

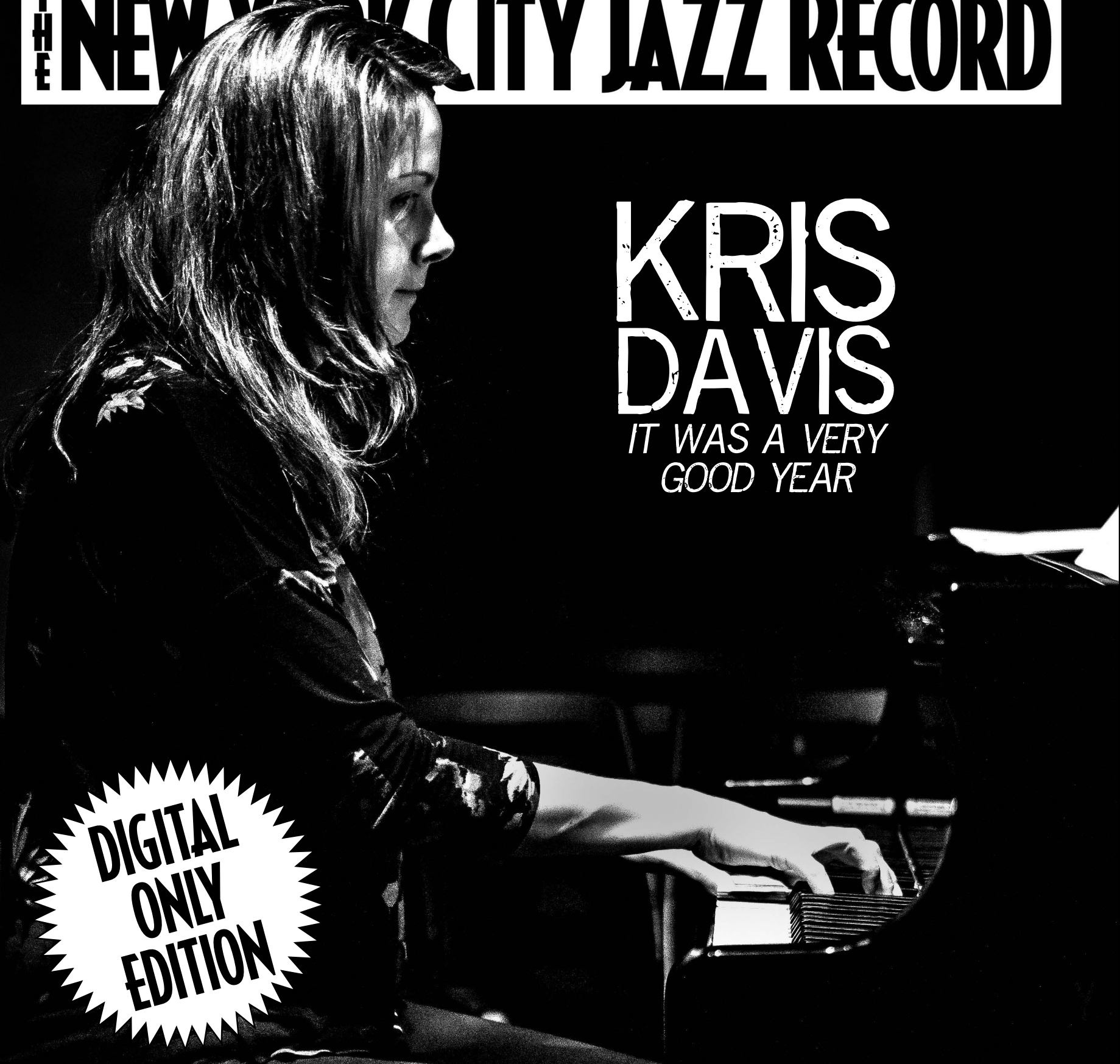
APRIL 2020—ISSUE 216

YOUR FREE GUIDE TO THE NYC JAZZ SCENE

NYCJAZZRECORD.COM



THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD



KRIS DAVIS

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

**DIGITAL
ONLY
EDITION**

**MAKOTO
OZONE**

**MAX
RAABE**

**HORACEE
ARNOLD**

**HAMIET
BLUIETT**

Managing Editor:
Laurence Donohue-Greene
**Editorial Director &
Production Manager:**
Andrey Henkin

To Contact:
The New York City Jazz Record
66 Mt. Airy Road East
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
United States
Phone/Fax: 212-568-9628

Laurence Donohue-Greene:
ldgreene@nycjazzrecord.com

Andrey Henkin:
ahenkin@nycjazzrecord.com

General Inquiries:
info@nycjazzrecord.com

Advertising:
advertising@nycjazzrecord.com

Calendar:
calendar@nycjazzrecord.com

VOXNews:
voxnews@nycjazzrecord.com

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Staff Writers

Duck Baker, Stuart Broomer,
Robert Bush, Kevin Canfield,
Marco Cangiano, Thomas Conrad,
Pierre Crépon, Ken Dryden,
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Anders Griffen, George Kanzler,
Steven Loewy, Kyle Oleksiuk

Contributing Photographers

Enid Farber, Peter Gannushkin,
Kentaro Hisadomi, Roberto Masotti,
Sherry Rubel, Robert I. Sutherland-Cohen

Fact-checker
Nate Dorward

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THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

APRIL 2020—ISSUE 216

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Legendary Swiss drummer Daniel Humair once said during an interview that jazz was only a small part of music, that music was only a small part of art and that art was only a small part of life. All these years later his words are heavy with significance.

As you can see from the sticker on our cover, for the first time in our history we are publishing an edition solely in digital form. This was a simple calculus; if there is nowhere to deliver (for those somehow unaware, all concert venues in New York City – indeed all unnecessary gatherings – are closed until further notice), there is little point in printing thousands of issues. And, as you leaf through the pages, the effects of COVID-19 – or, at least, the initial ones as its scope and longevity are unclear – are apparent in the scheduled shows cancelled and the lack of an Event Calendar, one normally having in excess of 750 concerts.

There is an old joke that jazz is always in a recession. But, as with most of the world's population and industries, it has never been in a pandemic. While events like the 1994 blizzard, 9/11, 2003 blackout and Hurricane Sandy tested the resolve of New Yorkers, those events were finite and we could quickly address the consequences and fall back on the strength of community, even if each, in their own way, left permanent scars. Now we are rightly having isolation advocated. For those familiar with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, we are now squarely at the bottom, focused on physiological and safety concerns. Things like art – part of self-actualization at the top of the pyramid – are luxuries right now.

But a society without community and the opportunity for higher pursuits is not worth the name. We can only hope that normalcy, which won't, unfortunately, resemble any past version of that concept, will return. Until then, do what you can to retain your humanity: physical, mental, spiritual and universal.

On The Cover: Kris Davis (Peter Gannushkin/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET)

Corrections: In last month's Jimmy Heath In Memoriam, Wendy Oxenhorn is Founding Director of The Jazz Foundation of America. And in the CD Reviews, Ricky Alexander's album was released by Outside In Music

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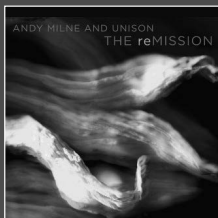
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Fred Staton
Photo by Richard Corman





ANDY MILNE & UNISON reMISSION

SSC 1576 - AVAILABLE 4/10/20

For over a decade, musician friends have urged me to make a trio recording. Early in my career, I dabbled with trios, but I focused mainly on duos, quartets and quintets as I began to develop my voice as a composer and collaborator. In 2017, I faced a life changing health challenge, and I began to reflect on how this might influence a musical course change. The jazz pianist's venerable formation stared me squarely in the eyes and I realized now was the time. (Andy Milne)

Andy Milne (p), John Hébert (b), Clarence Penn (d)

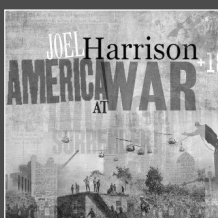


RAY SUHY-LEWIS PORTER QUARTET TRANSCENDENT

SSC 1583 - AVAILABLE 4/17/20

There is music that seemingly possesses mystical qualities, transcending the temporal; qualities that musicians seek. Jazz history is rife with examples of musical seekers. Saxophonist John Coltrane and pianist McCoy Tyner come to mind immediately. Guitarist Ray Suhy and pianist Lewis Porter come together on their new recording, *Transcendent*, under the influence of these wayfaring heroes to create music that reaches magical heights of musical interaction.

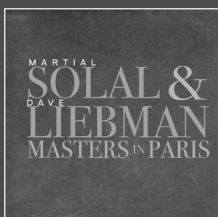
Ray Suhy (g), Lewis Porter (p)
Brad Jones (b), Rudy Royston (d)



JOEL HARRISON + 18 AMERICA AT WAR

SSC 1590 - AVAILABLE 4/24/20

Guitarist and composer Joel Harrison's new large ensemble recording, *America At War*, is a musical meditation on a lifetime of ruinous armed conflicts conducted by the United States. The ensemble includes 18 musicians game to the task of presenting this demanding and emotionally charged music.



MARTIAL SOLAL & DAVE LIEBMAN MASTERS IN PARIS

SSC 1551 - AVAILABLE 4/24/20

The great pianist and the saxophonist had never played together until 2016, when they came together under the impetus of Liebman's former student Jean-Charles Richard to perform at the Sunside Jazz Club in Paris, France. Their rapport was so obvious that they were quickly booked for a few more shows. Their new recording, *Masters In Paris*, was one of these special events, recorded live at Radio France Studio 104.



www.sunnysiderecords.com

If folks were worried about catching the novel coronavirus (at that point, only 62 New Yorkers had tested positive) it didn't stop them from packing Le Poisson Rouge (Mar. 12th) to see **Jeff Parker & The New Breed**. After a lively warm-up set by a drummer-less piano trio (tap dancer Michela Marino Lerman amply filled that function with syncopated footwork), the L.A.-based guitarist, alto saxophonist/keyboard player Josh Johnson, bassist Paul Bryan and drummer Makaya McCraven debuted songs from Parker's latest album, *Suite for Max Brown (International Anthem)*. Opening with "Executive Life", the quartet didn't take long to enter an altered time zone, Johnson's psychedelic pentatonic minor lines lagging way behind McCraven's titanic back-beats, an effect repeated on "Here Comes Ezra", an avant-Motown workout with an infectious melody and Jimi Hendrix vibe à la "Third Stone from the Sun". Bobby Hutcherson's "Visions" spotlighted Parker's pretty-meets-ugly tone and McCraven's agility within deep grooves. "Go Away!", an injunction to our president, and "Gnarciss" drew on funk and hip-hop mixology, with triggers, sampled loops and Moog-ish synth patches. Parker began John Coltrane's "After the Rain" alone with tangy chords and on "Max Brown" he and Johnson traded ideas over an extended drone until the hyper-funky 6/8 vamp. The crowd demanded (and got) its encore: "Get Dressed" and "Cliché", a 2-fer trance-funk jam that set all heads in the house a-bobbing. —Tom Greenland

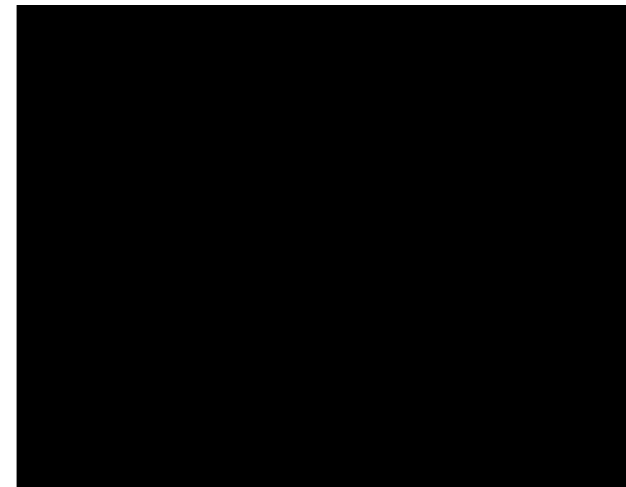
R.I. SUTHERLAND-COHEN / JAZZEXPRESSIONS.ORG



Jeff Parker @ Le Poisson Rouge

International Women's Day (Mar. 8th) at National Sawdust proved the ideal time and place for a **Women's Raga Massive** double bill: a poetry reading by Sham-e-Ali Nayeem followed by a tribute to Hindustani singer Lakshmi Shankar. Drawing from her debut book *City of Pearls*, Nayeem read probing verses about her childhood hometown of Hyderabad—her father's advice, the river, Muslim genocide, a woman's dual identity as goddess/door-mat—finishing with a new poem about the current anti-Muslim pogrom in Delhi. As she read, cellist Amali Premawardhana and tabla player Roshni Samlal improvised sensitive raga accompaniment anchored by the cello's droning open strings. Immediately after, Kavita Das narrated from *Poignant Song*, her study of Shankar's life and music. As she described the singer's debut in Calcutta, her love of dance, her illness, her work as a Bollywood playback singer, her deep immersion in Hindustani music, her seminal collaborations with Ravi Shankar and George Harrison, Das would periodically pause for the band to animate these events with appropriate musical examples. Premawardhana and Samlal, now joined by Carnatic vocalist Roopa Mahadevan, violinist Trina Basu and bassist Perry Wortman, played a Bhajan, a Carnatic song, a medley of Bollywood themes, a Hindustani tarana and an Indo-pop hybrid piece. The best came last with a mash-up of three Thillanas that resolutely concluded this homage to the iconic Indian musical matriarch. (TG)

Yes, the photo is just a black square. Circumstances converged unexpectedly towards this result but it has become deeply symbolic. Your correspondent's first choices for NY@Night reviews both came at the beginning of March but, due to musician illness, were both cancelled. Thus, a second set of selections were necessary and a date was chosen, Mar. 12th, wherein two shows in close proximity could be reviewed: Lakecia Benjamin's Pursuance at Dizzy's Club and Steve Wilson and The Analog Band at Birdland Theater. But, to quote a Hebrew proverb: Man plans and God laughs. On Mar. 1st New York City reported its first case of **COVID-19**; as of this writing there have been over 22,000. What had begun a blip on international news reports in December 2019 was declared a pandemic on Mar. 11th. In response, some NYC venues, lacking at the time any formal guidelines from national, state or city officials, took it upon themselves to close their doors, a gesture that recalled similar responses during such earlier city crises as 9/11, the 2003 Blackout and Hurricane Sandy in 2012. So it was that your reviewer arrived at the Time Warner Center in Columbus Circle to find that the elevators to the multiple venues of Jazz at Lincoln Center had been shut off and a notice posted that all programming—Dizzy's Club, Rose Theater, The Appel Room—was cancelled through April 15th. This, in conjunction with the travel ban announced that day as well as earlier (continued below)



cancellations of such events as SXSW, Coachella, Big Ears and a number of European festivals, plus the NCAA Basketball Tournament and many sporting events, had officially ushered the world into a new era. Feeling the weight of these new developments, your correspondent walked through Times Square towards Birdland. There were a scattering of surgical masks but nothing like one sees today. The crowds were there but thinned (there was no wait at Shake Shack) and eerily subdued. The first person carrying a box of plants was spotted; later, on the way back to Queens, seeing many more, these were understood to be office workers preparing for an indefinite period of telecommuting and no way to water their office foliage. Birdland was still open but Wilson, normally assured of a full if not packed house, had less than two dozen. His band was solid and the applause effusive but there was a chill to the proceedings. Was this resilience or denial? In the weeks since, Mayor De Blasio has made all unnecessary gatherings verboten and all places of public worship—from jazz clubs to hockey rinks to pizza parlors—have closed down. Email inboxes have been flooded with notices of concert cancellations and uncertainty about when musicians would be able to work again, a tiny sliver in the economic pandemic happening concurrent with the actual one. The aforementioned city crises now seem quite different; those quickly reinforced a need for community and togetherness. Not so now.

—Andrey Henkin

WHAT'S NEWS

An AfroFuturism themed program billed Sounds Of Justice paired William Parker's *Inside Songs Of Curtis Mayfield* and Sun Ra Arkestra under the direction of Marshall Allen at The Town Hall (Mar. 4th). The show opened with vocalist Leena Conquest's piercing acappella reading of Mayfield's "The Makings Of You" as projections of '60s Black Panther rallies filled the screen overhead. An interlude with pianist Dave Burrell and organ player Cooper Moore had Thomas Sayers Ellis orating, mixing his rebellious spoken word themes with those of Amiri Baraka. The Parker nonet kicked into full gear, propelled by Hamid Drake's rollicking rhythms, for "People Get Ready", with the voices of Leila Adu-Gilmore, Raina Sokolov and Ronald Peet joining Conquest's lead vocal, avant-funk interludes by alto saxophonist Rob Brown and trombonist Steve Swell in between. Parker's decidedly Arkestral processional "Inside Song #1" preceded the band's rendering of Mayfield's "I'm So Proud", which featured James Brandon Lewis' growling tenor. Parker's "Inside Song #2" had Burrell spinning out percussive swirling chords while Sayer shouted his and Baraka's poetry. Parker's soulful orchestration of "My Country" had the voices in full gospel mode as the audience joined in clapping time with the band. Parker's "Inside Song #3" and "The Tone World Theme" closed out the first half of the show, appropriately leading in to Allen and Sun Ra Arkestra's typically energized performance. —Russ Musto

Kicking off Women in Jazz Month, Dizzy's Club (Mar. 1st) presented pianist Helen Sung and her quite timeless quintet. With a frontline of trumpeter Terell Stafford and tenor saxophonist Roxy Coss, the band cast a certain perfection in postbop. Sung, a pianist of remarkable skill and unfettered imagination, pored over each work with determined ferocity guided by a central sense of melody. Stafford's celebrated bell-like tone, reminiscent of Clifford Brown, was driven further by dynamic drummer Kendrick Scott and Sung's democratic sense of space. But this ensemble too was built on a special sort of empathy, at one point juxtaposing unexpected double-time in the midst of a piano solo, causing Scott to break out in laughter as he and bassist David Wong locked into the soaring pulse. By the time Coss took flight, one could almost hear echoes of the '60s Jazz Messengers rounding Columbus Circle. The quintet maintained that intensity, filling the crowded room with the very urgency warranted by Women's History Month in the #metoo era. Of particular note was their take on Marian McPartland's "Kaleidoscope", the iconic *Piano Jazz* theme. Racing through the familiar melody, the band traversed gorgeously impressionistic sections, which found each member at slightly different tempi, before uniting again at various points. As they began to cook, improvisations artfully melted the arrangement and Sung commanded the space with a solo cadenza that could only be described as magical. —John Pietaro

On Mar. 1st, New York State confirmed its first case of COVID-19. In the weeks since, tens of thousands of cases have been diagnosed and New York City has been named an epicenter of the virus, with over half of the country's known cases and five percent of the world's. Events have moved quickly since the beginning of the month, with travel bans, cancellation of major events such as the NCAA Basketball Tournament and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Locally, after performance venues were initially left to make their own decisions, city and state officials at first banned gathering of over 500 people, eventually closing all public venues completely until further notice. Of specific relevance to readers of this gazette has been the cancellation of hundreds of concerts throughout the city, from such major venues as Jazz at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall down to the smallest coffeehouse. It is unclear as to when any programming will resume. This comes on the heels of numerous festivals, from Coachella to SXSW to Big Ears in the U.S. to various European festivals, also being cancelled out of an abundance of caution. As a result, the city's live music industry—not just jazz—has ground to a halt, leaving musicians, club owners, soundpersons, waitstaff and associated tradespersons faced with grim economic uncertainty. Some measures to mitigate that have been enacted. In these times, it is highly encouraged to support musicians by buying albums, currently one of the few revenue streams remaining to them. Many are also offering online lessons and concerts to earn money as well. In addition, venues throughout the city are filling in the concert gap by streaming performances from their archives. Please check the websites of your favorite venues and support them as well as all the musicians as best you can during this difficult period. While thinking about music may seem bourgeois right now, we are reminded of the composers who bravely plied their craft while being held at Nazi concentration camps and how art as an emotional balm is unmatched.

As an addendum to the above, Record Store Day (Apr. 1st) and International Jazz Day 2020 (Apr. 30th) have been postponed.

Litchfield Jazz Camp scholarship applications are being accepted through Apr. 15th for those individuals wishing to attend this year's camp (Jun. 28th-Jul. 3rd; Jul. 5th-10th; July 12th-17th; Jul 19th-25th) who are not able to pay tuition due to economic hardship. For more information, to apply for a scholarship and also for those wishing to contribute towards the scholarship fund, visit litchfieldjazzfest.com.

Apollo Theater announced a massive commissioning initiative, Apollo New Works, "dedicated to the creation of a diverse, 21st century American performing arts canon", made possible with the support of a \$2 million grant from the Ford Foundation. Among the participants will be vibraphonist Stefon Harris. For more information, visit apollotheater.org.

The National Recording Registry has announced its 2020 Entries, which include "Whispering" by Paul Whiteman Orchestra (1920) and *Concert in the Garden* by Maria Schneider Orchestra (2004). For more information, visit loc.gov/programs/national-recording-preservation-board/recording-registry

The Tobias Hoffmann Nonet of Austria has won First Prize of the Made in New York Jazz Competition. For more information, visit madeinnjazz.com.

As part of its Inspiring Woman line of dolls commemorating transformative women in history, Barbie (yes, that Barbie) has released a doll of legendary singer Ella Fitzgerald, which will include earrings, gown with brooch, microphone, shoes and doll stand. To purchase, visit barbie.mattel.com/shop/en-us/ba/inspiring-women-series.

Vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater has been named the Detroit Jazz Festival's 2020 Artist-in-Residence and will perform throughout the festival Sep. 4th-7th. For more information, visit detroitjazzfest.org.

The Stone series at Happylucky no.1 has ended due to the closure of the gallery.

Submit news to info@nycjazzrecord.com

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William Parker's *Inside Songs of Curtis Mayfield* @ Town Hall



Helen Sung @ Dizzy's Club

Taking the stage (Mar. 1st) for the final set of a week of sold-out shows at Village Vanguard, Cécile McLorin Salvant took a seat, flanked on either side by her oddly configured band of pianist Sullivan Fortner, banjo player James Chirillo, flutist Alexa Tarantino and percussionist Keita Ogawa. Singing selections from her extensive, eclectic repertoire Salvant opened with Sting's "Until", accompanied sparsely by piano for the first chorus before the band joined in the classically-tinged arrangement. Standing she then dove deep into the blues for a duet with Chirillo on Margaret Johnson's "Changeable Daddy Of Mine". Ogawa's cajon and percussion introduced Gretchen Parlato's "Circling", a feature for Tarantino, which had Salvant vocalizing with measured rhythmic drive. Her dramatic rendition of Kurt Weill's "Pirate Jenny" exuded thespian flair, which followed by a joyously soaring flying version of "Optimistic Voices" from *The Wizard Of Oz*, confirming an emotional range that continued on her readings of Gregory Porter's "No Love Dying" and Weill's "The World Is Mean". The mood lightened as she engaged the audience with her introduction of Shania Twain's "Still The One" and then by taking a request for "Wild Is Love". She dedicated her performance of Fred Hersch-Norma Winstone's "Stars" to her late drummer Lawrence Leathers, then followed with her own "Ghost Song" and "Moon Song". She closed out with Djavan's samba "Upside Down", which Fortner tagged with the *I Dream Of Jeannie* theme. (RM)

The tandem Nublu performance spaces boldly program improvisational new music with disparate strains of jazz and rock from the underground. With "Jazz From Hell" (March 10th), Nublu 151 reached still deeper. Organizer Laurent David affirmed that the title was an homage to the Frank Zappa album, but much of the music seemed inspired by...other forces. Opening was *Titan to Tachyons* led by guitarist Sally Gates with drummer Kenny Grohowski (John Zorn, Brand X) and Matt Hollenberg all over a baritone electric guitar. The desired effects—surreal and sci-fi heavy—were evident over rhythmic accents and rapid shifts of meter and dynamics led from within by Grohowski. Next was *ir*: 12-string banjo player Mick Barr and cajon player Erik Malave. Rolling melodic patterns against the rumbling cajon were wonderfully subject to phasing, sashaying downbeats in this direction or that, to great effect. The final set belonged to *Kilter*: Grohowski, Ed Rosenberg III, whose bass saxophone was electronically armed, and bassist Laurent David. The trio erupted in thickets of sound with bass and bass saxophone unisons shredding the house. Rosenberg ignited visions of Adrian Rollini (Anthony Braxton too) as his horn painted the venue black, Grohowski drove mercilessly and by the time vocalist Andromeda Anarchia joined in, the sheer volume became an entity. Her howl recalled Diamanda Galas, dipping into death metal lows and ghostly highs, at once conjuring the evening's necessary brimstone. (JP)

KENTARO HISADOMI / PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



MAKOTO OZONE

BY KEN DRYDEN

Makoto Ozone is one of many outstanding Berklee alumni from the '80s. The Kobe, Japan native was encouraged by his musician father and his teacher to play jazz. He was already a pianist with phenomenal technique and inventive improvising skill when he made his first appearance on a commercial release, a duo concert with Berklee professor and trombonist Phil Wilson in 1982, while the pianist was attending Berklee. After he graduated in 1984, Ozone was promptly hired by another Berklee professor, Gary Burton, for his quartet. Ozone spent several years touring and recording with the vibraphonist, in addition to touring to promote the Eddie Daniels-Gary Burton CD Benny Rides Again, taking Mulgrew Miller's place. After striking out on his own, Ozone regularly reunited with Burton for recording projects. In the '80s, he made three albums as a leader for Columbia and then signed with Verve, though most of his music in the new millennium has been recorded for Japanese labels. For a long time, he maintained homes in both the U.S. and Japan but in recent years has resided full-time in his native land. A prolific composer interested in many styles of jazz, Ozone currently records and plays with his own trio and his big band No Name Horses while also performing and recording classical music. X

The New York City Jazz Record: Were you exposed to a lot of music as a child?

Makoto Ozone: I was born in a family with music. My father was a jazz musician, who played Hammond organ and piano. So, it was natural for me to pick up jazz music.

TNYCJR: Did you study classical piano first?

MO: Nope! I started out playing Dixieland jazz, as my father was a pianist for a traditional Dixieland band. Louis Armstrong actually heard this band live in the '50s when he came to Japan and called the lead trumpet player "my boy". It was a great band. My dad took me to the rehearsal almost every weekend. This was so important in my life, as I got to know Branford and Ellis Marsalis. They told me that we speak the same language, "authentic", as my brother Branford told me. I took a piano lesson at the age of five as my mother suggested it. It was a classical lesson with the textbook, but I completely got turned off by it. I stayed away from playing the piano, reading music. Just sticking to playing the Hammond organ, which was my very first instrument.

TNYCJR: Which artists inspired your interest in jazz?

MO: Playing organ, my hero was Jimmy Smith, naturally. Then I went to a solo piano concert by Oscar Peterson, only because my uncle gave me his ticket. He couldn't go and didn't want to waste his ticket. Well, that concert changed my life. I immediately started to play piano from that point on. My father was always playing jazz in his car. That's when I heard the Buddy

Rich Big Band for the first time. Also, I loved the music of Henry Mancini. I met Henry about six months before he passed away. He loved the tango that Burton and I played as a duet.

TNYCJR: Who were some of your mentors in Japan and how did they inspire you?

MO: My most important mentor was Tadao Kitano. He was my teacher since I was in the seventh grade. He had a big band called Arrow Jazz Orchestra. He passed away a few years ago, but the band is still going strong in the Osaka [Western Japan] area. He was one of the most advanced arrangers and composers. He never stopped studying and checking out some new music until the time he couldn't play any more.

The lessons were so cool. We were supposed to do our lesson at Yamaha studios, but we always met at Yamaha and he would take me to jazz clubs and ask the band to let me sit in. Nobody could say "No" to him. I forced myself to learn one standard per week, so that I had a new song to play each week. Cool lesson, huh?

TNYCJR: Were there many opportunities for you to play jazz in Japan before coming to the U.S.?

MO: When I was 15 years old, my teacher Tadao made me play the piano with his big band at a major jazz festival in Kobe. He arranged "Body And Soul" with a complete piano solo featured for a whole chorus before the band came in. How lucky a boy can get? That led me to play his monthly gig with his big band at a jazz club. Not to mention, I couldn't read a note of music!

TNYCJR: What led to your coming to the U.S. to study at Berklee?

MO: The Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band came to Japan. She and her music blew me away. I told Tadao that I wanted to learn how to write for a big band. He said, "Go to Berklee." And I discovered that Toshiko [Akiyoshi] was the first Japanese student at Berklee. So I had no choice but to go to Berklee, especially to study with Herb Pomeroy.

TNYCJR: You met a cross-section of talented faculty and fellow students there. Tell me about your time and who left a lasting impression on you.

MO: I can't thank Berklee enough to let me study with such incredible teachers and great musicians. Starting with Herb Pomeroy, Greg Hopkins, Michael Gibbs for writing, Phil Wilson [trombone], Ray Santisi [piano], Maggie Scott [vocals], who taught me and helped me out entirely throughout my young days in Boston. 1980 was the year that I got into Berklee. That was the golden year for jazz at Berklee and I will tell you why. One day while I was practicing in the piano room,

someone knocked on the door and asked me to come play piano in the ensemble room. When I got down there, there were about 10 black kids getting ready to play. I was the only non-black. I got so excited to play with real black musicians for the first time. When I started to play—we played "I'll Remember April"—I was almost in tears as this band was swinging so hard and sounding so powerful. My whole body got filled with joy in two bars. It was Marvin "Smitty" Smith on drums, Donald Harrison on alto, Branford Marsalis on tenor and Wallace Roney on trumpet. There also was Terri Lyne Carrington, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Walter Beasley and more. That's when I first got the

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MAX RAABE

BY ANNA STEEGMANN

The 1920s were an artistically rich period in German history. Much of the music of the time was later declared degenerate art by the Nazis and musicians and singers were no longer allowed to perform. There are many talented German singers in love with the music of the Weimar Republic. Some have achieved international acclaim but no one has reached the level of stardom of Max Raabe. He has written original songs and music, including film music, and acted in films and done live theater. In 2010 his Israel tour attracted so much attention that it was documented on film as *Max Raabe in Israel*.

To date, Raabe has released 33 recordings. Several have sold more than 100,000 copies. The latest, *Max Raabe & Palast Orchester MTV Unplugged*, has been Number 2 in Germany's album charts for more than two months. Raabe's take on the album: "To be honest, I would have never had the idea of recording an MTV Unplugged with myself. I only considered it seriously when I realized that we don't have to be the cool MTV artists but that we can ask cool MTV artists to participate and join us in what we are doing. So we asked various guest artists, among them the rapper Samy Deluxe, German mega-star Herbert Grönemeyer, actor Lars Eidinger, singers LEA and Namika and heavy metal monster Mr. Lordi." Raabe experienced the cooperation as fun and inspiring. "All songs received a particular, very own twist; the resulting DVD/CD is exactly what we were hoping for." The project certainly worked out well. To peek behind the scenes of this recording, for interviews with Raabe and his guest artists, readers can visit the Palast Orchester's YouTube channel.

How did this wunderkind get his start? As a teenager living in a small town in West Germany he listened to big band music when his friends listened to punk. He loved nightclub scenes featuring orchestras in old black-and-white movies and was fond of his parents' collection of 78s. Raabe moved to Berlin to become a baritone opera singer and financed his studies with small performances. At the University of the Arts, he found fellow students enthralled with old tunes like him. They formed the Palast Orchester (palace orchestra) in 1986. Raabe hunted flea markets for old records and libretti. The group had their debut at the 1987 Berlin Theaterball. Performing in the lobby as a secondary act they were so successful that the audience left the ballroom to hear them in the lobby. The rest is history.

Raabe had his first major hit with his 1992 original "Kein Schwein ruft mich an" ("Nobody ever calls me".) In 2010 the orchestra received the Echo Music Prize of the Deutsche Phono-Akademie, an association of German recording companies that recognized outstanding achievement in the industry, for their CD *Charming Weill*. They scored well in international charts with two albums that interpreted modern pop songs in the style of the 20s.

The 11 orchestra members play multiple instruments and lend their singing voices when

required. Reeds (Sven Bährens, Johannes Ernst, Rainer Fox, Bernd Frank), trumpet (Michael Enders, Thomas Huder), trombone (Jörn Ranke), sousaphone/double bass (Bernd Dieterich), guitar/banjo (Ulrich Hoffmeier), drums/percussion (Fabio Duwentester), violin (Cecilia Crisafulli) and piano (Ian Wekwerth) blend harmoniously transporting listeners to a Swing Era dance hall. There has been change and continuity but the orchestra's musicianship has always been second to none. Raabe comments, "From the very first version of the Palast Orchester there are only Ian, our pianist, and I left. But most musicians have been with us since the late '80s/early to mid '90s. Our youngest member is our charming violinist Cecilia Crisafulli—the only woman in the orchestra. Even she has been with us for 13 years."

Raabe's voice has been called "a mix of liquid gold and velvet molded into a cut glass confection." The orchestra, in elegant evening attire, treats audiences worldwide to an over-the-top show. Their repertoire of vintage music, originals and interpretations of modern pop songs in the big-band style of the 1920s including songs by Britney Spears and Salt-N-Pepa, is unique and authentic. The lyrics of their German songs are often hilarious, though the humor doesn't always translate well.

Raabe acknowledges many different influences: jazz, classical music, early film music, revues and dance music. He feels that the Palast Orchester's sound "is universal, familiar to people on both sides of the Atlantic." He points out that there was an exchange in both directions. "In the 20s German musicians learned from jazz records that were coming from the USA to Europe and mixed it with their own tradition in classical music. What then evolved was transported back to America and other countries, for instance through all those talented Jewish musicians who had to flee Nazi Germany." Listeners often are not aware of where the songs originally came from: "'Dream A Little Dream', made famous by The Mamas and the Papas in 1968 is from 1931. 'Just a Gigolo' is from 1929, the same year our arrangement of 'Singing in The Rain' was written—a song made famous by Gene Kelly in 1952. Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's 'Alabama Song' was written in 1930 but became known to a wide audience through The Doors and David Bowie." Raabe doesn't think of his music as belonging to a certain genre. He thinks of it as timeless classic entertainment.

His current international tour "Dream A Little Dream" has won him high praises. The show according to Raabe "reflects what the music was conceived for when it was written and what it still does today: distract the audience for the time of the concert from their every-day troubles." Abroad Raabe includes more English songs and announces German songs with a short description "and then the music speaks for itself." Raabe feels lucky and grateful for his career. "It is unbelievable that we still exist after over 30 years and are now more popular than ever." ❖

For more information, visit palast-orchester.de. This band was scheduled to be at Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall.

Recommended Listening:

- Max Raabe & Palast Orchester—*Folge 2: Kleines Fräulein, Einen Augenblick* (Monopol, 1989)
- Max Raabe & Palast Orchester (with Max Raabe)—*Ich Wollt' Ich Wär Ein Huhn* (RCA/BMG, 2002)
- Max Raabe—*...Singt* (Monopol-Palast Musik, 2004)
- Max Raabe & Palast Orchester—*Heute Nacht Oder Nie (Live in New York)* (SPV, 2007)
- Max Raabe—*Übers Meer* (Decca, 2010)
- Max Raabe—*Der Perfekte Moment... Wird Heut Verpennt* (We Love Music, 2017)

SAINT PETER'S CHURCH

Dear jazz community friends,

It is a trying time for all of us in New York, the country, and the world. What we need more than ever is the healing power of music and prayer.

As of this writing in late March, Saint Peter's is closed, as are all other houses of worship in the city. We will be open again as soon as we are able.

In the meantime, we will roll out jazz (and other) content via our Facebook page in the coming weeks. We have a rich archive of services and concerts that we will "premiere" on Facebook so that we can watch them together. You can also sign up for our emails via our website: saintpeters.org. That's the surest way to be notified of our plans.

We'll get through this together. Please take care of yourselves and be safe. Peace and courage!

Amandus J. Derr, Senior Pastor
Ike Sturm, Director of Music for Jazz
Ronny Whyte, Midday Jazz Midtown Producer
The Saint Peter's Congregation and Staff

facebook.com/saintpetersnyc
www.saintpeters.org

KRIS DAVIS

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

BY KURT GOTTSCHALK



PETER GANNUSHKIN/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET

Pianist Kris Davis' new year's resolution for 2019 was, she says, "the same as everyone's: go to the gym. But I've kept at it." It's a modest resolution given the year she had: a new record that could well prove to be worthy of the signifier "career defining", if not "pivotal"; a new job at Berklee College of Music aimed, in part, at redefining gender norms in jazz; and a new nonprofit to support the record label she launched in 2016.

It was a stellar year for an artist who—at least since her leader debut, the boldly titled *Lifespan*, issued on Fresh Sound-New Talent in 2004—has proven herself to be a thoughtful composer and a performer just as capable of simple sentiment as she is intellectual musculature. It was also a year of making good on the serious statement of intent (of a sort) she made in 2016 with *Duopoly*, a CD/DVD set of duets with such major players as Tim Berne, Don Byron, Bill Frisell, Julian Lage and Angelica Sanchez and the first release on her Pyroclastic imprint. She followed that with a memorable set of duets with fellow pianist Craig Taborn in 2018 and then the remarkable *Diatom Ribbons*, which topped last year's critic Best-Of lists. "I was surprised people loved the record so much," she said of her most recent record, chatting in a West Village café the afternoon of a tribute to pianist Geri Allen at Bethany Baptist Church in Newark. "You never know when you put something out. I'm just interested to see where this will go, all the success around the album."

The modest pianist is careful, though, about counting her chickens, even the ones that have hatched already. She learned that lesson in 2011, after being named "one of four young pianists on the rise in the jazz scene" by *The New York Times*. "I was like, oh wow, stuff's gonna happen now," she laughed. "And then, nothing happened. But seeds are planted."

Davis arrived in New York City in 2001, having met some figures on the New York scene (Sanchez, trumpeter Dave Ballou and saxophonist Tony Malaby) at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity's International Workshop in Jazz & Creative Music, which she attended in 1997 and again in 2000. Born in Calgary, about an hour's drive from Banff, Davis started piano at 6 and joined her school's jazz band at 13. Her instructor saw something in her and introduced her to some of the contemporary greats, notably Herbie Hancock-era Miles Davis records. Those early lessons of playing the repertoire while transcribing Hancock solos may have been an early lesson in traversing styles and communities. Early classical schooling later led her to creating variations on a work by György Ligeti and writing a piece for Luciano Berio, two major figures of 20th Century European composition. An upbringing in mainstream jazz gave her a focus and musicality apparent in her improvisations.

Likewise, working with different communities of musicians in New York led to the cross-pollinated hybrids of *Diatom Ribbons*. The album is built around a trio with drummer Terri Lyne Carrington (who has booked time in the bands of Hancock, Stan Getz and Wayne Shorter, to name a few) and turntablist Val Jeanty (Tracie Morris, Wallace Roney), both of whom

also played with the late Allen. Added to that core unit are players from Davis' downtown stream, including Malaby, guitarists Nels Cline and Marc Ribot, bassist Trevor Dunn and Ches Smith, heard exclusively on vibraphone. Ensuring eclecticism, the album also includes a dedication to Cecil Taylor and a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks read by bassist/singer Esperanza Spalding. Part of the experiment, she said, was to bring her more recent associates in the Allen stream and her older, downtown improv partners into the same circle. "I was becoming part of this community of musicians, friends," she said. "I wanted to bring these two groups of people together and I felt like I had to write something that brought those sensibilities together."

Diatom Ribbons was a year in the making, between assembling the musicians, researching, writing and listening. Youssou N'Dour and Olivier Messiaen were on heavy rotation while she was conceiving the album, as was the free jazz funk of Ornette Coleman. Asked if the unusual mix was a project or a new pursuit, Davis called it a "new direction" and is imagining composing an album for the trio of Carrington, Jeanty and herself next.

Carrington played another part in Davis' big year. The drummer holds the Zildjian Chair in Performance at Berklee's Global Jazz Institute in Boston. She was also, not incidentally, the first woman to win a Grammy for Jazz Instrumental Album with her 2013 album *Money Jungle: Provocative in Blue*, in which she reworked the legendary Duke Ellington/Charles Mingus/Max Roach session for octet. In 2018, Carrington founded Berklee's Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice with the mission of raising awareness of gender disparities within jazz performance and inspiring and developing young musicians through education and mentorship. In August 2019, Davis joined the Institute as an instructor and Associate Program Director of Creative Development. In her advocacy role with the institute, she travels to schools to perform and to speak about the changing face of the jazz world and the new opportunities opening up, not just for women but for anyone who identifies along the LGBTQ+ spectrum. "A lot of students come to the institute because they feel like it's a safe place to explore gender fluidity," she said. "A lot of the students wrestling with gender issues are looking for a place to explore."

The institute has also been responsible for a new edition of Berklee's famed *Real Book*, a collection of lead sheets for musicians, this one comprised of compositions by such composers as Toshiko Akiyoshi, Tia Fuller and Mary Lou Williams, which could and arguably should, be jazz standards. The original, published by Berklee students in the '70s included only one composition by a woman. Davis offers the new edition—available as a PDF download—to schools she visits to use as a tool for creating a more balanced program. "If you want to create a curriculum around women composers, here's a starting point," she explained.

Davis is also using the position as a platform to bring communities together. In addition to her composition courses, where she introduces students to

such figures as Anthony Braxton and Karlheinz Stockhausen, she has begun organizing workshops (which may be an academic way of saying jam sessions) for faculty and students from Berklee and the nearby New England Conservatory of Music, bringing the latter's penchant for improv into the Berklee fold. "It's just not something that happens too often at Berklee," she said. "It's not known for free improvisation."

A commitment for seven months out of the year with Berklee leaves some time for running a label and being mother to a six-year-old, as well as her own music. After releasing *Duopoly* and her duo with Taborn, *Octopus*, along with a remarkable and unexpected album by pianist Cory Smythe (*Circulate Susanna*) in the label's first three years of existence, Davis last year incorporated the label as a nonprofit and secured funding from the Shifting Foundation to help pay for future productions. The label allows her to support other musicians—with a goal of signing younger artists—while retaining rights to her own work. "I was giving my records to smaller record labels and they wanted to own some part of the publishing," she said. "It just didn't make sense. I wanted to create an umbrella where all my music can exist."

The Pyroclastic plan is to split profits evenly with the artist for seven years once production costs are met, after which time all rights revert to the artist. With a small, on-call staff of a half dozen, however, the surplus is slim. "There's basically no profit in this," she said. "I don't know how other small labels are doing it." The coming year will see a second pressing of *Diatom Ribbons* plus new releases from Smythe, Taborn, Eric Revis and Sara Schoenbeck and a set of piano duets by Marilyn Crispell and Sanchez. And with touring curtailed under the current crisis, Davis is still looking forward to the release of a duo record with saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock on Intakt and is working on new material for the Borderlands trio with bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Eric McPherson.

As it happens, the pianist/composer/advocate/instructor/entrepreneur didn't make a resolution for 2020. But she did have personal goals for where she'd be by the time she hit 40, a marker she passed in January. "I was hoping by the time I was 40 I would be a mom and have a stable teaching situation where I could teach what I wanted to teach," she said with a smile. "Both came true." ❖

For more information, visit krisdavis.net. Davis is scheduled to be at *Village Vanguard* Apr. 21st-26th.

Recommended Listening:

- Kris Davis — *Rye Eclipse* (Fresh Sound-New Talent, 2007)
- Kris Davis — *Aerial Piano* (Clean Feed, 2009)
- Ingrid Laubrock/Kris Davis/Tyshawn Sorey — *Paradoxical Frog: Union* (Clean Feed, 2011)
- Eric Revis — *City Of Asylum* (feat. Kris Davis and Andrew Cyrille) (Clean Feed, 2012)
- Borderlands Trio (Stephan Crump/Kris Davis/ Eric McPherson) — *Asteroidea* (Intakt, 2016)
- Kris Davis — *Diatom Ribbons* (Pyroclastic, 2018)

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ENSEMBLE IRE

JEFF REILLY
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HORACEE ARNOLD

BY JIM MOTAVALLI

"It was a time when everybody knew everybody and high-quality people moved from one stylistic thing to another." Drummer Horacee Arnold was talking about 1973-74, when he recorded two memorable albums of cutting-edge fusion for Columbia, *Tribe* and *Tales of the Exonerated Flea*. The latter is a project Arnold would still like to revisit. He has a "Part Two" he'd love to make.

Arnold, born in 1937, grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, where he remembers banging out rhythms on a cardboard box—and having people pay him to stop making such a racket. He didn't hear a lot of jazz down there, but joined the Coast Guard as a young man and was lucky enough to be stationed circa 1959 in peacetime Long Beach. There was free time to head over to nearby Los Angeles and hear the music on Central Avenue. "I also got to learn from drummers like Lawrence Marable and Frank Butler, who were high on the totem pole," Arnold says. Around this time Arnold also started painting and that's something he still does. Tony Bennett is an inspiration. "I was shocked I could do it," he says of his abstracts and portraits. "I enjoy both areas and hope to exhibit my art soon."

Max Roach was a mentor to Arnold, helped him get work and invited him to come to New York around 1959-60. A trio with Cecil McBee and Kirk Lightsey was short lived, but there were gigs with Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Charles Mingus. A memorable one-nighter, once Arnold became New York-based, was with Bud Powell at Birdland in 1964. "He had come back from Europe and he was not a well man," Arnold says of the pianist. "But to play with him was something on a different level entirely." Also memorable was a stint with one of the lost legends of jazz, pianist Hasaan Ibn Ali. Arnold took part in intense rehearsals with Hasaan

(who was known by the one name) and bassist Henry Grimes. Arnold describes his music as having an affinity with Thelonious Monk and Herbie Nichols. They were supposed to record, but Hasaan, though hugely talented, was eccentric to say the least. "One night he said let's go down to the Village Vanguard," Arnold remembers. "Bill Evans was playing with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian and Hasaan pushed Evans off the piano stool and just started playing." Evidently, Evans accepted the usurpation and eventually Arnold took over the drums from Motian and they played a few numbers. But Hasaan was unknown and Atlantic wanted a name so the album came out in 1965 as *The Max Roach Trio Featuring the Legendary Hasaan*. Hasaan never recorded anything else and Henry Grimes disappeared, too (though since resurfacing).

Arnold always had progressive leanings and they came to the surface in 1967 when he founded the Here and Now Company, which featured at various times Sam Rivers, Joe Farrell, Reggie Workman, Karl Berger and Robin Kenyatta. Guitarist Ralph Towner became a friend and collaborator and they're still best friends today. It's not surprising, given his work with Farrell and interest in fusion, that Arnold would hook up with Chick Corea. He was in an early version of Return to Forever with Farrell, Stanley Clarke, Airto Moreira and Flora Purim. "They wanted to conceptualize further and became even more fusion-esque," Arnold says. "Lenny White was the best choice for them at that time." He also played with Stan Getz, around the time of the *Captain Marvel* album with Clarke and Corea, but didn't stay for long.

And now we come to Arnold's two great recordings as a leader. The drummer knew producer John Hammond, who heard some tapes he did with bassist Juini Booth, saxophonist Bennie Maupin and vibraphonist David Friedman (another close friend). Hammond approved and agreed to a record date. *Tribe* was released in 1973 and is a wonderful record with reference to what Weather Report, Herbie Hancock and Miles Davis were doing at that time. Towner is also aboard, as are fellow guitarist John Abercrombie, Friedman and saxophonist Billy Harper.

Columbia executive Bruce Lundvall heard *Tribe*

and dug it. Columbia was smiling, so *Tales of the Exonerated Flea* was green-lit and released in 1974. If anything, it's even better than *Tribe*, with three bassists (Clint Houston, George Mraz, Rick Laird), Abercrombie again, saxophonist Sonny Fortune, Friedman and Towner and great keyboard work from Arnold's friend Jan Hammer. Arnold blames bad management and the fact that Hammond became ill and disengaged for the fact that the albums didn't get promoted.

The album's concept is "man's place as a homo sapiens on the planet," Arnold says. "It's about what has transpired since our arrival here." The exonerated fleas, that's us. Part Two will complete the "duality of the project," but it hasn't been recorded yet. In the can, though, is an album with bassist Buster Williams, recently departed guitarist Vic Juris, pianist George Colligan and tenor saxophonist Antoine Roney. "It's primarily acoustic, but there's an urgency to it," Arnold says. "I hope it comes out soon."

Arnold, who lives in Manhattan, became a teacher at William Paterson University in New Jersey and has been there since 1981. "I'm still teaching there, but my schedule is much looser these days," he says. "That gives me the freedom to do what I want to do, including going out on tour and getting together with my best friend in the world, Ralph Towner."

Arnold may have had setbacks in his career—*Tribe* and *Tales of the Exonerated Flea* didn't make him a household name, but he's far from bitter. "I don't have any room for that," he says. "Things may not be going your way, but who knows what life will offer you." ❖

For more information, visit horaceearnold.com

Recommended Listening:

- Robin Kenyatta—*Until* (Vortex, 1966)
- Chick Corea—*The Complete Is Sessions* (Solid State-Blue Note, 1969)
- Horacee Arnold—*Tribe* (Columbia, 1973)
- Horacee Arnold—*Tales of the Exonerated Flea* (Columbia, 1974)
- Billy Harper Quintet—*In Europe* (Soul Note, 1979)
- Gust William Tsilis & Alithea (with Arthur Blythe)—*Pale Fire* (Enja, 1987)

LEST WE FORGET



HAMIET BLUIETT

BY ELLIOTT SIMON

Baritone saxophonist Hamiet Bluiett, who died Oct. 4th, 2018 at 78, influenced musicians not only with his horn but his style. Pianist D.D. Jackson is especially grateful: "He had an incredible impact on my approach to music-making just by setting an example of how to be spontaneous and fearless in one's playing, how to listen and interact and to harness the moment." Bluiett's association with Jackson blossomed in the late '90s and co-led sessions on the Justin Time label (*Same Space*, 1997; *Join Us*, 1998; *The Calling*, 2000) showcase that special bond. The latter session most specifically stands out for Jackson: "He was always harnessing the moment, trying things out fearlessly and not afraid to change course abruptly as needed. A definite life lesson every time."

Born in St. Louis in 1940, Bluiett studied clarinet, piano and trumpet and at the age of ten became fascinated with the baritone. He was captivated with Harry Carney's big sound, an integral part of the Ellington Orchestra, and soon joined the Black Artists

Group with trumpeter Lester Bowie and alto saxophonists Julius Hemphill and Oliver Lake. In 1969 Bluiett moved to NYC and was nourished by both its musical freedom and paying gigs. He joined the Charles Mingus Big Band where he had room to develop his unique voice further with solos on Mingus tunes like "Peggy's Blue Skylight". After leaving Mingus, early releases for India Navigation, particularly *Birthingright: A Solo Blues Concert* (1978), were daring live statements, nakedly exposing the baritone's powerful range and bluesy soul as never before.

Bluiett co-founded World Saxophone Quartet (WSQ) with Hemphill, Lake and tenor saxophonist David Murray in 1976. His "Hattie Wall", with its infectious funk that leads the listener to free encounters and safely back again, captures their message. Bluiett, Lake and Hemphill had partnered with Anthony Braxton for a saxophone quartet cut on Braxton's *New York, Fall 1974* (Arista, 1975). Soon after, the WSQ played a one-off gig in New Orleans and everything clicked. Bluiett's pumping horn allowed them to eschew jazz' customary rhythm section and harmonize like a doo-wop group or collectively improvise off irresistible hooks. Jackson remembers attending their recording session for *Selim Sivad: A Tribute to Miles Davis* (Justin Time, 1998), "It was appropriately not merely a rehash of how Miles might have played those tunes, but a reimagining of those pieces similarly to how Miles might have tried to uniquely approach things—a lesson already in itself."

Jackson describes how his upcoming tribute to Bluiett came about: "I had approached [Sistas' Place Music Director] Ahmed Abdullah about doing something there...I was also working with James Brandon Lewis. I first met him in a group Bluiett organized for one of the annual AACM concerts. So I thought it would be fantastic to do a Bluiett tribute featuring one of his most successful 'protégés'—James Carter playing bari—paired with a younger player also influenced by him on tenor. It should be a very fun evening and hopefully a fitting tribute to Bluiett's spirit." A spirit that dragged traditional jazz and creative music kicking and screaming into each other's arms for dazzling flashes of creation. ❖

A Bluiett tribute was scheduled to be at Sistas' Place.

Recommended Listening:

- Hamiet Bluiett—*Birthingright: A Solo Blues Concert* (India Navigation, 1978)
- Hamiet Bluiett—*The Clarinet Family: Live in Berlin* (Black Saint, 1984)
- World Saxophone Quartet—*Plays Duke Ellington* (Elektra/Nonesuch, 1986)
- Hamiet Bluiett/Larry Willis—*If Trees Could Talk* (Mapleshade, 1993)
- Hamiet Bluiett/DD Jackson/Kahil El'Zabar—*The Calling* (Justin Time, 2000)
- World Saxophone Quartet—*Yes We Can* (Jazzwerkstatt, 2009)

CONSTELLATION

BY GEORGE GRELLA

Any listener who has encountered saxophonist Matana Roberts' magnificent *COIN COIN* series has, at least indirectly, discovered Constellation Records. The Montréal label has released four of Roberts' albums so far, the most recent, *COIN COIN Chapter Four: Memphis*, coming out last year.

But there is much more to the Constellation catalogue and very little of it is jazz in even an extended sense of the term. The label has put out records by the avant garde roots artist Carla Bozulich (including 2014's *Boy*), electronic musician Jerusalem in my Heart, outsider singer/songwriter Vic Chesnutt, globe-encompassing pop artist Sandro Perri and seminal art-rock band Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

As Don Wilkie, who co-founded the label with Ian Ilavsky, told the story in a recent phone conversation, it all began with Godspeed and it all began in Montréal: "We started loft shows and met early Godspeed.

"Montréal [in the late '90s] had such a dearth of music resources of any kind, we thought a venue would be the place to start and then have a small label grow out of it on the old Knitting Factory model. There were no record labels that made sense to us locally and there was so much happening musically that we believed should be heard."

Easier said than done, though. As Wilkie describes it, the city "is zoned down to the square inch," and he and Ilavsky didn't have the money to manage the

process it would take to open a new venue.

"We said 'fuck it' and got off the ground with what we were doing" out of the loft shows. "We put out a 7" and then Godspeed's first record [*F# A# ∞*, 1997] and the rest is history."

That history means accumulating the 154 releases in the Constellation catalogue as of March 2020. Wilkie attributes the breadth of the label's aesthetic to the city in which it is based. "What was happening and continues to happen," he explains, "is it's a city that likes to experiment with music. Montréal was a very cheap place to live [when Constellation got off the ground]. Jobs were hard to come by, but at the same time didn't take a lot to live here. That brought those kinds of people to the city": musicians who could hold down a part-time day job and spend a substantial amount of their time and energy on making their music.

Still, the range of music on Constellation must have more to do than with simple geography and proximity—how do Wilkie and Ilavsky decide what belongs under their imprint?

"What's right for Constellation?" he wonders aloud, but can't quite pin it down. "There's an unspoken sense [between us] of what's right. We prefer listeners to decide whether there is a coherent body of work. We care about what our artists feel about the other music they're lumped with."

Roberts came aboard through the proximity of connections. Wilkie and Ilavsky have friends in Chicago, Roberts' original home, and through bassist Joshua Abrams, the two met Roberts. "And Godspeed met her," Wilkie adds, "and she played on their third album [*Yanqui U.X.O.*, 2002]."

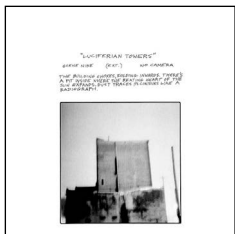
Roberts' concept, which mixes personal and cultural history, documentation and an approach to form that is social and congregational, stands out from the mainstream of jazz. Does it stand out from the label? In terms of those elusive qualities that mark the styles or aesthetic values that Constellation wants to promote, Wilkie says "We cared about her process, what she cared about politically. It was easy to fit her into what we were already doing. She's one of the artists we're most proud of."

Putting out new music, and music new to the founders, remains a personal, intuitive process. The primary focus remains on Montréal although Wilkie says, "It's changing all the time. I'm not a young man anymore; I'm finding it a little harder to spend my nights in dilapidated lofts.

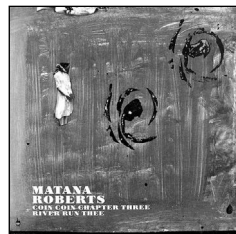
"I get dozens of things that come into my inbox. We try and focus on local artists, people we trust bring us things, the international ones are exceptional [for Constellation's outlook]. Local focus means we can get to know our artists, build a sense of trust. We try and be as involved as possible [with the recording and production of each new record]". They currently put out about 10 a year on average—and manage releases with a personal, even familial, touch with each artist.

For 2020, they are "in the middle of releasing three things much more electronic, there are clusters of things that [listeners may] lump into 'jazz' as far as a [genre]." But expect the new records to continue the ethos and aesthetic Constellation has found within their own process—local roots branching out into extended growth that covers a vast range of musical ideas. ❖

For more information, visit cstrecords.com



Luciferian Towers
Godspeed You! Black Emperor



COIN COIN Chapter Three: river run thee
Matana Roberts



Therapy With Colour
T. Gowdy



COIN COIN Chapter Four: Memphis
Matana Roberts



The Infected Mass
Those Who Walk Away

VOXNEWS

TUNES HELP

BY SUZANNE LORGE

25 years ago, vocalist Kurt Elling released a debut album that immediately begged comparisons between the newcomer and jazz luminary Mark Murphy. *Close Your Eyes* (Blue Note) earned Elling his first of 14 Grammy nominations to date. Through the intervening decades he went on to release more than a dozen albums, for the most part on major jazz labels: besides Blue Note, Concord, Decca and Sony's Okeh. For his latest album, though—*Secrets Are The Best Stories*, his first collaboration with pianist Danilo Pérez—Elling turned to the independent label Edition, based in the U.K. Why? For the freedom of it, he says. After a quarter of a century in the spotlight, Elling wants more room to craft his image as he sees fit—plus a greater cut of the proceeds. Thus, "Edition is the perfect home for this album," he asserted in a press release. "Edition's fresh ideas and energy bring a vital boost at a pivotal career juncture." On the new album the musicians offer sobering social commentary—not only through the somber imagery of Elling's lyrics but through Pérez' artfully disarticulated accompaniment (hear "Song of the Rio Grande", available as a pre-release on YouTube.) Elling's performance, however, is

as warm and kindly as ever. Not all things change. The album drops on Apr. 3rd.

Back in 1934, a 17-year-old **Ella Fitzgerald** stepped out on the Apollo Theater stage for the first time, thinking that she'd dance as a contestant in the newly birthed Amateur Night contest. The problem was that the Edwards Sisters, a high-energy dance act, were starring at the Apollo that night. Intimidated, Fitzgerald decided to sing instead. At first the audience booed her. But then she collected her wits, launched into Hoagy Carmichael's "Judy" and changed jazz history forever. Eagle Rock Entertainment's new documentary, *Ella Fitzgerald: Just One Of Those Things*, contains lots of known anecdotes like this, some in Fitzgerald's own words. It also contains many lesser-known stories about this jazz deity, including several that expose the racist and sexist forces that threatened to undermine her enormous talent. (History can attest that she won.) Interspersed with clips of Fitzgerald performing and speaking are interviews with informed subjects like dancer Norma Miller, who knew her, and jazz journalist Will Friedwald, who knows all about her. Check the Eagle Rock website for New York screenings. (April dates have been rescheduled.)

One of the casualties of COVID-19 was the release concert of singer **Aubrey Johnson**'s debut *Unraveled* (Outside In Music), originally booked for Mar. 20th at Rockwood Music Hall. A pity—this is a splendid, sure-footed release that deserves lots of attention. Johnson,

who wrote four of the tracks and arranged all 10 of them, has been traveling in good company for many years, so the virtue of her first solo effort comes as no surprise. She's sung with ensembles as varied and notable as Fred Hersch's Pocket Orchestra, John Zorn's Mycale and Sara Serpa's City Fragments and her uncle is Pat Metheny's longtime pianist, the recently departed Lyle Mays (1953-2020). As with the projects of her previous collaborators, the new album features solid writing, sophisticated harmonic abstractions and the effervescence of Johnson's wide-ranging voice.

One of Johnson's more high-profile projects was **Bobby McFerrin**'s 2010 Grammy-nominated *VOCAbuLaries* (EmArcy). This year, McFerrin is a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master. At 69, McFerrin is one of the youngest recipients. McFerrin is also the only member ever to have had a No. 1 hit on the Billboard Hot 100—his 1988 pop-reggae single "Don't Worry, Be Happy". But he's best known for his preternatural ability to improvise on almost any tune, pulling wildly divergent musical ideas seemingly out of the walls. The celebratory concert for this year's Jazz Masters, slated for Apr. 2nd at the SFJAZZ Center in San Francisco, Calif., has been postponed and is yet to be rescheduled.

VOXNews PSA: Hundreds of singers lost their New York gigs this month with the darkening of concert halls, theaters and clubs. They'll be back. In the meantime, consider buying a disc or download. Tunes help. ❖

JON CHRISTENSEN

BY ANDREY HENKIN

ROBERTO MASOTTI / COURTESY OF ECM RECORDS



Jon Christensen, the Norwegian drummer who helped bring his country's jazz musicians to international attention via hundreds of recording credits (a huge portion for ECM, earning a reputation as the label's house drummer) with a remarkable cross-section of international artists, died Feb. 18th at 76.

Christensen was born Mar. 20th, 1943 in Oslo. Some of his earliest credits were with vocalist Karin Krog and pianist Einar Iversen in the early to mid '60s. In 1967, he played on saxophonist Jan Garbarek's debut album (*Til Vigdis*, Norsk Jazzforbund), appearing alongside bassist Arild Andersen, and then with Garbarek on guitarist Terje Rypdal's debut *Bleak House*

(Polydor, 1968). Christensen would finish out the '60s working with countrymen like Egil Kapstad and Erik Vold, Swede Rune Gustafsson and American pianist Steve Kuhn. During this period, Christensen also worked with American composer George Russell, appearing (along with Garbarek) on 1967-68's *Othello Ballet Suite/Electronic Organ Sonata No. 1* (Sonet). This would lead to a crucial endorsement, *George Russell Presents The Esoteric Circle* (Flying Dutchman, 1969), Christensen as one-quarter of the titular band alongside Garbarek, Rypdal and Andersen, as well as participation in Russell's *Electronic Sonata For Souls Loved By Nature* (Flying Dutchman, 1969).

Soon the members of The Esoteric Circle were recording for Manfred Eicher's then-fledgling ECM label. Its seventh release was Garbarek's *Afric Pepperbird*, with all four in tow. Christensen would continue to record for the imprint well into the new millennium, most recently with Danish guitarist Jakob Bro, working with such label stalwarts as John Abercrombie, Ketil Bjørnstad, Iro Haarla, Keith Jarrett, Charles Lloyd, Enrico Rava, Dino Saluzzi, Tomasz Stankó, Bobo Stenson, Ralph Towner, Miroslav Vitous, Eberhard Weber, Bugge Wesseltoft and others. In addition, he had credits on other labels with Carsten Dahl, Lars Danielsson, Stu Goldberg, Yelena Eckemoff, Håkon Kornstad, Adam Makowicz and many more.

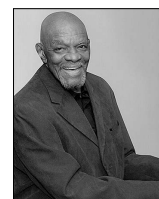
In a profile for *Modern Drummer Magazine*, Christensen described his career with a reserve characteristic of his playing: "I've always been hired to play like I play. I've been playing 'Jon Christensen' all the way. Journalists began writing that I was this innovative drummer and that people from Japan and Europe had begun trying to play like me. Only then did I figure out, Hmmm, maybe I've done something different after all."



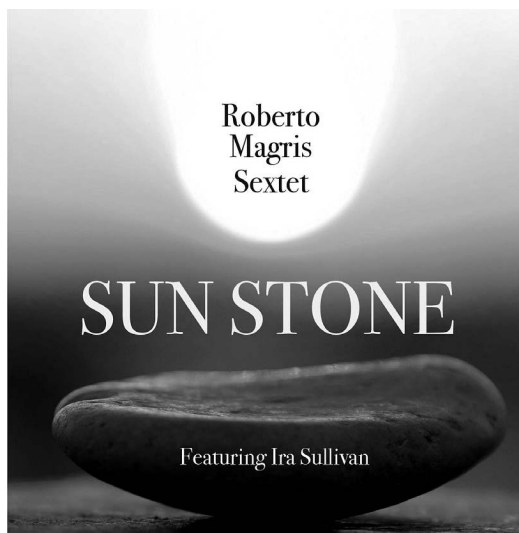
LYLE MAYS (Nov. 27th, 1953-Feb. 10th, 2020) The keyboard player got his early arranging experience in the famed North Texas State University Jazz Lab Band, put to good use a couple of years later in 1977 upon joining Pat Metheny, staying in the guitarist's bands well into the new millennium and contributing material and charts to dozens of albums, to go along with credits under Woody Herman, Joni Mitchell, Steve Swallow, Eberhard Weber, Bob Moses, Paul McCandless and others and a handful of albums as a leader for Geffen and Warner Bros. Mays died Feb. 10th at 66.



LAURIE MORGAN (Sep. 4th-1926-Feb. 5th, 2020) The British drummer was part of his country's nascent bebop scene, most notably as part of the short-lived New Departures Quartet (one 1964 Transatlantic album) alongside more well-known members Bobby Wellins, Stan Tracey and Jeff Clyne, plus even earlier work with John Dankworth, and among the first Brits to work with the recently arrived Blue Notes from South Africa in the late '60s. Morgan died Feb. 5th at 93.



ED STOUTE (Jul. 13th, 1935-Feb. 23rd, 2020) The pianist had only a few recording credits (Ken McIntyre and Illinois Jacquet in the '60s, rejoining the latter in the late '90s; Larry Ridley in the '90s), membership in the Harlem Renaissance Orchestra, decades of performing in his native New York concurrent with his job at Con Edison and one album as a leader, 2011's *The Ed Stoute Experience*. Stoute died Feb. 23rd at 84. ❖



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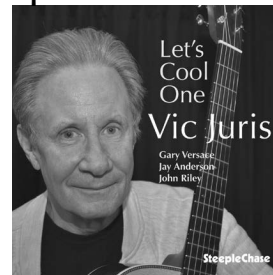
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3½-stars rating (Jack Bowers, All About Jazz)
3½-stars rating (Brian Morton, Jazz Journal, UK)
4½-stars rating (Wolfgang Weitlaner, Concerto, Austria)



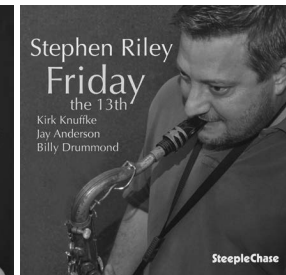
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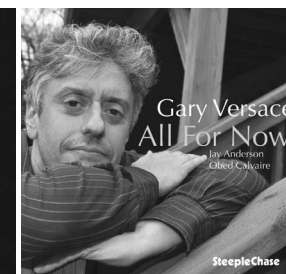


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March



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SCCD 31889



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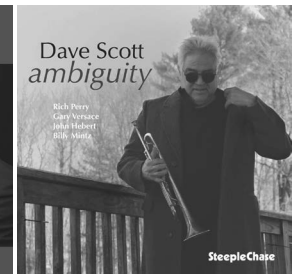
February



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(INTERVIEW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

gig with Branford. We still play together. Then I met Gary Burton as I was graduating.

TNYCJR: Gary Burton obviously found a special chemistry with you, not only adding you to his band shortly after you graduated, but continuing to collaborate with you on occasion over many years. What did you enjoy about playing with him?

MO: For me, it was the sound he produced. He doesn't play that instrument. He makes those metal bars sing out as if you could almost see the sound steam, if there is such thing, as it is coming out of the bars. Also, his harmonic approach on the instrument was the closest to how we piano players approach it. Only he only gets to use four notes at a time as opposed to ten fingers.

TNYCJR: Were there jazz veterans who helped you along the way after you graduated from Berklee?

MO: Gary Burton taught me almost everything you need to know to become a mature musician. The main thing was about comping. There are so many elements you must listen to. I was listening to so much detail on the surface when I started to play with him. He gave me such precise instructions and concept about comping. It took me about a year to find out what it was. But I am so grateful that he used all of his energy to teach me how to become a great accompanist.

TNYCJR: It is a bit frustrating trying to find your recordings issued in Japan, due to their limited distribution in the U.S. Are any of them likely to be licensed by U.S. labels or do you have plans for any U.S. releases in the near future?

MO: Yeah, tell me about it. I think part of it is my fault because I stopped living in the States. I am now based in Tokyo. Because I play classical concerts around the world and it was getting less and less necessary for me to be based in the States as I travel so much. Then my family was getting older. But I am now planning to make my annual appearance in the USA as I used to because I have a wonderful new management in London who can book me worldwide. I hope to find someone to release my new CD in the US.

TNYCJR: You have been working in classical settings in recent years. I remember how thrilling was your preview concert with Gary Burton of music from *Virtuosi* that you did at the IAJE Conference in 2002 at Long Beach, prior to the CD's release.

MO: To make a long story short, I will say I sort of stumbled into the world of classical music by accident. In 2003, I had an offer to play with Sapporo Symphony Orchestra and I took it because I assumed they wanted me to play Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue". I didn't ask, as we jazz musicians almost never talk about the program when we sign the contract.

A few months later, I discovered that they wanted me to play a Mozart piano concerto. And I had to pick one I like, not to mention I didn't know any of those 27 concertos he'd written. Anyway, I don't remember how I played it, as I was too nervous for the entire length of this concerto—I played No. 9 in Eb Major—but the conductor loved it and he sent the word out that I played such a fresh interpretation of Mozart to the whole world.

The next thing I knew, I was getting offers from other orchestras from all over the world. Now I play Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Ravel. It's crazy, but I am loving it so much. Because I can't play them the way I hear them. Yes, I practice so much to get the notes right. But my technique is never enough for playing those written notes the way I want it. This

keeps giving me an incredible frustration and joy at the same time. It keeps on challenging me. And those composers have incredible ideas and chops of writing such beautiful harmony in the most perfect way of construction.

TNYCJR: Tell me about your trio and your big band No Name Horses. What qualities do you look for in a musician? Has the big band toured with you outside Japan or are the logistics and costs too much of a challenge?

MO: I met [drummer] Clarence Penn through my dear friend and wonderful bassist Kiyoshi Kitagawa. He hooked us up in 1996 for the Caribbean Jazz Cruise. It was supposed to be for that one-week cruise, but we knew the chemistry was too good to let go after we played a few bars. Kiyoshi left the trio in 2000 and James Genus came in. By adding James on the bass, the trio was able to explore over more different genres of music. Now James is so active in his career, doing *Saturday Night Live* and playing with Herbie Hancock, so we asked Yasushi Nakamura, a very talented and experienced bassist, to play with us.

My big band No Name Horses was put together for a recording session for a Japanese jazz singer named Kimiko Itoh. I arranged all the songs. Half of the members are alumni of Berklee. The lead trumpet, Eric Miyashiro, is so well known among jazz lovers and brass players. He played the lead for Buddy Rich until his last concert, for Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman and other major bands. Again, the first voicing I heard, I knew it was too good to let go after this recording. And the members felt the same way.

We have traveled around the world as well as doing a major tour in Japan. I played at IAJE convention in 2006 in New York City, we played at La Roque D'antheron piano festival in South France, Edinburgh Jazz Festival, Porgy & Bess Jazz Club in Vienna. We are planning another world tour in 2022 and we are hoping to make a stop in New York City, whether it's a jazz festival or club dates.

TNYCJR: You've done some recording on electric keyboards. What draws you to them in place of a grand piano?

MO: I play Hammond and Fender Rhodes sometimes. I almost never play synthesizer. Incidentally, the new album of my big band No Name Horses, I wrote a progressive rock suite and play the organ like crazy!! Lots of fun!

TNYCJR: What is your process for composing a song? Do you work at the piano, computer or manuscript or a combination of them?

MO: I need a good month to compose songs for an album. The first week and a half is always painful. I keep telling myself, "Ok, that's it. Quit!" Then, from the third week on, something starts to happen. Yet my favorite original compositions always come so easy. What's up with that? I use pencil and manuscript paper for writing down memos and ideas. But I write the actual score and parts on my computer now, using the Sibelius program.

TNYCJR: Do you do workshops?

MO: I love teaching and sharing my ideas with younger people. I love watching them react and I always discover something new from them. I have been the head of Jazz Department at Kunitachi College of Music for the past ten years.

We have about 45 students. It is a very small jazz department in the conservatory, like the Juilliard jazz department. My very first student, Rina Yamazaki, won the second prize at Ellis Marsalis Jazz Piano

Competition and just recorded an album.

TNYCJR: You enjoy free improvisation. What factors help you create superior results?

MO: Just don't play the notes that you don't hear!! I get turned off if I hear the notes that are played only by my fingers. I did a duet concert tour with Chick Corea a couple of years ago. We opened all the concerts by playing completely free improvisation. Each one we did was a knockout!!


TNYCJR: What recording projects do you have planned for the future?

MO: My latest recording is with the big band. It's a combination of jazz and progressive rock. Ryunosuke Yamagishi, the guitarist on the CD, has just turned 20 years old. No musical background whatsoever. He can't read music but has had a great year. I hope someone in the States will distribute it. ❖

For more information, visit makotozone.com. Ozone was scheduled to be at Dizzy's Club.

Recommended Listening:

- Phil Wilson/Makoto Ozone—*Live!! At the Berklee Performance Center* (Shiah-Capri, 1982)
- Makoto Ozone—*Breakout* (Verve-Universal, 1994)
- Makoto Ozone—*The Trio (featuring John Scofield)* (Verve, 1997)
- Gary Burton/Makoto Ozone—*Virtuosi* (Concord Jazz, 2001)
- Makoto Ozone featuring No Name Horses—*Jungle* (Verve, 2009)
- Makoto Ozone/Christian McBride/Jeff "Tain" Watts—*My Witch's Blue* (Verve, 2012)



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Love Stories
Eliane Elias (Concord)
by Marilyn Lester

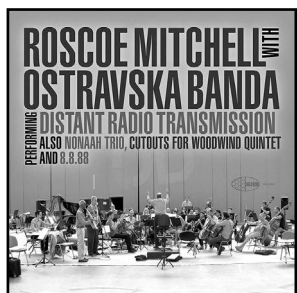
Traditional bossa nova is the mood of vocalist/pianist/arranger/composer Eliane Elias' *Love Stories*, nine tracks, four of them originals, seamlessly connected in style and theme. Elias has never strayed far from the solid ethos of the bossa style, which she grew up with in her native São Paulo, Brazil. She excels at that mellow, laid-back sound with sunshine in every beat—it's her oeuvre after all. Even her vocal tone is reminiscent of classic bossa singers such as Gal Costa, Elis Regina and Astrud Gilberto. Elias sings entirely in English, except for one tune in Portuguese, "Little Boat", composed by guitarist Roberto Menescal.

Love Stories, arranged by Rob Mathes, is lushly orchestral especially on two of the singer's songs, "Simplest Things" and "Silence", ballads that are highly evocative expressions of their respective themes. One of the most successful integrations of the sumptuous orchestral mood with the bossa nova style is found in the pop hit, "Baby, Come to Me", with original and creative harmonic modulations and tempo changes devised by Mathes and Elias. Mellow bossa beats open up to a more dynamic Latin-pop hybrid during each refrain. The introduction of backup vocals by Mark Kibble about halfway through the number also adds texture to the whole.

But for all the wonder and romance of strings and other traditional orchestral elements, it's Elias' small-group arranging that still reigns supreme. The well-chosen Brazilian rhythm section of Menescal and Marcus Texiera on guitar and Edu Ribeiro, Rafael Barata and Celso Almeida on drums, plus co-producer Marc Johnson on bass, is the backbone of the album, supporting piano voicings with intuitive understanding.

As a recognized interpreter of Jobim's work, Elias uses particularly praiseworthy nuanced vocal phrasing on "Bonita", one of Jobim's collaborations with Frank Sinatra in the late '60s, and mood-setting album opener, a softly swinging bossa arrangement of "A Man and a Woman" from the Oscar-winning 1966 French film of the same name. Her rendition of another Sinatra evocation, "Come Fly With Me", turns that tune into a slow, mellow and pointed invitation. Her piano interlude proves her statement that "the piano is an extension of my body and the deepest expression of my soul." Blessed to be an artist of equal talents, Elias is superior as both a vocalist and pianist.

For more information, visit concordjazz.com. Elias was scheduled to be at Birdland.



Distant Radio Transmission
Roscoe Mitchell with Ostravska Band (Wide Hive)
by Kurt Gottschalk

Conductor/composer Petr Kotik is a living link to an important part of New York's musical history not so

distant as it would seem. His association with the "New York School" of Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, Christian Wolff and John Cage began with his producing the latter's first concert in his native Prague, continued through his tenure at the State University of New York at Buffalo alongside Feldman and into his ongoing programming of those composers through the 50 years of his SEM Ensemble. At least as important as his efforts to keep the performance history of those composers alive and vital, however, has been his dedication to the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM)—notably Muhal Richard Abrams, George Lewis and Roscoe Mitchell—commonly associated with the jazz tradition and rarely given the time of day by standing orchestras. The connections between the New York School and AACM—open-form composition, sound-as-sound, etc.—are fairly apparent. The differences that might lead the latter rarely to be presented in the concert hall are left to the reader to deduce.

Mitchell, a founding member of the Art Ensemble of Chicago (AEC), is the focus of a wonderful collection from Kotik and his Ostravska Banda, an orchestra with overlapping membership to SEM that was established at Kotik's Ostrava Days contemporary music festival in Czechia. The disc includes recordings of four of Mitchell's compositions for solo Disklavier, trio, quintet and orchestra. The 20-minute title track, performed by the nearly three-dozen-strong Banda with Mitchell on soprano saxophone (the only track on which he plays) is surprisingly airy for an ensemble that big, James Fei's electronics giving the track its thumbprint. The piece continues in the series of scored improvisations Mitchell has explored in other recent recordings. The instantly recognizable vehicle "Nonaah" is realized here by a trio of piano, flute and oboe and another often-visited framework, "Cutouts", is performed by a quintet of winds and brass; both are heard on this recording in fully notated versions. The standout track, however, has no human performers, per se. "8.8.88" was played by pianist Stephen Rush on Mitchell's 2011 album *Numbers*, but here is tackled by a Disklavier programmed by Seth Horvitz. It's a thrilling nine minutes, reminiscent of Conlon Nancarrow's player piano music with a decidedly digital glitch.

Kotik's deep understanding of Mitchell's music lends the album authority; he has also served as conductor for the expanded, 18-member version of the AEC. His SEM Ensemble's spring concert, featuring works by himself, Wolff, Robert Ashley, Miya Masaoka and Julius Eastman, has been canceled due to the current health crisis. In its place, a video program featuring past performances of the same pieces performed by Ostravska Banda and SEM Ensemble will be streamed at 1 pm on Apr. 1st at semensemble.org.

For more information, visit widehive.com. Petr Kotik was scheduled to be at Bohemian National Hall.



Studio Sessions Vol. 4
Ava Mendoza/Vijay Anderson/Stephen Gauci
(Gaucimusic)
by George Grella

Stephen Gauci is a hard playing, high-energy improvising tenor saxophonist, with a delivery that owes something to Albert Ayler and Archie Shepp. What impresses about his playing is how it flows, like fast-moving water, from a swirling phrase to a false-fingered passage to a slap-tongue flurry to a honk and

a scream. It's not the technique, which is formidable, but the thinking.

This album is 12 tracks, all improvised and credited to the trio of Gauci, guitarist Ava Mendoza and drummer Vijay Anderson. The style is familiar to anyone who listens often to free music, but that doesn't make this album mundane. Just the opposite, the disc is full of details that grab the attention; without any song-form structure, one anticipates what idea is going to get tossed out next and what will happen to it.

The saxophonist is the ostensible leader—it's his label and he's an impresario, running the Bushwick Improvised Music Series. Whether through his guidance, or simply working with simpatico partners, the music has an excellent directness, focus and punch, signified by the relative brevity of the tracks. All but one are under five minutes, many three or less.

Within these compressed durations, the music sounds fresh. Anderson responds to the saxophonist directly, imitating or commenting on what's just been played while the great Mendoza whips back and forth between the nervous energy of single note lines and crackling chords. "gauci/mendoza/anderson, improvisation #4" is the magnum opus here, eight minutes of invention. Mendoza keeps up a rather ominous undercurrent, like some possibly malevolent entity driving Gauci and Anderson before her with the mere hint of her presence.

Anderson has a light touch on the drumkit, a lot of cymbals and snare; when he takes the time to slow down a bit it adds an exciting feeling of weight to the music. Everyone is thinking quickly, not just Gauci, and both serious and good humored.

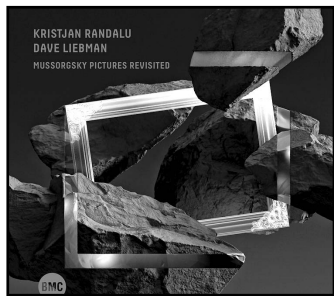
For more information, visit gaucimusic.com. Mendoza was scheduled to be at Union Pool.

RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES

- Lakecia Benjamin — *Pursuance: The Coltranes (Ropeadope)*
- Daniel Bingert — *Berit in Space (Moserobie)*
- Yoon Sun Choi/Jacob Sacks — *I Should Care (Yeah Yeah)*
- Collocutor — *Continuation (On The Corner)*
- Liberty Ellman — *Last Desert (Pi)*
- Fire! Orchestra — *Actions (Rune Grammofon)*
- Pandelis Karayorgis Double Trio — *CliffPools (Driff)*
- Charles Lloyd — *8: Kindred Spirits (Live From the Lobero) (Blue Note)*
- Matthew Shipp — *The Piano Equation (TAO Forms)*
- Martial Solal/Dave Liebman — *Masters in Paris (Sunnyside)*

Laurence Donohue-Greene, Managing Editor

- Mats Äleklint/Per-Åke Holmlander/ Paal Nilssen-Love — *Fish & Steel (PNL)*
 - Kenny Barron/Dave Holland Trio (featuring Johnathan Blake) — *Without Deception (Dare2)*
 - Duchess — *Live at Jazz Standard (Anzic)*
 - Jazz Sabbath — *Eponymous (Blacklake)*
 - Tobias Klein/Gonçalo Almeida/ Martin Van Duynhoven — *Live at the Bimhuis (Clean Feed)*
 - Charles Lloyd — *8: Kindred Spirits (Live From the Lobero) (Blue Note)*
 - Thollem McDonas/Brian Chase — *Dub Narcotic Session (New Atlantis)*
 - Jon Maksimowicz/Dmitrij Golovanov — *Beyond (s/r)*
 - Max Nagl Trio — *Moped (Jazzwerkstatt)*
 - Bobby Previte/Jamie Saft/Nels Cline — *Music from the Early 21st Century (RareNoise)*
- Andrey Henkin, Editorial Director



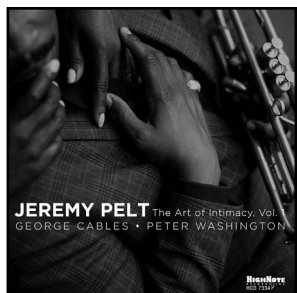
Mussorgsky Pictures Revisited
Kristjan Randalu/Dave Liebman (BMC Records)
 by Tyran Grillo

Although Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky (1839-81) is best remembered for *Night on Bald Mountain* and *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the latter has had the more interesting afterlife, inspiring arrangements from such wide-ranging artists as prog-rockers Emerson, Lake & Palmer, German metal band Mekong Delta and Japanese electronic pioneer Tomita. Yet this duo of soprano saxophonist Dave Liebman and pianist Kristjan Randalu presents more than a recasting of the Mussorgsky mold, instead a fresh landscape irrigated by channeling water from the source material. Case in point is the jaunting "Promenade", which opens in straightforward territory but which in subsequent iterations (five in all) draws out hidden messages.

Liebman understands how to turn even the most familiar melodies inside out without losing their skin in the process. His tone is as flexible and colorful as ever, navigating every twist of "Les Tuileries" and "The Market" with characteristic attention to detail. The physicality of his artistry is most obvious in "Ballet of the Unhatched Chickens", as also in his bluesy handling of "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle", the latter a veiled stand-alone among extroverted peers. Randalu, for his part, is as comfortable laying foundations as he is building on top of them. Whether orienting his compass to the lodestar of "Bydło" or jazzing up "Baba Yaga" with exuberance, he makes sure that every wisp of proverbial smoke fulfills its promise of fire. As a unit, he and Liebman find profoundest coherence in "Il Vecchio Castello", of which they make an understated dirge.

And so, by the time we reach the farewell of "The Heroic Gate", we are confident in having been somewhere. This is, of course, the whole point of Mussorgsky's greatest hit: to place us in that gallery so that we may feel the colors of every scene as if they were our own.

For more information, visit bmcrecords.hu. Randalu was scheduled to be at Soapbox Gallery.



The Art of Intimacy, Vol. 1
Jeremy Pelt (HighNote)
 by Mark Keresman

Many tradition-minded jazz performers will eventually record an all-ballad album, a concept album of sorts in which the program consists of slow, quiet songs to evoke (or enhance, for the proactive among us) a less-than-ecstatic romantic mood or sentimental mindset. *The Art of Intimacy, Vol. 1* is trumpeter Jeremy Pelt's entrance into this sub-genre and, yes, he takes it seriously. The context is subdued, all-acoustic and drummer-free, accompanied only by pianist George Cables, who knows balladry as a salamander knows moist morning leaves, and bassist Peter Washington,

unobtrusive and rock-solid.

Anyone that's heard Pelt knows he's an excellent hardbop trumpeter in the tradition(s) of forebears Freddie Hubbard and Kenny Dorham. This time out however Pelt's approach is somewhat closer to the latter in particular—crisp, clean intonation, eloquent delivery and soft tone around the edges and center.

The one semi-exception of the session is the trumpet/bass duo "Ab-o-lutely", in which Pelt generates some fierce, crackling fire that belies the ostensibly languorous tempo, Washington anchoring the proceedings with a deep, slightly sinuous tone (the tune is credited to the pair).

Cables gets his duo-spotlight as well, sublime on Nicholas Brodzsky-Sammy Cahn's "I'll Never Stop Loving You"; he's always very lyrical and melodious but he's outdone himself here. Pelt distills years of bittersweet, lovelorn regret into just under four minutes yet comes off as virtually exalted (as opposed to haunted).

Lucky Thompson's "While You Are Gone" suggests the buttery, breathy class of Art Farmer (who knew a thing or two about playing wistfully). Here, piano chords are stark but never harsh, almost achieving the solemnity of church bells. Cables' own "Ebony Moonbeams" is driven by an insistent ostinato figure, springboarding to Pelt's most high-flying, dynamic and carefree playing of this album, classy but never brassy (pun indeed intended).

Without any artifice or corniness, Pelt has fashioned a platter that can proudly stand with any of the "...Plays for Lovelorn Types" albums that preceded it.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Pelt was scheduled to be at Smoke.



Cobb's Pocket
Hendrik Meurkens (In+Out)
 by Tom Greenland

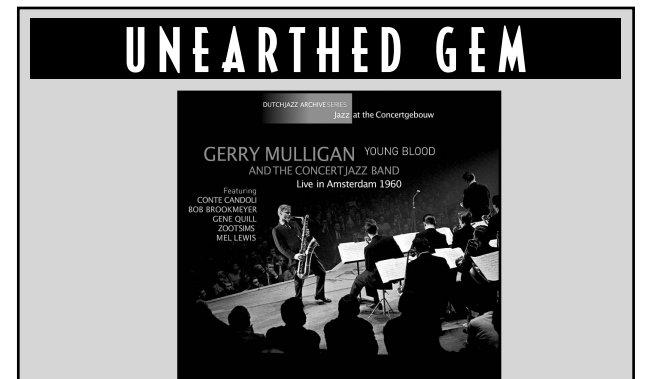
Dutch-German Hendrik Meurkens is probably the most prominent of a wave of chromatic harmonica jazz players of the '90s following in the seminal footsteps of Belgian "Toots" Thielemans. Sounding a bit like an organ, melodica, saxophone and/or accordion, the chromatic harmonica, with its sliding key, doesn't bend pitches as expressively as its bluesy diatonic counterpart, but nevertheless fits in admirably (replacing the tenor saxophone) in a traditional hardbop organ quartet. No surprise then that *Cobb's Pocket*, Meurkens' recent project (his first with an organ) named for and with drummer Jimmy Cobb, plus guitarist Peter Bernstein and organ player Mike LeDonne, works seamlessly in that genre.

Bernstein and Cobb have been playing in the pocket together for years in Cobb's Mob while LeDonne and Bernstein have long been co-fixtures at Smoke—so groove was a given. What Meurkens brings is a new flavor to the old recipe: a prodigious technical facility on par with Thielemans, an old world lyricism and a touch of Brazilian *saudade*, all spun out in driving eighth-note bebop phrases often tumbling atop one another in sweeping glissandos, light ornaments, bent attacks and fall-offs.

He especially shines on slower numbers like Slide Hampton's ballad "Frame for the Blues"; slow shuffling "Slidin'" (an original); Jimmy Van Heusen-Johnny Burke's "Polkadots and Moonbeams", where he confines himself to melodic paraphrase; and "A Slow

One" (another original), where he uncoils each idea in snaky curlicues. Bernstein's sound, a warmer, less ghostly revision of Grant Green, is always interesting, occasionally excellent, as for example his expressive, elegantly constructed solos on "Frame" and "Polkadots". LeDonne finds his deepest pocket (with Cobb) on "Slidin'", his highest flights on "Frame". Cobb, meantime, continues to do so well what he did with Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderley and Wes Montgomery: diggin' and jammin' his hands (and feet) into those deep rhythmic pockets.

For more information, visit inandout-records.com. Meurkens was scheduled to be at Smalls.



Young Blood (Jazz at the Concertgebouw)
Gerry Mulligan and The Concert Jazz Band
(Dutch Jazz Archive)
 by Tyran Grillo

The document presented here for our consideration by the Dutch Jazz Archive is important not only as a gem for fans of Gerry Mulligan, but also for reasserting the baritone saxophonist's first love of the large ensemble. His self-styled Concert Jazz Band was indeed a return to form. Recorded on Nov. 5th, 1960 at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, this performance finds Mulligan commanding his instrument in such a way that only the vessel of a big band would have been large enough to contain it.

Mulligan and friends chew on a wide-ranging repertoire, but especially seem to savor the iconic Johnny Mandel, represented in three tunes from his soundtrack to the 1958 Susan Hayward vehicle *I Want to Live!* (the theme, "Black Nightgown" and "Barbara's Theme").

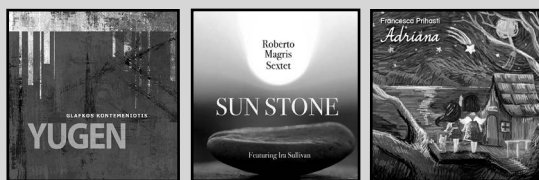
Alongside these cinematic turns, each a noir-ish sashay through smoke-filled rooms and even smokier intentions, we find a smattering of standards and showtunes, including the swinging Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart's "You Took Advantage Of Me" and slower drawl of Harold Arlen-Johnny Mercer's "Come Rain Or Come Shine".

Though Mulligan never treated this band as a showcase for his own writing, his are some of the highest points in the set. Of those, "Apple Core" provides a towering stage for guest soloist tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims who, despite being in less-than-stellar condition, brings a lithe kinesiology to the fore. The title track is another standout swing. In the latter vein, the rhythm section of bassist Buddy Clark and drummer Mel Lewis is on point throughout, but especially in "As Catch Can", in which they anticipate every turn of the wheel.

Fiery solos abound, including alto saxophonist Gene Quill's in "18 Carrots For Rabbit" and trumpeter Conte Candoli's in the title track. Mulligan himself goes for quality over quantity, adding grit wherever he treads, especially in a spotlight rendition of Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart's "My Funny Valentine" and with that characteristic dark edge only he could hone.

For more information, visit jazzarchief.nl. A tribute to Mulligan was scheduled to be at Blue Note.

GLOBE UNITY



Yügen
Glafkos Kontemeniotis (s/r)
Sun Stone (featuring Ira Sullivan)
Roberto Magris Sextet (JMood)
Adriana
Francesca Prihasti (s/r)
 by Tom Greenland

Pianists and horn players make natural bedfellows, the former's percussive polyphony an ideal framework and foil for the latter's singing tones. Here are three pianists—Glafkos Kontemeniotis (from Cyprus), Roberto Magris (of Italy) and Francesca Prihasti (from Indonesia)—heard in small-group settings in dialogue with American wind-blowing cohorts.

For *Yügen*, only his second release since arriving in New York in 1988, Kontemeniotis corralled saxophonist Joel Frahm, vibraphonist Alexander Gagatsis (on several tracks), bassist Marcus McLaurine and drummer Dave Meade for an all-original set. The title, a Japanese term for inarticulate beauty arising amid human suffering, alludes to his childhood in Turkish-occupied Cyprus and subsequent repatriation to another island: Manhattan. The irenic music—a distinctive blend of classical, folk and jazz—suggests Kontemeniotis has made peace with his wars. His writing, angular yet accessible, favors 6/8 patterns stippled with odd syncopations; his playing style seamlessly integrates left and right hands, bass chords resounding against treble trills. Frahm, the consummate sideman, tells engaging short stories laced with logic and warmth.

For *Sun Stone*, recorded in Miami, Trieste-based Roberto Magris enlisted trumpeter Shareef Clayton, saxophonists Ira Sullivan (alto) and Mark Colby (tenor), plus a rhythm team of bassist Jamie Ousley and drummer Rodolfo Zuniga, who add Latin sensibilities to the straight-ahead swing. The session follows the standard head-solos-head format with traded fours and outro blowing. Clayton uses growled and muted timbres to good effect, Colby plays with consistent power and invention while Sullivan brings a lighter touch, alternating alto with soprano and low-pitched flute. Magris, a decidedly theatrical player, often punctuates his runs with Jerry Lee Lewis-style glissandos and high hammered chords, creating excitement partly through exaggeration but more through childlike spontaneity, the anticipation he could do something unexpected at any moment.

The soft, bright Chagall-esque colors in the cover illustration for Prihasti's *Adriana* presage the swirling tranquility of her music. Of the three albums, hers most embodies the empathy possible between piano and horns, perhaps because she plays as if not in a hurry, taking time to wait and listen to the surrounding activity. The three horns—trumpeter Mike Rodriguez, saxophonist Dave Pietro and trombonist Alan Ferber—along with guitarist Nic Vardanega, who often sounds like he's part of the section, are arranged in varying contrapuntal combinations. Even the sustained chords contain restless inner voices and bassist Drew Gress provides buoyancy at the bottom end. Prihasti's cliché-free solos avoid predictable climactic arcs, instead tracing more impressionistic trajectories, inspiring similarly relaxed reactions from the others.

For more information, visit glafkoskontemeniotis.com, jmoodrecords.com and francescaprihasti.com.au



Live from Newport Jazz
James Carter Organ Trio (Blue Note)
 by Joel Roberts

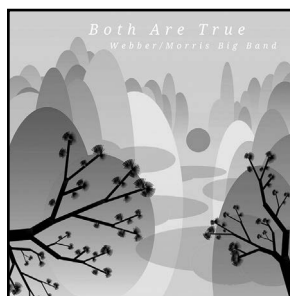
Saxophonist James Carter was one of the most dynamic and explosive jazz artists to emerge in the '90s, but he's been quiet lately, at least on the recording front. His new release, a live date from the 2018 Newport Jazz Festival, is his first in nearly a decade and his debut album for Blue Note. It's also the first time he's unleashing his soul jazz-drenched organ trio (with Hammond B-3 specialist Gerard Gibbs and fiery drummer Alex White) on the music of legendary swing guitarist Django Reinhardt, a frequent touchstone for Carter, dating back to the 2000 tribute *Chasin' the Gypsy*.

Carter has always moved easily between the more traditional side of jazz and its freer edge, as exemplified by his tenure with the World Saxophone Quartet. The new release highlights that versatility and tension, using Reinhardt's Gypsy jazz compositions as a jumping-off point for excursions into uncharted, genre-bending territory while staying true to the organ trio's roots in Jimmy Smith, Jack McDuff and Richard "Groove" Holmes.

Opener "Le Manoir De Mes Reves" (all the titles are printed in French), for example, starts off straightforwardly enough, but midway through Carter turns things up a notch, ripping into bluesy squawks and growls teetering on the edge of chaos. The next tune, "Melodie au Crepuscule", pushes things even further, with Gibbs and White laying down a no-nonsense funk playing field for Carter to run all over. The ballad "Anouman" gives Gibbs a chance to dip into his Dr. Lonnie Smith bag while White, as tireless a drummer as you're likely to hear, delivers an extended whirlwind solo on "La Valse Des Niglos", before giving way to more dazzling saxophone departures.

The album closes on a high note with the hard-core funk of "Fleche d'Or", as Carter and Company again push one of Reinhardt's Swing Era tunes into joyously unexpected terrain.

For more information, visit bluenote.com. Carter was scheduled to be at *Sistas' Place*.



Both Are True
Anna Webber/Angela Morris Big Band (Greenleaf Music)
 by Phil Freeman

Saxophonists Angela Morris and Anna Webber have teamed up to create a record that will please fans of Maria Schneider, Darcy James Argue and other masters of adventurous large ensemble music. This is complicated, rigorously arranged work, closer to modern classical music than Duke Ellington or even the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra. The nearly 11-minute opening number, "Climbing On Glass", has the drama and propulsive energy of a Lalo Schiffrin movie score, building to a fierce solo by alto saxophonist Charlotte Greve but winding down with a curiously

soothing, wordless vocal melody from the ensemble. That's followed by the first of two short tenor saxophone duos from the leaders.

The ensemble is 19 members strong (six saxophones, four trumpets, four trombones, vibraphone, guitar, piano, bass and drums) and most of the horn players double on flute, clarinet or flugelhorn. They're more than capable of mustering a wall of sound, but that's not how Webber and Morris choose to deploy them. Instead, many of the album's seven compositions employ extended instrumental techniques captured via ultra-detailed recording; the title piece, for example, allows the horns to spend much of their time emitting hisses, pops and small bubbling sounds and on the short "Rebonds" they pull the same trick as Dustin Carlson's guitar rises up slowly, erupting into a skronky solo like something Marc Ribot could have played on a mid-'80s Tom Waits album. But the pulsing horn chart that concludes the piece could have come from J.G. Thirlwell's score to *The Venture Bros*.

"Coral" is so amorphous it's more like a naturally occurring atmospheric phenomenon than a piece of music until its final moments, when all the long humming tones and gentle tickling of Marc Hannaford's piano comes together in a glorious swell, like seeing a rainbow at sunrise. The album concludes with the nearly 12-minute "Reverses", another big, orchestral piece, which includes a fierce solo from trumpeter Kenny Warren and, in its final minute, layered voices repeating a line from Maya Angelou like a mantra. Any fan of creative, forward-thinking jazz, from any size ensemble, should find this album essential listening.

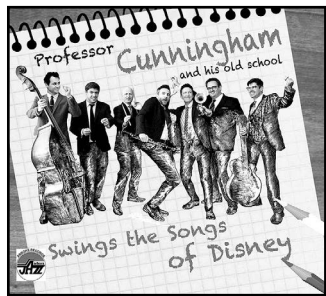
For more information, visit greenleafmusic.com. This project was scheduled to be at *The Jazz Gallery*.

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Swings Disney

Professor Cunningham and His Old School (Arbors)
by Ken Dryden

Over the past 80 years, Disney feature films have been filled with memorable songs, one of the key reasons why they appeal to several generations, not just young children. Dave Brubeck was among the first to dedicate an entire album to songs from Disney films and at least two, "Some Day My Prince Will Come" and "Alice In Wonderland", have become standards in jazz. But since Brubeck's LP in 1957, similar jazz recordings of Disney music have been few and far between.

Adrian Cunningham selected tunes from films throughout Disney's filmography, but took novel approaches to many of them and sometimes adding raucous vocals to ham things up a bit. Cunningham's arrangements are focused and to the point; only one of the 15 tracks runs over 4 minutes, so no soloist can possibly wear out his welcome. The ballad "When You Wish Upon A Star" is a subtle opener, played with more emphasis on the ensemble than soloists.

Cunningham doesn't overly camp up his vocal to a swinging Dixieland treatment of "Be Our Guest", adding some New Orleans-flavored clarinet as well. That changes in the fun-filled romp through "I Wanna Be Like You" (from *The Jungle Book*), which blends Dixieland and swing in an upbeat setting. The leader doesn't ignore music from more recent Disney releases, transforming Elton John's "I Can't Wait To Be King" into a Dr. John bluesy instrumental, highlighted by Alberto Pibiri's authentic blues piano and his own greasy tenor saxophone. The lively instrumental of "A Spoonful Of Sugar" (from *Mary Poppins*) brings a New Orleans street parade to mind, complete with the Second Line dancing along the sidewalks. Perhaps the biggest surprise is the brief medley of "You Never Had A Friend Like Me" (from *Aladdin*) and Louis Prima's "Sing Sing Sing", which interweaves the songs in an effective manner.

For more information, visit arborsrecords.com. Cunningham was scheduled to be at *The Django at The Roxy Hotel*.



Masters Legacy Series Volume 3
(featuring Benny Golson & Albert "Tootie" Heath)

Masters Legacy Series Volume 4
(featuring George Coleman)

Emmet Cohen (s/t)
by Pierre Giroux

Emmet Cohen is a dashing pianist with dazzling technique and oodles of improvisational skills, which led to his receiving the American Pianist Award in 2019. While Cohen is an "of the moment" pianist, his playing is also informed by his reverence for the giants of the hardbop genre, as these two volumes of music demonstrate. They follow earlier collaborations with drummer Jimmy Cobb and bassist Ron Carter.

Volume 3 features the irrepressible 91-year-old tenor saxophonist and composer Benny Golson alongside the 84-year-old drummer Albert "Tootie"

Heath, the surviving brother of tenor saxophonist Jimmy and bassist Percy, and either Russell Hall or Corcoran Holt on bass.

None of the well-known Golson compositions are offered in this session, although Heath's "For Heaven's Sake" is given a funky reading by Cohen in a trio format sparked by crafty drumming.

Right from the opening bars of Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" the band locks into a swinging groove that works both collectively and individually. As the remaining tracks spool out, Cohen's irrepressible pianism, Golson's sparse phrasing and Heath's subtle attack deliver a wonderfully satisfying musical experience.

Volume 4 brings Cohen's trio of Hall and drummer Bryan Carter together with the hardbop, blues-literate tenor saxophonist George Coleman, best known for his two years in the Miles Davis Quintet when the band recorded *Seven Steps To Heaven* and *My Funny Valentine*.

The setlist is mostly well-known standards along with two Thelonious Monk classics, "Trinkle Tinkle" and "Ugly Beauty". Almost as an after-thought is a Cohen original "For Big G" and "Db Blues", which is uncredited. Coleman's tenor work is full of creativity and surprises, through which he scatters a variety of harmonic patterns. Cohen's improvisations demonstrate an extensive farrago of grooves, both playful and full of swing.

These two releases might best be summed up by the following quotation from Emmet Cohen: "I'm ever grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from Benny Golson, 'Tootie' Heath and George Coleman. The jazz masters are each so unique and generous in their own way and I will forever hold their teachings close to my heart."

For more information, visit emmetcohen.com. Cohen was scheduled to be at *Dizzy's Club and The Appel Room*.



Screen Play

Tierney Sutton (BFM Jazz)
by Alex Henderson

Jazz artists have been performing songs associated with Hollywood movies ever since talkies first emerged at the end of the '20s. Los Angeles-based Tierney Sutton takes the concept closer to the modern day on *Screen Play* with material from the '60s and beyond.

Sutton delves into Tin Pan Alley with Leigh Harline-Ned Washington's "I've Got No Strings" (1940's *Pinocchio*) and a surprisingly funky interpretation of Harold Arlen's "If I Only Had a Brain" (1939's *The Wizard of Oz*) and acknowledges the '50s with her playful version of Jule Styne's "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" (1953's *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*), all done in a post-bop style, which she also applies to Simon & Garfunkel's "The Sound of Silence" (used in 1967's *The Graduate*), Michel Legrand's "The Windmills of Your Mind" (1968's *The Thomas Crown Affair*) to Dave Grusin's "It Might Be You" (1982's *Tootsie*). Sutton also includes two John Farrar songs from 1978's *Grease*: "You're the One That I Want" and "Hopelessly Devoted to You", both unlikely vehicles for jazz exploration but that work perfectly well, Sutton in particular toning down the sugariness of the latter.

Instead of lavish orchestral arrangements, Sutton sticks to her regular group of Christian Jacob (piano), Kevin Axt and Trey Henry (bass) and Ray Brinker (drums), with guitarist Serge Merlaud added on

"Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend", Legrand's "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?" (1969's *The Happy Ending*) and Grusin's "Ev'ry Now and Then" (in 1996's *Mulholland Falls*). Alan Bergman performs a vocal duet with Sutton on the melancholy Legrand ballad "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?" from 1982's *Best Friends*, in a version more cabaret than the hit version by Patti Austin and James Ingram.

Sutton takes her share of chances on *Screen Play*, making it a fairly unpredictable exploration of Hollywood-associated songs from different eras.

For more information, visit bfmjazz.com. Sutton was scheduled to be at *Birdland*.

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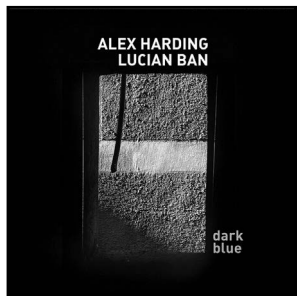
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Dark Blue
Alex Harding/Lucian Ban (Sunnyside)
by Marco Cangiano

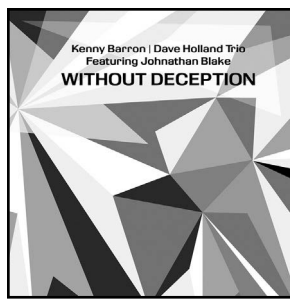
A baritone saxophonist from Detroit and classically trained pianist from Transylvania sounds like an odd pairing but is just more proof jazz is a universal language. Alex Harding and Lucian Ban have been collaborating for over two decades. Their empathy is evident across a wide range of moods, although, as per the title, a bluesy feeling runs throughout.

Harding's mastery over the challenging baritone has few peers; his sound, from harsh and edgy to breathy and subtle, allows the listener, thanks to superb recording engineering, the pleasure of following his fingers as they work along the keys. Ban demonstrates the connection between Romanian folk tradition and the blues, with a round and firm touch either in close dialogue with his partner or in solo outings. Some tunes have been part of their repertoire for a while, such as Ban's title track and "Chakra", while others are new co-credited originals, some, such as "Monkey See" and "The Invisible Man", the latter inspired by Ralph Ellison's novel, coming across as free improvisations. There are also two solo contributions, Harding's "H.B.", a heartfelt dedication to early mentor Hamiet Bluiett, and Ban's "Low

Country Blue", inspired by the Romanian countryside.

The CD starts with the title track, a mysterious piece featuring an intense dialogue for repeated piano figures and baritone runs. The mood is lighter for "Tough Love", a bouncy and angular walk. "Black Sea" is based on Balkan folk dances and finds Harding on bass clarinet. "Not That Kind of Blues" best captures the duo's empathy in a dramatic reading of the blues canon, reminiscent of Charles Mingus' orgiastic late '50s masterpieces. Ban's "Hymn" concludes the CD with a delicate piano intro, leading to a lament-like melody carried by baritone, then veering toward a gospel cadenza sustained by Ban's arpeggios and Harding's supple runs. The subtlety of these artists' sounds has been captured in a most intimate recording.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com. Ban was scheduled to be at Bar Lunatico, Harding at Sistas' Place.



Without Deception
Kenny Barron/Dave Holland Trio
(featuring Johnathan Blake) (Dare2)
by George Kanzler

Kenny Barron is often taken for granted, for he is a pianist who makes everything seem easy. His is a deceptive virtuosity, his lines flow with grace and

logic, every solo concise yet complete. When Dave Holland plays bass with him—often in the duo context that Barron has delved into more than most of his peers—he eschews the convolutions of his own band material and sticks to the bass-ics. The two have a comfortable rapport, but here it is sparked to something more by the catalyst of drummer Johnathan Blake's variety of rhythmic infusions.

For an album co-led by a pianist and bassist, this is a wide bouquet of tempos and rhythms, each distinguished and personalized by Blake. Barron's two Brazilian influenced originals are given distinctly different beats: "Porto Alegre" is a high-stepping samba right out of carnival in Rio, Blake's solo dancing over Barron's montuno, while "Until Then" glides along on a seductive bossa beat. Blake also brings an AfroLatin beat to Thelonious Monk's "Worry Later", a track that not only displays Barron's affinity for Monk but also features scintillating exchanges between piano and drums. One of Holland's two contributions, "Pass It On", is dedicated to the late drummer Ed Blackwell, remembering his New Orleans rather than Ornette Coleman background with a jaunty second-line beat from Blake. And Mulgrew Miller's "Second Thoughts" recalls Art Blakey as the tune was a Jazz Messengers favorite.

The trio is at its interactive best on Barron's beboppy "Speed Trap", from the leader's pointillist lines to Holland's slyly slurred pizzicato solo and Blake's slap sticks. Sumi Tonooka's "Secret Places" brings in a waltz meter and is highly suggestive of Herbie Nichols oeuvre. A subdued trio—Blake with brushes—showcases Barron's sumptuous rendition of Duke Ellington's "Warm Valley".

For more information, visit daveholland.com/dare2. This project was scheduled to be at Blue Note.



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Francisco Mora Catlett
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Sam Newsome
Soprano Saxophone
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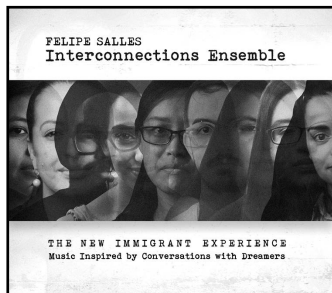
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(Tapestry)
by Donald Elfman

Felipe Salles' new venture, a bold musical response to the notion of immigration, deftly illustrates the relationship between the political and the personal. The music is inspired by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and emerged from Salles' friendship with Tereza Lee, the first "Dreamer", and subsequent interviews he conducted with nine others. The nine-part suite plus an introduction and coda spans almost 90 minutes over two discs and included is a DVD of a performance with video images projected before a live audience.

This music seems inspired by emotion, by regional color and even by speech. "Introduction" presents the dual notions of innocence and invitation, with the orchestra in its parts and individual voices gradually entering and coming to the first section, "Did You Eat?", in which the massed orchestra poses that most important question. The mood is slow and insistent, leading to a sensuous and spirited bit of improvisation by pianist Nando Michelin.

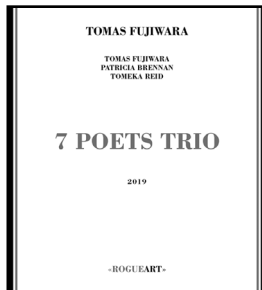
All of the sections reflect in-the-moment sensations and reactions to the immigrant experience. "Their Stories Have Never Been Told" suggests the movements of children, quietly buoyed by a piccolo solo from Jonathan Ball. "An Education to Begin With" begins with a quiet section for piano and becomes a yearning orchestral prayer with a cantorial solo from Angelo Subero on bass trombone. "A Part and Not the Other" is funky rock and roll with brash orchestral splashes and the electric guitar of Kevin Grudecki. "A Survivor's Guilt" opens with the tones of Ryan Fedak's vibraphone darkly expressing the title phrase.

Disc 2 begins darkly with the mysterious "It's Just Lines on the Ground", sinuous colors from flutes and piccolos as well as more ominous tones from low brass and reeds. "Built on Thin Air" quietly emerges lighter than air with Fedak's glockenspiel and the rich tenor saxophone solo of Rich DiMuzio, mostly understated but insistent, the tune revealing a world of textures. "Crossing Barriers" appears delicate and thoughtful yet deals with that most potent of images, slowly

evolving into a dense and complicated series of lines. The tempo picks up as the music becomes more frenetic with a tenor solo from Tyler Burchfield and a soaring solo from Doug Olsen on trumpet.

The suite as such closes with a quirky "These Things That are Taken for Granted", skewed roads traversed by the band highlighted by an electronics-assisted trumpet solo from Eric Smith and rocky grooves from Grudecki. The "Underture" that closes the recording sums up the powerful sentiments evoked throughout project and underlines the brilliance that Salles has brought to this most timely undertaking.

For more information, visit sallesjazz.com. This project was scheduled to be at National Sawdust.



7 Poets Trio
Tomas Fujiwara (RogueArt)
by John Sharpe

Drummer Tomas Fujiwara's ubiquity on the New York scene bears eloquent testimony to his fit with a wide range of forward-looking outfits. He can drive without dominating, harnesses power to grace and shows remarkable sensitivity to whatever is going on around him. Those qualities are upfront and center on *7 Poets Trio*, which unites Fujiwara with acclaimed cellist Tomeka Reid and up-and-coming vibraphonist Patricia Brennan.

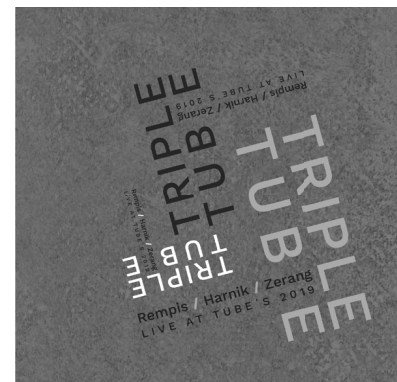
Fujiwara wrote all but one of the six originals with this unusual instrumentation in mind. He promotes an airy soundscape, redolent of quiet passion, on what is one of his most accessible albums, featuring lightly swinging lyricism, moments of reflective calm and a restrained aesthetic, which nonetheless permits adventurous forays. Reid's peerless artistry is by now well known, but she further displays how seamlessly she can switch from propulsive lilt to soaring melody and timbral invention. Brennan supplements her dazzling technique with two-handed independence and unexpected tonal shifts courtesy of judicious use of electronics.

Fujiwara allows everyone ample space. The gently swelling "Blend" evokes a still lake in early morning, until Reid's honeyed bowing takes flight, before segueing into the upbeat "KP". Like many of the cuts, the expressive opportunities are so artfully integrated that the percussive staccato duet for the leader and Brennan can almost pass unnoticed. An infectious jaunty bounce launches "A Realm Distorted", which offers another of those integral highlights, this time a mercurial careening between Reid and Brennan, before the latter sketches out "Questions" as a coolly blue ballad, later singing along with her rapturous lines.

Fujiwara's only turn in the spotlight is a characteristically elegant polyrhythmic introduction to the bright "Cruisin' With Spencer", whose aching refrain suggests a good-natured excursion while the textural extremes launching "Gentle Soul" imply there's a lot going on beneath the surface of the titular personage, something affirmed by Reid's funky sawing and Brennan's swerves into pitch-bending sinuosity.

With this configuration, Fujiwara continues to thwart expectations and does so in a supple and charming manner, which might just be the antidote we need for these troubled times.

For more information, visit rogueart.com. This project was scheduled to be at Ibeam Brooklyn.



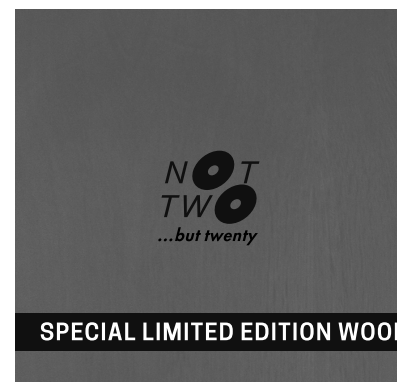
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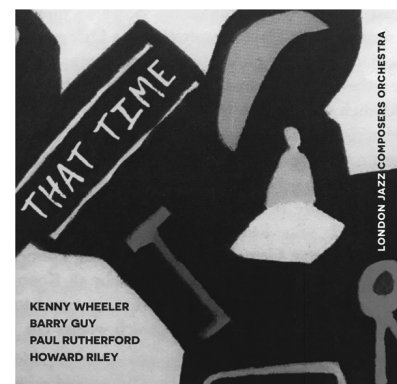
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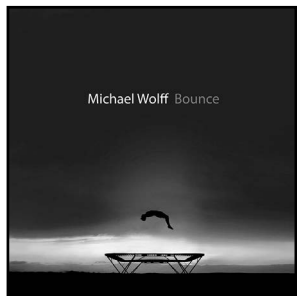


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Bounce
Michael Wolff (Sunnyside)
by Scott Yanow

Pianist Michael Wolff has worked with such notables as Cal Tjader, Cannonball Adderley and Sonny Rollins, was Musical Director for Arsenio Hall's talk show during 1989-94 and led 16 albums of his own during 1983-2015. However, it all came very close to the end in 2015 when he almost died from cancer after a four-year battle. Since then, and against all odds, Wolff has made a full comeback. In 2019 he celebrated his return by recording *Swirl* with a trio of bassist Ben Allison and drummer Allan Mednard. The same group is featured on its followup *Bounce*.

Wolff displays a personal style, which, while touched by Bill Evans and to a lesser extent McCoy Tyner, is adventurous in its own way. Wolff contributed six of the ten songs, which range from the title track (a funky piece one could imagine Les McCann performing) and the laidback "Chill" to touching ballad "Long Lost" and catchy "Picasso". His "Resuscitate" is of particular importance: upon hearing his wife being asked in the hospital if he had a Do Not Resuscitate agreement, Wolff woke up from his coma and said "Resuscitate me!"

Allison, who contributed "Milton", has many short solos and his familiarity with Wolff's spontaneous flights is obvious as he follows him closely. Mednard provides stimulating support and an occasional drum break. Wolff's son Nat sings his own "Cool Kids" quite well, giving the set a bit of variety. Of the other pieces, the trio gets a chance to cook on a modernized take of Arthur Schwartz-Howard Dietz' "You and the Night and the Music" and puts plenty of quiet emotion into the beautiful "Omar Sharif", which is taken from the recent play *The Band's Visit*.

Bounce consolidates Wolff's comeback and provides listeners with a strong overview of his accessible yet creative playing.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com. Wolff was scheduled to be at Knickerbocker Bar & Grill and Blue Note.



The Melodic Line
Reverso (Outhere)
by Dan Bilawsky

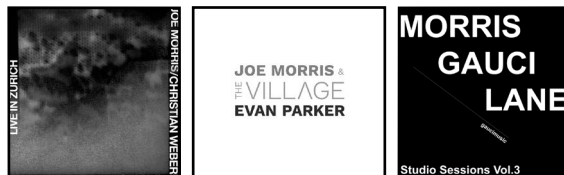
Reverso, a chamber jazz unit co-led by American trombonist Ryan Keberle and French pianist Frank Woeste, is driven by cultural exchange and built on the bidirectional relationship between classical music and jazz. On the group's debut, *Suite Ravel* (Phonoart/Alternate Side, 2018) a quartet, with cellist Vincent Courtois and drummer Jeff Ballard, delivered a program of classically-inspired pieces drawing on the work of jazz-influenced composer Maurice Ravel. On this followup the same band sans Ballard takes cues from Les Six: the group of French composers Darius

Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Louis Durey and Germaine Tailleferre.

Woeste, taking a particular interest in the emotional and technical aspects behind Milhaud's *Saudades do Brasil, Op. 67* (1920), captures and emphasizes a state of longing in his five compositional contributions. "Blue Feather", with its playful syncopation and handclaps, piano grounding, attractive trombone lines and rich arco cello work and "Montparnasse", presenting somewhat stark suggestions and shapes, each highlight that angle while playing as opposite sides of the same coin. Keberle, delivering four numbers of his own, was taken by the music of Tailleferre, the lone female. Often overlooked in the mists of history, her work over the course of 70 years showed tremendous breadth and depth of feeling. Keberle-crafted originals like "Exemplar", marrying dawning sentiments and an air of uncertainty, "Up North", both hopeful and inviting, and "Major Jack", tapping into the oddly sympathetic pairing of promise and anxiety, all underscore that point.

While Ballard's absence removes an instrument of thrust and specific elements of color, the focus on a trio shows gains in space and subtlety. This is essentially a slightly different context housing a similar subject and it works like a charm. Complementing what came before it, *The Melodic Line* extends on unique relationships, both stylistic and personal, in remarkable ways.

For more information, visit outhere-music.com. Keberle was scheduled to be at Langston Hughes Public Library.



Live in Zurich
Joe Morris/Christian Weber (Calytic Sound)
The Village
Joe Morris/Evan Parker (Fundacja Słuchaj!)
Studio Sessions, Vol. 3
Joe Morris/Stephen Gauci/Adam Lane (Gaucimusic)
by Stuart Broomer

Guitarist Joe Morris has literally written the book on improvised music, or at least one of them, *Perpetual Frontier: The Properties of Free Music*, a thoughtful exposition of diverse methodologies. That's just one side, however, of Morris' on-going practice: he has played guitar—lightly, heavily or not amplified at all—in numerous contexts, from the infernal power of Spanish Donkey with Jamie Saft and Mike Pride to the subtle dynamics of the English "school" with Simon H. Fell and Alex Ward. In these three recordings he appears in duos with two distinguished European partners and debuts as a drummer in a New York trio.

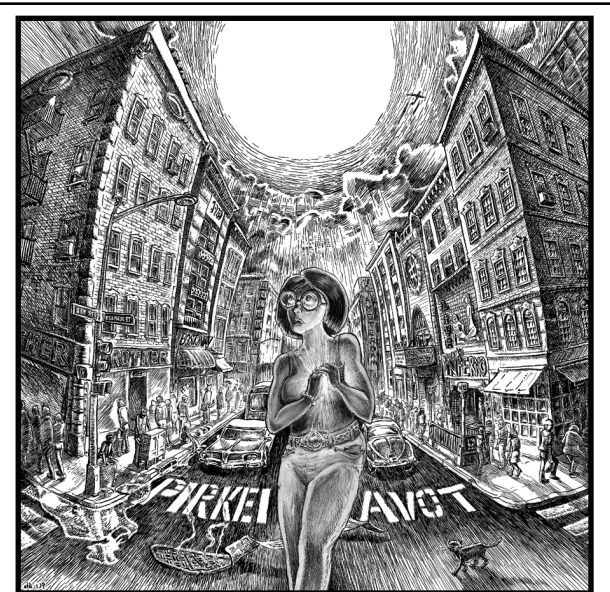
Swiss bassist Christian Weber has similar experience in free contexts and on *Live in Zurich*, there's something particularly fine, a concord between similar instruments as well as musical personalities. Morris ranges from barely amplified to lightly so while Weber explores multiple bowed and pizzicato techniques. The guitar's range readily extends that of the bass while the variety of attacks assures a certain breadth of timbre. There are also near-fusions of identity, as in the stunning last few moments of the first of two sets, Morris' rapid, fluttering chromatic lines an overlay on Weber's darker, underlying patterns. The abstractions develop further in the second set, the lines, rhythms, percussive and muffled timbres and extended techniques becoming further interwoven, as the two stretch to the limits of string duo interactivity.

The same dedication to complex interactive improvisation determines the quality of *The Village* with British saxophonist Evan Parker. It's illuminated by Morris' liner essay, which focuses on the paired themes of his own interest in African kora music and Parker's highly developed use of cycles.

The practical results of those two ideas are immediately evident in the music. The major episode is the 40-minute "Mound", in which there's an almost uncanny resemblance between Morris' frequently cyclical patterns and the way they interconnect with Parker's tenor lines, the two exploring converging and diverging phrases and patterns, some elongated and others clustering into batches of phrases, in a continuous shadow play that embraces a range of melodic, scalar and rhythmic patterns. The result is another strikingly individualistic Parker performance, but one in which his distinctive methodologies shape the dialogue as it rises to a stunning passage of circular breathing around the 27-minute mark. The highly detailed kinship is even more apparent on "Groove" with Parker on soprano, Morris' dense percussive polyphony embracing the saxophone's spiralling liquid lines.

The third of these recordings demonstrates another side of Morris' empathetic approach. Joining tenor saxophonist Stephen Gauci and bassist Adam Lane, Morris reveals a different side of himself, playing drumkit on *Studio Sessions, Vol. 3*, much as he's made an avocation of playing bass in the past; in doing so, he sacrifices the virtuoso skills apparent in the previous recordings. His drumming is loose, dense and steady, underlying ruggedly precise basslines while effectively framing and propelling the music. Center stage belongs to Gauci. His solos are compelling incantations that move with his strong, varied lines and mutating sound—from hoarse lower register to muffled cry—to develop a welling emotional power.

For more information, visit catalyticsound.com, sluchaj.bandcamp.com and gaucimusic.com. Morris was scheduled to be at The Stone at The New School.



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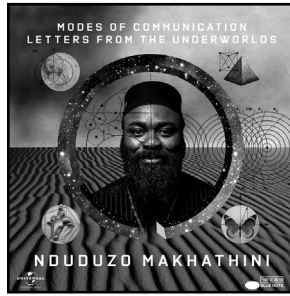
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Brightness: Live in Amsterdam
Kirk Knuffke (Royal Potato Family)
by Kyle Oleksiuk



Modes of Communication: Letters from the Underworlds
Nduduzo Makhathini (Blue Note)
by Robert Bush



Reincarnation
Warren Wolf (Mack Avenue)
by Russ Musto

There are relatively few world-class musicians playing the cornet, for the same reason that there are relatively few world-class jockeys riding the zebra. The alternative has cornered the market. But, in a world beset by trumpets, 40-year-old modern master Kirk Knuffke promotes the humble cornet.

Brightness, a trio set with 69-year-old bassist Mark Helias and 78-year-old drummer Bill Goodwin, is Knuffke's first live album as a bandleader, and a persuasive case for his instrument, Knuffke leaning into its warmer, mellower timbre.

Brightness is also full of cornet propaganda in the form of bent notes, which are easier to play on cornet than on trumpet. Knuffke uses them to complicate the repetitive but very beautiful melodies he plays. Like Albert Ayler, many of Knuffke's lines resemble children's songs, marches, hymns, and sea shanties (Knuffke has a demonstrated affection for sea shanties, like "Haul On the Bowline" and "Santy Anno," which he recorded in 2016 on Jeff Lederer's near perfect album *Brooklyn Blowhards*). The bent notes allow Knuffke room to explore the subtleties of these simple melodies and vary them seemingly to no end.

In Knuffke's lyrics, the first he has ever contributed to an album, something similar is going on. At least two of his lines imitate the variation-within-repetition structure of his cornet melodies. On one of the best songs, "The Mob, The Crowd, The Mass," Knuffke chants synonyms: "I am the people, the mob, the crowd, the mass," varying his language while repeating his meaning, reminiscent of Van Morrison.

There is something uniquely hypnotic about Knuffke's cornet-centered approach to music. Much like Lionel Hampton caused a generation of percussionists to start taking the vibraphone seriously, it might be that Knuffke is sowing the seeds of a new cornet revolution in the years to come. Maybe that is too much to hope. But even if that cornet revolution never comes, we'll at least have Knuffke and *Brightness: Live in Amsterdam*.

For more information, visit royalpotatofamily.com. Knuffke was scheduled to be at Bushwick Public House.

There is something special about music that emanates from South Africa, from Solomon Linda to Abdullah Ibrahim to Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Add 38-year-old pianist Nduduzo Makhathini to that list. His debut album is a marvel and while it may draw upon elements of McCoy Tyner's modal groups from the '70s, Makhathini has emerged with a voice of his own.

The core band is Logan Richardson (alto saxophone), Linda Sikhakhane (tenor saxophone), Ndabo Zulu (trumpet), Ayanda Sikade (drums) and Zwelakhe-Duma Bell Le Pere (bass). Several vocalists add significantly to this rich session, including the leader's wife Omagugu Makhathini and Asanda Msaki.

Much of the album reflects a deep sense of spirituality. "Saziwa Nguwe" opens with very gospel-ish piano chords soon abetted by a unison repeating horn line kept in an agitated state by vituperative drums. An early highlight comes on "Beneath The Earth", when Msaki joins the band. She has a beautiful, unfettered voice and splits the vocals with Makhathini himself, who shines throughout. Richardson squeezes in a delightful solo towards the end. This is a piece that would not sound out-of-place on a '70s ECM date.

Makhathini's connection to Tyner is especially pronounced on "Unyazi", a modal burner featuring illuminative work from the leader and frontline horns. Sikhakhane erupts with primal, screaming energy, followed by Zulu, who combines the speed of Freddie Hubbard with the smearing elasticity of Don Cherry. Richardson wraps it up beautifully and this tune is a sterling representation of what seems to be missing in a lot of modern jazz these days. Omagugu Makhathini joins the band on "On The Other Side" with appropriate drama and solid pitch and excellent throughout is the work of Le Pere, whose whole notes breathe naturally and frame everything on top especially well.

Apparently Makhathini's grandmother was a healer and the pianist believes his music is a continuation of that tradition. Perhaps that is what makes *Modes of Communication* such an engaging session.

For more information, visit bluenote.com. This project was scheduled to be at Dizzy's Club.

Warren Wolf has established himself as the leading modern jazz vibraphonist of his generation on excellent albums as a leader and myriad sideman outings. On *Reincarnation* he further demonstrates the breadth of his multifaceted talent, gently stepping outside of the mainstream to delve into his R&B roots with original songs proving him capable of crossing over without mitigating his considerable abilities.

Wolf has framed the album in a manner recalling an '80s Quiet Storm radio program with a "Smooth Intro" and "Smooth Outro" by Baltimore broadcaster Marcellus "Bassman" Shepard touting the vibraphonist's ability both to swing and groove "in the pocket" bookending eight tracks. The opening "For Ma" is Wolf's soulful dedication to his late mother on which the core band of pianist Brett Williams, electric bassist Richie Goods and drummer Carroll "CV" Dashiell III lay down an insistent gospel-tinged rhythm over which the vibraphonist solos with dynamic intensity. The beat is even stronger on "Vahybing", the quartet swinging vigorously before the song ends with Dashiell letting loose over a bluesy vamp.

"In The Heat Of The Night" is a romantic R&B ballad, adding Mark Whitfield's wah-wahing guitar to underpin the achingly slow throbbing rhythm on top of which Imani Grace-Cooper sings Wolf's lyrics, complemented by Shepard's Barry White-like commentary. The quartet charges straightahead with melancholic buoyancy on "The Struggle", before Whitfield and Grace-Cooper return for an engaging cover of The Isley Brothers' "For The Love Of You", sure to appeal to fans of Anita Baker and Sade. The singer is out front vocalizing with childlike innocence recalling Minnie Ripperton on Wolf's declaration of parental love "Sebastian and Zoë" and soaring optimism on "Livin' The Good Life", which blends jazz and funk. The program ends with Wolf and Williams dueting melodiously on "Come Dance With Me", before Shepard's closing announcement declaring, "What's his name—Warren Wolf. Now go tell somebody."

For more information, visit mackavenue.com. This project was scheduled to be at Jazz Standard.

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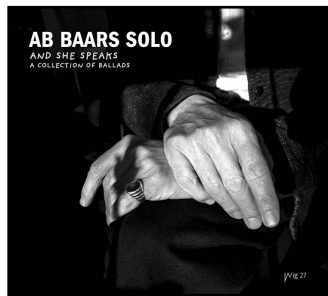
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And She Speaks (A Collection of Ballads)
Ab Baars (Wig)
by Steven Loewy

For decades, classically trained Dutch reed player Ab Baars has delighted with his iconoclastic style in the Instant Composers Pool Orchestra and on wide-ranging recordings both as a leader and sideman with members of the local scene and international figures such as Steve Lacy, Roswell Rudd, Ken Vandermark, John Carter and Anthony Braxton. This is his third solo album. Baars says that he "...listened extensively to ballads..." by the "great saxophonists" when he started playing many years ago and that this recording is a "salute to that tradition". Although each of these tracks references and is inspired by the works of others, the key word is "inspired", as for the most part, the original pieces are largely unrecognizable.

And She Speaks is often very slow, sometimes wispy, spanning the range of clarinet, tenor saxophone and shakuhachi and occasionally enhanced by trills, all evidence of Baars' cool, focused sound. Sometimes, as on "And She Speaks Purple" (inspired by John Carter), you may wonder exactly where Baars is taking us and there are moments when it almost sounds like difficult musical exercises. But, then, out of nowhere, on the compelling "Solitude Cadmium Yellow" (inspired by Duke Ellington), tenor bursts forth, the full force of the horn dancing wondrously with pockets of altissimo notes, gradually picking up pace and intensity. "Naima Blue Saphir" (inspired by John Coltrane), focuses on slow long tones, a bit spiritual and pretty, but mostly leisurely and gentle, a phrase that defines the album. By the last piece, the partially recognizable "Blame it on My Youth" (inspired by Oscar Levant), Baars reworks the melody beautifully, with a tip of the hat to its composer, Baars' singing clarinet makes the piece its own, gorgeous balladry and a fitting ending to an unusual album.

For more information, visit stichtingwig.com. Baars was scheduled to be at *Ibeam Brooklyn*, 244 Rehearsal Studios and Downtown Music Gallery.



Wild Wild East
Sunny Jain (Smithsonian Folkways)
by Jim Motavalli

Says Sunny Jain, leader/drummer/double-headed dhol player for the popular Brooklyn-based Red Baraat, "I believe the immigrants are our current-day cowboys and cowgirls." Jain, whose last name reflects his heritage in the gentle Jain faith, offers a project tracing his parents' journey from India to Rochester in 1970.

Eastern and Western sounds mix on *Wild Wild East*. "Immigrant Warrior", for instance, crosses Bollywood and fusion somewhat incoherently, with Grey McMurray's guitar carrying the rock energy and Pawan Benjamin's saxophone nodding to jazz. The standout track is the third one, "Osian", the name of Jain's ancestral village in Rajasthan. The liner notes

reference Sonic Youth but the song channels both Indian traditions and hypnotic improvising undertaken by New York-based bands like 75 Dollar Bill. "Red, Brown, Black" features Haseeb, a South Asian Muslim rapper, born in New York but raised on the West Coast. Is it surprising that questions of identity arise, both on the track and on the album as a whole? "Embarrassed by my culture from the get-go / Hip-hop raised me with the best flows / Black culture taught me how to say it with my chest though," he intones.

Though the CD booklet is illustrated with pictures of white, black and Latino cowboys, as well as those of Jain's family, the connection doesn't develop overtly, alternating between fusion-y pieces and traditional temple music, with Florida-raised vocalist Ganavya (known to translate jazz standards from English to Tamil) prominent. "Hai Apna Dil to Aawara", for instance, features her and sounds like an Indian country song, with just guitar and drums. "Tumse Lagi Lagan" is a bhajan religious song from the Jain faith and uses bansuri (an Indian flute played by Benjamin) to create a haunting mood. "Maitri Bhavanu" is a Jain prayer with effective chant-like vocals. These tracks sit alongside wilder excursions such as "Brooklyn Dhamal" and the title track, which channel everything from spaghetti westerns to surf guitar, all with ferocious drumming. Some of it is overly busy, but infectious.

For more information, visit folkways.si.edu. This project is scheduled to be at *Joe's Pub* Apr. 22nd.



8: Kindred Spirits (Live from The Lobero)
Charles Lloyd (Blue Note)
Montreux Festival 1967
(Swiss Radio Days Jazz Series 46)
Charles Lloyd Quartet (TCB)
by Andrey Henkin

It is a cliché among jazz critics to discuss older musicians in terms of wine—that they get better with age. But, to be honest, some old wine is corked. How many players sound better in their 80s than their 30s? A rare few. Randy Weston, Wayne Shorter and Abdullah Ibrahim all leveraged experience to imbue their later work with startling depth simply not possible at an earlier age. Saxophonist/flutist Charles Lloyd is another alchemist of this sort.

On Mar. 15th, 2018, Lloyd turned 80 and observed this milestone in the best possible fashion: a two-hour concert at the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara, Lloyd's adopted home since the '70s. Accompanying the newly minted octogenarian were friends old and new: bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Eric Harland, both part of several of Lloyd's recent projects; young charges Julian Lage (guitar) and Gerald Clayton (piano); and, during the second half, two guests in Blue Note head honcho Don Was (bass on two tracks) and famed organ player/proto-rock legend Booker T. (organ, including a take on his iconic "Green Onions", and piano and vocals for what sounds like an impromptu birthday tribute). Two years later, Blue Note gives Lloyd a lovely 82nd birthday present by releasing music from the evening: a CD or two-LP/DVD set of the concert's first half and a two-CD/three LP/DVD set of the entire show, the latter a signed limited edition including a 96-page hardcover book and two photo prints.

The material spans some of Lloyd's earliest pieces ("Dream Weaver", "Island Blues", "Sombbrero Sam", "Forest Flower") to ones of far more recent vintage. The band, like its intrepid leader, doesn't hurry; the performances easily swell past the 10-minute mark and

"Dream Weaver", which opens the concert, peaks at almost 22. Yet no note is wasted. At this point, Lloyd's every musical utterance is profound. Listening to him play is the equivalent of climbing a mountain to get a few intensely deep aphorisms from a cave-dwelling guru. The band floats along with him, morphing into an unlikely whole, virtuosity coalescing behind the shamanistic presence of the leader, much in the way that Shorter corralled his famed new millennium quartet.

To call this a Greatest Hits or Career Retrospective would be to reduce Lloyd's thinking to the simply linear. He is beyond time and to spend two hours in his presence both goes by in a moment and is an endless descent to the bottom of the ocean of history.

Nearly 51 years before the Santa Barbara concert Lloyd was in the beginning of his career but had already differentiated himself: interacting with the burgeoning psychedelic rock scene both through its bands and its venues; playing far-flung locales like Tallinn; and bringing a spirituality to his music that would lead to years of musical isolation in the mid '70s. His '60s quartet with Keith Jarrett (piano), Ron McClure (bass) and Jack DeJohnette (drums) is unfairly relegated to second-tier status behind the Davises, Coltranes and Minguses despite crossover success via a series of Atlantic albums. TCB, as part of its Swiss Radio Days Jazz Series, presents Lloyd's set from the 1967 Montreux Jazz Festival. He may be young at this point—and his band even younger, far from the stars they are today—but the vision and presence are already there, a beautifully ripe vineyard of grapes one can feel will become a special libation. Musical oenophiles: compare this 27-minute "Forest Flower" with the 2018 version.

For more information, visit bluenote.com and tcb.ch. Lloyd is scheduled to be at *Blue Note* Apr. 23rd-26th.

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Inventions & Dimensions
Herbie Hancock (Blue Note)
by Anders Griffen

Herbie Hancock, who turns 80 this month, recorded seven albums for Blue Note between 1962-69. Each of them is a departure from the last and a unique work of art. The success of these albums has led to their perennial reissue. This stereo LP pressed on 180-gram vinyl sounds clean and dynamic.

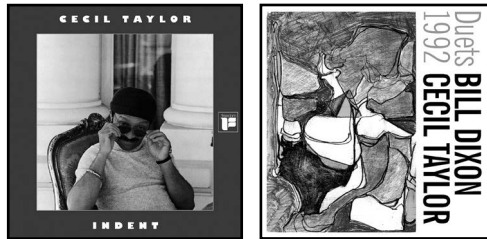
In 1964, *Inventions & Dimensions* was considered quite abstract and was deleted from the catalog soon after its initial release. In the liner notes to the 1998 six-CD set of *Herbie Hancock: The Complete Blue Note Sixties Sessions*, Bob Belden recalls, "*Inventions & Dimensions* (BN-4147) was a sought after item for years, until Blue Note reissued it, newly titled *Succotash* (BN-LA 152) and featuring a new cover, in 1972 to capitalize on Herbie's new-found fame." Hancock was already incredibly articulate both as a soloist and composer on his debut a year earlier at 22 years old. This was his third album and in the original liner notes Nat Hentoff asserts that, "This session is one of the most spontaneous jazz dates ever recorded." It was Hancock's intention to free himself and his fellow musicians from conventions of jazz, including 4/4 meter, pre-set harmonies and even melodies. None of the tunes had a specific melody and "Mimosa" is the only piece that had specific chord changes. Hancock said, "I told the musicians not to assume anything except for a few rules I set for each piece." This approach was the result of his first experiences playing 'free' with Eric Dolphy in the winter of 1962-63. "At the beginning, I thought I'd be afraid to play just anything felt," the pianist said, "but as I got used to it, the experience gassed me so much that I decided to plan for a record session in that vein." By this time, Hancock had begun working with the great arbiter of change, Miles Davis, who suggested using two Latin percussionists as well as bassist Paul Chambers. Willie Bobo on drums and Osvaldo "Chihuahua" Martinez on percussion create a unique texture and feel. The Latin influence is obvious, but Bobo in particular sounds equally at home in hardbop territory. An unusual mix of musicians and the fact that there were no written melodies gave the session a certain unpredictability.

All the musicians are rhythmically oriented throughout. Chambers tends to play basslines or vamps, but walks a bit on "Triangle" and "A Jump Ahead". Hancock gives each piece form by maintaining a train of thought wherein improvised themes are recapitulated. When the needle drops the listener is met with Bobo's brushes repeating a three-note figure that sounds like "Succotash". This piece is rich in texture and harmony and really sets the tone for the album. The original liner notes erroneously claim that Martinez is playing a guiro, but listen and it's almost certainly a shekere. Hancock joins the rhythm to start and goes through a sequence of chords before delving into myriad melodies. "Triangle" starts as a cool 4/4 swing. Chambers mainly walks before joining the drums and percussion as they lay down a 12/8 Latin-tinged flow. Side B starts with "Jack Rabbit", titled for its brisk pace. Chambers repeats a two-measure line while Martinez accents two and four on the conga. Reminiscent of Ahmad Jamal at times, Hancock freely explores harmony and dissonance, virtuosity and space over the groove. "Mimosa" is the most composed

piece. After a rubato intro, they lounge on a laid-back 3:2 son clave. "A Jump Ahead" refers to Chambers choosing a new pedal tone between every 16 bars of uptempo swing. Hancock's left hand is sparse while the right picks out single-note lines. Bobo is popping hard on this one, accenting the breaks.

Compared to the audience in 1964, today's listeners find this album much more accessible. Nevertheless, a distinct space is conjured by these sounds. *Inventions & Dimensions* was an apt title indeed.

For more information, visit bluenote.com



Indent
Cecil Taylor (Unit Core/Freedom - ORG Music)
Duets 1992
Bill Dixon/Cecil Taylor (Triple Point)
by Duck Baker

When *Indent* first appeared in 1973 on Cecil Taylor's own Unit Core label, it marked the pianist's first U.S. release since 1966 and seemed to open the floodgates; by the end of the decade another 10 Taylor records had been released and the pace only quickened after that. *Indent* was also the first of several solo outings to be released by Taylor, who died two years ago this month. This coincided with a general upsurge of solo recordings by such pianists as Randy Weston, Abdullah Ibrahim, Mal Waldron and others. It is possible that those of us who remember the original release of *Indent* cannot be objective, but many regard it as one of his most significant solo records.

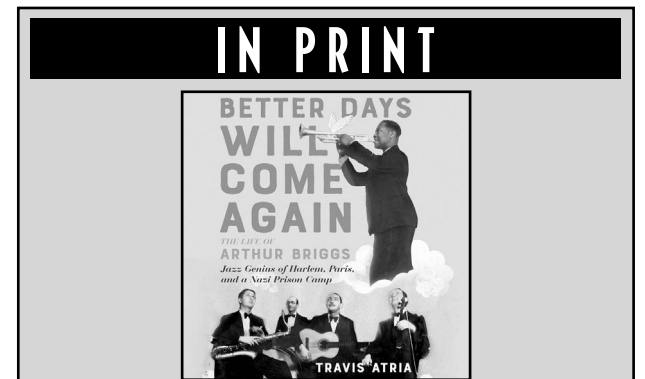
All the hallmarks of Taylor's fully mature style are evident here from the first rumbling, multi-octave figures. He builds the three sections of the piece through the insistent repetition of phrases that keep slowly transmuting into different patterns, which in turn continue to alter themselves. At any point he may intersperse quieter sequences of arpeggiated chords, or pile on a series of crashing clusters or lightning-fast runs. The listener must stay focused, because while the rhythmic configurations Taylor utilizes tend towards certain patterns, the harmonic references change as things develop, often suddenly, in mid-flight as it were. Some of these musical moments hit us like transformative epiphanies.

Where the music on *Indent* is largely predetermined, *Duets 1992* consists entirely of free improvisations with trumpeter Bill Dixon. Dixon had appeared on Taylor's 1966 masterpiece *Conquistador*, but the two had not worked together again until the short duo tour during which they made these studio recordings. By then Dixon usually used electronic delay on his trumpet and for these sessions was using a set-up that involved delay, reverb and repeats, which he varied by aiming the instrument at different microphones. Meanwhile the principals seem intent on avoiding obvious ways of developing things and even relating to each other. Taylor often sounds very different than we are used to hearing him, about as far from the single-minded development of *Indent* as he ever went. He leaves open spaces into which he drops abstract little flurries or chordal sequences and when things do coalesce along the lines we could expect from him, it is never for long. Sometimes he plays inside the piano and at one point even evokes a march. Meanwhile disembodied trumpet floats along on paths of its own. At times Dixon's lines are pensive and almost doggedly deliberate, at others there are no lines at all but series of smears, bleats, blats and skittering runs that are enhanced and distorted by the electronics. If none of

this conveys what the music sounds like, know at least that it is unlike anything you have heard before and that you will find it challenging, mesmerizing and endlessly rewarding.

Different ideas regarding packaging seems to have been one thing that delayed the original release of *Duets 1992*, but we can be sure that the production values Triple Point has brought to bear far exceed anything that could have happened in the '90s. The remastered *Indent* LP is beautiful as well, basically reproducing the 1977 Arista packaging with superior sound on a far superior pressing.

For more information, visit orgmusic.com and triplepointrecords.com



Better Days Will Come Again: The Life of Arthur Briggs, Jazz Genius of Harlem, Paris and a Nazi Prison Camp
Travis Atria (Chicago Review Press)
by Kevin Canfield

Trumpeter Arthur Briggs, born 121 years ago this month, honed his talents on uptown bandstands during the early years of the Harlem Renaissance. By the '20s, he was a minor Jazz Age star in Paris and would record with Coleman Hawkins, Django Reinhardt and Marlene Dietrich. When WWII began, the racism he'd encountered in the U.S. compelled him to stay put in France, altering the course of his life.

Travis Atria has researched Briggs' life on two continents, presenting a vivid portrait of Briggs as an industrious artist and "ambassador of jazz". Traveling alone, Briggs was 16 when he took a ship from Grenada to Ellis Island in 1917. The trumpet techniques he'd practiced since childhood earned him spots in bands that performed classical and ragtime tunes at places like the lively Lenox Casino on West 116th Street. Briggs played alongside Sidney Bechet and other notables while touring the U.S. in the 1910s-20s. In several states, he and fellow black bandmates were harassed by racists, "giving Briggs a lesson in American culture beyond Harlem," Atria writes. This informed Briggs' decision to stick with bands that worked in Europe—he played all over, from Vienna cabarets to Buckingham Palace—and make Paris his home. "On any given night," Atria says, "Briggs provided the soundtrack as the likes of Alice B. Toklas, Jean Cocteau, Marcel Duchamp and Ezra Pound got drunk" at Le Grand Duc, the famed Montmartre club. *The Chicago Defender*, the prominent African American newspaper, called Briggs "the one musician in Paris who is never without work."

In 1940, as German forces swept across Europe, friends implored Briggs to return to America. He opted to stay in Paris. That October, the Nazis tossed him in a squalid prison camp near Paris. For four years, Briggs endured filth, bigotry, threats and maggot-infested food, staving off thoughts of oblivion by playing in a camp jazz band and conducting a makeshift orchestra. Briggs was 43 when he was freed and during his time in the camp, "jazz had moved past him," Atria says. Briggs sensed this, but clearly wasn't one to give in. "Within weeks of his release," Atria adds, "Briggs put a new band together."

For more information, go to chicagoreviewpress.com



Colors
Michel Petrucciani (Dreyfus)
by Thomas Conrad

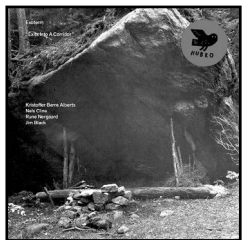
Few previously unreleased Michel Petrucciani recordings have come to light since the pianist's death at 36 in 1999. *Colors* is not one. 17 of these 18 tracks appeared on Petrucciani's Dreyfus albums between 1994-97.

There are some minor issues, like typos, misidentified personnel and sudden fades. But this two-CD compilation gathers in one place a strong representative selection of Petrucciani's late music. The liner notes by Pascal Anquetil contain passion and fresh insights. Petrucciani's severe disability from the bone disease osteogenesis imperfecta is widely known. But there is less awareness that he lived with constant pain and that he sometimes fractured bones while performing (a finger, his coccyx) and kept on playing. Many may not know that "Love Letter", a ballad like an outpouring of the heart, was composed for his last partner, Isabelle Mailé, who was with him when he died and who now lies beside him in Père-Lachaise Cemetery. The booklet also contains touching photos and reminiscences.

There are live solo concerts and studio sessions and also duos, trios and expanded ensembles. The tunes, all Petrucciani, are often technically daunting and require a pianist with extraordinarily gifted, independent hands. But even with Petrucciani's special capacity to drown songs in lavish extravagance and to find melodies within melodies, he was always a clear communicator. What he primarily communicated was joy: the joy of the invincible human spirit and of sharing his own creativity. You hear it in the way he could not wait to get to the next phrase. Often the joy was tinged with melancholy, like on "Romantic but not Blue".

He got his own sound from his Steinway. His hands were not impaired by his disability and his touch was powerful and hard but not harsh. (Anquetil believes that his "flexible bones" allowed his hands to "bounce back" from keys and create "mind-blowing intervals".) His notes rang, celestially. Just two examples: "Hidden Joy" starts pensively but is eventually released into crescendos of exhilaration. "Looking Up", perhaps his most admired piece, opens with bright snatches of notes in quick ascending runs like questions, which are answered in the affirmative when the melody coalesces and, resoundingly, resolves.

For more information, visit bmg.com/de/artist/dreyfus-music



Exits Into A Corridor
Exoterm (Hubro)

Music from the Early 21st Century
Bobby Previte/Jamie Saft/Nels Cline (RareNoise)
by George Grella



Dreamers Do
Kat Edmonson (Spinnerette)
by Marilyn Lester

connection too, as these are both fine examples of the kind of visceral, satisfying post-post-rock music that jazz musicians in general, and some of these players in particular, have been making early in the 21st century.

Exoterm's *Exits Into A Corridor* sounds like the Alas No Axis album we've been waiting for since 2013's *Antiheroes*. And indeed, Jim Black is the drummer. This is described as a "Norway/US supergroup" and all the music is by bassist Rune Nergaard but it's impossible to imagine Exoterm existing without the example of Alas No Axis. Also impossible is imagining this band without memories of punk rock. Alas No Axis could generate an earth-moving momentum, but this band thrashes more and Black himself frequently stretches free in a way he never did with his group, churning away and letting the pulse of the music build and keep its own pocket.

The sound is often beautiful—the opening "Fist Light"—often thrilling and always dark in an impressionistic, cinematic way, which follows narrative song titles like "Forest Mist-Night" and "Moves Away From the Door". Saxophonist Kristoffer Berre Alberts has a full tone and a public-facing, extroverted stance and his voice seems to dig hooks into Cline and the others. There's lots of great building tension and release, like in a suspense movie or a great rock set.

There are even more thrills on *Music from the Early 21st Century*. Though Bobby Previte is a more precise drummer than Black, this album is looser, very much the feeling that the trio is jamming, though with the high level of organization that has a relaxed but certain grip. Part of that is certainly that this is essentially an improvised album, though the players are clearly working with some common material (this also marks the first collaboration between Cline and organ player Jamie Saft). Another is that this is a live album, a collation of performances captured at Nublu and at venues in Pennsylvania and the Hudson River Valley.

That means this trio album is far more uneven than the compositionally directed Exoterm recording. But the lows, like "Paywall", are neither too deep nor bad, they're more a question of the limits of inspiration and the pleasures of hearing an excellent band vamp for a while. "For a while" means that this is a long album—77 minutes—and it can feel like it's been spinning for quite a bit. That's something of a necessary condition, though, as the longest tracks, "Ocession", "The New Weird" and "Flash Mob", are the best stretches, strong enough to carry the whole package into the top level.

Cline wails, but it's Saft who really shines brightest and his playing on "The New Weird" mixes the soulful roots of the instrument with elegant and imaginative harmonic motion. That's all before the blues comes out and wraps itself around the band. "Flash Mob" comes at the end, and, with crowd noise mixed in, sounds like the kind of encore that gives the people what they want and sends everyone, band included, home happy.

For more information, visit hubromusic.com and rarenoiserecords.com. Cline was scheduled to be at The Sultan Room as part of Alternative Guitar Summit and Village Vanguard with Kris Davis.

across a single night, via the mid-century Disney catalog along with familiar standards and two of her own works. Just the notion of Disney as a measure of emotional states is a unique, innovative enterprise.

Edmonson crafts a song cycle whose story is based on belief, starting (and ending) with *Cinderella's* "A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes" (Oliver Wallace-Paul J. Smith). It's followed by "Go to Sleep" (*Babes in Toyland*, Victor Herbert-George Bruns-Mel Leven), an ethereal lullaby, complete with angelic backup chorus. This number best captures Edmonson's vocal tone and style: a light and airy, sprightly soprano inflected with her Texas roots. "In a World of My Own" (*Alice in Wonderland*, Oliver Wallace), further sets an otherworldly mood. The rhythm is lulling, yet jaunty, with a rocking motion and highly evocative of the twilight world of dreams or, possibly, more pointedly, the far away realms of daydreamers.

Atmospheric instrumental interludes further set the tone. The flute-based "Night Walk" is followed by the classic "When You Wish Upon a Star" (*Pinocchio*, Leigh Harline-Ned Washington) but this isn't your grandmother's version. Edmonson has reimagined the tune with creative phrasing and updated rhythmic innovation. Another interlude, the mobilizing, percussion based, pun-titled "A Little Night Music?" (Stephen Sondheim) is followed by its natural consequence in the heart-throbbing, happily yearning "All I Do Is Dream of You" (Nacio Herb Brown-Arthur Freed). The arrangement features percussion and a gently driving Latin beat, with male chorus and an interlude of hopeful cheeriness.

Edmonson's own "Someone's in the House" is a fun, bass-inflected tune ending with a wild flight of saxophone improvisation calling up the kind of wide-eyed fear that proves ultimately harmless. Her "Too Late To Dream" is a beautiful, lush ballad, very Disneyesque in compositional style. Completing the story, Edmonson underscores her overarching view of positivity with "What a Wonderful World" (Bob Thiele as "George Douglas" and George David Weiss), delivering the tune as a balladic story song.

Edmonson has created an exploratory work of major consequence. Superb backing vocals by the trio Duchess are sprinkled like fairy dust throughout. The roster of superb musicians includes drummer Aaron Thurston, who co-produced the album and arranged most of the songs, with fresh, contemporary updating. Also featured are bassist Bob Hart, guitarist Matt Munisteri, Rob Schwimmer on keyboards and Haken Continuum synthesizer and pianist Matt Ray, plus Yacouba Sissoko on kora, Deep Singh on tabla and Bill Frisell on guitar.

For more information, visit katedmonson.com. Edmonson was scheduled to be at Birdland Theater.





You Scream A Rapid Language
James Ilgenfritz (Infrequent Seams)
by Tyran Grillo

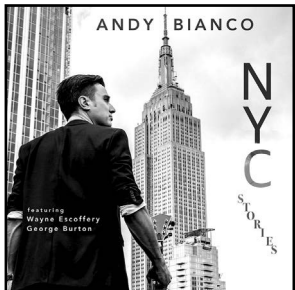
Bassist/composer James Ilgenfritz is rare for running lines of transfusion between jazz and classical bodies while keeping them equally alive. In that spirit, he presents this chamber program of formidable subtlety and feeling that travels comfortably between (and beyond) genres.

The combinations of instruments provide constant fascination, starting with the pairing of violin (Pauline Kim Harris) and double-pedal bass drum (Alex Cohen) in "Terminal Affirmative". By turns primal and futuristic, this music frays the edges of such contradictions to the point of unity. It's worth noting that this piece is based on observations of Ovid, who emphasized the power of water droplets to erode stone over time as an organic illustration of persistence. This philosophy seeps into everything that follows, but especially in "Apophenia III: The Index (2016)". This trio for piano (Kathleen Supové), guitar (James Moore) and violin (Jennifer Choi), based on a short story by J.G. Ballard, asks the musicians to build a grander narrative out of through-composed fragments. Thus, what first seem to be aphorisms take on a coherence all their own.

"Apophenia IV: A Bell In Every Finger" sets poetry by the late Steve Dalachinsky (on Muhal Richard Abrams and Cecil Taylor, no less) for baritone (Thomas Buckner), piano (Joseph Kubera), percussion (William Winant) and Ilgenfritz himself. Buckner lends his falsetto to this garden of delights and darkness, contrasting hauntingly with the album's masterstroke: "How To Talk To Your Children About Not Looking At The Eclipse". Here flutist Margaret Lancaster breaks down breath to its most linguistically pure elements and makes them sing.

Tempting as it is to call this album intermittently assaultive, it is perhaps better described as possessed of a fierce intimacy. As in the concluding "Fanfares For Modest Accomplishments" for two violins (Pauline Kim Harris and Conrad Harris), it uses brevity to bring our attention to expanse. Such dichotomies are difficult to maintain, but these musicians do just that with unwavering strength.

For more information, visit infrequentseams.com. This project was scheduled to be at Issue Project Room.



NYC Stories
Andy Bianco (Next Level)
by Tom Greenland

The front and back covers show a young man standing on a mid-city rooftop in a purple jacket with rolled up sleeves, back to the camera, shoulders jutted forward, guitar gripped by his side, gazing out over the offices and apartments as the Empire State Building bulges up behind him like a looming challenge—or threat. These

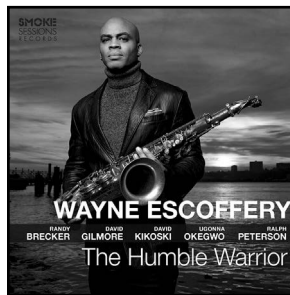
photos of Andy Bianco on his debut recording, *NYC Stories*, tell the tale of struggle. A refugee of post-industrial Pittsburgh, Bianco now stands in opposition to the biggest Apple of all, where striving jazz musicians come and go and you're only as good as your last few (often poor-paying) gigs.

Both the photos and the music on the disc show, however, Bianco prepared for the challenge. This quintet outing with tenor saxophonist Glenn White (Wayne Escoffery replacing him on two tracks), pianist George Burton, bassist Nathan Peck and drummer Paul Wells (Wayne Smith, Jr. or Allan Mednard replacing him on three tracks), is framed by the leader's resilient pieces: motif-driven melodies with contrasting bridge sections (often toggling between time signatures); slow-moving, Wayne Shorter-esque harmonies permitting the soloists more liberty; and long-form melodic clavés used as connective tissue between solos or as platforms for outro blowing. The mix (by Peck) suffers from a predominance of bass with a corresponding lack of treble, making it hard to hear the cymbal touches.

The mood verges from aggressive postbop to more open-ended blowing, especially during the melodic vamps. There are two short soliloquies, "Ballad for Mallards" and "Wild Geese", forefronting Bianco's skills as a chord soloist, though his penchant for long-decay echo effects here and elsewhere creates a certain distancing, an attenuation of the more intimate sound of fingers on strings. Some of his best single-note work occurs on "Drone Battery Slow".

Judging by the jut of his shoulders, clench of his jaw and verve of his writing and playing, Bianco will soon be back with some more stories.

For more information, visit artistecard.com/andybianco. Bianco is scheduled to be at Zinc Bar Apr. 27th.



The Humble Warrior
Wayne Escoffery (Smoke Sessions)
by Phil Freeman

Wayne Escoffery gigs regularly (as a leader, a member of the Black Arts Jazz Collective and Mingus Big Band, and as an in-demand sideman) and has a string of albums to his credit, but his name doesn't pop up in conversation nearly as often as some of his peers. Perhaps that's because his music is hard to categorize. On the surface, it seems like conventional postbop, 'just' acoustic small group jazz played at as high a level as anyone since Joe Henderson, but there's often a lot more going on, as one realizes after multiple listens. This album is a typically strong and adventurous effort, worthy of serious attention.

The core band is one Escoffery has been working with for several years: pianist David Kikoski, bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Ralph Peterson. They're a hard-swinging, hard-hitting unit augmented by a few guests.

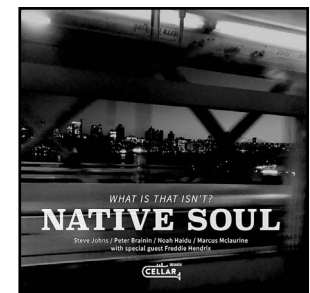
Randy Brecker (trumpet), David Gilmore (guitar) and Escoffery's son Vaughn (vocals), only 11, appear on a radical arrangement of composer Benjamin Britten's *Missa Brevis*. The 22-minute, four-part suite takes up a full third of the album and has the stately feel of the classic John Coltrane quartet's work, especially when Escoffery switches to soprano on the opening "Kyrie" section. On the second section, "Sanctus", Brecker, Gilmore and Escoffery are effectively performing three-part harmony on their

various instruments, making the music soar. Behind them, the trio swings in a stately, regal manner, Peterson keeping his usual apocalyptic approach just slightly in check. He makes sure we know the bombs are there, should he choose to drop them, though.

The title track also features Brecker; he and Escoffery play off each other beautifully, dancing confidently through the complicated but serene melody before stepping out with graceful but fierce solos. "A.K.A. Reggie", a George Cables composition, is a slow, bluesy ballad on which Escoffery's half-murmured phrases slide smoothly across the perfectly locked-in rhythm laid down by the trio.

Escoffery, as well known and highly regarded as he is, has in some sense been in the shadows, waiting his turn. Consider this album an invitation to recognize what should have been obvious long ago.

For more information, visit smokesessionsrecords.com. This project was scheduled to be at Smoke.



What Is That Isn't?
Native Soul (Cellar Live)
by Ken Dryden

Jazz groups frequently last no longer than a CD or two, due to other bands that members are a part of and the inevitable schedule conflicts. But it is refreshing to hear a group like Native Soul, a collective that has maintained the same players during its decade-plus existence: drummer Steve Johns (long in Dr. Billy Taylor's trio but who has played with leaders ranging from George Russell to Thomas Chapin); bassist Marcus McLaurine (a regular with the late trumpet master Clark Terry for years); plus veteran saxophonist Peter Brainin; and the talented pianist Noah Haidu. For their fourth CD, there is a special bonus on several tracks, guest trumpeter Freddie Hendrix, one of the most in-demand players today.

Egos are not an issue in this allstar meeting, as all four members contribute strong compositions and dive head first into each chart. Even though the music is almost all originals, it sounds as if the material has been road-tested on gigs, instead of played after a few rehearsals.

Haidu's lively postbop vehicle "Song Of Secrets" serves as a powerful opener, surging tenor saxophone and fiery trumpet buoyed by the intense rhythm section. Brainin plays both soprano and tenor in his inviting "What Is That Isn't", which blends a bossa nova air with AfroCuban piano licks.

Johns previously recorded "Sleep Walk" on a solo album, but this jaunty arrangement belies its title. Haidu's "The Chant" initially has a Middle Eastern flavor with hypnotic soprano, though the composer's extended solo takes the piece in a different direction altogether. Hendrix returns for McLaurine's "To C.T. With Love", a joyful salute to his longtime boss, which fits the playfulness that Terry brought to every performance. "Distant Circles" is a wistful ballad showcasing its composer's poignant tenor, which communicates its message without words. The sole cover is The Beatles' "Nowhere Man", variations in rhythm between sections and strong solos keeping it fresh. This is another excellent addition to Native Soul's discography.

For more information, visit cellarlive.com. This project is scheduled to be at Birdland Apr. 23rd.



Sofijazz
Sofija Knezevic (s/r)
by Alex Henderson

Sofija Knezevic is not easy to pigeonhole. *Sofijazz* finds the expressive Serbian vocalist (born in Belgrade but living in New York City since 2011) incorporating everything from Brazilian music and blues to traditional Eastern European music. Eclectic as she is, Knezevic delivers an enjoyably consistent album. Knezevic's band is trombonist Elliot Mason, pianist Dan Nimmer, bassist Carlos Henriquez and drummer Obed Calvaire and she doesn't use them as a mere backdrop for her singing, wisely giving plenty of solo space to skillful players like Mason and Nimmer.

Knezevic shows her more abstract side on originals "Serbian Superhero" and "Criticize", both of which find her drawing on the influence of risk-taking vocalists like Betty Carter and Sheila Jordan. But on Richard Rodgers-Oscar Hammerstein's "Happy Talk", she favors a pop-oriented exuberance along the lines of Ella Fitzgerald. Knezevic shows her appreciation of Brazilian music on Durval Ferreira's "Batida Diferente", Chick Corea's "You're Everything" (lyrics by Neville Potter) and the Rio de Janeiro-based group Fundo de Quintal's "Te Gosto" ("I Like You"). While her interpretation of "You're Everything" combines Potter's English lyrics with a samba beat, Knezevic sings in Portuguese on "Te Gosto" and "Batida Diferente". An accordion player, Mestrinho, is featured on "Te Gosto", giving it a forró type of feel more typical of Northeastern Brazil.

Knezevic expresses herself like a Julie London-ish torch singer on ballads, which include Francesca Blumenthal's "Lies of Handsome Men" and Tommy Wolf-Fran Landesman standard "Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most". She delves into a blend of blues and jazz on her own "Bluez", performed in a minor key, giving it a dusky quality, and uses her Eastern European background to creative advantage on interpretations of "Kisa Pada" (a traditional children's song) and standard "Sejdefu". Both of these gems originated in the former Yugoslavia but Knezevic does not perform either in a strictly traditional way, instead as vehicles for postbop improvisation.

Vocal jazz is a crowded field and too many singers are content merely to emulate what Sarah Vaughan or Billie Holiday were doing 70 years ago. Knezevic, however, takes her share of chances on *Sofijazz* and does so with unpredictable results.

For more information, visit sofijazz.com. This project is scheduled to be at Dizzy's Club Apr. 30th.



A Music of the Spirit (Out of Sistas' Place)
Diaspora Meets AfroHORN (s/r)
by George Kanzler

The spirit of Sun Ra reigns over this album, a project of Ahmed Abdullah and Francisco Mora-Catlett, who

played trumpet and percussion respectively in the Sun Ra Arkestra in the '70s. Mora-Catlett brings along two members of his AfroHORN band, baritone saxophonist Alex Harding and percussionist Roman Diaz, to Abdullah's bandmates from Diaspora, Don Chapman (tenor saxophone), Bob Stewart (tuba), Donald Smith (piano), Radu Ben Judah (basses), Ronnie Burrage (drums/percussion) and singer-poet Monique Ngozi Nri. Half of the eight tracks derive from the Sun Ra repertoire, the others ranging from avant swing to township jive.

The opener, "Accent", a '70s Earl Coleman composition, veers from hardbop swing to free sections in a see-sawing between ensemble and free polyphonic strains, which also set up driving solo features for Abdullah, Harding and Smith. The band's muscular rhythmic churn suggests postbop Elvin Jones polyrhythmic sweep on "Reminiscing", by Sun Ra bassist ShooBeeDoo, the two saxophonists in Trane-ish solo mode. And they nail the effervescent lilt of South African township jive on Miriam Makeba's "Magwalandini", prodded by electric bass and tuba, flugelhorn, baritone and piano spearheading the flow with spirited solos.

The other tracks feature vocals as well as the musicians, with Nri delivering an emotionally harrowing incantation/recitation of Louis Reyes Rivera's poem "A Place I've Never Been" over Abdullah's "Eternal Spiraling Spirit" before the piece turns to solos from muted trumpet, tenor and baritone. The poem imagines being a bullet that killed Malcolm X. More inspirational verses come from Nri along with Abdullah on Sun Ra's "Discipline 27 (In Some Far Place)", marked by chugging polyrhythms and a backbeat; "Love In Outer Space", with muted trumpet and an incantatory feel; and "Lights On A Satellite", a swaying, swirling chant-like piece with scintillating free piano. For those who missed the Sun Ra Arkestra and Loft jazz of the 20th Century, this is a worthy trip down memory lane.

For more information, visit store.cdbaby.com/cd/ahmedabdullahfranciscomoracatl. This project was scheduled to be at Sistas' Place.



The Complete Piano Duets
Ella Fitzgerald (Verve)
by Scott Yanow

Throughout her very productive career, Ella Fitzgerald was usually heard either leading a trio, accompanied by a big band or orchestra or with allstar combos. Although she recorded a series of fine duet albums later in life with guitarist Joe Pass, she was only heard on very rare occasions accompanied solely by piano.

This two-CD set reissues all of her piano duet recordings. *Ella Sings Gershwin* and the follow up from 1954, *Songs In A Mellow Mood* have Fitzgerald joined by pianist Ellis Larkins who was considered one of jazz' finest accompanists. His work clearly inspired the singer whose voice sounds particularly beautiful throughout the Gershwin set. The first disc concludes with two selections from Fitzgerald's later songbook projects: "Miss Otis Regrets" from the Cole Porter Songbook with Paul Smith and "Lush Life" from the Duke Ellington Songbook with Oscar Peterson.

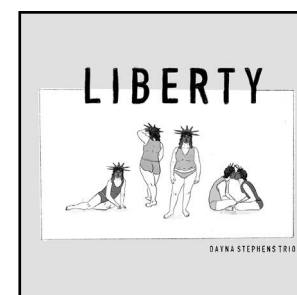
In 1960 Fitzgerald had an acting and singing role in the underrated film *Let No Man Write My Epitaph*. While only three songs were used in the movie, she recorded

13 numbers, mostly slow and moody ballads with Paul Smith as accompanist. Listeners who think of Fitzgerald as primarily being a joyful scat singer will be surprised by her heartfelt renditions of such pieces as "Angel Eyes", "Then You've Never Been Blue" and even a rather downbeat "My Melancholy Baby".

After a version of "Somewhere In The Night" from a 1964 concert with Tommy Flanagan, the remainder of this reissue has the singer reteaming up in 1975 with Peterson for what was originally half an album of solos (bassist Ray Brown was on the other selections), resulting in duets on five songs and two alternate takes. Unlike on most of the ballads from the other dates, Fitzgerald is somewhat playful during these later recordings and even scats a bit.

The Complete Piano Duets features Fitzgerald at her most intimate and makes the case that, in addition to being unbeatable as a scatter and swinging swinger, she was also at the top of her field as an interpreter of ballads.

For more information, visit vervelabelgroup.com. A Fitzgerald tribute led by Brianna Thomas is scheduled to be at Smoke Apr. 23rd-26th.



Liberty
Dayna Stephens Trio (Contagious Music)
by Dan Bilawsky

The title of the ninth album from saxophonist Dayna Stephens works on two different wavelengths. In one respect the nature of liberty serves as direct commentary on the format at hand—a pianoless trio offering escape from chorded shackles. But as a macro-level marker it addresses something more significant: an unflinching and absorbing look at the very meaning(s) of freedom, community and life in the present moment.

Stephens, working with bassist Ben Street and drummer Eric Harland, capitalizes on nearly 15 years of playing history and friendship with this project. Taken together, these three make for a pliant entity, which, nevertheless, delivers music with firmness and weight. On the intriguing "At Least 37th Cousins", a song reminding us that we're all related if we look back far enough in time, Street serves as a perfect pivot. With "Rhyming History"—which takes its name from a (supposed) Mark Twain one-liner claiming that history doesn't repeat itself, but, rather, rhymes—a swaying rhythm in five supports Stephens' catchy lines. And during "Tarifa", named for a Spanish municipality at the Southern end of the Iberian Peninsula, the trio blends Andalusian allure and Middle Eastern mystique while tackling the notions of separation laid out by the literal and figurative divide(s) between Spain and Morocco, Europe and Africa and various segments of the human race.

But Stephens and company aren't moored to weighty points. Just as often, the trio simply cuts loose in smart settings: Opener "Ran" uses mellow tidings to bookend a deep-rooted swing core; "Kwooked Stweet"—a contrafact on John Coltrane's "Straight Street"—delivers weaving fun and shifting gears; and "Loosy Goosy", built on "rhythm changes", goes to town with its name while leaving some room for solo trading with drums. Whether utilizing big-picture expressionism or simply playing to the terrain, the strengths of liberty remain at the forefront for this trio.

For more information, visit daynastephens.net. This project is scheduled to be at The Jazz Gallery Apr. 29th.



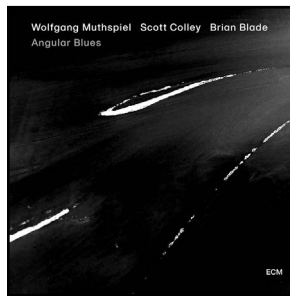
Eponymous
Jazz Sabbath (Blacklake)
by Andrey Henkin

Jazz in the modern era is almost entirely without humor; to wit, pseudo-intellectual band names; dour musician photos that make mugshots look like holiday card portraits; ridiculous hats; and, conversely, the almost Spanish Inquisition-like response to the fairly mundane post-modernist statement of Mostly Other People Do the Killing's note-for-note recreation of Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue*. So it is refreshing to have received the email announcing the release of *Jazz Sabbath* and its tale of righting a tragic, decades-old wrong. With a brazenness that puts noted song-stealer Miles Davis to shame, Black Sabbath—the Charlie Parker of heavy metal—apparently was not sprung from the brilliance of riffmeister Tony Iommi. Instead, those boys from Birmingham were nothing but rank rip-off artists. The truth is that the music, even the name, came from British jazz pianist Milton Keanes, whose Jazz Sabbath trio was an underground sensation in late '60s London. Jazz Sabbath even recorded an album, whose release was unfortunately delayed when Keanes suffered a massive heart attack. Upon recovering Keanes learned that not only had all the copies of the album been destroyed in a highly suspicious warehouse fire but the time he had spent convalescing was just enough for Black Sabbath to rerecord many of his songs and release two albums in 1970. Keanes disappeared into history while Black Sabbath made a decades-long career on false pretenses. Until the master tapes were suddenly found and the annals of musicology could be rewritten.

SPOILER ALERT. None of this, of course, is true but this reviewer, a card-carrying metalhead, will admit sheepishly to being fooled for an entire three minutes. The 15-minute documentary, featuring players from Whitesnake, Faith No More, The Ramones and others, obscured rather than illuminated, as did the fact the Milton Keanes of today was initially shown from the back, face obscured by long gray hair. Who is Milton Keanes? Adam Wakeman. In addition to his own albums, he has been a touring member of Black Sabbath and Ozzy Osbourne's bands and is thus uniquely positioned to play the part of the disgruntled Keanes, now trying to reestablish his significance.

All this is jolly good fun yet the joke could quickly fall flat if the music doesn't deliver. It does and the reason why is crucial to its success. Jazz bands have been covering rock music for as long as the latter has existed, mostly badly. Rather than continue that trend, Keanes/Wakeman presents the iconic music of Black Sabbath as if it were, as per the story, actually conceived of as jazz. It certainly helps that the songs are heavily rooted in the blues and thus share a foundation with much of jazz. Some pieces work better than others: "Rat Salad" almost sounds like boogie-woogie; "Iron Man"'s unaccompanied intro takes it almost into Hank Jones territory before moving into crisp swing; and "Children of the Grave" could have been from a lost Ahmad Jamal session. Sometimes guitar is added, which can slightly break the spell—as can the modern production standards. On the other hand, if you handed this album to an informant for the jazz police with no personnel or song credits, it would soon get its own tedious PR one-sheet and the band its choice of basement jazz club gigs.

For more information, visit blacklake.eu/jazzsabbath



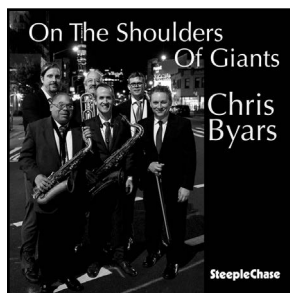
Angular Blues
Wolfgang Muthspiel/Scott Colley/Brian Blade (ECM)
by Tyran Grillo

On *Angular Blues*, Wolfgang Muthspiel revives the format of his 2016 ECM leader debut. Rejoined by drummer Brian Blade yet inviting bassist Scott Colley in place of Larry Grenadier, the Austrian guitarist serves a full course of originals with a couple of surprises added to taste. The members of this trio share what Muthspiel calls a "love of song" and perhaps no more succinct term could so accurately describe their rapport. Longtime listeners won't be surprised that Muthspiel has brought together players who understand the value of space: how to shape it, to be sure, but more importantly how to let oneself be shaped by it in kind.

The narrative impulses of the opener, "Wondering", harness the flexibility of Muthspiel's acoustic playing, which in this context meshes with bass while kissed cymbals draw the z-axis of a three-dimensional sound. Moods cycle between gentility and insistence and shades between. The title track is aptly named for revealing a delicately virtuosic side to the energies at hand. "Hüttengriffe" follows with a soft-hewn anthem.

The remaining tunes find Muthspiel plugged-in, jumping into the amorphous body of his electric guitar. In "Camino" he is equally at home, his fingers free to engage in metaphysical play. As a thinly veiled tribute to the late John Abercrombie—not only in style but also in the way Muthspiel drafts his solo—it's a highlight that deserves close listening. Others include "Kanon in 6/8", which shows the trio at its deepest level of synergy (it's also offset by the digitally enhanced solo "Solo Kanon in 5/4"), and bebop-influenced "Ride". Two standards fill in the gaps. Where Cole Porter's "Everything I Love" moves vertically, Gene de Paul-Patricia Johnston-Don Raye's "I'll Remember April" ends this worthy set on a horizontal plane.

For more information, visit ecmrecords.com. This project was scheduled to be at Jazz Standard.



On The Shoulders Of Giants
Chris Byars (SteepleChase)
by Ken Dryden

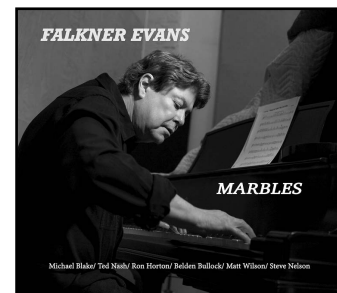
Saxophonist Chris Byars' sextet is made up of musicians with whom he has worked on a fairly regular basis over the past few years, some relationships going back decades; this configuration has worked together steadily since 2018. The last significant change was the departure of guitarist Pasquale Grasso, but Byars didn't opt to add another chordal instrument, though he had used a pianist in the past. Instead, he switched to tenor saxophone and enticed alto saxophonist Zaid Nasser to return, the band completed by seasoned trombonist John Mosca, bassist Ari Roland, bass clarinetist Stefano Doglioni and drummer Phil Stewart.

Byars' writing keeps everyone busy, so as one musician solos, the others are playing background

harmonies scored by the leader. Aside from Tommy Turrentine's cool "Big Red", all of the songs are Byars' originals, titled after cities or states as a play on a bandmember's name. The music will invite comparisons to the pianoless groups led by baritone saxophone great Gerry Mulligan, even with the different instrumentation, though the influence of a number of masters from the swing and bop era are also apparent in Byars' writing. The music sounds like it has been worked out in concert, sounding effortless.

One of the major strengths of the tenor saxophonist's charts is they are long enough to feature all of the frontline in each selection while both Roland and Stewart are also included in turn. Byars' elegant, sauntering "Keeper" is one of two songs dedicated to his new wife Ayna. Lively "Closer" showcases intricate alto saxophone, understated, vocal-like bass clarinet and fluid trombone. Roland's occasional switch to playing arco bass is a nice touch, too. The engaging performances on this CD will stand the test of time.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. This project is scheduled to be at Smalls Apr. 26th.



Marbles
Falkner Evans (CAP)
by George Kanzler

Since he emerged around the turn of the century, pianist Falkner Evans has released albums concerned more with the presentation of his compositions than prowess at the keyboard. Here he has expanded his ensemble to a sextet/septet in order to create varied ensemble charts suggestive of full band jazz. Yet he made sure that the rehearsed music could be altered by the musicians in the studio. Those musicians include a flexible horn frontline of Michael Blake (tenor and soprano saxophones), Ted Nash (alto saxophone, clarinet and flute), Ron Horton (trumpet and flugelhorn), plus Belden Bullock (bass) and Matt Wilson (drums).

The music itself is developed in much more sophisticated fashion than a head-solos-head format. Much of it is ensemble driven, some tracks featuring only a couple of soloists. Evans also explores varied time signatures and rhythms, taking full advantage of Wilson's creativity. For instance, the title tune (one of three adding vibraphonist Steve Nelson) rides along on a repeating piano ostinato pattern underpinned by tattooing tom toms, propelling tenor and piano solos before coming to the fore themselves. Wilson also creates an iconoclastic tropical rhythm for "Hidden Gem", doubling Bullock's beat under a slinky melody from the horns in an ensemble with bar breaks from trumpet, clarinet and tenor, vibraphone and piano taking the central solos. Evans makes evocative use of flute, contrasting it, in the tune's bridge, with tenor lead on "Sing Alone" and also exposing it on the bridge of the tango-like "Pina", where the horn section is led by soprano, but piano has the only featured solo.

Evans likes 3/4, 6/8 time and makes it swing much like 4/4. "Civilization" begins in 3 and moves to 4; "Mbegu" mixes 3/4 and 6/8. There's also more conventional swing on the midtempo "Global News", with the most conventional solo order of trumpet, alto, tenor; the tenor-led "This From That" and a fast, boppish "Dear West Village" featuring alto and tenor.

For more information, visit jazzbeat.com. This project is scheduled to be at Smalls Apr. 22nd.

ON THIS DAY

by Andrey Henkin



New Faces - New Sounds From Germany
Jutta Hipp (Blue Note)
April 24th, 1954

Leonard Feather's sexist liner notes aside, this album is highly noteworthy. Part of Blue Note's Modern Jazz Series, it featured the sole woman and European of the 71 10" LPs. That was pianist Jutta Hipp, who was soon to relocate from Germany to New York, where she had an engagement at the Hickory House. Here she is joined by countrymen Joki Freund (tenor saxophone), Emil Mangelsdorff (alto, elder brother to Albert), Hans Kresse (bass) and Karl Sanner (drums) for a piece each by her and Freund, jazz standards and one improvisation.



The Living Music
Alexander von Schlippenbach (Quasar)
April 24th, 1969

After convening the Globe Unity Orchestra in 1966 and before starting his long-running trio, German pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach made this record (later reissued on FMP). It, Peter Brötzmann's *Machine Gun*, Manfred Schoof's *European Echoes* and Willem Breuker/Han Bennink's *New Acoustic Swing Duo* were among the albums that established the European avant jazz movement. Brötzmann, Schoof and Bennink appear here, as do Paul Rutherford, Michel Pilz and Buschi Niebergall for six tunes by the leader, Schoof and Brötzmann.



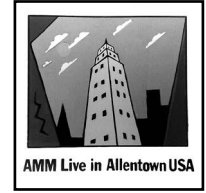
A European Proposal
Bennink/Mengelberg/Rutherford/Schiano (Flora)
April 24th, 1978

Eight years earlier, drummer Han Bennink, pianist Misha Mengelberg and trombonist Paul Rutherford worked together on the septet LP *Groupcomposing* (ICP). Bennink and Mengelberg's history went back to the early '60s and Bennink and Rutherford worked together often in Globe Unity Orchestra and other bands. The odd man out is Italian saxophonist Mario Schiano, who was plying free jazz hundreds of miles south, though this live album was recorded on his turf at Cremona's Teatro Ponchielli, a two-LP document of a one-time encounter.



Raggruppamento
Eje Thelin (Phono Suecia)
April 24th, 1989

Swedish trombonist Eje Thelin's four-decade career moved from Dixieland to modern Scandinavian jazz to freer European settings, finally settling into something mixing the last two across over a dozen albums. This was among his final recordings (he died a year later at 51), a collaboration with the Swedish Radio Jazz Group (founded in 1967 and here with a young Per Ake Holmlander on tuba), featuring fellow Swede pianist Bobo Stenson among the soloists and with Dane Palle Mikkelborg as conductor for Thelin's title suite.



Live in Allentown USA
AMM (Matchless)
April 4th, 1994

The venerable British free-improvising outfit AMM (established in 1966 and still active), here in its longest-running form of co-founders drummer Eddie Prevost and guitarist Keith Rowe, plus pianist John Tilbury (who came to the group in 1980), visits the Pennsylvania town made famous by Billy Joel 12 years earlier. The hour-long concert from the Muhlenberg College Arts Center Recital Hall, split into six untitled parts, was funded in part by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and released on AMM's in-house label.

BIRTHDAYS

April 1
†John LaPorta 1902-2004
†Harry Carney 1910-74
†Duke Jordan 1922-2006
Eric Ineke b.1947
Frank Tusa b.1947
†Gil Scott-Heron 1949-2011
Antoine Roney b.1963

April 2
†Max Greger 1926-2015
†Booker Little 1938-61
†Sal Nistico 1940-91
†Larry Coryell 1943-2017
Rahsaan and Roland Barber b.1980

April 3
†Bill Potts 1928-2005
†Scott LaFaro 1936-61
†Jimmy McGriff 1936-2008
†Harold Vick 1936-87
Linda Sharrock b.1947
Eric Kloss b.1949
Ali Jackson b.1976

April 4
†Gene Ramey 1913-84
†Buster Cooper 1929-2016
†Jake Hanna 1931-2010
†Hugh Masekela 1939-2018
Ole Kock Hansen b.1945
Ray Russell b.1947
Michel Camilo b.1954
Gary Smulyan b.1956

April 5
†Stan Levey 1925-2005
†Stanley Turrentine 1934-2000
Evan Parker b.1944
Jerome Harris b.1953
Håkon Kornstad b.1977

April 6
†Charlie Rouse 1924-88
†Randy Weston 1926-2018
†Gerry Mulligan 1927-96
†André Previn 1929-2019
†Art Taylor 1929-95
†Bill Hardman 1933-90
†Horace Tapscott 1934-99
Manfred Schoof b.1936
Gene Bertoni b.1937
†Noah Howard 1943-2010
John Pizzarelli b.1960

April 7
†Billie Holiday 1915-59
†Mongo Santamaria 1922-2003
†Victor Feldman 1934-87
†Freddie Hubbard 1938-2008
†Pete La Roca Sims 1938-2012
Alex von Schlippenbach b.1938
†Bob Berg 1951-2002
Fredrik Lundin b.1964

April 8
†George Dixon 1909-94
†Carmen McRae 1922-94
†Paul Jeffrey 1933-2015

April 9
†Teddy Roy 1905-66
†Julian Dash 1916-74
Steve Gadd b.1945
Hugh Ragin b.1951
Dave Allen b.1970

April 10
†Fess Williams 1894-1975
†Morty Corb 1917-96
†Fraser MacPherson 1928-93
Claude Bolling b.1930
†Barbara Lea 1929-2011
Omar Sosa b.1965

April 11
†John Levy 1912-2012
Emil Mangelsdorff b.1925
Raymond A. King b.1929
Matt Lavelle b.1970
Jakob Bro b.1978

April 12
†Johnny Dodds 1892-1940
†Russ Garcia 1916-2011
Herbie Hancock b.1940
Ryan Kisor b.1973

April 13
†Bud Freeman 1906-91
†Teddy Charles 1928-2012
†Rusty Jones 1932-2015
†Eddie Marshall 1938-2011
Simon Spang-Hanssen b.1955
John Ellis b.1974

April 14
†Shorty Rogers 1924-94
†Gene Ammons 1925-74
†Monty Waters 1938-2008
Steve Davis b.1967

April 15
†Bessie Smith 1894-1937
†Charlie Smith 1927-66
Richard Davis b.1930
Sy Johnson b.1930
†Herb Pomeroy 1930-2007
†Gene Chericio 1935-94

April 16
†Herbie Mann 1930-2003
Sabir Mateen b.1951
Jukka Tolonen b.1952
†Esbjorn Svensson 1964-2008
Junko Onishi b.1967
Landon Knoblock b.1982

April 17
Chris Barber b.1930
Sam Noto b.1930
Warren Chiasson b.1934
Han Bennink b.1942
Buster Williams b.1942
Jan Hammer b.1948
Mark Sherman b.1957
Sam Sadigursky b.1979

April 18
†Tony Mottola 1918-2004
†Leo Parker 1925-62
†Ken Colyer 1928-88
Freddy Hill b.1932
Hal Galper b.1938
Susanna Lindeborg b.1952

April 19
†Tommy Benford 1905-94
†Alex Hill 1906-37
Randy Ingram b.1978

April 20
†Lionel Hampton 1909-2002
Ran Blake b.1935
"Sonny" Brown b.1936
†Beaver Harris 1936-91
†Billy James 1936-2009
†Joe Bonner 1948-2014
Avishai Cohen b.1971
Matt Brewer b.1983

April 21
†Johnny Blowers 1911-2006
†Joe Dixon 1917-98
†Mundell Lowe 1922-2017
Slide Hampton b.1932
†Ian Carr 1933-2009
Alan Skidmore b.1942
†Peter Kowald 1944-2002
Mike Holober b.1957

April 22
†Buzzy Drootin 1910-2000
Candido Camero b.1921
†Charles Mingus 1922-79
†Tommy Turrentine 1928-97
†Paul Chambers 1935-69
Barry Guy b.1947

April 23
†Jimmie Noone 1895-1944
†Little Benny Harris 1919-75
†Ito Puate 1920-2000
†Bobby Rosengarden 1924-2007
Bunky Green b.1935
Pierre Courbois b.1940
Alan Broadbent b.1947
Narada Michael Walden b.1952
Kendra Shank b.1958
Bryan Carroll b.1959
Chris Lightcap b.1971
Petr Cancura b.1977

April 24
†Rube Bloom 1902-76
†Aaron Bell 1922-2003
†Fatty George 1927-82
†Johnny Griffin 1928-2008
†Frank Strazzeri 1930-2014
†Spanky DeBrest 1937-73
†Joe Henderson 1937-2001
†Colin Walcott 1945-84
Stafford James b.1946
Trudy Silver b.1953

April 25
†Earl Bostic 1913-65
†Ella Fitzgerald 1918-96
†Willis "Gator" Jackson 1932-87
†Harry Miller 1941-83
†Michael Cosmic 1950-2001
Phil Musra 1950
Carl Allen b.1961

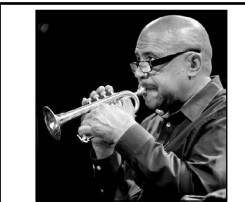
April 26
†Dave Tough 1907-48
†Jimmy Giuffre 1921-2008
†Teddy Edwards 1924-2003
†Herman Foster 1928-99
†Bill Byrne 1942-2002
Axel Dörner b.1964

April 27
†Connie Kay 1927-94
†Sal Mosca 1927-2007
†Calvin Newborn 1933-2018
Ruth Price b.1938
†Freddie Waits 1943-89
Scott Robinson b.1959
Martin Wind b.1968

April 28
†Russ Morgan 1904-69
†Blossom Dearie 1926-2009
†Oliver Jackson 1933-94
†John Tchicai 1936-2012
Mickey Tucker b.1941
Willie Colon b.1950

April 29
†Duke Ellington 1899-1974
†Philippe Brun 1908-94
†Toots Thielemans 1922-2016
†Big Jay McNeely 1927-2018
†Ray Barretto 1929-2006
†Andy Simpkins 1932-99
†George Adams 1940-92
†Hugh Hopper 1945-2009
Julius Tolentino b.1975

April 30
†Sid Weiss 1914-94
†Percy Heath 1923-2005
†Dick Twardzik 1931-55
Abdul Wadud b.1947
Russ Nolan b.1968



HUGH RAGIN
April 9th, 1951

Houston-born trumpeter Hugh Ragin, active since the mid '70s, has had a career distinguished by participation in a wide array of large and largish ensembles. In 1979 alone he was a member of the Leo Smith Creative Orchestra, Mnemonist Orchestra and Roscoe Mitchell Creative Orchestra. He continued to work with Mitchell (most recently as part of the current iteration of The Art Ensemble Of Chicago) as well as Anthony Braxton, John Lindberg, David Murray, Fred Wesley and others. In addition he has made discs for CECMA, Jazzline, Justin Time, CIMP, Black Saint, Marge, Hopscotch and Nine Winds as a leader or co-leader, including with his largish Trumpet Ensemble. -AH

CROSSWORD

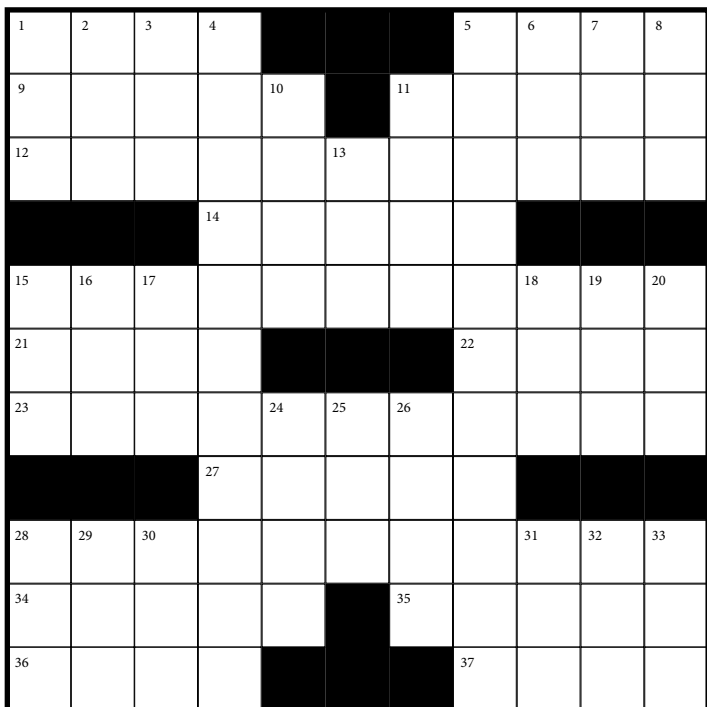
ACROSS

- Saxophonist Osby
- 1983 Sun Ra Saturn album *A Fireside* ____ *With Lucifer*
- Opening track of John Coltrane's *Impressions*
- Northwest Belgian city hosting a jazz festival every July
- A specialty LP may use this kind of vinyl
- Saxophonist Stephen responsible for the Monday night jazz series at Bushwick Public House
- 2000 Mike Mantler ECM album
- 1969 Tony Williams Lifetime Polydor album *Turn It* ____
- Undected minus octet
- Vince Guaraldi and George Duke both have written tunes for this famed Southern California resort
- Drummer Itzik
- 1981 Philly Joe Jones Marge album
- 1997 Erik Friedlander SLAM album
- Like a free jazz saxophone solo?
- Pianist Danny who arranged for Ella Fitzgerald, John Kirby and others
- Sonny Rollins sobriquet

DOWN

- Mingus tune ""Better ____ Hit in Your Soul""
- RareNoise Records catalogue prefixes

- 1969 Art Ensemble of Chicago live album ____ *Wobu*
- Jimmy Heath's favorite type of boy?
- Recently departed Norwegian drummer Jon
- 1987 Tribal Tech Passport Jazz album *Dr.* ____
- Vocalist Phillips
- A.R. Penck, Frank Wollny, Heinz Wollny
- Org. administering high school jazz bands from Juneau to Anchorage
- Notes in D7sus4 chord
- Like many a Lee Konitz album title
- Lindy ____
- Cole Porter standard "" ____ Got You Under My Skin""
- Proprietor of the Village Vanguard to her friends?
- The Swing ____
- Single jazz musicians can apply for this tax break (abbr.)
- 1999 Tetsu Saitoh/Michel Doneda Ohrai album ____-*Kan Live At* 聖誕音樂堂
- German flutist Mark Alban
- Coda or outro?
- 2008 Reptet Monktil album *Chicken Or* ____?
- Queens jazz venue (abbr.)
- What you give your band after a low-paying gig?
- West Village jazz venue once the Village Gate (abbr.)
- Bassist John who worked with Sun Ra and Thelonious Monk
- Singular flutist Hubert?
- 2001 Billy Martin Amulet album *Black* ____ *Speaks*



By Andrey Henkin visit nyjazzrecord.com for answers