



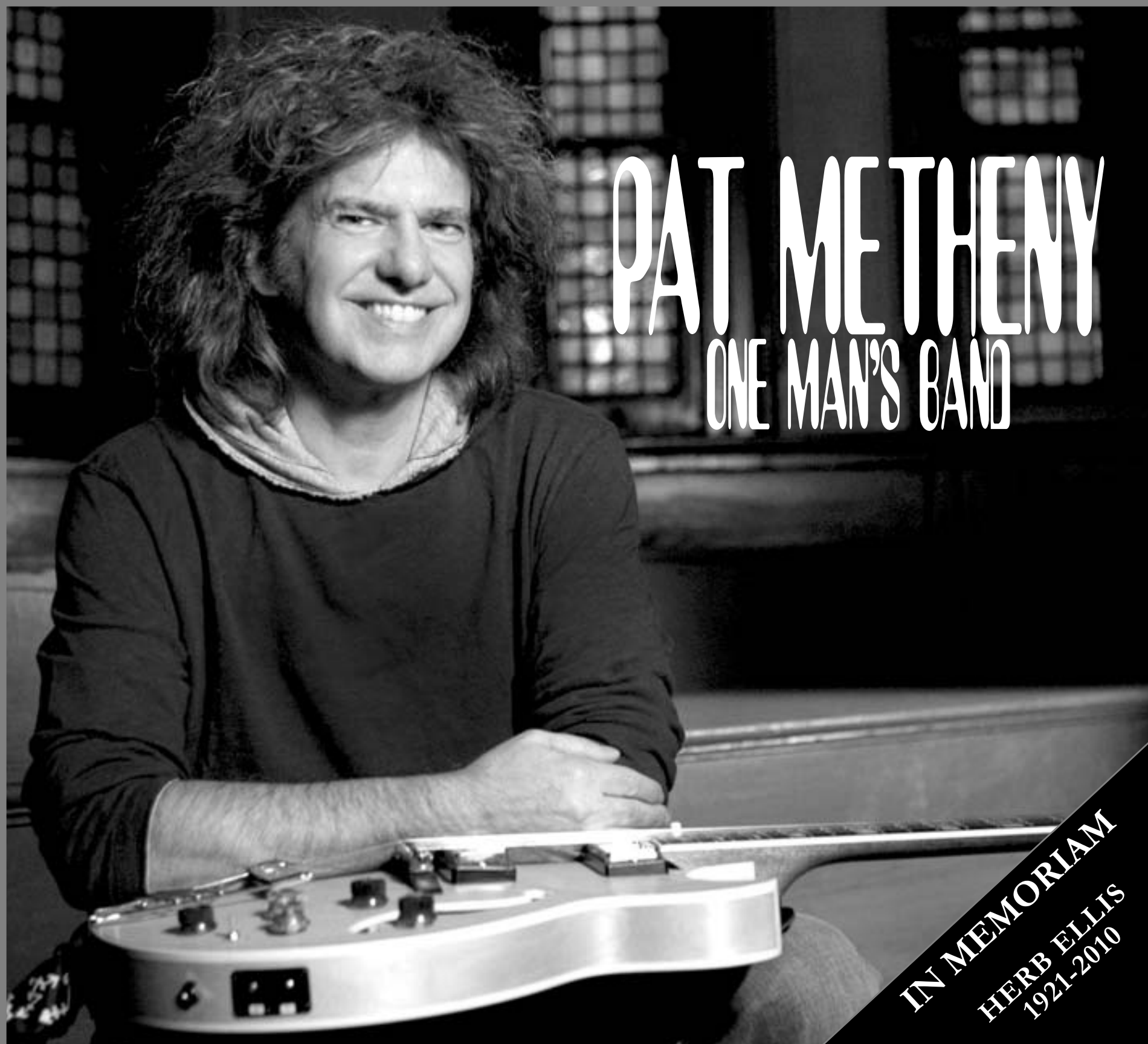
# all about jazz

NEW YORK

May 2010 | No. 97

Your FREE Monthly Guide to the New York Jazz Scene

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HERB ELLIS  
1921-2010

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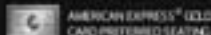
THE BLUE METHOD	SAT, MAY 1
THE REVELATIONS FEAT. TRE WILLIAMS	FRI, MAY 7
@ BB KING BLUES CLUB: OTTMAR LIEBERT & LUNA NEGRA	FRI, MAY 7
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K.J. DENHERT	SUN, MAY 9
JUILLIARD JAZZ BRUNCH: "WEST COAST SOUND"	SUN, MAY 16
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AMY LONDON QUARTET	SUN, MAY 30

## MONDAY NIGHT SERIES

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McCOY TYNER TRIO	MON, MAY 17
MAYA AZUCENA	MON, MAY 24
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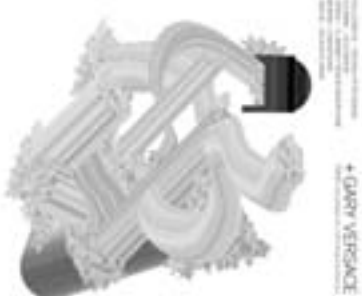
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**MAY 17**  
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*55 Bar (West Village)*

**MAY 18**  
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*Cornelia St. Cafe (West Village)*

**MAY 20**  
Search and Restore Presents  
**Dan Weiss Trio**  
*45 Bleecker (NoHo)*

**MAY 27**  
Inside the Whale Presents  
**Shakers-n-Bakers**  
**Allison Miller's BOOM TIC BOOM**  
**Gutbucket**  
**Father Figures**  
*Littlefield (Gowanus)*

**Pete Robbins' siLent Z**  
*siLent Z live*  
(Hate Laugh Music)  
**STREET DATE: MAY 25**

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Presented by Search and Restore

**MAY 28**  
*Tea Lounge (Park Slope)*

**MAY 29**  
*Cornelia St. Cafe (West Village)*





# all about jazz

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Uri Gurvich

Lest one needs a reminder of the globalization of the world in general and music in particular, last month's eruption of a volcano under Iceland's Eyjafjallajokull glacier was a particularly effective one. Lost in all the news reports of stranded travelers on both sides of the Atlantic were the many musicians whose tour plans were disrupted by the thousands of cancelled flights. The modern musician is a world traveller by necessity in the 21st century; there just aren't enough audiences in any one city for players not to tour. And given how long it takes to book these overseas gigs (in either direction), the effect of this recent natural disaster may be devastating to some artists. That we can't control nature is becoming increasingly obvious but what we can do is make our best effort to see live music as much as possible.

In other sad news, we report on the passing of guitar legend Herb Ellis (Aug. 4th, 1921 - Mar. 28th, 2010). The impact of his work in many situations but perhaps most famously as a long-tenured member of pianist Oscar Peterson's trio with bassist Ray Brown is still felt today. Though it is a sad duty, we present one of our In Memoriam spreads with remembrances from those who knew and loved this great artist. And for those readers who might be in Los Angeles on May 8th, a huge tribute concert will take place at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

But jazz keeps going; that is its strength. Our coverage this month includes features on guitarist Pat Metheny (On the Cover), who brings his certainly unique Orchestrionics 'band' to Town Hall; bassist Eddie Gomez (Interview), playing two weeks at Blue Note in memory of his former boss Bill Evans and a rare two-night appearance by seminal Detroit saxophonist Faruq Z. Bey (Artist Feature) at Issue Project Room. Our Megaphone this month is by Clean Feed Records label head Pedro Costa in advance of that imprint's annual festival. And of course more CD reviews and concert listings than you can shake a springtime-blooming stick at.

We'll see you out there...

Laurence Donohue-Greene, *Managing Editor*

Andrey Henkin, *Editorial Director*

*On the cover: Pat Metheny (Photography by Jimmy Katz and Sputnik)*

Submit Letters to the Editor at [newyork.allaboutjazz.com](http://newyork.allaboutjazz.com)

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Peter Yuskas, bass  
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While bassist **Adam Lane's** Full Throttle Orchestra is named to conjure up great size and bombast, at present it's a compact sextet whose sonic inventory includes passages of nuance and overall calm. With a Bay Area lineup, Lane has released *No(w) Music* (Cadence, 2001) and *New Magical Kingdom* (Clean Feed, 2006). His New York edition has a two-disc item, *Ashcan Rantings*, on the way. At the Brooklyn Lyceum (Apr. 14th), Lane provided a window into his current thinking, joined by David Bindman (tenor/soprano saxes), Avram Fefer (alto sax and clarinet), Herb Robertson (trumpet), Reut Regev (trombone) and Igal Foni (drums). "Cycles" established a mood of swing shading into funk, with a catchy, bluesy melody in 7/8, tart trumpet and alto solos and a tight framework of tempo shifts. "Imaginary Portrait" was also steeped in blues flavor, teetering from 4/4 to 6/4 and giving Robertson an unaccompanied spot that prompted obstreperous free group improv. Here and during "Sanctum", Lane showed a penchant for simple horn unisons expanding into richly voiced harmony in the second pass - an Ellingtonian touch made all the prettier by Robertson's cornet and Fefer's clarinet. The tunes had a rough-yet-polished character, allowing for pockets of free blowing and hinting at the band's rowdy punk-jazz origins. But "Calypso", an upbeat tribute to the late South African bassist Johnny Dyani, closed the set in sweetly melodic fashion, with Regev in the lead.

- David R. Adler



Photo by Olympiad Ioffe

Reut Regev, Adam Lane, Avram Fefer @ Brooklyn Lyceum

Brian Drye and Westbrook Johnson, curators of the Second Annual Trombone Festival at I-Beam, did a fine thing by corralling their trombone brethren and presenting 12 varied acts in 5 nights. The third evening in the series (Apr. 17th) was a double bill shared by **ERGO**, with trombonist Brett Sroka, keyboardist Sam Harris and drummer Shawn Baltazor and **Curtis Hasselbring's** New Mellow Edwards (NME), featuring the leader/trombonist with Chris Speed on tenor sax and clarinet, Trevor Dunn on bass and Ches Smith on drums (standing in for John Hollenbeck). Simply put, ERGO is an electronic atmosphere band, NME is an acoustic blowing band and both revealed a profound though dissimilar rock influence. Harris, taking the place of Carl Maguire, played Rhodes, synth and piano; Sroka, seated in a chair, molded sound with trombone, a laptop rig and pedals; Baltazor gave the mournful, ethereal and at times spooky music a beating heart of rhythm. Much of the material was from *Multitude*, *Solitude*, ERGO's latest on Cuneiform, although "If Not, Inertia" and "The Widening Gyre" are yet to be documented. After the break, Hasselbring's group exploded forth with a wry, peppy set of songs from their two releases on the Skirl label. They also snuck in a premiere, "You Are Many Names", a wild bit of chamber funk with a snaking clarinet motif, arch dissonance from trombone and bowed bass and strategically dished-out madness from the drums. (DA)

Had **Wayne Horvitz** not left his native New York for Seattle some 15 years ago, he and **Briggan Krauss** might have been the hottest 2/3 of a trio in town today. Their long association dates back to the band Pigpen in the early '90s, which found the duo paired with Bill Frisell, Michael Shrieve and the Billy Tipton Sax Quartet. Since then, they've been complemented by Kenny Wollesen, Dylan van der Schyff and Brandon Seabrook. But perhaps their least likely formation hit The Stone Apr. 7th with French-Vietnamese percussionist **Lê Quan Ninh**. Ninh's stature in the minimalist improvisation world makes him an unlikely bandmate for the loud keyboards and alto sax of Horvitz and Krauss, but minimalism doesn't always mean quietude. The three played a number of fronts, seamlessly and seemingly effortlessly, swaying between moderately low to moderately high volumes and contemporary classical to modern-jazz-leaning improvisations. Krauss showed a subtlety that kept pace with Horvitz' Nord synth (cast in jazz organ and more abstract roles) and piano (played with effective repetitions and careful string preparations). As a duo, they created a swath of settings to which Ninh responded impressively. With sticks and cymbal against his bass drum laid flat, he kept scattered time behind them. With pinecones and styrofoam against the drum's head, he played lead melodist. Overall, he helped to show once again what a strong 2/3 of a trio the rest of the band could be. - Kurt Gottschalk



Photo by Peter Gannushkin/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET

Wayne Horvitz, Lê Quan Ninh, Briggan Krauss @ The Stone

Musicians from other lands often look to do the New York thing while in town, assembling ad hoc Downtown or Bushwick bands. But German sound artist **Ignaz Schick** called to order a sort of round robin at Issue Project Room on Apr. 1st. Schick played for just over an hour in a series of tag team duos, pairing him off with turntablist Maria Chavez, guitarist Chris Forsyth, trumpeter Nate Wooley and audio manipulators Aki Onda and Aaron Moore. Taken in toto, the evening was an exhibition of the range of effects Schick gets from his "rotating surfaces" - a home stereo turntable sans record and another specially designed turntable-esque platter, both of which he augments with sticks and springs and other things set up to create sounds by spinning. It wasn't exactly about playing 'with' the others as it was playing with certitude, creating and fully inhabiting a new sound environment with each meeting. With Chavez he harmonized tone-arm noise and the grinds and whooshes of movement. Against Forsyth's distorted waves he created cymbal and sheet metal rhythms. The Aki Onda duet was even more rhythmic, cassette tape loops providing the impetus for a quietly crazed techno. With Wooley he applied the hornish squeal of a styrofoam cone, even mirroring the shape of a mute. But the biggest surprises came from Moore: processed vocals, spinning cymbals, spilled pennies and a PVC Alpine horn worked perfectly with Schick's object-filled table. (KG)

What's that expression about creating a monster? There were moments during saxist **Ellery Eskelin's** set at the Brecht Forum (Apr. 10th), ostensibly leading a trio with keyboardist Erik Deutsch and drummer Allison Miller in only their third gig, where he might have wondered what he had wrought. The first set, brisk at 40 minutes, began ominously with a sax cadenza, Deutsch eventually adding mournful long tones and Miller scratching at her kit. The effect was that of a funeral where the corpse wasn't quite ready to go yet. This first improvisation would swell in intensity over its 20-minute lifespan, but borne more of density than volume. An ersatz '50s cop show theme made a brief appearance until Deutsch moved into an almost religious organ, punctuated by a small bell chimed by Miller preceding her closing solo. The drummer was definitely the centerpiece (perhaps buoyed by her own very recent stint at leadership) and Deutsch avoided all the keyboard tropes available to him, making Eskelin the one to adapt to his 'rhythm section', rather than the other way around, an odd bit of tension. The set's other improv, a bit shorter at 15 minutes, began with Deutsch musically remembering his Atari (or maybe ColecoVision), Miller adding crystalline percussion and Eskelin popping tones. A quasi-jamband groove emerged, eliciting Eskelin's most passionate playing of the night. But still Deutsch played the joker and, most of the time, only Miller seemed to get the joke.

- *Andrey Henkin*



Ellery Eskelin, Erik Deutsch, Allison Miller @ Brecht Forum

Before the second tune of a set celebrating his new disc *Bessarabian Breakdown* (Kleztone), bassist **Jim Guttman**, looking like Gene Shalit minus the bowtie, quipped, "Thanks for coming to my bar mitzvah." The small crowd at Joe's Pub (Apr. 12th) tittered politely at the joke but there was some truth to the humor. Convening many of the players from the recent disc, Guttman played most of the album, in order and without much stretching out, perhaps a bit of bimah-fright. The music on the album, an appealing mix of klezmer and Latin aesthetics, is fun and spunky and begging for longer energetic readings. Maybe a larger, more effusive crowd could have livened up the proceedings but then again a strict 70-minute time limit and presumable desire to cover as much of the CD as possible were also factors. And as far as momentum, Guttman chose, by sticking to the album order, to pull out smaller groupings in between the larger ensemble numbers, creating a bit of choppiness. But within the context of the literal readings, there were some highlights: Frank London's always bombastic trumpet, the spicy dueling clarinets of Ted Casher and Alex Kontorovich and Guttman's cantorial basslines. Most impressive though was the almost manic swinging between surf-rock guitar and death metal banjo, courtesy of Brandon Seabrook. Both were featured throughout the set, a subversively reformed element to an otherwise generally conservative congregation.

(AH)

The power, passion, spirituality and beauty that have been the hallmarks of the music of **Pharoah Sanders** throughout his nearly 50-year career were in full flower as the great tenor saxophonist held forth at Birdland (Apr. 8th) leading his fiery working quartet. Sanders opened the night's first show with a moving rubato reading of John Coltrane's "Welcome" that set the tone for the evening. His horn's dark luxuriant tone called out to the composer in his own distinctive voice over William Henderson's rumbling piano, Nat Reeves' droning arco bass and the malleted toms of drummer Joe Farnsworth, creating a pensive trancelike atmosphere that faded quietly and then erupted into the rhythm section's bright melodic introduction to an extended rendition of "My Favorite Things". Featuring exciting solos from each bandmember, Farnsworth took the last turn with an amazing virtuosic display that ushered in the return of the leader who, after reprising the melody, concluded the song in his inimitable fashion by taking the sax from his mouth and having the horn seem miraculously to play itself. As the mystical sound dissolved into silence Sanders broke the spell with a shrieking introduction to his "You've Got To Have Freedom" that soon had the audience joining in with his rhythmic handclapping. The set's surprise song was the rarely heard "Villa", which the group swung tastily before taking things out with the leader's classic "The Creator Has A Master Plan".

- *Russ Musto*



Pharoah Sanders @ Birdland

Following the success of recent commissioned pieces for large ensembles at Jazz At Lincoln Center's Rose Theater in Manhattan and Teatro Pregones in the Bronx, **Papo Vazquez** brought his Pirates Troubadours to Brooklyn to take part in the 11th Annual Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival with a free concert at the Public Library's Dweck Center for Contemporary Culture (Apr. 1st). The trombonist/composer led his band of powerful players through a set of mostly originals that blended jazz improvisation and AfroCaribbean rhythms, including bombas and plenas reflecting his Puerto Rican heritage. Opening dramatically with a bullhorn fanfare over Richie Flores' congas, Vazquez conducted his band - featuring longtime colleague, saxophonist Willie Williams and the versatile rhythm section of pianist Zaccai Curtis, bassist Dezron Douglas and drummer Alvester Garnett, with Anthony Carillo on bongo and additional percussion - through a wildly cacophonous prelude into his soulful swinger "Reverend". The bomba "Enemy Within" and plena "Sol Tropical" both highlighted Vazquez' considerable skills as a composer and arranger able to merge traditional rhythms with modern harmonies and personal melodic concepts while the Cuban son "Juan Jose" that separated the two illustrated a new way with that classic form. The modernistic "Manga Langa" and Middle Eastern-tinged "Oasis" that closed the set showed Vazquez prepared to take Latin Jazz into the future.

(RM)

## WHAT'S NEWS

The new HBO series **Treme**, about post-Katrina New Orleans produced by David Simon, which premiered last month, features a number of jazz musicians, including Trombone Shorty, Dr. John, Kermit Ruffins and Allen Toussaint. The Tremé neighborhood of New Orleans' 6th Ward is thought by some to be birthplace of jazz. For more information, visit [hbo.com/treme/index.html](http://hbo.com/treme/index.html).

Trumpeter **Irvin Mayfield** has been sworn in as the newest member of The National Council on the Arts, the advisory body of the National Endowment for the Arts. Mayfield was nominated by the President and confirmed by the US Senate to serve on the National Council on the Arts for a full six-year term until 2016. For more information, visit [arts.gov](http://arts.gov).

Saxophonist **Sonny Rollins** has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a center for independent policy research. For more information, visit [amacad.org](http://amacad.org).

Proving that no one is immune to inter-apartment strife in New York City, the wife of pianist **Eddie Palmieri** was shot last month by the couple's downstairs neighbor as a result of unresolved noise complaints. Iraida Palmieri received an injury to her scalp and is recovering. Neighbor Maria Cartagena is being charged with attempted murder and assault though she may plead insanity, or at least hatred of Latin jazz.

The **Jazz Education Network**, risen in 2008 from the messy ashes of the defunct International Association for Jazz Education, has announced its inaugural conference, to be held in St. Louis, MO. May 20th-22nd. For more information, visit [jazzednet.org/2010\\_conference](http://jazzednet.org/2010_conference).

Finalists have been named for the 2010 **Jazz Journalists Association Awards**, to be given out at a ceremony in June. The complete nominee list is available at [jjazzawards.org](http://jjazzawards.org) and tickets to the event, to be held at City Winery, go on sale May 3rd.

In April, the **Harlem School of the Arts**, a non-profit founded in 1964 by singer Dorothy Maynor, closed its doors. But a last-minute donation of \$500,000 from brassman Herb Alpert will allow the school to stay open through the end of the academic year. For more information, visit [harlemschoolofthearts.org](http://harlemschoolofthearts.org).

The feature film **Handsome Harry**, starring Jamey Sheridan, uses jazz, as composed by Anton Sanko and performed by trumpeter Jumaane Smith, as the major component of its soundtrack. Sheridan, a self-avowed jazz fan since his teens, refers to jazz as "the third major character in the movie."

Saxophonist **Kirk Whalum** has been named the new president of The Soulsville Foundation, which operates the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Stax Music Academy, and The Soulsville Charter School.

**Rounder Records**, whose artist roster and catalogue includes Madeleine Peyroux and Jelly Roll Morton, has been acquired by the Concord Music Group. For more information, visit [concordmusicgroup.com](http://concordmusicgroup.com).

Submit news to [ldgreene@allaboutjazz.com](mailto:ldgreene@allaboutjazz.com)



# Eddie Gomez

by Donald Elfman

*Eddie Gomez is known throughout the world as a consummate bassist, sterling educator and a musician active in a wide variety of musical settings. He has been on the music scene for more than 40 years and has worked with everyone from Bobby Darin to Giuseppe Logan! Gomez moved from Puerto Rico as a child and was playing music from an early age. He came to prominence when Bill Evans asked him to be the bassist for the pianist's trio, a position he held for 11 years. Gomez also won the 2009 Latin Grammy for Best Instrumental Album: Duets (Acqua Records, with Carlos Franzetti). He comes to the Blue Note with Chick Corea and Paul Motian to play in a fortnight-long tribute to his former boss.*

**AllAboutJazz-New York:** I'd like to start by asking about Bill Evans. How did you first get the gig, how long did it last, what was its influence on you?

**Eddie Gomez:** Bill heard me play at the Village Vanguard. I was working with Gerry Mulligan's quintet back in 1966 opposite Bill's trio. He was looking for a new bassist and sent his manager over to ask if I could meet him. I was very timid at the prospect of meeting one of my heroes but I went and he was kind, very complimentary. I was in shock, couldn't really believe what I was hearing from an idol. He said he hoped that we could play together sometime and I thought that even if I never did it was good enough that he said those nice things to me. He called a few weeks later and asked me to go on tour with him. At the time I was working at the Copacabana with Bobby Darin. I had to quit Bobby but that was easy enough because the chance to play with Bill was like a dream come true. I did a West Coast tour for a month or so and then he said, "I'd really like you to stay on and be the bassist for my trio." I was 21 years old and felt it was like having a gold mine made available to me!

**AAJ-NY:** Who was the bass player before you?

**EG:** At that time it was Teddy Kotick from Boston. But Chuck Israels had played with him and Gary Peacock and, of course, Scott La Faro, the great innovator.

**AAJ-NY:** How long did you stay with Bill?

**EG:** 11 amazing years, 1966-77. They were great, learning years with an amazing impact on my artistic growth. I grew as a bass player, as an artist - I learned about sound, about soloing, about how to accompany, just everything. It took me a while to relax and truly fathom that I was making music and contributing to the output of an artist and a trio of this caliber.

**AAJ-NY:** Who were the drummers during that time?

**EG:** There were quite a few: Joe Hunt, Philly Joe Jones, Marty Morrell, Philly Joe again, Eliot Zigmund. And

then guys sat in - that was always fun. Guys like Elvin Jones, Tony Williams. It was really great playing with Bill and Philly Joe - that was like a *Twilight Zone* episode for me.

**AAJ-NY:** Why did you leave the trio?

**EG:** I was there 11 years and there were things that were starting to come my way. I actually thought I was going to play with him again but he died. I actually still dream about playing with Bill. I love his music and it's in my heart forever. But at the time there were other things that I wanted to explore. I have a broad range of interests musically and so I thought I'd try some other things.

**AAJ-NY:** How did you come to do things like, say, work with folk musician Tim Hardin?

**EG:** I did a lot of work with the flute player Jeremy Steig and his group Jeremy and the Satyrs. It was kind of a jazz/rock band and through that work, I came in contact with people like Richie Havens, Tim Hardin and a singer you may not remember named Sandy Hurvitz [she changed her name to Essra Mohawk]. So, all of these people were around and music from all sorts of places has always touched me. It doesn't have to be genre-specific and it doesn't always have to be jazz.

**AAJ-NY:** How did you first come to hear and then play jazz?

**EG:** I grew up in New York, on 110th Street on the West Side. I heard all kinds of music growing up. I started playing the bass when I was 11 years old and whatever music touched my soul, I wanted to participate. Early on it was Miles, Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Count Basie - I listened to it all. I was in this group called the Newport Youth Band and played at the Newport Jazz Festival, played with Marian McPartland, played with Benny Goodman when I was 18 and with other great players like Edmond Hall, Pee Wee Russell, Ruby Braff. Played with Paul Bley.

**AAJ-NY:** Tell me about the recording with multi-instrumentalist Giuseppe Logan (ESP-Disk, 1964)!

**EG:** I loved the way he played and also loved his drummer, Milford Graves. Actually, I played with Milford on a Montego Joe record [*Arriba!*, Prestige, 1964] and through Milford got to play with Paul Bley, John Tchicai and, I think, that's how I met Giuseppe. In fact, Chick Corea was on that Montego Joe album too.

**AAJ-NY:** And your work with Joanne Brackeen?

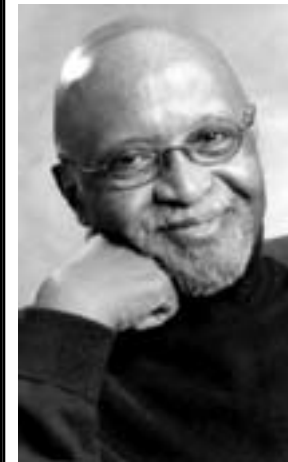
**EG:** Joanne's music was always challenging and fun. And she likes the bass to be very involved, not just a

backup instrument. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with being an accompanist - there's a real art to that, too. I played with her recently and I still enjoy her music. She's grown as an artist.

**AAJ-NY:** And your own recordings as a leader?

**EG:** *Mezgo* [1984] was one of the earliest ones - it had Chick Corea, Steve Gadd and Kazumi Watanabe on guitar. I made that in Japan and went on to do other recordings that reflected my eclectic side. Some of the early ones were kind of crossover projects and the more recent ones have been more straightforward.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 46)



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# Faruq Z. Bey

by Wilbur MacKenzie

Throughout the history of jazz, Detroit has produced world-class jazz artists, iconic individualists and ubiquitous sidemen alike. Many have moved to New York or other cities to pursue their career. A handful of great artists remained in Detroit, keeping the creative energy alive there (and consequently Detroit continues to produce incredible talent). One artist who has remained in Detroit over the decades, overcoming social and personal disaster to continue his creative pursuits, is saxophonist and composer Faruq Z. Bey.

His story has many chapters and some unexpected twists and turns. Born Jesse Davis in 1942, Bey took much inspiration from an older cousin's musical activities and picked up the bass as a teenager, studying with esteemed jazz educator James Tatum: "I was interested in following Monk Montgomery's example to pick up the Fender bass, but everything changed when I heard John Coltrane's 'My Favorite Things'. That really showed me something new." This new sound resonated with Bey and finally, after he attended a Detroit performance by John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders in 1966, Bey's switch to saxophone took place - amidst the infamous 1967 Detroit riots.

Many historical accounts of the aftermath of the 1967 riots focus on the destruction and the flight from centralized urban life in Detroit. For the many who remained dedicated to the city, though, it was a time of heightened social consciousness and artistic innovation.

During this time of renewed cultural awareness, a group of like-minded thinkers gathered together and formed a collective - living together, making art and sharing ideas. They recreated their culture, adopted new names and new ideas. A family name of Bey was chosen and the Bey Brothers - Faruq, Jalil and Sadiq - each subsequently made their mark in Detroit and around the world as writers, poets and musicians.

Formed in the '70s, Griot Galaxy was Faruq Z. Bey's main outlet for his interest in combining traditional elements of musical composition with the open-form improvisational ideas that had initially inspired his transition to saxophone. "There was a lot of great free playing going on, but I wanted to put that together with the traditional elements. I was influenced by what Roscoe Mitchell was doing; I wanted to explore new compositional forms," Bey recalls. Early Griot Galaxy members included brother Sadiq and guitarist Spencer Barefield.

A more consistent lineup came into place and flourished in the '80s, when drummer Tani Tabbal, bassist Jaribu Shahid and saxophonists Dave McMurray and Tony Holland all joined. This secure lineup combined formal rigor with conceptual fire, driven by Bey's charismatic iconoclasm and compositional inventiveness and grounded by the exceptional rhythm section of Shahid and Tabbal. AACM-inspired experimentalism and abstraction combined with a sense of groove and pulse that was uniquely Detroit. Though dancers and poetry had

always been a component of Griot Galaxy's work, this version of the band significantly upped the ante, adopting futurist science-fiction imagery, wardrobe and theatrics. This look, combined with the blistering intensity of the playing and the futuristic vibe of Shahid's effects-laden bass, resonated with local audiences, drawing huge crowds.

Bey's own persona seemed larger-than-life, with a giant mane of dreadlocks and leather jacket. Bey's WDET radio show, "Met Aesthetics", was hugely popular. Northwoods Improvisers founder Mike Johnston tells a story about how one listener, Ron DeCorte, happened to catch a recording of Albert Ayler on the show: "DeCorte was a dedicated listener from then on. He ended up becoming a huge fan of Griot Galaxy and recorded tons of their live gigs. He set up the sessions for *Kins*." (This recording was the band's debut, which DeCorte released himself.) Two live recordings followed, including one from the group's European tour: "We went to Austria and played in Nickelsdorf and that became the *Opus Krampus* record, which came out on Sound Aspects," Faruq said. Recently, another DeCorte live recording was released on Entropy Stereo, *Live at the D.I.A.*

Sadly, just as success and much wider appeal became imminent, tragedy struck. Bey's adventurous lifestyle took a toll and he ended up in a motorcycle accident that left him in a coma. Griot Galaxy worked to continue in his absence during his long and difficult recovery, but something was missing. Tabbal and Shahid were finding it increasingly difficult to make a living in Detroit and, ultimately, both heeded the call to New York. After recovering, Faruq pursued various projects throughout the '90s, including the Conspiracy Wind Ensemble and Speaking In Tongues.

Then, in the late '90s, Bey was approached by members of the Northwoods Improvisers. "The trio version of Northwoods shared a bill with Griot Galaxy back in the '80s and Faruq and I played together on sessions once in a while," Johnston related. "When our friend Len Bukowski came to town, we encouraged him to meet up with Faruq for sax lessons and that led to Faruq and Northwoods gigging together." *19 Moons*, the first cooperative release by Faruq Z. Bey and the Northwoods Improvisers, was released on Entropy Stereo in 2001 and since then the group has expanded to include saxophonists Skeeter Shelton and Mike Carey. More performances followed, along with further releases on Entropy and on vinyl-only label Qbico (including the recent *Hymn for Tomasz Stanko*, adding trumpeter Dennis González).

The upcoming appearance by the Northwoods Improvisers with Faruq Z. Bey at Issue Project Room promises to bring much of the intensity and colorful flare that the collective has developed with Bey. It will be a well-overdue opportunity for New Yorkers to hear Bey's distinctive approach to the saxophone and his unique blend of Detroit groove, melodic angularity and compositional intrigue. ♦

For more information, visit [northwoodsimprovisers.com](http://northwoodsimprovisers.com). Bey and the Northwoods Improvisers are at Issue Project Room May 27th-28th. See Calendar.

#### Recommended Listening:

- Griot Galaxy - *Kins* (Black and White, 1981)
- Griot Galaxy - *Live at the D.I.A.* (Entropy, 1983)
- Griot Galaxy - *Opus Krampus* (Sound Aspects, 1984)
- Faruq Z. Bey/Northwoods Improvisers - *19 Moons* (Entropy, 2001)
- Faruq Z. Bey/Northwoods Improvisers - *Ashirai Pattern* (Entropy, 2002)
- Faruq Z. Bey/Northwoods Improvisers - *Journey Into The Valley* (Entropy, 2004)

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# ONE MAN'S BAND by Tom Greenland

In plays such as *Medea* and *Alceste*, the ancient Greek tragedian Euripides was roundly criticized, even parodied, for his use of an artificial plot device or *deus ex machina* ("god from the machine"), because it violated narrative logic and challenged the audience's suspension of disbelief. Guitarist Pat Metheny, never one to shy away from wrathful gods, has taken a bold step on his latest tour: eliminating his band in favor of a miraculous machine able to extend and expand his musical visions. Does this negate the human feel and interactivity at the heart of jazz performance or is it a breath of fresh air, winds of change ushering in new solutions to old problems? One man's band is another man's machine.

Few jazz artists have reached the stature of Metheny, who, if not exactly a household name, nevertheless enjoys public accolades more associated with the echelons of rock stardom than that of your typical jazz icon. Yet he's no sell-out, no watered-down, genre-straddling, crossover opportunist, but a true seeker, willing to take chances, willing to risk his hard-won audience with ambitious and adventurous projects. His 17 Grammy awards (!) are matched by his top-of-the-poll rankings in 'serious' jazz-zines. Moreover, he has achieved an instantly recognizable, signature sound that separates him from the proactive pack of post-Jim Hall modernists like Bill Frisell, John Scofield and Mike Stern that moved guitar playing into the new millennium.

Since his first release as a leader, 1975's *Bright Size Life*, a trio outing with the late great bassist Jaco Pastorius and world-beat drummer Bob Moses, up to his most recent, *Orchestrion*, Metheny has been a distinctive voice in this music, combining homespun Midwestern Americana (he came up in the Kansas City music scene), angular neobop, avant-impressionism and a type of tone-poetry only possible in the evolving technosphere. His dreamy fusion of folk, rock and jazz is well documented in his work with the Pat Metheny Group (PMG) - with Lyle Mays, Steve Rodby and Paul Wertico completing the core quartet - while his 'straightahead' work is featured in fine trio and quartet outings such as *Question and Answer* (with Dave Holland and Roy Haynes), *Dream Teams* (with Sonny Rollins), *Trio 99>00* and *Live* (with Larry Grenadier and Bill Stewart), *Metheny Mehltau* and *Quartet* (with Brad Mehldau, Grenadier and Jeff Ballard) and *Day Trip* (with Christian McBride and Antonio Sanchez).

Metheny's free-form leanings emerge in works like *80/81* (with Dewey Redman et al.), *Song X* (with Ornette Coleman), *The Sign of 4* (recorded live at the Knitting Factory with Derek Bailey) and *Zero Tolerance for Silence*, this last a noisy collage that challenged even his staunchest fans. The guitarist's penchant for technological enhancements may be heard on *New Chautauqua*, where he overdubbed all the guitars and basses; *Letter from Home* and *Secret Story*, two heavily produced PMG projects, and the soundtrack to *Imaginary Day*, featuring his 42-string "pikasso guitar" - all precedents for *Orchestrion*, an outing that gives new meaning to concepts like 'overdubbing' and 'human feel'.

Remember those old movies where characters got spooked watching ghostly hands on a player piano? Metheny's *Orchestrion* apparatus is basically a highly-evolved player piano, only the ghost in his machine is computer sequencing software, MIDI triggering and a complex set of pneumatic (air pressure) and solenoid (electromagnetic) switches hooked up to robotic instruments. The labyrinthine linkage includes Yamaha Disklavier keyboards, a bottle organ (with

wind-blown, liquid-filled glass piping), mallet instruments like marimba and vibraphone and a hodgepodge of guitars, basses, drums and percussion. No mere remix of sampled sounds, these acoustic and acoustic-electric instruments are actually played in real-time by mechanical sticks, mallets, felt-covered bars, feather dusters, strumming robotic arms and whatnot, right before your very eyes and ears. The relatively sensitive solenoid switches transfer details of touch, timing and dynamics to the instruments, reproducing rhythms and textures that closely mirror Metheny's musical taste. It's close enough to human to fool even the most discerning of listeners: in a recent *JazzTimes* blindfold listening test, former PMG bassist Mark Egan instantly recognized the guitarist's playing on a cut from *Orchestrion* but had trouble identifying the other 'bandmembers'.

In an email exchange in the midst of his European tour in March, Metheny fielded a number of on-the-fly questions about his music in particular and his life in general. On the topic of craft, he noted that he gets most involved with the guitar during a tour, a period when he plays more over the longest periods of time, usually about two hours of practice during the day followed by three hours on the gig. "I tend to use the intense touring periods as a kind of research and development zone for furthering my vocabulary and refining things I might want to do on the instrument itself."

In the 35-plus years since he started playing in vibist Gary Burton's band, Metheny feels he has improved "quite a bit" and "can really get to many layers of detail in the way that I express ideas that are new for me. Each period seems to bring new things and, as I get more facility with the materials that I am interested in on the instrument, that in turn sows new possibilities for improvising and composing." Another important aspect of being on the road is that he develops a "deep connection to playing" from frequent performances in front of live audiences. "That gets you playing in a way that is just different than anything else," he notes. "I thrive on that."

Listening to Metheny's music, one is struck by his ability to construct floating, singable melodies that belie the complexity of his harmonic and rhythmic ideas. He suggests that, while it may be possible to analyze the harmonic and rhythmic aspects of jazz in a fair amount of detail, "the melodic aspect of things is by far the hardest to articulate and in many ways the most esoteric and elusive to develop." About other musicians he observes: "I hear great harmonic improvisers and great rhythmic improvisers many times more often than I hear great melodic improvisers. It is almost like it is not even on the radar for many people...[T]here is also a way to think of harmony and rhythm in a melodic way too and that is even harder to find." Metheny considers melody a "huge issue", something that keeps him constantly awake and on the alert for what can only be approximately summarized as "the good notes".

On the subject of composition, the guitarist states that he is always writing, but that he has to do a lot of it to get what he wants because much of it will end up in the Mac trash bin. "The past few years have been especially interesting," he says; "I feel like I am getting to a new level of understanding as a composer that is starting to parallel many of the things that I have worked on as an improviser. I always felt like I was way ahead as a player relative to the writing side; lately that is evening out." As far as avoiding ruts and germinating fresh ideas, Metheny has learned to accept his own affinity for certain harmonic moves and

rhythmic grooves. "I realized one day that I could play on the changes for 'Are You Going with Me' for hours and hours on end and never get even slightly tired of it." Additionally, he continues to experiment with extended forms and structures, especially on his last two records.

One glance at the *Orchestrion* project video (available at Metheny's website) will convince viewers that a considerable learning curve is required, first to understand the machine's workings and then to manipulate its considerable capabilities with flexibility and finesse. While he is intimately involved in the hows and whys of his Rube Goldberg machine, he is quick to stress that it is only a tool, a mere "envelope" for ideas; mastering this "ax" is only a step in the process. Ultimately, as Charlie Parker is alleged to have said, a musician has to forget all that shit and just play. Metheny has his own analogy: "It is like someone who sees a beautiful house and wonders, hmmm, did the carpenter that built that place use mostly a Phillips screwdriver or flathead? It doesn't really make a huge difference to me as long as it is a really great house."

So where's the rest of the band? Is Metheny worried that deserving flesh-and-blood musicians are being replaced by semiautomatons? How is he going to have a conversation with this contraption? These are non-issues as far as the guitarist is concerned. In the first place, it's supposed to be a solo act. No one ever faulted Joe Pass for developing the ability to play melody, chords and basslines simultaneously. In answer to the second question, Metheny counters: "Did the cartoon version of *Bambi* put a real, live Hollywood deer out of a gig?"

His point is that the *Orchestrion* is merely a "different form", no better or worse, just different. As for conversation, he is having one - with himself. "I play for myself and myself only, but I try to be conscientious about the fact that the guy in the third row had to take a shower, pick up his date, park his car, get the tickets, wait in line etc. So I will do my very best to play my very best for myself - for that guy. Anything other than doing it that way would be a wild guess. As soon as you allow critics, audiences and everyone else to have a vote, you are dead. The fan that lives inside of me is the only thing I know for sure."

But if Metheny's prodigious machine can fool virtuoso listeners like Mark Egan into thinking that live musicians are playing, how far away are we from robotic improvisation? Now that computers can recognize speech and even beat chess grandmasters at their own game, how long will it take them to learn bebop licks or "Giant Steps" chord changes? How long before it is impossible to tell the difference between a human improvising and a machine programmed for 'creativity' - the jazz equivalent of a Turing Test? Metheny has an answer for that one too: "Not anytime soon." One man's band is another man's plan. ♦

For more information, visit [patmetheny.com](http://patmetheny.com). Metheny's *Orchestrionics* is at Town Hall May 21st-22nd. See *Calendar*.

#### Recommended Listening:

- Pat Metheny - *Bright Size Life* (ECM, 1975)
- Pat Metheny - *80/81* (ECM, 1980)
- Pat Metheny/Dave Holland/Roy Haynes - *Question and Answer* (Geffen, 1989)
- Pat Metheny Trio - *Live* (Warner Bros., 1999-2000)
- Pat Metheny - *One Quiet Night* (Nonesuch, 2001-03)
- Pat Metheny - *Orchestrion* (Nonesuch, 2009)

# Tommy Gumina

by Elliott Simon



'60s



'90s

It is the rare jazz instrumentalist who gains such a total understanding of their instrument that by technical innovation they change the way

the instrument is played to achieve that elusive 'sound in their head'. Jazz accordionist Tommy Gumina is such an artist. When it comes to the accordion, Gumina's modifications and amplification development are on a par with Les Paul's guitar inventions and his polytonal voicings and advanced harmonics, though distinctly different, match in instrumental significance those of pianist Bill Evans.

Gumina came from the hotbed of second-generation American accordionists who grew up in ethnic '40s Middle America where the accordion was a staple. Through his association with the Harry James Orchestra, Gumina met up with clarinetist Buddy DeFranco and together they would create the most significant jazz accordion recordings of all time. These releases, such as *Polytones* (Mercury, 1963), are notable for Gumina's use of the accordion's inherent ability to sustain combined with his advanced harmonic techniques and DeFranco's incredible tone. DeFranco has called them the most cutting-edge recordings of his career and Gumina reflected on their approach. "I came up with a harmonic device for the accordion called polytonalities where you play two chords at one time and the accordion is a natural for this. I play the left hand for the basic chords downstairs. For example, I play a C7 downstairs, C bass and on my right hand I will play a DMaj chord so it gives you the augmented 11/13. I came up with that sound while we had the group with Buddy...some of that stuff has six- and seven-part harmony...we had a harmonic sustaining situation because with the accordion you can really sustain as opposed to the piano which can't sustain quite as long as we can." DeFranco and Gumina were the perfect partners and cuts like the beautifully ambient "My Ship" from over 40 years ago impress with their contemporary sound and feel.

Proud of the way the two musicians melded, Gumina is in the process of rereleasing some of these difficult-to-obtain landmark recordings through his Polytone company. Gumina started the business in the

'60s and since that time the greatest jazz guitarists and bassists have entrusted their tone to Tommy Gumina Polytone amps and equipment. The sound on guitarist George Benson's mega hit "Breezin'" was achieved through a Polytone 120-watt model 104. Gumina tells it: "When I first started Polytone I didn't have a background in electronics but I took a course at UCLA because I wanted to know about the business so consequently I have become fairly decent in the electronics field. Our first endorser for Polytone was [guitarist] Joe Pass and nobody was like Joe. He was unbelievable and the first guy to endorse my bass products was Ray Brown. Ray would come into my place and we would play together and we would also do a lot of the NAMM [National Association of Music Merchants] shows and Ray would be there and Joe would be there and we would play right at my booth. Ray's sound was so beautiful that we would be playing and I would stop just to hear him. He really was the boss and nobody has ever got that particular sound."

Gumina's blend of electronics acumen and instrumental expertise has allowed him to develop electronic accordions such as his polychord ("It has 80 different instruments that you can play with it"); state-of-the-art amplification equipment ("My new amplifier is 170 watts RMS and it weighs only about 18 pounds and the new power amp only weighs half a pound") and produce some superb but difficult-to-obtain recordings such as his partnerships with guitarists Joe Pass (*Sound Project*, Polytone Productions, 1987) and Ron Escheté (*Polycolors*, Polytone Productions, 1990).

Gumina is pleased to know that the relatively recent fruitful interchanges among world musics and jazz, most particularly those of Latin America and Eastern Europe, have given the accordion a new place and he is contemplating going out on the road again with DeFranco. "This is what I have to do. Before Buddy and I wrap it up, Buddy is going to be 86 or 87, he and I want to do another shot. I want to really do our polytonalities and some ballads of course but I want to really get the right situation where we can smoke a little bit. I am very happy that young guys are out there playing the accordion because for so many years a lot of times the accordion was slighted. It was strictly ethnic and they played it well but it never got beyond that and it is great that young guys are playing jazz accordion. It needs it." ♦

For more information, visit [tommygumina.com](http://tommygumina.com)

#### Recommended Listening:

- Tommy Gumina - *Hi-Fi Accordion* (Decca, 1957)

- Buddy DeFranco - *Pacific Standard (Swingin') Time!* (Decca, 1960)
- Buddy DeFranco - *Presenting Buddy DeFranco and Tommy Gumina* (Mercury, 1961)
- Buddy DeFranco/Tommy Gumina Quartet - *Kaleidoscope* (Mercury, 1962)
- Buddy DeFranco/Tommy Gumina - *Polytones* (Mercury, 1963)
- Joe Pass/Tommy Gumina Trio - *Sound Project (Sentimental Moods)* (Polytone-Alfa Jazz, 1987)



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## LEST WE FORGET

# Scott Joplin (~1867-1917)

by Donald Elfman

It may seem odd to be remembering Scott Joplin, usually considered a 'serious' composer, in a jazz publication. But ragtime influenced the earliest jazz and Joplin was himself known as a master improviser.

Joplin was born in eastern Texas in what research has shown to be the second half of 1867. He was given a basic education by his musical family and at the age of seven was permitted to play in the home of an attorney and in a neighbor's house. He soon went to school and studied music under several teachers including one Julius Weiss. Weiss taught the youngster about classical music, folk forms and opera and encouraged Joplin's aspirations towards composition. Joplin played music at church gatherings and at secular events where, it was reported, he often played

his own compositions.

In the late 1880s, Joplin left the area to work as a traveling musician and soon discovered that there were not a lot of opportunities for black musicians. He did accept work in churches and at brothels. He also found time to take classes in composition and counterpoint in the George R. Smith College for Negroes in Sedalia, Missouri. He went to play at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 and soon formed his own band to play his own music.

Joplin began working at Sedalia's Maple Leaf Club and the Black 400. He got a reputation as a well-respected piano player and composer. In 1899 he sold "Maple Leaf Rag" and the tune became an immediate success, selling about 75,000 copies in six months. He became known as the "King of Ragtime writers" and tunes like "The Easy Winners" and "Elite Syncopations" were soon covered by other musicians.

In 1900, Joplin and his wife Belle moved to St. Louis. He continued to have success with

compositions such as "The Entertainer" and "March Majestic". In June of 1904, Joplin married Freddie Alexander, the woman to whom he had dedicated "The Chrysanthemum". During the period he also created an opera company and self-financed the opera *Treemonisha*. But the audience was indifferent and Joplin went bankrupt. By 1916, Joplin was ill from syphilis and died in 1917.

Joplin and his fellow rag composers rejuvenated American popular music and helped create an appreciation for the music of black America. After the composer's death the popularity of ragtime waned but there was something of a resurgence many years later in the '60s, culminating in the use of "The Entertainer" in the popular movie, *The Sting*. The classical label Deutsche Grammophon even released the first recording of the complete *Treemonisha*. ♦

Tributes to Joplin are at Bargemusic May 14th and St. Michael's Cemetery May 22nd. See Calendar.

## Looking Outwards

by Pedro Costa

When Clean Feed first started I never imagined that we would have almost 200 releases after nine years. I guessed that we would put out about two or three records every year and have a hundred CDs released after a lifetime.

I think one of the reasons for this thinking was the fact that we were based in Lisbon, a city that doesn't have a scene like New York, Chicago, Paris, Berlin, Stockholm or Oslo. But soon after I realized that this handicap was actually the label's biggest advantage since not having such a strong scene of our own means we can see the whole world from here.

What usually happens with most labels is that they only release music by their own scenes. They make a great contribution to their scenes but, on the other hand, they get so obsessed that they don't look abroad and take advantage of the internet revolution and the increasing global music market.

We see ourselves as a world label because the music is just one. And especially for a label based in Lisbon, the message has to be clear: concentrating on the music we believe is crucial to document this very rich era, whether it's from New York, Chicago, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm or Japan. That's truly our manifesto.

What's really important is connecting people from different scenes all committed to the same goal: to release art through music. That's something that will never die. It will survive all catastrophes, all economical crises, all wars and the fact that the CD might be dying. There will always be a way while there's something to say.

Musicians are the most important element; they create, they support, they play live. Respect for musicians' work is vital for us and that's what we try to do - give them conditions so they can take their

chances and keep this kind of music updated in form and spirit.

We have had multiple experiences about showing the label's music in different places as New York, Madrid, Barcelona, Ljubljana, Utrecht and Chicago but we want to spread the word about the great music of today in as many places as possible: Berlin, Oslo, Stockholm, Cologne, Philadelphia, Lisbon, you name it. This is not part of any commercial plan but a way to keep working and surviving, to give our musicians a stage and to maintain the connections that happen when Clean Feed events take place.

Not just musicians but audiences, interested promoters and just people get together and find a way to make it through despite all difficulties taking place in today's world.

Every time I produce a concert, every time I get in touch with people, I always feel rewarded to do what I do, to help keep something going on, to help the music live on. That's the real reward for this kind of work. I believe you play what you are and 70% of the time it works like that and then extraordinary things happen in the other 30% that keeps everyone going.

Before I turn the megaphone off I would like to tell you how I would like Clean Feed to be seen or what I see it as, if I have the right to do it. I like to see us as an international label that doesn't belong to any country, any scene, any kind of cooperative thing but only as a label that exists to release the music of today by people of today in the field of improvised music. ♦

*For more information, visit [cleanfeed-records.com](http://cleanfeed-records.com). The Clean Feed Festival is at Cornelia Street Café May 7th-9th. See Calendar for complete lineup.*

*Clean Feed was founded in 2001 to release Portuguese and foreign musicians in separate and cooperative projects. Clean Feed aims to record innovative contemporary jazz projects that can make a difference, building a catalogue that will be internationally recognized by its quality and coherence.*

Almost a decade ago - around the time FSSA opened - there was a flurry of thoughtful articles in the music press about discrimination against female jazz musicians in the elite jazz world. The question still pertains: Where are the girls? Because if the girls aren't showing up for jazz band in middle school and high school in 2010, it's pretty unlikely that they'll be playing at Jazz at Lincoln Center in 2020.

They might be singing at JALC, though. When it comes to vocal jazz, the gender divide goes the other way: The rare male jazz singer, when he does show up, is much ballyhooed, especially if he's good. So let the ballyhooing begin, because there are several.

Minneapolis native **José James** (now residing in London) has achieved acclaim as a singer throughout Europe and Asia but remains virtually unknown in the US, a condition due to change with the release of his first recording for Impulse!, *For All We Know*. James seems so restrained and sensitive that you wonder what thoughts, what feelings he's sitting on. Recorded in one session with pianist Jef Neve, the CD explores some of the most seductive standards: "Tenderly", "Just Squeeze Me" and "Body and Soul".

On *Nine Lives Slipping* (Newmarket Music) Melbourne singer **Hayden Jones** delivers each lyric with an unforced intensity, his voice just naturally on edge. Each of the nine tunes on the disc - most of them jazz originals - is moody, driving, soulful, persuasive. Jones' apparent angst attracts rather than dismays: He may be slipping, but it's the listener who falls.

Another find is **Andreas Schaerer**, who uses innovative vocal percussion, free improv, whispering

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## VOXNEWS

by Suzanne Lorge

In 2001 **Tony Bennett** and his wife Susan Benedetto founded the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts in Queens - an homage from one pop jazz crooner to another. FSSA is a public high school where students get advanced education in the fine arts and plenty of opportunities to display their budding talents.

In one such opportunity last month the jazz band performed under the baton of Assistant Principal Bill Stevens and what a heartening display it was - a fully equipped big band, rookie instrumentalists trading fours, two promising jazz singers and supportive calls and applause from the teenagers in the audience.

One curious thing, though. On the stage above the heads of the student players hung seven portraits, each of a trail-blazing jazz musician. In the audience, two attendees were stumped by the only female of the bunch. When one asked who the portrait represented the other responded, "I don't know. A bystander, I guess." The portrait was of **Billie Holiday**, not just the only female of the bunch, but the only vocalist.

This is usually how it goes in jazz, sad to say: the men blow the horns and the women are the bystanders, unless the women are singers, in which case they are still often considered bystanders, musically speaking. This scenario played out below the dangling portraits, too: Of the 20+ high school students on the stage, only one instrumentalist was a gal. (To Stevens' great credit, his program included two pieces by jazz composer Mary Lou Williams.)

and tone poetry in French, German and English to surprise, amuse and, at times, disturb. Only a little bit pensive and scary, but mostly friendly and inviting, *Schibboleth* is his fourth release on Unit Records.

On-site listening: **Bob Dorough** at Feinstein's, May 2nd and 23rd; **Nancy Wilson** at Blue Note, May 10th; **Nancy King** at Jazz Standard, May 11th-12th; **Roseanna Vitro** at Cleopatra's Needle, May 14th; **Karrin Allyson** at Birdland, May 18th-20th and at JALC, **Nnenna Freelon** May 11th-16th, **Kurt Elling** May 14th-15th and **Robin McKelle** May 18th. ♦

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May 7: Charles Downs Trudy Silver  
Jerome Ellis + guests 10:30PM  
May 8: Jeff Franzel & friends 8PM  
May 9: Angelo Di Loreto 8PM  
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May 13: Pascal Niggenkemper 8PM  
May 13: Jeff Koch 10:30PM  
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May 14: The Brood 10:30PM  
May 15: Hal Weary 8PM  
May 15: Carolyn Holmes 10:30PM  
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May 16: Michael Shenker 10:30PM  
May 20: Ochion Jewell 10:30PM  
May 21: Lester Deane/Lisi Pakulski 8PM  
May 21: James Ilgenfritz 10:30PM  
May 22: Landon Knoblock 8PM  
May 22: Trudy Silver, Charles Downs,  
Ras Moshe + guests  
May 23: Community of the Spirit 8PM  
May 27: Mark Knezevic 8PM  
May 29: Pette Vagan 8PM  
May 30: Burt Eckoff 8PM

# Blue Music Group

by Marcia Hillman

Blue Music Group (BMG) is a record label that has positioned itself for the 21st century. Not only does it fulfill the demand for instant gratification and portability, but also it has succeeded in filling the gap created by the loss of many retail record store outlets due to the recession. As a matter of fact, the company has been able to do well because of and in spite of the negative economy.

Keeping up with the current technology, BMG sells records in two different formats: CD Downloads (the first record label to introduce Instant Net-CDs on its website) and also in convenient mp3 files. They are sold from the label's website. Each customer can then decide what to do with the CD downloads, whether burning it on a CD or simply converting to their favorite smaller formats for portable devices. The CD format includes printable artwork, lyrics and inserts.

Mika Pohjola, BMG's president, states, "The biggest problem with physical CDs today is the delivery time. CD Downloads deliver the same quality anywhere in just a matter of minutes. The mp3s are there as a discount version and they are optimized for a smaller size and slower connections."

Pohjola, a notable Finnish jazz pianist, first

became involved with the label two years ago as its artistic director and product developer. He explains that he "saw a need for this label to connect with the jazz community. I knew many musicians who have been on the scene for a while" and he called on some of them, working out a clearance with Blue Note Records for Joe Lovano. "I didn't have to contact that many," he continues. "The word spread quickly and my inbox was soon filled with emails from musicians. Some also just found the site which has developed into a full vehicle within the past two years."

The website is exceedingly informative, offering biographies on each of the artists and descriptions of each of the products for sale. BMG does not think in terms of who is on the label, but considers each project individually. The label prefers to call its 'artists' by the title of 'musicians' and is known for its quality high-end recordings as well as remastered classics. The label does not categorize musicians in genres but in instrument groups and does not put a distinction on whether a musician is in the jazz scene. The label does not "own anybody" as Pohjola explains, but musicians "can use our name and many do. Who is a jazz musician is not up to our discretion either." Some of the musicians sometimes perform in other genres as well.

One of the prime examples of the label's focus on the musicians is the case of the late Rashied Ali, the free jazz, avant garde drummer who, among other

things, worked with John Coltrane during the last years of Coltrane's life. Pohjola states that "Rashied was a fervent fan of Blue Music Group and I had a blast working with him on the album covers and getting his unreleased tapes into retail condition. I did an interview with him on August 5, 2009 in his studio, just one week before he passed away." This interview was sent out to the industry and played at his funeral, both in Riverside Church and in Philadelphia. There are three CDs by Ali currently available at BMG: *The Music of John Coltrane*, *Eddie Jefferson at Ali's Alley* and *Cuttin' Korner*.

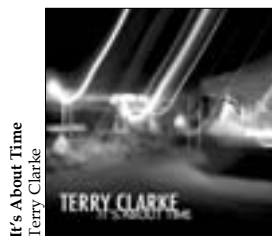
BMG finds its projects by musicians sending in their CDs. The label prefers them to send three tunes by mp3 files at first. In this way, the label continues its ecological commitment by saving time, effort and plastic waste. Some of the albums currently on the label are by such artists as Pohjola himself, Lovano, Luciana Souza, Chris Cheek, Esperanza Spalding, and Jack DeJohnette among others. There are also remastered classic albums by artists including Erroll Garner, Charlie Parker, Jefferson and more.

Pohjola has some very strong ideas about how a label should be run, believing artistic leadership is inseparable from being a musician and emphasizes that "a good label serves the scene with strong artistic leadership, independent values, completely immune to hype and commercial aspects when selecting future

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46



Northern Sunrise  
Mika Pohjola



It's About Time  
Terry Clarke



At Ali's Alley  
Rashied Ali Quintet



Configurations  
Rashied Ali with Prima Materia



Standards in Sweden I  
Jarrett/Peacock/DeJohnette

## LISTEN UP!

**Saxist BRANDON WRIGHT**, from Woodcliff Lake, NJ, went to the Universities of Michigan and Miami. He's played at Dizzy's Club, The Kitano, Smalls, Fat Cat, Smoke and Zinc Bar and with such groups as the Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra and Mingus, Chico O'Farrill and John Fedchock Big Bands.

**TEACHERS:** Walt Weiskopf, Rufus Reid, Mark Friedman, Dave Liebman, James Moody, Donald Walden, Gary Keller, Ron Miller, Whit Sidener.

**INFLUENCES:** Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, Joe Henderson, Wayne Shorter, Stan Getz, Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, Stanley Turrentine, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Sonny Stitt, Johnny Griffin, Ben Webster, King Curtis, Junior Walker, etc.

**CURRENT PROJECTS:** Leading my Quintet/Quartet and touring with Chuck Mangione and Abraham Inc. I've also just been asked to join the Max Weinberg Big Band.

**BY DAY:** Spending a lot of time promoting my debut album *Boiling Point* (Posi-Tone). I also teach a few private students, write music, practice, play sessions and exercise. I just moved to the Upper West Side and am enjoying exploring my new surroundings.

**I KNEW I WANTED TO BE A MUSICIAN WHEN...** I heard the Walt Weiskopf Sextet perform at Smalls Jazz Club. There was something magical about the way the entire group sounded and I was blown away by everyone's improvisations. I had no idea what they

were doing, but I was determined to find out!

**DREAM BAND:** Chick Corea, Christian McBride, Roy Haynes.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Lisa Simpson was my inspiration for choosing the saxophone!

For more information, visit [wrightjazz.com](http://wrightjazz.com). Wright is at *Smoke* May 12th and *Jazz Standard* May 17th with the *Mingus Big Band*. See *Calendar*.



Brandon Wright



Uri Gurvich

**Born** and raised in Israel, alto saxophonist and jazz composer **URI GURVICH** first began playing the saxophone at the age of 10. In 2003, he relocated to the US to attend Berklee College of Music. After graduating Gurvich moved to Brooklyn and began playing regularly with various ensembles and also became active on the international jazz festival circuit, which has taken him through the US, Europe, Japan and elsewhere. His debut as a leader, *The Storyteller*, was released in 2009 by Tzadik Records and featured

Francisco Mela (drums), Leo Genovese (piano), Peter Slavov (bass) and guest Chris Cheek (tenor sax).

**TEACHERS:** Ed Tomassi, Joe Lovano, Amikam Kimelman, Hal Crook, Greg Hopkins, Dave Santoro.

**INFLUENCES:** John Coltrane, Sacha Argov, Aharon Amram, Keith Jarrett quartets, Mercedes Sosa, Cannonball Adderley, Piyutim (Jewish liturgical poems), Charles Lloyd, Eric Dolphy, Joe Lovano.

**CURRENT PROJECTS:** Uri Gurvich Quartet; Francisco Mela's Cuban Safari; Ori Dakari Group; GNA Trio with Marc Ayza and Pascal Niggenkemper; Akihiro Nishiguchi Group; Ramiro Olaciregui Group; Daniel Ori Quintet.

**BY DAY:** I teach, write music, play the piano, practice, cook and hang out.

**I KNEW I WANTED TO BE A MUSICIAN WHEN...** I don't have a specific moment in mind... It is just something that happened.

**DREAM BAND:** My quartet but also one with Aharon Amram, Charles Lloyd, Hamza El Din and Elvin Jones.

**DID YOU KNOW?** When I was in the Israeli army band I almost went to jail because I forgot the army horn on the tour bus.

For more information, visit [urigurvich.com](http://urigurvich.com). Gurvich is at *The Stone* May 21st. See *Calendar*.

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The album avoids any hint of starchy obligation or misty nostalgia. Mr. Peplowski attacks these songs eagerly, as if tearing them out of their shrink wrap.

His clarinet playing is, as always, sprightly and controlled, expressive but never shrill...The band, with **Mr. Berg**, **Mr. La Barbera** and the bassist **Jay Leonhart**, matches his high degree of enthusiasm and meets his high level of expertise.

Nate Chinen - NY Times

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# HERB ELLIS

## 1921-2010

I met Herbie way before he joined Oscar Peterson, going back to at least 1953. Herb worked for me, and he also recorded with me a few times. He worked with me on the Steve Allen show - he and Barney Kessel would take turns. There was also a group with Buddy DeFranco and a tribute to Benny Goodman with Buddy and Herb.

Herbie was not only a great soloist, he was the best guitar player for any rhythm section. Boy, could he comp. You wouldn't even need a piano player! And he knew I loved big bands. He would play like a big band, with all these big band figures, behind me. He had respect for me, too - he liked my playing. But most importantly, he was one of my good friends. Living on the road is when you get to know somebody. And I got to know him on the road. I once mentioned to an audience I was playing for, "Who do you think was on TV the longest?" All sorts of names were thrown at me - Merv Griffin, Steve Allen, Johnny Carson - but it was Herb actually. He went from the Steve Allen Show to the Della Reese Show to the Regis Philbin Show and on. When one show would end, he would be hired for the next show and then the show after that.

I'm 85 now, and there aren't many people still around today that knew him. They may know the name, but not the person. He really had a great life. Goodness, he played with one of the greatest piano players that ever lived in Oscar Peterson and of course with bassist Ray Brown; he accompanied Ella and all the great singers. When you can do that.... Well, he was one of a kind. I'm going to miss him. He was a good guy.

- TERRY GIBBS, Vibraphonist

I first met Herb in 1978, when he took Ray Brown's recommendation to hire a 25-year-old kid who just got off Woody's band. We played together many times through the years including with Oscar Peterson's Quartet, which also included Ray. For me, it was like climbing into those classic recordings I'd grown up listening and playing to. After the group stomped through the first tune on the opening night, Herb turned around to me and saw that I was smiling from ear to ear. He said, "Well, did you like that?" I replied, "Oh yeah!" He then said, "Good... 'cause it ain't gonna get any better than this."

His passing is a huge loss to all who were fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to hear him... let alone play with him. He always provided the spark and was always a team player with rhythm sections, making sure everyone was on the same wavelength. Fortunately, every time I hear his recordings, I'll have to grin knowing that he's leaning back and raising his leg off the floor while "gettin' a hold of it."

- JEFF HAMILTON, Drummer

Herb was a dear friend. I first heard Herb in a big band, I believe Jimmy Dorsey's. I also got to hear him up close with the Soft Winds Trio with Johnny Frigo and Lou Carter. He was really important, as was Barney Kessel, as both went from big bands to small groups and then leaders. Herb and I became friends and I heard him a lot - it was just so exciting, that amazing trio with Herb, Ray Brown and Oscar. It swung so hard! He and I stayed in touch one way or another and I was really inspired by him personally. He had a very outgoing personality and was very giving. His playing was and still is really exciting for me. He was a big inspiration.

- JIM HALL, Guitarist

I was privileged to have met Herb in the late '50s - he was with Oscar Peterson in Chicago and we had a chance to first connect then. Several years after he called me and we since remained good friends. I always loved his playing. He was truly one of the greats.

We worked together through several tours of Europe with the Great Guitars: Mundell Lowe, Herb and myself. I joined the Great Guitars and jokingly suggested calling it the "OK Guitars" since they had so many great guitarists before I joined - Joe Pass, Charlie Byrd, Barney Kessel. I did two tours with the Great Guitars featuring Herb and as this was getting close to when he stopped playing, I held his hand right through the whole trip. It was great and we had a good time. He did my "Guitar Nights", a weekly guitar series I started in 1997 and have had at various locations in Los Angeles. As a matter of fact, he did his retirement gig at the one on December 4th, 2000 at Rocco's. That became a tribute and his official retirement.

I will always cherish the great musical moments and, as is the case with losing a great dear friend, there is always a lot of sadness - but I have great memories.

**- JOHN PISANO, Guitarist**

I played with Herb Ellis for many years and in all circumstances. He's probably one of the most complete jazz players I know, in every area of jazz. And he was always a lot of fun to work with and to be with. He had a great sense of humor. I worked with him on the Jazz at the Philharmonic tours - he of course was with the Oscar Peterson trio who I recorded with in 1954 and I worked with him at a lot of festivals and with a lot of good players over the years! His style was Herb. He sounded like Herb - that was his style. That I think was an important factor. There are a lot of musicians that copied a lot of players. He played his own way. We're sure sorry he's gone.

**- BUDDY DEFRANCO, Clarinetist**

Herb Ellis was a man of great pride and he played beautifully and with such simplicity. I had the absolute privilege and joy to share music with him for several years from the late '70s until his retirement. I of course heard that amazing threesome of Herb with the great Ray Brown accompanying and aligning with pianist Oscar Peterson. What Herb contributed to that group was like a Mack truck coming down the highway in terms of sheer force. His feeling of the rhythm was so powerful.

He was a disciple of Charlie Christian of course and he brought that very powerful sense of blues - Texas Blues. I remember him telling me of when he was a little kid coming into the city with his dad from Farmsville - near Dallas - and he saw an old African-American man sitting on the curb just playing some of that blues music. That was a defining moment for him. In every note, you could hear his true self: you felt the true blues and the joy of who he was.

I was in a very wonderful position to be playing with Herb and Ray. I treasure every moment on the bandstand with what was called the Triple Threat Trio. I remember, because of that powerful rhythm, when we were playing at the Blue Note one time, there was a line of great pianists, guitarists and bassists there and they said in amazement, "How can you play like that and have no drummer?!" The bond between Ray and Herb was one of the great friendships I ever encountered and they allowed me into that very special place.

**- MONTY ALEXANDER, Pianist**

My name for Herb was "gerbil", as he was on a real health food kick at that time, but the music that we shared was only grits and gravy...

I miss him.

**- RON CARTER, Bassist**

Herb Ellis was one of the first big band guitarists I met when I came home from World War II. I went to New York to join Ray McKinley's band (1946). And at the time Herb was working with the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, so we used to see a lot of each other. I got to know Herb and was impressed with him as a man and as a good player.

He didn't sound like anybody else - he had his own thing. I realized also, as I got to know him, that he was a wonderful blues player. He got that great sound that players from Texas used to get. Those of us who knew Herb will always remember him and love his playing. He was an original... Go easy my friend, you played your best, now go home and rest.

**- MUNDELL LOWE, Guitarist**

I knew Herb since 1946! He was just getting off Jimmy Dorsey's band before forming the Soft Winds trio with Lou Carter and Johnny Frigo. I was on the road with Vaughn Monroe's band at the time. We would always cross paths somewhere. We even played softball against them, with some ringers from the clubs.

I've always admired his playing. Occasionally, we played duets together. He was a disciple of Charlie Christian, but he went into the bebop area and did that extremely well. It was always swinging! He was a swinger and proved so when he played with Oscar Peterson and Ray Brown. But that group, the Soft Winds, was sensational. I don't know why they broke up. I keep saying it over - but he was a swinger! He was a Texas boy and a beautiful guy with other people.

**- BUCKY PIZZARELLI, Guitarist**

I met Herb when I was 19 - and I'm 72 now. When I was 19, I got a call from vocalist/pianist Bobby Troupe who invited me over to his house to audition for a group of his. When I got there, Jack Sheldon was playing trumpet and Herb was playing the guitar. At the time, I was listening to the Oscar Peterson Trio's *At the Stratford Shakespearean Festival* album with Herb and Ray Brown that I had worn out by then. So to see Herb there was a big deal for me. We then became good friends and I played with him through the years off and on. I even made my first album with him [Herb Ellis' *Thank You Charlie Christian* for Verve in 1960].

Two other big things he helped me with were with my certain talent for studio work, which he immediately recognized, and playing different styles. And that's what I wound up doing - I did that my whole career. I did the Glen Campbell show for around five years and during that time the Carol Burnett Show was coming to town. I remember I was working with Herb at Donte's in Los Angeles the night when I got the call - they called me to do the Burnett Show. So I asked Herb, "What should I do? I'm doing another show already and have for some time." He said, "You should do it!" And so I did. Working the Burnett Show lasted the next 11 years. That advice really helped me in my career.

Even though he wasn't in a great place the last years with the Alzheimer's, it's a great loss to the jazz community with Herb gone. He was a really nice and vibrant man and musician.

**- CHUCK BERGHOFER, Bassist**

It was always a pleasure and a privilege to work with Herb. His enthusiasm, his near genius ability to fit in with groups and his technique were all totally admirable. He was certainly one of the best.

**- ANDRE PREVIN, Pianist**

Herb Ellis was one of the best jazz guitarists we've had. He was a master of his instrument and the language of jazz. I realized how truly great he was when I filled in for him with the Oscar Peterson Trio in the summer of 1955. Working with Oscar and Ray Brown was a real challenge and Herb met that challenge admirably - he was able to function and groove with them playing a variety of music. Herb Ellis made many recordings and I'm sure his music will stand the test of time and place him in the highest ranks of jazz guitar. Herb and his music will surely be missed.

**- KENNY BURRELL, Guitarist**

Herb Ellis showed me about support the first day I met him. I was 17 years old and it was my first professional gig, subbing for Ray Brown at an afternoon concert for The Musicians' Wives in LA. He knew how green and scared I was, probably from my visible trembling and he went out of his way to show me that I could rest on his shoulders. That was Herb. Herb was like an uncle to me, insisting that I swing, be a part of his joyful music world and love this life. It's not only his music that continues on, his deep kindness still affects my being.

**- JOHN CLAYTON, Bassist**

My primary experience with Herb Ellis was playing together on my Norman Granz recording, my debut as a leader, in 1953 [*Amazing Toshiko Akiyoshi*, also known as *Toshiko's Piano*] with Oscar Peterson's rhythm section of Herb and bassist Ray Brown, plus Detroit drummer JC Heard. I was beyond excited. I also remember seeing the Oscar Peterson Trio with Herb and Ray play at Symphony Hall in Boston in 1956, shortly after I came from Japan to study in Boston. In my humble opinion, to be a member of the Oscar Peterson Trio - one, you have to have a great sense of time; two, you have to have great technical ability and, most importantly, you have to have great discipline to play with Oscar. Herb had all three. That says a lot of what a great player he was.

**- TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI, Pianist**

I had several opportunities to play with the great Herb Ellis and each time was a reminder of what a gracious and down to earth man he was. He was also one of the most swinging musicians on the planet! If I'm not mistaken the first time we met was on a gig with Ray Brown and Hank Jones, whom I'd played with many times previously. Even though Herb had never met or worked with me, he showed a kind and relaxed manner before a note was played and once the music started, he flashed knowing smiles and gave nods of approval. I believe the last time I played with Herb was in New York City at Town Hall with Oscar Peterson in 1996 [released as *A Tribute To Oscar Peterson - Live At The Town Hall*, Telarc]. Of course I loved his solos, but I could also listen to his accompaniment all day long. It was the epitome of groove and taste and it became evident to me that Herb was clearly one of the reasons why the drummer-less trio featuring himself, Ray Brown and Oscar Peterson swung so hard. I'm thankful I had the privilege of knowing him and making music with him.

**- LEWIS NASH, Drummer**



**What About? Conference Call (Not Two)**  
**Memphis The Fonda/Stevens Group (Playscape)**  
*A Scent in Motion*  
 Michael Jefry Stevens/Harvey Sorgen/Steve Rust  
 (Konnex)  
*Remembering the Future* Jon Hemmersam (JSHCD)  
 by Clifford Allen

The current musical climate being what it is, the moniker of "Conference Call" for a far-flung jazz quartet is quite apt. Creative musicians might call a number of different locales home and the idea of a working band living within the same zip code is something that's very 20th century. The unit of reedman Gebhard Ullmann, pianist Michael Jefry Stevens and bassist Joe Fonda has been together since 1998 (drummer George Schuller being the latest addition). *What About?* finds them performing live at Krakow's Alchemia in 2007. Particularly in live performances, composition and structure grow out of group improvisation and pieces segue into one another, albeit in a clearly defined fashion. Because of a penchant for sparse romanticism and a hunt-and-peck, searching quality to Stevens' pianism, comparisons might abound between his work and Paul Bley or Andrew Hill. However, his chordal sketches are definitive rather than ambiguous, pushing the beat rather than lying behind or around it. In a flash, clanking left hand and the woody flecks of Fonda and Ullmann's Dolphy-tuned bass clarinet can let up into profound, airy and almost sweet lyricism or stripped-down East European folk forms (both seem at play in "What About the Future?"). In a way, the conference is not only about the location of the group's members, but the convergence of stylistic approaches.

Stevens and Fonda have been collaborating since the late '80s and *Memphis* is the 11th disc under the Fonda-Stevens Group moniker. They've held fairly steady as a quartet for some time, featuring drummer Harvey Sorgen and trumpeter Herb Robertson. Bursts of stop-time ascension and descension mark Fonda's opening homage to Mark Whitecage, pizzicato strum encircling Stevens' ringing, Monkish stabs and spindly progressions as Sorgen keeps a dry whip-crack behind Robertson's bent wahs and flutters. Stevens' "For my Brother" explores a delicate, romantic calm that's almost filmic, though high arco bass harmonics and Sorgen's patter and rustle keep the tune from charting too languid waters. Robertson is muted, distant and shaky while piano, bass pluck and snare gradually pick apart and rearrange mood. But the foursome espouse a sense of humor and theatricality, too - witness the group chants of "There is a Very Fine Line between Your Life and Mine" and "Memphis Ramble".

The Sorgen-Rust-Stevens trio joins bassist Steve Rust with Stevens and Sorgen; this aggregation is just one of a handful of different piano trios that the pianist participates in and *A Scent in Motion* is their fourth date together (though it was actually recorded in 1994). "Camco" is a free improvisation that moves from a mean, Valdo Williams-like drive on a simple arpeggio into fractured pointillism, Rust and Sorgen tapping, tugging and thrashing at wood and skin. The disc itself has a nice, raw quality that captures the in-the-red moments of the trio perfectly. That's not to say

that they operate only in arenas of contained violence; rather, clouds of tonal imprecision and cottony murk inhabit Stevens' work on "Cpac", in skewed opposition to the playful agitation of Sorgen's toms and Rust's snaky plucked outlines and subtonal growl.

Danish guitarist Jon Hemmersam has collaborated with Stevens since the late '90s, including a trio with cellist Karen Valeur called the Jazzic Trio. If classical poise and open music are the two poles by which most of Hemmersam's music operates, *Remembering the Future* - joining the guitar-piano pair as it does with free stalwarts like bassist Ken Filiano, saxophonist Dave Liebman and drummer Rakalam Bob Moses - hews to the latter. "Passion", the second part of the opening suite, recalls the Sunrise Studio days, Liebman in full tenor tilt with the dry, burbling accents of Moses a constant active force. Muted piano guts, motoring pluck and Hemmersam's flinty, ringing clusters coagulate in midrange improvisational areas and separate into skeletal duos and trios. Stevens' solo is characteristically light, wistful Evans-nescence, sketched by Moses' cymbal work and leading into a pretty and insistent extrapolation from Filiano. Hemmersam has had a lengthy working relationship with guitarist-composer Dom Minasi, so the dedication of "Dom's Song" is fitting. This offering fuses frantic dustbowl coils with a syrupy, unsettling group plod pierced by trilling soprano and piano and closing in a near nod to "Goodbye Porkpie Hat".

For more information, visit [nottwo.com](http://nottwo.com), [playscape-recordings.com](http://playscape-recordings.com), [konnex-records.de](http://konnex-records.de) and [jonhemmersam.dk](http://jonhemmersam.dk). *Conference Call* is at Thomas Rochon Loft May 1st. See *Calendar*.



*Like The Rusted Key*  
**Peter Van Huffel Quartet (Fresh Sound-New Talent)**  
 by Stuart Broomer

Peter Van Huffel is a Canadian-born alto saxist who recently settled in Berlin after a six-year period in New York. His new quartet reflects all of those geographic connections, bringing together New York pianist Jesse Stacken, a mainstay of Van Huffel's New York quintet, Canadian bassist Miles Perkin and the Swiss-born, Berlin-resident drummer Samuel Rohrer.

To call Van Huffel a 'composer' in the casual parlance of jazz is almost a misnomer. He really composes, almost every piece a tautly structured individual work that provides strong thematic material and impetus for the improvising. The opening "Drift" makes subtle shifts in tonality, working from an initial toy-piano tinkling to cover a spectrum from Far- to Middle East and on. The moody "Melancholic" unfolds with a glacial architecture in which sounds and time are suspended while the closing "Atonement" is at once brooding and radiant, the almost liturgical alto line shot through with the bass' soaring harmonics. It is music of real power, with Van Huffel's alto always possessed of a focused clarity, a vision of linear necessity.

His sense of compositional form and his intense playing are essentially complementary, their interdependence notable on complex structures like "Backward Momentum". Stacken's piano is a source of tremendous momentum, his dense, rhythmically explosive playing sometimes invoking the drive and complexity of early Cecil Taylor. He thrives particularly on the pointillistic "Tangent" and in the

"Beast" series that arises throughout the CD and which alternately emphasizes tensile formal structures and free improvisation. Perkin is particularly adept at bowed passages and Rohrer is a complete percussionist, whether driving the group dialogues or creating glittering soundscapes with various metal instruments. The band is every bit the equal of Van Huffel's compositions, creating its own continuous dialogue and highly developed identity to reshape the music into a complete and collective expression.

For more information, visit [freshsoundrecords.com](http://freshsoundrecords.com). Van Huffel is at Le Grand Dakar May 1st and Cornelia Street Café May 7th as part of the Clean Feed Festival. See *Calendar*.

**GOWANUS JAZZ FEST 2010**  
 DOUGLASS STREET MUSIC COLLECTIVE  
 295 DOUGLASS ST / BROOKLYN, NY 11215  
[www.gowanusjazzfest.com](http://www.gowanusjazzfest.com)

MAY 8  
 8:00PM SAM NEWSOME SOLO  
 9:30PM BIG ENIGMA Cornia, Moran, Harris, Wolfson etc.

MAY 15  
 8:00PM CARLBERG/URIE CITY BAND Carlson, Forber, Rivett, Weiss, Udden etc.  
 9:30PM CHRIS SPEED'S YEAR NO Enslin, Santost, Black

MAY 22  
 8:00PM TIVOLI TRIO Carberg, Hibart, Raskert  
 9:30PM CRAIG TABORN TRIO

**RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES**

- Anat Cohen - *Clarinetwork: Live at the Village Vanguard* (Anzic)
- Jorrit Dijkstra - *Pillow Circles* (Clean Feed)
- Yusef Lateef & Adam Rudolph - *Towards the Unknown* (Meta)
- Olivier Manchon - *Orchestre de Chambre Miniature - Volume 1* (Obliqsound)
- Wallace Roney - *If Only for One Night* (HighNote)
- Ralph Towner & Paolo Fresu - *Chiaroscuro* (ECM)
- David Adler**  
*New York@Night Columnist*
- Gerri Allen - *Flying Toward The Sound* (Motéma Music)
- Carolyn Hume/Paul May - *Come to Nothing* (Leo)
- José James/Jef Neve - *For All We Know* (Impulse!)
- Dave Liebman/Evan Parker/Tony Bianco - *Relevance* (Red Toucan)
- Ben Monder/Bill McHenry - *Bloom* (Sunnyside)
- RED Trio - *Eponymous* (Clean Feed)
- Laurence Donohue-Greene**  
*Managing Editor, AllAboutJazz-New York*
- Tommy Babin's Benzene - *Your Body is Your Prison* (Drip Audio)
- Jeremiah Cymerman - *Under a Blue Green Sky* (Porter)
- Fight the Big Bull - *All is Gladness in the Kingdom* (Clean Feed)
- noZen - *Live! au Upstairs* (Malasartemusique)
- OM - *Willisau* (Intakt)
- Zeno de Rossi/Simone Massaron/Pacho/Giorgio Pacorig/Massimo Pupillo - *Jusi in the Wine House* (Long Song Records)
- Andrey Henkin**  
*Editorial Director, AllAboutJazz-New York*





*Old Tea*  
**Michael Musillami Trio (Playscape)**  
 by Lyn Horton

Guitarist Michael Musillami has seized onto the meaning of irreplaceable moments with *Old Tea*, dedicated to his 29-year-old son, who “took his own life” on Mar. 10th, 2009. In an extraordinarily touching story, Musillami’s liner notes say what cannot be said musically. But the music, executed by his outstanding regular trio, expresses more than can be verbalized.

Bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller take on Musillami’s music with a sensitivity befitting the celebration of human life. The record is concerned with continuity and the transformation of colors. Only one break between tracks is noticeable; the music flows, as one instrument’s sound interweaves with and yields to another.

“Introduction” finds guitar opening in skillful pizzicato form, with a backdrop of bowed bass and the tinkling of small chimes, reverently laying the groundwork for the unfolding of Musillami’s compositions, starting with the title track. Musillami’s guitar playing reflects an internal world, expanding and contracting from stepped-up rhythmic melodies and poignant tunefulness to fiery amplified surges within the same music-scape.

Fonda and Schuller are completely engrossed in the tide of musical changes. In several solo interludes, Fonda can be heard vocalizing, emphasizing his own playing, which, in itself, bears great presence as his lithe fingers lay out themes, bend pitches and craft figures that maintain pace with Musillami’s thoroughly masterful rendering of phrases. Schuller’s drumming speaks endless waves of rhythm and atmosphere. He snaps his brushes accurately and wields his sticks with character and steadiness.

The closing track echoes the opening, as the guitar and bass interact and the cymbals hiss. Fonda switches to flute to play an appropriately heavy-hearted coda.

For more information, visit [playscape-recordings.com](http://playscape-recordings.com). Musillami is at *The Local* 269 May 3rd. See Calendar.



*Blue Soliloquy (Solo Works for Soprano Saxophone)*  
**Sam Newsome (s/r)**  
 by Terrell Holmes

Sam Newsome’s *Blue Soliloquy* is not just a recording of solo soprano saxophone pieces; it’s an eloquent and daring discourse on the scope of possibilities that the instrument offers. As the CD title and song names suggest, the blues forms the foundation for everything Newsome writes and plays. He depends heavily on multiphonics but this complements, rather than submerges, the smooth, rich resonance of his overall tone. There are Gershwin-esque flourishes in tunes like “Blues for Robert Johnson” and “Blue Swagger” and Newsome’s virtuosity sometimes makes it sound like there are two people playing. And multiphonics are

not used just for their own sake; they’re the ‘amen’ notes in the call-and-response scheme of “Blue Pulpit” and carry the soulful and ambitious “Blue Sunday”. On several tunes - “Blue Beijing”, “Blue Doppler Effect”, “Blue Hum of the Holy Breath”, “24 Tones” - Newsome also employs the technique of circular breathing. While some players do this strictly as a parlor trick, Newsome embraces it on each song as a challenge, like a visual artist sketching a detailed landscape from a single unbroken line.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of *Blue Soliloquy* is the way Newsome explores the soprano’s imitative range. On “Blue Mbira” he manipulates his mouthpiece to capture the sound of an African thumb piano, produces flute pitches on “Bansuri Blue” and “Blue Bamboo” and echoes the texture of the human voice on “Throat-Singing Blues”. None of these is a stone-faced impersonation. Newsome swings the whole time, even sending out intermittent winks in the form of tenor-like honking. The disc ends with an interpretation of “Blue Monk”, the reworked chord structure and melody giving Newsome ample room to expound wonderfully upon the pianist’s point.

Newsome pushes creative limits on this stunning work and does so with startling effect. In his adept hands, the soprano becomes truly organic. Who knew that an instrument could have so much personality?

For more information, visit [samnewsome.com](http://samnewsome.com). Newsome is solo at *Douglass Street Music Collective* May 8th and *ABC No Rio* May 23rd. See Calendar.



*Biophilia*  
**Vinson Valega Group (Consilience Prod.)**  
 by Karla Cornejo

Vinson Valega is a devoted environmental and progressive activist who seems engaged with his craft on an aesthetic level but also, it seems, in a profoundly logical, moral way. The drummer’s compositions sound significant, as if every note were saying something, down to the slightest tap of the drumstick. This is not to say his records are wholly serious products. Valega demonstrates that quirk and laughter have their place alongside order and gravitas.


The strength of *Biophilia* lies in that its selection of songs work with each other, performed - perhaps even defined - in relation to each other. “Strange” is a tight little interlude that lasts less than a minute but serves as a promising buffer that delivers listeners to the last two tracks, which conceptually close off the record. The sweetness of “I Just Wanted To See What You Look Like” and “Charm” (the former more than five minutes long, the latter less than one) counteract with the unapologetically tart “Day By Day”. The record sounds tight and easy and fresh, though it’s clear that the easiness is facilitated by preparation and the freshness necessitated by an unwavering commitment to compositional order. “Sunset and the Mockingbird” is an Ellington piece that sounds like a reinterpretation with the softer crescendos and the sharper, dagger-like sax notes that puncture through the rhythmic layers. That eases into “A Moment of Silence”, which is anything but. The piece is a frenetic assembly of yearning - the piano scattering in the opening notes, the elegant and restrained cascading that’s tempered by the almost intimidating drums about a third into the song.

Harmonic dexterity is one thing, orchestral

ambition is another. But listening to a track like “Let” causes the listener to feel viscerally moved by the phantom sax and piano notes that seem to merge slowly, almost imperceptibly, into something accessible, groovy and memorable that seems finished. You begin to think that if the piece closes at any one of two or three possible ending points throughout its length, it would be fine because it’s had its say and said it well. The piano and drums come in humbly, begging to differ, challenging what’s there and promising there are better moments to come.

For more information, visit [cslproductions.org](http://cslproductions.org). This group is at *Smalls* May 1st. See Calendar.

UNEARTHED GEM



**Unreleased Art, Vol. IV: The Art History Project**  
**Art Pepper (Widow's Taste)**  
 by Jeff Stockton

In her liner notes to Volume IV of the *Art History Project*, Art Pepper’s widow describes him as a self-hating, alcoholic sex addict who turned to heroin in order to suppress these tendencies. Second only to Charlie Parker in the *DownBeat* polls of the day, nobody played alto saxophone as smooth and cool as Art Pepper. *Unreleased Art*, a three-disc set comprised of two-thirds never-before released material, traces Pepper’s life in music from his golden era in the ‘50s through his prison-interrupted discovery of Coltrane in the ‘60s and concludes with his final period, fresh out of rehab in the ‘70s and playing as if his life depended on it.

This was Pepper’s reality and the music on Disc Three, subtitled “Consummate Art”, is haunting, driving, drawn out and never stops swinging. It’s this period that defines Pepper as a true artist, 20 years and a lifetime beyond the handsome and impossibly talented natural in place at the start of his career. An authoritative blues closes this set, but it’s “Lost Life”, an achingly beautiful but harrowing ballad that represents Pepper’s *raison d’être*.

Pepper was such a masterful balladeer it made his transition to a Trane-inspired improviser - freer, wilder and angrier - as shocking as Dylan going electric at Newport. Disc Two’s “Hard Art” includes “So in Love”, a standard that earns a lengthy interpretation, and “That Crazy Blues” and “Section D”, two cuts that reach intense, squealing heights that mark Pepper’s great leap forward.

Not that Pepper’s ‘50s music is lacking. Done in the West Coast style, Disc One’s “Pure Art” features in-the-pocket drumming and lead horns darting around the piano-dominated rhythm. “Fascinating Rhythm” and “Begin the Beguine” are effortlessly cool and tenor man Warne Marsh is brought in for a bouncy “I Can’t Believe that You’re in Love with Me” and a deconstruction of “What’s New”.

Laurie Pepper calls *Unreleased Art Volume IV* a companion piece to *Straight Life*, her collaborative biography of her husband. As aural autobiography, these three discs trace the evolution of a jazz genius who lived one hell of a life and who was never more profound and masterful than at the end.

For more information, visit [straightlife.info](http://straightlife.info)

## GLOBE UNITY: PORTUGAL



*Eponymous* RED Trio (Clean Feed)  
*Serendipity*

Gianni Lenoci/Carlos Zingaro/Marcello Magliocchi  
(Amirani)

*Motion Trio* Rodrigo Amado (European Echoes)  
by Tom Greenland

Although more associated in popular imagination with the longing, saudade-laden sound of fado, Portugal has long supported jazz, boasting Europe's oldest jazz club, Lisbon's Hot Clube de Portugal, important festivals and an active free improv scene.

From Clean Feed, the Lisbon-based label with a stable of Portuguese (and other) creative musicians, comes *RED Trio*, with Rodrigo Pinheiro (piano), Hernani Faustino (bass) and Gabriel Ferrandini (drums/percussion), a non-hierarchical, piano-led trio that, like the combos of Bill Evans or Paul Bley, grants equal airtime to each participant. One of the factors contributing to this effect is the closely matching tones and timbres of each instrument: Pinheiro's prepared piano - emitting hammered, muted, scraped and bowed notes - is sometimes difficult to distinguish from Faustino's high-pitched harmonics or Ferrandini's scratchy cymbals and buzzing gongs. When all three take out their bows, as during the middle section of "Quick Sand", the album's epic centerpiece, the damped, metallic tones blend together seamlessly, like a factory full of flywheels, dynamos and random generators, each rotating at its own speed. In contrast, "Burning Light" comes on like a blast of cold thin air rushing into a rapidly depressurizing airplane cabin for 62 seconds of insanity.

*Serendipity*, another equilateral musical triangle, with violin instead of bass, teams Italians Gianni Lenoci (piano) and Marcello Magliocchi (percussion) with Portuguese Carlos Zingaro. Recorded live at the Bari Jazz Festival, these slightly wizened sound sorcerers engage in a series of moods, from the effortless, leisurely cohesion of the third track to the Harpy-like, three-way screeching of the final piece. This rambling conversation covers a range of topics, each member chiming in when the mood takes him. On the fourth track, Zingaro slaps and scratches his strings, bows with lugubrious intensity or trades legato runs with Lenoci like a pair of porpoises playing in the surf.

*The Abstract Truth* is the sophomore release by Rodrigo Amado (tenor and baritone saxes) with Kent Kessler (bass) and Paal Nilssen-Love (drums), a free-swinging session of pulsing percussion and sustained intensity. The most 'jazz'-like of the trios reviewed here, it deemphasizes ecstatic blowing and radical tone-bending in favor of a cooler, calmer soundscape, undulating waves breaking into brief solos or duets, only to regroup in a collective surge. The overall balance, pacing and group interactivity feel unforced yet powerful, unhurried yet fleet.

For more information, visit [cleanfeed-records.com](http://cleanfeed-records.com), [amiranirecords.com](http://amiranirecords.com) and [rodrigoamado.com](http://rodrigoamado.com). *RED Trio* is at Cornelia Street Café May 7th as part of the Clean Feed Festival. See Calendar.



*Incorrigible*  
One For All  
(Jazz Legacy Prod.)



*Return of the Lineup*  
One For All  
(Sharp Nine)

by Ken Dryden

One For All is a collective of hardbop/straightahead players who have busy careers as leaders and sidemen, yet enjoy the time they are able to spend together, whether working on a new CD or performing around the New York City club scene. The core group had its origins at Auggie's (now Smoke) in 1986, where drummer Joe Farnsworth had a regular gig. Soon he was joined by tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander, trumpeter/flugelhornist Jim Rotondi and bassist John Webber. Trombonist Steve Davis came on board in 1990, with pianist David Hazeltine joining a few years later. They didn't officially play under their sobriquet for a few more years, though *Incorrigible* marks their 15th CD together.

Most of *Incorrigible* is devoted to originals, excepting Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart's "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered", long a favorite of jazz musicians. But instead of treating this standard as a straightahead ballad, the group reharmonizes it, shifting from a loping introductory tempo to breezy hardbop, highlighted by smoldering tenor and energized trumpet. But the originals prove to be just as potent. The tenorist's title track is full of twists and rewarding solos by each frontline member. Hazeltine's Latin-flavored "Petite Ange" has an understated swagger while his slow but subtle "Blues For Jose" showcases blues-drenched solos by Davis, Rotondi and Alexander though the pianist loosens things up with his playful bop line. Davis contributed the gospel-flavored shuffle "So Soon", an extended workout that would have fit Art Blakey's repertoire (no surprise, since Davis was a member of the drummer's final band), and his modal piece "Spirit Waltz" bristles with energy. Rotondi switches to flugelhorn for his ballad "Voice", a moving salute to the late Freddie Hubbard, The trumpeter's infectious "Back to Back" is full of rich harmonies and would get any nightclub audience on its feet.

The group's previous disc *Return of the Lineup* is also a strong session. Two familiar pieces are included. Alexander extends John Coltrane's well-known arrangement of the standard "But Not For Me", conjuring a bit of the late tenor saxophonist in his solo and Rotondi's gorgeous setting of Cedar Walton's ballad "Dear Ruth" features his rich flugelhorn. Among the originals, Hazeltine's exuberant "Treatise for Reedus" honors drummer Tony Reedus (who died unexpectedly a short time prior to this record date), featuring the composer's intricate solo and Rotondi's sizzling muted trumpet. The pianist's "Blues For JW" is a snappy bop vehicle that almost has to be in honor of the late pianist/composer James Williams (who was Reedus' uncle and died unexpectedly in 2004 after a short bout with liver cancer). Rotondi's tense "Jackpipe" would have been welcome in the height of the hardbop era, a stimulating chart that provokes invigorating solos all around. There is more than a share of Latin-tinged pieces, too. Davis' "Silver and Cedar" honors two jazz piano greats while Alexander's "Road to Marostica" has a hip AfroCuban vibe blended with hardbop.

For more information, visit [jazzlegacyproductions.com](http://jazzlegacyproductions.com) and [sharpnine.com](http://sharpnine.com). This band is at Smoke May 1st. See Calendar.



*Mysteries Beneath*  
The Planet  
Edwards/Walter Group  
(ugEXPLODE)



*Invasion*  
Weasel Walter  
Septet  
(ugEXPLODE)

by Martin Longley

Both of these Weasel Walter albums feature similarly-equipped bands and a comparable level of attack, magnified, distended, distilled, compacted, crushed, mushroom-clouded or otherwise unnaturally manipulated to create a maximized rush of euphoria.

Walter co-leads an ongoing group with fellow drummer Marc Edwards and *Mysteries Beneath The Planet* is a live recording of two 2008 NYC gigs. There were different lineups for each night. The first included Tom Blancarte (bass), Peter Evans (trumpet), Darius Jones and Paul Flaherty (saxophones) while the second was bassless, but boasted a third drummer, Andrew Barker, along with saxophonists Ras Moshe and Mario Rechtern.

There are still regular attempts to deliver the old school free jazz frenzy of sustained demolition-blasting, but few can boast the sheer rumbling force of these shows. Groups, gigs and track-lengths are alternated, a short piece followed by a pair of extended 25 minute blasts, the disc concluding with another piece of comparative brevity. The Walter/Edwards barrage is divided up in the stereo field, both players filling all frequencies with their manic tattoos. The twitchy stick-work immediately provides a machine-gunning foundation for the gabbling hornmen.

On the lengthy "Luminous Predator", Rechtern's soprano sounds like a North African reed-shriek, Moshe riffing gruffly underneath on tenor. The players are in constantly blurring motion, channeling apparent chaos with supreme energy, maintained at length. During "Book Of The Dead", the other epic piece, Evans rips up above the majority frequencies, an element of manic Mariachi to his soloing trumpet levitation. The horns make a spontaneously orchestrated eruption of crazed hyena cackling. Even seasoned embracers of extremity will be flattened against the walls by this monstrous din.

The Weasel Walter Septet recorded *Invasion* at the famed Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, California, emphatically not the joint's accustomed stylistic output. It's a more refined artifact, when set beside *Mysteries*, but excitement still skates over its hi-fidelity surface. Here, Walter is concerned with textured arrangement, coaxing out the very varied sonic qualities of an inspired roster that includes guitarist Henry Kaiser and reedman Vinny Golia.

Attention is paid to space, as the Septet make tiny stabs of rationed activity, repeated blows to the cranium. After around 12 minutes of the opening "Nautilus Rising", activity intensifies and its atmosphere thickens. Golia rises up out of the magma, prettily warbling on soprano saxophone. The closing title cut's extreme events are delicately placed. There's an industrial wash, with chattering horns. This time, Golia streaks ebony bass clarinet hues.

Ultimately, these discs contrast an uninhibitedly brutal onslaught with a more finely-sculpted form of anarchy. These are two co-existing aspects of the Weasel Walter love of all things sonically extreme.

For more information, visit [nowave.pair.com/ugexplode](http://nowave.pair.com/ugexplode). *Walter* is at The Stone May 2nd and Zebulon May 17th and 25th. See Calendar.



Chicago 1946  
Cornell University 1948  
Duke Ellington (Musicmasters-Nimbus)

by George Kanzler

The depth and breadth of the Ellington Orchestra's repertoire/book over the half-century Duke led the band is mind-bogglingly vast. And commercially-released studio recordings are only the tip of the iceberg. There are compositions, versions of tunes and unique collaborations contained on these two albums found either nowhere else or only on other roughly contemporaneous live concert recordings. The Cornell University, December 10, 1948, concert documents an incarnation of the band that had gone unrecorded, commercially, for the entire year due to a union-imposed recording ban. It also has the added value of including Duke's illuminating, if often enigmatic, spoken introductions, segments missing on the Chicago recordings. The priceless aspect of the Chicago sessions is the presence of Django Reinhardt playing amplified guitar - although there is little interaction with the band.

These concerts took place in years that Ellington premiered new, extended works at Carnegie Hall annually. The second, yet earlier, Chicago Civic Opera House concert (1/20/46) reprised *A Tonal Group*, debuted a fortnight earlier in New York and includes a rare example of a "Fugue", a device Ellington also used in his tone poem "(A Tone Parallel to) Harlem" in 1951. The Chicago concert with Django (11/10/46) also features the first, pre-Carnegie premiere, debut of *The Deep South Suite*, best known for "Happy-Go-Lucky Local", but fascinating for Ellington's wry, sardonic take on the racist South in the other movements (his spoken comments are invaluable here). *Black, Brown and Beige* is excerpted with "Come Sunday-Work Song", demonstrating that Ellington had not given up on it despite poor reviews at its 1943 premiere.

By the post-WWII era, Ellington and Billy Strayhorn and his other collaborators, had developed a unique, post-Swing sound and extended vocabulary for the band. On these albums the band also embraces aspects of modernity like asymmetry, dissonance, bop harmonies and abrupt tonal/mood shifts on "The Air-Conditioned Jungle" (Chicago) and "The Tattooed Bride" and "The Symphomaniac" (Cornell). The 1948 concert is notable, too, for the last recorded revival of "Reminiscing in Tempo", Ellington's first extended work - a brooding, impressionistic elegy for his mother. Both albums also attest to the profligate creative and melodic fecundity of Ellington/Strayhorn, showcasing tunes like the dashing "My Friend", ravishing "Lady of the Lavender Mist" and "Sultry Sunset" that would be the envy of would-be composers today, but didn't make the cut in the ongoing book. Also intriguing are the creative reimaginings and reworkings in the (piano heavy) "Frankie and Johnny", "Caravan" (both Chicago) and "A-Train" take off, "Manhattan Murals" and "Humoreque" (Cornell). And don't miss the three-tempoed Ben Webster showcase, "How High the Moon" (Cornell), a template for tenor sax features for the next decades.

For more information, visit [wyastone.co.uk/nrl](http://wyastone.co.uk/nrl). Juilliard Jazz Orchestra playing Ellington (May 5th-9th) and Essentially Ellington Alumni All-Stars (May 4th-9th) are at Dizzy's Club May 4th-9th. The Essentially Ellington Concert is at Avery Fisher Hall May 10th. See Calendar.

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**Behind the Smile**  
**Antoinette Montague (In The Groove)**  
 by Marcia Hillman

Antoinette Montague's new CD shows what is *Behind the Smile* - eclectic taste and strong delivery. She is joined by choice company on this outing: Mulgrew Miller (piano), Bill Easley (saxophone, clarinet and flute), Peter Washington (bass) and drummer Kenny Washington, who doubles as producer.

Montague's programmatic choices are a varied mix, including blues, soul, the Great American Songbook, two Motown numbers and the original title track. She travels through these different genres without being tied down to any of them, but does show a strong affinity for singing the blues. Her work on Big Bill Broonzy's "Give Your Mama One Smile" and Buddy Johnson's "Ever Since The One I Love's Been Gone" displays her prowess and connection to genre. She has an edge to her voice (sometimes with a hint of that other Washington - Dinah) that allows her to belt the blues with the best of them, but there is also a softness that she can use when the song calls for it.

Montague includes a tune by jazz historian/critic Leonard Feather and lyricist Bob Russell ("I'd Rather Have A Memory"), recorded by Sarah Vaughan in the '40s, and the "23rd Psalm" by Duke Ellington originally written for Mahalia Jackson. The Motown selections are Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On" (featuring some nice interplay between voice and Easley's sax) and a funky rendition of "Get Ready" (full of Easley's wailing tones). There are some notable moments by Miller as he demonstrates his stride piano ability on Brubeck's quiet "Summer Song" and tastefulness on the Kerr-Jennings ballad "Somewhere in the Night", originally sung by Kim Carnes.

Montague is a pop singer, per se, with a good sense of tune selection. Surrounding herself with this group of fine jazz musicians as companions is another good reason she's smiling.

For more information, visit [antoinettemontague.com](http://antoinettemontague.com). Montague is at Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch May 6th. See Calendar.



**Lost in a Dream**  
**Paul Motian/Chris Potter/Jason Moran (ECM)**  
 by Ted Gordon

Consider this album a blind date of sorts: Paul Motian meets Jason Moran, introduced by the matchmaker Chris Potter. Though Motian had worked once with Moran in 2006, this collaboration is a stunning example of the versatility and mastery of Motian's veteran technique. Recorded over a week of concerts at the Village Vanguard, Motian's stomping grounds, this album is held together by the trio's seemingly effortless exploration of slow, melodic ballads. At 79, Motian has proven to be a versatile and thorough player, thriving in any combination of players.

With plenty of elbow room within his compositions, Motian expresses a reserved chaos - just enough beneath the shimmery surfaces of Potter's smooth melodic lines. Evoking Lester Young, Potter often acts as an intermediary between Motian and Moran, a kind of bridge between the latter's subdued, harmonically dense playing and the former's freer cymbal-work. That is not to say that Potter comes off as too slick on this album; on the contrary, his improvisations in both the quieter, more delicate moments, as well as in the louder, raucous instances (such as on "Drum Music") tie the album together, both stylistically and melodically.

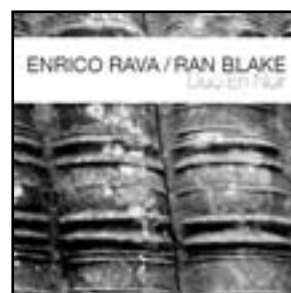
The one non-Motian composition is Irving Berlin's "Be Careful It's My Heart" and this ballad fits perfectly with Motian's own; though there is more harmonic movement, Moran handles it in such a way that allows Potter to shine through with free, beautiful, melody. A quick three-minute run-through, this track is a microcosm of the album as a whole.

The track with the highest energy is perhaps "Drum Music", a composition from Motian's 1979 album *Le Voyage*, showcasing Motian's free style alongside Potter's more harmonically free improvisation. Moran's heavy left hand and Motian's more rhythmic playing on this track synch up in an unexpected way, showing that these players really should get together more often. The next track, "Abacus", also from 1979, features an extended solo by Motian sandwiched between the lead and a da capo repetition, performed smartly with restraint. Small touches - a snare hit here, a Monk-like chord there - elevate this composition to a masterful level, a stacked hand that plays its cards one by one, revealing more and more as it goes on.

For more information, visit [ecmrecords.com](http://ecmrecords.com). Motian is at Blue Note May 4th-9th and 11th-16th. See Calendar.



**ScapeGrace**  
**Dennis González/  
 João Paulo (Clean Feed)**



**Duo En Noir**  
**Enrico Rava/Ran Blake  
 (Between the Lines)**

by Andrey Henkin

Different instruments paired in duet with piano bring out unique facets. With drums, its percussive nature becomes remarkably apparent while matched with an upright bass, it becomes more harmonic and moody. Though done with less frequency than those formats, the trumpet-piano duet is an appealing scenario, one that draws out the piano's higher range and a certain brash classicism. Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines perhaps did it first; Oscar Peterson recorded a handful of duet albums in the '70s with Dizzy Gillespie, Roy Eldridge and others and today we have the lengthy partnership of Satoko Fujii and Natsuki Tamura, to provide a very scant timeline of the genre.

The encounter between Latino-American trumpeter/cornetist Dennis González and Portuguese pianist João Paulo documented on *ScapeGrace* is an unusual one. It is certainly one of the former's more introspective albums, a wonderful opportunity to hear his lush melodic thinking in perfect clarity, only the slightest indication of moving air audible. Paulo's background is a classical one, with an accomplished technique to match so there too we get absolutely faultless articulation. The nine tracks on the album are originals, three by González and the remainder by Paulo. Most tend to move slowly and deliberately but

still maintaining a sprightly lightness. Not that there is much culture shared between Dallas (from where González hails and still makes his home) and Lisbon but different pieces on *ScapeGrace* might make a listener consider other analogous partnerships such as Canadians Kenny Wheeler and Paul Bley (which did happen) and South Africans Abdullah Ibrahim and Mongezi Feza (which sadly never did). The album is long at 72 minutes but unlike many other similarly extended sessions, it is the unfolding beauty of *ScapeGrace* that keeps it compelling.

Italian trumpeter Enrico Rava is no stranger to this format, having recorded with countrymen Enrico Pieranunzi and more recently with the dynamic Stefano Bollani. *Duo En Noir*, with American pianist Ran Blake, comes inbetween those efforts, recorded live in Frankfurt in 1999. The pair's emphasis on space and lyricism make them ideal partners. Apart from playing one of Rava's favorite originals, "Certi Angoli Segreti" (done solo), the rest of this program is an interesting mix of selections. There are jazz standards like "Nature Boy", "There's No You", "I Should Care", "Tea For Two" and "There's a Small Hotel" but interspersed is film music by Bernard Hermann and David Raksin (a "Vertigo/Laura" medley) and Roy Webb ("The Spiral Staircase) as well as Al Green's "Let's Stay Together" (solo piano). At less than 40 minutes, this set is quite zippy, the longest tune a whopping five-plus minutes and the shortest just under two (a solo Blake rendition of Kelly Donohue's "Shake the Cage"). *Duo En Noir* actually ends long before you were expecting, or wishing, it would.

For more information, visit [cleanfeed-records.com](http://cleanfeed-records.com) and [betweenthelines.de](http://betweenthelines.de). Rava is at Convent Avenue Baptist Church May 4th and Birdland May 5th-8th. See Calendar.

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*Live at the Woodstock Playhouse 1965*

Burton Greene (Porter)

*Why Not?* Marion Brown (ESP-Disk)

*Eddie Jefferson at Ali's Alley*

Rashied Ali Quintet (Blue Music Group)

*Configurations: The Music of John Coltrane*

Rashied Ali (with Prima Materia) (Blue Music Group)

*Mystic Journey* Azar Lawrence (Furthermore)

by Gordon Marshall

Before his death in August 2009, Rashied Ali was best known for his role as Coltrane's last drummer, replacing Elvin Jones of the classic quartet. Ali led Coltrane in a new direction with the percussive style he created, labeled "multi-directionalism". The term is prone to misunderstanding and a plethora of interpretations - which is a good part of its strength: since it can't be put into words, it forces musical interpretation that, in turn, forces music forward. The phenomenon unfolds on five new releases, two from the '60s that feature Ali in quartets, one from 1976 with his quintet backing vocalist Eddie Jefferson and one, from 2009, on which he leads the group Prima Materia. Capping these off is Azar Lawrence's newest album dedicated to and featuring Ali in what is presumably his last recording. These discs confirm Ali's achievement before and beyond his service with Coltrane and cement a legacy. In the year after Ali's passing, we are privileged to have such a spate of indications of his multifaceted talent.

Pianist Burton Greene's *Live at the Woodstock Playhouse 1965* begins with a cool, melancholy waltz, "Tree Theme II", almost along the lines of a Dave Brubeck/Paul Desmond effort like "Take Five". This quickly changes as alto saxophonist Marion Brown embarks on a hard-edged modal adventure, with Greene laying down darker chords. This is early Ali, sounding much like the guy he ousted, Elvin Jones. Bassist Reggie Johnson plucks double stops quietly in the background and Greene's solo is crossed with impressionist classical tones, the theme returning with a hint of baroque polyphony. "Cluster Quartet II", the second track, draws more from postbop proper, but

Greene punches down some clusters after the head. Then Ali breaks form, unleashing a free-tempo excursion, carried ferociously forward in the half-hour final track, "Like It Is". This is the big bang of multi-directionalism.

*Why Not?*, though Marion Brown's album, is about interactive dynamics. It is airy, but by no means tepid. Ali rips on his solos here; elsewhere he explores space as Brown, bassist Sirone and pianist Stanley Cowell explore the temporal dimension. This is an album about time, crosscurrents of speed and anticipation and patience and quietude, astir. Cowell is a particular standout. With wide ranging dynamics, he touches on dissonance yet brings it back into the clear of the lyrical. This is unusual for Brown, known for his frenetics first found on Coltrane's *Ascension* (Impulse!, 1965). He is as likely to hint at ballads with standard changes as to race up and down the chromatic scale. The band plays subtly against and in contrast with one another rather than chase the same game in cacophony.

The release with Eddie Jefferson *At Ali's Alley* is, as a Jefferson album can only be, in some ways a delight. Ali himself shows he can do bop and swing as well as anything or anyone and the rest of the quintet (Jimmy Vass and Marvin Blackman, saxes; Marsha Frazier, piano; Benny Wilson, bass) is excellent. Jefferson treads through such favorites as "Now's the Time" and "So What". However, he seems a little tired on this 1976 live recording, taken from Ali's own club. It is only on the ballads, his signature number "Body and Soul" and "Moody's Mood for Love", the hit for King Pleasure, that he comes fully to life and his voice soars - but these are priceless moments and must be heard or heard again.

Ali's *Configurations* is a drier affair, but it does yield warmth. Ali made this album (a retreat of a posthumously released recording he did with Coltrane in 1967, *Stellar Regions*) because he felt he could improve on the first effort with 40 years hindsight. In many ways he was right. Ali engages Prima Materia as a nexus to a plexus. The title is apt: Prima Materia configure and work out the permutations of Ali's drumming style. As substitute for Coltrane, tenor saxophonist Louie Belogenis merits most scrutiny. Despite all appearances, Belogenis is not a passion player in the mode of Coltrane. Sometimes deadpan, sometimes humorous or even dead serious, he seems like a swing stylist gone wild, but all his moves are cerebral and rational. He can create Coltrane-esque effects, but this happens where it is called for, propelled by Ali's statements, which are as impeccable as when he started out. Allan Chase, on alto and soprano, has the bite.

Tenor saxophonist Azar Lawrence's *Mystic Journey* charts a spiritual quest. Lawrence steers a sextet of Eddie Henderson (trumpet and flugelhorn), Gerald Hayes (alto sax), Benito Gonzalez (piano), Essiet Essiet (bass) and Ali adeptly through the traditions of hard modal and hardbop, with a turn or two to bossa nova. The ride is so smooth it is easy to overlook the complex activity at play. Lawrence varies his attacks on his instrument like a good baseball hurler varies his pitches. Now he sideslips, now he chops up the theme like ice. He engages in odd-interval arpeggios, controlled over-blowing and harmonics. More to the point, he knows when to pitch which pitch. This is never a matter of showing off effects, but a seamless concatenation of approaches that approximate, in a new context, Ali's multi-directionality. Lawrence is another Coltrane disciple, but not just another one - an outstanding one.

For more information, visit [porterrecords.com](http://porterrecords.com), [espdisk.com](http://espdisk.com), [music.bluemusicgroup.com](http://music.bluemusicgroup.com) and [furthermorerecordings.com](http://furthermorerecordings.com). Tributes to Rashied Ali are being held at Tribeca Performing Arts Center May 7th with the Azar Lawrence Sextet and The Local 269 May 31st, fêting Interstellar Space. See Calendar.



- Sat May 1 **MARK HELIAS QUARTET** 9PM & 10:30PM  
Elery Eskelin, Ray Anderson, Tom Rainey
- Mon May 3 **AMRAM & CO** 8:30PM  
Kevin Twigg, John de Witt, Adam Amram, John Ventimiglia
- Tue May 4 **DAVID SMITH GROUP**  
**CELEBRATING THE CD ANTICIPATION** 8:30PM  
Nate Radley, Gary Wang, Greg Ritchie, Kenji Omae
- Wed May 5 **TRACY BONHAM & COMPANY** 8:30PM  
Rhett Miller
- Thu May 6 **GNU VOX: BRENDA EARLE** 8:30PM  
Jesse Lewis, Ike Sturm, Jared Schonig

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Samuel Blaser, Michael Bates
- 9:45 - Ivo Perelman / Daniel Levin / Reuben Radding "Soulstorm"  
11:00 - RED trio + Nate Wooley "RED trio"  
Rodrigo Pinheiro, Hernani Faustino, Gabriel Ferrandini, Nate Wooley
- Saturday, May 8  
8:30 - Samuel Blaser Quartet "Pieces of Old Sky"  
Todd Neufeld, Eivind Opsvik, Billy Mintz
- 9:45 - Marty Ehrlich Rites Quartet "Things Have Got to Change"  
James Zollar, Erik Friedlander, Michael Sarin  
11:00 - Tom Rainey Trio "Pool School"  
Mary Halvorson, Ingrid Laubrock
- Sunday, May 9  
8:30 - Tetterapadequ "And the Missing R"  
Daniele Martini, Giovanni Di Domenico, Gonçalo Almeida, João Lobo  
10:00 - Tony Malaby's Apparitions "Voladores"  
Sean Conly, Tom Rainey, Satoshi Takeishi

- Mon May 10 **COMPOSERS COLLABORATIVE:**  
**SERIAL UNDERGROUND** 8:30PM  
Rachelle Camiez, Giancarlo Vulcano, Deborah Atherton, Ed Schmidt
- Tue May 11 **DAVE ALLEN QUARTET** 8:30PM  
John O'Gallagher, Matt Clohesy, Tom Rainey
- Wed May 12 **AMANDA MONACO QUARTET** 8:30PM  
Douglas Yates, Sean Conly, Satoshi Takeishi
- Thu May 13 **GNU VOX: PETER ELDRIDGE** 8:30PM  
Joel Frahm, Matt Aronoff, Ben Wittman, plus special guests!
- Fri May 14 **TONY MALABY CELLO QUARTET /**  
**MICHAEL ATTIAS' BAD LUCID** 9PM & 10:30PM  
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Francisco Mela, Brad Jones, Marty Erlich, Barry Cooper
- Sun May 16 **PO'JAZZ: THE DOUBLE SHARPS: ON THEIR OWN** 6PM  
Dan Lipsitz, Pierre Pisotelli, Nathaniel Schroeder, Boni Choi  
**HIBAKUSHA STORIES** 8:30PM  
Sam Sadigursky, Kris Davis, Aidan O'Donnell, Damien Reed  
w/ special guest Becca Stevens
- Wed May 19 **THE SONGWRITER'S BEAT** 8:30PM  
Ronny Drayton, Steve Conte, Pantera Saint-Montaigne, Julie Kathryn
- Thu May 20 **GNU VOX: TRISH LAROSE** 8:30PM  
Trish LaRose, Brandon Sturiale
- Fri May 21 **REZ ABBASI'S RAAQ** 9PM & 10:30PM  
Bill Ware, Stephan Crump, Eric McPherson
- Sat May 22 **TOM BECKHAM GROUP** 8:30PM  
Chris Cheek, Henry Hey, Matt Clohesy, Ferenc Nemeth
- Sun May 23 **PIANO & ARIAS** 6PM  
Eugene Sirotkine, Victor Antipenko
- Mon May 24 **ERNESTO CERVINI QUARTET** 8:30PM  
Joel Frahm, Dan Tepler, Dan Loomis
- Tue May 25 **LANDMARC** 8:30PM  
Marc Mommaas, Tony Moreno, Nate Radley, Vic Juris
- Wed May 26 **GNU VOX: A FOND FAREWELL -**  
**A FINAL NIGHT OF VOCAL INSANITY** 8:30PM  
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#### Nefertiti In A Silent Way Bitches Brew Miles Davis (Columbia-Legacy) by Russ Musto

Taken together, *Nefertiti*, *In A Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew*, recorded over a period of slightly more than two years from June of 1967 to August of 1969, present a reasonably representational overview of the (r)evolution taking place in the music of Miles Davis at the time and which would soon go on to affect much of the jazz genre in general. Rereleased here in their '60s format, as long-playing vinyl records with original covers and without the alternate takes that have expanded current CD reissues, listeners are given the opportunity to experience this important music as it was first intended to be heard. And although the claim stickered to the shrinkwrap of each of these 180-gram audiophile pressings "that nothing sounds as good and as warm as a vinyl recording" is debatable, there is indeed a certain sound here that is stirring, even if the experience may be more nostalgic than auditory.

*Nefertiti* is one of the iconic trumpeter's greatest masterpieces, a middle period issue by his second classic quintet of Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Tony Williams that began edging towards a more nuanced impressionistic sound on its previous two releases, *E.S.P.* and *Miles Smiles*. Here, particularly on ethereal Shorter pieces like the title track and "Fall", the emphasis on dissonant harmony, suspended rhythms and group interplay and away from traditional timekeeping, accompaniment and soloing, still evident (although in a transformational manner) on pieces like Williams' "Hand Jive", Hancock's "Madness" and Shorter's "Pinocchio", point to the groundbreaking work of future releases that would truly alter the sound of jazz forever.

Noteworthy for its utilization of electric instruments and extended form, *In A Silent Way* was the trumpeter's second album to use the subtitle "Directions In Music by Miles Davis" on the cover, signaling his conscious desire to move away from the sound and structure of traditional jazz. The two side-long pieces "Shhh/Peaceful" and "In A Silent Way/It's About That Time" represent a new direction in music for Davis and jazz, one that is funky and groove-oriented. The addition of John McLaughlin on electric guitar and Chick Corea and Joe Zawinul on keyboards, expanding the Hancock-Williams rhythm section (with Dave Holland replacing Ron Carter on bass) presents a revolution in sound, one of expansive tonality in which the soloists are given a new freedom to express themselves within a slowly shifting sonic tapestry, unconstrained by confining harmonic progressions. The resultant sound, while now accepted, was a radical departure at the time, although one with such a soothing appealing mood that it could indeed be considered a 'quiet revolution'.

*Bitches Brew*, on the other hand, remains arguably the most radically revolutionary (jazz) album of its radical time, with everything - from its then somewhat obscure title to the Afrocentric painting adorning the double record's gatefold cover and Ralph Gleason's ee cummings styled lower case liner notes - pointing away from the comfortable status quo that the music's most conservative adherents cherished. Expanding upon the electric tapestry of *In A Silent Way*, the sounds are more jarring, with Miles' reverberating trumpet soaring to an out-of-this-world atmosphere

and Bennie Maupin's dark bass clarinet, contrasting with Shorter's whining soprano sax (the only horn he plays on the date), contributing to the ominous tone that is central to the album's unsettling, ever-shifting groove. This is supplied by Dave Holland and Harvey Brooks' acoustic and electric basses beneath the swirling battery of electric keyboards manned by Corea, Zawinul and Larry Young, McLaughlin's distinctive electric guitar and an expanded percussion section: the dual drumkits of Lenny White and Jack DeJohnette and the congas and shakers of Don Alias and Juma Santos. Rightly considered the granddaddy of all fusion records, the concepts unveiled here have gone on to become accepted facets of popular music, causing audiences to forget just how earth shattering this date was when it first turned jazz on its side.

For more information, visit [legacyrecordings.com](http://legacyrecordings.com). The Music of Miles is at Iridium May 27th-30th. See Calendar.



#### Agendacide b/w Snow Leopard X 3 Reptet (Monktaile Creative Music Concern) by Elliott Simon

Remember in the highschool band room, how the horn section would goof around like they were part of Parliament Funkadelic or James Brown or the Mothers of Invention? The super cool Mothers, with Napoleon Murphy Brock on sax, flute and vocals. And then the drums, I mean all of them, would join in. Think if that horn section was actually as together and inventive as they thought they were and bassist Bootsie Collins was in the neighborhood and dropped in to jam. And the Specials, Selector and Madness, all of them including trumpeter Chas Smith, show up and then Frank Zappa himself makes an appearance on guitar midway through the jam with Sun Ra in tow as things take a decidedly fishy turn. Think all that and more and then you sort of have the feel of Reptet as "Grand Wazoo" turns into "Gwand Wabbit".

A Seattle sextet, Reptet mixes it all up and draws from a variety of styles including jazz, funk, world, Latin, ska, avant garde, Zappa and silliness. Their second CD used '70s funky attitude, punky-ska irreverence and ultra-cool LP-like packaging as somewhat of a touchstone while answering the age old limited option reception question *Chicken or Beef?* The answer was of course, "I'll have both please with pork BBQ, fish and veal as well". No veggie option here.

They have just released a new followup single, a real single on glorious very red vinyl (mp3s available for download with code), entitled *Agendacide b/w Snow Leopard X 3*. It includes organist Wayne Horvitz and prepared guitarist Mark Oi. John Ewing plays drums and assorted other things and he and bassist Tim Carey are stellar in providing not only a solid rhythmic floor but in setting direction to what could easily develop into total silliness.

But this is again really good music. Samantha Boshnack plays trumpet and she can scream or play it sweet. Chris Credit is on alto and bari saxophone and Nelson Bell's t-bone and tubas with Izaak Mills' tenor sax make for incredibly tight and swinging horn playing. It looks so neat on my turntable and sounds even better. Reptet = horns + bass + drums + attitude.

For more information, visit [reptet.com](http://reptet.com). This band is at The Local 269 May 9th and Rose Live Music May 10th. See Calendar.



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## ANTOINETTE 2010 PERFORMANCES

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• **SAT. MAY 8TH** Café Eiko presents **Swing Into Spring** with Antoinette Montague celebrating the radio release of her new CD! 11 Whitney St., Hartford, CT • 8 pm, doors open 7 pm \$35 stage side table seating, \$20 general admission To reserve, call 860-232-5677 (leave a call back number) or email japanalia@msn.com

• **SAT. MAY 29TH**

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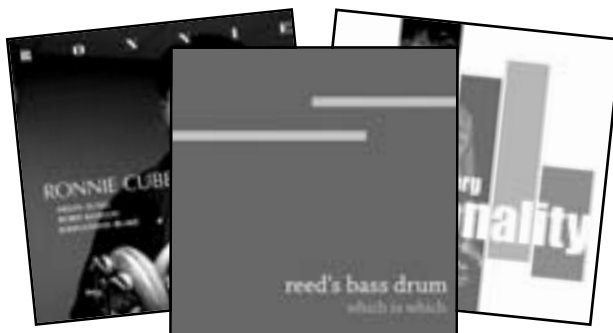
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(excerpt from Gary Giddins's liner notes)  
 \* 14 of the 51 tracks initially released in 1992 as *People Time* a 2 CD album

www.sunnysiderecords.com



**RONNIE** Ronnie Cuber Quartet (SteepleChase)  
*Baritonality* Roger Rosenberg (Sunnyside)  
*Which is Which* Reed's Bass Drum (s/r)  
 by Fred Bouchard

Do baritone saxophonists get insufficient respect? Worthy recordings by an elder master, a mid-career pro and a genial parvenu suggest they might deserve quite a bit more.

Ronnie Cuber, who'll be 69 this Christmas and has played with everyone from George Benson to Lee Konitz, attacks his horn with the litheness of a wildcat, applying bounce and bite. *RONNIE*, Cuber's fifth CD for SteepleChase (itself closing in on 40 years) hews to hand-plucked boppers (zesty Freddie Hubbard, hell-bent Charlie Parker, brazen Clifford Brown, debonair Dave Brubeck, extroverted Eddie Vinson, pensive sighing Scott LaFaro) with two Tin Pan Alley classics and two by Michel Legrand. Cuber's ideas are clipped and tart, yet genially and joyously expansive. His lean splintery sound - all his own - might suggest Pepper Adams shredding. Helen Sung's piano is perfectly counterpoised - relaxed and balanced - opposite the leader's gravelly derring-do; this is true even on the tiptoe unisons opening "Ah-Leu-Cha". Boris Kozlov's bass, a potent voice in any context, affords a strong timbral buffer for Cuber. (Cuber and his band are colleagues in the singular maelstrom of Mingus Big Band.) Strong solos all around, including Johnathan Blake on drums.

Roger Rosenberg, Gotham-born, 59, pulls out all the stops on his robust, rollicking set *Baritonality*. His sound is sandpapery, authoritative, gravelly in mid-register, reverberant in low. Ideas are hearty, expansive and by-the-bop-book on this flashy, brassy excursion. Straight-up originals set a tense pace: the title track and "The 8th Day" wend through speedy blues. Rosenberg also doubles on soprano (the uptempo "Paradox") and bass clarinet (a musing-then-acrobatic ballad dedicated to Mike Brecker). There is able, affable support by fellow veterans - Mark Soskin (piano), Chip Jackson (bass) and Jeff Brillinger (drums) - as well as a soaring guitar cameo by Peter Bernstein on the Landesman-Wolf beauty "Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most". Rosenberg has no fear of going it alone on a booting, gruff/tender four-minute tour of "Someone To Watch Over Me" or head-to-head with Brillinger on the exclamatorily scalar highballing closer "Birds and Tranes".

Jonah Parzen-Johnson, 30-something baritonist from Chicago, appears less as a leader on *Which Is Which* than as the foremost participant in a collective trio - with bassist Noah Garabedian and drummer Aaron Ewing - whose playful appellation designates its three voices. With no comfy chordal axes to guide or dictate, Reed's Bass Drum applies a constructivist process: their grazing passes over what's on the usual jazz buffet; they sample judiciously, tasting their way from track to track, taking small bites, chewing well, savoring and digesting with discrimination. They lead listeners along with care through their findings: tracks often segue one to the next in stealthy progression, explored cautiously in chromatic increments. "No, A Shark" bouncily develops a phrase from the title track; "Changes" and "At A Glance" grow similar motifs, possibly shoots from Gerry Mulligan's 1954 quartet. These thoughtful lads make many fine musical points in 44 minutes; the lead instrument being baritone sax,

rather than (say) pocket trumpet, gives their whole essay more heft, more gravitas.

For more information, visit [steeplechase.dk](http://steeplechase.dk), [sunnysiderecords.com](http://sunnysiderecords.com) and [reedsbassdrum.com](http://reedsbassdrum.com). Ronnie Cuber is at Fat Cat Wednesdays in May. Reed's Bass Drum is at Blue Note May 20th. See Calendar.



*Pieces of Old Sky* Samuel Blaser (Clean Feed)  
*Vol à Voile* Pierre Favre/Samuel Blaser (Intakt)  
 by David R. Adler

There's a wonderfully eerie quality to *Pieces of Old Sky*, trombonist Samuel Blaser's recording with guitarist Todd Neufeld, bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Tyshawn Sorey. Opening with the 17-minute title track, Blaser conjures a mood of dark, open expanse and gradual development. Neufeld lets his gently clanging chords and lines hang in the air, setting their quasi-metallic sound against Blaser's horn, which is sleek and legato but not without an edge of its own. Apparently, Blaser has a thing for guitarists of the slightly grungier type: he recruited Marc Ducret for a recent tour and his 2008 debut *7th Heaven* featured the underrated Scott DuBois.

With "Red Hook" and later with "Mystical Circle" and "Speed Game", Blaser introduces fast, corkscrewing unison lines and tight orchestration, departing radically from the drawn-out minimalism of the first piece. There are several spots where Blaser falls quiet and allows Neufeld, Morgan and Sorey to stretch, much like they did as a trio on Sorey's recent album *Koan*. But Blaser adds a deeper mournful mystery to their sound, evoking the blues (and perhaps a hint of "It Ain't Necessarily So") on "Mandala" and sketching in fine melodic fashion with Neufeld on "Choral I" and "Choral II" - the first as a duo, the second as a trio with Morgan and no drums.

Along with his highly developed quartet language, Blaser has made a mark with the unaccompanied disc *Solo Bone* and a duo with pianist Malcolm Braff titled *YaY*. To this we can add *Vol à Voile* ("gliding"), Blaser in duo with veteran Swiss drummer and improviser Pierre Favre. Here we get a much fuller view of the growling, groaning multiphonic techniques Blaser hints at during "Mandala" from *Pieces of Old Sky*. On "Quai des Brumes" he even achieves a contrapuntal effect, moving vocal pitches up and down against a low drone.

Favre brings an endless richness of timbre to the music, including bell-like tones on the closing title track, beautifully hollow and high-pitched toms on "Inextricable" and a huge yet softly blanketing kick drum sound on "Franchement!" ("honestly!") and "Babel I". The nine tracks slink in and out of tempo and Blaser plays a largely melodic improvising role, although the tables are turned on "We Tried" when the horn almost becomes a rhythm section, riffing steadily on two notes while Favre assumes the role of soloist. There's nothing else like it on the record or for that matter on *Pieces of Old Sky*. But such is Blaser's ability to cover all bases and continually adapt.

For more information, visit [cleanfeed-records.com](http://cleanfeed-records.com) and [intaktrec.ch](http://intaktrec.ch). Blaser is at Le Grand Dakar May 1st with Hufflignon, Cornelia Street Café May 7th with Hufflignon and May 8th as a leader as part of the Clean Feed Festival and Zebulon May 10th as a leader. See Calendar.





**Abattoir**  
**Audrey Chen/Robert Von Heumen (Evil Rabbit)**  
**Abstract Mechanics**  
**João Lucas (Creative Sources)**  
**The Pursuit of Happiness**  
**ARC (Sylvia Hallett/Danny Kingshill/Gus Garside)**  
**(Emanem)**  
 by Kurt Gottschalk

The middle child of the string family, the cello isn't heard from often enough in the improv world. Those who do pick up the instrument in jazz and experimental musics - Ron Carter, Tom Cora, Tristan Honsinger, Martin Schutz and Abdul Wadud come to mind - only underscore the scarce beauty of its rich tone and broad range. But the unassuming violoncello does seem to be gaining in popularity in recent years and some younger players are joining the small legion of new music cellists.

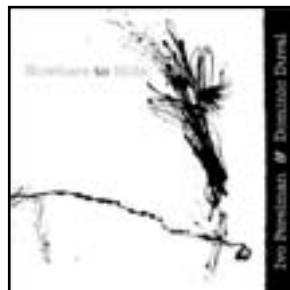
Baltimore-based Audrey Chen is one of the most notable of the young cellists and *Abattoir*, her duo with electronics manipulator Robert von Heumen, is a full round of beautiful playing and surprising turns. Chen's dexterity as both an instrumentalist and a vocalist is fairly striking and with both voices she moves easily between the pretty and the ugly, not always in tandem. The acoustic strings and singing voice give a very human feeling to the CD, only to be undermined by Van Heuman's live processing. In his hands, Chen's voice might start to develop an artificial sustain and within seconds be swirling like water down a drain. Fragments of her cello playing seem to be preserved and regurgitated as blipping percussion. At other times, the electronic elements separate themselves fully away from the acoustic, giving the odd sensation of an unstable duet, sometimes merging into a complex solo and then dividing again into two. The guttural sounds both favor at times might prove difficult to some listeners, but the five tracks here are endlessly inventive.

In many ways, João Lucas' settings for cello and electronics are more surprising by being (at least in spurts) more conventional. The Portugal resident's primary instrument is the piano and he plays accordion as well on *Abstract Mechanics* while providing intermittent electronic beds for the duo with cellist Miguel Mira. The piano is often the dominant voice, as Lucas seems to struggle against a bit of formalism. He is no doubt an adept classical player and much of the disc's charm comes from the waxing and waning of orthodoxy; he is fond of playing taut phrases without feeling the need to resolve them. The cello and electronics also seem to come in waves, often feeling like a single voice (more in sympathy, though, than via electronic linkage). About a quarter of an hour into the seven-part suite, a sing-song vocal (provided by Thiago Lucas) enters with dubious support from the instrumentalists, again creating a sensation that this all should be familiar, even if the elements don't quite go together and yet aren't quite separable. Ultimately, *Abstract Mechanics* is an enjoyably disorienting exercise in off-kilter arrangement.

*The Pursuit of Happiness* is the first release from the string trio ARC in 16 years and their first to use electronics. Violinist Sylvia Hallett, cellist Danny Kingshill and bassist Gus Garside are all vets of the British free improv scene and this 2008 recording shows that despite the time passed and the new

technology employed, they still share a deep connection. Hallett and Garside's use of electronics is kept to a minimum and often seems to provide an artificial (or augmented in any event) level of sustain; the recording is impossibly close, with stereo pans putting the listener in a center that doesn't really exist. Hallett and Kingshill's plaintive, wordless vocals add a haunting atmosphere to some of the tracks, while others carry more of the sparseness and abruptness common among the British practitioners.

For more information, visit [evilrabbitrecords.eu](http://evilrabbitrecords.eu), [creativesourcesrec.com](http://creativesourcesrec.com) and [emanemdisc.com](http://emanemdisc.com). *Abattoir* is at Japan Society May 8th as part of STEIM - Electronic Music Lab. See Calendar.



**Nowhere to Hide**  
**Ivo Perelman/  
 Dominic Duval**  
**(Not Two)**

by John Sharpe



**Mind Games**  
**Ivo Perelman/  
 Dominic Duval/  
 Brian Willson (Leo)**

While Brazilian saxophonist Ivo Perelman and bassist Dominic Duval might not pass as twins, they are clearly soulmates. Perelman first made waves over 20 years ago among a flush of free jazz saxophonists that included Charles Gayle and David S. Ware. Now with some 30 releases to his credit, Perelman's fluent impassioned post-Ayler tenor saxophone is a known quantity and it is the more subtle side to his artistry that is more likely to captivate. Duval was Cecil Taylor's bassist of choice for ten years and remains strongly associated with hornman Joe McPhee, not least as part of the acclaimed Trio X. Although both icons of the avant garde they share a decidedly lyrical imagination that manifests itself in abundance during these two spontaneously improvised discs.

Aptly named, *Nowhere to Hide* exposes an enthralling, intimate 76-minute discourse where instrumental prowess is a given, leaving the focus upon a virtually unbroken conversation between two equals, by turns ruminative, whimsical, aggressive and poignant. What passes is abstract, in that there is no melody or explicit structure beyond that conjured by the pair in full spate. But there is nonetheless a tuneful undercurrent, all extemporization, except some 15 minutes into "Amizade" when a staccato passage coalesces into the strains of Thelonious Monk's "Blue Monk", a favorite of both men. Familiarity breeds a preternatural level of responsiveness, from the opening title track where a Duval tremolo motif is echoed initially by Perelman, then tugged, stretched and distorted as a launching point for further exploration, right through to the closing moments of "Microforms", when the bassist repeats Perelman's statements back at him as the perfect rejoinder in a fugue-like conclusion.

With drummer Brian Willson (whose name is misspelled on the sleeve) added for *Mind Games* there is more bite and urgency and correspondingly less space for romantic expansiveness, particularly from Duval. Although eschewing composition, Perelman ensures variety through judicious use of the trio's resources across five cuts in just over an hour's playing time, peppering the three-way dialogue with impromptu solos and duos. His own hoarse multiphonic cries grab attention from the off, leavened by Willson's distinctive timbres, selected from a palette at times reminiscent of a Latin percussionist,

showcased to best effect in introduction to the crowning summation of the lengthy "G.S. Farewell!". Elsewhere "Primal Defense" starts with breathy burnished saxophone soliloquy, like a paraphrase of some forgotten standard, before Perelman's bubbling effervescent lines hold sway over a playfully nuanced rhythm. "Grateful for Life" is all incantatory tenor and drums, betraying the leader's signature penchant for insistent rhythmic structure alongside the melodic invention.

For more information, visit [nottwo.com](http://nottwo.com) and [leorecords.com](http://leorecords.com). Perelman is at Cornelia Street Café May 7th as part of the Clean Feed Festival. See Calendar.

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*Pleased to Meet You*  
 Oliver Jones/Hank Jones  
 (Justin Time)



*Moreover*  
 The Great Jazz Trio  
 (Test of Time-441)

by Joel Roberts

Hank Jones continues his remarkable late-in-life surge of activity with this new release documenting his first-ever recorded encounter with Canadian piano mainstay Oliver Jones. Hank Jones was 90 when *Pleased to Meet You* was recorded two years ago in Montreal while Oliver Jones was a relative pup at 74. That's a hell of a lot of years between them, but neither man seems impaired by age in the slightest. Hank Jones remains the epitome of understated jazz sophistication, masterfully blending bebop and swing while Oliver Jones, criminally underappreciated in the US, has a more hard-driving style that recalls his mentor Oscar Peterson.

The album opens with three tunes featuring the two pianos backed by an expressive young rhythm section (bassist Brandi Disterheft and drummer Jim Doxas), but the most memorable tracks are the five duets. Jones and Jones clearly have a ball romping through "Makin' Whoopee" and dig deep into their soul bags on Oscar Peterson's rowdy "Blues for Big Scotia". Peterson is an abiding presence throughout the album and is the subject of a touching tribute from Oliver Jones, "I Remember OP". Hank Jones also gets two solo numbers, including a brief, but brilliant "Monk's Mood", encapsulating a lifetime of jazz piano history into two minutes and thirty-two seconds.

Hank Jones was already a jazz elder statesman 30 years ago, when he made *Moreover* with bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Al Foster, one of many top-flight rhythm sections Jones recorded with through the years in what was billed as the Great Jazz Trio. This newly reissued session features Jones and his much younger cohorts, both then in their 30s, on highly interactive takes of originals by all three trio members and some well-chosen standards. Highlights include Jones' bebop workout "Phasar", Foster's breezy bossa nova "Pauletta" and an especially strong version of Charlie Parker's "Scrapple from the Apple", with both Jones and Gomez in the forefront. An unfortunate stab at Stevie Wonder's "My Cherie Amour", with Jones on the Fender Rhodes, is the lone clunker. Still, it's a solid album by three exceptional and exceptionally compatible artists.

For more information, visit [justin-time.com](http://justin-time.com) and [testoftimerecords.com](http://testoftimerecords.com). Jones is at Birdland May 25th-29th. See Calendar.



*Roman Nights*  
 Tom Harrell (HighNote)  
 by Tom Greenland

*Roman Nights*, Tom Harrell's third release with his hardworking quintet of Wayne Escoffery (tenor), Danny Grissett (piano), Ugonna Okegwo (bass) and

Johnathan Blake (drums) is an all-original set that maintains the highest standards of composition, small-group arranging and improvisation. Harrell is a paragon of restraint, each note carefully chosen, each phrase finely balanced, seducing the listener with the sheer magnetism of his melodies while Escoffery lets loose torrents of ideas that topple over each other with brassy bluster. On "Let the Children Play", for example, the tenor's serpentine lines are chock-a-block with inventive turns and exhaustively explored motifs as the trumpet's mellow, pure voice seems to imply as much with half the notes. Harrell's compositions range from the pared down melody of "Children" to the lyric beauty of the title track, leavened here and there with odd wrinkles, to the uneasy harmonic shifts of "Study in Sound" and "Harvest Song"'s strangely accessible mix of the foreign with the familiar. Grissett and Okegwo's contributions are considerable, but it is Blake's irrepresible pulse that dominates, elevating each track with deft reactions and all-out drive.

Mar. 31st's opening set at the Village Vanguard came soon after the CD's release, mirroring many of its features. Opening with "Storm Approaching", Harrell was initially hesitant, but hit his stride by "Obsession", which also featured Escoffery rousing from simmer to boil in short succession. The ultra-funky "Cactus" (not on the CD) was followed by a beautiful flugelhorn-piano duet on the title ballad, Grissett's lush chords supporting the horn's plaintive peal, a mix of tender vulnerability and rosy exuberance. The rhythm section was a sea of bobbing heads and smiling faces while Blake's hard-hitting sticking almost stole the show.

For more information, visit [jazzdepot.com](http://jazzdepot.com). Harrell is at The Kitano May 7th-8th in duo with Don Friedman and Iridium May 27th-30th. See Calendar.

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*A Quiet Time*  
Ahmad Jamal (Dreyfus Jazz)  
by Graham Flanagan



*10 Mysteries*  
John King (Tzadik)  
by Wilbur MacKenzie

As one of the most highly influential jazz musicians on earth, pianist Ahmad Jamal enhances that sparkling reputation with his outstanding new studio effort *A Quiet Time*. Jamal's latest album features two of the strong supporting players from his previous release, *It's Magic*: James Cammack (bass) and Manolo Badrena (percussion), with Kenny Washington replacing Idris Muhammad on drums.

While the title may imply a relaxed, ballad-heavy session, Jamal takes plenty of opportunities to swing at medium and sometimes-quick tempos, though there is a cooler approach than the often aggressive, Latin and African-tinged selections from *It's Magic*.

Jamal penned 9 of the 11 pieces found here. The album-opening "Paris After Dark" offers some of the best overall work. Although the song incorporates multiple rhythmic patterns of varying tempos, the group succeeds in seamlessly weaving them together, suggesting a fanciful journey through the unique districts of the titular city. A highlight is "After JALC (Jazz At Lincoln Center)", a similarly diverse composition that allows the quartet to explore a number of styles and attitudes within the boundaries of a single performance. Named after one of our city's most famous venues, unfortunately Jamal's liner notes don't offer any reason for the title. Is it a reference to an open-ended jam session following one of Jamal's performances there? Or does the tune simply capture the mood of something that happened after one of said performances? If ever you encounter Jamal in person, be sure to ask him and then report back!

Speaking of the liner notes, writer Eugene Holley, Jr. offers his own reflections on the album, including one unusual, slightly off-putting comment saying that the songs are "pulsed by that Negroidal rhythmic gravity we call swing." It's surprising this made it past the proofreaders, but apparently Jamal didn't mind.

Regardless, Jamal fans will no doubt appreciate *A Quiet Time* as an essential addition to the master's still-growing canon.

For more information, visit [disquesdreyfus.com](http://disquesdreyfus.com). Jamal is at Blue Note May 25th-30th. See Calendar.

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The point where composition and improvisation meet is often a quite perforated boundary. For a composer looking to engage performers as both interpreters of composed music and also as improvisers, the question of notation becomes of great importance. Composers have long looked to implement systems that determine certain aspects of a performer's behavior but leave other issues up to chance. This leads to a different gray area: the often equally ambiguous boundary between improvisation and indeterminacy. This distinction usually has more to do with the methodology of the composer than the actions of an interpreter.

In his second recording of music for string quartet to appear on Tzadik, John King explores the three-way intersection between composition, indeterminacy and improvisation. "10 Mysteries", the disc's primary material, is an extended work in nine movements. In addition to traditionally notated music, King has included his own notation system, which prescribes simple actions such as "drone" or "silence" or more directional transformations like "expand" or "distill". It is up to the performer to translate these instructions into music. The order and placement of these notations was determined through consulting the I-Ching, bringing yet another form of indeterminacy to the compositional process. The work becomes further indeterminate, as the player determines the duration of each semi-improvisational section.

With the string quartet Crucible, King has assembled a formidable ensemble to realize these works: violinists Cornelius Dufallo and Mark Feldman, cellist Alex Waterman and the composer on viola. The ensemble brings vitality, sensitivity and, in many instances, some astounding brute force to their impassioned interpretations. Sul ponticello scrapes and ethereal sul tasto glimmers intertwine, at times defying logic, at times coalescing into sublimely interwoven polyphony.

"Rivers of Fire" and "Winds of Blood" are the other works that appear (the latter appearing in two distinct realizations, version 1 and version 2). Both include electronic processing in addition to the traditional notated music and semi-improvisational elements present in "10 Mysteries". King describes this scenario as "trilogic unity", where predetermined, spontaneous and randomized information coexist. The ensemble plays notated music and improvises, always interacting with the sampled and processed versions of their own playing. The effect is often somewhat otherworldly, with familiar ensemble sounds gradually overtaken by a subtly processed equivalent - an oddly transformed echo of something that had happened previously. And then suddenly new quartet material returns - perhaps a sea of glissandos or false harmonics or a buoyant rhythmic pulse. The two realizations of "Winds of Blood" are quite distinct - the material is clearly the same, but things happen in a different order, as each player and also the electronics move independently through the work. This highlights the common facet of composition, improvisation and indeterminacy - in each methodology lies the chance for circumstance to exert its entropic influence.

For more information, visit [tzadik.com](http://tzadik.com). This project is at Roulette May 15th. See Calendar.

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### *Relevance*

**Dave Liebman/Evan Parker/Tony Bianco (Red Toucan)**  
*Turnaround: The Music of Ornette Coleman*  
**Dave Liebman Group (Jazzwerkstatt)**  
*Lieb Plays Weill* **David Liebman (Daybreak-Challenge)**  
by Ken Waxman

After more than three decades, saxist Dave Liebman is the epitome of the modern improviser whose recorded work is constantly first-class, but rarely as challenging as his live performances. Two new CDs alter those expectations, showing that his style can be extended. Take *Turnaround*, where Liebman and guitarist Vic Juris, bassist Tony Marino and drummer Marko Marcinko romp through a collection of rearranged Ornette Coleman tunes. More spectacular is *Relevance*, a two-sax face-off between Liebman and Britain's Evan Parker, his equivalent in the free music field, backed by drummer Tony Bianco. As good as it is, *Lieb Plays Weill* only finds Liebman adding another to his collection of stellar interpretive performances.

*Relevance* offers one of the most spectacular examples of unrestrained tenor - and soprano - madness since John Coltrane recorded with Pharoah Sanders. Instructively it's difficult to tell one reedist from the other, a fact that is unsurprising since both men's styles initially derive from Trane. While the duets are linear, any fireworks expressed are kept within the creative framework by the solid rolls, pops and jagged rebounds of Bianco. From the beginning it's likely Liebman on tenor who latches onto hocketing squeaks and extended vibrato runs while Parker's tenor playing evolves from irregular diaphragm-forced runs to reed biting. More moderato on sopranos, the two create in double counterpoint. Only in the second set does Parker use circular breathing; in response Liebman unrolls throat-tightening dissonance and triple-tonguing. Before switching back to tenors for an additional layer of contrapuntal contours, one saxist sounds an adagio tone that could come from a country blues fiddle.

Ornette Coleman is the modern jazzman closest to country blues. Yet Liebman, who specializes in harmonic development, chooses to emphasize Coleman's melodies on *Turnaround*. The reading evolves in blocks as opposed to treating Coleman's compositions as organic wholes; Juris' strategies add to this concept. The treatment of "Kathelin Gray", for instance, is gentle and straightforward, close to a Broadway ballad, with Liebman contributing a ravishing obbligato. "Una Muy Bonita" is given a Latin tinge with slick, resonating licks and wide strums from Juris, clavé pops and rolls from Marcinko and a double-time saxophone solo. Although Liebman produces multiphonics from his wooden flute on "Lonely Woman", the tune's romanticism is emphasized, especially when reflective slurred fingering and reverb from the guitarist parallels Liebman's narrative. "Face of the Bass/Beauty is a Rare Thing" manages to advance the first theme - initially triple-stopped by Marino - with bell-shaking and snare pops plus harsh strumming. The second tune is notable for Liebman's flutter-tonguing and trilling lows plus near baroque-licks from Juris, with cymbal sizzles marking the finale.

Although the instrumentation is the same on the salute to German composer Kurt Weill, the conception is anything but radical. Guitarist Jesse van Ruller's

playing, for instance, is so mainstream that Juris' individuality becomes more obvious. Van Ruller sprinkles licks intelligently and studs his comping with string snaps, but mostly he and the others - bassist Marius Betts and drummer Eric Ineke - are pretty unobtrusive. More ideas come from Liebman, but they rarely ruffle the song-like surfaces. A tune such as "You're Far Too Near Me" floats on reed obligatos that are practically Getz-ian while "This Time Next Year", with Liebman's chirping soprano, becomes a mellow bossa nova. Even his flute peeps on "Applejack" are more frilly than funky. About the only time lyricism is tested is on "Speak Low", magisterial tenor lines meeting intricate staccato guitar plinks. Rejuvenated, the tune pops with finger-vibrated reed smears, expressive string strums and cymbal slaps.

Liebman merely confirms his interpretive skills here, but should be applauded for challenging himself elsewhere. As these CDs attest, the further he gets from his comfort zone the better he sounds.

For more information, visit [www3.sympatico.ca/cactus.red/toucan](http://www3.sympatico.ca/cactus.red/toucan), [jazzwerkstatt.eu](http://jazzwerkstatt.eu) and [challenge.nl](http://challenge.nl). Liebman is at Iridium May 27th-30th. See Calendar.



*Live at Smalls* (featuring Jimmy Cobb)  
**Peter Bernstein Quartet (SmallsLive)**  
by Laurel Gross

Peter Bernstein is one of the most pleasing and accomplished guitarists around, a must-hear, go-see for fans of straightahead jazz with a fresh of-the-moment feel. A fixture on the New York scene and beyond, Bernstein deserves to be even better known for his intricately beautiful melodic lines, harmonic sophistication, spot-on improvisation and good taste.

Mentored early on by Jim Hall, Bernstein's never been a screamer. He plays quietly and intensely with confidence, intelligence, elegance and rare sensitivity - all amply displayed on *Live at Smalls*, part of a new series taken from the Greenwich Village jazz club.

Listen to the gorgeous guitar lines in "Stairway to the Stars", "Delilah" as well as in Bernstein's own lively and likeable originals "Vida Blue" and "Sideberns". And his bandmates have everything it takes to provide terrific support for these and other works, including Gershwin's "Love Walked In". Like Bernstein, these pros make everything seem effortless. Veteran drummer Jimmy Cobb has the right touch for each moment, whether soloing or propelling the group forward, handling laid-back or flashy with equal prowess. Richard Wyands is a standout on piano, playing cleanly and smartly throughout, sweetly executing Miles Davis' "Four" as well as other pieces with a winning lyricism and chord choices. Smalls and Smoke regular John Webber is able on bass.

The overall quality of this CD, recorded live over two nights in December 2008 - with some audience responses intact - is excellent and true to the club's intimate and easy-going spirit. One only wishes the 'night' would never end. As for this talented but still somewhat-underexposed guitarist, here's the bottom line: There are people who play guitar and then there are artists like Bernstein.

For more information, visit [smallslive.com](http://smallslive.com). Bernstein is at Blue Note May 2nd, Smalls May 5th and 12th, Bar Next Door May 6th and Smoke May 14th-15th with Jimmy Cobb. See Calendar.



**The German Projekt: German Songs from the Twenties & Thirties**  
**Andrea Fultz (s/r)**  
 by Andrew Vélez

Since its origins in the turbulent '20s-30s and with the occasional exception of a vocalist-cum-chanteuse like Ute Lemper, the authoritative renditions by Marlene Dietrich and Lotte Lenya have pretty much held title to this music, which might be called the Great German Songbook. Which makes it all the more impressive that Munich-born Andrea Fultz, who has worked with a variety of bands with material ranging from American Songbook to electronica and bossa nova, makes so impressive an impact with this collection. The songs of Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill and Friedrich Hollander came from cabaret, films and stage pieces and reflected their enchantment with American jazz. Although mostly sung here in German, the emotional and musical communication is clear. Typical is the opening track, "Alabama Song" from Brecht-Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, first heard by many Americans via *The Doors*. It's a cynical, sexy and crypto-romantic piece Fultz seizes unreservedly, chiseling each note with her full-throated soprano. Here and throughout the pianist Adam Shulman, percussionist Mica Patri and accordionist Rob Reich

create a raucously effective atmosphere.

One needn't understand German to appreciate Hollander's contemplative, "Wenn ich mir was wünschen dürfte". It's an intense, heartfelt duet between singing actress and pianist considering wishes that cannot be. By contrast there's Pirate Jenny's song, one of several gems from *The Threepenny Opera*. A revenge fantasy of an oppressed servant, Fultz' delivery is clear-eyed and ultimately jubilantly murderous. The only overtly political piece in the set, "Song of A German Mother" by Hanns Eisler and Eric Bentley, is a scathing ode to a son killed in war.

This group creates a world of its own in this collection that is seedy, sensual, insolent, filled with chipped and cheap sentiment, gritty and utterly compelling. It is its own singular jazz idiom, one as rich, distinctive and as enduring in its veracity as say the Dixieland that once emerged from New Orleans.

For more information, visit [andreafulz.com](http://andreafulz.com)



**Shining Hour**  
**The Oster Welker Jazz Alliance (Jazzed Media)**  
 by Suzanne Lorge

San-Francisco-based Jeff Oster has one of those happy-sounding voices that make you feel happy, too. Even on a depressing kind of song like "Sophisticated Lady", you're left with the impression that after all of that "smoking-drinking-never-thinking-of-tomorrow" stuff everything will turn out okay. But it isn't until Oster scats that you really submit to his affable sound and just want to be BJFF (best jazz friends forever).

Oster is no newcomer to vocal jazz, but he's not yet received the kind of attention that his ability might have garnered. After an early foray into professional singing, Oster took a 20-year hiatus to raise his family; one propitious evening in 2006 he stumbled into the sightlines (or "earlines", perhaps) of Peter Welker and sat in with the trumpeter's band.

On the Oster Welker Jazz Alliance's first CD *Shining Hour*, the pair offer up a shared vision of 11 mostly-known jazz standards and a couple of lesser-known tunes - like the opener, "Sweet Pumpkin", a swinging, almost-forgotten ditty that introduces Welker as a master arranger and the backing big band as both singer-friendly and a musical force in its own right.

Despite the deserved focus on Oster's vocals, Welker's band has plenty of solo time throughout the recording, on the title cut and most notably on Oster's vocalese original, "Bean". To emphasize the contribution of the instrumentalists to the recording, an asterisk appears next to each soloist's name in the song listings - would that more vocal albums provided such a handy reference. One curious thing, though: Welker plays second trumpet throughout the disc but only solos once, on flugelhorn, dropping in and out with some mournful measures on the closing number, "A Time For Love". One might regret his modesty.

One of the sweet surprises on the disc is the team's midtempo swing version of "Laura", a beautiful melody rarely performed by singers, given the dearth of singers in the genre who can take on the lyrics (in short, it's a guy's tune). True, there aren't a lot of guys singing jazz these days, but the ones who are - like Oster - dazzle all the more for their rarity.

For more information, visit [jazzedmedia.com](http://jazzedmedia.com)

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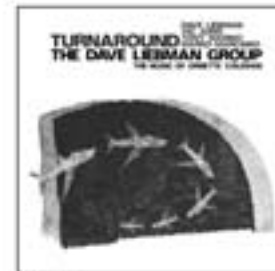
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**Countdown 2 Meltdown**  
**Mitch Marcus Quintet (Porto Franco)**  
 by Terrell Holmes

Although their music is grounded in blues, bop and other time-honored constructs, the Mitch Marcus Quintet is not your usual jazz band. In fact, the MMQ's adventurous tunes, use of unusual meters and delightfully manic arrangements travel far beyond conventional musical borders.

The band's new release, *Countdown 2 Meltdown*, is a sonic riot bursting with invention and mischief. This is evident from the first notes of "Coffee and Cones". Marcus' tenor and Sylvain Carton's alto drive this tune, with its incantatory, around-the-forest-fire vocalizing. A dynamite exchange between bassist George Ban-Weiss and drummer Tomas Fujiwara highlights "Ron and the Machete". Guitarist John Abraham, inspired by the horns, lights into the title track, playing with flawless rush-hour urgency. Abraham also stands out on the wonderfully raucous "Jimmy's Delight", laying down psychedelic riffs over Fujiwara's robust clamor. Trumpeter Darren Johnston joins the band for the improvisation "A's Lament". It doesn't quite work, but listening to their voices trying to agree is still intriguing.

The band's humor is on display throughout, from Marcus and Carton's seagull mimicry on "SS Clagett" to guest vocalist Lorin Benedict's tongue-in-cheek scatting on "HH". Carton and Marcus blow like inspired madmen on the satire "Tron McCain"; Abraham plays with such fury that his fretboard must have been smoking at song's end. And if Quentin Tarantino were to reimagine Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" as a '70s retro-epic flick, "The Albatross" would be its theme song. The funky horns and slashing guitar riffs may not be considered jazz, but it's sure damn fun listening.

*Countdown 2 Meltdown* shows that, in both the musical and recreational senses, the key word for the MMQ is 'play'. The guys are simply having a blast and they want everybody to be in on the fun.

For more information, visit [portofrancorecords.com](http://portofrancorecords.com). Marcus is at *Rose Live Music* May 27th and *Drom* May 28th. See Calendar.



**Live at Jazz Standard**  
**Fred Hersch Pocket Orchestra (Sunnyside)**  
 by Ken Dryden

Fred Hersch has amassed an impressive discography since his arrival on the jazz scene in the '70s. In addition to stints with Stan Getz, Art Farmer and Toots Thielemans and numerous appearances as a sideman, the pianist has recorded over two dozen albums as a leader, co-leader or solo performer as well as composing extensively. Hersch, who revealed his HIV-positive status as a gay man sometime ago, has also been active in AIDS education, though the past few

years were extremely rough for him, including a three-month long coma, plus battling AIDS-related dementia and pneumonia.

*Live at Jazz Standard* is one of Hersch's most intriguing releases, as he performs ten striking originals (several of which he previously recorded as instrumentals) with trumpeter Ralph Alessi, vocalist Jo Lawry and drummer Richie Barshay for an attentive audience at the busy NYC nightclub. The music reveals a diverse background, influenced by Hersch's classical training at times while also delving into nostalgic looks at earlier music forms, as well as forward-looking compositions. The quirky "Stuttering" is a playful postbop tune that has its share of twists whereas "Light Years" is an intriguing work with Lawry alternating between spoken and sung passages, backed by appropriately spacey accompaniment. The sensual "Invitation to the Dance" is a vocal adaptation of Hersch's "Sarabande" and the tender ballad "A Wish (Valentine)" is a perfect closer, a touching vocal/piano duet.

For more information, visit [sunnysiderecords.com](http://sunnysiderecords.com). Hersch is at *Jazz Standard* May 11th-12th. See Calendar.



**Noir Blue**  
**Ken Peplowski (Capri)**  
 by Martin Longley

In his liner notes, Peplowski reveals that after hitting 50 he had no desire to make albums that are going through the motions of record company requirements. Not that such bodies are lately in a position to demand anything. He now intends to make recordings when the inspiration is strong and when the circumstances align in an encouraging fashion. A major part of this disc's genesis seems to be the rapport that Peplowski shares with pianist Shelley Berg. Also on hand are Jay Leonhart (bass) and Joe La Barbera (drums), both of whom navigate the common ground with equal ease.

A flurry of piano/clarinet exchanges push the album underway on Irving Berlin's "The Best Thing For You". It's a fluid dialogue of short solos, delivered at a confident speed. Peplowski chooses clarinet for the first three tunes, soon going soft for Berg's "Home With You" and Ellington/Strayhorn's "Bourbon Street Jangling Jollies". The first has a vaguely pan-Latin mood, softly gliding while the second is gentler than might be expected, but still continuing the sensitive thoughtfulness. Peplowski's flute-like phrases are embellished by delicate-but-emphatic piano, as La Barbera's drums make their clicking curlicues.

Four tracks in and Peplowski brings out his meatier tenor saxophone, sounding like the DNA-tested son of Coleman Hawkins. Hoagy Carmichael's "Riverboat Shuffle" has a strongly nostalgic feel and the tender balladry resumes for "Love Locked Out". La Barbera provides "If Not For You", which is more of a bebopper, complete with his own climactic (and inevitable) drum solo.

A Billy Strayhorn twosome begins with "Multi-Colored Blue", the slowest slink of all, and by this time Peplowski has picked up his predominant clarinet. Berg implies a gospel root and the ooze continues through the title cut. The album is a well-paced entity, as "Nobody Else But Me" turns up as a toughened tenor swinger.

Peplowski penned the closing tune, "Little Dogs", inspired by Ornette Coleman. It's not as 'free' as he

seems to think, but this doesn't detract from its worth. There's more tenor with bite, but the breakdowns, exchanges and time-swerves suggest a significant degree of premeditation. It remains an atypical piece, though, and provides a fitting close to such a mood-swinging sequence. Peplowski has delivered another one of his perfectly poised examples of good taste. Fortunately, this well-behaved nature never leads to the good becoming the neutered.

For more information, visit [caprirecords.com](http://caprirecords.com). Peplowski is at *Lucille Lortel Theatre* May 17th with *Evan Christopher* and *The Kitano* May 21st-22nd with *Dick Hyman*. See Calendar.

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*The Last Recordings, Vol. 1, 2 & 3*  
Artie Shaw (Musicmasters-Nimbus)  
*The Complete Spotlight Band 1945 Broadcasts*  
Artie Shaw (Hep)  
*Complete Thesaurus Transcriptions 1949*  
Artie Shaw (Hep)  
by George Kanzler

Artie Shaw died in 2004 at 94 and this month marks the centennial of his birth but the clarinetist/band leader made his last recordings over half a century earlier with his final Grammercy Five (a sextet and quintet). That complete recorded output is on the first two volumes of *The Last Recordings*. Vol. 3 has contributions from Shaw's two post-WWII Swing big bands, also featured, respectively, on *The Complete Spotlight Band 1945 Broadcasts* and *The Complete Thesaurus Transcriptions 1949*. After he broke up that 1949 big band, which featured a saxophone section the veteran baritone saxophonist Danny Bank called the best he'd ever worked with (Herb Steward, Frank Socolow, altos; Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, tenors and Bank), Shaw briefly led a pop-oriented dance band before retiring, resurfacing for a few months in 1954 with those final Grammercy Five bands. Shaw's other notable recordings as a leader were all made in the three or four years before the USA entered World War II in 1941. They included his mega-hits "Begin the Beguine", "Stardust" and "Frenesi".

Shaw's reputation goes hand in hand with his notoriety as a glamorous personality (his eight wives included Lana Turner and Ava Gardner among four actresses, plus bodice-ripper novelist Kathleen Winsor and Jerome Kern's daughter Betty), verbal wit and talent as a writer (his post-musical career). Shaw, with his periodic Greta Garbo-like shunning of fame, was the perfect, often coveted, interview subject, contributing to his own legend with epigrammatic, acerbic and seemingly candid views in articles and, as can be witnessed here, in interviews to liner-note writers. The general consensus was that Shaw was fed up with the commercial aspects of the music business - that's why he quit. Here's two pertinent quotes:

"I'm through with dance bands. There are so many times you can play 'Stardust'." (1948)

"The 1949 band was the real reason I got out of the music business. It was a bust! All the public wanted was 'Beguine' and 'Frenesi' - you could become a one-tune player. ... I couldn't handle that". (ca. 1991)

And yet the recordings made by that 1949 big band included one or more versions of all those hits mentioned in the quotes and he did lead a (embarrassingly forgettable) pop/dance band in 1950. In fact, a majority of the recordings the 1949 band made could be called, whether swingers or ballads, danceable music in a neo-Swing vein. When Shaw says of that band "It was a bust!", he means commercially. Despite his protests to the contrary, the musical evidence suggests that Shaw was never a radical innovator or iconoclast, but a very talented jazz musician who wished to reach a wide audience - and make a lot of money. Yes, he was proud of he and his bands' musicianship. After all, he was one of jazz' greatest clarinetists and a demanding perfectionist bandleader. But he was following in Woody Herman's

footsteps when he hired Cohn and Sims and in Gene Krupa's when he featured Roy Eldridge (heard to advantage with the 1945 big band and Grammercy Five here). And the Grammercy Five bands of 1954 took their cues from such popular groups of the time as George Shearing and Dave Brubeck's - Shaw's 'chamber jazz' ideas were really his adaptations of cool jazz.

It's instructive to hear (on *Last Recordings, Vol. 3*, CD 1) what Shaw did after disbanding the admittedly swinging, but definitely commercially-pegged, 1945 band. He went into the studios with orchestras including strings (he first burst on the Big Apple scene in 1935 featuring a string quartet and rhythm section and "Beguine" was recorded by a big band replete with a full string section) and, pandering more to the pop ethos of the time, featuring vocalists, the most distinguished of them Mel Tormé, often with his vocal group The Mel-Tones.

On those more commercial recordings, as well as with his 1945 and 1949 bands, Shaw was the main soloist, his clarinet played with cool fervor and technical panache. But make no mistake about it, Shaw was the main attraction as a soloist. Only with the 1954 combo would he finally extend the solo roles of his sidemen, notably pianist Hank Jones, guitarists Tal Farlow and Joe Puma, vibist Joe Roland and even bassist Tommy Potter (a Bird and Diz alumnus). The music on *The Last Recordings, Vols. 1 and 2* are the gems of these CDs, supple, cool, fluent chamber jazz performed with admirable dynamic interaction, yielding quiet masterpieces of mainstream modern jazz that reveals more facets with every listening.

For more information, visit [wyastone.co.uk/nrl](http://wyastone.co.uk/nrl) and [hepjazz.com](http://hepjazz.com)

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*Inside This Heart of Mine*  
Catherine Russell (World Village)  
by Marcia Hillman

Catherine Russell covers a lot of jazz territory on her new CD - performing material from vaudeville, Tin Pan Alley, New Orleans, Delta blues, the Swing Era and the Django-esque '30s. Accompanying her on this journey is a full battery of musicians that replicate the sounds of each of the styles covered: musical director Matt Munisteri (guitar and banjo), Mark Shane (piano), Lee Hudson (bass), Brian Grice (drums), Jon-Erik Kellso (trumpet), John Allred (trombone) and Dan Block (saxophone and clarinet) complete the basic group. Howard Johnson (tuba), Sara Caswell (violin) and Rachelle Garniez (accordion) join on some of the tracks while bassist Neal Miner and drummer Rob Garcia substitute on several tracks each. But though this is a strong instrumental lineup, this CD is about the vocalist. The arrangements and instrumentation are designed to fit each individual song and style and showcase Russell's singing.

And Russell carries the ball from start to finish. She has a voice of many textures. She can be sassy, bluesy, provocative (as in Duke Ellington's "Long, Strong and Consecutive") and heart-rending (the Fats Waller title song and the song "Troubled Waters"

recorded by Duke Ellington with Ivie Anderson's vocal). She can deliver ballads such as "As Long As I Live" and "November" with sincerity in rich tones. And she can take you down to New Orleans with "Struttin' With Some Barbeque". It's clear Russell knows the history of each selection. She is emotionally tied to the lyrics (included in the CD insert) and sings with the passion of a Bessie Smith and the ease of an Ella Fitzgerald. There are also some notable instrumental moments on this CD: Shane's swinging work on "Quiet Whiskey" and Munisteri's lovely contribution on "Close Your Eyes".

Russell's CD release party, held at Dizzy's Club last month where she appeared with most of the personnel on the CD and sang most of the selections, duplicated the feeling of the album. The only difference was Russell's authoritative stage presence. She took command of the bandstand immediately with the rousing "We The People" (a Waller-Razaf Depression era song whose message is "we the people gotta have music and song"), her effervescent personality connecting immediately with her audience. Her enjoyment level and that of her band was totally apparent and completely contagious.

For more information, visit [worldvillagemusic.com](http://worldvillagemusic.com)



*siLent Z Live*  
Pete Robbins (Hate Laugh Music)  
by Elliott Simon

Downstairs at the Cornelia Street Café in the Village is one of the more intimate places to see live jazz in the city. The program there is intentionally eclectic and *siLent Z Live*, from altoist Pete Robbins, captures his angular group in those comfortable environs.

All other things being equal, the make or break for a live recording is the extent to which the performances thus immortalized remain fresh enough to endure repeated listenings. Is the spontaneity and closeness that allow live playing to engage the listener translated to disc in a way that retains that evening's communal spark? Robbins' quintet succeeds admirably in this mission as top-notch players, the room and, most of all, the music align for an engaging evening worth revisiting.

Robbins' alto, which impresses with its complex lines and crisp phrasing, is ideal for this group that, though judiciously using electronics, lays more emphasis on instrumental timbre. Guitarist Mike Gamble plays as cleanly as Robbins and the two beautifully meld on mood pieces like the touching "His life, for all its waywardness" and "Cankers and Medallions" as well as rock out when called for on "Some Southern Anthem". Like Gamble, cornetist Jesse Neumann is able to lend his tone to Robbins' in ways that expand the sonic gestalt, making for a beautifully open soundscape. Drummer Tyshawn Sorey, fast becoming a jazz wonder of the world, in tandem with bassist Thomas Morgan, is able to follow, actually, more correctly, to expand further, these intricate pieces while keeping the often very delicate structures from collapsing. Multiple styles, subtle building blocks and cerebral instrumental interplay give *siLent Z Live* its especially engaging voice.

For more information, visit [peterobbins.com](http://peterobbins.com). This project is at Tea Lounge May 28th and Cornelia Street Café May 29th. See Calendar.

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*Homefree*  
Nnenna Freelon (Concord)  
by Fred Bouchard

You can spot Nnenna Freelon miles off, like neon or a rainbow. The tall, rawboned, outspoken gal from Cambridge, MA via North Carolina owns a musical persona as unique as her name. She nails her ancient/modern, genre-jumping repertoire, embraces it, inhabits it organically and belts it with a hearty, emphatic attack.

You can tell her from a phrase - even a note - as she goes merrily variegating vowels, taffy-pulling syllables, signifying scat sounds (gong-gong), sing-singing exit vamps; check her risqué post-play on "The Lamp Is Low".

She and her working band of 10 years - Brandon McCune (piano), Wayne Batchelor (bass), Kinah Ayah (drums) and Beverly Botsford (percussion) - mess with usual tempos ("Smile" as breezy Latin) and keys ("I Feel Pretty" in minor). They gleefully reinvent Tin Pan Alley, here skanking up Cole Porter's "Get Out Of Town" as reggae and Dietz-Schwartz' "You and the Night and the Music" over a slow slinky vamp. Freelon sometimes lobs original blues bombs, wry comments on contemporary mores: she recasts an old favorite ("Future News Blues") in a personal tweet at

her quick-twittering-but-not-so-handy man in "Cell Phone Blues".

Even with all that, expect the unexpected. Freelon can wear down the unwary, lazy listener, in her persistent quest to rediscover tunes, with her indefatigable energy. Witness her closing three tracks. She turns "Skylark" from jazz hymn into a bluesily cantankerous one-on-one with Wayne Batchelor's bass that Hoagy Carmichael and Johnny Mercer - even Carmen McRae - might dig. (Her devoted version with strings came in 1992, big-budget Butler days at Columbia.) She transforms the gospel song "Lift Every Voice and Sing" with a bit of scat over a respectful rap cameo by her son Pierce. Her angular, salty "America The Beautiful", with cello sweetening, takes us out with an uneasy feeling. Freelon's compelling, searching artistry never lets up, yet leaves you with more grins than furrowed brows, with more questions than answers.

For more information, visit [concordmusicgroup.com](http://concordmusicgroup.com). Freelon is at Dizzy's Club May 11th-16th. See Calendar.



*Yaoundé* Samuel Torres (Blue Conga)  
*Currents* Manuel Valera (MAXJAZZ)  
*Oscar e Familia* Oscar Feldman (Sunnyside)  
by David R. Adler

Cuban pianist Manuel Valera is throwing his weight around the jazz scene and having an impact on several different levels. He's a fine acoustic stylist but also a serious proponent of electric keys. He's a rhythmic hyper-modernist (much like Dafnis Prieto and other innovating Latin jazz peers), but also a burner invested in the art of straightahead swinging. And last, he's a viable bandleader honing his own voice, but also an active sideman who can function tastefully in any setting and leap out like a tiger as a soloist.

To appreciate this pianist's gifts, one should examine not just *Currents*, his fifth and latest album, but also his appearances on *Yaoundé*, the sophomore release by Colombian percussionist Samuel Torres and *Oscar e Familia*, by Argentine alto saxophonist Oscar Feldman.

Of the three, *Yaoundé* is the strongest. The sound is enormous and the band - with Valera heard alongside saxophonist Joel Frahm, trumpeter Michael Rodriguez, bassist John Benitez and drummer Ernesto Simpson, plus guests - is beyond cooking. Valera's first solo spot comes on track three, the title song, followed by plenty more. His Nord organ sound brings a distinct shimmer to "Cosita Rica", although the Rhodes solo attack on "Lincoln Tunnel" and the closing "Camino del Barrio" is a bit muddled and indistinct. "Bambuco", "A Rose" and the opening "Un Atardercer en Cartagena de Indias", all with exceedingly subtle piano orchestration, bring out Valera's sensitive touch and team-player qualities - not to mention Torres' flair for merging traditional Latin jazz with left-field ideas drawn from other vocabularies.

Quite unlike *Yaoundé*, Valera's *Currents* is a piano trio date down the line, with Simpson again on drums and James Genus, who plays a pronounced and welcome role as a soloist, on acoustic and electric basses. Here, too, Valera adds Rhodes and even spacier Moog-type sounds ("Hindsight") to the mix. One can hear the imprint of Chick Corea, perhaps, in the layered keyboard lines, odd kinetic rhythms and

quasi-fusion aesthetic of the opening "Numerico" and the closing title track. But Valera stresses his songbook bona fides with "How Deep Is the Ocean", the crystalline ballads "I Loves You Porgy" and "I Fall in Love Too Easily" and a reading of Monk's "We See" that calls to mind Danilo Perez' brilliant *Panamonk*. Honoring the late Kenny Kirkland, Valera also offers "Dienda" and "Ode to Kenny", the latter a fast, involved waltz co-written with Simpson. Valera sparkles and the trio connects on a high level, even if the audio here isn't quite as crisp as it is on *Yaoundé*.

Oscar Feldman's *Oscar e Familia* features Valera on all tracks except one. The disc juxtaposes Feldman originals with works by the altoist's wide-ranging influences, from Guillermo Klein ("El Minotauro") to Wayne Shorter ("Children of the Night"), Astor Piazzolla ("Triunfal") and most notably Feldman's mentor Hermeto Pascoal, who wrote the title track and dedicated it to Feldman himself. The flavor of the set is heavily South American, with Tango and Brazilian references, two tracks augmented by string quartet, one with bandoneon and one with a guest vocalist. The orchestration of the Pascoal number entails five overdubbed saxophones. If the program seems a bit overstuffed, let it be noted that Valera is easily a standout presence. He locks in once again with Benitez on bass, mixes acoustic and electric sound worlds and swings with gusto on Feldman's Lee Konitz tribute "So Tenderlee". Simply put, he makes his case as a vital player whose role in the music will only get more interesting.

For more information, visit [cdbaby.com/cd/SamuelTorres2](http://cdbaby.com/cd/SamuelTorres2), [maxjazz.com](http://maxjazz.com) and [sunnysiderecords.com](http://sunnysiderecords.com). Manuel Valera is at Jazz Standard May 22nd-23rd with Dafnis Prieto. Oscar Feldman is at Blue Note May 23rd. See Calendar.

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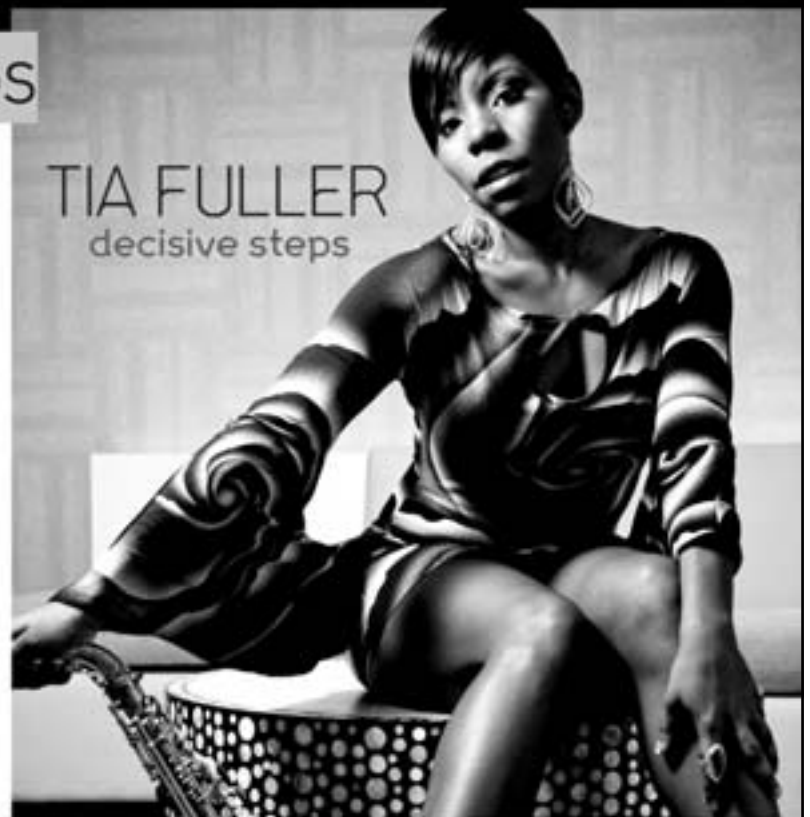
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*True Story*  
**Jean-Michel Pilc (Dreyfus Jazz)**  
 by Joel Roberts

Paris-born pianist Jean-Michel Pilc continues his impressive series of Dreyfus Jazz releases with *True Story*, his first album since 2006's *New Dreams* and the debut effort for his exciting new trio featuring the respected veteran drummer Billy Hart and the talented Russian-born bassist Boris Kozlov. The 49-year-old Pilc, a resident of New York for the past 15 years, is a self-taught musician whose varied experience includes playing with masters like Roy Haynes, Michael Brecker and Dave Liebman, among many others, as well as a stint as musical director and pianist for Harry Belafonte. He is a cerebral, yet deeply passionate artist, whose adventurous postbop style recalls Bill Evans and Keith Jarrett both for his expertly crafted, impressionistic soloing and dynamic interplay with his trio mates.

12 of the 15 tracks on *True Story* are Pilc originals, several of which, like "A Brief History of Time" and the five-part title suite, start off with simple, repeated melodies that evolve into swirling, harmonically dense improvisations. "B.B.B." is a heavily Monk-flavored piece with dramatic staccato rhythms while "Mornings with Franz", along with a gorgeous reworking of Schubert's "Relic", pay tribute to the renowned Romantic composer. Pilc and group also shine on two unlikely and completely reinvented covers: a revved-up rendition of Cole Porter's "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" and an exquisite, emotionally wrenching reading of the bittersweet show tune, "Try to Remember".

Jean-Michel Pilc makes music that's challenging, yet unabashedly beautiful. Along with his masterful keyboard technique, there's an intensity and seriousness to his music that rewards careful listening. It's a combination that should continue to earn this highly inventive artist critical plaudits, as well as, hopefully, a broad base of thoughtful fans.

For more information, visit [dreyfusrecords.com](http://dreyfusrecords.com). This trio is at Iridium May 26th. See Calendar.



*100 Years of Django*  
**Frank Vignola (Azica)**  
 by Martin Longley

In this centenary year of Django Reinhardt's birth, it's inevitable that homages will be uppermost in the minds of the guitarist's disciples. Frank Vignola has no desire to resist this temptation, given that so much of his very fiber is directly descended from the Reinhardt legacy. But aside from the unavoidable "Nuages", Vignola sidesteps down a less over-trodden path.

A core trio of Vignola, rhythm guitarist Vinny Raniolo and bassman Gary Mazzaroppi is augmented by the guesting accordionist Julien Labro. Between them, with a shower of speedily articulated notes and

warm nuzzling of textures, they create a fulsome ensemble sound.

The opening "Rythme Futur" is, appropriately, a tune that hasn't dated, making a busily urban scamper with Labro's accordion prominently featured. Vignola picks quickly, but doesn't relinquish his glowing tone, even when gushing spiky lines. "Troublant Bolero" gets an update, even if it's now gliding along a '70s Rio beach. Mazzaroppi is not neglected, taking the first of several bass solos that act as a contemplative respite. Most of the tunes are swift trotters, with "Swing Gitane" featuring a particularly breathless exchange between Vignola and Labro.

This album needs a few slow ballads and so Vignola inserts these calm interludes in strategic positions. "Tears" acts as a spellbinding guitar showcase, "Diminishing Blackness" has him soloing with sustained notes trailing at the end of each phrase and "Douce Ambiance" allows a lingering over stretched accordion flutters. In-between, though, "Mystery Pacific" is the choppiest number yet.

Right at the end of March, Vignola played one of Blue Note's Sunday brunch sessions. He brought out his slightly expanded Hot Club formation, with violin making up a quintet. The feel was directly reflecting the album, although an exuberantly compressed Reinhardt medley managed to subvert such a populist strategy with a blend of humor and dazzling virtuosity. Vignola and his band's skills might transfix the grazing audience, but periodic release arrived with outbreaks of absurdist action. They all suddenly struck a clustered pose for a photographer, then edited highlights of the set were replayed for a tardy friend of the guitarist.

For more information, visit [azica.com](http://azica.com)

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2  
 The Oulpians featuring Chanda Rule

9  
 Bruce Harris Quartet

16  
 Lena Bloch, saxophone; Boris Netsvetaev, piano; Ike Sturm, bass; George Schuller, drums

23  
 Pentecost with Saint Peter's own 3Plus3 (Trio+Voices) featuring dancer Anna Pillot

**MIDTOWN JAZZ AT MIDDAY**  
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5  
 Dominick Farinacci, trumpet; Dan Kaufman, piano; Yasushi Nakamura, bass; Carmen Intorre, drums; Keita Ogawa, percussion

12  
 Dennis Day, singer; Billy Kaye Trio  
 Jack Glottman, piano; Ben Meighner, bass; Billy Kaye, drums

19  
 Art Lillard's Heavenly Big Band

26  
 David Shenton, piano; Matt Aronoff, bass

**JAZZ ON THE PLAZA**  
 Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. — Free  
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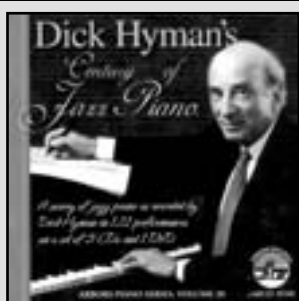
6  
 Queens College Jazz Ensemble with Antonio Hart, saxophone

13  
 NYU — Afro Peruvian Jazz Ensemble — Guest Artists TBA

20  
 Juilliard Jazz Ensemble — Guest Artists TBA

27  
 LaGuardia High School Big Band directed by Kevin Blancq

## BOXED SET



*Century of Jazz Piano (Piano Series, Vol. 20)*  
**Dick Hyman (Arbors)**  
 by Graham Flanagan

This intimidating, six-disc set (five CDs and a DVD) succeeds on two key levels. Rarely do we find a release that is equally effective in terms of its value as both an educational tool and a source of entertainment. Dick Hyman remains one of the most important figures in jazz today and - with this set - you soon find out why.

What makes Hyman so special isn't just his famous work on the soundtracks of various Woody Allen films or memorable concept albums like *Themes and Variations on 'A Child Is Born'*. With Hyman, we see a truly unique specimen of jazz. He has a brain that functions as a sort of comprehensive jazz encyclopedia. Along with that, he is a pianist with the skills to demonstrate perfectly almost every known technique and style to emerge during the course of the genre's 100 year-plus history.

Aside from a handful of tracks that find him in a traditional trio setting, Hyman explores the history

of jazz piano via 100-plus solo performances. He begins with the little-known 19th century composer/pianist Louis Moreau Gottschalk, the musician Hyman credits with being one of the very first artists to interpret the music performed by slaves in New Orleans circa the mid 1800s.

From there, no category goes unexplored; Hyman honors ragtime, stride, swing, bebop, free jazz and everything in between; he showcases the styles of the people whose talents collectively merged to create jazz as we know it today.

The first two discs might be the most enjoyable, as we hear expert renditions of the music created during the first 30 years of jazz. Hyman delivers a definitive take of Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag", along with a few more of the composer's famous works. Then there's James P. Johnson, Jelly Roll Morton, Earl "Fatha" Hines and Mary Lou Williams...and that's just the first disc!

The second disc features the styles of George Gershwin via the rather obscure yet excellent piano rolls "Rialto Ripples", "Liza (All the Clouds'll Soon Roll By)" as well as the more familiar "Do-Do-Do". After that we hear the birth of Swing through the music and style of Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson and Art Tatum.

Disc three includes the Swing Era's heyday, focusing on Duke Ellington, Nat King Cole and - most memorably - Erroll Garner. For this portion of the program, Hyman provides a reading of a little-known Tchaikovsky work that the pianist describes as "a reasonable estimate of what [Garner] might have done with it." The result so closely resembles Garner's signature, cluster-laden style that you won't believe it's indeed Hyman playing and not the

late legend.

A survey of early beboppers like Bud Powell, Oscar Peterson, Horace Silver and Red Garland closes disc three, segueing nicely into the five-song tribute to Thelonious Monk that opens the fourth disc. Here Hyman examines the new directions and inclinations towards improvisation that characterized jazz in the late '50s-60s.

The fifth disc serves as an exercise in "unstructured free improvisation". Hyman plays four original explorations, each delivered in the manner of groundbreaking improv-oriented soloists like Keith Jarrett, McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea and Cecil Taylor.

A series of brief 'etudes' played in the style of many of the respective surveyed pianists closes out the final disc, leading to perhaps the highlight of the entire set: an exhaustive DVD wherein Hyman provides on-camera demonstrations of the complex virtuosic techniques of history's greatest players.

If you ever wondered how Scott Joplin, Earl Hines, Erroll Garner and all the rest of the legends actually played the notes that made them famous, then this DVD will hold your attention for its nearly two-hour running time.

To say that this set is absolutely essential for students of piano jazz would be an understatement. Not only do you learn about the techniques behind the magic of jazz' greatest virtuosos, you get to hear the results of said complex, technical mastery. All of this is thanks to Dick Hyman, one of jazz' greatest living treasures.

For more information, visit [arborsrecords.com](http://arborsrecords.com). Hyman is at *The Kitano* May 21st-22nd. See Calendar.



# Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola*

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**DUDUKA DA FONSECA & HELIO ALVES: SAMBA JAZZ & THE MUSIC OF JOBIM**  
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 After Hours: Cyrille Almeida & Diego Figueiredo

**MAY 3 UPSTARTS!**  
**TEMPLE UNIVERSITY JAZZ BAND**  
 w/ Houston Person & Terrell Stafford

**MAY 4 CD RELEASE PARTY**  
**NIKKI YANOFSKY**  
 After Hours: Essentially Ellington Alumni All-Stars

**MAY 5-9**  
**THE JUILLIARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**  
 The Music of Mary Lou Williams & Duke Ellington w/ Kenny Barron (5/5-6) & Lew Tabackin (5/7-9)  
 After Hours: Essentially Ellington Alumni All-Stars

**MAY 10 CD RELEASE PARTY**  
**TIA FULLER QUINTET & FRIENDS**  
 w/ Shamiya Rayson, Miriam Sullivan, Rudy Rayson & Special Guest Sean Jones

**MAY 11-16 CD RELEASE PARTY**  
**NNENNA FREELON & HER QUARTET**  
 w/ Brandon McCane, Wayne Batchelor, Adonis Rose & Beverly Buford  
 After Hours: Gresselle Oghant Sester

**MAY 17 CLOSED FOR JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER BENEFIT**

**MAY 18**  
**ROBIN MCKELLE & FRIENDS**

**MAY 19-23**  
**TED NASH QUINTET**  
 w/ Frank Kimbrough, Ray Drummond, Willie Jones III & Brian Lynch (5/19), Eddie Henderson (5/20), Ryan Kiser (5/21), Mike Rodriguez (5/22) & Marson Priebop (5/23)  
 After Hours: Dezron Douglas Quartet

**MAY 24-26 A MAN & HIS MUSIC**  
**JOHNNY MANDEL CONDUCTS SHERRIE MARICLE & THE DIVA JAZZ ORCHESTRA**  
 w/ Special Guests

**MAY 27-30**  
**PHIL WOODS QUINTET**  
 w/ Brian Lynch, Bill Hays, Steve Gilmore & Bill Goodwin  
 After Hours: Bill Goodwin Quartet

**MAY 31 MONDAY NIGHTS WITH WBGO**  
**THE RODRIGUEZ BROTHERS**  
 Hosted by WBGO's Ellis Cathey



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**Momentum**  
Myron Walden (Demi Sound)



**Momentum Live**

by George Kanzler

*Momentum* is both album title and the name Myron Walden has used for one of his ensembles, inspired by the '60s Miles Davis Quintet (another ensemble, Myron Walden In This World, seems poised at the intersection of Windham Hill and ECM dale). Like Wayne Shorter in that Miles band, Walden, known until now for his alto, plays tenor sax in *Momentum*. These two albums also resemble the difference between the studio and live recordings of the Davis quintet, providing an even greater contrast since the studio CD, *Momentum*, features not only a slightly different cast but also instrumentation. David Bryant plays an electric Rhodes piano on it while Eden Ladin plays acoustic piano on *Momentum Live*. Trumpeter Darren Barrett and bassist Yasushi Nakamura appear with Walden on both CDs, but the drummers are Kendrick Scott (studio) and John Davis (live).

The drum difference is almost as crucial to the contrast in sound and approach on the two CDs as is the keyboard textures. Scott is the more kinetic and metrically adventurous drummer whereas Davis is more in-the-pocket, pushing the beat rather than flexing it. So the sound of the studio album is more

complex and textured than the live one. The disparity is most evident on the four titles that share both CDs. The studio version of "Of Three Worlds" is tightly programmed, full of tricky metric shifts and is mostly a tenor feature with crackling tenor-drums duet interludes; the live version drops most of the tenor-drum dialogue in favor of longer solos from trumpet and piano as well as tenor, carried along by a scintillating swing beat without most of the metric complexities. "Pulse", "written with the human heartbeat in mind" according to Walden's spoken intro on *Live*, is twice as long on that CD, looser and spacier than the compact studio version. Its affinities to Shorter's compositional style are more evident in the studio, where rhythms undulate and trumpet picks right up on the tenor's last harsh cries, continuing the feel. The live "Pulse" dynamics dip and rise more, trumpet whispering in after hesitating a couple of beats after Walden's solo, which is also a contrast to the studio one, this time quavering and fluttering rather than raspy. A cool vibe suffuses both versions of "Miles", a moody ballad featuring tenor and closing choruses of tenor and trumpet dialoguing, longer and more luxuriantly on the live track. The bossa-like rhythms of "The Road Ahead" provoke Barrett's bluesiest solo on the studio version, but he's in a (samba?) hardbop mode on the live track and Walden substitutes swinging fervor for studio slither on the live version.

The studio CD includes a few shorter tracks, all Walden originals deftly arranged to feature an aspect (horns playing tandem or trading 4s and 8s) or framing a single soloist. They add to the album's sparkle and evidence that Walden is becoming a jazz composer of note. Two pieces not on the studio album frame the live CD in driving postbop swing, as much an homage to mainstream hardbop as the Miles Quintet.

For more information, visit [myronwalden.com](http://myronwalden.com). Walden is at Jazz Gallery May 7th-8th and Smalls May 22nd with Francisco Pais. See Calendar.



**Sting Like A Bee**  
Mike Longo Trio (CAP)  
by Marcia Hillman

*Sting Like A Bee* is pianist Mike Longo's followup to his well-received *Float Like A Butterfly*. Bassist Bob Cranshaw and drummer Lewis Nash join him and this CD is so laid-back and relaxed it comes as no surprise to read in the liner notes that there was no need to listen to any playbacks. This offering is a tribute to two mentors: Oscar Peterson (with whom he studied for a time as a private student) and Dizzy Gillespie (for whom he was music director on and off for nine years).

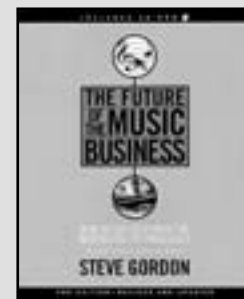
As a salute to Peterson, Longo includes a medley of three songs from *West Side Story* (Longo was present at a rehearsal for Peterson's famous recording date): "Tonight", "I Feel Pretty" (done in a 6/8 tempo) and "Somewhere". On the other side, Gillespie's "Kush" is a virtuosic solo piano interpretation where the left-hand figure is a constant throughout, the right hand playing the melody and improvisation. The rest of the album includes two Wayne Shorter compositions: the boppish "Speak No Evil", featuring some outstanding work by Nash, and "Dance Cadaverous", highlighting Cranshaw's lyrical side. A funky, bluesy "Love For Sale" has Nash and Cranshaw showing off and Longo delivers a slow, understated version of "Speak Low"

that shows off the song's beautiful bare bones. Then there are three Longo originals - a pretty bossa "Someone To Love", a fast-paced bop item "Bird Seed" and a traditional blues "Checked Bags" (title reference is to vibraphonist Milt Jackson).

There is a wonderful flow from one track to the next and a feeling of inclusion for the audience who will listen. This CD should be around for a long while as it has something for everyone - disc jockeys for radio play and individual listeners. Don't be afraid to be stung by this bee!!

For more information, visit [jazzbeat.com](http://jazzbeat.com). Longo is at NYC Baha'i Center May 4th. See Calendar.

## IN PRINT



**The Future of the Music Business (Second Edition)**  
by Steve Gordon (Hal Leonard)  
by Karen Hogg

Much has been written about the steady decline of CD sales and the rise of illegal downloading. The record industry has scrambled for a solution, only to alienate many of their customers with lawsuits targeting everyone from college students to grandmothers accused of file sharing.

Steve Gordon's book addresses the problems the music industry faces today and also offers up some possible solutions. This second edition updates the reader on recent technologies and how they can benefit musicians and entrepreneurs. Additionally, the book comes with a CD-ROM that includes interviews, internet resources and up-to-the-minute updates on the book.

Gordon begins the book with the basics of music law and how new digital technologies fit. He explains the new ways consumers discover and procure music such as webcasting, downloading and interactive streaming. He believes that the record industry's refusal to adapt to and accept newer technologies has cost labels and their artists dearly and illustrates how various lawsuits have done nothing to reduce illegal downloading. He presents blanket licensing or fees, as employed by performing rights societies, as one possible solution to the problem. With a blanket fee, consumers would pay a yearly (or monthly) flat fee to gain access to music on the Internet. He points out that ASCAP, BMI and SESAC are not beset by the same financial woes faced by record companies.

The author ends the book with ideas for artists promoting their music on the Internet. He includes interviews with musicians using new technology to advance their careers and also devotes chapters to artists who started their own record companies, online record stores and video webcasting.

Gordon, an entertainment lawyer, has written a book that, by necessity, is filled with legal terminology and dry business concepts. But he makes these ideas easy to understand. *The Future of the Music Business* is an important read for anyone associated with the music industry. As the fate of many record companies hang in the balance, their future literally depends on it.

For more information, visit [halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com)

Wed. May 12th

The Zinc Bar Presents

**JD Walter's Bassless Band**

Donald Edwards - drums

Orrin Evans - keyboards

Jim Ridl - keyboards

Seamus Blake - EWI

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"Walter is reshaping what jazz singing is all about...he is an original in an art overpopulated with copycats."

- Don Heckman, LA Times

[JDWalter.com](http://JDWalter.com)



**Timba Talmud**  
**Roberto Rodriguez (Tzadik)**  
 by Elliott Simon

A killer Latin rhythm section combined with soulful Jewish melodies is just one aspect of what makes *Timba Talmud*, from percussionist Roberto Rodriguez, such an infectious delicacy. Sexteto Rodriguez, as the band is now called, has been the premier vehicle for Rodriguez to showcase his strong compositions that, like a good Cuban sofrito or a tasty Jewish kugel, beautifully blend and simmer a variety of ingredients into a seamless pleasure. Over the years, Rodriguez has perfected a recipe that has both legitimized and increased the musical significance of what originally was seen as a '50s one-off novelty concept: Latin rhythms and Jewish melodies.

Although Rodriguez' cleverness allows him to pay appropriate homage to these roots - witness his loungey "Mambo Kitsch (for Susie)", featuring a delightfully cheesy combination of guest guitarist Oz Noy and Uri Sharlin's organ - he is foremost a serious politically-aware musician, elegant composer and skillful bandleader. Clarinetist Gilad Harel and violinist Jonathan Keren are able to move between Latin and Jewish with incredible ease, turning tunes like "The Son of Second Avenue" and "Kids Club Cha

Cha" into exciting new music. Harel in particular doesn't overdo the klezmer ornamentation but uses his wonderfully soulful tone to imbue these tunes with their Jewishness.

Other guests include flutist Itai Kriss, whose Latin/Middle Eastern brand of playing is custom made for this venture, and Oscar Onoz, whose tasteful trumpet flavors "El Sabor Del Shabat" and Algerian composer/pianist Maurice El Medioni's "Oran Oran". The latter is given a lengthy uptempo interpretation that includes vocals and some appropriately Latin-jazzy Sharlin piano while the title cut mixes in some electronics, possibly portending a new direction for the band. Things close with "Oyemayá (para Barack Hussein Obama "Omó" "Ochá")", a bass clarinet/violin doina freakout and celebratory Latin/Klezmer paeon. Under Rodriguez' inventive direction this magical mixed musical marriage is his best release yet.

For more information, visit [tzadik.com](http://tzadik.com). Rodriguez co-curates *The Stone* this month and is there May 12th with *The Mulato Insurgency*, 14th with *Electric Kulintang*, 16th as part of *The Stone Improv Night*, 20th with David Baron and 26th with *Sexteto Rodriguez Cuban Jewish AllStars*. See Calendar.



**Momentum**  
**Bill Gerhardt (SteepleChase)**  
 by George Kanzler

It takes uncommon knowledge of jazz history to begin a solo piano album with a dedication to Herbie Nichols. "One for Herbie" is only one of the delightful surprises from pianist Bill Gerhardt on this winning solo recital, sumptuously recorded on a 10-foot Fazioli grand piano at the SteepleChase studios in Europe. Based in Asheville, North Carolina, Gerhardt may be known to Big Apple jazz fans for his work in Cotangent, a quartet he co-leads with the Dutch (NY-based) saxophonist Marc Mommaas (the pianist lived in Amsterdam for a decade). A founding member of Asheville's Jazz Composers Forum, Gerhardt's compositions as well as his playing are showcased.

"One for Herbie" references Nichols tropes like circling around a theme and inserting dissonant hints and off-kilter timing into Tatum-esque arpeggios. It also develops a strong melodic theme reminiscent of "Have You Met Miss Jones?". Gerhardt employs prodigious technique developing fully two-handed, often independent, lines and a limpid, bright touch. But he's never ostentatious, using technique to further musical rather than egoistic goals. Every piece here - eight of the nine are his own - is distinct and self-contained: complete piano renderings of a concept or idea fully realized melodically, harmonically and rhythmically. Although the album title is *Momentum*, a close synonym of that term is just as, if not more, appropriate: flow.

Gerhardt's performances proceed with an effortless forward motion, whether brightly against a second line refrain, as in the jaunty "Daughter"; impressionistically as in the cityscape tone poem "Amsterdam" or with growing intensity like the interactive, chords across two hands, drive propelling "Cloud Field". And each tune has its own mood, from the surging sweet swing of "Coincidences", with its agile left-hand figures to the logical momentum of, yes, "Momentum". Two strongly impressionistic pieces conjure up weather and geography with sensual

precision. The brooding "Sleet" reflects on the predominant winter weather of Gerhardt's boyhood home of Cape Girardeau, Missouri. The buoyant waltz spring of "Emerald" is a souvenir of the pianist's vacations on Emerald Island off the Carolina coast, "a secluded, peaceful place ... [named] because the water there is so clean and clear". On "Gary's Waltz", by Gary McFarland, Gerhardt's slow, dreamy version seeks to communicate "the angelic beauty [McFarland] was able to convey". This is that rare solo piano jazz CD that rewards repeated listenings.

For more information, visit [steeplechase.dk](http://steeplechase.dk). Gerhardt is at *The Kitano* May 13th.

## ON DVD



**Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday**  
**Masters of American Music (Naxos)**  
 by Ken Dryden

Billie Holiday has long been acknowledged as one of the greatest jazz vocalists of all time. With her extensive catalogue of recordings for several labels, Holiday's music has been readily accessible though relatively little live footage with audio is available.

*Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday* integrates film and video performances, recordings, words from her controversial autobiography (read by actress Ruby Dee) and interviews with artists who played with her (pianist Mal Waldron, trumpeter Buck Clayton and Harry "Sweets" Edison), Milt Gabler (owner of Commodore and a producer at Decca), author Albert Murray and vocalists Carmen McRae and Annie Ross.

Recognized early on as a talent by impresario John Hammond, Holiday gained a foothold at the age of 17 in 1933, debuting on a Benny Goodman recording of the unpromising "Your Mother's Son-in-Law" for Columbia. In 1935, she was recording with bandleader Teddy Wilson and, by the following year, under her own name. Frequently the victim of racism, Holiday left Artie Shaw after a short time because she was omitted from some club dates due to the owners' attitudes, seething in the bus while a white female singer performed pieces associated with her. The one time she landed a movie role, it was as a lowly maid in *New Orleans*, with subservient demeaning lines.

There are plenty of anecdotes. McRae states that Lester Young addressed Holiday's mother as "Lady Day" and Billie appropriated the nickname. Gabler, who recorded Holiday singing the controversial ballad "Strange Fruit" (which scared Columbia executives), recalled her captivating audiences with it at Café Society Downtown. Waldron, her last accompanist, is shown playing with her late in her career, explaining how much he learned while working with her. The documentary wouldn't be complete without Billie Holiday singing "Billie's Blues" in 1957 on the television program *The Sound of Jazz*, marking her final reunion with Lester Young.

For more information, visit [naxos.com](http://naxos.com). Madeleine Peyroux celebrates Billie Holiday at the Apollo Theater May 20th as part of *A Great Night in Harlem*. See Calendar.

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## Thursday, May 27

- ★Faruq Z. Bey and the Northwoods Improvisers with Mike Carey, Skeeter Shelton, Mike Gilmore, Mike Johnston, Nick Ashton  
Issue Project Room 8 pm \$15
- ★Phil Woods Quintet with Brian Lynch, Bill Mays, Steve Gilmore, Bill Goodwin  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$35  
Dizzy's Club 11 pm \$10
- ★Bill Goodwin Quartet  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$35
- ★Miles Davis From Birth Of The Cool To Bitches Brew: Tom Harrell, Randy Brecker, Jeremy Pelt, Dave Liebman, George Cables, Lonnie Plaxico, Billy Drummond  
Iridium 8, 10 pm \$35
- ★Oz Noy Project; Itai Kriss Quartet with Aaron Goldberg, Eric McPherson, Gianluca Renzi  
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★Unbroken Trio: Louie Belogenis, Shanir Blumenkranz, Kenny Wollesen; Father Figures  
Zebulun 9 pm
- ★Paula West and George Mesterhazy Quartet with Ed Cherry, Paul Beaudry, Jerome Jennings  
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★Carlos Cuevas Trio with Alex Hernandez, Vince Cherico  
Bargemusic 8 pm \$25
- Romain Collin Trio with Luques Curtis, Obed Calvaire  
The Kitano 8, 10 pm
- ★Bill McHenry with Diego Voglino  
Royale 10 pm
- ★Adam Niewood/Abe Rabade Duo; Joe Magnarelli Quintet with Rich Perry, Rick Germanson, Ugonna Okegwo, Anthony Pinciotti; Carlos Abadie/Joel Sucato Group with Jonathan Lefcoski, Luca Santaniello, Jason Stewart  
Smalls 7:30, 9 pm 12 am \$20
- ★Dan Tepfer Group; Rob Garcia 4 with Noah Preminger, Dan Tepfer, Gary Wang, Rob Garcia  
Ignazio's Pizza 7:30, 8:45 pm \$5
- ★Jamie Begian Big Band with John O'Gallagher, Marc McDonald, Ben Kono, Dmitri Moderbacher, Dan Goble, Tom Goehring, Dave Scott, Marty Bound, Jason Colby, Jeff Bush, Deborah Weisz, Paul Olenick, Max Seigel, Bruce Arnold, Dave Ambrosio, Peter Retzlaff  
Rose Live Music 8 pm \$10
- ★Mitch Marcus Group  
Rose Live Music 8 pm \$10
- ★Andrew Atkinson Quartet with Tivon Pennicott, David Bryant, Matt Clohesy  
Jazz Gallery 9, 10:30 pm \$15
- ★Gnu Vox Finale: David Devoe, Julie Hardy, Wendy Gilles, Rachael Price, Brian Seeger, Matt Wigton, Jared Schonig and guests  
Cornelia Street Café 8:30 pm \$10  
Bar Next Door 8:30, 10:30 pm \$12  
Puppet's Jazz Bar 9 pm \$6
- ★Brandon Lee Trio  
Dred Scott Trio
- ★Stan Killian Quartet with Frank Lo Castro, Bryan Copeland, Darrell Green  
The Local 269 10 pm  
Smoke 11:30 pm  
Hawaiian Tropic Zone 9 pm
- ★Jason Teborek Quartet  
Nick Hempton Band
- ★Origin: Blue: Isamu McGregor, Evan Crane, Jeff Hatcher  
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm \$5
- ★Ian Rapien Trio with Nicolas Letman-Burtinovic, Chris Carroll  
Solo Kitchen Bar 9 pm  
Cleopatra's Needle 8 pm  
Greenwich Village Bistro 9 pm  
5C Café 8 pm
- ★Hank Jones/Joel Lovano Quartet with George Mraz, Willie Jones III  
Birdland 8:30, 11 pm \$30  
Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$25
- ★Ahmad Jamal Group  
Christian McBride Quintet with Steve Wilson, Warren Wolf, Peter Martin, Carl Allen  
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$30
- ★Nick Moran Trio; Iris Ormig Quartet  
Laco Deczi  
Bohemian Hall 6:30 pm
- ★LaGuardia High School Big Band  
Citigroup Center Plaza 12:30 pm

## Friday, May 28

- ★Claudio Roditi Quartet  
Orin Evans Group with Bobby Watson  
Smoke 8, 10, 11:30 pm \$30
- ★Peter Apfelbaum NY Hieroglyphics with Peck Allmond, Jessica Jones, Tony Jones, Josh Roseman, Natalie Cressman, Charlie Burnham, Dave Phelps, Viva DeConcini, Marcus Rojas, Dafnis Prieto  
Jazz Gallery 9, 10:30 pm \$20
- ★Daphna Mor's East of the River with Nina Stern, Omer Avital, Uri Sharlin, Shane Shanahan; Hadar Noiberg Trio with Edward Perez, Ziv Ravitz  
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★George Colligan Trio; Kerry Politzer Trio  
Cornelia Street Café 9, 10:30 pm \$10
- ★Pete Robbins' sILENT Z with Jesse Neuman, Mike Gamble, Eivind Opsvik, Tommy Crane  
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm \$5
- ★Alex Terrier with Francois Moutin, Roy Assaf; Tim Green Group with Nir Felder, Xavier Davis, Joe Sanders, Damion Reid; Eric McPherson Group  
Smalls 7:30, 9:30 pm 12 am \$20
- ★Thomson Kneeland Trio; Linda Oh Trio  
Bar Next Door 7, 9, 11 pm 12:30 am \$12
- ★Moacir Santos Celebration with Mario Adnet  
Rose Theater 8 pm \$30-120  
Puppet's Jazz Bar 9 pm \$12  
Drom 9 pm \$12
- ★Bill Ware Vibes Trio  
★Mitch Marcus Group
- ★Cynthia Holiday  
★Conor Nelson/Ayano Kataoka  
★Bruce Harris  
★Yaacov Mayman Quartet  
★Fabio Morgera  
★Nora McCarthy/Joshua Wolff
- ★Faruq Z. Bey and the Northwoods Improvisers with Mike Carey, Skeeter Shelton, Mike Gilmore, Mike Johnston, Nick Ashton  
Issue Project Room 8 pm \$15
- ★Phil Woods Quintet with Brian Lynch, Bill Mays, Steve Gilmore, Bill Goodwin  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm \$35  
Dizzy's Club 12:45 am \$20
- ★Bill Goodwin Quartet
- ★Miles Davis From Birth Of The Cool To Bitches Brew: Tom Harrell, Randy Brecker, Jeremy Pelt, Dave Liebman, George Cables, Lonnie Plaxico, Billy Drummond  
Iridium 8, 10 pm \$35
- ★Yvonnick Prene Quartet with Glenn Zaleski, Chris Smith, Cory Cox  
Iridium 12 am \$20
- ★Paula West and George Mesterhazy Quartet with Ed Cherry, Paul Beaudry, Jerome Jennings  
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm \$30
- ★Hank Jones/Joel Lovano Quartet with George Mraz, Willie Jones III  
Birdland 8:30, 11 pm \$30  
Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$25
- ★Ahmad Jamal Group  
★Burnt Sugar Arkestra Chamber Blue Note 12:30 am \$10
- ★Christian McBride Quintet with Steve Wilson, Warren Wolf, Peter Martin, Carl Allen  
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$35
- ★David White Quintet; Oscar Perez Quartet  
The Garage 6:15, 10:45 pm  
Shrine 6 pm
- ★Lonnie Gasperini Organ Trio
- ★Pete Robbins and sILENT Z
- ★Kenny Wessel Trio; Victor Prieto Trio  
Bar Next Door 7, 9, 11 pm 12:30 am \$12
- ★Alon Nechustan; Jonathan Keren
- ★Elektra Kurtis
- ★Maggie Brown and Group
- ★Spoke: Andy Hunter, Justin Wood, Dan Loomis, Danny Fischer  
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm \$5
- ★Petter Vagan
- ★Sarina Bridget-Bach Quintet
- ★Luc Decker
- ★Evan Schwamm Quartet
- ★Alcatraz: Hector Morales, Eric Kurimski, Sofia Koutsovitis, Edward Perez  
Tutuma Social Club 8, 10:30 pm  
Puppet's Jazz Bar 9 pm \$12
- ★The Committee

## Saturday, May 29

- ★Pete Robbins and sILENT Z
- ★Kenny Wessel Trio; Victor Prieto Trio  
Bar Next Door 7, 9, 11 pm 12:30 am \$12
- ★Alon Nechustan; Jonathan Keren
- ★Elektra Kurtis
- ★Maggie Brown and Group
- ★Spoke: Andy Hunter, Justin Wood, Dan Loomis, Danny Fischer  
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm \$5
- ★Petter Vagan
- ★Sarina Bridget-Bach Quintet
- ★Luc Decker
- ★Evan Schwamm Quartet
- ★Alcatraz: Hector Morales, Eric Kurimski, Sofia Koutsovitis, Edward Perez  
Tutuma Social Club 8, 10:30 pm  
Puppet's Jazz Bar 9 pm \$12
- ★The Committee

- ★Claudio Roditi Quartet  
Orin Evans Group with Bobby Watson  
Smoke 8, 10, 11:30 pm \$30
- ★Peter Apfelbaum NY Hieroglyphics with Peck Allmond, Jessica Jones, Tony Jones, Josh Roseman, Natalie Cressman, Charlie Burnham, Dave Phelps, Viva DeConcini, Marcus Rojas, Dafnis Prieto  
Jazz Gallery 9, 10:30 pm \$20
- ★Neal Kirkwood Octet with Jed Levy, Jimmy Cozier, Vincent Chancey, Jack Walrath, Curtis Fowlkes, Lindsey Horner, Jeff Brillinger; Tim Green Group with Nir Felder, Xavier Davis, Joe Sanders, Damion Reid; Stacy Dillard Trio with Diallo House, Ismail Lawal  
Smalls 7:30, 10:30 pm 1:30 am \$20
- ★Moacir Santos Celebration with Mario Adnet  
Rose Theater 8 pm \$30-120
- ★Phil Woods Quintet with Brian Lynch, Bill Mays, Steve Gilmore, Bill Goodwin  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm \$35  
Dizzy's Club 12:45 am \$20
- ★Bill Goodwin Quartet
- ★Miles Davis From Birth Of The Cool To Bitches Brew: Tom Harrell, Randy Brecker, Jeremy Pelt, Dave Liebman, George Cables, Lonnie Plaxico, Billy Drummond  
Iridium 8, 10 pm \$35
- ★Michael O'Brien's Greater Than 5  
Iridium 12 am \$20
- ★Paula West and George Mesterhazy Quartet with Ed Cherry, Paul Beaudry, Jerome Jennings  
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm \$30
- ★Hank Jones/Joel Lovano Quartet with George Mraz, Willie Jones III  
Birdland 8:30, 11 pm \$30  
Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$25  
Blue Note 12:30 am \$15
- ★Ahmad Jamal Group  
Vladimir Cetkar
- ★Christian McBride Quintet with Steve Wilson, Warren Wolf, Peter Martin, Carl Allen  
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$35
- ★Champion Fulton Trio; Dre Barnes Project  
The Garage 6:15, 10:45 pm
- ★Bruce Harris Quintet; André Matos Group; GroovProject  
Shrine 6 pm  
ESP Store 3 pm
- ★Richard Garet/Gill Arno

## Sunday, May 30

- ★Anat and Avishai Cohen with Jason Lindner, Matt Penman, Johnathan Blake; Eyal Maoz with Brian Marsella, Shanir Blumenkranz, Yuval Lion  
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
  - ★Carmen Staaf Trio with Kendall Eddy, Austin McMahon  
Cornelia Street Café 8:30 pm \$10
  - ★Dwayne Clemons Quintet with Josh Benko, Sacha Perry, Murray Wall, Jimmy Wormworth; Dmitriy Baevsky Quartet with Jeb Patton, David Wong, Joe Strasser  
Smalls 7:30, 10:30 pm \$20
  - ★Peter Leitch/Ugonna Okegwo  
Walker's 8 pm
  - ★Sean Hutchinson with Joe Hundertmark; Austin Donohue; Gato Loco; Stefan Zeniuk; Jesse Selengut; Jackie Coleman, Kevin Moehringer, Rick Becker, Joe Exley, Clifton Hyde, Ari Folman-Cohen, Kevin Garcia  
Rose Live Music 8:30 pm  
5C Café 8 pm  
The Blue Owl 8, 9:30 pm \$5
  - ★Phil Woods Quintet with Brian Lynch, Bill Mays, Steve Gilmore, Bill Goodwin  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$35
  - ★Miles Davis From Birth Of The Cool To Bitches Brew: Tom Harrell, Randy Brecker, Jeremy Pelt, Dave Liebman, George Cables, Lonnie Plaxico, Billy Drummond  
Iridium 8, 10 pm \$35
  - ★Paula West and George Mesterhazy Quartet with Ed Cherry, Paul Beaudry, Jerome Jennings  
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
  - ★Ahmad Jamal Group  
Christian McBride Quintet with Steve Wilson, Warren Wolf, Peter Martin, Carl Allen  
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$30
  - ★Ballrogg: Roger Amtzen/Klaus Ellerhusen; Vertex: Tor Haugerud/Petter Vagan  
Downtown Music Gallery 6 pm
  - ★Amy London Quartet with Roni Ben-Hur, Santi Debriano, Steve Williams  
Blue Note 12:30, 2:30 pm \$24.50
  - ★Sarah James Trio with Ethan Mann, Ed Schuller  
North Square Lounge 12:30, 2 pm  
Jesse Elder Trio  
The Garage 12, 7, 11:30 pm
  - ★Evan Schwam Quartet; David Coss and Trio; Jesse Elder Trio  
The Garage 12, 7, 11:30 pm
- Monday, May 31**
- ★2nd Annual Tribute to John Coltrane's Interstellar Space: Satoshi Takeishi/ Michael Attias; Ben Perowsky/Michael Blake; Michael TA Thompson/Oliver Lake; Gerald Cleaver/Charles Gayle  
The Local 269 7 pm \$10
  - ★Robby Ameen with John Beasley, Wayne Krantz, Conrad Herrwig, Brian Lynch, Lincoln Goines, Richie Flores  
Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$15  
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$20
  - ★The Rodriguez Brothers
  - ★Yotam Silberstein Quartet; Sharel Cassidy Quartet  
Rosie O'Grady's 8 pm \$20
  - ★Pete McGuinness Jazz Orchestra with Dave Pietro, Jason Rigby, Bill Mobley, Mike Holober  
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm \$5
  - ★Orlando Le Fleming Group with Lage Lund, Will Vinson; Will Vinson with Lage Lund, Orlando Le Fleming, Jochen Rueckert; Spencer Murphy Jam  
Smalls 7:30, 9 pm 12 am \$20  
Bar Next Door 8:30, 10:30 pm \$12
  - ★Dida Pelled Trio  
New School Presents: Erika Kapin Quartet with Angelo Spagnolo, Peter Yuskauskas, Maiko Ono; Jake Sherman Organ Group with Max Cutworth, Craig Ragain, Ari Karason  
Fat Cat 8:30 pm \$3  
Tutuma Social Club 8 pm
  - ★Pete Sparacino
  - ★Howard Williams Jazz Orchestra; Jean Caze Trio  
The Garage 7, 10:30 pm
  - ★Clarissa Sinceno; Nicholas Kadajski; Nico Soffiato  
Shrine 6 pm

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## REGULAR ENGAGEMENTS

- MONDAYS**
- ★Ron Affif Trio  
★Carter-Davis Ensemble  
★Sedric Choukroun and The Brasilieros  
★Steve Coleman Presents  
★Pete Davenport/Ed Schuller Jam Session  
★Eddy Davis New Orleans Jazz Band  
★Jesse Elder  
★John Farnsworth Jam  
★Ray Gallon Trio  
★Mike Gamble Trio  
★Vince Giordano's Nighthawks  
★Enrico Granafei solo  
★Harlem Renaissance Orchestra  
★Patience Higgins Sugar Hill Quartet  
★JFA Jazz Jam  
★Roger Lent Trio Jam  
★John McNeil Jam Session  
★Iris Ormig Jam Session  
★Les Paul Trio with guests  
★John Proulx  
★Stan Rubin All-Stars  
★Vanguard Jazz Orchestra  
★Melvin Vines Kortet with Kay Mori
- TUESDAYS**
- ★Evolution Series  
★Sedric Choukroun  
★Irving Fields  
★Joel Frahm  
★George Gee Make Believe  
★Art Hirahara Trio  
★Yuichi Hirakawa Trio  
★Loston Harris  
★Sandy Jordan and Larry Luger Trio  
★Joey Morant or College Jazz Jam  
★Iris Ormig Quartet  
★Gregory Porter  
★Annie Ross  
★Robert Rucker Trio Jam  
★Dred Scott Trio  
★Slavic Soul Party
- WEDNESDAYS**
- ★Astoria Jazz Composers Workshop  
★Frank Lacy  
★Rick Bogart Trio  
★Sedric Choukroun and the Eddies  
★Marc Devine Jam Session  
★Gordon Edwards  
★Joe Falcon Bolero Jazz  
★Felix and the Cats  
★Walter Fischbacher Trio  
★Rick Germanson  
★Jeanne Gies with Howard  
★Naoh Haidu Trio Jam  
★Patience Higgins Sugar Hill Quartet  
★Lauren Hooker  
★Jazz Jam Session  
★Shan Kenner Trio Jam  
★Jonathan Kreisberg Trio  
★Leddy and Friends  
★Nat Lucas Organ Trio  
★Jeremy Manasia Solo  
★Jacob Melchior  
★Arturo O'Farrill solo; John McNeil Group  
★David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band  
★Stan Rubin Big Band  
★Bobby Sanabria Big Band  
★Bill Wurtzel/Tony Decaprio
- THURSDAYS**
- ★Eric Alexander and Joe Farnsworth  
★Jason Campbell Trio  
★Sedric Choukroun  
★Dean and the Jazz Masters  
★Burt Eckhoff  
★Avram Fefer Trio  
★Aki Ishiguro Jam Session  
★Gianluca Renzi Trio  
★Smoke Big Band  
★Eri Yamamoto Trio
- FRIDAYS**
- ★Gabriel Alegria Sextet  
★Steve Blanco Trio  
★Kengo Nakamura Trio  
★Albert Rivera Organ Trio  
★Bill Saxton and Friends  
★Donald Smith  
★Chris Ward Trio
- SATURDAYS**
- ★Calley Bliss  
★Tyler Blanton Trio  
★Calley Bliss  
★Jesse Elder/Greg Ruggiero  
★Ted Hefko Quartet  
★Renaud Penant Trio  
★Wayne Roberts Duo  
★Search  
★Skye Jazz Trio  
★Mariela Valencia Show  
★Michelle Walker/Nick Russo  
★Bill Wurtzel Duo  
★Ryoichi Zakata
- SUNDAYS**
- ★Rick Bogart Trio  
★Toru Dodo Jam  
★Ear Regulars with Jon-Erik Kelloso  
★Marjorie Eliot/Rudell Dreads/Sedric Choukroun  
★Champion Fulton  
★George Gee & The Make-Believe Ballroom Orchestra  
★Satoshi Inoue Duo  
★Bob Kindred Grouo  
★Lapis Luna Trio  
★Alexander McCabe Trio  
★Junior Mance/Hide Tanaka  
★Peter Mazza  
★Chico O'Farrill's AfroCuban Jazz Big Band  
★Gregory Porter  
★Zack O'Farrill Quartet  
★TC Ill  
★Cidinho Teixeira  
★Jazz Jam hosted by Michael Vitali  
★Chris Washburne's SYOTOS Band  
★Nioka Workman, Kali Z, Sonya Robinson, Hui Cox





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Sat, May 29 @ 9pm  
 Cornelia Street Cafe (Manhattan)  
 www.corneliastreetcafe.com

(INTERVIEW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

**AAJ-NY:** Are you teaching?

**EG:** Yes, I teach at the Conservatory in Puerto Rico, in San Juan. I have a residency, which means I get to fly in once a month for about five days. I've been doing that for about five years and it's great also because that's where my mom is. I love the students there very much. I'm the Artistic Director of the jazz program and I love seeing the strides these students have taken. I also get to bring musicians there. There's a great AfroCaribbean program and of course the classical tradition which goes back to Pablo Casals.

**AAJ-NY:** Let's talk about this gig at the Blue Note this month with Chick Corea and Paul Motian.

**EG:** I met Chick when I was about 16. He was going to Juilliard and I was finishing high school. We played together for a while, kind of went our separate ways when I went with Bill, but came back to play on a couple of records together. We did his *Mad Hatter* album and we've always had a good working relationship. I think our perspectives on music are very similar. He's a great pianist, great composer and he's a lot of fun to be around.

**AAJ-NY:** You're very active.

**EG:** I'm doing a lot of touring and recording. But you know, I really don't get paid to play. It's kind of like I get paid to travel and the playing is free, a pleasure.

**AAJ-NY:** How much composing do you do?

**EG:** I'm not a prolific composer but I do work at it. In fact, I'm working now on an album of my tunes. There is a lot more of my music on the way.

**AAJ-NY:** What basses do you play?

**EG:** I have a bass that was put together by Arnold Schnitzer. It's actually a composite bass, made of three basses that he put together. I call it my Frankenstein bass! I also have a wonderful instrument that David Gage restored for me recently.

**AAJ-NY:** Finally, which bass players have been most influential to you?

**EG:** Oh God. Lots of them. Paul Chambers, Ray Brown, Jymie Merritt, Eddie Jones, Sam Jones, Scott LaFaro. So many guys - Jimmy Blanton, Charles Mingus, Milt Hinton ... I'm sure I'm leaving lots of guys out. ♦

For more information, visit [eddiegomez.com](http://eddiegomez.com). Gomez is at Dizzy's Club May 1st-2nd as part of *Samba Jazz* and *The Music of Jobim* and Blue Note May 4th-9th and 11th-16th as part of "Further Explorations of Bill Evans" with Chick Corea and Paul Motian. See Calendar.

**Recommended Listening:**

- Bill Evans - *California Here I Come* (Verve, 1967)
- Bill Evans/Eddie Gomez - *Intuition* (Fantasy-OJC, 1974)
- Jeremy Steig/Eddie Gomez - *Outlaws* (Enja, 1976)
- Chick Corea - *Three Quartets* (Stretch-Warner Bros, 1981)
- Kronos Quartet - *Music of Bill Evans* (with Eddie Gomez, Jim Hall) (Landmark, 1985)
- Eddie Gomez - *Dedication* (Evidence, 1997)

(LABEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

releases. If the music is no good, people realize it very

quickly no matter how you advertise it." Pohjola has always felt an ambition to serve "good music", no matter the genre. One of the things that he finds important for jazz labels is that a label person needs to play, compose and connect with musicians, not just be a fan or someone who follows the current scene. (This emphasis on leadership by "artist" rather than "bottom line accountants" is a refreshing one in this commercially-oriented world.) "Leading this label is now sort of an extension of my musicianship more than anything and trusting in other musicians who make great music for an audience. I do ask for musical integrity and development without fear and if the musicians are immune to external opinions, that's even better."

BMG is there for their audience, Pohjola goes on to say, but "we do not bend down to what people want. Instead, people who want us and the music that we represent know where to find the site. I believe this way our audience will believe more in us because we're not for the hype and hammering. We're, for sure, not for everybody but who we are will be decided by those who visit the site and listen to the music. It's that simple."

Blue Music Group is not your traditional record label, but one born out of these times: economically, ecologically and technologically. In its own way, it is a pioneer in this brave new world of delivering good music to customers who want their products instantly and easily. ♦

For more information, visit [bluemusicgroup.com](http://bluemusicgroup.com). Events this month include tributes to Rashed Ali at Tribeca Performing Arts Center May 7th and *The Local* 269 May 31st, *fête*ing Interstellar Space. See Calendar.

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May 3  
**JORMA KAUKONEN**  
 with THE LES PAUL TRIO  
 MAY 4 THE BOBS @ 8:00PM & 10:00PM

May 5-9  
**THE KENNY GARRETT BAND**

May 10  
**DAVE 'FUZE' FIUCZYNSKI**  
 with THE LES PAUL TRIO  
 MAY 11 MAD ABOUT THAD  
 MAY 12 JOAN STILES "Mostly Mary Lou"

May 13-16  
**STANLEY JORDAN**

May 17  
**LARRY CORYELL**  
 with THE LES PAUL TRIO  
 MAY 18 LINA KOUTRAKIS  
 MAY 19-20 MATT WILSON BAND

May 24  
**JIMMY BRUNO**  
 with THE LES PAUL TRIO  
 MAY 25 TERESE GENECCO & HER LITTLE BIG BAND  
 MAY 26 JEAN-MICHEL PILC TRIO

May 27-30  
**MILES DAVIS FROM BIRTH OF THE COOL TO BITCHES BREW**  
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 5/15 Katlyn Swanson and The Return  
 5/21 Cracked Latin  
 5/22 The Adam Ramsay - CJ Glass Quintet  
 5/28 Yvonnick Prene Quartet  
 5/29 Michael O'Brien's Greater Than 5

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JOHN BUNCH

He headed to Los Angeles after World War II, where he hooked up with the Woody Herman Orchestra. The group moved to New York and Bunch soon joined Benny Goodman's band and worked with Maynard Ferguson and Tony Bennett. At 88, the pianist died Mar. 30th.

HERB ELLIS

One of jazz' most virtuosic guitar soloists, he was raised on a Texas cotton farm. After sharing a college dorm room with Jimmy Giuffre, he moved to Kansas City to start a career that aligned him with Oscar Peterson, Ella Fitzgerald and Stan Getz. Ellis was 88 when he died Mar. 28th.

GRACIELA PEREZ-GUTIERREZ

At 17, the Cuban singer joined the female orchestra Anacaona. When her foster brother Machito headed to war in 1943, she took over as lead singer in his AfroCuban orchestra, belting out hits like "Ay, Jose" and "Si, Si, No, No". Graciela was 94 when she passed away Apr. 7th.

PETER HERBOLZHEIMER

After a stint as a guitarist in the US, the Bucharest-born musician took up the trombone in Germany. In 1969, he formed the international big band Rhythm Combination and Brass, which included Art Farmer and Palle Mikkelborg. Herbolzheimer died Mar. 27th. He was 74.

ERWIN LEHN

Co-leader of the Radio-Berlin Dance Orchestra in the '40s, he later founded the Southern Radio Dance Orchestra (SWR Big Band) in Stuttgart, one of Germany's most popular big bands. Also a teacher and composer for movies and TV, the pianist passed away Mar. 20th, aged 90.

JIM MARSHALL

From Hendrix setting his guitar alight to Cash flipping off the camera, he captured iconic images on his Leica M2. But the photographer's first important shot was of Coltrane in San Francisco in 1959. A revered documentarian of jazz, folk and rock, Marshall died Mar. 24th at 74.

LUIGI WAITES

A big influence in the Omaha arts scene, the drummer/vibraphonist organized a youth drum corps and helped organize the Omaha Summer Arts Festival. He played with Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton and Sarah Vaughan and was a mainstay at local clubs until his death Apr. 6th at 82.

MIKE ZWERIN

Miles Davis noticed him one night when the 18-year-old trombonist was sitting in with Art Blakey. He played with Maynard Ferguson and Claude Thornhill, but soon turned to jazz journalism, writing for the *Village Voice*, *International Herald Tribune* and authoring books. At 79, Zwerin died Apr. 2nd.

BIRTHDAYS

**May 1**  
†Hayes Alvis 1907-72  
†Jessie Price 1909-74  
Jack Lidstrom b. 1931  
Ira Sullivan b. 1931  
†Shirley Horn 1934-2005  
Carlos Ward b. 1940  
James Newton b. 1953

**May 2**  
†Teddy Stauffer 1902-41  
†Pat Smyth 1923-83  
†Richard "Groove"  
Holmes 1931-91  
Eddie Louiss b. 1941  
Mickey Bass b. 1943

**May 3**  
†John Lewis 1920-2001  
†Jimmy Cleveland  
1926-2008  
Jymie Merritt b. 1926  
Johnny Fischer b. 1930  
John Alexander b. 1948  
Larry Ochs b. 1949

**May 4**  
†Sonny Payne 1926-79  
†Maynard Ferguson  
1928-2006  
Warren Smith b. 1932  
Don Friedman b. 1935  
Ron Carter b. 1937  
Chuck Folds b. 1938

**May 5**  
†Paul Barbarin 1901-69  
Stanley Cowell b. 1941  
Jack Walrath b. 1946

**May 6**  
†Vic Berton 1896-1951  
†Freddy Randall 1921-99  
†Denny Wright 1924-92  
Isla Eckinger b. 1939  
Paul Dunmall b. 1953

**May 7**  
†Yank Porter 1895-1944  
†Pete Jacobs 1899-1952  
†Leon Abbey 1900-75  
†Edward Inge 1906-88  
Herbie Steward b. 1926  
Arthur Blythe b. 1940

**May 8**  
†Red Nichols 1905-65  
†Mary Lou Williams 1910-81  
†Jerry Rusch 1943-2003  
Keith Jarrett b. 1945

**May 9**  
†George Simon 1912-2001  
Dick Morrissey b. 1940  
Dennis Chambers b. 1959

**May 10**  
†Pee Wee Hunt 1907-79  
†Al Hendrickson  
1920-2007  
†Mel Lewis 1929-90  
†Julius Wechter 1935-99  
George Golla b. 1935  
Mike Melvoin b. 1937  
Jimmy Ponder b. 1946  
Ahmed Abdullah b. 1947  
Hans Reichel b. 1949  
Alex Foster b. 1953  
Philip Harper b. 1965

**May 11**  
†King Oliver 1885-1938  
†JC Higginbotham 1906-73  
†Oscar Valdambri 1924-97  
John Coppola b. 1929  
Dick Garcia b. 1931  
†Freddie Roach 1931-80  
Carla Bley b. 1938  
Ralph Humphrey b. 1944

**May 12**  
†Jack Jenny 1910-45  
†Marshall Royal 1912-95  
†Don DeMichael 1928-82  
Gary Peacock b. 1935  
Klaus Doldinger b. 1936  
Trevor Tompkins b. 1941

**May 13**  
†Maxine Sullivan 1911-87  
†Gil Evans 1912-88  
†Red Garland 1923-84  
Creed Taylor b. 1929  
Erick Moseholm b. 1930  
John Engels b. 1935

**May 14**  
†Sidney Bechet 1897-1959  
†Zutty Singleton 1898-1975  
†Skip Martin 1916-76  
Al Porcino b. 1925  
Jack Bruce b. 1943

**May 15**  
†Edmond Hall 1901-67  
†Gus Viseur 1915-74  
†Ellis Larkins 1923-2002  
Karin Krog b. 1937  
Oscar Castro-Neves b. 1940

**May 16**  
†Woody Herman 1913-87  
Eddie Bert b. 1922  
†Betty Carter 1930-98  
†Friedrich Gulda 1930-2007  
Billy Cobham b. 1944

**May 17**  
†Paul Quinichette 1916-83  
†Joe Roland 1920-2009  
Lee Katzman b. 1928  
†Dewey Redman 1931-2006  
†David Izenzon 1932-79  
†Jackie McLean 1932-2006  
†Peter Trunk 1936-1973

**May 18**  
†Pops Foster 1892-1969  
†Lou Hooper 1894-1977  
†Joe Turner 1911-85  
†Kai Winding 1922-83

**May 19**  
†Georgie Auld 1919-90  
†Bobby Bryant 1934-98  
Cecil McBee b. 1935  
Richard Teitelbaum b. 1939  
Sonny Fortune b. 1939  
Henry Butler b. 1949  
Jim McNeely b. 1949

**May 20**  
Louis Smith b. 1931  
Tommy Gumina b. 1931  
†Bob Florence 1932-2008  
Charles Davis b. 1933  
†Rufus Harley 1936-2006  
Victor Lewis b. 1950  
Ralph Peterson b. 1962

**May 21**  
†Fats Waller 1904-43  
†Bill Barber 1920-2007  
†Tommy Bryant 1930-82

**May 22**  
†Sun Ra 1914-93  
†Elek Bacsik 1926-1993  
Giuseppe Logan b. 1935  
Dick Berk b. 1939

**May 23**  
†Fred Guy 1897-1971  
†Artie Shaw 1910-2004  
†Rosemary Clooney  
1928-2002  
†Les Spann 1932-89  
Daniel Humair b. 1938  
Marvin Stamm b. 1939  
Don Moye b. 1946  
Richie Beirach b. 1947  
Ken Peplowski b. 1959

**May 24**  
†Frank Signorelli 1901-75  
†Herbie Fields 1919-58  
Max Bennett b. 1928  
†Gianni Basso 1931-2009  
Michael White b. 1933  
Archie Shepp b. 1937  
†Charles Earland 1941-99

**May 25**  
Marshall Allen b. 1924  
†Miles Davis 1926-91  
Piet Noordijk b. 1932  
Gary Foster b. 1936  
Christof Lauer b. 1953  
Wallace Roney b. 1960

**May 26**  
†Mamie Smith 1883-1943  
†Ady Rosner 1910-76  
†Shorty Baker 1914-66  
†Ziggy Elman 1914-68  
†Calvin Jackson 1919-85  
†Neil Ardley 1937-2004

**May 27**  
†Albert Nicholas 1900-73  
†Jock Carruthers 1910-71  
†Rufus Jones 1936-90  
†Bud Shank 1926-2009  
Ramsey Lewis b. 1935  
†Niels-Henning Orsted-  
Pedersen 1946-2005

**May 28**  
†Andy Kirk 1898-1992  
†Al Tinney 1921-2002  
†Russ Freeman 1926-2002  
Alfred Patterson b. 1937

**May 29**  
Freddie Redd b. 1927  
†Hilton Ruiz 1952-2006  
Wycliffe Gordon b. 1967

**May 30**  
†Sidney DeParis 1905-67  
†Benny Goodman 1909-86  
†Pee Wee Erwin 1913-81  
†Shake Keane 1927-97  
Harry Beckett b. 1935

**May 31**  
Red Holloway b. 1927  
Albert "Tootie" Heath b. 1935  
Louis Hayes b. 1937



IRA SULLIVAN  
May 1st, 1931

Dad taught him trumpet at age three in Washington DC. But soon the family moved to Chicago where he learned saxophone from mom. After a session with Eddie Caine, he picked up the flute. The multi-instrumentalist was a mainstay on the Chicago jazz scene, where he played with Charlie Parker and Roy Eldridge before heading to New York in 1956 to join Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. A visit to his parents Florida home in the '60s compelled him to stay and over the last half-century Sullivan has established himself as a respected leader and teacher, working with everyone from Idrees Sulieman to Jaco Pastorius.  
-Celeste Sunderland

ON THIS DAY

by Andrey Henkin



*Eponymous*  
Joe Roland Quartet (Savoy)  
May 10th, 1954



*Explosions*  
Bob James Trio (ESP-Disk)  
May 10th, 1965



*Brotherhood of Breath*  
Brotherhood of Breath (Ogun)  
May 10th, 1977



*The Dolphin*  
Stan Getz (Concord Jazz)  
May 10th, 1981



*New York-Barcelona Crossing*  
Brad Mehldau, et. al. (Fresh Sound)  
May 10th, 1993

Vibraphonist Joe Roland, who died last October at the age of 89, spent much of the later part of his life playing at clubs in his adopted home of Florida and mentoring local musicians. But before that he played with figures like George Shearing and Artie Shaw and recorded a handful of fine bebop albums under his own name. This particular session finds Roland in tow with musicians of greater fame - pianist Freddie Redd, bassist Oscar Pettiford and drummer Ron Jefferson - playing standards, originals and tunes by his sidemen.

Those that only know pianist Bob James for his far more commercial recordings since the mid '70s will be quite surprised at this album, his second disc as a leader after a hardbop debut a few years earlier. James is featured not only on the piano but inside it as well as providing some of the first utilizations of electronics in jazz. His sidemen would go on to avant garde fame - bassist Barre Phillips and drummer Robert Pozar - but the more typical James would emerge nine years later on his next album.

This album was the last to feature the 'original' lineup of African-English big band Brotherhood of Breath, led by pianist Chris McGregor, though by this point trumpeter Mongezi Feza had already died. Many of the band's stalwarts appear on this live concert from Toulouse, France: Harry Beckett, Marc Charig, Mike Osborne along with McGregor, Dudu Pukwana and Louis Moholo (three-fifths of the Blue Notes, from whence the Brotherhood was derived). Two long tracks were written by McGregor or Pukwana, sandwiched around Feza's "Sonia".

Saxophonist Stan Getz didn't record as much during the last decade-and-a-half of his life. This album is one of only three he made as a leader in 1981 and one of two live discs taken from San Francisco's Keystone Korner (the other is from an unknown date in May called *Spring is Here*). Getz is joined by Lou Levy (piano), Monty Budwig (bass) and Victor Lewis (drums) for a program of standards: "A Time For Love", "Joy Spring", "My Old Flame", "The Night Has A Thousand Eyes", "Close Enough For Love" and Luiz Eça's title track.

After a few sessions as a sideman with the likes of Peter Bernstein, Grant Stewart and Joshua Redman, but before embarking on a still-ongoing career as a leader, pianist Brad Mehldau participated in this cross-Atlantic session, aptly titled. Mehldau is the only American musician on these two volumes, the rest of the quartet Spaniards Perico Sambeat (alto sax), Mario Rossy (bass) and Jorge Rossy (drums). He contributed no tunes to this session, mostly made up of Great American Songbook and jazz standards.

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This film recounts the stellar career of singer Sarah Vaughan, from her beginnings at the Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey, to her debut at the Apollo Theater and her pre-eminence in nightclubs, concert halls and jazz festivals around the world. Packed with insightful interviews—many with Sarah herself—and live performances spanning her entire career.

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