In jazz parlance, the “rhythm section” is shorthand for piano, bass and drums. This is useful for saving space but really undercuts the role of these musicians, particularly in small group situations. And it hardly speaks to the individuality of the various members in said rhythm sections over the decades. To right this wrong just a little, our big three features this month would certainly make a fascinating example of the species, yet are here in featured roles.

We start with pianist Dave Burrell (On The Cover), a key contributor to the New Thing and its subsequent developments since the ’60s. He is the very deserving recipient of this month’s Vision Festival’s annual celebration evening dedicated to a living musician. We follow — out of order — with drummer Pheeroan akLaff (Interview), an important collaborator with players like Wadada Leo Smith, Oliver Lake, Henry Threadgill and the recently departed Cecil Taylor, to name but a few. He can be heard this month at Issue Project Room, Rubin Museum and The Stone at The New School. And, finally, from a totally different world (and side of the planet), is bassist Nicki Parrott (Artist Feature), who has played with legends like Dick Hyman, Clark Terry, Joe Wilder and Les Paul but steps out front this month for two nights at Birdland.

On The Cover: Dave Burrell (photo by Alan Nahigian)
CHUCHO VALDÉS
FT. ROY HARGROVE, ROBERTA GAMBARINI, RON CARTER, LENNY WHITE, REGINA CARTER
MAY 1 - 6

RON CARTER BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
MAY 7 - 9, 14 - 16

MS. LISA FISCHER & GRAND BATON
MAY 10 - 13

THE LEGENDARY JOÃO BOSCO & BAND FROM BRAZIL
MAY 17 - 20

THE DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA
MAY 22 - 27

THE BAD PLUS
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TUE-WED MAY 15-16
Tim Berne - Chris Speed - Reid Anderson - Dave King

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Conducting & Directed by Ryan Toddell

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JOEY DEFRANCESCO TRIO
MAY 30-JUNE 3
Mark Whitfield - Lenny White

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Short in stature, Camille Thurman is nevertheless tall in talent. The vocalist/reedplayer debuted new material at Greenwich House Music School (Apr. 5th) in a set entitled “Because of Them, We Are”, her musical response to feedback received about an article written last December for the local musicians’ union paper candidly detailing her experiences with sexism and sexual discrimination in high school, college and the professional world. Her songs—“Internalized Self-Doubt”, “Invisible”, “Because of Them, We Are”, “Inner Peace”, “Beyond Belief”, “Silence Is No Longer the Status Quo”—all embodied (either in lyric content or in Thurman’s prefatory remarks) the spirit of determination and resilience she brings to her art. Of course, once the music got going, it was hard to keep one’s mind on social politics, as the hard-swinging quintet (Thurman on vocals and tenor saxophone, pianist David Bryant, vibraphonist Nikara Warren, bassist Dezron Douglas and drummer Eric McPherson) quickly converted harsh realities into expressions of healing. Thurman and Bryant were principal soloists (though Warren shone in a few spots): the leader’s pliable voice navigating intricate melodic contours with aplomb, her horn spinning out relaxed but cohesive lines laced with ingenious ornamentations; Bryant playing in a similar though more incessant and iterative vein. McPherson, seamlessly integrating himself into the mix, was paradoxically powerful in his tasteful restraint.

—Tom Greenland

The last time this reporter saw British saxophonist Evan Parker duo with a drummer, it was the notorious show at The Stone, cut off by the fire department for “massive overcrowding. It was a tragedy (though avoiding another one) as the assembled were eager for this meeting of peers of free improvisation. Nearly a decade later, Parker was back in tow with another drummer (Apr. 2nd) but the circumstances were radically different. First off, the club is now in the spacious (and replete with fire exits) confines of The New School’s Glass Box Theater. And the drummer was Dan Weiss, over 30 years Parker’s junior, though not without his own growing reputation. Parker began the evening with a 17-minute solo soprano saxophone soliloquy, moving helically through overtones, electronic-sounding chirps and shredded brays, his face as red as the curtain behind him. Weiss followed this with 10 minutes of rotational drumming, echoing what Parker had just wrought. Then the pair met and, sadly, failed to gel across 23 minutes as it seemed Weiss was loathe to do more than react to Parker’s lines or stay silent. Things could have stopped there, a missed opportunity, but Parker, improvising for more than two-thirds of his life, believes in the process too much to give up so easily. Fortuitously, as a second duo improvisation started, Weiss realized a floorboard beneath him creaked and he incorporated this into a more fully engaged statement. By the final seven-minute piece, they were on fire.

—Andrey Henkin

Despite the slowly increasing presence of women, jazz remains, as one panelist put it, a “skewed landscape”. The occasion: a discussion (Apr. 4th) at New School’s Arnhold Hall on the gendering of jazz, just prior to a concert by Monika Herzig. After each artist had weighed in on issues faced working in a male-dominated arena, the international band—Germans Herzig (piano) and Leni Stern (guitar), American Jamie Baum (flute), Israeli Reut Regev (trombone), Brazilian Amanda Ruzza (electric bass), Mexican Karina Colis (drums), plus guest Canadian Ingrid Jensen (trumpet)—took to the stage to play material from their upcoming (second) release, Sheroes. First was Herzig’s jazz-rock arrangement of “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”, warming into Stern’s “Bubbles” in 6/8, with solos all around and traded phrases. Herzig’s “Nancy Wilson Portrait” and “The Whole World in Her Hands”, a 5/4 blues, featured sterling Jensen solos, the first building from a flugelhorn-like timbre into higher range, the second a textbook of dynamic variety, replete with pinched/squealed pitches. Regev, relatively reserved until then, revved up the emotional energy with her Middle-Eastern-flavored “I Am A Superstar”, with a fine turn by Baum. The finale linked Herzig’s energetic “Make It Count” to Stern’s “Hide and Seek”, based on a Senegalese children’s song, ending when the teenaged female musicians in the audience joined the sheroes onstage for a sing-along.

(TG)

Just before saxophonist/clarinetist Ned Rothenberg and Evan Parker were to begin their performance at Zürcher Gallery (Apr. 5th), the news spread through the room: pianist Cecil Taylor had just passed away. Thus what was supposed to be a joyous affair (Parker was celebrating his 74th birthday) became a reflective one. Prior to playing, Parker recalled the first time he had seen the pianist: 1962, a quarter of a mile down Bleecker at The Take 3, visiting New York because his father worked for the airlines and the young Parker could fly for free. Reminiscing done, Parker and Rothenberg dedicated the evening to Taylor, without whom the whole notion of the avant garde would be radically altered. The pair are partners going back over 20 years and thus the challenge, as Parker once explained to this reporter, is how to encourage one another to do something different. Whatever the internal deliberations, to which we as audience members are not privy, the results were astonishing. There was no hesitation, not a wisp of hierarchy, nary a moment where true and verdant communication was not taking place. First off, the men played alto pieces, Parker continuing the solo soprano statement he began over 40 years ago, Rothenberg going the opposite route with a didgeridoo-like exposition on bass clarinet. And though there were clarinet/tenor and tenor/altos dialogues, it was when soprano and bass clarinet met for 13 minutes that we were transported upwards, our spirits mingling with those recently departed. (AH)
The vision of drummer William Hooker artfully extended beyond Roulette’s fourth wall (Apr. 5th), conjuring jazz’ socio-political foundation. With the multimedia piece “The Great Migration”, he traced the northward path of African Americans and, through pre-recorded interviews, the lives of elders Nannie Lampkin and Alton Brooks, both present in the audience. The stories were intertwined with powerful music, mostly in but also via early recordings of spirituals and a haunting chain-gang song. Hooker’s band of Ras Moshe (tenor saxophone), Eriq Robinson (electronics), Mara Rosenbloom (piano), William Parker (bass), David Soldier (violin, banjo) and Ava Mendoza (guitar) shook the house with soaring improvisations, painting an aural manifesto of the Black experience. Moshe played with compelling passion, Mendoza’s features were gripping and Robinson’s electronics tore up the soundscape. The leader’s melodies guided the action, particularly a blues hook prominent in the bass, often varied fluidly by the others. The music, emotively directed by Hooker, recalled the rural south sans any trace of parody (Soldier’s fiddle was exceptional but his banjo needed stronger amplification) while other sections were ethereal and expansive. Dancer Coussey Celestin’s majestic segments flanked the production and she, Jeremy Grosvenor and Hooker also acted as narrators. So vital is this epic work, right now, that a lack of future productions would be criminal. — *John Pietaro*

The faux old world décor of Bar Lunático enlivened Marc Ribot judiciously (Apr 3rd). Under a corrugated tin ceiling, the club’s shadowy lighting fed into the noir imagery that no-wavers and other creatures of the night have always eaten up. Clearly, such affections aren’t limited by generational bounds: the 20-somethings in black berets and leather weren’t born when the guitarist pioneered new sounds downtown, but at Lunático Ribot and his searing new quartet were greeted by a cheering capacity house. Saxophonist Jay Lewis and Thompson again were heard respectively on "Icons At Fair", an uptempo romp on which Scofield and Clayton traded fours with Stewart. Clayton moved over to organ for "New Waltzo", a rollicking Meters-flavored number, staying with it for “Can’T Dance”, an appealingly lyric piece culminating in a climactic drum solo. Scofield dug into his country roots on a pair of waltzes, “Uncle Southern” and “Willa Jean” (the latter dedicated to his granddaughter), then dove full out into the genre on Shania Twain’s pretty “You’re Still The One”, before closing out swinging wildly on his “Wide Awaken”. — *Russ Mastro*

In a career spanning over 40 years as a bandleader, guitarist John Scofield has expertly melded elements of country, rock and soul music into his writing and playing, expanding without diluting the jazz lexicon of his instrument. At Blue Note (Apr. 5th) he continued along this path with his new band Combo 66 (the number marking the age he celebrated on his birthday last December). The quartet with pianist Bill Stewart, bassist Nick Dunston and drummer Bill Stewart got things started with the leader’s “Ring Out”, one of the set’s seven new songs written for an upcoming record date. Opening the piece alone with lightly strummed chords, Scofield’s distinctive sound was soon on full display, his thick-toned notes ‘ringing out’ as the rhythm section joined in, Clayton soloing, next followed by Archer while Stewart propelled each improvisation with swirling Elvin Jones-esque accompaniment. The band charged straightahead on “Icons At Fair”, an up-tempo romp on which Scofield and Clayton traded fours with Stewart. Clayton moved over to organ for “New Waltzo”, a rollicking Meters-flavored number, staying with it for “Can’T Dance”, an appealingly lyric piece culminating in a climactic drum solo. Scofield dug into his country roots on a pair of waltzes, “Uncle Southern” and “Willa Jean” (the latter dedicated to his granddaughter), then dove full out into the genre on Shania Twain’s pretty “You’re Still The One”, before closing out swinging wildly on his “Wide Awaken”. — *John Pietaro*

Celebrating the musical legacy of Thelonious Monk with a concert billed Crescent City Monk in The Apollo Room (Apr. 7th), drummer Herlin Riley brought the rhythmic flavor of his native New Orleans to a festive program exploring the repertoire of the iconic pianist. One of the premier showmen in jazz today, Riley began by dancing on to the stage playing tambourine and chanting poetically of the honoree, as fellow Wynton Marsalis Quintet alum saxophonist Todd Williams, pianist Eric Lewis and bassist Reginald Veal, along with vibraphonist Joel Ross and conguero Pedrito Martinez, played “Green Chimneys”. This segued into a brightly swinging version of “Thelonious” as Riley took his seat behind the drums to drive the ensemble. Williams’ solo tenor introduced the quartet’s intensely bebopping “Epistrophe”, after which Riley brought out vocalist Melanie Charles, pianist Isaiah Marlos and Lewis offering solo renderings of “Crepuscule With Nellie” and “Blue Monk” in between as Riley’s bass drum was replaced. The revolving cast of pianists Marsalis, Thompson and Lewis and Thompson again were heard respectively on versions of “Too”, “Rhythm-a-ning”, “Trinkle Tinkle” and “Crisis Cross”, then took turns as everybody joined in for closer “Straight No Chaser”. — *RM*
Khalid Yasin [né Larry Young] with Billy Cobham; off. I experienced Santana, John McLaughlin and was the new tune-in and dropping out became lifting Meditation was the new turn-on, abstract expression liberating African-American cultural milieu. had permeated the drive of many musicians in the Pheeroan akLaff: The ethos of Alice and John Coltrane cannot be described when it came to a reverence in seminal years in New Haven. I’ve heard you say that The New York City Jazz Record: Tell us about those seminal years in New Haven. I’ve heard you say that there was “magic in the air” and “a 1970s feel that cannot be described when it came to a reverence in music.” Will you elucidate?

Pheeroan akLaff: The ethos of Alice and John Coltrane had permeated the drive of many musicians in the liberating African-American cultural milieu. Meditation was the new turn-on, abstract expression was the new tune-in and dropping out became lifting off. I experienced Santana, John McLaughlin and K hailid Yasin [né Larry Young] with Billy Cobham; Sun Ra Arkestra with drummer Francisco Ali Mora; Horace Silver converting to macrobiotic eating; Strata East: Stanley Cowell and friends and Strata West: Kenny Cox and Friends; Yusef Lateef introducing world music compositions. These experiences made me want to get involved with ensembles that expressed a holistic approach to music. Many creative people acted upon the collective conscience in their search for meaning and their desire to change mindsets and paradigms. In 1975 I decided to go to New Haven with my friend Dwight Andrews and start a band. I wanted to meet Rashied Ali and possibly play music in New York. Because Dwight was working in the African American Studies department at Yale I managed to meet Professor Robert Farris Thompson and audit his African Art class. Department founder Charles T. Davis [pianist Anthony Davis’ father] was a conduit for several great minds there and an encouraging father figure to many young musicians. Professor Thompson, John Blassingame, Henry Louis Gates, Irene Jackson-Brown, Toni Nathaniel Harp, George Edwards of the Black Panther Party and many people who had either studied at Yale or experienced the trial of Bobby Seale were influencing the vibe of how our band made music. Some of the best friends and music associates that I still have today were there: Wadada Leo Smith, Mark Helias, Ed Cherry, Bobby Naughton, Mikashawn and Rick Rozie, Mario Pavone, Jane Ira Bloom, David Lopato, Joe Celli, Jarawa Brian Gray, Jay Hoggard, Nat Adderley, Jr. and many that I am probably forgetting to mention. At the time, DejaVu was more than a cool name for a band. It was a family of people with shared principles. It happened at a time when myth and science became tangible complements to music for me.

TNYCJR: Tell us about Brother Ad and Sister Akua, perhaps how you came to change your name and what influence they continue to have on your life and music?

PA: Ad Theotis Holland, Yale Divinity School circa 1972, Egyptologist, and Akua Audrey Ficklin, Unity minister and Astrologer. Both wereclairvoyant and sort of adopted me and gave me a moniker. It stuck. They could see that I was directionless with good intentions, with the potential to become significant or to explode. They were friends with Charles Stepney, Verdine and Maurice White and others with spiritual intent in their music and they hoped the best for me. Much of my career life was predicted by them.

TNYCJR: What is your ongoing study of or approach to philosophy and/or spirituality?

PA: I study humans through their patterns of mistakes and discussions of miracles, but I also study their destruction and the building of walls with their ideas. There are more pleasant studies like poetry. Philosophy has been more infused in my life from an Eastern perspective. A synthesis of Zen and reducing experience to its purest form. Several processes inform my spiritual meditation. Ethics and Aesthetics are increasingly more important than Logic and Reason.

TNYCJR: What is prayer? Or, how do you pray?

PA: My doctor was asked by one of his assistants “Why do you pray for your patients?” When greeted by someone from India, they may briefly put their hands in a praying position while approaching you. You might notice a person in Japan sharply dip their head when entering a space occupied by others. Those in touch with courtesies of Islam or African continental reverence gestures may touch their heart when greeting or saying goodbye. These are just a few acts of human motion toward recognizing the divine in our midst and it is prayer. If we see God in every molecule and especially in the obstructions the human form presents, we develop the sensitivity to modify our space. That is prayer for me. I believe in prayer for healing. I also pray for healing of all sorts when I play music.

TNYCJR: Your Wesleyan faculty page mentions, among other things, “physiological attunement”. What does this mean and how is it fostered?

PA: I encourage music to be developed as active meditation with welcoming confidence, receptivity and concentration. When students are out of shape, physically and otherwise, playing drums can promote humor, joy and remission of lethargy. My protocols borrow from many kinesthetic maintenance techniques. I have also recently enjoyed exploring creativity in music and cognition with Dr. Psyche Loui, professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Wesleyan. Creativity and improvisation figure highly in my view of cultivating a healthy spirit. I am interested in restoring emotional qualities that connect music to health.
Can you call me back in 10 minutes?” said Nicki Parrott, the bassist and vocalist. “We’re having a teachers’ meeting.” The teachers in question, including Bria Skonberg and Catherine Russell along with Parrott, were taking part in the New York Hot Jazz Camp, held at the Greenwich House Music School.

“It’s for adult musicians,” Parrott said, “and you can hear improvement from day one—they’re playing all day long. It ends with a concert. Right now there’s a bit of cacophony, because people are practicing in 15 rooms simultaneously.”

Parrott caught the jazz bug early. The first record the Australian bought was Jazz at Massey Hall, the famous document of the night in 1953 of Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Charles Mingus and Max Roach together in Toronto. She was 13 and, with a little help, had already fully embraced jazz.

“The catalyst was my musician sister, Lisa, who was coming home with tapes from friends. Lisa plays alto and baritone sax, and we formed a jazz group, Blues for 5, together in Australia.” Nicki and Lisa (who now live in Brooklyn) have a co-led album, Avakabal Suite, (Monkey Pats, 2001) and Lisa has appeared on nine of her sister’s albums since 2008.

Parrott started on piano at age four, switched to flute and then double bass (at age 15). She majored in jazz at the New South Wales Conservatorium in Sydney and began playing around town with people like Dale Barlow, Paul Grabowsky, Bernie McGann and Mike Nock, the New Zealand-born pianist in the pioneering fusion band The Fourth Way.

By the time she was 16, Parrott was winning awards in Australia, and one of them (1994 Young Achievers Award from the Arts Council of Australia) came with the funds to travel to New York for study with one of her bass heroes, Rufus Reid.

Since New York is the Mount Olympus for jazz, Parrott came and never left. After a few more lessons, with Ray Brown and John Clayton, she joined the city scene as a freelancing musician and still works that way. For groups looking for a great bass player, the fact that she sings too is a nice bonus.

“I am a superior jazz trombonist” Los Angeles Times

Parrott is very well known in Japan and has recorded no less than 16 albums, in all kinds of settings, for the Japan-only Venus label. It would be great if these recordings were available in U.S. stores, but they can be ordered on Parrott’s website. If awards float your boat, Parrott’s definitely won them, including two Swing Journal “Best Jazz Vocal Album” honors, for Moon River (2007) and Fly Me to the Moon (2008). The 2012 Black Coffee album on Venus snared a “Gold Disc” prize. Her discography includes an album arranged by Arif Mardin, a duet with singer Becky Kilgore, and a tribute to influence Blossom Dearie. In the summer, she’s often found at festivals—in Europe and the U.S. Parrott’s American label is Arbors, for which she’s recorded several albums, most with Italian pianist Rossano Sportiello. “He’s the best at playing stride,” she said. “He plays classical music, too, and is very popular in Europe.”

To give an idea of Parrott’s range as a musician, her 2016 Venus recording Yesterday Once More: The Carpenters Song Book is certainly not standards, but she plays them that way with a jazz group—and it works. “It was really fun,” Parrott said. “Karen Carpenter had a similar range to me, so I didn’t have to change keys. I think it came out nice.” Listeners will agree, if they can find the album.

Jazz education made Parrott who she is, and she’s paying it back, through programs like Women in Jazz, the WBGO/New Jersey Performing Arts Center Jazz for Teens program and the Litchfield Jazz Camp.

Parrott now lives in Connecticut and likes the greenery, but when she’s not abroad she’s in New York often for teaching and gigging. Her latest recording project, for Arbors, will be an album called From New York to Paris, with songs about both. Saxophonist Harry Allen is likely to be on it, as will pianist John Di Martino and maybe some surprise guests. ♥

Monday night at Iridium and guitarists from all over the world (Keith Richards, Slash, Paul McCartney, Steve Miller) dropped in to pay homage. At the end of that first gig, Parrott quoted Paul as saying, “You guys can leave, but leave the girl up here.”

“Les just loved to play, whether it was blues or a rock jam,” said Parrott. “He was also endlessly curious about how things worked and he had tenacity. He kept working on that guitar until Gibson finally told him he had something.”

Parrott would be a fine musician even if she didn’t have bass playing to fall back on. She’s a wonderful, expressive singer, with scat and the Great American Songbook in her arsenal. She counts Billie Holiday, Peggy Lee, Shirley Horn, Ella Fitzgerald and Blossom Dearie as influences, along with Brazilian singers Rosa Passos and Elis Regina. It’s not all women, though. “I’m a huge Sinatra fan,” she adds.

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Many musicians tread the porous border between inside and outside, tradition and freedom, the composed and the improvised, but few make such extensive incursions into either side as pianist Dave Burrell. Burrell, 77, was born in Ohio and lived there and in Harlem until his parents moved to Hawaii when he was six. After graduating from Berklee College of Music, he became one of the leading pianists associated with the ‘60s New Thing. Since then he’s enjoyed enduring relationships with Archie Shepp, David Murray and William Parker. When I spoke to Burrell he was busy preparing for the opening evening of the annual Vision Festival, which will be a celebration of his work, showcasing three different outfits reflecting his output. The Director said I should bring one of my compositions from past recordings, ‘Crucificado’ and ‘Attica Blues’. “At that particular time in the mid ’60s I had started off with the groups of Pharaoh Sanders and Grachan Moncur III and Archie knew who I was, but he wasn’t using a piano... We had several tours in the United States prior to the overseas trip. We were in the prison system in the U.S., Attica and several other prisons, and we performed at black student unions and universities that had Black Awareness Week and other kinds of programs for black and Latino students. But when he had the opportunity for the State Department trip, all of his collaborators were happy to go over.” Looking forward to the multi-set Burrell explains: ‘Shepp and I will revisit some of my compositions from past recordings, ‘Crucificado’ and ‘Margy Pargy’, in addition to my composition ‘Black Robert’. The last time we played together was at a festival in Paris in 2003.”

By the time Burrell hooked up with Shepp he had already issued his first album High Won-High Two, which signaled from the start that his interests were wider than just the avant garde by including a medley from West Side Story. But the tension between the inside/outside camps was already there. “I never wanted to be one of the players who composed or a soloist who wasn’t aware of both camps. To this day, I enjoy the challenge of fusing the two. I think I was at my most serious and most creative when I was with Shepp.”

“Dave’s a very serious person. When he rehearses, we’ll take some of his music, he’ll go through one song for a couple of hours, even upwards of four hours until I just can’t play anymore and I have to say, ‘Dave I gotta stop’. Then on stage we’ve developed a really good rapport in seeing where each of us is going to go and especially with his tunes I can hear where they’re going and see what’s happening and we develop our improvisations that way. We kind of intuitively know when to go back to the written material.”

Swell is also involved in Burrell’s most recent project, based on the early 20th century Harlem Renaissance. Burrell explains the genesis: “After the Civil War exploration and the many years concentrating on my rearrangements of Jelly Roll Morton’s compositions, I wanted to continue journeying through the past. I want to bring my work up through the Civil Rights Movement of the ‘60s, through the emergence of the avant garde and up to the challenges we face today.”

Older piano styles have always fascinated Burrell due to “the way ragtime and stride utilize and blend American and African folk music, as well as European classical repertoire.” He is currently embarking on a closer study of the pivotal pianist James P. Johnson, working on his composition “Carolina Shout” as well as researching activist, writer and composer James Weldon Johnson, including his involvement in the early stages of the Civil Rights movement and leadership of the NAACP. “My mother worked as Johnson’s secretary while at Fisk. I still have her copies of his The Book of American Negro Spirituals and The Second Book of African Negro Spirituals. Several musical portraits are already evolving from my research.”

Burrell will present pieces from both projects at Vision: “The first set includes three compositions, ‘Paradox of Freedom’ from my Civil War project; from my current project Harlem Renaissance, ‘Red Summer March’, reflecting the lynchings that started riots that spread among black workers throughout America in the summer of 1919; and ‘Full-Blown Rhapsody’, a bittersweet tribute to the writers, dancers and musicians emerging from the Harlem Renaissance 1918-1936.” Even within the compositions, Burrell blurs the lines. “For ‘Red Summer March’ the melody is very traditional and rhythmic as a march should be along the lines of a Sousa march, but the improvisation will be completely free with an emphasis on rhythms found in the actual melody line.”

But no picture of Burrell’s work would be complete without representing the unfeathered strand. “My last set will feature James Brandon Lewis and Kidd Jordan. We will play completely free, charged by the chaos that has interrupted the prospect of world peace... We have a poem by Monika called ‘Shout’, which is an inspirational piece that I will be sharing with the musicians for the third set. It deals with the turmoil in the world overall and the situation of migration and immigration universally.”

It’s best left to Larsson to try to sum up Burrell’s work: “That’s the thread in Dave’s portraits. They always reflect the humanity. That’s what that first opera was about, showing humanity. Not the political overthrow of bigger governments. But people can live their lives in harmony, in racial harmony. The Civil Rights Movement is something Dave has been part of since he was a little boy. Being brought up in that climate was a fascinating journey and it still is.”

For more information, visit daveburrell.com. Burrell is at Vision Festival May 23rd. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening
• Dave Burrell — Echo (BYG Actuel, 1969)
• Dave Burrell — After Love (America-Universal, 1970)
• Beaver Harris’ 360 Degree Music Experience — In: Sanity (Black Saint, 1976)
• Dave Burrell — Windward Passages (hatHUT, 1979)
• Dave Burrell/David Murray — In Concert (Victo, 1991)
• Dave Burrell Full Blown Trio — Expansion (High Two, 2003)
ADAM RUDOLPH

THE STONE RESIDENCY

MAY 8
THE UNKNOWABLE
Dave Liebman
woodwinds, piano
Hamid Drake
drumset, percussion
Adam Rudolph
handdrumset, sintir, percussion, electronic processing, piano

MAY 9
HU VIBRATIONAL
Hamid Drake, Joe Hertenstein, Rogerio Boccato, Dan Kurfirst
handdrums, percussion
Alexis Marcelo
keyboards
James Dellatacoma
electronic processing
Adam Rudolph
compositions, percussion

MAY 10
GALAXIES
Bill Laswell
bass, electronics
Nels Cline
guitar, electronics
Hamid Drake
drumset, percussion

MAY 11
KARUNA TRIO
Ralph M. Jones
saxophones, flutes, hulusli, ney, bamboo flutes
Hamid Drake
drumset, vocal, frame drum
Adam Rudolph
handdrumset, sintir, udu drum, multiphonic vocal, percussion, electronics

MAY 12
ADAM RUDOLPH’S MOVING PICTURES SEXTET
Adam Rudolph
compositions, handdrumset, sintir, percussion, electronics
Ralph M. Jones
saxophones, flutes, hulusli, ney, bamboo flutes
Alexis Marcelo
fender rhodes, piano, percussion

MAY 8-12
THE STONE @ THE NEW SCHOOL
55 West 13th Street (Near 6th Ave)
(8:30pm sharp)
Admission: $20
Students with ID: free entry
once paying audience has entered
Persistent and meticulous, outstanding pianist/composer Dom Salvador overcame early obstacles and embraced new challenges. He was the youngest of 11 children growing up in a poor but music-loving family in the small town of Rio Claro in northeastern Brazil. His first instrument was the tabletops of his home. Along with the singing of four sisters, who formed their own group, his inventive rhythms pervaded the house. A drum teacher was enlisted but moved away and there was no one else to tutor him. His brother Paulo, an electrician adept at saxophone, suggested he take up another instrument. Piano was chosen. A teacher was available. But there was no piano.

"The teacher drew a keyboard on paper for me and I practiced using that for almost a year," says Salvador. Then his brothers chipped in to buy him one. "It was a very bad piano, out of tune, but at least I had a piano to practice. Also the piano wasn’t in the right pitch, it was a half-step low. If I had to play with somebody else, I had to play a half-step up, to get in the same key." By 12 he was playing in an orchestra in São Paulo.

Relocating to São Paulo and then to Rio de Janeiro, where drummer Dom Um Romão had invited him to join the group Copa Trio, Salvador would make the famous jazz scenes of the Garrastazú (Brazil’s “52nd Street”, and go on to form his own trios, accompany many Brazilian artists such as Quarteto em Cy, Jorge Ben, Elis Regina, Elza Soares, Sylvia Telles and Roberto Carlos and be featured on the last album of the great master of Brazilian jazz Pixinguinha.

He would become one of the main proponents of “Samba Jazz”, combining his musical heritage with American jazz he fell in love with on the radio and 78s his brother brought home. “The first time I started to listen to jazz, it felt very familiar to me,” says Salvador. “So much so it seemed like I had played it in a previous life. Always I had that feeling...that I had lived here, came to the United States before my [present] life and that I knew this music.” Improvisation was not a part of Brazilian tradition, however. "Of course there were some people who could improvise a little bit. They had some freedom. But it's not the same as in jazz. That's why some musicians, not just me, created Samba Jazz." Salvador likened jazz to playing soccer. “When the coach teaches you how to play he tells you to do this, do that. But when you go to play in the game, and you’re right there, you forget about the coach, you have to create your own thing there. You can't follow what the coach said to you. Maybe he said, 'ok, you play the right side', but in the real game maybe you’re in the middle or on the other side. It's always improvisation.”

Salvador’s groundbreaking recording Rio 65 Trio would make a splash in Brazil when released in 1965 and made a deep and lasting impression on Duduka Da Fonseca, who was only 14 years old at the time and about a year into learning the art of drumming. Da Fonseca would hear the rehearsals of Salvador’s trio (with bassist Sergio Barrozo and remarkable drummer Dom Um Romão) through windows of the building where they were working as he walked to school and was mesmerized. “It’s among my favorite Top 10 albums of music that I know, jazz and Brazilian music included,” says Da Fonseca. “If I needed to choose 10 recordings, from Coltrane, Miles, from all that, this album, Rio 65 Trio, would be one of those albums I’d take to a desert island.”

It wasn’t until 1980 that the two finally met, after both had moved to the United States (Salvador in 1973 and Da Fonseca in 1975). Salvador’s regular drummer for his trio was unable to make a performance and, having heard of the fellow Brazilian, he called to ask if he’d substitute. Salvador was surprised to discover that Da Fonseca already knew much of his music and this led to Da Fonseca joining his trio and the pair working together on many other occasions.

Salvador called on Da Fonseca to take the late Machado’s place at the drumset for his “Rio 65 Trio 50th Anniversary Concert” at Zankel Hall in November 2015 with Barrozo aboard, bringing their relationship full-circle. The live recording of that thrilling concert featuring Salvador’s originals from his landmark album will soon be released by Universal Music.

With Duduka Da Fonseca Trio Plays Dom Salvador, released by Sunnyside last month, that circle has spun around again. His music is interpreted by sensitive musicians (the trio is completed by superb Brazil-based pianist David Feldman and imaginative bassist Guto Wirtti) who understand his compositions and share his free jazz-loving spirit. Salvador’s propensity for creating super-complex rhythms that can be very challenging for even expert musicians to realize are splendidly exhibited in such robust, energetic compositions as “Farjuto”, “Samba do malandrinho”, “Gafieira” and “Meu iraço é café forte” (“My Weakness Is Strong Coffee”). Salvador’s exquisite lyricism is beautifully realized in the ballads “Maria”, a heart-rending tribute to his wife of more than 50 years, who knocked him off his feet when he heard her singing in a São Paulo club where he was also performing, and “Para Elis”, written in honor of the great Brazilian singer Elis Regina.

“The way he plays piano is so rich and so many rhythms, polyrhythms,” says Da Fonseca. “When he plays it’s amazing. I don’t know anyone who plays that way. He’s a very unique player. It’s deep...Can be sad and can be happy... Amazing. A lot of people don’t know how brilliant Dom Salvador is as a piano player and as a composer. He’s composed so much beautiful music over the years... There’s enough to do many albums.”

A tribute to Salvador with Duduka Da Fonseca is at Jazz at Kitano May 25th-26th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
- Rio 65 Trio—Eponymous (Philips-Universal, 1965)
- Dom Salvador—Salvador Trio (Mocambo-Bamba/Mr Bongo, 1965)
- Dom Um Romao—Spirit of the Times (Muse, 1973)
- Robin Kenyatta—Nomusa (Muse, 1975)
- Dom Salvador—My Family (Muse, 1976)
- Dom Salvador/Duduka Da Fonseca/ Rogério Botter Maio—Transition (Lua Discos, 1997)

What Ali lacks in recorded provenance he more than makes up for with his compositional brilliance. On the Atlantic release, all seven originals are his and the performances are as enlightened as they are freewheeling. The tunes don’t quite adhere to the structural impulses of the time. There’s less resolution, more attention being paid to taking the listener on an adventure rather than reaching an ultimate destination. A great example is “Pay Not Play Not” featuring Ali’s rapid fire right-hand trills. Of note is how Roach reacts, a great example is how Roach reacts, his only recourse to keep a genuinely loose feel underneath the pianist’s rhythmic gymnastics.

As a result of his modernistic prowess, not everyone could play with Ali. In an interview, saxophonist Odean Pope spoke about Ali dropping by clubs and musicians leaving the bandstand because they didn’t have the chops to play with him. Pope stated, “He was so moderators, he was playing all these modern chord changes. Every tune that he played he created his own chord changes and his own concepts.” Perhaps what Ali left behind was his unconventional harmonic sensibilities, which could challenge an expert musician who wasn’t used to the freedom he supposedly to move. This was startling at the time, many believing he was a big influence on John Coltrane’s future “sheets of sound” approach.

The greatest tragedy of Ali’s career (he died circa 1980 at 46 or 49) is how little he left behind. What he did leave behind was a handful of compositions that showcased a voice ahead of his time. ✤
Many jazz fans dream of running a label. Xavier Felgeyrolles made it a reality in 1995. Felgeyrolles got interested in jazz as a young man. He recalled, "People around me were not listening to jazz. My father was a very good classical pianist. I discovered Fats Waller, but around me were not listening to jazz. My father was a very good classical pianist. I discovered Fats Waller, but I am still involved in the organization." Felgeyrolles completed his PhD in astrophysics in 1989 and began teaching. But jazz never was far from his mind. "I had a chance to work with the Memphis pianist Charles Thomas. It was extraordinary. I did a few tours with him, Essiet Essiet and Ben Riley. I was still involved with the festival and concerts, then decided to start a jazz label." He had gotten to know Donald Brown that year through his festival and they became friends. When the pianist no longer had a recording contract in 1995, the idea for Space Time Records quickly took shape. "We did a couple of concerts of solo piano in the back of a piano store." It was the label’s first release, Piano Short Stories. Over 21 years, Space Time has released 43 CDs. Working around his school schedule, Felgeyrolles traveled to New York City whenever possible. "In the 1990s and early 2000s I was in New York three times a year. I made many recordings. Last year I recorded Bill Mobley, who is writing amazing music for big band, but people don’t know him. I wanted something intimate and we did that. I had a chance to spend a lot of time in New York. To me New York is still the strongest place for jazz. Paris is a good place but a tiny thing for jazz, except world music.

The future label owner was gaining knowledge from his frequent conversations with musicians. "The first time I visited New York, Panama Francis told me, ‘You should listen to and work with people of your generation.’ He was right. I’ve worked with a lot of them: Mulgrew Miller, Donald, Bill Mobley. I know the younger generation, too. I met Ali Jackson when he was 16. I did an album with Walter Smith III. Space Time Records was named because I am a nuclear physicist and Space Time means ‘open mind’ too. I think each generation has to find its way. You can’t play what the generation before played the same way. I promoted the first concert in France of Robert Glasper and worked with Lionel Loueke, who is a very good friend. For the label I have had the chance to release incredible recordings produced by the musicians or by me. The library is not big but it is rich. I’ve worked with Donald Brown for 28 years and 20 with the label, I’ve also released CDs by his sons Keith and Kenneth. It’s like a family story." Brown and Mobley are well represented in its catalogue, in addition to sessions produced by Duotones with Toots Thielemans with Martial Solal, but Toots was asking too much money, I couldn’t afford it. Of course, I have a lot of live recordings that are very interesting, I don’t release too many CDs each year. I don’t make money, I just reinvest any earning with new projects. The only thing I ask is to approximately cover the expenses. Earning money with my label is impossible today.” With a laugh, he added, “Maybe some people are geniuses, I am not.”

Felgeyrolles sees himself as a hands-on producer whenever possible. “It’s rare that I haven’t been at a recording session, I want to be part of it. I wasn’t there for Kenneth Brown, Donald Brown’s son; it was produced by them. For Bill Mobley, I was there except for the duet with Kenny Barron and I suggested the tunes. I know some music, to read and write some, but I’m not a professional musician. I’ve learned a lot with

(Continued on page 50)
IN MEMORIAM

BUELL NEIDLINGER
BY ANDREY HENKIN

Buell Neidlinger, a bassist who was part of some of the earliest Cecil Taylor groups to go along with a number of releases as a leader or co-leader, mostly coming on his co-run label K2B2, died Mar. 16th at 82.

Neidlinger was born Mar. 2nd, 1936 in New York and started out on cello. As he related to our own Clifford Allen in a 2005 interview, his introduction to the bass came as a result of his cello teacher Luigi Silva, “whose idea was that in the summer you should take bass lessons for a month, because it would strengthen your hand for the cello.” Neidlinger’s first bass teacher was Walter Page of Count Basie’s orchestra. After a short period at Yale University, during which time he was a part of Eli’s Chosen Six with trombonist Roswell Rudd (the pair were childhood friends from summers spent in Rudd’s Connecticut home and gigging around during high school in bands that included Herbie Nichols), Neidlinger returned to New York, where he soon met up with players like Steve Lacy and Cecil Taylor. Both of those players were on Neidlinger’s debut as a leader, New York City R&B (Candid, 1961) alongside Rudd, Archie Shepp, Clark Terry, Charles Davis, Denis Charles and Billy Higgins.

Neidlinger would appear on Taylor albums such as Jazz Advance, Looking Ahead!, Love For Sale and The World of Cecil Taylor between 1956-61. He would also record with Lacy (Soprano Sax and Reflections) and Jimmy Guiffre (In Person) in this period. As part of a tribute statement to Rudd published in our February 2018 issue, Neidlinger recalled that, “it was during this time that Roswell invited me to be in his NY Art Quartet, but I declined, because in 1962 I moved to Texas to work with Sir John Barbirolli and the Houston Symphony Orchestra.”

The later ’60s and ’70s saw Neidlinger record with Jean-Luc Ponty and Andrew White while the ’80s and ’90s brought credits with Diane Schuur, Les McCann, Ivo Perelman, The Manhattan Transfer and Anthony Braxton, the latter in both a Black Saint quartet and a duo on Neidlinger’s K2B2. The imprint was co-founded with saxophonist Marty Krystall and very recently duo on Neidlinger’s K2B2. The imprint was co-founded by andrey henkin


Hermann Keller (Mar. 30th, 1945—Mar. 26th, 2018) The German pianist’s later work was mostly as a composer but he had credits with the Berliner Improvisations-Quartett, Michael Sell Orchester and Manfred Schulze Formation. Keller died Mar. 26th at 72.

Jerzy Milian (Apr. 10th, 1935—Mar. 7th, 2018) The Polish vibraphonist veered from easy listening to avant garde jazz, as well as music written for radio big bands and television, and worked in the bands of countrymen Jan Puszyn Wełnowski and Krzysztof Komeda as well as Czech bandleader Gustav Brom. Milian died Mar. 7th at 82.

Frans Van Dyck (Oct. 31st, 1923—Mar. 17th, 2018) The Belgian trombonist worked with countrymen like Bobby Jaspar and Jack Sels, fellow Europeans like Ernst van’t Hof and Kurt Edelhagen and Americans such as Jiggs Whigham and Slide Hampton. Van Dyck died Mar. 17th at 94.

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12 MAY 2018 | THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD
FESTIVAL REPORT

CREATE FESTIVAL
BY GREG PACKHAM

Veteran trumpet player and composer Wadada Leo Smith brought five different groups into New Haven, Connecticut’s Firehouse 12 for his annual CREATE Festival (Apr. 7th-8th). With a large palette, he integrated acoustic and electric elements, as well as video images played by Jesse Gilbert on a large screen behind the stage. Smith also held a reception Sunday afternoon to display what he calls the “Ankhramatation Language Scores”, which add pictorial imagery to his compositions.

The versatile Smith played a wide-ranging variety of trumpet styles—including stabbing punches, long-tone harmonies and pungent Harmon mute. One reference point would be middle and late 60s Miles Davis for the acoustic music and middle 70s Miles for the electric portions. But he has carved out his own trumpet sound within these styles and added a mixed media element. He lays a minimum of notes on the page and uses a lot of hand and verbal cues to direct his music. This puts a premium on the quality of the musicians onstage, who have to improvise freely and watch out for the cued ensemble parts. His collaborators ranged from improvising classical musicians and acoustic free jazz veterans to jazz-rock electric guitarists and bassists.

The first group featured his grandson Lamar Smith on guitar along with veteran drummer Thurman Barker and Hardedge on electronics. They performed ethereal free sounds with rustling drums on “Number One” and “Organic” and, despite being a last-minute substitute, Barker followed the music with great sensitivity. The younger Smith has learned how to get inside of his grandfather’s music while electronics added ambient colors. Gilbert incorporated the audio mix into his video displays to add rhythmic pulses along with images of the musicians.

The second group, Kosmic Music Ensemble, performed “Dark Matter, Dark Energy: The Unseen: A Suite”. Smith played some beautiful muted trumpet, which worked well in the quiet room, and pianist Sylvie Courvoisier had a standout performance, adding what she calls her “toys” inside the instrument. The lur player slipped into a sweet, solemn folk melody that faded into whistles and shouts from the audience, a surprisingly apt lead-in to the premiere of an effects-laced, rhythmically driving jazz composition by bassist Arild Andersen and his younger quartet. Andersen is one of Norway’s most internationally renowned jazz musicians; he tours constantly and on the day of this concert, his label, ECM, was releasing his latest album, In-House Science. (Just a few days after this Vossa Jazz premiere, Andersen played the launch concert at Blue Note Tokyo.)

While it is the fluid integration of traditional Norwegian sounds and modern jazz that distinguishes Vossa Jazz among music festivals, curator Trude Storheim’s vision for the event is nothing if not all-embracing. Her programming across the festival’s 35+ performances featured avant garde, big band, experimental, folk, pop and world musicians, many of them holders of Spellemannprisen, the Norwegian equivalent of the Grammy. Besides Andersen, the main stage alone welcomed Norwegian acts as diverse as hip-hop star Laras Vaular, wildly popular folk singer Ingebjorg Bratland and saxophone/clarinet player Eirik Hegdal, former Artistic Director of the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra (TJO). These concerts, in a room seating almost 1,000 people, were standing room only.

Vossa Jazz is also known for its Tingingsverket, the most prominent jazz commission in Norway. This year the honor went to Hegdal, who debuted “Musical Balloon”, his composition for six players, on the festival’s second evening. In this work, Hegdal pulled several musical components together into one clean musical statement: percussive free improv; recurring swing motif; horns trilling in tight harmony; neat syncopated structures; and surprising melodic leaps as a testament to the joy of sound. His players, all former TJO bandmates, had generous solo time, with current TJO Artistic Director and bassist Ole Morten Vågan.

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VOSSA JAZZ
BY SUZANNE LORGE

The mist lay heavy on the mountains, fjords and frozen lakes surrounding Vossevangen, Norway, the setting for the 45th annual Vossa Jazz Festival (Mar. 23rd-25th). Despite the town’s diminutive size—Vossevangen and its broader municipality claim only 14,000 inhabitants—each day hundreds of ticketholders crowded into the festival’s several venues, all just a short walk from each other along a picturesque center street.

The festival headliners played the main stage at the Park Hotel, an expansive building boasting four sophisticated performance spaces of varying sizes. On day one, Jørn Styve stood down center on the darkened main stage and opened the first show with a long, sonorous note sounded on the wooden lur, a traditional Norwegian horn (looks like a didgeridoo, sounds like a trumpet). The lur player slipped into a sweet, solemn folk melody that faded into whistles and shouts from the audience, a surprisingly apt lead-in to the premiere of an effects-laced, rhythmically driving jazz composition by bassist Arild Andersen and his younger quartet. Andersen is one of Norway’s most internationally renowned jazz musicians; he tours constantly and on the day of this concert, his label, ECM, was releasing his latest album, In-House Science. (Just a few days after this Vossa Jazz premiere, Andersen played the launch concert at Blue Note Tokyo.)

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(Continued on Page 51)
Pianist Kenny Barron was named an NEA Jazz Master in 2010 and has been honored with 11 Grammy nominations and regular appearances in the top tier of critics’ polls. Barron has upgraded his recent working trio of bassist Kiyoshi Kitagawa and drummer Johnathan Blake to a quartet, adding tenor/soprano saxophonist Dayna Stephens and trumpeter Mike Rodriguez, expanding his opportunities as a composer and arranger. The pianist has not settled into a predictable style of writing; his new pieces show that he continues to push the boundaries of his universe. This has been a working band for a while, with a rhythm section rivaling any current group and two up-and-comers in the frontline, playing music already woodshedded extensively on stage.

“DPW” is an infectious opener, brisk postbop detouring at times into an Afro-Cuban setting, showcasing big-toned tenor and energetic trumpet. “A Short Journey” has a sorrowful air conveyed by emotional soprano, with the rhythm section playing loosely behind the two horns. The easygoing rendition of Brazilian Caetano Veloso’s bossa nova “Aquele Frevo Axé” relieves some of the tension as Barron shows off his lyrical side. The funky Barron original “I’m Just Sayin’” is transformed through inventive use of dissonance while still retaining its urban flavor.

As Barron was a founding member of the Thelonious Monk tribute band Sphere (active from 1982-2002), it’s never a surprise to hear one of the master’s pieces on a Barron album. A solo interpretation of “Reflections” reveals the composer’s early stride influence (though in a very subdued interpretation of “Reflections” reveals the composer’s early stride influence) while blending elegance and humor, complete with a playful staccato tag at the conclusion.

For more information, visit bluenote.com. This project is at Village Vanguard May 1st-6th. See Calendar.

Sunrise
Ken Peplowski Big Band (Arbors)
by Scott Yanow

Ken Peplowski has long been a major force in the small-group swing movement. He worked with Benny Goodman, recorded regularly for the Concord label and established himself as one of the world’s great clarinetists. Though associated with swing, Peplowski has long had his own sound and style.

While he has played with many big bands through the years and occasionally toured with an orchestra, Sunrise is Peplowski’s first full album at the helm of a big band. He mentions in the liner notes that two of his biggest inspirations are Frank Sinatra and Duke Ellington. The former’s albums with big bands rarely have much solo space for sidemen and the same is true here. While the 18-piece orchestra includes several bandleaders (such as saxophonist Adrian Cunningham, trombonist John Allred, trumpeters Jon-Erik Kellso and Randy Reinhart, pianist Ehud Asherie, guitarist Matt Munisteri, bassist Nicki Parrott and drummer Chuck Redd), very little is heard from any of them in a solo capacity. The music is essentially a matchup between Peplowski (on clarinet) and the big band.

Even with that limitation, the music holds one’s interest and is quite successful. Three selections (“All I Need Is The Girl”, “I Like the Sunrise” and “Come Back To Me”) are revivals of Billy May arrangements made for the early ‘60s Sinatra/Ellington Reprise album. Mark Lopeman contributed four arrangements, there are two aripeces from Dennis Mackrel and the late Allan Holdsworth, and also plays Alto Dick’s little-known “Clarinet In Springtime”, written for Benny Goodman in the early ‘40s but never recorded.

Starting with a relaxed and cheerful version of Jule Styne-Stephen Sondheim’s “All I Need Is The Girl”, highlights include a lively version of Antonio Carlos Jobim’s “Chega De Saudade”, a fine remake of Frank Loesser’s “If I Were A Bell”, a rather moody and melancholy take of Leigh Harline-Ned Washington’s “When You Wish Upon A Star” (which makes one think that the wish is not being granted), a romp through Sonny Stitt’s up-tempo bop piece “The Eternal Triangle” and an inventive revival of Isham Jones-Gus Kahn’s “The One I Love Belongs To Somebody Else”.

Peplowski is in top form and his big band is consistently impressive during the enjoyable set. For more information, visit arborrecords.com. Peplowski is at Stern Auditorium May 1st as part of Forever Django, Knickerbocker Bar & Grill May 4th-5th, Tribeca Performing Arts Center May 10th as part of Highlights in Jazz and Jazz at Kitano May 11th-12th. See Calendar.
To say that pianist Brad Mehldau is merely a jazz artist is a disservice to his artistry. Time and time again, Mehldau has proven that his aesthetic is fluid and can take many forms. With his latest release, Mehldau takes four preludes and a fugue from Johann Sebastian Bach’s The Well Tempered Clavier and intersperses them among seven original pieces inspired by the seminal work. The suggestion of Bach as an inspiration for a modern practitioner such as Mehldau is warranted as his legacy of particular importance to jazz musicians.

Stemming from a commission entitled “Three Pieces from Bach”, Mehldau is adept at handling Bach as a subject as well as a source. Beginning with his original “Benediction”, the pianist chooses an airy touch followed by a sequence of beautiful legato lines before being broken apart into near cacophony. It is with “Benediction” that Mehldau expertly executes the idea at hand of Bach as ore to be mined, time forming the arc and modern style executing the idea. While no track on the album is filler, the five selections from The Well-Tempered Clavier are only needed as a means of fulfilling the premise of the album as it is the responses that are more welcome. That said, the nuance and delicate interpretation of Bach is further display of Mehldau’s prowess as a performer and his sensitivity to the source material.

Mehldau ends the album with a pair of original selections, further exploring his voice and astuteness as a storyteller. “Ostinato” takes the subtle grace of the selections, further exploring his voice and astuteness as a performer and his sensitivity to the source material. Mehdau has proven that his aesthetic is fluid and can take many forms. With his latest release, Mehldau takes four preludes and a fugue from Johann Sebastian Bach’s The Well Tempered Clavier and intersperses them among seven original pieces inspired by the seminal work. The suggestion of Bach as an inspiration for a modern practitioner such as Mehldau is warranted as his legacy of particular importance to jazz musicians.

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Quick, name influential accordion players! If you asked the same of our three featured chromatic button accordionists, you’d likely hear the names Mogens Ellegaard and Peter Zinli; Jo Privat, Gus Viseur and Tony Muréna; Kimmo Pohjonen and Janne Mäkinen.

Born in Graubünden, East Switzerland under the influence of Ländler volksmusik (à la Zinli) and the classical tradition, accordionist Hans Hassler was especially inspired by Ellegaard’s avant-gardism, forging his own approach over a 30-year period. On Wir Die Zeit Hinter Mir Her, he fully exploits the polyphonic and -rhythmic capabilities of his five-octave-plus, Moscow-made Jupiter model, in particular the free-bass configuration of the left-hand manual, which allows for customized chords, educing an orchestral palette in his improvised compositions: flute and double-reed tones; symphonic crescendos; rubbering/rustling percussive effects reminiscent of a güiro or washboard; funky hocketing across the manuals; odd breaths, squeaks and finger-taps. But for all his adventurism, he hasn’t forgotten the instrument’s danchall roots.

Privat, Viseur and Muréna were important figures in the jazz manouche movement of interwar Paris, an amalgam of French calse musette and North American swing, La Contre Attaque du Jazz Musette, Vol. 1 samples their best compositions, revisited and -vitalized by accordionist Erwan Mellec (who favors an Italian-made Bugari), guitarist Thomas Le Briz and tuba player Benjamin Lebert, collectively known as Swing of France, here augmented by Stéphane Barbier’s spartan drums. Dominated by minor-key Waltzes, the tunes contain serpentine melodies laced with intricate ornamentation and dolorous flourishes, rendered with a loose, Roma-esque insouciance that belies the difficulty of performing them. “Yayou”, one of two originals, veers to Louisiana swamp boogie and Privet’s “Modern Valse” has banjo, but that’s not to say the album lacks those virtues that make any musical performance compelling: narrative shape, tension, empathetic dynamics and sonic depth.

The pieces often reveal an affecting arc from the urgent and restless into warm interactions like the almost homey conversational dialogue of cello sighs and querulous alto whistles ending “Photonecetes Gracilis” or dreamy ruminations concluding “Opostomia Micripus”. The threesome demonstrate their mastery of dynamics on “Chauliodium Danae”, which suddenly accelerates from a restrained coloquy of cracks, beeps and squeaks to red-lining power before subsiding just as quickly. Such spontaneous shifts provide one of the joys of this set, with another being the constant surprise at how they respond to each other’s promptings in ways both unanticipated and yet, in retrospect, almost inevitably apt.

For more information, visit darktree-records.com. Seabrook, he matches their raw intensity and sense of unbridled adventure on a program of seven improvised cuts crafted over two days in the studio. In doing so they go one better than French novelist Georges Perec, who famously wrote a book without using the letter “e”, by avoiding not only “e” but all the other notes as well in music drawn from the extremes.

Seabrook deploys a range of unconventional timbres with sure-footed inspiration and spiky energy while Pitsiokos starts at the point where other reed players climax a solo, with textures that might be taken to signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. For his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. But his part Levin puts aside his customary virtuosity language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones. To signal emotional turmoil, and fashions a personal language of squeals, quacks and modulating drones.

The newest of these, “Modul 60” and “Modul 59”, open and close the album with hints of a concentrated future. Where the latter emotes in liminal territory, the former is a direct link to Continuum, Bärtsch’s previous record for ECM with his Mobile project. Any nods to the past, however, are refracted through a brighter coming of age: a sound that once ran now leaps. The ritual groove of “Modul 58”, for instance, is at once what we might expect and a fresher take on group integration, a taste of perpetual motion shown in the band’s willingness to let details express themselves to the level of ecstasy. “Modul 36” reveals the deepest change; known to any longtime listener of Bärtsch, here it takes on the uniformly colored properties that would seem to extend the band’s evolutionary path. It’s a classic yet forward-thinking groove, one that feels like a childhood home renovated from the inside out. “Modul 34” is another early tune, only now making its studio debut. There’s an almost digital quality to it, nuanced by human touch.

Awase is also a departure for including a non-Bärtsch original by Sha: the enigmatically titled “A”. Gradually building an ocean out of a water droplet, its waves flow to the magnetic suggestions of an itinerant philosophical compass. Like the album as a whole, it toes the line between light and shadow with every intention of shedding its ego to both along (and by) the way.

For more information, visit ecmrecords.com. This project is at Le Poisson Rouge May 6th. See Calendar.
Celebrating Fat Tuesday’s
Remembering Betty Carter

Friday, May 4, Concert at 8:30PM

This evening will celebrate Fat Tuesday’s as well as the legendary Betty Carter. Musicians who played with Betty Carter to perform as well as former members of Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead program.

Betty Carter band alumni: JD Allen (sax), Kenyatta Beasley (trumpet), Marc Cary (piano), Curtis Lundy (bass), Taharqa Patterson (vocals) and Clarence Penn (drums). Former members of Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead program: Addison Frei (piano), Diego Ramirez (drums), ArcoIris Sandoval (piano), Barry Stephenson (bass) and Charles Turner (vocals). Subject to change.
Marc Ribot's career as Downtown guitar guru has found its natural place, some 40 years hence, fronting Ceramic Dog. This trio, with a variety of guests layered into the mix, realizes his current vision. Increasingly, Ribot has added singing to his performance, raw, guttural, biting vocals and his fluid, boundless guitar playing moves into hardcore effortlessly. His kindred rhythm spirits, bassist Shahzad Ismaily and drummer Ches Smith, happily wade waist-deep into the big muddle of this thickened soundscape. Unlike other experimental ensembles reaching into punk for inspiration, Ribot’s pedigree gives license to overdriven rapid-fire crunchy chords as much as acoustic finger-picking. And as Ismaily and Smith are equally adept at alternating between pensive whisper and merciless throb, manifold artistry is on full display. Perhaps the only aspect of YRU Still Here? more apparent than its eclecticism is the decidedly radical stance upon which Ribot thrives. Here the call is for unity in defiance of oppression, with liner notes citing the Trump-directed immigration raids on working-class communities as “tyranny” and stating that musicians must “amplify the voices of rage in our community”.

The album opens with the distortion-laden “Personal Nancy”, a brief, driving work, before moving into the more tempered “Pennsylvania 6 5666” (Clenn Miller allusion?) and the lively “Punk La Migra”, which sonically spits into the face of the current administration. But it’s also about the music: a post-punk funky foray screaming with masterful guitar (McLaughlin fans will stop in their tracks), Curtis Fowlkes trombone, Mauricio Herrera’s perpetual-motion congas and Smith’s downright guttural, biting vocals and his fluid, boundless guitar picking. And as Ismaily and Smith are equally adept at alternating between pensive whisper and merciless throb, manifold artistry is on full display. Perhaps the only aspect of YRU Still Here? more apparent than its eclecticism is the decidedly radical stance upon which Ribot thrives. Here the call is for unity in defiance of oppression, with liner notes citing the Trump-directed immigration raids on working-class communities as “tyranny” and stating that musicians must “amplify the voices of rage in our community”.

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For more information, visit northernspyrecords.com. This project is at Le Poisson Rouge May 6th. See Calendar.

When you hear a jazz ensemble in person and soon thereafter hear their new record, it is always a teachable moment. You learn once again how experiencing music live differs from hearing it on an album—even when the album was recorded live, like Jeff Hamilton’s latest.

Recently I heard Hamilton’s trio on a jazz cruise. They played several of the tunes on Live from San Pedro. In person, it was clear that a piano trio really can be led by its drummer. Hamilton framed and defined each piece with his clean, articulate percussion content. Even with an exceptional pianist on board (Tamir Hendelman), the most riveting solos were Hamilton’s. He ran a drum clinic all night, if a clinic can be joyous and swing like crazy.

You cannot obtain such understandings from the record, when you cannot see the band, when you are not in the same room with their energy. Keith Jarrett once said that a recording of a concert is like a fax of the actual event. As faxes go, Live from San Pedro is a good one. On the basis of “Sylhite’s Day” and “In Walked Bud”, this trio, together 17 years, is as fast and fine-tuned as a Formula One racing car. On “Hammer’s Tone” and “Brush This”, Hamilton generates tantalizing excitement, using only brushes. He heard Meredith Wilson’s “Gary, Indiana” while driving through that much-maligned town while listening to Brazilian music on the radio. He decided to “put the two together”. A song from The Music Man and sensual samba rhythms mesh, seamlessly. It is a startling change of mood when Christoph Luty’s yearning arco bass introduces “I Have Dreamed”, the only ballad. Hendelman pieces out Richard Rodgers’ rapt melody as if in the process of discovering it.

Hendelman’s “Bennissimo” is a tribute to a fellow piano badass, Benny Green. When the trio played it on the cruise, Green, who was also on the program, was in the audience, in the front row, grinning. His presence made the moment dynamic. Of course, you don’t get that on the record. But you can hear the record more than once.

For more information, visit caprirecords.com. This band is at Dizzy’s Club May 7th-8th. See Calendar.

Crescent City Po’ Boy outlet; and “Miramar”, a rollicking rumba tune conjuring up Havana’s glamorous pre-revolution heyday. The closer, “Still Walking Back”, is a heartfelt tribute to Kerwin James, a well-regarded New Orleans sousaphonist, who died tragically at the age of 35 in 2007.

There’s a seamlessness to all the compositions, highlighting how the music of New Orleans and Havana, cities less than 700 miles apart, are born from the same African traditions. This is a celebratory album performed with exuberance by a great New York band.

For more information, visit jambalayah brassband.com. This band is at Floridaia Harlem May 11th. See Calendar.

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Sometimes musicians can be hemmed in by reputation, by style, by their timeframe in the grand scheme of things. Some performers want to explore/express themselves in different media—actors want to sing, singers want to act, jazz musicians want to perform notated works. Take Jasmine Choi, a superstar of the classical music sphere, performing as soloist with the Philadelphia, Berlin and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestras, adding to the abundant tradition of great Mozart concertos for flute. Acoustic bassist Joe Fonda has performed/recorded with Wadada Leo Smith, Billy Bang, Barry Altschul and Chico Hamilton. Drummer Harvey Sorgen has been known to mix it up with Ahmad Jamal and Dave Douglas as well as Paul Simon, veteran blues-rock band Hot Tuna and Grateful Dead bassist Phil Lesh. Trio Joy is where these three undertake group composition/free improvisation.

The opener “Moss” is a lovely soundscape. Choi plays slightly somber folk-like harmonious passages while Sorgen rumbles, sways and gently crashes like a windswept yet not-quite-stormy ocean surface and Fonda plucks and strums as if playing a giant lute. The result is modal jazz, Elizabethan-like lament and British Isles ancient song of the seas all at once. The surreal, mournful “Storyboard” finds Choi and Fonda using extended techniques, wrenching agonized, cathartic walls resembling the purposeful feedback of an electric guitar. Mildly frenzied “Frame Check” is perhaps the closest thing to ‘standard’ free jazz, played with a sense of forward motion and strong suggestion of swing; some points of reference would be the trios of Jimmy Giuffre and Sam Rivers. “A Feast of Figs” contains a Choi solo that is almost painfully beautiful, sticking to the middle range of the flute as if trying to distill all the anguish in the world and make it soulful and uplifting.

This is music about exploration and expression. There is warmth and purpose here.

For more information, visit klopotec.si. Fonda and Sorgen are at The Loft of Thomas Rochon May 11th. See Calendar.

Jasmine Choi/Joe Fonda/Harvey Sorgen (Klopotec)

by Mark Keresman

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | MAY 2018 19

format highlighting Zankel’s tart sound and fleet, brightly inflected, continuous lines.

As the title declares, this is a 65th birthday celebration of bassist William Parker, Zankel’s colleague for over 40 years. The suite is a loose collection of themes taken from Zankel’s compositions for big band and used as launching pads for extended improvisation welling up from the roots of free jazz. Two members of the sextet—pianist Dave Burrell and drummer Muhammad Ali—launched their careers in the ‘60s and the dense, powerful undercurrent they create with Parker’sfoundational bass, a flux moving in every direction at once, keeps the music in a state of vital turbulence, feeding the other voices of Zankel, trombonist Steve Swell and violinist Diane Monroe, the latter two also members of Zankel’s large ensemble.

The third and longest segment includes a Zankel theme directly invoking Ornette Coleman, as close to the union of dance and laughter as one can get. Laughter seems like part of Parker’s extended arco solo as well and when Monroe launches her solo, interjecting an extended passage of “Wade in the Water”. Blues roots arise everywhere here, with the band sourcing them from West African string music to Coleman and Taylor. The entire performance is a wide-ranging, joyous exchange among musicians clearly familiar with one another, everyone contributing to the celebration.

For more information, visit nottwo.com. William Parker is at Downtown Music Gallery May 13th and Roulette May 23rd, 25th, 27th and 28th, the latter as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.

by Phil Freeman

Baritone saxophonists don’t get to make their own albums very often. This is Lauren Sevian’s second release as a leader and comes nearly a full decade after her debut. The band is alto saxophonist Alexa Tarantino (with whom Sevian co-leads the wittily named group LSAT), pianist Robert Rodriguez, bassist Christian McBride and drummer E.J. Strickland. All the compositions are hers, save Tarantino’s “Square One”.

“Triple Water” kicks off the album in a bebop flurry. Sevian’s phrases—Tarantino is not heard here—have the intricacy and speed of John Coltrane on “Countdown” and the band keeps her flying high; McBride and Strickland are skipping along and Rodriguez dances across the keys, releasing rippling waves of notes. The mellow “Square One” follows, allowing the two saxophonists to harmonize. Tarantino plays around in the lower end of the alto’s range, with Sevian as her shadow, or her big sister, hovering protectively. McBride takes a forceful, string-popping solo. “Bluesiness” lives up to its title; it’s bluesy, but it’s also meandering and somewhat convoluted, a string of phrases that wind all over the place, barely anchored by the rhythm. McBride throws a maddeningly familiar quotation into his solo that does more to accent the piece than anything from the leader’s pen. “Miss Lady” begins with another Coltrane-in-1959 opening fanfare, but at the 90-second mark a half-speed drum solo drains away all its momentum; when the band comes back in, they’re swinging in a loose and genial manner, but it feels like an entirely different piece.

The baritone is well suited to ballads and both the title track and “Goldie’s Chance” are album highlights. Rodrigeuz displays a delicacy at the keys that perfectly balances Sevian’s slow, low swaying. But the almost manic “Lamb and Bunny”, on which Tarantino returns for another round with/against the leader, is astonishing. Rodriguez, McBride and Strickland set a racetrack tempo and the two women sprint through complex bebop phrases, tearing through the changes and trading off phrases like it’s 1945. Albums by baritone saxophonists may not be common, but Bliss makes a strong argument for more of them and soon.

For more information, visit posi-tone.com. This project is at Dizzy’s Club May 16th. See Calendar.

by Mark Keresman

Célébration de William Parker à 65 ans

par Yves Risset

The New York City Jazz Record | Mai 2018 19
May 1st Tuesday 8:30 pm
Michael Formanek and Andrew Cyrille Duo
Michael Formanek (bass)
Andrew Cyrille (drums)

May 2nd Wednesday 8:30 pm
Michael Formanek Quartet
Tony Malaby (tenor, soprano saxes)
Kris Davis (piano) Michael Formanek (bass) Dan Weiss (drums, percussion)

May 3rd Thursday 8:30 pm
Thumbscrew and Reeds
Mary Halvorson (guitar) Tomas Fujiwara (drums) Michael Formanek (bass) with: Tim Berne (alto sax) Jon Irabagon (saxes) Oscar Noriega (alto sax, clarinets) Peter Formanek (tenor sax, clarinet)

May 4th Friday 8:30 pm
Marty Ehrlich, Taylor Ho Bynum, Angelica Sanchez, Michael Formanek, Pheeroan Aklaff
Marty Ehrlich (alto sax, clarinets)
Taylor Ho Bynum (cornet) Angelica Sanchez (piano) Michael Formanek (bass) Pheeroan Aklaff (drums)

May 5th Saturday 8:30 pm
Tim Berne, Ralph Alessi, Michael Formanek, Ches Smith
Tim Berne (alto sax) Ralph Alessi (trumpet) Michael Formanek (bass) Ches Smith (drums, percussion)

May 6th Sunday 4:40-6:40pm
Michael Formanek, Solo Bass
Me, Myself, and Eye Series at
440 GALLERY Sixth Avenue @:
Ninth Street Brooklyn, NY 11215
Suggested Donation - S10

http://www.michaelformanek.com
THE ART OF JAZZ

Dexter Gordon, 1948
Photograph by Herman Leonard

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**The Unheard Artie Shaw**

The New York All-Star Big Band (featuring Dan Levinson) (Hep)

by Alex Henderson

Iconic clarinetist Artie Shaw (who died in 2004 at 94) is best remembered as among the most famous of the Swing Era bandleaders and that outfit’s lesser-known arrangements are the focus of this album. The title is somewhat misleading because some of these arrangements from Jerry Gray, Eddie Durham and others were, in fact, heard on Shaw’s live radio broadcasts of the ‘30s so the New York All-Star Big Band (with James Langton conducting and Dan Levinson featured extensively as lead clarinet) is, in effect, paying tribute to Shaw’s live performances.

 Appropriately, the CD opens with the ominous “Nightmare”, which was used as Shaw’s theme during his ‘30s broadcasts from the Blue Room in midtown Manhattan’s Hotel Lincoln. The band goes on to recreate the spirit of Shaw’s live broadcasts with instrumental performances of “I’ve Got the World on a String”, “In the Mood”, “Diga Diga Doo” and other standards part of his repertoire during that era.

Soloists include trumpeter Jon-Erik Kellso, tenor saxophonist Mark Lopeman and trombonists Harvey Tibbs and Jim Fryer. Levinson is the main lead and draws on the Shaw/Benny Goodman style whether playing Clarence Williams/Spencer Williams’ “Royal Garden Blues”, Irving Berlin’s “How Deep Is the Ocean” or Cole Porter’s “Begin the Beguine” (one of Shaw’s biggest hits). On his hit 1940 recording of “Stardust”, Shaw performed the Hoagy Carmichael standard as a slow ballad with lush strings; the Gray arrangement here is delivered at midtempo and will be familiar to collectors who have heard Hindsight’s CDs of Shaw’s Blue Room broadcasts.

There are six vocal performances: four with Moanin’ Mary (“Them There Eyes”, “You Go to My Head”, “Trav’lin’ Alone” and “The Moon Looks Down and Laughs”) and two by Molly Ryan (“And the Angels Sing” and “Stairway to the Stars”). The latter is clearly paying homage to Shaw vocalist Helen Forrest while the former are, in fact, heard on Shaw’s live performances.

For more information, visit hep.com. Levinson is at St. Michael’s Cemetery May 19th and Mezzrow May 30th. See Calendar.

**Plays Monk**

Duck Baker (Triple Point)

by Clifford Allen

In looking through discographies of various early-modern jazz guitarists, the music of Thelonious Monk enters playbooks only sporadically. Kenny Burrell didn’t record Monk until 1963; Wes Montgomery chewed on these pieces a bit earlier, primarily in live settings. René Thomas’ 1960 Guitar Groove LP includes “Ruby, My Dear” and that in itself is a treat (dusky interwoven guitar and tenor over soft rhythmic foottalls). It’s also easy to forget, as canonized as Monk is, how little his music was covered by others during his floruit—soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy being a rare exception. Monk was considered the “high priest of bebop” and his tunes a heady challenge to play, but the pianist, born just over a century ago on the coastal plains of North Carolina and raised in New York, imbued his music with the blues. It’s not hard to trace the lineage of his raggy tunes and their wry intervals to ragtime and folk-blues songsters, many of whom plied their trade on the six-string.

Fingerstyle guitarist Duck Baker is the kind of musician for whom a project like the recording of nine unaccompanied Monk compositions is a natural fit. His work has often favored soli and small chamber ensembles absent piano or drums, focusing on standard repertoire with a deceptively loose, easy swing that allows lines to unfurl in surprising directions (vis-a-vis Lacy). *Plays Monk* is, in a way, a follow up to *Spinning Song*, a recording Baker made of Herbie Nichols’ music for John Zorn’s Avant label in 1996, but these tunes open up into different spaces, not to mention adding two decades’ worth of lived artistry.

The set starts with “Blue Monk”, which was the first Monk piece Baker learned (and features in one of his jazz fingerstyle instructional videos), puckish harmonics and spindly elisions tapping in the direction of song before emerging in twangy pirouettes; furious runs gallop and almost obscure the fact that one is listening to an acoustic guitarist. It takes a certain kind of solo player to embody an orchestral concept where a pianist or saxophonist might be ‘hearable’ whether or not they are present. That said, solo study and the shape of a tune — a pearl or a jewel in this case — is paramount and Baker imbues a chestnut like “Round Midnight” with winsome parlor snap and “Bemsma Swing” with crisp, raggy jounce. Putting bebop, written craft and improvisation through their paces, *Plays Monk* is a masterful recording of creative solo fingerstyle.

For more information, visit triplepointrecords.com. Baker is at Wonders of Nature May 20th. See Calendar.

**Plays Monk**

Duck Baker (Relative Pitch)

by Robert Bush

Trumpeter Stephanie Richards’ days of flying under the radar of the creative music consciousness may be coming to a welcome end, thanks to recent high-profile assignments with Anthony Braxton and Henry Threadgill. Richards studied conduction under the late Butch Morris and, after years in Brooklyn, migrated out west to teach at UC-San Diego.

*Fullmoon* is a superb introduction to her music, which will please fans of masters like Lester Bowie and Bill Dixon. Recorded “live” in a room in tandem with the sampling of Dino J.A. Deane, Richards explores the timbral possibilities of her trumpet engaging and interacting with other resonating bodies to create a singular textural experience.

Richards and Deane open “New Moon” with warbly sputtering and a variety of organic and inorganic samples. Right away, her mastery of tonal manipulation becomes apparent. She places the bell of her horn at various distances and angles to “Snare”, achieving a remarkable variety of textures supported by Deane’s library of martial cadences. It is worth noting this album, without benefit of multi-tracking, ascends to a beautifully orchestral feeling.

On “Piano”, Richards placed a brick on the sustain pedal and blew into the instrument, enjoying the long decay and the manipulation of specific overtones while Deane hovers in the background with sympathetic swells of eerie textures. On “Gong Pt. 1”, Richards sat on the floor, pointing the bell of her horn up to a large gong hanging a few inches above her head. Certain tones activated sympathetic overtones, creating new combinations. “Gong Pt. II” was made possible by Richards playing her flugelhorn without a mouthpiece, utilizing her diaphragm for a specific type of vibrate reminiscent of bagpipes or shakuhachi. Placing her horn just above or coming into actual contact with the surface of “Timpani” creates a wonderfully weird distortion and at times the blend of her instrument and that of Deane becomes nearly impossible to differentiate.

On “Full Moon I”, electronic drones underpin a different feel and the manipulation of specific overtones while Deane hovers in the background with sympathetic harmonics and spindly elisions tapping in the direction of song before emerging in twangy pirouettes; furious runs gallop and almost obscure the fact that one is listening to an acoustic guitarist. It takes a certain kind of solo player to embody an orchestral concept where a pianist or saxophonist might be ‘hearable’ whether or not they are present. That said, solo study and the shape of a tune — a pearl or a jewel in this case — is paramount and Baker imbues a chestnut like “Round Midnight” with winsome parlor snap and “Bemsma Swing” with crisp, raggy jounce. Putting bebop, written craft and improvisation through their paces, *Plays Monk* is a masterful recording of creative solo fingerstyle.

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**Plays Monk**

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Roscoe Mitchell's allegiance to shifting and merging register in the album's final section but has obvious fun playing of his career and the excellent recording renders creative unfolding. Shipp offers some of the finest glimpse a view of his mind in the complex process of smaller but related components. We are privileged to punctuating single tones before fragmenting into inverted and reinverted while interspersed with fragments, which are then augmented, diminuted, recorded in 2005. Shipp's luminous pianism fades to, a concert duet with pianist Matthew Shipp. Accelerated Improvisations seem imbued with a kind of freely improvisation is added to the mix, placing Mitchell in the rarified company of artists whose self-actualization takes on the corpus-unifying complexities of revisitation. The Montreal-Toronto Art Orchestra comprises some of Canada's best performers of new music and they turn their attention to improvisations from two 2014 trio albums, Conversations 1 and 2, with Taborn and Baku. Stuart Broomer's superb notes detail the process by which Mitchell or one of his students first transcribed and then orchestrated the improvisations, sometimes even using spectral analysis to glean harmony from multi-pitched percussion instruments. The results are unlike anything in Mitchell's vast catalogue, scaling the heights of grandeur only to dive headlong into passages of uproarious humor, such as the squeaky-toy-inflected opening of "Rub." The title piece is a tour de force of transcription and composition, as comparison with the improvisation makes plain. A single but complex bell tone from the original becomes a chord, a sonority with overtone as well as micro- and macrocosmic implication for the rest of the piece. Mitchell provides only a soprano solo on the second part of "They Rode for Them," but his thumbprint is everywhere in these works, which, in AACM fashion, refuse either to embrace or reject convention, treading a middle ground of exploration. The recording itself is unique; it resides at the opposite end of the spectrum from ECM's opulent acoustics. Room atmosphere is almost entirely sublimated in favor of one of the most vivid stereophonic presentations imaginable. Each instrument is captured in space, its sound complete and never subservient to another instrument, surpassing any concert hall experience in refinement; the listener is seated about five feet away from the orchestra. If only major labels would record orchestras this way!

For more information, visit rogueart.com, ecmrecords.com and ressrecords.com. Mitchell is at Roulette May 24th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | MAY 2018 23
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**Pianist Leslie Pintchik continues her inventive musical expeditions with yet another set of unique originals and delightfully different takes on standards. She cares about melody, telling stories and communicating with her fellow musicians, most of whom have been with her for years. Pintchik’s playing presents delti technique always tempered by a lovely sense of humor.**

*Let’s start with her take on standards. Jimmy Dorsey-Paul Madeira’s “I’m Glad There Is You” is taken at a slow and sexy pace in a trio setting, making it as warm and inviting as it’s ever sounded. Solos by the leader and bassist Scott Hardy are delicate and powerfully passionate. Jerome Kern-Otto Harbach’s “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes” follows as a samba and the tone is engaging and intimate yet also hot and strong. Hardy is the perfect partner and drummer Michael Sarin provides spot complements and accents.*

*The slow tunes are exquisitely beautiful, elegant and bittersweet. “Mortal” reflects on our brief time on Earth with seriousness and rich emotion. Steve Wilson (alto saxophone) is elegant and heartfelt and Ron Horton (flugelhorn) carries a world of sensitivity and depth in his playing. “A Simpler Time”, which also appeared on Pintchik’s album *Quartets*, is heartbreaking yet bracing in this trio version. Pintchik and Hardy pair up as loving and listening intimates.*

*In a lighter spirit are the other four originals. “Happy Dog” and “Hopperesque” both utilize the delicate sound of Shoko Nagai’s accordion, the former a sprightly Latin number and the latter expressing the mystery inherent in much of Edward Hopper’s work. Leslie Pintchik creates a rich palette of music that is engaging and intimate yet also hot and strong. Hardy is the perfect partner and drummer Michael Sarin provides spot complements and accents.*

*Which It Was Received, Please Stay On The Line, Your Call Will Be Answered in the course of years. The three play together with a deep, shared consciousness because they have played together for so long, for sure, but they’ve also no doubt played together for so long because they’re able to share a deep consciousness. The earlier studio session is comprised of 20 short tracks while the more recent live recording is three longer tracks, but that is more likely attributable to the setting than the year. Put simply, Magnetism(s) extends the line(s) of some of the longest and strongest associations in New York’s free jazz. Its value isn’t in surprise but in dependability.*

*Sonic Fiction is the fourth record that Shipp has made with another reedplayer, Poland’s Mat Walerian (after 2012’s *The Uppercut: Live At Okuden* and *Jungle Live At Okuden* and 2015’s *This Is Beautiful Because We Are Beautiful People adding bassist William Parker*). Heard here on alto saxophone and bass and soprano clarinets, Walerian is a wonderfully slippery player, full of blury glissandi that melts over the music. This studio session is 20 minutes long, and Walerian appears on 15 of them. As such, it’s a monologue by an instrumentalist separated from instrument, a rambling, verbal improvisation on a few prepared themes. It may not hold up to more than a few prepared themes. It may not hold up to more than a few Sustainable lines reflecting a lifetime of listening to Bill Evans, Andrew Hill and Paul Bley. Shipp’s playing has always been full of idiosyncrasies and here he has an odd done-and-out habit of sudden stops, as if he’s had enough. It can be a bit disconcerting but gives a nicely unexpected countenance to the setting. The three play together with a deep, shared consciousness. The earlier studio session is comprised of 20 short tracks while the more recent live recording is three longer tracks, but that is more likely attributable to the setting than the year. Put simply, Magnetism(s) extends the line(s) of some of the longest and strongest associations in New York’s free jazz. Its value isn’t in surprise but in dependability.**

**Sonic Fiction**

*This unusual double-disc set features two solos: the first a series of short piano impromptus, the second a 63-minute free ranging discourse (to borrow from Sartre) being and nothingness. As such, it’s unlikely any other of the many releases in Shipp’s catalogue. The piano set is 11 short tracks recorded in studio, ranging from under two minutes to six and a half. They show Shipp in a rather jazzy mood, still half. They show Shipp in a rather jazzy mood, still following the spontaneity of the moment but with trills and loping lines reflecting a lifetime of listening to Bill Evans, Andrew Hill and Paul Bley. Shipp’s playing has always been full of idiosyncrasies and here he has an odd done-and-out habit of sudden stops, as if he’s had enough. It can be a bit disconcerting but gives a nicely unexpected countenance to the melody playing. Disc One is just 45 minutes. It would be nice if it ran a bit longer so it could provide a backing track to the decidedly stranger second disc, entitled “A Lecture On Nothingness” (the nod actually being not to Sartre but Cage). It’s a monologue by an instrumentalist separated from instrument, a rambling, verbal improvisation on a few prepared themes. It may not hold up to more than a listen or two, but doesn’t need to. It’s another intriguing entry in the 30-year discography of a musician never lacking in things to say.*

*For more information, visit yoguart.com and espdisk.com. Shipp is at Roulette May 25th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.*

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**Magnetism(s)**

*Matthew Shipp (Rogue Art)*

*Sonic Fiction*

*Matthew Shipp (ESP-Disk’)*

*Zero*

*Matthew Shipp (ESP-Disk’)*

*by Kurt Gottschalk*
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Drummer Duduka Da Fonseca’s new album, a tribute to the great Brazilian pianist and samba jazz pioneer Dom Salvador, feels inevitable—and in many ways unnecessary. Da Fonseca came of age in Rio de Janeiro, where, as a 14-year-old in the mid ’60s, he encountered Salvador’s groundbreaking album Rio 65 Trios, with Sergio Barrozo (bass) and the estimable Edison Machado (drums). “I played along with this particular album day and night for many, many years,” Da Fonseca writes warmly in the liner notes. Somewhat fortuitously, Da Fonseca would get the chance to play with Salvador in New York in 1980, cementing a musical partnership that has lasted for more than 30 years—and which perhaps had its apotheosis in a 2015 concert at Carnegie Hall on the 50th anniversary of Salvador’s seminal album.

In other words, Da Fonseca is so intimately connected with Salvador that basically everything he does is in some way a tribute to him. Which isn’t meant to imply that this record—with bassist Guto Wirtti and the excellent pianist David Feldman (with a short but meaningful cameo by the cellist Jacques Morelenbaum)—isn’t worth seeking out. Da Fonseca’s fealty to Salvador is tangible, but there are other influences that listeners will hear as well, in satisfying doses. In Da Fonseca’s loose, lovely drumming, which swings and stutters, you can detect Elvin Jones. There’s also a bit of Paul Motian in his brushwork. Feldman’s lush chords and rhapsodic flourishes remind one of Bill Evans, particularly on “Gafeiera” and “Valsa de esquina.” At times, the group sounds, collectively, like one of Chick Corea’s trios.

But in the end, it all goes back to Salvador, who wrote all of the compositions covered on this record. And for Da Fonseca, the admiration is mutual. Salvador, who lives in New York and has played piano with both Machito and Puente as well as artists from Ray Barretto to Rubén Blades—the group offers up an exciting program of nine new original compositions and updated arrangements of four AfroCuban classics. Driven by a powerful rhythm section in which Hernandez is joined by longtime colleagues, bassist Gerardo “Jerry” Madero and percussionists Luísito Quintero, George Delgado and Jorge González (on timbales, congas and bongos and bell, respectively), the band’s five horns (trumpeters Hector Colón and Manuel “Maneco” Ruiz, trombonists Doug Beavers and Noah Bless and baritone saxophonist/flutist Mitch Frohman) and three vocalists (Marco Bermúdez, Carlos Cascante and Jeremy Bosch, the latter doubling on flute) perform the urbania orchestras with enviable sophistication.

The album opener, Bermúdez-Colón mambo “Esa Nena”, highlights the orchestra’s originality, with an acappella vocal chorus and Colombian cumbia interlude. Four more new compositions—a pair from Bermúdez and the late Tito Puente pianist Gil Lopez, “Yo Te Prometo” and “Echa Pa’lante”, respectively, Cascante’s “Dime Tú” and Hernandez’ “Goza El Ritmo”—raise the temperature of the mambo fever. The band swing the appealing melodies with horns and voices engaging in call-and-response riffs with visceral rhythmic intensity. The exhilarating spirit persists in original arrangements of Cheo Feliciano’s “Guaracha Y Bembe”, Blades’ “Y Deja” and José Alfredo Jimenez’ “La Media Vuelta”. The mood then turns romantic on Hernandez’ cha-cha “Canção Para Ti”, Cascante’s classically tinged “Como Te Quise” and the classic bolero “Tres Palabras”. Trumpeter Randy Brecker joins the band on the swinging Hernandez instrumental “Somos Uno”, an easy grooving outing also featuring Quintero’s timbales. The date closes out back in a classic mambo mode with Bosch’s “Soy El Tambor”.

Celebrating the album’s release (Apr. 4th) at Le Poisson Rouge (site of the old Village Gate, where Hernandez regularly played in the club’s historic Monday night Salsa Meets Jazz series), the group opened with the pianist’s as-yet-recorded fiery mambo “La Orquestra Del Barrio”. Each instrumental stepped into the solo spotlight before Hernandez came to center stage to introduce the band (with trumpeter Chris Rogers, son of the late Eddie Palmieri trombonist Barry Rogers, filling in for Ruiz) and bring out the orchestra’s vocalists, who sang the song’s Spanish language lyric declaring the band’s mission to bring the “ritmo sabroso” to the peoples of the barrios. For the next two hours the group stretched out on the thirteen songs from the record, with Bermúdez, Bosch and Cascante respectively taking turns as lead vocalist on the first three, then coming together on “Goza El Ritmo” before a packed room of listeners and dancers, who cried out for “una mas” when it was all over.

At the time Chet Baker made these 1950 recordings, he had lived through great acclaim and being what some would say was the stereotypical young man with a horn: brilliant, inward and self-destructive. He died 30 years ago this month, in mysterious circumstances in Amsterdam at only 59. After growing up in Oklahoma he arrived in New York at the dawning of the birth of bebop and soon developed a sound similar to Miles Davis: quiet, restricted in range and melodic rather than harmonically virtuosic. Baker’s decades-long heroin habit led to the loss of his teeth and his movie star looks faded to a haunted visage.

However low he sank in later years, his range of expressiveness, whether playing trumpet or singing, still retained vestiges of his ability to cast a spell. Shining out of myriad inferior albums Baker recorded in his last decade is Live From The Moonlight with his trio in Macerata, Italy. It includes a rehearsal and a third set as a bonus. His affinity in his glory early years for classic American songs is recalled by revisiting several previously famously recorded. The tempos are different and takes generously longer. Where once Irving Berlin’s “How Deep Is the Ocean” was melancholy, here it bounces and is invigorated by Michel Grallier’s vigorous piano and Massimo Moriconi’s bass. Baker’s cohorts are full partners, enjoying generous solos as each winds in and out of Baker’s vigorous trumpet. Another from Baker’s personal songbook is Victor Young-Ned Washington’s “My Foolish Heart”, which, despite the obvious wear on his voice, is stunning and powerful, especially when he augments it with some of the still remaining gold in his trumpet. Two different takes on Jimmy Van Heusen-Johnny Burke’s “Polka Dots and Moonbeams” go from a gentle and lilting beat to a subtly melancholy and no-less-engaging take.

It is good to have these long-lost sets available again. There is enough gold here to affirm that even in his last years Baker still had something special to offer.
Circular Mood Scale (Music for Franz West)  
Marco Eneidi (Sonorus)  
by Pierre Crépon

More often than not, little is to be expected in terms of posthumous releases for musicians who remained in obscurity during their lifetime. Thus a new recording by saxophonist Marco Eneidi, who died two years ago this month at 59, is a welcome surprise. The digital (and limited cassette) release is made up of eight short segments seemingly edited from a longer free improvisation. The recording was made in a Vienna studio in 2010 and sheds light on a thus-far undocumented facet of Eneidi’s work: the trio with which he played for art openings and art world parties after his move to Austria in 2004. Those luxurious settings, with original Warhols and Pollocks on the walls, starkly contrasted with Eneidi’s life story. “But quite often,” Eneidi said, “we are ‘just the band.’” In this trio, James Lyons student and Cecil Taylor alumnus—worked with synthesizer player Philipp Quehenberger and drummer Didi Kern. In line with the no-genre-barriers free improvisation sessions Eneidi oversaw in Vienna, his partners were coming from diverse backgrounds encompassing punk and techno.

Quehenberger uses his synth to explore the outer regions of electronic sound, contributing heavily to the framing of the music. The sounds used shift rapidly, creating, in combination with Kern’s percussion work, a moving landscape over which Eneidi projects sharp lines using his characteristically intense tone, before often retreating into silence. An interesting aspect of Quehenberger and Kern is the rotating function they assign to their instruments. On “Say What?”, propelled by drums, keyboard starts out playing something akin to a double bass furiously plucked. On “7 Years”, Quehenberger uses sounds with sharp attacks reminiscent of orchestral percussion. Coloristic drumming often blends with wide electronic waves. Eneidi is maybe at his best on “Up 2 Whom?”, soloing at his closest to classic free jazz, joined by a keyboard of rare electronic expressivity.

“Music for Franz West”—an Austrian artist with rare electronic expressivity. At his closest to classic free jazz, joined by a keyboard of rare electronic expressivity.

One of Bechet’s biggest hits was his interpretation of the standard “Summertime”, but the duo revamps it with a mellow intro introduction by Liebman on wood flute before he switches to soprano for the body of the performance; inventive guitar, backed by an overdubbed guitar playing harmony, gives this chestnut a modern touch. The most memorable tracks are the performances of the title track, Bechet’s best known work, heard in three separate arrangements: first as an intimate duet where Liebman’s soft approach with judicious use of vibrato at the end of phrases works magically with spacious guitar; Stowell opting for nylon-string guitar in his solo rendition, a virtuoso yet understated performance; and Liebman throwing a curve by playing his unaccompanied version on piano, bringing the piece into the 21st century with his dramatic approach, which includes dissonance, altered chords and an unresolved ending.

For more information, visit originarts.com. Liebman is at The Stone at The New School May 8th and Smoke May 18th-20th. See Calendar.

For more information, visit sonorus-records.bandcamp.com

Petite Fleur: The Music of Sidney Bechet  
Dave Liebman/John Stowell (Origin)  
by Ken Dryden

Born and raised in Santiago, Cuba, with two decades of experience as an alto saxophonist, composer and arranger, it’s a bit of a surprise that Roman Filiú hasn’t led more dates. Instead, he’s built a solid reputation in the bands of Steve Coleman, David Murray, Henry Threadgill, Chucho Valdés and others, becoming a favorite at The Jazz Gallery, which commissioned Quarteria, his third project as leader. Titled for his working septet—comprised of trumpeter Ralph Alessi, tenor saxophonist Dayna Stephens, pianist David Virelles, bassist Matt Brewer, drummer Craig Weinrib and percussionist Ysenn Sanchez (with Marta Grand joining Stephens on tenor for two tracks)—the album showcases an ensemble well attuned to Filiú’s compositional intentions, well versed in each others’ musical moves and well equipped to make strong personal statements within the group context.

Filiú’s writing and playing show the influences of the caliente dance beats of Irakere (inventors of Cubo), tricky intervallic and rhythmic structures of M-BASE artists and small-group zest of the Jazz Messengers. But these are only touchstones of a less easily categorized, highly original amalgam, heard especially in Filiú’s distinctive handling of the line (and sound) of four horns, which varies from highly independent counterpoint to sinuous chorales, creating the illusion of great density with minimal means (though some of the horn parts in “Fulcanelli” most likely were overdubbed). His melodies, often antiphonal, don’t always go where you’d expect, yet generate momentum through their own logic, heard to best effect on the rolling, tumbling closing track “Kajifutrem”.

Soloing is excellent throughout: Filiú, ever thoughtful, seeks cogent melodic connections; Alessi, equally thoughtful, negotiates the tangled charts with aplomb; Stephens adds a strong third voice. The real marvel here is Virelles, who seems to be everywhere and nowhere at once, interjecting highly interactive yet empathetic ideas alongside the solos, then steering his own course with rapid legato lines, maintaining a limber, effusive, almost childlike quality, which nevertheless displays an underlying conceptual unity.

For more information, visit sunnyside Records.com. This project is at The Jazz Gallery May 11th. See Calendar.
A fine trombonist and alto flugelhornist, Scott Reeves has led small groups but it is with big bands that he really excels. He first recorded with the Indiana University Jazz Ensemble in 1969 but more significant have been his recorded arrangements and solos with orchestras led by Dave Liebman, Michael Treni and Bill Mobley. His own orchestra’s debut recording was 2015’s Portraits and Places. For the latest recording by his 17-piece band, Reeves contributed arrangements to seven pieces, four of which are his. He also plays and takes a solo apiece on both his instruments.

The date begins with a stirring version of Kurt Weill-Ogden Nash’s “Speak Low”, an AfroCuban-flavored rendition with strong solos from alto saxophonist Steve Wilson and trumpeter Chris Rogers. Reeves’ title track has a guest vocal by Carolyn Leonhart, who handles the wide intervals very well on a piece that is not too singable. The Arthur Altman-Jack Lawrence standard “All Or Nothing At All”, which is modernized a bit while keeping the melody intact, has a colorful trombone solo from the leader.

Moody and atmospheric original ballad “Incandescence” has vibraphonist Dave Ellson’s lone appearance and a spot for Wilson on soprano. Wayne Shorter’s “Juju” is taken for a stormy ride; the saxophone section plays two choruses from Shorter’s original recorded solo while tenor saxophonist Rob Middleton gets to solo over a newer version borrowed from the composer. “Shapeshifter”, using a 12-tone row, goes through several different sections, has an alto flugelhorn solo and gets quite free in the last part when pianist Jim Rull is featured. “Something For Thad” uses rhythm changes, tips its cap to Thad Jones (sounding in spots a little bit like his “Fingers”) and features hot solos from trombonist Matt Haviland and trumpeter Andy Gravish. This is an excellent example of both modern big band music and the arranging of Reeves.

For more information, visit smokesessionsrecords.com. This project is at Smoke May 11th-13th. See Calendar.

We know it’s not Midwestern, but it’s one of the great midtempo dance songs of the 2000s. Denny Allen, who was the Perfecto label’s first A&R guy, wrote “Shapeshifter” in 1963.

I don’t want to compare trumpet player Eddie Henderson to macaroni and cheese, but there’s a bit of comfort food in the grooves of Be Cool. Best known for his early ’70s work in Herbie Hancock’s Mwandishi, Henderson dishes up something entirely different here, a plateful of spicy midtempo and ballad-oriented bop. It doesn’t hurt that Henderson is accompanied by Kenny Barron (piano) and Donald Harrison (saxophone). For a program of standards, ballads and originals played in an acoustic jazz setting, these vets are ideal. Henderson, who has taken time out from playing to work as a psychiatrist, is now 77, but still sounds great.

A standout is “The Moontrane”, a tribute to its composer (and influence on Henderson) Woody Shaw. The playing is stately and lovely, essentially what Wynton Marsalis is getting at when he talks about jazz as America’s classical music. The title track was written by Henderson’s wife Natsuko (shades of Keiko Jones’ contributions to Elvin’s repertoire) and is a snappy bop line. Henderson solos first and high notes and ideas arrive at a rapid pace.

Turner Layton-Henry Cramer’s “After You’ve Gone” doesn’t offer any surprises, but does provide clear evidence of Henderson and Barron’s 30-year association. Ralph Rainger-Leo Robin’s “Easy Living” is a showcase for Henderson in lyrical Miles mode, sticking close to the melody. “Nightride” is a family affair, written by Henderson’s daughter Cava Menzies, mysterious and vaguely dangerous, music to accompany film noir. “Toys” is a nod to Hancock’s vast repertoire and two horns navigate the tricky turns with aplomb.

Drummer Mike Clark (another former Hancock sideman) sounds great, proving himself a close listener. He contributes “Loft Funk”, a tune in Horace Silver/Lee Morgan soul jazz mode. In the old days, you could accuse musicians of selling out for tracks like this, but that hardly seems apropos now. This kind of funk is as historic as swing and bop. John Coltrane’s “Naima” is taken at a brisk pace while “Dia Juzi”, offering Eastern European melancholy via Polish drummer/composer Tomek Grochot, is pensive, Barron is at his most ruminative and Henderson fully inhabiting the mood. His breathy playing as the tune fades out is wonderful.

For more information, visit originarts.com. This project is at Smalls May 12th and Sir D’s May 21st. See Calendar.

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May 2
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May 3
Bruce Forman Trio

May 4-6
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May 7-8
Jeff Hamilton Trio

May 9
Essentially Ellington Alumni Band

May 10-13
Juilliard Jazz Orchestra: Music of Duke Ellington

May 14
Javon Jackson’s Berklee Sextet

May 15
Glenn Zaleski Trio

May 16
Lauren Sevian’s LSQ CD Release Party

May 17
American Pianists Awards Sneak Preview

May 18-20
American Pianists Awards Sneak Preview

May 21-Monday Nights with WBGO
Kenny Rampton’s Paradise Blue Suite

May 22
Tia Fuller Quartet

May 23
Don Braden Quartet

May 24
Mike Rodriguez Quintet

May 25-27
Gerald Cannon Septet

May 28
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May 29-30
Ignacio Berroa Trio: Straight Ahead from Havana

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Be Cool
Eddie Henderson (Smoke Sessions)
by Jim Motavalli

I don’t want to compare trumpet player Eddie Henderson to macaroni and cheese, but there’s a bit of comfort food in the grooves of Be Cool. Best known for his early ’70s work in Herbie Hancock’s Mwandishi, Henderson dishes up something entirely different here, a plateful of spicy midtempo and ballad-oriented bop. It doesn’t hurt that Henderson is accompanied by Kenny Barron (piano) and Donald Harrison (saxophone). For a program of standards, ballads and originals played in an acoustic jazz setting, these vets are ideal. Henderson, who has taken time out from playing to work as a psychiatrist, is now 77, but still sounds great.

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For more information, visit originarts.com. This project is at Smoke May 11th-13th. See Calendar.
TIME WORKS FOR DREAMERS
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CHARLES THOMAS
Live in Europe

DONALD BROWN
Piano Short Stories

DONALD BROWN
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LIONEL LOUEKE
In a Trance

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Solo

A SEASON OF BALLADS

DONALD BROWN
Born to be blue

DONALD BROWN
Fast Forward to the Past

DONALD BROWN
Wurd on the Skreet

KEITH BROWN
The Journey

KENNETH BROWN
3 Down

BILL MOBLEY Orchestra
Live at Small’s

BILL MOBLEY
Moodscape

BILL MOBLEY & Strings
Black Elk Dreams

BILL MOBLEY
Hittin’ Home

JEAN TOUSSAINT
Blue Block

ESSIET OKON ESSIET
Shona

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WALTER SMITH III
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Two of the highlights stem from dedications. The first, “Bristol Fog”, a luminous ballad homage to late British pianist John Taylor, contains exquisite note choice and a resonant pizzicato feature for Hébert, while in the second, “Newlypsso” for Sonny Rollins, Hersch confounds a dark vamp with a swinging exposition of sparkling tales and waypoint contours. Those tributes are bookended by selections from two jazz greats, Thelonious Monk and Wayne Shorter. Monk’s “We See” opens the disc with a playful call and response between Hersch and McPherson before exploding into a series of fugue-like flights of fancy. Finishing the concert are Shorter’s reflective but celebratory “Miyako”, which segues via a tumbling tattoo from McPherson into a spirited rendition of “Black Nile”. The inevitable encore is for Hersch alone, a tearing closer that echoes the start, where he artfully hints at the tune, but only reveals “Blue Monk” in its full glory towards the end.

The threesome stretches, but never breaks the rhythmic and harmonic parameters of the repertoire. Hébert and McPherson fluidly switch between providing the superstructure around which Hersch spins his rich melodic ideas and offering cohesive counterpoint. But, most importantly, they sound as if they are having fun. Indeed, you can almost hear the smiles at a particularly well-turned phrase, of which they are having fun. Indeed, you can almost hear the smiles at a particularly well-turned phrase, of which there are many.

For more information, visit palmetto-records.com. Hersch is at Jazz Standard May 8th-13th. See Calendar.

In times of political strife, musicians, poets, all cultural workers have stood on the front lines of fight-back. Patricia Nicholson and William Parker stand as leading radicals within jazz’ cutting edge. The pair engage in an intimate portrait of “our present moment and the power of the spirit.” Parker is primarily heard on the West African donso ngoni. He uses the instrument’s modal stasis effectively, evoking the heat and breadth of sub-Saharan topography, peppering it with off-mic vocalization. Nicholson’s performances, in contrast, carry a strong theatrical component, including affected southern-like vernacular for some selections. Opener “Taked” finds the narrator bathed in numbing despair after witnessing a woman’s brutal abduction by authorities. There is something stunningly Kafka-esque about the piece, its dark imagery, its inward isolation, but the remainder of the album never quite matches this subtle urgency.

The theme is the need for hope; in its absence, the pair remind us, “there can never be justice”. It’s unclear how many of these pieces are specific to contemporary Trump-ian realities, but “The Wall Between” and “Wailing at the Lost Souls Department” offer strong responses to reactionary bravura. Mysteriously, within such vital messaging is “Granola”. Its stirring Orwellian refrain of “Words have gone missing” is affixed to a lengthy adoration of this breakfast choice. Pondering its symbolism, the confluence of the two remains unclear and unfortunately sounds trite.

As Nicholson’s Vision Festival hails improvisation, much of the work here makes fine use of the medium, yet some segments fall short. She often embellishes text with repetition, broken rhythms, diphthongs, plainsong and melisma, pertinent tools all. But such skills require nurturing, indeed a delicate rearing. When works appear strained by uncertainty in vocal expression, the quality of dissent is endangered by its very liberation. James Baldwin, among the most revolutionary of writers, stated that a sentence should emerge ‘clean as a bone’ when edited. It’s easy to imagine the constituent strength that may grow of this project with multiple performances.

For more information, visit patricianicholsonparker.com. Nicholson is at Roulette May 24th as part of Vision Festival. Parker is at Downtown Music Gallery May 13th and Roulette May 23rd, 25th, 27th and 28th; the latter as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.
German Karl Berger (b. 1935) first came to the world’s notice as one of the first vibraphone players in the sphere of ‘60s avant garde jazz: a member of Don Cherry’s groups; playing with John McLaughlin, Dave Holland, Clifford Thornton and many others; along with leading his own ensembles. More recently he’s lent his expertise and creativity in string arrangements for non-jazz performers Jeff Buckley, Sly & Robbie and Buckethead. He’s also a pianist and In A Moment is the latest in a trilogy of piano-oriented recordings for John Zorn’s Tzadik label—the first was solo, then a trio and now with a small string group.

“Slow Motion” is stately, sad, elegiac—the strings literally sigh as Berger parses notes with great care. It’s pensive but stops just short of bereavement. There are classical overtones in the writing for strings but this is indeed jazz, ever-so-slightly reminiscent of the underrated Third Stream sub-genre of the ‘50s. Note the swing in the piano and strings of “Mani”. In “Sertso” the strings and Berger ease out slow, sultry, Monk-flavored blues. The gorgeous “Not Sure” evokes Keith Jarrett in intermingling echoes of Impressionist classical piano and gospel music; rolling chords; subtle yet purposeful sense of forward-moving rhythm; almost elemental sense of lyricism. “Where Will We Go From Here” displays ominous passages for strings, with sharp, stabbing motifs and dissonances evoking Bernard Herrmann’s music for Psycho. Ken Filiano’s sonorous, rippling and bowed bass subtly buoys Berger and adds wry drive.

Berger’s writing for strings is interesting in that it provides stark contrast(s) to his piano; this isn’t “with strings” as the players are as expressive and interactive as Berger and Filiano. In A Moment is contemplative, but without being ponderous or overly cerebral. Berger’s compositions—suffocant ones at that—reveal their secrets over repeated listening.

For more information, visit tzadik.com. Berger is at El Taller LatinoAmericano May 26th. See Calendar.

Sun Ra & His Astro-Ihnfinity Arkestra (Roaratorio) Of Abstract Dreams Sun Ra (Strut) Discipline 27-II Sun Ra (El Saturn-Corbett vs. Dempsey) by Stuart Broomer

Archival releases of Sun Ra’s music continue unabated, his work larger and more clearly defined 25 years after his death (May 30th, 1993) than it was in life. He recorded voluminously and the significance of his output varies tremendously, from work of interest primarily to scholars and devotees to music that should have been heard widely. These three recent releases cover material recorded between 1968-75 and include two previously unseen collections and a reissued masterpiece, something for every Sun Ra collection.

The earliest is Sun Embassy, a nine-track LP of material recorded in the band’s Philadelphia house in 1968-69. The pieces are generally brief, resembling the band’s Chicago recordings of the ‘50s, though the music has grown increasingly exotic and electronic. The small groups include the usual brilliant reed players (John Gilmore, Marshall Allen and Danny Ray Thompson), but they’re often there to punch out riffs. At times this suggests orchestral tape pieces, material to be explored at greater length in performance. Some of the previously unrecorded pieces, short ostinatos, frequently appear: “Walk around Saturn”, for example, repeats a five-note figure from the reeds as Sun Ra piles up the strangest fuzzed electronic keyboard parts imaginable, the whole suggesting radio transmission from the ringed planet; “Cosmic Strut” is celebratory funk, an extended clavinet solo against percussion and riffing reeds; while “Dance of Fire” is essentially percussion music, clavinet setting the stage for some rapid, high-pitched drumming. The chanted theme of “Why Go to the Moon?” (with the repetition of “rocket number nine / try Neptune”) hints at this Astro-Ihnfinity Arkestra’s other dimensions.

Of Abstract Dreams, a radio broadcast from around 1974 on the University of Pennsylvania’s WXPN, presents a similar band consisting predominantly of Hokkaido reeds and percussion performing four highly varied (and entertaining) pieces. “Island in the Sun” is a gently percolating AfroCaribbean episode, propelled by several percussionists with Sun Ra’s piano and Marshall Allen’s flute taking the primary roles. “New Dawn” begins as a free ballad, Sun Ra piling up dissonant chords before the tempo picks up for Allen on alto with wild pitch bends and altissimo shrieks, the first soloist in a chain that includes bass clarinetist Elie Omoe and tenor saxophonist Gilmore. There’s an extended version of “I’m Gonna Unmask the Batman”, contemporaneous with the single version that featured blues singer Lacy Gibson. Here’s it’s the gravel-voiced percussionist James Jacson functioning as lead singer while the taut R&B horn section of the single (same people) gives way to free jamming and hard-edged, exploratory solos by Gilmore and Allen (the latter on oboe). In Sun Ra’s mirror world, it’s almost a send-up of the ‘official’ version. The most substantial piece of music is “I’ll Wait for You”, until this point a chant in the band’s repertoire, but here developed much further. It gets an extended piano introduction and typically adventurous Gilmore solo: he works his way to the stratosphere with cycling pentatons, midway ceding the foreground to Sun Ra’s “In some far place, many light years in space, I’ll wait for you”, that singularly warm and familiar voice then giving way to more wild reed explorations.

Discipline 27-II is a classic El Saturn record. It received its first official reissue as an LP on Art Yard/Strut last year and the CD has just been issued on Corbett vs. Dempsey with an eight-minute unidentified outtake added, a lightning-fast abstraction of reeds, electronic keyboards and bass. Recorded in October 1972, at the same time as the highly accessible Space Is the Place, Discipline 27-II benefits from a large band, first-rate studio conditions and engineering, as well as galvanizing alto solos from the infrequently featured Danny Davis. It belongs with Sun Ra’s greatest recordings, like The Magic City, Heliocentric Worlds and Lanquidity.

The opening “Pan Afro” is a minimalist modal melody with a dense hive of rhythm provided by five percussionists. The dissonant tumult of “Discipline 8” is even more powerful, feeding exotic mergers of brass and electronics, while “Neptune” is a superb mix of chorus singing and horn dynamics. The title track, 24 minutes long, is Sun Ra’s equivalent of a Bach chorale, a slow, keening melody, the reeds sweet and dream-like and lines that Sun Ra intones, June Tyson repeats, then three other singers harmonize and repeat. A hymn to the conquest of the everyday, it begins with “For you, I gave up everything I never had”, followed by other phrases—“You call it life.” “They call this life?” “They don’t call this life, do they?”—until there’s a sense in which one world has been transformed into another by the calmest of musics. One of Sun Ra’s greatest achievements, it all ends in laughter, some of it coming from saxophones.

For more information, visit roaratorio.com, strut-records.com and corbettvsdempsey.com

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George Coleman is a true old-schooler. Scorned by the younger members of the Miles Davis Quintet in 1964 as too much of a hardbop traditionalist when they were aching to break free and pull the music apart, the saxophonist has continued on his own path ever since. At times, he’s been a crucial voice, helping preserve the legacy of high-level acoustic jazz—as he did with Cedar Walton’s ’70s group Eastern Rebellion—during periods when other styles were in vogue. A typical Coleman gig will offer a mix of standards and blues, two sessions with a four-horn sextet and a B3/piano/drums trio or Argerich. The best tracks, treatments of Nocturne Op. 62, No. 2 in E Major and the A-flat Major Op. 32, No. 2 Nocturne, sound like the work of the Paul Motian-Joe Lovano-Bill Frisell trio, with bass added. That tickles the memory, but not in a lasting way.

Whispers and Cries is something else altogether. The setlist on this CD is standards, plus the traditional “Aura Lee”. Preminger’s playing is at its most expressive and pianist Frank Carlberg gives off the tantalizing tension of a musician weighing every note before he plays it, leaving open spaces that become logical parts of every line of soloing or accompaniment.

The saxophonist’s lushness and the pianist’s austerity have an ideal balance. Preminger has always been deep in the sound that Joe Lovano has established over the decades, managing to be both dark and warm, but here he sounds more like his own man than even on the quartet recordings. Heard all the way through, there are musical threads and hints tying all the tracks together into a large-scale experience: bits of Monk in “These Foolish Things”, which might have come from “Reflections”, two songs before, is an example. “Take the ‘A’ Train”, “Tea for Two”, the beautiful “I’ve Grown Accustomed to Her Face” at the end, turn out to be signposts in a set that follows a path deeper and deeper from one track to the next, full of foreshadings and recollections. The effect is of complex, circular time—this is the kind of album that stops you in your tracks.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. This project is at Blue Note May 21st. See Calendar.

Genuity
Noah Preminger (Criss Cross)
Chopin Project (with Nate Radley and Kim Cass)
Dead Composers Club (Connection Works)
Whispers and Cries
Frank Carlb erg/Noah Preminger (Red Piano)
by George Grella

Would Marx and Engels be jazz fans? One thinks they would admire tenor saxophonist Noah Preminger. Since he took over the means of both production and distribution a few years ago, self-releasing his recordings through his website, he’s transformed himself from a solid, talented musician to one who is showing himself to be a major figure.

The main vehicle for this has been his quartet, with the excellent trumpeter Jason Palmer, bassist Kim Cass and now drummer Dan Weiss, who replaces Ian Froman. This group’s first two albums mixed deep blues and a quasi-free harmonic structure. The new release, back on a ‘major’ label, is an in-the-now statement in the jazz modernist tradition that began with Ornette Coleman’s quartet. Genuity has clear echoes of the earlier group—the second track, “The Genuine One”, has the band starting in the same aesthetic and formal territory as “Lonely Woman”, then taking their own path in 5/4 time.

Preminger and Palmer are a great pair, the former spinning out twisting horizontal lines, the latter traversing a postbop interivallic language. Both are moody players, Preminger obviously dark while Palmer’s seeming extroversion barely veils his own emotional intensity. As with the previous two albums, this one has a private quality, the musicians playing for themselves, rather than as a prospective audience. This will not be to everyone’s taste and the album is maybe a track or two long, but for those who crave this strain of the music, the rewards are deep.

Dead Composers Club is Preminger and drummer Rob Garcia’s group and The Chopin Project is more upfront about music as pleasure. With Nate Radley on guitar and Cass once more, this is an album of jazz settings of selected Preludes and Nocturnes from the great composer. It is pleasant, but ultimately unsatisfying.

None of the tracks show any particular understanding of Chopin. What in the context of the originals are famous melodies here are made into chunky phrases that set the foundation for improvisation. The harmonies are simplified and there’s none of the rubato essential to the tension and release and the beauty of this music. The playing sticks to the changes, but even though this is jazz it sounds less improvisatory than Chopin played by Rubinstein or Argerich. The best tracks, treatments of Nocturne Op. 62, No. 2 in E Major and the A-flat Major Op. 32, No. 2 Nocturne, sound like the work of the Paul Motian-Joe Lovano-Bill Frisell trio, with bass added. That tickles the memory, but not in a lasting way.

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Dog Star
Jerry Bergonzi (Savant)
by Marco Cangiano

There is a mysterious quality to Jerry Bergonzi’s latest release. Whether due to his switching to an old Selmer or a high degree of empathy within the group, this release conveys a suspenseful quality reminiscent of Wayne Shorter’s Speak No Evil. Bergonzi’s influences are many but he has managed to distill his own sound and phrasing and emerge as a jazz beacon, thanks also to his valuable contributions as a mentor and teacher.

Bergonzi is joined by pianist Carl Winther’s Scandinavian trio along with his longstanding partner Phil Grenadier on trumpet. The interaction with Winther is almost palpable as expected if one has listened to their earlier collaborations. Winther is himself a synthesis of modern jazz piano, bassist Johnny Áman and drummer Anders Mogensen providing crisp yet subtle propulsion.

The program consists of midtempo originals, five by Bergonzi and two by Winther. The former’s “Pleasures” starts off with a meandering theme followed by saxophone zigzagging in and out of the rhythm section. The title track sustains the mood but at a slower tempo, whereas Winther’s “Vertigo” takes it up a notch, with economical piano atop a bouncing walk. “Live Stream” veers towards a ballad feeling, a notch, with economical piano atop a bouncing walk. “Live Stream” veers towards a ballad feeling, a notch, with economical piano atop a bouncing walk. “Live Stream” veers towards a ballad feeling.

The disc begins with a seamless blend of cello, soprano saxophone and wordless vocals that sounds so natural and organic that one wonders why combinations like this are not attempted more often. There is an alluring quality to Serpa’s voice, which nails each note with devastating clarity. Friedlander navigates the bottom with the bow and his fingers and Laubrock integrates herself as a third voice that is often difficult to separate from that of the leader.

It is impressive how large of an orchestral sound these three can conjure. “Passaros”, sung in Serpa’s native Portuguese, weaves the vocal threads with tenor and cello as equal and distinctive elements of a rich tapestry. Friedlander opens “Sol Enganador” alone, softly plucking an ostinato somewhat similar to the vamp on Dave Holland’s “Conference of the Birds”, voice and soprano alternating between lush unisons and stark intervals to activate the sense of one big instrument. Laubrock’s solo commences to ‘take it out’ while maintaining a velvet tone, like Anthony Braxton playing in the spirit of Stan Getz.

Cello sounds impressively rich on “The Future”, a minimalistic gem that finds Serpa intoning the words “The future is dark” through multiple key signatures as each instrument overlaps to create a swirl of melodic textures. Another highlight is “Storm Coming”, a feature for Laubrock, which, despite its title, retains a sense of serenity even through multiphonics and overtones, while cello and voice blend with very long held-tones in a reverb-drenched atmosphere.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. Serpa is at Brooklyn Conservatory of Music May 20th. See Calendar.

Vocalist Sara Serpa is a masterful minimalist who has been creating compelling music in duo and trio contexts for much of the last 13 years, especially with pianist Ran Blake and multi-instrumentalist André Matos. She has a voice that manages to sound delicate and powerful at the same moment, with rock-solid intonation and amazing pliancy without the slightest trace of ornament or artifice. Imagine a merger of Astrud Gilberto and Norma Winstone and you begin to get the idea. Her latest project is a sublime and unlikely trio with cellist Erik Friedlander and saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Bergonzi is at Zinc Bar May 23rd. See Calendar.
Marty Ehrlich at The Stone
THE STONE RESIDENCY: MAY 29 – JUNE 2

It would be hard to conceive of a player who sounds less like anyone else and more like he’s speaking directly through his horn than Marty Ehrlich

— Down Beat

TUESDAY MAY 29
In Duo
Wadada Leo Smith – trumpets
Marty Ehrlich – woodwinds

WEDNESDAY MAY 30TH
Marty Ehrlich’s Trio Exaltation
Clean Feed CD Release Performance
John Hebert – bass
Nasheet Waits – drums
Marty Ehrlich – reeds

THURSDAY MAY 31ST
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
Marty Ehrlich’s Philosophy of a Groove Quartet
James Weidman – piano
Jerome Harris – electric bass
Christopher Beck – drums
Marty Ehrlich – reeds

FRIDAY JUNE 1ST
Marty Ehrlich’s Shards
Angelica Sanchez - piano
Kate Gentile- drums
Marty Ehrlich - reeds
with special guest
Ray Anderson - trombone

SATURDAY JUNE 2ND
Marty Ehrlich’s Welcome Quartet
Ron Horton – trumpet
Michael Bates – bass
Gerald Cleaver – drums
Marty Ehrlich – reeds

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ROBERT D. BIELECKI FOUNDATION
Night Wave
Yuko Fujiyama (Innova)
by Kurt Gottschalk

On the inside of the cover of Night Wave is a humble note, beginning: “Thank you for listening to our music. Please let me introduce myself...” It’s a sweet and hopefully unnecessary caveat from a woman who recorded with such NYC mainstays as Roy Campbell, Ellen Christi and Mark Feldman and such luminaries of Japanese jazz as Masahiko Satoh. But it’s pianist Yuko Fujiyama’s first record in more than 15 years, so perhaps reintroductions are in order.

Fujiyama was a key (if unheralded) part of the vibrant Downtown improv scene of the ‘90s and her return stays true to form. A release concert at Roulette (Apr. 16th) held the measured beauty of the album, starting with a series of brief duets she said was “like a suite”. (Later in the set, she generously gave each of the musicians an unaccompanied solo.) Her duet with violinist Jennifer Choi was beautifully dense and played with confidence, in spite of the nervousness Fujiyama owned up to later in the set. With trumpeter Graham Haynes she played something sparse and lovely. The third duo was a rolicking piece with percussionist Reggie Nicholson (ably replacing Susie Ibarra, who played on the album), both playing mallets: she inside the piano case and he delivering isolated phrases on the kit. They moved into a sort of rotating trio, each player seeming very aware of every sound they made. As on the CD, it was rare to hear the whole quartet at once.

Night Wave is dedicated to the late percussionist Jerome Cooper (most famously one-third of The Revolutionary Ensemble), who introduced Fujiyama to the music of Cecil Taylor. It’s more than a bit of a cliché to liken any free pianist to the late giant but in this case, the dedication is apparent in the peaks and valleys of her more spirited playing, as on the plainly titled “Up Tempo”, a fast cymbal roll with individual instrument lines balanced on top of it, one at a time and then removed until the right balance is found, like instrument lines balanced on top of it, one at a time and then removed until the right balance is found, like a well-wrought tune with masterful control of dynamics over the extended piano solo, both heightened by Christian McBride’s vigorous bass. Whitaker’s more contemplative leanings are heard on “Flow”, “Take a Break” and “Until Next Time”, all fodder for crossover radio play with predictable but effective arrangements, the second track redeemed by the leader’s soulful chord progression, the third by Dave Stryker’s rambunctious guitar. Vocalist Melissa Walker cameoed on the easy-swinging reggae “I Thought About You”, adding warmth to the otherwise all-instrumental outing. “Mas Que Nada” is a propulsive Latin-jazz arrangement, which, more than any other track, demonstrates Whitaker’s impeccable touch: neither too languid nor impatient, his sense of timing establishes a tempo that pushes forward even as it lays back.

He switches from acoustic piano to Hammond B3 organ for Dr. Lonnie Smith’s “Back Track” and Pee Wee Ellis’ “Pistachio”, the latter a tribute to New Jersey organ player and then removed until the early 70s. Whitaker shows being prodigious control of timbre and dynamics, along with an original approach to the instrument’s tonal range, employing some very unorgan-y sounds at the beginning of “Back Track”, followed by all manner of rattle and clicks, then...on “Pistachio”, creating a dialogue between upper and lower keyboard manuals. A consummate technician and probably a perfectionist, Whitaker is preciously mature for his age and vintage, so it shouldn’t be a long wait until we (the jazz enthusiasts) can grant him our hearty imprimatur.

For more information, visit jazzfoundation.org. Whitaker is at Harlem Stage Gatehouse May 21st. See Calendar.

Bassist Ron Carter, listed in Tom Lord’s Jazz Discography as having appeared on 1,171 jazz sessions since 1960 and estimated to be on over 2,500 albums in all genres, has certainly been busy during the past 58 years. For a time in the ‘70s, he seemed to be in the studio nearly every day recording for someone and his career has not slowed down that much since.

Pianist Emmet Cohen, who played with and paid tribute to drummer Jimmy Cobb in the first volume of the Masters Legacy Series, gives Carter a similar treatment in Volume 2. But considering how prolific Carter has been through the years, how does one pick the right songs? Should Cohen have performed a full set of compositions by the bassist, or attempted to sum up his career in a dozen songs?

Instead, Cohen, Carter and drummer Evan Sherman constructed a colorful set performed live at the Vancouver Jazz Festival full of surprising choices. The first and last songs (a lengthy “All Of You” and “Joshua”) are from the bassist’s days with Miles Davis but two Swing Era pieces (Tommy Dorsey’s hit “Opus One” and “Any Old Time” which was recorded by Billie Holiday with Artie Shaw) have no prior connection to Carter. Four songs are played as a medley, grouped together as a 22-minute “Salute To Cedar (Walton)”; three are Walton compositions (“Hindsight”, “Holy Land” and “Dear Ruth”) with Carter’s midtempo blues “It’s About Time” his tribute to the late pianist. In addition, the trio performs Carter’s “Light Blue”, “Ron Carter Speaks” is a thoughtful bass solo and a traditional Jewish prayer ("Hatzi Kaddish") is developed into a minor-toned jazz piece.

The performances are conventional but excellent. Cohen gets the lion’s share of the solo space, being accompanied by driving basslines and attentive drumming. Carter also solos on each piece, creating concise statements in his distinctive sound and there are short spots for Sherman. Rather than necessarily being a definitive Ron Carter retrospective, Masters Legacy Series Volume 2 stands on its own as a high-quality modern mainstream set featuring strong communication between top-notch musicians.

For more information, visit cellarlive.com. Cohen is at Dizzy’s Club May 17th as part of the American Pianists Awards Sneak Preview. See Calendar.
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New Jersey native Gene Perla studied piano at Berklee, then switched to bass. He was ubiquitous in the '70s and is best known for backing Elvin Jones for three years. Back then he also founded PM Records, which recorded Jones, Dave Liebman and Jerry Bergonzi, among others. The label is still going strong, on the evidence of these two recordings—both of which feature Perla. He’s 78, but certainly hasn’t slowed down any.

Out of the Gate is the better showcase for Perla himself, since he wrote all of the compositions and plays them with a young band. Perla is a gifted writer and the music here is mostly midtempo swingers and ballads. "Spring Rain" is a lovely example of the latter and the best playing from pianist Oscar L. Williams II. This reviewer wishes there were more fast tunes, because a rolling boil is where tenor player Nicole Glover is heard to best advantage.

This woman is a major find. Her feature is “Sweet Mama” and oh mama! The bop head is stated, Perla takes a probing solo, then drummer Nic Cacioppo slams the band into a fast walk and Glover appears. Clearly influenced by John Coltrane, she’s also absorbed his son Ravi and other more recent players. She’s commanding on her horn and uses its full range, squeaking, squawking, squealing and building excitement. I can’t stop listening to that solo. Trumpet player Ben Seacrist is also heard to good advantage on “Sandy’s Dance”, “Swissterday” and “Round Town”. Not as forceful as Glover, his solos are nonetheless lyrical and nicely shaped. If he can sing, he’ll be a star.

The album is a good listen, but I keep coming back to Glover. Clearly, we need more young women in jazz and this one is ready for the major leagues. The Portland, Oregon native played in the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra while in high school, then studied at William Paterson University. She made a big leap forward when asked to play on Esperanza Spalding’s Grammy-winning Radio Music Society. Her first album as a leader came out in 2015 and now she’s resident and gigging in New York. Great things are ahead.

Another find is singer Viktorija Gečytė, a native Lithuanian who nonetheless sings in English with only a slight accent, but great authority on No Detour Ahead. She has a smoky voice with command in the lower register and great timing. Watch a YouTube video and you’ll see that stage presence is also part of the package.

The Go Trio features Perla and the program is almost all standards, with the exception of Lithuanian folk song “Kaledy Rytq” and two versions of the self-penned “Laundy Daina” (one solo). Gečytė, now resident in Paris, thrives at slow tempos, always a challenge for a jazz singer. If you’ve heard Shirley Horn, or Betty Carter’s glacial take on “Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most”, you’ve taken the master class.

A good pianist is essential to a project like this and the Go Trio has one in Sean Gough, who shows how to support a singer on “You Must Believe in Spring” and “I Keep Going Back to Joe’s”. The latter Jack Segal-Marvin Fisher song is a winner. Perla and sensitive drummer Jon Arkin also sound great throughout.

For more information, visit pmrecords.com. Perla is at Zinc Bar May 23rd with Jerry Bergonzi and The Sound Bite May 25th with Viktorija Gečytė. See Calendar.
Don’t You Wish (feat. Tomoko Ohno)  
Jay Leonhart (v)  
by George Kanzler

Jay Leonhart has been a first-call bassist on the New York music scene—jazz and popular—for over 50 years. Along the way he’s forged another, ancillary career as a singer-songwriter-poet. It is in that role he presents himself on this album, performing ten songs written over his career. Some of them have appeared on other albums and if you’ve seen Leonhart in small groups or duos in person you’re probably familiar with some of them. But here he showcases them in the pared-down context of a bass/piano duo with the vibrant and swinging Tomoko Ohno.  

As a vocalist, Leonhart combines the off-hand ease of a Mose Allison or Dave Frishberg with the acid bite of a Randy Newman, with a dollop of Bertie Wooster bemusement. Half the time his voice is as much conversational as musical, as he mixes parlando with actual singing. And he uses naïveté to enhance a sly, satiric approach to situations encountered in his work. There’s a phantasmagoric quality to “Playboy Club”, about his supposed mental breakdown while working at the one in New York as a “lad from Baltimore beginning to learn about real life as a 21-year-old.” The title song is a wry take on a question about smaller groups or duos you’re probably familiar on other albums and if you’ve seen Leonhart in small and】

Present Tense  
Joe Locke Quintet (SteepleChase)  
by John Pietaro

After a century of fighting for airspace and a proper reference in the annals of jazz axes, the vibraphone may be having its day. Again. With deference to the instrument’s lustrous history, SteepleChase Records has just rereleased two vibraphone-fronted LPs representing vastly different instrumental approaches. Between the two, an alternative history of mallet jazz skims across the turntable.  

Joe Locke Quartet’s 1990 contains uptempo postbop, cool sounds, late-night standards and funky fusion. Present Tense was titled in response to the wave of nostalgia, uniquely claiming the here-and-now. The wicked irony, of course, is that this reissue, by default, represents the there-and-then. But no mind that.

Fluky  
Pål Nilsen-Love Large Unit (PNL)  
by John Sharpe

Straight from the powerhouse Pål Nilsen-Love’s Large Unit signals an uncompromising stance. The Norwegian drummer, a veteran of Peter Brötzmann’s fiery Tentet, knows all about how to rev the engines of a gathering of improvisers. Fluky is the band’s fourth album since its inception in 2014 and that experience, both in the studio and on tour, means that Nilsen-Love cannily organizes his 13-strong crew so they can best express themselves and the crew amply repays that trust. Of course, given the assorted talent of the Scandinavians on hand, the outcome should never be in doubt.  

Nilsen-Love crafts four charts to steer his cast through soundscapes they might not otherwise reach, utilizing different subsets of the Unit at different times. At just under 27 minutes the title track stands as the highlight and exemplifies the band’s working method, setting out a series of non-repeating sections through which the group gleefully rambles. It opens with a barrage of white noise cymbal hiss, punctuated by pithy horn figure, which quickly subsides into delicately fluttering cymbal interplay, interspersed by sustained sound masses. It’s such unexpected gearshifts that sharpen the interest and justify repeat plays. “Springsummer”, featuring Holm’s cool clarinet, suggests a more ambiguous season than might be anticipated, while “Plyo” starts from layers of interlocking brass and woodwind to offer a sequence of riff-driven opportunities for individual expression, which guitarist Ketil Guttvik notably exploits by evoking a rummage through the tool drawer.  

For more information, visit paalnilssen-love.com. Nilsen-Love is at Roulette May 27th with Frode Gjerstad as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.
The Leadbelly Project
Adam Nussbaum (Sunnyside)

It’s no secret blues is the basis for much American music. While sharp-dressed cats such as B.B. King and Buddy Guy get lots of well-deserved credit, it was the unannounced performers who laid the groundwork. One such figure is Huddie Ledbetter, aka Lead Belly (1888-1949). Some consider him a folksinger (folk standard “Goodnight Irene” is his), others a blues singer. Let the puns and hash it out—Lead Belly remains a crucial figure in American music who impacted electric blues, folk, rock ‘n’ roll and country. Drummer Adam Nussbaum—heard with John Abercrombie, Gil Evans, Ted Curson, Steve Swallow, Mike Stern and many others—has fashioned a super-fine tribute to the songs and influence of Lead Belly (plus a couple of originals).

If one is expecting standard blues chord progressions, tearing instrumental soloing and/or classic songs presented earnestly, one might be disappointed. Superficially The Leadbelly Project brings to mind the electro-acoustic Americana of Bill Frisell. The tone of the guitars is blurry and slightly ethereal yet charged with earthy country twang and bent blues notes. The stately saxophone of Ohad Talmor has a blues-flavored feel much of the time but is still light and translucent. Nussbaum evokes slightly the style of former Frisell employer Paul Motian in that he’s more of an impressionist than timekeeper. But while he doesn’t stir up a storm, Nussbaum got the beat, swing and a ‘sway’ and makes with compelling crackle when the context calls for it. Take “Black Betty”, wherein Nussbaum lays down a New Orleans-type rhythm pattern halfway between a shuffle and a march tempo while guitarists Nate Radley and Steve Cardenas engage in sprightly yet pointed exchanges and velvety-smooth saxophone sings out a jabbing melodic line. “Black Girl” shows via contrasting guitars (terse, worried notes, judicious twang) the overlap between blues and country.

All tracks are tuned relatively short (between three and five minutes) and the soloing is to the point. This is an example of what a great tribute album/band should be—communicating the essence of the tributee while performing the subject’s works in refreshing ways.

For more information, visit sunnysidederecords.com

Don Braden (Creative Perspective Music)
by Phil Freeman

During R&B’s golden era, bands like Earth, Wind & Fire (EWF), Kool & The Gang, Ohio Players and others, as well as brilliant composers and arrangers like Stevie Wonder, Isaac Hayes and Marvin Gaye, created an expansive sonic palette blending jazz, funk, soul, rock and—in the case of Wonder and EWF—Brazilian and African music into songs as lush and intricate as they were hard-driving and funky. This was music that rewarded headphone listening every bit as much as it pushed people onto the dance floor. Saxophonist Don Braden, a veteran with over 20 albums to his name as a leader and a long career as a jazz educator at the Connecticut-based Litchfield Jazz Camp, New Jersey Performing Arts Center’s Jazz for Teens program and many other schools and institutions, tackles some of these classic tunes on his latest release.

The music on Earth, Wind & Wonder was recorded in two sessions: one in 2014 and another three years later. In between, Braden underwent surgery for a cyst in his jaw—which very nearly cost him his ability to play. The fact that it’s impossible to tell, without looking at the liner notes, which tracks were recorded in 2014 and which in 2017 is a testament to the success of the operation and to his talent and skill. The album—on which he’s backed first by pianist Brandon McCune, bassist Joris Terve and drummer Cecil Brooks III and later by pianist Art Hirahara, bassist Kenny Davis and drummer Jeremy Warren; Kahlil Kwame Bell adds percussion overdubs—includes versions of instantly recognizable tunes like “Fantasy”, “Can’t Hide Love”, “After the Love Has Gone”, “Don’t You Worry ‘Bout a Thing” and “Higher Ground”, as well as two Braden originals.

With just one horn and a three-piece rhythm section, the complex arrangements of the originals are missed, but the melodies are powerful enough to carry the day and everyone is playing with love and respect for the material, swinging hard and spinning these classic songs into jazz gold. This goes beyond mere homage into real transformation.

For more information, visit donbraden.com. This project is at Dizzy’s Club May 23rd. See Calendar.

IN PRINT

Dizzy, Duke, Brother Ray and Friends
(On and Off The Record with Jazz Greats)
Lilian Terry (University of Illinois Press)

A radio host, concert organizer and accomplished vocalist, Lilian Terry played an important role on the Italian jazz scene for many years. Now in her 80s, she has written a jaunty memoir about the time she spent with some of the 20th century’s legendary musicians.

Dizzy, Duke, Brother Ray and Friends is a book of laudable, if modest, ambitions. Terry isn’t out to dish dirt and doesn’t spend much time writing about the music itself. But taken for what it is—a collection of mostly flattering character sketches—this is a likeable effort.

Raised in Cairo and Florence, Terry began working for the Italian broadcaster RAI in the ‘60s. In the years that followed, she interviewed and befriended a host of visiting American jazz stars. Her fond memories of these artists fuel the book’s most vivid chapters. In Terry’s telling, Duke Ellington was a font of wry quotes—“I tour the world with a small case full of vitamins,” he told her—and Max Roach was a resourceful host when she visited the U.S. In the late ‘60s, Terry was traveling with Roach and his fellow African-American bandmates when they were turned away by a racist Rhode Island innkeeper. The quick-thinking drummer responded by arranging alternative accommodations for the group: “It was only the next afternoon…that Max told me, greatly amused, that we had been the guests of Lucky Luciano’s brother-in-law.”

After Terry, the book’s central character is probably Dizzy Gillespie. Friends for more than a quarter-century, Terry and the trumpeter collaborated on music education programs and an album released by an Italian label (Oo-Shoo-Be-Doo-Be…Oo…Oo…Oo, Soul Note, 1985). Gillespie, she says, was a brilliant, complex person. He could be moody, Terry says, and as he approached his 60th birthday, Gillespie rebelled against the idea of hearing aid. Though “not a ‘Santa Claus’ kind of man,” Terry writes, Gillespie’s “love of life and devotion to his music had raised him well above his shortcomings.”

For more information, visit press.uillinois.edu
Flutist Jamie Baum grew up in Connecticut and recently returned to her synagogue there for a stellar benefit concert featuring jazz rabbi Greg Wall and drummer Adam Nussbaum. She’s a spiritual seeker and not just in the Jewish tradition. Bridges explores various faith traditions, but it’s no naïve world music foray. All of it is filtered through her strong sense of jazz composition.

You don’t necessarily need to know that “From the Well” is based on a scale common to Maqam (Arabic), Jewish and South Asian music. It’s a bright but snaky uptempo theme, played with a bit of a backbeat. Baum’s solo looks east and then Sam Sadigursky plays the snake charmer on bass clarinet. Amir ElSaffar brings it back to the west with his smeary, destination-out trumpet solo. The latter, an American whose father is Iraqi, also adds some guileless singing to “Song Without Words”, written to honor Baum’s late father. It’s a pensive song about loss and features Baum’s best solo, as well as more evocative bass clarinet. “There Are No Words” is also about loss and John Escreet is heard to good advantage, with his insistent piano introducing the main theme and then taking a long solo that channels Don Pullen, from slightly dissonant to highly melodic.

“Honoring Nepal: The Shiva Suite” grew out of Baum’s performances in Kathmandu in 2003 and 2009 and was commissioned by the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art in New York. “The Earthquake” evokes the devastation wrought on Nepal in 2015 (Brad Shepik’s guitar is effective at conjuring the tragedy) and “Renewal”, with delicate piano notes like green shoots coming out of the ground, is about the rebuilding afterwards; you can almost hear the people coming out of their damaged homes, tools in hand. “Contemplation” mixes hope and sadness. Special mention should go to “Joyful Lament”, a feature for Shepik and Nepal Navin Chetti’s vocals and percussion. The latter’s playing, evoking both Carlos Santana and John McLaughlin’s work with Shakti, soars over written passages in a most engaging manner. “Mantra” is just that, based on ancient texts, with Chetti on tapanura and a vocal that calls for “healing, rejuvenation and nurturance”. The album lives up to its title. Baum is indeed building musical bridges.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com. This project is at The Cell May 26th. See Calendar.

“Epistrophy” was Thelonious Monk’s set closing theme, hence one of his most familiar pieces. Almost too familiar and yet the quintet here plays it with remarkable verve, completely engaged so that an old chestnut sounds as fresh as a newly minted original. And pianist Gary Versace creates a percussive solo just as original as Monk’s playing, spicing it up by alternating straight 4/4 time with off-kilter jangly sections spearheaded by drummer Matt Wilson. Ted Nash, the versatile reedplayer and longtime member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) who leads this live date, rounds out his quintet with vibraphonist Warren Wolf and bassist Rufus Reid. The music they create is constantly engaging, exemplary of today’s mainstream modern jazz.

Nash gets to stretch out here more than with the JLCO indulging his more avant abilities to conjure up some of Ornette Coleman’s rough-edged tone and unpredictable lines on “Organized Crime”, which also takes advantage of alternating jagged and smooth rhythms, and recalling the swirling phrases of Eric Dolphy on “Spinning Song”. The leader switches to flute on Chick Corea’s engaging waltz “Windows” and piccolo for Henry Mancini’s “Baby Elephant Walk”. That latter is a funky romp, propelled by a boogaloo backbeat and snappy snare work, plus a deep-groove bass solo. Reid’s pizzicato solo is also a highlight on “Windows” – in fact every solo here shines as timely and apt and Nash does not fall into the trap—common on live dates—of stringing out each tune with a solo from every member. All but one of the tracks is by the quintet, the one exception an expansive, tender duet of Johnny Mandel’s “Emily” by Nash on clarinet with Versace. Although this is a live recording, it has the feel of an artfully programmed studio album.

For more information, visit tednash.com. Nash leads the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in a celebration of Ornette Coleman at Rose Theater May 18th-19th. See Calendar.

Flutist Jamie Baum Septet* (Sunnyside) by Jim Motavalli

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in a celebration of Ornette Coleman at Rose Theater May 18th-19th. See Calendar.

Manuel Valera, Joey Carter, John Banírez, Maurice Herrera, Mark Whitfield, Jr.

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THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | MAY 2018 41
Miles Davis made several trips to Europe before 1960, but the trumpeter was never invited to tour with his own working band until the spring of that year. The trip was made even more historic by the presence of saxophonist John Coltrane and, fortunately, 7 of the 20 concerts on the tour were recorded and began appearing on various European bootleg labels about 25 years after the fact.

Even though this Columbia four-disc set marks the first “official” release (it’s hard not to smile when major labels adopt a snobbish pose regarding boots of material they decline to release for nearly 60 years, but never mind), an ocean of ink has by now been spilled about the music. Serious students of Coltrane’s playing could spend a long time comparing recordings on this tour with earlier live dates and, especially, what he played at the Village Vanguard in late 1961. A main reason for the way Coltrane was evolving was the harmonic structures of the modal style Davis had adopted. Coltrane by this time had no difficulty negotiating not only standard changes but also more advanced harmonic structures like his own “Giant Steps”, even at breakneck tempos. But the modal feeling seemed to suit his needs more and that is the direction he was now to take. Coltrane’s path to freer jazz involved stripping away the advanced structures he had mastered and modal jazz was his gateway.

Davis himself said later that Coltrane wanted to be out on his own and therefore he seemed angry on the tour and sounded angry on stage and many have interpreted things along these lines. While some may laugh at the idea that Davis would notice anyone else in the band being angry, others might question whether Coltrane’s playing sounds particularly angrier here than it did at the Plaza gig in late 1958 (Miles Davis, Jazz At Plaza, Columbia). He does sound a bit wilder and woolier on the two sets recorded in Paris on Mar. 21st than he did on subsequent tour dates and annotator Ashley Kahn’s suggestion that Davis’ insertion of more modal numbers into the later sets as a factor in this is intriguing. But a simple point already touched on may bear repeating: this music is chronologically halfway between the Plaza recordings and Coltrane’s first Vanguard stand and the same might hold for a description of his playing style.

Something of the sort is true of Davis as well. He sounds considerably more like the trumpeter with his second great quintet than that with the first, stretching out much further than he had during the ’50s, albeit in very different ways from Coltrane—almost the opposite, in fact. Where Coltrane played more and more notes, Davis played fewer, repeating simple phrases and even single notes over and over and where Coltrane was filling more and more of his canvas with detail, Davis left more space.

As for Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers and Jimmy Cobb, they were known, at the time, as “The Rhythm Section” and for good reason. Each was a superb accompanist in his own right and as a unit they could fit perfectly into almost any modern context. Whatever else was happening on this tour, there is no question that Coltrane was NOT leaving the rest of the band behind him. That Chambers was great with the saxophonist has always been accepted and by now this is generally acknowledged where Cobb is concerned. But the oft-implied idea that Kelly could not make the transition into modal territory as well as other pianists who would follow him in the band is given belied by these recordings. His comping is wonderful and his solos really sparkle.

A fairly recent four-CD boxed set on Acrobat covered similar territory. It did not include the Paris concert but did include sets recorded in Germany, Switzerland and Holland that are not present in the Columbia package. Thus neither box is definitive, but both are cheap but well produced and audio quality is generally similar. Those who want to collect all the music recorded on the tour might find it easier to start with the Acrobat set, since all it lacks is the Parisian material, but those who feel that one box is enough to get the idea should go with the Columbia, because the Paris recording is of particular interest.

For more information, visit legacyrecordings.com. A Miles Davis Birthday Celebration led by Al Foster is at Smoke May 25th-27th. See Calendar.

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**AMANDA MONACO – GUITAR | NOAH BAERMANN – PIANO**
**RUFUS REID – BASS | SYLVIA CUENCA – DRUMS**

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“A CRISPLY RESOURCEFUL GUITARIST... PLAYFULLY RESTIVE COMPOSITIONS.”
- THE NEW YORK TIMES

**AMANDAMONACO.COM**
While the sidemen on this album would all go on to jazz stardom, British-born pianist Ralph Sharon claimed fame in a different area: as singer Tony Bennett’s accompanist and musical director for over 50 years (returning to regular jazz recording in singer Tony Bennett’s accompanist).

While the sidemen on this album comprised of Richard Wyands, George Duvivier and Roy Haynes. As had been the case with the first two albums, the material is mostly Norman’s original.

After meeting in 1959 and then taking care of business with him earlier in 1960, listeners were screaming the blues with alto/tenor saxophonist Oliver Nelson on this album, his third release as a leader, all for Prestige’s New Jazz. He is joined in the frontline by Eric Dolphy (alto saxophone) and Richard Williams (trumpet), the rhythm section comprised of Richard Wyands, George Duvivier and Roy Haynes. As had been the case with the first two albums, the material is mostly Norman’s original.

Pianist Oscar Peterson was one of the most important jazz artists in jazz history, appearing on albums from around the world, starting with his native Canada. This particular date is taken from a concert at the Palace Hotel in Tokyo. While drummer Louis Hayes had occurred the past two albums from this tour, Oscar Peterson’s countryman bassist Michel Donato appears to have only spent this summer with him. With only two originals, “Wheatland” and “Blues Etude,” he appears among a program of standards.

Toshiko Akiyoshi was born in December 1959 in Hokkaido, Japan as a teenager. The pianist’s first album resulted from the urging of Oscar Peterson to Norman Granz. Soon after she studied at Berklee College of Music. And though she would record for Japanese labels later, it was typically with American musicians. Such is the case here, Akiyoshi joined by Gene Cherico (bass, part of her first Berklee trio in 1976-77) and Joey Baron (drums, a more recent collaborator) on live standards and one Akiyoshi tune.

In 1976, Joe McPhee recorded his first 100 albums, while the saxophonist was still in his own 1977 album recorded on the label. Joe McPhee was born in 1945 and has recorded for over 250 albums under his own name and up to 1998, with more than 500 albums as a leader from 1974 on. Joe McPhee has had long associations with Steve Lacy, John Taylor, and Sam Rivers. The latter’s albums were on Enja, which was founded in 1980, as has recorded for over 250 albums under his own name and up to 1998, with more than 500 albums as a leader from 1974 on. Joe McPhee has had long associations with Steve Lacy, John Taylor, and Sam Rivers. The latter’s albums were on Enja, which was founded in 1980, as has recorded for over 250 albums under his own name and up to 1998, with more than 500 albums as a leader from 1974 on. Joe McPhee has had long associations with Steve Lacy, John Taylor, and Sam Rivers.
Tuesday, May 1

- **Nicola Caminiti** Trio with Ben Tubaro, JK Kim; Assaf Kohan Trio with Matt Pavlica, Peter Trummler
- **Raulin and Boys from Brazil** with Matt Pierson, Jason Fray, Iacopo Papi, Eduardos Beisio, Rogério Boccato
- **Veselatic**-Julija with Lydiard/John Poitras, John Di Martino, Kevin dirty Call
- **William Paterson University Jazz Orchestra**
- **Danny Janklov
- **Katia Kabanova**; Gerardo Cauchoi; Luis Nieto, Latin Jam Band
- **Marc Haimoff** Trio with Simon Jermyn, Sala 12, Alex Goldman, Davis
- **Choco Velez** Quintet with Dayna Stephens, Mike Rodriguez, Kyokichi Kikagawa, Johnathan Blake
- **Benjamin Faux** Marabou with Dayna Stephens, Mike Rodriguez, Kyokichi Kikagawa, Johnathan Blake
- **Darin Salvesen**
- **Veselatic**-Julija with Lydiard/John Poitras, John Di Martino, Kevin dirty Call
- **William Paterson University Jazz Orchestra**
- **Danny Janklov
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- **Marc Haimoff** Trio with Simon Jermyn, Sala 12, Alex Goldman, Davis
- **Choco Velez** Quintet with Dayna Stephens, Mike Rodriguez, Kyokichi Kikagawa, Johnathan Blake
- **Benjamin Faux** Marabou with Dayna Stephens, Mike Rodriguez, Kyokichi Kikagawa, Johnathan Blake
- **Darin Salvesen**

Wednesday, May 2

- **Vanessa Goold** Quartet with Ludovica, Dan Pappadori; The Jazz Thieves; Matt Rollins
- **Nat Adderley, Jr. Trio**
- **Joe Farnsworth**
- **Rahsaan Carter, Jeremy Dutton**
- **Yoko Luey Lee Trio-Neil Johnson, Maria Fine, Jackie, Josh Beck, Reiko" Music Mainline" 8:30 pm $20
- **Manuela"s Unwanted Guests with Gerardo Cauchoi, Luis Nieto, Latin Jam Band, Roberto"s"**
- **Dan Monaghan, Mike Kennedy Group with Mike Frank, Ken Pendergast, Tim"s"**
- **Takashi Onishi Band**
- **Joe Print Quarto**
- **Steve Nelson Quartet; Abraham Burton Quartet**
- **Forever Django-"Passing the Family Ties; Donald, Sammon, and Annett Schwitz; Louis""**
- **Narada"s"**
- **Shoko Nagaoka's Takas with Vaski, Daniel, and Kenji"s"**
- **Rahsaan Carter, Jeremy Dutton"s"**
- **Joe Farnsworth"s"**
- **Rahsaan Carter, Jeremy Dutton"s"**
- **Yoko Luey Lee Trio-Neil Johnson, Maria Fine, Jackie, Josh Beck, Reiko" Music Mainline" 8:30 pm $20
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- **Forever Django-"Passing the Family Ties; Donald, Sammon, and Annett Schwitz; Louis""**
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- **Rahsaan Carter, Jeremy Dutton"s"**
- **Joe Farnsworth"s"**
- **Rahsaan Carter, Jeremy Dutton"s"**

Thursday, May 3

- **The Engering Lena Home; Michael Feinstein**
- **Rice Jones Trio with Cole Davis, JK Knik; Sam Zima Trio with Hugh Stupak, Fabian Roggli**
- **Savion Glover/Marcus Gilmore**
- **The Chop"s"**
- **Clyde's""**
- **Paco Sion**
- **Paul Jones Sextet with Affi"s"**
- **Bruce Forman Trio with Rufus Reid, Matt"s"**
- **Danny Janklov

Friday, May 4

- **Dave Sanchez and The Taro Hinter, John Webster, Steve Williams**
- **Mark Cocho Trio with Mark Zalekis, Brian Adler**
- **Sawon Glover/Marcus Gilmore**
- **Ethan Primason, Justin Frye, Arian Shafiee**
- **Jon Beshay**
- **Jeff Hamilton Trio with Tamir Hendelman, Christoph Luty**
- **Porter's Chords with Peter Barlow, Dennis Duke, Amanda Ware, John Webber, Don Pullen"s"**
- **Tony"s"**
- **Jam"s"**
- **Judith"s"**
- **Dave Sanchez and The Taro Hinter, John Webster, Steve Williams**
- **Mark Cocho Trio with Mark Zalekis, Brian Adler**
- **Sawon Glover/Marcus Gilmore**
- **Ethan Primason, Justin Frye, Arian Shafiee**
- **Jon Beshay**
- **Jeff Hamilton Trio with Tamir Hendelman, Christoph Luty**
- **Porter's Chords with Peter Barlow, Dennis Duke, Amanda Ware, John Webber, Don Pullen"s"**
- **Tony"s"**
- **Jam"s"**
- **Judith"s"**

Saturday, May 5

- **Dave Sanchez and The Taro Hinter, John Webster, Steve Williams**
- **Paul Cremaux Trio with Ed Howard, Adam.Collins, John Webber"s"**
- **Plucky Strum: Sheryl Bailey/Harvie S**
- **Jeff Hamilton Trio with Tamir Hendelman, Christoph Luty**
- **Porter's Chords with Peter Barlow, Dennis Duke, Amanda Ware, John Webber, Don Pullen"s"**
- **Tony"s"**
- **Jam"s"**
- **Judith"s"**

Sunday, May 6

- **Michael Formanek solo**
- **Eric Reed Quartet with Timothy Green, Michael Gumbel, McCleary Hunter, Jr. Village 8:30 pm $20
- **Eric Reed Quartet with Timothy Green, Michael Gumbel, McCleary Hunter, Jr. Village 8:30 pm $20

Monday, May 7

- **Dave Striker Quartet; "King" Solomon"s"**
- **Manuel Vecino"s"**
- **Pheeran akLaff solo; Isabelle O'Connell solo**
- **Jon Gordon Quartet with Bryan Roberts, Eric West, Joe Morris, Jonathan"s"**
- **George"s"**
- **Ray"s"**
- **Bing"s"**
- **Cook"s"**
- **Dave"s""**
- **Tom"s"**

Tuesday, May 8

- **Dave Striker Quartet; "King" Solomon"s"**
- **Manuel Vecino"s"**
- **Pheeran akLaff solo; Isabelle O'Connell solo**
- **Jon Gordon Quartet with Bryan Roberts, Eric West, Joe Morris, Jonathan"s"**
- **George"s"**
- **Ray"s"**
- **Bing"s"**
- **Cook"s"**
- **Dave"s""**
- **Tom"s"**
Tuesday, May 8

- Alexia Bramer, Jenee Gillet, Jon Albane, Robert Gluck, Javier Cardenas
  Solar 9:30, 11 pm $25
- John Ellis and Ethan Pinnock: The Squeal of The Ghost
  Sable 9:30 pm $25
- Christian Scott aTunji Albert
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Chris Washburne and The YEVOS Band with John Walsh, Ole Mathisen, Hector Montin, Eduardo Perez, Greg Lopez, Greats Ablaze
  Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Marcus Millar, Niles Haverstock, Adam-through-Orchid, and friends
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35

Friday, May 11

- Ron Ben-Hur
  The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm $25
- Aaron Goldberg
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Anthony Braxton
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35

Saturday, May 12

- Ron Ben-Hur
  The Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Ron Carter
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Jeff Blackwell
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Anthony Braxton
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35

Wednesday, May 9

- Ira Gitler/Bacharach Project with David Baker, Jeremy Powell, Alan Mednard
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Bill Charlap Trio with Piotr Kopus
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Ron Carter Birthday Celebration with Milt Hinton, Red Holloway, Tony112, and friends
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Kasandra James with George Cables, Andy Scott, Victor Paz, Albert Ayler, and friends
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Anthony Braxton
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35

Thursday, May 10

- Luca Benedetti with Michael Blake, Eric Finland, Tony Mason
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- John Ellis and Ethan Pinnock: The Squeal of The Ghost
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Christian Scott aTunji Albert
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Chris Washburne and The YEVOS Band with John Walsh, Ole Mathisen, Hector Montin, Eduardo Perez, Greg Lopez, Greats Ablaze
  Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Marcus Millar, Niles Haverstock, Adam-through-Orchid, and friends
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Marcus Millar, Niles Haverstock, Adam-through-Orchid, and friends
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
- Anthony Braxton
  Village Vanguard 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kokayi, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Tim Harrison, Chris Haney, Taro Okamoto
  The Village Vanguard 9:30 pm $35
"Annual Anniversary Tour"

Sean Gough

MAY 12

Montclair Library

12 Lafayette Bar

13 Shanghai Jazz

14 WFMZ-TV

16 Two Rivers

17 Zinc Bar

18 Miller Symphony

19 Deer Head Inn

20 Master Concert

23 Zinc Bar

24 Strauss Mansion

25 Sound Bite

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Kenny Kirkland

Steve David Goodman

RECORDINGS

Elvin Jones

Don Alias

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Sunday, May 13

- Jim Cimino/Loquita Benedetto
- Will Bernard and The BK Shades
- Sean C. Hendrix and the Secret Society
- Dave Ambrosio Trio with Tim Hagans, Joel Frahm, Billy Mintz
- Music of Duke Ellington: Juliani Jazz Orchestra
- Sean C. Hendrix and the Secret Society
- Jake Jackson: Sean All, Eric Dicken, Joe Moffett, William Parker Aquasonic Ensemble with Jeff Schanker, Anna Haren
- Trey Wold's Gotham City Band
- David Fredrickson and the Evolutionary Band
- Eric Alexander Trio with Doug Weiss, John Hagedorn
- Fred Hersch/Esperanza Spalding
- Juan Pablo Gonzalez, Tom Kujawa, Andrew Dardis, Angelina Monte, Jure Henry, Stefano Franci, Leandro Cianetti, Daniel Bard Thoister
- Enrico Sola Swing Time
- Kayo Kiddle: Trixie Tony Morris
- Kate Baker with Zach Block, Vicenza Coniacchi, Jack Jenkins, Arthur Liles, Robert Turre
- Richard Clements Quartet with Joy Brown, Charles Davis, Jim Cogil, Adam Baldridge
- Mike Jones and Friends with Leonor Fonaco, Ananda Sambodi, Mark Whitfield, Jr.
- Jeppe Jorgensen Trio with Kevin Scott, Klenandio, Adam Lane, Andrew Dardis, Jure Henry
- Andy Blanko Quartet, Julio South American Jazz Project
- Sacha Perry Trio: Chris Byars Original Secret with Zaid Nasser, Johnson Mosca, Stefano Doglioni, Ari Reidzis, Pete Banwell, Hadar Suez
- Eddie Henderson Quintet with Matt Wilson, Bruce foti, Kevin Eubanks, Ben Pirner, Mike Clark
- Craig Crawford
- Steve Coleman and Five Elements with Kool John, Jonathan Finlayson, Anthony Todd, Sean Rickerman

Monday, May 14

- Carl Bartlett, Jr. with James Novan
- Scott Robinson, Tom Christiansen, Alden Banta, Adam Unsworth, David Peel, Jeffrey Zeigler, Jonathan Rose, Pheeroan akLaff
- George Colligan Trio with Ed Howard, Victor Lewis and guest Adam Hutcheson
- Vijay Iyer Sextet with Graham Haynes, Mark Shin, Shleman Lopez, Christy Doran, Aram Bedikian
- Mark Sherman's Venture with Chase Bass, Felix Pastora, Mike Clark
- Josh Haden/Ed DeBartolo Quartet
- Bill Charlap Trio with Matt Colwell, Codine Nelson, Billy Kinnon, John Zorn, Sae Hashimoto, Steve Gosling, Shanir Blumenkranz, Tyshawn Sorey
- Joshua Redman and Brooklyn Rider: Johnny Gandelsman, Colin Jacobsen, Joel Frahm Trio
- Scott Joplin Memorial Concert: Dan Levinson Canary Cottage Dance Orchestra
- Sharp Radway
- Itay Goldberg 4Tet
- Felix Peikli/Joe Doubleday's Showtime Band; Gotham Kings
- Emilie Surtees
- Laura Mvula
- Jeremy Dutton

Tuesday, May 15

- Cole Davis Trio with Clay Lyons, James Gillespie, Alene Levine Trio with Ben Robelin, Stephan Bogleider
- "I Live My Life" w/ Dr. Lonnie Smith, Natasha Diggs, DJ Max: the new DJ of"My Life"
- "I Live My Life" w/ Dr. Lonnie Smith, Natasha Diggs, DJ Max: the new DJ of"My Life"
- Dave Meder, Billy Test
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Saturday, May 26

- Warren Vache and The Trio with Tardo Hammer, John Webber, Steve Williams
- Ira Kirs and Telavene
- Jeff McLaughlin Trio with John Cowforth, Rudy Rottman

- Anders Nilsson Trio with David Ambrosio, Sam Newsome and guest Peter Evans
- René Marie Quintet with John Chie, Elie Baiky, Quentin Bender
- Duke Ellington Orchestra with Jack Benny, Andy Kirk, Sonny Stitt, Tom Sturges, Pat Sadgurtry, Zack Lobter, Brad Shelkey, Chris Komis, Jeff Harshman

- Clifford Bailey Trio
- Sebastien Noblet ndol
- Garrett Snodgrass with pg Michael, Greg Lankton, Jelani Behard, Ryan Dusil and guest Peter Evans
- Brandon Bailey, Gregery The DDS at the Rose Hotel 7:30, 10:30 pm
- CMS Improvisors Orchestra led by Paul Mazzolli and Karin Kaddam
- Steve Lehman Quartet plus Ammar Al-Tamimi, Andras Szabo, Mark Nissan, Pedro da Silva, Theeb Soney, Abalon: Francisco Morega, Adam Tekl, Adam Klippe, Calvin Jones, Arthur Jafa
- By Any Means: Charles Gayle, William Parker, Muhammad Ali

- Adam Birnbaum, Doug Weiss
- Royal Hartigan
- Patricia Spears Jones/Jason Kao Hwang
- Ambrose Akinmusire, Brad Shepik, Chris Komer, Jeff Hirshfield

- Anthony Wonsey, Neal Caine
- Philip Harper Quintet

Monday, May 29

- Jay Rodriguez
- Jay Boll Trio with Perri Grace, Josh Roberts, Andrew Shillito Trio with James Ross, Matt Moran
- Bossa Brazil: Marcelo Vello with Patrícia Alves, Roni Ben-Hur, Jesse Sadic, Fabiana Brandou, Renata Mosca and guest Paulette Montelargian
- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Tim berne, Eric Revis

- The Bush-Tet: Stan Gian, Chris Rodriguez, Jim Samson, the John Bertie Latin Bop
- Paul Shrin
- Sascha Viscardi with Casey Benjamin, James Francies, Reuben Rogers, Toshi Reagon, Marya Hafid, Jon Bruce,そして
- Todd Neufeld Group with Noah Preminger, Jason Palmer, Kim Cass, Dan Weiss

- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King
- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King
- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King

Wednesday, May 30

- Swing with the Count: Michael Feinstein and Tedd Firth Big Band
- Alex Marter and Evan Groz
- Bossa Brazil: Marcelo Vello with Patrícia Alves, Roni Ben-Hur, Jesse Sadic, Fabiana Brandou, Renata Mosca and guest Paulette Montelargian
- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King
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- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King

Thursday, May 31

- Swing with the Count: Michael Feinstein and Tedd Firth Big Band
- Jason Lieven and the Bad Cats
- Vaughn Stoffey Trio with Cole Davis, Al Ax, Nadya Pilek Trio with Tamron Sherahe, Fabiana Brandou, Renata Mosca and guest Paulette Montelargian
- Alzade Muata
- The Bad Plus: Orrin Evans, Reid Anderson, Dave King

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Please tell us more about Seed Artists?

PA: Seed Artists is a small non-profit that thinks big. We got our first grant from the Elisabeth Irwin High School to take students to sing at hospice centers and community gardens. Now we are a catalyst for service to the community. I’m forwarding daring, youth literacy and community arts for all ages. Chris Napierala, our Creative Director, has worked very hard in the last few years to bring great music to Montclair. We even have jazz listening night in the Montclair Public Library hosted by Professor Peter Bodge, who prompts discussions with several swanky seniors. Our library concerts have been great outreach for bringing people together. The list is long, but Sheila Jordan, Richard Davis, Cyro Baptista, Oscar Noriega and several great artists have enriched our community. We had brilliant book talks with authors David Greenstein and William Parker at the New York Buddhist Church. We have contributed to Community Real Talk with ex-offenders, the police department and community groups. We are best known though for the Eric Dolphy Freedom of Sound Celebration, in which we featured over 40 musicians to commemorate the 50th anniversary [2014] of his untimely passing. The symposium included Eric Dolphy’s friends Richard Davis, Gunther Schuller and Grachan Moncur III and younger scholars James Newton, John Szwed and Michael Veal. We performed his known and unheard compositions, later to be inducted into the Library of Congress. Since then we have partnered with William Paterson University, The National Jazz Museum of Harlem, The Jazz Foundation of America and the 73 See Gallery in Montclair. On May 11th we will surprise middle school children during class time with a concert by pianist Angelica Sanchez. On Jul. 7th, we will co-present Randy Weston African Rhythms quartet with the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning in Queens. This summer we will have concerts at the Montclair Public Library and the first weekend of October we will have our first Millennium of Percussion Sound Celebration festival in Montclair. We intend for you to get involved with a wide range of music for body and soul regeneration.

TNYCJR: So it’s not all jazz.

PA: It’s almost never jazz to me, or I should say not only jazz. One of the distinctions I like to make is jazz the music and jazz the culture. One of the reasons I got involved with music was because of jazz the cultural ethos, which may be found in several areas of life, as well as a music we butcher words to describe. Its impact upon the world has represented the greatest absorbing music of an era of cruelty. Not only have we educated, or mis-educated, a generation to emphasize virtuosity but we’ve also mis-educated the public to think that this interaction of performance and applause is something that is going to benefit both parties. Jazz the music inspired a cumbersome educated virtuosity. Jazz the culture inspired social activism. The matrix that these two areas should be used to comprise do not work so much in tandem today. There is an applause button on one and a pause button on the other.

TNYCJR: What were you saying about virtuosity?

PA: In some cases we’re mis-educating jazz players to Sound Celebration to be something that was key part of their development. But virtuosity alone cannot help us explore the tender, the frail or the process of selflessness leading to the majestic. Think Chick Webb, George Russell or the accompaniment range of Freddie Waits or Paul Motian. Perhaps some of the great ones were something that we prized beyond the physical experience and in so doing they ended up sounding in a way that would astound us. I’d love to hear an interview with Art Tatum just to know what he was trying to make happen beyond demonstrating how hard he worked to expand the many embellishments with overwhelming facility. Drumming has always represented an exploration into a stratified environment generated by memory and shaping ideas until they deserve to be reconstituted or transformed. Time is also important which is different than just using one or two of these elements. The beating oneself into a frenzy like at a disco era of the ‘80s is now seeping its way into jazz and so it makes me a little sensitive as to just how I want to hear the percussion world. Some rhetoric brings on the worst and some brings out the best. It’s part of what makes percussion so powerful.

TNYCJR: A recent academic publication in the discourse on jazz education compares what they call “street level education” with current curricula and argues, I believe, that jazz education programs are missing the “street level” part.

PA: “Street” sort of reduces that side of the equation to how we think of something in contrast to university settings. “Street” can imply a lot of things. In the last few decades “street” is a code word for having a nose for skullduggery, emphasized by a colloquial vocabulary tone. But to actually learn by assembling parts of lots of wisdom acquired from as many beacons as you can meet...that’s a good street. The best of black music for me is not empty riffing or overstating the forlorn. I like the simplicity of absorbing the most from least. There’s a famous song that Totó La Mompi of Colombia sings called “Dolores has a piano”. The whole song is about Dolores having a piano and therefore having a massive influence on their quaint society. It’s a visual example of African diaspora adaptation at the turn of the 19th century. Some stuff doesn’t come in jazz education. What’s important in all this is remembering the connection to the music that has healed communities, not to just be one who toots their horn! I’ve been fortunate enough to be associated with huge mentors and made music with people who have advanced a lot of good things: Andrew Hill, Sonny Sharrock, Amiri Baraka, Cecil Taylor and many ancestors who commandeered life with a great amount of depth and perseverance. My situation is unique and I appreciate the amount of inner strength that I developed from working with many embellishments with overwhelming facility. My direction. He wanted me to reinvent myself as well, to be something different to the vibe. People like Donald or Bill have an open mind. That’s how I see the role of the producer, to suggest or bring something a little different. I don’t have to explain to them what to do. I worked two times with Buddy Montgomery. I recorded several CDs but only released one [Buddy Montgomery All Star Group, A Love Affair In Paris, 2000] because Buddy was a little sick, but the music was extraordinary. I wish I could find two tapes with Lenell Barge. Donald Miller[ Moodscape, 2007, a quartet session completed by Robert Hurst], I think that Eric Harland was not Bill’s first choice, but I like having someone of another generation bringing something different.

When asked about issuing historical recordings, Felgelroyles explained, “I’m open to it. I have a few projects. I worked with George DuVivier and Hank Jones, but Black & Blue has already done something similar [Blues from N.O. (Live)], I have an unreleased project by Donald Brown and an unreleased concert of James Williams with Billy Pierce, Mickey Roker and Peter Washington. I need to talk with Cedar Walton’s widow. I have a concert with his trio plus Wallace Roney and Vincent Herrera. When I try to issue this type of recording, the main thing is to pay the expenses. If people will buy them, it’s okay with me.”

Space Time artists are generous in their assessment of Felgelroyles’ contributions. Mobley remarked, “It has been great working with Xavier over so many years and getting his feedback and input regarding my projects. I feel very thankful he has given people like me, Jean Toussaint, Donald Brown and others like Essiet Essiet and Keith Brown the opportunity to record and get our music out there. Being connected with the great Donald Brown gave me the introduction to Xavier Felgelroyles. I only regret that Xavier is so far away now. I would love to continue this magic so easily here in the States to hook up all his great artists with more work in the States.”

Brown is no less enthusiastic with his praise: “We met when my album Early Bird was out and Xavier contacted Sunnyside Records to book me for his festival. He became my number one fan. I consider him to be one of my closest friends. He has been invaluable to my life on so many levels. That’s carried on to my kids; he has recorded them. He makes sure my records are played around the world and doesn’t let me fall by the wayside. When I had health issues, he was working with me to record. He has had great ideas and provided direction. He wanted me to reinvent myself as well, suggesting a duo record. Everyone in my household knows him and loves him to death. He has been a driving force.”
water under the human skin. The band, Jonathon Haffner (alto saxophone), John Lindberg (bass) and Barker once more, was the most traditional free-style group of the festival, with nice moments by Lindberg using a wide range of techniques, including bowing, plucking and strumming. Barker’s churning solo in the middle of the piece evolved over the whole of his kit.

Sunday night featured “JFK in Dallas, Parkland,” dedicated to fallen leaders Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Kennedy Brothers. This was a wild group with Brandon Ross (guitar), Melvin Gibbs (electric bass) and J.T. Lewis (drums), reminiscent of the later periods of Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman. Gibbs added ripping electronic fuzz box and Moog sounds, recalling his work with drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson, over reverb-drenched guitar sounds while Smith showed off his amazing technique. Definitely high-energy stuff.

The fifth group reunited Smith’s Golden Quintet, this time with longtime collaborator Anthony Davis (piano), Ashley Walters (cello), Lindberg and Pheeroan akLaff (drums). They performed Smith’s “Peace, Love and Liberty: Compassion and Respect for a Tolerant World,” a musical summoning of the sacred and the secular, backed by a traditional choir and a modern horn section. In Gamlekinoen, a converted movie theater, singer/violinist Sigrid Moldestad offered moving renditions of the traditional Norwegian folk music that has earned her three Spellemannprisen. And in Finnesloftet, one of Norway’s oldest non-religious buildings, Danish drummer Kresten Osgood explored the outer edges of percussive sound.

Also in Gamlekinoen, irrepressible British multi-instrumentalist Django Bates teamed up with the Bergen Big Band, now in its 26th year, to revisit his previous work with the innovative swing orchestra Loose Tubes, an 80s jazz phenomenon in Great Britain. Along with Loose Tubes drummer Martin France and flutist Eddie Palmer, Bates recreated his tune “Yellow Hill,” a bright, horn-focused composition and one of the biggest hits from the orchestra’s eponymous first album in 1985. On the final tune of the set, Bates had the horn section exit through the audience, riffing through a free improvisation—a thrilling close to the Gamlekinoen lineup on the festival’s final day.

Almost all of the performers at Vossa Jazz 2018 hailed from Scandinavia or, like Bates and Pullman, participated in creative collaborations with Scandinavian musicians. The exceptions to this rule provided a smattering of contrast: American avant garde guitarist Mary Halvorson led her ensemble Code Girl in a blazing set behind avant garde singer Amirtha Kidambi and South Korean singer Youn Sun Nah showed off her wide-ranging vocal skills in an eclectic repertoire of revamped pop/rock tunes, French chanson and contemporary jazz.

During the Easter season, the usual time of the Vossa Jazz Festival, the town of Vossevangen still lies wrapped in a wintry Nordic beauty. The festival venues, though, ring with a Nordic beauty of a different sort—one of artistic connection, musical exploration, and cultural celebration. Equally dazzling.

For more information, visit vossajazz.no
Wednesday May 23 | DAVE BURRELL
CELEBRATING A LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT
6:30 Invocation
7:00 Harlem Renaissance Sextet
8:00 Archie Shepp Quartet ft. Dave Burrell
9:00 Djassi DaCosta Johnson / Shayna Dulberger
9:30 Dave Burrell Quintet

Thursday May 24
5pm PANEL: Creating Safe(r) Spaces in the Performing Arts
hosted by The #WeHaveVoice Collective
7:00 Mary Halvorson’s Code Girl
8:00 Whit Dickey Trio
9:00 Women with an Axe to Grind
10:00 SPACE: Tom Buckner, Roscoe Mitchell, Scott Robinson

Friday May 25
7:00 Irreversible Entanglements
8:00 Douglas Dunn + Dancers w/ Critical Response Trio
8:45 Nasheet Waits Equality
9:30 Seraphic Light:
10:30 Matthew Shipp Acoustic Ensemble

Saturday May 26
6:00 Visionary Youth Orchestra
7:00 Fay Victor’s Mutations for Justice
8:00 Afro-Algonquin 2018
9:00 Patricia Spears Jones / Jason Kao Hwang
9:30 Ambrose Akinmusire / Kris Davis / Tyshawn Sorey
10:30 AfroHORN Fellow

Sunday May 27
3pm PANEL: The Ongoing Struggle for Cultural Equity in New York City Music Communities Pt. 1
6:30 Frode Gjerstad Trio
7:30 Gerald Cleaver / Brandon Lopez / Chris Potter
David Virelles
8:30 Arthur Jafa
9:30 By Any Means
10:30 Craig Harris’ Brown Butterfly

Monday May 28
3pm PANEL: The Ongoing Struggle for Cultural Equity in New York City Music Communities Pt. 2
6:00 Jaimie Branch’s Fly or Die
7:00 Cooper-Moore
8:00 Julie Ezelie Patton
8:30 Jemeel Moondoc’s New World Pygmies
9:30 Oliver Lake Big Band


www.artsforart.org/vf23
info@artsforart.org