

# cadence



## INTERNATIONAL JAZZ NEWS

TOP 10 ALBUMS - CADENCE CRITIC'S PICKS, 2019  
TOP 10 CONCERTS - PHILADELPHIA, 2019  
PARTIAL LIST OF ALBUMS RECEIVED

FESTIVAL REVIEWS  
24TH ANNUAL VISION FESTIVAL  
JAZZAHEAD! REPORT  
FIMAV VICTORIAVILLE, QUEBEC,  
MONTREAL JAZZ FESTIVAL, 2019  
CLIFFORD BROWN JAZZ FESTIVAL

CONCERT REVIEWS  
JOEL FRAHM TRIO  
THE BAYLOR PROJECT  
ARI HOENIG

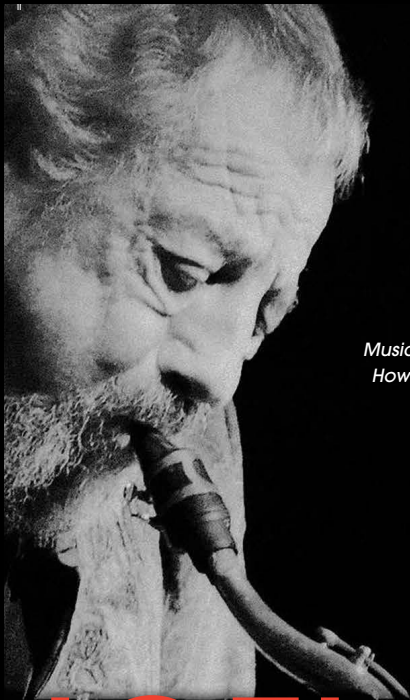
JAZZ STORIES  
JAMES BENNINGTON  
BACHIR ATTAR  
MARIA GRAND  
RONNIE BURRAGE  
JAIMIE BRANCH  
LEWIS PORTER  
JOE MORRIS



INTERVIEWS  
CRAIG HARRIS  
MARCUS SHELBY  
KELLY OTTAWAY  
BARRE PHILLIPS

COLUMNS  
BOOK LOOK  
NEWSISSUES - REISSUES  
PAPATAMUS - CD Reviews  
OBITUARIES

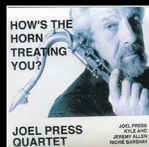
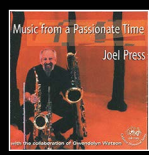




CADENCE

*Mainstream Extensions;  
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How's the Horn Treating You?;  
Untying the Standard.*

Cadence CD's are available through Cadence.



# JOEL PRESS

“ His robust and burnished tone is as warm as the man....simply, one of the meanest tickets in town.

— Katie Bull, *The New York City Jazz Record*, December 10, 2013

PREZERVATION



Clockwise from left: *Live at Small's*; *JP Soprano Sax/Michael Kanan Piano*; *JP Quartet*; *Return to the Apple*; *First Set at Small's*.



Prezervation CD's: Contact joelpress507@gmail.com

WWW.JOELPRESS.COM

*Harbinger Records scores*

# THREE OF THE TEN BEST

*in the Cadence Top Ten Critics' Poll*  
*Albums of 2019!*



**Let's Go In  
to a Picture Show**

"A 32-page liner booklet with printed lyrics and wonderful photos are included. Wonderfully done."  
—*Cadence*



**Sissle and Blake Sing  
Shuffle Along**

GRAMMY AWARD WINNER



**Shuffle Along of 1950**

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# OUTSTANDARDS

EYRAN KATSENELENOGEN

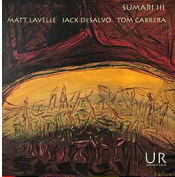
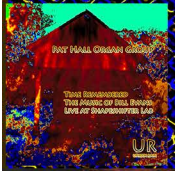
*"He sets the bar towards which  
other pianists must strive."*

— All About Jazz





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WOODSHEDD RECORDS





# BEN ROSENBLUM

CADENCE TOP 10 CRITIC'S POLL, 2019

## River City



*“There do emerge conservatoire  
aces with grit in their imaginations  
and a facility to express such in  
their playing. Ben Rosenblum is  
one such performer/composer”*

— *All About Jazz*

*“Caresses [the music] with the  
reverence it merits”*

— *Downbeat Magazine*

*“Got the hands of a diamond cutter  
here.” — Jazz Weekly*



[www.benrosenblummusic.com](http://www.benrosenblummusic.com)

# SILENT VOICE

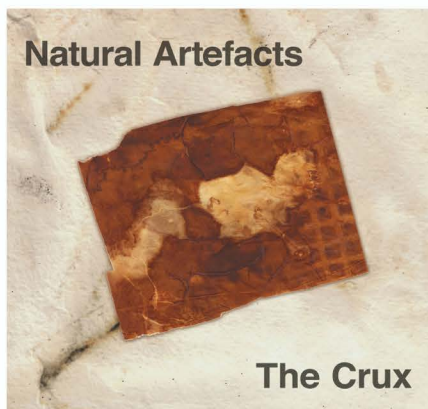


## MWENDO DAWA TRIO

Susanna Lindeborg p, elec  
Jimmi Roger Pedersen, b, elec  
David Sundby, dr

"Editors pick" *Down Beat* aug 2018 LJCD5260

# THE CRUX



## NATURAL ARTEFACTS

Susanna Lindeborg p, elec  
Merje Kägu guit  
Per Anders Nilsson elec  
Anton Jonsson perc

LJCD5261

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S W E D E N A B





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Bruce Crowther - JAZZ JOURNAL (UK)

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A winner." - MIDWEST RECORD

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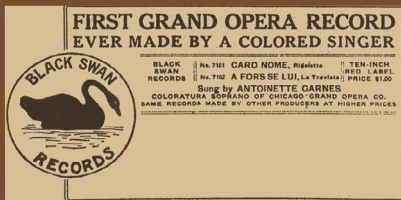


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*Cadence Top 10 Critic's Pick  
Historical Releases*

# BLACK SWANS

The first recordings of black classical music performers, most not reissued since they were new 100 years ago.



“There are no words to express how grateful I am to hear of this marvelous piece of love. It’s far too seldom that we speak of our great singers who contributed so very much to the world of Classical Music, not just Pop. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.” – **Grace Bumby**

“Listening to these almost-lost recordings is like witnessing an archeological dig reassembling into a bustling street scene, replete with sayers and players, united in music. What a profound gift: great songs and their history reverberating into this century from our chasmic past! Thanks to the formidable efforts of Leslie Gerber and his dedicated team, these voices will never go silent again.” – **Rita Dove**

**PARNASSUS**

## Black Swans – Various Artists PACD 96067

*This CD contains the first recordings made by black classical performers, singers and instrumentalists, dating from approximately 1917-1922. Only 5 of the 25 tracks have ever been reissued before. Together they provide a demonstration of the forgotten culture of black performers in classical music from the early 20th century*

[www.parnassusrecords.com](http://www.parnassusrecords.com)

Buy **BLACK SWANS: Earliest African-American Classical Stars** via Amazon

## Cadence Top 10 Critic's Pick



# SEDITION

Blaise Siwula  
Nicolas Letman-Burtinovic  
Jon Panikkar

**Setola Di Maiale Records (630318875573)**

*Spontaneously composed music sometimes known as seditious or free jazz created in a non-verbal environment.*

**Order the CD**

<https://store.cdbaby.com/cd/blaisesiwula22>

# RareNoiseRecords

presents



## **Sonar w. David Torn** **Tranceportation (Volume 1)**

Cat. No.: RNR113/RNR113LP

Formats : CD/Vinyl/DL

Release Date : Available Now

## **Led Bib : It's Morning**

Sharon Fortnam, Chris Williams, Pete Grogan,  
Liran Donin, Elliott Galvin, Mark Holub  
(w. Jack Hues, Susanna Gartmayer, Irene Kepl, Noid)

Cat. No.: RNR108/RNR108LP

Formats : CD/Vinyl/DL

Release Date : Available Now



## **Merzbow, Keiji Haino, Balázs Pándi** **Become The Discovered, Not The Discoverer**

Cat. No.: RNR111/RNR111LP

Formats : CD/Double Vinyl/DL

Release Date : Available Now

## **Jamie Saft, Dave Liebman, Bradley Jones, Hamid Drake** **Hidden Corners**

Cat. No.: RNR109/RNR109LP

Formats : CD/Vinyl/DL

Release Date : Available Now



## **Red Kite**

Even Helte Hermansen, Bernt Andre Moen,  
Trond Frønes, Torstein Lofthus

Cat. No.: RNR105/RNR105LP

Formats : CD/Vinyl/DL

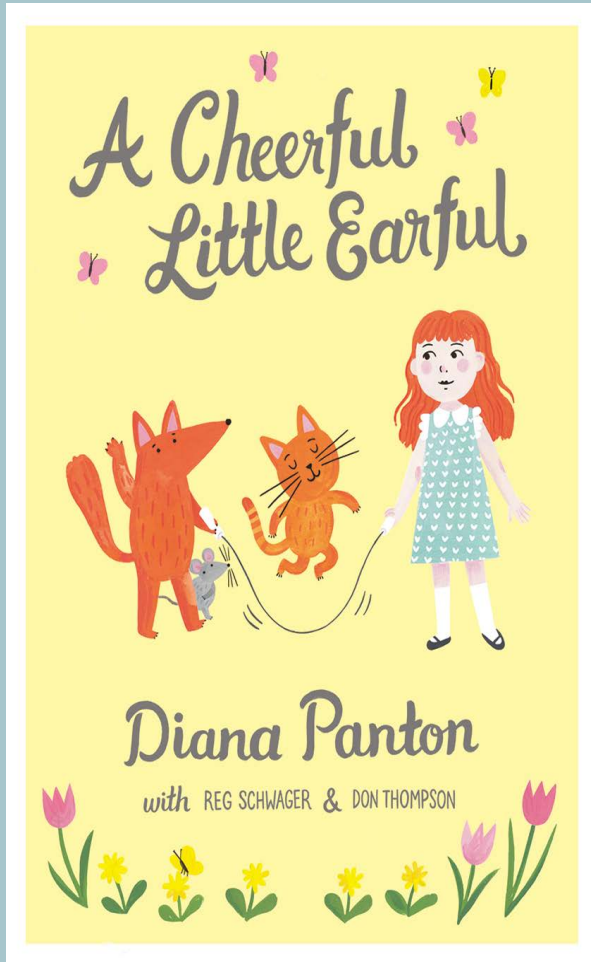
Release Date : Available Now



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album available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Cadence Top 10 Critic's Pick



# blood

## Jason Kao Hwang

### Burning Bridge

*..Hwang is one of the interesting voices in the creative spot that, after all, remains • the New Yorker's Lower East Side... In "Blood," the originality of the compositions, coupled with the inventiveness of improvised interactions (usually duos or trios of variable constitution) shows that a collective design rises to give coherence to the hybrid sound of formation from which emerge sudden changes of direction, variations in thickness of the arrangements and intricate timbral games. - António Branco. jazz.pt*

Jason Kao Hwang - composer/violin  
Taylor Ho Bynum - cornet/flugelhorn  
Joseph Daley - tuba  
Andrew Drury - drum set  
Ken Filiano - string bass  
Sun Li - pipa  
Steve Swell - trombone  
Wang Guowei - erhu

[jasonkaohwang.com/burning-bridge](http://jasonkaohwang.com/burning-bridge)

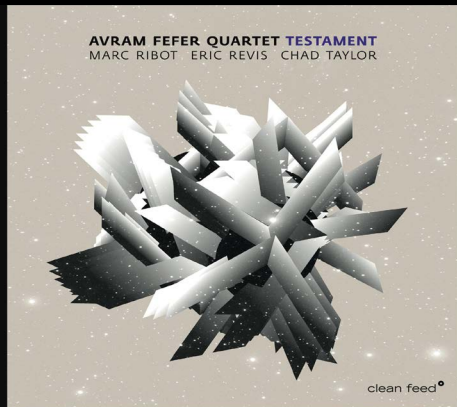


"Pianist Michael Kocour brings formidable technique and exquisite touch to 10 Great American Songbook standards."

Ed Enright, *DownBeat*



## AVRAM FEFER QUARTET featuring MARC RIBOT, ERIC REVIS, CHAD TAYLOR



"Impressive interplay in 5th gear." *Jazzweekly*

"I cannot recommend this one strongly enough. It is flat-out HOT! So get it already. It both swings and frees things up like mad." *GappleGate Music Review*

"The quartet's playing is very much of the take-no-prisoners variety, all four roaring with conviction and pushing the intensity level to the max." *Textura*

"Plug in to the energy and abandon of the record right now!!" *Track of the Day, Marlbank*

"*Testament*, the new album by saxophonist Avram Fefer, could reasonably be pegged as an avant-garde all-star project. Along with Fefer, it features guitarist Marc Ribot, bassist Eric Revis and drummer Chad Taylor — improvisers adept at turning any digression into an epic. But the resulting musical summit doesn't feel like a collision of forces (or egos) so much as a melding of voices (and minds)." *Nate Chinen WBGO*





A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that reflects on the water's surface. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, some of which are illuminated by the setting sun. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# HOME LIGHT

ERNIE  
WATTS  
QUARTET

## HOME LIGHT

BY ERNIE WATTS QUARTET

FLYING DOLPHIN RECORDS

This latest CD by the Ernie Watts Quartet is filled with a variety of powerful and lyrical pieces, and also some humor, such as the bebop Ornette-like energy of 'Freque Flyers,' and 'I Forgot August,' built on the harmonic structure of the standard 'I Remember April.' 'Horizon' is a meditative ballad, and the title tune, 'Home Light,' a nod towards gospel.

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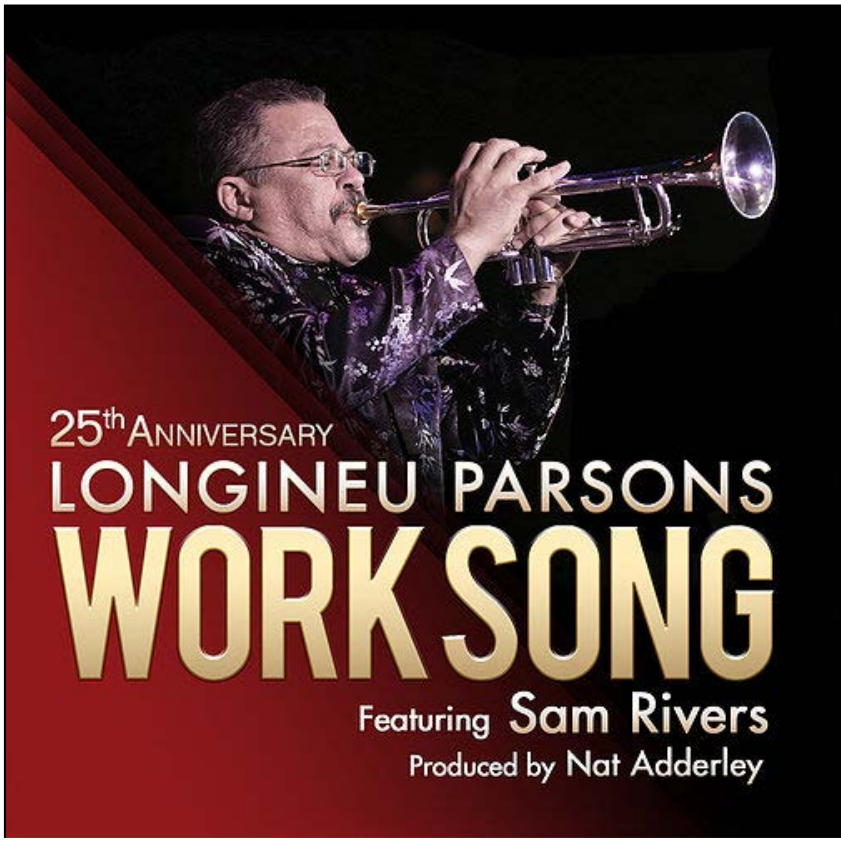


**WARREN BENBOW IS A WORLD CLASS DRUMMER, SONGWRITER, MUSIC PRODUCER, EDUCATOR AND AUTHOR IN NEW YORK CITY.**

Warren Benbow is a New York-based drummer who has worked and/or recorded with Whitney Houston, Nina Simone, LL Cool J, Betty Carter, Phyllis Hyman, Larry Willis with Eddie Gomez on the CD "Inner Crisis", Olu Dara, Ted Daniel, Linda and Sonny Sharrock, Jimmy Owens with Chris White and Kenny Barron, Doug and Jean Carn, Rene McLean, Rickie Byars Beckwith, Michael Urbaniak, Billy "Spaceman" Patterson, Junko O'Hashi, Teruo Nakamura and Super Friends, and was an original member of James "Blood" Ulmer's "Odyssey" band. In addition to his jazz work, he has also worked as an actor and musician in Broadway musical productions, and in film. He has performed on television, in the studio, and in clubs or concert halls around the world with artists Mary J. Blige, Gwen Guthrie, Nancy Wilson, Mavis Staples, Brian McKnight, SWV, and many others. In addition to his work as a musician, he has also worked as an actor and musician in Broadway musical productions, and in film with Ernest Dickerson, Spike Lee, Bill Duke, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, Gilbert Moses, Chapman Roberts, and Melvin Van Peebles.

**LISTEN:**

**[WARRENBENBOW.BANDCAMP.COM/ALBUM/WARREN-BENBOWS-HARMOLODIC-ADVENTURE-2](http://WARRENBENBOW.BANDCAMP.COM/ALBUM/WARREN-BENBOWS-HARMOLODIC-ADVENTURE-2)**



25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

LONGINEU PARSONS  
**WORK SONG**

Featuring **Sam Rivers**  
Produced by Nat Adderley

Dr. Longineu Parsons' newest album, "Work Song – 25th Anniversary Edition," is co-produced by Nat Adderley and features performances by Adderley and the legendary Sam Rivers.

*"I have listened to Longineu for more than twenty years and I've seen him survive while continuing to grow professionally with consistency all the time. He never allows his knowledge of his instrument – the trumpet – to interfere with his commitment to creativity and plain old swing. His influences obviously begin with Louis Armstrong and extend to the present day players.*

*Not only does Longineu utilize his appreciation of great past players with devices of his own but, he also masters the recorder, an instrument not normally associated with jazz. Percussion instruments are also within the musical realm of this talented artist.*

*I suggest you listen closely to Longineu – my personal favorite unsung artist." Nat Adderley*

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# NEW from Cadence Jazz Records

- #1236 Jimmy Bennington Trio *The Walk to Montreuil* w/J.L. Masson, B. Duboc
  - #1237 Ernie Krivda *At the Tri-C Jazz Fest* w/C. Black, M. Hayden, R. Gonsalves
  - #1238 Steve Swell's Nation of We: *The Business of Here...Live at Roulette*
  - #1242 Barry Wallenstein *Luck These Days* w/A. Birnbaum, V. Chauncey, N. Haiduck
  - #1243 Kazzrie Jaxen Quartet *Callicoon Sessions* w/C. Krachy, D. Messina, B. Chattin
  - #1244 JCA Orchestra *Stories* w/H. Honshuku, J. Hobbs, R. Stone, P. Scarff, N. Zocher, M. Cho
  - #1245 Mack Goldsbury's Quintet *Feat. Maciej Fortuna Live At CoCo's* w/S. Mahoney
  - #1246 Ehran Elisha Ensemble *Continue* w/H. Elisha, S. Bardfeld, D. Bindman, K. Filiano
  - #1247 Marilyn Lerner-Ken Filiano-Lou Grassi *Live in Madrid*
  - #1248-1252 Sal Mosca *Too Marvelous for Words*
  - #1253 Lee Shaw Duo *Live* w/Rich Syracuse
  - #1254 Pucci Amanda Jhones *Love, Jhones* w/Williams, Lemon, Sanabria, Tranchina
  - #1255 Glenn Wilson *Timely* w/J. D'earth, J. Toomey, J. Masters, T. Martucci
  - #1256 Dominic Duval, Skip Scott, Tim Siciliano *Elements*
  - #1257 Donnic Duval-Vincent Loccisano-Chris Covais *The Project*
  - #1258 David Haney *Angel Foot Shuffle* w/J. Priestler, A. St. James, B. Purdie
  - #1259 Eric Plaks New Trio *Sun and Shadow* w/John Murchison, Leonid Galaganov
  - #1260 Ted Brown Quartet *Live at Trumpets* w/J. Easton, D. Messina, B. Chattin
  - #1261 Don Messina *Dedicated to...* (double bass) solo
  - #1262 Buffalo Jazz Octet *Live at Pausa Art House* w/Bucheger, Rivera, Baczkowski
  - #1263 The Infinitesimal Flash Quartet *Live* w/J. Tchical, M. Marucci, A. Lane, F. Wong
  - #1264 Ray Suhy-Lewis Porter *Longing* w/Rudy Royston, Joris Teepe
- www.cadencejazzrecords.com Cadence Building, Redwood, NY 13679 USA orders@cadencebuilding.com

# NEW from CIMP

- CIMP 406 David Haney Quartet** *Siege of Misrata*  
with Andrew Cyrille(dr) Dominic Duval(b) Dominic Duval, Jr.(b)
- CIMP 408 Jimmy Halperin-Dominic Duval Trio** *Strayhorn*  
with Jay Rosen(dr)
- CIMP 409 Ehran Elisha Trio** *Heads*  
with Albert Beger(ts/ss) Dave Phillips(doublebass)
- CIMP 410 Mat Marucci Trio** *Inversions*  
with Rick Olson© Adam Lane(b)
- CIMP 417 Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound**  
*A Little While in Chicago*  
with Fred Jackson(sax) Jerome Crowell(tpt) Ed Schuller(b)

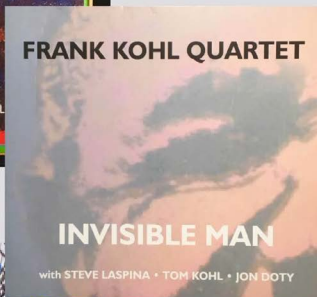


## COMING THIS SUMMER.

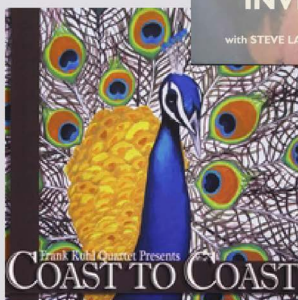
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JOHN STOWELL  
and Bassist,  
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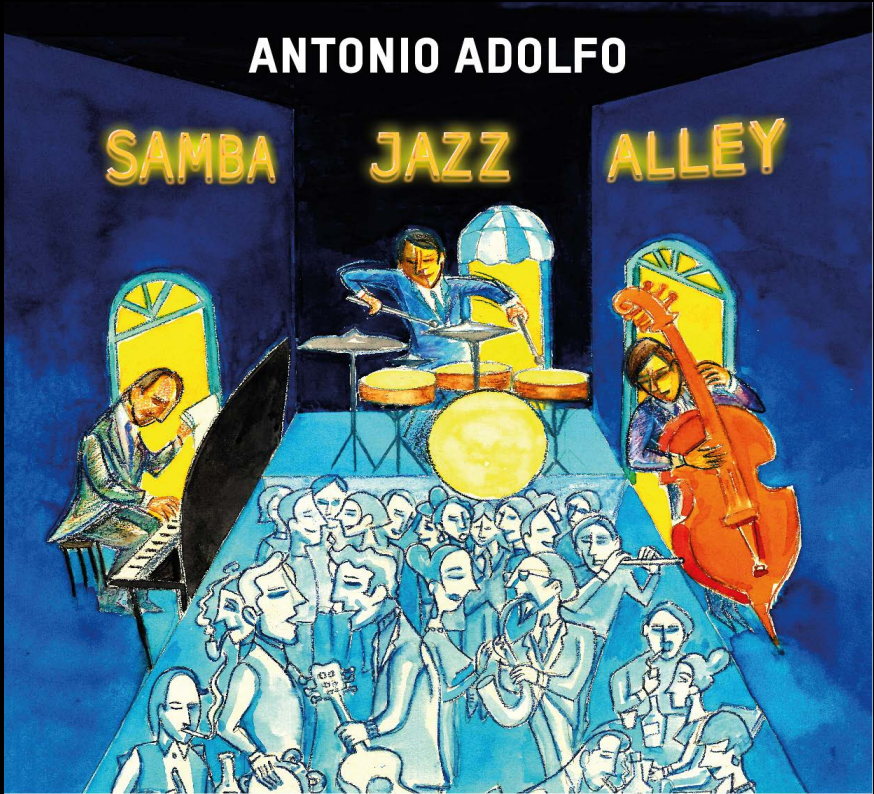
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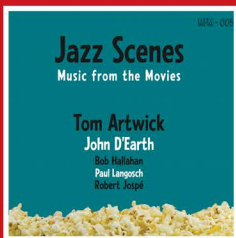
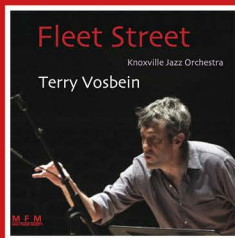
# JAZZ

AT

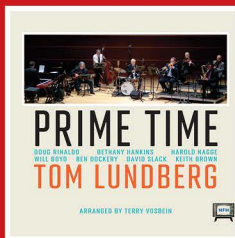
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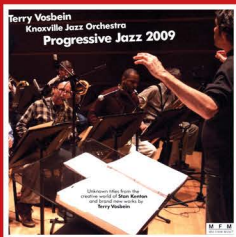
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New in 2019



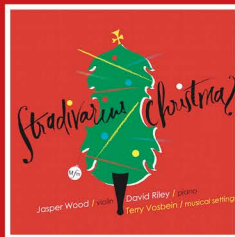
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WITH SPECIAL GUEST ERIC ALEXANDER



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*"Silky smooth jazz vocals...superb tribute to the King"  
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*"Bearde's voice is savory and warm, with occasional sand. His jazz inflection is respectful of the melody, easy going, sympathetic, thoughtful. He breathes lyrics"  
Alix Cohen – CABARET SCENES*

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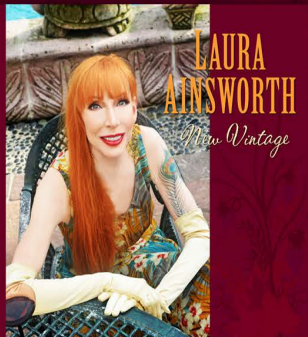


*Eclectus Records*

congratulates retro-jazz vocalist

## LAURA AINSWORTH

for the success of her third album *New Vintage...*



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"A must for jazzbo vocal fans!"

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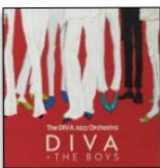
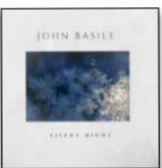
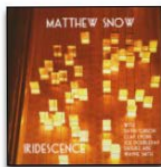
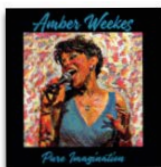
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## MATT LAVELLE QUARTET - HOPE

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# **TOMAS ULRICH**

## **CELLO**

**SOLO CONCERT**  
**MARCH 5, 2020, 8PM**

**CADENCE MONTHLY FEST**  
**ARETE VENUE AND GALLERY**  
**67 WEST STREET #103**  
**BROOKLYN, NY, 11222**

*Cellist-Composer Tomas Ulrich received music degrees from Boston University and the Manhattan School of Music. His principal teachers were Leslie Parnas, Fred Zlotkin, Marion Feldman and Ardyth Alton. In addition to his classical music activities, Mr. Ulrich has performed and recorded with such artists as Anthony Davis, Joe Lovano, Alice and Ravi Coltrane, Anthony Braxton, McCoy Tyner, Aretha Franklin, Natalie Merchant and many others. He has written music for film, theater and instrumental performance and he can be heard on over 100 CDs in a wide variety of musical styles and settings. Tomas has performed throughout Europe, Japan, South America, Canada and the United States. Jay Collins from Signal to Noise has written that "Tomas Ulrich is surely one of the most accomplished and intriguing cellists in improvised music, with a brilliant technical mastery and ability to play prickly improv, jazz, classical, film music or pretty much anything he desires."*

[www.discogs.com/artist/518836-Tomas-Ulrich](http://www.discogs.com/artist/518836-Tomas-Ulrich)



### Nora McCarthy Bio

- A prominent member of the New York jazz scene, vocalist, composer, lyricist, poet and actor, Nora McCarthy has enjoyed a very productive and significant musical career since 1996 when she recorded *red&blue*, her first of thus far nine CD's, with John di Martino-piano, Mike Lee-saxophone, Essiet Okon Essiet-bass, Alvester Garnet-drums and Sato Takeishi-percussion. Her eighth CD, *blesSINGS*, released in 2016 won the 38th Annual Jazz Station Awards in two categories: Best Jazz Singer and Best Jazz Vocal CD as well as the cover of *Jazz Inside Magazine*.
- McCarthy, a devotee of classic jazz, global rhythms and the fine arts, is a musical colorist, and interpreter of the lyric; a beautiful balladeer in the tradition of the great Jimmy Scott. Her burnished alto voice is steeped in tradition and rich with a distinctive style that cuts a broad swath from trad jazz, Great American Songbook, modern jazz, bebop, post-bop, soul, rhythm & blues, and beyond. An impressive improviser, her sound is reminiscent of the great voices and horns in jazz.



Joe's Pub, Public Theatre, NYC

A unique and dynamic vocal artist in the world of jazz and creative music today.

- McCarthy currently leads the following groups: The People of Peace Quintet; The Nora McCarthy Trio; Nora McCarthy QuARTet; A Small Dream In Red Innovative Voice and Saxophone Duo; *Manna For Thought* Improvising Trio; and, The Modern Voice Ensemble; and, is co-founder with alto-saxophonist Jorge Sylvester of ConceptualMotion Orchestra, a 20-piece large ensemble. In addition, Nora is an original member of Sylvester's ACE (Afro-Caribbean-Experimental) Collective and the Extended Edition with Strings—two rhythmically charged groups that perform Sylvester's and McCarthy's original music, her poetry and lyrics.

### Nora McCarthy Highlights

UPCOMING  
PERFORMANCES

- McCarthy' has written over 30 compositions and graphic compositions, soundscapes and poetic architectures that she has been designing since 2001 for her advanced music groups and has penned lyrics to dozens of jazz standards, other compositions as well as her own original music.
- Nora and her groups perform at some of the top clubs, jazz venues, concert halls, cultural centers, universities, and festivals in New York City, the Tri-State area and elsewhere in the USA and in the world.
- Early 2019 McCarthy made her off Broadway acting debut in the play *Moral Support*, a drama written by Bill Considine, directed by Félix E. Gardón at Medicine Show Theatre, NYC.
- Nora is a regular guest artist in pianist David Haney's and legendary drummer Bernard Purdie's ongoing production *Jazz Stories* at The Public Theater, Joe's Pub, NYC
- Nora presents a jazz radio show for Cadence Jazz World (<http://www.cadencejazzworld.com>) called, "Nora's Jazz Show" featuring jazz and avant-jazz, world jazz by established and emerging artists from around the world.

William Hooker Interviews Nora McCarthy  
<https://youtu.be/IZXkpIDPQ9g>

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**[www.adamlane.org](http://www.adamlane.org)**

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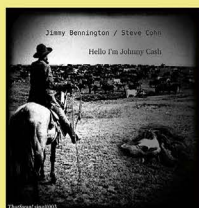
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## \*Tear it Down, Then Play a Ballad *Live at the Heartland*

- Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound  
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## \*Hello, I'm Johnny Cash

- Jimmy Bennington / Steve Cohn

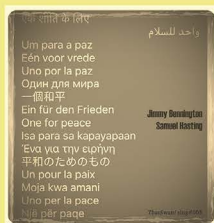
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## \*Belles de Nuit

- Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound  
feat. Fred Jackson Jr. (AACM) and Ben Boye

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## \*One for Peace

- Jimmy Bennington / Samuel Hasting

*ThatSwan!Sing#005*

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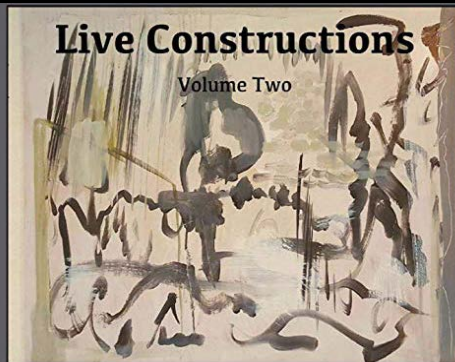


# Reggie Sylvester – drums



Reggie was a member of the Bern Nix Quartet and the early Black Rock Coalition of the mid-1980s and played in the BRC Orchestra. He has opened for Blues Traveller, Spin Doctors, Bill Laswell, and Raging Slab at Wetlands. He lives in Brooklyn and likes coffee and espresso of all types.

reggiejsylvester@gmail.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/reggie.sylvester.58>



Daniel Carter - Julian Priestler - Adam Lane  
Reggie Sylvester - David Haney

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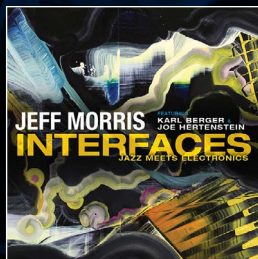
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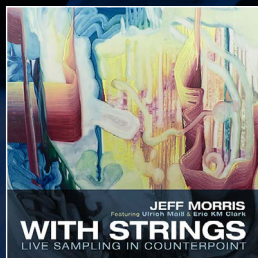
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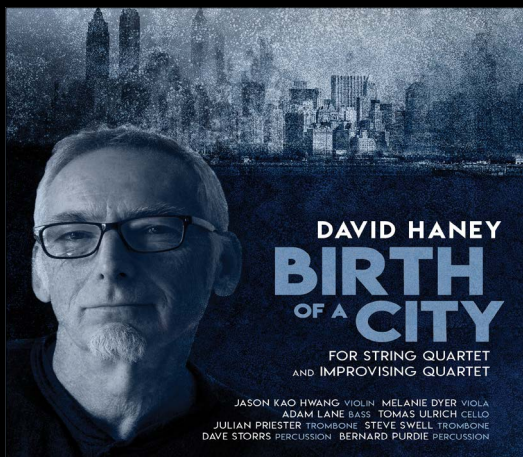


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- 106 Mark Whitecage Trio
- 107 Chris McCain - Billy Pierce Trio
- 108 Steve Swell & Chris Kelsey
- 109 Billy Bang 4tet
- 110 Herb Robertson/Dominic Duval/Jay Rosen
- 111 Vinny Golia & Ken Filiano
- 112 Luther Thomas 4tet
- 113 Sonny Simmons Trio
- 114 Paul Lytton 4tet
- 115 Joe McPhee 4tet
- 116 Steve Swell 4tet
- 117 David White 5tet
- 118 Sonny Simmons 4tet
- 119 Mark Whitecage 4tet
- 120 Joe McPhee & David Prentice
- 121 Kevin Norton Trio
- 122 Joseph Scianni - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 123 Lou Grassi Saxtet
- 124 Odean Pope Trio
- 125 Leo Shev Trio
- 126 Ivo Perelman Trio
- 127 Mike Bisio & Joe McPhee
- 128 Marc Edwards Trio
- 129 Paul Smoker - Vinny Golia 4tet
- 130 Joseph Scianni
- 131 Bobby Zankel 5
- 132 Joe McPhee 4tet
- 133 Roswell Rudd Trio
- 134 Ivo Perelman Trio & Rory Stuart
- 135 Brandon Evans 4tet
- 136 Thomas Bergtrom Trio
- 137 Dominic Duval & Jay Rosen
- 138 Frank Lowe Trio
- 139 Chris Kelsey Trio
- 140 Zsuzsa K. Fasztau/Noah Howard/Bobby Few
- 141 Dominic Duval's String Ensemble
- 142 Jon Hazilla & Saxabone
- 143 Khan Jamal
- 144 Bruce Eisenbeil Trio
- 145 Luther Thomas Trio
- 146 Roswell Rudd Trio
- 147 Claude Lawrence Trio
- 148 Glenn Spearman - John Howard Group
- 149 Steve Swell 4tet
- 150 Kahil El'Zabar's Ritual Trio
- 151 David Bindman Trio
- 152 Ahmed Abdullah's Diaspora
- 153 Eliot Levin 4tet
- 154 Tyrone Hill 4tet feat. Marshall Allen
- 155 Joseph Scianni Trio/ Mark Whitecage 4tet
- 156 Lou Grassi's PoBand
- 157 Mark Whitecage's Other 4tet
- 158 Arthur Blythe & David Eaves
- 159 Frodo Giordano 4tet
- 160 Thomas Bergtrom Trio plus Peter Britzmann
- 161 Rob Brown - Lou Grassi 4tet
- 162 Joseph Scianni duets
- 163 John Gunther's Axis Mundi
- 164 Chris Dahlgren/Briggan Krauss/Jay Rosen
- 165 Andrew Chesbire Trio
- 166 Ebran Elisha Ensemble
- 167 Ethnic Heritage Ensemble
- 168 David White 5tet
- 169 Bob Magnuson & Lou Grassi
- 170 Pucci Amadeo Jhonas
- 171 Marshall Allen4tet feat. Mark Whitecage
- 172 Charlie Kohlhase 5tet
- 173 Kowald, Smoker, McPhee, Whitecage, etc.
- 174 Kalaparush Maurice McIntyre Trio
- 175 Yoko Fujiyama's String Ensemble
- 176 John Gunther 5tet
- 177 Hugh Le'Ann & Marc Sabatella
- 178 Kowald, McPhee, Smoker, Whitecage, etc.
- 179 Michael Bisio & Joe McPhee
- 180 Marshall Allen4tet feat. M. Whitecage
- 181 Glenn Spearman & Dominic Duval
- 182 Burton Greene - Wilber Morris - Lou Grassi
- 183 Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 184 Steve Swell Trio
- 185 Joe Fiedler - Ben Koehn - Ed Ware
- 186 Paul Smoker 4tet
- 187 Patrick Brennan with Lisle Ellis
- 188 Th.Bergtrom/W.Morris/R.Nicholson
- 189 John Carlson/Eric Hipp/S.McClinton/S.Neumann
- 190 Ori Kaplan Trio Plus Geoff Mann, Tom Abbs
- 191 Odean Pope & Dave Burrell
- 192 Ahmed Abdullah/A.Harding/W.Kamaguchi/Weinstein: NAM
- 193 Mark Whitecage's Other Other 4tet
- 194 Bruce Swett's Crossover Trio
- 195 Sam Bardfeild's Cabal Fatale
- 196 Dom Minasi Trio
- 197 Blaise Swula Trio
- 198 Joe Fonda 5tet
- 199 Joe McPhee's Bluette

- 200 Elliott Levin - Tyrone Hill 4tet
- 201 Lou Grassi - Tom Varner - Ron Horton - Tomas Ulrich
- 202 John Bickerton Trio
- 203 Steve Swell Trio
- 204 Bob Magnuson - Tom DeSteno 4tet
- 205 Kahil El'Zabar's TriFactor
- 206 Tyrone Hill - Elliott Levin 4tet
- 207 Marshall Allen w/ Lou Grassi's PoBand
- 208 Bhub Ramey - Jack Wright - Fred Lonberg-Holm - Bob Marsh
- 209 Joe McPhee - Joe Giardullo - Michael Bisio - Dominic Duval
- 210 Ebran Elisha Ensemble
- 211 Jay Rosen 4tet
- 212 Konrad Bauer & Nils Wogram
- 213 Donald Robinson Trio
- 214 Luther Thomas 5tet
- 215 Dominic Duval
- 216 Briggan Krauss - Chris Dahlgren - Jay Rosen
- 217 Ken Simon 4tet
- 218 Phil Haynes - Herb Robertson 5tet
- 219 Paul Smoker - Bob Magnuson - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
- 220 Kahil El'Zabar with David Murray One World Family
- 221 Konrad Bauer/Nils Wogram/Dominic Duval
- 222 Phil Haynes & Herb Robertson
- 223 Ori Kaplan's Trio Plus4tetology
- 224 Roselle Washington with David Murray One World Family
- 225 Anthony Braxton
- 226 Paul Smoker - Bob Magnuson - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
- 227 Lou Grassi's PoBand
- 228 Wilber Morris & Reggie Nicholson
- 229 Yoko Fujiyama 4tet
- 230 Dave Burrell & Tyrone Brown
- 231 Masashi Harada Trio
- 232 John Gunther 5tet
- 233 Paul Smoker Trio
- 234 John Oswald - David Prentice - Dominic Duval
- 235 Anthony Braxton w/Alex Horwitz
- 236 Anthony Braxton
- 237 Avram Feler 4tet
- 238 Kevin Norton - Bob Celusac - Andy Eulau
- 239 Odean Pope - Byard Lancaster - Ed Crockett - J.R. Mitchell
- 240 Bobby Zankel Trio
- 241 Bruce Eisenbeil 4tet
- 242 William Gagliardi 4tet
- 243 Anthony Braxton 5tet
- 244 Rosi Herlein Ensemble
- 245 Steve Lehman 5tet
- 246 Alex Harding Trio
- 247 Kalaparush Maurice McIntyre Trio
- 248 Ned Rothenberg & Denman Maroney
- 249 Fred Hess 4tet
- 250 Charles Eubanks solo piano
- 251 Burton Greene with Mark Dresser
- 252 T.J. Graham with Rory Stuart
- 253 Jay Rosen Trio
- 254 Tom DeSteno - Bob Magnuson 4tet
- 255 Steve Lehman 5tet
- 256 Mary LaRose - Jeff Lederer - Steve Swell - D.Duval
- 257 Joe McPhee's Bluette
- 258 Joseph Rosenberg 4tet
- 259 Jean-Luc Guionnet & Edward Perraud
- 260 John Heward - Tristan Honsinger - Jean Derrone
- 261 Dominic Duval String & Brass Ens.
- 262 Lou Grassi's PoBand
- 263 Adam Lane 4tet
- 264 Daniel Carter - Steve Swell - Tom Abbs - David Brandt
- 265 John O'Gallagher's Axiom
- 266 Matt Lavelle 4tet
- 267 Khan Jamal 5tet
- 268 Bob Washington Trio
- 269 David Taylor Trio
- 270 Alex Harding - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 271 David Wertman-Charlie Kohlhase-Lou Grassi
- 272 Ursel Schlicht-Steve Swell 4tet
- 273 Carl Grubbs 4tet
- 274 Lucian Ban & Alex Harding
- 275 Frank Lowe 4tet
- 276 Elliott Levin-Marshall Allen-Tyrone Hill 5tet
- 277 Lucian Ban & Alex Harding 5tet
- 278 John Tchicai - Pierre Dorge - Lou Grassi
- 279 Dylan Taylor & Kelly Meashey
- 280 Kevin Norton 4tet
- 281 Adam Lane/ John Tchicai
- 282 Andrew Lamb Trio
- 283 Joe McPhee-Dominic Duval-Jay Rosen: Trio-X
- 284 Joe Fonda-Barry Altschul-Billy Bang
- 285 Steve Swell's New York BrassWoodTrio
- 286 Avram Feler 4tet
- 287 Luther Thomas 4tet
- 288 Tom Abbs 4tet
- 289 Paul Dummal - Paul Rogers - Kevin Norton
- 290 Charles Eubanks
- 291 William Gagliardi 5tet
- 292 Steve Swell 5tet
- 293 Chris Krvida 5tet
- 294 Odean Pope & Khan Jamal 4tet
- 295 Mark Dresser & Ray Anderson
- 296 Paul Dummal-Paul Rogers-Kevin Norton
- 297 William Gagliardi 5tet
- 298 Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra

- 299 Deborah Day & Dominic Duval
- 300 Hal Erstad 4tet
- 301 Jimmy Halperin - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 302 Ernie Krvida 5tet
- 303 Odean Pope 4tet
- 304 John O'Gallagher w/Masa Kamaguchi-Jay Rosen
- 305 Patrick Brennan 4tet
- 306 Kalaparush M McIntyre & The Light
- 307 David Taylor Trio
- 308 James Finn Trio
- 309 Chris Kelsey 4tet
- 310 Scott Rosenberg's Red
- 311 John O'Gallagher w/Masa Kamaguchi-Jay Rosen
- 312 Marco Ercedi - Lisle Ellis - Peter Valsamis
- 313 Lou Grassi 4tet
- 314 Mary Anne Driscoll - Paul Murphy
- 315 Gebhard Ullmann - Steve Swell 4tet
- 316 Burton Greene & Roy Campbell 4tet
- 317 Marc Pompe 4tet
- 318 Ken Wessel - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
- 319 John Gunther Trio
- 320 Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 321 Dave Taylor-Steve Swell 5tet
- 322 Khan Jamal 5tet
- 323 Mike Bisio 4tet
- 324 Avram Feler - Mike Bisio
- 325 Adam Lane Trio
- 326 Stephen Gauci Trio
- 327 Jay Rosen
- 328 Trio-X: JoeMcPhee/ DominicDuval/JayRosen
- 329 Chris Kelsey Trio
- 330 Prince Lasha & Odean Pope Trio
- 331 Byard Lancaster 4tet
- 332 William Gagliardi 5tet
- 333 Bobby Few & Avram Feler
- 334 Ernie Krvida 5tet
- 335 Adam Lane Trio
- 336 Carl Grubbs Quartet
- 337 Lucian Ban-Alex Harding
- 338 David Haney Trio
- 339 Burton Greene Quintet
- 340 Byard Lancaster 4tet
- 341 Sophie Duner 4tet
- 342 William Gagliardi 4tet
- 343 Joe Fonda's Bottoms Out
- 344 Lou Grassi's PoBand
- 345 Burton Greene Trio
- 346 Mat Marucci - Doug Webb Trio
- 347 Dominic Duval's String 4tet
- 348 Jimmy Halperin & Dominic Duval
- 349 Michael Bisio & Tomas Ulrich
- 350 Seth Weich 4tet
- 351 Stephen Gauci 4tet
- 352 Steve Swell - David Taylor 4tet
- 353 Odean Pope 4tet
- 354 David Haney Trio
- 355 Burton Greene solo piano
- 356 Mat Marucci - Doug Webb Trio
- 357 David Haney & Julian Prester
- 358 Chris Kelsey 4tet
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- 360 Michael Bisio
- 361 Stephen Gauci 4tet
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- 363 David Schitter - Dominic Duval - Newman T.Baker
- 364 Khan Jamal & Dylan Taylor
- 365 Bobby Zankel Trio
- 366 Ernie Krvida Trio
- 367 David Haney & Andrew Cyrille
- 368 Chris Kelsey 4tet
- 369 David Haney & Fredruy Cyrille-Dominic Duval
- 370 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESA Trio
- 371 David Haney Trio
- 372 Michael Bisio 4tet
- 373 Ernie Krvida
- 374 David Amerer Trio
- 375 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
- 376 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESA Trio
- 377 David Amerer Trio
- 378 Odean Pope 4tet
- 379 Jimmy Bennington Trio
- 380 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
- 381 Tom Siciliano Trio
- 382 Brian Landro & Group
- 383 Andrew Lamb Trio
- 384 Nate Woley + Taylor Ho Bynum 4tet
- 385 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
- 386 David Haney 4tet Avenue of the Americas
- 387 Diane Moser + Mark Dresser duo
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- 389 Andrew Lamb Trio
- 390 Jimmy Halperin + Dominic Duval
- 391 Jon Hazilla - Ran Blake
- 392 Adam Lane 4tet
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- 394 Odean Pope Trio w/Marshall Allen
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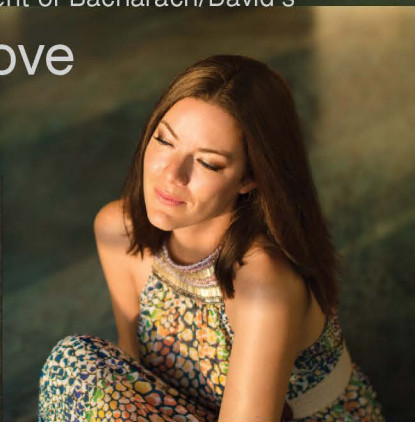
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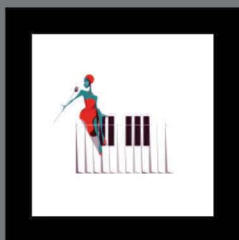
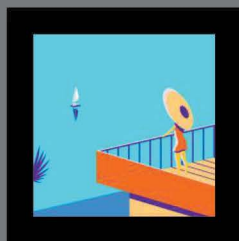
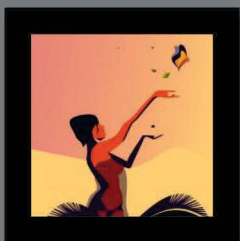
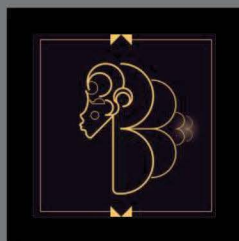
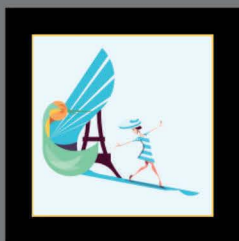
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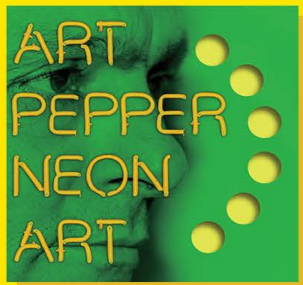
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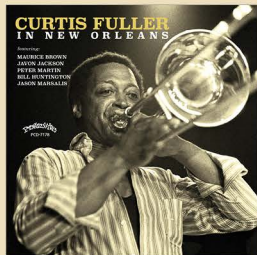
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### CIMPoL 5037:

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Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

### CIMPoL 5038:

Trio-X - Live at the Sugar Maple

Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

### CIMPoL 5039:

Trio-X - Live at Craig Kessler & Janet Lessner's

Joe McPhee (trumpet) - Dominic Duval (bass) - Jay Rosen (drums)

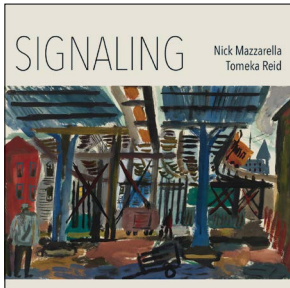
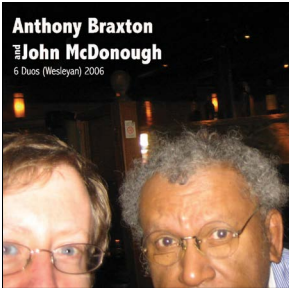
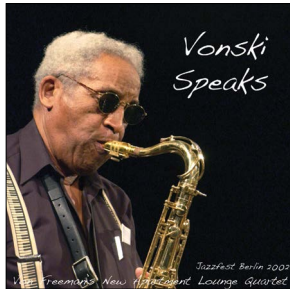
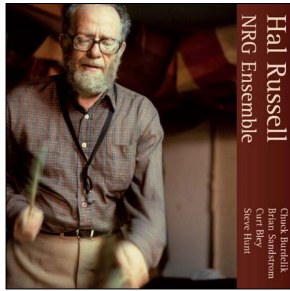
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5005	Salim Washington	Live at St. Nick's
5006-5012	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Live on Tour 2006
5013	Gebhard Ullmann + Steve Swell 4tet	Live in Montreal
5014	Ernie Krivda	Live Live at the Dirty Dog
5015-5019	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Trio-X - Live on Tour 2008
5020-5024	CIMPfest 2009: Live in Villach, Austria	Live in Villach, Austria
5025	Seth Meicht and the Big Sound Ensemble	Live in Philadelphia
5026	Eric Plaks Quintet	Live at Bronx Community College
5027-5030	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	Trio-X - Live on Tour 2010
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acc: accordion  
as: alto sax  
bari s : baritone sax  
b: bass  
b cl: bass clarinet  
bs: bass sax  
bsn: bassoon  
cel: cello  
cl: clarinet  
cga: conga  
cnt: cornet  
d: drums  
el: electric  
elec: electronics  
Eng hn: English horn  
euph: euphonium  
flgh: flugelhorn  
flt: flute  
Fr hn: French horn  
g: guitar  
hca: harmonica  
kybd: keyboards  
ldr: leader  
ob: oboe  
org: organ  
perc: percussion  
p: piano  
pic: piccolo  
rds: reeds  
ss: soprano sax  
sop: soprano sax  
synth: synthesizer  
ts: tenor sax  
tbn: trombone  
tpt: trumpet  
tba: tuba  
v tbn: valve trombone  
vib: vibraphone  
vla: viola  
vln: violin  
vcl: vocal  
xyl: xylophone



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# Inside This Issue

## CADENCE MAGAZINE EDITORIAL POLICY

Established in January 1976, Cadence Magazine was a monthly publication through its first 381 issues (until September 2007). Beginning with the October 2007 issue, Cadence increased in number of pages, changed to perfect binding, and became a quarterly publication. On January 1, 2012 Cadence Magazine was transferred to Cadence Media L.L.C.

Cadence Magazine continues as an online publication and one print issue per year. Cadence Magazine, LLC, is proud to continue the policies that have distinguished Cadence as an important independent resource.

From its very first issue, Cadence has had a very open and inclusive editorial policy. This has allowed Cadence to publish extended feature interviews in which musicians, well known or otherwise, speak frankly about their experiences and perspectives on the music world; and to cover and review all genres of improvised music. We are reader supported.

Cadence essentially always has been and remains "the best independent magazine of Jazz, Blues, and Creative Improvised Music that money can't buy."

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# Contributors

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**LARRY HOLLIS** (CD Reviews) *is a devout zen baptist, retired saxophonist & militant apathist. His work has appeared in mostly indie publications, liner annotation and Cadence for over three decades. Flanked by his books, records and videos, he lives an insular life in his hometown of Oklahoma City.*

**ROBERT IANNAPOLLO** (CD reviews) *has been writing for Cadence for over 25 years. He also writes for New York City Jazz Record and ARSC Journal. He works as the circulation manager at the Sibley Music Library at the Eastman School of Music and considers himself lucky to be around all that music.*

**MARK KLAFTER** *was born in NYC, the son of a Hungarian holocaust survivor. He was going to be a sports writer, but then became a hippie while getting an English degree at the University of North Carolina. He was radically saved by Jesus in 1973, and ten years later became a respiratory therapist. He believes jazz is God's music, and that King David and his kin were the first creative improvising musicians (see 2 Samuel 6:5).*

**BERNIE KOENIG** (CD Reviews, Short Takes) *is a professor of music and philosophy at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, Canada. He had two books published including Art Matters (Academica Press 2009). He is a drummer/vibist currently performing in a free jazz group and in an experimental group with electronics and acoustic percussion.*

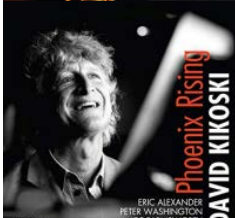
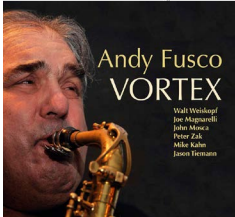
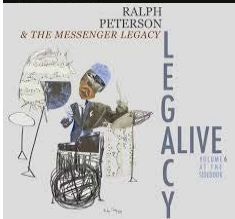
**DON LERMAN** *is a professional saxophonist and woodwind player, arranger, and writer who has written for Cadence for several years. A native and current resident of South Bend, Indiana, Don has also worked extensively in the Washington, DC area.*

**ROBERT D. RUSCH** (Papatamus, Obituaries) *got interested in jazz in the early 1950s and, beginning with W.C. Handy, has since interviewed hundreds of musicians. He has produced over 600 recording sessions of unpopular music and currently paints unpopular canvases.*

**SHEILA THISTLETHWAITE** (Short Takes) *is a journalist and music publicist based in Saskatchewan, Canada. Her articles on the arts have appeared in publications in Canada and the U.S. She has been a board member, and has worked as a publicist and as executive director for jazz festivals in Calgary, AB and Kelowna, BC.*



# Top Ten Recordings 2019



## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK - ZIM TARRO NEW RELEASES

ERIC HOFBAUER, /DAN ROSENTHAL  
QUARTET (*SELF-PRODUCED*)  
PAGO LIBRE - *CINEMAGIQUE 2.0*, LEO RECORDS  
MATT MITCHELL - *PHALANX*  
AMBASSADORS, PI RECORDINGS  
MARLENE ROSENBERG - *MLK CONVERGENCE*,  
ORIGIN RECORDS  
JASON ANICK - *RHYTHM FUTURE QUARTET*  
AND FRIENDS, RHYTHM FUTURE QUARTET  
A/B TRIO - *TRIOLILOQUY*, CHRONOGRAPH  
RECORDS  
SCOTT ROBINSON - *TENORMORE*, ARBORS  
RECORDS  
CLIFFORD LAMB - *BLUES & HUES*, WEBER  
WORKS RECORDS  
GREGOR HUEBNER - *LOS SOÑADORES*, ZOHO  
RECORDS  
SETOLADIMAIALE UNIT & EVAN PARKER -  
*LIVE AT ANGELICA 2018*, SETOLOA-DI MAIALE

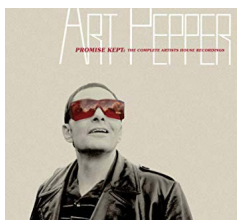
## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, LARRY HOLLIS NEW RELEASES

RALPH PETERSON & MESSINGER - *LEGACY*,  
LEGACY  
MARK TURNER/GARY FOSTER - *MEETS*, CAPRI  
JIMMY COBB - *THIS IS DIG OF YOU*, SMOKE  
SESSIONS  
PAUL COMBS - *UNKNOWN DAMERON*,  
SUMMIT  
GEORGE CABLES - *I'M ALL SMILES*, HIGHNOTE  
ANDY FUSCO - *VORTEX*, STEEPLECHASE  
ETHAN IVERSON - *COMMON PRACTICE*, ECM  
DAVID KIKOSKI - *PHOENIX RISING*, HIGHNOTE  
JOEY DEFRANCESCO - *IN THE KEY OF THE*  
*UNIVERSE*, MACK AVENUE  
JUSTIN ROBINSON - *AT FIRST SIGHT*, WJ3

## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, LARRY HOLLIS REISSUES/HISTORICAL

ART PEPPER - *PROMISE KEPT; COMPLETE*  
*ARTISTS HOUSE*, OMNIVORE  
JOHN COLTRANE - *BLUE WORLD*, IMPULSE  
ART BLAKEY - *ART OF JAZZ, IN & OUT*  
TUBBY HAYES - *GRITS, BEANS AND GREENS*,  
DECCA

# Top Ten Recordings 2019



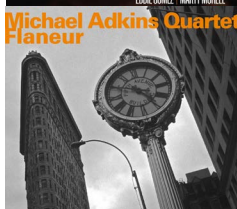
**DEXTER GORDON** - *IN THE CAVE*,  
NEDERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF  
**MICHEL PETRUCCIANI** - *ONE NIGHT IN  
KARLSRUHE*, JAZZ HAUS  
**FREDDIE HUBBARD**, *AT THE CLUB, VOL.1*,  
SLEEPY NIGHT  
**CANNONBALL ADDERLEY** - *SWINGIN' IN  
SEATTLE*, REEL TO REAL  
**BILL EVANS** - *EVANS IN ENGLAND*,  
RESONANCE  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** - *JAZZ AT THE  
PHILHARMONIC: LIVE AMSTERDAM  
1960*, NEDERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF/JAZZ



## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, DON LERMAN NEW RELEASES



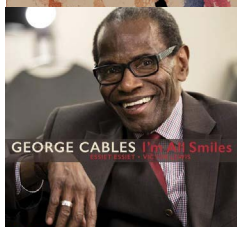
**MICHAEL ADKINS QUARTET** -  
*FLANEUR*, HATOLOGY  
**PEDRO GIRAUDO AND THE WDR BIG  
BAND** - *AN ARGENTINIAN IN NEW YORK*, ZOHO  
**BEN ROSENBLUM COASTAL TRIO** - *RIVER  
CITY*, ONE TRICK DOG RECORDS  
**GEORGE MCMULLEN TRIO**  
- *BOOMERANG*, PFMENTUM  
**STEPHAN CRUMP'S ROSETTA  
TRIO** - *OUTLIERS*, PAPILLON SOUNDS  
**NAVY COMMODORES** - *MOSAIC*  
(SELF-PRODUCED)  
**STEPHEN RILEY** - *OLEO*, STEEPLECHASE  
**GEORGE CABLES** - *I'M ALL SMILES*,  
HIGH NOTE  
**JAMIE FOX** - *I WISH* (SELF-PRODUCED)



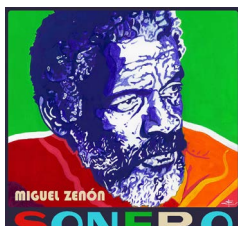
## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, KEN WEISS NEW RELEASES



**MIGUEL ZENON** - *SONERO: THE MUSIC OF  
ISMAEL RIVERA*, MIEL MUSIC  
**HUMAN FEEL (CHRIS SPEED/ANDREW  
D'ANGELO/KURT ROSENWINKEL/JIM  
BLACK)** - *GOLD*, INTAKT RECORDS  
**IRO HAARLA, ULF KROKFORS & BARRY  
ALTSCHUL** - *AROUND AGAIN: THE MUSIC OF  
CARLA BLEY*, TUM RECORDS  
**MILES OKAZAKI** - *THE SKY BELOW*, PI  
RECORDINGS  
**MATT MITCHELL** - *PHALANX AMBASSADORS*,  
PI RECORDINGS



# Top Ten Recordings 2019

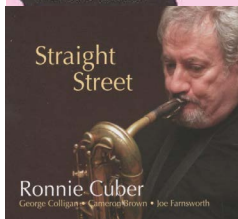
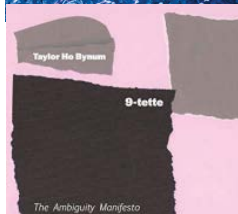


**THE VAMPIRES** – *PACIFICA*, EARSHIFT MUSIC  
**SATOKO FUJII/RAMON LOPEZ** –  
*CONFLUENCE*, LIBRA RECORDS  
**TAYLOR HO BYNUM 9-TETTE** – *THE  
AMBIGUITY MANIFESTO*, FIREHOUSE 12  
RECORDS  
**JOHNATHAN BLAKE** - *TRION*, GIANT STEPS  
ARTS  
**JASON KAO HWANG BURNING BRIDGE** –  
*BLOOD*, TRUE SOUND RECORDINGS



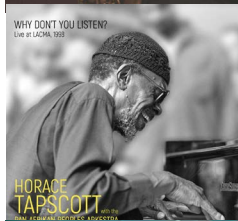
## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, DAVID HANEY NEW RELEASES

**RONNIE CUBER** - *STRAIGHT STREET*,  
STEEPLECHASE  
**HERE AND NOW**, DOUBLEMOON RECORDS  
**HORACE TAPSCOTT** - *WHY DON'T YOU  
LISTEN?* DARK TREE RECORDS  
**THE HATCH** - DARK TREE RECORDS  
**JON IRABAGON** - *INVISIBLE*  
HORIZON IRABBAGAST RECORDS  
**KAT GANG** - *COME CLOSER*, (SELF-  
PRODUCED)  
**GILLIAM, HALL, SORBARA** -  
*COUNTERSTASIS* - *REFRACTED VOICES* (SELF-  
PRODUCED)  
**JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN** - *L'ELEVATION DU  
POINT DE CHUTE*, ODD SOUND RECORDS  
**DENMAN MARONEY** - *SOLO@70* (SELF-  
PRODUCED)



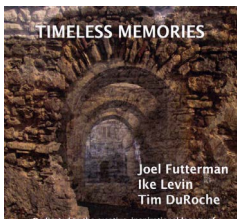
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**ANDREW CLINKMAN, TIM DAISY, AND  
KEN VANDERMARK** - *OPTION*, CORBETT  
VS. DEMPSEY/EXPERIMENTAL SOUND  
**JOEL FUTTERMAN, IKE LEVIN AND TIM  
DUROCHE** - *TIMELESS MEMORIES*, JDF/CLM  
**BLAISE SIWULA** - *SEDITION*, SETOLOA-DI  
MAIALE  
**JOSH LEVINSON SEPTET** - *MORNING  
JOY*, WISE CAT RECORDS  
**STEVE DALACHINSKY** - *INCOMPLETE  
DIRECTIONS*, KNITTING FACTORY RECORDS  
**JACK DESALVO** - *NEVICA*, UNSEEN RAIN  
**ROCCO IACCOVONE** - *JUST LIKE  
FALLING*, UNSEEN RAIN  
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# Top Ten Recordings 2019



*A GARLAND OF RAGAS* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
**LINA NYBERG** - *TERRESTRIAL*, HOOB RECORDS  
**BRANDON ROSS AND STOMU TAKEISHI** - *FOR LIVING LOVERS* - *REVEALING ESSENCE*, SUNNYSIDE

## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK ROBERT IANNAPOLLO NEW RELEASES



**TAYLOR HO BYNUM 9-TETTE** - *THE AMBIGUITY MANIFESTO*, FIREHOUSE 12  
**IRO HAARLA** - *AROUND AGAIN*, TUM  
**RICH HALLEY** - *TERRA INCOGNITA*, PINE EAGLE  
**ALEX HARDING/LUCIAN BAN** - *DARK BLUE*, SUNNYSIDE



**THOMAS HEBERER** - *X MARKS THE SPOT*, OUTNOW

**QUINSIN NACHOFF'S FLUX** - *PATH OF TOTALITY*, WHIRLWIND

**PARNICZKY QUARTET** - *BARTOK ELECTRIFIED*, BMC

**TOMEKA REID QUARTET** - *OLD NEW CUNEIFORM*

**WADADA LEO SMITH** - *ROSA PARKS: PURE LOVE*, TUM

**GEBHARD ULLMANN'S BASEMENT RESEARCH** - *IMPROMPTUS AND OTHER SHORT WORKS* (WHY PLAY JAZZ)

## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK - JEROME WILSON NEW RELEASES

**FIRE! ORCHESTRA**, *ARRIVAL*, RUNE GRAMMOFON

**STEVE HAINES**, *AND THE THIRD FLOOR ORCHESTRA*, JUSTIN TIME

**WADADA LEO SMITH**, *ROSA PARKS: PURE LOVE* (TUM)

**JAMES BRANDON LEWIS**, *AN UNRULY MANIFESTO*, (RELATIVE PITCH)

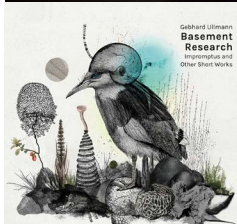
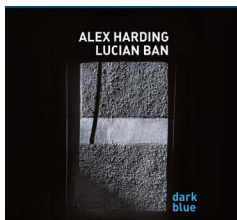
**THE ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO** - *WE ARE ON THE EDGE*, (PI)

**THE OGJB QUARTET** - *BAMAKO*, (TUM)

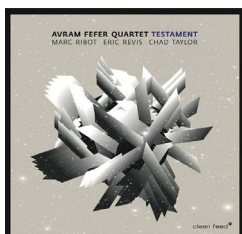
**BRIA SKONBERG** - *NOTHING NEVER HAPPENS*, (SELF-RELEASED)

**SARA GAZAREK**, *THIRSTY GHOST*, (SELF-RELEASED)

**EZRA WEISS BIG BAND**, *WE LIMIT NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD*, (OA2)



# Top Ten Recordings 2019



**JAMIE SAFT / STEVE SWALLOW / BOBBY PREVITE, YOU DON'T KNOW THE LIFE, (RARENOISE).**

## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, MARK KLAFTER NEW RELEASES

**AVRAM FEFER - TESTAMENT, CLEAN FEED**  
**DAVID FRIESEN INTERACTION, ORIGIN**  
**DAVID HANEY - BIRTH OF A CITY, BIG ROUND RECORDS**

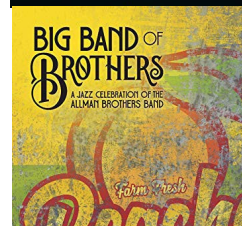
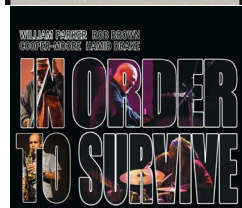
**WILLIAM PARKER - IN ORDER TO SURVIVE LIVE/SHAPESHIFTER, AUM FIDELITY**

**JOEL ROSS - KINGMAKER, BLUE NOTE RECORDS**

**TOM HARRELL - INFINITY, HIGHNOTE**  
**JENNY SCHEINMANN/ALLISON MILLER PARLOUR GAME, ROYAL POTATO FAMILY**

**BIG BAND OF BROTHERS - A JAZZ CELEBRATION OF THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND, NEW WEST RECORDS**

**PAUL DUNMAL - SOULTIME, FMR RECORDS**  
**ROB BROWN - FROM HERE TO HEAR, ROUGEART**



## TOP TEN CRITIC'S PICK, LUDWIG VANTRIKT NEW RELEASES

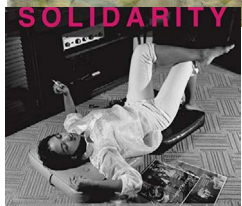
**ANDRES VIAL - GANG OF THREE FEATURING DEZRON DOUGLAS AND ERIC MCPHERSON, CHROMATIC AUDIO**

**MIKROPULS - FEATURING GEBHARD ULLMANN, HANS LUDEMANN, OLIVER POTRATZ AND ERIC SCHAEFER, INTUITION**  
**DON ALIQUO & MICHAEL JEFREY STEVENS - LIVE AT HINTON HALL - THE INNOCENCE OF SPRING, ARTISTS RECORDING COLLECTIVE**

**SATOKO FUJII WITH RAMON LOPEZ - CONFLUENCE, LIBRA RECORDS**  
**JEROME JENNINGS - SOLIDARITY, LOLA RECORDS**

**IRO HAARLA, ULF KROKFORS & BARRY ALTSCHUL - AROUND AGAIN, TUM RECORDS**  
**JOHN YAO'S TRICERATOPS - HOW WE DO, SEE TAO RECORDINGS**

**COLIN STRANAHAN, GLENN ZALESKI, RICK ROSATO - LIVE AT JAZZ STANDARD, CAPRI**  
**ERIC ALEXANDER, DOUG WEISS, JOHNATHAN BLAKE - LEAP OF FAITH, GIANT STEPS**  
**BANGKOK LINGO - SMELLS/COLOURS/NOISE, LOSEN RECORDS**



# Top Ten Recordings 2019



## TOP 10 VOCAL RELEASES CADENCE EDITORIAL BOARD

**MIKE LORENZ & THE WITHERBEEES**  
(SELF-PRODUCED)

**SAMANTHA SIDLEY** - *INTERIOR PERSON*, RELEASE ME RECORDS

**LOTTA-MARIA SAKSA** - *YOU'RE THE CREAM IN MY COFFEE*, ACOUSTIC MUSIC RECORDS

**LET'S GO IN TO A PICTURE SHOW**,  
*HARBINGER RECORDS*

**JEANNE LEE**, *THE NEWEST SOUND YOU NEVER HEARD*, A-SIDE RECORDS

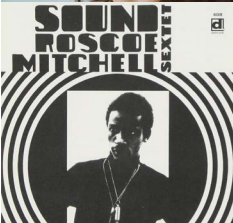
**BETTY BRYANT** - *PROJECT 88* (SELF-PRODUCED)

**GRETJE ANGELL** - *IN ANY KEY*, GREVLINTO RECORDS

**KATERINA BROWN** -  
*MIRROR*, MELLOWTONE RECORDS

**MAGGIE HERRON** - *RENDITIONS* HERRON  
SONG RECORDS

**LICA CERATO AND PAOLO BALTARO** - *CALL PORTER* (SELF-PRODUCED)



## TOP 10 HISTORICAL AND REISSUES CADENCE EDITORIAL BOARD

**ROSCOE MITCHELL** - *SOUND*, DELMARK

**HUBERT LAWS** - *MORNING STAR*-1972,  
*CARNEGIE HALL*-1973, *THE CHICAGO  
THEME*-1975

**BLACK SWANS** - *PARNASSUS* RECORDS

**AIRTO MOREIRA** - *FREE + IDENTITY +  
PROMISES OF THE SUN*. RECORDED FOR CTI  
1972, ARISTA-1975 AND ARISTO-1976,

**LONGINEU PARSONS** - *WORK SONG*, TRIABL  
RECORDS

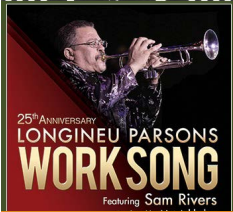
**EUBIE BLAKE & NOBLE SISSLE** -  
*SING SHUFFLE ALONG*, HARBINGER  
RECORDS

**SISSLE & BLAKE'S** - *SHUFFLE ALONG 1950*,  
HARBINGER RECORDS

**SAM RIVERS** - *EMANATION*, NOBUSINESS  
RECORDS

**FRODE GJERSTAD** - *DAY TWO*, NOBUSINESS  
RECORDS

**NANCY WILSON** - *NANCY WILSON: FOUR  
CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS*, AVID RECORDS



## 2019 Top Ten Gigs – Philadelphia Ken Weiss

12/18/18 **Charles Lloyd** at the *Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Art*. The legendary tenor sax/flutist turned back the years, along with (as always) a stellar band - Julian Lage (g), Marvin Sewell (g), Reuben Rogers (b) and Marcus Gilmore (d).

1/11/19 **Iva Bittová** at *House Gallery 1816* (Fire Museum Presents). The Moravian avant-garde violinist/singer popped up in town to play at this private home/art gallery and was totally enthralling with her seemingly endless array of vocal sounds and emotions, as well as with her advanced violin skills.

2/22/19 **Joe Morris** at *House Gallery 1816* (Fire Museum Presents). A stunning solo guitar event that mixed stamina with extended technique. Just how does he render those sounds reminiscent of kora and riti?

3/30/19 **Ben Wendel Seasons Band** at *Chris' Jazz Café*. Wendel's hip grooves aligned with his powerhouse quintet [Gilad Hekselman (g), Aaron Parks (p), Joe Martin (b) and Kendrick Scott (d)] to point a finger towards the future.

4/1/19 **Jajouka Baraka with Bachir and Mustafa Attar, Arrington de Dionyso, Al-Mady, Ben Bennett/ Boneshaker with Mars Williams, Kent Kessler, Paal Nilssen-Love/ Timothee Quost** at *Johnny Brenda's* (Ars Nova Workshop). This triple-feature event presented the rare offerings of two Master Musicians of Jajouka, who's exotic sounds and rhythms were intriguing, while the other two sets dropped into very experimental areas on the backs of a trio of veteran innovators and a French trumpeter/sound-sculpture.

6/22/19 **Christian Sands High Wire Trio** with Ulysses Owen and Luques Curtis at *Chris' Jazz Café*. A dynamic display of virtuosity and dynamism. The trio powered through dirty barrelhouse, touching pop, heartstring-pulling gospel, and jackhammer modern motifs. Perhaps best of all, Sands paid max tribute to Erroll Garner, one of the few newbies respectin' the late, great pianist.

9/1/19 **Cinghiale (Ken Vandermark & Mars Williams)** at *Vox Populi* (Fire Museum Presents). The wild boar duo of Chicago multi-reedists re-formed in January of 2019 after a 25-year nesting period and proved there was plenty of meat left on the bone to devour.

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019

9/13/19 **Orrin Evans & his All-Star Quintet** at *Chris' Jazz Café*. Evans paid tribute to Chris' 30th year anniversary by bringing in his friends – Bobby Watson, Buster Williams, Sean Jones and Obed Calvaire - for a highly entertaining mix of stirring solos that streamed pure silver fluidity.

10/2/19 **Fred Frith Trio** at *Johnny Brenda's* (Ars Nova Workshop – October Revolution Festival) with Jason Hoopes (b), Jordan Glenn (d), Susana Santos Silva (tpt) and Heike Liss (visual art). The former Henry Cow founder's return to town, after a 30-year absence, was a glorious 104-minute, completely improvised set that stayed connected and musical. Frith brought his playthings to challenge his guitar strings. Guest trumpeter Silva was a revelation- watch out for her!

10/6/2019 **Makaya McCraven** at the *Ruba Club* (Ars Nova Workshop-OctRev Festival) with Jeff Parker (g), Luke Stewart (b) and Joel Ross (vib). Featured music that cradled beautiful melody against a torrential percussive push that added a thrilling urgency. The ending's understated version of Coltrane's "After the Rain" was the cherry on top.

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Charles Lloyd - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Iva Bittova - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Joe Morris - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Ben Wendell Seasons Band- Photo credit Ken Weiss



Jajouka Baraka with Bachir and Mustafa Attar and guest Mars Williams - Photo credit Ken Weiss



## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Christian Sands - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Cinghiale (Ken Vandermark & Mars Williams) - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Orrin Evans & his All-Star Quintet - Bobby Watson, Buster Williams, Sean Jones and Obed Calvaire - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Top Concerts - Philadelphia 2019



Fred Frith s - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Makaya McCraven - Photo credit Ken Weiss

# The List - Albums Received

## The Cadence Media List

Here are some of the titles that came across our desk in 2019

+ A must for your record collection

\* Of Special Interest

- + BLACK SWANS, PARNASSUS RECORDS
- + MIKE LORENZ & THE WITHERBEES (SELF-PRODUCED)
- + SAMANTHA SIDLEY - *INTERIOR PERSON*, RELEASE ME RECORDS
- \* AARON WEINSTEIN - 3 X 3, CHESKY RECORDS
- \* AFRO YAQUI MUSIC COLLECTIVE - *MIRROR BUTTERFLY*, INNOVA
- \* ALLA ELANA COHEN - *QUAESTIONES ET RESPONSE*, NAVARRO RECORDS
- \* AMENDOLA VS. BLADES - *EVERYBODY WINS*, ROYAL POTATO FAMILY
- \* ASH GRUNWALD - *MOJO* (SELF PRODUCED)
- \* BILL GILLIAM/GLEN HALL/JOESORBARA - *COUNTERSTASIS - REFRACTED VOICES* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* BOB SHEPPARD - *THE FINE LINE* CHALLENGE RECORDS
- \* CHANDA RULE - *SAPPHIRE DREAMS*, PAO RECORDS
- \* PAGO LIBRE, *CINEMAGIQUE 2.0*, LEO RECORDS
- \* CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY - *TELEPATHY*, JAZZBEAT PRODUCTIONS
- \* CLAIRE MARTIN - *BUMPIN*, STUNT RECORDS
- \* DAMIEN KINGSTON TRIO - *TRIBUTARY SMOOZ*, (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* DANISH RADIO BIG BAND - *JAZZIN' AROUND CHRISTMAS*, STORYVILLE RECORDS
- \* DAVID FINCK - *BASICALLY JAZZ*, GREEN HILL RECORDS
- \* DENMAN MARONEY - *SOLO@70* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* DETAIL - *DAY TWO*, NOBUSINESS RECORDS
- \* DORADO SCHMITT - *CLAIR DE LUNE*, STUNT RECORDS
- \* ED SCHULLER - *U GOT IT* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* ERNEST TURNER - *MY AMERICANA* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* EZRA WEISS BIG BAND - *WE LIMIT NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD*, OA2 RECORDS
- \* FABRIZIO SCIACCA QUARTET - *GETTING IT THERE*, (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* GEORGE COLLIGAN- *AGAIN WITH ATTITUDE*, IYOUWE RECORDS
- \* GRETJE ANGELL - *IN ANY KEY*, GREVLINTO RECORDS
- \* HARRI SJOSTROM - *UP AND OUT*, AMIRANI RECORDS
- \* HAZEL MITCHELL-BELL - *STRONGER THAN EVER* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* HOUSTPN PERSON *I'M JUST A LUCKY SO AND SO*, HIGHNOTE RECORDS
- \* INEKE VANDOORN & MARC VAN VUGT, *CROSSING CANADA LIVE* (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN - *L'ELEVATION DU POINT DE CHUTE*, ODD SOUND RECORDS
- \* JIMMY BENNINGTON - *NEW JERSEY FREEBIE* SLAM PRODUCTIONS
- \* JIMMY COBB - *THIS I DIG OF YOU*, SMOKE SESSIONS
- \* JOÃO PEDRO VIEGAS, LUIZ ROCHA, SILVIA CORDA, ADRIANO ORRÛ - *UNKNOWN SHORES*, AMIRANI
- \* JON IRABAGON - *INVISIBLE GUESTS*, IRABBAGAST RECORDS
- \* JON IRABAGON - *INVISIBLE HORIZON*, IRABBAGAST RECORDS
- \* KATERINA BROWN - *MIRROR*, MELLOWTONE RECORDS
- \* KELLY JOHNSON - *SOMETHING*, ORIGIN RECORDS
- \* LARRY CORBAN - *EMERGENCE*, NABROC RECORDS
- \* LARRY WOLF WITH FOUR CATS & A CANARY - *MOOD SWINGS*, (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* LAURENCE HOBGOOD - *TESSETERRA*, UBUNTA RECORDS
- \* LONGINEU PARSONS - *WORK SONG TRIABL* RECORDS
- \* MAGGIE HERRON - *RENDITIONS*, HERRON SONG RECORDS
- \* MARLENE ROSENBERG - *MLK CONVERGENCE* ORIGIN RECORDS ]
- \* MATT MITCHELL - *PHALANX AMBASSADORS* PI RECORDINGS
- \* NEW YORK VOICES - *REMINISCING IN TEMPO*, ORIGIN RECORDS
- \* NICOLAS BEARDE - *I REMEMBER YOU*, RIGHTGROOVE
- \* NOTHING BUT TIME - *PEARRING SOUND*, (SELF-PRODUCED)
- \* PABLO ZIEGLER CHAMBER QUARTET, *RADIOTANGO*, ZOHO
- \* PAUL SIBERGLEIT - *JANUARY*, BLUJAZZ

# The List - Albums Received

- \* PAUL ZAUBER'S *BLUE BRASS BLUJAZZ*
- \* PHILIPP GROPPER - *CONSEQUENCES, WHYPLAYJAZZ*
- \* PRESENT QUARTET - *ROUTES, PATHS, COURSES, PFMENTUM*
- \* REBECCA DUMAINE / DAVE MILLER - *CHEZ NOUS*,
- \* RICH HALLEY - *TERRA INCOGNITA (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- \* RICHAEAL VALITUTTO & DAVE WILSON, *PFMENTUN*,
- \* ROB SCHEPS - *COMENCIO, STEEPLE CHASE*
- \* RODRIGO AMADO - *SUMMER BUMMER, NOBUSINESS RECORDS*
- \* RONNIE CUBER - *STRAIGHT STREET, STEEPLE CHASE*
- \* SAM RIVERS - *EMANATION, NOBUSINESS RECORDS*
- \* SETOLADIMAIALE UNIT & EVAN PARKER - *LIVE AT ANGELICA 2018 (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- \* SOPHIE HASSFURTHER OGUZ BUYUKBERBER DUO - *MIND LIKE WATER, SOWIE SOUND*
- \* STÅHLS TRIO - *KÄLLTORP SESSIONS VOLUME ONE, MOSEROBIE MUSIC*
- \* TERRY VOSBEIN / CHRIS MAGEE, VOSBEIN MAGEE BIG BAND - *COME AND GET IT!*
- \* THOMAS HEBERER - *X MARKS THE SPOT, OUT NOW RECORDINGS*
- \* TUNETOWN - *THERE FROM HERE, (SELF PRODUCED)*
- AHMAD JAMAL - *BALLADES, JAZZ VILLAGE*,
- ALAN GOLDSHERV - *THE POCKET AND THE OTHER POCKET (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- ALBERTO PIBIRI AND THE AL PEPPERS - *THE NACHO BLUES BLUJAZZ*
- ALEX HAHN - *NEW FLIGHT (SELF PRODUCED)*
- ANDRES VIAL - *GANG OF THREE, CHROMATIC AUDIO*
- AUGIE HAAS - *DREAM A LITTLE DREAM, PLAYTIME MUSIC*
- BEN MARKLEY QUARTET - *SLOW PLAY OA2*
- BEN WEBSTER IN NORWAY STORYVILLE
- BEN WEBSTER'S *FIRST CONCERT IN DENMARK STORYVILLE*
- BENJI & RITA (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- BILL EVANS - *SMILE WITH YOUR HEART, RESONANCE*
- BILL O'CONNELL AND THE AFRO CARIBBEAN ENSEMBLE, SAVANT*
- BLUERING-IMPROVISERS - BLUERING, VOL. 1, RUDI RECORDS*
- BROOKLYN FUNK ESSENTIALS - *STAY GOOD, DORADO RECORDS*
- CAMILLE HARRIS - *BABY ON THE SUBWAY, (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- CHARLES DI RAIMONDO - *THE SOUND OF JAZZ [SELF-PRODUCED]*
- CHRISTIAN CORREA & RAN BLAKE - *STREAMING (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- COREY CHRISTIANSEN - *LA PROXIMA, ORIGIN RECORDS*
- DAVE BASS - *NO BOUNDARIES, WHALING CITY SOUND*,
- DAVE MILLER TRIO - *JUST IMAGINE, SUMMIT RECORDS*
- DAVE RUDOLPH QUINTET - *RESONANCE (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- DAVID FINCK - *BASICALLY JAZZ, GREEN HILL*
- DAVID JANEWAY - *SECRET PASSAGES, NEW DIRECTIONS RECORDS*
- DAVID KIKOSKI - *PHOENIX RISING, HIGHNOTE*
- DEXTER GORDON - *IN THE CAVE, NEDERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF*
- DIANA PANTON - *A CHEERFUL LITTLE EARFUL, LITTLE THINGS*
- DOR HERSKOVITS QUARTET - *FLYING ELEPHANTS (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- DRED SCOTT - *RIDES ALONE ROPEADOPE RECORDS*
- DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA, STORYVILLE RECORDS
- DUKE ELLINGTON IN COVENTRY, 1966, STORYVILLE RECORDS
- EIVIND AUSTAD - *NORTHBOUND, LOSEN RECORDS*
- ENRICO FAZIO - *CRITICAL MASS, LEO RECORDS*
- ERIC ALEXANDER - *LEAP OF FAITH, GIANT STEPS ARTS*
- EUBIE BLAKE & NOBLE SISSLE SING *SHUFFLE ALONG HARBINGER RECORDS*
- EUGENIA CHOE - *VERDANT DREAM, STEEPLE CHASE*
- EYAL VILNER - *SWING OUT! (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- GLAFKOS KONTEMENIOTIS - *YUGEN (SELF-PRODUCED)*
- GRETJE ANGELL - *IN ANY KEY, GREYLINTO RECORDS*
- HANK JONES IN COPENHAGEN, STORYVILLE RECORDS
- HARBINGER - *EXTENDED, OA2*
- HAROLD DANKO / KIRK KNUFFLE - *PLAY DATE, STEEPLE CHASE*
- HASTINGS JAZZ COLLECTIVE - *SHADOW DANCE, NEW DIRECTIONS RECORDS*

# The List - Albums Received

HEINZ GEISTER - *THE COLLECTIVE MIND, VOL. 2*, LEO RECORDS  
HORACE TAPSCOTT - *WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN?* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
IRO HAARLA / ULF KROKFORSS / BARRY ALTSCHUL, TUM RECORDS  
ITAMAR EREZ - *MJ ALEGRIA* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN - *MIGRATIONS*, ODD SOUND RECORDS  
JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN - *DEUX TIERS*, ODD SOUND RECORDS  
JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN - *THE ODD LOT*, ODD SOUND RECORDS  
JAELEM BHATE - *ON THE EDGE*, FACTOR CANADA  
JAN HARBECK - *THE SOUND THE RHYTHM*, STUNT RECORDS  
JASON YEAGER - *NEW SONGS OF RESISTANCE, OUTSIDE IN MUSIC*  
JC SANFORD QUARTER - *KERATONCONUS*, SHIFTING PARADIGM RECORDS  
JEFF DENSON - *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*, RIDGEWAY RECORDS  
JEFF RUPERT - *THE FLYING HORSE BIG BAND*, FLYING HORSE RECORDS  
JOHN PIERCE - *JUST FRIENDS* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
JOHN VANORE - *PRIMARY COLORS, ACOUSTIC CONCEPTS*  
JOHN WOLF BRENNAN - *NEVERGREENS*, LEO RECORDS  
JON BATISTE - *AN ANATOMY OF ANGELS*, VERVE  
JON IRABAGON - *DARK HORIZON*, IRABBAGAST RECORDS  
JONATHAN NG - *DREAMING ON MY FEET* [SELF-PRODUCED]  
JULIEN DESPREZ/METTE RASMUSSEN - *THE HATCH*, DARKTREE RECORDS  
JULIO BOTTI - *JAZZ TANGO FUSION*, ZOH0  
KATHLEEN HOLLINGSWORTH - *MAD LOVE*, GLADITUDE RECORDS  
KERRY POLITZER - *DIAGONAL* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
KRISTEN R. BROMLEY TRIO - *SIMPLY MIRACULOUS*, (SELF-PRODUCED)  
KRISTIN KORB - *THAT TIME OF YEAR*, STORYVILLE  
LELA KAPLOWITZ - *TO ONE*, BIG ROUND RECORDS  
LESLIE PINTCHIK - *SAME DAY DELIVERY*, PINTCH HARD RECORDS  
LISA RICH - *HIGHWIRE*, TRYTONE RECORDS  
LORI WILLIAMS - *FULL CIRCLE* (SELF PRODUCED)  
LYN STANLEY - *LONDON WITH A TWIST* (SELF PRODUCED)  
MARCO TRABUCCO - *MERAKI*, (SELF-PRODUCED)  
MARK DOYLE - *WATCHING THE DETECTIVES*, GUITAR NOIR III  
MARK SHERMAN - *MY OTHER VOICE* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
MARK WINKLER - *I'M WITH YOU* (SELF PRODUCED)  
MARKUS RUTZ - *BLUEPRINTS, OA2*  
MARYJO MUNDY' - *THE FOURTEENTH CONFESSION*, BLUJAZZ  
MELBREEZE - *AMETHYST*, (SELF-PRODUCED)  
MICHAEL MUSILLAMI / RICH SYRACUSE - *DIG*, PLAYSCAPE  
MIKA STOLTZMAN - *TAREBA MIKARIMBA*, BIG ROUND RECORDS  
MIKE DIRUBIBO - *LIVE AT SMALLS*, SMALLS LIVE,  
MIKE PACHELLI - *HIGH STANDARDS* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
MODERN ART ORCHESTRA - *PLAYS BELA BARTOK*, BMC  
MOY ENG, WAYNE WALLACE - *THE BLUE HOUR*, PATOIS RECORDS  
NEW YORK VOICES - *REMINISCING IN TEMPO*, ORIGIN RECORD  
OKAN ERSAN - *NIBIRU*, (SELF-PRODUCED)  
ORAN ETKIN - *FINDING FRIENDS FAR FROM HOME*, TIMBALOOLOO  
OSCAR HERNADEZ - *LOVE THE MOMENT*, ORIGIN RECORDS  
PABLO EMBON - *REMINISCENT MOODS*, (SELF-PRODUCED)  
PARNICZKY QUARTET, *BARTOK ELECTRIFIED*, BMC  
PASQUALE GRASSO - *SOLO BALLADS, VOL. 1* SONY MASTERWORKS  
PAUL MAY, CAROLYN HUME - *KILL THE LIGHTS*, LEO RECORDS  
PAULA HARRIS - *SPEAKEASY* [SELF-PRODUCED]  
PETER ELDRIGDE, KENNY WERNER - *SOMEWHERE*, ROSEBUD RECORDS  
PETERSON KOHLER COLLECTIVE - *WINTER COLORS*, ORIGIN RECORDS  
PUREUM JIN - *THE REAL BLUE* CELLAR LIVE MUSIC  
QUINN STERNBERG - *MIND BEACH* (SELF PRODUCED)  
QUINSIN NACHOFF'S FLUX - *PATH OF TOTALITY*, WHIRLWIND  
RAN BLAKE / CLAIRE RITTER - *ECLIPSE ORANGE*, ZONING RECORDINGS  
RANT - *TO RAISE HELL AS WE GO ALONG*, UNIT RECORDS  
RAY OBIEDO - *CAROUSEL*, RHYTHMUS RECORDS

# The List - Albums Received

RAYMOND DE FELITTA - *PRE-WAR CHARM* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
REBEKAH VICTORIA - *SONGS OF THE DECADES*, PATOIS RECORDS  
REID ANDERSON, DAVE KING, CRAIG TABORN, INTAKT RECORDS  
REZ ABBASI - *A THROW OF THE DICE* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
RICH WILLEY - *DOWN & DIRTY*, WISE CAT RECORDS  
RON R HOLMES - *SYZYGY MUSIC* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
RUSS LOSSING - *CHANGES*, STEEPLE CHASE  
SARA GAZAREK - *THIRSTY GHOST* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
SCOTT HAMILTON - *DANISH BALLADS...AND MORE*, STUNT RECORDS  
SENRI OE - *HMMM PND RECORDS*  
SISSLE & BLAKE'S *SHUFFLE ALONG 1950*, HARBINGER RECORDS  
SOUL MESSAGE BAND - *SOULFUL DAYS*, DELMARK RECORDS  
STEFAN AEBY - *PIANO SOLO*, INTAKT RECORDS  
STRANAHAN, ZALENSKI, ROSATO - *LIVE AT JAZZ STANDARD*, CAPRI RECORDS  
TISH ONEY - *THE BEST PART*, BLUJAZZ  
TOBIAS WIKLUND - *WHERE THE SPIRITS EAT*, STUNT RECORDS  
TONI GERMANI - *WE COLONIZED SOULS*, TERRE SOMMERSE RECORDS  
TUCKER BROTHERS - *TWO PARTS* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
VOCTAVE - *SOMEWHERE THERE'S MUSIC* JAMEY RAY MUSIC  
WES MONTGOMERY, - *WES'S BEST*, RESONANCE  
YOKO MIURA, GIANNI MIMMO, THIERRY WAZINIAC - *LIVE AT L'HORLOGE*,  
AMIRANI RECORDS  
YUKO MABUCHI - *PLAYS MILES DAVIS* YARLUNG RECORDS  
YVETTE NORWOOD - *TIGER LOVE IS* (SELF-PRODUCED)  
789 MILES, MATT OLSON OA2 RECORDS  
ALONG FOR THE RIDE, THE PETE MCGUINNESS JAZZ ORCHESTRA SUMMIT  
\* ALTERNATIVES, MILLER WRENN'S ESCAPIST PFMENTUN  
ANCIENT AND MODERN, STEVE COHN, GEORGE HASLAM, STEVE KERSHAW  
SLAM  
\* [A]PART ELLEN KIRKWOOD - SIRENS BIG BAND EARSHIFF MUSIC  
\* BARRACOOON, JD ALLEN, SAVANT RECORDS  
BRASIL! MARK MORGANELLI JAZZ FORUM RECORDS  
\* CALIFORNIA QUARTET, DOUG MACDONALD DMACMUSIC  
CARRIER, XAVIER LECOUTURIER ORIGIN RECORDS  
\* CHEZ NOUS, REBECCA DUMAINE & DAVE MILLER SUMMIT RECORDS  
COLLECTIVE THOUGHTS, IAN WARDENSKI QUINTET (SELF-PRODUCED)  
COMMON GROUND, RODNEY WHITAKER ORIGIN RECORDS  
\* CONFLUENCE, SATOKO FUJII LIBRA RECORDS  
\* CONTEMPORARY CHAOS PRACTICES, INGRID LAUBOCK INTAKT RECORDS  
CROSSING THE BRIDGE 2, PHILADELPHIA HERITAGE ART ENSEMBLE HERITAGE  
SOUND, INC  
\* DISCOVERY, MARTON JUHASZ MARTONJUHASZ.COM  
DIVINE TRACES, MAX PETERSON TRIO QFTF  
\* DIWAN, SHAHBAZ HUSSAIN & HELEN ANAHITA WILSON GOLDENGIRL REC.  
DOWN AND DIRTY, RICH WILLEY'S BOPTISM BIG BAND WISE CAT RECORDS  
\* ECLECTICO PABLO LANOUGUERE QUINTET (SELF-PRODUCED)  
EMERGENCE, LARRY CORBIN NABROC RECORDS  
EQUAL TIME, AKIKO, HAMILTON, DECHTER CAPRI RECORDS, LTD.  
\* FARALLON, NICK GRINDER OUTSIDE IN MUSIC  
FOR LOVERS ONLY, KENNEY POLSON (SELF-PRODUCED)  
GLOBETROTTER, LUCA DI LUZZIO JAZZ LIFE  
GRAVITY SIMON SAMMUT /OMAR VAZQUEZ (SELF-PRODUCED)  
GROOVE MACHINE, CHARLIE APICELLA & IRON CITY OA2 RECORDS  
HATS OFF, STEVE LIPMAN, STEVELIPMANMUSIC.COM  
\* HOKUSAI PIANO SOLO, AKI TAKASE INTAKT RECORDS  
\* HIGHER, PATRICIA BARBER ARTISTSHARE  
\* HOW WE DO, JOHN YAO'S TRICERATOPS SEE TAO RECORDINGS  
\* I THANK GOD, ELSA HARRIS THE SIRENS  
I'M ALL SMILES, GEORGE CABLES HIGH NOTE RECORDS  
INDIVISIBLE, BENNETT PASTER (SELF-PRODUCED)  
\* IN THE CAVE, DEXTER GORDON NETHERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF

# The List - Albums Received

\* IT'S ABOUT TIME, KING LOUIE ORGAN TRIO SHOUG RECORDS  
\* JAZZ, CASEY ABRAMS CHESKY RECORDS  
\* JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC LIVE IN AMSTERDAM: COLEMAN HAWKINS  
ET AL. NETHERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF  
\* LAST WORKS, TOM PIERSON ORCHESTRA AUTEUR  
\* LEAP OF FAITH, ERIC ALEXANDER GIANT STEP ARTS  
\* LENAPEWIATTUCK - RIVER OF THE LENAPE, BUD TRISTANO, KAZZRIE JAXEN  
NEW ARTISTS  
\* LETHE-AHOH, GEORGE HASLAM - NIKOLAS SKORDAS SLAM  
LIMINALITY, ERIK SNOW OA2 RECORDS  
\* LIVE AT LAMANTIN JAZZ FESTIVAL, LAMU EL NEGOCITO RECORDS  
\* LIVE CONSTRUCTIONS, DANIEL CARTER, JULIAN PRIESTER, REGGIE  
SYLVESTER, ET AL. SLAM  
MLK CONVERGENCE, MARLENE ROSENBERG ORIGIN RECORDS  
\* MARK TURNER MEETS GARY FOSTER 2 CD SET, CAPRI RECORDS, LTD.  
MOSTLY LOVE SONGS, MARC MEZGOLITS QFTF  
\* MOVING MISTS, LUKE GILLESPIE PATOIS RECORDS  
MOVING ON, LANNIE BATTISTINI (SELF-PRODUCED)  
MYTHICAL RIVER, MOUTIN FACTORY QUINTET, LABOURIE JAZZ  
\* NEW AGE OLD WAYS, PETER LIN (SELF-PRODUCED)  
\* NEW YORK TRIO, ANGELIKA NIESCIER INTAKT RECORDS  
\* ON! JORDON DIXON (SELF-PRODUCED)  
+ ON A GLORIOUS DAY, PASTOR DONALD GAY THE SIRENS  
ONE NIGHT AT CHRIS', THE DAVE WILSON QUARTET (SELF-PRODUCED)  
\* OPEN TO NOW, JOSHUA CATANIA SHIFTING PARADIGM RECORDS  
\* OVERJOYED, LARRY FULLER CAPRI RECORDS, LTD  
\* PARTNERS IN TIME, MIKE LEDONNE SAVANT RECORDS  
PHOENIX RISING, DAVID KIKOSKI HIGH NOTE RECORDS  
PHRAIM, FRAIM QFTF  
\* PORTRAIT, GRETA MATASSA ORIGIN RECORDS  
\* PUNKT.VRT.PASTIK, KAJA DRAKSLER INTAKT RECORDS  
RANALDO, JARMUSCH, URSELLI, PANDI TROST RECORDS  
RIDES ALONE, DRED SCOTT ROPEADOPE RECORDS  
RISE UP, SCOTT RAMMINGER ARBOR LANE MUSIC  
SAILING HOME, ROSANNA ECKERT OA2 RECORDS  
SAPPHIRE DREAMS, CHANDRA TULE PAO RECORDS  
\* SHADES OF SHIRLEY HORN, CONIEGE WASHINGTON (SELF-PRODUCED)  
SHADOW DANCES, HASTINGS JAZZ COLLECTIVE NEW DIRECTIONS, INC  
SMOKEHOUSE SERENADE, KERRY KEARNEY DWAZ ENTERTAINMENT  
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE, ANTHONY CACERES (SELF-PRODUCED)  
SONGS FOR ALL OF US, MIKE LEE IYOUWE RECORDS  
SORTE! MUSIC BY JOHN FINBURY GREEN FLASH MUSIC  
\* STONE, SATOKO FUJII SOLO PIANO LIBRA RECORDS  
\* STORIES FROM HERE AND THERE, TUOMO UUSITALO FRESH SOUND/NEW  
TALENT  
STRONGER THAN EVER, HAZEL MITCHELL-BELL (SELF-PRODUCED)  
\* SWING OUT! EYAL VILNER BIG BAND (SELF-PRODUCED)  
+ TIME GONE OUT, COURVOISIER - FELDMAN INTAKT RECORDS  
\* UNKNOWN SHORES, JOAO PEDRO VIEGAS AMIRANI RECORDS  
\* TETRAKTYS, MATTI SALO QUARTET LUOVA RECORDS  
THE BIRDSONG PROJECT, ELLYNNE REY (SELF-PRODUCED)  
\* THE GATES, YAO/SMITH/HUGHES SEXTET SHIFTING PARADIGM RECORDS  
\* THE LAST TAXI: NEW DESTINATIONS, PAT BATTSTONE LEO RECORDS  
\* THE RHYTHM OF INVENTION, WAYNE WALLACE LATIN JAZZ QUINTET PATOIS  
\* THE SEVEN RAYS, JERRY BERGONZI SAVANT RECORDS  
THERE YOU GO THINKING AGAIN, FOUR JAZZ HANG RECORDS  
\* TRANCE MAP+ EVAN PARKER, MATTHEW WRIGHT ET AL. INTAKT RECORDS  
TRIAGE, CHRIS LOMHEIM SHIFTING PARADIGM RECORDS  
VITALITY, MATT SKELLENGER GROUP (SELF-PRODUCED)  
WOODEN MIRRORS, DANIEL BARBIERO & CRISTIANO BOCCI PLUS TIMBRE  
YES, TRIO HEINZ HERBERT INTAKT RECORDS



## THE JAZZ SCENE

### PHILADELPHIA

BY KEN WEISS

Philadelphia, PA: Buddy Guy, the 82-year-old legendary Blues guitarist/singer, continues to win over listeners with his downhome humor, showmanship, scathing guitar licks (just not as plentiful these days), and standout repertoire. His set on 6/29 at Glenside's Keswick Theater brought out a bevy of admirers sporting previous Buddy Guy tour t-shirts. His language was pretty salty at times, and within 5 minutes, he was playing his axe with his groin (he later played it with his buttocks and also his teeth). In addition to his own originals, including the brilliant "Feels Like Rain," he covered work by B.B. King, who he proclaimed to be the greatest guitarist of all time, John Lee Hooker, and "Take Me to the River" by Al Green. He also touched on Hendrix and Iron Butterfly's "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." Guy lamented that the Blues aren't played on the radio anymore and said, "Every time I play, I have to tell you a little bit about my life... I was born on a farm and I didn't know what running water was until I was 17." He later walked the aisles and while on stage, had the house lights put on so he could see the audience during a couple audience participation sections. "Put the lights on," he said, "So if you fuck up this song, I can get you!"... Lafayette Gilchrist's solo gig @ Exuberance on 7/25 included two lengthy sets of original compositions that displayed his broad influences and playing styles. Sitting at the piano to start things off, he said, "I walked in here and I'm like, wow, this is like paradise! Wow!" Right he was, as Matt Yapple, the presenter/founder of the venue, an invitation-only house salon, which offers (typically) small piano-led bands (or solos), once or twice a month, to audiences who are all about the music. Yapple sums up the intent to be, "@exuberance is a listening room for piano jazz." He has designed his home to work around the audience's and the performers' needs and comforts. Gilchrist traveled up from Baltimore while on break from touring with David Murray. His songs were exclusively mid-tempo and bereft of technical virtuosity/showy keyboard flourishes, relying instead on melody and delivery. His first tune, a Classically based, slow tempo piece, was curiously announced as "Safehouse Blues" and then later as "Safe Harbors." Later pieces featured some entertaining Ragtime playing, a waltz, and a tune dedicated to the Tuskegee airmen, who he had contact with as a youngster, as well as a plethora of songs rich in toe-tapping heads. Near the end, Gilchrist asked, "How y'all doin? Think you could stand a couple more? Yeah? You're not just saying that!?...On 7/30, Ardmore Music Hall housed Prog Rock super group The Stick Men, a trio that includes prog Rock royalty – Tony Levin (Chapman Stick) and Pat Mastelotto (d) of King Crimson, along with Germany guitarist Markus Reuter. They laid down a mix of each of their own original tunes, as well as seven King Crimson songs, in acknowledgment of King Crimson's 50th anniversary this year. The Stick Men were opening their current tour this night, the first night they had played in almost one year, and this current round was still a work in progress. Reuter called the first tune and the band started playing, but after a minute, the music stopped, and it was explained that they had started out of order. Opening with a few barn burners, including "Horatio," Mastelotto was called on to pummel away non-stop. Mastelotto would note mid-set that, "The first [songs] should be at the end of the show. I'm tired already. We're doing these in a completely different order." "Learning to Fly," a Pink Floyd song that Levin participated on in the '80s, was followed by a Robert Fripp

## Short Takes Philadelphia

tune – explained as, “Not quite King Crimson, but almost.” There was a large amount of free music and improvisation, along with very impressive musicianship, especially by Levin on his large Chapman Stick. Many in the audience sported assorted Stick Men or Tony Levin tees and the merch line was awfully long. Opening the night was local electric guitar/effects hero Tim Motzer, who had played a few times in town with Reuter in the past, followed by a solo hit by guitarist Kevin Hufnagel of Dysrhythmia / Gorguts fame... Carol Faulkner, the mother of drummer Justin Faulkner, presented the free 6th annual Community Unity Music Festival out in the open at Clark Park on 8/3. Founded in 2013, after the shooting death of two of her nephews, her mission is, “To have young people put the guns down and pick up an instrument.” Her organization acts as a hub, leading young people to training institutions and paying at least six months to a year of their first installment of taking lessons. This year featured a performer that’s gonna be hard to beat next year – Bootsy Collins of Parliament Funkadelic! Also on the packed stage were two drum sets filled by Justin Faulkner and his little brother Nazir Ebo, as well as Justin’s boss – saxophonist Branford Marsalis (who got away with wearing a Saints football shirt in Eagle country). Collins came out with high energy and really loved the close contact with his adoring audience. The stage was extended by a runway and he sat at the very end of the platform with his legs in contact with fans and later went into the crowd a few times to the dismay of his rather large bodyguard. Collins didn’t bring a bass, so he mainly sang and revved up the crowd. The second song covered was Aretha Franklin’s “Rock Steady,” and the original drummer from the recording was put into the drum chair – Bernard Purdie, who had made his way up from his home in South Jersey. Purdie said he was going to be working with Collins on a project in the future... It was headline news when The Met opened in December 2018 in North Philly. The refurbished historic opera house, built in 1908, has since hosted numerous glamorous events and big names, but no Jazz bills until 8/4 when the Herbie Hancock / Kamasi Washington tour settled into the elegant venue. Security was at high level with metal detectors and frisking, and since I was photographing, I was positioned for 2 hours outside in the lobby for the Washington set, along with the Philadelphia Inquirer’s photographer, so that no photos were taken after the first 10 minutes of Washington’s set. Hancock came prepared with a first-rate band – guitarist/vocalist Lionel Loueke, keyboardist, vocalist, alto saxist Terrace Martin, bassist James Genus, drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, and at times, flautist Elena Pinderhughes. Commencing with twelve minutes of instrumental play, Hancock took a break to stand and clap as Loueke sang in his Benin tongue. “You have to be a daredevil to play with these guys,” Hancock enthused. “Every time they play, they’re saying I dare you! My parents used to do that to me – I dare you!” He also did his best to unite the audience by asking, “How many kinds of people do we have in America?” A response came back – “One!” “That’s right. Human beings,” Hancock agreed. He later strolled over to Loueke and noted that he had two different guitars – “A brown one and a blue one. See, color does make a difference!” When the headliner wasn’t monologuing the house, his musical offerings had a definite eye on the past. The music played was from his fusion bag with tunes like “Rockit,” “Cantaloupe Island” and “Actual Proof.” The encore found Washington on stage next to Hancock, who jammed on his flashy keytar for a jubilant rendition of “Chameleon.”... Cinghiale (Ken Vandermark & Mars Williams) & Steve Marquette exited the cozy con-

# Short Takes Philadelphia

finer of Chicago for a two-week tour of the States, settling at Vox Populi (Fire Museum Presents) on 9/1 for hot performances at the steamy art gallery. Vandermark and Williams originally formed Cinghiale in the mid- '90s and had put it to rest for about 25-years until January of 2019 when they realized they would both be in New Orleans at the same time so why not do a Cinghiale hit? Their Philly performance found the multi-reedists to be in fine, compatible form, as they worked over charted material that was to be recorded in 4 days. Commencing with a Vandermark piece dedicated to two of his favorite musicians – Henry Threadgill and Julius Hemphill – featuring the composer on baritone and Williams on alto. Williams announced the next tune to be “The Baby Barks,” and said, “After that lovely piece of Ken’s we have a non-lovely piece of mine,” and that it was inspired by a recent haunted house experience the two had. They chose twin tenors to spread the chilling feeling. Next up was “Two Kinds of Truth,” which they had only played twice previously. This tune took the form of a ballad with a cantorial feel for much of its run interspersed with shards of broken glass. The night opened with Steve Marquette’s solo of heavily distorted guitar that was occasionally played with a spoon and bow. He credited the two other musicians on the bill as having a major impact on him even knowing about improvised music. “Life is a funny, old dog, I guess,” he surmised. Marquette admitted that most of the tour’s driving duty was his and that they were given a smaller SUV then expected so that travel was a bit “clown car.”...Drummer Sherrie Maricle hosted bassist/vocalist/songwriter Jay Leonhart at her stunningly comfortable and hip home studio/presenter space Drummers on 9/6. Performing with pianist Tomoko Ohno and Maricle, Leonhart captivated the listeners with his whimsically penned original pieces and virtuosic playing. Funny comes easy to him, as the trio took the stage, he asked his bandmates what was to be played and told the audience, “You’re not supposed to hear all this, we’re supposed to have done it before hand,” and “The audience outnumbered the band, that’s all we ask.” He explained that he writes the lyrics as poems first before putting down the music, and that, “I write all these songs out of self-defense.” His song about the Playboy Club is especially noteworthy. His first gig was working at the Playboy Club and finally, after a year and a half, had to leave because it was too overwhelming for a young man. An unexpectedly humorous moment during the long set came with a sudden loud knock at the door right as Leonhart was introducing his song about US Customs and a very nervous Ohno looked around, thinking it was ICE coming for her, said, “I have my Green Card!” It turned out to be a mistaken delivery of Indian food. Maricle, who has played with Leonhart numerous times in the past, recalled how she religiously went to see Leonhart weekly after she moved to New York in 1985 at the Blue Note brunch sessions he held down for 10 years.

Ken Weiss

## **THE JAZZ SCENE** **HOBART, TASMANIA** *BY ALWYN AND LAURIE LEWIS*

The well established Jazz on Thursday series continued at The Burnie Townhouse on May 23 featuring The Viktor Zappner Swingtet with vocalists Nadira Farid and Sophie Leslie.....while June 13 again showcased the Swingtet with saxophonist Spike Mason and vocalist Yoly Torres.....Hobart's Salamanca Arts Centre featured four internationally acclaimed artists on June 1 for a new event combining video projections and live jazz with artist Tim Maguire, pianist Dorian Ford, bassist Nick Haywood and drummer Tom Robb.....the July Annual Devonport Jazz Festival delighted fans with crowd pleaser James Morrison, Melbourne's Gianni Marinucci Trio and a Squeezebox Cabaret with Matthew Ives and his Big Band.....July 27 original compositions by Reinhardt and Grappelli were presented to a sell out audience at The Founders Room, Salamanca by Charlie McCarthy violin, Harry Edwards lead gtr, Felicity Lovett gtr and Isaac Gee bass.....August 23 the Moonah Arts Centre premiered The Mob – The McEntie/Ottaway Big Band featuring tenorist Mitch Ellis, plus a moving solo by guitarist Damian Kingston on Swansong followed by "Donald English" a tribute to Ottaway's grandfather.....Once again the Hot August Jazz one day festival in North Hobart brought fans out into the cold to enjoy the free entry smorgasbord of talent with Extemporaneous Lea, a trio of singer Lea Mason, tenorist Spike Mason, bassist Nick Haywood and visual artist Nellie Gibson at Lizzie and Lefroy, Sidewinder at The Republic Bar, D7 led by singer Eleanor Webster specialising in songs of international repertoire also at The Republic and The Big Small Band at The Homestead with pianist Dan Sulzberger and tenorist Alistair Dobson.....The weekend of Sept 20/21/22 saw the Annual Longford Jazz Festival under the leadership of Don Ives bring veteran saxophonist Paul Furness from the Mainland to headline an enthusiastic group of local talent drawn from all across the island.....Melbourne bass player Tamara Murphy's Spirograph Studies at The Wharf Ulverstone in Tasmania's northwest on September 1.....singer Nadira and Friends also at The Wharf Ulverstone, October 6.

## **24TH ANNUAL VISION FESTIVAL JUNE 11- 16, 2019 ROULETTE, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK**

### **REVIEW AND PHOTOS BY KEN WEISS**

New York's 24th Annual Vision Festival lived up to the high expectations that the national/international audience it attracts each year has come to expect – a well-rounded presentation of the arts with a commitment to fierce originality and self-determination, loaded with one-off performances. Thirty-four sets filled with thought-provoking music from over 150 artists, as well as dance, poetry, panel discussions, and the visual arts, spread over six packed days.

The first night was devoted to master percussionist Andrew Cyrille, this year's Lifetime of Achievement honoree. The 79-year-old Cyrille organized the night in a novel way with eight mini-sets of duos, trios, and a solo, all of which showcased his uncanny ability to excel across a wide span of musical motifs. He paid tribute to his Haitian roots with Haitian drummer Jean Guy "Fanfan" Rene and poet Quincy Troupe; there was a segment with cellist Tomeka Reid and dancer Beatrice Capote; a trio with Wadada Leo Smith (tpt) and Brandon Ross (g) which explored sparse textures that took on stunning resonance with each added layer; a duet with vocalist Lisa Sokolov, a relationship made through the late Jeanne Lee; as well as caustic duets with Vision hero Kidd Jordan (ts), who was making only his second gig of the year due to poor health (he said, "I'm gonna do the best I can and leave the rest to providence,") and lastly, German reed-master Peter Brötzmann. There was also a highly anticipated duet with legendary percussionist Milford Graves, a pairing that reached back to their 1974 recording. Cyrille recalled seeing Graves playing in Italy once and how he literally ran up a wall and, at some point, raced a train. Graves, now 77-years-old, was dealing with health issues. After their exploratory set, Cyrille said to his fellow drummer, "I appreciate you and I thank you for being a part of my life." Graves, who summoned all of his courage to make the event, tearfully addressed the audience with, "In all honesty, this was a major test for me. It was tough. I'm allowed to have my emotional moment right now." Cyrille came up from behind to comfort him. Graves, a man of past mythical physical prowess, was in a safe place to let his emotions run free. We all felt his pain, while at the same time, marveled at his long, pioneering career. There will never be another Milford Graves.

The following five nights ran thick with highlights, including Tomas Fujiwara's 7 Poets Trio with Patricia Brennan (vib) and Tomeka Reid (cel), featuring the chilling effects of combined cello and bowed vibes; Kidd Jordan's Alvin Fielder Tribute with Joel Futterman (p), William Parker (b) and Hamid Drake (d), a fierce sendoff to a beloved friend that finished with

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019

the frail Jordan at the edge of the stage, noting that if this was to be his last performance, he had no regrets; Alto Gladness, a tribute to Cecil Taylor with three alto saxophonists – Jemeel Moondoc, Bobby Zankel and Idris Ackamoor, who were part of Taylor’s Black Music Ensemble at Antioch College during Taylor’s residency (1969-1973). At set’s end, Moondoc said, “I think Cecil would have liked that;” a Matthew Shipp (p)/William Parker (b) duo, a combo that never fails to connect; the Rob Brown Quartet with Steve Swell (tbn), Chris Lightcap (b) and Chad Taylor (d); the James Brandon Lewis Unruly Quintet with Jaimie Branch (tpt), Anthony Pirog (g), Luke Stewart (b), and Warren G. Crudup III (d), a severe set of music that had the leader imploring his bandmates to play even harder; Heroes Are Gang Leaders, a large group headed by poet Thomas Sayers Ellis, who had a number of the photographers asking who he was all week (he frequently took flash photos during sets), but once on stage, he was a hyperkinetic force, breaking up a tambourine and gregariously directing the group; and the grand finale – the D.D. Jackson Bluiett Tribute Band with James Carter (bs, ss), Darius Jones (as), William Parker (b), Ronnie Burrage (d) and Juma Sultan (perc), a wide-open, juggernaut tribute to the late baritone saxophonist, featuring some of the pieces he loved to play, delivered by the full-throated alto attack of Jones and the mesmerizingly, propulsive baritone work of Carter.

Other notable happenings included the unlikely trio of Kris Davis (p) and William Parker with drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts, the David Virelles Mboko, which included percussionist Roman Diaz leaving the stage and returning in costume as Irene Abakua, a towering hooded dancer representing an Afro-Cuban secret society; a set entitled Blue, which featured festival organizer Patricia Nicholson painted blue, interacting to sounds produced by Cooper-Moore and Val Jeanty, with live video painting by Bill Mazza; and the inclusion of longtime Vision Festival attendee, German visual artist Jorgo Schafer, who supplied an artistic backdrop of painted skeletal figures which were unveiled one at a time as part of a long, segmented scroll hung behind performers Vincent Chancey (Fr hn), Joe Fonda (b) and Jeremy Carlstedt (d). There was also the first twerking sighting at the Vision Festival, a lowlight that came during the Davalois Fearon Dance segment.

Next year makes a quarter century for this shining star of a festival, organized by Arts For Art. Here’s hoping that proper funding allows the event to spread its wings in celebration of what makes it so special – diversity, equity and self-determination.

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



Kidd Jordan - William Parker-Wadada Leo Smith - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Andrew Cyrille - Milford Graves - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



Alto Gladness - Idris Ackamoor - Jemeel Moondoc-Bobby Zankel - Photo credit Ken Weiss



## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



Matthew Shipp-William Parker - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Rob Brown-Steve Swell-Chris Lightcap-Chad Taylor - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



David Virelles Mboko Virelles-Roman Diaz-Rashaan Carter-Eric McPherson  
- Photo credit Ken Weiss



Patricia Parker-Val Jeanty-Cooper-Moore - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



Val Jeanty - Photo credit Ken Weiss



Vincent Chancey-Jeremy Carlstedt-Joe Fonda - Photo credit Ken Weiss

## Festival Review: Vision Festival, 2019



Dianne McIntyre-Amina Claudine Myers - Photo credit Ken Weiss



D.D. Jackson-William Parker-James Carter-Ronnie Burrage-Darius - Photo credit Ken Weiss

**FIMAV, VICTORIAVILLE, QUEBEC, MAY 16-19, 2019****CHASING THE SUBLIME, GOING SOLO***by Josef Woodard*

Density and intensity are expected when visiting the annual Quebecois phenom known as the Victoriaville festival—aka FIMAV (aka Festival International Musique Actuelle Victoriaville). The festival, launched by the intrepid and new music/avant-garde-fixated founder Michel Levasseur, packs 20 consecutive shows into three-and-a-half-days in May, in a modest city nestled in diary farm terrain. One always has to wonder about the local response to the decidedly avant-garde-ian and experimental leanings of this festival which brings outsiders (and fans of “outside” music) to their town one weekend a year.

This year’s 35th annual FIMAV foray (the festival took a sabbatical year off after number 25) embodied the ongoing premise of this unique festival, whose sense of adventure and celebration of adventure is said to have been a strong influence on the potent upstart, the Big Ears Festival in Knoxville. In Victoriaville, the delicate balance and raucous sonic salad involves bringing together free jazz/ improvisation, electronic/ computer music notions, noise, art-folk and “worldly” hybrids, art- and avant-rockers, and other from the far side of mainstream. Oh, and regular appearances by John Zorn, who cites this as one of his favorite festival haunts.

Stars coming out this year, for the 35th birthday, included old guard jazz icons Peter Brötzmann, Roscoe Mitchell (in a thrilling set with poetic, outspoken spoken word artist Moor Mother), Barre Phillips, and noise-shaman Keiji Haino. We heard a FIMAV debut (hopefully, the start of a new habit) for new music stalwarts Bang on the Can All-Stars, and powerful sets by jazz world vanguard-keepers Vijay Iyer—with his Sextet, probably the finest group in jazz of the moment, cerebral and visceral by turns—and Tyshawn Sorey, with his utterly unique, “chamber” flavored trio.

In other alternative large ensemble news... the meditative-minimalist balm award of the festival goes to Norwegian guitarist Kim Myhr, whose multiple guitar-and-percussion work “You TK Me” is pure undulant, post-Reich-meets-post-rock bliss.

Even so, all things considered and consumed, the standout hour of the entire festival broke down to some math: a musician (well, a master), his double bass, and a world of music summoned via head, hands and spiritual x factor. The great bassist Barre Phillips has performed in Victoriaville many times over the years and is in a public spotlight presently thanks to End to End, his luminous solo album for ECM Records last year.

Quite simply, his hour-long set on a Friday night held the large crowd in the festival’s largest venue, the Colisée (a hockey arena) in thrall. More good news: the show was officially recorded for possible release

on the festival's in-house label, Victo, which would make it the second Phillips solo album for the label, after 1990's *Camouflage*.

In Victoriaville, each of Phillips' ten discrete pieces, adding up to an impromptu suite, had its own character, direction and aesthetic dimension, sometimes exploring specific dynamics or technical attributes—arco, percussive uses of the bow, angular double-stopping—but always affixed to an over-arching musical logic. He capped off the challenging sweep/suite of ideas with a sweetly melodic encore, a graceful exit.

Phillips, now 84, appeared in a press conference along with Brötzmann that morning in the festival's central Hotel Victorin, and explained that "our special music needs time to develop. It's a lifetime story." True that, and his solo concert felt like a glimpse into a well-lived musical lifetime, still in progress.

Coincidentally, another festival highlight this year also exemplified the rare art of the spontaneously combusted solo performance, when British reed player John Butcher settled into the ornate sacred space of the 19th century church Église St-Christophe D'Arthabaska, a wonderful new venue for the festival in recent years. Butcher, a Victoriaville veteran in assorted projects, proved his acknowledged mastery in the free/solo mode on tenor and soprano saxophones, carefully balancing control and abandon, a wide palette of textures, and—this is important—a highly-attuned sensitivity to the reverberant properties and deified ambience of the "room."

Personally, the jury is still out about this year's contribution from Brötzmann, a trio affair with pedal steel player Heather Leigh and Japanese madman Haino. Brötzmann, who leaves a trail of memorable FIMAV shows—including a spirited solo set back in 2011, recorded for Victo—was in alternately volcanic and tender form in the 75-minute set, while Leigh mostly provided an uncommonly mellow bed of often two-chord vamps. Haino, moving anxiously from percussion to manipulated voice to his spiky, spasmodic guitar approach on his Gibson SG, was the roving, unpredictable shamanistic force of nature. More than once, he kept the party rolling after what would have been a logical finale. He still had more to say, it seemed, when sudden clapping forced closure (applause interruptus?). Somehow, in this trio meeting, the parts and the whole had trouble getting along, despite some flashes of insight.

Bang on a Can's presence was an inspiring touch, and a ripe example of how even a token dose of "contemporary classical," score-based new music can make for a complementary pact with the strongly improvisational agenda making up the lion's share of the FIMAV stages. Last year, the festival opened, powerfully, with Montreal composer Walter Baudreau's heavily-scored, complex and sometimes post-serial music as a festival-opener. May the trend continue.

BOAC presented pieces from its expansive "Field Recordings" project, with works based on some brand of found source—audio or visual.



Julien Desprez-Abacaxi (photo, Josef Woodard)



Moor Mother-Roscoe Mitchell (photo, Josef Woodard)

The usual NYC suspects were accounted for—Carolyn Shaw, BOAC co-founder David Lang, Christian Marclay—but the freshest musical meat was locally sourced, via Quebec’s enlightened and sometimes hare-brained musician/guitarist Rene Lussier. His “field recording” score took on literal dimensions, folding the rhythmic sound of a snoring bull with taut, unison note bursts from the All-Stars.

We got eloquent large ensemble projects from Canada: Vancouverite cellist Peggy Lee’s evocatively lovely and elastic “Echo Painting,” opening the festival; and, from Montreal, composer-leader Rainer Wiens’ “conduction-“guided birdsong canvas “Birds of a Feather” and the dada-tinged vocalistic art-circus feats of Joane Héту Joker choir. France also weighed in this year on the program, with three impressive and distinctly different projects. Klimperei and Madame Patate treats the deceptively child-like miniature songs by Christophe Petchanatz with a myriad of sonic tools and toys. Quite by contrast, the retro-electronic nature of the duo with Xavier Garcia and Lionel Marchitti. They conjure up a fascinating blend of Garcia’s digital tweaking on computer and keyboard with the fiercely analog sound-mangling poetry of Marchitti, whose primary “instrument” of choice is an antique Revox tape recorder, and a pile of sundry objects, rendered sonic.

From the rock spectrum--and one of this program’s great “discovery” moments--wizardly French guitarist Julien Desprez made his North American debut as a leader, with his trio Abacaxi, seizing sensory attentions with his virtuosic integration of electric guitar voltage and bedazzling effects pedal-dancing. Pedals also control the tautly synched staccato lighting blitz of the show, a corollary to the aural ratatat.

Despite what might seem a novelty-driven sound-sight manipulation, on paper, the “being there” aspect was almost literally stunning, and the sound world he creates in real time adds up to one of the more inventive and personalized electric guitar “action painting” styles on the “out” scene. Or any scene.

As a grand finale-blowout for the fest’s 35th birthday, Haino returned to make some cathartic joyful noise with the blissfully uncategorizable Indonesian duo Senyawa, before an ecstatic set from the sneakily progressive and still-relevant Dutch avant-punk band The Ex. The Ex are presently celebrating life @ 40, while Victoriaville this year celebrated FIMAV @ 35. Midlife becomes them both.





Peggy Lee (photo, Josef Woodard)

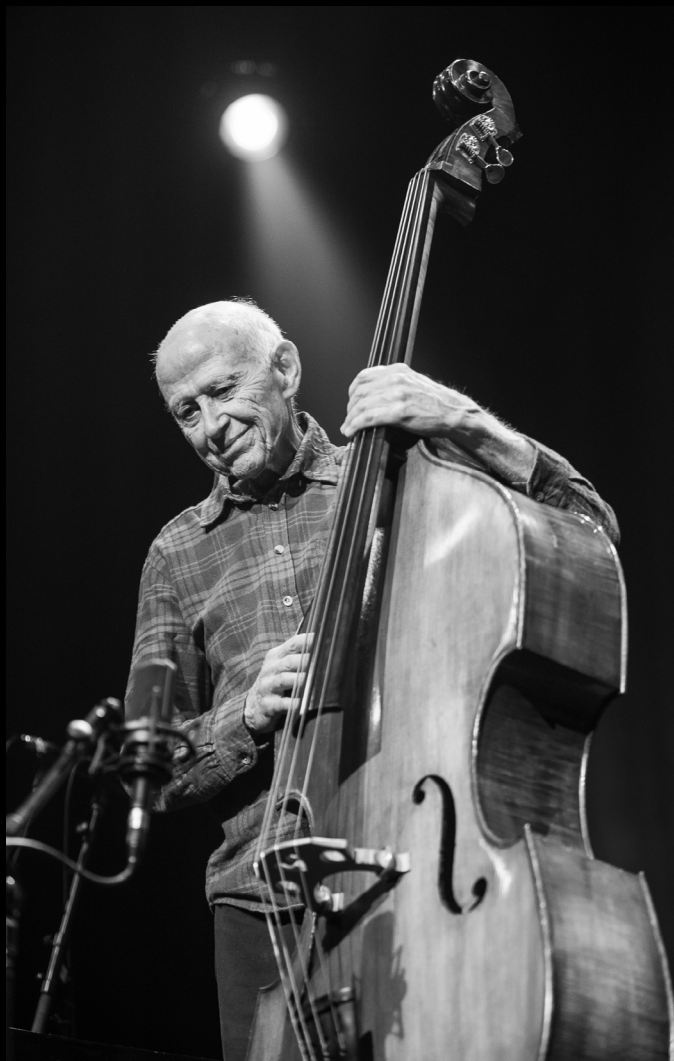


Vijay Iyer Sextet (photo, Josef Woodard)



Photo: Martin Morissette FIMAV 2019

John Butcher (photo, Josef Woodard)



Barre Phillips (photo, Josef Woodard)

## **JAZZAHEAD! REPORT: NORWEGIAN JAZZ ARRIVES, EN MASSE**

*by Josef Woodard*

For the past several years, in the business and the practice of jazz on the European side of the Atlantic, nearly all roads have led to Bremen, Germany for a long weekend in late April. The increasingly potent magnet: jazzahead!, the expanding phenom of a convention, expo, networking emporium and, yes, densely-packed and tightly organized music festival. 2019 marked the 14th anniversary of the event founded by jazz/classical promoter Peter Schulze and musician-educator Uli Beckerhoff, and this year's model bumped upward in terms of attendance and, presumably, jazz world influence.

By now, the hectic traffic amidst booths on the exhibition floor and in the showcase venues of the large Messe Bremen convention compound and the retooled slaughterhouse venue known as Kulturzentrum Schlachthof adds up to what might be described, oxymoronically, as a highly-organized temporary citadel of chaos. Much may get done over the course of a few days, and much left-undone and unsaid, left for to-be-continued dealings, projects and conversations.

Amidst the whirl of activity and notes left for later, one searches for cohesive themes or "scenes" as take-home material. One strong theme emerging this year, to my already biased ears, had to do with the varied and fascinating creative solutions to the concept of large ensembles in jazz, and hailing specifically from Norway.

Something akin to a movement seemed afoot on this rendezvous in Bremen, after hearing such expanded Norwegian groups as the mischievous Skadedyr—with an cool elastic humor often revolving around drummer Hans Hulbækmo—and a striking new band led by the maverick accordionist Frode Haltli, his blissfully inventive and open-minded folk-jazz-free band Avant Folk Ensemble. Haltli showed up later in the pristine Sendesaal venue (renovated and now run by jazzahead! co-founder Schulze) for "ECM Night," featuring a rare return to action by the masterful Trygve Seim's chamber-Nordic-jazz tentet Sangam, to these ears, the real highlight of the entire time in Bremen. As a final kicker, we got some punchy, punky post-Sun Ra party timing from drummer Paal Nilssen-Love's fab Large Unit, a brilliant jazzahead! closing set, heard in the Schlachthof early on Sunday afternoon.

Clearly, for these Norwegian outfits, bigger is better, and is also a contextual challenge. Norway boasts its share of notable entries in the big band category, including the great Trondheim Jazz Orchestra. But these "other" large bands are reinventing their own musical wheels and commanding our attention.

More broadly, the musical contingent from Norway, that established stronghold of artistic energy and unique character in the jazz world, has been only marginally represented at jazzahead! in the past. But, as Norway was designated as the annual "partner country" in this year's event, an embarrassment of Norwegian musical riches hit Bremen. The "partner country" concept is a fruitful one, a chance to get a concentrated and carefully curated dose of jazz from given corners

of the world, mostly in and around Europe, though open to new geographic possibilities. Last year's Polish focus was a strong one, highlighted by trumpeter Maciej Obara's set at Die Glocke, and 2016's Finnish year nicely showcased that country's unique jazz palette. But, as the whole, the Norway year grabbed my ear and held it more strongly than any of the six previous years' showcases.

The first year I went, in 2013, Israel was the spotlighted country, and I was duly impressed by a strong roster of players from Israel—and often with secondary or primary bases in New York City—previously unfamiliar to me. The organizing party for that selection was the Israeli Dubi Lenz, a veteran jazz DJ, lecturer, promoter and festival producer (now with the winter edition of the Red Sea Jazz Festival). In a conversation we had during the speed-dating styled “matchmaking” segment of the weekend, he stressed that “it’s important to know that Israel is something other than what you see on the news,” he asserted, adding “I hate politics.”

Politics and tensions between nations and cultures still exist for this Bremen weekend, but for the most part, are set aside (apart from the frequent question posed to us visiting Americans, along the lines of “how could Trump have been voted into office, and how soon can you get rid of him?”). Jazzahead! is primarily a peaceable cultural convergence zone during which differences are set aside for a cause: doing jazz business, and up the multicultural smorgasbord of music sets spread out over two days and three nights.

Most of those sets are strictly timed at 30 minutes—on real, German time—and packed into 40 scheduled slots on the calendar grid, and with a sprawling “Club Night” on Saturday spreading out into whereabouts in Bremen beyond the convention center epicenter.

Thursday night's “Norwegian Night” set the pace for the weekend, with eight sets keeping visitors in perpetual motion every half hour. The varied roster for that evening included the aforementioned, scampish Skadadyr and the glowing Avant Folk Ensemble, the inspired pianoless trio Gard Nilssen's Acoustic Unity—led by drummer Nilssen and featuring saxist to watch for Andre Roligheten and bassist Ole Morten Vagan—and West African-flavored singer Kristin Asbjørnsen. The piano trio tradition got a lyrical yet cerebrally potent representation from the Espen Berg Trio, and hard rock-jazz siren Hedvig Mollestad supplied the night-closing headbanger jazz set at the slaughterhouse.

Over at the annual Friday night “gala concert,” in the enchanted setting of the 1928-vintage Art Deco-styled theater Die Glocke, current ECM rising star Matthias Eick prevailed and won the crowd over with his melodic electro-acoustic band.

On the double bill, we also got an earful of the remarkable “side project” band known as Trail of Souls: this is the hybrid group sound you get when you mix an ace blues guitarist, Knut Reiersrud, a soulful singer, Solveig Slettehjell, and the sophisticated arrangements and derangements of the extant trio known as In the Country. I was impressed the first time I heard them, in a church in Molde, Norway. At

Die Glocke, I was convinced this is one of the great “pop” bands on the planet! Of course, the world may or may not agree, or even get a chance to hear them.

Despite the intentional highlighting of jazz from different locales, though, musical nationalism is hardly the norm at jazzahead!. Culture-crossing musical liaisons were common at the “European Jazz Meeting” and the annual Saturday afternoon “German Jazz Expo--” there, partly because of the liberal meshing of cultures based in the German jazz hub of Berlin. Thus, the German portion of the weekend featured such gifted artists as the German-born but half-Afghan vocalist Simin Tander, in a beguiling duet with electronics-fitted cellist Jorg Brinkmann, the dazzling Russian alto saxist (now a Berliner) Olga Amelchenko, and the German-Finnish hard bop-goes-free meet-up of the Janning Trumann 6. For punk jazz cred, with intricate twists attached, the German trio Edi Nulz made a raucous/joyful/tight noise.

Iceland had its fair portion of attention during the Friday night “European Jazz Meeting,” in the form of American-born, Iceland-based drummer Scott McLemore’s evocative two electric guitars (Hilmar Jensson and David Doruzka), and acoustic bassist Nicolas Moreaux, with a subtle sonic effect reminiscent of the old Bass Desires band. Also from Iceland, the fine mid-career pianist Sunna Gunnlaugs’ trio, bolstered by guest from Finland, the chameleonic trumpeter Verner Pohjola, wove a supple path between the retooled pop melodic stuff of George Michaels’ “Wake Me Up Before You Go Go,” and the post-hard bop fervency of “Ancestry,” the title track from her latest album. Other high points of the “European” session: the cathartically noisy psychedelic jazz guitar trio sounds of the Portuguese The Rite of Trio, a multi-culti new project, Aksham, with frequently ECM-linked artist Elena Duni as vocal focal point, strong and poetic, by turns. Capping off the eight-act segment, with an intelligent band, was the now 20-year-old inside-outside Belgian big band Flat Earth Society—a veritable pioneer in the world of alternative big band notions.

Back on the subject of artful large ensemble projects without easy categorization, the music which most lingers in the memory, for me, was Sangam. As accordionist Haltli told me after a mesmerizing and idiom-stitching set, this almost mythic project was playing for the first time in seven years and was relying most on music from an as-yet unrecorded set of music written as a commission for the Vossa Jazz Festival back in 2005.

On this occasion, Seim passed much of the allotted soloing spotlight to other musicians in the group, but he soared with a bold compositional voice veering from minimalism through touches of Kurt Weill and Stravinsky, Carnatic music and plenty of that old Norwegian brew, where contemplative poise and “blue notes” live and breathe. The 75-minute show gets my vote as “best of show” in this edition of jazzahead!, plus special merit as “music most deserving of being recorded.”



Simin Tander and Jorg Brinkmann (photo, Josef Woodard)

# Festival Review: jazzahead!



Frøde Haltli's Avant Folk Ensemble (photo, Josef Woodard)



Skadedyr (photo, Josef Woodard)



# Festival Review: jazzahead!



Edi Nulz (photo, Josef Woodard)



Gard Nilseen's Acoustic Unity (photo, Josef Woodard)

## MONTREAL JAZZ FESTIVAL, 2019

### EASING INTO THE BIG 4-0

BY JOSEF WOODARD

Age does have something to do with it, thank you very much. But so do multiple other factors, some strategic and rational, some of the x factor variety. We're talking about the legacies of our veteran jazz festivals around the world, a running timeline into which the 40-something category now includes the grand, model Montreal Jazz Festival. Although Montreal's 40th birthday fete this year was big news, the number itself is more of a mid-life milestone by now, when several European festivals and America herself boasts two of the world's oldest—the Monterey and Newport festivals—tracing back to the origins of the still-young jazz festival species.

Meanwhile, up in Montreal, the 40 factor is less important than the fact of this being a significant transition year, as the swan song season for co-founders André Ménard and Alain Simard. The ambitious pair launched this festival with high hopes and a passion for music, but with no knowledge that it would soar to the upper echelon of the global festival realm. Some (present party usually included) consider this the world's best jazz fest, at least in terms of a well-oiled machine, with its artistic logistical priorities well in order.

And it is looking mighty fine and running smoothly at 40. Revisiting MIJF for my 22nd time (a timeline starting in 1989, the year of Charlie Haden's famed residency, and the start of Ménard's prominence as festival programmer), much seemed comfortingly the same, but on a vaster scale. As always, the festival engages in a benevolent takeover of the downtown "Place des Arts" area of town, closing down traffic and creating a vibrant festival zone in the face of Montreal's status quo, with free music stages and excuses for even jazz-haters to flock there for ten days.

Of course, jazz lovers are more than welcome here. As always, the highly public buzz outside contrasts the serious musical matters carrying on in multiple indoor venues within easy walking proximity. Among the highlights of my four-night stay at the festival were contrasting corners. The tricky, math-funky new groove sensibilities of master drummer Nate Smith's group KINFOLK segued into the agreeable mainstreaming powers of Joshua Redman's quartet, closing with his intriguing non-standard "Standard Bearer," a snaky quirk of a tune with a tight, knotty melody. Redman has been upping his game as a composer of late, also evident with his work in his new band Still Dreaming.

Montreal hasn't shied away from the practice of booking major pop acts, a forgivable sin considering that they also pay respects and give due employment to many sub-genres and current trends and acts in jazz of the day—or of historical interest. (It must be said, however, that the festival is seriously lacking interest in the all-important avant garde end of things, a condition exacerbated

## Festival Review: Montreal Jazz Festival

in recent years, partly because that focus has been picked up by the alternative bookings of the celebrated and adventurous Café Popolo in town.)

During my four-night stay, the lucre-luring popsters of choice, placed in the large Salle Wilfred-Pelletier venue, were of the old school variety—the Alan Parsons Project and Peter Frampton. Parsons is still riding the power of his background as an engineer for the Beatles and Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon*, and a semi-cult status as a bandleader in the ‘70s, whose music—theatrically staged and arranged—is strangely both progressive and regressive. Even his brand-new album, *The Secret*, sounds airlifted from the ‘70s. A keyboardist’s lame, swing-less jazz-quoting solo passage was surely one of the worst “jazz” moments of the entire festival.

Frampton, sadly on his final tour due to a medical condition he fears will limit his guitar playing abilities, was in fine, spunky form. In the jazz festival context, it seemed more apparent than usual that this superlative example of a rock guitarist delivers lines steeped in elastic jazz phrasing and sense of exploration. He remains an underrated rock virtuoso amongst rock guitar icons, somehow diminished by the poppy sheen of his *Comes Alive* mega-phenom of the ‘70s.

Splitting the difference between jazz, pop, and showboating musical gymnastics, young British sensation Jacob Collier brought along his band to play for a packed Club Soda. After hearing his novelty-fueled solo act—jumping from piano to drums to bass and layering vocal parts in dazzling real time—it is reassuring to hear him playing well with others, although his impulse to impress still sometimes overwhelms a more mature approach to music-making. But we assume that will come with time and self-editing.

Maturity doesn’t have to spell the end of restless invention, as encountered in the freewheeling musical ventures of the seasoned Frenchman-in-New-York Jean-Michel Pilc’s *Waves Trio*, putting in a strong set at the central L’Astral nightclub.

Eminent male jazz vocalist Kurt Elling has launched duo project with pianist Danilo Perez, and the results heard at the historic Monument National venue (next to the former “red light” district) were tantalizing, if still in an experimental, formative stage. These two seem to get along famously, blending qualities of virtuosity, a will to take chances, warmth and teasing humor. With a set list ranging from the Silvio Rodriguez classic “*Rabo da Nube*” (dedicated to better relations between the U.S. and Cuba), “*Come Sunday*,” “*Pannonica*” and Stevie Wonder’s “*Overjoyed*,” along with eccentric narrative detours, the duet buzzed with rapport, and future promise.

Two of the most memorable Montreal evenings supplied sublimity via sparse means. Tapping his very fine ECM solo bass album *The Gleaners*, Larry Grenadier summoned up a performance of variety and depth, using alternate tunings, tasteful original pieces and references to Paul Hindemith, and his tribute to a hero, Oscar Pettiford—“*Pettiford*.” Grenadier, as heard in Brad Mehldau’s trio and his “chordless” trio *Fly*, is a fluid, precise player, able to leap registers with great ease. He also has a natural adventurous streak which

## Festival Review: Montreal Jazz Festival

extends to the wherewithal to make of his ambitious solo project a successful endeavor.

The following night, we got the more expected of a rare solo piano set by the great Swede Bobo Stenson, which, like the Grenadier show, was part of a compact tribute to ECM Records during its 50th anniversary year. The ECM contingent in town also included the dynamo piano duo of Vijay Iyer and Craig Taborn, Tord Gustavesen and Nik Bartsch's Ronin, closing out the penultimate festival night with its entrancing post-rock riff-based hypnosis program.

Stenson's hour-plus, unbroken suite of a concert stole the festival show, to these ears. Though best known for his trio work, on ECM albums, Stenson is a in the solo piano format, an aspect of his mastery which really need to be documented on record. At the former church venue, Gesu, where much of this festival's more musical fare is showcased, Stenson's lived-in With his singing way of phrasing, blended with a graceful melancholic tinge and a flexibility to move in and out of tonality-pushing terrain, the pianist wove his way deftly through a series of pieces, but always with a musical through line and sense of surprise intact.

After an hour of wending through various keys and musical "places," he closed with a brisk bebop-ish passage and a playful two-note resolution, a wink from left field. For an encore, he embraced the sweet contours of the Silvio Rodriguez-penned title cut for last year's trio album, *Contra la indecision*, but then exited into a wandering mode, heading off into an expressive forest of his own devising to end the show.

In some way, Stenson's solo set amounted to a kind of micro-festival in itself and was an ideal tour de force choice at Montreal's big 4-0/founders' send-off party.

## Festival Review: Montreal Jazz Festival



Benoit Rousseau, Kurt Elling & Danilo Perez - photo, Josef Woodard



Christine Jenson Group - photo, Josef Woodard

## Festival Review: Montreal Jazz Festival



Jean-Michel Pilc - photo, Josef Woodard



Larry Grenadier - photo, Josef Woodard

## Festival Review: Montreal Jazz Festival



Bobo Stenson solo - photo Josef Woodard)



Bobo Stenson solo - photo Josef Woodard)

## Photos and Text by Emil Mondo



North Philadelphia born trombonist Jeff Bradshaw gets an « A » for trombone artistry and an « A+ » for audience engagement: photo credit - Emil Mondo



Rodney Square, Wilmington DE. Waiting for Terence Blanchard: photo credit - Emil Mondo

Tina Betz, the City of Wilmington's Director of Cultural Affairs calls it "the largest free multi-day jazz festival on the East Coast" and she should know. She has been producing the sprawling weeklong affair for over 3 decades. The festival is named after trumpeter and Wilmington native, Clifford Brown whose life was cut short at age 26 in 1956.

The standout performers of the 2019 festival were the trumpeters. The jazz trumpet is not stuck in the past, not with young maestros like Etienne Charles cutting new ground in the genre. Christian Scott a Tunde Adjuah layed out some very touching grooves and it was capstoned with a magisterial performance by Terence Blanchard and the E-Collective.

Day 3, June 10 was dominated by latin jazz acts. The big brassy Spanish Harlem Orchestra got everyone on their feet and gyrating to traditional salsa fare. Quincy Jones protege Alfredo Rodriguez treated the fans to more innovative interpretations. Lovers of latin flute were treated to masterful performances by Nestor Torres.

The Jenkins Project is a Wilmington-based ensemble helmed by baritone Michael Jenkins that deserves more attention. They need to invest in their social media outreach because they have much value to offer. Other notable Wilmington performers included saxophonist and band leader Fostina Dixon & the Winds of Change and newcomer Raye Jones Avery. The varied line up included smooth jazz guitarist Norman Brown and his group who also backed up Billboard chart-topping singer Lindsey Webster. The festival was kicked off by trombonist and Philadelphia native Jeff Bradshaw, a man which a huge stage presence who gets an "A" for audience engagement and the last act was fittingly by jazz royalty, Branford Marsalis.

The Clifford Brown Jazz Festival returns on June 17-20, 2012 to Rodney Square, Wilmington Delaware.



## Festival Review Clifford Brown Jazz Festival



Trumpeter, composer and bandleader Étienne Charles. Still in his 20s, has created an impressive body of work; photo credit - Emil Mondo

## Festival Review Clifford Brown Jazz Festival



Chris Scott A Tunde Adjuah: one of the young lions of the jazz trumpet  
photo credit - Emil Mondo



Pinnacle trumpeter, Terence Blanchard; photo credit - Emil Mondo

## Joel Frahm Trio in Omaha June 7, '19 by Mark Klaffer

On the liner notes to his 1957 *Mating Call* album, John Coltrane's admitted favorites on tenor saxophone at the time were Sonny Stitt, Dexter Gordon, Sonny Rollins and Stan Getz. Singling out Getz, he had this to say, "Let's face it—we'd all sound like that if we could." After hearing saxophonist Joel Frahm play at The Jewell in Omaha on June 7, 2019, I believe Trane would have similar words to say about Mr. Frahm if he were around today.

It's not like I was really hearing Frahm's first "live" performance. By the time I did see him a few feet in front of me I had watched him perform numerous times via free livestream courtesy of Smalls Jazz Club in Greenwich Village in New York. Watching from the comfort of my home over the period of two years, I became convinced that I was hearing and seeing one of the greatest practitioners of the music today. Seeing him interact both as sideman and leader with many musicians, I was struck time and time again with the beauty and consistency of his sound, and the endless fount of ideas that came spiraling and flowing out of his horn. Playing in Omaha with local musicians Mitch Towne on Hammond organ and Dana Murray on drums, everything I had ever felt or heard from Frahm was confirmed and on ample display in a very varied two sets.

Whether playing standards or Frahm's originals, whether ballads, mid or up-tempo songs, Frahm exhibited complete command and exquisite tone for every style that was employed. I don't know how much lead time or rehearsal Towne and Murray were able to have with Frahm's music before the gig, but the excellent support, soloing and compatibility on the originals testified eloquently to the local musician's expertise and adaptability. Throughout the night Towne's deeply textured organ lines were a source of strength and beauty, while Murray's focus and flexibility on drums made the music work. Among the standards there was a honeyed *My Ideal*, and a lush, velvety time-stands-still version of *What's New* with beautiful layering on organ, tasteful brushes on drums and a gorgeous cadenza on sax. Frahm was very Trane-like on *All or Nothing at All*, stating the melody followed by a flurry of notes in a sheets-of-sound fashion. His imagination and facility on tenor simply knows no bounds. When you think he has exhausted all the ideas he could come up with during a solo he reaches deeper and uncorks sounds and patterns of surprise and delight in their creativity. On Frank Foster's *Simone* a lovely intro that meshed well into unison swells with the organ yielded to Frahm's incredible articulation and clarity at flying speeds, maintaining a composed and relaxed undergirding to his solo.

The originals provided the greatest showcase for Frahm's talent and concepts. There was a sultry take on *Jobimeola*, first appearing in 2007 on the disc *We Used to Dance* with Kenny Barron. Thinking of Benny (Golson) was a bright, breezy, jaunty blues romp that had Frahm scissoring through the scene and Towne with an expressive solo on organ. His *Qu'est-ce Que C'est* showed he can play anything he wants at any time as rapid-fire notes came steaming out of his horn. *Boo Dip Dip* featured Frahm as a craftsman of the highest intelligence and compelling clarity that can also be fiery. Murray's drums on this tune were solid and encouraging. Frahm relished sharing his tune *Bright Side*, which is his adaptation of Lou Reed's *Walk on the Wild Side*. The repeating groove came from a pleasant place of reflection, sort of the other side of the "wild side." *Bee Line* had the notes following so hard one upon the other and locked into a forward frenzy that never felt anxious or hurried, but rather calm and collected. Not easy to pull off. *Blow Papa Joe* was Frahm's nod to the music on Joe Henderson's *Inner Urge* album. Like Henderson, Frahm did not waste a note. He made everything count and express something valid and substantial. Frahm has reached a point of getting to the root essence of his own inner freedom and his facility on the tenor. Catch Joel Frahm wherever and whenever you can.

### **The Baylor Project in Omaha July 24, 2019 by Mark Klaffer**

Last night in Omaha (July 24), at the relatively new Jewell jazz club in the heart of downtown, I experienced a phenomenon that I had not encountered before. The Baylor Project, fresh off the 2017 release of their debut album *The Journey*, and the two Grammy nominations that disc generated, delivered music that seamlessly moved from strong jazz standards and originals with seasoned chops all around, to deeply moving renditions of classic and contemporary Christian and gospel hymns, all naturally flowing from one to the other in the same set. The husband and wife led band, with Marcus on drums and Jean on vocals, along with Terry Brewer on acoustic and electric piano, Richie Goods on acoustic bass and Keith Loftis on tenor and soprano saxophones, inhabited and communicated this blend with no affectation, no religious posturing, no apologies and with the unabashed convictions of their prowess on their instruments and their joy in the Lord.

The night started out with a forceful drum solo from Marcus that led to an all instrumental number in which it was clear that this band was not going to hold back anything as they modulated nicely between straight ahead and rhythm and blues contours. Tenor and bass solos on this number were dynamic and strong in their articulation. Jean Baylor then made her appearance onstage and gave us a very heartfelt *Our Love is Here to Stay*. Brewer then quietly launched into a nearly five-minute piano solo that deftly and exquisitely explored gospel and black church intonations and emotions that caused a hush to fall on the sleek and intimate club. This segued into a flat-out worshipful *Great is Thy Faithfulness*, with Jean's mezzo-soprano leading the ensemble into very cogent playing and Loftis's soprano into a driving solo. Where to go from this mountain top? Back to displaying that The Baylor Project does not consist of timid believers, but jazz artists whose skills and pedigree has been nurtured at great jazz and music schools and in associations like Richie Goods' nine years and three albums with Mulgrew Miller. Marcus started a song off with brushes, moved shortly to pounding mallets and then let his sticks lead into a lilting melody. This tune was more of a nod to pop and smooth jazz, but any concerns with that were overcome by Jean's convincing scatting and vocalizing acrobatics which sent the band skyward and conveyed the love and care they have for each other, the music, and the audience. They are indeed refreshed by their own music. Marcus' cymbal washes added to the aural tapestry. After this came the well known *Tenderly*, with Jean coming in after an introspective piano solo. Her clear diction and expressiveness were touching. Loftis's tenor clearly reminded of Coleman Hawkins. Next came the traditional *Hallelujah* with Jean's "You are worthy, You are holy" full of sincerity, reaching a note near the end of the song that sounded like she found it in the third heaven. The sweet finale was the Baylor's *Laugh and Move On*, where soprano and voice perfectly united to tell us "You've got to laugh and move on / Holding on to something bad won't make it any better / You've got to laugh and move on / Learning to live love and let it go." Marcus has said *Laugh and Move On* is an important song in today's climate because it provides a musical route for human healing." And in Omaha one sultry, summer night, The Baylor Project demonstrated that they are doing good and important work, and making great music.

"I read the news today, oh boy," sang The Beatles almost fifty-two years ago. The news I heard today (12/13/18), is that the Cornelia Street Café in the West Village of New York City will close its doors on January 2. The outpourings of sadness, praise and lament for this long tenured artistic haven and music mecca are flying in from all directions. Let's add a well-deserved memorial by taking you back to June 16, 2018 when the Ari Hoenig Trio lit up the downstairs grotto.

Drummer Hoenig and I had never met before this night, but I sure did feel like I knew him well. For many months before this summer evening I had watched Ari and his various groups via Smalls livestream from my home in the hinterlands of northeast Nebraska. Ari's nearly every Monday appearance at the esteemed jazz club five minutes' walk from Cornelia Street had provided ample evidence that the idiosyncratic drummer, composer and musical explorer should be seen and heard live if possible. A family vacation to my hometown was such an occasion.

Ari has a whole stable and network of musicians that he works with in various settings and genres, and this night he chose Or Baraket on bass and Eden Ladin on piano, both very sensitive and fleet fingered products of the flourishing Israeli jazz scene who now call New York home.

The first tune (all originals) that I caught was the title song from his 2010 release, *Lines of Oppression*. The sinuous, catchy and ascending opening repeated figure that forms the melodic statement opened up into a terrace for the freedom of expression and collaboration that characterizes much of Hoenig's work. There were thrilling unison lines and snippets of the main theme repeated throughout the song, with Ladin's left hand capturing the ominous oppression suggested by the title. This served as a platform for Ari's beautiful touch in imbedded soloing. The song Lyric followed, written for one of his daughters. The tender caress of the brushes and the quiet murmurings of Baraket's bass led the trio to become intertwined at every angle. Ari's trademark unusual accents on drums and cymbals were abrupt but a welcome fit to the flow. Not to be left out, his other daughter wanted a song as well, so Alana came next. The beauty and sincerity in this number bordered on the unbelievable. The fast bop of *Ephemeral Eyes* showed how Ari never stops driving and stimulating the band to keep cooking and working together. *Wedding Song* unveiled a lilting, inner coherence and beautiful symmetry of celebration, as ever emerging layers of musical embrace were revealed. The set concluded with *Gurnsey Gooseneck*, where Ari sounded a Bernard Purdie type groove that said, "I am free, and so is the music!" Ladin, Baraket and Hoenig blended into a mind meld which gave the effect of a 33rpm record getting slowed down to 16rpm. The overall accessibility of their brilliance provided an entry for the audience to travel with them.

When it comes to conceptions of jazz drumming, execution and composing,

Ari Hoenig is an original. He is focused on maintaining interest, surprise, and excitement for himself, his bandmates and his audience. The drum kit in his hands is an ever-shifting landscape and playground that he is shaping to suit his moment to moment inspiration, but never losing vital connection to what he is hearing from his fellow musicians. Ari leads his group through a feeding frenzy of smiles, looks and listens that modulates the common mind that the music cultivates. They are on a daring and exciting ride, and we are fortunate to be there to join them. All three are tuned and locked in to both the sound and the space that they are inhabiting. This is conversation at its friendliest, most daring and adventurous best. The almost constant novelty of Ari's drumming and composing keeps the music fresh with discovery. Ari simply plays patterns and rhythms that you have not heard before. His concept of keeping time is real, flexible and dynamic. He can change rhythm suddenly and move it quickly into a meter and feel that at first might appear to clash with where the music is but is shown to be quite compatible with where the music is going and where Ari sees the music going. He is not afraid to employ an idea that is within his vocabulary and execute it in the most startling and fresh way. He and his bandmates are not afraid of space and appear to have an implicit trust in each other's ability to listen and respond quickly to whatever direction Ari wants to take the music. This makes Ari a powerful and convincing leader without imposing a possessive or excessive ego. He leads, and the others joyfully and willingly follow and mesh with him. Ari Hoenig's special musical alchemy is to integrate permutations of reality and creativity in the act of creation. Such artistry will live on as a legacy and testament to the much beloved home of Cornelia Street Café.

Mark Klafter

## PERRY'S POWER

BY

JIMMY BENNINGTON

He had a little place, a building with only a few other tenants. Maybe only one... they rarely spoke or saw one another. Mornings he would play Jazz radio very loudly and would then go about his day...the late Perry Robinson.

There was a tiny stairway that led to a tiny room (Perry's bedroom), a still tinier alcove where there was the worlds smallest keyboard, a music stand, his clarinet, a window, a faded poster from a show from long ago, and little else. Even though we'd stayed up rather late the evening before on my arrival, Perry was up like a quiet firecracker going about his daily routine. I could hear him going about, saying something here and there. Once the radio started though, that was it and I ventured into the kitchenette to find Perry busy preparing food. He sensed my presence immediately and whirled around with a hearty 'Good Morning Maestro! Oh Ho! and Aha! Did you Sleep very well? Can I make you some Breakfast!?' When I discovered what it was he was making, I wasn't up to it and may have just had some toast. He was making a grand sardine sandwich with all the trimmings and then some...it was comprised of a dark heavy Russian bread that Perry stressed the greatness of many times, there was a special kind of sardines you had to have, not just any can would do, then there was the choice of either spicy kimchee or old world authentic cabbage (quite a decision to make in the early a.m.!)...I wrote it down per Perry's instructions...it's lost to time now. I called it Perry's Power. Because, after sweating and snorting the gigantic fish sandwich down with patience and reverence, sweat poring from his cheeks and forehead, he made a He-Man stance, flexing his wiry arms and growled "AAAaaaughoooO! Maestro! That is it! I am Ready! Ready for Anything! Aagh Beautiful Baby! Beautiful!"

He took me up to the alcove where he composed, he took his ocarina from his neck, and played a little thing. It was quite nice, the window letting the light in. I could see see that no matter how small the piano might be, or how austere the setting, great things could happen, were happening, and would be happening...

I had come in for a few gigs and a recording with Perry. The night of my arrival, I offered to take take him to dinner to show my gratitude for him putting me up. Only the year before, Perry had been my guest in Chicago, and he insisted it was only fitting that I should be his guest on my next New York visit. I told him to pick his favorite spot, anything goes...he chose a modest Japanese place nearby, and we ate and drank copiously, laughed and shared some great moments...

One thing I noted was the gusto with which Perry ate; he perspired when he ate and I felt that he was on a very strict economy always and that a meal out was a fairly rare treat. Keeping in mind, that musicians and artists are often invited to dine with the wealthy...they like having us around, but times between, artists have to think about that next meal, that rent payment, etc. The most creative gigs are not usually money making endeavors and so a loss is to be expected. As Lester Young told a musician who couldn't make an out of town gig because of low pay, Lester told him, "Man, you got to save up to make those out of towns gigs!" He told me that even though he had a few standing invitations to go to Europe, a festival in Germany in particular (Freiburg), he usually wasn't paid much if at all...just airfare, room and board, expenses...but little money.

## Jazz Stories Jimmy Bennington

He took me into his bedroom and showed me a beautifully embroidered sack, a silken magician's bag if there ever was one, and let me thrust my hand in among a mass of cool Euro coins... "When I need to, I just take this bag down to the currency exchange and convert em!" To say that he was frugal would be doing him an injustice, as Perry would give the shirt off of his back to just about anyone, but, he was thrifty and resourceful in every sense. Perry also confided that he lived in a 'commercial' apartment and that whenever the owner visited the building, the landlord (who respected him as an artist) would call Perry to alert him. It happened on a day I was there, and the procedure was to slide the big door across the kitchenette and bolt it down with a padlock, then, taking our beers and our smoke, Perry locked the door behind us that lead to the upstairs alcove.

We heard the landlord bustling about in the main room below... we smoked and whispered quietly... it was maybe twenty minutes or so later that the owner left... we remained that way for some minutes when Perry gracefully rose from his cross-legged position and went to the 'world's smallest keyboard'. It was quiet and deathly still and he played an elusive original melody he'd been working on. It came out like so much cool water, it spilled out and came to you like an old friend. Then he sprung up when the notes had died away and said, "To the day Maestro! To the day!" and we left that little place and went out, and about, to the city of New York, that Perry knew like the back of his hand.

He was quiet and still on the Path train; almost invisible. His eyes were lidded and his head was down... we walked down this way and that, took a left, then a right, and we were there; Manhattan. Safe and sound in the club... and he was in his element and played like the bird he was, floating above the din.. soaring.

We parted a few afternoons later, when my taxi arrived. We rested in the window waiting. Everything had already been said and we sat in a comfortable and satisfied silence. Then Perry pointed a finger at an old record album hanging askew on the wall and quietly asked, "Do you know about 'Funk Dumpling' Maestro?"  
Perry Robinson - Maestro! One of our Great Heroes

### THE JFK INN

BY

JIMMY BENNINGTON

You already know about how it was one of those things. Dumb if you do it and even dumber if you don't. David Haney, pianist/ composer invited me to accompany him to New York to play some gigs... places in Manhattan... the Jazz, the 5C Cafe, and elsewhere. I knew David from my days in Portland and was excited for the opportunity to travel a bit and play the real music. This was years ago now. My plane left from Seattle and I met up with David at one of those gigs. I remember the taxi driver was an unauthorized type and he and another guy hustled my gear and myself into the cab before I could really protest; I did manage to establish a fixed price and off we went.

The gig was an all black club where we played improvised music. I suggested to David at one point that we maybe play some of our Herbie Nichols repertoire to appease the audience, but David stuck to his guns and we played to a few



## Jazz Stories Jimmy Bennington



Jimmy Bennington and Perry Robinson



Jimmy Bennington and David Haney

## Jazz Stories Jimmy Bennington

perplexed faces. Later, at the hotel, he reminded me that this was his endeavor and that he would call the 'tunes'. Of course I understood, and it was a lesson for me as a sideman, the rest of the short junket being very successful and I believe he did throw in a Nichols tune when I least expected it...

The hotel we stayed at was near the airport, the JFK Inn. Once inside the little room, two beds separated by a bedside table, we sat and were arrested by the sounds and noises happening all around us. It almost seemed as if a small army were going to charge through the door at any moment. We sat opposite one another on our respective beds and tried to talk, but the sudden bangs, curses, and other unexplained sounds stopped our talk in its tracks. We began to wonder where we were when we realized it would be best to barricade the door with something. Something nice and heavy. We dragged a big lounge chair from across the room and set it up against the door. Have to be pretty strong to get through that...but what about those gunshots we heard? Would we be safe from them? There in the little room we drew the curtains and kept watch on the barricaded door for any sudden jolts.

The conversation had to big in those circumstances, and we spoke of our lives, of Jazz, of death, of living in the day to day, goals, dreams. At one point David said, 'You know Dr. (his nickname for me), I always thought I was going to die very young and so I lived that way...but then I had a dream that I would live to be very old, and so I began to live that way...a banana every morning for breakfast, good food, I go for a run or a strong walk. I sat across from him and thought how I felt it would be a young end for me. So I too lived like that. I ate what I wanted and drank what I wanted...slept when I fell asleep and not before. Now, these years later, I too am having dreams of living longer, but I don't eat a banana for breakfast in the morning.

The subways on that trip were hectic and the homemade Indian food we were forced to eat at one of the gigs soured our stomachs...an amateur cook who spoiled our venture to a nearby authentic Indian restaurant by insisting that we eat her special interpretation of Indian food. I protested in the corner to Haney, but we really had no choice as gentlemen and with m.f.'ing politics. We ate the bland and terrible food and repaired back to the JFK Inn with very few dollars in our pockets. I remember the proprietor at the club kept reminding me that I was playing Frank Gant's drums...'that's The Frank Gant young man'

OK. At one point, I asked him 'It is OK if I play them right? This is the house kit isn't it?'

We sat up most of the last night reminiscing about the gigs, the moments, the little tour, the feasibility of another future venture...and our safety as the evening grew late. We slept with the mission in our hearts.

The journey had been made.

Again.

This time.

The terrible noises died down after awhile though, even in New York, and we slept with the heavy chair against the wall and even cracked a window.

Aug. 8, 2019  
Chicago

**BACHIR ATTAR [LEADER OF THE MASTER MUSICIANS OF JAJOUKA]****Taken by Ken Weiss on 4/1/19****The Day Ornette Came to My Village**

It's my best memory, in 1973 when Ornette Coleman comes to the village, along with other great artists like William Burroughs and Jazz critic Robert Palmer. It was amazing for me to experience it as a child [9-year-old]. They stayed and made music for a week every night in the village. It was Ornette and his guests from Europe and America. They made music from sunrise to sunset. I remember that and [how] Ornette recorded all that week. It was legendary, and the most magic music I ever listened [to] in my life. It was with my father and Ornette Coleman in the village! It was something that never can be happen again. That's why Ornette is the one, he surrendered to the music because he's a great artist. He's one of the best of them in Jazz. He described free Jazz. I think what he mean about free Jazz – it's like free to be witnesses of human being music from the earth. I love Ornette, that's why I love Ornette always, because he's more than open. He's a human musician, as Jajouka is human music. I hope, along with the help of Ornette's son, Denardo, to get out 20 hours of music on CDs of Ornette and my father.

**Last Visit with Ornette**

I've had conversations with Ornette, but my English is not very good. When I visited him the last time, even before the tribute for Ornette in Brooklyn, I visited him in his apartment. There are videos of this because he took them. We talked and [Laughs] I told him I am going to do a song on him called "Anytime" because when you say to him, 'Oh, I will come to see you next week,' he would say, "Anytime, anytime." Anytime, I love that anytime. I have a song called "Ornette Anytime."

**Ornette's Funeral**

His funeral was amazing, I was there with my brother. I was invited to the funeral to lead the procession. I saw him in the room with his family. I have to play one song, a song for the funeral, but when I see him in the open coffin, I forgot the song I was going to play, really. After I left [the private room], I don't know what to play. I said to my brother, 'I don't know what to play. I forgot what I have arranged, it's gone!' Because when I see him sitting in the coffin like this, that was Ornette, but he was smiling. But the song comes to me, just like that. It was different, I had never played something like that in my life. I think you can see it on YouTube. That song, I didn't know how it comes to me. It's crazy, I don't know, it just came that moment.



Bachir Attar, photo by Ken Weiss

## MY FIRST PERFORMANCE

Taken by Ken Weiss on 4/4/19

A couple days ago, my father sent me these old newspaper articles. When I was 9 years old, [Laughs] this is very candid, I wanted to buy a Barbie [doll] but my dad didn't have any money, so he said, "Okay, you know what we'll do? We'll go out and play in the street and with the money we make, you can go and buy your toys." So, he took me to an affluent area of Geneva, Switzerland, where I grew up. He had a little keyboard and I was singing. We made good money, I think we made like \$200 in a couple hours, which was a lot. It was enough to buy me two Barbies. They were really expensive. Those things were like \$100, they were really nice dolls. I was really happy, this was the first time in my life where I did something that paid me money. There was a crowd around us and this woman came up and said, "You can't do this. This is illegal because you can't make a minor work," and she called the police on us. They came and said we had to stop and that we were gonna have to talk with a social worker because this was not supposed to happen. They wanted to know if my dad was a fit parent. I was crying, I was really freaked out. I was really scared they were gonna give my dad a ticket. [Laughs] Nothing happened but the next day, this stuff came out in the newspaper about somebody who was making their kid play for money. This stayed as a funny memory for us - a half tragic and half comical moment for us.

### Playing in the Street

I used to play in the streets when I moved to New York. I was playing by the Museum of Natural History with a friend of mine, he was playing keyboard and I was playing saxophone. This guy walks by us and he was like, "Hey, this is cool, what are you doing?" It turned out to be Sonny Rollins' longtime bassist, Bob Cranshaw. I couldn't believe it, that this iconic person was listening to us. He was really nice. We ended up talking for awhile and he told me that he lived in the area. And then he invited me to come and meet him and Sonny at a festival that I was also playing at. Unfortunately, this was right when Sonny got sick and he couldn't make the gig. But it was amazing for me to just randomly meet Bob Cranshaw in the street.

### New York Jam Session

This is a story about being at a jam session at Small's in New York City. Roy Hargrove used to go to sessions at Small's a lot and we used to hang out there. You'd go there late at night and he'd be there. Of course, when he was there, people deferred to him. So, I was probably 18 and really eager to play. I came up with my horn and I was getting ready to play when Roy stopped me and said, "Do you know this song?" I said, "No, not really, but I can kind of hear the changes," and he looked at me and said, "Go home and learn the song. When you learn the song, you come and play it." And to me, that was a really big teaching moment because he was very firm and very clear. Not mean about it, but he was clear that there's a whole lot of work you need to do at home where you need to learn these songs. You can't just come in and play. Go home, get your stuff together in the shed, and then come and play. That was a great teaching moment for me. A few years later, I saw Roy and he gave me a compliment and I went home and worked. For me, it really helped that he was critical of me. It's really important to accept criticism.



Maria Grand, photo by Ken Weiss

## **Ronnie Burrage Memory**

**Taken by Ken Weiss on 2/16/19**

I remember being pretty young and on the road with Woody Shaw and we were based between Amsterdam and some places in Spain. We had about 3 days off, and back then, you could get a flight from Madrid to Nigeria for about \$75, I believe roundtrip. So, I went. I got there, got in a taxi, and said, 'I'm a musician, take me to Fela.' So, he took me to Fela's compound, and I played with his bandmembers. I told them I was playing with Woody and, of course, Fela loved all of the Jazz musicians. He wasn't there at the time. I played with those cats for 2 days and then came back to Woody. It was a wonderful experience. [Laughs] I feared for my life in Nigeria, being so young, but God always protects me.

**CADENCE: WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN NIGERIA?**

Oh, man, first of all, when I got into the taxi, the taxi got stopped several times and I got asked, "Who are you? Show me your passport. How much money you got on you?" I said, 'I ain't got no money, I'm just here to visit Fela,' and when I said Fela's name, people backed up and I was able to go through. But there was a lot happening in Nigeria, you know the temperament in Nigeria was all about money. It was corrupt, there was all kinds of crazy stuff going on. But Fela was such a powerful influence and I just wanted to have the experience, and I was hoping to meet him.



Ronnie Burrage, photo by Ken Weiss

## My Chicago Immersion - Taken by Ken Weiss

*This memory was obtained after Branch finished playing with an oddly named trio, Jaimie Branch Vs the Party Knüllers, with bassist Fred Lonberg-Holm and drummer Ståle Liavik Solberg at South Philadelphia's Da Vinci Art Alliance [Fire Museum Presents] on June 9, 2018.*

I guess in the spirit of playing with Fred Lonberg earlier tonight, I'll talk about how I got immersed in the Chicago Jazz scene. I'm a really big fan of Axel Dörner, the trumpeter from Berlin. He was playing a couple gigs [in Chicago]. He played with Keith Rowe at the Empty Bottle and then he played solo at Myopic Books, which is a tiny spot in Chicago. There were maybe fifteen of us in the audience and afterwards, I asked Axel for a lesson. And I think he was a little bit apprehensive but he said yes. He was staying at Fred's house and Fred was like, "Sure you can come over and do the lesson." And so I had the lesson with Axel, and Fred, I guess, heard it from upstairs and kind of poked his head in to see who it was, like if it was someone he knew, not realizing it was me. A couple weeks later, or maybe not even that long, he called me up to see if I could play with his Lightbox Orchestra at the Phrenology Festival in Chicago, it was like the Hungry Brain circa November, 2004, I believe. I said yes, of course, I was super into the music, super into the scene, but didn't really know anybody yet, and that night I ended up playing with, like sixteen guys, all guys, that would go on to be some of my core group of Chicago musician homies. There was Frank Rosaly, Tim Daisy, Jason Stein, Josh Berman and Keith Jackson all in the band. I was bike messaging at the time and had recently gone into the Jazz Record Mart to apply to work there, I was sick of riding my bike around. Josh Berman and Keith Jackson both worked at the Record Mart and that night I got a call back from the shop. And so, not only did I have the gig and met the fellas, but I got a job at the world famous Jazz Record Mart – all in one night – because of Fred Lonberg-Holm. That's a pretty good memory I think.



# Jazz Stories

Jaimie Branch



Jaimie Branch in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

Lewis Porter  
Village Vanguard  
Tales



Pete LaRoca, drummer



## STORY ONE

### At the Village Vanguard with Pete LaRoca:

The first time I was at the Vanguard was in most unusual circumstances. It was the late spring or summer of 1966, I think May, June or July. I was 15 and my mother had joined Mensa. If you're not familiar with Mensa, it's an organization that you have to take an IQ test to join. It's a group for people who would like to hang out with intelligent folks like themselves. My mom was divorced when I was young so she was hoping to meet men in Mensa. She also asked me and my two brothers to take IQ tests and we all became members. We really didn't expect to participate at all—she was just curious to find out our IQs—but then she brought to my attention that there was a jazz interest group starting, and she said you really should go. My mom hated the idea that I wanted to be a professional musician—I had insisted on this since the age of 10. But she was also my mom and she thought this would be good for me.

I was super shy so I wasn't really sure that I was interested, but she encouraged me to go. At that time we lived near 164th Street and the Grand Concourse in the Bronx. This meeting was quite a trek—it was in Riverdale, the upper class part of the Bronx. I'd never been there before. I had to take a long bus ride, and then walk a ways. But I found the apartment building and when I got to the door there was a tall Jewish guy who welcomed me.

It turned out it was just him, me, and three other people. This was difficult for me, being so reserved—nowhere to hide. So the host said, "First let's introduce ourselves." There was a woman with a daughter who was about my age, but I was too shy to say anything to her daughter. Then there was an African-American man who said "My name is Pete LaRoca," and the other

people there showed no glimmer of recognition, but I said, “Are you Pete LaRoca the drummer?!” He said “Well, yes, actually I am.” I asked him why he was there, and he said something about how yes he is a successful drummer but he’s getting tired of that lifestyle and he also wants to meet other intelligent people.

Pete was indeed a brilliant guy and in fact recently when I worked with Dave Liebman on his autobiography *What It Is*, which came out in 2013, Dave had very nice things there to say about Pete. I was so excited that Pete was there that I probably didn’t pay enough attention to the other three people. But the meeting proceeded just as a regular social group, and the idea came up, “Let’s go on a trip to a jazz club,” and Pete said “You know, there’s this great new band at the Village Vanguard on Monday nights” (the band had started in February 1966). He said “They know me there, so I can get us a table even though we’re a small group.”

So, sure enough, in June or July of ‘66 we met at the very back of the Vanguard. At that time there was a slightly larger oval table in the back, by the bar, that seated about 6 people—it’s not there currently. We saw the original Thad Jones-Mel Lewis big band (now the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra). Richard Davis was on bass playing in his very expressive style which I loved, the memorable Pepper Adams was on baritone sax of course, and so on. This wasn’t my first time to see live jazz, but I think I hadn’t been to a club. I think I’d only been to the Sunday afternoon concerts at the Red Garter (later the Bottom Line) that were sponsored by an organization called Jazz Interactions. I got free tickets by winning “blindfold tests” on WKCR (this was before Phil Schaap) and I saw lots of great artists at those Sunday events—Bobby Brookmeyer with Jimmy Giuffre and Reggie Workman, Dave Liebman with Randy Brecker, etc.

But with my mom being divorced and me being one of three brothers, we didn’t have much money. So when the waitress came over to take our orders, when she got to me I said “Nothing.” I had almost no money on me, I didn’t know about minimums, and she briefly looked a little shocked. But Pete was so nice and such a gentleman that he said right away “He’ll have a Coke, and put it on my tab.” I was still too shy to say anything to the girl who was my age. She asked me a couple of questions about what jazz I liked and we only exchanged a few sentences.

So at the end of the night the other three were on their way to Riverdale which of course is not where I lived, and Pete said “I can drive you home.” The Bronx wasn’t anywhere on his way—I’m pretty sure he lived in Manhattan. So we went out to his car and it was a yellow cab. I said “This is your car?!” He said “Yes, I’ve been working as a cab driver.” As he drove, we talked. He knew that I played piano and wanted to become a professional musician. But he said that it’s a very hard life and it’s not for everyone, and so on. I think he mentioned that he was planning to become a lawyer. (In any case, he did become a

lawyer a few years later and left full-time music performance.) When we got to my apartment building he gave me his phone number and said to call anytime. He was such a nice person that I took him up on it. The next day I was listening to Bird on a Savoy LP and around 11 a.m., I called. I started talking about the Bird recordings, but he couldn't get his head around who it was. He asked two or three times who it was. Finally he burst out laughing and said, "This is Mal isn't it? Mal Waldron. Come on, Mal!" The funny thing is, if you listen to this interview with Mal, I did sound something like this at the time:

<https://youtu.be/LKVO6MneZa0>

In any case, I finally persuaded him that I was Lewis and not Mal, and we talked for a few minutes about Bird. But after the awkward start, the conversation never really got relaxed. I wasn't the kind to bother people, so I didn't contact him after that.

There's a little postscript to this story. Flash forward to almost 30 years later. In October, 1995, I was doing lots of phone interviews for my Coltrane biography. I phoned Pete and reminded him who I was, and of course he remembered Mensa, but he didn't remember me or any of the story. However he was very helpful and answered all my questions. Then around 1998 when I living in Yonkers, I saw that he'd be playing a gig, which he rarely did anymore. I went to the Westchester Conservatory in White Plains and the band was Sonny Fortune, Charles Tolliver, Reggie Workman, and probably a pianist. There was a drum set, but Sonny got up before they started and said that Pete, now a lawyer, was tied up in litigation and would be late. He asked "Does anybody here play drums?" I raised my hand and said "I'm a pianist but I play some drums." So I played! In the middle of the second piece, Pete showed up and I handed the sticks to him. At the end of the set, Sonny Fortune gave me a big hug. Then I introduced myself to Pete. He remembered the interview about Trane but not our Village Vanguard excursion. But I never forgot his kindness.

## STORY TWO

### **A Drinking Lesson at the Village Vanguard:**

As I told you in my other story, my first trip to the Vanguard was with Pete LaRoca in the summer of 1966. So, now that I was acquainted with the Vanguard, I saw that the great Coleman Hawkins was playing there just a few weeks later. In the 1980s I published two books about Pres, but I was into Hawkins before I ever knew anything about Lester Young. Among the first five jazz LPs I bought in the fall of 1964 was RCA LPV-501. This was the first in their acclaimed Vintage Series of reissues and it featured Hawkins recordings from 1927 all the way to "Just Friends" from Sonny Meets Hawk in 1963. I listened to the last track over and over to enjoy both Rollins and Bley and it had a huge

impact on me. To some extent it set the direction of my playing—my use of polytonality and so forth. And Hawkins had participated in all this great music for all these years, so I had to see Hawk. So I went to the Vanguard, by myself, at age 15. I sat at a little table against the left wall, about five tables from the stage. I could show you that table today—that's how little the Vanguard has changed!

Now, honestly, I don't think they were supposed to let me in to the Vanguard. The drinking age in New York was 18 at that time. And I looked my age or younger. But not only did they let me in, a tall thin waiter came up and asked what I would have to drink. I knew from my experience with Pete LaRoca that buying a drink was required, not optional. But this time I was ready. "I'll have a Coke," I said.

Believe it or not, the waiter said, "It's two dollars for a Coke, you can have it if you want, but for the same two dollars you can get a real drink." Here I am under age, and not only is he serving me, he's encouraging me to get liquor! Understand, I'm from a lower income Jewish background. My mom was a struggling divorcée and I'm the middle of three boys. In Jewish homes, especially if your mother heads the household, there's very little liquor in the house. You have the sweet Manischewitz wine for Passover and maybe one bottle of liqueur like schnapps for guests. If you are very religious you have wine every Friday night for Shabbat (Sabbath), but we did not observe that. The bottom line is, I knew nothing about liquor! But I understood that he was saying that I was wasting my money to pay \$2 for a Coke. In those days a can or bottle of Coke at the store was 25 cents.

So I thought quickly. I looked at the table across the little aisle to the right of me, and somebody was drinking something clear like water. I said, "What's that?" He said, "That's called a Tom Collins." I said, "I'll have one of those." He brought it and I hung on to it, "nursed" it, for the rest of the night.

So thanks to this waiter at the Vanguard, I got into the habit of buying a "real" drink whenever I went to the Vanguard or any jazz club. Another time I asked more about drink options and I found out that there were sweet ones, so for a year or two I would order a Black Russian because I love chocolate. I later learned that there was a White Russian and I liked that, but not as much as the chocolatey one. Some years later, after college I think, I starting trying whiskey and other hard liquors, eventually ordering them straight so I could see what they really tasted like. But I never really liked the taste of liquor. I always bought my one drink and nursed it all night.

Many years later in the fall of '86 I met fellow pianist Don Friedman and we soon became good friends. Sometimes we went out to hear music together and I noticed that he always ordered a seltzer with a twist of lime. The first time, I asked, "Is that all you're getting"? And Don said, "Yeah, I don't always feel like having a drink." So finally, following Don Friedman's lead, I learned to just order what I felt like having, which was usually not liquor. These days

I'll usually get a seltzer with a twist.

But let's not forget that the first time I ordered a drink I was there to see the great Coleman Hawkins in 1966. The club was far from packed—in fact I remember it being maybe a third full, maybe less. At that time he was bald and had a pretty full beard. These photos are what he looked like:

<https://www.gettyimages.dk/detail/news-photo/american-jazz-saxophonist-coleman-hawkins-copenhagen-news-photo/1012518822>

<https://www.gettyimages.dk/detail/news-photo/norman-granzs-jazz-at-the-philharmonic-tour-in-europe-news-photo/1012548648>

<https://www.gettyimages.dk/detail/news-photo/american-jazz-saxophonist-coleman-hawkins-and-american-jazz-news-photo/1012519600>

His trio featured a pianist—I remember it being Tommy Flanagan, who I believe was on a break that year from touring with Ella Fitzgerald, but Barry Harris was working with him around that time, so I guess it could have been Barry. The drummer was Eddie Locke. The bassist was Major Holley. You couldn't forget him, because he soloed by bowing and singing, but unlike Slam Stewart—his inspiration, who sang in a falsetto—Holley sang in a low voice.

Hawkins was only 61 (he was to pass away before his 65th birthday), but he was considered to be an “elder.” He was a brilliant artist and he still played really interesting lines. The only thing is that he often left pauses between lines and let the rhythm section go on. Every once in a while during these pauses, he'd let out one laugh like this—“Ha!” He could have been laughing at something he played, and I wish I could say he was knocking himself out. But honestly it seemed more like the way someone laughs when they're remembering something hurtful that somebody said earlier in the day. He seemed a bit bitter, and I learned later that he was an alcoholic, so who knows what was going on with him? But he was still brilliant and it was amazing to see him.

I was a shy kid. I sat by myself and didn't talk to anybody. But I stayed all night—I wasn't going to miss any of this! During one of the intermissions trumpeter Roy Eldridge came by just to say hello. I loved to see that, because I was, and am still, crazy about Roy's playing. I wasn't surprised, because I knew that they'd had a long association. They'd been recording together since 1940 as well as performing together and touring with Jazz at the Philharmonic. Roy didn't play that night (I did get to see him at the Half Note within the next year), but it was fun to see them together. They sat at a table around the middle of the club, and you could hear them laughing and enjoying each other's company.

So that's my story of seeing Coleman Hawkins and of learning what to order to satisfy the minimum drink requirement at the legendary Village Vanguard!

## Jazz Stories: Two from the Village Vanguard



Lewis Porter, 7/21/17 Philadelphia Clef Club of Music Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

**Joe Morris Memories****Taken by Ken Weiss on 2/22/19****Kora**

A few years ago, I played the one and only duo I've ever played with Evan Parker. After paying a lot of attention to Evan Parker in the '70s, I got very intrigued by the way he plays a cycle and his improvising, and so that, and some other things, led me through some connections to pay a lot of attention to African kora music. That helped me to get the technique that I use when I play the guitar and solo. When I played this duo concert with Evan, I played a little bit differently than some other guitar players because, in a way, I was playing in unison with him. I was playing a sort of changeable, alternating kind of cycle that was very much like what he was doing. After the concert, an African man walked up to me and he said that he liked my guitar playing and that it reminded him of a kora. And I said, 'That's very interesting,' and then I told him the story of my interest in kora. He said, 'Well, I play kora,' and I asked him his name. He said it was Foday Musa Suso, and I said, 'You're one of the kora players I listen to!' After that, I did a tour with Nate Wooley and Paul Lytton, and I told Paul that story, and Paul said, 'That's interesting because back in the '70s,' which is around the time that I was going through this, he said, 'Evan and I listened to a lot of West African music,' and that he had a whole collection of West African music. [Laughs] So that's an amazing coincidence to me that kind of brings everything close. Without any kind of discussion, I could hear something in Evan Parker's playing that ended up actually being, at least somewhat, inspired by some of the same stuff that I was. I'm still inspired by kora music. Part of the reason I went to listen to West African music was dealing with all those issues of tradition and building of technique, and all that stuff in the '70s, and being an American. I wanted to understand what American guitar playing was, and so, in order to understand that, I had to understand the Blues. I listened to Charley Patton, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Bukka White, and all those guys. And, to go farther back, you end up studying West African music, so I spent a lot of time paying a lot of attention to West African string music. That helped me expand my ability to improvise. There's also the Cecil Taylor aspect of it. How do you get that much density on the guitar if you don't use all your fingers, and if you do, where's it coming from?



**Joe Morris Memories****Taken by Ken Weiss on 2/22/19****Derek Bailey**

I had a wonderful experience one time, going to Derek Bailey's house. I think a lot of people have done this, but everyone of them was unique. Derek Bailey lived in Hackney and came to a gig that I did in London. It was great to see him there and he invited me to his house for lunch. I took the bus out to his house, which was very nice, full of CDs. Karen served me a really great lunch- fish and some nice cake and champagne. We had a wonderful conversation, and it was a really great day. It was very gratifying for me to be invited to his home and be treated so nicely. We ended up playing together. I didn't bring a guitar, so I played his old Epiphone guitar, which was kind of beat-up. He played his [Gibson ES] 175. We went upstairs and played for a few minutes, and it was great, it was very different. It was great to play with somebody like that. It surprised me how intensely he played, even though there was a lot of space in it. I remember being thrilled and thinking, 'Oh, man, I hope we can do a gig someplace!' I was just totally pumped up about the whole thing. And so, when we were done, he stopped and sat there for a second and said, "You know the problem with two guitars is that it just sounds like one big guitar. What's the point?" [Laughs!!] So that was that. We stayed friends but we didn't get to play again.



Joe Morris, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

**HUMANITY AND THE PARADE OF MUSIC  
INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY KEN WEISS**

*Drummer/percussionist Warren Ingle Smith [born May 14, 1934, Chicago, Illinois] isn't a household name but chances are everyone's heard his work by way of Broadway shows [including the original production of "West Side Story"], television programs and commercials, as well as his many years of sideman performances with Rock and Popular artists such as Aretha Franklin, Janis Joplin, Van Morrison and Barbara Streisand, in addition to his extensive work with numerous Jazz artists including Miles Davis, Gil Evans, Nina Simone, Nat King Cole, Sam Rivers, Tony Williams, Max Roach, Nancy Wilson, Quincy Jones, Count Basie, Carmen McRae, Charles Mingus, Joe Zawinul and Anthony Braxton. He also did early work with contemporary Classical composer icons John Cage and Harry Partch. Smith is well schooled on the entire range of percussive instruments, with a special interest in timpani. He's also famous amongst his musician peers for the generosity and compassion that he's displayed throughout his long career. His famous loft space Studio WIS served as a launching pad for many careers and a safe shelter for those in need. It's not possible to spend time with Warren Smith and not want to be a better person. This interview took place on May 28, 2018 at his Harlem apartment at the bottom of Sugar Hill.*

***Cadence: You've built a remarkably varied career, playing in all different Jazz settings, as well as Motown, Soul, Rock, R & B, and with contemporary Classical composers. How did you avoid being typecast and locked into a specific genre?***

Warren Smith: My mindset wouldn't let me do it, and I might add that my parents and all of my uncles and aunts were musicians who played varied music. My mother was in a family piano trio, she played the harp, my aunt played classical piano and my uncle played the violin. When my father, who played saxophone, came along, he took that uncle and his younger brother and trained them to play the saxophone and they became pretty well-known alto saxophone players. I had three aunts who played the organ. All these different musicians were like in a parade coming through my house in my youth. Gene Ammons and Johnny Griffin would come by every week and take a lesson from my father. There was no way for me to [be anything but a musician].

***Cadence: What is your personal connection with percussion?***

Smith: Saxophone was my original attraction since my father played it. He was working in bands constantly. One night my mother took us to pick "Pops" up and we were privileged to go upstairs to the second floor where this nightclub was. We weren't supposed to be there but we went in with my mother, and I looked over in the corner on the bandstand and there's a drum set, but what attracted me was that the bass drum had lights flashing on and off. I ran over to the drum set and I started bugging my father about getting me a set. My

dad dealt with stores buying and selling saxophones, so through his musical connections he was able to get me a drum set, and that stayed with me the rest of my life. From the time that I was six, I wanted to be a professional drummer. I think some of the decision to be a drummer came out of frustration. I was familiar with the piano and I could see what pianists could do. They were using both hands with equal facility, which became an ambition for me, but at the same time I could also employ my feet as a drummer. The piano in general did not interest me because I wanted to use all four appendages at the same time.

***Cadence: In the past you've said that you try to sound like more than one person when you perform. Would you comment on that?***

Smith: I was bent towards drum percussion because I wanted to do more than what I thought were the limitations of the drum set. You can't play melody on the drum set but I found out that I could [Laughs] by using different drums. But the fact that it seemed limited to me at that time, because I hadn't been exposed to musicians doing more on it, everybody was just playing the drum set, and I wanted always to expand it so that I could get some kind of melodic impulses or chordal effects and things like that. That's what got me interested.

***Cadence: You've drawn a lot of inspiration and ideas out of hearing other musicians talk.***

Smith: Yes, all my life, these musicians were collecting in my house, not just the family musicians, but others from outside the house, would come visit, and all these conversations about, for instance, going to Europe, which a lot of African Americans weren't thinking about in those days, but these people, including my father, who had lived in Europe for five years, and other people who had music take them all throughout the world. So this exposure, all these conversations, made an impression on me. It was further verified when I got to college and my original percussion teacher sat us down and told us how important it was to hear the stories of other musicians and their experiences because that's how you really learn what professional life is like.

***Cadence: You're also very connected to nature and your immediate environment as a source for creative inspiration. One example being that you've written and recorded the "Quality of Life Suite" which is based on the homeless you've encountered.***

Smith: When I was growing up, my parents always had a large apartment, such as what I have here. We were coming out of the Depression, I mean I had no idea what all of this was, but what happened was that family and others collected all together in our home. There might be several family members housed in each room, and then we would all collect for meals. That feeling just stuck with me. When my kids starting going to college and then coming home on breaks, they would bring all their classmates that wanted to come to New York and I'd have a whole apartment of people. This human activity was always around me, and seeing homeless people who have no place to stay has always affected me. It always bothers me. All cities

Interview:

Warren Smith



Warren Smith in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

are cold but New York doesn't have the humanity that Chicago has. I never saw a cop, like I did in New York, find a sleeping person and go SLAP him on his feet with his billy club and make him move. If you're a public servant how can you treat people like that? All of these things, the fact that I was around people caring for people and bringing people home. When I had my studio down on 21st Street, I constantly had two or three people sleeping over. I think it's not humanity's way to just ignore other people's hardships.

**Cadence:** *It's not possible to understand how your career unfolded without appreciating your roots and immersion into music as a child.*

Smith: I started taking clarinet lessons from father at age four. Pop had everything from a bass saxophone to a soprano saxophone and all the clarinets. He had accumulated this huge collection of instruments and as soon as I could, I started tooting on them and somehow the saxophone, with all its magnetism, didn't grab me like the first time I saw that drum set which just hypnotized me and drew me to it. I got very serious about music and I could read rhythmic notation for the drum set by the time I was six. I didn't really get facile learning the tonal language of reading music until I got to college but you couldn't trick me with anything rhythmically because I had all that exposure and somehow it all stuck.

**Cadence:** *You had many musicians coming to your childhood home.*

Smith: My father, in addition to being a saxophone teacher, was also a saxophone repairman and he was constantly helping people. Also, in those days, if you had a piano, which was a rarity, your home was a social center and people would gather. Someone would go to the nearby stockyard and get a ten gallon tin of chitterlings, which were cow intestines. They'd bring it home, open it up, and the smell would permeate the house, and my brother and I would go to bed and put our heads under the covers and stay until they finished cooking. It was always a social affair at our home. We had a piano and there was always a plethora of piano players, it could be Art Tatum or anybody who was in Chicago at the time. Since all the musicians were coming through our house to get their horns fixed, other musicians would come by and almost every week there'd be a jam session which might go from Friday night to Saturday morning, and the same the next night. That's how me and my brother grew up and we didn't know that everybody didn't have access to culture like that until we went to college and learned how lucky we were.

**Cadence:** *Would you talk about some of the musicians that came to your house?*

Smith: Gene Ammons, Johnny Griffin and many others came through. Charlie Parker came but we were too young [to realize his importance] although we knew who he was. Bebop was being debated like Free Jazz was/is now. Folks were talking and we had his first records. We memorized them and took turns pantomiming Bird and Diz's solos. Von Freeman was very close with my uncle and he also studied

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Warren Smith



Warren Smith in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

saxophone with my father. There were so many people, there were terrific singers. It was constantly like, alright, who's going to do something now, and there was a line. [Laughs] There were painters, musicians, composers, and we also were discussing things like communism, socialism and the difference between capitalism and dictatorship. I mean all this stuff was going around in our heads as children.

**Cadence:** *Do you have any interesting repair stories from your father?*

Smith: Sonny Stitt came to our house one day and had to have his horn fixed. My dad was a whiz and fixed his horn right up but Sonny didn't have the money to pay for it. Melvin Van Peebles' father had the tailor shop downstairs and Sonny had left his suit at the tailor shop to be pressed to make his gig that night. My dad fixed his horn for free and gave him the money to get his suit out of the cleaners so that he could make his gig. My father would do that at times and I never heard him have a conversation about anybody that owed him anything. We grew up thinking that giving away and sharing your resources was a way of life, which in the Depression, it was because black people wouldn't have survived without that. I was my father's apprentice and I've recently helped musicians with their saxophones. I still have some of his repair tools. If you have a gift and don't give it out I think it just rots in your body.

**Cadence:** *You grew up on the South Side of Chicago at 58th and Calumet in the same building as future saxophonist (Kalaparusha) Maurice McIntyre and future actor/playwright/composer Melvin Van Peebles. That's a lot of talent coming out of one building.*

Smith: We lived in a three story apartment and on the second floor was the Peebles' family and on the third floor there was pharmacist named Moses McIntyre whose son was Maurice who later studied saxophone with my father and went to New York before I got out of college. He later came back and changed his name to Kalaparusha. He was one of my daily playmates. My folks had a terrific record collection and they allowed us access to it. We'd put a record on and listen to the record so many times that we'd pantomime the solos and know the whole record. We studied so hard that all of us had the capabilities of becoming professional musicians later on. In fact, Melvin was the only one that didn't, he became a writer.

**Cadence:** *Architecture was to be your career when you enrolled at the University of Illinois but you promptly switched to music studies. Cecil Taylor remained inspired by architecture throughout his career, has it also informed your work?*

Smith: I didn't realize that Cecil Taylor was also interested in that but that makes sense. I dabbled with the idea of being an architect. I was fascinated by Frank Lloyd Wright and people like that. I'd say that architecture absolutely informed what I do because of structures. I do my improvisations with a structural form in mind. I don't know

what's gonna come out but there's usually a set frame that I've set for myself. When I started composition that came in very handy because I didn't have any trouble organizing stuff. The thing about architecture, they had a lot of, what they called the Bauhaus architects settled in Chicago, and when they started putting in all these tall buildings and glass and steel structures, my father would drive us downtown and show us these buildings and tell us who built it, and that stayed with me to the point where when I went to Europe I'd search out where Le Corbusier and Antonio Gaudi's works were. I had wanted to design buildings when I went into college. I said, 'I can be a musician anytime,' and I don't mean to sound [degrading], but I knew that was there, that was in the bank. So I went into architecture, but because my hand rendering was not up to the standard of most of the students there, I was flunking out of architecture school really quick. Meanwhile all the elective studies I took in music were earning all A's so my parents sat me down after a semester and suggested I major in music. I always was concerned about making a livelihood. I had seen how my family members were all very competent, professional musicians, but many also worked in the post office and I knew that I did not want to combine those two things. I'd rather be in architecture and do my music on the side, but that didn't work out. My brother became an art teacher but he was doing art the whole time that I was doing music.

***Cadence: At the university you studied percussion with noted professor Paul Price who championed the percussive works of the contemporary Classical composers. Would you talk about your time with him?***

Smith: The first thing he taught me, as a percussionist rather than as a drummer, was that every note that you hit has an importance to it. So don't just slam or beat, and of course, I wound up slamming and beating and throwing stuff across the room, [Laughs] but the point was that anything that I could control had to be very well controlled, technically speaking. I studied hard on all the techniques of playing the snare drum, but that wasn't enough, so I got the drum set, but that wasn't enough. Then eventually in college I went into the mallet percussion instruments which gave me piano access. Being exposed to that, just driving a drum set never satisfied me again. So almost anytime I play, I may have some other set of mallet instruments on the side, or other things for effects in addition to enhance the scope of the drum set. I use to bring home scraps of metal and tin that I found on the street when I was taking a walk and configure them into all kinds of non-pitched percussion instruments, and I still do that. Here I am, 84-years-old and I'm still picking up shit on the street!

***Cadence: What does your wife say about that?***

Smith: [Laughs] This is my third wife and they were all the same, you know I was driving them all crazy. "What are you gonna do with all this shit? Get this out of here!" So I have my room and a closet, and I



have a studio full of stuff –timpani, marimba, vibraphone.

**Cadence:** *Through Paul Price you got to meet and work with the contemporary Classical composers.*

Smith: The first one I encountered of that level was John Cage, and I didn't realize it at the time but John Cage and Merce Cunningham, the choreographer, were paired up. They came to the University of Illinois together and Cunningham showed me some nuances about dance that I hadn't observed before that made me an immediate fan of choreography and dance and wanting to collaborate with that. His partner, John Cage, was such an open-minded individual that if he did a composition and people in the audience didn't like it, and they got up and slammed their chairs and walked out and started cussing – he considered that to be part of his composition because he stimulated that in them. The audience reaction was part of his intention. It made me aware, very acutely, as a freshman in college, how important the interaction with the audience is. Later, when I worked with Max Roach he would insist that there be no music stands between his performers and his audience. He insisted that when we worked with him, everything was memorized. We all wrote out scores and parts, but we rehearsed weekly and memorized all our parts. We could interchange parts or instruments in some cases if someone was absent. And what that taught me was that if you establish that, then the music takes another life in of itself because people aren't so wedded to a line of restrictions and they can embellish on what you're doing and give you some ideas to make it sound better.

**Cadence:** *So you actually got to play with John Cage?*

Smith: Oh, I did a lot of his compositions. That first couple of years, he brought the whole University of Illinois Percussion Ensemble to New York to record one of his pieces. We also did a concert at Town Hall with some of his compositions. I think he latched on to Paul Price because Paul was also an open-minded thinker. We were one of the first percussion ensembles on the university level. At the time, everybody was making fun of it because it had too much African influence or too much "Jazz" influence. Paul kept developing and finding these contemporary composers who were writing for ALL percussion music. And it was amazing the amount of material we got to. I have a whole file cabinet full of compositions from other people because every time we did something, the music was lying around, I'd grab it and take it home. I might study it later, and now I share it with my students.

**Cadence:** *What John Cage memory can you share?*

Smith: I remember once he brought these big washtubs into the school and we had to fill them up with water. He had written something for an instrument he called the Water Gong. So what happens is that you take a gong and you hold it up over the water. The gong has this wide sound and after you strike it, you immerse it in the water and the sound of the water makes a sound like, "Wurrlllp," or something

## Interview: Warren Smith

like that. Cage was sitting and watching our performance and when I struck this thing and stuck it in the water, I kept my eyes on him, and he literally had an orgasm when he heard the effect. His whole body shook in spasm. I mean it was like an orgasmic reaction, the thrill of the sound that he had suggested being brought to life just turned him on. I thought, 'Damn, I wonder if something that I write would turn me on like that?' It was a very deep way of understanding his mind's process and how important all these crazy ideas, that none of us could understand, were to him when they actually came out.

**Cadence:** *Would you talk about your work with Harry Partch?*

Smith: That was at the end of my five years at the university. I had spent the previous summer in music camp at Tanglewood studying timpani and when I came back from that experience of Classical music, there was Harry Partch moving in with all his equipment and all this shit that he had made and built since he was fifteen-years-old. He had an instrument which I played that was called the Marimba Eroica. It was bigger than the bass marimba and had only four notes and was made out of wood. The bars were very thick and one bar was as long as this couch. You hit the lowest bar and it had sixteen vibrations per second. You could literally see it shake. You couldn't hear it but you could feel the vibrations in your body, right up from the floor through your body. We never heard that damn instrument but I have a recording of it which Harry Partch gave us copies of. We worked for a whole year with him on these instruments. His instruments were so unusual that each instrument required a different technique from what we were used to. He had a marimba that he called the Diamond Marimba and the bars were shaped in the form of a diamond so that when you played the scale you had to find a different way of movement instead of up and down a chromatic scale. Our octave has twelve tones per octave and it repeats itself, his octave had thirty-three tones. I thought that was very unusual until I went to a museum in France and I found some Indian scales there that the octave has more than a hundred tones compressed into where our twelve tones are. This museum had all these different scales and ours was one of the most simplistic in the whole society of man. I mean there are so many other cultures that have a much more complex scale and that's why when we hear some of these sounds they sound out of pitch because it's not in our pitch. It's not in the tempered twelve-tone scale, but they'll have two, three notes in-between those that enable them to create a music that we can't create and don't understand hearing. It's very interesting.

**Cadence:** *Which of his unusual instruments most fascinated you?*

Smith: The Diamond Marimba because of the vibration from it. I liked the fact that I could feel the vibrations of all the notes through my body, that's what I like about the drums. You hit a drum and it has a sound that goes out but the sound comes back to you. You learn how to use the vibrations esthetically, to a certain extent, to create a mood or

impose a feeling of some emotional content upon an audience. These are all things that I related to. I don't know if I'll ever stop studying this because I'm constantly receiving more enlightenment that helps me understand these things more. There's something about sound and that's why when you walk into a store there's music playing because that music is commanding you to buy something. I did many recordings where we were recording music just for that purpose. There were businesses called SESAC and Muzak that recorded thousands of these songs and then sold them to merchandizers. One day I'm walking in the supermarket and I heard background music that I had recorded! It's just background music but it's really designed to make people loose with their money.

**Cadence:** *So you're to blame for that.*

Smith: Yeah. [Laughs] I heard that and I said, 'That's what they used me for?'

**Cadence:** *You should get residuals for that.*

Smith: Oh, we do, but it's miniscule. For years, including even today, the first of August, BMI will send me a three hundred dollar check for royalties that they haven't paid over the year. Some years my share of the royalties might have been thirteen cents or a dollar and it just accumulated. They actually have agencies that monitor this for the musician's union. That's money that's coming in from all over the place from the accumulation of dates.

**Cadence:** *This Diamond Marimba which you can't hear, how does that translate from a recording to a listener?*

Smith: It transmits a pulse that perpetrates the musicians and the audience. If you listen to it on record you have to have a very powerful bass speaker to hear it but you can hear it there. You can't always hear the tone itself because that's below the capability of the human ear, but you can feel the pulse, the impulse, and the impact of the vibrations.

**Cadence:** *Careers are often made by who you know and good timing, and you certainly caught a break in knowing your university classmate, composer Michael Colgrass. He got you to New York by way of a tympani scholarship and gave you a job opportunity.*

Smith: When I went to the University of Illinois as a freshman, Michael Colgrass was ahead of me as a sophomore. I grew up in a town outside of Chicago called Maywood and he grew up nearby in Brookfield. By the time I got to the school he had already started composing percussion music. His music was based on Jazz techniques which I had been familiar with from birth. He developed far beyond the typical percussion composer and began doing compositions for other instruments outside of percussion, which meant that you had to learn orchestration. I used him as my idol and started doing the same thing. By the time I got to my senior year I was writing compositions mainly for percussion but I also worked with strings and orchestras. In the meantime, Michael Colgrass went to New York City with a

scholarship to Manhattan School of Music, and while he was there he started hanging out with the [original] West Side Story people and got in as the substitute percussionist. By the time I got to New York, he was the percussionist for the play. He invited me down and gave me a copy of West Side Story. I memorized it and went to see the show. When Michael left, going on to become an internationally well-known Classical composer, they made me the percussionist. I had just graduated from Manhattan School of Music with a master's degree in percussion and this was my first Broadway show ever. The play lasted for another six months in New York City before going on the road. They made me the drummer rather than being the percussionist for the road edition but I knew everything the drummer did so it was an easy transference. That got me on the road and took me all around the United States. I left when they started doing one-nighters. I came back to New York and began teaching school.

**Cadence:** *Did you have any idea how historic the music for West Side Story would become at the time you were performing in the original show?*

Smith: I had no idea.

**Cadence:** *Did you have any contact with Leonard Bernstein?*

Smith: Slightly, he came in and conducted the show when I was there and came and saw the show while I was playing it. He was a very interesting composer and he inspired me to broaden myself as well.

**Cadence:** *You went on to play in numerous Broadway pit orchestras. Would you talk about that life and how satisfying it is to perform daily in that setting?*

Smith: The first one was a thrill. They have functionaries called contractors who hire all the musicians for the various Broadway shows and the contractor who had put together the orchestra for the West Side Story hired me for other shows. Some of these shows didn't last long at all, some of them failed in preview and some had a week or two on Broadway. But the contractors picked me up so after one show would end, they'd call up, "Hello Warren, I've got another show for you." I can't even remember all the damn shows I did but it wound up being about forty shows on Broadway and Off-Broadway. Typically for shows, you'd go out for six weeks to different cities and then you'd spend two weeks in New York in previews before the show actually opened. So the preparation for all this, before you even do the show, you have maybe three days of ten to twelve hours of just rehearsing this music, over and over, because when we hit the preview there is no room for mistakes. The band has to be set and they may change the music and this gets very taxing. At the same time you're doing rehearsals and then a preview performance so that first month is miserable. You get paid extra for it but damn, it wears you out and there's nothing in your mind or world but this damn show. I don't want to go through that process anymore. I've been through that over forty shows and I directed shows

when I was teaching where I had to be the musical director, although all this information came in handy.

**Cadence:** *Eventually you gave up Broadway shows but some of the reason was reportedly due to racism. Exactly what happened?*

Smith: There were many, many times where I was the only African American in the pit. Occasionally there might be one black woman in the chorus line. I'll point out an interesting thing from my time on Broadway, Morgan Freeman was a chorus boy on a show that I did for the World's Fair. At times, you'd see someone come through the ranks and rise to a certain ascendency and I just figured that was gonna happen to me and it did, it just didn't happen to me as a Broadway star, but I did as many shows as I wanted to, and made that money. But it's more fun not to be obligated to that same ridged schedule eight times a week. It's a very hard working job. I was in the pit when a guy had a heart attack and I realized the money wasn't worth the anxiety, especially when I was the only black person. I was not into gambling, which most of the musicians were into, or at least the leadership ones. They'd play this poker game between shows and intermissions. I would go into the pit and practice during these times and they would get pissed off at me because my practicing was disturbing their card game. I can understand that because my practicing was disturbing my family all my life. [Laughs] I remember one time in particular, I'm coming down into the pit and the leader stops me and says, "Why aren't you smiling anymore?" It was like I was supposed to come down there with a certain attitude and that really angered me, but I couldn't say anything. I didn't realize the effect this was having on me until I was doing one show that was so unpleasant that I had this involuntary furrow in my brow and one day, as I left the pit and stepped outside into the street, I felt this thing relax. I quit that job and it never came back again. That was a particularly oppressive job because of all the jokes and shit that would come about and I'm the one that everybody's looking at. I would try to get in and out of the pit as quick as possible. One day I put a book that I was reading on a chair and I was changing my pants beside it when a trumpet player came in. He saw the book and dumped it off the chair and sat down. I looked at him and felt this anger come up. He looked at me and said, "What," and I yelled, 'Motherfucker,' in the middle of the dressing room and the whole place froze. They hadn't heard black language or profanity down there and it was so electric. I couldn't get out of there fast enough to laugh that this one word had upset that whole show so much but that's how unfamiliar they were with African American life. I mean this is a word that we bat around. I started refusing Broadway shows after that.

**Cadence:** *You also worked for ABC TV.*

Smith: I got on staff at ABC Channel 7. There was a show that a friend of mine had connections with and I got a job as a staff musician until they killed all the staff orchestras and sent them out to California.

## Interview: Warren Smith

But that gave me another three years of great employment. You had to be competent to cover whatever they asked you to do. You had Jazz luminaries there like Ernie Royal and Joe Wilder, who could read the trumpet part from any symphony. You know, I did all these television shows and then we had an hour after finishing the last taping to get home to see the show, which I almost never made. And, in the meantime, I never once saw the Bill Cosby Show or all the other famous primetime television shows because I was always at the station or coming home from it so I'm completely unfamiliar with all of that popular culture.

**Cadence:** *At this point you were also doing jingles and movie scores. At the height of your career, you made an average of two recordings a day, and up to five per day.*

Smith: It was musically stimulating because I was getting in contact with all kinds of different composers – everything from some meticulous little children's thing to something symphonic like having to play The Rite of Spring. Theatrical people use all kinds of elements. It was great but I'd get home and everybody was in bed. I finally got my first college teaching job which gave me adequate salary where I could stop doing a lot of those other things that I did, although I still did Broadway shows for the first ten to fifteen years that I was teaching. And that was kind of strange because I was getting two waves of pressure. Other musicians that I was working with questioned why I messed around teaching school and wasn't concentrating on being a musician, while at the same time, the people that I was teaching school with worried that I wasn't spending enough time with the kids. But I would take the kids to the gig with me and a lot of them became professionals because of the connections that I would give them. A lot of my teaching cohorts were professionally jealous that I could do things like that. That pressure really wore on me.

**Cadence:** *You worked with many very prominent artists outside of Jazz such as Barbara Streisand and Aretha Franklin. Did you have a relationship with them?*

Smith: Not a personal relationship with them but I was with them on the road. I did a beautiful tour with Barbara Streisand and the only mistake I made was they asked me how much money I wanted and I asked for something like three or four hundred dollars and the guy said, "Are you sure?" I later found out if I had only shut up they would have offered me considerably more than that. But what a great tour. We would drive out to Teterboro Airport, leave our cars, and get on her personal jet, which was like a twelve or fourteen seater with a liquor cabinet. Oh, man, the way those people live, and Barbara herself was just a wonderful, temperamentally stable person. She was married to a guy who was an actor and a bit of an asshole. They split up a little bit after that but he was kind of in the way. He was obviously having the effect of knowing that she was the boss and that he was insignificant within this setting and it troubled him. But Aretha, I did a number

of tours with her. She was completely religious and she surrounded herself with family. She had a brother who was a cutup, he'd be on the bus with us, stirring up a whole bunch of stuff. Her father was a minister and they were all singing in church, but man, when she got on that stage and started taking off, it was unbelievable. I remember one day at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, and I wasn't even on the job, I was with another band, and something had happened to her percussionist and I was asked to fill in with her band, so I did. Aretha was singing and we were all playing behind her and she got excited and jumped up and when she hit the ground her breasts fell out naked in front of all the large crowd of people. We all saw this. And she was so excited that she jumped up again and they went back in and everybody looked at each other and asked, "Did you see that?" But it was amazing. The people in the front row were like, "Ahhh!" But you know, it never fazed her, she never even realized that it happened. Now that was a memory that I will never release- just seeing her animation and that happen. I think part of the applause was from those of us that saw that! [Laughs] It's amazing how music can possess people and she certainly had that.

**Cadence:** *In the late '60s you made your mark on Pop and Rock history. In 1968 you appeared on Van Morrison's influential Astral Weeks recording. Talk about making that album and why he used Jazz artists?*

Smith: He didn't know any of us but some people in England brought him over to New York do this recording. I was one of the first call percussionists and you also had Connie Kay, the drummer, Richard Davis was the bassist, Jay Berliner was the guitarist. All these guys were first call, two or three record dates a day type of people. I was just on the fringe of it. So we came in there and this guy was just so quiet and completely intimidated. And the thing I remember about him, he had this leaf, like lettuce leaf, that could have been easily mistaken for marijuana and he kept rolling these cigarettes. It wasn't marijuana, it didn't have that smell, but it was some kind of vegetable leaf that he smoked. He let us do all of the recording and then he came out and recorded his voice over the tracks. I got the feeling that he was even a little intimidated to try to do it live with us. He was a very quiet, redheaded guy and I didn't hear him sing until I got copies of the record afterwards.

**Cadence:** *You learned under Gil Evans.*

Smith: I was working with Gil Evans' orchestra. Gil was constantly writing but he had two young children and found it difficult to work at night at home because his kids were very active and then his wife needed attention. I had my studio so Gil would come over to my place around ten o'clock at night, about when I was leaving to go back home to Long Island, and stay there all night and write. I would come back the next day and there'd be a blank sheet of paper with some scribbles on it representing a set of chords and a rhythmic movement and then another note with scant notation about bars and half steps. Me and my

friends would get this and we'd write out the scores and give them to Gil. He'd approve them and bring back the scores and we'd write out the parts for him like little elves bringing him this music. So I was helping him with his band. I asked him if I could study composition with him and he said, "Study? Man, I ain't no teacher! Why don't you write something for the band?" So I wrote a piece for his band. Now what better teaching experience could Gil Evans give you than to give you some sketches and have you turn them into a composition for him? I would never have gotten that in any college, colleges don't know that.

***Cadence: In 1969 you served as Janis Joplin's musical director for eighteen months, including her only European tour. Why were you chosen for that job?***

Smith: One day Gil Evans was doing a movie and he called me up at midnight and said, "I need a love's theme for this movie and I don't have time. We have a recording at 8 o'clock this morning." So I stayed up that night and wrote the damn thing, this nice little chart, and handed it to him. We did all the parts and he liked it. He actually recorded it and it got on the record. So I became an arranger. At some point after that, Albert Grossman, who was Janice Joplin's manager, brought her to meet Gil Evans at my studio. Grossman said, "Gil, I want to introduce you to Janice Joplin." I didn't turn around but I heard what was going on. He said, "She needs an arranger. How would you like to arrange some stuff for her?" Gil said, "Man, I ain't interested in that! Why don't you ask this cat," and points at me. [Laughs] And Grossman turned around and asked, "Would you like to do it?" What this meant was he wanted me to go on tour with her. She had a band of Big Brother and the Holding Company's leftovers. Not all of the band was there – two or three horn players and the drummer, who happened to be one of my former students. So he hired me to be her musical director. They flew me out to San Francisco, bought me a tape recorder, and I recorded her with the band. I still have the original reel-to-reel tapes from that performance. I took the tapes back to the hotel room for a week and transcribed all the music and came back with newly arranged charts. When we went to Europe, they got us the Rolling Stones' studio to rehearse. I went in and rehearsed this band, got all the music together, and did this performance with her. We did a whole eight week European tour. By this time, I had been working with her about eighteen months, writing and rehearsing the band, and when we finished that eight week tour, I quit because I was coming back over to the same European cities the next week with a theater group called the Negro Ensemble Company for another eight weeks. I wound up spending most of that year in Europe. After I quit Janice Joplin, all her music came out that had my arrangements. It was just being in the right place at the right time, I guess.

***Cadence: When you got the Janis Joplin gig were you entirely confident in leading her group? What were your feelings?***

Smith: It was like another arranging gig, and that's something I had



experience doing. I had been doing a lot of arranging for Rock groups such as Pearls Before Swine and some other groups through [sound engineer] Richard Alderson who had a recording studio. All this stuff was happening at this old, beat-up place on 66th Street before they had built Lincoln Center. It got torn down eventually but we had some great sessions before that happened.

**Cadence:** *What did her band think of a Jazz guy coming in?*

Smith: The point is that I had a master's degree and had been teaching. They didn't know what else I was doing.

**Cadence:** *How familiar were you with Janis Joplin's music when you got hired?*

Smith: I wasn't. They sent me out to California and I taped, learned and arranged her music. I taped three or four of her concerts, which I still have.

**Cadence:** *Would you share a memory of Janice Joplin?*

Smith: I remember one time she got intimidated because a tall, young singer from Martinique, or somewhere, came on stage before us. [Laughs] Janice was very aware of competition and very insecure about it. And this cat tore it up. He got down on the floor and shook and sang and the audience roared. When he finished, Janice said, "I'm not going on behind that." I said, 'Janice, they came to hear you.' She went into her dressing room and I had to bang on the door, 'Janice, will you get your ass out of there!' She was completely intimidated, man, because of this cat's success, she didn't want to follow that. Of course, when she hit the stage it was a standing ovation before she sang and she recovered. But she had a very fragile psyche. She wasn't a self-confident person at all and there were times when you really had to give her a few pats and hugs to get her on stage.

**Cadence:** *So with Janice Joplin you're right in the center of Rock's drug scene. How did Rock's drug scene compare to that of Jazz's?*

Smith: [Laughs] No difference. I mean you get two or three musicians together and they smoke a little bit, it's not gonna be about what kind of music you're playing. It breaks that down. I think people put up those barriers between Jazz and Rock and Pop and Fusion, but the musicians back in the dressing room, they aren't concerned with that. We admired each other. I know some Funk musicians, like Bernard Purdie, man, I'm scared to death if I have to substitute or play a drum set behind something like that, but they'd be just as scared to have to play a timpani note so it all kind of evens out.

**Cadence:** *Many New York musicians of your generation have colorful stories to relate involving Philly Joe Jones. Do you have one?*

Smith: There were a lot of drummers who had connections with Zildjian that could go to the factory and come back with a whole bunch of cymbals. Philly Joe would go up to Zildjian, he was in dire straits then, and he'd come back with a load of cymbals and sell them for drugs or pawn them, and then all the guys would go into the pawn shop and get all the new cymbals for cheap prices. Here's a funny story.

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One day Max let Philly Joe borrow a set of drums. I can say all this stuff now because everybody's dead and I won't offend anyone. So Philly took Max's drums and pawned them and brought Max back the ticket because he knew that Max would go and redeem the drums. It got to the point where nobody would let Philly Joe near a set of drums. It was sad but humorous at the same time but these are the realities of our life and we still haven't entirely overcome all these things. We still don't know how to deal with drug addiction in a human way.

***Cadence: You founded the Composer's Workshop Ensemble in 1959 which included a diverse collection of musicians including Johnny Coles, Jimmy Owens, Al Gibbons and Julius Watkins. What was your concept for the ensemble?***

Smith: It was more varied compositions than experimental compositions. I had been playing in concert bands and symphony orchestras all through school and college and beyond, and I was listening to all these different composers, and what disturbed me about "Jazz," I don't like that term, was the inflexibility of A-A-B-A or A-A-B, as in the Blues form. And I decided that I wanted to do something where I would extend certain things that I liked. I remember the first time I heard somebody play a 3/4 in Jazz was Max Roach, and right in the middle of it he puts a bar in that's much longer than that and it goes out and then back into the Blues and everybody flipped. That showed me that it doesn't have to be that ridged. Originally I was writing just arrangements of music that I had heard, just copying the arrangements of other well-known musicians, but then I decided that there were things that I wanted to do within those arrangements which would extend them or change the tempo or just break it up some kind of a way to satisfy my own curiosity. And that led me into writing original compositions.

***Cadence: Studio WIS was your performing and recording space which played an important role in New York City's historic loft-Jazz period. How did Studio WIS come about?***

Smith: Because I could not practice at home, especially not a drum set, with young kids at home. I'd be down in my basement at 4 o'clock in the morning sometimes and my wife would come down – "What the fuck! Get out of here!" I realized that I had to do something. I had a violinist friend of mine who had a five-floor walkup apartment on 59th Street and 10th Avenue and she had gotten into a Broadway play and was moving into a nice apartment. So she gave me this apartment, which had a bathtub and a stove, but the bathroom was outside, down the hall, which you had to share. I was there for about five years and then another friend of mine had a place down in Chelsea and he was moving. It was in a five-story brownstone building at 151 West 21st Street that had formerly housed sweatshops making clothes for the garment industry. As the garment industry declined and left the area, many artists moved in and used the floor-through spaces as studios for music, art and theater work spaces. The available space was a

floor-through apartment with an open loft and a bathroom, so I moved in there immediately. That was 1967 and I was there through 1999. I moved my timpani and drum set there, and when Max Roach heard about it, he started rehearsing his band there. In the summer, we'd have the back windows open and people would come over the rooftops and sit on the fire escape listening to the bands rehearse in my studio. All kinds of musicians came through including big bands. Sometimes I wouldn't even be there and stuff would be going on. Lots of people came through including Ray Chew, who would come to my place after school with his buddies to practice, and then one day I look up and he's grown and making a big name for himself as music director for American Idol and Dancing with the Stars.

**Cadence:** *How did you start having performances for a paying audience?*

Smith: I had two partners – Anton Reid, who I still have an association with, and Mike Henderson. I was teaching junior high school in Brooklyn and these guys helped me set up my place, clean it up, and hung out with me. When I got the other place downtown, it just magnified the situation with other people coming in to use the place and others listening. One day Anton said, "Man, why don't we start having some performances here?" So we'd rehearse on Friday afternoons and then invite people to come in and it caught on. John Zorn asked Anton if he could do a performance in my studio. For his performance, he had two guys bring up this big-ass box, the size of a casket, and laid it on my studio floor. The box flipped open and Zorn came out of the box playing his alto and broke everybody up. That was his first performance in New York City, nobody had heard of him then.

**Cadence:** *How did your setup differ from other lofts?*

Smith: I didn't live there, I rarely stayed over, so I could afford to let other people stay overnight and leave their instruments there. So it became a storage space and a stopover for a lot of musicians. It was a perfect setup if you were doing a performance there because you could play, sleep over, and go home the next day. The floor below me was still a sweatshop. There must have been about ten or twelve sewing machines right underneath us as we played our instruments. One day, Ray Chew was there with some ballbuster musicians and they turned up the volume and the ceiling downstairs underneath us gave way. We heard this rumbling and ran down there and the ceiling had been brought down by the vibration, collapsed on these poor women, and they were all just trembling. We helped them clear off stuff and thankfully no one got hurt but that ended the garment industry in that building. Most of the lofts operated on grants and donations and the "door gigs" meant that any admission generated was usually divided among the performers. The lofts offered exposure in the city. Some of us had enough reputation to attract international audiences and tourists

**Cadence:** *Was Studio WIS one of the first Jazz lofts?*

Smith: I think I had one of the first ones that was doing any regular

business. James DuBois had Studio We around the same time. I started Studio WIS before Sam [Rivers] started Studio Rivbea and before Joe Lee Wilson's basement studio down from Sam's called Ladies Fort. These guys were getting into arguments when they would do shows. They'd be angry because Joe Lee would have a headliner that might conflict with what Sam Rivers was presenting at his studio. There wasn't enough audience to go around, it was very rare that the places were actually packed.

**Cadence:** *Did you have the longest running Jazz loft?*

Smith: Damn near close. Before I left in 1999, most of them had closed up. Many had gone out of business long before that because the real estate business got more active and people were taking those loft spaces and converting them into condos and selling them as units. Here we were paying a small amount, my rent never got above \$250 a month for the thirty years I was there!

**Cadence:** *How did you determine who performed?*

Smith: I had friends and partners who would book that for me and it got to the point where people would ask me and I told them to go talk to Anton or Mike. The only stipulation I had was as long as it didn't interfere with my own band's rehearsals and performances, everybody was welcome. They did performances, especially when I wouldn't be around there, particularly when I was teaching school all week.

**Cadence:** *What was admission to get in?*

Smith: I don't think donations were ever higher than six bucks a head to get in and if you didn't have that then come on in anyway. It was really liberal. Donate something. Somebody might drop a twenty dollar bill. I was in a position where I was buying a home in Hempstead, Long Island and I had the studio and my combined rent for the mortgage and the studio was \$500 a month. I could afford it, I was doing Broadway shows at the time.

**Cadence:** *Did you have any police issues?*

Smith: Occasionally. We found that we did have to shut down around eleven o'clock because we had some neighbors who were moving into those new condos and they complained early on but most eventually got adjusted to the music and some joined the audiences instead of complaining.

**Cadence:** *What's your fondest Studio WIS memory?*

Smith: It was just great to be able to write some music, and have other people write some music, and then have a bunch of musicians collect on a regular basis, religiously without funding, unless sometimes I'd have to give somebody carfare, and just do that because we all loved the music. That was the best feeling in the world. And other people bringing their compositions in which opened me up, it made me be more open to other people's influences. The studio drew people like Gil Evans and Charlie Persip. Charlie Persip moved his entire teaching operation to my studio. He was one of my teachers, so that was like me getting a post-graduate experience from him. Before Mel Lewis moved

to New York, Charlie was the first-call drummer on almost all the record dates and I'm sure that got me a whole bunch of recording dates also, just from associations like that.

**Cadence:** *What is your worst memory related to the studio?*

Smith: [Laughs] I remember something that almost became my worst memory. We had a fireplace there and one day it was chilly and I decided to build a fire. It didn't occur to me that the chimney had probably been blocked up for a long time, so I got some paper and wood and started the fire. It was burning well and then I heard something go, "Whrrrrrrrrr." I didn't think anything of it until this brigade of firemen suddenly came up and sprayed the fireplace and said, "Damn it, don't you realize you could burn the whole fucking building down doing that?" The place would have gone up because it was a brownstone front but everything inside was wood. That was the closest to a disaster that we ever had. Most of the memories from there are precious fond memories. There were a couple of instances where I had to actually throw somebody out that was just so disruptive that I couldn't take it, but that was so rare. It was a relief to be able to go there and relax and then go home and enjoy the family.

**Cadence:** *What was your relationship with Max Roach at the time he asked you to be an original member of his M'Boom group in 1970 and how did the band come to be?*

Smith: That studio started it, Max was rehearsing his quartet there. He didn't have to move his drums or cymbals in and out and we had an old beat-up piano. In fact, Max Roach's group was one of the groups that people would come up over the roof and hang out on the fire escape to listen. One day Reggie Workman was hanging out after the quartet had rehearsed and told me that Max wanted to talk with me. I called Max and he had come up with this idea of a percussion ensemble that included Roy Brooks, Omar Clay, Joe Chambers, myself and Freddie Waits. Max knew that I had been involved in some percussion ensembles because he'd seen some of the Classical concerts I had done at Manhattan School of Music, which is where he had also gone before I did. It's interesting to note that everybody in academia was afraid of improvisation then because a lot of Classical musicians wouldn't give improvisation any credit. They felt that those people couldn't read, but, of course, all of them could read, but these [Classical people passing judgement on them] couldn't improvise, that's what it was. At this time, none of us was proficiently playing African drums so Max brought in Richard "Pablo" Landrum, who was a Yoruba priest, but he and Max got into a psychological conflict. He couldn't accept the kind of leadership that Max was offering and Max couldn't accept any diffuse motives, so he fired him and got Ray Mantilla who knew all the stuff that Pablo knew but he was also accomplished in the Jazz tradition. He also added Eli Fountain, who had just come from school and was living at my studio by way of Max since he didn't have a place to stay. So all six of us got together for a year on Thursday afternoons for a percussion

rehearsal.

**Cadence:** *The group rehearsed for a year before performing. Were the members compensated for their time in rehearsals?*

Smith: No, it was a matter of six musicians getting together. We all revered Max, and all of us were dedicated so we set aside a time when most of us didn't have gigs – Thursday afternoons. Freddie Waits was always working on a gig except for then. He was working straight through every day. He worked to his death, he just didn't know how to stop working. So we all set that time aside to rehearse, and when we did start to perform as M'Boom, we set everything else aside and moved with M'Boom.

**Cadence:** *M'Boom's music was a collective effort.*

Smith: We didn't have any music to start with but everybody brought in their own original compositions, including Max. Max was such a profound leader and teacher at that point, because he had gotten his ass kicked by older musicians growing up. He had a profound respect and a very deep feeling of if you did not show adequate respect for his stature, he could go off on you. We started rehearsing every week and he'd push each one of us who brought a composition in. He'd say, "I'm not satisfied with the way you rehearsed that. You could make us do more than that," and he helped make each of us into a more accomplished musical director just by making us be more diligent with our own productions. And after the year, he arranged for us to do a European tour and after that, we were a working group.

**Cadence:** *What was the group's first gig?*

Smith: I actually got the first gig for M'Boom. I was teaching at Adelphi University and I had a class in African American music, and I don't know how I got the nerve to do it, but I got Alice Coltrane to come in with Reggie Workman to do a free class for me. And then I brought M'Boom in for a free performance.

**Cadence:** *Why didn't M'Boom have any work for that first year? Was the concept of an all-percussion group a tough sell at the time?*

Smith: No, it wasn't a hard sell because Max could have sold anything. It was that we weren't ready to perform in public. When we got to that point, Max went out and got some gigs. The only unfortunate thing was that he never was able to get us to Japan because that would have really set us up economically. Japan would have taken us on a nationwide tour and paid a lot of money, and we would have come home with all kinds of devices because that's what people were doing in those days.

**Cadence:** *So what was it like to be right in the middle of M'Boom and play with Max Roach and that diverse grouping of percussionists?*

Smith: It was just like being in an orchestra. I had been exposed to percussion ensembles a long time before that so the feeling wasn't new to me, but what was new was being able to improvise with that fabric of percussion behind you. When you got the chance to take a solo, and you had all that percussion behind you, with five other timekeepers meticulously prodding you on, everybody could play a good solo. I

was one of the few who could play on a xylophone. Joe Chambers is an excellent pianist so he could play vibraphone much better than I could. Everyone had their own strong elements so we divided it up and played to everybody's strengths.

**Cadence:** *Share a memory of Max Roach.*

Smith: Wow. I'll tell you one and this was before I even came to New York. I was in Chicago and one of my old buddies and I went out to see Max's group with Clifford Brown, Richie Powell, George Morrow and Harold Land. They're on stage and Max is playing and we're sitting at the bar right next to the bandstand. My friend turned to me and said, "Damn man, Max is playing so fucking loud I can't hear nothing else." I told him to shut up because I knew Max was sensitive. Well, Clifford was watching the audience like crazy and had read his lips and walked back to Max and said something into his ear and Max softened down and played that way the rest of the night. That showed me two things. It showed me how much respect he had for Clifford and the fact that he was open to variation and change if he was convinced it would help the music. Later on when I played with him, I could criticize Max but there were people who he would not take criticism from.

**Cadence:** *How did Max Roach specifically influence you?*

Smith: I had all of the records he was on. I had all of his solos memorized, although I couldn't play them, and some of them that I still work on. I listened to all the cats. I was privileged because I was a percussionist, so I was on the gigs playing percussion while Charlie Persip and all the other drummers were playing. I watched these guys and I studied their arm motions until I could actually almost replicate the way they were doing it and it helped me learn how to play the drums. I mean I was a professional but I was not a good drummer. It was a matter of learning from 'the guys'.

**Cadence:** *You spent well over twenty years with Sam Rivers.*

Smith: Sam came from Boston and one of the first friends that I met came from Boston also – Jack Jeffers, a bass trombone player as well as an aeronautical engineer and lawyer by training. When Ken McIntyre moved down from Boston, Jack introduced me to him and Ken was looking for someone who could read his music charts and could play. I could read well at the time and I could play drums a little bit so I got into Ken's quartet. Two years after Ken came to New York, Sam Rivers arrived and started rehearsing with a big experimental band. Sam was writing very complicated music and couldn't find a drummer to read his charts. He had all kinds of drummers come in but they just couldn't do it. Ken McIntyre told Sam Rivers about me so I was invited to a rehearsal and immediately I became his drummer. Sam was living at 124th Street in a five floor walkup with his four or five daughters and wife. They had two apartments there because of the big family. Apartments were dirt cheap in those days, probably twenty-five to fifty dollars a month. So we would go up there to this adjacent



apartment and have these big band rehearsals. Eventually, he paired down and decided to do a trio tour with me and tubist Joe Daley and we went all over Europe, and that became a regular thing. Eventually I couldn't make some gigs because I was doing a Broadway show and I got replaced as the drummer in the big band but I was there for over twenty years. I went through a lot of hardships together with Sam. He lost a daughter and all kinds of crazy stuff happened. I lost my first wife. As far as a musician, man, he really opened me up. I never felt that I could play a drum solo and just go ahead and be free until he gave me that space inside of his ensemble. I was pretty constricted but he opened me up, he and McIntyre, they made me take it out and drew me out of that box.

**Cadence:** *Would you share a memory of Sam Rivers?*

Smith: That trio was in Amsterdam for a whole week and Amsterdam was so loose then. We'd go sit down at the bar and some guy would come up and put a pile of marijuana on the bar. Everything was just so simple and easy, I never saw Sam more relaxed than then. He could be a very disciplined, strict bandleader, but being loose, I actually think that when he didn't have all those responsibilities to worry about that he played better. I've never seen anyone like him. Sometimes he'd start out with us not even on the stage. He'd come out and play the hell out of the piano, really Classically oriented arpeggiated, chordal kind of stuff, and then he'd start playing on the flute before he even touched the saxophone, and he'd tear that up, and then when he got to the saxophone... Where did he get that? Sam wasn't a big person. His body was all skin, bone and muscle, but it was like there was a surge of strength beneath that that kept propelling him up further and further. I didn't understand a lot of this, he was older than I was so he knew a lot. He knew how to manipulate an audience, how to get more out of a sideman. It was just very easy to work with him.

**Cadence:** *You were an early member of the Tony Williams Lifetime band. What was your experience playing with him?*

Smith: My first experience came when I was doing a show and I went up to Boston to break the show in. I knew Alan Dawson was playing at a club in Roxbury so I went down there after we had done the show to hang out and hear Alan Dawson. I get in the door and I'm told Alan Dawson wasn't there that day. I said, 'Oh, shit. Well, who's playing?' 'We've got this twelve-year-old kid.' So I said, 'Twelve-year-old? I ain't coming down here to hear no kid! What's his name?' He answered, 'Tony Williams.' So I figured I was there and I sat down. Man, this twelve-year-old kid scared me so bad that I went back home and I practiced diligently for three years before I felt comfortable. That was the first time I heard him. A couple years after that, I'm at my studio one day and Howard Johnson calls me up and says, 'Hey man, Tony Williams wants to talk to you. He's forming a group and he might be interested in using you. So I went down to a rehearsal with Juini Booth, who was just there to listen, Ted Dunbar, me and Tony. We rehearsed

## Interview: Warren Smith

a couple of tunes and then Tony said, "We're gonna record at five." So we did that and it came out pretty good, and then Tony said, "Okay, tomorrow, same time." So we came back, rehearsed, and recorded and that was the whole album [Ego, 1971]. We later went on tour and sitting behind Tony night after night, and seeing him do all this stuff, something said to me, no, that's not humanly possible. He did things he never even thought about but everything was just so technically perfect that I watched what he did and it taught me how to get closer to that. The way he lifted his toes off the ground to play with the weight of his whole feet, they became so flexible because there was no weight on them. His feet were just as fast as his hands. It was amazing.

**Cadence:** *You've been busy making recordings and composing for almost sixty years yet you've released few recordings as a leader. Why is that?*

Smith: I just didn't have time to concentrate on it. I never attracted the attention of any endorseees. I never felt like I ever had to push myself because the phone never stopped ringing, and most of it was not to play drums, most of it was to play percussion. My first release was on Strata East in 1972. I did another on Miff Music Company in 1987. I did 2 LPs for RCA Japan in 1977, 2 cassette tapes on Miff Music Co. in 1988, 4 CDs on various labels in the 80's and 90's, and one DVD on Miff Music in 2007.

**Cadence:** *Your 1998 recording has one of the most memorable titles ever – Cats Are Stealing My \$hit [Mapleshade]. Putting humbleness aside, would you talk about where you've made your mark in the field of percussion? What unique aspects you've brought?*

Smith: If anything, I would say it is related to the timpani. I think that I might have influenced both instrumentalists and composers about the possibilities of that instrument. For the most part, most people who are associated with kettle drums or timpani are fixed into the Classical era of performance, and the most difficult music there was done by people like [Heitor] Villa-Lobos outside of the United States, people that had a more imaginative mindset. I think that I fit in with that, in encouraging other people to do more both compositionally and performance-wise on that instrument. You know, when you have a drum that you can manipulate the pitches like that, why can't you do more? Sitting in a band like M'Boom helped me develop the timpani as a solo instrument. When you have a percussive, rhythmic support underneath you, then it frees you to do something else with the other instruments, so I could concentrate more melodically on the timpani or on manipulating the pedals. It also helped me be more exacting so nothing ever bothered me with symphonic literature in terms of playing the timpani. All the Brahms and Beethoven and stuff, I'm beyond what they were asking people to do then because nobody was thinking of asking anybody to do that on the timpani. I've almost had to develop my own technique. I was willing to break the rules I had learned about playing the timpani in order to play the things I wanted to play. As far as percussion itself

is concerned, my exposure to all these contemporary composers that started writing for percussion - John Cage among the first, opened the door for both more composition and inventive performance.

**Cadence:** *We've touched on part of your remarkable career but arguably your most stunning achievement may be in getting Bernard Stollman [of ESP-DISC] to actually pay you for your recording work. How did you become one of the few to get reasonable money from him?*

Smith: It was really funny. Bernard had an office on Fifth Avenue and, I didn't realize it at the time but his mother was the official presence in that office. Something had happened and he hadn't paid me for a recording so I went to his office and said, 'Madam, he owes me money. I'm going to do a record date this afternoon and when I come back if my money is not here I'm gonna start tearing up this fucking office,' and then I walked out and did the record date. When I came back she said, "Here's your check Mr. Smith." [Laughs] It was his mother. After that, Bernard never messed with me financially because he probably got some retribution from his mother. That's one of the few times I ever threatened to go off on somebody.

**Cadence:** *A sad part of your history came with the loss of your extensive percussion collection due to Hurricane Sandy in 2012.*

Smith: That was not even the first time that had happened. I had moved my stuff way out near a place in Canarsie when some storm came through a few years before Sandy and all my stuff was in the water. So I had to find another place for them. Freddie Waits had a studio in the basement at Westbeth Artists Housing on Bethune Street so he let me move all my stuff there. When I got to the studio as soon as I could after Sandy came through, I found the organ floating upside down, the piano bench was on top of it, they had to punch a hole in the timpani heads to let the water out. Water was even inside the ceiling fixtures. Everything was ruined. So that was two times in the space of four years that I had literally lost all my equipment. Two people have given me a set of kettle drums and I have a new space for my instruments.

**Cadence:** *What are your interests outside of music?*

Smith: Architecture, art, education. I taught and retired after forty years of teaching everything from junior high school to college level courses. I'm still interested in the philosophy of education but I don't want to go back into any institution for any goddam thing anymore. I do remain interested in presenting, especially to young people, a germ of a thought that might help them advance their ideas. I also do a lot of archiving. I have a room in the back which has walls of cassette tapes which I have to transfer to digital, perhaps with the help of an archive institution. They are filled with live performances from Sam Rivers, Gil Evans, M'Boom, all kinds of stuff.

**Cadence:** *I have inside information that you have an extreme fondness for Mercedes Benz diesel cars.*

Smith: I went through that for about twenty years and the only thing that curtailed it was that it was hard for me to find a mechanic close by.

The last one I had lives all the way in the Poconos. I've never been in a more comfortable automobile.

*Cadence: The last questions have been given to me by other musicians to ask you:*

*Steve Swell (trombone) said: "I'm a huge fan of Warren's and also of Nina Simone. I bought a DVD of a concert of hers and as the camera panned from Nina to her band members, it panned to [bassist] Lisle Atkinson and then over to Warren Smith! I was blown away. I told him about it and he knew nothing about the DVD but he found it online and got himself a copy. I would like to hear about you working with her."*

Smith: I was friends with Montego Joe, who I met at the Manhattan School of Music. He became one of Nina's early musical directors and he got me to work with her. She had just bought a home in New Rochelle so we went up there on a weekly basis. I found myself for the first time in my career, arguing with the boss/musical leader over various things, sometimes it was over very petty stuff. But man, she had such a wide range of musicality, everything from Jazz to Classical music. I remember when she got tense, there was a nervous vibrato in her voice and when she was relaxed, she had the silky smooth tone that came out. She was a very contentious person and I got myself drawn into several arguments with her. One day on a plane down to Atlanta I sat with her husband Andy Stroud. During the trip, I asked Andy why sometimes the piano at their home was on the back porch and sometimes it was inside the house. He said, "Man, sometimes she makes me so mad that instead of taking it out physically I just get up and move that fucking piano and then I move it back!" She never made me that mad but I eventually had to just quit, but, man, the music was worth it and she was such a great musician as a singer and with her range on the piano. I really liked the sultry depth of her voice. I was one of her longest lasting drummers.

*Jason Kao Hwang (violin) asked: "What is your conceptual approach to pitched and non-pitched percussion?"*

Smith: That's interesting. I use non-pitched percussion in a relative sense. In other words, from high to low, and the influx of those sounds can be insinuated melodically. They don't have an actual pitch to them. Any kind of a rhythmical impulse that is familiar can be translated into melody by using somebody else's mind. Often when I'm playing in accompaniment and I hear another instrument do something that is strange, I'll find a way on some percussion instrument to refer to it or suggest it because I'm always thinking in counterpoint or accompaniment. I try to anticipate other people's ideas and move along with them as they're happening. That's the only way I can answer Jason. I don't think of them as just drum sounds, I think of all my rhythmic impulses as melodically intended.

*Cadence: What do you do in the instance where you don't like what they're giving you?*

Smith: It's to try to play back a little less or listen carefully to an

there for months until they were able to get their domestic situation straightened out.

**Cadence:** *How many people would stay over at one time?*

Smith: Usually no more than two but there were times if a number of people came to town I could put mats on the floor, and that happened on a fairly frequent basis. The word was – “You’re going to New York?”

**Here’s Warren’s phone number.” [Laughs]**

**Joe Daley also asked:** *“Describe the spiritual experience of waking up in morning to your mother’s harp playing?”*

Smith: Oh, man, are you kidding? It was like, well, I’m awake but I’m in heaven. She played Debussy and all these songs. We wouldn’t get up hurriedly, we’d just lay there and listen to this harp. She would practice every morning. It was a full sized harp and it was my first introduction to chromatic music. It was like being surrounded by a warm emotional blanket. Maybe that’s why I get along with people as much as I do. [Laughs] I don’t get angry at all or disturbed very often, and I think that’s part of it.

**Famoudou Don Moye (percussion) asked:** *“Maestro Smith, as a drummer, percussionist, multi-instrumentalist, composer, teacher, bandleader, first-call sideman, recording artist, etc., you have set a very high standard of professionalism for decades. How many instruments do you play and who are some of your idols and favorite collaborators?”*

Smith: Let’s start with the last one. Favorite collaborator was Max Roach, undoubtedly, Gil Evans, undoubtedly, in the terms of the people who were older than me that I was looking up to. Also Osie Johnson. My first drum teacher was Oliver S. Coleman, who was a drummer like me that played for everybody and everything. He could play mallets, he could play Broadway shows in Chicago. He didn’t feel like he had to come to New York to get over because everything was there. My first and most effective influence was my father because he was surrounded by music and he was open like I was. As far as the number of instruments I play, I couldn’t count them but there must be a hundred instruments that I have experience with. I probably could still play the saxophone and clarinet enough to get through the entire register except for the altissimo register which requires an embouchure. When I was at the University of Illinois I took a music education degree and I had to learn trumpet, violin, cello and other instruments, but I wasn’t comfortable on trombone. That mouthpiece was a little too big for me.

**Cadence:** *Have you created any instruments?*

Smith: Oh yeah, percussion instruments. I’ve created strings of different sounding woods. I’ll create a family of instruments, especially of gongs.

**Cadence:** *Do you have any final comments?*

Smith: Yes. I’m blessed to have the energy that I have and the desire to still want to move at this age. I just hit 84 two weeks ago and I don’t plan to change anything because it’s worked for me this long.

## **Craig Harris Interview     Are They Listening? Interview and photos by Ken Weiss**

*Craig Harris (b. September 10, 1953, Hempstead, New York) takes his role as a creative artist very seriously. He's spent his career working hard to contribute to the tradition and inspire listeners. He remains indebted to the past strong leaders he's worked with, including Sun Ra, Abdullah Ibrahim, Henry Threadgill, Olu Dara, Cecil Taylor, Sam Rivers, Muhal Richard Abrams, David Murray, and especially Makanda Ken McIntyre, who turned Harris' life around as his teacher at SUNY College at Old Westbury. He's one of the most unique trombonists in Jazz and was also one of the first American musicians to tackle didgeridoo. This interview took place on May 24, 2018 at his home in Harlem, close to Marcus Garvey Park.*

***Cadence Magazine: As a trombonist, you've had to answer questions about your instrument throughout your career. Trombone lost favor in the '50s to sax and guitar before making a semi-comeback in the '80s and '90s during the brass renaissance. Are you content with the popularity and the status of the trombone in the music industry?***

Craig Harris: That's a misnomer, trombone has always been prominent if you have a world view on it and don't just think about it in the United States. It's always been prominent, especially in the Caribbean. Duke Ellington used the instrument a lot in large ensembles. There was always jobs for four trombone players with him, but you're right, with the smaller groups, the instrument was pushed out in favor of saxophones and trumpet, but there's always been great players. Some of the greatest musicians have been trombone players. I think it has something to do with where the instrument's sound lies. It's in the midrange, it's not the low bottom or the upper top. I don't think we hear that well there [in the midrange]. It's not the instrument, it's the ears. People just haven't been brought up to it. Art Blakey used trombone, and the one who really drew me to the use of the trombone was Charles Mingus, who used it a lot in his smaller ensembles and made me feel okay that there was [a spot for trombone]. It's an instrument like all the others. You've got to spend the time and do a lot of hard work with it. While we're talking about the trombone's popularity I would like to correct something that came out in Amiri Baraka's liner notes to my first recording *Aboriginal Affairs* (India Navigation, 1983). He asked me a question about trombonists and it got twisted around. I said, "Well, the only trombonists around were Roswell Rudd and Grachan Moncur III," but when I answered that question I was saying they were the only ones of prominence. They were the ones you saw on the recordings. There's always been a lot of great trombone players around but the industry does not record them as leaders. So that was taken the wrong way because it left out people like Julian Priester, Billy Howell, [Tom] McIntosh and Jimmy Cleveland, all these great trombone players

have always been going on so I want to rectify that in this interview. In my period, people like Carla Bley, Anthony Braxton, David Murray, Henry Threadgill and Muhal Richard Abrams have started using a lot of trombone.

**Cadence: Do you care to address the perceived technical limitations of the trombone?**

Harris: There are no limitations on the instrument, you have to put the work in. And there are some things that no other instrument can do except the trombone. Once again, we have to look at it from a broader spectrum. If you're just talking about a certain system... For example, if you were to go from low B-flat to low B, you have to move about two feet, where on other instruments it's just a quarter of an inch. So you have to know about the instrument in order to write for it. You're not gonna write a low B-flat to a low B and expect it to be played at a very fast tempo unless now they have the triggers on the trombone where you can play it like that. If you know how to write for the instrument then there are no limitations. J.J. Johnson, Slide Hampton, Carl Fontana had no limitations.

**Cadence: A couple of the limitations that people talk about is the extremely physical nature of playing trombone and also the difficulty in maintaining accurate intonation.**

Harris: I'm not being difficult about this but there are things on every instrument that are physically difficult to play or to continue to play. It's fatiguing. You really have to know the instrument, and on trombone, there's certain things about the positions. You have to work with alternate positions to make things happen. It's work but it can be done. That's an antiquated question because I'm hearing trombone players now that are just ridiculous with what they're doing. There's no limitation on the instrument, just the human being. The other instruments have to catch up to the trombone. Trombone players are some of the best musicians and a lot of them are great writers.

**Cadence: Are you satisfied with the evolution of trombonists?**

Harris: People have been playing this instrument for a very long time. People just don't hear it enough because of that archaic thinking that it's only used for certain things. For a long time we've been oriented that this instrument is supposed to sound like this and that we're supposed to have a tenor and an alto saxophone and a trumpet [in a band]. There have been great players like Jimmy Knepper, David Baker and Phil Wilson. We just don't see the instrument enough in our culture but if you go to other cultures like in Brazil or Cuba, come on. I think we have to open up to a world view with the instrument. Listen to the sound of the instrument, it's the sound. Trumpet don't sound like this.

**Cadence: Regarding the sound, it's been said that the trombone is the "voice of God." The late Roswell Rudd once said of the instrument – "You blow in this one end and a sound comes out the other end that disrupts the universe." Would you address the instrument as a vessel for the creator?**

Interview:

Craig Harris



Craig Harris in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss



## Interview: Craig Harris

Harris: That depends on the person, you go to the instrument and you create beautiful things. It has a beautiful midrange voice, it's up to you. I think it's an excellent vessel for me to express myself and all my musicality. It's funny, and I don't think I've ever said this in print, but I started on trombone in sixth grade in that famous tradition when public schools had music programs and you went into a room and they asked you what instrument you wanted to play. I picked trumpet my first day but the director had lost all his trombone players to graduation and he needed a trombone player. He kind of tricked me by saying, "You know your arms are nice and long and all the other kids can't reach out in seventh position." Also, it was big and shiny, and I liked that, so I took it.

**Cadence:** *In a 1983 New York Times article you commented, "I'm not saying that I'm doing anything different – it's part of everything that went before." Has that changed now that it's thirty-five-years later? Have you added to the legacy of the trombone?*

Harris: Whew, that's not for me to determine but I've been pushing and really making my statement.

**Cadence:** *You also noted in the New York Times piece that no trombone player had ever been a major influence for you, it was composers such as Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Mingus and Ornette that guided you. Would you explain that?*

Harris: I've always been a musician and a player, and trombone happens to be my vehicle. The biggest influence on me was probably Miles Davis. I played in a lot of Rhythm and Blues bands when I was younger and then I heard Bitches Brew which I could relate to. Then through Miles Davis, I got to Charlie Parker because I did my history and saw that he played with Parker. I listened to Charlie Parker and I said, "Where's the trombone at?" And that's how I got to J.J. Johnson. After J.J., I listened to Curtis Fuller and Slide Hampton and Tyree Glenn. That was my road into it and my mother had some of these records too in the '60s. I listened to Archie Shepp, Albert Ayler, Eric Dolphy and John Coltrane. I came into the music like that, and from that, I went backwards and studied where they came from. There weren't a lot of trombone players from those early influences except Roswell and Grachan.

**Cadence:** *So you listened to these artists that didn't utilize trombone in their work. Did you ever wonder if you could fit into that scene and play that music?*

Harris: I was influence a lot by the music from 1959 on and Archie Shepp did use a lot of trombone so I could imagine myself in that music too. That's the direction that I was hearing, that's the music that touched me so much.

**Cadence:** *Let's touch on your earliest days. Would you talk about the day-to-day struggles of growing up in the project houses in Hempstead, Long Island?*

Harris: Ooh, I come from a single parent household. My mother raised

Interview:

Craig Harris



Craig Harris in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

five kids, but it was a strong family with grandparents and a lot of cousins and uncles, so a big support system. In the 1930's my family moved up from South Carolina and they were domestic workers and stewards and worked their way up. Living in Hempstead, we were right next to Garden City which is one of the most affluent towns in the country. This is where the domestics lived, the next town over. It was a culturally rich neighborhood. I lived on a notoriously bad street – Wilklow – it's now called Martin Luther King Drive. It was a real community although it was the projects. If I did something down the other end of the street, by time I got home, my mother already heard about it. That's how it worked, and if an older person told you something, you listened to them. There wasn't a lot of money there but there was a lot of community there, which is lacking now in our communities. It wasn't all innocent but it was a safe time, people were watching out for you.

**Cadence:** *Would you share a vivid memory from your childhood?*

Harris: I actually met Martin Luther King, he came to our neighborhood around 1963. He came to give the commencement speech for Hofstra University and, of course, if you're gonna go to Hofstra University, you cannot go there and not go into the African American community, so he came and spoke to us. I was only nine-years-old at the time. After he finished, he got into his limousine, and as kids, we chased him in his car. I was running fast and I stuck my hand in his car, I wanted to shake his hand, but at the same time, the driver had put the power window up and my hand got caught. So I'm shaking his hand but then I can't pull my hand away and the car is dragging me. He didn't know it because I was still running but once he saw it, he had the driver slow down and lower the window. So I was this close to Martin Luther King and that still sticks with me today. After that visit, they renamed the street after him.

**Cadence:** *What was your mother's reaction when you came home with the trombone?*

Harris: This is a funny thing. I came home with the trumpet for a day or two and then the trombone, and I was in a band within a week. [Laughs] We had all gotten our instruments and we couldn't play one note from another, but right away we formed a band. We'd get in a room and just go for it. The idea was that you had an instrument so you had something to do now. It was a rite of passage in public schools at the time, everybody had an instrument and a box to walk it around in. My mother was okay with it and I was really a very good student from sixth grade to ninth grade and then I rebelled. Remember the Human Rights and Civil Rights thing was going on at that time, so I didn't want to learn, I didn't want to be in the band. I didn't want to do anything that was traditional. I wanted to be protesting everything. From ninth grade to twelfth grade, I was not in the band in school. I joined a friend's band when I was a freshman in high school and we played James Brown covers. That was my first time doing transcription

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Craig Harris



Craig Harris in 2018, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

and trying to play like on the record. We worked a lot of weddings and dances.

**Cadence:** *One of your early gigs was in a topless shake bar that closed at four AM. How did you swing that with your mom and what did you make of the situation?*

Harris: That was one of my first concerts. I was in ninth grade and we worked at this topless place called Showplace in Roosevelt, New York. They had topless waitresses that wore little tassels. It was funny because we'd go to school and people would ask, "So what did you do last night?" We had some parents as chaperones so my mother never had to worry about me. Eventually, the school formed a Jazz band and the director went around to a couple of the clubs and asked us to get back into the school band. He wrote out the theme from the movie Shaft and other current music for us to play and I got back in the band at the end of my senior year. And by the way, that was another [trombone] connection for me because J.J. Johnson scored Shaft.

**Cadence:** *You attended the music program at SUNY College at Old Westbury where you became very influenced by its founder/director Makanda Ken McIntyre. What did you learn from him and why was there such a strong connection?*

Harris: Man, that was life changing. My friend, bassist Alonzo Gardner, went to Westbury a year before I did and he told me there was something else going on there and that I needed to come so I did. I was doing lacrosse and other athletics at the time but I got back into music. Makanda actually came to Hempstead and heard me play with Alonzo and said, "You've got a lot of work to do," and I said, "Okay." The kinship was mentor but more like brother or big uncle or father figure. We're both Virgos, both raised by single mothers, and a lot of the same kind of thing. I trusted him and he had an interest in me to be better, which I perceived right away, so I gave him my all. There's no me without him. That was the changing of my life, the changing point. Physically we resemble each other very much. We're connected in many different ways. I remember one time Sunny Murray saw me walking down the street and he kept calling me McIntyre. He thought I was him because he saw me with a horn case. Makanda and his first wife Charshee kind of took me in. The College at Old Westbury was unique at that time, the school was for traditionally bypassed people. The United States government from the pressure of the Civil Rights movement was starting to invest money in places that they had never invested money in before. So they started this university there with veterans, older people who had had other jobs in life, and people who had had issues with the law and had come back and wanted to continue their education. The average age on campus was 24-25 and I was 18. When you went to Westbury, it wasn't about pledging or the freshman hierarchy, you went there to go to school. There were no entrance exams. It was set up to give African Americans a place to study and it had an incredible faculty, not just the music faculty, which included

Warren Smith, Richie Harper and Makanda. It was an incredible place to go to school. It was an incubator for advanced thought and I really accelerated my reading and understanding of philosophy. I was a poor student until Westbury, not because of ability but no work ethic, and that was Makanda's greatest gift to me. He taught me about a work ethic and about putting the time in. Through the McIntyres and Westbury, I've been able to see the world and grow.

**Cadence:** *What other future prominent artists went to school with you?*

Harris: Knoel Scott came out of the program. That's how I got out of the Sun Ra band. I was ready to leave the band and I told Sun Ra, "I have two for you so I can leave and you won't put no curse on me." [Laughs] That's just a joke. I was leaving the band and I told Sun Ra about Knoel and Kenny Williams. Some of the others from Westbury were drummer Andrei Strobert, Alonzo Gardner, who played bass for Olu Dara, saxophonist Andrew Lamb, Kenyatta Abdur-Rahman, who played with M'Boom, and Mala Waldron.

**Cadence:** *How did your connection with Sun Ra transpire?*

Harris: I had seen the Arkestra play a number of times because I had been coming into the city a lot with Warren Smith, who was working with Sam Rivers. I'd drive in with Warren and then sleep in his car while he finished his gig, and get the ride back to Long Island. I wasn't playing in the city, because I was in school, but I was seeing everyone who was playing there. I met Pat Patrick [baritone saxophonist for Sun Ra Arkestra] when he came to Westbury to teach but I was a senior then and he was only teaching an elementary course for the undergrads, but we always talked. On the day I graduated in June of 1976, I was sitting outside the student union and he came by and asked what I was doing and suggested I come by next week to the Bottom Line and sit in with the Arkestra. So I did and they gave me an outfit out of the trunk and I got on the stage next to Vincent Chancey. We played and then Sun Ra told me to get a passport because the band was going to Paris next week. They were supposed to go there for a couple weeks but we stayed for four months. This was my entree into the world of Sun Ra and it was a beautiful time. We were on the road with a band of about twenty people, and when we weren't playing, we were rehearsing during the daytime in the hotels. I learned that music over a compacted four months. I stayed in the band for three years after that but I was immersed with Sun Ra every day with that tour. It was another level, you were in it at its highest level.

**Cadence:** *How did that first night with the Arkestra go? How was it to sit in cold?*

Harris: It was very interesting because I had seen the band perform so I kind of knew their routine but it was different sitting up there. When Sun Ra pointed to me, I just played. I went for it like everybody else did. I took the train back to Long Island and Sun Ra called me the next morning very early. I had been out of my family home for four years but by then I had moved back into the apartment with my mother and

four other siblings. So my mother got the phone and said, "Some man named Sun Ra is on the phone." He said I had to come down to Philly to rehearse. I would go to the Port Authority with the mushroom clouds inside of it from everyone smoking in there. I wasn't interested in living in the Sun Ra house. Pat Patrick taught me how to navigate the band, how to be in the band but still kind of keep your independence. He was one of the few people that Sun Ra allowed to do that. He went in and out of the band and did other gigs. Charles Davis and Pat were the early members so they could do that.

**Cadence:** *How did Sun Ra stretch the European trip from a planned few weeks to four months?*

Harris: Businesswise, he was ingenious and he had baritone saxophonist Danny Thompson and manager Richard Wilkinson handling the business. Sun Ra was something else. He had twenty musicians in Europe and two or three big gigs set up, and while we were over there, he would barnstorm and call people and say, "We've got nothing to do this week what do you have for us?" That helped my business acumen later on. Also, he used to bring his product. He had all these records, boxes and boxes of records, and everybody would have about thirty records they would carry when we'd go through Customs and he'd sell the records after performances and then he'd just press some more as need be. The record covers were blank white so he'd draw something on them and now if you go on the Internet, those are some of the most pricey items for record collectors. People ask me if I have any of those all the time, which I wish I did.

**Cadence:** *What did Sun Ra talk to you about?*

Harris: What didn't he talk about? [Laughs] Sun Ra liked to talk and walk. He liked to go for long walks. He talked about music, composition, orchestration. Of course, he was always talking about the Kemet. He talked about Sekhmet and Osiris, we talked about the alternate reality, the Rosicrucian, the Kybalion books, a lot of metaphysical books he would recommend that you needed to read. We were based in a Paris hotel, the five brass section members all stayed in a big loft room on the top. Every day I would walk with Sun Ra just talking. We used to go to the Louvre, we'd walk along the Seine, along the Champs Elysees, every day just talking. We'd visit the museums and go to the African community. He was always doing something. He'd talk until he'd fall asleep on his bed. He'd be out and then you'd just leave. Everyone knew that Sun Ra was at the hotel so people would come and he would hold court every day. I met Ted Jones, Amiri [Baraka], Sam Rivers, Cecil Taylor that way. That was an impactful 1976 for me.

**Cadence:** *You earlier said you worked with the Sun Ra Arkestra for four years but it was actually more than that off and on.*

Harris: More off than on from June, 1976 to November, 1999. I worked as a regular member of the band from June, 1976 until November, 1979. After that, I recorded Strange Celestial Road in the studio in 1979, sat in with the band at the Beacon Theatre in the early '90s, before his death,

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and performed with them for his centennial in Switzerland and at Lincoln Center.

**Cadence:** *How did you come to live at Warren Smith's loft space, Studio WIS, after relocating to New York City in 1976?*

Harris: Warren's known me since I was about seventeen-years-old. He lived around the corner from me in Hempstead and I'd go over there, and then he was there at Westbury. Warren was at the school but he was gone a lot because he was a musician who worked all the time. When Warren wasn't at the school, he'd send in Joe Chambers, Freddie Waits or Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson to teach. I used to ride in Warren's Mercedes into the city. I was at Studio WIS all the time, helping him with his drums up the stairs, and I might stay there for a night. So when I graduated and started hanging around Studio WIS. Warren's one of those gracious people, he gave me a key and said, "You can stay here, just don't mess up." It wasn't just me, he did it for a lot of people including Howard Johnson and Eli Fontaine. I'd come in some nights and there'd be six guys sleeping. It was a place for me to network. People knew there was a trombone player at Studio WIS, and that was a time when people would call you to come right over to cover a session. It was also a rehearsal studio and Max Roach would come through with M'Boom. I used to pool my money together with other people and go down to the Chinese restaurant and get a meal for two and three of us would eat.

**Cadence:** *What was your loft Jazz scene experience and what was life like in the city at that time?*

Harris: Every night I'd go straight down Seventh Avenue and make a left on Eight Street and walk to the East Village lofts. The people that weren't getting hired at the clubs were playing in the lofts. I spent most of my time at Sam Rivers' loft -Studio Rivbea - and sat in the trombone chair of his big band. People started knowing you and you'd get calls. The phone at Studio WIS had a big clipboard that people could leave messages on. There'd be a message that David Murray was looking for me. One day, Clifford Adams left me a message that he had to go on tour with Mel Lewis and Thad Jones and that this guy Dollar Brand needed a trombone player. I took the job and I ended up working with him for two years. It was a musician's exchange. The other loft I spent a lot of time at was Rashied Ali's Ali's Alley where I played with Jaki Byard's big band every Monday night. Relationships were created and it was a very beautiful time for independence, creativity and comradery. It was a real community - something that's lacking now. There was affordable housing there at the time. My first apartment I paid sixty-five dollars a month for two bedrooms in Harlem. So people lived in the area and you'd see them at breakfast and on the streets, but now most people live outside the city due to cost. There was a real buzz back then and every day there was something to do and somebody was playing somewhere. People were out more and you'd pick up work by running into them.

**Cadence:** *What was the status of real paying jobs for trombonists in*



***New York City when you arrived?***

Harris: It was very little for everybody. People were making like twenty or twenty-five dollars, and at times, two dollars. If you weren't working in the clubs, you'd work the lofts. You had to do your own publicity, mimeograph your own flyers and put them up to get people to come and then all the money would go to the musicians. So after those lofts started getting packed, people were making a little bit of money. You could make fifty dollars some nights, which was good money, but you might make one dollar if nobody came. It wasn't about money then, believe me. The longer I stayed in Sun Ra's band, the less money I made because that meant that you had bought into it. He had two pay scales - one for the mercenaries, the people who'd just come in, play their parts and leave, and then he had the believers, the people who were in the band for do-or-die. They got paid less.

***Cadence: Is the scene better today as far as gigs and finances?***

Harris: You know what's so sad? There's people out there chasing that same fifty dollars, and that's the truth. I've played for five thousand dollars and I've played for five dollars in one night. The scale of this thing has not gotten better, it's worse now. Most of my colleagues teach at universities and don't play fulltime because of that. Ornette Coleman got me to understand really early that music business is two separate words. There's music and there's business, and the business is still very poor. There's a few people that make some money, but for every one of them, there's about a thousand that are not making a dime. So it's still a labor of love.

***Cadence: Your first extensive tour in a small group setting came with Abdullah Ibrahim in 1979. How did that experience develop you?***

Harris: Right, that was my first time in a small group being featured every night, having to be up to a certain level every night. I was in the forefront of people with that band and a lot of other musicians got to see me play. In Sun Ra's band, you've got so many people around you that they're not dependent on you every night. Abdullah is a very different bandleader than everyone else. He has his own track. He sounds different and he plays in different places and had contacts with all the expatriated South Africans that had left due to the Apartheid still going on then. I learned how to really navigate Europe from him, how to work the trains. With Sun Ra, we were in the bus all the time and did not deal with the trains.

***Cadence: How did you come to encounter the didgeridoo in Australia during that first Abdullah Ibrahim tour?***

Harris: People told me about the didgeridoo and that I might hear it on the tour, but I wasn't paying it no mind because I had never heard it before. While I was there, Bobbi Sykes, the poet who was sort of the Angela Davis of Australia, and was active in the Land Rights issue at the time, told me about the didgeridoo and that women weren't supposed to play it, but she showed me how to play it. I later met an aboriginal man who got me one and it's been part of my arsenal ever since.

**Cadence:** *Were there many other American musicians using the instrument at the time you started on it?*

Harris: No.

**Cadence:** *Were you the first American to feature didgeridoo?*

Harris: Rahsaan Roland Kirk had played it. There was also another musician named Stuart Dempster, if you get into contemporary music.

**Cadence:** *What does the didgeridoo add to your work that trombone doesn't?*

Harris: Man, it's very interesting, the didgeridoo is so basic. You know it's just a piece of wood. It's a regular wood column, three to ten feet, that you blow through and circular breathe. I couldn't circular breathe until I worked with Abdullah Ibrahim. I had been trying for years but Carlos Ward, the great alto saxophone player, he could circular breathe, and I would watch him close-up every night. I practiced it and finally got it together and applied it to the didg. The overtones and the density of the sound is amazing. It gives me another color in the band. I don't play traditional didgeridoo, it's more of a continuum of the trombone for me. I use it as a sound color. I play for kids in schools and as soon as I play the didgeridoo, you can hear a pin drop in the room. It has metaphysical healing properties, it's a powerful sound. People think it's a gimmick, no, it is the essential sound, the primal sound. It's the ocean, it's not a gimmick with me.

**Cadence:** *Can you travel with a didgeridoo?*

Harris: Whew, now come on, we post-9/11 now. After 9/11, I got tired of traveling with it so I checked out Stuart Dempster and he makes his own out of PVC pipe. I have a case made for my didge so if the concert's right, and we have the budget for it, I can carry it, but typically it's a problem. So usually, when I get to a place I'll tell them that I need four-feet of 1.5 inch PVC pipe, sandpaper, and duct tape that has designs on it. Then I sand it down, pimp it out, and play it, and I get nice sound out of it. After I finish, I sign it and give it to somebody, rather than carry it around. There's didges all over the world that I've made. It's just ridiculous what musicians go through with our instruments in airports. It's an ongoing battle.

**Cadence:** *The PVC pipe sounds effective but there's something so spiritual about playing a real wood didgeridoo that's been hollowed out by termites in the forest.*

Harris: I can say that my first two didges were eaten out by termites in Australia but now they just drill a hole through them and paint them. There is something to what you're saying but for practicality...

**Cadence:** *You've made it a point throughout your career to learn different forms of music from all over the world. How do you find new musical forms?*

Harris: They're there and I just open myself up to them. A great influence on me was Don Cherry, who I think was the original renaissance, multi-culti person. I use to watch and study him as a human being and how he traveled. He used to have a small little bag with a

pocket trumpet and some essentials. He didn't have any luggage, he would just go around without it. He told me he had been doing that for years. He had safe houses throughout the world where he had clothing and instruments. What I learned from him was to embrace other cultures, other sounds. I'm not an expert in Indian or African music, but I am open to all these things, and I will spend time listening to them and incorporate what I can into my sound. And I strongly believe that African Americans have to have a relationship with Africa.

***Cadence: You recently came back from Senegal. What work are you doing there?***

Harris: The first time I went to Africa was with Sun Ra in 1977. We went to the 2nd annual World Black Festival and I felt an affinity there. I saw Fela and met a lot of musicians with whom I've stayed in contact with. The next time was 1980 with Abdullah Ibrahim, we went to Senegal, and ever since I've been going back and forth to Senegal because I have a very good friend there. I go to research and see how people think there. I'm not an anthropologist, I'm just a musician who wants to trade information. My ancestors come from there so I want to complete this relationship.

***Cadence: Going to Cuba in 2001 with David Murray and a thirty-piece orchestra had to be a rich event for you. What most surprised you in Cuba?***

Harris: I was prepared because traveling Europe all those years, we meet musicians from all over the world. When I travel to a place, I don't just stay in the hotel, I really integrate myself into the people. I'm always looking for the hood to see where the poor and working class people live, the everyday, salt of the earth people. I want to learn culturally what's going on, what they're eating today, what they're dancing today. David wrote some beautiful music and he had phenomenal musicians and we did an album there. I'd been to Cuba a number of times so I wasn't surprised by anything. They have some serious poverty there but they still have a sense of community and maintain a high integrity.

***Cadence: You've worked with many great leaders. What was your experience with Cecil Taylor?***

Harris: Yeah, we just lost him. I went to his house with David Murray and Denardo [Coleman] two days before he passed. I met him in Arles, at a festival in the south of France. The festival's bill was Sam Rivers, Cecil Taylor, Sun Ra and the Art Ensemble, and somehow the promoter had run away with the money. My relationship with Cecil Taylor starts with Ken McIntyre, who was on Unit Structures. That album was one of the first pieces of music that was bending my mind before I understood it. One of the most encouraging people during my whole career has been Cecil Taylor because he heard me play and said I was doing good things and should keep at it. Like I said earlier, people would be out in the [New York] clubs all the time and I would see Cecil almost every night. I would talk to him and he would always call me Mr. Harris. He'd say, "Mr. Harris, how are you doing? Keep it going, keep it going," and

he really helped me. He said, "You know you have to draw the lines. If you're gonna do this, you have to do it. You're doing something, stay on it. Really do it." I got a call from him that he was doing a piece for a dance company. It was Glenn Spearman, Jimmy Lyons, Raphe Malik, myself, William Parker and Rashid Bakr. I went to the rehearsal and we sat around and Cecil wrote on notebook paper, it wasn't on staff lines, it was very different. . . . He'd write the notes ascending and descending but you had to write down your part. I sat as close as I could to Jimmy Lyons and just watched what he did, I went right to the source. He had long rehearsals, just like Sun Ra did. We'd play the music and come back the next day and play it differently. I learned commitment from Cecil – if you're gonna do this, you have to do this. Commitment and work ethic, to be knowledgeable about our past and our present, but to also push it on and make some kind of contribution. It takes a lot of hard work to make that kind of contribution. People may think his music is just random but there's nothing random about what he does. Every unexpected moment is expected. Unexpected to be expected to be unexpected, and then you're supposed to take it and move with it. I also got to work in Cecil's big band.

**Cadence:** *You've recorded with a variety of leaders, including The Roots, but one recording in your discography sticks out. How did you come to work with Lena Horne on her Grammy Award winning *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music* [1981, Qwest]?*

Harris: Sitting in Studio WIS one night, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, who was one of the great composers of our time, called me and told me he was arranging, writing and staging Lena Horne's one-woman show and he needed a trombone player. I had no Broadway experience but Perk called me and said, "Come on."

**Cadence:** *Garry Giddins wrote *Weather Bird: Jazz at the Dawn of its Second Century* [2004, Oxford University Press]. He includes a chapter where he picks a single recorded track to represent each year from 1945 – 2001. The 1983 track he chose was "Blackwell" from your *Black Bone* [Soul Note] recording. He noted that you could, "conjure up striking, insightful themes in a neoclassical mode." It's impressive that he felt your work set the tone for the year.*

Harris: This is the first time I'm hearing this, I'll have to get that book. I think what Garry's saying is what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to be inside the history and the forms of the prior period but to push at the same time into something else. I'm trying to use all of the past but yet it has all of the future within it. And the composition "Blackwell" is like that. It's dedicated to drummer Edward Blackwell, who impressed me with his rhythmic independence, so I wrote this tune based on a rhythm that Blackwell didn't play but it was something that he would do. In fact, Woody Shaw talked to me about "Blackwell" one time. He asked, "How did you think about that?" And I was humbled because I listened to people like Woody Shaw.

**Cadence:** *Listening to "Blackwell", as well as your total body of*

*compositional work, it's evident that your compositions are intricate pieces that are multilayered and highly organized, yet still retain a raw edge. There's always a lot of things going on with your work.*

Harris: McIntyre, Sun Ra, Muhal, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson.

Composition is another very serious craft, it's a continuum from the trombone. How can you take four people and make them sound like eight people? Because of my training and my exploratory nature, I can get a sound out of a group of people. Also being around people like Muhal, Threadgill, George Lewis, James Newton, Anthony Davis, David Murray, Cecil Bridgewater and Gil Evans. Composition allows you to be in many different places and be unique, it's really dear to me. I spend a lot of time on it and it can get you into working with dancers and film people.

*Cadence: Another constant throughout your career has been choosing to work with a social consciousness and to have a voice.*

Harris: [Laughs] Oh, and I'm just starting. It's because it's right, and it goes back to that day I met Martin Luther King. When I got that close to that man and touched his hand and looked into his eyes, when I look at my mother's eyes, when I see injustice. No, we have to stand up for what's right. You have to remember that I was born in 1953 so I'm probably the last generation before America became so-called integrated. I understand what a segregated America is like, as opposed to a lot of people now. And I know how far we've come and how far we need to go. We can't let people pull things back. Plus we've got to take care of this planet. This is not a fad for me, I will always speak up. You see what's going on today.

*Cadence: Do you feel that speaking up has hindered your career?*

Harris: No, because I'm not interested in that. I come from a strong stock of people and our saying is – if they don't let you through the door, go through the window. If they don't invite you to their party, go make your own party. You have to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and be satisfied with yourself.

*Cadence: In the late '80s, you changed your career's direction from performing/touring to primarily focusing on developing large-scale multimedia collaborative works.*

Harris: That comes from seeing Sun Ra. He had a twenty-piece band, a screen behind him [with visuals] playing, and the go-go [dancers] going on. This was full grand stage. From '76 to '88 I was on the road a lot in Europe and I saw that things were changing. The business was changing and the Europeans were starting to foster more of their own musicians with help from their countries. The Europeans would come over here with sponsorship from their governments and do tours that we weren't able to do. I realized that I wanted to play more where I lived and it wasn't happening with the music so I started going to more theater, more dance events. I also started seeing the [jazz] audience dwindle too during the late '80s. I saw the same people [at gigs] and that we weren't getting a lot of new audience. I spoke to Amiri Baraka

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about developing audiences in the African American community. I started working with my friend, poet Sekou Sundiata, we did pieces together and I noticed there was a different audience. There were a lot of African Americans, a lot of women. There was new ground there. I started working a lot at Aaron Davis Hall here in Harlem

**Cadence:** *One of your numerous large works is the 2003 Bessie Award-winning **Brown Butterfly** which is based on the physical gestures of boxer Muhammad Ali. How did you translate his footwork and jabs into art?*

Harris: Man, you've got to hear that thing, we're gonna release it any day now. That's another hero of mine, a social hero and an athletic hero. He's another person that's stood up for human rights for everybody. Everybody knew the Vietnam War was wrong and he called it. What I did was I got all the footage I could get of him and I played it with the sound off while I looked at him. I used a tone row basis for that. I took pitches off of the row and wrote down the rhythms of how he moved.

**Cadence:** *Your other projects have also been inspired by inventive sources such as Harlem's renaissance and the poems of James Weldon Johnson which are based on the rhythmic cadences heard within the preaching of African American ministries. How are you coming up with these unique ideas to source new works?*

Harris: The inspirations are in front of us. Muhammad Ali, 210 pounds and able to move like that. He created his own style, just like there's trombone players who created their own style, and I wanted to parallel that. I'm an avid reader. I study and I live right in the middle of it here next to Marcus Garvey Park. When I walk down that street, I'm walking down the same streets that Charlie Parker and James Baldwin walked to get to the subway. I get informed by this environment. The building I live in speaks to me, it's from 1895.

**Cadence:** *It seems most of your time is spent on these large projects, how often are you performing as a Jazz musician in clubs these days and do you miss not doing more of that?*

Harris: I'm gonna be doing it a bit more now because I enjoy it, but I've never stopped. I just haven't been on that track. I'm not saying I'm a prophet but I saw the writing on the wall with the Downtown Scene in 1988. I said, "This is changing," so as Sun Ra said, I had to create another reality. I've been involved with two organizations that have produced shows at affordable prices in the Harlem community - Harlem Jazz Boxx, which has produced weekly concerts for the last three years, and also 3 on Three Presents, which has produced monthly concerts for the last nine years. As we see so much gentrification in our community, we feel a strong sense of cultural preservation is needed. This is the uniqueness our community. I've done extended residencies with my big band at two Harlem institutions - the Dwyer Cultural Center and Mist Harlem. I'm also artistic director with a 501c3 organization called Arts and Education Continuum, whose mission is to entertain, educate, and enlighten the community. So we've made

a scene up here at churches, small and large spaces, and with house concerts. I've had performances here at my home and other people's homes. We have a serious network, we've been very busy up here, we did 58 concerts last year. I've been playing, just not downtown. They say if you're not downtown, you're not around, but I don't believe that. It's expensive for the establishments downtown and I don't think all of them are so good for the music. Are people really going there to hear the music or are they going there to get something to eat and talk. I'm not denying a good time but are they listening?

**Cadence:** *What are your interests outside of music?*

Harris: Taking care of myself physically, swimming, reading. I used to be more into sports but now I'm so disgusted with the business of sports. Right now? Music, health, family and friends, those are my interests now.

**Cadence:** *How about any guilty pleasures?*

Harris: Oh, I've got all the guilty pleasures! I love to dance. Do you know what house music is? I'm a "house head." When I would work at Sweet Basil's, right after the gig, I'd take my horn and go around the corner and I'd go dancing. I'd see Cecil Taylor in there sometimes, and Andrew Cyrille. I like clothing. Be glad I don't have no money because it would be ridiculous if I had some money! I'd get with Mr. [Jamaaladeen] Tacuma. [Laughs] I have a beautiful family and a beautiful partner. Playing trombone and writing still excites me.

**Cadence:** *The final questions have been given to me by other artists to ask you:*

**Warren Smith (percussion) asked:** *"Craig how many different single instrument groups did you see rehearse at Studio WIS –such as all tubas or baritones or all percussionists?"*

Harris: I saw a lot of them. I saw World Saxophone Quartet, Gravity, M'Boom, and Slideride. I saw Pat Patrick and Charles Davis' Baritone Saxophone Retinue with all baritone players. There was Brian Smith with a bass group; Stanley Cowell with a piano choir; there was a trumpet group with Lester Bowie, Olu Dara, Wynton Marsalis, and Malachi Thompson; a flute group with James Newton, Threadgill, Frank Wess; the clarinet group with John Carter, David Murray and Alvin Batiste. Rhys Chatham rehearsed there with a lot of guitarists. There was also an all voice group and I did an all digeridoo group.

**Cadence:** *Why were there so many single instrument groups then?*

Harris: It's nice to work with bass, drums and piano, that's a standard configuration, but people started to do other configurations. Just seeking different sound.

**Steve Swell (trombone) asked:** *"I would like to know if you still maintain a practice routine and anything that may be special about it that you would want to share? The same goes for a composing routine if you have one?"*

Harris: I'm back on it again. Getting my warmup in the morning, take

## Interview: Craig Harris

a break and come back and work on whatever I'm working on, like my sequences. Stop, take a break, and do some writing, every day. I had been off it for a little while. There's a book I work out of in the morning called Total Range. Makanda had a sequence where we'd work on motifs, but he would call it figure. You take this motif through a 2-5-1 progression. He referred to it as "evolution-revolution-resolution." I still work on that and I really wish he was here now to see how I've progressed. Everything he said I understand now, and even more. I wish he was here so I could say, "Yeah, man, but check this out." You know, because you want to give back. You also have to work on writing, and writing not only when you have a deadline. Muhal Richard Abrams had incredible discipline. He'd get up at five o'clock in the morning to write. Also working with the new technology- the computer is a big part of it now, but always starting with my sound, keeping the sound because it all starts with that.

**Ray Anderson (trombone) asked:** *"What can you say about Slideride, our four trombone (acapella, so to speak, no rhythm section) band? It went through many iterations, but you and I founded it."*

Harris: It was about personality. Gary Valente and I go all the way back to Jaki Byard. Ray Anderson and I go all the way back to Sam Rivers' big band. George Lewis and I worked with Anthony Braxton and Sam Rivers. So the relationships in that first Slideride, the one that recorded, we were all coming into New York at the same time. We were all usually sitting in sections together and we'd talk. It wasn't about the instrumentation, it was about those four people. We were so in the groove with each other as far as our experiences. Ray and George go all the way back to something like sixth grade, studying with the same teacher. And all of us understood what we were doing. We were on the same page even though all four of us were totally unique as different individuals. Once we started to use subs, it wasn't the same. Ray has a tape from one of our last things that we really need to put out. I want to know what happened to that tape, I'm gonna call him.

**Samuel Blaser (trombone) asked:** *"You are such a versatile artist, which type of ensemble (trio, quartet etc...) best fits the voice of your trombone?"*

Harris: I never met this cat but I've been watching him. He reminds me of somethings I do, not that he's copying. He likes trios a lot. Well, I like them all. They're like flavors, it's like Baskin-Robbins. Every setting has its function. The thing is, I've been busy as hell and I have so much output, it just hasn't been in the so-called Jazz track. I've been on another track, the life track, and that's the truth. The polls don't interest me. What means something to me is getting up every day and being a better musician and a better human being. Getting back to Samuel's question, I like all the things I do because I can do them and they take me to travel a certain way. They all center around me and the trombone.

**Samuel Blaser also asked:** *"You played as a leader and as a sideman with so many great musicians, many of whom are idols of mine -*



***Muhal Richard Abrams, David Murray, Sun Ra, etc... What is your favorite souvenir?"***

Harris: [Long Pause] Favorite souvenir from all of that? Man, that's hard, there's not just one. I'm not trying to be politically correct but they are all one because they've all been about my growth as a creative contributor to this art form. That's all of those experiences because they enabled me to be an individual. Aha, that's it, [Snaps Fingers] that's the common line. In all those things, what was required was for you to be an individual. That's what ties all those people together – your individuality and being able to put that inside of the group. So you've got to find the me within the we. You had to bring something there, contribute something. Being in places where you can contribute is the greatest thing. David Murray allowed me to play long-ass solos and work things out on stage. Muhal, same thing, letting me work myself out within his world. Sun Ra and Abdullah Ibrahim, letting me have space to really develop, not hindering me. Warren letting me express myself. There you go, it's all those things. That's what ties it all together and that's what I try to offer the people that work with me. Here's a place where you can express yourself. There are rules and regulations but you can express yourself.

***Cadence: How has your investigation of the trumpet advanced your vocalization skills?***

Phil Minton: It's the reverse. I'm relearning the trumpet and trying to forget it is a brass tube with valves that open and shut different lengths of tubing so that you can play different pitches in a certain order. I'm using a lot more half-valving, which is less measured and more like singing.

***Cadence: When did you first realize that you could perform and be accepted as an experimental vocalist?***

Minton: It was gradual. Since the late '50s, I had the idea of playing my voice as an instrument for abstract expression. Jackson Pollock was an inspiration, but playing about with "your voice" was not a respectable thing to do. You were perceived as dishonest – like, "Oh, dear, you sound like a different person!" I suppose I thought playing the trumpet was perceived as respectable. I was in my late twenties before I recorded anything that could be called voice improvising [Phil Minton Quartet with Lars Göran Ulander - Up Umeå, Blue Tower, recorded 1969]. And what I do now is accepted all over the world but only by very small audiences, as is improvised music.



Marcus Shelby, bassist



Marcus Shelby Jazz Orchestra

## Marcus Shelby's Dukedom; Arrangements for Social Change PART ONE by Tee Watts

Like any true, great conductor of the communicative sort, Marcus Shelby, even in conversation is able to swing the focus gently back to the groove, to the pocket where the flow of information and ideas converge in meaningful transference. Shelby shifts easily between topics. Be it the symbiotic connection between Ellington and Strayhorn, music in general, the Civil Rights Movement, or even sports, the wellspring of his creativity is centrally derived from the Black experience.

"I do lead an orchestra and various ensembles and most of the work I do is really inspired by the Black experience, some of which is of the holocaust nature. For example, I composed a suite around the life and work of freedom fighter Harriet Tubman."

Here Marcus Shelby makes reference to one of many commissioned works he has written in his career. His piece, "Harriet Tubman," was researched while he was a

2006 Fellow in the Resident Dialogues Program of the Committee for Black Performing Arts at Stanford University. The piece evolved into a two act musical opera that was also released on Cd in May of 2008 on Shelby's own Noir record label.

In an interview with the San Francisco Chronicle's Jesse Hamlin first published on 10/15/07, Shelby explained the genesis of his interest in Harriet Tubman. He said it was sparked initially when he was a youngster by a book given to him by his mom on Tubman, the 'Conductor on the Underground Railroad.' As an adult, Shelby read the 2003 biography on Tubman, "Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero," written by Kate Clifford Larson. In it, Shelby discovered Harriet Tubman's close relationship to music, specifically how she used coded spirituals to communicate escape messages to slaves planning to join her on journeys north to freedom.

Another project close to the heart of Marcus Shelby is his piece *Blackballed; The Negro Leagues and the Blues*. This is how he described it for *Cadence*.

"Blackballed was a fun and glorious project as it gave new life to the

Negro Baseball Leagues and legendary players like Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. It combined two passions of mine. "I'm sort of a self-declared baseball historian, so I love baseball, but there's also Blues and Swing and the similarities that intersect within our country when it comes to the evolution of the Blues, when it got its footing in the late 19th century and the evolution of Black baseball. Black folks have been playing baseball, pretty much as long as White folks in this country." When this writer chimed in with, "Yeah ever since Abner Doubleday invented it," Shelby quickly straightened out my skewed version of baseball history.

"Well actually, that's the myth. I don't wanna get too far off the rails here but Doubleday was a military person who had witnessed a game and while watching, notated the rules. Now the thing is, the true history of the invention of the game was glorified and fantasized because they tried to attach the prestige of someone in the Union Army as being the inventor of this national pastime. The truth is, this game had been going on under different names, for some time since before the Civil War, if not under the same rules, then rules that were close. It was called Rounders and also Townball, which was similar to Cricket. So there were all these variations that had nothing to do with Abner Doubleday. The rules of baseball that we know and understand now were birthed by the New York Knickerbockers Club, a gentleman's club, a baseball society. Abner Doubleday gets a lot of credit, but my point is that the actual structure of segregated baseball, where Black people finally said, "Ok, if you're not gonna let us play in the Major Leagues anymore, (because the last Black person to play in the Major Leagues before Jackie Robinson was Fleetwood Walker in 1884) then we're gonna start our own league. The Negro Leagues were started by people like Rube Foster and other Black baseball club owners at a time when Blues and Swing music, which became Jazz, were popular in African-American culture. The baseball players stayed at the same hotels as the Jazz and Blues musicians. The musicians and athletes had to deal with the same sort of infrastructure; from ownership to promotions, concessions, travel, etc. Parallel industries, if you will. Blues and Swing, bats and swing, there's this sort of celebration and buoyancy of the style that was unique to Black life. Some of it is sad and some of it has to do with the songs that have helped us in the struggle."

Marcus Anthony Shelby was born on February 2, 1966 in Anchorage, Alaska. His family soon moved to Memphis, then finally settling in Sacramento.

"My dad was stationed in Alaska and that's why I was born there. We left a year after I was born. We lived in Memphis, Tennessee for awhile and finally settled in Sacramento when my dad was stationed at McClellan Air Force Base. I was a four sport athlete in high school; football, basketball, track and baseball. I did music in church, but really didn't consider music as any sort of career path, because I didn't

know anybody that did it professionally. I wanted to play professional basketball. I was really excited about that because as a kid, I saw Michael Jordan. That was my era. I got a basketball scholarship and went to Cal Poly and played for four years while I studied electrical engineering. In my senior year, I saw Wynton Marsalis on kind of a whim. My dad told me he was coming to town and encouraged me to check out this young trumpet player. I wasn't really into Jazz. I was like, into whatever was popular.

In addition to church, I played in high school but I wasn't this kid who was on track to become this Jazz musician. So when my dad told me to go see Wynton Marsalis, I didn't even know why, I had no interest in the music. But I thought it would be an excellent idea for a date. So I took my date and man, from the first note, I forgot about my date! I got hooked on the music. It hit me upside the head. I had never heard or experienced this before. Half of it was the music, but the other half of it was the image. They were wearing suits. Wynton was articulate. There was a certain reverence and respect for the music that made me go, 'Whatever that is right there, I want it. I want to be that. I want to carry that.

After that, I started listening to the music. I didn't even start playing again right away. I started listening. And a year later, I saw Marsalis again at the Long Beach Jazz Festival. Bob Hurst was on bass, Jeff 'Tain' Watts was on drums, Kenny Kirkland on piano. I'll never forget that concert because Bob Hurst broke a string and just kept on playin'. After the concert I said to myself, 'Alright, I have to join a church.' I went out and got a bass. I hadn't played in four years and I wasn't good at first. I had a lot of energy and excitement but my technique was not good at all. Way behind. But there was a burning passion inside me that insisted I pursue this. I dropped electrical engineering after I graduated and came to L.A. I found Billy Higgins and joined his workshop at the World Stage performance space. I applied for a scholarship to Cal Arts in order to study with James Newton and Charlie Haden. I got it and my whole life changed. That was 1990 and I never looked back. I came to San Francisco in '96 after spending six years in L.A. I had a group there called Black/Note with Willie Jones III, James Mahone and Eric Reed. We did four records. The ironic thing is, in '94 we got signed by Wynton Marsalis' manager and ended up opening for him throughout the U.S. and Europe. To this day, Wynton and I are friends. That was a full circle moment for me."

Circular orbit or straight ahead trajectory, Marcus Shelby's creative output and achievements are momentous and diverse. As bandleader of his first professional ensemble effort, Black/Note, the band had record deals with Columbia and Impulse. When he landed in San Francisco in 1996, he seemed to plunge headlong into creating his own métier. Crafting music astride themes that embrace social awareness and justice. Without shame or prejudice he declares, "For me it's just one way to learn about my history. To create projects around it that

require me to go out and research and ask questions about. The music is really the final product and actually the thing that takes the least amount of time. Getting the information and having it sort of live inside of me takes the most time. I've had my orchestra now for twenty years and it is the vehicle used to express it when it comes out. Because of getting really close to the subject matter, to me it's almost like what you might call a character actor who lives the life of a civil rights activist.

I did a project entitled *Beyond The Blues: A Prison Oratorio* on the prison-industrial complex in this country. I researched that by going into prisons, gaining an understanding of how the prison industry exploded over the last forty years with mass incarceration, and then writing music about it. As I said, that's the easiest part because after the research, you understand the mood, the feeling, the rhythm, all those things that the music can describe within the context of whatever subject you are trying to talk about."

Another volatile historical topic tackled by Shelby is a composition entitled *Port Chicago*. It is a suite that reflects on the munitions explosion and aftermath that occurred on July 17, 1944 at U.S. Naval Base at Port Chicago, California. In all, 320 people were killed and another 390 were injured. Most were African-American who were the personnel assigned to loading the dangerous cargo on ships bound for ships seeing action in WWII. A month after the explosion, hundreds of African-American sailors refused to load munitions resulting in a charge of mutiny for 50 of them.

Shelby is quoted on his website, giving background on his perspective of the work and his compositional intent.

"The black sailors who lost their lives on July 17th, 1944 in a massive explosion at the Port Chicago Naval Weapon's Base were true, if unwitting, American heroes. The explosion drew investigation, which revealed Jim Crow-like racial segregation in the naval forces, involving disadvantaged, dangerous, and ultimately deadly working conditions for black sailors. In response to the public exposure of these truths, the Navy quietly desegregated its ranks; in 1948, President Harry Truman desegregated all U.S. armed forces. Ironically, the Port Chicago tragedy revealed and corrected a grave injustice, and brought America closer to equal justice for all, the very foundation of true democracy. Indeed, these sailors' lives were not lost in vain. "*Port Chicago*" the composition is an abstract representation that chronicles the story of these African American sailors. It pays homage to the men and to the sacrifices they made for the moral development of their country. It also honors the survivors—those who have had to bear the burden of history's continuing injustice. "*Port Chicago*" hopes to again shed light on those injustices, and to join the efforts to exonerate the survivors."

Another unique representation of Shelby's skills is the collaborative play for which he composed the music, *Isfahan Blues*. The storyline of the play, written by Iranian-American playwright Torange

## Interview: Marcus Shelby

Yeghiazarian, is a fictionalized account of a relationship that developed between a member of Duke Ellington's band and an Iranian actress, when President Kennedy's State Department sent Ellington's aggregation on a goodwill tour in 1963 at the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. and the height of the Cold War.

With a solid past behind him and the promise of a continued bright future ahead, Marcus Shelby has established a comfortable rhythmic pace to his life. In May of 2019, Shelby begins a two-year term as a Resident Artistic Director at SFJAZZ. His first show features author Daniel Handler and will examine the Blues traditions in San Francisco neighborhoods, tracing their development from the Barbary Coast period to present day.

His second show will present his quintet in performance with Professor Angela Davis in a dialogue entitled Blues Legacies and Black Feminism (from her book of the same title) which sheds new light on the legacies of Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith and Billy Holiday.

"I actually have a lot of off days," says Shelby. I'm fifty-two years old. At this point in my career, I've gone from gigging and playing everyday, seven days a week, somewhere, you know, Have Bass Will Travel, all kind of gigs for twenty-somethin' years. So now, I'm workin' on projects that allow me to spend multi-years developing them. Some of those years are strictly research. Many of my projects are works in progress. I might do smaller, ensemble versions of big band pieces I've written and do presentations in a public space where I can get feedback, or even share elements of a larger final piece. I've done that, pretty much, with every project that I've had over the last twenty years. So, some of that is daily work, some of it, not so much. I've developed my work ethic so that I'm not always playin', not always teachin', not always writin'. There's also times when I'm not doing music at all. I spend a lot of time at the ballpark. I spend a lot of time at school activities with my kids. I've also been on the Arts Commission for the city of San Francisco for going on six years."

The response to what was intended to be the last question for Mr. Shelby to share a little about his compositional technique goes a little deep. "Yeah, I play piano and have a nice one at home. I have drums, a couple of basses and guitars. To answer your question, if I'm creating original music, you know, a lot of what we understand about composition is not so much the melody that we remember. There are certain melodies that are just memorial. We walk away, we never forget it. Like for example Body and Soul is a beautiful melody. Where the work goes in for a big band composer is the orchestration and arranging. And for that, you don't need a piano. You just have to understand harmony, obviously. You have to understand rhythm, all of those compositional tools. You have a piano as a tool. You'll want to work out harmonic and melodic passages. But after awhile, after so many years, it's like being a chef. There are certain things you've done over and over again that you're able to cull from and because you've done it so many times, you know how it's going to sound. When I

started writing for a big band, I didn't know anything at all about it. But I was so in love with Duke Ellington's music. It hit me hard. I spent the first six years of my career just playing Coltrane, Miles Davis and Monk. To me, at first, Ellington was old hat, not as immediate, at my own juvenile level, at that point. The irony is, if you ask any old veteran of the music who to listen to, they say Duke Ellington. When I first played Duke, it was like, 'Where is it at?' I don't get it. When I put Coltrane on, I heard that right away.

But after a while, like anything else in life, you can swim on top of the ocean, but when you swim deeper, you understand that's where the richness of the life force is. Not the stuff that floats on top of the ocean. Now, I'm not sayin' that Coltrane and them are junk. The deeper you go in the water is where you find Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith. And if you swim deep enough, Buddy Bolden.

So, at some point I hit a wall like we all do and had to go to Ellington. It was like I opened up this door and found this unlimited amount of information that I felt I needed to get. And then it put all the John Coltrane, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk stuff in perspective. It made it even richer for me. Ellington's stuff was the life force. Bessie Smith was the ultimate life force. Everything really came out of her. So I just kind of fell in love with Ellington and wanted to write exactly like him. So how could I do that? I didn't even have a big band.

I started learning and playing Ellington's music, part by part. I started collecting scores. I got over two-hundred, close to three-hundred scores that I've collected over the years and I've studied them. I started collecting classical scores so that I could study instrumentation and learn how the great Classical composers used it. Then I got into Billy Strayhorn. I discovered that despite their symbiotic connection, musically Ellington and Strayhorn were very distinct. Now, I can listen to an arrangement by either of them and know right off whose arrangement it is."

At this juncture I ask Marcus Shelby who had the most affinity for the Blues? Ellington or Strayhorn?

"I would say neither one of them did. I think both of them grew up in what was called the East Coast Blues. It wasn't as authentic as the Mississippi Delta Blues or the King Oliver, Buddy Bolden Blues of New Orleans. The East Coast Blues was sophisticated, academic Blues. Ellington was from Washington, D.C. Strayhorn was from Pittsburgh. They did not come out of the fountain of Blues that informed Louis Armstrong. But they were practitioners of the Blues and could compose beautiful Blues melodies that could go over Blues changes. Between the two of them, Ellington would be the one that had the most Blues sensibilities. Strayhorn was more of an impressionist. You could hear it in his playing and writing. He was really refined. Where Ellington wasn't as refined as Strayhorn, Strayhorn had developed an amazing ability to write in a really light way. None of his arrangements are heavy or overwritten. It's well-balanced, with a certain ease and comfort to it when you look at it and listen to it.

Of course, there would be no Strayhorn as we know him without Ellington. If you listen to how Ellington's music evolved over the years, it becomes evident that he is just a pure genius. While he didn't have the technical skills that Strayhorn had, the way he was always able to land in the right spots was genius. I've studied Duke Ellington for twenty-five years. I can't tell you a lot about a lot of things, but I can tell you a lot about Duke Ellington.

One thing to know about Ellington is that he grew up in two different churches. His dad went to one church and his mom went to another one. So he got two different musical experiences through the church. On the other hand, Billy Strayhorn did not grow up in the church. That's a very important distinction. The foundation of the two different composers are informed from two different histories. Ellington was all about call and response. Billy Strayhorn was listening to Debussy, Liddell, Tchaikovsky and Chopin. That's why his writing had that impressionistic element to it."

There you have it. Marcus Shelby is San Francisco's cosmopolitan man. Bandleader, Historian, Researcher, Collaborator, Artistic director and Arts Commissioner. Quoted in a Bay Area newspaper on why he chooses to live in Francisco as opposed to say, New York he said, "In New York, I'm not sure I could've built the vision. This is my city. This is where I am. My kids go to school here. I work in the schools. I believe in them."

Somewhere on the planet there are probably students who will eventually discover Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn as well as Marcus Shelby and perhaps study them all intently with that burning passion that Shelby referred to. We can only imagine what kind of contributions to the music these students will make. That music will come to be in time, or, as Ellington himself wrote *A Hundred Dreams From Now*.

*For more information on Marcus Shelby, visit his website [www.marcusshelby.com](http://www.marcusshelby.com)*



**Marcus Shelby's Dukedom;  
Arrangements for Social Change PART TWO by Tee Watts**

In discussion with Marcus Shelby about his extensive study of the realm of Duke Ellington, Shelby hypothesizes on the symbiotic relationship between Duke and Billy Strayhorn.

“One thing to know is Ellington had a doppelganger in the form of Billy Strayhorn. The prolific output capacity of two composer arrangers allowed them to constantly have work. In January of 1960, Ellington's producer, Irving Townsend, Billy Strayhorn and Duke, came up with the idea of reenvisioning the Nutcracker Suite. So, six months later, they were in the studio. In the meantime, Ellington was in L.A. and Strayhorn was in New York. Billy Strayhorn did most, if not all of the work. All he did was write and arrange. So when you have two cats with that solid work ethic, you get a lot of work done. This was really a fertile period for them. They did the Far East Suite as well as Such Sweet Thunder and others around that time. There was a lot of work going on, in the form of suites, tone poems and extended compositions. The Harlem Nutcracker was one of the best that they did.”

The conversation shifts here, to the challenges of playing Ellingtonian compositions. Shelby's own orchestra tackled the Harlem Nutcracker this past December in performance at SF JAZZ.

“It's important music. It's one of those things where, I believe, that to do it really well, you must have a functioning band, where you can match the personalities with the music, because the piece was written for the personalities of the Ellington band. Not that you have to have an Ellington type band, but you must have players that fill the respective rolls; A good clarinet player and a flute player for one of the pieces. You gotta have a rehearsed band that's been around. You have to kind of imagine the personnel, not so much to recreate the solos. There's a great deal to imagine through the composed writing and as in all of Ellington's music there's space for soloing. You gotta really balance it out. Some of the solos are so memorial they've become part of the composition, you know? Like in Waltz of the Floreodores/ The Waltz of the Flowers and other passages that you might want to keep in there because it's become part of the character of the song. Note for note in some case. Like Duke Ellington's Take The A Train, for example. There's a trumpet solo in there, originally taken by Cootie Williams, that many people play exactly as he played it because it's become part and parcel of, and very characteristic of the song.

There are other examples of that in big band charts where the soloist plays note for note the original solo. There was a lot of so called jazz 'em up classics of the period from the '30s on. This was more than just that. This was really creating full-fledged compositions with the vitality of an original that carried Tchaikovskyian themes. And that's

where they were so successful because, these themes are not note for note, but you can hear them. Like with the March Of The Sugar Plum Fairy, or even what Duke calls Volga Vouty (The Russian Dance). You can hear the the theme but it's slowed down to Swing or syncopation. The aroma of the original theme remains, tut there's going to be some Swing added to it. Tchaikovsky might've used a triad or a simple harmonic background. Ellington and Strayhorn are using the language of Blues or Swing.

The conversation pauses there as Shelby reflects on culture and definition. He does not define himself as a Jazz artist. "I don't really care about the Jazz word. That's a word that Europeans came up with. I'm more attuned to the Blues because that came out of the history of Black people. That's something you can't buy, sell, control, move or market. You can't do that. Though they've done it with Jazz successfully and it has its own space in the marketplace where it's being exploited.

Now, various styles of the Blues have been exploited as well. But I'm talkin' about the Blues that are connected to our spirituals, freedom songs and work songs, that are the foundation of Black music and by extension, all American music. Not the genre of the Blues, the B. B. King and all that. They own that too. I'm talkin' about something that they can't steal or take. They can steal Rap music, but they can't steal Hip Hop cuz that's cultural, like the Blues. Jazz is not cultural. It's a made up word that means nothing. Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Charles Mingus all HATED that word.

The word Jas was a predecessor to the word Jazz. Do you know that the first reference to the word Jazz was in a baseball article? It was 1913 or so. The San Francisco Seals were playing a game and getting beaten horribly and the writer of the article wrote, The Seals seem to have lost their jazz...Which meant their pep, speed and sense of improvisation. That was the first use of the word in popular writing. And then it became associated with the music, I'm from that school that doesn't appreciate that term, though there's nothing we can do about it at this point. It's all over our institutions and buildings.

I've never called my music Jazz, myself a Jazz musician, or my band a Jazz orchestra. I can't stop people from naming it that way, but for me, I don't position it that way. I call it an orchestra. We play Blues, Swing, Afro-Cuban music, in essence Black music. Jazz? I don't know what that is. It's something that was created in the late '30s to market Dizzy Gillespie and them."

As the conversation with Marcus Shelby circles back to the subject of study, Duke Ellington, I ask him about Ellington's collaboration with John Coltrane.

"Well, in the '60s, when Ellington entered into the sunset of his life, they were trying to find these partnerships in recording situations, as he had reached the pinnacle of his career as a composer. He was super famous at the time. This is not Ellington still trying to make it. This is

## Interview: Marcus Shelby

Ellington, the institution. He'd been around forty years and was in his '60s. They were looking at Coltrane too, because he'd reached a certain level of fame by this time.

Ellington the big band composer, whose rhythm section was very central to his music, was now going to be paired with Coltrane's rhythm section, even though they both brought their own rhythm sections to the session.

For comparative purposes, Ellington also collaborated with Count Basie, Louis Armstrong and Charles Mingus at different times. To use sports analogies, it was like using different infields, different backcourts or backfields which allowed the music to be heard in a different way. That's what I find most impressive on the John Coltrane collaboration. That they both maintained their own sound and their own space while playing with different associations."

We finalize our conversation on Marcus Shelby's Dukedom by talking about the art of bass playing, bass players and other musicians who influenced him. Marcus studied under Charlie Haden.

"That was my teacher in '91 and '92. He was a beautiful cat, very humble and giving. You know, he was Charlie Haden, the famous bass player back then. It was at the point in his career where he was being rejuvenated. His career got a big boost in the early '90s and he eventually signed with Verve Records. He put together a quartet and put out a number of records. At that time he was teaching at Cal Arts and I was just lucky enough to have gotten a scholarship to study there. And you know, the reality of it was, it was boring a lot. It's not like I saw him every week, but I do remember some really good interactions with him. That was 27 years ago. I'm a different person, I wasn't that good back then. He had no reason to be nice to me, but then he was getting paid to teach. He was generally one of those cats who was just kind to everybody. He gave me words of encouragement. Not only that, he gave me strings. He was super-nice, but he can't compare with Billy Higgins though, as far as influence and impact. I want to be clear about that. Billy Higgins was the man for me."

Shelby also talked about the influences of Charles Mingus, Ray Brown, Paul Chambers and Jimmy Blanton. "I try to be influenced and learn, borrow, steal or take from all of them. I listen to Jimmy Blanton and Paul Chambers the most, foundation wise. Blanton was so proficient that Ellington started writing compositions specifically for bass because of that young man. Then there is Ray Brown, but I think Paul Chambers is the one who put it all together. His is the modern day approach to supporting and soloing. And he wasn't here that long. He didn't make age 40. Nonetheless, he recorded on a lot of important records, from Miles Davis to John Coltrane that are really good examples of his work, from which we can learn. So I take a little bit from everyone, but the ones whom I take the most from are Jimmy Blanton and Paul Chambers.

## **A TASMANIAN OVERVIEW BY ALWYN AND LAURIE LEWIS KELLY OTTAWAY - PIANO/VIBES**

**CAD** *Let's start at the beginning, when and where were you born?*

**KO** April 25, 1978, Brisbane, Australia. I moved to Tasmania during my last year in College.

**CAD** *Was your family involved with music?*

**KO** Yes quite a bit, nothing in a professional way. I was raised in a religious family so there was always music, especially Sunday there were always hymns, my Mum used to play the piano in church. I had two brothers and two sisters and they dabbled in music as a hobby. My eldest brother was heavily into bluegrass, banjo and guitar. He was one of those players who would play part of a song but not the entire song. He would learn the easy part (laughter). He was a major influence in my early stages but for me it was straight to piano because that was the most accessible thing that was there.

**CAD** *What did you mainly listen to? If you came from a religious background were you told jazz was the Devil's music?*

**KO** I had that to a degree. My father couldn't stand Bebop – to him it just made no sense, he couldn't talk about scat singers Ella Fitzgerald anyone like that.

**CAD** *Did that increase your interest?*

**KO** I became curious. If he didn't like it there must be something in it.

**CAD** *So did you have friends who were interested in the music?*

**KO** I didn't become emotionally aware until I heard my cousin who was a jazz pianist play. As much as I could I'd hang out with him and he made me aware of improvisation. I didn't know what he was doing or understand what he was doing but I wanted to learn that, be able to do that. The understanding didn't happen straight away but I remember thinking "I like this music, I don't know why I like it but it's doing something to me."

**CAD** *Perhaps the music chose you?*

**KO** Oh absolutely. The second thing that made me aware of the emotional aspect of the music was my grandfather. He would busk on a regular basis – he just played tunes of his era on a banjo and mandolin and people would give him money for it and everything he made he gave to charity, he never kept anything for himself, he just loved to play, not for celebrity or anything like that, it just made him happy.

**CAD** *A lot of people get into music for different reasons, but if you have a real drive, it won't let you go?*

**KO** Absolutely.

**CAD** *When you're playing and the music is really firing, you know the chords, progressions etc. but you don't have time to really think do you, so where is the music coming from?*

**KO** Well it comes from somewhere and if ever I were to find out where it comes from it would probably disappear just as quickly.

**CAD** *Tasmania is a small island limited population, so how do you handle the frustration, not everyone you work with is of the same calibre.*

**KO** Just ride it out. If you allow yourself to get frustrated in that situation you play frustrated and it's just a vicious cycle, you just keep going round and round if you don't try and grab a positive in that situation. It happens, one time I had a residency in Hobart and the drummer dragged the time, which meant you had no forward momentum so you just make the best of that knowing that further down the track there are going to be times when it is all beautiful and self-expression will have a chance to pour out of you. You're always setting yourself up for the next gig.

**CAD** *Your writing is heavily influenced by Oliver Nelson, how did that come about?*

**KO** I was drawn to it when I was growing up because in amongst my brother's recorded collection of ballads was one by Glenn Miller. I was just struck by the sound of the instruments coming together and I've always been drawn to large ensembles and big bands, the ability for expression dynamically as well as harmonically and the extremes that can be reached from the tiniest to a gargantuan sound. That led me to listen to the Buddy Rich big band, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis and the Charles Tolliver big band, but in amongst all that I was drawn to Oliver Nelson and Stolen Moments. I got the album Blues and the Abstract Truth and I wore that thing out because I was fascinated with his ability to work with harmony that was stepping outside the key centre of that moment and I wanted to know how he did that. So I got transcriptions of scores and realised that it is deceptively simple, it's not complicated. And the world of arranging and composition opened up.

**CAD** *There is a four letter word essential to all this called "feel".*

**KO** Yes, when I was young up until around age ten I would listen to music but it wouldn't affect me emotionally but then I found in my brother's collection some Stevie Wonder and that would really affect me.

**CAD** *Well now you're talking feel and emotion.*

**KO** I recall that he really moved something in me because of the sound he was getting the groove, so many layers, and he is a perfectionist too.

## **Barre Phillips Interview** **Magic Carpet into the Sound World** **By Ken Weiss**

*Barre Phillips [b. Oct 27, 1934, San Francisco, CA] is a virtuoso bassist improviser who expatriated to Europe in the late '60s and has lived in the South of France since 1972. Extremely influential in Europe and revered by his peers, Phillips has the distinction of recording the first complete album of solo bass improvisation [Journal Violone, 1968]. He is also thought to have made the first improvised double-bass duet, with Dave Holland in 1971 [Music from Two Basses]. His work with The Trio [John Surman and Stu Martin], beginning in the late '60s, became a model in itself, and influenced many younger musicians. Phillips' experience spans a wide range of musical styles, from Coleman Hawkins to Derek Bailey. Some of his other collaborators have been Archie Shepp, Chick Corea, George Russell, Lee Konitz, Jimmy Giuffre, Paul Bley, Don Ellis, Peter Nero, Evan Parker, Barry Guy, Atila Zoller, Peter Brötzmann, Joe Maneri, and Joëlle Léandre, as well as a memorable time with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in 1964. He's also played in a trio with Urs Leimgruber and Jacques Demierre for over 18 years, and worked with Ornette Coleman, including Coleman's soundtrack recording for the film Naked Lunch [1991]. Phillips continued to issue solo bass recordings during his career and has just released the final chapter in that idiom – End to End [ECM]. This interview took place on May 19, 2019 in Mt. Vernon, New York, at the home of Phillips' brother, Peter, a noted composer in his own right. Phillips was in the States for a very rare pair of performances in New York in support of the new release.*

**Cadence: Where does the unusual name of Barre ["bar"] derive from?**

Barre Phillips: Well, do you want the long versions or the short versions for these stories? [Laughs] I was a second child after my brother Peter was born, so, of course, they wanted a girl. I was supposed to be called Anne. When I was born, there was no predetermining what the sex of the child was. I don't know if they were disappointed, but they were unprepared. You had to register the child before you could leave the hospital and they didn't have a first name. My mother was walking the halls and she saw on a door the name of a doctor whose middle name was Barre and she took it. My parents opted for that being pronounced as "Barry." I researched the name and it goes back to the Huguenot days in France and then it migrated with the Huguenots being chased out by the Catholics. But that's as a family name, not a first name. So, the mistake that my mother made was she thought it was a second first name, but it was a family name, being spelled with the e and not the y. I was called Barry until the age of fifteen when in high school English class, the teacher was reading the roll on the first day of class and she came to my name, hesitated a bit, and said, "Bar?" And I said, "That's me!" And I changed my name at that instant. I realized that I preferred "Bar" to "Barry."



Barre Phillips - Photo credit Ken Weiss

Now the parents are dead, so they don't have to deal with it! [Laughs]

**Cadence:** *Do you have a middle name?*

Phillips: No, that's it.

**Cadence:** *Although you were born in San Francisco, you've lived in Europe since 1967. That means you lived in America for 33 years and in Europe for 50 years. Do you still think of yourself as an American?*

Phillips: Yes, I do but I don't think of myself in terms of nationality, but when I'm asked the question, then yes.

**Cadence:** *What was the most difficult adjustment you had to make to live in Europe?*

Phillips: There was nothing difficult about that time. You have to understand that I did not leave the United States, I stayed in Europe, which is different than leaving. I went to London in August 1967 to ostensibly stay for 2 months for private reasons and ended up staying. I came for non-musical reasons, but I found so much work that it would have been silly to go back to the States. I wasn't hurting for work when I lived in New York, I was always working. I worked commercially as well. I played over a year in the Peter Nero Trio, earning good bucks. But it was different in Europe, why people were calling me was for what I played and not how I could take care of the job. Playing with Peter Nero was can you do the job, are you presentable, and are you the right color? I stayed a bit over a year in England at first, and because people knew me there from recordings, they were asking me to play. So, I started playing, although it wasn't my intention to play. I started playing right away, as much as you could because there were problems with the musician's union exchange program going on at the time. From my time there, I saw that people would talk about doing things rather than just going on and doing them and I realized cultural differences – the thinking, the speaking. It was difficult for me- I enjoyed seeing the differences. When I started living in France, I started off living with a French couple that were in theater. They had a huge place and they invited me to stay there. They took me around and I learned the language from people.

**Cadence:** *What is it about French culture that strikes you as most puzzling?*

Phillips: I wouldn't say puzzling, curious? Yes. [Laughs] Their different attitude towards sexuality, for example, and body function, is very interesting. They are so much more open and realistic than it is in the puritanistic American culture that I grew up in. You could look at it as a SHOCKING difference. There's not one that I find disturbing. Bureaucracy everywhere is a pain in the butt and the French are really bureaucratic. They love their bureaucratic structure and they push it to the full. For example, I'm retirement age now. I have retirement from the States and from the French system. It's very easy to sign up for your retirement in the U.S.A. – a couple of clicks, a wave of the hand, and there you go. With the French, it is much more complicated. It's



up to the individual worker to prove that he's worked. When I went to apply in France, the person said, "You did save all your pay slips, of course." [Laughs] 'Oh, was I supposed to save my pay slips?' "Well, absolutely, how else are you going to control that we've got it right?" That's different, right? Talking with other musicians – "Oh, yes, I had a shopping cart full of pay slips when I went to my retirement." In general, I didn't have any difficulties although I was used to living in a small community where neighbors were neighborly. Neighborliness in France, in the rural communities, is something very different than the American style. For example, just French, not mixed nationality families, except for the very beginning days there, I've never been invited over for dinner or a drink, and it's not because I'm American, it's because they have their circle of friends and that's it. You can be shocked by that but that's just the way it is. I've never taken a French passport. I've got all the papers to be able to live socially as a French person, but I can't vote. I vote over here in the States by mail through the California system.

***Cadence: How many languages do you speak?***

Phillips: Two that I can really say that I speak – English and French. I get along just fine in Spain. I was a Spanish student in school. I do fine with some Italian and I can find my way around in German, but I can't sit down with a German and have an intelligent conversation.

***Cadence: You're currently back in America to perform twice in New York in support of your latest ECM release End to End. How often are you performing these days?***

Phillips: What I am trying to do now, and it's been working the past three or four years, is to go out once a month. I haven't changed my at-home work schedule on the instrument or on the music at all, but the traveling has become so difficult, and my presence at home has become more needed than it was in the old days now that the old age thing has set in. I'm still with the same wife, who is going to be 82 and needs more help. The amount of energy that I have left is less than it was forty years ago. I took myself off of the freelance market quite some years ago and hardly anyone calls me for that anymore. If ECM were to call and ask me to do a session with someone, I would no doubt, out of respect and love for the company, I would do it, but going and traveling on the road and doing tours? No. Even with Urs [Leimgruber] and Jacques [Demierre], we don't tour like we did.

***Cadence: End to End is beautifully recorded, every sound you made is clear. How much of an impact did [ECM head] Manfred Eicher have on the finished work?***

Phillips: There was no discussion about sound at all. The engineer, Gérard de Haro, is someone I've worked with a lot through the years, even before Manfred started working with him. Gérard knows my sound very well, my preoccupation with clarity of sound. There's also a big contribution to the record in terms of sound with the bass I have



Barre Phillips - Photo credit Ken Weiss

that is extremely clear. The bass and I have built up a clarity together that really pleases me. Where Manfred's participation was, was exactly what I was hoping when I called him. I really wanted to make the record with him, not just for him. This is highly likely going to be the last solo record I will make because of the lapses between when I've made them – ten to fifteen years. I'm 84 now, so adding ten years? I don't think so. [Laughs] I hadn't worked for Manfred for so many years, but I was ready to do a solo record and I called him up and he was so warm and open – "Yeah, you want to do it tomorrow? Let's go!" That blew me away because he has so many projects. I thought it might take years, but he was hot to do it. He had given me three days in the studio to do it but after the second day he asked if I wanted to do any more and I said, 'No, let's move on,' and he said, "Let's put it on the shelf and come back in a couple of months and listen to it fresh and make the record then." So, we did that. I didn't listen to it until we met again, some months later. I listened to all the 35 takes once before meeting him in the studio. We sat down and started listening and he started tweaking things, and he composed the record. It was an amazing moment, how his memory, listening to all these takes, how he could remember things, and make the composition of the record in his head as it was going along. And I was sitting there, marveling, letting him work. It's very interesting because several people have said they're very impressed by the form of the record. What I like so much about this record is that, on my behalf, there's no artifice, it's just me the way I would be playing and working at home. The bits of artifice which I had brought with me to the studio, I threw out almost instantly and didn't even record them. [Laughs] It was so interesting when the whole setting was – "Oh, just let him play." Manfred built the record and when I listen to it, which I don't a lot, but before I came on this tour I had to listen, and I was once again impressed by it. But to be honest, I have no idea if it's any good or not because it's just me doing my natural thing.

*Cadence: Most of the 13 tracks on the new release are less than 3 minutes long. Why so short?*

Phillips: As I listen to the recording now, nearly two years after the recording days, I can hear what I'm doing in the line of this 'just my natural stuff,' I mentioned earlier. Since I began doing my own thing, my musical ideas have been quite short - like when I was writing small pieces from which to improvise in the '70s and so. Just a short statement seems to be a piece in itself, like a small object of sculpture. Doing the record, freely improvising, but knowing it's for a record, I tended to say what I have to say in a particular mode, or mood, and stop - except when there is a rhythmic base to the material, as in tracks 4, 9 and 11. When there's a more or less steady beat going on, it took longer to feel the form develop and conclude than in the "rubato" pieces.

*Cadence: In End to End's liner notes, you state that, "It's the end of a*

*cycle, not a summing up, but the last pages of a journal that began fifty years ago." Looking at your solo bass series as a whole, spread across six albums, what is the combined statement that you've made with the work, as you see it?*

Phillips: Oh, interesting. The combined statement in verbal terms is – ‘Hey baby, do your own thing. You gotta do your own thing.’ It’s something that I ran into as a performing musician around 1975. This was at a time when The Trio, with John Surman and Stu Martin, had a rebirth and was playing in a town in Switzerland, and I realized what we were doing, and what I had been doing since I said I was going to be a professional musician, was doing my thing in front of people and the people were coming and were supporting me. I was earning a living doing my thing. I mean, what is that all about? [Laughs] For myself, I was giving nothing, the giving part had nothing to do with why I was playing. I became very aware at that time that the Jazz business was all about product, but what I’d been doing here as an individual and as a group was more about personal process. We were playing for ourselves. Playing for the public was necessary to earn a living but it wasn’t why we were playing together. And from that time on, in public performance, I was into improvising. At that time, ‘75-’76, my solo playing was starting to take off, and I tried to put a message in the music, without using any words, that you would all be better off if you were home making music rather than coming to this concert. The perfect concert for me would have been if nobody was there but they had left notes that said, “Barre, have a great concert but we can’t come tonight, we’re busy making music.” Socially and politically, I felt a big problem that we are having in our industrial age is that people, in order to earn a living, are having to grab an available job in order to survive and not do something they want to do. If I have anything to say [through my work] it comes in a historical sense where you go back to the mid-’70s, when free improvisation was a pretty small element on the musical horizon. It’s amazingly grown a lot more since then, musically and intellectually, as a mental and reflective way of going about things.

*Cadence: Journal Violone, your first solo bass recording done in 1968, was not intended to be released. You had been asked to record some solo bass segments for your friend, composer Max Schubel, who instead of working over the pieces at Columbia’s new electro-acoustic studio as planned, was so impressed with your creativity that he facilitated its release, making your work the first complete album of solo bass improvisation. What was your reaction when you heard his intent to release an album and when did you realize the historical ramifications?*

Phillips: He didn’t do it without my knowledge. Immediately after I recorded what I did at the church we were in, I said, ‘That’s about all that I can do,’ which was quite a bit, and I went down into the pews

where he was sitting, and he said, “That was incredible, that was fantastic. There’s no way that I can take that and use it in a studio, but I would love to put it out. What do you say?” He had his own little label and I was shocked, in a dumbfounded kind of way. I had just played the way I was playing at home. So, I thought about it, I talked to a few people, and I told him, ‘If you think it’s worthwhile, I respect your opinion so let’s do it,’ and not get involved with my own ego about this thing. I didn’t realize the historical part until doing an interview in 1970 or ’71 with a French Jazz magazine when the interviewer pointed out that he felt sure it was the first solo bass recording. I said, ‘No, you’re kidding.’ [Laughs] I didn’t know that and surely, if I had known it at the time, I would have been very hesitant because of the pretentiousness of making a statement like that. **HEY, LISTEN TO ME!** *Cadence: Well, that’s my next question. What you played for Schubel in that church was done without expectations or limitations. How different might Journal Violone have sounded if you had known ahead of time that you were recording an album?*

Phillips: I have no idea what it might have been. If I had known it was going to be the first solo bass recording, I would have said no because there were so many fantastic bass players in every domain all over the place, but not playing their very own stuff, their own homemade soup, as it were.

*Cadence: After Journal Violone was released, there were a number of requests for solo performances. How long was it before you felt completely comfortable performing solo in public? How long before you were confident of presenting a cohesive statement each night?*

Phillips: That’s very interesting. The time between the record coming out and people asking me to come play solo was quite a few years. What was immediate after the recording, but had nothing to do with the recording, was through French theater, which was also one of the reasons I moved to France. I had been living in London, going to Paris to play with Marion Brown and Steve McCall from time to time. We were hired by Gunter Hampel to play in Aix-en-Provence and Marseille as a free Jazz quartet on a French theater piece. The gig lasted a month. At the end of the run, the theater director, Antoine Bourseiller, said, “I enjoy very much what you do. Would you be interested in staying and playing solo for my next production?” I did it and that work lasted three months. His instructions were, “You play when you want and the more avant-garde sounding it is, the better I’ll like it.” This happened at the Centre Dramatique de Sud-Est. I played on stage upstage behind a scrim, a netted screen, either hidden from the audience or lit from behind at times. The play was Classical French-Anglo, by Victor Hugo and everything else – the costumes and décor – contemporary. It was kind of an avant-garde approach that I didn’t really understand the value of at all, but it gave me a chance to develop my solo playing. When the run was over, the director said,

"You know, you should play solo." He set up a little tour for me of six concerts at different national centers. I agreed but then I thought, 'So, what does one do?' [Laughs] It was way before you're just gonna play your own music. I wouldn't have been that presumptuous with what was my music at that time. Yes, there was a lot of material but never organized or practiced in terms of presenting in public, just research about what you can do on a bass, which is still ongoing. So, I played one of Bach's cello suites all the way through, 35-minutes long! That was the first half of the concert. Bach, yeah, how pretentious can you get? After intermission, I played two contemporary pieces, one by Charles Whittenberg, and the other was a sonata written by my brother Peter for bassist Bertram Turetzky. I also played some improvisation at the end. It was a terrifying experience to do that, especially playing the Bach. From then on, slowly, things would happen, and I would be asked to play at festivals.

***Cadence: You've been presenting solo bass performances off and on for 50 years. You're hailed as a master of extended technique and free improvisation. What is your approach to a solo bass performance? Have you developed a process to present a set of music that interests you as well as the audience?***

Phillips: I do take the audience into consideration as far as how I dress, how I present myself in visual terms, and verbally with talking to the audience or not. I'm now only playing my music and doing it in pieces. I'm no longer playing 35-minutes straight with no break, mostly in consideration of the audience. It's easier for them if there are breaks where I can start all over again. It gives them a concentration break, it's easier for them as well as for me. Musically speaking, what I do is there are zones that you can look at as different techniques. I'm improvising from a technical approach that can lead me into an area of music that will let me be freely creative, as I am going to the end of my possibilities in that particular technique. It's always been like that for me and I find that the exciting part for people is not what you can do, but it's in that area between what you can't do and what you can do. When you start a piece in this area between controlled and non-controlled, you control it up to a certain point, and you know what you're doing, and there's this whole vast area out there where you don't know what you're doing, and you do not control. And when we go into there, we are very accident prone, and we are looking to absorb that and make it part of what we can do. That fragility there has a very interesting part for the public. The player who just plays into the non-control gets boring very quickly because when you're controlling things, you're putting things into some kind of form. When you go beyond what you can do, the form is impossible because you cannot control the materials. In the process, what I do is usually through a projection of listening into the future, to try and hear where I start in this repertoire that I have, which is based on different techniques.

Where do I start today? Then it's a question of a logic of going on of the moment, which is completely instinctive and unplanned. Yeah, that's the way I work.

**Cadence:** *Where does your concept of sound come from?*

Phillips: When I was a child, I'd have moments of self-hypnosis where you leave consciousness of where you are. As a kid I had these spaced-out moments. In my spaced-out moments, I was in the sound world in this autohypnosis stuff. I had a period of about three years when my family was living in southern Oregon in the countryside, where I spent a lot of time alone in the woods, and the hearing of sound became like second nature to me, and the spacing-out into the sound, which was a gift or whatever, it was something that nature gave to me to have access to this autohypnosis in the sound world. Much later on, I realized that this state was a different state of consciousness, like the Sufi's talk about. It's going into a zone where your intellectual processes are not being used, there's just the sound. Also, as a young man in my twenties, using marijuana and peyote, and by time I got to LSD, I already knew all about this sound world by having access to it, and being able to establish that this was real. It was not just a hallucinatory area of the mind. Now I have access to that with no drugs. It has become a disciplined thing that I go into when it's time to play music, it's the vehicle, for me. I don't have a problem with taking my sound as a magic carpet into an area where I can marvel at what's coming out. And there's no intellectual content, there's no thinking involved. It's a different function of the brain. I don't know enough about it to be more specific but I'm not the only one who thinks about this. I feel that what communicates to the public is the vital vibration of the performer when he is able to let go of his thinking, if you want to think of it that way, and let his vibration go into his sound. For me, it's letting my chi, my spirit, go into the sound. People like it because the person's vibration is in the sound. Now, this is all from reflection, it's not scientifically provable, [Laughs] but someday maybe it will be as we get closer with quantum theory.

**Cadence:** *Are you talking about or have you had out of body experiences while playing?*

Phillips: Yes, with and without drugs. It started happening for me when I was about twenty-six.

**Cadence:** *How often does that happen for you?*

Phillips: I would say today that it's something that I have an access to when I'm in this state of the sound world. I have access to it, but it frightens me and I don't want to go there. It was very interesting, for example, playing with Joe Maneri and his microtonal system. We played together without me having any initiation into his microtonality [system]. It was just – "No, you just play what you play." So, I played and sometimes I would get into his world where I had no further idea of tonally what I was doing. I had no relation to the tempered scale, and

that was a very uncomfortable situation for me. I would stay there as long as possible, but this detachment thing would start to happen, and I had to go play an open string and get my orientation back. I needed to stay rooted. The biggest experiences that I've had were not only through the sound world detachment but of not sleeping and going where that takes you when you don't sleep for four or five days and you just keep going.

**Cadence:** *Why weren't you sleeping for four or five days?*

Phillips: I was working all the time – working day and night. That was right in the period before I left California for New York.

**Cadence:** *You've talked before about the concept of playing what your ear suggests.*

Phillips: I have discovered that I have a sound memory bank that is enormous of so much stuff that has happened in the past in the zones that I control and the zones I don't control. There is also muscle memory to play the instrument, which is enormous and grows and grows. So, I decide the starting place and then in this non-intellectual zone where I am in the sound, there is information about form, how long does it last, it's all there. All experienced musicians know what the notes should sound like. Their ear tells them what it should sound like as when they read the notes off the score or tune their instruments. But when you take away the notes, and you just have the ear, it also suggests what to do, but not in a pre-ordered way. I play by ear. The ear takes me along, it tells where to go. So, I just try to do that.

**Cadence:** *In terms of mechanical obstacles presented by the instrument, what's been the most difficult thing you've needed to overcome on the bass in order to play what your ear hears?*

Phillips: The research is still going on and, for me, it's been with the bow. The bow is such a world unto itself, so the research goes on and on, regarding every aspect of the bow. Probably the biggest challenge for me is what do you do rhythmically with the bow? I'm coming from a Jazz background with my pizzicato, so I have a leading place that I'm quite comfortable with and it's okay with me. In my bow playing, I'm coming from the Classical world, that's not okay for me to start from there. I've had to find another way to personalize the bow technique but still the bow is such a challenge sound wise, to cover the whole palate of what the bow can do that it's endless for me.

**Cadence:** *How close are you performing always what your ear hears?*

Phillips: I'd say 95 percent.

**Cadence:** *Are there unique techniques or inventions that you've developed for bass playing?*

Phillips: I've no idea. You'd have to ask the other bass players about that.

**Cadence:** *How has your skill as an improviser improved or changed over the course of your career?*

Phillips: Well, when we look now back to that thing that was the first



record of bass improvised music, up to today where, my god, the number of solo bass recordings that have been done. Improvised or not improvised is not a subject for me. I'm a militant improviser but it was for social reasons, it had nothing to do with the music. That the music is speaking from the heart of the musician and that his heart is in there is the key to the sound that I'm looking for. When you're playing Classical music or Jazz, you have to respect the whole history of those musics and take a stance in the history and make your contribution. When you're doing your own music, you just have to respect yourself. Evolution is not so much about improvisation as it is about personalizing music, no matter what it is. The piano player playing Bach, who knows how many thousands on the planet are doing that? How many of them can you listen to and say that you know who they are by listening to them? It so personal in the touch and the phrasing, which is the big challenge for all the Classical soloists to do. The progress report for me is very positive.

**Cadence:** *What helped you the most to be a better improviser?*

Phillips: The more access that you have to materials that you can play, the more chance you have to be able to play with somebody else. Improvisation can be something you do at home alone but it's really about collective playing, and the more you can bring in materials that you master to the meeting with other musicians, the more possibilities we have to make things. So, to become a better improviser is to listen to more and more different musics, feel what's in there, and figure out how you would participate in that. I used to play along with Bartok on the phonogram when I was in Berkeley. Play along, listening to the bass part, and I would do the same thing with a Mozart string quartet. It was for the THRILL of playing along with these players and this great music, rather than doing some kind of research. I think the more that you can do, the more that you know in an intellectual way about what's going on, is very helpful to be an improviser, along with the techniques you learn.

**Cadence:** *In a past interview, you've said that you listen to what's going on in the room right before you take the stage so that you are, "Already hearing what's going on." Would you explain that concept?*

Phillips: It's just a matter of hearing in general. We turn on and off all the time. Like when it's noisy, the brain shuts down, so you don't hear the noise. Since my vehicle to getting on the magic carpet of playing in the sound world is my own sound, I have spent time to learning that. So, my listening to the room, listening to the environment, now we're not just doing our everyday listening where the brain is doing a lot of the work, I'm objectively listening. That's what that's about. Getting in tune to being in tune with myself.

**Cadence:** *So, if environmental sound is your guide to creativity, what effect did leaving behind big city life in New York City and London, in exchange for France's rustic Provence, have on your work?*

Phillips: That's interesting. I really couldn't say specifically. I was always coming back off the road, living in the countryside in a nice quiet environment. It's the same thing with light, the light of the day, the light of the night, between the city and the country. Once again, I'd have to say that you'd have to ask somebody else to do a comparison of my playing, but for me personally, coming back to where I lived for 45 years, I just moved this year, away from that situation and into the village, which is still just a rural village in the south of France. The quiet and the nature, and living in a non-push button environment, where I had to physically work for the water in and for the water out, and for the water not falling on your head through the roof, and to heat it, and to keep the garden going. You were physically and directly in touch with nature out of necessity. I lived with a spring on the property which is a wonderful contrast from going to Berlin or London. I'm sure that there are influences into the music from that.

**Cadence:** *You play what you hear. Do you play political music?*

Phillips: No.

**Cadence:** *We've talked about your solo bass playing but you've played in many different settings during the span of your career. Your 1971 duo bass album with Dave Holland, *Music from Two Basses*, is credited as one of the first, if not the first, double bass duet albums. How was to record in that setting?*

Phillips: We're back to Manfred Eicher and the very early days of the [ECM] label. I can't remember what number it was [number 11] but it was among the first dozen records that he made. Dave was touring with Circle and I was playing with The Trio and we would run into each other on the road. Both groups got booked to play in Hamburg, along with other people, and we did this radio production. So Dave and I were there playing side by side and in a break, Manfred came up and introduced himself. I had already met him in a Berlin club a year or two before when he was playing bass in a Jazz band. Dave had never met him, and Manfred told us he had a small label, which was news to me, and he said he'd love to have us make a duet recording. And Dave and I looked at each other and said, "Wow." [Laughs] Thought about it for about ten seconds and agreed.

**Cadence:** *What is your preferred performance situation?*

Phillips: The trio is the ideal number. The information that you can handle is very accessible and easy to control and keep going. As you get down to two, the duties are divided by two and as you get down to one, you've got a hundred percent.

**Cadence:** *Would you briefly touch on your childhood? What music was played in the house and what led you to music? Your brother Peter also chose a music career as a composer.*

Phillips: We lived in southern Oregon and in grammar school, I was in singing class at age 8. I had never seen a piece of music so I didn't know anything about the notes on the page, but the text was there, and I could

follow along and sing. After the first session the teacher in private said, "I see you can't read this." I was embarrassed and answered that that was correct. She said, "But your singing was wonderful." I was singing what's called a descant, it's over the top of everything. The teacher told my mother that I had an ear and I should study music. My brother, who is four years older than me, was already playing trumpet, and my mother said, "No, one kid in the family is enough." [Laughs] We ended up leaving Oregon and went back to California, to Palo Alto, a rich community. I started junior high school and the school had instruments, bands, and an orchestra. I've said many times that the bass chose me at around age 14. The instrumental teacher came and made a pitch to get recruits for her orchestra. She was going through the instruments to see who was interested and when she got to the double bass, my hand shot up and I saw my name on a theater marquee and a flash. In fact, my flash was so strong that my two rowdy friends next to me also raised their hands. They didn't hang in there but that's how I started. The music in the house was my brother's music. He played Bartok and Stravinsky and Jazz, all of which blew me away. There was always a little organ in the house that my mother played but only for infrequent singalong times. My brother was in a Dixieland band at the time and they didn't have a bass player, so I started playing in that band the same week I started playing Classical music, all this with no training. Incredible.

**Cadence:** *Your family advised you not to be a musician?*

Phillips: Yes, they weren't very happy with either of us being musicians, but that was just a stubborn father. Peter decided from the beginning and I didn't decide until I was 25.

**Cadence:** *What was the extent of your formal education on the instrument?*

Phillips: I took a couple of musical courses at Berkeley and I always played in the school orchestra, but I was self-taught. I tried when I was 21 to study. I went to the San Francisco Symphony and was able to take two lessons before I ended it. It wasn't possible, I couldn't do it, so I just kept on playing. I didn't actually have any tutoring until New York City, and that I wasn't looking for. I was very lucky when I got to New York and being accepted into the community and finding work quite rapidly. A lot of it due to my brother, who was already there, but not exactly. I didn't want him to help me, I didn't want to be the little brother being helped. He was involved with Gunther Schuller and the Third Stream movement as a young composer. He did help me in an indirect way as I ended up playing a little concert series with Gunther Schuller. I was second bass; the first bass was Richard Davis. After the series, Gunther thanked me and said, "I can see that there's a lot of this stuff that you don't know anything about, right? If you like, I can take you to a teacher." He took me to Fred Zimmerman, who was one

of the 3 or 4 top bass teachers at the time. I started with Fred, who was a wonderful man. After I played for him, he said, "Okay, let's start at zero." I didn't know anything from all my self-taught approach. I had the great fortune to work with Fred quite regularly for about a year and a half because I was new in New York and I wasn't that busy. Once I started getting more work, I saw him less and less, and into the third year of working with him, he passed away and I didn't look for another teacher. Shortly after that, I was in Europe. I had learned enough from Fred about the mechanics of the instrument, especially how the bow works, to carry on myself and continue working to develop my personal thing

**Cadence:** *Who were your early bass influences?*

Phillips: On the old records, I didn't pay attention to the bass at all. It was the ensembles. I was into Dixieland music so when there would be live Dixieland, my influences were whoever was playing. Just watching, seeing what they were doing. I had no teacher, so I watched how they were plucking the strings and what's the left hand doing? Dave Larrio was one of the main bassists I saw but I never had the nerve to go up to him and ask questions. I was impressed by Paul Chambers when he was playing with Miles. Of course, I had heard Slam Stewart and Major Holley. I liked what they were doing but it didn't turn me on. I listened to how they phrased things but didn't try to imitate them. With the bow I stayed within the Classical realm for the first 20 years.

**Cadence:** *Is there anybody who influences you on bass today?*

Phillips: Influence? Well, I see fascinating things happening. There's a Swedish bass player Nina de Heney who has a way of playing with the bow in a continual spiccato bouncing bow, that is fascinating to do. She does the bouncing bow, drawing it and pushing it back, and you can't hear the change of bow, just the continued bouncing going on at different intensities. It's a great, expressive thing but how on earth do you do that? But I'm not going to figure out how to do that or go get a lesson from Nina. That technique is her thing. I've discovered a few multiphonics by accident on the bass but there are published studies of that by a contemporary Norwegian bass player. Wow! I think I'm influenced by everybody. Another example is Stefano Scodanibbio, who developed artificial harmonic and true harmonic pizzicato and has had a big influence in Europe.

**Cadence:** *You played with trumpeter Don Ellis while you were in California. He was known as a very demanding leader who played very complicated time signatures. What do you recall from your time with him?*

Phillips: I met him early on when he was doing a workshop series, and anybody could come. I went hoping to participate in the new music and sure enough, 12 to 20 players showed up every Thursday afternoon in a loft. Anything went. It was an open workshop to try things. But

out of that came a group of people, including Don Friedman, that were interested in playing experimental music. That ended up with Don Ellis recommending me to play with him in a piece of Larry Austin's at the New York Philharmonic in 1964. Don Ellis was curious and great in that he was not one of the Jazz hip guys. He didn't talk with the Jazz language. He came from a Midwestern educational background and he was so open-minded at the time. His wife was a Midwest beauty queen, a really straight lady. They had two kids as I did so our two families did some social time together. He had exceptional talent. He was a great reader; he could read all the difficult contemporary stuff. Gunter Schuller was very happy to get him because he could improvise, he could play Jazz phrasing. Don was really just so in love with the experimental music stuff, which was quite unusual, and very comfortable for me.

***Cadence: Talk about performing as a soloist in the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein in 1964?***

Phillips: Bernstein did half of his music with contemporary music and the other half with the old war horses. Bernstein had chosen this piece by Larry Austin for orchestra and three improvising Jazz musicians as an example of the Third Stream stuff that was going on in the contemporary world. The piece had been premiered in a Gunter Schuller series in Washington, D.C. Don Ellis played the horn solo and the rhythm section was Sticks Evans and Richard Davis, because the bass and drum parts were very complicated and written. The improvising part was by the trio improvising freely on two cadenzas which linked the three movements together. The piece was coming to New York and I realize now that they didn't want two Afro Americans playing in the brand-new Lincoln Center. They were not happy with that possibility, so Don Ellis said he'd bring his guys, me and drummer Joe Cocuzzo. He didn't even check with us to see if we could read music because we weren't reading any music in his band! The music was very difficult. I had to work quite hard on it, but I got it together. I was studying with Zimmerman at the time, who was playing in the philharmonic. It was a week's worth of work. There was a piano concerto by Aaron Copland, who was alive and played the piano. Afterwards, Bernstein chose to record that piece, which became my first professional recording. I got a call - "This is Mr. Bernstein's office; he has decided to record the piece next Monday." 'Oh, yeah, I'll be there,' I said. [Laughs] I put down the phone and said, 'Oh my God, Bernstein wants you to record.' We still had to hassle for the money, they didn't want to pay anything. They gave in easily because we weren't really asking for anything out of the ordinary.

***Cadence: Did you have personal contact with Bernstein?***

Phillips: A few times, offstage. For example, we would be together before he would go on, and then the soloists would come in afterwards. He was nervous. He had some special cat's eye cufflinks,

and he had a thing going on due to his nervousness, of massaging one of his cufflinks. And I mentioned something about that to him and broke his trance. He did not like that. [Laughs] To see the way the orchestra treated him was very interesting during the rehearsal periods. He had to learn so much music, it was almost inhuman to be able to do that, so there would be little mistakes, and as soon as he would make any kind of mistake, somebody from the core of the orchestra would say, "Hey, Lenny, in measure 124, that's a B-flat, man!" That's how they treated him, and he had to take it. I don't know how many people would dare do that, but there was one. On one break, I was back with the bass players because my teacher was there. I'm meeting the guys and there was this old man, an enormous Italian man with an enormous bass, Carlo was his name. Then the break was over and they're going to play some Mendelssohn. And Carlo said, "Hey, Barre, why don't you go? You play for me," and Zimmerman said, "Yeah, come on." So, I go out with Carlo's enormous bass to play the rehearsal and we start playing. Bernstein looks over, sees me there, stops the orchestra and [Laughs] shouts, "Carlo, get your ass out here! You," pointing to me, "get the fuck out of here!" [Laughs] He didn't want anyone messing with his rehearsals. Eventually, some nasty stuff happened. We played the Larry Austin piece, it's over, the week of performances is over, and Bernstein told us on the last night that after the concert is over, because our piece was the last on the program, he wanted us to go down with him to the green room for a reception. So, the three of us were there, along with Larry Austin, Bernstein, and three of his assistants. We got into the elevator to go down to the green room and Bernstein said, "While you're here, I've decided I'd like to do the piece on my national TV program and the dates are so and so." I looked at my schedule book, and for the rehearsal, I'm going to be in San Francisco playing in another band on tour. And I said, 'Oh, I might have a little problem with the rehearsal,' and Bernstein turned to one of his assistants and said, "Get another bass player." That was it. So, I was out, and they got Richard Davis back for that gig. [Laughs] I was young in town, I didn't know that you don't do that, at least not with the maestro there. Everyone there was shocked, except for the assistants. Larry Austin was coughing, and Don Ellis and Joe were like, "Jesus, that's cold." And Bernstein wouldn't even look at me anymore after that. [Laughs] A little bit of an ego problem with the big director boss.

**Cadence:** *You came to New York City and played with many interesting and influential players. One was Hungarian guitarist Atilla Zoller.*

Phillips: I met him through Don Friedman. We started playing together in New York City and did three European tours together in trio with Don Friedman. Atilla was a good businessman. He had some film scores and we made and a quartet record with Daniel Humair of Atilla's compositions called *Horizon Beyond*. We played a lot in

Hungary. Atilla loved to laugh, he had a very great belly laugh. He didn't drink more than the rest of us. He didn't smoke dope. His story is very interesting. He went from Hungary to Vienna. He came through the wall with his guitar on foot illegally. He showed up in Vienna and said, "Here I am. I want to play." He was a good player and the Jazz community, including Joe Zawinul, welcomed him into the Viennese scene, so he was able to have access to the West by jumping ship from Hungary in the old days when the walls were still up. He was a straight-ahead Jazz player that wrote some very nice themes that are angular and interesting.

**Cadence:** *Did you have a Coleman Hawkins connection?*

Phillips: Oh, you'd like some Coleman Hawkins stories? [Laughs] That's great. This was my first tour in Europe, 1964, and I'm playing in the George Russell Sextet. One of the concerts was in Bordeaux. We shared the stage with the Swing All Stars, which included Coleman Hawkins, Sweets Edison and old man Jo Jones. They came from the States without a bass player. Jimmy Woode, who knew the repertoire and was living in Europe, was supposed to be the bass player half the time during their tour, and the other half of the time just with a local bass player. Jimmy Woode did not show up in Bordeaux, so I was asked if I minded playing in their band. I said, 'No, not at all.' I'd grown up on that repertoire, so it was comfortable to play with them. But I'm a modern guy, I'm 10 to 15 years younger than them. I am not from their school. I'm not playing just the root and the fifth, I'm playing along like I'm playing lines, and I hear Coleman Hawkins playing with me while the rest of the rhythm section is doing the standard thing. We weren't taking it far out or anything. It's staying in the form, but I hear the horn player listening to the bass player and I thought that was amazing. [Laughs] So, the next day, which was a day off, both bands were to go to Brussels on the train which left Bordeaux at 8 in the morning. But the only people there to catch the train from these two bands were Coleman Hawkins, Harry Edison and me. So, we travel the long haul up through Paris to Brussels, and the quart of cognac is out by 9 AM. They were just hanging out and they included me. We had fun together and we hung out that night in Brussels in a club with Roland Kirk. So, the next day, it's soundcheck time and I'm hanging out in the dressing room with his band. We were sitting in there, shooting the shit. [Laughs] The quart of cognac is out again. The rumors about him drinking a bottle of cognac or brandy a day are true! [Laughs] But he never got drunk. Jimmy Woode was not due there that day, it was to be a local guy. So, here comes the producer with a guy and says, "Mr. Hawkins, this is Mr. Benoit Quersin, your bass player for tonight." And Bean looked at him and looked at me and said, "Bass," he called me "Bass," "don't you want to play with me tonight?" And I said, 'Yeah, yeah, sure but Bean, I don't have a bass.' I didn't have a bass; I was playing whatever bass was there on the tour. Bean said, "Well, Mr. Benoit, you've got a bass, right?"

Do you mind if “Bass” plays your bass?” [Laughs] So, I played a second set with him. There must be a film of this concert and it would be a real kick for me to be able to see that. It was so much fun for me. It was a chance experience and it was very nice that he dug it and wanted me to play with him a second time.

***Cadence: You hung out with Roland Kirk, Coleman Hawkins and Sweets Edison in Brussels?***

Phillips: It was late night in a bar without a band and Roland Kirk showed up. He was also playing on the festival. He was alone and knew the guys. He said to Sweets in his squeaky voice, “Hey, Harry, you got anything to smoke?” Sweets reached into his pocket and said, “Shit, where’s my stash?” And Roland said, “You looking for this?” He’d picked his pocket. [Laughs] Later on in the evening, he picked Harry Edison’s watch without him knowing. He was a blind pickpocket, man! [Laughs] He was so funny. He’s doing these jokes. It got to be real late, and everyone’s pretty drunk and it’s time to go. One of the Belgium guys offers his car to get us to the hotel and Roland says, “I’m gonna drive.” We said, “Oh, sure Roland, right.” A drunk Roland Kirk driving the narrow streets of Brussels, right? [Laughs] Everyone agreed, and he gets in behind the wheel and he’s shown where the stuff is. He starts up the car and he starts driving and everyone is laughing and carrying on. It’s a very narrow one-car, one-way street and there’s no parking there. He slows down at the cross street and drives down to the next corner, very slowly, gets to the corner and said, “That’s enough of this. I don’t feel like driving anymore,” and got out. He was able to drive the car drunk, by ear, using the reflection off the walls using the sound of the motor to keep himself balanced. He had stereo going from the reflection off the buildings and when he came to the cross street, he could hear that there’s no buildings and he could hear that there was nobody coming.

***Cadence: You had no reservations about being in a car driven by a drunk blind man?***

Phillips: [Laughs] No, not being with these guys. Everybody was drunk. No, he stayed in first gear, going ten miles an hour. He wasn’t speeding down a freeway. [Laughs]

***Cadence: You also played with Jimmy Giuffre.***

Phillips: That also happened through Don Friedman. The two years that I played with Jimmy were wonderful. He lived just down the block, on East 97th Street. He had no work, nobody was hiring him for gigs, and he was writing a book at home on arranging. The years I played with him, we would rehearse regularly with Don Friedman, doing his music and improvising. He recorded every session we did together. Jimmy was very open so when I was free, and didn’t have babysitting duties, and had practiced enough, and didn’t have some other rehearsal, I would go to Jimmy’s house to play or listen to music. He’d ask me things like how I warmed up on the bass and basic technical stuff to help his arranging knowledge and he also applied it to the



clarinet.

**Cadence:** *Later in your career, good timing led to you touring with Ornette Coleman, beginning at the 1975 Bologna Jazz Festival when Charlie Haden was suddenly called away for the birth of his triplets and you were present to fill in for him.*

Phillips: I had met Ornette before in 1958, before either of us had gone to New York. It was in Sausalito, in the Bay Area. John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet had been performing in Los Angeles and had met Ornette and Don [Cherry]. Lewis invited them to come up to San Francisco where the MJQ was playing at the Black Hawk. He wanted to talk with Ornette more about his system and what he was doing. Ornette came and there was a meetup on the Sunday day off, and my brother, who was in touch with John Lewis, was informed about this meeting and was invited. He told me to come along as well, so I did. Ornette was there and he tried to do some playing with Connie Kay and Percy [Heath] but it was not happening at all, [Laughs] it just didn't work. But John Lewis did not participate in that, they were just talking. I met Ornette a second time in Berkeley, in 1962 and he was very instrumental in my leaving California and going to New York. He came and sat in with the band I was in. We played Jazz cover tunes by Horace Silver, Dave Brubeck, Miles, the songs that were going on those days, plus some original tunes, and some songs of Ornette's. This was a very low period for Ornette, before he went to stay in Europe. He was fed up with the scene in the States. He couldn't believe that he was so popular and had earned no money yet. Who's got his money? [Laughs] He was starting to learn that part of the life. His girlfriend, at the time, Eve, was the cousin of the piano player in the band I was playing with, and she brought Ornette, who had his horn, and he sat in with us. After the set, we thanked each other and he said, "That's great but why do you guys play this school music?" The piano player and I agreed that he was absolutely right and a week later the band was dead after being together for a year. [Laughs] After meeting Ornette, that was it, and within two months, I was in New York. So, 1975 comes and Charlie is not gonna be there for the gig. I was there with The Trio and the organizer comes and says, "Ornette wants to see you" and took me to their dressing room. Ornette said, "Barre, it's your dream come true. I want you to play with me tonight. Will you play?" So, I did, and it was STRONG, a marvelous experience with Dewey Redman and Eddie Blackwell. The level of energy was right up high, right away. Boom! Boom! Yeah, sink or swim, baby! [Laughs] It was wonderful.

**Cadence:** *Ornette later asked you to play on the Naked Lunch soundtrack he was working on in 1991. What are your memories from that time?*

Phillips: I was in Paris around the birth of my granddaughter by my daughter Claudia. The phone rang and it was friends of Ornette's who told me that Ornette would like me to come to England to record with

him. I asked when it was, and they said it was tomorrow. [Laughs] New York style, right? I wasn't going to say no to that, so I said, 'Goodbye baby, see you later.' I didn't have my bass with me, so the question was do I run home to get my instrument, because I'm 500 miles away. I made some phone calls and arranged to borrow a bass from Ron Mathewson. I went and had a day to get it together. I bought a set of strings, a bow, and a chunk of rosin. I took this beautiful English bass back to my room and went to bow it and the bass said, "What are you doing to me? I don't understand that at all." I guess Ron didn't play that bass with a bow; he was a Jazz bass player. The bass hadn't been bowed in, Lord knows how long, and it didn't want to know about that. And we're starting tomorrow, I don't have three weeks to teach the bass how this works. You gotta do it now, so, we'll see what happens. So, of course, what happened was that the very first thing to record with Ornette was, "Okay, Barre, you start with the bow." [Laughs] Way up high and fast! It was really funny, and it's on the record as well. The bass said, "Okay, if that's what it has to be, that's what it has to be." It was a beautiful experience playing with Ornette in the studio, in a calm and orderly situation. There were some very telling things going on, and since he's passed away, I suppose I can tell one Ornette story. The parts for the orchestra had been done previous to my coming there, so that wasn't stuff to be done. They were not happy with how it sounded on Ornette's improvising with the orchestra. He had been playing separately in a booth, so they were gonna overdub on the orchestra and try to do a better version for them. They didn't have the orchestra come back and play, they used the orchestra tapes. And Ornette, he played sharp, he often played above the pitch. Mostly in Jazz, you go under the pitch, but Ornette went over the pitch, a lot, especially in the high register. I was there in the studio with the crew and they're recording Ornette, who's down in the studio. They played it back, and the composer Howard Shore, who had a good relationship with Ornette, said, "Ornette, it's sharp, it's out of tune. Let's try it again." They try it again and it's out of tune, man. So, finally, Howard goes down with a tuner to look at the tuning and they try it again. And again, he tells him it's out of tune. Ornette tried it again and he nailed it, right in tune, and Howard said, "That's it!" Ornette asked to hear it and then said, "That ain't my sound!" [Laughs] So, what we hear on the recording is Ornette, that high playing. That was very telling. Moments like that with Ornette I enjoyed very much. Those kind of native, folksy response to things came out, rather than the system that he had that nobody ever really understood – the harmolodics. From the early times that I got to spend with Ornette in California, I was able to better understand Ornette's thing about his system. I think he was a native player, like a folk musician, playing by ear in a very native way. He had intelligence but it was kind of folk intelligence. As little as I knew him, I think that he got together that system to be somebody who has a system. That's

just a personal opinion, that's what it felt like. Ornette was a really funny guy, he had humor. He told a lot of funny stories and his outlook on life – looking at things and turning them that other way. He was ironic but never sarcastic. One time he told me, “When I had the bass right, that's when I was playing with Scott [LaFaro] and Charlie. The two basses because one could play the bass and the other could play the bass.” I thought, ‘Whoa.’ [Laughs] I quickly understood what he was saying, knowing the two players, right?

***Cadence: You moved to Europe in 1967 and ended up in The Trio with John Surman and Stu Martin which became a very influential band that played over 400 concerts. What made The Trio so special?***

Phillips: Looking back at it, I can't really say what it was in a social-political way, but in a musical way, John was coming from diatonic music. His roots were in the church as a child. I would say where I appealed to John was in the harmonic and melodic thing that we built, because it was going back to earlier than Jazz for him. Because of the harmonies and the scales involved in there, it was somewhere between Jazz and an older music, like plainsong. He enjoyed the comfort of that. The familiarity of that, the feeling of homeness with that, especially with bowed bass and bass clarinet, which we loved to do together. We improvised melodically together and moved around, shifting harmonies. We created with two voices. And then on the other side, the wild man, the savageness of Jazz in Stu. He was a great Jazz drummer, and he adapted to this kind of free playing readily. I knew Stu from New York but it hadn't been on the free Jazz scene at all. It had been in Jazz, mostly big bands. So, I think it was the wild part. I listened to those old records and said, ‘My God, we were ferocious.’ When the ferocious part happened, it shouted! John was powerful and Stu was right there – “Let's go higher and further,” and I'm right there, filling in the gaps, as best I can. Because Stu was such a great Jazz drummer, that playing tempo together was not a problem like you could have in Europe a lot of times, trying to hook up with a drummer, because of style. Stu was a real Jazz drummer so he could play tempos no matter where it's at. Super-fast or slow-slow, we could always feel very comfortable together, rhythmically. The elements that I tried to bring into the music was a more open contemporary thing that did not work so well. John wasn't that comfortable with them and for Stu it was, language-wise, too foreign, even though they were simple things to understand, they were not so simple to do. It was areas more abstract, more quasi contemporary music that aren't documented on the records. I think we could have developed my part of it more, but that was cool. I think the elements were that these guys could rave but they also could play traditionally and the two-voice thing between me and John was appealing to a lot of the younger players. I mean, how many of these guys have I met that say, “Man, that's what we listened to. That was the happening stuff.” I say, ‘Okay,’ but we surely didn't know that then.

[Laughs]

**Cadence:** *Why did you locate to the South of France in 1972? That's not exactly a musical hotspot.*

Phillips: No, not at all. It's an easy enough story actually. I came to the south of France to do a theater production for Antoine Bourseiller. He asked me to do a different theater production in Marseille where I was the musical director, composer and bass player. The production was to last one year. At the time, I was a newlywed with my current wife, and she had two children with her. We were newly together and didn't have a place after living in Paris and then Belgium. We decided it would be great if we could stay in the South of France and this place came up. We tried it and have stayed there for 45 years!

**Cadence:** *Would you talk about your early years in France's Provence region and how you came to settle at your castle residence in Puget-Ville? When you arrived, it was abandoned and overrun with vegetation you had to clear.*

Phillips: That was not an uncommon situation in the European scene. Castles and the villages around the castles were abandoned and the people moved down into the plains where it was flat. Especially when the railroads were finally put in in the 19th century and there were not so many wars. The site where we lived goes back to the Middle Ages. There had been three waves of cultures up into the Renaissance, so we were the fourth one, [Laughs] coming into the mix in the modern times. It was such a wonderful place to live. Yes, it had been abandoned for a long time. There was lots of overgrowth, but you could get to it by road, and it wasn't that far out lost in the boonies. It's just, as so often happens, the old historical stuff just didn't interest the locals that much to keep it up. But because of the Catholic church and the chapel that was there [next to the house], it had been kept operational for pilgrimages once or twice a year to go up to the old chapel. And this house, which was not from the Middle Ages, but built in the 17th century, and then in the 18th or possibly even the early 19th century, had been modified so that it was actually right against the outer wall of one side of this chapel. It had also been kept up, more or less, through the years, so it wasn't completely falling down, whereas the 60 odd houses that were in the village, were all down on the ground. The majority of the castle was down on the ground too, except for one wall that was ready to fall. It was all abandoned. When they would leave these villages, they would take their roof tiles with them to rebuild down low. As soon as the roofs are gone, the rain does the rest of bringing the rest of the house down. They were put together with poor mortar.

**Cadence:** *You had to chop wood for fuel?*

Phillips: Right, there was no electricity for the first ten years. The house I lived in was considered part of the chapel Ste. Philomene because it was attached to it. In France all the Catholic churches and

other buildings belong to the state. The city is part of the state and they “administer” these buildings, but the church has retained the right to say what can happen or not in consecrated buildings since the deal that was made in 1905. It’s a complicated situation and the “war” between church and state is still present in French life. I never owned where I lived, I was allowed to live there with the understanding that I would maintain it.

***Cadence: In 2014 you founded the association European Center for Improvisation (CEPI) which is apparently the only organization dedicated to creation via improvisation combining artists, as well as others in all walks of life, including researchers, mathematicians, physicists, philosophers, etc.***

Phillips: It has to do with local politics. My vision of what this place (the site called Haute-Ville where the chapel and house are located) could be, from the very get-go, when I first saw it in the early ‘70s, was that there could be an artist center there for people to come and work at. I rapidly found out as I got to know the people and the local government, that if I wanted to do it all alone, it might be possible to do, but I wasn’t going to get any help. So, with all the rest of my life to do, I just put that on the backburner. Then in early 2014, the town government changed, probably the first new direction since the Second World War. These people were listening to me, they wanted to know. The new mayor came with the cultural attaché a few days after they were elected and spent an afternoon there as I laid out my plans. They were interested. From their interest to their refusal to do it took two and a half years. For something like that to happen, you have to start at the village level. The village has to be in agreement or politically the thing is not gonna work at all. It needs authorization and funding. I’m an old man but if I could have gotten this thing started, there would have been money to find younger people to actually do all the necessary work. In 2016, while I was waiting for the government to decide, I held the first conference in the village about improvisation. I found the money through private sources without public funding to put on a three-day conference. It wasn’t a festival but a professional conference. I’ve done it three years in a row, first featuring Franco-Italian, then Franco-German, and last year Franco-Swiss. The thing is growing but still, it was only 50 people last year. Now that I’ve moved away from Haute-Ville, and the place is going back to the city, the city will do whatever they’re going to do with it, which is not going to be to make it an international art center. [Laughs] The conference is again going on this September, taken over by György Kurtág Jr. to do the artistic direction. The Germans are talking that they would like to do one, and there’s another place in France that would like to do one and a place in Italy. Eventually, it will be nomadic instead of coming to a single place.

***Cadence: What’s life like in the South of France? What’s a regular day***

***in Puget-Ville for Barre Phillips?***

Phillips: A regular day in Puget-Ville? I'm a get up early guy, so I'm up at 6 o'clock and I go out on the street to the bakery, pick up a fresh baguette, and maybe a couple of sweeties or some pain au chocolat, and come on back. My wife sleeps later than that. I'm still settling into the new place. There's a lot of work to do and I'm not in a hurry to do it. I'll practice and I spend about two hours a day on the internet, just with the correspondence. I don't do Facebook or any of the other social media things, not because I'm against it, I'm just not prepared to put more time into the computer – answering emails and booking flights for the work that I do. I don't have an agent or a secretary to do all that stuff, and I never have. I've now been doing the cooking in our household for a couple years, so I have to get that together. My wife does the cleaning up.

***Cadence: What's your specialty?***

Phillips: My specialty is an enchilada sauce to die for, [Laughs] that's what the locals know me for. I also make some dynamite refried beans that are always a big hit too.

***Cadence: When's the last time you played a Jazz standard?***

Phillips: [Long pause] It was with Paul Bley in the '90s on a duo improvise gig and right in the middle of the playing, he burst into "Spring Will Really Hang You Up the Most." He played through one chorus of it and then on to other things. I think that was the last standard I played, and it was so fun to do that because it's been so long since I played standards that I don't remember the changes. I used to know the songs and the changes, normal stuff for a Jazz musician, but here we were, and I had no idea what key he was playing in or what the original key is. I knew the melody to the song, but here we were, playing it in a whole new way, completely improvising the bass part as though we were playing something else melodic that I was improvising along with.

***Cadence: You had a long history with Paul Bley.***

Phillips: Yes, I did, going back to my very earliest days in New York when he was not working with a bass player. I got to New York in August of '62 and it took me about three months after I arrived there to even put my nose out in the street. It was like, 'Wooo.' I met him and invited me to his place to play together. I'd go to his house and we played duo. We did a very little bit of work together at that time. Paul was the first musician I had played with who came to what I was playing and I felt that he was taking me in his arms, like you would take a child in your arms, not a baby, but a child that you cared about. The warmth, the giving comfort of what he was playing with what I was playing. It was like an invitation – go, play, go. Without saying any of that, it was only through the music. That started to open me up, let my ear run the show. That was wonderful. It started there, and through the years he'd call me up for a gig, mostly duo, and our

story would continue. And then Steve Lake came along and proposed these recordings with Evan Parker that we did for ECM and there the story got thicker and richer. Paul had such marvelous reactions to my propositions in the harmonic world, and when I would leave the harmonic melodic world and go out into space, he was right there too. He could do all of that and do it so well. Wow! Offstage, he was a real character, [Laughs] a real character, and I loved him for it, even though sometimes it caused some big problems. [Laughs]

***Cadence: How many basses do you own and what's the history behind them?***

Phillips: We've been here for several hours, isn't that great? I love telling stories. At the moment, I have two basses. My first bass happened when I was in junior high school. I was playing with the school's bass until my mother went to the Methodist church and there was a bass hanging around in the back room that she bought for 25 bucks. Nobody knew what that bass was doing there. We took it to the local luthier and he got it working again, and that was my first bass. From there on, the basses continued to come to me. I never looked for a bass, they always just came to me. I had seven basses at the house, which were too many to store, so I've sold some. I've found basses abandoned in odd places. I got one in Marseille while I was working in the theater production with Antoine Bourseiller. I was using the local guy to work on my bass and I walked in one day or some strings and there's this funny wooden box that was smaller than a bass box and it had a little bass in it with three strings. He said some people had found it in their attic and they wanted to sell it, but it wasn't worth anything. I bought it for 100 bucks. Stuff like that. All these basses coming to me, most of them needing work. I found one in the Paris flea market in 1970 that needed a lot of work, but it turned out to be a wonderful bass. All those early recordings of The Trio were made on that bass and now my bass-player son uses it. The bass that I travel with now was bought brand new seven years ago. It comes from a bass maker, Jean Auray I've been working with for over twenty years. It comes apart in two pieces and goes in a flight case that's a very reasonable size. I love the instrument, so I was able to give up the wonderful basses that I had. I had a very big five-string bass that I used on a lot of my recorded music from the '80s and '90s. It's now in Prague with a younger player, Jiri Slavik. Another was an old French bass which is in Vermont. Other basses are in San Francisco, with my son-in-law, and in Norway. They've all found new homes in such a way that I was quite happy with the situation. I've also had two carbon fiber instruments that were made here, very near to where I live.

***Cadence: Your children are also artists.***

Phillips: Yes, two of the four. They have the talent and the drive to do it. David is a bass player. His mother and I split up when he was young. He came to live with me in Europe for a few years and I gave

him one or two lessons. I showed him how the bow worked, and he got that right away, [Laughs] instantly. He went back to New York and went to school at the Mannes school (where he studied with Homer Mensch) for four years and then he went to Julliard for grad school (under Eugene Levinson) for three years. He did the whole gamut for the Classical music scene. He does occasional Classical music work but that's not his first choice. He's making his living on Broadway. He's first call with The Book of Mormon. My daughter Claudia was a natural born performer as a little kid and just continued on from there. She came to stay with me after high school, so she's been in France since she was 18. She first worked as a singer and was on the charts for six or seven years on the '80s European Pop scene working with the big record companies and doing all the television and touring with all that Pop music stuff, until she had a baby. When my granddaughter Zoe was born, and Ornette invited me to London in 1991, she threw in the towel on being a Pop star because, more and more, she was not happy with doing bubblegum music and working with the bubblegum industry. She proposed to them, a more adult approach to her product, still in the line of Pop music but no more bubblegum, and they said, "Thank you very much, good luck. Goodbye." She was offered the job of being on the judging panel of the European The Voice show but she said no. She'd done a lot of television by then and knew that world pretty well inside out. She has now gone from a performer-recording artist to doing vocal teaching at a studio in Paris that is used by a lot of producers who need their newest Pop stars to learn how to sing and to be on stage. She is a pedagogical advisor there and she has a second job in the French education system. She's also the secretary of the European Voice Teacher's Association. She's running around Europe with a super active life.

***Cadence: What are your interests outside of music?***

Phillips: Number one is sleep, rest and reflection is number one. I've spent a lot of time organizing things for other people. I started in the early '90s in the village to help organize for mostly Pop musicians to have a place to play and I moved on to be the president and the artistic director of a very big weeklong bass festival that was held in Avignon. Outside of music, I play an internet game Words with Friends with my kids every day for about half an hour. It's internet Scrabble. I don't do sport or hunting or fishing. More and more, I spend time hanging out with my wife. I enjoy the cooking, but it has not become a passion. There's nothing that I enjoy doing outside the home. I'm a homebody.

***Cadence: The final questions have been given to me by other artists to ask you:***

***Barry Guy (bass) said: "Since I have had the great pleasure to work with Barre on many occasions, I guess there exists a "no question situation." I love Barre's bass playing, and the man himself, of course. He is a kind of guru figure in the sense that he has an understanding***



*of time, space, and color that is a lesson to us all. To ask a question would seem superfluous. However, if you really need something to kickstart a dialogue, maybe you could ask Barre about his relationship to dance. I have worked with many dancers and found the experience liberating. Maybe Barre found the same?"*

Phillips: Wow, that's interesting that Barry would ask that. That's great, yeah, because we haven't talked about dance at all. I ran into dance accidentally around 1970. I was living in Paris and one of my mates at the time, Michel Portal, got a call from a producer to come play for some dancers. They were Americans, so Michel invited me because he said his English was poor. The choreographer for the company was new in Paris, although she was very well known as a dancer. Her name was Carolyn Carlson. It did not work out for us to do something with that company, but I had met Carolyn and her mate, and we became friends because I knew Paris a bit and could speak more French than they could. And then she got a job at Fête de l'Humanité, which is the big annual French Communist Party celebration every September in Paris. She had a show to put together for that, so we worked together as a duo, starting in 1971. I later worked with her again in 1974 in Avignon and eventually she was named to form a company at the Paris Opera, a dance research group inside the Paris Opera. She called me up and said, "Barre, we are now going to perform in the Paris Opera so get your suitcase together." I ended up working with her there for six years. To get back to Barry's question, I had always done music as music, but now with the dancers, I was doing the music with a whole visual thing going on. Working at the Paris Opera, I started by learning the choreography and made up my own music to it. It progressed and I became more involved with the dance itself, moving on stage like a musician with the bass. I started to learn about the power of music in relationship to the image. Communication-wise, I'm not talking about decibels and turning up the volume, it's possible to detract from the visual perception by the frequencies, and the amount, and how you're playing. The balance between the aural and the visual is a very delicate thing to do. You can relatively easily wipe out the visual part for the spectators, which was not my intent at all because this woman was, and still is, an unbelievable performer. It had to be very balanced. That really opened my eyes and my ears to projecting the power of music, which I was not aware of previous to working with the dance. I learned the deep communication possible with music by working with the dancers.

*Joëlle Léandre (bass) said: "I have known Barre for so long and we've done so much different stuff together, not only to play in duo but also to record and play in different bands and projects including a totally crazy bass spectacle a long time ago at the American Center with a lot of basses on stage! I first heard Barre at age 15 in my birth city Aix-en-Provence. I was a student at the conservatory and Barre was giving a*

*solo concert in town. I was there and it was so new for me to listen to this kind of solo! We all learned from Barre, he is such an important musician, not only as a bass player, but as a human being and a sage! Here's something just for Barre, my colleague, my brother, that will make him laugh. It's a question just for bass players. - Dit cher Barre, dans le train, quand tu dois aller manger un bout quelque chose, tu t'absentes...que fais tu de ta basse?"*

*["Say dear Barre, on the train, when you have to eat something, you must leave your spot. What are you doing with your bass?"]*

Phillips: So, when you have to go eat something on the train, where do you put your bass? Well, I trust in the Gods. [Laughs] My friend, Tetsu Saitoh, who unfortunately passed away two days ago, used to chain his bass up in the train with a padlock. I don't do that, but I don't go and eat the food there, I get the food and bring it back to my seat.

*Urs Leimgruber (saxophones) asked: "What do you think about your own sound space and how important is it for you?"*

Phillips: Oh, your own sound space is where everything is coming from, it's your center. With us instrumentalists, it's with the instrument. It's a definite space. The first development before playing together with others is that you are feeling good with your space, and that is a thing between you, yourself, that day, the acoustics of the room, and the condition of the instrument at that time. A good part of the professional thing is to suss out what is going on and make whatever adjustments are necessary so that you're comfortable with the sound space. Then from there we can go and play with the others. Some days it happens just like that, it's just left over from the day or week before. In 2015, I was sick and didn't play for four months, and when I finally picked up the bass again, with no more muscles and callouses, after not having touched the instrument for four months, it was right there. It was the next note from the last one I had played four months before. I didn't know what was gonna happen after not even listening to music for four months. Sometimes it goes right on and sometimes you have to make it anew. You have to know how to do that. When you're comfortable with that, then you have something to give.

*Jacques Demierre (piano) asked: "After so many years of playing purely acoustic with you in trio, I also enjoyed very much your amplified bass on our last tour. How would you describe the new sound space created by the arrival of Thomas Lehn on electronics in the Leimgruber-Demierre-Phillips trio?"*

Phillips: The physical sound space has become much bigger in space-volume and richer. It's like the trio without electronics, sometimes it would be very loaded and full of sounds, but with the addition of the electronics, the space has become larger no matter how small the acoustic space that you're in. It's become quite larger and the sound spectrum has opened up for all three of us in the original trio. This

is our 20th year to play together and we've gone through a lot of soundscapes and different areas of sound because these two musicians are so creative. I'm so at home with them. They're not stuck in a rut.

**Peter Brötzmann (reads) said:** *"A question for Barre? No idea. What do you dream about?"*

Phillips: [Laughs] I had a dream period early on, fifty years ago, when I was working on my dreams and remembering them. I was constructing things with my dreams, telling them to my analyst.

[Laughs] And then I got bored with it and I shut it off because it's like a discipline. I could easily remember my dreams as a young person. Today I remember very little of my dreams and there's usually some kind of anguish involved. I did military service years ago, and after I finished 22 months of the army, for one month straight I had horrible, anguished dreams about military things that had to get cleaned out of my subconscious. But in modern times, the anguish dreams involve the instrument being broken or lost.

**Hans Koch (reads) asked:** *"It's a long time ago but I'd like to know what you think about the period with John Surman and Stu Martin and how your musical attitude changed as a result of that time together."*

Phillips: That time together was very important for me because I was able to experience having a clear voice in a music early in my "career." I didn't feel that previously. In New York, playing with Bley, I was too much of a baby in that situation to feel the presence on the outside. But working with John and Stu, it was a very collaborative group, everybody with his capabilities. The compositional parts were basically shared between John and I, and they were immediately put into practice. There was an evolution of the old way of having a set, to eventually having no set up at all. You just know the material so well that you can bring it out when you think it's needed and bring everybody together on that material, because it was so familiar to each other. So, the developing of my individuality in a collective setting started to flourish there with John Surman and Stu. That was important because my voice was coming out and it was an important part of The Trio.

**John Surman (multi-instrument) asked:** *"I remember you doing some very interesting stuff with electronic effects - especially in the context of your work with dance. Does any of that electronic stuff interest you these days?"*

Phillips: I've given away most of the gear that I had because my electronic time was in the '80s, the analog days. It was basically done with Terje Rypdal who was heavily into the electronics thing - playing with that kind of amplification and sound treatment. Now with Thomas Lehn coming on the scene, for the bits that he's played in the trio with Urs and Jacques, I was looking around and I found my old Yamaha Rex50, which is a sound processor. I dusted it off and I think

I will get there again to using it. Bringing along the amplification equipment, that I still had, to play with Jacques and Urs, was fun. In the meantime, maybe four years ago, I played a duo concert at a festival with Keijo Haino. We had played together in Japan on numerous occasions, there's even a couple of records with Keijo. But it was never in a physical situation where he could play electrical guitar full out. This festival was out in the open so he could play full out, and it was a marvelous experience, although it was way too loud. I had worn an earplug on only one side, I should have worn two sides. [Laughs] But what was going on in this super loud music, in my kind of musical terms of pitches and rhythms, was unbelievable. A very rich musician, it was great. I'd do it again for the musician, not for the volume.

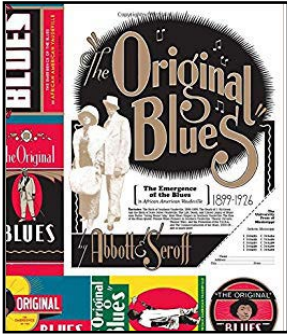
*Evan Parker (saxophones) said: "Barre is a very special individual. I can't think of a question but one very clear memory from about fifty years ago is walking home from a gig at the Little Theatre Club, sharing the first half of my walk to Kilburn with Barre's walk to Holland Park. Barre had a wheel on his bass, the first one I had seen at that point. It was raining very hard and we were soon soaking wet. Smiling broadly, Barre said, "I dig weather.""*

Phillips: [Laughs] I do remember that. As I said, I came to London to do something outside of music. In New York, I had talked with David Eisenon, who had spent time with Ornette in London, about what to do in London for the couple months that I was to be there. I wanted to know how it worked. He gave me the number of a journalist there who had been helpful to him and Ornette. I called him from the airport, and he gave me an address which turned out to be John Stevens' house, the John Stevens from the Spontaneous Music Ensemble. We hung out for a bit. He knew who I was and was happy to give me a hand to do things and get oriented. He said, "Oh, and now I have to drive into town because we're playing tonight. Would you like to come along?" We drove down to Soho to the Little Theater Club. I met Evan there. I met Derek Bailey there, he was playing a show in Soho a short walk away and would join in at the theater club once his show ended. I also met Trevor Watts there. I got to know them and later ended up doing some trio stuff with Evan and John. So, I met the free players before I met the Jazz players such as John Surman. The thing about, 'I like weather,' it's still true today. So many people say they only like it when it's warm, and not cold, or the opposite. Well, I like it all. I think weather's great. [Laughs]

*Cadence: Great. On that note, thank you Barre.*

Phillips: Yeah, you've got a load of stuff, [Laughs] sorry about that.

## Book Look



**THE ORIGINAL  
BLUES: The  
Emergence of  
the Blues in  
African American  
Vaudeville 1899-  
1926 by Abbott  
& Seroff. 420  
pp. Softbound.  
Published by  
University Press  
of Mississippi.  
\$40.00.**

Hot off the press in a paperback edition is this reprinting of the acclaimed third and final installment of their exhaustive examination of early Black Music in America by author/scholars Lynn Abbott and Doug Seroff. The hardback edition was reviewed by yours truly last year online and is available on page 220 of the 2017 Annual Edition of Cadence. This is an exact replica of that tome only a tad smaller in overall size and at a much more affordable price. Like a prized re-read or second listen to a favorite recording, this holds so many gems that it is almost impossible to not find some new insight or information on re-investigation. Thanks to the Mississippi Press for putting this out in a more available printing where it is hoped it will reach an even larger audience.

Larry Hollis

# DVD Critique

## GUNTER HAMPEL EUROPEAN-NEW YORK QUARTET LIVE AT THE GOLDEN PUDEL

BIRTH BLUE RAY 180221

NO TITLES 44:45

GUNTER HAMPEL, B CL, FLT, VIB; CAVANA LEE HAMPEL VCL; JOHANNES SCHLEIMACHEL, TS, ELEC; BERND

Oezsevim, d Hamburg no date

As readers of my reviews know, I am a huge fan, and this disc just adds to my appreciation of Hampel's music. The first track, which lasts just over half an hour, is a great example of improvised music with all four musicians carefully listening to each other. Hampel moves from a brief intro on bass clarinet to vibes, with Cavanna Lee Hampel, Johannes Schleimacher and Bernd Oezsevim all joining in to create a long, constantly changing piece, with solo space for everyone. Schleimacher uses electronics behind the vibrato of the vibes and the vibrato of the voice while Oezsevim provides great accompaniment, as well as a great solo. The tempos change periodically and there is a wonderful quite part with Hampel on flute. And then things get back to everyone playing together. I love his vibes playing. He primarily uses four mallets to create great harmonies as well as rhythmic patterns in accompaniment mode. The second piece has a written melody with some lyrics. It is quieter with great vocal work by Lee Hampel. Oezsevim accompanies tastefully with mallets. At the end Hampel is not only playing vibes but uses a mallet on the side of the instrument to create a percussive sound. Finally a note on the camera work by Ruomi Lee Hampel. The whole show is filmed with a hand held camera which moves around, showing the whole band and close ups of soloists. Sometimes the music changes quickly and the camera takes a moment to refocus. But that just adds to the sense of being there. In short, the DVD was too short. I could have watched and listened for hours.

Bernie Koenig

## VINNY GOLIA NEW MUSIC ORCHESTRA - LIVE AT THE REDCAT PFMENTUMDVD123 AND NINEWINDS DVD400

SET ONE INTRODUCTION/ SHOW OF FORCE/ 5 LARGE ENSEMBLE VERSION/ UP IN THE SKY LIKE THE SUN AT HIGH NOON/ LOST AND FOUND/ CARBINE ONE, CHANGE A LETTER/ CARBINE TWO/ SET TWO INTRODUCTION/ WOULD YOU LIKE HELP ON YOUR JOURNEY TO MOTTSFIELD?/ SOCCER GEAR DROPPED ON RELIGIOUS LEADERS/ BARNUM BROWN FINDS SOMETHING/ JUST ANOTHER MORNING/ ENCORE 87:19

# DVD Critique

Vlns: Andrew Tholl, Henry Webster, Melinda Rice, Stephanie Moorehouse, Lauren Baba, Eric KM Clark, Madeline Falcone, vlns: Cassia Streb, Natalie Brache, Morgan Lee Gertsmar; cels Ariela Perry, Derek Stein, April Guthrie, Thea Mesrow; Bass: David Tranchina, Ivan Johnson; ob; Kathy Pisaro, ob, Eng hn Joseph Thel; bsn Jonathan Stahney, Archie Carey; C, alto, bass flt, pic, Christine Tivolaco, Sammy Lee; sax, flts cl, Vinny Golia, Gavin templeton, Jon Armstrong; tps; Dan Clucas, Daniel Rosenboom, Drew Jordan, Andrew Rowan; tbn, Evn Sprechert, Ben McIntosh, matt barber; Fr hn; Erin Poulin, Adam Wolf; Bass tbn, John Tyler Jordan; Tuba, Stefan kac, p. Ingrid lee; G, Alx Noice; Perc; Jodie landau, Tony Gennario. Vinny Golia, d Andrew lessman, Vcl Andrea Young, Carmina Escobar; conductor Matt Lowenstein, Vinny Golia Los Angeles 2018

These pieces are a mix of styles. Sometimes the ensemble sounds like a small classical orchestra playing somewhat conservative contemporary classical music and at other times it sounds like a big jazz band augmented by strings and other woodwinds.. This tension took away some of my enjoyment of the music. Over all I enjoyed the music but there are a number of places that I felt did not work. Over all I felt that the strings were under used. There are titles but each set is played continuously. There are tempo and instrument changes with each piece, but there are also such changes within each piece. Maybe because of my classical background, individual titles to me seem superfluous. Just play. During the classical sounding sections I tried to listen for various influences, and there are many, from Bartok to Henry Cowell and I think in one melody I heard Mahler. I loved a piano solo where MS Lee played tone clusters with her fists. The solos were generally good. I really enjoyed the voices, both in ensemble work and in solo sections. The one thing that bothered me was the tempo and mood changes within a section when a different soloist started to play. I am not sure if Golia wanted to create a different setting for each soloist in a jazz context where he was writing specifically for that soloist, or if he was thinking of different sections for soloists in a classical sense where each section develops the musical material differently. And it was this tension that interfered with my over all enjoyment of the music. About two-thirds into set two I found myself looking at the timer to see how much longer the piece would last. The encore actually was quite interesting. It had more of a classical feel with points of sound and a good overall ensemble sound. A note on the camera work. There was a fixed camera looking down at the whole ensemble and from I could tell, there were two camera operators on the floor. Over all they did a good job but on a number of occasions the cameras were not focused on a soloist the way they should have been. In a couple of places I couldn't tell where a particular soloist was.

Bernie Koenig

# New Issues



## ART PEPPER, UNRELEASED VOL. 10: TORONTO,

WIDOW'S TASTE NO #

A SONG FOR RICHARD /  
LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY  
/ HERE'S THAT RAINY DAY /  
BLUES FOR HEARD / WHAT  
IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE.

60:34.

DISC TWO: ALL THE THINGS  
YOU ARE / BAND INTROS /  
THE SUMMER KNOWS / I'LL  
REMEMBER APRIL. 50:47.

DISC THREE: SAMBA MOM  
MOM / STAR EYES / ART  
PEPPER INTERVIEW. 60:27.

Pepper, as; Bernie Senensky, b;  
Gene Perla, Dave Piltch, b;  
Terry Clarke, d. 6/16/1977.

Toronto.

There are two ways of looking at this historic set, a pessimist would regard it as merely a rehearsal for Pepper's triumphant gig at the Village Vanguard later that year while an optimist would think of it as a long overdue, successful first leadership tour for the alto-ist. Heading up a somewhat thrown-together rhythm unit comprising younger players Pepper soars through a repertorie of mostly well-worn standards, a fairly obscure jazz number and two originals with a sense of giddiness sometimes missing from his slicker settings. Pianist Senensky is one of outstanding Canadian musicians present whose performance often equals that of the leader while the bass chair is divided among two talents known and unknown. Gene Perla is the sole American from the rhythm section that went on to the initial Vanguard date and he made some waves with Elvin Jones in the drum icon's combo earlier in the decade. Bernie Senensky cut two albums for his PM label. The other bassist is Dave Piltch who was a mere teenager of seventeen. Just who is playing the upright is unidentified on the majority of the tracks so it is up to the listener to discern who is who. The masterful Terry Clarke should be a familiar name to most Cadence readers as he and Don Thompson among other Canadian musicians of note have graced many a successful session.

Stashed among three evergreens from the likes of Kern/Gershwin, Cole Porter and Jimmy Van Heusen (the only song smith to name himself after a shirt) on disc one are "Blues For Heard" and "A Song For Richard" from the leader and Joe Gordon respectively. The first title is named for a famous jazz bass man and the latter is by a trumpeter friend and label mate who died much too soon in an accidental apartment fire. It has an easy-going swing to it while the first-mentioned is a blue shuffle, something today's faux-hipsters wouldn't dare play. Of the standards, "Rainy Day" is taken as a beautiful ballad and the other two more up-tempo, with Art producing an incredible solo on "Long Ago....".

The second platter holds three tried & true selections along with an introduction of the band members. Book ended by dusty diamonds "All The Things You Are"



# New Issues

and "I'll Remember April" is Michel Le Grand's "The Summer Knows"/. Penned in the early seventies as part of the Oscar winning score of *The Summer Of '42* it is the most recent of the standards heard herein and Pepper proves his prowess as a consummate balladeer once again. Gene Perla demonstrates what large ears he has on both of the other two tunes with deft pizzicato picking.

The final disc has the least music on it with only two charts present; the altoist's "Samba Mom Mom" and the venerable "Star Eyes" which should not be confused with "Angel Eyes" that was a Pepper ballad staple which the Gene DePaul script is not. It is brief and has a ornamental vamp ending.

The latinish original with a stirring Senensky solo atop a synchronized upright and drum kit bed. Needless to say, Art Pepper is in fine form throughout this three disc set and the extended interview with Hal Hill that closes out the box is an especially welcome bonus. An essential addition to the discography of a true jazz giant

Larry Hollis

## (1) RAY SUHY & LEWIS PORTER LONGING

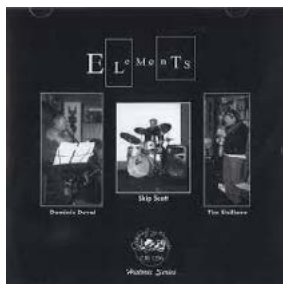
CADENCE JAZZ RECORDS CJR

PATRANI / CONVOLUTION / RAGTIME DREAM / CONSEQUENCE / MESSAIEN TAKE 2 / BLUES IN THE ROUGH / HER GRACE / CONTRITION / LONGING / MESSAIEN TAKE 1. 67:10.

Suhy, g; Porter, p, el p; Joris Teepe, b; Rudy Royston, d. April 19, 2017, Paramus NJ.

**G**uitarist Ray Suhy and pianist Lewis Porter provide an interesting combination of musical styles and lead a quartet in a highly energetic session on (1). Suhy's playing is dynamic and high-powered, displaying his deeply-rooted rock influences as well as some jazz elements on his six original compositions, with his fine ballad "Her Grace" showing his tender side. Porter brings his expertise in the modern jazz idiom to Suhy's world fairly seamlessly, contributing outstanding solos on Suhy's compositions as well as on three of his own. Porter's original pieces include enigmatic vehicles "Ragtime Dream" and two takes of "Messaien," as well as an earthy blue riff "Blues in the Rough" that comes closer to common ground for the two masterful but contrasting artists. The trading of solo ideas between Suhy and Porter in the latter portion of Suhy's "Contribution" is another illustration of how contrasting styles can be complementary. Superior backing throughout is provided by bassist Joris Teepe and drummer Rudy Royston (listed I believe mistakenly as being on guitar on the album), with Royston supplying an extra dose of impressive and extroverted playing. Don Lerman

# New Issues



**(2) DOMINIC DUVAL,  
TIM SICILIANO, SKIP  
SCOTT  
ELEMENTS  
CADENCE JAZZ  
RECORDS CJR 1256**

JOSHUA / BRIGHT SIZE LIFE  
/ QUESTION AND ANSWER /  
IRIS / ALONG CAME BETTY /  
YES AND NO / SEARCH FOR  
PEACE / TELL ME A BEDTIME  
STORY / WINDOWS / WALTZ  
/ STRUWWELPETER. 68:42.

Duval, b; Siciliano, g; Scott,  
d. 2007, NY.

Also from Cadence Jazz Records and released in 2017 on their Historic Series, (2) was recorded ten years earlier and features the trio of Dominic Duval, Tim Siciliano, and Skip Scott with superior studio performances of jazz compositions dating from 1954 to 1990. On the more recent material, guitarist Siciliano has an affinity for the engaging music of Pat Metheny, playing comfortably at a brisk latin pace on “Bright Size Life” from Metheny’s debut release in 1976, and on two more Metheny pieces. Also in an engaging vein, Herbie Hancock’s “Tell Me A Bedtime Story” (from 1969) has a lilting quality, with the group smoothly handling the tune’s multiple time signatures. Bassist Duval is quite active in backing Siciliano on the harmonically advanced Wayne Shorter 1965 composition “Iris,” with Duval’s impressively fluid and creative solos present on this and on Shorter’s “Yes and No”(1964). Also from the decade of the 1960s are “Windows” from Chick Corea and a brisk “Joshua” from Victor Feldman, with a novel version of Benny Golson’s “Along Came Betty” from 1954 the oldest piece presented. McCoy Tyner’s “Search For Peace” from 1967 was an inspired choice of a ballad for the set, with a sensitive reading of the melody by Siciliano followed by fine solos from the guitarist and Duval. The session closed in a simpler and more relaxed mode with Attila Zollar’s “Struwwelpeter,” a medium swinger with more standard changes, featuring drummer Scott on some 4-bar trading done with his signature subtlety.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

## (1) THE ERIC PLAKS NEW TRIO SUN AND SHADOW

CADENCE JAZZ RECORDS CJR 1259

3-3-4 / THEME FROM SHOSTAKOVICH SQ3 / SPIRAL / FREE AND EASY WANDERING / SECRET ROOMS /

2-3-4. 56:28.

Plaks, p; John Murchison, b; Leonid Galaganov, d. April 25, 2016, Brooklyn, NY.

Pianist Eric Plaks, a native of Princeton, New Jersey, has been an active participant in the New York City jazz scene since 1996, performing and recording in a wide range of jazz categories from bop and straight ahead to the avant guard. Since 2003 he has completed ten recordings in the quintet, big band, and duo formats, adding one in the trio format with this 2016 recording (1).

The nearly-hour program is in the modern creative or free jazz idiom and consists of six selections, four of them over ten minutes in length. Throughout the program, an empathy of each member of Plaks's newly-formed trio for one another was apparent, with each continuing to find new and creative musical ideas and to play with one another with great recognition and response. Plaks's liner notes provided interesting insights on the formative seeds of several of the selections, which can be especially welcome to a listener of music in this genre, and especially useful on repeated hearings. In the opener, for example, the title "3-3-4" referred to bassist John Murchison's idea of alternating time signatures of 3, 3, and 4 beats as a starting point for the piece. Free improvisation on "Theme from Shostakovich SQ3" proceeded in three sections, or "islands" in a large sea as described by Plaks, based on the initial theme from Shostakovich's string quartet. Drummer Leonid Galaganov brought an original and compelling melody line which began and ran through "Free And Easy Wandering" in a riveting performance. "2-3-4" utilized three melodic or rhythmic motifs from a rehearsal to serve as its core. All selections were done in single takes, and as Plak's mentions, each was characterized by "active listening" from all participants in this fine initial recording session for the group.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

## (2) DANIEL CARTER, HILLIARD GREENE, DAVID HANEY LIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

SLAMCD 589

CONSTRUCTION NUMBER ONE / CONSTRUCTION NUMBER TWO / CONSTRUCTION  
NUMBER THREE /

CONSTRUCTION NUMBER FOUR / CONSTRUCTION NUMBER FIVE. 28:05.

Carter, tpt, ts; Greene, dbl bass; Haney, p. November 17, 2017, New York, NY.

The trio of Daniel Carter, Hilliard Greene, and David Haney provide a program of spontaneously composed music on (2), one in which repeated hearings reveal new impressions on a listener. "Construction Number Two," one of two longer pieces over 9 minutes, features many swings of musical development, beginning with the trio in a quiet mode with Carter on trumpet, followed by heightened energy generated by bassist Greene, again a quieter segment featuring Greene with elemental accompaniment by Haney, and then the reentry of Carter on tenor saxophone leading to trills that seem to serve as the top of the hill. Greene moves to arco as the group ends the piece with an eerie quality. Haney uses the wide range of the piano in slightly jarring fashion to initiate "Construction Number Three," with Greene soloing in a similar vein before Carter enters on tenor in another extended and well-developed work. Green and Carter create a notable sensitive exchange on bass and tenor on "Construction Number Four," one of the three shorter pieces of the session. The recording, done at a radio station at Columbia University, provides the type of sound for the group that a listener would hear in a live room as opposed to the more glossy sound of most modern recordings.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

## (1) MICHAEL ADKINS QUARTET - FLANEUR

HATOLOGY 745

FIRST WALK: ARCHIVES / HARD REQUEST / WE'LL SEE / NUMERAL.

SECOND WALK: BEFORE YOU KNOW IT / GRAFICA / OFFERINGS / SILHOUETTE. 53:17.

Adkins, ts; Russ Lossing, p; Larry Grenadier, b; Paul Motian, d. March 22, 2008, New York, NY.

The music of tenor saxophonist Michael Adkins on (1) has a pensive, deeply thought-provoking quality. The starting points for Adkins and his quartet in these selections are generally groupings of held tones, or simple themes, from the tenor, subsequently joined by piano, bass, and shades of percussion, and then musically expanded upon by Adkins and the group. In the opener, "Archives," Adkins establishes and creatively develops motifs based upon roots and fifths, later adding other tones of the scale such as the second and sixth. Bassist Larry Grenadier, who enters within the first minute, supports the tonic set out by Adkins and permits growth and exploration in this key, with drummer Paul Motian providing subtle percussion on snare and cymbals in a largely free time context. Pianist Russ Lossing leads off on the second piece, "Hard Request, with a motif of sustained chords that turns into a somber ode when joined and elaborated upon by the tenor, bass, and drums. "Silhouette" is a kind of microcosm of the entire recording, a tour de force of nearly 10 minutes which utilizes a similar structure of simple to further elaboration of musical themes. The beauty of Adkins tenor tone here and the elemental ending are highlights of this closing piece.

Don Lerman

## (2) GEORGE MCMULLEN TRIO - BOOMERANG

PFMENTUM PFMCD120

BOOMERANG / FOLLOW THE BOUNCING BALL / IMPROV I; EARTH MYSTERY / I LOVED HER LAUGH

/ THE OPEN GATE / IMPROV II; AIR CURRENTS / GEONOMIC PREVIEW / WAITING / IMPROV III;

PRAIRIE WIND / DIRTY STINKING LOWDOWN CRYIN' SHAME / IMPROV IV; FIRE, DANCING. 53:01.

McMullen, tbn; Nick Rosen, b; Alex Cline, d, perc. August 16, 2015, no location.

Trombonist George McMullen and his trio present an album of interesting original music performed at a high level on (2). There is variety here, with the opener "Boomerang" being a medium up conception imaginatively arranged for the trio, with impressive execution of trombone and bass unison figures during the melody and ending the piece. In a similar post-bop idiom are "Geonomic Preview," which has a very natural and appealing melodic flow, and the more enigmatic "Follow the Bouncing Ball" and "The Open Gate." McMullen's troubadour-like expressiveness in the trombone's high range and elsewhere on the horn comes to light on "I Loved Her Laugh," as well as on the Ellingtonian-like ballad "Waiting." Also in this general category is "Dirty Stinking Lowdown Cryin' Shame," its slow groove well generated by bassist Nick Rosen and drummer Alex Cline, with fine solos from Rosen and McMullen. Representing a third category in this varied program are four shorter "Improv" selections, with air currents, prairie wind and other items freely portrayed by Cline's percussion and the rest of the group.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

ERIC DOLPHY,  
MUSICAL PROPHET,  
RESONANCE HCD-2035.

DISC ONE:

CONVERSATIONS=JITTERBUG  
WALTZ / MUSIC MATADOR /  
LOVE ME / ALONE TOGETHER  
/ MUSES FOR RICHARD DAVIS  
(PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED 1) /  
MUSES FOR RICHARD DAVIS  
(PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED 2).

DISC TWO: IRON MAN=IRON  
MAN / MANDRAKE/ COME  
SUNDAY / BURNING SPEAR  
/ ODE TO CHARLIE PARKER /  
A PERSONAL STATEMENT \*  
(BONUS TRACK). DISC THREE:

PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED  
STUDIO RECORDINGS=  
MUSIC MATADOR

(ALTERNATE TAKE) / LOVE  
ME (AT 1) / LOVE ME (AT 2)  
/ ALONE TOGETHER (AT) /  
JITTERBUG WALTZ (AT) /  
MANDRAKE (AT) BURNING  
SPEAR (AT).COLLECTIVE

PERSONNEL: Dolphy, as, flt,  
b cl; William "Prince" Lasha,  
flt; Huey "Sonny" Simmons,  
as; Clifford Jordan, ss; Woody  
Shaw, tpt; Garvin Bushell,  
bsn; Bobby Hutcherson, vib;  
Richard Davis, b; J.C. Moses,  
Charles Moffett, d. 7/1&3/63.

Nyc. (\*) Dolphy, as,b cl,flt;  
Bob James, p; Ron Brooks,  
b; Robert Pozar, perc; David  
Schwartz, vcl. 3/2/64. Ann  
Arbor, MI.

Subtitled The Expanded 1963 New York Studio Session this 3 CD or LP set is the latest release in Resonance Record's award-winning historical series. Expanded is the operative word here as it is admitted that there was some cherry-picking involved in track choices. The back story of how this material was acquired is explained in the one-hundred page booklet chock full of comments, essays, remembrances and photographs. Of particular note are musical analysis from co-producer/ musician James Newton and historical background from Robin D.G. Kelly author of the definitive Monk biography. Also of interest, especially to this writer, was Dolphy confidant Juanita Smith's description of how the principal got that noticeable bump on his forehead that so entranced writer Lester Bangs.

Of the three discs presented, two were previously issued by producer Alan Douglas as Jitterbug Waltz and Iron Man on his labels FM and Douglas then later as Conversations (Cell-5014) & Iron Man (Cell-5015). The former disc has two takes of "Muses for Richard Davis" while the second disc contains a bonus track originally titled "Jim Crow" on a Blue Note album of assorted cuts entitled Other Aspects.

Yes, this was the same Bob James of Taxi fame and anyone that doesn't know his earlier experimental bent would do well to investigate his mid-sixties LP Explosions for the ESP imprint. As for the disc of unissued alternate takes, they are a virtual treasure trove of Dolphyism on all three of his instruments. A virtual all-star lineup of supporting players contribute but be advised to check out "Ode To Charlie Parker" first waxed for Prestige on Far Cry and the "Iron Man" duets with Richard Davis (MVP throughout) and an eighteen year old Woody Shaw. Recommended without reservation.

Larry Hollis

# Reissues



ROSCOE MITCHELL  
SEXTET  
SOUND  
DELMARK 4408

Ornette / The Little Suite /  
Sound / Ornette (alternate) /  
Sound (take 1). 70:13.  
Roscoe Mitchell – as, clt.  
recorder, etc.; Lester Bowie –  
tpt, flgh, hca; Lester Lashley  
– tbn, cel; Maurice McIntyre  
– ts; Malachi Favors – b;  
Alvin Fielder – d, perc. 8/10  
&26/1966, Chicago, IL.

52 years ago (1966), Delmark Records (a label that was previously known for issuing premier blues recordings) released Roscoe Mitchell's *Sound* which was the initial recording that broadcast the music being made in Chicago by the AACM organization. Avant-garde saxophonist Mitchell was little-known outside of Chicago at the time but one hearing of this recording let the listener know that here was something radically different from what was being made at the time. It was different from Coltrane, Coleman, Taylor and the rest of the new jazz that was being produced in the early 60s. Yes, there were some shared concepts but mostly, this was a group of players who were tapping in on something unique. Here was a music that was exploring texture, unusual instrumentation (recorders, harmonica, little percussive instruments, bike horns), space and silence as devices as important to the music as solos and free group blow-outs. This was definitely something new.

The fanfare beginning the opening track "Ornette" isn't that shocking. The solos that follow are intense, the rhythm free and the obvious commitment these players have to this music, is very much in the tradition of the "new music" that came before. Perhaps the most unusual feature on this track is the moment when Lester Lashley (on cello) and bassist Malachi Favors engage in a dialogue.

The two tracks that followed however (there were only three tracks on the original issue), separated Roscoe Mitchell's music from what went on before. This is where the texture, the space and the little instruments all come to the fore. "The Little Suite" opens with what seems like a random phrase on harmonica played by trumpeter Lester Bowie. But it is soon revealed as a motif that returns several times. At one point a march intrudes, at another a free group improvisation comes to the fore. And it all seems at random. But in an interview in *Cadence* (2017) drummer Alvin Fielder mentions that (and I'm paraphrasing here) that though everything sounds random, they rehearsed the music for this session for a few weeks before recording and

# Reissues

knew what they were going for.

The title track, which originally took up an entire side opens with a somber theme statement by Mitchell that opens into uncharted territory where each player seems to be wrenching sounds out of their respective instruments that had never been achieved before. Members engage in solos, duos, trios and group improvisations. It's thrilling music that charted a distinctly new way of group playing that has become the norm for many of today's more forward-looking players.

This reissue restores the original analog mix and it sounds beautiful with every instrument distinct and clear. It also adds two alternate takes that have been released before. Interestingly the alternate "Ornette" follows the schematic of the originally released take but it seems a little bit messier and less focused. After the initial theme statement of the alternate "Sound", it branches out into some very different territory from the originally issued take.

Sound is one of the major documents of 1960s free jazz. It pointed another new direction that was carried on by forward looking players that followed. It's a record that should be in every adventurous listener's collection.

Robert Iannapolo



# New Issues



## FIVE TEN CINCO UM ZERO MOONDOG RECORDS

1. 88	4:14
2. SPRING	5:13
3. ENIGMA	6:28
4. VAMOS VADIA	6:16
5. SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT	6:00
6. RICE AND BEANS	4:51
7. D-TOUR	5:54
8. PRAYER	3:10

TOTAL TIME: 42:06

RECORDED APRIL 12-14, 2017

World Fusion group Five Ten is aiming for a large impact in their inaugural release, *Cinco Um Zero*. Climbing the snare laden ladder of success in music biz is a slippery slope for sure, but these guys have the goods.

All members have shared stages and studios with major artists too numerous to list here, but the band members are, Steve Carter keyboards, Jeff Narrell pan steel, Dennis Smith bass, Marquinho Brasil percussion and Billy “Shoes” Johnson drums. The die is definitely cast. (Sadly, it must be noted that the group’s original drummer on this recording, the hugely talented Joel Smith, passed six months ago. (RIP.)

Now to the music. Opening track 88, immediately showcases the versatility of the group. There are snatches of post-bop avant-garde, straight ahead Jazz with the Trinidadian flavored pan playing of Narrell. Around the world in four minutes and fourteen seconds. Track 2 Spring finds Narrell’s pan playing against the backdrop of Carter’s vamping piano, creating a vibe of waking up after a winter of hibernating.

If we need some bass and drum Funk, and we do, track 3 Enigma is the ticket. Bassist Dennis Smith lays down a figure that drummer Joel, bites a smokin’ backbeat into. The pan and keys augment the riff, building tension throughout and finish with a final flourish.

*Vamos Vadia* is track 4. It is a mostly instrumental Reggae inflected pan paean. Back in the mix are perhaps Spanish lyrics for which this reviewer has no translation. Very cool runnin’s nonetheless. Standout track. In the words of Jeff Narell, “Sometimes we like to take a tune that everybody knows and turn it upside down and inside out and make into something unexpected.” Track 5 is Five Ten’s remake of Nirvana’s *Smells Like Teen Spirit*. No thrashing metal here. A lush arrangement transforms this definitive Cobain classic into an instrumental ballad. For mature adults!

Track 6 *Rice And Beans* A tasty trip to the Caribbean where working class class fare on the menu tastes like lobster and caviar.

Track 7 *D-Tour* Steve Carter’s piano drives the opening statement of this piece. After a percussive interlude, Jeff Narrell jumps in and drives the rest of the way home.

Track 8 *Prayer* is the shortest piece on the Cd. A meditative closer that winds *Cinco Um Zero* down nicely. You may remove your ear buds when the music stops.

A superlative effort by some A list cats who know how to stay out of each other’s way. Bigger things may be in their common future.

# New Issues



## GUNTER BABY SOMMER BABY'S PARTY INTAKT 303

Apero Con Brio / First Shot  
/ Special Guest No. 1 –  
Danny Boy / Flinke Besen /  
Second Shot / A Soft Drink In  
Between / Inside – Outside –  
Trip / Third Shot / A Little Nap  
In Between / Special Guest  
No. 2 – Der Alte Spanier /  
Party Over – In A Sentimental  
Mood. 55:45.  
Gunter Baby Sommer – d,  
perc; Till Bronner – tpt, flgh.  
12/5-6/2017, Winterthur,  
Switzerland.

German drummer Gunter Baby Sommer has had a long career in improvised music. He's not as well-known in the U.S. as he should be. The first recordings to make it here, the duos with pianist Ulrich Gumpert done in the mid-late 1970s, were released by FMP. In the 80s he was a member of Wadada Leo Smith's trio that also included bassist Peter Kowald and released several excellent recordings. His discography is dotted with many collaborations with musicians such as Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton, Irene Schweizer and many others. But since his emergence he's also released many recordings of his own projects.

Sommer's latest release is entitled *Baby's Party*. In honor of his 75th birthday, Sommer threw a party and only invited one guest: trumpeter Till Bronner. I'm unfamiliar with Bronner but he seems like an unusual choice. According to the liner notes and online discographies, he's associated with more mainstream projects. It's even noted Bronner appears courtesy of Sony Music. This seems a far cry from Sommer's alliance with the more outre elements of jazz.

But one need only listen to the opener "Apero Con Brio" to hear the sympatico musical relationship these two share. Sommer is on marimba and Bronner on flugelhorn. It's a beautiful match sonically and Bronner dances lithely around Sommer's patterns. On "Flinke Besen" a similar meeting occurs with Bronner on flugelhorn and Sommer switching to trap drums. Sommer toys with the tempo playing snappy brushstrokes while Bronner follows nimbly atop. Sommer and Bronner seem bent on making this as diverse a record as possible. Sommer has a large arsenal with him including chimes ("A Soft Drink In Between"), small tuned drums and kitchenware. "Second Shot" finds Bronner on a muted trumpet with Sommer accompanying solely on Jew's Harp. It's an unusual sonic treat. Bronner occasionally uses electronics, sparingly, to create echoing lines. The set ends with a parting take on Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood" that seems to sum *Baby's Party* nicely. All in all a set of 11 duets between brass and percussion that maintains interest throughout the program.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



**HARVEY SORGEN  
/ JOE FONDA /  
MARILYN CRISPELL  
DREAMSTRUCK**

NOT TWO 977

MY SONG / PORTRAIT /  
LANDSCAPE / OUR OWN TEA  
LEAVES / DREAMSTRUCK /  
READ THIS / AREA 52 / BOTH  
SIDES OF THE OCEAN / ON  
BELLAGIO / KALYPSO. 56:41.

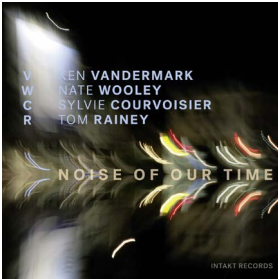
HARVEY SORGEN – D;  
JOE FONDA – B; MARILYN  
CRISPELL – P. 1/2018,  
SAUGERTIES, NY.

One of the more interesting features among jazz musicians that emerged in the 80s and 90s was their willingness to mix and regularly interchange with players from other scenes, i.e. New Yorkers playing with Bostonians, Chicagoans playing with Europeans etc. And it's an approach that's still in effect and frequently produces great results.

Drummer Harvey Sorgen, bassist Joe Fonda and pianist Marilyn Crispell had played with each other in various bands but never in this particular combination. And it was an inspired move to play with each other in a piano trio. As a rhythm section they would be an ideal combination since they are three open players who could follow solo instruments and also prod them into uncharted territory. But on *Dreamstruck*, the three as a piano trio are a perfect distillation of Paul Bley's concept of the open-ended trio format, blending free improvisation and song-based material into a coherent program. The program here consists of six free improvisations, although "Both Sides Of The Ocean" sounds like Crispell is composing a tune on the spot with Fonda and Sorgen accompanying in the moment. Fonda brought two of his distinctive compositions: the moody, meditative "My Song" and the knotty, dense "Read This". The title track was written by Bob Windbiel and almost sounds like a distant relative to Coltrane's "After The Rain", a song upon which Crispell has previously left her imprint. The album closer, "Kalypso", was written by Paul Motian and takes the disc out with a fun romp.

The set plays to this trio's strength. The music changes kaleidoscopically, not only from piece to piece but also within each track. One never knows where the music is going next. There's almost a continual dialogue amongst the three players. Sorgen's masterful drumming is the backbone of the music and pushes it along with the most subtle of nuances. Each of his cohorts picks up the thread of what he's doing and takes it in their own direction. This is the first time the three have played as a trio but one hopes that they will continue with this format. As it stands, *Dreamstruck* is one of the finest piano trio recordings of 2018.

# New Issues



## VWCR NOISE OF OUR TIME

INTAKT 310.

CHECKPOINT / TRACK  
AND FIELD / SPARKS /  
THE SPACE BETWEEN THE  
TEETH / TAG / SONGS  
OF INNOCENCE / VWCR /  
TRUTH THROUGH MASS  
INDIVIDUATION / SIMPLE  
CUT. 44:18.

KEN VANDERMARK – TS,  
CLT; NATE WOOLEY – TPT;  
SYLVIE COURVOISIER  
– P; TOM RAINEY – D.  
8/17/2017, MOUNT  
VERNON, NY.

The personnel of Noise Of Our Time reads like a who's who of great musicians who emerged in the 90s.

Reed player, Ken Vandermark, trumpeter Nate Wooley, pianist Sylvie Courvoisier and drummer Tom Raney have all led groups and recorded memorable sessions over the last 25 years. Once again, as above, all of these players have worked with each other before but never in this combination.

Performing under the name VWCR, each member except Raney contributes three compositions. Courvoisier's "Checkpoint" starts with an unaccompanied free tempo theme statement by Vandermark. When the other three enter it's in tempo and the two elements seem to be pushing and pulling at each other. It's Raney's drumming that holds everything together. When the piece finally falls together at the end with a group theme statement, it's a marvelous moment. Wooley's "The Space Between the Teeth" alternates droning lines played by the horns with silence and explosions from piano and drums to great effect. Although Vandermark is known for dynamic and aggressive compositions, "Simple Cut" is a surprise. It's a quiet, almost ominous sounding piece whose theme consists of a repeated motif. The piece moves forward with a staggered rhythm. Courvoisier finds a way to elicit dense chords out of the motif. And Wooley bends it all out of shape.

This is an inspired combination of players that sounds like they've been playing as a unit for a long time. The pieces are true group performances with each player giving the music their distinctive voice.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



## RICH HALLEY 3 THE LITERATURE PINE EAGLE 011

Little Willie Leaps / Misterioso  
/ Chano Pozo / Broad Way  
Blues / High Powered Mama  
/ Mood Indigo / Brilliant  
Corners / Motherless Children  
/ Pussy Cat Dues / Kingdom Of  
Not / Someday You'll Call My  
Name / Law Years. 57:55.  
Rich Halley – ts; Clyde Reed  
– b; Carson Halley – d. 8/26-  
27/2017, Portland OR.

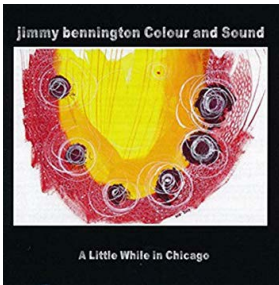
Seems like saxophonist Rich Halley can be depended upon to issue one album per year but he has a tendency to mix up the group formats. After a quintet date with him sharing the frontline with reed player Vinny Golia and trombonist Michael Vlatkovich (2016's *The Outlier*), he followed it up with a reeds - flutes/drum duet with his son Carson Halley (2017's *The Wild*). His current release, *The Literature* is the first with his regular trio of bassist Clyde Reed and Carson Halley since 2005's *Mountains And Plains* (when the drummer was Dave Storrs).

Halley is a composer in his own right and his albums consist of mostly original compositions. But for *The Literature* he decided to explore a dozen of his favorite jazz and blues tunes with the trio. Some are famous: Ellington's "Mood Indigo", Monk's "Brilliant Corners" and "Misterioso". But there are some lesser-known selections: Sun Ra's "Kingdom Of Not", Mingus' "Pussy Cat Dues" and Jimmie Rodgers "High Powered Mama".

If you're unfamiliar with Halley, he's a tenor player with a big, burly sound that's uniquely his own but there's a Rollins-esque orientation to what he does. One listen to the opener, Miles Davis' "Little Willie Leaps" lets the listener know what they're in for. Halley digs into these tunes and he mines them for all they're worth. But he rarely goes for the obvious approach. On "Kingdom Of Not" he focuses on Sun Ra's penchant for a gospel groove. On Mongo Santamaria's "Chano Pozo", although the rhythm is prime (with Carson Halley's drums given free rein), his saxophone explores the melodic properties inherent in the theme, not something one automatically thinks of when they think of Santamaria. He approaches "Mood Indigo" by refashioning his sound a little bit adding a bit more vibrato and smoother phrasing. There's a lot to listen to on *The Literature*. And if one is looking for a set redolent of the jazz tradition but investing it with a personal contemporary vision, look no further than this release.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



**JIMMY BENNINGTON  
COLOUR AND  
SOUND  
A LITTLE WHILE IN  
CHICAGO  
CIMP 417**

IT'S MY MOTHER-IN-LAW'S  
BIRTHDAY / SAXOON /  
GERMAN WALRUS WINE  
/ TWO FASCINATIONS / A  
LITTLE WHILE IN CHICAGO  
/ BLUES FOR J.C. / A DANCE  
FOR KEIKO / WHO DOES SHE  
HOPE TO BE?. 72:04.  
JIMMY BENNINGTON – D;  
FRED JACKSON – AS, SS;  
JAMES CROSWELL – TPT; ED  
SCHULLER – D. 9/17-18/2012,  
ROSSIE, NY.

**D**rummer Jimmy Bennington has had a peripatetic existence. From growing up and early jazz experiences in Texas to a period on the West Coast and the Pacific Northwest, he seems to have settled in Chicago. When forming his band Color And Sound he recruited some local talent: reed player Fred Jackson and trumpeter Jerome Crowell both members of the AACM. And he added an old friend on bass, Ed Schuller. He put together a good group and he taps on their individual skills for *A Little While In Chicago*.

The program consists of originals by Bennington and Jackson, a couple of tunes by Bennington's cohorts from his Texas period and a Sonny Sharrock cover. It's a diverse and well-chosen program that each player seems to connect with. Jackson is featured on soprano and alto saxophones and it's his lithe tumbling soprano phrase that opens this disc on his humorously titled "It's My Mother-In-Law's Birthday". That phrase is followed by a solo interlude from Bennington and then a jaunty theme emerges before Crowell takes off on a solo that maintains the buoyant mood started by Jackson and Bennington. It's a great opening track. Bennington's "German Walrus Wine" percolates along on a 4 bar, 16-note descending phrase from Schuller that, along with Bennington's brushwork propels the music along. Bennington's drumming always has a nice subtle drive whether playing with brushes or sticks. There's a hint of a Latin lilt to "A Dance For Keiko". Jackson's "Blues For J.C." is based on Coltrane's "Mr. P.C." and is a feature for Ed Schuller. He has a field day with it. The album concludes with a version of Sonny Sharrock's "Who Does She Hope To Be" with Jackson (on alto) and Crowell's trumpet harmonizing beautifully on the theme, shading it for maximum impact.

*A Little While In Chicago* is a great indication of the state of Bennington's art.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



## MAT MARUCCI TRIO INVERSIONS

CIMP 410

INVERSIONS / ETHEREAL

VOYAGE / LIKE JIMMY

(SMITH) / FILM NOIR /

FOOTPRINTS / CONTRAOLGY

/ AMADEO 1917 – QUEEN

RACHEL MELODY / BLUES

8 / RIFF FROM JAZZ

CENTRAL / BODDA-BOOM /

FRACTURED. 64:33.

Mat Marucci – d.; Rick

Olson – p; Adam Lane – b.

5/12/2013; Syracuse, NY.

**M**at Marucci is a kinetic drummer of consummate technique and one with a plethora of musical ideas. He's recorded several albums under his own name since the late 1970s. Among his more high-profile recording gigs as a sideman were Jimmy Smith's *Daybreak* (2005) and John Tchicai's 1999 release *Infinitesimal Flash*. On the latter session he shared rhythm section duties with bassist Adam Lane and Lane now appears on Marucci's latest release *Inversions*. The piano chair is held down by Rick Olson, a pianist whose harmonic depth and adventurous soloing make him the perfect person to round out this trio.

The opening title track heralds that this is Marucci's recording. His drums are in the forefront setting the tempo and a rhythmic quirkiness that maintains the forward momentum. It's basically a free improvisation and as Olson and Lane fall in it shows just how in tune with each other these three are. "Ethereal Voyage" sounds like it has a kinship with "Poinciana" but Marucci invests it with a higher energy than the usual tempo at which that tune is usually performed. But not all is driving energy music. "Amadeo 1917 / Queen Rachel Melody" is a lovely ballad sequence with Olson meditatively picking out chords, Lane's bass roaming around in the underside of the piece and Marucci's cymbal washes giving everything a finishing sheen. Lane also gets a nice arco solo on this track as well. Olson's "Film Noir" is another highlight and moment of respite with dense almost expressionistic chords that never go quite where one expects it. It's all too brief, just the theme statement. It would have been nice to hear a fleshed-out version with solos but it sounds complete as it is.

Marucci's drumming is dynamic and never overwhelms the other two players. He composed all tracks except the two previously mentioned and a take on Wayne Shorter's "Footprints". This is a studio session recorded at the club Jazz Central, in Syracuse, N.Y. Later that night the group recorded a live date at the club that produced 2013's *Live At Jazz Central*. Interestingly, the only repeated track is "Amadeo 1917 / Queen Rachel Melody". *Inversions* is a unique set, separate from the previous release and it's well-worth hearing.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues

## MARION BROWN / DAVE BURRELL LIVE AT THE BLACK MUSICIANS' CONFERENCE, 1981

NO BUSINESS 109

Gossip – Fortunato / La  
Placita / My Little Brown  
Book / Punaluu Peter / Pua  
Mae'Ole / Crucifacado / Lush  
Life. 75:10

Marion Brown – as; Dave  
Burrell – p; 4/10/1981,  
Amherst, MA.

**A**lto saxophonist Marion Brown and pianist Dave Burrell were complimentary figures. Both emerged in the second wave of players who were following in the wake of the Coltrane-Coleman-Taylor axis of “new Jazz”. (Brown was on the scene a few years earlier.) Both could engage in free improvisation that could build to pitch intensity when called upon to do so. But both also had a deep, abiding respect and affection for jazz’ history. Although Brown’s alto sound had a contemporary harder edge to it, one could hear the influence of Johnny Hodges in Brown’s more lyrical forays. As for Burrell he could easily whip up a group frenzy with Taylor-like barrages. But he could also show off his more historical influences such as stride piano. Both sides were evident on the first album recorded

under Burrell’s name, High with the free jazz blowout “East Side Colors” with Sunny Murray on drums followed by the stride-centric “Margy Pargy” aka “A.M. Rag”). Brown was nine years older than Burrell and, in a sense, he took Burrell under his wing. Burrell’s first recording was as a member of Brown’s group on the album Juba-Lee (1966). And they renewed their relationship on and off over the ensuing decades. In 1981 Brown was supposed to play a duet with pianist Hilton Ruiz at the Black Musician’s Conference at U Mass., Amherst. When at the last-minute Ruiz had to cancel, Brown called Burrell and he was there. One would expect this to be a bit messy, happening in such short order. But in 1979, Burrell toured Japan as part of Brown’s quartet and they performed duo segments as part of their sets. But listening to the first moments of this disc, one gets the impression they just picked up where they left off two years ago and they were off.

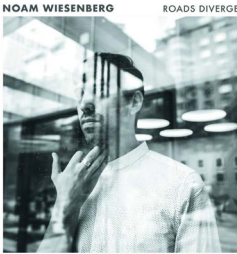
The set consists of three Brown compositions, three of Burrell’s and two by Billy Strayhorn (a favorite of both). What’s evident is the affection that each has for the other’s compositions. On the opening medley of “Gossip / Fortunado” (two of Brown’s) after a long solo from Burrell during the “Gossip” portion, one can hear him edging closer to “Fortunado” and when he hits it, he plays the chords with such affection. It’s a marvelous moment. Brown is clearly fond of Burrell, the composer, as well. He has a way of caressing the melody line of “Pua Mae’Ole” that is among the most striking playing this listener has ever heard from Brown. Another facet of this disc is that it offers the listener the opportunity to hear the Burrell compositions from his opera *Windward Passages* (“Punaluu Peter” and “Pua Mar Ole”) expanded to the duo format. At the time of this recording they had only been available in solo interpretations.

It’s fortunate that this session was unearthed and released. It brings to light music that forms an important part in both players’ discographies. It’s 75 minutes of superb duet music of the highest order.

Robert Iannapollo



# New Issues



**NOAM WIESENBERG**  
**ROADS DIVERGE**  
**BROOKLYN JAZZ**  
**UNDERGROUND**  
RECORDS 067  
PRELUDE/RESFEBER/SHIR  
LE'SHIR/WHERE DO WE GO  
FROM  
HERE/ROADS DIVERGE/  
CAPRICORN LADY/DAVKA/  
MELODY FOR  
IDO/THE TOURIST 48:13  
Wiesenberg, b; Philip  
Dizack, tpt; Shai Maestro, p,  
Fender Rhodes; Dayna  
Stephens, ts; Immanuel  
Wilkins, as, cl; Kush Abedey,  
d; June 20-21, 2017  
Brooklyn, New York

If you want to know where modern, post-bop jazz is headed and the young musicians whose hands it is in then go no further than Noam Wiesenberg and his friends on this debut record. He takes the strong foundation of Art Blakey's groups, the fiery exchanges and swirling overlaps of John Zorn and Dave Douglas in Masada, and the gorgeous compositions and soloing of the last Tony Williams Quintet and puts his own stamp on it. "Roads Diverge" is a very appropriate title for this project which branches off the main road into byways and pathways that offer new discoveries around every bend. Wiesenberg is a strong, assured, and articulate bassist, and his exquisite writing and arranging make the beauty and vitality of his talents shine, providing a platform for the entire ensemble to declare the praises of this timeless music.

Wiesenberg bookends the record with two satisfying solo excursions. The first, "Prelude," provides a majestic and portentous beginning to the journey, blending harmonic layers floating over his thunderous and spacious bass, a conjunction of heaven and earth. The final number, "The Tourist," the only non-original on this date, starts off pizzicato, then features overdubbed bowed lines followed by more pizzicato overdubbed over all that, creating a peaceful and pastoral resolve. The seven ensemble numbers that make up the marrow of this recording are what will leave you with many happy memories. "Resfeber," a Swedish word that signifies the palpitating and anxious heart of a traveler about to go on a trip, captures the intensity and optimism of such a state. The horns briefly present the theme, followed by Shai Maestro with a creative, searching and propulsive solo. Wiesenberg is never competing for attention, content to support from underneath with a deft touch, and the colorful Kush Abedey drives the music with an assortment of accents and fills. The trumpet of Philip Dizack and the alto sax of Immanuel Wilkins take the music to another level. Dizack starts off measured and soft-textured with Wilkins floating in and out, darting here and there with a smooth attack. They build up their conversation with penetrating energy, ferociously wrapping their lines inside and outside of each other

# New Issues

with daring and excitement. The theme is restated and then subsides. Overall a beautiful GROUP effort. "Shir Le'Shir," written for his niece, is a lovely, dreamy melody that in Wilkins's hands grows with passion and fire to a fever pitch, and then is gradually brought down from a boil to the tender, repeating theme. These young men sound like mature players who know how to listen and speak to each other. "Where Do We Go From Here" is another fresh exploration of modern jazz form. The piano jumps out with a repeating figure and staccato bursts, the horns again winding their way all around and through each other, Dizack particularly brilliant and the alto grabbing and pulling the listener in. The repeating piano figure transitions to a nice fade out. The title tune is cut more out of the classic hard bop mould, with Dayna Stephens providing a spare and thoughtful solo on tenor and Abedey leading the way down the diverging road. Wiesenberg introduces the rapturous "Capricorn Lady" with a beautiful bass solo, followed by piano and horns that sing the sensual and loping rhythm and melody. Wiesenberg enjoys working a groove behind the horns, this time Wilkins offering a warm and friendly clarinet wafting in the background. This tune reminded me of Tony Williams's lovely "Sister Cheryl." The bouncy and inviting "Davka" showcases another fleet-fingered solo from Maestro, with the trumpet of Dizack bursting through with great sound and command. Fender Rhodes sets the mood for the pretty and pleasant tribute "Melody for Ido." Again, Wiesenberg's writing and arranging stands out as original and very pleasant to the ear. The trumpet soars very high on this one, bringing the band and the song to a wonderful height and climax. The Fender restarts the whole thing out of a dissolve, the alto leads and then the whole ensemble swings and waves to passersby.

Mark Klafter

# New Issues



**(1) ALEXANDER VON SCHLIPPENBACH  
GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA  
GLOBE UNITY – 50 YEARS  
INTAKT CD 298**

GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA –  
50 YEARS. 44:03.

Henrik Walsdorff, as; Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky, as, cl, flt; Daniele D'Agaro, ts, cl; Gerd Dudek, ss, ts, cl, flt; Evan Parker, ts, ss; Rudi Mahall, b cl; Axel Dorner, tpt; Manfred Schoof, tpt, flgh; Jean-Luc Cappozzo, tpt; Tomasz Stanko, tpt; Ryan Carniaux, tpt; Christof Thewes, Wolter Wierbos, Gerhard Gschlossl, tbn; Carl Ludwig Hubsch, tub; Alexander von Schlippenbach, p; Paul Lovens, d; Paul Lytton, d. November 4, 2016, Berlin, Germany.

The origins of the Globe Unity Orchestra date to 1966, when Joachim-Ernst Berendt commissioned pianist Alexander von Schlippenbach to create a work for a large group in the free jazz idiom to be performed at the Berliner Jazztage festival, of which Berendt was the founder and musical director. Von Schlippenbach formed a 13-piece ensemble made up of members of the Manfred Schoof Quintet and the Peter Brotzmann Trio, both noted German groups in the avant-guard area, plus five additional players, to perform his “Globe Unity” at the 1966 festival. Von Schlippenbach and the orchestra, with some differences in personnel, returned to perform there in 1970, 1976, 1986, 2006, and most recently for the 2016 festival, since renamed Jazzfest Berlin. Von Schlippenbach’s 2016 version of the Globe Unity Orchestra, which includes many of the most prominent free jazz musicians of Europe, is an 18 piece group, consisting of 5 reeds, 9 brass, piano, and two drummers, and includes three original members of the orchestra (pianist von Schlippenbach, trumpeter Manfred Schoof, and saxophonist Gerd Dudek). Representing the orchestra’s fifty year anniversary at the festival, this recording (1) presents music in the free jazz idiom which ebbs and flows for a performance of 44 minutes. As the music proceeds from boisterous to quieter moments and back, a listener may be struck by the ability of the musicians to play with 17 others in a spontaneous and interactive way and to continue this for a lengthy period. On the visual side, Richard Williams, artistic director of the festival from 2015 to 2017, comments in the liner notes on the striking effect of soloists and groups of soloists advancing to the front of the stage, which enhanced the intense experience of the live performance. The Globe Unity Orchestra has made two previous recordings on the Swiss label Intakt Records, in 2002 and 2006.

Don Lerman

# New Issues



## (2) PEDRO GIRAUDO & THE WDR BIG BAND AN ARGENTINIAN IN NEW YORK ZOHO ZM 201804

MENTIRAS RIADOSAS /  
CHICHARRITA / LA LEY  
PRIMERA / LAPIDARIO / EIR  
/ DESCONSUELO SUITE:  
PRELUDIO DE BOMBO  
LEGUERO / MATE AMARGO  
/ CON UN NUDO EN LA  
GARGANTA / LA BRONCA.  
55:34.

Johan Horlen, as, flt, cl;  
Karolina Strassmayer, as, flt;  
Olivier Peters, Paul Heller,  
ts; Jens Neufang, bari;  
Andy Haderer, Wim Both,  
Rob Bruynen, Ruud Breuls,  
John Marshall, tpt; Ludwig  
Nuss, Shannon Barnett,  
Andy Hunter, tbn; Mattis  
Cederberg, b tbn; Pablo Held,  
p; Paul Shigihara, g; John  
Goldsby, b; Hans Dekker, d;  
Bodek Janke, perc. November  
29, 2016, Cologne, Germany.

2) is a recording of a live concert from bassist and composer Pedro Giraudo and his New York-based WDR Big Band which was performed at the WDR Funkhaus in Cologne, Germany in 2016. Giraudo, a native of Córdoba Argentina who moved to New York City in 1996, has released eight albums as a leader including this one, with four on the ZOHO label. The six compositions of Giraudo on this album all have intriguing melodic themes and imaginative rhythms. His well-crafted arrangements contain interesting musical development, artful backgrounds to soloists, and feature all sections of the band. Alto saxophonist Johan Horlen's brilliant solo on the pretty ballad "La Ley Primera" is representative of the uniformly outstanding performances from the band throughout the program. Giraudo's four movement "Desconsuelo Suite" is a compelling work, from the urgent themes of "Mate Amargo," the pensive and tango-influenced sounds of "Con Un Nudo En La Garganta," to the exciting odd-metered rhythms and surging strains of "La Bronca."

Don Lerman

# New Issues



**AKIKO TSURUGA/  
GRAHAM DECHTER/  
JEFF HAMILTON,  
EQUAL TIME,  
CAPRI RECORDS**

MAG'S GROOVE / ORANGE  
COALS / OSAKA SAMBA / A  
BAPTIST BEAT / MOMENT'S  
NOTICE / LION'S GATE /  
I REMEMBER YOU / THIS  
COULD BE THE START OF  
SOMETHING BIG. 46:58.

Tsuruga, org; Dechter, g'  
Hamilton, d. 8/24/2018.  
Denver, CO.

Truth be told, there are probably more female organists on the current jazz scene than any time in history. And there are even two or so of Asian descent. Akiko Tsuruga has achieved veteran status since almost two decades in the Big Apple, studying with Dr. Lonnie Smith and releasing about ten examples of her Hammond talent. Yet she remains somewhat below the radar to the general jazz public. Here's a follow-up to her self-produced live offering *So Cute, So Bad* from 2017 with the same personnel. There are also some videos of the trio at *Dizzy's* available on YouTube.

This time out they sail through an eight tune program of the usual mix of originals and standards. Tsuruga contributed three titles, the leadoff number which could be a simultaneous salute to Milt Jackson and trumpeter Joe Magnarelli who answers to that nickname, "Osaka Samba" which fuses a hometown vibe to Brazilian affection and the creamy ballad "Lion's Gate" (no relation to the movie studio). Elsewhere, there's a sanctified shuffle version of Hank Mobley's "A Baptist Bear", a Trane classic off *Blue Train* and a pair of standards that end things up with a brushed "I Remember You" & a brisk take of the Steve Allen evergreen. Hamilton gets his due on the latter and Dechter's "Orange Coals" a cooking riff with an interesting bridge followed by some thoughtful interchanges between the organ and guitar solowise. Mention must be made of its composer who has two albums out (with need to do another one soon) and gets MVP honors with no disrespect to his colleagues. A nice one.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

## HOUSTON PERSON, I'M JUST A LUCKY SO AND SO,

HIGHNOTE 7327.

WILLOW WEEP FOR ME /  
WONDER WHY / I GUESS I'LL  
HANG MY TEARS OUT TO  
DRY / I'M JUST A LUCKY SO  
AND SO / WHO CAN I TURN  
TO / DAY BY DAY / ALONE  
WITH JUST MY DREAMS /  
SONG FOR A RAINBOW / I  
WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOU  
/ NEXT TIME YOU SEE ME.

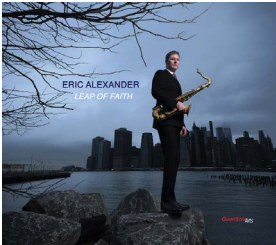
55:34

Collective personnel: Person,  
ts; Eddie Allen, tpt; Rodney  
Jones, g; Lafayette Harris p;  
Matthew Parish, b; Kenny  
Washington, d. 11/20/2018.  
Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

It wouldn't be too far off the mark to define Houston Person as a singer of songs. With a tone as big and warm as the city of Houston in mid-summer one can almost hear the veteran tenorist singing through his metal mouthpiece and reed especially on delicious ballads like the many prime examples heard here on his latest effort for Highnote. In this day and age when many aspiring saxmen sound like duck calls Houston reminds us of the days when tone came first then technique second. Surrounded by like-minded sidemen completely familiar with what is required to sell this session filled with blues- draped standards with a ringer from Rodney Jones thrown in for good measure. Speaking of the guitarist, the under sung Jones makes a notable impression on seven selections while trumpeter Allen shows up on one half dozen titles. No big agenda here just six skilled players enjoying making some excellent music together. Like Jimmy Cobb, Harold Mabern, Benny Golson and a few other jazz vets Houston Person is a national treasure worth supporting. Now how about an album with a hot Hammond smoking at Rudy's studio shrine?

Larry Hollis

# New Issues



**ERIC ALEXANDER,  
LEAP OF FAITH,  
GIANT STEPS ARTS 003.**

LUQUITAS / MARS /  
CORAZON PERDIDO /  
HARD BLUES / FRENZY /  
BIG RICHARD / MAGYAR  
/ SECOND IMPRESSION.

57:15.

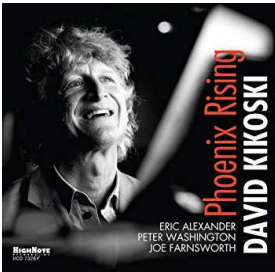
Alexander, ts; Doug Weiss,  
b; Johnathan Blake, d. 5/8 &  
8/7/2018. NYC.

In 2016 the Japanese Venus label issued a compact disc entitled *Just One Of Those Things* by the Eric Alexander Trio. The sole similarity to it and this new release on the fledgling Giant Steps Arts logo is the triad of tenor, sax and drums (Alexander, Dezron Douglas & Neal Smith) the latter two replaced by Doug Weiss and Johnathan Blake. Whereas the former was a studio offering consisting of seven standards and a pair of John Coltrane writings this most recent platter sports an all-Alexander program captured at the Jazz Gallery last year.

Essaying an all-Alexander program (for the first time) this is not strictly a completely chord-absent set as the leader takes to the piano bench for a brief intro to "Corazon Perdido" and there are a few surprises when it comes to influences regarding some of the numbers like Bela Bartok with sweet arco upright on "Magyar" or the contrafact of Bruno Mars popular "Finesse" entitled "Mars". Then there are a pair of familial themes in "Little Lucas" for one of Eric's sons and the "Big Richard" a sumptuous salute to his late father. Blake lights a fire under the aptly-titled "Frenzy" and crackles on the street-strutting "Hard Blues". Things wrap up with an alteration of 1961 saxophone signature on "Second Impression" with a trip down the Trane tracks. It, along with the above-mentioned "Frenzy", both appeared on the 2016 self-titled Highnote disc. It has been over half of a century since Gerry Mulligan taught us that a chordless unit can produce worthwhile jazz and this honored tradition is carried on by Eric Alexander and his comrades. Recommend.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues



**DAVID KIKOSKI,  
PHOENIX RISING,  
HIGHNOTE 7328.**

PHOENIX RISING / KIK IT/  
WICHITA LINEMAN / IF I  
WERE A BELL / EMILY /  
LOVE FOR  
SALE / MY ONE AND  
ONLY LOVE / LAZY BIRD  
/ WILLOW WEEP FOR ME.  
59:16.

Kikoski, p; Eric Alexander,  
ts; Peter Washington, b; Joe  
Farnsworth, d. 12/20/2018.  
Englewood Cliffs,  
NJ.

Regular readers of Cadence should recognize the name of musician David Kikoski as his recording resume stretches back over two decades to issues on labels like DIW, Triloka, Small's Live, Epic, Sirocco and most prolifically, Criss Cross with almost a dozen titles. Not to mention his sideperson appearances on many other sessions with A-list aggregations such as Opus 5 and the Mingus Big Band. Needless to say, he's paid enough dues to qualify for lifetime membership in the musician's union.

For his first release under the Highnote logo he helms a blue-ribbon quartet with heavy artillery in the bottom sporting under-recognized upright ace Peter Washington teamed with his old One For All mate Joe Farnsworth. The third OFA connection is the excellent tenorist Eric Alexander on all tracks save for the Mandel staple "Emily". The Kikoski/Alexander co-written title leadoff has more twists and turns than a mountain two laner, followed by the Eric-penned "Kik It" along with Trane's "Lazybird" are the hot cakes in the stack while certified standards (Willow..., My One & Only Love, Love...) are decked out in fresh finery with a Jimmy Webb pop ringer sandwiched in for a somewhat surprising change of pace. With comprehensive booklet annotation and crisp sound from the legendary Van Gelder studio this is a winner all the way. I'm keeping my copy.

Larry Hollis



# New Issues



## VARIOUS ARTISTS, JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC: LIVE IN AMSTERDAM 1960

NEDERLANDS JAZZ  
ARCHIEF 1802.

(A) ANNOUNCEMENT BY  
NORMAN GRANZ / TAKE THE  
A TRAIN / BALLAD MEDLEY:

THESE FOOLISH THINGS-I  
REMEMBER CLIFFORD-  
LAURA-THE MAN I LOVE /  
STONED (aka BEDLAM).

(B) THE MOOCHE / KUSH(\*)  
/ WHEATLEIGHT HALL. Total  
Time: 75:39.

(A) Coleman Hawkins, Don  
Byas, ts; Benny Carter, as; Roy  
Eldridge, tpt; Lalo Schifrin, p;

Art Davis,

b; Jo Jones, d.

(B) Dizzy Gillespie, tpt;

Stan Getz, ts; J.J. Johnson,

tb; Schifrin, p; Davis, b;

Chuck Lampkin, d. Candido

Camero, cga(\*). 11/19/1960.  
Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.

By the time this European tour of Norman Granz's star-packed roadshow happened the line between Swing and Bebop had blurred considerably but not completely beyond recognition. The two tenor players were perhaps the most open to the latter sounds with Hawkins employing reboppers (even maverick Monk) in sideman capacities. Bookended by punchy flag wavers the obligatory slow grinders showcase the Hawk (the Zeus of the tenor) on '...Foolish Things', an unexpected Don Byas exposition of the Golson gem, followed by Benny Carter's vibrato-laden "Laura" before Little Jazz closes things out with "The Man I Love". Nice work from all hands.

John Birks and crew give off the vibe that they are chopping at the bit to kick. With two super-star guests in Get and Johnson there is plenty of fire power packed into the three tune set. They sail through Duke's chart and a pair of originals from the leader. As expected everyone performs admirably but it was to Texan Leo Wright's hot alto that these ears were continually drawn. He doesn't cut James Moody's studio solo on the 6/8 "Kush" but he comes damn close. Lalo Schifrin spearheads a tight rhythmic unit that is totally at ease since both he, Wright & Lampkin were Dizzy bandmates. As with the norm for this label a thick booklet with memorabilia is enclosed.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

## WES MONTGOMERY, WES'S BEST, RESONANCE 2039.

JINGLES / MR. WALKER /  
WEST COAST BLUES / FOUR  
ON SIX / ONCE I LOVED (O  
AMOR EM PAZ) / WES' TUNE  
/ LI'; DARLING / GOING DOWN  
TO BIG MARY'S / DIABLO'S  
DANCE /  
NICA'S DREAM / GIVE ME  
THE SIMPLE LIFE / 'ROUND  
MIDNIGHT. 61:15.

Montgomery, g; various  
other unlisted personnel. No  
dates or locations given.

## BILL EVANS, SMILE WITH YOUR HEART, RESONANCE 2038.

SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL  
COME / YESTERDAYS /  
MOTHER OF EARL / YOU'RE  
GONNA HEAR FROM ME  
/ BAUBLES, BANGLES  
AND BEADS / MY FUNNY  
VALENTINE / NARDIS / VERY  
EARLY / TURN OUT THE  
STARS / POLKA DOTS AND  
MOONBEAMS / RE:PERSON  
I KNEW / WALTZ FOR DEBBY.  
69:50.

Evans, p; various other  
unlisted personnel. No dates  
or locations given.

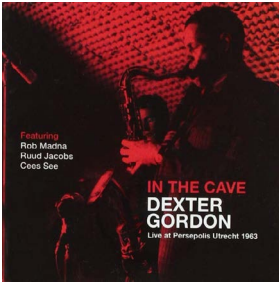
Founded almost a dozen years ago the Resonance company has established a new standard among jazz labels releasing attractively produced packages on both compact disc and vinyl long-players. For those of us who couldn't afford to acquire all of the titles desired now comes a single cd digi-pack with selected titles from various artists and major figures.

The Wes Montgomery collection (a) contains an even dozen titles from five of the six releases previously issued. For some unexplained reason no tracks from the In Paris set with Harold Mabern & Johnny Griffin are present. Three cuts (1,3&5) are from the Smokin' In Seattle disc with the Wynton Kelly Trio are upfront, "Mr. Walker", "Round Midnight" and "Four On Six" hail from the latest Back On Indiana Avenue issue with an unknown piano quartet and the In The Beginning packet provides "Wes's Tune" & "Going Down To Big Mary's" with the Montgomery Brothers in a quintet. The latter title was written by R&B singer Titus Turner and has a vocal from Debbie Andrews. The One Night In Indy album furnishes two titles, the standard "Give Me The Simple Life" and Neal Hefti classic "Li'l Darling" with Eddie Higgins while "Diablo's Dance" & Horace Silver's "Nica's Dream" with the under-rated Mel Rhyne on piano on the former and organ on the latter spring from One Night In Indy. These are prime Wes Montgomery works and rank right up there with most of the Riversides.

The Bill Evans selection (b) follows the same format with the same number of titles, eye-catching artwork from Takao Fujioka (for whom the collection is named) and uncredited personnel. Like the Montgomery release, Evans' son Evan penned an appreciation where Robert A. Montgomery Sr. wrote the aforementioned. These dozen numbers are arranged in increments of three starting with the first three from Live At Art D'Lugoff's Top Of The Gate in a trio of Eddie Gomez and Marty Morell. "Mother Of Earl" was composed by longtime friend Earl Zindars, one of many compositions by him Evans waxed over the years. Next up is a triad of standards with Gomez and Jack DeJohnette from Some Other Time laid down at the MPS studios in Germany. Miles' "Nardis" and a pair of originals follow with the same rhythm section from the Another Time album. Things end up full circle with the threesome from the first 3 cuts on the most recent issue Evans In England. Bill Evans may have been given short shrift in the Ken Burns documentary but Resonance sure has made up for it.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues



## DEXTER GORDON, IN THE CAVE, NEDERLANDS JAZZ ARCHIEF 1801.

STANLEY THE STEAMER /  
Announcement / YESTERDAYS /  
Announcement / I WANNA BLOW  
NOW / Announcement / BODY  
AND SOUL / Announcement /  
DEXTER'S DECK / Announcement  
/ IN THE CAVE. 74:19.  
Gordon, ts; Rob Madna, p; Ruud  
Jacobs, b; Cees See, d. 1/20/1963.  
Utrecht, Netherlands.

This year has been an especially good one for fans of Long Tall Dexter. Not only were we blessed with an excellent insiders biography from his widow Maxine but several heretofore unreleased sounds from Tokyo 1975, LA 82, Subway Club 73, France 1977, Frisco 62 and elsewhere. These tracks stem from a Sunday night (of a two day gig) at the Modern Jazz Club Persepolis Enclosed in the informative booklet are the circumstances surrounding (in Dutch & English language) written by producer Frank Jochemsen. He informs us that not long before Gordon's largely acknowledged masterwork *Go! For Blue Note* was released so his chops were up for it.

Even with the leader in peak form the real surprise here is the amazing backing trio. Trap vet Cees See is the only one I was vaguely familiar with and Ruud Jacobs is rock steady on the big bull but it is pianist Rob Madna who is the biggest revelation. What a player! He has it all, with superlative solos and he spurs Dex onward and upward with deft comping. I need to search him out.

The six selections go down like smooth scotch, the medium blues opener and my nomination for next-to-best cut "Dexter's Deck", two sumptuous steam valves "Yesterdays" which is no perfunctory run through clocking in at a hair over thirteen minutes and the immortal "Body And Soul" or as Gordon calls it in his spoken intro "the tenorist's dilemma" that has, as on the Kern ballad, a short(for LTD) cadenza and the jump tune "I Wanna Blow Now" with call-and-response singalong and many quotes from the horn. . The last two numbers impressed yours truly the most; from a 1947 Savoy date the aforementioned "Dexter's Deck" sports his most expansive ride (Madna's also) and the leader proclaims in his introductory announcement he "gets a kick out of playing". Jacobs is afforded a solo straight out of Leroy Vinnegar walking lexicon and there are some tasty fours with the drums. The final title tune is something of a rarity. A Dorian mode free improvisation with collective composing credits it's the longest track present. . After a hypnotic drum intro Dex enters with some snaky, Middle Eastern sax line that juxtapose cleanly into a four/four swing that continues back and forth throughout the performance. Effective hand slapped snare is audible under the bass spot before a stick exposition on the drum kit. This is volume six in a Treasures of Dutch Jazz that holds titles from Hank Mobley, Ben Webster, Cannonball Adderley, Don Byas and more. A worthy addition to put in mildly.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

## CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY TELEPATHY JAZZBEAT

PRODUCTIONS no #  
ONE OF ANOTHER KIND  
/ HALLUCINATIONS /  
EVERYTHING HAPPENS  
TO ME / AUTUMN IN NEW  
YORK / I'VE GOT THE  
WORLD ON A STRING /  
SEGMENT. TOTAL TIME:  
33:01.

Christopher Hollyday – as;  
Gilbert Castellanos – tpt;  
Joshua White – p; Rob  
Thosen – b; Tyler Kreutel –  
d. recorded 5/4/2018, San  
Diego, CA.

**B**ack in the late 80s it seemed impossible to avoid alto saxophonist Christopher Hollyday. Emerging at the tail end of the “Young Lions” era, he had a contract with a major label, many of the jazz magazines of the day featured articles on him and jazz radio stations featured his recordings. He did all of this by the age of 18. A bop-oriented player, he delivered straight down the center music with assurance. Although Charlie Parker was the prime influence (and why wouldn't he be), he seems to have absorbed a bit of the Jackie McLean aesthetic as well, honing in on his more aggressive tone and energetic playing. Hollyday released five albums for Novus but was dropped by the label in 1992. After that Hollyday seemed to vanish from the scene. What happened is he went back to school then moved from his native Boston to San Diego and has been busy as a jazz educator ever since.

Telepathy is his first recording in over 25 years. While there's nothing too surprising on here it's amazing that his bebop sounds fresh and invigorated. Part of the reason is the quintet that is playing with him. Comprised of other San Diego players, they seem to be inspiring him. His frontline partner, trumpeter Gilbert Castellanos works hand-in-glove with Hollyday with a Freddie Hubbard streak. Oddly, pianist Joshua White seems to be the one holding the music together with his rich harmonic sense and his understanding of bop pianistics. But he's under-utilized and doesn't get much solo space. The rhythm section is solid and everything runs like fine-tuned clockwork.

The program consists of six standards treated well. Opening with Freddie Hubbard's flag-waver “One Of Another Kind”, the music brims with energetic playing. It's nice to see Bud Powell's tricky “Hallucinations” being played with Hollyday and Castellanos trading biting solos. “Autumn In New York” slows things down nicely and White delivers a delicate solo and his accompanying playing throughout makes this a highlight of the disc. The album concludes with another bop flagwaver, Bird's “Segment” and it ends the album on a satisfying note. It's a good date and should be a treat for bop lovers and those who've been waiting to hear a new Hollyday recording. But at 33 minutes, it's a little skimpy on playing time.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



## MODERN ART ORCHESTRA PLAYS BELA BARTOK: 15 HUNGARIAN PEASANT SONGS

BMC 265

FOUR OLD TUNES:

RUBATO / ANDANTE

– POCO SOSTENUTO –

PIU ANDANTE (TEMPO

1) – POCO SOSTENUTO

– PUI ANDANTE / POCO

RUBATO – SOSTENUTO

/ ANDANTE / SCHERZO:

ALLEGRO – SOSTENUTO,

POCO RUBATO – TEMPO

1 / BALLAD (THEME WITH

VARIATIONS) : ANDANTE /

PIU ANDANTE / MAESTOSO

/ OLD DANCE TUNES:

ALLEGRO / ALLEGRETTO /

ALLEGRETTO / L'ISTESSO

TEMPO / ASSAI MODERATO

/ ALLEGRETTO / POCO

PIU VIVO – ALLEGRETTO /

ALLEGRO / ALLEGRO – PUI

ZVIVO – POCO PUI MENO

VIVO. TOTAL TIME: 68:38.

Kornel Fekete Kovacs –

conductor, tpt, flgh; David

Liebman – ts, ss, recorder;

My knowledge of Hungarian jazz history is not particularly deep. Part of the problem is that not a lot of the music was imported nor was it scouted by American labels. In the 1960s, guitarists Atilla Zoller and Gabor Szabo were the most prominent players to emerge from there. Pianist Gyorgy Szabados is considered the first Hungarian jazz player to invoke the spirit of free jazz but his albums were impossible to find. In the 1980s I stumbled across an excellent album by pianist Karoly Binder's quintet which featured John Tchicai. Since the turn of the century more and more of the music has been seeping out of the country. Particularly notable is the Eastern Boundary Quartet who have had several excellent recordings. They feature two veteran Americans: pianist Michael Jefry Stevens and bassist Joe Fonda with saxophonist Mihaly Borbely and drummer Balazs Bagyi. It's a group where all members contribute compositions and over the course of four albums have amassed a worthwhile discography. In all of the above examples, these players also blended in elements from Hungarian folk music and modern Hungarian composers (Bartok, Kodaly) into their concept. It's very distinctive, it's very seductive and it blends well with jazz rhythms and harmonies. The results are unique. Below are two recent releases that show Hungarian jazz musicians paying homage to arguably the country's greatest composer, Bela Bartok, mixing folk and classical elements with jazz improvisation

**T**he Modern Art Orchestra, under the direction of Kornel Fekete-Kovacs perform Bartok's 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs. This was a piece Bartok wrote and arranged for solo piano based on Hungarian folk melodies that he had cataloged. The suite, originally composed in three different parts, was combined by Bartok for single piano performance. Fekete-Kovacs arranges it for a full jazz big band using himself and Janos Aved, Kristof Bacso and Gabor Subciz as arrangers. He also invited several guest musicians including American Dave Liebman (one of the most intrepid of American jazz players), and four Hungarian musicians: Mihaly Dresch (fuhun – a Hungarian flute), Miklosz Lukacs (cimbalom – a Hungarian dulcimer-like instrument), Laszlo Goz (bass trumpet) and singer Veronika Hoarcsa. Other members of the orchestra solo as well. Including Aved (ts), Balasz Scerto (tarogato), Gabor Cseke (piano). Here it is performed as a non-stop orchestral suite opened up for improvisation with each section nicely segueing into the next.

# New Issues

Mihaly Dreach – fuhun;  
Miklos Lukacs – cimbalom;  
Laszlo Goz – b tpt; Veronika  
Harcza – vcl; Kristof  
Bacso – ss, as, flt; David  
Ukei – as, clt; Janos Aved  
– ts, flt; Balasz Cserta – ts,  
tarogato, bagpipe, clt;  
Mihaly Bajuszncacs – bars,  
b clt; Adam Graf – tpt, flgh;  
Zoltan Bacsa – tpt; flgh;  
Gabor Subicz – tpt. Flgh;  
Balasz Bukovinszki – tpt,  
flgh; Zolran Varga – horn;  
Balint Kepiro – horn; Attila  
Korb – tbn; Gabor Barbinek  
– tbn; Miklos Scathy – b tbn;  
Peter Kovacs – tuba; Aron  
Komajti – g; Gabor Cseke –  
p; Adam Bagothy – b; Laszlo  
Csizi – d. recorded  
11/20-21/2017, Budapest,  
Hungary.

## PARNICZKY QUARTET BARTOK ELECTRIFIED BMC 260

BULGARIAN RHYTHM /  
FRUSTRATION / MAJOR  
SECONDS / VILLAGE JOKE  
/ BOATING / FAST DANCE /  
THE WHEAT WILL BE RIPE /  
SYNCOPIATION / THUMBS  
UNDER / BEAR DANCE.  
TOTAL TIME: 48:00  
Andras Parniczky – g; Peter  
Bede – as, ss; Erno Hock  
– b; Istvan Balo – d, perc.  
recorded 6/19-20/2017,  
12/10/2017. Budapest,  
Hungary.

Each of the guest soloists brings his area of expertise to the music. Liebman's solos are solidly jazz derived but his improvisations (and he's featured at length on six of the 15 tracks) are faithful to the Hungarian-derived melodies and modes. On "Andante" Dresch solos at length on fuhun and Liebman's subsequent solo on soprano blends perfectly with the Hungarian flute. The ensemble voicings range from Bartokian (of course) to a Gil Evans style to standard big band. What is surprising about this disc is how all the various elements merge into a unique listening experience. And it demonstrates the relevance and adaptability of both Hungarian folk music and Bartok's music to the world at large. If the above answers the question of how Bartok's music would adapt to jazz contemporization, the Parniczky Quartet answers the question "what about Bartok Electrified"? It was a concept I eyed a with a bit of suspicion. But practically from the opening moments, guitarist Andras Parniczky and his quartet allayed any worries. The main soloists are Parniczky and saxophonist Peter Bede. But the backbone of this music is drummer Istvan Balo, who, ironically, was the drummer on that 1984 album by Karoly Binder I found. He's a player with a seemingly flawless sense of time as is demonstrated on the opener "Bulgarian Rhythm" (a piece from Bartok's *Mikrokosmos*). It's counted in 7/8 but the music flows with a direction and straightforwardness that belies its quirky (to Western oriented ears) rhythm. Saxophonist Brede floats above with the melody and with an improvisatory naturalness during his solo. But credit has to be given to Balo who maneuvers the metric complexity, inserting well-placed fills and cymbal splashes that serve the music with more than mere time-keeping. Guitarist Parniczky usually sports a jazz-toned clarity and his single line solos are never less than interesting. "Major Seconds" and "The Wheat Will Be Ripe" finds him adding a drenching feedback to his phrases that are effective. On the intro to the latter it blends nicely with bassist Erno Hock's arco basslines. Throughout, the ensembles are extremely tight but never stiff. Most of the tracks are brief (only two exceed the five-minute range) but pack a lot into their short-ish running time. All in all, another effective contemporization of Bartok's music. Both of these discs are well-worth hearing.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



ALLESSANDERO  
NOBILE / DAVE  
BURRELL / ANOTIO  
MONCADA  
REACTION AND  
REFLECTION

RUDI RECORDS 1039

REACTION ONE /

REFLECTION ONE

/ REACTION TWO /

REFLECTION TWO /

REACTION THREE /

REFLECTION THREE / FOR

CARLO. TOTAL TIME: 49:10.

Dave Burrell – p; Alessandro

Nobile – b; Antonio Moncada

– d. recorded 3/2017, Vittoria,

Sicily, Italy.

Since 2011 Rudi Records has been documenting the Italian improvised music scene with an impressive frequency. The catalogue seems to be oriented toward the more modern sounds but there are some mainstream oriented releases as well. I've only heard a few of these (those leaning toward the more contemporary approaches) but they've all had something to recommend them. Below are two of their most recent releases.

While the label has been rigorous in promoting Italian musicians, there are frequent collaborations with others including William Parker, Satoko Fujii, Sabir Mateen. On Reaction And Reflection, Sicilian musicians Alessandro Nobile (bass) and Antonio Moncada (drums) are joined by august pianist Dave Burrell. The meeting stemmed from an invitation to Burrell to perform a solo set in Vittoria, Sicily and this session was a subsequent result. For this set they performed seven free improvisations.

Although Burrell is known as a composer ("Crucificado" and "A.M. Rag" to name just two) and he is a dab hand at many historical styles of jazz piano, he's also in his element when playing free jazz. Nobile and Moncada sound attuned to each other and it doesn't take too long for Burrell to figure a way into their world. The pianist has distinctive approach when playing this style that evolves from abrupt spritzes of phrases and builds to free form barrages (let's not forget the intensity of his playing back in the BYG days of 1969-70) and the other two shadow him closely. But there are many shades to this music. There are passages of in tempo playing and moments of quiet beauty. "Reaction Three" starts with a rumbling drum solo and when Burrell enters he starts playing rhythmic phrases that imbues the piece an almost danceable quality.

Dave Burrell is one of those musicians who seems willing to play with new people in new situations. Reaction And Reflection shows the positive results that this methodology can produce.

# New Issues

## BLUERING- IMPROVISERS BLUERING, VOL. 1

RUDI RECORDS 1038

Prelude / Quietness Of

Fighters / interlude / Blue Is  
The Color / Urban Crescendo

/ Blue Fish In The Ring /

No Ending Theme (Chant  
Of Hope) / Keplership –

BlueRingers All The Night  
(live)\*. total time: 44:42.

Tobia Bondesan – conductoe;

Andrea Del Vescovo-tpt;

Andrea Angeloni – tbn; Paolo

Acquaviva – tbn; Massimiliano

Dosoli- clt; Leonardo Agnelli

– clt; Francesco Nowell – flt;

Marco Vecchop - as; Riccardo

Filippi - as; Massimo Gemini

– ts; Franceso Panconesi –

ts; Francesco Salmaso – ts;

Gabriele Mastropasqua – bars;

Joseph Nowell – p, kybds;

Luca Sguera – p, kybds;

Francescp Fiorenzani – g;

Michele Bondesan – b;

Gioseppe Sardina = d, perc;

Camilla Battaglia, Eleonora

Elettra Franchina, Clizia

Miglianti – vcl. recorded 7/19-

20-2016, Pisa, Italy; except

\*- recorded 7/20/2016, Siena,

Italy.

**B**lueRing Improvisers is a large ensemble of musician friends who would meet, talk and make music. They eventually formed into a collective big band. Although it seems to be a democratic organization on their first release *Blue Ring Vol. 1*, Tobia Bondesan seems to be the organizing factor. Although he is a saxophonist, here he is listed as conductor and composer of the various themes that emerge but doesn't appear to be playing. For this recording the instrumental membership numbers 18 with three vocalists (mostly wordless). The music is complex and well-played. "Interlude" starts as a sparse ballad with unique harmonies and gradually builds to a dense full ensemble. "Blue Is The Color" is propelled by an ostinato pattern from Michele Bondesan's bass and has the best use of wordless voice, couched in intricate brass/reed harmonies which build to a free jazz blowout. Each movement segues into the next, the total emerging as a 7-part suite. The final track is a live piece that gives a good idea of how fun and loose this band can be. Good soloists and interesting compositions make this one worth hearing.

Robert Iannapallo



# New Issues



## MICHAEL MUSILLAMI / RICH SYRACUSE DIG

PLAYSCAPE 030519

C MINOR BLUES CHASE /  
TWELVE TONE TUNE / BLUE IN  
GREEN / NARDIS / ALL BLUES  
/ HOW MY HEART SINGS /  
BILL'S HIT TUNE. TOTAL TIME:  
44:00.

Michael Musillami – g; Rich  
Syracuse – b. recorded  
3/5/2019, New Haven, CT.

Guitarist Michael Musillami has amassed an impressive discography over the past 20 years. Although he's been recording under his own name since the 1980s it was at the turn of the century that he established his Playscape Records to showcase not only his music but also that of players he's respected (bassist Mario Pavone, pianist Peter Madsen, saxophonist Thomas Chapin a/o). The label has documented many Musillami projects but the most interesting have been those with his adventurous trio (with bassist Joe Fonda and drummer George Schuller) and its various augmentations. But another formation that's produced very different but complimentary results is the duo he's set up with bassist Rich Syracuse.

Musillami and Syracuse use this format to explore the compositions of various jazz composers. The first, *Of The Night* focused on the music of Wayne Shorter, the second on the music of Charles Mingus. *Dig* finds the duo adding their touch to the music of pianist Bill Evans. This duo format is an inspired way of getting inside a composer's / performer's music and it's perfectly demonstrated here. Evans' music was about intimacy and that is carried over into this duet. When dealing with the music of Shorter and

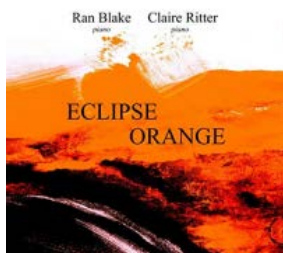
Mingus the two were able to imbue their energy with vigorous interplay and heated exchanges (especially with the Mingus album). But they also brought out hidden (or previously ignored) gentler contours in the music that are frequently missed in other interpretations. On *Dig* the opposite is true.

A good example is the Evans composition "Twelve Tone Tune" (aka "T.T.T."). Here they take the implications behind the piece literally and develop it with a dense web of intersecting lines and rich dissonances. Miles Davis' "Nardis" (written for Bill Evans) is also given an energetic treatment. But the gentle, probing intimacy that is at the root of Evans' music is there throughout as well. The opener "C Minor Blues Chase" starts things off in that frame with Syracuse's thick bass lines supporting and adding heft to Musillami's improvisation and vice-versa.

*Dig* makes it three successful albums in a row for this duo. One looks forward to see who they have their sights on next. But it would be nice to hear them do an album of Musillami's compositions someday.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



## RAN BLAKE / CLAIRE RITTER ECLIPSE ORANGE

ZONING RECORDINGS

CLAIRE RITTER STORY / BLUE

MONK / ECLIPSE ORANGE /

BACKBONE / SHORT LIFE OF

BARBARA MONK / I MEAN

YOU / IN BETWEEN / BLUE

GRITS / EMERALD AND

THE BREEZE / HIGH TOP

SNEAKERS / SUMMERTIME /

WALTZING THE SPLENDOR /

IMPROVISATION ON SELMA /

KARMA WALTZ / BREAKTHRU

/ COOL DIGS / THERE'S BEEN

A CHANGE / BRAZIL MEDLEY

/ OVER THE RAINBOW /

INTEGRITY. TOTAL TIME: 54:05.

Ran Blake – p; Claire Ritter

– p; Kent O'Doherty – rds.

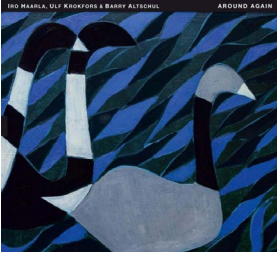
recorded 10/7/2017, Charlotte,

NC.

Pianist/composer Ran Blake is a true original. In the late 1950s when he emerged, he had the proclivities of an avant-gardist. But unlike many of that era, he based his avant-gardism in song structure frequently drawing on popular songs, jazz standards, his own originals and developing harmonies that couched the music in a complexity that made the familiar seem dark and alien. Add to this the influence of black-based gospel music and one had a true visionary. When he released his first album *The Newest Sound Around* with singer Jeanne Lee they seemed a perfect match. She was a singer who understood where Blake was coming from and he couched her voice with his unique harmonic approach. In the mid-60s he was tapped by Gunther Schuller to lead the third-stream department at New England Conservatory, a position he held for over 40 years. In that position he mentored many players: Matthew Shipp and John Medeski to name just two pianists but his mentorship went beyond just the keyboard.

Pianist Claire Ritter was another pianist who received inspiration and guidance from Blake. He has guested on several of her previous recordings. For *Eclipse Orange*, a concert held at Queens College in Charlotte, NC, she invited Blake and saxophonist Kent O'Doherty to participate. What ensued was a free-wheeling trip through a vast repertoire of originals (by both Ritter and Blake) and standards. Ritter and Blake play solos and duets and Ritter also plays several tracks in duet with saxophonist O'Doherty. Blake seems to be in a relaxed mood and the duets with Ritter are light, almost playful. "Blue Monk" with its keyboard splashes between the main phrases is a great example of this. The darker side of Blake's music only surfaces on "Improvisation On Selma", a piece that is colored with a brooding melody. Blake opens the proceedings with "Claire Ritter Story" that's a medley of three of her compositions, all of which surface as duets during the rest of the concert. Ritter's "In Between" is particularly lovely composition with the two pianos criss-crossing and swirling around each other. "Summertime" a song Blake has performed countless times is given a brief but effective run. The

# New Issues



**IRO HAARLA / ULF  
KROKFORS / BARRY  
ALTSCHUL  
AROUND AGAIN  
TUM 054**

CLOSER / VASHKAR /  
BATTERIE / IDA LUPINO /  
AROUND AGAIN / OLHOS  
DE GATO / INTERMISSION  
MUSIC / KING KORN /  
AND NOW, THE QUEEN /  
UTVIKLINGSSANG / START /  
JESUS MARIA. TOTAL TIME:  
66:57.

Iro Haarla – p; Ulf Krokfors  
– b; Barry Altschul – d.  
recorded 11/11/2015,  
Helsinki, Finland.

duos between Ritter and O’Doherty maintain a light, breezy air. All in all, *Eclipse Orange* is the record of an event that was well-worth documenting.

**F**innish pianist Iro Haarla has been recording since the early 80s. Initially she was on a number of recordings by her late husband, drummer Edward Vesala. But she’s been releasing albums under her own name since 2000 and of those I’ve heard, they have featured a unique player with a spare style that understands the concept space plays in the unfolding of a melody. In that sense, she seemed to have a kinship with the music of Paul Bley. So, it isn’t surprising that she has released *Around Again*, an album of early Carla Bley compositions, many of which had their premiers in Paul Bley and Jimmy Giuffre trios (where Paul Bley was pianist). As a matter of fact, this listener is delighted that she’s released this recording.

Long-time bassist Ulf Krokfors is on hand and he is very familiar with Haarla’s method. They recorded a duet album in 2003. But the ringer in this trio is drummer Barry Altschul. Altschul was the main drummer in Paul Bley’s 1960s trios and was the architect of the style of drumming that was a hallmark of the trio’s interplay. If there is any drummer who can bring out the hidden nuances in these compositions, it’s Altschul.

Haarla understands about the hidden nuances as well. She is a melodist at heart and understands that the key to these pieces is letting the melodies grow organically, whether it is at a deeply slow tempo (i.e. “Closer”) or at an extremely fast one (“Start”). The other key to this music is in the group interaction. While everyone is focusing on their own role, they are always mindful of what the other two are doing. Sure, the interaction is free but no one player is really striking out on their own and dominating the music. It takes a remarkable amount of restraint and thought to make the Carla Bley music of this era work. And Iro Haarla has assembled a trio that gives the music everything it needs.

Robert Iannapollo

# New Issues

## QUINSIN NACHOFF'S FLUX PATH OF TOTALITY WHIRLWIND 4733

Path Of Totality / Bounce  
/ Toy Piano Meditation /  
March Macabre / Splatter  
/ Orbital Resonances. total  
time: 80:47.

Quinsin Nachoff – ts, ss;  
David Binney – as, c melody  
s; Matt Mitchell – p, synth,  
novachord, hpschd, Estey  
pump harmonium; Kenny  
Wollenson – d, Wollensonic  
perc; Nate Wood – d. Mark  
Duggan – marimba, vb,  
glocksnespiel, crotales,  
Tibetan singing bowls; Carl  
Maraghi – bars, b clt; Dan  
Urness – tpt; Matt Holman  
– tpt; Ryan Keberle – tbn;  
Alan Ferber – tbn, b tbn;  
Orlando Henandez – tap  
dance; David Travers-Smith  
– electronic kybds. recorded  
11/11-13/2016, Calgary,  
Can; 12/19/2016, Brooklyn,  
NY; 9/9/2017, Brooklyn, NY.

Saxophonist/composer Quinsin Nachoff's first Flux album was released in 2016 to positive reviews. It was an unusual ensemble with a two-saxophone frontline (alto saxophonist David Binney), keyboardist Matt Mitchell and drummer Kenny Wollensen. No bass was present and this, coupled with the extra keyboards Mitchell played, gave the ensemble a more spacious than average sound even with the aggressive playing by the frontline.

Path Of Totality (the title inspired by the 2017 solar eclipse that was seen throughout much of the U.S.) is a 2-disc set that builds on that first album. Nachoff has expanded the concept by adding an additional musician to the base group. Perhaps surprisingly however, the addition is not a bassist but a second drummer (Nate Wood) on two tracks (the title track and "Orbital Resonances") and then he alternates the drummers on other tracks. Mitchell plays several other keyboards as well, including a synthesizer, harpsichord and harmonium. He also adds musicians on various tracks and despite that, it still sounds like Flux. The opener and closer are performed by the base quintet and they are both characterized by a light-hearted ambience that gives the music buoyancy. One can sense this is going to be an adventure within the first few seconds of "Path Of Totality". It begins with the piano and drums starting out with an emphatic beat in tandem but shortly the drummers begin to phase in and out of sync with each other. Soon the horns enter at an oblique angle with the theme and the group takes off. The music keeps shifting in this manner keeping the listener on his/her toes. On "Bounce", the guests start appearing and they bring a lot to the music. Jason

Barnsley's organ adds to the climax of that track, especially in its fading moments in tandem with Mitchell's piano. "Toy Piano Meditation" is practically a feature for Matt Mitchell but not on the titular instrument. His piano is prominent throughout the piece, sometimes nicely shadowed by the marimba and vibes of Mark Duggan. Even when Nachoff and Binney are soloing, Mitchell's piano gets the attention on this track. "March Macabre" has the largest personnel with the base quintet augmented by five brass and reed instruments and a tap dancer. The march maintains its prominence in the rhythm until the last few minutes when the tap dancer emerges, gradually given over to a solo where his rhythms liberates the music from its previous rhythmic underpinning.

There is so much to absorb on this recording and it reveals its complexity and strategies over repeated listenings. But it never sounds overworked. Path Of Totality places Nachoff among the best of the new younger players.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues



## DAVE RUDOLPH QUINTET RESONANCE

SELF-RELEASED no #  
ATONEMENT / THOSE

CLUMSY WORDS / LONELY  
TRAIN / THE VINE / BOUNCE  
/ RESONANCE\* / NIGHT  
SQUIRREL / WHIMSY /  
BRRUSHSTROKES. TOTAL

TIME: 55:03.

Dave Rudolph – d; Larue  
Nickelson – g; Zach  
Bornheimer – ts; Pablo  
Arencibia – p; Alejandro  
Arenas – b; on \* add Whitney  
James – vcl. recorded Tampa,  
FL, no date.

Drummer Dave Rudolph is a veteran on the Florida jazz scene yet Resonance is the first recording of his music. Surprising since he's been performing professionally for over 25 years. He teaches contemporary percussion at the University Of South Florida. And he's played in bands around the area during this time. It took the death of a close friend who had always urged him to record his own music to get him to get his band together and finally do it.

Resonance is a tasty mix of contemporary styles. It's mostly acoustic music (except for the guitar) and each player is more than adept at his instrument. The music ranges from a Latin groove on "Atonement" with the guitarist interjecting short fillips during the theme. The track also has an unexpected tempo shift in the middle of it. Seems like Rudolph is always thinking of ways to make his music interesting. The title track adds the wordless vocals of Whitney James giving the piece a dreamy ambience. "Bounce" is straight ahead jazz but with its own distinction. Guitarist Larue Nickelson delivers his finest solo of the set. Rudolph delivers a subtle yet propulsive solo toward the end. "Whimsy" is in 3/4 and features a piano solo by Pablo Arencebica that rides the waves of Rudolph's drumming. The finale "Brushstrokes" is a tenor sax / drums duet that borders on free improv.

All in all Resonance is a successful romp through nine tracks. Let's hope Rudolph can keep this group together and they return to the studio sooner rather than later.

Robert Iannapolo

# New Issues

## WES MONTGOMERY, BACK ON INDIANA AVENUE, RESONANCE 2034.

DISC ONE: FOUR ON SIX / MR.  
WALKER / 'ROUND MIDNIGHT  
/ SO WHAT THE END OF A  
LOVE AFFAIR / TUNE-UP  
/ WEST COAST BLUES /  
JINGLES(\*)/ IT'S YOU OR NO  
ONE(\*)/  
NOTHING EVER CHANGES  
MY LOVE FOR YOU(\*)/  
ECAROH(\*)/ SANDU(\*\*)/  
WHISPER  
NOT(\*\*). 67:05,  
DISC TWO: STOMPIN' AT  
THE SAVOY/ IT'S YOU OR NO  
ONE/ OPUS DE FUNK/  
SUMMERTIME/ BETWEEN THE  
DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE  
SEA/ EASY LIVING/ FOUR /  
I'LL REMEMBER APRIL/ THE  
SONG IS YOU. 64:04.

DISC ONE: (Piano quartets  
with piano, guitar, bass &  
drums)/ (\*)Organ trio (\*\*)  
Sextet with trombone &  
sax)

DISC TWO: (Nat "King" Cole-  
style tracks with guitar, piano  
& bass)  
(Collective personnel):  
Montgomery, g; Earl Van  
Riper, Buddy Montgomery,  
John Bunch, Carl Perkins,  
p; Mel Rhyne, org, p; Monk  
Montgomery, Mingo Jones, b;  
Paul Parker, Sonny Johnson,  
d;  
David Baker, tbn; David  
Young, ts. Circa mid-to-late  
1950's. Indianapolis, Indiana.

Subtitled The Carroll DeCamp Recordings this sixth and latest set from the excellent Resonance company is a treasure chest for anyone that loves music. Divided into three separate sections by instrumentation many of the participants are unidentified and this was somewhat worrisome, especially when it came to the pianists, but it makes for some spirited blindfolded bouts. A notation on the back reads "Exact recording dates, locations and supporting musicians are not known; the information provided here provided here should be regarded only as educated guesses.". My two cents won't be included but there are some sublimely tasty piano playing herein and two of my personal favorites (Carl Perkins and brother Buddy) are listed.

For someone who didn't even pick up a guitar until his late teens Wes Montgomery matured fast and went a long ways. His signature sound was instantly recognizable and never sounded manufactured.

There is just too much here to go into detail concerning each and every track but the sound is amazingly clean for the time span. As an admirer and one of the few who thought keyboardist Mel Rhyne always got short shrift on those Riverside dates it was a pleasure to hear his subtle organ work at such an early stage. As usual with the folks at Resonance, the packaging and graphics are first rate. The hefty booklet is stuffed with all kinds of related information from experts on the subject. This one is bound to make everyone's top ten historical best-of lists.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues



## BILL EVANS, BILL EVANS REVIEW EVANS IN ENGLAND, RESONANCE 2037.

DISC ONE: OUR LOVE IS  
HERE TO STAY / SUGAR  
PLUM / STELLA BY  
STARLIGHT / MY FOOLISH  
HEART / WALTZ FOR DEBBY  
/ 'ROUND MIDNIGHT /  
THE TWO LONELY PEOPLE  
/ WHO CAN I TURN TO  
(WHEN NOBODY NEEDS  
ME). 55:39.

DISC TWO: ELSA / WHAT  
ARE YOU DOING THE REST  
OF YOUR LIFE? / TURN OUT  
THE STARS / RE: PERSON I  
KNEW / GOODBYE / COME  
RAIN OR COME SHINE /  
VERY EARLY /  
SO WHAT / MIDNIGHT  
MOOD / POLKA DOTS AND  
MOONBEAMS. 56:21.

Evans, p; Eddie Gomez,  
b; Marty Morell, d. Circa  
12/1969. London, England.

My sole experience catching the Bill Evans Trio in concert was in the mid-seventies and it still stays in my mind from time to time after all these years. It was at an art museum in my hometown with a small but appreciative crowd. The supporting players were the same as this two-disc set with the exception of Elliot Zigmund on the drum throne in lieu of Marty Morell. Aside from the exquisite musical sounds I recall Gomez having trouble anchoring his big upright which kept sliding forward but he never missed a note. After the set I lucked into a short chat with Zigmund who proved to be most gracious. My only complaint was a faint back-ache from watching the pianist bent over with his nose almost touching the keyboard.

This double-disc packet holds eighteen tracks of sublime trio interaction that many aficionados hold to be the pianist's best unit next to the one with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian. Like Thelonious Monk, there was a fairly established setlist that had developed over the years but there are a few ringers present. As Marc Myers states in his section on the repertorie "Sugar Plum" is making its debut here, along with "The Two Lonely People" that wouldn't make it to the studio until two years later. Named after the lioness in the movie Born Free, "Elsa" was waxed eight years earlier but seldom performed. The remainder are either originals like "Re:Person I Knew" the Keepnews anagram, a spritely "Walt For Debby", "Turn Out The Stars" and "Very Early" or established evergreens that Evans reinvigorates with his customary skill.

In addition to the Myers essay there are interviews with Gomez and Morell and an essay and interview with tape provider Leon Terjanian in the usual chock-full booklet. Like most Resonance issues this exquisite package is available in the vinyl format. Highly recommended.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

## 1) JEFF MORRIS INTERFACES RAVELLO RECORDS 7998

UPSYP / A SOLO IS THE NTH  
MELODY / IN WHICH / RONDO  
/ INTO / THREE AT ONE /  
UNWIND / CLOCKSAYS /  
INDERNEATH / DOT (DOT  
DOT). 51:29.

Morris, live sampling;  
Karl Berger, vib, p; Joe  
Hertenstein, d, tabletop perc.  
September 25-27, 2017,  
Woodstock, NY.

## (2) D. J. SPARR ELECTRIC BANDS I CAN HEAR HER THROUGH THE THIN WALL SINGING INNOVA 013

I CAN HEAR HER THROUGH  
THE THIN WALL SINGING: I.  
ELEGY AFTER MIDNIGHT / II.  
THE GUITAR / III. THE SINGING  
/ IV. THE PIANO / V. HEAVEN /  
META444 / STRING QUARTET:  
AVALOCH / EARTHCASTER  
SUITE: DRIPS / BELLS / FAMILY  
/ WORK / DANCE. 47:12.

Kristina Bachrach, voc;  
Sparr, el g, electronics;  
Brianna Matzke, p; Hajnal  
Karman Pivnick, Emilie-Anne  
Gendron, Adda Kridler, Karen  
Strittmatter Galvin, vln;  
Stephanie Griffin, Kimberly  
Sparr, viola; Michael Haas,  
Jake Wenger, cello; Mark  
Morton, b, org. Pittsfield, NH,  
Chicago, IL, Brooklyn, NY,  
Chapel Hill, NC, Lubbock, TX,  
no recording dates given.

Jeff Morris presents electronic music in a novel way on (1). Joined by Karl Berger on piano and vibes and Joe Hertenstein on drums, Morris most often uses a sampler instrument to both augment and be an inherent part of the music being created. He explains in the album notes that to this point, the use of recorded sounds in music has generally been limited to manipulating sounds in the studio, working essentially as a composer rather than a performer. Here Morris aims to be a fuller participant in the music being freely generated, using the sampler and his own software to capture sounds from the other performers and to play them (in many forms) live, which in turn may influence the other musicians and the course of the music as it continues. On "Into" and later "Unwind," Morris grabs sounds from the drums and vibes previously played to later recast them into the music, sometimes in various altered forms including playing them backwards. "Three at One" offers a clearer delineation between the live instruments and the electronic ones, with its core of vibes and a swinging bass gradually expanded upon by Morris's electronics. On other cuts the electronics bring more complexity to the scene, offering the quality of "intertwined textures" that Morris admired in Tristano and others.

Composer/guitarist D. J. Sparr presents music of a mixed classical and eclectic character in the form of two five-movement suites and two other original works on (2). Using a total of thirteen musicians including strings, guitar, electronics, and vocal, the recordings were made in five different locations and feature groups ranging from two to six members. Sparr, on electric guitar, and soprano Kristina Bachrach are the only performers on the opening suite "I Can Hear Her Through the Thin Wall Singing," with simple single-pitch lines from Bachrach accompanied sparsely by Sparr on guitar in the first movement, "Elegy After Midnight," growing in melody and background during the next three movements before returning to simplicity in the vocal and major seventh chords on the guitar in the last movement. The longer of the two single works "String Quartet: Avalock" has an impressionistic quality, with underlying sustained sounds permeating its 14 minutes. "Earthcaster Suite," utilizing six musicians collectively on four strings, guitar, percussion, banjo, mandolin and organ, consists of six short pieces, each in the one to two minute range. Sparr's work on banjo and mandolin over the strings gives this work its peculiarly jaunty quality.

Don Lerman



# New Issues

(1) ARTHUR  
GOTTSCHALK  
ART FOR TWO  
NAVONA RECORDS  
NV6185

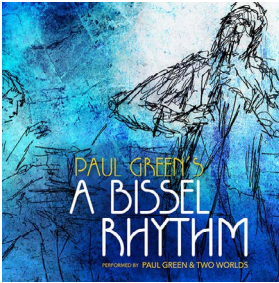
BENNY, ZOOT AND  
TEDDY / SONATA FOR  
ALTO SAXOPHONE AND  
PIANO: ALLEGRO / WALTZ  
NOCTURNE / BRAVURA!  
/ OH, MORE OR LESS /  
SONATA FOR BASS CLARINET  
AND PIANO: OVERTURE,  
SALT PEANUTS MEMORIAL  
BARBEQUE / MOTET-ANCIENT  
INCANTATIONS / FINALE-  
GREEN DOLPHIN STREET  
BOOGIE / SHALOM. 61:35.

Gottschalk, composer; Mario Ciaccio, as, ts; Sauro Berti, cl, b cl; Naomi Fujiya, p; Chiara Biondani, Elisa Deromedi, Sara Webber, Maddalena Barbi, Marcella Endrizzi, Erika Maistrelli, Veronica Maistrelli, Cristina Martini, Iris Pancheri, Giovanni Bruni, Mauro Brusaferrri, Massimo Chini, Michelle Aliprandi, Mario Flor, Lorenzo Muzzi, Matteo Rinaudo, voc.

Arthur Gottschalk's creative compositions for two and three instruments, with a 16-piece choir added on one selection, are presented on (1). The opening "Benny, Zoot, and Teddy," begins in a spritely manner, with unexpected twists of time and melody artfully scripted for clarinet, tenor saxophone, and piano. While the piece is both classical and eclectic in character, jazz elements are also present in the form of boogie woogie rhythms, Monk lines, and musical references (seemingly) to "West Side Story." The performers on this selection, Sauro Berti (clarinet), Mario Ciaccio (tenor saxophone), and Naomi Fujiya (piano), demonstrate they are fully capable of generating a swing conception in addition to their virtuosity as classical musicians. Gottschalk's "Sonata for Bass Clarinet and Piano," composed in 2009, is another largely classical work with some jazz elements included in the form of "Salt Peanuts" references in the first movement and brisk swinging eighth notes in the third, performed exceptionally by Berti on bass clarinet and Fujiya on piano. A second sonata features sparkling performances by the duo of Ciaccio on alto saxophone and Fujiya on piano on a three movement classical work bringing to mind the music of Jacques Ibert. The tenor saxophone and bass clarinet are creatively paired by Gottschalk to portray unique sounds on "Oh, More or Less," at times sounding like an accordion or like an object buffeting about in the wind. Gottschalk's closing piece, "Shalom," alternates traditional Jewish melodies which reflect on the theme of peace sung by a 16-piece choir with musical commentary from the tenor saxophone and bass clarinet duo, again in an interesting way.

Don Lerman

# New Issues



**(2) PAUL GREEN  
AND TWO WORLDS  
A BISSEL RHYTHM  
BIG ROUND RECORDS  
BR8955**

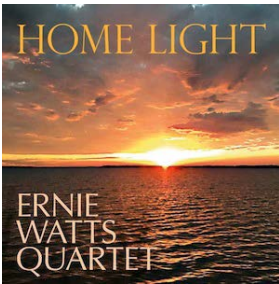
A BISSEL RHYTHM / ZOEY'S  
CHOSIDL / MY OWN  
FREILACH / DOINA AND  
RAMBLE / PRELUDE TO THE  
BLUES / JOE'S HURRA / THE  
JEWISH MARCH / LISA'S  
SONG. 45:03.

Green, cl; Charles Tokarz, ts;  
Jason Ennis, g; Ben Kohn,  
p; Daniel Broad, b; Peter  
Sweeney, d. August 1, 2018,  
Catskill, NY.

On (2), Paul Green and his six-piece group Two Worlds perform several new compositions from Green that both represent the idiom of Jewish music well and also incorporate jazz elements. Five of his eight pieces are of the slower-paced, somber, or heart-throbbing variety ("Zoey's Chosidl," "Doina and Ramble," "Prelude to the Blues," "Joe's Hurra," and "Lisa's Song") and three are of the uptempo and high-spirited quality ("A Bissel Rhythm," "My Own Freilach," and "The Jewish March"). Green's frequent use of minor and harmonic minor harmonies, cadenzas and theatrical stops impart a Jewish character to the music, while subtle twists in harmony and significant space for improvisation lend it its jazz identity. Green's clear clarinet tone emerges best in his simple heartfelt ode "Joe's Hurra," while his cadenza and solo on "Prelude to the Blues" are unhurried, and represent his best jazz playing on the album. Of the other principal soloists, the generally classical pianist Ben Kohn offers a soulful Ramsey Lewis-like chorus on "Doina and Ramble," while guitarist Jason Ennis is excellent throughout, providing top-tier solos on "A Bissel Rhythm," "Joe's Hurra," and other selections.

Don Lerman

# New Issues



(1) ERNIE WATTS  
QUARTET  
HOME LIGHT  
FLYING DOLPHIN  
RECORDS FD 1012

I FORGOT AUGUST / CAFE  
CENTRAL 2AM / DISTANT  
FRIENDS / FREQUIE FLYIERS  
/ HORIZON / O.P. / SPINNING  
WHEEL / JOE / HOME LIGHT.  
68:10.

Watts, ts; Christof Saenger,  
p; Rudi Engel, b; Heinrich  
Koeberling, d. Cologne,  
Germany, December 11-12,  
2017.

Veteran saxophonist Ernie Watts toured with Buddy Rich in his early years and made his first recording as a leader in 1969 on the Pacific Jazz label. Since then Watts has appeared on over 70 albums in both leading and supporting roles. His most recent, (1), presents his own quartet, a group which has been performing together for over 18 years and has accordingly reached a high level of connection and communication, as the album notes comment and the music bears out. Here Watts and his cohesive group take on a wide variety of musical styles, including bebop or standard-based vehicles "I Forgot August" (Watt's inventive line based on the standard "I'll Remember April"), "O.P." (the Sam Jones classic), up-tempo latin selection "Joe" (on which an overdubbed soprano may be heard along with Watt's tenor), post-bop adventuresome compositions "Distant Friends," "Frequent Flyers," and "Spinning Wheel," beautiful ballad "Horizon," and soulful closer "Home Light" which was dedicated to the memory of percussionist Ndugu Chancler. The principal soloists, Watts and pianist Christof Saenger, are uniformly strong and inventive throughout. Watts is particularly animated and multi-faceted, exhibiting and then going beyond his underlying bebop roots to free flowing musical ideas that reflect more current developments in jazz.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

## (2) THE DAVID RICARD BIG BAND PARALLELS ARTIST SHARE AS0163

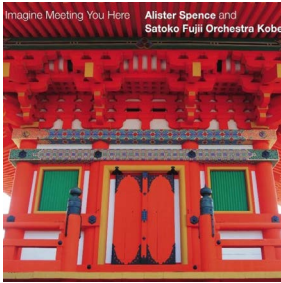
SPIDER-MAN /  
WANDERING WALTZ / THE  
BIG TO DO LIST / COME  
OUT SWINGIN' / SARAH'S  
THEME / PASS THE PEAS /  
THE ODD COUPLE / STICK  
SHIFT / TOO MUCH! /  
NOTE-ABLY PINK / PURE  
IMAGINATION / PRETTY  
MEMORY / SRIRACHA CHA  
/ RIVERSIDE PARK. 61:05.

Chad Willis, Dave Richards,  
Wayne Bergeron, Anne  
King, Mike Cottone, Josh  
Aguiar, Blake Martin, tpts;  
Dave Ryan, Erik Hughes,  
Sean Shackelford, Dennis  
Rollins, Julian Gralle,  
Jake Kraft, tbns; Doug  
Webb, Geoff Nudell,  
Aaron Heick, Michael  
Czaja, Noah Preminger,  
Dave Thomasson, John  
Mitchell, Kyle O'Donnell,  
Brian Clancy, Stephen  
Taylor, sax, ww; Brandon  
Covelli, Jordan Seigel,  
Bill Fulton, p; Will Brahm,  
Matt Hornbeck, Grant  
Geissman, James Leibow,  
g; Ricard, b; Sammy K,  
d; Billy Hulting, vb, perc.  
Woodland Hills, CA, no  
date.

The David Ricard Big Band features excellent performances of the top-notch big band compositions and arrangements of leader/bassist David Ricard on (2). No section gets shortchanged or underutilized in Ricard's writing, with winds, brass, and rhythm artfully combined to yield strong introductions, melodic statements, ensemble and/or shout choruses, solo backgrounds, and endings. It helps to have good players, too, and Ricard's outstanding lineup of musicians (33 in total, undoubtedly with different players used on different dates) played his music with tight execution, immaculate intonation, and spirit. The 14 selections in this program include nine Ricard originals and five by other composers including three TV/movie-related themes. Swing is the main rhythmic idiom here, with a bright scoring of "Pure Imagination" and the Nestico-like "Riverside Park" being prime examples. Within the swinging category but with an added driving groove are Ricard compositions "Come out Swinging," bringing to mind the Buddy Rich big band, "Note-ably Pink," perhaps Mancini-influenced (with a lighter drive), and Ricard's arrangement of "Spider-man," with soloists Will Brahm on guitar and Wayne Bergeron on trumpet adding a good deal of excitement on this cut. Two funk instrumentals, Ricard's "Stick Shift" and the 1972 hit by the J. B.'s "Pass the Peas," are entertaining and well-executed. There are also selections in the genres of waltz ("Wandering Waltz"), latin ("Sriracha Cha"), breezy ("Too Much"), ballad (the pretty "Sarah's Theme"), and Bobby Timmons's grooving "Pretty Memory" featuring Jordan Seigel on piano. The other soloists are all excellent, with trombonist Erik Hughes deserving special mention for his fine solos on three selections.

Don Lerman

# New Issues



**(1) ALISTER SPENCE  
AND SATOKO FUJII  
ORCHESTRA KOBE  
IMAGINE MEETING  
YOU HERE  
ALISTER SPENCE MUSIC  
ASM008**

IMAGINE MEETING YOU  
HERE 1 (IMAGINE) / IMAGINE  
MEETING YOU HERE 2  
(MEETING) / IMAGINE  
MEETING YOU HERE 3 (YOU) /  
IMAGINE MEETING YOU HERE  
4 (HERE) / IMAGINE MEETING  
YOU HERE 5 (POSTSCRIPT).  
49:12.

Spence, conductor; Ko Iwata,  
Yasuhisa Mizutani, as; Eiichiro  
Arasaki, ts, shakuhachi;  
Tsutomu Takei, ts; Keizo  
Nobori, bari s; James Barrett,  
Shojiro Yokoo, Natsuki  
Tamura, Rabito Arimoto, tpt;  
Yusuke Imanishi, Yasuko  
Kaneko, tbn; Takumi Seino,  
g; Satoko Fujii, p; Hiroshi  
Funato, b; Yoshikazu Isaki, d.  
September 10, 2017, Kobe,  
Japan.

Australian pianist/composer Alister Spence's composition, "Imagine Meeting You Here," is performed on (1) by the Satoko Fujii Orchestra Kobe, a group led by Japanese pianist/composer Satoko Fujii with whom Spence has performed in the past. The 15-piece orchestra, with fairly traditional instrumentation of five reeds, six brass, and four rhythm section players, also fits the description of Spence as an "improvising orchestra" in that its members are adept and comfortable in free or spontaneous improvisation. No doubt the orchestra benefited from previously performing the five-part suite, a considerable work of nearly 50 minutes, in its February 2016 premiere, as heard in the crisp execution of ensemble sections and strong and spirited overall performance on this recording. The elemental sound of flutes, trombone and tom tom in the opening part is followed by a gradual entrance of the fuller orchestra with sustained chords over the tom tom's rhythm, later building to a boisterous and majestic level in the seventh minute, where trumpet and tenor free solos begin and close out the first part. This use of small sub-groups, followed by the entrance of more players, characterizes one of Spence's approaches to developing the music. Another is Spence's effective use of cross-cutting horn lines in part four. Interesting and novel sounds such as wildlife and whistle sounds, vocal sounds and shouts, and the sound of the shakuhachi (traditional Japanese wind instrument played by tenor saxophonist Eiichir Arasaki), are frequently employed by Spence, perhaps drawing upon his experience of writing significant music for film and theatre. A listener to this music should be prepared for many musical surprises.

Don Lerman

# New Issues

(2) TOM RAINEY  
TRIO WITH MARY  
HALVORSON AND  
INGRID LAUBROCK  
COMBOBULATED  
INTAKT RECORDS CD  
316

COMBOBULATED / POINT  
REYES / FACT / ISN'T MINE  
/ SPLAYS ITSELF / TORN  
ROAD. 53:06.  
Rainey, d; Laubrock, sax;  
Halvorson, g. September  
15, 2017, New Haven,  
Connecticut.

(3) ALEXANDER  
HAWKINS PIANO  
SOLO  
IRON INTO WIND  
(PEARS FROM AN  
ELM)  
INTAKT RECORDS CD  
330

SONG ALL THE WAY /  
CONGREGATIONAL /  
TOUGH LIKE IMAGINATION /  
PLEASANT CONSTELLATION  
/ GOSSAMER LIKE A GHOST  
TREE / STRANGE COURAGE  
/ IT SHOULD BE A SONG  
/ HARD AS THREADS /  
TUMBLE MONO / WANDER/  
WONDER / WE ALL BLEED /  
ETUDE. 57:14.  
Hawkins, p. September  
22-23, 2018, Zurich,  
Switzerland.

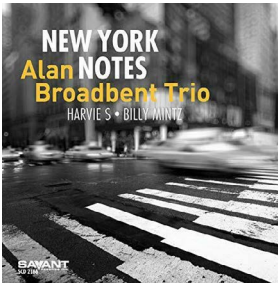
**T**om Rainey, Ingrid Laubrock, and Mary Halvorson set a pace for their adventuresome jointly-composed program with a segment combining the efforts of each musician entitled "Combobulated," conveying a sense of disarray along with group development in this opening 18 minute piece on (2). From there, five more pieces in the 6 to 8 minute range display the trio in mind-expanding variation. Rainey's quiet tom-toms begin a reflective "Point Reyes," followed by the multi-faceted "Fact," which begins aggressively until guitarist Halvorson introduces a peaceful chordal phrase in the piece's middle. Laubrock on tenor employs overtones and the full range of the instrument for the opening two minutes of "Spays Itself," with Rainey and Halvorson jumping in and driving forward strongly until a group climax at 6:30, with placid playing for the last half minute of the piece.

Don Lerman

**B**ritish pianist Alexander Hawkins combines creativity, a wide range of musical expression, and an extraordinary command of the piano in this solo piano recording on (3). Hawkins, who cites classical composers, jazz performers of earlier and current eras, and classical pianists as influential, provides twelve selections, each new and different and mostly within the four to six minute range, in this 57-minute program. The development or evolution of Hawkins's musical ideas is frequently heard, as on "Tough Like Imagination" which begins in an exotic and mysterious manner and becomes darker and more forceful as the piece continues. Likewise, "Tumble Mono" begins in a contemplative mode with underlying modern harmonies, adding edge with a major buildup and transformation midway through the piece before its sudden ending. The fluidity of Hawkins's musical expression is displayed in an intriguing dialogue between the right and left hands on "Strange Courage," and in the startling pianistic wizardry of his closing piece, "Etude."

Don Lerman

# New Issues



## **BROADBENT TRIO, NEW YORK NOTES,**

SAVANT 2166.

CLIFFORD NOTES / MINORITY

/ I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY

/ CONTINUITY /

CRAZEOLGY / ON A MISTY

NIGHT / WALTZ PRELUDE /

317 EAST 32 STREET /

FINE AND DANDY. 62:37.

Broadbent, p, Harvie S, b; Billy

Mintz, d. 1/24 & 2/8/2019'

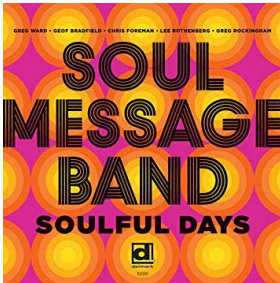
New York.

Just in case you've been asleep for several decades, it's an established fact that Alan Broadbent produces some majestic music every time his hands touch piano keys. The winner of a pair of Grammys (back when they meant something) and numerous accolades he has graced a wide variety of recordings from such notables as Natalie Cole and others from most of the popular fields other than jazz. He's also been active in the soundtrack studios and a valued sideman on many a session.

A native of New Zealand and a graduate of the Berklee School of Music, he is an admitted acolyte of the great bebop giant Bud Powell he is not now nor ever has been a Bud Powell clone. That's not to say he isn't extremely facile with solo ideation as sharp and quick as June lightning. Certainly not just blowing vehicles his writings here (the Brownie salute opener, the early work "Continuity" & the effervescent "Waltz Prelude" based on a classical from the 1800s) hold much content. Among the diverse program are two standards and jazzy works from Lennie Tristano, Benny Harris, Tadd Dameron and Gigi Gryce all rendered with care and respect. His appearance on the Charlie Haden Quartet West albums should be mandatory listening. The upright work is unflinchingly sturdy and the trapkit adds just the right punctuation. Alan Broadbent is a man that wears many musical hats and, fortunately for Cadence readers, he's wearing his jazzbro cap for this splendid date.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues



## SOUL MESSAGE BAND,

SOULFUL DAYS,  
DELMARK 5030.

SIR CHARLES / THESE

ARE SOULFUL DAYS(#) /  
UNCERTAINTY / HAMMER  
HEAD(#) /

LITTLE GIRL BLUE / MATADOR  
/ EASY TIME / J.O.S.(#) /  
THERMO.. 76:12.

Greg Ward, as(\*); Geof  
Bradfield, ts(#); Chris Forman.  
org; Lee Rothenberg, g; Greg  
Rockingham, d.  
8/22&23/2018, Chicago.

Those out there whose memories aren't as shaky as your mind might recall a threesome called the Deep Blue Trio that cut a couple of disks and a DVD a few years back. Two-thirds of that group are present here in the persons of sightless organist Chris Forman and veteran trapster Greg Rockingham. What this basically boils down to is a typical organ trio of Hammond, guitar and drums augmented on four tracks by alto, tenor or both. These specific cuts brought back this writer some fond memories of catching the Brother Jack McDuff combo with the twin tenors of Red Holloway and Harold Vick.

After the killer opening shuffle penned by guitarist Rothenberg things mellow out somewhat with a classic Cal Massey jazz standard "These Are Soulful Days" which will get inside your head and refuse to leave. Recorded by Lee Morgan on his Leeway Blue Note among other notables, it's original version can be found under the Candid logo on the only album from Massey. Aside from the standard "Little Girl Blue" the remainder of the selections from Wayne Shorter, Jimmy Smith, Louis Bellson/Tommy Newsom, Freddie Hubbard and Grant Green are all medium to up in the tempo department. "Uncertainty" was written by Greg Ward. To my mind there have been very few jazz organ releases of note so far this year. One from Chicago native Ben Patterson at the Van Gelder studio and the latest from Joey DeFrancesco. You can add this one to that list.

Larry Hollis



# New Issues

**DAVID BERKMAN  
SEXTET,  
SIX OF ONE,  
PALMETTO RECORDS  
2194.**

BLOWING SMOKE / CYNICAL  
EPISODE / BLUE POLES / BILLY  
/ SINCERELY / THREE AND A  
HALF MINUTES /  
KICKSTOPPER / SHITAMACHI  
/ RESTORATION / RAIN RAIN.  
56:34.

Collective musicians: Berkman,  
p; Dayna Stephens,EWI, ts;  
Billy Drewes,as, c; Adam  
Kolker,ss, b c;  
Tim Armacost, ts, EWI; Chris  
Lightcap, b; Kenneth Salters,  
d; Rogerio Boccato, perc. No  
dates  
given. Circa NYC.

**DAVE STRYKER,  
EIGHT TRACK III,  
STRIKEZONE 8818.**

MOVE ON UP / PAPA WAS A  
ROLLIN' STONE(\*) / PRETZEL  
LOGIC(\*) / TOO HIGH / WE'VE  
ONLY JUST BEGUN / THIS  
GUY'S IN LOVE WITH YOU(\*) /  
EVERBODY LOVES THE  
SUNSHINE(\*) / AFTER THE  
DANCE(\*) / JOY INSIDE MY  
TEARS(\*). 52:35.

Stryker, g; Stefon Harris, vib;  
Jared Gold, org; McClenty  
Hunter, d; Mayra Casales, cga,  
perc;(\*).

1/21/2019, Paramus, NJ.

Printed in small type and in parenthesis are the two words Plus Guests which it is assumed refers to multi-reed ace Armacost and percussionist Boccato. The remaining six have been together for several years in performance and recording. Tim Armacost has also spent time in the studio and mostly sticks to his trusty tenor here. The ten numbers heard here are all penned by the leader and are given convenient thumbnail descriptions along with the solo order on the inside liners. Lots to grasp here, with compositions ranging from moody ballads to uptempo burns so be prepared to give this repeated hearings. Berkman is a reflective pianist with a firm touch and doesn't mind sharing solo space. A successful extension of his last release with some of the same personnel.

Larry Hollis

The eight track nostalgia strikes again, as Dave Stryker and cohorts return with the third and final installment in the trilogy. First off, the cover is a real hoot, packed with bygone-era memorabilia that should bring a grin to the chin of seasoned listeners. From the kickoff hot shuffle of a Curtis Mayfield song, the program goes through items from Steely Dan, Roy Ayers, the Carpenters (?), Marvin Gaye, the Rolling Stones, two Stevie Wonder titles and more. Stefon Harris is back behind the vibes after being spelled last album by Steve Nelson and percussionist Mayra Casales, who was on Stryker's indispensable Messin' With Mister T date, adds some fuego to several tracks. Those Cadence readers familiar with these fine musicians from the Strykin' Ahead record onward will not be disappointed. A real keeper, no sleeper.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

## JASON PALMER, RHYME AND REASON, GIANT STEP ARTS 001.

DISC ONE: HERBS IN A GLASS  
/ RHYME AND REASON / BLUE  
GROTTO / SADHANA .  
DISC TWO: THE HAMPTON INN  
(FOR ALAN) / MARK'S PLACE /  
WALTZ FOR DIANA /  
KALISPEL BAY. TOTAL TIME:  
1:44.21.

Palmer, tpt; Mark Turner, ts;  
Matt Brewer, b; Kendrick Scott,  
d. 6/7&8/2018, NYC.

## JOHNATHAN BLAKE, TRION, GIANT STEP ARTS 002.

DISC ONE: CALODENDRUM  
/ SYNCHRONICITY 1 / TROPE  
(LINDA INTRO)= TROPE / ONE  
FOR HONOR / HIGH SCHOOL  
DAZE / NO BEBOP DADDY.  
DISC TWO: BEDRUM / GOOD  
HOPE / EAGLE / RELAXING AT  
THE CAMARILLO / BLUE  
HEART / WEST BERKLEY ST.  
TOTAL TIME: 1:51.15.

Blake, d; Chris Potter, ts; Linda  
May Han Oh, b. 1/21&22/2018.  
NYC.

There's a new record label in town and it is something to shout about. Operated on a non-profit basis by the husband and wife team of Jimmy and Dena Katz it is artist-oriented, independently released and attractively presented. The initial issue was the Jason Palmer followed shortly by the Johnathan Blake set. Both are double disc digipacks recorded in performance at the Jazz Gallery in the Big Apple.

The sidemen for this group are no strangers to the leader or one another and it shows in the tight controlled freedom of their interaction. Mark Turner's always reliable tenor is a welcome second voice and the elastic tag-team of Matt Brewer and Kendrick Scott are happily as up front sonically as the horns.

The leader provided all the material and his mellifluous brass is full of soul and sass. He generously provides descriptions of all the selections so there is no need to go into detail concerning each track. After a long run with the Danish Steeplechase label it sounds as if he has comfortably settled into his new home.

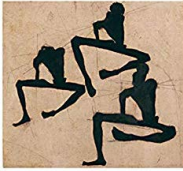
Larry Hollis

As is the case with the Palmer package the Johnathan Blake is a chordless affair with like-minded comrades, this time reed ace Chris Potter and the sturdy Linda May Han Oh. Like the players on the Jason Palmer date these three are well-versed in each others musicality. The set list is quite diverse, the majority from Blake (including an opener on each disc), "Blue Heart" by his late father, two each from Potter & Oh, Bird's classic 12-bar blues from 1945 on the Dial label, a chart from bassist Charles Fambrough and an extended romp through the Police's "Synchronicity 1". One wonders what Sting would make of this dazzler since he defected to Las Vegas recently. Both of these releases contain state-of-the-art graphics and great photography from Dena and Jimmy (who also engineered) Katz. With these two superlative issues we welcome a new and exciting label to the fold. They deserve our support.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

EHUD ASHERIE TRIO



WILD MAN BLUES

## EHUD ASHERIE TRIO, WILD MAN BLUES,

CAPRI 74153.

WILD MAN BLUES / PARKER'S  
MOOD / FLYING DOWN TO RIO  
/ AUTUMN NOCTURNE /  
CHASIN' THE BIRD / NA BAIXA  
DO SAPATERIO / OH, LADY BE  
GOOD/ AND THEN SHE  
STOPPED. 46:47.

Asherie, p; Peter Washington,  
b; Rodney Green, d. 3/2/2018.  
Brooklyn, NY.

In an overcrowded field it is relatively easy for some worthy names to get overlooked or even lost. This is no more evident than when it comes to jazz piano. One of those names is most certainly Ehud Asherie, a forty-year old veteran of the Big Apple scene with a handful of albums under this belt. In fact, his 2016 issue *Shuffle Along* where he explored the works of Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle made my top ten list that year. Not merely limited to the piano keys, his album *Organic* demonstrated his prowess on the organ. But the piano is his main instrument and he is very much its master. In a list of eclectic players I would place him somewhere between Dick Hyman and Jaki Byard when it comes to an encyclopedic knowledge and love for the jazz piano tradition. For his most recent effort he's enlisted the services of Peter Washington and Rodney Green to form a dream trio of the highest level.

To be expected, the song list is all over the map with writings from almost every decade by such notables as the Gershwin brothers, Charlie Parker, Gus Kahn & Vincent Youmans, Dizzy Gillespie and wife Lorraine, Pops and Jelly Roll, among others. Topped off with heartfelt annotation by Ken Peplowski this is another superlative addition to this undervalued pianists discography.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

**ANDRES VIAL,  
VIAL PLAYS MONK:  
SPHEREOLOGY  
VOLUME ONE,  
CHROMATIC AUDIO**

111417.

BLUEHAWK / COMING ON  
THE HUDSON / THINK OF  
ONE / UGLY BEAUTY / GREEN  
CHIMNEYS / LIGHT  
BLUE / ASK ME NOW /  
INTROSPECTION / WORK /  
FUNCTIONAL. 58:58.

Collective personnel: Vial, p;  
Peter Bernstein, g; Dezron  
Douglas, Martin Heslop, b;  
Rodney Green, Andre White,  
d. 9/16 & 11/14/2017. Mount  
Vernon, NY.

**BERNARD PURDIE &  
FRIENDS,  
COOL DOWN,  
SUGAR ROAD RECORDS  
002.**

ELEVATE / COOL DOWN /  
SHAND STAND / MONEY  
BAGS / DEEP IN LOVE (#) /  
BETTER  
MAN (+) / THE GOLDEN TIE  
/ KEEP ON / STRANDED (\*).  
41:17. Purdie, d; Ivan Neville,  
kybds, vcls; Brian J, g, vcls,  
perc; Pete Shand, b; Morgan  
Price, s; Nadav Nirenberg,  
tbn; Hadar Noiberg, flt; Jay  
Jennings; tpt; Anthony Cole,  
vcl(+); Mayteanna Morales,  
vcl(#); Cyril Neville, vcl (\*);  
Chauncey Yearwood, vcls,  
perc; Stephane San Juan, perc.  
No dates given.  
Brooklyn, NY.

Seems like every time you turn around these days there's yet another Monk tribute album. This one is somewhat different from the fold in that it is in a quartet format but with a guitar instead of tenor. Plus pianist Vial only alludes to Monk's keyboard touch briefly on the second selection and nowhere else. Canadian Vial, with just a couple of releases out, is a newcomer to these ears but it his slightly heavier-than-Evans touch and advanced harmonic sense that delighted this reviewer. No stranger to the works of Mr. Monk, Peter Bernstein steals the show occasionally with his superb musicianship. The bass and drum chores are almost split, with Douglas and Green on the first half dozen, spelled by some inventive interplay from Vial and Bernstein on "Ask Me Now" before Heslop & White end things up on the next three titles. I'm impressed.

Larry Hollis

It's quite impossible to pigeonhole drummer Bernard "Pretty" Purdie into any specific musical bag. He can do it all. The only time this reviewer ever got to catch him live was with a Jeff Beck quartet opening for the Mahavisnu Orchestra many moons ago. This short nine tune outing does not defy categorization idiom-wise as it could easily be classified as soul music laced with funk. The first two numbers have unidentified vocals and a traps intro that reminded this listener of Purdie's classic drum break on "Memphis Soul Stew" with King Curtis and the Kingpins at the Fillmore. The following pair of titles are both forgettable instrumentals with flute, guitar and horns layered on "Money Bags" while another two instrumentals (The Golden Tie/Keep On) are hardcore funk with a clavinet prominent on the latter. The three identified vocals are all ballads of a sort with Morales in her "little girl" voice, a whisper y Cole effort and Neville Brother Cyril on the heavily backbeated closer. Outside the normal range of this publication.

Larry Hollis

# New Issues

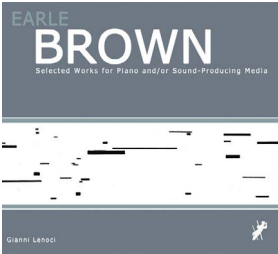


## (1) KALI RIOT

RONIN RHYTHM RON020  
TROPE / BIST DU EIN  
SCHMETTERLING? / RIOT / UM  
/ OF / 61 / MAYA. 51:18.  
Raphael Loher, p; Urs Müller,  
g; Nicolas Stocker, d. 7/2017,  
Winterthur, Switzerland.

1) As members of various groups within the Swiss improvisational music scene, such as Nik Bärtsch's Mobile or Marena Whitcher's Shady Midnight Orchestra, keyboardist Raphael Loher, guitarist Urs Müller and drummer Nicolas Stocker have converted their weekly rehearsals into a repertoire that evolved from their own musical personalities. That repertoire has resulted in a trio they call Kali, which recorded an album they call Riot. With an artistic purpose as fixed and imaginative as Bärtsch's spiraling modules and Whitcher's haunted wraiths, Kali ominously describes on its CD cover a poisonous plant, perhaps assumed to be kali—or perhaps not, since kali is merely the nuisance plant called tumbleweed in the United States. Nonetheless, the combined energy on (1) balances Stocker's thumping, synaptic drive; the atmospheric of Loher's persistent dissonances and repetitive curling lines; and Müller's explorative background effects and unrestrained force. Kali's tracks frequently build dynamics through layered tension as the energy grows without pause like a quickening pulse. The opening track, "Trope," for example, proceeds in Stocker's tapping meter of eleven. A contrasting repetitive piano figure of extended tones and then rivulets of notes creates the foundation for Müller's emerging fierceness. Typically, "Trope" starts quietly with an ominous ding-ding-dinging before the undercurrent is released into the open atmosphere of reverberating expressions of disquiet. Then the trope isn't metaphorical at all; no ambiguity of intent remains. "Bist Du Ein Schmetterling?" ("Are you a butterfly?" being perhaps an apostrophic question for a moth and not an urban reference) at least titulary sets up a quizzical mood of, again, initial quietude characterized by Stocker's perambulating pace (in a park? in a meadow?). Its change of mood at 2:20, when Loher substitutes free-spirited improvisation for his initial haunting phrase, sets up Müller's fluttering ethereal effects. Perhaps those effects are an impression of der Schmetterling itself, which sounds as the track develops as if it's joined by a riot of die Schmetterlinge. Defying expectations set up by the other tracks, "Of" starts with a heavier bearing created by the piano's

# New Issues



## (2) GIANNI LENOCI EARLE BROWN: SELECTED WORKS

AMIRANI AMRN 054/06-C  
HOME BURIAL. FOLIO:  
OCTOBER 1952 / NOVEMBER  
1952 ("SYNERGY") /  
DECEMBER  
1957 52 / MM-87 / M-135  
MARCH 1953 / MUSIC FOR  
"TRIO FOR FIVE DANCERS"  
JUNE 1953  
/ 1953. 4 SYSTEMS JANUARY  
1954. TWENTY-FIVE PAGES  
(1953). 57:14.  
Lenoci, p, electronics.  
3/29/2016, Monopoli, Italy.

exaggerated low-bass two-note lumber. Stocker's martial suggestions on the snare drum and Müller's allusive variations blend sandpaper-ish scratching and sustained notes into a textural mesh. "Um" consists of three minutes of Loher's leisurely rhythmless, minor-mode, high-treble rumination. The even dynamics are colored by Müller's barely audible, long, highly pitched notes. The only accent consists of but one bass-pedal thump near the end. The riot, after "Um's" respite, ends with "Maya," which is similarly brief, fragile and meditative.

2) Though born in Massachusetts and remaining a life-long United States resident, Earle Brown, a member of the New York School of music, is studied and remains venerated more in Europe than in his native country. As if as proof, in 2017 the archive of Earle Brown's work moved from the U.S. to Basel, Switzerland, where it's managed by the Paul Sacher Foundation. Consistent with enduring European interest in Brown's innovations and his importance in avant-garde music, Italian jazz musician Gianni Lenoci has recorded on solo acoustic piano nine interpretations of Brown's most famous compositions and one, "4 Systems," electronically. Lenoci had no choice but to interpret Brown's works, rather than to read them. Famously, Brown not only allowed, but required, that the performer make the decisions about how his music would be played. Brown's innate comprehension of mathematics led to his engineering studies at Northeastern University. A trumpet player in high school, Brown advanced his interest in improvisation when he was a member, along with Zoot Sims, of the U.S. Army Air Corps base band at Randolph Field in Texas. At the suggestion of another soldier, Brown studied the Joseph Schillinger method of composition for four years, and he eventually developed the unlikely synthesis of mathematical concepts with open-form abstraction. Influenced by abstract impressionists like Jackson Pollack, Brown created the musical equivalent of Alexander Calder's suspended sculptures that change shapes and perspectives as they float randomly, attaining intended evanescence, rarely

# New Issues

returning to the same exact image. Accordingly, Brown wrote some of his works in modules so that the performer could choose the order of interchangeable performance pieces. The last track of Earle Brown: Selected Works for Piano and/or Sound-Producing Media, in fact, is Brown's first open-form piece. "Twenty-Five Pages" was written on 25 loose pages for as few as one, or for as many as 25, pianists---and, so that the pianist(s) could play the notations forward or backward or upside-down. Lenoci is the one pianist on this album who stamps his own identity on Brown's famous composition. In Lenoci's hands, "Twenty-Five Pages" sonically appears as kaleidoscopically shifting impressions, rhythmless, at times dissonant, and possibly conversational between clusters and haunting notes of treble and bass extremes. Appropriately, Lenoci's track is precisely 25 minutes long. The album starts with Brown's first work from 1949 based on a Robert Frost poem, "Home Burial." Written for piano, "Home Burial" consists of Brown's musical impressions of the narrative short-story-like poem about sorrow, anger, loneliness and evil. Lenoci interprets the composition with sudden accents (of heartbreak at the loss of a child?) and quiet moments of calm reflection, only to flare again, throughout a conversation between two grief-stricken adults. What's revealing are how often avant-garde music of this type is recorded now and how unobjectionable Brown's works without melody or rhythm sound today. Brown's influence grew when he produced his master work, Folio, in 1952 and 1953. Folio attains immediacy of interpretation through Brown's individualistic style of graphical notation influenced by Schillinger, but also by his studies of music before the development of the current traditional style of notation. Brown's compositions consisted of symbols, rather than stemmed notes, to indicate the proportional lengths of rhythms and their interrelationships to other notes. Folio's dynamically in-the-moment readings are as various as the musicians who perform its movements. No two performances of gliding movements have ever been the same, as Brown intended. With hushed legato presses of keys and episodic quick sparks dramatized by sometimes intervening moments of silent stasis, Lenoci plays seven of the components of Folio. Each contrasts with and is as varied from the other movements as Brown's graphical notations and Lenoci's performances create. His floating modules having been developed before the advent of actual space exploration, Brown's goal was to suggest the universe of possibilities as vast as space itself. He thought of his works in three-dimensional, constantly evolving terms that inspire wonder and that require musicians' own alert innovations. Seventy years ahead of his time, Brown created new forms of expression that exploratory musicians like John Zorn value. Those forms are being rediscovered by a successive generation searching for unconventional, unrestricted sonic adventures. As is Lenoci.

Bill Donaldson

# New Issues



**TORCH**  
**COMMON TONE**  
**RECORDS**  
TANGENT 7 / AIR / THE  
SURFACE OF AN EMERALD  
/ TENNIS / YACHTIE / FIRE /  
NANA /  
VALSE D'ALCHEMIE  
/ ANDANTINISH /  
LARGHETTO-LAND / LENTO  
BASH / PICARDY /  
RABBIT. 39:24.

Brian Chin, tpt; Eric Likkel,  
cl, b cl; Ben Thomas, vib,  
bandoneón, perc; Steve  
Schermer, b. 8/30-  
31/2017, Seattle, WA.

The musicians of TORCH are decidedly passionate about not just music, but also, more broadly, the ability of artistic creation to improve social progress and individual well-being. In addition, they are passionately dedicated to Seattle's continuing reputation as a center for significant contributions to various art forms.

Despite their passions, TORCH's musicians recorded a fairly calm first album in which their exuberance roils beneath the surface, rather than spouting far above it. Though the trumpet can excite in a Dizzy atmosphere and the clarinet can beckon with a Goodman swing, both of those instruments maintain their TORCH volume at the same level as that of the vibes and the bass. Their original compositions include a diverse repertoire of jazz, folk music, tango and classical music. Even so, their unique style realizes the common elements of the genres, rather than their differences. Trumpeter Brian Chen was instrumental in the formation of TORCH, whose philosophical mission includes community altruism and cohesion. Before TORCH was established, Chen also founded Seattle's Common Tone Arts, a non-profit organization that arranges for local talents to mentor students in disciplines like dance, film, architecture...and music. Its offshoot, Universal Language Project, has commissioned new works, recorded musicians, produced performances, worked with educational institutions, and applied artistic endeavors to goodwill initiatives in the Pacific Northwest. In addition to Chin's bridging of human compassion with musical activities, clarinetist Eric Likkel, an ordained minister, shines his lighted torch in Seattle's social programs. Bassist Steve Schermer works to preserve native species in the region. With common purpose and complementary talents, the quartet winnowed its repertoire to thirteen relatively brief tracks. Their original compositions derive from styles of international influence; the others are adaptations of works by twentieth-century composers. Pieces by Igor Stravinsky and Erik Satie occur several times in the album. The first track, "Tangent 7," sets up the group's ethic and its style with a moderately accented tango of dynamic stability—and even relative calmness,



# New Issues

wherein the rhythm is nudged by Schermer's bass. Significantly, composer Ben Thomas' vibes open the piece. Then the trumpet and the clarinet dart in and out of the rhythm before their sustained tones at a low volume harmonize with the vibes. After acceleration, Chin and Likkel hold notes in dual layers before trading again their linked phrases. Following Schermer's bowed melodious solo, beautifully performed, Chin's "Air" awakens through Likkel's jabbing and warbling, as if at sunrise. With a nod to Béla Bartók, "Air's" circular pattern develops from a round to animate the piece with Eastern European-influenced irregular time signature and accents. Thomas' "Fire" also requires precision of interaction and a feeling for the work's impressionism to negotiate its difficult passages, played without flamboyance as a shared creation. Performed in the lower register on bass clarinet, the descending lines of Manuel de Falla's lullaby, "Nana," from *Siete Canciones populares Españolas*, provides a comforting connection between Spanish folk songs and the development of modern twentieth-century music. "Andantinish," Chin's adaptation of Stravinsky's "Andantino" from *Les Cinq Doigts*, alternates the melodic lead from bass to clarinet, while the other instruments provide pedal point chiming. Consecutive Stravinsky pieces also include Chin's variations of "Larghetto-Land" and "Lento Bash," referring to additional "easy pieces" from *Les Cinq Doigts*. Taken as a trilogy, these Stravinsky tunes, meant to keep the right hand in the same position on the piano, apparently serve as an accessible educational pathway into his music, rather than challenging young students with *The Rite of Spring* before they're ready for it. Likkel's interests appear to be in French music, for his arrangement of "Picardy" attains emotional resonance with a melancholy minor-key carol, enlivened by Thomas' eight-seven metrical pattern on vibes. (Actually, all of the deceptively complex music of TORCH appears to be diligently arranged.) Likkel arranged the Satie compositions, which too can serve as Impressionistic introductions to his music: the light-hearted "Tennis" with its back-and-forth imagery, and the more ethereal "Le Yachting," both short pieces inspired by visual art from *Sports et Divertissement*. Origin Records recording artist Thomas, who favors Argentinean challenges, plays the bandoneón on "Rabbit," another of his compositions featuring the energy that swells from the nuevo tango. As a member of the Austin Piazzolla Quintet, Thomas adapted the tango's lunges to the TORCH quartet's polyphonic style. "Rabbit" nudges along pulsating rhythmic movement and declarative accents announcing solo interludes. Global in perspective and local in commitment, TORCH has established a unique style combining precise technique with flowing interactivity as they perform a repertoire consistent with its broad range of interests and its distinctive instrumentation.

Bill Donaldson

# New Issues



## MICHAEL ARNOWITT SWEETSPONTANEOUS

BIG ROUND BR8952

DISC 1: AGAINST THE WIND /  
BULGARIAN HOEDOWN / THE  
CROSSING / MIGRATORY  
MOOD / SYRIA-US / PIROUETTE  
/ THE CRYING CANDLE. DISC 2:  
THIRD SHIFT / SHAPKA  
SWING / ELEGY FOR RICHARD /  
MEDIUM MESSAGE / ASCENT /  
MIDNIGHT FOREST /  
STREET STRUT. 2:10:49.

Arnowitt, p; org; Tatum  
Greenblatt, Dave Smith, tpt,  
flgh; Yosvany Terry, as; Lucas  
Pino, ts, cl, b  
cl; Randall Wolfgang, oboe; Dan  
Silverman, Matt Haviland, Nick  
Grinder, tbn; Al Roman, vln; Rick  
Rosato, b; Colin Stranahan,  
d; Shirley Crabbe, vcl; Therisa  
Rogers, spoken word. 1/10-  
12/2017,  
New York, NY.

So appropriate a jazz recording title is that of e.e. cummings' poem, "O sweet spontaneous." One wonders why it never received previous attention. But then, outside of English literature courses, who would be aware of a hundred-year-old poem that admires the earth's annual rebirth and its firm resistance to human will? Michael Arnowitt knows of the poem. That's not surprising. Like many other contemporary musicians, Arnowitt views jazz within the larger universe of artistic creation, including not only classical and folk music, but also literature, dance and visual art. Based in Montpelier, Vermont for 35 years, Arnowitt has been immersed in the artistic process, in international performances, and in studies of the personal musical development of master composers. In 2017, though, Arnowitt's wide-ranging interests settled on recording his first commercially released jazz album. His past events have celebrated Ella Fitzgerald, Bill Evans, Art Blakey and other jazz icons. However, *Sweetspontaneous* consists of his own compositions, and lyrics...though Arnowitt couldn't resist the temptation to include poetry from Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou as well. Reflecting either his recent prolific creative activities or else the compilation of previously written pieces, *Sweetspontaneous* is notable for its scope of musical interests, its generosity toward participating musicians, its diversity of genres, and the directness of its accessibility for listeners. Indeed, Arnowitt, though residing until 2017 in New England and now in Toronto, included in *Sweetspontaneous* some of New York's equally talented and individualistic musicians, such as Yosvany Terry and Colin Stranahan. Space limitations prevent descriptions of all of the album's delights. However, "Bulgarian Hoedown" stands out as a showcase for Arnowitt's broad musical interests; the musicians' locked-in engagement in performing his compositions; and the group's interactivity for achieving a sound bigger than the number of its members. Remaining in the rhythmic and harmonic background, as if admiring his creation, Arnowitt allows violinist Al Roman to set "Bulgarian Hoedown's" mood with a tug-at-the-heartstrings, darkly evocative, rubato solo. But that's not the mood that develops. After Stranahan introduces a faster rhythm and after the horns build minor-key harmony in layers, Roman recalls country fiddling before trumpeters Dave Smith and Tatum Greenblatt take off with searing, soaring, swinging solos. The application of solos to consistent, insistent

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Bulgarian-inspired accenting builds throughout eleven minutes to a wild and thrilling conclusion. “Shapka Swing” too derives from Bulgarian culture, this time as musical descriptions of the country’s geometrically arranged hat designs. Arnowitt’s idea this time is the performance of consecutive duo performances, one player holding the pedal point and the other improvising over the pulsating rhythm. This allows for trumpeted fanfare, clarinet-and-violin klezmer allusions and unfolding trombone colors. Another work of global references, “Syria-us,” results from Arnowitt’s benefit concert to assist Syrian refugees. His absorption of, and respect for, divergent musical styles set up a work of Syrian harmonies, again in a minor key. At the beginning, the musicians breathe the notes and their microtones emerge as sonic utterances, instead of as melody. Once again, it becomes evident that all of the musicians are entirely devoted to Arnowitt’s project as they immerse themselves in his ideas. Arnowitt’s piano technique shines through on those tracks as he improvises in rotation with the other members of the group. His “Migratory Mood,” an imitation of birds in flight, achieves its culmination from Arnowitt’s introductory lightness of coruscating touch before he takes the piece into swing with the force of Rick Rosato’s bass work and the piano’s thematic fills. More delicate with classical leanings, and a departure from the horns’ harmonic accents, is the “Pirouette” waltz, performed on oboe by Randall Wolfgang. Not as simple as it would seem, Arnowitt’s idea brings to life repeated descending bass lines without resolution until the final phrase, thereby keeping the piece aloft, and the listener in suspense. Arnowitt’s integration of poetry into the music occurs when Langston Hughes’ “Crossing” and Maya Angelou’s “Still I Rise,” recited by assistant producer Therisa Rogers, are set to music. “The Crossing” features Rogers’ understanding of the poem itself as she is accompanied solely by Rosato. A beautiful ballad, Arnowitt’s “The Crossing,” with a slight tango feel, allows for extended improvisations as elaborations of the poem. Arnowitt’s composition based on “Still I Rise,” “Ascent” starts with Rogers’ recitation accompanied this time solely by Smith’s trumpet. A message of defiance and hope, “Ascent” moves at a faster tempo than “The Crossing.” “Ascent” also contains more intimations of joy suggested by Arnowitt’s written accents—a stylistic characteristic that occurs on many of his tracks. Arnowitt wrote some of his own poems, like “Against the Wind,” sung by Shirley Crabbe. It too expresses defiance through microtonal colors and the discomfort of dissonance. “The Crying Candle” is a message of optimism that offers a balm for the often negative environment of current events. Arnowitt, like Lennon and McCartney, imagines a future of, well, harmony, a product of spring’s rebirth. Arnowitt is a musician with boundless musical curiosity. An example was his “1911 Concert,” which featured as a contrast of styles music written in that critical year by Maurice Ravel, Arnold Schoenberg, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Charles Ives, Igor Stravinsky Alexander Scriabin and Béla Bartók. Michael Arnowitt’s abundance of restless talent suggests that two discs could hardly contain it, and that he had to cull additional material from the project. Perhaps much more remains unrecorded. The prodigious result, *Sweetspontaneous*, is a rewarding accomplishment deserving of broad attention.

Bill Donaldson

# Papatamus

**REVIEWS  
OF CDS,  
LPS AND  
BOOKS**  
A collection of  
sometimes  
disparate  
material though  
generally  
relating to music  
recordings or  
performance.

*Editor's Note: The following is a compilation from Papatamus columns from April, July, and October 2019.*

*A NOTE TO READERS: I cover a lot of items in this column and it is only a fraction of what crosses my desk. I choose to only write about things that I find of interest, usually that is due to quality of music but not always. You can contact me at [rdr@cadencebuilding.com](mailto:rdr@cadencebuilding.com). Mail received may be included in the next column and is subject to editing at my discretion. If you do not want your correspondence printed please let us know. Cheers, rdr.*

Singer KAT GANG has issued a session; **COME CLOSER** [NKR 888295 802734]. Here the program is 12 mostly standards [49:38] with backing from, Matthew Fries-p, John Sneider-tpt, Phil Palombi-b, and Tim Bulkley-drm. Her 3 originals are quite interesting, simple melodies handled and drawn out to give greater emphasis to the lyrics. Trumpeter Sneider is only on board for 4 tracks and his playing adds a melancholy touch on a number of tunes. The fact is there is not one song on this CD that is handled in a traditional manner. This is a singer worth following and I wish there was more. All involved should share the praise as there is not a weak or false moment on the CD.



Don Redman (1900-1964) was a force, especially as an arranger in the pre-war period. **THE KING OF BUNGLER BAR** [Umlaut Records umfr-cd29] by the **UMLAUT BIG BAND** is made up of 28 Redman arrangements [58:48] from 1924 up to 1951. These are not totally faithful arrangement readings but they've managed to maintain the spirit of Redman's original arrangements while making changes accordingly to accommodate and consider the growing sophistication of jazz. The 12-page enclosed booklet will give you context, soloists and intelligent liners. This music is great fun and may lead you, however, to further investigate Fletcher Henderson, early Ellington and so forth. There is some great music from these past eras. Recorded live 4/19-21/18. Seek this CD out and have some fun; guaranteed.



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Also showing an Ornette Coleman influence in the music structures is the ERIC HOFBAUER [gtr]/DAN ROSENTHAL [tpt/flg] QUARTET [Aaron Darrell-b, Austin McMahon-drm]; HUMAN RESOURCES [Creative Nation Music cam 033]. This is the first recording for this group and it is very nice indeed. There are 10 originals [71:45] written by various players in the band. A particular favorite of mine was “Ornette’s Context”, by Hofbauer, during which Darrell sneaks in with an Ornette quote. There is much to enjoy here, a free-ish date [7/19/17] which even bopsters whose brains has not petrified might find an enlightening challenge. This group has a wide enough grasp of jazz genres and it is my hope they will continue to creatively exploit it with future releases. Freshly rewarding— both compositionally and instrumentally. David Adler’s 5 pages of liners add to this treat.

The BEYOND BORDERS BAND [Fadhel Boubaker-ud, Niko Siebold-as/ss, Dominik Furstberger-drm, Jonathan Sell-b] has issued IT JUST HAPPENS [Hout Records 4050486 115992]. This 8/16 date is their second release (3 years after their first release). With the exception of 2 compositions by Furstberger the 8 tunes here [60:06] are all credited to the band which suggests they are group improvs, on the other hand they are so tight perhaps it was group writing. What the group shows is an integration of Western harmony with Arabic styles. Jazz is in the forefront, while the Arabic influence is in the beats and often in the lines of a tune. Most importantly, while the Arabic influence is present, it is never far from jazz, Tunisia ascending. AMORGOS [Slam Records 592] is not a jazz CD but a recording of 12 compositions by ADA PITSOU played by a quartet [piano/violin/cello/drums] with sounds of nature [wind, water, thunder] as a component of the composition/music. The music is engaging and unpretentious and suggests a fragility and lightness. Amorgos indeed.

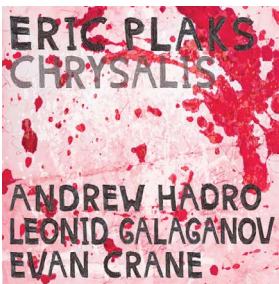
Not really Jazz but interesting never-the-less is: YOU’RE THE CREAM IN MY COFFEE [Acoustic Music Records best-nr 319.1588.2] by LOTTA-MARIA SAKSA [gtr]. Recorded in February 2018, Saksa has taken old piano rolls, transcribed them and then arranged them

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for guitar. The guitar couldn't cover all the registers of the piano so she decided to create a guitar duet and then played / recorded both parts. Saksa has a lovely touch and the 8 familiar titles [37:29] go down with a lovely ambiance, my only reservation is the shortness of recorded time, this could have another 12 tracks on it. A great recording for a blindfold test. Music from over 70 years ago still charming today.

Also not jazz, but not without interest is: LET'S GO IN TO A PICTURE SHOW [Harbinger Records hcd 3403]. This non-leader issued CD presents 26 songs [79:54] connected to various movies from 1927-1922. Most of these songs of antiquity have lyrics sung in the stiff trembly voice that characterizes burlesque of the era prior to the talkies. The tunes are associated with movie stars of the period, Chaplin, Pickford, Fairbanks and so forth. It's a fascinating look at the mores of life and pop culture of the times. The picture show promised many things; mostly a way to escape through entertainment and the songs are often suggestive of pending romance (pretty much the same as today). The last tune here is a 1922 recording of "The Sheik Of Araby" performed by Charles Hart, Elliott and Everett Clark. A 32-page liner booklet with printed lyrics and wonderful photos are included. Thankfully jazz was soon to arrive. Wonderfully done. ERIC PLAKS [p] is a talented and powerful artist who has about 4 recordings out, his latest is on Out Now Records [#035] called CHRYSALIS. This 4/9/17 date finds Plaks with a very strong group; Andrew Hadro [bari/clts], Leonid Galaganov [drm] and Evan Crane [b] playing 9 originals [54:56]. This is free jazz at its best, especially the exchanges between Plaks and Hadro. There is an external framework for the groups music which suggests a strategy before playing so the music is form as opposed to totally non form. So far this one of Plaks' best.

JEREMY MANASIA [p] has issued a new tasty CD in SUTRA BOOK [SmallsLive Records sl-0062]. Manasia and group [Asaf Yuria-as, Stacy Dillard-ts, Ugonna Okegwo-b, Jason Brown-drm] have taken some Zen chants and tried to reflect them through jazz on 6 Manasia originals [48:54]. A number of jazz men are Buddhists and engage in the rapid fire chants. I don't



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hear any particular connection between the chants and the music. What I do hear, is some excellent jazz and compositions. This is a very convincing hard bop quintet all around and they deserve to be recorded again and soon. Recorded 2/11/18. This should be heard.

A year later from Green Dream is the next date PIXEL QUEEN [BluJazz Records bj 3410] [4/10/13]. MANASIA again is supported by Mori and Ruggiero. The program is 6 originals plus “Lucky To Be Me” [47:50] and is closer to the Green Dream CD in that it is quieter, even at times flowery and certainly less distinctive bearing little resemblance to the Witchery CD and I’ll admit, for me, anticlimactic.



Pianist ULF KRUPKA has released volume 2 of HYMNS IN A JAZZ MOOD [Losen Records los 210-2]. I’m not familiar with the 9 hymns [52:26] but these are beautiful interpretations. Krupka is joined by Line Falkenberg-sax and Tine Asmundsen-b. This is a perfect trio as they express various moods from solemn to bright and clear. At times Falkenberg takes on a Desmond-like tone. The only part that left me cold was the one track where Krupka chose to play organ on a hymn that sounds like the folk piece “Go Tell Aunt Roadie The Old Grey Goose Is Dead”. This is jazz all the way and rewards multiple playings.



## REISSUES / HISTORICAL

ROSCOE MITCHELL’s SOUND [Delmark de 4408] is a reissue of a reissue of a reissue, I believe. Recorded 8/10&26/66 this remains a cornerstone of Chicago style new music and precursor to the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Over 50 years old, it remains fresh and connective to the whole free jazz scene in general. Here the sextet is: Mitchell-as/clt/ recorder, Lester Bowie-tpt/flg/harm, Lester Lashley-tbn/cello, Maurice McIntyre-ts, Malachi Favors-b and Alvin Fielder-perc. There are a total of five originals [70:13] here and augmenting this issue is one alternate take each of “Ornette” and “Sound”. These additional alternate takes add more good stuff with non-faded

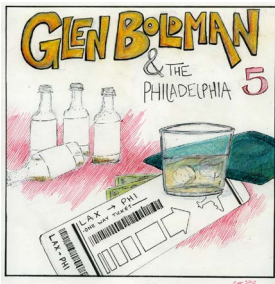
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freshness. This pressing reverts back to the original analog mix, there is some color added to the cover and the number 8 added to the original matrix number, differentiating it from the previous Delmark [408] issues. Get the new issue and give your kid the older issue.

Drummer BEN GOLDMAN has issued GLEN BOLDMAN & THE PHILADELPHIA 5 [no label 796017 599780]. It's a confusing title and nowhere is there any explanation on the liner note less and dateless CD. After a little research I was not able to find out anything about the band [Sam Nobles-b, Kevin Cross- gtr, Blayne Salerni-tpt, Andrew Bedell-ts, Ian Kurlan-vbs]. For the 4 originals [39:23] Goldman is credited as composer and arranger. The drums are less pronounced than on the Matt Kane CD and the music is more crowded. One piece "Klezmerica" has an eastern sound and rhythm about it and may suggest this is an Israeli group. Excellent group.

Trombonist MARIEL AUSTIN, graduate of Cal State and New England Conservatory, has put together what she calls her Rock-Jazz Orchestra and issued an EP of 5 tunes [39:35] called RUNNER IN THE RAIN [Futura Production Records msa-001]. Calling her orchestra Rock-Jazz is a misnomer, as while there are rock elements, the fact is, this is a jazz band and features Noah Preminger; a strong established player that has been noticed for both his tenor strength and taste. At one time Austin was associated with the Clare Fischer group and later, at NEC, George Russell. The influences are clearly heard. On two of the tracks, Austin lends her voice not so much as a feature but as part of the band's sound. Not sure why this is called an EP, it is a term applied to LPs when a record was issued as part of a larger whole and usually as 45 RPM not 33 1/3 RPM. Short but excellent.

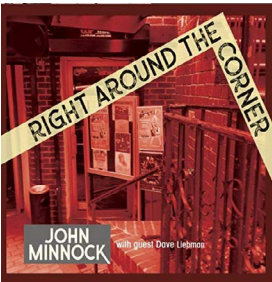
JASON ANICK [violin/man] has issued RHYTHM FUTURE QUARTET, AND FRIENDS [Rhythm Future Quartet Records 700261 470221]. This delightful CD opens with one of Anick's originals, and as many Django-esque records do, in the



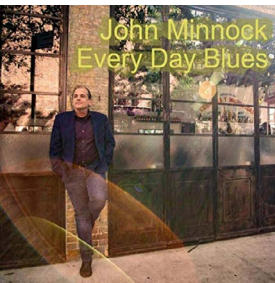


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always joyful Hot Club Of France musical style. This quartet [Olli Soikkeli-gtr, Max O'Rourke-gtr, Greg Loughman-b] may start out with a nod to the Hot Club but then goes much further, all the while maintaining their infectious rhythms. There are 13 tracks [56:36] here: 8 originals by various band members plus compositions by Ellington, Django, Pettiford, Garoto and Joshua Redman. The music covers many styles, Latin, semi-classical and includes a torch song ["Solitude"] nicely performed by the talented Cyrille Aimée. If you're a fan of the Gypsy jazz sound and not too much of a purist this will absolutely suit you. Other guests include a string octet, Hamilton De Holanda on bandolim and Stochelo Rosenberg on guitar.



JOHN MINNOCK is a singer like no other; part cabaret—part saloon singer—part story teller. RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER [no label 888295 842044] features Minnock on a program of 10 tracks [44:05], a mixture of standards and originals. Minnock's voice is strained and plaintive which gives it an added quality when put into context coming from a gay singer dealing with LGBT concerns. He is backed by a small group of musicians including Dave Liebman who is very effective on tracks. This is a very nice production, my only complaint is "for full liners...", you're directed to go to a website. That aside, this is a new male singer to watch.



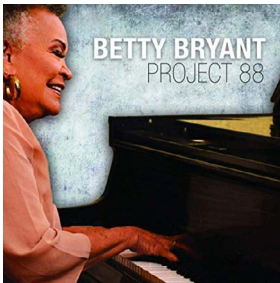
EVERY DAY BLUES [no label 191061 014362] is JOHN MINNOCK's latest effort. Here, he is backed by Bill Duffy or Enrique Haneine [p], Gavi Grodsky [gtr] and Carlos Mena [b] on 10 standards [46:50]. This time there are liners and the same powerful sincerity expressed on the previous release. Minnock handles this material in an overly dramatic manner BUT, it is never over reaching and is very believable. May he never take formal singing lessons.

Speaking of JEANNE LEE, A-Side Records has issued THE NEWEST SOUND YOU NEVER HEARD [A-Side Records 0005], a 2CD set [109:55] of vintage European recordings from 1966 and 1967. These are duos with Lee and RAN BLAKE. This is classic stuff and is equal (and then some) to their historic 1961 duo recordings. 33 cuts of mostly standards and for

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Blake and Lee fans this is desert island grade. The fine liners from Danilo Pérez and Dominique Eade puts everything in context. If you are a collector of either artist, this is a must.

BETTY BRYANT [voc/p] is a singer from a different era, maybe the late 1950s. She is 89 years old and PROJECT 88 is her ninth self produced CD [Bry-Mar Music 677357 03752]. Her voice has at times a slight wobble as might be expected, nothing to make the listener uncomfortable but enough to remind you that this is no ingénue but a woman of some experience. There was a time when there were labels, like Concord, who would record artist like this; singers that had some character. Nestled in the 10 tracks here [45:19] are 5 originals and they are very good in both melody and lyric. She is backed here by some fine jazz drawn from a group of 14 musicians. There are other BETTY BRYANT albums still in print. First up: WHAT'S THE POINT? [BRY-MAR 02222], A trio date circa 1999. 12 tracks [47:45] that include 4 Bryant originals. Tom Gargano [b] and James Gadson [drm] make up the trio. This is a light affair with no real stretching out. A sense of blues and cabaret colors the delivery. NO REGRETS [BRY-MAR Records no number] has 12 tunes (2 originals) [57:09] and features Bryant's fine piano work. Backup comes from Gargano, Kenny Elliott [drm] and Robert Kyle [ts/flt] and gives some edge to this relaxed and fun session. ITERATION + [BRY-MAR Records 666175022720] is as the title indicates, a reissue of previous issues plus 3 titles previously unissued ["Soon It's Gonna Rain", "Keep Him Away From Me", "The Very Thought Of You]. It's a wonderful collection [73:05] and goes down very easy and I'd recommend it as a fine introduction to the pleasures of Bryant's singing and piano work. MOSTLY ME [BRY-MAR 888295 175869] is probably from 2014 and sports an evocative cover painting by Bryant, one more of her artistic talents. The 16 tracks [59:06] are solo Bryant (p/v) with the exception of one track where she is paired with Robert Kyle [ts] and one track paired with Tony Guerrero [tpt]. Three of the tracks are Bryant's original, one classical piece by Poulenc and the rest standard jazz fare. This



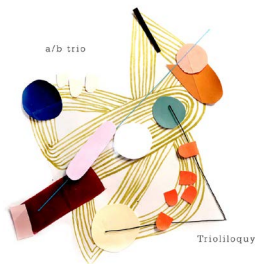
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CD is arguably Bryant's most intimate though not the most jazz infused. Overall listening to the 5 CDs, I'm impressed by the consistency, sincerity, delivery and the expanse of her talents. This is talent!

KIKOERU [Libra 215-055] is SATOKO FUJII's final [12th] release in celebrating her 60th year with one release per month in 2018. This release is with her 15 piece Tokyo Orchestra. It has been my feeling that her finest work, with some exception, has been with larger groups and this is no exception. Here she scores 6 compositions [60:10], 4 originals and 2 pieces by Natsuki Tamura. Some of Fujii's originals use repetition to build up tension to a point one might consider obsessive before making space for breaks, which enviably are filled by some wonderful free blowing. She also achieves a tension using increasing volume for added dynamic range. The 2 compositions by Tamura are looser and playful. This is an astonishing orchestra and they have turned out an astonishing fine CD as well. This effort rivals some of the great bands from Europe i.e. Globe Unity, London Jazz Composers Orchestra and so forth. Recorded 8/14/18.



A/B TRIO's TRIOLILOQUY [Chronograph Records 065] is a fine recording of free bop along the lines of early (1959-1961) Ornette Coleman. This is primarily due to Dan Davis' bluesy probing sax work and harmonies with Kevin Turcotte's trumpet, who is a guest with the trio [Thom Bennett-drms, Josh McHan-b]. Bennett is effective, keeping an irregular beat on muted toms through the 8 originals [58:18]. He and Davis work well together in keeping the music open and flowing. Much to honor here.



HERE AND NOW [Doublemoon Records dmchr71360] is by the SIGURDUR FLOSASON [as] DeLux 4Tet [Michel Reis-p, Jeff Herr-drm, Marc DeMuth-b]. Flosason is an Icelander who has been active, though not heavily recorded since the late 1980s. Since 2010, he has led a number of sessions on the Storyville label. This is a new group for the 54 year old and the 9 originals are all by different members of the 4tet [58:57]. Recorded 4/5&6/16 and 8/12&13/17, I have no idea when this group was

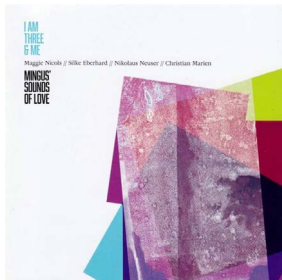
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formed or if they still exist as a group, but on this CD they play with precision and unity. Flosason, has a smooth, almost Desmond-ish tone. I've enjoyed this CD numerous times and each listen for me increased its beauty and welcome.

If you're a fan of Charlie Mingus' music I recommend MINGUS' SOUNDS OF LOVE [Leo Records cd Ir 844] by the group I AM THREE & ME [Silke Eberhard-as, Nikolaus Neuser-tpt, Christian Marien- drn] as one of the most original tributes to Mingus' music. If you are not familiar with Mingus, I'd strongly suggest you start with *The Clown* [1957] anything from his Atlantic recordings from the mid 50s. Then check out this Leo cd for further appreciation. This is also a follow-up on I Am Three and Me's Mingus tribute of 6/15 also on Leo. On this issue MAGGIE NICOLS [voice] is added to the group. Nicols is particularly effective on "The Clown" where she adds original lyrics which have their own charm. Instrumentally, I Am Three & Me is also exceptional. Nine Mingus compositions [55:01] handled creatively with soul and originality. This is very nice— one of the years best.

Also nice is the intense listening necessitated by JOHNATHAN BLAKE's, TRION [Giant Step Arts gsa 002]. This is the second release for producer Jimmy Katz. Both releases issued so far are live 2 CD sets; both excellent. The first on this new label was Jason Palmer covered in the January 2019 Papatamus. Blake's Trion is just under 2 hours of 12 well chosen titles supported by Chris Potter [ts] and Linda May Han Oh [b]. Recorded 1/21&22/18, Blake carries, for the most part, the music with a constant ribbon of rhythms that suggests Elvin Jones. Potter's roots really come through on "Relaxin' At The Camarillo" where he boldly steps forth with strong lines reflective of Sonny Rollins. Oh is less featured but absolutely noticeable for her strong and imaginative work throughout. This is a monster recording and drummers might listen to how Blake drums both rhythmically and musically.

SCOTT ROBINSON is a multi-instrumentalist with recordings on ss ,as, ts, bari, clt , b-clt, bass-s, flt, c-mel sax, theremin and some other wind



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instruments. On TENORMORE [Arbors Records arcd 19462] the big news is the only instrument he plays is the tenor sax, a fact that Robinson writes about as part of his delightful liner notes. Joining Robinson on this 1/17&18/18 date are Helen Sung [p/org], Dennis Mackrel [drm], Martin Wind [b] and on one cut Sharon Robinson [flt]. The program [67:29] consists of 10 tracks (5 originals and 5 non-originals), including a fine solo opener on “And I Love Her” which twists and turns from straight ahead to near avant guard, without being gimmicky. Robinson is consistently inconsistent in his approach and you might say the CD is of 10 different tenor players so varied is his approach while visiting different genres and tenor sounds. Entertaining, fun and serious - a very special CD.



CLIFFORD LAMB has issued BLUES & HUES [Weber works Records 19101] a record which champions mashup, i.e. melding two works to create a third, in other words—a hybrid. The 8 tracks here [46:38] are all Lamb’s compositions and they are fine. What they are mashed up with is explained in the full liner notes. One piece, “Smiles For Miles”, is not a mash up. Back up is drawn from a pool of musicians including Cindy Blackman Santana, Buster Williams, Nicholas Payton and vocalists Laura Vall and Alex Brown. A moving recording.

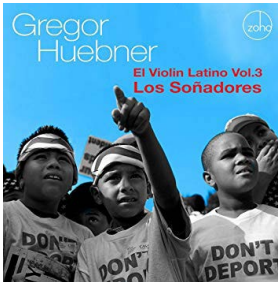


Trombonist NICK GRINDER has issued FARALLON [Oim 1907]. This is a recording that covers a wide range of jazz styles—all of it well done. It opens with “New & Happy”—a very credible play in West Coast contrapuntal smoothness circa 1965. Other parts move stylistically to slightly avant to a rather mellow reading of Monk’s “Reflections”. All of the other 6 compositions are Grinder’s structured originals. Sharing the front line with Grinder is Ethan Helm, who may be a new comer, the rest of the quintet is Juanmo Trujillo [gtr], Walter Stinson [b] and Matt Honor [drm]. A substantive recording from 3/24&25/18.

El Negocito Records has issued LIVE AT JAZZCASE [enr 071]. This a 9/15/16 recording by MARK ALBAN LOTZ [flts/piccolo] and his group Lotz Of Music [Claudio Puntin-clarinets/jaw harp, Albert

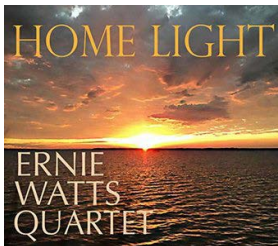
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van Veenendaal-p, Jörg Brinkman-cello, Alan Purves Gunga-perc]. This is a surprising CD. Recorded live, LOM weaves 8 pieces [49:07] separate but playing as movements. At times the effect is a chamber group, other times a jungle group and other times like an improv jam. Yet on top of this mix is an emotional kick and logic. Many in this group have played together for years and they may have developed a familiarity and sixth sense amongst each other. Arguably this is one of Lotz' finest.



GREGOR HUEBNER is a wonderful violinist; soulful whether playing composed or instant compositions. LOS SOÑADORES [Zoho Records zm 201901] is an exciting Latin jazz recordings covering 11 tracks [61:01] of original and familiar music played by a pool of 12 musicians. There are no horns on this undated recording, dealing pointedly at the USA's current policy to non Whites seeking entry to the USA.

ERNIE WATTS [s], is perhaps one of the most often and widely recorded tenor saxmen in the world. Since the early seventies, he has recorded on hundreds of labels with an astonishing number of artists. His latest HOME LIGHT [Flying Dolphin Records fd 2012] features his regular quartet [Christof Saenger-p, Rudi Engel-b, Heinrich Koeberling-drm], since about 2000. The 9 tracks [68:07] include 3 Watts originals and some compositions by the other musicians on this record. A nice variety of challenging music. This is a fine CD which wears very well on repeated listenings.



## REISSUES

BGO Records continues to mine the CTI catalogue. The HUBERT LAWS set [BGOCD 1347] reissues Morning Star-1972, Carnegie Hall-1973, The Chicago Theme-1975. The back up was a collection of musicians often used by Creed Taylor. Laws was doing an amazing amount of recordings as a sideman while leading dates for both CTI and Atlantic. The last of the 3 LPs re-issued here were also Law's last for CTI, he was next onto Columbia. As an aside, the Columbia sides are of lesser interest in that they are light and funky. The first 2 reissued LPs here

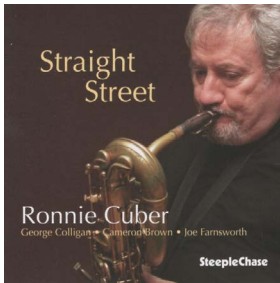
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(Morning Star and Carnegie Hall) are really beautiful and I think I didn't pay much attention at the time they were originally released compared to other CTI artists and the new music developing in the states and in Europe. 20 pages of liners and updates by Charles Waring are very interesting. An eye opener for me and perhaps for you, if you overlooked Laws.

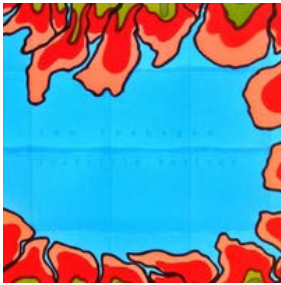
One might call the 1970s the decade of AIRTO MOREIRA. Moriera's Brazilian percussion and vocal effects appeared on hundreds of fusion and ethnic jazz sessions between 1970 and 1980. BGO has reissued 3 fine examples of his talents [128:36]; Free + Identity + Promises Of The Sun. Recorded for CTI 1972, Arista-1975 and Arista-1976, these sides include Keith Jarrett, Joe Farrell, Chick Corea, Hubert Laws, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Milton Nascimento and dozens of other musicians. The Free session includes 3 bonus tracks not on the original release. This reissue has music of its time and place and in that regard sounds as fresh, perhaps fresher, today than yesterday. A 20 page liner and essay by Charles Waring compliment this wise buy.

A fine example of where SteepleChase is today is STRAIGHT STREET [sccd 31860] by the RONNIE CUBER quartet [George Colligan-p, Cameron Brown-b, Joe Farnsworth-drm]. I remember when Cuber's first led session came out, a 1976 date on Xanadu Records. At the time, I thought it was a good sign that that label took bop seriously and was willing to record a fresh face. Cuber was part of the Newport Youth Band, led by Marshall Brown, in 1959. After that he was with Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman and was on a variety of record dates before hooking up with Xanadu. By the mid 1970s he was playing a lot of unremarkable glorified studio gigs. Since 2000 he has almost exclusively made a series of leadership dates for Steeplechase—the latest release being Straight Street. Oddly, this was recorded 11/2010 but is just being issued now. It is a fantastic live recording of 8 standards [71:19]. A monstrous date and one of the best for all aboard. Certainly one of Cuber's best. Why did it take almost 10 years to release?

I was quite impressed by pianist ERNEST TURNER's MY AMERICANA [no label 193428 673717] a



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collection of 9 covers and originals [45:22] that had meaning to him while growing up in Durham, North Carolina. Turner has an original style that reflects the frumpiness of Monk and the freeness of Bud Powell. Some highlights are: an un-strident reading of “We Shall Overcome” and a rendering of “Ain’t Misbehavin’” using 3/4 time. Jon Curry’s, Sid Catlett-like drum rolls are well placed and nicely featured and Lance Scott’s [bass] playing shows power. Recorded 7/31-8/2/2018.

JON IRABAGON [multi reedman] is considered genius by many involved in the jazz world and his new 2 cd set INVISIBLE HORIZON [Irabagast Records 014/015] will certainly enhance that evolution. I would think the critical establishment would endorse this as an impressive and major work from this emerging artist.

MATT MITCHELL has a new release out on Pi Recordings [#81] PHALANX AMBASSADORS is a live recording from 12/13-14/2018 with his quintet [Miles Okazaki-gtr; Patricia Brennan-vib/marimba; Kim Cass-b; Kate Gentile-drm]. There are seven originals on this program and while I don’t feel Mitchell is as clear and powerful here as he is on the Irabagon release above, to be fair, he is playing a different role. Here he is with a subdued group that is all over the place, it would be hard to guess who the leader is. But the music is a wonderful display of confidence. Much the time this ball of snakes scoots or darts in different directions and potentially could play all sorts of mind games if the listener allows it. It is a wonderful example of free form improvisation.

Also a fine example of free form improvisation is THE HATCH [Darktree 10]. This is a duo of JULIEN DESPREZ [el gtr] and METTE RASMUSSEN [as] on seven improvs [44:50]. These two are pretty new to the improvised music scene, which may account for the freshness they bring to their collaborations, not yet having codified their approach. Recorded 9/12/16, this is an oddly compelling recording. For the most part, Desprez is the sounding board for Rasmussen, creating all manner of pops and scratches under which Rasmussen blows all manner



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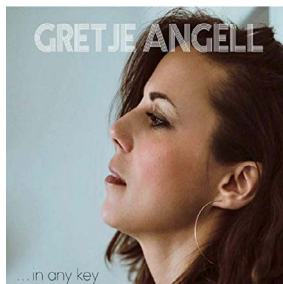
of passionate improvs. This is not a foot patting date, but it wears well on repeated listenings. An effective duo.

Yet another fine example is PHILIPP GROPPER's [ts] group Philm [Elias Stemeseder-p/syn; Oliver Steidle-drm; Robert Landfermann-b] who work well as a unit on CONSEQUENCES [WhyPlayJazz wpm 046]. This is very evident as the quartet works through 6 Gropper originals [51:16] with precision and passion. There is no space to spare but it is not mind numbing either.

Bassist PER MATHISEN has put together an all star trio [Gary Husband-drm, Ulf Wakenius-gtr] on SOUNDS OF THREE [Losen Records los 213]. Recorded 1/28&29/2019 the seven trio originals and two covers [58:05] are highlighted by rhythm and some fancy fingering. This is enthusiastic and happy jazz. A perfect combination, a bow to the artists and the label.

Tenor man RICH HALLEY's latest TERRA INCOGNITA [Pine Eagle Records 012], is Halley with the Matt Shipp [p] Trio [Mike Bisio-b, Newman Taylor Baker-drm]. It's a different setting for Halley and one he fearlessly embraces. This is a session of 6 free improvs [59:04] and a good deal of the success should go to Jim Close who engineered the recording. There is terrific separation and so one can zero in on any of the four artists and hear individual strategy and "see" who is adding what to the painting. The main focus is on Halley as he builds his solos, keeping it logical and free and eventually turning it over. This set could be used in a classroom as an introduction to "free music". Shipp plays a more subdued and supportive roll, Bisio is superb, as is Baker.

GRETJE ANGELL is a new and welcome voice. IN ANY KEY [Grevlinto Records 00-001] is, I believe, her first recording. She has a light and airy voice with no strain or pretension. There are only 9 standards [36:24] here. Support ranges from one instrument accompaniment to full orchestra. Dori Amarilio [guitar] is outstanding and plays on most of the tracks. The CD is too short. It would have been nice to hear another half hour of Angell stretching out.



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Wonderful aperitif, more please.

Kenny Washington adds a few lines of vocal assist on “They Can’t Take That Away From Me” on KATERINA BROWN’s MIRROR [Mellowtone Records 1016]. Brown was born in Russia in 1982 and spent the better part of a decade gigging around before going to a university to study harmony and theory etcetera. In 2015, she moved to the San Francisco bay area and this is her maiden recording.

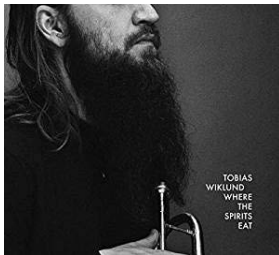
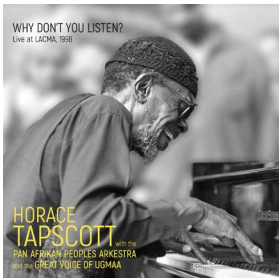
Four of the 11 tracks [48:56] here are Russian tunes and are quite lovely. The rest are standards, which includes a wonderful version of “Like A Lover”. She has a lovely voice, sings accent free and has good instincts for jazz as demonstrated by her uncompromised backing, which stretches out nicely. A very promising debut, watch for a follow-up.

MAGGIE HERRON [p/voc] immediately got my attention on her opening track “Centerpiece” on RENDITIONS [Herron Song Records 888295 905503]. She performs it at mid tempo, not the usual uptempo, and then there is her distinct voice which is either an alto or tenor, low enough that my first thought was it was man singing. It takes a moment to acclimate but that could be said of Nina Simone and Odessa. Either way good is good. Joining Herron are a variety of players including Darek Oles [b], Larry Koonse [gtr] and Bob Sheppard [flt]. 12 covers, undated tracks [50:45].

There are a number of elements that can influence me as to whether or not I’ll write about a CD. Music is of course, foremost, then packaging, historical importance and so forth. I have enjoyed MARLENE ROSENBERG’s MLK CONVERGENCE [Origin Records 82781]. On display here is both Rosenberg’s bass playing (she has a touch of Mingus there) as well as her sincere concerns regarding social justice that is missing in today’s society, but what really caught my attention were the 8 pages of notes where she writes about herself, the music [10 tracks (seven originals) 53:25] and the group [Kenny Barron-p, Lewis Nash-drm, Christian McBride-b]. Vocalists Thomas Burrell and Robert Irving III are featured on one track a piece. Get this for the liners and stay for the music. Overall,



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a fine package.

HORACE TAPSCOTT [1934-99] was one of creative forces on the West Coast in much of the second half of the 20th century. In many areas he parallels Ellington, although Tapscott is more overtly Afro-centric and political but in his choral work there are similarities to Ellington's Sacred Music Concerts. Now from Dark Tree Records [#11] comes WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN? The labels name, no doubt is a reference to Tapscott's excellent composition of the same name. As evident with this release, the label has some access to the Tapscott archives. This issue is of a concert from 7/28/98 and probably the last recording from this very gifted artist. This recording brings together the Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra and the voices of UGMAA on 5 titles ["Aiee! The Phantom", "Caravan", "Fela Fela", "Why Don't You Listen?" and "Little Africa" - 73:14]. The venue at LACMA is casual, talk casual, but attentive. Featured from the band: Phil Ranelin [tbn], Michael Session [ts/as/ss], Donald Dean [drm] and from the singers: Dwight Tribble, Amina Amutullah and Carolyn Whitaker. This CD is so evocative and inspired I'd recommend it to anyone familiar with or new to the wonders of Horace Tapscott. Give yourself 73 minutes of musical pleasure. A 14-page liner puts the session in context. TOBIAS WIKLUND [cornet] has done an impressive job on WHERE THE SPIRITS EAT [Stunt Records 19012] a 12/12&13/17 recording with his quartet [Simon Toldam-p, Daniel Fredriksson-drm, Lasse Mørck-b]. I'd guess that recording this produced much good cheer as a joy permeates much of the 12 tracks [50:30]; a combination of exceptional Wiklund originals and two Louis Armstrong covers. Wiklund has been involved with jazz for over a decade and this is his first release under his name and it's a good one. Don't let the two Armstrong titles or the employment of the cornet fool you into thinking this is a gathering of the Moldy Fig society. There is no stylistic marker here other than good jazz of many colors. Wiklund's cornet has the coloring of a flugelhorn as well as a traditional trumpet, not his main instrument, but one he fully corrals. If the spirits do in fact eat here, the

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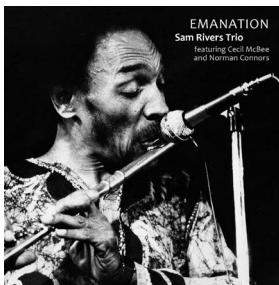
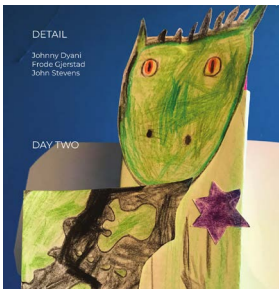
menu is wide and satisfying.

THE ODD LOT [Odd Sound Records no number] is a two disc set recorded in April 2005. One CD is JACQUES KUBA SÉGUIN with a big band playing 9 originals [58:24]; very theatrical and Breuker-esq. The other disc here is a 44 minute DVD in French or English, with subtitles, of mostly Séguin talking about most of the music and how it came about. Séguin comes off as a serious and modest artist. The DVD is an excellent compliment to the music. Fascinating music and video and easily recommended.

DETAIL is the name of the group (usually a trio) established by FRODE GJERSTAD [ts/ss]. DAY TWO [NoBusiness Records nbcd 114] was recorded October 12, 1982. This trio [Johnny Dyani-b, John Stevens-drm] was one of the best and stayed together almost through the decade. The 44:52 minute program [Day Two Part 1 / Day Two Part 2] starts out tentatively and the date sags a bit in the middle, careful editing would have helped. That aside, what is here are uncompromised improvis and a historically important artifact from the standpoint on Gjerstad, Norwegian jazz, Dyani and Stevens.

It would seem Ed Hazell has access to SAM RIVERS' archives and from that comes EMANATION [NoBusiness Records nbcd 118]. This 2 part piece was recorded 6/3/71, at the start of his ABC/Impulse period. Backed by his trio of the time [Norman Connors-drm and Cecil McBee-b], Rivers is playing ts/ss/flute/p on this tour de force on "Emanation parts 1&2" [76:41]. Hard to believe this is 50 years old as it sounds contemporary. Recorded at Boston's Jazz Workshop, this is one of Rivers' best. The 16-page liner booklet has photos and Ed Hazell's notes put everything in context.

Triabl Records [tr 0021] has reissued trumpeter LONGINEU PARSONS', WORK SONG from 1994. There is some powerful music overlooked here, the quartet [Lawrence Buckner-b, Kevin Bales-p, Von Barlow-drm] lets it all blow out on "Work Song" featuring Parsons and a terrific drum solo by Von Barlow. Sam Rivers [ts] makes an appearance on 3 of the 11 tracks [59:31], while Nat Adderley [cornet] appears on 1 track.



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Harbinger Records has and continues to put out material of interest and often overlooked by students of American music. Two such items are: EUBIE BLAKE & NOBLE SISSLE SING SHUFFLE ALONG [Harbinger Records 3204] and SISSLE & BLAKE'S SHUFFLE ALONG 1950 [Harbinger Records hcd 3402]. The earlier [#3204] is made up of rare 78 RPMs and arranged to effect the whole show. This material that is nearly 100 years old is excellent. Number 3402 is a producers acetate used to sell investors on the production. Sissle narrates the play with enthusiasm and Blake plays piano throughout. This CD is excellent and the material is quite rare, vintage material—some of which found its way to Harrison and Biograph Records and other labels dealing with antique music. Shuffle Along had an uneasy time trying to get produced on Broadway, the play was an historical sensation in the early 1920s and finally was revived in 2016 to modest reviews and closed 2 months later. What really sells these 2 productions are the extensive liner booklets, 20 pages which outlines the joys and sorrows of putting on the play. Blake was very proud of this music and played it often at parties and get togethers where he is shouting out verbal accompaniment. If you have any interest in American musical theater get these discs and settle down for an afternoon of good listening and reading. Tacked on to the end of the #3402 CD is a few minutes of a tribute to Ruth King. Who was Ruth King? Perhaps a reader could tell us.

NANCY WILSON recorded for Capitol Records for about 15 years during which she honed a very definite style somewhere between a jazz singer and a supper club singer—always identifiable. Avid records has issued NANCY WILSON: FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS [Avid Records amsc 1349]. This is terrific stuff and here is a great place to start if you've never spent any time with Nancy Wilson. The 4 classic LPs from 1959-1962 issued here are: Like In Love/Something Wonderful/with Cannonball Adderley/Hello Young Lovers. Also included are 6 vocal tracks from the 1960 album with George Shearing; The Swingin's Mutual. A fortuitous grouping.



# Obituaries



Arthur Neville

**ART NEVILLE** (December 17, 1937 – July 22, 2019) *Singer, member of the Neville Brothers.*



Joao Gilberto

**FRANCISCO ESTABAN DE LA ROSA** [b] died 7/5/19. *He was 85.*

**JOÃO GILBERTO** Born 10 June 1931 Juazeiro, Bahia, Brazil. *Died 6 July 2019 (aged 88)*



Harold Mabern

**JIM CULLUM** *passed away today at 77 years old.*

**HAROLD MABERN, JR,** *piano March 20, 1936 – September 19, 2019*



Tex Arnold

**HUBERT "TEX" ARNOLD,** *Pianist, Music Director, Arranger and Composer, Has Died Hubert "Tex Arnold" (March 2, 1945 – August 22, 2019)*

**SEYMOUR 'SY' SUCHMAN, 93,** *bandleader and jazz musician. March 7, 1926 – Aug. 9, 2019*



Sy Suchman

**ROBERT SAGE WILBER** (March 15, 1928 – August 4, 2019) *He was 91.*

**GERMAN LUKIANOV,** *trumpet, died on July 7, 2019*

**ABRAHAM TSOANA KOLA** *died on 10/30/18. He was 58.*



Bob Wilbur

**BOB FREEMAN** [sax/p/arr] *died on 1/22/19. He was 84.*

**DOLORES PARKER MORGAN** [singer] *died on 12/17/18. She was 99.*



German Lukianov

**DON ALBERTS** *died on 12/10/18. He was 86.*

**ED BICKERT** [g] *died on 2/28/19. He was 86.*

# Obituaries



Beth Carvalho

**BETH CARVALHO**, Brazil's 'Godmother of Samba,' died on April 30, 2019 in Rio de Janeiro. She was 72.



Dr. John

**BO LEIBOWITZ**, host of KCRW's "Strictly Jazz," died on June 3, 2019. He was 74.

**MAC REBENNACK**, AKA Dr. John, New Orleans music legend, died on June 6., 2019. He was 77.



Jo Sullivan

**DAVE SAMUELS**, a Grammy-award winning vibraphonist died on April 22, 2019 in New York City. He was 70.

**JO SULLIVAN**, (singer) died on April 28, 2019. She was 91.



Lawrence Leathers

**LAWRENCE LEATHERS**, Grammy-Winning jazz drummer, died on June 2, 2019. He was 37.

**LEON REDBONE** born Dickran Gobalian, singer, musician, died on May 30, 2019. He was 69.



Leon Redbone

**LISLE ARTHUR ATKINSON** jazz double-bassist, died on March 25th, 2019, New York, He was 78.

**NORMA MILLER**, Lindy-Hopping 'Queen of Swing,' died on May 5, 2019. She was 99.



Norma Miller

**RON HEARN**, Vancouver music scene correspondent, writer for Cadence Magazine, frequent obituary contributor, died on May 9, 2019. He was 70.

**SAM PILAFIAN**, (tuba) died on April 5, 2019. He was 69.



Sam Pilafian

**ALVIN FIELDER** [drm] died on 1/5/19. He was 83

**ANDRE PREVIN** [p] died on 2/28/19. He was 89.

# Obituaries



Abraham Tsoana Kola



Alvin Fielder



Andre Previn



Dolores Parker Morgan



Nancy Wilson  
Wolfgang Schlüter

**ETHEL ENNIS** [singer] died on 3/9/19. She was 86.

**GALT MACDERMOT** [composer] died on 12/17/19. He was 89.

**HAL BLAINE** died on 3/11/19. He was 90.

**HARRY HARMAN** died on 1/2/19. He was 91.

**IRA GITLER**, [Jazz Critic] died on 2/23/19. He was 90.

**JAMES DAPOGNY** died on 3/6/19. He was 78.

**JODY WILLIAMS**, [g] died on 12/1/18. He was 83.

**JOHN HEWARD** [drm/painter] died on 11/5/18. He was 84.

**JOHNNY KNAPP** [p] died on 11/9/18. He was 90.

**JOSEPH JARMAN** [sax/flt ] died on 1/9/19. He was 81.

**JULIO BARBOSA** died around 1/22/19 in Zimbabwe. He was 93.

**KEN NORDINE** [Word Jazz] died on 2/16/19. He was 98.

**KIYOSHI KOYAMA** died. He was 82.

**MICHEL LEGRAND** [composer/pianist] died on 1/26/19. He was 86.

**MABLE LEE** [voc/tap] died on 2/7/19. She was 97.

**NANCY WILSON** [singer] died on 12/18/19. She was 81.

**NORMAN GIMBEL** [songwriter] died on 12/19/18. He was 91.

**PERRY ROBINSON** [clt/voc] died on 12/2/18. He was 80.

**PETER PRISCO** [p] died on 12/31/18. He was 72.

**REYNOLD SCOTT JR.**, [sax] died 6/23/18. He was 74.

**STEPHEN COUTTS**, [g] died on 10/10/18. He was 61.

**"URBIE" GREEN** died on 12/31/18. He was 88.

**WOLFGANG SCHLÜTER** [vibes] died on 11/12/18. He was 85.



*Thank you ...* to **Cadence Magazine**  
for honoring **Clifford Lamb's, "Blues & Hues"**  
as one of the **Top Ten Releases of 2019!**

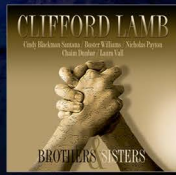
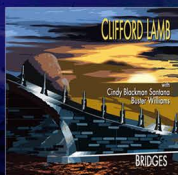
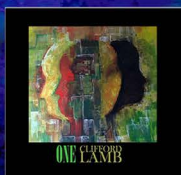


**"Blues & Hues" is a true mashup of original compositions carefully intertwined with songs by revered composers resulting in a first of its kind in Jazz.**

*Featuring* Cindy Blackman Santana, Buster Williams, Nicholas Payton, Tariq Akoni, Laura Vall, Alex Brown, Anacron, Justin Klunk, Scott Mayo

**Produced by Jeffrey Weber • Recorded by Clark Gemain**  
**Recorded LIVE, TO TWO TRACKS**

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