulary. The troupe has always evinced a collective spirit, and here the band improvises, and, in a few cases, composes all 11 pieces together, while retaining a crackling cohesion and untamable thrust.

According to Kevin Whitehead's typically erudite liner notes, only the buoyantly churning "Spooty And Snofer"—a generous showcase for bassist Thomas Morgan's melodic gifts and warm, woody tone—was partly written out before the session, while three other pieces were built from little more than sketches. On the most frenetic material, such as the opener "Astrono Said So," there's a lean clarity to each individual line, but together they become pulse-quickening, as each creates friction in its off-kilter push. Pianist Elias Stemeseder alternates between flowing melody and lapidary complexity, using jagged counterpoint and occasional prepared piano treatments to emerge as an analog to Black, while Morgan displays characteristic concision in threading those halves together.

The drummer contends with a much denser and busier landscape on the debut from Vancouver guitarist Gordon Grdina's Nomad Trio, which also features pianist Matt Mitchell. The leader's knotty compositions are packed with twists and turns, and with the way Grdina and Mitchell unleash endless skeins of swerving sound (with a marked prog-rock influence), there's not much space for the drummer, who nonetheless finds his place.

The corkscrewing melody of "Nomad" offers delirious energy, and when Mitchell's piled-up left-hand figures joust brilliantly with the drummer's spilled-over groove, it's impossible to miss Black's mastery of maintaining order, even in the most chaotic circumstances. The trio sometimes proves fatiguing, packing in so many notes, which makes "Benbow" and the patient closer "Lady Choral" the only spots where Grdina plays oud rather than electric guitar, a welcome respite.

—Peter Margasak

Reckon: Astrono Said So; Tripped Overhue; Tighter Whined; Spooty And Snofer; Very Query; Focus On Tomorrow; Next Razor World; Neural Holiday; Dancy Clear Ends; What You Are Made From; This One And This Too. (47:16)

Personnel: Jim Black, drums; Elias Stemeseder, piano; Thomas Morgan, bass.

Nomad: Wildfire; Nomad; Ride Home; Benbow; Thanksgiving; Lady Choral. (51:48)

Personnel: Gordon Grdina, guitar, oud; Matt Mitchell, piano; Jim Black, drums.

Ordering info: intaktrec.ch; skirlrecords.com

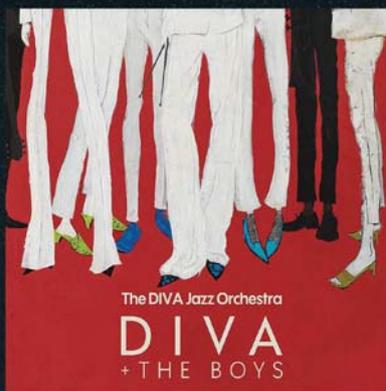
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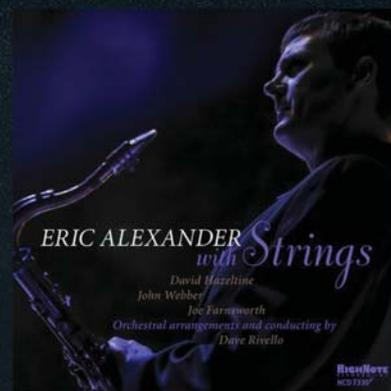
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Origin: Demonstrable Chops

In 1997, Seattle musicians Matt Jorgensen and John Bishop birthed Origin Records, an independent label “run by musicians for musicians.” An instrumentalist-led jazz label was a daring concept 23 years ago, when players had few recording options aside from those that the majors provided. But Origin was nothing if not daring. Under Jorgensen’s guidance, the label also was an early adopter of online music promotion and distribution, an innovative stance that helped its founders expand further into the global jazz market.

Today, Origin comprises four brands—jazz imprints Origin Records and OA2 Records, Origin Classical, and Origin World—and has released more than 600 albums.

The artists who found a home with the label—at least 300 internationally—represent different styles and echelons of jazz, from guesting headliners like drummer Brian Blade and saxophonist Joshua Redman to the vocal group New York Voices and regional jazz names like Seattle pianist/singer Dawn Clemens, Philadelphia saxophonist Tom Talitsch and Chicago guitarist Erik Skov.

What these artists all have in common—besides the hard-working label behind them—is demonstrably superlative musicianship.

When pianist **Hal Galper** first heard the live recording that became **The Zone: Live At The Yardbird Suite (Origin 82793; 58:28 ★★★★★)**, he didn’t recognize his own playing. On that November 2016 gig—at the eponymous club in Edmonton, Canada—“the music came from some place deeper,” Galper wrote in the album’s liner notes. The bandleader, who’s a long way from his 1970s electrified workouts on the Mainstream imprint, called that place “the zone,” where the affinity with his trio (bassist Jeff Johnson and drummer Bishop) is spontaneous, tight and magically intuitive. Generated in the zone, these seven exquisite tracks churn with excitement and subtlety under Galper’s spellbinding touch.

For his third Origin album with the **Circle 3 Trio, Interaction (Origin 82792; 61:14/51:57 ★★★★★)**, bassist/pianist **David Friesen** debuts some new material while borrowing strategically from his earlier Origin albums like *My Faith, My Life; Structures*; and *Bactrian*. Captured on two discs—one a studio session and the other a live recording—the contrasting versions of the reprised tunes lend insight into Friesen’s cool, sophisticated creativity. And while there are many arresting moments on these paired discs, none are more sweetly aching than Friesen’s folksy comping to Joe Manis’ thoughtful saxophone solo on the final track, “My Faith, My Life.”



On **Immigration Nation (OA2 22177; 78:56; ★★★★★)**, versatile trumpeter and composer **Charlie Porter** utilizes modern jazz vernacular to make a social statement about contemporary life in the United States: Our forebears and our music all derive from someplace else. Rather than preach, however, he shows how it works. On *Part I: Leaving Home*, the first six tunes, he celebrates the rich rhythmic vitality of American jazz forms, and on *Part II: New Beginnings*, he explores the synthesis of differing musical thoughts. A former student of Wynton Marsalis, Porter’s playing is fluid, expressive and magnificent.

On **Lolly Allen’s** infectiously jocund **Coming Home (OA2 22178; 55:44 ★★½)**, the vibraphonist recalls the 1950s club scene in Los Angeles with bright remakes of tunes like Horace Silver’s “The Hippest Cat In Hollywood” and Dizzy Gillespie’s “Bebop.” But Allen has her own view of L.A. jazz: Her originals—like the bracing “Little Hummingbird” and the colorful title track—are steeped in modernity. The sleek Lolly Allen Quintet, with additional horns and a guitar on two tracks, matches its bandleader in energy and wit; as they pass through their solos, you’ll wish you could join in.

For **City Abstract (Origin 82788; 55:22 ★★½)**, **Dan McCarthy** penned six dynamic originals to celebrate the work of two of his mentors, pianist Carla Bley and fellow vibraphonist Gary Burton. To start, he opens the album with “Bleyto (For Carla Bley),” an uptempo, ringing tune with post-bop vitality that stands in stylistic contrast with the closing track, “Desert Roads (For Gary Burton),” with its galloping jazz-rock groove. In between these vibrant bookends, McCarthy delves into beautiful vibes-guided meditations on tunes like Keith Jarrett’s “Coral,” Pat Metheny’s “Midwestern Nights Dream” and his own “Other Things Of Less Consequence.”

Ordering info: originarts.com



Sonar With David Torn *Tranceportation (Volume 1)*

RARENOISE 0113

★★★★★

The Swiss quartet Sonar already had established a unique, high-tech art-rock sound before teaming up with experimental guitarist and electronic musician David Torn.

Sonar’s music has a lot in common with fellow Swiss native Nik Bärtsch. In fact, its debut album, and a 2017 collaboration with guitarist Markus Reuter, appeared on the keyboardist’s Ronin Rhythm label. And like Bärtsch’s group Ronin, Sonar traffics in minimal, looping riffs and precise, cell-based rhythms that build almost imperceptibly to peaks of surprising intensity. But while his music seems to be at its core a fiercely abstracted form of jazz-funk, stripping away flourishes until nothing remains but evocative chords locked to a grid, Sonar are more willing to rock out. The band often seems to be conducting a semiotic interrogation of “the riff,” with Manuel Pasquinelli’s concussive drums functioning as the element that keeps the music anchored to the floor. And Christian Kuntner’s tritone bass is a massive rumble at the core of the nearly 15-minute album opener, “Labyrinth,” a tune that at times sounds as if it could be a song by Norwegian psychedelic explorers Motorpsycho.

Torn, a longtime fan of using high technology to make disturbing noises, is out front throughout, soloing in a way that recalls Adrian Belew’s work with King Crimson, with a side of post-metal, not unlike Soundgarden’s Kim Thayil. His playing on the relatively mellow “Red Sky” is like a coil of razor wire slowly rolling out across a desert landscape at dusk.

Tranceportation—its sequel expected in May—balances structure and freedom in ways that make headbanging feel like an act of Zen discipline.

—Philip Freeman

Tranceportation (Volume 1): Labyrinth; Partitions; Red Sky; Tunnel Drive. (39:03)

Personnel: David Torn, guitar, live looping; Stephan Thelen, Bernhard Wagner, tritone guitar; Christian Kuntner, tritone bass; Manuel Pasquinelli, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: rarenoiserecords.com

Valery Ponomarev *Our Father Who Art Blakey: The Centennial*

SUMMIT 758

★★★★

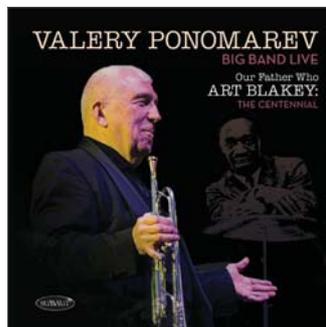
In Jazz Messengers folklore, a number of trumpeters followed in the frothy wake of Lee Morgan and Freddie Hubbard, including a young Russian who held the chair through the end of the 1970s, giving way to a rising Wynton Marsalis. Valery Ponomarev's bebop-fluent emanations fit like a glove within the Art Blakey criterion, and the drummer became a father figure to the young man. Blakey would have celebrated his 100th birthday in 2019, and for the occasion, Ponomarev put together a band to perform large-ensemble versions of Messenger classics, arranged by the trumpeter. There are a number of places where the live ensemble isn't quite together, though, and issues of intonation (especially in the trumpets) are evident. Crowd pleasers like "One By One" are faithful representations of the source material, more reincarnation than reimagination. The tour de force is Ponomarev's take of "Caravan," moving through the epic chapters of Hubbard's version, down to his challenging counterpoint on the bridge. At 76, Ponomarev still plays and leads with fearless gusto, a trait he likely gleaned from Blakey.

—Gary Fukushima

Our Father Who Art Blakey: The Centennial: Overture; Tell It Like It Is; Are You Real?; One By One; Caravan; Webb City; Hammer Head; Quick Silver; Kalypto To Theme Song. (52:56)

Personnel: Valery Ponomarev, Rick Henly, David Neves, Antoine Drye, Waldron Ricks, trumpet; Victor Jones, drums; Ruslan Khain, bass; Mamiko Watanabe, piano; Todd Bashore, Chris Hemingway, alto saxophone; Peter Brainin, Steven Carrington, tenor saxophone; Anthony Nelson, baritone saxophone; Stafford Hunter, Alvin Walker, Jimmy O'Connell, Jack Jeffers, trombone.

Ordering info: summitrecords.com



Ronnie Cuber

Four

STEEPLECHASE 31882

★★★★½

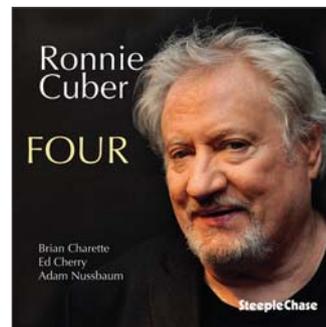
Recording as a valued leader and sideman in numerous contexts for more than 40 years, baritone saxophonist Ronnie Cuber continues to plow through different, sometimes contrasting, terrains. He convened a challenging saxophone/bass/drums ensemble for *Ronnie's Trio* in 2018, and on *Four*, Cuber delivers an archetypal soul-jazz groove, adding his bari to an organ trio. It's a classic sound in jazz, but atypical in his own discography. The warm and fluid tone that Cuber brings to this session makes one wonder why it's taken him so long to front such a troupe. His command of the dynamic comes across in especially vivid colors on ballads like "Tenderly," as B-3 player Brian Charette dashes Toots Thielemans' "Bluesette" with funk. Drummer Adam Nussbaum has been a regular sideman in Cuber's groups, and this familiarity makes for an ongoing and fulfilling dialogue. The drummer's shifting tones on "Coming Home Baby" might have made Cuber rethink his direction on the fly, although he easily floats over the changes. While Cuber's approach here is resolutely modern, much of album serves the same function as the organ-jazz idiom did 50 years ago: to rock a club with the same kind of backbone as a much larger band.

—Aaron Cohen

Four: Battery Blues; Sidewinder; Motivation; Tenderly; Just Friends; Bluesette; Coming Home Baby; How High The Moon; Sugar; Four. (66:45)

Personnel: Ronnie Cuber, baritone saxophone; Ed Cherry, guitar; Brian Charette, Hammond B-3; Adam Nussbaum, drums.

Ordering info: steeplechase.dk



Milton Nascimento *Maria Maria*

FAR OUT 0215

★★★★

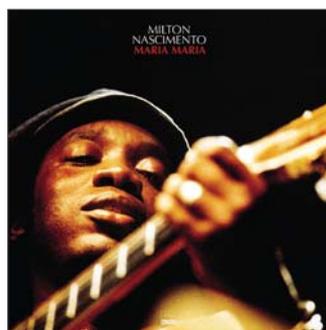
First released in 2003, Milton Nascimento's ambitious *Maria Maria* now is a two-LP set. Despite its textural and structural variety, at more than an hour it can be boring, and it's not cohesive enough to stand alone. The 1974 recording initially was designed as a soundtrack to a ballet about slavery in Brazil, and it feels that way, even as it showcases Nascimento's undeniable prowess. Highlights include his honeyed voice on "Francisco," "Sedução" and the captivating "Boca A Boca," an extended track featuring nervy vocals, lurking flutes and Pointillist synth. Like several other cuts, "Santos Católicos X Candomblé" opens with spoken word and moves into bristling percussion. Guitars and vocals feint and parry as this haunting tune divides and subdivides, throwing off heat. Nascimento's fusion of ideas and strains makes *Maria Maria* distinctive; rigorous editing could have made it memorable.

—Carlo Wolff

Maria Maria: Maria Maria; Cozinha; Pilar (Do Pilá); Trabalhos (Essa Voz); Lilia; A Chamada; Era Rei E Sou Escravo; Os Escravos De Jó; Tema Dos Deuses; Santos Católicos X Candomblé; Pai Grande; Sedução; Francisco; Maria Solidária; De Repente Maria Sumiu; Eu Sou Uma Preta Velha Aqui Sentada Ao Sol; Boca A Boca; Maria Maria (Nova Maria). (67:14)

Personnel: Milton Nascimento, guitar, piano, synthesizer, vocals; Luiz Alves, bass; Novelli, bass, vocals; Nelson Angelo, guitar, synthesizer, vocals; Oscar Araiz, Hélcio Milito, percussion; Ronaldo Bastos, Nico Borges, Telo Borges, Sirlan, Cafí, effects; Paulinho Braga, Hélcio Rodrigues, drums, percussion; Fafá De Belém, Nana Caymmi, Clementina De Jesus, Tavinho Moura, vocals; João Donato, piano, organ, percussion; Frederyko, guitar, vocals; Beto Guedes, guitar, mandolin, synthesizer, vocals; Paulo Moura, saxophone; Zé Rodrix, organ, flute, percussion, vocals; Robertinho Silva, drums; Caboclinho, atabaques; Tavito, guitar, vocals; Wagner Tiso, piano, organ, vocals; Nana Vasconcelos, vocals, percussion, drums, effects; Vermelho, organ, vocals; Valdir, Renato, Malu, coral.

Ordering info: faroutrecordings.com



Yelena Eckemoff *Nocturnal Animals*

L&H 806151-29

★★★★

Yelena Eckemoff has dedicated a great deal of time to translating disparate concepts into music—and free-verse poetry—during the past decade. And for *Nocturnal Animals*, the pianist and her band examine fauna with relish and restraint.

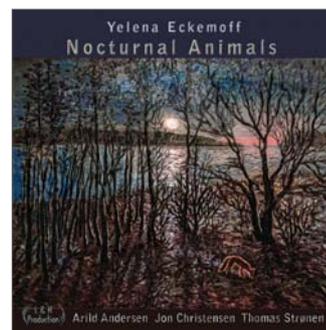
It'd be easy to argue that the music here feels more related to Eckemoff's anthropomorphizing of animals referenced in song titles than to the creatures themselves. Still, the music is evocative: "Rattlesnake" moves with an ominous slither while tastefully avoiding the obvious percussion implements one might expect. Dual drummers Jon Christensen and Thomas Strønen do a lot of heavy lifting, using auxiliary percussion and complex, dancing rhythms to suggest each critter's essence. And Arild Andersen's bass lends the music a pleasant rubbery quality, circling around Eckemoff's left-hand antics, alternating between sturdy support and contrapuntal mischief. The piano is careening but delicate, the bandleader's right-hand runs occasionally a tad busy. Ultimately, though, *Nocturnal Animals* is relatively light entertainment, with no grand spiritual or social intentions. It's just one skilled composer thinking about animals, how they act and what they might think. It's a fine exercise, and well executed.

—Dustin Kratochiv

Nocturnal Animals: Disc One: Cicada; Bat; Walkingstick; Fox; Grizzly Bear; Rattlesnake; Wolf. Disc Two: Hedgehog; Toad; Lynx; Scorpion; Firefly; Owl; Sea Turtle. (45:16/42:14)

Personnel: Yelena Eckemoff, piano; Arild Andersen, bass; Jon Christensen, Thomas Strønen, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: landhproduction.com





New and Renewed Spirits

The Jimmys, *Gotta Have It* (Brown Cow 006; 50:36 ★★★★★) When not working on his Wisconsin dairy farm, Jimmy Voegeli flaunts his alter ego as the leader of a jump band that warrants notice beyond the Midwest. This new album brims with an honest feeling that stimulates the bandleader's casually forceful vocals and piano work. The other Jimmys, including horn players, respond with exaltation to every smiling suggestion he throws their way. Voegeli's lucky to have Perry Weber in the band; he's an exceptional guitarist who plays with an understated clarity and a sense of stakes. No slouch either as a songwriter, Voegeli sprinkles his tunes, like the faux-ominous "Grim Reaper," with witty lyrics. Two Weber drinking songs are two too many, though.

Ordering info: thejimmys.net

Lucky Peterson, *50: Just Warming Up!* (Jazz Village 70165; 73:45 ★★½) A half-century since Willie Dixon "discovered" him as a child organist, Peterson continues to breathe life and vitality into the blues. Singing and playing mostly guitar in a French studio, he finds the greatest power of his recording career when cauterizing the raw emotional hurt on the Albert King-derived "Angel Of Mercy." It's a startling reaffirmation of his historic roots, preserving the blues' sense of darkness with new spirit. Never one to sit still, Peterson moves past unalloyed blues and takes off in other stylistic directions: blues-rock, funk, romantic pop-r&b, New Orleans party blues, gospel and rap. These experiments in eclecticism are acceptable, despite characteristic outbreaks of, well, over-warmth.

Ordering info: lucky.peterson.com

Betty Fox Band, *Peace In Pieces* (Self Release; 63:12 ★★★★★) Fox makes the pilgrimage to Muscle Shoals' FAME Recording Studios, as have other up-and-comers hoping to capture the magic of history. And this Tampa, Florida-based vocalist has the time of her life,

communicating her delight most tellingly on "Feels So Good." Eleven more originals, a decent lot overall, also display that she handles soul and soul-blues gestures with sureness. Fox also convincingly refines a religious vision, singing "Til The Storm Passes By." Nevertheless, some of her vocal gymnastics seem calculated for dazzling performance, rather than emotional outlay.

Ordering info: bettyfox.net

Jack Mack & The Heart Attack, *Live From Centennial Park—Atlanta 1996* (Free Roll; 61:33 ★★★★★) Jack Mack & The Heart Attack finished its set at the 1996 Summer Olympics and were revving up concert-goers for an encore when a domestic terrorist's bomb exploded. Released in tandem with *Richard Jewell*, a Clint Eastwood film about a heroic security guard on duty that night, this long-anticipated concert album finds the seven-piece band from Los Angeles measuring up to the highest standards in expressivity, bluesy grain and Memphis-type soul stylings. Gripping "I Walked Alone," sung at a measured pace with depth by TC Moses, is added to exciting approximations of hits by Sly & the Family Stone, the Staples Singers and James Brown. The album ends abruptly with a nanosecond of white noise.

Ordering info: jackmack.com

Big Mike & The R&B Kings, *This Song's For You* (Red Tint; 70:23 ★★★★★) Once on the Chicago blues scene and found the past few years in New Orleans, singer-bassist Big Mike Perez delivers one of the more curious albums to come along in a while. The diverse program follows his investigations into Chicago blues and r&b, torrid blues-rock, party funk, reggae, off-kilter smooth-jazz and, not least, surprisingly touching love songs of an indeterminate musical type. His performance only loses purpose when the funk and blues-rock are overdramatized. **DB**

Ordering info: bigmikeandtherbkings.com



The Westerlies *Wherein Lies The Good*

WESTERLIES RECORDS 001

★★★

Wherein Lies The Good is the third album from The Westerlies, the innovative brass quartet that now includes trumpeters Chloe Rowlands and Riley Mulherkar, as well as trombonists Andy Clausen and Willem De Koch. It's by far the group's most stylistically varied release, featuring original compositions along with a panoply of traditional tunes by Charles Ives and the Golden State Quartet.

The music is loose, bright and lively, and mostly shorter tunes form the record's spine. Others are roomier, including the 14-minute title track that comes early in the program and is divided into 11 movements. The final three tracks function as a kind of suite. The best tunes here, though, are brief and playful, such as "Golden Gate Gospel Train," an expressive bit of polyphony that brings to mind Jimmy Giuffrè's "The Train And The River." Bandmembers seem to have a collective sense of humor, too. Nothing is overly solemn, even on a rendition of Arthur Russell's "Eli," when tin foil covers the bell of one trombone to create a kind of sustained fricative that sounds a bit like a sizzle ride. The first track, "Robert Henry," is minimalist and somewhat classically inflected, as is "Chickendog And Woodylocks." Other efforts—like "Laurie," featuring a sighing trombone that almost sounds like a tuba—are slow and contemplative without being overly pensive. "Do Unto Others" begins with a lovely, blues-inflected call-and-response that has a New Orleans-style feel.

The collected works make *Wherein Lies The Good* a uniquely textured, open and broad effort, one that benefits from drawing on a variety of sources and moods. —Matthew Kassel

Wherein Lies The Good: Robert Henry; In The Mornin'; Weeping Mary; Wherein Lies The Good; Golden Gate Gospel Train; Travelin' Shoes; Remember Me; Born Ten Thousand Years Ago; Do Unto Others; The Kiss; From The Very First Time; Laurie; Eli; Chickendog And Woodylocks; Memories; Entropy; Parts I-III. (64:46)

Personnel: Chloe Rowlands, Riley Mulherkar, trumpet; Andy Clausen, Willem De Koch, trombone.

Ordering info: westerliesmusic.com

Nils Landgren/ Jan Lundgren

Kristallen

ACT 9628

★★★★★

Trombonist/vocalist Nils Landgren and pianist Jan Lundgren unite for an intimate and multifaceted program. The single-vowel difference in their surnames feels appropriate, as their set consists of two distinct yet compatible decks of cards, shuffled into each other. One of those decks is instrumental, the other vocal. Of the former, Lundgren's "Blekinge" introduces a windswept pastoralism. Amid a smattering of Swedish folk-songs, including "Byssan Lull" and "Värmlandsvisan" (both reworked into delicate grooves), they plant the evergreens of "Norwegian Wood" and Keith Jarrett's "Country." Standing tallest among these, however, is Abdullah Ibrahim's "The Wedding," a tune glowing with tender nostalgia.

On the vocal side of things, listeners are treated to a bluesy take on another Beatles classic, "I Will," where the duo offers plenty of atmosphere. Standards "Didn't We" and "The Nearness Of You" rub shoulders with the pair's "Why Did You Let Me Go." "Lovers Parade," an effort credited to Lundgren and Michael Saxell, unfolds with special clarity, wintry and sincere. Landgren's singing is every bit as brassy as his trombone, and each informs the other.

—Tyran Grillo

Kristallen: Blekinge; Byssan Lull; Country; Didn't We; Hornlåtar; I Will; Why Did You Let Me Go; Lovers Parade; Norwegian Wood; Olu; The Nearness Of You; Värmlandsvisan; The Wedding. (59:50)

Personnel: Nils Landgren: trombone, vocals; Jan Lundgren: piano.

Ordering info: actmusic.com



Andrea Keller

Transients: Volume 2

SELF RELEASE

★★★★★

While acquitting herself artfully as both pianist and composer on *Transients: Volume Two*, where a few songs also are titled as sequels, pianist Andrea Keller makes a point of casting a flattering light on the impressive Melbourne jazz scene.

But echoes of precedents arise along the way. We can detect parallels to Keith Jarrett's 1970s Scandinavian quartet on "Sleep Cycles (II)," and sonic similarities with the current Norwegian sounds of Christian Wallumrød and Trygve Seim. Elsewhere, variations of waltz time grace the song set, from a duet with guitarist Stephen Magnusson on the bittersweetly gentle "Do Not Go Gentle" to the percolating piano-saxophone-trombone matrix of "Inside Out (II)." With its yearning emotional tenor, "Search For Optimism (II)" effectively realizes the suggestion of the title, lined with chordal bass guitar work and an impressive piano solo.

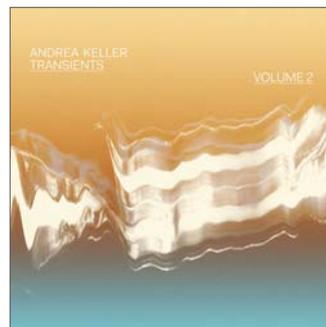
Finally, bonafide swing enters the picture, with the walking bass-driven closing track, "Domesticity." Roving rounds of soloists work steadily toward a spidery, cool head only articulated at tune's end. Keller leaves us wanting more on a crisply suspended unison line.

—Josef Woodard

Transients: Volume 2: Sleep Cycles (II); Inside Out (II); Search For Optimism (II); Saint Misha (II); Salmon Life; Suspended; SNAFU; Do Not Go Gentle ... ; Domesticity. (47:29)

Personnel: Andrea Keller, piano; Flora Carbo, alto saxophone; Julien Wilson, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; James Macaulay, trombone; Stephen Magnusson, guitar; Sam Anning, bass; Christopher Hale, bass guitar; Leigh Fisher, James McLean, drums.

Ordering info: andreakeller.bandcamp.com



Jimin Lee

Strange Flower

MIRROBALL 1932

★★★★★

To call Jimin Lee's *Strange Flower* satisfying modern jazz would be a disservice to her compositional inventiveness and the album's lyrical muse, Korean modernist poet Yi Sang.

An augmented subdominant in the opening phrase of "Mirror," followed by sporadic shifts between major and harmonic minor tonality, serve as musical counterparts to Sang's strange thoughts on an otherwise ordinary object. And unison sections shared by Lee and Eunyoung Kim's piano melodies feel like metaphors for the contrast between one's true self and a reflection in a mirror. "Flower Tree" presents similar musical texturing, but revolves around the idea of struggle and yearning for different circumstances. Everything—from light cymbal taps to relaxed plucks from Seungho Jang's bass—exudes emotional brightness, matching the titular object. Yet, the ambivalence of harmonic resolution reflects Lee playing with the poem's idea of a tree's beauty and its inability to move. Her whistling and irregular vocals on the free-jazz "Crow's Eye View Poem No. 12" even align with Sang's contrasting white pigeons with loose, swooping bundles of laundry. While *Strange Flower* is a pleasant enough listen, exploring Sang's poetry only will add to the experience.

—Kira Grunenberg



Strange Flower: Flower Tree; Mirror; Crow's Eye View Poem No. 12; Self-Portrait; Words · For · White · Flower · 1-3; Cliff; Paper Memorial; This Kind Of Poetry. (52:45)

Personnel: Jimin Lee, vocals; Seungho Jang, bass; Junyoung Song, drums; Sunjae Lee, saxophone (3, 4, 8); Jinwon Oh (3, 9); Jin Soo Kim (10), guitar; Eunyoung Kim, piano.

Ordering info: mirrorbballmusic.co.kr

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Tackling Country Success

According to researcher Jada E. Watson's 2019 report *Gender Representation on Country Format Radio*, country music radio hit an all-time low in 2018 for playing the music of female artists. Through that year, women-led ensembles made up less than 12 percent of the songs on playlists for stations throughout North America. And it doesn't look like it got any better last year, despite the commercial gains made by artists like Maren Morris and Kelsea Ballerini.

One of the few artists that has managed to maintain a presence in the country establishment is **Miranda Lambert**. Her latest album, **Wildcard (RCA Nashville B07WFJBB8D; 48:53 ★★★★★)**, landed atop the Billboard Country charts and found its way into the Top 10 of the Billboard 200. And Lambert hit those marks even as she challenged the established format. This new record has clomping singalongs like "It All Comes Out In The Wash" and "Bluebird" that are catnip to radio programmers, but sets them alongside New Wave-streaked guitars and ballads that preach equal parts empowerment and romantic yearning.

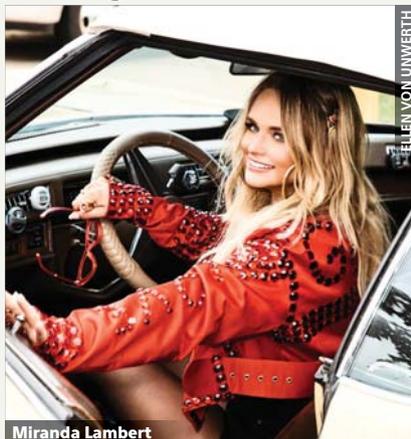
Ordering info: sonymusicnashville.com

Often, the way that women get heard on country radio is by being part of a group. That's what helped push Kimberly Perry and her all-sibling group, The Band Perry, to the top of both the country and adult contemporary charts. And it's what has been a driving force behind the sound of Nashville trio **Lady Antebellum**. The group's major strength long has been the interplay of vocalists Hillary Scott and Charles Kelley. And the ensemble doesn't mess with its formula on **Ocean (BMLG B07XR5FZFM; 47:33 ★★★★★)**, letting the male/female harmonies provide emotional heft through songs that paint pictures of misty-eyed romance ("On A Night Like This"), heartbreak and crinkly nostalgia ("Pictures").

Ordering info: bigmachinelabelgroup.com

A similar blend of voices has propelled **Little Big Town** to the major leagues, but with a bit more power at their disposal thanks to the balance of four voices. But on its latest album, **Nightfall (Capitol Nashville B07ZPJXS5D; 46:11 ★★★½)**, the group proves to have more in common with Lambert than Lady Antebellum. The self-produced album questions the demands and beauty standards foisted upon women and acknowledges how hard it can be to break free of them on songs like "The Daughters" and "Sugar Coat." That the group serves those messages with a glistening pop-country sheen feels downright subversive.

Ordering info: umgnashville.com



Miranda Lambert

But as the numbers referenced in *Gender Representation on Country Format Radio* bear out, country radio still is a man's world. And no man has been dominating that field like **Luke Combs**. The burly singer-songwriter from North Carolina has reached that apex by sticking to an almost cliched formula of songs about drinking, hard work and the girls that make those activities worthwhile. It's exactly that blueprint that drags down **What You See Is What You Get (Columbia Nashville B07XN4B4DD; 59:42 ★★)**, his second full-length. There are no surprises to be found throughout this overstuffed record and little excitement in hearing nearly an hour's worth of medium-tempo trudging and bellowing sentiment. It's only the appearance of high-profile guests like Brooks & Dunn and Eric Church that shake Combs from his lethargy, resulting in highlights like the chugging "1, 2 Many" and an ode to acceptance, "Does To Me."

Ordering info: sonymusicnashville.com

What might help the scores of country artists in Nashville and beyond is working somewhere outside the mainstream. Kacey Musgraves and Margo Price found critical acclaim and crossover fame by courting indie and jam-band audiences. Struggling musicians also could find some outside-the-box collaborators, like **Futurebirds**, a quintet from Georgia that steers into the psychedelic sound that outlaw country legends toyed with during the 1970s. Now would be a good time to hitch a wagon to their rising star. **Teamwork (Easy Sound B07Y5TYGLL; 50:21 ★★★★★)** is an improvement on their trippy, yet accessible, sound that feels as comfortable as a broken-in pair of jeans, and with songs like the shuffling "My Broken Arm" and the anthemic "Wear It Out" nestled up beside the sun-damaged ache of "Waiting On A Call," the variety here is as colorful as a patchwork quilt. **DB**

Ordering info: easysound.co



Will Vinson

four forty one

WHIRLWIND 4752

★★★★★

Will Vinson calls himself a frustrated pianist, which will be less of a surprise if you've heard him play, because the young Londoner (who's now based in New York) has a subtle harmonic sense that evolved over seven leader dates. But his Whirlwind debut sees him fulfill something of a dream project by recording in duo and quartet formations with no less than five major keyboard artists and their respective rhythm sections.

By far the most important, in the sense of musical affinity, is Gonzalo Rubalcaba. With Larry Grenadier and Eric Harland, the group takes on "That Happened," a clever reimagining of "It Could Happen To You" with a verve that hasn't been around since the bebop days. But there are other joys here, too. Sullivan Fortner's front-of-church "Boogaloo" is a perfect opener, and the relaxed approach to recording, with no rehearsal and very little studio fuss, lends a palpable warmth and spontaneity to the proceedings. Gerald Clayton's "Cherry Time" has a dark, throbbing interior sustained by Matt Brewer and Clarence Penn, while his "I Am James Bond," far from being upbeat and cocksure as the title suggests, is a delicious ballad.

Vinson eats up the situations, and there isn't a single clunker. He's always been one of those players who deals with sometimes daunting new tunes like the young Bobby Fischer doing speed chess—but with humor and heart. In fact, every track here invites the wishful thought that there were an album apiece with each ensemble. That might, of course, be the next step. But for the moment, this feels like a musical dream come true. —Brian Morton

four forty one: Boogaloo; Love Letters; Banal Street; Oasis; I Am James Bond; Cherry Time; Work; KW; The Way To You; That Happened; Milestones. (74:41)

Personnel: Will Vinson, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; Gerald Clayton, Sullivan Fortner, Tigran Hamasyan, Fred Hersch, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, piano; Matt Brewer, Larry Grenadier, Matt Penman, Rick Rosato, bass; Obed Calvaire, Eric Harland, Billy Hart, Clarence Penn, Jochen Rueckert, drums.

Ordering info: whirlwindrecordings.com



Bill Mays And Friends *Mays Plays Mays*

NO BLOOZE 4

★★★★½

The importance of relationships hits home with *Mays Plays Mays*, where pianist Bill Mays celebrates family and friendships. Except for the Gershwins' "How Long Has This Been Going On?" and a tribute to Mays written by pianist Chris Cuvier, the tracks all are Mays' originals.

Backed by his longtime trio of bassist Martin Wind and drummer Matt Wilson, to whom Mays pays compositional tribute to on "MW2," the collective adds trumpet/flugelhornist

Works For Me *Reach Within*

POSI-TONE 8202

★★★★

This year marks Posi-Tone's 25th year of exploring new frontiers of jazz.

Label founder and producer Marc Free kicks off the celebration with Works For Me, one of his curated collectives of emerging talent, that mixes and matches members' distinctive voices in sometimes fresh and surprising ways.

"Jinrikisha," the opening track, sets the stage with Tony Davis' lyrical guitar voicings standing in for the kinetic bursts of Kenny Dorham's trumpet on Joe Henderson's 1963 bop classic. It's an interesting idea that doesn't really deliver. Far more successful is the lively give-and-take between Alexa Tarantino's dynamic alto saxophone and Caili O'Doherty's more cerebral keys, which puts a new spin on Henderson's dialogue with McCoy Tyner.

Except for the final track, a swingin' cover of Stevie Wonder's "Send One Your Love" that showcases some of Davis' most innovative work, the other tunes are original compositions that include several standouts.

"Reach Within," an O'Doherty composition that showcases some of the collective's

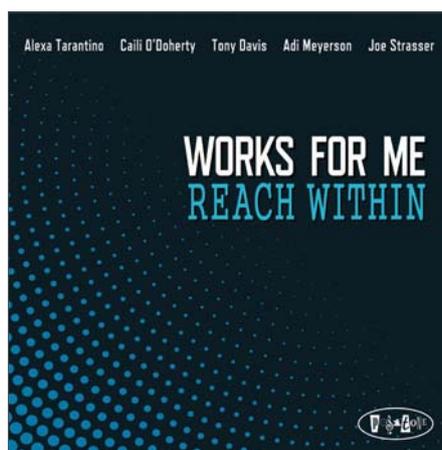
Marvin Stamm and guitarist John Hart for a couple tunes.

Mays' melodic adventures capture a taste of historic piano greats, zoning in on a clever Lennie Tristano or a bluesy Thelonious Monk while potentially hinting at the refined elegance of Bill Evans. Romantic lyrics written by Judy Kirtley (Mays' wife) on his waltz "Play Song" spotlight the pianist on vocals. "Ten, Chelsea Evening," written for Kirtley, is a soundscape of the Manhattan neighborhood that segues into Mays' pensive piano, and Wind's seductive arco and pizzicato bass. The pianist's four-song suite, a tribute to his parents and siblings, features his inventive dedication to his father, "Whistling Pastor," with a shape-shifting vignette motif based upon Mays' father's happy-go-lucky 10-note whistling melody. A celebratory piece for Greece, "Kalavrita," showcases Mays happily singing to a danceable festive rhythm over his own Fender Rhodes, and accompanied by background singers, flugelhorn and the high-energy rhythm unit fading out a sunny finale.

—Kerlie McDowall

Mays Plays Mays: Birthday Blues; Exuma; Mays In The Mirror; Jolie Joëlle; MW2; Play Song; Snow Job; How Long Has This Been Going On?; Ten, Chelsea Evening; For Woff; Martha; Whistling Pastor; Mark David; Eileen's Birthday Waltz; Kalavrita. (67:35)
Personnel: Bill Mays, piano, Fender Rhodes, vocals; Martin Wind, bass; Matt Wilson, drums, percussion; Marvin Stamm, trumpet (1), flugelhorn (6, 15); John Hart, guitar (1, 5, 13); Margaret Dulaney Balitsaris, Judy Kirtley, Rose Litschauer, vocals (15).

Ordering info: billmays.net



most expressive ensemble work, anchors the album. Tarantino's sprightly soprano and Joe Strasser's playful hi-hat syncopation spice up "Salt And Vinegar," another O'Doherty piece. And Adi Meyerson's rich, evocative bass opens her own "Your Smile (Keeps Me Sane)," a lyrical meditation shadowed by minor-key melancholia that lingers before drifting off into space with a guitar outro.

—Cree McCree

Reach Within: Jinrikisha; Mr. M; Lake Sebago; Le'Var; Reach Within; El Gran Birane; Your Smile (Keeps Me Sane); Salt And Vinegar; Send One Your Love. (50:16)

Personnel: Alexa Tarantino, alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, alto flute; Tony Davis, guitar; Caili O'Doherty, piano; Adi Meyerson, bass; Joe Strasser, drums.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com



Kat Edmonson *Dreamers Do*

SPINNERETTE 2001

★★★★

Kat Edmonson's *Dreamers Do* doesn't draw from today's sociopolitical atmosphere for inspiration. Instead, its embrace of dreams and childhood innocence becomes an oasis of hope, excitement and optimism, tackling a more timeless question posed by the vocalist and bandleader: "Are the messages we receive as children, about following our dreams, sustainable or relevant through adult life?"

Spanning two originals and 18 Great American Songbook and Disney-derived selections, Edmonson delivers an abundance of personality, from her earnest and casual admissions in "Very Good Advice" to the carefree and self-assured swagger on the closing reprisal of "A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes." Bill Frisell makes an appearance, too, his guitar adding a celestial feel during "The Age Of Not Believing" as he plays overtones and harmonic notes against the lyrics' somber and pragmatic premise.

Despite Edmonson's gossamer voice unifying the album's repertoire, the inclusion of so many instruments—harp, strings, glockenspiel, *pipa* and *erhu*—and stylistic nuances makes *Dreamers Do* much more than an album of conceptually related songs. It's an attempt to show how we perceive dreams, the act of dreaming and the emotions that emerge.

—Kira Grunenberg

Dreamers Do: A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes; Go To Sleep; In A World Of My Own; Night Walk (Interlude); When You Wish Upon A Star; The Parlor (Interlude); Chim Chim Cher-EE: This Old House (Interlude); Someone's In The House; Carlyle (Interlude); Very Good Advice; Too Late To Dream; A Little Night Music? (Interlude); All I Do Is Dream Of You; Be Careful How You Wish; The Second Star To The Right; The Age Of Not Believing; Morning (Interlude); What A Wonderful World; A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes (Reprise). (51:26)

Personnel: Kat Edmonson, vocals; Bob Hart, bass; Matt Munisteri, Pete Smith, guitar, vocals; Roy Dunlap, keyboards, vocals; Aaron Thurston, Mathias Künzli, percussion; Jiaju Shen, *pipa*; Yang Wang, *erhu*; Rob Schwimmer, keyboards; Brandee Younger, harp; José Luis Oliveira, Tim Ruedeman, flute; Trini Basu, Fung Chern Hwei, Rachel Golub, Justin Smith, Janey Choi, Mazz Swift, Kiku Enomoto, Dana Lyn, Christina Courtin, Ali Bello, violin; Karen Waltuch, Jessica Troy, Miranda Siefaff, viola; Marika Hughes, Clara Kennedy, cello; Bill Frisell, guitar; Evan Arntzen, clarinet; Linus Lux, glockenspiel.

Ordering info: katedmonson.com



Mute

Mute

FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT 1019

★★★★★

The quartet Mute makes the case—and provides a robust blueprint—for a postmodern jazz on its debut album, as ideas flow freely among musicians in an almost mixtape form. It's not that the group is out to push new tones from its instruments, but there seems to be an effort to reframe familiar sounds and structures.

The album's nine-minute centerpiece, "Great Concavity," is a vortex of melodies from drums, bass and piano, pulling the clarinet into deeper,

darker tones. Its timbre shifts among atonality à la Lennie Tristano, ornate contemporary classical and punchy post-bop.

That kind of conflicting interplay serves as a theme across the album's nine tracks as Mute weaves angular and atonal structures with more conventional melodic development. The first section of "Articulate Space" pits Jeonglim Yang's singing bass and Kevin Sun's flighty clarinet against Escherian melodies from Christian Li's keys. But another element at play on *Mute* comes from the band constantly morphing its ideas and sound; Li's constructs dissolve into a swirl of crystalline notes that propel the sweetly melancholic clarinet, coming off like a mix of Sondheim and Benny Goodman.

Since individual voices in Mute trade off leading rolls number to number, no single player seems dominant, even when soloing. It's a balance that other musicians—like multi-instrumentalist Simone Baron, who also recently issued a postmodern collection—are thinking about. The dynamics of jazz are moving forward, pushing the genre to be more reflective of its democratic values, even as our country seems to be doing that less regularly. —*Jackson Sinnenberg*

Mute: Decalcomanie; Articulate Space; Follow The Leader; Are You Happy Now?; Great Concavity; False Idols; And Now For A Word From Our Sponsors; Palindromania's Dream; Lava. (56:14)

Personnel: Kevin Sun, C-melody saxophone, clarinet; Christian Li, piano; Jeonglim Yang, bass; Dayeon Seok, drums.

Ordering info: freshsoundrecords.com

Calabria Foti

Prelude To A Kiss

MOCO 23-06

★★★

For her fourth album, Calabria Foti displays salient storytelling, as well as her competence as a vocalist, violinist and interpreter of classic American music.

The title track, Duke Ellington's "Prelude To A Kiss," establishes mood and timbre, but sets the stakes high with an orchestra painting a multi-textured and polychromatic landscape where Foti can play. She languorously kibitzes, flavoring her delivery with a Streisand-esque nasality.

The bandleader's exquisite arrangement of Bill Evans' "Waltz For Debby" takes a detour along a widening road as guitarist Larry Koonse's solo shifts tempo. And a duet with guitarist/vocalist John Pizzarelli on "It's The Mood That I'm In" proves Foti not only keeps good company, but keeps up with them, too.

"I Had To Fall In Love With You," which Foti's father wrote for her mother, arrives with a heartfelt punch that perhaps only a daughter can deliver. The tune's opening and closing bars overlay a contemporary sound with a refrain ushered in through the phrasing of the piano and guitar. Foti's voice warms like a blanket and creates space for reflection, honesty and vulnerability.



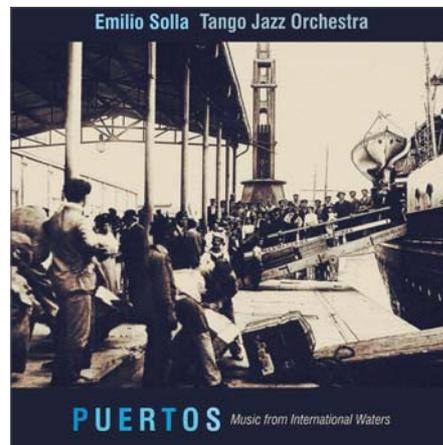
Her uptempo "Goodbye," the lone original here, unveils Foti's ability to compose a gem that highlights her range. And Michael Dees' "I'm Home" concludes *Prelude To A Kiss*, showcasing the vocalist's rich tonality when she reaches down into her lower register and emits a diphthong in "home," creating a place for you to shelter.

—*Michele L. Simms-Burton*

Prelude To A Kiss: Prelude To A Kiss; I Had To Fall In Love With You; On The Street Where You Live; Waltz For Debby; When I Look In Your Eyes; Goodbye; The Man With The Horn; Backyard Medley; The Folks Who Live On The Hill; It's The Mood That I'm In; I'm Home. (56:17)

Personnel: Calabria Foti, vocals, violin; Roger Kellaway, piano; Trey Henry, bass; Peter Erskine, drums; John Pizzarelli (10), vocals, guitar; Larry Koonse (2, 4, 10), George Doering (6), guitar; Bob McChesney (1, 5, 7), trombone; Luis Conte (2, 6), percussion; Gail Levant, harp; woodwinds; strings.

Ordering info: calabriefoti.com



Emilio Solla Tango Jazz Orchestra

Puertos: Music From International Waters

AVANTANGO 005

★★★★★

The high concept that drives *Puertos: Music From International Waters* has no right to work. Dedicating each song to a different port seems like a hoaky idea lifted straight out of the era of stereo demonstration LPs. But what moves *Puertos* beyond a simple pastiche is that Emilio Solla has invested heavily in each of the pieces here. It's the difference between seeing each city from the deck of a ship and exploring the back alleys of each place.

The thread running through the various ports is how imperialist conquests, the slave trade and immigration mixed with native traditions to create distinctive-yet-linked music in cities ranging from Cadiz to Buenos Aires and New York. Certain instruments, like Julien Labro's bandoneon, tie diverse elements together, drawing lines back to Europe, while on "Four For Miles," Solla uses the trumpet section to trace Miles Davis' evolution within the New York jazz scene through styles and decades. Among other highlights here is the way a chamber tango ensemble of bandoneon, trumpet and trombone emerges from the big band on "La Novena." But best of all is the way Solla tells New Orleans' story—shifting from a jarring introduction that expresses the chaotic uncertainty of Congo Square to narrative statements by Noah Bless' trombone, and then a powerful combination of Edmar Castañeda's harp and Pablo Aslan's bass. —*James Hale*

Puertos: Music From International Waters: Sol La, Al Sol; Llegará, Llegará, Llegará; Chacafrik; La Novena; Four For Miles; Allegro; Andan Luces; Buenos Aires Blues. (75:56)

Personnel: Emilio Solla, Arturo O'Farrill, piano (2); Alex Norris, Jim Seeley, Brad Mason, Jonathan Powell, trumpet, flugelhorn; Noah Bless, Mike Fahie, Eric Miller, trombone; James Rodgers, bass trombone; Alejandro Aviles, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, piccolo, flute; John Ellis, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone, clarinet, flute; Todd Bashore, alto saxophone, flute, clarinet; Tim Armacost, tenor saxophone, alto flute, clarinet; Julien Labro, bandoneon, accordion; Edmar Castañeda (6), harp; Pablo Aslan, bass; Ferenc Nerneth, drums; Samuel Torres (1), Arturo Prendez (2), Franco Pinna (6), percussion.

Ordering info: avantango.com



Joachim Kühn & Mateusz Smoczyński
Speaking Sound

ACT 9630
★★★★

Musical chemistry sometimes can be hard to come by. But even if it's not completely there, it can be glossed over a bit in a group setting. As an instrumental duo, pianist Joachim Kühn and violinist Mateusz Smoczyński are left exposed. These nine pieces—the choicest selections from a marathon four-hour recording session—are a showcase for playing that is impassioned without every becoming overblown, and relaxed without ever falling into torpor.

Wisely, Kühn and Smoczyński entered into this project with some guidelines, as well as some material to work with. They wrote the bulk of the tunes on *Speaking Sound*, but make great use of some extant songs: "I'm Better Off Without You," written by Rabih Abou-Khalil, feels operatic in its emotion, and "No. 40," a take on an Armenian melody composed by Georges I. Gurdjieff, carries the sweet ache of nostalgia through Smoczyński's gently straining performance.

The originals feel like they were constructed from improvisation, using their titles as guides. On "Love And Peace," for example, Kühn teases out a small flurry of notes that his musical partner latches on to and follows. They gallop together before tumbling into a beautiful, giddy discordance. And the closing track "Paganini," by far the most upbeat moment on the album, plays like a mashup of the titular composer's work, as fragments of violin gleefully halt and jump around Kühn's keyboard flashes.

If this is just scratching the surface of the work that these two musicians recorded during a long afternoon last April, listeners only can hope that they dig deeper into these sessions for another release.

—Robert Ham

Speaking Sound: Epilog Der Hoffnung; Maria; Love And Peace; No. 40; Schubertaster; After The Morning; I'm Better Off Without You; Glückszahl 23; Paganini. (44:33)

Personnel: Joachim Kühn, piano; Mateusz Smoczyński, violin, baritone violin.

Ordering info: actmusic.com

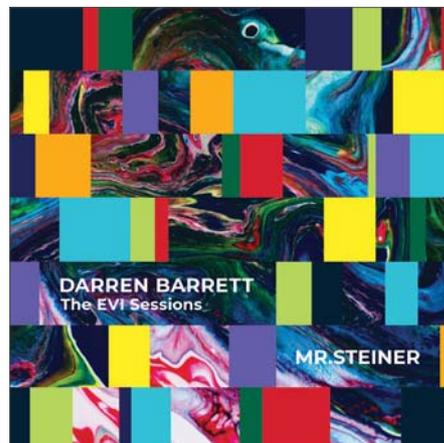
Darren Barrett
Mr. Steiner (The EVI Sessions)

DB STUDIOS 0003
★★★

It's hard not to call Darren Barrett's *Mr. Steiner*—a tribute to Nyle Steiner, the inventor of the EVI and EWI—smooth jazz. The music certainly references the r&b-influenced sounds of a very specific era. Ballad "dB Plus KG" is smooth enough as Barrett and saxophonist Kenny Garrett mesh. But the guitar-focused "Deal For Real" moves beyond the album's intentions to become a touch more interesting. The shift's a brief one, though, as "EVI Theme #1" seems like nothing more than a jingle. While Barrett's utilizing a period instrument to offer contemporary ideas, those ideas simply creep a bit too close to the smooth world.

—Anthony Dean-Harris

Mr. Steiner: Mr. Steiner; Keep It Moving; Only You Know; Nu Vibrations; dB Plus KG; Botnick; Deal For Real; You See Me; EVI Theme #1. (29:54)



Personnel: Darren Barrett, EVI, EWI; Kenny Garrett, alto saxophone; Noah Preminger, tenor saxophone; Kurt Rosenwinkel, Jeffrey Lockhart, Roy Ben Bashat, François Charvallon, guitar; Santiago Bosch, keyboard; Chad Selph, organ; Daniel Ashkenazy, Gonn Shani, bass; Mathéo Techer, Roni Kaspi, drums; Judy Barrett, percussion.

Ordering info: cdbaby.com

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Live in Their Latter Years

In terms of style, background, recognition and—perhaps, most famously—temperament, drummer **Buddy Rich** and saxophonist **Fred Anderson** seem poles apart. But digging deeper, they both sought and often achieved the best of jazz: dedication, crafting an individual sound and staying with it for the long haul.

Two new releases serve as reminders of how they stayed sharp and productive in the latter part of their careers. That these are also live albums, recorded in sharply different places, showed how much they delivered for their respective audiences.

Rich is introduced as “the world’s greatest drummer” at the beginning of **Just In Time: The Final Recording (Gearbox 1556; 71:30 ★★½)**, and that accolade isn’t far from the truth. Nor would Rich likely have considered such a statement to be a benediction, as it was a claim he professed throughout his entire life. (Then there are the candid bus tapes posted to YouTube where he made such an assertion rather notorious.) This 1986 date came at a time when his musical life was nearing its end: He died the following year at age 69, but sounded determined to go out fighting.

Performing at Ronnie Scott’s, still London’s most recognized club for traditional jazz, Rich had led big bands for about 20 years by the time that this 16-member ensemble took the stage. This is streamlined swing, heavy on standards and as tightly controlled as Rich’s reputation would indicate. A spirited exchange between the trumpet and saxophone sections shapes “The Trolley Song.” Rich’s focus here is leading from behind, rather than unleashing any extroverted solos. His command of dynamics remained sharp at this late date, especially when he directs the low-end brass moans on the title track and creates a contrast between these runs and Matt Harris’ piano solo. Rich’s daughter, Cathy Rich, also makes a guest appearance with a lively take on “Twisted.” When Rich does let loose on an appropriately dramatic “Porgy And Bess,” he became a relentless force without any unnecessary flourishes.

Ordering info: gearboxrecords.com

Anderson never had Rich’s kind of demeanor as a bandleader or while he was running his crucial Chicago bar, The Velvet Lounge. Still, his inner strength required few words. He delved into free-jazz before that idiom gained a foothold in the Midwest and withstood the knocks he received as a trailblazer. But Anderson also created spaces for such sounds to flourish, especially at the Velvet, where he and his contemporaries regularly would jam with a slew of visiting musi-



cian who would carve out their own paths. **Fred Anderson Quartet—Live Volume V (FPE 26; 57:30 ★★½)** captures one such night in December 1994.

Anderson, 65 years old at the time of the recording, was just about to see a resurgence of disciples, which would continue growing until his passing 16 years later. Possibly, many of the musicians who have become known throughout the jazz world recently had attended a gig like this one, which bartender Clarence Bright recorded on a DAT. Bassist Tatsu Aoki (who also has released live Anderson recordings) held onto it and more recent technology helped clean up the sound. The results present another look at an impactful scene just as it was making another shift.

Aoki and percussionist Hamid Drake had been frequent collaborators with Anderson while trumpeter Toshinori Kondo guested at the Velvet. Also an electronics artist, Kondo paid more than a passing visit to this community: That year he and Drake were performing with saxophonist Peter Brötzmann’s Die Like A Dog ensemble. (The German musician made Chicago a frequent touring and recording stop back then.)

They all blend in here throughout three extended tracks that essentially are open-ended improvisations within Anderson’s framework. “Analog Breakdown” starts with Kondo’s electronic blasts and builds upward from there. But Anderson’s labyrinthian tone uses quiet force to turn everything around. Drake and Aoki also make the piece swing toward its conclusion. Anderson’s warm low-end notes also add direction to Kondo’s energy on “Probability Distribution.” When the set concludes with “Era Of Rocks,” there’s a sense of playfulness that serves as one more reason why this saxophonist remains so beloved, especially in his hometown. **DB**

Ordering info: fprecs.com



Satoko Fujii/Joe Fonda *Four*

LONG SONG 151/2019

★★★★

In Japan, your 60th year represents the end of a life cycle and a time of renewal. Satoko Fujii celebrated the event with a personal twist. The pianist, composer, arranger and big-band leader observed it by releasing a CD each month during 2018. Each showcased a different ensemble, partnership or aspect of her work.

One way to read *Four*, which was released 30 days after Fujii’s 61st birthday, is that she’s in no need of new beginnings; she’s already doing exactly what she wants to do, which is to play with as many like-minded musicians as she can and share that work with the world. Taken from two concerts played in Japan during September 2018, this latest album is her fourth with bassist Joe Fonda to be released in three years.

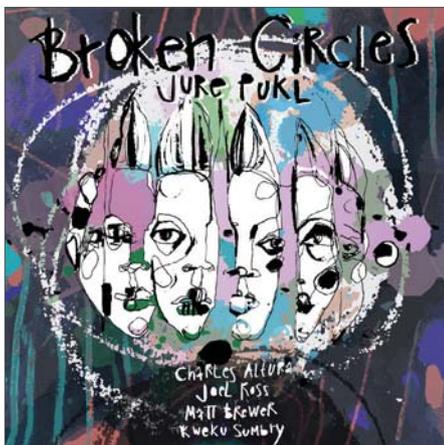
Before 2015, Fonda and Fujii were strangers. But each deems the other to be a partner who abets freedom. That doesn’t just mean playing free-jazz, but being free to play either inside or outside the parameters of rhythm, melody, harmony or the physical confines of the piano. Fonda is free to mine the lower registers, as he does during his grave introduction to “Painted By Moonlight”; Fujii is likewise as free to hang back as she is to move through percussive runs and dramatic figures, rushing toward the horizon of “The Wind As It Bends.”

This is process-oriented music, and while the pithy pieces that begin *Four* each yield rewards, the lengthy tracks that make up its second half are the most fulfilling. This is not only because one gets to hear Fonda and Fujii working things out at length, but because trumpeter Natsuki Tamura joins them. His vocabulary of gargles, growls and bold Iberian-tinged melodies easily amplifies the core duo’s extremes. —Bill Meyer

Four: Painted By Moonlight; Diamonds In The Rough; Cannot Do More; Gift From Billy; The Wind As It Bends; Stars In Complete Darkness; We Meet As 3. (54:47)

Personnel: Satoko Fujii, piano; Joe Fonda, bass, flute; Natsuki Tamura, trumpet (6, 7).

Ordering info: longsongrecords.com



Jure Pukl *Broken Circles*

WHIRLWIND 011

★★★★½

Tenor saxophonist Jure Pukl's *Broken Circles* is a fine, accomplished recording that doesn't put its best foot forward. Its opening track is also the most off-putting: "Sustained Optimism" is a jumble of complex meters, unpleasant harmonies, abrasive melody and even more abrasive improvisations from the bandleader, vibraphonist Joel Ross and drummer Kweku Sumbry.

One can be forgiven for approaching the rest of Pukl's followup to 2017's *Doubtless* with caution.

Fortunately, it's all a ruse. The remainder of *Broken Circles* consists of sophisticated but enjoyable music. The quintet enjoys great chemistry, especially in its front line of Pukl, Ross and guitarist Charles Altura. "Gloomy Sunday" finds the guitar and vibes locking keenly into each other as the former solos and the latter accompanies, then vice versa. The pair then nests together for Pukl's pointed bass clarinet improv.

That said, Altura's work as rhythm-section liaison is hard to dismiss. His mesh with Sumbry and bassist Matt Brewer on "Sky Is The Limit" is sublime. And on the breezy "Triumph Of Society," he converges with Brewer in particular, holding the carefully colored chords while Brewer dances and tosses in smart substitutions against Ross and Pukl's traded choruses.

Nor are the drummer and bassist slouches at improvisation: Sumbry puts masterful suspense into his workout on "Triumph Of Society," moving through chatty cadences on cymbals, bouncing accents off contributions by Ross and the bandleader before rumbling into a feature section of his own. And Brewer,

a member of The SFJAZZ Collective since 2018, takes two of the album's best solos: an inquisition on "Separation," an already somber and musing piece set to a funeral-march rhythm, and a foreboding-laced run (perhaps because it paraphrases the *Jaws* theme) on "Bass Intro." The latter segues into "Half Past Five," which doesn't bear out the foreboding (though it adds some of its own). It does, however, contain highlight solos from both Pukl and Ross, as Sumbry continues beating out surprisingly funky accompaniment that both enlivens the track, as well as urges on his bandmates.

All of which is to say, the unappealing hurdle of *Broken Circles*' opening can be overcome. Indeed, as if to compensate for that initial misstep, Pukl and company provide a double barrel of cuteness and tenderness on the exquisite "Kids," replete with a brief melody snatched from the "ABC" song pretty much every American child has learned.

—Michael J. West

Broken Circles: Sustained Optimism; Broken Circles; Separation; Compassion; Triumph Of Society; Gloomy Sunday; Empty Words; Bass Intro; Half Past Five; Kids; Sky Is The Limit; Separation (Radio Edit). (64:25)

Personnel: Jure Pukl, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone (11), bass clarinet (6); Joel Ross; vibraphone, kalimba (3); Charles Altura, guitar; Matt Brewer, bass; Kweku Sumbry, drums.

Ordering info: whirlwindrecordings.com

Jonathan Kreisberg *Capturing Spirits—JKQ Live!*

NEW FOR NOW 0006

★★★★½

Guitarist Jonathan Kreisberg might be right when he attributes the success of *Capturing Spirits—JKQ Live!* to its setting. But that shouldn't minimize an appreciation for his group's coherence or the bandleader's own smooth fluidity of articulation.

The lovely, lilting melody of "Trust Fall" is proof Kreisberg's ensemble attained a musical clairvoyance. There's a delightful symmetry, a nice ballast of communication. Clearly, the band's been probing and interrogating tunes, bouncing ideas off each other for more than a few sessions. The intensive interplay between Kreisberg and Martin Bejerano (on both piano and Rhodes) during "Known You Before" is a picturesque tableau of sound, and a good depiction of how they blend and anticipate each other. The pair arrives at a similar intersection of creativity on "Relativity" and "Everything Needs Something," where Colin Stranahan's tick-tock beat establishes a tempo perfectly suited for bassist Matt Clohesy's imaginative solo.

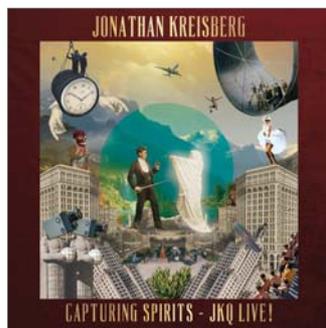
Based on the reaction of the crowd at Jazz-Schmiede Düsseldorf, Kreisberg's quartet—in a singular moment back on March 15, 2019—touched on a collective nerve.

—Herb Boyd

Capturing Spirits—JKQ Live!: The Lift; Trust Fall; Everything Needs Something; Relativity; Known You Before; Wild Animals We've Seen; Body And Soul. (62:08)

Personnel: Jonathan Kreisberg, guitar; Martin Bejerano, piano; Matt Clohesy, bass; Colin Stranahan, drums.

Ordering info: jonathankreisberg.com



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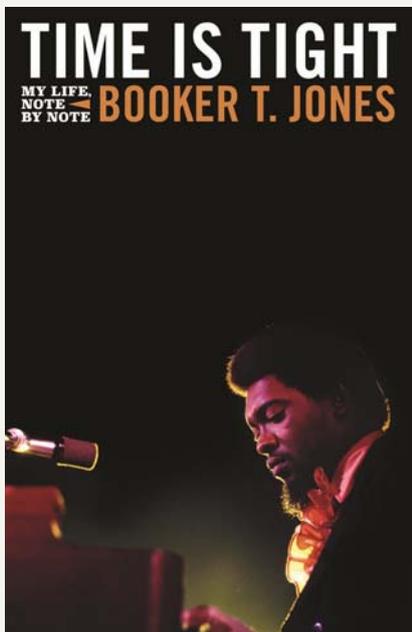
Soft-spoken **Booker T. Jones** always takes time to think. His genial, unhurried approach fueled the deep groove he built in the 1960s for the invaluable Booker T. & The MG's, as well as the thoughtful compositions and productions he planned for innumerable artists in the years that followed. A strong sense of quiet reflection also runs throughout Jones' memoir, *Time Is Tight: My Life, Note By Note* (Little, Brown).

Jones keeps his creative process in the foreground, which makes this book stand above so many popular musician autobiographies. He doesn't shy away from discussing personal joys, misadventures and tribulations, but he also knows it's his recordings that make this life so singular. With a prestigious music degree alongside numerous hit records to Jones' credit, this composer arranges the book so that passages revolve around themes, rather than progress in a typical chronological straight line. Gradual revelations build dramatic tension.

So much music surrounded Jones since he was a child prodigy in Memphis, Tennessee, the discussion of artistry follows a lifelong theme. With his family's encouragement and support, he became versatile on a range of instruments, starting when he was nine and his father gave him a clarinet. He gravitated to the piano and organ, at one point accompanying gospel great Mahalia Jackson. After high school classes, Jones started hanging out at the city's burgeoning Stax record company and quickly became central to its house band. When Booker T. & The MG's wrote and recorded its smash "Green Onions" in 1962, Jones wasn't quite 18 years old.

Such early success created more demand, and Jones worked constantly at Stax on the group's recordings and the string of sessions that featured Booker T. & The MG's backing star r&b singers. More than 55 years after Jones' piano progression provided, in his words, "just the right timbre" to push Otis Redding on "I've Been Loving You Too Long," his joy in describing it remains palpable. Equally incredible was that among these crucial studio dates and live gigs, Jones made regular drives to Indiana University, where he was committed to finishing his bachelor's degree.

Most likely, the trips back and forth between Memphis and Bloomington, Indiana, gave Jones time for the kind of contemplation that runs throughout this book. On campus, constant drills sharpened his expertise in theory, and Jones' vivid prose conveys how such lessons alongside subsequent training informed his classic recordings. When he describes how he applied "the golden ratio"



(an eight-bar phrase followed by a 14-bar phrase) to the melody of "Time Is Tight," the insight enhances the song's beauty.

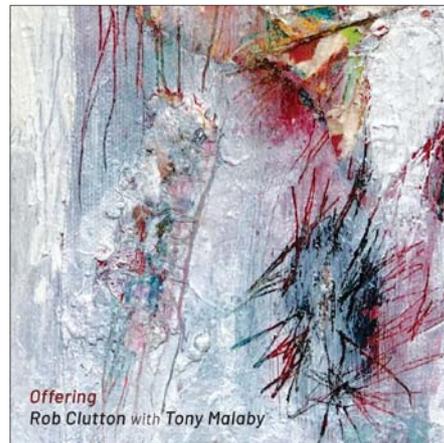
A different kind of education had Jones confronting changing, often hostile, racial dynamics. After growing up in the segregated South, he also scorned black militants who derided his work in an integrated group. Meanwhile, Jones shatters a myth in *Time Is Tight* that Stax offered a unified and equal environment before Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. As he points out, company management invited white MG's guitarist Steve Cropper to participate in music publishing, whereas Jones was not included in such discussions. The evenhanded tone that comes through in Jones' writing lends a sense of credence to the accusation.

After Jones left Stax and established a life in California during the 1970s, his musical intuitions proved vital as he worked for artists across genres. He immediately recognized Bill Withers' virtuosity and put together the singer/songwriter's 1971 debut, *Just As I Am*. Sharing enthusiasm for jazz standards with Malibu neighbor Willie Nelson, Jones crafted the country legend's 1978 landmark, *Stardust*.

By the end of the book, with Jones a happy grandfather releasing solid recent recordings, his pride feels well earned.

Jones also wisely eschewed any ghostwriters to help pen his narrative. Since his own musical voice has strongly resonated for close to 60 years, he knows there's no reason to dilute it when working to express the breadth of history on the printed page. **DB**

Ordering info: littlebrown.com



Rob Clutton with Tony Malaby

Offering

SNAILBONGBONG 006

★★★★

Although inherently lean of means, the duo of bassist Rob Clutton and saxophonist Tony Malaby is expansive and sensitive in spirit. A natural and empathetic link is clearly evident here, a fresh case study in how the bass-and-sax partnership can yield broad results.

Clutton has won acclaim and played with a range of musicians, including Roscoe Mitchell and Anthony Braxton, and leads his Canadian band, The Cluttertones. But it was while the two were members of the Nick Fraser Quartet that the bassist sensed a rapport with Malaby, a notable inside-outside player whose résumé includes work with Paul Motian and Kris Davis. What *Offering* offers, though, is a luminous variation on the duo setting.

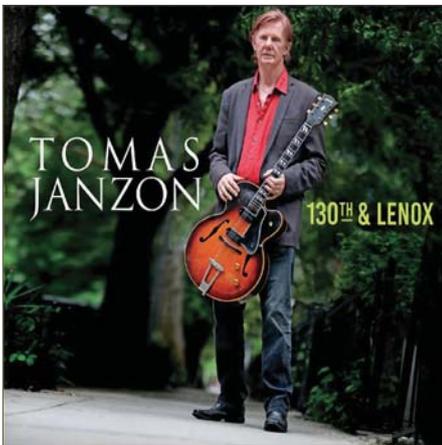
Clutton composed seven of the 11 tracks here, with the others a testament to the pair's easy meshing of energies. (A Fraser tune is included for good measure.) Each track owns its own distinct character and bearing, with the two outer pieces—the opening "Offering" and the gentle endpiece of "Latitude"—providing graceful framing for wilder interior moments.

Call this a "chordless" duo at your peril: Both musicians extend beyond the standard single-note voices of their instrument through multiphonics, bass chording and overtones via arco bass. "Twig" has an almost onomatopoeic relationship with its title, rising out of a scattershot percussive foundation on bass, tucked beneath Malaby's nattering theme on soprano. By contrast, the pensive rubato ballad "Refuge" showcases the musicians' melodic insightfulness, with Malaby's soft, breathy long tones floating into the distance.

—Josef Woodard

Offering: Offering; Motion; Crimes Of Tantalus; Swamp Cut; Refuge; Twig; Swerve; Sketch #11; Trilogy; Polar; Latitude. (43:07)
Personnel: Rob Clutton, bass; Tony Malaby, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone.

Ordering info: robclutton.com



Tomas Janzon

130th & Lenox

CHANGES 114

★★★★★

There's an authority to Tomas Janzon's playing, but it's generous, open, masterful and gracious. His collaboration with two distinct sets of musicians on both the East and West coasts model sterling ensemble play and a commitment to showcasing the tunes and their possibilities, rather than just the virtuosity of the collected players.

This is especially true of the tracks featuring the East Coast combo: stellar vibraphonist Steve

Nelson, bassist Hilliard Greene and drummer Chuck McPherson. Nelson and Janzon often double, expanding the harmonic range of both their instruments, creating a sweet synthesis. On "Softly As In A Morning Sunrise" their solos and breaks are concise and conversational. For the Janzon original "Somewhere Over Stockholm," the bandleader leaves Nelson plenty of space on a bass-driven, minor-key march that serves as the bridge, before answering him with characteristically understated elegance in his own solo. Also from the East Coast sessions comes the slightly retitled, casually acerbic "Have You Met Ms. Jones."

The California sessions feature bassist Nedra Wheeler and drummer Donald Dean, and a take of Sam River's "Beatrice" highlights the group's fidelity to melody, as do its versions of Wayne Shorter's "Iris" and Thelonious Monk's "Monk's Mood."

Irrespective of the coast, *130th & Lenox* is a recording that celebrates bonhomie and sharing, a welcome message for these times.

—Hobart Taylor

130th & Lenox: Softly As In A Morning Sunrise; Somewhere Over Stockholm; Prince Albert; Latitude Longitude; Invitation; Beatrice; Have You Met Ms. Jones; Iris; Hypnagogic; Monk's Mood; The Crystal. (49:45)

Personnel: Tomas Janzon, guitar; Steve Nelson (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9), vibraphone; Hilliard Greene (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9), Nedra Wheeler (4, 6, 8, 10, 11), bass; Chuck McPherson (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9), Donald Dean (4, 6, 8, 10, 11), drums.

Ordering info: cdbaby.com

Michelle Lordi

Break Up With The Sound

CABINET OF WONDER

★★★★★

Vocalist Michelle Lordi assembles an all-star band to take her musical journey beyond a firm grounding in jazz to a more diverse and eclectic sonic landscape. But *Break Up With The Sound* still pulls in some classics while punctuating the proceedings with five original compositions, including two with contributions from Lordi's bandmates.

The vocalist's cover of Hank Williams' "I'm So Lonesome" accentuates the country-waltz character of the tune, and conjures images and sounds of a funeral march. Despite her desire to move beyond jazz here, Lordi throws in a version of "Lover Man," where bassist Matthew Parrish dexterously opens the tune before saxophonist Donny McCaslin's phrasing creates the ambience for the vocalist to deliver a flawless and weighty sound. But to fully appreciate Lordi's abilities, one has only to take in "Before." With guitarist Tim Motzer doubling on electronics to provide a new-age sound and a memorable solo, the tune showcases Lordi's deftness at crafting a song replete with good storytelling.

"Red House Serenata"—composed by Parrish, Motzer and drummer Rudy Royston—



functions like an interlude and serves as the album's only instrumental.

Easy, slow-tempo tunes dominate, though, and the simplicity of Lordi's style controverts the textures she creates. This is no better demonstrated than on the original "Double-Crossed," which Lordi composed with McCaslin, the saxophonist finding space for an extended solo, again reminding listeners why David Bowie hired his band to record *Blackstar*.

—Michele L. Simms-Burton

Break Up With The Sound: Poor Bird; Wayward Wind; Double-Crossed; True Love; Before; No Expectations; Lover Man; Red House Serenata; Red House Blues; I'm So Lonesome. (55:19)

Personnel: Michelle Lordi, vocals; Donny McCaslin (1, 3, 7, 9), tenor saxophone; Tim Motzer, guitar, electronics; Matthew Parrish, bass; Rudy Royston, drums.

Ordering info: michellelordi.com



Brenda Earle Stokes

Solo Sessions Volume 1

ALL SHE NEEDS 007

★★★★★

Although her past releases have been ensemble-focused, Brenda Earle Stokes' *Solo Sessions Volume One* features the solitude of her solo jazz piano, accompanied only by her voice. The 43-year-old's vocals on her sixth album as a leader are at times throaty, with spotty articulation calling for key transposition, but arranger Stokes shrugs it off with a storm of swinging, heartfelt piano.

The recording, captured at a library in her hometown of Sarnia, Canada, originally was intended as a demo and has the mix dry on Stokes' piano timbre, occasionally overpowering her vocals.

The opener, "If You Never Come To Me," hints at Broadway and segues into bossa nova rhythms. Stokes' composition "Standing" showcases leaping quartal intervals, backed with smooth lyricism. Not obsessing over a sense of the spectacular or extraordinary, the pianist instead revs up on eclecticism, centering her jazz improvisation and pop-jazz adventures. The left-hand stride blues featured on "How Long Has That Evening Train Been Gone?" is paired with right-hand horn-like passages and simple shapes with a tritone flourish.

Stokes' interpretation of Dave and Iola Brubeck's powerful "Strange Meadowlark" has her solo flowing through starry chords, revisiting those stride excursions. "The Waltz's" love story was penned by Stokes and spotlights sinuous 3/4 musings, while "East Of The Sun (West Of The Moon)" shimmers with energetic scatting and cheery piano, Stokes wrapping up the session with her adoration of the art form.

—Kerlie McDowall

Solo Sessions Volume 1: If You Never Come To Me; Standing; Weaver Of Dreams; The Consequences Of Falling; How Long Has That Evening Train Been Gone?; Ladies In Mercedes; I Can Let Go Now; Strange Meadowlark; The Power Of Love; The Waltz; East Of The Sun (West Of The Moon). (51:17)

Personnel: Brenda Earle Stokes, piano, vocals.

Ordering info: brendaearle.com



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DOWNBEAT 2020 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ CAMP GUIDE



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Bassist John Clayton (left) has helmed the Vail Jazz Workshop since its inception in 1996.

STUDENTS LEARN FROM MASTERS IN VAIL

AFTER BASSIST JOHN CLAYTON played the first Vail Jazz Party over Labor Day Weekend in 1995, he asked festival founder Howard Stone what he planned to do for a follow-up.

“Howard said he wanted to add an educational component,” recalled Clayton. “I told him I loved the idea and I wrote him a check. ‘I want to be the first one to contribute,’ I said. ‘And if you need me in any way, just give me a call.’”

So began the Vail Jazz Workshop in 1996, with Clayton at the helm. Over its 25 years, the workshop, which takes place the week before the Vail Jazz Party, has mentored 298 high school students; its alums include familiar players such as pianist Robert Glasper, trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, saxophonists Tia Fuller and Grace Kelly, and drummer Obed Calvaire, as well as rising stars like pianists James Francies and Justin Kauflin, and bassist David Wong.

The Vail Jazz Workshop (scheduled for Aug. 29–Sept. 7) is distinctive for numerous reasons, but most salient is its unusually low student-teacher ratio. Each year, six jazz masters tutor 12 students, who are chosen from a pool of more than 150 applicants.

The founding faculty was the Clayton Brothers sextet. Over the years, the teaching staff

has remained relatively stable, with three original members returning in 2020: Clayton, trumpeter Terrell Stafford and pianist Bill Cunliffe. The other teachers this year are drummer Lewis Nash, saxophonist Dick Oatts and trombonist Wycliffe Gordon. The faculty sextet is mirrored twice by the student body, which consists of two players on each instrument practiced by the teachers. Students receive daily, one-on-one private lessons from their mentors.

“Herlin Riley was the [drum] instructor the year I attended,” recalled Calvaire, who attended in 1998 and went on to tour with Clayton before joining the SFJAZZ Collective. “It is one of the best things that ever happened to me. Herlin helped my playing, my musical decisions, my whole concept of grooving, and my view of how I played. By the time you left, you were a brand-new musician.”

Not only that, you had a personal window to a career.

“Up until a year ago, I was playing with John,” Calvaire said, “so just being a part of that group in that camp—I don’t think I would have had those opportunities otherwise.”

Another key attraction at Vail is that the students are invited to perform at the festival

with their mentors, which presents a challenging opportunity, but also allows audiences to get a glimpse of the next generation of jazz stars.

“That’s one of the biggest thrills you can imagine for the students,” Clayton said. “They’re no longer in a room with six instructors; instead, they’re having to play for an audience. The whole week leads toward that.”

During that week, students are provided no written music: Everything is done by ear. Instructors bring or write new tunes on the spot and arrangements are made that week. This means every student has to memorize every note—except for their solos, of course.

“Every one of these students gets plenty of practice reading music in school,” Clayton said. “They have private lessons, band directors; they play in ensembles. But how much opportunity do they have to learn a tune simply by listening to it? And then, going further, not only learning the song, but really learning an involved arrangement, where they’re playing the middle parts, the harmony parts? This allows us to really go deep.”

The annual operating cost for the Vail workshop is about \$120,000, but thanks to Stone’s fundraising acumen and the generosity of the



A typical workshop day at Vail can last up to 14 hours.

STEVEN K. POPE



Terrell Stafford (right) helps a student with a plunger mute at the Vail workshop.

JACK AFLECK



Workshop attendees aren't provided with written music; they need to memorize every note.

STEVEN K. POPE

Vail community, very little of that budget comes from tuition. Students who cannot afford it pay nothing for the workshop, which includes room and board provided by families in Vail. Stone and Clayton work hard to get the word out to band directors around the country whose student bodies include low-income kids, musicians of color and young women, which is evident from their alumni list.

That said, auditions are blind, so there's no predicting each year's ethnic or gender mix. If there happens to be a tie between two applicants, Clayton explained that the faculty might "lean toward the student of color or a female," to promote diversity within the group. He added, "We also try to let students [who don't get in] know that we were impressed with their level [of talent] and want them to audition again. Also, if one student happens to be a senior, then we'll probably choose that student because they won't have a second chance."

Students who do get in often have no idea how hard they will be asked to work. A typical workshop day can last as long as 14 hours. After breakfast with their host families, students are taken to the Marriott Hotel, where the morning starts with a lecture by one of the instructors about their own challenges and careers, which gives students a feel for their teachers as real people, not just professionals. Clayton himself is inspirational in this respect, bringing real life experience to his "raps," as he calls them.

"We discuss how we talk to each other as human beings and bandmates—about not being afraid to dig deep and express yourself through the music," Clayton said. "From there, we take a quick break, and then they start practicing and rehearsing, learning all that music

with no written-down notes. Then they have private lessons and then there are more playing sessions, till as late as 10 or 11 p.m. So, not only are we trying to give them a bit of insight into our lives, but also we want them to know what it feels like to be playing music hour after hour after hour, for the whole day and night. Because that's part of the experience. We've all had those kinds of days, playing one-nighters, being on the road."

"It was really hard at the beginning," said 2017 alum Ben Feldman, a bassist who now attends the Manhattan School of Music and recently toured with Dutch singer Lizzy Ossevoort. "It almost broke us down. But the Vail workshop really made me up my musical game. The teachers there made much higher demands and were so serious about the music in a way other camps weren't. They really made us perform at our highest levels."

Indeed, Clayton has a sly way of extracting a level of playing from students that they didn't know they were capable of.

"We do our best to eliminate the word 'difficult,'" he said. "That would just cloud their progress. We just say, OK, here's what's gotta happen, let's do this. Then, they're all on board: You're their teacher, you told them to do something, they're going to assume that it's possible to do that. But in the back of our minds, we're thinking, 'Let's make sure we don't tell them this is really difficult.'"

When it comes to inspiration, the view of the Rocky Mountains doesn't hurt. From the Vail town square, where outdoor performances take place in a tent, attendees can breathe in fresh air and look into the distance to see bike trails and ski slopes against a powder-blue sky.

"You have an all-star band at your disposal, and outside your window you see those mountains," Francies said after one of his performances in 2017.

Dick Oatts—the veteran alto saxophonist and artistic director of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra—came on board a few years ago (after Clayton's brother Jeff left the faculty). "John has been an inspiration," Oatts said. "To watch how he gets the students to come together over a short period of a few days—it's just remarkable what they take in and what they retain. It's made a huge impact on the jazz scene."

A lot has changed since 1996, when Stone and Clayton first got started. Thanks to the internet, students have far more access to information than they did 25 years ago. That, and the burgeoning quality of jazz band programs around the country, means students are coming in at a much higher level.

"Every year," Clayton said, "after we hear them play those first couple of songs together, we inevitably pow-wow and say the same thing: 'Oh, my God. What are we going to teach them?' We're always shocked. They blow us away with their seeming maturity—and it is mature playing. But then we ask them if they've heard of Gene Ammons. 'No.' And then that clarifies it for us, 'Oh, OK, let me tell you about this That really makes it easier for us.'"

For the students, a week in Vail might wind up being about more than learning new licks or new recordings. It can be life-changing. When Calvaire attended, his hosts for the week were Stone and his wife, Cathy.

"They are beautiful people to be around," Calvaire asserted. "They helped me become the man I am."
—Paul de Barros



New York Jazz Academy in New York City

EAST

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Adventure Music Camp at Eastman Rochester, New York August 3–7

This is a day camp at Eastman School of Music for students entering grades 5–9 (current grades 4–8). The camp meets Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities include ensemble rehearsals (band and string orchestra), theory in motion (musicianship class with movement), electronic music (using apps and computer programs to create music and enhance practice time), composition and improvisation. This program is for students who have at least two years' experience on their instrument or in a chorus, and are playing at a NYSSMA level 2 or Suzuki book 2 or higher. A teacher's letter of recommendation is part of the application so that appropriate music can be selected for the ensembles. No audition necessary.

Faculty: Terry Fonda Smith (director) and others.

Cost: \$360

Contact: (585) 274-1400 or (585) 274-1074, summer.esm.rochester.edu/course/adventure-music-camp

Berklee Summer Programs Boston, Massachusetts

June–August

Participants will study with renowned faculty while getting a taste of what Berklee, Boston and college life are all about. Participants can come from middle school, high school, college or beyond. There are more than 20 summer programs to consider at Berklee College of Music, Boston Conservatory at Berklee and Berklee's campus in Valencia, Spain.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: Varies by program

Contact: berklee.edu/summer

Camp Encore–Coda Sweden, Maine

June 24–July 19, July 19–August 9

This camp includes private lessons, combos, jazz bands, classes in performance, history, theory, ear training and composition as well as a full slate of traditional camp recreational activities. It's located on beautiful Stearns Pond in Sweden, Maine, and accommodates 120 campers ages 9 to 17.

Faculty: Sam Al-Hadid, Noah Berman, Chase Morrin, Paul Jones, Kevin Norton

Cost: First session, \$5,300; second session, \$4,900, full season, \$8,400

Contact: (617) 325-1541, encore-coda.com

Central Pennsylvania Jazz Camp Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

June 10–13

At this camp, every student gets the spotlight. Students ages 11–21 play in small combos, placed by ability level so that faculty can properly guide all students. Combos present their original arrangements in a concert on the last day, and every student gets a chance to solo.

Faculty: Tim Warfield, Joe Magnarelli, William Stowman, Paul Bratcher, Steve Varner, Jeff Stabley, Kirk Reese, Gavin Horning

Cost: \$425 for residential students, \$325 for commuter students

Contact: (717) 540-1010, friendsofjazz.org

COTA Camp Jazz Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania

June 22–28

CampJazz was founded in 2007 by Phil Woods and Rick Chamberlain to give young musicians an opportunity to learn the art of small group improvisation. This camp welcomes all instrumental and vocal learners ages of 12 and older. Attendees will receive focused instruction from internationally acclaimed performers and educators.

Highlights include research at the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University, a professional recording at Red Rock Studio and multiple performance opportunities at the Deer Head Inn.

Faculty: Sam Burtis, Spencer Reed, Matt Vashlishan, Skip Wilkins, Paul Rostock, Bill Goodwin, David Liebman, Sherrie Maricle, Jon Ballantyne, Najwa Parkins, Kent Heckman

Cost: \$750 tuition, additional cost for housing

Contact: Diane Pallitto, (201) 349-5178, campjazz.org

Eastern U.S. Music Camp at Colgate University

Hamilton, New York

June 28–July 12, July 5–19, July 12–26

This jazz program at Colgate University is for attendees from ages 12 to 18. It is challenging and intense, aiming to improve musicianship in a motivated, mature atmosphere. Friendly, professional and a renowned faculty is key to the program's 45-year history. Wide choices for performance experience include jazz combos, jazz ensembles and contemporary jazz-rock. Improvisation skills are developed, as well as knowledge of theory, harmony, conducting and music production. Abilities are matched to creative ensembles of various levels.

Faculty: Tom Christensen, Nick Weiser, Sean Lowery, guest artists

Cost: Starts at \$995 for a two-week session.

Contact: Grace Brown, (866) 777-7841, (518) 877-5121, summer@easternusmusiccamp.com, easternusmusiccamp.com

Eastman Experience: Summer Jazz Studies Rochester, New York

June 28–July 10

This rigorous program provides an intensive, performance-based experience for motivated students currently in grades 9–12 and is ideal for those considering jazz studies in college. Students work directly with the renowned Eastman School of Music jazz faculty in a program designed to enhance improvisational and ensemble skills. For additional details, see summer.esm.rochester.edu.

Faculty: Jeff Campbell, Bill Tiberio, Charles Pillow, Clay Jenkins, Mike Kaupa, Mark Kellogg, Bob Sneider, Dariusz Terefenko, Rich Thompson, Dave Rivello

Cost: \$2,492

Contact: Shaya Greathouse, (585) 274-1404, sgreathouse@esm.rochester.edu

Geri Allen Jazz Camp Newark, New Jersey

July 5–11

At this camp held at Rutgers University, young women will find inspiration and build community in a jazz immersion program. Students

refine their instrumental or vocal skills and work side-by-side with acclaimed jazz musicians. The camp is for participants from ages 14 to 26.

Faculty: Regina Carter, Carla Cook, Marion Hayden, Allison Miller, Ellen Rowe, Bruce Williams
Cost: \$1,400 for on-campus residents, \$1,050 for off-campus
Contact: njpac.org/summer, (973) 353-7058, artseducation@njpac.org

Hudson Jazz Workshop

Hudson, New York

August 6–9

The 14th annual edition of this workshop in upstate New York offers a focused four-day immersion in jazz improvisation and composition conducive to intensive study.

Limited to 10 students who come from all over the globe, the level is high. Hudson Jazzworks grants six scholarships and is in collaboration with the Manhattan School of Music (MSM), the Conservatorium van Amsterdam (CvA), the Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium (RMC Copenhagen), the New School and the William Paterson University. Be ready for a deeply personal and enriching experience with Catskill mountain views and a professional chef.

Faculty: Armen Donelian, Marc Mommaas
Cost: \$645
Contact: info@hudsonjazzworks.org, hudsonjazzworks.org

Interplay Jazz Camp

Meriden, New Hampshire

June 20–27

Interplay brings together world-class faculty mentors to foster positive musical outcomes. Vocalists and Instrumentalists are immersed in ensemble rehearsals, master classes, improvisation workshops and performances. Participants live fuller, richer lives because of higher-level creative thinking, deeper emotional expression and richer communication. This camp offers a diverse and intergenerational experience. The 25th Camp Reunion Weekend is June 27–28.

Faculty: Fred Haas, Shelia Jordan, Dominique Eade, Armen Donelian, Miro Sprague, Jason Ennis, Gene Bertocini, Dave Clark, Bob Hallahan, Tim Gilmore, Justin Varnes, Matt Wilson, David Muesham (yoga), Karrin Allyson, Tim Atherton, Chloe Brisson, Richie Iacona, Madeline Kole, Chris Humphrey, Freddie Bryant, David Newsam, George Voland, Michael Zsoldos, John Carlson, John Proulx, Donn Trenner, Natalia Bernal, Marty Jaffe, John Harrison
Cost: \$1,200
Contact: info@interplayjazzandarts.org, interplayjazzandarts.org

JAM Camp

Chevy Chase, Maryland

June 22–July 10

JAM Camp is a great place for young instrumental and vocal musicians in grades 5–12 to learn to play and perform jazz the way the professionals do. Sessions are led by professional musicians, including national renowned recording artists. Participants must have at least one year of formal music training. Monday through Friday from 1–5 p.m. (no class July 3).

Faculty: Paul Carr, Pepe Gonzalez, Allyn Johnson, Aaron Seeber
Cost: \$595
Contact: (301) 871-8418, coordinator@jazzacademy.org, jazzacademy.org

JAM Lab

Chevy Chase, Maryland

July 5–10

JAM Lab is a residency program with a great chance for young musicians grades 6–12 to learn to solo on their instrument and with their voices. The main focus of the lab is on jazz improvisation. Participants must have at least one year of formal music training. An extended day class from 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. is also available.



July 19-25, 2020

Connect with our renowned resident faculty at the William Paterson University **SUMMER JAZZ WORKSHOP** open to commuters of all ages, and residents age 14-18. The workshop welcomes non-resident adult participants.

Resident Faculty
Steve La Spina; Marcus McLaurine; Cecil Bridgewater; Tim Newman; James Weidman

Selected Previous Artists
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The Workshop provides:

- Seven intense days of instruction and mentorship in jazz improvisation, performance, arranging, and history
- Nightly clinics and concerts, meet-the-artist sessions, and an evening at a legendary New York City jazz club
- Final concert with students and resident faculty

For information and online registration go to wpunj.edu/summerjazzworkshop



ANDREW HURLBUT

New England Conservatory's Jazz Lab in Boston

Faculty: Paul Carr, Pepe Gonzalez, Allyn Johnson, Aaron Seeber
Cost: \$965 (extended day), \$1,425 (Residency); \$1,375 (JAM Camp and JAM Lab Extended Day), \$1,845 (JAM Camp and JAM Lab Residency)
Contact: (301) 871-8418, coordinator@jazzacademy.org, jazzacademy.org

through Friday; there are no overnight accommodations.

Faculty: Ted Chubb, Alexa Tarantino, Willie Applewhite, Zoe Obadia, Matt Buttermann, Mika Nishimura, Juan Montoya, Dave Baron, others
Cost: \$950
Contact: (212) 258-9871, jja@jazz.org, jazz.org

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Junior Jazz Academy
 New York City

July 6–10
 Presented as part of Jazz at Lincoln Center's educational efforts, the Junior Jazz Academy is a week-long intensive for middle school students currently in/entering 6th, 7th or 8th grade. Students learn through small and large ensembles as well as classes on jazz masters, jazz language and instrumental studio. The program runs 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Summer Jazz Academy
 Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

July 13–26
 Presented as part of Jazz at Lincoln Center's educational efforts, and designed and instructed by a select team of faculty, SJA serves as a rigorous training institute for 42 of the most advanced and dedicated high school jazz students. Students apply by audition and perform in big bands and small combos. They will take classes in aesthetics, culture, history, performance practice and pedagogy. The academy is held at Bard College.

Faculty: Steve Wilson, Tim Warfield, Lauren Seviaan, Ingrid Jensen, Marcus Printup, James Burton III, James Chirillo, Rodney Whitaker, Helen Sung, Lewis Nash, Jeff Hamilton
Cost: Free; room-and-board, \$2,145 (scholarships available)
Contact: (212) 258-9871, sjainfo@jazz.org, jazz.org

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Summer Jazz Workshop
 New York, New York

June 21–27
 Presented as part of Jazz at Lincoln Center's educational efforts, Summer Jazz Workshop is designed to support high school jazz musicians aspiring to reach the next level. The one-week program provides students a unique jazz immersion experience in the heart of New York City. Students apply through audition and participate in big band, combo, instrumental studio classes and classes in performance practices.

Faculty: Christopher McBride, Jon Irabagon, Gary Smulyan, Melissa Aldana, Marquis Hill, Tatum Greenblatt, Nick Finzer, Matt Buttermann, Willerm Delisfort, David Wong, Marion Felder
Cost: \$1,250; room-and-board, \$650 (scholarships available)
Contact: (212) 258-9871, sjainfo@jazz.org, jazz.org

The Jazz Camp at Newport
 Newport, Rhode Island

July 26–31
 The Jazz Camp at Newport, sponsored by Salve Regina University and University of Rhode Island, provides a great opportunity for high school students to learn from experienced music professors, including master classes. The week-long camp will conclude with a final concert. Students will receive a ticket to the Newport Jazz Festival on Friday, Aug. 7, at Fort Adams State park, courtesy of Newport Festivals Foundation Inc. They also will have the opportunity to have a meet-and-greet with a Newport Jazz Festival artist, presented in association with Newport Festivals Foundation Inc.

Faculty: See website.
Cost: \$1,150 overnight, \$650 commuter
Contact: salve.edu/jazzcamp

Jazz House Summer Workshop
 Montclair, New Jersey

August 3–15
 The award-winning Jazz House Summer Workshop, led by Artistic Director Christian McBride and 20 top jazz professionals, immerses students in the art of jazz performance. The workshop focuses on improvisation, theory, composition, history and film scoring, plus master classes with world-renowned guest artists. Performances include Dizzy's Club at Lincoln Center and Montclair Jazz Festival. Residential housing is available.

Faculty: Christian McBride, Ted Chubb, Billy Hart, others

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Cost: \$1,595
Contact: info@jazzhousekids.org,
jazzhousekids.org

Litchfield Jazz Camp **Washington, Connecticut** *June 28–July 25*

Consisting of four weeklong sessions, Litchfield Jazz Camp has been a special place for musical and personal growth since 1997. Top-notch faculty teach groups at all levels of play in a supportive, collaborative atmosphere. There is no pre-audition. Upon arrival, students are placed in skill-based combos. Ages 13 through adult are welcome.

Faculty: Luques Curtis, Zwe Le Pere, Nicki Parrott, Mario Pavone, Sean Pentland, Avery Sharpe, Joris Teepe, Ian Carroll, John Iannuzzi, Steve Johns, George Schuller, Matt Wilson, Don Braden, Claire Daly, Paul Bollenback, Mike Godette, Dan Liparini, Doug Munro, Dave Stryker, Vinny Raniolo, Jen Allen, Zaccai Curtis, Orrin Evans, Julian Shore, Carmen Staaf, Damian Curtis, Kris Allen, Claire Daly, Caroline Davis, Mike Dirubbo, Tom Finn, Andrew Hadro, Jeff Lederer, Albert Rivera, Dakota Austin, Pedro Milan, Joe Beaty, Peter Mceachern, Dave Ballou, Jean Caze, Russ Johnson, Nick Roseboro, Elliot Bild, Nicole Zuraitis, Melinda Rose Rodriguez, Alina Engibariyan, Liya Grigoryan, Richie Barshay

Cost: Starting at \$1,150 (financial aid available)

Contact: litchfieldjazzcamp.com, (860) 361-6285, info@litchfieldjazzfest.com

MSM Summer at Manhattan School of Music **New York, New York**

July 13–31

MSM Summer provides instruction and performance experience in instrumental music, voice, and composition for students ages 8–17 in a dynamic conservatory setting. Students will develop their musical skills and join a vibrant community of young musicians. The program runs Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Faculty: Nadje Noordhuis, Remy Le Boeuf, Sean Richey, Norman Paul Edwards Jr.

Cost: \$2,850

Contact: msmsummer@msmny.edu,
msmny.edu/msm-summer,
(917) 493-4475

Marshall University Jazz-MU-Tazz Summer Camp

Huntington, West Virginia

June (dates TBA)

This camp is designed for high school students of all levels from beginning to advanced. Participants can enjoy a music-packed week with big band and combo rehearsals, guest-artist workshops, jam sessions and

special topic sessions on jazz improvisation, theory, history and more.

Faculty: Dr. Martin Saunders, Dr. Ed Bingham, Dr. Michael Stroehrer, Jeff Wolfe, Jesse Nolan, Duane Flesher, Danny Cecil

Cost: See website.

Contact: music@marshall.edu,
marshall.edu/music/jmt

Maryland Summer Jazz **Rockville, Maryland**

July 15–18, July 22–25

Presented by Jazz Wire, Maryland Summer

Jazz is one of the few boutique jazz camps in the country dedicated to adult amateur musicians. MSJ is all about improvisation, small group jazz, connection and having a blast.

Faculty: Past faculty includes Ingrid Jensen, Paul Bollenback, Jeff Coffin, Helen Sung, Jimmy Haslip, Greg Boyer, Jeff Antoniuk, Sherrie Maricle, Walt Weiskopf

Cost: Starting at \$925

Contact: Artistic Director Jeff Antoniuk,
(443) 822-6483,
marylandsummerjazz.com



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Monday, June 22–Friday, June 26, 2020

Jazz instrumentalists and vocalists—grade 9 through adult—you are invited to reach the next level in your artistry within this jazz summer workshop. This intensive five-day program provides you with the opportunity to develop your improvisation skills while delving into the historical narrative of our distinctly American art form. Daily workshops include ear training, jazz theory, improvisational development, and small-group work with our renowned faculty.

Javon Jackson

*Program Director, Director of the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz,
Tenor Saxophone*

FACULTY INCLUDE:

Jimmy Cobb, *Drums* Linda Ransom, *Voice*
Billy Drummond, *Drums* David Smith, *Trumpet*
Jeremy Manasia, *Piano* David Williams, *Bass*

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*Scholarships available for Connecticut Residents

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hartford.edu/hartt



Litchfield Jazz Camp in Washington, Connecticut

LINSEY VICTORIA PHOTOGRAPHY

Jazz Lab gives students the tools to take their musicality to the next level through innovative curriculum, small ensemble performance and guidance from world-renowned faculty and guest artists.

Faculty: Adam Neely, Tim Lienhard, Henrique Eisenmann, Ken Schaphorst, David Zoffer, Rick McLaughlin, Michael Mayo, Lihi Haruvi, Michael Thomas, Wendy Eisenberg, Zwelakhe Duma Bell le Pere, Peter Moffett, Robin Baytas

Cost: \$1,800 Early Bird Tuition (before April 1); Regular Tuition: \$2,000; Housing: \$1,612

Contact: jazzlab@necmusic.edu, necmusic.edu/jazz-lab

The National Jazz Workshop Fairfax and Winchester, Virginia

June 21–26, July 12–17

In its 12th year, NJW offers comprehensive jazz curriculum with weeklong workshops at Shenandoah Conservatory and George Mason University. Participants are provided with resources to expand skills through a developed curriculum. Tracks include vocal, instrumental, jazz arranging and audio engineering.

Faculty: Matt Niess, Mike Tomaro, Darden Purcell, Shawn Purcell, Graham Breedlove, Craig Fraedrich, Regan Brough, Kevin McDonald, Xavier

Perez, Mike Tomaro Big Band, The Airmen of Note, The Navy Commodores, The Army Blues, The Capitol Bones, NJW All-Stars, others

Cost: See website.

Contact: matt.niess@nationaljazzworkshop.org, nationaljazzworkshop.org

New England Conservatory's Jazz Lab

Boston, Massachusetts

June 28–July 11

Jazz Lab is for students who love jazz and want to push the boundaries of creative music.

New York Jazz Academy Summer Jazz Intensives

New York, New York

June 29–September 4

New York Jazz Academy Summer Jazz Intensives offer high-quality jazz education and a fully immersive New York City experience. Highlights include a diverse curriculum including lessons with top teaching artists, theory classes, ensemble rehearsals, master classes, and jazz club visits. Ages 14 through adults are welcome. Instrumentalists and vocalists are welcome. There are beginning, intermediate and advanced levels.

Faculty: Javier Arau, David Engelhard, Tom Dempsey, Sirintip, Carolyn Leonhart, Peck Allmond, Jay

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- Jam sessions
- Topic discussions
- Faculty concert

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June 10-13, 2020

Central Pennsylvania Jazz Camp

Messiah College
Mechanicsburg, PA

2020 Guest Educator:
Joe Magnarelli

www.friendsofjazz.org

Leonhart, Matt Pavolka, Pete Zimmer, others

Cost: Starting at \$727/week.

Contact: (718) 426-0633,
nyjazzacademy.com

New York Jazz Workshop Summer Jazz Intensive Series

New York, New York

June 7–13, June 29–Sept 4, July 23–August 30

Musicians from all over the globe have turned to the New York Jazz Workshop Summer Jazz Intensives to collaborate, learn and to get inspired. This series of workshops offers 11 three- and four-day intensives for adults (July 23–Aug. 30) and four day-camp weeks for teens (June 29–Sept. 4) in New York City. The Jazz Improvisation Workshop In Italy program presents a weeklong retreat (June 7–13) of rigorous jazz studies in a relaxed and friendly environment where participants will delve into rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements of jazz improvisation, all while keeping in contact with the surrounding nature and the beautiful landscapes of Tuscany.

Faculty: Marc Mommaas, Mark Sherman, Doug Beavers, Vito Leszczak, Kenny Wessel, Fay Victor, Tony Moreno, Olivia Foschi, Frank Kimbrough, Jacob Sacks, Amina Figarova, Tim Horner, Vito Medina, Darius Jones, Sebastian Noelle, Nate Radley, Loire Cotler, others

Cost: See website; early bird discounts are available.

Contact: info@newyorkjazzworkshop.com,
newyorkjazzworkshop.com

NY Hot Jazz Camp

New York, New York

April 13–19

Musicians 18 and older of all skill levels are welcome at this camp, where up to 48 students will be arranged into bands. Workshop topics include improvisation, stage presence and etiquette and jazz history. The camp culminates in a performance at a jazz club, where all students are expected to improvise a solo.

Faculty: Bria Skonberg, Randy Reinhart, Antoinette Montague, Dan Levinson, Dion Tucker, Rossano Sportello, Jared Engel, Cynthia Sayer, Kevin Dorn, Molly Ryan

Cost: \$950

Contact: info@nyhotjazzcamp.com,
nyhotjazzcamp.com

NYU Summer Jazz Composers Workshop

New York, New York

July 13–17

This is an intensive workshop for intermediate and advanced-level students examining composition, arranging and orchestration techniques for jazz ensembles. Students will write their own compositions during the workshop that will be performed on the final day. Daily classes and lectures will be held by the NYU Jazz Studies Program composition faculty.

Faculty: Rich Shemaria, Gil Goldstein, Alan Broadbent, Alan Ferber

Cost: \$850; housing, \$462

Contact: Dave Pietro, NYU Steinhardt Jazz Studies Director, (212) 998-5252,
dap224@nyu.edu, steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/summer

NYU Summer Jazz Improv Workshops

New York, New York

June 29–July 10, July 13–24

These two-week workshops offer daily ensembles, workshops and performance

opportunities along with an in-depth look into jazz theory and improv classes geared towards the intermediate to advanced student. Students interact with the finest jazz musicians in New York City, giving students access to the world's greatest music scene.

Faculty: Last year's faculty included Dave Pietro, Tony Moreno, Dave Schroeder, Adam Rogers, Rich Perry, Rich Shemaria

Cost: \$2,500; housing, \$898

Contact: Dave Pietro, NYU Steinhardt Jazz Studies Director, (212) 998-5252,
dap224@nyu.edu, steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/summer/jazzimprov

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ENCORE CODA

Camp Encore Coda in Sweden, Maine

students are welcome to attend as commuters. Student musicians will gain experience in improvisation, small group and large ensembles, and will perform in a final showcase. Professional concert attendance is also included.

- Faculty:** Jazz faculty members from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University
- Cost:** Residential Tuition: \$975; Commuter Tuition: \$775
- Contact:** (848) 932-1500, summer@mgsa.rutgers.edu, sites.rutgers.edu/mgsa-community-arts-summer/music

Samba Meets Jazz Workshops—Maine
Bar Harbor, Maine
August 2–9

Located on Frenchman’s Bay at College of the Atlantic (steps from Acadia National Park), this instrumental and jazz tap week explores a variety of styles—jazz, Brazilian and Afro-Cuban jazz. Adult participants of all levels and musical backgrounds benefit from personalized attention. The instrumental program includes ensembles, big band, improvisation, phrasing and instrument-specific study, arranging, plus jams and performances. The tap dance program includes jazz, Brazilian and Afro-Cuban, with an opportunity to work with instrumental faculty. Guests and chaperoned high school are welcome. Partial scholarships and work/study are available, based on financial need and merit. Discounts are available for educators and working musicians.

- Faculty:** Nilson Matta (director), Brian Lynch, Harry Allen, Adriano Santos, Dario Eskenazi, Felipe Galganni, others
- Cost:** See website.
- Contact:** Alice Schiller, (917) 620-8872, alice@sambameetsjazz.com, sambameetsjazz.com

Samba Meets Jazz Workshops—Massachusetts
Beverly, Massachusetts
July 2020

Participants in the vocal and instrumental camp of adult hobbyists, working musicians and educators will have a unique opportunity to study, hang, play and sing with masters of jazz and Brazilian jazz on Endicott College’s oceanfront campus. The vocal program includes one-on-one coaching, interpretation, phrasing, technique, scatting, charting, theory, Portuguese pronunciation (optional) and percussion accompaniment. The instrumental program includes ensembles, harmony, improvisation, arranging, Brazilian rhythms, styles, phrasing and more. Partial scholarships and work/study are available, based on financial need and merit. Discounts are available for students, educators and working musicians.

- Faculty:** Nilson Matta (director), Dominique Eade, others
- Cost:** See website.
- Contact:** Alice Schiller, (917) 620-8872,

Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz Summer Jazz Camp
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 6–17

This is a two-week intensive program that provides Jazz education to Philadelphia music students with at least two years of experience on their primary instrument. For the past 12 years, the summer camp has been offering instruction by some of Philadelphia’s most accomplished jazz musicians in composition, improvisation and applied music theory. The students will be placed in large and small ensembles, where they will get performance opportunities, as well as participate in master

classes with world-renowned jazz artists.

Faculty: Cedric Napoleon, Monette Sudler, Sumi Tonooka

Cost: \$350 (one week), \$750 (two weeks)

Contact: Paul Giess, (215) 893-9912, clefclubofjazz.org

Rutgers Summer Jazz Institute
New Brunswick, New Jersey
July 12–17

This camp is open to students ages 11–18. Overnight housing is available for high school students, and middle school



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sambameetsjazz.com

Skidmore Jazz Institute Saratoga Springs, New York

June 27–July 11

The Skidmore Jazz Institute, now in its 33rd year, is led by Mark Beaubriand (director) and Todd Coolman (artistic director). The faculty members are top jazz practitioners who are also gifted educators. Students work closely with faculty in daily combo rehearsals and improvisational classes. Private and semi-private lessons distinguish this institute from other similar summer camps. The evening concert series presents the Skidmore Faculty All-Stars and invited guest artists in performance, and afternoon master classes offer additional opportunities to learn from these master musicians. Students perform at the historic Caffe Lena and twice on campus. They also attend the Freihofer's Jazz Festival at SPAC.

Faculty: Todd Coolman, Bill Cunliffe, Steve Davis, Mike Dease, Bob Halek, Antonio Hart, Clay Jenkins, Brian Lynch, Dennis Mackrel, John Nazarenko, Jim Snidero, Mark Beaubriand (director)

Cost: \$2,929 (including room and board)

Contact: Coleen Stephenson, (518) 580-5447, cstephen@skidmore.edu, skidmore.edu/summerjazz



Interplay Jazz Camp in Meriden, New Hampshire

Summer Jazz Camp at Moravian College Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

July 6–10

The camp offers jam sessions, jazz history, master classes, workshops and classes in recording techniques, plus a recording session. Two tracks are offered: Beginner/Intermediate and Advanced (by audition). Student musicians entering grades 8–12 and college students are encouraged to enroll. High school juniors and older have the option to earn college credit.

Faculty: Moravian College jazz faculty

Cost: \$425–\$490

Contact: music@moravian.edu, (610) 861-1650, summerjazz.moravian.edu

Tritone Jazz at Naz Rochester, New York July 19–24

Tritone is all about playing, learning and keeping it all fun. Curriculum is focused on adult learners (no one under 21 admitted) of all experience levels and includes participation in small combos, big bands, guided improvisation/theory classes, instrument instruction and jam sessions.

Faculty: Gene Bertocini, Darmon Meader, Charles Pillow, Zach Harmon, Clay

SUMMER JAZZ ACADEMY

Bard College • Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
July 13–26, 2020

Faculty: Steve Wilson, Tim Warfield, Lauren Sevian, Ingrid Jensen, Marcus Printup, James Burton III, James Chirillo, Rodney Whitaker, Helen Sung, Lewis Nash, Jeff Hamilton

SJA ensembles will be featured at the Caramoor Jazz Festival on July 18th, 2020 with special guests Sean Jones, Sherman Irby, Ingrid Jensen, and Steve Wilson.

SUMMER JAZZ WORKSHOP

Fordham University Lincoln Center •
Manhattan, New York • June 21–27, 2020

Faculty: Christopher McBride, Jon Irabagon, Gary Smulyan, Melissa Aldana, Marquis Hill, Tatum Greenblatt, Nick Finzer, Matt Buttermann, Willerm Delisfort, David Wong, Marion Felder





National Jazz Workshop in Virginia

Jenkins, Mark Kellogg, Dariusz Terefenko, Ike Sturm, Kristen Shiner-McGuire

Cost: \$845

Contact: Bob DeRosa, (585) 377-2222, bob@tritonejazz.com, tritonejazz.com

University of the Arts: Summer Institute Music program Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

July 6–17

The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts and University of the Arts present this dynamic two-week intensive, where instrumentalists and vocalists explore technique and repertoire while interacting with master-level musicians. Uncover a range of creative possibilities through jam sessions, ensembles, lessons and collaborations, with an emphasis on improvisation and performance.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: See website.

Contact: uarts.edu/simusic

UMass Fine Arts Center Jazz in July Amherst, Massachusetts

July 13–24

Jazz in July is a concentrated two-week program where jazz vocalists and instrumentalists study improvisation with some of the nation's best jazz artists and educators. The program includes master classes, group clinics, jazz theory and improvisation training, ensemble coaching, jam sessions and style explorations. Live performance is critical to the program, and students perform before a live audience in community settings. Jazz in July is a multi-generational program with participants age 15 and over. Jazz in July is a program of the University of Massachusetts Fine Arts Center, in cooperation with the Department of Music & Dance.

Faculty: Jeff Holmes, Sheila Jordan, Jason Palmer, Avery Sharpe, Earl MacDonald, Luis Perdomo, Steve Johns, Felipe Salles, Winard Harper

Cost: Commuting Students: One week, \$625; two weeks, \$1,250. Residential Students: One week, \$973; two weeks, \$2,093. Register before March 1 and receive 20% off tuition.

Contact: jazzinjury@acad.umass.edu, (413) 545-3530, jazzinjury.com

Vermont Jazz Center's Summer Jazz Workshop Putney, Vermont

August 9–15

VJC hosts about 60 instrumental and 20 vocal participants from around the world for a challenging, invigorating workshop. The program is set up so that participants can focus intensively on the music. Learning opportunities include classes in theory, composition and arranging, vocal studies, listening, master classes and jam sessions.

Faculty: Sheila Jordan, Helen Sung, Francisco Mela, Cameron Brown, Jay Clayton, Jason Palmer, Brian Adler, Claire Arenius, Freddie Bryant, Stacy Dillard, Harvey Diamond, Ray Gallon, Marcus McLaurine, Camille Thurman, Michael Zsoldos, David Picchi, Eugene Uman, others

Cost: \$1,595

Contact: vtjazz.org, ginger@vtjazz.org, (802) 254-9088 ext. 2

William Paterson University Summer Jazz Workshop Wayne, New Jersey

July 19–25

Commuters and residents 14 and older experience seven intense days of small group performance and improvisation, along with classes in arranging, improvisation, jazz history, and a trip to a New York City jazz club. World-renowned jazz artists provide extensive mentorship, and there are daily clinics and concerts.

Faculty: Rufus Reid (Artist in Residence), Cecil Bridgewater, Steve LaSpina, Marcus McLaurine, Tim Newman (Director), James Weidman

Cost: Commuters: \$899 (includes all concert admissions, music fees and entrance fee to NYC jazz club). Residents: \$1,384 (includes all concert admissions, music fees and entrance fee to NYC jazz club, plus room and meals).

Contact: Tim Newman, Director, newmant@wpunj.edu, wpunj.edu/summerjazzworkshop

Wheeler Jazz Camp Providence, Rhode Island

June 15–19

For five days, students are immersed in jazz and learn from instructors who are passionate about music and teaching. Each day concludes with combos, jam sessions and performances. The camp is open to players of all abilities and ages, and students are grouped by skill and interest. The Wheeler School's campus provides well-equipped instructional, practice and performance spaces that include pianos, drums and amplifiers. All instructors are active performers and recording artists.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: \$550

Contact: summercamp@wheelerschool.org, wheelerssummercamp.com/camps/summer-programs

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Gregory Aguirre

Second Line Arts Collective's Sanaa Music Workshop in New Orleans

youngmusicianscamp@gmail.com,
youngmusicianscamp.com

Furman University & Greenville Jazz Collective Summer Jazz Camp

Greenville, South Carolina

June 28–July 2

Students take classes in jazz theory, improvisation and history, and perform in a big band and/or jazz combo. The camp includes evening faculty recitals and a final student concert, and is open to high school and middle school students of all levels and instruments.

Faculty: Dr. Matt Olson, Steve Watson, Shannon Hoover, Justin Watt, Brad Jepson, Jake Mitchell, Tom Wright, Keith Davis, Matt Dingleline, Tim Blackwell, Ian Bracchitta

Cost: \$410 for commuters, \$530 for overnight campers

Contact: Dr. Matt Olson, director of jazz studies, matt.olson@furman.edu, (864) 294-3284, furman.edu/academics/music/precollegeandadult-programs/pages/summerjazz.aspx

High School Band/Honors Wind Ensemble Camp

Austin, Texas

June 21–27

This camp is designed for musicians ranging from the most talented and proficient to the less experienced. It is open students entering grades 9–12. This session features four concert bands, each conducted by recognized outstanding conductors from around the state of Texas. The program includes sectionals, master classes, elective study, supervised practice and optional private lessons.

Faculty: See longhornmusiccamp.org.

Cost: \$495 for day campers, \$695 for residential campers

Contact: lmc@austin.utexas.edu, (512) 232-2080, longhornmusiccamp.org, longhornmusiccamp.org/high_school_band_honors_wind_ensemble_camp

Jazz Institute at Brevard Music Center

Brevard, North Carolina

June 8–19

Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Jazz Institute at Brevard is a summer program for students ages 14–29 of all experience levels. The program includes instruction for vocals and most jazz instruments, including saxophone, guitar and drums, led by Michael Dease (the director) and other award-winning faculty members.

Faculty: Michael Dease, Gwen Dease, Jim Gasior, Todd Coolman, Randy Napoleon, Sharel Cassity, Jim Alfredson, Jeff Sipe, Ulysses Owens Jr., Brian Lynch, Anthony Stanco, Carmen Bradford, Lenora Helm Hammonds, Gina Benalcazar, Gregory Tardy, Luther Allison, The Sencalar/Glassman Quintet

SOUTH

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Fayetteville Adult Jazz Camp at the University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas

June 25–28

Attendees can learn jazz songs, style and improvisation by ear and from written notation during the day and then take part in evening performances by the faculty and student groups. This camp is open to music students age 19 and older with at least one year of experience on their instrument/voice.

Faculty: Chris Teal, Nick Finzer, Doug Stone, Matthew Golombisky, Dr. Kimberly Hannon Teal, others

Cost: \$462 (by May 1), \$497 (after May 1). Fee includes instruction, materials and daily lunches. Lodging/Meal Package (for those staying overnight at dorm): \$175.

Contact: fayettevillejazzcamp.com, Nastassja Riley, camp coordinator, (479) 575-4702, cms@uark.edu, Chris Teal, camp director, uofacmsjazz@gmail.com

Fayetteville Youth Jazz Camp at the University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas

June 21–26

Attendees can experience a fun group dynamic where they feel free to express themselves through improvisation and composition. Instruction includes how to learn songs, assimilate styles, and improvise, giving campers plenty of tools to improve their musicianship after the camp is over. This camp is open to students from ages 11–18.

Faculty: Chris Teal, Nick Finzer, Doug Stone, Matthew Golombisky, Dr. Kimberly Hannon Teal, others

Cost: \$370 (by May 1), \$400 (after May 1):

instruction, materials, daily lunches and dinners. \$235: lodging package (for those staying overnight at dorm), five nights lodging, breakfasts. Scholarships are available.

Contact: fayettevillejazzcamp.com, Nastassja Riley, camp coordinator, (479) 575-4702, cms@uark.edu, Chris Teal, camp director, uofacmsjazz@gmail.com

Frost Summer Jazz Workshop

Coral Gables, Florida

June 22–26

This workshop is a 5-day intensive program, designed for high school students planning to major in jazz studies in college. In addition to performing ensembles, there are courses in theory and improvisation, arranging, recording techniques, entrepreneurship and college prep workshops.

Faculty: Chuck Bergeron, John Hart, Steve Guerra, John Yarlning, other Frost faculty members.

Cost: \$600 (tuition), \$300 (housing and meals), \$140 (facilities and administrative fees)

Contact: Chuck Bergeron, c.bergeron@miami.edu, prep.frost.miami.edu

Frost Young Musicians' Camp

Coral Gables, Florida

June 29–July 10, July 13–24

This camp is for intermediate and highly advanced players in grades 7–12. It offers classes for traditional jazz instruments and for string players and vocalists. The schedule will be filled with playing with large and small groups, a technique class, an improv class and an elective. Attendees will study with faculty members from the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where the camp is held.

Faculty: Aaron Lebows, Brian Murphy, Ira Sullivan, others

Cost: See youngmusicianscamp.com.

Contact: Sarah Neham Salz,

Cost: \$1,500.
Contact: admissions@brevardmusic.org,
brevardjazz.org, (828) 862-2140

Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp **New Orleans, Louisiana**

June 29–July 17

This jazz education intensive is offered to students 10 to 21 years old. Instruction is offered in brass and woodwind instruments, acoustic and electric bass, guitar, piano, drums and percussion, large and small ensembles, vocal, swing and second-line dance, music composition and money literacy. Online or in-person audition required.

Faculty: Artistic Director Edward "Kidd" Jordan, Stefon Harris, artist-in-residence, others.

Cost: See website.

Contact: louisarmstrongjazzcamp.com, (504) 715-9295, (504) 300-9297,
jazzcamp@louisarmstrongjazzcamp.com

Loyola University Summer Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 8–11

At this camp held at Loyola University New Orleans, participants will enjoy four full days of combos, improvisation, theory, ear training, appreciation, faculty performances, master classes and individual lessons. This camp is for non-beginners who have completed the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades, and who sing, play brass, woodwind or string instruments, piano, bass, guitar or drum set. Financial aid is available.

Faculty: Tony Dagradi, Matt Lemmler, Ed Wise, Wayne Maureau, Adam Bock, John Mahoney, Dr. Nick Volz, Wess Anderson, Dr. Gordon Towell

Cost: \$240 for tuition, \$570 with room and board

Contact: Dr. Gordon Towell, gjtowell@loyola.edu, cmm.loyola.edu/music/loyola-jazz-camp

Nashville Jazz Workshop Summer Camp

Nashville, Tennessee

June 22–26

NJW camp is an immersive day camp for teenagers who are serious about jazz and the music industry. Classes are led by a faculty featuring some of Nashville's finest session musicians and touring sidemen. This camp gives an inside look at the mechanics of the music industry via jazz.

Faculty: Evan Cobb, Jamey Simmons, Rahsaan Barber, Roy Agee, Lindsey Miller, Jody Nardone, Jonathan Wires, Chester Thompson, Bethany Merritt.

Cost: \$450

Contact: Evan Cobb, evan@nashvillejazz.org, nashvillejazz.org

New Orleans Traditional Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 21–26

This camp includes six nights of housing, breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday, ensemble and sectional instruction, private lessons, evening jam sessions, a performance opportunity at Preservation Hall, a chance to play in a second line parade and to perform in a final concert. There is an optional extra day to play at a jam session at a local venue. The focus is on traditional jazz and swing. All ages are allowed, but participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Scholarships are available for high school and college musicians.

Faculty: Banu Gibson, Ben Poler, Charlie Fardella, Dan Levinson, Tom Fischer, Ray Moore, Charlie Halloran, David Sager, Steve Pistorius, David Boeddinghaus, Kris Tokarski, Heather Pierson, Katie Cavera, Larry Scala, Mark Brooks, Doyle Cooper, Gerald French, Hal Smith, Leah Chase

Cost: \$2,200

Contact: Banu Gibson, executive director, (504) 895-0037, notradjazzcamp@gmail.com, tradjazzcamp.com

Second Line Arts Collective's Sanaa Music Workshop

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 15–26

This workshop is for students age 15 to 23. Sanaa immerses students in exercises that focus not only on honing one's music skills but also on the processes of marketing, selling and branding music. The goal is to provide students with the tools necessary for a successful, lucrative and fulfilling career in the arts. Classes include small combo, private instruction, music marketing, music licensing, touring, branding, social media, and guest lecture lunch series.

Faculty: Faculty and past guest artists include Braxton Cook, Cyrille Aimée, Jamison Ross, Quiana Lynell, Jonathan M. Michel, Darrian Douglas, Gregory Agid, Jasen Weaver, Scott Johnson, Reid Martin.

Cost: See secondlinearts.org.

Contact: secondlineartscollective@gmail.com, secondlinearts.org

University of North Carolina Asheville Summer Jazz Camp

Asheville, North Carolina

June 21–26

In this microcosm of the university program, participants will focus on improvisation in multiple genres, from contemporary classical to jazz to experimental electronics. Open to every instrumentalist and vocalist of any discipline, this camp teaches sound as communication, using verbal schematics.

Faculty: UNC Asheville faculty members, Mark Small, Mike Baggetta, Justin Ray, Jacob Rodriguez, others.

Cost: \$595 for residents with early

registration. Cost increases for later registration.

Contact: Steve Alford, camp director, (828) 255-7137, salford2@unca.edu, music.unca.edu/events/jazz-camp/

University of North Carolina Wilmington Summer Jazz Workshop **Wilmington, North Carolina**

July 12–17

This workshop is geared for middle and high school students, and covers virtually every aspect of jazz studies, including small and large jazz ensemble opportunities, music theory classes, jazz history, individual lessons and evening performances. This workshop also features opportunities to work one-on-one with jazz faculty and guest artists.

Faculty: Frank Bongiorno, Tom Davis, Natalie Boeyink, Kevin Day, Justin Hoke, Jerald Shynett, Jon Hill, Jerry Lowe, Paolo Gualdi

Cost: \$525 for tuition, housing and three daily meals during the workshop.

Contact: Dr. Frank Bongiorno, (910) 962-3390, uncw.edu/music/smc/smcjazz.html

University of North Texas–Davy Mooney Jazz Guitar Workshop

Denton, Texas

July 12–17

This workshop offers an intensive week of

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study and performance for aspiring jazz guitarists. Instruction will cover fretboard knowledge, jazz guitar technique and vocabulary, chord melody, and other topics. Participants will have the opportunity to perform with a rhythm section, as well as in duos and trios, and be coached by faculty. The workshop is open to advanced high school students (14 and up), college students, professionals and serious amateur guitarists.

Faculty: Davy Mooney
Cost: \$595 tuition plus housing and fees.
Contact: jazzworkshop@unt.edu,
 (940) 565-3743, jazz.unt.edu/
 davy-mooney-jazz-guitar-workshop

University of North Texas—Jazz Combo Workshop

Denton, Texas

July 5–10

The 29th annual edition of this acclaimed workshop is open to musicians ages 14 and up. The curriculum includes combo, faculty concerts, jazz theory/improvisation, jazz history/listening and instrumental master classes (trumpet, saxophone, trombone, piano, bass, guitar, drums). This year's special guest is acclaimed saxophonist and composer John Ellis.

Faculty: Davy Mooney, John Ellis, Lynn Seaton, Alan Baylock, Philip Dizack, Quincy Davis, Dave Meder, Nick Finzer, Rob Parton, others
Cost: \$595 tuition plus housing and fees.

Contact: jazzworkshop@unt.edu,
 (940) 565-3743,
 jazz.unt.edu/combo-workshop

University of North Texas—Lynn Seaton Double Bass Workshop

Denton, Texas

June 15–19

This intimate workshop will offer an intensive week of study and performance opportunities for the jazz bassist. Classes include bass line development and daily sessions on technique. Participants will have an opportunity to perform with a rhythm section and be coached. Faculty concerts will be presented throughout the week. Participants will perform in the Friday evening Bass Bash concert. The workshop is open to advanced high school students (14 and up), college students, professionals and serious amateur bassists. The workshop is limited to 15 participants.

Faculty: Lynn Seaton.
Cost: \$595 tuition plus housing and fees.
Contact: jazzworkshop@unt.edu,
 (940) 565-3743,
 jazz.unt.edu/doublebassworkshop

University of North Texas—Vocal Jazz Educator Seminar

Denton, Texas

June 18–20

This seminar is filled with content relevant to current or aspiring vocal jazz educators of all

levels (minimum age 18). Topics include working with rhythm sections, repertoire, sound equipment, rehearsal techniques, warm-ups and exercises to improve an ensemble's musicianship. Continuing Education Unit credits are available.

Faculty: Jennifer Barnes and Jeff Horenstein.
Cost: \$350 tuition (early bird pricing \$300 until March 31), on-campus housing and fees for an additional cost. \$15 for Continuing Education Unit certificate.
Contact: jenniferbarnes@unt.edu,
 jazz.unt.edu/vocaljazzseminar

University of North Texas—Vocal Jazz Workshop

Denton, Texas

June 21–26

For six intense days, participants will be involved in every aspect of vocal jazz, from solo and ensemble performance to improvisation, pedagogy, songwriting and jazz theory. Educators attend a daily class about vocal jazz directing, programming and rhythm sections. The workshop is open to vocalists age 14 and up. Continuing Education Unit credits are available.

Faculty: Jennifer Barnes, Rosana Eckert and Greg Jasperse.
Cost: \$595 tuition plus housing and fees, \$15 for Continuing Education Unit certificate.
Contact: jenniferbarnes@unt.edu,
 jazz.unt.edu/vocaljazzworkshop

University of South Carolina ColaJazz Camp

Columbia, South Carolina

July 16–19

This camp welcomes all ages and levels. Participants will enjoy instrumental sectionals, concerts, music theory lessons, jam sessions, master classes by distinguished guests, a grand finale concert and more.

Faculty: See colajazz.com.
Cost: See colajazz.com.
Contact: contact@colajazz.com, colajazz.com

Vocal Jazz Online Summer Camp

Durham, North Carolina

August 3–7

Vocal Jazz Online presents this camp, which offers participation online via webinar, face-to-face or both. All activities will be archived in modules so that participants can access them for a lifetime. This intense but fun week covers all aspects of singing vocal jazz (solo, group with combo, music theory, improvisation and songwriting). All ages and levels are welcome. The camp is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Faculty: Lenora Z. Helm Hammonds, North Carolina Central University faculty members, others
Cost: \$399
Contact: lhelm@nccu.edu,
 vocaljazzsummercamp.com



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The University of Wisconsin's Summer Music Clinic hosts middle- and high-school students.

UW CLINIC FOSTERS MUSICAL GROWTH

NOW IN ITS 91ST YEAR, THE UNIVERSITY OF Wisconsin's Summer Music Clinic in Madison has established a history of teaching middle-school and high-school students while remaining open to fresh ideas. The clinic's jazz offerings and a new state-of-the-art performance center promise to make this summer's weeklong programs especially vibrant.

"There is a lot of good tradition and things that don't necessarily change a lot," said Carrie Backman, music program advisor for the clinic. "There's a close connection to the university's school of music. As music education has evolved, so has our approach. There's a purposeful movement for students to experience as much as they can, regardless of their skill level. [This is] a place for them to strive and to learn."

Backman has experienced all sides of the clinic. She first entered the program as, in her words, "a really horrible trumpet player" in the sixth grade. Teaching and encouraging all participants has been key to the clinic's success. Along with auditions that find ideal spots for each performer, attendees can assemble their own pro-

grams from a selection of classes. These range from music theory to yoga for musicians. Small groups, big bands and Afro-Cuban ensembles are among the numerous jazz offerings.

"Students who participate in a jazz-based program plus a classical program become a much richer version of their musical selves," Backman said. "Any part of jazz speaks to people in a different way than classical music, and students find [their voices in a way] that they don't in orchestra or concert band."

Johannes Wallmann, director of jazz studies at the university, has substantially built on its jazz program since he arrived on campus in 2012. For the clinic, he previously has enlisted locally based artists like bassist Nick Moran alongside such visiting teachers as saxophonist Teodross Avery and bassist Marcus Shelby. The faculty is prepared to deal with attendees at all skill levels.

"Some of the jazz ensembles will have students who never played in high school jazz ensembles before and who are just dipping a toe in the water," Wallmann said. "If they have a positive experience, it could be the start of a lifelong

love of playing music, or trying something out and deciding, 'It's not for me, but I had a good experience.'"

The clinic usually hosts between 300 and 400 middle-school students, and the same number of high-school musicians for each of its junior and senior weeklong programs that run from June 21–July 3. Primarily, attendees come from across Wisconsin and the Midwest, though Backman said that some have come from as far away as Alaska. Participants can attend jam sessions at the city's North Street Cabaret and at Common Ground Cafe in nearby Middleton.

"At both jam sessions, characters are welcome," Wallmann said. "This is a place where people can be a little more eclectic, and that's valued and appreciated—rather than frowned upon."

Some students might also receive full-tuition scholarships to the university as a result of their performance. One such UW student, Max Newcomer, plays saxophone in the school's jazz orchestra while studying mathematics and economics. Collaborating with different players at the clinic was just as crucial to his experience as his own musical evolution.

"We all began to develop language as a group," Newcomer recalled. "Some were the traditional calls and responses we have in the jazz language; others were little motifs each of us would try to elaborate on throughout our improvisation. By the end of the week, the connection between all of us was deeper due to our combo developing as a whole unit and not purely as individuals."

Students also will be able to take advantage of the campus' Hamel Music Center, which opened last October. The building includes a 700-seat concert hall, 400-seat recital hall and a multi-purpose rehearsal space. State-of-the-art acoustic elements can be adjusted to accommodate for the sonic differences between, say, choral groups and amplified instrumental ensembles.

"Our previous concert facilities were marginal, not beautiful, and didn't sound great, so it was embarrassing when people would come from modern, well-equipped high schools," Wallmann said. "Now, our facilities match the rest of the education we provide."

Wallmann noted that Madison's supportive attitude toward diversity is another benefit, especially as senior students explore identity issues beyond notes on the page.

"Young people come to camp and tell us, 'I use these pronouns,' or, 'I go by a name that maybe doesn't quite match gender presentation,' and this is something that they're experimenting with," Wallmann said. "Seeing that personal growth has nothing to do with music per se, but [seeing them] take another step forward in life into adulthood, into becoming the people they want to be as adults, has been wonderful."

—Aaron Cohen



Tri-C JazzFest Academy Summer Camp in Cleveland

MIDWEST

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Birch Creek Summer Music Academy

Door County, Wisconsin

July 12–25, July 26–August 8

Birch Creek is a summer residential music academy and performance venue for dedicated young musicians ages 13–19. Students master jazz fundamentals and improvisation by performing in big bands and small combos. They establish professional rehearsal and performance attitudes through close mentorship from and observation of top jazz performers and educators.

Faculty: Jeff Campbell, Rick Haydon, Dennis Mackrel, David Bixler, Bob Chmel, Tanya Darby, Lennie Foy, Tom Garling, Steve Horne, Clay Jenkins, Joey Tartell, Scott Burns

Cost: \$2,100, scholarships available

Contact: registrar@birchcreek.org, (920) 868-3763, birchcreek.org/academy/apply-now

Butler University Jazz Camp

Indianapolis, Indiana

July 12–17

Held on the campus of Butler University, this camp invites students ages 12–18 to participate in a fun and intense learning experience under the guidance of Matt Pivec, director of jazz studies. Commuter and residential options are available. No audition is required, and all levels are welcome.

Faculty: Matt Pivec, Kenny Phelps, Jesse Wittman, Rich Dole, Jen Siukola, Sean Imboden, Sandy Williams, Erica Colter, Chris Drabyn, Janis Stockhouse

Cost: \$375 commuter (includes lunch daily); \$725 residential (ages 14–18) (includes dorm stay and three meals per day)

Contact: (317) 940-5500, bcas@butler.edu, butler.edu/bcas/summer-camps

Creative Strings Workshop

Columbus, Ohio

June 28–July 4

With a focus on bowed string instruments (violin, viola, cello, mandolin, bass) for professionals and amateurs ages 14 and up, the Creative Strings Workshop offers small-ensemble coaching, clinics, master classes, jams and concerts spanning jazz, world music, fiddle styles and rock. No previous jazz strings experience required.

Faculty: Past instructors have included Christian Howes, Joel Harrison, Diana Ladio, Jennifer Vincent, Nicole Yarling, Micah Thomas, Gabe Valle, Paul Brown, Kris Keith, George Delancey, Andy Reiner, Chris Shaw, Alex Hargreaves, Jason Anick, Greg Byers, Mike Forfia, Cedric Easton

Cost: Starts at \$995

Contact: Christian Howes, chris@christianhowes.com, (614) 332-8689, christianhowes.com

Elkhart Jazz Fest Workshop

Elkhart, Indiana

Dates TBA

This workshop is for middle-school and high-school students. The curriculum includes big band and combo workshops and a live performance at the Lerner Theatre, and students are eligible for free jazz fest passes.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: See website.

Contact: elkhartjazzfestival.com/workshop

Fernando Jones' Blues Camp

Chicago, Illinois

July 5–10

Student musicians ages 12–18 will learn and perform Chicago blues in a structured program with like-minded others under the tutelage of qualified and internationally traveled instructors. Placement is for intermediate and advanced-level vocalists and instrumentalists (all instruments welcome). Band slots are limited and entry is competitive. The organization also has presented camps in Atlanta, Miami, Palm Beach and London.

Faculty: Fernando Jones and his cadre of internationally traveled blues practitioners



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Guitar: **Roddy Elias, Lorne Lofsky**
Drums: **Nick Fraser, Jim Dexas**
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Student Camps 2020

Jazz Ensemble & Combo
week I June 21-26 week II June 28-July 3

Jazz Improvisation & Combo
July 5-10

Big Band for Adults
June 19-21

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info@shelllakeartscenter.org
shelllakeartscenter.org

Cost: Free
Contact: (312) 369-3229,
 info@blueskids.com,
 blueskids.com/chicago

Golden Grizzlies Jazz Camp Rochester, Michigan

July 20–24

The Golden Grizzlies Jazz Camp at Oakland University allows students entering 9th grade through graduating high school seniors to expand their knowledge in improvisation, ensemble techniques and jazz fundamentals. Students will receive instruction from OU jazz faculty as well as mentorship from current OU students. Students have the choice to form small groups (up to eight people) from their current schools and perform as ensembles. They may also register as an individual and be placed in an existing group. The camp will conclude with a performance at an area Detroit jazz venue. This is a day camp. Scholarships are available.

Faculty: Sean Dobbins, Scott Gwinnell,
 Timothy Blackmon, Mark Kieme
Cost: \$395
Contact: communitymusic@oakland.edu,
 (248) 370-2034, oakland.edu/srmt/d
 community-engagement

Illinois Summer Youth Music Urbana-Champaign, Illinois

July 19–25

Senior Jazz (grades 8–12) features improvisation-focused combo-based instruction. Junior Jazz (grades 6–8) offer big-band experience with improvisation classes and opportunities for combo playing.

Faculty: Chip McNeill, Tito Carrillo, Ron
 Bridgewater, Larry Gray, Joan
 Hickey, Joel Spencer, Chip Stephens
Cost: \$700 (with room and board), \$500
 (tuition only)

Contact: (217) 244-3404, isym@illinois.edu,
 isym.music.illinois.edu

Interlochen Arts Camp Interlochen, Michigan

June 27–July 18

At Interlochen Arts Camp, musicians in grades 6–12 spend three weeks immersed in the world of jazz. The comprehensive curriculum includes daily small and large ensemble rehearsals and classes in improvisation, jazz history, theory and musicianship. Students also take private lessons with an accomplished faculty of performers and educators.

Faculty: Andrew Bishop, Xavier Davis
Cost: \$6,100
Contact: (231) 276-7472, camp.interlochen.
 org/program/music/hs/jazz

Jamey Aebersold's Summer Jazz Workshops Louisville, Kentucky

July 3–19

As one of the world's premier jazz camps, the Jamey Aebersold Summer Workshops offer hands-on combo rehearsals, classes, lectures, master classes and faculty jazz concerts. Ages have ranged from 11 to 85, with participants coming from all across the globe. All instruments are welcome, including strings, voice, accordion, harmonica and tuba. Space is limited at this extremely popular camp.

Faculty: See workshops.jazzbooks.com/faculty
Cost: \$599, additional cost for room-and-board
Contact: (812) 944-8141,
 summerjazzworkshops.com

Kansas City Jazz Camp Kansas City, Kansas

June 1–5

This combo performance camp for all

instruments is co-sponsored by the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra. Two rehearsals take place each day, plus instruction in jazz theory, master classes and daily faculty concerts. Students ages 12 through adult are grouped by ability level. The camp features an all-star student big band.

Faculty: Doug Talley, Rod Fleeman, James
 Albright, Steve Molloy, Dr. Justin
 Binek, Dr. Mike Pagan, Scott Prebys
Cost: \$250 (includes lunch)
Contact: Jim Mair, (913) 288-7503,
 kansascityjazz.org

Keith Hall Summer Drum Intensive Kalamazoo, Michigan

June 15–20, June 22–27

This one-of-a-kind jazz drum camp offers valuable experience through master classes, jam sessions, rehearsals with professional rhythm sections and a drum choir. The week culminates in two performances at the local jazz club. Health, leadership and character building are important aspects as well.

Faculty: Faculty has included Jay Sawyer,
 Christian Euman, Evan Hyde,
 Jeremy Siskind, Matthew Fries, Phil
 Palombi, Matt Hughes, with guests
 Billy Hart, Carl Allen, Matt Wilson,
 Tommy Igoe, Will Kennedy, Donny
 McCaslin, Andrew Rathbun, others
Cost: \$699 (tuition and meals); housing is
 an additional \$220
Contact: (201) 406-5059, keithhallmusic.
 com, khdsdi@keithhallmusic.com

Midwestern Music Camp Lawrence, Kansas

June 7–19

Since 1936, Midwestern Music Camp has brought musicians from grades 6–12 to the University of Kansas. Each division of the camp offers a comprehensive musical experience, carefully planned and supervised by KU faculty to ensure that students at all levels of experience receive the quality instruction and attention that they need to improve their skills and enjoy making music. In addition to band and orchestra instruction, this camp offers a specialized drumline academy for percussionists.

Faculty: Sharon Toulouse, Carolyn Watson,
 Bret Kuhn, Dr. Matt Smith, Ike
 Jackson, others
Cost: See website.
Contact: musiccamp@ku.edu, music.ku.edu/mmc

New York Voices Vocal Jazz Camp Kalamazoo, Michigan

July 27–August 2

Held at Western Michigan University, this camp offers an opportunity to work, sing with and learn from internationally acclaimed vocal group The New York Voices. The camp is open to anyone ages 14 and up. Students, educators, professionals and anyone interested in expanding their knowledge of vocal jazz with New York Voices are welcome.

Faculty: New York Voices, Greg Jaspersse,
 Chris Buzzelli, Jay Ashby

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Cost: See website.
Contact: nyvcamps@newyorkvoices.com,
newyorkvoices.com/summer-camp

Northern Illinois University Jazz Camp

DeKalb, Illinois

July 12–17

This camp is for enthusiastic jazz instrumentalists of all skill levels who want to focus on a creative approach to improvisation and ensemble playing and have completed grades 8–12. NIU Jazz Camp is jam-packed with performing, learning, and listening, and is for musicians who want to improve their understanding and performance of the jazz tradition. Campers attend rehearsals, seminars, master classes, jam sessions, sectionals and group classes, all taught by NIU jazz faculty, alumni and students. Concerts, optional private lessons and recreational activities fill the evening hours. Campers participate in classes on jazz improvisation and jazz theory, and attend instrument master classes that focus on specific techniques for performing jazz and related music.

Faculty: Geof Bradfield (camp director), Kimberly Branch, Nick Roach, Marybeth Kurnat, Mark Dahl, Scott Mertens, Marlene Rosenberg, Reggie Thomas, Lexi Nomikos, Lenard Simpson, others

Cost: \$600 (early bird registration postmarked June 1 or earlier); \$650 (regular registration postmarked June 2 or later)

Contact: Kristin Sherman, ksherman2@niu.edu, (815) 753-1450, niu.edu/external-programs/summer-camps/jazz.shtml

Northwoods Jazz Camp

Rhinelander, Wisconsin

May 13–16

Aspiring students of jazz from college age to seniors are welcome at this camp in a beautiful wooded lakeside setting of Northern Wisconsin. A faculty of jazz professionals teach instrumental/vocal master classes, improvisation, jazz listening, modern jazz combo and big band playing, with concerts each night (open to the public) where advanced students sit in with the professionals.

Faculty: Last year it included Kim Richmond, David Scott, Andy Baker, Tom Hynes, Ryan Frane, David Story, Tim Davis, Kimberly Ford

Cost: \$845 (single occupancy room), \$695 (double occupancy room); a 50% deposit is required

Contact: Kim Richmond, jazzkim@kimrichmond.com, northwoods jazzcamp.com

Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Milt Hinton Institute for Studio Bass

Oberlin, Ohio

July 11–18

The institute includes a weeklong residential program open to bass students ages 13–21 and two Suzuki teacher-training courses for adults

18 and older. The residential program is open to students from all ability levels and genres.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: \$1,025

Contact: anna.hoffmann@oberlin.edu, oberlin.edu/summer-programs/hinton-bass-institute

Orbert Davis' Chicago Jazz Philharmonic Jazz Academy

Chicago, Illinois

July 13–24

Summer Jazz Academy is a two-week, full-day intensive camp for students of all levels, ages 10–17. Students will explore diverse artistic disciplines, performances, civic engagement, and college and career counseling. The academy aims to help sustain an important art form, provide crucial life skills and open doors to higher education.

Faculty: Orbert Davis, Dr. Roosevelt Griffin, members of the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic Orchestra

Cost: \$200–\$425. Scholarships, discounts and payment plans are available

Contact: Jordan Mandela, jazzacademy@chijazzphil.org, (312) 573-8932, chicagojazzphilharmonic.org/education

Roberto Ocasio Latin Jazz Camp

Cleveland, Ohio

June 7–12

At the 16th anniversary edition of this

Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland is committed to providing educational opportunities for students of all ages and from all walks of life. Take a look at the educational programs we have coming up this year.



- **Tri-C Jazz Studies Program** | Jan. 13-May 10, 2020
- **Tri-C JazzFest Academy Spring Session** | Jan. 25-May 16, 2020
- **Tri-C Vocal Jazz Day** | Feb. 17, 2020
- **Tri-C DownBeat Jazz Education Days** | April 27-30, 2020
- **Tri-C JazzFest Summer Camp** | June 15-27, 2020

Call 216-987-4940 or visit www.tri-cjazzfest.com for more information.



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resident camp, held at Case Western Reserve University, students in grades 8–12 (and graduates) will learn about and perform various styles of Latin jazz, including technical and rhythmic aspects, composition, arranging, improvisation, history and culture.

Faculty: Bobby Sanabria (artistic director), Janis Siegel, Special Guest Artist TBA
Cost: \$700; \$650 before April 1
Contact: robertoocasiofoundation.org, (440) 572-2048, trof@robertoocasiofoundation.org

St. Olaf Music Academy
Northfield, Minnesota

June 21–27

This intense week of music-making under the direction of St. Olaf faculty is designed for high school students from around the country who have completed grades 8–12. The sessions include private lessons, large ensembles, chamber music, enrichment classes, recitals and master classes, followed by evening faculty recitals, student performances and social and recreational activities directed by St. Olaf music students. The final

concert will be streamed online. Students will return home with new skills, new energy, new friends and a heightened commitment to music.

Faculty: St. Olaf music faculty
Cost: \$680
Contact: summer@stolaf.edu, (507) 786-3031, stolaf.edu/camps

Shell Lake Arts Center: Adult Big Band
Shell Lake, Wisconsin

June 19–21

Perform jazz ensemble big band under the guidance of Shell Lake Arts Center's nationally recognized teaching artist faculty. This workshop for adults is open to all levels of experience.

Faculty: See website.
Cost: \$300 (non-credit), \$425 (one graduate credit)
Contact: (715) 468-2414, info@shelllakeartscenter.org, shelllakeartscenter.org

Shell Lake Arts Center: Jazz Ensemble and Combo
Shell Lake, Wisconsin

June 21–26, June 28–July 3

Large ensembles and groups are prevalent at this SLAC camp. The program, which is directed toward students in grades 6–12, targets individual improvisation and arranging, among other topics taught by master teachers.

Faculty: See website.
Cost: \$675 per session (early bird rate of \$650 if received by March 1)
Contact: (715) 468-2414, info@shelllakeartscenter.org, shelllakeartscenter.org

Shell Lake Arts Center: Jazz Improvisation and Combo
Shell Lake, Wisconsin

July 5–10

Jazz improvisation and small groups are the focus of the SLAC camp. The program, which is directed toward students in grades 6–12, targets individual improvisation and arranging, among other topics taught by master teachers.

Faculty: See website.
Cost: \$675 (early bird rate of \$650 if received by March 1)
Contact: (715) 468-2414, info@shelllakeartscenter.org, shelllakeartscenter.org

Straight Ahead Jazz Exchange
Chicago, Illinois

July 20–24

At this event, instrumentalists and vocalists can participate in interactive courses guided by accomplished professionals. Enthusiasts can engage in discussions and presentations led by world-renowned artists. There are evening concerts (open to the public). Recommended for ages 19 and up.

Faculty: Sharel Cassity, Jose Diaz, Geof Bradfield, Mike Reed, Victor Garcia, Dana Hall, Robert Irving III, Jarrard Harris, more
Cost: \$330 (early bird registration until March 31), \$355 (regular registration), Jazz Institute of Chicago membership and special rates available
Contact: Diane Chandler-Marshall, (312) 427-1676 ext. 4, jazzinchicago.org

Summer Music Clinic at University of Wisconsin–Madison
Madison, Wisconsin

June 21–27, June 28–July 3

Young musicians at this camp will have the opportunity to learn from some of the best music educators in the nation. Students will participate in ensembles and take a variety of music-elective classes, while making new friends and experiencing residential life on campus. The junior session (for students completing grades 6–8) runs June 21–27.

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TRITONE JAZZ FANTASY CAMPS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ A faculty member for every 5 campers ★ Small-combo playing ★ Big-band playing ★ Improv classes ★ Master classes ★ Jam sessions 	<p>Two camps to choose from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Cool on the Lake Baileys Harbor, WI July 5–10 ★ Jazz at Naz Rochester, NY July 19–24
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Call Bob at 585-377-2222 or visit us online at: tritonejazz.com

The senior session (for students completing grades 9–12) runs June 28–July 3.

Faculty: Faculty members are recruited from around the United States.

Cost: See smc.wisc.edu.

Contact: smc.wisc.edu, smc@wisc.edu, (608) 263-2242

Tri-C JazzFest Academy Summer Camp Cleveland, Ohio

June 15–27

This is a performance-based camp for students ages 12–18 that incorporates jazz, blues, gospel, r&b and hip-hop. The camp provides students the opportunity to work with JazzFest artists and ends with an outdoor performance at the festival. See tri-cjazzfest.com.

Faculty: Dominick Farinacci, Anthony Taddeo, Johnny Cochran, Chris Coles, Aidan Plank, Walter Barnes, Robert Hubbard, Dan Bruce, Joe Hunter

Cost: \$250 (early bird, by April 1), \$300 (regular cost)

Contact: (216) 987-6145, tri-c.edu/jazzfest/educational-programs.html

Tritone Cool on the Lake Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin July 5–10

Tritone is all about playing and learning and keeping it all fun. Curriculum is focused on adult learners (no one under 21 admitted) of all experience levels and includes participation in small combos, big bands, guided improvisation/theory classes, instrument instruction and jam sessions. Personal attention is paramount, with a 5:1 camper/faculty ratio.

Faculty: Terell Stafford, Gene Bertoncini, Janet Planet, John Harmon, Rod Blumenau, Dean Sorenson, Tom Washatka, Zach Harmon, Ike Sturm

Cost: \$875

Contact: Bob DeRosa, bob@tritonejazz.com, tritonejazz.com, (585) 377-2222

University of Central Oklahoma Jazz Lab Summer Jazz Camp Edmond, Oklahoma

June 21–26

Campers participate daily in combos, master classes, improv and theory sessions, jazz history presentations, big band reading sessions and evening jam sessions in a fun and relaxed environment. It's open to instrumentalists age 14 and up.

Faculty: Brian Gorrell, Lee Rucker, Jeff Kidwell, Clint Rohr, Michael Geib, Grant Goldstein, Dennis Borycki, David Hardman, Ryan Sharp, Zac Lee, Special Guests

Cost: \$350 tuition (with \$50 early bird discount available) includes a camp T-shirt and two meals. On-campus housing available with rates starting around \$35 per night double occupancy.

Contact: Brian Gorrell, bgorrell@uco.edu, ucojazzlab.com, (405) 974-5285

University of Michigan MPulse Jazz Institute

Ann Arbor, Michigan

July 5–July 11

Components of the Jazz Institute include jazz arranging, a professional digital recording session, improvisation skills, listening skills, jazz history, applied instrument training, theory/musicianship classes, creative collaboration with other musicians and small group (combo) performance.

Faculty: Dennis Wilson, Associate Professor of Jazz & Contemporary Improvisation

Cost: \$1,775

Contact: mpulse@umich.edu, smt.d.umich.edu/mpulse

UMKC Jazz Camp Kansas City, Missouri

June 21–25

UMKC Jazz Camp brings world-renowned performers and jazz educators to Kansas City to work with talented young instrumentalists ages 12 and up. Jazz Camp participants improve technical and improvisational skills, and aural acuity while studying the standards of the past and new, innovative literature.

Faculty: Bobby Watson, Mitch Butler

Cost: \$370

Contact: (816) 235-5448, vallee@umkc.edu, info.umkc.edu/cmda-jazz

University of Missouri–St. Louis Jazz Camp

St. Louis, Missouri

Dates TBA

This big band jazz camp with an emphasis on ensemble playing features instrument master classes, improvisation and ear training, plus a set by the Jim Widner Big Band. The finale concert features all of the camp big bands.

Faculty: Past instructors have included Chip McNeill, John Harner, Dave Scott, Gary Hobbs, Kim Richmond, others

Cost: See website.

Contact: Jim Widner, widnerjl@umsl.edu, music.umsl.edu/summercamps/jazz-camp.html

University of Toledo Summer Jazz Jam Camp

Toledo, Ohio

Dates TBA

This is a weeklong jazz day camp at the University of Toledo Center for Performing Arts, offering all levels of jazz instruction by master jazz musicians/educators. The camp is open to all people ages 12 and up.

Faculty: Gunnar Mossblad, Mark Sentele, Jay Ronquillo, others

Cost: See website.

Contact: gunnar.mossblad@utoledo.edu, utoledo.edu/al/svpa/music/ensembles/summer_jazz.html



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Contact Brian Gorrell, Director of Jazz Studies
bgorrell@uco.edu • www.ucojazzlab.com • (405) 974-5285

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CU Denver—LYNX Camp Music Industry Program in Colorado

CU DENVER LYNX CAMP

WEST

 This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

88 Creative Keys

Austin, Texas

July 14–17

At 88 Creative Keys professional development workshops, piano teachers learn to improvise, use technology, lead off-bench activities, direct group teaching and acquire updated business skills with today's leading pedagogues. Unlike larger music education conferences, these workshops are limited to a small group of participants in order to maximize individual attention.

Faculty: Bradley Sowash, Leila Viss

Cost: \$700

Contact: 88creativekeys.com

California Brazil Camp

Cazadero, California

August 16–22, August 23–29

Whether you are a beginner or seasoned professional, California Brazil Camp offers intensive classes in a wide array of Brazilian music styles, for all instruments, as well as a full dance program. For adults and supervised children.

Faculty: Chico Pinheiro, Guinga, Ze Paulo Becker, Alessandro Penezzi, Fabiana Cozza, Ailton Nunes, Kellyn Rosa

Cost: \$975 includes all classes, meals and lodging

Contact: info@calbrazilcamp.com, calbrazilcamp.com, (415) 824-2894

California Jazz Conservatory—Jazzschool Girls' Jazz & Blues Camp

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley, California

August 3–7

Open to instrumentalists and vocalists ages

11–18, this camp provides a supportive environment where girls have fun and develop self confidence, improvisation skills and ensemble techniques. It features an all-women faculty with teen and middle school groups and electives at all levels. Attendees are required to have some facility on their instrument and/or a desire to sing.

Faculty: Directors Jean Fineberg and Ellen Seeling, and the Montclair Women's Big Band

Cost: \$499 (financial aid available)

Contact: girlscamp@cj.c.edu, cj.c.edu/girlscamp

California Jazz Conservatory—Jazzschool Guitar Intensive

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley, California

August 10–14

This weeklong intensive for aspiring professional guitarists is directed by internationally acclaimed jazz guitarist and educator Mimi Fox and features numerous guest artists. This Jazzschool Intensive takes place at the California Jazz Conservatory, located in downtown Berkeley, California.

Faculty: Mimi Fox

Cost: \$850

Contact: Rob Ewing, info@cj.c.edu, (510) 845-5373, cj.c.edu

California Jazz Conservatory—Jazzschool High School Jazz Intensive

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley, California

July 6–10

This program is limited to eight advanced high school jazz instrumentalists, with openings for rhythm section instruments and horns. Musicians work closely with top Bay Area jazz artists, including rehearsals, master classes and private lessons at the California Jazz Conservatory. Students develop improvisation/

arranging/composition skills in an intensive rehearsal format.

Faculty: Michael Zilber

Cost: \$795

Contact: Erik Jekabson, erik@cj.c.edu, (510) 845-5373, cj.c.edu/intensive

California Jazz Conservatory—Jazzschool Jazz Piano Intensive

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley, California

June 15–19

This five-day Intensive for the intermediate jazz pianist focuses on rhythmic feel, comping and soloing in both piano trio and solo piano formats. Emphasis is placed on swing feel, voicings and voice leading, and analysis and performance of select jazz pianists' solo transcriptions. Pianists will work with a professional bassist and drummer.

Faculty: Susan Muscarella, others

Cost: \$950

Contact: Susan Muscarella, susan@cj.c.edu, (510) 845-5373, cj.c.edu

California Jazz Conservatory—Jazzschool Jazz Saxophone Intensive

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley, California

June 29–July 3

This new five-day intensive for intermediate to advanced jazz saxophonists places an emphasis on soloing, group interaction, sound, technique and more. Participants work with a professional rhythm section, receiving guidance from faculty throughout the week. Everything culminates in a Friday evening student/faculty concert.

Faculty: Michael Zilber, Dann Zinn, others

Cost: \$850

Contact: Rob Ewing, info@cj.c.edu, (510) 845-5373, cj.c.edu

**California Jazz Conservatory–
Jazzschool Summer Youth Program**
California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley,
California

June 22–26, July 27–31

This camp is open to performers on all instruments entering grades 7 through 10 (with consultation, also open to students entering grade 6). Students participate in daily ensembles, theory classes, private lessons and workshops at the California Jazz Conservatory. Students perform with visiting guest artists in concert at the conclusion of each session.

Faculty: See website.

Cost: \$495 per week;
\$900 for both weeks

Contact: Rob Ewing, rob@cjc.edu,
(510) 845-5373, cjc.edu

**California Jazz Conservatory–
Jazzschool Vocal Intensive**
California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley,
California

August 10–15

This weeklong program is designed to help singers define, create and perform in a distinctive style. This unique intensive emphasizes the technical, creative and spiritual aspects of singing and serves as a catalyst for artistic growth.

Faculty: Laurie Antonioli (CJC Vocal Chair),
Theo Bleckmann

Cost: \$950

Contact: Laurie Antonioli, laurie@cjc.edu,

(510) 845-5373,
cjc.edu/vocalintensive

**California Jazz Conservatory–
Jazzschool Women’s Jazz & Blues
Camp**

California Jazz Conservatory/Berkeley,
California

March 23–27

This concentrated program is presented at the California Jazz Conservatory, providing musicians with the opportunity to study and perform jazz and related styles of music in a supportive environment. It equips musicians with technical and artistic skills, while affording them opportunities to network with others who share their passion for music.

Faculty: Jean Fineberg, Ellen Seeling,
members of the Montclair
Women’s Big Band

Cost: \$499

Contact: womenscamp@cjc.edu, (510) 758-
2200, cjc.edu/womenscamp

Centrum Jazz Port Townsend
Port Townsend, Washington

July 19–26

Led by Artistic Director John Clayton and located in a beautiful setting on Puget Sound, this camp is open to instrumentalists and vocalists high school-age and older. Participants receive daily coaching in a small group setting from world-class faculty. Master classes, theory and special topics classes

and performances by faculty and guests are included. Audition info is at centrum.org.

Faculty: John Clayton, George Cables,
Dawn Clement, Anat Cohen,
Tanya Darby, Chuck Deardorf, Alex
Dugdale, Chuck Easton, Tia Fuller,
Michael Glynn, Wycliffe Gordon,
Juliana Grall, Randy Halberstadt,
Jeff Hamilton, John Hansen,
Marion Hayden, Gary Hobbs, Kelby
MacNayr, René Marie, Allison
Miller, Miles Okazaki, Ellen Rowe,
Gary Smulyan, Terrell Stafford,
Chris Symer, Katie Thiroux, Brianna
Thomas, Jay Thomas, Eric Verlinde,
Sunny Wilkinson, Matt Wilson,
others

Cost: \$845 tuition; room-and-board
options available

Contact: Gregg Miller, Program Manager,
(360) 385-3102 ext. 109, gmiller@
centrum.org, centrum.org/jazz

**CU Denver–LYNX Camp Music
Industry Program**

Denver, Colorado

June 14–26

This camp provides high school students with a snapshot of what it’s like to have a career in the modern music industry. Students get a preview of the contemporary-focused CU Denver college music programs including the areas of singer/songwriter, music business, recording arts and performance/ensembles.

25th ANNUAL Vail Jazz Workshop

August 29 - September 7, 2020

Notable Alumni

- Robert Glasper *Piano '97*
- Keyon Harrold *Trumpet '97*
- Gerald Clayton *Piano '01*
- Grace Kelly *Saxophone '09*
- Evan Sherman *Drums '09*
- Russell Hall *Bass '10*
- Jeffery Miller *Trombone '13*

**Full and partial scholarships available.
Open to musicians aged 15 to 19
as of August 29, 2020.**



THE FACULTY



**Join this esteemed alumni network.
Be part of the 25th Annual Vail Jazz Workshop.**

FOR MORE INFO AND TO APPLY: VailJazz.org/workshop



California Brazil Camp in Cazadero, California

Faculty: Owen Kortz, Peter Stoltzman, Todd Reid, Leslie Soich, more
Cost: \$1,100–\$2,200, scholarships available
Contact: Kelli Rapplean at lynxcamp@ucdenver.edu, (303) 315-7468, artsandmedia.ucdenver.edu/prospective-students/lynx-camps

Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band Camp
Los Angeles, California

July 27–31

Held at Los Angeles College of Music, this camp features instruction from musicians in one of the world's top large ensembles, Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band. This camp provides an immersive learning experience with a four-time Grammy winner. It will

include instrument-specific master classes, plus combos, improvisation and a final performance. Additionally, there will be jam sessions and recording sessions. This camp is for musicians age 12 and up. Application deadline is June 15.

Faculty: Gordon Goodwin and members of the Big Phat Band
Cost: See lacm.edu/goodwin-bpbc.
Contact: summer@lacm.edu, (626) 568-8850, lacm.edu/summeratlacm

Guitar College's Yosemite Jazz Guitar and Bass Workshop
Oakhurst, California

June 14–19

Affordable, all-inclusive, adult workshop near Yosemite offers scenic views, fresh air plus plenty of hands-on playing experience. The

workshop prides itself on student participation, not lectures or hearing teachers play. Study daily with four seasoned jazz professional instructors in small groups and jam nightly finishing with a student concert.

Faculty: Rich Severson, Todd Johnson, Mike Dana, more
Cost: \$899–\$1,499
Contact: (559) 642-2597, guitar@sti.net, guitarcollege.net/yosemite.html

Idyllwild Arts Summer Program
Idyllwild, California
 June 28–July 11

Attendees will learn from some of the best jazz artists in the country. Participants rehearse and perform in big bands and combos. Also, campers get specialized coaching on their instrument and perform alongside special guests and faculty at the end of each week.

Faculty: Tom Hynes
Cost: \$3,170 (tuition plus room-and-board); Day Student tuition: \$1,880; Lab fee: \$50. Scholarships available.
Contact: (951) 468-7265, summer@idyllwildarts.org, idyllwildarts.org/summer

Jam Camp West
Loma Mar, California
 July 18–24

This exciting, creative and fun seven-day (six-night) music, dance and vocal program is held in the beautiful redwoods of Loma Mar, California. Designed for 10- to 15-year-olds of all skill levels, Jam Camp provides youth with an extremely high-quality music education curriculum taught by leading educators, which includes traditional and contemporary musical styles and exposure to the cultural underpinnings of jazz. In addition, fun outdoor activities and creative adventures are held each day.

Faculty: Marcus Shelby, Terrence Brewer, Josiah Woodson, Tammi Brown, Samara Atkins, more
Cost: \$995
Contact: (510) 858-5313, info@livingjazz.org, livingjazz.org/jam-camp-west

Jazz Camp West
La Honda, California
 June 20–27

This eight-day jazz immersion program for instrumentalists, vocalists and dancers of all skill levels is held in the beautiful redwoods of La Honda, California. With more than 48 all-star faculty members, participants immerse themselves in workshops, personalized instruction, student performances, faculty concerts and late-night jams. Ages 15 and up.

Faculty: Ulysses Owens Jr., Julia Wolf, Jovino Santos Neto, Johnaye Kendrick, Kate McGarry, Terrence Kelly, Tammi Brown, John Santos, more
Cost: \$1,430–\$2,295
Contact: (510) 858-5313, info@livingjazz.org, livingjazz.org/jazz-camp-west

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TEAGARDEN JAZZ CAMP AT SLY PARK, CA
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- Daily one-on-one and ensemble instruction, emphasis on improvisation
- Nightly performances plus an end of camp special concert
- Exponential growth in improving improvisation skills and ensemble playing



2020 CAMP DATES
 Week One: July 26 - August 1
 Week Two: August 3 - 9

"Jazz Camp was just an amazing place to be. The environment was so amazing and accepting." - Syed A.

"Camp has shown me the joy of traditional jazz, a genre I would not otherwise have appreciated as much as I do now, and I'm excited to carry on this musical tradition." - Isabel M.

"My playing has made leaps and bounds of improvement; I couldn't imagine any other way to grow this much." - Julius F.

"Everyone here was very supportive and this positive environment has helped me not only learn but also become less frightened of doing what I love. This experience has changed my life in the best way possible." - Elly G.



CHECK IT OUT AT WWW.SACJAZZCAMP.ORG

MJF SUMMER JAZZ CAMP

PLAY WITH TALENTED
AND MOTIVATED STUDENTS
JUST LIKE YOU!

STEVENSON SCHOOL
PEBBLE BEACH, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 14-20, 2020



The MJF Summer Jazz Camp will be an accelerated and impactful interactive engagement with professional jazz educators and artists. Participants will learn performance and practice skills, along with jazz history and theory. The 2020 MJF Artist-in-Residence, Christian Sands will share an amazing jazz experience with the campers.

Available To: Students in Grade 6 through College Freshman - Residency and Day Campers welcome.

Daily Camp Time: 8:30am - 4pm

Tuition: Residency - \$1,200 Day Camper - \$600

Website: montereyjazzfestival.org/summer-jazz-camp

Contact: ReNae Jackson, renae@montereyjazzfestival.org | 831.373.8843



Monterey Jazz Festival



Monterey Summer Jazz Camp in Pebble Beach, California

JazzFest Jazz Camp Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Dates TBA

All incoming 7th to 12th grade musicians and vocalists are welcome at this camp. Class offerings include jazz improvisation, jazz theory, history of jazz, combo rehearsal and more. The top camp band will perform on the main stage of JazzFest 2020, and campers will have the chance to visit festival artists backstage.

Faculty: Past instructors have included Dr.

Paul Schilf, Jim McKinney, Joel Shotwell, Rachael Kramer, others

Cost: See website.

Contact: info@sfjbc.org,
siouxfallsjazzfest.com/jazzcamp

Jazz Maui Camp Maui, Hawaii

June 21–28

This exciting camp is designed for aspiring young musicians ages 13 and up of all skill levels looking to unleash their creativity and

explore the beauty of Hawaii. Instruction includes ensembles, master classes, electives and concerts from award-winning faculty. Daily music curriculum will be enhanced with Hawaiian immersion activities including luau, snorkeling, zip line, beach time, history tours and more. Limited space is available.

Faculty: Katie Thiroux, Justin Kauflin, Paul Contos, Matt Witek

Cost: \$1,500

Contact: jazzmaui.org

Lafayette Summer Music Workshop Lafayette, California

July 19–24

In its 22nd year, the Lafayette Summer Music Workshop provides an intimate and inspiring environment for learning and playing jazz. Master classes, improvisation workshops, combos, theory and free-choice classes are led by preeminent jazz musicians. The average student-to-teacher ratio is 6:1. Student age is 11 through adult. Scholarships are available.

Faculty: Past instructors have included Bob Athayde, Kyle Athayde, Anton Schwartz, Mary Fettig, Dan Pratt, Alex Hahn, De'Sean Jones, Rick Condit, Matt Zebley, Guido Fazio, Zac Johnson, Kasey Knudsen, Melecio Magdaluyo, Alex Murzyn, Colin Wenhardt, Dann

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"As an aspiring musician, it surpassed my expectations ten times over." —Jazz Camp participant

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JULY 27 - JULY 31, 2020

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summer@lacm.edu
626.568.8850

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Cost: \$690–\$750
Contact: lafsmw.org, (925) 914-0797

Monterey Jazz Festival Summer Jazz Camp
Pebble Beach, California

June 14–20

Summer Jazz Camp is available for students entering grades 6 through college freshman in the fall of 2020. Both day and residency options and scholarships are available.

Faculty: MJF 2020 Artist-in-Residence Christian Sands. Past instructors include Kasey Knudsen, Paul Contos, Kyle Athayde, Mike Galisatus, Jeanne Geiger, Eddie Mendenhall, Matt Witek, Katie Thiroux, Pat Kelley, Gaw Vang-Williams.

Cost: \$600 for Day Students; \$1,200 for Residency Students; scholarship deadline: April 15

Contact: ReNae Jackson, (831) 373-8843, renae@montereyjazzfestival.org, montereyjazzfestival.org/summer-jazz-camp

Pacific Jazz Camp
Stockton, California
June 14–20

Now in its 18th year, Pacific Jazz Camp at University of the Pacific offers students in grades 8–12 the opportunity to participate in jazz ensembles and combos along with classes in jazz improvisation and history. Professional musicians and Pacific's faculty present daily master classes. The camp ends with a public concert on the stage of historic Faye Spanos Concert Hall.

Faculty: TBA
Cost: \$825–\$925
Contact: musiccamp@pacific.edu, (209) 946-2416, go.pacific.edu/musiccamp

Pacific Summer Jazz Colony
Stockton, California
June 14–20

This is a one-week, intensive jazz program for students who are entering their sophomore, junior or senior years in high school. Students will study with Pacific's Jazz Studies faculty and guest artists, in combo rehearsals, master classes, classes in jazz theory and advanced jazz improvisation. They will have ample opportunities to perform in front of the colony participants as well as the local community at Pacific's Take 5 Jazz Club.



JAZZCAMP WEST 2020

La Honda, CA • June 20-27

8-day jazz immersion program
 120+ classes daily • All Levels
 Adults/Teens 15 & up

Transforming lives through music



JAMCAMP WEST 2020

Loma Mar, CA • July 18-24

7 amazing days of music, vocals and dance • 10-15 year olds
 All skill levels welcome

livingjazz.org



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 John Clayton, Artistic Director

JULY 19-26
WORKSHOP AND FESTIVAL
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APPLY AT CENTRUM.ORG/JAZZ

Tia Fuller



Jazzschool Girls' Jazz & Blues Camp at California Jazz Conservatory in Berkeley



University of Northern Colorado Jazz Camp in Greeley

Faculty: Past faculty include Stefon Harris, Ingrid Jensen, Helen Sung, Eddie Gomez, Dee Daniels, Lewis Nash
Cost: \$1,700. Limited scholarships are available, (209) 946-3222
Contact: Patrick Langham, (209) 946-3970, go.pacific.edu/jazzstudies

San Jose Jazz Summer Jazz Camp at Valley Christian San Jose, California

June 15–26

Designed for middle-school and high-school students with skill levels from intermediate and up, this two-week camp offers immersion in every aspect of jazz. Each student participates in both a small ensemble and big band, and one advanced ensemble will play at the 2020 Summer Fest. Placement auditions are on June 8.

Faculty: camp manager Gary Ortega, Saúl Sierra, David Flores, Hristo

Vitchev, Michaelle Goerlitz, Joy Hackett, Nichole Boaz, Brian Ho, Dr. Marcus Wolfe, Oscar Pangilinan, Veronica Tyler Christies, John L. Worley Jr., Kat Parra, 2020 Guest Artist TBA
Cost: \$800 (\$750 before May 1); SJZ supporters receive \$50 off tuition
Contact: Camp Director Wally Schnalle, wallys@sanjosejazz.org, sanjosejazz.org/summercamp

Santa Barbara Jazz Workshop

Santa Barbara, California

July 12–16

Adults and high school aged students are welcome at this learning and growing experience for aspiring students of jazz. A limited enrollment (approximately 40 students) to a high ratio of instructors assures an intimate and personalized music education experience. A faculty of jazz professionals teach instrumental/vocal master classes, improvisation, jazz listening, modern jazz combo and big band playing, with concerts and jam sessions each late afternoon (open to the public) where advanced students sit in with the professionals.

Faculty: Last year included Kim Richmond, Kimberly Ford, Jonathan Dane, Scott Whitfield, Tom Hynes, John Proulx, Chris Symer, Dave Tull
Cost: \$775 (after April 15); Early-Bird special, \$725; under age 21, \$700
Contact: Kim Richmond (jazzkim@kimrichmond.com), Kimberly Ford (kimberlyfordsings@gmail.com), santabarbarajazzcamp.com

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Stanford Jazz Workshop

Stanford, California

July 6–10, July 12–17, July 19–24, July 26–31

SJW offers three jazz immersion opportunities for musicians: Giant Steps Day Camp for middle schoolers; Jazz Camp, a residential program for ages 12–17; and Jazz Institute, which puts advanced young players and adults together with the greatest jazz musicians in the world, focusing on improv skills and combo performance.

Faculty: 2019 faculty included Joshua Redman, Anat Cohen, Dayna Stephens, Andrea Motis, Marquis Hill, Lemar Guillary, Dave Gregoric, Jason Lindner, Maya Kronfeld, Randy Porter, Joshua White, Sheryl Bailey, Jeff Parker, Scott Colley, Adi Meyerson, Dafnis Prieto, Kendrick Scott, Dave King, Roy McCurdy, Matt Wilson
Cost: \$895 for Giant Steps Day Camp; \$1,495 for Jazz Camp; \$1,590 for Jazz Institute; housing and meals extra
Contact: stanfordjazz.org, (650) 736-0324, info@stanfordjazz.org

Summer at Cornish—Jazz at Cornish Seattle, Washington

July 13–18

Students ages 12 to 18 study with Cornish College of the Arts jazz faculty and special guest artists, with performance and recording opportunities.

The program's pre-college intensives help students to create audition pieces and get an early start in preparing for the college application process. This camp is held at Cornish College of the Arts.

Faculty: See website.
Cost: \$495 per class
Contact: cornish.edu/summer,
summer@cornish.edu

Teagarden Jazz Camp **Pollock Pines, California**

July 26–August 1, August 3–9

Sponsored by the Sacramento Jazz Education Foundation, the Teagarden Jazz Camp offers two separate weeks of instruction in the beautiful Sierra Nevada foothills, with outstanding faculty and counselors. Curriculum is focused on improvisation, instrumental/vocal technique and small-band performance. Learn trad-jazz/swing/improvisation in a supportive, non-competitive environment. No audition to apply. Open to ages 12–20.

Faculty: Rusty Stiers, Bria Skonberg, Jeff Kreis, Greg Varlotta, Anita Thomas, Nate Ketner, Jason Fabus, Jason Wanner, Curtis Brengle, Nahum Zdybel, Sam Rocha, Jeff Minnieweather, Shelley Burns

Cost: \$795

Contact: Camp Director Bill Dendle,
bdendle@comcast.net,
 (916) 927-5222, sacjazzcamp.org

University of Colorado–Boulder **Summer Jazz Academy**

Boulder, Colorado

Dates TBA

The CU Summer Jazz Academy is an opportunity for a select number of talented 7th through 12th grade music students from around the country to receive world-class jazz instruction in a one-week summer session. Participants will be placed into jazz combo settings, improvisation classes, instrumental master classes and seminar sessions with CU Thompson Jazz Studies faculty. Students and faculty perform together each evening at jams with guest artists. A final student performance concludes the session.

Faculty: Dr. John Gunther, Dr. Joshua Quinlan, Jeff Jenkins, Dave Corbus, Bijoux Barbosa, Paul Romaine

Cost: See website.

Contact: musicacademy@colorado.edu,
colorado.edu/music/summer-college-music/summer-music-academy/summer-jazz-academy

University of Northern **Colorado Jazz Camp**

Greeley, Colorado

July 12–17

Located in a beautiful campus setting in colorful Colorado, this camp is designed to

be intensive, challenging and inspiring. It's open to both instrumentalists and vocalists, who will take part in student big bands, combos, vocal jazz ensembles, master classes, jazz theory and improvisation classes, student jam sessions and nightly faculty concerts.

Faculty: from the University of Northern Colorado plus special guests Don Aliquo, Paul McKee Clay Jenkins

Cost: \$385; room-and-board, \$320

Contact: arts.unco.edu/music/jazz-camp

Vail Jazz Workshop **Vail, Colorado**

August 29–September 7

Entering its 25th year, the Vail Jazz Workshop is unlike any other jazz education experience. It is for ages 15 to 19. With a 2-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio, participants get the individual attention of internationally acclaimed performers and educators. Additionally, the "Vail Jazz All-Stars" get the opportunity to perform for artists and patrons at the Vail Jazz Party.

Faculty: John Clayton, Bill Cunliffe, Wycliffe Gordon, Lewis Nash, Dick Oatts, Terell Stafford

Cost: \$2,500 (up to full scholarship available)

Contact: workshop@vailjazz.org,
vailjazz.org/workshop

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Jazz Instrumental Intensive

June 28–
July 11
2020





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(Previously Brubeck Institute Summer Jazz Colony)

June 14–20, 2020

University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA

A one-week, intensive education program in jazz performance for exceptionally talented students, grades 9–12.

Register:
go.Pacific.edu/JazzStudies
 209.946.3222



Drummer Antonio Sánchez speaks to participants at a KoSA Music workshop.

KOSA MUSIC KEEPS A STEADY BEAT

KOSA MUSIC HAD A RELATIVELY HUMBLE origin, but today it is an international force in the world of music education. During the past 25 years, KoSA has grown exponentially under the leadership of percussionist Aldo Mazza and his wife, Dr. Jolán Kovács, who teaches at McGill University in Montreal.

KoSA presents percussion workshops and events in the United States, Canada, Cuba, China and Italy. As Mazza explained during a recent interview from KoSA's Montreal headquarters, the roots of the organization go back to a percussion camp he attended in Vermont before college.

"I grew up in Ottawa after my parents emigrated from Calabria, Italy," Mazza explained. "I started playing drums in a rock band, but I had a strong interest in everything from Weather Report to soul. I heard about a percussion symposium in Vermont with instructors like Gary Burton and Joe Morello. I wasn't sure I could handle it, but I wanted to explore other styles."

The experience of working with master musicians such as Morello and Burton was a revelation for Mazza.

"It opened up a whole new world for me," he recalled. "I left Ottawa to attend McGill University to study music, and was off like a rocket on a mission."

Mazza earned degrees in jazz and percussion, and became a member of Répercussion in 1974, touring the world with the celebrated group. He also became an in-demand studio musician, performing with artists ranging

from James Brown to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

When Répercussion began to wind down its schedule in 1996, Mazza focused on music education, hoping to create a percussion camp environment similar to the one that first had inspired him so deeply.

"I met Peter Wilder, who had founded a record store [in Vermont]," Mazza said. "We became good friends, and when my wife and I visited him, I told him about my vision."

"We were at my kitchen table," Wilder remembered during a recent interview, "and Aldo outlined his vision for an educational space for drummers and percussionists to start out, then expand from there. We settled on nearby Johnson State College [now Northern Vermont University] for the premiere event."

"I wanted it to be the ultimate percussion camp," Mazza said. "And 'la cosa' in Italian means 'the thing.' I changed the letter 'C' to a 'K,' and that's been the name ever since."

The KoSA Percussion Workshop became a success, and over the years, Mazza has brought in a who's who of great jazz and rock musicians to teach, including Jimmy Cobb, Steve Gadd, Neil Peart and Terry Bozzio.

In 2001, Mazza started KoSA Cuba, a camp held in Havana in conjunction with performances with Fiesta del Tambor, created to provide nightly all-star performances featuring top Cuban percussionists.

"It's grown into a huge event," Mazza said. "The evening concerts are held in a 4,000-

seat concert hall, and the week-long study program features faculty like Mark Guiliana and Antonio Sánchez, plus great Cuban musicians like Amadito Valdés and Adel Gonzalez."

KoSA's Cuban presence has expanded beyond the Havana event (scheduled for March 22–29) with additional events slated for the Matanzas Jazz Festival (April 29–May 6).

In addition, KoSA has been presenting percussion workshops in China since 2011 in conjunction with 9 Beats Music and hosted a 2018 workshop in Mazza's hometown of Calabria, Italy. KoSA, now based in Montreal, also presents an event to coincide with the Canadian city's jazz festival.

To further share his knowledge, Mazza teamed with Alfred Music to release an instructional guide and DVD, *Cuban Rhythms for Percussion and Drumset*.

"In studying Cuban music in depth and facilitating workshops, I found it fascinating that there was a lot of confusion outside of Cuba about how deep, complex and fascinating the rhythms are there," he explained. "I decided to write a book to help clarify these rhythms to help others to understand and play this wonderful music."

According to Wilder, the KoSA team deserves accolades for its exceptional efforts in percussion education.

"I travel a great deal for my work, and when speaking about drums, I haven't met anyone that hasn't heard of KoSA," he said. "That's a testament to Aldo, Jolán and the KoSA Team."

—Terry Perkins



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A student trio performs at the International Music Camp

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International Music Camp International Peace Garden, Manitoba/ North Dakota

July 12–18

This summer marks 65 years of this camp, located on the Canada/U.S. border between North Dakota and Manitoba. IMC offers a full-week session of jazz studies, including big band or vocal jazz streams, along with jazz theory, improvisation, combos, faculty master classes and optional private lessons. This program is open to students completing grades 7–12 with at least three years of playing experience.

Faculty: Dr. Greg Gatién, Jenelle Orcherton, Dr. Matthew Patnode, Anna Penno, Dr. Jeremy Brekke, Cynthia Peyson Wahl, Brittany Mielnichuk, others

Cost: \$450.00 (before May 1); \$470 (after May 1); add \$20 for vocal jazz

Contact: internationalmusiccamp.com, info@internationalmusiccamp.com, (701) 838-8472 (USA), (204) 269-8468 (Canada)

Jazz Improvisation in Italy Tuscany region, Italy

June 7–13

Hosted by the New York Jazz Workshop, this

program presents a week of rigorous jazz studies in a friendly environment. Highlights include daily music sessions, private lessons, evening jam sessions, excursions and a final concert. Jazz Improvisation workshops and classes will be hosted in the Agriturismo La Pineta, a working farm/vineyard located in the heart of Tuscany.

Faculty: Mark Mommaas, Kenny Wessel, Jeroen Vierdag, Fay Victor

Cost: Workshop, \$980; accommodations range from \$500–\$1,200

Contact: info@newyorkjazzworkshop.com, newyorkjazzworkshop.com/workshopsjazz-improvisation-workshop-italy

Jazz Wire/Digging Deeper Jazz Workshops Germany, England, Netherlands, France, Belgium, Spain

July 30–Aug. 31

Adult amateurs and semi-pros will have the opportunity to study with one of the foremost adult jazz educators in the world: Jeff Antoniuk. He takes his experience of teaching jazz and distills the message down for three hours of playing and learning and sharing. Different topics will be presented in each session.

Faculty: Jeff Antoniuk

Cost: Starting at \$150 per person

Contact: Jeff Antoniuk, diggingdeeperjazz@gmail.com, jazzwire.net/events

JazzWorks Jazz Camp and Composers Symposium/ Practice Retreat

Harrington, Quebec, Canada

August 17–20, August 20–23

These unique learning opportunities are for singers and instrumentalists. Participants can work on jazz theory and technique with innovative Canadian and international artists. Attendees can share the joy of learning in this intensive, adult-focused learning experience and immerse themselves in combo rehearsals, master classes, improvisation, jazz history, composition and arranging, with nightly jam sessions and concerts.

Faculty: Adrian Vedady, Kirk MacDonald, Holli Ross, Derrick Gardner, Lorne Lofsky, Roddy Elias, Jean-Michel Pilc, Dezron Douglas, others

Cost: See website or call (613) 220-3819.

Contact: jazzworkscanada.com, jazz@jazzworkscanada.com

Joshua Breakstone's Kyoto Jazz Guitar Workshop

Kyoto, Japan

June 17–27

This workshop offers seven days of intensive three-hour workshops. Attendees will have private accommodations with a western-style bed and a private bath. Activities will include two nights at jazz clubs, five dinners at acclaimed restaurants and two guided tours of temples, gardens and neighborhoods.

Faculty: Joshua Breakstone, Phillip Strange, Fukuro Kazuya, Ito Aiko, Terai Yutaka, Ono Midori

Cost: See website.

Contact: kyotoguitarexperience.com, joshuabreakstone.com

KoSA Cuba Festival Camp Havana, Cuba

March 22–29

The 19th edition of this event will include a one-week study program and attendance at nightly concerts during the Fiesta del Tambor (Havana Rhythm and Dance Festival). Campers will experience intense hands-on classes and seminars. The program involves an immersion in Cuban rhythms, music and culture. Daily classes, taught by some of Cuba's top artists, will focus on conga, bongo, timbales, drumset and other instruments. All instruments are supplied on site. There will be sessions by Cuban ethnomusicologists, visits to museums and religious ceremonies, interaction with Cuban musicians and playing sessions. U.S. legal travel is possible, and university credits are available (up to 3 from U.S. universities).

Faculty: Giraldo Piloto, Yaroldy Abreu, Adel Gonzales, Amadito Valdes, Oliver Valdes, Rodney Barreto, Enrique Pla, others. International guest artists will participate, too.

Cost: \$2,550 (single occupancy)

Contact: Aldo Mazza, Director, (800) 541-8401, (514) 482-5554, kosamusic.com

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www.kosamusic.com

Langnau Jazz Nights, Jazz Workshop

Langnau, Switzerland

July 20–26

In addition to theoretical and practical classes with experienced teachers, attendees will have the opportunity to meet and improvise with jazz musicians from all over the world.

Faculty: Gretchen Parlato, Dayna Stephens, Ingrid Jensen, Camila Meza, Fabian Almazan, Alan Hampton, Kendrick Scott

Cost: CHF 680 / CHF 350 for students of a university of music (includes festival pass)

Contact: jazz-nights.ch, workshops@jazz-nights.ch

Langnau Jazz Nights, Junior Jazz Workshop

Langnau, Switzerland

July 20–26

This workshop is for ages 10 to 18. Besides classes that take into consideration age and skill level, the participants will have the opportunity to join the instrumental classes of the Jazz Workshop and special workshops of the performing bands.

Faculty: Gretchen Parlato, Dayna Stephens, Ingrid Jensen, Camila Meza, Fabian Almazan, Alan Hampton, Kendrick Scott, Christoph Siegenthaler, Ivo Prato, Rolf Häsler, Niculin Christen, Pius Baschnagel

Cost: CHF 250 (includes festival pass)

Contact: jazz-nights.ch, workshops@jazz-nights.ch

Langnau Jazz Nights, Master Class for Jazz Piano

Langnau, Switzerland

July 20–26

The sixth version of this master class will be offered in collaboration with the Lucerne University of Applied Science and Arts. Six to eight participants (selected by a jury) will have the opportunity to work with Tailor Eigsti. The workshop includes individual lessons, theory classes and workshops.

Faculty: Tailor Eigsti.

Cost: CHF 680 / CHF 350 for students of a university of music (includes festival pass)

Contact: jazz-nights.ch, workshops@jazz-nights.ch

MacEwan University Summer Jazz Workshop

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Dates TBA

This workshop, which is for participants ages 13 and up, features MacEwan University music faculty members. Improvisation, technique and performance skills will be taught through practical application in small jazz combos, as well as in classroom settings. Participants will play together in small ensembles with other students as well as with the faculty. These instruments are accepted: saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass and drums.

Faculty: MacEwan faculty members and guest clinicians.

Cost: See website or call (780) 633-3725.

Contact: conservatory@macewan.ca, macewan.ca/wcm/index.htm

Samba Meets Jazz Workshops Paris, France

April 16–21

This musical exchange welcomes instrumentalists, tap dancers and vocalists of all levels. With a focus on jazz and Brazilian music, the program will include ensemble intensives, master classes, tap repertoire and technique,

vocal technique and repertoire, scatting, harmony and improvisation, Brazilian rhythms, Brazilian percussion and more. The schedule allows participants to enjoy Paris' rich culture and nightlife. Discounts are available for students, educators and working musicians. Also, special hotel rates are available. Call (917) 620-8872.

Faculty: Nilson Matta, Nelson Veras, others

Cost: International participants, 400€–750€; U.S. participants, \$745–\$1,695.

Contact: sambameetsjazz.com, alice@sambameetsjazz.com

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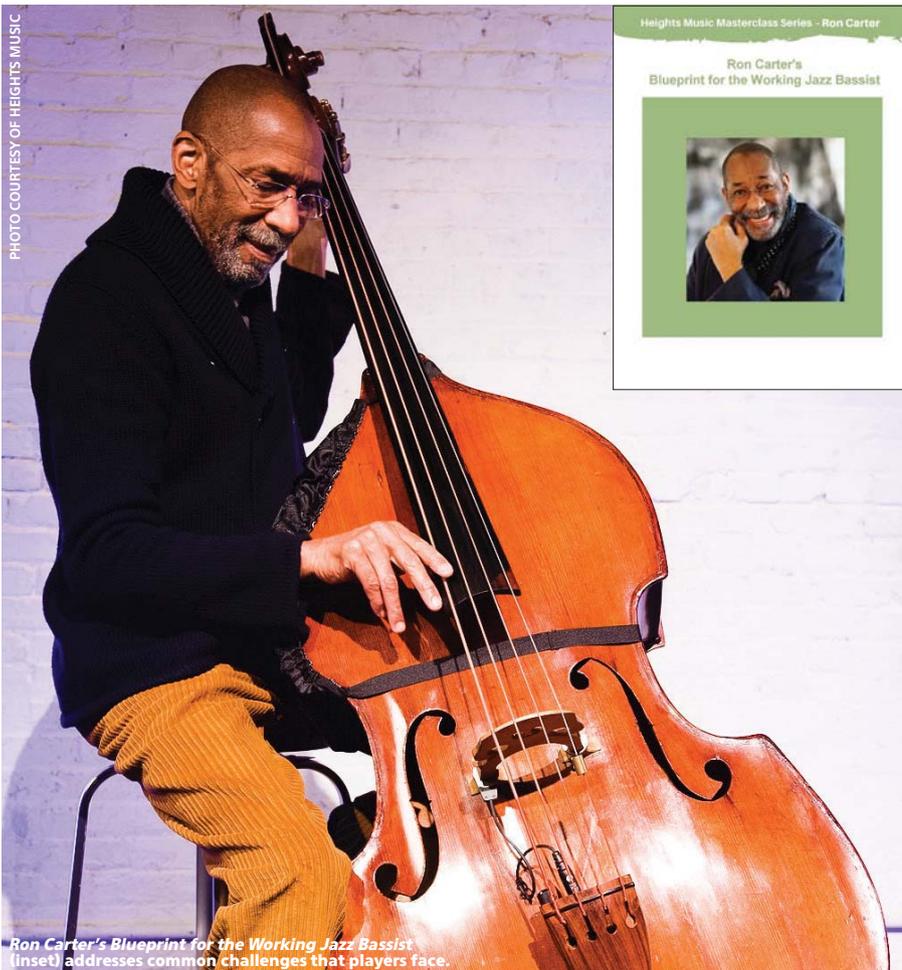
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Ron Carter's *Blueprint for the Working Jazz Bassist* (inset) addresses common challenges that players face.

Ron Carter's Bass Lines 'Connect the Dots'

Countless times throughout his career, Ron Carter has heard the familiar refrain from fellow bassists: "I've been playin' this tune, and I'm stuck and can't think of anything to play!"

Carter knows exactly where they're coming from. "It says that the bassist has been playing a tune, a 12-bar blues, for example, and has run out of ways to play an acceptable bass line—one that includes some slick rhythms and interesting note choices, and has a great sound," he says. "I can understand the frustration, given the many responsibilities of the bassist in any jazz ensemble."

According to Carter, those responsibilities include:

- maintaining the song form
- insisting that the ensemble maintains a good sense of intonation

- holding the tempo
 - contributing to the dynamic of the group
- "Like all bassists, early on I faced the same challenges, and over time I developed my own system for meeting them," Carter continues. "It's called Connect the Dots, and any bassist can use it."

Carter dedicates a chapter from his new book, *Ron Carter's Blueprint for the Working Jazz Bassist* (Heights Music Masterclass Series), to connecting those proverbial dots. The book serves as a manual for how to take your playing to the next level and develop your own unique sound.

No other jazz bassist has mastered the art of crafting his own sound better than Carter. The book is a compilation of what Carter personally learned while playing on thousands of albums and CDs, and during decades of

live performances. Bass players who follow Carter's instructions, and practice often, will find themselves better able to excel in any musical group, in any key, at any tempo.

DownBeat recently caught up with Carter and asked him to discuss how his Connect the Dots system helps to empower bassists and keeps them from becoming "stuck."

How did you develop the Connect the Dots system?

I consider myself not only a bassist but also a scientist who experiments using his own scientific method. I have worked this way my entire career.

Why is it important for bassists to understand this approach to developing bass lines?

This system identifies the many note options available to the bassist, and makes it easy to find them, playing horizontally as often as possible.

The bassist can see on paper the number of choices he has on any given bar, chord, tempo or song. By having a diagram, they can easily identify the range of choices they have.

What are some of the ways the Connect the Dots system can be used to help the bassist communicate musical ideas to other members of the ensemble and the soloist?

The system is designed to get the attention of the rest of the band members. When the bassist plays a "special" bass line, the other members of the group respond to its harmonic or rhythmic direction. It makes them hear something different than what they were expecting, and directs them where the bassist wants them to go.

The bassist needs a plan to find these attention-getting combinations. All he has to do is follow the system, the "blueprint" for his own bass lines. Those players with whom I've shared my system are amazed when they see the possibilities.

When you were a less experienced player, how did you go about choosing the best notes for your bass lines?

I have always trusted my ear, my harmonic curiosity and my daring to play my bass lines. I was using my method from the start, even if I didn't realize it on day one. **DB**

Ron Carter's Blueprint for the Working Jazz Bassist (Heights Music) is available for purchase online at roncarter.net and heightsmusicinternational.com.

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Devin Gray

Musicianship for Drummers: How To Practice Along With Recordings

Unless you have the good fortune of living in or near a rather large metropolitan area, you probably don't go out with family or community mentors nightly to hear today's top jazz practitioners sharing their craft with vibrant nightlife crowds. For serious students of jazz drumming, most of their deep learning takes place through live experience.

As musicians practice, absorb and navigate many of the complex understandings of the music's priorities and realities, we can sometimes lose sight of what I consider the simple goals—number one being the act of making music while building creative communities. There's practicing music; there's making music; and then there's the practice of making music. I want to focus on sharing creative ideas for students to help in the processes of making music, while not necessarily having to live in major cities.

The following preparations should be worked on in the aspiring drummer's own time to create advanced musicianship for situations when they are making music with other humans. There is one simple idea that keeps me going to this day: Practice along with

recordings by the greats. Grab some headphones, plug in and get to work. Here are five steps to take, with some tips and ideas to help you shed along the way.

First: Pick some songs that you think are interesting. They can be with drums, or without. You can narrow down your choices through simple reflection: Do I really want to play this song? Do I love it a ton? Do I want to try something that's out of my comfort zone, perhaps a challenge? Ask a teacher or a friend to share recommendations with you.

Second: Listen. Listen a lot more. "Wear out the grooves," as they used to say about vinyl LPs, then listen again even harder, but only to a few songs. Gradually, narrow your choices to one song and listen on "repeat" in what I call "hyper-focused short session repetitive listening mode" (5–15 minutes maximum). Try singing along with whichever parts your ears naturally hear; remember, it's all music at the end of the day. Memorize every instrument's musical expressions. Internalize each player's feel. Be a master of that music the best you can. Jazz remains an aural tradition, and your efforts

to advance your ear as a musician should be never-ending.

Third: Plan your practice sessions accordingly. Do your snare-drum practice-pad warmup routines as usual, but keep in mind that your next practice segment will be about having fun while playing music the best you can. Then simply practice, explore and experiment along with the song. Imagine you are in the studio with the band. Imagine they called you for the gig or recording date and gave you a week to learn the music without a rehearsal. Play along with it on loudspeakers or on your headphones and see what happens. Adjust the playback volume to extremes to see how it changes your approach to the instrument. Test your musical awareness and your abilities to accompany the musicians on the track. Try an improvised technical idea on the spot, without getting in the way of the music. Note how you interact with your instrument and strive to remain musically "fluid" in each moment with the piece of music. Then, reassess.

Fourth: Check in with yourself. Study your progress. How is your time locking in? How are

the colors and textures? The touch and feel? Perhaps even show a friend or a teacher. Better yet, listen with someone who's not studying music and notice how you listen differently around others. How are the transitions between musical passages? Are the energy levels matching? Did you take any musical risks, or did you play everything safe? Remember, learning to play all styles of music often comes down to trial-and-error processes.

Fifth: As an advanced component to this process, after a few weeks of experimenting, you should record yourself playing with the music. Wait a few days, then sit down and take honest critical notes on what you hear as a drummer and musician next to, say, Dave Holland, Lee Konitz, Joe Lovano, Kris Davis or Vijay Iyer. I would also like to stress that this is not your final work. This is not what you post on the internet after 30 seconds of trying it once. This is the start of a longer process of advancing your musicianship through discovering more about your playing than you had thought was possible on your own. It's just the tip of the iceberg.

This kind of practicing is by no means limited to any style of music. For me, the wider the musical landscape, the better. This concept is not meant to replace other forms and topics of practice, but rather to add to and enhance your regular practice.

Over time, you will find yourself growing with these ideas. You might want to keep advancing your skills by learning any song with interesting rhythms in any style, by ear, on the spot. Practice the songs and grooves at faster tempos, try relaxing more and "lose yourself" while playing drums. Try following and supporting the soloist more, all while focusing on the primary goal of making higher-quality music with creative musicians.

I have found this concept to be extremely beneficial to the development of my musicianship as a drummer over the years. Here are some of my favorite recordings to practice along with—they might serve as a useful starting point for this practice technique:

- Art Blakey, *Jazz Messengers!!!!* (Impulse, 1961)
- Herbie Hancock, *Thrust* (Columbia, 1974)
- Joe Henderson, *The State Of The Tenor, Vols. 1 & 2* (Blue Note, 1986)
- Geri Allen, *Live At The Village Vanguard* (DIW, 1990)
- Roy Hargrove, *Parker's Mood* (Verve, 1995)
- Kenny Wheeler, *Angel Song* (ECM, 1997)
- Ingrid Jensen, *At Sea* (ArtistShare, 2005)
- Craig Taborn Trio, *Chants* (ECM, 2013)
- Kris Davis, *Diatom Ribbons* (Pyroclastic, 2019)

When practicing with jazz recordings, take the time to memorize what you hear. Transcribe drum grooves and solos to the best of your ability. Practice your own variations and improvisations, with and against the music. Improvisation and imagination are extremely important elements to work on in this last step.

I'd like to close by providing a specific example of one jazz recording that I have found useful when teaching my private drum students: Craig Taborn's trio playing "Hot Blood," from the CD *Chants* (listed above). Start by listening to the audio track for a while; this will help you begin to internalize the music. Then, practice the drum groove (see Example 1) along with the recording.

Next, study the lead sheet of the tune (see Example 2) to gain a deeper understanding of how the drum groove complements the melody and bass lines on the recording. Finally, challenge yourself and put your skills to the ultimate test by combining all of these aspects together.

DB

Originally from Portland, Maine, drummer Devin Gray has been active in New York City for more than a dozen years. His two main projects as a leader have been Dirigo Rataplan (a quartet with saxophonist Ellery Eskelin, trumpeter Dave Ballou and bassist Michael Formanek) and RelativE Resonance (a quartet with reedist Chris Speed, pianist Kris Davis and bassist Chris Tordini). Gray's fresh approach to modern drumming has enabled him to play with many of the world's great jazz musicians. He has performed and recorded with innovative musicians of contrasting styles and backgrounds, including Dave Liebman, Tony

Malaby, Gary Thomas, Ingrid Jensen, Dave Burrell, Dave Ballou, Michael Formanek, Nate Wooley, George Garzone, Chris Speed, Drew Gress, Sam Rivers, Ralph Alessi, Ingrid Laubrock, Cory Smythe, Chris Tordini, John O'Gallagher, Ellery Eskelin, Kris Davis, Ted Rosenthal, Matt Mitchell, Uri Caine, Andrew D'Angelo, Vardan Osepian and Angelica Sanchez. Gray holds a bachelor's degree in music from Peabody Conservatory of Music and a master's degree in jazz drumming from the Manhattan School of Music. Gray has been teaching privately for more than 10 years at his studio in Brooklyn. He offers lessons in most locations around the world while on the road, and regularly online via Facetime. Gray has led master classes in numerous locations at colleges and universities in Europe and the U.S., and continues to compose, record and tour full-time. Visit him online at devingraymusic.com and devingraymusic.bandcamp.com.

Example 1

Example 2



Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah's Trumpet Solo on 'The Emancipation Procrastination'

For the title track from trumpeter Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah's 2017 release, *The Emancipation Procrastination* (Ropeadope), he solos on a simple i-V vamp in C minor. Though at first listen, both the vamp and his playing might seem fairly basic, upon examination we'll see that Scott does some sophisticated yet subtle things that really make this improvisation powerful. By sticking to a lot of the same ideas, and developing certain motifs, he creates a solo that has the strength of a composition.

One such idea is the B natural vs. the B \flat . Most of his playing is from the C aeolian mode (or natural minor scale). If the flat-seven of this scale were traded out for the natural seventh (B \flat for B), we get the harmonic minor. In a textbook or classroom, one might be taught to play the aeolian on the Cm and harmonic minor on the G7. Then the B \flat matches the seventh of the Cm and the B natural matches the third of the G7. Scott does not treat them this way.

We hear the B and B \flat mostly played together, as if he's hearing a scale that is a combination of aeolian and harmonic minor. And he

doesn't necessarily use them as chromatic passing tones, either. Take a look at measure 7, where Scott just plays B to B \flat as a mini-lick, then moving on to G and A \flat , without any attempt at connecting them.

We hear a similar thing from bars 12–13, and in bars 17, 24 and 36. Scott appears to play the B as a passing tone from C to B \flat , but he does this on the G7, the opposite place from where it would conventionally be played. This is sweet, as it furthers the hip sharp-nine quality of the V chord.

Additionally, he's using the same sequence of notes but not with the same rhythm or at the same point in the measure. As we've seen a lot in great soloists, he's creating cohesion and variety simultaneously.

Another even more subtle note is the A \flat , which Scott uses in a particularly interesting way. Again, this is a note that a music instructor would say is fantastic to lean on for the G7, as it's not just the flat-nine (another hip jazz sound), but also implies the B diminished that also would resolve to the Cm (B diminished is a G7 \flat 9 without the G). However, Scott tends to lean on this pitch on the tonic chord (bars 14,

26 and 38). On this harmony, this note produces a lot of tension, and a strong pull to resolve down to the fifth, which Scott typically does, but he really makes you wait for it (especially for the end of this solo). Doing it so often also creates a mini-motif that adds to the consistency/variety aspect.

The trumpeter also has the tendency of emphasizing other non-chord tones on the Cm, like the ninth he stresses in measures 2, 10–11, 18, 30–31 and 34. He gives this note anywhere from a quarter note to making it the only pitch played in bars 10 and 11. I suspect I don't need to point out how this is more of the variety-within-repetition approach. Part of the variation is in how he moves away from this note. In bar 34, he resolves down to the root, which is the textbook place for this pitch to go. But across measures 30 and 31 he jumps up to the fourth, which is quite unexpected, and for measures 10–11, he continues playing the D through the next bar, letting the next chord (G7) resolve into the pitch he's playing,

which is very slick.

Some of these motifs are used much more sparingly. A great one is the D \flat that only appears twice (bars 8 and 21). Both times this is on the V chord, and the lines both culminate on this note. It's the flat-five of the chord, a very bluesy note. Using it twice makes it a motif, but only using it twice prevents it from coming off as cliché.

But related to this D \flat (the flat-five of the V chord) is G \flat , the blue note, the flat-five of the key. Scott only uses this once (measures 14–15), and makes the curious choice of playing it on the Cm (giving us the blues sound), but still playing it when the chord changes to G7, which one would expect to come off as awkward—but Christian pulls it off and makes it sound soulful. This lick appears in between the instances of the D \flat , and is sort of the same motif, but sort of not. **DB**

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

They said there would be some monster players at this jazz camp....



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Photograph by Melanie Futorian

Townsend Labs Sphere L22

Hardware/Software Modeling Mic

Everyone wishes they could afford a high-end recording microphone, but the price tag can be prohibitive, especially if you are looking for a vintage capsule. Modeling microphones have appeared on the scene to try and address this need, and one of the most interesting of these is the Townsend Labs Sphere L22.

The Sphere is a combination of hardware and software, consisting of a large double-diaphragm condenser microphone and a plug-in that can run natively on Mac or Windows, or can be run on the UAD platform to offload the processing, if you use one of the company's interfaces or accelerators.

The mic itself is large, harkening back to the vintage tube mics of the past, and is built solidly. Because it uses two capsules, the Sphere comes with a five-pin cable that breaks out into two three-pin XLR cables. It also comes with a shockmount, and a swivel mount, in a sturdy suitcase.

Because of the way the Sphere uses both diaphragms to model, it requires two channels when you record. So, you put it on a stereo track in your DAW, and pop the Sphere plug-in on the track. The plug-in then uses the information from both capsules to allow for some pretty amazing after-the-fact manipulation. As a bonus, because it uses the two capsules, you can turn it sideways and record stereo (there is a separate plug-in for this).

I was fortunate enough to have access to some of the vintage mics being modeled in the plug-in available for this review, courtesy of a colleague who runs a boutique recording studio. We looked through the mic locker, and decided to use the highly prized and rare Telefunken ELA M 251. When you record the Sphere, it is imperative that both channels have matched gain settings, so Townsend recommends using a pair of digitally linked channels. Since we were going for the vintage tone, we used a pair of Neve 9098s, which are stepped gain, so they required no calibration (although the L22 does have a calibration setting that you can use to match variable gain preamps). We put the 251 through a Neve 1073 and spent some time making sure the gain and coloration matched as closely as possible.

We then recorded some acoustic guitars through both mics, and the results were great—the differences between the two mics were negligible. The Sphere acquitted itself well, and sounded as good as a mic costing many orders of magnitude more.

Some of the most interesting uses came after the recordings were tracked, because that's when the plug-in takes over and can really shine. One of the first things we did was start to change mic models, and those results were more subtle than one might think. You definitely could hear the difference in some types, but the changes were not radical. Most high-

end microphones are going to sound good through good preamps, and if you know how to place a mic, you're going to get similarly good results. There are subtle differences in the character of each, but few are going to grab your ear if they share a polar pattern. You can also combine characteristics of two mics in a "dual" configuration, which can yield more dramatic results, but ultimately what all this means is that you can create a few mic profiles that you really love, and that will work for most anything.

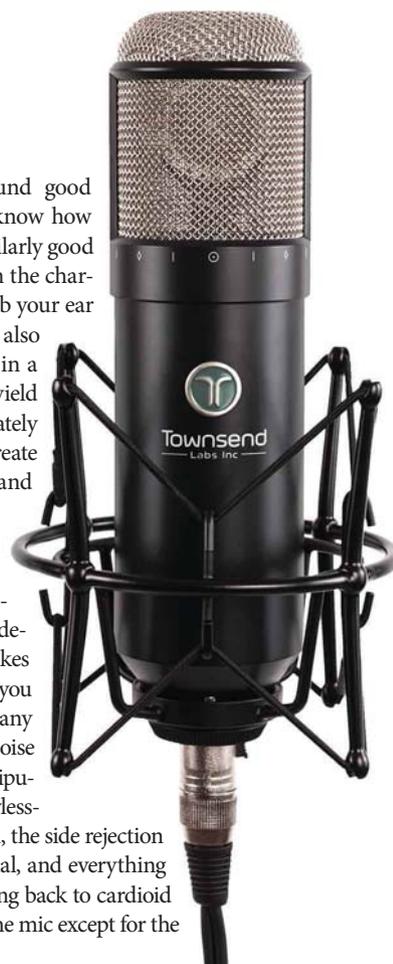
Because you are capturing both sides of the mic, you can change polar patterns, on- and off-axis characteristics, filters and proximity effect—independently from one another. This makes for some very cool manipulations, as you can apply any polar pattern or filter to any mic. We tested this by making some noise on the sides and back, and then manipulating the pattern, and it worked flawlessly. When we went to a figure-8 pattern, the side rejection was great; move to an omni-directional, and everything around the mic became clear; switching back to cardioid patterns gave us rejection all around the mic except for the front source.

I also found the ability to play with proximity effect and microphone axis to be particularly interesting—some of the available mics have notable off-axis characteristics. Especially when recording amps, it's not unusual to place the mic off-axis to utilize some of these properties. But with the Sphere you could place the mic, and then find the "sweet spot" without having to actually move the mic—all while keeping the mic pointed directly at the source to take advantage of the rejection characteristics.

If you're well versed in mic placement and selection, you probably won't want or need to adjust these parameters after the fact. So, rather than focusing on that aspect, I set out to assess and evaluate the Sphere as a tool in itself, and it passed with flying colors.

—Chris Neville

townsendlabs.com



G7th Heritage A.R.T. Capos

Perfect Intonation at Every Fret

A capo can be a very handy accessory to have in your musical toolbox. It provides players with the ability to utilize open chord shapes transposed to any key. It has become a staple in the world of bluegrass, folk and country, and is invaluable to fingerstyle players.

However, the capo can be a frustrating experience for musicians, causing intonation issues and loss of tone. The folks at G7th decided to address these problems and have introduced the G7th A.R.T. Capos, a serious

advancement in capo design that instantly adapts to any neck radius, resulting in highly accurate intonation.

Tackling the intonation hurdle was something that Nick Campling, G7th founder and designer, was determined to accomplish. "A way to automatically adjust the radius over the strings seemed to me to be the next logical improvement to make," he said of the genesis of A.R.T. (Adaptive Radius Technology). The problem with capoing a fretted instrument is the

numerous variables that affect accuracy, such as fingerboard radius, neck profile, fret size and even string gauge. The innovative A.R.T. technology utilizes an internal mechanism that allows the capo's rubber sleeve to instantly adapt to any neck radius and provide spot-on intonation on every instrument.

The A.R.T. technology currently is available on the Heritage yoke-style and the Performance 3 clamp-style capos. I was sent the Heritage versions for both guitar and banjo and instantly was convinced that these are the best capos I have ever used. They are made of polished stainless steel and come in a leather carrying case to keep them protected during transport. I tested the capos on all my acoustic and electric guitars and several banjos. The Heritage consistently provided perfect intonation, with great tone up and down the neck. I prefer the yoke-style capos for their ability to be stored over the nut when not in use.

A.R.T. capos have set a new standard in the industry. This does come at a price, with the Heritage models selling for \$149.99 and the Performance 3 models going for \$57.99. But considering they'll replace that drawer full of capos you now have, they're worth every penny.

—Keith Baumann

g7th.com



Sax Dakota SDB-XR-62 Raw-Bronze Bari Makes a Powerful Statement

The SDB-XR-62 Baritone Saxophone from Sax Dakota is a striking instrument—in terms of both its sonic and visual characteristics. The entire instrument is made of raw, unfinished bronze alloy, giving it a unique, lacquer-less look accented with distinctive grille-type keyguards and elaborate hand-engraving on the body, bell and neck. The alloy itself, which features a high copper content, helps the saxophone to resonate with the power and presence of a gong. This is one beast of a bari.

As a working baritonist, I took advantage of opportunities to test-drive the SDB-XR-62 on multiple gigs and rehearsals. I had tremendous fun discovering what the horn was capable of, and played up its bold aesthetic at every opportunity.

The SDB-XR-62 projected far and wide. This made playing it especially enjoyable and is likely the result of several significant design factors: the horn's all-bronze makeup, an internal neck taper designed to maximize air flow, and a large bell (7.48 inches in diameter) that begins to flare at the saxophone's bottom bow and collar. It responded gloriously, which encouraged me to push the horn to its limits. The SDB-XR-62 proved capable of handling everything I could throw at it with my metal Ted Klum London mouthpiece and #3 Rigotti reed, with headroom to spare.

The SDB-XR-62 performed beautifully when I played it at more modest and moderate dynamic levels on gigs, blending perfectly with sax sections consisting mostly of vintage Selmers and Kings. During hushed ballad arrangements (Neal Hefti's "Li'l Darlin'" comes to mind), I found that I could finesse the horn at subtone volume levels. And on the medium-tempo swingers, I discovered just how flexible and expressive the SDB-XR-62 can be, with its well-rounded, harmonically complex tone.

After playing the SDB-XR-62 several times, and using a few different mouthpieces (including a Brillhart Level-Air, a JodyJazz Jet and a Vandoren 16), I marveled at the range of tones it's capable of generating. Bright, dark, brassy, mellow—this horn suits any musical mood and has the capacity for all kinds of different sonic textures, from raspy and rugged to silky smooth.

The SDB-XR-62 was spectacular when it came to intonation. Octaves lined up consistently, the overtone series was spot-on and the low A was right in tune with the rest of the horn. Credit this instrument's solid pitch to its graduated bore taper and accurate tone-hole placement. Speaking of

the overtone series, the SDB-XR-62 sang with ease in the altissimo zone.

The SDB-XR-62's mechanics are solid. Professional touches include Pisoni Italian pads, black oxide-tempered springs, stainless steel long-hinge rods, an awesome triple neckstrap ring (like on the old Kings), classy mother-of-pearl abalone key touches, and double-arm reinforcement on the low C, B and B_♭ keys.

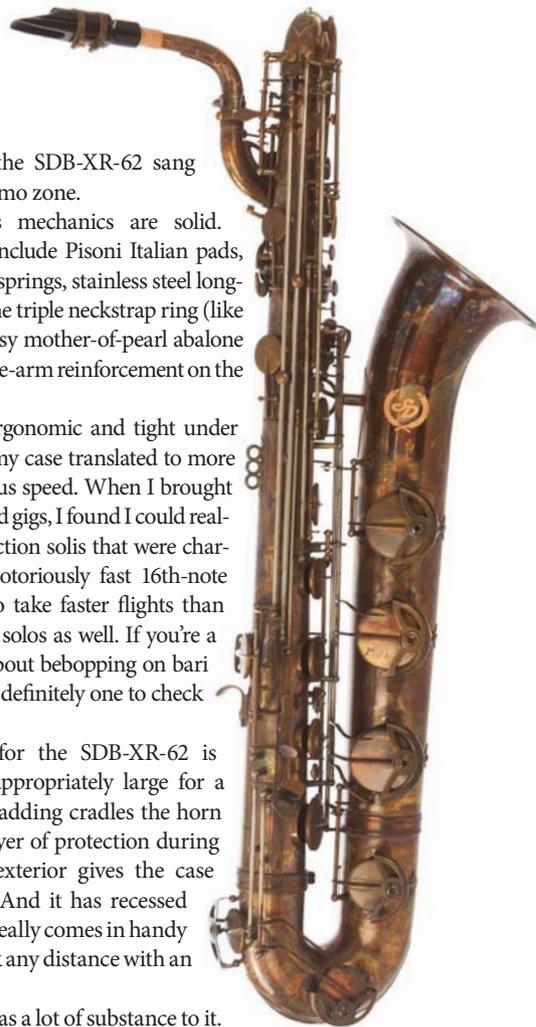
The keywork is ergonomic and tight under the fingers, which in my case translated to more control and tremendous speed. When I brought the horn out to big band gigs, I found I could really tear through sax-section solis that were characteristically full of notoriously fast 16th-note runs. I felt inclined to take faster flights than usual during my own solos as well. If you're a player who's serious about bebopping on bari sax, the SDB-XR-62 is definitely one to check out. It's built for speed.

The travel case for the SDB-XR-62 is impressive, too. It's appropriately large for a low-A bari. Interior padding cradles the horn just right, adding a layer of protection during transport. A tweed exterior gives the case a cool, vintage look. And it has recessed wheels, a feature that really comes in handy when you have to walk any distance with an instrument this size.

The SDB-XR-62 has a lot of substance to it. You can feel it vibrate to your very core when you play it. It's Sax Dakota's top-of-the-line bari, and it would make a great choice for the advanced player who seeks a highly responsive, pro-quality instrument that makes a powerful statement.

—Ed Enright

saxdakota.com



1. Virtual Analog Synth

Kyra is a 128-voice, field-programmable virtual analog synthesizer from Waldorf Music. It features eight independent “parts” with up to 32 notes per part, each effectively functioning as a complete synthesizer with sound sources, modulators and multieffects. A USB 2.0 connection can exchange MIDI information, as well as send the audio from each stereo “part” to a computer as eight stereo 24-bit streams at 96kHz. **More info:** waldorfmusic.com



2. Marbled Mouthpiece

D’Addario Woodwinds has launched its limited-edition Reserve Evolution marbled mouthpiece. Designed for the modern clarinetist, Reserve Evolution mouthpieces deliver a warm and refined tone featuring quick response and ease of articulation. It gives clarinetists greater flexibility for a wide variety of musical styles. The marbled-rubber mouthpiece is available in two pitch-system versions: A=440Hz and A=442Hz. **More info:** daddario.com



3. Fuzz on the Fly

The Keeley Fuzz Bender is a hybrid fuzz pedal combining silicon and germanium transistors to create a highly tweakable, musical fuzz that works well with guitar, bass, keyboards and more. The Fuzz Bender’s active EQ enables users to boost or cut the bass and treble frequencies by +/-20dB, and the bias control takes a user’s tone from zippery, velcro-like sputter to full-on bombastic, wooly fuzz. Oversized knobs make it easy to fine-tune fuzz on the fly.

More info: robertkeele.com



4. Music in the Air

M-Audio’s Air series of audio interfaces gives producers, composers and musicians the ability to produce 24-bit/192kHz studio-quality recordings on their computers via an intuitive, easy-to-use interface. With a range of five models, Air interfaces are tailored to record everything from a solo performer to a large ensemble. **More info:** m-audio.com



5. Mini Condenser

Roswell Pro Audio has introduced the Mini K87. Designed as a neutral and uncolored counterpart to the Mini K47, the Mini K87 is an all-purpose studio condenser mic with Roswell’s signature clarity and warmth in a familiar, compact package. Roswell’s K87 capsule is specially tuned for this microphone and is coupled to a low-distortion audio circuit. The combination delivers a smooth response normally associated with much more expensive devices. **More info:** roswellproaudio.com



6. Guitar & Voice Amp

The Recording King Songwriter 60 is a two-channel acoustic instrument amplifier with studio-monitor clarity and detail. It has all the features users need to amplify their instrument and voice. The Songwriter 60’s instrument channel delivers a pure sonic imprint of a user’s guitar, and the microphone channel can accommodate a singer’s favorite vocal mic—from a standard dynamic to a phantom-powered condenser. **More info:** recordingking.com



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Members of the UK Jazz Ensemble have frequent opportunities to perform onstage.

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Raul Midón (right) with Frost School of Music Dean Shelly Berg

COURTESY FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Distinguished Alumni: Dean Shelly Berg surprised Frost School of Music graduate Raul Midón with the school's 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award at the guitarist-vocalist's Nov. 7 Frost Music Live concert performance. Midón (B.M. '90) returned to Frost on the occasion of University of Miami's Homecoming Week. Along with releasing 10 studio albums as a solo artist, Midón has collaborated with Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder and Bill Withers, and has contributed to recordings by Queen Latifah and Snoop Dogg. frost.miami.edu

Definitive Encyclopedia: *The Definitive Jazz & Blues Encyclopedia* (Flame Tree Publishing, London), now expanded and fully updated from the illustrated edition, traces the evolution of jazz and blues from their 19th-century African-American origins through to the present day. Each chapter covers a different era, highlighting key developments in the music and providing essential information on artists and recommended recordings. Drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts wrote the encyclopedia's foreword, and longtime DownBeat contributor Howard Mandel served as consultant editor.

flametreepublishing.com

Teachers as Directors: *Rehearsing the Jazz Band* (Meredith Music/Hal Leonard), edited by Mary Jo Papich and Ryan Adamsons, includes chapters by Caleb Chapman, John Clayton, José Antonio Diaz, Curtis Gaesser, Antonio J. García, Gordon Goodwin, Roosevelt Griffin III, Sherrie Maricle, Ellen Rowe, Roxanne Stevenson, Steve Wiest and Greg Yasinsky—all expert jazz educators. Each contributing author provides a list of suggested charts for school jazz band directors to consider. halleonard.com

Spring Lineup: Jazz at Princeton University has announced its spring 2020 season, which runs Feb. 22–May 9. Highlights include performances by student groups joined by guest artists, including Chilean vocalist Claudia Acuña and Cuban drummer Dafnis Prieto. The second-annual Princeton University Jazz Festival is scheduled to take place April 18.

music.princeton.edu

UK Promotes Musical Versatility

AS JAZZ PROGRAMS STRIVE TO BEST MEET the needs of students who will graduate and enter a constantly changing music scene, the University of Kentucky might have inadvertently been pursuing the ideal course of action for the past 50 years. UK doesn't offer a jazz degree.

"We have an unusually flexible approach to musical curriculum with respect to jazz," said Raleigh Dailey, who teaches jazz studies, improvisation and piano in UK's School of Music and leads its Jazz Lab Band. "Students can study both jazz and classical music in various proportions. Rather than emerging with a 'jazz' or 'classical' degree, many students have experience with both, which is an obvious advantage in today's competitive market."

"You don't come to UK to study one genre," said Miles Osland, the director of jazz studies since 1989. "You're a saxophone major or a piano major." Currently, he explained, his best saxophone student comes from a classical background.

In celebration of the half-century of the UK Jazz Ensemble and Osland's three decades at its helm, the school recently released two compilation albums: *UKJE The Early Years ... 1979–1999* and *UKJE ...Till Now 1999–2019*. The recordings are filled with high-caliber playing on tunes by composers ranging from Duke Ellington to Astor Piazzolla.

"We document a lot of what we do, and it proves to be a great recruiting tool," Osland said.

Whether it's the jazz ensemble, lab band, the world music ensemble or one of the wind or percussion bands, Osland said the recordings showcase the skills of both the students and faculty members.

Osland described the ideal UK music student as one who values versatility. Despite the pro-

gram having a focus on pedagogy, rather than performance, the number and range of ensembles provide no shortage of opportunities to play in public.

Dailey explained that prospective UK students can expect a steady performance schedule, both on-campus and in the broader Lexington community. For those in the UK Jazz Ensemble, the opportunities are even more substantial; the band has toured China and performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

"Jazz students are among our most active, prominent performers," Dailey said. "Our top ensembles—the UK Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Cats, Mega-Sax—perform widely, regionally and at national and international venues. Lexington is a perfect environment for developing students: large enough for performing opportunities, but with a welcoming, suburban feel."

Established in 1865, the university has an undergraduate enrollment of about 22,000. "[Considering] UK's size, we have a very low student-to-teacher ratio," Dailey said. "This personal contact and involvement with students is critical to music study, and it's one of my favorite aspects of teaching at UK."

Osland would like to see music enrollment increase, particularly in terms of players who study rhythm section instruments. "We need to focus our recruitment in that area to give more balance to the number of great horn players we have," he said.

During Osland's stint, UK has increased the number of jazz ensembles, and introduced specializations in improvisation, which Dailey teaches: drum set and bass.

Overall, it's a fine record of growth for a school where jazz is just one part of a larger musical vision.

—James Hale

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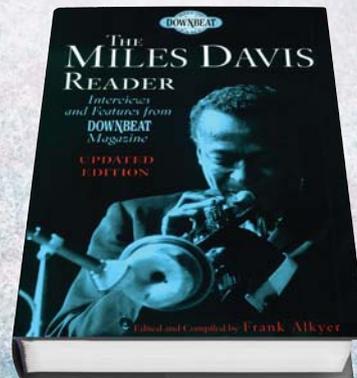
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Michele Rosewoman

Since debuting the group in 1983, Michele Rosewoman has issued two albums with her pathbreaking Cuban-folkloric-music-meets-contemporary-jazz New Yor-Uba ensemble. The most recent is 2019's *Hallowed* (Advance Dance Disques). This is Rosewoman's first Blindfold Test.

Kris Davis

"Corn Crake" (*Diatom Ribbons*, Pyroclastic, 2019) Davis, piano; Val Jeanty, turntables, vocals; Terri Lyne Carrington, drums.

I'm feeling and hearing a style and an influence running around in that. I like the mix of electronics with acoustic, the odd-meter groove that gives you space to feel a lot of different things. I especially like the way it built. It reached a point where I thought it would become more involved and keep morphing in the vernacular of the magic of, let's say, B.A.G. artists with their free-improv ending up in an explosion somewhere along the line—but then it settled in. I've written stuff like that, that's meant just to get to a zone and stay there. The drum colors made me think of Tyshawn Sorey, but I dropped that quickly because the drummer laid into a beat that I don't think Tyshawn would ever stay on. I liked the colors of the piano. I liked the way the narration came in and out, nicely placed and effective, never dominating but just integrating well with the rest. I enjoyed it.

Jason Moran

"Thelonious" (*Thanksgiving At The Village Vanguard*, Yes Records, 2017) Moran, piano; Tarus Mateen, electric bass; Nasheet Waits, drums.

A beautiful tune by Monk—absolutely a hero and huge influence. I love Monk for the space that he uses, and here the spaces were filled from the beginning. So, the execution was a little busy for me, in terms of my personal taste. I was listening to the energy, which seemed to get more and more and more. And I was thinking, Monk would achieve this very differently. When I heard the audience at the end, I understood why they played like that. Touch and execution were clearly the pianist's own. But it didn't especially pay homage to Monk, other than performing a great piece of Monk's their own personal way.

Aruán Ortiz/Don Byron

"Tete's Blues" (*Random Dances And (A)Tonalities*, Intakt, 2018) Ortiz, piano; Byron, clarinet.

I really liked that. Everything felt organic. I like to work stuff out like what the piano player did. The coordination of the two hands gets you thinking on multiple levels at the same time. That groove really found a place where it rolled. I liked the textural changes and the way, for example, when the piano first brought in the left-hand movement, a single note, it sounded like it could be a bass on the high end. When the clarinet started out, it was going through textures that sounded to me like a flute; later, I really liked the warmth of the clarinetist's sound from the high end to the low end. The way they flowed together was really natural. I liked how the written elements blurred into the improvisational elements, and the way the whole piece evolved and opened up.

David Virelles

"Tierra" (*Gnosis*, ECM, 2017) Virelles, piano; Roman Diaz, percussion; the Nosotros Ensemble.

I quickly thought of David Virelles with Roman Diaz, from the depth of the mood they achieved, and then the freedom of David's playing with his fluidity and organic colorations at the piano. I love the moods they created, and the transition from one zone into another.



Michele Rosewoman

Sylvie Courvoisier/Mary Halvorson

"Woman In The Dunes" (*Crop Circles*, Relative Pitch, 2017) Courvoisier, piano; Halvorson, guitar.

As I listened, I was feeling a certain arena of the music, and certain individuals were jumping in and out of my mind. The spacious approach to the guitar and some of the angles made me think of Liberty Ellman, but the effect was not quite something I could hear him doing. Then, with the piano, the zone of the music made me think of Tyshawn, but I hadn't heard him enough on the instrument to know if it's him. I liked it. I found it transforming me and the room, and not to a bad place.

Marta Sánchez

"Cascadas" (*El Rayo Del Luz*, Fresh Sound New Talent, 2019) Sánchez, piano; Roman Filiú, alto saxophone; Chris Cheek, tenor saxophone; Rick Rosato, bass; Daniel Dor, drums.

I'm not sure who the piano player or the tenor player are, but I know Roman Filiú was playing alto, from hearing him play his part, and also from the nature of the composition, which I can't totally explain, because I don't feel this was his band. I liked the opening and the new elements on the head that entered behind the clear 3/4 feeling, adding other dimensions to where the meter and time could be felt. I don't think I ever heard them again in the piece, which I missed, because later the time was fairly obvious. This expresses my taste, my aesthetic—I want to be intrigued by things that obscure the time or make it a bit of a mystery.

The chord changes were nice and flowing. I would have liked them not all to land on the downbeat throughout, which is the way it's structured for the improv, which everyone pretty sticks to—except the bass player, who kind of floats. I really like the time to float, so you can feel the mysteries of time, the cracks between the cracks.

Chucho Valdés

"Son XXI" (*Jazz Bata 2*, Mack Avenue, 2018) Valdés, piano; Yelsy Heredia, bass; Dreiser Durruthy Bombalé, batás, vocals; Yaroldy Abreu Robles, percussion.

Different folks were coming to mind, but I found myself thinking of Chucho because the language was so solid, so instilled. The groove was solid and not forced. It just laid there naturally. Given today's aesthetic, everything moves all the time, and at first it felt a little static. Then I realized it's not static, it's just grooving. I did enjoy when the bass player made some moves. That was nonstop interesting. Chucho uses a lot of space. There's a lot of notes, but it feels more like a lot of textures than a lot of notes, shifting in a very organic way from one texture to the next. **DB**

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

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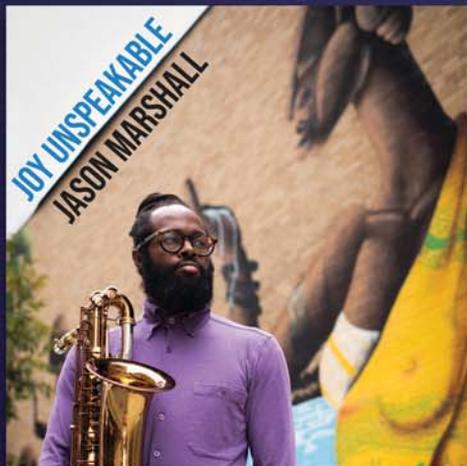


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