“Tradition!” bellowed Chaim Topol as Tevye the milkman in Fiddler on the Roof. Though he was singing about the various inhabitants of his village, the sentiment can be applied to jazz in all its myriad forms. Every person taking up an instrument is both weighed down and uplifted by that tradition. It is what they do with it that advances the art form, keeps it relevant (if not solvent) and attracting further players who, in turn, will push it forward.

Our features this month all do their part in celebrating jazz history. Preservation Hall Jazz Band (On The Cover) are crucial to the life of New Orleans jazz but have also expanded their reach to the primordial depths of jazz history; the band performs as part of Central Park SummerStage this month. Vocalist Roberta Gambarini (Interview) has been continuing the work started by legendary singers decades ago yet bringing her own voice to varied contexts. She is at Blue Note for four nights. And composer/bandleader Darcy James Argue is the heir to Gil Evans and Duke Ellington, adding modern urgency to the big band format and beating the economic odds. See him and his Secret Society large ensemble at Jazz Standard.
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HAROLD LÓPEZ-NUSSA TRIO
THU-SUN AUG 2-5

BILLY CHILDS QUARTET
THU-SUN AUG 9-12

ALICIA OLATUJA
TUE-WED AUG 14-15

Warren Wolf Quartet
THU-SUN AUG 16-19

THU-FRI AUG 23-24
ETIENNE CHARLES CREOLE SOUL
BRUNO HOGAN • JORGE LEMA • SULLIVAN FORTNER (8/23) • MICA THOMAS (8/24)
JONATHAN MICHEL • OGED VULVAIRE
SAT-SUN AUG 25-26
ETIENNE CHARLES Big Band
JUNAAME SMITH • WALTER GANO • ANTHONY STANGO • MICHAEL THOMAS • BRIAN HOGANS • JOHN ELLIS
SETH EBERHOLD • PAUL NERZELA • DON TUCKER • COREY WILCOX • MICHAEL DEASE • CRAIG GLASSMAN
SULLIVAN FORTNER • ALEX WINTZ • BEN WILLIAMS • OGED VULVAIRE

THU AUG 28
DARCY JAMES ARGUIE’S SECRET SOCIETY
DAVE PETERSON • ROB WILKES • SAM HADDOW • ROY COSS • GAIL MARAGH
GENEWA BLACK • JONATHAN POWELL • MATT HILMAN • NJAL MARSHALL
JASON PALMER • MIKE FAHEY • RYAN KIRKHAM • JACOB DARCHIK • JENNIFER WHARTON
SEBASTIAN NOELLE • ADAM BRINKMAUS • MATT GLOESTER • JON WIKAN

CYRUS CHESTNUT TRIO
THU-SUN AUG 30-SEP 2

WARREN WOLF QUARTET past present Beyond
THU-SUN AUG 21

BRANDEE YOUNGNER QUARTET: ELECTRIC
RASHAAN CARTER • MARCUS MILLER • KEYON HARROLD • CHELSEA BRATZ
WED AUG 22

BRANDEE YOUNGNER QUARTET: ACOUSTIC
DEPRISON DOUGLAS • EJ STRICKLAND • KEYON HARROLD • ANNE GRUNDMANN

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In a city jam-packed with world-class jazz guitarists, Jack Wilkins is one of the classiest. The day after Independence Day, while a few neighborhood kids were setting off their last rockets and sparklers, Wilkins was quietly setting off a few fireworks of his own at Jazz at Kitano. Accompanied by bassist Essiet Essiet and drummer Sylvia Cuenca, he began the early set with “Without a Song”, which, like Jim Hall’s work with Sonny Rollins, was relaxed, intelligent, brimming with “Without a Song”, which, like Jim Hall’s work with Sonny Rollins, was relaxed, intelligent, brimming with polished melodic/harmonic gems. At a time of life when only getting to the piano stool without a cane is daunting, Harris’ wit (musical and otherwise) remains remarkably fresh: he repeatedly regaled the room with clever repartée and melodic surprises over the well-worn chord changes. The crowd sang “karaoke” on an improvised tune based on the third, seventh and fifth scale tones and knew exactly when to clap (once then twice, alternating) on the ‘band intros’ music. The heart of the set was “Sweet Lorraine”, Harris’ eulogy to Gordon with the ad hoc lyrics: “It’s not goodbye but so long, we will meet again.” —Tom Greenland

Free improvisation is for sitting. Long, continuous sets, complex forms, peaks and valleys are all best appreciated from a comfy chair. But there are times, such as at Ibeam Brooklyn (Jul. 7th) when an irresistible urge to leap from said chair happens frequently. Why? Well, when listening to a quintet of visiting Catalan pianist Agustí Fernández with tuba player Ben Stapp, trumpeter Nate Wooley, guitarist Joe Morris and percussionist Ben Hall, it was to help in sound identification, i.e., who the hell just made that sound?"

“At Summergarden concert series in conjunction with Jazz at Lincoln Center for the past 17 years, music waiting under the petals of Isa Genzken’s Rose II or past the watchful gaze of Pablo Picasso’s She-Goat. The first concert of the 2018 edition (Jul. 15th) was especially fitting in these surroundings. Trumpeter Michael Rodriguez’ quintet is eminently sculpted, a classic trumpet-tenor frontline with rhythm section, recalling moments of Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers or Miles Davis Quintet. The leader, who had turned 39 the day before, presented pieces by his brother, pianist Robert, and former teacher at University of Miami, pianist Ron Miller, alongside his own originals, including one commissioned especially for the evening. His band was an accomplished one: tenor saxophonist John Ellis, pianist Gary Versace, bassist Carlos Henriquez and drummer Obed Calvaire. As with the French Impressionists and their habit of painting en plein air, Rodriguez and company crafted long, fluttering pieces skirting hard- and postbop, with an emphasis on melody both in the pieces and what the members did with them during their solos, Versace especially memorable in a Billy Joel-like fashion (a high compliment). The commission, “Pathways”, spoke to the trumpeter’s musical lineage and, at 22 minutes, traversed planes of musical thought, mixing brain and heart, featuring music-box like piano and a hitherto-unknown romantic side to Ellis.” —Andrey Henkin
Martin Luther King, Jr. famously wrote on the importance of jazz, “Much of the power of our Freedom Movement has come from this music.” So it was more than appropriate for the late Civil Rights leader to be musically feted with a program billed Songs For Dr. King: Nina Simone & Mahalia Jackson. Brianna Thomas opened the concert at the New York Botanical Garden (Jul. 13th) offering a stirring reading of “How Can I Sing Thine Song”, starting mournfully, before taking on an optimistic tone that would define the evening, as the rhythm section of pianist James Hurt, guitarist Marvin Sewell, bassist Ryan Berg, percussionist Fernando Sáci and drummer Darrian Douglas dynamically modulated into a bright tempo. Guest trombonist Wynton Gordon, along with trumpeter Bruce Harris and reed player Patrick Bartley, joined in for a NOLA-styled “Just A Closer Walk With Thee”. It began with a funereal drum beat, then switched gears into a Second Line rhythm that had Thomas dancing around the stage. Gospel classics “Rock Of Ages” and “Precious Lord Take My Hand” closed the first set (Jul. 6th) with a searching improv that developed rapidly into Monk’s “We See”. Swinging and burning through variations, modal runs and crunch chords, the pianist embellished the tune with motic, notes flicking and hemming the instincts of each member into one seamless voice that strays at will into multidimensional arcs. And yet, Caine’s bold and unexpected turns and tacs kept everyone glued to center. With the house drawn into each moment, few realized that this opening piece lasted a full 30 minutes. The three continued on, never tiring of the artful game of catch. Caine birthed fantasias of standards (stunning renditions of “Honeysuckle Rose” and “Someday My Prince Will Come” stayed with us all night) as Helias and Perowsky alternately accompanied or took the lead. The bassist offered an atmospheric touch, driving from behind and serenading with moving solos, while the drummer’s fluid strokes tickled and danced over cymbals before unleashing streams of delicate rim shots and throbbing toms. Perowsky, a powerful, melodic featured soloist, duelied with the pianist and softly lit the room on fire. —John Pietaro

Sonny Fortune sat on the edge of the stage long before the first downbeat hit, eyes shielded by darkness (Jul. 14th) being warmed up with an assortment of postbop recordings and as the opening chords of Miles Davis’ “So What” flowed over the room, Fortune had slipped into the zone. The rest of the ensemble soon joined him there and together conjured a set that compelled us all into that special place. With the leader’s fluid, soaring soprano, the quartet opened with Henry Mancini’s theme, beautifully channeling Coltrane’s jazz walzes. The sinewy melody complete with horn trills was grounded by pianist channeling Coltrane’s jazz waltzes. The sinewy melody complete with horn trills was grounded by pianist Michael Cochrane’s left-hand block chords and Perowsky alternately accompanied or took the lead. The pianist embellished the tune with motic devices, tossing them like fireballs back to the drummer's fluid strokes tickled and danced over cymbals before unleashing streams of delicate rim shots and throbbing toms. Perowsky, a powerful, melodic featured soloist, duelied with the pianist and softly lit the room on fire. —John Pietaro

WHAT’S NEWS

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced its 2019 class of Jazz Masters, who will be feted at a concert in Washington, DC in April 2019. The late awardees are vocalist/ pianist Bettye LaVette (who died in April), pianist Abdullah Ibrahim (joining Paquito D’Rivera, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Candido Camero and Dave Holland as the only non-Americans) and composer/bandleader Maria Schneider (the youngest individual honoree), with historian/ author/earstwhile drummer Stanley Crouch receiving the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy. For more information, visit arts.gov.

Some 50+ years after his death, John Coltrane had his highest-ever charting position for one of his albums, the recently discovered Sixth Dimensions at Once: The Lost Album (Impulse!), throughout the U.S. and Europe.

For one night only on Aug. 27th, Minton’s Playhouse will present the “immersive theater experience” Live Bird, a one-man show by Jeff Robbben, the legendary alto saxophonist. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit mintonsharlem.com/event/live-bird-a-night-with-jeff-robben.

In addition to the performance of percussionist Bobby Sanabria’s West Side Story: A Masterwork Reimagined Aug. 10th at Damrosch Park as part of Lincoln Center Out-Of-Doors, Sanabria and Jamie Bernstein will discuss the project on Aug. 7th at 7 pm at the Film Society of Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center’s Amphitheater. For more information, visit lincolncenter.org/out-of-doors/show/west-side-story-reimagined.

The inaugural recipients of The Instant Award in Improvised Music, as funded by an anonymous donor at $50,000 per awardee and given under the auspices of the Chicago art gallery/recording label Corbett vs. Dempsey, have been named: saxophonist Joe McPhee and pedal steel guitarist Susan Alcorn. For more information, visit corbettvsdempsey.com.

Guitarist Pat Metheny, who was named an NEA Jazz Master for 2018, has been elected into the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, joining other jazz artists such as Palle Mikkelborg and Krzysztof Penderweci. For more information, visit musicakademien.se.

The Jazz Gallery has announced a new monthly program in conjunction with The School for Improvised Music running from September 2018- April 2019: an eight-session course culminating in a concert at the venue. For more information, visit schoolforimprov.org.

Submit news to info@nycjazzrecord.com
The New York City Jazz Record: So sorry about the loss of your father. Tell me about the influence he had on your musical life.

Roberta Gambarini: Thank you, it’s hard and still very fresh. My father played tenor saxophone when he was young. He could not pursue it as a career but he always remained a big fan of the music and he practiced at home. And I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing literarily without my father and my mother, who were always jazz fans. They were my basic supporters, I listened to music through the record collection of my father. He had a jazz collection of albums and he used to go to auctions to get vinyl—stuff that was hard to find—he and his friends used to go to France and Holland for these auctions. My father loved jazz of course. His favorite instrumentalists were Don Byas and Lucky Thompson, also Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, all kinds of jazz, bebop, Dizzy, the music of the big bands, Chick Webb, Duke Ellington, Count Basie. My parents used to bring me along to hear jazz concerts at a very young age, as soon as they could. They used to volunteer at a jazz club in Northern Italy where a lot of the greats used to pass through: Dexter Gordon, Johnny Griffin, Art Farmer, Slide Hampton and so I got to hear a lot of concerts at a very young age.

TNYCJR: What were some of the records that had the deepest impact on you growing up?

RG: There were two in particular. One was Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook and the other one was this Duke Ellington record called And His Mother Called Him Bill, which was the record that Duke Ellington did in tribute to Billy Strayhorn. Billy Strayhorn has always, and continues to be, a big thing in my life. He is probably my favorite composer and the one that has had the most influence on me and on my way of singing.

TNYCJR: You grew up playing various instruments. Did you always know that you wanted to be a singer?

RG: I always sang. I don’t know about “being a singer”, because I always sang for fun. So, yes, I always knew that I would have fun singing. I wasn’t really thinking of it in terms of “One day I’m going to win a Grammy” (laughs) but I was thinking in terms of, maybe one day I’ll get to sing these songs...of Billy Strayhorn for example. I wanted to sing this music.

TNYCJR: What were some of the challenges that you had to overcome as a young artist?

RG: I remember being in complete shock, because I had just arrived to the United States. I sent the admission tape when I was still in Italy and that was the same year that I applied for the artist diploma at the New England Conservatory and I got accepted. I knew that I was a semi-finalist for the Monk competition, so literally I had just moved and that was my first time in the States. It was a cultural shock. I was the only one who was non-English speaking, not Anglo-Saxon and it was very disorienting to say the least. But I met master Jimmy Heath, who later on became one of my mentors, and also Grady Tate. I got to meet some great artists through the experience: Dee Dee Bridgewater and Joe Williams, who unfortunately died soon after that.

TNYCJR: You are one of the world’s favorite living scat singers. Which musicians taught you the most about this art form?

RG: First of all by listening to the records of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Anita O’Day, the masters of this art. But also directly by learning from two great musicians who taught me a lot about how to do it: James Moody and Clark Terry.

TNYCJR: You’ve traveled the world. Where have you found some of the best audiences?

RG: It’s hard to say because I have found great audiences everywhere, they just have different personalities. The Brazilians are great, for example, because they sing along with you if they know the songs. I don’t really have a favorite audience, everyone has been so great.

TNYCJR: On your album So in Love there is a track that is arguably a 21st century classic, “On The Sunny Side of the Street” featuring vocalise for Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Sonny Rollins. What can you say about the making of this?
Jazz is so economically precariously that every new musician or group making a go of it has an edge of unlikeliness about them. Take that situation and extrapolate it to an 18-piece big band and that makes Darcy James Argue’s career so far vastly more unlikely. Yet he formed and has run (both musically and administratively) his Secret Society big band since 2005 and in objective terms his career is thriving.

Argue is not simply a jazz composer, but a composer making contemporary music for jazz big band; he has also written for new classical ensembles and arranged music for the Atlanta Symphony. You’ll find him in front of not only the Secret Society but big bands all over the globe, including the Jazzgroove Mothership Orchestra, WDR Big Band, Big Band Palace das Arte and many more.

But it is through the Secret Society that he’s made his biggest mark, with Grammy and Juno nominations for all three of its albums, Infernal Machines, Brooklyn Babylon and Real Enemies. Those last two have been large-scale multimedia pieces that work on recordings but are only fully realized and experienced live: the former is a soundtrack to the real time drawings of artist Danijel Zezelj while the latter is a jaw-dropping exploration, through music, video and narration, of what Richard Hofstadter called the paranoid style of American politics.

In one of the traditions of jazz history, this all started in high school band. Growing up in Vancouver, Canada, Argue went to a school with a strong music program in general, where jazz was part of the culture, and played fourth trumpet in the big band. There was no epiphany that set him on the path that took him to the high school audio library and there was the vinyl they play them like they’re not and that’s part of their mythology. 'In a good world we would have come under the magic spell, unfolded by Alister Spence...Toby Hall...and Lloyd Swanton' Bad Alchemy, Germany

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Sustained longevity in the jazz world is a feat achieved by a relative few. Preservation Hall Jazz Band (PHJB), with roots reaching back to the ’50s, celebrated its 50th Anniversary from 2011–12 with several major projects, including a concert at Carnegie Hall. Under the leadership of Ben Jaffe, PHJB is moving forward robustly into its next half-century. The documentary film, A Tuba to Cuba, is about the group’s trip to Cuba, poised to make the film festival circuit, following the group’s Cuban-inspired album So It Is.

Back in the ’50s, Preservation Hall in New Orleans’ French Quarter—the band’s home—was being run as a bohemian art gallery and cultural hangout. Part of the scene included music; local players were invited to gig at the Hall to encourage business. It was a dynamic that caught the attention of visiting Philadelphians, Sandra and tuba-player husband, Allan Jaffe. By 1961, Jaffe was running Preservation Hall as a music venue, with a focus on hiring older musicians struggling to survive. “At that time, there were no venues for these musicians to play in beside bars. There was no place for jazz to be showcased,” says Ben Jaffe. Suddenly there was a venue in which the music of the city could be heard on a regular basis and patrons could come and enjoy their cultural heritage.

On the unexpected death of Allan in 1987, son Ben took over, becoming Artistic Director in 1993 and leader in 1995. By 1999 most of the older generation musicians had passed on; the composition of the band evolved into an eclectic mix of musicians.

Much of the band’s evolution since the mid ’90s has been tied to Jaffe’s own learning curve. He’d just graduated college when his father passed away, so his task was not only to take over PHJB, but to figure out its path and what that meant in terms of the culture of the city with its rich heritage in music. Today, with a National Medal of the Arts to its credit (bestowed in 2006), the band is comprised of Jaffe (double bass, tuba), Walter Harris (drums), Ronell Johnson (trombone), Branden Lewis (trumpet), Clint Maedgen (saxophone), Kyle Roussel (piano) and the oldest member, reed player Charlie Gabriel, who just celebrated his 86th birthday. “Charlie Gabriel is New Orleans’ most important living musician,” Jaffe notes. “He embodies the things that are most important to me in life. He taught me how to focus and keep my eye on the prize without getting bogged down in distraction. Charlie is simply a beautiful human being.”

In 2011, the Preservation Hall Foundation was established to protect, preserve and perpetuate the musical traditions and heritage of New Orleans. The mission reflects the philosophy of the band, which is to create greater awareness and appreciation for traditional New Orleans jazz and the communities that support as well as expand on it. In 2015 PHJB took its life-changing trip to Cuba. The musical connection between Cuba and New Orleans runs deep. “The connection to Cuba is complicated and layered,” Jaffe points out. Slave ships from Africa stopped in Havana en route to New Orleans, for instance; yet the city was always a locus where sounds and cultures from around the world mingled. The singular history of the Crescent City is a topic that’s important to Jaffe, so important that the recent direction of the band and its future path hinge on it. He notes that for “outsiders” what makes New Orleans tick is not necessarily understood and perhaps even unfathomable. The mission, then, includes interpreting that history into music for a wide audience. “New Orleans is unique to the United States,” Jaffe observes. “There is no other city like it.”

Years before, in the ’30s, pianist Jelly Roll Morton, in his Library of Congress recordings, noted “the Spanish tinge” in the music of the city. The phrase refers to the AfroCuban rhythms that embellish conventional rhythms commonly used in jazz and popular music. Morton also noted the Cuban presence in his own French Creole culture. The phenomenon lies in the path of the drum. The primal rhythms of Africa were brought first to the Caribbean—primarily Cuba—and then translated to New Orleans before moving up river and then east and west. Whereas slave owners in the American south forbade the drum and use of rhythmic devices, Cuban slave owners never withdrew drumming from their slave population. This fact helped to preserve the essence of the rhythms of the African homeland.

It was no surprise then, when in Cuba, the band encountered their musical counterparts. The trip became a pilgrimage, according to Jaffe. Through music the band sought to connect the history and culture of New Orleans in a direct line to the musical heritage upon which it is, in large part, based. The elements of son, rhumba and habanera are apparent in New Orleans funk and jazz, for instance, particularly in Second Line parade beats. It had been by Cooter’s Buena Vista Social Club project that was Jaffe’s introduction to Cuba. “What Cooter was doing was much like what my parents did when they started Preservation Hall—discovering and bringing to light the older musicians who didn’t have a chance to play anymore,” Jaffe says, adding, “with the Buena Vista projects we were charmed by these older Cuban musicians, but in A Tuba to Cuba we’re dealing with more gravitas. Buena Vista opened the door, but our film shows the history and the connections of cultures and music. A Tuba to Cuba makes good on his father’s dream of tracing the musical roots of New Orleans back to Cuba.

PHJB members knew they wanted to film the trip from the outset and that idea grew in scope, as did the trip itself. From casually intending to bring along some cameras, the entourage wound up with two directors. But before A Tuba to Cuba came So It Is, an album of original compositions composed by Jaffe and Gabriel, with a few other contributors. So It Is (the group’s second release of original music) is heavily influenced by the AfroCuban rhythms absorbed on the trip, especially in the use of the claves. It marks a departure, miles away from the jazz of the veterans who used to play in the Hall at the beginning and certainly a distance from previous PHJB albums. So It Is is an emotional release—brash and funky, catchy and alive with a new spirit, loaded with a dynamism that reflects post-Katrina New Orleans as well as the experiences garnered on the Cuban trip. In sum, the album reflects the discovery of Cuba as integral to the band’s identity.

A Tuba to Cuba recently screened at the Alamo Drafthouse Lamar during the SXSW Film Festival. It is set to be entered in several more film festivals before seeking commercial distribution. The film observes closely the building of bridges across time and cultures. One clip that had been taken on the trip with a cellphone camera and posted on YouTube is a prime example of how musicians who have never before met and who come from different locations and cultures can achieve musical and personal harmony. The band playing a staple of its book, “Go to the Mardi Gras”, with its Second Line groove, were joined by Cuban percussionists, who fell right into step. As A Tuba to Cuba unfolds, the participants thus discover how close those ties are and why. And as is so often the case when musicians get together, new music is created from their collaborations. The bonds draw closer, so that by the end of the documentary, it’s clear that lives have been changed. The inspiration continued in the scoring of the film, with Jaffe exploring rhythmic, harmonic and melodic musical moments, which grew into more with the knowledge accrued from his experience.

Incharting a course for the future, Jaffe reflects on the past. “My parents captured a snapshot in time,” he says. “They didn’t even necessarily think that what they were doing would actually last.” Yet he notes that PHJB has always moved in tandem with the evolution of the music of the New Orleans community. “When they began with Preservation Hall,” he says, “there was a debate about what constituted the New Orleans sound. “What Jaffe knows for sure is that PHJB will continue the cultural conversation. The band has been to Brazil, has connections to Haiti and has recently been exploring Colombian music. “After Hurricane Katrina,” Jaffe says strongly, “we made a commitment to expand our mission. We want to know what role we play in our culture and in the music. Music is a vehicle for connection. We want to celebrate these connections and keep exploring.”

For more information, visit preservationhalljazzband.com.

Preservation Hall Jazz Band is at Central Park Summerstage Aug. 8th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening

• Sweet Emma Barrett/Preservation Hall Jazz Band—New Orleans’ Sweet Emma and her Preservation Hall Jazz Band (Preservation Hall, 1964)
• Preservation Hall Jazz Band—New Orleans (Vol. I) (CBS-Columbia, 1976/77)
• Preservation Hall Jazz Band—When the Saints Go Marchin’ In: New Orleans, Vol. III (CBS, 1983)
• Preservation Hall Jazz Band—Live! (Sony Masterworks, 1991)
• Preservation Hall Jazz Band—Shake That Thing (Preservation Hall, 2001)
• Preservation Hall Jazz Band—So It Is (Sony-Legacy, 2015)
Chucho Valdés says come to Cuba
Havana Jazz Festival
January 13-21, 2019
JazzCuba.com
Back in the latter part of the 70s Ricky Ford established himself in the jazz world as the premier “mainstream” saxophonist of his generation; a lone young lion—practically a pride of one—blowing roaring tenor in the manner of Dexter Gordon and Sonny Rollins at a time when few young African-Americans were coming on to the jazz scene playing in the tradition. Ford, who was born in Boston on Mar. 4th, 1954, began his musical journey as a drummer, before moving on to tenor at 15. Playing capably with local organ trios around his hometown he was sighted by pianist Ran Blake, who urged him to enroll in the New England Conservatory, where he studied with master musician-educators Jaki Byard, George Russell, Joe Allard and Joe Maneri.

Upon his graduation in 1974 he was tapped to join the Duke Ellington Orchestra, then under the direction of Mercer Ellington, who had taken over following his father’s death earlier that year. Ford recalls his year and a half in the group with understandable pride. “I love Duke Ellington so it was great to play in the band…[trumpeter] Jack Walrath. It was quite different…[bassist] Danny Mixon was there. [Drummer] Dannie Richmond and [vibraphonist] Lionel Hampton for about a year and a half around 1980,” he continues. “And then right around that time I started working with [pianist] Abdullah Ibrahim when he started his band Ekaya. We were pretty much busy working locally at Sweet Basil. I started working there regularly with Ekaya and then with [bassist] Richard Davis. Sometimes I would work with [cornet player] Nat Adderley in the group with [pianist] Larry Willis, [bassist] Walter Booker and [drummer] Jimmy Cobb. So I was pretty active as a sideman and as a leader.” Recordings with drummer Beaver Harris and soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy revealed an ability to play ‘outside’ the mainstream, which was increasingly apparent in the intensity of his solo improvising.

Soon he was leading his own groups, first at the Tin Palace and then Sweet Basil, as well as in Boston, where he was earning his Master’s degree at Brandeis, studying composition with Guggenheim fellow/composer Martin Boykan. His 1977 debut recording, Loxodonta Africana, which featured sophisticated, swinging pieces for sextet and nonet, revealed the impact of his tenures with Ellington and Mingus on his writing, which became more idiosyncratically personal on a succession of ten albums for Muse and three others on Candid, quartet, quintet and sextet efforts that featured multigenerational casts.

In 1996, Ford relocated to France to join the family he had started in Paris a couple of years earlier. He quickly established himself, founding a big band that played his ever-increasing songbook. He also played regularly with fellow American expatriates like pianists Kirk Lightsey and Bobby Few and drummers John Betsch and Steve McCraven. In 2000 he accepted a position to teach at Istanbul Bilgi University, splitting his time between Turkey and France for the next seven years. “There was a great scene there; there are a lot of musicians in Istanbul,” he notes.

Upon returning to France fulltime, Ford retained something of the Turkish culture that led to another major artistic decision. He says, “Most of the musicians in Turkey, they don’t just play music, they do other things involving art, so I decided to try it. I opened an art gallery in 2008. It’s called Galerie 14 in a place called Toucy. We expose artists and photographers from all over the world. A lot of French artists; artists from Africa, artists from Turkey, artists from America; I do one exhibition a year of my paintings.” He’s also started a jazz festival in the town he likens to a French Woodstock. He says, “This year we have Steven Reinhardt, he’s related to Django Reinhardt, and we’re having Michelle Hendricks [daughter of Jon Hendricks]. We also have free concerts on some of the streets in Toucy and free concerts in the gallery.

In the ’70s Shepley became a student of yoga and in the ’80s and early ’90s he started a jazz festival in the town he likens to a French Woodstock. He says, “This year we have Steven Reinhardt, he’s related to Django Reinhardt, and we’re having Michelle Hendricks [daughter of Jon Hendricks]. We also have free concerts on some of the streets in Toucy and free concerts in the gallery.

For more information, visit joeshepleytrumpet.com

Joe Shepley was one of the most in-demand studio and live trumpet players from the ’60s-00s. He did endless jingles and movies and worked with too many artists to name. He imbued the trumpet with childlike enthusiasm and steadfast positivity.

Shepley was born on Aug. 7th, 1930 in Yonkers. His uncle took him to see Louis Armstrong and Red Elridge as a teenager. He joined the American Federation of Musicians Local 402 in 1946 and was working club dates before serving in the Korean War from 1952-54, joining Local 802 upon his return. He attended Manhattan School before and after his service, studying with Joseph Alessi, Sr., Donald Byrd and Joe Wilder, earning his Bachelor’s degree in 1956 and Master’s in 1957. But it was Carmine Caruso, with whom he took less than a dozen lessons, who had the biggest influence: “All the success…all I have physically is my big ears. I played my trumpet with my head,” Shepley said after his 21st birthday in 1957.

For more information, visit joeshepleytrumpet.com

Recommended Listening:
• Ricky Ford — Loxidonta Africana (New World, 1977)
• Mingus Dynasty — Reincarnation (Soul Note, 1982)
• Ricky Ford — Shorter Ideas (Muse, 1984)
• Abdullah Ibrahim — No Fear, No Dice (Tiptoe-Enja, 1990)
• Ricky Ford — American-African Blues (Candid, 1991)
• Ricky Ford/Kirk Lightsey — Reeds and Keys (Jazz Friends, 2003)

Jazz From The Westchester Workshop (RKO Records)

Shepley taught privately and at Hastings High School while playing various club dates when his career started to take off in the mid ’60s. He befriended Bernie Pravin, who began giving him studio work. Bernie Glow and Ernie Royal also took him under their wing and soon Shepley was busy in the studios. He was proud of his lead assignment on B.B. King’s “The Thrill Is Gone” and developed a close relationship with fellow trumpeter Burt Collins in the late ’60s in King Richard’s Fluegel Knights and the Duke Pearson Big Band. One of his great solos is his feature on “Time After Time”, the final piece on Introducing Duke Pearson’s Big Band (Blue Note, 1967-68). Shepley and Collins took the Pearson rhythm section of Bob Cranshaw and Mickey Roker and formed the Collins-Shepley Galaxy, releasing two albums. Shepley spent more time teaching, hanging out with fellow American expatriates like pianists Kirk Lightsey and Bobby Few and drummers John Betsch and Steve McCraven. In 2000 he accepted a position to teach at Istanbul Bilgi University, splitting his time between Turkey and France for the next seven years. “There was a great scene there; there are a lot of musicians in Istanbul,” he notes.

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**LABEL SPOTLIGHT**

**WEEKERTOFT**

BY STUART BROOMER

English improvisers have always stood out for their ability to develop and sustain musician-run labels, beginning in 1970 with Incus, whose founders included Derek Bailey and Evan Parker, and working through a host of others, including Parker’s psi, Eddie Prévost’s Matchless, Maya Homburger and Barry Guy’s Maya and Mark Wastell’s Confront. Weekertoft, the label created by London-based guitarist John Russell and Dublin pianist Paul G. Smyth, just emerged in 2016, but it’s the product of a much longer history. Russell is a veteran organizer: he launched Mopomoso (a contraction of MOderNismPostMOderNismS0Vhat) with composer/trumpeter Chris Burn as a monthly concert series of improvised music in 1991 at London’s Red Rose Theatre, where it was held continuously until a 2008 move to the Vortex Jazz Club, where it continues today without interruption.

Weekertoft (that name is a compound from the Kent dialect, “weeker” for ear, “toft” for a dwelling with adjacent buildings and grounds) arises directly from the Mopomoso experience, as well as drawing on its vast archive. Russell recounts, “Paul and I had talked about doing this for quite some time before we went ahead. I had already factored in the idea of an initial release to be taken from the Mopomoso tour in 2013, so we started with a four-CD boxed set. I think our main reasons were to have something that was of a decent quality. I also wanted a label that would in some way have a relationship with live events, so while documenting and spreading the word, its emphasis would be on the live nature of free improvisation.”

For Smyth, a classically trained pianist who went to art school and worked in rock, it’s just that magic of Mopomoso’s live free improvisation that attracted him: “My friendship with John Russell began in the late ‘90s when I visited his club night Mopomoso by chance and had my mind and heart broken in a dozen places. It’s proven to be the thread that runs through my musical life to this day. His support from that time on was invaluable, especially since Ireland was very much a rock at the edge of Europe when it came to improvised music. Mopomoso was the education that taught me how to fuse my experience with fine art and classical music with the kind of energy that I was used to from the world of rock and roll.”

As for the division of duties, Russell says, “Paul is responsible for sleeve design, manufacture and maintaining the website and I do the shipping and some text, spreading the word, etc.” As for their ability to work together as musicians, their 2014 duo cassette *Ditch School* (Weekertoft 7) testifies to that.

Weekertoft launched with the aforementioned ambitious boxed set called *Mopomoso Tour 2013: Making Rooms* (Weekertoft 1-4). The CDs draw on different performances and are individually devoted to the trio of Russell, Evan Parker and bassist John Edwards; Pat Thomas’ solo piano; the string trio of violinist Alison Blunt, violist Benedict Taylor and bassist David Leahy; and the duo of vocalist Kay Grant and clarinettist Alex Ward. In effect, it’s an introduction to four different improvisational approaches.

Since then Weekertoft has demonstrated its freedom and adaptability by releasing different projects in diverse media, whether as CD or download, download-only or cassette. Russell is pragmatic: “It’s rather a scatter-gun approach and depends sometimes on what we can afford to do. In general, I would say that for download-only it is more ‘archival/historical’ and for the CDs and cassettes more about the present, that is, for musicians who would like something to sell at concerts, although that’s not a hard and fast rule. The recorded quality stays high whatever the format.”

That “archival/historical” element is clearest in Chris Burn and Matthew Hutchinson’s *Re, Cook and Out*, from Red Rose recordings made in 2000 and 2001 (Weekeft Digital 3). The vocal clarinet mutating and synthesized transformations of instrumental sounds are remarkably contemporary. Smyth’s solo from 2010, *The Warning Signs* (Weekertoft Digital 1), comes as a revelation. His approach to the piano is utterly original, sometimes focusing on the strings and rhythmic detailing, building complex yet spacious soundscapes in which individual sounds join eventually into a rich chorus. Brevity alone likely explains why *In Search of Wasabi* (Weekertoft Digital 2) is a download. The wholly satisfying trio recording with Ken Ikeda on electronics, Russell and percussionist Eddie Prévost is a mere 25 minutes in length.

As for the physical releases, clarinettist Alex Ward’s solo CD *Proprioception* (Weekertoft 6) initially focuses on his acoustic improvisations, studio recordings with a startlingly vivid and intimate sound, so near that one feels like an occupant of the clarinet itself. When he adds amplification to the clarinet he presses it into the sonic territory of an electric guitar.

(Continued on page 38)

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**VOX NEWS**

**WORDS, WORDS, WORDS**

BY SUZANNE LORGE

In 2012, three years before he died, Pulitzer-prize winner and U.S. Poet Laureate Philip Levine began performing his poetry to the accompaniment of saxophonist Benjamin Boone and a tight ensemble of jazz instrumentalists. Levine’s voice was sure and smooth, his poetry sharply evocative. The 14-track collection that grew out of the collaboration—*The Poetry of Jazz (Origin)—*demonstrates how well carefully crafted language and improvised music complement each other.

Boone invited notable guest artists to perform on select tracks, among them saxophonists Chris Potter on an homage to Sonny Rollins, “The Unknowable” ("Wood-shedding, they called it / But his woodshed was / Sergei Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf;* Gates not only wrote the clever libretto for the 35-minute jazz opus but also narrates. Like the 1936 original, the piece is a didactic musical fairytale meant to help kids learn all of the instruments in the orchestra. The modern version takes the instruction a step further: not only does Gates’ text identify the usual jazz instruments, but also each character in the story is assigned its own groove. The piece is one of six Prokofiev- or wolf-inspired compositions on the eponymous, self-released album. Even the coolest of the cool will smile at this one.

Among the notable summer reads for lovers of vocal jazz: British writer Peter Jones’ *This is Hip: The Life of Mark Murphy (Equinox)* chronicles the career of the legendary hipster, from his early years in upstate New York through his contributions as a prolific recording artist and always-touring musician to his final concert at Joe’s Pub in 2013. Jones’ biography is a slew of stories and quotes about and from some of the most accomplished jazz musicians of our time.

Pianist/songwriter David Frishberg talks about his life on the road and in the music business in *My Dear Noa Fort, singer/saxophonist Camille Thurman will release *Waiting for the Sunrise (Chessky)*, at Dizzy’s Club (Aug. 30th).
LORRAINE GORDON
BY ANDREY HENKIN

Lorraine Gordon, the jazz matriarch who ruled over her fiefdom at the Village Vanguard from a reserved corner table for the past 25+ years, died Jun. 9th at 95. Gordon published her biography, Alive at the Village Vanguard: My Life In and Out of Jazz Time (Hal Leonard Publishing), in 2006 and was named a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master for Jazz Advocacy in 2013, the first woman to receive the honor.

Gordon was born Lorraine Stein on Oct. 15th, 1922 in Newark, NJ. Though she would make her first trip to the Village Vanguard five years after it was opened by Max Gordon in 1935, her life in jazz began with another chapter. She was married to Blue Note Records founder Alfred Lion and crucial to its early efforts (the label began in 1939), working as a bookkeeper, artist promoter and helping build its roster, notably pianist Thelonious Monk. Speaking with Will Friedwald for The Wall Street Journal in 2013 in advance of receiving the NEA Jazz Master award, Gordon recounted a delicious piece of jazz irony from her time at Blue Note: Monk’s first engagement at the Village Vanguard, which she helped arrange, was far from a success, with Max Gordon exclaiming, “You trying to ruin my business? We’re dying with this guy!”

Gordon and Lion later divorced and, in 1949, she married Max, around the point when the Village Vanguard moved from its early bohemian roots to its now-revered place in the jazz firmament as the longest-running jazz club in the world.

Lorraine became involved with the business of the club when Max’ health began to fail and, after his death in 1989, took over operations of the club, closing for only one day in remembrance. It continued to be a pinnacle to be reached by any jazz artist and the only New York City jazz club to maintain its six-nights-two-sets-a-night format. In the new millennium, the Village Vanguard was a frequent home for such legends as Cedar Walton, Geri Allen and Paul Motian as well as featuring experimental acts like pianist Cecil Taylor and various projects of saxophonist John Zorn.

Gordon had been in declining health for the past several years, yet still audibly shushing unruly patrons with undiminished vigor on the nights when she attended performances. The club’s daily operations were increasingly taken over by Max and Lorraine’s younger daughter Deborah, along with Jed Eisenman, the club’s general manager for many years.

In discussing the changes she had seen in jazz during her time below ground at 178 7th Avenue South, Gordon said to Friedwald: “Everything changes... Of course it changes – it’s a growing art form. Anything that’s artistic and pure will change. Otherwise it’s a static thing that you don’t care about. What’s new is the name of the genre; if it comes out of the musical ability of artists who play and compose, then it’s a valid art form.”

BIG BILL BISSONNETTE (Feb. 5th, 1937—Jun. 26th, 2018) The trombonist was a champion of jazz from his adopted home of New Orleans, performing regularly and documenting a wide array of local musicians on his Jazz Crusade label, which was active since the mid ’60s and later expanded to include the trad scene of Britain. Bissonnette died Jun. 26th at 81.

BRIAN BROWNE (March 1937—Jun. 5th, 2018) The Canadian pianist was a stalwart up north, making records for RCA Victor, Capitol and CBC, then falling into obscurity via substance abuse but reemerging to great acclaim on the Ottawa jazz scene over the past two decades. Browne died Jun. 5th at 81.

WAYNE DOCKERY (Jun. 27, 1941—Jun. 11th, 2018) The bassist was active from the mid ’70s, working with Sonny Fortune, George Benson, Hal Galper, Billy Harper, Freddie Hubbard, Junior Cook, Eddie Henderson, Archie Shepp, Sunny Murray, Odean Pope, Kali Z. Fasteau and others. Dockery died Jun. 11th at 76.

NORMAN EDGE (Apr. 29th, 1934—Jun. 4th, 2018) The bassist was a member of pianist Morris Nanton’s trio in the ’60s, appearing on several Prestige dates, but had more exposure for his work on Gene Ammons’ 1962 Prestige album Bad! Bossa Nova. Edge died Jun. 4th at 84.

JON HISEMAN (Jun. 21st, 1944—Jun. 12th, 2018). The British drummer was one of the stars of European jazz and fusion, working with pianists Mike Taylor, Howard Riley and Pete Lemer early on, founding jazz-rock bands Colosseum in 1968 and Tempest in 1973 and appearing on albums by Jack Bruce, Colosseum bandmate Dick Heckstall-Smith, Wolfgang Dauner, Volker Kriegel, The United Jazz+Rock Ensemble, Barbara Thompson and others to go along with a smattering of albums as a leader. Hiseman died Jun. 12th at 73.

REBECCA PARRIS (Dec. 28th, 1951—Jun. 17th, 2018) The vocalist made albums under her own name for Weston Blair, Koch, Shiria and Saying It With Jazz and in collaboration with Gary Burton, 1994’s It’s Another Day, for GRP. Parris died Jun. 17th at 66.
FESTIVAL REPORT

SUONI PER IL POPolo
BY MATHIEU BÉLANGER

The annual Suoni Per Il Popolo festival took place in Montréal Jun. 1st-19th. Those familiar with the festival will have noticed that this 17th edition was a few days shorter compared to the ones of the past few years, which lasted three weeks.

As always, diversity proved to be at the heart of the festival’s identity. In addition to free jazz and improvised music, the festival continued to feature various genres such as contemporary music, electroacoustic, hip-hop, noise, punk, etc. Indeed, the Quatuor Bozzini (which premiered a work for string quartet by Élaine Radigue), Jacob Kierkegaard, Moor Mother and Puce Mary were among the many artists as part of this year’s edition. Furthermore, the festival put an emphasis on issues related to cultural and gender diversity, most notably by featuring many queer artists.

The festival likes to work with artists with whom it has built a relationship and 2018 saw the return of saxophonists Joe McPhee, Ken Vandermark and Dave Rempis, bassist William Parker and flutist Nicole Mitchell, among others. These special relationships are also used by the festival as a vehicle to invite musicians who do not perform regularly in Montréal such as pedal steel guitarist Susan Alcorn (in trio with McPhee and Vandermark), drummer Milford Graves (in duo with Parker), saxophonist David Murray (in duo with drummer Khalil El’Zabar), cellist Tomeka Reid (in a trio with Mitchell and drummer Mike Reed) or drummer Roger Turner (in the trio Monicker with trombonist Scott Thomson and guitarist Arthur Bull).

As always, it would be impossible to give an account of all the concerts and so this report will concentrate on some that stood out.

The first highlight of the 2018 Suoni Per Il Popolo was the concert of McPhee and drummer John Heward at La Vitrola (Jun. 5th). There was something very special in the playing that night. As McPhee said between two pieces, the music was made up of fragments—“some from the past, some from the future”—yet while one could hear the fragmented nature of the music, it moved from one idea to the other in an organic way and maintained a cohesive mood. There was also a deepness to the music and they pulled off the feat of infusing it with a genuine sense of joy. McPhee told the audience it was a special concert for them and they certainly rose to the occasion.

One of the best concerts of the festival was that of Party Knüllers—the duo of cellist Fred Lonberg-Holm with guest trumpeter Jaimie Branch at Casa del Popolo (Jun. 11th). The music itself would be best described as insectile because of its fast pace, emphasis on small arco and pizzicato, played a riveting duet with a child whose clarion sound wafted heavenward. Her clean, clarion sound wafted heavenward. The music itself would be best described as insectile because of its fast pace, emphasis on small arco and pizzicato.

(Continued on Page 39)

MONTRÉAL JAZZ FEST
BY MARK KERESMAN

The Montréal Jazz Festival is, quite rightly, considered a world-class festival. Every year, from approximately the end of June though the first week of July, music spanning the spectrum of jazz—and beyond—can be heard and felt, from nearly all corners of the globe, performers internationally known to homogrown Canadians, icons and megastars to young ‘uns on the way up. In years past, everyone from Ornette Coleman to Jeff Beck have been honored with awards. Take this year, for instance…

Among the hundreds of jazz festivals that dot the map of greater Europe every year, Südtirol is special for two reasons: its setting and its programming. The South Tirol region of northern Italy is one of the most beautiful places on earth. The green mountain slopes look almost perpendicular. Somehow chalets cling to them. If there is a flat place there is usually a castle. Further back, on the high horizon, are the jagged silver peaks of the Dolomites. The Artistic Director, Klaus Widmann (a physician by day in Bolzano, the base town of the festival) hears a different drummer. The artists he books are often young and rarely famous. They always, in some way, push the envelope. He says, “If we don’t support the musicians who are capable of creating the future, the jazz art form will wither.” You go to Widmann’s festival to challenge yourself, not to seek reassurance.

There is always a geographical theme. This year (Jun. 29th-Jul. 8th) it was “The North”: the Nordic and Baltic countries. Most of the venues are provocative contexts for music: alpine huts, cable car stations, fortresses, mountain meadows, factories. On the second night, the Norwegian trio Building Instrument (Mari Kvien Brunvoll, vocals; Åsmund Weltzien, keyboards; Øyvind Hegg-Lunde, drums) played beside a mountain lake. Brunvoll sang in Norwegian in a small, pure voice. She and Weltzien used electronics to multiply and layer themselves, orchestrally. As night descended, their soft alluring sonorities became one with the wind through the trees. This hypnotic ensemble drew you into its dream.

The Hannah Paulsberg Concept (Paulsberg, tenor saxophone; Oscar Grönberg, Rhodes; Trygve Fiske, bass; Hans Hulbækmo, drums) also played in an optimal setting, at 7,000 feet, just below the caves of an active marble quarry. If you were slightly late, as you worked your way down from the caves toward the concert in a meadow, you heard Paulsberg before you saw her. Her clean, clarion sound wafted heavenly. She is a measured improviser who derives interesting ideas from the melodic centers of her graceful songs. She closed with a rapt ballad, “Short Story”. In the looming presence of the permanent mountains, her transitory human saxophone voice was especially yearning.

Nils Berg Cinemascope (Berg, tenor saxophone; Josef Kallerdahl, bass; Christopher Cantillo, drums) played in a public park in Bolzano. Berg uses clips from YouTube as stimulation for improvisation and collaboration. His acoustic quartet at Maison Symphonique (bassist Josef Kallerdahl, drummer Tom Paley and Chris Potter) played in a public park in Bolzano. Berg uses clips from YouTube as stimulation for improvisation and collaboration. His acoustic quartet at Maison Symphonique.
Cuban pianist Harold López-Nussa grew up in Centro Habana, absorbing the sounds of indigenous classical composers in the conservatories where he trained, alongside the batá drumming and songs of the AfroCuban Santería ceremonies prevalent in his neighborhood, later turning his attention to jazz improvisation. On his second release for Mack Avenue, *Un Dia Cualquier*, his intention, as the title suggests, is to present (mostly) original music for trio as you would hear it played on an “everyday day.” For someone with López-Nussa’s considerable skill set, however, this presumably unpretentious effort is still likely to dazzle the unsuspecting listener.

The pianist’s taste and technique are both impressive and impeccable on “Cimarrón”, the incisive opener; on “Elegua” (named for the Orisha deity), where his lines rush forward over the pulse; and especially on “Ma petite dans la Boulangerie”, where his busy left-hand baseline anchors even busier right-hand figurations that accelerate independently. Other tracks, notably “Danza de los Sangolíos”, “Una Tarde Cualquiera En Paris (to Bebo Valdés)”, the rhapsodic “Preludio (to Jose Juan)” and the son/danzon “Y la Negra Bailaba” are comparatively refined, even courtly, revealing a more classical temperament. At times, as on the staid ballad “Contigo en la Distancia” (a cover of César Portillo de la Luz), one could wish for a bit less of the delicate agility and a bit more brazen chance-taking, but López-Nussa doesn’t seem the type to risk painting himself into a musical corner.

Supported by his younger brother Ruy Adrian on traps or congas and Gaston Joya on bass, both formidable technicians in their own right, both well comfortable with the leader’s artistic inclinations, the session boasts cohesive interplay, particularly on “Una Tarde Cualquiera En Paris”, “Elegua” and the spirited closer, “Mi Son Cerra o”, which features dramatic piano work, edgy bass solo and conversational congas over the outro before it all ends quietly.

For more information, visit mackavenue.com. This project is at Jazz Standard Aug. 1st. See Calendar.

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Nigerian drummer Tony Allen spent more than a decade (1968-79) as the musical director for the celebrated singer/saxophonist Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the founder of the African jazz hybrid known as Afrobeat. Before leaving for Europe, Allen was a major architect of the uniquely infectious sound, something that Kuti openly acknowledged. Now 78 and living in Paris, Allen—whom Allen not getting writing credit on Kuti’s songs, for which he created the rhythms—still carries the torch for Afrobeat. The Source is something of a repertory tribute to the sound, performed ably by a mostly French little big band. All the compositions are either by Allen or co-written by him and every one is an earworm. Instead of the loose 20-minute workouts typically delivered by Kuti’s Africa 70 and Egypt 80, these pieces are tightly—and brilliantly—arranged (by Allen) and none makes it to the seven-minute mark. Allen, who also recorded a tribute to drum influence Art Blakey last year, is a master at interweaving riffing horns and pushing the music forward with a firm rhythmic pulse. The album features creative use of baritone saxophone, tuba, flute and trombone, playing solo or in ensembles.

If Wynton Marsalis organized a tribute to Kuti at Lincoln Center, it would sound like this. That’s not meant negatively, but the approach tends to emphasize the artists as composers first, improvisers second. The players don’t stand out on this album and most get fairly brief solos. “Ewajo”, for instance, is one of the few pieces that features a Kuti-like tenor solo and Jean Jacques Elangui (who also plays soprano) does a good job of evoking the master without significantly expanding on his legacy. But as an ensemble, playing a compelling circular theme, the piece is first-rate. Rhythm guitarist Indy Dibongue from Cameroon gets in some good work on “Life is Beautiful”, as he does on the propulsive “Tony’s Blues”.

“Push and Pull” doubles bass (Mathias Allamane, great here) and two-handed left-hand bassline (Jean Baptiste Donadini) on some totally in-the-pocket drumming. The big swaggering piece has a bit of a Dollar Brand township feel to it. “Cool Cats” is a pulsating tune featuring Yann Jankielewicz on alto. He’s fine, but never exhibits the kind of urgency and fire that was typical of Kuti at his best. That could be said of the whole band, which might have been better off recording before an impassioned audience.

Of course, one big thing this project is missing is Kuti’s always committed baritone voice, railing against the latest authoritarian impulses of the Nigerian government. Allen says in the liner notes to his album Secret Agent, “Fela wrote like a singer, I write like a drummer.” Fair enough and Brian Eno says—no contest here—that Allen is maybe the most brilliant drummer ever. He never overplays—one of the marks of a truly great drummer—and doesn’t even solo on some of the album’s best. That could be said of the whole band, which might have been better off recording before an impassioned audience.

A concluding treatment of the standard “Alone at Last” (written by Gershwin, popularized by Frank Sinatra) might have been better off recording before an impassioned audience. Instead of the loose 20-minute workouts typically presented (mostly) original music for trio as you would hear it played on an “everyday day.” For someone with López-Nussa’s considerable skill set, however, this presumably unpretentious effort is still likely to dazzle the unsuspecting listener.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch. Ortiz is at The Stone at The New School Aug. 2nd. See Calendar.
Valley of Search
Alan Braufman (India Navigation-Valley of Search) by Marc Medwin

At 5:49 of “Love is for Real”, from Side A of this excellent reissue, Alan Braufman tears apart a web of atomic serenity with a multiphonic alto explosion. A barbaric yawp of which Whitman would have been proud, it also distills histories, encapsulating a time, a place and the biographical and musical heterogeneities heralding them. Clifford Allen, whose expertly informed liner notes are a large part of this long overdue reissue’s success, captures the vibrant spirits at work and play in the West Side NYC performance space that was 501 Canal Street. As few others are qualified to do, he sets the stage for the two continuous 1974 performances comprising this LP. He paints a vivid picture of these musicians converging, living and playing according to a DIY aesthetic evident in every sound on offer. Each side comprises what is probably a typical band set in microcosm. The pieces ebb and flow in insistent arcs and it all begins with a pulsed drone. This one is unique, as it’s presented on dulcimer by Cooper-Moore, whose many instrumental, vocal and political contributions were celebrated during 2017’s Vision Festival; this is his first recorded performance. Listen to him chanting sacred text as bassist Cecil McBee bolster’s that gorgeous drone and Braufman’s flute conjures shades of New Thing energy, channeling early ‘60s Ravi Shankar collaborations with West Coast jazz musicians. Such comparisons become superfluous, early ‘60s Ravi Shankar collaborations with West Coast jazz musicians converging, living and playing according to a DIY aesthetic evident in every sound on offer. For more information, visit valleysofsearch.com. This project is at Greene Space Aug. 1st and National Sawdust Aug. 3rd. See Calendar.

Solos
Matteo Liberatore (Innova) by Annie Murnighan

On Solos, Brooklyn-based Italian ex-pat Matteo Liberatore uses bedsprings, kick drum beaters, alligator clips and bass bows to expand the sonic capacity of his acoustic guitar. He transforms the instrument into a drum, flute or violin played pizzicato, creating a striking series of compositions that fluctuate between moments of jarring noise and eerie silence. Scratching strings and the thump of Liberatore’s body against the guitar’s wooden frame—sounds that other artists may seek to mask on their recordings through noise gates and compressors—are often placed in the forefront, imbuing Solos with an unsettling immediacy.

“Agnés”, named for the late visual artist Agnès Martin, flutters and expands beautifully with swift and textured arpeggations. The dedication is fitting: like her large-scale drawings and paintings, Liberatore’s work is both minimal and abstract. On a number of tracks, it’s easy to forget that the sounds are coming entirely from a single instrument. While “Chimera” creaks like a tin wind-up toy, “Barrea” recalls the disordered and transfixing hum of an orchestra tuning.

Liberatore’s unorthodox and experimental techniques also lend a striking physicality to his work. On the closing piece, “Matryoshka”, the guitarist overlays the horizontal scratching of his instrument’s steel strings with a sparse and curious chord progression. Strings plucked and strummed mingle with hollow knocks against the wood, creating layers of noise and texture that complement the bewitching harmony. “Coral”, one of the more recognizably guitar-driven pieces, recalls the veering and harmonic complexity of György Ligeti’s more downtempo piano études. Liberatore’s playing sways gracefully between moments of discord and unsetting beauty.

Despite the variety of sounds he produces, Liberatore doesn’t sacrifice compositional cohesion for instrumental experiment. Innovative and uncanny, his technique doesn’t act as an end in itself but, rather, as a means for him to express uncertainty and disquiet to haunting effect.

For more information, visit innova.mu. Liberatore is at Downtown Music Gallery Aug. 5th. See Calendar.

Tokyo ‘81
Woody Shaw (Elemental Music)
The Tour, Volume Two
Woody Shaw/Louis Hayes (HighNote) by Robert Bush

There is a significant school of thought positing that mainstream jazz trumpet reached its zenith in the late ‘70s with the ascendance of Woody Shaw, especially the string of albums that began with Little Red’s Fantasy and continued with Rosewood and beyond. Tokyo ‘81 features Shaw’s working band of the day: Steve Turre (trombone), Mulgrew Miller (piano), Stafford James (bass) and Tony Reedus (drums). Shaw himself says: “Immediately evident with a noticeably faster rendition of “Rosewood”—all of his salient facets on display: fat, brassy tone; bold intervalic development; and a surplus of ideas. Turre and Miller also acquit themselves admirably on the 69-bar form and Reedus stirs things up as James holds it all down.

Shaw opens up his piercing upper register on a brilliant reading of “Round Midnight”, utilizing his unique harmonic concept, which never defaults to an empty exercise of “running the changes”; this approach still sounds fresh today and it’s a shame more trumpeters aren’t continuing in that vein. Miller makes the most of his feature, turning in a smart and ebullient essay and James is the great unifier with his huge, woody sound and rock-solid imagination. “Apex” is a barnburner gliding efficiently on precise ride-cymbal pings, freeing Shaw to release a blistering contribution, followed by Turre, who manages to swing his ass off at any tempo. Miller heads up the rear with lightning in the right hand and thunder in the left. After three uptempo pieces, Shaw’s “From Moment to Moment” represents a welcome respite. The pensive ballad derives maximum heat via groaning bass whole notes and a truly languid bass trombone observation. Miller begins “Song of Songs” alone, gradually opening up to include mournful bass arco and shimmering cymbals. Shaw extrapolates his pentatonic theme with a long, winding solo and Reedus catches fire when the scene shifts into double-time with a keen sense of forward motion.

Turn the clock back four years and Shaw is holding things down with drummer Louis Hayes and raspy free agent Junior Cook (tenor saxophone), alongside Ronnie Mathews (piano) and the constant presence of James on The Tour, Volume Two.

Shaw and Cook blend together very well on these. “My Cup Runneth Over” is an unabashed hero statement, while “Across the Street” is a more spacious and elliptical affair with a killer Coleman Hawkins reference. “Venus” is a romance that mingles tonal beauty and restless energy, finalizing the album on a perfect note.

For more information, visit elemental-music.com and jazzdepot.com
Three has always been a prime number...for jazz interaction. Consider the classic piano trio format: an ideal combination of complementary instrument ranges and timbres fostering maximum creative input from each musician. Three new albums reiterate the relevance of this time-tested grouping.

Australian pianist Alister Spence has spent almost two decades playing with bassist Lloyd Swanton and drummer Toby Hall. Not everything but enough, the trio’s third album, contains a disc of original compositions (almost all by Spence) plus a second disc of free improvisations, every third track a piano solo. The compositions, reflective of Spence’s experience in film composing, employ minimalist figures, sonic texturing and subtle live looping effects to suggest a musical mise-en-scène. A strong sense of collectivity, innuendo and abstraction prevails, though the Monk-ish “Peculiar Orbit” provides a (welcome) change of pace. The second disc’s 21 short improvisations vary from dense frenzy of “Room 7” and “Room 16” (a standout) to comparatively sparse Foley effects of “Room 10” and “Room 21”. Spence’s solos often utilize high chiming tones, low rumbles or trilling clusters, all filtered through his roving, through-composed sensibility.

A decade after The Arcade Project, Håvard Wiik’s trio with bassist Ole Morten Vågan and drummer Håkon Mjåset Johansen returned to the studio for This Is Not A Waltz, showcasing the Norwegian pianist’s fearsome chops, avid imagination and snaky themes. Wiik, a disciplined thinker, finesses each melodic fragment with the precision of a score, following each idea through to its logical conclusion but what’s astonishing is his ability to do so at breakneck speed with the illusion of ease. The first four numbers, sonically sculptured, are “Calligrams” and “Neidbau”, lush ballad “Tudor Style” and mood-swinging “Bought & Muzzled” – all display this uncanny combination of formality and freedom. Vågan and Johansen join Wiik on every hairpin curve, each sudden fork in the road, drums finally coming to the fore on “Mnemonic Functions”.

Another Norwegian, Kjetil Mulelid, makes his trio debut with Not Enough to Buy A House, a generally more relaxed and equilateral effort than the above. Although the central track, “C & R”, is a free improvisation, the album as a whole has a tonal (or at least semi-tonal) feel, Mulelid’s themes leisurely unrolling around lifting and lowering rock chord progressions, often sustaining a pedal tone or repeated notes against the shifting harmony. Bassist Andreas Winther and drummer Bjørn Hegge are iconoclasts by temperament, willing to follow the song forms but prone to interject elements of rambunctiousness, readily apparent in “Children's Song” or “You And I”, in Silence, Having No Words”. Winther, without raising his volume, easily asserts himself during these ‘triologues’ while Mulelid’s ‘solos’ ride the collective wave.

For more information, visit alisterpence.com, moseriebie.com and runegrammofon.com

While cellists are not infrequent participants in jazz and improvised situations, neither are they regulars. As with many, you get the feeling that Chicago-based practitioner Fred Lonberg-Holm gets the nod more because of his musical personality than the instrument he plays. That’s not surprising when you consider his dexterity, fertile imagination and left-field sensibilities.

Lonberg-Holm was an original member of German saxophonist Peter Brötzmann’s Chicago Tentet and has remained a valued partner. On Ouroboros, recorded during a 2011 tour, Lonberg-Holm provides a wildly oscillating, scratchy foil to Brötzmann’s visceral roar across four spontaneous creations on this limited-edition LP. His inspired noisemaking on “The Circle”, alternating between screaming bowing and incising harp-like plucks, launches the first side like a statement of intent. Brötzmann’s clarion call initiates a series of charged dramatic exchanges in which Lonberg-Holm more than holds his own. There’s a strange beauty to be found in Brötzmann’s cathartic wail, most obviously during passages of world-weary lyricism, like those that close “The Figure Eight”, on which Brötzmann wields his rarely heard bass clarinet. Among the energy and intensity are sudden simultaneous changes of direction, which speak of an intuitive bond, as evidenced on “The Spiral”. Lonberg-Holm’s reiterated sawing rumps up the tension, toppled when Brötzmann locks into a nagging phrase, repeated at a different rate to create a truly electrifying effect. Lonberg-Holm also knows when to drop out, thus presenting Brötzmann’s stratospheric tenor squall in even sharper relief. In the short “The Fusion Of Opposites”, pauses pepper the rattling and intermittent cries, almost as if they are taking stock, before Brötzmann paraphrases some of his favorite melodic motifs for a reflective finish.

Lonberg-Holm demonstrates his versatility on Animation by drummer Tim Daisy’s Fulcrum Ensemble, taking on the role of the bass or stepping into the frontline with horn figures fading into the distance. Earlier, Daisy sets up some fine solos, which often become duets, such as that between cornet player Josh Berman and trombonist Steve Swallow. Lonberg-Holm also gets an accompanied feature, evoking electric guitar with his shredding legato, before intertwining with James Falzone’s piping clarinet. “Glass And Lead”, featuring Daisy’s marimba, suggests more of a chamber orientation while “Means To An End” goes through several moods. It starts forcefully with a propulsive cello vamp before encompassing free polyphony, a driving alto saxophone

For more information, visit astralspirits.bandcamp.com, bowhardatthefrog.bandcamp.com, timdaisyrelayrecords.bandcamp.com and corbettvsdempsey.com. Lonberg-Holm is at The Stone at The New School Aug. 4th. See Calendar.
Aug 4 Jimmy Heath & Alyson Williams
Aug 31 Arturo O’Farrill
Sponsors & Schedule @ www.jazzmobile.org
Aug 15 Yunior Terry
Aug 17 Craig Harris

Aug 4
BÉLA FLECK
» SAT AUG 4 @ MURMRR

Aug 8
GOGO PENGUIN
» WED AUG 8 @ BOWERY BALLROOM

Aug 23
SEXMOB SUMMER
» THU AUG 23 @ NUBLU (151 AVE C)

Aug 1
TONY ALLEN
» WED AUG 1

Aug 1
SUN RA ARKESTRA
» WED AUG 8 @ LINCOLN CENTER OUT OF DOORS
Performing live score to “Space Is The Place” with Lean On Me. José James celebrates Bill Withers & Samora Pinderhughes’ “The Transformations Suite”

Aug 1
SEXMOB SUMMER
» THU AUG 23 @ NUBLU (151 AVE C)

GET TICKETS AT LPR.COM
To clue in out-of-towners, Downtown Music Gallery is THE record store in The Big Apple for creative music of all stripes. DMG is known for carrying music from around the globe in all formats as well as for weekly live performances. Tuba player Jesse Dulman has been making the rounds in avant garde jazz on stage and in the NYC subways. Recorded in July 2017, this is a fairly enthralling set of well ‘n’ wooly, let-er-rip free jazz thankfully foregoing self-absorbed abstractness.

“Making Amends to Chelsea the Neighborhood” is mournful yet oddly celebratory, its structure almost a march, evoking New Orleans funeral parades. Tuba to some degree functions as a bass, anchoring the music, giving it a bottom yet, in the manner of the bassists in Bill Evans’ trios, also interacts with the other horns, at times sounding like a very deep trombone. Ras Moshe’s tenor saxophone is supple and sonorous, Dave Sewelson’s baritone makes with mighty blues-inflected gusts, ecstatically testifying in the manner of a tenor. Drummer Leonid Galaganov rumbles and clatters, providing less of a beat or swing than punctuation. This piece brings to mind the raw, visceral, bigger-ensemble phase(s) of Albert Ayler, especially his seminal album Bells, which Ralske strains equal measures of air and sound, bending notes, half-valving and howling like a distant, heartick wolf. One is hard-pressed to find a more enticing blend of acoustic and electronic instruments. This sphere of compelling introspection continues over the following cuts with the additions of Michael Lytle’s subterranean bass clarinet, Watson Jefferson’s flute (listen for his too brief chase-cum-hocket with Ralske on “House Call”) and Cecil Broche’s siren of a violin, as well as further electronics by Matthew Ostrowski. The album closes with the standout duo of Capp and upright bassist Andrew LaFkas on “Shadows Broken”, a paired love song of sorts to both Ornette and the music’s liberation.

However, with the nonet recording We Must Build Alternative Models, the title of which suggests a Buckminster Fuller paraphrase, this brand of music/sound emulsion graduates into a 42-minute darkling.

The album blues nearly all boundaries between the acoustic and the electronic in a manner that, though intriguing, leaves one wishing for a bit of forefront in this dreamworld backdrop. The credits list the musicians on board, with no clarification of director or even primary conceptualist. The ensemble includes celebrated underground improvisers (Capp, Ralske and LaFkas as well as clarinetist Patrick Holmes and violinist Laura Ortman), those musicians identified primarily with the processed (guitarist Marcia Bassett) and the meditative (soprano saxophonist Tyler Wilcox) and some straddling all areas (percussionist Sandy Gordon, electronics artist Barry Weisblat). The unifying blend is an expected role. This sphere of the clarinet’s highest register, with an improvised A section where he’s groaning tauntingly in bass clarinet turf. The album frequently features the expansive reach of the clarinetist/experimentalist, an international source of avant music since he helped found his native country’s Fluxus happenings. A collaboration between Gregorio and Capp, Letman-Burtinovic is a penchant for casting electronic-sounding laments rather than delving for any period into an expected role. This works best in the duo setting, as soundscapes emerge, but the thrill remains the trio at full-throttle: “Breathing Under Water” and “Daily Chem Trials” as pure if not criminally brief examples of this level of invention: Capp dancing lightly across ride cymbals, guiding, driving, shouting, whispering over 50+ years of the once-New Thing, always as contemporary as tomorrow.

For more information, visit toddcapp.bandcamp.com and chapchap-music.com. Capp is at Troost Aug. 7th. See Calendar.
Hampton, Weldon has sometimes been described as a “big band soloist”. But he is equally comfortable in small-group settings and Those Were the Days reminds us that when it comes to Philly-style organ combos, he is a consummate pro.

For more information, visit cellarlive.com. Weldon is at Showman’s Aug. 8th and 15th and The Django at Roxy Hotel Aug. 24th. See Calendar.

Those Were The Days
Jerry Weldon (Cellar Live)
by Alex Henderson

With his hard-swinging approach and robust, full-bodied sound influenced by Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane and Dexter Gordon, tenor saxophonist Jerry Weldon is known for his contributions to the big bands of Lionel Hampton and Harry Connick, Jr.

But the native New Yorker, now 60, has done many other things as well—and one of them is playing in organ combos: in addition to Jack McDuff’s Heatin’ System band, Weldon has worked with organ legends like Jimmy McGriff, Mel Rhyne, Joey DeFrancesco, Dr. Lonnie Smith and other Jimmy Smith disciples. Those Were The Days is very much in the Philadelphia organ combo vein, with trio of Kyle Koehler on Hammond B-3 and Colby Inzer on drums (Daniel Sadownick adding percussion at times).

Whether turning its attention to Philly soul, Russian folk songs, the Burt Bacharach/Hal David songbook or Tin Pan Alley standards, Weldon’s trio finds the hardbop/soul-jazz possibilities in a wide range of material, including “Love Won’t Let Me Wait”; the Philly soul classic is usually performed as a slow, romantic ballad, but Weldon manages to transform it into an exuberant uptempo romp. And similarly, the Frank Sinatra-associated ballad “Strangers in the Night” is also taken at a faster pace than usual.

Although pianist Earl “Fatha” Hines’ “Rosetta” came out of jazz’s pre-bop era, Weldon’s forceful performance is drenched in bop sensibilities. Bacharach/David’s “Walk on By” is transformed into an exuberant uptempo romp. And similarly, the Frank Sinatra-associated ballad “Strangers in the Night” is also taken at a faster pace than usual.

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Although pianist Earl “Fatha” Hines’ “Rosetta” came out of jazz’s pre-bop era, Weldon’s forceful performance is drenched in bop sensibilities. Bacharach/David’s “Walk on By” is transformed into an exuberant uptempo romp. And similarly, the Frank Sinatra-associated ballad “Strangers in the Night” is also taken at a faster pace than usual.
...in this outing. In fact, important careers and their own sounds, they prove to perform 11 of Wayne Shorter's finest compositions from the Sunnyside label. It has now been reissued as originally released in 1984, it was just the fourth release of Shorter's music.

The music is taken from his most productive period as a composer, when Shorter was with Blakey, the Miles Davis Quintet and the early years of Weather Report. Even without his 'greatest hit' ("Footprints"), this is a particularly strong collection. While some of the songs will be familiar, these interpretations are full of surprises: "Ana Maria" explores quite a few moods; a concise and uptempo version of "Dolores" does not waste a moment; and "Dance Cadaverous" emphasizes the upper register to give it a light-hearted feel. "Pinocchio" has a famous melody but the high-note statements by the two pianists are quite unique. "Marie Antoinette" is taken for a rollicking ride, "Armageddon" is as somber as one would expect and the uninhibited playing on "Lester Left Town" has Lightsey and Danko sounding like a barely-under-control player-piano. Of the remaining pieces, "Witch Hunt" has strong forward momentum, "Iris" is a warm and mysterious ballad, "El Gaucho" gives the pianists an opportunity to romp together. Okura is both the literal "Ima", self-reflecting through these sweeping compositions, and the figurative "Ima" holding them together. The title track opens with wondrous naïveté as flutist Anne Drummond, harpist Riza Printup, Okura and Newsome combine for gorgeous voicings that evolve into a glorious celebration underscored by Newsome’s touching solo. Other cuts present Okura’s take on her life pre- and post-partum. "A Summer in Jerusalem" depicts a fictitious relationship between Jew and Arab with Middle-Eastern tinge from Okura and Sam Sadigursky’s bass clarinet, Harrell’s horn echoing the lovers’ warm moments, while instrumental interchange and changing rhythms portray one aspect of the newborn experience, "A Night Insomnia". "Black Rain", "Birth of Shaykumani" and "Tomiyā" elegantly intertwine disparate Japanese themes such as Buddha’s birth, the WWII Atomic horror and Taiko drumming into the group dynamic (the band is completed by bassist Pablo Aslan, drummer Jared Schonig and guitarist Rez Abbasi) while "Blues in Jade" presents as Okura’s "Rhapsody in Blue".

For more information, visit chantrecords.com and nezmusic.org. Okura’s Ima Ima project is at Dizzy’s Club Aug. 20th. See Calendar.

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Shorter By Two was released on his own Ksanti label in 2014. This live disc features two of the same musicians: Brian Charette, best known on organ but here playing piano, and bassist Ugonna Okegwo. JK Kim is on drums. The quartet burns through six DiRubbo originals and a version of guitarist John Abercrombie’s “As It Stands” in 65 minutes.

"Hope" is a fiercely swinging bebop burner, which based on the announcement seems to have ended the first set on one of the two nights that was recorded; it makes a perfect album opener too, though. "Details" is a mellower, blueriser tune that lets DiRubbo float in space, extrapolating on melodic concepts and chord sequences in a way that’s rooted in jazz tradition, but not bound to it. Tonally, he’s a player who’s found a middle way, neither a thick, gutsy blower like Arthur Blythe nor a sharp post-Ornette crier.

"Pent-Up Steps", as its title indicates, dips into John Coltrane’s compositional catalogue, borrowing from his "Giant Steps" and Sonny Rollins’ "Pent-Up House", creating a kind of whirlwind of notes in the process. The band bounces in place behind the leader, keeping the tempo twitchy and high-energy while giving him plenty of room to run. Charette plays piano like it’s an organ, clanging out big chords that he seems to expect to reverberate more than they do.

The live mix does Okegwo no favors; he’s a barely audible rumble in the middle of the sonic field while drums have the sharp, plastic clatter of practice pads. Still, Kim’s accents on the uptempo numbers are rousing and his brushwork on the mournful "As It Stands", recorded mere months after Abercrombie’s death, is gentle and thoughtful. DiRubbo should record more often; this album is a welcome return.

For more information, visit smallslive.com. DiRubbo is at Smalls Aug. 10th-11th. See Calendar.

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Yiddish Momme" and “Kojo No Tsuku”, an apt introduction to Ima Ima.

Released on Mother’s Day, Ima Ima is Okura’s personal journey as a Japanese woman into motherhood and Judaism. The music blends both cultures’ musical forms into classically informed jazz compositions scored into magnificent concert-level pieces. Ima means “mother” in Hebrew and “now” in Japanese with the Hebrew letters (aleph/mem) representing strong water, referring to the glue that holds a family together. Okura is both the literal "Ima", self-reflecting through these sweeping compositions, and the figurative "Ima" holding them together.

For more information, visit chantsrecords.com and nezmusic.org. Okura’s Ima Ima project is at Dizzy’s Club Aug. 20th. See Calendar.
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The pairing of guitar with bass and drums is particularly intimate. The lack of other chordal or frontline instruments creates space and draws listeners further in to appreciate the intricate lines woven by the players. Both guitarist Roni-Ben Hur and bassist Harvie S have found a partner equally skilled as a soloist and accompanist while accomplished drummer Tim Horner is a good choice to round out the group.

What also stands out is the inclusion of less frequently played gems: Joe Henderson’s “Serenity” is no less powerful than the original recording, but more subdued in character; there is plenty of fire in George Shearing’s minor bop classic “Conception”, with effective, brief solos all around; Thelonious Monk’s “Introspection”, recorded several times throughout his career but rarely heard today, features Ben-Hur’s rapid-fire solo in contrast to the bassist’s more deliberate approach; Tadd Dameron’s driving bop gem “Focus” is given a vigorous workout; and a blistering take of Kenny Dorham’s “Asiatic Raes”, one of his most memorable tunes, has Horner as the primary soloist.

The trio also excels playing the music of Brazilian masters, conjuring a lazy sunny day on a quiet beach in Ary Barroso’s “Prá Machucar Meu Coração” or a lively extended exploration of Baden Powell’s “Deixa”. Yet the band outdoes themselves with their brilliant arrangement of Billy Strayhorn’s heart-breaking ballad “Blood Count”, composed while he was in great pain and hospitalized during the final stage of terminal esophageal cancer. While the composer’s emotions are unencumbered by those who have come before him, an impressive trait for a young musician who, at just 23, seems to be blowing a whole lot of history through his horn.

For more information, visit jazzheads.com. This project is at August 22nd. See Calendar.

El Maquech
Adam O’Farrill’s Stranger Days (Biophilia)
by Matthew Kassel

Trumpeter Adam O’Farrill has a tone—alternately bright, dry, diaphanous, growling—that harks back to players such as Cocte Williams and Maynard Ferguson. On his self-assured sophomore album, he appears to be channeling, more than any other influence, the ghost of Don Cherry, who put forth smeary, fragmented, off-key phrases in Ornette Coleman’s quartet in the late ’50s. He’s accompanied by his brother, Zack, on drums, Chad Lefkowitz-Brown on tenor saxophone and Walter Stinson on bass—the same group from O’Farrill’s debut album, Stranger Days—and it sounds as though they’ve sent Coleman’s groundbreaking form of free jazz through a multicultural prism.

There’s “Suiya Motiva”, for instance, a Mexican folk tune in which O’Farrill weaves a delicate obbligato around Lefkowitz-Brown’s earthy solo. “Erroneous Love”, with lovely, rubato-feel pockets, is a playful nod to Thelonious Monk’s “Eronel”. In Irving Berlin’s “Get There Behind Me Satan”, O’Farrill plays solo, displaying the full dimension of his sound. “Henry Ford Hospital” is inspired by the Frida Kahlo painting. The title track, a light number that skitters along at an upbeat pace, is also from Mexico, though it sounds Korean with it if it could have emerged from Eastern Europe. The album ends with Gabriel Garzon-Montano’s “Pour Maman”.

O’Farrill seems to be making a point about the interconnectedness of cultures and there is little doubt that he is the right person to do it. The son of the pianist Arturo O’Farrill and the grandson of the Cuban composer Chico O’Farrill, Adam, who is also of Jewish, Mexican and Irish descent, has a formidable lineage. But the best and most vital thing about his talent is that he doesn’t let that lineage weigh him down. On El Maquech, he deals heavily with the past, but there’s no evidence that he’s dealing with any anxiety of influence. He sounds unencumbered by those who have come before him, an impressive trait for a young musician who, at just 23, seems to be blowing a whole lot of history through his horn.

For more information, visit biophiliarecords.com. O’Farrill is at August 29th. See Calendar.

New Road: Iowa Memoirs
Dave Pietro (ArtistShare)
by Marco Cangiano

Reed player Dave Pietro not only leads his own projects but has been one of the pillars of three of the most exciting jazz orchestras in today’s business: Maria Schneider Orchestra, Gil Evans Project and Darcy James Argue’s Secret Society. His small-group efforts, however, may have been undeservedly overlooked. This latest recording is thus a timely reminder of Pietro’s rich interest and palette, not only as an imaginative soloist but also as a composer.

As suggested by Grant Wood’s Open Road painting on the cover, the music reflects Pietro’s personal memoirs of the period he spent in 2011 as Artist-in-Residence at the University of Iowa. The midwestern landscapes as well as the many personal connections definitely left an impression on Pietro, a native New Englander and adopted New Yorker. His musical memoirs deliver wonder-like images of Iowa, a land whose inner and subtle beauty seems like a well-kept secret to all those who have not been fortunate to visit. To some extent Pietro’s approach to translating his memoirs deliver wonder-like images of Iowa, a land whose inner and subtle beauty seems like a well-kept secret to all those who have not been fortunate to visit. To some extent Pietro’s approach to translating his memoirs into musical portraits parallels the way Schneider has reflected upon her youth in Minnesota.

With “Sanctuary”, which turns out to be a local pub both Pietro’s alto and Johannes Weidenmüller’s bass find particularly inspiring. “Heartland” is introduced by introspective piano leading to a joyful theme featuring lively solos by Sipiagin on flugelhorn and Pietro on alto and showcasing Johnathan Blake’s drums. A brief, two-part, Ravel-inspired suite concludes the journey, capturing the full breath of Iowa’s colors through Pietro leveraging the timbres of his flute and soprano. A very enjoyable album and open invitation to visit Iowa.

For more information, visit artistshare.com. Pietro is at Jazz Standard Aug. 29th with Darcy James Argue. See Calendar.
Blue Dream | Solo A Genova
Jamie Saft (RareNoise)
by George Grella

In the difficult and essential musical balance between style and idea, keyboardist Jamie Saft’s music-making has usually been heavily weighted toward the former. He has spent a good deal of time in John Zorn’s Tzadik orbit and fallen into the trap of making music about how other music has been made—skillful and often pleasurable stuff, but a fleeting experience that leaves little impression after it has passed. So these two new albums are real surprises. The music is substantial, it has purpose and meaning, it has something to tell the listener and all the ideas come through clearly and with force. It has effect, not just affect.

The quartet on Blue Dream has an original sound. There’s the Coltrane quartet in their foundation and Bill McHenry’s hard-reed tenor saxophone often spits out Charlie Rouse-like tones, but on this record the group has the quality of working within the stream of modern postbop jazz while playing with an exhilarating lack of burden from historical antecedents. Coltrane is a mood that inspires, not a style to mimic.

There’s a consistent range of medium tempos throughout the 12 tracks and the pairing of Saft’s left hand and bassist Brad Jones builds layer upon layer of musical and expressive depth and power. With pauses for elegant, swinging readings of “Violets for Your Furs” and “Sweet Lorraine”, Saft’s nine originals plot a well-shaped journey through immersive listening. This is a throwback album, not a checklist of certain types of tunes but an end-to-end climb-off involving tension, with the cool exhale of “There’s a Lull in My life” to bring the listener back to level ground at the conclusion.

Solo A Genova has a similar compelling musical narrative and is superb through and through. The concept of the recital was Saft wanting to present his ideas about America through music, mostly pop songs and bassist Brad Jones builds layer upon layer of musical and expressive depth and power. With pauses for elegant, swinging readings of “Violets for Your Furs” and “Sweet Lorraine”, Saft’s nine originals plot a well-shaped journey through immersive listening. This is a throwback album, not a checklist of certain types of tunes but an end-to-end climb-off involving tension, with the cool exhale of “There’s a Lull in My life” to bring the listener back to level ground at the conclusion.

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China Caribe
Dongfeng Liu (ZOHO)
by Tom Greenland

Cultural collisions (unlike their automotive counterparts) are often constructive. Consider the collision of West African and Cuban musics, or the resultant Afro-Cuban styles with jazz, or more to the point here, Latin jazz with Chinese traditions. Enter pianist Dongfeng Liu, who makes his debut recording with China Caribe, a meshing and mashing up of cultural strangers.

The album’s core sound arises from Liu’s quartet with electric fretless bassist John Benitez (whose presence is so strong he can almost be considered a co-leader), conguero/percussionist Roberto Quintero and trap drummer Francis Benitez, all fluent in what is broadly termed Latin jazz. It should be noted, however, that Liu’s arranging and playing style is a few degrees cooler than caliente: where others would plunge forward, he prefers to explore open spaces and textures, unstudying his improvisations in a more episodic fashion. His compositions, while relying on fairly standard harmonic formulas, employ interesting rhythmic twists: “Mirror Image” has smoothly modulating subdivisions of three while “I Know You” and “Memory” both alternate between five- and seven-beat sections.

Much of the album’s originality derives from its inclusion of unusual timbres, sonic thumbprints not often associated with the Latin jazz mainstream. For example, “In the Clouds” begins with Benitez’ slap-pop bass buoyed by the keening drone of a morin khuur (horsehead fiddle), followed by whistling melodies derived from throat-sung overtones, the latter two performed by the Hanggai Band, a Mongolian rock group; later, the song’s main theme is heard on Min Xiao-Fen’s ruan (four-stringed lute). The latter is also featured on another traditional Chinese lute, the pipa, on “Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon”, an adapted folk melody, and “Arcadia”, where she supplies the characteristic shakes, bends, rakes and fast scrambling figures idiomatic to the instrument. Feifei Yang’s wispy trembling erhu (spike fiddle) handles the melody of “Fisherman’s Song at Dusk”, another programmatic folk song.

The inclusion of all of these distinctive timbres evokes an expansive global soundscape, somewhere between China and Cuba, the sounds, like smells, triggering specific memories, formerly incongruous, now strangely simpatico.

For more information, visit zohomusic.com. This project is at ShapeShifter Lab Aug. 17th. See Calendar.

Blue Dream

China Caribe

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Waiting for the Sunrise
Camille Thurman (Chesky)
by Jim Motavalli

There’s no shortage of jazz singers today, which is a good thing. Most of them are fairly traditional, descended from Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Carmen McRae or Sarah Vaughan and married to the Great American Songbook. That’s not bad, either, but…imagine how fresh Lambert, Hendricks & Ross sounded when they first appeared on the scene? Or Bobby McFerrin’s body music and Leon Thomas’ yodeling?

Camille Thurman is not one of those innovators, at least on the evidence of her new album (number four for her and second for Chesky). As a tenor saxophonist and singer, she’s hitting the mainstream. Thurman aced Fitzgerald’s scatting and her lightly swinging vocal style would have fit in quite well in, say, 1962. And as a saxophonist? Think of the relaxed swing of Hank Mobley. She has a big tone that works best on ballads.

The album is very listenable, thanks in part to a superb band of Cecil McBee (bass), Jack Wilkins (guitar) and Steve Williams (drums). Jeremy Pelt is heard here and there on trumpet, but sounds so far off the mic he might have been in a different studio. Is the song selection here a bit conservative? You bet. “If You Love Me (Really Love Me),” for instance, is a curiosity first recorded by Edith Piaf and then turned into a big-voiced country-ish hit for Brenda Lee (who reportedly never heard Piaf’s version). Thurman does just fine by it, but the song is a trifle moldy. The ballad “The Nearness of You” is a standout here; when she’s not scatting, Thurman’s trick is to employ a sure upper register and emote into the stratosphere. But her tenor solo is dry, precise and lovely. Wilkins responds with similar restraint.

“Easy to Love” is another standout and really swings. Pelt’s solo is unfortunately spoiled by the poor recording, but when he’s done Thurman explodes into scat—dissolving perfectly back into the lyric. (Betty Carter was a master of this, of course, was Fitzgerald.) However, Thurman sounds slightly wobbly on “The World is Waiting for the Sunrise” and her version of Milton Nascimento’s “Tarde” just doesn’t work. Some jazz singers should stay away from Portuguese.

When Thurman sings “I’m On Your Side”, it really sounds like she is. Her voice has a warm edge that will keep listeners tuned into her work.

For more information, visit suna.com. Sun Ra Arkestra is at Damrosch Park Aug. 8th. See Calendar.

Lake of Light: Compositions for AquaSonics
William Parker (Gotta Let It Out)
Voices Fall From The Sky
by Marc Medwin

To place William Parker squarely in the box labeled “composer” or “improviser” is to deny the fertility of the ground he has spent the past 45 years preparing. More and more, the projects he is helming inhabit a diverse world where sound and form work in symbiosis, blurring the boundaries of categorization in the process.

These two albums present a demonstrative cross-section of his diverse approach and if his instrumental mastery, though present, is subjugated by his compositional prowess, his masterly Lo Harp, Stones can become overwhelmed by the water and metal can merge and the simple act of raining rose petals is alchemical, turning motion to sound as dance transmogrifies into constructive protest or soulfood as savory as the music on these discs.

For more information, visit gottateilout.com and aumfidelity.com. Parker is at Dizzy’s Club Aug. 28th-29th. See Calendar.

24 AUGUST 2018 | THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD
Entitled *Imaga Mondo* (Esperanto for “Imaginary World”), Leonor Falcón’s debut album finds the Venezuelan violinist exploring a wide range of styles including jazz, folk, rock and free improvisation.

The first piece is “Nymphs and Spacemen” and, as its title suggests, evokes both ancient folklore and intergalactic exploration. The track builds from a spindly pizzicato introduction as Falcón layers veering, sustained notes to create an off-kilter, atmospheric effect. As these high-pitched reverberations continue to ascend and descend, Falcón introduces a mythical solo violin melody. Striking in the sheer number of disjointed and unexpected ideas that burst forth without unraveling, “Nymphs and Spacemen” is the perfect representation of Falcón’s compositional leanings.

For the remainder of the album, she is joined by drummer Juan Pablo Carletti, guitarist Juanma Trujillo and bass clarinetist Christof Knoche. Their dynamism is part of what makes the record so engaging: a breadth of uncanny, disordered and truly unique melodic ideas, allowing each member of the trio to take turns demonstrating their skill.

Though the alluring multivalency of “Nymphs and Spacemen” is what makes it such a fitting opener, this same quality often prevents the album as a whole from registering as a fully cohesive project. Tracks like “Parima”, a buoyant and relatively straightforward folk jig, feels out of place between rock-driven “Humanoides” and improvisatory duet “JP and Christof”.

Falcón’s compositions are ever-shifting, tracing circuitous paths that constantly eschew resolution. Her curiosity and technical skill are clear though her inclination to dabble with styles occasionally robs the project of its momentum. Despite its inconsistencies, *Imaga Mondo* is, more often than not, as enchanting as the mythical figures who inspire many of its pieces.

For more information, visit falcongumbarecords.bandcamp.com. Falcón is at Bushwick Public House Aug. 27th. See Calendar.

On The Sea of Modicum, tenor saxophonist Andrew Lamb forms the highly combustible apex of a triangle grounded by twin percussionists in a performance from the 2016 Vilnius Jazz Festival. Lamb came onto the scene during the Loft Era having studied with AACM charter member Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre and has maintained a continued, albeit slightly under the radar, presence ever since. One major collaborator has been celebrated drummer Warren Smith, who supplies the foundation here alongside his Lithuanian counterpart Arkadijus Gotesmanas, one of his country’s leading exponents of the drums.

Together they combine for some old-school free jazz. The two drummers complement rather than compete with Lamb, allowing space for him to thrive. Although well separated across the listening soundstage, there’s no indication on the sleeve as to who is in which channel. That’s an important omission as they largely operate in tandem, undertaking simultaneous shifts in dynamics. Lamb offers a muscular grainy foil, combining the obliqueness of mentor McIntyre with the incantatory majesty of late-period Coltrane. He builds from simple motifs, reaching highly charged intensity with a falsetto varying between ragged emotion and laser-focused directness.

The sidelong title track from the album, available as either a limited edition LP or as a download, begins as a simmering percussive stew before settling into a loping shuffle. A gong strike precedes Lamb’s squirreling entrance, which ascends to a crescendo of churchy testifying. Once he winds down, a pulsing throb of pattering interplay, including what sounds like tabla beats, creates an almost ritualistic feel to bring the piece to an end. A similar processional vibe permeates “To The Angel Of Lithuania”, compounded by tenor ululations over the solemn pulse, ultimately evoking the pathos of Coltrane’s “Alabama” in the mournful yet unbowed splendor.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com. Lamb is at Bushwick Public House Aug. 6th. See Calendar.
Pianist Ran Blake’s style is somewhat unusual, melding jazz, blues, Great American Songbook tradition, gospel, classical and film noir cinema. Danish drummer Kresten Osgood, over 40 years his junior, is eclectic and has played with a varied cast of characters since the turn of the millennium. Blake is quite fond of the duet yet this is a rare occasion where he’s paired with a drummer. The Dorothy Wallace Suite consists of originals and a few evergreens, all very short and to the point. “Vera Fuller” has a scaled-down symphonic grandeur (for its two-minute length) while “Ricky Ford at Logan” starts out in a similar fashion before Blake introduces jaunty stride piano, the notes so grand and plump and buoyant you can almost imagine them dancing in the air, Osgood gingerly dancing along with them, hugging the background and accents. “Brick in the Driveway” is Osgood alone, making with some cheery bam-bam into sounding like a jingle. “Ran’s Account” commingles the ironic romance of Monk and astringency of 20th century classical composers like Bartók and Schoenberg. The prettiest and most striking piece is “Mood Indigo”—it’s got a sly R&B-like intro before embracing one of Ellington’s loveliest melodies, crisp beats and delicate cymbals providing gentle swing and a bit of moody late-night ambiance. Arthur Schwartz-Howard Dietz’ “Dancing in the Dark” gets a similarly off-kilter treatment but stays closer to the melody, Blake and Osgood elegance personified.

Blake fans will need to get this and the brevity and variety of the tunes—along with the earnest oomph of Osgood—would make this a good entry point for newbies.

For more information, visit ilkmusic.com. Blake is at Jazz at Kitano Aug. 18th. See Calendar.

This double LP album combines all the sets Ella Fitzgerald recorded at Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP) concerts; actually four sets: two from Sep. 17th-18th, 1949 at Carnegie Hall and one each from 1953 and 1954 at Bushnell Memorial Hall in Hartford, Connecticut. The first thing evident is that “sets” in the early LP era at JATP concerts were a lot shorter than those we are accustomed to at concerts today. The longest here is little more than 20 minutes long and that is excluding an instrumental number played by a typically diverse JATP allstar horn group before Fitzgerald comes back to sing “Flying Home” with them.

Fitzgerald was in her early to middle 30s on these sets and they predate her in-depth exploration of the Great American Songbook on her series of Songbooks (1956-64). So her repertoire here ranges from her early novelty hits (“A-Tisket, A-Tasket”) and jazz-blues tunes (“Robbin’s Nest”, “Basin Street Blues”) to pop hits of the day (“Hernando’s Hideaway”) and a handful of jazz/pop standards. Among the jazz standards are a captivating, bluesy rendering of Duke Ellington’s “I’m Just A Lucky So and So” and a slyly, delighting in the words (and wordplay) version of George Shearing’s “Lullaby of Birdland”. She also has fun with the words and mimicking a petulant little girl’s voice on “Old Mother Hubbard” and “A-Tisket, A-Tasket”, the latter replete with “Hi Ho Silver” interjections. That reprise of her first hit leads directly into a vintage example of her status as a musician among musicians: “How High the Moon” features an early version of what became a shtick for Fitzgerald, singing “I don’t know the words to this song, but I’ll sing it anyway”, then improvising some lyrics before launching into a bebop scat, leading into solos by saxophonists Charlie Parker, Lester Young and Flip Phillips, trombonist Tommy Turk and trumpeter Roy Eldridge.

Fitzgerald’s supreme musicality shines through in her ability to segue from a tour de force bop/swing scat uptempo burner, “Oh, Lady Be Good”, to a tender, melismatic ballad, “Black Coffee”. And don’t miss her transformation of another kitschy pop hit of the era, “Hernando’s Hideaway”, into a gem of blues and bop scat, as well as a made-up chorus she adds extolling the virtues of JATP.

For more information, visit universalmusic.com. A tribute to Fitzgerald with Natalie Douglas is at Birdland Aug. 20th. See Calendar.
After eight albums on Posi-Tone, organ player Jared Gold has moved to guitarist Dave Stryker's Strikezone. His relationship with Stryker goes back at least as far as the guitarist’s 2006 album *The Chaser*. The two are a locked-in groove machine, Gold’s melodic yet abstract approach to the keyboard—Larry Young is a major influence—perfectly matched by Stryker’s precise guitar work. They’re supported by drummer Billy Hart, who’s operating in a somewhat laid-back mode, but you can always sense the power and hard-swinging funk he holds in reserve, ready for deployment at a moment’s notice. On and off, Jeremy Pelt turns the trio into a quartet.

The trumpeter leaps out of the gate on the opening title piece, his rich tone sending him floating above Gold’s churning organ and Hart’s high-tension drums, Stryker filling out the mix with impeccably placed chords. On Stevie Wonder’s “Lookin’ For Another Pure Love”, a slow, loping blues, he pulls a somewhat Woody Shaw-esque trick, blowing long lines packed with notes as the band keeps things flowing steadily. Gold’s bass pedals are placed superbly well in the mix, providing an almost subsonic rumble, like the subwoofers of a passing car. Pelt’s final appearance is on “One For John A”, a dedication to the late guitarist John Abercrombie, with whom Gold worked. The tune has a fanfare-like ‘70s melody, perfect for flugelhorn; listeners may well find themselves thinking of Bob James and/or Chuck Mangione.

There are plenty of solid moments on the trio cuts, too, especially since Gold makes unexpected repertoire choices. There’s a Beatles song (“She’s Leaving Home”), the Gershwin’s “It Ain’t Necessarily So” and “How Long Has This Been Going On”. The rollicking performance of Miles Davis’ early bop gem “Budo” is followed by an equally spirited rendition of the standard “Just One of Those Things” featuring the leader’s inspired brushwork.

For more information, visit storiellercords.com. Green is at Fat Cat Aug. 10th, Jazz at Kitano Aug. 15th with Adam Hutchens, Jazz Standard Aug. 16th-19th with Warren Wolf and Smoke Aug. 23rd. See Calendar.

Pianist Martial Solal, who turns 91 this month, still produces highly imaginative music. The repertoire for this German outing could not be more familiar and yet challenging. There is a palpable pleasure in Solal’s revisiting the standards he has been playing throughout one of the longest careers in jazz history—he started with Django Reinhardt and Sidney Bechet in the ’30s. “My One and Only Love” is a case in point: approached literally and then explored thoroughly, with an insistence on the bass register, which makes the reading quite dramatic and less romantic than usual. “Body and Soul” receives a similar treatment, almost circumspect as if Solal were playing the tune for the very first time. While his “sensitivity, creativity and prodigious technique”—to quote Ellington’s praise—stand, Solal’s interpretations are less abstract than in previous projects and in a few cases tune the feeling and reaching and extracting the very core of the songs. This is particularly evident in the Duke Ellington (as well as Juan Tizol and Billy Strayhorn) medley, where echoes of stride piano interplay with the essence of the tunes.

A similar approach is pursued in reinterpreting—twice—“Frère Jacques”, the French nursery rhyme seen through the lens of the entire history of piano jazz and Solal’s full-of-surprises style. Some of Solal’s earlier daring music is found in his own compositions such as “Köln Duet” and “Coming Yesterday”.

While most of Solal’s pyrotechnics seems to be gone, his almost unique ability to deconstruct and then reassemble a piece, similar to Picasso’s early Cubism experiments, remains intact and is showcased to great effect on “A Night in Tunisia”. Last but not least, the album’s own one of Solal’s lesser known aspects: his understated yet infectious sense of humor in introducing each song and his diversions into the aforementioned “Frère Jacques” and Mozart’s “Marche Turque”. The album closes with an interview that captures the artist’s wisdom and will along with his reluctance to look back at his career: he is way too young for that and very eager to play some more piano.

For more information, visit intuition-music.com

In the search for new and striking forms of expression, it’s always refreshing to encounter an original voice. Flutist Robert Dick sounds unlike any other practitioner of his instrument, or rather instruments, as he explores the whole range of the flute family and especially the lower end. Dick’s discography boasts over 30 entries from the ’80s onwards; he has authored instruction manuals, and he continues to perform. Dick met drummer Tiffany Chang when she subbed in an ensemble he coached at NYU in 2011 and recognized something in her inventive unfettered playing that would complement but not constrain his own.

Dick marshals novel, often percussive, timbres to fulfill deterministically musical ends, particularly the combination of conventional sonorities, vocalizations and overblowing to reveal the harmonics inherent in his flutes. Chang maintains an incisive but freewheeling flow, instantly responsive to her partner and sharing a keen sense of dynamics. Importantly, she knows when to allow space for the flute to breathe and when to hustle, illustrated from the off in “Thieves” with its gusty bass flute and conversational pacing. On “Swedge”, she alternates between brushed pater and loping cantor behind Dick’s swirling microtonal swoops facilitated by his trademarked Glissando Headjoint.

Many of the pieces possess a spontaneously generated structure. That’s most obvious on the title track, which begins with Dick’s throaty staccato voice/ bass flute amalgam, matched by spiky percussion. After a churning unaccompanied drum interlude, breathy interplay holds sway, before a return to the opening gambit, but this time with Dick’s voice gradually becoming the dominant element. “This Once”, with its exotic mix of bumb instrument and flute creating an elegiac feel, provides a pleasing contrast to the predominantly textural adventures elsewhere, as does “Pirarucu” with the Latin tinge to Chang’s rhythmic tracery and Dick’s dancing piccolo.

On “Recovered Melody”, Dick’s solemn contrabass flute sustains meet Chang’s rustling accompaniment to fashion a suitably valedictory finale for a disc brimming with astonishing interplay.

For more information, visit roguart.com. Dick is at The Stone at The New School Aug. 7th and Downtown Music Gallery Aug. 19th. See Calendar.
The results of those (non-Ella) collaborations are on these four discs. They amply demonstrate that Armstrong was still one of the greatest pop-jazz singers ever, and especially on the Peterson collaborations like "Moon Song," a creative, thrilling trumpeter. As a singer, working with sometimes pedestrian charts, he brings a warmth and personal touch to every song. It remained to Armstrong an elegant way to connect to all kinds of music and to keep on living his life as "Let's Do It."
Pianist Sullivan Fortner gained significant attention for his debut CD *Aria*. Fortner’s second outing builds upon his earlier success and shows tremendous growth. One aspect of his aesthetic deserves immediate mention: he doesn’t artificially extend his arrangements, creating compelling performances wrapped in less than five minutes, leaving the listener wanting more.

Joined by two supportive sidemen in bassist Ameen Saleem and drummer Jeremy ‘Bean’ Clemons, Fortner’s playlist is diverse with several inventive twists, kicking off with an elaborate setting of “Changing Keys (Wheel Of Fortune)”. penned by Merv Griffin for the game show he created, Fortner turning this seemingly bland theme song into a bopper’s delight. His own “Pep Talk” feels like it could have Griffin for the game show he created, Fortner turning this seemingly bland theme song into a bopper’s delight. His own “Pep Talk” feels like it could have

Fortner’s playlist is diverse with several inventive twists, kicking off with an elaborate setting of “Changing Keys (Wheel Of Fortune)”, penned by Merv Griffin for the game show he created, Fortner turning this seemingly bland theme song into a bopper’s delight.

The pianist also tackles jazz classics, including his subdued yet mysterious setting of Duke Ellington’s “In A Sentimental Mood”, incorporating flashes of vamping homage to its composer in the midst of brilliant improvising. Fortner’s infectious calypso “New Port” should be a candidate for his regular repertoire, buoyed by adept percussion.

Much of Thelonious Monk’s work has been widely explored so finding a fresh path is difficult, but Fortner’s creative “Monk Medley” adds Hargrove on trumpet for a spacious, whimsical duet of “Monk’s Mood”, which segues into a sassy take of “Ask Me Now”. The surprise conclusion is a meditative piano solo of the 19th century hymn “The Solid Rock”. This outstanding CD should earn Sullivan Fortner a spot on many jazz critics’ best of lists for 2018.

For more information, visit impulse-label.com. Fortner is at Jazz Standard Aug. 9th-12th with Alicia Olatuja and Aug. 23rd, 25th and 26th with Etienne Charles and Zinc Bar Aug. 24th. See Calendar.

The title of bassist Sean Conly’s third album will elicit nods of recognition from many eking a living from the NYC jazz scene. But if Conly has struggled he’s still been more visible than many, appearing on over 80 albums since moving to the Big Apple in 1994, including associations with saxophonists Gregory Tardy, Darius Jones, Yoni Kretzmer and Michael Attias.

It’s the last of these who leads the line for Conly’s trio on this freewheeling date, with drummer Satoshi Takeishi completing the crew. Conly also writes prolifically, providing the six originals that make up the program here.

His compositions, dramatic without veering into abstraction, make full use of the resources at his disposal through plotting multiple lines, which cement the impression of a finely wrought, totally integrated unit. “Totem” shows how it’s done. It starts with an artfully pitched rolling intro from Takeishi over which Attias lays a simple, slightly oriental-tinged theme. After a couple of repeats Conly joins, thickening the ensemble, before the three separate but interlocking voices stretch out, becoming more urgent, rocky even, until Attias brings proceedings to a close with a multiphonic flourish.

Notwithstanding the intricacies, Attias remains the dominant element. With his airy, dancing Ornette-inspired alto cry, he not only expertly delivers Conly’s smart arrangements but also adds his own highly-charged expression to the improvisations that flow from them while staying true to the original conception. It all comes together on “Afterfact”, one of the highlights, which juxtaposes a skronky lead-in of blaring alto and churning drums with a slow burning tension in which Attias’s yowls, yaps and fractious overblowing hint at restrained emotional power.

But through it all, Conly’s fresh path is demonstrated his chops in the twisting resonant start of the dirge-like “Undertow” while elsewhere simultaneously supporting and probing, pirouetting always at the confluence of melody, rhythm and freedom.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. This project is at Balboa Aug. 9th. See Calendar.
The turning point in pianist Oscar Peterson’s life took place in 1949. At the time, Peterson had already recorded a series of impressive swing and boogie-woogie performances for the Victor label in his native Montréal starting in 1945 but he was only well known in Canada.

One day producer Norman Granz happened to hear that he told the driver to go to the club instead. After meeting Peterson, Granz had him appear as a special guest at a Jazz At The Philharmonic concert at Carnegie Hall, became his manager for nearly four decades and began recording him prolifically for his label. Granz was so amazed by what he heard that he told the driver to go to the club instead.

One of Granz’ first major Peterson recording projects took place during 1952-54 when he had the pianist record ten albums in a songbook series, featuring the music of a different composer on each record. Singer Lee Wiley had pioneered the songbook concept in jazz with a series of projects during 1939-40 and Ella Fitzgerald had recorded eight Gershwin songs accompanied by pianist Ellis Larkins in 1950 although her own famous Songbook series (also produced by Granz) would not begin until 1956. The Peterson series, simply titled Oscar Peterson Plays, featured the pianist playing 113 selections in all and he made the results sound effortless. The pianist was joined by bassist Ray Brown, either Barney Kessel or Herb Ellis on guitar (Ellis succeeded Kessel in late 1953 and is on the final three albums plus a few other selections) and, on one number, drummer Alvin Stoller. An album apiece is comprised of some of the best songs of Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, Vincent Youmans, Harold Arlen, Harry Warren and Jimmy McHugh.

All of the music has been reissued in this five-CD Verve boxed set. The performances are concise, clocking in between three to four minutes apiece as was customary near the end of the 78 era. Peterson embraces the melody, swings with his trio and keeps the themes nearby even during his wildest flights. Brown is heard in a purely supportive role while Kessel and Ellis’ brief solos are included for a contrast with the pianist, but the focus throughout is on Peterson. None of the composers would have complained about these treatments since everything is so tasteful yet Peterson does come up with consistently fresh ideas as he improvises with his tight group. The results appealed at the time to both a jazz and an easy-listening audience and they still sound spirited and joyful today.

The original songbook series was so successful that in 1959 Granz had Peterson (who by then had a trio with Brown and drummer Ed Thigpen) do it again with nine more albums of the music of the same composers (with Warren and Youmans combined on one record), documenting the whole project in an 11-day period. Hopefully that second songbook series will be reissued in similar fashion by Verve in the future.

Oscar Peterson Plays will be enjoyed by anyone interested in the Great American Songbook or hearing Peterson early in his very productive career.

For more information, visit universalmusic.com
ON THIS DAY

Blue in Trinity Dizzy Reece (Blue Note) August 24th, 1958

Trumpeter Dizzy Reece is an outlier for Blue Note as a non-American in its catalogue (he was born in Jamaica and had a career in mid-50s London). This is his debut for the imprint (waxed in London), with three more sessions through 1960. Joining him for four originals plus "I Had the Craziest Dream" and "Round Midnight" is trumpeter Donald Byrd, whose own Blue Note debut would come later in the year, plus Brit vibist Hayes (tenor saxophone) and Charlie and Harden (bass) remaining from Crisis, drummer Ed Blackwell filling out the group on a set similar to Crisis.

The album was recorded during a period of intense religious group Eckankar; his first album, for which he wrote words and music, was self-released by the organization. Separately he played jazz vibraphone, as found in this collaboration with the eldest of the Jones brothers, pianist Hank. A band of guitarist Rodney Jones, bassist Victor Gaskin and drummer Mickey Roker support the pair for this double album with an idiosyncratic setlist remaining from Crisis, drummer Ed Blackwell filling out the group on a set similar to Crisis.

Broken Silences

Ornette Coleman (Moon) August 24th, 1969

While Roy Eldridge (trumpet) did attract a high level of musicians for Ornette Coleman's tenor saxophone, Arabic choice and Charlie and Harden (bass) remaining from Crisis, drummer Ed Blackwell filling out the group on a set similar to Crisis. While Roy Eldridge (trumpet) did attract a high level of musicians for Ornette Coleman's tenor saxophone, Arabic choice and Charlie and Harden (bass) remaining from Crisis, drummer Ed Blackwell filling out the group on a set similar to Crisis. While Roy Eldridge (trumpet) did attract a high level of musicians for Ornette Coleman's tenor saxophone, Arabic choice and Charlie and Harden (bass) remaining from Crisis, drummer Ed Blackwell filling out the group on a set similar to Crisis.

Mets Hank Jones Dari (Timeless) August 24th, 1973

Darji, AKA Darwin Gross, was a spiritual leader of the Maganite religious group Egnakar; his first album, for which he wrote words and music, was self-released by the organization. Separately he played jazz vibraphone, as found in this collaboration with the eldest of the Jones brothers, pianist Hank. A band of guitarist Rodney Jones, bassist Victor Gaskin and drummer Mickey Roker support the pair for this double album with an idiosyncratic setlist.

This same band of tender saxophonist Don Menza, drummer Pete Magadini, bassist Dave Young and pianist Wray Downes recorded an album for Sacville in 1977 called Bones Blues under Maganite's leadership (and earlier still with George Duke on keys for 1975's Polyrythmn). Here it is a co-led affair from Claudia's Jazz Club in Montreal, while the personnel is the same, the setlist is different, yet still a mix of jazz standards like "Confirmation", "I Mean You" and "On A Misty Night" alongside bandmembers original.
Wednesday, August 1

Lavon Henry/Tom Coghill
Japhna Alapagpuntung with Trevor Brown, Robbi Aldie

John Pizzarelli Trio
Marvin Maye with Billy Stritch Trio
Brian Lewis, Ken Filiano, Andrew Drury

Marvin Nemeth Quartet with David Bryant, Christopher Hoffman, Pawson Banich, Brandon Satenstein

Denise Litchman's Queensland Swag with Gordon Au, J. Walter Hawkes, Dalton Robinson, Nathan Peck, Rob Giunka and guests Mazz Swift, Tony Wilson

Ryan Staten

Mélen Felsie Big Band

Matt Raimricher

Tadatsuki Umino Trio, Groove Trio No Good Jazz

Carrick Shuffle Jazz Jam

Jazzmobile: Darcy Mason

Alan Braunman's Valley of Search with Cooper-Moore, James Brandon Lewis, Ken Filiano, Andrew Drury

Rick Hollander Quartet with Brian Levy, Paul Brindle, Will Woodard

Plyways: Mars Rosenblum, Anais Moviel, Adam Lane

Herald Lopez-Nussa Trio with Gasto Joyce, Rui-Adrian Lopez-Nussa

Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $25

Tony Allen's The Source

Martin Dominick Cohrs

Modern Art: Joe Graziosi, Jakob Dreyer, Kenneth Salters

Gerald Clayton Quintet with Logan Richardson, Walter Smith III, Joe Sanders, Marcus Gilmore

Alan Braufman's Valley of Search with Cooper-Moore, James Brandon Lewis, Ben Wolfe Sextet with Tom Harrell, Tim Warfield, Joel Ross, Luis Perdomo, Benito Gonzalez Trio

Numbers: Michaël Attias, Tony Malaby, Ralph Alessi, Ben Gerstein, Kris Davis, Duane Eubanks Quintet with Robin Eubanks, Zaccai Curtis, Gerald Cannon, Chris Beek

Nerve Dance: Michaël Attias, Aruán Ortiz, John Hébert, Nasheet Waits

Allan Harris Quartet with Nimrod Speaks, Shirazette Tinnin

Mike LeDonne/Peter Washington

Lynette Washington

Jazzmobile: T.K. Blue

Billy Childs Quartet with Steve Wilson, Hans Glawischnig

T.W. Sample; Jared Gold/Dave Gibson; Pablo Bencid

Ken Fowser; Los Hacheros

Or Bareket Trio with Nitai Hershkovits, Kush Abadey; Nadav Remez Trio with Yael Dray-Barel/Gabriel Hermida

New York Jazz Academy Showcase

Dante James Trio

Thursday, August 2

Erik Deutsch

Vaugn Stoffyo Trio with Cole Doney

Marco Schenget

Matt Clohesy, Colin Stranahan

Noodle Gallery 7:30, 10:30 pm $15

John Pizzarelli Trio

Marvin Maye with Billy Stritch Trio

Isaac Ben Ayala

Bangarang

Michael Anne Hoffman Cogswell

Eliot Kener, Kaia Kriis, Tame Reising, Alex Olds, Gaya Feldshen Schorr with Rachel Thienem, Blake Opper, Micha Talama, Tali Lavitz, Stephen Beghegni

Ben Words Sextet with Tom Harrell, Matt Warfield, Joel Ross, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards, Ken Filiano

Ryan Staten

Friday, August 3

Hillary Gardner

John Merritt, Brandon Bain

Bruce Jackson; Saul Rubin Zebert; Yoshi Waki

Erik Porriz Trio with Takiaki Okuma

Steve Wood

Ori Pelossof

Persis of Memory: Kassa Overall, Vijay Iyer, Reeri Cohane, Evan Flory

Billy Childs Quartet with Steve Wilson, Hans Glawischnig

Randy Tallar

Larry Wallach/Trish Alyoshi

Nelson Rivers's Quartet with Hector Marcias, Gabriel Rivers, Pablo Bengochea

Aquila Nayero

Rick McCourty Quartet with Alex Goodman, Will Tamanaa, Dave Baron, Jimmy Macbride, Matt Pavich's Home Band

John Farnsworth Quartet with Joseph Bruscia, Gualtiero Modarelli

Ronalee: Michael Attias, Anacleto Ojeda, John Hébert, Marshall Mann, Hayes White

Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $25

Gerald Clayton Quintet with Logan Richardson, Walter Smith III, Joe Sanders, Marcus Gilmore

Nate Radley Trio with Gary Wang

Deep Veggie

Ben Wolfe Sextet with Tom Harrell, Joel Ross, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards

Ryan Staten

Rick Hollander Quartet with Brian Levy, Paul Braendle, Will Woodard

Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $25

Saturday, August 4

Ricky Ford Quartet with Mark Sooskin, Jerome Harris, Barry Altschul

Nate Radley Trio with Gary Wang

Deep Veggie

John Pizzarelli Trio

Marvin Maye with Billy Stritch Trio

Ben Wolfe Sextet with Tom Harrell, Joel Ross, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards

Ryan Staten

Friday Cathedral Quartet with Matt Cockey, Michael Pisker

Jay Leonhart

John Pizzarelli Trio

Marvin Maye with Billy Stritch Trio

Béla Fleck solo

Billy Childs Quartet with Steve Wilson, Hans Glawischnig

T.W. Sample; Jared Gold/Dave Gibson; Pablo Bencid

Ken Fowser; Los Hacheros

Or Bareket Trio with Nitai Hershkovits, Kush Abadey; Nadav Remez Trio with Yael Dray-Barel/Gabriel Hermida

Jazzmobile: Jimmy Heath Big Band; Alphonse Williams; Ward Harper and Friends with Gabrielle Garn; Kinichi Harper; Central Park, Great Outdoors

Sunday, August 5

Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $25

Frank Kimbrough

Jazz at Kitano 8, 10 pm $34

Mike LeDonne/Peter Washington

Lynette Washington

Jazzmobile: Jimmy Heath Big Band; Alphonse Williams; Ward Harper and Friends with Gabrielle Garn; Kinichi Harper; Central Park, Great Outdoors

Santi Debriano

Béla Fleck solo

Billy Childs Quartet with Steve Wilson, Hans Glawischnig

Marianne Windham; Billy Childs, Jones, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards

Sandy Brown

Birdland Theater 7 pm $50

Marc Devine Trio

Alex Clough; Billy Kaye; John Marshall Quintet with Grant Stewart, Paul Gill, Peter Brown, Brooklyn Circle

Santi Debriano

Béla Fleck solo

Billy Childs Quartet with Steve Wilson, Hans Glawischnig

Marianne Windham; Billy Childs, Jones, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards

Sandy Brown

Birdland Theater 7 pm $50

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Marianne Windham; Billy Childs, Jones, Luis Perdomo, Donald Edwards

Sandy Brown

Birdland Theater 7 pm $50
### Saturday, August 11

- **Red Hook Soul with Michael Blake**
  Bar Lounge 8:30, 10 pm
- **Ale Wozniak and Tao**
  Bar Lounge 12:30, 2 pm
- **Eric Corcoran**
  John Pizzarelli Swing 7
  Bar Lounge 6:30, 1 pm
- **Wiborg Williams and Noto**
  Joe’s Pub 9:30 pm $20
- **Marina Rodriguez; Barbara Martines**
  Club Bonafide 6 pm $20
- **Ted Nash Quartet with Gary Versace, Womack, Rulis, Reub, Matt Wilson**
  Birdland 9 pm $50
- **David Danielson; Flame Seaburn; John Macadon;**
  Joe’s Pub 11:30 pm $20
- **Radwan Scheditz; Steve Carrington; Jerry Mullen; Laura Nagle**
  Joe’s Pub 6 pm $20
- **With Annual Stan Marseille Memorial Jazz Concert; Maryjane Edliğ Ensemble**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $10
- **Fred Ho Birthday Celebration; Yasu Makita**
  Joe’s Pub 7 pm $15
- **Stephen Gauci/Cooper-Moore; Zach D栋; huge kai; Malui Eben; Kenji Hatori**
  Joe’s Pub 9:30 pm $15

### Sunday, August 12

- **The Ladies**
  Joe’s Pub 6 pm $20
- **Tribute to Mulgrew Miller**
  Joe’s Pub 8 pm $20
- **Red Nash Quartet with Gary Versace, Joseph Doubleday, Rufus Reid, Matt Wilson**
  Birdland 9 pm $60
- **Ben GoldbergKirk Knudf; Juanna Trujillo, Heri Paz, Dayne Seck**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **Terry Wald’s Soho City Band; Alexi Davis; Three of Four Shades of Mingus**
  Joe’s Pub 9:30 pm $20
- **William Hooker, Jesse Henry, Ravi Naiman, Hares, Moshe, Cristian Arango, Elena Rossom**
  Joe’s Pub 9:30 pm $20
- **Kim Clarke**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **The Skip Turner; Matt Nelson, Danny Rasband, Garbados, Specter Joanna**
  Joe’s Pub 10 pm $20
- **Yoko Sono**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **Jazzmobile; Arturo Hervanat; Avrat; Roots & Family Celebration; Hot Club Of Baltimore**
  Joe’s Pub 9 pm $20
- **Jazzmobile; A-Harmonian-Harmonia; Avrat; Roots & Family Celebration**
  Joe’s Pub 10 pm $20
- **Sandor Albert Trio with Vanessa Fabbri**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **Catherine Russell**
  Joe’s Pub 9:30 pm $15
- **Ali Murray/Triq with Sachi Perry; Johnny Qua Trio with Tardo Hammer,**
  Joe’s Pub 10 pm $20
- **A Tribute to Murello Mureu; Terell Stafford; Steve Nelson, Dayne Grisset, Peter Washington, Les Nash**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **Nada Pesquisa; The Anderson Brothers; Brooklyn Bridge**
  Joe’s Pub 11 pm $20
- **Kurt Rosenwinkel Trio with Daro Forward, Greg Hutchinson**
  Joe’s Pub 9 pm $20

### Monday, August 13

- **Kaly Trio with Ethan Silverman, Michelle Maibach; Michele Walker Trio with**
  Sean Fitzpatrick, Michael O’Brien
  Dizzy’s Club 7:30 pm $35
- **Roy Hargrove Band with Paquito D’Rivera;”**
  Smoke 9 pm $40
- **Victor Lin**
  Smoke 7, 9, 10:30 pm $40
- **Rory Sullivan Special Event; Edward McFadden; Michael Eaton;**
  Smoke 7 pm $40
- **Bill Bergman**
  Smoke 9 pm $10
- **The Sound Bite**
  Smoke 10 pm $10
- **Showman’s**
  Smoke 10 pm $15
- **The Jazz Gallery**
  Smoke 10 pm $15
- **The Brooklyn Commons**
  Smoke 11 pm $20
- **Blue Note**
  Smoke 11 pm $60
Tuesday, August 14

- Stan Kilian, Jesse Lynch, Moppa Elliott, Jared Liu
- Andrew Ryan Trio with Vaughn Stovall, J.K. Kim; Adam Larson Trio with Clark Summers, Matt Wilson
- The Bad Band Group
- 4 Generations of Miles: Sonny Fortune, Mike Stern, Buster Williams, Lenny White
- Roy Hargrove Band with Paquito D’Rivera
- Victor Lin
- Low Country’s Not So Big Band
- Trio Da Paz and Friends: Romero Lubambo, Nilson Matta, Duduca da Fonseca, Maschi Adnet, Harry Allen, Claudia Roditi
- Adam Mozaﬁni
- Zaccai Curtis Quartet
- Saul Rubin Eizater, Peter Brainin Latin Jazz Workshop
- The Bad Band Group
- The Bar Guide Band
- Larry Carlton
- Takashi Omosono solo
- Lee Konitz Nonet conducted by Ohad Talmor with Judith Insell, Mariel Roberts, Simon Goldman, Carolinave, Christof Knoche, Denis Lee, Frank Kimbrough, Chris Tordini, George Schuller
- Adam Hutcherson Quartet with Takashi Omote, Peter Brendler, Rodney Green
- Li Cai
- Andy Blanco Quartet
- Saul Konitz Trio with Vitor Goncalves, Ben Sivers
- Jerry Weldon
- Lauren Sevian’s LSQ with Helen Sung, Marcos Varela, E.J. Strickland, Maximilian Horn Jr. with Joe Forman, Aaron Snider
- Julian Lage/Steve Swallow
- Songbook Summit: The Anderson Brothers Play Jerome Kern
- Akemi Yamada; Richard Tait
- Kurt Rosenwinkel Quartet with Aaron Parks, Eric Revis, Allen Mednard
- Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

Wednesday, August 15

- Melissa Stylianos with Steve Wilusz, Chris Rice; Orlando de L Fleming
- Kuni Mikami
- Seven Plus Seven with Gregehr Uhlenbusch; Steve Davis Quintet; Corey Wallace DUBtet
- Joel Forrester Duo
- Rachid Kouchra
- Peter Brainin Latin Jazz Workshop
- The Bad Band Group
- The Bar Guide Band
- Larry Carlton
- Takashi Omosono solo
- Lee Konitz Nonet conducted by Ohad Talmor with Judith Insell, Mariel Roberts, Simon Goldman, Carolinave, Christof Knoche, Denis Lee, Frank Kimbrough, Chris Tordini, George Schuller
- Adam Hutcherson Quartet with Takashi Omote, Peter Brendler, Rodney Green
- Li Cai
- Andy Blanco Quartet
- Saul Konitz Trio with Vitor Goncalves, Ben Sivers
- Jerry Weldon
- Lauren Sevian’s LSQ with Helen Sung, Marcos Varela, E.J. Strickland, Maximilian Horn Jr. with Joe Forman, Aaron Snider
- Julian Lage/Steve Swallow
- Songbook Summit: The Anderson Brothers Play Jerome Kern
- Akemi Yamada; Richard Tait
- Kurt Rosenwinkel Quartet with Aaron Parks, Eric Revis, Allen Mednard
- Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

Thursday, August 16

- Michael Attias Quartet
- Pete McCormick Trio with Matt Chighi, Mark Ferber
- John Yao
- 4 Generations of Miles: Sonny Fortune, Mike Stern, Buster Williams, Lenny White
- Beegie Adair and Monica Ramey
- Roy Hargrove Band with Paquito D’Rivera
- Victor Lin
- José Fuentes Duo
- Emilee Surtess
- Jorge Glusin
- Trio Da Paz and Friends: Romero Lubambo, Nilson Matta, Duduca da Fonseca, Maschi Adnet, Harry Allen, Claudia Roditi
- Adam Mozaﬁni
- Martina DaSilva/Steve Felker; Mark Whitﬁeld
- Vicki Burns Quartet with Art Hirahara, Sam Sevilla, Curtis Nowosad
- Dan McKee’s Big Heart Machine
- Warren Wolf Quartet with Helen Sung, David Wang, Rodney Green
- Sheila Jordan
- Michael Marcus
- Brian Mover
- Adam Larson Quartet; Darnell Doggus; Julio Rodriguz
- Steve Koonce Sextet with Craig Rivers, Bryan Carpenter, Igor Appel, Waldo Chavez, Joel Makah
- Julian Lage Trio with Jorge Roeder, Dave King
- Songbook Summit: The Anderson Brothers Play Jerome Kern
- Joe Spinelli, John Marko
- Kurt Rosenwinkel Quartet with Aaron Parks, Eric Revis, Allen Mednard
- Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

Friday, August 17

- Brianne Thorne/Greg Lewis
- Tom Dempsey Trio with Ron Osowski, Vince Elber
- 4 Generations of Miles: Sonny Fortune, Mike Stern, Buster Williams, Lenny White
- Beegie Adair and Monica Ramey
- Zaccai Curtis Quartet
- Kyle Eastmond
- Victor Lin
- Art Libo Trio
- New York Jazz Academy Showcase
- Monte Alejandro Rodríguez
- Trio Da Paz and Friends: Romero Lubambo, Nilson Matta, Duduca da Fonseca, Maschi Adnet, Harry Allen, Claudia Roditi
- Steve Koonce Sextet with Craig Rivers, Bryan Carpenter, Igor Appel, Waldo Chavez, Joel Makah
- Julian Lage Trio with Jorge Roeder, Dave King
- Songbook Summit: The Anderson Brothers Play Jerome Kern
- Joe Spinelli, John Marko
- Kurt Rosenwinkel Quartet with Aaron Parks, Eric Revis, Allen Mednard
- Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35
### Sunday, August 19

- **Renee Marie/Earl Montejo Sextet**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 8:30, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Kurt Brown**
  - Venue: Smoke
  - Time: 7, 9, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $40

- **Teddy Noy**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 8:30, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Nitec**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Jazz at Kitano**
  - Venue: Jazz at Kitano
  - Time: 8, 10 pm
  - Tickets: $34

- **Joe Farnsworth Group**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 8:30, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

### Monday, August 20

- **Eliot Shiffer Trio with Al Goldenberg**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9, 11 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **George Brain**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Daron Hagen Quartet**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Abigail Sorensen**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

### Tuesday, August 21

- **Ryan Keberle and the Social Justice Quartet**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 8:30, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **John Collins**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Fat Cat**
  - Venue: Fat Cat
  - Time: 7, 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Sidney Bechet**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10

### Wednesday, August 22

- **German Dambrosio Trio**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **David Weiss Point of Departure**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Alphonso Hopper**
  - Venue: Smoke
  - Time: 7, 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Jazz Standard**
  - Venue: Jazz Standard
  - Time: 7:30, 9:30 pm
  - Tickets: $30

### Thursday, August 23

- **Geri Allen**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Ben Williams, Obed Calvaire**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Tomo Fujita**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 11 pm
  - Tickets: $10

### Friday, August 24

- **Lars Danielsson**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 8:30, 10 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Carla Sayer**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

### Saturday, August 25

- **Paquita Grass Trio**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9, 10:30 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Waltz**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 11 pm
  - Tickets: $10

### Sunday, August 26

- **Bryan Piana**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 9 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Joe Farnsworth**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 10 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **The Joe Farnsworth Sextet**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 11 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Barb Jungr**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 2, 5 pm
  - Tickets: $35

- **Tomo Fujita**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 7 pm
  - Tickets: $10

- **Diana Pescott**
  - Venue: Village Vanguard
  - Time: 7, 9 pm
  - Tickets: $10
**Regular Engagements**

- **Monday**
  - Richard Clements/Murray Wall Band
    - Grove Street Stop Quarters Bar 8 pm

- **Tuesday**
  - Yuchi Hirakawa Trio
    - Birdland 8 pm
  - Steve Witno
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Josephine Krix Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Lester Harris Trio
    - Birdland 5:15 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Mingus Big Band
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Pasquale Grasso
    - Birdland 8:30 pm
  - Battle Of The Horns
    - Birdland 8:30 pm
  - Vincenzo Giordani & The Nighthawks
    - Birdland 8:30 pm

- **Wednesday**
  - Bill Watrous/Leaonhart
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - The Ear Inn
    - Blue Note 8 pm

- **Thursday**
  - Eric Yano Moto
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Eric Yano Moto
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Joel Forrester
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Marcus Garvey Park
    - Birdland 7:30 pm

- **Friday**
  - Kenda Shank with Dean Johnson, Matt Wilson
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Birdland 8:30 pm

- **Saturday**
  - Eric Yano Moto
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Eric Yano Moto
    - Birdland 7:30 pm

- **Sunday**
  - John McNeill/Mike Fabio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Jeremy Pelt
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
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    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
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  - Eric Yano Moto
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  - Joel Forrester
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
  - Loston Harris Trio
    - Birdland 7:30 pm

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  - Kenda Shank with Dean Johnson, Matt Wilson
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Blue Note 8 pm
  - Tom Beckham Trio
    - Birdland 8:30 pm

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  - Eric Yano Moto
    - Birdland 7:30 pm
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I want to say about the art of vocalese: it’s wonderful to sing along with recordings, you know, wordless, with great solos—it’s a lot of fun, it’s the way I started—however, vocalese is an ART. It entails really going inside the solo and understanding all the rhythm and the nuances. The last thing I recorded is on an album with a wonderful tenor player, Maeneuleme Cisi, from Torino and this is an album dedicated to Lester Young. I got to sing an adaptation of the poem “No Eyes” by beat generation poet David Meltzer—who wrote a great book of poems inspired by the music of Lester Young—on Lester’s 1945 solo on “These Foolish Things”. This took me a while and it took a lot of focus, because of getting all the inflections and the rhythm. I do see a lot of interest now—a resurgence, almost like a fashion—of putting videos on the internet of singers singing along to great solos in the background. That’s great but the real ART of vocalese is to understand all the nuances and the rhythm. Before you can even write the lyrics that tell a story you have to truly get inside of the music... and so it’s not just notes, but rhythm and nuances and inflections, it’s like taking a story and when you put your own words to it and you sing it. THAT is CREATIVE and you sing it with nothing in the background playing. I realized the magnitude of vocalese when I transcribed this song by Lester Young for the No Eyes project and at first it seemed so flowing, when he plays it he makes it sound this way. Then when I transcribed it I thought, “This is the most difficult thing I’ve ever done in my life.” But you can’t take it too easy, you have to really respect this thing and be willing to go inside of it. It’s not enough just repeat the notes and sing along, although that is a great place to start.

**TNYCJR:** Singing the Jimmy Heath songbook—tell me about this project.

**RG:** It’s so dear to my heart. Master Jimmy Heath was one of the first musicians I met when I arrived in the States and he’s one of my idols. I have been listening to his records since childhood. I heard all these amazing melodies and it wasn’t until years later, when I started to sing with the Dizzy Gillespie All-Stars and Jimmy was in the band playing and arranging, that we really hung out a lot and he honored me with his friendship. I didn’t know that a lot of his great songs have lyrics, because they had not been sung. These melodies are amazing and they remind me of a lot of my favorite composer Strayhorn: the shape, the scope, the width, the beauty of them, really remind me of Strayhorn. So we recorded these songs, many of them have lyrics by Jimmy himself and I wrote lyrics to a few of the songs, as well as a few other lyricists. And of course there are many more of those melodies by Jimmy so I hope one day we record a volume two (laughs).

**TNYCJR:** What is the best way for fans to stay connected to you online?

**RG:** I am currently working on my full website, finally, that is going to gather all the information about my new projects, where I’m going, what I’m up to. Also, later in the fall, I’m planning on launching my educational website, which will be separate from my artist page, devoted to my teaching. I’ve been very passionate about education, holding master classes. I love to teach and actually I’m writing a book. It will have tips and interactive parts and it is going to be all about the voice and aspects of how to work on the voice. That one might take a little while—I will be making announcements about it on my Facebook page.

For more information, visit facebook.com/roberta.gambarini. Gambarini is at Blue Note Aug. 23rd-26th. See Calendar.

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**Recommended Listening:**

- Roberta Gambarini/Antonio Scarano—*Apreslade* (Splasc(h), 1991)
- Roberta Gambarini—*Easy To Love* (Groovin’ High/ Kindred Rhythm–In+Out, 2004)
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- Roberta Gambarini—*Connecting Spirits* (The Jimmy Heath Songbook) (Groovin’ High, 2015)

**LABEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11**

The other CD to appear since that initial launch is *Psychic Alchemy* (Weekertoft 5) by the duo of Smyth and drummer Chris Corsano. The 2015 concert of loose drumskins and taut piano strings has all the freshness and energy of Don Pullen and Milford Graves’ 1966 duet recordings with a half-century history of improvisatory practice added. Meanwhile, *Taping Arms Point*—The Wind, a recent cassette (Weekertoft 8), documents the duo of tenor saxophonist Rachel Musson and bassist Olle Brice.

Weekertoft’s latest release uses the digital format to present a festival far more diverse and expansive than the Making Rooms boxed set (Weekertoft Digital 5) documents the Discovery Festival 2017 in Walthamstow, taking in 19 sets from some 60 musicians and lasting over six hours. Covering a range of approaches, there are large ensembles like the Mopomoso Workshop—Not From Here and the South Leicestershire Improvisers Ensemble along with small groups and solo performances that include a Who’s Who of English free improvising; trumpeter Jim Dvorak; reed players Stefan Keune, Alex Ward, Evan Parker and Alan Wilkinson; drummers Steve Noble, Roger Turner and Mark Sanders; bassists Marcio Mattos and John Edwards; violinists Alison Blunt and Nigel Coombes; pianists Vynon Weston and Steve Beresford; singer Maggie Nichols and cellist Hannah Marshall as well as Russell and Smyth.

What’s next for Weekertoft? Russell has a cassette on the way, a trio “with [cellist] Matthias Safatly and [saxophonist] Jean-Jacques Duerincks called ‘Serpentes’. It’s a group I like very much and we recorded a fine set in Rotterdam earlier this year.” Smyth adds, “This recording is one I’m particularly proud of. Our musical relationship is quite special, and it is one that has kept Mopomoso running for 27 years: ‘We made a commitment to live performance opportunities that would allow people to come from Torino and this is an album dedicated to Lester Young. I got to sing an adaptation of the poem “No Eyes” by beat generation poet David Meltzer—who wrote a great book of poems inspired by the music of Lester Young—on Lester’s 1945 solo on “These Foolish Things”. This took me a while and it took a lot of focus, because of getting all the inflections and the rhythm. I do see a lot of interest now—a resurgence, almost like a fashion—of putting videos on the internet of singers singing along to great solos in the background. That’s great but the real ART of vocalese is to understand all the nuances and the rhythm. Before you can even write the lyrics that tell a story you have to truly get inside of the music... and so it’s not just notes, but rhythm and nuances and inflections, it’s like taking a story and when he plays it he makes it sound this way. Then when I transcribed it I thought, “This is the most difficult thing I’ve ever done in my life.” But you can’t take it too easy, you have to really respect this thing and be willing to go inside of it. It’s not enough just repeat the notes and sing along, although that is a great place to start.

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- Roberta Gambarini—*Connecting Spirits* (The Jimmy Heath Songbook) (Groovin’ High, 2015)
gestures and micro-dynamics as well as its progression based on breaks. What was particularly impressive was the cohesion of the playing despite the constant flow of new ideas.

Another highlight was the trio of Mette Rasmussen (alto saxophone), Craig Taborn (piano) and Ches Smith (drums) at La Sala Rossa (Jun. 13th). One impressive feature was that the musicians were at the service of a collective creation. Furthermore, it was this collective creation that made their individual contributions shine. The way the music unfolded also showed a great concern for form. Indeed, even though the music was entirely improvised, the musicians were conscious of building something over the course of the concert.

Will Guthrie’s solo concert at La Vitrola (Jun. 15th) was another high point. While he is, strictly speaking, a drummer, describing his performance as a drum solo would be missing the mark. Indeed, the Nantes-based musician used his drumkit, cymbals and gongs as tools to generate fascinating resonances and overtones.

Finally, the performance given by Irreversibile Entanglements, a free jazz quintet that includes poet Camae Aweya, at La Sala Rossa (Jun. 17th) has to be mentioned. In her poetry, Aweya addressed in a very direct and visceral manner a variety of issues of justice that still affect African-Americans. The charge of her words was not only complemented, but also amplified by the music itself, most notably by the powerful rhythm section of bassist Luke Stewart and drummer Tcheses Holmes. Over the course of the concert however, the quintet’s proposition did show its limitations due to a certain lack of variety in structure and approach from one piece to the other.

The 2018 edition proved to be the best in years, most notably because of its consistency.

For more information, visit suoniperilpopolo.org

(MONTRÉAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

pianist/bandleader/composer Carla Bley and her husband/electric bassist Steve Swallow. To make up for this, a tribute to Bley at Le Montréal National was organized in which The Orchestre National de Jazz would play her compositions, conducted by trumpeter Andreas Stensland Löwe, piano; Jo Berger Myhre, bass; Andreas Lennø Knudsrød, drums) were set up on a forest floor, an environment so perfect for hoovering, poetico piano trio music that you forgot to wonder how they got the Yamaha Concert grand piano up the mountain and into the woods.

The concert that could stand for the whole festival was Maria Faust’s Sacrum Facere project. Her octet played under the stars in a stone quarry at 3,500 feet, with a sheer rock face behind them. “Sacrum Facere” means “sacifice of human souls” and all the pieces in this seven-part suite were about “the destinies of women”. The brass and woodwind ensemble (plus the kannel, a traditional Estonian plucked string instrument) patiently portrayed Faust’s stark forms that recurred throughout. The gifted Italian acoustic pianist Giovanni Guidi has a new Rhodes project called Drive!, with Jörg Rehmer on electric bass and Federico Scettini on drums. On an outdoor basketball court in the small town of Merano, they played one hour-long piece like a river that swept you up and carried you home. Splashgirl (Andreas Stensland Löwe, piano; Jo Berger Myhre, bass; Andreas Lennø Knudsrød, drums) were set up on a forest floor, an environment so perfect for hoovering, poetico piano trio music that you forgot to wonder how they got the Yamaha Concert grand piano up the mountain and into the woods.

For more information, visit montrealjazzfest.com

(SÜDITIROL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

visual imagery opened new doors of perception. Unfortunately, the plug had to be pulled on this unique concert when a violent thunderstorm sent the audience running for cover.

One of the best events took place on a sunny morning beneath shade trees on the grounds of Palais Toggenburg in Bolzano. Simone Graziano Frontal was an exception to the Nordic theme. Graziano’s priority, for his Italian/American/Dutch quintet was not showcasing all the solo firepower at his disposal, but exploring ensemble form. His tunes are careful structures with many moving parts, at many levels of intensity. When their moments came, each badass soloist burned: Graziano on piano, Dan Kinzelman on tenor saxophone, Reinier Baas on guitar and Gabriele Evangelista on bass.

Here are some vivid memories, isolated from a blur of sensory overload at high altitude. The songs of Norwegian vocalist Natalie Sandtorv are psychodramas. She is a powerful theatrical presence with a voice capable of wide intervallic leaps. The It’s Never Too Late Orchestra, led by tuba player Per-Åke Holmlander, achieved something almost impossible: they played explosive, raving avant garde jazz with a big band and made the chaos coherent, if barely. In a dark cellar in Bolzano at midnight, Mats Gustafsson’s Fire!, with singer Mariam Wallentin, conducted barbaric dark ceremonies. Few bands in any genre generate so much raw visceral impact. The cable car ride to the concert of Swedish singer Anni Elif was breathtaking and her warm, clear music was perfect for a cold, wet mountain morning. The gifted Italian acoustic pianist Giovanni Guidi has a new Rhodes project called Drive!, with Jörg Rehmer on electric bass and Federico Scettini on drums. On an outdoor basketball court in the small town of Merano, they played one hour-long piece like a river that swept you up and carried you home. Splashgirl (Andreas Stensland Löwe, piano; Jo Berger Myhre, bass; Andreas Lennø Knudsrød, drums) were set up on a forest floor, an environment so perfect for hoovering, poetico piano trio music that you forgot to wonder how they got the Yamaha Concert grand piano up the mountain and into the woods.

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For more information, visit suedtiroljazzfestival.com