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If you are reading this, we’ve been spared the apocalyptic prediction of the Mayans. We can only assume that whatever entity(ies) are responsible for such things simply could not let the world end and thus rob us of the opportunity to present our Best Of 2012 selections from the wide realm of jazz. So for that we thank him/her/them. Please flip to our centerfold spread and peruse our selections for the year’s best in Albums, Concerts, Musicians, Clubs, Record Labels, Boxed Sets, Reissues, Tributes, Unearthed Gems, Large Ensembles, Latin and Vocal releases, Debuts, books and, if that were not enough, 100 New Release Honorable Mentions. We hope that some of your favorites made our lists and also that you’ll discover some new treasures. Of course, we won’t have that much time to enjoy them: new releases are en route and there is an Incan legend foretelling the end of the world in 2013.

In the meantime, winter in the city is hardly a time to stay indoors. One of the highlights of the cold months is the annual Winter Jazzfest, which this year includes a performance by legendary trio The Fringe (On The Cover), who just celebrated their 40th anniversary. Newish The Firehouse Space will present a weekly curated series by drummer/percussionist Satoshi Takeishi (Interview), in addition to his numerous performances around town with a multitude of groups. And The Stone’s programming this month will feature Catalan pianist Agustí Fernández, including solo (his new solo disc made it into our Honorable Mentions list...that’s what they call synergy). We also have features on saxist Gary Foster (Encore), who makes a couple of rare appearances; harpist Dorothy Ashby (Lest We Forget), fêted at Winter Jazzfest; Jazzhus Disk (Label Spotlight), one of our imprints of the year; festival reports from Poland and Scotland; a Megaphone by saxophonist/artist Patrick Brennan and our usual bounty of CD Reviews and concerts in our Event Calendar.

Happy New Year!

Laurence Donohue-Greene, Managing Editor Andrey Henkin, Editorial Director

On the cover: The Fringe (photo by Scott Friedlander)

Corrections: In last month’s NY@Night, the accordionist with Kyoko Kitamura and Anne Rhodes was Adam Matlock. In the CD Reviews, the label for Karl Berger/Dom Minasi’s *Synchronicity* is Nacht and the guitarist for Pretty Monsters is Owen Stewart-Robertson. In the Birthdays, Herbie Nichols was actually born Jan. 3rd.

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Though it entailed gathering musicians from various parts of the globe, Canadian clarinet master François Houle did the right thing by playing ShapeShifter Lab (Dec. 2nd) with the exact lineup from his brilliant Songlines release Genera. The frontline of Houle, Swiss trombonist Samuel Blaser and American cornetist/flugelhornist Taylor Ho Bynum allowed for endless color mutations and finely rendered written parts. Frenchman Benoît Delbecq kept it fairly low profile on piano and prepared piano, but he endowed the music with a wealth of harmonic and percussive twists. Bassist Michael Bates and drummer Harris Eisenstadt (Canadian ex-pats both) pointed the way from the airiest rubato abstraction to driving, meticulously placed rhythms. The set began slow, with the dark lyricism of “Le concombre de Chichoutimi”, but Houle was thinking in terms of a long medley: Bates soon segued to the up-tempo line of “Essay No. 7” then joined Eisenstadt for an interlude that brought the band into the emphatic, slow-grooving “Guanna”. Houle was blowing two clarinets at once by the time the medley was finished. On the swing-based “Albatros” he played through half a clarinet, connecting his mouthpiece directly to the lower joint. That is the essence of Houle’s approach: wildly unstable, expressionistic elements we with straightforward and undeniable virtuosity. The dueling plunger shouts of Bynum and Blaser on “Mu-Turn Revisited” offered another vivid example.

-Kurt Gottschalk

There isn’t really room for a third person in Jon Irabagon and Mike Pride’s duo I Don’t Hear Nothin’. But the Blues. The Sonny Rollins/John Coltrane styled sax-and-drum meeting already fills every inch of the sound space it creates, so adding anything - much less a guitarist schooled in heavy metal - seems something like caulking an anvil. But the over-the-topness of making the extraordinary Mick Barr a third member is what made it work when they played Cornelia Street Café (Dec. 6th). The strategy at play was essentially to stand on top of each other, playing endless arpeggios like a ladder extending off a fire engine. By virtue of sheer momentum it was unimportant if the notes matched up, which they didn’t really, but the players synched in velocity and showed, well, “restraint” is a funny word, but they showed exemplary control. Not all was bluster, however. After some pace-setting laps, Irabagon started playing one note to Barr’s four and providing a grounding. He fell in and out of that while Pride matched and sometimes quartered the maestro. About 20 minutes in they dialed it back just enough to reveal the harmonic complexities underpinning the momentum, then accelerated again, holding tight to the tempo but letting amplitude ebb and flow. The slurring of the reed, the wavering of guitar distortion, melded into a whole, punctuated and perforated by the force of Pride’s drumming. And true to their name, they even skirted on a blues theme before the end.

- David R. Adler

As a student of Lennie Tristano and a noted colleague of Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh, tenor saxophonist Ted Brown provides a living link to the Tristano school - an intriguing area in jazz history, somewhere in the interstices between bop and “cool”. Brown turned 85 the day before his gig at The Drawing Room (Dec. 2nd) and arrived ready to celebrate in his calm and imperturbable way. His co-leader for the first set was Brad Linde, a young DC-based tenorist and Brown disciple, who played with distinction on Brown’s “Smog Eyes” and Tristano’s “317 East 32nd Street”, not to mention the standards “Broadway” and “My Melancholy Baby”. Pianist Michael Kanan, who runs The Drawing Room as a rehearsal space and concert venue, joined the band and juiced up the harmony, adding his own inventive spark. After a break, attention turned to Brown with cornetist Ikue Mori, bassist Chris Lightcap and drummer Matt Wilson. Harmony was king in this quartet, even with no piano: Knuffke and Brown snaked their way through the changes of “Featherbed” (based on “You’d Be So Nice to Come Home To”) and applied the Tristano logic in minor keys (“Jazz of Two Cities”) and waltz time (“Dig-it”), all from their new SteepleChase disc Pound Cake. Knuffke had a way of dancing into his melodies, as if striving to embody each phrase physically. Brown played his trickiest heads without a flaw and his solos, while not as agile as way back in the day, were stamped with pure individuality.

- David R. Adler

Phantom Orchard, the remarkable duo of Ikue Mori and Zeena Parkins, seems to appear about every four years - not often enough but always a welcome sight. This time around saw the release of the wonderful Trouble in Paradise (Tzadik), with the group expanded to include Parkins’ sisters Maggie and Sara on strings, the Norwegian duo Fe-Mail (Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratke and Hild Sofie Tafjord) supplying vocals, electronics and French horn and the frighteningly precise percussionist Shanya Dunkelman. Parkins and Mori set a ridiculously ambitious goal for themselves at Roulette (Dec. 11th) by playing their new set of septet compositions on their own. It was, of course, radically different than the record, but with Parkins playing synthesizer, acoustic and electric harps, hand percussion and celeste and Mori armed with two laptops, one for her percussive audio textures and the other for her haunting live video manipulations, they did a laudable job. The music came off as more episodic, more like a series of short scenes than the expansiveness of the CD, but that worked well with the projections, which were the big surprise of the night. Mori has been working with video for a number of years, but previously it’s seemed secondary to her music. Here she employed small, creepy dolls she’s been making, creating little scenes - unnerving, occasionally funny - that were intercut with more abstract visuals. The set ended with a prolonged decrescendo and then, perfectly, a feather falling from Parkins’ hand.

-KG
Last month pianist James Carney presented the 250th edition of his Konceptions series. Neither changes in venue nor the broader musical landscape stays this courrier from the swift completion of his appointed rounds. It really is an impressive accomplishment and to celebrate the milestone, Carney presented his own group to a packed house of well-wishers, followed by what was supposed to be a reconvening of the mighty Tim Berne/Barbara Carroll collaboration that began last decade and continues intermittently. But it was not to be extended on this particular evening (Dec. 4th) as the trumpeter was unavailable due to illness. That left alto saxophonist Berne, guitarist Ryan Ferreira and drummer Ches Smith hopefully to be “entertaining enough”, to quote Berne. They succeeded admirably on three pieces of decreasing length (before the final improvisation, Berne was heard to mutter “It’s almost not worth stopping...it’s so hard to start.”), which brought together the skills of three players equally comfortable with gauzy soundscapes and spiky musical razzors. Density was passed around judiciously, with no one interested in bulldozing into cracks but instead gently (or occasionally not so gently) stepping into the spaces left behind. Smith’s percussive elements - gongs, springs - were often echoed by Ferreira’s heavily-effected comping and the trio seemed to want to get quieter rather than louder, contrary to common improvisatory practice, except for the nine-minute free improvisation, Berne was heard to mutter “It’s almost not worth stopping...it’s so hard to start.”), which brought together the skills of three players equally comfortable with gauzy soundscapes and spiky musical razzors. Density was passed around judiciously, with no one interested in bulldozing into cracks but instead gently (or occasionally not so gently) stepping into the spaces left behind. Smith’s percussive elements - gongs, springs - were often echoed by Ferreira’s heavily-effected comping and the trio seemed to want to get quieter rather than louder, contrary to common improvisatory practice, except for the nine-minute free improvisation, Berne was heard to mutter “It’s almost not worth stopping...it’s so hard to start.”)

For years New York’s finest pianists and bassists paired off nightly at Bradley’s on University Place to engage in profound musical conversations showcasing the art of duo improvisation in an intimate setting. Since the demise of the legendary room, the form has all but disappeared at its highest level, but the sound of the Kenny Barron-Dave Holland Duo at Jazz Standard (Dec. 13th) recalled those glorious days. While Barron was a regular at Bradley’s, Holland, an occasional visitor, was more frequently playing free improvised duets with Sam Rivers further downtown at the saxophonist’s Studio RivBea loft space. The merging of the two masters’ divergent backgrounds resulted in music of subtle sophistication both inspired in its intelligence and breathtaking in its beauty. Barron opened the evening’s second set with a spare introduction to his “Lullaby”, Holland joining him on the second chorus to expand the sonic atmosphere with rich harmonics and engaging countermelodies. On the pianist’s “Calypso” the bassist combined an authentic Caribbean beat with bluesy inflections to drive the piece as Barron soloed soulfully. Opening his own “Ario” with a virtuoso bass solo, Holland displayed the full supple tone that marks him as one of his instrument’s best proponents. The sound of Bradley’s came alive on a swinging “I Hear A Rhapsody” and alluring “Daydream” before the pair closed, wildly running the gamut on Barron’s inside/outside tour de force “What If?”. - Russ Mastro

A day before his 76th birthday and one month prior to his official inauguration as a 2013 NEA Jazz Master, the appearance of Eddie Palmieri at Rose Hall (Dec. 14th) was a much-deserved celebration of Latin music’s greatest living American icon. Billed as “A Career Retrospective”, the almost three hour concert could hardly touch upon the highlights of Palmieri’s seven-decade-spanning history and so the evening’s music focused on his more recent work merging Latin rhythms and jazz sensibilities. Opening with “Aida”, a concerto-like exposition of his unique pianistic style, replete with trademark percussive dissonant clusters, he demonstrated his standing as a distinctive solo performer. Yet it was Palmieri the bandleader that was truly the evening’s standout. Leaping into his “Palmas”, propelled by his longtime percussion section of José Clausell, ElJohnny Rivera and Orlando Vega, on timbales, congas and bongo or bell respectively, the pianist drove the music relentlessly both as a soloist and with authoritative comping behind bassist Luques Curtis, trumpeter Brian Lynch, guitarist Tim Berne, saxophonist Louis Fouchez, banjoist Hall Corwin, on the Herwig through a set of rhythmic Latin jazz. Adding singer Herman Oliveira, tres master Nelson Gonzalez, trombonist Jimmy Bosch and others for the second half, Palmieri kept his word to deliver music that would lift the audience from its seats with the fiery dance classics “Mucena”, “Lindo Yambu”, “Oye Que Te Conviene” and “Palo Pa’ Rumba”. (RM)

We, along with the entire jazz community, would like to pass along our sincerest condolences to the family of saxophonist Jimmy Greene, whose six-year-old daughter Grace Márquez-Greene was among the victims of the unthinkable tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School last month. A music scholarship fund was established in Ana Grace’s memory. For more information, visit wcsu.edu/ia/greene-scholarship.asp.

We are saddened to report that the end of 2012 saw the closure of two important venues for jazz: Harlem’s Lenox Lounge and Williamsburg’s Zebulon.

The 2012 nominees for Grammy Awards have been announced. Best Improvised Jazz Solo: Ravi Coltrane; Gary Burton and Chick Corea; Chick Corea; Kenny Garrett; Brad Mehldau. Best Jazz Vocal Album: Soul Shadows - Denise Donatelli (Savant Records); 1619 Broadway: The Brill Building Project - Kurt Elling (Concord Jazz); Live - Al Jarreau (And The Metropolis Orkestr); (Concord); The Book Of Chet - Luciana Souza (Sunnyside Records); Blue Moon - Ahmad Jamal (Jazz Village); Unity Band - Pat Metheny Unity Band (Nonesuch). Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album: Centennial: Newly Discovered Works Of Gil Evans - Gil Evans Project (ArtistShare); For The Moment - Bob Mintzer Big Band (MCG Jazz); Dear Diz (Every Day I Think Of You) - Arturo Sandovall (Concord Jazz). Best Latin Jazz Album: Flamenco Sketches - Chick Corea; for the Next Generation - Jose Gonzalez. Best Fusion Album: For The Moment: Gil Evans Project (ArtistShare); New Cuban Express - Manuver Valera New Cuban Express (Mavo Records), Best Traditional R&B Performance: Gregory Porter. Best R&B Album: Black Radio - Robert Glasper Experiment (Blue Note). For more information, visit grammy.com.

Drummer Jack DeJohnette has received a $50,000 fellowship from USA Artists, an organization that recognizes the nation’s most cutting-edge and traditionally practiced artists from the fields of architecture and design, crafts and traditional arts, dance, literature, media, music, theater arts, and visual arts. For more information, visit usaartists.org.

A benefit concert for Warren Smith, who lost his priceless percussion collection in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, is being held at Brecht Forum Jan. 20th. For more information, visit DissonantArts.com.

Bassist/vocalist Esperanza Spalding is a winner in the inaugural Smithsonian Magazine Musical Innovation Award. Spalding won in the category of performing arts. For more information, visit smithsonianmag.com.

Veteran producer/promoter/booker Todd Barkan - of Keystone Komer fame and more recently Dizzy’s Club Coca-Cola - has entered into a partnership with The Iridium (formerly Iridium Jazz Club) to present 100 nights of jazz programming at Iridium in its downtown, primarily on Wednesday and Sunday evenings, through 2013. The series, “Todd Barkan Presents Keystone Komer Nights At The Iridium”, will premiere Jan. 2nd with a tribute to John Mongemont. For more information, visit theiridium.com.

Submit news to info@nycjazzrecord.com
Satoshi Takeishi

by Brad Farberman

Originally from Mito, Japan, drummer Satoshi Takeishi has followed two very different sonic routes: Latin music and avant garde jazz. Joining the New York music community in 1991, Takeishi made his initial mark trap-kitting for congueros like Ray Barretto and Carlos “Patato” Valdez, but soon crept downtown, hooking up with exploratory players like Erik Friedlander and Michael Attias. Music for Takeishi is also a family affair: he plays in a duo with his wife, pianist Shoko Nagai, and has performed and recorded in various situations with his brother, longtime Henry Threadgill electric bassist Stomu Takeishi.

The New York City Jazz Record: You first got interested in Latin music at Berklee College of Music.

Satoshi Takeishi: At the time, there were many musicians from South America and Central America. I just found what they were doing more interesting than the jazz lessons I was taking from some teachers at Berklee. So I got together with these students from Brazil, from Puerto Rico, from Central America and they showed me all these rhythms. I was fascinated by how they transferred these rhythms onto the drumset.

TNYCJR: How did you break into the Downtown scene?

ST: To make a living, I kind of relied on the knowledge of Latin and Colombian music. I got into the New York Latin jazz scene, which was Ray Barretto and “Patato” Valdez and Tito Puente. I got in that first. I got the gig with Ray Barretto’s band. That was straightahead Latin jazz. Meanwhile, I would do all these sessions during the day with all these creative Downtown scene musicians. The community in New York is an interesting thing. Some people can go between these different communities - straightahead jazz and more experimental to rock, pop. I was playing with these Latin jazz people and also very, very creative experimental jazz scene [musicians], but I was also playing somewhat with the straightahead crowd. So I tried to do as many different styles as possible, because that was the reason why I came to New York. Basically, I went into every possible style and I will play with anybody. So, experimental music was not the only area that I was interested in. I moved around.

TNYCJR: Talk about Shoko Nagai.

ST: She grew up as an organist. Not in church; in some very popular school called Yamaha Music School, in Japan. They had this whole program training children to play this monster synthesizer, with the pedals and buttons and two keyboards. Amazing machine. And she grew up playing this instrument. We have an ongoing duo that plays mostly Shoko’s compositions. And they are from contemporary 20th century music to improvised jazz to experimental songs. All these elements incorporated into this music. It’s perfect for me, because I can bring everything that I know about rhythms and music into this duo and she brings her own takes on that. We are only two persons but we try to create this music that has a lot of different elements without defining any particular genre.

TNYCJR: You and your brother have played together in many contexts. Describe your musical bond.

ST: We never really played until I came to New York. When we were growing up, he had his band and I had my band and we would never play together. But once I came to New York, he was already [an] established musician, especially in the experimental scene. Patrick Zimmerli - I think that was the first time we were in a band. And we started working seriously with Erik Friedlander. It’s almost effortless. I know what he does and he knows what I do. It comes so naturally; it’s a great combination. Not because he’s a brother. Musically, it’s an amazing combination whenever we play. But, at the same time, we move around very different circles. So recently, we haven’t really played together. Last time we played together was accompanying this Romanian singer, Sandra Weigl. We were playing experimental gypsy music.

TNYCJR: You’re the drummer on Anthony Braxton’s Quintet (London) 2004. What was that experience like?

ST: I’m very honored that I had that experience working with Anthony, somebody on that level of genius and dedication and love for the music. I worked with him on and off and about a year. I started to go to Wesleyan University to do those small concerts with Anthony because of this bass player Chris Dahlgren, who I had a great, great quartet [with] when he used to live in New York. He moved to Wesleyan to study with Anthony - composition and all that. So Chris would invite me to go up there and do a session with Anthony, do a small student concert with him. Anthony eventually asked me to play in his quintet, which at the time was me, Chris Dahlgren, Mary Halvorson and Taylor Ho Bynum. So that’s how we studied his music. His music, if you look at it, is scary to read. [laughs] It’s very complicated. But he would explain to us the system and how he wants us to play. So all that process of learning - to see the process of his composition and how he approaches his compositions and his notes - that itself was an education. I did one European tour and the London Jazz Festival live album was one of those concerts.

TNYCJR: Talk about Ray Barretto.

ST: Ray did two bands. One was a salsa band, a very traditional Latin salsa orchestra. They didn’t play jazz. They just played dance music. Ray’s known for that - leading a great, great dance band. He had that and the quintet I was in, which is just a jazz band - piano, bass, drums, him on congas and a couple of horns. He came from this very traditional Latin music world but he always had love for jazz. He was on many of the great jazz records in history. So he always had this sensitivity to do this more loose way of playing Latin music. So somebody like me, going to his world, he was very flexible about what I brought into his band. He really never criticized me for not doing what he’s used to hearing. If he felt uncomfortable, he would say, “Sato, I need you to play this or that.” But other than that, how we improvised, how we accompanied the soloists and all that stuff, was pretty much up to me. He didn’t restrict me in that way. I still remember this one night in Boston. At one point in the section, (CONTINUED ON PAGE 41)
Agustí Fernández

by Ken Waxman

A complete pianist in every sense of the word, who blends exquisite technique with innovative inspiration, Agustí Fernández is arguably Spain’s most accomplished contemporary improviser. This month he’s playing four nights in different configurations at The Stone, a rare series of American dates. “I like all kind of combinations, from duo to big ensembles because each one presents different challenges for a player,” he explains. “Listening, language, instruments, techniques, sound, volume, interplay, etc. will be different in every setting.”

In fact, Fernández, 58, who lives in a small town just outside of Barcelona, welcomes all sorts of musical situations. A regular member of The Barry Guy New Orchestra (BGNO), Evan Parker’s Electro-Acoustic Ensemble (EAE) and numerous smaller European combos, at The Stone he’ll work with guitarist Joe Morris, trumpeter Nate Wooley, multi-reedist Ken Vandermark, bassist Pascal Niggenkemper and other players, some for the first time, some renewing associations. “It’s always very inspiring to meet or listen to your colleagues in non-usual combinations,” he adds. “I’ve learned something from every musician I’ve ever played with.” The Stone connection came through Morris, who is curating two weeks at the venue and with whom Fernández has recorded in the past, both in duo and a trio with Wooley. “I feel very close to Joe as a musician,” says the pianist.

Born in Palma de Mallorca (in Catalonia, an autonomous region of Spain), Fernández began playing when he was four years old - “I have no memories of not playing the piano,” he muses - studied classical music at the local conservatory and in 1987 won first prize at the Second Biennale of Young Creators of the Mediterranean, in Thessaloniki, Greece. After that he could have pursued a career in so-called classical music, but had already fallen under the twin influences of pianist Cecil Taylor and composer Iannis Xenakis. Of Xenakis, with whom Fernández studied, he recalls: “I was impressed by the intensity of the music, the lack of romanticism. To me it was more like a natural phenomenon, like the weather, let’s say, happening through sounds, a punch in the stomach.” As for Taylor, “I was impressed by his piano improvisations. I had never heard anything like him before. From both Xenakis and Taylor I learned about the decisions you have to make in order to play your own music and not someone else’s. This means mainly learning what not to play, what to leave out.”

Adding that “you don’t learn the most important things at the conservatory, you learn them on stage or during a rehearsal”, in his formative years the pianist had already been involved with as many musical projects as possible. Starting with teenage rock bands - “I had one foot in classical and another one in rock; Bach and Soft Machine,” he recalls - at 18 he spent a year playing cocktail music in hotels and nightclubs. Later he created music for local theater and dance companies, composed electronic music, co-founded the Banda D’Improvisadors de Barcelona and taught at ESMUC, the Catalan college of music. “I’ve always been active in many different aspects of music, classical, commercial, avant garde, rock, jazz, contemporary, film music, music for dance, etc. sometimes with different gigs or recording sessions in the same week. But for the past 10 to 12 years 99% of what I do is improv-related,” he reports.

Among those projects, besides the BGNO and EAE, are the Aurora Trio with drummer Ramon López and Guy; EFG, a trio with trumpeter Peter Evans and saxophonist Mats Gustafsson and Trio Local with saxophonist Liba Villavecchia and the late sampler player Joan Saura plus many solo concerts (a new solo album, Pianowork | One, has just been released on Sirulita). “I prefer to work in long-term groups because with them you can go deeper in your quest and refine your common artistic approach,” Fernández reveals. His interest in electro-acoustic environments remains as well, which will result in an upcoming CD with electronics manipulator Joel Ryan. Additionally Catalan composer Hèctor Parra is writing a one-hour solo piano piece to feature Fernández, to be premiered in November of this year.

While he concedes that his playing reflects his background, he disagrees with those who insist on the demarcation between European and North-American improvisers. “As an improviser, my roots are in what is called the first generation of European improvisers: Derek Bailey, Evan Parker, Peter Kowald, Alex von Schlippenbach, Fred Van Hove, etc. These are the musicians who invented the music we play nowadays: my tradition. Of course, jazz has been and still is, a big influence, in the sense that I listen to a lot of jazz, old and new. But it’s not the only source and not the main one. Besides improvisation, I listen to contemporary music, electronic music, ethnic music, popular music, anything. There is something in every music that may influence the way I play, even if unconsciously. The African pygmies or [alto saxophonist] Christine Sehnaoui, there’s no difference for me, it’s just great music.

“I also don’t think there is a significant difference between American and European improv,” he adds. “When I’m playing with Joe Morris or Peter Evans, let’s say, it’s not much different than when I’m playing with Mats Gustafsson or Barry Guy. The music may be completely different, but not because they’re Americans or Europeans, but because they’re different people from different backgrounds, generations, countries and lives.” Similarly he dismisses the idea of his being a particular Spanish or Catalan style of improvisation. “Only nuances or hues and the way in which I approach the musical fact may relate to that. But I really don’t think of my playing as Spanish, or European. It’s just something that I am.”

For more information, visit agustifernandez.com. Fernández is at The Stone Jan. 16th-18th and 20th in various groups, including solo. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
• Evan Parker/Agustí Fernández - Tempranillo (New Contemporary Music, 1995)
• Agustí Fernández/Peter Kowald - Sea of Lead (Hopscotch, 2000)
• Agustí Fernández/Mats Gustafsson - Critical Mass (psi, 2004)
• Peter Evans/Agustí Fernández/Mats Gustafsson - Kapros Lithos (Multikulti Project, 2009)
• Agustí Fernández/Barry Guy/Ramón López - Morning Glory (* Live in New York) (Maya, 2009-10)
• Agustí Fernández - Pianoactivity | One (Sirulita, 2012)
is a new music label featuring an indefinite number of audio and video jazz programs taken from live radio and television recordings from the archives of Südwstrundfunk Stuttgart, Baden-Baden and Mainz in south west Germany.

Post-War Europe - Germany in particular - gave American jazz artists a warm reception. Following the nightmare of Nazism, Deutschland was a devastated country and culturally in ruins. The people warmly welcomed US soldiers who brought jazz to the night clubs of their cities and later the big bands and ensembles to the major venues of their towns. Many of the performers felt accepted and understood with their art for the first time in their lives – and needless to say, these circumstances improved the quality of their playing. Many of them remained in Europe, finding new homes in Paris, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Baden-Baden.
In the often promiscuous habitat of the jazz musician, stability is unusual and, in a music that thrives on improvisation, possibly not even desirable. But The Fringe recently celebrated their 40th year together, with a largely unchanged lineup. This Boston trio are deeply immersed in spontaneous free-forming and their stability hasn’t hampered their constantly renewed lust for unpredictability and exploration. They have perfected the art of familiarity facilitating sufficient looseness to take risks every single time they perform.

Tenor saxophonist George Garzone and drummer Bob Gullotti have been an item since the 1972 beginning while bassist John Lockwood is rapidly approaching his 30th year with the outfit. The original bassman Richard Appleman departed when the trio started to tour more frequently, needing to devote more time to teaching and to being with his family. In the early days, Lockwood used to sub a lot and eventually just drifted in full-time.

The band will be making a comparatively rare NYC appearance during this month’s monstrous Winter Jazzfest. Also at the fest, Lockwood and Gullotti will be playing a completely improvised trio set with Leo Genovese, who is mostly known for his regular piano work with Esperanza Spalding.

“We were just doing jam sessions at my apartment,” Gullotti recalls of the early ’70s. “It wasn’t just a trio. There were different musicians, pianists, guitarists. At one point, the other guys couldn’t make it and we ended up playing as a trio and we really liked it. From that point on, I didn’t call the other cats! George and I had met in an R&B band the year before. Then we got a call from WBUR who asked us to play on their radio and we ended up doing that for months, every Saturday night. Somebody heard us and we got a steady gig.”

The absence of chordal instruments such as piano and guitar released The Fringe into a more abstract zone where almost anything could happen. Their extended pieces are rigorous journeys into the outer sonic limits. Garzone’s rounded, gruff tone always extended pieces are rigorous journeys into the outer zone where almost anything could happen. Their performances have flourished with the latest being The Fringe. They’ve now maintained a weekly residency at the Boston Jazz Club Wally’s and also hosting nights at his own house. All three Fringers themselves emerged from Berklee and simultaneous careers in education have been important facets of their existence. Yes, they are qualified to make these observations, but that doesn’t prevent a degree of ambivalence.

“It’s always changing, but it’s really healthy right now,” says Gullotti. “There’s an endless creativity. Dave Liebman’s in town a little bit now and Joe Lovano plays with us quite a bit.” The latter saxophonist guested on The Fringe’s Live at Zeitgeist album in 2003. “He came in to play and it happened to be the night we were recording live.”

Pianist Kenny Werner and saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi are also frequent guests, found playing at The Lily Pad whenever they’re passing through. In fact, recently, Bergonzi has been delivering the gallery’s opening set, with The Fringe following at 10:30 pm. The session continues until well past midnight, which is very encouraging for a Monday evening.

Garzone has plans this year to revive Gar/Gonz, the 1980s combo that united him with Bergonzi. Hopefully, we shall see an NYC date on the tour schedule.

The Fringe have only managed to release 10 albums over their four decades, but these have been spaced out quite equally. One of their highlights was 1992’s It’s Time For The Fringe, where the band revealed a penchant for cameron attire. More than half of the trio’s albums have been recorded live and it seems that they are more likely to include compositions if inhabiting a studio. The Fringe are preparing their next album, a 40th anniversary live set, combining audio and DVD, recorded at the Boston Conservatory Auditorium.

There are plans afoot to release it on a Danish label, but the exact date isn’t yet scheduled. Garzone describes its feel as “classical”, in terms of acoustics, tonality and space. “And in the second set we dressed for the heart of complete improvisation. “We wrote very little music, because it was evident that we were heading into the free range,” says Garzone. “It kind of went that way by itself. Something else took over. There was no set decision about doing that, it just happened itself.”

“We don’t plan too much, we just get up and whatever happened that day comes into the music,” Lockwood explains. “Crazy tunes will crop up, but we don’t decide to do that before the gig, it just happens. There are no rules. It could be a standard or an original. Sometimes a standard might come up that we’re not 100% on, so we create a bridge. It just evolves. We’re almost more of an audience than the audience, because we’re watching this thing happen. Not too much is spoken of it afterwards. That’s how we’ve always done it.”

There is a sense within the band that all three members are satisfied with their continuing state. “I think that the quality we have with the trio is probably always going to be the core,” says Gullotti.

“It’s getting better and better,” says Garzone. “There’s not too many groups that can boast 40 years of playing together. I always say that if you want to keep a band together, don’t try. We just followed the music. Young people don’t do that anymore, they try to steer the music, to determine where it’s going to go and what’s going to happen. Sometimes that works, but there’s no sense of freedom and trust anymore, just letting something happen.”

Lockwood remembers his early years with The Fringe: “Whenever you have a new person, they bring something new to the table. Sometimes a standard might come up that we’re not 100% on, so we create a bridge. It just evolves. We’re almost more of an audience than the audience, because we’re watching this thing happen. Not too much is spoken of it afterwards. That’s how we’ve always done it.”

By the mid ’80s, Appleman was raising two sons, chairing the band department at Berklee and doing a lot of theater pit work (eight shows a week with Monday night off for Fringe-ing). “I was able to hang in there for a while,” he recalls. “But as the group got more offers to perform, something had to give. It became time to change bassists.”

The bandmembers have some differing opinions on the Boston jazz scene. “There are less places to play.

No question of that,” Lockwood observes. “But the ironic thing is there are more and more students being pumped out. In most cities there are less places to play. The colleges have taken over and they’re creating more monster musicians, but there’s no real work for them, so it’s kinda interesting, the whole scenario.”

Nevertheless, Lockwood is instrumental in bolstering the scene, involved with jam sessions at Boston’s historic jazz club Wally’s and also hosting nights at his own house. All three Fringers themselves emerged from Berklee and simultaneous careers in education have been important facets of their existence. Yes, they are qualified to make these observations, but that doesn’t prevent a degree of ambivalence.

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Gary Foster
by Marcia Hillman

Gary Foster is a musician for all seasons. He is a “crossover” artist, playing saxophone, clarinet and flute in genres ranging from jazz and pop to movie and classical music and managing to attain success as a master reedman and a constantly working musician for almost 50 years.

Foster (born May 25th, 1936 in Leavenworth, Kansas) started his musical career learning to play clarinet at 13. “My mother thought I should learn to play a musical instrument. And there was the clarinet,” he recalls. “I started listening to records and became more interested when I was in high school. What fascinated me was how does someone play a jazz solo and by the time I was in my 12th year of school, I was playing in the high school dance band.” At this point, Foster was listening to Woody Herman and Count Basie. What particularly inspired him was the recording of Herman’s “Four Brothers” and saxophonist Stan Getz, whose tone influenced Foster’s emerging style. Following high school, he continued his education at Central College in Fayetteville, Arkansas and then transferred to the University of Kansas, earning Bachelor degrees in Musical Education and Clarinet Performance. “In those days,” he comments, “there were no jazz studies programs in the universities and colleges. You learned by listening to records and by the trial and error method.”

By 1961, Foster had relocated to Los Angeles - playing saxophone and hoping to work as a jazz musician. When reality set in and Foster realized that he could not make enough of a living to support himself and his family as a jazz player alone, he started taking work as a studio musician, doubling on woodwinds. Living in Los Angeles at that time gave Foster the opportunity to work with some of the best in the business. “One of the major influences in my life was Stan Kenton. Although I never worked in his band, he was kind of a mentor for me and was the one who told me to follow my dream,” he explains. Important also to Foster’s further development were Warne Marsh and the late Clare Fischer.

With studio work providing Foster’s main earnings, he was kept busy performing on major movie soundtracks and also at recording sessions. He can be heard playing behind artists such as Frank Sinatra, Mel Torme, Bob Dylan and Barbra Streisand while his TV show credits include The Carol Burnett Show and as part of the Academy Award TV Television Orchestra. He also displayed his classical repertoire ability in regular performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra and Opera Orchestra. But “I’m a jazz player at heart,” he states, so when he was invited to join the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band in 1973, he jumped at the chance and toured with the band until 1982. “I really enjoyed those years and working with Toshiko and Lew. They are like family to me,” he relates. When the band moved on, Foster remained in Los Angeles and continued his studio and performing work. He went on to work at one time or another with the big bands of Clare Fischer, Louis Bellson, Ed Shaughnessy and the Marty Paich Dek-Tette. Other notables Foster performed with included Cal Tjader, Poncho Sanchez and Shelly Manne.

In addition to his busy performing and recording schedule, Foster was able to do some teaching on a collegiate level starting in the ’60s. He has been on the faculty of the Pasadena City College and UCLA. Named Milsap Visiting Professor of Saxophone at the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, he held that position from 1984-2000. Foster performs, lectures and conducts classes at colleges and symposiums whenever he gets a chance.

Although Foster may not be a household name, he has been able to make the kind of music he wants. “I credit my wife for all of the support she has given me over the years,” he readily admits. “She has always kept things going at home while I was out there following my dream.” And even more performances are on his schedule when he makes a rare New York City visit this month - appearing as co-leader with pianist Michael Kanan and as part of drummer Andrew Cyrille’s big band. “I am looking forward to my upcoming gigs in New York. It’s been a long time since I’ve been there,” Foster comments.

For all of Gary Foster’s history and expertise in the many “seasons” of music, jazz remains his “first priority...I love it. To say it another way, I think it was James Baldwin who wrote you ‘have to go way the blood beats’.”

Foster is at David Rubenstein Atrium Jan. 17th with Andrew Cyrille and Smalls Jan. 19th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
• Dennis Budimir - Session With Albert (Revelation, 1963)

Dorothy Ashby (1932-86)
by Donald Eilman

Though we don’t always think of the harp in connection with jazz, it has been a part of that world since the ’20s (on a recording in 1926 by Art Kahn and His Orchestra and credited to one Russ Crandall). Throughout the ’30s-50s, harpsists played with singers, with big bands and on the recordings that featured soloists with strings, later expanding their role. The first harpist to record an album as a leader was Betty Glamann in 1955. However, to really give the harp a jazz personality was Dorothy Ashby. Her 1957 album The Jazz Harpist found her in the company of saxist Frank Wess, drummer Ed Thigpen and bassists Wendell Marshall and Eddie Jones and transformed the harp from simply a color to an instrument that could swing much as a guitar.

Dorothy Jeanne Thompson was born on Aug. 6th, 1932 in Detroit and grew up around music. She attended the seminal Cass Technical High School where her classmates included Donald Byrd, Kenny Burrell and Gerald Wilson, to name a few. After studying at Detroit’s Wayne State University, she played jazz piano but by 1952 she had made the harp her main instrument. She prevailed over jazz players’ resistance to the harp and was soon playing in shows - often with drummer/future husband John Ashby - and recording with some top-notch musicians. And her first jazz record in the mid-’50s was a hit.

Dorothy toured the country in trios with her husband and also worked writing scores in a theater company that he founded. Later, thanks to the assistance of singer Bill Withers, Ashby became a studio musician and, having settled in California, came to record with Stevie Wonder (she’s on the seminal 1976 album Songs in the Key of Life), Dionne Warwick, Diana Ross, Billy Preston, Earth Wind and Fire and the soundtrack of Valley of the Dolls.

Ashby died in Santa Monica, California on Apr. 13th, 1986. But she left quite an intriguing recorded legacy and influence in unexpected places. Her own recordings - over ten as a leader, five of which have recently been reissued in the Fresh Sound boxed set The Jazz Harpist - include her aforementioned debut (1957), In A Minor Groove (1958), The Fantastic Jazz Harp of Dorothy Ashby (1965) and Django Misty (1984). She’s also on recordings by Freddie Hubbard, Gene Harris and Sonny Criss. The High Llamas, an eclectic British pop band, recorded a song called “Dorothy Ashby” in 2007 and her work has also been sampled by hip-hop bands including Jurassic 5 in 2006. All of these attest to her rooted sense of swing, seriousness about the instrument and diverse talents.

A Dorothy Ashby Tribute by Brandy Younger is at Sullivan Hall Jan. 11th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
How we conceive deeply affects how we hear and what we sound. Ordinarily, people talk about “music” as a sonic “thing” we “make” and listen to. But, this is only shorthand for a much larger field of activity and most musicians (at the very least, by feel) know this.

First of all, “music” is not a “thing”, but an activity, a way that happens in an interaction among people, sounds and imagination; music’s sound is the audible symptom of all this doing.

Sounds that act as music, just like any other sound, trace back to some generative source and these in particular become marked with the whoness of a composer, an agent, a person - a somebody. To compose is simply to choose among sounds. So, when we pay attention to music, we listen not only to sounds and how they interrelate, but also to what composers are doing. Composing, however, is more than the design of a sonic image. It’s also social organization - not only assembling sounds, but also coordinating connections among people. Who decides makes all the difference in musical structure.

When musicians sound the decisions of a single composer, its interactive structure could be called monologonal. Musical information (what to play when) flows unidirectionally toward a fixed, generally repeatable, sonic image. A lot of what’s called “composed” music (say, Beethoven, or even a pop tune) behaves this way.

Dialogical structures happen when a number of participants are composing simultaneously. Here, the information flow is multidirectional and reciprocal. Each composer’s decision stream affects all others and the music’s sonic image changes in correspondence with these interactions. It not only doesn’t, but can’t, ‘stand still’. Where a monologonal structure waxes predominately deterministic, dialogical structures bend more probabilistic. Dialogical music, also known as collective improvisation, is a gift offered (through example) to the world by black North America.

Specific compositional decisions participate in a metacompositional context. Metacompositions are communities of precomposed assertions. For example, Euro-classical performers, in general, do not compose, but train to create very specified, standardized sounds to correspond with the compositional messages they follow through notation. A structure like guaguancó is metacompositional. All the information necessary to contribute to a ‘straight ahead’ jam session (including the tunes) is metacompositional. The actual composing (the choosing among sounds) is ordinarily called “improvising”.

In addition to the metacompositionally-based composing that’s achieved in a jam session, or through purely free improvisation, there’s also an option to compose for improvisers, which would be to invent a specific structural interface for dialogical composing. This is in some ways similar to, but still different from, composing for readers or reciters. The difference is that the information conveyed to improvisers is oriented to incite yet something else to happen that’s not been predetermined while at the same time focusing these improvisations in very specific (albeit probabilistic) ways.

The difference between a ‘tune’ or purely ‘free’ playing and a composition by Monk, Mingus or Threadgill - or Ornette’s overall compositional concepts regarding improvisation within which his ‘tunes’ are embedded (“Let’s try to play the music and not the background.”) - is that metacompositional structures by themselves tend to default to a baseline average that can only be redeemed by very exceptional playing while the interface structures proposed through a composition for improvisers raises the bar in a way to push an entire ensemble’s dialogical composing uniquely beyond what’s standard. However, this kind of composing isn’t restricted to handing out new charts. It might also be accomplished through gathering around particular generating concepts or through special understandings evolved through playing together over time.

There’s really no such thing as ‘unstructured’ music. A music’s structure includes the coordinating of sounds, the kind of thinking circulated and the interactive relationships fostered within an ensemble. Composing for a player piano, a recorded tape or a computer is very different from scaling a conception to be embodied by an actual player. And that’s equally different from a player conceptualizing and composing music in situ. All are available and all are possible. But they’re not at all the same (no matter how much recordings may make all of these seem ‘equal’ and interchangeable). It’s a matter of what kind of world you want to enact and what kind of story you want to tell.

For more information, visit sonospheric.net. brennan is at El Taller LatinoAmericano Jan. 10th with Karl Berger. See Calendar.

Widening the Frame
called “Music”
by patrick brennan

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VOXNEWS
by Katie Bull

The VOXNews archive this writer has accumulated since taking over the column last January is formidable. Many CDs didn’t make it into the column, even though taking over the column last January is formidable. However, this kind of composing isn’t restricted to handing out new charts. It might also be accomplished through gathering around particular generating concepts or through special understandings evolved through playing together over time.

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The VOXNews archive this writer has accumulated since taking over the column last January is formidable. Many CDs didn’t make it into the column, even though they are brilliant. So let’s reflect back on this past year and illuminate great albums we just can’t let get away.

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Andy and the Bey Sisters (RCA Victor/Fontana - Blue Moon) captures a tender moment when Bey was just 20 years old! A jazz icon, this reissue is a powerfully enriching way for Bey fans to hear his beginnings.

Some of the releases highlighted in this column over the past year: Hildegard Lernt Fliegen - Cinema Hildegard (Unit); Dr. John - Locked Down (Nonesuch); Tone Ase/Thomas Stranen - Vaygheria (Giigaton); Luciana Souza - The Book of Chet (Sunnyside); Dena DeRose - Travellin’ Light (MAXJAZZ), to name only a few. And the experimentally inventive Kitamura, a core member of Anthony Braxton’s world, can be heard at The Stone as well as commencing yet another residency with her many ensembles at Ibeam Brooklyn (Jan. 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th). Brave and irreverent Marie, a vocalist/ composer who writes deeply personal songs, will crack every heart open with a lightening strike of vocal honesty at Dizzy’s Club (Jan. 31st-Feb. 2nd). And the experimentally inventive Kitamura, a core member of Anthony Braxton’s world, can be heard at The Stone (Jan. 23rd) performing singing Gary, Grace and wit.

The NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | January 2013 11
Jazzhus Disk  
by Alex Henderson

When Chih-Yu Chen, president/founder of Jazzhus Disk, is asked to describe the label’s philosophy and vision, the Taiwanese resident responds, “Jazz around the world”. Indeed, the independent label has been very international in its approach, focusing heavily on reissues and live rarities (many of them previously unreleased) from European improvisers, not shy about unearthing lesser known recordings from the ‘50s-70s. Its catalogue has included CDs by a long list of European musicians that includes German pianist/keyboardsist Wolfgang Dauner, British pianist Stan Tracey, French tenor saxophonist Barney Wilen, Italian pianist Romano Mussolini (youngest son of dictator Benito Mussolini), Norwegian pianist Svein Finnerud and the Danish Radio Jazz Group. Some of the Americans who have appeared in the Jazzhus catalogue include trumpeter Bill Coleman and pianist Bill Evans.

“Jazzhus is a label focusing on jazz music outside of the United States,” Chen explains. “We have reissued albums recorded in Romania, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Mexico, Jamaica, Argentina, the UK, France and Germany. For me, jazz music goes beyond geographical and racial boundaries. It was born in the United States, for sure, but jazz colors its life with people and cultures around the world.”

Having an international outlook appears to be giving Jazzhus a very international following. Chen estimates that Jazzhus’ customer base is roughly “60% in Asia, 20% in Europe, 20% in North America.”

Although Chen grew up in Taiwan and now lives in the Taiwanese capital of Taipei, the Jazzhus founder has spent a considerable amount of time in New York City and it was in 2006 that Jazzhus was started in Brooklyn. At first, the company’s focus was distributing independent jazz CDs and jazz books in China. But in 2007, Chen started to envision Jazzhus as an actual record company instead of strictly a distributor. During a trip to Europe that year, Chen met the late Danish bassist Erik Moseholt and got permission to reissue his rare Jazz Journey album. Jazzhus released eight CDs in 2008 and the label’s identity as a provider of rare jazz recordings from the past took hold. But Jazzhus’ plans were derailed - at least temporarily. "Unfortunately, the global financial crisis took place that fall, starting from NYC and soon went worldwide," Chen recalls. "That affected our CD sales a lot. That year, I moved back to Taiwan for a new job and postponed the entire reissue project for almost two years. Jazzhus Disk didn’t release any other CDs until the winter of 2010.”

2010 was not only the year in which Jazzhus resumed its reissue program, it was also the year Chen met British jazz drummer Barry Martyn (who founded the New Orleans-based Crescent City Productions in 1976) and was excited to hear about the wealth of live recordings he had in his vaults. In addition to licensing previously released titles from Bellaphon/L&R Records in Germany (which Chen says hasn’t been difficult), Jazzhus has purchased an abundance of live master tapes from Crescent Jazz, Martyn helping Jazzhus make them CD-friendly with his editing and digital remastering. Chen notes that those old live analog recordings “need a lot of efforts to transfer them into the digital format…Barry is a really good sound engineer and editor too.”

Chen’s partner at Jazzhus is Mark Zhao, based in Beijing, whose responsibilities include recording and promoting live concerts. Other participants include graphic designers Claire Lin and Shibo Hsu, Masahiro Maeda (who is with Ultra-Vybe Records in Japan and helps Jazzhus with distribution and marketing in that country) and C. Chang (a consultant who helps with packaging and marketing).

A major turning point for Jazzhus came in 2012, when it released German saxophonist/clarinetist Peter Brötzmann’s China Live 2011. That CD/DVD marked the first time that Jazzhus put out a new recording. And according to Chen, new recordings will be a high priority for Jazzhus in the future, anticipating that at some point CD output will “hopefully” consist of “30% older recordings, 70% new or previously unreleased ones.”

Although jazz has been Jazzhus’ focus so far, Chen sees the company getting into other types of music in the future. One of Jazzhus’ goals, Chen says, is “introducing Taiwanese and Chinese musicians to the world” - and that will include not only jazz, but also, rock (including punk), electronics, world music and folk.

One thing that Chen stresses will not change is Jazzhus’ preference for physical CDs. Unlike many labels, Jazzhus isn’t selling digital downloads at all. “We love physical stuff and have never considered… (CONTINUED ON PAGE 41)
FESTIVAL REPORT

Kraków Jazz Autumn I

Situated just north of Slovakia, with the Czech Republic and Germany due west, Ukraine to the east - the ancient city of Kraków, Poland’s one-time capital, is one of the country’s oldest, largest and most important cities. Many improvisers have called it home and countless jazz clubs are spread throughout the city - from Western to Eastern Kraków and across the winding Vistula River to Podgórze, where there are jazz venues nestled among emotional World War II reminders of the Jewish ghetto and Oskar Schindler’s factory. A progressive strand of experimental jazz thrives in Kraków, partly due to the tireless devotion of Marek Winiarski, who in 1998 founded Not Two Records (nearing 200 titles) and seven years ago instigated the annual Kraków Jazz Autumn festival.

2012’s edition took place from early October into the first days of December, mostly fit into two separate weeklong chunks. For Oct. 28th-Nov. 1st, the festival flaunted a diverse international focus, with a particular emphasis on drummers, starting with Hamid Drake, whose face not only graced festival posters strewn throughout the city but whose playing encompassed the festival’s collaborative spirit.

At the Manghba Museum concert hall Drake and Poland’s Hera sextet (its unique instrumentation including Polish clarinetist Waclaw Zimpel also on harmonium, a hurdy-gurdy player and another drummer) successfully traversed tunes ranging from an eighth century Japanese melody, a Tibetan Buddhist prayer, an East Indian tal and an indigenous tune, all with equal and astonishing aplomb. Drake’s multi-rhythmic drive also catapulted the DKV Trio. Through three extended group improvisations plus a brief encore, the drummer’s tempos shifted gears on moment’s notice while his punctuations and escalating syncopations propelled bassist Kent Kessler and reedman Ken Vandermark (on clarinet and tenor).

The Thing, another high-octane sax, bass, drums trio, opened the festival week at Alchemia’s basement space with a two-hour set, leaving little else to be said. Exclusively on tenor sax, Mats Gustafsson was perhaps more subdued without the low-end honk and force customary from his baritone (which was damaged in transit). Still the trio proved equally comfortable dripping with punk-inspired sweat and energy (drummer Paal Nilssen-Love’s “Viking” had the saxophonist playing as if on electric guitar and he and bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten even toying with feedback) while also digging into lovely melodies like Sonny Rollins’ “Theme From Allie”, Don Cherry’s “Golden Heart” and the encore - Joe McPhee’s “Alien”.

Drummers Zlatko Kaucic and Kraków Jazz Autumn regular Tim Daisy featured their percussive talents solo. The former’s resourceful floor set-up of (CONTINUED ON PAGE 50)

Kraków Jazz Autumn II

An undoubted highlight of the Kraków Jazz Autumn was a four-day residency by British bassist Barry Guy’s New Orchestra (Nov. 20th-23rd). The first three evenings in the intimate basement of the Alchemia club were given over to a dizzying array of small group sessions drawn from the orchestral ranks while during the day they rehearsed for the grand finale by the entire ensemble. In Guy’s words, the Alchemia sessions offered an opportunity to explore what a big band could be. And what a terrific range there was, as the 12 skilled improvisers veered from hushed coloqyuvia incendiary free jazz to unbridled noise.

Among the high points were a brace of bravura exhibitions by the Tarfala Trio (Guy and the Swedish duo of baritone saxophonist Mats Gustafsson and drummer Raymond Strid). As a unit the trio balanced on the fulcrum between the bassist’s cerebral machinations and the reedman’s primal scream, buoyed by Strid’s tonally inflected propulsion. The prevailing characteristic was the ebb and flow between explosive bluster and reflective threnody. At one point the Englishman built an emotionally charged solo out of a procession of silvery harmonics extracted by a combination of precise articulation and inexhaustible energy. Augmented by the trombone of Johannes Bauer and the additional percussion of Paul Lytton, there was more emphasis on the high-octane aspects. In this company, Guy avoided elaboration, at times concentrating on a determined strum, as Gustafsson flared in berserk oratory amid Bauer’s blowzy smears.

Bauer was featured in two further noteworthy sets. Unaccompanied he displayed a keen sense of humor. After reiterated annunciatorary fanfares, angled towards the walls and ceiling, he shifted onto exhalations, growls and chutters, with the trombone only intermittently at his lips. He even managed to incorporate having a sip of red wine into his playful discourse. Later, in a triumvirate accompanied by the seasoned Guy/Lytton pairing, the trombonist’s broad impasto strokes made for a pleasing contrast to the detailed miniatures of jostling interplay essayed by bass and drums.

A later threesome found the tenor and alto saxes of Evan Parker and Trevor Watts respectively merging into intertwining combustion while pianist Agustí Fernández supplied the substructure, slamming the keys in a dense spirited soundscape. By way of complete antithesis, only the quietest of pops and snorts broke the silence at the outset of the ensuing set, ironic as the bottom heavy firepower assembled on stage comprised Gustafsson’s baritone, Per Åke Holmlander’s tuba and Hans Koch’s bass clarinet. Sporadic proclamations from the two reeds were forged into a coherent narrative, replete with space (CONTINUED ON PAGE 50)

GIO Fest V

Brawny and gritty, Glasgow, Scotland’s largest city, has been a shipbuilding, trading and manufacturing powerhouse since the Industrial Revolution. At the same time the grey northern port has had a long-established aesthetic side, characterized by the often imitated Arts and Crafts Movement designs and structures of Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928).

Both power and passion were reflected as the city’s 24-member Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra (GIO) celebrated its 10th anniversary and 5th annual festival (Nov. 29th-Dec. 1st). Performances at the city’s downtown Centre for Contemporary Art included those by the entire band, its various subsets, other Scottish improvisers and guests including inventive saxophonist Evan Parker, irresistible vocalist Maggie Nicols and polymath George Lewis utilizing trombone and computer.

Like Mackintosh’s architecture, which took into account the city’s unique character, “Tractatus”, Lewis’ GIO showpiece, was composed to reflect the band’s talents. Flowing with a swing undercurrent, the sequences moved the narrative weight from section to section with equality, encompassing spritely pulls and strokes from the six-piece string section; drummer Stu Brown’s inventive hand patting; flutter-tongued vamps from trumpeter Robert Henderson; a steady piano ostinato from Gerry Rossi; plus Nicols and vocalist Nicola MacDonald yelping and gibbering.

Guided, rather than conducted, by Lewis, the polyphonie piece exposed varying orchestral colors, creating excitement through contrast not discord.

Even more site-specific was GIO guitarist George Burt’s “Three Envelopes for E.M. –”, a suite which placed in an orchestral setting actor Tam Dean Burn’s recitation of translated poems by Edwin Morgan (1920-2010), Glasgow’s former Poet Laureate. Burn’s gesticulating interpretation in guttural Scots-Gaelic was given particular weight by repetitive tremolo sequences moved the narrative weight from section to section with equality, encompassing spritely pulls and strokes from the six-piece string section; drummer Stu Brown’s inventive hand patting; flutter-tongued vamps from trumpeter Robert Henderson; a steady piano ostinato from Gerry Rossi; plus Nicols and vocalist Nicola MacDonald yelping and gibbering.

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Great fun for the audience and players, but less substantial musically, was “Some I Know, Some I Don’t”, another GIO-commission, this one from Jim O’Rourke: A Fluxus-lite game piece, it involved musicians following directions printed on the playing cards he or she picked. Episodes where Lewis publicly cited haggis as his favorite food; MacDonald (CONTINUED ON PAGE 50)
Count Basie, arguably, was playing soul-jazz long before that term came into vogue. Gritty, earthy and blues-minded, Basie’s band had a major influence on the tenor saxophonists of the ‘40s as well as the funky soul-jazz organ combos of the late ‘50s-60s. And Basie’s sidemen often carried a soulful aesthetic with them even when the Count wasn’t around. That is alive and well on this reissue, which unites two classic Frank Wess/Frank Foster encounters from 1956 (North, South, East...Wess and No Count) on a single 73-minute CD, the former released under Wess’ name while the latter was a Foster album. The septet lineup is the same on both: tenor saxophonist/flutist Wess and tenor saxophonist Foster are joined by trombonists Benny Powell and Henry Coker, guitarist Kenny Burrell, bassist Eddie Jones and drummer Kenny Clarke.

Except for Burrell and Clarke, everyone in this septet had been a member of Basie’s orchestra. And his influence is impossible to miss on infectious grooves such as Wess’ “Hard Sock Dance”, Foster’s “Apron Strings”, Coker’s “Lazy Sal” and producer Ozzie Cadena’s “What’d Ya Say?” (a slow, relaxed blues). Much of the material was composed by Foster (including “Stop Gap”, “Dill Pickles”, “Alternative” and the gospel-ish “Salvation”), although the septet also turns its attention to Leroy Anderson’s “Serenade” and the Rodgers-Hart standard “Dancing on the Ceiling”. It should be noted that the absence of a piano on these two albums is no coincidence; the septet’s participants didn’t want to have a Basie-ish sound without actually having Basie on piano.

Both albums combine Kansas City swing (Wess and Foster’s arrangements) with hardbop (Burrell’s guitar solos and Clarke’s drumming). These inspired Wess/Foster encounters continue to hold up admirably well over 56 years.

For more information, visit freshsoundrecords.com. Wess is at Birdland Jan. 1st-5th for his 91st birthday celebration and Allen Room Jan. 18th-19th. See Calendar.

It’s the album so nice, they named it twice. That’s Joey DeFrancesco’s Wonderfall! Wonderfall!, to be exact. The organist celebrates the release of his 10th disc on HighNote Records alongside two fellow jazz pioneers: guitarist Larry Coryell and drummer Jimmy Cobb.

The trio’s theme song is easily “JLJ Blues”, named after the musicians’ first initials. DeFrancesco showcases his distinctly tangy style before handing the reins to a nimble Coryell, who breezes through intricate riffs without a moment’s pause. They switch places several times before forming a coalition of their own, trading complementary chords in harmony. Cobb, however, is the glue that cinches the entire affair. With spirited splashes of cymbal rhythm, he drives the music forward at just the right speed.

DeFrancesco and his bandmates further prove to be masters of playful composition in “Love Letters”. Though Victor Young and Edward Heyman originally penned the piece, the trio invigorates each refrain with crisp wit. Cobb brings his cymbal splashes down to a rich simmer while the fire between Coryell and DeFrancesco leans toward the friendly side as the two exchange irresistibly charming musical quips. “Five Spot After Dark” embodies the same innovative groove. Coryell and DeFrancesco alternate luxuriant intricate monologues as Cobb’s up tempo barks to composer Benny Golson’s era.

Darker overtones surround DeFrancesco’s sound in the eponymous track “Joey D”. His opening notes evoke a pensiveness that tiptoes into ominous territory. But with a few spritely twists, the organist springs back into his energetic flair. Some dark elements still linger, shrouding the piece in an intriguing curtain of mystery. Most misteriously of all, however, is the crooning trumpet in the forefront of the jazz standard “Old Folks”. As Coryell and Cobb stir up an elegant ambience, the instrument begins a sultry dance. The force behind the enchanting brass? None other than the wonderfully radiant Joey DeFrancesco.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. DeFrancesco is at Dizzy’s Club Jan. 2nd-6th. See Calendar.

Giancarlo Mazzu/Blaise Siwula/Luciano Troja (SLAM)

After five years of intercontinental music making, Italian pianist Luciano Troja and guitarist/drummer Giancarlo Mazzu, plus New York multi-reedist Blaise Siwula, have finally recorded their co-operative trio, D’istantes, on a single 73-minute CD, the former released under Wess’ name while the latter was a Foster album. The septet lineup is the same on both: tenor saxophonist/flutist Wess and tenor saxophonist Foster are joined by trombonists Benny Powell and Henry Coker, guitarist Kenny Burrell, bassist Eddie Jones and drummer Kenny Clarke.

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Dan Block is a phenomenon, a virtuoso on all the reed instruments, an empathetic sideman and expansive leader, expert on an amazingly diverse repertoire and a creative composer. The two albums here represent a big beautiful picture of just what he can do.

Guitarist Marty Grosz is, himself, a phenomenon, an encyclopedia of the great music of the jazz and Swing tradition and, of course, Block is a perfect complement. Here the leader and a handful of wind players present music that, for the most part, is never heard these days. Mostly rare tunes by James P. Johnson, they’re gems played with, as Grosz often points out, verve and panache. (Grosz points to two players Johnson, they’re gems played with, as Grosz often heard these days. Mostly rare tunes by James P.

Block’s Duality, duets with a number of his musical friends, is something else again. First check the repertoire: Ellington, Gershwin and other Hall-of-Fame composers, some Brazilian fare including an encyclopedia of the great music of the jazz and Swing tradition and, of course, Block is a perfect complement. Here the leader and a handful of wind players present music that, for the most part, is never heard these days. Mostly rare tunes by James P. Johnson, they’re gems played with, as Grosz often heard these days. Mostly rare tunes by James P.

All the outside the box composing and playing, Pietik does is impressive, but she also has a gift for understatement when necessary; that is, knowing how to find the balance between complexity and simplicity. She imbues Billy Strayhorn’s lament “Something to Live For” with masterful symphonic flourishes that emphasize its poignancy, even if this great denegue manages to be concise, not loquacious. And this album could have had no more fitting ending than “Improvisation Blue”, a song by Pietik’s dad, discovered among his possessions. The song is brief and she plays it tenderly with a minimum of adornment, so perhaps her gift for brevity was an inheritance.

It’s hard to believe this is Roberta Pietik’s maiden voyage on solo piano. Her playing reflects various influences but it’s her own stunning and singular voice that makes this album so memorable.

For more information, visit thirteenthnoterecords.com. Pietik plays solo at Smalls Jan. 7th. See Calendar.

Pow!! Drummer Barry Altshul and bassist Joe Fonda open this new disc with a quick but potent harbing. Fonda then executes a sliding descent and rapid-fire rise, Altshul swinging in and out of time with the ease of a master. All this occurs before the title track’s melody has even been stated. There is no warm-up, no searching to find each other. What better way to begin a celebration of Altshul’s approaching 70th birthday? On paper, the album is a retrospective, recapping a celebration of Altschul’s approaching 70th birthday?

Grotry - a marvel. A fine instrument in its own right, but it is the combination of the two instruments that makes this piece unique. The guitar’s kinetic energy is augmented by the drum’s steady beat, creating a driving rhythm that propels the melody forward. The result is a powerful and captivating piece that showcases the skills of both musicians.

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For more information, visit thejazzcity.com.
A jazz mainstay for more than a quarter of a century, David Kikoski is known for virtuosity on both piano and keyboards. On his latest effort as a leader he forges ahead in the acoustic trio setting, where the spotlight shines brightly on his abilities as both instrumentalist and composer. Enlisting the support of bassist Christian McBride (with whom he often played in the band of longtime employer Roy Haynes) and drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts (in whose quartet he regularly performs), Kikoski embarks on an often daring journey, which, while grounded in the tradition, moves in a direction reflecting his original talent.

Easing into the date with Watts’ “Blutain”, a staple of the drummer’s live performances, the pianist immediately distinguishes himself as an uncommonly soulful player with a distinctively inventive harmonic concept, assiduously avoiding the commonplace as he gets down on top of McBride and Watts’ powerful accompaniment. The pianist’s “Russian Roulette” is an imaginative march, displaying an ingenious approach to orchestration with appealingly melodic bass out front in the opening and featured in a free flowing middle section. A second original, “Drama”, is a 12/8 outing on which Kikoski’s McCoy Tyner-ish fluidity comes to the fore within the context of a dark bass ostinato and West African-influenced drumming. A third, “Placidity”, displays his unabashed romanticism.

Returning to the Watts songbook, the trio swings explosively on “Mr. J. J.”, an uptempo romp that reflects the influence of Horace Silver on both the composer’s writing and the pianist’s playing. Kikoski’s “(Still) A Glimmer Of Hope” is a particularly engaging, multi-metered episodic outing with a soulful interlude while his two-part title track is the date’s most free-form excursion. It begins with a rhapsodic solo piano prelude, soon expanded to an impressionistic tapestry of sound, which culminates in the second part’s exotic rhythmization. The concluding “Never Let Me Go” features Kikoski unaccompanied, lyrically putting his stamp on a standard that many have played before, but few with as much originality and feeling.

For more information, visit actmusic.com. This project is at Le Poisson Rouge Jan. 12th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.

Gamak

Gamak is the next stage in Mahanthappa’s development, reuniting the leader with longtime bandmates François Moutin (bass) and Dan Weiss (drums), who last appeared as his quintet’s regular rhythm section on 2006’s Codebook. This time out the core is augmented by electric guitarist David Fiuczynski, called a “master of microtonal guitar” in the CD’s accompanying notes. Fiuczynski’s sound ranges from the Chinese-inflected “We’ll Make More” to the rockish “Lots of Interest” and the roaring punky coda of the “Majesty of the Blues”. “Stay I”, by contrast, is laid-back and brief while “Are There Clouds in India”, first heard on 2002’s Black Water, is dreamy and contemplative, both featuring Mahanthappa’s horn taking the lead.

Occasionally, Mahanthappa’s attack develops something of a sameness. The opening track, “Waiting Is Forbidden”, sets Fiuczynski’s funky counterpoint against Mahanthappa’s signature staccato phrasing. “Lots of Interest”, in spite of Fiuczynski’s searing solo, also finds Mahanthappa latching onto a run and repeating it over and over, as does “We’ll Make More”. As the program draws to its conclusion, though, “Copernicus 19” is a quick dash up and down the horn, which leads into “Wrathful Wisdom”, an intricate, demanding piece with alternate fingerings that asks a lot of the musicians and offers an embedded compositional variety that the other tracks don’t always achieve. Finally, “Ballad for Troubled Times” slows things down, letting Mahanthappa’s ringing tone come out. Gamak is an intriguing work from one of jazz music’s most vibrant and individual voices.

For more information, visit crisscrossjazz.com. Kikoski is at ShapeShifter Lab Jan. 9th with Opus 5. See Calendar.

Musician Biographies

David Kikoski (Criss Cross)
by Russ Musto

Gamak

Rudresh Mahanthappa (ACT Music)
by Jeff Stockton

It seems equally trite and facile to emphasize alto saxist Rudresh Mahanthappa’s ability to blend the sounds of Indian music with more traditional jazz influences. But blending Eastern and Western approaches to making music is central to his motivation as an artist. It’s what he’s always done over the course of more than a dozen albums as a leader.
Hidden People pushes the envelope of the standard piano trio as pianist Leo Genovese, bassist John Lockwood and drummer Bob Gullotti deconstruct well-worn avenues on each of its eight cuts. Ironically, the session is tied together with a free-formish approach neither too free nor too decisive, the result an organized statement of diversity and creativity. This is a fun release and the tunes are reminiscent, in a clever perspective, of something you have heard before. You haven’t heard it quite this way before. Hidden People becomes a sort of intro to the piano trio through Genovese’s warped historical perspective.

There are lots of hidden people “At the Market” as Genovese conjured up Jean-Jacques Perrey and Rufus Harley with Ondioline-cum-bagpipe lines on this wicked synth-sounding burner while “The South” finds Scott Joplin and Otis Spann mixing it up in a fractured bluesy rag. Lockwood and Gullotti are two-thirds of saxophonist George Garzone’s The Fringe and as such are no strangers to finding concealed individuals through somewhat ‘out’ explorations. “Goodbye” features Lockwood bowing up cellist Fred Katz in a poignant chamber setting courtesy of Genovese’s classically inspired lines; in contrast, “Mezcalito” has Gullotti summoning Sunny Murray with a leisurely percussive exploration.

Genovese is a stylistically diverse pianist and the smooth pretty melodic lines in “Spirits Around” touchingly speak of the just-departed Dave Brubeck. Garzone himself appears on “Nomads” as Genovese switches to saxophone before the title cut pays tribute to a parade of pianists past. With no apologies to Connie Francis, things close with assorted takes on the jazz nugget “Who’s Sorry Now?” Hidden People is enjoyable for the different characters listeners will find lurking in it.

For more information, contact leogenovese@yahoo.com. This group is at Culture Project Jan. 12th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.

Hidden People
Leo Genovese (s/r)
by Elliott Simon

CD RELEASE TOUR JANUARY 2013

JAN 18 Philadelphia PA
8:00 PM Philadelphia Art Alliance
www.arsonavworkshop.com

JAN 19 Baltimore MD
8:30 PM The Windup Space
www.creativedifferences.us

JAN 20 Brooklyn NY
5:00 PM Roulette | www.roulette.org

JAN 23 Middlebury VT
8:00 PM 51 Main | www.go51main.com

JAN 24 Montréal QC
8:30 PM La Sala Rosa | www.casadelpopolo.com

JAN 25 Portland ME
8:00 PM Dimensions in Jazz

JAN 28 Cambridge MA
8:00 PM The Lily Pad | www.lily-pad.net

This tour is supported by funds from the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York and the Netherlands-America Foundation.

www.drifrecords.com

40Twenty
Jacob Garchik/Jacob Sacks/
Dave Ambrosio/Vinnie Sperrazza (Yeah-Yeah)
by Sean Fitzell

Begin 20 minutes after the hour, play to the top of the next hour and then repeat. This so-called 40-20 gig was the basis of the old dinner-club scene and 40Twenty is the first release by the collective of trombonist Jacob Garchik, pianist Jacob Sacks, bassist David Ambrosio and drummer Vinnie Sperrazza. The music, like the name, has a vintage sound, an homage to the period of highball glasses and cigarette cases that is neither rote recreation nor snide irony. Each musician composes to instigate robust group interplay. In another nod to the past, the group recorded after completing a two-week run of shows to hone the music and forge their identity.

Sacks’ quirky “Jan 20” opens the set and alternates between a lazy swing and a terse angular unison line. The ample theme provides impetus for the bass and trombone to improvise. Tinkling piano forays bookend Garchik’s flight, Garchik’s flight, before the two trade ripostes. Fleet cymbal work powers the elegant “Gi”, penned by Garchik, who unfurls an impressively insistent support. Low rumbling piano asides provide textural contrast to the lengthy horn run. Mournfulness imbues the trombone theme of Sperrazza’s “Plainchant” and the rhythm section’s smoldering accompaniment has a timeless quality.

“Soon Enough” boasts a jaunty feel for Sacks and Garchik to stretch, before Sperrazza takes a rare turn with crackling snare rolls and understated tom flourishes. A spare piano theme that allows notes to sustain naturally and fade introduces Ambrosio’s “One Five”. His quick upper-register pizzicato explorations usher in the others and the group gradually coalesces around the loose moody theme, more about the trip than the destination. With a quicker pace and tighter construction, the concluding “MajorEe MinorEe” is an ideal romp to highlight the group: Garchik’s loquacious daring; Sacks’ dramatic flair and the taut, adventurous exchanges between Ambrosio and Sperrazza. Clocking in at around 45 minutes, there is also a classic air to the format and pacing of 40Twenty, which makes a statement without overstaying its welcome.

For more information, visit yeahyeahrecords.com. This band is at Bowery Electric Jan. 12th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
One of the best things about being a downtown New Yorker is being able to fall out of bed and into Smalls Jazz Club (and vice-versa), a welcoming, casual basement venue on a sliver of West 10th Street that’s been a magnet for young, contemporary players and fans since it was founded in 1994. Bassist Dezron Douglas’ Live at Smalls features the straightahead jazz for which Smalls is famous and the young Douglas has assembled a crackerjack band that snaps and pops in all its individual parts but never loses sight of an ensemble ethic.

This outing (taken from two nights in March 2012) comes out of the gate swinging with Barry Harris’ aptly named, upbeat “Bish, Bash, Bop”, which allows for sparkling and inventive participation by Douglas and a roster of equally impressive colleagues: agile and responsive trumpeter Josh Evans; sax player Stacy Dillard, who can dazzle with his sinuous, sensuous and powerful lines; talented and lyrical pianist David Bryant (who also composed the contemplative “Nita”) and the sure-handed and tasteful Willie Jones III on drums. Douglas proves himself a deft composer, with three works of varied tempi and mood: “The Puppet”, “Let’s Ride” and “Power of One”.

If any criticism should be offered, it’s that Douglas - who gives others room to stretch - might allow himself a little more soloing time. But that’s a quibble. One great thing about these performances is how everyone’s contributions seem so beautifully balanced. This is how a working band should operate, as a band of equals and attuned listeners, all of whom have the technique to realize what their hearts dictate. The effect is sure-fire all the way, from the head on down.

For more information, visit smallslive.com. This project is at Sullivan Hall Jan. 12th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.

Last month in Boston, guitarist and Berklee professor David “Fuze” Fiuczynski premiered an original composition entitled “Flam! Pan-Asian MicroJam for J Dilla and Olivier Messiaen”. That tells you a lot about him. He’s into improv, hip-hop, world music, avant-gardism and microtonality and he’s unafraid to cram those universes into a single listening experience. This is especially evident on Planet MicroJam. There’s so much information that at times it’s difficult to process everything. One path to enlightenment might be to follow the drummers.

Also from the Berklee faculty - not to mention the bands of Jaco Pastorius and Maceo Parker - Kenwood Dennard is called upon to assist with Fuze’s epic multisection pieces. On the album-opening “Micro Emperor”, Dennard’s precise, forceful trap-kitting carries the ensemble from a cheerful microtonal head to a quieter moment where Fuze slides and wiggles joyously over subtly rattling cymbals and legato bass tones. Later, mournful violin from David Radley leads to a few seconds of Latin music before a steady swing beat takes hold, with Fuze scurrying and scrambling on top. Dennard lights a fire under the many spaces and places of “Horos Fuzivikos” too, pushing it from a Middle Eastern territory to a Derek Trucks-like blues-rock chapter to a dark drum-and-bass segment.

When Fuze wants to tap into a hip-hop thing, he summons Brooklyn drummer Jovol Bell, who sets up a slow, slithery behind-the-beat foundation on “Mystic MicroJam” over which Radley can sigh, mutter and ponder. On the ominous but soulful “Apprehension”, Bell dishes out authoritative rim shots and persistent hi-hat for Fuze’s funky guitar chattering.

And when the music drifts out, Jack DeJohnette is at the kit. Based on a string quartet by late microtonal champion Julián Carrillo, “Meditacion” finds the drummer delivering thick, no-time blows between bouts of gently nudging swing. And on the foreboding “Madoka Blue”, DeJohnette meets droning bass and rubbery fretless guitar with sparse free musings.

For more information, visit rarenoiserecords.com. Fiuczynski is at Le Poisson Rouge Jan. 12th with Rudresh Mahanthappa as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
In a way it’s not surprising that reedman Jason Stein has become the go-to guy for challenging or experimental music that needs a bass clarinet. The Chicago-based New Yorker not only specializes in the deep-toned licorice stick, but also seeks to avoid the instrument’s obvious influences in his quest for the extremes. Consequently his woody fluidity frequently extends into bracing harmonics and tonal distortion. He speaks in tongues, though in a distinctive voice, heard to varying effect on two recent discs.

As part of oboist Kyle Bruckmann’s WRACK, Stein contributes to an unusual frontline on *Cracked Refraction*, completed by the leader and Jen Claire Poulson’s viola. Along with the accomplished pairing of Anton Hatwich (Dave Rempis Percussion Quartet) on bass and Tim Daisy (Vandermark 5) on drums, they move between tightly corralled formations and freewheeling expression in the blink of an eye, fulfilling the demands of Bruckmann’s idiosyncratic compositions, which combine jazz and contemporary classical methods.

When Stein steps out it’s still very much within the well-demarcated frameworks of the multi-sectioned pieces, over spritely bass and drums on the title track, amid lurching rhythms and madcap cartoon march tonalities or in a knotty tattoo on the lengthy “Imaginary Caverns”, one of the standout tracks, reminiscent of Anthony Braxton’s *Ghost Trance Music* in its steady stream of eighth notes and wildly bounding intervals. Bruckmann’s canny arrangements achieve a bigger than expected sound through pitching subsets of the group against one another in multiple layers and tempos. Appropriately enough the concluding “NJBC”, based on a lullaby which Bruckmann sings to his daughter, is the most emotionally direct cut, introduced by Stein at his most reflective and featuring the leader’s vocally inflected oboe and Daisy’s marimba in a sweet conclusion to a set of winningly labyrinthine astringency.

On *Next Delusion* by Berlin-based saxophonist Boris Hauf, Stein forms part of an even more unconventional lineup. There can be few instrumentation that are completely novel, but three horns matched with three drumsets recalls few precedents. Waxing on one of the German’s regular trips to Chicago, Hauf has assembled a talented crew, though their abilities are almost totally sublimated to the leader’s offbeat conceptions.

For much of the time, the three percussionists (Frank Rosaly, Steven Hess and Michael Hartman) are so restrained as to be subliminal and the horns (Keefe Jackson, alongside Stein and Hauf) aren’t much more demonstrative. It’s largely impossible to tell who does what in the four tracks, which defy categorization in their execution of Hauf’s austere and rigorous charts. Dissonant unisons and subdued drones characterize the horn lines, which often sound on a parallel but unconnected track to the rumbling massed drums. Ultimately it’s a curiosity that sounds like nothing else.

For more information, visit porterrecords.com and cleanfeed-records.com; Jason Stein is at The Bitter End Jan. 11th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
Cuban Crosshatching is an approach of simple, intersecting lines, a minimalistic way to create shading effects. For Cuban percussionist Arturo Stable, his lines are those of musical influence and the approach, as he writes in the album’s liner notes, is one of experimentation with both his musical past and present - a way to find the many places at which those lines intersect. Cuban Crosshatching, Stable’s fourth album as a leader, and its 13 tracks find Stable minging in a quartet with top-flight friends (tenor saxist Seamus Blake, guitarist Lionel Loueke and bassist Edward Perez) and welcoming vocalist Magos Herrera for a couple of cameos. This is a great chance to hear Stable playing really provocative and complex tunes in the studio without a drumkit behind him to clutter things up. Whether he’s swinging deftly like a jazz drummer on “Mr. Brake”, getting slow and emotional with cymbals on “Letters to Luz”, pounding out an engaging ostinato on “Taitá” or just going full blast on an improv duet with Blake, Stable keeps it all fresh and interesting, with his strong Latin roots always perceptible. And aside from a killer bongo solo on “Habana del Este” and a few other moments, Stable spends virtually the entire album focused on comping, allowing him to explore both simple and ear-poppingly wild rhythms with immense depth while placing his musicianship, rather than his virtuosity, at the forefront.

Stable gets a lot of help from his sidemen, who can certainly claim a relatively high level of influence on the overall sound of this album. Blake and Loueke fit really nicely opposite each other as primary soloists, consistently and effectively feeding off Stable’s eternal groove at every turn.

But it’s Stable’s fleeting, two-minute duet with Herrera that really makes this one to remember. He’s playing shakers, she’s singing right in the middle register. It kind of comes out of nowhere and becomes one of those moments when you’re shocked that they could be doing so much with so little. And by the end, it’s Herrera who’s holding the tune together while Stable does the dancing.

For more information, visit origenrecords.com. Stable is at Symphony Space Leonard Nimoy Thalia Jan. 12th. See Calendar.

Live Grooves...Epic Tales
Freddie Bryant + Kaleidoscope (Hipnotic)
by George Kanzler

The tri-fold cover of this album depicts a globe-trotting Freddie Bryant, with lines on the map linking his New York base to destinations on five continents as well as Cuba and Madagascar. There is a strong sense of journey conveyed by the wide variety of music and presentation, a sense enhanced by Bryant’s facility and command of various kinds of guitars and styles of playing them. It also lives up to its title: although recorded in a studio, there is a “live” spontaneity to the music and the tunes - all but one by Bryant - do suggest epic tales, as they develop beyond the bounds of simple melodies, often blossoming out into new vistas with added strains or shifting times and rhythms.

The journey begins in the most exotic locale, musically, with “Drum On, Drum On”, dedicated to a “disciple of Ravi Shankar” and suggesting a new empathy for Bryant’s 12-string guitar simulating a sitar, the two guest saxophonists (Donny McCaslin and Yosvany Terry) weaving skittering lines in their part of the outing. “Blues Koan” adds Juan Gallardo’s piano to the basic Kaleidoscope trio (electric bassist Patrice Blanchard and drummer Willard Dyson), Bryant on his Fender Telecaster electric guitar displaying a gleaming jazz tone. On other Telecaster-featured tracks Bryant changes up aspects of his style, more funky on a soul-jazz swinger; hard-edged, twangy or choppy on R’n’B or gospel-inflected pieces. And he creates sighing tones and fluttery grace notes in his intensely lyrical electric take on the Brazilian baiao-inspired “Passages”, in two contrasting (jumpy and sleek) strains with compelling tenor sax from McCaslin. 12-string guitar is paired with Steve Wilson’s flute on the episodic bossa “Beginner’s Mind” while the Rio parade beats of Black Orpheus are conjured up by the joyous “La, La, Ohh!”, nylon string acoustic guitar enhancing the infectious mood of the sing-along vocals. A rousing, highly syncopated “Bo Diddley” with Telecaster, eruptive drumming and both saxophonists soloing ends with a shift to samba rhythms that foreshadows the final, contemplative tune, a dreamy “Bolero” from the basic trio with Bryant on nylon-string acoustic guitar.

For more information, visit hipnotic.com. Bryant is at Zeb’s Jan. 13th. See Calendar.

Different Times
Old Time Musketry (SteepleChase Lookout)
by Ken Dryden

Old Time Muskettry’s Different Times is one of the first releases in SteepleChase’s new subsidiary, SteepleChase Lookout, which stretches beyond the typical postbop music heard on the main label. Tenor saxophonist/clarinetist Adam Shneit, JP Schlegelmilch (who plays piano, Wurlitzer, accordion, synthesizer and glockenspiel), bassist Phil Rowan and drummer Max Goldman (who doubles on melodica) had been playing together for around two years prior to entering the studio, drawing from numerous stylistic influences.

One of the joys of hearing an unfamiliar young band like Old Time Muskettry is the constant “sound of surprise”; their music is never predictable. “Star Insignia” is an unusual opener, with Shneit’s languid tenor, Rowan’s bluesy bass carrying the folk-like melody in a lumbering cadence. The dissonant, ragged ebb and flow of Schneit’s “Different Times” has the flavor of Ornette Coleman’s work. Schlegelmilch’s unusual “Cadets” begins as a playful march, showcasing the glockenspiel and the composer’s fresh approach to accordion, though it shifts gears into a more tense avant garde atmosphere for its middle section. “Hope For Something More” is a bittersweet ballad, focusing on longing clarinet, complemented by contemplative piano and eerie melody. Their arrangement of American composer Henry Cowell’s “Anger Dance” has a bohemian air in the opening, though the second half incorporates free-spirited tenor sax, suspenseful accordion and a loose rhythmic structure. Schlegelmilch’s infectious “Highly Questionable” is another adventurous work, suggesting a wild blend of Jewish folk, tango and Cajun musics. Schlegelmilch’s deliberately muddysounding Wurlitzer adds a twist to his explosive dance “Underwater Volcano”. Old Time Muskettry has found creative ways to combine their wide-ranging interests into intriguing new compositions.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. This group is at Sycamore Jan. 14th and The Firehouse Space Jan. 27th. See Calendar.

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Chris Potter  tenor and soprano saxophones, bass clarinet  
Craig Taborn  piano  
David Virelles  prepared piano, celeste, harmonium  
Larry Grenadier  double-bass  
Eric Harland  drums

Chris Potter is at the  
Village Vanguard  
February 5th – 10th

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2012 Best Albums of the Year

Nik Bärtsch's Ronin  
*Live*

Tim Berne  
*Snakeoil*

Billy Hart Quartet  
*All Our Reasons*
The British percussionist Paul Lytton and Oregon-raised, New Jersey-based trumpeter Nate Wooley, some 27 years his junior, have found a remarkable artistic sympathy in each other and have met with some fine successes as a result (check out either of their duo albums: 2007’s *Untitled* or 2009’s *Creak Above 33*). What holds them together, perhaps, is a shared fascination for the small sounds that their generally-loud instruments produce.

Such connections make for one of the most rewarding configurations in free improvisation: a duo with a well-articulated language joined by a third voice. That additional player might try to pick up the lingo or work against it, but either way the grounding is there. Lytton and Wooley have already recorded with David Grubbs (2007’s *Seven Storey Mountain*) and Christian Weber (2009’s *Six Feet Under*) and appeared on stage with many others. Now, with *The Nows*, the pair appears on disc with electronicist Ikue Mori and reedman Ken Vandermark.

With any other horn-and-drum duo, Mori might be left clutching at straws. The sounds that emanate from her laptop are usually soft and subtle and can be lost against heavier-hitting players. But Lytton and Wooley deal in the macro focus, small sounds given great attention. In this recording, from a March 2011 set at The Stone, Mori sounds great, even something like a common denominator. Her blips work well with Lytton’s quick drum runs and her whooshes mesh nicely with Wooley’s trumpet flutters. At their best, the three sound very much like the inner workings of some unusual machine.

The second disc finds the pair joining forces with saxophonist Ken Vandermark, recorded two weeks later on his home turf at the Hideout in Chicago. It is, unsurprisingly, a louder, ‘jazier’ set than the one with Mori, but still performed with attention to detail. Vandermark has a clarinet, bass clarinet and tenor and baritone saxophones in tow, so there’s a great diversity of detail as well. Both trios work well, but it’s nice that the first half of each disc is the duo alone. Getting to hear how the duo works before folding a third party in makes the listening all the richer.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. Wooley and Vandermark are at The Stone Jan. 17th with Agustí Fernández and Joe Morris. See Calendar.

Though he’s performed straight-up jazz in the past and even released an album of standards, vocalist José James says he doesn’t want to be considered a jazz singer. And it may not be the right label for an artist whose music is equal parts jazz, funk, R&B, soul and hip-hop. On his fourth solo album and first for Blue Note (which continues to expand its non-jazz lineups), the 33-year-old James offers a unique brand of vocal stylings evoking the likes of Marvin Gaye, Donny Hathaway, Bill Withers and Gil Scott-Heron, but with an utterly contemporary feel.

Though he has a powerful baritone voice, James sings quietly most of the time, often barely above a whisper, over a rather sparse instrumental background (usually just bass, drums and electric keyboards with occasional horns). The tunes, many written or co-written by James, move effortlessly between styles, from slow, sexy ‘babymakers’ (“No Beginning No End”) and gently grooving funk (“Trouble”) to Afropop (“Sword + Gun”). “Do You Feel” is a gospel-rooted tearjerker that features James’ most expressive vocals while “Come to My Door”, penned by singer-songwriter Emily King, is a catchy, radio-ready pop tune (and a good one - so good that it’s offered in two versions, an electric one and an acoustic bonus track).

Among present-day artists, James’ sound is reminiscent at various times of neo-soul singers like D’Angelo and John Legend, the R&B-meets-jazz of Gregory Porter and even the eclectic modern blues of Olu Dara. The most obvious links to jazz here are the loose, improvised feel of much of the music, the hip horn arrangements on several tunes and the presence of two superb keyboardists: Robert Glasper, who’s also successfully crossed between the worlds of jazz and hip hop, and Kris Bowers, a past winner of the Thelonious Monk piano competition.

For more information, visit bluenote.com. James is at Highline Ballroom Jan. 23rd. See Calendar.

**The Nows**
Paul Lytton/Nate Wooley + Ikue Mori and Ken Vandermark (Clean Feed)
by Kurt Gottschalk

**No Beginning No End**
José James (Blue Note)
by Joel Roberts
Now entering his eighth decade, Dutch drummer Han Bennink shows no signs of flagging. But perhaps the most surprising development in his idiosyncratic career was the formation in 2008 of a trio that bore his name. He enlisted the services of two musicians a couple of generations removed from his, pianist Simon Toldam and clarinetist Joachim Badenhorst. On their second disc, Bennink # Co., it’s clear this is a working trio, Badenhorst and Toldam both providing compositions. Toldam’s “Dog” starts as a knotty piano solo until Badenhorst and Bennink enter and it becomes even knottier. “Kiefer” seems based on what sounds like a loopy variation of “Honeysuckle Rose”. Badenhorst’s “Ganz” is a jaunty romp with the composer playing slippery lines on bass clarinet as Bennink gooses him with snappy brushwork. The compositions are linked by free improvisations and the disc concludes with a charming version of Strayhorn’s “A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing”. Throughout it all Bennink plays only a snare drum yet gives the music all the drive, color and texture it needs. That is a feat he also extends to the latest album by trumpeter Eric Boeren’s quartet. Coconut is the group’s fifth release since 1997 and continues the exploration of compositions by Ornette Coleman plus originals. There’s a strong bluesy base to this music and a lot of contrapuntal playing between Boeren and reed player Michael Moore. On this live set, their lines bristle with energy. Coleman’s “Joy Of A Toy” goes way back in the band’s book and you can hear them playing with the theme, staggering the frontline unison statements with unpredictability as Bennink and bassist Wilbert De Joode push them along. They take Coleman’s improvisational ideas in their own direction and the originals are very much in that spirit. This is a very underrated band that should be better known.

The Royal Improvisers Orchestra is a group of young players in Amsterdam, grounded in Butch Morris’ concept of conduction and led by Brazilian reed player Yedo Gibson. But in the five years they’ve been together (varying personnel), they’ve developed an understanding of free improvisation that is now more intuitive. They’ve played with members of the ICP Orchestra, Steve Beresford, Frank Gratkowski and others as featured players. The odd thing is that there are no brass players amongst the group’s 20 members. Live at the Bimhuis was recorded in 2008 and features a scrappy ensemble that has come up with some interesting results. “Truism Turism” is a nicely quiet piece with flutes, reeds and plucked strings that seems to float in some strange ether. On “His Composition”, Bennink takes over the drum chair with his distinctive patter, yet he allows the others to set the course and he follows along as they gradually build the eight-minute piece to a rousing climax.

For more information, visit ilkmusic.com, toondist.com/Platenbakkerij.html and yedogibson.com. Bennink is at Roulette Jan. 20th. See Calendar.
In this music, legacies are an interesting thing. How are we to perceive/deal with the work of an esteemed musician/composer after their death? What is more important - the songbook or conjuring the ‘feeling’ of the absent artist? For a figure like soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy (1934-2004), whose work was both tuneful and open-ended and who saw himself in a lineage of form and improvisation, it’s tough to figure out the ‘right’ response.

Challenging as it might be, Lacy’s compositions are sometimes covered by others. In addition to the excellent New York quartet Ideal Bread, we can now add transatlantic group The Whammies to the list of repertory interpreters. The Whammies feature the saxophonist’s former students, collaborators and estimable contemporaries. Pianist Pandelis Karayorgis, altoist Jorrit Dijkstra, violinst/violist Mary Oliver, drummer Han Bennink, bassist Nate McBride and trombonist Jeb Bishop. Dijkstra is a searing and quixotic player; combined with the garrulous and fleet trombone of Bishop and Karayorgis’ blocky, motific phrasing, the ensemble is knotty and swinging and hinges on a surprisingly tasteful Bennink. The Whammies are respectful yet calamitous in respect to Lacy’s ‘book’, which needs a bit of dirt under the fingernails to remain relevant.

One of Lacy’s grittiest recordings was the first LP waxed by his ’70s quintet with cellist/violinist Irène Aebi, saxophonist Steve Potts, bassist Kent Carter and drummer Joel McEuen. Estilhaços ("shrapnel") was recorded live on Feb. 29th, 1972 at the Cinema Monumental in Lisbon during a period of colonial war and crowning tensions between the Estado Novo regime and pro-democracy resistance. Potts was coming off work with François Tusques, Alan Silva and Sunny Murray and adds acrid explosiveness to a set that is more blustering than snippy or quivery, with the leader’s gold-toned soprano often closer to a thin scream of anguish, fitting in times of tumult. McEuen is an underrated percussionist, his dry and chatty propulsion giving the ensemble a jaunty ruggedness. Clean Feed has reissued this rare piece with decent quality to the music, a sense of risk and uncertainty that Shipp magnifies into fields of harmonic possibility, the two combining to create a dense network through which Perelman throws lines of splintering rhythms and surprising leaps, sometimes taking to his high register to stake out his own ground.

If The Clairvoyant’s impulsion is towards a collective unconscious, a kind of speaking-in-tongues where the boundaries of self disappear, The Gift is very different, with bassist Michael Bisio’s particularly flowing, guitar-like phrasing and sometimes traditionally secure walking lines emphasizing the song-like side of Perelman’s talent. Perelman can still blow mightily, but there’s an innate lyricism here, a sense of perspectives echoing back and forth amongst the group, of a sound or phrase dropped by one musician and picked up and expanded by another. There’s a certain floating ease that leads to the playfully ironic swing and bird whistles of “What Is Anguish?”

Trio design takes another turn on Living Jelly as Perelman unites with Joe Morris and drummer Gerald Cleaver. It’s definitely the most precise unit here, indebted particularly to Cleaver’s energized clarity. Morris usually plays bass on his recent projects with Perelman, but here he has guitar in hand, finding a thoughtful way to match lead and support functions at the same time. At times, he seems to be reaching back to his early studies of West African string music as the three develop forceful rhythmic grooves. The concluding title track is particularly strong, with Morris and Cleaver locking onto a tight figure that eventually has Perelman soaring.

For more information, visit driffrerecords.com, cleanfeed-records.com, ictusrecords.com and unseenworlds.net. The Whammies are at Roulette Jan. 20th. See Calendar.
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BEST OF 2012

NIK BÄRTSCH’S RONIN - Live (ECM)
TIM BERNE - Snakeoil (ECM)
ORRIN EVANS - Flip the Script (Posi-Tone)
FLY - Year of the Snake (ECM)
JOSH GINSBURG - Zebras Variations (BJU Records)
DARIUS JONES - Book of Mac’bal: Another Kind of Sunrise (AUM Fidelity)
HAFEZ MODIRZADEH - Post-Chromodomal Out! (P)
LINDA OH - Initial Here (Greenleaf)
GREGORY PORTER - Be Good (Motema)
MATT WILSON’S ARTS & CRAFTS - An Attitude for Gratitude (Palmetto)
-David R. Adler

BOXED SETS

DOROTHY ASHBY - The Jazz Harpist (Regent/Prestige)/New Jazz/Aspen/Aspen (Fresh Sound)
CHARLES MINING - The Jazz Workshop Concerts 1964-65 (Mosaic)
THelonious Monk Quartet - The Complete Columbia Studio Albums Collection (Columbia-Legacy)
WILLIAM PARKER - Centering (Unreleased Early Recordings 1976-1987) (Nobusiness)

REISSUES

BILL BARRON - The Tenor Stylings of Bill Barron/Modern Windows/Hot Line (Savoy-Fresh Sound)
CHIRS MC GREGO - In His Good Time (Organ)
ALBERT MANGELSDORF - Nova Jazz Rammuang (CBS/Jazzhus Disk)
HAL RUSSELL - NRG Ensemble (Nessa)
HEINER STADLER - Brains on Fire (Labor)

TRIBUTES

FRED HO & QUINCY SAUL - Present The Music of Cal Massey (A Tribute) (Mutable/Big Red Media)
SIMON NARATOV - Spinning Songs of Herbie Nichols (Leo)
TERI ROGER - Dear Abbey (Inner Circle)
SPECTRUM ROAD - Eponymous (Palmetto)
The WHAMMIES - Play the Music of Steve Lucy (Drift)

UNEARTHED GEMS

THE JAZZ COURIERS - Tippin’ (Live in Morphine 1959) (Cavebox)
SHEILA JORDAN/HARVIE S - Yesterday's (HighNote)
ALBERT MANGELSDORFF QUINTET - Legends Live: Audimax Freiburg (June 22, 1964) (Jazzhaus)
PAT MARTINO - Alone Together (with Bobby Rose) (HighNote)
WES MONTGOMERY - Echoes of Indiana Avenue (Resonance)

LARGE ENSEMBLE RELEASES

THE AARDVARK JAZZ ORCHESTRA - Executions (Leo)
FRED HO & QUINCY SAUL - Present The Music of Cal Massey (A Tribute) (Mutable/Big Red Media)
THE RESONANCE ENSEMBLE - What Country is This? (Not Two)
RYAN TRUEDELL/CAL E VANS PROJECT - Centennial: Newly Discovered Works of Cal Evans (ArtistShare)
ZANUSSI THIRTEEN - Live (Moserobie)

LATIN RELEASES

EDMAR CASTAÑEDA - Double Portion (Arpa Y Voz Prod.)
GONZALO RUBALCABA - XXI Century (Spasion)
BOBBY SANABRIA BAND - Multiverse (Jazzheads)
PONCHO SANCHEZ AND HIS LATIN JAZZ BAND - Live in Hollywood (Concert Picante)
PAPO VAQUZ MIGHTY PIRATES TROUBADOURS - Oasis (Picaro)

HONORABLE MENTION

NIK BÄRTSCH’S RONIN - Live (ECM)
KELAN PHILIP COHRAN & THE HYPNOTIC BRASS ENSEMBLE/EVANS (ECM)
DR. JOHN - Locked Down (Nonesuch)
BILLY HART QUARTET - All Our Reasons (ECM)
DAVE KING - I’ll Be Ringing You (Sunnyside)
BILL LASWELL - Means of Deliverance (Innerhythmic)
HAFEZ MODIRZADEH - Post-Chromodial Out! (P)
SAM NEWSOME - The Art of the Soprano, Vol. 1 (n/r)
SAM RIVERS/DAVE HOLLAND/BARRY ALTSCHUL - Reunion: Live in New York (P)
JESPER ZEUTHEN - PLUS (Barefoot)

RODRIGO AMADO MOTION TRIO & JEB BISHOP - Burning Live at Jazz au Centre (JACC)
NIK BÄRTSCH’S RONIN - Live (ECM)
JACOB GARCHIK - The Heavens (Yesterene)
GRASS ROOTS - Eponymous (AUM Fidelity)
FRED HO & THE SAXOPHONE LIBERATION FRONT - Snake-Eaters (Big Red Media-Mutable)
BILL LASWELL - Means of Deliverance (Innerhythmic)

THE THING (WITH BARRY GUY) - Metal! (NoBusiness)
ZANUSSI THIRTEEN - Live (Moserobie)
ZÜRIRHORN - Wanderlust (Unit)

-Andrey Henkin

DEBUTS

JOHANNA BLAKE - The Eleventh Hour (Sunnyside)
GRASS ROOTS - Eponymous (AUM Fidelity)
DEVIN GRAY - Dirigir Raptaplan (Skirt)
TYLER MITCHELL - Live at Smalls (smallLIVE)
SPECTRUM ROAD - Eponymous (Palmetto)

VOCAL RELEASES

RAN BLAKE/CHRISTINE CORREA - Don’t Purchase Here (Tribute to Abbey Lincoln Vol. One) (Red Piano)
KATJU CRUZ/HOWARD CURTIS - Lightning & Thunder (St. Martin’s Press)
DR. JOHN - Locked Down (Nonesuch)
DENA DEROSE - Travelin’ Light (MAXJAZZ)
LUCIANA SOUZA - The Book of Chet (Sunnyside)

BOOKS

Mr. P.C.: The Life and Music of Paul Chambers (Equinox)
Miles Davis: The Complete Illustrated History (Voyageur Press)
Shall We Play That One Together: The Life and Art of Jazz Piano Legend Marian McPartland (Portland’s St. Martin’s Press)
Herbie Hancock and The Musdbandish Band: You Know When You Get There (University of Chicago Press)

Honorable Mention

Juhani Aaltonen/Heikki Sarmanto - Conversations (TUM)
Rez Abbasi - Continuous Beat (Enja)
J D Allen - The Matador and the Bull (Savant)
Jacob Abel - AYCH - Eponymous (Relative Pitch)
Duck Baker Trio - Annesia In Transcender (Les Cousins)
Han Bennink Trio - Bennink # Co. (ILK Music)
Ted Brown/Kirk Knuffke - Found Cake (SteepleChase)
John Butcher - Bell Trove Spools (Northern-Spy)
John Butcher/Guillaume Villain - Brian Charette - Music for Organ Sextet (SteepleChase)
Chicago Trio - Velvet Songs: To Baba Fred Anderson (Rogue Art)
Anat Cohen - Claroscuro
Rick Coryell/Eddie Gomez/Paul Motian - Further Explorations (Europa)
Marilyn Crispell/Gerry Mulligan - Affinities (Intakt)
Jeff Davis - Leaf Hotel (Fresh Sound-New Talent)
Scott Dubois - Landscape Scripture (Sunnyside)
Paul Dunmall/Tony Bianco - Thank You To John Fiedler - Big Sackbut (Yellow Sound)
Foxes Fox - Live at the Vortex (psl)
Nobuyasu Furuya Quintet - Agitator Naka Naka
Dennis Gonzalez Yells at Eels - Resurrection and Life (Northern-Sky)
Craig Green/Dave King - Drum Music (Music of Paul Motian)
Ralph Lalama BopJuice - Live at Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz (Leo)
Ralph Lalama BopJuice - Live at Smalls (smallLIVE)

Parallax - Watching Edvard (Clean Feed)
Avishai Cohen - Eponymous (aum Fidelity)
Kiyokazu Doctette - Weight (OutNow)
Mike Reed's People Places & Things - Nine Lives (Nobusiness)
Ray Anderson Pocket Brass Band - Sweet Chicago Suite (Intuition)
Smul’s Paradise - Six Feet Under (Tzadik)
Mike Reed - Canada Day III (Tzadik)
Bill McHenry - Gather (Storyville)

Elastic Aspects (Thirsty Ear)
Natsuki Tamura/Satoko Fujii - Echoes of Indiana Avenue (Resonance)

Tim Berne - There Now (Storyville)

The Creep - Joe McPhee/Ingebrigt Håker Flaten (Innova/Plastic Sax)
**CONCERTS OF THE YEAR**

**SUMMIT TRIO**
Scott Robinson, Gene Bertoncini, Jonathan Batiste
Rubin Museum’s “Harlem in the Himalayas”, January 20th

**IRENE SCHWEIZER/PIERRE FAVRE**
Intakt Records Festival, The Stone, March 10th

**HAROLD MABERN TRIO**
John Webley, Louis Hayes
Smoke, March 23rd

**HUGH MASEKELA/LARRY WILLIS**
Jazz Standard, May 1st

**GERALD CLEAVER BLACK HOST**
Darian Jones, Brandon Seabrook, Cooper-Moore, Pascal Niggenkemper
Undead Jazz Festival, Sullivan Hall, May 9th

**BARRY HARRIS QUARTET**
Charles Davis, Ray Drummond, Leroy Williams
Harlem Jazz Shrines Festival, Minton’s Playhouse, May 11th

**THE THING WITH JOE MCPHEE**
Mats Gustafsson, Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Paal Nilsen-Love
Vision Festival, Roulette, June 13th

**TERJE RYPDAL QUARTET**
Palle Mikkelborg, Ståle Storløkken, Paolo Vinacci
Le Poisson Rouge, June 27th

**ERNIE ANDREWS**
Houston Person, Bill Charlap, Peter Washington, Kenny Washington
92nd St “Jazz in July”, July 17th

**BOBBY McFERRIN**
WITH JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA
Allen Room, September 14th
- LaDonohue-Greene

**MUSICIANS OF THE YEAR**

**TIM BERNE** (saxophone)

**JACK DEJOHNETTE** (drums)

**BILLY HART** (drums)

**JON IRABAGON** (saxophone)

**WADADA LEO SMITH** (trumpet)

**LABELS OF THE YEAR**

**CLEAN FEED** (cleanfeed-records.com)

**DELMARK** (delmark.com)

**ECM** (ecmrecords.com)

**JAZZHUS DISK**

**NOBUSINESS** (nobusinessrecords.com)

**VENUES OF THE YEAR**

**CORNELIA STREET CAFE** (West Village)

**IBEAM BROOKLYN** (Gowanus)

**JAZZ STANDARD** (Midtown)

**SHAPESHIFTER LAB** (Gowanus)

**SMOKE** (Upper West Side/ Harlem)

**BEST OF 2012**

**ANDREY HENKIN**

**ANDREASVARD** - Granular Alchemy (ILK Music) • **RAY ANDERSON** Pocket Brass Band - Sweet Chicago Suite (Intuition) • **MICHAEL ATTIAS** - Span Tree (Clean Feed)

**JOSH BERNER & HIS GANG** - There Now (Delmark) • **JEB BISHOP/JORRIT DIJKSTRA** - 1000 Words (Drift) • **PETER BRÖTZMANN** - Solo + Trio Roma (Vicoto)

**JUAN EDUARDO PREVOST** - All But: Meetings with Remarkable Saxophonists, Vol. 2 (Matchless) • **JOHN BUTCHER/MARK SANDERS** - Daylight (Emanem)

**EVARO** (Anzic) • **AVISITAL COHEN** - Trinity II (Anzic) • **SEAN CONLY/MICHAEL ATTIAS** - Think Shadow (OutNow) • **THE COOKERS** - Believe (Motema Music)

**MARILYN CRISPPELL/DENNIS DRESSER/GERRY HEMINGWAY** - Play (Storyville) • **CARLSTEN DAHL EXPERIENCE** - Metaphorphosis (Storyville)

**TOM COLTRANE (SLAM)** • **PAUL HAYWARD** - La Paloma (Intakt) • **TOM HARRELL** - Number Five (HighNote) • **ERNER HASLER** - The Other String (Unit)

**BUMI HUMAIR - Sweet & Sour (Laborio Jazz)** • **JASON KAO HWANG** - Burning Bridge (Sunnyside) • **ICHAR-MIKOŁAJ TRZASKA CLARINET QUARTET** - Watching Edward (Kilogram)

**ALVIN FIELDER** - Live at the Guelph Jazz Festival (Creative Collective) • **DAVID KOKOSKI** - Consequences (Criss Cross) • **MASABUMI KIKUCHI TRIO** - Sunrise (ECM)

**GUNITTEN Baby Sommer** - La Polonaise (Intakt) • **TOM HALL** - The Other String (Unit)

**HENRY GAREY** - The Outer String (Unit)

**JACOB ANDERSON** - All But: Meetings with Remarkable Saxophonists, Vol. 2 (Matchless)

**KRISTOFFER ROSEN** - Live at Smalls (smallSLIVE)

**SCIENCE** (Cuneiform) • **BRIAN BUSH** - Efficient (Anzic) • **STEPHEN CRUMP/ROSETTA TRIO** - Jitterbug Creep (Anzic) • **JAMIE FUX/LIBERTY ELMAN** - Winter Jazzfest, The Bitter End, January 7th

**JEFF TAIN WATTS QUARTET**
David Kikoski, Marcus Strickland, Orlando Le Fleming
Village Vanguard, February 4th

**MATT WILSON’S ARTS & CRAFTS**
Torell Stafford, Gary Versace, Martin Winch
Dizzy’s Club, March 3rd

**BILLY HART QUARTET**
Ethan Iverson, Mark Turner, Ben Street
Birdland, April 7th

**CRAIG TABORN TRIO**
Thomas Morgan, Gerald Cleaver
Village Vanguard, April 7th

**AMIR ELSAFFAR QUINTET**
Tony Malaby, John Escreet, François Moulin, Dan Weiss
The Jazz Gallery, May 4th

**ROUND ROBIN DUETS**
Undead Jazz Festival, 92Y Tribeca, May 12th

**LIONEL LOUEKE GROUP**
Derrick Hodge, Mark Guillaume, Robert Glasper
Blue Note, September 5th

**HERBIE NICHOLS PROJECT**
Frank Kimbrough, Ben Allison, Michael Blake, Ted Nash, Ron Horton, Michael Sarin
Jazz Standard, November 12th

**SHEILA JORDAN/STEVE KUHN**
Blue Note, November 19th

- David R. Adler

*ANDREJ HENKIN*
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LIVE IN MORECAMBE
1959

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Listening to Ware’s muscular, torrential tenor over the course of the album’s three movements - each entirely improvised and titled “Processional” 1, 2 and 3 - it’s almost inconceivable that this would be his final live performance before succumbing to complications from his transplant last November at age 62. “Processional 1” and “Processional 2” are dense thickets of contrapuntal group improvisation featuring alternately boisterous and braying tenor against Cooper-Moore’s untethered piano lines, Parker’s bass accompaniment and Ali’s provocative drum hits. “Processional 3” begins with a gorgeously expressive duet between Ware and Parker’s ethereal bowed lines, which quickly evolves into another fulminating group investigation, ending with a popped saxophone exclamation and then furious applause.

Denmark lost two of its most innovative musicians within a week of each other this past October. Saxophonist John Tchicai (who died in October at 76) was born and raised in Copenhagen but spent time in ‘60s New York as part of the New Thing movement in ensembles like New York Eye and Ear Control and the New York Art Quartet as well as participating in John Coltrane’s epochal Ascension. Upon moving back to Denmark in 1966, the saxophonist began a series of rewarding associations with Danish musicians like bassist Peter Danstrup and drummer Ole Rømer, both of whom are featured on a double-disc release from Storyville Records capturing Tchicai in prime form on sessions from 1977 and 1987. The music varies widely - from synthesized funk to blistering postbop and languid calypso - reflecting both Tchicai’s eclectic tastes and the eras in which they were recorded, but Tchicai’s beautifully focused tone on an array of woodwind instruments and commitment to spontaneous invention never wavers.

Although lesser known in the US, bassist Erik Moseholm was a household name in Copenhagen until his death last October at 82. A towering figure on both the jazz and classical scenes, Moseholm’s clean tone and innate sense of swing made him a first-call player for American musicians traveling through Scandinavia and he made invaluable contributions to a boundary pushing trio co-led in the late ‘50s-early ‘60s with fellow Danes pianist Bent Axen and drummer Peter Wissing. The recently released CD reissue of a seven-inch record of this historic trio from 1960 is yet another reminder of Moseholm’s contributions not just to Danish music, but jazz as a whole. The eponymous EP clocks in at little more than 11 minutes, but brims with passion, swing and improvisational daring.

Austrian saxophonist and composer Max Nagl readily admits to being a lifelong fan of the British saxophonist Lol Coxhill. “Lol has been a great influence on my musical life since I first heard (his debut album) Ear of the Beholder many years ago,” Nagl explains on the jacket of his recently released compilation of duos and interludes the pair recorded in the late ‘90s-early ‘00s. Coxhill, who passed away at the age of 79 last July, was an imposing figure throughout Europe, known for his developed improvisational ability, which often found outlet in galvanic solo performances. On this set, Nagl and Coxhill trade solos, often playing unaccompanied for long stretches, before returning to the exploratory duets that are the most satisfying parts of the album. In between tracks, Nagl adds harpsichord interludes of no more than one minute that act as a sort of palette cleanser between saxophone barrages, in addition to other ethereal percussive and tonal effects that add depth throughout the album. The disc is a mixed bag, but moments of absolute beauty shine through and speak to the immense talent of Coxhill and Nagl and their compelling rapport.

For more information, visit aumfidelity.com, storyvilleiterecords.com, downtownmusicgallery.com and maxnagl.at
Joe Harriott (Jul. 15th, 1925-Jan. 2nd, 1973) was a Jamaican altoist who established himself in London in the ’50s. Nowadays he is mostly remembered for two records in his ‘free form’ style and two others that attempted a sort of fusion of jazz and Indian classical music with pretty good results. But what Harriott was, first and foremost, was a hell of a bebop alto player and if he never shook off Charlie Parker’s influence entirely, well, neither did Eric Dolphy.

Movement is one of Harriott’s greatest records, but neither it nor the solid but less spectacular High Spirits have ever been reissued in nearly 50 years. On both, Harriott is joined by Shake Keane, another Jamaican expat of spectacular abilities, on trumpet and flugelhorn. Harriott felt that Keane was his musical soulmate and it’s easy to see why; great range, tone, chops, creativity and originality, this guy had it all. The rhythm section consisted of pianist Pat Smythe, bassist Coleridge Goode and drummer Bobby Orr, all excellent players with big ears. Harriott’s free-form style relied on group interaction over a series of loosely defined musical episodes and it sounded tame to ears accustomed to American free jazz, more like some kind of ultra-hip film score than Coltrane-esque catharsis. Long, flipped-out solos were generally avoided, and the music tended to be tonal, though not along the lines of predetermined harmonic progressions. Movement alternates modern jazz tunes with this freer style, an approach Harriott used in concert. In a way this makes it an ideal introduction to this fascinating figure.

High Spirits features music from the successful musical. Smythe’s arrangements bring out the attractive tunes nicely while Harriott and Keane show how much passion they could get into short, concise solos. Songs like “You’d Better Love Me” and “If I Give You” are moderately well known and several others here should be. Harriott and Keane are all but unknown but certainly don’t deserve anonymity.

For more information, visit duttonvocalion.co.uk

Paradoxical Frog (Clean Feed)

Each member of Paradoxical Frog (pianist Kris Davis, saxist Ingrid Laubrock and drummer Tyshawn Sorey) is both player and composer and the band’s second album Union has the feel of a composers’ collective, each distinct voice working towards similar goals, albeit with different materials.

After the spiky counterpoint of Sorey’s brief opener “An Intermittent Procession”, the trio’s esoteric, understated side comes out, as Laubrock’s “First Strike” could easily lead the listener to suspect they are in for a CD of bowed metal and barely-audible multphonics. Davis’ “Fear the Fairy Dust”, however, brings plenty of exquisitely sculpted long-form composition and improvisational dynamics. Sorey’s “Figment 2012” unfolds gradually, calling to mind Bartók’s “Music for Strings Percussion and Celesta”.

The band’s connection to improvisational and compositional traditions are intricately linked; the work of Jimmy Giuffre’s trio with Paul Bley and Steve Swallow comes to mind often, as does some of Anthony Braxton’s quartet activities in the ’80s. The band’s sound, however, is very much defined by the individuals’ distinct voices. Davis’ second contribution is the title track, located just past the midpoint. This is in some ways one of the more overtly jazz-oriented moments, though the way the melody works gradually from fragmentation towards cohesion is impressive (it’s nice to hear a composition intelligently work its way towards an idea rather than spending the duration working itself away from it). This piece finds its way to some very subtle sonic spaces and the band again affirms their distinct skill at fluctuating between chaos and order. On “Masterisk”, Laubrock continues to provide the more abstract compositional constructs while the final track, “Third Strike, You’re Out”, shows the band twisting around Laubrock’s unusual repetitive idea - a fitting final statement.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. Kris Davis is at Zinc Bar and Culture Project with Michael Attias, both Jan. 11th as part of Winter Jazzfest, Cornelia Street Café Jan. 13th with Tony Malaby and 20th with Sara Serpa and Jazz at Kitano Jan. 16th with Rob Garcia. Ingrid Laubrock is at JACK Jan. 28th. Tyshawn Sorey is at Jazz at Kitano Jan. 4th with David Lopato, Cornelia Street Café Jan. 9th, Bowery Electric Jan. 12th with Mario Pavone as part of Winter Jazzfest and Seeds Jan. 16th with Pete Robbins. See Calendar.
When American jazz enthusiasts hear Portuguese-language music, they are often listening to music from Brazil. But there is another Portuguese-language tradition with a rich history: the fado music of Portugal itself. Portugal’s Fado em Si Bemol doesn’t pretend to be fado in the classic Amália Rodrigues/Maria Teresa de Noronha/Carlos do Carmo sense. Rather, it puts an experimental spin on fado, combining it with everything from jazz to tango to Brazilian music.

They show us their instrumental side with an intriguing arrangement of Chick Corea’s “Armando’s Rhumba”, which has usually been heard with a Spanish or AfroCuban flavor but the familiar melody sounds perfectly natural with a fado rhythm. Instrumentals, however, are the exception rather than the rule on QB and singer Pedro Matos shows himself to be a charismatic performer on jazz-influenced offerings such as “Casa da Mariquinhas”, “Marcha do Bairro Alto”, “Matilde” and “Cantigas de Maio”. Matos is no less expressive on “Tango para Teresa”, which blends fado with Argentinean tango, both of which can be melancholy.

Fado em Si Bemol’s performance of Gilberto Gil’s “Sítio do Pica-Pau” will be especially interesting to those who know a lot about Brazilian music. Gil helped pioneer a style of Brazilian pop known as tropicália. Fado em Si Bemol’s version draws on both fado and tropicália and hearing Gil’s lyrics performed with a Portuguese accent rather than a Brazilian one is certainly unusual. But there is no shortage of surprises on QB, which is as rewarding as it is adventurous.

For more information, visit vidisco.pt. This group is at Somethin’ Jazz Club Jan. 12th, Tomi Jazz Jan. 15th, Alfama Restaurant Jan. 16th and 23rd, Metropolitan Room Jan. 17th and Drom Jan. 22nd. See Calendar.

Introducing Joe Sanders (Criss Cross) by Sharon Mizrahi

Introducing Joe Sanders…and what an introduction indeed. Having played with the Heath Brothers, Herbie Hancock and Gerald Clayton (among many others), this bassist is certainly no newcomer to the jazz realm. His debut album, however, brims with new ideas put into action.

A glance at some of the CD’s track titles (“Bewildered Minds Wait”, “Orange Blue”) reveals that Sanders has a knack for ingenuity - and it permeates far beneath the surface. In “Believe, Belief, Below” (a composition by Esbjörn Svensson of E.S.T. fame), Luis Perdomo sets the tone with a somberly meditative refrain, inching forward with the immense restraint of a classical pianist. On bowed bass, Sanders slips in almost imperceptibly, until a raw twist in his notes transforms the piece into a subtly charged, sometimes even wrenching, duo. Sanders and Gretchen Parlato also pair up in their co-written piece “A Joy and Sorrow”. The latter’s breathy vocals lend a smoky air to the spirtely instrumentation, forming an intriguing contrast with Sanders’ own smoky voice.

Alto saxist Will Vinson contributes much of the color in “Orange Blue”, offering substance alongside a hint of flamboyance. He foregoes the ‘low-and-slow’ approach, delving into the low (and high) registers with ceaseless energy. Sanders, drummer Rodney Green and Perdomo contrast the crisp sax with a lighter ambience, stirring a mist of double stops, cymbal taps and piano flourishes. In “Enigmatically Decided”, the band drastically speeds up yet maintains this effortless harmony. Vinson slurs away while Sanders plucks one intricate sequence after another, fueled by Perdomo’s stride-like piano.

And by the end of this hour-long journey, Sanders, Vinson and Perdomo make their mark as distinctive musicians with stories to tell while Parlato and Green illustrate the poignant creativity that continues to make them prominent in the jazz scene. So it can be decided - rather enigmatically, one might say - that what Sanders has crafted is of the straightahead-meets-soul-meets-refreshing wit variety: a thoughtful set of tunes that keeps the mind sharp and the ears entertained.

For more information, visit crisscrossjazz.com
Although there are sketches of Mogen David's on the sleeve of this CD and keyboardist Jamie Saft is a sometime member of Electric Masada, the orientation and sound of the session is more towards Rastafarian reggae interpretation rather than anything Hebraic.

Fight Against Babylon is more about what can be created in Saft's Kingston, NY studio than the sounds of Kingston, Jamaica. While veteran jazz bassist Larry Grenadier and drummer Craig Santiago, whose proficiency stretches to roots, ska and rocksteady, maintain the beat throughout, there are times when Saft's playing on piano and Fender Rhodes glides a little too close to pop-jazz and pseudo-classical. Imagine reggae drummer Sly Dunbar and bassist Robbie Shakespeare mixing it up with Crusader Joe Sample - or MOR piano king Roger Williams. As a matter of fact, when Saft's forceful syncopation kicks in on a number such as "Gates" you'd swear Country and Western piano avocado Floyd Cramer had been taped playing with locals during a Caribbean vacation.

In a more serious vein, Saft, who also composes movie scores, is able to impart a cinematic delicacy to other tracks, creating chamber reggae intermezzos whose romantic vocals could accompany a film's key scene. Such is "Fire Ablaze", where the pianist's initial flashy glissandi become sensitive key clicking by the end. Switching to the electric piano for "Hear 1 Jah", his retro '70s Herbie Hancock-like reverber is just sugary enough to add sweetness to the line but played with enough bravado that, combined with Santiago's foot-tapping rhythm, it maintains the composition's flow.

At the same time while the piano playing is anything but understated, Saft composes tunes that are swing-oriented enough to lock into a groove. Grenadier gets to strut his stuff on "Niceness", where his initial proficiently stretches to roots, ska and rocksteady, and he's right. This is new music that takes just enough of the tradition to provide a foundation for excellent in-the-moment invention.

For more information, visit tommyigeoe.com. This group is at Birdland Fridays. See Regular Engagements.

Of the various joys in jazz, few compare to hearing a big band live. So head to Birdland on an early Friday evening and you'll get the electric pleasure of drummer Tommy Igoe and the Birdland Big Band. For its debut recording, the group offers "eleven" tunes that, according to its leader, tell the world that the band is "ready for its closeup".

Here is a dynamic, new (now not-so-new) big band with smart arrangements of mostly contemporary jazz and Latin or Latin-flavored tunes by Michael Brecker, Don Grolnick, Michel Camilo, Herbie Hancock, Mike and Leni Stern, Pedro Gutierrez, Chick Corea and two by Darmon Meder (founder, arranger, composer and more for New York Voices). The players are among New York's finest and they give great account, both as part of the band and as soloists.

Saxophonist Rob Middleton arranged the spunky and in-the-pocket arrangement of Bobby Timmons' "Moanin". It retains the original's funky flavor but becomes something new with some gently swinging writing for the band plus an extraordinary reading from harmonica player Rob Paparoza (as well as fine solo work from bassist Tom Kennedy and Middleton himself).

The arrangements are demanding but never so much that they lose an audience. On Corea's "Armando's Rhumba" the band tackles the jaunty theme and once again brings back the appeal of the original but with fills by the band and Igoe's percussion, plus says leads from Nathan Childers (soprano sax) and Barbara Cifelli (baritone sax).

Igoe says that the band doesn't dwell on the past and he's right. This new music that takes just enough of the tradition to provide a foundation for excellent in-the-moment invention.

For more information, visit vealerecords.com. This group is at Cornelia Street Cafe Jan. 6th. See Calendar.
Years before her appearance on “If It’s Magic” from Stevie Wonder’s Songs in the Key of Life, harpist Dorothy Ashby (1932-86) was renowned for playing jazz on a primarily orchestral instrument. She wasn’t the first harp player in jazz but she was among the first to record as a leader and five of her albums are collected in this excellent boxed set. Ashby was no light-fingered harp player in jazz but she was among the first to slip musical references into her solos; she quotes the title cut and the poignant “My Ship”. Pollard is delightful and there’s even a light-stepping version of “The Guns of Navarone”.

Anywho...
**Greek mythological musae inspired song and poetry but saxophonist Roman Filiu showcases his own set of muses for this likable but somewhat scattered release. Filiu is part of a new wave of Cuban jazz musicians who benefitted from a loosening of musical exposure in Cuba and the groundbreaking band Irakere. Although Filiu’s Cuban roots inform this release they are not at its heart. Musae is more a contemporary jazz release than anything else but just when you think you have the groove, things change. Filiu’s sax is both sophisticated and extreme, with his alto tending toward the former and his soprano the latter. Likewise, Musae itself is a dichotomy with two different atmospheres and lineups. The commonalities, along with Filiu, are fellow Cuban pianist David Virelles and bassist Reinier Elizurde. They both are quite hip to Filiu’s changes and keep the session from devolving into disjointedness. Half the tracks, by far the more cerebral, include drummer Marcus Gilmore and guitarist Adam Rogers. The latter is superb and he adds depth to a somewhat rambling “Summer Song” while matching Filiu note for note on the quick-stopping entry and exit of “Dark Room”.

The other half of the session includes drummer Dafnis Prieto (on whose label this album is released) sans Rogers. Three of these tunes are the strongest and most tension filled of Filiu’s musings. “El Nanga” and “La Montaña” are thrillingly cohesive statements while “Venus” is an exquisite nod to a smoky exotic interlude. The remaining “Episodes” (three vignettes interspersed throughout the album) with this quartet unfortunately frustrate with their brevity and are more like short songbytes than creative transition points. While Musae has Filiu musing perhaps a bit too much it shows that in the right circumstance he can flat out play.

For more information, visit dafnisonmusic.com. Filiu is at the Iowa City Jazz Festival on 19th. See Calendar.
Echo vom Zuerihorn

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Placed as one of the Top Ten Jazz albums 2012 by The New York Jazz Record

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Jazz at Lincoln Center

Gerry Mulligan and the Concert Jazz Band (Fresh Sound)

Although probably best known for his tenure in the Vandermark 5, Windy City trombonist Jeb Bishop brings his exciting blustery trombone to a catholic variety of settings across North America and Europe.

Bishop joins with Dutch saxophonist Jorrit Dijkstra on 1000 Words for 12 tightly framed duets, only one of which breathes the five minute barrier. Half originate from the pen of the Dutchman, with the remainder divided joint efforts and Bishop’s charts. Both men navigate the angular contours with ease, switching insouciantly between incise unison and garrulous counterpart, creating a stark soundscape, accentuated by insistent motifs, like the title track, which invokes the late Steve Lacy in its repeated intervallic leaps. In a session that moves from wintry melancholy to jaunty sparkles, the level of responsiveness signals a simpatico quick-witted approach, manifest most clearly in the three improvisations. One man often holds down the basics, freeing the other to take liberties, a gambit most obvious on the trombonist’s riffing “Strobe”, where after a tricky stop-start head, Dijkstra’s tart alto shoots off at unpredictable tangents, before giving way to Bishop’s multiphonics and woozy mutterings. It’s an entertaining set, both levelheaded and uproarious.

Burning Live finds Bishop in Portugal alongside reedman Rodrigo Amado, fronting a freewheeling quartet. Three long cuts swing out of a series of loosely extemporized melodies created by the two horns. Bishop works in emphatic, burry lines, his broad strokes alternately declamatory and lyrical while Amado’s extended emotional range is denoted by choked wailing and occasional overblowing. At best, the interplay between the two forms one of the main selling points of this set, as does the busy flow of timbral commentary and pulsing accent from drummer Gabriel Ferrandini. By way of example, the 26-minute “Imaginary Caverns” opens with a gradually accelerating give and take between trombone and alto saxophone, before blossoming into a tender ballad. But then like a rolling snowball, the foursome gathers mass and momentum, leading to a short drum solo of tonal ingenuity. Thereafter they slightly lose their way in a dreamy ambience underpinned by Miguel Mira’s cello coloration until Bishop reinvigorates through some compelling interaction with drums and cello.

For more information, visit freshsoundrecords.com. A Gerry Mulligan Tribute by the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra is on Rose Hall Jan. 18th-19th. See Calendar.

Gerry Mulligan and the Concert Jazz Band (Fresh Sound)

The mid-20th Century was a fertile time for large ensemble jazz developments and experiments, most notably Miles Davis’ Birth of the Cool bands of the late ‘40s and Gil Evans’ work with Miles in the late ‘50s. In the vanguard of new approaches to the big band sound was Gerry Mulligan, an integral member of those Birth of the Cool sessions, who formed his 13-piece Concert Jazz Band (CJB) in early 1960. This double CD album is the first complete release of a concert by that band on Oct. 1st, 1960, at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium (six tracks have appeared on a CJB Mosaic boxed set).

Mulligan built his ‘little big band’ sound from the bottom and core up, borrowing many concepts from the small groups - piano-less quartets and sextets - he had led in the ‘50s, including polyphony, dynamics, open voicings and nimble swing. Like those small groups, the CJB was largely piano-less, the rhythm section consisting of bassist Buddy Clark and drummer Mel Lewis, whose work here presages his seminal work with Thad Jones and the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra.

Three trumpets, three trombones and five reeds rounded out the band, with the leader’s baritone sax not just prominent as a solo instrument but also in leads in the ensembles. Mulligan also moved to the piano at this concert for his long keyboard feature: “Piano Blues”, his arrangement spotlighting fine interplay between the horns and piano. Most solo spots other than the leader’s are taken by valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, trumpeter Conte Candoli and, in the last half of each CD set, guest tenor sax soloist Zoot Sims. Alto saxophonist Gene Quill, who often plays clarinet within, not leading, the sax section, is featured soloist on “18 Carrots for Rabbit”.

The band’s charts and performances expand upon while never abandon the swing tradition and apply the lessons of section and voicing flexibility pioneered by Duke Ellington, whose orchestral philosophy and practice greatly informed those of Mulligan. The charts have myriad ways to involve the musicians, from shout choruses and riffing to counter-melodies, stop-times and abrupt dynamic changes. Soloists are never left alone for long with the rhythm section, keeping the rest of the band members on their toes. Polyphonal interplay sparks many of the tracks, but never impedes the nimble swing momentum of the band. A perfect example is Al Cohn’s arrangement of Art Farmer’s “Bluesport”, a flagwaving tempo that just flows along from intricate ensemble polyphony to solos over and around horn figures, all while Clark and Lewis keep the rhythm lithe and limber as the dynamics move easily from whisper to shout and back. This is, simply, a superb album from one of the great jazz ensembles of the mid-20th Century.
It’s no insult to Clifton Anderson to say that he’s spent most of his professional career in the shadow of a more famous relative. Not when the relative in question is his Uncle Sonny, as in Sonny Rollins. The well-respected 55-year-old trombonist’s reputation rests mainly on his nearly three decades working alongside Rollins and serving as his musical director. But he’s also performed with a wide range of others, including Slide Hampton, Frank Foster, McCoy Tyner and Lester Bowie and made some rewarding, though infrequent, albums as a leader. Anderson’s new release, just his third under his own name (and first since 2008’s Decade), highlights his full-bodied, postbop trombone sound and his considerable compositional skills. His playing on the nine tracks here proves that he’s easily among the top mainstream trombonists in jazz today.

The six originals cover a variety of moods and styles, ranging from the intense hardbop of the title track and the Latin groove of “Remember This”, featuring some expert plunger work from Anderson, to the irresistibly bouncy “Bacalou Tonight”, a Calypso number that’s reminiscent of similar tunes by Rollins. Three standards (Rodgers-Hart’s “Where or When” and “Falling in Love With Love”, plus “Tomorrow” from the musical Annie) are all taken at brisk tempos and handled adroitly by Anderson and his talented colleagues, who include his excellent working group (pianist Donald Vega, tenor saxophonist Eric Wyatt, bassist Essiet Essiet and drummer Steve Williams) along with some high-profile guests, including pianist Monty Alexander, saxist Kenny Garrett, trumpeter Wallace Roney and drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts.

With Anderson at the helm, the entire ensemble blends together seamlessly, creating a feel-good album of finely executed, heartfelt jazz, which shines overdue attention on a talented team player getting a rare and well-earned moment in the light.

Almost every sleeper record becomes a well-regarded rarity someday - witness the high demand for albums that were doyens of ’70s cutout bins. In similar fashion, it might be easy to overlook this excellent release by Chicago saxophonist Dave Rempis and the Boston triumvirate of trumpeter Forbes Graham, pianist Pandelis Karayorgis and drummer Luther Gray. The name “Construction Party” presumably refers to the reformist (anti-Ahmadinejad) Iranian political party and as Graham, Rempis and Gray are known for work in freer realms of improvisation, the disc’s penchant for composition means the name is oddly apt.

Instruments of Change consists of a solid 70 minutes of music spread across eight tunes, with each member of the quartet composing two pieces. It’s an interesting ensemble structure - trumpet, alto saxophone, piano and drums (no bass), with Karayorgis’ robust left-hand movements holding down the bottom end. The pianist’s “Two-ophony” offers detailed rent-party swing, Gray’s fflitting brushwork an athletic counterpart to Rempis’ acerbic loquaciousness. Karayorgis is aesthetically a student of such masters as Herbie Nichols, Hasaan Ibn Ali, Misha Mengelberg and the early work of Cecil Taylor. Graham - whose recordings are relatively small in number - is positively awesome on this disc, with a crumpled finesse that recalls Bill Dixon acolyte Marc Levin, able to convey a broad textural/emotional range with short bursts and incisive whines. His low barbs on Rempis’ “Hover” are striking for their unsettled simplicity, with a deep and stomach-projected oration.

On the trumpeter’s “Fibbin’”, loose traditionalism gives way to collective sparks as Karayorgis’ right hand teases and undoes before working into a stubborn and rangy behind-the-beat solo, quoting “Satin Doll” with drunken discomfort. The quartet is formally well balanced between improvisation and composition, able to stray from the tunes’ centers while also offering taut and sometimes frightening measurement. Yet there is a sizeable fire burning throughout and in a time of “office cubicle free jazz”, recordings like Instruments of Change are scarce and not to be missed.

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Hawkins exchanges inspiration with close associates, among them the trumpeters Henry "Red" Allen, Rex Stewart and Charlie Shawver. Throughout the set we trace Hawkins' distinctive lines of development, the course of his ballad playing, increasing harmonic experimentation and tremendous sense of drama and construction. The 1939 session with that famous version of "Body and Soul" is included as well as small-group sessions from the early '40s in which he embraces bebop with younger players like Oscar Pettiford and Max Roach. Hawkins is heard backing singers here and, at the opposite extreme, improvising unaccompanied on the two-part "Hawk's Variations", breaking ground later explored by Sonny Rollins and myriad others.

Hawkins' genius is evident everywhere in the wealth of material here, but it's the quality of presentation that lends ready access to the significance of specific performances. Loren Schoenberg's biographical essay and track commentary are a superb combination of scholarship and enthusiasm, continuously conveying the importance of individual moments, like Hawkins' phrasing on the 1926 "Stampede" and its influence on Roy Eldridge, from whom it would pass to Dizzy Gillespie, or the innovative daring of his solo on "Strangers" from 1932. This kind of survey is a relatively new departure for Mosaic and this set couldn't be done any better.

For more information, visit mosaicrecords.com

Paradoxically, the overriding fascination of this 1985 Cambridge, Mass. session is with its least-known player. Unlike guitarist Joe Morris, cornetist Butch Morris and violinst Malcolm Goldstein, this is only the second record featuring Lowell Davidson (1941-90), who only plays percussion and aluminum acoustic bass here, unlike his 1965 ESP-Disk debut as a pianist.

Someone who studied biochemistry at Harvard, after the trio date Davidson returned to Boston, where after taking too many chemicals himself, found his increasingly erratic behavior meant few gigs. He met Joe Morris in the early '80s and played with him on-and-off from then on. Davidson, whose piano playing had quirky Herbie Nichols-early Cecil Taylor intonation, approaches other instruments in a more rudimentary and more abstract manner, resulting in off-center coloration rather than time-keeping while the aluminum bass almost lacks double bass properties and is instead mostly involved with upper-partial tremolos. Frequently it's also difficult to distinguish the bass work from Joe Morris' abrasive plucks and pops plus Goldstein's flying spiccato and other extended string techniques. Meanwhile Butch Morris uses his cornet to flick muted tones or plunger whines into the mix. Among the others' dense and agitated timbres, his mewling grace notes stand out.

For more information, visit web.roguart.com. Morris is at 16th-19th, 22nd-27th and 29th-31st. See Calendar.
This album, recorded live in Stuttgart and Frankfurt in late November 1961, is a worthy companion piece to the classic one recorded the next summer at Antibes, on the French Riviera, by a Dizzy Gillespie group with the same frontline: trumpet, Leo Wright's alto sax and flute and Lalo Schifrin's piano. This quintet is rounded out by bassist Bob Cunningham and, in a rare appearance with Gillespie, drummer Mel Lewis. This frontline was one of Gillespie's most ebullient and a large reason for its flair was the presence of Schifrin, whose command of his instrument was as thorough and masterly as that of Gillespie. And Dizzy, then in his early 40s (who died 20 years ago this month), was at the top of his game, a jazz giant with a deeply personal, highly virtuosic style incorporating bebop into the wide jazz mainstream.

The longest tracks on the album - both clocking in at over 15 minutes - are also the highlights. Gillespie turns Duke Ellington's “The Mooche” into a modern-at over 15 minutes - are also the highlights. Gillespie's “Kush” is more exotic, with stirring melody elaboration, McGregor's instant arrangements confirm his keyboard and compositional skills.

Exposed early on to rousing hymns and Xhosa folk melodies while growing up at a Church of Scotland mission in the South African hinterlands, McGregor's melodies - he composed 9 of 13 tracks here - would define those of music throughout his recordings to sell owners of ballrooms and clubs on booking him. Signed to the newly formed Capitol in 1942, he avoided being obscured by the recurring Musicians' Union strikes against labels, since Capitol settled early, giving this orchestra exposure that eluded other big bands. Kenton wasn't adverse to covering standards and featuring vocalist like Anita O'Day and June Christy to sell records, as it subsidized his more experimental writing. Furiously working on new charts while on the road, Kenton recruited a number of great arrangers, including Bill Holman, Gerry Mulligan, Johnny Richards, Lennie Niehaus, Marty Paich and Pete Rugolo. The bandleader coined the term "progressive jazz" to describe his music, which evolved through several distinctive periods. Breaking up his band in 1948, Kenton returned with a 43-piece orchestra with strings and was an early explorer of AfroCuban rhythms. The Kenton alumni include Lee Konitz, Richie Kamuca, Frank Rosolino, Art Pepper, Zoot Sims, Shelly Manne, Mel Lewis, Howard Rumsey, Maynard Ferguson, Mike Vax and Carl Saunders, among others. Rumsey, Holman, Saunders, Vax, Dr. Herb Wong and LA Jazz Institute Director Ken Poston are among the prominent interview subjects. Kenton was one of the early advocates for promoting jazz education, conducting workshops with students, which included Keith Jarrett, Gary Burton, Pat Metheny, Randy Brecker and Peter Erskine. While Kenton's bands in his final years didn't have the star power of those he led in the "40s-50s, his contributions as a forward-thinking leader and composer are reaffirmed in this documentary.
For all the focus given to Chicago reedman Ken Vandermark’s various projects and worldwide associations, it’s his regular working units that are often the most rewarding. That’s not to say that, as a musician-composer, he hasn’t learned a great deal from collaborative units and one-offs or that they aren’t ‘good’ - that is clearly why Vandermark is as busy as he is. Yet there’s something to be gleaned from the adage that “the band that plays together stays together”, as challenging as it may be for globetrotting artists to do so. Not being able to work regularly necessitated a hiatus of the DKV Trio, Vandermark’s excellent group with drummer Hamid Drake and bassist Kent Kessler, though they have reconvened regularly since 2008.

The group is remarkably simple in its construction and approach. DKV is a collective improvisation ensemble rooted in earthy rhythms and spry, open-ended blowing; and while all three members are well versed in non-idiomatic free improvisation, the ‘spontaneous music’ that DKV engages is within the jazz tradition and fairly accessible. Not quite a power trio in the sense of The Thing or similar outfits led by saxophonists Peter Brötzmann and the late Mike Osborne, the supple and often trance-like rhythms and breakneck motion channeled by Drake and Kessler act as bedrock for Vandermark’s flinty, heel-digging tenor and baritone (his warbling clarinet is more sparsely applied, but part of the arsenal). The group’s feel is clearly aligned with fellow Chicago tenorist Fred Anderson and his trios with Drake and a revolving cast of bassists - indeed Anderson recorded with the DKV Trio and the group performed often at his Windy City club, the Velvet Lounge. While Vandermark is obviously not steeped in the milieu and 2011, including a program of the music of Don Blackwell-ian swing is a necessary part, as is Kessler’s throaty arco and callus-flaying pizzicato.

Another in a series of major Not Two Vandermark documents, Past Present is a seven-disc boxed set comprised of live performances waxed between 2008 and 2011, including a program of the music of Don Cherry (recorded at the Sant’Anna Arresi Jazz Festival in 2008). The latter is a rare instance of the trio engaging the work of a composer outside the group, at least in a literal rather than implicit sense. Of course, DKV make these pieces entirely their own, with Vandermark both jubilant and searing in his muscular, linear improvisations on tunes from “Brown Rice” to “Elephantasy”. All of the sets are very well recorded and convey the sheer workmanlike joy that these three musicians feel in playing together - “workmanlike” in that so much of their music is a matter of getting things done, imbued with a no-frills approach to improvising.

There is nothing extraneous here, just spirited and consistently powerful playing. Perhaps time away from the group allowed each of the band’s members to refine their approach; compared to earlier recordings the music on Past Present seems more incisive and the improvisations (especially those of Vandermark) effectively colorful.

38 years together and apart will necessarily generate a bevy of experiences that translate into deeper levels of communication and it’s clear that DKV has grown as a unit. That’s not to say every moment in perfection - this writer has never completely been able to get behind the backbeat sections that occasionally crop up with this group, though admittedly the groovy close to Disc Six’ second piece (all of the improvisations are untitled) is pretty fine. Furthermore, seven discs is also a lot to get through, especially with a format that’s pretty basic. Nevertheless, in going through the set one finds that any single disc “toe dip” will be rewarding and overall Past Present is extremely consistent. The set’s size shouldn’t deter anyone interested in these three musicians’ work and even if there are a few flagging moments, the process of hearing and assimilating the DKV Trio’s music is very worthwhile.

For more information, visit nottwo.com. Ken Vandermark is at The Stone Jan. 17th-18th. See Calendar.
I almost reduced what I played to one stick on the side of the drums. And Ray started playing his conga with his fingers, which is unheard of. It was against this convention of Latin conga drumming. To play conga with fingers, you know? That was how flexible he was. He could just adjust to whatever happened to the music. Patato was the same way. He was a very traditional Cuban conga player. He never told me what to do or restricted what I could do.

ST: I didn’t make any CDs with Patato, but I made a bunch of tours in Europe and we played a lot here, in New York. He was an amazing character. Ray was very straight. He didn’t drink, he didn’t smoke, he didn’t party. Just kind of a straight guy. But Patato is the opposite. He would stay up later than any of us and there were a bunch of younger players in the band. Then the next morning, we’re totally tired [and] he would show up in a three-piece suit and totally awake and he’s ready to go. Very interesting character to work with. The way he led the band was singing. He wouldn’t speak in musical terms. He would just sing to [the musicians]. So that was beautiful, to see the way he thought about the music. Very unique. And very different from Ray. Ray had more conventional knowledge of musical forms and musical ideas. He was very clear about directing how the music should sound.

TNYCJR: Your drumming, in general, is subtle and it seems like you’re concerned with not overpowering the groups in which you play.

ST: My strongest concept is that the drumset consists of different instruments with different timbres, frequencies and functions. That is very important to me. I think that’s one of the reasons that I tend to play few instruments at the same time. That leads to not overpowering other people. Drumset can overpower anything, not just by playing loud, but just playing everything that drumset has to offer. Because it covers all the frequencies - cymbals to bass drum. Especially if you’re playing a string instrument, or acoustic instruments, it’s a problem. If you start playing cymbals too loud when you’re playing with the violin or cello, you will lose something of their sound. I think I’m very, very sensitive to that idea: drumset as an orchestra instrument. It really came from all these [Berklee] drummers showing me the percussion parts on drumset, which is to really think about these instruments as one entity. So I guess it’s finding that balance: when to overpower and when not to overpower. I need to overpower sometimes. [laughs] It’s a great thing. Sometimes the drummer just takes over. I like to have both worlds at the same time.

TNYCJR: So you were in Patato’s band also?

ST: It’s a great thing. Sometimes the drummer just takes over. I like to have both worlds at the same time.
talent, Hess, Coltrane, and John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and Ornette Coleman, Brains

modern classical composers as it does to jazz innovators like

John Coltrane Festival - A Love Supreme: Azar Lawrence Quintet with

The Bad Plus: Ethan Iverson, Reid Anderson, Dave King

Frank Wess 90th Birthday Celebration

John Coltrane Festival - George Coleman Quartet with Harold Mabern, Doug Weiss, Alfie Fanger

John Coltrane Festival - My Favorite Things: Harold Mabern/Eric Alexander Quartet with

Friday, January 4

• John Coltrane Festival - George Coleman Quartet with Harold Mabern, Doug Weiss, Alfie Fanger
• David Lopoto Trio with Ratz Harris, Tyshawn Sorey

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• John Coltrane Festival - George Coleman Quartet with Harold Mabern, Doug Weiss, Alfie Fanger
• David Lopoto Trio with Ratz Harris, Tyshawn Sorey
• Mara Rosenbloom Trio with Sean Conly, Mark Farber

Wednesday, January 2

• John Coltrane Festival - A Love Supreme: Azar Lawrence Quintet with

• Background Music - The Music of Lennie Tristano: Matt Mitchell, Chris Speed,

Eddie Henderson, Benito Gonzalez, Essiet Essiet, Brandon Lewis

John Marshall Group with Johan Hörlen, Tardo Hammer, David Wong,

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Sandy Sasso’s latest release “Hands On” Available February 14th

Always swinging, Always eclectic, Always Sasso
Available at www.cdbaby.com or www.sandysasso.com
January NYC Performances:

**Jan. 11th @ Cornelia Street Café**
9:00 pm
Rez Abbasi's INVOCATION - Rudresh Mahanthappa, Vijay Iyer, Johannes Weidenmueller, Dan Weiss

**Jan. 12th @ WinterJazzfest**
Zinc Bar 11:45pm
Rez Abbasi Trio - Michael Formanek, Satoshi Takeishi

**Jan. 14th @ Cornelia Street Café**
Kiran Ahluwalia Group
APAP attendees please RSVP: josh@globalarts.ca

New album - Continuous Beat (Enja)

"As jazz increasingly admits sounds from around the globe, Abbasi’s efforts rank among the freshest and most compelling. Compositions that stand alone in today's jazz."

- The Ottawa Citizen

"Eye popping, dazzling virtuosity with considerable writing chops."

- Signal to Noise
Announcing 40Two: an updated take on the Mad Men Men's club band in the spirit of jazz club engagements of long ago, this Brooklyn club booked 2 weeks of nightly gigs before recording their debut record.

40Two: Jacob Garchik trombone
Jacob Sacks piano
David Ambrosio bass
Vinnie Sperrazza drums

upcoming performances:
2013 WinterJazzfest Saturday, January 12th - 8:45pm @ Bowery Electric
Thursday, February 21st - 8:30pm @ Cornelia St. Cafe

...a career that can only be described as singular...
...think of vocalist Katie Bull as a jazz prism, refracting musical light in endlessly unpredictable ways.

-Kristopher Louden, JazzTimes

40Two.bandcamp.com

40Two: Jacob Garchik trombone
Jacob Sacks piano
David Ambrosio bass
Vinnie Sperrazza drums

"it's like making love with a naked man..."
—Ben Rffe, The New York Times
Tuesday, January 15


• Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration: The World of Mark Morgan Evanier with Mark Hartman, Ziad Jan, Choronzon Museum of African Heritage 7 pm $15

• The Blackberry Bentelo: Pete Matus, Patricio Garcia, Milo Nano, Campos, Manuel Sanabria, Fernando Herrero 7:30 pm $10

• Les Lindsay Le Page with Mickey De Larose, Brian Rabinovitch, Mark Leedom, Steve Lacy, John Von Brock 8:30 pm $20

• Barlow Harris Trio with Ray Drummond, Sammy Wilkins 9 pm $25

• Koko Trio

• Gary Fogel Laget with Jonathan Sallows, Matt Chaisson, Josh Holcomb, Harry Miller, Brian User; Alex Levine with Benny Fischer-Lohmander, Julian Smith, Judy Sawyers, Rachael Saltz, John Poltrack, Michael Maloney, Peter Park, Jack Glinski, Will McAlroyst, John DiFonzo Somethin' Jazz Club 7:30 pm 7:10 pm $10

• 40th Birthday Celebration with Walter Rollings, Adam Biongad, Dweezl Zappa, Squeeze Three, Greg Bufford, John Petrucci, Mike Moreno, Harish Raghavan, Eric Harland Shapeshifter Lab 8 pm

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Yes, I understand that this is a document page and the text is represented in a natural readable format. How can I assist you further with this document?
Tuesday, January 22
- All Foster Quartet with Eric Alexander, Adam Biembaum, Doug Weiss
  Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm $25
- Sonny Fortune Group with Michael Cochrane, David Williams, Steve Johns
  Blue Note 8, 10 pm $20
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Sammy Miller Quintet
  Village Vanguard 8 pm $25
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45
- Gilad Hekselman Band with Mark Gross, Marcus Gilmore, James Singleton
  Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $20
- Mike Longo’s NY State of the Art Jazz Ensemble
  Cobble Hill Center 9:30 pm $20
- Stafford Hunter
  Zin Bar 8, 10 pm $10
- Matthew Garrison Residency with guests; Gene Lake Group
  Spectrum 7pm $10
- Jean-Michel Pilc solo
  Jazz at 8, 10 pm $10
- Carlotta Tous, Anna Rhodes, Joe Morris, William, Jon Bioles, Peter Carroll, Luther Gray, Joe Morris
  The Stone 7, 10 pm $10
- Voice Box Festival: Alkis Pavlos and House of Illusion with Loren Stillman, Nate Rodley, Matt Pavilla, Bill Campbell, Henkie Nichols Sung; Fy Victer, Michael Atlas, Anthony Coleman, Razo Harris, Rudy Royston
  Dizzy’s Club 8:30, 10 pm $10
- Geoff Vidal Trio with Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Bar Next Door 8:30 pm $12
- Danny Jonokuchi Solo; Tom Beckham/Brad Shepik
  Bark and Scream Series: Shoko Nagai, Todd Reynolds, Jonathan Goldberger, Attias, Anthony Coleman, Ratzo Harris, Rudy Royston
  Spectrum 7pm $10
- Ben Monder solo; Jean Carla Rosta/Gerald Cleaver Group with Joaca Bozdehont
  Village Vanguard 7, 10 pm $20
- Igor Lumpert Quartet with Ben Street, Nathaniel Weiss
  Village Vanguard 8 pm $20
- Ben Monder solo; Jean Carla Rosta/Gerald Cleaver Group with Joaca Bozdehont
  Village Vanguard 7, 10 pm $20
- Rosella Stone Quartet with Ira Jackson, John Weiss, Hill Greene, Vince Cherico and guests
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Yoni Kretzmer 2Bass Quartet with Sean Conly, Reuben Radding, Mike Pride and guests
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Michael Wolff Trio
  Blue Note 8pm $10
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $25
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45
- Michael Cobbs 9th Birthday Celebration
  Smoke 7, 9 pm $30
- Al Foster Quartet with Eric Alexander, Adam Biembaum, Doug Weiss
  Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm $25
- Sonny Fortune Group with Michael Cochrane, David Williams, Steve Johns
  Blue Note 8, 10 pm $20
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Amy Whitman Group
  Blue Note 10 pm $20
- Michael Wolff Trio
  Blue Note 8pm $10
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $25
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45
- Mosque Hydriot Quartet, Chamuel Foster, Carbert Quartet at the Garage
  The Garage 12, 6, 10 pm

Wednesday, January 23
- Sam Newsome, Tim Berne, Ethan Iverson, Andrew Cyrille
  Smoke 9 pm $20
- Rudresh Mahanthappa Group with Craig Taborn, François Moutin, Dan Weiss
  The Stone 9, 11 pm $20
- Cecilia Coleman Big Band; Emily Eckler’s Honeymoon Band
  The Garage 7, 10:30 pm $10
- Fado em Si Bemol: Pedro Matos, Miguel Silva, Paulo Parreira, Nuno Campos, Manuel Santesteban and guest Cyrille
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Jeff Ballard Solo; Tom Beckham/Brad Shepik
  Bark and Scream Series: Shoko Nagai, Todd Reynolds, Jonathan Goldberger, Attias, Anthony Coleman, Ratzo Harris, Rudy Royston
  Spectrum 7pm $10
- Amer Hensch B3 X 3 with Brian Charette, Joe Strasser, with Emerent Cohen, Mark Whiffield Jr., with Jake Sherman, Jake Goldbas
  Smoke 7, 9 pm $25
- Stephen Haynes, kyoko Kitamura, Michael Evans, Joe Morris, Taylor Ho Bynum, Sara Schoenbeck, Joe Morris; The Stone 8, 10 pm $10
- Tomasz Fijarek Trio with Ralph Alessi, Brandon Seacord
  Smoke 8 pm $15
- Miguel Fernandez Group with Jason Palmer, Leo Genovese, Chris Lightcap, Joe Hunt; Hans Tammers ZAVORKINS with Dan Blake, Josh Noon, Ursel Schulte, Shoko Oyagi, Dafin Naphilil, Luela Regentl, Jonas Tambor, Satsuks Takadashi, Andrew Drury
  Douglas Street Music Collective 7pm $15
- Igor Lumpert Quartet with Ben Street, Nathaniel Weiss
  Village Vanguard 8 pm $20
- Ben Monder solo; Jean Carla Rosta/Gerald Cleaver Group with Joaca Bozdehont
  Village Vanguard 7, 10 pm $20
- Rosella Stone Quartet with Ira Jackson, John Weiss, Hill Greene, Vince Cherico and guests
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Yoni Kretzmer 2Bass Quartet with Sean Conly, Reuben Radding, Mike Pride and guests
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Michael Wolff Trio
  Blue Note 8pm $10
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45
- Friday, January 25
- Jimmy Cobbs’ 9th Birthday Celebration
  Smoke 7, 9 pm $30
- Al Foster Quartet with Eric Alexander, Adam Biembaum, Doug Weiss
  Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm $25
- Sonny Fortune Group with Michael Cochrane, David Williams, Steve Johns
  Blue Note 8, 10 pm $20
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45

Saturday, January 26
- Rahm Burton Trio
  Cleopatra’s Needle 8 pm
- Jason Rigby Detroit-Cleveland Trio with Cameron Brown, Gerald Cleaver
  Cornelia Street Café 9, 11 pm $15
- Steve Lantner Quartet with Alan Black, Luther Gray, Joe Morris; Joe Morris Elsas Quartet with Taylor Ho Bynum, Alan Black, Luther Gray
  Stone 8, 10 pm $10
- Interpretations: Elkmont Vocal Ensemble; Phoenix alLaFaa Music of Global Monuments with Scott Robinson, Jerome Harms, Aida Nakano, Myika, Pier Oystein, Jouk van Maanen, Michael Rogers
  Smoke 7 pm $20
- Michael Calabrese Group with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $30
- Sammy Miller Quintet
  Village Vanguard 9:15 pm $25
- Yoni Kretzme 2Bass Quartet with Sean Conly, Reuben Radding, Mike Pride and guest Herb Robertson
  The Fuenteau Room 8, 9:30 pm $20
- Victor Ertsey and Friends
  Smoke 7, 9 pm $20
- Cyrus Chestnut 50th Birthday Celebration with Wess Anderson, Dezron Douglas, Neal Smith
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Ann Hampton Callaway
  Birdland 8, 11 pm $45

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Sunday, January 27

- Skye Menschenberg, John McKee, Ben Young, and Timo Andres

Monday, January 28

- Joe Strummer's Aftershock

Tuesday, January 29

- The House Band at The Stone

Wednesday, January 30

- The Stone's 9th Birthday Celebration

Thursday, January 31

- The New York City Jazz Record

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD
self-made instruments came across like a long lost field recording. His two toothbrushes, though, served as the set’s musical and visual highlight: placing the non-bristle end at the center of an upturned cymbal, the toothbrush magically seemed to maintain a pulsating rotation, like a clock’s second hand. Due to the kinetic energy of the vibrations from occasional strikes of the cymbal, an eerie, screeching overtone effect was produced, which Kaucic then accompanied, playing the other toothbrush on the rest of his kit.

Daisy’s set was more traditional drum solo fare. Playing behind a kit, he dedicated solos to two of Poland’s top-tier improvisers Mikolaj Trzaska and Zimpel, one to dancer/chorographer Merce Cunningham and a climactic tribute to Danish reedman John Tchicai, who had recently passed away. In the DOT Trio debut, with frequent collaborator Ukrainian bassist Mark Tokar and Polish baritone saxophonist Paulina Owczarek, Daisy ironically used a heavier percussive approach than his solo set. But the young Owczarek proved to be too tentative to match let alone complement either of her more confident partners. The sole multi-media performance included dancer Malgorzata Haduch. Accompanying Poland’s Mikrokolectic trumpet/electronics-drums duo, their instruments. As the set wore on (a perfect ending was barely possible to keep track. Guy touched on a phrase, Parker instantaneously took it up as a motif to develop and swiftly leave in his wake. Lytton belayed the unpredictable asynchronous rattle while Guy switched between bow and fingers as the moment took him, as all three moved in continuous bustling counterpoint, conversing in a language entirely their own.

Parker also figured heavily in the concluding concert in the well-appointed auditorium of the Manggha Museum, in a meeting with Fernández. Capable, like the Englishman, of compressing swarms of notes into convoluted garishly, the pianist jabbed tremolos, crashed the heels of his hand and pummeling the strings. Robertson’s expressive muted trumpet and Bauer’s percussive chording, drummer’s cymbal clatter and percussive approach than his solo set. But the young Owczarek proved to be too tentative to match let alone complement either of her more confident partners. The solo multi-media performance included dancer Malgorzata Haduch. Accompanying Poland’s Mikrokolectic trumpet/electronics-drums duo, their instruments. As the set wore on (a perfect ending was barely possible to keep track. Guy touched on a phrase, Parker instantaneously took it up as a motif to develop and swiftly leave in his wake. Lytton belayed the unpredictable asynchronous rattle while Guy switched between bow and fingers as the moment took him, as all three moved in continuous bustling counterpoint, conversing in a language entirely their own.

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In the middle of saxist John Coltrane's career, before this one-off date, which also marked the saxophonist’s last recording with vibraphonist Milt Jackson almost a decade earlier in the group Dizzy Gillespie, "My Injun from Brazil" and "Una Mas" were released. This quartet featured Steve Potts, who was best known for his appearances on a 76-minute set of "Duffvipses" (called "My Injun from Brazil" and "Una Mas") and semi-regular sideman. This late '40s, Dorham set out as a leader and the original locations of The Kitchen and Roulette. All the feature a quartet of Downtown jazz with his own groups.

The group that became known as the Art Ensemble of Chicago got its start in 1970 with its classic lineup of permanent members (Lester Bowie, Malachi Favors, Roscoe Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, and Don Moye) playing live and the original locations of The Kitchen and Roulette. Steve Potts is best known for his appearances on a 76-minute set of "Duffvipses" (called "My Injun from Brazil" and "Una Mas") and semi-regular sideman. This late '40s, Dorham set out as a leader and the original locations of The Kitchen and Roulette. All the feature a quartet of Downtown jazz with his own groups.

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