

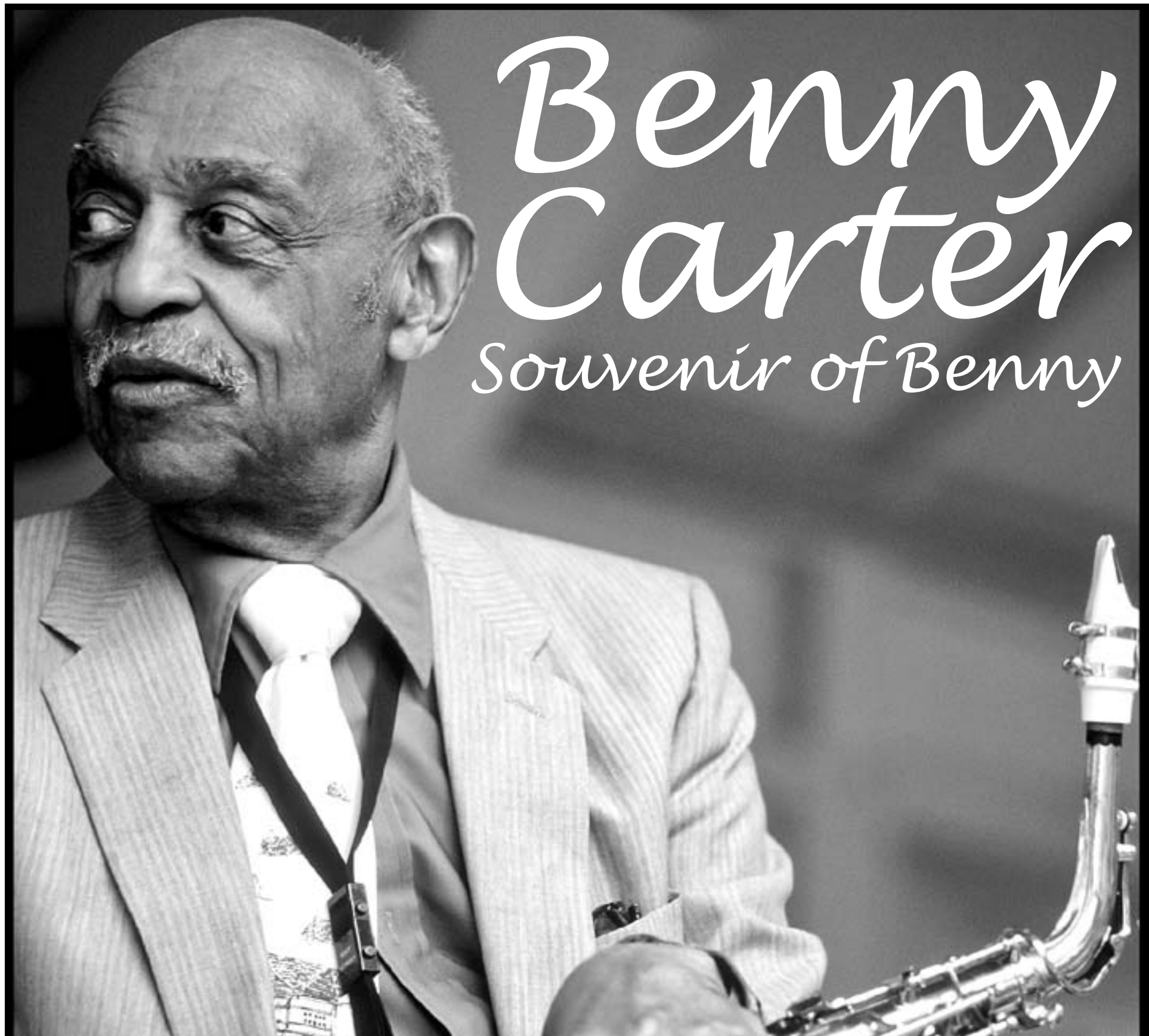


THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

July 2011 | No. 111

Your FREE Guide to the NYC Jazz Scene

nycjazzrecord.com



Benny Carter

Souvenir of Benny

Freddy Cole • Zeena Parkins • psi Records • Event Calendar

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W/ KENDEL CARSON & JOHN PLATANIA

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W/ ALEX MACHACEK & DOUG LUNN

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W/ SPECIAL GUEST

NELS CLINE (WILCO)

JULY 12 / 7:00PM

JOHNNY RODGERS BAND

JULY 12 / 9:00PM

PAUL SAFY JR.

JULY 13 / 8:00PM & 10PM

NYC HIT SQUAD

JULY 14 / 8:00PM & 10PM

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JULY 15 - 8:00PM & 10:00PM

THE HENDRIX PROJECT
FEATURING GEORGE COLLIGAN, RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA, JEROME HARRIS & DONALD EDWARDS

JULY 19 / 7:00PM

KAREN MASON "BACK ON BROADWAY"

JULY 19 / 9:00PM

VARLA JEAN MERMAN

JULY 20 / 8:00PM & 10PM

JOHNNY A POWER TRIO

JULY 21-23 / 8:00PM & 10PM

ERIC KRASNO, NEIL EVANS & ADAM DIETCH

JULY 24 - 8:00PM & 10:00PM

THE FOUR FRESHMAN

JULY 25 / 8:00PM & 10PM

LES PAUL TRIO
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VINNIE MOORE

JULY 26 / 7:00PM & 9PM

TERESE GENECCO & HER LITTLE BIG BAND

W/ NICOLAS KING

JULY 27 / 8:00PM & 10PM

PETER TORK (OF THE MONKEES)

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Is it getting hot around here? The usual East Coast jump from chilly post-winter to scorching full summer (otherwise known as spring - guess it really can hang you up the most) has occurred, buoyed by last month's slew of festivals. A nice perk to summer in the city is how jazz gets to come out of the basements and dark rooms and get some sun, not to mention larger-than-usual crowds. There are shows in various parks and the city's open spaces this month; check our Event Calendar for places to tan while soaking up some jazz.

But jazz is still an indoor, night-time music. Our Coverage this month will take you all around the city. The late Benny Carter (On The Cover) was a legendary musician and composer and will be fêted at the annual Jazz in July celebration at 92nd Street Y. We have canvassed a number of his colleagues for remembrances of this giant. Vocalist/pianist Freddy Cole (Interview) is long out of the shadow of his brother, releasing albums regularly and appearing to great acclaim all over the world, including Jazz Standard this month. Zeena Parkins (Artist Profile) is part of a 'long' line of harp improvisers and works in all number of creative environments; this month she is at Blue Note and The Stone with different groups.

In between using this gazette as a sunhat or a fan or a decoration to that spiffy sand castle, take a gander at the rest of our features: an Encore on bassist Juini Booth, Lest We Forget on John Jenkins, Megaphone by Ken Vandermark and Label Profile on saxist Evan Parker's psi Records. We also continue the season of Festival Reports with missives from Canada (FIMAV), Germany (Moers) and right here (Vision). And at this point, we surely don't need to remind you about the CD Reviews and packed Event Calendar, indoors and out.

Summer in the city is about a lot more than gritty necks. It's about seeing jazz in shorts, skirts, tanktops, sundresses, flipflops, the temperature of the city rising to equal the heat of the music. Yowza, where's the iced tea?

We'll see you out there...

Laurence Donohue-Greene, *Managing Editor* Andrey Henkin, *Editorial Director*

On the cover: Benny Carter (Photograph © 1994 Jack Vartoogian/FrontRowPhotos.)

In Correction: In last month's Cover story on Dee Dee Bridgewater, the recording year for her album *Red Earth* was missing in the Recommended Listening; it was recorded in 2006. In the Artist Profile, David S. Ware was mistakenly said to have had liver failure and an eventual transplant; it was actually his kidneys.

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Managing Editor: Laurence Donohue-Greene
Editorial Director & Production: Andrey Henkin

Staff Writers

David R. Adler, Clifford Allen, Fred Bouchard, Stuart Broomer, Thomas Conrad, Ken Dryden, Donald Elfman, Sean Fitzell, Graham Flanagan, Kurt Gottschalk, Tom Greenland, Laurel Gross, Alex Henderson, Marcia Hillman, Terrell Holmes, Robert Iannapolo, Francis Lo Kee, Martin Longley, Suzanne Lorge, Wilbur MacKenzie, Gordon Marshall, Marc Medwin, Russ Musto, Joel Roberts, John Sharpe, Elliott Simon, Jeff Stockton, Celeste Sunderland, Andrew Vélez, Ken Waxman

Contributing Writers

Duck Baker, Mike Chamberlain, Anders Griffen, George Kanzler, Matthew Miller, Sean O'Connell, Francie Scanlon, Ken Vandermark

Contributing Photographers

Lena Adasheva, Jim Anness, Salvatore Corso, Scott Friedlander, Peter Gannushkin, Martin Morissette, Alan Nahigian, Susan O'Connor

To Contact:

The New York City Jazz Record
116 Pinehurst Avenue, Ste. J41
New York, NY 10033
United States

Laurence Donohue-Greene: ldgreene@nycjazzrecord.com

Andrey Henkin: ahenkin@nycjazzrecord.com

General Inquiries: info@nycjazzrecord.com

Advertising: advertising@nycjazzrecord.com

Editorial: editorial@nycjazzrecord.com

Calendar: calendar@nycjazzrecord.com

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92nd Street Y Jazz in July Summer Festival July 18-28

MON, JUL 18, 8 PM
JAZZ PIANO MASTER CLASS
 Bill Charlap, piano / Ted Rosenthal, piano / Sean Smith, bass
 Kenny Washington, drums
 Participants to be announced.

TUE, JUL 19, 8 PM
SWING, SWING, SWING!
 Marilyn Maye, vocals / Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar / Houston Person, tenor sax / Ken Peplowski, clarinet
 Aaron Weinstein, violin / Bill Charlap, piano / Jay Leonhart, bass
 Dennis Mackrel, drums

WED, JUL 20, 8 PM
THE KEY PLAYERS
 Kenny Barron, piano / Bill Mays, piano / Bruce Barth, piano / Bill Charlap, piano / Peter Washington, bass / Willie Jones III, drums

THU, JUL 21, 8 PM
SUMMER SERENADE: THE MUSIC OF BENNY CARTER
 Mary Stallings, vocals / Phil Woods, alto sax / Jon Gordon, alto sax
 Harry Allen, tenor sax / Jimmy Greene, tenor sax / Gary Smulyan, baritone sax / Bill Charlap, piano
 Peter Washington, bass / Kenny Washington, drums

TUE, JUL 26, 8 PM
TRUE BLUE: THE BLUE NOTE RECORDS LEGACY
 Randy Brecker, trumpet / Steve Wilson, alto sax / Eric Alexander, tenor sax / Dave Stryker, guitar
 Renee Rosnes, piano / Bill Charlap, piano / Peter Washington, bass
 Lewis Nash, drums

WED, JUL 27, 8 PM
IN HIS OWN SWEET WAY: CELEBRATING DAVE BRUBECK
 Dick Oatts, alto sax / Scott Wendholt, trumpet / Chris Brubeck, bass trombone / Bill Charlap, piano / Harvie S, bass / Terry Clarke, drums

THU, JUL 28, 8 PM
ALWAYS: IRVING BERLIN
 Sandy Stewart, vocals / Sachal Vasandani, vocals / Jeremy Pelt, trumpet / Grant Stewart, tenor sax
 Joe Locke, vibes / Bill Charlap, piano / Renee Rosnes, piano / Sean Smith, bass / Lewis Nash, drums



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92Y

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There is something immediately gripping about the speed, grace and unerring touch of **Warren Wolf** at the vibraphone. Clearly this isn't lost on Bobby Watson, Christian McBride, Jeremy Pelt, Willie Jones III and others who've hired the young Baltimore native and new Mack Avenue Records signee. That Wolf also plays piano and drums on a high level - as documented on his recent self-release *Warren "Chano Pozo" Wolf* - makes him an even more unusual find. Keeping strictly to vibes at Jazz Standard (Jun. 9th), Wolf brought on board pianist Lawrence Fields, bassist Eric Wheeler (subbing for Kris Funn) and drummer John Lamkin for an inspired one-nighter. The second set commenced with the midtempo "Soul Sister", gliding and funky in a '70s McCoy Tyner vein. Wolf continued with "Para Mejor o Peor" ("for better or worse"), a fine jazz ballad, which grew into more of a rock power ballad by the outro. "I Surrender Dear" started at a strutting trad-jazz pace and after Wheeler's three able choruses Wolf delivered the goods: a set of rousing stop-time breaks and a virtuoso cadenza, the set's defining moment. Strayhorn and Ellington capped it off: "Lush Life", initially a vibes/piano duo, led to a breakneck "Caravan", powered by Lamkin's galloping swing. The first-rate piano solo left one wondering when Fields will throw his hat in the ring as a leader. No grand revelations here, but solid music-making, deep in the tradition, from a highly promising group.

- David R. Adler



Warren Wolf @ Jazz Standard

On Miles Okazaki's first two recordings, *Mirror* (2005) and *Generations* (2009), the leader's guitar wasn't the main focus. Rather, it was part of a larger ensemble fabric woven by three saxophones, bass and drums, even vocals on the latter disc. Premiering a third volume of original music, *Figurations*, at The Jazz Gallery (Jun. 4th), Okazaki went a different route, scaling back to a quartet with Miguel Zenón (alto sax), Thomas Morgan (bass) and Dan Weiss (drums). Here the guitar was well out in front as a solo voice and Okazaki's tumbling, accelerating, pointedly unstable phrases seemed to connect with Weiss' drumming on a molecular level (a function of their work together on Weiss' *Jhaptal Drumset Solo* and other projects). Even at its most austere and highly technical, the music bore traces of blues, soul, funk and swing - "Dozens", the finale, was based on "I Got Rhythm" changes. But Okazaki drew on more obscure systems of information as well. Included in the printed program were his original drawings, mysteriously representing five of the six featured compositions, "Mandala", "Tesselation", "Dozens", "Hive Mind" and "Circulation". Bold reds and blues in complex labyrinthine patterns, against a background of jet black: Okazaki's visual aesthetic certainly opened the door to a music that could seem baffling and rhythmically overstuffed at points. Visit the "Theory" section of milesokazaki.com to see how deep his imagination goes.

(DA)

The summer edition of the Festival of New Trumpet Music (FONT) was stripped down to a mere three nights, but opened fittingly enough with a memorial concert for trumpet innovator **Bill Dixon**. The concert - held Jun. 3rd, just 13 days before the first anniversary of his passing, at the Rubin Museum of Art in Chelsea - featured a sextet of musicians who had worked with the master, appropriately including a quartet of trumpeters. It was the brass (Taylor Ho Bynum, Stanton Davis, Stephen Haynes and Wadada Leo Smith) that opened the show with a quartet improv before the full band played Bynum's "That Which Only You Could Do", named for a Dixon instruction for improvising. Davis introduced his gentle bop piece "Play Sleep", which he played with the rhythm section (bassist William Parker and drummer Warren Smith), followed by Bynum's "Woods". It was a casually friendly evening, remembering not just Dixon but time spent in each other's bands or playing with George Russell and others. What might have seemed odd about the setlist was actually quite astute: it wasn't until the final piece that they played a Dixon composition and then interpolated within an arrangement by Haynes. For an artist who preached individuality, it only made sense. "When an artist like Bill dies, what do we do?" Haynes asked the audience, by way of answering the implied question. "Do we play the pieces? Are there pieces to play?" The response was implicit in the music.

- Kurt Gottschalk



Bynum, Smith, Davis and Haynes @ Rubin Museum

There isn't a sound on Earth that could be mistaken for **Peter Brötzmann's** saxophone. Too metallic for an elephant, too organic for a foghorn, it is the sonic equivalent of a comet: you can't actually hear it, just the burn in its wake. Such was the insistent opening of an inventive quartet made, as fours are, from a pair of twos. Opening his Lifetime Achievement night at the Vision Festival Jun. 8th, stage left was Brötzmann and Eric Revis, stage right another horn/bass duo, Joe McPhee and William Parker. The fact that there is an extraordinary amount of power in his playing goes so completely without saying that that's all anyone ever says. Such that when he began his duo with Jason Adasiewicz (the second set of the night) the vibraphonist banged along with his sticks held horizontally, striking the metal keys longways. The drummerless quartet and melody-percussion duo displayed his tunefulness. Of course, saying it doesn't make it so and the evening ended with a full-on quintet fronted by three horns (Brötzmann, Ken Vandermark and Mars Williams) held steady by the rhythm section (Kent Kessler and Paal Nilssen-Love). Brötzmann ensured a musical structure to the maelstrom, much like his beloved Albert Ayler. He might not have had the full band play the themes as Ayler did and he may or may not have conceived of the themes in advance but he played them, repeated them and parsed them. Busily, methodically, he wrapped a tent around a thunderstorm.

(KG)

Nels Cline was born in 1956, **Marc Ribot** 1954. But both guitarists have the remarkable ability to play, almost simultaneously, like musicians both 20 years their junior and senior, strident progressivism mixed with deep blues. The pair performed their debut concert at Le Poisson Rouge (Jun. 15th) as a dual celebration of the venue's third anniversary and their recent *DownBeat* cover story. Even if Ribot has a Greenwich Village folksy vibe to him, in contrast with Cline's surfer-rock looks, they are actually two coils of the same humbucker. They've had pop gigs - Tom Waits (Ribot) and Wilco (Cline) - that belie some of their more avant garde work as leaders and sidemen for an array of national talent. But at the concert, they eased slowly into the bombast the capacity crowd was expecting, beginning on a pair of acoustic guitars for pastoral, Americana-type musings, delicate at the outset but quickly, almost fatalistically, devolving into harsh atonal strums and careening single-note lines. Most of the music seemed improvised, with the exception of a blues (featuring drowsy vocals by Ribot) and a take on the jazz standard "Easy Living". Some of the most interesting moments in the arc of the concert came when Ribot switched to electric, matched by an effected lap steel from Cline, Americana seen through the lens of the Cold War of their early youth. By the end, Cline picked up his Jazzmaster and stood to wax Hendrixotic over Ribot's air-raid intensity. 90 minutes of guitar history as musical catharsis. - *Andrey Henkin*

Photo by Peter Gannushkin/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET



Nels Cline & Marc Ribot @ Le Poisson Rouge

The spirit of this column is to present New York's unique position in the jazz world; the city is an embarrassment of riches on any given night. One such moment happened at Cornelia Street Café Jun. 1st with the premiere performance of **Sifter**, the cooperative trio of cornetist Kirk Knuffke, guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Matt Wilson. A first-time ensemble but hardly between unfamiliar; Knuffke is a key member of Wilson's quartet and subs in Halvorson's quintet. For the first set of this unusual instrumental ensemble - almost a subset of old trad-jazz bands - all three members wrote pieces. And though Wilson is a few generations older, it was his playing that sounded the youngest and most exuberant, easily coloring the fractured, effected musings of Halvorson and Knuffke's stately cry. But it was the second set that embodies why New York is so special. A tall guest was in the audience, Danish saxophone legend John Tchicai, in town for the upcoming Vision Festival. The trio invited him up for a short-but-satisfying set played to a small-but-spellbound crowd. Tchicai, a pioneer on two continents, is an outsized personality, both literally and musically, and he pushed the trio into anarchic realms for a single, probing improvisation. Wilson seemed to have more fun than usual punctuating Tchicai's wails while Halvorson sweep-picked alien chords, Knuffke adding doleful commentary. Tchicai's spontaneous chant summed it up: "Anything can happen, one second to the next." (AH)

One of the busiest, most recorded musicians in jazz today, the ubiquitous **Billy Hart** has spent most of his half-century career as a first-call sideman playing in the service of others, sadly leaving little time for the master drummer to front his own units. Fortunately, the quartet assembled by pianist Ethan Iverson with saxophonist Mark Turner and bassist Ben Street that Hart presently leads has seen enough action during the last decade to have developed into one of the tightest, most exciting bands currently operating. Despite its standard instrumentation, the group is anything but typical in its approach to performance, thriving on a sense of drama fueled by a constantly evolving dynamic, which eschews complacency in favor of an unrelenting quest for the sound of surprise. Beginning its Friday night second set at the Village Vanguard (Jun. 10th) with a dark bass and sprawling drums preamble casting an ominous air over the room, the group eased into the march-like melody of Iverson's "Mellow B", Turner displaying his expansive range and meticulous tonal control as he harmonized with the composer's piano. The foursome worked out on "Conception", Hart driving his young bandmates at a fierce tempo, then smoothly switching gears for his beautiful "Charvez". The whistling prelude to the leader's "Children's March" confirmed the group's penchant for the unexpected, which persisted through the night as the players interacted seamlessly around Hart's powerful, virtuosic drumming. - *Russ Musto*



Photo by Scott Friedlander

Billy Hart Quartet @ Village Vanguard

The all-too-rare appearance of the **Wadada Leo Smith** Golden Quartet at Le Poisson Rouge (June 5th) as part of last month's Festival of New Trumpet Music (FONT), reaffirmed the importance of the semi-annual event in presenting to local audiences important music that might otherwise remain unheard. The New York premiere of Smith's *Freedom Summer*, part of a longer work inspired by the Civil Rights movement, featuring the latest edition of the composer's allstar band - Angelica Sanchez (piano), John Lindberg (bass) and Pheeroan akLaff (drums) - proved to be one of the highlights of the three-day celebration. Smith, whose attentiveness to sound and space has been the hallmark of his music for decades, has in recent years shown a powerful stylistic allegiance to Miles Davis' similarly driven approach. The plaintive tone of the trumpeter's muted horn on the opening "Brown vs. Board of Education" clearly identified him as one of the iconic brassman's most noteworthy successors while the piece's brilliantly intriguing construction unmistakably marked him as one of contemporary music's most important composers. Weaving his clarion sound (which often took on an electrified character despite the absence of electronic alteration) within the vibrant tapestry of his colleagues' distinctive voices, there was an ever-rewarding atmosphere of tension and release as the band evoked the spirit of a gladly bygone era on the suite's songs: "Freedom Summers", "Little Rock Nine" and "Rosa Parks". (RM)

WHAT'S NEWS

Winners of the **2011 Jazz Journalists Association Jazz Awards** have been announced. If you are looking for a surprise, go buy a box of Cracker Jack (with the one exception being Bill Holman's dethroning of Maria Schneider as Arranger of the Year after she had won the award eight years running!). After an encouraging roster of awardees in 2010, this year's crop of winners is a great disappointment. There is no need to single out any entities we feel did or did not deserve their award; in a bit of Orwellian semantics, some just deserved to win *more*. The real issue at stake is the validity of such awards. If one accepts that the Grammys - especially with their recent contraction - are not an accurate reflection of the jazz world at large, the community needs something like the Jazz Journalists Association Jazz Awards to single out special achievement. But with such authority comes responsibility. Voting rates are relatively low and many people are simply not qualified to choose the best of the year in most categories, whether it be through ignorance, negligence or personal agenda. This is a microcosm of the entire democratic process. Without an informed and active electorate, you get corrupt and ineffective government or skewed jazz awards. The voting bloc should understand and accept the significance of their voice or else forego their right to vote lest these awards lose even more meaning. Still, we congratulate all the winners and nominees. For the complete list of 2011 winners, visit jjazzawards.org.

It has been reported that altoist **Lee Konitz** suffered a subdural hematoma while on tour in Australia and had to cancel his immediate appearances, including at the Melbourne International Jazz Festival. The 83-year-old had successful surgery and we wish him a speedy recovery.

The **Library of Congress** has launched the National Jukebox in partnership with Sony Music Entertainment. A massive collection of historical recordings produced in the US between 1901-25 is available for listening free of charge, the entirety of Sony's pre-1925 catalogue including 1,000s of recordings produced by Columbia Records, Okeh, and Victor Talking Machine Co. and others. Highlights include recordings by Fletcher Henderson, Al Jolson and Paul Whiteman Orchestra. For more information or to peruse the collection, visit loc.gov/jukebox.

As part of a "Drummers Week" on the **David Letterman Show** last month (which included Sheila E and Rush's Neil Peart), jazz legend and NEA Jazz Master Roy Haynes was invited to play on the late-night talk show, a rare instance of jazz on mainstream broadcast television. Maybe next Jay Leno will devote an episode to bass clarinetists.

An online petition is circulating by the **Justice for Jazz Artists!** organization. Its platform is to provide a "safety net" for New York performing jazz musicians. Legislation was passed in 2007 exempting clubs from paying sales tax on admission charges, with the intent that the money saved would go to pension and health care funds for musicians. According to the organization, no substantive progress has been made towards the establishment of such funds since then. The effort is being spearheaded by Local 802, the Musicians Union. For more information, visit justiceforjazzartists.org.

Submit news to info@nycjazzrecord.com



Photo by Salvatore Corso

Freddy Cole

by Andrew Vélez

Singer/pianist Lionel Frederick Cole, born Oct. 15th, 1931, better known as Freddy, was the youngest of five children. He grew up in a Chicago family in which "music was all around." All three of his older brothers, Eddie, Ike and most famously Nat, were musicians. According to veteran record producer/club proprietor Todd Barkan, who's known Cole for over 30 years, "Freddy is the great poet laureate of song. His depth of feeling and his abilities as a compelling storyteller are his greatest skills. He is a grandmaster storyteller in song." Later this summer, Cole will release Talk To Me, his seventh album for the HighNote label.

The New York City Jazz Record: Your singing voice is so different than your speaking voice.

Freddy Cole: (Chuckling) I never thought about it that much. When you are singing you have a lot of help. When you're talking you're just on your own.

TNYCJR: You came from a family in which four of the children turned out to be musicians.

FC: The music comes from my mother's side of the family I guess. She played piano and was a choir director in my father's church. My dad was a Baptist minister. There was music at the church and there was always music in our house. ...I guess you could say that I was blessed to be brought up in those circumstances with music in and around me. Being young it didn't really make a dent in my brain until I got to be a grown man. ...Some of the great people that others would be in awe of... I just saw them and they used to call me "Little Cole". [Drummer] Osie Johnson, he was one of the ones who started it. They were persons that really looked after me when I was going to Juilliard and I was out on the New York streets... You know [drummer] Sonny Greer; I would have to say Sonny would be on my case more than any of the other ones. He kept me on the straight and narrow. If they saw me doing something, they'd pull my coat to it. They were very helpful to me about temperament and about doing what you got to do to keep on moving.

TNYCJR: Ahmad Jamal said he doesn't see as much mentoring by older musicians going on as when he was coming up and what a difference it made.

FC: Oh, yeah, it does. I recall so many times those guys would help you. ...A saxophone player in Chicago, Swing Lee, a friend of my brothers and all. I was 17, 18 years old. I had a gig with him and he was going to give me a solo on "Talk of the Town". And I got to the gig, man, was waiting to SHINE with this solo. I practiced all day. And he got there and he called another key on me. (Laughing) Well man, I was devastated. I fumbled. After the set he called me over and said, "I know you're upset. But I did that for a reason. Suppose you were playing with a singer who sang in another key. When you tell me you know

something, then you know it all over the piano." And that never left me.

TNYCJR: I'm not sure that we learn anything except through experience.

FC: Right, right. I've learned a wealth of things just learning how to be a good listener. I just told my son, who is a very fine musician... He flew in from Los Angeles. He's on the way to Nashville to do something there. I told him, just remember what I told you, be a good listener. He sings, he writes, he arranges. In fact I just recorded one of his tunes on this date I finished. The song is called "After All These Years".

TNYCJR: Tell me some about the names you didn't think that much about when you were little.

FC: I really gained the utmost respect for them after I got to where I would know about music. Basie would always mess with me and tell me a joke. Duke was the same all the time. Elegant and he spoke great English. He was just a wonderful man.

TNYCJR: You recorded a tribute to Billy Eckstine (*Freddy Cole Sings Mr. B*, HighNote, 2010).

FC: Yeah, that was my man. B was an extraordinary guy. He and my brother were very tight. Of course everybody had the Mister B shirt collars. They played him so much on the Chicago jukeboxes and you'd be walking down the street and [hear] "Jelly, Jelly, Jelly". And he did "I Apologize". All those songs. Talent-wise you couldn't argue with it. He truly was a balladeer. ...[For that CD] the hard part was narrowing them down until we had 10 or 12 songs because he did so much. And he was so musical that people just really didn't realize. He played trumpet and he would diddle around on the guitar. He was my man. I just loved him.

TNYCJR: What about piano influences? Teddy Wilson? Oscar Peterson?

FC: Teddy more so than Oscar. I never could play like Oscar. Boy, he was a monster! He was a great guy too. Teddy Wilson had that finesse that I tried to learn. Also John Lewis. He was my favorite.

TNYCJR: You lived in New York when you were a very young guy in the '50s.

FC: New York was really happening at that time. There were a host of places to play, all kinds of things to do. That's why I say when those guys threw up a red flag on me and pulled my coat on the dos and don'ts... For instance [singer] Babs Gonzales, through Babs I met James Moody and I met so many people. ...You would go to hear other people and you tried to learn. Nowadays musicians don't have places to congregate

like Beefsteak Charlie's and others where every day you would see somebody. ...And the Brill Building. You had songwriters coming down there that didn't know how to write out the music and you could write it out for them. And boom! They would put lyrics to it and run to the publisher to try to get it recorded.

TNYCJR: It was a different community.

FC: It was. And fortunately I was able to bridge the gap between R&B people and jazz folks. You had to be able to do both because they came right there and put it on your platter.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

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Zeena Parkins

Photo by Martin Morrisette



The fact that harpist Zeena Parkins was able to premiere her new band - Zeena and the Adorables - at Quebec's Festival Internationale de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville on May 21st, nine days after the group played Brooklyn's Issue Project Room, says something about her career as both a composer and improviser. While the New York show was the first gig by the trio, their Victo show was the first time they played the material she'd written for the band publicly.

That bit of temporal sleight of hand reflects the parallel paths of her work: A noted member of the 'Downtown' scene since she moved to New York in 1984, Parkins has been composing for dance companies for about as long. The two orbits have rarely crossed in the past, but now - in Parkins' greatest stake as a bandleader to date - the worlds are vibrantly colliding. The music the Adorables (which includes percussionist Shayna Dunkelman and electronicist Preshish Moments) played at the Victoriaville festival in fact began as music for dance, commissioned by choreographer Neil Greenberg for his piece *Like a Vase* and performed live at Dance Theater Workshop in November 2010. Parkins called on two students she'd met while teaching at Mills College who had, coincidentally, moved to an apartment around the corner from her in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, to play the score live and a band was born.

Working with dance companies is a common avocation among experimental composers in New York, even if the work often goes unnoticed in the music world - and sometimes by dance audiences as well. But for Parkins, it's a key part of developing a project like the Adorables and working within the balance of composer and improviser. While she is no doubt best known as the latter, she does several dance commissions a year and has won three Bessie Awards for composition for dance. That prize has also been awarded to such musicians as David Byrne, Anthony Davis and Julius Hemphill.

"It's that dilemma of being known as one thing so much that people don't even listen," she said about the dual role of the improvising composer. "But to me personally I don't ever need to make that distinction.

"I've always had a lot of fusion and confusion between the two and I like that," she added with a laugh. "It never would have been possible without the dance world. You have months to rehearse and you have multiple performances. It allows you to go where you want to go at a fairly deep level."

Parkins is known for her work with such figures as Ikue Mori, Elliott Sharp and John Zorn and also for redefining the harp as an instrument that can stand up to the electric guitar in volume and malleability. Originally developed with the late cellist Tom Cora during her time with him and Fred Frith in the group Skeleton Crew, her electric harp (closer in size to an Irish harp) has undergone a few transformations since the '80s. "We just banged that first one together just to see if it would work," she remembered. "It was barely

by Kurt Gottschalk

tunable." A couple of years later it was remodeled with the assistance of another collaborator, Doug Henderson. More recently - after a high-profile stint with the singer Björk - she had a third model constructed, as well as buying a beautiful full concert harp.

While the harp has become her trademark, it's not her only instrument. The Detroit native completed some coursework in piano performance at the University of Michigan, but left before graduating. ("I knew I wasn't going to be a concert pianist and I felt like my world was just getting smaller," she said.) She transferred to Bard where she discovered experimental film, something that would later influence her own music-making. But it was after a move to England that she picked up the accordion and started thinking about spontaneous performance.

"When I landed in New York in the mid '80s I had this perfect skill set," she said. "I had played in a circus in London where I learned the accordion. I played piano and I played harp so I got to play with a lot of people and my associations in the dance community started right away." Parkins speaks with a genuine humility about those early days and about being invited to work with musicians she admired, but that path led to higher profile work and, perhaps unexpectedly, back to academia. Time spent at Mills College in San Francisco led to her subsequently taking over courses for turntablist Marina Rosenfeld at Bard. "I wasn't a school person," she said, laughing again. "I mean profoundly not a school person. So when Fred [Frith] asked me to sub for him at Mills, I thought, 'OK, I really want to do a good job.' This is a part of my artistic process now. When I'm writing my syllabus it's like I'm writing some strange novel. So now I'm really excited about it."

Another unexpected turn on that path was working with pop superstar Björk, who herself has a strong interest in performance and experimental music. "I learned a lot about performance with her," Parkins said. "Being in a more pop world and learning more about pop production - that whole relationship to sound and constructing pieces and having jewels that you can construct around to make a piece - that really has informed my work since. I feel like I have a way of being inside what I'm doing but knowing that there's something that emanates out of it. I really have much more of a sense of my performance space and performance energy now."

The influence can be heard in the Adorables material. It's instrumental music, often abstract or atmospheric, but there's a pop sensibility running through it - something, Parkins said, she wouldn't be able to develop without a working band. "You can see why people like Meredith Monk and Philip Glass have their own ensembles, because you can work with them and they know the languages," she said. "When I work with friends, I can really uncover things, which I know I can't do with two rehearsals and a gig. I can really work with them, which I love." ❖

For more information, visit zeenaparkins.com. Parkins is at Blue Note Jul. 1st as part of the Spontaneous Construction series and The Stone Jul. 30th solo and with William Winant. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:

- John Zorn - *The Bribe* (Tzadik, 1986)
- Elliott Sharp/Zeena Parkins - *Psycho-Acoustic* (Victo, 1994)
- Zeena Parkins - *Moth=Maul=Betrayer* (Tzadik, 1995-96)
- Nels Cline - *The Inking* (Cryptogramophone, 1999)
- Phantom Orchard (Zeena Parkins/Ikue Mori) - *Orra* (Tzadik, 2007)
- Zeena Parkins - *Between The Whiles* (Table of Elements, 2010)



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2:15 PM **Fred Hersch / Nico Gori Duo**

3:30 PM **Robert Glasper Trio**

4:45 PM **John Scofield Quartet**
John Scofield, guitar
Michael Eckroth, piano
Scott Colley, bass; Bill Stewart, drums



Saturday, August 6 (One ticket for all Saturday sets!)

3:00 PM **Juan Carlos Formell's Johnny's Dream Club**
— Sonidos Latinos

4:15 PM **James Farm**
Joshua Redman, saxophone
Aaron Parks, piano
Matt Penman, bass
Eric Harland, drums

5:30 PM **José James, vocals**

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Benny Carter

Souvenir of Benny

by Alex Henderson



Photograph © 1994 Jack Vartanian/FrontRowPhotos.

It's quite ironic that this journalist is writing a cover story on Benny Carter. In 1994, I was assigned by *Jazziz* to write a cover story on the iconic jazzman, who was 87 at the time. Musicians of that stature usually have publicists or managers who arrange interviews for them, but in 1994, Carter preferred to be contacted directly for interview requests - and when I called his home phone number in Los Angeles, Carter himself answered. Although polite, Carter seemed reluctant to be interviewed and asked me to please give him some time to consider my request. After a few more calls (Carter answered his phone every time and wasn't screening the calls), it became evident that the interview wasn't going to happen; in 1994, he didn't feel that he had anything to tell the media that he hadn't already said in the past. But here I am, writing a posthumous cover story on Carter years later.

Carter, who was born in New York City on Aug. 8th, 1907 and passed away on Jul. 12th, 2003 at the age of 95, had one of the longest, most productive careers in the history of jazz; he was a jazzman who emerged when Calvin Coolidge was president and maintained a busy schedule during the Bill Clinton years. Carter was especially famous for his distinctive alto saxophone playing, but he was also quite accomplished as a trumpeter, clarinetist, composer, arranger and bandleader. Despite all his achievements, Carter was the opposite of self-aggrandizing; he even turned down an offer to host Ken Burns' *Jazz* series. And when Carter's friends and colleagues remember his life, they remember a man who was as humble as he was accomplished.

"Benny had an aversion to self-promotion like few people I ever met," recalls veteran saxophonist Mel Martin, who played with Carter extensively and was among his close friends. "If you hung out with him as a friend, it was great. But if you tried to officially interview him, he had such an aversion to self-promotion. I used to write for *Saxophone Journal* and *Jazz Improv* and I begged Benny for an interview numbers of times. But Benny just didn't want to be interviewed. And when he did agree to be interviewed, it drove the interviewers crazy. They would ask, 'What was it like playing with Fletcher Henderson in the 1920s?' And Benny would go, 'Well, it was a gig.'"

The 69-year-old Martin continues: "Benny Carter lived through so much jazz history. Here was a guy who was close to Billie Holiday, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins and on and on, but he didn't like to dwell on it. And I think that in Benny's mind, that was the secret to him staying youthful."

The word "youthful" often comes up in connection with Carter, whose MusicMasters recordings of the '80s-90s underscore the fact that even when he was in his 80s, his chops hadn't diminished at all. Jazz critic Scott Yanow accurately described Carter's longevity in *All Music Guide*, writing: "Carter was as strong an altoist at the age of 90 as he was in 1936, when he was merely 28." And "humility" is another word that often comes up in discussions of Carter's legacy. Jazz historian Ed Berger, who produced many of Carter's

MusicMasters releases and co-authored the book *Benny Carter: A Life in American Music*, remembers Carter as a bandleader who was anything but egotistical. "You hear all these stories about bandleaders who felt threatened if one of their sidemen got too much attention, but Benny Carter was the complete opposite," Berger explains. "Benny was delighted to feature his sidemen and sometimes promoters would say, 'You should play more.' And Benny would respond, 'Yes, but I have all these great musicians and I want them to be heard.'"

Although media-shy, Carter was hardly a recluse or a loner. He loved to hang out with his friends as much as he loved to surround himself with musicians of different ages. Jazz historian/tenor saxophonist Loren Schoenberg, who was among Carter's close friends, remembers him as a great talker who had little patience with conversations he felt were overly nostalgic.

"Benny didn't want to talk about the past, which was frustrating for people like me who are historically oriented," the 52-year-old Schoenberg notes. "Benny really didn't want to get into the past beyond a couple of sentences. But as frustrating as that was, I totally understand it. Benny always lived in the present and future tense. He liked to surround himself with younger people and the older I get, the more I have the same proclivity."

It isn't hard to find jazz heavyweights who cite Carter as a major influence. Alto sax giant Phil Woods, who recorded some excellent two-alto albums with Carter and is now 79, notes: "The first jazz I ever played were transcriptions of Benny Carter solos. I was 13 years old. When they ask when I heard the first music of Bird, I must give them the word: I worshipped Benny Carter. And he was a dear friend until the end."

Alto saxophonist/clarinetist Hal McKusick, who turned 87 on Jun. 1st, says: "I believe Benny Carter influenced most of us one way or another... I grew up listening to Carter, Pete Brown, Tab Smith, [Johnny] Hodges and Lester [Young] mostly. I always admired Benny for his flawless technique and smooth approach to playing jazz - always elegant."

Another octogenarian who has fond memories of Carter is 89-year-old tenor/alto saxophonist and flutist Frank Wess. "Benny Carter was one of my idols," Wess explains. "Benny was always way ahead of everybody else, even in the 1930s. I became aware of him when I was about 14 years old. I admired him as a saxophonist; I admired him as a trumpeter, a composer and a bandleader. Benny was an all-around great musician and he was a very nice man - a very polite man."

Wess adds, however, that Carter's politeness didn't prevent him from getting his point across: "I remember one time when Benny was conducting and the players weren't really in tune. Benny didn't insult the musicians; he just tapped on the stand and said, 'I'll try to give you a better beat.' I admired Benny so much."

Although Carter was a native New Yorker, he spent most of his life on the West Coast. In 1943, he moved to

Los Angeles, where he became one of the first African-Americans to compose and arrange music for Hollywood studios; television work followed in the '50s and '60s. "Benny Carter integrated Hollywood before Jackie Robinson integrated the major leagues of baseball," Schoenberg notes.

Because he was so multifaceted, Carter touched different artists in different ways. Vocalist Mary Stallings has included some of Carter's songs in her repertoire and she points out that his work was as beneficial for singers as it was for instrumentalists.

"As a singer, it's important to me to always discover great music - and Benny Carter composed a lot of great music," asserts Stallings, who is now 70. "I know what I like and what appeals to me and if it touches my soul, I know it's right. Songs either touch me or they don't; Benny Carter's songs touched me deeply. His melodies were so poignant."

Another singer who has been touched by Carter's legacy is LA-based Deborah Pearl. Her new album, *Souvenir of You: New Lyrics to Benny Carter Classics* (which Ed Berger released on Evening Star Records, the label he founded in 1992 with Carter's assistance) contains 13 Carter songs for which Pearl wrote lyrics. She explains that *Souvenir of You* was inspired not only by Carter's artistry, but also by their friendship. Pearl met Carter through his wife Hilma and spent many hours in their home in the Hollywood Hills.

"I think that Benny made a contribution not only with the music he left behind, but also with who he was as a person," Pearl observes. "Whenever I felt sort of weird or funky, I would call up and go to Benny's house and hang out with him and Hilma. Being with them, everything just sort of felt right with the world. Benny and I connected; I felt like he got me."

Carter's story is one that continues to be told by his many admirers. Eight years to the month after his death, Carter's career is still being celebrated with everything from tribute albums, bands and concerts to profiles on jazz-related websites. "Benny was about his love of music and his love for Hilma and his love of life itself," Pearl stresses. "I think that's why he remains so relevant to the human condition." ❖

For more information, visit bennycarter.com. A *Benny Carter Tribute* is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 21st with Mary Stallings, Phil Woods and others. See *Calendar*.

Recommended Listening:

- Benny Carter - *Chronological (Vol. 1-11)* (Classics, 1929-1954)
- Art Tatum/Benny Carter/Louis Bellson - *The Tatum Group Masterpieces, Vol. 1* (Clef-Pablo, 1954)
- Benny Carter - *Jazz Giant* (Contemporary OJC-Fantasy, 1957-58)
- Benny Carter and His Orchestra - *Further Definitions* (Impulse, 1961)
- Benny Carter & The American Jazz Orchestra - *Central City Sketches* (Musicmasters-Nimbus, 1987)
- Benny Carter/Phil Woods - *Another Time, Another Place* (Evening Star, 1996)

Juini Booth

by Sean O'Connell



'70s



'10s

Much can be said about a musician by looking at his employers. By the time bassist Juini Booth was 30 his resumé included experience alongside

some of the most significant jazz artists of the '60s and '70s. His innate sense of time and reliability as a role player has given Booth a career of which most people could only dream.

Born in Buffalo on Feb. 12th, 1948, Booth began skipping school to make dates with Chuck Mangione and his brother Gap while he was still a teenager. Inevitably Booth broke off for Manhattan where he befriended drummer JC Moses at the East Village club Slugs. Moses, who lived only a few blocks from the venue, introduced Booth to some of his friends: Hank Mobley, Paul Chambers, Kenny Dorham, Philly Joe Jones. "Here's this little young guy hanging around. So they found a use for me," recalls Booth. That use turned out to encompass everything from Ron Carter's castoff gig catching curveballs from Coleman Hawkins at the Village Vanguard to a lifelong affiliation with the Sun Ra Arkestra. "Sun Ra was an amazement. It was not a band for the faint hearted. And it still isn't."

While still a teenager Booth received his greatest education by replacing Reggie Johnson in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. For two years he crisscrossed the country, five to a car, with every instrument case strapped to the roof, playing every night alongside Blakey's thunderous hi-hat. "He taught me something," says Booth. "He gave me some muscles." Unfortunately, due to a little problem with the IRS, Blakey was dealing strictly in cash during Booth's tenure and no recordings were ever made of that band.

Eventually Booth left the group to join Messenger alum Freddie Hubbard - a band he would subsequently quit and rejoin three times. Following his first stint Booth set out for a change of pace in California where he befriended drummer Shelly Manne and was never at a loss for work. "I got to play with all the West Coast guys - Bud Shank, Buddy Collette, Harold Land, Gerald Wilson." While enjoying the Pacific air Booth landed two life-changing gigs in a week: a night outside San Francisco with Cannonball Adderley's quintet and a set with Thelonious Monk at the 1969 Monterey Jazz Festival. "It was an incredible week,"

recalls Booth. "I could have died and gone to heaven. I didn't really know any of Monk's songs but Monk liked it."

After a year of fun and sun Booth returned to New York, debunking a rumor that had spread quickly. "Milt Jackson said to me 'Juini, there's a rumor you're dead.' I came back and everybody's doing a double take, like they'd seen a ghost." In New York, Booth played on Gary Bartz' *Harlem Bush Music* albums, participated in the avant garde loft scene and rejoined Hubbard's band for another few paychecks before joining up with Tony Williams' Lifetime. "Things were changing. I started playing electric bass. My ears rang for ten years after that." This unit also went regrettably unrecorded but there are a few bootlegs circulating of the Lifetime band in Europe with Booth hiding in the shadow of his amplification with organist Larry Young in a keffiyeh seated behind him.

His time with Williams, like many of his other gigs, was short-lived and Booth returned again to New York, picking up work with pianist McCoy Tyner, who had spent nine months as a Messenger. "I was off and on with McCoy for five years. We did some duo gigs and trio gigs," says Booth. "His left hand. It would break the thickest strings on the piano. Way down at the bottom. I had to get out of the way sometimes." After a few recordings Booth's restless bass led to work with Elvin Jones. "It was loud but it was musical." He appeared on *Time Capsule* alongside Kenny Barron and George Coleman before striking out on his own again.

Starting in the early '80s Booth began focusing on solo bass work, earning recognition from the International Society of Bassists and National Endowment for the Arts. Although he still occasionally performs solo Booth can often be found on the fringes of Alphabet City playing an electric bass with his band I Led 3 Lives at ambient space-lounge Nublu.

Despite 40-plus years in the business Booth still looks like the youngest guy in the room playing a blend of house, reggae and swing well into the morning. But for all his accomplishments Booth is not just sitting around talking about the good old days. He is focused on the future with plans for a solo record and other projects that will take him around the world but always, inevitably, back to New York.

"I'm a loft session Wildflower. I'm a Sun Ra satellite. I'm a Coltrane-ite. I'm a Jazz Messenger. I'm a Tony Williams Lifter. I'm all these things. I look at it and I say, 'Well, that's wonderful' but it also says that I never did something of my own. And this I'm trying to change." ❖

For more information, visit juiniboost.com

Recommended Listening:

- Sonny Simmons - *Music from the Spheres* (ESP-Disk, 1966)
- McCoy Tyner - *Enlightenment* (Milestone-Fantasy, 1973)
- McCoy Tyner - *Atlantis* (Milestone, 1974)
- Chico Freeman - *Beyond the Rain* (Contemporary OJC, 1977)
- Steve Grossman - *Way Out East, Vol. 1&2* (Red, 1984)
- Charles Gayle - *Ancient of Days* (Knitting Factory Works, 1999)



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LEST WE FORGET

John Jenkins (1931-93)

by Donald Elfman

For every celebrated musician in the jazz world, there are countless others who, for one reason or another, fall well beneath the radar and gain only some small local acclaim or disappear into anonymity.

Alto saxophonist John Jenkins is not exactly anonymous but this Parker-inspired player made very few recordings and had a career that was but all too brief. Still, connoisseurs know him and his limited recorded output serves as evidence of a talent to be experienced. Interestingly, in 1955, he twice replaced Gigi Gryce - in Cleveland and Chicago - in groups led by Art Farmer. Here was an early indication of Jenkins' prowess as a postbopper.

John Jenkins was born in Chicago on Jan. 3rd, 1931. He studied with noted teacher Captain Walter

Dyett at the great music program at DuSable High School. (Others who passed through the program there included Gene Ammons, Von Freeman, Joseph Jarman, John Gilmore, Wilbur Ware, Dinah Washington, Johnny Hartman, Richard Davis and many others.) Jenkins' first instrument was the clarinet but he later switched to the alto. Joe Segal, who later ran Chicago's famous Jazz Showcase club, ran a series of popular jam sessions at Roosevelt College and Jenkins played in those from 1949-56.

Jenkins played, but did not record with, Charles Mingus in 1957 and in that same year made his only albums under his own name (he had moved to New York). *John Jenkins and Kenny Burrell* was done for Blue Note and finds the saxophonist and guitarist as co-leaders with the phenomenal rhythm section of Sonny Clark (piano), Paul Chambers (bass) and Dannie Richmond (drums). Jenkins wrote three originals of a hardbop nature and his playing deeply reflects the influence of Charlie Parker.

In the same year, Jenkins also recorded: *Alto Madness* (Prestige) with Jackie McLean; *Jenkins, Jordan and Timmons*, with Clifford Jordan and Bobby Timmons (Prestige) and *Star Eyes* with Donald Byrd (Savoy). As a sideman in 1957 he was one of the Prestige All-Stars under Teddy Charles and also recorded with Hank Mobley, Paul Quinichette, Clifford Jordan, Herbie Mann and Wilbur Ware. All of these leaders and these labels recognized an inspired and passionate musician but, alas, after some sideman work through the early '60s and a few dates with organist/singer Gloria Coleman, John Jenkins pretty much dropped out of music.

Jenkins worked as a messenger in New York and sold jewelry and brass objects to make a living. He briefly took up the alto again in the early '80s, did some playing on the streets and, in 1990, recorded at Condon's with fellow Chicagoan Clifford Jordan in the latter's big band. Jenkins died Jul. 12th, 1993. His is a voice that still deserves to be heard. ❖

New Bottle, New Wine, New Table

by Ken Vandermark

Isn't it time for a new modernism in our music? By this I mean a move away from the classic, established forms of jazz and improvised music toward completely new structural considerations. Throughout much of the 20th century a creative dialectic existed between generations, which led to exciting and innovative expansion of artistic thought. When I look around and listen to much of the current international scene, I can't shake the feeling that there isn't enough of a push against the past and pull toward the future.

What I do find is 1) a general concern about "getting work" (and musicians have responded to this problem more and more by creating their own performance options); 2) a great knowledge of historical styles (the current access to musical information both aural and visual is unprecedented) and 3) a new level of virtuosity among young musicians (it would seem that the players that Anthony Braxton has wanted for his most demanding music have arrived in greater numbers). All of these developments are positive and important: work ethic, knowledge, instrumental discipline.

But what about ideas? Too often during a concert, doesn't it feel that there is a strong element of creative complacency going on? Perhaps the music is played well, but it's formally predictable (the perpetuation of 'head-solos-head' structure without an attempt to vary the sequence of events). Or there is an aesthetic 'concept' in place that's recognizable within the first minutes but never developed, the surface of the musical 'point' is enough (yes AMM is great, but what about the groups that can't sustain narrative tension with the materials they've chosen, reduced or otherwise). Or there is a simplistic hybrid of styles presented without concern for why the components worked in the first place, the end result a diminution of the source material (the energy of rock coupled with the instrumental technique of jazz led to some seriously bad fusion). Or old forms are analyzed into oblivion with smug satisfaction (the difference between clever and intelligent often lies in the use of irony). And on and on.

Despite all the hard work going on, the investigation of music history and the ability to play whatever is at hand (scored or otherwise), doesn't it seem that something vital has been lost in the contemporary discourse of jazz and improvised music? I think that the issue may be that there has been a lack

of concern for the question, "What is the subject?"

Weren't the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic innovations that occurred during the '40s caused because the subject matter for the Bebop generation had shifted away from the artistic concerns of the '30s? What was discussed by Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins, et al, was no longer the focus for the musicians of the next wave. Times had changed - socially, politically, culturally. Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie (among others) turned the pop songs of their parents upside down and found a whole new way to portray their point of view with sound and spontaneous narrative. The Beboppers completely understood the subject, what they were going to address with their music and why.

I would say the same is true with regard to the work that John Coltrane did with his own group(s); what Miles Davis did with the bands he led from the '50s to the '70s; what Duke Ellington invented for his entire life; why Cecil Taylor found one way to open up the expression of time in jazz and why Jimmy Giuffre came up with another; why the English improvisers like Evan Parker and Paul Rutherford found their own language across the ocean from the United States; why the Art Ensemble of Chicago created a socio-political music-theater language nearly concurrent with what was happening on the Dutch scene of the '70s, but with completely different results. And on and on.

Isn't it necessary for us to do the same thing in our own time? Shouldn't it be a requirement? As Mike Watt states in the documentary about The Minutemen, *We Jam Econo*, "All you had to do to belong was contribute." Isn't it the same for us? I suggest that this means more than getting gigs, being informed and developing technique. It means finding a new subject for us to describe, one that belongs to this period and whoever is conveying it, whether an individual, a group, a scene. I would suggest that this proposition is more essential than jobs, a large record collection and access to the Internet and hours in a practice room. Without "the subject" the rest of it has no point.

A new modernism would free all of us in the music, allow each individual to find different and personal things to say. The subject matter may lead to radical change, as the ideas of Ornette Coleman did. In other instances, the world may be presented with a unique voice, like that of Stan Getz. But in every case the musicians will have the opportunity to contribute something, belong to the legacy of jazz and improvised music by adding to it with ideas, instead of maintaining former structures, gestures and conventions. Without question there are artists of my time that I hear doing this: Ab Baars, Tim Daisy, Axel Dörner, Christof

Kurzmann, Elizabeth Harnik, Jason Moran, Joe Morris, Paal Nilssen-Love, Craig Taborn, Håvard Wiik, to name a few. There are many others and many I'm sure I haven't heard yet. These are the artists who inspire me now, who have the creative attitude of Thelonious Monk, the creative spirit of Derek Bailey, the creative imagination of Billie Holiday.

By embracing the innovative conviction of these musicians (past and present) - the integrity with which they push(ed) ideas to the edge with spontaneous sound and composition - we will locate the key to our own directions. Because in the end, from an artistic standpoint, it's not just about gigs, erudition and chops - it's about ideas. ❖

For more information, visit kenvandermark.com. Vandermark is at The Stone Jul. 8th-9th. See Calendar.

Since the spring of 1986, Ken Vandermark has focused on expanding the possibilities of improvised and composed music. He's worked continuously from the middle '90s onward - both as a performer and organizer in North America and Europe - and his creative emphasis has been contemporary music that deals directly with advanced methods of improvisation. Vandermark moved to Chicago from Boston in 1989. Since then he's performed and recorded in a vast array of contexts and with many internationally renowned musicians, touring on a regular basis in North America, Europe and Japan for more than half of each year. His concerts and numerous recordings have been critically acclaimed both at home and abroad.



Little Apples:
A Collection of Fiction
by
Kurt Gottschalk
The New York City Jazz Record contributor

"Kurt's writing is hilarious, surprising, full of power and feasts on his knowledge of music." - Roy Nathanson

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VOXNEWS

by Suzanne Lorge

Roseanna Vitro started her career in Texas, working her way through rock, blues, gospel and R&B, eventually landing in jazz, where she's remained since. She has toured internationally as a jazz ambassador for the US State Department, headlined at Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center and released 12 albums for Concord, Challenge, Half Note and Telarc.

Yet Vitro's latest release - her first for Motéma Music - is a departure from her Songbook mainstays. On *The Music of Randy Newman* Vitro tackles 10 of the composer's pop and movie tunes, the entirety a brave plunge into the depths of Newman's provocative work. It's brave because the lyrics take on some tough subjects - slavery, aging, despair. And the tunes themselves have to be bent to fit a bop or swing or Latin groove - not always an easy task with pop tunes and certainly not with pop tunes carrying a social comment (they tend to be word-heavy). Vitro

accomplishes the task masterfully, however. She relies on her long-time collaborators Mark Soskin (piano), Dean Johnson (bass) and Tim Horner (drums) to pull it off and violinist Sara Caswell contributes in no small part to the album's seductive mood. She launched the CD at Dizzy's Club last month but is following up with a performance at Saint Peter's Midtown Jazz at Midday Jul. 27th.

It's hard to comprehend the assemblage of talent on drummer **Terri Lyne Carrington's** inspired undertaking, *The Mosaic Project* (Concord). Imagine a party where Nona Hendryx, Gretchen Parlato, Esperanza Spalding, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Sheila E., Geri Allen, Dianne Reeves, Cassandra Wilson and Bernice Johnson Reagon are all jamming on one heart-stirring tune after another in a hodgepodge of soul, funk, bebop and pop and you'll get the idea. The CD sets a new standard for female jazz accomplishment.

Legacies living on: Concord just issued a 50th anniversary collection of the 12 tracks on *Ring-A-Ding*

Ding, the first album that **Frank Sinatra** recorded under his own label Reprise. The tunes are all digitally remastered for the CD, along with two bonus tracks, one previously unheard. While there isn't much new here musically, enthusiasts will appreciate the well-done liner notes that document the beginnings of Sinatra's collaboration with arranger Johnny Mandel. Not to be outdone, Storyville is offering a comprehensive package of **The Boswell Sisters'** extensive oeuvre of early traditional pop songs. At more than 100 titles, *The Boswell Sisters Collection* covers the trio's decade-long career in the '20s-30s. Like Carrington, the three women did their own arrangements, as revolutionary in their day, perhaps, as Carrington is in ours.

July gig list: **Mark Murphy** plays Birdland Jul. 24th; **Tierney Sutton** and **Claudia Acuña** are at Dizzy's Club Jul. 19th-24th and 26th-31st, respectively, and Miles' Café hosts **Dee Cassella** Jul. 9th and **Deborah Latz** Jul. 12th. ❖

psi Records

by Stuart Broomer

When Evan Parker launched psi a decade ago, he was no stranger to producing records. Back in 1970 he was a founder of Incus, one of the first musician-run labels and a very influential one, setting an important precedent for countless musicians. When he left Incus in 1986, at the dawn of the CD era, he was becoming one of the world's most widely recorded musicians. Today he's built up a very large discography on labels like ECM, Emanem, FMP and Leo.

By 2001, though, Parker found he "missed the feeling of overseeing a project from start to finish that I had known during the initial phase of Incus" and launched psi. According to his mission statement, it's called "psi for all the associations with irrational numbers, golden ratios, etc. but above all for the Psi phenomena, which I am convinced are at the heart of improvised music making." The name is also a kind of punning signature: Parker's initials are ESP.

To make psi function, Parker works closely with Martin Davidson of Emanem: "Without Martin I could not do it. I have a busy touring schedule, which shows no signs of abating. Every psi production requires my involvement at every stage, but Martin is there as facilitator. In fact, there is no business entity separate from Emanem. This simplifies my relations with bureaucratic authorities. Martin has the complete complementary and essential skill set at every stage of the process. His uniquely equable temperament is

perhaps the most important skill of all. Total trust is also essential.

From the start, Parker's concerns have been "to represent my own music in the way I like to see it done and to draw people's attention to the work of other musicians who I feel are not given the prominence they deserve, whether young, middle aged or even the terrifying 'old'." As he points out, "without recordings, there is no hope of a professional existence. Apart from their important function in documenting the musicians' work, they are also the calling cards to promoters and commentators."

Surveying the psi catalogue, you get a sense of its multiple functions for Parker. There's the systematic presentation of his solo soprano music from reissues like *Solo Saxophone* and *Conic Sections* to new chapters like *Lines Drawn in Light*. *Pisa 1980 Improvisors Symposium* is among the reissues, an essential meeting of diverse Europeans that has grown by 94 minutes from a single LP to a two-CD set. There are new recordings with old friends, including duets with drummer Han Bennink and pianist Stan Tracey and, from 2002 to 2007, psi chronicled the annual Free Zone Appleby, the free improvisers segment of the England's Appleby Jazz Festival.

Parker has also managed to document some ambitious projects, like the very different octets of *Crossing the River* and *Set*, based on "the mechanisms of biological evolution." Parker points out that: "These are both examples of work that would be difficult to find support for elsewhere. They also took advantage of specific situations: *Crossing the River* the long-term association with Gateway Studios, which was coming

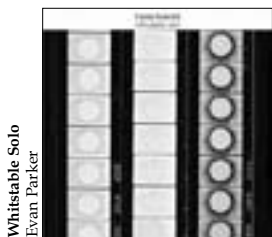
to an end, and *Set* the commission from SDR which effectively subsidized a very elaborate and technically demanding idea."

There are also regular arrivals of new musicians. In his mission statement for the label, Parker wrote, "Our reason for making records is to present unique statements from individuals making music their own way regardless of genre." It means just as much to the musicians. Bassist Adam Linson remarks, "I think it's a very powerful sentiment. The possibility of making unique statements is what sent me down this path in the first place. It implies avoiding anachronistic reproduction in favor of statements that are part of today's environment and perspectives. A project like Systems Quartet that incorporates aspects of both jazz and computer music poses a difficulty for the divided camps of existing establishments. Thankfully, we have psi."

Linson's just-released Systems Quartet disc with Axel Dörner, Rudi Mahall and Paul Lytton points to psi's place in bridging acoustic and electronic improvisation. For Parker, "It's part of the work where I think I can claim to have pioneered effectively. The Electro-Acoustic Ensemble goes back more than 20 years and before that the Music Improvisation Company and the duo with Paul Lytton both had important electronic - as distinct from amplified - elements. It is a leitmotif in my opera so to speak!"

And it's a key to psi's identity: Parker has created a label with the feeling of an expanded musical family. Many of the musicians who appear on psi have worked with his expanding Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, like

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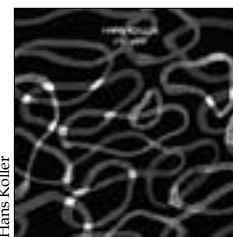
Whistle Solo
Evan Parker



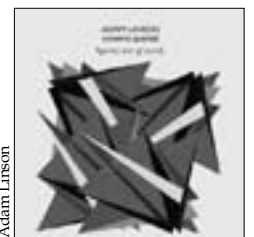
Creak Above 33
Nate Woolley/Paul Lytton



Hyste
John Russell



Cry, Want
Hans Koller



Figures and Grounds
Adam Linson

LISTEN UP!

MATT MITCHELL is a pianist, composer and electronic musician from Philadelphia. He performs regularly throughout the US and the world. He has released several albums on Scrapple Records and has participated in several recordings in 2011 which should see the light of day later in the year and in 2012.

Teachers: Michael Cain, Ralph Alessi, Elizabeth DiFelice, Luke Gillespie, David Baker, Benjamin Witten.

Influences: Feldman, Xenakis, Monk, Hancock, Jarrett, Hill, Taylor, Bley, Abrams, Powell, Miles '64-75, Autechre, Weather Report, Napalm Death, Gorguts, Immolation, Merzbow, XTC, The Beatles, Zappa, Cardiacs, Bernard Parmegiani, Ornette and tons of artists I'll remember only after submitting this.

Current Projects: My sextet Central Chain with Tim Berne, Oscar Noriega, Mary Halvorson, John Hébert and Tomas Fujiwara, Tim Berne's Los Totopos, Tim Berne/Matt Mitchell/Ches Smith Trio, John Hollenbeck's Claudia Quintet + 1 and Large Ensemble, Darius Jones Quartet, Fourth Floor duo with Dan Weiss. Duos with Ches Smith and Dave King to surface later this year. Also activity this year with Rudresh Mahanthappa/Bunky Green's Apex and Rez Abbasi's Invocation. I also teach at SIM (schoolforimprov.org).

By Day: Practicing and composing in preparation for any/all of the above.

I knew I wanted to be a musician when... I was 13.

Dream Band: Given all the people I get to play with, I feel like I'm living the dream life.

Did you know? I have three cats.

For more information, visit mattmitchell.us. Mitchell is at *Cornelia Street Café Jul. 15th and 30th with Tim Berne, Barbès Jul. 16th with Matt Bauder, I-Beam Jul. 22nd with Darius Jones and Jazz Gallery Jul. 27th as part of the SIM Faculty Band. See Calendar.*



Matt Mitchell



Ben Stapp

As a tubist and composer, **BEN STAPP** is on the forefront of New York's creative music scene. His debut CD (*Ecstasis* with Tony Malaby and Satoshi Takeishi) received an honorable mention in the *Village Voice* and allaboutjazz.com called it "a debut of a fresh new sound." He has recorded with Shoko Nagai, Ken Filiano, Herb Robertson, Alipio Neto, Adam Lane,

Ravish Momin, Franz Hautzinger and others.

Teachers: Joseph Earl (trombonist), Jack Warren (classical guitarist), Tommy Johnson, Roger Bobo and Sergio Carolino.

Influences: Giocinto Scelsi, George Frederick Haas, Thomas Ades, Stravinsky, Brahms, Debussy. Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Bob Stewart, Howard Johnson and Marcus Rojas.

Current Projects: My own ensemble is the Zozimos Collective. I also perform with Sanda's Weigl's Japanese/gypsy band, Martin Vejerano's group Chia's Dance Party, the TILT Brass Ensemble and Opus Nine will premiere my piece "Atsumor" this September.

By Day: Gigs, rehearsals, teaching, studying, part-time jobs!

I knew I wanted to be a musician when... I heard "Für Elise" played by a classmate in 4th grade.

Dream Band: The Zozimos Collective.

Did you know? I lived in Portugal for two years.

For more information, visit benstapp.com. Stapp is solo at *Downtown Music Gallery Jul. 3rd and University of the Streets Jul. 13th with Beaux Arts Brass Quintet. See Calendar.*

FIMAV

by Mike Chamberlain



Peter Brötzmann

Artistic director Michel Levasseur acknowledged in the closing press conference that it took two years for the renewed Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville (FIMAV) to take, both for the organization and for the audience.

Following the 25th edition, in 2008, Levasseur and his team took a year off for rest and reflection, returning in 2010 with a leaner version - four days instead of five on the Victoria Day long weekend. The lineup for 2010 was also thin on paper, with half of the 20 concerts featuring artists from Quebec, whose names would not draw people from outside. And Montrealers were little inclined to travel two hours to see artists who play regularly in the city. This year's schedule offered more in terms of star power - a relative term in the world of outside music - with performances by The Ex, Merzbow, Anthony Braxton and Peter Brötzmann among the 20 presentations.

The 27th edition (May 17th-20th) began strongly with the North American premiere of Tokyo Taiga, the trio of vocal artist Koichi Makigami, vocalist/percussionist Sato Masaharu and Altai throat musician Bolot Bayrishev, the gravity of whose voice rose from the primordial depths, the hipster/detective persona of the beatboxing Makigami combining with the tribal and extraterrestrial elements of earth and sky evoked by Bayrishev's soft upper register drone and his strumming on the guitar-like kai.

The Ex and Brass Unbound (Ken Vandermark, Mats Gustafsson, Wolter Wierbos and Roy Paci) was the most joyous performance of the festival. The hard-driving funky wall of sound, elements of reggae, West African timbres, the careening guitars of Andy Moor and Terrie Hessels, the collective horn improvisations, the inspired solo breaks of Italian trumpeter Paci and the absolutely astonishing power of Gustafsson's baritone sax backed by Katherina Bornefeld's big drum sound showed what a jazz/rock fusion should sound like, taking the strongest elements of both musics and combining them in an expression of power and soul.

Peter Brötzmann's two sets showed two very different sides of his work. A trio with Paal Nilssen-Love and Massimo Pupillo was a blast of pure power, Nilssen-Love kicking off in high gear and flying all over the drum kit for the hour-long set, with Pupillo thrashing on electric bass and Brötzmann firing out short bursts of notes. Repetitious, yes, but in the same way that the blues are, with the interest lying in the variations and build-up of tension, which came about 20 minutes in when the group moved into what sounded like "Cherokee" and Brötzmann played an abstraction of a solo line. Much less abstract was Brötzmann's solo set the next afternoon. Performed

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Vision Festival

by John Sharpe



Planetary Unknown

In these straitened times it is a singular pleasure to behold a festival run by and for artists without being indebted to the vagaries of corporate sponsorship. Now in its 16th year (Jun. 5th-11th), New York's annual Vision Festival remains the premier international showcase for avant jazz, drawing in numerous overseas visitors alongside those from out of state. Alongside the expected stars, this year's roster was noticeable for the greater visibility of up-and-coming musicians and bands, helped by one night in conjunction with the Festival of New Trumpet Music. After a tentative start the final four days ranked with the very cream of previous Vision fare.

Each year the Vision Festival celebrates one of its own. For the first time, that honoree came from across the Atlantic, with German saxophone iconoclast Peter Brötzmann catching the bouquets. Now 70 but in no way diminished, Brötzmann's distinctive ensemble-cleaving bellow raised the hairs on the back of the neck. His stamina also remained unrivalled, on display for over 150 minutes without flagging in three excellent sets to a sell-out crowd. His quartet with fellow veteran Joe McPhee was the pick, their impassioned horns cushioned by the deeply resonant twin basses of William Parker and Eric Revis. Even then, Brötzmann was taking risks, debuting a duo with the vibes of Jason Adasiewicz, a format with few precedents, but one where Adasiewicz rose to the challenge. The final set with Ken Vandermark, Mars Williams and Kent Kessler, powered by drum dynamo Paal Nilssen-Love showed how familiarity can breed not contempt but cohesion. All four have been part of Brötzmann's Tentet and in some ways this was a scaled-down version of that celebrated agglomeration: on-the-fly arrangements, great transitions, mastery of dynamics and near-telepathic understanding borne of shared experience.

Other highlights included the debut of avant jazz supergroup Planetary Unknown, comprising saxophone colossus David S. Ware (looking unwell), paired with pianist extraordinaire Cooper-Moore and the stellar rhythm team of Parker and Muhammad Ali, in a towering performance of power and strength. Unlike their recent AUM Fidelity recording, here there was no let up in the intensity. Ware, his magisterial tone still intact, went for broke playing virtually non-stop the entire set, often in tumultuous interaction with Cooper-Moore who gave it his all: when chords, clusters and glissandos weren't enough he resorted to fists and forearms too. Similarly outstanding, Paradoxical Frog (Ingrid Laubrock, Kris Davis, Tyshawn Sorey, with guest Mat Maneri) were evidence of a new order, with bewildering compositions

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Moers

by Ken Waxman



Ornette Coleman

Ornette Coleman's performance at Germany's Moers Festival was the surprise birthday present for its 40th edition, which took place Jun. 10th-12th about 50 miles from Cologne. Announced earlier, cancelled and rescheduled, the jazz legend's performance wasn't noted in the official program. Appearing on the fest's final night, Coleman's quartet turned in a suitably magisterial set, with the leader infusing his tongue flutters and altissimo reed cries with genuine emotion. Segueing through short selections including classics like "Dancing in Your Head" and "Lonely Woman", the alto saxophonist's lines swooped, swerved and sighed, bringing a distinct blues sensibility to everything. Meanwhile bassist Tony Falanga's robust strumming and contemplative bowing paced the material, as electric bass guitarist Al MacDowell used guitar-like fingerpicking to color the proceedings. MacDowell's head elaborations in unison with Coleman's lines, or flowing call-and-response patterns with Falanga, were buoyed by unforced backbeats from drummer Denardo Coleman.

Moers' 20 featured performances took place in reportedly Europe's largest circus tent. In a positive way, Moers is like a three-ring circus. Besides shows for the tent's massive audience, the festival hosts smaller gigs elsewhere. Daily late-night sessions showcased younger Cologne jazzers, mid-morning improvisations mixed players from different bands plus during the week primary schoolers were taught improvisational rudiments by experienced players. An afternoon recital by 25 pupils plus instructors such as saxophonist Georg Wissel and tubaist Carl Ludwig Hübsch almost confirmed the anti-free music taunt that "my kid can play that" as students created well-paced, rhythmically challenging sounds. Following that experiment with protoplasmic sound extensions, however, the instructors proved that in-the-moment improv is more sophisticated and demands immediate responses. An example occurred when some players picked up on one child's repeated nose blowing, incorporating sonic parodies of her nasal honks into their solos.

Coleman's earlier appearance at Moers was in 1981. Drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson, also featured that year, returned in 2011 with the Encryption trio of bassist Melvin Gibbs and guitarist Vernon Reid, who also played with him in the Decoding Society 30 years ago. Solid in accompaniment that included cross-pulsing and bass drum accents, Jackson's playing belied the minor heart attack he suffered the day previously. He checked out of the hospital for the show, returning for observation immediately afterwards. Using thumping accents and slurred fingering

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Oracle
Russ Lossing (hatOLOGY)
by Anders Griffen

Listening to jazz, we often hear the influence of the masters filtered through new artists. One can pick out major influences right away. However, listening to Russ Lossing's *Oracle*, we mainly hear Russ Lossing.

It's not that the influences and the tradition are not present. On the contrary, it's all here and then some - from Scriabin to Bill Evans, Bartók to Paul Bley - but Lossing isn't a newcomer. He's not an old timer either, but he's devoted himself to crafting his language, to "detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within," as Emerson wrote. His phrases are formed with tone and touch the way a vocalist shapes words with breath and nuance to articulate the message and he has developed an expansive vocabulary to spark and kindle his explorations.

Drummer Billy Mintz and bassist Masa Kamaguchi are kindred spirits. The command these musicians possess allows them to render new forms and build fine structures within these compositions. The prized element is space. The ensemble is free to explore in such a way that is only possible when each has all the room in the world and allows the same for his mates - that is great ensemble work. This space opens dimensions of possibilities as the subtle articulates minute details in the worlds discovered within each piece. The listener, too, is granted abundant space. "Beautiful Ugly" and "Love and Beauty" are highlights.

The recording is very successful in preserving the character of the instruments with enough headroom and air that they don't interfere with one another sonically. There is room to savor the tones of each expression. This is fine music for attentive listening.

For more information, visit hathut.com. Lossing is at *The Stone* Jul. 1st with Michael Attias and Jul. 5th and *Korzo* Jul. 26th with this group. See *Calendar*.



Wiry Strong
Ralph Alessi And This Against That (Clean Feed)
by David R. Adler

There's a good deal of continuity between *Wiry Strong*, the latest release from trumpeter Ralph Alessi's *This Against That* and previous efforts such as *Look*, a 2007 outing with the same personnel. A key difference, however: tenor saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, a "special guest" on four tracks from *Look*, is now billed as a full-fledged quintet member. Between the two frontline horns, Andy Milne's spacious piano and the rugged, textural rhythm of bassist Drew Gress and drummer Mark Ferber, Alessi gives himself an enticing range of options. He goes the route of tight orchestration, spiky melodies, darkly suggestive harmony and flowing improvised dialogue, hard-edged but not without a certain tenderness on numbers such as "Halves and

Wholes" and "Mira".

Of the 15 tracks, all are Alessi's originals save for four collectively-composed pieces: "Pudgy", "Racy Banter", "Celebrity Golf Classic" and the opening "Clown Painting". Curiously, these brief abstract sketches, marked by odd timbres and repeating rhythmic patterns, are recorded a bit louder than the main body of the album, giving the disc a slightly uneven aural effect (perhaps the intention of co-producers Alessi and Tim Berne). Elsewhere, subtle overdubbed trumpet backgrounds on "Station Wagon Trip", "Halves and Wholes" and the closing title track enhance the chamber-jazz aspects of Alessi's writing. The playing is sonorous and vibrant, although at 72 minutes the program drags in spots.

Drummers are key to Alessi's springy, funk-inflected rhythmic language, as Nasheet Waits proved on the trumpeter's laser-focused 2010 quartet outing *Cognitive Dissonance*. On *Wiry Strong* it is Ferber who lends momentum and wide-ranging percussive colors: martial snare patterns on "Bizarro-World Moment"; rolling toms on "20% of the 80%"; skittering motion on "A Dollar in Your Shoe" and rubato musings leading to a bright, surging tempo on "Medieval Genius". But repeat listens drive home how every bandmember - not least of all Alessi with his soaring and allusive horn - brings this complex contrapuntal world into relief.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. Alessi is at *The Stone* Jul. 1st with Michael Attias and *Jazz Gallery* Jul. 27th and 30th. See *Calendar*.



The Essential Django Reinhardt
Django Reinhardt (RCA-Legacy)
by Duck Baker

Modifiers like "essential" always get a reviewer's attention, since prospective buyers always want to know whether they are being applied with any accuracy. In this case, no one is likely to argue that these recordings from late in guitarist Django Reinhardt's career represent his most significant work. But they do offer an excellent selection from sessions recorded in Rome in 1949-50 and make a great introduction to his often-underrated later work.

Django's position as the first really great jazz guitar soloist seems secure, as does his standing as the greatest European jazz of the 20th century. He adapted the gypsy flair for instrumental brilliance and romanticism to swing, taking Louis Armstrong as his musical model and, in his ability to improvise melodically, Django showed real understanding for the essence of what Armstrong and other Americans did, even though his musical vocabulary was always sweeter and more flowery. The last was even truer of his partner in the Quintette du Hot Club de France, Stephane Grappelli, though at his best the Parisian violinist could swing quite nicely. The Quintette was formed in 1935 and enjoyed enormous success until Grappelli decamped for England in 1939, leaving Django to lead other lineups. None of these was ever as convincing as the prewar group, but Reinhardt and Grappelli did work together several times after the war and the recordings they made in Rome are of particular interest.

Django's playing had evolved considerably during the '40s. He incorporated some of the boppers' innovations and if this wasn't always successful it was

always fascinating and emphasized how different a musician he was from those he worked with, Grappelli included. The gulf is even more noticeable on the tracks that feature reedman André Ekyan, who is heard on about a third of the tracks here in place of Grappelli.

This collection illustrates the folly of overlooking Django's later work. His playing is as full of fire and imagination as it ever was and the only reason for any Reinhardt devotee not to seek out this anthology would be wanting the complete collections issued by Fremaux & Associates.

For more information, visit legacyrecordings.com. A Django tribute is at *Birdland* Jul. 1st-3rd. See *Calendar*.

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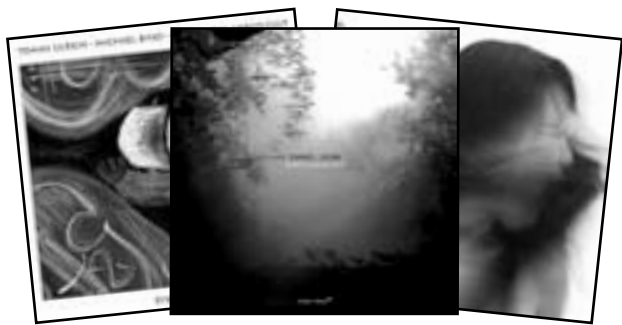
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Editorial Director, The New York City Jazz Record



Discoverers Cargo Cult (CIMP)
Noisy Love Songs (for George Dyer) Okkyung Lee (Tzadik)
Inner Landscape Daniel Levin (Clean Feed)
 by John Sharpe

It wasn't until he broke his arm in 1949 that bassist Oscar Pettiford became a jazz pioneer on the cello. He experimented with its smaller cousin, which he could play even with his arm in a sling and performed and recorded on it for the rest of his career. But not until the '60s New Thing did the cello properly find its place. Today the cello plays second fiddle to no one, especially on the three discs at hand.

Cellist Tomas Ulrich leads the string trio Cargo Cult through their fourth outing on *Discoverers*. Lauded for his ability to bridge the jazz and classical worlds, Ulrich goes even further here, bringing a finely honed improvisational sensibility to the table. Bassist Michael Bisio and guitarist Rolf Sturm have similarly wide ranging tastes and firmly sublimate their abundant technique to the needs of the music. This predominantly tuneful set sounds like three friends having fun, demonstrating a mutual love of melody. Bisio proves a surefooted anchor, buoying up the ensemble but blending the lithe and the lyric in his features, particularly a fine pizzicato spot on "A New Day". Sturm fits right in, whether cleverly inserting Morse code suggestions into the spiky swing of "To Birds" or milking the high drama of "Oil". A democratic ethos manifests through shared writing credits, elegant interplay and ample solo room. On "Mixed Emotions" the leader partakes of a darkly abrasive and animated arco duet with Bisio while the extreme register murmurings of "Walking Through Those Shadows" unfurl into an appropriately mournful three-part counterpoint before a series of anguished variations. Bisio's "History of a Mystery: H. floresiensis" moves from violent to ruminative, concluding a pastoral idyll with a sweetly lilting theme.

Strings also loom large on *Noisy Love Songs*, as cellist Okkyung Lee unveils a program that focuses as much on compositional structures as the unfettered explosions for which she is better known. Though monster improvisers like Craig Taborn and Peter Evans are on board, their contributions are used sparingly and with surprising restraint, as part of a revolving cast. "Danji" is a mercurial pas-de-deux for Taborn's crystalline piano and Lee's swooping cello while "Saeya Saeya" adds Evans to the mix in an exchange of smeary gesture. Those two improvisations apart, most of the pieces juxtapose simple interlocking rhythmic devices with layers of electronic effects or wilder individual expression. The overall effect is accessible and intriguing, exemplified by the opening "One Hundred Years Old Rain (The Same River Twice)" where the serene beauty derived from the intersections of trumpet and strings is underpinned by crackling electronics and sounds evocative of dawn in a rainforest. Elsewhere, Cornelius Dufallo's violin and Christopher Tordini's bass join Lee in a string trio on "Upon A Fallen Tree", anchored by a two-note pizzicato motif while "White Night" comes on like a concerto for Satoshi Takeishi's exotic percussion.

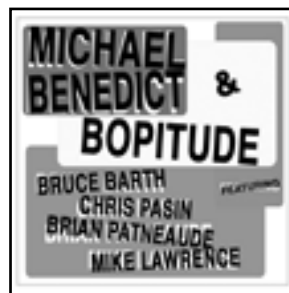
Finally on *Inner Landscapes* we are left with the cello alone. On his first solo record, Daniel Levin allows his imagination to run riot over the course of six improvisations from a brace of live dates captured during 2009. In the liners Levin describes his intention

that the music be "casual but very determined" and he fulfills that wish through an impressive focus on weight, line, dynamics and overall direction. On the way he invokes all manner of musics with prodigious skill: jazz, classical, improv, noise, vocal chorus. But nowhere are the references sustained as he restlessly pursues an unceasing inner flow, which makes blow-by-blow description thankless. Contrasts and jump-cuts abound, with ideas picked up, examined and discarded in favor of newer routes all within the space of a few minutes. Some moments stand out in relief: a passage of plaintive cries pitched against dark grainy slashes; a litany of multi-layered abrasions; a sequence of descending chuckles in contrasting registers. But in practice the six tracks are all of a piece. His technique is unquestioned and he revels in the physicality of the instrument. Those with an adventurous streak or interest in the outer reaches of the cello universe will find much to savor.

For more information, visit cimprecords.com, tzadik.com and cleanfeed-records.com. Lee is at Central Park Summerstage Jul. 15th-16th, I-Beam Jul. 29th with James Falzone and The Stone Jul. 30th with William Winant. Levin is at The Stone Jul. 1st, Downtown Music Gallery Jul. 2nd and Jazz Gallery Jul. 9th with Matana Roberts. See Calendar.



Live at Smalls
Bruce Barth Trio
 (smallsLIVE)



Eponymous
Michael Benedict & Bopitude
 (Planet Arts)

by George Kanzler

Pianist Bruce Barth has been a reliable fixture on the postbop/hardbop scene in the Big Apple since the early '80s. In the quintet Bopitude, his strong touch and attack are ideally suited to stand up and be heard in assertive company. His trio work is rarer and the set captured at Smalls features him not only as leader but also as the composer of eight of the nine tracks.

Live at Smalls is extremely well paced and programmed for a live CD. It begins with the midtempo "Oh Yes I Will", almost a warmup displaying Barth's fluidity and easy swing. "Sunday" hints at a churchy 6/8 in its flextime opening, then picks up steam as Barth digs into block chords before settling back into the melody with hints of waltz-time. On his meditative, delicately pealing solo on "Yama", the mood is enhanced by Rudy Royston's mallets over Vicente Archer's bass. "Almost Blues", an AAB blues with an extended B-section, finds Barth developing lines with a conviction akin to that of late blues piano master Ray Bryant. "Peaceful Place" successfully combines ringing tones with an insistent bass ostinato and earthy two-hand chords. "Afternoon in Lleda" features extended rubato and lyrical solo piano interludes. "Wilsonian Alto", a reference to Barth's frequent collaborator alto saxophonist Steve Wilson, is proto-funk with sprung rhythms and deep grooves. Barth sidles into the melody of "Good Morning Heartache" rubato, his improvisation flowing out of it. Flexible and sprung rhythms also animate the closer, "Looking Up".

Barth's piano provides a strong chordal anchor for *Michael Benedict & Bopitude*. Benedict, unlike some drummer-leaders, doesn't loom over the proceedings. He's a team player and provides a variety of tempos and approaches, ie, sticking to brushes throughout "Joy Spring", which keep the music fresh. Selections range from the familiar ("Moanin'", Dexter Gordon's "Cheese Cake" and Kenny Dorham's "Whistle Stop")

to James Williams' loping, long-toned tune "Alter Ego" and Bobby Watson's boogaloo march "Hackle and Jeckle". Chris Pasin, a trumpeter who has recently emerged again on the scene after decades of obscurity, brings his distinctive, cliché-free voice to the proceedings and Brian Patneau's tenor sax fills the hardbop mold admirably. Bassist Mike Lawrence and Benedict keep the time crisp and exhilarating. A highlight is a diaphanous, haunting and multi-tempoed version of Grachan Moncur III's "Frankenstein".

For more information, visit smallslive.com and planetarts.org. Barth is at The Kitano Jul. 1st-2nd with Jerry Bergonzi, Smalls Jul. 19th and 92nd Street Y Jul. 20th. See Calendar.

UNEARTHED GEM



Flashpoint: NDR Jazz Workshop (April '69)
John Surman (Cuneiform)
 by Jeff Stockton

In 1969 Brit saxist John Surman invited some of his mates to Germany to tape a TV show for North German Broadcasting in Hamburg. A mind-blowing gathering of the cream of British jazz musicians plus two Austrian guests, *Flashpoint* (a two-disc DVD/CD set) serves as an essential historical document as well as a vital performance, which, aside from the turtlenecks, hairstyles and black and white cinematography, is as fresh as last week.

In his informative liner notes, Brian Morton asserts that Surman and his crew probably learned much of what they knew from records and since the first notes we hear are a brief Harry Miller bass vamp, the LP that quickly comes to mind is Coltrane's *Africa/Brass*. Piano and drums pick up the rhythm, the horns (led by clarion trumpeter Kenny Wheeler) take up the cause and Surman sculpts a particularly burly and rough-hewn solo on soprano. Three of the five cuts are Surman compositions, but he tends to give the solo spotlights to his band. Altoist Mike Osborne is fleet and aggressive on "Mayflower". On his own "Puzzle", Erich Kleinschuster blows limpid trombone in contrast to Malcolm Griffiths' busy, bursting energy that challenges the structural integrity of his horn. Tenor Ronnie Scott's smooth solo gives way to Surman's soprano on pianist Fritz Pauer's "Gratuliere", a tune reminiscent of Coltrane's version of "Inch Worm".

The set closes with the title track, commencing with a raucous overlapping fanfare. Surman's bari sits down below and Osborne screeches on top, Griffiths plunges the bell of his horn like mad and Pauer pounds the keys with the heels of his hands. Osborne takes the first solo, even more aggressively than before. When Alan Skidmore (who had previously been a revelation on "Once Upon a Time") takes over on tenor, looking like Joe Henderson with his thick moustache and horn-rimmed glasses, he builds his story-telling solo to an ecstatic high before the action falls and dovetails right into Surman's energized baritone feature. It's the program's final leap-from-your-chair moment, some of the best that British jazz had to offer. Decades later, Surman has left a sterling legacy.

For more information, visit cuneiformrecords.com

GLOBE UNITY: TURKEY



Istanbul Sessions Ilhan Ersahin (Nublu)
Snow

**Mark O'Leary/Senol Küçükyıldırım/Murat Çopur/
Can Ömer Oygan (TIB Prod.)**

Featuring Eugene Chadbourne

Dead Country (Konnex)

by Tom Greenland

One of the Middle East's largest countries, with a distinctive folk music tradition employing unusual rhythms and a unique micro-tonal tuning system, Turkey has also embraced outside influences such as jazz. These projects, all recorded in Istanbul in collaboration with Western artists, suggest the extent to which creative improvisers have developed a common language understood across borders.

Nublu proprietor and label head Ilhan Ersahin's *Istanbul Sessions* is the fruit of his frequent trips there to promote New York artists; in addition to Swiss trumpeter Erik Truffaz, it includes bassist Alp Ersonmez, drummer Turgut Alp Bekoglu and percussionist Izzet Kizil in a set of rocking originals. Ersahin's warm, relaxed tenor tone counterpoises Truffaz' electronically enhanced growls and screeches, together delivering slow-moving modal melodies over the bubbling hand-slaps of Kizil's darbuka. Track to track, the album maintains its momentum, balancing creativity with accessibility.

Snow, which juxtaposes a photograph of cloud-capped Mount Ararat on the cover with a crowded cityscape on the back, is another example of Middle East-meets-West, the latter represented by Irish guitarist Mark O'Leary, the former by trumpeter Can Ömer Uygan, bassist Murat Çopur and drummer Senol Küçükyıldırım. *Snow* opens with two extended electronic sound collages built around O'Leary's slow-moving, delicately crescendoed intervals, the second achieving an eerie ambiance of a spelunking expedition. "Ka", the third cut, waxes ecstatic by comparison, O'Leary evoking elephantine cries while Uygan builds long tones of primary color into emphatic chromatics to sustain a dramatic climax. The overall effect is like listening to a rainforest: dense clusters of sound obscured by thick undergrowth and a canopy overhead.

The black-and-white cover shot of a cowboy-hatted guitarist fingering a jackknife to his single-string diddley-bow evokes a rootsy vibe, but *Dead Country's* eponymous album is more avant-metal than 'country', fired by the triple onslaught of Sevket Akinci, Umut Çağlar and featured guest Eugene Chadbourne's thrashing guitars, Demirhan Baylan's snappy electric bass and Kerem Öktem's headbanger beats. On "Mole in the Ground" Chadbourne fingerpicks banjo and croons the Appalachian ballad in C Major while the Turkish quartet wails in the parallel harmonic universe of D minor; on "Sooner or Later" he vents shouted-word poetry. The collective wall of sound ranges from jam-rock to free-noise: world music at the local level.

For more information, visit nublu.net, tibprod.com and konnex-records.de



The Hour of the Star
Ivo Perelman Quartet (Leo)
by Stuart Broomer

Tenor saxist Ivo Perelman has here assembled a group of rare compatibility, renewing musical relationships with pianist Matthew Shipp and bassist Joe Morris and selecting a drummer, Gerald Cleaver, who contributes mightily to the music's cohesion. The pieces are all attributed to the quartet, so the format is free improvisation, but set within group dialogues of continuous (and often tremendous) momentum.

While Perelman, like most saxophonists, can engage the furies, he's capable of a broad expressive range, a musician who can construct a compelling linear narrative while picking up and incorporating the nuances supplied by his collaborators. The group here is ideally suited to this, with Morris' often loping elastic beat, Shipp's challenging comping and forceful solos and Cleaver's multi-leveled rhythmic and timbral commentary. This CD documents the first meeting of this group, recorded in a studio prior to a trip to Brazil.

A few of the CD's six explorations particularly stand out. "Singing the Blues" is a rare flight for Perelman into a traditional zone. Accompanied here by just Morris and Cleaver, he picks up on the warmth and swagger of R&B, mining inherited phrases for an original perspective. The title track is the centerpiece, an intense group exploration set within the modal terms of the classic Coltrane quartet in its last phase. But this group takes the principle of dialogue further, building in density and freedom to create a fully interactive ensemble, form persisting ultimately in the saxophone lead. The concluding "Whistling in the Dark" is marked by an intense sense of mystery, at times fierce group dialogue, at others a vehicle for Perelman's tenor to swirl off alone or with sparse accompaniment by just Cleaver or Morris.

For more information, visit leorecords.com. Perelman is at *The Stone Jul. 1st* and *Issue Project Room Jul. 13th* with this group. See Calendar.



Bond: The Paris Sessions
Gerald Clayton (Decca-Emarcy)
by Tom Greenland

Pianist Gerald Clayton is a formidably talented up-and-comer, raised under the tutelage of a musical family (his father plays bass, his uncle sax), who has apprenticed and performed with an impressive roster of heavyweights to emerge in the latter half of his 20s with two Grammy nods and the foundation of an original sound. *Bond: The Paris Sessions* is his sophomore release with bassist Joe Sanders and drummer Justin Brown; like his debut *Two-Shade* it highlights his strong writing hand and personal aesthetic, a simultaneous de- and reconstruction of the jazz tradition.

Traditional elements are evident in his feel for funk and blues, recalling Horace Silver's gutsy style

while his light but highly articulate touch echoes the classical restraint and open-ended lyricism of Keith Jarrett. Rhythmically and harmonically, however, Clayton allies himself with the new breed, employing through-composed rhythmic structures and semi-functional chord progressions that 'resolve' in unusual ways. Like many hungry young lions, Clayton seems on a mission here to claim his musical turf, mixing high concept writing and improvisation with an undercurrent of soulful, party-down swing.

The original material flows with a fractured, postmodern logic, supported by Clayton's remarkable command of the keyboard, his moods quickly swinging between assertive declamation and subtle suggestion. But his originality is most apparent on covers of the standards "If I Were a Bell" and Jerome Kern's "All the Things You Are" and "Nobody Else But Me", all prime examples of how an innovative improviser can find new inspiration in time-tested forms.

For more information, visit emarcy.com. Clayton is at *Jazz Standard Jul. 1st-3rd*. See Calendar.



Lark Uprising
(featuring Joe McPhee)
Mikolaj Trzaska
(Multikulti Project)



Blue Chicago Blues
**Joe McPhee/
Ingebrigt Håker Flaten**
(Not Two)

by Kurt Gottschalk

Saxophone quartets can be a noisy affair: raucous, rambunctious and celebratory. Close cousin the clarinet quartet is a subtler persona, more nuanced and capable of greater internal dialogue, enough so that Polish reedman Mikolaj Trzaska was easily able to add the fifth voice of Joe McPhee to his Ircha clarinet group without the conversation getting overwhelmed. McPhee plays a variety of instruments in the reed and brass families and is smart enough for great sensitivity in his playing. And while McPhee is given "featured artist" billing, he's not the star of the show on *Lark Uprising*; one nice thing about the grouping of like instruments is that it's the instruments themselves, and not their players, which take the spotlight. When one clarinet does push them into the occasional frenzy and another quickly pulls them back down again, it's only the engagement of instruments - and of the moment at hand - that is heard.

McPhee picks up his saxophone for a fine duo session with bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten. The session was recorded in the Norwegian bassist's former adopted home of Chicago and is geared, at least titularly, toward that city's great blues tradition. The cry on *Blue Chicago Blues* is serious and spontaneous, even shocking at times. McPhee's simultaneous playing and moaning on "Requiem for a Broken Heart" sounds almost Arabic, or at least nowhere near Maxwell Street. Flaten proves flexible throughout, even taking an inventive percussive turn on his bass in "I Love You Too Little Baby". More than anything, more than city or mood, the blues is (or once was) about playing directly from the heart. It's that sense of the blues that Flaten and McPhee channel. They're not playing 12-bar patterns, but they're playing the here and now.

For more information, visit multikulti.com and nottwo.com. McPhee is at *The Stone Jul. 2nd* and *12th-13th* (both with *Ingebrigt Håker Flaten*) and *University of the Streets Jul. 6th*. See Calendar.



Old and Unwise
Bruno Chevillon/Tim Berne (Clean Feed)
 by Sean Fitzell

For this live-in-studio date, Tim Berne engages crafty veteran Bruno Chevillon for a series of improvised duets. Flinty alto contrasts the bass' resonant warmth - but it's less the instruments than the personalities behind them that propel the music.

"Crossed Minds" erupts in an introductory blast of darting alto runs matched by fleet retorts from Chevillon. Immediate contrast emerges with the spacious suspended tones of "High/Low", as Berne patiently builds a concluding repeated theme. Chevillon hammers the strings to begin "L'etat D'incertitude" while Berne's dissonant overblowing gradually recedes and he unfurls fluid lines in response to the bassist's thrumming. "Au Centre du Corps" similarly opens with alto howls and fluttering percussive bowed bass, featuring extended techniques before rapidly spinning more traditional lines.

The pair consistently asserts acute listening. Developed from a buzz of prepared strings and crisply peppered sax, they join in an uneasy consonance of wavering alto cries and bowed bass on "Quelque Chose Vacille". On "Dissimulable", they converge so quickly on an ascending-then-descending run that it

sounds composed. Berne uses recurring thematic phrases to construct new patterns on "Cornered", as Chevillon matches rhythmically with scraped strings, before settling into a groove. He raps the bass for percussive resonance, adding texture to Berne's high-wire theme on the concluding "Single Entendre".

Though perhaps Old in chronology, the startling clarity and responsiveness of Chevillon and Berne's collaboration belies any notion of Unwise.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. Berne is at The Stone Jul. 2nd with John Hébert and Stone Jul. 13th-14th and Cornelia Street Café Jul. 15th with Matt Mitchell and 30th as a leader. See Calendar.



Pure Imagination
Dave Valentin (HighNote)
 by Russ Musto

Versatile flutist Dave Valentin's third outing for HighNote delivers a solid program, blending smooth, Latin and straight-ahead jazz into an intoxicatingly satisfying cocktail. Joined by his first-rate working band of longtime musical director and pianist Bill O'Connell, bassist Ruben Rodriguez, drummer Robby Ameen and percussionist Richie Flores, the flutist soars with the ease that comes when playing in a

familiar environment. The underrated O'Connell, whose three-decade tenure with Valentin has given him an invaluable insight into his partner's musicality, contributes six original compositions and three hip arrangements of popular standards that highlight the leader's rhythmic, melodic and tonal strengths.

The opening orchestration of Charlie Chaplin's "Smile" immediately identifies Valentin as a compelling melodicist, lyrically swinging the popular line. O'Connell's arrangement draws upon the persistent rhythmatism of his section mates while his solo underscores his own harmonic genius. A flute/conga interlude adds dramatic depth to the piece, which concludes with percussion-driven intensity. The pianist's "Slip and Slide" is a tipico Latin jazz excursion reminiscent of his Mongo Santamaria days, Valentin relaxed and soulful, while his pop-oriented "Joy" finds the flutist playing with overwhelming delight. The title track, beautifully arranged for the leader's alto flute, is unabashedly romantic in its tone.

The flutist is in a salsa-fied setting on the uptempo "Hummingbird" whereas the electric keyboards of "See Saw" has him floating in a more ethereal atmosphere. The gentle orchestral sonance of overdubbed flutes gives "When Sunny Gets Blue" a heavenly allure and "Cat Man" highlights the band's ability to get deep down into the funk without sacrificing musical sophistication. "Last Minute" dances the set out in an AfroCuban groove typifying Valentin's style, concluding a disc that can only add to the flutist's well-deserved popularity.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Valentin is at Blue Note Jul. 3rd with Conrad Herwig, Orchard Beach Stage Jul. 17th and Saint Grant's Tomb Jul. 31st with NJMH Afro-Cuban All Stars. See Calendar.

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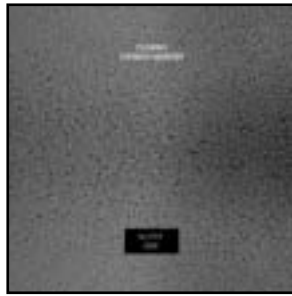
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- Associate Professor of Music, Jazz Studies U of M
- Bassist, Diane Krall
- Lead Bassist, Oceans 11, 12 & 13 Soundtracks
- Bassist, Tonight Show with Jay Leno, 1992-1999
- NEA Presidential Scholar Awardee
- Credits: 6 Grammys and 4 Emmys

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Klippe/One
Thomas Heberer (NoBusiness)
by Clifford Allen



Tiresias (with Sunny Murray, Michael Bisio)
Louie Belogenis Trio (Porter)
by Jeff Stockton

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CANADA DAY: THE EXPAT ENSEMBLE 10:30PM
Owen Howard, Andrew Rathbun, Dave Smith, Aidan O'Donnell
- Sat Jul 2 **DAN LOOMIS QUARTET 9PM**
Robin Verheyen, Loren Stillman, Jared Schonig
SPOKE 10:30PM
Justin Wood, Andy Hunter, Dan Loomis, Danny Fischer
- Sun Jul 3 **ERI YAMAMOTO TRIO 8:30PM**
Dave Ambrosio, Ikuo Takeuchi
- Mon Jul 4 **AMRAM & CO 8:30PM**
David Amram, Kevin Twigg, John de Witt, Adam Amram
- Tue Jul 5 **JULIA PATINELLA AND TRIO MATAPENA 8:30PM**
Maniel Berger, Diego Obregon
'AFRO-PERUVIAN SKETCHES' 10PM
Pedro Rodriguez, Pablo Menares, Hector Morales, Jean Rohe, Host.
- Wed Jul 6 **THE GLOBAL LIVING ROOM FESTIVAL: CATARINA DOS SANTOS 8:30PM**
Marcos Vigio, Leco Reis, Robert di Pietro
SEBASTIAN CRUZ AND THE CHEAP LANDSCAPE 10PM
Stomu Takeishi, Ted Poor, Jean Rohe, Host.
- Thu Jul 7 **THE GLOBAL LIVING ROOM FESTIVAL: SHUSMO 8:30PM**
Tareq Abboushi, Hector Morales, Jean Rohe, Host.
PETR CANCURA LONESOME QUARTET 10PM
Kirk Kruffke, Garth Stevenson, Robert DiPietro
- Fri Jul 8 **AMANDA BAISINGER 9PM & 10:30PM**
Ryan Scott, Pete Rende, Chris Morrissey, Dave Burnett
- Sat Jul 9 **ARI HOENIG QUARTET 9PM & 10:30 PM**
Gladi Hekselman, Shai Maestro, Orlando Le Fleming
- Sun Jul 10 **PASCAL NEW FIELD 8:30PM**
Pascal Niggenkemper, Robin Verheyen, Scott DuBois, Jeff Davis
NATHANIEL SMITH QUARTET 10PM
Jake Saslow, Sam Minnie, Toru Dodo
- Mon Jul 11 **WASHINGTON SQUARE WINDS WOODWIND QUINTET 8:30PM**
Caryn Freitag, Amy Yamashiro, Elyssa Plotkin, Anna Morris, Casey Cronan
- Tue Jul 12 **LAINIE COOKE 8:30PM**
Onaje Allan Gumbs, Elias Bailey, Matt Wilson
- Wed Jul 13 **ALAN HAMPTON PRESENTS "THE FAMILY TREE" FEATURING...ALAN HAMPTON 8:30PM & JOSH MEASE 9:30PM**
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Michael Fomanek, Ben Gerstein, Jonathan Goldberger, Frantz Loriot, Jonathan Moritz
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Tim Berne, Oscar Noriega, Mary Halvorson, John Hébert, Tomas Fujiwara
- Sat Jul 16 **MARIO PAVONE: ARC SUITE MUSIC 9PM & 10:30PM**
Tony Malaby, Dave Ballou, Craig Taborn, Michael Pavone, Matt Wilson
- Sun Jul 17 **SAM TRAPCHAK - PUT TOGETHER FUNNY 8:30PM**
Tom Chang, Greg Ward
- Mon Jul 18 **ERIK DEUTSCH & ALLISON MILLER QUARTET 8:30PM**
Marty Ehrlich, Trevor Dunn
- Tue Jul 19 **PETE MCCANN 8:30pm**
John O'Gallagher, Henry Hey, Matt Clohesy, Jordan Persson
- Wed Jul 20 **SEBASTIAN NOELLE'S KOAN 8:30PM**
Loren Stillman, George Colligan, Thomson Kneeland, Tony Moreno
- Thu Jul 21 **TOM CHANG QUARTET 8:30PM**
Greg Ward, Matt Clohesy, Rob Garcia
- Fri Jul 22 **CARLO DEROSA'S CROSS-FADE: BRAIN DANCE 9PM & 10:30PM**
Mark Shim, Vijay Iyer, Marcus Gilmore
- Sat Jul 23 **BEN MONDER TRIO 9PM & 10:30PM**
Gary Versace, Ted Poor
- Sun Jul 24 **BOBBY AVEY QUARTET FEATURING MIGUEL ZENON 8:30PM**
Miguel Zenon, Thomson Kneeland, Jordan Persson
- Mon Jul 25 **KENNETH SALTERS SEXTET 8:30PM**
JOONSAM LEE QUARTET 10PM
- Tue Jul 26 **ANDREW RATHBUN'S IDEA OF NORTH 8:30PM**
Nate Radley, Gary Versace, Jay Anderson, Michael Sarin
- Wed Jul 27 **"MIKE + RUTHY'S FOLK CITY": THE SILVER HOLLERS 8:30PM**
Amy Helm, Elizabeth Mitchell, Daniel Littleton, Byron Isaacs, Ruthy Ungar
- Thu Jul 28 **NIKOLAJ HESS TRIO 8:30PM**
Johannes Weidenmueller, Gregory Hutchinson
- Fri Jul 29 **MARY HALYORSON QUINTET 9PM & 10:30PM**
Jonathan Finlayson, Jon Irabagon, John Hébert, Ches Smith
- Sat Jul 30 **TIM BERNE TRIO 9PM & 10:30PM**
Matt Mitchell, Dan Weiss
- Sun Jul 31 **JOCELYN MEDINA'S "WE ARE WATER" CD RELEASE SHOW 8:30PM**
Chris Ward, Hadar Noiberg, Nir Felder, Chris Tary, Ziv Ravitz

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Brooklyn-based and Cologne-reared trumpeter and composer Thomas Heberer has been making subtle waves on the improvisational music scene since the late '80s and been regularly associated with the Dutch Instant Composers Pool Orchestra since the '90s. His work as a solo artist and as a leader of small groups is less well known, especially on these shores. That should change with the chamber trio *Klippe*, which joins Heberer with bassist Pascal Niggenkemper and clarinetist Joachim Badenhorst on nine instant compositions that use the leader's "cookbook" form of notation. This trio is represented on one of two LPs, *Klippe*. The remainder of the set is dedicated to solo music and titled *One*.

As Heberer notes in the liners, "cookbook...allows for the highest amount of freedom on the musicians' side while incorporating significant structural tools on the composer's side as well. [It] does so by implementing the idea of instant memory." Heberer's music for trio is intense and dusky, moving in ways not necessarily associated with jazz, often parceling out themes that recall contemporary concert music. It does not take long for the bright, crackling volleys of Heberer's language to snake out on "Mole", bouncing off the pensive, woody walk assembled by Niggenkemper and Badenhorst. Wound harmonic pops bounce off of delicate reedy cycles, poles in between which the trumpeter's swagger builds forward motion. "Insel" pits nasty bass clarinet sputter and metallic scrawl against muted sashays, the formidable bowed and knocked masses of Niggenkemper's bass providing stewing support. Heberer's lines evoke classical simplicity only to fragment it in brash stutters on "Kleiner Bruder", offset by what amounts to an oddly precise wander, bass and bass clarinet glomming together only to act independently moments later.

One, unlike other albums of Heberer on his own, is unadorned by electronics as he stretches out on ten pieces for unaccompanied Bb concert and quarter-tone trumpet. These tracks are not just gimmicks, but a concise exploration of what can be done with breath and instrument in a solo setting. To be sure, there is nothing of 'traditional' trumpet playing here, Heberer using multiphonics, circular breathing and split tones to create apolarity between husky lilt and nattering high-pitched whine on the opening "Bone". Thin spits broaden into near-bilious stammer on "Network", punctuated by audible inhalations as Heberer occupies a distinct notch alongside Albert Mangelsdorff and Axel Dörner. *One* isn't an effort to make the trumpet sound like something else entirely; rather, what Heberer does is imprint an expanded vocabulary and imbue it with physical challenges, all the while retaining (and perhaps even strengthening) a literalist message. Rising and falling huffs, clarion bugle-calls and variably-inflected tone rows mesh with buggy whine and subtonal growl, often ending up woven into quite beautiful lines.

Klippe/One is a perfect place to get acquainted with Heberer's art and hopefully his recognition on his own will continue to increase.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com. Heberer is at *The Stone* Mondays with Karl Berger. See Calendar.

In a crowded field of jazz tenor saxists Louie Belogenis has distinguished himself as an original voice in the style forged by Albert Ayler and late-period, Ayler-influenced, John Coltrane. Belogenis has come to this style honestly, having previously participated in tributes to these artists organized by his frequent partner, the late drummer Rashied Ali. On *Tiresias*, Belogenis partners with the man who practically invented avant garde drumming, Sunny Murray, along with bassist Michael Bisio, to reimagine Ayler's *Spiritual Unity* trio (in which Murray played).

Murray's participation is the only thing that explicitly links the five improvisations here to the Ayler trio's masterwork. The single cover is Coltrane's "Alabama", so what this trio is tapping into is the spaciousness, reflective tempos and extra-sensory interplay for which Ayler (as well as Coltrane) were searching. Belogenis, Murray and Bisio aim for a state of suspended grace and they get it, but what comes through most clearly in this music is flow. The improvisations sound seamlessly knit together and Murray is integral to this process. His rhythms float on the cymbals but are grounded by a pounding bass drum and he presents a clinic in touch. Bisio is equally subtle, drawing sonorous low notes with his bow and anchoring the tunes with rich and emphatic plucks.

If the touchstone is Ayler, Belogenis' playing isn't as broad, nor his timbre as extreme, but he finds the correct middle range by positioning himself inside Murray's insistent murmur and wrapping his sound around Bisio's quietstorm strum. The recording quality itself enhances the overall sonic effect by accurately capturing Murray's now-you-see-him-now-you-don't phantom percussion, Bisio's nuanced tastefulness and Belogenis' appropriately strained-yet-forceful tone. Belogenis pushes the limits of his tenor, but not too much and the calmness at the center of this music makes it at once an easy go and a profoundly moving - almost sublime - listening experience.

For more information, visit porterrecords.com. Belogenis is at *University of the Streets* Jul. 2nd and *The Stone* Jul. 5th. See Calendar.

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**Good Eats (Tribute to Lou Donaldson)
Mark Rapp's Melting Pot (Dinemecc)**
by Alex Henderson

Interesting and memorable jazz tribute albums are not about knee-jerk emulation; they are about interpretation. And trumpeter Mark Rapp does a lot of interpreting on *Good Eats*, which pays tribute to Lou Donaldson - a fine alto saxophonist who started out as a Charlie Parker disciple before evolving into a funky, groove-minded, R&B-influenced contributor to soul jazz. This album includes six Donaldson compositions, songs that Donaldson had in his repertoire but didn't write (including William J. Hill's "The Glory of Love" and Quincy Jones' theme from the '70s sitcom *Sanford and Son*) as well as Rapp's boogaloo-ish title track.

Good Eats differs from Donaldson's output in a number of ways. First, there is no alto sax (Don Braden plays tenor sax or alto flute on some of the selections) and half of the tracks don't contain any saxophone at all. Second, organist Joe Kaplowitz brings some Larry Young influence to the table (instead of the more typical Jimmy Smith type of approach). And then there is Rapp's playing; instead of the expected big, fat tone of a Lee Morgan, Woody Shaw or Freddie Hubbard, Rapp adds a Miles Davis-influenced aesthetic to "Elizabeth", "Pot Belly" and other Donaldson tunes.

Good Eats is relevant to soul jazz, but also postbop and fusion. And while Rapp's arrangements of "Brother Soul", "Elizabeth", "Spaceman Twist" and "Alligator Boogaloo" aren't ultra-cerebral, they are certainly more so than Donaldson's original versions. With its healthy balance of intellect and groove-oriented accessibility, *Good Eats* is a consistently intriguing celebration of Donaldson's legacy.

For more information, visit markrapp.com. Lou Donaldson is at Birdland Jul. 5th-9th. See Calendar.



**Dark Lights
Alex Hoffman (Smalls)**
by Tom Conrad

Alex Hoffman's tenor saxophone enters *Dark Lights'* opening track, "Night Jaunt", with a clarion, optimistic announcement that comes from an earlier, more trusting milieu than our own. The little big band around him sounds so suave we might be listening to a Tadd Dameron octet recording from the '50s. But the sound is too good. And the liner notes say that Hoffman came to New York to go to college only six years ago.

Dark Lights is Hoffman's debut as a leader and just his third time on record. It is unusual. Hoffman is a young player deeply rooted in the original language of bop. It is ambitious. All the tunes are Hoffman originals arranged for nonet. It is impressive. Hoffman has internalized much musical history and speaks bop fluently, with passion and new millennium inflections. He is an exciting soloist because he always sounds like he is being pushed hard from within by his need to

communicate. His tunes are complete concepts and his charts are clean, with precisely intersecting parts and graceful movements. The only disappointment is that Hoffman does not fully exploit the resources of the nonet format. The additional horns are used mostly for weight in the theme statements. Essentially only three players solo: Hoffman, trumpeter Dwayne Clemons and pianist Sacha Perry.

Those solos are the *raison d'être* for *Dark Lights*. Hoffman continuously unleashes improvisations like the one on "Evil Eye": extended, detailed, complex, finished statements. Clemons is a revelation. His trumpet sound is tart and confrontational and every solo is a tipping, teetering adventure that resolves in victorious declamations. On "Celeste's Swing" and "Fragment", he could be a respected peer of Howard McGhee and Kenny Dorham, transported to our time. As for Perry, drawing on forebears like Monk and Frank Hewitt, he sounds only like himself. Usually he careens ambiguously sideways, deadpan and ironic, like on "Hurricane Sacha". Sometimes, like on "Evil Eye", he spurts and lurches and uncovers chiming internal melodies.

For more information, visit smallsrecords.com. Hoffman is at Smalls Jul. 5th and 19th, Fat Cat Jul. 9th and 17th and The Garage Jul. 26th. See Calendar.



**Cylinder
Darren Johnston/Aram Shelton/Lisa Mezzacappa/
Kjell Nordeson (Clean Feed)**
by Wilbur MacKenzie

Cylinder is a collective quartet based in San Francisco, with an ensemble dynamic that echoes Ornette Coleman's classic quartet without foregoing each individual's unique voice as an instrumentalist and composer. The four musicians each come from disparate locations in the US and Sweden and each brings to the ensemble an eclectic background of musical vocabularies.

The challenge with a record by four leaders who all compose for the band is to create a sound that both represents the distinct characters of the composer/performers, but also puts forth a general consensus of creative direction. Saxophonist/clarinetist Aram Shelton's history with Chicago inevitably leads a listener to draw comparisons between the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians and Shelton's colorful and spacious composition style, with "Four Thoughts" and "Skipped Rocks" both offering an enchanting blend of abstraction, freedom and lyricism. Drummer Kjell Nordeson sounds amazing on the latter and the Swede's own compositions are beautiful, "Shells" brimming with energy and drive and "Sung By Dogs" mixing melodic intrigue with some great extended techniques from trumpeter Darren Johnston.

Johnston's compositions probably most directly call to mind Ornette Coleman's unlikely melodic structures, with the themes of "The Ear That Was Sold To a Fish" and "Sink Town" floating over a propulsive rhythm. Bassist Lisa Mezzacappa's prodigious technique lends the ensemble firm footing and a flexible poise that enables fluidity of motion. Both her arco and pizzicato playing are buoyant, assured and consistently engaging. Her "The Deep Disciplines" sets up a variety of ensemble shapes in the composed sections, with sharp unisons, wobbling trills and

driving rhythms all careening up against each other.

The variety of compositional structures on display across this disc are impressive and the energy with which the musicians bring these works to life is ear-grabbing. Having each found their way to the Bay Area from disparate locales, they have created a cohesive band with a sense of teamwork and a love of innovation and tradition, both shared and personal. The band functions so well as a unit because it is made up of individuals enjoying each other's ideas and discoveries.

For more information, visit cleanfeed-records.com. This group is at Barbès Jul. 6th, Douglass Street Music Collective Jul. 9th and The Stone Jul. 10th. See Calendar.

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The Age of Carbon
Elliott Sharp (Intakt)
by Ken Waxman

From 1984-91 guitarist Elliott Sharp stood the conventions of rock, improv and notated music on their heads with his percussion-heavy Carbon band. Using overdubs to add greater density to the match of his double-neck guitar and reeds with at least three percussionists, plus brass players, an electric harpist and sampler exponents, he created a sound that was uniquely audacious.

Listening to the 49 tracks, which last from 31 seconds to more than 18 minutes, on this three-CD retrospective, the suspicion remains that the band's salad days were at its beginnings. Certainly the early arrangements, which encompass polyrhythmic positions from each of three drummers (Mark Miller, Charles K. Noyes and David Linton), introduce a refreshing variety to the lengthier tunes. But by the '90s, when Joseph Trump and Samm Bennett were more often behind the kit, the relentless thumping could easily have been transferred onto any stripped-down pop-rock session of the day without disruption. Other players' contributions make a difference however. "Singularly" on Disc 3, for instance, manages to be both abstract and authoritative in a sparse setup when drummer Bobby Previte's paradiddles and thumps intensify Sharp's power-chording.

The early Carbon was also more daring, as Sharp utilized his reeds almost as frequently as his guitar. Echoing riffs from overdubbed horns mix with strident guitar licks on a tune such as "Iso", even while the hefty beats from the live drummers separate and unite throughout. Inspired by fractal geometry, "Self-Squared Dragon" finds Sharp's fuzz tones and reverb extended with banjo-like fills and bass-string buzzes in a stop-time extravaganza enlivened by brays from Jim Staley's trombone. Staley and Ken Heer on trombones, tubaist Dave Hofstra and additional percussionists also help define the multi-part "Sili/Contemp/Tation", recorded live at The Kitchen. As the percussionists bang away in different tempos, Hofstra's pedal-point blasts provide the continuum while Sharp's trebly guitar distortion slowly moves up the scale. The interjection of glottal stops from the brass keeps the percussion backbeat from overwhelming the narrative.

With Carbon later on adopting repetitive organ-like lines from a sampler/keyboardist, stylized guitar riffs and seemingly inexhaustible multiple percussion beats, other memorable tracks stay far away from rock-like replication by introducing novel concepts. For example, "Not-Yet-Time", a score to a dance piece from 1985, uses electronic distortions to mold and color the underlying theme. While the drummers' shuffles are still dense, they're lightened by mulched textures from the overdubbed reeds, as well as Sharp's distinct finger-styled runs. With the use of a graphic score and instruction sets, "Jump Cut", from 1990, shows another path the band could have followed. Percussive clip-clops and what sounds like hammering on a thunder sheet are balanced by a sluicing electric bass solo, a wash of keyboard harmonies and guitar pyrotechnics.

The tracks on *The Age of Carbon* can be split in half. Many are admirable enough to stand up to repeated listening. However a high majority of the others relate so clearly to the big beat-obsessed musical ideas of their time that carbon dating wouldn't be necessary to situate them historically.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch. Sharp is at The Stone Jul. 7th in duo with Mary Halvorson. See Calendar.



Voice of My Beautiful Country
René Marie (Motéma Music)
by Joel Roberts

René Marie didn't begin singing professionally until she was past 40. But she's certainly made up for lost time over the past decade and a half, establishing herself as one of the music's premier vocalists with a sensuous style that mixes blues, soul and gospel with a strong respect for the jazz tradition. She's also an actress and activist and, in the tradition of Nina Simone and Abbey Lincoln, a jazz singer who directly addresses social issues in her music.

Her latest release is one of her best yet, a deeply personal and thoughtful exploration of the many colors of American music. The set list is one of the most diverse and seemingly mismatched you're likely to see, ranging from Tin Pan Alley (Jimmy Van Heusen's "Imagination") to Motown (The Temptations' "Just My Imagination") and from 19th century folk music ("Oh Shenandoah") to '60s acid rock (The Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit"). But Marie, joined by her longtime trio (pianist Kevin Bales, bassist Rodney Jordan and drummer Quentin Baxter), reworks and reimagines these tunes, making each one entirely her own and finding the common thread that makes them all part of the American fabric.

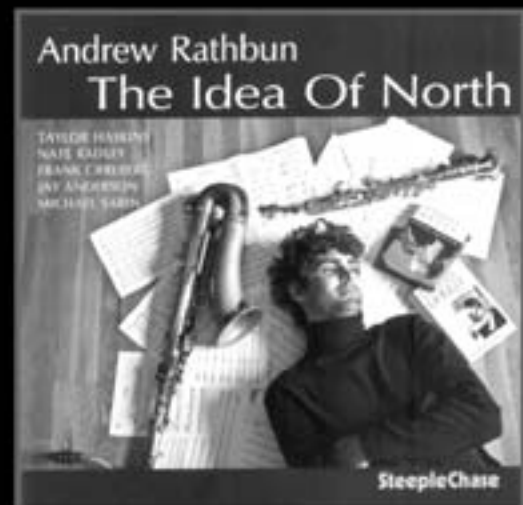
The album's focal point is the title suite, a rousing and soulful reading of the patriotic standards "America the Beautiful" and "My Country 'Tis of Thee", along with her highly original version of the national anthem, which features the lyrics of the spiritual "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (long known as the "Black National Anthem") set to the melody of "The Star Spangled Banner". Marie created a stir when she sang this arrangement at a Denver civic event three years ago, but this simple, yet powerful musical statement certainly gets its message across. It's a fitting and dramatic conclusion to one of the most ambitious and successful jazz albums of the year.

For more information, visit motema.com. Marie is at Jazz Standard Jul. 7th-10th. See Calendar.

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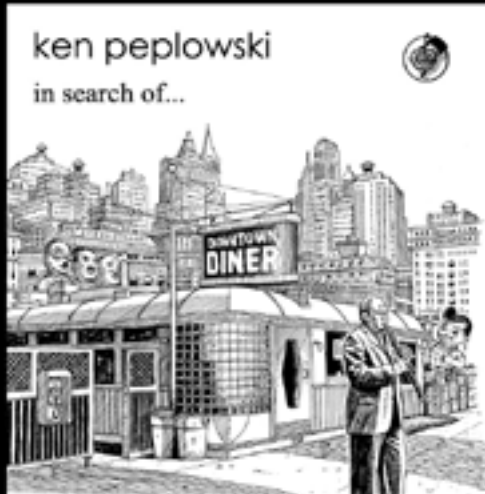
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30 years into a career that still finds him holding forth in the front row, Peplowski and his pals serve up a smoking set that keeps his creative and unique style front and center. A tasty mainstreamer throughout, this is solid sitting down jazz that gives you our daily minimum requirement of bounce to the ounce. Solid.
Chris Spector, Midwest Record

For me, any recording with a cover drawn by Bill Griffith ("Zippy The Pinhead") has started off on the right foot. It's also new music from the fine clarinetist and occasional tenor saxophonist Ken Peplowski and "In Search Of..." (Capri Records) - what's not to like.
Richard Kamins - Step Tempest

Ken Peplowski has a beautiful command of tone be it on the clarinet, his signature instrument, or the tenor saxophone, which he plays equally well. On "in search of...", Peplowski's latest recording, we find the masterful reed man applying that tone to a terrific set of standards and new music.
FRANK ALKYER Downbeat Critic's Choice.

Ken Peplowski is a clarinet virtuoso, with a tone of such warmth and beauty that it takes only a few bars to create a feel-good atmosphere, either in performance or, as he ably demonstrates on In Search Of ..., in the studio.
Bruce Lindsay.



Lines of Oppression
Ari Hoenig (Naive)
by Elliott Simon

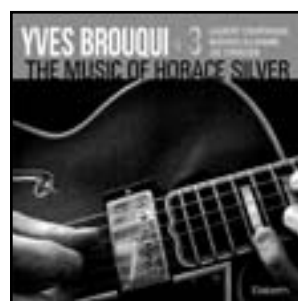
Not to say that drummer Ari Hoenig needed a change but in a move that is perhaps more reflective of maturity and experience than it is of musical direction, *Lines of Oppression* is squarely about the band. During the past 10 years Hoenig has showcased his unmatched polyrhythmic mastery and uncanny ability to coax melody out of his drumset. In the process, he has become one of NYC's top drummers. Here both pianist Tigran Hamasyan and guitarist Gilad Hekselman as well as bassists Orlando Le Fleming and Chris Tordini combine for a very entertaining group effort.

Like Hoenig, both Hekselman and Hamasyan are striking in their virtuosity, making the group ethos all the more refreshing. The session could easily have devolved into a showcase of solos but while the licks and chops are present, the groove is melodic and often times downright pretty. The opening title track, with its repetitive hook and 11-minute length, is a custom-made forum for Hekselman. He excels with piercingly complex electric runs but the band never loses sight of the tune. A middle diversion led by Hamasyan's off-center interpretation of the melody solidifies as much as it charts a new direction.

Many of the remaining songs are similarly constructed. The frenetic "Arrows and Loops", with its hints of Eastern Europe, has Hamasyan dancing with speed and precision without sacrificing composition before the band coheres, both instrumentally and vocally, around the delicately lovely theme of "Wedding Song". The requisite forum for Hoenig's drum-singing technique is the Jazz Messengers' "Moanin'", which evolves into a nicely-put-together vehicle for group improv before the band congeals around the eerie motif of "Loves Feathered Nails". Things close with an interesting juxtaposition of the standard "How High the Moon" and the original "Higher to Hayastan" for a rocking redux tribute to some Armenian roots.

It remains to be seen if this is a step in a new direction or a pause along the way but *Lines of Oppression* is Hoenig's strongest statement of leadership yet.

For more information, visit naive.fr. Hoenig is at Smalls Jul. 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th and Cornelia Street Café Jul. 9th. See Calendar.



The Music of Horace Silver
Yves Brouqui +3 (Elabeth)
by Francie Scanlon

After a quarter-century as a professional musician, French guitarist Yves Brouqui has arrived - big-time! Since his initial time in New York in the early '90s, spent ensconced in the Smalls scene, Brouqui has toiled with the likes of Grant Stewart, Spike Wilner, Jim

Rotondi, Bobby Durham and Eric Alexander as well as a number of important French musicians. His new recording, *The Music of Horace Silver*, with countrymen pianist Laurent Courthaliac and bassist Matthias Allamane, along with New York drummer Joe Strasser, heralds a very significant benchmark in his development as a musician and composer.

A golden homage to legendary pianist/composer Horace Silver, a prolific leader and important sideman with such players as Art Blakey, Miles Davis and Hank Mobley, Brouqui's synergistic quartet accomplishes Silver's command from his autobiography *Let's Get to the Nitty Gritty*: "Do your thing with it. Keep the music alive, pure and progressive." The spirit of Silver is thoroughly present in the glorious melodic sweeps and rhythms channeled by Brouqui's group, almost as good as any in which Silver participated from the mid '50s-late '60s.

Brouqui's debut as a leader for Elabeth Records resoundingly echoes the vibe of Silver's quintet when it played the streets of New York in the early days of the late Dr. Billy Taylor's Jazzmobile flat-bed truck and Slugs in East Village.

In addition to presenting two original works - "Love Walk" and "I Remember Dan" - Brouqui skillfully avoids the temptation of retransmitting some of Silver's most famous pieces and instead masterfully interprets and advances the reach of lesser-known works such as "Horacescope", "Yeah" and "Sweet Stuff". No mere imitation - though quite flattering to Silver - it's an interpretative, stylized and unabashedly glamorous journey of dazzling solos and harmonious rhythms.

For more information, visit elabeth.com. A Horace Silver tribute is at Smoke Jul. 8th-9th. See Calendar.

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The Throes
Nate Wooley/Taylor Ho Bynum (CIMP)



High Society
Nate Wooley/Peter Evans (Carrier)

by Robert Iannapolo

We are fortunate to be living in an era with several young, accomplished improvising trumpeters ready to assert their voices in the future history of the instrument. Three are featured in this review: Nate Wooley, Taylor Ho Bynum and Peter Evans.

Although very different from each other, they have several things in common: they are each strong technical players; each are willing to experiment and take risks and have derived inspiration, not only from the obvious trumpet sources (Armstrong, the Ellingtonians and the bop technicians) but also from innovators like Bill Dixon, Wadada Leo Smith and Paul Smoker. And they collaborate with fellow trumpeters.

Wooley and Bynum are willing to the point of forming a group and writing compositions for the band. *The Throes* was recorded after almost two years of performing together. The rhythm sectioners of bassist Ken Filiano and drummer Tomas Fujiwara were unfamiliar with each other when the group started but here they work in tandem to support, prod and drive the co-leaders. It's easy to tell Wooley from Bynum since the latter is playing cornet throughout and they blend the two horns nicely when playing simultaneously. The program consists of two pieces by Wooley, two by Bynum and one each from Filiano and Fujiwara. Wooley's two contributions include a smartly bopping piece of West Coast-influenced cool, "Face To The Sun", and the concluding slow, beautiful exercise in tonal distortion, "Back To My Steel". The compositions are separated by improvised duets from various members of the group. *The Throes* is an excellent blend of both the accessible and adventurous approach to contemporary jazz and it's a good disc to check out the varied styles of two of the best trumpeters playing today.

And then there's the duo of Wooley with Peter Evans. Wooley has intrepidly explored more hard-edged areas: the two Blue Collar discs with Steve Swell and Tatsuya Nakatani and the Silo disc on Utech are good examples. And he uses electronics in his setup, most notably in his duets with British drummer Paul Lytton. Evans, while a game free improviser, is less inclined toward electronics. But on *High Society*, the two plug into guitar amps and blow and blow hard and they don't let up. *High Society* is all about extended technique, breath, vocalization, feedback, the percussive popping of valves and any alien sound the instrument can make. While the music is aggressive, assaultive at times, there are also moments of variegation. "I" seems to be the most succinct piece with its boiling tea kettle opening, extended wall of sound feedback and subsonic, pulsing conclusion. While there are precedents of this style of playing in Wooley's discography, Evans' fans from albums might be a bit startled by this approach at first. Most people will probably be dismissive but it's really quite a brilliant display of trumpetronics by two players who seem to be enjoying the hell out of performing it.

For more information, visit cimprecords.com and carrierrecords.com. Wooley is at *The Stone* Jul. 12th and 15th with Adam Lane and as a leader, *Clemente Soto Velez* Jul. 18th and *I-Beam* Jul. 29th and *Café Orwell* Jul. 30th, both with James Falzone. See Calendar.

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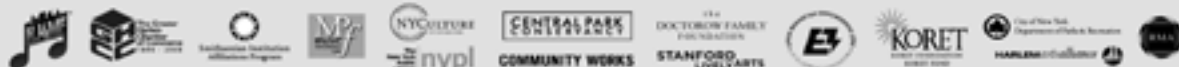
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Power Play
Ralph Bowen
(Posi-Tone)



All Wrapped Up
Jared Gold
(Posi-Tone)

by Ken Dryden

While many of his Posi-Tone labelmates are young lions and lionesses, saxist Ralph Bowen has made his mark since arriving on the New York City jazz scene in the late '80s. He has recorded with Benny Carter, Horace Silver, Ralph Peterson, Jr., Michel Camilo, Steve Wilson and Anthony Branker, to name just a few.

Power Play is Bowen's seventh CD as a leader and he's joined by a strong rhythm section consisting of pianist Orrin Evans, bassist Kenny Davis and drummer Donald Edwards. Bowen's big toned tenor is the centerpiece of his brisk hardbop vehicle "K. D.'s Blues" as he gradually moves from building upon the initial riff to a rapid-fire run introducing Evans' more conventional (but no less powerful) solo. "The Good Shepherd" initially sounds like an Irish jig recast in a postbop setting, though it quickly evolves into a wild exploration by Bowen with Evans sitting out as Davis and Edwards fuel the leader's fire. The infectious "Drumheller Valley" is constructed upon a simple riff, though this driving work quickly builds steam into a powerful performance by the quartet. Bowen switches to soprano for his soft ballad "Jessica" and the bittersweet "A Solar Romance". The sole standard is a deliberate, elegant arrangement of "My One and Only Love" that showcases Bowen's lyricism.

Organist Jared Gold has made great strides during his brief career as a leader. For *All Wrapped Up*, his fourth Posi-Tone CD, he recruited Bowen, trumpeter Jim Rotondi and drummer Quincy Davis, all seasoned, in-demand musicians. Gold's approach to organ is fresh, drawing from earlier greats but building upon their foundation to develop his own distinctive style. He composed several originals for this date, including the turbocharged "My Sentiments Exactly", a piece full of twists that energizes the players. With a title like "Get Out of My Sandbox", it's expected that a song will have a bit of humor and this funky off-center composition doesn't disappoint. "Just a Suggestion" is equally funk-filled, with tight unison lines and Bowen's hip tenor sax in the spotlight. Each of the sidemen contributed an original as well: Davis composed the harmonically rich "Piece of Mine"; Rotondi's slow, sorrowful "Dark Blue" has a lonely air and Bowen's "Midnight Snack" is a surging, free-spirited affair.

For more information, visit posi-tone.com. Bowen is at Zinc Bar Jul. 13th with Orrin Evans and Smalls Jul. 28th. See Calendar.



The Way We Were (Live in Concert)
Etta Jones & Houston Person (HighNote)
by Andrew Vélez

What is immediately and most striking about this set's opener, "Do Nothin' 'Till You Hear From Me", is

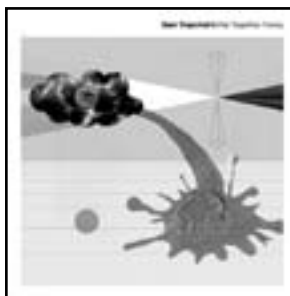
how Houston Person's hot tenor saxophone recalls the voice of his late, longtime musical partner, vocalist Etta Jones. That honking furnace heat continues through three more hot instrumentals, providing a lead-up to a series of vocals by Jones. On that Ellington classic and throughout, pianist Stan Hope delivers swinging accompaniment and prime solos.

Jones, a veteran R&B singer with nonpareil blues and jazz skills, recorded this set live about a year and a half before she passed in 2001. Jones' delivery of "Fine and Mellow" is a salute to one of her mentors, Billie Holiday. What's evident is how she shared a blues feel and a way of twisting notes with Holiday that is as distinctive as it is satisfying. Jones also had a great sense of humor, clear when she ends the tune with a brief 12-bar imitation of Lady Day. As an homage it is as witty as it is spot-on.

Together she and Hope transform "I Could Have Danced All Night". She stretches and honks the notes of "danced and danced and danced". Nothing is ever just a throwaway with these pros. Even with a bit of fluff like "Ma, He's Makin' Eyes At Me", she and Person give a shout-out performance that transforms it into a rocking interlude.

The closest Jones ever came to having a hit record was in 1960 with her version of "Don't Go To Strangers" (from the Prestige album of the same name). On this recording it's an even more stripped down version of this Redd Evans/Arthur Kent/Dave Mann blues. A powerhouse rendition by a great singer, she inhabits the song in a way that speaks in no-frills style to decades of singing and living by a deep soul.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Person is at Grant's Tomb Jul. 13th as part of Jazzmobile, Jazz Standard Jul. 14th-17th and 92nd Street Y Jul. 19th. See Calendar.



Lollipopocalypse
Sam Trapchak's Put Together Funny (s/r)
by Terrell Holmes

With a band named Put Together Funny and a CD entitled *Lollipopocalypse*, one might expect a roster of whimsical and off-the-scale tunes with satire at their core. This band, however, under the leadership of bassist Sam Trapchak, mostly plays splendid jazz tracks spiced with rock and R&B influences.

Guitarist Tom Chang and alto saxophonist Greg Ward open the call-and-response-inspired "Different Dance". It begins as a tender two-step and gains momentum when the leader steps in with a swinging pizzicato. Ward expands his ideas in fits and starts but once he finds an idea to cling to, he blows wonderfully. On the rock/R&B amalgam "On the Cusp of Cancer" Chang drops the gloves and lets loose with atavistically distorted, burning licks over drummer Arthur Vint's thrashing. Vint is also the support, with sticks on rims, as Trapchak puts down some funky pizzicato and Ward gets the last word, remonstrating in the upper register as the song crescendos. Ward and Chang also shine on the unconventional "Tongue and Groove".

This group has a surprising and pleasant touch on straight-ahead jazz. Ward plays flawlessly along the melody of "Long Live/Less Say", with Chang adding lush notes with softer edges. Liling guitar gives the lovely "Losing You" an Ellingtonian dreaminess. Trapchak plays with a subtlety just above ear level here and shows a fully developed and sophisticated rhythmic sense on "Precious Few".

The title track has the promise of energy and eccentricity that the band name seemed to suggest. After the quintet throws a melodic head fake in the song's first half, a guttural rumble, then full-blown shout, by Chang takes the tune into second gear. Trapchak and company morph into an unbridled garage band: Chang blares his chords, Ward screams at the top of his lungs and delightful chaos ensues. This song defines what Put Together Funny is all about: jazz played with a rock and roll heart and a free sensibility, down to the last notes.

For more information, visit samtrapchak.com. This group is at Cornelia Street Café Jul. 17th. See Calendar.



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Lou's Idea
Louis Hayes
(American Showplace)



Live at Smalls
Jazz Incorporated
(smallsLIVE)

by Marcia Hillman

Drummer Louis Hayes keeps on going and never skips a beat. This is clearly demonstrated by two new releases - each one with a different personnel lineup and material. The drummer, known for his work through the years with his Cannonball Legacy Band and various quintets under his name (as well as working with just about everybody along the way), has found some new playmates here.

Lou's Idea by the Louis Hayes Jazz Communicators (the group title taken from a group Hayes put together in 1965 which was "Lou's idea") finds Hayes joined by Mulgrew Miller (piano), Santi Debriano (bass), Steve Nelson (vibes) and Abraham Burton (saxophone). The choice of material covers a wide range - all the way from commercial pop (Bacharach/David's "Say A Little Prayer") to a jazz standard such as Cedar Walton's "Bolivia", which contains rousing performances by all. Hayes' talent for listening to the other instrumentalists stands out on this CD, especially on McCoy Tyner's "Just Feeling", where he engages in musical conversation with Miller. There are a number of highlights to check out - Nelson and Burton

sounding very soulful and Debriano's arco work on Mal Waldron's "Soul Eyes"; Miller's interpretation of "Bolivia" and an energetic piece of drumwork by Hayes on "Same Page" (an original by Debriano). Also there is a short and a long version of the song "I Have Nothing Better To Do" (originally sung by Carmen McRae and dedicated to her). The long version features some heartfelt piano by Miller.

The Jazz Incorporated CD was recorded live at Smalls Jazz Club in August 2010 by a group with Hayes, trumpeter Jeremy Pelt, pianist Anthony Wonsey and bassist Dezron Douglas. The selection of material is a mix of two originals (one each by Pelt and Wonsey), songs by Duke Pearson, Art Farmer, Dizzy Gillespie and one out of the Rodgers-Hammerstein songbook. Starting off with Farmer's "Punsu" done uptempo, a slow version of Pearson's "Is That So?" is next, featuring a conversational reading by Pelt and Wonsey's stunning piano runs covering the whole of the keyboard. Gillespie's "Woody 'N You" is a standout with searing trumpet, piano acrobatics, pulsing bass and Hayes playing the melody on the drums during his featured spot. "We Kiss In The Shadows" (from *The King And I*) shows off Pelt's softer side and provides a nice change of pace. The closer, "Shout!" (Pelt's original) is a blues where everyone is at his peak - the composer's trumpet is hot and sultry, Wonsey's piano is smoking, Douglas' bass rocks and Hayes continues to be masterful.

Hayes has been quoted as saying that the drummer is the "engine playing through everything." The engine is running smoothly on both of these albums and the listening is good, so enjoy!

For more information, visit americanshowplacemusic.com and smallslive.com. Hayes is at Birdland Jul. 19th-23rd. See Calendar.

notes - but it is Berger's commitment to them and his meticulous integration of them into a larger piece that throws them into striking relief.

"Miniature 8" finds the pianist running down an unfurling melodic line that keeps burbling up and over expected resting points. The selection - perhaps more than any other - is a striking distillation of Berger's method as a composer and performer. The measured, but unpredictably meandering, melody is featured with the bare minimum of left-hand accompaniment, pausing in mid-stride before blooming once again, only to halt on an unexpected note of consonance. The performance sounds more spontaneous the further you get into it until the subtlest of themes reappears and a crystalline structure emerges right before a whispered ending.

In addition to Berger's mastery as both a composer and pianist, a great deal of credit to the success of this album has to go to recording engineer and sound editor Ted Orr - a former student of Berger's at his famous Creative Music Studio in the late '70s and a great musician in his own right - who manages to capture every nuance of Berger's sound in a remarkably balanced and full recording. Recorded over two nights at the Kleinert/James Gallery in Berger's longtime home of Woodstock, NY on a gorgeously resonant Steinway, the audio quality is stunning.

Spurred on, no doubt, by these felicitous factors and his own limitless imagination as both a composer and a performer, Berger has succeeded in producing a remarkable album. *Strangely Familiar* quietly demands an engaged listener, but it also richly rewards it in a way that only the best creative music can.

For more information, visit tzadik.com. Berger is at The Stone Mondays. See Calendar.



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Strangely Familiar (17 Miniatures for Piano Solo)
Karl Berger (Tzadik)
by Matthew Miller

"These days we live under the accelerating spell of being short on time, not having time, having to find time, making time," writes Karl Berger in the notes to this masterful performance of 17 miniature piano compositions. "So, please, hold that space for a moment. Just relax and listen. Let yourself go there - find your Music Mind."

Berger's invitation to enter what he describes as "a rare, quiet, natural state" where a listener can not only appreciate, but actually "participate in the spaces where I'm not playing", is impossible to refuse from the opening notes of "Miniature 1", an elegiac and startlingly beautiful exploration of melody through a shifting landscape of rhythmic and harmonic color. Berger's insistent right hand keeps the focus on the thematic line while he continually recontextualizes with light bass notes and tone clusters from the left, skirting the boundaries of traditional harmony and fixed tempo, but never getting in the way of the listener filling in the blanks.

Berger's remarkable ability to blend spontaneous ideas into an intricate, but nearly always diaphanous, musical structure is what makes *Strangely Familiar* such an engaging listen. The melodies throughout the performances sound almost familiar in their utter simplicity and directness - "They are simply statements that want to happen," the composer explains in his



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Córdoba

Pedro Giraudo Jazz Orchestra (ZOHO)
by David R. Adler

If one sound in bassist Pedro Giraudo's music stands out the most, it is that of Tony De Vivo's cajón. Somehow this box percussion instrument cuts through the rambunctious reeds and brass of Giraudo's 12-piece ensemble, rooting the music in South American soil but never weighing it down. All the while, Giraudo, a New Yorker since 1996, conjures rhythms and colors of intricate design, fronting a lineup that has remained remarkably steady over the years. His latest CD, *Córdoba*, is the best to date: eight compositions forming a symphony of sorts with four winds, two trumpets, two trombones and rhythm (including drummer Jeff Davis alongside De Vivo). The only lapse: horn soloists are not clearly identified.

There's a story underlying *Córdoba*, named for the city and province in Argentina where Giraudo was raised. Contrasting urban and rural moods, images of girls riding to school on horseback, the bitter taste of a local tea called mate (mah'-tay): such are Giraudo's inspirations, stamped with nostalgia and evoked by means of indigenous rhythms such as the chacarera, zamba and baguala. There's a pronounced folkloric quality and a reliance on clear-as-a-bell tonal harmony, anchored by Jess Jurkovic's piano. Yet the adventurism of New York jazz bursts through, not least in the spitfire improvisation of altoists Will Vinson and Todd Bashore, trumpeters Jonathan Powell and Tatum Greenblatt and trombonists Ryan Keberle and Mike Fahie, among others.

Giraudo is not a showy bassist, but he solos fluently on "Sol Naciente" and nails complex lines on electric bass - a sound new to this group - on "Duende del Mate", doubling with Vinson's soprano sax to startling effect. He brings a subtle Ellingtonian flair to the three-part "Pueblo", adding in a marvelous chorale passage for flutes and bass clarinet. But apart from the finely wrought arrangements, it's the tight and playfully lopsided rhythm - and the buzzing thud of that cajón - that gives Giraudo's little big band its most sizable impact.

For more information, visit zohomusic.com. Giraudo's sextet is at Barbès Jul. 9th and orchestra at 92Y Tribeca Jul. 19th. See Calendar.



Gray Scale
Free Fall (Smalltown Superjazz)
Last Train to the First Station
Reed Trio (Kilogram)
Strade d'Acqua/Roads of Water
Ken Vandermark (Multikulti Project)
by John Sharpe

In these pages some months ago, trombonist Steve Swell highlighted a new paradigm of the current jazz

scene that many are missing: the tendency for musicians to be improvising in a number of approaches and settings, but maintaining a personal soundscape. No one personifies this more than the prolific Chicago reedman Ken Vandermark, who hits the road for more than half the year in an absurdly wide range of vehicles, spanning duets to large ensembles.

On *Gray Scale*, Vandermark appears with two Norwegian musicians, both from the Scandinavian supergroup Atomic. Named after the final recording of reedman Jimmy Giuffre's seminal '60s free improvising trio, *Free Fall* also mimics their chamber-inclined lineup with the Chicagoan restricting himself to clarinets, alongside Håvard Wiik (piano) and Ingebrigt Håker Flaten (bass). While the group's previous albums have featured charts from each bandmember alongside free improvisations, on this studio set the band has dispensed entirely with written compositions. And the gambit pays off handsomely with one of the band's strongest outings, where the group ethos of austere contemporary classicism juxtaposed with energetic expression transcends the lack of paperwork. Together they create wonderful synchronicities that would be almost impossible to plot, like the astonishing passage on "Griseus" where Håker Flaten's muscular percussive slap of string against wood is matched by Vandermark's tongue-clicking clarinet, framing Wiik's insistent piano embellishment. Such convergences abound and each adds unexpected flourishes. On "Argenteus" the clarinetist's clarion cry stands in stark relief against Wiik's pecking piano and the bassist's soaring arco muttering like distant gulls to set up a compelling meditative ending. Each listen to this excellent disc reveals fresh depths.

Another threesome takes the stage on *Last Train to the First Station* by the descriptively named Reed Trio, which matches Vandermark with two Polish confreres from his Resonance Ensemble. Consisting of 11 spontaneous pieces, the program explores all the possibilities inherent in the lineup through three duos, solos for each and a handful of trios. Variety is assured through switches of personnel and instrumentation, all helpfully demarcated on the neatly-packaged case so the listener can track who is playing what. Recorded in front of what sounds like a smallish audience, there is a slightly distant ambience, but it is still possible to hear all the intimate minutiae. All three prove instrumentalists of the highest order. On his feature, reedman Mikolaj Trzaska blows throaty alto saxophone with a broad vibrato, moving from the yelping to the lyric while clarinetist Waclaw Zimpel seems more concerned with timbre and weight of line, channeling didgeridoo through his bass clarinet before flowering into eloquent soliloquy. Together they contrast an almost classical severity with multiphonics and extreme registers in a set that doesn't quite match the beautiful ugliness of Vandermark's other reed trio *Sonore* with Peter Brötzmann and Mats Gustafsson, but still promises enough to make this group worth watching.

Also crossing international borders is Vandermark's first soundtrack, composed to accompany *Strade d'Acqua/Roads of Water*, a movie that records a journey up the Amazon by Italian director Augusto Contento. To perform his charts, Vandermark assembled a cast of frequent collaborators under the moniker Predella Group. Compared to much of the Chicagoan's output, he utilizes simpler forms here, more often structured around steady rhythms, though on some numbers like the opening "Further" abrupt cuts increase complexity and mirror cinematic technique. Tim Daisy's varied percussion is one of the key determinants of mood. His calm marimba patterns evoke flowing water at the outset of the episodic "Sieve of the Soul", but his choppy clatter in tandem with the leader's dissonant saxophone during "Signal" creates a more edgy vibe. A sense of restraint runs through the set. "Dust Town" nurtures a gentle swing with breathy

tenor and grainy lyricism from Jeb Bishop's trombone while the jazzy groove of "Austral Cartography" develops from an assortment of bass riffs languidly deployed by Nate McBride and buoying up lovely relaxed solos from Vandermark and trumpeter Jaimie Branch. Knowing what these folks are capable of, some may be overwhelmed, but of course like all successful soundtracks, the intent is to support not overpower and to reap the full effect requires recourse to a screening (possible online).

For more information, visit smalltownsupersound.com, kilogram.pl and multikulti.com. Vandermark is at The Stone Jul. 8th-9th. See Calendar.

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Live at Feinstein's
Rebecca Kilgore/Harry Allen Quartet (Arbors)
 by George Kanzler

Supper club/cabaret rooms like Feinstein's don't just book bands, they book theme acts or shows. So here we have the show singer Rebecca Kilgore and tenor saxophonist Harry Allen's quartet presented in August 2010, the hook being the brief but resonant teaming, on (mostly) '30s records, between Billie "Lady Day" Holiday and Lester "Prez" Young. But the repertoire here isn't limited to songs those two recorded together, just as the performances don't mimic the music.

Classic swing is an increasingly rare commodity these days. Many younger neo-swing musicians and especially singers are content to skim the surface of swing feel, either rocking pendulum fashion on a two-beat rhythm or stomping down on a foursquare, four-beat rhythm. Both lack the nuance and lilt of vocal and small combo swing exemplified here by Allen's band - Rossano Sportiello (piano), Joel Forbes (bass) and Chuck Riggs (drums) - and Kilgore.

Those yearning for the bittersweet, rueful angst of later Holiday need not apply here, as heartbreak and pathos are not on the menu, nor are bathetic and self-flagellating songs (or interpretations). The touchstone here is "Getting Some Fun Out of Life" and even "You

Can't Lose a Broken Heart" is approached as more lark than lament.

The old swing maxim that "T'Ain't What'cha Do, It's The Way How'cha Do It" applies, especially to songs recorded by Holiday that have never really been standards, none more so than the opening track, "Your Mother's Son-in-Law", from Holiday's first recording session in 1933, when she was still a teenager. Kilgore adds the verse Holiday never recorded, Allen quotes Benny Goodman licks (who was on the original session) and the two insert some scat-plus-sax shout riffs in the middle, making this novelty song a bright delight. "Them There Eyes" gets a fast spin with panache, Kilgore never rushing as she flexibly toys with the melody, Allen adding gruff heft with his sax - his tone/approach is more late Al Cohn or Ben Webster than Prez these days. Allen and Kilgore interact becomingly as his obligati shadow vocals, but it's the subtleties and nuances of their time and swing that make this CD so enjoyable.

For more information, visit arborsrecords.com. Allen is at Feinstein's Jul. 11th, 92nd Street Y Jul. 21st and Jazz Standard Jul. 28th-31st with Freddy Cole. See Calendar.



Heart's Reflections
Wadada Leo Smith's Organic (Cuneiform)
 by Stuart Broomer

In its latest expansive recording, trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith's Organic is a 14-member band, an ensemble with four electric guitars, piano, violin, two saxophones, two laptops and two basses, all of it pressed forward by the truly magisterial drumming of Pheeroan akLaff. Clearly an outgrowth of Smith's interest in *Bitches Brew*-era Miles Davis fusion, Organic expands the concept to take in Smith's interests in extended composition and contemporary electronics.

The two-CD set has at its center the piece *Heart's Reflections: Splendors of Light and Purification*, an 11-part suite, an hour in length, dedicated to the 13th century spiritual teacher Shaykh Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili. Its themes are celebration and serenity, search and elegy and its often-modal anthems inspire some of Smith's finest trumpet playing, whether it's the beautiful and pensive Harmon-muted dirge of the opening "The Dhikr Of Radiant Hearts, Pt. I", set against the spare drumming and cymbals of akLaff, or the wistful floating sound of "Spiritual Wayfarers", accompanied by the bubbling electric piano of Angelica Sanchez.

While Smith has tremendous orchestral resources available to him here, he uses them with rare discretion, keeping them in check to be unleashed for episodes like the dense funk-rhythms of the ebullient "Certainty". In the final two-part "The Well", Smith plays long stretches with just akLaff or the laptop players Mark Trayle and Charlie Burgin. The individual voices of the guitarists, most notably Michael Gregory and Brandon Ross, are heard at greater length in the long suites that open and close the CDs - 20 minute homages to the late Don Cherry and Leroy Jenkins, each of which moves through a kaleidoscope of shifting moods and are less introspective than the title suite. From its rock elements to its abstract electronics, Organic successfully fuses diverse elements of Smith's multi-faceted musical personality.

For more information, visit cuneiformrecords.com. Smith is at The Stone Jul. 5th in duo with Angelica Sanchez. See Calendar.

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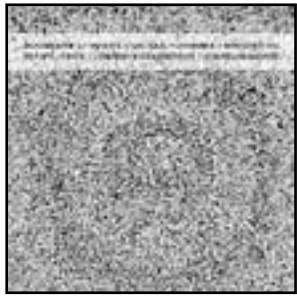
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Doomsayer
Tim Kuhl (eleven2eleven)
by Sean Fitzell

Drummer Tim Kuhl exemplifies the omnivorous flexibility of the emerging generation. He's backed straight-jazz veterans and mixed with free improvisers. After two releases featuring his compositions, he tacks free on *Doomsayer*. The broad timbres and versatility of the group - bassist Michael Formanek, guitarist Jonathan Goldberger, violist Frantz Loriot, trombonist Ben Gerstein and saxist Jonathan Moritz - ensure the creative unpredictability that Kuhl craves.

Withholding bombast, the introductory "Gray" is a patient drum solo with a spare, heavy bass drum groove that Kuhl extrapolates with flourishes around the kit. "Gold", a quarter-hour epic, snakes its way from amorphous probing to a long section set by Goldberger's pulsing. Kuhl's emphatic snare bursts elicit excited retorts, until the piece gradually recedes. Most pieces illustrate a similarly investigatory approach; only the caustic "Pink" erupts with the full band's cacophony of swirling notes and pounding drums in a three-minute blast.

Kuhl effectively highlights each musician with featured subsets. His minimal malleted drums become tribal for Loriot's sweeping runs on "Green" while on

"Violet" Formanek and Moritz enter a subdued dialogue. The bassist's thick lines begin "Royal", before the horns patter against snapped strings and a pizzicato viola duet develops, followed by a rapid succession of staccato 'bone and sax pops. Kuhl's rapping snare mirrors Goldberger's delayed effect, cushioning Gerstein's blowing and concise ending on "Red". Haunting guitar and subtle drum colors join for the darkly cinematic "Black", apt accompaniment for the closing credits of an indie-drama and evocative of the album's title.

For more information, visit timkuhl.com. This group is at *Cornelia Street Café Jul. 14th*. See Calendar.



(re)Conception
Helen Sung (SteepleChase)
by Russ Musto

Little more than a decade and a half after her first introduction to jazz, Helen Sung has emerged as one of the music's premier young pianists. Classical training is clearly evident in her impeccable technique and touch, as well the intelligent construction of her arrangements and improvisations, but the depth of her jazz devotion is unmistakably apparent in her highly personalized phrasing and unswerving swing. Inspired

early on by Tommy Flanagan, this disc bears the unmistakable mark of that great piano master. On only her second trio outing Sung is joined by Flanagan's last rhythm team of bassist Peter Washington and drummer Lewis Nash and swings with remarkable maturity, demonstrating mastery of a classic idiom.

The set begins with a reworking of George Shearing's "Conception" [hence the (re) prefix], which integrates Washington's bass and Nash's brushes into an organic group sound. Her arrangement of Frank Loesser's "I Believe In You", utilizing a Sergio Mendes-like vamp to open and close the piece, reinvigorates the popular melody. The leader's classical background comes through in virtuosic performances of the poignantly interpreted "Far From The Home I Love" (from *Fiddler On The Roof*) and the briskly waltzing original composition "Duplicity" (a feature for Washington's lyrical bass). The trio's informal romp on "C Jam Blues" is truly ducal in its elegance and pure New York in its vigor.

Sung's jaunty arrangement of Burt Bacharach's ever-charming "Wives and Lovers" displays her unfailing lyricism, a quality shared by Washington in both his accompaniment and solo. "Crazy He Calls Me" is a stirring ballad performance, full of emotional touches. The uptempo arrangement of Monk's seldom-heard "Teo", framed as a classically-tinged march, features the pianist burning things up, propelled by fast walking bass and irrepressible drumming. The date's concluding track, Sung's arrangement of the Ellington rarity "Everything But You", again recalls the graceful sophistication of the Flanagan trio to end a recording truly timeless in its sound.

For more information, visit steeplechase.dk. Sung is at *Smalls Jul. 14th*. See Calendar.

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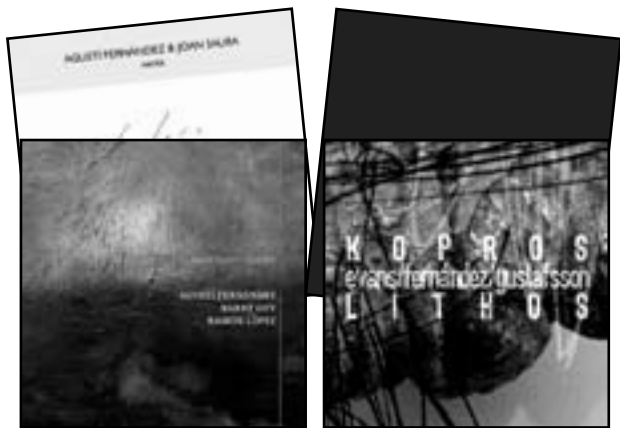
Bridges
TIN/BAG (Mabnotes)
by Clifford Allen

It wouldn't be wrong or unfair to call the music of TIN/BAG, the duo of LA trumpeter Kris Tiner and Brooklyn guitarist Mike Baggetta, a post-rock pairing. On *Bridges*, their third disc together, the mood of melodic abstraction stretches further away from jazz and improvised composition, in the semi-traditional sense, into areas of atmosphere with a decidedly 'pop' sensibility. Tiner's compositions make up six of the nine tunes here, the title track and "The Truth" are Baggetta's subtle contributions and the disc closes with a cover of Bob Dylan's "Just Like a Woman".

Baggetta's guitar work is often stripped-down and ultra-muted, having a tendency to approach a kind of dusty, filmic minimalism, which presents an interesting contrast with the stately, poised cadenzas of Tiner's brass. The opening "Bobo" presents flurries at first, moving into plaintive footfalls as Baggetta picks out a spacious, hushed rhythm that offers curious support to the trumpeter's direct, gauzily particulate phrases. Occasionally, the guitar rhythms give rise to spiky, air-clearing passages that augment Tiner's steeliness. The pair move through space with sound, taking time to ensure that notes and progressions are absolutely felt even if the music is equal parts pictorial (or imagist) in its reach. "Maslow" is slightly busier with Tiner's gulps, whines and flutters both soft and with a biting tone while Baggetta's gentle reverb caresses and frames the trumpeter's agitation.

The title track begins with Baggetta solo, almost tenor guitar-like in tonal quality. Tiner, upon entering in muted wafts, channels Wadada Leo Smith with incisive softness. "The Truth" reprises the opener's folksy qualities, dewy strums floating almost loop-like with trumpet approaching mildly harried intensity. It's fitting that the pair close with Dylan, embracing a homespun melodicism and wistful romance, but this cover is unnecessary by the same token - TIN/BAG do that quite well on their own.

For more information, visit mikebaggetta.com. This group is at Brooklyn Conservatory of Music Jul. 21st. See Calendar.



Vents Agustí Fernández/John Saura (psi)
Ambrosia Joe Morris/Agustí Fernández (Riti)
Morning Glory (+ Live in New York)
Agustí Fernández/Barry Guy/Ramón López (Maya)
Kopros Lithos
Peter Evans/Agustí Fernández/Mats Gustafsson
(Multikulti Project)
by Ken Waxman

Over the past 15 years Catalan pianist Agustí

Fernández has become the most celebrated pianist - if not complete improviser - from his part of the world. In many ways he's the successor to pianist Tete Montoliu (1933-97). But while Montoliu was a bopper, Fernández doesn't limit himself to one style, as this quartet of memorable discs makes evident.

As founders of the Improvisadors de Barcelona Orchestra, Fernández has often worked with live electronics and sampler player Joan Saura. *Vents* is a rare duo session from the two. Created in studio over an eight-month period, *Vents'* tracks are so much a part of the electro-acoustic world that it's difficult to remember that Fernández is playing acoustic piano. Then again the keyboardist is a master of the timbres that can be bowed, plucked and strummed from internal strings, usually prepared with vibrating objects and his expressions mate perfectly with the austere flanges and oscillations shrilled, reverberated or crunched by Saura's electric implements. Throughout the performances onomatopoeically reflect both meanings of 'vent': an expression of pent-up emotion and an opening for the escape of gas to release pressure. Most of the tracks are remarkable in the way that Fernández' tough keyboard pressure and popping internal strings add a needed humanity to Saura's radiator-like hisses, motor-driven grinding and crackling sound patches.

Ambrosia is not your parents' guitar-piano duo. It put a post-modern cast on the proceedings as Fernández matches wits with guitarist Joe Morris. The latter, who now often works as a bassist, at times manages to translate the low timbre of the four-string to his six-string. That means that echoes of double bass accompaniment is present while the guitarist showcases spiky, single-string action. On a tune such as "Ambrosia 1", the two languidly complement one another even while distending the theme. Morris' fraills speed up to the point that they're eventually bouncing from strings below the bridge and on the neck while Fernández concentrates on swirling and contrasting dynamics à la Cecil Taylor. Even though legato passages and harmonies are at a minimum, some of the tracks on this magisterial six-part suite don't turn away from unintentional delicacy. However, if some tracks come across as a discordant aural version of greyhound racing, with Fernández chord-spraying as quickly as Morris string snaps, the two are still able to intermingle such tactics as soundboard echoes from the pianist and slurred fingering from the guitarist to promote sophisticated parallel improvising.

Morning Glory is wedded to acoustic expression. Recorded in Spain and New York, this two-CD set is a spiky take on the jazz piano trio with British bassist Barry Guy and Spanish percussionist Ramón López. The album's 19 tracks, especially those recorded live at Jazz Standard, could be an updating of Bill Evans' celebrated Village Vanguard sets. With his perfectly formed notes, Fernández makes his composition "David M" a piano showcase with deep ruminations in the instrument's middle register. A swinging, near lullaby, it's also notable for Guy's slippery modulations that are unabashedly tonic. Barely there, with understated bounces on this track, López further exhibits his sensitive touch throughout. He confirms it on a tune such as "Don Miquel", where his nervy tomtom pulse and cymbal scrapes unite with the pianist's methodical keyboard strumming to frame Guy's solo gorgeously. Almost so-called classical in execution, the bassist manages to create two different sounds with his bow, before exciting with hand-pinch lines. There's a faint Latin tinge to "Don Miquel", carried over from Fernández' "Aurora" on the other disc. An Iberian take on Hispanic rhythms, the tremolo patterns reveal many notes in rapid succession, yet the line stretches enough to keep the impressionistic theme chromatic. Guy's retort features scrapped and stropped strings while the percussion undertow is mostly rim shots and what sounds like the hand-crushing of crisp paper. Other

pieces expose more abrasive back-and-forth group improv, often at lightning-quick speeds. At points Fernández' choruses echo from the piano's lower quadrant or he jabs at the keys while Guy bows.

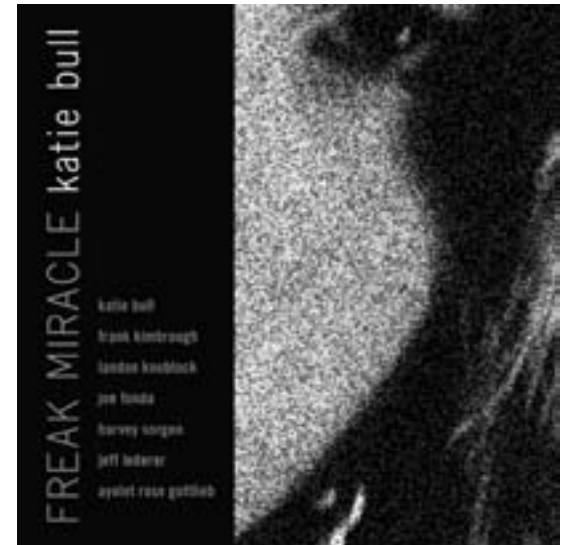
More atonal is *Kopros Lithos*, whose experimental textures arrive courtesy of the pianist, American trumpeter Peter Evans and the baritone saxophone and alto fluteophone of Swede Mats Gustafsson. There's no percussion but that doesn't stop it from being the most stentorian of the four sets. Between Evans' flighty squeals and wide-bore grace notes plus Gustafsson's verbal shouts, tongue slaps and growls from his baritone sax, there's enough discordance to go around. On a track such as "You displaced me by your singing", Fernández adds to the general din by continuously rubbing and plucking his piano strings as well as clattering various objects placed upon them. At the same time it's his methodical key-stopping that guides the trumpeter's flutter-tonguing and the saxophonist's metal-scrapping honks to a more melodic interface. Perhaps those connective timbres from the keyboard also define the message behind another track title: "My fingers were glue". Certainly Fernández' pressure firmly shapes the parallel improvising from the horns. Here Evans buzzes and whinnies as if a metal sheet is pressed against his horn's bell while Gustafsson contributes high-velocity snorts and brays.

Fernández' pianistic control while improvising in a non-conventional manner is a tribute to his skill. It's also another indication why any and all of these discs are satisfying listens.

For more information, visit emanemdisc.com/psi.html, aumfidelity.com/riti.htm, mayarecordings.com and multikulti.com. Fernández is at The Stone Jul. 12th in duo with Joe Morris. See Calendar.

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Don't Follow The Crowd
Eric Alexander (HighNote)
by Alex Henderson

Harold Mabern isn't the only acoustic pianist who Eric Alexander has featured on his albums, but it is safe to say that Mabern is at the top of his list. The big-toned tenor saxophonist has employed his former teacher on more than ten of his albums and the two of them are reunited with excellent results on *Don't Follow The Crowd* (which was produced by Don Sickler and engineered by the legendary Rudy Van Gelder). In fact, the cohesive quartet Alexander leads on this 2010 session is the same group he led on his 2009 recording *Revival of the Fittest*, Alexander and Mabern joined by Nat Reeves on upright bass and Joe Farnsworth on drums. But the fact that Alexander is working with the same musicians doesn't mean that he plays it safe on this CD. When it comes to choosing material, Alexander isn't afraid to surprise us.

Alexander operates in the acoustic hardbop/postbop realm, which is full of musicians who insist on confining themselves to the most overdone standards. Alexander, however, comes up with an interesting variety of songs on this album, successfully putting his stamp on everything from Stanley Myers' "Cavatina" (from the 1978 film *The Deer Hunter*) and Henry Mancini's "Charade" to bassist Bill Lee's dusky balladic title track. The tenor man brings a Brazilian-flavored approach to Gordon Parks' "Don't Misunderstand" (from the early '70s Blaxploitation film *Shaft's Big Score*) and he has no problem turning the Michael Jackson hit "She's Out of My Life" into a straightforward bop ballad.

"She's Out of My Life" is the type of song that many hardbop/postbop musicians typically ignore; they automatically assume that because it came out of R&B/pop, it wouldn't be a good vehicle for jazz expression. And when 'smooth jazz' musicians perform that type of song, it is usually a waste of time because they end up performing dull, lifeless note-for-note covers and approach the tune as Muzak. But Alexander takes "She's Out of My Life" seriously as a jazz vehicle, and his bop interpretation of the Jackson hit is every bit as compelling a ballad statement as his version of the title track.

True to form, Alexander enjoys a strong rapport with Mabern. Between Alexander's authoritative playing, chemistry with Mabern and intriguing choice of songs, *Don't Follow The Crowd* is yet another fine album from this expressive tenor saxophonist.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Alexander is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 26th.



Victory!
JD Allen Trio (Sunnyside)
by Joel Roberts

In the short documentary film that accompanies JD

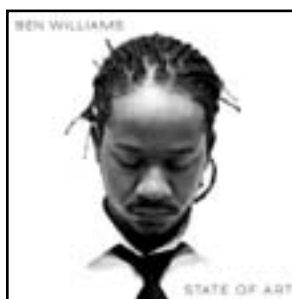
Allen's new trio release, the dynamic tenor saxophonist explains that he's less interested in writing standalone songs than in creating sonata-like themes that play out over the course of an album. It's a formula he's followed with great success on his recent discs and he returns to it with impressive results on *Victory!*.

A Detroit native with a brawny tenor sound, Allen served a lengthy and valuable apprenticeship with Betty Carter before making a name for himself in recent years both as a solo artist and as a key member of trumpeter Jeremy Pelt's stellar quintet. On this trio outing - with the powerful rhythm section of bassist Gregg August and drummer Rudy Royston - Allen follows a less-is-more philosophy, shunning long, rambling solos in favor of concise, well-articulated statements built on infectious, accessible riffs. All his tunes have clear arcs and decisive endings. It's a kind of progressive 'jukebox jazz', gritty, urban and soulful, that bears the influence, at various times, of modern masters like Coltrane, Rollins and Ornette, plus a healthy dose of Motown soul.

Standouts among the 12 interwoven tracks - none longer than five minutes and some less than two - include the title tune, which is no fanfare, but rather a dark, loping, gospel blues with Allen weaving gorgeous saxophone lines on top of an unrelenting beat. "Sura Hinda" has a questing, late-Coltrane feel while "Motif" is an adventurous excursion showcasing Royston's muscular drum work. "Philippe Petit", written for the French tightrope artist, is a musical high-wire act featuring intricate bowed bass lines. The lone non-original here - a romantic, breathy Ben Webster-esque reading of the ballad "Stairway to the Stars" - is a prime example of Allen's taste and economy. Clocking in at a shade over two minutes, it's just a couple of choruses, bridge, one more chorus and out, but it includes a wealth of marvelous playing without an extraneous note.

The entire album is only about 35 minutes long, but rather than sit through the extended, often bloated soloing that provides filler on so many jazz albums, just hit the repeat button and listen to JD Allen's victorious venture twice.

For more information, visit sunnysiderecords.com. Allen is at Cornelia Street Café Jul. 1st with Michael Bates. See Calendar.



State of Art
Ben Williams (Concord)
by Elliott Simon

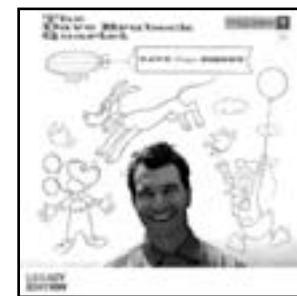
State of Art has bassist Ben Williams displaying his warm tone and slick style, qualities no doubt responsible for his 2009 Monk International Jazz Competition win and gigs with the likes of Wynton Marsalis and Herbie Hancock. This is Williams' debut as a leader and he has chosen to pay homage to influences as varied as trumpeter Lee Morgan and pop stars Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson. He accomplishes this not through rehashed arrangements but in the context of a contemporary session that mixes jazz with funk, hip-hop and R&B.

Williams' band is a fleet, youthful and adaptable bunch. They are as much at home bringing "Moonlight in Vermont" up to date with electric bass and an ethereal guitar styling from Mathew Stevens as they are paying tribute to hardbop trumpet, "The Lee Morgan Story", by melding emcee John Robinson's raps with Christian Scott's sizzling trumpet or using a

swinging sax and pretty percussive floor to smooth out Stevie Wonder's "Part Time Lover". Somewhat paradoxically "Moontrane" is funky up by combining Marcus Strickland's sax with Gerald Clayton's keyboards while a shout-out to soul's godfather James Brown, "Mr. Dynamite", is reworked into fusion.

Straighter tunes like the easy-flowing "Dawn of a New Day", funky opener "Home", requisite Latin number "November" (with spot-on groove from drummer Jamire Williams and percussionist Etienne Charles) and soulful "Things Don't Exist", featuring a lovely throwback string arrangement, perfectly counterbalance the more personal numbers. Rounding things out is Michael Jackson's "Little Susie", a springboard for Williams to riff out an intro that provides nutritious jam fodder for the rest of the band.

For more information, visit concordmusicgroup.com. This group is at 92Y Tribeca Jul. 19th. See Calendar.



Dave Digs Disney: Legacy Edition
Dave Brubeck (Columbia-Legacy)
by Ken Dryden

Dave Digs Disney was a natural project for the Dave Brubeck Quartet, which had been playing songs from various Disney movies on live dates. Brubeck has long joked that he heard his kids' Disney records so many times that he must have absorbed them, but in any case, the songs all had strong, memorable melodies that provided a solid base for improvisation. One in particular, "Someday My Prince Will Come", remains a part of the pianist's concert repertoire over five decades after he recorded it and has long become a favorite of jazz musicians.

For some unexplained reason, Columbia recorded the 1957 sessions in both stereo and mono, yet only issued six mono tunes on the original LP, followed by a 1994 CD reissue that added two previously unissued songs (both mono takes). The Legacy edition includes all eight of the previously issued mono tracks, plus eight stereo interpretations of the same songs, along with alternate takes: four stereo and one mono.

The group includes the pianist, alto saxophonist Paul Desmond, bassist Norman Bates and drummer Joe Morello. "Alice in Wonderland" has a hip loose flavor with Brubeck and Bates (followed by Desmond and Morello) trading fours. Brubeck's boisterous jazz waltz treatments of "Someday My Prince Will Come" are full of magic, the pianist being in a playful mood as he follows Desmond.

The saxist supplies effortless variations in his extended solos, particularly in the breezy settings of "Heigh Ho (The Dwarf's Marching Song)" (with Brubeck adding a hilarious quote from Cole Porter's "Anything Goes" in one take) and the relatively obscure "One Song" (from *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs*). Desmond also shines in the several versions of the loping arrangement of "When You Wish Upon a Star".

Throughout the sessions Bates and Morello (who sticks mainly to brushes) provide strong support while Brubeck and Desmond communicate via their unique ESP to bring out the best in each other. One caveat: this two-CD set is available only by download or as a CD-R set manufactured on demand.

For more information, visit legacyrecordings.com. A Brubeck tribute is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 27th. See Calendar.



Rruga
Colin Vallon (ECM)
by Terrell Holmes

Each song on *Rruga*, the wonderful ECM debut by Swiss pianist Colin Vallon's trio (after a pair of albums earlier this decade on local imprints hatHUT and Unit), unfolds like an intricate mystery waiting to be solved. Vallon, bassist Patrice Moret and drummer Samuel Rohrer play the original compositions with a poetic tenderness and telepathic interplay. And the adventure lies not in solving the puzzles but in the journey toward their resolutions.

"Telepathy", "Home" and the title cut are songs that flow within spare, eloquent melodies that give them the intimacy of solemn conversations among close friends. There are also stand-you-up-straight moments of invention. Vallon strumming and bowing the piano strings on "Polygonia" builds a challenging foundation for Moret's bold face pizzicato and Rohrer's intense drumming. Listeners and travellers will cringe at the title "Eyjafjallajökull" (2010's erupting Icelandic volcano pronounced EH-ya-fiat-la-YO-kut) and that memorable chaos brews in its musical rendering, with Vallon's ominous undercurrents, Rohrer's percussion with beads and Moret's measured plucking. Their voices also blend perfectly on "Noreia" and "Meral", where Vallon creates an echo effect toward the end of the song reminiscent of church bells pealing in the distance. On "Iskar" (and on "Rruga, var." to a lesser degree) the trio plays like two trios, where the former plays the instruments more conventionally and the doppelganger produces an aural bouquet where the instruments are practically interchangeable.

When the Colin Vallon Trio made its New York debut last month at the Rubin Museum of Art as part of its first US tour, the show underscored the exceptional nature of this dynamic and multi-dimensional group. Each man manipulated his instrument to assume the character and aspect of one of the others.

They opened the set with the album's title cut and followed that with "Polygonia". Vallon bowed the piano strings and strummed them; he also plucked the strings to produce kalimba-like sounds. All of these gave the music an added dimension and texture. Moret at one point hand-drummed on the outside of his bass. Rohrer moved skillfully among sticks, mallets and

brushes to produce a mosaic of sounds. He used a small bow to 'play' the edges of his drum kit and caressed his snare and cymbals with a string of beads, doing so with the solemnity and care of a shaman summoning a spirit. He could also go from percussive to concussive by whipping off thunderous volleys that would have aroused pride and envy in Brian Blade.

But the ultimate kudos must go to Vallon, a truly gifted pianist who plays and leads with strength, spontaneity, introspection and a melodic sophistication that results in a balanced and unique sound.

For more information, visit ecmrecords.com



Goodbye New York, Hello World
Matt Lavelle (Music Now!)
by John Sharpe

Matt Lavelle stakes his claim as an up-and-coming member of that select band of multi-instrumentalists who doubles on brass and reeds. With *Goodbye New York, Hello World* the Downtown fixture issues a bulletin from the free jazz frontline together with a cadre of familiar collaborators. Drawn from two live sessions at The Kitchen in New York City, the 66-minute program chronicles a mix of duet and quartet performances, featuring strong soloing on uncomplicated blowing vehicles that largely avoid invoking the fire music defaults.

Breathily fluent on cornet, but more impassioned and vocalized on bass clarinet, Lavelle has something to say on all his axes, leavening insistent repetition with vaulting unpredictability. Francois Grillo's bass (recorded slightly hot) keeps the leader good company throughout. In three duets he advances flexible propulsion, cycling through a selection of riffs while simultaneously adding adroit counterpoint. On the three quartet tracks the pair is joined by Ras Moshe on tenor saxophone, proving particularly accomplished in overblown falsetto excitement, and drummer Bob Hubbard, who maintains momentum with a constant cymbal pulse embroidered by a clattering rat-a-tat.

Lavelle takes a lengthy bass clarinet solo on the sprightly freebop of "Your the Tonic", which also features winning interaction with Grillo. Here and elsewhere on the group cuts some of the transitions back to the heads are somewhat tentative suggesting a work in progress. But their chemistry is palpable and also in evidence on "Choices", a brooding dirge notable for fine interplay between the bassist's bow work and the leader's weighty low-pitched reed. "Rose", the fleet-fingered opening cut, sounds like an extemporization for pinched cornet and fast walking bass, before closing with a feature for Grillo alone, where the Frenchman is able to meld melody with meter to good effect. On "Endings and Beginnings" the twosome is cool and airy, only becoming more purposeful when Lavelle switches to his mellifluous alto clarinet. The simple theme of "WAYNE" provides a launching pad for another slab of wiry freebop, with Lavelle's agile flugelhorn work presaging Moshe's calming mid-register tenor cascades, but the concluding title track, where Hubbard's resonant gongs impart a ritual feel nicely setting off Lavelle's meditative alto clarinet, suggests possibilities for future exploration.

For more information, visit matlavelle.org. Lavelle is at University of the Streets Jul. 2nd as a leader and 27th with Chris Forbes and Brecht Forum Jul. 17th. See Calendar.

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Beneath Tones Floor

**Oluyemi Thomas/Sirone/Michael Wimberly
(NoBusiness)**

by Ken Waxman

Best-known as the anchor of the Revolutionary Ensemble in the '70s (and '00s revival), bassist Sirone (born Norris Jones) adds his rhythmic power and invention to this exemplary trio set recorded at the Brecht Forum in 2008, likely his final American recording. But there's no feeling that the bassist, who recorded very infrequently as a leader and before his death at 69 in 2009 lived in Berlin, is anything but an equal partner here. Other bandmembers are multi-reedist Oluyemi Thomas, an occasional New York visitor from Oakland, California who has, in his small discography, worked with bassist Alan Silva, drummer Sunny Murray and guitarist Henry Kaiser, and local percussionist Michael Wimberly.

Sirone's tough strumming and col legno patterning add the appropriate connecting thread to the 10 tracks, which flow seamlessly into one another. Wimberly, whose bass and saxophone associates have included such distinctive improvisers as Charles Gayle and Wilber Morris, knows exactly how to color the proceedings: cross-sticking, focused rim-shots and clattering paradiddles.

On top of Sirone's flamenco guitar-like facility and the drummer's sympathetic understatement, which on a piece like "Silence On The Move" zip from martial pacing to stick friction without losing the beat, Thomas extemporizes equally on all his horns. He barks and vibrates on soprano saxophone; speeds his bass clarinet tones from guttural tremolo to stuttering altissimo and overcomes the musette's nasal properties while chromatically blending it at different times with grounded timbres from one or the other rhythm players.

Beginning acappella, "Heavenly Wisdom" showcases guttural bass clarinet smears mixed with vocalized hums that evolve when the bassist adds a moderato bowed line. Thomas' soprano saxophone proffers a solid demonstration of flutter-tonguing on the title track and elsewhere displays the reedist's capacity for disjointed, yet emotional multiphonics. Most notable of the improvisations is the classic duo contrast that arises on "Reflections of Silence, Painting Silence, Images Of Silence", which match the bassist's wood-vibrating licks with either Thomas' Pied Piper-like flute peeps or pinched musette shrills.

Beneath Tones Floor is a rare example of in-the-moment cohesive improvising that, due to Sirone's death (plus the inherent nature of this kind of music), can never be repeated. Luckily someone had the foresight to record this program for those not there to witness it.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com. Thomas and Wimberly are at Clemente Soto Velez Jul. 18th. See Calendar.



In Search Of...

Ken Peplowski (Capri)

by Ken Dryden

Multi-reedist Ken Peplowski has made his mark since arriving in New York City in the mid '80s. He studied with Sonny Stitt and toured with Benny Goodman's final orchestra while also recording extensively, making over 30 CDs as a leader since 1987 and working with similarly-minded players like Loren Schoenberg, Charlie Byrd, Randy Sandke and John Pizzarelli.

The bulk of this aptly-titled release showcases Peplowski with pianist Shelly Berg, bassist Tom Kennedy and drummer Jeff Hamilton. Rather than choose the typical mix of standards and familiar jazz works, Peplowski, who listens to a wide range of music, mostly opted for neglected gems and new material.

Freddie Redd's "The Thespian" is from the pianist's *Shades of Redd*; Peplowski displays both his lyrical chops and fluid hardbop licks on tenor sax. No vocalist is needed for Peplowski's majestic setting of the ballad "When Joanna Loved Me", with a magical vibrato in the style of Ben Webster.

Switching to clarinet, Peplowski's whispering take of Rodgers-Hart's "A Ship Without a Sail" (from the 1929 musical *Heads Up!*) and his longing, emotional setting of Cy Coleman's "With Every Breath I Take" demonstrate his mastery of interpreting ballads. Berg penned "Peps" in honor of the leader, a cooking bop vehicle that stimulates the quartet, along with the gorgeous ballad salute to Billy Strayhorn "In Flower" (recorded previously by Berg on Lorraine Feather's *Language* with her lyric), both featuring the leader on clarinet.

The final three tracks come from a self-produced 2007 session. Peplowski's robust tenor is paired with bassist Greg Cohen in a breezy setting of "No Regrets". George Harrison's "With You and Without You" is transformed into an exotic Far Eastern setting, with Peplowski as the only soloist, his trance-like clarinet beautifully backed by Cohen, vibraphonist Chuck Redd and percussionist Joe Ascione. The finale is a hip New Orleans-flavored duet of "Rum and Coca-Cola" (honoring Professor Longhair) featuring the clarinetist with Ascione.

For more information, visit caprirecords.com. Peplowski is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 19th. See Calendar.

IN PRINT



Blue Note Records:

**A Guide for Identifying Original Pressings
Frederick Cohen (Jazz Record Center)**

by Clifford Allen

No jazz record label is more revered than Blue Note, as to which the label biographies, near-constant reissue programs (on both CD and LP), books of album cover art and frequently high prices of original vinyl can attest. Jazz Record Center shop head honcho Fred Cohen has assembled a fascinating field guide to identifying original pressings of Blue Note titles from its first modern jazz singles and ten-inches until the full changeover to Liberty Records labels around 1967. With all of the "original" pressing Blue Notes being touted - and supposedly faithful reproductions - it's important for collectors to have something that will ideally stave one off from paying too much money.

The guide painstakingly explores such things as the deep groove (created by the center clamp for metal stampers in the record manufacturing process), raised or flat rims, the presence of the Plastylite "P" (erroneously referred to as the "ear" by some) and Rudy Van Gelder's name or initials in the run-off grooves and last but not least the various Blue Note office addresses. All of this information is handy - one can find Blue Note records pressed well into the '60s with label addresses from a decade earlier, but missing a deep groove or flat edge. Sometimes such records are incorrectly referred to as originals - with this guide in hand, one can perhaps avoid the mistake of overpaying.

Some of the facts are downright maddeningly arcane - a slight grey tint to a copy of *Blue Train* is supposedly indicative of a first-run jacket. Even those collectors and fans who are a bit closer to diehard or obsessive can find new information in this book - such as the rare blank-back single sleeves from the '50s or the variability among laminated/non-laminated sleeves being tied to jacket suppliers. These details are reminiscent of a train-spotter pointing out curiously mismatched parts on a diesel locomotive. It's a fascinating and frequently head-scratching book of facts about records as objects/artifacts and definitely invaluable to boot.

For more information, visit jazzrecordcenter.com. A celebration of Blue Note Records is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 26th. See Calendar.

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Hi-Fly
Sachal Vasandani (Mack Avenue)
 by Joel Roberts

Sachal Vasandani is a young mainstream jazz singer with plenty of promise, as evidenced by this new release (his third for the Mack Avenue label since his 2007 debut *Eyes Wide Open*). With his classic crooner's approach, impressive vocal technique, charisma and good looks, he's well-positioned to reach the crossover audiences that gravitate to the likes of Harry Connick Jr. and Jamie Cullum. But he also has strong straightahead jazz chops and a sensibility that imbues everything he sings with a jazz spirit, whether it's standards, original compositions, or surprising contemporary choices, like Amy Winehouse's "Love is a Losing Game", delivered here as a melancholy, late-night torch song.

The new album features appealing, if somewhat conventional readings of familiar fare like "The Very Thought of You" and "All the Way". More engaging are two tracks that pit Vasandani with vocalese master Jon Hendricks, still a force to be reckoned with at age 89. Hendricks pushes the younger singer, nearly 70 years his junior, to break out of his comfort zone on a joyful, rollicking take on "One Mint Julep" and returns for the Randy Weston-composed title track, for which Hendricks penned the lyrics. Vasandani more than holds his own with Hendricks and clearly has a blast trading jabs with the jazz legend.

Vasandani contributes several original tunes as well, notably "Flood", the album's emotional centerpiece, which was inspired by recent devastating natural disasters around the world. Vasandani and his fine trio (pianist Jeb Patton, bassist David Wong and drummer Kendrick Scott), along with guest soloists Ambrose Akinmusire on trumpet and John Ellis on tenor sax, get their best chance to stretch out on the singer's "Babe's Blues". A solid outing by an up-and-coming vocalist with a bright future.

For more information, visit mackavenue.com. Vasandani is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 28th. See Calendar.



Asynchronous
Van Hove/Dunmall/Rogers/Lytton (SLAM)
 by Ken Waxman

Featuring an enviable instance of a so-called supergroup of improvisers clicking in a festival setting (the 2008 Europa Jazz Festival in Le Mans, France), *Asynchronous* demonstrates what can be done in the familiar saxophone and rhythm section milieu. It helps that each participant is a veteran, comfortable in many improv situations even if this is a one-time-only meeting. Paul Dunmall, who plays tenor saxophone and border pipes here, and seven-string bassist Paul Rogers are one-half of the cooperative British quartet Mujician, as well as leading their own bands. Antwerp-based pianist Fred Van Hove has been defining a

Flemish variant of free jazz since before his participation in 1968's *Machine Gun*. And Belgium-based, English-born drummer Paul Lytton is equally adaptable, having spent four decades collaborating with stylists ranging from British saxophonist Evan Parker to American trumpeter Nate Wooley.

Proof of this cooperation is dazzlingly apparent during the CD's almost 47-minute title track. Dunmall spits out pressurized vibrato and split tones with his considerable body weight behind them while Van Hove counters with churning chords and equally kinetic runs. As the saxman's glissandi become progressively glottal and atonal, the pianist reaches inside his instrument to animate the tightly wound strings with stops, strums and pops.

Rogers' thick pressure on the bass' multiple strings plus Lytton's skittering drags and rebounds hold the rhythm, no matter how often the saxophonist's timbres move from nephritic to altissimo. With the only momentary release from the staccato, cascading sound textures those few instances when Lytton strikes a small bell with a wire brush, the fortissimo and polyphonic performance ends as intensely as it began. Van Hove continues outputting pile-driver chords; Lytton ruffs and rolls; Rogers' sul tasto slides and, nearly engulfing the other tones, Dunmall boosts his staccato tongue slaps and multiphonic intensity.

Overall, the skills displayed are such that four-part connectivity is never lost, making the date a tribute to both individual talent and group interaction.

For more information, visit slamproductions.net



Woods & Mays
Phil Woods/Bill Mays (Palmetto)
 by Ken Dryden

Now in his sixth decade as professional, Phil Woods has built an impressive, extensive discography as a leader while also serving as a sideman on many memorable recordings, having played with Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie and Quincy Jones, to name just a few. The Springfield, Massachusetts native was honored as an NEA Jazz Master in 2007, one of numerous awards he has received in his illustrious career. Bill Mays, who joined Woods' quintet several years ago, has a distinguished resumé as a leader, composer and sideman, like many of his predecessors in the band. Mays' vast knowledge of tunes and improvising skill make him the perfect match for the peerless alto saxophonist, almost two generations his senior.

Woods has a gift for writing memorable songs and he debuts two new compositions here. "Blues For Lopes" honors the late Joe Lopes, a fellow Springfield native and close friend who played with Supersax and helped prepare Woods for Juilliard. The saxophonist's hip tribute is a playful affair, with he and Mays engaging in an amusing trading of fours. "Hank Jones" honors the late fellow NEA Jazz Master, a lush lyrical affair representative of the effortless elegance with which Jones played a ballad. The late saxophonist Al Cohn was another close friend and a prolific composer; Woods' emotional setting of Cohn's "Danielle" conveys the sense of longing without the need of a vocalist.

Woods has long had a gift for uncovering forgotten songs, such as Richard Rodgers' "Do I Love You?", which was written for the 1957 *Cinderella* television special. The duo's exuberant treatment makes one

wonder why it was neglected. Of course, Woods and Mays can find something fresh within the most frequently played standards. The pianist opens George Gershwin's "How Long Has This Been Going On?" by playing the often-omitted verse as a moving piano solo, with Woods then adding his piercing, spacious alto in a deliberate arrangement. The duo plays their buoyant interpretation of Irving Berlin's "The Best Thing For You Would Be Me" at a brisk tempo as the two men engage in a lively musical conversation.

For more information, visit palmetto-records.com. Woods is at 92nd Street Y Jul. 21st. Mays is there Jul. 20th. See Calendar.



ON DVD
Jon & Jimmy: Dreams, Drugs and Django (Euforia)
 by Terrell Holmes

Jazz history is littered with instances of musicians whose personal demons overshadowed their talents and ultimately destroyed them. The documentary *Jon & Jimmy: Dreams, Drugs & Django* shows how addiction and codependence affected the lives of two gifted guitarists.

Jimmy Rosenberg grew up in a caravan in Holland and attracted attention as a guitarist before he turned ten. Bold in his approach to improvisation, his speed and technique were unparalleled. Jon Larsen is a respected musician and producer 20 years Jimmy's senior. Their link is their love for guitar legend Django Reinhardt, who is at the core of this film. Jimmy, like Django, is a gypsy of Sinti heritage. They met at a Django festival in France. Jimmy became Jon's friend and musical partner; Jon loves Jimmy like a brother, saying that playing with him is like "capturing the moment and being alive."

As Jimmy approached the cusp of superstardom, he was allegedly offered cocaine at a party during an American tour and the downward spiral began. He eventually wound up living on the streets for three years with no guitar. In the grand tradition of self-delusion, Jimmy sees his addiction as a conspiracy hatched against him and not of his own doing.

Jimmy and Jon reconnected in 2004 and after recording and touring briefly Jon booked three months' worth of gigs and recording dates. But Jimmy's behavior was erratic, including violent episodes with promoters and the police. Jimmy even threatened to kill Jon and his family. After a failed attempt at reconciliation, things ended between Jon and Jimmy inversely to the way they began. Jon arranges to perform Django's music with a symphony orchestra but decides against Jimmy as a guest soloist, using Jimmy's brother Stokolo instead. While watching this relationship unfold is tortuous, the true shame of *Jon & Jimmy* is that the music becomes marginalized because one man didn't take enough responsibility for his own life and another man took too much responsibility for it.

For more information, visit djangomovies.com. A Django tribute is at Birdland Jul. 1st-3rd, featuring Young Lions of Gypsy Jazz. See Calendar.

BOXED SET



The Complete Short Stories 1998-2010
Howard Riley (NoBusiness)
by Andrey Henkin

Though he was a contemporary of all the avant British stars of the '60s - giving Barry Guy his first major exposure and later participating in the bassist's monumental *Ode*; working with Tony Oxley, Paul Rutherford, John Stevens and others - pianist Howard Riley never became the international sensation the others did. A possible reason for his anonymity is that he has almost exclusively worked with fellow Brits, the major exception a duo disc with a somewhat equally obscure American, Jaki Byard. He has had a steady profile, working early on in trio formats, then moving to solo work, followed by numerous duos and then varied appearances with groups like Guy's London Jazz Composers Orchestra and partnerships with the late Elton Dean. He may not be as lauded as countrymen pianists like Keith Tippett or John Taylor but can be argued to be Britain's original avant garde one, never straying far from the cerebral promise of his first crop of discs.

Riley had a productive relationship with several British imprints in the late '90s to mid '00s: FMR (most notably a duo with Tippett); SLAM (solos to duos to quartets) and Emanem (an amazing trio of pianos with Tippett and John Tilbury the highpoint). But suddenly he appeared with a solo piano performance from 2009 in Vilnius, Lithuania, released by that country's relatively new avant garde label NoBusiness. Much like saxist Mats Gustafsson's two albums for the label, this live date was somewhat of a departure from NoBusiness' catalogue of mostly American and Eastern European artists. So *The Complete Short Stories 1998-2010* is a remarkable commitment to an artist who deserves a greater reputation than he has thus far garnered.

There are six discs in this boxed set. The first two reissue the very obscure (so much so it doesn't even figure into several online discographies) *Short Stories* (ESProductions, 1998-99). The second pair revives the second volume in that series, recorded in 2004 and 2006 and originally issued by SLAM. The last two discs are new material, recorded in London (as was most of the music) in 2008 and 2010.

Riley's music since the beginning of his career has been highly iconoclastic. He is not a free-pounder nor an ivory-stroker or an inside-the-case wanderer. His first album from 1967 was very much in the vein of period Paul Bley. Later with Guy and either Oxley or Alan Jackson he moved into abstraction worthy of an Andrew Hill, an aesthetic that would figure into his early solo work. But by the start of this decade-plus worth of music, when he was 55, Riley had mellowed somewhat. The tunes became shorter and more melodic and on the whole he added accessibility to his repertoire, crucial when trying to digest a set

of this magnitude: 79 pieces at close to five-and-a-half hours in total duration.

But that accessibility is a relative term; this is not solo piano à la Chick Corea where the floridness can be easily ignored or Cecil Taylor, whose density is much of the point. Riley's pieces are discrete miniatures yet do not come off as insubstantial. There are moments recalling his earlier angularity followed immediately by bluesy musings, subconscious paeans to omnivorous players like Byard. That those two worked together may be the best means to describe Howard Riley. At this point in his career, to which this boxed set attests, he can, does, will and want to play everything. He may be the closest thing England has to Thelonious Monk, another individualist. Riley may not have Monk's subversive humor but he does have his sculptor's touch, forming pieces that work in three dimensions.

Except for the last disc's five pieces, the longest tune here is seven minutes but most average about three-and-a-half minutes. This allows Riley to invest a great deal of himself in a short space of time without getting overly attached to what he is playing. There is another tune, another dozen tunes just around the corner. As a listener, it can still be overwhelming as there is little respite throughout the set, even for those already acquainted with Riley's approach(es). Though fame may be nice, Riley's isolation has given him a style and nuance he might not have gotten if he had to adapt to dozens of musical environments or pledge allegiance to a particular school of playing. The title of the set is apt: he is a writer, crafting literary bursts alone.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com

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(INTERVIEW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

TNYCJR: Your brother Nat [King Cole] was enormously famous. It required real grit for you to follow your own path and keep going.

FC: Yeah, it does and it continues to be. ...Fortunately I have learned to let that lie. ...I wrote that song "I'm Not My Brother, I Am Me". So the main thing I worry about is [when someone says] "Oh, you sound just like your brother." Oh, thank you very much. Did it sound GOOD? (Chuckle) ...You know, the club owner is paying me to sound good and put some people in the seats. Fortunately over the years I have been able to build my following. These are my people coming to hear what I do. And it's a good feeling. I get great audiences in Brazil. I can play tiddly winks there I guess and get over, they like it so well.

TNYCJR: You have a very strong feeling for representing jazz.

FC: It's like that old expression, just trying to keep the bebop alive. In my estimation jazz doesn't get the respect that it should. ...So I just try to be a first-class person and carry myself in a respectful manner. I'm happy to bring this music forward.

TNYCJR: Your feeling is so deep for these songs. That's so obvious when a singer has that quality.

FC: They lose their soul to the music. You lose your soul in the music. You get inside the music. A lot of people say to me you sing like you were there. And I say I WAS there. One of the tunes I just recorded, I'm sure you know it, "M'amselle". In the studio they said, you really put yourself in Paris in this song. And I said I sure did. (Chuckling) "It was midnight, it was Paris and hey, once again it's spring." Just put yourself right in there. That's the great part about being a musician and an entertainer. ❖

For more information, visit freddycole.com. Cole is at Jazz Standard Jul. 28th-31st. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:

- Freddy Cole - *Waiter, Ask The Man To Play the Blues* (Dot-Verve, 1964)
- Freddy Cole - *The Cole Nobody Knows* (Audiophile, 1977)
- Freddy Cole - *I'm Not My Brother, I'm Me* (Sunnyside-HighNote, 1990)
- Freddy Cole - *To The Ends of the Earth* (Fantasy, 1997)
- Freddy Cole - *This Love of Mine* (HighNote, 2005)
- Freddy Cole - *The Dreamer in Me (Live at Dizzy's Club)* (HighNote, 2008)

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(LABEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

FURT, the electronic duo of Richard Barrett and Paul Obermayer, who have recorded extensively for psi. Barrett remarks, "I'd prefer not to see that association in terms of a disembodied entity like a CD label, but rather as one among many aspects of my association with Evan and his work. It means a great deal to me that what I'm doing, with FURT and in other areas, is being supported and encouraged by someone with Evan's depth of involvement with creative music."

Guitarist John Russell, another long-time associate who recently joined the Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, recounts the making of *Hyste*, his outstanding solo CD: "I went down to Whitstable [on the English North Sea coast] to spend a couple of days recording in St. Peter's Church with Evan and John Edwards. Evan said I should record some solo improvisations for a CD on psi while the opportunity was there with the excellent Adam Skeaping engineering. The result was *Hyste* and Evan was involved through the whole process. We discussed ideas about the cover, sleeve notes and titles.

"I was completely free to choose musical content and Evan and Adam dealt with the final mix. I think one of the things about psi is Evan's attention to the detail involved in each release and his collaboration with and understanding of the needs of the musicians he works with. Having something of my more recent solo playing on CD and released with such care and attention makes for a very good feeling and on the whole I've had some good feedback from people who have heard it. I'm very happy with the whole thing!"

Trumpeter Peter Evans, another recent addition to the Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, has two solo discs on psi, *More Is More* and *Nature/Culture*. He recalls meeting Parker around 2004, "...I approached Evan after the set and he invited me to the place he was staying the next day. I brought some (not very good) solo music, which he actually listened to all of, right there with me in the room, gave some comments, asked me some questions... the whole thing was pretty funny looking back on it. We stayed in touch and when I recorded my first solo disc, I sent him a copy, simply because I thought he would enjoy it. I couldn't find anyone to put it out and told him and he said that he could release it. And ever since we have developed what Evan jokingly likes to call an 'avuncular' relationship."

Asked what he most enjoys about having his own label, Parker answers in a word: "control". It's evident in the attention to layout and artwork, often with luminous portrait photography by Caroline Forbes.

With so much new music on psi, a listener might overlook Parker's ongoing interest in more traditional forms. One psi jewel is German saxophonist Gerd Dudek's *'Smatter*. Dudek has been Parker's section-mate in Globe Unity Orchestra for decades, but his own work is little documented. Parker united Dudek with a first-rate English rhythm section and created one of the most beautiful mainstream dates of the past decade, Dudek's gorgeous tone embellishing "Body and Soul" and "The Peacocks" with a grace comparable to Stan Getz. Another recent CD of mainstream interest is pianist Hans Koller's *Cry, Want*, by a tentet with Bill Frisell (and liner notes by crime novelist John Harvey). An orchestration of Jimmy Giuffrè's title tune features Frisell and Parker with brilliant results.

Parker's plans for the future include putting Dudek and Koller together in a quartet and "the duo with Misha [Mengelberg] is coming soon and I hope some sub-groups from the Electro-Acoustic Ensemble's tour last year. And a list as long as your arm." ❖

For more information visit emanemdisc.com/psi.html. Artists performing this month include Agustí Fernández at The Stone Jul. 12th in duo with Joe Morris and Nate Wooley at The Stone Jul. 12th and 15th with Adam Lane and as a leader, Clemente Soto Velez Jul. 18th and I-Beam Jul. 29th and Café Orwell Jul. 30th, both with James Falzone. See Calendar.



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- 7/21 GREGORY PORTER
SMOKE JAZZ & SUPPER CLUB / 7, 8, 10:30
- 7/27 ROSEANNA VITRO
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Sunday, July 10

- ★ **Lawnmower:** Jim Hobbs, Steve Fell, Pete Fitzpatrick, Luther Gray; **Cylinder:** Darren Johnston, Aram Shelton, Lisa Mezzacappa, Kjell Nordeson
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Bucky Pizzarelli/Ed Laub Duo;** Grant Stewart Quartet with David Hazeltine, Joel Forbes, Phil Stewart
Smalls 7:30, 10 pm \$20
- ★ **New Field:** Pascal Niggenkemper, Robin Verheyen, Scott DuBois, Jeff Davis; Nathaniel Smith Quartet with Jake Saslow, Sam Minaie, Toru Dodo
Cornelia Street Café 8:30, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Katie Bull's Freak Miracle** with Landon Knoblock, Joe Fonda, George Schuller, Jeff Lederer, Greg Ward; Nick Gianni's Evolution
Nublu 9 pm
- ★ **Terry Waldo's Gotham City Band;** Jordan Young Group; Brandon Lewis/ Renee Cruz Jam
Fat Cat 6, 9 pm 12:30 am
- ★ **Bill O'Connell Latin Jazz Allstars**
Birdland 9, 11 pm \$30
- ★ **Xavier Davis**
The Bar on Fifth 8 pm
- ★ **Joe Morris;** Brad Farberman, Dave Sewelson, Josh Sinton; Michael Attias, Sean Conly, Mike Pride; Ras Moshe, Shayna Dulberger, Dave Miller, Chris Welcome
The Local 269 7 pm \$10
- ★ **Peter Leitch/Harvie S**
Walker's 8 pm
- ★ **Erika Dagnino with Blaise Siwula, Ken Filiano, Sarah Bernstein;** Michael Durek's SK Orchestra
ABC No Rio 7 pm \$5
- ★ **Senri Oe;** Lindsay Mendez and the Marco Pagaia Trio; Faustina Abad Quintet
Miles' Café 5, 7, 8:30 pm \$19.99
- ★ **Noam Wisenberg;** Aubrey Johnson/Jason Yeager
Caffe Vivaldi 7:15, 8:30 pm
- ★ **John Wiggle Orchestra;** New Tricks
Shrine 8, 10 pm
Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$30
- ★ **Carmen Lundy**
- ★ **René Marie with Kevin Bales, Rodney Jordan, Quentin Baxter**
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm \$30
- ★ **The Heath Brothers:** Jimmy and Albert "Tootie" Heath, Jeb Patton, David Wong
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$25
- ★ **Yukari/Carlo Costa;** Kyoko Kitamura/Jen Baker
Downtown Music Gallery 6 pm
Saint Peter's 5 pm
- ★ **Rob Scheps Core-tet**
- ★ **Low Tabackin Group with Boris Kozlov, Shinnosuke Takahashi and guest Joe Magnarelli**
Riverbank State Park 5 pm
- ★ **Kuni Mikami**
Blue Note 12:30, 2:30 pm \$24.50
- ★ **Debbie Deane**
Douglass Street Music Collective 2 pm
- ★ **Camila Meza Trio**
North Square Lounge 12:30, 2 pm
- ★ **Klezmer Brunch:** Alon Nechustan's Talat
City Winery 11 am \$12
- ★ **Lou Caputo Quartet;** David Coss and Trio; Joonsam Lee Trio
The Garage 11:30 am 7, 11:30 pm

Monday, July 11

- ★ **Oliver Lake Trio with Santi Debriano, Pheeroan akLaff**
Clemente Soto Velez 8 pm \$10
- ★ **Warren Vaché and John Allred with Harry Allen Quartet**
Feinstein's 8 pm \$20
- ★ **Mingus Orchestra**
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★ **40Twenty:** Winnie Sperrazza, Jacob Sacks, Jacob Garchik, Dave Ambrosio
Barbès 7 pm \$10

- ★ **Karl Berger Stone Workshop Orchestra with Frederika Krier, Miguel Malla, Steve Swell, Art Bailey, Jeremy Carlstedt, Jorge Sylvester, David Schnug, Stephen Gauci, Catherine Sikora, Skye Steele, Sylvain Leroux, Thomas Heberer, Patrick Glynn, Adam Caine, Dominic Lash, David Perrott, Adam Lane, Ingrid Sertso**
The Stone 9 pm \$20
- ★ **Trio Sabir:** Michael Wimberly, William Parker, Sabir Mateen; William Parker's The Essence of Ellington with Dave Burrell, Steve Swell, Darius Jones, Rob Brown, Sabir Mateen, Dave Sewelson, Willie Applewhite
University of the Streets 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Ned Goold;** Billy Kaye Jam
Fat Cat 9 pm 12:30 am
- ★ **David White Jazz Orchestra**
Tea Lounge 9, 10:30 pm
- ★ **Charenee Wade**
Zinc Bar 7 pm \$7
- ★ **Angela Bingham Trio with Yotam Silberstein, Marco Panascia**
Bar Next Door 8:30, 10:30 pm \$12
- ★ **Xavier Davis**
The Bar on Fifth 8 pm
- ★ **Kamal Abdul Alim/Eric Wyatt Group with Benito Gonzalez, Shinnosuke Takashi, Motoki Mihara**
For My Sweet 7, 9 pm \$10
- ★ **Scot Albertson/Dr. Joel Utterback**
Tomi Jazz 9 pm \$10
- ★ **Erika Dagnino/Ras Moshe**
Nightingale Lounge 7 pm
- ★ **Howard Williams Jazz Orchestra;** Mayu Saeki Quartet
The Garage 7, 10:30 pm
Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ **Isaac ben Ayala**

Tuesday, July 12

- ★ **Joe Morris/Agustí Fernández;** Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Nate Wooley, Joe McPhee, Joe Morris
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Marcus Roberts Trio with Rodney Jordan, Jason Marsalis**
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$30
- ★ **Kimberly Thompson Trio**
Dizzy's Club 11 pm \$15
- ★ **Sam Yahel Trio with Matt Penman, Jochen Rueckert**
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$25
- ★ **Pablo Ziegler's From Piazzolla to Ziegler with guest Sandra Luna**
Birdland 8:30, 11 pm \$30
- ★ **James Ilgenfritz' The Glossary of Musical Terms with Douglas Detrick, Sam Kulik, Ingrid Laubrock, Yoni Kretzmer, Jackson Moore, Lily Maase, Brad Farberman, Terrence McManus, Carl Testa, Sarah Bernstein, Jason Hwang, Anne Rhodes, Evan Mazunik, Vincent Sperrazza, John O'Brien; William Parker's The Essence of Ellington with Dave Burrell, Steve Swell, Darius Jones, Rob Brown, Sabir Mateen, Dave Sewelson, Willie Applewhite**
University of the Streets 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Lainie Cooke with Onaje Allan Gumbs, Elias Bailey, Matt Wilson**
Cornelia Street Café 8:30 pm \$10
- ★ **Marianne Solivan Duo;** Dave Gibson Group with Julius Tolentino, Jared Gold, Anwar Marshall; Ken Fowser/Behn Gillette Jam
Smalls 7:30, 9:30 pm 12:30 am \$20
- ★ **Tine Bruhn with Lars Haake, Joel Holmes, Luques Curtis, Joe Blaxx; Rashied Ali Tribute Band with Greg Murphy, Josh Evans, Joris Teepe, Lawrence Clark, Eric McPherson**
Zinc Bar 7, 9, 10:30 pm 12 am
- ★ **Palmetto Bug Stompers**
Damosch Park 7:30 pm
- ★ **Saul Rubin;** Peter Brainin Latin Jazz Workshop; Greg Glassman Jam
Fat Cat 7, 9 pm 12:30 am
- ★ **Xavier Davis**
The Bar on Fifth 8 pm
- ★ **Deborah Latz;** Joe Alterman
Miles' Café 7, 8:30 pm \$19.99
- ★ **Noriko Tomikawa Trio**
Tomi Jazz 9 pm \$10
- ★ **Jack Wilkins/Freddie Bryant**
Bella Luna 8 pm

- ★ **Michika Fukumori solo**
The Kitano 8, 10 pm
- ★ **Mark Capon Trio**
Thalia Café 8 pm
- ★ **Mike Dease Big Band;** Paul Francis Trio
The Garage 7, 10:30 pm
Shrine 7 pm
- ★ **Camille Thurman**
Pier 45 6:30 pm
- ★ **Illa Skibinsky**
Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ **Isaac ben Ayala**

Wednesday, July 13

- ★ **Ingebrigt Håker Flaten/Joe McPhee;** Tim Berne, Michael Formanek, Ches Smith
The Stone 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Jazzmobile:** Houston Person
Grant's Tomb 7 pm
- ★ **Christian McBride and Inside Straight**
Madison Square Park 7 pm
- ★ **Darius Jones Trio with Cooper-Moore, Rakalam Bob Moses**
Barbès 8 pm \$10
- ★ **Jane Bunnnett/Hilaro Duran**
Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm \$20
- ★ **Fat Cat Big Band;** Orrin Evans Captain Black Big Band
Zinc Bar 7, 9, 10:30 pm 12 am
- ★ **Ivo Perelman Quartet with Matthew Shipp, Joe Morris, Luther Gray**
Issue Project Room 8 pm \$10
- ★ **Rebirth Brass Band**
The Kitano 8, 10 pm
- ★ **Bryn Roberts solo;** Yotam Silberstein Trio; Craig Wuepper's Earsight! with Peter Zak, Mike DiRubbo, Dwayne Burno
Smalls 7:30, 9:30 pm 12:30 am \$20
- ★ **Jeb Patton Trio with David Wong, Pete Van Nostrand**
The Kitano 8, 10 pm
- ★ **The Imp Duo:** Mossa Bildner/Connie Crothers; Beaux Art Brass Quintet; Herb Robertson, Stephen Haynes, Mark Taylor, Steve Swell, Ben Stapp
University of the Streets 8, 10 pm \$10
- ★ **Rafi D'lugoff;** Adam Larson; Ned Goold Jam
Fat Cat 7, 9 pm 12:30 am
- ★ **Erika Dagnino/Ras Moshe**
Goodbye Blue Monday 9 pm
- ★ **Thomas Heflin**
Brooklyn Lyceum 9:30 pm \$10
- ★ **Bob Rodriguez Trio;** Chantale Gagne Quartet; Jonathan Parker
Miles' Café 7, 8:30, 10 pm \$19.99
- ★ **Yuukari's Spicepot**
Tomi Jazz 9 pm \$10
- ★ **Brian Villegas**
Flute Gramercy 8 pm
- ★ **Bossa Brasil:** Mauricio de Souza, Alan Chabert, John Lenis
Flute Bar 8 pm
- ★ **Frente Cumbiero**
Terraza 7, 9 pm
- ★ **Matt Grossman**
Shrine 7 pm
- ★ **Marcus Roberts Trio with Rodney Jordan, Jason Marsalis**
Dizzy's Club 7:30, 9:30 pm \$30
- ★ **Kimberly Thompson Trio**
Dizzy's Club 11 pm \$15
- ★ **Sam Yahel Trio with Matt Penman, Jochen Rueckert**
Village Vanguard 9, 11 pm \$25
- ★ **Pablo Ziegler's From Piazzolla to Ziegler with guest Sandra Luna**
Birdland 8:30, 11 pm \$30
- ★ **Xavier Davis**
The Bar on Fifth 8 pm
- ★ **Le Pompe Attack;** The Anderson Brothers
The Garage 6, 10:30 pm
- ★ **Isaac ben Ayala**
Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ **Aaron Weinstein/Tedd Firth**
Saint Peter's 1 pm \$7

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(VICTO CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

acoustically (Brötzmann explained that he didn't usually work so early in the day), the set was a series of ballads, including "I Surrender Dear" and "Round Midnight" - not necessarily what one would expect, showing a lyrical side that is not often associated with the reedman. Individually and collectively, these were two absolutely fascinating and spellbinding experiences by the 70-year-old master.

In another compelling set, Richard Pinhas, Merzbow and Wolf Eyes gave a beautifully detailed and precise performance that was symphonic in scale, electronic chattering stabs of processed sax, guitar and vocals undulating and building to a brutal and, at times, painful intensity, foreboding dark tension of fluttering engine throbs, shrieking feedback and screeching sheet metal tearing at the edge of the abyss - a highlight of the weekend.

eRikm and FM Einheit continued the emerging theme of macho music, with a performance quite unlike any seen at Victo, with the former on turntables and the latter, percussionist for Einstürzende Neubauten, on a variety of percussion instruments that included a large coil spring, a Makita drill, stones and bricks on a metal table. The pair produced primitive factory sounds and heavily distorted fast grooves with pounding crescendos and sudden stops in a set that felt like an analog version of the Merzbow performance but in set pieces rather than symphonic movements. There was a performative aspect, especially from the squat, powerful Einheit, with his demolition worker air, a shock of white hair hanging over his forehead, dust flying as he smashed bricks in a 40-minute set that was cogent and to the point.

Zeena Parkins' set with her new group, The Adorables, the early Saturday show, was a departure from Friday night's heaviness. This was not exactly a premiere, but the trio played a set of compositions for the first time, so in a way, it was. The music was sometimes delicate, sometimes fast and funky, but always nuanced with an eye for detail and very, very beautiful, probably the biggest surprise of a festival that was rich in fascinating performances but light on surprises.

Any performance by Anthony Braxton is highly anticipated and the North American premiere of "Echo Echo Mirror House" was not an exception, though the results of seven musicians (Braxton, Taylor Ho Bynum, Mary Halvorson, Jessica Pavone, Jay Rozen, Aaron Siegel, Carl Testa) playing a combination of regular instruments and iPods loaded with Braxton solos was extremely dense, requiring great concentration, almost too much to absorb at once. This performance will most likely be released on the Victo label and should benefit from repeated close listening.

Other performances of note were those by Montreal's Ratchet Orchestra, Jaap Blonk, Nels Cline and Norton Wisdom and 7K Oaks, whose set might have been the best of the festival had they stopped 20 minutes earlier than they finally did.

It did feel like the old spirit of Victo was back and there were many smiles and few complaints on the weekend, both from audience members and the festival organization. ❖

For more information, visit victo.qc.ca

(VISION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

running to several pages that nonetheless captured the spontaneity of improvisation and incorporated fantastic contrasts between the combusive and the ordered. Saxophonist Laubrock's timbral investigations were particularly wonderful, with a skronk explosion near the end on soprano atop Sorey's kitchen-sink-

and-all drumming.

Pianist Matthew Shipp invited saxophonist Evan Parker, another elder statesman of the European free scene, to join him in a sparkling extemporized duet, which included a burst of the Englishman's magical self-devouring soprano saxophone and a brief quote from Monk's "Shuffle Boil", amid the pianist's thunderous chording, insistent motifs and glinting flurries pawed from the extremes of the keyboard. Under the moniker All Star Mystery Collective, a constellation of Vision Fest mainstays delivered in style with a freewheeling set studded with bravura solos from Rob Brown, Roy Campbell and Cooper-Moore among others, raucous ensembles and rugged group empathy, accompanied by the dancing and occasional vocals of organizer Patricia Parker. Their final number encapsulated much of what is best about the Vision Festival, moving seamlessly from a joyful celebratory bounce into atonality and back again, recalling New Orleans polyphony.

Collective Dawn of Midi was an ear-opener for many, compelling in their movement from almost subliminal stirrings to a timeless mesmerizing groove evoking sunrise over the souk, with pianist Amino Belyamani's minimally evolving patterns and piano preparations pitched against the throbbing bass of Aakaash Israni and the unpredictable outbursts of percussionist Qasim Naqvi. Another pianist, Connie Crothers, led from the front, taking her quartet from cool swing to fiery communion, with saxophonist Richard Tabnik's physical contortions mirroring his slippery lines and bassist Ken Filiano always eloquent and inventive.

Honorable mentions go to the muscular Blood Trio (Sabir Mateen, Michael Bisio and Whit Dickey) who opened proceedings; saxophonists John Tchicai's Ascension Unending (featuring one masterful solo from the leader), Tony Malaby's unrelenting Tamarindo and Kidd Jordan's vibrant quintet; trumpeters Stephen Haynes' sonic explorations with Parrhesia, Tomasz Stanko's quartet of Sylvie Courvoisier, Mark Feldman and Mark Helias adding welcome grit to the oyster, Ted Daniel's irrepressible updating of King Oliver and Peter Evans' Pulverize the Sound with drummer Mike Pride and electric bassist Tim Dahl doing exactly that, dividing the audience in the process; drummer Tomas Fujiwara's incendiary The Hook Up and trombonist Reut Regev's rollicking R*time spotlighting guest pianist Burton Greene.

Recently passed violinist Billy Bang received several dedications during the Festival but none was more heartfelt or moving than that at the absolute end. Tributes can have the tendency to be maudlin or inconsequential, but under the direction of William Parker the massed might of a 20-piece string section, the violinist's former band and additional horns gave a soulful extended rendition of Bang's "Mystery of the Mekong", followed by a spirited version of "Saigon Funk", which interpolated a wild orgiastic blow-out appropriately named "Ascension for Billy Bang", concluding with Parker strutting his stuff against a juddering slab of funk for a rousing and emotional finale that made this writer long for next year's offering already. ❖

For more information, visit visionfestival.org

(MOERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

underlined with feedback loops, Gibbs reinforced the rhythm while utilizing buzzing reverb during solos. Instructively, much of Reid's evocative lead guitar work was based on slide guitar styling as traditional as T-Bone Walker's. The three were as rooted in the blues as Coleman.

If Encryption literally amplified Coleman's

innovations, then tenor saxophonist Jon Irabagon is an accelerated variant of Coleman's imaginative improvising. Seemingly never stopping for breath, Irabagon played 45 minutes of freebop based on Harry Ruby-Bert Kalmar's "Three Little Words", studded with split-second quotes from pop and jazz standards. Encompassing techniques ranging from foghorn growls and serene trills, he never lost his way, frequently cycling back to the head and at points seemed to be playing two disparate reed parts by himself. Ample space was left as well for bassist Peter Brendler's string-slaps or below-the-bridge strums plus drummer Barry Altschul's pinpointed bass drum bashes that fuelled a steady backbeat.

Anyone missing a piano sound could turn to a hushed and methodical solo set from Abdullah Ibrahim. Playing mostly medium tempos, Ibrahim applied variants of touch and texture to his playing, at junctures appending a slow, rocking beat to methodical chording. His pastoral output was only traded for ringing notes during an encore when torrential rain hit the tent.

Younger bands which impressed included The Ambush Party (TAP) from the Netherlands and Germany's Tørn. Following Germany's bombastic The Dorf, a 25-piece ensemble that combined vamping rock rhythms with sustained, climactic lines from a multiplicity of soloists, Tørn carved out a program of spiky chamber-improv. Although clarinetist Joris Rühl's pitch was strident and staccato, his squeezed timbres harmonized perfectly with pianist Philip Zoubek's tremolo runs, key clanking and string-stopping. Bassist Achim Tang's matchless technique supplied the melding ostinato, as drummer Joe Hertenstein's rim shots and hi-hat slaps broke up the rhythm while keeping it free-flowing.

TAP's pianist Oscar Jan Hoogland didn't stint on internal string strumming and mallet-pummeling either, but these New Music echoes were only part of the band's game plan. Improvising collectively, TAP galloped among references to trance, Dixieland, klezmer, free jazz, tango and even operatic music, with vocalized gurgles from cellist Harald Austbø, whose theatrical sawing on cello suggested a familiarity with the Three Stooges as much as so-called classical chamber music. Meanwhile Natalio Sued exposed flat-line clarinet variants and slurping tenor saxophone runs and drummer Marcos Baggiani's steady beats in tandem with Austbø's stentorian strokes focused the material.

Other performances included influences as disparate as naïve pop, R&B, grindcore, hip-hop, electronica and ethnic music. The most appealing maintained a connection to jazz like trumpeter Igar Thomas' The Cypher with powerful soloing from saxophonist Marcus Strickland and keyboardist David Bryant or existed in their own sphere like the Afrobeat-meets-soul spectacle of Nigerian singer/saxophonist Seun Kuti, incorporating multiple percussionists and horns plus lightly-clad backup singer/dancers.

Michiyo Yagi's Double Trio from Japan, which matched her shrill vocals and vigorous plucks on 17-string and 21-string kotos with contributions from drummers Tamaya Honda and Nori Tanaka plus bassists Todd Nicholson and Takashi Sugawa, created an East-West fusion. Her enormous instruments reproduced timbres that resembled 12-string guitar strums one minute and electric guitar licks the next, contrapuntally interfaced with Nicholson's supple, melodic plucks and Sugawa's abrasive friction or thickening the drumbeats. The results were abrasive, discordant, melodic, harmonic and wholly original.

Unique performances such as Yagi's, plus the exposure given to younger bands, as well as celebrations of masters such as Coleman, demonstrate how Moers has managed to thrive for four decades. ❖

For more information, visit moers-festival.de

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