MYRA MELFORD
MEDITATION AND COLLABORATION

FRANK VIGNOLA
JOEL ROSS
LARRY MCKENNA
ED BLACKWELL
As human beings, we are the sum (hopefully greater) of our experiences. For musicians, the added challenge is applying that experience towards creating a life-specific body of work.

Pianist Myra Melford (On The Cover) has mixed her instrumental training with spiritual practice and cultural awareness to mint music of great depth and subtlety. She revisits and introduces some of the results with a week’s curation at The Stone at The New School. Guitarist Frank Vignola (Interview) has made the best of what almost was a career-ending injury, taking his time to think about repertoire, education and what is next in store for him; in the short term that is a night at Iridium this month. And if not for a twin brother who was a better drummer, Joel Ross (Artist Feature) might never have taken up the vibraphone and gone on to his Blue Note Records debut KingMaker, celebrated at Jazz Standard. Saxophonist Larry McKenna (Encore) resisted the urge to leave Philadelphia and has had a long career in the City of Brotherly Love (he plays Small’s this month) while a move from his native New Orleans to California led drummer Ed Blackwell (Lest We Forget) to a meeting with Ornette Coleman and years of musical history (Blackwell is celebrated at The Stone at The New School).

Corrections: In last month’s review of Marilyn Crispell’s Dream Libretto, “Memoria / For Pessa Malka” was composed while “The River” was improvised.

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Happy lucky no.1, a shoebox-shaped art gallery/performance space in Brooklyn’s Crown Heights neighborhood, provided the setting (May 10th) for a robust and occasionally raucous set by Banquet of the Spirits, a world-beat jazz collective sparked by the irresistible percussion of Cyro Baptista. In the dozen or so years it’s been active, the group has championed folk-rooted party music with an avant edge — music to dance and think to. There was hardly room for dancing among the cramped rows of folding chairs, but following a short free-form intro, bodies were instantly set in motion to the reggae-fied theme of “Bird Boy” and then to the catchy strains of “Mumakata,” animated by Baptista’s berimbau and drumming, Tim Keiper’s kora. Keyboard player Brian Marsella introduced “Kwanzaa” with a musing rhapsody, later soloing dexterously on melodica, toy piano, synth organ and other keyboards, often in combination, over a romping 6/8 groove, which segued to a rousing Brazilian percussion break on “Ko-Ko”, featuring guitarist Nels Cline, guest for the gig. Bassist Shanir Blumenkranz switched to oud for a saxophone break on “Ko-Ko”. The peak moments came during “The Roots Shuffle” rolled out an infectious line that showed how, in the right hands, standards can be kept relevant, every nuance audible, including the to close out its daylong conference at CUNY Graduate Center (May 8th), the Historic Brass Society put on a concert at Elebash Recital Hall with a number of the day’s participants. The subtitle of the conference was “Repertoires that Influenced and were Influenced by Early Jazz” and celebrated bandleader James Reese Europe (in the centennial year of his death) and Latino composers like Chinchíquina Gonzaga and José Pablo Valenzuela García. The key attraction, apart from hearing such pieces as Shelton Brooks’ “Dark Town Strutters Ball” and W.C. Handy’s “St. Louis Blues”, was hearing them played on period instruments like ophicleide (Scott Robinson, whose collection of instruments was a source for the concert), helicon (Dave Pearson), Acme Siren (Henry Meredith) and more Conns than you could shake a stick at. As befit the era in question, renditions by the orchestra were pithy at around three minutes each and full of an appealing raggedness far from modern-day big band laser precision. Then pianist Ehud Asherie played oddly introverted taked on Jelly Roll Morton, Luckey Roberts and Ernesto Nazareth. This led to the evening highlight: Jason Moran’s solo piano exposition of “Ballin’ The Jack” and “Castle House Rag” in a 13-minute medley demonstrating both subtlety and complexity, punctuated by a brief monologue, saying that Europe should not be spoken of alongside Duke Ellington but should be thought of as greater for the conditions under which he worked. — Andrey Henkin
Drummer Quincy Davis brought a hard-hitting Jazz Messenger-styled sextet into Smalls (May 10th) to play original music from his forthcoming debut release as a leader. Davis kicked things off tapping his two sticks together to set up the medium tempo of his "Nat Turner," bringing in the band with Philip Dizack (trumpet), Myron Walden and Melissa Aldana (alto and tenor saxophones), Aaron Goldberg (piano) and Ricky Rodriguez (bass) with an explosive drum roll. Aldana was up first in the solo order, mining her lower register with dark bellowing lines, followed by Walden, tart at screaming out with hoarse crying accents, and then Rodriguez, who played with articulate lyricism, bringing the group back into a reprise of the processional melody. The rhythm section introduced "Lost In Thought," a pretty waltz that featured Dizack, Walden and especially Rodriguez, who took a turn that nodded Lee Morgan's way, followed by Walden, who played with ascendant verve. Walden moved over to bass clarinet for the intro to "Reverse Psychology," then back to alto for the meditative melody. Aldana reaching high up into her airy upper register. The set ended with Davis' pianist brother Xavier's anhemitic "First Step Into Reality." – Russ Musto

Following a set of repetitive electronic sounds and unimpressive visuals with duo Antelope, which largely wasted the formidable talents of drummer Jason Ajemian, Jamie Branch introduced the audience at Roulette to the ensemble Fly or Die (May 4th), which debuted in 2017 on the International Anthem label from Branch's adopted home of Chicago. For this second set of the evening, the celebrated trumpet player brought together the saxophonist Carl Maraghi and trumpeter Jonathan Villamar, alto saxophonist David León and trumpeter of "Varsity Drag Mambo" with extended solos by "Lo Llevo En Mi" then livened things up on "Donde Va Cita Rodriguez stepped into the spotlight for the bolero "Almendra" and Rodriguez let loose on Gil Fuller's undergirding the vocals of Marco Bermudez on a pair of Palladium-era '40s mambo classics, "Que Vengan los Rumberos" and "La Feria de las Flores." Villamar was featured on the Chico O'Farrill orchestration of "Almendra" and Rodriguez let loose on Gil Fuller's bebopping arrangement of "Bongo Fiesta." Vocalist Cita Rodriguez stepped into the spotlight for the bolero "Lo Llevo En Mi" then livened things up on "Donde Va Maria," delighting the crowd by dancing with mambo dance Joey Hemingue as trumpeter Joe Magnarelli and dance Joey Henriquez as trumpeter Joe Magnarelli and alto saxophonist Roman Filio soloed. The orchestra shifted into heavy swing for Ray Santos' arrangement of "Varsity Drag Mambo" with extended solos by Villamar, alto saxophonist David León and trumpeter Mike Rodriguez. Santos' "Jericho" had baritone saxophonist Carl Maraghi and trumpet Jonathan Powell blowing low and high before Hemingue took his turn, spurred on by the crowd's rhythmic clave clapping. The set closed with his "Macho's Groove"—Russ Musto

WHAT'S NEWS

The newest class of NEA Jazz Masters has been announced. Jazz advocate, vocalist Bobby McFerrin, saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell and bassist Reggie Workman. For more information, visit nea.gov.

Sculptor and collaborator with/presenter of jazz musicians Alain Kirili has received a 2019 Arts and Letters Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and will receive a Lifetime Achievement Honorree at the 2019 Vision Festival, taking place Jun. 11th-16th.

The Brooklyn Jazz Hall of Fame will posthumously induct pianist Randy Weston in a ceremony at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation Jun. 19th as part of a Juneteenth celebration. For more information, visit centralbrooklynjazz.org.

The 2019 Eretgun Jazz Hall of Fame inductees have been announced: saxophonists Cannonball Adderley and Frank Trumbauer, vocalist/pianist Dinah Washington and drummer/bandleader Chick Webb. The newest class will be celebrated at Dizzy’s Club Jul. 16th-17th. For more information, visit academyjazz.org/hall-of-fame.

The Jazz Journalists Association 2019 Award Winners have been announced. Ahmad Jamal received the Lifetime Achievement Award, Wayne Shorter was named Jazz Musician of the Year and Linda May Han Choo Up-and-Coming Musician of the Year while West Side Story Reimagined by Bobby Sanabria Multiverse Big Band was named Record of the Year and Both Directions at Once: The Lost Album by John Coltrane was Historic Album of the Year. For more information and to view the complete list of winners, visit jjajazzawards.org/prp/2019-winners.html.

A memorial tribute to Yvonne Ervin, founder of the Tucson Jazz Festival and Tucson Jazz Society, journalist and founder/Vice President of the Jazz Journalists Association, will take place at Jazz Standard Jun. 1st at 6 pm.

Meshele Ndegeocello was awarded the 2019 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts in the music category by a panel comprised of Delfeayo Marsalis, Willy Iacono, Jr., with a prize of $75,000. For more information, visit herbalettawards.com.

The Montclair, NJ club Trumpet will close its doors Jun. 30th.

Applications for the Jazz Road Tours program, an initiative of the Doris Duke with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation designed “with an emphasis on bringing jazz to rural, isolated, and underserved parts of the country” is accepting applications starting Aug. 1st. For more information, visit jazzroad.southernarts.org.

NJ PAC has announced the 8th Annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. Submissions are due by Sep. 9th and finalists will be announced in October. For more information, visit njpacticketing.com.

The first call for submissions for the John Abercrombie Jazz Scholarship Fund for students at Purchase College, where Abercrombie was an adjunct professor, has been announced. To submit this initiative, visit johnabercrombiejazzfund.org.

Marcon 5 keyboard player PJ Morton has announced plans to restore the New Orleans home of comet player Buddy Bolden in partnership with the Preservation Resource Center.

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The Soup & Sound series will present a two-day event featuring Blood Drum Spirit: a West African dance and drumming ensemble Blood Drum Spirit—We Are One (Jun. 1st) and a West African dance and drumming ensemble Blood Drum Spirit—We Are One (Jun. 1st) and a West African dance and drumming ensemble Blood Drum Spirit—We Are One (Jun. 1st) and a West African dance and drumming ensemble Blood Drum Spirit—We Are One (Jun. 1st) and a West African dance and drumming ensemble Blood Drum Spirit—We Are One (Jun. 1st). Turn out for the band with Philip Dizack (trumpet), Myron Walden and Melissa Aldana (alto and tenor saxophones), Aaron Goldberg (piano) and Ricky Rodriguez (bass) with an explosive drum roll. Aldana was up first in the solo order, mining her lower register with dark bellowing lines, followed by Walden, tart at screaming out with hoarse crying accents, and then Rodriguez, who played with articulate lyricism, bringing the group back into a reprise of the processional melody. The rhythm section introduced "Lost In Thought," a pretty waltz that featured Dizack, Walden and especially Rodriguez, who took a turn that nodded Lee Morgan's way, followed by Walden, who played with ascendant verve. Walden moved over to bass clarinet for the intro to "Reverse Psychology," then back to alto for the meditative melody. Aldana reaching high up into her airy upper register. The set ended with Davis' pianist brother Xavier's anhemitic "First Step Into Reality." (RM)
As a virtuoso of the guitar, Frank Vignola was in demand as a sideman even as he was developing his own solo career—at 23 he formed the Hot Club Quintet with immediate success. You may well have heard his work without realizing it. He’s played with a Who’s Who of artists, from Ringo Starr and Madonna to Susannah McCorkle, Jane Monheit, Leon Redbone, Wynton Marsalis, Bob Dorough, Lionel Hampton, Vince Giordano, Bucky Pizzarelli and many more. He was a regular player with Les Paul, a friend and mentor, until Paul’s death in 2009. Vignola’s versatility covers genres including swing, fusion, gypsy jazz, classical and pop. After surviving a near-death accident in 2017, he’s returned to performance and also concentrates intensely on his educational online jazz studio. He plays an Eastman Frank Vignola guitar based on a Ryan Thorell design.

The New York City Jazz Record: You began your love and study of guitar at a very young age, hearing your banjo-player father’s music.

Frank Vignola: I was immediately fascinated with Django Reinhardt and Charlie Christian. I heard them on record when I was five years old. Why I love their playing is the way they would play a melody, the phrasing used, the tempos of the songs and the blues always being prevalent. My father taught me the chords to “Limehouse Blues” around that time. I could already hear the chord changes, maybe because at that age there aren’t distractions—you’re always totally in the moment. I played that tune over and over! When I was seven I was taught to read music by a player of the family. Later on, when I was in high school, I studied at the Cultural Arts Center in Long Island, where I grew up.

TNYCJR: It would seem your fate as a musician was very much determined.

FV: It’s hard to say what path I would have taken if my father hadn’t been a musician. I do know it’s very important to expose kids to jazz, blues and classical music early on.

TNYCJR: But there’s also rock ‘n roll, which you’ve played.

FV: I love rock ‘n roll and think that guitarists who are responsible for classic riffs like “Stairway to Heaven”, “Walk This Way” and so on are genius. My introduction to rock was Frank Zappa’s Studio Tan record. Zappa could play some serious guitar. But I actually wasn’t aware of rock until I was 14 or 15. I prefer jazz and most particularly the era of traditional, swing and bebop.

TNYCJR: Your solo career began fairly early in your professional life.

FV: I always liked working with the same musicians as a band to create a sound. I always loved the Modern Jazz Quartet, the Braff/Barnes Quartet, Dave Brubeck Quartet and so on—bands. In 1988, when I was working with Vince Giordano playing almost every night, I decided to walk into Michael’s Pub and inquire about performing a salute to Django show. I was dressed in a tux and looking fine so I figured what the heck. To my surprise, management said great—you start in three weeks. This was the start of my solo career. In the first week of our three-week engagement, which ended up being an extended 20-week engagement, The New York Times, Fox News and every other major media were all there reviewing like crazy. I was very lucky and fortunate that Gil West provided this opportunity. This truly set up my solo career.

TNYCJR: A very strong work ethic drives you.

FV: I do have an incredible work ethic because I truly love what I do. Most of my time now is spent teaching and producing educational materials for my online jazz studio, with occasional touring—all work I absolutely love.

TNYCJR: Virtuosity is a rare commodity and you’ve attained that distinction.

FV: Moving from being a good player to being more is about a defining point of style, sound and uniqueness. When I hear Louis, I know in two seconds who it is. When I hear Django, I know who it is in two seconds. Same notes and songs as everyone else but, wow, what a sound. That’s what a good player who wants to be a better player strives for.

TNYCJR: There is clearly a philosophy that informs what you play.

FV: It is to play great songs! Billy Mitchell knew the words to every song he played. I’m not a lyric guy—I’m interested in the relationship of melody to harmony—but when you think there are only 12 notes to work with and how you can have so many combinations that are unique, it’s mind-boggling. It fascinates me. When you think about players like Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan and how they color the melody, it’s a beautiful thing. I think of Cole Porter’s “Get Out of Town” or the Gershwins’ “Easy to Love” and the intricacy of Ellington and Strayhorn’s “Satin Doll” and I am continually amazed. “Stardust” still intrigues me and I know hundreds of songs. When I was recuperating from the accident, songs helped me heal. There was a period in my recovery when I listened to nothing but Jimmy Van Heusen.

TNYCJR: Songs and melody imply a strong belief in storytelling.

FV: My thought has been to play songs people know.
At the January 2017 concert “In Celebration Of A Life Well Spent” memorializing vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, one artist stood out as the surprise of the evening. Not listed in the program, Joel Ross had been chosen by impresario Todd Barkan to represent the future of the instrument. He performed holding his own in the heavy company of George Cables, Essiet Essiet, Joe Chambers and Eddie Henderson. Cables, who already new the young vibraphonist, says, “Joel is an extraordinarily talented young musician. I had him in an ensemble at The New School and he is very musical and adventurous in his solos...very lyrical and harmonically astute. Playing with him is a real pleasure...it’s easy to interact with him because he is very responsive to his surroundings.”

Ross, who was born on Jul. 10th, 1995, growing up in a quiet part of the south side of Chicago hearing a “lot of gospel music”, had already had a lifetime of musical experience and education by the time he arrived in New York only months before. He and his twin brother both began playing drums before they were three and by the time he was ten he was sitting in at church services where his father was a teacher-counselor. He began formal music training in elementary school. He remembers, “I think we were about ten when we joined our school concert band and that’s when I started playing mallet percussion...all the classical percussion, tympani, xylophone, orchestra bell, snare drum, bass drum...and then in the same year we auditioned for Chicago all-city music program, which had a concert band and a jazz band.”

He had not even seen a vibraphone or heard jazz before that. He says, “I had auditioned on drums, but my brother is the better drummer so they suggested that I play vibraphone. I didn’t want to, but I did and that was our first exposure to jazz...I remember the first vibraphonist [I heard] was definitely Milt Jackson and he was by far the heaviest influence on me, at least on vibraphone. When we first started off it was Milt Jackson, Theelonious Monk, Miles Davis and then pretty much John Coltrane. Those were the cats we were listening to heavily.”

Ross excelled on the instrument and during his years at the Chicago High School for the Arts, where flutist Nicole Mitchell was an instructor, he earned a seat in the all-city jazz band and began receiving national attention as part of the Monk Institute youth program, which partnered with the school. Ross says, “The first year we worked with Benny Green, the second year we worked with Eric Reed, the third year was Sean Jones and my senior year is when I met Gerald Clayton. And that’s when I learned about a lot of his peers who eventually became mentors and close friends.”

While still in high school Ross met Stefan Harris backstage at the Chicago Jazz Festival: “Stefan was the first professional vibraphonist that I met and that’s how I started meeting all the other vibraphonists. Then I went to college through him and studied with him [at the Brubeck Institute].” Harris’ personalized method of ear training, which Ross describes as “tying emotion and feeling to harmony” had a profound influence on his composing and playing. Harris proclaims, “Joel is an absolutely brilliant young man. The magic in his creative presence is fueled by a rare combination of courage, drive, curiosity, authenticity and a strong sense of social justice. He is clearly one of the most definitive voices of his generation.”

Vibraphonists Joe Locke and Warren Wolf share his opinion. Locke says, “Joel Ross represents the future of the music—a future that is upon us. He owns the tradition yet is fearless about jumping into unknown territory. His playing is like soul food to me, in the truest sense of the term. I’m nourished by his work and left with a sense of wonder by the intellectual rigor and poetry he brings in equal measure to any project he is part of.” Wolf declares, “Joel is one of my favorite vibraphones today...like a hybrid of some of the modern masters of the vibes like Bobby Hutcherson, Steve Nelson and his mentor Stefan Harris. He takes important stories that are happening in the world and bases his compositions on those particular events. Joel is pretty quiet in person, but when he starts to perform you can truly hear his voice and what he’s going to accomplish in the future.”

Recently Ross’ profile has increased markedly. While he has led various ensembles at The Jazz Gallery and late night sessions at Smalls and Dizzy’s Club, most of his national recognition has come as a sideman with Melissa Aldana, James Francis, Marquis Hill, Godwin Louis and Makaya McCraven. Now with the release of his debut album KingMaker all that is about to change. The Blue Note date by his Good Vibes band with alto saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins, pianist Jeremy Corren, bassist Benjamin Tiberio, drummer Jeremy Dutton (and on one track guest vocalist Gretchen Parlato), features a dozen original compositions. Following the advice he received from Hutcherson to “write music about your life” each track evokes a tale about family, friends and experiences in a manner that is harmonically absorbing and narrative in nature, unmistakably the work of someone who artistically is his own person.

Yet as compelling as the the album is, it is only a glimpse of a huge talent who has much more to say. At a concert last month at Roulette Ross performed with two distinctive ensembles. In his Inspiration Quartet he played both piano and vibraphone on a set of daring compositions based on his regular duo improvising sessions with the group’s saxophonist Sergio Tabanico. Then with his octet Parables, featuring Wilkins, Marja Grand and Adam O’Farrell, he premiered “Revelation”, a Jerome Foundation-Roulette commissioned work, which revealed enormous compositional prowess and a mastery of the jazz, gospel and classical idioms. Wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with the words Man of God, he played and conducted energetically, dancing around the stage with a joyous smile of major accomplishment and a sense of things to come. ❖

For more information, visit iplayvibes.com. Ross’ Blue Note CD release is at Jazz Standard Jun. 4th-5th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
- Joel Ross — KingMaker (Blue Note, 2016)
- Ulysses Owens, Jr. — Falling Forward (Spice of Life, 2016)
- Makaya McCraven — Universal Beings (International Anthem, 2017)
- Walter Smith/Matthew Stevens/Joel Ross / Harish Raghavan/Marcus Gilmore — In Common (Whirlwind, 2017)
- Melissa Aldana — Visions (Motéma Music, 2018)
There are many facets to pianist Myra Melford’s oeuvre. That is one reason her residency at The Stone at The New School this month holds so much promise. Another is the slate of innovative accompanists scheduled to join her. A third is the potency of voice she has cultivated over the last two decades of rigorous spiritual and musical study, diverse collaboration and fearless experimentation.

Bred of jazz, the European classical tradition, Hindustani and Islamic music and a dose of Chicago blues, Melford’s approach is rich in texture and rhythmically bold. Her repertoire ranges from the gamut from minimally structured free improvisation to highly melodic or groove-driven. Melford explained that these diverse strands have been present—at least nascent—since her earliest childhood exposure to music. Melford’s first musical memories are of Indian classical music. Her first piano teacher also took an unusual approach that had a lasting impact.

“I was studying classical piano with a family friend who was also a great boogie-woogie player,” said Melford. “The blues are really a strong part of my roots as a musician. It can be pretty abstract now, but it’s always a current. Whether I am playing completely free or improvising over chord changes…[it’s] always present in my music.”

Jazz came later in college and was instrumental to her decision to major in music. It has remained another dominant force ever since. A similarly prominent stream of influence flows from her experiences as a Fulbright Scholar in India, studying the harmonium, an instrument with a long tradition in Hindustani music. Melford traveled across India, learning from multiple masters while also exploring yoga and meditation. This proved profound, reshaping her music and deepening her spiritual practice.

She absorbed core musical elements during these studies, which over time have been fully integrated into her music. “Though I don’t use Indian rhythms in my music… the form of how Indian music enfolds from a slow introductory phase and then gradually moves into time, picking up tempo, [features] like that are certainly devices used in my music. The biggest thing that changed…after India was the emphasis on melody…[it] became a big way of approaching improvisation. I started to privilege that over chord changes.” Musical practices were not the only significant aspect of this period. In many ways, the heart of Melford’s music, the immutable core that manifests across its diversity, was brought to light through the greater immersion in meditation. Melford described this core as “…wanting to offer the best of who I am… the desire to offer something uplifting or meaningful to people. I always ultimately want people to experience something life-affirming.”

These early strands are still fundamental to Melford’s music, but her approach is not static. “I like to play the piano a lot of different ways and in a lot of different contexts,” she says, “everything from super free and experimental to tunes with, I hope, beautiful melodies and harmonies and with grooves… I have always been curious about other kinds of music from around the world. I’ve pursued [all] these interests. I haven’t dropped anything. I just keep adding!” In addition, playing with a lot of different partners is a central part of who she is. “Everyone I play with brings out something new and inspires me in different ways.”

This dedication to collaboration will be a prominent feature of Melford’s residency. In contrast to her 2005 residency, the new program will present Melford’s most current work. “Much of 2005 was about a retrospective, a revisiting of what I had done in my career up until that point,” she explained. With the second residency she can now “…focus more on current projects… [as well as] some things I was not able to include [before].”

On tap will be Trio M, Be Bread and Melford’s current band Snowy Egret, among other features. Speaking specifically about the latter, Melford explained that they will present their established repertoire, covering music from the band’s recent releases, including from the lushly produced The Other Side of Air (2017). This latest recording aptly distills key elements of Melford’s sound, in particular the blend of the experimental and Hindustani influences.

Illustrating her commitment to continuous growth, Snowy Egret’s output also reflects Melford’s most recent spiritual explorations, including an opportunity to participate in a pilgrimage to sacred sites of the Huichol Indians in Mexico: “Their culture is very connected to what they consider sacred landscapes, Mountains, the ocean and deserts. There was a lot of that energy [in the music that followed]…very open and the first record.” Snowy Egret will also debut a new arrangement for a suite Melford wrote last summer for Muhal Richard Abrams, which premiered at the Chicago Jazz Festival with a septet of AACM members.

Several reunions are also on the menu. “I am looking forward to reuniting with Trio M, which is Mark Dresser on bass and Matt Wilson on drums. We’ve had a special connection for many years, [though] recently we have not had much chance to play together.” Another night will bring together Melford, Cuong Vu (trumpet), Stomu Takeishi (bass) and Rudy Royston (drums) “…in sort of a throw-back to the band I had for many years, Be Bread.”

Melford has a long-standing musical relationship with both Vu and Takeishi. Their earlier recordings coincided with Melford’s return from India, Where the Two Worlds Touch (2004) and to a greater degree Images of Your Body (2006). Melford has maintained an especially close relationship with Takeishi, with whom she first started playing over 20 years ago. “We have developed a kind of telepathic communication where we can anticipate where each other is going with the music and get on board with that and support it… He’s such an amazing listener and so attentive, so understanding of how my music unfolds, which can be very different night to night. He’s a huge part of then making sure that happens.” Melford added, “The other thing is his relationship to rhythm. I don’t know anyone who feels time like he does. It has this feeling of timelessness even when he always knows exactly where he is… He can let [the music] expand and then pull it back in and drop it back into the downbeat several measures later. To me, that’s genius.”

Not all the music will be drawn from ongoing projects and partnerships. The first night of the residency will feature the New York premiere of a quartet that has only played together twice before, in California, comprised of Ben Goldberg (clarinet), Michael Formanek (bass) and drummer Hamir Atwal. “We found we had this great connection and ease playing with each other. I am looking forward to introducing the New York audience to it.”

Melford will also showcase a group of musicians she felt would be exciting to play with, but with whom she has not worked often in the past. “This will be a first meeting of a quintet with Mary Halvorson [guitar], Ingrid Laubrock [saxophone] and Tomeka Reid [cello].” The meeting promises fireworks because the four women share common attributes “like the ability to just play completely free improvisation, but also to use notated material or some kind of text structure.”

Over the scope of her work, Melford has pursued an additive process that remains a major characteristic, defining her music’s wealth of detail and intense sense of motion. It also helps elucidate the personal connection many feel when encountering her music. Her inspirational sources are so individualized—and multifaceted—that the resulting amalgam clearly shines forth from Melford’s deepest being. Her willingness to share that light so completely accounts for both her music’s originality and its capacity to connect with listeners at such a highly personal and spiritual level.

The Stone residency affords the opportunity to experience Melford’s rich music and personal energy in an intimate setting, whether audiences are able to attend a single evening or more than one. In her words, listeners will be able to “…hear a very similar energy at the core of the music expressed in very different ways through different vocabularies, from tunes to open-ended explorations and also hear all these unbelievably great colleagues with whom I get to play.”

For more information, visit myramelford.com. Melford is at The Stone at The New School Jun. 11th-15th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
- Myra Melford – Alive in the House of Saints (hatHUT-hatOLOGY, 1993)
- Myra Melford – The Same River Twice (Granavisision, 1996)
- Joseph Arman/Lucy Jenkins/Myra Melford – Equal Interest (OmniTone, 2000)
- Myra Melford/Mike Dresser/Matt Wilson – Trio M: Big Picture (Cryptogramophone, 2006)
- Myra Melford – Life Carries Me This Way (Solo Piano) (Firehouse 12, 2013)
- Myra Melford’s Snowy Egret – The Other Side of Air (Firehouse 12, 2017)
Tenor saxophonist Larry McKenna has been a fixture on the Philadelphia jazz scene for well over 60 years, performing with many iconic Philadelphia tenor saxophonists such as Sonny Stitt and Gene Ammons, Eddie Harris, and Hank Mobley’s “The Break Through”.

In 2018, he co-led a studio date with fellow tenor saxophonist and octogenarian Bootzie Barnes, The More I See You for Vancouver-based Cellar Live. McKenna and Barnes have many things in common: both were born in 1937 (McKenna in July, Barnes in November); have been active on the Philly scene since the ’50s; play hardbop; and favor a lyrical yet hard-swinging approach to the tenor saxophone. McKenna and Barnes have been performing two-tenor gigs in Philly since the ’80s, when they first shared the stage at Ortieb’s.

“We were a big hit at Ortieb’s,” McKenna recalls. “A lot of people said it was reminiscent of the old tenor groups like Sonny Stitt and Gene Ammons, Eddie ‘Lockjaw’ Davis and Johnny Griffin, Al Cohn and Zoot Sims, Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray. This was a Philly version of the two-tenor thing.”

The More I See You came about after McKenna, Barnes, organ player Bill Brown and drummer Byron Landham played a concert at Penn State Abington in the Philly suburbs. After Cory Weeds saw a video of that concert online, he got in touch with McKenna. Cory said, ‘Can you get the same group to record for the Philly suburbs.’ After Cory Weeds saw a video of Landham played a concert at Penn State Abington in the ’80s, when they first shared the stage at Ortieb’s.

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You’re the One that I Want”—and the previously regret-filled The Graduate. Simon’s “The Sound of Silence” from Best Friends; and bassist Trey Henry and drummer Ray jazzy interlude; she and Alan trade heartbreak on their, as an atmospheric modern The Thomas Crown Affair Marilyn Bergman hit “Windmills of your Mind”, from Sutton herself arranged Michel Legrand-Alan and compositional élan of the album’s many beloved songs. from the Sutton Band’s fresh arrangements as from the making. The excellence of this album derives as much compilation culled from 80 years of Hollywood film-, a 15-song Screenplay Sutton and Co. reprise this uplifting song, “Arrow”, on Sully Clint Eastwood’s film One of the tunes didn’t and her band turned out a winning score for director life. Gottlieb and Lawrence celebrate the album at time Gottlieb’s children take on that role. Life imitating in instruments lying about during the famous session, released in 1970. Almost 50 years ago the younger An Hourglass”, which Herbie Mann’s label Embryo dedication to Gottlieb’s early mentor, Arnie Lawrence’s electronica to klezmer and on to more familiar jazz Pneuma: Who Has Seen the Wind? GO TiME: Live in LA GO TiME: Brooklyn presents (Biophilia) reveals the bassist’s burgeoning interest in writing for vocals. On this modern jazz release she writes choral arrangements for the first time—specifically for the Australian quintet Invenio, led by Melbourne singer Grusin for Mulholland Falls. The following year saw eight new releases, including a pairing of Fernández and the Tunisian violinist Yasmine Azaiez; a double CD by the quartet of Evan Parker, bassist John Edwards, drummer Mark Sanders and reed player Mikolaj Trzaska; a return of the Olei brothers; and a disc featuring [trumpeter] Amir Elsaffar. The following years have only picked up the pace. Last year saw 17 new titles on the label and plans are currently underway to reissue the Fernandez, William Parker and Susie Ibarra album One Night at the Joan Miró Foundation (Synergy, 1998) along with new releases by Evan Parker and guitarist Joe Morris and a boxed set by saxophonist Trevor Watts. And all the while, Karlowski has maintained his commitment to documenting the working of the growing scene in Poland. “It has become larger than in past years,” he enthused. “So many musicians try to discover their own voices. Some of them play in the Warsaw Improvised Orchestra, some of them—like fantastic blockfule [recorder] player Dominik Strycharski—sad ballad co-written by the Bergmans and Dave Grusin for Muhtollan Falls. Even outside a celluloid context these tunes still pack an emotional punch. Prolific singer/composer Ayelet Rose Gottlieb dropped two discrete albums last month. On the first, Pneuma: Who Has Seen the Wind? (Songlines), Gottlieb sets her smooth, expressive alto in service to a suite of songs that take the wind as their theme; three clarinets provide the comping, from free improv through electronica to klezmer and on to more familiar jazz idiom. The recording is feeling and changeable—like the element it conjures up. On the second, I Carry Your Heart: A Tribute to Arnie Lawrence (Ride Symbol), in dedication to Gottlieb’s early mentor, Arnie Lawrence’s son Erik—a gifted saxophonist and flutist in his own right—joins Gottlieb for a poetry-and-improvisation recitation. The duo, abetted by pianist Evan Fort and Gottlieb’s three children, recreated the studio setting for Arnie Lawrence’s improvised composition, “Inside An Hourglass”, which Herbie Mann’s label Embryo released in 1970. Almost 50 years ago the younger Lawrence, then a child, raced about the studio playing instruments lying about during the famous session, adding youthful playfulness to the recording. This time Gottlieb’s children take on that role. Life imitating life. Gottlieb and Lawrence celebrate the album at Pomegranate Gallery (Jun. 26th). Millenial powerhouse singer Grace Kelly, singer/saxophonist, has launched the second album in her GO TIME series, this time a Los Angeles-centered release. GO TIME: Live in LA serves as an enticing followup to last year’s video album GO TiME: Brooklyn, both on the PAZZ label. On tunes as disparate as Billy Austin-Louis Jordan’s “Is You Is or Is You Ain’t (My Baby),” John Lennon-Paul McCartney’s “Come Together” and Van Morrison’s “Crazy Love”, Kelly demonstrates both keen technique and unflagging style. She performs as a guest artist at the Django Reinhardt Festival at Birdland (Jun. 27th). Linda May Han Oh’s new album, Aventurine (Biophilia) reveals the bassist’s burgeoning interest in writing for vocals. On this modern jazz release she writes choral arrangements for the first time—specifically for the Australian quintet Invenio, led by Melbourne singer Gian Slater. Throughout the album the group handles early chant lines as deftly as bebop grooves. Singer Hilary Gardner plays from The Late Set (Anzic), her duo album with pianist Ehud Asherie, at Dizzy’s Club (Jun. 6th) and, in an exciting cross-genre move, New York City Opera presents Stonewall, a reimagining of Gilbert and Sullivan’s 1879 production set in late 1969 Greenwich Village uprising at the Rose Theater (Jun. 25th). Clarification: The April VOXNews column described Bob Dorrough’s But For Now (Enja), released posthumously this year, as his final album. But in 2017 Deer Head Records released Live at the Deer Head Inn, which Dorrough recorded in 2015; a year after he recorded But For Now. ♦
Dave Samuels, a vibraphonist/percussionist best known for his participation in jazz-fusion band Spyro Gyra and own Caribbean Jazz Project, died Apr. 22nd at 70 after a long illness.

Samuels was born Oct. 9th, 1948 in Waukegan, Illinois, just north of Chicago. In an interview given for Yamaha Instruments in 2012, Samuels recalled, “When I was growing up, we had a lot of music in the house. Both my older brothers played instruments. My eldest brother played piano, my middle brother played saxophone and I played drums...I was playing in the school jazz band, getting together with other players to learn new music and when I was about 15 years old I started working.” It was while matriculating at Boston University that he switched to vibraphone and marimba, eventually going on to Berklee College of Music and studies with Gary Burton.

In his mid 20s, Samuel began his recording career. In November 1974, he took part in the famed Gerry Mulligan/Chet Baker Carnegie Hall Concert released on CTI. More work with Mulligan followed, as well as with David Friedman and Michael Mantler/Carla Bley. 1977 was an auspicious year that found Samuels performing with Frank Zappa, making his first guest appearance with Spyro Gyra and releasing the first album under the moniker Double Image, a band co-led by himself and fellow vibraphonist Friedman.

Samuels would go on to work with Spyro Gyra, first as a guest, then as a full-fledged member and again as a guest through 2008, appearing on over 20 albums. Double Image was a less prolific project, yet still yielded several albums between 1977-2006. Alongside these two vehicles, Samuels had a trio with Art Lande and Paul McCandless, which recorded a 1981 album for ECM, and sideman work with Anthony Davis, Andy LaVerne, Joe Beck, Oscar Peterson, Michael Brecker and Billy Cobham. From 1994-2001, he was a part of various Pat Metheny groups.

He still had time to make his own albums for Telarc, MCA, GRP, Columbia, Verve and Concord. His concentration from the mid ’90s well into the new millennium was his Caribbean Jazz Project, which made 10 albums, including ones with guests Paquito D’Rivera and Diane Schuur.

Samuels also was a columnist for instrument magazines, an instructional book author, clinician and instructor at Berklee and New England Conservatory. Speaking about his connection to instruments in the Yamaha interview, the aptly soft-spoken Samuels said, “Musicians have a love of creating music. They also have a love of playing certain instruments that they feel very connected to. When I play, I play the instruments that I feel not only comfortable playing, but that represent my sound and that fits into the music I’ve got.”
Tallinn, Estonia’s Jazzkaar festival celebrated its 30th anniversary (Apr. 19th-28th) with a program of over 80 concerts and nearly 180 events spread out across the city and beyond, including special happenings in nearby towns. It almost feels inadequate to refer to the ten-day affair as a music festival; beyond a remarkably diverse array of musical acts, Jazzkaar also included numerous talks and exhibitions celebrating the city’s commitment to its thriving arts scene.

The festival is just one example of Estonia’s emphasis on promoting the arts in the wake of its 1991 independence from the Soviet Union, which marked the end of over 50 years of artistic and cultural oppression. Walking the streets of Tallinn today, one will find posters for festivals, concerts and art exhibitions lining the cobble walls of the medieval city and the first stacks on display at Tallinn’s three largest record stores are all dedicated to local artists.

One Estonian artist whose (well-deserved) hype preceded her is Kadri Voorand, who performed in duo with bassist Mihkel Mälgand multiple times throughout the correspondent’s five-day visit. The first was one in a series of “home concerts”, in which small groups of lucky listeners were invited to take off their shoes and witness intimate performances by similarly sock-clad musicians in the homes of local families. On Sunday night, at the soft light of the sunset cast a warm glow on the wide-open living room, Voorand and Mälgand created massive polyphonic landscapes that rippled and pulsed throughout the space. Voorand, mainly a vocalist, also spontaneously switched between various instruments (including violin, piano, glockenspiel and mbira) with the assistance of a deftly handled looping pedal. Mälgand provided the perfect backbone on upright bass and bass guitar, responding instinctively to Voorand’s theatrical vocal dynamics and balancing her whimsical spoken word interludes, which one audience member aptly compared to the work of Laurie Anderson.

Voorand was one of many artists to challenge the limits of jazz as it is traditionally defined. However, in the festival’s designated “Experimental Music Night”, the performances varied, both in quality and in how each performer defined the vague descriptor. Saxophonist Peter Brötzmann was up first, performing in duo with Heather Leigh on pedal steel guitar with effects. As Leigh created distorted, almost folklike reverb-drenched drones, Brötzmann ripped out frantic, endlessly captivating lines with his characteristically harsh and robust tone. Though they often appeared to exist within separate sonic landscapes, the magic of their collaboration emerged when their disparate styles suddenly overlapped in mystifying ways.

Swedish vocalist Sofia Jernberg began by alternating between soulful melodies and uncanny timbral utterances pushing the limits of the human voice. A palpable silence fell over the audience as the crowd strained to hear each and every fascinating sonic detail hidden within her rasping, squeaking, high-pitched and guttural exhalations.

Somewhat less successful was Estonian saxophonist Maria Faust with bassist Tim Dahl and drummer Weasel Walter. The performance struggled to maintain momentum after sound issues early on; a shame, given the group’s riveting mixture of jazz, noise rock and post-punk. A comparable fusion of styles came later in the festival from New York electronic noise rockers Paris Monster. Geoff Kraly (bass and electronics) and Josh Dion (drums, electronics and vocals) set the mood with swirling electronic sequences before incorporating distorted bass riffs and stuttering rock rhythms.

American vocalist Somi presented a collection of songs from her album Petit Affraged to a packed crowd on the Vaba Lava stage, conveying a sense of intimacy through her deep personal connection to the material, drawing directly from her own experiences to send soulful, mesmerizing messages on race and identity. Her powerful, mutable jazz vocals shifted from a rich tenor to a delicate vibrato to deliver highlights such as her silky smooth ode to Harlem and an upbeat, funky rallying cry against gentrification.

Another strong set came from a local artist came with pianist Kirke Karja and The Klingons, comprised of reed player Luïdas Mockninkas, saxophonist Pertti Lapprand, bass player Etienne Renard and drummer Hans Kurvits. The group delivered serious music with no interest in playing it safe. Though often played with dissonance, Karja’s ideas flowed out in a mesmerizing and fluid stream of consciousness set to a driving beat anchoring the unsettling and unsettled atonal melodies. Though at times the horn solos tested the audience’s patience, the group’s zeal was infectious, as their mysterious and meandering tunes unexpectedly unfolded to reveal a strange, lyrical grace.

Hungarian violist Félix Lajkó on the Vaba Lava stage held nothing back, shredding out expressive folk lines accompanied by Attila Sidóoo’s nylon-string guitar strumming and József Horváth’s jazzy upright bass. Lajkó kept the momentum going with aplomb, dramatic dynamic shifts displaying the group’s impeccable timing and synchronicity.

Appearing in Estonia for the first time was the Joshua Redman Trio, who played originals as well as pieces like Richard Rodgers-Oscar Hammerstein’s “Surrey with the Fringe On Top” and Oscar Pettiford’s “Tricotism”. The saxophonist, bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Gregory Hutchinson kept it light and cool, with impeccable timing and musical sensitivity. As Rogers held down smooth harmonic lines and Hutchinson wowed with a rhythmic finesse, Redman soared. The group was so in sync even the most simple of melodies were elevated to a level of mastery.

The America-centric evening continued as DC-bred rapper Oddisee took to the Vaba Lava stage, backed by his five-piece band Good Compy. The floor was opened up to a packed standing room crowd as soulful keyboard harmonies, bright electric guitar and dramatic, shimmering drums built up into a tight groove. The set was one of the most lively this correspondent saw all week.

By the end of the week, after an inevitably taxing run of three to four shows per night, the highlights shone clearly from among the less memorable. As this correspondent’s trip came to a close, there was a moment of reflection on one of the first shows of the week—a riveting offering from the German pianist Martin Kohlstedt. Beyond his technical capability, it was the curiosity apparent in his playing that rendered the performance so memorable, reflecting the general mood of the week’s program.

For more information, visit jazzkaar.ee

VINCENT HERRING PRESENTS

New York Japanese Jazz Festival
June 25 - 27, 2019
SMOKE Jazz Club
2751 Broadway, New York, NY
Tuesday, June 25
7:00 pm
Akiko Tsuruga Quartet feat. Fukushitaiinaka (ds)
9:00 pm
Takaiiro Izumikawa Quartet feat. Vincent Herring (as)
10:30 pm
Tomoaki Baba Quartet
Wednesday, June 26
7:00 pm
Tadataka Unno Trio
9:00 pm
Miki Hayama Quintet
Mark Shim
10:30 pm
Rina Yamazaki Trio
Thursday, June 27
7:00 pm
Migwi Miyama Sxetxet
Erena Terakubo & Nana Quiletet feat. Louis Hayes (ds)
David Kikoski (p)
10:30 pm
The Maguire Twins Quartet
Steve Nelson (vib) & Benito Gonzalez (p)
For more info:
newyorkjapanesefestival.com

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | JUNE 2019 13
Begin Again
Fred Hersch & The WDR Big Band (Palmetto)
by Jim Motavalli

Usually heard solo or in trio format, pianist Fred Hersch’s compositions also shine in the big band format. So collaboration with the Cologne-based WDR Big Band was probably inevitable. The music was arranged and conducted by Vince Mendoza, who has done cogent work for Joni Mitchell, Sting, Melody Gardot, Joe Zawinul and Björk.

The title tune actually has a long trio section, reuniting us with the familiar Hersch, but the full orchestration, with a slight Latin tinge, highlights the durability of the pianist’s writing. That’s Swedish alto saxophonist Johan Hörlén soloing so effectively. “Song without Words,” #2: “Ballad” features Hörlén again; this track would shine with just the one horn added to the trio. “Havana” is here in a big shape-shifting arrangement, changing tempo and mood rapidly, like a medley in a flashy musical. A long piano section takes it off the stage and into the streets and Paul Heller offers a muscular tenor solo.

“Out Someplace (Blues for Matthew Shepard)” is an appropriately moody ballad, with overtones of contemporary classical music, and personal for Hersch, a mournful response to a horrific hate crime. “Pastorale” is pretty and peaceful, with a swelling melody and quietly uplifting work from Hersch. Ruud Beurrel’s anemic trumpet is wonderful on the gently swaying “Rain Waltz.” Karolina Strassmayer also has some salty things to say on alto, but gets a bit overwhelmed by the arrangement.

“The Big Easy” is New Orleans on a Sunday afternoon, a sashay through the French Quarter. Ludwig Nuss’ trombone and Andy Haderer’s trumpet give it regional flavor. “Forward Motion” is the brash swinger, with the strongest melody on the disc. Mendoza’s writing has its near-bombastic moments, but is generally understated. For the most part, this isn’t big, brassy jazz, but thoughtful music with a full palette of colors nicely serving Hersch the part, this isn’t big, brassy jazz, but thoughtful music moments, but is generally understated. For the most

Perpetual Optimism
Herlin Riley (Mack Avenue)
by George Kandel

This album could also have been called “Perpetual Motion,” an all description of drummer Herlin Riley’s approach to rhythm and his percussion arsenal. Some drummers push the beat from behind, others stay right on top of it. Riley leads it, pulling it along as his rhythmic patterns forge slightly ahead. To this forward-leaning approach, Riley adds New Orleans Second Line polyrhythmic accents. A native of the Crescent City, he studied with Ellis Marsalis and has been a member of

Chaos Theory: Song Cycles for Prepared Saxophone
Sam Newsome (W/)
by George Grella

The prepared instrument concept, physically altering the instrument, is generally attributed to John Cage. Though he wasn’t the first to insert objects into the piano strings, thus radically altering their sonic properties, he did—starting with his 1938 piece Bacchanale—establish the method as its own genre.

Cage’s goal was to replace an entire percussion section with the piano. Saxophonist Sam Newsome’s goal has been to expand the possibilities of his soprano saxophone. He frequently uses mutes to alter the sound and on Chaos Theory he uses tubing to lower the range—among other things this produces a sound like a didgeridoo (“Sonic Polarity”) or a viola being played via a double-reed (“Tel Aviv”).

Conceptually, this is closer to Henry Cowell, who changed the way the piano could be played. Musically this is nothing but Newsome, an excellent improviser with a high level of dedication to the craft of spontaneous music. He values organization and discipline as much as he does freedom and the album as a whole is broken down into refreshingly succinct pieces, most under three minutes in duration.

All these elements make the listening experience provocative but also ambiguous; for every ear-opening idea there’s a missed opportunity. Tracks like “Boiler Room Aesthetics” and the four separate sections of the title piece mix some startling and attractive timbres (via multi-tracking), yet the least of which is

Newsome’s ability to play long, sustained phrases of exquisite and finely tuned multiphonics. The best stuff sounds like a small improvising ensemble with everyone listening sharply to one another. That this is all one man in no way undercuts how well Newsome can form something out of nothing.

But there are also pieces like “Bubble Mute Boogie” and “Urban Locomotion” that are a repeated rhythm pattern with Newsome playing lines over the top. While not bad, they are ordinary in the context of the recording’s principles.

For more information, visit mackave.com. Riley is at Bushwick Public House Jun. 3rd. See Calendar.
Ur Leimgruber has been a third of one of the champion working units of nonidiomatic improvisation since its inception. The Ur Leimgruber (saxophones)/Jacques Demierre (piano)/Barre Phillips (bass) trio, which will mark its 20th anniversary next year, has crafted a music particular to itself, wherein extended technique is used not to take the music further but bring it further in, creating an internalized aesthetic that pushes toward its center rather than radiating from it. It’s not a private conversation, but it is a personal one, a meeting that is whole and singular.

The trio doesn’t trade in riffs or solos. They rarely partake in bold declaration. They don’t really do much to anchor the unfamiliar and, as such, they aren’t really joined. It takes a certain personality and, as evidenced on WilliSisa, Thomas Lehn is just that person. Just as the trio bears little relation to like instrumental exercises by Lee Konitz or Hank Jones, this quartet—recorded live in 2017—doesn’t refer back to the (more recent) legacy of electro-acoustic improvisation; it’s a melding of four minds, not a meeting of two dynamics. Lehn’s legacy of electro-acoustic improvisation; it’s a melding of four minds, not a meeting of two dynamics. Lehn’s
dominant characteristic. However, at the same time, it’s the polarity between the two that makes the album work. On occasion it’s hard to distinguish Ughi and
bassist Djibril Toure within the overall electroacoustic production, but Carter remains hapidly pristine. This could be a TV or film soundtrack, repeatedly conjuring up the image of a solitary spirit wandering amid the bustling, throbbing metropolis. Carter’s sound often has a plaintive edge, particularly on trumpet when he ever evokes Miles Davis’ muted lyricism, as towards the end of “Canal Street”. One of the highlights of the set, “Nostrand Avenue”, initially depicts a place of menace, Carter reiterating a melodic figure on tenor against an eerie shimmering backdrop, before spiraling up at his most animated as the pulsing tension increases. After a groove with a simple keyboard motif and coloring washes, Carter returns for the final section, in essence a measured duet with Ughi’s unruly clicks and rustles, to loop his high voice and various instrumental samples into the ongoing mix. As the sitar hints at Eastern mysticism, Carter floats above like an ethereal sages. In the end, as voice and instrumental loops thicken an understated crescendo, it’s Carter’s melodic musings that elevate the impact of the drifting piece.

For more information, visit 577records.com and jarvesarnshaw.bandcamp.com. Carter is at Bushwick Public House Jun. 3rd and 24th, H100 Jun. 6th and Flowers For All Occasions Jun. 30th with Harbinger. See Calendar.
**GLOBE UNITY**

First Thirst - Live at Cave12
Akira Sakata / Nicolas Field and (Not Two)
Yellow Live
Christoph Erb/Michael Vatcher Duo (VETO)
A View of the Moon (from the Sun)
Mette Rasmussen/Chris Corsano (Clean Feed)

by Tom Greenland

Alone together, without a bassist to hog the low-end frequencies or pianist to inject chords, a saxophonist and drummer will have much to discuss. Three horn/drum duet recordings show just how far such improvised dialogues may range.

First Thirst - Live at Cave12 documents a musical conversation held in a Geneva, Switzerland club in June 2008 between veteran Japanese saxophonist Akira Sakata and London-born drummer Nicolas Field. Despite a 30-year age difference the pair is well matched. On the title track, Sakata's high-torsion alto uncoils in ever-climbing spirals, at times windy and wheedling, pushing his sound up to the edge of, but not quite reaching, a raspy overdrive. The high intensity of the title track slowly settles into a valley of relative stillness only to scale back up to a final dramatic peak 15 minutes later.

"Kaigara-Bushi" features Sakata's gasping Kabuki-style vocal soliloquies bookending an ardent instrumental duet. As the dog gone deal combines clarinet with subtle whispering bells, rattling cymbals and scampering tom-toms. "Stable stables, towards ten more" pushes the edge just a bit further, containing the fiercest and most satisfying moments.

Yellow Live documents Swiss tenor saxophonist Christoph Erb and now-New York-based (though 20-year Amsterdam resident) drummer Michael Vatcher's gig at Gelbes Haus in Lucerne (Erb's home base). Like Sakata and Field, Erb and Vatcher enjoy an empathetic, seemingly intuitive understanding and, like Sakata, Erb plays with incredible power and presence, which, paradoxically, never sounds forced. Some of this is attributable to his use of space, the presence of small but consistent gaps in his 'sentence structure', allowing Vatcher's ongoing chatter to oscillate between foreground, middle- and background positions. Three long tracks plus a shorter vignette (Erb on soprano), all named for yellow pigments ("Carotin", "Xanthophyll", "Lutein", "Zeaxanthin"), show an adept and open-ended handling of timbral manipulation and dynamic contrast.

Listening to Danish saxophonist Mette Rasmussen's vibrant alto on A View of the Moon (from the Sun), her second duet with American drummer Chris Corsano, recorded live at Cankarjev dom in Ljubljana, Slovenia (their debut was recorded at Brooklyn's Green), is an ear-opening experience. Like Sonny Rollins or Melissa Aldana, she is possessed of a wide-ranging, architectural imagination only, unlike them, her art is steeped in a post-punk/ecstatic jazz aesthetic. Like Sakata and Erb, her power manifests through ideas rather than raw sound and, like Erb, she employs an ecstatic assortment of tones in service of thematic development. On "Well Now, There, Then" and "You're Breaking Up, the House Is Going Through":

30-something pianist Ehud Asherie has mastered the historic sense of jazz but is determining his own path for moving it ahead. For his Capri Records debut, he and his cohorts, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Rodney Green, improvise with a sense of structure complemented by freedom, humor and joy.


Charlie Parker appears via a slow and bluesy "Parker's Mood"—think of the original and see how it resonates in this new version—and "Chasin' the Bird", beginning with a piano flourish that emphasizes its rhythm and spirit, then a bouncing bass solo and propulsive drum fills.

Brazil plays a role in Asherie's life as he met his partner there. He absorbs the subtle rhythms of Ary Barroso's gloriously melodic "Na Baixa Do Sapateiro" while quite a different tribute to Brazil, via the 1933 Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers RKO film of the same name, is offered by Vincent Youmans-Gus Kahn-Edward Eliscu’s "Flying Down to Rio", the trio playing at a madly fast tempo.

From Broadway comes the Gershwin's evergreen "Oh, Lady Be Good", in which the leader first invokes the composer as pianist and then settles into a most relaxed groove. And then there's the neglected "Autumn Nocturne", originally written by Kim Gannon and Jose Myrow for the Claude Thornhill band, six hands reveling in its intimacy and beauty.

As a closer, Asherie has chosen "And Then She Stopped", written by Dizzy and wife Lorraine Gillespie and recorded in 1964 for his Janmo Caribe album. It's a Latin-ish affair, with popping drums and bouncing bass both fueling Asherie's inventions and setting fires of their own. This trio recording is infused with curiosity, invention and the celebration of surprise.

**For more information, visit caprireco.records. Asherie is at Small's Jun. 2nd with Bruce Harris and 16th as a leader, Dizzy's Club Jun. 6th with Hilary Gardner and Knickerbocker Bar & Grill Jun. 21st-22nd. See Calendar.**

**Wild Man Blues**

Ehud Asherie (Capri)

by Donald Elfman

For more information, visit no.ttwo.com, veto-records.ch and cleanfeed-records.com

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A duet between pianist Bryn Roberts and guitarist Lage Lund, Hide the Moon and the Stars is a straightforward affair showcasing each musician’s compositional and interpretive abilities. All but one of the album’s ten pieces are originals, with five from Roberts and four from Lund. Each track alternates between the composers, maximizing equality of vision and dialogue as the players navigate each other’s musical roadmaps to deliver a serene body of work.

Roberts hovers in the upper registers as he crafts structured phrases, which develop each tune by sculpting detailed miniatures rather than robust, expository lines. Since securing first place at the 2005 Thelonious Monk guitar competition for a graceful approach to “Ishahan” that overshadowed more flamboyant styles, Lund has deepened his reserved approach and carved out a reputation for balanced, lucid playing. This applies in spades to Hide the Moon and the Stars and meshes well with Roberts’ nuance, establishing a consistently placid atmosphere utilizing a palette of pallid watercolor hues and shades of grey. Tunes like lilé “Amaryllis”, tripping “Cheers for the Call” and smooth “Brent Rogers” epitomize the mood, unfolding with spacious eloquence. The interplay flows like spring meltwater to form clear, interlocking rivulets traveling over the thawing landscape of each piece, simultaneously following its interlocking rivulets traveling over the thawing landscape of each piece, simultaneously following its contours while delineating new ripples, appealing in part due to their ephemeralism. The title track reflects this cool approach, but stands out for an additional degree of unpredictability, as does “Alternative Facts”, notable for Lund’s departure into more abstract contours while delineating new ripples, appealing in part due to their ephemeralism. The title track reflects this cool approach, but stands out for an additional degree of unpredictability, as does “Alternative Facts”, notable for Lund’s departure into more abstract

While Hide the Moon and the Stars could have benefited from more variety of tempos, the album generates a peaceful, naturalistic atmosphere that is accessible, without sinking into the simple or saccharine.

For more information, visit bryn-roberts.com. Lund is at Jazz Standard Jun. 6th-9th with David Sánchez. Roberts is at Mezzrow Jun. 9th. See Calendar.

1963: New Directions
John Coltrane (Impulse!)
by Duck Baker

Following on last year’s release of John Coltrane’s Both Directions at Once: The Last Album, Hide the Moon and the Stars may be generally ecstactic, but the music itself is monumental. The music of the album is composed by Coltrane and arranged by his accompanists, who were given freedom to interpret the compositions as they saw fit. The result is a record that lives up to the considerable hype that surrounded it. One suspects that whatever problems Coltrane’s solo on the latter is regarded as a classic in its own right and rightly so. Hartman was blessed with as warm a baritone voice as has ever been heard in jazz, somewhat in the Billy Eckstine mold but, for many, more convincing. Like many of the greatest singers in any genre, Hartman always seemed primarily concerned with telling the story, not with standing out with unnecessary embellishment. Many listeners who were introduced to Hartman through this record went on to become ardent fans. The intelligence of the vocalist’s interpretations help give them the maximum possible emotional impact and the same applies to Coltrane’s approach to the ballads here. But has any other version of “Lush Life” or “My One and Only Love” sounded this good before? The fact that we can even ask the question speaks volumes.

Elvin Jones was unavailable for several months in 1963, and his replacement was Roy Haynes, who was every bit the monster drummer Jones was, though not as ideally suited to this quartet. We hear Haynes on the April and May sessions that produced two tracks (notably “Dear Old Stockholm”) and at much greater length on the live recording from Newport in July. It is fascinating to hear how a master like Haynes approached this scenario; though he adapted himself to all sorts of different situations over the years, Haynes really never sounded like this except in this group. And given how many live quartet versions of “Impressions” and “My Favorite Things” we have with Jones, Haynes’ presence can only add interest, though some have argued that Coltrane’s solo on the latter is the best we have in any case.

This set contains no ‘new’ discoveries, meaning that a couple of tracks listed in discographies as unreleased must be presumed lost. And while the packaging is extremely attractive (the liners by David Wild are concise and informative), one thing that audiophiles should know is that the running times on 3 of the 10 LP sides are over 25 minutes. The 180-gram review copies sounded not just fine but terrific, but I’m not sure how they feel on paper. That all fits onto just three CDs or five LPs is impressive (though hardcore audiophiles may take issue in the latter case).
Insurrection is the instrumental quartet most likely to sport John Zorn out front, but the saxophonist’s role is purely composer/arranger and producer. The music, in the best gut-wrenching style, is played by guitarists Julian Lage and Matt Hollenberg, bassist Trevor Dunn and drummer Kenny Grohowski. This second album by the group, considerably harsher than its eponymous 2018 release, brandishes its caustic soundscape with intent. Lage and Hollenberg cast a sound war over the ten pieces comprising Zorn’s suite of 17th century Salem, turbulently driven by Dunn and Grohowski. The brutal misogyny, classism, racism, xenophobia and scapegoating that terrorized Massachusetts villagers three centuries back didn’t occur in a vacuum: like the Inquisition that earlier tore Europe apart, the Salem witch trials were a perversion of religious teachings when faced with outsiders and the potential loss of power. The stain left by this purposeful reign of paranoia was the perfect metaphor during the ‘50s Red Scare, most powerfully symbolized in Arthur Miller’s The Crucible. And while Zorn offers no specific political commentary here (though he did name a 2008 album The Crucible), the analogy appears all too obvious in today’s orchestrated fear of the ‘other’. In this regard, Salem 1692 couldn’t be more timely.

The selections are full-throttle Zorn, but even where the volume recedes (“Spectral Evidence”, “Dark of the Moon”, “Sarah Good”), the mood remains ominous. High-powered chromatic runs, stinging diminished fifths, throbbing basslines and generous use of reverb speak well to the hysteria. “Tituba”, named for a slave falsely accused of conspiring with the devil, mixes in union lines, burning drum breaks and a killer 7/8 section, the result of which sounds something like James “Blood” Ulmer and John McLaughlin jamming with 1981-era King Crimson. Downtown. Several pieces bear resemblance to classic fusion, albeit, via the darkest spectrum. “Malefisacarum” is the climax of the work, filled with jarring auroral explosions. And why not? It’s named for the vile guidebook witch hunters used to elicit confessions.

For more information, visit tzadik.com. Zorn is at Village Vanguard Jan. 9th. See Calendar.

Babi
Milford Graves (IPS-Corbett vs. Dempsey)
by Pierre Crépon

Currently, the Merriam-Webster definition of “square root” is illustrated by a quote from a New York Times piece promoting a documentary about drummer Milford Graves, a film successfully making the rounds in cinema festivals around the world. This casual instance of mainstream visibility would have been hard to foresee in 1976, when Graves taped Babi live, or on the release of the album by IPS, Graves and drummer Andrew Cyrille’s independently-produced label, the next year. When the unreleased material heard on the second CD of this reissue was recorded in 1969, Graves’ name was more likely to be found in the Harlem-based Amsterdam News; he identified as a cultural nationalist and wrote about black revolutionary music free of Western thought.

On the two sessions, the drums constitute a pulsating center of gravity, flanked by Arthur Doyle and Hugh Glover’s reeds. Occasional mainstream visibility doesn’t mean this music will become a commodity anytime soon. The saxophonists’ point of departure is the most paroxysmal part of the free jazz solo, areas of pure sound production uncovered by previous avant garde players, used here as a continuous mode of expression through modulation and repetition. Graves’ kit is uniquely configured around removed bottom heads for maximal sound projection and a move away from the snare in favor of heavy tom use. His playing is equally unique, using the free-flowing approach of the avant garde while still sounding extremely rhythmical. Graves also makes frequent use of vocalizations.

The sound quality of the 1969 tape is precarious (it likely could not see a stand-alone release), but it does add something important to Graves’ discography, sparse and devoid of leader material for that period after a 1965 debut for ESP-Disk’ and a pair of self-released 1966 albums documenting a Yale University concert with Don Pullen on SRP: a glimpse at the beginnings of this long-standing trio, initiated that year and still playing only privately at that point. Paired with Babi, the 1969 session creates an arc that provides interesting historical food for thought, given the radical nature of the approach in the era’s larger context.

The notion of ‘classic’ doesn’t have much currency in avant garde jazz, but certain records inherit the status for the unique music they document. With its compact 30 minutes, Babi is one of them.

For more information, visit corbettsedempsy.com. Graves is at Roulette Jun. 11th as part of the Vision Festival and Gavin Brown’s Enterprise Jun. 27th. See Calendar.

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Joe McPhee is a free jazz veteran, a multi-instrumentalist who made his recording debut on trumpet with Clifford Thornton and taught himself saxophone at 32, inspired by the then-revolutionary sounds of John Coltrane, Albert Ayler and Ornette Coleman. Since 1989 McPhee has recorded/performed as a leader and with peers like Peter Brötzmann and Evan Parker. Keep Going is eight free dialogue between McPhee and Drake, the former employing extended techniques to wrench sounds beyond the so-called normal range of saxophone and trumpet, including vocalizing directly into the instrument. As one could guess from viewing this title the mood is somewhat angry—it is, but the fury is tempered by catharsis and humor with flashes of hope. “Medgar/Malcolm/Martin” has torrid trumpet and spare, ominous drumming and is followed by “Time Was” with McPhee’s playing especially plaintive and haunting. Keep Going is about raw expression and empathetic interaction. Akira Sakata is a veteran free jazz alto saxophonist from Japan. In October 2000 he got together with some simpatico players in a New Jersey studio: Drake, eccentric bassist Bill Laswell and Pete Cosey, best known as guitarist with Miles Davis during his notorious retirement electric period. Fisherman’s is a somewhat different animal—there’s free improvisation and lots of it, but done over a rhythmic matrix of thrubbing, electronically-treated bass, undulating drumming (sometimes sparse, other times shifting, almost always steady) and the Jackson Pollock-like splatter of shimmering, snaking, artfully distorted anchor notes that provide the framework. The leader takes her first solo on the second track, “Within A Diapason”, and she stays focused even when the horns keep interjecting, like little kids tugging at their mother’s pant leg to get her attention.

The interaction between Eberhard and De Masure recalls Jackie McLean and Granch Moncur III in the early ‘60s on albums like Evolution, Some Other Stuff, One Step Beyond and Destination...Out!. There are also hints of Charles Mingus’ work; the abstract tootling melody that kicks off the opening track, “Polychromatic Pictures”, brings to mind “The Clown”, minus Jean Shepherd’s narration. De Masure takes the first solo and it’s a fun one. Schneider sets up a bouncing rhythm Ed Blackwell would have smiled at and the trombonist emits lines like an elephant laughing at a private joke. The leader takes her first solo on the second track, “Within A Diapason”, and she stays focused even when the horns keep interjecting, like little kids tugging at their mother’s pant leg to get her attention.

The loose and instinctive playing of Steve Lacy has long been a draw for Udden. Udden performed at a memorial concert that was held in New York City, along with a number of Lacy’s friends and collaborators, including the drummer John Bettsch. Over the past few years, Udden has collaborated with Paris based bassist Nicolas Moreaux, with whom he recorded Belleville Project, which was released in 2015. The two continued to interact and consider new projects. As it turns out, the American born Bettsch called Paris home for decades and Moreaux had been performing with him on occasion. The idea of incorporating Bettsch into a trio project began to coalesce and would eventually culminate in their new recording, Belleville Project, which was released in 2015. The two continuing their work as “nature work.” There might not be a better example of this expression and, thus, considers the act of playing and composing as “nature work.” For more information, visit corbettvandempsey.com, tryst.at and astralspirits.bandcamp.com. Drake is at Roulette Jun. 12th and 14th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.
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There are few players with a tone as distinct as alto saxophonist Jemeel Moondoc, whose consistently articulated sound draws a line directly to Ornette Coleman. Moondoc does not set out to impress but, in his understated way, does exactly that: his performances are devoid of grandstanding, instead focusing on tightly structured group playing and intense solos. Bolstered by a highly compatible rhythm trio of piano master Matthew Shipp, steady bassist Hilliard Greene and eclectic drummer Newman Taylor Baker, the quartet is off to the races with the opener and highlight of the album, “Cosmic Nickelodeon”. Hard-hitting drums propel the group feverishly as Moondoc steals the show with a wildly joyous and upbeat solo floating above Shipp’s effective countermelodies while Greene anchors the proceedings. Baker’s solo builds beautifully but not before Shipp constructs a fascinating story developing with uncanny intensity.

While the somewhat less interesting “Blues for Katie” opens slowly with bass, it is when the cerebral Shipp lets loose, swinging vigorously in a satisfying romp, that the heat rises followed by Greene’s subtle yet straightforward contribution. Moondoc is always ready to blow, but his alto is also the glue that gives the quartet its distinctive sound. On “Hear Now, Gone Now”, he begins with his usual enthusiasm but by the end the listener is treated to wild supporting drums and fascinatingly complex piano lines, the rhythm section spurring Moondoc to searing cries. The closing piece, “Ornette Gone Bye”, remembers the great saxophonist, as Moondoc cajoles and implores while Shipp offers strong support—it honors the spirit of Ornette without maudlin retrospection.

Through the years, Moondoc has built an enviable body of work as a leader and as a sideman. The Astral Revelations is a splendid, though not critical, addition to his discography. For more information, visit roguart.com. Moondoc is at Roulette Jun. 13th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.

Theo Croker, an excellent trumpeter whose tone occasionally recalls Freddie Hubbard, excels in acoustic postbop settings, is the grandson of the great Doc Cheatham and constantly seeks to stretch his music into unexpected areas. All but the latter is irrelevant when listening to his latest release, Star People Nation. It is apparent from the first moments of the opener “Have You Come To Stay” that this is a different type of Croker release. He not only plays trumpet but electric piano and synthesizer, contributing programming and an occasional background vocal. The electronic ensembles, with trumpet often in the lead, sometimes recall ‘70s Miles Davis but with a different tone and less sense of danger. The first five selections mostly emphasize the electronics: Croker often utilizes Rose Gold’s voice as part of the ensemble on the R&B-ish “Getaway Gold”; creates an atmospheric background ballad on “Subconscious Flirtations and Titillations”; and fills “Wide Open” with plenty of electronic trumpet wah-ing. Croker also contributes some impressive playing to “Have You Come To Stay” while “Portrait Of William” includes a catchy riff.

The creative jazz content increases a bit during the next three selections: rhythmic “Just Let It Ride” has a concise piano solo from Michael King; “Crestfallen”, with its blend of trumpet, Irwin Hall’s flute and King’s electric piano, recalls a ‘70s CTI date; and “The Messenger” sounds like it is from a different album altogether. The acoustic quintet on the latter piece features pianist Eric Lewis (ELEW) paying homage to McCoy Tyner, Croker playing a blazing solo and tenor saxophonist Anthony Ware turning up the heat. The remainder of the program consists of the exotic if inconclusive “Alkebulan” and a feature for Chronixx’ vocal on the electronic funk of “Understand Yourself”. Star People Nation is for listeners who enjoy dense and unpredictable electronic ensembles. Those who prefer Croker on “The Messenger” will have to be patient.

For more information, visit sonymusicmasterworks.com. This project is at Jazz Standard Jun. 13th-16th. See Calendar.
More than 30 years have passed since bassist John Patitucci (now 59) first achieved prominence as a member of keyboard player Chick Corea’s fusion-oriented Elektric Band, followed by its straightahead spinoff Akoustic Band. As a leader, Patitucci has been featured in a wide variety of settings along the way and Soul of the Bass is his most intimate and stripped-down effort. This album, which features Patitucci on both acoustic and electric basses, is dominated by unaccompanied performances, although cello, drums or vocals are occasionally added.

While he frequently ventures into more experimental arenas, the traditional acoustic jazz trio is the acclaimed pianist Brad Mehldau’s touchstone and the format he has returned to again and again over a career that stretches back to the ’90s. Soul of the Bass is his latest trio effort and despite its odd title, it’s a mostly straightahead offering from Mehldau and longtime collaborators Larry Grenadier (bass) and Jeff Ballard (drums).

The album opens with an engaging Mehldau original, “Spiral”, which builds from a classical-inspired melody on piano into an expressive improvisatory canvas for the three band members, who display a strong sense of telepathy and empathy on this and the rest of the selections here. That’s followed by the relaxed, deceptively simple title tune, which Mehldau has said was inspired by a dream in which the actor Philip Seymour Hoffman read the U.S. Constitution to him. Hoffman died suddenly just a few weeks after the dream.

Mehldau has long programmed his albums with an eclectic repertoire drawn from jazz and pop sources and the current release is no exception. There’s a pure bebop reading of the underappreciated pianist Elmo Hope’s “De Dah”, along with a fast-paced, but totally in control take on the Frederick Kern-Alan Jay Low standard “Almost Like Being in Love”, featuring some especially impressive bass runs and fleet work on drums. The group reworks a fairly obscure Beach Boys song, “Friends”, into an affable-enough jazz tune and brings a real sense of joy to “Great Day”, a Paul McCartney number from the ’90s. And if anything defines Mehldau’s sensibility it’s the transition, which makes perfect sense here, from the McCartney tune to one by avant garde jazz titan Sam Rivers, whose gorgeous composition “Beatrice” closes this satisfying album on a high note.

Another recent Mehldau release finds him in an even more intimate setting, this time a duo encounter with the great bassist Charlie Haden, who passed away five years ago this summer. Long Ago and Far Away is a live date, recorded at a church in Mannheim, Germany in 2007. The concert was the first time Mehldau and Haden had performed together in public as a duo, though they had previously appeared in various small-group settings with the likes of Lee Konitz and Paul Motian.

Although Mehldau was three decades younger than Haden, the two shared a strong personal and musical bond built on harmonic improvisation and the idea of freedom in jazz. Mehldau described their connection this way: “It’s as if Charlie and I are walking along a path side by side, with no one in front.” The pair explores that shared vision over the course of this captivating and serene 72-minute set, starting with an inventive reading of Charlie Parker’s “Au Privave” and continuing with extended interpretations of standards like Arthur Johnston-Sam Coslow’s “My Old Flame”, Matt Dennis-Tom Adair’s “Everything Happens to Me” and the elegant Jerome Kern-Ira Gershwin title tune.

For more information, visit nonesuch.com and impulserecords.com. Mehldau is at Village Vanguard Jan. 18th-23rd. See Calendar.
Despite impressive releases as a leader and a 20-year tenure with Rashied Ali, Greg Murphy remains largely overlooked outside of the New York jazz scene. This exceptional effort, on which the Chicago-born pianist is joined by bassist Eric Wheeler and drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts, should go a long way in exposing his abilities, both as a skilled instrumentalist and imaginative composer/arranger, to a wider audience.

Murphy opens things up with a swinging rendition of Sigmund Romberg-Oscar Hammerstein jam session staple “Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise”, interjecting McCoy Tyner-ish flights and inflections propelled by the driving rhythms of Wheeler and Watts, both of whom share the spotlight with solos of their own. The pianist’s mambo-fied arrangement of the Pharrrell Williams mega-hit “Happy”, featuring layered electronic keyboard work, is an infectiously danceable affair on which he alternates the melodic line and clave-undergirded montuno choruses (with a quote from Horace Silver’s “Filthy McNasty”).

Murphy’s compositional abilities come to light on the title track, which features fleet-fingered piano and bass improvisations and an explosive drum solo on top of the tenacious piano vamp emerging from the swinging melody. He shows his more sensitive side lithely Waltzing on Joe Ford’s beautiful “Earthlings”, then jumps back into the pop world with a funky arrangement of Bruno Mars’ “24 K Magic”, swinging piano complemented by keyboard flourishes nodding to Earth, Wind & Fire.

The trio moves outside on Murphy’s “Street Cats”, ethereally ambling out of tempo, then gradually easing into a racing middle section on which the pianist demonstrates a credible affinity for the avant garde while his soulful “Finer Things” and rhapsodic “For My Mom” both demonstrate an appealing lyricism. The up-tempo “Straight No Blues” serves as a platform for swinging solos, after which the band once again displays its ability to take things out on Murphy’s frenetic “Moving Violation”, bringing it back in on the appealing Waltz “Well, of All Things”. The band charges frenetic “Moving Violation”, bringing it back in on the displays its ability to take things out on Murphy’s swinging solos, after which the band once again demonstrates a credible affinity for the avant garde with judiciously chosen musicians.

For more information, visit whalingcitysound.com. Murphy is at Mezzrow Jun. 5th and Tea House Garden Jun. 20th. For more information, visit whalingcitysound.com. Murphy’s homage to the African-american holiday on which the date was recorded.

Murphy’s musical approach both in his compositions and particularly in his solos, which are very consequential, leaving no room for preconstrued patterns. Vayenas and Escreet follow Cornelius’ lead in their solos, taking their time in building their musical phrases. Cornelius is particularly inspir

The trio moves outside on Murphy’s “Street Cats”, ethereally ambling out of tempo, then gradually easing into a racing middle section on which the pianist demonstrates a credible affinity for the avant garde while his soulful “Finer Things” and rhapsodic “For My Mom” both demonstrate an appealing lyricism. The up-tempo “Straight No Blues” serves as a platform for swinging solos, after which the band once again displays its ability to take things out on Murphy’s frenetic “Moving Violation”, bringing it back in on the appealing Waltz “Well, of All Things”. The band charges frenetic “Moving Violation”, bringing it back in on the displays its ability to take things out on Murphy’s swinging solos, after which the band once again demonstrates a credible affinity for the avant garde with judiciously chosen musicians.

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Cologne-based alto saxophonist Angelika Niescier first started recording with American rhythm sections in 2011. She has excellent taste: on “Quite Simply” (Enja) she worked with bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Tyshawn Sorey in a program consisting of her own compositions plus Ornette Coleman’s “Congeniality” and Anthony Braxton’s “69-O”, keys to her own approach and the kind of hand-in-glove quartet she’s assembled here. This third in a series of Intakt CDs emphasizing Niescier’s New York connection has bassist Christopher Tordini, drummer Gerald Cleaver and trumpeter Jonathan Finlayson as guests.

Niescier has a talent both large and balanced, matching subtle abstraction with emotional depth and executing every line with thoughtful precision. From the opening explosion of “The Surge”, poised between machine gun and cry, she establishes her authority as a freewheeling improviser; it’s only as her varied compositions emerge that an experimental bent is revealed, a willingness to let chance, as well as determination and improvisation, enter the group’s processes. The slow and intense “Ekim” borrows its melody from the Turkish composer Nazife Güran, but then Niescier matches it with a bass part determined by chance, creating a compound work of tangible paths and arbitrary procedures. The subtle friction draws powerful statements from both Niescier and Finlayson. “A Truck Passing a Clock Tower” (inspired by John Cage’s famous remark about trucks, factories and music schools) uses chance methods to determine who in the quartet is playing when but, again, Niescier surmounts any sense of the random, soloing with a sharp focus on subtly permutating lines. At another pole of influence, “5.8” seems to reference “Cherokee”. The group’s empathy is consistently apparent. Finlayson’s slightly acidic tone complements Niescier’s dryness while Tordini and Cleaver provide consistently inventive support, shifting directions seamlessly with the leader’s more spontaneous trailblazing.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch. Jonathan Finlayson is at The Jazz Gallery Jun. 26th-27th with Liberty Elman. See Calendar.

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“Here is another real find. …Tomboulian has a wide range, a controlled voice with slide and scat ability, and a solid blues feel equal to her jazz chops. Add some really slide and scat ability, and a solid blues feel.”

~Alix Cohen, Cabaret Scenes

Eclectic and soulful…Tomboulian’s one-of-a-kind style shapes the work on her debut release as a band leader. … surprises audiences with her ability to bend phrases, mix styles and in general express a clear, if artful, idea. While “Love’s In Need of Love Today” is Tomboulian’s debut as a leader, it illustrates her years spent honing her craft.”

~ Dodie Miller-Gould, Lemonwire

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Living Being II: Night Walker
Vincent Peirani (ACT Music)
Sfumato live in Marcia (with Joachim Kühn)
Emile Parisien Quintet (ACT Music)

by Tom Greenland

Siggi Loch’s ACT label has been a singular force in nurturing European jazz for over 25 years. Among its many releases, two celebrate the fruitful artistic camaraderie of two Parisians: soprano saxophonist Emile Parisien and accordion player Vincent Peirani. Living Being II: Night Walker follows the group’s 2015 debut, broadening its “chamber rock” (as Peirani terms it) concept to embrace everything from Led Zeppelin and Henry Purcell to Sonny Bono. The rock element is firmly fixed by Tony Paeleman’s Fender Rhodes piano, Julien Herné’s edgy electric bass and Yoann Serra’s hard-kicking drumset, contrasted with Parisien’s elegant and affecting soprano saxophone and the diverse, decidedly non-traditional ideas emanating from the leader. Bono’s pseudo-rumba “Bang, Bang” gets a Mediterranean gloss while Purcell’s “What Thou Art” is elevated by Parisien’s slowly ramped-up solo. The Zep covers, prefaced by an accordion solo emphasizing the Celtic quality of “Stairway to Heaven”, segues to a raga-like reading of “Kashmir”, saxophone playing an alap-style solo, accordion echoing it a la Indian harmonium, leading to the famous riff, played first at half speed, later at full tilt. Next, the familiar guitar part of “Stairway to Heaven” is rendered on Rhodes, followed by an irrenc melody reading and a reprise of “Kashmir”. “Le Clown Sauveur De La Fête Foraine”, the title track, “Unknown Chemistry” and especially “Smoke & Mirrors” (Valentin Liechti guiding on electronics) all show the band’s predilection for layered parts and rhythmic pastiche.

Sfumato live in Marcia is a CD/DVD of the Parisien Quintet’s exuberant 2017 performance. Parisien’s earthy soprano playing, Redolent of French chanson, lies at the heart of the sound, augmented by German pianist Joachim Kühn’s quicksilver touch. The core quintet includes guitarist Manu Codjia, bassist Simon Taulieu and drummer Mário Costa, with trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, bass clarinetist Michel Portal and Peirani as guests. The CD, presenting the concert numbers in a slightly rearranged order, opens with “Le Clown Tueur De La Fête foraine”, a three-part suite that passes from Peirani’s sensitive solo introduction to a romantic Waltz to Portal’s lyrical solo during the second section to the leader’s gracefully dovetailing Baroque-meets-postbop solo in the third. The concert’s highlights are “Temptation Rag” and “Transmitting”, both featuring Marsalis, the first an old-timey romp with three-way soloing, the second revealing Marsalis in a playful, Woody Shaw-esque mood. Parisien’s two-part “Balladibiza” and Kühn’s “Missing a Page” showcase the leader’s gentle but assertive playing as well as Kühn’s dense contributions, both tracks building to a collective climax fueled by Costa’s minimalist yet emphatic drumming. The DVD, presenting the concert in its original order with one additional song, shows lingering close-ups of the musicians’ facial expressions (both when soloing and when reacting to others), a few establishing shots, plus a few inserts of Peirani’s bare feet, all edited in jump-cut fashion to add visceral dimension to the musical event. Those who prefer to read a book before seeing its movie adaptation may want to listen to the CD first.

For more information, visit actmusic.com. Peirani and Parisien are at Rockwood Music Hall Jun. 27th and Rizzoli’s Bookstore and Nublu 151 both Jun. 30th. See Calendar.
For five years, Denny Zeitlin has performed an annual solo concert at the Piedmont Piano Company in Oakland, California, always interpreting the work of a single composer. The series has produced one previous album of Wayne Shorter tunes (Early Wayne, Sunnyside, 2016).

Miles Davis was notorious for claiming authorship of tunes written by others. The pieces on Remembering Miles were composed, co-written, appropriated by or associated with Davis. They span the arc of his career, from the original “Milestones”, which appeared on his debut as a leader in 1947, to “Time After Time” by Cyndi Lauper and Rob Hyman, which he performed obsessively in the late ’80s, toward the end of his life.

The first track introduces Zeitlin’s mindset on this night in Oakland. “Solar” (everyone says Chuck Wayne wrote it but the first two measures are inscribed on Davis’ tombstone at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx) takes a while to make an appearance in Zeitlin’s formal, ornate prologue. Then “Solar” is quickly overwhelmed, takes a while to make an appearance in Zeitlin’s formal, ornate prologue. Then “Solar” is quickly overwhelmed.

Last month on May 4th was the last of Zeitlin’s four nights at Mezzrow, a gig billed as “a celebration” of Remembering Miles. The celebration was loose, Whereas Zeitlin played solo on May 1st-2nd, on May 3rd-4th he played with a trio (Buster Williams, bass; Matt Wilson, drums). On May 4th the trio played one tune from the album, “Weirdo” and one other piece from Davis’ discography, Shorter’s “E.S.P.”

Mezzrow, that narrow alley of a jazz club with the stage at the far end, was packed sardine-tight. Zeitlin clearly felt the energy of Mezzrow’s Saturday night vibe. (The Piedmont Piano Company probably feels more civilized, less on-edge.) He attacked “Weirdo” ferociously, from many angles. It is an odd blues to start with and Zeitlin made “Weirdo” one small aspect of his own free, spontaneous outbreaks. But he never forgot the song. Zeitlin obviously remembered that, in Davis’ body of work as a composer, “Weirdo”, now mostly forgotten, was a precursor to “Walkin’”, one of his signature tunes. At Mezzrow, for a moment, just before the end of “Weirdo”, Zeitlin not only quoted “Walkin’”, he landed on it, hard.

For more information, visit sunnysidercords.com

Naughton’s compositions are distinctive, each revolving around trio interaction. The title track has a stately theme with parts for all three players weaving around one another. “Slant” is a puckish line, slightly off-kilter, and a springboard for simultaneous group improvising. At the end of the disc is included a previously unissued alternate take of this piece that is worth hearing; it is taken at a slower, more measured tempo and shows how this group worked at these compositions. “Rose Island” is a carefully constructed piece where each member fits tightly within the framework. The closing “Ordette” is the most overtly melodic piece and its lyricism is tempered with abstraction.

Throughout Smith etches his lines with clarion calls and muted burned strokes while Robinson’s limber clarinet slithers around like a slippery eel yet always ending up in the right place. Naughton falls somewhere between Walt Dickerson with languid, flowing lines and mid ’60s Bobby Hutcherson via an abrupt percussive attack. But these influences were folded into a distinct style that made him one of the most unique players of this period.

It’s admirable that Naughton’s compositions are not necessarily vibraphone-centric. He seems more concerned with group interaction. If anything his vibraphone work is the most subtle element of the music. But when one focuses on it, the listener is amply rewarded with complex harmonics, which provide an inimitable textural backdrop. Naughton clearly is a master of the instrument.

It’s great to see The Haunt reissue. It’s a lost gem that deserves to be restored to its rightful place as one of the best jazz albums of the ’70s.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com
Solo horns have to work hard in the quartet format and the heads sometimes sound malnourished. The prolific trumpet player Tom Harrell is a strong enough leader and soloist to record as the only horn, as he did on his previous disc, *Moving Picture*. Here though he is supported by an all-star group of saxophonist Mark Turner, bassist Ben Street and drummer Johnathan Blake, with Charles Altura’s spiky guitar taking the place of a pianist. Dig the unison horns traveling to “Dublin”, a midtempo tune that would have thrived in the classic Blue Note era.

On “Hope”, Harrell’s Harmon mute gets a workout. Yes, that does make him sound like Miles Davis, but the tune sounds more disquieted than something Davis would write, though the double tempo sections that keep jumping out would be right up the Dark Magus’ street. The mute is back on the loping “The Isle”. And “Duet” is just that, the two horns locked slyly together for 1:42.

Harrell is a democratic leader. Altura is featured on “Folk Song”, with a flamenco feel. Turner is typically assertive performance from Harrell, who, as a sideman has given him a deep appreciation and familiarity with the standards songbook, one that informs his crafting of originals: “Cease”, the CD opener, resonates like a familiar standard. Two salutes to recently deceased peers incorporate key aspects of their styles in pieces far too celebratory to be called elegies: “To John” for John Abercrombie and “A Chant for Larry” for Larry Coryell. Of the four acoustic features, “Julia” and “In Three for Two”, a duet with Anderson, reveal penetrating lyricism. In keeping with Juris’ affection for swing and bop, the CD closes with a rhythm changes contrafact, the high spirited “Kirby’s Scene” dedicated to the bacterian at 55Bar.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. This band is at 55Bar Jun. 2nd. See Calendar.

This piano trio recording was made in honor of the late Lee Shaw, who was a well-regarded pianist and influential teacher in upstate New York (whose most famous student was John Medeski). Drummer Jeff “Siege” Siegel and bassist Rich Syracuse accompanied her in what was something of a late career revival before her death in 2015 at the age of 89.

Nick Hetko sits at the keyboard here. Shaw initially set up the relationship between Hetko—a protégé—and the rhythm section when the younger pianist was still a teenager and there’s a real sense of familiarity on this album, the kind of interplay and responsiveness that sound like second nature. Everything on the album smacks of a longstanding piano trio using all their mastery.

Sieg is a subtle leader—he and Syracuse provide superb accompaniment; they don’t drive but they do organize the itinerary with a gentle grip and a firm direction. That leaves Hetko in a prominent role, with mixed results. His touch is just spasmodic, his broad range of attacks and varies his approach to the keys themselves in a way that is beguiling. He also uses dynamics expressively and has a strong sense of how to form a solo.

He’s got skills, in other words, at times too much so. There are segments when things seem to come too easy, where Hetko, and so the music as a whole, sounds tested, including eight originals from Juris written since the gig began, as well as two covers, The Beatles’ “Julia” and Wayne Shorter’s “E.S.P.”. The title of this CD references the two guitars Juris brought to the session, his usual electric jazz model and a steel string acoustic.

This is not a band that tries to emulate a power trio. Juris plays his electric guitar with very little in the way of effects, mild reverb and a suavely mellow tone. Nussbaum is all subtlety and nuance, even when using sticks, although he’s as apt to be employing brushes or bundles. And Anderson has a billowing, natural feel on his acoustic bass. The result is a warm collective sound where none of the individual parts are obtrusive, all supporting a common goal.

Juris has profited artistically from his long career—he’s been active since the ’70s—as a musician who has worked with dozens of leaders and, especially, with some of his most prominent guitarist peers. His work as a sideman has given him a deep appreciation and familiarity with the standards songbook, one that informs his crafting of originals: “When You Were There” by Syracuse and “Oscar’s Boogie”, which takes all the wrong lessons from its composer Oscar Peterson. There’s too much Peterson in that one and too much Brad Mehldau and Chick Corea in Hetko’s “Captain of a Sinking Ship”.

The album is at its best when the pianist pulls back and the rhythm section asserts itself more, when the group concentrates on playing as a trio. There are good moments in every tune and the closing “I Fall In Love To Easily” by Julie Styne is a winner.

For more information, visit artistsrecordingcollective.biz. This project is at Zinc Bar Jun. 11th. See Calendar.
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The inspiration Wadada Leo Smith has found in environmental and sociopolitical concerns over the past seven years has spawned a rich avenue of exploration in an already diverse and rewarding career. The series of suites dedicated to the Civil Rights struggle and natural topography (National Parks, Great Lakes) represents some of his most powerful achievements. In general, the inspirations have been handled in the abstract—these aren’t Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln records—with the subjects only directly addressed in the titles. (In performance, he has also used video to help make the real-world connection.) But Smith, it seems, couldn’t resist giving his desegregation activist protagonist a voice. The 15 sections of his Rosa Parks: Pure Love oratorio include six songs setting his own text to music and a seventh using Parks’ words. His words are concise, direct and poetic and beautifully delivered by the three members of his Diamond Voices trio. The ensemble consists of four trumpets, four strings, drums and electronics, all working to an understated but dramatic effect. The breadth of the ensemble is limited somewhat by the string and horn arrangements feeling so close together—each of the quartets could cover more ground—and the electronics are, likewise, held at bay. Smith’s orchestration here is stronger than his composition, however, the whole outshines the parts.

Much of Smith’s career has been dedicated to the free improvisation and that’s the locus of Burning Meditation. There’s more burning than meditating in the duo with drummer Sabu Toyozumi. The hour-long set was recorded live in Yamaguchi City, Japan, in 1994 (two years after the concert that became 1992’s Cosmos Has Spirit) but it’s a timeless language that could have dated from 2014 or 1974. Toyozumi sometimes plays staccato rim rolls or quick cymbal splashes but more often pushes with pulsing electronics. Smith is heard on trumpet, bamboo flute, koto, voice and percussion. The recording is a bit boomy but the playing is focused and as the air with incisive yet soulful trumpet. Later Ben Gerstein’s trombone flutters initially in exchange with Mike Pride’s malleted drums and then Sam Weinberg’s flinty tenor saxophone, which eventually takes over in an outpouring of choked skronk.

Cornet player Kirk Knuffke’s spot is more boppish and Pride’s responsive fills form a particularly noticeable feature here. Alto saxophonist Anthony Ware takes a more restrained approach in contrast to what has gone before, with cool, speech-inflected long tones until Pride ups the ante. In conclusion, Welcome conducts a succession of monolithic lines leading to a slightly wisfufu tutti finale, distinguished once again by plangent valedictory brass and tolling gongs. The only regret is that the disc doesn’t last longer than 29 minutes.

For more information, visit gaucimusic.com. This project is at Bushwick Public House Jun. 3rd. See Calendar.
There are numerous artists like John Hart who record only sporadically. For his first SteepleChase album, Hart is joined by alto saxophonist Dick Oatts, bassist Bill Moring and drummer Tim Horner, all equally seasoned musicians, on fresh looks at familiar standards and jazz classics, along with his superb originals.

There are several factors that make this session stand out. Hart’s reharmonization of time-tested songs is subtle, rather than disguising the melody and slowly revealing the theme. He also leans toward a Jim Hall-like approach on his instrument, often playing softly, leaving plenty of space and nimbly adding tasty accents to Oatts’ lead line. A great example is the transformation of Irving Berlin’s “How Deep Is the Ocean” from an introspective ballad into an exuberant arrangement. The intricate original blues “In Traneing” has delightful interplay between Oatts and Hart, fueled by the rhythm section’s driving pulse. “Guernica”, named after Pablo Picasso’s famous painting, was written by Hart for a student ensemble at the University of Miami, where he teaches; this extended work depicts life in the Spanish town before and after the massacre of its population to stunning effect.

Hart explores Vincent Youmans-Harold Adamson-Mack Gordon’s “Time On My Hands” and Duke Ellington’s “Sophisticated Lady” with the rhythm section, both becoming virtual master classes for guitarists. For the former, Hart approaches it as if accompanying a dancer doing a soft shoe routine, then switching to a breezy bop setting, while the latter is like a musical kaleidoscope, revealing new dimensions with each chorus, along with showcasing Moring’s intimate solo. Joseph Kosma’s “Les Feuilles Mortes”, better known under its English title “Autumn Leaves”, is marked by wistful alto and imaginative departure from its well-known theme. The strength of this session merits more frequent record dates for John Hart.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. Hart is at Smalls Jun. 7th-8th with David Bixler and North Square Lounge Jun. 9th with Roz Corral. See Calendar.

Live at COTA

Bill Mays Trio (No Blooze Music)
by Donald Elfman

This spirited new recording—the first in ten years by this trio—reflects the timeless brilliance of its leader. Pianist Bill Mays, bassist Martin Wind and drummer Matt Wilson prove that the magic that brought them together is still working all these years later.

Live at COTA is a performance taken from the Celebration Of The Arts Festival near Mays’ Pennsylvania home. The pianist opens solo and is soon joined by his simpatico compatriots in a quiet and rhapsodic reharmonization of Jimmy Van Heusen-Johnny Mercer’s “Darn That Dream”, which blends naturally and easily into that pair’s “Dream”. Jay Livingston-Ray Evans’ “Never Let Me Go” is given a dancing, samba groove, with insistent brushes, pulsing bass (including an arco solo) and light but solid piano.

Among Mays’ originals are “Sun of the East”, dedicated to Lennie Tristano, a rereckoning of another standard—which we’re invited to guess—and, in the spirit of the past, “The Next Right Thing”, subtitled “An Extravagant Soft Shoe”. Wilson on brushes keeps that softness pulsing and the dance a swinging affair. And for a modern standard, there is Wayne Shorter’s delicate and beautiful “Infant Eyes”, which Wind moves forward with a subtle take on and improvisations from the melody.

The album is dedicated to departed spirits, saxophonist Phil Woods and pianist/singer Bob Dorough. Mays plays a piano that belonged to Woods and celebrates the saxophonist’s own tribute to the passing of Bill Evans, the shimmering “Goodbye Mr. Evans” preceded by Evans’ own rarely played “Your Story”. As a surprise closer, Mays sings the charmingly wacky Dorough tune “Nothing Like You” (famous for its version on Miles Davis’ Sorcerer). It’s a gas from start to finish, with the raspy vocal recalling the composer and the trio romping straightahead.

Live at COTA gleams with spirit, wit and joy.

For more information, visit billmays.net. This band is at Mezzrow Jun. 28th-29th. See Calendar.
Sanctuary does not break ground or explode conventions. Its strength is in execution of the classic jazz tradition, demonstrating a studied technique and finesse that invites the listener to sink into the luxuriant mood, to listen close and appreciate its nuance.

None of this means there’s zero innovation to be found—it is in the detail and the integrity of the architecture the trio erects on the foundation of the classic piano trio lineage. This is rooted in the Bill Evans or Keith Jarrett tradition of collective dialogue, fluidity, subtle color and precision. Matt Slocum once again impresses with his compositions’ structural clarity and delicate development, as well as his consistently expressive drum style and willingness to privilege the group dynamic over his own displays. If anything, Sanctuary finds Slocum reeding further to demand an even more integrated approach.

In the hands of the trio, the eight originals provide the recipe for a series of satisfying forays. For example, on “Days of Peace”, Slocum and bassist Larry Grenadier enter into engaging trades, darting bass figures mirrored by Slocum’s understated, light touch; the skittering phrases falling across the snare and toms like a heavy afternoon rain. On the title track, Slocum provides lush brush work that nurtures more than drives pianist Gerald Clayton’s gently melodic lines while on “Romulus” it is a sturdy bassline that undergirds firm piano phrasing and cracking snare patterns and unpredictable bass drum insertions buoying the piece.

A persistent calm dominates, a mellowness, which, while bordering at times on lassitude, provides a fitting table to appreciate the refinements of the trio’s delivery. And just as gourmands know there’s a time and a place for everything from barbecue to exotic fusion to professionally rendered classics like the soufflé—known equally for its delectability as its precision to fail—jazz epics understand there will always be a home for the kind of music the Matt Slocum Trio provides. Best paired with low light and fine dining, Sanctuary is to be savored slowly.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com. This project is at Saint Peter’s Church Jun. 15th. See Calendar.

Sanctuary
Matt Slocum (Sunnyside)
by Franz Matzner

Art Ensemble of Chicago (Freedom-ORG music)
by Duck Baker

In early 1969 saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell, trumpeter Lester Bowie and bassist Malachi Favors moved to Paris, along with saxophonist Joseph Jarman, the newest member of the Art Ensemble. Jarman replaced drummer Phillip Wilson, who had left to join Paul Butterfield’s band. It was after arriving in France that Jackson was largely programmatic, Tutankhamun is episodic, with some sections that are arranged, some freely improvised and some improvised along preplanned lines. It begins with a recitation by Favors that evokes...what? Dream-speech, delirious meandering, evocations of unknown entities in forgotten tongues?

Next comes a definite theme, stated on bass and horns, which soon gives way to a long, slowly developing collective improv with one or another voice emerging briefly as a general sort of leader. A measured feeling holds for quite a while before things become more abstract and complex, until an aural collage in which we get fleeting impressions—a cartoon marching band, bent fanfares on trumpet and saxophone or an assortment of near-random sounds on instruments that cannot even be readily identified, with an ending as unexpected as it is satisfying. The other long piece, “The Ninth Room”, opens with an attractive theme reminiscent of Booker Little’s writing. Then Favors settles down to some deep-tone walking, over which Bowie and Mitchell make explosive statements while Jarman provides scrambled percussion-and-sound accompaniment. The record is rounded out with two duos by Mitchell and Favors at their freest and most angular, called “Tinintinedalen”.

For more information, visit orgmusic.com. A Joseph Jarman tribute led by Douglas R. Ewart is at Roulette Jun. 15th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.

The Halloween Session
The New York 3 (TMP)
by John Pietaro

This gathering of improvisational veterans from both sides of the Atlantic offers an album’s worth of classic free jazz. The Halloween Session is unique in that the selections are brief, the longest clocking in at under six minutes. Between cuts, bits of talk are audible, including engineer Tom Tesdesco or the band members creating head arrangements: “Oh, it’s like a polka,” bassist Joe Fonda exclaims at one point.

Led by French-Italian alto saxophonist Luciano Pagliarini, the ensemble carries the torch of pianolois trios, particularly with the inclusion of Fonda and drummer Lou Grassi, mainstays of avant garde New York City jazz. The result is a solid, intriguing journey through the music and moment. Pagliarini’s voice rings utterly eternal. His preplanned lines. It begins with a recitation by Favors that evokes...what? Dream-speech, delirious meandering, evocations of unknown entities in forgotten tongues?
After years of working in obscurity and suffering the slings and arrows of critical and popular disdain, Cecil Taylor had begun to achieve a modicum of the success he so richly deserved in the 70s. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1973; there was the famous performance on the White House lawn for an ebullient President Jimmy Carter in 1978; and in 1974 he recorded a monumental live concert at the Montreux Jazz Festival in the form of Silent Tongues, awarded “Album of the Year” in 1975 from DownBeat Magazine. Some 44 years later Silent Tongues is back and, if anything, sounds as glorious as ever, proving that Taylor was the most original pianist of the 20th century.

Rereleased on vinyl, the album wastes no time on niceties, opening with a stunning three-movement suite “Abyss, Petals and Filaments, Jitney”. Clocking in at nearly 20 minutes, this is chock full of pristine niceties, opening with a stunning three-movement suite “Abyss, Petals and Filaments, Jitney”. Clocking in at nearly 20 minutes, this is chock full of pristine

Mark Morganelli has been a fine bop-based trumpeter/flugelhornist since at least the late ’70s and long involved in organizing concerts and recordings. During 1979-83 he had a musicians’ loft called The Jazz Forum, a name that he has used for various projects (including his recently established Tarrytown club). The two-CD set Brasil! is an easy-listening program of bossa nova classics performed with a small combo and around half of the 27 selections feature vocalist, including the assertive solo singer Monika Oliveira and a vocal ensemble that includes three of the other musicians (keyboard player Abélita Mateus, accordion player Eddie Monteiro and percussionist Nanny Assis).

The instrumental and most of the vocal pieces find Morganelli (strictly on flugelhorn) playing quite melodically, usually stating the theme and not venturing far from it in his solos. Mateus and Monteiro follow similar approaches with fine backing from bassist Nilson Matta, drummer Adriano Santos and Assis; guitarist Carlos Barbosa-Lima also has a few spots that fit in well. Among the songs, 18 of which are by Antônio Carlos Jobim, are such numbers as “Amor Em Paz”, “Desafinado”, “So Danco Samba” (Morganelli quoting “Take The ‘A’ Train”), “A Felicidade”, “Corcovado”, “Dindi” and a Luiz Bonfa medley of “Manha da Carnaval” and “Samba de Orfeu”.

Nearly all of the music is from the late ’50s-60s and these renditions will not make one forget the originals. One wishes that Morganelli stretched the music a bit, perhaps varying the tempos (everything is taken at a relaxed pace) or moods. However, this is a tasteful and pleasing set of concise performances (six songs are under three minutes with only one song longer than six minutes). Brasil! is valuable for those who are not familiar with bossa nova. The musicians let the melodies and lyrics speak for themselves.

For more information, visit orgmusic.com. A Taylor tribute is at Roulette Jun. 13th as part of Vision Festival. See Calendar.
Besides dedicating himself to mastering unforgiving instruments such as the bass and contrabass clarinets, Paul Austerlitz is a composer and ethnomusicologist with a focus on AfroCaribbean music. This CD is the first installment of a trilogy called “Marasa Twa” inspired by the spiritual and musical traditions of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The result is varied, enjoyable and at times exciting music. The 12 tunes are either originals or arrangements of traditional songs ranging from Nigeria and Haiti to Finland. Each is rather complex in structure but Austerlitz makes them sound very approachable. Credit must be given to the musicians, with a particular mention to Benito Gonzalez’ exciting and percussive piano and Santi Debriano’s reliable bass. Rozna Zila’s vocals add depth and emotions to the music.

Much of the music is also influenced by John Coltrane—“Padre” and “En-Art” (its backward spelling being a giveaway) are two examples, with the former recalling “Impressions” and latter paraphrasing “Giant Steps”. Coltrane echoes can also be heard in “Lapriyè Djò” thanks to Gonzalez’ McCoy Tyner-esque approach and Debriano’s dramatic solos. But it is the leader’s bass and contrabass clarinetats that characterize the overall sound, Austerlitz at times combining them with Isaiah Richardson’s clarinet and electronic effects à la Jimi Hendrix. This is more evident in “Funkay-Be-Sea”, showcasing Royal Hartigan’s tasteful drumming, and the two versions of “Rara”. A reference to Sonny Rollins cannot be avoided when listening to “Boot the Boot”, executed in a pianoless trio featuring Debriano and Hartigan at their sublest. Finally, “Oriki” and “Bara Súwà Yo” are two midtempo swingers based on traditional Yorùbá songs preserved through the Afrocuban tradition, the blending of the clarinetats in the latter reminiscent of John Carter’s atmospheres in his pentalogy on the AfroAmerican tradition.

For more information, visit roundwhirledrecords.bandcamp.com. Austerlitz is at Bushwick Public House Jun. 24th. See Calendar.

Two musicians who are absolutely central to the project of English free improvisation, percussionist Eddie Prévost (who turns 70 this month) and saxophonist John Butcher, each have (at least) dual musical personalities, whether as sound-oriented free improvisers or as free jazz musicians. As the only constant in the 50-year history of the group AMM, Prévost is strongly associated with spacious, symphony-length sound symposia in which he plays a variety of isolated instruments, but his own groups often have the linear focus of free jazz. While Butcher may play with a quarry or a mausoleum as well as humans, he can also play free jazz with hypnotic intensity. In this 2018 performance, the focus is largely sonic, but ultimately embraces other dimensions.

Butcher is first up with the relatively brief “Twice and More” and “Tree Demons”. The former, on tenor, has distinct segments, beginning with a sustained line formed in continuous multiphonics at fixed intervals, a rare event; the latter begins as a series of fledgling soprano chirps that expand into lines, gradually then rapidly, like someone has discovered both the saxophone and improvisation and mastered them in a couple of minutes before moving on. Prévost’s solo is over 19 minutes, much of it consisting of long tones achieved by bowing, scraping and tapping cymbals, so resonance-rich, metallic and sustained that it suggests a symphony for a metal-working shop as well as the very music that Butcher has played in his previous solos.

The main event is a 35-minute, three-phase duet, “Visionary Fantasies”, in which all that precedes it comes to fruition. Identity passes from one instrument to another when soprano assumes some of the same metallic abrasiveness as scraped metal. Eventually sounds shift from the factory to a cavern of resonant mysteries, a heightened consciousness of high-pitched multiphonics, which develops until a gong renders everything ceremonial. The ultimate virtue of this music is its subtlety: it makes almost everything else seem obvious.

For more information, visit matchlessrecordings.com
Among the most striking openings on a jazz album in recent years is the thrice-repeated four-note introductory phrase of The Beatles’ “And I Love Her”, intoned in a piercingly high register by Scott Robinson’s tenor saxophone on Tenormore. From that plateau, Robinson drops into the middle registers of his horn to play the tune, a cappella. It’s an arresting introduction to Robinson’s first all-tenor album as a leader in his over four-decade career as a jazz musician. Before the millennium he had made an all C melody saxophone album, but Robinson is best known for his versatility and command of a panoply of instruments in both, but not limited to, the reed and brass families, many grouped into the Miscellaneous Instrument category in jazz polls. Among the more exotic he owns and plays are contrabass saxophone, bass marimba and theremin. But Robinson, who plays baritone saxophone, flutes and clarinets in Maria Schneider’s Orchestra, considers tenor his first instrument and has been playing his 1924 silver Conn model ever since he bought it in an antique shop in 1975. He’s joined by his working quartet of over the last decade: Helen Sung (piano and B3 organ), Martin Wind (bass and acoustic bass guitar) and Dennis Mackrel (drums).

Besides The Beatles, Robinson taps into the American Popular Songbook for three standards on his album. “Put On A Happy Face”, from the Charles Strouse-Lee Adams score of Bye Bye Birdie, is taken at a surprisingly slow tempo, giving it what Robinson calls “a subtext of sadness”, a feeling he enhances with a breathy tone, big vibrato and long, fluttering phrases. Hoagy Carmichael’s “The Nearness of You” gets a gently rocking backbeat and soul feel from B3 organ and bass guitar. Sasha Distel’s “The Good Life” (with English lyrics by Jack Reardon) emerges from a long, free improvisation that includes Wind’s bowing. Robinson’s originals include the multi-themed “The Whistler”, with a flute, “Hem The Hempstead”, as well as his solo flute; “Morning Star”, a heartbeat tempo piece in the standard song form; and three blues. The closing title track, a 10-bar blues, can also be heard as “ten or more” on the drums and soloists can extend the 10 bar choruses by indeterminate lengths.

Robinson also plays only tenor with the Jack Mouse Group on the drummer’s Intimate Adversary, as part of a quartet with Art Davis (trumpet and flugelhorn), John McLean (guitar) and Bob Bowman (bass). The album features nine of the leader’s originals showcasing a variety of rhythms and tempos. The title tune finds Robinson in a Four Brothers mode and Mouse’s varied tunes, including a gospel 6/8 soul blues, “Old, New & Used Testaments” and the cool bop “Barney’s Fife”, bring out Robinson’s versatility on tenor. The CD concludes with a penultimate semi-free blues and final, rousing free improvisation, “Three Free” by Robinson, Mouse and Bowman.

On both albums Robinson reveals a catholic command of his saxophone, encompassing a variety of tones and timbres as well as a proficiency in all registers of the horn, from the very highest to the deepest lows.

For more information, visit arborsrecords.com and flashpointcreativearts.org. Robinson’s Tenormore project is at Birdland Theater Jun. 21st-22nd. See Calendar.
When an artist tackles familiar repertoire, it can result in rather predictable, cliché-filled music. Russ Lossing, a talented pianist who has been active professionally for over three decades, found it easy to generate some fresh approaches to playing standards and time-tested jazz compositions, given his track record on earlier small-group record dates. For this session, he recruited two fellow veterans in bassist Michael Formanek and drummer Gerald Cleaver, both of whom help make the performances interactive rather than simply supportive by thinking outside the box.

Lossing’s approach to Ray Henderson’s “Bye, Bye, Blackbird”, a staple that never seems to get too far out of favor in jazz circles, is a perfect example. A rapid-fire solo introduction hints at just enough of the melody beneath the cluster of notes and while Lossing plays in more straightahead fashion as his rhythm section joins him, he consistently detours from the tune into a freer setting without ever losing the essence of its theme. Richard Rodgers’ ballad “Little Girl Blue” shimmers in a swinging original “Blues In The Shedd”. For more information, visit chuckredd.com. Redd is at Jazz at Kitano Jun. 28th-29th. See Calendar.

The late Don Friedman, who died three years ago this month, is a classic example of an extremely talented pianist who remained relatively undervalued during his life. After his early to mid ’60s conceptual albums, which were largely based on original material, and key contributions to modern jazz masterpieces such as Booker Little’s Out Front, Friedman increasingly relied on the great jazz tradition as a source of inspiration. This did not imply relinquishing the originality of his early recordings but rather refocusing it onto well-honed material, making it sound as new each time.

This reissue of a 1978 recording is no exception. The nine tunes are almost exclusively divided among some of the best-known standards, such as Victor Young-Ned Washington’s “Stella by Starlight” and Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein’s “All the Things You Are” and “Stella by Starlight”, Cole Porter’s “I Love You” and “All the Things You Are” are attacked at a somewhat brisker pace than usual whereas Michel LeGrand-Alan Bergman-Marilyn Bergman’s “What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?” undergoes a very emotional treatment. While it is difficult and to large extent unfair picking favorites, “Billie’s Bounce” manages to revitalize the 12 bar F blues format in just above four exhilarating minutes.

For more information, visit jazzology.com/progressive_records.php

Muneer Nasser’s tribute to his father Jamil Nasser, born George Joyner in Memphis 87 years ago this month and dying in 2010, also known as Jamil Suliman, is a labor of love. The author, a trumpeter and jazz historian, worked for more than 14 years on this book, interviewing his father, family members and musicians his father worked with and researching public and private records. The result is a compelling as-told-to memoir interspersed with excerpts from interviews and reviews. Most jazz memoirs are about bandleaders, not sidemen or -women. The author sets the record straight; to him, the bass is the foundation of any jazz ensemble, providing the pulse and outline for the harmonic structure.

In his long career Jamil Nasser played with formidable artists like B.B. King, Miles Davis, Red Garland, Al Haig, Lester Young, Phineas Newborn and for 12 years with Ahmad Jamal. Audiences loved his warm, sonorous tone, his deep melodic sense and impeccable timing. Nasser contributed to over 100 recordings and, as Vice President of the Jazz Foundation of America, fought for greater union representation, healthcare and self-determination for jazz musicians.

The book is an important contribution to the field. Nasser describes the grueling life on the road, race relations among jazz musicians and the injustice of the jazz industry. He portrays musicians exploiting their peers, not giving them credit for their compositions and arrangements, turning others on to heroin. He paid heavy dues for his lack of union representation, healthcare and self-determination for jazz musicians.

Please be aware that the book is not entirely accurate in some of the historical details, such as Jamil Nasser’s birth and death dates. For more information, visit jamilnsasser.com
Jones Jones: A Jones in Time Saves Nine
Larry Ochs/Mark Dresser/Vladimir Tarasov (NoBusiness)
by Stuart Broomer

Jones Jones is a free improvising trio consisting of Bayarea saxophonist Larry Ochs and bassist Mark Dresser along with the Lithuanian-resident drummer Vladimir Tarasov, who turns 72 this month. That “Jones”, doubled in the group name, may have the standard usage of “craving”, but it’s a rampaging impulse to free expression and sonic exploration, an impulse to open dialogue that creates and discards textures and moods with radical abandon, regularly driving toward new life and new sounds. That compulsion drives every episode and is enshrined in every track title, here inserted, Jonesingly, into the titles of famous films, whether classic or recent, hence “The Jones who Knew Too Much” and “Three Jones Outside Ebbing, Missouri”. A Jones in Time Saves Nine is released on LP with three additional tracks available as a download.

The greatest challenge in discussing free improvisation is adequately describing degrees of collaborative empathy or engaged difference, but a high degree of either (or both) is the mark of any really good improvising ensemble and present here. The instrumentation of saxophone, bass and drums insists, to some degree, on the jazz tradition and paths lead to rhythmically propelled dialogue. Ochs is a wildly vocalic player: notes bend, overtones rush in, sounds contort (at times suggesting the breathing apparatus of Archie Shepp’s Ben Webster wedded to the bulging warmth of Evan Parker’s Coleman Hawkins, for anyone seeking easy parallels). Dresser adroitly handles multiple pluckings and bowings while Tarasov is always listening, feeding and finding new directions, a master of conversational dynamics and nuance.

Directions change rapidly and impulsively: “A Fistful of Jones” begins with roars and squawks and rattle, a call to order that later find sustained momentum. “Twelve Angry Jones” starts with shrill, high-speed soprano, only to embrace minutes later, a kind of warm balladry with Dresser finding his bass’ inner trombone. One feels the spontaneity and empathy everywhere here, whether Tarasov revealing at one point that a bass drum is all he needs or Dresser drenching electric cicadas from his acoustic bass. There are all kinds of improvising ensembles around, but Jones Jones actually insists on improvising.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com. Dresser is at The Stone at The New School Jun. 12th. See Calendar.

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Chrysalis
Eric Plaks (OutNow)
by John Sharpe

A native of Princeton, NJ, pianist Eric Plaks has been active in a variety of styles, from straightahead to big band to free, since moving to Harlem in 1996. His collaborators have included reedplayers Blaise Siwula and Daniel Carter, trumpeters Aquiles Navarro and Matt Lavelle and French horn player Vincent Chancey, suggesting an affinity for the free jazz genre he explores on Chrysalis. Plaks presents six compositions and three improvises, realized by a trio completed by reedplayer Andrew Hadro and drummer Leonid Galaganov, supplemented by bassist Evan Crane on three tracks.

Plaks’ charts stem from an ongoing project to create a book of 100 themes to use as either raw material in improvisations or in a more traditional head-solo-lead format. The album showcases some of his favorites out of the first batch of 20, which supply loose frameworks for the outfit’s imaginative interplay. Plaks leads from the front, a percussive pianist whose consistent motifs make the dedication of “Theme 11” to Cecil Taylor seem inevitable. While the opening “Ashes To Ashes” is jointly credited, it reveals structure too. Indeed, it recalls the 1976 duet between Anthony Braxton and pianist Muhal Richard Abrams in both its boppish aspect and the contrast between Hadro’s gruff baritone saxophone and the rolling piano.

But even the composed numbers come in for some deconstruction. That’s most obvious in “Theme 18”, dedicated to David S. Ware, which begins with a piano riff at locomotive pace, but soon goes wayward as Crane cuts across the beat with oddly accented plucks and Plaks pummels the keys. In any case, Hadro rarely advances the themes as directly as here, more often taking an oblique approach, which adds another layer of intrigue. In a change of pace, Plaks tackles “Theme 1” entirely alone, reveling in intricate variations upon its rich internal workings. The way melody and rhythm emerge from the freer elements upends expectation. It’s a group that thrives by being on the same page, but not in unison.

For more information, visit outnowrecordings.com. Plaks is at The Brooklyn Commons Jun. 6th, Silecna Jun. 14th with Barry Wallenstein and Bushwick Public House Jun. 24th. See Calendar.

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Eight Track III
Dave Stryker (Strikezone)
by Ken Dryden

Guitarist Dave Stryker has now completed a third volume in his Eight Track series, again focusing on tunes of the ’70s, including Motown, pop, rock and R&B, presumably songs that made an impact on him in his youth. His band once again includes organ player Jared Gold and drummer McClenty Hunter, with vibraphonist Stefan Harris, who appeared on the first CD, plus the addition of Latin percussionist Mayra Casales on several tracks.

Fans of the original recordings won’t miss the lack of vocals in Stryker’s finger-freight, which retains the essence of what drew attention to them in the first place. On the other hand, if one wasn’t listening to this music when it was on the radio, Stryker’s interpretations may prompt many to listen once again to these forgotten master musicians and average citizens alike. Scenes of the quartet jamming with locals and traveling throughout Ghana are interspersed with profiles of each of the four including clips of them at home and a wonderful segment of Hartigan tap dancing. There are also interviews with global artists such as dancer Joann Thompson and master musician, dancer and international speaker Kwabena Boateng. The latter summed up the film’s core in two sentences: “Music can change the world. And I think it’s already done it.”

For more information, visit weareonemovie.com. This project is at Flattlands Reformed Church Jun. 2nd. See Calendar.

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We Are One - Blood Drum Spirit
(A Film by Sara Pettinella)
by John Pietaro

Royal Hartigan is a most vocal proponent of world music traditions. A professor in Ethnomusicology at Dartmouth, the drummer-percussionist’s history extends to post-graduate study at Wesleyan where he focused on African, Native American and Indian drumming. Earlier, at Amherst, Hartigan concentrated on African American music with close tutelage under Ed Blackwell and coursework with Max Roach and Archie Shepp. The amalgam was a uniquely expansive view of jazz and improvisation. Hartigan performed and recorded with the late saxophonist/activist Fred Ho for decades. His own vehicle, Blood Drum Spirit, is featured in this powerful new documentary directed by filmmaker and photographer Sarah Pettinella.

Saxophonist David Bindman another Wesleyan alumnus fusing world traditions with new music, founded the Brooklyn Saxophone Quartet with Ho. Pianist Art Hirahara and bassist Wes Brown were Ho band members. If there is a central fixture here, it is the late baritone saxophonist and his commitment to social justice via Asian and African culture and the voices of the oppressed.

Hartigan states in We Are One that upon first hearing African music, he recognized its relationship to jazz. “It brought me to a place that transcends everyday life” and as soon as he had the opportunity to do so, brought the band to Ghana. The quartet traveled to multiple African villages, first meeting with the elders and sharing in food, dance and traditional music before they brought out a drum set, electric keyboard, electric bass and saxophone. Pettinella caught beautiful moments with village master musicians and average citizens alike. Scenes of the quartet jamming with locals and traveling throughout Ghana are interspersed with profiles of each of the four including clips of them at home and a wonderful segment of Hartigan tap dancing. There are also interviews with global artists such as dancer Joann Thompson and master musician, dancer and international speaker Kwabena Boateng. The latter summed up the film’s core in two sentences: “Music can change the world. And I think it’s already done it.”

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ON SCREEN

The New York City Jazz Record | June 2019 | 37
The five discs of this set are festooned with pictures of the five men, all sadly departed: Mingus in 1979, Pullen in 1995, Gardner in 2014, Stubblefield and Brooks in 2005. The music was recorded for Detroit’s WDET public radio and its jazz program director, Bud Spangler (who died in 2014), is heard introducing and sending off the band (with lengthy instructions on how future Strata Gallery attendees could find the club) and in a between-set interview with Brooks.

Even with all the bootlegs, this is the only existing document of this particular group. It presents us with the second official take of “The Man Who Never Sleeps” (after the 1971 Japan-only Columbia album Charles Mingus With Orchestra). Brought back from the distant past is “Celia”, originally appearing on 1957’s East Coasting, while “Noddin’ Ya Head Blues” predates the studio version on 1977’s Three Or Four Shades Of Blues. These are the only known performances of “Dizzy Profile”, which was recorded with its dedicatee at Carnegie Hall years before and later would become part of the repertoire of the Mingus Big Band, as sung by Frank Lacy. Filling out the program are high-water marks of Mingus’ oeuvre: “Pithecanthropus Erectus”, “Peggy’s Blue Skylight” and “Orange Was the Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk”, plus Duke Ellington’s “C Jam Blues”.

Discography as a science is akin to tracking tornadoes; where a musician touches down briefly can indicate origin point and somewhat predict direction. But, of course, music and musicians are hardly that simple. Just as a tornado is better assessed by its impact as a force of nature, so too should this album be gauged by what those few hours, just off of Woodward Avenue at 46 Selden Street, must have been like for the audience. “Pithecanthropus Erectus” is presented in all its glory at over 25 minutes; “C Jam Blues” and “Noddin’ Ya Head Blues” are even longer. Mingus might not have been quite the force he was behind the bass earlier but his unquestioned leadership never diminished and with Pullen and Stubblefield he has collaborators on the level of Jaki Byard and Eric Dolphy. “Noddin’ Ya Head Blues” closing with a lengthy saw solo from Brooks accompanied by only piano and bass adds a surreal whimsy after an almost dirge-like performance.

Included in the set are liner notes by British music writer Paul Bradshaw and a brief statement by producer Sy Johnson about how he brought “Dizzy Profile” to the Mingus Big Band and how different this version is. Also included is a poster reproduction from the concert. On the bottom, it mentions that the following week Herbie Hancock would be at the Gallery; he only has one release from 1973 (hint hint).
The back of this LP has notes by producer Norman Granz, a long-time champion of Art Tatum, wherein he writes about the many more albums the pianist would surely go on to make. But Tatum would die two and a half years after this session of uremia. The pianist would surely go on to continue to do so on occasion, often as part of Bailey’s Company weeks in London, until this final meeting and only instance as a duet. The spirit of those improvised Company sets is indicated by the following “Input” pieces, ranging from almost seamless (“Input #1”) to five and a half minutes (“Input #5”).

**BIRTHDAYS**

| June 1 | Nelson Riddle 1925-86 |
| June 2 | Ernie Hood 1922-91 |
| June 3 | Misha Mengelberg 1935-2017 |
| June 4 | Freda Payne 1936-86 |
| June 5 | Tadd Dameron 1922-83 |
| June 6 | Alan Branscombe 1936-86 |
| June 7 | Winard Harper b.1962 |
| June 8 | Scott Burnette 1958-90 |
| June 9 | Bob Wallis 1934-91 |
| June 10 | Johnnie Ray 1933-80 |
| June 11 | Allan Reuss 1915-94 |
| June 12 | Oscar Peterson 1925-93 |
| June 13 | Mike Bordin 1958-80 |
| June 14 | Claudette Colbert 1903-96 |
| June 15 | Lennie Tristano 1919-91 |
| June 16 | João Gilberto 1935-80 |
| June 17 | John Hollenbeck 1964-99 |
| June 18 | Earl Hines 1903-85 |
| June 19 | Horace Silver 1921-88 |
| June 20 | Kenji Watanabe 1936-90 |
| June 21 | James Lewis 1903-88 |
| June 22 | Polly Apfelbaum 1937-88 |
| June 23 | Donny Hathaway 1939-93 |
| June 24 | Donny Hathaway 1939-93 |
| June 25 | Dizzy Gillespie 1917-93 |
| June 26 | Gilbert Blythe 1936-86 |
| June 27 | Billie Holiday 1915-59 |
| June 28 | Carl Davis 1930-79 |
| June 29 | Max Roach 1924-2005 |
| June 30 | Charlie Lewis 1919-78 |
| July 1 | John McLaughlin 1942-82 |
| July 2 | Hank Mobley 1926-72 |
| July 3 | Robert Glasper 1979-2005 |
| July 4 | Junior Mance 1924-85 |
| July 5 | Ray Charles 1930-94 |
| July 6 | Leon Redbone 1939-86 |
| July 7 | Billy Tipton 1915-89 |
| July 8 | Paul Motian 1938-95 |
| July 9 | Anna Maria 1949-94 |
| July 10 | Tony Hall 1931-86 |
| July 11 | Gene Ammons 1925-82 |
| July 12 | Tony Williams 1941-75 |
| July 13 | Milt Hinton 1910-2000 |
| July 14 | Billie Holiday 1915-59 |
| July 15 | Huey Lewis 1950-2000 |
| July 16 | Charlie Parker 1920-55 |
| July 17 | Stan Getz 1927-85 |
| July 18 | Ted Curson 1935-2012 |
| July 19 | John Coltrane 1926-65 |
| July 20 | Bill Evans 1929-82 |
| July 21 | Jimmie Lunceford 1902-47 |
| July 22 | Ray B�登入a X 1924-25 |
| July 23 | Billie Holiday 1915-59 |
| July 24 | John Coltrane 1926-65 |
| July 25 | Ray Charles 1930-94 |
| July 26 | John Coltrane 1926-65 |
| July 27 | John Coltrane 1926-65 |

**CROSSWORD**

**ACROSS**

1. 1998 Verve album A Go Go is the product of this collaborative effort.
2. John McLaughlin’s what was beyond?
3. Mundu, vibraphonist for Dr. Buzzard’s Original Savannah Band
4. Conductor in Violin Marocco
5. The eventual Cole Porter standard “I Get a Kick Out of You” was first sung by her
6. Longtime Nik Bärtsch bass clarinetist
7. Saxophonist Konitz or vocalist Jeanne
8. 15th Canadian RCA Victor catalogue prefixes
9. Astor Piazzolla’s favorite vocal son
10. European jazzman to record with his brother in a band plus their brothers played with his childhood friend from Chelmsford, MA
11. Girl from Somewhere
12. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
13. You’ll need this currency to attend a show at the Blue Note
14. This Co. used to sponsor the New Haven Jazz Festival
15. What Lester did in Britain?
16. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
17. Iyer’s partner in Raw Materials
18. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
19. Paul Lovens b.1949
20. Hermeto Pascoal b.1936
24. Bega
25. An all-time favorite vocal son
26. Oscar Peterson 1925-93
27. Tony Williams 1941-75
28. Al Hirt 1922-2004
30. Paul Lovens b.1949

**DOWN**

1. 1910 Abdullah Ibrahim Intuition album
2. Iver’s partner in Raw Materials
3. Mundi, vibraphonist for Dr. Buzzard’s Original Savannah Band
4.まま ギター, who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
5. In 1966, Dick Hyman covered Stgt. Barry Sadler’s ballad for these U.S. soldiers
6. Seattle-based record label an
7. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
8. This Co. used to sponsor the New Haven Jazz Festival
9. Saxophonist Michael in John Vanore’s Abstract Truth
10. You’ll need this currency to attend a show at The Pit Inn
11. This Co. used to sponsor the New Haven Jazz Festival
12. Saxophonist Michael in John Vanore’s Abstract Truth
13. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
14. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
15. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
16. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
17. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
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29. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续
30. Guitarist who has worked with Peter Apfelbaum, Mike Reed,将持续

**THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | JUNE 2019 39**
Saturday, June 1

- Ayano Lowe 5-8 pm
- Clovis Nichols Band with Carl Allen 9:30 pm - 12:30 am
- Danny Barker—A New Orleans Life in Jazz: Dr. Michael White, Catherine Russell, Lucien Barbarin, Gregg Bethell, Shannon Powell, Herlin Riley, Lenny Jones, Don Vappie, Philip Norris 10 pm - 12 am

Sunday, June 2

- Victor B雷斯 Trio with Jay Anderson, Adam Nussbaum 5-8 pm
- Felipe Salas Interconnections Ensemble with Jonathan Ball, Aaron Dutton, Mike Caulfield, Dick McGriff, Tommy Brunche, Jeff Holmes, Yo-Yo Yamashita, Eric Smith, Doug Olsen, Clayton DeFreest, Randy Rogers, Bud Gule, Angel Suero, Nando Michelin, Kevin Grudecki, Ryan Feidt, Keita Kawauchi, Bertram Lehmann 9-12 am
- Jazz at Lincoln Center Youth Orchestra 9-12 am

Tuesday, June 4

- Urs Leimgruber/Sullivan Fortner 8 pm
- Joseph Francis w/ Mike Moreno, Eric Harland and guest Bijan 9-11 pm
- Todd Robbins 11:30 am - 1 pm
- Shirel Johns 11:30 am
- Jonathan Elbl/Blakkah/Allex David 7:30 pm
- John McNeil’s Hop Point w/ Jeremy Wilson and guest Anthony Piscitelli 7:30 pm
- Andy Persica 8 pm
- Andrew Rosenberg/John De La Vega/Scott Deubler/Tommy Aldridge/Bo Diddley 8 pm
- Joe Locke with guest Lee Andrews 8 pm
- The 75 Club at Boogie Woogie Mansion 8:30 pm
- Dizzy’s Club 11:15 pm
- The Village Vanguard 8:30 pm
- Birdland 8:30 pm
June 6

- Vanisha Gould Quartet with Chris McCarthy, Dan Pappasello, Robert Giagnorio
- Ravi Coltrane Trio with David Virelles, Reuben Rogers, Fredrik Ullberg
- Stephanie Nakasis and Matt Batell with Kiyoshi Arai, Fukushima Tamiya and guests
- James Francis’ Flight with Mike Doolin, Joe McPhee and the Blak
- Todd Robbins
- Kenny Werner Trio with Johannes Weinsheiner, Aron Heing, Greg Stadler
- Shenell Jones
- New Acquah Jazz Orchestra
- Raphael Druggal Trio +1, Groove Bar & Grill
- Virgin Donal Band
- Marcus Varela Quartet with Jason Roof, Gary Cetas, Eric McPison
- Joel Ross Good with Vivianinkel Williams, Jeremy Cohen, Kuncia Mendelstein, Jeremy Gutter
- Jack Rebok/Mike Migliore
- Steve Foley, Ravi Markovitch, Ana Popovic Group
- Carlos Quebrados, Samuel Weinberger, Wassel Walter
- Uli Leimgruber, Federico Balducci, Hans Tammen, Shoko Nagai, VivienneAerts,
- Jeff McLaughlin Trio with Marcos Varela, Ana Popovic, Carlos Quebrados
- Uri Gurvich, Adam O’Farrill, Edward Perez, Clarence Penn
- Ravi Coltrane Trio with David Virelles, Reuben Rogers
- Veronica Swift Trio with Pasquale Grasso, Reuben Rogers
- Joey Alexander
- Music Now: Ras Moshe Burnett, Leonor Falcón Pasquali, Layla Zami, Oxana Chi,
- Andrew Pereira Trio with Jeff Dingler, JK Kim; Sean Nowell Trio with Art Hirahara
- Jonathan Kreisberg Quartet with Martin Bejerano, Matt Clohesy, Colin Stranahan;
- Orlando Haddad/Patricia King
- Carlos Quebrados, Samuel Weinberger, Wassel Walter
- Steve Dalachinsky; Gabriel Zucker
- Uri Gurvich Quartet with Leo Genovese, Edward Perez, Francisco Mela
- Perry Smith Trio with Matt Aronoff, Donald Edwards
- David Sánchez Carib with Lage Lund, Ed Simon, RickyRodriguez, Obad Calvane, Jean Lee Aarons, Markus Schwartz
- Kathleen Lands
- Cynna Chestnut/Deborah Douglass
- Ravi Coltrane Trio with David Virelles, Reuben Rogers
- Veronica Swift Trio with Pasquale Grasso, Reuben Rogers
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- Cynna Chestnut/Deborah Douglass
- Ravi Coltrane Trio with David Virelles, Reuben Rogers
- Veronica Swift Trio with Pasquale Grasso, Reuben Rogers
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- Joey Alexander
- Music Now: Ras Moshe Burnett, Leo Genovese, Francisco Mela
- Pello Aponte, Markus Schwartz
- Jared Gold Quartet with Jeremy Pelt, Dave Stryker, McClenty Hunter;
- Kathleen Lands
- Cynna Chestnut/Deborah Douglass
### Monday, June 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Admission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Riod</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>9 pm</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter McEachern's Bone Code</td>
<td>Bar Next Door</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>11 pm</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Parker Trio</td>
<td>Bar Next Door</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>9 pm</td>
<td>$16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Satchwill</td>
<td>Birdland</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$35</td>
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### Tuesday, June 11

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Miller</td>
<td>Billy's</td>
<td>7/11</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Soulful Six</td>
<td>Nublu</td>
<td>7/11</td>
<td>9 pm</td>
<td>$18</td>
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### Wednesday, June 12

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Hefferan</td>
<td>The Lighthouse</td>
<td>6/12</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jazz Factory</td>
<td>Forte</td>
<td>6/12</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>$10</td>
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### Thursday, June 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andy Boy</td>
<td>Jazz at the Lighthouse</td>
<td>6/13</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Stoltman</td>
<td>The Village Vanguard</td>
<td>6/13</td>
<td>7:30, 9:30 pm</td>
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### Friday, June 14

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas Sout</td>
<td>Smoke</td>
<td>6/14</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Jones Trio</td>
<td>Smoke</td>
<td>6/14</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Rucker Trio</td>
<td>Smoke</td>
<td>6/14</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$30</td>
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### Saturday, June 15

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<th>Location</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant Stewart Quartet</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>6/15</td>
<td>9 pm</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moebius</td>
<td>Jazz at the Lighthouse</td>
<td>6/15</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note:** The above schedule includes various jazz events happening throughout the month of June in New York City. Please check the listed locations for further details and ticketing information.
**Monday, June 17**

- **Eric Alexander Quartet with David Kikic, John Weber, Joe Farnsworth**
  - At Blue Note Chelsea, 9:30 pm $50
- **André DeRogatis, Carmen Rodgers**
  - At Dizzy's, 8:30 pm $15
- **Jako Kirkos Trio**
  - At Bar Next Door, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 pm $12
- **Jason Pich**
  - At Zinc Bar, 9 pm $20
- **Dana Carter**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $50

**Tuesday, June 18**

- **Leon Parker, Ralph Peterson, Nina Rosalind Dante, Matteo Liberatore, Caroline Davis, Dan Weiss**
  - At Ibeam Brooklyn, 9 pm $15
- **Romane/Daniel John Martins Quartet with Julien Cattiaux, Michel Rosciglione**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $30
- **Ben Rubens; Franglais: Eve Seltzer**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $20
- **Samuel Taylor**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $20

**Wednesday, June 19**

- **Delphine Delak at The Stone**
  - At The Stone at The New School, 8:30 pm $20
- **Anthony Colman Trio with Michael Rosen, Tim Brown, Victor Lewis**
  - At Mezzrow, 7:30 pm $20
- **Mike Lomperis, Dan Levinson, Denny Zeitlin**
  - At Silvana, 6 pm

**Thursday, June 20**

- **Andy Beal Trio**
  - At Birdland, 8:30 pm $35
- **Jeppe Yao Duo**
  - At Bar Next Door, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 pm $12
- **Adam Cordero Trio with Odin Scherer, Henry Mermer; Tal Yahalom Trio with Abraham Burton, Tom Guarna, Allyn Johnson, Neal Caine**
  - At Bar Next Door, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 pm $12
- **Lucy and Brian Wijndres**
  - At Bar Next Door, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 pm $12
- **Donna Jean O'Neel**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $20

**Friday, June 21**

- **Leonard Woolf**
  - At Village Vanguard, 8:30, 10:30 pm $35
- **Kurt Elling**
  - At Smoke, 7, 9, 10:30 pm $40
- **Hilmar Falk Quartet**
  - At Zinc Bar, 7:30, 9 pm $20

**Saturday, June 22**

- **Tardo Hammer Group with Anthony Parnther, Jef Rae, Jonathon Battaglia, Michael Spencer**
  - At Zinc Bar, 7:30, 9 pm $20
- **Jazzmeia Horn with Irwin Hall, Victor Gould, Keith Brown, Ben Williams, Anwar Marshall**
  - At Birdland, 8:30, 11 pm $50
- **Samantha Simon and Terri Lyne Carrington's First Monday CD Release**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $50
- **Ben Rubens; Franglais: Eve Seltzer**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $20

**Sunday, June 23**

- **Mark Grap**
  - At Birdland 6 pm $30
- **Tasha Nevs**
  - At Birdland 6 pm $30
- **Seamus Blake and Company**
  - At Birdland 8:30 pm $40
- **Kevin Mahogany**
  - At Birdland 10 pm $40

**Monday, June 24**

- **Stephanie Blank**
  - At Zinc Bar, 7:30, 9 pm $20
- **Jazzmeia Horn with Irwin Hall, Victor Gould, Keith Brown, Ben Williams, Anwar Marshall**
  - At Birdland, 8:30, 11 pm $50
- **Marko Perkovic**
  - At Birdland, 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Leo Parn**
  - At Birdland, 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Samantha Simon and Terri Lyne Carrington's First Monday CD Release**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Irene Rocha**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Nina Rosalind Dante, Matteo Liberatore, Caroline Davis, Dan Weiss**
  - At Ibeam Brooklyn, 9 pm $15
- **Romane/Daniel John Martins Quartet with Julien Cattiaux, Michel Rosciglione**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $30
- **Ben Rubens; Franglais: Eve Seltzer**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $20
- **Sam Taylor**
  - At Birdland Theater 7 pm $20
- **Marko Perkovic**
  - At Birdland, 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Samantha Simon and Terri Lyne Carrington's First Monday CD Release**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $20
- **Irene Rocha**
  - At Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $20
TNYCJR: In the past you’ve characterized your style as "aggressive".

FV: Rhythm guitar in the traditional jazz style is a very physical style of playing. So although I don’t recall making that aggressive comment, I probably meant when playing rhythm guitar it takes a lot of physical energy and effort to keep the energy up when playing at a brisk tempo.

TNYCJR: Of necessity, your playing style has changed.

FV: It’s mellowed. I have a nine-inch plate in my arm so it has changed my playing style. I love songs and melody. The more songs I learn, the more songs I want to learn.

TNYCJR: Your teaching became an important part of your career path as much as your playing has been.

FV: The tubist, Sam Pilafian, got me into teaching and giving clinics and workshops. I was always amazed at how he could speak to a group of students for hours about music, all the while keeping them playing what he happened to be speaking about. Then I met the folks at Truefire.com. They are the leader in online downloadable guitar education. Brad Wendkos, who produced most of my educational courses, was extremely helpful in helping me keep focused on one subject at a time. I really enjoyed watching and being a part of a guitarist’s growth whether on a professional level or as a beginner to jazz. It’s so thrilling when I went through my fourth and final surgery, I realized it’s time to heal. I had to postpone 100 concerts and started the painful recovery and physical therapy process with a thankful and almost excited attitude. I guess that’s just the way I am. I also did not take one opioid painkiller after I left the hospital. I wanted to feel the pain so I didn’t do anything that I shouldn’t have been doing.

TNYCJR: Strong self-awareness and positive attitude guided your recovery.

FV: That and faith has been everything. I woke up and continue to wake up every day and while stretching with no pain, I thank my lucky stars above that I can continue to wake up every day and while stretching. Money isn’t everything, etc. It’s all true. And I’m not necessarily speaking of religion, but of faith in the order of the universe, of a higher power or universal intelligence.

TNYCJR: One of those chestnuts is the “life-changing” event.

FV: Yes. I do not tour nearly as much as I used to and have such a new love of nature. I used to play between 200-300 shows per year. Not anymore. I want to watch my kids grow up and see their baseball games and other activities. I love being at home now. After 30-plus years of not being in one place for more than two weeks at a time and away from home 200+ days per year, I have come to appreciate grounding and routine.

TNYCJR: At 54 there’s still a lot of music in your future.

FV: And hopefully, on planet Earth—alive and well. I mean that on several levels. Life is dangerous these days. Professionally, I want to continue to grow my education business. It’s a fascinating journey. Before the accident I always intended to take time off to devote to it. Then, with 18 months off to recover I was ‘forced’ into it. It’s not only something I love but it’s a way to leave a legacy, especially for my kids. I’ll continue to perform, of course, but I’m choosier about it. Basically what I’m striving for is to continue to do what excites me and to work within an ethic of considered personal balance about my life.

For more information, visit frankvignola.com. Vignola is at Iridium Jun. 18th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
• Andy Stein and Friends—Goin’ Places (Stomp Off, 1984)
• Frank Vignola—Appel Direct (Concord, 1993)
• Frank Vignola—Blues for a Gypsy (Gypsy Jazz Gastar Solos) (Acoustic Disc, 2001)
• Bucky Pizzarelli/Frank Vignola—Moonglow (Hyena, 2004)
• Frank Vignola—Vignola Plays Gershwin (Mel Bay, 2006)
• John Bunch—Do Not Disturb (featuring Frank Vignola and John Webber) (Arbors, 2009)

(LABEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

work in smaller formations and experiment with composition and music for theater. We have the fascinating violinist Dagna Sadowska, who has a very strong classical background and very seriously treats improvisation as a way of creation. Her husband, clarinetist Michal Gerczynski, goes the same or a similar way. There are also some jazz musicians who opened their responsiveness to free improv, especially pianist Kamil Pietrowicz, vocalist Anna Gad and drummer Krzysztof Gradziuk, who is also a part of the very important Polish piano trio RGG.

But ultimately, it’s the music, not the point of origin, which drives Fundacja Stuchaj. “Never mind if it is recorded by Polish, European, American musicians or musicians from other countries,” Karlowksi said. “I believe that true quality exists without geographical factors and could be born in almost every cultural environment. For me, what’s more important is working with wise and open-minded musicians. Then you can trust the musicians and wait for the results with never-ending excitement.”

For more information, visit sluchaj.bandcamp.com. Artists performing this month include Joe Morris at Bushwick Public House Jun. 3rd, Hamid Drake at Roulette Jun. 12th and 14th as part of Vision Festival and Peter Evans at Zurcher Gallery Jun. 25th. See Calendar.

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CORINNE BAILEY RAE • HANCOCK/MCBRIDE/COLAIUTA • DIANNE REEVES
TANK AND THE BANGAS • THE BAD PLUS • TERENCE BLANCHARD FEATURING THE E-COLLECTIVE
DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER AND THE MEMPHIS SOULPHONY • BUika • THE RON CARTER TRIO
PJ MORTON • SONS OF KEMET • MAKAYA MCCRAVEN • CÉCILE McLORIN SALVANT

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RALPH PETERSON AND THE MESSENGER LEGACY • KANDACE SPRINGS • ELEW • WOMEN OF THE WORLD
MARCUS STRICKLAND TWI-LIFE • CHRISTIAN SANDS • 3 PIANO ERROLL GARNER TRIBUTE!
DAFNI PRIETO BIG BAND • SPANISH HARLEM ORCHESTRA • JAMES FRANCIS’ FLIGHT • AARON DIEHL
JENNY SCHEINMAN & ALLISON MILLER’S PARLOUR GAME • DARCY JAMES ARGE’ SECRET SOCIETY

BILLY HART QUARTET • IN COMMON (WALTER SMITH III, MATT STEVENS, JOEL ROSS, HARISH RAGHAVAN, KENDRICK SCOTT)
CAMILA MEZA & THE NECTAR ORCHESTRA • JOEL ROSS ‘GOOD VIBES’ • HAILU MERGIA
TIA FULLER’S “DIAMOND CUT” • SAMMY MILLER AND THE CONGREGATION • DOMI & JD BECK
LAUREN SEVIAN/HELEN SUNG DUO • THE ROYAL BOPSTERS FEATURING SHEILA JORDAN • LAURIN TALESE
THE DAYNA STEPHENS GROUP • MWENSO & THE SHAKES • MARIKA HUGHES • THE NEW STRING QUARTET
ALPHONSO HORNE AND THE GOTHAM KINGS • BRANDON GOLDBERG • MATANA ROBERTS • BRIAN MARSELLA • TOM OREN
BEN MORRIS QUINTET • ERIC WURZELBACHER QUARTET • ALEXANDER HEFFNER, HOST OF THE OPEN MIND ON PBS

MARK STRYKER: “JAZZ FROM DETROIT” • SOPHISTICATED GIANT: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DEXTER GORDON BY MAXINE GORDON
BERKLEE GLOBAL JAZZ INSTITUTE WORKSHOP • URI JAZZ BIG BAND • RIMEA SR. ALL-STATE JAZZ BAND

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