

JUNE 2020—ISSUE 218

YOUR FREE GUIDE TO THE NYC JAZZ SCENE

NYCJAZZRECORD.COM



THOSE
GONE
SILENT

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THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

JUNE 2020—ISSUE 218

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*There is a laudable tradition in the Jewish faith. The deceased are each buried in the same plain wooden box, no metal or ornamentation to delay their return to the earth or to distinguish them in the eyes of their maker according to wealth or position. It is that which inspires this issue, which we have called *Those Gone Silent* (pgs. 6-11). 18 jazz musicians from around the world were victims of COVID-19, a microscopic entity with a terrifyingly macroscopic impact. Some of these musicians were legends while others may have existed on the fringes. There were those that were prolific and those whose careers were truncated by the vagaries often accompanying a life in the arts. There were banjo, bass, guitar, keyboards, piano, production, saxophone, trombone and trumpet across as many sub-genres of jazz. What they all have in common is this tragic ending. So we memorialize them fully and equally, each written about by a friend, collaborator or even family member. The black cover of this issue is reflective of our grief for these losses.*

With no concerts being presented in New York for the foreseeable future, many musicians have gone online to stream solo performances or, if they are lucky enough to live with a fellow musician, duets. To celebrate this adaptation in the time of crisis, we devote a section of CD Reviews (pgs. 16-19) to solo and duo recordings.

And we present a special feature, “The Shape of Jazz to Come” (pg. 3), named for the Ornette Coleman album, wherein we spoke with club owners from across the city and across the spectrum about their efforts, concerns and hopes for their individual reopenings and audience engagement when the time comes that the city and its artistic communities come out of isolation.

Corrections: In last month’s CD Reviews, Joel Harrison’s band was 19-pieces and is not his first large ensemble recording. The Woody Herman boxed set did not contain airchecks and the songs not included that the writer mentioned came from labels not covered in this set.

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THE SHAPE OF JAZZ TO COME

BY KURT GOTTSCHALK

Nobody knows quite what the city will look like once the New York PAUSE order is lifted and nobody knows what the months and years following will bring. One thing that seems all but certain, however, is that New Yorkers are in for a period of sad discoveries. Along with the losses of life and livelihood, favorite restaurants, cafés and bars, clubs and venues, bookstores and record stores are sure to be gone, having disappeared with neither fanfare nor farewell.

And even in establishments that remain established, it'll be a long time before New Yorkers gather shoulder-to-shoulder in microcosms of the crowded city. No time soon will we be pressed together at small tables at Panna II or the Hungarian Pastry Shop or in the celebrated cellar known for more than 80 years as the Village Vanguard. And maybe no one is missing those crowds more than the Vanguard's owner, Deborah Gordon.

"It was always part of my life, from the time I was born," she said. "I'd go there, I'd see my dad, I'd borrow \$5, I'd see Keith Jarrett and I'd leave. Not bad."

In 2018, Gordon inherited the club from her mother, Lorraine Gordon, who had been managing it since her husband Max Gordon died in 1989. With the club closed, Gordon is spending these unprecedented days working on a book about the history of the famed club while trying to figure out how to keep it afloat and plan for an uncertain future. And, of course, she's not alone in her worries. Venues across the city—from such larger presenting organizations as Issue Project Room and Roulette to intimate rooms like Barbès, The Jazz Gallery and Sistas' Place—are doing their best to figure out how to continue presenting performances with little or no money coming in the locked doors.

The Vanguard is launching weekend live streams this month, with sets by drummer Billy Hart and pianist Vijay Iyer kicking it off in an effort to keep some activity happening under the esteemed name.

"That's all we've got if we want to breathe some life into the club—and we do—and say we're still here," Gordon said. "I fear what's going to happen to the whole landscape of jazz clubs. It's hard to imagine it's going to resuscitate. When do you think anyone's going to want to go down into a little basement?"

The city and the world have seen a lot of calamity and catastrophe since the Vanguard opened in 1934, but with the loss of income that comes with stay-at-home orders, Gordon's quite reasonably concerned about the future. "You think back on all the things the Vanguard has been through since it opened," she said. "It's been through a lot: Prohibition, then the Depression, war, blackouts, floods, 9/11, a lot of history buffeting it around. Of course, this stands out. We just have to take it as it comes and do our best."

About a mile to the north lies the locked door of The Jazz Gallery. Thanks to Artistic Director Rio Sakairi's long-held interest in online programming and marketing, the Gallery was quick to move to the web. Since the end of March, the Gallery has presented more than 50 streamed events, including musical presentations as well as happy hour hangs and dance parties. Sakairi keeps the events exclusive—the ceiling is set as low as 15 paying attendees for some events so there's an opportunity to interact. And ticket prices are

near what door charges were back when people gathered behind doors. But that's still a small percentage of the usual take at the door and that's a problem. The venue has had to cancel its 25th Anniversary Gala in August and while membership has actually increased with people outside the city joining for the video benefits, overall revenue is down. "We do need nightly income," she said. "Government grants are about 40% of our budget. Grants don't pay for rent, grants don't pay for staff, grants are normally for a specific project."

Sakairi acknowledges a degree of learning on the job as a web producer and says she hopes to improve the audio and video quality and to encourage musicians to think about camerawork and even set design. "Even if I do things that aren't 100% polished, nobody complains and I get to experiment," she said. "I'm starting to understand how to use the medium."

Few venues were as ready for online programming as Roulette when the statewide shelter-in-place order came down. With six video cameras and full recording studio capacities, the 400-seat theater is primed for webstream production. On top of that, the organization was already in the process of editing, mixing and mastering archival recordings, which have been made available on its website. "We have about 10 years of videotape from the '90s into the early 2000s that hasn't been put up, very basic, single camera," according to co-founder and artistic director Jim Staley.

The venue is also moving forward with artist commissions and is planning for a fall season, whether it's online or with a limited or full audience, with sponsors making livestreams available without a ticket charge. "The idea is you want people viewing those artists' work," he said. "The more people the better."

While facing an uncertain future, Staley speaks in terms of what it will look like, not if it will happen. There's still 20 years on the venue's 30-year lease in downtown Brooklyn and its budget was secured before the lockdown came down. "Roulette's not going to close," he said. "We're in a fairly strong position. We're doing alright now."

Nearby in downtown Brooklyn, Issue Project Room had the ironic good fortune of having already planned to close its physical space. With renovations underway to the room at 22 Boerum Place, the organization was already in the process of moving to a virtual office and producing events in other venues when the lockdown struck. Without a summer season, they've had time to plan for virtual programming and have begun posting new, commissioned works. And like Roulette, they're looking toward the possibility of hosting events with audiences in the fall.

Executive Director and Chief Curator Zev Greenfield has also been active in daily "culture calls" with arts organizations and institutions and representatives from the Department of Cultural Affairs, in which such topics as capital projects, curating online programming and hosting special fundraisers are discussed. "It allows you to have engagement with your peers so you can think through short-term or longer-term issues," he said. "It helps you to realize you're not on an island on your own.

Issue's much better off if all of these other arts organizations are flourishing as well."

But what flourishing will mean even in the near future, he said, remains an open question. "Of course we're in the darkness with a lot of this," Greenfield said. "People can't plan because we just don't know."

The Jazz Gallery, Issue Project Room and Roulette all benefit, at least for the time being, from having an annual budget in place. But smaller Brooklyn spaces like Sistas' Place in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Barbès in Park Slope that were already just scraping by are facing bigger challenges.

It's hard to imagine a room more devoted to the history of African American music and political movements than Sistas' Place. Since March, the room has sat stagnant, with no structure for streaming and no money coming in the door. Still, music director Ahmed Abdullah remains hopeful. Sistas' operates out of a building owned by the Bridge Street AME Church and, so far, has been able to keep its lease.

"I think we will [survive] because we're a community organization," Abdullah said. "We'll figure it out. There's a number of different irons in the fire but there's nothing that we can do concretely until things open up. We can talk about it, we can think about it, but until then it's just theoretical. The silver lining in all of this is I can practice on a regular basis," he added. "I now have far more time than I ever have."

In addition to working on his trumpet technique, Abdullah has been reading his old diaries, revisiting the early days of the space. "We've really gone from nothing in 25 years to being a historic landmark institution," he said. "How we've built it up is how we're going to build it up."

For a notoriously small space like the back room at Barbès, however, it's hard to hold out hope.

"To quote a famous band, we're at the 'no future' stage," said owner Olivier Conan. "We have no idea. Nobody does. It makes it hard to make any plans. There's no network of solidarity or help for businesses like mine, or for musicians either." A crowdsourcing campaign exceeded its \$25,000 goal, but that money only kept Barbès afloat through the end of May. Since then, he said, he's been relying on the good graces of a friendly landlord. "It allowed us to stay closed," Conan said. "We may be able to limp along for a few months but I can't imagine being able to host concerts in that back room anytime soon. We're the opposite of social distancing."

Barbès has been posting short, artist-made videos that Conan calls "postcards" and is hoping to introduce more streaming, but isn't happy with the usual quality of living room video. "Your standard Facebook Live with someone's apartment, there's no sense of staging," he said. "I find it hard to watch. It's sort of killing me," he added. "It's the longest I've gone without seeing a show in 30 years."

Like Sakairi, Conan imagines a time when live performance streams are produced with care given to both the audio and visual aspects, when musicians might become their own documentarians. "We have to learn some things," he said. "It's not being done right now, but we're in emergency mode, we're in panic mode. It's a new art form. ❖



BENNY GREEN
BENNY'S CRIB

SSC 1589
AVAILABLE 6/26/20

I planned Benny's Crib to be a continuation of the ensemble cast I'd presented on Then and Now, which is my working trio augmented by three guest performers, flautist Anne Drummond, vocalist Veronica Swift and percussionist Josh Jones for a few of the selections, as a further extensions of my basic instrumental palette of piano, bass and drums. With Anne's flutes and Veronica's voice, I like to "stack" or "layer" a virtual "few" of them to make chords and counterpoint, sometimes doubling the clusters I play on the piano with my right hand.

Bassist David Wong has now worked in my band longer than anyone, seven years, and again lends his impeccable service to Benny's Crib. The lone variation in personnel from the previous album is our new drummer, Aaron Kimmel, who we love. —*Benny Green*

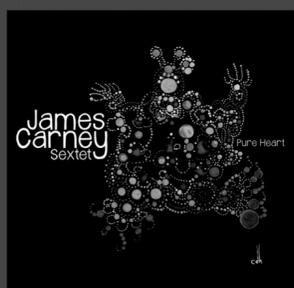


DENNY ZEITLIN
LIVE AT MEZZROW

SSC 1582
AVAILABLE 6/12/20

Over the years I've had the opportunity to perform in a wide range of venues—from jazz festival stages for thousands of outdoor fans to jazz clubs with fewer than a hundred listeners. And while there is a special excitement in sharing music with a huge crowd, I find myself drawn more to the intimate settings, like Mezzrow.

Spike Wilner and his staff have created a unique place for music in a long basement room in NYC's Greenwich Village. He keeps his Steinway Grand in perfect shape; the acoustics are miraculously superb; and people are really listening. During this trio gig with Buster Williams and Matt Wilson, it felt like we were all in it together—players and listeners deeply involved in the emerging. —*Denny Zeitlin*



JAMES CARNEY
SEXTET
PURE HEART

SSC 1561
AVAILABLE 6/5/20

The sextet that Carney put together is quite an assemblage. For the horns, he recruited his longtime friend and saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, bass clarinetist and alto saxophonist Oscar Noriega, and recent collaborator and trumpeter Stephanie Richards. Bassist Dezron Douglas and drummer Tom Rainey met in their first time ever pairing. In fact, most of these players had never played together before, except Coltrane and Douglas and Noriega and Rainey.

The pieces that Carney wrote for the sextet were well conceived but left room for stylistic interpretations from the players. Carney understood that with all of these special conceptualists and stylists that it would serve the music best to allow them to bring their personalities to the service of the pieces.



www.sunnysiderecords.com

As jazz continues to grapple with the ramifications of COVID-19, a new arena of improvisation is emerging: the from-home livestream concert. A sterling exemplar was clarinetist **David Krakauer** and pianist **Kathleen Tagg's** album release 'party' for *Breath & Hammer*, performed in their Manhattan home (May 10th). There were technical glitches, the sound barely audible at first, soon resolved thanks to feedback from the 80-some logged-on listeners. The first piece was Kinan Azmeh's "November 22", Tagg trailing a silver chain across her strings for a plonky sound, reaching in the box to pluck or strum them like a harpist. Abraham Ellstein's "Hasidic Dance" was next, a mash of Broadway and Yiddish theater. By now a slight delay between the visual and sonic signals was apparent, subtle but potent, as if we were astronauts on radio to mission control. Tagg's arrangement of John Zorn's "Parzial" contained more extended piano techniques, which complemented Krakauer's soulful inflections, so soulful, in fact, that he was able to invoke a moment of transcendence despite the disconcerting delay. We weren't in the same room, of course, but it felt as if everyone grew quiet. On "Birimbau" Tagg ran a gloved left hand along a bass string, setting up a 7/8 vamp. Krakauer capped his frantic "Body and Soul" with a sweet searing high note, displaying formidable klezmer chops on "Moldavian Journey" and two traditional pieces. The "self-proclaimed encore" was a tender take on "Nigun Offering". —*Tom Greenland*



Kathleen Tagg & David Krakauer

For his portion of Connection Works' "Me, Myself and Eye" series (May 9th) flutist **Michel Gentile** played solo improvisations inspired by Ellen Chuse's paintings. Seated before a blank grey wall in his music room, positioned on the right side of the screen, he posted, one by one, digital images of Chuse's work on the left. The first painting, titled "Hover Blue", composed of two stark black ovals dominating a lightly spackled blue background, served as a springboard for a short, circularly breathed bass flute solo. For "Tangled", an image of overlapping black strips against a sharp red field, Gentile switched to soprano, closing his eyes. In fact, most of the time his eyes were closed. So what was inspiring him? It turns out that he'd so immersed himself in the paintings recently that he didn't need to look at them: "It's all in here," he explained, pointing to his head. A third number, played on fife, accompanied "Little Jewels", a quartet of red blobs circled by greens and whites. A fourth piece, played on alto flute, was set to "All That Remains", showing abstract white figures resembling a paper gingerbread man chain against a split field of dark and light blues. Gentile's response to all of these images was invariably measured and meditative, changing character with each switch of instrument. On "Dark Matter: Red Field", totally obscured by the image, he evinced unseen chimes and whirrings; on "Burst" his lines unspooled in perpetual motion; and on "Floating Gold", he squeezed out pinched long tones. (TG)

If there is one positive to be taken from the era of COVID-19, it is that bassists have finally been able to reject their ivory and metal overlords; 52 years after Barre Phillips played unaccompanied in an English church, his heirs are filling social media platforms with their own solo statements. **Jorge Roeder** wasn't just playing solo because he was sheltering in place (May 8th); he was also virtually celebrating/previewing his new solo album, *El Suelo Mío*, due in July. After a brief hiccup where he accidentally cut off the feed before starting, Roeder played 11 songs, most from the album, across a pithy 51 minutes, framing himself nicely against a geometrical space and an abstract painting, an electric bass watching, but not participating, in the left-hand corner. The well-balanced audio was crucial as solo bass, perhaps more so than other instruments, requires a deep range and responsiveness to capture all the textures, materials and reverberations. Unlike some bass expositions focusing on extended technique, Roeder concentrated on narrative and melody, the influence of Charlie Haden hovering over him like the painting at his back. He explored deep funk and Peruvian rhythms, plus a healthy dose of standards, and the music succeeded both on its own and with the added band of the mind, moving from pastoral to vigorous. This reviewer decided to go all in and turn off the light in his viewing space; for several precious moments he forgot that he was trapped in a closet in an apartment in a city under lockdown. —*Andrey Henkin*



Jorge Roeder

The good folks at Arts For Art (AFA) may have solved the problem with livestreaming concerts: they focused on brevity and humanity, managing to recreate the homespun quality of the Vision Festival (sadly postponed due to COVID-19) in an online forum. To watch with all the other watchers (56 participants at its maximum) was to be part of a Brady Bunch/Hollywood Squares grid of Vision veterans, adding to the closeness. May 1st was a family affair, with former spouses/longtime collaborators **Angelica Sanchez** (piano) and **Tony Malaby** (tenor/soprano saxophone) meeting up in the former's NJ house, where the latter is a regular visitor from his own home two blocks away. The entire performance, two Sanchez originals, lasted only 19 minutes, yet featured two guests, son Jack on electric bass and then dog Duke in some Norman Granz type of role. There was a bit of murkiness to the audio, which added to the mysteriousness of the first melody and if the full richness of each player's tone was not fully coming through their sensitivity to dynamics was. The addition of electric bass took the proceedings from the forest glen to the basement jazz club while Duke split the difference. AFA Den Mother Patricia Nicholson-Parker followed with questions from the audience, the most interesting of which centered on what the family was eating, a topic of universal appeal these days, and Malaby most emotional when talking about how lucky he was to have this environment in which to play music these days. (AH)

Traditionally the Mother's Day holiday would find **Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra** on stage at Birdland, performing for a packed house of families celebrating with their matriarchs. While this year the band was unable to take to the stage, that didn't prevent the majestic 18-piece ensemble from delivering a typically exciting set of AfroCuban music that night (May 10th) via its weekly Virtual Birdland internet stream. The group eased into things with Cuban composer Abelardo Valdés' classic "Almendra". Once a staple in the repertoire of the orchestra of the bandleader's late great father Chico O'Farrill, the song, in a smoothly swinging arrangement, featured solos from trumpeter Rachel Therrien, bass trombonist Earl McIntyre and bassist Bam Bam Rodriguez. The music continued with Emilio Solla's classically-tinged "Llegará, Llegará, Llegará", a beautiful episodic outing that spotlighted Ivan Renta's tenor saxophone and Bryan Davis' flugelhorn. O'Farrill stretched out, along with trumpeter Seneca Black, trombonist Rafi Malkiel and alto saxophonist Addison Evans, on Bebo Valdés' "Ecuación". An archival clip from Symphony Space showed the band performing Pablo Mayor's cumbia-jazz "Mercado En Domingo". Back to the present the orchestra threw down on trumpeter Adam O'Farrill's arrangement of the Yucatán folk song "El Maquech". The show came to a rousing finish with sonero Keisel Jiménez joining the band for the fiery mambo "Mandinga (Bilongo)".

—Russ Musto



Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra

Cinco de Mayo found **Allan Harris** devoting his regular Harlem After Dark livestream to a multilingual program of songs from the Latin American songbook (May 5th). Seated in front of the fireplace of his uptown living room, the versatile vocalist-guitarist began by pointing to the framed portrait of Benny Moré atop the mantle before fluidly singing Ernesto Duarte's Spanish lyric to "Como Fue", the romantic bolero the famed Cuban sonero made popular all over the world. Moving down to Brazil, he followed with "Corcovado", gently intoning Gene Lees' "Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars" English lyric to the Jobim classic. Remaining in a Brazilian mode he continued with one from the Sergio Mendes repertoire, Michel Legrand's "Watch What Happens", following it with two more Jobim pieces, "Eu Sei Vou Te Amar" and "Wave", singing the former in Portuguese and the latter in English. Finally arriving in the country whose independence the day celebrated, Harris sang "Besame Mucho", by Mexico's Consuelo Velázquez, in both Spanish and English. He then took a detour to Italy, singing "Non Dimenticar". Online requests had the singer rendering two more by Jobim, "Desafinado" and "Dindi", in between which he inserted stirring readings of "So Many Stars", "A Day in the Life of a Fool (Manha de Carnaval)" and "How Insensitive". The mood lightened with breezy versions of "The Girl From Ipanema" and "So Nice (Summer Samba)" before Allan ended with his own Tex-Mex flavored "Dark Spanish Lady".

(RM)

If it's any indication of livestream acceptance, this reviewer was unable to access this event (May 1st) due to overly crowded "airwaves" until it was bounced to co-producer Roulette's YouTube channel. Or perhaps, the rush of viewers was all about **Bang on a Can** (BOAC). This annual festival, founded in 1987 by composers David Lang, Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe, was developed during residency at the R.A.P.P. Arts Center until that East Village venue closed. BOAC, never homeless, has only moved outward and upward with each transition. Not an organization to collapse in the face of a pandemic, the founders hosted a powerful collection of remote performances from musicians' homes, leaping the miles over hours. Lang, Gordon and Wolfe, from their own remote locations, not only functioned as programmers and MCs, but also added discussion and interviews with the contributing composers. Celebrated pianist Vijay Iyer intrigued with an étude incorporating extended techniques. Trombonist and noted composer-improviser George Lewis performed a duet with pre-recorded piano whole-tone runs as he shouted and lamented in empathic collaboration. Baritone saxophonist Ken Thomson adapted Shelley Washington's work for 35 reeds, producing a rhythmic post-modern cross of "Four Brothers" and *Birth of the Cool*. Guitarist Mary Halvorson played a compelling piece with digital delay that absolutely sobbed. Stay tuned for the next edition, Jun. 14th. Bravo!

—John Pietaro



Mary Halvorson

Saxophonist/poet **Elliott Levin**, stalwart of the avant jazz scene both in NYC and particularly in his native Philadelphia, produced a Cinco De Mayo event born of the Mexican holiday's revolutionary heart. In duo with masked drummer Dave Louis, Levin emoted his radical verse throughout the spirited performance while never sparing his tenor saxophone and flute. Levin's pedigree includes performing and recording with Cecil Taylor followed by collaborations with Jamaaladeen Tacuma and other notables, hence Levin's forays into the free are deeply felt. His own projects as a leader have often radically sought to unite instrumental sounds to the spoken word. During this performance, classic tenor-driven fire music with explosive drumming alternated with slower, more introspective works where flute poured out an atmosphere of near comfort while framing poetry of a decidedly anti-capitalist nature. Overall, this was a satisfying event but, unfortunately, the gremlins that too often plague such digital streams were out and about that night, perhaps high on tequila like many of us, causing audio difficulties (especially problematic with meaningful, revolutionary poetry) and later, with the broadcast itself. Music and poetry such as this requires clean audio if nothing else. As the creative community here, in Philly and far beyond, may be living with this type of livestream gigging for a while, it's hopeful that the technology catches up quickly to offer we who are hungry for a return to nightclubs a viable option in the meantime.

(JP)

WHAT'S NEWS

As part of the 2020 Centennial Celebration of **Charlie Parker's** birth, the seminal alto saxophonist will have part of his life turned into a graphic novel: *Chasin' The Bird—Charlie Parker in California* (Z2 Comics), centered on the period in December 1945 when Parker was on the West Coast. The graphic novel, to be released in September, will include an exclusive flexi-disc of Parker's music from that trip. For more information on this and other parts of the centennial celebration, visit charliebirdparker.com.

Pianist/composer **Anthony Davis**, known for his own albums since the '70s and collaborations with James Newton, David Murray and Wadada Leo Smith, was the recipient of the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Music for his opera *The Central Park Five*. For more information, visit pulitzer.org.

The 2020 Class of the **Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame** have been named: Freddie Green, the recently departed Lee Konitz, John Lewis and Teddy Wilson. For more information, visit jazz.org/blog/2020-ertegun-jazz-hall-of-fame-inductees.

Louis Armstrong House Museum has announced pianist **Jason Moran**, who in 2019 had a multimedia exhibition at the Whitney Museum, as guest curator of "Here To Stay", a permanent exhibition at the Armstrong Center, located across the street from Armstrong's historic house and set to open in 2021. For more information, visit louisarmstronghouse.org/here-to-stay.

Recipients of the **2020 Instant Award in Improvised Music**, given by The Horse with No Name, have been named: Raymond Boni, Peter Brötzmann, John Edwards, Satoko Fujii, Mats Gustafsson, Okkyung Lee, Arto Lindsay, Paul Lytton, Sam Newsome, Alexander von Schlippenbach, LaDonna Smith and Nate Wooley. For more information, visit corbettvdsmpsey.com.

The first round of grantees of **Jazz Coalition Commission Fund**, an initiative to promote creativity in the time of COVID-19, have been named, each receiving \$1,000 towards a new work to be performed at a later date. The first group is Melissa Aldana, Dayme Arocena, Lakecia Benjamin, Tim Berne, Johnathan Blake, Jaimie Branch, James Carter, Mino Cinélu, Alfredo Colon, Jon Cowherd, Amir ElSaffar, Orrin Evans, Ben Lamar Gay, Kate Gentile, Jon Hassell, Ashley Henry, Vincent Herring, Bertha Hope, Jazzmeia Horn, Wayne Horvitz, Shabaka Hutchings, Christine Jensen, Amirtha Kidambi, James Brandon Lewis, DJ Logic, Nduduzo Makhathini, Tarus Mateen, Camila Meza, Chris Morrissey, Aaron Myers, Roy Nathanson, Linda May Han Oh, Aaron Parks, Herlin Riley, Wallace Roney, Jr., Brandon Ross, Joel Ross, Rio Sakairi, Christian Sands, John Santos, Dred Scott, Sara Serpa, Monnette Sudler, Alexa Tarantino, Camille Thurman, David Torkanowsky, Elio Villafraña, Greg Ward, Ben Williams, Anthony Wilson and Brandee Younger. For more information, visit jazzcoalition.org.

Given the impossibility of holding the annual event in person, the annual **Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Festival** will go virtual this month from Jun. 8th-12th, with a local band from Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music (Bronx, NY), directed by Penelope Smetters-Jacono, taking part. For more information and to watch the festival, visit jazz.org/ee.

The **Alternative Guitar Summit Camp** is going online Jun. 18th-20th with masterclasses and performance by a faculty of Julian Lage, Gilad Hekselman, Nir Felder, Scott Metzger, Tim Miller and Joel Harrison. For more information, visit alternativeguitarsummitcamp.com.

Saxophonist **Kamasi Washington** provided the score for *Becoming*, director Nadia Hallgren and Higher Ground Productions' documentary profiling First Lady Michelle Obama, streaming now on Netflix.

The recipients of the **2020 Jazz Journalists Awards** have been named, with drummer Terri Lyne Carrington netting Musician of the Year, alto saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin Up-and-Coming Musician of the Year, Branford Marsalis Quartet's *The Secret Between The Shadow And The Soul* (Okeh) Album of the year and ECM Label of the Year among the highlights. For more information and the complete list, visit jjazzawards.org/p/2020-winners.html.

Guitarist Leonid Morozov was named the second **John Abercrombie Jazz Scholarship Fund** Grant recipient. Morozov, from Moscow, will begin his senior year in the fall at SUNY-Purchase Conservatory of Music. For more information, visit johnabercrombiejazzfund.org.

Submit news to info@nycjazzrecord.com



KEN WEISS

BOOTSIE BARNES 1937-2020

I was very fortunate to meet this master of Philadelphia's jazz community when he was 27 years old. I gave him his first major gig and from that coming together we were like brothers. We exchanged musical ideas, concepts and practiced every day in my parents' home. Bootsie Barnes had memorized over 200 compositions. He was forever reaching for information.

I'm so very grateful that I lived in his time. When Bootsie Barnes left the planet it was a great loss not only for his family but also for the whole world. He would tell me every time I play my saxophone, it's like the first time because there's so much more to learn.

Bootsie Barnes was like a walking university. He developed the theoretical knowledge, technical expertise and improvisational technique that most musicians will not accomplish in a life time. Jazz luminaries such as John Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, the Heath Brothers, Benny Golson, Lee Morgan, Shirley Scott, Philly Joe Jones, Jymie Merritt as well as obscure, short-lived geniuses like pianist Hasaan Ibn Ali – young musical explorers who lived near one another, practiced in each other's living rooms, shared the same schools and teachers and honed their chops and musical imagination in the same music venues in densely populated black Philadelphia neighborhoods. Bootsie and me were in the same Philadelphia neighborhoods and these incredible luminaries would pass information on down to Bootsie Barnes and me.

— ODEAN POPE, SAXOPHONE

EDDY DAVIS 1940-2020

I've just lost one of the dearest friends I've ever had in music. Eddy Davis was a highly significant and influential presence in my life. He was a fiercely individualistic performer, a veteran of the old Chicago days when music was hot, joyful, exuberant and unselfconscious. A character and a curmudgeon, who could hold court for hours after the gig. And a loving mentor who helped younger musicians like myself learn and grow in this music.

Eddy was generous with his strong opinions, with his knowledge and experience and with his encouragement. But he was a generous soul in other ways as well. When he heard that I was building a studio (my "Laboratory"), he had me come by his apartment and started giving me things out of his closets: a Roland 24-track recorder, three vintage microphones, instruments...things that I treasure, and use, every single day of my life. When my father turned 75, Eddy came out to the Lab in New Jersey and played for him and wouldn't take a dime for it.

When I got the call that Eddy had passed – another victim of this horrible virus that is ruining so many lives, and our musical life as well – I hung up the phone and just cried. Later I went out to my Laboratory and kissed every single thing there that he had given to me. How cruel to lose such an irreplaceable person...killed by an enemy, as my brother David commented, that is neither visible nor sentient.

— SCOTT ROBINSON, REEDS/MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENTS

MANU DIBANGO 1933-2020

Manu Dibango was a Cameroonian saxophonist, vocalist and songwriter who developed a musical style fusing jazz, funk and traditional Cameroonian music. He was best known for his 1972 hit single "Soul Makossa", which was much sampled and copied: Michael Jackson's "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'", Rihanna's "Don't Stop The Music", for example. Manu, not known so much as a jazz player, but with his warm tone on the tenor saxophone, produced simple catchy, infectious riffs and themes (commercial music).

I worked with him on his record *Electric Africa* in Paris and "Big Blow", an extended version of "Soul Makossa" that featured Herbie Hancock, Bootsy Collins, Sly & Robbie, Bernie Worrell, Wally Badarou and many others. Also, Sly & Robbie's *Language Barrier* and Deadline's *Down By Law*. He was always fun and open-minded, willing to experiment and try many different things.

In recording sessions, he contributed to a relaxed atmosphere that made people very comfortable and without pressure. What I will remember the most is his huge smile and booming laughter. Emmanuel N'Djoké "Manu" Dibango is gone now but he leaves so much to appreciate. He will be missed.

— BILL LASWELL, BASS/PRODUCTION



ALAN NAHIGIAN



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HENRY GRIMES

1935-2020

Over 17 years, Henry and I did two recordings and many tours, during which I got to know him as a friend. Henry was the most human of beings – the very opposite of the technocratic chops “monster” that haunts the bad dreams of Conservatory students. His wife Margaret shepherded Henry’s beautiful and extraordinarily gentle soul through a world of increasing brutality with great love and dedication, for as long as was humanly possible.

Although Henry spoke less than anyone I ever met, his presence transformed any space – train compartment, stage, recording studio or even, finally, a nursing home dormitory. That quiet power was the spirit of the instrument Henry loved – transforming the music from below, building the structures from which others swing – the contrabass language was the speech of his heart.

Together, in the trio with Chad Taylor and the quartet with Roy Campbell, we played the most beautiful music I’ve ever experienced. I’ll miss Henry and always feel incredibly lucky to have had the chance to hang out with him and make music while we could.

I thank Joe Petrucelli and Wendy Oxenhorn of the Jazz Foundation of America, who helped Margaret and Henry through the difficulties of Henry’s last two years, and look forward to the day when human beings of all ages, incomes, and abilities have a right to dignified and compassionate care.

– MARC RIBOT, GUITAR



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OLLE HOLMQVIST

1936-2020

Olle Holmquist, one of Sweden’s most respected musicians, left us at 83, in the throes of Alzheimer’s disease and COVID-19.

Already in the ‘40s Olle started playing tuba in the Salvation Army wind orchestra in Skelleftehamn. He also played the trombone, which became more and more his main instrument. After his military service in Umeå, Olle moved to Stockholm. Olle had an incredible musical breadth and an exceptionally long and rich career. From the ‘50s onwards Olle played with everyone – and I mean “everyone” – in Swedish jazz and popular music from Putte Wickman to ABBA and onwards. Internationally he played with names such as Quincy Jones and James Last Orchestra. He was also a member of the Radio Bands in Stockholm, Zurich, West Berlin, and Hamburg. All these names just mentioned give you a clue about Olle’s extensive and branched musician life.

Olle and I did not know each other so well but we worked together every now and then over the years. We had a common geographical background, both from Skellefteå in very north of Sweden. Our mutual friends from there and “tuba talk” joined us. For me personally – and probably for others – Olle was one of the most positive and “forever young” people I have ever met. A great musician and human being has gone out of time. It’s sad and boring...

– PER-ÅKE HOLMLANDER, TUBA



COURTESY OF KULTURNAVETISE

DAVID HOROWITZ

1942-2020

David Horowitz was a successful composer and arranger when he recently passed away at 77. I was his contractor, bass player and close friend for 52 years and was with him for just about all of his music career. We spent many years in the recording studios of NY putting his music on countless commercials, at times using celebrity voices like Lou Rawls, Gladys Knight, Bill Withers, to name a few.

But our association started back in the late ‘60s before any of the glamour and notoriety of either of our later lives. We were both jazz instrumentalists, making our way through the jazz scene in New York, sitting in at clubs, playing for peanuts and living the precarious lives of young struggling jazz musicians. In 1968 we were brought together by a producer putting a band together for a folk singer named Tom Paxton. We came together again when we joined Tony Williams’ Lifetime. We toured with him and put out an ill-fated recording for Polydor called *The Old Bum’s Rush*.

David later worked with Joe Henderson and Randy Weston as a synth player for their albums. He also joined me in Gil Evans’ band and we worked with him for some years and recorded a couple of albums.

David always had a razor sharp wit and understood the demands of recording better than anyone I’ve ever known. My favorite line of his (knowing that the first or second take is usually the one that’s going to be chosen) was, “OK, let’s rehearse this thing till we beat all the life out of it.” I’ll miss him. I already do.

– HERB BUSHLER, BASS



COURTESY OF HERB BUSHLER

ADRIEN H. TILLMANN - WWW.AHTI1985.COM



LEE KONITZ 1927-2020

The first thing I think of when I think of Lee is truth. It's what he exemplified at every moment, be it in his music or in his life. He was a straight-shooter both in his words – he could be biting and acerbic – and in the notes he chose to play, which were somehow always just right, like spot-on observations made by a keen-eyed wise-man. He was real, exceptionally so. Neither his music nor his character ever felt put on, which made his kindness and generosity towards the people he loved even more special, because you knew he meant it. And it made the moments when his playing turned from reserve to effusion powerful, because you knew he wasn't going for an effect; you knew an inner need had arisen in him in that moment, from the heart, and that he had let himself express it. Lee, not a believer in the afterlife, once said: "Heaven is right here, right there, anywhere we can communicate. Communication is heaven." And meaningful communication requires truth. Otherwise, what is there to say? It also requires listening, and he listened with tremendous sensitivity, a master at avoiding misunderstandings both musical and personal. "Listen," he would remind you, is "silent" with the letters rearranged. If communication is heaven, Lee, a fearless communicator, must have lived in heaven for much of his long life. And he leaves us with an important responsibility: in his absence, to find within ourselves the uncompromising truth that he stood for every day.

– DAN TEPFER, PIANO

ALAN NAHIGIAN



ALEX LAYNE 1939-2020

Alex Layne was a distinguished music major at Queens College. He studied with bassists Alvin Rhem and Ron Carter. He joined the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band around 2000, which included a tour of Russia and participation in a documentary on the band, *The Last of The First*. The Russian tour commenced at Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow celebrating the centennial of Louis Armstrong. An additional performance, also honoring Armstrong, was made to a sold-out crowd at Shostakovich Hall in Saint Petersburg. The band was also featured at Spaso House, the impressive former palace of a Russian nobleman, now the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Ambassador John Collins gave a speech complimenting the musicians representing a unique American artform.

Alex was one of the younger musicians in the band and was always ready to assist and help make the tour go forward as smoothly as possible. He brought formidable background to the group of older, stellar musicians. His credentials included performing with Coleman Hawkins as well as with Max Roach. He had also played with Freddie Hubbard, Cedar Walton and backed such influential vocalists as Billy Eckstine, Carmen McRae, Gloria Lynne and Miriam Makeba.

He made studio recordings with the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band, some of which appear in the documentary film, and all available on the CD *From Past To Present* (AAH Records). His music, friendship and support on all levels are sorely missed.

– ALBERT VOLLMER, FOUNDER HARLEM BLUES & JAZZ BAND

R.I. SUTHERLAND-COHEN / JAZZEXPRESSIONS.ORG



GIUSEPPI LOGAN 1935-2020

Giuseppe Logan was the ultimate definition of the original in jazz. He knew exactly what he was doing musically. His music was different from anyone else in jazz history. He was in NYC right at the center of what was branded The New Thing back then. He did not produce a huge amount of work in his lifetime, but his music touched many people around the world on a personal level, largely from his ESP-Disk' classics.

At the core of his music were his story and the humanity within. Giuseppe's music is for me, the ultimate example of humanity in music. At this level, music and the person are truly one and the same and it defies technical analysis. Roswell Rudd told me Giuseppe was a genius. Darius Jones said it best for me in describing a solo Giuseppe took with Steve Swell's Nation of We as the sound of a vulnerable mad genius. Both Giuseppe and Buddy Bolden died in a mental home, though Giuseppe saved himself from becoming a legend.

The jazz tradition of mentorship on the bandstand was still intact when I knew Giuseppe. We were allies but every second around him was also a learning moment for me. Playing with him helped me figure out the thesis of my own life. There's a video on YouTube of us playing "My Favorite Things". Nobody would ever, ever play it that way other than Giuseppe Logan.

Giuseppe's music lives on for those who are ready to hear it.

– MATT LAVELLE, TRUMPET/BASS CLARINET

MIKE LONGO 1939-2020

Mike Longo and I met in 1968. I had put together a big band for Dizzy Gillespie's three-week tour of Europe. Mike was playing in Dizzy's quintet at the time.

Listening to him each night made me aware he was a master of the piano, arranging for big band and really understanding jazz harmony. As time went on we became friends and he asked me to perform as soloist with his big band, New York State of The Art Jazz Ensemble, in his yearly tribute to Dizzy at the Bahá'í Center in New York. Mike had arranged a number of Dizzy's compositions. As time went on he asked me to arrange some music for the band.

Mike was a wonderful educator and had written many books about jazz harmony. He also was a record producer releasing numerous CDs on his label Consolidated Artists Productions, Inc.

Most importantly, he was a wonderful human being, businessman and pianist. He is greatly missed by MANY.

— JIMMY OWENS, TRUMPET



ALAN NAHIGIAN

PAT LONGO 1929-2020

For the many years that Pat lived in Los Angeles, I considered him a good friend. He hired me for his band regularly and often asked me about other musicians he could work with. I believe he came to Los Angeles soon after he had done a substantial stint with the Harry James Band. Pat's book had many of the charts from that band.

I was sorry when I heard that Pat moved east to New Jersey. He always had a lightness about him but with the East Coast showing through somehow, partly in his speech and also in his attitude and perspective. I enjoyed knowing him and had wished that we could have worked together more than we did.

— KIM RICHMOND, WOODWINDS



COURTESY OF PATLONGOMUSIC.COM

ELLIS MARSALIS 1934-2020

Ellis Marsalis was born in New Orleans, LA. In the late '50s, he was driving from Los Angeles, CA originally to go to New York. However, he changed his mind and went back to New Orleans where he would marry Dolores Ferdinand and raise six boys. I truly believe that had he gone to New York instead, music history after 1980 would've changed. He had impacted so many musicians over the course of many years. That's why his death felt like a huge blow to the jazz world.

My father was aware of all music in American culture from the 1900s to today. When he attended a gig that my older brothers were performing with a funk band in the '70's, Dad was in the audience laughing because it reminded him of the R&B band he was in during the '50s. This understanding of how music evolves informed his perspective on life, music and teaching. He believed that music should be passed on to future generations and that it was important to understand how music was connected to world events.

I was very fortunate to grow up as a son and bandmember of Ellis Marsalis. Whether it was playing music with him or having various conversations about moments in life that inform us as a people, we will miss him very much. It is also up to us to pass on the knowledge that he imparted to us to the next generation.

— JASON MARSALIS, DRUMS/VIBRAPHONE



JEFF STROUT

COURTESY OF MARCELLO PELLITTERI



JACQUES PELLEN 1957-2020

I met Jacques in 1996 through our common friend and bassist Gildas Boclè. We played as a trio at the Montpellier Jazz Festival, broadcast by Radio France. I immediately became aware of Jacques' personal sound and tone, balancing profound melancholic melodies with an exhilarating rhythmic complexity of arpeggios. A master in layering rich harmonic textures on his 12-string Takamine, he blended elements of jazz, rock, blues and Celtic traditional music of which he was a fantastic interpreter.

Since then we collaborated in many other different projects, culminating in his recording *Lament For The Children* (Naïve, 2007) with the same trio we had in Montpellier a decade earlier. Along the way we shared the amazing experience of recording in Brooklyn with Michael Brecker for the Celtic Tales album *Pas An Dour* (Naïve, 2000), a Celtic/jazz project Brecker wanted to be a part of. Jacques stayed at my place in Manhattan for a few days and, although he was an introverted person, we talked a lot about life over a few whiskeys. That's when I discovered how much his personality and his music were permeated by his native land. His guitar was his canvas where he depicted the nuances of Britany's landscapes: its countryside's breeze, the earthiness of grassy dunes and sandy beaches, the forceful wind crashing waves over rugged and jagged cliffs, rarefied echoing atmospheres followed by sudden rumbles and downpours, just like the unpredictable Breton skies.

So long, brother Jacques.

– MARCELLO PELLITTERI, DRUMS

COURTESY OF GUILLERMO BAZZOLA



MARCELO PERALTA 1961-2020

I met Marcelo for the first time back in 1982. From then until his untimely, sad death, we were very good friends. During all these years we shared so many hours together, either rehearsing and playing or just hanging and laughing. He was definitely one of my favorite people.

Marcelo was an accomplished player and a very serious teacher. Thanks to this, he gained great respect among both professional musicians and music students. He was a real artist and sound was his specialty. His vigorous tone, no matter which saxophone he was playing, was his trademark.

He had a deep knowledge of jazz history, especially about the free and post-free styles from the '60s and '70s. Listening to those Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane or Archie Shepp records with him was crucial for my musical education. Collaborating with him on different projects (his Argentine groups during the '80s and '90s and our Gnu Trio here in Madrid, some 10 years ago) was always an enriching experience in both artistic and human aspects. Seeing Marcelo was synonymous with superb music, great talk, usually good food and many laughs.

For all those reasons and, above all, for being a wonderful and decent human being, devoted to his lovely family and his friends, he will be always in my thoughts and my heart.

– GUILLERMO BAZZOLA, GUITAR

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BUCKY PIZZARELLI 1926-2020

Here's the Bucky I knew...He always wore a crisp Brooks Brothers suit, complete with matching tie and handkerchief, whether it was breakfast on the road, a recording date or any of the hundreds of gigs he did per year. He always showed up early, a consummate professional, always smiling, never complaining, including those less than salubrious events we all sometimes played. He seemed to truly know everyone, and everyone seemed to know him and I never, in over 30 years, heard anyone say anything negative about him – one of the most well-loved people I ever met.

Then there was his playing – one of the greatest rhythm guitarists/accompanists of all time – this is a fact that's not disputed. He was an inventive soloist who mastered the seven-string guitar and put his personal stamp on the songs he really loved, among them "Honeysuckle Rose", "This Nearly Was Mine" and anything Benny Goodman ever recorded. He was on thousands of recordings and could levitate any rhythm section by his unerring swing and sense of unbridled joy.

And, finally, he was a big mentor and friend to me, championing my cause to whoever would listen way before I deserved it, and giving me lots of encouragement and great advice throughout our many years playing together. And my Bucky was everyone's Bucky – he was open, generous, and kind to all, and will be sorely missed.

– KEN PELOWSKI, TENOR SAXOPHONE/CLARINET

FREDDY RODRIGUEZ, SR.

1931-2020

Up until his death in March at 89, tenor saxophonist Freddy Rodriguez led the band at Denver's famed El Chapultepec jazz club, a gig he held for 40 years. At every gig Freddy would announce it was his birthday, which, at 89 years old, every day you'd want to celebrate as such! He'd also let everyone know he was playing the 'safe sax'... really a description of his mellow tone inspired by his heroes such as Dexter Gordon and Coleman Hawkins.

Musicians would regularly pop in and Freddy enthusiastically welcomed them to sit in. It might be one of the Marsalis brothers one night or Bono from U2 another night. In the early '80s, Jaco Pastorius sat in for a legendary set. But it was also always a delight to hear a young high school or college musician cutting his teeth and then see Freddy spending his break encouraging them.

Freddy grew up in Denver but, like many other hometown jazz musicians across America, did move away to 'the big city' early in his career to pursue more opportunity. In his case, he moved to Los Angeles and for a while had some success with the West Coast jazz scene. Denver was lucky to have him back in town. Freddy was a jazz icon in Denver. No, he was never featured in *DownBeat* and he didn't play the big jazz festivals, but his legacy will be just as important: one of the many hometown jazz musicians who perform throughout America, jazz evangelists keeping this great art form alive and accessible to Americans everywhere.

— ANDREW HUDSON, BASS

WALLACE RONEY

1960-2020

I always felt Wallace and I had a special relationship. It started when I was playing with Philly Joe Jones (in Dameronia). We played a concert at Howard University, where Wallace was studying. Years later, Wallace reminded me that we first played together then, rehearsing some Tadd Dameron big band charts. We later played and recorded together in my second Superblue band and on the *Monk On Monk* CD project. Wallace also honored me by having me produce quite a few of his albums as a leader. The last times we were together were during his 2019 sessions at the Van Gelder Studio with my wife Maureen engineering. Wallace loved to record at Rudy's studio; he always said it was his favorite. It saddens me deeply that he won't be able to finish the last project he started at Rudy's.

We had so many other wonderful times together: him rehearsing at my NYC rehearsal studio with Tony Williams; us together at Mt. Fuji festivals in Japan. Of course, Miles was important to him, and he put Miles in a new perspective in my life. I remember Mr. Namekata (producer and creator of the Somethin' Else label in Japan) wanted me to record both "Round Midnight" and "Autumn Leaves", as a tribute to the original Blue Note *Somethin' Else* album that originally featured Miles. Naturally, I featured Wallace. His tribute to Miles in those two tracks is absolutely thrilling. But Wallace had his own compelling voice; he was all about music.

— DON SICKLER, TRUMPET/PRODUCTION

HAL WILLNER

1956-2020

I was lucky enough to be around Hal for 30 years, often in the middle of the musical storm. Hal loved improvisation and things happening in the moment: a producer who wanted to embrace the unknown. He thrived on the chaos of creation. "What's the point if it's not dangerous?" So many incredible memories. Here are three classic "Hal moments".

1) Hal wanted me to write a big band arrangement on "Perfect Day" for Lou Reed to sing with the *Kansas City* band for a Jazz Foundation of America benefit, but also explained that this was not something Lou would necessarily want to hear (you dig). Lou was ill and running late. Hal said, "Bernstein wrote an arrangement of 'Perfect Day'...Lou says, 'alright let me hear it'...had just enough to time play it once...and, yes, we played it with Lou that night. 2) On a concert celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Solidarność movement, Hal had me arrange Sun Ra's "Watusa" to be played by a full orchestra as Lech Wałęsa walked onstage...talk about a meeting of the stars. 3) Hal bringing down the house with his hilarious monologue before performing Fear's "New York's Alright if You Like Saxophones" at Town Hall. He became an incredible performer in the last few years of his life.

Hal loved musicians, Hal loved music more than anyone I knew. But that was just part of him. He loved comedy, film, poetry...and puppets. He was a sponge for everything and was always ready to listen and help in any artistic situation.

— STEVEN BERNSTEIN, TRUMPET



COURTESY OF ANDREW HUDSON



JONATHAN CHIMENE



PETER GANNUSHKIN/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET

OBITUARIES

*DIED FROM COMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19



TONY ALLEN (Aug. 12th, 1940 - Apr. 30th, 2020) The Nigerian-born, France-based drummer pioneered the AfroBeat rhythm as the engine of Fela Kuti's bands in the '70s, appearing on dozens of albums made for His Master's Voice, African Songs, Signpost, Regal Zonophone, EMI, Jofabro, Afro Beat, Soundworkshop, Coconut, Afrodisia, Kalakuta, Polydor and other labels, as well as his own voluminous catalogue as a leader from the mid '70s onwards on Soundworkshop, Coconut, Polydor, Grandstar, Mercury, Cobalt, Comet, Honest Jon's, Strut, Jazz Village and World Circuit, among which were a 2010 co-led session with Hugh Masekela and 2017 tribute to Art Blakey, all this to go with guest credits with Manu Dibango, Brooklyn Funk Essentials, Ernest Ranglin, New Cool Collective, Sofi Hellborg, Angélique Kidjo and others. Allen died Apr. 30th at 79.



***BOOTSIE BARNES** (Nov. 27th, 1937 - Apr. 22nd, 2020) The Philadelphia stalwart saxophonist was a member of Odean Pope's Saxophone Choir for many years, recorded under Don Patterson, John Swana and Uri Caine and had his own handful of albums since the late '90s, the most recent a 2018 co-led date with Larry McKenna, *The More I See You* (Cellar Live). Barnes died Apr. 22nd at 82.



LEE BOSWELL-MAY (Sep. 24th, 1945 - Apr. 18th, 2020) The jazz advocate (and widow of bassist Earl May) was curator of Jazz in the Loft at South Orange Performing Arts Center as well as stage manager of its Giants of Jazz series. Boswell-May died Apr. 18th at 74.



PHIL BROADHURST (Jun. 26th, 1949 - Apr. 24th, 2020) The New Zealander pianist recorded for Kiwi Kiwi and Ode (usually with his Sustenance quartet) and Rattle Jazz, plus work with George Chisholm and Auckland Jazz Ensemble. Broadhurst died Apr. 24th at 70.



JOHN BUCHER (1930 - Apr. 5th, 2020) The cornet player led the Original Delta Five in the '50s, was part of the Red Onion Jazz Band in the '60s and then, decades later after a career on Wall Street, headed the NYC-based Speakeasy Jazz Babies. Bucher died Apr. 5th at 89.



MICHAEL COGSWELL (Sep. 30th, 1953 - Apr. 20th, 2020) The historian/archivist was crucial in making trumpeter Louis Armstrong's house an historical, educational and tourist destination as the founding Executive Director of the Louis Armstrong House Museum as well as authoring *Louis Armstrong: The Offstage Story of Satchmo*, published in conjunction with the museum's 2003 opening. Cogswell died Apr. 20th at 66.



***EDDY DAVIS** (Sep. 26th, 1940 - Apr. 7th, 2020) The banjo player's most visible work was in Woody Allen's various trad ensembles, documented on *Wild Man Blues* (RCA, 1998), but he was active since the mid '60s in the trad scene, leading dates for Blackbird, Electric Lemon, Pa Da, his own New York Jazz, Revelation, Jazzology and MusicMasters and with credits under Terry Waldo, The New York Banjo Ensemble, Cynthia Sayer, Peter Ecklund, Benkó Dixieland Band, Uri Caine, George Gruntz and others. Davis died Apr. 7th at 79.



PETER ECKLUND (Sep. 27th, 1945 - Apr. 8th, 2020) The trumpeter had albums on Stomp Off, Arbors and Jazzology to go along with sideman credits under Marty Grosz, Terry Waldo, Cynthia Sayer, Eddy Davis, Vince Giordano, The Hot Club Of Cowtown and pop and rock groups. Ecklund died Apr. 8th at 74.



RON GILL (1935 - Apr. 16th, 2020) The Boston-based singer toured with Duke Ellington in the '70s, made an 1998 LP, *Ron Gill Sings the Songs of Billy Strayhorn*, feting Ellington's songwriting partner, and was beloved in Beantown for his 20-year WGBH radio show *The Jazz Gallery*. Gill died Apr. 16th at 85.



ANDY GONZALEZ (Jan. 1st, 1951 - Apr. 9th, 2020) The bassist and brother to late trumpeter Jerry was a co-founding member of the latter's Fort Apache Band, active since the early '80s with almost a dozen albums on Enja, Sunnyside, Milestone and Random Chance, and had hundreds of credits since the late '60s with Ray Barretto, Eddie Palmieri, Dizzy Gillespie, Harlem River Drive, Clifford Thornton, Charlie Palmieri, Cachao, Willie Colón, Kip Hanrahan, Steve Turre, Hilton Ruiz, Pete Rodriguez, Kenny Kirkland, Papo Vazquez, Charlie Sepulveda, David Sanchez, Don Byron, Conrad Herwig, Tom Harrell, Jimmy Bosch, Arturo O'Farrill, Chico O'Farrill, Luis Perdomo and many others. Gonzalez died Apr. 9th at 69.



***HENRY GRIMES** (Nov. 3rd, 1935 - Apr. 15th, 2020) The bassist reversed the typical tragic jazz story, recording with a Who's Who from 1957-66, including Shafi Hadi, Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Sonny Rollins, Tony Scott, Rolf Kühn, Billy Taylor, Mose Allison, Carmen Leggio, Steve Lacy, Perry Robinson, Roy Haynes, Gil Evans, Jerome Richardson, Shirley Scott, McCoy Tyner, Walt Dickerson, Albert Ayler, Sunny Murray, Archie Shepp, Charles Tyler, Don Cherry, Cecil Taylor, Frank Wright, Burton Greene, Karl Berger, Pharoah Sanders, Marzette Watts and Bill Barron, as well as a single album as a leader, *The Call*, for ESP-Disk in 1965, then disappearing for decades and presumed deceased only to be rediscovered in dramatic fashion working as a janitor in Los Angeles and rejoining the jazz world at the 2003 Vision Festival and beginning a nearly-two decade second act as a leader and collaborator with Marc Ribot, Dennis Gonzalez, William Parker, David Murray, Luis Perdomo, Fred Anderson, Oluyemi Thomas, Evan Parker, Rashied Ali, Dave Douglas, Roswell Rudd, Paul Dunmall and others. Grimes died Apr. 15th at 84.



ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS (Sep. 3rd, 1949 - Apr. 6th, 2020) The pianist was active as a leader since the late '70s with dates for Zebra, SteepleChase, Half Note and 18th & Vine to go with over 100 sideman credits since the early '70s with Norman Connors, Carlos Garnett, Charles Sullivan, Cecil McBee, Birthright, Larry Ridley, Lenny White, Roy Ayers, Woody Shaw, Buster Williams, Betty Carter, Nat Adderley, Teruo Nakamura, Bennie Maupin, Art Webb, John Stubblefield, Clint Houston, Shunzo Ohno, Steve Grossman, Al Foster, T.S. Monk, Earl Klugh, Sathima Bea Benjamin, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Stanley Jordan, John Blake, Jay Hoggard, Sadao Watanabe, Billy Cobham, Kevin Eubanks, James Moody, Michael Carvin, Terumasa Hino, Carmen Lundy, Avery Sharpe, Bill Ware, Joseph Daley and others. Gumbs died Apr. 6th at 70.



***DAVID HOROWITZ** (Jul. 29th, 1942 - Apr. 6th, 2020) The keyboard player's early work was supporting folk musicians but he had '70s jazz credits under Joe Henderson, Tony Williams Lifetime, Randy Weston, Alan Silva, Gil Evans Orchestra and Enrico Rava. Horowitz died Apr. 6th at 77.



RONNIE HUGHES (Jun. 27th, 1925 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The British trumpeter was active from the '50s onwards, working across a wide range of English big bands with Ted Heath, Mike Westbrook, Ray Davies, The New Big Band, The London Brass Conference, Tony Evans and others. Hughes died Apr. 1st at 94.



RYŌ KAWASAKI (Feb. 25th, 1947 - Apr. 13th, 2020) The Japanese fusion guitarist had albums on Union, Elec, RCA, East Wind, Chiaroscuro, Timeless, Openskye, Philips, MPS, Continental, Ryka, VideoArts Music, DIW, Satellites, Studio Songs and Vivid Sound alongside sideman work under Takeshi Inomata, Jiro Inagaki, Gil Evans, Cedar Walton, Elvin Jones, Clint Houston, Masahiko Satoh, Shigeharu Mukai, Ted Curson, Gato Barbieri, Teo Macero, John Clark and others. Kawasaki died Apr. 13th at 73.



***LEE KONITZ** (Oct. 13th, 1927 - Apr. 15th, 2020) The saxophonist, 2009 NEA Jazz Master, 1992 Jazzpar Prize Winner, 2013 German Jazz Prize winner for Lifetime Achievement and top recipient of numerous jazz polls was among the most significant, prolific and enduring musicians in jazz history, starting from his first dates in 1947 with Claude Thornhill; work with Lennie Tristano from 1948-55; appearance on Miles Davis' *Birth of the Cool* sessions in 1948; debut as a leader for New Jazz in 1949; participation in several iterations of the Metronome All Stars in the '50s; membership in the 1952-54 Stan Kenton band; long partnership with Warne Marsh; well over 150 albums made for Prestige, Vogue, Storyville, Atlantic, Verve, MPS, Milestone, Campi, Music Minus One, Philips, SteepleChase, Groove Merchant, Horo, Wave, Fantasy, Choice, IAI, Epic, Dragon, India Navigation, G.F.M., Label Bleu, MusicMasters, Enja, Jazz House, Philology, Musicdisc, West Wind, Soul Note, Paddle Wheel, Insights, Sunnyside, hatART, Odin, Venus, Edition, ECM, Blue Note, Columbia, Summit, P.S.F., Challenge, BMG-France, Palmetto, DIW, Chesky, Artesuono, Milestone, OmniTone, Pirouet, OutNote, Half Note, Whirlwind, Double Moon, Impulse, QFTF and other labels; collaborative dates with Jimmy Giuffre, Albert Mangelsdorff, Attila Zoller, Phil Woods, Martial Solal, Gary Bartz, Jackie McLean, Charlie Mariano, Red Mitchell, Hal Galper, Paul Bley, Karl Berger, Michel Petrucciani, Chet Baker, Enrico Pieranunzi, Bill Evans, Harold Danko, Gil Evans, Peggy Stern, Frank Wunsch, Stefano Battaglia, Franco D'Andrea, Don Friedman, Franz Koglmann, Rudi Mahall, Jerry Granelli, Marian McPartland, Kenny Wheeler, Dave Holland, Bill Frisell, Brad Mehldau, Charlie Haden, Paul Bley, Enrico Rava, Rich Perry, Renato Sellani, Steve Swallow, Paul Motian, Ted Brown, Matt Wilson, Alan Broadbent, Stefano Bollani, Ohad Talmor, Gary Versace, Grace Kelly, Dan Tepfer, Alexandra Grimal, Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, Ethan Iverson and many more; and sideman credits from the '50s onwards with Charles Mingus, Gerry Mulligan, Lars Gullin, Ralph Burns, Dave Pike, Gil Evans, Andrew Hill, Dave Brubeck, Mangelsdorff, Bill Evans, Shelly Manne, Teo Macero, Berger, Chick Corea, Solal, George Gruntz, Motian, Max Roach, Zoller, Fred Hersch, Matt Wilson, Rolf Kühn, Jakob Bro and many many others. Konitz died Apr. 15th at 92.



***GIUSEPPI LOGAN** (May 22nd, 1935 - Apr. 17th, 2020) The saxophonist was a part of The New Thing in mid '60s NYC, releasing two albums on ESP-Disk (quartet dates with Don Pullen, Eddie Gomez or Reggie Johnson and Milford Graves) and recording with Roswell Rudd and Patty Waters, then disappearing from music for decades, homeless and suffering from drug addiction, before suddenly rejoining the jazz scene in 2009, through the support of Matt Lavelle, and releasing a handful of albums for Tompkins Square, Mad King Edmund and Improvising Beings before falling out of music once more in 2012. Logan died Apr. 17th at 84.



***ELLIS MARSALIS** (Nov. 24th, 1934 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The pianist and patriarch of one of jazz' first families (he and sons Branford, Wynton, Delfeayo and Jason were collectively named NEA Jazz Masters in 2011) was a champion of the music from his hometown of New Orleans via decades of mentorship and his own albums since the early '60s on AFO, Elm, Columbia, Spindletop, Somethin' Else, CBS and Verve and peppered his career with the occasional sideman date/guest spots with the likes of Nat Adderley (1962), Snooks Eaglin (1977), American Jazz Quintet (1987) Courtney Pine (1989), Harry Connick, Jr. (1992), Kermit Ruffins (1996) and, of course, his children. Marsalis died Apr. 1st at 85.



JYMIE MERRITT (May 3rd, 1926 - Apr. 11th, 2020) The bassist (possibly first to use the electric bass in jazz) started his career auspiciously with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in 1958, staying with the classic iterations of the band through 1962 and also recording with Sonny Clark, Bobby Jaspar, fellow Messengers Wayne Shorter, Curtis Fuller and Benny Golson, Chet Baker, Max Roach, Jimmy Witherspoon, Jimmy Smith, Wild Bill Davis and Lee Morgan and leading his Forerunners in his native Philadelphia from the early '60s into the modern day. Merritt died Apr. 11th at 93.



BOB MIELKE (1926 - Apr. 17th, 2020) The Dixieland-style trombonist led his own band, The Bearcats, in the '50s, and in the late '40s-mid '60s worked with Bob Wilber, Sidney Bechet, Bob Scobey, Gene Mayl, George Lewis, Barbara Dane and Lu Watters. Mielke died Apr. 17th at 94.



***BUCKY PIZZARELLI** (Jan. 9th, 1926 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The guitarist, who pioneered the use of the seven-stringed version in jazz (and father to fellow guitarist John and bassist Martin), amassed hundreds of credits since the '50s with Pee Wee Hunt, Rex Stewart, Bobby Donaldson, Al Caiola, Mat Mathews, Don Costa, Bobby Hackett, Sir Charles Thompson, Tony Mottola, Lionel Hampton, Carol Sloane, Gene Ammons, Etta Jones, Willis Jackson, Doc Severinson, Kai Winding, Wes Montgomery, Stanley Turrentine, Toots Thielemans, Gene Bertoncini, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Oscar Peterson, Benny Goodman, Joe Venuti, Carmen McRae, Stéphane Grappelli, Warren Vaché, Zoot Sims, Bob Wilber, John Bunch, son John, Red Norvo, Cynthia Sayer, Peter Appleyard, Paul Desmond, Ken Peplowski, Ruby Braff, Scott Robinson, Scott Hamilton, Flip Phillips, Dick Hyman, Howard Alden, Frank Vignola and dozens of others to go along with his own numerous sessions since the '60s for Savoy, A&R, Choice, Monmouth Evergreen, Flying Dutchman, Stash, Groove James, Chesky, Concord, Arbors and many other labels. Pizzarelli died Apr. 1st at 94.



***JACQUES PELLEN** (Apr. 9th, 1957 - Apr. 21st, 2020) The French guitarist started out in folk music, particularly Celtic, then branched out into jazz in the '90s with Didier Squiban's various projects, Bruno Nevez, Peter Gritz, Jean-Marie Machado and others as well as his own albums for Caravan, Gwerz Pladenn, Silex (the latter a collaboration with Paolo Fresu and Erik Marchand) and Naïve. Pellen died Apr. 21st at 63.



DIETER REITH (Feb. 25th, 1938 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The German keyboard player had mid '60s associations with Svend Asmussen (albums for Victoria and Murbo) and Charly Antolini (the drummer's SABA album *Drum Beat*), his own albums across a range of genres for SABA, Center, Mondial, MPS, BASF, Intercord and Mons, library records made for Intersound and Sonoton and sideman dates with Maynard Ferguson, Knut Kiesewetter, Peter Herbolzheimer, Horst Jankowski and others. Reith died Apr. 1st at 82.



HAROLD RUBIN (May 13th, 1932 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The South African-born artist and clarinetist flouted Apartheid-era race restrictions by playing alongside black musicians in the '50s concurrent with artwork decrying the brutality of the government (the latter causing him to be arrested and charged with blasphemy), then emigrated to Israel, where he continued his political artwork and returned to jazz, co-founding the Zaviot quartet, being part of The Tel-Aviv Connection, releasing his own albums on Jazzis, OutNow and Hopscotch and mentoring younger generations of Israeli avant garde jazz players. Rubin died Apr. 1st at 87.



RON RUBIN (Jul. 8th, 1933 - Apr. 14th, 2020) The British pianist/bassist was active since the mid '60s with recording credits under Sandy Brown, Bill Coleman, Mike Taylor, Tony Coe, "Snub" Mosley and George Melly and regular live performance with his countrymen and visiting Americans. Rubin died Apr. 14th at 86.



RICHARD TEITELBAUM (May 19th, 1939 - Apr. 9th, 2020) The keyboard player and composer began his career as part of the ex-pat American improvising collective Musica Elettronica Viva (alongside longtime members Alvin Curran and Frederic Rzewski), which released albums on Polydor, BYG, Mainstream, Horo, IRML, Matchless and Victo, and had partnerships with Anthony Braxton (in groups ranging from duets to participation in Braxton's large ensembles), George Lewis (late '70s-early '80s albums on Black Saint and Lovely Music) and Andrew Cyrille (a 1997 duet on Silkheart and a 2014 Cyrille ECM date) and collaborations with/credits under Leroy Jenkins, Carlos Zingaro, Joëlle Léandre, Steve Lacy, Sven-Åke Johansson, Marilyn Crispell, Tanya Kalmanovitch and others to go with his own albums for Denon, Lumina, hatART, Moers Music, Tzadik, New World and other labels. Teitelbaum died Apr. 9th at 80.



LES TOMKINS (Oct. 31st, 1930 - Apr. 26th, 2020) The British jazz journalist was a fixture on BBC Radio 2, wrote for *Melody Maker* and *Jazz News*, edited *Crescendo International*, wrote liner notes for numerous albums and, in the winter of his life, took up amateur jazz singing. Tomkins died Apr. 26th at 89.



JOE TORRES (Nov. 29th, 1943 - Apr. 13th, 2020) The Puerto Rican-American pianist (nicknamed Professor) had credits under Bobby Valentín, The Latin Dimension, Rubén Blades, Hector Lavoe, Celia Cruz, Milton Cardona and, most notably, Willie Colón from the mid '60s into the '90s (especially albums *La Gran Fugu* from 1970, *El Jucio* from 1972 and *The Good, The Bad, The Ugly* from 1975) on Fania, Columbia and Vaya. Torres died Apr. 13th at 76.



LOUIS VAN DIJK (Nov. 27th, 1941 - Apr. 12th, 2020) The Dutch pianist/keyboard player had dozens of releases since the early '60s on Philips (an EP made when he was 19 and had won the Loosdrecht Jazz Concours in 1961), Artone, CBS, Polydor, Keytone, Blue Mouse, Organon, RCA, Columbia, Quintessence, Challenge and other labels, either as a leader or in collaboration with countrymen like Chris Hinze, Rita Reys, Thijs Van Leer and Pim Jacobs, as well as a periodic partnership with Belgian Toots Thielemans. Van Dijk died Apr. 12th at 78.



SANNE VAN HEK (Nov. 4th, 1978 - Apr. 7th, 2020) The Dutch trumpeter had a 2004 album as a leader (the self-released *Ask me later*), membership in the Magic Malik Orchestra, The Black Napkins, Network of Stoppages and SpermChurch and credits under Kleefstra|Bakker|Kleefstra and Guus Janssen. Van Hek died Apr. 7th at 41.



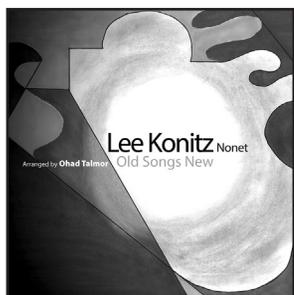
IAN WHITCOMB (Jul. 10th, 1941 - Apr. 19th, 2020) The British multi-instrumentalist had a charting pop hit, "You Turn Me On!" in his early 20s but then moved away from then-modern music to concentrate on ragtime and music hall styles, recording through the last millennium for Tower, United Artists, Argo, Warner Bros., First American, Sierre Briar, Stomp Off, Audiophile, Premier and Rhino. Whitcomb died Apr. 19th at 78.



JOAN WILDMAN (Jan. 1st, 1938 - Apr. 8th, 2020) The pianist/keyboard player, composer and respected educator at University of Wisconsin-Madison helped build the school's jazz program, founded the non-profit arts presenting group Madison Music Collective, wrote articles on music theory and history, released a handful of albums (including the 2015 duo effort *Conversations* with Joe Fonda) and collaborated with fellow UW-Madison professor Roscoe Mitchell, playing on his *Four Compositions* (Lovely Music, 1987) and *Numbers* (RogueArt, 2002-10). Wildman died Apr. 8th at 82.



***HAL WILLNER** (Apr. 6th, 1956 - Apr. 7th, 2020) The producer had hundreds of credits since the late '70s across a wide array of genres including jazz with albums by Beaver Harris, Gary Windo, David Sanborn, Spanish Fly, Gary Lucas, Bill Frisell, The Jazz Passengers, Jun Miyake and others and was also famed for his work on the soundtrack to the 1996 Robert Altman film *Kansas City* and the tributes he organized to Nino Rota (Hannibal, 1981), Thelonious Monk (A&M, 1984), Kurt Weill (A&M, 1985), Carl Stalling (Warner Bros., 1990), Charles Mingus (Columbia, 1992), Raymond Scott (Basta, 1998) and Howard Arlen (Sony Classical, 2003). Willner died Apr. 7th at 64.



Old Songs New
Lee Konitz Nonet (Sunnyside)
 by George Grella

This is an album that is easy to like but difficult to admire and Lee Konitz' death at the age of 92 from COVID-19 intensifies that ambivalence.

Veneration of elders has been a cornerstone of jazz culture for decades, a lumpen by-product of the record business mining and promoting their back catalogues and looking for surefire money-makers and the institutionalization of jazz as canonical hierarchy. In theory, this is a way for musicians to learn from past innovators while using that knowledge to express their own musical personality—as Lin Chi supposedly said, “If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him.”

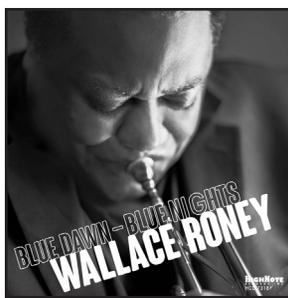
In practice, though, there's little irreverence and Konitz is the Buddha here, his fellow musicians (flutist Caroline Davis, clarinetist Christof Knoche, bass clarinetist Denis Lee, violist Judith Insell, cellists Mariel Roberts and Dimos Goudaroulis, bassist Chris Tordini and drummer George Schuller) and session arranger and leader Ohad Talmor the devoted acolyte. Talmor arranges this set of romantic standards—including “Goodbye”, “In The Wee Small Hours” and “I Cover The Waterfront”—with the colors and filigrees of the Third Stream era, an old-school approach belying

the “New” of the title.

Konitz spent decades trying to sidestep musical clichés and undermining the idea of virtuosity—especially his own—because it made it too easy to play something skillful, acceptable and meaningless. To put him in a setting that would have worked for Sinatra is misguided and the blandishments of the arrangements smooth out the creative tension and surprise that should be inherent in any Konitz recording.

That the playing of the band is so fine and good-natured, everyone loving Lee and wanting to do right by him, makes this one pleasant to hear and disappointing at the end. As seems to be a trend on recent recordings, the final track, “Trio Blues”, is the best because it's idiosyncratic in this context. More like Konitz, it's what one remembers most vividly.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com



Blue Dawn - Blue Nights
Wallace Roney (HighNote)
 by Ken Dryden

Wallace Roney's passing at 59 from COVID-19 was a major loss to jazz. The trumpeter left a formidable legacy with his discography as a leader and work with Art Blakey, Tony Williams and others. These 2018

studio sessions may very well represent Roney's final release under his own name.

The trumpeter assembled a band of promising young musicians, saxophonist Emilio Modeste, pianist Oscar Williams II, bassist Paul Cuffari and Roney's nephew, drummer Kojo Odu Roney, with seasoned veteran drummer Lenny White spelling the young percussionist when he was unable to make one session, plus guitarist Quintin Zito on three tracks.

While Roney was an accomplished soloist and composer in any setting, the focus of this CD is mostly made up of songs penned by others. Vibrant opener “Bookendz” (the only Roney original) features the leader's articulate horn while teenager Modeste (on saxophone) and the young drummer (only 15 at the time of recording) sound well beyond their years.

Ballads are always the acid test for jazz musicians, as no matter how well one can play challenging lines at a rapid fire tempo, it can be harder for a technical wizard to make every note count, whether soloing or comping. Roney's exquisite introductory solo in Kaye Dunham-Bryce Rohde's “Why Should There Be Stars” is buoyed by the creative backdrop of Williams and Cuffari.

The leader also encouraged his bandmembers to contribute original music, much like Blakey did to push his young sidemen. While Roney made suggestions, it is clear that he let them find their own way for the most part and the results speak for themselves. Williams' hypnotic “In A Dark Room” and Modeste's furious “Venus Rising” are highlights, both men are talented composers. If this CD proves to be Wallace Roney's swan song, he ended his career on a high note.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com

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Some Aspects of Water
Geri Allen (Storyville)
by George Kanzler

The Jazzpar Prize, awarded annually in Denmark from 1990-2004, included by far the largest cash prize (sometimes in the millions of U.S. dollars depending on the exchange rate of the Danish kroner that year) in jazz. The hope was to make its prestige on par with Norway's Nobel Prizes, but for jazz. Unfortunately the Jazzpar neither achieved the cachet of the Nobel, nor other international awards, partly because of the lack of interest from parochial American jazz media. This CD preserves music from the Jazzpar concerts by pianist Geri Allen (who died three years ago this month) when she won in 1996. It includes trio tracks with Danish bassist Palle Danielsson and drummer Lenny White, as well as pieces by the trio augmented by the horns of Johnny Coles (flugelhorn), Henrik Bolberg Pedersen (trumpet, flugelhorn), Kjeld Ipsen (trombone), Axel Windfeld (tuba), Michael Hove (alto saxophone, flute, clarinet) and Uffe Markussen (tenor and soprano saxophones, bass clarinet, flute) as the Jazzpar Nonet.

Allen, 38 at the time, was already one of the most original pianists in jazz (her recordings with Ornette Coleman also came out in 1996) and she is in top form as both a pianist and a composer, most impressively as

both on the 19-minute centerpiece of the album and concerts, tone poem "Some Aspects of Water", composed for the Jazzpar Nonet. The piece moves from a piano-drums duo opening to shifting ensemble movements sprouting solos from Coles, Ipsen and Allen, before a dropout to Markussen (bass clarinet) in a semi-rubato colloquy with bass and cymbals resembling the trio interlude of Duke Ellington's "A Tone Parallel to Harlem". The ensemble returns with a swelling waltz before moving into 9/4 for Allen's muscular solo, rife with prodding clusters, soaring over and around the impactful horn lines to a rousing climax.

With the trio, Allen displays her ability to play inside/outside, even on the same tune, as she does on her own "Skin", a section pitting left against right hand followed by one full of knuckled clusters redolent of the avant garde. But her utter inventiveness and uniqueness is exemplified on her creative appropriation of the Jule Styne-Sammy Cahn standard "A Beautiful Friendship", first playing it as if by Red Garland, then taking it through myriad changes in a completely original—harmonically and melodically—solo improvisation fully worthy of the Jazzpar Prize.

For more information, visit storyvillerecords.com



Live
Bo Lindenstrand (PB7)
by Kyle Oleksiuk

Posthumous albums are often either embarrassingly bad, or worse, just boring. Many are slapped together and sold in order to extract a final profit, grave robber-style, from the deceased artist, at the price of releasing albums that were never meant to see the light of day—like the 12 Jimi Hendrix records released after his death.

This is definitely not the case for Bo Lindenstrand's *Live*, which is an illuminating example of just how good a posthumous release can be. It is exceptional both as a celebration of Lindenstrand (who tragically drowned three years ago this month) and also as a live album. It consists of Lindenstrand's best performances between 2008-13, as he led quartets with a rotating group of Swedish musicians in a handful of Stockholm clubs. Lindenstrand was an accomplished entertainer and the performances are overflowing with passion, zest, spunk, pep. Most of them "sound the same", in the sense that they work well as background music, but are never boring.

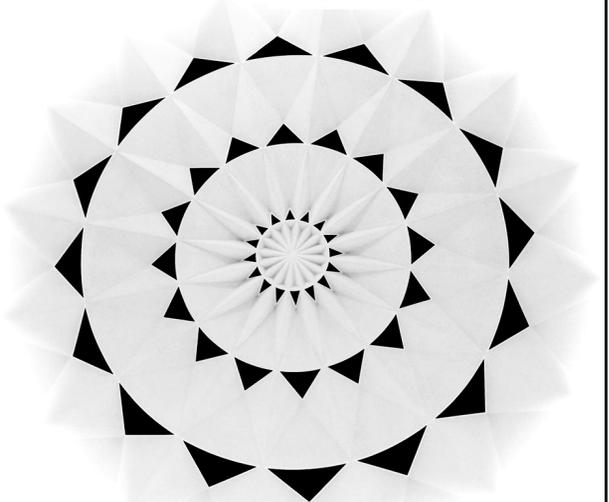
Erik Centerwall, in his liner notes, writes that "the traditions of Jazz in Sweden do not follow a straight line of evolution, but rather like a tree, reveal a rich array of branches." Most traditions of jazz outside of Sweden could also be described this way, but Centerwall's metaphor touches on something very important to *Live*: it documents not only the single "branch" of Swedish jazz that Lindenstrand represents, but the whole "tree" of live performers and musical traditions that made up the scene of which he was a part. Lindenstrand plays with 6 bands and 14 musicians, covering standards that were central to the club scene in Sweden and to his own style: songs by bebop players like Charlie Parker and musical theater lyricists like Cole Porter. For anyone interested in getting a concise picture of Stockholm's traditional jazz scene, or just of one talented musician who had a prominent place in it, there are few better albums than this.

For more information, visit plugged.se

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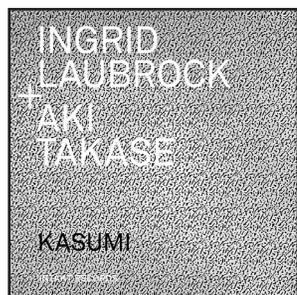
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Kasumi
Ingrid Laubrock/Aki Takase (Intakt)
by Stuart Broomer

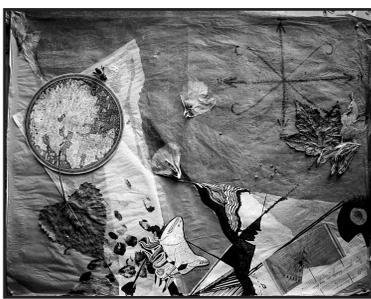
Saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and pianist Aki Takase first played together in “Brooklyn-Berlin Dialogues” at the 2016 JazzFest Berlin, a series of duets in which Laubrock chose Takase as her partner. Further performances in London and Zürich led to this 2018 recording to which each musician contributed five compositions along with four improvised duets. It’s a meeting between adventurous, inventive musicians who mark each piece with a shared sense of form.

It’s music of surprise, each of the 14 pieces clearly defined. Takase’s “Harlekin” is one of the stronger themes, with an insistent rhythmic pattern somehow suggesting both ancient military music and village dance; an ironic, Kurt Weill-like ambiance gives way to spirited improvising, fractured percussive piano clusters feeding leaping soprano. Takase’s “Dark Clouds” takes a similarly surprising turn, moving from dizzying duck-toned soprano and raging piano to a slow, delicately somber duet; “Poe” is surprisingly piquant, moving from playful to melancholy.

When Laubrock turns to tenor, the duet foregrounds just how beautiful her sound is, a warmly liquid tone, its perfectly smooth character serving to highlight occasionally expressive deviations, precise to an almost academic degree, as if she’s somehow found a quality equivalent but distinct from the metallic sheen of John Coltrane and the gauze of Stan Getz. It’s particularly notable on her “Sunken Forest”, the longest track here, and marked by the balladic empathy the two possess, piano framing the saxophone lines perfectly. On her “Win Some, Lose Track”, Laubrock’s sound is evanescent, a dance with silence in which the instruments fuse.

While lyric strengths come to the fore, there’s often an insistent energy, as in the tumbling power of piano on Takase’s “Andalusia” and rapid free-improv “Scurry”, just under a minute and a half long, which appears as an invigorating jolt in the middle of the set. It’s a program in which brilliant musicians explore much of the expressive range.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch



In The Garden
Anaïs Maviel (Gold Bolus)
by Elliott Simon

In The Garden from vocalist/multi-instrumentalist Anaïs Maviel begins with “Bells”, a simple ringing increasing in volume as the track progresses. Its unspoiled honesty announces this live solo performance recorded in 2018 at the OBEY Convention Festival in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Maviel’s voice communicates both lyrically and instrumentally and with lyra (Greek bowed lyre), kamele n’goni (West African string instrument), surdo (Brazilian drum), singing bowl and

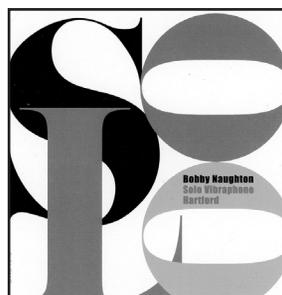
piano she provides an intense listening experience.

Following the initial jingling invocation, the first half of the set highlights Maviel’s lyrical and more traditional singing abilities on an emotive “I am You” and self-reflective title piece. Simple stringed accompaniments underscore her powerful lyrics and melismatic presentation. Maviel spotlights her poetry and delivery on these cuts, movingly describing her views on commitment, “I am not afraid I am you and you are me” and self-reflection, “I ate the sacred apple in the garden”. They come across as primeval narrative ballads, laying bare her feelings and private thoughts in an intimate folkloric setting.

“Listening” and “Bells from Afar [métadire]” complete the concert and are profoundly different from the prior candid lyrical statements in both form and function: ambient harmonic experiences utilizing the tonal properties of various instruments in close connection with Maviel’s voice. The former is an incredible sonic encounter between voice, lyra and surdo while the latter is a more sedate meeting of voice and piano. Maviel creatively employs her voice in the way that a reedplayer uses overblowing, microtones and multiphonics to enhance improvisation.

Available as a digital download with accompanying original two-sided collage, *In The Garden* speaks through waning notes, silence, dynamic variation and harmonics. But it is Maviel’s harmonious and dissonant extended vocal techniques that are the most striking aspects of the session.

For more information, visit goldbolus.com



Solo
Bobby Naughton (OTIC)
by Jim Motavalli

The Creative Musicians Improvisers Forum (CMIF), Connecticut’s answer to the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, was formed in New Haven in 1977, with trumpeter Leo Smith (not yet Wadada) as a key creative force alongside vibraphonist Bobby Naughton, saxophonist Dwight Andrews, bassist Wes Brown and percussionist Gerry Hemingway. Among other ensembles, Smith formed New Delta (also rendered as “Delta”) Ahkri, including Naughton. This reviewer heard the CMIF musicians play in various configurations a number of times.

Naughton played keyboards in rock bands until about 1966, when he took up vibraphone and began to play free jazz with clarinetist Perry Robinson and others. Perhaps Karl Berger—one of the few other avant garde vibraphone players then active and nearby—was an influence.

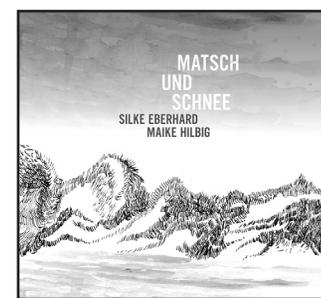
Naughton was a fixture on the Connecticut jazz scene, such as it was, in the early ‘70s and recorded with Smith, Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell and Mario Pavone. This solo record was recorded at Real Art Ways in Hartford in 1978 and it’s quite lovely and decidedly more accessible than a lot of the music CMIF played.

Naughton doesn’t seem to have recorded much in recent years, but he founded OTIC Records early on (1969, releasing five LPs) and this record is on that label, revived in 2002 and now based in Vermont. There are two tunes by Smith, two by Carla Bley (“Jesus Maria” and “Ictus”), Charles Mingus’ “Goodbye Porkpie Hat” and a couple of standards. Versions of Hoagy Carmichael’s “Stardust” and Jimmy Van

Heusen’s “But Beautiful” are particularly appealing, with these melodies for the ages treated with great delicacy. It’s very nicely recorded (on a Revox) by Joe Celli, who co-founded Real Art Ways in 1975. Gary Burton would approve.

The playing here is fascinating. It’s got the jagged edge that Ornette Coleman brought to jazz, but at the same time the music isn’t difficult or challenging. The recording captures Naughton playing in a mature style, which was truly all his own and a melding of free and mainstream influences. The vibraphonist Jay Hoggard was around Connecticut at this time and perhaps his more accessible style rubbed off on Naughton. However this evening in Hartford came together, its appearance on disc after all these years is welcome.

For more information, visit bobbynaughton.com



Matsch und Schnee
Silke Eberhard/Maïke Hilbig (Trouble in the East)
by Kurt Gottschalk

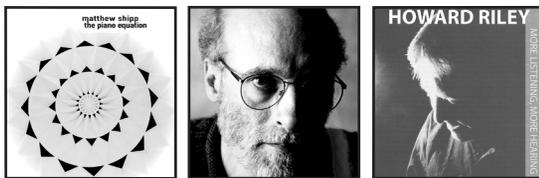
One of the highpoints in saxophonist Silke Eberhard’s discography is a set of duets with pianist Aki Takase titled *Ornette Coleman Anthology*. It’s also one of the earliest releases under her name, but this is no backhanded compliment. There are other high points, of course, this is just a useful one. In 32 Coleman compositions (across two compact discs), Eberhard and Takase find something that’s often missed out by his interpreters, that being the sheer joy often present in his music. True, his tunes can be like sharp-edged jigsaw puzzles, but more often than not there’s also a lightness, an ebullience uncommon in the avant garde.

Whether Eberhard learned that from the master or it’s just in her blood, *Matsch und Schnee* offers a similar sort of effervescence. There’s no Coleman in the program—the compositions come from Eberhard and her duet partner, bassist Maïke Hilbig—but there’s a bounce, a teasing of unison lines and a flexibility of time and, most importantly, a songfulness that brings Coleman readily and repeatedly to mind.

Hilbig’s discography is about as spare as was Eberhard when she made that first record with Takase 11 years ago, but on the strength of her compositions here (and she provided six of the 10) there’ll be plenty to listen for in her future. (Her releases with the trio Vorwärts/Rückwärts can be streamed in full on the Trouble in the East Bandcamp page, as can *Matsch und Schnee*.) Her “Cremant” stands out, moving with ease between a Burt-Bacharach-on-codeine theme, concise extrapolations and extended tones and overtones, with generous solo space given to her partner, in under six minutes.

Among Eberhard’s contributions is the spritely opener “25618”, which could be a count for the twisting lines or a coded composition date (the album was recorded in August of 2018) but whatever it means, it tickles the mind and makes promises the album delivers. Eberhard (who in August will receive the 2020 Berlin Jazz Prize) is really too smart a player to be overlooked. Her past projects have also included ventures into the Eric Dolphy and Charles Mingus catalogues, but she is by no means a traditionalist or revisionist. She is a knowledgeable musician, informed enough to make listening a joy.

For more information, visit troubleintheeast-records.com



The Piano Equation
Matthew Shipp (TAO Forms)
Solo@70
Denman Maroney (s/r)
More Listening, More Hearing
Howard Riley (SLAM)
by John Sharpe

Although unaccompanied music-making is certainly having a moment right now, these three solo piano outings were recorded well before COVID-19 hit the streets. It's a venerable format, offering the most versatile range of expression of any single instrument and all the more so when in the hands of masters of the trade. Each of the adventurous protagonists qualifies as veterans, although that may be a tad harsh on Matthew Shipp, who hasn't quite breached the six-decade marker, while it recedes in the rearview mirror for Denman Maroney at 70 and Howard Riley at 77. That wealth of experience guarantees that each brings a mature style to the table.

The Piano Equation may be Shipp's umpteenth session alone at the keyboard, but he still uncovers new things to say through the flow of 11 what sound like off-the-cuff cuts. What he takes from the jazz and classical traditions has been so thoroughly personalized as to render attempts at attribution irrelevant, such that by this juncture the main reference is himself. As ever he shoehorns restlessly changing fragments of melody and rhythm into cohesive shapes, which resemble nothing else. The opening title cut is by turns limpid, impulsive and romantic, full of unexpected digressions, excursions to the extremes and glittering syntax. Those building blocks recur in differing proportions and flavors throughout the program, alongside individual elements, which together fashion memorable episodes. One is the heavy sustain bathing the cramped gestures and dark scuttling of "Vortex Factor" in chiming overtones, helping convey a sanctified embrace to the stately progression towards thunder at the close of the final "Cosmic Juice". Likewise, attention-grabbing reiterated ringing cells in sharp relief to the uneasy lurch elsewhere spice "Radio Signals Equation" and "Tone Pocket" while "Clown Pulse" is another of those numbers at which Shipp excels, where a catchy blues-tinged motif regularly reappears amid the sideways diversions, but is over all too soon. Suffice it to say, the disc constitutes yet another fine addition to Shipp's copious discography.

Maroney may be best known for his under-the-bonnet "hyperpiano" technique, but on *Solo@70* he exclusively explores what he calls temporal harmony, in which pulse fields arise from the juxtaposition of different meters in each hand other than those which most listeners would recognize. A sequence of overlapping single-note cadences midway through "Air Condition" provides perhaps the starkest example of the resultant slightly disorienting effect of rhythmic dislocation. The digital album presents a retrospective of sorts as the 21 compositions, clocking in at over 130 minutes, span a half-century of Maroney's career, including a mix of unrecorded charts and ones previously issued in ensemble form. All are tuneful and stay in tempo(s) throughout. He creates his own musical world and shows it to be independent of genre as the program variously evokes ragtime, Baroque counterpoint, Americana, pealing bells, Minimalism, waltz time and the miniatures of Erik Satie. Among the highlights are the glinting ripples spreading across a dark undertow of "A Thought Revolved", slightly mournful simultaneous Morse-coded messages of "Iterato" and dazzling interlocking patterns of the canonical "Fowler's Better Blues". Though Maroney

succeeds in giving each track a distinctive character, the overall consistency of approach makes this fare best consumed in small servings.

Englishman Riley is another specialist in solitary recital, even surpassing Shipp, with more than 16 solo dates waxed over a 45-year period. On *More Listening, More Hearing*, all the pieces are improvised in the order they were played, with the exception of two passes by a standard and another look at a composition that he first waxed back in 1967. Riley in his own way is no less recognizable than Shipp. "Line Play" could act as a summation of his style: a subdued, pared-back lyricism speckled with sparkling phrases; a fluttering left hand carving out stuttering tremolos; and penchant for expanding and contracting time. His austere melodic sensibility can be heard on "Elusivity" where he unhurriedly conjures a churchy feel, on the songlike refrain that rings out on "Feelings Allowed" and the emphatic nagging passage that surfaces towards the end of "Momentum". He remains within a similar emotional tenor for the whole disc, teasing out variations within his signature sound, with its echoes of Monk and Ellington. Both takes of Jerome Kern's "Long Ago And Far Away" merge seamlessly with what the liners term Riley's familiar diction, with the dark embroidering of the concise, prettily abstract second take the pick of the two. Probably the high point is a lovely meditative ballad reading of his own "Sunflower", in a program that gains in cohesion and impact as the session progresses.

For more information, visit taoforms.bandcamp.com, denmanmaroney.com and slamproductions.net



Padova Solo
Mats Gustafsson (Catalytic Sound)
Heavenly Guide
Luca T. Mai (Trost)
by Andrey Henkin

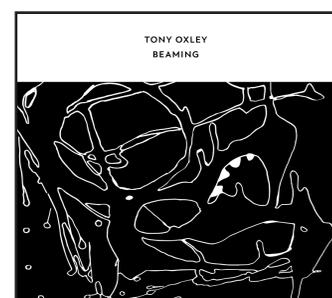
Between them, saxophonists Mats Gustafsson of Sweden and Luca T. Mai of Italy have produced some of the most radioactive material to be found outside of the 18-mile exclusion zone surrounding Chernobyl. The latter has plied most of his trade of the last 20 years with the trio ZU while the former has been prolifically and internationally active since the late '80s. Gustafsson guested on a ZU record; ZU and now-defunct Gustafsson project The Thing have performed together; and the pair even recorded a four-minute baritone saxophone duet, "While The Wind Mixes The Playing Cards Of Polite Faces", in 2004. Each one has the power of a landmine, leaving a blast crater behind them whenever they play. This is even the case when they are on their own.

Padova Solo is not Gustafsson's first solo outing; he has made a handful, including one exclusively on slide saxophone. This 2016 live date from Italy finds Gustafsson on various saxophones, plus electronics. It begins subtly, all breath and flutter across the seven minutes of "Giotto", before "Ibrahimovic" announces itself like a bull blowing up a china shop, bass saxophone rumbling the speakers, punctuated by Gustafsson's inimitable yelps through the instrument. In stark contrast and needed respite, "Nordström" is a nearly eight-minute digital drone, segueing into the baritone peals of the almost 10-minute "Hult", heartbreaking and oddly bagpipe-like before moving into a lovely melodic exposition. "Asino" sounds like it is being played solely through a saxophone mouthpiece; the poor Padovians must have had to plug their ears.

Bass saxophone returns for the closing "Morgagni", six minutes of pops, growls and foghorn blasts that somehow manage to maintain a narrative arc. Gustafsson is player of many flavors—here you get to lick them all.

Heavenly Guide is not only Mai's first solo outing, it is also his first album as a "leader". Like Gustafsson, he plays baritone saxophone and electronics but, unlike *Padova Solo*, *Heavenly Guide* mixes free improvisations with tunes, such as the digital swirls of "Intro" blasting into a version of "Epistrophe" that could disinter Thelonious Monk from his Ferncliff Cemetery resting place. The title track uses loops to create an aptly churchlike choir. Bombastic "Manum Ad Ferrum" screams to be ZU-ified but is instead cut off in favor of the echoey wails of "The Sound of His Horn". Eric Dolphy's "Gazzeloni" is a companion piece to the aforementioned "Epistrophe" in vintage and approach. "Bahr Atla" and "Celestial Nile" close the date with washes of processed saxophones, the kind of thing the SETI Project was trying to hear for decades. The 25-minute album revels in juxtapositions and what Mai is able to do in the studio that he (probably) couldn't do onstage.

For more information, visit catalyticsound.com and trost.at



Beaming
Tony Oxley (Confront Core)
by Mark Keresman

It's safe to say that drummer Tony Oxley (who turns 82 this month) occupies the same lofty strata in the U.K. as Milford Graves and the late Sunny Murray do on these shores. He has played with Cecil Taylor and the many participants of the U.K. free/avant jazz scenes and thrives in all manner of improvised settings. And Oxley, in fact, was one of the founders of Incus Records, the iconic British label devoted to free improv. Apart from that zone he has played with Gordon Beck, Sonny Rollins, John Surman and Lee Konitz, among others.

Beaming is a duo set, Oxley providing the concept (that's what the credits read) and performing electronics and Stefan Hölker the acoustic percussion. If one seeks pure drumming, one could be a touch nonplussed here. Here it's the interplay of these two that produces the array of sound(s) herein. Several types of percussion are channeled, joyfully warped and transformed by this pair. Opener "I" is akin to a hall of funhouse mirrors, except sound, not images, are reflected/refracted. The mood is furtive, restless, the volume swells and then subsides; the tones surreal and (seemingly) random. It is difficult to know where acoustic tones leave off and the electronically produced ones begin (the point perhaps).

"III" has ringing, percussive tones and a quick tempo; at times it sizzles in a surreal manner. It rattles, full of ringing tones, brisk racket and echoing passages. Considering this is but two players the music has a rich, nearly orchestral sonority. "VI" is a cheerily fractured mélange of metallic noise-mongering. What makes it invigorating is the easy, unhurried enthusiasm Oxley and Hölker bring to the table.

Beaming is unlikely to make many—heck, any—converts to the art of rough-hewn sonic alchemy. But for those valuing (or, simply, used to) this kind of din, it's a shot of bracing beverage.

For more information, visit confrontrecordings.com

GLOBE UNITY

*Oceans*

Lisen Rylander Löve (Hoob)

Solo

Felice Clemente (Crocevia Di Suoni)

Solo

Nicole Johänntgen (Selmabird)

by Tom Greenland

Jazz saxophonists have been making solo albums for almost a half-century, yet far fewer recordings exist than you would imagine, likely because of the inherent difficulty of sustaining an accessible narrative structure in this most Spartan of formats. Below we consider saxophonists from Sweden, Italy and Switzerland (via Germany) who have not only risen to, but also ably overcome, the challenge.

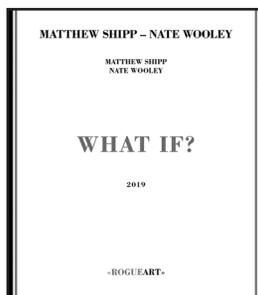
Gothenburg-based Lisen Rylander Löve's *Oceans* draws on her skills as a tenor saxophonist, vocalist and electronic soundscaper. The 'hit single' would have to be "Follow", a hooky, Peter Gabrielseque world-pop number, but most of the album is more ambient, suffused with thick layers of pulsing samples: churchy organs; compressed vocals; echoed decays; 'backward' effects à la The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows"; and robotic winds, waves and vanishing trains. An apt analogy is the deep focus cinematography of Gregg Toland, in which separate stories simultaneously unfold in the fore-, mid- and background of a composite image. Löve's dense layerings create a similarly complex gestalt through the accumulation and association of sonic imagery. Her distinctive horn work, sharply in focus on "Nothingness", is not the star here, more often playing a smaller role in the bigger picture.

The next two albums under review take a more puritan approach: one person, one saxophone, no overdubs. Both were recorded in churches, where the shape of the room, and thus the quality of its reverberation, becomes a factor.

Felice Clemente, active around Milan, packed his tenor and soprano south to a small hilltop church in the municipality of Montecalvo Versiggia to record *Solo*. His playing holds hints of swing, blues and Bach (the latter especially on "A Secret Place", "Sarabande" from Bach's fifth cello suite and "Notturmo No. 2"), revealing a more adventurous proclivity on "La Nani", accompanying himself with foot taps and valve clicks. A song-serving soloist, he keeps his statements brief and on task, implying underlying harmonies with vertical structures à la Coleman Hawkins, all intoned in a rich *bel canto* resonance that seems to rise and undulate, as if to embrace each crack and curve of the 18th Century architecture.

Nicole Johänntgen's project, also titled *Solo*, is an apropos companion piece to Clemente's. The Zürich-based alto saxophonist chose a larger, newer, boxier venue for her project, with an even longer reverberation time, but is similarly invested in exploring the room's dimensions, sonic and otherwise, curious to hear how it will hold her beautiful tone. Like Clemente she's thematic, but her improvisations stem more from motivic gestures and the loop forms of minimalist composers. Her tonal range is broader, employing squeezes, clicks, flutters, breathy attacks, gruff or falsetto vocalisms and she is not afraid to pause, leaving gaping silences, as if waiting for the room's response, a musical bat navigating by echolocation.

For more information, visit hoobrecords.com, croceviadisunirecords.com and nicolejohaenntgen.com

*What If?*

Matthew Shipp/Nate Wooley (RogueArt)

by Steven Loewy

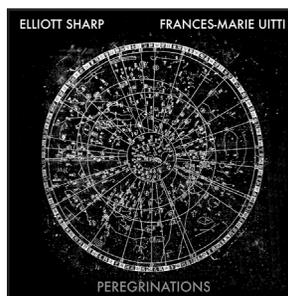
For years, pianist Matthew Shipp has traversed the road not taken (not to be confused with the meaning of the seminal poem by Robert Frost), often to stunning effect in a series of duo recordings with Brazilian saxophonist Ivo Perelman. For *What If?*, Shipp is joined by trumpeter Nate Wooley, who has performed with he and Perelman on a couple of extraordinary albums. The liner notes from late poet Steve Dalachinsky embed his beautiful and characteristically cryptic musings and veiled commentary.

Each of the relatively short tracks (generally within the three- to six-minute range) take full advantage of Shipp's unique style and Wooley's sensitivity and diversity of sound to create abstract yet fully accessible improvised pieces. There is no grandstanding here, but rather an exquisite exercise in the art of listening, as the performers offer a mélange of fabulous sounds and explore a wide variety of moods.

Almost every piece is a mini-lesson in the art of improvisation, yet are highlights. As with several of the tracks, "New Light", for example, opens slowly and softly with dense chords from Shipp, Wooley inserting delicate, lovely phrases that curve and twist gently, piercing the silence and tempting Shipp to increase the intensity, which he does at his own pace.

The trumpeter and pianist sometimes anticipate each other's moves while other times veer off in curiously compelling directions that seem obvious in retrospect. Shipp is a master of illusion, his strikingly gorgeous and deceptively simple lines exploding and reverting on a whim while Wooley fades, growls and swooshes his way to ecstasy. In contrast, "Ktu" opens hard and fast with Wooley squeezing notes and Shipp's rolling thunderous undergirding a fine foil. The pianist lets loose with unmitigated power, the trumpeter takes the bait and the two dance comfortably to new heights. It is startling how much music can be packed into such a short piece with just two players. Contrast that with "Circular Juice", in which speedy pointillistic trumpet bounces off rapid-fire clusters to imbue the track with thunderous force.

For more information, visit roguart.com

*Peregrinations*

Elliott Sharp/Frances-Marie Uitti (zOaR)

by Tyran Grillo

Free improvisation can be many things: challenging, abrasive and meandering among them. This spontaneous act of creation between Frances-Marie Uitti (cello) and Elliott Sharp (Dell'Arte Anouman acoustic guitar and soprano saxophone) is none of those things. Rather, it's welcoming, cartographic and focused. Sharp has always had a tactile approach to the guitar, one that emphasizes skin and organs alike and

which embraces natural resonance as a portal to understanding the mathematical certainty of decay. The same could be said of Uitti, who digs into her cello as if it were a plot of land and pulls up every root around which she can curl her fingers.

In "Avior", the relationship between these two signatures is so complementary that one almost feels a new strand of archaeology at play. Not in the sense of tearing up sacred land for the bastion of science, but of letting the past speak for itself. Thus, when Sharp sheds the guitar for a soprano saxophone in "Ainitak" and "Algieba", he invites an earthen language to rise to the surface. In tandem, Uitti renders her instrument a giant ear to capture those utterances before they fade.

Given that in the past Uitti has been mislabeled a mere provider of drones, this reviewer challenges any listener to discover anything but complex shades of meaning in her sound. In that respect, both musicians are translators of energies that could otherwise go unacknowledged. Sometimes, as in "Mizar", Uitti brightens the foreground while at other times, as in "Mintaka" and "Arcturus", Sharp wraps us in the garland of a minstrel's weathered muse. And while it is tempting to label their music as cathartic, in these times of distance one can't help but read it as a form of proximity. As organic as it gets.

For more information, visit elliottsharp.com

*Solo Sessions, Volume 1*

Brenda Earle Stokes (s/r)

by Alex Henderson

Singer-pianists have a long history in jazz, ranging from Fats Waller and Nat King Cole to Shirley Horn and Patricia Barber. Brenda Earle Stokes is among the young performers making her mark as a piano-playing vocalist and does it without any accompaniment on *Solo Sessions, Volume 1*, just piano and her expressive vocals.

Stokes performs a few Great American Songbook gems, including Jack Elliott-Victor Young's "Weaver of Dreams" and Brooks Bowman's '30s classic "East of the Sun (and West of the Moon)", favoring a relaxed midtempo on the latter, but also turns her attention to everything from Brazilian music (Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Inútil Paisagem", a.k.a. "If You Never Come to Me"), southern pre-War blues (Leroy Carr's "How Long Has That Evening Train Been Gone?") and pop-rock material from Michael McDonald, k.d. lang ("The Consequences of Falling") and Huey Lewis.

McDonald included "I Can Let Go Now" on his first solo album. In Stokes' hands, it is still a ballad, but her torch song interpretation is a welcome departure from McDonald's adult contemporary approach. Featured in the movie *Back to the Future*, "The Power of Love" was a major hit for Lewis in 1985; Stokes turns it into slow and bluesy post-bop.

Bassist Steve Swallow's "Ladies in Mercedes" was first heard as an instrumental in the mid '80s but entered the vocal realm when British singer Norma Winstone added text in the '90s. Stokes embraces her lyrics in a pensive, understated version, taking a humorous look at the lifestyles of affluent women.

The title implies that Stokes will be releasing another volume in the future. If so, one hopes that she will be as far-reaching in her choice of material as she is on this memorable outing.

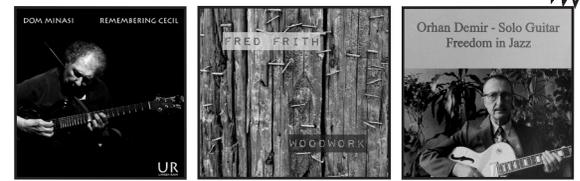
For more information, visit brendaearle.com



Hopetown
Claudia Solal/Benoît Delbecq (RogueArt)
It's Alright To Be Everywhere
Sascha Ley/Laurent Payfert (Jazzhaus Musik-Yela)
Alone Together
Jay Clayton/ Jerry Granelli (Sunnyside)
by Scott Yanow



Electric Organic Symphony
Mike Nock/Ra Kalam Bob Moses (Ra-kalam)
Waves
Julie Sassoon/Willi Kellers (Jazzwerkstatt)
Dub Narcotic Session
Thollem McDonas/Brian Chase (New Atlantis)
by Jim Motavalli



Remembering Cecil
Dom Minasi (Unseen Rain)
Woodwork
Fred Frith (Klang Galerie)
Freedom in Jazz
Orhan Demir (Hittite)
by Kurt Gottschalk

Duets are often the most difficult musical setting for singers in which to succeed. There is nowhere to hide and every sound and moment of silence is heard. These very different CDs each team an improvising vocalist with a single member of the rhythm section.

Vocal-piano duets are the most common setting in the duo format. The meeting between Claudia Solal (daughter of Martial) and Benoît Delbecq is different than one would expect. The latter plays “prepared piano”, often spending as much time inside the piano as on its keys. While his instrument functions as a type of tuned drums, Solal is a poet who also sings when she is not reciting her stanzas. The relatively brief (38 minutes) *Hopetown* consists of nine originals with Solal’s words being accompanied by Delbecq’s sounds and patterns. The subject matter includes the many contradictory parts that form a human being (“Inner Otherness”), destruction of nature (“Euphoria”) and uncertainty about an affair (“Ultimate Embrace”). It would be interesting to hear Solal (who has a lovely voice) singing a full set of music but that was not the point of this abstract project, which will be of more interest to lovers of poetry than to music listeners.

Vocal-bass duets were first pioneered and have long been championed by Sheila Jordan who began recording in that format in the ‘70s. Luxembourger singer Sascha Ley and French bassist Laurent Payfert perform 17 improvisations based loosely on their compositions on *It's Alright To Be Everywhere*. Jean Pascal Boffo joins the group on guitar and electronics for three of the numbers, one of which also includes pianist Murat Ozturk. Ley’s mostly wordless vocals are sometimes emotional and percussive; at other times (as on the closing “Departure”) she almost sounds like a conventional singer. She effectively explores a variety of emotions without resorting to set lyrics. Payfert has excellent technique and sometimes swings the music even though he can play as freely as Ley sings. Their explorative duets are all fairly brief, none clocking in above 3:58 although the pieces with Boffo are a little longer.

Singer Jay Clayton and drummer Jerry Granelli first met in 1979 when, without rehearsal, they performed a trio concert of free improvisations with the late Oregon percussionist Collin Walcott. They have been friends and occasional associates in the 40 years since, recording a set of duets in 1986 for the JMT label called *Sound Songs*. Reunion *Alone Together* is mostly filled with adventurous free improvisations although it does include loose versions of two standards: Dimitri Tiomkin-Ned Washington’s “Wild Is The Wind” (which displays the beauty and power of Clayton’s voice) and Ornette Coleman’s “Lonely Woman”. Clayton has always been a very versatile improviser and utilizes words well on the occasionally witty “Fast Speaking Woman”, which contrasts with the otherworldly sounds that open up “Birds And Artists”. Listeners have to be a little patient on some of the performances, where it takes time before inspiration strikes, but the interplay between Clayton and Granelli works particularly well on “New Morning Blues”. How many other singers have the bravery to record in this potentially forbidding setting?

For more information, visit rogueart.com, jazzhausmusik.de and sunnysiderecords.com

Sometime in the late ‘60s or early ‘70s, drummer Bob Moses got together with New Zealander pianist Mike Nock, possibly in a Lower East Side loft and most likely during the latter’s tenure in the pioneering San Francisco-based electric band The Fourth Way. Nock had recently acquired a pair of synthesizers, and the pair “went crazy,” says Moses (who recorded the two long improvisations on a cassette). Recently that cassette was discovered in a drawer somewhere and Moses decided not only to release it as *Electronic Organic Symphony*, but add to it with new overdubs made between 2016-18. The results sound pretty cohesive, not unlike the loft jazz being recorded in New York then. Except for the fairly rudimentary synthesizer work, it could be a lost Art Ensemble of Chicago recording. “Moon” is moody, enhanced by new bass clarinet work from Stan Strickland and tenor saxophone from Daniel Bitran. “Sun” begins with some collective improvisation, via saxophonists Jorrit Dijkstra (alto) and Edmar Colon (tenor), and builds gradually. Two bass players are credited, Damon Smith and Yaka Don Pate, and Keiichi Hashimoto is on a bunch of instruments. Throughout, Moses’ creative drumming and application of “little instruments” really stands out and enhances the music. Nock is better on piano or Fender Rhodes, but his early synth work is historically interesting.

Julie Sassoon is a classically trained British pianist who lives in Berlin and recorded *Waves*, duets with drummer Willi Kellers live in Munich in 2017, and the previous year in the studio on the last day of a quartet recording session. Again, spontaneous composition is the order of the day. On, for instance, “Soulplay,” Keith Jarrett-esque piano improvisation builds off increasingly impassioned drumming and then recedes—just like waves. Playing this way requires intense listening and the players are up to the task. Sassoon has a very delicate touch—all that classical training—and Kellers is all over the kit; dig his exquisite mallet work on “If You Ever Change Your Mind”. Not light listening, but rewarding. “The Cormorant”, dense sound waves with Mal Waldron overtones recorded at Kulturradio Studios, deserves special mention for top-flight recording quality.

Thollem McDonas (piano) and Brian Chase (drums) follow the same spontaneous format as Sassoon/Kellers on *Dub Narcotic Session* but their improvisation is spikier and shifts gears as often as a Ferrari at Le Mans. McDonas (who undoubtedly holds Cecil Taylor in high regard) is a wanderer who gives frequent solo recitals across North America and Europe, but his music definitely benefits from the addition of Chase, who plays only when it enhances the work. “Where We Come From” is a highlight. The opus is the 19-minute “Awed By All,” which launches with gathering clouds. After three minutes of pounding, the skies clear somewhat; we still get jagged flurries of notes, but they subside as drums briefly come to the fore. The piece is full of dramatically contrasting sections; at one point, it gets so slow it almost stops dead. It’s a challenging work, an exercise in dynamics that is definitely not easy listening.

For more information, visit nativepulse.com/ra-kalam-bob-moses-records, jazzwerkstatt.eu and newatlantisrecords.bandcamp.com

Attempting to play guitar like Cecil Taylor played piano would be about as foolhardy an endeavor as attempting to play piano like Cecil Taylor played piano. He was a singular talent, like Eartha Kitt or Erik Satie or Sean Connery’s James Bond; imitators will pale. Guitarist Dom Minasi doesn’t attempt the impossible on his *Remembering Cecil*, but he achieves it nevertheless. Over the course of three-quarters of an hour, he manages to call up the master’s clusters, percussive persistence and quick multi-linearity in ways that come off as more than homage but stopping short of mimicry.

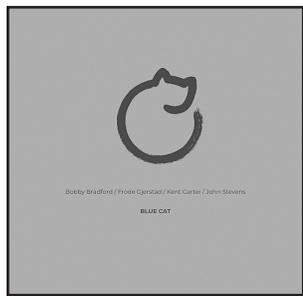
The guitar, of course, is a different instrument than the piano. One can’t quite cover as much terrain in a given moment on a guitar neck as on a piano keyboard and the concept here limits the endeavor. The circles seem smaller, the angles more obtuse. Not as good a record as a Cecil Taylor recital, nor as good as some of Minasi’s own best releases but for the aficionado ever thirsty for improvised variations on amorphous themes, it’s an enjoyable listen.

Minasi plays the four tracks straight, without effects, alteration or extended technique. The same ought not be said about *Woodwork*, Fred Frith’s first unaccompanied, single-take album since 1982’s *Live in Japan*. Recorded in Brussels in 2018, this is a wonderfully knotty affair, dense and difficult. His tools are different than Minasi’s—Frith was one of the first to lay the guitar on its back and subject it to varieties of implements and appliances, loops and distortion—but there’s an overarching sensibility that can be related back to Cecil Taylor, or to other of the finest free improvisers: the trajectories can’t be predicted but the logic can be followed. There’s a wonderful cohesiveness to the one long (42-minute) track and a lovely respite in the strangely serene short (5-minute) one. At times it may sound more like a horse and carriage on a cobblestone street than it does a guitar, or even music for that matter. It’s an often noisy album and surprising that it’s been so long since Frith has released such a commotion, accompanied only by the layers of his imagination.

If something cleaner is what one’s after, one could do worse than Orhan Demir’s new solo recording. The Turkish-born Canadian guitarist hasn’t released an album in more than 20 years, so *Freedom in Jazz* is likely to fall on fresh ears. And those ears have pleasures awaiting. It’s a full CD of music, 20 original compositions that fall readily into the tradition of easy-going abstraction. If Minasi is casting Cecil Taylor onto the guitar, Demir calls to mind something closer to Bill Evans, with occasional flairs or his own musical heritage. It’s a bit boppish, rushing without frenzy, with subtle melodies lying just below the surface.

The poor guitar has been subjected to more decoration and celebration, endless innovation and, perhaps, greater degradation than about any other musical instrument. Yet somehow it keeps coming back for more. It’s nice to hear a musician like Demir reminding us of the beauty of jazz guitar and to be reminded again—by Minasi and Frith—of all the places it’s been.

For more information, visit unseenrainrecords.bandcamp.com, klanggalerie.com and orhandemir.ca



Blue Cat

**Bobby Bradford/Frode Gjerstad/
Kent Carter/John Stevens (NoBusiness)
by Stuart Broomer**

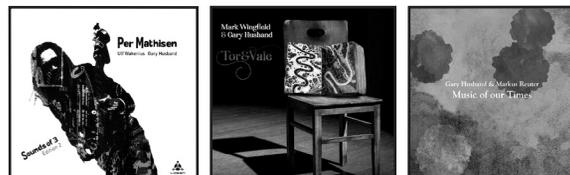
This June 1991 recording from a London club combines California-based cornet player Bobby Bradford with Norwegian saxophonist Frode Gjerstad, expatriate American bassist Kent Carter and late English drummer John Stevens (who would have turned 80 this month). It's a quartet of long associations, reaching back 20 years to Bradford's 1971 appearances with Stevens' Spontaneous Music Ensemble and ten years to the formation of the trio Detail, which began with Gjerstad, Stevens and bassist Johnny Dyani in 1982 and which had consisted of Gjerstad, Stevens and Carter since 1987. Most notably, there's a 1986 recording, *In Time Was*, from the Bracknell Jazz Festival of a Detail quartet with Bradford and Dyani, released on Gjerstad's Circulazione label and currently available on Bandcamp. One can stretch associations well past the date of this recording as well: Bradford was appearing with Gjerstad's improvising orchestra Circulazione Totale at least as recently as 2011.

Clearly there are special musical relationships here, with Stevens the linchpin, an energetic, explosive drummer possessed of a raw, engaged creativity. He's able to spur the band into a different direction with a sudden flurry. Bradford and Gjerstad are both lyrical players, but sharply contrasting ones. Bradford practices a defined melodic clarity, to the extent that even his solos here can resemble theme statements; Gjerstad lines, in contrast, are dense multi-directional events, filled with mutating, speech-like tones. There are strong ties for each to the music of Ornette Coleman, Bradford's through long association and Gjerstad's through early influence, though here his phrases have a lively convolution all their own. Carter, a fluid, responsive bassist, suffers in the mix here, but is still a key element, knitting parts together.

The LP presents three pieces. The first, 23-minute "Blue Cat 1", is the most developed, beginning at a dirge-like tempo with Bradford's strongly melodic playing matched by Gjerstad's weaving clarinet-like counterpoint. As the extended collective dialogue develops, Bradford's relatively laconic voice dovetails with Gjerstad's burbling, bending lines. The two

relatively brief pieces on Side 2 emphasize Bradford's literal tunefulness, a reminder that many of his key partnerships have been with composers: Coleman, John Carter and Hafez Modirzadeh. "Blue Cat 2" sets elements of a hardbop blues in the language of collective improvisation while the concluding "Blue Cat 3" moves between collective improvisation and a defined but fragmented tune carried by Bradford. It's fascinating, simultaneously developing contrasting perspectives.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com



Sounds of 3 (Edition 2)

Per Mathisen (Losen)

Tor & Vale

Mark Wingfield/Gary Husband (MoonJune)

Music Of Our Times

Gary Husband & Markus Reuter (MoonJune)

by Tyran Grillo

Three albums released within a year of one another exhibit the depth of English drummer/pianist/composer Gary Husband (who turns 60 this month) in those very capacities. More than that, each taps into his evolution as a creative soul, drawing an increasingly wider circle around his ability to craft landscapes with minimal gestures.

As a drummer, he enriches *Sounds of 3 (Edition 2)*, the second iteration of Norwegian bassist Per Mathisen's trio, with strong punctuation. Just as Husband replaces Giraldo Piloto, so does guitarist Ulf Wakenius replace Frode Alnæs.

The funky "The Blues Boy" kicks off a set of mostly in-group originals. Mathisen's writing is sharp, propulsive and kinetic, bounding off guitar with aplomb in "16 Knödeln" and "Invasion" while also allowing for late-night moods to creep in. Wakenius contributes two tunes: the James Bond-esque intrigue of "One Of A Kind" and upbeat swing of "Lines For Oscar". Mathisen's "Invasion" is a bass-heavy romp while Husband's "Alphabet Soup" plies a darker trade. The set also includes a bubbling take on Sting's "Wrapped Around Your Finger", conveyed with unabashed joy.

One could hardly imagine a more faraway space for Husband to inhabit than *Tor & Vale*, one of two exquisite MoonJune releases to examine his pianism in the context of electronic landscapes. For this he joins Mark Wingfield (guitar, soundscapes).

From the first blush of "Kittiwake", it's clear that

Wingfield's right angles and Husband's parabolas share an unusually simpatico coexistence. Wingfield is a robustly melodic player in the Terje Rypdal tradition, singing through "The Golden Thread" as if the vapors of the air were his energy drink. He also leaves plenty of room for Husband to emote at the keyboard. Neither musician is afraid to extend his ideas as far as they will go, as in the fully improvised 16 1/2-minute title track, in which the digital effects of guitar fly out like ghosts, at one point leaving the piano on land below to explore the stratosphere before coming back down for a songful landing in "Shape of Light". Not every boat is made to float, however, as "Tryfan" and "Vaquita" plant themselves firmly. Such moments keep even high-flung reveries like "Silver Sky" from venturing into New Age, holding us just enough in regard to feel like home.

Music Of Our Times places Husband at a Fazioli F212 grand piano alongside Markus Reuter on live electronics and eight-string Touch Guitar. The atmosphere is one of suspension, each track flowing into the next as if by chain of spirit. Time slows to a crawl in a space where dreams become the norm and language ceases to exist in favor of movement. Names are obscured by the fog of memory, so that we shed all frames of reference in favor of making our own paths as we go.

Thus, the beauty of "Across The Azure Blue" cannot be overstated. It seems to reach for us from another realm, of which we catch only glimpses in an echoing stream of consciousness. All of which makes the relative grounding of "Illuminated Heart" so satisfying: a feeling of safety in unsafe times.

For more information, visit losenrecords.no and moonjune.com

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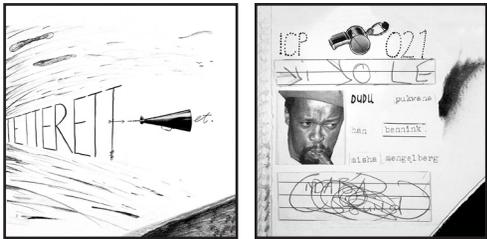
RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES

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- Peter Evans – *Into the Silence (More is More-Old Heaven)*
- Ben Goldberg – *Plague Diary* (BAG Productions)
- David Krakauer/Kathleen Tagg – *Breath & Hammer* (Table Pounding)
- Rudresh Mahanthappa – *Hero Trio (Whirlwind)*
- Hank Mobley – *The Complete Blue Note Sessions 1963-1970* (Mosaic)
- Jorge Roeder – *El Suelo Mío (s/r)*
- Archie Shepp, Raw Poetic, Damu the Fudgemunk – *Ocean Bridges (Redefinition)*
- Sonar (with David Torn) – *Tranceportation (Volume 2)* (RareNoise)
- Patty Waters – *An Evening in Houston* (Clean Feed)

Laurence Donohue-Greene, Managing Editor

- Alan Braufman – *The Fire Still Burns* (Valley of Search)
- James Carney Sextet – *Pure Heart* (Sunnyside)
- Avishai Cohen – *Big Vicious* (ECM)
- Joe Fiedler's Big Sackbut – *Live in Graz* (Multiphonics Music)
- Georg Graewe Quartet – *Amsterdam, October 1998* (Random Acoustics)
- GRID – *Decomposing Force* (NNA Tapes)
- Mats Gustafsson – *Padova Solo* (Catalytic Sound)
- Antti Lötjönen – *Quintet East* (We Jazz)
- MacroQuartet – *The Complete Night: Live at The Stone NYC* (Out Of Your Head)
- Stephen Riley – *Friday The 13th* (SteepleChase)

Andrey Henkin, Editorial Director



Tetterett

ICP Ten Tet (ICP-Corbett vs. Dempsey)
Yi Yole

Dudu Pukwana (ICP-Corbett vs. Dempsey)
by Andrey Henkin

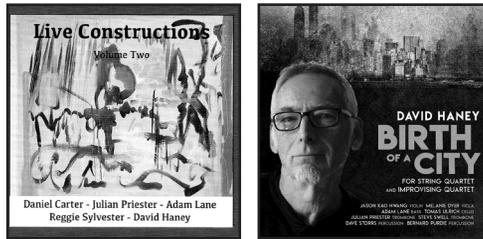
John Corbett is a friend to anyone who has been sniped on eBay when bidding on an impossibly rare jazz record. First with Atavistic' Unheard Music Series from 2000-09 and since 2012 on his co-led imprint Corbett vs. Dempsey, the jazz historian has reissued dozens of important, mostly European avant garde and free jazz albums, previously available in quantities ranging from hard-to-find to don't-bother-looking. Of late, Corbett has turned his attention to the output of Holland's Instant Composers Pool (ICP) Records, one of the key artist-run labels documenting continental weirdness of the late '60s into the new millennium.

1977's *Tetterett* by the ICP Ten Tet is a precursor to the still-active ICP Orchestra, setting the template for that ensemble's manic and pithy mix of improvisation and composition, the latter mostly from the twisted pen of pianist/ICP co-founder Misha Mengelberg (who would have turned 85 this month). 4 days of sessions produced these 11 tracks, which defy description in the same way the elephant did to the six blind men of Buddhist myth. Is this music for the circus and, if so, is there a circus extant that could keep up? It also continues the tradition set up by LPs like *Machine Gun*, *European Echoes* and *The Living Music* from several years earlier, mixing players from different countries: Mengelberg, drummer/ICP co-founder Han Bennink, saxophonists John Tchicai (DK), Gilius Van Bergeyk (NL, who also contributes two pieces), Peter Bennink (NL) and Peter Brötzmann (DE), trombonist Bert Koppelaar (NL, who wrote one piece), cellist Tristan Honsinger (US, ICP Orchestra stalwart), cracklebox operator Michel Waisvisz (NL) and bassist Alan Silva (US).

1978's *Yi Yole* is a fascinating date, even by ICP standards. Mengelberg is here, as is Bennink but on clarinet, viola and trombone in addition to drums. The third player is South African alto saxophonist Dudu Pukwana (who died 30 years ago this month)—much more closely associated with Britain's avant jazz scene—in his only recorded appearance with either Dutchman. All three bring a piece to this Netherlands concert, none appearing elsewhere. Given that all are iconoclasts on their respective instruments and that to them tradition—whether South African folk music or

American Swing—is both to be prized and subverted, the results of this not unusual instrumental setup are, in fact, quite unusual. While Mengelberg and Bennink were partners of longstanding, Pukwana doesn't sound cowed for a second; playing jazz in Apartheid-era South Africa will do that to you.

For more information, visit corbettvsdempsey.com



Live Constructions, Volume Two
Daniel Carter/Julian Priester/Adam Lane/Reggie Sylvester/David Haney (SLAM)
Birth of a City
David Haney (Big Round)
by Tyran Grillo

While the two albums profiled here share the talents of pianist David Haney and trombone virtuoso Julian Priester (who turns 85 this month), in terms of sound they are worlds apart, each in its own engaging way.

Live Constructions, Volume Two surrounds those two musicians in fine company at Columbia University's WKCR. Consisting of seven improvised "Constructions", the performance inhabits a space all its own. On the topic of space, given the intimate confines of the radio studio, there's a photorealistic quality to the recording. Much of the music is groove-oriented and finds the rhythm section of Adam Lane (bass) and Reggie Sylvester (drums) locking step as if each tune were predetermined. The caravan ride of "Construction Number 7" stands out in this regard. Even the more abstract "Construction Number 8", however, carries a pulse. Daniel Carter's soprano saxophone is an attractive voice and like his tenor enlivens the proceedings with a searching, descriptive quality. Haney himself maps a terrain of his own for everyone to walk along. As for Priester, 83 years old at the time, he guests on three tracks, including "Construction Number 9", an album highlight. He has the vibe of a relaxed and unforced storyteller, threading his notes through the spaces between molecules.

Birth of a City is a compelling project for which Haney takes on the role of composer and conductor. He combines through-composed material for an unconventional string quartet (Jason Kao Hwang on violin, Melanie Dyer on viola, Lane on double bass, and Tomas Ulrich on cello) with an improvising quartet of two trombonists (Priester and Steve Swell) and two percussionists (Dave Storrs and Bernard Purdie). Over the course of two multifaceted pieces, both of which started on the piano before Haney developed them into their current forms, we encounter the outside and the inside of that very urban environment. The title suite spans eight parts and is crafted with a strangely haunting precision. Under Haney's direction, the program moves with a sense of purpose and cohesion that keeps it from being a jumble. The most intriguing portions are those in which explicitly written passages find ways to interlock with adlibbed ones, and vice versa, as the ensemble explores the tension between two streams of consciousness. "Variations on a Theme" concludes with five parts of its own. Though more abstract and microscopically attuned to postmodern angst, it is also more compact and filled with catharsis. Drawing on a warped brand of Americana, it works its way through folk textures and historical traumas alike. The final duet between Priester and Swell is a memorable farewell, turning ashes into song.

For more information, visit slamproductions.net and bigroundrecords.com

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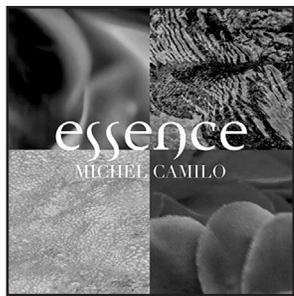


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Essence
Michel Camilo (Resilience)
 by Brian Charette

Michel Camilo has had a storied career. The virtuoso Dominican pianist has won a Grammy, Latin Grammy and even an Emmy! *Essence*, his 25th album, celebrates some of his best known compositions arranged for big band by trumpeter Michael Philip Mossman. Camilo is fluent in all Latin styles, which he shifts between in provocative and uncommon combinations.

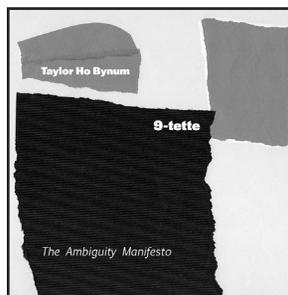
"Mango's Blues" follows a haunting piano vocal duet with percussionist Eliel Lazo. The ascent of chromatic chords in deceptive cross-rhythms is punctuated by a triplet figure, morphing into churning AfroCuban choruses from baritone saxophonist Frank Basile. Many of the rhythmic devices used on the tune, known as metric modulations, place three beats over the same space as two in the original meter. As the tune progresses, more manipulation of the triplet builds the tension to yet another feel: hard swing.

All styles are handled expertly by the group and clearly marked by the spot-on charts. "Mano a Mano"'s samba gets its sizzle from drummer Cliff Almond, fluid trombonist Michael Dease and the brutal bebop of Mossman, who shows he can burn as well as write. Charlie Parker gets a nod in "Yes", a great unison head

over "Donna Lee" changes with a tight super saxophone soli and piano fireworks. The rhythm section even gets its chance on the slick kicks. Dig that surprise, unresolved, diminished chord at the end.

It's hard to stay still while listening to "Piece of Cake" with its steady *montunos* and güiro. Camilo classic "On Fire" gets a wonderful rendering with airtight horns and inventive piano tricks. Art Blakey tribute "Repercussions" has an angular melody stacked in fourths; solos from alto saxophonist Antonio Hart and trombonist Steve Davis cement the stompy swing while Camilo works a riff on a stuck blue note wrapped in shades of the exotic *Insen* scale. We finally get to hear a bass solo from Ricky Rodriguez, who deals at the same level as everyone on this side... pro!

For more information, visit michelcamilo.com



The Ambiguity Manifesto
Taylor Ho Bynum 9-tette (Firehouse 12)
 by Dan Bilawsky

Taylor Ho Bynum is a nonconformist through and through, so it should come as no shock that even his previous and prevailing ideas hold little sway over this project. Despite serving as the conclusion of what the cornet player refers to as an "accidental trilogy", which

began with 2013's sextet-centric *Navigation* and continued with 2017's *Enter the PlusTet*, *The Ambiguity Manifesto* doesn't owe debt(s) to past statements. Bynum may still be intent on leveraging musical relationships and erasing or, at least, obscuring lines separating written directions and free play, but this band proves to be dynamically dissociated from expectations. With saxophonists Ingrid Laubrock and Jim Hobbs, bass trombonist/tuba player Bill Lowe, Ken Filiano (bass and electronics), Stomu Takeishi (electric bass guitar), cellist Tomeka Reid, guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Tomas Fujiwara on this inventive, experimental journey, everybody is all ears and all in.

Riding over a James Gadson-worthy drum groove on opener "Neither When Nor Where", the cool careen of strings and the strength of micro riffs for horns merge and almost serve as genuflection to precepts. But this crew is too shrewd to box things in really. A skewed sensibility informs these firm moves. That most accessible entrance is countered by what follows: a mixture of murmur and squawk on "Enter Ally"; an embrace of weight, weightlessness and *nouveau* pastorella during "Real/Unreal (for Ursula K. Le Guin)"; and a long gaze across uncharted spaces on the lengthy "(G)host(aa/ab)".

The second half plays on interchangeable construction, as Bynum adopts the roles of modular architect and DNA redesigner. This organizational gambit speaks to structure while also exhibiting playfulness in the combinatorial process. In two instances—"Ally Enter" and "Unreal/Real (for Old Music)"—Bynum primarily shifts parts within single housings, but with "Enter (G) Neither" he looks to varied notions pulled from multiple domains.

For more information, visit firehouse12records.com



BO LINDENSTRAND

BO LINDENSTRAND—LIVE

"For many years Bo Lindenstrand (1944 -2017) was one of the figures in Sweden, who saw to the survival of Jazz at the art form. He, possibly too, was the most discrete. These two CDs, spanning the years from 2008 until 2013 and which were recorded at various places round about Stockholm, reveal an unique artistry, with striking renditions and moments: a standard repertoire in which all the details create a dancing lightness, a ballad's melodic line is bent, seemingly to speak with itself, resembling a form of dialogue."

Eric Centerwall, author and music critic

Recorded by Christer Ädelqvist on a ZOOM H2 and on a Olympus Is 10
 Produced by Viveca Lindenstrand and Patrik Boman 2019

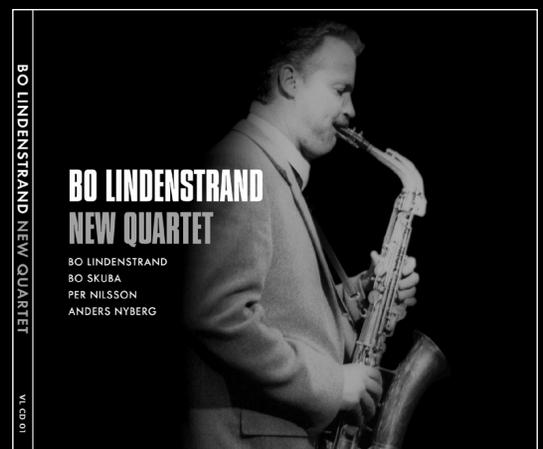
BO LINDENSTRAND—NEW QUARTET

Bo Lindenstrand, alto saxophone ; Bo Skuba, piano;
 Per Nilsson, bass; Anders Nyberg, drums

"Bo Lindenstrand, here with the New Quartet from 2001 displayed a richness of ideas, a world of his own. He is fun to rediscover, either with knowledge of a Parker idiom and its iconic phrases, or when looking at his very uniqueness – also, the supporting musicians. They all carried out their artistry in maybe unsympathetic times in regards to a Jazz era, they only had their brilliance to rely upon."

Eric Centerwall, author and music critic

Recorded in SAMI studio, Stockholm, 2001
 Produced by Jonas Koch och Viveca Lindenstrand Edit by Viveca Lindenstrand

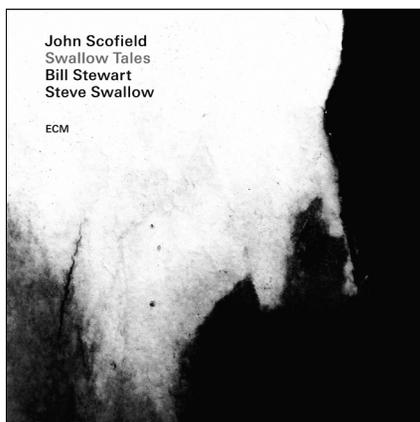


CONTACT: [VIVECALINDENSTRAND@GMAIL.COM](mailto:vivecalindenstrand@gmail.com)

John Scofield Swallow Tales

John Scofield guitar
Steve Swallow bass
Bill Stewart drums

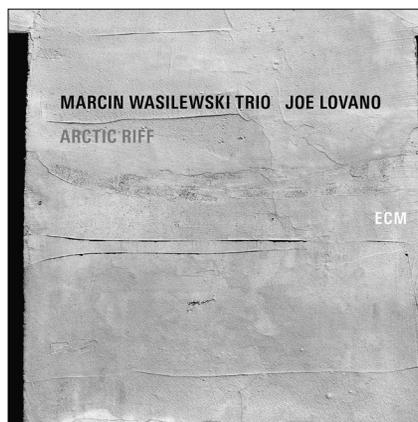
Guitarist John Scofield celebrates the music of his friend and mentor Steve Swallow in an outgoing and spirited recording, exploring compositions by Steve Swallow: a broad range including classics as well as lesser-known works.



Marcin Wasilewski Trio w/ Joe Lovano Arctic Riff

Joe Lovano tenor saxophone
Marcin Wasilewski piano
Slawomir Kurkiewicz double bass
Michal Miskiewicz drums

The first-time teaming of Poland's Marcin Wasilewski Trio and tenorist Joe Lovano brings forth special music of concentrated, deep feeling, in which lyricism and strength seem ideally balanced.



Avishai Cohen Big Vicious

Avishai Cohen trumpet, effects, synthesizer
Uzi Ramirez guitar
Yonatan Albalak guitar, bass
Aviv Cohen drums
Ziv Ravitz drums, live sampling

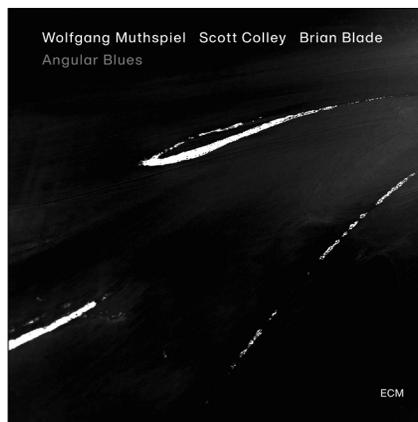
"If some tracks are fed by a raw energy coming from punk, new wave or electro, we are especially struck by the richness of the nuances, the sense of dramaturgy and the love of detail - all of which testifies to an exemplary production, bringing together acoustic, electric and electronic sounds." - *Pascal Rozat, Jazzmagazine (France)*



Carla Bley / Andy Sheppard / Steve Swallow Life Goes On

Carla Bley piano
Andy Sheppard tenor & soprano saxophones
Steve Swallow bass

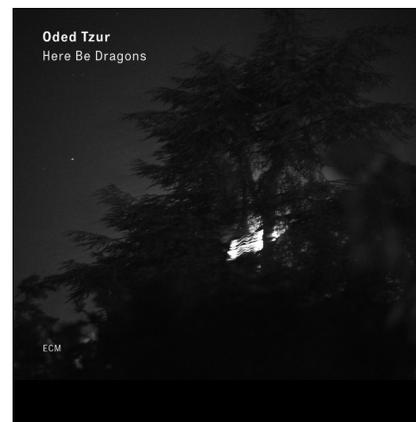
"Each instrument in Carla Bley's longstanding trio is both spare and versatile. Every player puts a premium on plain-stated melody, and gently evocative touch. There's a quietness, a loneliness together, that gives this group its special intimacy." - *Giovanni Russonello, New York Times*



Wolfgang Muthspiel Angular Blues

Wolfgang Muthspiel guitar
Scott Colley double bass
Brian Blade drums

"A unique collection of personal statements by a very classy contemporary trio." - *John Fordham, Jazzwise (UK)*



Oded Tzur Here Be Dragons

Oded Tzur tenor saxophone
Nitai Hershkovits piano
Petros Klampanis double bass
Johnathan Blake drums

"Individual tenor saxophone notes are consumed into one long sonorous flowing. Tzur's progress feels unbroken yet undergoes myriad subtle modulations, like undulations in a rolling river. The quietude contains undercurrents of intense energy." - *Thomas Conrad, Jazz Times*



Old New
Tomeka Reid Quartet (Cuneiform)
 by George Grella

This is a fun band and a fun, satisfying record. And it is cellist Tomeka Reid's second album leading this group (its eponymous 2015 debut was on Thirsty Ear) and second album as a leader period (she was just named "Jazz Strings Player of the Year" by the Jazz Journalists Association) and from the start the quartet has had the sound of a band that just clicks. They are all young veterans as musicians and this band has both freshness and the calm and light-feeling maturity of older players.

Part of the freshness is the pure sound, which is right out of the instrumentation; strings swinging together and Mary Halvorson's heavy-picking paired with Reid's sweet, grainy lines—the two are doubled on much of the material, all originals from Reid—is the kind of smart, aesthetically wise orchestration that is woefully underappreciated in small-group jazz.

Drummer Tomas Fujiwara, who plays with Halvorson in Thumbscrew and many other ensembles, is superb. He has a subtle style, controlled quiet force, precise but projecting a loose, shambling affect and his sound fills in all the blanks. There's already a dry timbre to the group and he adds a touch of roughness with his snare and some balm with cymbal splashes.

Listeners may pay less attention to the individual tracks—though ones like "Aug. 6" and "Sadie" have one taking a look at the album information—than to the overall attitude and, again, that sheer sound. Reid and Halvorson play like a two-horn front line in that they take turns with most of the soloing, but they also accompany each other when the other is in the lead, guitar playing chords and cello arco and the latter adding pizzicato counterpoint in between the guitar and Jason Roebke's bass. This is a band that plays together while they're playing together and it's a real pleasure to hear.

For more information, visit cuneiformrecords.com



New Shoes: Kind of Blue at 60
Schapiro17 (Summit)
 by Donald Elfman

This celebration of the 60th anniversary of Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* not only keeps alive its spirit and quiet power but completely reworks and reimagines it with new harmonic colors, textures, rhythms and even melodic organization. Going even further, leader Jon Schapiro has surrounded the original tunes by five new compositions, each entitled "Boiled Funk" (anagram for *Kind of Blue*) plus another play on that title, "Foiled Bunk", performed and written by pianist Roberta Piket. These smart and inventive compositions extend the tradition of both big band writing and the originality of Davis through the years.

The album opens with "Boiled Funk", replete with

tempo changes and bold solos from tenor saxophonist Paul Carlon, bassist Evan Gregor and trombonist Deborah Weisz. "Foiled Bunk" finds Piket combining openness and thoughtfulness. Her playing leads to "So What", about which more later.

To flesh out the other "Boiled Funks": number 2 is sinewy, with a dark solo from soprano saxophonist Rob Wilkerson and ominous sounds from the ensemble; 3 is basically a fiery feature for trumpeter Andy Gravish; 4 returns to number 1 with Charles Mingus-like funk and a hot alto solo by Candace DeBartolo; and 5 is a slow quirky thing that again features Piket.

To the masterwork itself, starting with "So What". We hear the suggestion of the simple, almost minimalist theme, but Schapiro creates a whole new construction with very complex orchestra writing buoyed by pulsing bass and drums (Jon Wikan) and the powerful way the soloists—particularly trombonist Alex Jeun, Wilkerson and Gravish—soar off and away. "Blue in Green" is also mysterious and dark but suddenly alto saxophonist Ben Kono enters with what feels like a spontaneous cadenza. That comes to fruition as the whole orchestra enters the fray to a more easy-swinging section.

"All Blues" finds its meter broken up and then resectioned among brass and reeds; soloists Carlon, Jeun and Gravish work with the assemblage to make this the quirkiest arrangement of all. An almost breathy "Flamenco Sketches" slowly and quietly develops with a lovely protracted guitar solo by Sebastian Noelle. Finally, "Freddie Freeloader", while measured, is less ominous and there's a solo from Gravish that finds him closer to but never imitative of Davis, a thrumming bass solo, an earthy section from Walter Harris on bass trombone and a faster and fluent solo from Carlon. This beautifully realized recording finds stunning inspiration to create a new original.

For more information, visit summitrecords.com



Black, Brown & Beige
Sherman Irby's Inferno
The Music of Wayne Shorter
Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
 with Wynton Marsalis (Blue Engine)
 by George Kanzler

Since Wynton Marsalis became Musical Director of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra 29 years ago, the JLCO has become closest to America's own resident jazz orchestra. It is the only fully functioning, annually salaried jazz ensemble comparable to the country's many symphony orchestras. When it began the JLCO was largely dedicated to preserving and presenting classic jazz repertoire, especially the music of Duke Ellington. It was then and remains the finest Ellington Ghost Band we have, effortlessly eclipsing the woeful, "official" Duke Ellington Orchestra(s) run as revenue mills by the Ellington estate.

In the last decade of the 20th Century the JLCO also served another primary purpose, as a conduit for Marsalis' composing, unveiling a series of major works including the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Music composition *Blood On The Fields*. In the last decade, Marsalis has written less and encouraged members of the orchestra to write more, as well as featuring the music of other than Ellington jazz artists in concert, often with guest soloists, sometimes the actual honoree.

These three albums, recorded at regular season concerts by the JLCO, represent three aspects of the orchestra's output and interests. *Black, Brown & Beige* (BB&B), recorded in 2018, is a return to Ellingtonia and the first complete recording of Ellington's first major concert work since the archival recordings of the

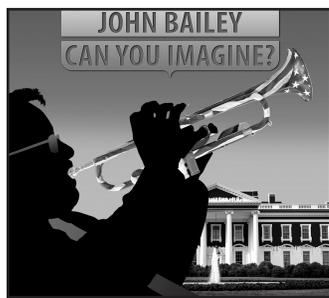
premiere at Carnegie Hall in 1943. *Inferno*, recorded in 2012, is a suite by JLCO alto saxophonist Sherman Irby, demonstrably indebted to Ellington and featuring the JLCO's link to the Ellington Orchestra, the late baritone saxophonist Joe Temperley. *The Music of Wayne Shorter*, recorded in 2015 with Shorter guesting on tenor and soprano saxophones, features big band arrangements of ten Shorter pieces.

Ellington recorded a reformatted, abridged version of BB&B as a six-part suite in 1958, featuring Mahalia Jackson singing "Come Sunday", which was an instrumental in the 1943 Carnegie Hall premiere. The JLCO's recording returns to the original nine-part format—dividing each color in the title into three sections or parts—to present it as close to the original as possible. But in Ellington's oeuvre, BB&B was an early experiment, an initial stepping-stone in his creation of longer works. It planted seeds for his expansive later creations, from the tone poem "A Tone Parallel to Harlem", through-composed including solos like large parts of BB&B, to his many suites and his *Sacred Concerts*, which incorporated the melody of "Come Sunday". That Ellington never performed BB&B live while often performing "A Tone Parallel to Harlem", excerpts from his many suites and numerous *Sacred Concerts* suggests that he felt he had outgrown/transcended the earlier concert work. Still, the JLCO's album is invaluable in preserving it in all its voluminous, omnivorous multiplicity. It is a reminder of how kaleidoscopic Ellington's command and appreciation of African-American music was, even when he had yet to marshal that command fully.

Inferno is ostensibly inspired by Dante but obviously modeled on Ellington's suites. Irby even features the baritone saxophone sound Ellington brought to prominence through Harry Carney by highlighting Carney disciple Temperley in lead parts throughout and with solos in the opening and closing movements. The suite as a whole is a good example of why Marsalis calls the orchestra's home "the house of swing". Most of the movements ride on vibrant swing rhythms, with bandmembers showcased in rousing solos, notably the febrile exchanges between Ted Nash (alto saxophone) and Victor Goines (tenor) on "Movement V: The Three-Headed Serpent" and the contributions of Marsalis, Irby and trombonist Elliot Mason on the flag-waver "Movement III: Beware the Wolf and Serpent".

The Music of Wayne Shorter is both a wide showcase for the JLCO, with nine of its members (including Marsalis) contributing arrangements, as well as the artistry of Shorter, who plays on nine of the ten tracks. Seven of the tracks are from Shorter's first decade-plus, although his most familiar ones ("Footprints", "Speak No Evil", "Lester Left Town") are avoided. Shorter is in top form throughout, eliciting spontaneous applause after some solos that seems to emanate from both audience and orchestra. His tenor is especially ardent and playfully frisky on "Hammer Head", a piece he wrote while with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in the early '60s, arranged by Irby, and on "Armageddon", from his 1964 album *Night Dreamer*, arranged by trumpeter Marcus Printup, where his tenor solo over a mid-swing tempo has a freewheeling swagger spiced by quirky high notes. A long version of "Mama 'G'", from his debut 1959 album *Introducing Wayne Shorter* is a swinging barn-burner arranged by Chris Crenshaw, which kicks off with a Shorter tenor solo that inspires a string of further solos from bandmembers. The Weather Report tune "Diana" as well as two pieces from the 1985 album *Atlantis* all featuring Shorter on soprano have the arrangers (Nash, Vincent Gardner and Carlos Henriquez respectively) finding creative ways to emulate the electronic aspects of the originals with reeds and especially muted brass. The album is an impressive tribute to Shorter as well as a celebration of the many virtues of the JLCO.

For more information, visit blueenginerecords.org



Can You Imagine?
John Bailey (Freedom Road)
by Jim Motavalli

In 1964, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie ran for President against Lyndon B. Johnson and his Republican challenger Barry Goldwater, his tongue even more firmly in his cheek than it normally was. Here's an excerpt from his campaign song: "Your politics ought to be a groovier thing / Vote Dizzy! Vote Dizzy! / So get a good President who's willing to swing."

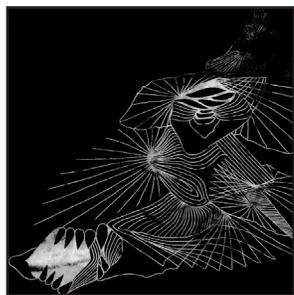
That campaign is the basis of fellow trumpeter John Bailey's new album (only his second as a leader) and informs his three-part "President Gillespie Suite". Although it has parts like "The Humanitarian Candidate" and "President Gillespie's Birthday Song", it's not program music. It does sound like something its dedicatee could have put together ("Salt Peanuts" is momentarily evoked), though sometimes the overlapping horns recall Charles Mingus.

The album opens with a bang. Bailey's "Pebbles in the Pocket" is a very straightahead burner, showcasing strong solos by the leader, trombonist Stafford Hunter and tenor saxophonist Stacy Dillard. Drummer Victor Lewis' "The Touch of Her Vibe" has a tricky line and includes cool call-and-response between Bailey and Earl McIntyre (tuba), followed by a high-note solo from Bailey buoyed by Edsel Gomez (piano) and Mike Karn (bass). Things get wiggy (in a good way) when Dillard and Hunter enter for some collective improv. Another Lewis tune, "From the Heart", is here too.

All the horn players get plenty of out-front time and bass and alto flute player Janet Axelrod is featured on Chico Buarque-Francis Hime's meditative "Valsa Rancho". The latter doesn't solo per se, but certainly sets a mood. The tempo picks up midway with sparkling soprano saxophone from Dillard, whose own lightly luminous and tender "Elite State of Mind" has overlapping horn parts that work well. Jule Styne-Bob Merrill's "People" from *Funny Girl* (sung by Barbra Streisand) is a nice framework for a ballad led by Bailey, who honed his talents in bands led by Buddy Rich, Ray Charles, Ray Barretto and others. He's on 70 albums, playing all kinds of music.

Gillespie, by the way, stood for enforcing Civil Rights, ending the Vietnam War and recognizing communist China—all of which happened. He also wanted Miles Davis as head of the CIA.

For more information, visit johnbailey.com



Decomposing Force
GRID (NNA Tapes)
by John Pietaro

The trio GRID touches the listener as would a continuation of the fire music of another lifetime, but includes a hardcore element, also quite vintage at this point, which somehow allows it all to feel contemporary. This ensemble never spares the listener and, as such,

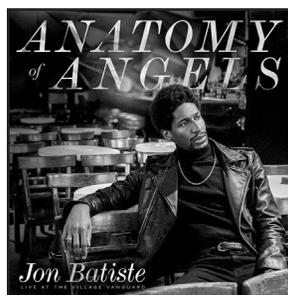
indicates the stress of this very moment, mid-lockdown U.S.A. The outcome is harsh, snarling and biting, but within this mélange of distortion and odd Latin-esque dance drive, there is something familiar, something we kept in long ago distant dreams. In this respect, GRID is utterly timeless.

"Brutal Kings", the opening cut, can be called onomatopoeia, throwing exemplary sounds into the airspace, taking no prisoners, but then "Nythyne" offers much of the same. Saxophonist Matt Nelson (a student of Gary Bartz and one-quarter of Travis Laplante's Battle Trance saxophone quartet) blends with bassist Tim Dahl (a regular of Lydia Lunch's Retrovirus as well as a mainstay in ensembles led by Marc Ribot, Mary Halvorson, Elliott Sharp, Ava Mendoza and many more), straining, twisting and carving out new sounds, perhaps a nether-world consciousness reminiscent of Greg Ginn's *Gone of Decades* wasted.

With a bit of bourbon in your reviewer, this album releases the secrets of generations lost and in this respect, it is dizzying. Side Two (this release makes one miss LPs one hell of a lot) brings us "The Weight of Literacy", which offers no quotes from James Joyce, Bertolt Brecht, Edna St. Vincent Millay or James Baldwin, but paints a thicket of sound that seems to bring all of these together. It's a strange story, this, which follows drummer Nick Podgurski (leader, *Feast of the Epiphany*) into the looking glass of timelessness.

By the time of closing track "Cold Sleep", built on feedback and a torturous kind of searching, the ensemble tosses the listener into the place omnipresent since this epoch began, one of distorted wake-sleep realities and unhealthy portions of drink thrown into the nightmare of the new reality. Shit. Allow this album to slice into your moments.

For more information, visit nnapapes.com



Anatomy of Angels (Live at the Village Vanguard)
Jon Batiste (Verve)
by Joel Roberts

If you know pianist Jon Batiste mostly from his gig as the bandleader and Musical Director for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, this live recording, culled from a weeklong 2018 stand at the Village Vanguard, is a reminder that the 33-year-old New Orleans native and Juilliard grad has some serious jazz chops.

Most of *Anatomy of Angels* features Batiste in a trio setting, joined by bassist Phil Kuehn and drummer Joe Saylor of Stay Human, Batiste's genre-crossing band from *The Late Show*. Opener "Creative" is an original that feels like a blend of Thelonious Monk and classic New Orleans jazz, which is a pretty good description of the pianist's overall style. That's followed by the crowd-pleasing blues-meets-gospel of "Dusk Train to Doha", another Batiste original.

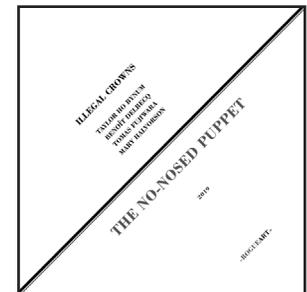
He later pays direct homage to Monk, whom he calls his "musical idol", with a stellar cover of "Round Midnight" recalling the classic Miles Davis version, starting slowly with the trio before a fiery horn section (trumpeters Giveton Gelin and Jon Lampley, saxophonists Patrick Bartley and Tivon Pennicott) joins in to create one of the more raucous versions of the familiar tune in recent memory.

Rachael Price from the pop-soul-jazz group Lake Shore Drive lends her sultry vocals to an engaging cover of the Ray Noble standard "The Very Thought of You", exquisite piano providing the sole

accompaniment. The horns return for the 13-minute title cut, a sprawling John Coltrane-inspired whirlwind that closes the session on a high note and makes the case for Batiste as a composer of serious intent.

The album, while highly satisfying, is on the brief side at 35 minutes, which feels like a bit of a tease given the fact that Verve has issued a second (also brief) volume from the same Vanguard residency. That album, *Chronology of a Dream*, explores the leader's funk side as opposed to the more exploratory jazz found here, but the two could easily have been combined as a single, full-length release showcasing his entire arsenal.

For more information, visit vervelabelgroup.com



The No-Nosed Puppet
Illegal Crowns (RogueArt)
by John Sharpe

Under the perhaps unfamiliar banner Illegal Crowns, guitarist Mary Halvorson, drummer Tomas Fujiwara and cornet player Taylor Ho Bynum combine with French pianist Benoît Delbecq for their second album *The No-Nosed Puppet*. Like its predecessor, the LP (or digital release) is a collective effort where each member brings charts to the table. Although all are accomplished leaders in their own right, they adopt an ensemble approach to exploring the diverse material in which the individuals stand out no more than the interactions among them.

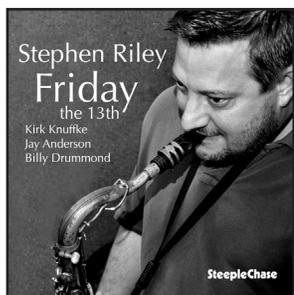
Artful arrangements, such as Fujiwara's bright jerky title cut, demonstrate that not only is this a band in the sense of a fully cohesive unit, but also construct novel settings to show off the high-spec components. Once the tune opens out, Delbecq and Halvorson spit out simultaneous streams of invective, until the latter goes it alone, using effects to overlay multiple echoes, in ever-increasing density, over churning drums. Then all change to a menacing ostinato over which Bynum splutters and squeals, before finally slowing for a coda of tumbling piano to take the piece out. Blowing vehicles these are not.

Delbecq's two compositions are less direct, with neither unveiling an explicit theme. Both reveal how well he has integrated piano preparations into his playing. On the conversational and discursive "Brushes", that translates into piano first chewing the cud with tappy cymbals and later musing guitar while cornet periodically joins in a series of eruptive gusts and wheezes. "Two Blue Circles" similarly mines timbral depths, this time in percussive exchanges of staccato sounds, while Bynum once again displays his talent for avoiding the obvious, with an expressive litany of groans, exclamations and bleats.

Bynum's "Extemporize An Untidy Conclusion" features switches from jittery interplay to huskily voiced refrain to martial rhythms, incorporating a choppy cornet/drum duet along the way. The title itself gives an intimation of how intention can trump expectation.

Halvorson's twin contributions could sit easily among her output elsewhere. "Blood And Sand" adopts a lilting gait with careworn cornet carrying the tune while the closing "Louise Knows", a beautiful ballad of twilight valediction, provides a quietly stunning finale to an absorbing and thoughtful disc.

For more information, visit rogueart.com



Friday The 13th
Stephen Riley (SteepleChase)
 by Ken Dryden

Tenor saxophonist Stephen Riley and cornet player Kirk Knuffke have both recorded frequently as leaders for SteepleChase and worked as sidemen on other releases for the label. Given the frequency with which SteepleChase artists join forces, it was only a matter of time before they made a CD together. Two more veterans with many appearances on the label, bassist Jay Anderson and drummer Billy Drummond, round out this top-shelf quartet.

The lack of piano gives both soloists added freedom for their explorations and amplifies the contributions of the rhythm section, which provides stimulating accompaniment. While many leaders focus on their own compositions, Riley has preferred to find new approaches to standards and favorite jazz works by a wide range of artists, also with a penchant to insert amusing song quotes where least expected. Knuffke is the perfect foil in this setting, as they inspire each other with their improvised lines. The sole Great American Songbook standard is Cole Porter's "Love For Sale", which alternates between AfroCuban and bop rhythms, Knuffke and Riley melding into a conversational frontline.

Riley's unaccompanied intro into Eddie Vinson's "Four" sets up an extended workout as intricate as any previous recording. They revel in Thelonious Monk's whimsical "Friday The 13th", capturing the spirit of the late pianist, while their masterful unaccompanied duo introduction to "Round Midnight" gradually unveils the famous theme in a novel way, later joined by inventive bass and discrete brushes. Oliver Nelson's "Hoe Down" has long been overshadowed by his better known anthem "Stolen Moments" (which preceded it on his landmark 1961 album *Blues and the Abstract Truth*), but Riley's striking arrangement of this forgotten gem may provoke others to include it in their setlists. The recently departed Jimmy Heath's "Gingerbread Boy" concludes the session with a flourish, the work of the rhythm section making it stand out as unique. Riley continues to surprise listeners with his creative settings of familiar jazz and this CD is representative of his best work.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk



Et hån mot overklassen
Bushman's Revenge (Hubro)
 by Kurt Gottschalk

For a decade and a year, Oslo-based label Hubro has been building a remarkably reliable catalogue of consistently fresh and eminently listenable recordings hovering in the nebula of composition and improvisation. The strength of the label's output certainly suggests something about the fertile jazz scene in Norway but says just as much about the

curatorial ear of founder Andreas Risanger Meland. As a former employee of both Rune Grammofon and ECM, Meland clearly learned the values of brand identity and high-level production from some of Europe's standard bearers.

Like Meland, the trio Bushman's Revenge (their name coming from a particularly potent brand of South African hot sauce) has a history with Rune Grammofon, having released seven albums in as many years on that label before issuing *Et hån mot overklassen* ("a mockery of the upper class") on the Hubro imprint. With the switch came a regrouping of sorts, a solidification and expansion. Gone are the guest players of many of their recent albums but added to the solid guitar trio formation are drummer Gard Nilssen's vibraphone and Wuritzer organ, bassist Rune Nergaard's organ and toy piano and multiple guitar voicings (including baritone and soprano) from Even Helte Hermansen and electronic implements across the board.

The result is music you can get lost in, languid jams that turn atmospheric when your ears aren't looking. Hermansen favors long, slowing lines that recall Carlos Santana at his unfussy best. Nergaard and Nilssen can recede and surprise, suggesting bits of exotica, '70s fusion or spaced-out psych. There's less of an edge here than in some of their past outings (certainly less than when they cover Black Sabbath at any rate) and more group exploration.

All members contribute compositions, with 3 of the 10 written by the trio. The standouts come from Hermansen: his "A Bottle A Day Keeps The Wolves At Bay" sets a slow surf vibe over an Indian drone like a pot of mock tanpura stew, where "Toten" features spaghetti western lines pushed along by softly persistent and very tidy tom rolls.

But "standouts" aren't the point here. The record is available as a limited-edition double-LP and digital download, but the CD version is the only way to ensure that its hazy 66 minutes float past uninterrupted. It's a groove greater than the sum of its parts.

For more information, visit hubromusic.com



Girl Gone Wilder!: Susannah B Sings Alec Wilder
Susannah B (s/r)
 by Marilyn Lester

Composer and sometime lyricist Alec Wilder, contemporary of American Songbook writers such as Hoagy Carmichael, Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington and the like, is little remembered today, despite a prolific career in a wide assortment of genres, which included classical music as well as jazz and pop. Susannah B's (the B is for Blinkoff) tribute to Wilder, *Girl Gone Wilder!* covers the Wilder ground well, from early to later work, with 14 varied tracks, including many not usually found on Wilder collections.

She's backed by a strong band arranged to give maximum support to the singer, with enough time for each player to be showcased in crisp solo turns: Michael Farrell (keyboards), David Sutton (bass), Scott Breadman (percussion), Ray McNamara (drums and hang drum) and Sal Lozano (saxophone/flute/clarinet). Farrell also contributes a few velvety, laidback vocals, notably on "Don't Stop" (lyric by William Engvick) and "Lullaby Land".

Wilder marched to his own drum, caring little about accolades or commercial success. He was championed early on in his career by Mitch Miller and

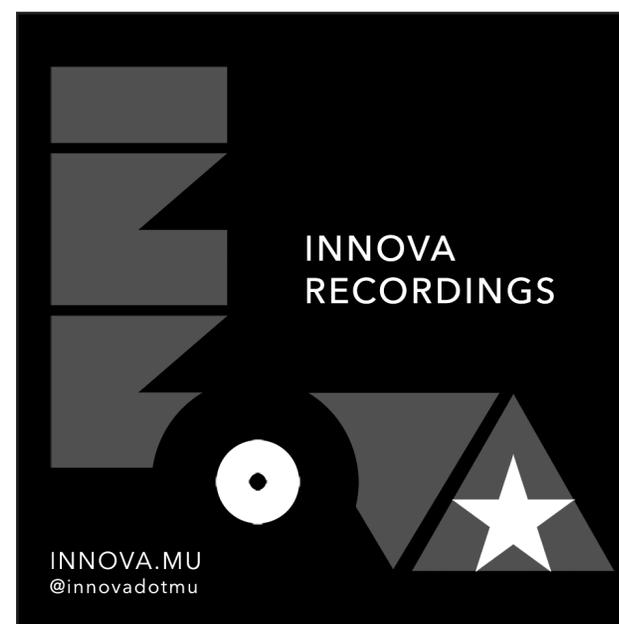
Frank Sinatra, who largely set him before the public. As a writer of often unique and sophisticated material he left a rich but underappreciated legacy. Yet, those like Blinkoff, treasure(d) his work, including Marlene VerPlanck, Roland Hanna, Bill Charlap and Marian McPartland. Wilder wrote for his friends mainly, among them the doyenne of the story song, Mabel Mercer. "Is It Always Like This" was written for her in 1955, perfect for her unique style, a parlendo with a deep and intense focus on lyric. Blinkoff's version shifts the emphasis of the song back to the melody, with a swing, Latin-style beat and support from backup singers.

Blinkoff's vocal tone is smooth, but also slightly girlish—a light head voice, yet supple and versatile. She's also blessed with a fine sense of phrasing and vocal dynamics. Additionally, Blinkoff has a strong acting background and so her inclusion of several story songs suits her, primarily "It's So Peaceful in the Country", melancholy "Blackberry Winter" (lyric by Loonis McGlohon) and jazz-ballad arrangement of "S'Gonna Be a Cold Day", with McGlohon's lyrics still exerting supremacy over the melody.

Blinkoff produced and arranged *Girl Gone Wilder!* with longtime collaborator John Ballinger, who also plays guitar on some of the tracks. In some cases, the two replicated the style and feel of originals, such as the 1967 pop version of "Mimosa and Me" (lyric by William Engvick) introduced by Jackie and Roy, as well as a Latin-infused "Moon and Sand" (lyric by Morty Blitz), introduced in 1941 by Xavier Cugat and his Waldorf-Astoria Orchestra. The tempo matches the original's conjuring of sultry swinging nights under swaying palms. In other instances, deliberate departures were made from the originals, including a swinging "Crazy in the Heart" (Engvick), miles away from the lush romantic ballad sung in 1956 by Peggy Lee. Likewise, Wilder's best-known tune "I'll Be Around" is sung with a chirpy up-beat, infusing an optimistic '50s-style hopefulness into an otherwise desperate sentiment.

Wilder's sometimes eccentric composing offered a melodic and harmonic syntax favored by jazz musicians, as presented in a lilting "Be a Child" (with Marshall Barer and lyric by Loonis McGlohon). Blinkoff and Farrell swing their way through the number, pausing to offer light scat on their progress through it. Wilder the lyricist is showcased in his later addition of words to the music of trumpeter Thad Jones' 1969 composition "A Child Is Born". One can almost picture him listening to the extended piano intro opening up Jones' penetrating melodic lines and harmonics (backed by the Mel Lewis Orchestra), knowing this beautiful tune demanded a lyric to make it whole.

For more information, visit susannahb.com





Travellin' Light
Alvin Schwaar/Banz Oester/Noé Franklé (Leo)
by Marco Cangiano

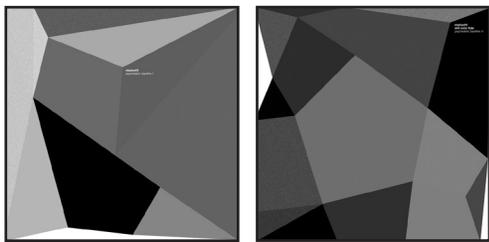
This is a somewhat surprising release from Leo Records, as it features a program of well-known jazz standards. It also marks the debut of pianist Alvin Schwaar and drummer Noé Franklé (veteran bassist Bänz Oester has been active since the '80s). It is a love affair between an interactive trio and a handful of compositions by legendary figures such as John Coltrane ("Big Nick"), Bill Evans ("Very Early") and Herbie Hancock ("I Have a Dream"). The fact that two out of eight pieces were penned by Duke Ellington is quite revealing of the love and respect for the jazz tradition.

The approach is one of deconstructing and reconstructing each piece, almost hiding the main themes and melodies while maintaining the utmost respect for their very essence. Ellington's "Prelude to a Kiss" receives the most recognizable and perhaps respectful treatment whereas Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein's "All The Things You Are" gets an initially atonal and multilayered handling, alluding to the theme halfway through yet disclosing it only at the very end. Each piece is built as a sort of condensed suite, with soft intros, often by warm bass as in "I Have a Dream", followed by tonal improvisations touching upon the main themes, leading to proper codas.

The interplay is remarkable and announced at the outset of the CD with a delicate reading of the Gershwin's "Someone To Watch Over Me". The deliberate pace allows the trio to cherry pick and savor each note while listening to one another, Ellington's "Heaven" from his *First Sacred Concert* being a case in point. Leo Robin-Richard A. Whiting-Newell Chase's "My Ideal" comes across as less structured and leaning toward atonality and open improvisation more in tune with Leo's catalogue. "Very Early" and "Big Nick" play with the respective themes but also try to capture Evans and Coltrane's unique sounds, thanks in particular to eclectic drumming.

The wonderful recording quality catches subtle nuances, which continue to be disclosed after each listen. These are virtuoso players so confident with their approach to the music that they have no need to show off their technical prowess. As emphasized in Gerry Hemingway's thoughtful liner notes, "musicality is a sense that grows and matures over time." This is music that keeps evolving inside your ears.

For more information, visit leorecords.com



Psychedelic Backfire I & II
Elephant9 (Rune Grammofon)
by Phil Freeman

Elephant9 is a Norwegian trio of Ståle Storlækken behind the keys (he plays Hammond organ, Fender Rhodes, Minimoog and Mellotron), Nikolai Hængsle Eilertsen on bass and Torstein Lofthus on drums. This matched set of live albums was recorded during a four-night residency at the Kampen Bistro in Oslo; on the

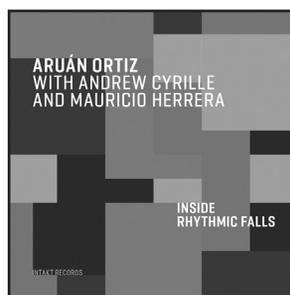
second disc, they're joined by guitarist Reine Fiske of the psychedelic rock band Dungen. (He also appeared on the band's third and fourth studio albums, 2012's *Atlantis* and 2015's *Silver Mountain*.)

Psychedelic Backfire I is a six-track, 71-minute set of pieces from several Elephant9 albums. It begins and ends with tracks from their debut, 2007's *Dodovoodoo*, each radically extended; "I Cover the Mountain Top" swells from 9 minutes to 12 while the title track more than doubles in length from 5 minutes to over 11. In between, "Habanera Rocket" from 2009's *Walk The Nile* and "Farmer's Secret" and "Actionpack1" from 2017's *Greatest Show On Earth*, are performed as well, always at slightly greater length than the studio versions. There's also a 13-minute medley of "Skink" from *Dodovoodoo* and "Fugl Fønix" from *Walk The Nile*.

On *Psychedelic Backfire II*, the jamming becomes even more extreme; two of its four tracks are medleys, combining tracks from *Dodovoodoo* and *Atlantis* with ones from *Walk The Nile* and the shortest piece is 14:05, the longest 18:46. The difference between the two albums is the difference between the initial Larry Young/Jack Bruce lineup of Tony Williams Lifetime and the Mark II version of Deep Purple, with Ritchie Blackmore, Jon Lord, Roger Glover and Ian Paice. The level of power and fury is always intense, but the duels between guitar and keyboards give it a little extra kick.

This is music meant to be heard at top volume. Storlækken is pushing his battery of keyboards deep into the red, bass is a massive throbbing rumble and Lofthus is not just nonstop but positively manic, like a cross between Ginger Baker and John Bonham. When Fiske joins the band, he has to struggle to carve out a space for himself at times; on "Skink/Fugl Fønix", his approach is noisy and yet still somehow overly restrained. By the album-closing "Freedom's Children/John Tinnick", though, he's in sync with his bandmates as they launch skyward in full "Highway Star" mode.

For more information, visit runegrammofon.com



Inside Rhythmic Falls
Aruán Ortiz (Intakt)
by Robert Bush

From the very opening strains of the hypnotic "Lucero Mundo" from pianist Aruán Ortiz' newest album one is drawn into a different world. It features a poem written by Ortiz and narrated by the voices of Emilene Michel, Marlene Ramirez-Cancio and the composer paying tribute to the African diaspora from the Congo to his native island of Cuba. The piano often seems less dominant than in traditional settings. On the opener, the poetry is dramatically offset by the almost magical drums of the masterful Andrew Cyrille, who shares wisdom and insight befitting his long tenure as one of the world's finest percussionists.

"Conversations With The Oaks" is a livewire discussion between the leader of the session and Cyrille and literally explodes into the air with nervous, jangling energy. Ortiz evokes the spirit of Thelonious Monk and, especially, Cecil Taylor, whom Cyrille drummed for in the '60s-70s.

Percussionist Mauricio Herrera joins the ensemble for the mysterious "Marimbula's Mood" and it is amazing to experience the sense of patient unity each man brings to this music. Over the sparkling upper register of piano, Cyrille taps a complex series of rhythmic data into "Golden Voice", transforming that

data into one of the highlight moments on this session.

The funeral chords of "De Cantos y Naningos" and the glacial tempo bring out the tasteful brushstrokes of Cyrille, creating a delicious tension that never really resolves. The group becomes a trio again on the first part of the title track; there are seemingly infinite layers of cowbells, hand-drums and trap set converging to transmit an intricate message. Another highlight comes on "Argelier's Disciple". Returning to the bracing duet format, Cyrille and Ortiz explore the episodic piece with full commitment. It flashes from violent combativeness on one extreme (definitely recalling the drummer's exchanges with Taylor) to a beautiful and delicate choreography on the other.

Ortiz has definitely come a long way in the creative music world since he arrived in the U.S. more than 15 years ago. Adding Cyrille to the equation yields exponential benefits.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch



mikroPULS
Gebhard Ullmann, Hans Lüdemann, Oliver Potratz,
Eric Schaefer (Intuition)
by Robert Iannapolo

Saxophonist/clarinetist Gebhard Ullmann is an explorer, willing to jump in at the deep end to see what happens. He has always been instrumentally at the top of his game with a rich tone and willingness to extend the range of his instrument(s) as much as he can. He assembles excellent groups (Basement Research, Conference Call, Clarinet Trio, BassX3) and works in duet formats with pianist Achim Kaufmann, drummer Tyshawn Sorey, singer Almut Kuhne and others.

Which brings us to his latest release. It grew out of his trio Das Kondensat with bassist Oliver Potratz and drummer Eric Schaefer, a group that altered its texture and tonality through electronics. In the '90s, Ullmann heard saxophonist Joe Maneri and was fascinated by his use of microtonality. That approach began seeping its way into his playing, another tool in his instrumental arsenal. Coincidentally, an old musical cohort, pianist Hans Ludemann, had also been dealing with microtonality. Ullmann asked him to join the group he was forming to compose, explore and improvise with microtonality. Hence, *mikroPULS* (the capitalized portion formed from each member's last name).

Initially, the approach can be a bit disorienting, as opener "Flutist With Hat And Shoe" demonstrates; a brooding ballad from Ullmann's book (first recorded in 1999), everything initially sounds off-kilter, especially with its composer playing "virtual piano", a computer-programmed keyboard tuned to quarter-tones used in conjunction with acoustic piano. But once the ears adjust, the sound becomes quite effective. The intro to Schaefer's "Head Quarter", with its carefully placed tones, sounds like everyone is playing in the space between the notes. But it works. Perhaps the most arresting moment occurs on Potratz' "Human Body Upgrade", swirling interludes of Ullmann and Ludemann duetting over the rhythm section's sporadic driving beat. "F.J.D.", a wry rewriting of Eddie Harris' "Freedom Jazz Dance", proves that even with quarter-tones, this group can sound funky. Ullmann has put out more than his share of great albums but the more one hears *mikroPULS*, it sounds like one of his best.

For more information, visit challengerecords.com

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Fred Staton
Photo by Richard Corman

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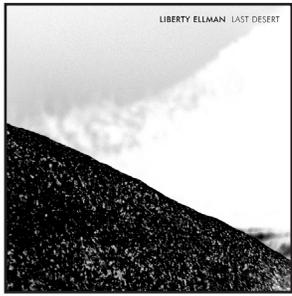
Land of the Black Squirrels: A Bronx Boheme Novel
Mwalim (Thirty-Three Enterprises)
by John Pietaro

With its roots in the African American storytelling tradition, *Land of the Black Squirrels* builds original urban folk tales of Bronx and Harlem creatives into the basic structure of a novel. Mwalim, a playwright, musician and poet as well as Dartmouth professor, threads together intriguing stories spanning decades. Using the social awakening of the late '60s, with its political unrest and ethnic enlightenment as hub and anchor, he spins tales reaching into both chronological directions, dipping into 1955, the '70s, '80, '90s and beyond. The generations of artists within center around the character of Calvin "Oba" Bey, a drummer, painter and leader of a cultural center. The reader experiences the musical maturity of Bey, his touring, marriage and fatherhood as well as his necessary day job and the growth of his New World Arts Academy. Although the model is not immediately apparent, cultural-educational programs of the AACM, Black Panther Party, BAG, Horace Tapscott's UGMAA, the Young Lords, Black Arts Movement and The East surely stand as inspiration. But *Land of the Black Squirrels* presents a view into the place(s) and time(s) while reaching well beyond the arts. Customs of African American, Caribbean and Latinx people, from meals and family life to prayer and dress, are movingly explored.

Overall, the strains of historic fact, fiction and legend sit comfortably together, painting a tapestry most prideful. Mention of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Max Roach and Amiri Baraka are expected, but passages that directly tie such jazz giants to historic figures (Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Ture) and Mwalim's own creations often elevate this account to the educational. His description of the return to New York City of "B Man" Berris, a bandleader of Mwalim's character universe, after 21 years abroad during "...the midst of madness that was the so-called Civil Rights Movement..." is a tour through Black Liberation, racial struggle and gentrification. His life in jazz brings him through vital points in the music's history, from Café Society to hardbop while other characters carry the story into the purview of hip-hop, dance music and funk.

The inclusion of wide-ranging and numerous historic details, however, places this book a little too closely into the breadth of maximalism. Unfortunately, for an inviting people's history, this can be hard to digest, particularly in the company of lengthy, detailed accounts better suited to live storytelling. The inclusion of lists of dinner items, furnishings, scents and sights, which, left to conjecture or in small numbers important to the reading experience, can become obstructive when displayed in a written outpouring. One can easily imagine such intricacies igniting emotion and tension within Mwalim's presentations at the Nuyorican Poets Café (I'm looking forward to catching his next appearance). But throughout the tradition, such forays into breathlessness of narrative best grasps an audience by way of its bond with the storyteller.

For more information, visit thirty-threepages.com



Last Desert
Liberty Ellman (Pi)
by Thomas Conrad

Liberty Ellman is a premier guitar sideman. He has worked for major bandleaders like Henry Threadgill and Vijay Iyer and has been important to leading-edge projects like Myra Melford's Snowy Egret and Stephan Crump's Rosetta Trio. In 23 years he has recorded only five albums under his own name. *Last Desert* was exactly the same personnel as its 2015 predecessor, *Radiate*: Steve Lehman (alto saxophone), Jonathan Finlayson (trumpet), Jose Davila (tuba), Crump (bass) and Damion Reid (drums).

Ellman and Davila have played in Threadgill's Zoid and *Last Desert* sounds somewhat like a Threadgill project. It proceeds from similar aesthetic attitudes: quirky polyphony; episodic development; jerky, nervous rhythmic energy (with big off-kilter bumping beats from tuba). Also like Threadgill's music, *Last Desert* is easier to admire than to love.

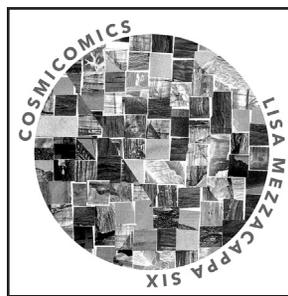
Admiration starts with the proficiency of these players, who execute Ellman's challenging concepts with precision and who, when given their moments, contribute fierce individual creativity. The point of Ellman's music is ensemble form. Instead of solos there are quick, abrupt forays and many are striking. Lehman

is given to passionate jagged outbursts (e.g., the second part of the title track). Ellman offers one strangely lyrical guitar vignette after another. Finlayson's improvisations are tight, complete set pieces, made up on the spot.

But *Last Desert* is for listeners who prioritize intellectual rigor over emotional exposure. Pieces like "Rubber Flowers" and "Doppler" are like puzzles. The listener's job is to figure out how the juxtaposed parts fit together. Tunes lurch and double back, generating separate but related intermittent lines of thought from six advanced thinkers. Arcane counterpoint and austere harmonies emerge. There are many starts and few conclusions. On the other hand, a piece like "The Sip" feels like a five-minute intro that perversely refuses to begin. To enjoy this music you must be stimulated, rather than frustrated, by unresolved paradoxes.

One subject on whom all listeners should agree is Davila. If his deadpan tuba ironies do not make you smile, you're a grouch.

For more information, visit pirecordings.com



Cosmicomics
Lisa Mezzacappa Six (Queen Bee)
by Jim Motavalli

San Francisco bassist Lisa Mezzacappa was inspired to write the music on *Cosmicomics* by the imaginative '60s Italo Calvino short story collection of the same name, which explores the boundaries of science, including how we came to exist. It's what happened when she allowed his work "to fully inhabit my mind for a year."

The music could be the soundtrack to a *Cosmicomics* film. It's stunning, dense, brilliantly through-composed and up to the minute. Three "Signs" pieces (from "A Sign in Space") consider the notion of a slowly revolving galaxy and a creature trying—although the effort is futile, as post-modern thought tells us—to leave some clear sign of its existence therein. The composer describes these entries as "conducted improvisations" and that's what they sound like.

John Zorn is a reference point, but although the pieces are shifty, they make their moves less abruptly; listen to how in "All at One Point" the music chugs along organically and then, halfway through, a theme emerges and we're sent spiraling upward. It's completely consistent with the theme of the story (and science), which is about the Big Bang and the expansion of the universe. "The Form of Space" also has a big, swaggering head and one can imagine the Sun Ra Arkestra marching the perimeter of the old Five Spot but if you expect it to break into a series of solos or a consistent, swinging beat, you're not listening to the plan.

Aaron Bennett (tenor saxophone), John Finkbeiner (guitar), Mark Clifford (vibraphone), Tim Perkis (electronics) and Jordan Glenn (drums) serve the music and express themselves through what's on the page and it's hard to imagine a more sympathetic group. Nobody grandstands, everybody listens and it works as one enthralling entity.

This a major work. It deserves to be recognized in the pantheon, which is much harder to do these days with so many independent releases and COVID-19 distracting everybody. Then throw in sexism. But if only one record makes it through the static of 2020 to your ears, let it be this one.

For more information, visit queenbeerecords.bandcamp.com

ON SCREEN



Up From the Streets
New Orleans: The City of Music
Written and Directed by Michael Murphy
(Eagle Rock Entertainment)
by Tom Greenland

Up From the Streets is Michael Murphy's loving tribute to the Crescent City, cradle of early jazz civilization. Like Ken Burns' *Jazz* or David Simon and Eric Overmyer's HBO series *Treme*, music, especially jazz, is the central focus, though through that lens we discover a cultural gumbo—that utterly unique motley of French, Spanish, African, Cuban and Native American influences—that is New Orleans.

Host Terence Blanchard (who is also an Executive Producer alongside Geoff Kempin and Terry Shand and is served as the film's Musical Director sets the tone, walking us through the neighborhoods and historic sites, archival photos, film clips and a long line of local interviewees, often playing his trumpet.

The narrative begins during the slave trade, in Place des Nègrès (aka Congo Square), where Sunday drumming sessions led to the music(s) now known as jazz. Along the way, the film reflects on: Cuban syncopation; second-line parades and drumming styles; early female musicians (Irma Thomas is heard in a few notable performances); Mardi Gras Indians; gospel, blues, rumba, mambo, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, traditional jazz, funk, brass band and bounce music; semi-mythical figures like Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton and Louis Armstrong; Storyville; racism, segregation (both historical and current), Plessy vs. Ferguson and the erasure of Creole status; legendary pianists like Professor Longhair, Allen Toussaint, Dr. John and James Booker; clubs like Dew Drop Inn (aka "The Groove Room") and Tipitina's; famous hit factories like Cosimo Matassa's J&M Recording Studio and Toussaint's Sea-Saint Studios; and the impact of Hurricane Katrina.

We hear eloquent testimony from Wynton Marsalis, Blanchard and music journalist/former editor of *Vibe* and *Spin* Magazines Alan Light (among others) about the lingering presence of Armstrong. We learn from Branford Marsalis of Armstrong's sly contumacy in changing the words of Clarence Muse-Leon René-Otis René's "When It's Sleepytime Down South" to "When it's slavery time down south" on a 1932 recording. We learn from Blanchard that The Beatles' solo guitar ballad "Blackbird" was inspired by the American Civil Rights Movement. We realize, hearing him play his "Yes We Can Can" on solo acoustic piano, that Toussaint was even funkier than The Pointer Sisters.

Though locals are justifiably proud of its past, the film makes it clear that New Orleans music is, foremost, a living tradition, looking futurewards for the next "jazz".

For more information, visit eagle-rock.com. This film is being screened virtually through Jun. 15th at cinemas across the country. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit watch.eventive.org/upfromthestreets.



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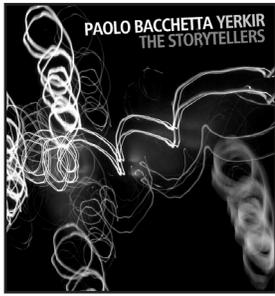
Dear friends,

Until we can gather together again, Saint Peter's Church is broadcasting past concerts on Fridays at 4:00 ET on Facebook and YouTube. We alternate classical and jazz programming. Please join us!

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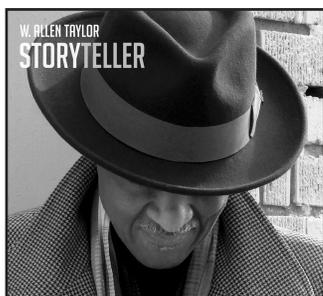
The Storytellers
Paolo Bacchetta Yerkir (Auand)
 by John Pietaro

As part of a moving homage to the late Paul Motian, Italian guitarist Paolo Bacchetta devised *The Storytellers*, an album featuring works inspired or composed by the late, celebrated drummer-composer. His trio Yerkir, (Armenian for earth) completed by organ player Giulio Stermieri and drummer Zeno De Rossi, well illustrates the multiple faces of Motian's career.

Right from the top, "White Magic", a churning blast of instrumental rock from 1982, takes the message and grit further than Motian envisioned, adding organ blasts to tear holes in the audio terrain. It's fair to say that downtown's post-punk confluence is here resurrected to its obvious conclusion. Throughout, guitar sings, slashes, whispers and lures. Stermieri and De Rossi not only complement his sizzling lines, but also cast a network of empathic sound, at once agitating and terse.

Spacious cuts like the pensive "Abacus" (Motian) and sleepily restless "Chinese Café" (Stermieri) paint much of the atmosphere one associates with Bill Evans, Motian's best loved and remembered employer. While the organ is a wholly different animal than the acoustic piano (particularly Evans'), Stermieri's touch, executed with the delicacy of a surgeon, lends itself well to this effort. And while the drummer's role here could be daunting—Motian's purposeful tacits, sensitive drive and visceral awareness put him into a unique category among modern drum artists—De Rossi displays considerable fluidity and chops with masterful dynamics and undying patience, paying tribute but never copying. Makes sense that in *The Storytellers*, he offers gripping commentary (listen for this in his own "Sournoise" and "Jean"). Bacchetta's "La Danza Macabra" is the standout, an uptempo waltz, which brings to mind Motian's brilliant trio with Joe Lovano and Bill Frisell. The guitarist's overdrive and burn easily share space with Frisell-like arabesques as Stermieri's swells inspire De Rossi to climb over and above. Yes, you want this album.

For more information, visit auand.com



Storyteller
W. Allen Taylor (s/r)
 by Marco Cangiano

This is W. Allen Taylor's much-awaited debut CD. His activity has been centered on Bay and DC area venues, thus preventing wider audiences from appreciating his singing. He has been labeled as "a jazz singer from the old school...combining originality with a style reminiscent of the golden age of jazz singing." The list of his vocal influences includes Jon Hendricks and Eddie Jefferson, among others, but traces of Mark Murphy can also be found. This makes Taylor one of the regrettably dwindling number of vocalese practitioners. His natural swing and taste allow him to

revisit well-throttled standards with gusto and originality. Much of the credit though is due to his partners. Saxophonist Lionel Lyles delivers a number of very compelling solos and Chris Grasso's piano provides tasteful comping that aptly complements Taylor's singing. Bassist James King and drummer Mark Prince come across as true royalty in driving and supporting the proceedings with firm hands.

The material could not be more challenging but Taylor and his partners surf through it with confidence and concision—the average length is slightly above four minutes. From the opener, Miles Davis' "So What", through Andy Razaf-Don Redman's "Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You" and Sonny Rollins' "Doxy" there is an underlying blues feeling shared among the group. But Taylor's mastery of ballads such as Bobby Troup's "You're Looking at Me" and Billy Strayhorn's "Day Dream" is equally impressive thanks to his capacity to interpret the text (he had a long career in theater prior to rediscovering music as his passion).

The highlight is a heartfelt version of Charles Mingus' "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat". Introduced by Lyles' short statement on tenor, the immortal melody rolls slowly over the gently bouncing rhythm section until tenor reemerges with a very inspired solo, reminiscent of Booker Ervin's underrated balladry, prior to Taylor's coda. The CD is wrapped up by an uptempo version of Dizzy Gillespie's "A Night in Tunisia" with Hendricks' lyrics in which Taylor's scat-singing is featured once again. A welcome debut by an artist who definitely deserves wider exposure and appreciation.

For more information, visit watjazz.com



The Pearls
Ellery Eskelin/Christian Weber/Michael Griener
 (Intakt)
 by Steven Loewy

With a substantial history of subverting the way in which we hear music, saxophonist Ellery Eskelin has made a career of stretching and twisting melodic lines in a wholly individualistic style that substantiates an innovative vision. His immediately recognizable singular tone, approach and fluid lines are in evidence on *The Pearls*, a sort of sequel to this trio's earlier Intakt album *Sensations of Tone*. In contradistinction, *The Pearls* focuses on time: with the self-deprecating qualification that Eskelin is a musician and not a philosopher, he asks, "...[D]oes time exist? Is timekeeping itself time? Are we time?" In this he is more astute than he realizes, mimicking the famous proposition put forth by British thinker J.M.E. McTaggart that time is an illusion.

Eskelin's questions are addressed with a mix of free pieces mixed among upbeat older tunes, such as the title track by Jelly Roll Morton, a couple of eccentric rags, including one by Scott Joplin, and "Jive by Five", a popular swing melody penned by Harry "Sweets" Edison and performed with verve and panache.

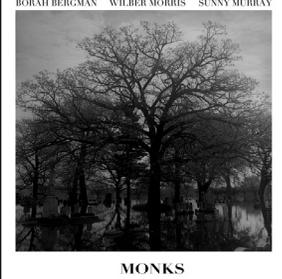
Eskelin's performances are characterized by a floating quality, where he produces cascading flurries of notes at low volume, often at remarkable speed and belying any preset time signatures. This is evident on several tracks, including the opening "ABC", in which his playing is tight, swift, soft and fluid, and the closing "Black Drop", where a delicate opening slowly advances to just above a whisper. Strong contributions from bassist Christian Weber and drummer Michael

Griener undergird the saxophonist's escapades, an anchor over which he buzzes timelessly.

With a tip of the hat to Henry Threadgill, Eskelin navigates the two rags without eviscerating their essence, retaining their toe-tapping qualities while expanding them just enough. "Eccentric Rag", in particular, is played at an eccentrically fast pace: short, fun and exhausting. To sense how Eskelin totally modernizes the original, listen to the seminal 1914 version performed by Russell Robinson, its composer. Primarily by manipulating time, Eskelin takes the piece to a new dimension, making it his own.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch

UNEARTHED GEM



BORAH BERGMAN WILBER MORRIS SUNNY MURRAY

MONKS

Monks
Borah Bergman/Wilber Morris/Sunny Murray
 (Somerealmusic)
 by Pierre Crépon

Pianist Borah Bergman began his career solitarily in the '70s-80s, before moving to duets and trios. It was then that he organized this 1996 New York studio date with bassist Wilber Morris and drummer Sunny Murray. Once the session had been completed, the DAT masters were found to be overloaded beyond repair. Recently discovered safety tapes, salvaged through extensive engineering work, made it possible to hear the music for the first time in excellent quality, though none of the principals are with us any longer.

The bop pioneer's influence is such in many corners—brilliant and not so brilliant—that the "Monk album" is almost a mandatory stop in a discography. But although entirely dedicated to Monk material, this session has nothing to do with formulaic exercise. "A Free Association Peregrination in the Fecund and Funky Fields of Monkdom", the title of the sole non-Monk piece, indicates the general direction.

Bergman is constantly "exploding the tunes into fragments, re-assembling, expanding and abstracting," writes producer Joseph Chonto. It holds true for the collective work of the trio, which often happens at extreme pace, for stretches of time of a median 20 minutes, Bergman's crossed-hands ambidexterity redoubling the relentlessness. Yet the pianist does not eschew short motives to reroute the music's flow to stunning effect while the drums and bass thrust forward. Murray is far too infrequently credited for the diversity of his playing; he is here in full deployment mode, bordering on the combative, but the two opening takes of "Well, You Needn't" show clearly his capacity for nuance, his cymbal magic happening in full effect only the second time around. Morris manages the arduous task of finding the appropriate sonic space to make his bass sing while holding a constantly strong bottom. Cooler numbers provide welcome opportunities to focus on his playing.

The session is presented in a fashion usually reserved to the masters of Monk's era: in its entirety, incomplete takes and studio chatter included. *Monks* contains a lost album, but what would have made the cut is left up in the air. It only enriches this significant addition to all three players' discographies.

For more information, contact somerealmusic@earthlink.net

BOXED SET



Momentum 4 (Consequent Duos: 2015>2019)
Ken Vandermark (Audiographic)
by Steven Loewy

Chicago-based reedplayer Ken Vandermark is an original, adventurous and prolific performer with a personalized approach to free improvisation. This limited edition five-CD boxed set is his first recorded duos with all but British percussionist Paul Lytton. *Momentum 4* is a masterful achievement that provides several hours of fascinating and critical listening.

The first disc is a 2015 studio recording with Lytton. It is a tour de force, familiarity permitting them to stretch, anticipate and explore as Lytton pushes and colors Vandermark's remarkable flow of ideas. While each track rewards and along the way features a variety of clarinets and saxophones, colored by substantial diversity in rhythm, volume and technique, closer "ESS 1F" is particularly effective, opening with a quiet drone-like dirge on tenor, which builds slowly, by way of a drum roll, slap tonguing and myriad other strategies, to an intense crescendo, ending suddenly.

The two lengthy live duo tracks with Ikue Mori were part of Vandermark's second residency at The Stone in 2018. Her fascinating swirls and electronics are a wonderful canvas for Vandermark and he accepts Mori's challenges head-on. Vandermark sometimes sits out to let Mori work her magic, as she swerves, veers and flutters; when they interact, Vandermark transforms his horn into an oscillating machine, tempered by the deep, woody tone of the clarinet. Each listen reveals something new overlooked earlier. The end of the second track highlights Vandermark's altissimo lurches, which intertwine with Mori's scintillating tones like the peripatetic leaves of an ivy bush.

The third CD features three pieces with pianist Kris Davis also from The Stone in 2018. The duo was supposed to be a trio with drummer Paal Nilssen-Love, who missed the performance when his plane was rerouted due to poor weather. On "Stone 2A", Vandermark sports an aggressive clarinet, Davis focusing on extended technique, rapidly repeating notes and occasionally intervallic jumps as well as the inside plucking of strings. Vandermark is on fire, focusing on the upper registers, his sinewy presence wrestling with Davis. "Stone 2B" opens softly and languidly, as Vandermark emphasizes his brawny appeal on tenor, Davis eschews syncopation and Vandermark weaves lovely, full lines on the edge of explosion as the volume increases, the piece eventually ending as softly as it began. Over the course of more than 20 minutes, closer "Stone 3" summarizes their close confluence, Vandermark pummeling his instruments and Davis pounding the keys, leading to exhilarating results. Along the way and especially toward the end, there are varieties of

tone, volume, emotion and sound.

William Parker and Vandermark go back a long way, having performed together for the first time in 1999 as part of the Peter Brötzmann Chicago Tentet. As a duo at The Stone in 2018, the bassist works his usual enchantments with an accessible full-bodied tone and a swinging style, which supports Vandermark's saxophone and clarinet in what are probably the jazziest solos in the collection. There is plenty of time for both to strut their stuff, with snippets of melody, some trills and falsetto notes from Vandermark and brilliant work from Parker. The third piece, the superb "Eventual", written for Sunny Murray who died a month before the performance, is the only one among the five discs springing from written composition, bass and saxophone offering a warm and lovely walk, embracing the past and anticipating the future.

Drummer Hamid Drake and Vandermark have been playing together for more than two decades, even once as a duo in 2017 when bassist Kent Kessler's plane was delayed. For this 2019 studio performance, the two come together for seven pieces of varied colors. Drake is a powerful performer, sporting a muscular kit that lights a fire under Vandermark, whether on clarinet or saxophones. The latter switches among his reeds and gives Drake plenty of richly deserved solo space, the master percussionist entrancing with his wide palette. Each of the focused, comparatively short tracks is a minor gem. Drake shows himself a worthy partner whose strong listening skills make this last collaboration a fitting ending to a gorgeous collection.

For more information, visit audiographicrecords.com

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JOHN BAILEY

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FRR johnbailey.com

ON THIS DAY

by Andrey Henkin



Paris Concert
Gerry Mulligan (Pacific Jazz)
June 1st, 1954

Trombonist Bob Brookmeyer started working with baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan in February 1954 in New York City. A quartet completed by bassist Bill Anthony and drummer Frank Isola was in Boston in April. Then Red Mitchell took over on bass and this was the band that went on a short European tour in June (actually a Parisian residency at Salle Pleyel with a Swiss date in the middle), of which this is first night. Of the ten tunes played, Mulligan wrote three ("Utter Chaos", his closing theme, played twice), the rest jazz standards.



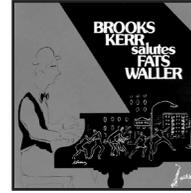
Space Flight
Sam Lazar (Argo)
June 1st, 1960

The liner notes, written by E. Rodney Jones of KXLW-St. Louis, are effusive about the talents and potential of organ player Sam Lazar, whose debut album this is. Yet Lazar would make only two more albums, both for Argo, through 1962, then disappear. The title track of this date first came out in 1959 as a single on Cawthron; there are seven other Lazar tunes, one standard and a tune by Willie Dixon who, interestingly, plays bass here. Jones also devotes two lines to the LP's guitarist: a 24-year-old Grant Green in one of his earliest sessions.



Unity
Frank Wright (ESP-Disk')
June 1st, 1974

Released some 32 years after the fact, this CD documents an appearance by the Frank Wright Quartet at the Moers Festival in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The band, completed by pianist Bobby Few, bassist Alan Silva and drummer Muhammad Ali (Rashied's brother, whose photos of the leader are used herein), had been in existence for a little over two years at this point, yet seemingly disbanding shortly thereafter until a 1978 reunion concert in Detmold, Germany. The CD is the title track in two parts, 27:28 and 29 minutes, respectively.



Salutes Fats Waller
Brooks Kerr (Blue Wail)
June 1st, 1981

While blind pianist Brooks Kerr was most closely associated with his idol/mentor Duke Ellington, touring with the band as a teen, forming a trio with Duke sidemen Russell Procope and Sonny Greer and generally considered the world authority on Ellingtonia, here he fetes a very different pianist, Fats Waller (whose contemporary, Willie "The Lion" Smith was Kerr's childhood teacher). This trio date with bassist George Duvivier and Greer is 11 tunes, including Waller classics like "Honeysuckle Rose" and "Ain't Misbehavin'".



Proverbs and Songs
John Surman (ECM)
June 1st, 1996

This album, British reedplayer John Surman's 14th of 24 albums for ECM since 1979, is one of his most ambitious. Surman sets texts from the Old Testament for himself on baritone and soprano saxophones and bass clarinet, longtime collaborator John Taylor on organ, solo speaker John Curry and the festival chorus (conducted by Howard Moody, with whom Surman would collaborate on 2006's *Rain on the Window*) of Salisbury Cathedral in southern England, where this album was recorded. A uniquely British take on spiritual jazz.

BIRTHDAYS

June 1
†Nelson Riddle 1921-85
†Herbie Lovelle 1924-2009
†Hal McKusick 1924-2012
Lennie Niehaus b.1929
Rossano Sportiello b.1974

June 2
†Ernie Hood 1923-91
†Gildo Mahones 1929-2018
John Pisano b.1931
Pierre Favre b.1937
Irene Schweizer b.1941
Matthew Garrison b.1970
Noah Preminger b.1986

June 3
†Carl Pruitt 1918-1977
†Al Harewood 1923-2014
Phil Nimmons b.1923
†Dakota Staton 1932-2007
†Bob Wallis 1934-91
†Ted Curson 1935-2012
Grachan Moncur III b.1937
Corey Wilkes b.1979

June 4
†Teddy Kotick 1928-86
†Oliver Nelson 1932-75
†Alan Branscombe 1936-86
Mark Whitecage b.1937
Ted Daniel b.1943
Anthony Braxton b.1945
Paquito D'Rivera b.1948
Winard Harper b.1962

June 5
†Kurt Edelhagen 1920-82
†Specs Powell 1922-2007
†Pete Jolly 1932-2004
†Misha Mengelberg 1935-2017
†Jerry Gonzalez 1949-2018

June 6
†Jimmie Lunceford 1902-47
†Raymond Burke 1904-86
†Gil Cuppini 1924-96
†Grant Green 1931-79
Monty Alexander b.1944
†Zbigniew Seifert 1946-79
Paul Lovens b.1949
G. Calvin Weston b.1959

June 7
†Gene Porter 1910-1993
†Tal Farlow 1921-98
†Tina Brooks 1932-74
Norberto Tamburrino b.1964
Devin Gray b.1983

June 8
†Billie Pierce 1907-74
†Erwin Lehn 1919-2010
†Kenny Clare 1929-85
†Bill Watrous 1939-2018
Julie Tippetts b.1947
Uri Caine b.1956

June 9
†Les Paul 1915-2009
†Jimmy Gourley 1926-2008
†Eje Thelin 1938-90
Kenny Barron b.1943
Mick Goodrick b.1945

June 10
†Chink Martin 1886-1981
†Willie Lewis 1905-71
†Dicky Wells 1907-85
†Guy Pedersen 1930-2005
†John Stevens 1940-94
Gary Thomas b.1961
Charnett Moffett b.1967
Jonathan Kreisberg b.1972
Ben Holmes b.1979

June 11
†Clarence "Pine Top" Smith 1904-29
†Shelly Manne 1920-84
†Hazel Scott 1920-81
†Bob Gordon 1928-55
Nils Lindberg b.1933
Bernard "Pretty" Purdie b.1939
Jamaaladeen Tacuma b.1956
Alex Siapiagin b.1967
Assif Tsahar b.1969

June 12
†Marcus Belgrave 1936-2015
Kent Carter b.1939
Chick Corea b.1941
Jesper Lundgaard b.1954
†Geri Allen 1957-2017
Oscar Feldman b.1961
Christian Munthe b.1962
Peter Beets b.1971

June 13
†Charlie Elgar 1885-1973
†Doc Cheatham 1905-97
†Eddie Beal 1910-84
†Phil Bodner 1919-2008
†Attila Zoller 1927-98
†Buddy Catlett 1933-2014
Frank Strozier b.1937
Harold Danko b.1947
Mike Khoury b.1969

June 14
†John Simmons 1918-79
Burton Greene b.1937
Pete Lemer b.1942
Marcus Miller b.1959
Gary Husband b.1960
Diallo House b.1977
Loren Stillman b.1980
Ben Syversen b.1983

June 15
†Allan Reuss 1915-1988
†Erroll Garner 1921-77
†Jaki Byard 1922-99
†Mel Moore 1923-89
Tony Oxley b.1938

June 16
†"Lucky" Thompson 1924-2005
†Clarence Shaw 1926-73
†Joe Thomas 1933-2017
Tom Harrell b.1946
Fredy Studer b.1948
Mike Baggetta b.1979
Ryan Keberle b.1980

June 17
†Lorenzo Holden 1924-87
†Frank E. Jackson, Sr. 1924-2013
Chuck Rainey b.1940
Tom Varner b.1957

June 18
†Sammy Cahn 1913-93
William Hooker b.1946

June 19
†Joe Thomas 1909-86
†Jerry Jerome 1912-2001
†Al Kiger 1932-2013
Chuck Berghofer b.1937
Paul Nieman b.1950
Billy Drummond b.1959
John Hollenbeck b.1968

June 20
†Doc Evans 1907-77
†Lamar Wright 1907-73
†Thomas Jefferson 1920-86
†Eric Dolphy 1928-64
†Joe Venuto 1929-2019
Anders Nilsson b.1974

June 21
†Dewey Jackson 1900-94
†Jamil Nasser 1932-2010
Lalo Schifrin b.1932
†Jon Hiseman 1944-2018
Chuck Anderson b.1947
Eric Reed b.1970

June 22
†Ray Mantilla 1934-2020
Hermeto Pascoal b.1936
Heikki Sarmanto b.1939
Eddie Prevost b.1942
Ed "Milko" Wilson b.1944

June 23
†Eli Robinson 1908-72
†Milt Hinton 1910-2000
†Eddie Miller 1911-91
†Helen Humes 1913-81
†Lance Harrison 1920-2000
†George Russell 1923-2009
†Sahib Shihab 1925-89
†Hank Shaw 1926-2006
Donald Harrison b.1960

June 24
†Charlie Margulis 1903-67
†Manny Albam 1922-2001
†George Gruntz 1932-2013
†Frank Lowe 1943-2003
†Clint Houston 1946-2000
Greg Burk b.1969
†Bernardo Sasseti 1970-2012

June 25
†Johnny Smith 1922-2013
†Bill Russo 1928-2003
Joe Chambers b.1942
Bobby Naughton b.1944
Marian Petrescu b.1970
John Yao b.1977

June 26
†Teddy Grace 1905-92
†Don Lanphere 1928-2003
†Jimmy Deuchar 1930-93
Dave Grusin b.1934
Reggie Workman b.1937
Joey Baron b.1955
Bill Cunliffe b.1956
Mathias Eick b.1979

June 27
†Elmo Hope 1923-67
George Braith b.1939
Todd Herbert b.1970

June 28
†Jimmy Mundy 1907-83
†Arnold Shaw 1909-89
†Gene Traxler 1913-91
†Pete Candoli 1923-2008
Bobby White b.1926
John Lee b.1952
Tierney Sutton b.1963
Aaron Alexander b.1966
Jesse Stacken b.1978

June 29
†Mousey Alexander 1922-88
†Ralph Burns 1922-2001
†Ove Lind 1926-1991
Julian Priester b.1935
Ike Sturm b.1978

June 30
†Harry Shields 1899-1971
†Grady Watts 1908-86
†Lena Horne 1917-2010
†Andrew Hill 1937-2007
Chris Hinze b.1938
Jasper Van't Hof b.1947
Stanley Clarke b.1951
Ken Fowser b.1982



REGGIE WORKMAN
June 26th, 1937

Reggie Workman has been the model for consistency since his earliest dates in 1960 with Gigi Gryce, Duke Jordan and Donald Byrd, appearing on albums in almost every year since. He is notable for his tenures with John Coltrane, Art Blakey, Freddie Hubbard, Lee Morgan, Archie Shepp, Mal Waldron and far too many others to list here. He is one-third of Trio 3 alongside Oliver Lake and Andrew Cyrille, which has released almost a dozen albums since 1997. Then there are his albums as a leader or co-leader since the '70s for Tomato, Denon, Leo, Music & Arts, Strata-East, Postcards, Enja, Evidence, TUM and other imprints. And finally he has had a long career as a respected educator. -AH

CROSSWORD

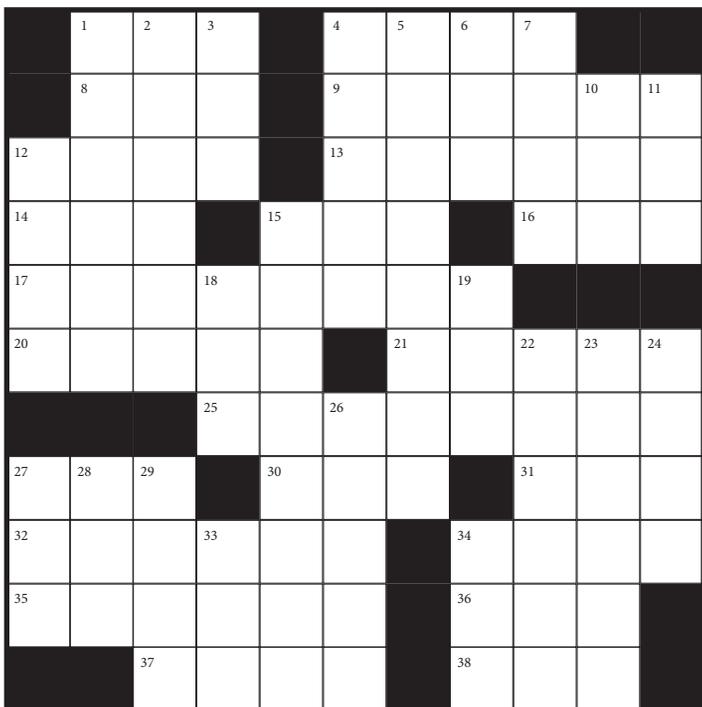
ACROSS

- Peter Brötzmann label
- '70s Japanese saxophonist Kaoru and '50s Canadian saxophonist Aaron
- Mr. Carter to you
- Not staccato
- Exit
- Spooky Albert Ayler album
- Charles Tolliver's Music ____
- Austrian label releasing albums by Archie Shepp, Jim Pepper and others
- 1988 Fred Hersch/Steve La Spina/Jeff Hirshfield Red Records album...and so on
- This guitarist collaborated with Medeski Martin & Wood beginning in 1998
- With The, Miles Davis show closer
- John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter have this in common
- Mwandishi trombonist
- Erstwhile Wayne Shorter keyboard player Rachel, if she was from England?
- This rock band was signed to Fantasy Records (abbr.)
- 1972 Barry Guy Incus double-album
- Jazz often does this in terms of strong emotions
- Trumpeter Bob or bassist Dave
- Bassist Bill Wood took this Hindu honorific
- Early Megadeth drummer Samuelson who started his musical career in jazz fusion

- Repeated endings
- Oslo jazz club

DOWN

- Trumpeter Jaimie
- Art Ensemble of Chicago's Mitchell
- Jane Bunnett home prov.
- Spyro Gyra was named for a type of this
- 1971 Lol Coxhill Dandelion album *Ear Of* ____
- Third Tony Williams Lifetime album
- Use this if you want to get your demo tape back (abbr.)
- Trio of A.R. Penck, Frank Wollny and Heinz Wollny
- Pianist Peterson to his friends?
- Where guests and press can be found
- Like many a soprano saxophone solo
- This label reissued the first two releases by 1 Across
- Lonnie and John
- Like some free jazz
- A pork-pie hat is not one of these
- Type of Cuban guitar
- Andrea Centazzo label
- Resonance Records producer Feldman
- He had a Chosen Six
- A label is only as good as this (abbr.)
- Repeated, a Cuban dance
- Non-root notes of a Cmaj7 chord



By Andrey Henkin

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