THE INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF CREATIVE IMPROVISED MUSIC

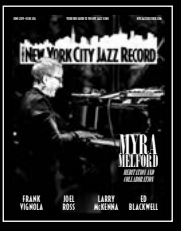
2020 A YEAR OF LOSS

HERE ARE A FEW PEOPLE THAT DIED THIS YEAR

ANDREW KOWALCZYK, *producer, died on April 6, 2020. He was 63.*
ANDY GONZÁLEZ *died on April 2020. He was 69.*
ANNIE ROSS, *jazz singer and actor, died on July 21, 2020. She was 89.*
BILL WITHERS, *singer - songwriter, died on March 30, 2020. He was 81.*
BUCKY PIZZARELLI, *guitarist, died on April 1, 2020. He was 94.*
CAREI THOMAS, *jazz pianist and composer- died on. She was 81.*
DANNY LAEKE, *studio engineer died on April 27, 2020. He was 69.*
DONN TRENNER, *died on May 16, 2020. He was 93.*
EDDY DAVIS *banjo virtuoso died on April 7, 2020. He was 79.*
EDDIE GALE *[tpt] died on July 10, 2020. He was 78.*
ELLIS MARSALIS *died on April 1, 2020. He was 85.*
FREDDY COLE *singer, pianist, died on June 27, 2020. He was 88.*
FREDERICK C TILLIS *[ts/ss/composer] died on May 3, 2020. He was 90.*
GARY PEACOCK *[bass] died on Sept. 4. 2020. He was 85.*
HAL SINGER *[ts] died on August 18, 2020. He was 100.*
HAL WILLNER, *legendary producer died on April 7, 2020. He was 64.*
HELEN JONES WOODS *[tbn] died on July 25, 2020. She was 96.*
HENRY GRIMES, *legendary bassist, died on April 17, 2020. He was 84.*
IRA SULLIVAN *[tpt, fl] died Sept. 21,2020; He was 89.*
JEANIE LAMBE, *legendary Glasgow jazz singer died on May 29, 2020. She was 79.*
JOHN MAXWELL BUCHER *trumpet and cornet, died on April 5, 2020. He ws 89.*
KEITH TIPPETT, *British jazz pianist died on June 14, 2020. He was 72.*
LEE KONITZ, *legendary jazz saxophone artist died on April 15, 2020. He was 92.*
LUCKY PETERSON *[gtr/kbds] died on May 17, 2020. He was 55.*
MICHAEL COGSWELL, *a jazz archivist and historian died on April 20, 2020. He was 66.*
NADI QAMAR *[piano] died on Oct. 21, 2020. He was 103.*
ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS *died on April 6, 2020. He was 70.*
OVERTON BERRY *[piano] died on Oct. 19, 2020. He was 84.*
PETER JOHNSON ECKLUND, *cornet, composer, died on April 8, 2020. He was 74.*
RICHARD TEITELBAUM *died on April 9, 2020. He was 70.*
RICHIE COLE, *Alto Sax, died. He was 72.*
RONALD LEWIS, *Preserver of New Orleans Black Culture, died. He was 68.*
STANLEY CROUCH *[drm] died on Sept. 6, 2020. He was 75.*
STERLING MCGEE *[gtr/voc] died on Sept 6, 2020 of covid-.19. He was 86.*
STEVE GROSSMAN *[sax] died on August 13, 2020. He was 69.*
TOSHINORI KONDO *[trumpet] died on Oct. 17, 2020. She was 71.*
WILLIAM SMITH *[clt] died on Feb. 29, 2020. He was 93.*

Volume 46 Number 1A Annual Edition 2020

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD



EXCLUSIVE CONTENT ON JAZZ & IMPROVISED MUSIC IN NEW YORK CITY

COMPETITIVE & EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE

"SIMPLY THE HIPPEST JOURNAL ABOUT JAZZ IN NEW YORK THAT HAS EVER BEEN PUBLISHED" - JOE LOVANO

"THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE PERIODICAL ON THE MUSIC THAT I HAVE EVER READ" - ANDREW CYRILLE

TWITTER: @NYCJAZZRECORD | FACEBOOK/NYCJAZZRECORD | INSTAGRAM.COM/TNYCJR

NYCJAZZRECORD.COM

THE DR. JAZZ TEST FOR "PROMOTIONITIS"

Do you suffer from these symptoms?

- Tightness of Budget
- Distributor Complications
- Sales Constipation
- Air Play Rejection
- Elevated Blood Pressure or Ulcers

If you answer yes to any of the above, contact Dr. Jazz immediately! New Patients always welcome!

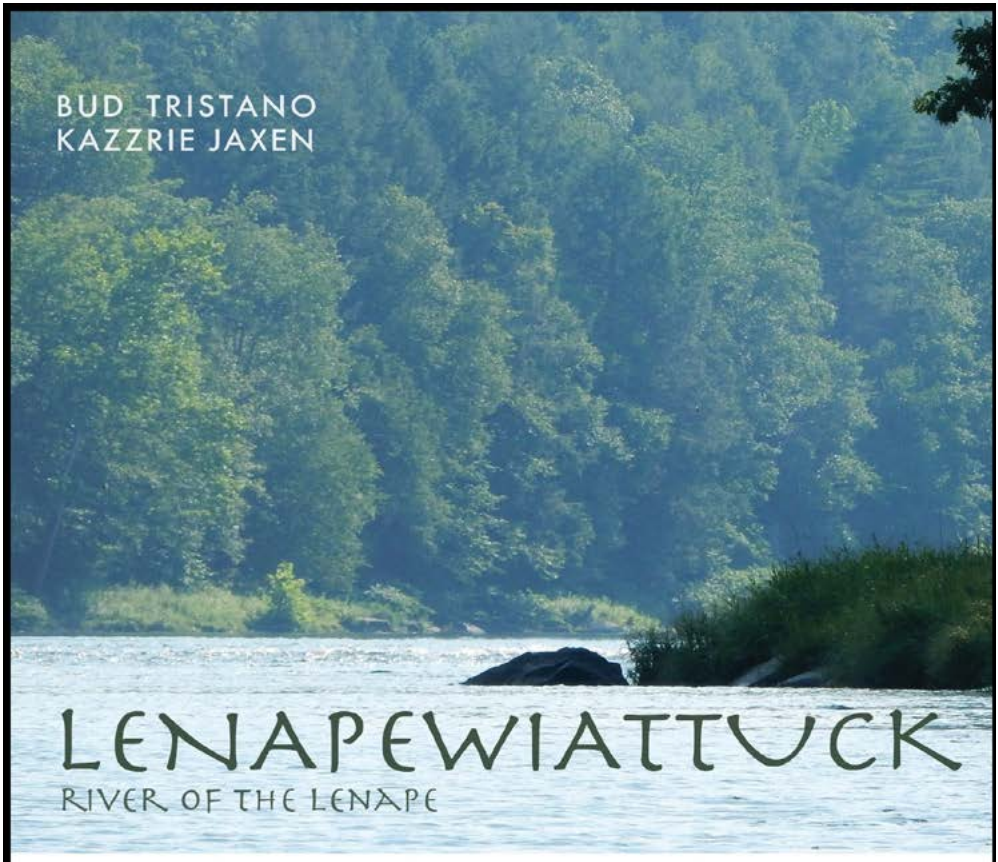
248-542-7888

DRJAZZ@DRJAZZ.COM

dr. Jazz™ OPERATIONS

PROMOTION & MARKETING CONSULTANTS

24270 Eastwood,
Oak Park, MI 48237-1602



A suite of 11 genre-defying guitar/piano improvisations by Bud Tristano and Kazzrie Jaxen celebrating the passion & mystery of the Delaware River, originally called "Lenapewiattuck" by the indigenous Lenape. All of the music on this CD is spontaneously improvised and is, for both players, an expression of love for the wild passionate beauty of nature.

"This is Nature in all its glory, and the duo's portrayal of all its aspects is a work of art."
- Dennis Winge, JazzGuitar.com

"There is mystery aplenty in this highly kinetic work, which, despite the presence of only two instruments, has a symphonic breadth of sound and feeling . . . Immerse yourself in this river of sound, and emerge refreshed, enlarged, and illuminated."
- Mel Minter

"Frankly, after reading the notes I was afraid to listen to the CD. I feared that two such powerful spirits as Bud and Kazzrie, in their endeavor to unite their musical talents, might end up running each other off the road. But when I heard those wind chimes at the Fourth Crow, I knew they had arrived together. E. duobus unum. A rarity."
- Marv Friedenn

www.newartistsrecords.com

CARLA MARCIANO QUARTET

PSYCHOSIS

HOMAGE TO BERNARD HERRMANN

This album is my heartfelt homage to one of the greatest geniuses of film score, the composer and conductor Bernard Herrmann, whose music has dazzled me since I was a child. It has been very interesting to arrange, revise and adapt, for a jazz quartet, some of the best known themes from outstanding soundtracks Herrmann wrote for equally outstanding films - all psychological thrillers (hence the title Psychosis) - by brilliant directors, including Marnie, Psycho and Vertigo by Alfred Hitchcock, Taxi Driver by Martin Scorsese and Twisted Nerve by Roy Boulting. Bearing a classic feel and originally conceived for orchestras, the tracks in this album were arranged in full respect of the originals, leaving intact, for example, the beauty of the melodies, while at the same time creating new improvisational spaces that would allow our quartet to maintain its own identity.

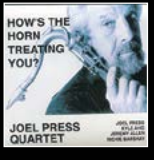
www.carlamarciano.com

Order from Challenge Records
https://www.challengerecords.com/products/15610227128703

CADENCE

Mainstream Extensions; Music from a Passionate Time; 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

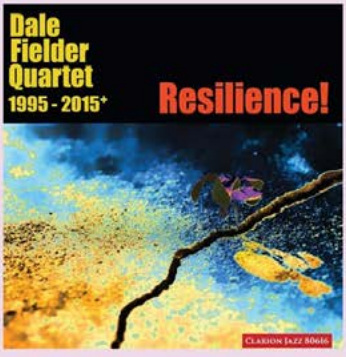
Clockwise from left: *Live at Small's; JP Soprano Sax/Michael Kanan Piano; JP Quartet; Return to the Apple; First Set at Small's.*

Prezervation CD's: Contact joelpress507@gmail.com

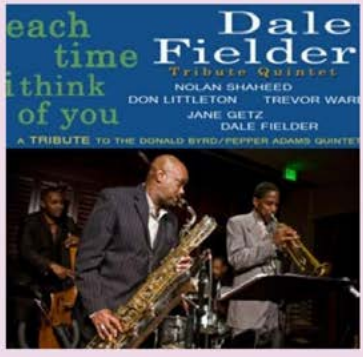
WWW.JOELPRESS.COM

Dale Fielder Quartet
"Consensus"

Dale Fielder/Geri Allen NYC 1983
"Scene From A Dream"



Dale Fielder Quartet
20th Anniversary 2-Disc CD
"Resilience!"

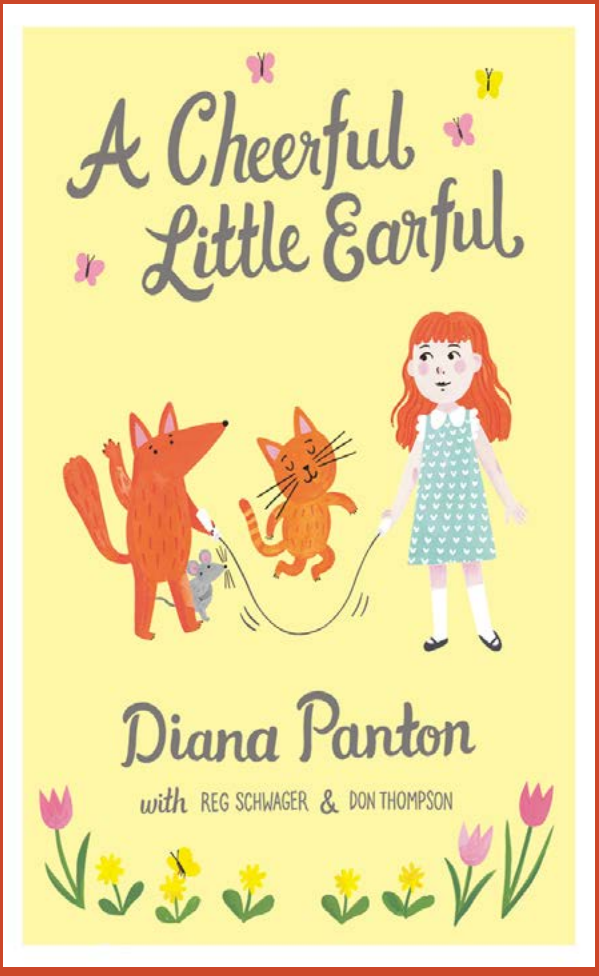


Dale Fielder Tribute Quintet plays
Donald Byrd/Pepper Adams
"Each Time I Think of You"

They're not necessarily easy to find. But these small-label albums can be every bit as rewarding as the well-publicized releases from Verve, Blue Note, or the other major labels. The common threads include deeply reflective improvisational styles, strong rhythmic bases, use of ethnic instrumentation and musical forms, a willingness to merge a variety of jazz genres, and a reverence for classical traditions from America, Europe, Africa, and the East. But most of all, these discs share an artistic aspiration that is uncompromised by commercial interests. These are musicians looking to establish their own voices and vision, without the help of big record company contracts.

--Bill Kolhasse/L.A. TIMES

NEW release by double JUNO winner Diana Panton!

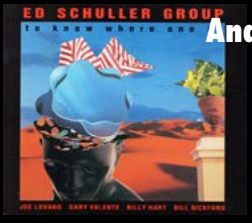


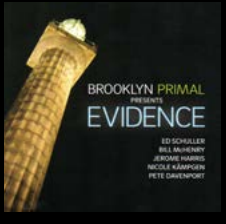
*A sequel to her chart-topping album I Believe in Little Things (****DownBeat). A Cheerful Little Earful is sure to make kids and jazz aficionados alike grin from ear to ear!*

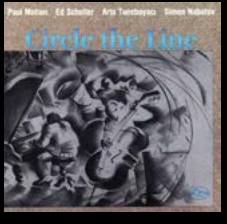
www.dianapanton.com
album available at Amazon.com

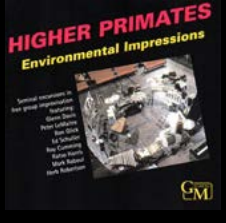
Ed Schuller
(bassist, composer)
on GM Recordings

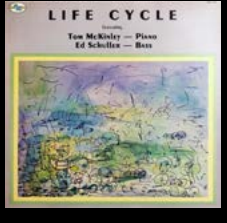
My name is Eddy
I play the bass
A kind of music
For the human race
And with beauty and grace
Let's stay on the case
As we look ahead
To an uncertain space
Peace, Music
Love and Life"











More info, please visit:
www.gmrecordings.com
Email: gmrec@earthlink.net

GM Recordings, Inc.
P.O. Box 894
Wingdale, NY 12594

GM RECORDINGS

Roger Hanschel & String Thing

beauty of the essential detail

Roger Hanschel - sax, comp. Nicola Kruse - vl
Ingmar Meissner - vla Gunther Tiedemann - vc Jens Piezunka - b

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUK8ND1DQxw

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qI_csTc4nI

www.rogerhanschel.de www.stringthing.de

post@rogerhanschel.de

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 Doninic Duval-Vincent Loccisano-Chris Covais *The Project*
#1258 David Haney *Angel Foot Shuffle* w/J. Priester, 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 Infinitessimal Flash Quartet *Live* w/J.Tchicai,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)

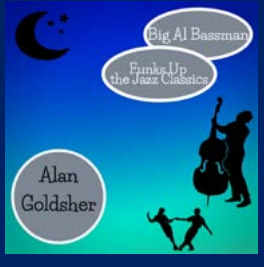
CIMP 409 Ehran Elisha Trio *Heads*
with Albert Beger(ts/ss) Dave Phillips(doublebass)

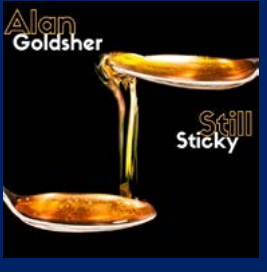
CIMP 410 Mat Marucci Trio *Inversions*
with Rick Olson℗ Adam Lane(b)

CIMP 417 Jimmy Bennington Colour & Sound
A Little While in Chicago
with Fred Jackson(sax) Jerome Croswell(tpt) Ed Schuller(b)

GOLD NOTE RECORDS

THE DOPEST IN JAZZTRONICA SINCE 2019





NEW MUSIC FROM

ALAN GOLDSHER

www.GoldNoteRecords.com

info@GoldNoteRecords.com

STREAM NOW ON SPOTIFY


FRANK KOHL QUARTET
RISING TIDE
with STEVE LASPINA • TOM KOHL
FRANK KOHL QUARTET
INVISIBLE MAN
with STEVE LASPINA • TOM KOHL • JON DOTY
COMING THIS SUMMER-
A NEW CD
BY GUITARIST,
FRANK KOHL
with Guitarist,
JOHN STOWELL
and Bassist,
STEVE LASPINA
frankkohl.com
Frank Kohl Quartet Presents
COAST TO COAST
frank kohl quartet
reform


FUZZI-
WUZZI
GUNTER
HAMPEL
EUROPEAN-NEW YORK
QUARTET
FUZZI WUZZI
LIVE AT THE
GOLDEN PUDEL
HAMBURG-FISCHMARKT
GUNTER HAMPEL-
CAVANA LEE HAMPEL
JOHANNES SCHLEIERMACHER
BERND OEZSEVIM
BIRTH BLUE RAY 180221
180221 GUNTER HAMPEL- FUZZI WUZZI
BIRTH RECORDS THE GUNTER HAMPEL EUROPEAN-NEW YORK JAZZ QUARTET LIVE AT THE FAMOUS GOLDEN PUDEL-HAMBURG

RATS LIVE ON NO EVIL STAR

WHY DO YOU RIDE?

JAILHOUSE DOC WITH HOLES IN HER SOCKS

A WALLFLOWER IN THE AMAZON

Darrell Katz

musician composer
bandleader educator
http://www.darrellkatz.com

"Katz's compositions are a melting pot of diverse styles and cross-references; avant-garde classical machinations rub shoulders with of funky fusion, swinging Stan Kenton-esque "big band" moves, Globe Unity Orchestra- styled freakouts, and the sweetly unadorned vocal stylings of passages Rebecca Shrimpton…"
All About Jazz-Dave Wayne

"…Darrell Katz has made a name as an imaginative and innovative composer, and this collection can only increase his reputation, such is his ability to create so many atmospheres and textures over the space of one record."
Downbeat, Simon Scott

"Katz has carried on the compositional tradition of Julius Hemphill (1938-1995) in that his music is always a fusion of blues, avant-garde, poetry, improvisation, disparate elements thrown together that reveal their connections after multiple listenings…"
Step Tempest-Richard B. Kamins

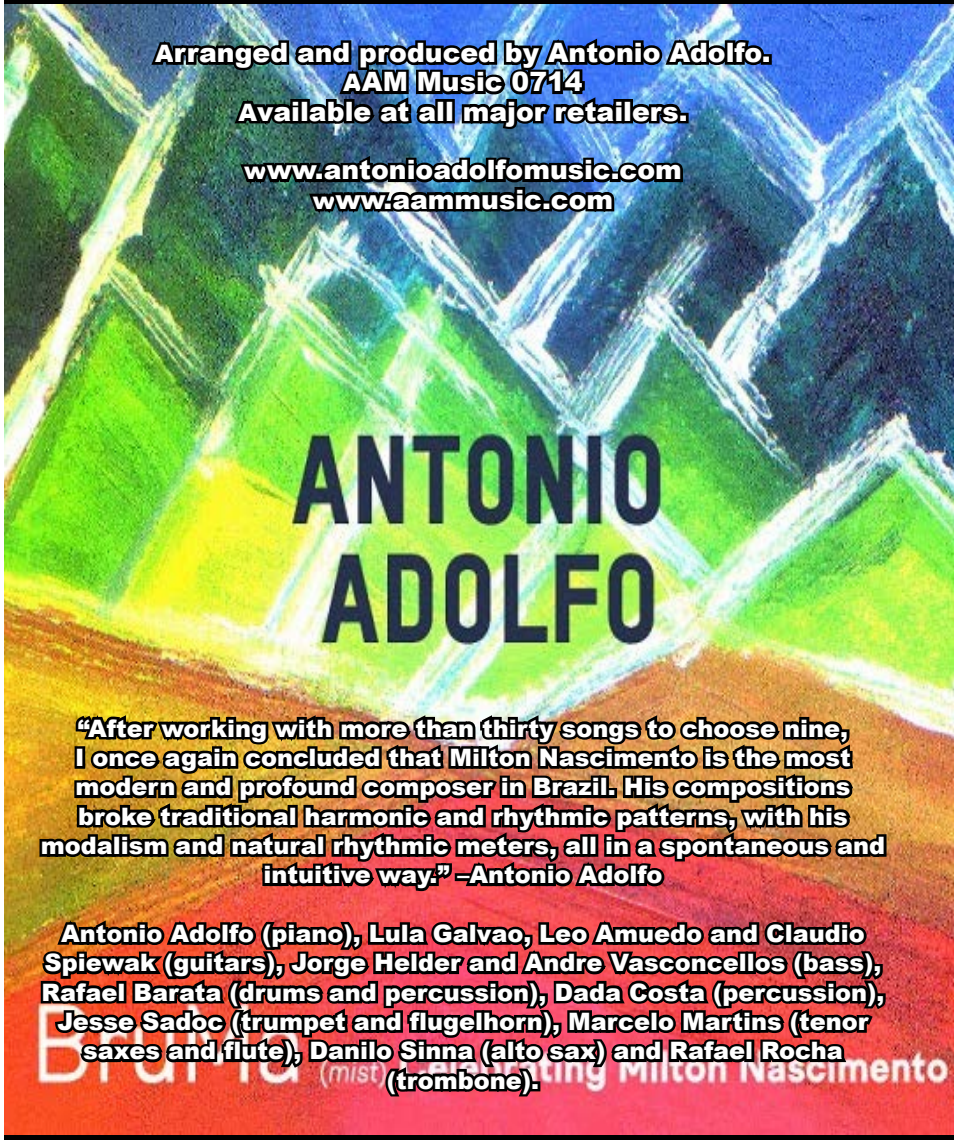
Arriving on the cusp of the Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra's thirtieth anniversary year, Why Do You Ride? (October 14, Leo Records) shows off Katz's deft ability to juggle off-kilter modernism with electrifying dynamic shifts and a tumult of jazz-history reference points in his vivid, smash-cut big band arrangements, all combined for this excursion with his love for cycling and a fascination with what Albert Einstein had to say about learning, knowledge, love and war…"
Leo Feigin

Multi Latin Grammy® and Grammy® nominated pianist, arranger and composer

ANTONIO ADOLFO

presents his new CD

BRUMA: CELEBRATING MILTON NASCIMENTO



Arranged and produced by Antonio Adolfo.
AAM Music 0714
Available at all major retailers.

www.antonioadolfomusic.com
www.aammusic.com

"After working with more than thirty songs to choose nine, I once again concluded that Milton Nascimento is the most modern and profound composer in Brazil. His compositions broke traditional harmonic and rhythmic patterns, with his modalism and natural rhythmic meters, all in a spontaneous and intuitive way." –Antonio Adolfo

Antonio Adolfo (piano), Lula Galvao, Leo Amuedo and Claudio Spiewak (guitars), Jorge Helder and Andre Vasconcellos (bass), Rafael Barata (drums and percussion), Dada Costa (percussion), Jesse Sadoc (trumpet and flugelhorn), Marcelo Martins (tenor saxes and flute), Danilo Sinna (alto sax) and Rafael Rocha (trombone).

Spend a cozy evening with the
award-winning music of retro-jazz vocalist

LAURA AINSWORTH

on CD, download and vinyl LP!

Coming Summer 2021:
the new album,
You Asked For It

"Ainsworth's voice is sublime as it caresses top-notch musicianship by a slew of southwest jazz players."

– Mario Taradell, Dallas Morning News

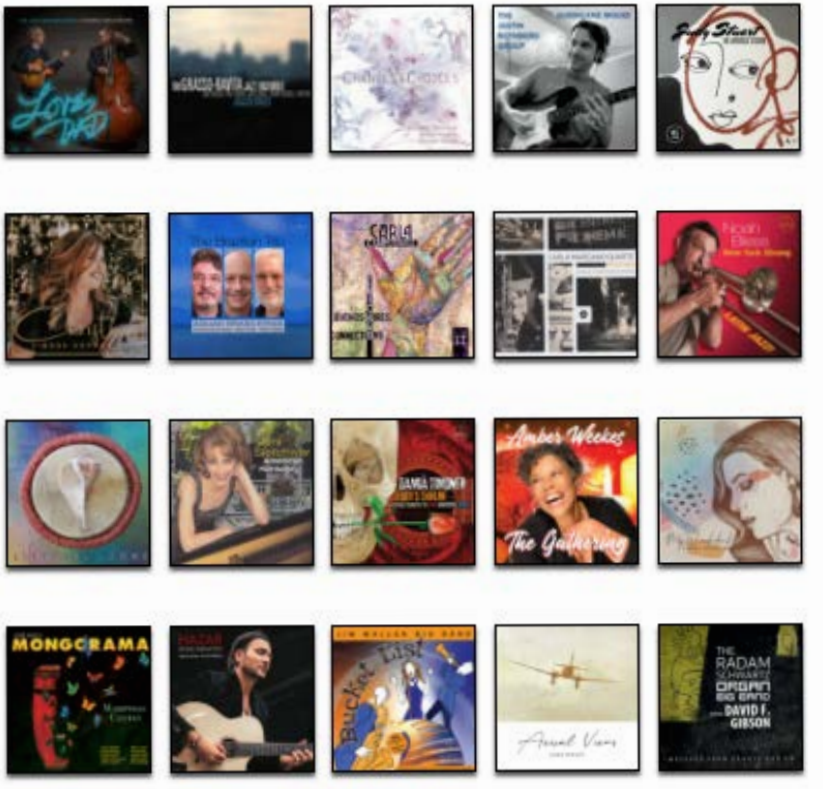
www.lauraainsworth.com

JAZZ PROMO SERVICES

2020 NEW RELEASES

For Promo Service or Digital Download

Contact: jim@jazzpromoservices.com



www.jazzpromoservices.com

ThatSwan! Records - *New Singles 99¢*

(available on CD Baby and iTunes)

*Sad Drums / Bitter Drums

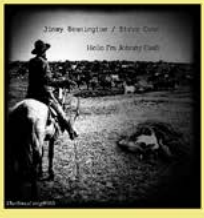
- Jimmy Bennington / Seth Paynter *ThatSwan!*Sing#001

*Tear it Down, Then Play a Ballad

Live at the Heartland

- Jimmy Bennington Colour *&* Sound
  feat. Daniel Carter and Brian Smith

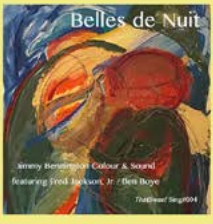
*ThatSwan!*Sing#002



*Hello, I'm Johnny Cash

- Jimmy Bennington / Steve Cohn

*ThatSwan!*Sing#003



*Belles de Nuit

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

*ThatSwan!*Sing#004

*One for Peace

- Jimmy Bennington / Samuel Hasting

*ThatSwan!*Sing#005

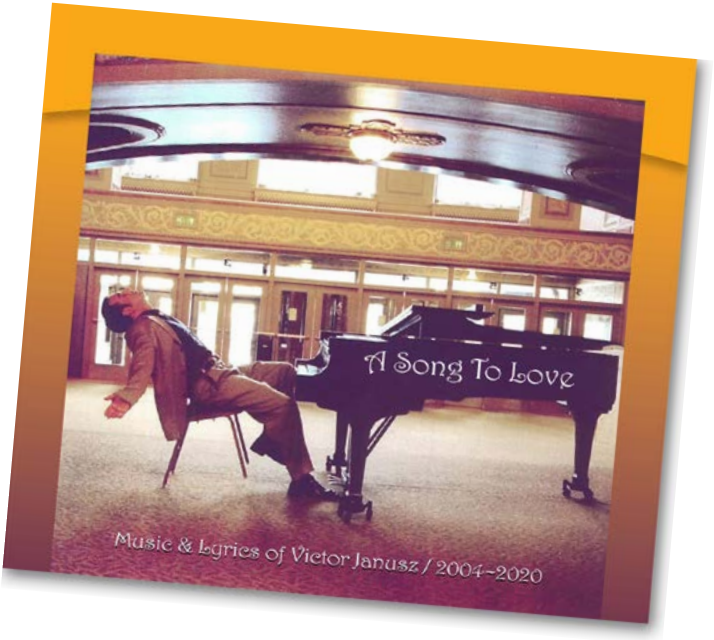
www.jbcolourandsound.com


MJT
MODERN JAZZ TODAY
modernjazztoday.com
INTERVIEWS
FEATURES
SYNDICATED
RADIO &
ONLINE
MAGAZINE
OWNED &
OPERATED
BY A MUSICIAN
TODAY'S
JAZZ
ARTISTS
4
YEARS
HOSTED
BY:
JEFF
WILLIAMS
And
COUNTING

Seattle singer/songwriter releases an anthology of his most beloved songs from the last two decades with

A Song To Love

Music & Lyrics of Victor Janusz / 2004~2020



With a number of brand new tracks including a duet with blues great Duffy Bishop, *"Fruitcake Blues."*

Produced by Scott Trethewey & VJB
Producing Engineer: Pete Remine
Master Engineer: Dave Pascal
Photo by Jimmy Malecki

"VJ knows how to sell a song and the obvious joy he has in performing is appealing." *– Scott Yanow, LA Jazz Scene (2019)*

"Janusz sounds like a cross between Billy Joel and Vince Guaraldi." *– Tom Scanlon, Seattle Times*

Digital: https://victorjanuszband.hearnow.com/a-song-to-love
CD Order: https://www.facebook.com/victor.janusz

CIMP

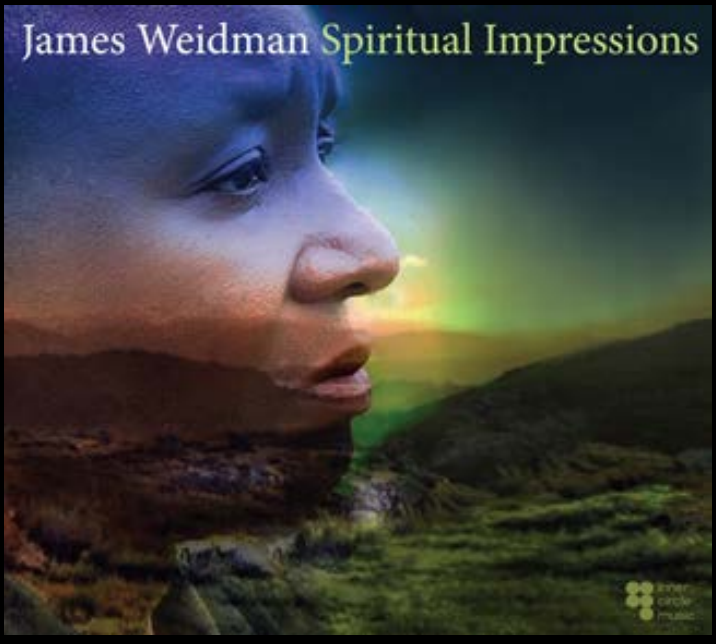
Creative Improvised Music Projects: adventuresome music in audiophile sound

Cadence Building Redwood New York 13679 USA
cimp@cadencebuilding.com www.cimprecords.com
tel (315) 287-2852

101 Evan Parker/Barry Guy/Paul Lytton +J.McPhee
102 Ernie Krivda Trio
103 Bobby Zankel Trio
104 Frank Lowe Trio
105 Gregg Bendian Project
106 Mark Whitecage Trio
107 Chris McCann - 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 Sextet
124 Odean Pope Trio
125 Lee Shaw 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 John Gunther Trio
137 Dominic Duval & Jay Rosen
138 Frank Lowe Trio
139 Chris Kelsey Trio
140 Zusaan Kefateau/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 Heward Group
149 Steve Swell 4tet
150 Kahil El'Zabar's Ritual Trio
151 David Bindman Trio
152 Ahmed Abdullah's Diaspora
153 Elliott 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 Eyges
159 Frode Gjerstad 4tet
160 Thomas Borgmann Trio plus Peter Brötzmann
161 Rob Brown - Lou Grassi 4tet
162 Joseph Scianni duets
163 John Gunther's Axis Mundi
164 Chris DahIgren/Briggan Krauss/Jay Rosen
165 Andrew Cheshire Trio
166 Ehran Elisha Ensemble
167 Ethnic Heritage Ensemble
168 David White 5tet
169 Bob Magnuson & Lou Grassi
170 Pucci Amanda Jhones
171 Marshall Allen4tet feat. Mark Whitecage
172 Charlie Kohlhase 5tet
173 Kowald, Smoker, McPhee, Whitecage, etc.
174 Kalaparush Maurice McIntyre Trio
175 Yuko Fujiyama's String Ensemble
176 John Gunther 5tet
177 Hugh Ragin & 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 Koen - Ed Ware
186 Paul Smoker 4tet
187 Patrick Brennan with Lisle Ellis
188 Th.Borgmann/W.Morris/R.Nicholson
189 John Carlson/Eric Hipp/S.McGloin/S.Neumann
190 Ori Kaplan Trio Plus Geoff Mann, Tom Abbs
191 Odean Pope & Dave Burrell
192 Ahmed Abdullah/A.Harding/M.Kamaguchi/Weinstein: NAM
193 Mark Whitecage's Other Other 4tet
194 Bruce Eisenbeil Crosscurrent Trio
195 Sam Bardfeld's Cabal Fatale
196 Dom Minasi Trio
197 Blaise Siwula 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 Bhob Rainey - Jack Wright - Fred Lonberg-Holm - Bob Marsh
209 Joe McPhee - Joe Giardullo - Michael Bisio - Dominic Duval
210 Ehran 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 DahIgren - Jay Rosen
217 Ken Simon 4tet
218 Phil Haynes - Herb Robertson 5tet
219 Paul Smoker - Bob Magnuson - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
220 Kahil El'Zaber with David Murray One World Family
221 Konrad Bauer/Nils Wogram/Dominic Duval
222 Phil Haynes & Herb Robertson
223 Ori Kaplan's Trio PlusDeliriology
224 Rosella Washington & Tyrone Brown
225 Anthony Braxton
226 Paul Smoker - Bob Magnuson - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
227 Lou Grassi's PoBand
228 Wilber Morris & Reggie Nicholson
229 Yuko 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 Fefer 4tet
238 Kevin Norton - Bob Celusak - 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 Hertlein 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 Derome
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 Fefer 4tet
287 Luther Thomas 4tet
288 Tom Abbs 4tet
289 Paul Dunmall - Paul Rogers - Kevin Norton
290 Charles Eubanks
291 William Gagliardi 5tet
292 Steve Swell 8tet
293 Ernie Krivda 5tet
294 Odean Pope & Khan Jamal 4tet
295 Mark Dresser & Ray Anderson
296 Paul Dunmall-Paul Rogers-Kevin Norton
297 William Gagliardi 5tet
298 Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra

299 Devorah Day & Dominic Duval
300 Harris Eisenstadt 5tet
301 Jimmy Halperin - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
302 Ernie Krivda 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 Eneidi - 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 Fefer - 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 Fefer
334 Ernie Krivda 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 5tet
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 Meicht 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 Priester
358 Chris Kelsey 4tet
359 Stephen Gauci Trio
360 Michael Bisio
361 Stephen Gauci 4tet
362 Kalaparush McIntyre 4tet
363 David Schnitter - Dominic Duval - Newman T.Baker
364 Khan Jamal & Dylan Taylor
365 Bobby Zankel Trio
366 Ernie Krivda Trio
367 David Haney & Andrew Cyrille
368 Chris Kelsey 4tet
369 David Haney-Andrew Cyrille-Dominic Duval
370 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESATrio
371 David Haney Trio
372 Michael Bisio 4tet
373 Ernie Krivda
374 David Arner Trio
375 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
376 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESATrio
377 David Arner Trio
378 Odean Pope 4tet
379 Jimmy Bennington Trio
380 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
381 Tom Siciliano Trio
382 Brian Landrus Group
383 Andrew Lamb Trio
384 Nate Wooley + Taylor Ho Bynum 4tet
385 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
386 David Haney 4tet Avenue of the Americas
387 Diane Moser + Mark Dresser duo
388 Frode Gjerstad + Paal Nilssen-Love
389 Andrew Lamb Trio
390 Jimmy Halperin + Dominic Duval
391 Jon Hazilla + Ran Blake
392 Adam Lane 4tet
393 Bob Rodriguez Trio w/Dominic Duval + Jay Rosen
394 Odean Pope Trio w/Marshall Allen
395 Kalaparush McIntyre 4tet



TOP 10 RECORDINGS FOR 2018
CADENCE MAGAZINE

James Weidman Spiritual Impressions

www.jamesweidman.com
http://www.facebook.com/James.Weidman.Music
Twitter: @weidmanjazz
#jamesweidman on YouTube
Instagram: @jeweidman

The latest by
Award-Winning Vocalist

LJ FOLK

featuring EMILIE-CLAIRE BARLOW

in an original duet arrangemment that still turns heads

THE LOOK OF LOVE

AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE

Scan to listen on Youtube now

ljfolk.com

contact: lj@ljfolk.com

Available as a digital download
everywhere and on a limited
edition CD direct from
Tube Room Records
carlbaugher.bandcamp.com

Tube Room Records

NEW ON MUSE EEK RECORDINGS

Two master guitarists present a sumptuous series of intertwining original duets

The long awaited collaboration of Kenny Wessel and Bruce Arnold is here, with eight tracks of emotion, fire and fun. -- And an uncanny rapport between two great stylists.

releases October 15
audio available on all online platforms
visit us at kennyandbruce.com

MUSE EEK

FRANK WALTON/YORON ISRAEL SEXTET

LIVE IN CHICAGO

Live in Chicago Frank Walton / Yoron Israel Sextet

Available at CD Baby
www.cdbaby.com/Artist/FrankWaltonYoronIsraelSextet

CIMPoL

Creative Improvised Music Projects on Location

latest releases

Creative Improvised Music Projects on Location: adventuresome music in audiophile sound

New CIMPoL releases:

CIMPoL 5032-5036:

CIMPFest 2011: LIVE IN VILLACH, AUSTRIA

DISK 1: Ernie Krivda Quartet **DISK 2:** Avram Fefer Quintet **DISK 3:** Steve Swell Sextet
DISK 4: Ken Filiano Quinet **DISK 5:** Bill Gagliardi Sextet / Adam Lane's Villach Orchestra

CIMPoL 5037:

Trio-X - Live at Kerrytown

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)

CIMPoL 5040:

Trio-X - Live in Green Bay and Buffalo

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

Earlier CIMPoL releases:

5001	Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen	AIR: Above and Beyond
5002	Odean Pope	Serenity
5003	Joe McPhee & Dominic Duval	The Open Door
5004	David Bond Quintet	The Early Show (live at Twin's Jazz)
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
5041	Mat Marruci Trio	Live at Jazz Central
5042	Teresa Carroll Quintet	Live at Dazzle

315-287-2852 Cadence Building, Redwood, New York 13679 USA
cimp@cadencebuilding.com www.cimprecords.com

A SEED IN THE WIND

GREAT AUNT RUTH & THE SAUCY CATS

www.greatauntruth.com

O my Love, I have always known your voice...

"Josie's made a stunning record, big beautiful voice with extravagant orchestral arrangements. And it's jazz." – **HOWARD MANDEL**

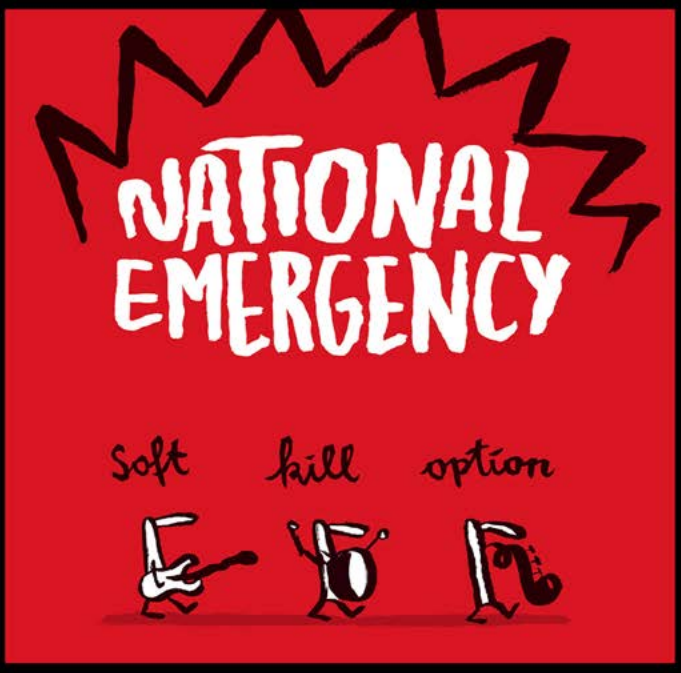
JOSIE FALBO *You Must Believe in Spring*

AVAILABLE ON ALL DIGITAL ONLINE SITES, INCLUDING
iTunes.com **AND** Amazon.com; **AND ALSO AT** JosieFalbo.net

SOUTHPORT RECORDS ***REAL JAZZ MADE IN CHICAGO***
chicagosound.com

SOFT KILL OPTION

National Emergency



"Noisy protest-punk-jazz!"
Concerto Magazine, Austria

„The three aren't only heave-ho-noisemakers, but their long phrases also include subtle elements and conscious dramaturgy."
Jazz 'n' More, Switzerland

www.softkilloption.com

Praise for Sonic Twist's last album "Cloudwalking"

"There is some magic spice going on here....enough to take us all on a magic carpet ride upwards and onwards."

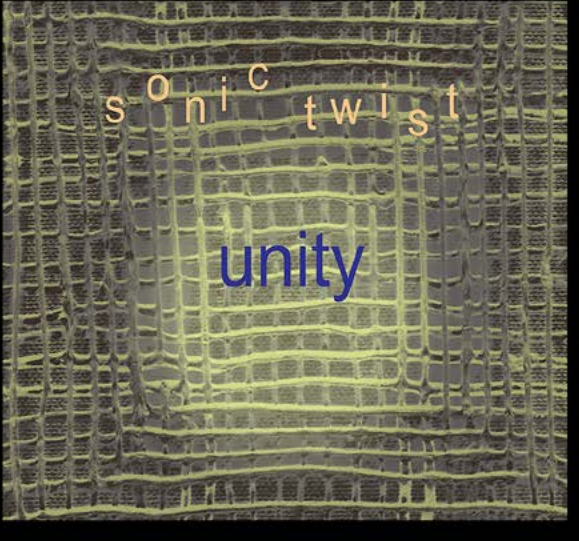
--Bruce Gallanter
Downtown Music Gallery

NEW FROM SONIC TWIST

SONIC TWIST® IS:

BRUCE ARNOLD
GUITAR

JUDI SILVANO
VOICE



VIDEOS AND AUDIO AVAILABLE ON ALL ONLINE PLATFORMS

VISIT US AT SONIC-TWIST.COM

Eva Kess: Sternschnuppen: Falling Stars

Neuklang Records

The bassist, composer, and bandleader Eva Kess has created an arrestingly beautiful body of music that sounds unlike any other in the jazz-string canon. Kess's fourth album, Sternschnuppen: Falling Stars, is an ambitious departure from her previous projects...
Falling Stars marks her ascension as a composer/arranger with a strikingly integrated vision that treats all of her collaborators as equals within a single septet.

Encompassing the post-bop continuum, chamber music, and jazz's kindred South American traditions, the music showcases her big sound and commanding presence as a player, but Falling Stars is most impressive as a statement by a composer who has found a voice as distinctive and personal as her compositional mentors, British pianist/composer Django Bates and Argentine pianist/composer Guillermo Klein.

www.evakess.com
www.facebook.com/evakessmusic
twitter.com/eva_kess_
YouTube: https://bit.ly/3fX9vvi
www.instagram.com/eva_kess_music
evakess.bandcamp.com/album/sternschnuppen-falling-stars

Celebrating 40 Years
1972 – 2012

New Jersey Jazz Society

We give jazz a boost in the Garden State!

Education

GENERATIONS OF JAZZ lively education program travels to schools
ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS awarded to young jazz studies scholars

Musical events

PEE WEE RUSSELL MEMORIAL STOMP Hot Jazz party, every March
JAZZFEST Indoor/outdoor festival each June, spanning the spectrum of jazz
JAZZ FEAST free in Princeton each September
COLLABORATIVE CONCERTS with various venues: Ocean County College, Community Theatre at Mayo Center for the Performing Arts, Bickford Theatre in Morristown, more

Member benefits

JERSEY JAZZ our award-winning 11x per year journal
JAZZ SOCIALS informative, musical, fun, social
FREE FILM SERIES ongoing
ANNUAL MEETING free end of year social with entertainment
DISCOUNTS AND FREEBIES from partner organizations
RECORD BIN catalog of music not found elsewhere
FREE LINKS musician listings on our Web site
AND MORE new initiatives all the time

www.njjs.org

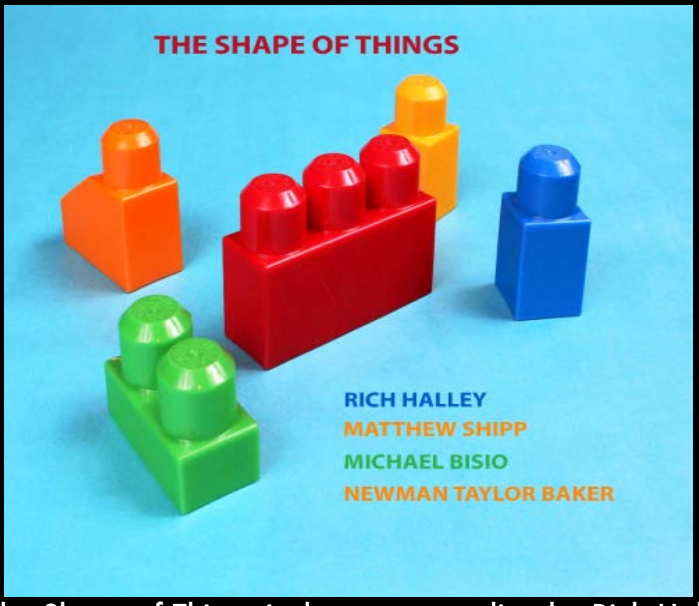
membership@njjs.org • 1-800-303-NJJS (1-800-303-6557)

New Jersey Jazz Society: Dedicated to the performance, promotion and preservation of jazz.

The New Jersey Jazz Society is a 501(c)(3) registered Charitable Organization.

Saxophonist Rich Halley releases The Shape of Things

New Release, available November 4, 2020 on Pine Eagle Records, features pianist Matthew Shipp, bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Newman Taylor Baker



The Shape of Things is the new recording by Rich Halley, featuring a quartet with innovative pianist Matthew Shipp, standout bassist Michael Bisio and sterling drummer Newman Taylor Baker. Halley's second recording with Shipp, Bisio and Baker sees the group building on their intuitive chemistry in a series of incisive and powerful improvisations, recorded in Brooklyn in August 2019.

Pine Eagle Records
10244 SW Lancaster Road, Portland OR 97219
pineeagle@richhalley.com
www.richhalley.com
503-244-2070

"Halley has a big, full-throated sound that may recall prime Sonny Rollins."
Kevin Whitehead, Fresh Air, National Public Radio

etudes

for solo guitar

Alex Goodman

a methodical approach to developing contrapuntal techniques on the guitar

Available:

www.alexgoodmanmusic.com/store

IN+OUT RECORDS IN THE GROOVE AND OUT OF THE ORDINARY

www.inandout-records.com

RON CARTER / FOURSIGHT
Stockholm Vol. 1 & Vol. 2

IOR CD 77139-2
IOR CD 77140-2

with
Renee Rosnes
Jimmy Greene
Payton Crossley

NOW THE COMPLETE CONCERT AVAILABLE

HENDRIK MEURKENS
Cobb´s Pocket

IOR CD 77141-2

with
Mike LeDonne
Jimmy Cobb
Peter Bernstein

RATKO ZJACA
Light In The World

IOR CD 77143-2

with
Renato Chicco
Stefano Bedetti
John Riley

RAMÓN VALLE
Inner State

IOR 2LP 77144-1
IOR CD 77144-2

with
Omar Rodriguez Calvo
Jamie Peet

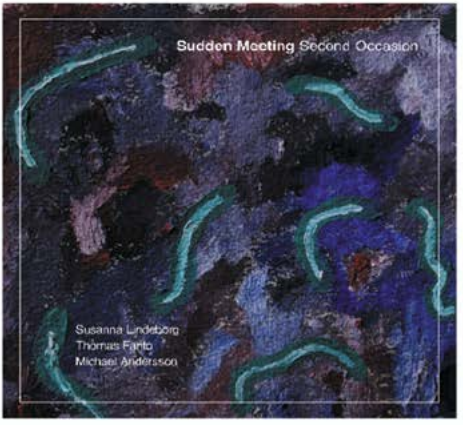
Limited Audiophile
Signature Edition
handsigned/handnumbered
Double Gatefold
180 gr. Virgin Vinyl
incl. Bonus Track
not available on CD

MVD entertainment group
Serving Artists & Audiences

www.mvdshop.com
Distribution North America

Stream & Hi Res Download
at any common retailers and platforms

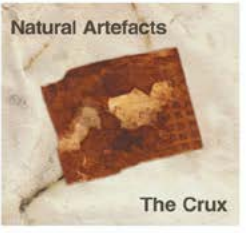
SUDDEN MEETING
Second Occasion



Susanna Lindeborg kb,elektr
Thomas Fanto elb, elektr
Michael Andersson perc, elektr

MWENDO DAWA TRIO
Silent Voice
Susanna Lindeborg p, elec
Jimmi R Pedersen b, elec
David Sundby dr

"Editors pick" Down Beat aug 2018



NATURAL ARTEFACTS
The Crux
Susanna Lindeborg p, elec
Merje Kägu guit
Per Anders Nilsson elec
Anton Jonsson perc

LJ Records
www.lj-records.se

Apple Music, Spotify,
digital and physical

NAXOS
SWEDEN AB

Jon-Erik Kellso
SWEET FRUITS SALTY ROOTS JCD-408

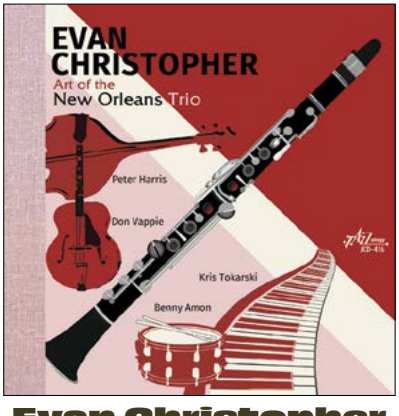
NEW CD RELEASES

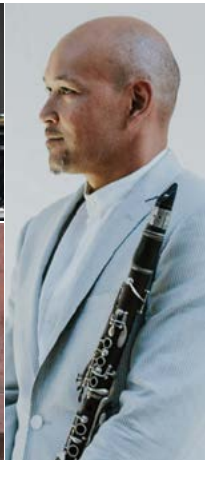
JAZZOLOGY.COM

amazon digital | apple music | HDtracks

G.H.B. JAZZ FOUNDATION

1206 DECATUR ST, NEW ORLEANS, LA 70116
PH: +1 (504) 525-5000
email: GEOBUCK@JAZZOLOGY.COM





Evan Christopher
ART OF THE NEW ORLEANS TRIO JCD-416

This page has been left (almost) blank intentionally.
This page is a symbolic break, what precedes is advertising, (free of editorial influence), what follows is editorial (free of advertising influence).

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CADENCE

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: sopranino 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

Annual Edition 2020
Vol. 46 No. 1A (439)

Cadence ISSN01626973
is published by
Cadence Media LLC,
P.O. Box 13071, Portland, OR 97213
PH 503-975-5176
Email: cadencemagazine@gmail.com
www.cadencemagazine.com

Subscriptions 1 year:
First Class USA: $65
Outside USA : $75
PDF Link $50

Managing Editors: David Haney, Colin Haney, Tana Keildh
Art Department: Alex Haney
Digital Content Licensing and Institutional sales:
Ava Martin
Advisory Committee:
Thomas Martin
Colin Haney
Patrick Hinely
Nora McCarthy

ALL FOREIGN PAYMENTS: Visa, Mastercard, Pay Pal, and Discover accepted. POSTMASTER: Send address change to Cadence Magazine, P.O. Box 13071, Portland, OR 97213 Published by Cadence Media, L LC.

FRONT COVER

Remembering some jazz musicians
that died from complications due to Covid 19

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 Media, 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."

TOP 10 ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

FESTIVAL REVIEW

JAZZ STORIES

INTERVIEWS

COLUMNS

Contributors

JAMES BENNINGTON (Feature, Jazz Stories/ Interviews) *has collected oral histories and photographs of several artists, mainly published by Cadence Magazine and Modern Drummer Magazine. Bennington is also a drummer/ bandleader recording for SLAM (UK), Cadence Jazz Records/ CIMP/ CIMPoL (NY), Unseen Rain (NY), OA2 (Seattle), and his own ThatSwan! label (Chicago). Once mentored by Elvin Jones, Bennington celebrates nearly 30 years in the music field. He is a Dream Cymbals and Gongs Artist and is based in Chicago.*

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 includinig 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.*

Contributors

JEFFREY D. TODD (Interviews) *is Associate Professor of German and French at Texas Christian University. He plays saxophone locally in the Dallas / Fort Worth area, and is a lifelong jazz fanatic.*

KEN WEISS (Interviews, Photos, Short Takes) *has been documenting the Philadelphia jazz and experimental music scene with photography since 1992 and has written the Cadence Short Takes column since 2003 as an attempt to defeat the conventional adage that, once played, the music is "lost to the air." He has also completed numerous interviews for Cadence and Jazz Inside Magazine.*

TEE Watts, (Interviews) *Music journalist T. Watts has written features for Glide Magazine, Blues Blast Magazine and many others. He is a radio producer at KPFZ 88.1 fm in Lakeport, CA and currently co-writing the memoirs of Lester Chambers of the Chambers Brothers.*

JOSEF WOODARD (Festival Reviews) *is a longtime journalist-critic on jazz, other genres of music and other disciplines in the arts. Thought based in Santa Barbara, Calif., her often travels internationally to cover jazz festivals. He has written for DownBeat and the Los Angeles Times for many years, and a list of publications include Jazz Times, Jazziz, Cadence, All About Jazz, Entertainment Weekly, Opera Now, Artweek, and various newspapers. He has penned many album liner notes, and has two books published, to date, on Charles Lloyd (A Wild Blatant Truth, 2016) and Charlie Haden (Conversations with Charlie Haden, 2017), published by Silman-James Press, as well as the chapter "ECM and U.S. Jazz," for Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM (Granta) (2007).*

As a musician, he is a guitarist, songwriter and "situationist" in Headless Household (founded 1983) and other bands, and runs the label Household Ink Records, with 40 titles out to date.

Covid 19 Jazz Musicians Relief Activity

We asked subscribers to help us raise money to support musicians affected by COVID 19.
Financial Assisatance went out to the following organizations and indivduals on behalf of Cadence Subscribers.
Thank you!!

The following artists and groups received support-

Jack Walrath, musician: $800
Art Baron, musician: $500
Jameel Moondoc, musician: $500
Reggie Sylvester, musician: $470
Denzel Demory, musician: $200
New York City Jazz Record, jazz journal: $100
NAACP Empowerment Programs, organization: $50
Jazz Foundation of America, organization: $50
Creative Music Studio, organization: $25

Here are some of the people that donated to this campaign:
Matthias Schwabe-Hermann, $300
Stephanie Hutchison, $200
William Gillespie, $200
CEB Music, $200
Thomas Farrelly, $100
Peter C Katz, $100
Stefano Gidari, $100
Lars Bjorn, $100
Anonymous, $85
Julia Storrs, $50
Don Messina, $50
Marvin Stamm, $50
Gerd Heinlein, $50
Robert Meggison, $50
Peter Schulz, $25
Craig Premo, $25
Jeff Fuller, $25
Matthias Böttcher, $10
McDonald Payne Jr, $5

2020 A YEAR OF LOSS

HERE ARE A FEW OF THE PEOPLE THAT DIED THIS YEAR

ANDREW KOWALCZYK, *producer, died on April 6, 2020. He was 63.*
ANDY GONZÁLEZ *died on April 2020. He was 69.*
ANNIE ROSS, *jazz singer and actor, died on July 21, 2020. She was 89.*
BILL WITHERS, *singer - songwriter, died on March 30, 2020. He was 81.*
BUCKY PIZZARELLI, *guitarist, died on April 1, 2020. He was 94.*
CAREI THOMAS, *jazz pianist and composer- died on. She was 81.*
DANNY LAEKE, *studio engineer died on April 27, 2020. He was 69.*
DONN TRENNER, *died on May 16, 2020. He was 93.*
EDDY DAVIS *banjo virtuoso died on April 7, 2020. He was 79.*
EDDIE GALE *[tpt] died on July 10, 2020. He was 78.*
ELLIS MARSALIS *died on April 1, 2020. He was 85.*
FREDDY COLE *singer, pianist, died on June 27, 2020. He was 88.*
FREDERICK C TILLIS *[ts/ss/composer] died on May 3, 2020. He was 90.*
GARY PEACOCK *[bass] died on Sept. 4. 2020. He was 85.*
HAL SINGER *[ts] died on August 18, 2020. He was 100.*
HAL WILLNER, *legendary producer died on April 7, 2020. He was 64.*
HELEN JONES WOODS *[tbn] died on July 25, 2020. She was 96.*
HENRY GRIMES, *legendary bassist, died on April 17, 2020. He was 84.*
IRA SULLIVAN *[tpt, fl] died Sept. 21,2020; He was 89.*
JEANIE LAMBE, *legendary Glasgow jazz singer died on May 29, 2020. She was 79.*
JOHN MAXWELL BUCHER *trumpet and cornet, died on April 5, 2020. He ws 89.*
KEITH TIPPETT, *British jazz pianist died on June 14, 2020. He was 72.*
LEE KONITZ, *legendary jazz saxophone artist died on April 15, 2020. He was 92.*
LUCKY PETERSON *[gtr/kbds] died on May 17, 2020. He was 55.*
MICHAEL COGSWELL, *a jazz archivist and historian died on April 20, 2020. He was 66.*
NADI QAMAR *[piano] died on Oct. 21, 2020. He was 103.*
ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS *died on April 6, 2020. He was 70.*
OVERTON BERRY *[piano] died on Oct. 19, 2020. He was 84.*
PETER JOHNSON ECKLUND, *cornet, composer, died on April 8, 2020. He was 74.*
RICHARD TEITELBAUM *died on April 9, 2020. He was 70.*
RICHIE COLE, *Alto Sax, died. He was 72.*
RONALD LEWIS, *Preserver of New Orleans Black Culture, died. He was 68.*
STANLEY CROUCH *[drm] died on Sept. 6, 2020. He was 75.*
STERLING MCGEE *[gtr/voc] died on Sept 6, 2020 of covid-.19. He was 86.*
STEVE GROSSMAN *[sax] died on August 13, 2020. He was 69.*
TOSHINORI KONDO *[trumpet] died on Oct. 17, 2020. She was 71.*
WILLIAM SMITH *[clt] died on Feb. 29, 2020. He was 93.*

TOP 10 ALBUM RELEASES 2020

NEW RELEASES - CADENCE STAFF PICKS

RICH HALLEY - *THE SHAPE OF THINGS* **- PINE EAGLE**
PASQUALE INNARELLA - *GO DEX* **- AUT RECORDS**
MATTHEW SHIPP - *THE UNIDENTIFIABLE* **- ESP**
PETER HAND - *HAND PAINTED DREAM* **- SAVANT**
POTSA LOTSA XL — *SILK SONGS FOR SPACE DOGS* **- LEO RECORDS**
JUHANI AALTONEN AND JONAS KULLHAMMAR — *THE FATHER,THE SONS & THE JUNNU* **- MOSEROBIE RECORDS**
LAFAYETTE GILCHRIST - *NOW* **- LAFAYETTE GILCHRIST MUSIC**
JASON ROBINSON, ERIC HOFBAUER *TWO HOURS EARLY, TEN MINUTES LATE* **- ACCRETIONS**
EVA KESS - *FALLING STARS* **- NEU KLANG**
JOHN DI MARTINO - *PASSION FLOWER* **- SUNNYSIDE RECORDS**

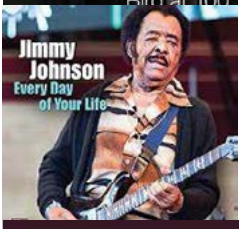
NEW RELEASES - KEN WEISS

JAMES BRANDON LEWIS QUARTET – *MOLECULAR* **- INTAKT**
ANGELICA SANCHEZ & MARILYN CRISPELL – *HOW TO TURN THE MOON* **- PYROCLASTIC TOH-KICHI, SATOKO FUJII, TATSUYA YOSHIDA-** *BAIKAMO* **- LIBRA**
LAFAYETTE GILCHRIST - *NOW* **- LAFAYETTE GILCHRIST MUSIC**
MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA – *DATA LORDS* **- ARTIST SHARE**
RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA – *HERO TRIO* **- WHIRLWIND**
JAMES BRANDON LEWIS, CHAD TAYLOR – *LIVE IN WILLISAU* **- INTAKT**
ERIC REVIS – *SLIPKNOTS THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS* **- PYROCLASTIC**
FRED HERSCH - *SONGS FROM HOME* **- PALMETTO**
GORDON GRDINA - *GORDON GRDINA'S NOMAD TRIO* **- SKIRL**
MIKE FAHIE JAZZ ORCHESTRA - *URBAN(E)* **- GREENLEAF MUSIC**

NEW RELEASES - LARRY HOLLIS

BOBBY WATSON/VINCENT HERRING/GARY BARTZ - *BIRD AT 100* **- SMOKE SESSIONS**
BLACK ART JAZZ COLLECTIVE-*ASCENSION***- HIGHNOTE**
PETER AND WILL ANDERSON - *FEATURING JIMMY COBB* **- OUTSIDE IN MUSIC**

Top Ten Recordings 2020



WAYNE ESCOFFERY - *THE HUMBLE WARRIOR*- **SMOKE SESSIONS**
JIMMY JOHNSON-*EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE*- **DELMARK**
ANDY FUSCO-*REMEMBERANCE*- **STEEPLECHASE**
JOHN DI MARTINO-*PASSION FLOWER*- **SUNNYSIDE**
HAROLD MABERN-*PLAYS MABERN*-**SMOKE SESSIONS**
LARRY WILLIS-*I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY*- **HIGHNOTE**
GRANT STEWART - *RISE AND SHINE* **- CELLAR**

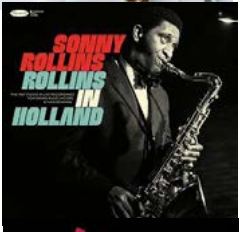
REISSUES/HISTORICAL - LARRY HOLLIS

THELONIOUS MONK-*PALO ALTO*-**IMPULSE**
BOBBY HUTCHERSON- *TONE POET* **-BLUE NOTE**
SHIRLEY SCOTT-*ONE FOR ME*-**ARC RECORDS**
NEIL SWANSON-*49TH PARALLEL*-**REEL TO REAL**
HANK MOBLEY-*COMPLETE BLUE NOTE SESSIONS 1963-70* **- MOSAIC**
KENNY BARRON/MULGREW MILLER-A*RT OF PIANO DUO LIVE*-**SUNNYSIDE**
ART BLAKEY/JAZZ MESSENGERS-*JUST COOLIN'* **- BLUE NOTE**
LENNIE TRISTANO-*THE DUO SESSIONS* **- DOT TIME**
HORACE TAPSCOTT-*THE GIANT IS AWAKENED*-**REAL GONE MUSIC**
CHET BAKER-*LEGENDARY RIVERSIDE ALBUMS*- **CRAFT RECORDINGS**

NEW RELEASES - JEROME WILSON

MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA - *DATA LORDS* **- ARTISTSHARE**
NATE WOOLEY, *SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN VI,* **PYROCLASTIC**
JASON PALMER - *THE CONCERT: 12 MUSINGS FOR ISABELLA* **- GIANT STEP ARTS**
JEFF PARKER - *SUITE FOR MAX BROWN* **- INTERNATIONAL ANTHEM**
DENISE MANGIARDI - *BROWN BOOK* **- ALICE'S LOFT**
AVISHAI COHEN - *BIG VICIOUS* **- ECM**
MICHAEL THOMAS - *EVENT HORIZON* **- GIANT STEP ARTS**
LAKECIA BENJAMIN - *PURSUANCE: THE COLTRANES* **- ROPEADOPE**
ARTURO O'FARRILL/THE LATIN JAZZ ORCHESTRA - *FOUR QUESTIONS* **- ZOHO**
MATT WILSON QUARTET - *HUG!* **- PALMETTO**

Top Ten Recordings 2020



NEW RELEASES - ROBERT IANNAPOLLO

SUSAN ALCORN – *PEDERNAL*- **RELATIVE PITCH**
JACOB GARCHIK – *CLEAR LINE* - **YESTEREVE**
GORDON GRDINA – *RESIST* - **IRABBAGAST**
MARY HALVORSON / CODE GIRL – *ARTLESSLY FALLING* - **FIREHOUSE 12**
JASON KAO HWANG – *HUMAN RITES ENSEMBLE* - **TRUE SOUND**
KAZE / IKUE MOTI – *SAND STORM* - **LIBRA**
QUINSIN NACHOFF – *PIVOTAL ARC* - **WHIRLWIND**
CORY SMYTHE – *ACCELERATE EVERY VOICE* - **PYROCLASTIC**
STEVE SWELL – *ASTONISHMENTS* - **ROGUE ART**
THUMBSCREW – *ANTHONY BRAXTON PROJECT* - **CUNEIFORM**

REISSUES/HISTORICAL - ROBERT IANNAPOLLO

CHARLES MINGUS - *CHARLES MINGUS @ BREMEN, 1964 & 1975* - **SUNNYSIDE**
SAM RIVERS - *RICOCHET* - **NO BUSINESS**
SONNY ROLLINS - *ROLLINS IN HOLLAND* - **RESONANCE**

NEW RELEASES - LUDWIG VANTRIKT

ERIC REVIS - *SLIPKNOTS THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS* - **PYROCLASTIC RECORDS**
MATT WILSON QUARTET - *HUG!* - **PALMETTO RECORDS**
NOAH HAIDU - *DOCTONE* - **SUNNYSIDE**
THEO HILL - *REALITY CHECK* - **POSITONE**
RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA - *HERO TRIO* - **WHIRLWIND RECORDINGS**
PAUL JONES - *LET'S GET TROPICAL* - **OUTSIDE IN MUSIC**
TOIVO QUINTET - *VIEW* - **LOSEN RECORDS**
EVA KESS - *FALLING STARS* - **NEU KLANG**
POSTSA LOTSA XL - *SILK SONGS FOR SPACE DOGS* - **LEO RECORDS**
ALVIN SCHWAAR, BANZ OESTER, NOE FRANKLE - *TRAVELLIN' LIGHT* - **LEO RECORDS**

October Revolution of Jazz & Contemporary Music (Ars Nova Workshop) October 1-31, 2019, Philadelphia, PA

By Ken Weiss

The 3rd rendition of Ars Nova Workshop's October Revolution of Jazz & Contemporary Music (OctRev) differed significantly from the previous two renditions which were consecutive 4-day events. The 2019 OctRev version featured 10 nights of shows stretched across the entire month of October at various venues.

Roscoe Mitchell and local emerging star Camae Ayewa, aka Moor Mother, who have been making a duo of it lately, kicked off the festival on 10/1 at the Ruba Club. Opening with "The Black Drop," Mitchell compressed notes on soprano, often swinging his head from side to side to alter sound, while Ayewa added poetry and some sparse electronic effects. She spent a good part of the night reading from her book Fetish Bones, while Mitchell either played his saxophones or stood behind a homemade stand that held an impressive array of bells and tiny instruments, which he beat and played, further abstracting the music...

Festival day 2 found the Fred Frith Trio at Johnny Brenda's on 10/2. It was really a quintet with Jason Hoopes (b), Jordan Glenn (d), Susana Santos Silva (tpt) and Heike Liss (visual art), but we expect some wackiness from the veteran avant-Rock/Jazz pioneer. Frith returned to town after a 30-year leave of absence and his 104-minute set of completely improvised music held together incredibly well thanks to Hoopes and (especially) Glenn, who vividly engineered most of the melodic swagger to the session. Newcomer Silva understood when to add colorations and, at times, held her instrument facing downwards, blowing across the mouthpiece for novel sounds. Frith remained seated and barefooted for the set, manipulating his guitar with fingers and a host of little toys and props such as tops, bags, metal objects, and a long red fabric piece. His wife, Heike Liss, sat at a table facing the front of the stage, working a laptop to create images across two screens behind the stage that included dizzying whirls of trees, images of walking feet, lights, and drawing on the screen to alter images with lines and new colors.

Drummer Makaya McCraven at the Ruba Club with Jeff Parker (g), Luke Stewart (b) and Joel Ross (vib) on 10/6 immersed listeners in a world of composed music that felt totally free and open. McCraven was a true revelation to many in the crowded space. His uncluttered drumming was forceful and dynamic, but never intrusive. He pushed Parker and Ross to new levels of energy when needed. Ross spent the majority of his time with two mallets and his stinging vibraphone strikes merged well with the leader's efforts. McCraven saved his drum solo for almost night's end. Short but powerful, it led into an almost hypnotic Rock segment that brought cheers. After announcing that, "I think that's all we got," a lovely, understated version of Coltrane's "After the Rain" followed. Surprisingly, the band secluded

themselves in a backroom after the set, missing an opportunity to further substantiate a relationship with a boatload of new fans.
Virtuoso percussionist Adam Rudolph brought his colossal project – Go: Organic Orchestra & Brooklyn Raga Massive to the Painted Bride Art Center on 10/6. The fact that the event was held at the historic venue was a pleasant surprise for all, including the Bride's management team, which has been in a very public battle to sell the aging building and go the route of venue-less presenter. Rudolph, who first played the site in 1987, was masterful in conducting the gigantic (and gigantically ambitious) ensemble – 8 members of BRM and 24 members of GOO. He was in constant motion, a dance really, moving in and out of his ensemble, jumping at other times, and using silent hand signs to signal directions in the moment and to set up a scheme at the start of pieces. He remained silent for both sets, declining the opportunity to address the house at intermission. The music was a successful merger of Indian and Western music into a sweeping, cross-cultural performance that solidly accomplished Rudolph's vision of bridging ancient traditions and forward-looking excursions. It was clear to see why this project had been referred to as a "Bitches Brew for the 21st century." The music had long segments of soaring beauty, as well as constantly changing instrument voicings which kept the music fresh, exotic and unique. Rudolph avoided the typical round-the-room, everyone gets a solo segment, choosing to keep the unit grounded as a whole structure. Towards the end of set one, everyone pulled out a wooden flute, large seashell, or in Graham Haynes case, a large antelope horn (a kudu) that once belonged to Yusef Lateef [who brought 3 kudu horns back from Nigeria in 1986], and blew in unison. This marked the third time Rudolph had the combined ensembles on stage and the first time this particular configuration of his full orchestra and full complement of BRM musicians appeared.
Drummer Charlie Hall of Philly's indie Rock super group The War On Drugs is a longtime Miles Davis aficionado, with a particular fascination for the trumpet icon's electric period. Hall and his group of stellar collaborators have been exploring the '69-'75 era of Miles Davis' canon since the late '90s in San Francisco, and he reconvened the forces to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Miles Davis' landmark recording In A Silent Way with a one-off hit on 10/10 at World Café Live with Monnette Sudler (g), Darren Johnston (tpt), Mitch Marcus (Fender Rhodes, ts), Daniel Clarke (Hammond B3), Brian Jones (d), Ross Bellenoit (g), Ezra Gale (b) and Dan Scholnick (tabla). The ensemble played two lengthy sets, they were having so much fun, they obviously didn't want to stop – "This is beyond joyful on stage," Hall announced. The first set included such goodies as "Sivad," "Bitches Brew," "Little Church," "Spanish Key," "Miles Runs the Voodoo Down," and "Aghartha." Their rendition of the headlining classic album came during the second set which also included a finale of "On the Corner" and "Black Satin." The music was loose (some of the band met for the

Moor Mother-Roscoe Mitchell, photo credit - Ken Weiss

Fred Frith Trio, photo credit - Ken Weiss

Makaya McCraven, photo credit - Ken Weiss

Adam Rudolph's Go: Organic Orchestra & Brooklyn Raga Massive, photo credit - Ken Weiss

Charlie Hall celebration of Miles Davis' In A Silent Way, photo

Ethan Iverson Quartet featuring Tom Harrell, photo credit - Ken Weiss

Patty Waters - Burton Greene, photo credit - Ken Weiss

first time this night), jammy, and irresistibly fun. There weren't many solos, but the participants made their statements episodically while staying true to the composition. Johnston was a revelation channeling Davis. Sudler was impressive working in a Rock setting with her steely chords, and the compo of drummers led the charge. Jazz critic/author John Szwed was presented with an award prior to the performance and gave a brief talk about In A Silent Way (which marked the beginning of Davis' "electric period"), and how the album was met by controversy among Rock and Jazz music critics. He explained that the record was shocking when it came out in '69, right at the height of the Vietnam War. It was unlike anything else at the time with its reflective qualities.

Ars Nova Workshop has made sure to present at least one performance during its annual OctRev festivals that touches directly on the "tradition," and this year it was the Ethan Iverson Quartet featuring Tom Harrell on 10/17 at the University of the Arts' Caplan Center. Placing a premium on chestnuts drawn from the Great American Songbook covered with aplomb and grace, Iverson (p), along with Ben Street (b) and Eric McPherson (d), handled "The Song is You," "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," a luxurious take of "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," and "All the Things You Are," after which Iverson said, "When you're in Philly, it's impossible not to think about all the [past] great Philly musicians. I was just trying to quote Bobby Timmons." Iverson's original "Philadelphia Creamer," a slow Blues, began the night, and Denzil Best's grooving "Wee," with a vibe that shined a light on Sonny Rollins' "St. Thomas," ended the set on a high. Harrell, dressed in his typical black getup, was a melodic marvel. Unfortunately, he spent more time standing offstage than on, but when he did play, his clear tone on trumpet, delivered with precision and dexterity, confirmed his status as one of today's leaders on his instrument.

Groundbreaking avant-garde vocalist Patty Waters made her Philly debut at the age of 73 on 10/26 at the Caplan Center. Best known for her shocking rendition of the traditional song "Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair" on her 1965 ESP Disk recording, Waters eventually disappeared to a quiet and private life in California to raise her child. Although she never lost the want and need to sing, she has only recently returned to performing. Appearing with Waters was her longtime pianist, Burton Greene, along with Adam Lane (b) and Igal Foni (d). Waters approached her songs of lost love and pain with a voice echoing a broken heart and an anguished soul. The piano trio took the first song, as they would multiple other songs through the set, sort of an "amuse bouche" clearing the air effect, offsetting the heavy impact that Waters' presentation induced. Greene's original compositions added humor and a high energy, especially with pleasers such as "Flea Bop" and "Funky Donkey." Waters, demure and soft-spoken onstage and off, commenced with her favorite tune "Moon, Don't Come Up Tonight," and then her haunting version of "Nature

Boy," which featured Greene working inside the piano and Waters repeating "Love, love, love, love, love the greatest thing is to be loved in return." "Hush Little Baby" began with Foni rushing to the wall, where he knelt on his knees and squeaked the door with open palms. Next came an uncomfortable moment when a listener called out Greene for having his portable light shining into the audience's eyes. The awkwardness continued as Greene called the next tune to be "Strange Fruit" but Waters stopped him, saying she wanted to do "I Loves You Porgy," sending the band rustling through the charts. Waters explained, "I'm bad about the list. We make a list up and then we don't stick to it. I can't remember what we're supposed to do next!" Foni jokingly exclaimed, "I can't work under these conditions!" Songs that followed included "Careless Love," which Waters stopped prematurely, calling out, "I think we have to call it quits on this song. It's not what I wanted to sound like," "Strange Fruit," sung as slow, single words clearly enunciated, Segueing into "Lonely Woman," and a moving rendition of "Wild is the Wind," which she sang with fervor – "Wild, wild, wild is my love." The encore turned out to be the big shocker of the night, Waters decided to perform "Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair" for only the third time in her career. After announcing that, "It will be different. It won't be like the record," the Greene tossed charts on the piano strings to dampen them, Lane held paper against his bowed strings and Waters sang a more restrained, yet heartfelt interpretation of the classic song. Post-set, she was all smiles and hopeful that the audience enjoyed the night – "I didn't want it to be boring." A few weeks after the performance, Waters emailed this message – "I want to tell you that I am really enjoying singing "Black" again. I sang it at Zebulon in L.A. for first time since recording it for ESP Disk, and then again in Philadelphia, and I intend to continue singing it and performing it again now. This might be of interest to some people because I haven't desired to perform it until just recently."

Advertised as very special drone-centric double-bill by two virtuosic sound designers, Lea Bertucci opened for Deradoorian at Ruba Club on 10/27. Bertucci did some major looping of her alto sax, building a wall of droning "voices," while adding laptop generated sounds, before ending in what sounded like a rainforest of sounds – chirping birds and animals. It was all very organized, melodic, and avoided crescendos. Deradoorain, the former bassist, keyboardist, and vocalist for Dirty Projectors, sat on cushions with her equipment in front of her, and a large gong to her right. After explaining that she'd be dealing with, "Sensitive electronics tonight," she looped a spoken "Om," adding in efforts from a small wooden flute, played areas of the gong, read from a book, mixed in electronic effects, added voice, including some throat singing, before ending with flute playing and ringing a Tibetan singing bowl, completing a spiritual journey in the space of 45 minutes.

The OctRev also included shows by Sarah Davachi/ Matchess on 10/3 and the Sounds of Liberation featuring David Murray & the Creative Arts Ensemble on 10/31.

Bass is a Bitch By Ed Schuller

In the fall of 1973 I had just started my second year as a student of music in Boston Mass. I was enrolled in what was then called the "Afro American Music Department" under the leadership of the late great pianist and composer Jaki Byard, who would later serve as a mentor to me at the beginning of my career as a Jazz acoustic bass player. During those years, surprisingly enough, there were quite a few great Jazz clubs and venues in and around the Boston area and one of the best of these was within walking distance of the New England Conservatory in the Back Bay on Boylston Street. This particular venue was actually two connected basement clubs called the "Jazz Workshop" and "Paul's Mall". Between these two clubs it was possible to hear all the great Jazz musicians and groups of that time. Some of the bands I heard included people like Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins, Bill Evans Trio, Ornette Coleman, Elvin Jones, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Cecil Taylor and, of course, the great Charles Mingus, whom I got to hear on a number of occasions, the first being near Lenox Massachusetts, at an outdoor venue called "Music Inn" located on the Wheatleigh Estate (previous home of the famous "School of Jazz" which existed between the years of 1957 and 1960). I must have been 16 years old and Mingus was pretty much my favorite Jazz hero and an intimidating one at that. During the intermission I went to relieve myself in the men's room and while I was doing that Mr. Mingus walked in to do the same. His presence was overwhelming, kind of a cross between a Samoan warrior and Genghis Khan. At that moment I might have said something to the effect of "how much I dug his music" and he may have said something like "cool" and that was it.

Meanwhile fast forward a few years to the "Jazz Workshop Club" where various iterations of his groups would play at least twice a year and in the fall of 1973 my friend Leon "Boots" Maleson (a fine bassist as well) and I went to hear one of those shows. At this point I must digress a bit to explain a few connections that are pertinent to the story. First of all, my father Gunther Schuller was not only a good friend of Mr. Mingus but had collaborated with him on various recording projects through the years (including conducting "Half-Mast Inhibition" on his recording titled "Pre-Bird"). Also, the aforementioned Jaki Byard had played with some of Mr. Mingus' greatest groups throughout the 60s along with people like Eric Dolphy, Danny Richmond and Booker Erwin. Jaki related to us some pretty wild stories about what it was like to play with Charles Mingus, implying that it wasn't always so easy and how Mr. Mingus was known for his erratic behavior and temper which only added to his already eccentric mystique.

Anyway, the night Boots and I went to hear the Mingus Band at "The Jazz Workshop", among some of the other people in the audience were none other than Jaki Byard himself, saxophonist Ricky Ford (who was

also a student at NEC and would later go on to play with Charles Mingus' last working group), drummer extraordinaire Charli Persip and a whole bunch of other students from the NEC, Berklee College of Music and so on.

Mingus' group was a sextet consisting of Roy Brooks on drums, Bobby Jones on tenor sax, Lonnie Hillyer on trumpet and two other guys whose names escape me now. The music was of course fantastic and between the second and third sets, at the bar, Jaki introduced me to Mingus. He said: "Hey Charles, I'd like to introduce you to a fine young bass player whose name is Ed Schuller and he's Gunther Schuller's son." Mingus then says to me something like "Yea man, ain't bass a bitch," adding "Man, that shit still kicks my ass." At this point, I am pretty much freaking out because I'm like a foot away from Charles Mingus who looks like Genghis Khan and he's telling me that "bass playing is a bitch" and I reply somewhat lamely "Yes, Mr. Mingus, I know what you mean."

Now, that would have been exciting enough but the night was yet young. Somehow between the second and third sets, trumpeter Lonnie Hillyer apparently got sick and could not play the last set. Mingus was clearly not happy about this and in between tunes he asked for volunteers to come up and "sing the trumpet parts". Not surprisingly, there were no takers for that request and Boots Maleson and I were just sitting there, minding our own business, nursing our beers and digging the scene (despite the fact that I was legally under age for any alcohol consumption). At some point after the band had played a few tunes from their repertoire, minus the trumpet parts of course, Mingus decided he'd had enough and proceeded to turn the whole thing into a jam session. He began inviting people up to the bandstand. He'd say things like "Now we're going to have Ricky Ford come up and play tenor sax and Charli Persip can come up and play the drums." He then invited Jaki Byard to join in, but apparently Jaki had already left. He then looked directly at me and said: "And now we'd like to have Gunther Schuller's son come up and play the bass." At that moment I really didn't understand what was going on and was in the middle of sipping some beer when Boots goes: "Hey man, he means you," at which point I managed to spill beer all over myself. 3 The whole thing was totally surreal, almost like an "acid trip". There was "Genghis Khan" intensely motioning to 17-year-old me to come up to the bandstand and play Charlie Mingus' bass. At that point I kind of went into a semi-catatonic zombie-like state and found myself on the bandstand, picking up Mingus' bass with its lionhead scroll and a bridge that had apparently been burnt and charred to lower the gut string's action (at least that's what I think was going on there).

Now, if things weren't bizarre enough, out of the audience came running another guy, a trombone player named John Licata, yelling "Italians can play Jazz, too", and proceeded to invite himself up on stage. Talk about balls.

Anyway, the first tune called was Juan Tizol's "Perdido", a relatively easy 'AABA' standard. However, at that moment I wouldn't have known how to play "Happy Birthday" I was so nervous, and to make matters worse, Mingus was just standing about three feet away from me looking like a Mongolian warrior king. He then counted it off and we started to play. Luckily, my temporary memory loss receded and everything seemed to fall into place. Here I was, playing with some of the best musicians that I'd ever played with up to that time in my life and there was Charles Mingus, never leaving the bandstand, yelling encouragement to all of us and to me, just three feet away . He would say things like: "Yea, Gunther Schuller's son, swingin' baby!" or "Yea man, smokin' Gunther Schuller's son!" Obviously, he couldn't remember my first name, but I couldn't have cared less.

In the end, I guess we played about four tunes altogether and then it was over. Mingus announced the names of everyone who had played, saying stuff like: "Ricky Ford, crazy baby, Charli Persip, swinging man!" and when he got to me he said "Yea, Gunther Schuller's son, crazy baby!". Finally, at the end he looked at the trombone player and said, "and you man, you're really crazy."

The next thing I remember is walking down Boylston Street with Boots and people coming up to me and telling me how good I sounded playing with Mingus. It was like some kind of weird dream and even then I was thinking to myself, "did all that just happen?" To this day, whenever I see my friend Boots, I ask him to confirm that the events that I've described here happened and he remembers them pretty much the same way I do.

As an epilogue to this tale, I would meet Charles Mingus only one more time, in the summer of 1978, approximately six months before he passed away on January 5th, 1979. My father got me a 4 job playing with the New York Philharmonic Chamber Players for a concert at "Cooper Union", playing Charles Mingus' composition "Revelations" among other "Third Stream" works. Charles, now in a wheelchair, and his wife Sue Mingus were in attendance that night, seated in the front row. During the intermission I went to pay my respects and said something to him to the effect: "I love you, man, and I hope you get better," and he said to me "Yea, Gunther Schuller's son. Bass is a bitch but don't ever give up," and so far I never have.

Peace and Music Ed Schuller December 22nd, 2018

New Year's 1973

In the later part of 1973, at the ripe old age of 18, I was in my second year at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston Mass. At that point, I had been playing the acoustic bass for almost four years and somehow was managing to get all kinds of different jobs and gigs playing everything from straight-ahead Jazz, weddings, Bar-Mitzvahs, restaurants and lounges. At some point, I managed to land a steady five nights a week job at a Holiday Inn in Tewksbury, Massachusetts with a pretty terrible lounge band doing Top 40, Italian songs, some standards and the like. It was led by an Italian-American singer named (if my memory serves me right) Gina Lombardi. There was also a keyboard player, a saxophonist and a drummer. Of course, this kind of lame commercial lounge music was definitely not my cup of tea so I smoked a lot of Mexican herb and played everything by ear. Despite my rather cavalier attitude to the whole thing, Gina and the rest of the fellows thought I was some kind of boy wonder and when Gina would introduce the band to the audience, she would always point out the fact that I was "only 18".

In many ways, the gig itself was like something out of the 50s. The patrons that frequented the lounge were predominately middle-aged white business men in polyester suits and women with starched hair and too much makeup. I don't remember seeing anyone of color in that place the entire time I worked there. To put this all into context one must only remember the racial turmoil and tension of the times, what with "busing" and the unfolding of "Watergate" and in a suburb of Boston like Tewksbury it would have been downright dangerous for a black person to be there. However, in all fairness, there were other neighborhoods in the Greater Boston area like Roxbury or parts of the Back Bay where white people would have also perceived a certain level of fear and danger. Hence the specter of segregation would rear its ugly head on both sides of the "proverbial tracks".

Meanwhile, as New Year's Eve was approaching, I was hired to play a much better paying New Year's gig somewhere else and, as it turned out, the saxophone player was in the same situation. Gina asked me if I knew anyone who could sub for us on that night and without really thinking about it too much, I told her "Yea, of course I can do that, no problem." I ended up getting my good friends Leon "Boots" Maleson to play bass and the very talented saxophonist Ricky Ford for that particular night. So now everything was arranged and I didn't give it another thought. However, at some point a few weeks before the 31st, it somehow came out that Ricky Ford was black and dear Miss Gina Lombardi totally freaked out. I'm not sure if she was an out-and-out racist or if she was just afraid of losing the gig, but either way, I wasn't having it. I told her in so many words "that if that was the case that she could get her own damn saxophone player and that I was quitting after New Year's." Little did I know that karmic justice was about to unfold.

In the end, Boots (who isn't black) still ended up doing the gig and called me the next day with quite the story. They ended up hiring a saxophone player from New Hampshire who, despite the fact that he was white, ended up completely taking it out and my recollection of what Boots told me goes something like this:

The guy they hired showed up late, wearing an army jacket with a Peace sign on the back. He was disheveled and clearly drunk with a bottle of vodka in a paper bag and an attitude to match. Boots told me that when Gina would sing, he would just start soloing in the style of John Coltrane over her vocals. As Boots put it later, "he was not at all happy doing this gig and the leader of the band was very unhappy with him. Somewhere during the set, he was given a feature. He played 'Body and Soul' and at that point, 19-year old Boots realized that this dude was a great player." However, 3 a little while later he managed to spill his vodka all over the stage and was then summarily fired. I also recall Boots telling me that he would yell out things like "Trane died for your sins" and other incendiary remarks like that. Talk about comeuppance. My friend Ricky Ford would have played the gig totally straight and taken care of business. The saying "you reap what you sow" comes to mind.

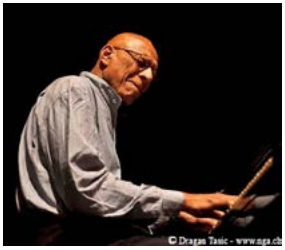
Boots never saw the guy again but somehow that night continued to haunt him through the years. As he later put it, here was "a musician with some demons, who cared only to play the music he was devoted to, no matter if he got fired or not."

Fast forward over three and a half decades later, Boots tried to remember the mystery saxophonist's name and began to search the internet. With only one clue, he remembered that the guy had told him that he had played with the Woody Herman Band in the 60s and with that he came across the name Jackie Stevens and realized that that had to be the guy. Further research revealed that he had passed away some years ago and despite his apparent destructive behavior that night perhaps he had achieved some measure of peace towards the end of his life.

Now, having told this story, some questions still remain. How did this guy Jackie Stevens end up on this ridiculous lounge gig in a racist New England town like Tewksbury in the first place? Normally, if somebody calls someone for a gig like that, you would be told to dress up in a tuxedo or at the very least a jacket and tie. You would be informed what kind of gig it was and if you were not ready to accept the circumstances and conditions of the job, you would probably turn it down. Even if he desperately needed money, it would make no sense to show up in a tattered army jacket talking about "Trane dying for your sins". My theory is that he was on a mission of some sort of social protest or sabotage and he took the gig just to kind of "stick it to the man" and communicate the absurdity of the whole thing. I also wonder if he understood the blatant or, at the very least, systemic racism that was the reason he was even hired in the first place. He was obviously a very accomplished and creative musician, who had endured a pretty hard life as many of our musical artists and heroes have, and maybe these things can make you kind of crazy. Of course, we can never know for sure what was going on there, but I have to believe things like this happen for a reason. Look at the events that occur today. Enough said.

Though I never met or heard you, Mr. Jackie Stevens, I can only wish you rest, peace and music.

Ed Schuller with the help of Leon "Boots" Maleson, January 26th, 2019



REMEMBERING THE DETROIT RIOTS OF 1943 AND 1967

BY KIRK LIGHTSEY

In January this year, prior to Covid changing the world outlook, much loved pianist Kirk Lightsey together with his wife Nathalie and daughter Leila made a family visit to Tasmania. During the time shared we had a chance to talk with Kirk about Coming and Going, the book he is in the process of writing telling of his sixty-odd years in the business known as jazz, an absolute coup for a publisher and something no jazz lover or lover of the arts in general, would want to miss. Once back in Paris and confined to hospital, current world events caused Kirk to recall his time in Detroit during the 1943 and 1967 riots. This is an excerpt from his upcoming book, due for release next year. Alwyn Lewis

From the tender age of 6 I have had a front row seat for the American performance of race riots and rage.

It all began for me at home in Detroit. When I was a little boy, I used to sit on the trunk next to the front window to look outside. We lived then on 4136 Brush Street. From the window you could look down on Brush Street and past Grace Hospital. Beyond ran John R and Woodward. Woodward Avenue divided East from West in Detroit. And the further east you went, the blacker and poorer you were. We lived 3 Blocks East of Woodward.

That day in June 1943, I was astonished to see hordes of people coming from the black and poor side and running towards the hospital to attack the doctors and nurses who stood outside having a smoke or something.

What I witnessed was the peak of racial tensions in the city, when fights and the spreading of rumors culminated in gangs of both colors roaming the streets with Woodward Avenue as their dividing line.

My friend Warren Hanson tells the story of his father, a black man of light complexion, being attacked by black people in the Black bottom neighborhood where he worked as an insurance salesman. A black woman, who knew him, witnessed the scene and let him into her house to safety.

Twenty-four years later, I lived in a Detroit loft

on John Large Street, overlooking the expressway, on the second floor above a barbershop. It was a mixed neighborhood.
We used to play and rehearse at my place. Marcus Belgrave (tp), George Bohanon (tb), Leon Henderson (sax) – he was Joe Henderson's brother, John Dana (bass), and Charles Moore (tp), who was teaching us how to rehearse. David Durrah used to come over to hang out and practice on my piano while I played my gig at the Rooster Tail. And, of course, my friend of always, Rod Keeler hung out with us.
July 1967 was a very hot summer. On July 23rd, David Durrah was crashing at the pad and we woke up hearing helicopters, shots being fired and people yelling. I went up to the roof to check what was happening.
Within minutes, four armed policemen surrounded me. David had to let them into the loft. They were State Troopers and kept giving me contradictory orders. One would say put your hands up and turn around and the other one would say put your hands behind your back and don't move or I'll shoot you.
I told them I lived there and had no weapon. They took me downstairs to interrogate me. They thought I was a sniper shooting from the roof and they started looking around the pad for weapons. They didn't give a shit about the crystal ball full of C sitting on the piano or the bag of grass that Rod had stashed in one of my drawers. One said, "There is nothing there but weed." But meanwhile a young National Guardsman was pushing David into the closet, with a gun to his throat. I happened to see them from the corner of my eye and started screaming to leave him alone. The other cops turned around and immediately told the motherfucker to go back downstairs. David Durrah later said, "I could tell in the eyes of that Smokey the Bear, that he just wanted to kill someone; I was just getting out of the army and I knew that look. One more step back into that closet and I was dead!"
That same day looters broke into the grocery store across the alley and set it on fire. Suddenly my window broke and a projectile hit my Steinway and burned it on the side.
Later we found out that earlier that morning, the police had raided a "blind pig" (unlicensed bar) known to be owned by the Purple Gang, some kind of Jewish mafia. Because of the heat wave, a lot of people were hanging out in the street and they quickly gathered against the police, starting an eruption of violence which turned Detroit into a warzone.
The riots lasted 5 days and nights and we were right in the middle of it. I stayed home, sometimes going down to the barbershop to discuss the news and look at Detroit becoming "Destroit".
So many years, decades, later and it's still going on. I wonder why in all these years there has been no resolution. Why is it still going on? When will we learn? What can we do? Questions. But now it's up to the young people to save mankind.

NO TEETH MU-NECK AND CHIEF BROKEN WING

TALES FROM THE ROAD WITH MODINE

BY ED SCHULLER

In the early 1980's I was fortunate enough to be a member of one of the great Jazz ensembles of that time led by the unique and iconic drummer/composer Paul Motian. The group was a quintet originally consisting of Joe Lovano on saxophone, Bill Frisell on guitar, myself on acoustic bass, Paul of course on drums and my main man, another genius, Billy Drewes playing saxophones.

We managed to do a couple of tours in Europe culminating in a beautiful recording for ECM called "Psalm". This recording, produced of course by Manfred Eicher and engineered by Martin Wieland in Lud wigsburg, Germany was actually among the first digital recordings ever made (the machine/processor itself was the size of a large refrigerator).

During this time I was also touring and recording with Paul Motian in other groups including a piano trio led by a guy living in Paris named Eric Watson as well as saxophonist/composer Tim Berne featuring people like Mack Goldsbury (saxophone), Herb Robertson (brass) and others.

It was on some of these other tours where Paul started talking to me about wanting to make change in the quintet. He felt that Billy Drewes was stylistically too close to Joe Lovano and was thinking of replacing him with someone who would act as more of a 'foil' to Lovano's modern and precise way of improvising. I have to admit that I didn't understand what Paul was talking about and thought maybe he was going crazy. After all, he was contemplating letting Billy Drewes go because he played "too good" and that, as it turned out, is what ended up happening, despite all attempts to persuade him otherwise.

Enter Native American saxophonist Jim Pepper who had recently moved to New York from Alaska, where he had been a commercial salmon fisherman. Even before he was recruited into the Motian Quintet, I had already met and played with him in his own groups (even recording one song with him on his landmark recording "Comin and Goin"). Pepper's main claim to fame was that he had found a way to fuse the songs and melodies of his Native culture (Creek and Kaw people) to the idioms of Jazz, World Music, Funk and Reggae. He also possessed one of the most soulful and powerful saxophone tones of anyone around (legend has it

that Jim and Mike Brecker used to practice together "back in the day") and if Paul Motian wanted someone who played completely different than Lovano, then that is what he got.
To characterize these divergent styles, one could start by saying that Pepper was definitely more of a "wild chapatulla" both musically and in his lifestyle choices. That is not to say that Joe was some sort of "wilting flower". Far from it, but Mr. Lovano's approach to music was certainly more refined and coming from an extensive knowledge of Jazz history, repertoire and technical skill.* They also each possessed beautiful but totally different tones on their respective horns, leaving no confusion as to who was playing what.
As we started hitting as a band, I began to understand what Motian's concept was about and a very unique ensemble dynamic and sound began to develop. In addition, the two saxophonists seemed to foster increasing respect for each other as it became apparent that they were both being influenced by the other in a variety of musical and extra-musical ways.
In terms of the style of music the Quintet played, I would call it structured freedom. Most of the repertoire consisted of original tunes composed by Paul (sometimes with Frisell's help) as well as some occasional Monk or Bill Evans stuff. Often we would play through the compositions playing over the changes and forms without setting up any obvious grooves, patterns or pulse. To know where you are in the form required intuition, sensitive ears and quick reflexes. We also played delicate ballads, "crazy Punk" Rock stuff and epic tone poems spurred on by Bill Frisell's haunting electronic guitar effects and Paul's one-of-a-kind approach to the drums.
In the following are three tales corresponding to the three recording dates the Paul Motion Quintet did for Soul Note in Milan, Italy: Story of Maryam (1983), Jack of Clubs (1984) and Misterioso (1986). These recordings were all produced by Giovanni Bonandrini in the same studio (Barigozzi Studio) with the same engineer (Giancarlo Barigozzi). However, each date has, what we now call a "Pepper story", associated with it. There are of course hundreds of pretty incredible "Pepper stories", because Jim Pepper was a colorful, charismatic, funny as hell crazy son of a bitch. His Native name was "Hunga chee edda" or "Flying Eagle" which sounds good but he told me many times how afraid of heights he was. He would say, "Man, I can't go up there. I'm a jumper". The one thing I would say about Jim Pepper is that he was a genius at screwing up and succeeding at the same time. How that worked, I cannot tell you but after Pepper passed, I found myself in situations where I would say to myself "I wonder what Pepper would do now". All I know for sure is that my man Pepper was a paradoxical dichotomy of contradictions and the living embodiment of the saying "the good, the bad and the ugly".

Part I The Story of Maryam aka "No Teeth"

In the summer of 1983 the Paul Motian Quintet was on tour in West Germany, France and Italy and on July 27th and 28th the band recorded the first of three records at Giancarlo Barigozzi's studio in Milan, Italy called The Story of Maryam.

I have to admit that my memory of this particular tour is a little fuzzy. After all it was approximately 36 years ago and things could get pretty wild in those days. For many of my peers and colleagues the phrase "sex, drugs and Jazz" would have been apropos to what was happening in varying degrees and one of the all-time masters of that "hang" was none other than Jim Pepper himself. Keeping up with Mr. "Flying Eagle" was a challenge to say the least and by default it became my unofficial role to at least try. Jim and I became fast buddies and along with Joe sometimes, we would partake of the wild side of what life on the road had to offer. Most of the time it was a lot of fun and as long as it didn't affect the music, everything was cool. However, I have to admit that sometimes, inevitably, things went a little too far so we eventually adopted a demerit system for keeping track of who was screwing up the most and Pep and I made that list on more than one occasion.

As it turns out, before the tour even started, Jim was having some pretty serious issues with his teeth, which for a saxophone player is definitely not a good thing. The way I understood it, his dentist had decided that the would need to get permanent dental implants so in the meantime he was given a removable temporary dental bridge so he would be able to make the tour.

If my memory serves me correctly, right before the recording dates, somehow Pepper managed to lose his temporary "clackers" in a hotel room or something and that was no laughing matter.* But, on a more serious note, it is a fact that one cannot play the saxophone properly with compromised or nonexistent teeth and here we were supposed to record a record. Paul was none too happy about the whole situation and I think he attempted to fire Pep right on the spot. It would not be the last time.

Meanwhile, the producer Giovanni Bonandrini heard about the situation and hooked Pepper up with an Italian dentist he knew in Milan and in the end, Jim Pepper was able to play on the recording, which—in spite of everything—came out great.

Here we have an example of my man Pep completely screwing up and somehow, against all odds, managing to successfully pull off what previously appeared to be, for all intents and purposes, a total fiasco. The way I see it, whenever Jim Pepper's "luck" would run out, that's when he would get "lucky" and this was only the beginning of some pretty wild adventures to come.

Part II Jack of Clubs aka "Mu-neck"

The next European tour/record date for the Paul Motian Quintet was in March 1984. It involved a lot of travel through many countries, including Germany, France, Spain, Austria, Hungary and Italy. Somewhere around the middle of the tour we played a concert in Munich at a club called Philharmonie (which of course is long gone). The gig itself was geat but it also turned out to be a catalyst for some pretty dramatic "plot points" which would unfold for all of us in the days and months ahead.

The club was packed and among the patrons were all the members of the famous band Oregon: Paul McCandless, Ralph Towner, Glen Moore and Collin Walcott. They happened to also be on tour but had that night off. During the

breaks and after the concert we all hung out and I got to meet the amazing World Music multi-instrumentalist Collin Walcott. Now that dude was righteous and we kind of hit it off almost immediately. Among other things we talked about getting together back in the States and working on some musical concepts together. For me, just getting to hang out with so many high-level musical cats was an honor and a privilege. There was a nice feeling of mutual respect between all of us that is all too rare in today's world.

Meanwhile, also at the club was another fine musician, a local saxophonist / composer named Gunther Klatt. At some point, Jim Pepper and him met and began talking and drinking wine. As it turns out, Gunther was actually a pretty good amateur saxophone repair man and Pep's horn needed some work so they decided to leave the club and go to his "workshop" to check out the horn and drink more wine.

As it turned out, our next concert was in Budapest and our itinerary called for us to fly out of Munich that following morning, thus it was decided that we should all meet in the lobby of the hotel at around 9:00 am and take taxis to the airport, but Pepper was a no-show and he wasn't answering his room phone, either. I volunteered to go up to the room and see what was going on and when I got there, I found the door half open and Pep passed out in the bed fully clothed. I somehow was able to wake him up and within five minutes he was downstairs piling into one of the taxis next to me. He was of course in pretty bad shape, totally hung-over and in a very surly mood. Sitting next to him I made the mistake of commenting on how bad his breath was and in response he pulled out a tube of toothpaste and squeezed it into his mouth and all over his beard and moustache. Nice! At that point, I decided not to comment any more about anything.

Later, after we'd all checked in at the airport, Pepper's mood improved and he told me how Gunter Klatt had done him a solid and really fixed his saxophone, and even opened the case to show me, which was kind of dumb since I wouldn't know if the horn was fixed or not, just by looking at it.

Anyway, the flight to Budapest was uneventful till we went through passport control. Right before the tour started, back in the States, I had done some laundry and had managed to mistakenly wash my passport. Amazingly enough, the damage was rather minor. You could still read all the information though the print was slightly blurred and up to that point, there had been no problem at any of the many borders we had been through. However, in 1984, Hungary was still behind the "Iron Curtain" and when the border official saw my passport I was flagged and detained. It was pretty scary stuff, but after about an hour and a half, they stamped my passport with a one-way visa allowing me to enter the country. I was then told that I would need to get a new passport at the US Embassy and after that I would have to go to a Hungarian government office to get an exit visa to leave. Luckily, we had a few days off before the gig, so I had time to make all that happen. It was all very "kafkaesk", especially at the Hungarian ministry building.

Meanwhile, I was back on the demerit list, having caused everyone to have to wait for me at the airport and my man Pepper wasn't gonna let me forget it. Luckily, the hotel was really nice, right on the Donau and we were all able to

relax, do some sightseeing and get some much needed rest.
The concert venue turned out to be a rather large sports arena and we were to share the bill with a kind of fusion band from Finland. Anyway, while we were setting up for the sound check, I went to the bathroom and when I came out, Joe runs up to me and says "Eddie, you're not 'stink number one' anymore" (meaning the top of the demerit list). He then explained that Jim Pepper appears to have lost the neck and mouthpiece to his "Balanced Action" Selmer tenor, which was pretty much a disaster due to the fact that to replace these items would not be easy, expecially the neck, which is unique to that particular kind of horn.
Paul Motian was understandably pissed off and was already talking about firing Pepper (again). But, that's just where the guy's incredible luck kicked in. As ist turned out, Joe just happened to have an extra neck, which would work with Jim's horn (both their saxophones were similar models). How this was even possible was really kind of like winning the lottery. What had happened was a little over a week before, we'd done a concert at the "New Morning" club in Paris and a saxophone-playing friend of Joe's had given him that extra neck saying that he didn't need it anymore.
Meanwhile, back in Budapest, now Joe had a neck that he could lend to Pep to use for the rest of the tour. But, he still needed a mouthpiece and once again, he lucked out because the tenor player from the Finnish band used the same type of Otto Link mouthpiece that Jim used and agreed to lend it to him for our set. And thus Jim Pepper was miraculously once again able to beat the odds, playing the gig and not get fired.
We left Budapest the next day, flying to Munich and then taking a train to Milan where we were to record Jack of Clubs for Bonandrini's Soul Note label. Somehow Pepper was able to procure a mouthpiece in Milan and on March 26th, 27th and 28th, the Paul Motian Quintet recorded another beautiful album. The session itself went pretty smoothly with a minimum of drama, so in this case, I'll let the music speak for itself.
On that first day at the studio we were visited by another crazy character, clarinettist Tony Scott. He'd been on the scene since the days of Charlie Parker and Bebop and had known Paul for decades. I guess you could say Tony was kind of an iconic Jazz star in his own right and would show up almost randomly to various festivals and gigs both in Europe and in the States. At that time, he was staying with an Italian family in Milan, which was kind of his nomadic modus operandus in those days.
As it turns out, after the record date we had a couple of days off till our next gigs, which were in Vienna. In light of that, Tony asked Joe, Bill Frisell and I, if we would be interested in doing some paid recording sessions with him for the next couple of days. We all of course agreed, play some music, make a little extra money, why not. But this was to be a unique experience for all of us. First of all, the whole project consisted of one song, Billy Strayhorn's Lush Life. Tony Scott was obsessed with this tune and wanted to make an entire album featuring different versions of Lush Life. It all sounded pretty crazy to us, but what the hell, if that's what he wanted, that's what we'll do. Meanwhile, he had also invited the entire band to have dinner with him at the home of that

family where he was staying. In the end Paul opted out but the rest of us, Joe, Bill, Pep and myself went for the free food and drink. It was quite a feast and a good time was had by all. Along with the family, Tony had also invited a rather attractive blonde Italian woman in her 40s named Lilly, whom he introduced as his girlfriend. She had a very distinctive low husky voice that was strangely seductive and when she spoke English, it was in a very thick halting Italian accent.

Anyway, we all feasted, drank and partied for hours and finally found our way back to our hotel for some much needed rest. Unfortunately, for some of us there had been some kind of overbooking problem at the hotel, meaning that I had to share a room with Pepper. Now Jim and I are good friends but to try and sleep in the same room with him is like being punished for a crime you didn't commit. The main probem was that when he snored, it reminded one of what a grizzly bear in hibernation must sound like. Trying to sleep through that was just not gonna work, no matter how tired I was and just as my despair and desperation reached critical mass, the phone in our hotel room rang. Now, at this point it's around 3 am and I'm wondering what the hell is going on now. So I answer "hello" and a very deep and husky voice says "I want to a-speak-a to the-a indiano" and I go "Ok, no problemo". I then handed the phone to Pepper and said "Yo, it's for you". It turned out to be Tony Scott's girlfriend Lilly from the dinner and she wanted Pepper to come to her house pronto. This of course was music to my ears, thus finding myself thinking things like "Wow, there really is a God and he just answered my prayers." Oops, not so fast. Pepper had to get Lilly's address and with her broken English and him trying to write it down, this turned out to be an arduous and slow-moving ordeal. Finally he had it and the plan was to call a taxi in the lobby and leave. Again, not so fast! Somehow, my man manages to lose the address in the hotel room and for the next 45 minutes, we both looked desperately everywhere for this little, very important piece of paper. Finally he finds it in some pocket and I'm like "Man, can you get the fuck outa here before something else happens". And then he was gone. I didn't see him again until we got on the train to Vienna three days later. Needless to say, when Tony Scott found out about the whole thing, he was not happy, but here I am getting ahead of myself.

The next three days Joe, Bill and I recorded with Tony at another studio somehere in Milan. Every day before the session, we would have a lavish lunch at his benefactor's family home. Nothing like amazing food and booze before recording.

As advertised, everything we recorded was some kind of interpretation of Lush Life. Tony had some pretty wild concepts. For example, on one version he had Frisell playing totally out and dissonant chords (not the original harmonies), while Tony recited the words of the song like a mad "Beat Poet", i.e. "I used to visit all the very gay places, those come what may places, where one relaxes at the axis of the wheel of life to get the feel of life from Jazz and cocktails", and so on. Another version was like a Ray Charles style Blues with Tony playing piano and singing. We also did one where I played the melody arco, having learned the melody from the late great pianist Jaki Byard, with Bill's beautiful accompaniment. Joe ended up playing more drums than saxophone, and as

bizarre as it all was, I found it to be quite interesting and creative. Anyway, that was the way it went for two days, but on the third day, the Motian Quintet was scheduled to leave around 8 pm on an overnight express to Vienna, and so we determined that we could record in the afternoon and still make the train.

As usual, we had lunch with the family (I remember lobster tails) and then on to the studio to record one more version of Lush Life. As soon as we got there, Tony Scott had Joe go into the drum booth and play fast swinging time which would be recorded until Tony determined that they had enough. So, there you have Joe playing fast swing all by himself, not really understanding the point to all of it and, as I remember, this went on for at least half an hour or so. Poor Joe was in that freaking drum booth sweatin', huffin' and puffin' and not knowin' why.

Anyway, when that was over, he told Bill and I that he wanted us to play every chord of Lush Life (verse and chorus) at a very slow rubato tempo that he would conduct. I haven't counted how many chords there are in Lush Life but it's a lot. To make it even more intense, we had that train to catch and time was running out.

So we began, with Tony Scott conducting us, looking and acting like a total crazed maniac. Each chord had a duration of five or six seconds, so getting through the whole tune was going to take a while and to make matters worse, there was a big clock right on the wall near where we were playing just to remind us how little time we had left to make the train, not to mention the fact that we still had to get to the hotel at 6:00 to pick up our bags. It was nerve-racking to say the least, but in the end everything worked out. Tony explained that he was going to superimpose the slow moving chords over the fast moving drums and overdub a clarinet solo over the whole thing, which sounded really interesting to me. Unfortunately, when the record finally came out (1989), this version wasn't on it for some reason.

Meanwhile, we had that train to catch and somehow with Tony's help we made to the station just in the nick of time. Of course, Pepper had to be there too and he showed up with that woman Lilly, who he'd been hanging with since that night at the hotel room. Needless to say, the vibe between Jim and Tony got real dark and some rather "antagonistic" words (to say the least) were exchanged as the train left the station. Paul seemed amused, like he was getting used to Pepper's antics as I guess we all were. The truth is, Paul was already contemplating letting Pepper go, which would have consequences for me as well.

Anyway, in Vienna we had two nights at a club called Jazz Land, but I don't really remember much about it. Meanwhile, Jim had started to form a theory as to what had happened to his neck and mouthpiece. He became convinced that Gunther Klatt (the guy in Munich who had repaired his horn) had somehow absconded with said items, which of course didn't make any sense. However, the fact that something mysterious had happened in Munich that night was festering in Pepper's mind and he was going to get to the bottom of it no matter what. Thus, a plan began to take shape. As it turned out, the next day, after the Jazz Land gig, the itinerary had us traveling by train to Hamburg, where we were to play the last gig of the tour. Pepper's idea was that him and I would

travel to Munich to see if we could find out what happened with that missing neck / mouthpiece and then sometime later take an early train to Hamburg and still make the gig. How I got roped into all this is a mystery to me, but I guess I figured that's what friends are for. We were in those days using Eurail passes, which meant you could just hop on any train in Western Europe wi4 ';ksavcxgthout having to buy a ticket or make a reservation. So the next day, while Paul, Joe and Bill went to Hamburg, Pepper and I traveled to Munich, where some friends were waiting for us to help us on our quest to find the elusive Gunther Klatt. Apparently, no one was able to reach him by phone, so with our friends Hermann and Beate, we were to drive around town in their car, going to various bars and cafes where he was known to hang out. What a plan! Pepper had already started drinking on the train and so by the time we got to Munich, he was already pretty lit up and we were just getting started. We arrived in the late afternoon, when our friends met us and after stowing our gear at their place, we were off to execute our "mission".

For the next six hours or so we basically bar-hopped our way across a rainy, damp and chilly Munich. However, this alcohol-fueled exercise in futility did nothing to bring us closer to our goal, but the more we drank the more it didn't seem to matter. However, as the night wore on, Pep's mood began to darken. At around midnight, we ended up at the Jazz Club Unterfahrt (in the Haidhausen section of Munich). It was a familiar place, where all of us had hung out and played many times. All of a sudden Gunther Klatt walks in and all hell breaks loose. By this point in the night, Pep was pretty much "three sheets to the wind" and in his mind, Gunther had gone from a person of interest and possible suspect to guilty of grand theft mouthpiece and neck, no investigation necessary. My memory is a bit hazy as to what happened next, but I remember Pepper kind of pouncing on Gunther Klatt and pinning him down across a table getting ready to pound his face in with his fist. At that point I had to intervene somehow and tried to pull Jim away at which point he turned on me and threatened to kill me as well, to which I replied something like "go ahead MoFo, you crazy son of a bitch." Anyway, after that, myself and some other folks managed to diffuse the situation to where Gunther was able to explain to Pepper that he had nothing to do with whatever happened to those things and to this day, the answer as to what actually did happen still remains an alcohol-fueled mystery.

At this point, I would like to point out that Gunther Klatt and I would become very good friends and colleagues, playing, touring and recording with people like John Betch, Ronnie Burrage, Frank Lacy and others. But that's a subject of another story.

Anyway, two days after the Unterfahrt incident, Pepper and I had to take a tain to Hamburg departing form Munich at around 8 am. It was to be challenging journey, to say the least. Where ever the Flying Eagle had stayed the night before, he had somhow managed to secure several bottles of wine and began imbibing immediately and for the rest of the next nine hours, Jim Pepper was "the life of the party", so to speak. The thing about my man was that he was able to be both charmingly charismatic and obnoxiousy rude, depending on what was happening. For example, if some dude got on the train and wanted

to sit in our compartment, Pep was a master of making sure that wasn't going to happen. On the other hand, if a person of the female persuasion was to enter his awareness, "a Native American prince charming" would emerge, politely flirting without offending, and word up man, he was freaking good at it. The thing was, it seemed like four out of five women would at least find Jim interesting, but on this particular train ride, even he might have gone too far when he started hitting on 80-year old grandmothers. Suffice it to say, that by the time we got to Hamburg Hauptbahnhof, both of us were in pretty bad shape and still had a concert to play at a club called Onkel Pös, part of which was to be recorded by Hamburg Radio.

I vaguely remember that the first set, the one the radio recorded, went pretty well. But, after that, things kind of went south, as my man kind of lost it for real and we ended up playing the third set as a quartet without him. Needless to say, Paul was not happy and for all of us it was not a good way to end the tour. Apparently, later that night, back at the hotel, Pepper, in a fit of frustration, rage and temporary insanity, threw his tenor against the wall, causing considerable damage to the horn. Ouch!

Meanwhile, the next morning, Paul, Bill, Joe and I flew back to the States, leaving Hamburg at 9 am, while Pepper somehow got on a train to Paris, where he was able to visit the Selmer factory, get his horn repaired and secure a new neck, as some kind of endorsement deal. How he was able to pull all that off, I have really no idea, but in the end, as usual, Jim Pepper would once again, despite everything, find "the Great Spirit" looking out for him.

In conclusion to this crazy story, I would like to tie up a few loose ends. As it turned out, I would never get a chance to play with master World musician Collin Wolcott. Seven months later, on November 8th, 1984, he was killed in a horrific vehicle accident while on tour in East Germany with the band Oregon. Another tragic casualty of that night was our wonderful Austrian friend Joe Härting, who was driving the tour bus. He apparently got pinned down by the steering wheel and later succumbed to massive internal trauma while directing first responders to helping the other guys in the band. He'd also been a driver for some of our Quintet tours and reminded me of Arnold Schwarzenegger in the movie "Conan the Barbarian". He was so strong that he could lift a car up by himself. A great guy to have on the road with you. Fortunately, Ralph Towner and Paul McCandless were not seriously injured and somewhat ironically, bassist Glen Moore had already flown back to the States due to the fact that him and his wife were having a baby. Talk about life and death and how fate can intervene in mysterous ways.

I should also mention that while this was all happening, the Paul Motion Quintet was also on tour in Europe and we got the news while in Zurich, Switzerland. Those would turn out to be some dark days for all of us, realizing how easy it was to have your "groove seriously disrupted", trying to make the next gig. As a matter of fact, just a few years later, Paul was traveling in a van with John Abercrombie, Miroslav Vitous and pianist Joachim Kühn, when at some point Joachim, who was driving, lost control, causing the vehicle to flip over. As the guys all tried to extricate themselves from the van, they realized that Joachim was missing, which of course freaked everyone out. Suddenly,

from the other side of the wreck, Joachim emerged, smoking a cigarette with mud all over his face and without missing a beat, says to everone, "you know man, my groove has been seriously disrupted". Luckily, no one was really hurt but after that, Paul began to consider not traveling in tour busses, vans or SUVs, and eventually he would stop going on the road altogether.

At this point, I would also like to clarify a few things about Jim Pepper and why I felt the need to tell these crazy tales. First of all, as far as myself and others that knew him are concerned, there was something about his presence that seemed to defy "the laws of normalcy", manifesting in a kind of fearlessness. He did not let himself get pidgeon-holed into any categories or sterotypes, Native American or otherwise. Being around him, there would be very rarely any dull moments and even though some of his behavior can only be described as outrageous and even disturbing, most people couldn't help but like him or, at the very least, find him interesting.

I have certainly struggled with whether or not such stories should be written down as they obviously don't always paint him or others, including myself, in the best of light. However, any attempt to "sugarcoat" the narrative would in my opinion negate the purpose of telling these stories in the first place.

Perhaps another underlying reason I feel compelled to relate these wild tales is to communicate how different the Jazz community was back in those days (70s, 80s and early 90s) compared to the present. First of all, there weren't that many Jazz education programs in those days and to be even moderately successful on the Jazz scene required not only talent and the will to learn, but the ability to hang at some fairly gritty late night scenes (often involving drugs, alcohol and sex). The point is, despite the incredibly high level of skill, technique and musicianship exhibited by many of today's young Jazz musicians, I feel that something of that old school urban grittiness is missing in a lot of today's music. I recognize we now live in different times and I'm certainly not trying to bring back "the good old crazy days", but we should be able to appreciate the wild and crazy adventures of another era. As Paul Motian himself put it (in reference to the iconic New York Jazz Club The Village Vanguard) "in the old days guys went to the mens room to shoot up. Now they go there to floss their teeth." Enough said about that.

Part III Misterioso aka "Chief Broken Wing"

In the summer of 1986, the Paul Motian Quintet would go on the road for the last time, culminating in what would be our final recording as a band. So, on the 2nd of July, we took flights out of JFK, via Rome, to the city of Cagliari on the island of Sardegna. From there, we were driving an hour south along the west coast of the island to a beautiful little coastal village called Porto Pino, where our first concert was scheduled in a few days. But, a lot would happen before we'd even played a note.

The promoters of the music festival where we were to perfom had arranged for us to stay privately at the home of a wonderful, friendly Italian dude named Bruno. The journey had been long and we were all pretty wiped out, so Paul, Joe, Bill and I decided we'd better take a nap before dinner. Pepper had a different idea and apparently found a bar, made some friends and partied the afternoon away.

Meanwhile, dinner had been organized for all the festival artists at a school cafeteria located just outside the village. Some of the other participants included Brazilian icon Hermeto Pascoal and his group, drummer Bob Moses, bassist / guitarist Jerome Harris, saxophonist Dick Oats, as well as various members of the sound crew, stage hands and organizers. When Jim arrived separately, it was clearly obvious that he was inebriated beyond what even we would consider socially acceptable. Within five minutes of his entrance, he managed to knock over a glass of red wine onto Paul who then asked him to go sit at another table away from the rest of us. How is that for getting the leader of the band to dig you. However, Pep was just getting started. He ended up sitting with an Italian dude talking trash, inexplicably about basketball and who was the better player. Pep claimed that he was a former "all-American All Star" in high school (which is actually true) and that back in the day he was nicknamed "the crack attack" (probably not true).

Anyway, after dinner, as we were leaving the school, Pep's new "friend" pointed out a nearby hoop with some kids playing one-on-one. He then asked them if he could borrow their ball for a minute and said to Jim something like "So, Mr. crack attack, let's see what ya got". When Pep got the ball, he went for a three-pointer, totally missing the backboard and falling backwards onto the hard concrete ground, while the rest of us watched in amazement. It was so freaking slap-stick funny that both Joe and I actually collapsed from uncontrolled hysteria and disbelief, none of us realizing the consequences of what had just occurred.

That night we all went to hear Hermeto Pascoal and his incredible band at the outdoor festival venue. Hermeto and everyone in his band are amazing, virtuosic genius-level multi-instrumentalists and so we were all pretty pumped to be there. The place was packed, of course, and so, to better see that was happening, I ended up hanging out with Jerome Harris behind a video monitor watching the concert as it was being filmed. Suddenly, in the middle of the set, Hermeto whistled and everyone just left the stage and a few seconds later, Jim Pepper walks out dressed in ripped shorts, T-shirt and a bandana. He then grabbed a soprano saxophone and attempted to play something. Inexplicable, as he blew into the horn, no sounds came out and he finally gave up and started singing, rather inappropriately, a rather bawdy Native courting song. It was truly bizarre and somewhat disturbing. To make things worse, the audience was not happy and as Hermeto's band came back, Jim left the stage. None of us saw him again till the next day when "the shit really hit the fan."

After the concert, we all went back to Bruno's villa to get some much-needed "shut-eye". Jim had somehow made it there on his own and when he woke up the next day, it became apparent that something was very wrong with his right wrist. Obviously, he had injured himself during his ill-fated drunken attempt at B-ball prowess after the dinner yesterday. When our dear host Bruno heard about what had happened, he offered to help, saying something to the effect: "Jimmy, don't worry, my mama, she fix." As it turned out, "mama" lived a few houses down. She was an ultra-traditional Italian woman, probably in her late 80s, dressed in the customary black attire of a woman in mourning for her late husband.

Anyway, Bruno took Pep over to mama's house, where apparently she tried to heal his wrist by grabbing it and twisting. The scream of excruciating pain must have been deafening and if his wrist hadn't been broken before, it most certainly was now. The next thing we knew, somebody was taking Pepper to some doctor they knew, 30 or so miles away. Apparently he had several hairline fractures in his wrist and would have to wear a cast.

To say Paul was "pissed" would have been an understatement. For the next four or five hours, while Jim Pepper was getting his wrist checked out, Paul walked around Bruno's pad, ranting and raving about how he was going to fire the MoFo, do our upcoming recording as a quartet, and no matter the cost, send his sad ass home on the next available flight. It was freaking intense but clearly understandable. All this crazy shit had happened in less than two days and we'd yet to play one note.

At some point during all of this, Joe Lovano and I must have split to go hang out at the beach, away from all the mayhem and craziness. The whole area is incredibly beautiful, sunny and serene. It's the kind of place I could image to spend my "retirement", if I ever make it that far.

Anyway, while we were out, Pep returned from the doctor sporting a nice plaster cast on his wrist and arm. Paul must have cooled down a bit, because somehow Jim was able to convince him that he should not be fired and that he would still be able to play the gigs. How he did that, I cannot say. I mean, how do you convince someone, expecially Paul Motian, that you can still play the saxophone, when you have an injury like that, not to mention the fact that the doctor had told him not to play for a month. Obviously, if anyone could do it, it would be Pepper. He had a con-man side to him, that when he put his mind to it, he could convince someone of almost anything.

Meanwhile, that night (Friday, July 4th) we would play our first concert at the outdoor venue in Porto Pino. It was to be one set starting at 11:00 pm. I think we played four tunes, starting with Monks's Misterioso and then three Paul Motian originals (Dance, Yallah and The Story of Maryam). It might not have been Jim's best night, but he somehow managed to get through it, cast and all. As it turned out, he could still move all his fingers on his right hand and he had already started cutting some of the cast off to allow even more movement. He had also rigged a kind of makeshift harness to hold up his arm. It all looked pretty weird but the bottom line is he wasn't fired.

Next day was free. Joe and I went to the beach while Paul and Bill Frisell walked around the town. Those two made for quite a pair, looking like "Lurch and Igor". I know the locals found it amusing. At some point, Joe and I came up with a new nickname for Pep: "Chief Broken Wing". Meanwhile, "the Chief" spent a good part of that day actually practicing (which he normally never did), figuring out alternate fingerings on the saxophone and modifying his cast to allow for more technical fluidity.

The following day (Sunday, July 6th), we traveled to Cagliari to play our next gig, which was in a rather large arena. It would be an interesting evening, to say the least. After checking into a hotel and chilling out for a few hours, we were taken to the venue to set up and do a sound check. The first odd thing we would notice when we got to the stage was a rather large portable round

swimming pool and when we inquired as to its purpose, we were told it would be a "surprise". All we knew was that we were to play three tunes as a quintet and then one tune / percussion jam with Bob Moses, Steve Barrios and Ray Mantilla. After that Hermeto Pascoal and his band would play a set to end the concert, after which we were all invited to a big dinner. Viva Italia!
Anyway, the reason for the swimming pool was revealed as part of the show's first act. Hermeto and all seven members of his group "danced" out on the stage dressed in bathing suites playing percussion instruments, tuned beer bottles and penny whistles. They then made their way into the pool forming a circle with Hermeto in the middle, playing some sort of native Brazilian flute. I would learn later that what they were doing was re-enacting a Native musical ritual of some indigenous people of the Amazon region, where they would use the surface of the water itself as a percussion instrument. So, while some of the guys provided a harmonic tapestry via the tuned beer bottles, others slapped the water, creating a kind of "aquatically splashing groove". In the middle, Hermeto soloed on his flute, periodically dunking his long-haired albino head under the water to create a kind of gurgling sound while he continued playing. It was wet and wild with water splashing all over the stage to the consternation of poor Bill Frisell, whose amplifier and electronic effects were set up dangerously close to the pool. Fortunately, his gear survived unscathed and the show would go on more or less as planned.
We played our three quintet tunes (Misterioso, Dance and The Story of Maryam), ending with Paul's calypso-like opus Mandeville, a tune featured on our ECM release Psalm, which featured the above mentioned percussionists. As for Pepper, his efforts from the day before appeared to have paid off. Because of his injury, his ability to play fast runs or lines was somewhat imparied, which kind of forced him to rely more on his more melodic sensibilities. This was not necessarily a bad thing and I personally think it caused him to put more emphasis on a wholly different aspect of his musical language. Also, it seemed that some of the tensions created between Jim and Paul as well as the rest of us, due to his behavior those first couple of days, seemed to have abated somewhat. Once again, Jim Pepper aka "Chief Broken Wing" had somehow managed to turn what should have been a total disaster into a viable, if not perfect, situation. However, Pep wasn't out of the woods yet. We still had another gig in Sardegna and a record date in Milan, not to mention the continuing problem of a fractured wrist and a cast to deal with.
Anyway, after one off day in Cagliari, we were driven three hours north to a beautiful little medieval town called "Oziero". I don't remember much about the gig but the place itself was in a mountainous region with amazing views of the Mediterranian Sea and the surrounding landscape. All I know is, that was to be our last live concert as a band and I believe it was just one set. At that point Paul had already decided that the quintet was too expensive and that, after the recording date, Jim and I would be let go, leaving Lovano, Frisell and Paul to form what would become the famous "Paul Motian Trio".
Meanwhile, we now had five days off in Sardegna before flying off to Milan to record Misterioso. It would turn out to be more like a vacation than a working tour. In fact, we'd already dubbed it the "Paul Motian Vacation Tour".

The next day, our driver Johnny took some of us back to Cagliari, dropping Paul and Bill of in Porto Pino. The rest of us went on to hear the Miles Davis Group performing that night at the festival. It was amazing to hear Miles - and his band, of course was great, professional and grooving, consisting of, among others, Robben Ford (guitar), Adam Holzman (keyboards), Bob Berg (saxophones) and Steve Thorton (percussion). As I recall, they played some of the Miles Davis hits of the time, Jean Pierre, Cindy Lauper's Time After Time and other intense jams whose names escape me now. The thing I remember most about it was that when Miles was actually playing, the groove seemed to have an almost magical, supernatural quality about it. However, as soon as he stopped, the music would revert to more terrestrial, albeit highly skilled, "L.A.-style funk band" kind of thing. It was all good, but what makes people like Miles Davis stand out, even among the greats, is beyond any rational or linear explanations. One might say the same about Paul Motian.

Moving right along, the next four days were spent more or less in "vacation mode", staying with our friend Bruno at his Porto Pino Villa. It was definitely not the worst place to be, i.e. great weather, incredible food, beautiful beaches and wonderful people. Meanwhile, Pep was able to get our driver Johnny to help him saw off a good portion of his cast, giving him more dexterity and freedom to play. We were also able to check out some of the material we would record at our upcoming session in Milan.

On the 14th of July, we said goodbye to Bruno and Porto Pino and took a morning flight from Cagliari to Milan. By 2:30 in the afternoon we were at the Barigozzi studio to set up and begin the session. That day we recorded takes of four tunes: Gang of Five, Misterioso, Dance and Once Around the Park, finishing up the following afternoon with Monk's Pannonica, Folk Song for Rosie, a solo guitar version of ByaBlue, Abacus and a special unaccompanied solo sax opus called Johnny Broken Wing (the latter obviously in reference to Mr. Peppers recent wrist injury).

In the final analysis, one could definitely say "all's well that ends well". Misterioso remains my favorite recording of the three Soul Note releases and despite everything, Pepper's contribution to the music was outstanding. As usual, he managed to turn a potential desaster into a beautiful success.

Paul Motian's Band would continue for many years as a trio featuring the amazing Bill Frisell and the musical mastery of Joe Lovano. Pepper eventually moved to Austria where he was diagnosed with lymphoma cancer. He was able to get back to his family home in Portland, Oregon before succumbing to this terrible disease on February 10, 1992 at age 51. I was able to attend and perform at his memorial in Portland, along with Gordon Lee (piano), Don Cherry (trumpet) and Jim's father Gilbert, mother Floy and many others.

All of us that knew him will never forget him.

Hum Buck Shay
Fly like an Eagle
Hungga Chee Edda

Memory - Patty Waters
Taken by Ken Weiss

I have a pleasant memory of my first time traveling around Europe. I was living in New York City at the time and was friends with [visual folk artist] Ellie Ali, who would later become the wife of drummer Rashied Ali, who was good friends with Clifford [Jarvis, the father of Water's son]. We were all good friends in Manhattan. Someone sold me a return charter flight to Amsterdam and Ellie followed on a separate flight. I believe it was the summer of 1967, and It seemed like a perfect time in my life to travel to Europe. As we walked through Amsterdam, we passed my ESP Disk album in a record store window. Then when we went to London, again, I saw my Patty Waters Sings album on display in the window of a little record store. I had no idea my album had become so popular. I was surprised and delighted to see it in the record store windows. I then went on my own to see lovely Paris and explore Italy. After a few weeks of traveling Italy, passing along Monaco to Madrid, I stayed overnight in Gibraltar, then boarded a little plane to Tangier, Morocco. As I wandered through the Medina, Ellie Ali came up to me! It was such a surprise to run into each other on the street in Tangier! We immediately got a little hotel together. Tangier was exotically beautiful, with its blue waters, balmy evenings, deliciously spiced food and prayers sung each evening. It was a special ending to an unforgettable experience. We returned on a nine-day Yugoslavian freighter where a bell would chime whenever food was served. I read a complete book by Jean Genet [Our Lady of the Flowers] on that relaxing return to Manhattan.

Any musical experiences during the trip? Did you go into the music stores to look at the album?

I did not go into the record stores. I felt shy, but enjoyed the experience of actually seeing them displayed in the windows. I did not seek work or meet people who might have hired me. I just vacationed and saw all the tourist sights. It was just before all the crowds started to flock to Europe. I felt extremely lucky for the experience and enjoyed the trip immensely. I stayed in charming hotels and ate delicious food. I had no problem speaking English as I traveled. I like sharing this memory. That trip was one of the highlights of my life.

Fred Frith Interview In the Air
By Ken Weiss

Jeremy Webster "Fred" Frith (b. 2/17, 1949, Sussex, England) is a multi-instrumentalist (guitar, bass, keyboards, violin, and crude home-made string instruments of his own invention), composer/improviser/studio sound sculptor best known for his reinvention of the electric guitar (check out his 1974 Guitar Solos), and as co-founder of the iconic English avant-Rock group Henry Cow. He has also instigated such bands such as Art Bears, Massacre, Skeleton Crew, Keep the Dog, the Fred Frith Guitar Quartet and Cosa Brava. Long associated with members of the Downtown community including Ikue Mori, Tom Cora and Zeena Parkins, Frith has played with Lotte Anker, Derek Bailey, Evelyn Glennie, Miya Masaoka and John Zorn, among scores of others, making a point of working in gender mixed groups for the last 45 years, and composed for ensembles of all persuasions as well as for film, dance and theater. He taught at Mills College for many years. This interview was completed by way of the Internet between October 6-9, 2019.

Cadence: Your given name is Jeremy Webster Frith. Why do you go by Fred?
Fred Frith: Shit happens.
Cadence: Your website bio states you've, "been making noise of one kind or another for almost 50 years." Would you address the notion of noise and its association with music?
Frith: Any sound can be defined as music if you decide that's what it is. It's up to you. Music in this sense means accepting sounds, any sounds, for their potential to touch you and change you and help you to hear the world differently.
Cadence: The press quotes section of your website humorously lists favorable summations such as, "One of music's greatest improvisers," along with searing criticisms – "The stupidest thing I've ever seen," "Even my dog can improvise like that," and "Should be sellotaped to Derek Bailey and pushed off a cliff." How do you deal with aggressively negative reviews and have they affected you during your career?
Frith: I enjoy them immensely and they don't change anything, any more than the positive ones do.
Cadence: Your brother, Simon Frith, was an influential Rock critic. What kind of conversations have you had with him regarding the role of the critic and has he reviewed your work?
Frith: My brother Simon still is an influential writer about popular culture, and the huge field of popular music studies became what it is partly due to the impact of his writing. We've had the odd conversation over the years about this or that record or performance of mine, but I operate in a very different field, so it's probably fair to say that my work is mostly outside his sphere of expertise! A couple of years ago, he and I and my older brother Christopher, who's a

neuroscientist, had a public discussion on what it means to listen from our different perspectives. I found that really interesting.

Cadence: I attended one of your shows recently and after the set, there was a line of people that waited to tell you how much your music has meant to them. A few even noted how you changed their lives. Would you comment on that type of feedback?

Frith: It's deeply touching and reminds me what a privileged life I lead, and how much responsibility I have to take what my work seriously and not let up! Well, not too seriously...

Cadence: Would you discuss your interest in improvisation and your longstanding attraction to playing free and dealing with music that has the potential of falling apart?

Frith: Improvisation for me is kind of the musical "norm." It's where I exist and interact with other musicians most effectively. What I've learned about listening and using my resources can be translated into compositional structures as well, of course, and I like to compose in a variety of different ways, some more spontaneous than others. But improvising is the center of gravity. Any kind of music has the potential to fall apart in my experience. But with composition that means you pretty much have to stop and start again. When listening to improvisation some of the moments that are revelatory, ecstatic even, are when you feel the players are in a hole, and you think, "How the hell are they going to get out of that?" and then suddenly they find an amazing solution you didn't expect at all, and take it somewhere completely different. I love that!

Cadence: You're not pegged as a Jazz musician, but you've played with plenty of so-called Jazz artists. What's your connection to Jazz?

Frith: I grew up listening to a lot of Jazz and reading a lot too. Nat Hentoff's Hear Me Talkin' To You was my bible when I was 15. I listened to everything I could get my hands on. Miles and Ornette and Coltrane and Mingus marked me forever. But it didn't feel like MY music, and British Jazz musicians were often treated like second class citizens by music critics. I couldn't help noticing that, how it was always about comparisons, and chops, and polls, and insecurity. I wanted music to be about love and community, which I experienced a lot more in Folk clubs in the 1960s, to be honest. So, I didn't aspire to be a Jazz musician, while trying to take on everything I could that had a bearing on creative energy and understanding rather than particular idiomatic skill sets.

Cadence: Your approach to guitar remains wide-open. You've used an array of household items on your instrument including eggbeaters, paint brushes, dried beans and rice, and numerous found items. What led you to start doing that and how do you avoid it becoming gimmickry?

Frith: It always fascinates me what music writers ascribe to me in this regard. It's not based on taking note of what I actually do, but on an assumption that I use a bunch of random stuff to make noise. So, let's

Fred Frith, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

get the record straight - I've never used an eggbeater! Or beans! The things I use have been carefully picked for certain quite specific sound qualities, especially to do with avoiding or getting around the sound of the plucked string. Often they are objects that mediate between the strings and the gesture. So, I can place an object on the strings and then approach it as a resonator via the pickups, to give one example. In most cases I've used the same resources for years because they've become part of my technique. I started doing it because of a desire to experiment—as in see what would happen—and soon figured out the kind of things that I liked, and which were useful. I can't stop you or anyone else from finding it "gimmicky," but for me this is my instrument.

Cadence: What's the best backstage item you've discovered to use impromptu for a performance?

Frith: I don't tend to look for items backstage before a concert, I already have what I need. Nearly 40 years ago in Japan, I found instant coffee, which I thought might be interesting to pour on the strings. It was July and unbelievably hot and I sweated onto the coffee which began to percolate, making the strings utterly dead. The residue is still there, it's like concrete. I can't get it off!

Cadence: How long have you been performing with your bare feet and why do you do that?

Frith: I started doing it when I played fiddle with my friend, the late Lars Hollmer, in Sweden, and all of the band went barefoot, so I did too. And I found that I really liked it. It put me in touch with the ground - the sound coming through the soles, and later more fluidity with the pedals. I don't always do it, especially in winter, but I'm still very attached to the idea.

Cadence: You're known for your electric guitar playing but you've also made a number of recordings on electric bass and violin, as well as playing piano and xylophone. How would you describe your level of proficiency on those instruments?

Frith: Proficiency is a fairly vague term. I can do what I need to do in the contexts that I work in. My definition of technique is the ability to do what you want to do when you want to do it!

Cadence: You've been performing on home-made instruments for some time. What have you built?

Frith: There was a brief period at the beginning of the '80s when I made a few instruments that were basically planks of wood with strings and pick-ups. I did it because I realized that the guitar had basically become a piece of wood with strings and pickups, so I didn't see why I actually needed to play it as a guitar. I re-examined those instruments twenty-odd years later and built some new ones for different specific projects – Heiner Goebbels Man in the Elevator, for example, and Traffic Continues with the Ensemble Modern. But the principle was more or less the same. During the '90s I'd worked together with the late, great Claudine Brahem to build instruments

Interview: Fred Frith

Fred Frith, Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

of my conception that she then designed and realized. This was for an extraordinary theater/dance work by François Verret called Nous Sommes les Vaincus. The instruments included a giant bagpipe operated by two people, and a mobile banjo constructed from a timpani, a ten foot long aluminum "neck," and bicycle wheels, for example. Claudine was brilliant! Now I am preparing some new instruments for a joint exhibition with my friend and colleague Sudhu Tewari at the San Francisco Center for New Music next March.

Cadence: Do you sell your creations?

Frith: Nope.

Cadence: What dream instrument would you like to build if there were no limitations?

Frith: I like limitations.

Cadence: Is there an ultimate artistic goal you're working towards?

Frith: Getting better at what I do, however you want to define that.

Cadence: It's well documented that you come from a musically inclined family and that your grandmother aspired that you would become a musician. Did she get to hear the music you made as an adult?

Frith: My grandmother was an accompanist who had to abandon her musical career when she married my grandfather. When I was 5, she told my parents I should have music lessons, which duly happened, on violin. Alas, she died when I was very young.

Cadence: I'm asking this next question with the hope that you'll see the humor in it. You were a choirboy in your youth. Where did things go wrong?

Frith: My voice broke.

Cadence: You started violin lessons at age 5 with a teacher who utilized non-traditional teaching methods. The first 6 months were spent exploring breathing, relaxation and listening, you didn't touch the violin during lessons. Was that the best way to learn the instrument? I suspect many 5-year-olds would not be patient enough to hang in there for those initial 6 months.

Frith: You don't necessarily question things beyond liking something or disliking it when you're that young. I liked it, and regard it now as an extraordinary gift - to learn at such a young age the central importance of breathing and the body in making music. Or anything else come to that.

Cadence: As a kid you were passionate about playing any instrument you could find. Is it true you broke into a chapel to play organ?

Frith: It is. We used to get out of bed at 3 in the morning and climb through the back window of the school chapel. Beautiful empty space, not too near other buildings. We could play as loud as we wanted!

Cadence: You came to guitar relatively late. Considering your interest in instruments, it's surprising that you didn't run across a guitar until age 13.

Frith: What do you mean by run across? I knew what a guitar was, I

listened to guitar music. I just didn't find one that I could get my hands on until I went away to school…

Cadence: You taught yourself guitar from a book of guitar chords. Why didn't you have a teacher?

Frith: I taught myself guitar chords from a book of guitar chords. I taught myself to play by listening to records and watching and listening to other people. I had a teacher briefly (2 lessons), but because of my violin training, my left hand was very far in advance of what the teacher wanted me to do, and my right hand somewhat behind! I was immediately bored…

Cadence: Hearing the Blues for the first time at 15, you immediately transformed your high school band, The Chaperones, into a Blues band. What was your connection to the Blues as a 15-year-old from Sussex, England?

Frith: It never really works like that does it? "This happened and then that happened." That's the routine way to misunderstand history! There were all kinds of music to discover, and the various strands intertwined in different ways and at different times. American Blues artists were finding it possible to make money by visiting the UK, perhaps because of the very strong British Blues boom instigated by folks like Alexis Korner, Graham Bond, John Mayall. Within a few years of hearing these artists I had attended concerts of Muddy Waters, BB King, John Lee Hooker and others. I even played bass with Champion Jack Dupree when he performed in Cambridge, and he had settled in my home county of Yorkshire for a time. So you could say I was connected to it because it was in the air, and also because I was deeply affected by reading about blues artists, and about conditions in the USA, and the Civil Rights movement.

Cadence: You met fellow Cambridge student Tim Hodgkinson at a Blues club in 1968 and had an immediate musical connection. Was he the one who introduced you to modern Jazz artists?

Frith: He introduced me to Ornette Coleman's music, and 40 years later, when I played at the Meltdown Festival in London, I was able to introduce Tim to Ornette! I'll never forget it! Before that I had listened to a lot of modern Jazz—in fact I was a bit of a Jazz nerd—but while I'd heard Miles Davis and Coltrane and Mingus, as I said before, Tim led me to Free Jazz.

Cadence: (Avant-Rock band) Henry Cow was founded by you and Hodgkinson in 1968. What were your plans for the band at the start and how did that change over the years?

Frith: Our plan at the start was to have fun exploring the things that interested us. That didn't change at all. But our interests continued to expand, of course.

Cadence: There's numerous hazy versions of how Henry Cow was chosen as the band's name. Might you clear that up?

Frith: Unlikely!

Cadence: Henry Cow opened for Pink Floyd, which was also a

Cambridge student band. What's been your relationship with Roger Waters?
Frith: Pink Floyd were not a Cambridge student band; they were FROM Cambridge. They were a local band, which is not the same thing! I have never spoken a word to Roger Waters in my life! David Gilmour sat cross-legged in front of me when I played a solo at a bill we were sharing in 1969, which was unnerving. Nick Mason, I had a lot more to do with, because he produced Robert Wyatt recordings that I played on, for example.
Cadence: So, both Henry Cow and Pink Floyd are fictional names. Is there any name mimicry involved amongst the two bands?
Frith: I doubt it.
Cadence: Henry Cow also opened for another iconic band – Captain Beefheart. What were those experiences like and did Don Van Vliet's work influence you?
Frith: Life-changing, though not perhaps in the ways you might think. Mostly we learned to hate the music industry even more because of the way Don's life was managed and scripted, and how much he hated it. And we had a fabulous time hanging out with him. We stayed in touch for many years after that tour. His work had a huge impact on all of us I would say. The intensity, the passion, the way words and music combined. That impact had started long before this tour, however.
Cadence: Lol Coxhill suggested you check out Derek Bailey after seeing your band play in 1971, so you went to a Bailey performance and you were the only one there? Would you talk about Bailey's experience and how much of a role he played in your career?
Frith: Both Lol and Derek were important mentors for me. Lol taught me that I didn't have to be ashamed of enjoying playing a wide variety of different kinds of music as long as I approached them all with equal commitment. And Derek taught me to accept myself for who I am, not to worry about conforming to someone else's idea of what an improviser should be. I could not have been more fortunate.
Cadence: Guitar Solos (1974) was your first solo recording and, in the eyes of many, it radically redefined and reinvented guitar playing. Would you talk about making that recording and how you approached the guitar in ways that were new?
Frith: I was asked to make a solo record by Virgin. I think they wanted a Rock hero kind of thing, but I was more interested in seeing how I could reinvent the guitar. I gave myself a deadline by booking a studio, and then for two weeks I spent all day, every day, deconstructing and reconstructing the "instrument" at home until I felt ready to give it a shot. The record itself was just a series of improvisations, but they felt like 'etudes', each track having a specific approach. The studio used old computers for tape recorders. They were so noisy (and in the same room), that when it came to mixing, it was impossible to hear the frequencies we were adding or subtracting, which has a lot to do with how it sounds!

Cadence: Guitar Solos followed the historic solo recordings made by Anthony Braxton on alto sax and Barre Phillips on bass by roughly 5 years. Did their work enter into your consciousness when you made your recording?

Frith: I didn't hear the Braxton record until many years later. The Barre Phillips record (Unaccompanied Barre, released in the US as Journale Violone) came out in 1968, and I'd bought it a couple of years earlier after I heard him play at the notorious Natural Music concert with John and Yoko [Lennon], and many others, in Cambridge in 1969. This record had a huge impact on me, and I wanted to do for the guitar what I felt Barre had done for the bass. More than anyone, he was the player who got me seriously interested in improvisation.

Cadence: After Henry Cow disbanded, you moved to New York City in 1979 and lived there for 14 years. Would you talk about that experience and the culture change after growing up in Sussex, England?

Frith: I didn't grow up in Sussex. I was born there but grew up in the North of England in Yorkshire. It's worth mentioning because back then London was the center of everything, and I didn't feel happy there. I had the classic Northerner's insecurity and resentment towards all things South. I had moved to London after I graduated from Cambridge, rather unwillingly, but it was deemed essential to our (Henry Cow's) career. When the group broke up in 1978, I almost immediately received an invitation to go to New York from the legendary Giorgio Gomelsky, and as soon as I got there, it felt like home to me in a way that London never had. Pretty much everyone I ran into had come from somewhere else, and there was an openness and excitement that struck me with gale force. I think the years between 1978 and 1985 represent one of the biggest creative explosions I've ever experienced, mine and other peoples. During that time I started Massacre and Skeleton Crew, made three Art Bears records, released Gravity, Speechless and Cheap at Half the Price, worked with Aksak Maboul and Material, produced records for the Muffins, Orthotonics, V-Effekt, Etron Fou Leloublan and Mizutama Shobodan, and performed improvisation concerts all over the US, Europe and Japan, alone and with folks who became my long-time associates and friends, like John Zorn, Bob Ostertag, Ikue Mori, and Tom Cora.

Cadence: In New York, you quickly fell into that Downtown Music scene. Would you talk about your association with John Zorn and time spent in his Naked City band?

Frith: I came into contact with John via Eugene Chadbourne, who'd sent me a copy of his first solo record in 1977. I met Eugene in Paris the following year and he invited me to participate in a concert he was putting together with Zorn in June of 1979 called 2000 Statues. We performed John's game piece Archery, and a crazy piece of Eugene's which was recorded later that year by a very large group - kind of a who's who of that so-called Downtown scene. It all began there for me. I performed quite a lot with Zorn back then, in fact our first duos were

in his apartment to audiences of 3 or 4 people, but it got out of hand rather quickly, so we had to find real venues! Naked City came almost ten years later. I think I was hired because of the fact that I had a Rock background, rather than Jazz like everyone else, and Rock players who could read music were thin on the ground! It was unnerving playing my second instrument in a band full of geniuses, but to say I learned a lot would be an understatement!

Cadence: How was it playing with Bill Frisell?

Frith: Every night a new adventure!

Cadence: As you mentioned, during your time in New York you expanded your interest in studio production work by producing recordings for other artists. Talk about your attraction to post-production and why you like to finish off the work of others?

Frith: That's not really how I see it. I'm not finishing off the work of others so much as trying to make it possible for them to realize their ideas as engagingly as possible. The work begins before the recordings are even started, except in a couple of cases where I was asked to mix something that had already been recorded, which I don't much like. I also think the term post-production, which has a precise meaning in the film world, is much less clear when applied to recording audio. For me the work in the studio is part of the compositional process. The work takes shape in the studio and reveals itself, like a block of marble revealing a sculpture. It's not coming after the creative work; it IS the creative work. I learned to be a composer in the studio, and it's where I feel most at home, so producing felt natural to me.

Cadence: Additionally, in the '80s, you also began writing for dance groups, film and theater. That's interesting because you're admittedly driven by in the moment creation, not pen-to-paper compositions, which these projects require.

Frith: This is misleading in several ways! I'm driven by all kinds of things! For a start, I've been composing "on paper" since I was 13, and still do, in multiple contexts. Secondly, I was involved in composing for dance and theater with Henry Cow since the late '60s. The '80s was a return to something with which I'd already had a lot experience. Apart from the composing end, I had been in the band for productions of Brecht/Weill's Happy End and Mahagonny, for example. Thirdly, why do you think working for dance, film and theater "requires" pen-to-paper compositions? Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't! Depends on the context, who you're working with, how much you have in the budget, and many other factors. Anyway. I tend to work with the same handful of choreographers and filmmakers over a long-time span, and regard them as close creative partners with whom I can truly collaborate. It's the collaboration that excites me, the exchange of ideas, and precisely the fact that every project may require a different approach. And since I usually make music for film and dance in the recording studio, alone, and with other players, I'm always delighted to do it! The fact is that the film work, especially, draws on improvisational skills AND notated

parts and I really like that.

Cadence: You're interest in rethinking traditional compositional notation reaches back to your early work with John Zorn. You've been known to use photographs for graphic scores. What qualities does a photograph need to have to qualify as a musical score and how do you inform others to draw the needed data from the photographs?

Frith: Notation is a simple way to achieve a predictable outcome. Standard notation has the advantage of being universally accepted and understood, so anyone can play with anyone else if they acquire the basic necessary skills. My interest in exploring other ways of controlling musical outcomes actually predates my working with Zorn by many years—he and I had pretty strong differences of opinion about his game pieces, for example, especially the early ones. Reading John Cage's Silence, looking over a friend's copy of Cornelius Cardew's Treatise shortly after it came out, listening to Stockhausen's Aus den Sieben Tagen, and really digging the way Ornette Coleman mixed notation and improvisation on Chappaqua Suite, these were some of the origins of my interest in non-traditional means of communication. That was all happening when I was a student in the '60s. My photographic scores started life as just photos of things that interested me. At some point I started wondering idly if they would make sense as musical scores, so I started adding graphic elements to photographs and asking people to perform them. It was a fascinating exercise, because you find out which scores produce a recognizable and consistent result, and which ones are different every time, in which case you have to ask yourself if the score is actually controlling anything, or are the players just making shit up! A lot of the time it was down to the instructions, which meant that players didn't even really need to see the score when playing. They had to get down with a basic idea. I learned many things from the process and have found a handful of these scores to be super useful as teaching resources because they can be performed by any age group at what you would call- proficiency level!

Cadence: Your song titles are often pulled from newspaper articles. How are you naming your pieces and do the names have any correlation with what was played?

Frith: Hmm. The Stone Box Set has titles taken from the front page of The New York Times on the day of the relevant performances. So that was a pretty obvious connection. Can't think of any other newspaper titles. I get titles from many places—the dark recesses of my own mind, or poets and writers that I like, random extracts from random sources, instruction manuals for firefighters, you name it. And I'm always looking for the title to somehow illuminate the music. I take it very seriously!

Cadence: During your career, you've traveled the globe working with musicians from many cultures. Would you mention some of your most interesting discoveries and unusual pairings?

Frith: Well, you don't have to travel the globe to work with musicians

from many cultures. I had a student ensemble at Mills which included an oud player from Lebanon, a gu zheng player from Beijing, a mridangam player from Chennai, and a heavy metal guitarist from Oakland. Among others! That was at the very least interesting! My group Clearing Customs is all about cultural co-frontations, and we're are playing again next year after a long break. (Co-frontation is actually the name of a concert I performed in Tokyo with a singer from Beirut - Khaled Al Haber. We played each other's music. It was inspiring).

Cadence: Who were you most surprised to hear wanted to perform with you?

Frith: I'm happy that anyone would want to play with me!

Cadence: You taught at Mills College for over 20 years. It seems odd you were hired as a professor of composition since you focus on improvisation.

Frith: I was hired as a professor of improvisation but ended up working with anyone who found it useful to do so, including composers, electronic musicians, dancers and sound artists, as well as people who defined themselves as improvisers. In the end, your job as a professor is to be useful to your students, so I tried to avoid defining my position too rigidly!

Cadence: What advancements do you feel you've brought to Mills and now that you're retiring from there, what class would you have liked to have taught that you never had the opportunity?

Frith: I pretty much did what I wanted to do at Mills, so I have no particular regrets or missed aspirations. I think I helped usher in some good changes, like Signal Flow, the graduate festival that is always a delight. Retiring in 2018 was certainly a jolt, but I still teach at the Musik Akademie in Basel, Switzerland (since ten years with plans to retire in 2020) and am closely involved with a new School of Music and Sound Art in the south of Chile that I helped create, so opportunities abound!

Cadence: What are your guilty pleasures?

Frith: Why do I have to be guilty?

Cadence: Do you care to give a brief comment regarding Brexit since it is coming to a head?

Frith: Words cannot express the mediocrity of the vast majority of the current generation of UK politicians. What a disaster!

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

Henry Kaiser (guitar) asked: "What would be on your list of 10 desert island discs and what are the five best or most influential concerts that you've attended in your life?"

Frith: Henry! Lists!

Recordings: Today's list off the top of my head:

1. Captain Beefheart: Trout Mask Replica
2. Asha Bhosle: Ghazals From Umrao Jaan And Kashish
3. Cheryl Leonard: Chattermarks: field recordings from Palmer Station, Antarctica

4. Olivier Messiaen: Turangalîla Symphony
5. Lau: Race the Loser
6. Charles Mingus: Town Hall Concert
7. The Who: Sell Out
8. Ornette Coleman: This is our Music
9. Annea Lockwood/Ruth Anderson: Sinopah: World Rhythms
10. Louis Andriessen: De Tijd

Tomorrow they would all be different!

Concerts:

Ustad Vilayat Khan, Cambridge, 1969
Natural Music (w. John Lennon/Yoko Ono, Barre Phillips, John Stevens et al.) Cambridge, 1969
King Sunny Ade, New York, 1984
Viktoria Mullova, Bach suites for solo violin, Mills College
Werner Bärtschi, Paganini variations, Mills College

Rhys Chatham (multi-instruments) asked: "I remember hearing about how you used to tour in France and supported yourself by going from town to town and playing in the local cafes. I'd be interested to have you talk about that and what did you play?"

Frith: That's a charming myth if ever I heard one! Henry Cow toured in France on many occasions in a well-established circuit of small clubs and "maisons de culture" that supported independent music. We did what we did, which continued to change and develop over the whole life of the group. But it wasn't the kind of "troubadour heading down the road and asking to play in the local bar" at all. It was no different, essentially, from the kind of touring I do now!

Lotte Anker (saxophone) said: "Playing with you is always a delight! It's something with the interaction, the ways of listening, choices taken, the energy - somehow all those elements connect in a very natural way - even when there are clashes, it still connects in the big picture. It's like entering a space for real exploring which is a quality in music I highly appreciate. And all your beautiful sounds: they have such a wide spectrum of expressions. I really love merging into those and still there can also be challenges and edge in the music. You, Heike (Liss), and I had a conversation recently in Basel (under the influence of some wine) about the turbulent state of the world, politics, climate changes and migration, and how it all impacts on life, the music we are doing, and the arts in general. There were no conclusions of course, and the whole conversation stands a bit blurry in my memory. My question is what are your thoughts on the turbulent world and its (eventual) impact on the music/your music?"

Frith: Right back atcha! There's the impact the turbulent world has on us and our music, usually a series of practical banalities like "Oh, they lost my bags again" or "What do you mean it's cancelled!" and then more darkly, "You mean now I need a visa?" or "Do you stand with the boycott?" I guess what's important to me is the other direction: what impact do WE have on the turbulent world? And I think through the spirit of love and resistance we CAN have an impact, by allowing

ourselves to be free and in the moment in the face of all the odds! That, in any case, is what I aspire to. It's about joy and spirit... (Hope to play again soon!)

Lotte Anker also asked: I know you to be a true expert in birds, which I myself have witnessed and am very impressed by. Has your great interest in birds, and all their sounds, consciously or subconsciously influenced your music and sounds?

Frith: Of the subconscious, I know nothing! But there are certain bird sounds that I have always been haunted by, particularly the sounds of the shorebirds I grew up with in the north of England, like the Redshank and the Curlew. Seabirds seem to express an essential loneliness that draws me in. I think there's some of that in my approach to a phrase or a line. I can't really be more precise than that…

Nels Cline (guitar) asked: "Having listened to Henry Cow from the beginning (at least as far as we knew as import nerds in Los Angeles) and Guitar Solos (a total "game changer" for me then and even now), hearing Massacre at the Whisky A-Go-Go in '81 was revelatory - like non-fatal shrapnel to the mind and body. I am curious to know to what extent total improvisation - as you have so masterfully assayed in subsequent decades - was a part of that trio's repertoire. In my memory, Massacre was "tight" and also free/loose. And related to that/this topic, how has this confluence of composition and improvisation possibly changed or morphed in your music over the many years since Massacre?"

Frith: Massacre started with composed fragments that I taught Bill [Laswell] and Fred [Maher], and then we were all free to expand and contract the material however we felt like. As we went along, we started to improvise completely, but in a way that was super compressed, like we were making up songs. In the end, we hardly played the composed material at all. Now of course, we play completely freely. As for how composition and improvisation interact in what I do, I can only say "constantly." It's pretty much at the forefront of everything I do, whether writing for Classical players with improvised elements, or getting improvisers to tackle composed fragments, and anything in between. Maybe it's an obsession because I don't think I'm quite where I want to be yet, so it keeps driving me.

Barre Phillips (bass) asked: "Fred, if you had to formulate a single sentence for a musician just starting to improvise, what would it be? My love, Barre."

Frith: What just happened, what happens next? (Hope to play again soon!)

Cadence: You've said that teaching how to listen is the most important thing. How do you teach that?

Frith: Teaching is never a question of telling someone how to do something. It's about providing a space where we can try things out and make mistakes, primarily, and so I try to provide contexts where people can try out different ways of listening and approaching what they hear. And understand that there isn't a "right" way to do that.

Peter Brötzmann Interview
A Horn Has to Sound
Interview and photos by Ken Weiss

Peter Brötzmann (b. Remscheid, Germany, March 6, 1941), is a venerated, high energy multi-reedman improviser from West Germany, who Swiss pianist Irene Schweizer has called "The Father of German Free Jazz." His greater than 50-year career includes important connections with major figures in creative music such as Cecil Taylor, Derek Bailey, Han Bennink, Peter Kowald, Evan Parker, Fred Van Hove, Misha Mengelberg, Willem Breuker, Albert Mangelsdorff, Alexander von Schlippenbach, Don Cherry, Rashied Ali, Werner Lüdi, Sonny Sharrock, Bill Laswell, Mats Gustafsson, Keiji Haino, William Parker and Joe McPhee. Brötzmann initially studied painting, which he remains active in and is quite accomplished at, becoming involved in the Fluxus movement, before moving to a career in music. Self-taught on clarinet, he soon moved on to saxophones to play Swing and Bebop before settling firmly in the Free Jazz setting. Brötzmann's 1968 high decibel/ear eviscerating octet recording, Machine Gun, reflected the political turmoil in Europe at the time, and is considered among the greatest Free Jazz recordings. He continues to tour heavily, record frequently, and his live performances remain one of the most exhilarating experiences to behold. Brötzmann agreed to a short interview but didn't fuss when it extended past three hours spent at his Brooklyn hotel on June 11, 2019, just prior to his appearance at the Vision Festival.

Cadence Magazine: Pitchfork Magazine has described you to be "one of the most devastating forces to ever touch a saxophone." Your work is often described along the lines of destructive and eviscerating, however at least one writer has labeled your playing to be one of the most "life-affirming and joyous in all of music." What do you feel best matches what you do, and can you be both destructive and joyous at once?

Peter Brötzmann: You might be able to do that, but I never felt that my way of playing was destructive, just the opposite. It may sound a little bit different from the saxophone sounds you're used to, but I am not destroying. I build up things. That's what the art is there for. I don't

agree, but I understand why [people may] feel that way. Since I started to play the horn in the late '50s, I've had to find my own way because I never had a teacher, there was no repairman around, I had to learn everything myself. There was no other elder saxophone player around to show me how to do it, so whatever I know, I have learned by myself.

Cadence: You've said in the past that you distain the "sonic terrorist" description of your playing.

Brötzmann: I think all these words are quite nonsense. No, [I don't like that]. Other Jazz musicians learn from other Jazz musicians, so when Coltrane died, you had 100,000 tenor players trying to play like Coltrane, and of course, nobody reached that. That never was my thing. My main goal when I was young was to be a painter, and as a painter you do all your stuff alone. You find out what's going on with you in this world, and that is still my main interest. What is this Brötzmann guy doing with his horns and his brushes in this world? In my early years, I got the chance to work with a couple of good guys like Nam June Paik, who influenced my way of doing things. He always said, "Brötzmann, do your thing." I mean, [at that time] we had no audience, we had a lot of difficulties in the so-called Jazz scene. I learned from him and Joseph Beuys, and even from early Stockhausen, that you have to do your own thing. My colleagues on the German scene, Manfred Schoof and Alex von Schlippenbach, came from another background. They had a little bit of Jazz history behind them, and they had studied, and I didn't have that at all. I just tried to get some sounds out of that horn. On the other hand, I always liked Jazz because it's moving, it's going forward. My main guy from the very beginning was, and always will be, Coleman Hawkins, and following him is Sonny Rollins, Coltrane, Eric Dolphy. I also had a chance to listen to all the old Blues guys live and on records. One important concert was the Lionel Hampton Big Band with a front line of 4 tenors playing "Flying Home" and they really went crazy. People like Eddie Lockjaw Davis are still my guys, I love that. What I learned talking to Steve Lacy and Don Cherry, the guys in Europe in the early years, and even a night with Eric Dolphy in my hometown, they all said go do your own thing. Even Lee Konitz. After the very first official festival I played in Germany, the '65 Frankfurt Festival, when all the critics said, "Ah, that's no music, that's no Jazz," Lee Konitz came to me and he saw that I was in not such a good mood after that, so he said, "Peter, play your stuff and don't worry." So, I have to thank a lot of, especially American musicians, for help, advice, and for just being there. Another American I had the chance to work with, Frank Wright, he told me, "Man, Brötzmann, just play." Yeah, we did that together and that's what it is about. I think a horn has to sound. Minimalism, I think is completely the wrong way to do it.

Cadence: What's your interest in playing melody?

Brötzmann: It always was there. Maybe it has to do with getting older, I like melodies, I like the standards. [Laughs] I can't play them, I play

them in my way. I just recorded a solo record for the Trost label where I use a lot of melodies and tunes that have been in my head since I was a kid, since I started to play clarinet. Even I don't know if it's a good thing or if it's completely shit, [Laughs] but we will see. Listening back to it, I started to like it, but we will see.

Cadence: Off stage you're laidback and casual, but once you take the stage, everything changes. Do you have a routine that prepares you to perform or are you able to just turn it on when it's time to hit?

Brötzmann: No, if I touch the horn, it has to go. I have no special recipe. I'm glad if I have a quiet 10 minutes for the last cigar and no talk or other music and a little concentration, but it's nothing special. No.

Cadence: The first time I saw you play was in 1996 in New York City at what turned out to be the first Vision Festival. It was a duet with pianist Borah Bergman. Within a few seconds after the start, Bergman stopped and announced that he couldn't play on such a bad piano. But you said, "Oh, Borah, just play!" And you both played great. That was a really informative lesson that this music is not about perfection, it's about feeling and passion.

Brötzmann: [Laughs] Did I do that? I can imagine that I reacted like that. On the other hand, I can understand Borah's point because he was the most technical guy I've ever seen on the piano, even compared to Cecil, who had his own way of doing things. But Borah, with his left hand, he needed a functioning machine. Another piano player I used to work with, Misha Mengelberg, he was happy if he could play with one finger, [Laughs] a couple of notes on an upright in a fucked-up bar. There are two opposite sides of doing things, but both of them make great music. It's a pity that Borah is not as well-known as he should be.

Cadence: You've often referred to performing on stage as a "fight," and that you need tension and challenges to play your best. Would you talk about how that works for you?

Brötzmann: We Jazz musicians are usually quite friendly people when we sit and drink and eat together. All that is fine, it's good comradeship, which is very important, but on stage, it doesn't count. You have to fight, it's not a friendly clap on the shoulder. It's- I'm here and you, for fuck's sake, do your thing, and I do my thing, and then let's try to get it together. As an artist, you have to be selfish. You have to make clear what you want. Of course, I can say that now, but for me, it was a longtime process to learn that. It comes with the years. I think that's why I got quite respected from a lot of American players in my early years because I always did it the way I had to do it. I remember a little talk with John Gilmore after the Sun Ra band played following my large Machine Gun-like ensemble. He came up and said, "Hey, Brötzmann, how do you do that? You don't play harmonies; you don't care about anything, but it still sounds?" That was a nice compliment. He liked it but he didn't understand how it worked. Do I? I don't know. [Laughs]

Cadence: How often are you still surprising yourself by what you play?

Interview: Peter Brötzmann

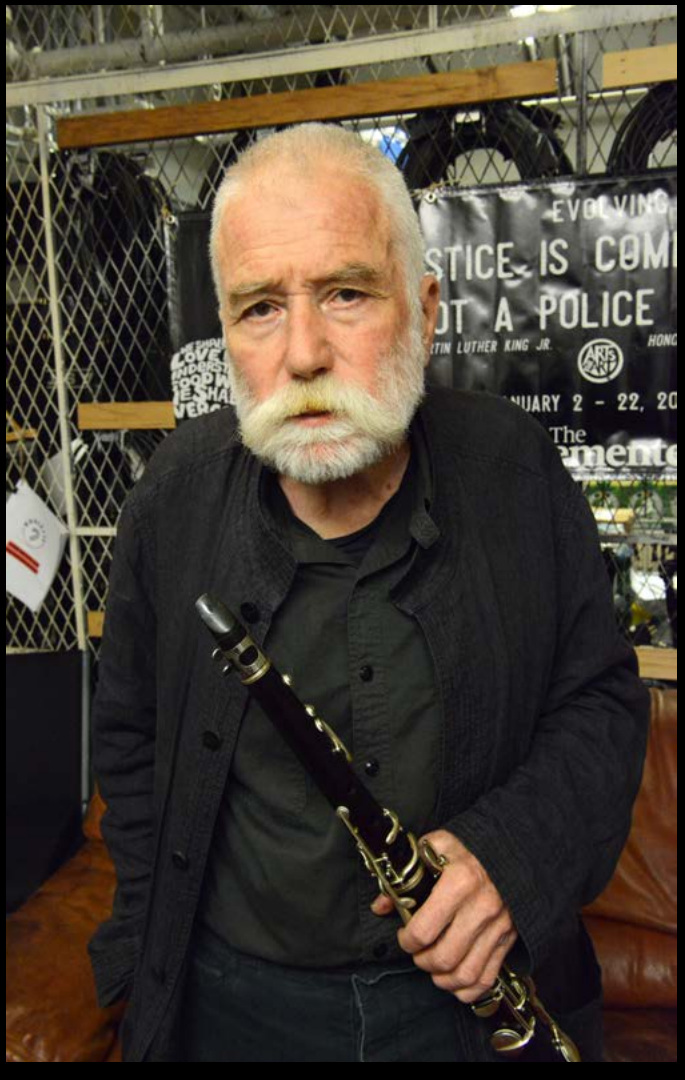


Photo credit Ken Weiss

Interview: Peter Brötzmann

Photo credit Ken Weiss

Interview: Peter Brötzmann

Photo credit Ken Weiss

Brötzmann: It still happens. Not as much as it happened in the early years where you could always find out things, but it still happens. It depends with whom I'm working and what the set up is. That's why, for example, I like the collaboration with Heather Leigh, because she brings me to think in a different way about using the horn. I still do it with all the power and force I have, but I use the horn in a different way than with the trio with Hamid [Drake] and William [Parker]. It's a different situation. I'm still learning, and while learning, you get, from time to time, a little surprise. The horn is such a great machine, you always can find little things you never have played before. It's there, yeah, I like that.

Cadence: How does breathe work into your playing and phrasing?

Brötzmann: That's my problem, actually. My lungs are just working 60 percent, so my phrasing, especially in the change of weather… I came from the cold north of Spain yesterday, and landed in New York's hot and humid air, and getting out of the plane, I nearly couldn't breathe. Breathing, in general, is a little problem, which means my phrasing, over the years, is getting a bit shorter, but my doctors always tell me to keep going, otherwise it will fall apart. I have to challenge myself with the breathing. Blowing out is easier than getting it in. Two summers ago, I was invited to Bogotá, which is about 3,000 meters high, and when I arrived the first night, I couldn't do anything. I couldn't move, I couldn't eat, so the guys provided me with a flask of oxygen in my hotel room. I took a sip from time to time and then I could do the playing. It's difficult but I don't want to complain too much. It is what it is, and I have to live with it, and as long as I have the feeling for myself, that I can still push things around, and my colleagues tell me that I still play not too bad, I will go on.

Cadence: You continue to play with incredible force and tour at an exhausting pace, which, as you just noted, isn't easy with breathing issues at age 78. How do you physically and mentally feel after a performance, and why do you feel the need to perform and travel so often?

Brötzmann: [Laughs] The last question is very easy – I have to make some money. That's the economic side of it. The travel, not the work on stage, is very much exhausting sometimes, and you don't do it like in the old times, where there was a tour in Europe for 4 weeks and you traveled by train or car with somebody driving. That was easy. Nowadays, you have to fight with the guys at the airport, if you can take your horn in the cabin. It's not getting easier, it's more and more difficult. The planes are always late, so you miss a connection from time to time. And running through the airports, with my lung situation, is impossible, so I sometimes ask for assistance. It's not easy, and sometimes I'm really fed up with this side of the, let's call it profession, but as soon as I'm on stage, and together with the guys, then it's fine.

Cadence: You once broke a rib while playing?

Brötzmann: [Laughs] Yeah, that was in a really wild concert in Tokyo

with Mr. [Bill] Laswell and Fred Frith and Anton Fier. That was a really wild concert, and I pushed my horn into my side. I didn't realize it during playing. We just finished our set and went out for drinks and dinner, but the next morning in my hotel room, I couldn't move. I had to roll myself out of the bed and go on all fours. I called the doctor, and the guys helped me. Lufthansa carried me home in a bed [Laughs], more or less, on the plane. Yeah, that happens.

Cadence: Performing is obviously very cathartic for you. How do you imagine life would be if you suddenly could not play anymore?

Brötzmann: That of course is a question I have to face. What would I do? To tell you the truth, I would like to spend a bit more time at home. I'm still doing my little artwork. I have quite some ideas in my head but never time to realize them, and so I'm always hoping for the summer, where the jobs are getting a little less, to have more time for that. But on the other hand, when I'm 2-3 weeks at home, I need to move somewhere, I need to play. It's more than fun, it's just I need it for some reason. But I don't know how long it goes with the lungs. If they get worse, I still can sit at home and paint my things I want to do, or other things. I'm not afraid of that kind of future. We will see.

Cadence: In a 2001 interview, at age 60, you said that realistically speaking, you had 10 years left and that you didn't, "want to end up repeating things of the good old times and playing some weak shit." That was over 18-years ago, do you care to update your prediction?

Brötzmann: Oh, give me another 5 years now [Laughs] I would say. No, I'm always looking for challenges and it's still a challenge to work with Han Bennink and von Schlippenbach for example. Working with Heather is a big challenge always because you have to fight against the electric machine, which is always difficult for a horn player. You have to get in some connection with her way of thinking, and that forces me to think a bit different. Her thing is tuned in some different key, and I have to use other keys on my horn that are usually on the side. To play with Hamid as a duo, with guys like this, it's always a challenge still. It's never getting back to old things we have done, it's always trying to step forward. Situations around us are changing all the time, and we are just a kind of mirror in what is out there. If you look at worldwide politics nowadays, such a lot of things are going on. And especially for me, as a child born in the war, the first thing I thought when I started to learn what my fathers had done to the rest of the world, was never again, never again. This kind of nationalism, this kind of Fascism, and nowadays seeing all that kind of stuff in nearly all parts of Europe, not to talk about this country, where I'm a guest, so we don't have to talk about your special president [Donald Trump] at the moment, we can just look at Europe and the developments there, which are very dangerous. An example of this is that I was supposed to have an art exhibition in Pisa, but it got cancelled because the Pisa city government said no, we don't need these foreigners anymore. The rightwing nationalists are getting more important again, and if we don't want the world coming to an end, we have to cooperate together. We don't have

to build up new walls.

Cadence: After performing for close to 50 years, where do you see your music heading? Is there an endpoint that you've been aiming towards?

Brötzmann: I see it as a lifelong story. Of course, as a human being you look for perfection in your own thing. Maybe I'm coming a bit closer to that, but there is still a lot to find out for me. It's a learning process until the end. I can't sit here with a certain kind of resume where I've done this and I'm here…no, it goes, it goes on.

Cadence: What specific aspect of your craft are you still working on? What, if anything, needs improving?

Brötzmann: It's still the sound, I think. And I must say, during the last 20 years, I'm more interested in developing the sound. I mean, I had my own sound from the very beginning, and if people heard me on the radio, they knew that was "terrible Brötzmann" again. Now, for myself, as I said, it's still Coleman Hawkins as one of the guys I'm listening still most. What he did for himself to get this kind of perfection is far away from me, but I'm trying. It's hard to describe because I might have it in my head, how it should be, and it's not perfect yet. It never will be, I'm afraid, but coming a little closer here and there. That's what I'm interested in.

Cadence: There are many compositions on your recordings that list you as composer. What do your original charts look like? How much is written out?

Brötzmann: I never learned to write notes in a proper way. I started from the very beginning with graphic notations. There is a contemporary composer, Dieter Schnebel in Germany, he is the classic guy for graphic notations. I learned a lot from him, just watching how he did it, and Mauricio Kagel, his notations sometimes were very graphic. My goal when putting bands together was always knowing the people I wanted. I didn't look for a saxophone, I looked for the saxophone PLAYER I wanted. It was always a very personal thing, and the goal was, if it was early Machine Gun, or if it was late Chicago Tentet, to get the guys to the point to take over responsibility, and to help them make their own space for themselves without losing the whole thing. I'm always most interested to get people playing. The playing is the most important thing.

Cadence: You listened to the Blues as a kid, trying to understand it. Would you talk about the Blues and how it relates to your music?

Brötzmann: Let's try. I never saw the Blues as a kind of form, I saw the Blues as a most perfect description of a situation a human being is in, and mostly the human being is in a kind of shit, and to get out of that. Of course, the Blues is based in this country in the South from the black people. It's a perfect way to express yourself, to talk about daily things, to talk about money and booze and women – all essential things for life. You find that in German art, for example in the period of the German Expressionism. My understanding is much more from the painter side in me, the interest and the understanding of the Blues, than as a musician, which came later for me. If you are a young man

growing up with all the difficulties in after-war politics, in finding your place in this world. Yeah, I always made my life quite alone in a way. So, listening to the Blues, and seeing it live by some of the greatest guys... My favorite still is Howling Wolf. I had even the chance to shake hands with him [Laughs] as a very young man. That was really the essence of life in the Blues, and I think all cultures have that in a certain way, and it always has to do with music. Music is the most perfect medium to express that kind of thing. If you're able to look at it with a certain distance, you can take a lot for yourself out of it, and that was always a good help to know there was such a music.

Cadence: You were turned onto Jazz at a very young age after witnessing a Sidney Bechet concert. How did that experience make you feel? What do you remember about it?

Brötzmann: That was in the '50s. There were a lot of musicians touring in Germany, because Germany was cut off from everything, so there was really a need for music after the war. We had some army barracks around my town, Belgians and English mostly, so you had a lot of music coming from England. I heard Sidney Bechet twice. Once with a completely American band, some guys all living in Paris at that time, and then with the French band of Claude Luter, who was performing in Europe a lot. This man [Bechet] with his horn was such a power on stage with just blowing and getting such a great sound out of that soprano. That was very impressive.

Cadence: What was the extent of your exposure to live American Jazz performances as a young man?

Brötzmann: I started to travel very early, when I was still at school. The first steps always were across the Dutch border. Amsterdam was only 4 hours away by car or train. I had my first exhibitions in Holland, and as a student I went to England for the music when I was around 15. I was in London one night with a guy from my class and we strolled the streets and heard some strange music out of a basement. We weren't allowed but we snuck in a little bit, and there were 4 or 5 black guys playing some strange music. Later I learned that was Joe Harriott. Yeah! A couple of years later, in my area there was a kind of Jazz club with a wine bar and some prostitutes in the back, but they had live music. Bands would play for 2-3 weeks, and if they were successful – 4 weeks. I was 17-18 and part of a Swing/Bebop band, which was trying to get more advanced stuff together, when I heard the George Maycock band of Jamaican guys. They were quite interesting. It was the time of Hard Bop and you could hear Art Blakey all over the place, as well as Horace Silver, Lou Donaldson. That was the first time I saw Walter Perkins, who, 40 years later, I would have the pleasure to play with. I heard Miles Davis and all the Coltrane bands, including the ones with [Cannonball] Adderley and Dolphy. It was great information for a young man. At the big festivals in Berlin and Frankfurt, you could hear Duke Ellington and Count Basie, and all that beautiful stuff. It was a wide range of music. I was also always interested in what was going on

in the field of contemporary music. That was the time that Stockhausen was setting up his electronics studio in Cologne, and Cage and Tudor came to visit.

Cadence: As you alluded to, your work is informed by your status as part of Germany's first generation after WW ll, and dealing with the gravitas and guilt that comes from that. Do you still feel that inside of you?

Brötzmann: I wouldn't say it's guilt, it's shame.

Cadence: In a 2001 DownBeat interview you said, "I still believe that what I'm doing is necessary – not only for myself, but for others too." Would you talk about that?

Brötzmann: If you are not convinced that what you're doing is right, you shouldn't go on stage. The other thing is, coming back to the shame I mentioned, even if I go nowadays to play in Poland or Russia, for example, it's for me still a different thing than just going somewhere else. I have to say that sometimes there are some young people coming after the show, nearly with tears in their eyes, and being moved with what I have done, or what I have done with somebody else. That gives me the feeling there is something in the music which opens hearts or perspectives. I have that kind of feedback quite often, I must say.

Cadence: You met your father for the first time at age 8, after he was repatriated from a Russian prisoner-of-war camp. I've not read anything where you've addressed that. Would you talk about that?

Brötzmann: Yes, he could escape and showed up one day. [Laughs] I can't tell you too much about that, he just was there. He left, he had to go to the army when I was 3 years old. I hadn't seen him, and then there was this man. We knew he was alive, and from time to time, we'd get some kind of sign that he was still alive. It's funny, I come from an old soldier's family, in a way. My grandfather and great grandfather were all soldiers with the emperor in the Wehrmacht. My father didn't want to be a soldier, he was a tax officer in Hitler's time, but then he had to be a soldier too, but he stayed a simple soldier. His older brother was quite a high-ranking officer in the Wehrmacht. My father actually didn't like to talk about the war or the prison after that. No, it was nearly impossible to get some statements from him, but when his older brother came to visit, his brother would say the Wehrmacht wasn't so bad, it was a good army. I was impressed as a kid, but then, growing up, when I would hear the same nonsense again, we'd have our fights in the nights. [Laughs] I think my father had to suffer from all that he experienced in those years. It must have been so many bad things that he couldn't or wouldn't talk about. Yeah, that was our problem because Germany's first post-war government was still full of old Nazis in the administration. Of course, we didn't want that, and the students revolted in the '60s. That was my generation, and that might be one of the reasons that the German so-called "Free Jazz" was always a bit more radical, a bit more violent. The English had formalistic and aesthetic

problems, but we had to get rid of something. That was, for sure, a part of my thing. To come back to my father, he was, for sure, a nice guy, but educated in the Prussian way, and when I started to be busy with the arts and the music, he didn't understand. He didn't want to understand. There was a time when I got married very, very early, and he always had other plans for me. I left school and started the art school without asking anybody. I just did it, and so there was a time he didn't speak with me for long years. [Laughs] Yeah, it was a bit strange sometimes. He was very nice to my wife and kids, but we just said hello. Nothing to do [with each other]. And just before he died, a couple of weeks, I visited him in the hospital, and at the end he said, "Yeah, maybe you have done the right thing," which was a bit late, but, okay. He couldn't get out of his skin, as we say in German. He was really focused on education in his picture of the world. He couldn't open up.

Cadence: How did it feel to have your dad come back to you when you were 8?

Brötzmann: The times were so difficult, everybody had to try to survive. My parents were mostly busy with organizing things to eat, and my father had to find a new job. We kids were left to the streets. We had our street gangs which we organized ourselves, and we stole what we could to eat – fruits and potatoes. I can't complain, it was a good time, in a way. [Laughs]

Cadence: Music almost didn't happen for you. You initially studied art and graphic design at Wuppertal Art School for over 4 years. What were your career plans at that time?

Brötzmann: I wanted to be a painter. Because I married before I was even 20, and then we had a fast two kids, so during my studies I had to already work for my professors, and I worked in factories, and everywhere just to make money to survive as a family. I did my music, and I always had a little studio for the painting. I was always quite busy at that time. My wife was a great person and we always had an open house for all the artists passing through. I had connections to Holland and England and Scotland, so a lot of painters or musicians on the road would stay for weeks or months. We always had an open house with soup and 6-packs of beer. After my studies were finished, I had to make some money, so I opened up, with a friend from the art school, a kind of advertisement studio, and worked mostly for industrial companies in my area. It was working but then, at the same time, the art went on, the exhibitions came, and with the music, I had my own first trio with Peter Kowald, who I found at the school playing tuba. I told him, 'Man, we need a bass,' and he took lessons. I think it was around Machine Gun time that I decided to stop the advertising nonsense. The kids were older so my wife could at least do a half-day job somewhere. We managed to get along. And then music in a way took over. I liked to be on the road, I liked to create with some other

people. When you are in your studio, you are alone. That's a nice feeling too, but the music was always something else and still is, a greater challenge. In the studio, if it's not a good work, you can throw it in the garbage, but the music is there, you play it, and you can't take it back, and that's quite a risky thing.

Cadence: What made you think you could make a living as a musician without taking formal lessons?

Brötzmann: This was after war times and I had the feeling you could do anything. You didn't have to go by established systems, just do what you do, and it was working, at least for me, not for everybody. I mean, not to glorify these years, it was hard. Sometimes we were sitting with no money, no bread on the table, so I sold one of my horns, which I always regretted. We had a big brewery in town that paid the best, and you could do two shifts and make some money fast. I'd put crates of beer on the belt. I did that from time to time, and all kinds of things. At other times, I was thinking, 'I give up. I'll sell the horns tomorrow,' but [Laughs] I didn't.

Cadence: As an art student, you encountered Fluxus artist Nam June Paik, who made his big debut in 1963 in Wuppertal at an exhibition in which he scattered televisions everywhere and used magnets to alter and distort their images. What was your connection with Paik?

Brötzmann: He came to Europe to study music and got thrown out of music schools and conservatories, [Laughs] and he got stranded in Cologne. He came out of the John Cage school in a way, and at that time, he was working a lot with prepared pianos, with all kinds of toys and some mechanical sound systems. I liked all that prepared piano and the other mechanical sound machines. As a person, he was a very convincing man. He looked at what he was doing with a great distance and always with a kind of smile, and he kept that even when he later did big installations. What I learned from him was to not take it all too seriously.

Cadence: The music you set out to play wasn't popular, it was never meant to be easy listening. Bassist Peter Kowald in a 2005 Cadence Magazine interview said that you, "were beaten, slapped in the face for what you played."

Brötzmann: It was not so dramatic. We had quite some wind against us from all sides and the most important thing were people like Steve Lacy, Don Cherry, Carla Bley, they gave us the important support. If you have something in mind, you can't look left and right. If people like it or not, that was not the point. We had to do it. You have to be patient and insistent. You have to work it. You have to do it all yourself because you can't rely on somebody else. That's why I started my own record label – Free Music Production [FMP]. I was always on the edge, [as far as] being successful economically, but the label was, and still is, an important label for these years of European and world-wide music.

Cadence: Perhaps what's most impressive about your career has been

your resolve. There's a Willem Breuker quote in Kevin Whitehead's book New Dutch Swing that amplifies that. Breuker recalled bringing in a "silly tango" for the group to play and you got mad at him and said, "How can you play a tango when you're a free-Jazz player?" Breuker argued that the music had to be developed because in a few years nobody would want to listen to the blowing and screaming anymore.

Brötzmann: So far he is right – the blowing and the screaming of the '60s doesn't transfer to today. There are a lot of younger bands that think that Free Jazz is just a thing like Swing and Bebop. That is a different thing because, Free Jazz, and I never liked that term, was happening for a very special, limited time. It was America in the '60s, with the things that went on in Detroit, Washington, DC, the things in the South, the killing of students, the Black Panthers. The same situation was for us young guys in Europe. We wanted another society, we wanted to change the world in the naïve and foolish way [we thought]. When I sit with Joe McPhee, and we talk of old times, as old men tend to do, he tells me in what kind of demonstrations he got beaten up in. That had a lot to do with [what entered into the] music. I still like the screaming and the full parts of the horn, but that is me and the way that I play, but the way I'm using that is different from the way I did 40-50 years ago. I wish I would hear a bit more full sound and full screaming from the horn players now a days, but people are so quick to play some beautiful, nice shit, or to get to this minimalistic sphere, which I always hated. Man, can you imagine a Blues player fumbling around on the guitar? It has to sound. I mean, you have a trumpet, let it sound. You have to give a message. Maybe it's not time for big messages. The way music is played today, just coming out of academic backgrounds and trying a kind of mix between contemporary compositions and a bit of free, and a little bit of [this or] that, I'm not convinced. And then of course, it's a different scene now with all the different medias you can work. That has influenced younger musicians, but I doubt that it is a good influence. Our daily lives have [been forced to change]. This morning I went for coffee around the block and I had to use a credit card to pay, they didn't take cash. What would I have done if I didn't have a card? In a couple years, you won't see a human behind the counter, it will be some robot. We need human voices. We are flesh and blood and we should talk, we should listen to music. I see everybody is getting more and more into themselves, and we need just the opposite.

Cadence: In the same book, Breuker is also quoted boosting that, "I could play louder and longer than Brötzmann, and I could drink him onto the floor." Which of those two claims is most true?

Brötzmann: It was mostly the opposite. [Laughs] Willem and I were really good friends and whenever I had work in Amsterdam in the early years, I stayed with him where he was living with his parents. I

knew his whole family. He was a very, very social character. When it came to playing, he was very educated. He knew all the tricks, and all the shit, but when it came to playing, I think we both had our qualities. And if it came to drinking, I think I've won the most battles, ya. [Laughs]

Cadence: Two thousand eighteen marked the 50th anniversary of Machine Gun, your best-known work and a true classic. That was the second recording you made, the second of a few hundred recordings that followed. Does it bother you when this early work is referred to as your best or most important work?

Brötzmann: For sure, it's not my best, my best is still to come, I think. It has a special meaning. It was the first West European collaboration on record, a self-produced thing, and it had the right title, at the right time. On the other hand, there are a lot of misunderstandings about the title. The title was from Don Cherry giving me that nickname, although it was the time of Vietnam, and it also had to do with that. It still has a kind of importance in history, but music wise, there's plenty of more interesting music [that I've done]. It's a very simple piece, it's very structured. It's a very conservative piece, in a way. It's a theme, a solo, some middle things, quotations, a solo again, and so on, but for those years, yeah, it's a special thing.

Cadence: Does it bother you when that's all the media wants to talk about?

Brötzmann: It's a bit stupid but I know that people don't listen anyway. If you have this image once in your life, you keep it until you are under the grass. It's one part of human stupidity. The writers who just want to write about Machine Gun are people who never listened to anything else, anything that came after. I'm not happy about that, but I don't care.

Cadence: As you mentioned, some of the rage reflected in the production of Machine Gun was in response to the Vietnam War. How did that war have such an impact on you as a German citizen?

Brötzmann: We just had finished the Second World War and the U.S. started again with the Bay of Pigs disaster, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and at the same time, we had our inner German problems, so it all came together. And the riots here, in your country, that all came over to us, and we, at that moment, we saw the world as one thing. What was happening here came over to us too. In a way, we were part of a worldwide movement against everything like that – against war.

Cadence: What was the German audience's reaction to the release of Machine Gun, as compared to the rest of Europe?

Brötzmann: I got a lot of press at that time from the papers, so it was recognized. There were people that liked it and found it necessary, as well as, of course, the people that said, "No, that's not music. That's not what we need or want." But that's always a good sign. It was long ago.

I'm not sure that I can say that the German reaction was any different from the rest of the world. I would say the reaction was the same all over.

Cadence: How did you come to self-release Machine Gun and get it out into the world?

Brötzmann: The first record order, after they were pressed, was an order from a little shop in Stockholm. The first package was sent to this little store under the famous club where Ornette played - the Golden Circle. The Japanese also got interested very early. I just had money initially to press 500, and the first 500 went out very quickly, which was good for me, because at that time, you had to finance everything in advance. I put a little ad in the German newspaper that if you prepaid, you got it for less money. So, money came in and I could pay the bills. The next year, 1969, we founded FMP and the record went over to the company. There was quite a movement in Europe at the same time to form labels. The ICP was founded , Incus was founded, Gunter Hampel set up his own label, and we had contact with Carla Bley and Mike Mantler [who founded the JCOA label], and we had a big meeting at the radio station in Hamburg to coordinate all the different labels, but it didn't work because nobody was able to administrate all that. [Laughs]

Cadence: What's your response to trombonist/author George Lewis who claims that Machine Gun can be heard as a blatant imitation of Coltrane's Ascension?

Brötzmann: That is nonsense, it has nothing to do with Ascension, not at all. I've not heard that comment before. I know he's an intelligent guy, but how he came to this conclusion is a little strange.

Cadence: Machine Gun is so named because that's the nickname that Don Cherry gave you. Did you like that he called you "Machine Gun," as well as "Living Ball of Fire?"

Brötzmann: Yeah, the "Living Ball of Fire" is of course a bit more poetic, [Laughs] but "Machine Gun" was okay too. I was proud that he had some name for me.

Cadence: You've had other nicknames?

Brötzmann: No, that was enough.

Cadence: In the late '60s, you believed that music could bring about change. Do you still feel that's true?

Brötzmann: We can't change society. If you look at the arts now a days, they are the main flagpole for this fucked up society. No, we can reach single people, and we can, maybe, open up their minds, their hearts, but we won't change society with the arts.

Cadence: Let's talk about some of your other recordings. Your recordings tend to have very graphic titles including The Dried Rat-Dog, Guts, The Brain of the Dog in Section, The Nearer the Bone, the Sweeter the Meat, Hairy Bones, Funny Rat, Die Like a Dog and Crumbling Brain. How are coming up with these titles?

Brötzmann: I don't know. Some of the titles have a little story, for

example, Hairy Bones. I was sitting with Paal [Nilssen-Love] for breakfast in Oslo, and next to us, was sitting a very good looking lady, but very thin and boney, and all over covered with hair, so I said, 'Oh, man, look at that hairy bones.' So that was the title for the band. A lot of the more sophisticated titles I got out of the writing of a poet I still admire very much – Kenneth Patchen. For the Crumbling Brain cover, I used a woodcut I had, and it just reminded me of a brain falling apart. There's nothing big behind the titles.

Cadence: Other album titles shock with sexual references – Nipples, More Nipples, and Balls. Talk about the sexual nature of your music.

Brötzmann: I think that's what drives us through life, that is the main important thing. As a man or as a woman, you have that, and that makes you alive. Even when you are quite old, it's still important.

Cadence: Nipples (1969) is your earliest recording and includes jokester Han Bennink as the drummer. What was Bennink's reaction to hearing what the title was to be?

Brötzmann: I don't recall what his reaction was. I don't remember any bad reactions to my titles. As a young man, Han was a real family man, and we always argued about my way of life. [Laughs] He was drinking milk and being brave, and I was the opposite. [Laughs]

Cadence: It's stunning that Manfred Eicher was the producer for Nipples, considering the more ambient recordings he would later famously make with his ECM label. What was your experience with Eicher then? Did he have an ear for that music?

Brötzmann: Manfred is a special case. Did you know he was a bass player in the earlier times? And we even had a trio together at the same time as Nipples, for a short period of time with a German drummer living in Munich named Fred Braceful. But it didn't work out with Manfred. We had two different aesthetic images in our heads. As a producer for Nipples, we went down to his studio near Stuttgart where he already had the sound engineer he would work with for years. I always got in trouble with their understanding of sound. We worked all day long, and when I got home with the material, I realized I could only use 20 minutes of it, and that became the first side. The next day, I had to go with a smaller group to a famous recording engineer in Cologne, Conny Plank, and he did the other side. Later, I did a Globe Unity recording for Manfred and I had the same problem with the same engineer, who was doing what Manfred was telling him. Yeah, his whole label is a very narrow aesthetic understanding of sound. Good for him that he is so successful with it, but it's not my cup of tea. I think he killed a lot of bands and music. When I listen to it, there's no excitement or surprises or broad sound, but it fits together with his character, and it's a good total product.

Cadence: On your No Nothing recording (1990), you are listed as playing the Brotzophone. What is that?

Brötzmann: It's a kind of instrument I made myself out of an old tenor and an alto. It worked. You could get tones out, but you never could

control what tone is coming out. It's full of surprises because you can't control what sound comes out. I still have it somewhere in the corner, but I never use it.

Cadence: How many instruments do you have at home?

Brötzmann: It's quite a number. I have a couple of altos and tenors, a bass saxophone, and a few years ago I bought a contra alto clarinet, which is very special. I have bass clarinets and other clarinets, but it's a pity that I can't travel with all that anymore. I would like to bring a bass clarinet from time to time but it's so difficult to give it into the luggage. It's so risky.

Cadence: Your 1994 solo recording Nothing to Say has to qualify as one of the most negative marketable album titles. Why name it that and what led you to dedicate the work to poet/playwright Oscar Wilde?

Brötzmann: It was from the beginning, a very strange session. FMP had a little studio in Berlin, and I asked [engineer] Jost Gebers to show me how to handle the machines. I said, 'I have a mattress here and an icebox full of drinks and food. Let me do it and leave me alone for two days.' I tried to do that and the first night I started, nothing was working. I couldn't play anything. I was nearly on my way to give up. The next day, I tried again, and one piece after the other got in shape. Maybe the title comes from this very difficult recording situation, and at the same time, I must have been reading Oscar Wilde a bit, and that seems to fit [Laughs] quite well together. The title? You live with this fuck you mentality, in a way, so that is in that context.

Cadence: One of the most unusual recordings in your discography is your 1987 work No Material with Ginger Baker and Sonny Sharrock. How did that grouping come about and what was your experience with the mercurial Ginger Baker?

Brötzmann: [Laughs] Ginger, yeah. The band was put together by a manager who had the idea. At that time, I was working with Sonny. It was a kind of strange band, I must admit. At the first rehearsal, when Ginger heard me playing, he was looking very grim. But we went on and I tried my best. He was playing, he could play, but still, it was not a good feeling to have for a tour. At that time, I was drinking, and Ginger is famous for his alcohol consumption. We were sitting at the table and everybody had a bottle in front of them. We talked and emptied the bottles, and after that, it was quite a good understanding. [Laughs] We made a handful of concerts, but I wouldn't say that was an extraordinary example of good music.

Cadence: Cecil Taylor famously had a month-long residency in Berlin in 1988 and you had the opportunity to, not only perform with him, but to record and release over 14 hours of that music on your FMP label. What are your memories of that time?

Brötzmann: I knew Cecil from the very, very early years. We met many times and it was always very friendly. During this time in

Berlin, we met quite a bit. It was very nice to sit with him at night and hear him talk about his family and more private things. When we recorded his European band, I was standing next to him. You know I always liked to play, and it didn't matter who was sitting there, but in that case, he always was trying to stop me because he had his whole thing in mind. We didn't argue, but I always felt that the music didn't work out. He had [the mindset that], like a lot of American band leaders - if they are the leader, they want to tell you what to do. That was the same when I started to work [when I was young and] very innocent and didn't know anything, with Carla Bley. I've always loved her compositions and her piano playing, but all the solo parts…I mean we were wild guys, we wanted to play. I think she was always a bit angry with me because I never did what she wanted me to do. It was the same with Cecil, a little bit.

Cadence: You play many reed instruments, including the rarely heard tárogató (a single reed Hungarian horn). Talk about that instrument and why it's not more popular.

Brötzmann: The instrument found me. I had a gig in the south of Hungary about 30 years ago, at a festival connected to a music school. After the concert, a guy came to me and said, "I am the repairman here at school and I would like to show you my workshop. I said, 'Yes, please,' because I always like this kind of things. It was a beautiful workshop with all the tools, and there was a row of tárogatós which he said were his treasures. He asked if I'd like to try one, and I tried one after the other, and he said, "If you want, you can buy one." I found the one that sounded the best and bought it, not knowing actually what it was. He told me a little bit about where it came from, and how it was used in Hungarian Folk music in the 19th and early 20th century. It was really cheap to buy. It was still during the Cold War and the West currency was worth something. I gave him my fee for the festival and some Hungarian money, and we were both happy. The instrument comes from the very Far East, from the Chinese Mongols, and at that time it was used in the armies with a brass mouthpiece. When the Mongols came to the Middle East, the Middle East guys put on a double reed because they were used to it, and they developed it further. When the Turks tried to invade Hungary and Vienna, the guys in Budapest put on a clarinet-like mouthpiece. I play it a little different from the way they use it in Hungarian Folk music, because it sounds very sweet and very nice in the Folk music. I'm still in touch with the guy who sold me the instrument and sometimes I send him a piece of music, and whenever he listens to his beautiful tárogató, he says, "Brötzmann, I hate it. I can't stand it." [Laughs] He has a tárogató trio with his daughters and they play so sweet and nice, everything is in tune, and I'm always out of tune. I like it, It's a very special horn.

Cadence: President Bill Clinton named you in 2001 as one of his favorite musicians. He called you "One of the greatest alive." What

was your reaction to hearing that?
Brötzmann: [Laughs] I couldn't believe it. I got some phone calls and emails when the interview was published. I thought somebody's joking, but it was true. I was curious so I wrote him a letter and sent him some new production and some of my art books, and he wrote back. So, I have two Bill Clinton letters at home. [Laughs]
Cadence: You didn't play at the White House for him?
Brötzmann: No, he got fired before that. [Laughs]
Cadence: By any chance, have you heard from President Donald J. Trump?
Brötzmann: Not yet, and I doubt it. That's another sad story.
Cadence: You've remained living in Wuppertal. Why stay there?
Brötzmann: Inside Germany I wouldn't know where to go. I don't like Berlin too much. The only city I like is Hamburg, but the music in Hamburg is not happening, it never was. And I have a nice living situation in the middle of town, with a nice garden and backyard studio for the arts and music, nice neighbors, a nice landlord, and it's in the center of Europe, more or less. I have 3 or 4 airports around, train traffic goes easily, and to move somewhere else? I was tempted in the early times after going to Chicago. I like it there very much, and at that time it would have been cheap to buy or rent a little house, but I had no money. [Laughs] Ten years later, prices went up. And I must say, I like to go to the States. I like the American audience, and I draw a nice crowd in certain areas, but I think with the daily American way of life, it's not so much my cup of tea. I like the South, but what do I do in Austin, Texas all year long without a car? I don't drive cars and you are lost in American cities without a car. New York is much too expensive. As a musician, you are completely lost there and it's too hectic. It's a normal, quiet life in Wuppertal when I am there, and that's what I need. In the earlier times, hectic was fascinating, but now I would prefer the countryside.
Cadence: Why don't you drive?
Brötzmann: I never did. When I was young, I always wanted to have a motorcycle, but we had no money, and I was drinking too much, and that would have been a disaster anyway. But cars never interested me. I bought a couple of cars but Kowald or Van Hoven drove them. I never drove.
Cadence: The culture of drinking is certainly different in Germany than it is in America. You've been open in the past about your heavy drinking history, which you gave up cold turkey in 2000. How bad did it get for you?
Brötzmann: I did know that I was on a very dangerous way, so I stopped in the earlier times here and there, but I always started it again. I ended up getting gout in my feet, and then it reached the fingers. That's a very painful thing. I remember coming from a tour in Poland. I wasn't drinking much there because I don't like vodka, but the gout came, and I was home alone. I couldn't move, and it was so painful

that I called the emergency [line] and a young doctor came who knew what he was talking about. I made a pot of tea and he gave me some painkillers and told me what he thought would happen with me if I were to go on like that. [Laughs] And I must say, he did a good job because that was it for me. It's easy in this profession to get into alcohol or drugs. After I stopped, I had maybe a week or ten days of a hard time to get the poison out of the blood, but I made it.

Cadence: How did the experience of performing change for you once you quit drinking?

Brötzmann: It was different, and it still is. You play with much more consciousness about what you are doing. Life without alcohol, it's not easy, I tell you. It was much easier to get through all the airport nonsense at least half drunk so you don't realize all the bullshit. Nowadays, I realize everything and it's sometimes hard to keep calm. For sure, it changed my playing a little bit too, and I must say, I like it. I'm really very much aware of what I'm doing, but not that I regret the other time, because it went different ways in my head.

Cadence: You still find time to paint and to make art, as well as creating the covers for many of your albums.

Brötzmann: The main difference is that when you make art, you do it alone, plus you can stop and start, change things. You can throw things away and start from scratch. But, when you have a big canvas in front of you, and the smell of everything, and being alone for this white wall… It has a certain tension when you touch it with a brush. It's a very sensitive and very enjoyable thing to do. In the last few years, I've done a lot of art things on the side, but in-between packing the suitcases, there's not much time. That's my problem.

Cadence: How does the creative and cathartic outlet of making art compare to making music for you?

Brötzmann: At the end [with art], if you have the product there, and you get the feeling of, okay, that's it, don't do more, that's the same nice feeling as when I go on stage and we know that we've done a decent piece of music. It's the same. But, working with the music, usually the brain is empty, everything is gone. If you concentrate for this hour of music, it's a kind of emptiness, and that you don't get with the arts. The product is there, you can look again, so its different. When the hour of music is over, then I am out, [Laughs] its gone.

Cadence: You like to use found objects in your art. Do you actively look for things to use or do you happen upon items that inspire you?

Brötzmann: Daily things come to me now. I it was different in the earlier times. There were a couple of years I was working a lot with metal things and pipes, so in that time I was looking for things to use. I went through the streets, where I could find things. Nowadays, I use the daily garbage which comes with packages, and other things that give me an idea of how to use them.

Cadence: What are your interests outside of music and art?

Brötzmann: It's a lot and nothing. If I find the time, the area around

my town is quite green and quite nice. I like to take long walks, if the lungs agree. Walking, reading all kinds of stuff. My garden, if I'm there. At the moment, it needs some work, so next week I will do quite a bit. That's it, more or less. I like to watch the birds in my garden, but their variety is shrinking now to just blackbirds and some sparrows. It was much different in the earlier times. I don't see butterflies anymore. I'm alone in this simple daily watching of nature, and you can see the world is changing – not to the better.

Cadence: Do you have any guilty pleasures? Anything we'd be surprised to hear that interests you?

Brötzmann: [Laughs] A guilty pleasure! I like to watch all kinds of crime stories on TV. I like that because, for me, it's the best way to relax and forget all the duties you have to do. And I've liked crime stories since I was a kid. Besides that, nothing special that I shouldn't talk about. [Laughs]

Cadence: Do you listen to music at home?

Brötzmann: I must admit, not much. I have quite a nice collection through all of Jazz' history. but in the end, I always come back to the same things – Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, James P. Johnson, and of course, Coleman Hawkins and other tenors, and sometimes a nice Jimmy Giuffre. The main things are Ellington, Monk, Hawkins, Billie Holiday or some Carmen McRae, Anita O'Day.

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

Joe McPhee (multi-instruments) said: "In 1977, in a theater in Paris, I saw you and Han Bennink perform as a duo for the first time. It was life changing. I recorded my solo record Graphics for Hat hut the next day. If I had to follow you two on stage, it would probably have ended my music career! My question is what is your favorite recollection of [Swiss saxophonist] Werner Lüdi? You and I were on the road together in the U.S. with the [Chicago] 10tet when he died, and I remember you being very saddened at his passing."

Brötzmann: Werner was a very special guy. I met him first when he was working in Gunter Hampel's early band. The band played in a club in Dusseldorf, a town near Wuppertal, so I took my alto under my arm and went there with Kowald. I sat in with the band and had an immediate good understanding with Werner. We played some really crazy stuff. Eventually, the other musicians left the stage, one after the other, until it was a duo with Werner. Then the bouncer of the nightclub came, took me by my collar, and threw me out. [Laughs] So that was that. After that, we lost track of each other until 20 years later, he called to ask me to come play with his new band. So, we started again with different duo things and he was always a member of my large ensemble in that time.

Keiji Haino (guitar, vocals) was unable to ask a question. His contact person said, "Mr. Haino would like to turn it down with good will, because he cannot ask questions with light feeling as Mr. Brötzmann

is too intimate and important for him." I'm including this response because I found it to be a powerful reaction.

Brötzmann: I know that for him, I am kind of a very special friend. I mean we know each other for long years. Our first tour in Japan was long – nearly 3 weeks – in the early '80s. And he didn't speak any English until the last couple of gigs where he tried to say thank you and things like that. Since then, we have done quite a bit in duo, and just last year, we did a nice tour with Heather and a very interesting recording this year. What I like with Keiji is that he's a man for the stage, he is very present. He's there and he nearly can do whatever he wants. Sometimes we argue a bit but… [Laughs] He's one of the guys. I like him.

Mats Gustafsson (saxophone) asked: "Does politics and ideology play a less important role in creative music nowadays, compared to the '60s and '70s? Should we care at all or are we just past it all? Should we give a fuck?"

Brötzmann: No, we shouldn't give a fuck, but, of course, he's right. In the '60s, politics, music and arts were much closer together and [thus] the importance was more obvious, but we shouldn't give up because we play a certain role in the system. [Our role is] to make our little standpoint clear. I think we don't have to talk too much about it, we just have to play it, but we have to play it with a full consciousness of the things going on. That is necessary, otherwise you just play and write and paint in your ivory tower, and that doesn't bring you somewhere. No.

Cadence: As a youth, you were connected to the Communist Party. Does that mindset still hold true for you today?

Brötzmann: I never was a member, but in the early '60s, I was very close to some people in the Communist Party. I think nowadays, what is left over is of no importance anymore. I wouldn't say that you should throw Karl Marx's Capital in the garbage heap, you should read it again. I think you'll find a lot of things you can still use. I think communism didn't fail because of its ideology being a mistake, I think it's mostly human stupidity which failed it, and that seems to be the problem with other systems too.

Paal Nilssen-Love (drums) asked: "Taking into account the support money now verses when you were touring with support from Goethe in the '80s and on, how do you view the risk that you took as a young musician versus the risk that younger musicians take these days? That's risk as in life, music, financially, everything."

Brötzmann: I'm not sure what he means. No, [in my early days], there was support for either a concert or travel, not both. Compared to what Paal gets from his Norwegian foundations, what I got was not more than peanuts. The support is a problem. It's, of course, nice if you have a chance to play in Asia and somebody is paying the plane ticket for you, which Goethe did [for me] rarely. When you are a young musician and somebody makes it possible that you go and play in Japan, you

don't say no, and you should take it, but you should do something with it. I mean, I never had a bad conscience to take some ticket from Goethe. No, because I know I worked my ass off for it. It's not like the Norwegian system that gives everybody that can hold a guitar, support, and lets them go to New York to play in some dumb place for 10 or 20 people, and then they go home and say, "Man, I had a big success in New York!" These kinds of things are happening. It's a strange thing with that support. There are festival guys that have a list of which bands get support from the government, so they know they don't have to pay them. There are festivals where you never see American musicians anymore because American musicians nearly never get support. You also don't see the Germans. The Goethe Institute still exists, but if you want to get support from them, you have to spend so much time knocking on doors, being nice to people, and writing files and files, and I gave all that up, a long, long time ago.

Milford Graves (percussion) said: "You don't play traditional Jazz, you're doing your thing. No one's ever contested your strength on the horn on volume, but they've said, "He's not playing music." They weren't giving you respect in certain circles. This is not a question that I'm asking you personally, but I wanted to know what your response is to those people that say you're playing outside "the tradition." What do you think about playing Jazz standards and bebop tunes, tunes that are recognized by people? I think that's a good question to ask you because that's always been the thing, man, if you don't play a certain way. Many labels, including the DIW label, which I recorded on with David Murray, told musicians that they had to play some standard tunes on the recording. You could play free, but they wanted you to play some standard tunes [because that sold more albums]. They didn't ask me to do that because I would have told them not to tell me what tunes to play, I'm gonna play what I do. You're not paying me enough money to sell out like that, but some guys had to play tunes to prove that they can play. So, with you, Peter, you don't play tunes like that. What's your response to this? What do you feel about some people having to legitimatize themselves? The thinking that if you don't play a tune, you don't play legitimate Jazz. Do you consider what you play to be Jazz? I think this is an important question because people say the same thing about me – that I'm not using a snare drum now, and that that's not Jazz drumming. But I'm gonna do what I do. You're not gonna hear that traditional mix from me. I'm not gonna be a part of a million guys out here trying to play Elvin or Max. They're all lost, they're all clones, man. And when I say that you don't play in "the tradition," that's a compliment, because what you play is liberating, it's more of an expression from the human soul."

Brötzmann: Yes, the last sentence really is right. I always, excuse my language, didn't gave a shit about people telling me, "You have to play [standard] tunes. You have to prove that you can do it." I never was interested in that way. I think all those tunes have been played a hundred million times, and better than I ever will play them. My

interest was, and still is, is to find out what am I able to do. What do I want to do, and where does it end? What record labels and other people are thinking, telling, or asking, that never was my interest. I think being a musician in this world, you just can do one thing and that's to find out who you are, and that needs a lot of work. That's a lifelong situation. Everything else is really on the side of nonimportance.

Cadence: You said earlier that Coleman Hawkins was your "main guy." Do you see the connective line from Coleman Hawkins to you?

Brötzmann: No, that would be too big of a thing. I just love his sound. For example, when I think of Coleman Hawkins, I think about the recording he did with Max Roach - We Insist! [Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite]. Besides his beautiful solo, as a man out of his tradition, to take this political standpoint was an important thing. He is in a much bigger category than me, and I don't want to put myself so close to him. The man had his own language, his own phrasing that was so completely different from all the others at that time. He had his voice. And I'm trying my best to have my voice, and I think I'm coming closer, but there is still some work to do.

Cadence: I'll turn the question a little bit and ask if you feel you are a part of the Jazz tradition or outside of it?

Brötzmann: I would say in the tradition, for sure. But, of course, a lot of people see that different. [Laughs]

Han Bennink (drums) - When asked to recall his funniest memory regarding you, Bennink said: "It was getting into the Black Forest and making the album Schwarzwaldfahrt there during four days." Would you talk about the making of that recording and the humor involved?

Brötzmann: What? That was a funny thing for him? We had a lot of fun. Ya, it was funny. It was cold, it was still wintertime. The instruments were ice cold and didn't sound. He was knocking on trees, and we were throwing big rocks into the frozen lake, and things like that. We had nice wine with us, and good bread and cheese, and in the night, we went down to this guest house with very warm beds and good food. No, it was fun. Even the recording is still fun [to listen to]. You asked earlier if Machine Gun was my best recording, Schwarzwaldfahrt is much more interesting than Machine Gun, as were a lot of other things I did with Bennink. He's right, it was funny. We two guys, with instruments, in his black Citroën van moving through the snow and ice, in the forest, nobody else around. [Laughs] It was quite nice.

Cadence: I asked Bennink about the Germans not being funny and he said, "The book about German humor only has one page, and that page is blank. There is only one German film, The Trumpet Player by Carl Valentin, that makes me really smile. There are several bad Dutch comedians that made a big career in Germany." And then he ended with - "Han gives you a Dutch smile!" In New Dutch Swing you're quoted to say, "When the Germans try to be funny, it ends in disaster." Would you comment on Germans and humor?

Brötzmann: Ya, the trumpet player he mentions, Carl Valentin, he was a Bavarian guy, so that's not real German. German and humor? That's a problem. I usually can't laugh. What they think is funny, these Germans, I agree [with Bennink], but what the Dutch are sending over to the Germans? He's right, it's crap. Nobody wants them in Holland. [Laughs] In Germany, you know we have quite a booming TV comedy industry, and if I come to see a piece of that, I can't laugh. No. Though I must say, I'm not a fan of the Dutch humor, there is something strange [there]. I prefer the English, but he is right, with Germans and humor, it's not easy.

Evan Parker (sax) asked: "If you could own one painting, which would it be?"

Brötzmann: That is complicated, Evan. No, that's too much. Oh, yeah, maybe I know. Do you know the German painter Max Beckmann? One of his early paintings is a park situation with a castle and trees [Seascape with Poplars, 1924]. It's very, very simple and small. That I could need, ya. I have a lot more in mind, but if it really comes to one, that would be it.

Cadence: Do you have a final comment? Perhaps something related to your career in music?

Brötzmann: A career in music? [Laughs] Not really, but all the young kids should really think if they say yes to be a musician – it's hard work, it's hard work, but most of them give up anyway. You can ask other musicians, it looks like [we] are world famous guys, and I don't complain, but it looks like we are working and working, but if we don't do it, we don't know how to survive. I still organize things myself, with a handful of musicians. I have no idea how the future of the music will look

Rodney Franklin at Yoshi's, San Francisco

Rodney Franklin at Yoshi's, San Francisco

Rodney Franklin Guided by the Old Guard Written by Tee Watts

Dr. Herb Wong is fondly remembered as the guru of the Berkeley, California Unified School District's pioneering Jazz program. Dr. Wong's cross-cultural vision exposed thousands of elementary school through high school students to the intricacies of Jazz and set a phalanx of Jazz soldiers on the professional Jazz trail who are yet highly regarded today. Those include Joshua Redman, Craig Handy, David Murray, Ambrose Akinmusire, Benny Green, Steven Bernstein, Peter Apfelbaum and, the subject of today's offering, keyboard master, Rodney Franklin. Interviewed in the Spring of 2020, Franklin yielded unique perspectives on pre-Covid 19 life in the Jazz Brotherhood. We plunged right in.

Cadence: We'd like to make this kind of biographical. We know that Dr. Herb Wong launched your career as a youth, but what was life like before that as a very young boy. Was there music in your home? Were your parents musicians?

R.F: They weren't really musicians. But they had general musical skill. But, you know they weren't professionals. They worked in other fields. I had an uncle that was a Jazz buff. That was his thing. He listened to Jazz all the time. So I grew up on a constant diet of it.

Cadence: So, when did you start taking piano?

R.F: My parents started me when I was three or four. From what I understand, I had a little knack for it. It was kinda cute but nobody was really paying attention to it.

Cadence: When did you start attracting attention?

R.F.: (Laughs). In Kindergarten. That's when I met Herb Wong. He was principal at Washington Elementary School in Berkeley which I attended. He was principal by day and a KJAZ radio host by night. As principal, he had great foresight. He wondered what would happen if you took a bunch of children and started teaching them improvisation, in addition to just straight classical. So that's kinda how he started his youth Jazz Program.

Cadence: Did he play as well?

R.F.: No, he was a Jazz lover and educator. He was a holistic visionary at a very unique time.

Cadence: So, by the time you were in high school you were a

professional musician?
R.F: I actually started working professionally when I was about 13. Herb accelerated my development by influencing all the great players who came to town to come over to the elementary school and play a lunchtime set for the students. It was a very original idea.
Cadence: What names came through?
R.F: Sonny Rollins was one of many. I gotta say though, the experience that sticks out for me was the afternoon I went into the cafeteria and there was this dude playing on the piano. Herb says, "Rodney, come here and listen to this guy." So, I'm looking at this cat playing and I'm wondering who he is. Turns out, it was Oscar Peterson.
Cadence: Did he dazzle you?
R.F: You know, I'm a kid of six years old. I'm like, "Who is this dude?" That was the day I decided I could go that way. So that was literally one of the main turning points in music for me. Herb brought all kinds of people to the elementary school. Miles came through, Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Duke Ellington came through. I met the (Jazz) Crusaders when I was nine. They were making a record down at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley. That's when I first met Joe Sample. Now, he and I are in a book entitled, Down The Rhodes: The Fender Rhodes Story, published by Hal Leonard Music. Herbie Hancock, George Duke, Stanley Clarke, Chick Corea and Quincy Jones are all in it. I actually ended up in the book with them. I always wanted to be one of those guys.
There was this whole wave of players that came through. Herb Fong was very serious about doing this thing. The upside of that as children we were seeing the heavyweights do their thing. We were like, "We can do that." We weren't thinking that we couldn't. We didn't have that filter. So that's how the whole game got started for me.
Cadence: So you progressed to a point where you were actually playing dates at thirteen?
R.F: Yeah, when I first started playing clubs, I was twelve or 13, somewhere in there. We did our first album when we were nine. Somebody just sent me a copy the other day. We went to the Reno Jazz Festival and did this little thing. We used to do all these competitions. This is one of those stories that's like, little did we know. Little did they know! We were just rollin'. No one was thinking twice about what this thing could actually be. It wasn't on the radar. It was a cool little experiment that went really right for a lot of us.
Cadence: So, who were you playing with at that stage that also went on to success in music?
R.F: Peter Apfelbaum and I met when I was six and he was four. The volume and the range of the list of people who came out of those programs is long. I don't have them in my head right now.
Cadence: How were you able to get around the age restriction of working in clubs?
R.F: Well, I bugged the shit out of my mama. Eventually I was in

private school and there was a group of guys at school who said, "You should play with us at night." They literally came over and talked to my parents and said, "Look, this kid needs to be playin'. He's really good and we'd like to take him with us. We promise we'll take care of him and have him back before it gets too late.
So, my parents relented and let me do that. Now all these people were saying, "Come play over here." I started playing with two Gospel choirs and my thing became playing. That was my concentrated focus. As a kid I was doing sports and other things, but music was the direction I decided to go in.

Cadence: Guitarist Shuggie Otis talks about being too young to play legally in nightclubs when he was fourteen and having to wear sunglasses and a fake mustache. Did you experience that?

R.F: I experienced a lot of that. They got me a little top hat and did what they could, you know? (laughs) Back then, it was platform shoes and shit, you know? They stuck me in the corner and I'd play and experience that type of environment. When I reflect now and having listened to a bunch of Jazz players on the way up, that's what they were doing, playing in clubs all over the world. That's how they got to the school when I was coming up. I was just fascinated with it and I loved music. How my mom and dad agreed is one of those anomalies. My teachers at school were saying, "This kid can really become something. There's something about him."
I was fortunate to have a lot of excellent exposure and a lot of the right stuff poured into me early. So I was able to envision, 'what it looks like from up here, so to speak.' I was informed by people who were touched by light.
It's funny that recently I bumped into a friend of mine who often teases me. We met when we were twelve. As an adult she was running the program at an all girls school. So we have this running joke about when she'd invite me to play, she says I was like Schroeder in Peanuts, I was so focused on the piano, I didn't see anybody. I would play my piano and go home.

Cadence: You recorded at Ray Dobard's Music City?

R.F: Yeah. Jesus, is that up there on line? (Laughs)

Cadence: It's on Wikipedia.

R.F: I haven't seen that in a while. It's always changing. I need to do some editing of my own. I did so some things at Music City. I did some back up stuff with a vocal group called the Numonics. Man I haven't thought about all those groups I played with in a long time. There was a band I played with called In One Peace. I moved around a lot. When I was thirteen or fourteen, I played a show at the Berkeley Community Theatre with Donny Hathaway and the Isley Brothers.

Cadence: So you met Donny?

R.F: Yeah, he heard me play and came back and said, "Man, let me tell you something about you. You're gonna be one of the cats, man." I'm like, "Okay, okay."

"No, no. Hear me boy. Yo' ass can play." It was very interesting because after he passed, I was living that life. I can understand what he was under, especially during that time when there was no template. Those were the path cutting years in music that led to where we are now. That stuff had an effect on a lot of people. And having been a road musician for many, many years, I understand. Having lost a lot of colleagues now, I understand. I feel really grateful to be here to address it. A lot of my friends aren't. That's real talk.

Cadence: What college did you attend?

R.F: When I was in high school, I'd taken some classes at U.C. Berkeley and St. Mary's under the young musicians's program. But after high school I started at San Jose State. They were trying to start a Jazz program there. So I went down there initially and then I got a call from Bill Summers. At the time, he was working on Roots with Quincy. So, he was like, "You wanna come join my band?" So I left school and went with him. Two years later I was signed with CBS. That's the way my life went.

Cadence: So looking back on having been signed to a major label, how do you reconcile that association now?

R.F.: You can see it as all kinds of things. For me, it was a target I had because I wanted to be one of those guys. So you've got a kid that went from meeting Oscar Peterson at six years of age to being label mates with Herbie, Miles, George Duke, Luther Vandross, and Stanley Clarke at twenty years old. Call it what you want, but for me it was like a dream come true at that level. It was unbelievable. The Jazz labels weren't signing a bunch of kids at that time yet they signed me. My life was like one of those path cutting prototypes. I'm that guy for whatever reason and my life turned that way, so signing at that point for me was like, How did that happen? You know, we played Carnegie and the Lincoln Center. I found myself working with guys I'd always listened to. I went on the road with Freddie Hubbard.

Cadence: How long were you on the road with Freddie Hubbard?

R.F: We did a year and a half, maybe longer than that. I had my first album out, In The Center. Freddie had his album Super Blue, out. The label thought it was a good idea for me to go out on the road and learn with seasoned artists. I learned from the best out there. Even rolling with Bill Summers, I began the process of how to do this thing. I didn't just learn it. You gotta be taught how to live a life like that. What we do is insane, yet normal for me cuz it's the only thing I know. Oh, this is how you travel the planet. We go from city to city and do this day in and day out. God, what an education, you know? You can't learn this aspect in school.

Cadence: Can you talk about the hard times?

R.F: Uh, yeah. My second record went to #1. So what do you do when you have a #1 record? Where are you gonna go when you play Carnegie at twenty-one and your record is #1 in Europe? Where do you go when you start at that level?

It's been this really interesting laser-focus approach for me and I've just kept going. I kind of woke up nine or ten years in, having recorded ten or so albums and went, 'This is crazy. How do you continue to do this long term?' I'm looking at the guys ahead of me. Chick, Herbie, and I were label mates. I used to record at Chick's studio in L.A. These guys took me under their wings. I asked them, "How do you do this decade after decade?"

"Aw man, you just keep going. You keep it moving." They were path cutters so I listened to them. I was still trying to learn. The road can be so brutal.

"Stick with us, kid. We'll show you the ropes." And they did. You get this wide angle experience of life, that for me was normal, but I came to realize that we were not necessarily normal. But, it was our normal. And then life shows up. What was that? Oh, that's life!

Along the way, I did like, five projects with Stanley Clarke. I left CBS and went to RCA for awhile, and then life turned into this whole other experience. Since I had started when I was a kid, there was a lot of stuff I hadn't caught up to. Like relationships and other crazy stuff. You know, it's interesting. Miles would take me over to the side and say things like, "Hey Franklin, come here man. If this shit out here don't kill you, you might be able to play this music one of these days, hee hee." What he meant was, if you don't get worn out, you might be able to contribute to the art. Another time he told me, "If you play that same shit, don't play it. Play some new shit, man."

I was able to get encouragement from the old guard cats. The guys that knew. They were guiding me. Now I look back, those were the people that were feeding into me that which I would later find to be invaluable. Cuz they weren't telling me what they thought. They were telling me what they knew. There's a huge difference. When you get it from the horse's mouth, it's a wholly different thing.

So I hit this spot after having done thirteen or fourteen records where I started to burn out. It was just too much. I wound up going out with the Isley's actually—for awhile playing on the R&B side. I also played with Frankie Beverly, and then Stevie Wonder. It was supposed to be a few months, but turned into like, almost seven years.

Cadence: It's been said that when you go on stage with Stevie, your bladder better be completely empty.

R.F: Yep. Eat two dinners and go to the bathroom cuz you ain't gettin' off for a very long time.

Cadence: Man, How do you do that? How does he do that?

R.F: Once you're in the music, the music does it. It's a totally different place.

Cadence: A while back you played for us an unreleased recording of you and Take 6 that I thought was potentially a huge record. Was it ever commercially released?

R.F: Well, when the Fender-Rhodes book was published, a couple of Take 6 tracks were released. Man there's so much music. It's hard to think about all the stuff we did. I'm just rollin'.

Cadence: Well, what's next on the horizon for Rodney Franklin?
R.F: Well, we'll see now that the planet is shut down. There is a whole battery of stuff that I was about to begin. Fortunately, I've had an opportunity to get reloaded, so to speak, to grow to another level, to something else. So, there's a lot more music down the pike. We've got a live stream coming up later this week, cuz, as you know, because of this shelter in place thing, nobody's going anywhere. In terms of me getting a bunch of guys and putting them in the same room? It's off the table. There are no orchestra dates. Cats ain't gettin' together and jammin', you ain't goin' over to the club. You definitely won't be playin' anyone else's horn. Ain't no tellin' what this thing will turn in to. It's an interesting time for me because I'm a people person. I love human beings. I like people. What we do out there is for people. There is no template for where we're headed next. I'm sure the music will survive. It will turn into something else. We won't always be in this situation that we're in now.
(Author's note) - As we wind down the session, Rodney talks about some of the Chicago musicians he has recorded with including legendary arranger Tom-Tom Washington and the Earth, Wind & Fire Horns who later became the Phenix Horns. As we sign off, he gives us a final quote:
R.F: When I reflect on who I've been touched by, it's been a lot of folks. Life takes time for all of us. You've got to grow. It's been an amazing experience, a fascinating life. I've been able to contribute some stuff and have more to give. Life just happens. You get all the crazy stuff too. My journey has been a very unique existence in that way.

In 2013, Hal Leonard Music published Down The Rhodes: The Fender Rhodes Story.

Interview with Bill Crow
Taken and Transcribed by Randy L. Smith
Kobe to New York, via telephone

Cadence: You've said so much already in your two books [Jazz Anecdotes and From Birdland to Broadway, both Oxford Press], and Gordon Jack interviewed you so I want to avoid going over some of the same territory.
OK, great.
Cadence: You know whose birthday it is today?
Uh, no.
Cadence: Fats Navarro.
Oh, really?
Cadence: Yeah, you make some mention of him in your book [From Birdland to Broadway], but not a whole lot.
Well, he was gone before I got to New York; I never got to meet him.
Cadence: He died in July of 1950, and I thought you got to New York in January 1950.
I did. I was under the impression he was already dead, but I guess not.
Cadence: You were born December 27th, 1927, in Othello, Washington?
Right.
Cadence: What is your full name?
William Orval Crow, O-R-V-A-L.
Cadence: This is kind of off the wall, but here's a quote: "As a Capricorn born on December 27th, your strong determination is as notable as your patience."
[Chuckles.] Well, I don't know about astrology at all, so I don't have any comment about that.
Cadence: That's fine. Gordon started off his interview asking you about Gail Madden, and I wanted to do the same because I knew Gail.
Yeah, the guy that brought me out to New York, Buzzy Bridgeford [drums], knew her, and he came and got me late one night and said, "Come on, I want you to meet this person." He took me down to her apartment, and Max Roach was there. This girl that Max had eyes for, Margo—I can't remember her last name—but she was gonna sponsor Gail in buying a brownstone or something, and she was gonna be the therapist that got all the jazz musicians off of junk. That was her idea. And then she and Margo had a big blowup, and the next thing I knew, Gail was with Gerry Mulligan who was one of the guys she intended to be part of this program. I played a couple of gigs that Gerry was on, and she was there, but I didn't really get to know her that well.
Cadence: Did you know Don Manning [drums and radio personality] in Portland?
Sure.
Cadence: He interviewed Madden on his radio show, and she insisted she was not Gerry's girlfriend. In the Gordon Jack interview you say she was.

I guess that's kind of a loose term. They were together; I don't know what they were. But I know that her idea was to get him off junk and they hitchhiked out to California, and I believe he did clean up. He did a little jail time out there, but he told me he had already kicked his habit, but he was just at the wrong party at the wrong time, and there was a bust, and he ended up doing some time in jail.

Cadence: Right. She talks like she had a lot of influence on Gerry, and on the musician scene in general. Do you think she was as musically influential, to Gerry, as she has been sometimes credited?

I don't know about musically, she was really more talking about straightening his life out.

Cadence: She's been credited with the idea of Gerry going with a piano-less format.

Well, what Gerry told me was, either there was no piano at the Haig, or it was a very bad one, and he was trying to figure out a way to have the smallest group that he could still play backgrounds and use his arranging instincts, you know. And they just tried that out, and Chet was so good at it, it just kind of became a thing.

Cadence: So one story goes the piano was taken away because Red Norvo was taking over the residency at the Haig and didn't want the piano. So that whole thing about Gail convincing . . .

Yeah, I wouldn't be able to give you any information, one way or the other, because they were in California and I was here. I probably heard some of the same scuttlebutt you did, but I couldn't say what was the real scene.

Cadence: Did you ever hear her play piano?

No, she played maracas a couple of times on jobs that I . . . [laughs] I thought it was kind of fruitless.

Cadence: Yeah, she played maracas on Gerry Mulligan's first record as a leader in 1951 [Mulligan Plays Mulligan, Prestige]. So you never knew her to gig around town?

No, I did one job with Gerry out in Queens. I don't even think it was his job, just we were both on it, and everybody was kind of surprised that he brought Gail along and had her play maracas [laughs]; it didn't seem to be appropriate. He was just trying to make her happy. I took photographs of the rehearsal in Central Park. The way it happened was, everybody used to go up to Nola Studios, and chip in a quarter or so apiece, and we would rehearse his big band charts. He had some things that he had written for Elliot Lawrence, things like that, and Gene Krupa, I think. And nobody had any money that day and so Gerry said, "It's a nice day, let's go out in the park." So we went over to Central Park and it was just the musicians that happened to be there: two bass players, no drummer. I wasn't playing bass. I was babysitting Dave Lambert's daughter, so I took a camera with me I took some pictures. Gail's in those pictures.

Cadence: And you took the pictures?

Yeah, all the ones in the park there. There is one where she's just standing there with her arms folded while Gerry's talking to the band,

conducting the band, or something. I didn't get a close-up of her; I was interested in the musicians, you know. She happened to be there.
Cadence: Among other things she claimed to have introduced the Slonimsky book to New York Jazz circles.
Oh, I don't know whether that's true or not. Something like that's around, you know, it's hard to say that one person introduced it.
Cadence: Yeah, well, Gail Madden had kind of a tendency to make herself the center of everything.
Yeah. That night that Buzzy brought me down to her apartment, she was busy talking to some people inside, you know, Max and them. So she came out and said "Hello," and she said "Here, I have something I want you to hear," and she pulled out a little tape recorder and puts on a tape of her giving a lecture about, you know, psychological stuff. And then she goes back in the other room, so Buzzy and I sit there listening to this tape. So I look at it and I think, "This is about an hour tape," you know. I want to go to bed. I just said, "Say good night for me," and I slipped out. I don't think she liked that. Oh, I know there was one time I said something or other and she came in and started the thing over from the beginning, "Oh, no. No talking, you have to listen to this."
Cadence: Man, that sounds like her.
So I tiptoed out and that was the last time I saw of her until that time that she was on the gig with Gerry.
Cadence: I'm from Washington State also, so I knew a lot of those guys that you knew and used to hang out with in the Northwest like Neil Friel [trumpet], for example.
Oh, sure. Well, Neil was out here in New York for a little while when I first came out, and I got to see him a little bit. And I remember when I went home one time, he and Freddie Greenwell and Buzzy had a job down in Tacoma, so I drove down there and visited them.
Cadence: Yeah, Fred Greenwell was one heck of a musician, wasn't he?
Oh yes, he was. When I first heard Al Cohn, I thought he sure sounds a lot like Freddie.
Cadence: Yeah, I used to listen to Fred Greenwell and think that he was just the greatest thing.
Yeah, I remember one time. Maybe it was in Tacoma. We were in a club someplace, and Freddie was playing there, and Don Lanphere came in and everybody was saying, "Oh, we're going to have a tenor battle," you know. So, they invite Don to sit in, and he gets he gets up and they play, I don't know, "Sweet Georgia Brown," something like that. He plays about ten choruses, he sounds really good, you know, and then Freddie plays one chorus of the melody and sits down again [chuckle]. That was his idea of a tenor battle.
Cadence: I bought a trumpet from Don Lanphere when he had Belmont Music many years ago.
Well, I ran into him when I first came out here. Chan had left Bird and was with Don. But that was just like a little glimpse—I went to somebody's apartment and there the two of them were.

Cadence: How about Bill Ramsay. Do you know him?
No.
Cadence: He's a Tacoma guy. Long time saxophone player, really good player.
Yeah, I've heard the name. Oh, the guys that I hung with the most the year that I was back out of the army there were Kenny Kimball and Doug [possibly Chuck] Metcalf, and a guitar player named Arlo Welles. Let me see, who else was around? Well, Floyd Standifer, of course. And Gerald Brashear, a tenor player.
Cadence: I never got a chance to meet him or see him.
Some years later when I was with Marian McPartland, we had a steady gig at the Hickory House, but in the summertime she we go out and work some gigs. There was place in Detroit she liked to play for a week, [and] a place in Columbus, Ohio. So while we were in Columbus, the Basie band came through, and I knew a lot of those guys, so I borrowed Marian's car, and went over and picked up Joe Newman. He said, "Let's go out and visit my friend out here as long as we got the wheels," so we go just a little bit out of town and knock on this guy's door, and there is Gerald Brashear sitting on the couch. It's funny how those things go.
Cadence: Just now you brought up Marian McPartland. She's someone that I'm interested in because you haven't said a whole lot about her in your books. I recently listened to the Capitol record, At the Hickory House. And it's actually a studio record isn't it?
Yes, we did that in the Capitol Studios. She was a little bugged because their piano was not in perfect condition [chuckles]. You're gonna do a piano recording, you should have a good piano [chuckles].
Cadence: I put that record on recently and I thought, "Man. Marian sounds good."
Yeah, she was a good player.
Cadence: I had remembered her from her Piano Jazz series, you know, casually rapping with people and playing piano with Teddy Wilson and everybody.
Yeah, she was good at that. It was a nice program.
Cadence: Claude Thornhill sounds like a bit of a queer duck.
Yes, he was. He didn't like the spotlight. He liked having a good band, you know, it was the band era. His book was very musical. If he started to get a hot record, he'd take a month off and go fishing or something. He'd let things die down a bit. He didn't like having to do the interview shows and things like that.
Cadence: You also mentioned Don Shirley. Did you see the movie The Green Book?
No, I didn't. I met Don through Marian. He came and played a gig when she took off. And I got to know Don, and Richard Davis was with him at that time.
Cadence: What was your impression of Don as a piano player?
Well, I thought he was a nice player. His time was a little funny.

Sometimes he'd increase the tempo. I felt sorry for Richard having to follow him.

Cadence: Another guy I have to ask you about because I'm such a huge fan is Lucky Thompson.

I did get to play with him a couple times on record dates, but never in a club job situation. Yeah, I like the way he played.

Cadence: Yeah, that's what everybody says. You mentioned a date with Jackie Cain and Roy Krall that Lucky played on that you were on.

Yeah, they never released that record. In fact, years later I mentioned that to Roy. I was doing a gig with him down in New Jersey. He didn't remember the date at all.

Cadence: So that was never released. You mentioned somewhere in your book about Jimmy Knepper making tapes of Charlie Parker. I wonder if any of those were ever released?

I don't know. He had a tape recorder, and they had this apartment down under the street at 136th St., so he could play all night, it didn't bother anybody. And if Bird would drop by and play, Jimmy would hit the record button and record whatever Bird played. And then he wrote it out during the day and used that to practice with.

Cadence: Before I forget, I wanted to ask some kind of prosaic questions. You live in Rockland County, New York?

Yeah, that's just north of the Jersey border on the west side of the Hudson.

Cadence: How close are you to the Big Apple?

Oh, only 20 minutes from the George Washington Bridge.

Cadence: Are you playing some gigs still?

Yeah, I'm playing with people a third my age mostly. There's a trumpet player named Ryo Sasaki who calls me for gigs down in Soho and Tribeca, couple of restaurants there. There's a good tenor player named Chris Johansson—young guy—that calls me for occasional jobs. And there's an older clarinet player name David Aaron who has kind of a Benny Goodman Quartet group that he hires me for when he gets sounds, but his work is dwindling these days. There's a place out in a neighborhood called Dumbo. Down under the Manhattan Bridge overpass is where they get the name Dumbo. There's a place out there called Super Fine that I play now and then with a good baritone player.

Cadence: And do you play some gigs on tuba still?

Yeah, during the summer usually there's a couple of country clubs that like the Dixieland quartet—we have banjo, tuba, trumpet and clarinet. You know, I do five or ten things over the summer.

Cadence: What's your advice to young musicians on how you stay healthy?

I don't really know: just don't die [laughs].

Cadence: You certainly have witnessed your share of jazz musicians who had problems with drugs and alcohol and all that.

Well, I was just lucky. When I was in the army I tried to learn to drink and I was no good at it. I would either get silly or fall asleep or throw

up. And then when I got out of the army and ran in to Buzzy and some guys out in Seattle that were messing around with horse. I tried that once and felt like I'd been poisoned to death and never had any fun with it at all, so that was the end of that. I was very fortunate. Like Duke said, "Heroin was very popular in those days [laughs]."

Cadence: Do you remember what year you were fired from the Playboy Club?

Let's see, that was in the 60s, and I have it on my computer. I can look up the dates for you, but I don't have it open right now.

Cadence: You remember about when you started on Broadway?

Yeah, that was more like the 70s, end of the 60s into the 70s. My last Broadway show ran until 1980. And when I reached 62 or 65—I can't remember—and realized my health insurance expired at that age, so I had to take my pension and social security in order to get the health insurance.

Cadence: What did you do after you kind of retired from the Broadway scene?

I retired back to jazz [chuckles].

Cadence: Oh, yeah, so you started playing gigs again.

Yeah, well I had been playing gigs along in there anyway, you know, but a lot of guys that used to call me had died: Al Cohn, Zoot Sims later on Bob Brookmeyer. It was just a matter of finding younger people to play with.

Cadence: As for your writing, you were writing for the union newsletter, Gene Lees, stuff like that.

Yeah, Gene kind of got me started writing again because—this is about ten years after the Russian tour [with Benny Goodman in 1962]—he called me up and said, "Nobody's ever really written about that tour, why don't you do it?" And I said, "How long you want it?" And he said, "As long as it takes." So I wrote this long piece, and he published it in about five or six issues of Jazzletter. And when I did my books I referred to that trip some, but that article, you can find it on my website.

Cadence: What was the critical response to your two books?

Oh, it was excellent, with one exception. I think it was in Melody Maker, one of those British publications. I can't think of his name—Kingsley Amis— evidently he's a big jazz fan but only up to about 1927. And he just really tore my book apart and said things about it that weren't true. I just couldn't imagine. I had just stepped into his territory, I guess. He really tore it apart, but all the other criticism was really good.

Cadence: Were those books bestsellers?

Not really. The New York Times didn't review it, but you know, it became like a constant seller. I think those are still available in paperback. The second book is available printed on demand. They pretend like it's available, but they just print one up when somebody buys it.

Cadence: Did Venus [Japanese record company] contact you about doing the two CDs [From Birdland to Broadway and Jazz Anecdotes]?

Yes, well it was an accident, really. I'm starting to forget peoples' names now—this piano player from the West Coast called me up and said, "I'm doing an album dedicated to Al Haig, and I know you played with him, so I'd like you to be on the album. We're going to come out to New York and record," you know.

Cadence: Was that Claude Williamson?

Yes, yes. So I got him a drummer and we recorded, and Mr. [Tetsuo] Hara from Venus Records came out to supervise—he doesn't speak any English—but he had an interpreter with him. So I mentioned that Haruki Murakami, who is a famous novelist in Japan, had translated one of my books, and he said "Great! We do a CD!"

Cadence: Well, when he found out about Haruki Murakami, that's probably what did it, right?

Yeah, he figured he would ride in on the publicity, you know. And then I saw him about a year later and said, "You know Murakami translated my other book," and he said "Great, we do another CD [laughs]". And that was my opportunity to do a couple of things under my own name.

Cadence: That's funny. So those are your first two leader albums, actually.

Yeah.

Cadence: And how was that working with Tetsuo Hara, the producer?

Oh, he was great. He let us do whatever we wanted to do, paid us. And then when the CDs came out he gave us a stack of CDs and I never heard from him again [laughs].

Cadence: Did you meet Haruki Murakami?

Yes, he came to my house when we made the deal with my publisher to do the translation, you know. And he came up and visited me and brought a photographer along, and he was very nice. He is a big jazz fan.

Cadence: How was his English?

Oh, it was good.

Cadence: In Japan he's regarded every year as a Nobel laureate candidate.

Yes, I know. I've read a couple of his novels; they're really deep.

Cadence: I wanted to ask you about that Venus quartet because I think it's a hell of a band. I just love Carmen Leggio.

Yeah, well that was Carmen's band. He had a little once a week gig that we played and when he could get Joe Cohn [guitar], he always did. And David Jones is a drummer that we both loved that lives up here. So I just grabbed those guys and wrote out some tunes and we made them.

So you did most of the musical planning for those dates?

Yeah, I had to write some originals that I could name the names of the books, you know, to help Mr. Hara sell the record.

Cadence: I see. Do you still see Joe Cohn?

I haven't seen him for quite a while. He's a very hard guy to find sometimes. He takes on projects and disappears. The last time I saw him he was playing with Harry Allen, but that was some time ago.

Cadence: Do you know anything at all about Frank Strozier?

No, I don't. I just know his name.
Cadence: How about Richard Wyands?
I got a chance to play with him a couple times. I really love the way he plays. I think that he has a hard time sometimes because he doesn't want to play on an electric keyboard, and lot of places don't have a piano anymore, you know. We're all used to people bringing keyboards in.
Cadence: I heard that he's not doing so well. He may even be in hospice right now [Wyands passed away a day or two after this interview].
Oh, really? I didn't hear that. That's too bad, but it's not surprising. He's at that age. But a marvelous player.
Cadence: I always thought so. He's a sideman on a lot of dates with people like Gene Ammons and people like that.
Uh, huh. Yeah, I played with him a couple times with Houston Person.
Cadence: You've used this metaphor of the jazz musician as a storyteller. I wonder if you could you elaborate on that a little bit.
Well, that's my own fantasy, I guess. The musicians that I like to listen to the most always seem to be telling a story. It's like creating songs, you know.
Cadence: What are your feelings on the current jazz scene?
Well, I like it a lot. A lot of the younger musicians are turning out to be melodic players, you know. It's nice. We've gone through a period where everybody's just running up and down through a hard scale, things like that. But young players I'm playing with are harking back to Al Cohn and Zoot Sims, and Miles in his early period, so it's nice to hear, they are all good players.
Cadence: So they're telling stories again?
Yeah, I've met a lot of young guitar players that are really nice. You know, for a while there everybody was buying their kid a saxophone and then the Beatles came and everybody started buying their kid a guitar [laughs]. But the result is there're some really fine guitar players out there . . . interested in jazz.
Cadence: In your career, you've associated with musicians representing the entire history of jazz: from Tommy Ladnier, Sidney Bechet, and Eddie Condon; on through Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and the rest; to Bill Evans, Scott LaFaro, Roland Kirk, and other modernists with an ear to extending the parameters of the music. Do you ever think about that?
Oh, I just feel like I had the good luck to get interested in jazz early, when I was in grade school, in sixth grade, and I was still trying to play the trumpet then. And my grade school music teacher called me into his house as I was walking by one day and said, "I want you to hear something." And he played me Louis Armstrong's "West End Blues," and that really converted me into being interested in jazz. I thought, "Oh, there can't be anything more wonderful than that." And so I started collecting records, and fortunately, the electric store in this little town that I lived in, Kirkland, Washington had a stack of records in the back that you could listen to and see if you wanted to buy one. Whoever was stocking that supply was not just giving you the Victors and Columbias

and Capitols, they had a whole a lot of small labels, so I was introduced to people like Mary Lou Williams and Eddie Miller, the Casa Loma Orchestra, odd choices, you know. And that was while I was still in junior high school, so I just stayed with it until I was able to play it myself.

Cadence: Do you still listen to recorded music?

Sure, I have a stack of CD's here that I haven't gotten to, over the last two or three years, that people have sent me. You know, my wife passed away a few months ago, so I have a lot of free time on my hands now, and I'm going through listening to music a lot.

Cadence: I see. So, that was Aileen?

Yeah.

Cadence: How long were you married?

53 years. We lived together for three-and-a-half years before that and I courted her for two years before that, so we really had a nice long run.

Cadence: What is the key to your having functioned in so many different musical settings as you have?

Well, part of it is, the bass player is kind of the root of every style of jazz and you don't have to adjust the way you play that much to fit in with all the different styles. So, just following the work, you know. I got hired to be the house bass player at Eddie Condon's, and then Kai Winding hired me over at the Playboy Club, and I was playing with all different people. One of the nicest compliments I ever got I was playing a Jazz Festival out in New Jersey. I was part of the rhythm section that had just played something or other, and then they had three tenor players get up and one of them was Buddy Tate—who I never met before or never played with before—and so they called a tune and we played it and Buddy turns around, gives me a big smile and says, "Where have you been all my life [laughs]?" That really touched home.

Cadence: That's a good story. So could you talk about your conception of the role of the bass player in the rhythm section?

Well, the rhythm section itself has the role of making the band feel good and giving it some kind of movement or direction or whatever it is. I played a lot with four-man rhythm sections, three-man rhythm sections, two man rhythm sections—I've even done some jobs where I was the only one. First you have to have an agreement among the members of the rhythm section on where the swing is and where the pocket is, and everybody has to hone their skills to where they can get to that place and keep each other happy. And that'll make the band happy, if there's a band. It's like feeling your way into it all the time; every night it's like a different situation and you jump in and do the best you can and if everybody's smiling you say, "Oh, what a good boy I am."

Cadence: What rhythm sections were your favorites?

Well, drummers that I locked in beautifully with were . . . the first week I was with Stan Getz, Roy Haynes was the drummer and I loved the way he played, but I only got to play with him that week. And then Frank Isola came and I loved playing with Frank. That was a good choice that Stan made. And then it was Kenny Clarke and Duke Jordan. And Duke

Jordan, I can't imagine why Miles Davis said all the negative things about him he said because I found him to be a really wonderful person and an elegant piano player.

Cadence: Well, you never know about Miles.

Never know. And that thing we had with Marian was really good with Joe Morello and me. We had a good thing together. And later on Dave Bailey was the drummer with Gerry for quite a bit; we got along very well together. And then on Gerry's Concert Jazz Band, Mel Lewis was the drummer. I really got tight with him. That was another situation where it was just the two of us, you know, that's the rhythm section, and it just came off beautifully, I thought.

Cadence: What do you think about the Stanley Clarke conception of bass playing? It's very different.

Well, sure it is different. I think it's wonderful he can do what he does. I love to listen to him, but I don't want to play that way [chuckles].

Cadence: And you mention Scott LaFaro in your book.

Yeah, I got to hear him several times when he was with Bill. He was wonderful. I was sitting with Ray Brown one day at the Vanguard and Scott was playing and Ray was jumping up-and-down, "Goddam, listen to this kid play, he's got his own thing going! Listen to this," you know. We were both very excited about what he could do.

Cadence: That was an ear opener for some bass players in those days.

Yeah, I tried to play a little of it that way when I was with Jim Hall's Trio. I was just subbing for a couple of days, it was Steve Swallow's gig and Jim was laughing. He said, "Man, you're getting farther out than Scott is [chuckles]." I took his hint and went back to playing what he wanted to hear.

Cadence: After you switched over from valve trombone, who were the bass players that you listened to? You've mentioned Oscar Pettiford.

Well, Oscar was around so I listened to him a lot. I got to hear him in clubs a lot. Ray Brown was around but I didn't hear him in person that much, but I certainly paid attention to what it was playing on records. Later on when Wilbur Ware came to town, I was really impressed by the way he played.

Cadence: What did you like about Wilbur Ware?

Well, he was really grounded in the bottom of the harmony and played with such swing and simple ideas but you'd say, "Why didn't I think of that, that's wonderful." And then Red Mitchell was also very influential. I thought he was one of the best soloists I ever heard on bass, again a melodic player.

Cadence: Another Northwest guy we haven't talked about is Red Kelly. Maybe not the world's greatest bass player, but . . .

Oh, he was a good big band player.

Cadence: Good big band player, and he was a comedian, wasn't he?

Oh, he certainly was. He used to call me up. I'd be on the road in Toronto, or something, and he would somehow find out whose house I had gone to after the gig, and he'd call me up to tell me a joke [laughs]. I enjoyed Red a lot. Do you know that story about him and Red Norvo?

Cadence: I'm not sure. Why don't you go ahead and tell it?
Well, Red Kelly and Red Mitchell were sharing an apartment on the Upper West Side, and Red Norvo had just lost Charlie Mingus—he had left the trio—so he had heard Red Mitchell play down at Birdland and thought he was a wonderful player. It was dark down there, he didn't really get a good look at him, but he asked somebody for his number and he called up and the voice answers, says, "Hello." And he says, "Hello, is this Red?" And he [Kelly] says, "Yes." "This is Red Norvo. I got a gig in Chicago for a week. You want to come and do it with me?" He says, "Yeah, sure." "Okay, I'm driving out, I'll pick you up." So they get in the car and they drive out, and they get to about Cleveland, and Norvo turns around to Red and says, "Say, Mitchell, are you getting hungry?" And he says, "Mitchell? I'm Kelly!"
Cadence: Yeah, I do remember that story now that you tell it. That's Red Kelly for you. What a character. I used to hear him at his Tumwater Conservatory [near Olympia, Washington]. Were you ever there?
Yeah, the one in Tacoma.
Cadence: Tacoma, that was Kelly's [Bar and Grille].
Uh huh. I was there. I visited him there. Funny, I ran into him when I was with Terry Gibbs. We were up in Detroit and Woody's band came through, so they came out to the club where we were working and I meet Red there, that was the first time I ever met him. He picks me up by the back of my jacket, and holds me up to Woody, and says, "Hey, Woody, this guy's from Seattle [laughs]." I felt like a dog, you know.
Cadence: He was that strong?
He was, yeah [laughs].
Cadence: Do you remember him running for governor of Washington?
Oh, yeah. I describe that, I think, in my book.
Cadence: Oh, in Jazz Anecdotes.
I can't remember which book.
Cadence: Well, I know it's not in From Birdland to Broadway because I just reread that that, so it must be in Jazz Anecdotes. All the Joe Venuti stories are great, though!
And I told that story in the preface to Jazz Anecdotes, the Red Kelly story about him sitting on the dog. I called him up to verify it and he told me the true story, which is in the preface there. You can read it.
Cadence: Of Jazz Anecdotes?
Yeah.
Cadence: Let me ask you just one last question. How is your garden growing?
It's beautiful today. The Japanese anemones that are about three feet high are blooming all along the walk.
Cadence: Do you take care of the garden yourself?
Yeah.
Cadence: Or do you have someone help you?
Oh, no. I do it myself.

Joseph Benzola photo credit Bill Amutis, WUSB Radio

JOSEPH BENZOLA
INTERVIEW
BY
JAMES BENNINGTON

Cadence: For the record, what is your date and place of birth please?
JB: 6 April 1960 in Manhattan.
Cadence: When and how did you begin to play music?
JB: Both of my parents loved music. My father was a devotee of Doo-Wop but he also loved Stan Getz. My mother loved all the great singers such as Sinatra, Tony Bennet, Sarah Vaughn, and Joe Williams. She also loved people like Tito Puente and Eddie Palmieri. My uncle was a musician… a drummer. He played with Johnny Maestro and The Crest of 16 Candles fame. He was not in the studio but he was in the touring band. I was surrounded by music and instruments from a very early age. You've probably seen all the pics I've posted of me with my red and white metal drum set, piano, trumpet, and sax! My earliest memory was of Elvis singing Blue Suede Shoes. The turning point… the point where for the first time the hairs stood up on my neck was when The Beatles performed on Ed Sullivan. I was just about 4 but I remember that night… I remember the energy and pure white light pleasure that surged throughout my whole being. I could not quite grasp exactly what it was but I knew it was magic and that it would change my life!
I always loved to bang on those green and red hassacks with wooden spoons in my grandparents house. I would also take my toy rifles and machine guns and play them like guitars in front of the mirror singing Beatle tunes… for hours! My uncle turned me onto jazz at a very early age. Being Italian and living in the city, he would come over to our house for coffee and cake every Saturday afternoon. He would sit me down in the living room and put on a show called Like it Is. This was the mid 1960's which was the genesis of African-American cultural programming. Besides for politics, Like it Is aired lots of music. The day I remember in particular is the day Dizzy Gillespie performed with his band. The sound was simply astounding, along with his unique trumpet and puffy cheeks! I remember my uncle making a comment that the reason why his cheeks puffed out was that he was playing incorrectly. My thought was that if that was incorrect, I needed to find a way to sound that great and be incorrect!

My first attempt at a real instrument was not the drums or guitar which I badly wanted to play but the accordion!!!! I don't know how or why this was decided to be my instrument of choice, but I was given this instrument to play. I remember going for lessons. The crazy thing is that it was a group lesson in a large room. Everyone seemed so damn old!!!! From what I remember, it seems that everyone there was playing for quite some time and I was lost. I eventually was shown mercy and my parents took me out of lessons and sold the accordion.

Cadence: Have drums and percussion always been your first loves?

JB: Absolutely! I have always been able to play, from the first time I sat in front of a kit. I had various pads and toy snare drums which was quite frustrating. I got my first kit in the winter of 1973… a Pearl 5 piece black simulated leather finish kit with some very cheap Chinese cymbals and hi hats. I bought my first Zildjians a year or so later… a 20" mini cup ride and 14" New Beat hi hats. I still use both as my main cymbals today.

Cadence: Would you consider yourself a hand drummer first? and have health issues moved your focus into other areas?

JB: I would consider myself a drummer-percussionist first but playing the piano has had a profound influence on my conception. When I was younger, my initial thought process was that I had to be a "Drummer" but the more I learned, listened, and read about other musicians such as Max Roach, Tony Williams, and especially Jack DeJohnette I knew what my direction had to be. Someone like Jack was not only a master drummer, but he also was a band leader, composer, and pianist. You can hear the influence of the piano on his playing…. The way he tunes his drums and approaches the cymbals. I started to play the piano when I was 16 and I heard a correlation of the piano to the drums, but I thought that might be just a figment of my teenage imagination. This idea was proven true when I read an interview with Jack DeJohnette in DB in 1978. Jack was asked if the piano had influenced his playing. His response was:

" That's exactly the way I hear them. To me, cymbals are the bridge to the drum set- they connect it up. Cymbals are like the thumb on the piano; the way you use your thumb when you're making an arpeggio run up the piano, that's the way I hear my cymbals in relation to the drum set. They are pedal tones, and in the overtones of the cymbals are orchestra sounds, orchestra intervals. When I hear a cymbal I hear thousands of tones and microtones."

As to hand drumming, I see myself as a total percussionist and I integrate both standard and hand percussion into my setup. I started listening to Airto early on and his conception had a huge influence on me. He was the first person that I heard play "little instruments" in such a creative fashion… not only rattles and bells but also bird calls and whistles. All of those instruments are part of my vocabulary thanks to Airto and Don Moye.

The health issue that you mentioned was a blood clot in my leg which I had the pleasure of having a few years back! I would say that it has not altered my approach or concepts.

Cadence: How long have you been doing this?

JB: Well I've loved the drums since birth but I think I seriously began to study

and play around the age of 14… so 46 years. My uncle who I mentioned before started me on match grip and began discussing with me such exoteric topics as focusing energy and flow, approaching the drums as a melodic instrument, the importance of dynamics and phrasing, and other musical matters. He was also the one who introduced me to Airto.

Cadence: Your playing and conception, to me, is totally unique and seems very much of the moment...how have you attained this approach to music?

JB: Focus and mentally visualizing the whole process. I'm not a big proponent of the term "Free Music", Free Improvisation", "Free Jazz". Every individual has a vocabulary that they use during their playing… some more than others! For example, both Cecil Taylor and Derek Bailey are considered free improvisers but if you actually listen to their music, there is nothing free about it. Before I hear a piece by Cecil and Derek, I know what it's going to sound like. Cecil's music changed very little from the late 1960's onwards. Both Cecil and Derek have a very unique vocabulary which they have internalized in their playing and compositions.

With that said, I have developed a very unique approach and vocabulary over the years based on many different influences: jazz, 20the century classical music, electronic music, the music of India, Bali, and sub-Saharan Africa, the sounds of nature. I have taken those influences, musics, and unique energies and have diced and sliced them into my unique voice and vision. So what sounds like music of the moment which to some extent it is is actually governed by language and vocabulary. I can't escape me!!!

Cadence: You list a lot of recordings as inspiration...are there some musics/ musicians that you site as an inspiration to what you are doing?

JB: Oh my God…. YES!!!! One never truly escapes influences… it's what you do with them. Music like all of the arts is a very organic process. Innovation and the next step is built upon the shoulders of the past… that goes for everyone. No one mysteriously appears fully formed… at least not to my knowledge. Not Coltrane, not Cecil, not Sun Ra, not Charlie Parker, not Varese, not Cage…. No one!! I am what I am from what I've learned from my influences,which are MANY: Coltrane, Elvin, McCoy, Cecil, Sun Ra, Art Tatum, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Barry Altschul, Airto, Famoudou Don Moye, Anthony Braxton, The AACM, Keith Jarrett, Milford Graves, Tony Oxley, Bill Evans, Vladamir Horowitz, Cage, Varese, Stockhausen, Zappa, Art Tripp, Charles Ives, Xenakis, Scriabin, Webern, Schoenberg, Debussey, The Beatles, Pet Sounds and SmiLe, Song Cycle by Van Dyke Parks, The Velvet Underground, The Rascals, Keith Emerson, Bill Bruford, Keith Moon, Ginger Baker. And of course the profound musics of Africa, India, Bali, South East Asia, and the music of Islam.

Eric Dolphy once said that he was after what the birds in the trees were saying (singing)...nature...is it fair to say that you are inspired by the sounds of nature and the universe?

Absolutely!!! Music -Sound is all around us. This was the point of Cage's 4'33"…. How to listen deeply in the moment. One would think that the concept of music initially was listening to the sounds of nature and imitating those sounds. Probably the first sound was hitting something… your chest, two rocks together. Somebody then discovered blowing into a hollow stick produced a

sound. So there you have it… a band!! I use sounds that are all around me. It's not the sound.. It's what you do with them. Varesse and Cage both proved that noise can be used in a musical context. Oliver Meassian and Eric Dolphy both used bird songs in their compositions and playing. Sun Ra and the sounds of the universe. I have built my music and language on both musical and for lack of a better term, extra musical sounds. The sounds of the natural world have had a very deep influence on me. The integration of those sounds in my music have taken the music to another level.

Cadence: How do you continue to seek and strive, especially during these unique times of lockdown, etc.?

JB: Well since I have not been a very popular choice for other musicians over the past 25+ years, I've been developing a solo language which would take on the sound of not only playing solo, but would duplicate the sound and energy of multiple musicians. So it doesn't matter if there was total freedom or a lockdown. The results are the same… I am producing music alone. Besides for the albums I've produced, I have been producing pre-recorded and live solo concerts over the past 6 years which incorporate this solo language. I have done everything from solo piano and drum solos to electronic excursions. There is a very interesting quote from Cecil Taylor that I come back to all the time when I feel like giving up:

"Well I've had to simulate the working jazzman's progress. I've had to create situations of growth- or rather situations were created by the way in which I live. At the piano, in music, or away from the piano. What I mean is that if the making of music is your overall goal, the way you live becomes kind of a musical process. You're continually searching to absorb everything that happens to you and incorporate into music"

As you're probably aware, the frustration level of playing creative music is great. There is no money, a small audience, and very little interest. I continue to create music because I have come to the realization that I have to.

Cadence: Who are some of the artists you are proud have worked with?

JB: Early on, I worked with Makanda Ken McIntyre with his small and big bands and workshops in the early to mid 1980's. Ken was a great musician and composer who has gotten lost in the shuffle. I think that this was due to the fact that he went into academia very early so he could support his family. There were two very important concepts that I learned from playing with Makanda: Volume does not equal intensity and start where other people end. I also learned from Ken that you can do anything you want as long as you know where "One" is, which of course is very true. Some other people that I've either worked or recorded with: the great guitarist-composer-Ives scholar Dan Stearns, Jim Ross, Jim Goodin, and Ben Smith. I've worked on a few dance projects with Chris Becker contributing some percussion parts. Last summer, I performed live with guitarist-composer-micro tonalist David First in a percussion ensemble that helped realize his Schuman Resonance pieces. Marc Edwards was part of the ensemble and it was a pleasure to finally meet him in person and share a stage with him!

Cadence: Are there any projects/ recordings you have done that stand out?

JB: I started a series of compositions in 1995 entitled "Portraits of the Dead".

It's a series of sonic portraits for many of my music, literary, and spiritual heroes. The idea is not to mimic the styles but rather, it's my sonic impression of the individual. I believe at the moment I'm up to 25 portraits. I had a rather prolific year in 2019 and I'm very happy with the finished albums: 3 Haikus, Solo Language, Greatest Dance Hits, and 12 pieces. I'm also very pleased with the series of video improvs that I've done over the past 6 years. It really has defined and showed what my solo language has developed into over the past few years.

Cadence: What are your feelings about the state of the music field/ business/ industry for yourself and as a whole?

JB: For me, there has never been a music industry or field. I've produced, documented, and distributed all of my music independently. I have no outlets to perform and that includes the community that I live in. With very few exceptions, I perform and play all instruments on my recordings. I rarely get a review or interview. I am never mentioned in "Best of" lists. My music gets lost in a sea of infinite recordings that are released by the hundreds on a daily basis but yet… I still persevere. And the reason for that is that I believe that music is a spiritual endeavour and a gift that needs to be shared with all of humanity. I document my work so that others may find something of value in it that may enhance their life. I would like to share another quote with you which is from A.B. Spellman's profile of Herbie Nichols in "Four Lives in the Be-Bop Business":

"For if the products of an artist life work are to be the sum of his life, then Herbie Nichols, a jazz musician who seldom worked where he could play his own music and who has no records in the current catalog, maybe said not to have lived at all" I think about that quote often. That pretty much encapsulates my thoughts on the music industry!

Cadence: Do you have a daily routine that sustains you? How do you stay with the music? What do you see for yourself on the horizon...in the future?

JB: I don't have a daily routine. We moved into a new house in 2019. At the moment, I do not have the space to set up my drum kit but I do have my hand percussion, electronic drums (DrumKat, WaveDrum, and Nord Drum 3P), piano, bamboo flutes, and other items. The 3 albums last year were recorded using these instruments. If I'm not playing, I'm visualizing and thinking about music which is quite helpful. As far as what do I see for myself over the horizon… I would like to continue developing my solo language. I would love to have a series of duets with like minded musicians… similar to the recordings that Charlie Haden did in the late 1970's. I would LOVE to perform live and I will continue to send out proposals to spaces that might work with my musical conception. I don't feel that my music is so hard to understand… I actually find it quite listenable. You just have to follow the colors, timbres, and sounds as they flow through the air. All you need is an open mind and a set of working ears.

Interviewed May 21, 2020

Available Music:
https://josephbenzola.bandcamp.com/
https://vimeo.com/josephbenzola

Joëlle Léandre You Cannot Imagine

By Ken Weiss

Double bassist, improviser and composer, Joëlle Léandre [lee-ON-drah] (born September 12, 1951 in Aix-en-Provence, France) is one of the dominant figures of the new European music with over 200 recordings under her name. In addition to working with a lengthy list of Jazz's greatest improvisers (Derek Bailey, Anthony Braxton, George Lewis, William Parker, Evan Parker, Irène Schweizer, Barre Phillips, John Zorn, Maggie Nicols, Marilyn Crispell and Myra Melford), she has also been featured in the field of Contemporary music, performing with Pierre Boulez's Ensemble InterContemporain, and worked with Merce Cunningham and John Cage, who composed specifically for her – as have Giacinto Scelsi and at least 39 other composers. Léandre was a member of the European Women Improvising Group and later co-founded the feminist improvising trio Les Diaboliques with Schweizer and Nicols. She continues to be an outspoken supporter of the need for female improvisers in creative music. This interview was done by phone (by way of the internet) on April 18-19, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Léandre had left her home in Paris and was sheltering in in the center of France at her country house in Touraine.

Léandre: Next year I will be 70 years old. I've played for 45 years with my international friends and lived in America, Berlin, Japan and Israel. I'm a musician and a gypsy, a nomad. I started the bass at 9-years-old and I never stopped. All my years have been full of concerts, projects, and creation. After my Classical studies, I went to New Music and Free Jazz, but at the same time I listened to Jazz, even the classical Jazz. I'm deeply a musician but I've worked a lot with theater people, with choreographers, dancers, poets. My palette to be a musician is very large. I have this passion. I play with so different musicians, you cannot imagine.

Cadence: You've inspired many composers to create works for you.

Léandre: I've had 41 composers compose works for me. I've provoked them. You see, in 2020, composers are still composing for the same instrumentation. They compose for violin, piano, cello and flute. Why don't they compose for bass? It's because we are not a noble instrument. I'm from Europe and we have a very, very old culture, and the decision was always made to compose for certain instruments, to give

them roles and rules. Who decided that the bass is just a side instrument? That is just stupidity. The bass is such a rich instrument, and I provoked them, even when I was young and in the conservatory, I provoked certain composers. 'Hey, why don't you compose for contrabass?' They said, "It's a big instrument, it's very low. I don't know." This provoked me, so, I will practice my bass nonstop. I will play my bass. I practiced for 7 hours a day. This shaped my personality. I'm an outsider, an outlaw with my bass. I like this process, not only for the bass, but for my life. You create and invent by yourself. I have no recipe, I am just a bass player who's met many different people in art – musicians, writers, poets, theater people, dancers, and I was ready to create music for them, and around them with my instrument. It's freedom and love, and it's something that takes all your life to do. I do a lot of improvisation, as you know, and composition, of course! When you improvise, you have to be you. You cannot lie. Even if you play wrong, you can say, 'Sorry, I play shit yesterday, but it was me.' That's life, and life is a big work, it's never finished, that's the process of to be alive.

Cadence: I've seen you perform many times over the past decade and one thing that strikes me about you is your strength. Not only in the way you play your instrument, but the strength you present through your personality and command of the stage. Where does that come from?

Léandre: Love and anger. It's natural that when a person plays, they open their mouth. I'm a very political person about what is happening in the world. It's a feeling, an energy, that comes from the soul. It's a stupid time and stupid people, mostly the people who are the bosses, the power, the ones who make the decisions in culture, the people who pretend to have the direction to tell us what we have to do. I don't know if I am an anarchist but all that pushed me to continue, to play, to say, to scream even…I think I'm a rebel because I have a strong conscience about politics and I am against all this hierarchy, this injustice in the world. You know what? Maybe I'm a gypsy rebel. I'm like a big bee, I'm a big, fat bass bee. I go around and create my music. [Laughs]

Cadence: You've been described as stubborn, visionary and uncompromising by some in the past, and as someone unconcerned with style. Would you talk about your approach to music and what's important to you?

Léandre: This is what people are perceiving, but it's not me looking in the mirror and saying, 'Hey, Joëlle, be like that.' [Laughs] As I said earlier, I am an eclectic musician. I've played with Leonard Bernstein, Maazel, Celibidache, Barenboim and Antal Doráti… I worked freelance with Classical symphony orchestras and with chamber music too. When you play different Classical repertory – it's so far from Mingus or Monk. This is my work, this is my selection, all the time, every day. I've done it for long years! You have to search and select. You select your socks in the morning, your food, your pants, and the musician selects their music. When I finished my Classical studies, I worked with two ensembles Ensemble l'Itinéraire and Pierre Boulez's InterContemporain ensemble. I've worked with Berio, Xenakis, Stockhausen, many others, also young generation Contemporary composers like Grisey, Murail, Levinas, Fenelon and Jolas. I met John Cage in '72, he was so important for me, and Giacinto Scelsi in Rome in '78. I'm really a kaleidoscope. That's

why I say I'm a gypsy. I like to listen to La Callas, but I also like hearing Ornette Coleman and to see some new Contemporary theater pieces or dance. This is part of my food. It's not just to play the bass, that is only my tool, that's all! The rest is my selections. I started as a Classical musician, but I stopped. Why? Because it was not my life to receive a [paycheck] every month and be paid like a fonctionnaire [French for civil servant]. I made the decision to stop Classical music and New Contemporary music because of the hierarchy- you have the composer and you have the performer. The creation is only from the composer. Who decided that the performer has to shut up? What do you mean? Because you have a pencil and white paper, the musician cannot be creative? So, I stopped it. I loved it, but it was not my feeling anymore. I listened to Free Jazz at 18 and it changed my life.

Cadence: Growing up in a working-class family in the south of France shaped your concept of an artist as someone who needs to work just as hard and long as a farmer in the field. Would you briefly talk about your childhood and what led to the work hard concept that's remained with you?

Léandre: When you grow up in a worker family, you don't have too money. At that time, only the father worked and the mother stayed home with 3 children. I started out on a plastic flute at 8, and I was quite good. I loved it and I asked my mom, 'Please mom, I would like to make music.' Oh, my God, to make music in a worker family? I'll never forget what she said until I will die. This pushed my ass to grow, to be me. She said, with a long silence. "Can you repeat?" And she looked down on me, a very shy 8-year-old little girl. I repeated it, and she said, "It's not for us." Yes, art and culture were not for us, it's for the bourgeoisie. No books at home for me as a child, but since the age of 15, I've been [very active in learning from books]. In my two homes now, I have four libraries. I read a lot. It's an intense pleasure. As a musician, I travel a lot, and in the trains and planes, I read! My dear parents made a big sacrifice and put me in the conservatory in Aix-en-Provence, the small city I come from.

Cadence: You're a very creative person. You've said before that society doesn't want creative people. Too much creativity would lead to pure anarchy. Would you explain that, and if so, how does society, or the powers that be, control creativity?

Léandre: Creativity is impossible to control because we are all different and so unique. I think people are born to create something else by themselves. If you go into the track that society decides where you have to be, you become institutional. I could be an institutional musician, receive a grant every year, but I'm not. They probably look at me as an anarchist or an outlaw. The political society doesn't want people to think too much because they don't want individualism, they want the masses controlled. They want us to go the same speed, on the same track, and to shut up. If you want to wear pink pants and a yellow hat, why not? But if you have pink pants and a yellow hat, the people around you will say, "Wow! Well, he's bizarre. Who is he?" Society is built for the masses, not for the individual. If your track is a little different, the people don't like it too much. The people will be afraid. That's why we eat the same, we dress the same, we have to think the same… It's terrible! It's not liked if you give your own ideas, your own point of view but to be different is a path of

freedom, and when you're attracted by freedom, it's a long process. It's a life, it's my life, it's long and full of a lot of responsibility!

Cadence: What is it about chaos that attracts you?

Léandre: I don't think I'm attracted by chaos because even in a pure chaos, you will find the right sense because it will become your sense. My life and my thoughts and my attitude are not at all chaotic. I know exactly where I put my feet. It's decision and selection. Chaos can lead to change, it can cause explosion, but life is not black and white. we need some colors. Human beings are fragile, in French we say savoir ne pas savoir. Some days it's boring, so chaos can be good to help you find the way.

Cadence: What do you feel is your responsibility when you take the stage?

Léandre: Good question. I feel very responsible because you're nothing without the listeners. You can play at home for your cats, if you want, but if you come on stage, there's a sense of love and beauty, frustration, fear and life and death. It's all of what we are. When we go on stage, artists touch the audience. You can change a person in public because they are so touched, they are full of questions. I am sure they can receive something new, something different. They can also be shocked, they can receive something else through their senses and emotions. You can change their life, and we are responsible for that. It's not just 'Oh, she plays well the bass,' and to make good money, when we go on stage, we are totally responsible.

Cadence: You're a very animated performer. You don't just bow and pluck the bass, you sing, you groan, you shout, move around, play tenderly and violently at times. There's a strong theatrical component to your playing. Does that come out naturally or Is it done to enhance your performance?

Léandre: It's just me. I'm a performer, but first my language is sound and music. But, by chance, I have a voice, and I can sing. I have a free voice. I never studied voice. I can sing Jazzy and Opera and Pop, and I can be funny or dramatic. The fact that I play this huge instrument, it's furniture, it's like a body, maybe. When I arrive on stage, I'm not alone, I'm two. You'd have to ask the audience because it's hard to talk about myself, but the music is more than music for me, it's also action, narration sometimes, and I always try to give some sense, structure, repetitions, forms thematic or not, I try my best to organize my materials. It's like a composition! Many bass players sing along or make percussions with their bass, perhaps because we don't have a big repertory, we have to invent it. Maybe it's also a kind of rebellion against the traditional role of the bass as a side instrument, along with the drums, which is so wonderful, but also boring. It depends on the musician with who you play. Naturally, I think I provoke tension and release, which is life, which is my personal drama. Everybody has a personal drama.

Cadence: What do you see is the role of your voice versus the bass in your music?

Léandre: The voice for me is simply another string. I have 4 strings on my bass, and when I add the voice, another string is added.

Cadence: How did you decide that bass was to be your instrument? Were there concerns about the difficulties inherent in physically dealing with such a large instrument?

Léandre: I started on piano at 8. After six months, a man came to tune the piano and told my parents, "You have a son, why not put your son in the class of this fantastic, new bass teacher who is looking for students?" So, my parents put my brother into the conservatory, and he started the bass. When I saw this instrument, I saw this body, oh, my God, standing up, and it played so low [mimics a low human voice as if the bass was being bowed]. I was so attracted. I'm a sandwich between my sister and my brother. I was such a silent baby, I never cried. I just looked at people with my big, green eyes. It was like a human being to me, it became my friend, my puppet, perhaps. The bass was magical for me. I loved it and I started on the bass at 9-years-old. I stood on a chair. For six years, I continued piano and bass at the Aix-en-Provence conservatory, along with the school, it was a lot, and when I finished my study there, my teacher said, "Joëlle, you play piano not bad, but if I would be you, I would study bass at the Conservatoire of Paris. After you study there, you will be with your friend, and you will travel. You will be so happy." I stopped piano and I presented to the Conservatoire of Paris at 17 and a half, very young. I finished my studies at 20 and a half, which is also very young. I was alone in Paris, 800 kilometers away from my family. Paris was not easy. It was totally another culture, people had an accent, but I had this bass with me, and I just played and practiced the instrument all the time. It was a jubilation!

Cadence: Jazz was a little-known genre for you until you became intrigued by the cover of Slam Stewart's Blowin' Singin' Slam album [1945, Savoy], which you found at a second-hand stall along the Seine in 1971. How did that record spark your interest in jazz?

Léandre: Yes, I remember it very well. I saw the bass on the blue cover, and I bought the LP like I bought and listened to [the records of] Mingus, Paul Chambers, Major Holley, Glenn Moore, Richard Davis and Jimmy Garrison. I bought all the bass LPs in Jazz. Barre Phillips, Eddie Gomez, nobody told me to buy these, but I did, and I didn't finish my Classical studies. I wanted to know and understand what this instrument is, not only in Classical music. I was very curious. In Classical training, they give you an instrumental knowledge, in Jazz, you're given the adventure to invent, to create your own music.

Cadence: While in Paris, you heard Free Jazz players such as Bill Dixon, Anthony Braxton, Archie Shepp, Alan Silva and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. What did you learn from seeing them?

Léandre: I'm a child of Free Jazz. I was at the American Center in Paris listening to them all. I was 18 and it was a shock for me. It was a fantastic shock. We had already all this music in Europe, it was a big explosion starting in May of '68. They gave me jubilation, everything was new. Everything was possible. This was my generation. They gave me the message to "be you." They, along with John Cage, gave me this message. I didn't talk like this when I was 25, 40, or even 50-years-old, but now, I can look back at my past, and I can see how I decided. I started to meet dancers. I composed my first dancer music in 1974, and I composed my first music for theater. I never said no, I say yes! I'm a worker in fact, or a bee. If I don't understand, I go home, and I work in silence to understand what I have to do. In Europe, we had all these American artists move to and play, mostly in Paris, and I was ready to listen to it!

Cadence: Your interests quickly shifted from Classical to Free Jazz. How well versed are you in traditional Jazz and its history?

Léandre: I listened to the real, classical Jazz, Bebop and Swing on records. I have fantastic albums at home with all of Monk, all of Coltrane, all of Mingus and so many more. It's fantastic to listen to them, but it was not my music. I was not going to function with those rules and the roles of bass and drums serving as the traditional rhythm section. That was not me. That's not my music. I was looking for my music, my feeling, my decision. It's a risk, but life without risk can be so boring, no? I was looking to create new music, my music, in my century, plus I am a woman, not a man. I had to find my music, my feeling, my sounds. I don't want to play like a man. Men have examples to look up to, not only in music, but as a woman, we don't really have big figures on podiums. The only figures in front of me were men. I had to find myself, as a woman, in a creative way. All the world is built by men, almost everything. Women have to do somethings by themselves. I invent and create my own shit, I did not want to have the groove of Charles Mingus and the sounds of Charlie Haden, for example. I wanted to be Joëlle Léandre. I learned a lot from poetry, painters and composers. This is my private garden. I understood when I was so young, at 19, that I was not interested anymore in necrophile music. I want live music! Especially in Classical music, or classical Jazz, they have to sleep. It's enough! We are in the 21st century. I want to be in my century.

Cadence: What were your thoughts and concerns on leaving France in 1976 for the Center for Creative and Performing Arts in Buffalo, NY?

Léandre: I went to work with Morton Feldman after I received a grant. I had applied for grants to work at Valencia, California, Bennington College and Buffalo, and Morton Feldman invited me to Buffalo for a year. I was there with other musicians. It was fantastic. We got money every month. We were well paid, and we did what we wanted. We played some New Music concerts, and then we had parties almost every weekend. That was so great! It was a fantastic time to be there with Morty, as we called him. I was already known in France at the time from my work with Ensemble L'Itinéraire and Ensemble InterContemporain. I didn't have the position in those ensembles, I was a freelancer when they needed a second bass for certain scores.

Cadence: Do you have memories to share about Morton Feldman?

Léandre: I remember his apartment. It was empty, with totally white walls, and this huge white painting of Jasper Johns. We'd go to his apartment to practice or for some party. He was such a funny guy, he had a fantastic, heavy, and so loud, laugh. You cannot imagine. "Hah! Hah! Hah!" It was like that. He had a severe personality, but at the same time, very funny. A loving life type of man.

Cadence: You speak a lot about John Cage. He was an important mentor to you during your first stay in America and afterwards. You refer to him as your "spiritual father."

Léandre: Yes, in a way, he continues to be with me almost every day. He gave me this knowledge to love any sounds without hierarchy, without any preference in sounds. Who can decide that this sound is not beautiful, and this sound is ugly? The people with money, the institution, decide what

theater piece and what music is good. They have the power to decide for you. This I did not like at all! For them, the creation, or the creative music, can be just institutional. They will never, or rarely, send you to a little gallery or somewhere to hear a creative group. They will send you to a large and well-known institution. Creation is not institution, and John Cage understood this. If you crash a bottle filled with water, who decides this is not a nice sound? Cage knew the reality about sounds and silence, and it gave you the sense of responsibility to be you. It's so deep, and I think all my life I will thank John. I can say John because I was so close to him. Every year, since 1976, I went to New York, and each year, I called John Cage, and he cooked for me. He was a friend. Later, he composed a piece for me, Ryoanji, for bass and small orchestra. It's a dedicated piece for me. I had asked him if he had ever composed for bass and he said no. I said, 'Why haven't you composed? You could compose a piece for me.' He said okay. This happened in Paris in 1981, at a party centered around Teeny Duchamp, the widow of Marcel Duchamp. Marcel Duchamp was a very good friend of John Cage. John told me to meet him at an address outside of Paris, in Neuilly, at 7 o'clock PM. He was so precise with time. I remember he had his stopwatch all the time. I was there on time, and he screamed down from the second floor to come up. Later, he cooked for us. He asked if I knew where I was? Oh, my God, it was the apartment of Marcel Duchamp! You can't imagine how touched I was because, even before Free Jazz, and everything, I am a child of this time. A part of Erik Satie, Surrealism, Café Voltaire, Marcel Duchamp, the readymade, all the question about art or no art. I'm a child of that, and to be in Duchamp's apartment, where the piece Ryoanji was decided between John Cage and me, it's a wonderful memory. He said he had composed a series of solo instrumentation called Ryoanji, which is a temple in Kyoto, Japan with a [Zen rock garden] which is very meditative. Cage was like a God in Japan. I miss John Cage almost every day.

Cadence: Cage famously disliked Jazz and improvisation. What did he have to say to you regarding that side of your musical interests? Did you attempt to convince him of the benefits of improvisation?

Léandre: I talked about that with John. He talked about Hard Bop, Bebop. He said it's always the same tempo, and he didn't like that. He didn't like all the same beat, the repetition. But, in terms of improvisation, he made me a joke, almost the last time I met him. He had a cane, he was older in Paris by then. I asked him if he liked improvisation and he said, while laughing, he was all the time laughing, "May I tell you something Joëlle? Sometimes when Merce [Cunningham] dances above the stage, and he has different musicians, of course, we have a score, we play my music with a stopwatch," and he said, "Do you know what Joëlle?" [Laughing like a baby] "You know what? Sometimes I improvise." [Laughs] Never will I forget that! Everything was possible with John Cage, everything was great. He was unique, but he didn't like too much Jazz.

Cadence: Your first performance in Buffalo was a solo set in 1976, and your first album Joëlle Léandre - Contrebassiste (Taxi) was a solo recording [1982, Adda]. Why make the decision to present yourself as a solo artist to begin your career?

Léandre: When I received the grant in Buffalo, it was possible for me to give a solo concert. I composed for the first time for solo bass. It was a piece called "F. A.," which stood for France America. After Buffalo, I received another grant and I decided to return to America in 1980 for the second time. I stayed one year in New York. During my second visit to New York, I was so curious about bass repertory. What is the bass - an instrument that had been totally forgotten in this century. Why doesn't the bass have repertory? Because nobody in Europe at this time composed solo pieces for bass. Before me it was Bertram Turetzky from San Diego. He made a lot of things and pushed composers and received more than 200 scores for solo bass. In New York, I found different scores at a publishing company. During my second time in America, I made my first album Joëlle Léandre – Contrebassiste. I was invited to Cincinnati by the ISB [International Society of Bassists], and Classical bassist Frank Proto had a studio there, and he invited me to make my first album.

Cadence: That recording's title track begins with you screaming three times for a taxi and then venting in French about the stupidity of taxi drivers not knowing how to deal with your bass. It's really a performance art piece. Is that the direction you were heading?

Léandre: I composed this a long time ago, before the album, and I put it on the album. I don't know that I was heading in that direction. I was a freelance musician in Paris, and I took many different taxis with my bass to play with the different ensembles. I was ready to talk about the stupidity of the cab drivers. They all repeated the same complaints about why did I need this big, heavy instrument. In my brain, it was hard to listen to the same complaining sentences over and over each time I took a cab. One day, I had a recorder with me, and I took 8 or 9 cabs around Paris and I recorded all the provocation from me putting the bass inside the taxi. The result is really from the taxi drivers – it's not my text. It's what they said. I went home and selected [certain portions] and built the phrases out of it to compose the music. Yes, it's a theatrical performance. To see a musician playing and talking at the same time is forbidden for a musician. A musician had to shut up and just play! [Laughs] It's sad why a musician cannot speak.

Cadence: Bassist Barre Phillips served as an early source of inspiration for you. He recorded the very first album of solo bass improvisation, and he's lived in the south of France since 1972. Would you talk about the special connection you share with him?

Léandre: He was such an important figure for me, totally. I listened to Barre and I didn't finish my Classical study in Aix-en-Provence. My bass teacher there, Pierre Delescluse, was so impassioned, and such a fantastic bass player. At 15, he told me there was a bass player giving a recital in Aix-en-Provence that night and that I should go with him and other students to listen. It was Barre Phillips. It was a shock to listen to Barre. He played his music and part of a Bach suite – a slow-moving prelude. I was fascinated. I've told Barre that, and we've played together so many times in different bands and with dancers also, and we've composed a long theater piece together. We have invited Robert Black to play with us! I call Barre my brother. After Barre, I was the second or third bass player to make a solo recording.

Cadence: Derek Bailey was an early important influence. Would you talk about him?

Léandre: It was my time, surely. During my second stay in America, I opened the [Village] Voice paper and saw that Derek Bailey's Company was giving a concert. So, I went to listen, and at the end of the concert, I went to Derek, maybe he knew my name, I'm not so sure, it was '80 or '81, and I said, 'I am in New York for one year and I am free to do what I want.' And he said, "Ah, we have to play together." I don't know if it was by chance, but I was ready. We got together for 3 days in the afternoon, until the evening, drinking tea and playing guitar and bass. We played and talked about the music, and about the people, about freedom, Jazz, Pierre Boulez, New Music, composed music, Free music. It was fantastic. He invited me a few months later to play with another Company performance, and I started to play with Bill Laswell, John Zorn, Evan Parker, Peter Brötzmann, and others. I can say that Derek was the protagonist, the spiritual father in Europe about Free music, although I don't like the term Free music. My God, we are not free. We have a past, we have a tradition, a culture. I like to improvise. I like the term improvisation. More or less, Derek invented this genre, along with AMM, in Europe. Derek was a pure attraction for me, and for the concept of giving your life for this creative music. I was attracted by that. A year later, I went back to Europe and he invited me to play in trio with Evan Parker and him at the BBC. I met different British musicians there. I was there at the right time, and I never said no. I grew to understand sounds and music. We played with jubilation and with a pure expression, a human expression, when we improvised. Derek is a so important musician, not only in Europe!

Cadence: Talk about playing as a member of two very important and influential all women's groups – the European Women improvising Group [EWIG] beginning in 1983, and as a co-founder of Les Diaboliques, the trio with Irène Schweizer and Maggie Nicols in 1990.

Léandre: This was big. There are so few women [playing this music]. It's hard to be in a band, it's a quite hard life. It's difficult with trains, waking up early and catching, maybe three trains, because you have a gig in a small village and it's hard to reach. In a way, it's really more of a man's life, it's a challenge. I had heard the FIG, the Feminist Improvising Group [the precursor band to EWIG], in Paris, and it was fantastic to see for the first time, a women's band. For centuries, we just looked at men's bands, why not women bands? [Laughs] It's so simple. We had only a few fantastic women piano at the time, and singers in Jazz's history. When I listened to FIG, I was shocked in a good, a positive way. They made some noise and some sounds that were bizarre, but when you listened to the Sun Ra band and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, they made also very bizarre sounds and sang. I went directly to Irène after the FIG gig. She's such an important musician, she's the first woman in Europe, in '62, playing with Louis Moholo and with Kowald and more. She was the ONLY woman in all of Europe to be on the road. To be on the road means to have a band, to lead the band, to find the gigs, and pay the band. We are still very few. The FIG eventually became the EWIG which was Lindsay Cooper, Maggie, Irène and me. Les Diaboliques came after that. I've played with Irène

and Maggie for close to 40 years. You want to know what the difference was to play with Les Diaboliques? Women have a lot of humor and spirit, even on stage, and sometimes we make jokes. I love that. Men play Jazz SO seriously. Oh, God, and men in general [are so serious], only maybe Han Bennink and Misha Mengelberg, but they are Dutch musicians. What I understand to be the difference between men and women, women don't have this attraction to power and competition. Men, yes, I am quite sure. I'm quite sure. I've been on the road with them, and I've played 90 percent with them. Men are in competition, competition about the number of gigs, CDs, grants, and blah, blah, blah. I think with women, up until now, we don't have this feeling of competition. We don't care, we are happy to be together and play! There's no anxiety or stress over having to play like another sax player, or more fast, or more money, etc... Playing with Les Diaboliques was a pure pleasure, but it's also a great pleasure to play with men, don't worry, I learn a lot from being with them! And please, music is not men or women, music is… that's all.

Cadence: You've done a lot of work with dancers. What do you draw from the art of dance?

Léandre: I understand that as a musician I can learn about movement, structure, organization, rhythm, space and silence from a dancer. The three or four dancers arriving on stage can give you food for your music, in either spontaneous or composed music.

Cadence: You've gotten to play with a lot of the people who you experienced playing in Paris when you were a student. That must have been quite a highlight for you.

Léandre: Yes, I've played with many people. Braxton called me in 1982. I was supposed to play a solo at the Victoriaville festival in Canada, until Michel Levasseur [the founder] called me and said, "Joëlle, Braxton wants you to play with him." I said, 'Oh, my God! How to do?' But I knew already Braxton's music, his compositions, his scores, and I can read because I played quite a lot of New and Contemporary music in my past. So, I was ready to play with Braxton. My God, he had three kilos of scores, and we had only 3 days to prepare. With Boulez, to work his scores with his ensemble, we'd take 10 days of rehearsals. I looked at his score and said, 'Anthony, I'm sorry, it's impossible. We have only 3 days and all of this portion is composed.' He composed a lot. Braxton is a so important composer. NOT ENOUGH PLAYED! But I was ready, and we played. I have so many different stories like that with so many different musicians, as well as poets and dancers. You just need to be ready, to take risks, and to work! The risk to be you. It's work, but life is work. To be alive is a work. You could go – "Ah, life is beautiful!" No, life is difficult if you open your eyes and ears! It's a long process to slowly understand life. Did you know I played with Bill Dixon? I listened to him at 19-years-old, and I played with him a few years before he died. I met him at a party in Paris. He saw me and said, "You are Joëlle Léandre. Sit down, talk to me." We were eyes to eyes. I told him, 'Bill, in 1969 I did not even finish my Classical studies as a bass player in Paris because I went to the American Center and I heard you in duo with Alan Silva, and who knows, without listening to you, NEVER I would be what I am or have become.' His eyes grew so big and bright. He was so shocked and happy,

he gave me a bang to my stomach and arm, and he said, "We have to play together!" And we did. He asked what I wanted to do. I asked about including piano, but he said, "No, they play too much." He wanted to play as a duo, and we found gigs. This is the life I have, a gypsy life, an adventure life!

Cadence: You've produced four solo recordings. How do you decide it's time to release solo work?

Léandre: I record solo when I'm ready. The music is, before all, a collective meeting. When you play a solo, it's a moment very precise. It's an important moment.

Cadence: You've made over 80 duet recordings with a wide range of performers and instruments [violin, vocalists, spoken word, piano, vibes, bass, multi-reeds, trombone, trumpet, flute, guitar]. Why has that setting become your favorite?

Léandre: I love duet recordings, duets are art. You can hear and listen very well to your conversation. When you improvise, there is no hierarchy. You just listen deeply, in a way, you become the other one. The duo is fantastic for this. The question you should be asking me is what is composition and what is improvisation? This is the question, because when you improvise, you compose. There is exactly the same organization about sound, repetition, form, structure, organization, variation, theme or not. It's like when you compose, and you have this white page, you have to listen to do it. This is a deep and important discussion, talking about composition and improvisation. If you compose, you decide everything by yourself – just one person! When you improvise, it's a collective music, and you have to trust the musician with who you play. Life is always decisions, it's also how you select. I like to compose, and I get sometimes commissions to do that, but I really like immensely to improvise. [Laughs]

Cadence: The Not Two label released A Woman's Work in 2016, an 8-CD box set that documents some of your activities over the past decade. What were your thoughts on releasing such a mammoth work?

Léandre: You have to ask the producer [Marek Winiarski], not me. He wanted to make a 5-CD set and I told him I had more than 5-CDs of work, and he said, "Joëlle, you do what you want." [Laughs] I proposed different tapes, and I think it's an important box. Why not? It's also to say, hey, in this man's [music] life... Don't forget, some women can work, have ideas, can create, etc.…We know how men can be so macho, especially in Jazz! I don't know why. Can you imagine a woman arriving at a men's meeting? "Oh, my God! We have to be careful now, we have a woman in the band!" I think men are very well together. They drink together, they have fun together, they talk about [women]. I play 95 percent with men, it's like that! If they call a woman, she has to play FOUR times better than them. Do you know that? She has to be a strong player. That's why we are so few. This 8-CD box? I said to myself, 'Why not?' John Zorn put 20-CDs in a box. Why not Madame Joëlle Léandre? I like the title with its irony. Hey, women can do some things also, that's why I call it A Woman's Work, because many think woman's work is to clean the apartment, to make the food and take care of the children.

Cadence: You've said, "I never teach. I am not a teacher. I pass, I push musicians." That's confusing because you taught improvisation and composition at Mills Music College in 2002 and 2004.

Léandre: Exactly, I never teach. When I say that I'm not a teacher, I'm a passer. I mean that, how do you say it, I give a foot on the ass [a kick in the ass] - boom! In order to be you, you need to learn first, and then to unlearn. And when you unlearn, slowly you start to be you. It's a long process. You need to shut up and learn with humility. So, when I was at Mills, I passed something else to these young students about music, about looking at life, about a lot of things, and they grew…maybe. This came from Cage, again. It's important to put out our own music, slowly with patience! The young musicians who arrive here, for example, in Paris, for festivals or clubs, they know everything, all the riffs. They play so good, but I don't know if they play the music. You know how I call these fantastic American young musicians? I call them the "old young musicians." They are old! They have to listen to Braxton's music or all the other creative international musicians, but they don't. You know how I call this music, this commercial music? Sorry, it's commercial shit! People were afraid of John Cage's music and Rothko's painting, but art changes, it moves, and that's what it is to be alive. I'm okay to listen to the fantastic Beethoven and Mozart, and the so important Jazz people like Miles Davis. It's so good. It's big work for these students to take the risk to be themselves and to listen to the world, but without risk, life would be boring.

Cadence: Many Americans best know you from your frequent appearances at New York's Vision Festival, which was co-founded by bassist William Parker. How did you first connect with Parker?

Léandre: I played with Peter Kowald many times and Peter was very close friends with William Parker. The first time I met William was in 1979 or '80. I played in a quartet with William Parker, Peter Kowald, and Paul Rodgers in a bass quartet in New York. Then I received a grant in Berlin and stayed 2 years there. Cecil Taylor had gotten the same grant the year before me, and in this time, Cecil had a band with William on the bass. So, because of this, William was there, and we played in duo in Berlin. We became very good friends. I met many New York musicians there because Jost Gebers of the FMP label had invited them to come. William is like my big brother, and he and Patricia [Nicholson Parker – co-founder of the Vision Festival] invite me almost every year to the Vision Festival, which is a so important festival in America.

Cadence: Peter Kowald was one of the first European Free Jazz artists to have a strong physical presence in New York City. Do you have a memory to share about him?

Léandre: I was to give a solo performance at a Jazz festival in London in 1978. I had already started playing solo bass concerts around the world at that time. The organizer said he had another bass player that wanted to play with me. As I said, I never say no, so I asked who it was, and he said Peter Kowald. So, we played together. Peter was fantastic, and he later invited me to play in [his hometown] Wuppertal and Berlin, and I got to play with all of the musicians in the East and West Germany Free Jazz scene that was already beginning in the '80s.

Cadence: What's the hardest thing about performing for you?
Léandre: It's my life, if I don't go on stage, I'm sad because it's my expression, my language. What I like about Jazz, you can add this, is that I was attracted by Jazz musicians because they continue all their life to perform and to play their instruments. Music for me is instrumental life! They are a performer, improviser and composer forever.
Cadence: You've visited America numerous times. What strikes you as most odd about the culture here?
Léandre: I like the attitude they have. They can be a great child, they have a smile. They meet adventure with open arms. In Europe, especially the French people, they analyze everything, and they are very serious. What I don't like about America is that it invented this marketing system. They created this big industry that is centered around stars and money. I lived in New York twice and you can really see what's happening on the streets. You have these so, so rich people, so stupid rich, and just two blocks around the corner, you have the poor homeless. This is terrible for me. I think in Europe, it is more human.
Cadence: What are your interests outside of music?
Léandre: I read a lot. I like to walk in the forest. I'm a meditative type of person. I take time to look at nature. I planted roses and geraniums this April. I cook, I like food and wine. We have good wine in France, n' est ce pas? Ha, ha, ha.
Cadence: The last questions have been given to me by other artists to ask of you:
The first question is actually a question of yours that you gave me to ask William Parker in 2013 for an interview. You asked: "What is music? After my 53 [now 60] years of music, playing so many different musics, meeting so many people, playing so many concerts and festivals and being on the road so much, playing for dancers and poets, I don't know what music is anymore."
Léandre: Yes, exactly, I continue to think that. Because sound is both life and death, life is sounds and I'll give all my life to the music. This I am sure. I believe that. I don't know what is music after playing it for almost 70 years. I have to use a French term because I don't know how to say it in English – La Musique, c est [Music is].
Marilyn Crispell (piano) asked: "What are your perceptions of the current state of women in the music?"
Léandre: Marilyn plays the same kind of music that I play, we are on the same train. She has a Classical background, and suddenly she listened to Coltrane and she changed her mind in music. There remains many brothers and few sisters [in this music]. Creation should be made by both. I think women are the future because women have to create their music. Continue to invent! We start to be a force now in America and Europe. We will be more and more [in the music]. Men have to understand that we are a part of this creative world. That's what I think. We talk about sounds but sounds are not man or woman. I think it would be sad for women to just play with women. We have to continue to meet and play with our brothers, but our brothers have to open up their minds and their hearts and welcome the women.
Alvin Curran (composer, musician, sound artist) gave this question while he

and his wife were quarantined in California. After performing a few shows in America, they got waylaid by the coronavirus pandemic and were not able to fly home to Italy. The way he put it was they were "incarcerated" as "refugees in the luxury Greater People's Park of Berkeley, California." He said: "Much Love to you, Joëlle. In your opinion, who was Giacinto Scelsi?"

Léandre: Oh, my God, beautiful. Well, I met Giacinto Scelsi for 10 years by taking the train 4-5 times a year from Paris to Rome, and I'd stay for 3 -7 days in this first floor apartment, and Scelsi was on the third floor. I would practice his music. We'd talk about humanity, talk about men and women, about how this music is about loving sounds. Deep talk about how one sound has a soul, a heart. I remember eating a soup and mozzarella in his apartment! Scelsi's music can touch anybody of any age and any culture. Scelsi's music is really quite unique. It is a so deep music! Giacinto was also a poet, a painter, a musician and an improviser. All his music, especially piano music, was simply improvisation and recomposed later. He had a tape recorder on top of his piano. He always said to me – "Improvise, improvise." It was so important to my life to meet Scelsi, but also important to meet Braxton, George [Lewis], and the writers and poets. I don't like hierarchy, never forget that. Never I will put on the podium a person, a big figure, more than another one.

Myra Melford (piano) asked: "What are your memories of the marathon tour in the US with Tiger Trio in 2018, and on what went into getting your visa prior to the tour?"

Léandre: I remember the difficulty to bring my bass and travel case, and all the time in the different cities because it was a long tour. It was so funny, this trio, a brilliant trio! So rich, so creative! We had a long and fantastic meeting all the time in each city. We were laughing, you cannot imagine, during the buses, the flights. I tell you, it's a wonderful band!

Barre Phillips (bass) asked: "How would you describe the bass playing of William Parker in the overall scene of today's free improvisers?"

Léandre: I feel William has the Jazz history in his fingers and his feeling, plus he is a poet, a leader. He and Patricia are so human. They are so rare, I love them.

William Parker (bass) asked: "What musical event changed your life?"

Léandre: I cannot give you one event or one name that is on top of the other. I have already told you about some names, some musicians, some composers, some writers, some painters, some dancers. I don't want to make a difference. All my brothers and sisters pushed me to be me. I understood and I learned from them, and I have to thank them.

Cadence: Any final comments?

Léandre: No, I've given you my life, almost I'm totally naked, and I hope you will write a FANTASTIC paper! Thank you so much. Peace and love!

Interview Joëlle Léandre

Interview Joëlle Léandre

Photo Credit - Ken Weiss

Interview Joëlle Léandre

Photo Credit - Ken Weiss

Interview Joëlle Léandre

Photo Credit - Ken Weiss

"Mr. Kidd Plays the Bass: An Interview with Bass Icon Putter Smith"

Putter Smith's face is world-famous. The distinctive West Coast bassist has played with a host of jazz, blues and pop luminaries – Monk, Art Blakey, Bobby Brookmeyer, Warne Marsh, Art Pepper, the Akiyoshi/Tabackin big band, Art Farmer, Diane Schurr, Ray Charles, T-Bone Walker, Sonny and Cher among them – in a lengthy career spanning from the late 1950s to the present. But that's not why his face is famous. It is famous because of Putter's appearance as "Mr. Kidd" in the 1971 James Bond film, Diamonds are Forever. *In this interview, conducted at Putter's home in South Pasadena in March of 2019 , the renowned bassist talks about his appearance on the big screen and its effect on his musical career; his brief but formative stint as a member of Thelonious Monk's rhythm section; what it was like growing up in the shadow of his brother, the great West Coast bassist Carson Smith; and much more.*

J: When were you born?

Putter: January 19, 1941. I was born in the first half of the last century. [laughter]

J: Yeah. It's been a while. [laughter] So, if you were to give me the overall arc of your career, how would you do that?

Putter: I just fell into playing. My brother passed away 21 years ago. He was a great bass player, and in his day very, very famous. He occupied the same position on the West Coast that Paul Chambers occupied on the East Coast. He was on, he told me, 150 different recordings on the West Coast, on the Gerry Mulligan Quartet and all that stuff. And then, when they broke up, he went with Chet and traveled with Chet.

J: Oh, my. Roller coaster ride, yes?

Putter: Yes. And then he recorded and played with many, many people. Including Charlie Parker, and I have pictures of him playing with Charlie Parker and Chet Baker together. He was 10 years older than I, and he was my hero. My father was a baker. He worked for a big company as a dough mixer, which is kind of like the quarterback on a football team. Bakers have to get up at 2:30, 3:00 in the morning and start their thing, then they get home at 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon and go to bed. So I hardly saw my father until I was older. And so I looked up to my brother, Carson, as a father figure. And I kept a scrapbook of everything, when he was in Down Beat every week, or every month, and I had a scrapbook. And I listened to all that music. My father really loved music, and so we grew up with Stravinsky and Kabalevsky and all this great music, from Bartók to Beethoven to Duke Ellington. I remember hearing Charlie Parker when I was 8 or 9 years old. "Koko" was the tune. At the time it was just a sound for me. I didn't particularly even like it, but it was very recognizable. I was really listening to Dave Brubeck, Chet Baker, Gerry Mulligan, and classical music.

J: The West Coast sound.

Putter: When I was 8 he was 18, and he'd have people over to the house, and he would bring me out to sing along with Cootie Williams. He taught me how to keep time, then he left right about that time, when he was 18, 19, and went to New York. He had left a little half-sized bass, which I used to fool around with. When I was 11, I would pick up the bass and play along with it. I knew nothing – nothing! But I knew what it was supposed to sound like, and I would just play

Interview: Putter Smith

around with it. So at the age of 13, I'm in junior high: Bell High School, Stan Kenton's alma mater. Somebody came up to me and says, "You're Carson's brother," because he was famous, among jazz musicians at least. At that time, jazz was very hip, even to teenagers.

J: ***When was this?***

Putter: 1954. And he asked me, "Do you play bass?" I said, "Yeah, yeah." He says, "Well, we got a job at the Compton Community Center on Thursday night. Pays $3. You want to do it?" And I said, stupidly, "Yes. Sure." [laughter] Remember: I knew nothing. And so I went. I didn't have a cover for the bass. It had three strings, and I don't remember which three they were. [laughter] So now I'm playing, I knew what it was supposed to sound like, and I made it sound like that. Next thing you know, I'm working three nights a week. Everybody says, "Yeah, man! Sounds good!" What? I didn't even know the names of the notes! We had a piano at home with some broken keys and I used to play on that a lot. At one time I could do a pretty good imitation of Erroll Garner's style, and so I took some piano lessons. But the work was like that. Then at the age of 16, I had something like a religious experience: I knew that this is what I was intended to do with my life: to play this music. A couple years before that, a trumpet player by the name of Fred Stillman had given me his – I don't know if you would call it a Rolodex; it was just a bunch of file cards. And he said, "Call these people, get some gigs, then get the money." He had a book kind of like the Guy Lombardo book. I think it was written for a quintet. The cards had all the little VFW halls in LA, and then NCO clubs like El Toro Marine Base listed on them.

J: ***All the dance venues?***

Putter: Yes, and they had regular dances. So I started leading dance bands. We'd go in and play dance music for these things. Before long, man, I was raking it in. I was making more than my dad when I was 14, 15. And it was really terrible. [laughter] Guys were making $2 or $3 a night, and I think on New Year's we got $7.

J: ***Still, that meant something back then.***

Putter: My dad was making $40 a week, but I was making as much as $50 a week. At the same time, I was playing with some guys just for the love of it. A piano player named Ronnie Hoopes and Dave Koonse.

J: ***Larry Koonse's father?***

Putter: It's his father, yeah. We've been lifelong friends. We're still the closest of friends. Ronnie passed away three or four years ago. So we were playing together, and I straightened my head and realized, "This is what God wants me to do." Although I don't have a belief in a God as somebody who's looking after me or taking care of the world, obviously. [laughter] But I believe there is a God. Of course, we know nothing. I mean that's why religion exists, I think, because it's so frightening, the thought, "Where did this come from?" If you think about it too much, it's frightening, you know?

J: ***Sure.***

Putter: My daughter, when she was 5 or 6, I think, asked me, "Who made everything?" And I said, "Well, honey, some people think God made everything." And she says, "Well, who made God?" And I said, "That's the

question!" [laughter] I said, "Our little brains can't comprehend it. We're like dogs looking at a car. We know it goes." So, since I was a kid I've been on this trip. And I was fortunate: my father made it possible. So long after he passed away, I realized what he did for me. My head was filled with all this great music all the time. Although I say I didn't see him, he was obviously a giant presence. And he never pushed me to get a job, if I'm a musician.

J: ***What was he going to say? You're not earning enough money? [laughter]***

Putter: Well, no. So when I received "the message", I immediately stopped calling and getting the Guy Lombardo-style dance band gigs. Immediately. I just stopped it. I said, "I don't want to do that any more. I'm only going to do this other stuff."

J: ***And when was that?***

Putter: '57. Then one day, when I was 16, a drummer was working on a gig with me and he points down at his drum. He's got a Dexamyl spansule sitting there. And he says, "Take that." I said, "No, no, no. I don't want to do that."

J: ***I see.***

Putter: And he actually kept on and kept on. He said, "Try it, try it, try it." And he kept on, and kind of forced me to take it. I did and was instantly hooked.

J: ***Oh, wow.***

Putter: And so I had a period of four years… I mean the first two or couple years, you're just doing it for fun, and then it becomes an addiction. So four years in all when I was hooked. That became a giant setback in my life. But all this time I'm still studying and practicing and working, but it's mostly wasted. When I was 18 or 19, I was still living in a house with my father. It was on a top of a mountain here in the middle of Los Angeles, and I had sessions that started at midnight every night. And one guy that was there every night was Warne Marsh.

J: ***Good grief!***

Putter: Yeah, Warne Marsh. And the music was so far above me. Maybe twice in that year I was able to play along with him. Most of the time I was just playing at the same time as he was. [laughter]

J: ***Yes, right. [laughter] Not quite the same thing.***

Putter: No. And that was another thing: some of the guys I was playing with were Tristano students. I never got into the Tristano thing. And I really don't know what he did for so many people. I was never into him.

J: ***Right. But you were into Warne Marsh?***

Putter: I was into Warne Marsh. I was into Lee Konitz. He's one of my true heroes, especially his early music. My brother's the bass player on "Lover Man."

J: ***So when was this period of addiction?***

Putter: Late 50s – about '57 to 1960. I was really messed up on speed.

J: ***Did it affect your playing? I mean, did it speed you up?***

Putter: I think so. You get in a trap. And I was stuck there. And then somebody – I don't want to say who – gave me some LSD, and I was 23. And I went out on the porch, and that was again a religious experience. And it was

like the voice of God, only it wasn't really a voice, but it said, "You don't need anything." And it was like my shoulders relaxed. I went, "Aah!" And I never took another pill.

J: ***Wow!***

Putter: Never. And that's almost – I don't know how long. I can't add. But I'm 77 now, and I was 23 then, so somebody else can do the math.

J: ***I'll do the math. [laughter]***

Putter: And at that point, VR and I got married and decided to have children. I was so happy to be a human being again. Then I went off and got a gig. A friend of mine, Boyd Poulson, a very good bass player who now is a very prominent bass bow maker, was working with a guy named Don Randi.

J: ***He's playing in town still, Don Randi. I wanted to go to his gig yesterday, but I couldn't make it.***

Putter: I see Don very rarely, mostly at funerals. And so Boyd says, "Come down and sit in on a set, because I'm going to leave the gig." I did, Don liked me, and I took the gig. I was so happy. Several great musicians came on the gig, drummers. There was a guy named John Clotter, who was kind of his main guy. John was in the band for a while, and then another guy I had been working with, a drummer named Jim Keltner. I got Jim on the gig and he was there for I don't know how long: a year, six months. And Will Bradley, Jr., was on it. But Don said to me – and this is in '65 – he said, "Get an electric bass, and I'll get you some recordings." I said, "OK." After all, I'm a family man. That's my main focus. So he started getting gigs, and I was recording with Phil Spector. At that time they didn't call it the "Wrecking Crew." It was just a bunch of musicians. And he had four bass players. His big secret was that he had four of everything.

J: ***Oh, really?***

Putter: He had four bass players playing one bass line. He had four drummers, and one would be playing the bass drum and one would be playing the snare. It was four drummers doing the work of one drummer. [laughter] He had four saxophone players.

J: ***OK. [laughter]***

Putter: He had four guitar players. That was his big secret. And I thought he was an idiot, you know?

J: ***I can understand why.***

Putter: But now people are saying, "Those are classic," and I go, "Oh, Jesus. Give me a break!" It's horrible stuff. And most everybody on the band said the same thing. This is terrible.

J: ***Yeah, this is absurd. [laughter]***

Putter: But then due to the worship of money, "He's a genius! Genius! He made 100 million. Oh, he's a genius!"

J: ***Yeah, right.***

Putter: Right. Yeah, President Genius. [laughter] He was unstable. But I've done tons of that. So I was making money. In fact, I have a very small pension from the musician's union, and it's almost entirely from that couple of years.

J: ***What recording studio was this?***

Putter: It was Gold Star mostly. I don't know who else. I didn't know

anything about any of that.

J: ***You just showed up at an address.***

Putter: I just went in and did the recording, because Don was Phil Spector's contractor. He got all sorts of things we did, recordings with Martin Denny, and Sonny and Cher. Cher was a very nice person, and probably still is. While the studio stuff is happening, I'm working at a place called Sherry's, six nights a week, and we were making $86 a week.

J: ***What were you doing at Sherry's? What kind of music?***

Putter: I would say the closest thing would be like Ramsey Lewis.

J: ***And you were playing electric bass?***

Putter: No, no, I was playing upright. The electric was just for getting these other gigs. In fact, on the stuff I did for Phil Spector, I was always playing upright bass. He would have an upright bass, a Fender bass, a Danelectro bass, and a guitarron, and those were the four bass players. Lyle Ritz, the upright bass player, when any of the others would take off – which was 50% of the time – he would play one of those other instruments and call me to play the upright bass. I was just a sub, but on upright bass. And then I was doing these other gigs that Don had gotten on electric bass.

J: ***I see.***

Putter: So at one point Don says, "We're going out on strike from Sherry's. We're asking for $100 a week." So we went out for two weeks. And for two weeks I was getting up at the same time as my family, going to bed with my wife instead of coming home at 3:00 in the morning and she's been asleep for four hours already. God, it felt so good! And so Don called me up and he says, "Man, we're back. They're giving us the $100." And I said, "Don, I can't go back." And he says, "Well, that means you're out."

J: ***Out of the other stuff as well?***

Putter: Yes. And I said, "I know. I know." And I never held that against him. In my mind he's a dear memory and a dear friend – one that I never see, but that's how I feel about him.

J: ***So, basically, if you didn't do the Sherry's gig, you were out for everything else?***

Putter: Yes. Because it was all political, all that stuff. I was doing five and six recording dates a week, but it wasn't like the real big studios. It wasn't like Frank Sinatra or Peggy Lee or those big-time things.

J: ***OK.***

Putter: So I was young and foolish and threw it away, but I felt like I couldn't do it any more. And then right away, I started working with Johnny Mathis, and it was the first time I ever was on retainer, and I was making twice as much on retainer as I had been at Sherry's. I didn't get any recording from it. But I continued to get recording calls for a while. Part of the recording business is, you have to hustle. You'll stand there and one of the producers will say, "I'm going to do this thing." I'd say, "Oh, that sounds really great," and sound really interested in it. So then you call them up and say, "Man, I just want to say I'm real excited about this project", and stuff like that. I don't think there's anything wrong with doing that. When you're in a business and you act like a business slave, OK. I would never do that for the jazz, unless I got some indication. I don't hustle jazz gigs, because they're too personal. But I did kind

Interview: Putter Smith

of do it for these other gigs. So one time I was on a Cher gig playing electric bass, and some prominent writer – I can't remember his name – had written a thing like a Jamerson bass line and it was [singing Latin bass rhythm]. It was a real nice little line. So the producer asks, "Can you simplify the bass part?" I'm reading it. And I say, "OK." So I go [sings simplified version]. "Can you simplify it some more?" We do a take, and he's just, "Yeah, can you simplify the bass part again more?" And I played [singing even simpler version]. "Can you simplify it again?" And so I go, [singing] "Bing, bing-bing. Bing, bing-bing." He says:"That's it! That's it!" At that moment, I decided this is not why I became a musician. I can make money somewhere else. And so the minute I stopped hustling, it was gone, because there were nine guys waiting in line.

J: ***Sure. Somebody else is going to step up.***

Putter: And, so I had mixed feelings about giving that up but… Anyway, I did have the gig with Johnny Mathis. And I'm making fine money and going out and traveling. And one of the thing I loved about being on his band was you would spend a week in each town. And I'm an art lover, so I would go to the museums in town. There was a 10-week tour, and I hit every museum on the east coast. That went on for a while. Then I got a drummer on the gig, but he wasn't really capable of cutting it and they fired him almost immediately. He asked me to take his side at the union and say that he was supposed to get two weeks' pay. And he was my friend, so I said "OK." Then I got kicked off the the gig. That's how it goes.

J: ***Yeah, sure.***

Putter: Later he had a chance to help me out the same way and didn't. So it's life. And you go, "Well, OK."

J: ***You do what you feel you have to do, right? And you accept the consequences.***

Putter: Yeah, I suffered the consequences. It's very painful when it doesn't get returned. That was a painful thing in my life.

J: ***And that was…?***

Putter: That was the 60s, when I lost the Mathis thing. But OK, I'm fine. I'm cooking, I'm grooving.

J: ***You got your fingers.***

Putter: And by now, I'm a regular on the scene and working, and I get called to do Willie Bobo. And I loved it. I just loved playing that music. Sometimes Willie would be a week in a place like The Lighthouse or Shelly's.

J: ***The Manne-Hole?***

Putter: Yes. But mostly it was a night here, a night there – good, though. And he was such a good guy. The money was never funny. He was the greatest guy.

J: ***What was he like as a musician?***

Putter: He was aces. In salsa bands, it's really like a mirror of African bands: everybody has a small part. They have a lot of people, and they all have a little spot in the rhythm. And then the genius of the band is the timbale player. That's the guy. I mean, like, Pancho Sanchez had Ramon Banda. With Ramon, you'd go see them, and they're swinging like crazy, but then Ramon would begin a solo, and it was like otherworldly. Oh, God!

J: ***Yes, it transports you.***

Putter: Well, that's who Willie Bobo was. He was the timbale player. And he very rarely took a timbale solo, but when he did, it was like, "Whoa! Jesus!" So good. And then he got sick and died. So I'm working a mixture of everything and trying to keep it together. For a working musician – not a star – your mate is so important. I mean, I absolutely could not have had the life that I've had without my wife VR. It takes a very, very special person to say, "OK, I'll see you later", and you're walking out the door at 8:00 at night and not coming home until 2:30. And acquiescing to the fact that you have to spend a number of hours in a music room every day by yourself and that your schedule is so haphazard that it's very difficult to make any kind of plans or to go anywhere. You can't say, "Hey, let's go to New York for two weeks", or 10 days, or whatever. You can't because you've got a gig. It takes a very unusual person and somebody who really is in it with you and wants it for you as bad as you do. I can't emphasize that enough. Anybody who wants to be a musician, they have to be with the right person, because if you aren't, it can just fuck you up mentally. So I'm out working this country club gig in a tuxedo with an accordion player, and I come home and say, "Gee, I just made $150!" Now, my wife's father, Frank Bianchetti, was a boxer who was actually in the Jack Dempsey stables. When he met my wife's mother, she said, "I'm not going out with any boxer." So he gave up boxing. And he was good. He was a great, tough, Italian guy. I knew him for several years before he died. But he had taught VR how to box, and she could assume a proper pugilistic stance. Subconsciously, she would get in this stance, with her legs and her feet a certain way. And I come home and she's standing in the doorway in the pugilistic stance, and she says, "You just got the call to go with Monk, and you better say yes." [laughter] What happened was, Monk had done a tour of Asia, and was coming back. The tour was slated to end, and Charlie Rouse and the bass player were gone. I'm very sorry, I can't remember who it was. It might've been Bob Cranshaw, but I'm not sure.

J: ***Yes, right.***

Putter: Bill Cosby, who's a giant jazz fan, had paid for these guys to go to a place called, if I recall correctly, the Manhattan School of Acting. Monk got a last-minute booking in San Francisco, so they called me. I was a giant Monk fan and had transcribed a bunch of his stuff. They called around and I was recommended by two different sources, so I got the gig. So I went up to San Francisco. There was no book and no rehearsal. I go into the – what was it called? – The Jazz Workshop. I go in there, and, in the mode of the time, I have long hair and the glasses.

J: ***Granny glasses? [laughter]***

Putter: Yeah, all that. And so I go into the dressing room and Monk is there, and he's turning around in a circle. My thing is not to bother anybody. So he stops and he looks at me and he says, "You the new bass player?" And I said, "Yeah." And he says, "White is right." [laughter] So at that moment, I knew everything was cool. I had read interviews of him, so I knew that he wasn't prejudiced. That was very funny.

J: ***"White is right." [laughter] Kind of pithy and cryptic at the same time.***

Putter: Oh, and that's very typical of everything with Monk. I had two or three weeks' notice on this. And so I borrowed every record, every recording, and went through everything. And so we get on stage, and the drummer – Lenny McBrowne, he was a very nice man – said, "Remember this. Remember…" I guess he assumed I didn't know much about Monk, but I really did know more than most. So he says, "Remember that Monk is always right. And if he's wrong, he's still right." I thought, "Well, thank you." And so Monk starts playing, solo, and it's a tune I've never heard before, but which I found out was "Ugly Beauty."

J: ***Yikes!***

Putter: But it's filled with Monkisms, so by the end of the second chorus, I have it together. My goal in that thing was to play for Monk. The rhythm section I liked with him was Oscar Pettiford and Art Blakey.

J: ***That early Blue Note stuff.***

Putter: So I just played like that. And he really liked me. He liked me musically and personally. And I hung out with him every minute in San Francisco.

J: ***Oh, man. You're basking in it!***

Putter: I'm telling you! [laughter] And in the middle of the second week, he got another call and I'm walking up to Mike's Pool Hall with him – that's where we would go on the breaks – and he says, "[talking like Monk quietly and indistinctly]" I have a hearing problem, and I've always had it, so I ask, "What did you say?" And he says, "Do you want to go to Shelly's with me?" Monk asked me himself! I was like, "Geez, man!" My tail is still wagging. That was something.

J: ***Oh, yeah!***

Putter: Yeah, man! Monk himself asked me to go, you know? And so I went down there with him. The Monk stories … what I observed was so wonderful. Sometime I asked him questions – not many, because mostly I just wanted to be with him and not bother him. So I asked him one night at Shelly's, I said, "When you play 'Well, You Needn't', sometimes you have the bass going F to F#, F to F#, and then sometimes you're keeping the F and you've got the rising fifth, the fifth's going up, all the way up, and then a major seventh back down." I asked him, "Which do you prefer?" And he says, "Mix it up." That was so liberating! Yeah, mix it up! That was the opposite of control freak. I know he really appreciated that I was playing what I thought worked for him. Then, when we worked at Shelly's, we had a different drummer. It was a young guy, and his name was Leon Chancler. He was very young, 19 or 20. Astonishing drummer, like Tony Williams.

J: ***[laughter] Well, that's not going to work.***

Putter: And the second night, I said to him, I said, "Leon, have you ever heard Monk?" And he said, "No, I haven't." And I said, "Well, you should go get a record, because Art Blakey's his favorite drummer." He got so pissed off at me, and he turned it into like, "You guys are trying to push me around!"

J: ***You're bugging me. This is Monk, man!***

Putter: But then a couple older guys that were around the club – Walter Bishop Jr. and these guys – they apparently heard about this. And they told

me, "You're right, man. You were right to tell him that." Well, Leon later changed his name, and was still pissed off at me. And he said, "Now my name is Ndugu." And I said, "What does Ndugu mean?" He said, "It means 'lion.'" And I said, "Well, you're already named the lion." The name Leon means "lion." I saw him, I don't know, 10 years ago, and what a hell of a drummer. Jesus, what a drummer! And we got…

J: ***He was a young lion, right?***

Putter: He was great, but it wasn't right for Thelonious. We kind of reconciled about 10 or 15 years ago. We saw each other and had a talk about it and and I enjoyed it. We said, "Yeah, man," and shook hands. "We're cool." He just died, two or three years ago.

J: ***Oh, wow.***

Putter: Shocking. He was at least 12 years younger than me. Ridiculous! Anyway, the worst thing I've ever done professionally was… After I worked with Thelonious, a year later he called me – not he personally, but his family – and Thelonious was coming out and they were going to do two weeks at Shelly's and two weeks at – I think it's called The Jazz Alley – someplace in Seattle. And when you work with Thelonious, you're making $150 a week – Very, very low pay. They pay your way there, but they don't pay your hotel. [laughter] Of course, at that time, you could find a place for $10 a night.

J: ***Right, OK.***

Putter: And I had just been offered, for the same period of time, to go to Australia with John Mayall for something like $4000 a month. And so I turned Thelonious down to go with John Mayall, who is a really fun, nice guy. He's kind of a cross between Stan Laurel and Rex Harrison. English, humorous, mischievous, very clever and funny. But it was completely the wrong thing for me to do. It was the Bluesbreakers, real simple blues stuff. So I went and did a month with them. Now the money is all gone, but every moment I spent with Thelonious is precious to me. I recall every moment of it.

J: ***How long was that?***

Putter: Well, it covered a period of two months, but it was two weeks in San Francisco and two weeks in LA. And when we were in San Francisco, I hung out with him in the daytime too. Jesus, what an experience that was. I should say "is", because it's like it's…

J: ***It's present with you.***

Putter: To have done that, you know?

J: ***Yes. Could you have kept on with the gig?***

Putter: Well, it doesn't matter. If I'd just done that, it would've doubled my exposure.

J: ***I'm sure.***

Putter: Yeah. Then I had several chances to go to Europe, one with Charlie Lloyd. I knew Charlie here in LA, before he became famous. He called me to go to Europe with him, which was about '71, '72. I don't know who else was in the band. It might've been Keith Jarrett. I might've had a chance to do that. I don't know. Anyway, he called me to do it, and I said, he says, "It pays $150." And I say, "Charlie, I got bills to pay", and I'd have had to pay for room and board. The pay was $150 per week, which at the time you could survive on in Europe.

And so I ask him, "Charles, man, can't you make it $250? I got to be able to send 100 bucks a week home. I have to be able to. I got two kids!" No. Couldn't possibly do it. Not possible.

J: ***Wow.***

Putter: I kind of wish I had done it. And then when I worked with Art Blakey, Art said, "Come to New York and work with me", and I said, "Can you get me an airplane ticket?" Because we had no money, and we didn't have a backup, like a parent or relative that could provide. So how am I gonna ask VR, "Can you take care of the family until I get back?" We had no money and no pipeline. Jesus, I'd have finally gone to New York with Art Blakey, and that'd have been, whew!, major, you know?

J: ***Yep.***

Putter: And I imagine that, if had gone with Charles, that would've been major too.

J: ***Yeah, he was still riding the wave at that point, I believe.***

Putter: I heard stories later, long after it had happened. Keith Jarrett and Jack de Johnette were working with him, and they found out what Charlie was making a night, and they [laughter] went ballistic. "Man! Here you're paying us $25 a night and you're making this kind of money!"

J: ***And he's raking it in.***

Putter: Yeah. I don't know how much he was making. It might've been a thousand.

J: ***It was enough for them to be very angry.***

Putter: Yeah. But anyway, the miserliness of so many musicians… That's why guys like Lawrence Welk have a place in my heart. He took care of his guys. [laughter] Of course, I could never have done that gig, but… [laughter]

J: ***[laughter]. Imagine the biography: From Monk to Welk: A Musician's Life!***

Putter: [laughter] Anyway, after about two months with Monk, I get a call asking if I'm the bass player with Monk. I said, "Yes", so they asked me to come down to Universal Studios. I went there, thinking they want me to lay down a bass line or something. So they set me down and hand me a script. I'm like, "What?" They said, "We want you to read this scene." Well, VR, my wife, had been in acting for about 10 years and was very good. She used to bring her scripts home whenever she would have something to learn. And so I had learned how to read a script, in order to work with her. I knew what to do. So they have me reading this part and they're laughing and I don't even know why. They liked it and said there'd be a screen test. VR said, "You've got to go!", so I go to the screen test. This was for the character I play in Diamonds Are Forever. And the character – I didn't know this until I got on the plane to go to the first shoot – was gay. That kind of threw me for a loop.

J: ***Oh! Seriously? I didn't know that either. [laughter]***

Putter: When you say, "some of my best friends are Jewish and some of my best friends are gay people", this is true. When you're in fucking show business, you begin to learn that all a person needs to be is stand-up. Just be honest and stand-up and that's just fine.

J: ***Be a mensch.***

Putter: You can be in the closet or you can do whatever the fuck you want. And no judgment. I learned that years ago. When I was in high school and you're sitting in the room, and you're looking up the aisle, you're looking at the chicks… And if the chick's got a sleeveless, you're looking at her armpits… [laughter] And if they're completely covered up, you're looking at her ankles, you know? [laughter] Just like totally drawn to this. It's hard. Then you realize that a gay person, they're drawn just as strongly as I am. This isn't something you plan.

J: ***No. Yeah, it's not.***

Putter: So I went through a period of asking myself, "Do I look gay?" [laughter] At about that time, there was this movie with Richard Burton and Rex Harrison, I think it was, about a couple of gay hairdressers. So I was trying to find some justification. "Well, if they can do it, I can do it." But I went through some changes about that, as did many others. The movie came out and I think 12 million people saw it the first week.

J: ***[laughter]***

Putter: Wherever I went, a group of people would surround me and start asking me the same three or four questions.

J: ***Yes, your character is very visible. [laughter]***

Putter: And I've always been a very shy person. I've always enjoyed standing on the sideline observing. And to be the center of attention was, it was…

J: ***A shock?***

Putter: Very hard, very tough. I would deny that it was me. [laughter] "No, you must have me confused with somebody else." One time I was at the beach, on one of those rubber rafts. I was about 200 feet out from the shore, floating there. A little kid comes by and says, "Oh, you're the guy in the James Bond movie!" And I said, "No, no." And he says, "Well, who are you then?" [laughter]

J: ***Because you have to be somebody! I know you're somebody! [laughter]***

Putter: It really bothered me. And I lost a lot of work. I mean, a lot of cats stopped calling me. I called people to ask why. "Oh, you're a big star now."

J: ***They think you don't need the bread.***

Putter: And I was making less! I made less on that movie than I had been making on the road. I was on the road with a guy named Mason Williams, and I was making $800 a week with that. And on the movie, I made $600 a week. So I had 10 years of really, really tough times financially.

J: ***Wow.***

Putter: Yeah, it was rough.

J: ***And so that's during the 70s?***

Putter: Yes. The 70s were the decade of "Oh, shit!" But I kept playing with people like Kent Glenn and John Gross, and other people that were very serious about the music. I was working the worst gigs, and I'm still very grateful for the people that called me. Chuy Reyes is a guy that called me a lot. "The Mongolian Horse" was his nickname. And other guys.

J: ***Was this the first time you began associating with John Gross? Because I know he was on that Left Coast band that you put together.***

Putter: John has been a fixture. He and Kent Glenn. Kent brought John in

the late 60s. I knew those guys before all this happened. Jesus, it was rough. We tried to get food stamps. My wife can make any place look great. We had this big house in Highland Park, which we had bought for $13,000 and were paying on. That's what a big house cost at that time. I had $500 in the bank, and that was it. So the food stamp lady came to the house, looked around, and everything is beautiful. We had no money, but our poverty wasn't obvious. She said, "Well, you have to spend all that money in the bank, and then you have to sell the house."

J: Sell the house?

Putter: Yeah. And I said "What?" All I want is some help, food stamps, you know? And I got so mad that I began looking around for a way to make money without disturbing my music thing. That concept of making money without disturbing your music is a Tristano school concept. That's what Warne Marsh and Lee Konitz were doing. At one point Lee Konitz painted houses, and Warne Marsh was cleaning swimming pools. But the main thing was: don't take a stupid music gig, otherwise it disturbs your art. So I had that in my mind, even though I'd had five or six years of playing trash music. But I never, ever got serious about it, and I was always playing seriously with people as well.

J: Don't you think that you gain something by playing in different situations?

Putter: Yes, I think you do. But, see, I don't totally subscribe to what Tristano said. And some of it I disagree with violently. But I do like that idea of not disturbing your music. The idea is: don't get serious about being a rock-and-roll musician, if that's not where your heart is.

J: I see.

Putter: Just play it, but don't get serious about it. Then go play your regular, rehearse and practice. I used to read voraciously, and I got on a thing of reading about Jewish culture and all that. This is going to go way off the subject, but I'll get back to it. So when I was 11 and we got our first television – this was in '49 or '50 – they would show films of the concentration camps on one of the two channels we had. I'm watching this and I'm going, "How can this happen? How could people do this to each other?" So I began reading everything I could about the Holocaust and the Germans too, because it happened in Germany. And so then I got very interested in the whole Jewish culture thing and at one point even considered becoming Jewish. Anyway, in all this reading I came across the rabbis' commentaries on the Talmud or the Torah, one or the other. Well, this one was about what-if questions like, "What if the only thing you have to eat is pork?" And the answer was, well, first of all, you have to survive. If you have to eat pork, he says, go ahead and eat it, but don't suck the marrow. [laughter]

J: Yes. Don't like it. [laughter]

Putter: Don't like it. Eat it to survive, but don't like it. I love that. And so that's kind of what I mean here. You can start making money in rock and roll, but don't suck the marrow. Don't kid yourself that this is anything but crap. And I don't really mean that either, because for some people it's serious business, and they're really happening. So I looked at all sorts of ways to not give up my artistic soul and to maintain, because it's a lifelong thing of practicing and

playing your instrument as much as you can and very consistently. Now we're in the 70s, the period of poverty. That's when I discovered flipping houses. And so, over a period of five to seven years, I flipped about a dozen houses in my spare time, while maintaining ... And then realized at some point that flipping was the wrong way to go about it. You should buy a home. And so right now, I have this house and another duplex.

J: ***That you're renting?***

Putter: Yes. In this house, there are four units, and three of them are rented. And then the duplex is rented. I'm making a living from that, so I can continue to work these $50 gigs and not feel like a fool. And at one point, when I first bought this, I had solved so many problems in the escrow that I felt like I could do anything. If it's a little house or if it's a skyscraper, it's the same thing. You find a piece of property with a problem, you buy it for less than market value – I mean, you're never trying to cheat anybody ...

J: ***Right.***

Putter: It's just you buy low, solve the problem, and you sell high. Or, you buy low, you solve the problem, and you rent it out and maintain an income. And that's what I'm doing now. I highly recommend that, except that now, the price of real estate is so high. We bought this in the 80s, and it was the last piece of property we bought. And then you have to make sure you're totally insured. We had one property burn down.

J: ***Oh, my.***

Putter: And so we had two years in the toilet. We had to borrow against this one to maintain that one, because you still have to pay for the mortgage and the property taxes. The insurance company is the worst. When I see these ads, like, you're in good hands? Yeah, you sure are. [laughter]

J: ***Hands that close in and squeeze. [laughter]***

Putter: Blatant, blatant. And the thing I've found out through this journey is, anything that's up to, like, $40,000 or something, they'll pay you. But once it gets past that, you got to sue them. They'll just say, "No, we're not going to do that." They'll make you a very small offer, take it or leave it. But anyway: so goes the story of my financial life as a jazz musician. I knew that, if I devoted myself entirely to this for 10 years that I could probably make $10 million from it. I said, "No, I'm going to be the $10 million dollar bassist," driving 40 miles for $50. That was my choice. So, at the end of the '70s, it was a struggle financially and in terms of the quality of gigs. I was making a living flipping houses and still maintaining a regular playing schedule, but it was a pathetic living. Then, in the beginning of the '80s, I got a call through a friend of mine, the drummer Mike Stephans, to go on the road with Bob Brookmeyer. Bob was a hero of mine, from very early on. The first thing I heard was the recording he made with Oscar Pettiford, where he had that famous recording of "Stardust" and "Bohemia After Dark", and all those great things. In fact, Pettiford's solo on "Stardust" was the first thing I ever transcribed on the bass. It's just Pettiford and the piano player on that tune. Since then, many people have transcribed that, but I did it by myself, and it was great. Before that – I think I was 11 or 12 – I had transcribed Dave Brubeck's solo on "Take the A Train." As much of it as I could.

J: ***All the voices?***

Putter: No, just the melody. But the Brookmeyer gig opened the door, and we worked a couple of nights at Carmelo's. Carmelo's was the jazz club of LA for a number of years, and a drummer named Chuck Piscitello owned it. This was along Van Nuys Boulevard, very near Ventura. Everybody worked there, and I worked there with Brookmeyer probably three or four nights. And it was the kind of thing with Brookmeyer working in town, all the musicians came in to see him. That opened things up for me, and I began getting good calls again. After 10 years in the desert, it's like, "Oh, he can play bass!" From that point on, I got good calls. I gave up many, many years ago on ever making a living playing music, but not on being a musician. I had to set myself up to make money in another way. So when I started getting very good musical calls again, it was such a relief. Ever since then, it's been good. January and February are usually really terrible. But I'm playing all the time, and I'm working a decent amount. I've been going to New York for the last five years, since there's only a few jobs in LA. There's only a few clubs, and so there's only a few jobs, and people tend to become "the" drummer or the bass player du jour. And I was one of the bass players du jour for a nice period of time: did a lot of work, got a lot of calls, and got a little cocky, you know? And now I'm no longer the bass player du jour. There are people that like me and call me, but the ones that are advertised are Chuck Berghofer for older guys and then Darek Oles is getting most of the gigs for younger people.

J: ***Who?***

Putter: Darek Oles. Yeah. His last name is a long Polish name, but he goes by O-l-e-s. It's Oleszkiewicz or something. He's a very good bass player, and so is Chuck Berghofer. And sometimes I get jealous. "Hey, let me get my name in the paper again!", because it used to be in the paper all the time. You go through these things.

J: ***Are you going to New York sometimes now?***

Putter: I haven't recently. My wife had a knee replacement, and I kind of got out of the habit of going. I had a place to stay, which I lost, and I still have a roomful of equipment there – a bass and amp and clothing for New York, everything I need – but I haven't been able to leave town. And now I'm kind of antsy to get back. It's such an exciting place. I wish I had gone there when I was 20. But then…

J: ***But then you wouldn't have had the family.***

Putter: The whole thing, yeah. But it's a much more vital scene. When I first got to New York, the first week I was there, this piano player, Leonard Thompson, says, "Let me find you a place to stay for 10 days." He found me a place, and I subletted.

J: ***When was this?***

Putter: Five, maybe six years ago. So, the first night, he says, "You want to go and hear some music?" Duh! Of course! So, we go down to the Village, and geez, I mean, there's four or five clubs all within walking distance of each other.

J: ***Like 52nd Street back in the day.***

Putter: So we go down there, and there was one place…. I can't remember the name of it. It might be called The Fat Cat. Well, you go down these stairs,

and it's kind of like the de facto campus of NYU. The place is filled with pool tables and ping pong tables. Off to one side they have a jazz lounge, with old funky couches. Famous guys are playing: Eliot Zigmund and Todd Coolman and a piano player I'd never heard, Pete Malinverni. He is as good a piano player as I've ever heard: kind of a post-60s style, but sparkling, like Hank Jones or somebody. Really the highest quality. And then Todd Coolman was the bass. He's got books out on bass playing. Eliot Zigmund was Bill Evans' drummer. They're just the greatest. I go up and talk to them and they say, "Oh, yeah. I've heard of you. I heard you on such-and-such a record." They're, like, welcoming. On the way out, I just say to myself "Wow!"

J: Yeah, of course.

Putter: On the way out, I went upstairs, and I see this little brochure for jazz venues called the Hot House Jazz Guide. It's sort of like the restaurant guides you see in a hotel room, except for jazz. I go into one of the places it suggested – I think it's called the 545 or something like that – and God, I hear one of the best bass players I ever heard in my life: Martin Wind. Stunning. Like, man, God-darn it! Of course he never heard of me or anything, but I say, "Geez man, you're great!" He's in the same league as George Mraz or somebody like that. And these people are working $50 gigs. And so back to the pad….

J: Fifty-dollar gigs? They were probably fifty dollars 10 years ago.

Putter: I think they were more, because I mentioned this to Jon Mayer. I used to work with him on Saturday nights. He lived in New York, and said they used to pay more. Now they pay $50 and a meal, and the meal's kind of important. Anyway, so I get back, look through this Hot House brochure, and there are 25 full-time jazz venues in Manhattan. Twenty-five!

J: And that's just in Manhattan, not to mention…

Putter: In Brooklyn, there was like 10 or 11, in New Jersey six or seven, and then a couple in Pennsylvania. They have listings of every night, every musician, and I went through and looked at every name. There were names of 2000 musicians. And it wasn't like here, where you look down the list of who's playing and it's the same two guys. There, it's different guys on every one of them. I only saw two or three names that I saw twice. My God, that's a vital scene!

J: Yes. Absolutely.

Putter: And so when you get there, it's very, very exciting. So I connected with Mike Kanan, a piano player who lives there and had a spare room that he rented to me. That's where all my stuff is. So when I'd go back there, I'd fly in, get to his pad about 8:30 at night. And he'd say, "You feel like playing?", and I'd say, "Yeah! That's why I'm here." And he'd get on the phone, and an hour-and-a-half later, we were at a studio, and there'd be a session with three or four great, great musicians. In New York I was playing once or twice every day. I started getting gigs when I'd go back there, and I got to where I didn't want so many gigs. I just wanted to play.

J: "I'm getting sucked into the scene." [laughter]

Putter: But it's just so exciting. And rejuvenating. But since then, Mike has had to vacate one of the rooms because of a possible gas leak, and so I don't have access to that room any more.

J: So are there any other important gigs in your career you would like to talk about?

Putter: Well, I didn't mention my long-term relationship with Alan Broadbent. We made quite a few CDs. That was very helpful. I certainly learned a lot. I still get letters about those CDs, and that's nice.

J: Was that a trio gig?

Putter: Yes, a trio.

J: Who was the drummer?

Putter: Well, it started off with his best friend from New Zealand, Frank Gibson, who's a marvelous drummer. Marvelous!

J: And Broadbent's from New Zealand?

Putter: Yes. He would bring Frank over to do the recording. We actually went to New Zealand a couple of times and recorded there. And then, the first drummer he used other than Frank was Joe LaBarbera. Joe was a wonderful drummer, and a superior human being. And….Let's see who the other drummer was. I don't think we ever recorded with Billy Mintz, although he was the drummer for a couple of years. I was dealing with my hearing problem when Billy was with us. He played so quietly, and when he would hit the cymbal with a brush, I wouldn't hear the hit, the "ching"; I would just hear the "bloom", the swell of the sound, which was rhythmically worse than useless.

J: Yes, right.

Putter: And, but now that I have hearing aids and I can hear Billy, I love him. I loved him then, too. Kendall Kay did a number of recordings with us, and he was the drummer for a long time.

J: So how about how many recordings did you do with Alan?

Putter: Well, it's probably around 10. It might be more.

J: Over a period of ...

Putter: Forty years.

J: Continuing to the present?

Putter: Well, he moved to New York a few years ago, and so we were unable to maintain it. It was the early 70s when we began playing together. A drummer, Nick Ceroli, brought me together with Alan. Nick was one of the great drummers, and a great guy and funny, and has so many memorable lines. He died of a heart attack when he was 43.

J: Wow.

Putter: Yeah, ridiculous. We had been on the road together when I was 18 and he was 19, and had been lifelong friends. And so it was a complete shock when he died. He was very funny. Some of his jokes are "What is it we have that nobody wants?" [Answer: Jazz] [laughter] When he struck out trying to get laid one time he said, "They just won't listen to reason." [laughter] And several other things. Another thing he said. There's this thing where bass players go "diggita-dong-ding-dong." He said about one bass player, "Too much diggita and not enough dong." [laughter] He was a very, very special guy. And so that was that thing. And then in the last few years, recording with American Jazz Institute, I've gotten to record with Lee Konitz. 10 years ago, I recorded with Mark Turner and Gary Foster and Joe LaBarbera. That's just coming out now. It's a double album.

J: ***I take it Gary's playing alto and Mark is playing tenor.***
Putter: Correct. And last year, I think around October, I recorded with – again, through Mark Masters – Oliver Lake, who just kills me, Andrew Cyrille, Tim Hagans, Gary and Mark Turner.
J: ***OK.***
Putter: And there was a group of small big band arrangements mixed in but those were the soloists, and then Jerry Pinter, Stephanie O'Keefe, Dave Woodley, and Gene Cipriano. Ed Czach played piano on some of it. And there was Craig Fundyga on vibes. Anyway, that was released, and then it got a very high rating in Down Beat and they talked about how good I sounded. Said my name twice!
J: ***Whoa!***
Putter: And then you go, "Yeah, yeah! Good writer." [laughter]
J: ***[laughter] "Yeah, What's that critic's name again?"***
Putter: What I'm saying is that here, even at my age, I feel pretty vital, even if my being one of the central guys in LA is past. When you were asking about my formative years, did I tell you the story about Doug Watkins?
J: ***No.***
Putter: OK. Well, you're influenced by everything, but there are certain things you listen to over and over and over, right? I talked about Charlie Mingus being a bad influence. But growing up, I heard my brother mostly, and he really stands up. You hear him now, you go, "That's bass playing." And he was never recorded as a great soloist, although he became a great soloist after his jazz career was kind of over. But the people I listened to were Oscar Pettiford. I transcribed some stuff of his. And Percy Heath, Doug Watkins. I didn't even know I was listening to Doug Watkins because I was listening to Sonny Rollins on Saxophone Colossus.
J: ***Yeah.***
Putter: You know when you have a black vinyl record and it turns gray? I did that to two copies of that album.
J: ***You wore them out.***
Putter: And I also listened to Paul Chambers and Ron Carter. When you listen, you don't realize that it's actually influencing you, but it is. It becomes the sound you're trying to get, but not consciously. But about 10 years ago, or 15 years ago, I was in the car listening – and I hadn't listened to Saxophone Colossus in at least 25 years. And I have this conception of myself, and people say this also, that I have my own voice, that I have a certain thing. I once heard a young piano player say that, with our kind of melodic invention, the way of playing against set chord changes, you create problems and solve them. And the way that you solve them is your style. And I went, "This is exactly what I believe." That's really what you're doing. And there's an emotional content to it as well. I have a background in theory and so I figure I have a pretty large storehouse of possible solutions. Anyway, I'm hearing this on the radio – and I think it was "Morität", the first recording I know of that song…
J: ***"Mack the Knife."***
Putter: Yeah, "Mack the Knife." And this is Sonny Rollins, you know? And so when it came to the bass solo with Doug Watkins and he started playing, and I

said, "Holy shit! That sounds like me!" Or, "That's what I sound like!"

J: ***Yeah.***

Putter: But I've heard myself play and thought of Oscar Pettiford. I can hear things that I've assimilated from Paul Chambers too, and lots of other players. My primary listening has been to soloists: Bill Evans and Charlie Parker, Miles Davis. I was a very early admirer of John Coltrane. When the first Miles and Coltrane records came out, people were in serious doubt about this tenor player. But the minute I heard him, I went, "That guy is fantastic." And I still think that those are the best recordings of him.

J: ***Before he got into the sheets of sound? Where he sort of has more of the Dexter Gordon influence maybe?***

Putter: I just knew it was melodic and real unique solutions to the problems.

J: ***I see.***

Putter: And I would think, "Wow, that guy is amazing" and they'd say, "You really like that?" [laughter] And people would go on the gig and they'd play some honking stuff and they'd say, "I'm doing John Coltrane." You poor person.…

J: ***[laughter] That's so interesting.***

Putter: Yeah. Then I got hung up on the Nefertiti album. I had it in my car and I was driving two hours a day and listening to it.

J: ***You were entranced.***

Putter: I was, it was like, God, it was like mother's milk or something. And then I got to where I knew every note, and places where they all came in a bar late and where there were mistakes and stuff. It's charming to hear all that stuff. Beautiful, beautiful. And so that became a huge influence. And then since then, one of the biggest things I've listened to like that was Bob Marley. Something which I realized about his playing is that he uses fivetuplets, and so I did a study of fivetuplets and that influenced me. Nana Caymmi also became a fixture in my brain. I did the same thing with her that I did with Nefertiti. I would go, "Oh, God!" I don't understand what she's saying, but I sure feel it. And I analyzed it. I transcribed a tune called "Viejo Piano", which is with her brother Dori, and when you analyze it, you go, "Man, this chick is a percussionist." But it's soft. It's not hard-edged percussion. It's soft, but precise, like Dexter Gordon. Anyway, talking about my influences, there you go.

J: ***Cool. Now, I think I'll just segue into a related topic: your conception of bass playing. How do you classify the various concepts of playing the bass, and where do you fit into that? Is that an answerable question?***

Putter: It took me many years to realize how to answer that question. At first, I thought that soloing and being the support guy was the same thing. It took me many years to realize that they're totally different things. Because when you're a bass player, in the kind of music that I play, the bass is a support and an affirmation device for the soloist, and specifically in music of the late 20th century, the bassist's role is to define the chord changes by playing the root or the third on one. And like all rules, everything can be broken, ad infinitum. But that's the bassist's role. And then it's about how you get from one note to another. And the notes, aside from the roots, are far less important than the time itself, the time feel. Another thing that I listened to for a year or two was

King Sunny Adé. And that time is to me is the time feel of the jazz that I love. I wouldn't want to limit myself to saying this is all I have to do and only this, because sometimes I'll play in what's become known as the Scott LaFaro style, and that is very, very satisfying. It really depends on who you're playing with and what they want. But the function of the bass is to provide a great time feel, a very happy time feel.

J: ***And can you characterize that time feel in any other way?***

Putter: The African time feel, I think, is the basis of jazz. And there's also a South American time feel, which is a little different. The African time feel is so relaxed. It's not some hard-edge thing, like, "You've gotta swing, man! You've gotta swing," you know? "Hey! [claps loudly] Hey! [claps] Hey!" It's like [soft claps]. It's very easy and very natural. So part of it is becoming able to be that relaxed when you're playing, which comes from being fairly masterful of the instrument. And it doesn't mean you have to be the giant virtuoso. Charlie Haden could barely play the bass. I mean, I'm sorry: he was a dear friend of mine, whom I loved and love. But, [laughter] I saw him play quite a while ago, and it was in a small room, and in my mind I thought, "God, Charlie! I wish you'd have learned to play the bass a little more", because he was very limited in what he could do. But what he did with what he could do was so expressive and beautiful.

J: ***Had a beautiful sound to me.***

Putter: And what's clear is, when you hear him on the later albums, he sang a song. And you go, "Oh, yeah. There's the truth right there." We were good friends. And then there's other guys, like we were talking about Wilbur Ware, who obviously had no training.

J: ***He was a Chicago bassist, wasn't he?***

Putter: I don't know.

J: ***But he played with Sonny Rollins in some of those…***

Putter: Oh, yeah.

J: ***… recordings from the Village Vanguard.***

Putter: And Monk. I think he was probably Monk's favorite bass player. I knew some of those guys, like Charles Davis, and he just would talk endlessly about Wilbur Ware. And I think Wilbur was really the first guy to really use that broken time thing, where you don't just play straight quarter notes on the beat. He'd really break it up. And Scott LaFaro, I think, went there, with a somewhat more refined sound, but Wilbur Ware was the real thing, like Jimmy Blanton. And I just read a book about Pops Foster that's an interview of the old-timer who had played in the 'teens with guys like Freddie Keppard and Louis Armstrong. It's a brilliant book and every bass player should read it. And I had always thought of Pops Foster, partly because of his name, as an old-timer. [talking in "old-timer" voice]

J: ***Yes, right. [laughter]***

Putter: But when you read it, this guy has perfect memory of everything. He remembers everybody's name and everything that was happening, and the vitality of his career. I think he died in the early 60s, and he had actually played with Charlie Parker, all the way from those early guys. And he was a bad mother! He was really a good, strong bass player. And I have no idea what he

sounded like. That's one of the things I want to find out. Another thing about the real early recordings is they were recording with one mic.

J: ***Yes.***

Putter: And the nature of acoustics is that the bass notes travel more slowly than the trumpet notes. All sound moves at the speed of sound. And when you throw vibrations in it, it's going back and forth. And the slower the vibrations, the longer it goes sideways. So you have a 3-foot oscillation in a bass note, whereas it's minuscule in a trumpet. And so a trumpet player'll play a note, and 50 yards away it's pretty clear. The bass player plays something and 50 yards away, you can't hear it. That's why they're always saying, "Turn the bass up! Turn the bass up!" And where you're standing, it's way too loud.

J: ***Yes.***

Putter: And so when they were recording, like, Count Basie's band, the bass player sounds kind of dull. And they were saying this is the all-American rhythm section, with the great, great Joe Jones on drums and I think Walter Page on bass. And they're always saying, "This is the greatest rhythm section," and you go, "Well, the bass didn't sound that good." It's because they're behind, slightly behind, whereas in reality, they might've been right on top of everything. Anyway, I'm sorry to go a little theoretical on you.

J: ***Not a problem. It's all relevant. So, we were talking about your conception of bass playing. The tenor saxophone is an instrument where there are so many different colors that can be gotten out of that instrument, so many different kinds of sounds, but I think the same thing is true, maybe not quite to the same extent, but it's pretty true of the bass as well.***

Putter: Well, I hadn't thought about what you're saying. I would think of different colors as more space or less space, and sometimes a solo done in wide intervals, not exactly arpeggios, but moving way up and moving down. And rhythmic solos. You can play "bass" solos, bass-type solos, where you're playing a variation of time, like Wilbur Ware. But I feel like I become a saxophone player when I play a solo. And I'm playing with a totally different mindset than when I'm playing as a support person. As a support person, I'm responding to what the other players are saying and I try not to feed them. I try not to finish somebody's line. I try not to get in their way, and I try to play affirmatively. It's mostly done on a subconscious level, but I'm conscious that my role is to affirm and to help the soloist. I worked with Bobby Tucker, Billie Holiday's accompanist, when I was working with Billy Eckstine. [laughter] I was about 20 years old. It was the first serious New York musician I had ever worked with. And he shouted at me a couple of times,"Don't do that!" [laughter] He would tell me what to do. And one of the things he said was, "You know, the bass line doesn't have to make sense." And that's kind of liberating in a way.

J: ***Yeah.***

Putter: Accompanying doesn't have to make sense. It itself is not the focus. It's…

J: ***OK. So by "making sense", you mean it doesn't have to sound itself like a melodic line?***

Putter: Right. It doesn't have to stand by itself. So when I hear accompanists,

piano players creating their own lines, it's generally interfering. When I was subbing at CalArts for Charlie Haden and teaching rhythm section classes – which I did for 10 years – I would really work on that. "Don't repeat what the soloist does," I said, "If you want to play a couple of notes in acknowledgement of a phrase, fine. But then go back to your support role." [laughter] And I got some pretty damned good results from the students. Drummers also would play along, and they sometimes play hits that are much louder than anything else. I said,"Don't do that. Unless you're doing a feature with a big band, don't play any louder than anybody else." And I remember this one trio that we were working with at CalArts, and they were doing this, and I spent the whole two hours working on the drummer. [laughter] The next week they came in and they sounded great. I was so thrilled. [laughter] Yay! So, whatever you do as an accompanist, you have to avoid interfering with the soloist. And then when you're soloing, everything in the panoply is open to you.

J: ***Yeah, sure.***

Putter: One thing that's hard to break for bass players is the tendency to want to start and end every phrase on a primary chord tone, especially the root, because we're so used to playing roots. They're the bass notes, after all. But when you play a solo, you're really radically free of all of that.

J: ***So you've got to practice that freedom then, right?***

Putter: Well, get my book.

J: ***Get the book! [laughter] OK. So, a new topic… A lot of people see the West Coast sound as a softer sound, a softer, more legato kind of melodic line. Do you think that came out of the more relaxed, laidback and cool, if you will, way of being you have in California?***

Putter: I think the main difference between the East Coast and the West Coast are the drummers. The West Coast drummers played very quietly, and the East Coast drummers played much louder. Not more aggressively, but louder.

J: ***Yeah.***

Putter: I had a conversation with Lennie Niehaus sometime in the last 20 years, and we got on the subject of the writing, and he said, "We were all just trying to write Miles Davis' Birth of the Cool. We were trying to write like Gil Evans and Gerry Mulligan and those guys." And at the time, most drummers played with brushes, quietly. When you recorded anything at that time, everybody was in the same room, and so the drummer couldn't play loud or it'd be awful.

J: ***In my mind, there's a coalescence between what's happening musically and that laidback California vibe.***

Putter: Well, it's a lot easier in California than it is in New York to survive.

J: ***Yeah.***

Putter: Seriously, the weather's so different. And up until five years ago, it was very easy to find inexpensive lodging and you could get around with a car. And now it's become ridiculously expensive. Not as bad as New York, but almost.

J: ***And San Francisco's probably even worse.***

Putter: They're the worst. But, the seriousness of the New York musician ... Although some of us here were just as serious. And then the volume of music in the 60s: it got so much louder. My brother, when I was – I don't know – 12,

13, or 14, he played me some records, and he said, "This is the most exciting drummer in jazz. He's loud, but he's the most exciting drummer." And he put on "C.T.A.", Art Blakey with Miles. But then when I worked with Art in 1970, he was relatively quiet, because when rock and roll came in, with the isolation recording, drummers played at their fullest, loudest volume. And when I was talking about this trio that I worked with at CalArts, the drummer said, "I know you want me to play soft, but it feels so good to hit that thing as hard as you can." I said, "Yeah, but pretend you're a little teeny midget and you've got these little sticks and you're just hitting it as hard as you can." [laughter] There's a whole bunch of Lawrence Welk things that people have written down. One guy had a list of 50. I wish I had it. The most famous is, "And now we're going to play: 'Take A Train' by Duke Ellington." Another one was, "When you play, I want you to look like you're having a lot of fun, but don't." [laughter]

J: ***[laughter] That's a good one. So, the formation of that West Coast sound…***

Putter: At that time, no bass player had an amp. And music was not loud. It was very quiet. Pops Foster talks in his book about how loud music had gotten, and this is in 1960. He said, "We used to be able to stand in front of a big band and have a conversation while they were playing." Real sweet, you know?

J: ***That's very telling.***

Putter: I saw Count Basie's band, and they were playing their whole thing, and they were all playing so sweetly and softly, and then came amplifiers et cetera.

J: ***Right. Sure.***

Putter: What music is now is ridiculous. I recorded a movie on Queen, a show on Journey, a show on…

J: ***Yes. I've seen the one on Queen.***

Putter: You saw the movie?

J: ***I have.***

Putter: Yeah, I liked it. And the thing at the end made me want to say, "Well, gee, they were really good." They had a little clip of the actual band, and I said, "Well, gee, they were really good." And so I recorded a thing of the actual band, and they were good, but again, it's such simple music and it's not what we do. Because we're actually creating music and dealing at a very high level of music theory, and also rhythmically so much more complex. And that thing about rock and roll – and I may have said this before – is that the rhythm section is not improvising. The bass player's playing a line. How boring. I think rock and roll is really a drummer's music. And it's funny: you hear those drum solos, and they sound like Gene Krupa. [laughter] And Gene Krupa was great. [laughter] But I like Philly Joe. He's my favorite drum soloist. But that's one thing about the kind of music that we play: there's a feeling that the four of you are one, and this thing is happening and it's so great to be in there. And when you have somebody that's playing a fucking loud drum solo, I don't care for it. Yeah, I don't care for it.

J: ***Yeah. Elvin was known for playing loud too. But when Elvin is playing time in the Coltrane quartet, it's a totally different sound. I mean, it's***

this very relaxed feel. You feel like it's almost like the ocean.
Putter: Well, it's that big time. He's got that big time. But I've seen these clips of Coltrane's band, and if I got a chance to play with Coltrane, I would of course, but I wouldn't enjoy it. I don't want to just be the dog. "Here, let's whip the dog for 45 minutes."
J: Yeah, so is that a comment on what Jimmy Garrison had to do in that group?
Putter: Yes. And he was a very fine musician.
J: Yeah, right. So what wouldn't you like about it?
Putter: Well, physically it's unreasonable. It's fucking unreasonable.
J: You mean like playing "Impressions" or something like that?
Putter: Yeah, to play that long. And also, it's not really interesting from a bass player's point of view, because you have no movement of roots.
J: True.
Putter: And when you're playing free, that's interesting for about three minutes.
J: Yeah, [laughter] OK. Like Jimmy Garrison playing D minor and Eb minor [laughter] for minutes and minutes and minutes on end.
Putter: Yes.
J: So how do you make that interesting?
Putter: That's the problem, right there. Well, I mean, you just have to get it totally on a time level. Just get into the ecstasy of the time. So, we were talking about the role of the bass player and what it's like to be a bass player. There's a guy I play with where I play nothing but broken lines, and it feels totally natural. It doesn't feel like I'm forcing to do it. And other people you try to do it, and it sounds like you're forcing it.
J: Right. Well, don't you think that there is a kind of analogy to playing time on the cymbal? Because, there's the classic spangalang, spangalang, spangalang, where it's just so mechanical and it's the same way all the time. And when you hear Elvin Jones, he breaks that up. Often with Elvin, that's not happening at all. That's of course only one drummer. But he was very prominent, to my ears, in changing that up.
Putter: And he could also play all the other ways, too. I mean, doesn't he play mostly brushes with Tommy Flanagan overseas?
J: Yes, right. A little cocktail trio.
Putter: Yeah, and totally capable. My friend Dave Koonse was standing with Kenny Clarke one time and heard him tell the bass player that they were working with, "If you've got a dollar, you should spend 95 cents on the time and a nickel on the notes."
J: I think Dizzy Gillespie thought that way too, because I've read some things where he was saying the same thing, and in fact a guy that used to play with him teaches this way, the pianist Mike Longo.
Putter: I don't know him.
J: Just think first of a rhythm, then put notes to it.
Putter: I think I say that in the book. I said that what we're doing in this music is we're playing drum solos and we're putting notes on the drum solos. And that's how you should think of it. Because if the rhythm ain't happening…

It's that thing of "it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing."

J: ***True. So, OK. I wanted to ask you about improvising. How do you practice improvising? Obviously improvised music is a spontaneous music. But, when you're practicing, you think about certain things. Do you think things like, "Well, this is how I want to approach the beginning of this solo"?***

Putter: Often you try to capture what the last person did and continue what they were doing. And if that doesn't present itself, I try to focus on some aspect of the melody and build on that. But you're not really thinking. You're following a bouncing ball. And it's going through your head and you're just trying to capture as it goes by. And so your preparation is to learn how to capture what you're hearing. And a great deal of that has to do with mastering the instrument. But the bass, you don't really master it. You can't. It's always a wild animal. So, my practice…. At different times of your life, you practice different things. I don't practice improvising much. I do the basic fundamentals of playing the instrument – getting it in tune, getting myself warmed up – and I do that every day. Then I mostly work on new material. And I might play a few choruses on that. If the new material has some chords like the 96 chords that I work on in my book, and I'm a little foggy on some of them, then I'll work on those parts, and try to get smooth on them.

J: ***Smooth on the transition?***

Putter: Yeah. Say it's Gm7 to Abm7b5 to Dm7 and the b5 chord is spooking me a little bit. It's like a sandwich of chords. I'll play the whole sandwich and try to get smooth on the connections. I'll do all of the work on that that I have in my book: arpeggios and scales and all that kind of stuff. And I might work on it for a few days. And then I'll try improvising. and that'll often lead to different ideas. But they're not ideas that I'll carry into my solos when I play it, because I'm just following the bouncing ball.

J: ***I see.***

Putter: When you're not able to follow a tune, it's because you're really not sure what those notes are. When you have the material together, you can cross any bridge and go there. And most of my practice is trying to increase my technique and trying to be able to play across the strings more than just up and down a string. I've been working for the last couple of years in the higher registers. I asked Scott LaFaro what he was working on. We were colleagues here in LA at the same time. He used to come and see me play, and I saw him several times. We also played together. And we would ask each other, "What are you working on, man?" And he showed me what he was working on, and I described it – they interviewed me for his book. His sister wrote a book about him, and I described it in that. It's kind of phenomenal, what he's doing, how he was arpeggiating. And if you do it a little bit, you realize how quickly you can develop a lot of speed doing it, but for some reason I had never done it. I've never spent a year working on that stuff. And then you wonder, "Why haven't I worked on that?" Because since know what to do, why don't I do it?

J: ***Have you ever answered that question?***

Putter: No.

J: ***OK. Is it that you don't want to, because it's Scott's thing?***

Putter: No, it's not that. I wouldn't sound like Scott LaFaro. I mean, he was

like the Michael Jordan of the bass. You couldn't do that. But you could ask him, "What did you work on, Scott?" and improve yourself about 100%.

J: ***Gotcha.***

Putter: He practiced a lot. His sister said he would stand in the corner and practice for four hours a day. But whatever you work on, it's all running through your head. And the more you know about music, and the more you know about your instrument, the more you can capture that. And that's what I'm trying to do. I'm talking mainly about soloing now, but also about playing bass lines. But when playing bass lines, I don't feel like I'm the boss. I'm responding. I'm the boss when it comes to the time feel, but even then, I'm really listening to the drummer as if he's a metronome. I don't fight the drummer. When I play with a drummer that doesn't have good time, I don't fight them. I just am busy the next time they call. [laughter]

J: ***Fair enough! [laughter]***

Putter: I started to mention my practice routine. I think bass is one of the most difficult of instruments because it demands a lot of strength and accuracy. I probably don't miss 10 days of practice a year. I've just got to do it. I've practiced today. Gary Foster has a lot to do with that. I had a conversation with him almost 50 years ago about this. I always noticed that whenever Gary would play his instrument, he just sounded gorgeous! Every time, no matter when. And I asked him, "Gary, how do you always sound so great?" Because when I play, maybe after a half-hour it starts sounding OK. Gary saw that I was serious about the question, and he says, "Come to my office at five o'clock and I'll show you." And so he sat me down and told me what he does, and I have done that ever since.

J: ***What did he show you?***

Putter: Well, he says, "First of all, you have to establish a routine that takes you through the entire instrument," and it took maybe six months before I had a routine. And he says, "You do that, and then you work on whatever is current." That's what I do. And it takes 35, 40 minutes to get through my routine. For years I was practicing three hours a day. And now I practice about an hour. But I do that whole routine, and then I work on whatever I'm working on currently, as long as I can, and then at some point my body goes, "That's it."

J: ***You're done***

Putter: And now, if I practice an hour and 15 minutes, I feel like I've done a lot. And when I practice, I'm going to a real deep level right away. The routine goes like this… first I find my sound on the bow, and then I do intonation studies. Each of these things takes 5 or 7 minutes. I'll practice things a certain way. There's a bass exercise Gary Karr invented called "the vomiter." You start from a certain note, and slide up and down [singing] through an octave. I work each finger. Right now I'm starting on F# on the D string, going up an octave. I start with my fourth finger, then I'll do it with the first finger, and then with the second. I do it with the second finger last, because of some physical problems. Before that, I think I started on C on the A string, maybe for a year or two. And then I've been doing the F# now for a couple of months maybe, and I'll do it for a while. I've got the metronome going at 75. And maybe at some point I'll go, "OK, I'm going to move it up to 111" and do that…And I'll do these things for years and just, it's part of my daily thing. Every six months, or sometimes

a couple of years, I'll change what I'm doing. And then I play all the 12 major scales the length of the instrument. Most of them are three octaves, but there's one or two that are four. And then I do these Niels-Henning Pedersen pizzicato exercises. I've been doing those for 35 years. Per-Ola Gadd, a Swedish student where I was teaching, pulled out his instrument and he was starting with [sings a very fast, well-articulated bebop line], and I go, "Wow! What is that?" And he says, "Niels Pedersen showed me this." So I get him to show me them, and so I've been doing those for 35 years. That's the whole routine. At that point, I'm ready to play anything I want.

J: ***I see.***

Putter: Currently I'm working on my reading. Before that I spent a year working on one of the Bach suites, trying to get the high end together. And after a year of working on this all in the real high positions, I went back and looked at some other stuff and I went, "Oh! Yeah!" I could play it easily. Big improvement, which, at the age of 77 is like "yeah!"

J: ***That's really amazing.***

Putter: And I practice with a metronome. One thing it does for you is it keeps your ear listening outward, so that you're not just listening to yourself, but hearing what's happening out there. And then steadiness.

J: ***Sure.***

Putter: So mostly I'm doing that. And then I'll work on current material. I've made a copy of music from Benn Clatworthy's band, and I'm going through that entire thing trying to get my reading better. When I was working with Toshiko Akiyoshi, Lew Tabackin and Joey Baron – for several years we worked together – and some of that time would be with Toshiko's big band. Joey was a delight in every way. We used to practice together – we would room together when we were on the road – and we would tape ourselves and we'd listen to it and talk. He was so helpful to me. We were in Japan for a month, and the process was you get to the venue at 6:00, concert starts at 6:30. After you get there, you just barely have time to take your instrument out of the case get it warmed up, then you do the gig, which took an hour-and-a-half. Then you put the instrument back in the case, go back to the hotel. The poor roadies would have to put the stuff on the truck and drive to the next place, and you'd go to the hotel and sleep. Then you'd jump on a plane in the morning and go to the next venue. And you wouldn't get your axe until a half-hour before the gig. And about the third week, I told Joey, "Man, I haven't practiced in three weeks, and yet the minute I take the bass out, I feel like I'm hot." It was like burning right away, with no practice. And so I realized at that point that it was essential to be playing all the time. And so my commitment is to practice every day, and perform five times a week. A performance is 90 minutes, full-out, with someone. It could be in your front room, or it could be a street corner, it could be any number of things, but it's 90 minutes full-out. I've been doing that for years. And very often, like this week, it's all non-paying work. But that's how I practice improvising: by improvising. And trying to do it almost every day.

J: ***OK, yeah.***

Putter: But it's a bit hard in LA. That's what's so appealing about New York. It's very easy to get guys to play, because everybody is there to play. This is

more of a company town, where, if you've got the gig with Madonna, you're heavy.

J: ***That's what the sharks are swimming around, right?***

Putter: That's right. It's a different trip. And I'm sure there's that happening in New York too, but there's this subgroup of thousands of serious jazz musicians.

J: ***Who are your absolute favorite improvisers, and why? What do you like about them?***

Putter: Charlie Parker. So melodic, so interesting rhythmically. Truly revolutionary in his playing, and one of the things about a true revolutionary innovator, there's no doubt. It's unbelievable what this guy is doing. Earl Palmer told me a great story about Charlie Parker. Earl was a studio drummer here, and had been in the Air Force. When he got out of the Air Force, he went to the Music Conservatory of New Orleans. Great drummer, and very successful. Very successful. When he was in New Orleans, he was the drummer that traveling soloists would pick up, and then he had a guitar player and bass player. And so they were doing a rehearsal with Charlie Parker. And a guitar player – this is 1949, 1950, something like that – and the guitar player says, "Bird! Bird! Man, man! We love you, man! But what are you doing? What is it you're doing?" And Bird says, "It's a series of miraculous recoveries." [laughter] And one thing about Bird… Miles at that time was playing nonstop eighth notes. Bird was rhythmically so angular and incredible! His spirit and his feel was so amazing.

J: ***Bird, OK. Who else?***

Putter: Lester Young. So interesting when he played, and so heartfelt. All of the tenor players for many, many years, until Coltrane, were all playing versions – in my mind – of Lester Young. Art Tatum. I mean, talk about genius. Tatum wasn't an improviser, although he could improvise. But all those things he did are worked out.

J: ***Yeah, they're arrangements.***

Putter: Good God! They're gigantic! I mean, it's just astonishing. When I was playing in the symphony, they'd have a piano soloist, and we'd play something, and every once in a while they'd have an encore. And I thought, these classical piano players should learn an Art Tatum arrangement or two, because they'd make a great fucking encore, man. And it would be so profound. Definitely up there with anything else they might play. Anyway, I think every musician should spend a lot of time listening to Art Tatum. I was very fortunate that I was exposed to it at a very early age. Norman Granz had given my brother 10 copies of the Hollywood Bowl recordings he made. There were 10 records, and my brother gave me one or two, and this was before they even had covers. They were just blank white covers. And I listened to that over and over and over, when I used to listen to music like that. I used to listen to music all the time, all day. I don't do that any more.

J: ***Why not?***

Putter: I don't know. Now, the way I listen, first of all I'm immediately deep into analyzing it. And it's like working, practicing. It takes a lot of energy to really practice, to really get in there. And playing, too, it's always, I'm always trying my best. I'm giving it my all, and so when I'm not doing that, I'm like,

"Yeah, I'm relaxing." [laughter] It's my commitment. It used to be my passion. And now it's my commitment, and I think I still have tremendous passion about it.

J: ***That's obvious to me.***

Putter: But I don't need to be doing it 12 hours a day. OK, so Art Tatum: everybody should put in 150 hours on him. Anything Miles ever did is worth study, and it's interesting to watch his development, from the time he was playing with Bird and it sounds like he can hardly play the instrument, to when he began to get tremendous technique in the early 50s, and on and on. You can see how he developed in every way. Don Cherry used to come to my house and we'd play, the two of us. Don played with me many times, and he was a very, very good musician.

J: ***I love his playing.***

Putter: Very original. Based in the whole bebop thing. At the end, I thought Miles was channeling Don Cherry. That's what I thought and what I think. And another thing: my brother was playing with Chet Baker, and he said, when they went to Boston, that Miles was in there every night to hear him. And I do think that Miles was affected – I don't want to say "influenced" – by Chet. Before Chet, Miles played with remnants of Roy Eldridge, and all of the trumpet players. Toward the end of the solo they would get higher, and maybe end on a high note. And the other thing is there was a kind of vibrato. At a certain point, Miles loses the vibrato and no longer feels like he has to end up high. As far as the notes and rhythms that Miles plays, I don't think he was affected by Chet, but I do think he was in other ways. In his autobiography, he denies it, which to me is kind of like, "Oh, yeah." [laughter] "Tell me another one."

J: ***I agree.***

Putter: And Chet was another great, great improviser. I don't know if people are aware of how really great he was. And early Lee Konitz. Chet Baker is so melodic and soulful. Beautiful! God, I love it! And Ethan Iverson told me, he says, "Man, you remind me of Chet Baker." I go, "Well, thanks, man." I couldn't understand what he meant, but that's Ethan. And Lee Konitz's solo on "Lover Man" is to me the apex.

J: ***Which record is that on?***

Putter: It's on Konitz meets Mulligan. My brother's playing bass on that, which is why I had it.

J: ***OK.***

Putter: But "Lover Man" captured me. I used to listen it over and over and over. And I wasn't listening in an analytical way. I'm just soaking it in. And it's just like the rat with the electrodes leading to the brain. "Hey, yeah! Press it again. Again, again." [laughter] I never got into analyzing records until the last 10 years. But his solo on that just totally floors me in every way. And it's like another realm of emotion. It's otherworldly. And technically so high up there. They used to say "cool," but he's the hottest. He just wasn't playing obvious, what they would think of as "hot licks" and funk notes and stuff, but it's really on fire. He plays very, very little now, without much technique. Let's see. Who else? One of my favorite bass players, not as a soloist but for his time, is Ron Carter. I just love his sound and his time feel.

J: ***I want to ask you about his sound. He has this, to my ears, like a rubber band sound. There's so much sustain. [Putter agrees] Is that from the pickup, or does that have to do with the strings he uses?***

Putter: Well, he uses a certain kind of a string. I bought a couple of sets of those strings and I actually felt like I got more like a Ron Carter sound.

J: ***Yes.***

Putter: The thing is, they're expensive strings and they break down very quickly. So, if the company is giving them to you, it's great, because a set of strings at discount is close to 250 bucks. When I put these regular strings on, they last. I've been getting a year out of them, or more than a year. When I was doing Carter's strings – I can't remember the name of them, but they're black and smooth – sometimes I put them on and they broke immediately. They're very flimsy and expensive. If you get two months out of those, you're doing good. So it's too expensive for me. But I know that he gets them for free. If I were a string company, I'd give Ron Carter whatever he wanted.

J: ***Yeah, good call! [laughter] What do you like about his time feel?***

Putter: Well, his time is perfect. His sound is very even, it doesn't go up and down. It's very smooth, and his time is just so exactly right, perfectly in the middle. Somebody that was a big influence to me, that I didn't mention before, who doesn't really get their due, was Red Mitchell. Red Mitchell was one of the greatest bass soloists ever. There are pockets of people that get it, and he killed me. No doubt about it, there wasn't anybody like him. And he also came out of Oscar Pettiford. I also have to talk about Bill Evans. I mean, I've spent a thousand hours listening to Bill Evans.

J: ***Did you play with him?***

Putter: Oh, no. My favorite albums are… The albums he did with Scott LaFaro are wonderful and everything, but my favorites are the ones with Chuck Israels. And I don't know, there's something about that band that's just so great. And so was the one with Scott La Faro. Scott was a wonder! Jesus! I heard him live several times in different situations, and we actually played together once. And I heard him with Stan Getz and Roy Haynes and Steve Kuhn. Stan Getz was waving the piano player out every time. I think the piano player was really getting pissed, but Scott was doing some incredible things. And just how we walked the bass. He was building lines in a different way than I'd ever heard. I wish I had written them down at the time. But whew! Scott LaFaro, man.

J: ***What was so extraordinary about the way he built his lines?***

Putter: Well, he was constructing his in groups of 6- or 7-note phrases, and then it'd repeat itself, and he was going all the way through that while the chords are changing 4 beats at a time. He was transcending bass walking. Yeah, he was something, and he should've been recorded a lot more than he was. Too bad. Let's see... Other great soloists? Sonny Rollins. I lived off of Sonny Rollins for years and years, and whew! Amazing! Who's next on the list?

J: ***Well, you had mentioned Warne Marsh before. Is he in the list of some of your favorite improvisers?***

Putter: Oh, yeah! Great, great improviser. I was going to say, when I was playing with him when I was 20, it was way, way over my head. And then,

now when I hear recordings of him, I was like, "Whoa! Wonderful." And the other day – anything that happened in the last 30 years is "the other day" at my age – I hear a band on the radio, I hear the tenor player and he's very good, and a good rhythm section. I'm trying to figure out who the tenor player is by process of elimination. I thought, "Well, it could be Joe Henderson. It could be so and so …." I had it down to two or three guys it could be. And then a second tenor player came on, and it was as if a hologram of Warne Marsh were standing there. There was just no mistaking it. It was Warne Marsh, nobody else. And as it turned out, Pete Christlieb was the other tenor player. He's a great tenor player.

J: ***No question.***

Putter: But I mean he's mainstream. It could be Joe Henderson, it could be Gene Ammons or somebody else.

J: ***Yes, right. It's got elements of…***

Putter: Yeah. Got great everything. But Warne was, whew!

J: ***One guy. [laughter]***

Putter: Yeah. And I kind of think that's the goal of playing. It's not to be one guy, but that you are one guy. And if you work at it enough, you will emerge. Your solutions to the problems and the way you go about it. And everything you learn changes your playing. You learn one thing and you keep learning stuff and more comes out. I thought, when I spent six months working on fivetuplets, it didn't emerge in my playing for several years. I was trying to put it in there, it just wouldn't go. And then I was, a couple of years later I was listening to a playback and I go, "Oh, shit! I'm playing fivetuplets!" [laughter] But they sound totally natural. They didn't stand out, like, "What is that?"

J: ***Over two beats?***

Putter: Five against two, and five against four. And then Coltrane. I really love Coltrane with Miles – that's great, great stuff – and of course some stuff he did afterwards. The thing that annoys me is when it goes on too long. And I know that there's people going to go, "You jerk!" But when it goes too long, I stop listening. In my mind they've gone too far. I was at a gig and eating before the gig, and a thing comes on and I go, "Whoa! God, that's good!" Second chorus, "Oh, shit! It's even better!" Third chorus, "Wonderful! Wonderful!" Fourth chorus, I'm no longer listening.

J: ***Yeah, you're eating. [laughter]***

Putter: It's just this Charlie Parker thing. Bird said that if you play more than three choruses, you're just practicing. After all, we are performing. In the end we're actually entertaining people with what we do. It's not just about how far we can get. We also have to consider the audience. I don't mean pandering. You're still playing.… And when I worked with Thelonious, his pacing of the set and mixing up of tempos and all that sort of thing was very deliberate. I got to where I felt I knew what he was going to play next, and there it was! That was a wonderful feeling.

J: ***I want to ask you something about working with Thelonious. You didn't work with Charlie Rouse?***

Putter: Correct.

J: ***So, you might not have any answer to this, but I always wonder.***

Charlie Rouse, when I listen to him on, say, Further Definitions with Benny Carter, his pitch is perfect on that. [Putter agrees] But…

Putter: When was that made, do you know?

J: That's in the early 60s, I think. Probably '61, '62, '63, would be my guess.

Putter: Well, that's the thing: it just really bothers me, his intonation. And then he made that record Sphere with the group Sphere? He's playing perfectly in tune. And I attributed it to tuners, electronic tuners. And if he played perfectly on Benny Carter's album, I'd maybe attribute it to Benny Carter. I know that movie of Thelonious that Clint Eastwood brought out… You know, the documentary? At one point Thelonious is trying to get Charlie in tune. Have you ever seen that movie?

J: No, I haven't.

Putter: Well, it's an interesting movie. The thing about working with Thelonious is I realized what a normal human being he is. Everybody tries to make him into be some weird guy and he's half-nuts and all that, and he may have been. But to me, he was a normal guy with normal reactions. But a very unusual take. They're in a recording studio somewhere in Europe, and he says to the recording engineer, "Now, don't tell us we're going to record if you're not going to do it. Get the sound together and then let us work." I forget exactly how he said it, but he's very succinct. But clearly, he's saying, don't let us start playing and then cut us off in the middle of it. So the engineer says, "OK, everybody." Thelonius asks him, "Are you sure?" "Yeah." So they start playing this thing, and they're two or three minutes into it, and then the engineer comes in and says, "OK, we're ready to go now." And Thelonious' says, "Oh, shit!" Like, we can't be doing this over and over and over again. We're not trying to play the exact same thing. We're really making this up, you know? And you run out of…

J: Ideas?

Putter: There's a thing, it has…

J: The freshness.

Putter: Yeah, it has a thing, and then that's it.

J: I ran across something recently that Michael Brecker said. He said that usually the first take is the best.

Putter: Yes. Well, something interesting regarding Michael Brecker and Warne Marsh… Gary Foster was going to somewhere like Virginia. He'd been picked up at the airport with Michael Brecker at the same time. They were in a limo together and the tape was playing, and Michael Brecker says, "Is that Warne?" Gary says, "Yeah, that's Warne." And Brecker said – this is what Gary told me – he said, "He's really improvising. I have a whole bunch of these licks that I've pieced together, but Warne is really making up fresh stuff." And I love that, when people say things like that.

J: I know what you mean.

Putter: We all have licks that work in situations, but this material of mine, I am actually improvising: I'm actually making up new stuff, and I play stuff I've never played before and will never play again. And then I have stuff that I know works. I hear it and I know it is going this way, but I am improvising.

J: Yes. And that's a beautiful statement, because it's a tribute both to

Michael and to Warne.
Putter: I agree. A beautiful thing to say.
J: …especially for someone who has been recognized so highly for all the things that he had done as Michael Brecker. [Putter agrees] And of course Warne, [laughter] who…
Putter: … who got nothing.
J: [laughter] Yeah, bupkus.
Putter: Nothing. Yeah.
J: Absolutely. But all the accounts I've heard of Michael Brecker, he was a really nice and good guy.
Putter: Sounds like it.
J: And just as a point of interest to me, I've always loved Art Pepper. I know you played with Art.
Putter: Yeah.
J: How was he as a player when you played with him?
Putter: Way past it. And he didn't care for me. When somebody doesn't care for you, you usually don't like playing with them.
J: Yeah. And so this was late in his career?
Putter: Yeah. But his earlier stuff, it doesn't get any better than that.
J: Yes.
Putter: And I did listen to him quite a bit. And then other people that I've listened to extensively – I said Nana Caymmi – Billie Holiday. I mean, I've spent thousands of hours listening to Billie Holiday. And when you get down to analyzing what she did, say, rhythmically, it's incredible. She would change a melody completely and yet it's still the same melody. She does a thing in "Say It Isn't So." You read the sheet music of that and it's like [singing]. And when she sings it, it's completely embellished, and yet it's still the same melody. And she's not doing a jazzy version of it, she's just singing that song. And I was completely under the spell of Ray Charles for many years. It's unfortunate sometimes when you work with a great musician like that. I worked with him. He called me up a couple times to work with him, and I was too busy. Then one time I was able to do it. Then, within a few weeks, I saw what a terrible person he was. A cruel – I mean really cruel, not funny, really cruel person. I said, "I don't need this." He wasn't cruel to me, but to these young black musicians that were auditioning. He and his buddy, Joe Adams were wallowing in it sadistically. I'm sorry I didn't stick with him and get a couple of years on the road with Ray Charles, but I didn't need it at the time, and I didn't want it. And consequently, I can't listen to him.
J: Yeah. I understand.
Putter: And that's a shame, because he was really marvelous.
J: Genius musician.
Putter: True.
J: I studied Richard Wagner, the opera composer, for a long time.
Putter: The anti-Semite?
J: Well, yes. And a transcendent genius. So there's this bizarre pairing of genius and anti-Semitism. Often genius can be allied with very unsavory personal characteristics.

Putter: I'm not that into it. I just knew that he's a known anti-Semite, and that makes him a terrible person. I have never been captured by his music.

J: Sure.

Putter: Although… When I studied with Leonard Stein, Schönberg's assistant, at LA City College, we studied Structural Functions of Harmony. The book is almost built on these couple of bars of Wagner's music.

J: Probably the opening chords from Tristan und Isolde. Two of the most famous chords in Western music.

Putter: Yeah. The whole course was built around those two chords. But I never did get into listening to him. Although, I'll tell you, last night there was an old film on, and they had a little bit of something of Wagner, and I listened to it and I thought, "Well, that's really very good." But, yeah. I don't want to like him, you know?

J: I understand. It's like so many things. I was talking to a friend last night about John Scofield's guitar lines. I just have never gotten them. When I hear them, I say, "Wow, he's obviously a great player." But it just never grabbed me for some reason.

Putter: Yeah, I mostly have followed my gut totally on that, but I made an exception with Brad Mehldau. People that I really respect were talking about how great he is. So I got a copy of The Art of the Piano, and I studied it. I made myself listen to it every day. I had it in the car and listened to it every day. And I finally got to where I could analyze what he was doing. On "All the Things You Are" he's going a bar of 4/4, a bar of 3/4, and in the bar of 3/4 he was playing 4 against 3. So he'd play a line, and then they'd go into that other thing flawlessly. And killing me, technically. But it's still not moving me emotionally. And so after months of studying that, I had a dream that I was at a party in a room kind of like this. There were little couches and beige lights, and in the corner there was Brad Mehldau. It was funny. [laughter] And it was beautiful! I mean, it was moving me emotionally, it was beautiful. And I got out of bed and put it on, and it was beautiful. I thought, "Ah, Jesus, this is beautiful!" Really got it on an emotional level. And then when I was in New York, I went to see him, and again I was locked out. Again, I couldn't follow him. It was too much work. But I know that he's a giant. I did the same thing with Ornette, when I first heard him. And I listened to Something Else every day for six months. But it never clicked with me. There's too many wrong notes. Ben Webster's another giant to me. You put on Webster and he plays the most beautiful thing. You never think, "Gee, too bad he never got into Coltrane."

J: No, you don't. [laughter] You just melt, is what happens.

Putter: Yeah. This is music. It is also very interesting. But I never got there with Ornette, although Don Cherry really knocks me out. And then I heard this story from Don Payne, the bass player on that first album. It was originally Don Cherry's group. And the guys in the MJQ listened to them, and they said, "Well, you need to do original tunes," and Don says, "Well, I know this guy over in" – wherever it was – "who writes these interesting tunes," so they spent a month or two learning Ornette's tunes. They came back and did an audition again, and Lester König, the producer of Contemporary Records, was there. Lester comes up on the stage and he says, "Mr. Coleman, I love your band, I

love your music, I love you," da-da-da, and gave the recording date to him, and it was Don Cherry's band. So that was pretty bad.

J: ***That's pretty rough.***

Putter: I know that a lot of young kids say "I'm into Ornette." I go, "Jesus! What about Charlie Parker?" Because it sounds to me that that's what he's trying to do. It just doesn't resonate with me. I mean, it's OK. And then everything he's done since, and he gets these McArthur grants? I know he's dead and you shouldn't talk ill of the dead. And I did talk to him. Once I went to see him with Scott LaFaro playing. Just not up to the level, you know? Again, I'll be banned for life for saying that.

J: ***Yes. Well. [laughter] I remember one story I heard, I think this came through the connection with James Clay, because James Clay is from Fort Worth, and…***

Putter: James Clay was one of my brother's friends. And in the short time I worked with Ray Charles, James was on the band. They wanted my brother to do the recording, because he was pretty famous, and I asked him, "Who will you use?" He said, "I use James Clay and Larance Marable." I got to be very close friends with Larance Marable years and years later. Great drummer. You were saying something about Ornette and James?

J: ***Yes, so Clay is in LA, with Ornette, and they're reading through a set of exercises or something. So they're playing along, and all of a sudden Ornette plays all this other stuff, and James says, "What are you doing?" Ornette says, "Well, I'm just playing what he meant to write."***

Putter: [laughter] Yeah. Well, I felt like Ornette was kind of a simpleton, that's what I thought. That's what I felt. And he was a very sweet guy, very nice fellow.

J: ***Maybe that's the best way to understand his music. Maybe it's more like folk music in a way.***

Putter: I don't know. I don't get a lot of modern, like super-modern art. I think the benchmark is Rembrandt, Picasso, you know?

J: ***Yeah, if you're going modern, Picasso. [laughter]***

Putter: Like, to start off with the mastery of perspective and dimension and to basically learn how to fucking paint, you know?

J: ***Yes. [laughter]***

Putter: And that's what I feel about so much music you hear. The guys really can't play. They really don't have the instrument together. But they can make funny noises and have an attitude.

J: ***You were talking about Charlie Haden not having the mastery of the bass per se, but within his limited range, he can be expressive.***

Putter: Absolutely. Very expressive. In fact, I think that he opened up a certain area. I was saying that Miles was affected by Chet Baker. I feel like I was affected by Charlie Haden. And when I first heard Charlie – I think that it was "Face of the Bass" on one of the early albums, I thought, "I don't want to hear any more of that, because I don't want that to influence me." Because first of all, it was so easy to do, and so it was very powerful and emotional and everything, but it was really extremely simple. But with the right attitude, you can make it sound like, "This is really some deep shit." Not that Charlie wasn't deep. He could play – I mean, he couldn't play, but…

J: ***He could play, but he couldn't play. [laughter]***
Putter: It was very, very limited.
J: ***OK, yes.***
Putter: He made the most of what he had. And he was a really special human being. I'm trying to think of other people that have had a big effect on me. Walter Norris had a big effect on me. He kind of took me under his wing when I was about 17. We used to play together every day, and we would go through "Stella by Starlight." We'd go up a fourth each chorus, and he'd take 12 choruses and I'd take 12 choruses. That was typical of what we did. We really worked hard. Then he went to New York. I recorded with him two or three times, and I'm on his last recording, in Berlin, in 2005, I think. Another guy I loved to play with out here was Paul Bley. I worked for six months with Carla Bley in a little coffee shop, just a duo. I saw her in New York at a memorial for Charlie, where they asked me to speak. And I said, "Hello Carla! You remember me?" She had no memory of me.
J: ***After six months of playing with her?***
Putter: Six months, yeah. I'd pick her up at Paul's house, and we'd play the gig and I'd take her home. We were friends! But she didn't remember me at all. Of course, what you look like when you're 19 and what you look like when you're 75…. I recognized her, but when you got up closer, you could tell, it was a different…
J: ***Version?***
Putter: Yes. She kind of looked like Lauren Bacall at a young age.
J: ***Before we finish, I've got one more question. I know that teaching has become an important part of your life. I don't know if it is now as much as it was at one point.***
Putter: It is not now, but have you seen the documentary Itzhak? It's about Itzhak Perlman. The documentary?
J: ***No.***
Putter: I don't know if it's on Netflix. But, absolutely see it.
J: ***I'll check it out.***
Putter: It's so inspiring. To see him as a 13-year-old! Hah! Jesus Christ! But he said – and I think he was probably in his 60s when he started teaching – and he said, "I can't believe how much I've learned by teaching." He says, "Now I want to do it all the time," and he started a school in Israel for Palestinians and Israelites. One of the funny things in the movie is that he's invited to Netanyahu's house. And so they're wheeling him in in his wheelchair. And a dog comes up to him, and he starts to pet him, and Netanyahu says, "Don't pet him. He bites." I go, whoa! Now, there's an insight into Netanyahu. Why would you have a dog that bites coming up to Itzhak Perlman in a wheelchair? "He bites." Just like his master.
J: ***He just might bite his way into prison one of these days.***
Putter: Right. I think that Netanyahu's creating quite a number of anti-Semites. What a prick! And I'm the furthest thing from an anti-Semite.
J: ***I know.***
Putter: Anyway, Itzhak was talking about teaching and how much he's learned, and I realized that I've learned more from teaching than the students

have. And real early on – I was probably not even 30 – I began teaching a little bit , and somebody says, "How do you know which notes to play?" Great question, which I think led me to the work I did, and the years of searching. And it's nice to be able to answer that question 50 years later. [laughter] "Well, here's how. First of all, it has to sound good." And that's what they're asking, how to find a note that sounds good. But you learn a lot from them. I was in a school situation where you have a student for 10 weeks, and you see one who accomplishes nothing and always has an excuse why they didn't. They couldn't practice because of this or that. And then you see another person who moves along in giant steps, and is hungry. It's so clear who has practiced. And I think that's one thing that propelled me into being a fanatical practicer, not in terms of hours, but every day. The last time I was with Mark Turner, I found it kind of annoying that he never takes his tenor out of his mouth. Ever! It's like, "Geez, man, can't you just...?"

J: ***I'm thinking of Groucho Marx's cigar right now.***

Putter: I mean, "God, how're you doing, man?" "Wow! How's everything? How are the kids?" I don't think he has kids, but…

J: ***No. [laughter] He never takes the horn out of his mouth. [laughter]***

Putter: There's a time to be human. Although I did get to hang with him a little bit when we made that record 10 years ago. And so we had dinner together and got to talk. And I asked him some questions about playing odd times and all that, and how to work on it.

J: ***I've got an album he did with Jochen Rückert, a German drummer. I saw the band, in Lyon, France, and that's where I got the album. They were doing a gig there, and yeah, they were doing a lot of odd meter stuff.***

Putter: Well, the thing about odd times, I've worked on 5/4 a lot, 7/4 a little, and is it engaging, or is it just a display?

J: ***Yeah, it's a question.***

Putter: I think 7/4 actually feels freer. Rhythmically, you can feel it. But it's a specialty. It just doesn't engage me enough. I got fairly conversant in 5/4.

J: ***I sort of feel the same way. It's interesting, but as far as getting to the point of grabbing me, it didn't. I mean, I liked it. [laughter]***

Putter: [laughter] Yeah.

J: ***[laughter] I like a lot of things, you know?***

Putter: "Oh, I liked it …. I think I liked it."

J: ***Yeah. [laughter] But, one thing I appreciate about Mark Turner's playing is that he always tries to make the horn sound beautiful.***

Putter: Yeah, that's good.

J: ***So, teaching has helped you learn?***

Putter: Oh, yeah. Tremendously, tremendously. That question, "How do you know what the right notes are?" [laughter] Good question!

J: ***Dizzy Gillespie one time said something like, "I spent 10 years learning what notes to play, and 50 years learning what notes not to play."***

Putter: [laughter]

J: ***Well, it appears we're out of time. Thanks so much for sitting down with me. I've really enjoyed soaking all of this in. It's been a great pleasure.***

Putter: Well, thank you! The pleasure is all mine. And you're welcome! Yeah, beautiful.

Putter Smith: A Selected Discography
The format of this discography is as follows: 1) Headliner(s), 2) Title of Recording, 3) Musicians, 4) Label and catalog number, 5) Year of Release.

• **Alan Broadbent Trio. Moment's Notice**. Alan Broadbent p; Kendall Kay d; Putter Smith b. Chilly Bin Records 735231814422 (2008).
• **Gary Foster and Putter Smith. Perfect Circularity.** Gary Foster as; Putter Smith b. American Jazz Institute 77001 (2007).
• **Jeff Colella and Putter Smith. Lotus Blossom.** Jeff Colella p; Putter Smith b. American Jazz Institute 77002-2 (2014).
• **John Gross, Larry Koonse, and Putter Smith. Threeplay.** John Gross ts; Larry Koonse g; Putter Smith b. Ninewinds Records NWCD 0133 (1990).
• **Karen Hammack/Paul Kreibich Quartet. Lonesome Tree.** John Gross ts; Karen Hammack p; Paul Kreibich d; Putter Smith b. Two Tall records (no cat. no.) (2000).
• **Mark Masters Ensemble. Our Métier. Andrew Cyrille** d; Gary Foster as; Tim Hagens tpt; Oliver Lake as; Mark Masters comp and arr; Anna Mjöll vcl; Putter Smith b; Mark Turner ts. Capri Records 74150-2 (2018).
• **Putter Smith. Home. J**ohn Gross ts; Kendall Kay d; Theo Saunders p; Putter Smith b; Jon Whinnery as. Skipper Records SP1018 (2011).
• **Rossy-Kanan Quartet.** Bud. Michael Kanan p; Jorge Rossy vib; Putter Smith b; Jimmy Wormworth d. Swit records SWIT27 (2017).
• **VR Smith. Once I Loved.** Michael Kanan p; Chuck Manning ts; Putter Smith b; VR Smith vcl. Skipper Records 1037 (slated for 2020 release).
• **Walter Norris Duo. Elements in Motion.** Walter Norris p; Putter Smith b. Sunburst Recordings (no cat. no.) (2009).

John Lake

John Lake

JOHN LAKE

JAZZ DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

TAKEN BY BILL DONALDSON

Cadence: Why did you decide to release your first album, Seven Angels, during the COVID-19 epidemic?

John Lake: I really didn't choose now! I wanted to release the album about a year after recording it, and here we are. In some ways, it's been a blessing to have this project to focus on while the rest of our world is on pause. It does feel somewhat insensitive to be talking about this album, with so much pain and suffering going on in this country right now. But I'm hopeful that it will raise some spirits.

Cadence: What kind of effect has the epidemic had upon your career and those of other musicians?

J.L.: COVID-19 has been hard on musicians, all of us. I consider myself very fortunate to have made a living playing trumpet, at least for a while. It wasn't all artistic jazz music, but I loved it. This [June 2020] is the busy season for me, as far as gigs go. But since March every gig I've had on the books has cancelled. I don't live extravagantly, but I've probably missed out on forty percent of my annual income, with no end in sight to the cancellations. Something's got to give. I mean, I don't want to get sick, either. I think waiting it out is the right thing to do. Right now, I'm on unemployment, which is available to freelance musicians for the first time ever. I have received some grants from arts organizations, like the Grammy Foundation and the Louis Armstrong Foundation, which have made this album release possible. So I'm grateful for that.

But, at some point, unemployment income will stop, probably in late summer. Who knows when we will be able to start performing again? A lot of folks are looking at alternative ways of making a living, myself included. Part of this album release has helped me separate the art of music-making from the idea of making a living as a musician. It's extraordinarily difficult to make a living

exclusively from art. Most musicians find ways to augment their incomes with teaching, playing corporate gigs or musical theater. But I think we'll all have to reconsider that strategy after the effects of COVID-19 are felt across the broader economy. As far as the album is concerned, I would love to perform this music, in the right space, and when it's safe to do so.

Cadence: Do you have any other examples of the effects of COVID-19 on other musicians?

J.L.: Oh sure. Lots of live streams—some talking, others performing. I just did one for the album release. I watched my friend Corey Wallace perform via Smalls Live just the other day. And with electronic payments, it's easy to contribute to the musicians. I know that for some clubs, it's all about the music. I really doubt they're profiting on this. That's one of the aspects of jazz music that I appreciate the most: the sense of community. It's inspiring.

Cadence: You mention that "it wasn't all artistic jazz music." What other kinds of gigs did you get besides jazz?

J.L.: Oh boy. Cruise ships. Salsa dates. Lots and lots of weddings. Most of which I genuinely enjoy. I love being a gigging musician. I work in some very talented bands with amazing performers. But I've seen definitely an angry bridesmaid or two. And there has been a groomsman who had a little too much to drink and thought the singers were his new best friends. Too many sweaty hugs! Bandleading is an art, but on some gigs I'm very happy to be in the back of the stage. And for some reason, when people see a tambourine, their sense of entitlement just takes off. I will occasionally bring one for certain songs. But here's a pro-tip for the part-time percussionists out there: Keep the tambourine out of sight when you're not using it. I believe lawyers would call that an "attractive nuisance."

Cadence: What is the relevance of your album's title?

J.L.: The title, Seven Angels, has a few different meanings for me. First of all, from wordplay and aesthetic perspectives, it just rings a certain bell for me. Also, I don't always bring this up, but I have synesthesia. It's sort of hard to explain, but it's a condition, thought to be genetic, where letters and numbers will get cross-referenced in the mind's eye to correlate with certain colors, shapes and textures. That's one manifestation of it. So, for example, "S" is a shiny metallic grey, "E" is a sort of pastoral green and "V" has a lustrous purple velvety texture. Sounds crazy, right? This is the way I experience letters and words, and I really like the way Seven Angels looks in my head. I do a bit of film photography as a hobby, and the album cover photo has a very complementary color palette to the title. Lots of folks have synesthesia, and don't know what it's called, or even that it's a "thing." I didn't know until midway through college. My trumpet teacher told me about it. I see colors when I listen to music, or any sound really. And then, when I'm thinking of the theory, another set of colors and textures corresponds to the key I'm in and the notes I'm playing. But I can tune in and out. Like, I'm not thinking about what my right ankle feels like when I'm playing "Cherokee." It's just there.

Getting back to Seven Angels, in the physical CD packaging, I dedicate this album to the people in my life who have guided me along this journey. This is my first album under my name, and I feel it's been a long time coming to

this moment. I'm just so grateful to those who saw a rough pile of clay and thought, "Hang on, let me help this guy out." That includes my parents, of course. It also includes my wife, as well as all my music teachers from the fifth grade until I was out of school and moved to New York. So, I wouldn't say that there are exactly seven angels. The title of the record isn't a direct correlation to the number of people who have helped me. But the title is an expression of gratitude and reverence for those who helped guide me on my own path.

Cadence: Have you had the experience of being a guardian angel too?

J.L.: I wouldn't say that I have gone out of my way to be that for anybody. I'm not sure it works that way…but you never know if you might have an effect on someone. The album's release has actually made me start to think of pivoting more intentionally into teaching at some point—considering what it means to mentor, and also spreading the gospel of this music. Until recently, I haven't really felt right about that—about telling someone how to play music. But if I can show someone the ways I go about it, and if that helps them, then that's a good thing.

Cadence: How did you choose the musicians to record Seven Angels with you?

J.L.: I mentioned that a big piece of this record is about gratitude. Something I'm especially grateful for is the community of musicians in New York City. The sextet on Seven Angels isn't really a "band" that works a lot. It consists of a few colleagues I met during my time here that I clicked with personally and professionally. And I admire each one of them for their musicianship and their individual characters. I met most of them on the big band scene.

So, Steven Feifke is a fellow big band leader and arranger I met through our mutual studies with composer David Berger. We became fast friends, always bouncing ideas off each other, and he's such a monster talent at the piano. I was playing in his big band, and I was always giving him a hard time (also known as complaining) about writing the trumpets so high! But his writing is truly a thrill to perform, and it really challenges me to be a better musician. And he's been a constant source of inspiration and encouragement. I met Paul Jones on the rehearsal band scene. I think he's a fantastic foil. Every trumpet player needs a good foil! Miles Davis always had a foil. I liked Paul for this record because our sounds are very complementary. And man, his ears are always open! He listens and reacts to the band. Paul tells a story with the group, not "at" them. That's the kind of music I like to play. Alto saxophonist Michael Thomas joined us for a few tunes ["A Shade of Jade," "Signal Changes" and "cloud_down"]. I met him playing in his incredible Terraza Big Band, which he co-leads with bassist Edward Perez. Michael brings his trademark fire to some three-horn charts I had developed, including an absolutely burning solo on Joe Henderson's "Shade Of Jade." Michael is brilliant improviser and composer in his own right.

I met bassist Marcos Varela on the jam session scene. Marcos is another guy who's always excited to play and has a positive attitude on top of being an incredible bassist. He has a nice round sound, excellent time feel, very expressive, and again, a fantastic listener. Everything you want in a bass player. Marcos is quite a composer too. He's a real artist. I met drummer Jeff Davis in a very hip avant-garde big band led by Angela Morris and Anna Webber.

They actually have a new record out [Both Are True] on Dave Douglas' Greenleaf label. So I'm hearing Jeff play all these textures and colors, not too much straight-ahead time. Something spoke to me that said, "This guy swings." Understatement of the century! He took complete command of the time. There's not a second on this record where the energy is flagging. Jeff has beautiful cymbal sounds and just exquisite taste. Trumpet players need a foil, yes, but having Jeff on the drums was like filling up the car with jet fuel.

Cadence: You said that each track of Seven Angels relates to your experiences in New York. Can you give some examples?

J.L.: Sure. Let's see, I wrote "Nightwatch" at about 3:00 a.m. on Christmas morning, maybe five years ago. I wanted to give it a very alert but peaceful atmosphere, almost like standing vigil. Growing up, Christmas was always a big deal, of course. But now I'm an adult with no kids and my wife didn't grow up with [Christmas]. So there's not much to do. But if there's one night of the year when New York City is quiet, that's it.

I wrote "Whelmed" specifically for a show that I put on at IBeam with a quintet that included Anna Webber, Nick Dunston, Zack O'Farrill and Julian Shore. I sometimes find it easier to write a song if I know the people I'm writing it for. You get to know them and the way they play, and you think, "What can I write that will let them shine?" That was a fun night! All the people on that stage are incredible band leaders on their own. That show was another testament to just how robust the musician community is in New York. Fantastic musicians everywhere! And, it turned out the guys on my record played it pretty well too.

Cadence: You said that you wrote "The Bet" a few weeks before Seven** Angels **was recorded. What's the story about that composition?

J.L.: Well, the record date was about three weeks out [early May, 2019], and I knew I needed something fresh, something with a lot of energy. A strong melody too. It was a gorgeous spring day, the kind where I'd usually be out on my bike, tooling around Prospect Park here in Brooklyn. I had the day off from gigs, and I was just aching to go outside and blow off some steam. But I promised myself I would write this new tune today. Had to be today. That sparked a memory of Anton Chekhov's classic short story, "The Bet," where a banker makes a wager with a lawyer that he can't stay isolated in his room for a period of fifteen years. I don't want to spoil the ending for anyone, but that was the feeling I had. Once I had that inspiration, the song just poured out of me as I was sitting at the Rhodes piano, and then at my computer. I might have still gone on that bike ride afterwards! I can't remember. It's one of my favorite songs to play from the record, and it was the first single that we put out.

Cadence: Were Horace Silver's energy and groove influences forcomposing "Pearls of the Tartar?"

J.L.: Absolutely. As a piano player, he had such a funky, evocative touch on the instrument that's really unlike anyone else's. Everyone knows he's one of the all-time greats, but to me Horace Silver seems somewhat under-appreciated as a composer. Lots of people write great pieces, but what makes him special is that his writing is so intertwined with his playing—with his time-feel. To some, [Silver's compositions] may seem a little "low-brow" next to a revered harmonic genius like Wayne Shorter, for example. But I think there's another

layer of sophistication when you look at the complete package of Horace Silver. The way he puts it all together: the composition, the performance, the instrumental proficiency. That's a lot of work. And that's what the title alludes to. In Dostoevsky's pseudo-memoir, House of the Dead, he mentions that a Tartar will loot finery (pearls, jewelry, silk robes) from his enemies without appreciating their value. Similarly, there's a tendency for society to look down on jazz musicians as "just making things up," or as being unrefined. There's a lot of work that goes into what we do. This song is a tribute to Horace's ability to craft that finery within the stylistic confines of bebop.

Cadence: Those two tracks reflect the themes of literary works. Did you study literature and associate it with jazz?

J.L.: Not formally. I remember hating the required reading in high school English classes. My dad bribed me to read Mark Twain and Robin Hood, which I enjoyed. I didn't start reading for fun until college, when I started with The Hobbit. Then I read the Lord of the Rings trilogy. Then I got into a big Ayn Rand phase, which I'm thoroughly embarrassed about now! There was a great used book store next to the Conservatory in Cincinnati. You know the smell? Unforgettable. I picked up a copy of Dostoevsky's The Idiot, and was pretty rapt from the first chapter. Then Tolstoy, then Hemingway, then Philip Roth, then Saul Bellow. And lots of others along the way. Actually, if there's one thing I got from Ayn Rand, it's the willpower to push through some of these slower-moving old novels. Her stuff is like jogging through quicksand. It's not verbally dense, but God, is it a slog! Also, I enjoyed some Hunter S. Thompson, and Charles Bukowski was entertaining. I'm not sure how "jazzy" those guys are, though. The Malcom X autobiography is an incredible read for any jazz fan. But if a work of fiction is placed in a jazz setting, something will inevitably strike me as being inauthentic. Of course, I've read a lot of scholarly works about jazz in my university studies, but it's really difficult to draw substantive parallels between jazz and literature. But they can get along great. For example, Saul Bellow rarely mentions music, but I could clearly see a jazz soundtrack to a motion picture version of Herzog.

Cadence: Was "A Shade of Jade" chosen for its changes and mood? The saxophonists are fearless on this track.

J.L. I have always loved this tune. Joe Henderson is another under-appreciated genius. His compositions have such incredible balance between lyrical melodies, colorful harmonies and exciting rhythmic devices. And they're always fun to improvise over. That's difficult to achieve! I wrote this arrangement to emphasize all those aspects—and to include a nod to another of his masterpiece compositions, "Inner Urge." I knew this tune was going to be on the record from early on, and in some ways it sets the overall tone as being firmly straight-ahead jazz. This informed my personnel choices from the beginning. So I knew these guys would eat it up.

Cadence: The arrangement of "Lady Bird" takes the Tadd Dameron composition to another level with its stretched lines and its feel of three.

J.L.: "Lady Bird" was one of the first jazz songs I learned. I think I played it for my college auditions. So, it's been with me for quite a while. On a debut album, it's a good idea to include one or two things the audience is already familiar with. Let them know where you're from, musically speaking, but the trick is

not to bore them with the same old renditions. This arrangement was inspired by Robert Glasper's take on "Afro Blue," with Erykah Badu. Such a fresh re-imagining of the tune! It's like something you might hear in a dream, or it's like seeing the song from another dimension, just floating through space.

This is my debut album, and I'm 36 years old. So in a sense, I've been working towards this music for quite a while. I started writing music back in college, and like any instrument, [composition] is a voice that you have to develop over time. But all the originals on the album are children of New York City. I think the oldest one, "Signal Changes," was kicking around in some form in 2013, which was my first year in town, and, as I mentioned, I wrote "The Bet" just a couple weeks before the studio date.

Cadence: How did you decide to include Paul Jones' arrangement of "Everything I Love" on the album?

J.L.: I had a very hectic, very Tristano-esque contrafact on the song, which I called "My Haven." We had played it once or twice together, and it turned out that Paul knew the original song. It's not often called, even though Cole Porter's songbook is well-worn territory in the jazz world. Paul went home and banged out his arrangement, and he took it in a completely different direction. When he brought it in to the next session, I thought, "Wow, this is musical." While I was whittling down my book for the recording, I asked him if I could include it, and he agreed. I always loved the idea of ending a set with a ballad, and it filled a need for something softer and more hopeful. It was really a perfect fit.

Cadence: As for the other original tracks on Seven Angels, was there a compositional approach or balance you sought?

J.L.: "Balance" is a key word. I'm always looking for balance—in composition, in arrangement, on the trumpet. I studied with Ralph Alessi a little bit when I got to New York, and he shared a tenet of yoga with me: Growth is loss. In other words, to focus your attention in one direction, you must let go of something else. So, it's not enough to say, "Well, we need a fast one. And we need a bass solo!" I think of the three facets of music, which are melody, harmony, and rhythm. I try to find a balance for each one within every composition, and then over the album as a whole. My practice is to go slowly, putting things together and taking them apart several times. I might revise a tune of the course of years to find that sweet spot, to realize the character of the tune as clearly as possible.

Cadence: Do you consider yourself to have a personal, distinctive style?

J.L.: I think I do have a style with my writing, and I look forward to developing it further. I think I'm getting there with my trumpet playing. These things take time. In many ways, I'm still sorting myself out as a person. I've heard it said that you fully become yourself when you stop caring about what other people think. I'm working on it!

Cadence: When did you start playing a musical instrument?

J.L.: I started on trumpet in the fifth grade. I liked music. I had taken piano lessons and sung in the church choir. I was deciding between trumpet and drums, and my Mom told me that trumpet players get more girlfriends. Looking back, I don't regret choosing trumpet, but I'm not sure she knew what she was talking about.

I'm from Celina, Ohio, which is a very small town of about 10,000 people in the western part of the state. Celina has good musical resources for such a small town. The Celina Music Store is there. It's the only music shop for miles. They just happened to have a trumpet teacher—Chuck Loyer—who sadly passed away a couple years ago. When I started, lessons were $4 for thirty minutes (Okay, now I sound old). Then at school, we had jazz band every day in the morning, symphonic band in the afternoon, and because it's Ohio, lots and lots of marching band practice. We had excellent educators too: the Loughrige brothers, and especially Chuck Sellars and John Stetler. I really credit them with not only turning me on to proper jazz, but also with encouraging me to make it my career choice. And they're just really sweet, good guys. They still come to my shows in Ohio. I can't tell you what that means. At their suggestion, I spent two summers at the Bands of America camp in Normal, Illinois, where I met some professional trumpet players for the first time—first Rex Richardson and then Ron McCurdy. They were the first guys that I saw where I thought, I want to do that. Of course, when you're a kid, you don't fully know what "that" is, but it was my first taste of music as a way of life.

Cadence: Do you think you'll write music for an album about your hometown as have, for example, Maria Schneider for The Thompson Fields or Matt Wilson for Going Once, Going Twice?

J.L.: Maybe I will. This record feels like an accounting of everything up to this point, including Celina. I love Celina, and I still go back to see my family. But I'm also a very different person from who I was when I was growing up. And there are some things about small-town life that are more difficult now. I've lived in four different cities since leaving Celina, and New York is my home now. I love the food here, I love New York's diversity, its music scene, its sense of humor. But, on the other hand, the artwork on the cover of Seven Angels shows a sunset over the lake where I grew up. So there's a quiet beauty about it that will always be with me.

I grew up right on Grand Lake. There was a beach down the street from our house, and just about every day in the summertime I'd be swimming, fishing, boating, you name it. My dad was an ad salesman for the local newspaper, The Daily Standard, which is still in production. It's one of the last truly independent papers left; most others have been acquired by conglomerates. He got that job right after college, and he retired from the same desk some forty years later. That doesn't happen too much anymore. My mother was a special-needs teacher. She got me into piano lessons and singing in the church choir. She always supported our education, which I'm so grateful for. She plays piano, and she used to sing in college. I think she regrets not doing more with music in her own life. But ultimately, they both encouraged me to pursue music after high school. Keep in mind that Celina is a small town without a lot of fine arts. That was quite a leap of faith.

They wish I were closer now, but they know my life is in the big city. And they do enjoy visiting me here. Lots of great food they can't get back in Ohio! My maternal grandmother was born in Brooklyn as well, so in some sense it's a homecoming for my Mom.

Cadence: Which colleges did you attend?

J.L. I attended the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Looking back, this is what I'm saying about gratitude. It's a world-class conservatory a couple hours from where I grew up. I felt lucky to get into the jazz program there. In fact, I almost didn't. I was wait-listed. I hadn't even applied to other schools. Everybody at school just assumed I was going to Cincinnati. I called the jazz trumpet professor just about every day until he finally let me in. That was Brad Goode. Brad is an amazing teacher and a first-rate artist on the instrument. Brad does things on the horn that are uniquely his own. He spent a lot of time teaching me not only the trumpet—and he had a lot to teach me about the instrument. But also he taught me what it means to be an artist, and the importance of developing your own voice. As I said, I'm still working on it. But I think about his teachings every day.

John Fedchock would come to Cincinnati every year, do a clinic and then play downtown at the now defunct Blue Wisp. His big band records are part of what inspired me to write my own big band music. He knows all the parts of a big band, how it works and how to use it. Since I moved to New York, I've gotten to know him and have taken some very informative lessons. He's a fellow Ohioan and I think he just gets where I'm going and what I'm doing.

I taught a clinic last year at my alma mater, the University of Cincinnati. That was a trip. I don't think I'd been back since I graduated in 2006. It was amazing to see what's changed, and what hasn't. Scott Belck is running the program there. It was very inspiring.

After I graduated from Cincinnati, I then followed Brad to the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he relocated. All in all, I was under his wing for about eight years, and we grew pretty close. He got me into the scene in Denver, where I really started to cut my teeth as a lead trumpeter. I have a lot respect for him. The man is an encyclopedia! I really felt I could ask him anything about not only trumpet playing, but how to build a career, and what life is like as a musician. Brad gave me the tools to put my playing together, including the high register.

Cadence: You don't seem to like trumpet parts that are written in the high register, although Goode has quite a range.

J.L.: I don't want to give the impression that I don't like playing high notes; I am a trumpet player, after all. One of my first jazz records was Maynard Ferguson's Big Bop Nouveau. But Arturo Sandoval says it well; "Playing the trumpet is pain." High notes are not an issue, practically speaking, but sometimes you meet an arranger who never learned about orchestration. Past a certain point, I'm not going to injure myself because you don't understand the difference between the trumpet and the electric guitar.

Cadence: What are the differences between the Cincinnati and Denver jazz scenes?

J.L.: I think Cincinnati is the more typical Midwestern small city scene with a few handfuls of really great players and a few good performance venues. When I was there, the Blue Wisp was the spot to hear all the great local players, as well as touring acts, on the weekends. That's where I first heard greats like Tim Hagans, Ingrid Jensen, John Fedchock, Joe Lovano and Fred Hersch. Hearing someone play standards in a club with a local rhythm section is an

unusual experience in a city like New York. Here, it's mostly ultra-modern originals, usually with the band from the recording. A smaller local scene provides an education that a bigger city cannot, in some ways.

Denver has a lot more bands. Like, "Our band name is Moldy Bagel and we rehearse our collectively-written songs on Tuesdays at Mike's house." That was very rewarding too—to dig into some original music with your friends, rather than just taking turns soloing. That's where I started my project "Shirley," which was a jazz-rock hybrid band. We did a couple recordings [different-sized cages and from a bright clearing]. They still sound good! I was really inspired by Kneebody at the time. I was also very lucky to be in a group led by Art Lande called Funko Moderno, which I think he's still playing with. They put out a record after I left town. You can learn a lot making music that way, which, again, is not very conducive to survival in the Big Apple.

After living in Cincinnati, and then in Denver/Boulder, I realized that it was going to be impossible to make a living playing trumpet in a smaller city. It became apparent that most of the really well-playing local musicians had spent at least some time in New York. It really put an impression on me that, "Sure, you're out here playing jazz in this bar, with a baseball game on TV behind you. Calling tunes. But not really." Pretty much all my heroes were New Yorkers at some point. Tim Hagans was a huge influence on my playing, and he was from Dayton. Joe Henderson, of course, was from Lima, Ohio. I thought, New York is the ultimate step. To be clear, I have nothing against Cincinnati and Denver. In fact, I love them. But the reality is that there are only so many gigs, so many theaters, so many places to teach in those markets. And a part of me had always wanted to live in a big, metropolitan city. Brad was from Chicago, which was very appealing. Los Angeles is gorgeous, but I wanted something grittier. I was already worn out from driving all around Denver. Eventually I settled on New York City. I thought, This is it; I'm going to take my chance. Luckily, around the same time I was saving up to leave Denver, I met my wife, Zi. She was the first woman I dated who liked the idea of moving to New York. Everything kind of came into place. Again, this is a lot of what "Seven Angels" means to me. Somehow, the planets seemed to align, and everything felt right. Now, that doesn't mean that it was easy. Getting married, moving across the country, rebuilding my life in the jazz capital of the world. It was a lot.

Cadence: How did you meet your wife?

J.L.: I met my wife in Denver, at a salsa club that's now defunct, called The D-Note. She's not a musician; she was there to dance. I remember coming up to her while they were doing the pre-show dance lesson. I said, "You don't want to do the lesson?" And she replied, very dismissively, "I don't need it." We hit it right off! A year later we were married. She was studying psychology at the time. After we moved to New York, she enrolled at Columbia for a master's in counseling psychology. She just recently started her own practice here in the city, and is looking at doing some teaching in the fall. I couldn't be more proud of her. It's been eight years now.

Cadence: What was the most interesting job that you've had in New York?

J.L.: I was lucky to get a bank job almost immediately upon landing in Brooklyn, which I desperately needed. But that was a rough gig. I had been working in

banks before, doing customer service, and loan applications. But I had never seen a manager yelling at the staff in front of customers. Or a bank that runs out of money by eleven o'clock a.m. Unpaid overtime. It was a real introduction to the East Coast way of doing things, I guess. One of the tellers had allegedly been involved in a robbery at another branch, but the bank wouldn't fire her because they didn't want to be liable for wrongful termination. Every day was fit for a TV melodrama.

Cadence: Was there any "culture shock" when moving from smaller towns to New York?

J.L.: Growing up in a small town, I think, really shapes a lot of who I am. I'm probably way too polite for most New Yorkers, for one thing. It sounds foolish now, but at the time New York City just seemed like some inaccessible wonderland, like the lost city of Atlantis. Of course, I stumbled. That's how you learn. I was so eager to play and fit in, especially in the early days, I probably turned some people off. Playing jam sessions can teach you a lot, but they can also be harmful in some sense. To move beyond that stage, I had to learn to play with the band, to tell a story with my improvising, and not just play to impress the room.

Cadence: How can jam sessions be harmful?

J.L.: So, I'm somewhat introverted. A lot of musicians are. Sessions can be stressful, especially if you don't know anyone, you're new in town, and you want to make a good impression. In a jam session, if you're polite, you take two or three, maybe four choruses, depending on tempo. This is not your gig. This is not A Love Supreme. Keep it social, you know? It can be difficult to tell an authentic story in two choruses, with total strangers, on an unfamiliar stage. Sometimes, for me, this would result in "jazz vomit." Just playing everything I knew in two choruses, trying to be "the man." Some people can make a career out of that, in which case, good for them! But that's ultimately not how I want to play music. It's much better for me to be comfortable with the musicians, be comfortable in the space, to listen and to react to my bandmates. Maybe I'm overly sensitive, but that's how I like to play. That's when I feel the best about it. I don't want to say jam sessions are bad; they're not. I met a lot of amazing musicians and friends doing them. But there was a point where I wanted to go beyond that environment.

Cadence: Where were your first performances in New York?

J.L.: My first gigs in New York City were big band gigs. One of my very first gigs was with the Howard Williams Jazz Orchestra at The Garage, which is now closed. I think any New York big band people reading this right now will be nodding their heads and smiling. The Garage was a rite of passage for many young musicians in the city for years and years, particularly those on the big band scene. Big bands are sort of an ideal way for horn players to become introduced to the jazz scene. If people hear that you can read (I mean, really sight read), and you show up on time, there's quite a lot of activity in that scene. Double that if you can play some lead trumpet. Not that it pays the rent, but it's a way to get your name around. I've backed off of the "reading bands" circuit somewhat. I am always in need of trumpet players to sub in rehearsals. It's cyclical.

In fact, that world has kind of shaped my career since moving here. It's such a vibrant scene, with so many creative people, especially in my generation. It's invigorating. I let myself be proud of how many big bands I play in. One of the harder things about COVID-19 is that I'm not seeing my friends very much. My favorite part about New York is the big band rehearsals. Getting a coffee, going to a room in midtown, making music, and seeing all my buddies. That's as good as it gets.

Cadence: Have you been able to book many performances?

J.L.: I have a hard time with that. I'm not a natural self-promoter. I don't typically enjoy being the focus of attention. This is not an ideal set of attributes for a band leader. But I don't think I'm alone in those feelings. I have some friends who seem to be always booking gigs, and they tell me they feel similarly. I'm very proud of Seven Angels. I think it will open a lot of doors, performance-wise, when the shutdown is over. So I'm doing some homework to prepare for that.

Cadence: How did you start leading bands in New York?

J.L.: I had been writing some big band music and holding reading sessions at IBeam, which is a rehearsal/performance space in Brooklyn. I was just calling my friends, who included Steve Kortyka who has performed with Lady Gaga and Brian Newman. I knew Steve from Cincinnati. Also, I had contacted Mike Sailors and Danny Jonokuchi, both incredible trumpet players and composers. They all expressed interest in forming a collective, which we did. I had been waiting for something like that to form organically. Again, things fall into place. Running a big band is stupidly hard and expensive. I was so glad to find some like-minded friends to collaborate with because I wouldn't have done it on my own. We had a monthly show at The Django, which is a speakeasy-style club in lower Manhattan. Fancy cocktails, band in suits, playing swinging charts. We all love the hyper-modern music, of course, but we were missing that classic fifties big band sound. We have been chatting about doing a full-length recording, but we'll have to see how this pandemic ends. The interest is still there.

The Webber/Morris band is certainly different from what I usually find myself doing. I love getting into their headspace. I had played quite a bit of open/free/creative music in Colorado, when I was studying with the phenomenal Art Lande. Since I've been in New York, though, it's been mostly straight-ahead or modern jazz. So the Webber/Morris band is always a breath of fresh air. And they're just a lovely group of people. Something to note about that group is that each piece has a completely unique character. It's a rare and fun challenge to find what that is, and then to route my playing through it in a way that enhances what they wrote. It's not just "insert loud high note here."

Brian Krock is a good friend. I so respect him as a composer, and also as a player. Everything he does is with the utmost integrity. He doesn't slack off, and he has an unshakeable commitment to moving the music forward. His music is an interesting challenge in much the same way as the Webber/Morris band. As a lead player, I also love that Brian understands orchestration. So when he writes me way up high, it's not gratuitous. It's done in a way that I can sink my teeth into it, just the same as if I were playing a Frank Foster chart.

I also want to mention player/composer Remy Le Boeuf. I just adore his music

for all the same reasons mentioned above, but also because he places a priority on melody and beauty. He really has it all going, far beyond what we'd call "jazz arranging." It's not just playing music with these people. It's making art. It's playing life.

Cadence: Do you tour?

J.L.: I've done a little touring here and there—short trips. Touring as a jazz musician can be prohibitively expensive. But I still travel back to Ohio and Denver to play with friends from time to time. Ben Markley is a good friend who has me out occasionally to play in his big band in Wyoming. Another Cincinnati alumnus, Joshua Quinlan, teaches at the National University of Costa Rica and is very entrepreneurial as a bandleader. The guy is working constantly. I like to visit my friends and play some horn when I can.

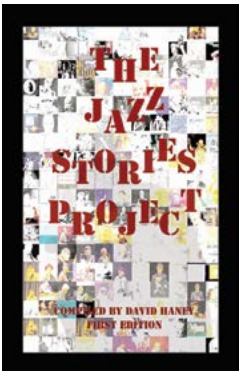
Cadence: Are there any memorable stories about any of your performances, such as for the New York Rangers NHL team?

J.L.: I was called for the Rangers through a good friend, baritone sax mastermind Andrew Gutauskas. He'd been stepping in for a few games, and he reached out to me when the music director, Ray Castoldi, mentioned he wanted a trumpet player. It's been a delight. We go in early, run the tunes like "Sledgehammer" or "St. Louis Blues", which are fun departures from my usual fare. Then we basically kick back and watch the game! We play during the intermissions, and they send up a drone for a video. I've gotten to work with some exceptionally talented folks there, very nice folks. Sometimes you have to step back and say, "I didn't think I'd be doing this ten years ago." That was actually my last gig before the COVID-19 shutdown. So I had fun writing "Madison Square Garden" on my unemployment form.

Cadence: What are your future plans?

J.L.: Good question! It depends on how all this COVID-19 stuff shakes out. I'm not sure. I would be really grateful to go back to what I was doing before everything closed. Assuming we can someday go back to normal, I want to continue playing in the bands I am in, and continue exploring the big band world. I'm 36. I have another lifetime of that to look forward to. But, thinking long-term, I also want to shift some of that focus towards my career as an artist and a bandleader. I have some music that I'd like to share.

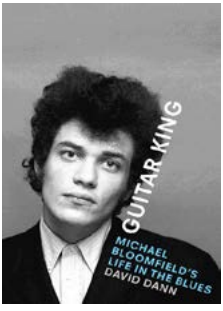
Book Look



THE JAZZ STORIES PROJECT, COMPILED BY DAVID HANEY, FIRST EDITION, 301 pp. SOFTBOUND PUBLISHED BY CADENCE MEDIA, LLC. $55.00.

Back in the eighties when this writer first appeared in these pages the major feature stories were what was known as "oral histories" presented in the traditional question and answer format. As noted on one of the early pages it is stated "This collection of stories is a combination of anecdotes told by the artists and excerpts from longer interviews" originally published in Cadence magazine. The initial pages have two lists conveniently divided into "Stories About" and "Stories By". There are approximately one hundred and twenty-five figures featured with some being represented more than once. Following that are the Table of Contents with corresponding page numbers, Another section is Jazz Stories:A Photo History by Patrick Hinely that covers a plethora of artists in its seventy-one pages. The book concludes with a Memory section on three deceased musicians, Leon Russell, Bert Wilson & Jimmy Amadie. Describing the contents of this volume in detail would be equal to describing each bite of a huge delicious steak. There are recollections of note from figures both known and lesser- known so I shall leave that for the reader to discover. With its mostly short paragraphs this is a perfect "bathroom read" but this writer found it hard to put down once started. Highly endorsed.

Larry Hollis



GUITAR KING: MICHAEL BLOOMFIELD'S LIFE IN THE BLUES, BY DAVID DANN, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS.

This hefty tome (2.81 lbs. 749 pages. Hardbound) should be a gift to all lovers of American music and a pure delight to guitar aficionados. It also should clear up some misconceptions and enhance the reputation of one of our major guitar heroes. In the acknowledgments portion near the book's end, the author tells of the works genesis from a website that chronicled the discography of Bloomfield's recorded activity as both sideman and leader. From that beginning the seed blossomed into this massive volume. In the short Prologue, Dann writes a dramatization of a conversant between the guitarist and Bob Dylan upon their first meeting. From there it goes into the first section of the three major parts of the book; Guitar King consists of ten chapters (Social Misfit:Chicago & Glencoe 43-58)/ North Shore Hotshot: Glencoe, 58-61/ Folk Fanatic, Chicago 61-63/, Marriage, The Pickle & Big Joe Chicago 62 -63/,

Old Town, Chicago 63-64/,, Auditioning For Hammond, Chicago & New York 63-64/, Big John's & The Group,Chicago & New York 64/, Butterfield Blues, New York & Chicago 65/, Plugging In At Newport, Newport 65/. Electrifying Dylan, Newport 65.) which ranges in scope from birth, family and early biographical data to some of the most interesting chapters concerning embryonic development (like how he willed himself to play right-handed although a southpaw) both technically and stylistically to the mid-sixties flowering,

The second section, titled His Holy Modal Majesty, contains eight chapters (On The Road With Butter, New York, Boston, Chicago & San Francisco, 65-66/, East-West, Chicago, San Francisco & New York, 66-67/. Blues To Britain, London, 66/, Hoisting The Flag, New York & San Francisco, 67/. Music, Love And Flowers, Monterey, 67/, Groovin' Is Easy, Los Angeles, Boston & New York, 67/, Another Country, New York & San Francisco, 67 & 68/, Shucks And Sessions, New York,Los Angeles & San Francisco, 67&68) that sandwich a twelve page photo section that holds fascinating images of Mike at age thirteen at his bar mitzvah, with brother Allen, an early gig flier for Vince Viti and "Them". playing the piano at Pete Welding's home, numerous stage and studio shots with Dylan, Al Kooper, Charlie Musselwhite and Buddy Miles plus others. My particular favorite is the one with Norman Rockwell who drew the iconic cover for the Live Adventures album. Being a semi-retired saxophonist and familiar with Stemsey Hunter, the Electric Flag was most captivating.

Knockin' Myself Out, the third and final major portion holds eight chapters (Entertainer No More, Philadelphia, New York & San Francisco, 68/, Live Adventures, San Francisco & Boston, 68/,
Michael's Lament, San Francisco & Chicago, 69/, Stoned Leisure, Mill Valley, 69-72/, Reed Street, Mill Valley, 72-74/, Loving These Blues, Mill Valley& San Francisco, 74-77/, Count Talent, Mill Valley & New York, 77-80/, Last Call, Mill Valley, New York, San Francisco, Italy & Scandinavia, 80 & 81.)
which wrap up the overall saga of our hero. Gone at a mere 37 years of age.

There is such a wealth of meticulously researched information in these page it would take up the entire issue of this magazine to detail them properly but it's best left for the reader to discover these joys for themselves. Following the three main parts of this handsome work are eight more sections to peruse; an Epilogue subtitled Great Gifts From Heaven, informative Notes, a Bibliography with Additional Resources, a hefty Recordings both LP & CD ,the aforementioned Acknowledgments, About The Author and a carefully crafted Index.

Esteemed guitarist and close playing friend Jesse Ed Davis often spoke of his admiration for Michael Bloomfield and another music pal, Tom Sullivan (who worked with both Joe Cocker and Blood, Sweat & Tears) stated he was one of the nicest musicians he ever met. For those that were touched by his gifts I leave you with this quote from Jack Kerouac "The Only Truth Is Music".

Larry Hollis

Reissues

FLIP PHILLIPS, FLIPENSTEIN, PROGRESSIVE 7063. SATAN TAKES A HOLIDAY / WICHCRAFT / VAMPIRE'S DREAM / DRACULA'S DANCE / GHOUL OF MY DREAMS / CHOST OF A CHANCE / HANGMAN'S NOOSE THE CLAW / SATAN TAKES A HOLIDAY / GHOUL OF MY DREAMS / GHOST OF A CHANCE / HANGMAN'S NOOSE. 62:15. Phillips, ts; Lou Stein, p' Mike Moore, b; Butch Miles, d. 7/20/1981. NYC.

It's not to difficult for one to draw parallels between the careers of Flip Phillips and Illinois Jacquet. Both chose tenor sax as their primary instrument and both were devout Prez- byterians when they started out. They first gained attention in the big bands of the day (Phillips with Woody Herman, Jacquet with Lionel Hampton) before graduating to the ranks of Norman Granz's Jazz At The Philharmonic. There they both gained notoriety pandering to the crowd with honking uptempo solos that drove some into a frenzy. Yet both drew some appreciation from the critics for their outstanding ballad interpretations. While both had fallow periods of inactivity they experienced second winds, Jacquet on Prestige & Atlantic while Flip waxed some impressive sounds for the Chiaroscuro. He celebrated his 80th birthday on a live date for Arbors in 1995 and even recorded for Verve two years before his passing with fellow reed kings Joe Lovano and James Carter.

As related in the large paragraph on an inside page, Flip tells how the idea for this concept album came about from a conversation with pianist Stein seven years later in a one day session. There's an ambient mix of standards, two originals each and a couple of co-writes. Flip's rhythm changes chart "The Claw" is heard again while the pianist's "Dracula's Dance" is fairly modal with a quirky time take. Moore and Miles go together like pumpkin pie and whipped cream. As good a place as any to check out the talented Flip Phillips if you're not already aware of him.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

BREEZY RODIO, IF IT AIN'T BROKE DON'T FIX IT,

DELMARK DE860.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE DON'T FIX IT / FROM DOWNTOWN CHICAGO TO BILOXI BAY / A WOMAN DON'T CARE / I'M A SHUFFLIN' FOOL / A MINUTE OF MY KISSING / LOOK ME IN THE EYE / DESPERATE LOVER / LOS CHRISTIANOS / LED TO A BETTER LIFE / GREEN AND UNSATISFIED / THE BREEZE / I'LL SURVIVE / PICK UP BLUES/ I NEED YOUR LOVE / ANOTHER DAY. 69:24.

Rodio, vcl, g; Monster Mike Welch, Kid Andersen, g; Quique Gomez, Simone "Harp" Nobile, hca; Sumito "Ariyo" Ariyoshi, p; Dan Tabion, org; Light Palone, Marvin Little, b; Lorenzo Francocci, Harley Gingras, d; Constantine Alexander, tpt; Ian Letts, as, ts; Ian "The Chief Mcgarrie, bars; Corey Dennison, bg vcl, g, vcl. 11/2018. Chicago. "

Ex-Linsey Alexander sideman Rodio has his second Delmark title out and its more of the same which isn't such a negative assessment if you enjoyed his last effort Sometimes The Blues Got Me that yours truly awarded a positive score in a previous issue of this magazine and in a reprint on pages 295 & 296 of the 2018 Annual Edition. Much of the same personnel is present once again along with special guests Kid Andersen, Monster Mike Welch, Corey Dennison and Quique Gomez as credited on the albums cover. Both Welch and Andersen are on one track apiece with guitar solos, there are harp spots from Gomez on two cuts and Dennison shows up on three. Harp master Billy Branch, who was on the aforementioned disc, graciously penned the liner annotation and the horn section has been pared down from two trumpets to one with no noticeable loss. Like his last release the 16 titles are mainly originals and there's plenty of hot blues-rock guitar work from this sure -fire up & comer. Need to write a answer song to track number four and call it "I'm A Fool For A Shuffle". Larry Hollis

MATTHEW SNOW, IRIDESCENCE,

NO # OR LABEL.

AMBER GLOW / BLITZ / THE EXIT STRATEGY /BROOD / JEALOUSY / BOUYANTLY BLISS / THE CHANGE AGENT / VENUS. 48:07.

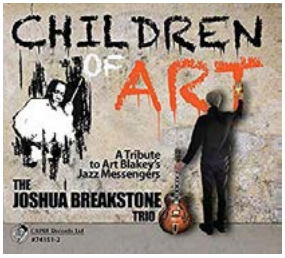
Snow, b; David Gibson, tbn ; Clay Lyons, as; Joe Doubleday. vib; Daisuke Abe, g; Wayne Smith, d.

Circa 2018. NYC.

Here's a little something out of the usual, a straight-on jazz recording with no piano or top brass. The principal is a Big Apple resident who is making his debut with this disc and, aside from boneman Gibson, is staffed with relative unknowns. This spartan production is housed in a thin, cardboard sleeve with relatively scant information provided. Yet there is nothing stingy about the music, all of which purportedly was scripted by the bassist. Nice full chord voicings give the overall sonics a more wider sound to the interesting charts that compliment the selections. Doubleday provides some spacious background on many tracks and his solo work is first rate. The alto of Lyons breaks things up nicely with a crisp tone that befits the soundscape while Abe limits his guitar to mostly chordal duties. The most impressive solos spring from the bell of Gibson's slide and he is featured heavily throughout especially on the moody "Brood" and the final cut. As for Snow, he's almost overtly generous, allowing his group members unlimited solo space and only coming to the forefront on one tune. Other than the short overall playing time & shortage of up-tempo numbers (3 out of 8) this is a moderately impressive debut.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



JOSHUA BREAKSTONE TRIO, CHILDREN OF ART, CAPRI RECORDS 74151. WITCH DOCTOR / SPLENDID / HOLY LAND / EL TORO / LONELY WOMAN / STABLEMATES / BREAKTHROUGH / CHILDREN OF ARE. 57:25. Breakstone, g; Martin Wind, b; Eliot Zigmund, d. 1/10/2018. Teaneck, NJ

Subtitled A Tribute To Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers it is important to remember the band's name as the playlist is made up entirely of compositions by former members of various editions of the famed drummer's combos. Included herein are works from the likes of deceased masters Horace Silver, Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley, Walter Davis, Jr. and still-living elders Benny Golson & Wayne Shorter. The final selection is the title tune from guitarist Breakstone.

Not very well known outside of discerning listeners circles but the 64 years old Jerseyite has been kicking the jazz gong around for many moons now. His affiliation with the Capri label dates back to the dawn of the 2000s. Although never a Messenger in the truest sense his heartfelt two page annotation clearly shows how he and many of us were touched by the Blakey and the great players that passed through his ranks. Conversant with all his fretboard forefathers JB struck this listener on this one with a Jim Hall vibe due to his laid back approach and intelligent solo construction. Pocketkeepers of perfection, Wind and Zigmund get plenty of space alone and in bass/percussion trades.

The Lee Morgan opener shuffle holds the latter and a nifty "Without A Song" quote from the leader, the certified Benny Golson classic has guitar/ drums swaps and a reverent take of "Holy Land" from the Cedar Walton songbook. First heard on an LP under the Muse imprint, this writer was unaware of the original due to the Hank Mobley Blue Note was only available in Japan at the time.

Gotta love those pricey imports of our own native music. Two ballads are present; not the Ornette script but a lovely line from Horace Silver with its three measure channel. Without superfluity this is an extremely listenable date that puts a somewhat different spin with an overdue salute to some of the compatriots of the much-missed Art Blakey.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ROGER KELLAWAY. THE MANY OPEN MINDS OF..., IPO (NO # LISTED). 52ND STREET THEME / HAVE YOU MET MISS JONES / DOXY / TAKE FIVE / TAKE THE A TRAIN / NIGHT AND DAY / CARAVAN. 62:42. Kellaway, p; Bruce Forman, g; Dan Lutz, b. Circa 8/2010. Santa Monica, CA.

Like Alan Broadbent and a few select other pianists, Roger Kellaway is a multidimensional master musician with extensive credits. His most recent endeavor is a self-produced trio date recorded at The Jazz Bakery a west coast establishment some nine years ago just seeing the light of day. This is not the standard piano, bass and drums configuration but the piano, guitar and bass format popularized by the great Nat "King" Cole. Joining Kellaway are the forever under-applauded a seasoned guitarist Bruce Forman who earned his spurs with altoist Richie Cole and upright bassman Dan Lutz a well-respected sessioneer on the LA studio scene.

Housed in a fold-over cardboard sleeve this no-frills package begins and ends with the two fastest paced numbers, a blazing rendition of Monk's dedication to the "street that never slept" and an only slightly slower take of "Caravan". Between that pair are five well-known standards among which are classics from Cole Porter and Richard Rodgers along with staples from Sonny Rollins and Paul Desmond. The latter has the most inventive arrangement with the A sections done in a "call & response" pattern between the keys/frets against the upright with the piano taking the channel. The following Strayhorn chart is taken as a lazy stroll with the time picking up for the second piano ride.

The threesome prove they are no strangers to the blues with a spirited examination of Newk's "Doxy" with Forman slapping his axe (like Herb Ellis with O.P,) for a conga effect. The rule of three suggests a trio of three is more satisfying than other numbers. It holds true in this case.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

CHIP STEPHENS/ GLENN WILSON, SADNESS & SOUL, CAPRI 74159.

GIANT STEPS / MY ROMANCE / ADAMS PARK (FOR PEPPER) / IN A MELLOW TONE (MELATONIN') / SADNESS AND SOUL / SPRING IS HERE / ROUND MIDNIGHT(*)/ COUNTDOWN / OUR LOVE IS HERE TO STAY. 61:19. Stephens, p, prepared p(*); Wilson, bars. 6/27/2018. Bloomington, IL.

Alto or tenor saxophone with a keyboard duets are not all that uncommon but piano and baritone sax collaborations are a rarer mix. Both participants are thoroughly seasoned veterans with voluminous resumes. These are not just masters of their respective instruments that some hotshot producer had the brilliant idea that they would mesh well together, they have known one another and gigged together off and on for almost two decades before establishing the duo two years ago. Drawn from jazz sources and the classic American songbooks of Rodgers & Hart and the Gershwin brothers, they reinvent melodies laced with high-art improvisation that we once thought chisled-in-stone. It can be compared to an Alfred Hitchcock film where the placid surface hides much more beneath the familiar settings. A case in point, the Coltrane titles are turned upside down by tempo fluctuations on "Giant Steps" while "Countdown" gets a lyrical Latin feel. These are all due to the harmonic distillation produced by Chip Stephens' inventive arrangements. Check out the overtones on "My Romance" and the prepared piano treatment of the Monk classic. Both originals hold half hidden beauty; "Adams Park", an ode to the beloved Knife, from Wilson and Stephens' title track are ear enticing. Glenn Wilson turns in his usual marvelous melodicism on the big horn to compliment Stephens completely ambient pianistics. There is much here to savor and repeated listenings bring added joy. Recommended.

Larry Hollis

HUMAN FEEL
GOLD

INTAKT CD 322

ALAR VOME / IMAGINARY FRIEND / G_D / STINA BLUES / BASS PLACE / EON HIT / MARTENS / LIGHTS OUTS / NUMER / OLOGY 58:58. Andrew D'Angelo, as, b cl; Chris Speed, ts, cl; Kurt Rosenwinkel, g; Jim Black, dr, ROMI. 2017, New York, NY.

The urgency, explosiveness, camaraderie, unrestrained passion, expressiveness and the broad, captivating sonic spectrum evident in the varied compositions of Human Feel's Gold make plain the quartet's shared commitment to their musical purpose-a purpose that hasn't changed since they met over thirty years ago. After that, life got in the way, as is the frequent rude, inconvenient sidetracking by life. And so, Gold represents Human Feel's first full album in eleven years. Nonetheless, their commonality of purpose reassembled the four musicians together. Once again determined to complete another album, they started working on new material until they were ready to provide, to listeners' good fortune, solid Gold performances. The product of compositions by every member of the group, Gold commences with "AlarVome" with its invitingly sweet close harmonies of saxophonists Andrew D'Angelo and Chris Speed. Gold concludes with a similarly peaceful duet that fades to silence on "Ology" (which, naturally, follows "Numer," the first part of the combined word's division, and which may [or may not] hint at the Pythagorean numerical method of composing the two tracks). In between such deceptive peacefulness are statements of powerful, even ferocious, free improvisation that blends non-categorizable mixtures of rock, gospel, chorales, trance, electronica and jazz. Accordingly, the peacefulness of D'Angelo's "Alar Vome" vanishes at 1:25 minutes when drummer Jim Black crashes through the stately calm of the saxophones, as if shattering even a shred of boredom. "Alar Vome" is calm no more, and neither is Gold. Seemingly in a gigantic struggle, the saxophones maintain their slow free-rhythm theme while Black counters it, or offers another thematic perspective, with an alternative force. Eventually, the saxophones and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel shed the dignified long tones for an colloquy between D'Angelo's alto sax and Rosenwinkel's guitar without Black's rhythm. And so it goes throughout Gold: the unexpected and the contrasts provide the delights. The second track, Speed's "Imaginary Friend," lights the fuse with a pulsating rhythm pattern of accents on one and three, the third accent

being appropriately a triplet. But then an explosion blossoms into the saxophones' unfolding ascent, followed by the unexpected freedom of release of coruscating bright colors and overtones and squawks before the piece's structure returns to its characteristic rhythm. Even as Human Feel breaks out in free improvisation, it seems to follow the composition's structure, and even in the case of "Imaginary Friend," its concision and logic. "Eon Hit" too creates a rhythmic signature, lighter than those in other pieces, but nonetheless one of breezy sonic fullness as the saxophones join Black and Rosenwinkel in rhythmic gamboling between spurts of repetitive melodic bits. Less restrained and more rock-like in character is Black's "Stina Blues," played with his medium-volume backbeat and Rosenwinkel's frame of a final quarter note before a sustained tone in an un-rock-like meter of seven. On "G_D," G_ld's musicians consider spirituality with thoughtful deliberation as D'Angelo's vibrato on alto saxophone, in alternating low and high registers, bespeaks contemplation over Rosenwinkel's soft chords before Speed contributes his own thoughts and voice on clarinet. Then, all of the members of the quartet blend for a richly hued pastiche. It's worth noting how effectively on all of the tracks the four musicians fill the harmonic spectrum with beauty and excitement, no bass nor a conventional chorded instrument like the piano needed to broaden the sonic palette. As if to reinforce that point, the initial mid-register trilling trance-like suggestions of "Bass Place," built on shifting modalities, glide into calm, floating suggestions from Rosenwinkel, Speed's clarinet and D'Angelo's bass clarinet adding color without the anchoring effect of a bass. At 6:47, the blasting WAKE-UP! change of dynamics abolishes the comfort that the quartet established before the return to quietude at the fadeout. D'Angelo's "Numer"-punchy as it introduces the saxophones' tight spirals, spurts and flutters in unison, and in guttural conversation or sweet song-nonetheless is loose enough to allow for the free trading of improvised snippets with Rosenwinkel and Black. Human Feel improvises collectively "Lights Outs," the only track that wasn't notated. The result includes D'Angelo's altissimo smears and squeals, contrasting with Speed's mid-range tenor sax acceleration from his initial prodding punctuations to his wilder overtones and sonic fullness. The two reed musicians allow no rests or pauses to interrupt what turns out to be a rhythmless concise statement after all, Black's bass drumming a sporadic pulse. In a little over four minutes, "Ology" succinctly concludes Gold with otherworldly textures from Black's work of non-conventional pitches on the ROLI Seaboard synthesizer, to which the saxophones and guitar contribute equally Space Odyssey-like mid-volume sonic explorations. The rarity of Human Feel's recordings increases their value as this distinctive quartet-one whose collaboration was determined by the musicians' mutual human feel-deepens its collective musical personality.

Bill Donaldson

New Issues

VIEW OF THE CITY
DOUG MACDONALD TRIO

BLUJAZZ BJ3448

GRIFF / BOSSA DON / AL'S PALS / DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE / EMILY / SPEAK LOW / CORCOVADO / BE MY LOVE / GATEWAY BLUES / THE SONG IS YOU / YOU'LL NEVER KNOW / MOST OF THE THINGS / BLUE CAPERS. 63:05. MacDonald, g; Harvie S, b; Steve Williams, d. 10/10/2016, Astoria, NY. VIEW OF THE CITYDOUG MACDONALD TRIOBLUJAZZ BJ3448 GRIFF / BOSSA DON / AL'S PALS / DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE / EMILY / SPEAK LOW / CORCOVADO / BE MY LOVE / GATEWAY BLUES / THE SONG IS YOU / YOU'LL NEVER KNOW / MOST OF THE THINGS / BLUE CAPERS. 63:05. MacDonald, g; Harvie S, b; Steve Williams, d. 10/10/2016, Astoria, NY.

Guitarist Doug MacDonald takes us, and himself, back to the magnetizing pull of New York City, where in 1979 he recorded New York Session, his first album with New York musicians. Much has changed, it goes without saying, and much has remained the same, it also goes without saying. I guess I'm saying it anyway. MacDonald recorded New York Session with Hank Jones, Arvell Shaw, Frank Derrick and Grady Tate-a fortunate collaboration with some jazz masters. MacDonald's New York-based group that he assembled in 2016, almost forty years later, doesn't include a pianist, Hank Jones having contributed his unique, respectful identity to New York Session. MacDonald's more recent session, View of the City, is a quiet, relaxed performance of matured professionals in the midst of New York City's driving energy, as if their view of the city occurs from within the peaceful eye of a surrounding hurricane. MacDonald's trio recorded in the sound-controlled acoustic isolation of Astoria's Samurai Hotel Recording Studio as New York City bustled outside it. First-call New York musicians-bassist Harvie S and drummer Steve Williams-joined in to support MacDonald's calm exploration of eight standards and four of his own spirited compositions, plus one from Harvie S. With the unruffled intensity of a Joe Pass or a Barney Kessel, MacDonald plays melodies through implication, wherein the trio intentionally departs from the lead sheets to project a loose in-the-moment feel. Though MacDonald doesn't provide information about the trio's formation, an interesting story would be one that covers MacDonald's first meeting with Harvie S and Williams, with whom he had never before recorded. Had MacDonald admired their work from afar in California? Had they been recommended to MacDonald because of their recordings with other trios or duos? Nevertheless, all three of them dig into MacDonald's minimalist's approach, which maintains the melody as king and in which improvisation consists of the thoughtful absorption of melodies. MacDonald's minor blues, "Griff," opens the album and sets the tone for its remainder as it allows for each member's unforced improvisation during its relaxed tempo. Harvie S, who has recorded numerous albums of his own,

interprets over three choruses, followed by a trading-of-fours with Williams, who spent 25 years backing Shirley Horn. The familiar melody of "Emily" offers an iridescent waltz whose sense of beauty is emblematic of this trio's style. Increasing the tempo-and the complexity of the album's compositions with quickened sixteenth notes-MacDonald's "Al's Pals" (which he broke down to trio form from a big band arrangement for veterans of Woody Herman's band) is notable for the perfected interplay between guitar and bass. They join for up-tempo unison melodic statements and entertaining counterpoint and then walking bass under MacDonald's chorded and then rapid single-note improvisation. This is a trio that just met? The album's repertoire is mixed, on the one hand consisting of Jobim's "Corcovado," which MacDonald plays as a solo by utilizing the entire range of his guitar for rhythmic support and a singing melodic quality. On the other hand, it consists of Harvie S's "Most of the Things," his own variation on "All the Things You Are" on which, yes, the melody is front and center as it's performed on the bass, while MacDonald accompanies on guitar. A faintly remembered movie theme, "Be My Love" from 1950's The Toast of New Orleans, provides for guitar-and-bass back-and-forth variations of its melody. The World War II-era musical, One Touch of Venus, introduced the jazz favorite, "Speak Low," which MacDonald's trio treats to an up-tempo swing that gathers energy as it propels to its dramatic ending of a stretched chord. In addition, View of the City includes the jazz standards, "Don't You Know I Care" and "Blue Capers." The contrasts of song choices continue as MacDonald's trio digs into their contrasting moods. Duke Ellington's romantic dance number consists of sustained ringing tones. But then, Blue Mitchell's composition provides the album's spirited locked-in finish with individual solos and the final chorded exclamation from this joyful meeting of musicians before, one assumes, they left David Stoller's studio for a 21st Street view of the city.

Bill Donaldson

New Issues

GEORGE NAZOS
HEAT SONG
STREET OF STARS RECORDS
OUR MELODY / HEAT SONG / EVIDANCE / PEBBLES / ANOTHER SONG / MAKE BELIEVE / TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY / INTERSECTIONS / CHANGING LANES / SHOWER BLUES / DREAMING / BIRD ON A WIRE 50:46
Nazos, g ; Tamuz Nissim, vcl ; Harvie S., Bass ; Tony Jefferson, d. 12/5/2019
Teaneck,NJ

NYC based guitarist and composer George Nazos from Athens, Greece presents his second CD as leader "Heat Song". George is joined by bassist Harvie S., drummer Tony Jefferson and vocalist Tamuz Nissim. Upon first listen to "Heat Song" I am immediately drawn into the sound of the instruments blending together so well and the overall quality of the recording. The use of space and each musician so carefully working together is very clear. There is no ego here, only a sensitive cooperation with each other and a dedication to the music.
George's use of different time signatures like on "Heat Song", "Evidance" and "Make Believe" adds an extra excitement to the compositions, allowing the listener to experience 7/8 & 5/4 in a way that feels natural and different simultaneously. There is also a wonderful variety in compositions: the stunning guitar and vocal duos "Pebbles" and "Bird On A Wire". "Another Sound" is a rich and inventive solo Bass composition by Harvie S., and a masterful solo guitar piece by George "Intersections". I enjoyed every track on this CD. "Heat Song" has everything one could ask for, a natural flow, variety in composition and musical excellence. The other real winner here is George Nazos's ability to write tunes that are rich, inventive and beautiful. Finally "Heat Song" finishes with Tamuz Nissim and George's guitar and vocal duo of "Bird On A Wire" which nearly brought me to tears.
Excellent listen !!!

Frank Kohl

New Issues

THE TNEK JAZZ QUINTET, PLAYS THE MUSIC OF SAM JONES, TNEK JAZZ NO#

UMIT SEVEN / BITTERSUITE / SOME MORE OF DAT / LILLIE /O.P. / DEL SASSER / TRAGIC MAGIC.

Antonio Parker, as; Benny Russell, ts, ss; Darius Scott, p; Kent Miller, b; Greg Holloway, d. No dates given. Springfield, VA

Whether it was his common name, a retiring personality or lack of interest in promoting himself and his works, Sam Jones never made the big time but was highly appreciated by aware listeners and his fellow musicians. Now comes a belated salute from five musicians that are largely unknown outside their respective areas. In the biographical paragraph each one receives all have extensive gigging credits, some forays into academia and hail from the east coast. Producer Ron Kearns suggests the late Jimmy Heath as an influence on Russell's tenor and Cannonball for the alto of Parker but I hear more Billy Pierce in the former and maybe Richie Cole for the latter. This seems to be more of a producers project judging from the long liners, background notes and book plugs from the aforementioned Kearns who gets a paragraph resume for himself. No mention about the choice of Kenny Barron's "Tragic Magic" in an all-Jones program when there are plenty more Jones compositions (like "Visitation" & others) available. Otherwise an adequate tribute to an often overlooked bass giant.

Larry Hollis

LINDSAY ALEXANDER LIVE AT ROSA'S DELMARK DE862

PLEASE LOVE ME / MY DAYS ARE SO LONG / HAVE YOU EVER LOVED A WOMAN / I GOT A WOMAN / GOIN' OUT WALKIN' / SOMETHIN' 'BOUT 'CHA / SNOWING IN CHICAGO / SHIPS ON THE OCEAN / GOING BACK TO MY OLD TIME USE TO BE 50.41

Alexander, g & vcl; Sergei Androshin, g ; Roosevelt Purifoy, Kybd ; Ron Simmons, Bass ; "Big" Ray Stewart, d 5/16-17/19 Chicago, IL

The Blues has its voice and when that voice speaks it speaks to Lindsay Alexander. In the great tradition of Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters and B.B. King, Lindsay Alexander is delivering that voice to you. Lindsay is a lucky man to have that voice, however it's not enough just to have it ; bringing that deep down soulful feeling that comes from living the life and feeling it, is what counts. Pandemic be dammed, you bring this recording into your house, move all the furniture into the other room and put your dancing shoes on!

It's a great thing when a group can get a nice live recording. Unlike a studio recording where you get the sound just the way you like, in a live recording you get things the way they really are. "Live At Rosa's" has it just right, great sound, balance and energy. The band lays it down and Lindsay sours on top. Nice selection of mostly originals and some covers. The blues at its best with Lindsay Alexander.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

(1) JIMMY BENNINGTON, STEVE COHN
ALBANY PARK
SLAM 587
NEPALESE SUITE / BLUE IN GREEN / CUT DOWN / QUIET NOW / A TIME WHEN I CAN GET BACK TO YOU. 47:30. Bennington, d; Cohn, p, vcl, shakuhachi. 4/27/2013, Chicago, IL.

(2) JIMMY BENNINGTON COLOUR & SOUNDBOOM! LIVE AT THE BOP SHOP
CIMPOL 5043
TING D'LA / MORSE CODE / EARTH JONES / TWILIGHT / THE HITCHIN' POST / PLEASE MAKE UP YOUR MIND / SAY IT (OVER AND OVER AGAIN) / FLIGHT TO JORDAN. 62:32. Bennington, d; Fred Jackson, saxophones; Jerome Croswell, tpt; Ed Schuller, b. 5/23/2014, Rochester, NY.

(3) JIMMY BENNINGTON, STEVE COHN, ED SCHULLER
NEW JERSEY FREEBIE
SLAM 596
NIGHT AND DAY / NEPAL / NEW JERSEY FREEBIE / BACK TO YOU / INTRO TO THAT'S IT / THAT'S IT / BODY AND SOUL. 37:20. Bennington, d; Cohn, p, vcl; Schuller, b, vcl. 6/26/2014, Hackensack, NJ.

BOOM! Jimmy Bennington is back with three album releases as part of his Colour and Sound Series. As the name of the series suggests, the drummer's ambitions lie in music's ability to affect the senses, specifically sonic textures, a wide range of dynamics BAM sizzzzzt and the resultant storytelling. More interestingly, the second component of his series' name suggests sight from sound, with subtle and/or vivid shades and hues buh-buh-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM and atmosphere and moods pop clang brrrrrsh. No doubt, the Colour and Sound series carries on the tradition of the jazz master, Elvin Jones, for whom Bennington worked as his band manager and drum technician and with whom Bennington studied. Jones often described the drum kit's sounds in terms of colors, characterizing the cymbal's sound, for example, as a spray of brilliant reds, oranges, greens, yellows, like confetti. And so, Colour and Sound can affect the senses interchangeably with vibrant outreach to the soul. They can be a sound seen or a sight heard. Appropriately enough, Bennington's CIMPoL (Creative Improvised Music Projects on Location) release that reflects his CIMP album, A Little While in Chicago, sports a title that suggests elements of sonics and hues and even-for those interested in the combination of jazz with a literary perspective-onomatopoeia and rhyme. That title is BOOM! Live at The Bop Shop. The same members of the Colour and Sound quartet appear again. Fred Jackson Jr. plays saxophones; Jerome Croswell, trumpet; Ed Schuller, bass; and of course, the leader of the group, Bennington on drums. So this time, the quartet, it plays with special force and the pyrotechnic sparks usually are very red because they're playing live. In Rochester, New York. At The Bop Shop. As on A Little While in Chicago, BOOM! Live at The Bop Shop sets up the tension of Schuller's pulsating New York City sensibilities with the more linear and relatively straightforward low-key improvisation of Jackson and Croswell. That flashing musical ignition continues to enliven and enlighten. For BOOM! Live at The Bop Shop kicks off not with a boom, but, yes, with the bass drum's fortississimo BOOM! that follows a brief turquoise mezzo-piano syncopation-with-paradiddle intro on the snare. As with other

groups led by drummers, Colour and Sound consists of powerful individualistic musicians who contribute their own original ideas to compositions while joining into the common purpose. On "Ting d'la," the first track of (2), Schuller holds down the implicit modality that drives the wordless conversation of Jackson and Croswell as they call and respond, picking up where one leaves off. Sure enough, the defining characteristics of "Ting d'la" are Bennington's BOOM! and Schuller's quarter-note dom-dom-dom-dom-dom rather than melody. Jackson and Croswell do create a harmonic weave between the solos as a handoff, and the improvisations build. On "Morse Code," intriguingly entitled, Jackson's tones remain declarative, bright, mellow and distinctive as they develop beige-and-yellow long tones over Bennington's unflagging, mid-volume light pattern throb-throb-throb-tap-tap on snare drum and tom-tom with intermittent bass drum accents, wherein the duo streams coding and wordless decoding, ignoring even implicit bar lines. Impressionistic is Fred Anderson's orangish "Twilight," opened by the sax and the trumpet's unison unrushed notes, with a quiet splash on cymbals, and enlivened by Schuller's bottom-end arco buzz. Acknowledgements to other composers occur with Dave Liebman's "Earth Jones." Bennington's hi-hat-and-bass-drum chi-CHI-bum-chi-CHI-bum represent a pianissimo calm before the gray storm, the tranquility ssshhhhh so soft that the volume has to be turned up to make sure that a track has started. But true to Bennington's propensity for dynamic contrasts, the horns-with intertwined flocks of bluebirdish trillllllllll/warble/dart/dart clarity over the snare drum's light tap-tap and the russet tooooooon-toon-tooooooon-tun-toon-toon-tooooon bass vamp-build solos through smears and bluesy quarter-tone ruminations to a fortissimo ornithological shriek! Boom! Live at The Bop Shop ends with two covers, chosen perhaps for audience familiarity. "Say It (Over and Over Again)" proceeds softly without much variation during its maroony five minutes. The track's emphases involve the sweetness of the song delivered in almost straightforward fashion with golden shininess by Jackson and Croswell, Schuller providing oaken

last-dance-like accompaniment and Bennington laying back at the end for light-as-a-feather shishhhhh on cymbals. Duke Jordan's winding "Flight to Jordan" provides a fun, energetic emeraldy hard-bop conclusion to BOOM! Live at The Bop Shop, allowing for Bennington's rrrrrrrumbllle-and-POW! finish. Bennington's two albums with pianist Steve Cohn are no less colorful, no less textural, no less in-the-moment improvisational, no less atmospheric than (2). Nonetheless, they do create instead more spatial kaleidoscopic environments of dramatic pauses and thoughtful rests before the interruption of lightning-white forte accents and silvery gossamer gusts held together by the thematic cohesion of ting-tunk-scramble, ding-ding-ding-ding-plunk-plunk punctuating phrases.

1), recorded in Chicago also as a part of Bennington's Colour and Sound House Concert Series, includes two jazz standards with the free improvisation of bamboo-tan-and-malachite Far East inspirations. Having resided in Japan before moving back to the United States, Cohn integrates in his music those inspirations with his jazz sensibilities. Starting with his "Nepalese Suite," at over 17 minutes a suite indeed, Cohn's reflections evolve intoringgg/brrrruppp/crinkle/toom/toom/JANG intimations of "Body and Soul." Generously, Bennington lays back to allow Cohn to sustain his spontaneous creation until providing magenta shading on snare and cymbals when Cohn sings too. Cohn's "Cut Down," more melodic than "Nepalese Suite," switches between calm ding/ding/ding flow with bass-clef num/num/num/slam, dynamically alternating strength and calmness to reflect the changes of the wind in Japan where the composition was written. The looseness of Bennington's style, without meter, carries over from "Cut Down" into "A Time When I Can Get Back to You," which is eventually furious before its clang/thump/sizzle acceleration resolves when Cohn's Japanese shakuhachi ooooooooo-faa-woo-eee-toooo solo ends the album. As for standards, Albany Park features Denny Zeitlin's "Quiet Now,"descriptive enough, and broken into charcoal haunting crinkle/throb/pop/shatter/gallop fragments. And there's "Blue in Green," obviating another person's (my) description of its colors. Bennington takes its introduction, tap tap tap rollllllll bump, before Kohn comes in with angular variations of its sssish splash jingle bump bump bump bump pedal point, making the interpretation their own.

2) Schuller joins Bennington and Kohn on New Jersey Freebie, in which appear similar themes such as the body, the soul, Nepal, light, darkness, the spectrum of colours in between, standards, and always free improvisation. The arresting unpredictability of seasoned musicians locking into the same bright kaleidoscopic flashes of now-ivory, now-vermilion, now-tangerine, now-azure, now-pink, now-lemon accomplishes revealing visions within their music.

3) starts Cole Porter's "Night and Day"-dappling dark and light-with Cohn's comforting mid-register single-note noodling, which goes slyly slightly awry in the

ninth measure with oblique high-register notes. Repetition of the melody leads to a darkening ebony crescendo of tremolos and plink-plink-wham shatterings into CHING-chingle-chingle pieces. Cohn sings and Schuller issues his commanding flow. Schuller emerges from the trio's spontaneity to develop his own solo over Cohn's chord clusters smash slam and brief jung-jung-jung-jung intimations of swing. Cohn's concerns with the soul's permanence transcending the body's evanescent confinement issues again from, naturally, "Body and Soul." Schuller melodically introduces zangggg-twinggg-plunk the song mahoganally before Cohn enters vertiginously, though mostly melodically, over Bennington's soft teal support. Again, Cohn evinces respectful support for Nepalese culture with "Nepal," this time with Schuller's mournful taupe bowed mmmmm-burrr-eeee exchange, sometimes with harmonics, sometimes with emotionally resonant vibrato, sometimes with Sul Ponticello, sometimes with furious tremolo or a quick descent, but eventually evolving into a showcase for the bass interpretation. The separate themes and sonorities of the trio combine, and distinctly separate voices complement one another. Brief is the group's improvisation of "That's It." It initially enjoys a gentle khaki introduction of tornadic upper-register piano clusters. Then an upswept mauve whoo smash blam boing outpouring, vocal and instrumental, develops into a wild improvisation. Cohn's dissonant-at-first in-four piece, "Back to You," again cringle-ding-ding-ding-crack finds its perfect cerulean musical counterpart in Bennington and Schuller, who provide droll strolling responses tap-thump-rustle-clang to Cohn's unpredictable lead. With three additions to the Colour and Sound Series of recordings, Jimmy Bennington has built his own intricately textured multi-hued, multi-sonic language of free-spirited improvisation inspired by his Elvin Jones apprenticeship. How foolish it is, though, to think that readers can be expected to hear the spirit of the music from words appearing on a black-and-white page or screen. CRASH!

Bill Donaldson

New Issues

BILL WARFIELD & THE HELL'S KITCHEN FUNK ORCHESTRA, SMILE, PLANET ARTS 302018. SMILE / CUCUMBER SLUMBER / HIP-HUG-HER / ODE TO BILLIE JOE /FIRST TIME ON A FERRIS WHEEL / DANCE OF THE COAL CARS / MAD DOG / RAINBOW CONNECTION / I'VE GOT TO USE MY IMAGINATION / THEME FROM LAW AND ORDER / THIS CITY NEVER SLEEPS / SMILE. 74:15. Collective Personnel: Warfield, tpt; John Eckert, tpt, flgh;Andrew Gould, as, flt; Dave Riekenberg, ts, bars, flt cl; Matt Hong, bars, as, flt; Blue Lou Marini, ts, ss, flt, cl; Matt Chertkoff, g; Cecilla Coleman, p; Paul Shaffer, el p, org; Steve Count, b, el b; Scott Neumann, d; Jane Stuart, Julie Michels, Carolyn Leonhart, vcl. No recording dates listed. Hoboken, Montclair, Teaneck, NJ.

While unaware of Bill Warfield before acquiring this compact disc, after the first spin I was reminded of another veteran brassman that's experiencing something of a resurgence of late, John Bailey. Although the latter is more straight-forward jazz he has been buried in studio work as has Warfield who leans more to the funky soul side of jazz along with some R&B and Pop titles thrown in for good measure. Both men have paid their fair share of dues on the commercial music side and both know their way are their instrument. The Hell's Kitchen Orchestra was formed five years and this is their second waxing. Diverse is hardly the word for the tune list; a pair of Warfield originals, a Eurythmics song, a Booker T. & The MG's anthem and an array of items both popular and jazz-based. There is even a TV crime series theme thrown in. Band chirp Jane Stuart sings three numbers ("First Time On A Ferris Wheel" "I've Got To Use My Imagination" & "Ode To Billie Joe") the last of which didn't transfer from rural to urban all that well. Nice backing from pianist Cecillia Coleman under guest Carolyn Leonhart on the Muppet song and Julie Michels does a passable job on the first "Smile". The leader switches from flugelhorn to trumpet for the final take of the title tune with Paul Shaffer on Fender Rhodes. The former Letterman show bandleader adds tasteful Hammond B-3 on several of the tracks thankfully keeping his Vegas tendencies under wraps. Mention must be made of bar-walker supreme Blue Lou Marini who whips out his tenor for some incendiary solo work on four of the tracks.

If variety be the spice of life, this one is far from lifeless.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

1) UP AND OUT UP AND OUT
AMIRANI RECORDS 060

UP AND OUT – ONE / UP AND OUT – TWO / UP AND OUT – THREE / THREE DRAFT PISTONS. 66:22
Harri Sjostrom – ss, sopranino sax, selected mutes; Phillipp Wachsmann – vln, live electronics; Emilio Gordoa – vbs; Matthias Bauer – b; Dag Magnus Narvesen – d. 1/23/2018, Berlin, Germany.

2) BILL GILLIAM / GLEN HALL / JOE SORBARA COUNTERSTASIS – REGRACTED VOICES
MELOS PRODUCTION 006

Sinuous Movements / Iraniranumange / Crustacean Alert / Darkness Here / Melting / Tacticity / Radio Chatter / Cave Ritual / Thrust / Invitation / Pulsar Kick / Morphs Into / Breathing. TT: 52:08.
Bill Gilliam – p, preparations; Glen Hall – woodwinds, electro-acoustic; Joe Sorbara – d, perc. recorded Toronto, Canada, no date given.

1) Up And Out is an improvising group founded by reed player Harri Sjostrom in 2009. Basically, it's Sjostrom and whoever he has invited to play with him in a "Present – Time – Composing" project. This Up And Out release consists of music recorded at a concert at Galerie Nord in Berlin in January, 2018. This time Sjostrom invited an international assemblage: violinist / electronics Philipp Wachsmann, a veteran of Britain's free improvising scene since the 1970s, Mexican vibraphonist Emilio Gordoa and Norwegian drummer Dag Magnus Navesen who recorded with Sjostrom in the Move Quintet and German bassist Matthias Bauer has played with him in various groupings. Suffice it to say that these musicians' paths have crossed with each other at some point over the past few years. And the listener is fortunate that this particular aggregation has been assembled.
Basically, the group freely improvised over four lengthy tracks. While the final track "Three Draft Pistons" is credited to Wachsmann, it is an "update" of a piece he wrote in 1980 that involved improvising musicians to play over pre-recorded electronic sounds.
What makes this recording so good is the instrumentation Sjostrom assembled. The presence of Wachsmann's violin and Gordoa's vibes are unique textures in improvised units. The music is spacious, intricate and well-detailed. Part of it is due to the instrumentation. But another major part is that these are seasoned players from this milieu and don't feel the need to say everything at once. On the opening track, Sjostrom, the leader, doesn't play until the three-minute mark and then while his entry is quiet and subtle, it's also very dramatic. Throughout the four pieces the music swells and ebbs like the best free improvisation and there's always something interesting happening, whether it be a unique textural interlude, a hidden "melody" that appears from the violin, a rhythmic element that suddenly emerges and then, just as abruptly disappears. Because of that it's a recording this listener feels compelled to put on regularly. Up And Out is a very worthwhile endeavor.

2) From Canada comes the improvising trio of Bill Gillian on piano, Glen Hall on woodwinds and electronics and Joe Sorbara on percussion. Glen Hall is prob-

3) HEINZ GEISSER / ENSEMBLE 5
THE COLLECTIVE MIND VOL. 2
LEO RECORDS 864
PEACOCK DANCE / TRUMPE-L'OEIL / WHAT IF? / NO BONES ABOUT IT / 4+1 / COCO / BLUE-SHIFTED. 39:34.
Heinz Geisser – perc; Robert Morgenthaler – tbn; Reto Staub – p; Fridolin Blumer – b.
recorded: 3/18/2018, Maur, Switzerland.

ably best known of this trio, particularly for his work in the 1990s with Roswell Rudd and Gil Evans. But he gradually migrated to free improvisation. Hall has worked with Joe Sorbara who is one of the finest percussionists from Canada and shouid be much better known. This writer is unfamiliar with Bill Gilliam but he is a pianist/composer from the area who straddles the line between composition and free improvisation and has played with Hall before.

The program for Counterstasis-Refracted Voices consists of 13 tracks. Some are miniatures (two minutes or less). The longest "Cave Ritual "clocks in around 9 minutes and most are in the 4-6 minute range. Hall plays tenor sax, bass clarinet and flutes (including bass flute) and utilizes electronic processing while playing them. Gilliam plays piano and utilizes prepared piano techniques. Sorbara is pure percussionist and his interaction with the other two is frequently subtle but substantial. As a matter of fact subtle but substantial could be an apt description of this set as well. But at nine minutes, "Cave Ritual" is the most satisfying track. But as a full program, the music transports the listener to a very different sound world that's worth visiting. And best of all, this recording was produced with the assistance of the Toronto Arts Council.

3) Swiss quartet Ensemble 5 releases The Collective Mind, Vol. 2 (I missed volume 1, released earlier in 2019) and it fits in within the purview of free improvisation. But of the three considered here, this one is the closest to jazz.

It's straight ahead, non-thematic improvisation played on unaltered instruments. To be sure, there are extended range techniques and no overt rhythmic "jams". For sure there is a rhythmic pulse, the leader, Geisser is a drummer, after all. "4+1" is a rhythmically charged piece with each player adding rhythmic stabs and embellishments. While no one player is featured on a track, trombonist Robert Morgenthaler's fragmented phrases are the feature of "No Bones About It" and justifiably so. Since I missed Vol, 1 I can't say whether this is better or not. But The Collective Mind, Vol. 2 is well worth hearing.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

ENRICO FAZIO
CRITICAL MASS
WABI SABI
LEO RECORDS 862

E=MC2 / LILO VARIATIONS / WEST TO EAST (A WALTZY RAGA) / SLIDING STIMES / OVERSHOOT DAY / LECTIO MAGISTRALIS. TT: 61:38.

Enrico Fazio – b, electronics; Luca Campioni – vln; Anais Drago – vln, 5 string el vln; Alberto Mandarini – tpt, flgh; Gianpiero Malfatto – tbn; euph; flt; Adalberto Ferrari – clt, bclt; contrabass clt;, Turkish clt; Francesco Aroni Vigone – ss, as; Gianni Virone – ts, bars; Fiorenzo Sordini – d, perc + Valeria Sturba – theremin; Moustapha Dembele – kora, djembe, tamani; Simone Ghio – kybds. recorded 11/2017, Agliano Terme, Italy.

The experimental strain in the Italian jazz scene that emerged in the late 1970s still thrives and there are a number of releases that come out every year that don't get the attention they deserve. This has been especially true since the inactivity of Splasc(h), Soul Note and Horo labels that released so much good music in the 80s and 90s. But releases continue to come out albeit on small regional labels or self-produced and they don't get much distribution or attention.

Back in the late 70s/early 80s, a quartet based in Milan, Art Studio shone as one of the best groups to come out of Italy. They self-produced their first few releases before being signed by the Splas(c)h label. They released seven albums during the 1980s before all four members branched out into their own thing and eventually broke up. But former members guested on each others' recordings. Since the dissolution of Art Studio, bassist Enrico Fazio has always evidenced an interest in larger group formations. He released three albums with his septet and formed Critical Mass, a 12-member strong ensemble. Wabi Sabi is their second recording, following Shibui, released in 2013. Despite the passage of time, the group is essentially the same as on the earlier release with a new keyboard player, the addition of a kora/djembe player and a theremin player on "Overshoot Days".

The term Wabi Sabi is a Zen concept that allows for the "beauty of imperfection". This album was recorded without any preliminary rehearsals to preserve the spontaneity of performance. But, probably because the personnel is all familiar with Fazio's music, there appears to be no overt "mistakes". And despite the wide variety of compositional strategies and complexity of the music, it still has a nice, spontaneous feel. Even with the modernist flourishes, this is not "difficult" music per se. It's actually quite welcoming music with attractive harmonies laced with dissonance. Abrupt rhythmic shifts while intentionally jarring still seem well-placed and give the listener a pleasant jolt. "West To East" is the best example of this. It opens with a kora passage shifts rhythmically and tonally several times building to a series of solos over a rhythmic base until the rug is pulled out from under everything breaks down for a solo violin interlude by Anais Drago. Fazo re-

SETOLADIMAIALE UNIT + EVAN PARKER LIVE AT ANGELICA 2018

SETOLA DI MAIALE 3880

INTRO / FIRST / SECOND / THIRD / FOURTH / FIFTH. TT: 71:16.

Stefano Giust – d. cymbals; Evan Parker – ss, ts; Marco Colonna – b flat clt, c clt, alto clt, bclt; Patrizia oliva – vcl, electronics; Alberto Novello – analog electronics; Giorgio Pacorig – p; Michele Anelli – b; Philip Corner – gong; Phoebe Neville – gong. recorded 5/16/2018, Bologna, Italy.

enters with an ostinato line in 11/4 and Adalberto Ferrari enters on Turkish clarinet to dialogue with Drago. The listener is carried on the musical journey that the title promises. Another high point of the disc is the intro to "Sliding Tones" with a brass/reed chorale. It's that way throughout the album. Wabi Sabi could be Fazio's most successful large group effort yet… despite the lack of overt mistakes.

The second disc reviewed here is an unusual one. It's on the Setola Di Miale (google translates this as "Pig Bristle") label and is listed as a celebration of the 25th anniversary concert of the label. Competely unaware of the label, that has been in existence since 1993, and fairly knowledgeable of free improvisation, I went to their website and found they have a catalogue of approximately 400(!) releases. Most of the artists are Italian and mostly unknown to this writer. However, dotted through their discograpghy are names like Taylor Ho Bynum, Vinny Golia, Tobias Delius, Fred Frith a/o as members of improvising ensembles, It's an notable achievement. Obviously 25 years of doing this and accumulating such a catalogue deserves acknowledgement and celebration. Label head and drummer Stefano Giust organized a septet of musicians associated with the label and added a notable guest in the form of saxophonist Evan Parker to perform at the 2018 Angelica Festival. They performed a 71-minute set of free improvisation. It's a truly impressive document. The music ebbs and flows and while things can get heated at times, it's clearly a group effort. The band will break off into various sub-groups and the music all seems to flow naturally. (I believe there was no conductor... or at least none credited.) A few names should be mentioned, however. Notable is vocalist Patrizia Oliva whose voice is processed by electronics and spectrally sneaks in an out of the music. Marco Colonna's clarinets are frequently evident. Of course, Evan Parker's distinctive saxophone emerges occasionally. But ultimately, these 8 musicians are here to contribute to the unified whole and all do so successfully. It's a remarkable performance right down to the final wind down and it's all well-worth hearing.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

MARILYN LERNER / KEN FILIANO / LOU GRASSI
INTENTION
NOT TWO 995
INTENTION / METAMORPHOSIS / PLINK PLUNK / ERIC'S HOUSE / NO FAREWELL / CAVERN OF MYSTERY. TT: 73:59
Marilyn Lerner – p; Ken Filiano – b, EFX; Lou Grassi – d, perc.
recorded 11/30/2018, New York City.

Over the course of three releases the trio of Marilyn Lerner, Ken Filiano and Lou Grassi has developed into one of the most formidable working piano trios. hat sets them apart is that they are pure improvisers and eschew a compositional base as their starting point. Despite what some people may think, that's not an easy thing to do. Their third release, Intention, was recorded at the home of Eric Stern (known as Eric's House Of Improv). It's a perfect example of what this trio does best. It presents the full concert and one gets the true arc of the performance. They start out with a brief nearly seven-minute piece, feeling out their instruments, the space, the attendees. Then they take off. "Metamorphosis" is a dense, high energy three-way improvisation that keeps up for over 17 minutes. There are occasional interludes where two others will briefly drop out and one member will come to the fore. A pressed roll from Grassi provides the ultimate punctuation mark to end the piece. The audience sounds stunned by its conclusion. The onomatopoetically titled "Plink Plonk" takes things deeper with Lerner playing the insides of the piano and Filiano coaxing alien sounds out of his bass with his electronics. The entire set continually shifts, ebbs and flows with members breaking off into duos and solo interludes but Intention is true piano trio free improvisation at its finest. This listener was glad it was recorded and wishes he could have been there in this intimate gathering.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

CHRIS REYMAN
KOAN
FORTUNA MUSIC 026
WHO'S TO BLAME / HORIZON / FREE ONE / BEAUTY'S EDGE / NO SFA FRO HER / ANTHEM / FREE 2. TT: 64:04.
Chris Reyman – p; Herb Robertson – tpt; Mack Goldsbury – ts. Flt. clt; Erik Undworth – b; Lou Grassi – d. 4/18/2017, El Paso, TX.

Lou Grassi shows up on another recent and very different release. He and Texas reed player Mack Goldsbury have met up several times over the years and recorded a couple of albums together. In 2013, they did a U.S. tour as Goldsbury's quartet with bassist Eric Unsworth and trumpeter Herb Robertson. Chris Reyman is a teacher at University of Texas, El Paso and he works on dance projects with Sandra Paola Lopez Ramirez. In 2017, Reyman used the Mack Goldsbury Quartet to collaborate with on a recording of a dance piece Koan. He has chosen a stellar unit to realize his composition.

The suite has a wide-range and features all members of the group. Things get off to a bristling opener with "Who's To Blame", a which starts as a freebop charger but goes through a number of changes before it ends 12 minutes later. The piece is open for improvising but also contains a lot of scored material covering tempo shifts and group subdivisions. Yet throughout, the band maneuvers these shifts with ease sounding, like a working unit. "Horizon" contains a slow moody theme blended with a fast, active piano accompaniment to great effect. "Free One" is one of two group improvisations. It's propelled by a loping rhythm played by Grassi on tom toms with mallets. The horns interject stabbing commentary with especially effective work by Robertson. Perhaps the one misfire is concluding the suite with "Free 2", another group improv. While it is a fine track, it would seem that the preceeding track "Anthem" would have been a better closer for the disc. Perhaps it works better in performance with the dancer but where it's placed makes the piece seem to end on an inconclusive note. But it doesn't mar an otherwise fine disc. Koan is well worth checking out.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

KARL BERGER / JASON KAO HWANG
CONJURE
TRUE SOUNBD RECORDINGS 02
PROPHECY / SILHOUETTES / BEYOND REACH / VANISHING ROOTS / FAITH / BELOW ZERO / WATER FINDS WATER / ARISE. TT: 53:37
Karl Berger – vb, p; Jason Kao Hwang – vln, vla. 3/20/2014, Woodstock, NY

The New York City-based loft scene of the 1970s paved the way for a strong scene that developed in the 1980s and 90s. The three players featured in this review developed their music in the fallout of the loft scene and came into their own in the 1990s. Each has been a productive player experimenting with their own ideas and each has a substantial discography worth exploring. These are their three latest releases.

1) Violinist/violist Jason Kao Hwang is a classic representation of this phenomena. He was a participant in the loft scene and formed the band Commitment with reed player Will Connell, bassist William Parker and drummer Zen Matsuura and self-released their only album in 1980. (It was reissued with additional live material by the No Business label in 2010). Hwang released the first album under his own name in 1990 (Unfolding Stone) and hasn't looked back since. He's released nearly 20 albums under his own name including an opera and those with his highly- praised eight piece multi-cultural Burning Bridge ensemble.

Within this discography are a number of duet records including one with bassist Dominic Duval and Korean stringed instrument player Sang Won Park. Conjure finds Hwang playing with vibist/pianist Karl Berger and it's yet another major release in his discography. Berger, who was among the first Europeans to embrace the jazz avant-garde in the 1960s, has been extremely productive in the 2010s. In addition to playing in Berger's Creative Music Orchestra, Hwang featured in the string section of Berger's 2018 Tzadik release In A Moment where Berger's piano was matched with a string ensemble. So perhaps it was inevitable that Conjure would happen. Whatever the circumstances, the listener is the fortunate recipient of this wonderful music.

The opener "Prophecy" starts with Hwang's opening phrases sounding almost guttural and they're matched by Berger's sparse piano chords. The piece moves slowly, deliberately laying out the shape of the music. One can tell that they are listening deeply to each other. The album proceeds apace to the penultimate piece "Water Finds Water". It opens with an arpeggiated figure from Berger's vibes and is soon matched by spectral harmonics

STEVE SWELL QUINTET SOUL TRAVELERS ASTONISHMENTS

ROGUE ART 0091

Astonishments* / Sketch#7 / The Seldom Heard / For Mondays / Being Here* / Morphogenesis. TT: 51:56

Steve Swell – tbn; Jemeel Moondoc – as; Dave Burrell – p; William Parker – b; Gerald Cleaver – d; on * add Leena Conquest – vcl. 12/13/2018, Brooklyn, NY

AVRAM FEFER QUARTET TESTAMENT

CLEAN FEED 537

DEAN ST. HUSTLE / AFRICAN INTERLUDE / TESTAMENT . SONG FOR DYANI . MAGIC MOUNTAIN / WISHFUL THINKING / PARABLE / ESSAQUIRA. TT: 61:32.

Avram Fefer – as, ts; Marc Ribot – g; Eric Revis – b; Chad Taylor – d. 12/17/2018, Brooklyn, NY.

from Hwang. The piece develops from there but Berger keeps returning to the opening figure. Over 13 minutes they dance around each other before summing it up with a final return to the opening. The entire album contains eight gems like this. Conjure is a series of spontaneous intimate duets, beautifully recorded and is one of the finest albums in each of their voluminous discographies.

2) Trombonist Steve Swell has had a similar trajectory to Hwang's and their paths have crossed many times over the years. Although starting as a member of the brass section of the Buddy Rich Orchestra, the key figure in Swell's development is trombone master Roswell Rudd. Not only did he absorb Rudd's command of his instrument, but he also embraced Rudd's sense of exploratory adventurousness. And in doing so, Swell came up with his own sound and approach to music. He's game for the free improvisational situation and he's done plenty of recording in that format. But he's also found ways of compositionally putting together albums that make a complete statement. A good early example of this was 2003's Suite For Listeners, Players And Other Dreamers. A more unusual approach to that situation can be found on 2015's Kamreki, a diverse selection of music that was a summation of his music of the past few years and also a celebration of his 60th year on this planet.
Astonishments is yet another unique and worthwhile endeavor recorded with his quintet the Soul Travelers. Comprised of four other members (alto saxophonist Jemeel Moondoc, pianist Dave Burrell, bassist William Parker and drummer Gerald Cleaver), each is a leader in his own right, it's a measure of the esteem of his cohorts that he can assemble a group of this caliber. Add to that vocalist Leena Conquest reciting/singing Swell's poetry on two tracks and one has a complete album-length document.
The title track has Conquest reciting the simple things in life that have brought satisfaction. When taken individually they are astonishments. At one point it becomes a litany of those who have recently passed (Will Connell, Connie Crothers, Roy Campbell) but

their passing is an astonishment in itself and referred to as "lives well lived". In the background, the quintet interjects jabbing phrases and punctuations. Swell makes great use of his "sidemen" all of whom are highlighted at one point or another. Pianist Burrell (with whom Swell recorded Turning Point, a series of duets in 2013) stands out with his unique lyricism and he's perfectly placed within this ensemble. His unique style of comping highlights Moondoc's tart- toned alto solo on "The Seldom Heard". On the same track Burrell's lyricism blends perfectly with an arco bass solo from Parker. Throughout Cleaver's drumming gives the music the forward momentum and dynamism it needs.
In Astonishments one gets a complete program of contemporary music that's as good as any that's being made these days.

3) Saxophonist Avram Fefer emerged about a decade later than the other two musicians featured in this review, but he shares a similar wide vision of music. In the 90s, during his stay in France he recorded an album with Last Poets and was a member of Beigel's Daisy Toasts, a successful soul/funk group based in France. When he came back to the U.S. toward the end of the decade, he dove headfirst into the more experimental groups based in New York. He recorded with pianist Bobby Few (two duet albums and two group albums). He's collaborated on albums with bassists Michael Bisio and Adam Lane and with post-funk avant-garde ensemble Burnt Sugar. In 2001, he formed a trio with bassist Eric Revis and drummer Igal Foni, succeeded by Chad Taylor in 2009.
Which brings us to Fefer's most recent recording Testament. It finds the trio morphing into a quartet with the addition of redoubtable guitarist Marc Ribot. And he's a perfect addition to the trio. He's a player comfortable playing just about any style and Fefer gives him a lot to work with over the eight tracks.
The opener is a bit of a surprise. "Dean Street Hustle" is a post-bop flag-waver and both Fefer and Ribot dig in with meaty solos. With the rhythm section driving the soloists along the piece is an excellent opener. Fefer's fondness for African-derived rhythms (very in evidence on this recording) comes to the fore on "African Interlude". The piece is carried on by Chad Taylor's polyrhythmic drumming. Fefer delivers a rich throaty tenor solo that flies along the rhythm base. The ten minute "Magic Mountain" is once again buoyed by the rhythm section with Revis playing a cyclic motif that is interrupted by free interludes from Fefer and Ribot. The track alternates between a soaring melody and free interludes with ease. The one misfire on the disc is Song For Dyani which inexplicably fades around the four minute mark, just when it sounds like it's about to truly soar. But that's a minor complaint.
With Testament, Fefer has turned his trio into a quartet and brought it into the new decade with strong compositions and excellent playing throughout. Let's hope there's a follow up.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

PAGO LIBRE
CINEMAGIQUE 2.0
LEO RECORDS 863
ENTICING / A BOUT DE SOUFFLE / SYNOPSIS / KISSING JOY (AS IT FLIES) / TIKKETTITAKKITAKK / ALPERIDUO / NOSTALGHIA / ENTR'ACTE: LE TANGO D' E.S. / FOLK SONG / SUONATINA / LITTLE BIG HORN / DANCE OF KARA BEN NEMSI / AIMEZ-VOUS LE BRAHMS? / TUPTI-KULAI* / RMX* / RASENDE GNOME* 73:44.
Arkady Shilkloper – horn, flgh, alphorn, alperidoo, vcl.; Tscho Theissing – vln, vcl; John Wolf Brennan – p, acropiano, melodica. Vcl; Daniel Patumi – b; on * George Breinschmid -b replaces Patumi; recorded 4/2000, Winterthur, Switzerland, except * - recorded 2004 at Feldkirch Festival; Fledkirch, Austria.

Pan-European quartet Pago Libre was formed 1989 with Irish pianist John Wolf Brennan one of its founding members. Their music was a curious blend European art music, folk song, jazz leanings and even a bit of free improvisation. There wasn't anything like it around at the time and It was a beguiling blend. It's a blend that's carried them through several personnel changes over the past 30 years but it's maintained the original vision.
Their latest album Cinemagique 2.0 (subtitled Sixteen Soundtracks For An imaginary Cinema) is actually a reissue of sorts of the 2000 release Cinemagique. The running order appears to have been rejigged, two short pieces have been deleted and three live tracks from a festival in Feldkirch, Austria in 2004 have been added. The original recordings were remastered in 2019 and they sound spacious, clear and beautiful. (Not having heard the original recording, I can't compare). Each instrument is distinct and one can clearly hear accompanying lines and musical commentary throughout.
Despite this reorder, the main program plays as a cohesive whole. Each member (brass player Arkady Shilkloper, perhaps best known to Americans as a member of the Vienna Art Orchestra); Swiss violinist Tscho Theissing and Italian bassist Daniele Patumi) contributes to the compositional stew. But all are in the spirit of the group's music. Brennan's "Kissing Joy" is one of the highlights. Starting with a Coltrane-ish bass line in 6/8, an attractive theme emerges, leading into some leisurely improvising until all stops midway for a crystalline solo by Brennan before the group picks it up and continues to the end. "Nostalghia" is credited as a group improvisation but contains a striking "lead" line courtesy of Shilkloper's French horn. Theissing's "Tikkettitakkitakk" has an Indian flavor, particularly with its rhythmic flow but harmonically, things happen within that belie an Indian source.
The entire program hangs together despite its diversity of source material and approaches. Perhaps the three bonus tracks are a bit redundant because they "sound" as if they're from a different source (a live concert) and there is a different bass player. But it's not worth complaining about that since it gives the listener three more quality tracks from Pago Libre.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

GLORIA DEI CANTORES
STABAT MATER
GLORIA DEI CANTORES
065
PEACE UPON YOU, JERUSALEM/ L'ABBE AGATHON/ SLAVE REGINA/ MAGNIFICAT/ NUNC DIMITIS/ STABAT MATER 69:02
Gloria Dei Cantores, Richard K. Pugsley, conductor. Featuring Rachel McKendree, Sr Amanda Ortolani, sopranos; Alexander Pugsley, baritone; James E, Jordan, organ
Orleans, MA, Sept 2018, May and September, 2019

I have often said that is can be difficult to tell the difference between some contemporary composed classical music and some improvised music. So here is a completely composed piece under review.

Arvo Part, born in Estonia in 1935 is considered to be a minimalist composer along such people as John Adams, Phillip Glass, Terry Riley and others. Minimalism has various influences including music from Asia with its repetitions. Like all such composers, each brings a personal approach to the music within that overall genre. Today, Part is one of the most performed contemporary composers.

Stabat Mater is a form of prayer on the suffering of Mary. This recording includes other works that are related to the Stabat Mater. Part 1 begins with a section from psalm 122 about the ascent to Jerusalem. This section features two soprano soloists, accompanied by chorus and orchestra. The influence of Gregorian Chant can be heard throughout the whole work but is clear hear in the choral accompaniment.

Part two is the story of L'abbe Agathon or Father Agathon , an old man who turned to the desert in order to understand Christ's life more fully. This section features soprano and baritone soloists, women's choir violi and celli.

Salve Regina is performed by choir and organ and uses what Part calls his "tintinnabull" technique of composing which is supposed to have specific effects on the ear of the listener related to tintinitis, or the hearing of the ringing of bells. The text is from an 11th century monk, Herman von Reichenau.

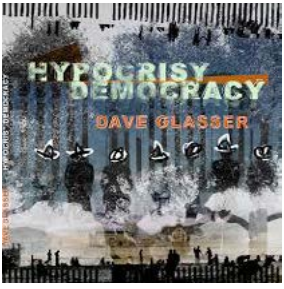
The Magnificat uses Part's technique coupled with more straitforward compositional techniques. This section is about Mary's response to the angels. This sections features soprano soloist with full chorus.

Nunc dimitis is about St Simeon's song of witness. It uses space and silence with the full chorus and soprano solo. It uses various harmonic techniques moving from major to minor to modes.

And finally the main section, the Stabat Mater itself, the longest section of this recording. This piece was commissioned by the Alban Berg Foundation on the

100th anniversary of Berg's birth. The piece is about Mary's suffering watching Jesus die on the cross. It has tremendous emotional content.
Musically, like so many religious works, can stand on its own as a concert work. It is a great work for lovers of choral music. The harmonies and structures of the piece can be listened to casually or with great seriousness. Like all great works, the more carefully one listens, the greater the rewards. And, as someone familiar with the work of Part, I can say this is an excellent performance.
In terms of recommendations to readers of Cadence, any one interested in composition or choral works, regardless of genre will surely enjoy this wonderful recording.

Bernie Koenig



DAVE GLASSER, HYPOCRISY DEMOCRACY, HERE TIS NO#.
KNIT WIT / JUSTICE / IT'S NOTHING NEW / DILEMONK ; COFFEE, DOGS AND TELELOGS / IT'S A SMALL WORLD / FREEDOM / GLEE FOR LEE / REVOLVER / DEEP DARK / MINOR MADNESS. 53:23. Glasser, as, ss, flt; Andy Milne, p; Ben Allison, b; Matt Wilson, d, perc. 6/20/2019. No location given.

Although thoroughly familiar with the tradition saxman Glasser holds an adventurous streak that rises to the fore on more than one occasion of his latest artistic statement. Sort of a modern day Gigi Gryce if you will. Studies with the late Lee Konitz are pointed out in the duet with drummer Matt Wilson (frequent Konitz sideman) on "Glee For Lee" which sheds little influence (to this writer's ears) to the celebrated Konitz dryness and he apparently holds more affection for the blues than his mentor in the funky "It's Nothing New" or the almost boppish "Revolver". "Dilemonk" nods towards a certain pianist that one cannot picture any Tristano grads playing alongside while "Minor Madness" teeters on the edge of pure freedom. The work closes with an off-kilter take of Disney's "It's A Small World" which appears to be an odd choice to end a batch of originals until one learns the back story. Give it a spin.

Larry Hollis

GORDON GRDINA
THE MARROW
SONGLINES

SAFAR-E-DAROON/ EL BAZ/ MINI CON/ CALLING ON YOU/ SHAMSIR/ CONVERGENCE/ ILLUMINATION/ OUTSIZE/ GABRIEL JAMES 52:37
Gordon Grdina oud; Mark Helias, bass; Hank Roberts, cel; Josh Zubot, vln; Hamin Honari, perc

I thoroughly enjoyed this recording. I love Mid-eastern, North African music, and when joined with a western sense of improvisation, it opens new doors. But then I have always liked the idea of mixing styles and genres. But first two personal comments. Growing up in Jewish home, these minor scales with the Mid-eastern sense are part of me. I love them. And, albeit as a tourist, I spent a bit of time in Egypt and Morocco where I herd lots of local music. Grdina is the real deal.

This is clearly a jazz record from a Mid-Eastern perspective. The improvisations are excellent and work well with each tune. Some thing is important to me is that solos of any instrument should reflect the over all musical context. And here they do. I especially like the drum break on Safar-E-Daroon. It sounds like Honari has been listening to jazz drummers and did what he could on his mid east drums

The strings work very well behind the solos. Often, to my ears, the strings are used very much the way a sax section might be used behind a soloist in a big band. There are also many sections of very tight string section playing.

Grdina keeps things interesting by changing tempos and moods so his playing never gets into rut. Each track is fresh and keeps the ears open.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

HARRISON ARGATOFF
TORONTO STREETS TOUR

INTRO/ WAIT/ MURORO/ RAINFALL/ INTERLUDE/ WHITE ACACIA/ UNTITLED/ FLICKER/LOVE IS LOVE/ I HAVE STARTED 71:38

Harrison Argatoff ts, vcl
Toronto

This is an album of solo saxophone. Argatoff composed all but two of the tunes and improvises on them. Solo instrumental records are not always easy to listen to as they tend to become repetitive. To Argatoff's credit he varies tempos and textures to maintain interest.

Argatoff is a recent graduate of The University of Toronto's jazz program, and is trying to create a career for himself, which is indeed a noble effort.

This recording was done under a bridge in Toronto and is part of his "street tour". The bridge provides an interesting setting which yields a kind of echo or reverb sound. He has a nice light tone, at times almost sounding like an alto. He sings on White Acacia, a Russian folk song.

I was basically enjoying the recording until Untitled. On this track, which is way too long, Argatoff seems to get caught up in a repeating phrase and keeps working it. I know the feeling well as a performer, but as a listener, it went on too long. But then on the next track he changes his sound producing a great vibrato which pricked my ears. He also produces some very interesting harmonics on this track as well. But, again, it went on a bit too long.

Overall, Argatoff is a talent which needs nurturing and a bit of self discipline. I would also like to hear him with other players.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

JEFF MORRIS
HEARING VOICES
RAVELLO RECORDS
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM/ DEFINITION OF A/ A TUESDAY WITH RODNEY/ A TUESDAY WITH RODNEY—BALLAD/ A TUESDAY WITH RODNEY—SCHENKERIAN BLUES/ JABBERWOCKY—A TIMBRE POEM/ REPRISE (HEARING VOICES) 51:06

Jeff Morris, elec; Elisabeth Blair, Susanna Hood, Rodney Waschaka 11, Joseph Butch Rovan , vcl
Feb 15

I am somewhat familiar with Jeff Morris, having reviewed his Interfaces CD. This is a vocal record with electronic backgrounds and accompaniments. Well into the first track I was immediately reminded of Stockhausen's Gesang der Junglige where Stockhausen used electronic sounds with distorted children's voices. Here there are no children's voices but a number of adult voices.

As the record went on I kept listening closely. At times there were words, but the words themselves are not as important as the vocal sounds and the harmonies. On different tracks there are different lead voices and very different textures which require careful listening to fully appreciate how the voices are being used.

I don't know if the whole record is composed or improvised. And from a listening standpoint it really doesn't matter. I have often made the point that today it is often difficult to tell what is improvised and what is composed since contemporary classical composers and jazz composers and performers are using the same musical materials. The important point is just to appreciate the music.

And there is much to appreciate here. A truly fascinating recording.

Bernie Koenig

OLIVE BROWN, EMPRESS OF THE BLUES,

AUDIOPHILE RECORDS ACD-362.

AGGRAVATIN' PAPA / BACK WATER BLUES / SWEET MAN / SUGAR / 'DEED I DO / GIMMIE A PIGFOOT AND A BOTTLE OF BEER / HOW COME YOU DO ME LIKE YOU DO / THAT OLD FEELING / EMPTY BED BLUES / GO BACK WHERE YOU STAYED LAST NIGHT(A) / GOODIE GOODIE / SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE SORRY / NOBODY KNOWS YOU WHEN YOU'RE DOWN AND OUT / BEALE STREET BLUES(*) / EVERDAY I HAVE THE BLUE / AM I BLUE?(B) / 'BAMA BOUND(C). 66:14.

BROWN, VCL; JOHN TRUDELL, TPT, VALVE TBN; TED BUCKNER, AS, CL; MIKE MONTGOMERY, P; BILL BOLLE, B; J.C. HEARD, D (A)/ BROWN, VCL,DON EWELL, P(*); GARDNER HITCHCOCK, D. (B)/ BROWN, VCL, MIKE MONTGOMERY, P; FRANK POWERS, CL.

(A) 10/6/1973. WARREN, MI. (B) 5/16/1972. MEMPHIS, TN. (C) CIRCA 1970. LOCATION UNKNOWN.

It must be admitted upfront I was somewhat taken aback when I first saw the title of this album. To me and most others there was only one Empress in the blues kingdom and that was the immortal Bessie Smith. In Paige VanVorst's booklet annotation he addresses that subject admirably but a better title surely could have been found. That said, everything else is, as they used to say "hunky dory". Ms. Brown has a strong, sure voice with none of the normal "blues mama" gruffness and a slight vibrato sometimes at the end of her phrases. Her history is detailed in the liners. The first ten tracks presented were on a vinyl record by Olive Brown and Her Blues Chasers and is heavily indebted to Bessie Smith in tune selection. The first two cuts were recorded by her in the twenties, the second with James P. Johnson on keys, originally on the Okeh label "Gimme A Pigfoot" is taken up with a few growls from Ms. Brown and the classic "Empty Bed Blues" is a smooth stroll with trumpet obbligato. The second batch begins with "Goodie Goodie" a song I remember hearing as a teenager sung by the tragic Frankie Lyman followed by a number from Pops and several standards. The W.C. Handy classic is a boogie woogie piano solo by Don Ewell who heads up the trio elsewhere. The next selection is not the Memphis Slim (Peter Chatman) although its the same chorus with different verses. The majority of these tunes are medium tempo with only two ballads heard. The last number comes from a vinyl LP entitled Struttin' With The Boll Weevil Jass band although Brown is backed only by piano and licorice stick, Overall an interesting listen from mainly unknowns (save Ewell & J.C. Heard).

Larry Hollis

New Issues

DAVE STRYKER/BOB MINTZER/WDR BIG BAND,
BLUE SOUL,
STRIKEZONE 8820.

TROUBLE MAN / ANA / WHAT'S GOING ON / CAME TO BELIEVE / BLUES STRUT / WHEN DOVES CRY / WICHITA LINEMAN / SHADOWBOXING / STAN'S SHUFFLE. 58:07.

Collective personnel" Stryker, g; Mintzer, ts; Wim Both, Rob Bruymen, Andy Haderer, Ruud Breuls, tpt; Ludwig Nuss, Raphael Klemm, Andy Hunter, tbn; Mattis Cederberg, b tbn; Johan Horlen, Karolina Strassmayer, as; Olivier Peters, Paul Heller, ts; Jens Neufang, bars; Billy Test. p. org; John Goldsby, b; Hans Dekker, d. 22,25 & 26/2019.

If one were to nominate the most under recognized contemporary jazz guitarist on the scene today the name of Dave Stryker would top my list. Not a shredder nor introspective doodler, his thoughtful economical construction and inherent bluesiness makes me recall another personal hero Kenny Burrell.

From his earlier waxings for the import Steeplechase line, his much-missed co-led combo with Steve Slagle up to his Hammond anchored quartet which finally achieved some attention on the charts, his stylistic versatility is another impressive trait. This new issue is even more of a stretch in scope with Stryker set inside a blue ribbon big band. Add to that six of the titles arranged by the talented Bob Mintzer who also orchestrated the other three charts put together from the leader and long time keyboardist Jared Gold. For an extra added plus is Mintzers donation of a pair of originals and his tenor on three cuts. Six of the tracks are from previous albums from the fretman with fresh charts. Special kudos to Billy Test who doubles on organ for the two Marvin Gaye songs and joins the tenor and guitar for solo slices on the killer "Blues Strut". From former employer Stanley Turrentine, "Stan's Shuffle" closes out the proceedings on a joyous note. Great audio from a broadcast by Studio 4 Cologne.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

JASON PALMER, THE CONCERT: 12 MUSINGS FOR ISABELLA, GIANT STEP ARTS 004.

DISC 1: A LADY AND GENTLEMAN IN BLACK / CORTEGE AUX ENVIRONS DO FLORENCE / LA SORTIE DO PESAGE / CHRIST IN THE STORM ON THE LAKE OF GALILEE / A FRENCH IMPERIAL EAGLE FINIAL / CHEZ TORTONI. 68;59.

DISC 2: PROGRAM FOR AN ARTISTIC SOIREE / AN ANCIENT CHINESE GU / THE CONCERT / LANDSCAPE WITH AN OBELISK / SELF PORTRAIT / THREE MOUNTED JOCKEYS. 65:53.

Palmer, tpt; Joel Ross, vib; Mark Turner, ts; Edward Perez, b; Kendrick Scott, d. 5/23&24/2019. NYC.

MICHAEL THOMAS, EVENT HORIZON, GIANT STEP ARTS 005.

DISC 1: DISTANCE / DRIFT / BASS INTRO / DR. TEETH / FRAMEWORK. 48:11.

DISC 2: SAX INTRO / CHANT / UNDERGROUND / DRUM INTRO / EVENT HORIZON / FOX AND CAT. 59:02.

Thomas, as; Jason Palmer, tpt; Hans Glawischnig, b; Johnathan Blake, d. 8/14&15/2019. NYC.

For his sophomore issue(A) on the Giant Step Arts label trumpeter Jason Palmer has opted to go the concept album route. Returnees Mark Turner & Kendrick Scott welcome newcomers Joel Ross and Edward Perez to form a stellar quintet to interpret the leaders twelve compositions. The seed for all this came from a still-unsolved theft of a dozen painted masterpieces some thirty years ago from a museum in Boston. Among the stolen items were treasures from Rembrandt, Vermeer, Degas and others. That piqued the trumpet man's interest to write a musical number for each item. The results were presented last May at the Harold S. Vanderbilt Penthouse of the hotel InterContinental New York Barclay and recorded by label honcho Jimmy Katz.

Palmer's descriptions of the individual works are precise yet lengthy and may be found on his blog at https:/ jasonpalmerjazz.wordpress.com so my comments will be kept to personal impressions.

The initial disc begins with an re imagining of a Rembrandt and is cast with a blues hue. Back in the day in my hometown was a black combo known as Preacher Smith & His Deacons who I sometimes jammed with. Never knew his first name but the Preacher played KC-styled piano and sang in a Joe Turner/Jimmy Rushing type voice. His main eccentricity was that he played utilizing just the black notes on the keyboard which is the format this work takes. Imagine my surprise! Elsewhere is a horse racing scene from Degas written in six-eight time followed by another Rembrandt in 15/8.The last two tracks concern an eagle high on its apex which has a fittingly soaring melody and the other a mixed meter portrait of a painting from French modernist Edouard Manet

The second platter kicks off with a moderato take of a canvas by Degas with rides from the trumpet, vibes and bass but nothing from the tenor until the ensemble finale. The next title features the leader's crystalline tone encased in a pentatonic, oriental feel. Vermeer's "The Concert" is an extremely lyrical long line for the horns written to portray the three musicians pictured. The jazziest number is next up yet it begins

with a trapset interlude and as almost a ballad. Penned by the Dutch artist and Rembrandt disciple Govert Flinck it holds a Myron Walden contrafact sandwiched between a rubato intro and ending. The last Rembrandt theme (a self-portrait}is a construction from a previous tune, this time built off Wayne Shorter's "Miyako" which sports some collective improvisation that could be classified as contemporary psychedelic dixieland. Three is the key to the final kicker, the second title to be taken as a convoluted waltz in six-four with Scott's sizzling kit over the top of the tag. There is much music to be savored herein and repeated listening can only bring extended joy.

Unlike Jason Palmer's latest release, Michael Thomas' newest effort is more sparse and captured in the nightclub setting of the Jazz Gallery. There seems to be a bit more ambiance from the audience than in the more formal Palmer concert atmosphere. The band pays allegiance to Ornette's original fourtet with Thomas strictly on alto, Palmer on crisp trumpet and the top shelf duo of Miguel Zenon's bass ace Glawischnig and percussive master Blake kicking the tubs. There are descriptions of the compositions (all original) on both fold-overs of the double digi-pack so my views will be kept to a minimum.

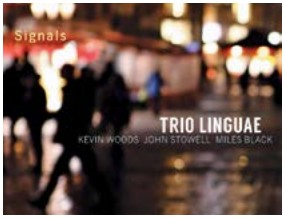
The first disc kicks right into an alto stretch before the trumpet joins in for the two part theme followed by Palmer (over some hip skin commentary and intermittent pauses from Blake) before the head redux. "Drift" does exactly that, with a moody horn line snaking through rhythmic punctuation. Nice touch with an alto ride beginning with just he and the upright before the traps eventually join in.

Needless to say, "Bass Intro" is self-explanatory leading into my favorite cut dedicated to the crazed conductor of the Muppet Show band. It's very Colemanesque with a NOLA undertow that has Blake showing a Ed Blackwell influence. The last track is a medium up construction piece with hot alto interplay with the traps and the best trumpet solo of the set with smears and growls.

An almost four minute "Sax Intro"on disc two prefaces "Chant" which sounds very complex especially toward the end counterpoint over the drum spot. "Underground" which follows is equally diffuse and the longest entry present. The title tune is an exercise in intensity building with strong soloing. The disc ends on a whimsical note with a cleverly-titled contrafact of Wayne Shorter's "Pinocchio". This writer was unaware of Michael Thomas before but with this impressive second outing will be monitoring him closely in the future.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

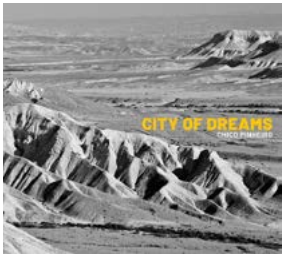


KEVIN WOODS
JOHN STOWELL
MILES BLACK
TRIO LINGUAE
SIGNALS
ORIGIN LC29049
FEW REGRETS / SOLO EN VIENTO SABE / PERI'S SCOPE / SIGNALS / MY SHINNING HOUR / SINCE LAST DECEMBER / BIG T'S / INUTIL PAISAGEM / ONE FOR B.E. / VIRGO / I HEAR A RHAPSODY
Kevin Woods,tpt, flgh ;John Stowell, ; g, baritone g, ;Miles Black, p
6/24 & 9/1 2019 Surrey, BC

A very pleasant surprise and joyful treat to hear this trio without bass and drums.
Three of the most able-bodied, spontaneous communicators in Jazz converse through six originals and five covers. "Signals" begins with Kevin Wood's beautifully written "Few Regrets". A rubato opening with John Stowell's pristine nylon string melody statement leads to a strong chord progression intro. Kevin Woods takes over the melody and then takes the first solo. Kevin's clear tone, sense of rhythm and phrasing is so beautifully born from what's happening around him. Miles Black fills the air with a full bodied, soulful accompaniment and then moves into a wonderfully melodic solo. John has the final solo, weaving magically through the changes as he dances seamlessly with Miles. "Peri's Scope" is an energetic version of Bill Evans tune that starts with everyone soloing together. The skill of listening to one another is perfectly executed here as all three musicians turn in outstanding performances. The interplay between the guitar and piano is especially moving, bringing back the voices of the Jim Hall, Bill Evans sessions. The melody is then stated wonderfully at the last chorus.
There are too many great moments on "Sigals" to list. The originals by Kevin Woods and Miles Black are outstanding. John's use of the fretless baritone guitar is an extra special treat. This is an instrument you hardly ever hear and it can play the role of guitar and bass. Add in the fact that it's fretless and you have a sound that's awesomely unique, not to mention the uniqueness of the person that's playing it!
My biggest takeaway from "Signals," is that as listeners, we all to often become accustomed to listening to music in a certain format. In a way the fact that "Signals" doesn't have bass or drums is what makes it so intriguing . I believe it challenges the players to dig down, say more and do it in a different way. "Signals" is a joyous celebration of interplay and conversation.

Frank Kohl

New Issues



CHICO PINHEIRO
CITY OF DREAMS
BURITI RECORDS
CITY OF DREAMS / INTERLUDE / LONG STORY SHORT / ESTRADA REAL / GESTURE / INVISIBLE LIGHTS / ENCANTADO / THEME / VILA MADALENA / FAROL / UP IN THE AIR
48:31
Pinheiro, g; Chris Potter, ts; Tiago Costa, p; Bruno Migotto, bass; Edu Ribeiro, d
early 2020 São Paulo, Brazil

On all fronts Brazilian guitarist Chico Pinheiro is presenting bright, multicultural music of the highest caliber. Whether one focuses on Chico's compositions or his guitar playing, jazz and the sounds of Brazil are in good hands.

The opening track "City Of Dreams" is a masterwork, beginning with guitar and piano stating the melody. The bass and drums join in and the full beauty of "City Of Dreams" and the quality of it's recording is revealed. The arrangement of this piece is also outstanding, as it travels in and out of tempo and the different written parts are shared amongst the players. A flawless solo by Chico and some up front drumming by Edu Ribeiro make this a perfect title track.

"Long Story Short" is an energetic straight-ahead piece that opens with Chico and Chris Potter playing the melody in unison. Again the arrangement is awesome, with written background parts that give Edu Ribeiro just enough space to set things on fire and give the soloist a springboard to soar. Chico solo's first, and now we witness the extent of his virtuosity. Perfect sixteenth note runs easily executed with clarity and purpose using the whole fretboard. Chris Potters up next ; a biting tone and melodic conviction, using the rhythm section to his full advantage. This is a very satisfying piece for any of you hardcore beboppers.

With "Estrada Real" Chico Pinheiro doesn't let up and keeps delivering the goods. This is dreamlike melody placed atop a masterful rhythmic canvas that one could only dream of writing. The drums play an essential role in the energy "Estrada Real" creates. Chico continues to demonstrate his abilities with nylon string guitar and by singing the melody.

"Farol" is a guitar and piano duet in 6/8 exquisitely written and performed. The intricate melody is shared and flawlessly executed by the two players. The solo's consist of Chico and Tiago Costa trading eights and then joining there solo's together before they restate the melody. The energy created in this piece brings me back to the Gary Burton - Chick Corea duet's. I make this comparison simply to point out the degree of excellence that is accomplished with "Farol", not to compare there individual voices. Special attention should be given to Chico's solo, in a few short measures he demonstrates the level of passion and ability he possesses.

With "City Of Dreams" Chico Pinheiro" achieves new levels of excellence that puts him in the realm of the worlds finest guitarists. One can only imagine the heights he will reach in his lifetime.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

ALVARO ROJAS
GRAN KASA
SELF PRODUCED
LITTLE BELL / I KNOW, I KNOW / EVERYBODY WINS / TU, LA TIERRA / GRAN KASA / AT THE WINDOW / YEAR OF THE DOG / HARMONIUM / HUM HUM / BEIJING / SHELTER
50:03
Rojas, g; Meredith Bates, vin & effects; Peggy Lee, cel; Chris Gestrin, p & kybd; James Meger, bass; Sam Cartwright, d; Liam MacDonald, cajon & cga & perc; Elisa Thorn, harp; Sam Davidson, cl & b cl; Susana Baca, vcl
Early 2020 Vancouver, BC

I'm feeling a great sense of responsibility to convey the impact "Gran Kasa" has had on me. I know very little about guitarist / composer Alvaro Rojas and in this case I embrace the role of student as I experience this amazing music. As I listen I hear enormous passion, color, love of rhythm and percussion and a powerful statement of how music can move us. "Gran Kasa" leaves me with an optimism of how we are all connected. The music begins with "Little Bell" ; a blast of intoxicating rhythm. The bass and percussion drives this piece as it warms and mesmerizes the senses. A strong passionate melody is stated with guitar and strings dancing atop the rhythm section. An exquisite solo by pianist Chris Gestrin kicks the passion up to an even higher level. Rounded out by modulations throughout, this is an exceptional piece. "Tu,La Tierra" is a rich and captivating vocal ballad with singer Susanna Baca. Driven once again by passion, a story being told. The rhythm section lays out the canvas with a wonderfully slinky feel and the vocals fly above it all. One can only imagine the motivation for "Shelter". Beautiful string arrangements begin and then layers of sound join in building the intensity. Whatever darkness is speaking here, when all is said I am left with a feeling of hope. I have trouble classifying "Gran Kasa" so I'll go out on a limb here; I see the music of Alvero Rojas as World Music. It encompasses Jazz, Afro-Peruvian, classical and a strong emphasis on rhythms of the world. For those of you wishing to expand your musical universe, I highly recommend this CD. I find the music of "Gran Kasa" to be beautifully written and performed. Most importantly I see it as a unifying force and a voice of optimism. Just what we need in these challenging times.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

RADAM SCHWARTZ ORGAN BIG BAND, MESSAGE FROM GROOVE AND GW, ARABESQUE RECORDS AJ220.

TROUBLE JUST WON'T GO AWAY / BLUES MINOR / AINTNO NO WAY /DIG YOU LIKE CRAZY / WHAT TO DO / BETWEEN THE SHEETS / MESSAGE FROM GROOVE AND GW/ A PATH TO UNDERSTANDING / WORK SONG/ VON GOTT. 60:37.

Collective personnel: Schwartz, org; Charlie Sigler, g; David F. Gibson, d; Ted Chubb, Ben Hankle, James Cage, Lee Hogans. tpt; Anthony Ware, Danny Raycraft, as; Abel Mireles, Gene Ghee, ts; Ben Kovacks, bars; Peter Lin, Andrae Murchison, tbn. 2/3/2020. Montclair, NJ.

It's been over a decade since Radam Schwartz appeared on my radar, The late Joe Fields gave me the privlege of penning the liner notes to his Savant issue Blues Citizens a quintet date that deserved more recognition than it got. This new one is considerably more inhabited by the presence of the Abel Mireles Jazz Exchange Big Band and carries the byline "On Drums David F. Gibson". He is front and center on the title track and the final cut written by some guy named JS Bach. The other eight numbers run the range from John Coltrane to the Isley Brothers and individual soloists are conveniently identified on each title. By the way, there are three scripts from the leader and "Work Song" should not be confused with the Nat Adderley composition of the same name as it was written by Charles Mingus.

Arranged by Schwartz, Mireles,William Gorman, Ben Kovacs and Peter Lin the charts are thoughtful and mostly economical. A word about the album's title: the first named refers to Richard "Groove" Holmes while the initials stand for Gerald Wilson who inspired Schwartz with their organ/orchestra work. In his booklet annotation, scribe Ron Scott makes much ado about this pairing claiming this is the first time an organist has played his own bass lines under a big band which is debatable. I can recall Holmes playing with Dallasite Onzy Matthews large group on a Lou Rawls Capitol platter from back in the day but I'm unsure that he performed his own bass on every track. If you dug Brother Jack McDuff's album with Benny Golson or the many Jimmy Smith Verves with Oliver Nelson this one should fit the bill.

Larry Hollis

Reissues

SHIRLEY SCOTT,
ONE FOR ME,
ARC RECORDS 003.
WHAT MAKES HAROLD SING? / KEEP ON MOVIN' ON(*) / DO KNOW A GOOD THING WHEN YOU SEE ONE? / BIG GEORGE / DON'T LOOK BACK.41:53.
Scott, org; Harold Vick, ts; Billy Higgins, d; Jimmy Hopps, cowbell(*). Circa 11/1974. NYC.

Personally I never put much weight into the old saw "All Good Things Come To Those Who Wait" but with the release of this session which I've been attempting to obtain since its issuance has made me change my mind. Originally cut for the fabled Strata-East label its limited pressing and distribution made it almost immediately a rarity. The title of this work is self-explanatory and in her voluminous inner-slip annotation Maxine Gordon does into intimate detail regarding the circumstances surrounding the session. In addition to being a music insider, accomplished biographer of former husband Dexter Gordon and close personal confidante to Ms. Scott, Gordon will tell one all they need to know about the this releases back-story. What is heard here are three writings from the leader and a pair from Vick. The tenorist was no stranger to the Hammond B-3 milieu having played with such figures as Big John Patton, Jimmy McGriff & Brother Jack McDuff among others. Long a favorite of his peers (Sonny Rollins wrote a tune to him) he, like Hank Mobley, Tina Brooks, Charlie Rouse and a few select others, never got his due until after he left us. An all-styles saxmaster he can't be boxed in as a mere soul jazz funkster when one checks out his work with early fusion combo Compost. The same is true of Smiling Billy who ran the gamut from Lee Morgan to Ornette Coleman. That Ms. Scott would choose these two among all the other jazz giants she knew and worked with is a testament to her unerring taste which always translated to her keyboard talents. Neither a screamer or squabbler, she harks back to some of the older organ pioneers like Jackie Davis, Teddy Buckner or Wild Bill Davis. Utilizing a less-percussive attack she often employs a more chordal approach occasionally in conjunction with a mellotron (a synthesizer of sorts) which gives an overall string layering effect. The opening tune is brushed by Billy and spiked by a smidgen of salsa, its followed by Vicks' semi-boogaloo with what sounds like overdubbed horns but could be the mellotron again. "Do You Know A Good Thing When You See One?" just lays me out; a walking blues with a bridge and some extended saxophonics from Mr. Vick. Next up is Shirley's dedication to the great George Coleman, it has a nice drumkit spot from Higgins then the final number, that Vick named for his sole Strat-East LP with a larger group. This one has mellotron sounds on the theme. But enough of this descriptive jive, just buy the vinyl or disc It was worth the wait.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

CHARLES TOLLIVER, CONNECT, GEARBOX 1561,

BLUE SOUL / EMPEROR MARCH(*)/ COPASETIC / SUSPICION(*). 38:36.

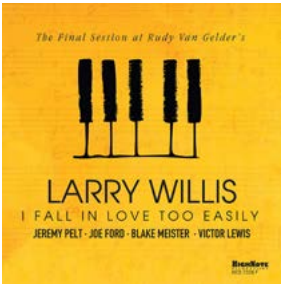
Tolliver,tpt; Jesse Davis, as; Keith Brown, p; Buster Williams, b; Lenny White, d; Binker Golding, ts(*). Circa 11/2019. London, UK.

After retrieving this review CD from my mailbox and opening it up my television happened to be playing a commercial for a restaurant chain that featured the theme song from a seventies sit-com that brought back some memories. The lyrics expressed a "welcome back to someone who had been away much too long" and I thought to myself how apropos it was at that particular moment. This import disc marks the gifted trumpeter Tolliver's return to the recording studio after more than a decade. Many younger listeners may not be aware of his background so due to the absence of booklet annotation a short introduction is in order. He came to my attention in the mid-sixties on three albums by the great Jackie McLean and recorded with other artists on that esteemed label (Andrew Hill, Hank Mobley, Horace Silver) when in the early 70s he formed the legendary Strata-East company with compadre Stanley Cowell who remains equally under-valued. Tolliver's last releases, before this latest, were also under the Blue Note logo during the last decade.

The trumpet man is no novice at assembling all-star configurations, his debut under his own name (Paper Man, 1968) sported an A-list combo with Herbie Hancock, Gary Bartz, Ron Carter and Joe Chambers for the British Black Lion label that made this writer recall a Billy Preston hit "Will It Go "Round In Circles". The line-up is almost identical in instrumentation save for the addition of tenor sax on a pair of titles. Captured at London's RAK Studios while on a European tour Tolliver enlists some heavyweights as his touring band with names most Cadence regulars will be aware of. It's good to see altoist Davis back in action while Donald Brown's son Keith makes a strong impression comping and soloing with much authority. Two of the four tunes presented can be heard in previous big band versions, one each on Tolliver's pair of Blue Notes. Those titles are" Emperor March" which was the title of a 2009 live album and "Suspicion" from 2006. The former is the longest number heard with Brit Binker Golding adding his tenor to the head with its seven note punch over a Latin feel. He takes the first ride followed by alto shadowed by the leader with fast-fingered trills and brassy jabs then a probing piano spot from Brown. The latter is my favorite cut, the always dependable Buster Williams sets up the intro before being joined by keys & drums into a cooking three horn shout with riffs behind each of the horn soloists. Davis' hot alto reminded this listener of the much-missed Arthur Blythe but without the buzzsaw overlay. Piano navigates back to the lead line with Lenny White providing popping underpinning throughout. Elsewhere the leadoff title "Blue Soul" has pow-wow drums before alto/trumpet unison. Davis and Tolliver fit hand-in-glove like a musical Sydney Greenstreet/ Peter Lorre and their solo statements are expertly underlined by intermittent walkups and returns to the initial throbbing rhythm.
The folded three page insert has Ghost lyrics written for each track save "Copasetic" which is the shortest at a little over six minutes. It's taken medium up with sections of staggered time.
Speaking of time, the total playing time might be on the skimpy side but with sounds this rich let's not complain. Welcome back indeed.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



LARRY WILLIS, I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY, HIGHNOTE 7326. TODAY'S NIGHTS / HEAVY BLUE / ANNA / HABIBA / THE MEANING OF THE BLUES / LET'S PLAY / CLIMAX / I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY. 50:36. Willis, p; Jeremy Pelt; tpt; Joe Ford, as; Blake Meister, b; Victor Lewis, d. 9/5/2019. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Subtitled The Final Session At Rudy Van Gelder's this disc by the under sung keyboardist Willis brought to mind an old song from the great Billy Preston "Will It Go Round In Circles". As explained in the first paragraph of Russ Musto's annotation he was in his early twenties when he first darkened the door of that hallowed studio to wax an album with Jackie McLean. For the next several decades Willis was in and out of that recording space both as a leader and sideman for various labels until his passing at age 76 from a pulmonary hemorrhage.
For this final gathering a strong lineup of three longtime associates and a newcomer were assembled. That new face was that of brass ace and co-producer Jeremy Pelt who joins Joe Ford for half of the selections and is heavily featured on the sole ballad "The Meaning Of The Blues" which not only spotlights his lyricism but that of the leader. As Musto points out in his liners these eight numbers make up something of a career retrospective with a pair of scripts from his seminal Heavy Blue issue under the import Steeplechase logo; the brisk title tune with some hot drumwork from veteran Lewis and the popping Latin-flavored romp "Habiba" from fellow pianist Kirk Lightsey. Two trio tracks from another 1994 Steeplechase date Let's Play sport "Anna" by bassist Santi DeBriano in a moody take with strong interplay between the upright and piano while the album's namesake is another Willis original that slowly builds on the suspense level. My picks for favorite tracks are the fiery full quintet reading of Jack DeJohnette's "Climax" which the pianist first essayed on a Blue Note Jackie McLean classic Jacknife from September 24th of 1965 and the final cut, a solo piano rendition of the standard that is a perfect sampling of the multifaceted talents of the late, great Larry Willis.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

MICHAEL FORMANEK
ELUSION QUARTET
TIME LIKE THIS
INTAKT CD313

DOWN 8 UP 5 / CULTURE OF NONE / A FINE MESS / THIS MAY GET UGLY / THE SOUL GOODBYE / THAT WAS THEN / THE NEW NORMAL. 58:43.

Formanek, b; Tony Malaby, ts, ss; Kris Davis, p; Ches Smith, dr, vib, Haitian tanbou. 2/14/2018, Mount Vernon, NY.

It wasn't difficult for Michael Formanek to find a subject for his first album on the Intakt label. Formanek's intention was to reflect the emotions of what we're living through, for a Time Like This in human history is unprecedented. Intentionally chosen as a pun, as was Dave Brubeck's Time Out or Bill Evans' Time Remembered, for example, the title of Time Like This refers to the presentation of Formanek's own slippery applications of meter, which can change during the process of improvisation throughout the album. The emotions of this time of global alarm-with sudden medical attention diverted to the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty if not collapse (the depth of which is still unknown at time of this review in May 2020), demonstrations against racial injustice, the cynical use of disaster for political divisiveness, the immediate evaporation of audience-based performance opportunities, online rather than face-to-face communication ["social distancing"]-have become even more fearful and darker since Formanek's Elusion Quartet's recording was released. The downward social, economic, political and medical trends are worrying. Screwball comedies and uplifting songs like "Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries" (1931) may have been distractions after the 1929 economic crash, but they didn't reflect how people really felt. With more musical freedom in the last fifty years, recordings, and particularly jazz, have become more honest. Honest, and perhaps prescient, is Time Like This. Formanek composed the musical frameworks for each of the album's seven compositions. And then he chose three other confident, imaginative, artistically honest musicians who could deepen with their inimitable abilities the emotional bearing of the improvisational spaces. Perhaps as a warm-up to the musical social statements, the first track of Time Like This, "Down 8 Up 5," is a literal description of Formanek's compositional element of pitch, rather than meter. Pianist Kris Davis starts the rootless down-8-up-5 intervals as an otherworldly initial upper-register twice-played solo motive before Formanek and Smith deftly join, Formanek with a single note at the beginning of the pattern and Smith with light hi-hat taps at one, six-down, two-up and one. Malaby enters with his own brief legato counter melody, eerie as well as he allows for two of Davis's patterns between choruses.

And then the quartet, still weaving in the motive throughout, develops without undue drama a complex floating tapestry of improvisational forms which are all the more intriguing when Smith's vibraphone adds to the drifting colors. "Culture of None" is cultural indeed as Formanek and Smith commence with a spirited give and take. Formanek establishes a rapid movement of uneven meters while Smith adds mixed cultural references with hand drumming on the Haitian tanbou. Davis contributes to the spur-of-the-moment feel with splashes, trills, chunks and single-note scampers, mostly in the treble clef. As before, Malaby applies his melody to the improvisation, bringing eventually the four-part unity to the ending. Formanek's political statements begin with a piece whose title refers perhaps to either the Blake Edwards or Laurel and Hardy movie's title. If anything, "a fine mess" understates the current social and political chaos we live in, and so does "A Fine Mess," the jazz composition. Malaby introduces and concludes the theme, softly performed. Davis develops a gossamer rhythmless solo as a separate interpretation, individualistic as is Formanek's. (It should be noted that the recorded clarity of Davis's performances is due in no small part to the quality of the piano at Oktaven Audio.) "This May Get Ugly" obviously precedes the worldwide events after the 2018 recording because unimaginable ugliness has descended upon us. The warning of "This May Get Ugly," similar to other tracks like "The New Normal" in its organic improvisational development, moves from a tentative interplay of soprano sax and piano to a ferocity of free expression led by Formanek and Smith's rumbling movement before a hushed ominous calmness descends. "The Soul Goodbye" confirms the dark suggestion of "This May Get Ugly." Malaby is the leading voice with long tones and aggressive trills and loosened-embouchure sonic shapes and squeals and barks and overtones. Refuting the sometimes heard insistence that earlier times like that were without their own problems, "That Was Then's" rhythm surges with Formanek's vamp, splashed by Davis's chords of close dissonance. Malaby plays the unsettling twisting written melody over them. And the final track, "The New Normal," alludes to a phrase heard all too often as planned polarization in all of its unethical ways becomes acceptable. Formanek's untethered improvisation with Malaby represents his "new normal" as they intentionally set up an eerie scenario of unplanned direction before Davis and Smith come in with the written unison ringing accompaniment in defiance of a standard time. How similarly unpredictable is a time like this.

Bill Donaldson

New Issues

MAGNETIC
EP
BLUJAZZ BJ3475

ANA MARIA / NOT SO FAR AWAY / SOB A LUZ AMARELA / TAPESTRY / DIVISCERAL. 36:39.

Joel Moore, ts, ss; Nick Mizock, g; Paul Scherer, p, synth; Michael Barton, el b; Paul Townsend, d. 2018, Joliet, IL.

With the release of EP, the musicians of Magnetic recall the heyday of extended-play recordings, which bridged the length and the number of song selections between 45-RPM single plays and long-play albums. Now, Magnetic has recorded its own extended-play CD of similar-to-EP length. Without the advantage of liner notes, listeners may assume that EP is a sampler (at a little over 36 minutes), as was the intention of some EP's, rather than a fond recollection of EPs' content. EP features a quintet of seasoned Chicagoland musicians presenting, except for Wayne Shorter's "Ana Maria," their own compositions, which are consistent in the thematic objective of EP format. The five tracks vary in atmosphere and compositional approach. They feature, through their solos, the individual members' mastery of their instruments through their immersion in post-fusion-inspired sound. It is entirely appropriate that the album begins with a Shorter composition, for Magnetic plays the subdued "Ana Maria," from Native Dancer, with similar instrumentation, with Joel Moore's obviously Shorter-influenced tone on soprano sax, and uncannily with almost exactly the same tempo. Extended solos from Moore, Paul Scherer on keyboard and Nick Mizock on guitar account for EP's longer version of "Ana Maria." Magnetic's musicians have long jazz resumes, as well as degrees in music from geographically distant educational institutions like Berklee University of Music, Indiana University and the University of Southern California. Their circumstances converged in Chicago for this and perhaps future recordings. EP succinctly offers additional contrasting and complementary tracks written by three of Magnetic's musicians, thereby providing distinctive improvisational opportunities and separate musical statements. Moore's bright "Not So Far Away" establishes contrast after "Ana Maria" with a Dave Grusin-like finger-snapper similar to a movie's or a television show's theme song from the 1980's, complete with a conventional ending, but for the inclusion of dynamic solos from electric bassist Michael Barton and Mizock. The minor key modality of Moore's "Sob A Luz Amarela" veers back to Shorter's style rather than toward eighties sitcom themes. Its darker shades feature Moore's own polished burn on soprano sax and Mizock's finely articulated pizzicato guitar flurry. Barton's "Tapestry," EP's longest track, is finely woven indeed in lush atmospheric textures as Moore switches to tenor sax and as the quintet develops a rubato ethereal shimmering. And then, Mizock's "Divisceral" ends EP with an energetic scamper aligned with Carl W. Stalling's wackiness, complete with Scherer's whimsical Rhapsody in Blue quote on acoustic piano. "Divisceral" provides Scherer with more improvisational opportunity than do the other tracks, on which he plays synthesizer. This brief, challenging composition, alternating between prodding accents and rippling fluidity, offers final prestissimo performances by each of the band's members-Moore soaring on tenor sax, Mizock zinging with fascinating rapidity on electric guitar, Barton switching between bounding serial accompaniment and free interplay, and drummer Paul Townsend driving with relentless force

Bill Donaldson

New Issues

JOHN SCOFIELD
SWALLOW TALES
ECM 2679
She Was Young / Falling Grace / Portsmouth Figurations / Awful Coffee / Eiderdown / Hullo Bolinas / Away / In F / Radio
Scofield, g; Steve Swallow, bass; Bill Stewart, d
3/2019 Steinhardt, NY

The art of freewheeling improvised Jazz is alive and well in "Swallow Tales". If I could subtitle this amazing CD it would be "Ears Wide Open". Let me take you back to the early 70's when I was a student at Berklee College Of Music. Steve Swallow was teaching and John Scofield was a student, but not your everyday student. John was already recognized by many including Gary Burton as an exceptional guitarist. Steve Swallow was writing many of these tunes at the time, they were made into lead sheets and past out among the students. They became vehicles for us to learn to improvise on. The most famous of these was "Falling Grace". The tunes themselves were different, more modern with harmony unlike that of the previous era. In a similar fashion, John's playing was also different and more modern, expanding the role of jazz guitar to find new degrees of dissonance, tone and phrasing. All the things that make John instantly recognizable and set him apart from other guitarist were coming into focus. Jazz was evolving, and you're listening to two of the architects of that evolution. Add into the mix Bill Stewart. Aside from being one of the finest drummers on the planet, Bill hears everything and his reactions are cosmic and in a voice all his own. "Swallow Tales" presents nine of Steve Swallows original compositions. All of which demonstrate a uniqueness in melody and harmony and the ability to marry the two. The bass has a strong voice within the trio, encouraging vigorous conversation as they travel through the changes. Some may disagree but when I listen to this trio I can hear distant sounds of Cream's "Wheels Of Fire". I love every track on "Swallow Tales", so let me describe a few. "She Was Young", is a beautiful, playful ballad in 3/4, a story being told. John's use of voicings and counterlines shapes and colors this simple and expressive melody. "Falling Grace", the tune we know best. Eight bars of drum solo intro leads to a crashing first chord and it's off we go. Everyone is on high alert as they soar effortlessly through a tune they feel so at home with. "Awful Coffee", is a dark, colorful melody, traveling, searching and finding clarity as it leaves just enough room for everyone to show their feelings "Away", a deep and mournful ballad, climbing to express what's in the heart, like the ocean crashing into the jagged coast only to be sucked back out to sea. The whisper of Bill's brush work and an exceptional solo by Steve make this an extraordinary piece. "Portsmouth Figurations", provides a wild ride through this slightly up tempo piece. John is in top form, sucking notes out of the air, bending, twisting and slurring those notes as he weaves his way through the changes and crashes into a chord of his own invention. Bill's on fire, absorbing everything around him as he creates pockets of energy. Steve in pursuit, driving his bandmates to excellence. A perfect example of ears wide open ! All in all, kind of like "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" LOL, there's a place where jazz musicians go to be free. Somewhere between this world and the next. "Swallow Tales", takes you there.

Frank Kohl

New Issues

AL GOLD,
AL GOLD'S
PARADISE,
GOLDSONGS GS1001.
THAT'S MY BABY / PARADISE (DOWNHOME) / TRAMPS TAKE LINDEN / MR. BANKER / RAMBLIN' PONY BLUES / BOOGIE IN THE DARK / GOT A MIND / WON'T SLEEP TONIGHT / PARADISE (UPTOWN) / MAPLEHOOD LIMBO. 36:15.
Collective Personell: Gold, vcl, el & sl guitar, mand; Jerry Cordasco, d, perc; Mitch Eisenberg, el & acc g, baritone g; Jared Gold, org; Eric Heilner, p, org; Terry Hemmer, el b; Cd King, b, g; Cassidy Rain, vcl, g; Baron Raymonde, s; Tom Rice, el g; Johnny Sansone, hca, Dave Styrker, g; Anthony Tamburro, acc g. 1/11-13/2019. Maplewood, NJ.

For all you Facebook people there is a site for Al Gold but since I don't do Facebook you'll have to fend for yourselves. It can be told he's based in Jersey and has been helming jams at the Hat City Kitchen for several years. His band, the Suburban Rhythm Kings include some of the side-people here namely drummer Cordasco and Rice on guitar. There's a listing inside the digi-pack of all ten tunes with short descriptions and who's playing what. All of the set list is comprised of Gold pennings save for one which was a co-write. Other participating musicians include singer Cassidy Rain who adds to "Boogie In The Dark" and harmonica ace Johnny Sansone who sparkles on that cut and the first rendition of Paradise with nice slide and subtle brushes He may be more familiar with readers of Living Blues than of Cadence. Most will know of guitarist Styrker and organist Gold (any relation?) on my favorite number "Paradise (Uptown)" a simmering shuffle with a one chorus ride from each. Another cut or two by this pair would have bolstered my score and bulked up the skimpy playing time. Gold's gruff Leon Redbone-style voice and generic guitaring gives this one a marginal rating.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

(1) ALVIN CURRAN & JON ROSE CAFE GRAND ABYSS

RER JRAC

ADORNO'S BOILED EGG / BENJAMIN AT THE BORDER / SHOFARSHOGOOD / THE MARCUSE PROBLEM / MARX ON SAFARI / TEQUILA FOR TWO. 61.54.

Curran, p, sampler, shofar; Rose, vln, amplified t violin, 6-string drainpipe, singing saw. 1-4: April 25, 2016, Rome, Italy; 5-6: September 27, 2018, Sydney, Austrailia.

(2) PAUL MAY, CAROLYN HUME KILL THE LIGHTS

LEO RECORD CD LR 847

HORIZONTAL BLUE / SENTRY / SURRENDER / SHADOW AND DUST / THE BLACKSMITH AND THE BUTCHER'S WIFE / KILL THE LIGHTS. 44:07.

May, d, intimate metals; Hume, p, kybd; Bernd Rest, g. 2019, no location given.

Alvin Curran and Jon Rose, both unique and trail-blazing artists of long standing in many musical categories including performance in the free jazz idiom, first met and played together in Berlin in 1986, later performing sporadically in Rome and other cities throughout the world. (1) presents the two performers as recorded in Rome and Sydney on music that Curran comments is "indefinable but always accessible." The album's opener "Adorno's Boiled Egg" is a 12-minute affair on which Curran plays piano and/or sampler, while Rose plays amplified tenor violin and/or violin. With a multiplicity of sounds at their disposal, the two musicians create and interact, generating music that forges ahead, with some swings in intensity. Quiet moments occur at the four minute mark of spare piano and classical violin, and at the eight minute mark of violin pizzicato, leading to interesting musical development in each case. The action-packed "Benjamin at the Border," 23 minutes in length, adds verbal, explosive, and other sounds to the Curran/Rose palette, with extended sounds of agitation leading to a peaceful segment from the violin and piano at the 20 minute mark, evolving to a floor of sustain and continuing inventive play from the violin in the piece's final three minutes. Curran blows a shofar, displaying its calling and bleating as well as sustained shaking and low register sounds, with accompaniment from Rose's 6-string drainpipe on "Shofarshogood." Significant development of suspenseful and eerie sounds characterize "The Marcuse Problem," while the album ends on a whimsical note with "Tequila for Two," in which Rose's singing saw and Curran's piano provide a mind-altering transfiguration of "Tea for Two."

Carolyn Hume (piano/keyboards) and Bernd Rest (guitar) provide elemental piano and sustained chords over repeated rhythmic figures from Paul May (drums/metals), generating peaceful and foreboding moods in cuts ranging from four to nearly eleven minutes on (2). The pairing of acoustic piano and electronic sounds, along with scraping percussive sounds produces a particularly eerie quality on "Surrender." Gradual and very subtle musical development generally occurs throughout these extended selections, such as on "Kill

New Issues

3) JOE ROSENBERG ENSEMBLE
MARSHLAND
QUARK RECORDS
QR201925
LA DANSE / MARSHLAND / MARSHLAND deux / LONG AND SHORT OF IT / FUNAZUSHI / LA DANSE deux / AMELIA / MARSHLAND trois. 38:02.
Rosenberg, ss; Bart Maris, tpt, flgh; Daniel Erdmann, ts, ss; Arnault Cuisinier, b; Edward Perraud, d. December, 2019, Paris, France.

the Lights," in which sustained electronics of both very low and high frequencies (or pitches) along with recurring percussive patterns are presented for its duration of seven minutes.

Three horns interacting freely and as well as in tandem are a main feature of this latest recording (3) from soprano saxophonist Joe Rosenberg. Bassist Arnault Cuisinier and drummer Edward Perraud, who also performed on Rosenberg's previous 2016 release "Tomorrow Never Knows" (Quark Records), are alone on "Marshland deux," which gives some context to the remaining cuts utilizing the full quintet. In this version of his ensemble, Rosenberg has added a trumpet and another saxophone (compared to himself and a cello on the front line in the previous recording), and on "La Danse" long tones from the three horns generate intriguing chords above a quiet and subtle rhythmic floor from Cuisinier and Perraud. The three horns (Rosenberg, Daniel Erdmann, and Bart Maris) play contrapuntal lines on "Marshland," spare weighty unison figures on "Long and Short of It," and briskly-moving lines with rich and/or complex harmonies backed well by bass and drums on "Marshland trois." More harmonic lines from the horns may be heard on the more contemplative "Amelia" in quite melodious form. "Funazushi" presents the ensemble in a freer and developing mode for nearly eight minutes, with the two soprano saxes sparring near the end and closing together with a flourish.

Don Lerman

New Issues

ANDREA DOMENICO TRIO PLAYING WHO I AM

ABEAT 197

WE SEE/ IT EASY TO REMEMBER/ DANIELLA/ BUBBA/ YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS/ SHUFFLE BOIL/ RUBY MY DEAR/ FOR KENNY/ MELANCHOLIA/ GOODBYE 56:35

Andrea Domenico, p; Peter Washington, bass; Billy Drummond, d New York, no date

An Italian pianist with a New York rhythm section playing mainly standards, featuring tunes by Monk and Ellington, with a couple of originals in good old 1960s bop style.

Nothing new here but some good two fisted melodic piano playing with great rhythmic support. But by track 6 I found m I was wandering. Too much of the playing sounded similar. There is the occasional bass solo and drum fours, but too many of the tunes are played at a similar tempo and once the tune is played, the solos start to run together. I personally would have preferred longer solos and more room for Washington and Drummond. Drummond does an excellent job of responding to Domenico in their exchanges, but I would love to have heard him in a longer solo where he could develop his ideas.

Bernie Koenig

KENNY BARRON/ DAVE HOLLAND FEATURING JOHNATHAN BLAKE, WITHOUT DECEPTION,

DARE2 RECORDS -011.

PORTO ALEGRE / SECOND THOUGHTS /WITHOUT DECEPTION /UNTIL THEN / SPEED TRAP / SECRET PLACES / PASS IT ON / WARM VALLEY / I REMEMBER WHEN / WORRY LATER.65:35.

Barron, p; Holland, sc b; Blake, d. 8/17& 18/2019. Mount Vernon, NY.

After first glance at the heading of this review one might say to oneself "Oh no not another trio session to add to the trillion that are already out there" but take another look at the three members of the unit. Two jazz elders that are long certified jazz brands and an up & comer who is fast attaining that status. In fact, Blake's inventive sticking and tasteful brush work makes him the spark plug that drives this tri-motored engine. The playlist consists of three Barron scripts, a pair of Holland lines, a ducal evergreen and three others most notably Monk's trippy "Worry Later" with it's percussive boots. The piano shines of the title tune taken at a light walk and the aptly-entitled "Speed Trap". Master up-right bassist Holland contributes the drum introduced "Pass It On" (dedicated to the great NOLA trapster Ed Blackwell) a funky vamp in a Horace Silver manner. So give this one a fair listen, chances are you'll want to add it to your shelf of piano trio treasures.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ART "TURK" BURTON
ANCESTRAL SPIRITS
ATBCD 102

SOUL DRUMMER/ NIGHT IN TUNISIA/ KILLER JOE/ ANCESTRAL SPIRITS/ SUMMERTIME/ ALL BLUES/ FREEDOM JAZZ DANCE/ LISTEN HERE 69:47

Art Burton, congas; Ari Brown, as, ss; Edwin Daugherty, as; Yosef Ben Israel, bass; Eddie Beard, p; Dushun Mosely, d; Luis Rosario, perc; Sammy 'Cha Cha' Torres, perc; Maggie Brown v. Chicago 2019

I am a huge fan of the AACM, of which Burton has been a long time member. I must admit to not being familiar with him. But of course I am familiar with Ari Brown. Based on my knowledge of the AACM and given the comments in the notes I was expecting a real barn burner of a CD, featuring some way out drumming and sax playing. Unfortunately, what we have here is something else entirely. What we have is more like a 70s or 80s Afro-Cuban band playing, for the most part, jazz standards.

Having said that the music is really good, with some very high quality playing. Brown excels throughout, and really gets into it on the title track, and Daugherty provides a mellow contrast. Beard's solos on Summertime and All Blues are nice and bluesy. Night in Tunisia was original with lyrics. Summertime made me want to get up and dance. Actually a number of tracks did that for me. But some of the drum sections did go on a bit too long. Mentioned in the notes are influences such as Tito Puente, Ray Barretto, Willie Bobo, Candido, and Mongo Santamaria. These influences do come through clearly. I am not quite sure who the ancestral spirits are; they are not African, but they certainly belong to the Afro-Cuban jazz tradition.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

CALLE LOIZA JAZZ PROJECT,
THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU,
NO LABEL OR NUMBER.

SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN / SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME / STOLEN MOMENTS / DOLPHIN DANCE / OLD FOLKS / IN YOUR OWN SWEET WAY / WELL YOU NEEDN'T /

THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU. 59:36.

Collective personnel: Mark Mont De Oca, p; Xavier Barreto, flt; Melvin Jones, Gordon Vernick, tpt;

Andre Avelino, g; Tony Batista, b; Jimmy Rivera, d; Javier Oquendo, cga; Candido Reyes, guiro ;

Reinel Lopez, Ivan Belvis, perc. 3/22/2019. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Here's something out of the ordinary, a tribute album with two different twists. While most works of this nature concentrate on one thing or person, this one is dedicated to a handful of passed musicians (Mongo Santamaria, Dave Valentin, Juancito Torres, Carlos "Patato" Valdez and Jerry Gonzales). It also honors a celebrated street in Santurce, Puerto Rico much like 52nd Street of yore in New York. It was there in a club named Mini's and later on, Apple Jazz Club that many members met, jammed and formed the core quartet (De Oca, Rivera, Batista, Avelino) of the group. Comprising four jazz staples and an equal number of certified standards from the Great American Songbook, this foursome plus a trio of horns and assorted percussion sail through a program of that's equally Latin and jazz in its mix.

Taken as a laid back bolero "Old Folks" is the closet thing to a ballad in this mostly upbeat set filled with native rhythms like the bomba and cha cha. The percussive underpinning on most of the numbers juxtapose the Latin tinge with the more jazzy playing on top. The two Atlanta-based trumpet men are the most impressive soloists and their rides are pointed out in the convenient listings inside the digi-pack flap. Flute is only heard on four cuts and guitarist lays out on the bolero. Puerto Rico may be devastated by recent forces of nature but these resourceful musicians prove their country's resilience.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ERIC WYATT, THE GOLDEN RULE FOR SONNY
WHALING CITY SOUND 117.

THE GOLDEN RULE (FOR SONNY ROLLINS) / WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW / GRAND STREET / IF EVER I WOULD LEAVE YOU / BUD POWELL / SON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL / AFTER THE MORNING / BEST WISHES / IN THE SPIRIT OF ARTHUR (FOR ARTHUR RHAMES) / NUBIA / AZALEA / THE BRIDGE. 79:00.

Collective personnel: Wyatt, ts, flt,vcl, bells, cga, perc; J.D. Allen, ts; Clifton Anderson,tbn; Giveton Gelin, tpt, Sullivan Fortner, Benito Gonzalez, Anthony Wonsey, p; Russell Malone, g; Tyler Mitchell, Eric Wheeler, b; Chris Beck, Willie JONES III, CHARLES GOOLD, D. 3/25/2019. BROOKLYN, NY.

Veteran saxophonist Eric Wyatt latest release emphases his deep ties (mostly through his musician father) to jazz iconWalter Theodore Rollins. Not so much in his sound but in his Rollinsesque sensibility. Five of the dozen selections heard are from the pen of Newk and yet of the pair of originals from the leader only the title tune is specifically aimed toward him while the other is a salute to the little-known multi-instrumentalist Arthur Rhames who died at only 32 years of age. The other dedication is the John Hicks number "After The Morning" which is played for Roy Hargrove. Among the other selections are writings from Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, a Bacharach/David pop ditty and the Camelot chestnut "If Ever I Would Leave You". Some recognizable names among the sideman cast are Sonny's nephew Clifton Anderson (3 cuts), Willie Jones III, Russell Malone who adds welcome chordal coloration & solos for two items, Anthony Wonsey likewise and JD Allen in a tenor tandem on the final track. Most impressive to these ears were a pair of relative newcomers trumpeter Giveton Gelin and Sullivan Fortner whose two albums for Impulse have been thoroughly enjoyed. All in all, a diverse and interesting dozen listens.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

(1) ICOMPANI AMORE PER TUTTI

ICDISC.NL 19-02IL BIDONE / PROVA D'ORCHESTRA / AMORE PER TUTTI / MILANO E NADIA / O VENISE VENEGA VENUS / UN RAGGIO DI SOLE / ET DIEU…CREA LA FEMME / DIVA DOLOROSA PART 1 / DIVA DOLOROSA PART 2 / IT'S OVER / IL TEATRINO DELLE SUORE / IL BAR DI CINECITTA / LA GRANDE BOUFFE. 63:01.

Bo van de Graaf, ss, as, ts; Jeroen Doomernik, tpt; Hans Sparla, tbn; Friedmar Hitzer, Aili Deiwiks, Tessa Zoutendijk, Rik Sturtewagen, vln; Jacqueline Hamelink, cello; Gert Wantenaar, acc; Michel Mulder, bandoneon; Leo Bouwneester, p/kybd; Christoph Mac-Carty, p; Arjen Gorter, b; Marco Bonarius, b; Rob Verdurmen, d; Andre Groen, d. Amsterdam, December 17, 2018; Tilburg, Netherlands, April 4, 2012; Arnhem, Netherlands, May 25, Leeuwarden,Netherlands, January 24, 2010; Nijmegen, Netherlands, December 28, 2010.

This very worthwhile and enjoyable recording on (1) presents music written for films directed and/or written by Fellini and other noted filmmakers. The films date from 1955 to 2012, with three each from the decades of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, two from the 1980s, and one more recent film from 2012. A majority (8 tracks) of the recording was done in Amsterdam in 2018, with the remaining 5 tracks recorded in other cities in the Netherlands in 2010 or 2012. A total of 16 musicians participated, with the size of the groups ranging from 5 to 9. The most common-sized group was the sextet (7 tracks), consisting of saxophone, violin, accordion, piano, bass, and drums, with the larger groups adding trumpet, trombone, a second violin, and/or cello, and bandoneon replacing accordion on 5 selections. The music, by noted composers Nino Rota, Nicola Piovani, Paul Misraki, Loek Dikker, Gato Barbieri, and Philippe Sarde, brings theatre or film to mind, since many of the selections have frequent changes in mood, tempo, and rhythmic feel that may depict changing scenes or otherwise accompany what is taking place in the film. Nino Rota, composer of 6 of the 13 selections, is seen to possess great emotional range, from the very reflective qualities of "O Venise Venega Venus" and "IL Teatrino delle Suore" as orchestrated by saxophonist Bo van de Graaf, to the rapid jazz and beautiful ballad melodies of "Milano e Nadia" as scored by Paul Vlicks, and to the retro and show-biz sounds of "IL Bidone," as arranged by pianist Leo Bouwmeester. Also featured prominently is the work of Loek Dikker, composer of the wide-ranging music in "Diva Dolorosa" parts 1 and 2 , and arranger of Gato Barbieri's evocative music from "Last Tango in Paris" (Bernardo Bertolucci, writer/director). The performances are top-notch and include excellent jazz solos from saxophonist van de Graaf, trombonist Hans Sparla, trumpeter Jeroen Doomernik, accordionist Gert Wantenaar, bandoneonist Michel Mulder, and pianist Christoph Mac-Carty.

Don Lerman

New Issues

2) CARLA MARCIANO QUARTET PSYCHOSIS

CHALLENGE RECORDS CR73486

THEME FROM "TAXI DRIVER" (BETSY'S THEME) / THEME FROM "MARNIE" (PRELUDE) / FROM "MARNIE" TO "TWISTED NERVE" / THEME FROM "TWISTED NERVE" (THEME AND VARIATIONS) / THEME FROM "PSYCHO" (PRELUDE) / THEME FROM "VERTIGO" (PRELUDE) / THEME FROM "VERTIGO" (SCENE D'AMOUR) / HOMAGE TO JOHN WILLIAMS: THEME FROM "HARRY POTTER" (HEDWIG'S THEME). 69:08.

Marciano, as, sop; Alessandro LaCorte, p, kybd; Aldo Vigorito, b; Gaetano Fasano, d. September 19-20, 2018, Buccino (Salerno), Italy.

In another CD devoted to film music, saxophonist Carla Marciano pays tribute to film composer Bernard Herrmann on (2), rendering along with her quartet heartfelt performances of Herrmann's music from five films. Marciano and her rhythm section of Alessandro LaCorte, Aldo Vigorito, and Gaetano Fasano have played together on four previous recordings as well as at jazz festivals and clubs, and the resulting cohesiveness of this outstanding group is evident on this recording. Performing on alto and sopranino saxophones, Marciano plays with much passion and intensity, capturing along with the group the urgency and spine-chilling qualities of the Herrmann melodic themes, which were written for psychological thriller movies. Her expressive playing is characterized by fluid lines, trills, Coltrane-esque sheets of sound, and a substantial wellspring of ideas. Having arranged six of the eight selections, Marciano took care to well represent each of the Herrmann melodies, while also leaving room for extended embellishments and improvisation by herself and the group. The trio is strong throughout, with notable individual performances from pianist LaCorte on "Theme from Marnie," drummer Fasano on "Theme from Psycho," and bassist Vigorito on "Theme from Vertigo (Prelude)," each of these themes being from films directed by Alfred Hitchcock. There is much stylistic variation in the group presentation, from electric/exotic to acoustic to free jazz (the latter on cut 3, "From Marni to Twisted Nerve"). The group also plays one selection from famed film composer John Williams, "Theme from Harry Potter," a LaCorte arrangement ending impressively with a riveting sax line over rhythmic hits from the group.

Don Lerman

New Issues

JIM SNIDERO, PROJECT K, SAVANT 2185.

HAN / DMZ / JEJU / MOTHER / JENGA-HEIZE / SEOULFUL / GOOFY / HANO BAK NYUN. 53:28.

Snidero as; Dave Douglas, tpt; Orrin Evans, p; Linda May Han Oh b; Rudy Royston, d; Do Yeon Kim, gayageum. 8/31/2019. Queens, NY.

In a field somewhat overcrowded with world music that has little or nothing to do with jazz, alto ace Snidero has hit on a new sub-genre that is fresh and new to my knowledge. He credits his spouse of some two decades plus with a lot of the influence since she is of Korean ancestry and this project has been incubating some twenty years inside his mind. As told in Ted Panken's explanatory booklet notes, it was after a trip to in-laws in that country and the acquisition of a prayer bowl which is heard at the start and end of this album. Then he began writing the six songs that comprise the bulk of the program and arranging the material for longtime associates Evans, Oh and Royston. As explained in the aforementioned notes, he then integrated the gayageum, a traditional stringed instrument deftly played by Kim. Then for icing on the cake trumpet-man Douglas topped off this musical confection with perhaps his first sideman date since John Zorn's Masada. There is no mistaking this magnificent concoction for New Age or World Music, it is definitely jazz of the highest order. As Snidero states in the last sentence of the booklet, "I hope to do another record with this configuration". Let's all hope he does.

Larry Hollis

JOHN BAILEY, CAN YOU IMAGINE? FREEDOM ROAD RECORDS

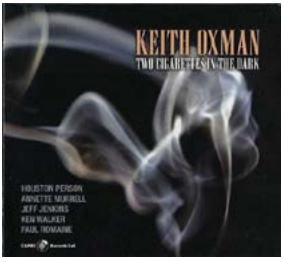
PEBBLES IN THE POCKET / PRESIDENT GILLESPIE SUITE: THE HUMANITARIAN CANDIDATE-ROAD TO THE BLUES HOUSE (FEATURING EARL MCINTYRE-PRESIDENT GILLESPIE'S BIRTHDAY SONG / THE TOUCH OF HER VIBE / THE BLUES HOUSE / BALLAD FROM ORO INCIENSO Y MIRA / ELITE STATE OF MIND / VALSA RANCHO (FEATURING JANET AXELROD) / FROM THE HEART / PEOPLE. 62:08.

Collective personnel: Bailey, tpt, flgh; Stacy Dillard, ss, ts; Stafford Hunter, tbn; Edsel Gomez, p; Mike Kern, b; Victor Lewis, d,cym,perc; Janet Axelrod flt, aflt,bflt; Earl McIntyre, b tbn, tba.1/14&15/2019

For the follow-up to his much admired inaugural In Real Time, brass boss John Bailey has retained Dillard & Lewis with new personnel Hunter, Gomez and Karn along with ringers flutist Axelrod and bottom brass vet Earl McIntyre. Around half of the compositions heard are from Bailey, old hand Lewis contributes a pair, the Rahsaan-inspired "From The Heart" and the lush ballad "The Touch Of Her Vibe", while Dillard adds his "Elite State Of Mind" for a flute feature for his wife. Elsewhere there are Afro-Cuban items from Chico O'Farill and Chico Buarque the latter focusing on the flute this time the bass and alto models. The showcase for the album is the trilogy "President Gillespie Suite" which makes the entire work something of a mini-concept piece. At slightly over a dozen minutes it reminds us old timers of the mid-sixties satire/run of Dizzy for the oval office. The proceedings end with a thoughtful duet between the leader and Edsel Gomez of the standard "People".

Larry Hollis

New Issues



KEITH OXMAN, TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK

CAPRI RECORDS 74161.

I'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE / VOSS IS BOSS / EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME / TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK / BOSSA FOR BABY / MURPHY'S LAW IMPACTS L.E.A.P./ CRAZY HE CALLS ME / WIND CHILL / SWEET SUCKER / MURRELLANCHOLY. 55:21.

Oxman, Houston Person, ts; Jeff Jenkins, p; Ken Walker, b; Paul Romaine, d; Annette Murrell, vcl. 12/14/2018. Denver, CO.

My initial exposure to Mile High City native Keith Oxman was on a pair of Curtis Fuller disks also under the Capri logo(CAI41007CAI74116). His last effort found him paired with Dave Leibman and this one has he teamed with Houston Person for six selections. This is no jam or cutting session but a mutual joining of two members of the brotherhood of breath. In fellow member Charles McPherson's liner notes he deservedly praises both saxists along with the backing trio of Oxman's longtime allies.

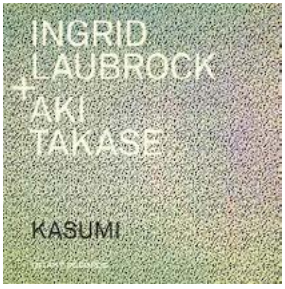
The twin tenor tracks are three standards, the title tune and a pair of compositions from two more members of the saxophone tradition, Hank Mobley (Bossa For Baby) and Johnny Griffin (Sweet Sucker). It is noted that on these cuts Person is panned right while the leader is panned to the left.

There are a pair of vocals on two of the standards, "Everything Happens..." & "Crazy He Calls Me" by Oxman's friend, Annette Murrell who receives equal extolment from McPherson and adds a different spice to the mix.

The pairing of these two tenor terrors reminded this listener of Dex and Jug from days of yore. Heartedly recommended.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



1) INGRID LAUBROCK AND AKI TAKASE KASUMI

INTAKT CD 337 / 2019

KASUMI / ANDALUSIA / BROOKISH / CHIMERA / HARLEKIN / DARK CLOUDS / SCURRY / SUNKEN FOREST / DENSITY / WIN SOME, LOSE TRACK / POE / CARVING WATER / ONE TRICK PAPER TIGER / LUFTSPIEGELUNG. 50:07.

Laubrock, ts, ss; Takase, p. September 15-16, 2018, Winterthur, Switzerland.

Saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and pianist Aki Takase offer original music that displays their considerable talents both as players and as composers in the modernist idiom on (1). Their 14 selections are of moderate length and sometimes brief, ranging from one and a half to six and a half minutes. Takase's five compositions are generally engaging pieces with tightly structured and integrated roles for the piano and saxophone, such as on "Harliken" which might be described as a vigorous modern stride. Laubrock's writing features the saxophone and piano in close tandem, sometimes on unison lines containing wide intervals and complex rhythms, as on "Brookish" and his four other compositions. For both composers, structured sections are a stepping off point for considerable free improvisation with again much integration between the two artists during these excursions. Their four joint compositions are forums for the interactive creativity of Laubrock and Takese, who are contemplative on "Kasumi" and more animated on "Carving Water." The audio recording quality is extraordinarily good, capturing well the crispness of the piano and the dry to dark tenor saxophone tone quality.

2) JOSHUA GEROWITZ DARK FOREST THEORY

PF MENTUM PFMCD 134

AKASHA, QUEEN OF THE DAMNED / HBI 1.5 (DARK FOREST THEORY) / DEANNA AND LWAXANA / PSEUDO SHAMANISTIC TENDENCIES (CUBENSIS) / HBI 3.7 (CHRONO-SYNCLASTIC INFUNDIBULUM) / HBI 5.9 (VOIGT-KAMPH EMPATHY TEST / NADIA VULVOKOV /

This 2019 disc (2) comes from a ten piece group led by Joshua Gerowitz consisting of three horns (two saxophones and one trumpet), four vocalists, bass, drums, and Gerowitz on guitar. This recording contains both free-form and more arranged material, with four compositions by Gerowitz and the remaining six co-composed by Gerowitz and members of the ensemble. Uniqueness and individuality rule in this recording made at a community college in California, with vocalists generating unusual sounds as individuals and as a group and also joining the horns in varied ensemble passages throughout the proceedings. Gerowitz's "Pseudo Shamanistic Tendencies...," the album's longest track at just over 10 minutes, includes both structured lines from the guitar, horns and voices, soloing from a wailing soprano sax, followed by a building of intensity and volume, group spontaneous playing, and concluding with aspects of the opening theme. Two tracks which were jointly composed by the entire group appear to be largely free-form, with "HBI 10.14..." quite raucous and "HBI 9.13..." displaying the group in more subdued form.

HBI 10.14 (YEWENJIE) / HBI 8.12 (GOM JABBAR) / HBI 9.13 (SIRENS OF TITAN). 46:45. Casey Butler, Joe Santa Maria, sax; Louis Lopez, tpt; Carmina Escobar, Sharon Chohi Kim, Kathryn Shuman, Micaela Tobin, voice; David Tranchian, b; Colin Woodford, d; Joshua Gerowitz, g/fx. February 27, 2019, Glendora, CA.

3) BRIAN GRODER TRIO

LUMINOUS ARCS

LATHAM RECORDS

MOON BOW / SPANGLIN' / FAR BETWEEN / SUNDOG / BONDS OF NOW / WINTER WURR / UNTIL EYES MET / LONGER THAN SKY / CRYSTAL LATTICE / PIRR / SMOORED. 64:40. Groder, tpt, flgh; Michael Bisio, b; Jay Rosen, d. November 22, 2018, Brooklyn, NY.

Trumpeter Brian Groder, along with bassist Michael Bisio and drummer Jay Rosen, draw upon their jazz musicianship to generate and exchange musical ideas in a free manner in this 65 minute set on (3). Groder provides some contrast by his choice of instrument for various tracks, trumpet or the mellower flugelhorn. His large expressive range, from quite pensive to strolling thoughts to rapid animation, also adds interest to the music. A frequent use of intervals, especially flatted fifths, in his lines is another aspect of Groder's playing. Bisio on bass and Rosen on drums are superior complements, responding melodically (in Bisio's case) and rhythmically (in both Bisio's and Rosen's case) to Groder in addition to initiating things when that is called for. On "Until Eyes Met," one of two cuts over nine minutes, Groder accompanied by Bisio begins slowly, playing thoughtfully and with a slight blusey quality. Bisio's bass solo follows, the tempo increasing markedly with Rosen's reentry, leading to a pause before Groder returns with Bisio to close out things deliberately as they began. Bisio's playing is further showcased on other tracks, such as his introspective bass solo on "Pirr" and his strong arco playing on "Winter Wurr." Rosen lays a quiet groundwork to begin "Crystal Lattice," and more importantly plays and accompanies with great insight in the group context.

Don Lerman

New Issues

LOLLY ALLEN, COMING HOME, OA2-29085, THE HIPPEST CAT IN HOLLYWOOD / COMING HOME / LITTLE HUMMINGBIRD / EMILY / LOLLY'S FOLLY / GENTLE RAIN / IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW / MAMBO INN / O GRANDE AMOR / BEBOP. 56:29. Collective personnel: Allen, vib; Danny Janklow, as, ts; Josh Nelson, Tom Owens, p; Jordan Richards, b; Paul Kreibich, Kendall Kay, d; Larry Koonse, g; Carl Saunders, tpt; Scott Whitfield, tbn; Adam Schroeder, bars. 3/2 & 5/11/2016. Glendale, CA.

While perusing an online radio chart it came to my attention that nestled among all of the usual suspects and their respective releases was an album on the Origin subsidiary OA2 entitled Coming Home by a certain Lolly Allen. Her name was entirely new to me yet the said issue had attained the number four spot on the listing. After re-checking my "to review" it was discovered that very item was in my stack so here goes.
As far as can be ascertained this is Ms. Allen's debut outing and it is a fairly impressive one. The one thing I noticed right off was pianist and assistant producer Josh Nelson in the leadoff sentence of his liner notes failed to mention Bobby Hutcherson in his list of vibraphone giants. Other than that small glitch this is flawless production with the two rhythm sections split effectively, guitarist Koonse on the two tracks with the three-piece horn section. A pair of originals (Little Hummingbird & the title number) fit in snugly with writings from Dizzy, Johnny Mandel, Tadd Dameron, Horace Silver and others for an easy on the ears setlist. Solid bass anchoring and intermittent reedwork from Jordan Richards & Danny Janklow respectively. To paraphrase the great Richard Pryor "This lady has potential!" Larry Hollis

JOHNNY GRIFFIN & EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS, OW! LIVE AT THE PENTHOUSE, REEL TO REAL 003.INTERMISSION RIFF / BLUES UP AND DOWN / OW! / BAHIA / BLUE LOU / SECOND BALCONY JUMP /HOW AM I TO KNOW? / SOPHISTICATED LADY TICKLE TOE / INTERMISSION RIFF. 58:44. Griffin, Davis, ts; Horace Parlan, p; Buddy Catlett, b; Art Taylor, d. 5/30 & 6/6/1962. Seattle,WA.

Even though it was released too late to make my best of historical list it did make a few others that apparently had a later deadline. It certainly would have made mine had it been issued before my list was turned in.

At this late date anyone remotely interested in the history of our beloved art form will be acutely aware of the two tenor titans involved in this unearthed treasure from the early sixties recorded at the famed Penthouse club. Griffin with his lightning speed and Davis with his trademark playing posture (head tilted back, lips on the tip of the mouthpiece), they made for a dynamite duo once upon the bandstand. Captured with a blue ribbon rhythm section during two titillating sets at different times the fifth teen listed titles are described in Ted Panken's concise booklet notes. As with the two previous Reel To Real titles they are enclosed in a handy 28 page inner booklet packed with interviews, great photos, reminiscences and pertinent facts, This is what the jazz of that time was all about and one not to be missed.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

MARK ALBAN LOTZ LOTZ OF MUSIC: LIVE AT JAZZCASE

ELNEGOCITORECORDS 071

OF ROYAL HERING/ QUASIMODO/ NISTRU/ WAITING FOR PREY/ STROLLIN' A REEF/ IMPROVISATION/ TAMAGO/ THE EGG JAM ENCORE 49:05

Mark Alban Lotz, pic, as, contra bass flt, v, fx; Claudio Puntin, clt, bass clt, jaw harp,v. fx, prepared p; Albert van Veenendaal, p, prepared p; Jorg Brinkman, cel, fx; Alan Purves Gunga, d, perc, brim bram, and 'other surprising sound objects' Neerpelt, Belgium, 15 Sept, 2018

This CD is an interesting mix of avant-garde sounds with some good old-fashioned bop. The mix works for me. I must admit to being a great fan of the prepared piano, thanks to my involvement with avant-garde classical music back in 60s.

The opening tracks, to my ears, blended together as parts of a long piece, which I enjoy. I find that many improvisational CDs work this way for me. But Strollin' A Reef really perked my ears. It is a really nice boppish tune played with gusto. I could imagine walking, or should I say 'strollin' along a path to this rhythm.

I also quite like the interplay between the high winds and the cello, which creates a lovely contrast, especially on Improvisation. But compositionally speaking, my favorite track is Tamago. It has an almost Mid-Eastern melody, also features all kinds of sound effects. They must be the 'surprising objects' mentioned above.

The final Encore is all out fun. There is a constant pulse which gets syncopated. The various percussion sounds push the piccolo along. A very enjoyable CD.

Bernie Koenig

PAUL SHAW QUINTET, MOMENT OF CLARITY,

SUMMIT RECORDS DCD-763.

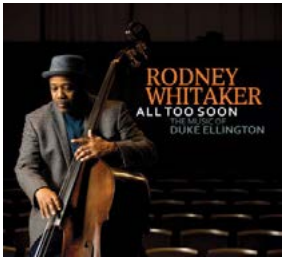
HEARTLAND / SHAPESHIFTER / SONG FOR EVERYONE / MARY OLIVER / PEEKABOO / MOMENT OF CLARITY / SHOWDOWN. 50:01

Shaw, d; Alex Sipiagin, tpt; Brad Shepik, g; Gary Versace, p; Drew Gress, ac b. No recording date listed. NYC.

Moment of Clarity is not only the title of Paul Shaw's debut disc but one of seven original compositions that make up this impressive outing. Shaw is a seasoned percussion master that has accrued extensive playing credits over the years but has an economical style, much like Jimmy Cobb among others, that keeps him to minimal drumming breaks and only a short spot on the bluesy "Peekaboo". There's a thoughtful pacing of moods running through the program until the spirited "Showdown" which closes the proceedings. Shaw's companions should ring some bells with readers of this publication; Sipiagin, Shepik and Versace inhabit most of the solo space and the combination of trumpet and guitar is a welcome respite from the usual two horn front line. Track four is a tribute to the celebrated poetess of the same name. Paul Shaw might be overdue but his playing is right on time. A good one.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



RODNEY WHITAKER, ALL TOO SOON, ORIGIN 82789.

COTTON TAIL / ALL TOO SOON / TAKE THE A TRAIN / JUST SQUEEZE ME / MOOD INDIGO / IT DON'T MEAN A THING / HARLEM AIR SHAFT / DO NOTHING 'TILL YOU HEAR FROM ME / PERDIDO / AZURE / COME SUNDAY / CARAVAN. 62:37.

Collective personnel: Whitaker, b; Diego Rivera, ts; Michael Dease, tbn; Richard Roe, p; Karriem Riggins, Kavon Gordon, Rockelle Whitaker, vcl. 11/19,24,25/2017. Ann Arbor, MI.

To be totally honest up front it must be admitted this writer has been a fan of Mr. Whitaker since he first came on the scene. Among contemporary upright bass players I would rate him in the top five.

So it has been that a sense of personal disappointment has accompanied my reception of his last two releases for the Origin label. Not that there is anything wrong with the music in general it's just a matter of presentation to these ears. Both this latest and his previous disc Common Ground were recorded in the same time period and at the identical studio but with different musicians save for the singer. Both were also tributes to composers Greg Hill and Duke Ellington.

Subtitled The Music Of Duke Ellington (as if we couldn't guess) these dozen selections are mostly well known among jazz aficionados performed with panache by the sextet (Gordon on the last two tracks). There are only four non-vocal titles heard, the opening up "Cotton Tail", a breathtaking bass over brushes "Just Squeeze Me" with Sweets-style muted trumpet, the classic "Harlem Air Shaft" strewn with nifty ensemble passages and nice arrangement of "Perdido" that gives all hands a chance to blow. Otherwise, the remaining eight tracks are vocals with Rodney's oldest daughter, Rockelle Whitaker (but sometimes referred to as Fortin) sings in a more than capable voice. That's where the rub came in for this listener. No disrespect to the lady but when I get an album by a world class bassist I expect it to be made up of mostly instrumentals or have at least a notation of "Featuring the voice of..". Even his preceding Origin release had four vocal tracks with the small print "Lyrics by Rockelle Fortin" on the back cover. Edward Kennedy Ellington wasn't noted for the band singers he employed, he was celebrated for his compositions as performed by his orchestra. That's why the preponderance of vocalizing made this a disappointment.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

THE OGJB QUARTET BAMAKO

TUM 050

LISTEN TO DR. CORNELL WEST/ BAMAKO/ BE OUT S'COOL/ STICK/ GS #2/ JUST A SIMPLE SONG/ IS IT ALRIGHT?/ 3 PHASE 09/ OGJB #2/ OGJB #1 63:17

Oliver Lake, as,ss, recit; Graham Haynes, cnt, dousn'gouri; Joe Fonda, bass; Barry Altschul, d, perc, mbira Brooklyn New York, July 2, 2016

A CD with four musicians I really like. And they deliver! The opening track, over fourteen minutes long introduces everyone. The piece, written Fonda, shows off everyone. Fonda's solo is excellent, as are the solos by Lake and Haynes. Altschul doesn't solo here but keeps things moving with a bubbling accompaniment. He does get to solo on GS. He keeps the rhythmic sense of the tune going and develops the rhythmic idea nicely. Bamako features a recitation by Lake about ancestry, accompanied by appropriate music.

The rest of the CD features great tunes composed by members of the quartet and ends with two tracks of collective improvisation. They vary tempos and textures which keeps the CD interesting.

The last two pieces really stand out for me, perhaps because I am free player these days. I could relate to the interplay among all four musicians. They clearly listen to each other and work off each other. They leave nice spaces, and also play lots of notes filling spaces. In short these pieces are excellent examples of how free improvisations should become musical conversations. An excellent CD with four excellent musicians working beautifully together. Bernie Koenig

WALLACE RONEY, BLUE DAWN-BLUE NIGHTS,

HIGHNOTE 7318.

BOOKENDZ / WHY SHOULD THERE BE STARS / WOLFBANE / NEW BREED / DON'T STOP ME NOW / IN A DARK ROOM / VENUS RISING / ELLIPTICAL. 53:29.

Collective personnel: Roney, tpt; Emilio Modeste, ss, ts; Quintin Zoto,g; Oscar Williams II, p; Paul Cuffari, b; Kojo Dou Roney, Lenny White, d. 9 & 12/2018. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

It would seem to me that one would be hard pressed to find over a handful of regular readers of this publication that were not aware of Wallace Roney. His fine trumpet has graced over two score recording dates under his name and more than twice that many as a valued sideman. For his eighth issuance under the Highnote logo he's assembled a crew of young turks for exhilarating romps through the same numbered amount of fresh material from outsourced writers. Captured in two sessions with only a change of drummers (Lenny White on the drum throne for the second) and the guitar of Quintin Zoto added on those tracks, both gatherings were expertly engineered and mixed at the famed Van Gelder studio for close, sterling silver sound. Mention must be made of the leader's nephew Kojo, who at fifteen plays with the fire and unbridled enthusiasm that made this listener think of a young tony Williams. Another nice one to add to the Wallace Roney catalog.

Larry Hollis

Papatamus

A collection of sometimes disparate material though generally relating to music recordings or performance.

By Bob Rusch
Edited by Abe Goldstien

This is my last Papatamus for Cadence Magazine. You can continue to read my Papatamus column on line at www.papatamus.com. I thank David Haney for the space he has provided for this column, and wish him well with continued success of Cadence Magazine.
Bob Rusch

Ed.Note: We will dearly miss Bob's top notch column but are very happy to see his work continue on at www.papatamus.com. Robert Rusch has always been a huge boon for Cadence readers as one of the true voices of experience and musical wisdom. Thank you, Bob.

A NOTE TO READERS: I cover a lot of items in this column, but it is only a fraction of what crosses my desk. I choose to write only about things I find of interest, usually because of the music's quality. Mine is a small voice against media hype/print-ola, but be assured neither friend nor benefactor has influenced my judgements. My writings are my feelings, and that which money can't buy. You can contact me at rdr@cadencebuilding.com. Mail received is subject to editing and may be included in the next column at my discretion. If you do not want your correspondence printed, please let me know. Thanks and cheers.

JOE HAIDER [p] is 84 years old and has been in jazz for seven decades. The liner notes to his most recent release — AS TIME GOES BY [Challenge Int Records dmchr 71371] — suggest this is his swan song. The eight tracks [64:27] are a mixture of originals and standards, including the title tune. Recorded in February 2020, Haider is featured with his sextet of Bert Joris [tpt/flh], Heinz von Hermann [ts/flt], Johannes Herrlich [tbn], Raffaele Bossard [b] and Dominic Egil [drm]. The title track is particularly dour, perhaps reflecting Haider's liner notes. The rest of the set is a nice slow burn with a touch of west coast cool. Definitely a nice set to go out on, if in fact that's what it is.

MICHAEL WOLFF (p) is joined by LEON LEE DORSEY (b), MIKE CLARK (dms) on PLAY SGT. PEPPER [Jazzavenue 1]. Wolff had to have Bobby Timmons in mind when he recorded this brief and pleasant excursion in Sgt. Pepper land. The original concept for this date came from Dorsey and Clark. They are a good fit, as is the familiar music.

FRANÇOIS HOULE 4: RECORDER [Songlines sgl 1532-2] is one of Houle's finest for the label he started with in 1992. Since that time, he has been featured on about one dozen recordings. Here, he leads a solid quartet of Gorden Grdina [gtr], Mark Helias [b] and Gerry Hemingway [drm] recorded in fall 2020. The 15 original tracks are all full of life and rhythms, making this a fun one to pick up.

The latest release from the SOUTH FLORIDA JAZZ ORCHESTRA — CHEAP THRILLS [Summit Records DCD757] — features the music of Rick Margitza [sax].

Papatamus

Recorded in early 2019, the SFJO is directed by Chuck Bergeron [b] with guests John Hart [gtr], Brian Lynch [tpt] and assorted others. Considering that Margitza takes all sax solos, and composed and arranged all nine tracks, it might have been fair to release this under his name. No matter what the billing is, the music satisfies.

HOW TO SAY SORRY AND OTHER LESSONS by FAWN FRITZEN [Jazz Yukon Records CR-081] may not be jazz, but it is well done. Fawn Fritzen [voc] and David Restivo [p] present nine Fritzen compositions that deal with things such as "Make A Little Noise" and "Bittersweet Goodbye." One piece in particular, "With You Love," could be a theatrical hit, but what do I know.

SUSIE MEISSNER [voc] has been recording since 2009. I WISH I KNEW [Lydian Jazz cd1004] is her fourth recording, and it's a good one. Recorded in August 2020, Meissner sings 12 songs from the Great American Songbook. Although the tunes are familiar, Meissner gives them a fresh take. What really sells this recording is the backup band of Ken Peplowski [clt], Larry McKenna [ts], John Swana [tpt/flg/evi], Paul Meyers [gtr], John Shaddy [p], Lee Smith [b] and Byron Landham [dms]. This combo should make themselves available to all singers in the Philly area. I've heard many recordings by singers who would have benefited greatly from their backing.

The cover drawing on TWO PART SOLUTION [Cellar Music Records CM 110519] by FRANK BASILE [bari] and SAM DILLON [ts] says it all. The drawing of the two saxophonists has the bells of their horns facing each other, giving it a sense of a Verve recording circa 1952 … or perhaps a Flip Phillips recording. The nine tune set begins with a take on "Two Bass Hit." I saw quickly what to expect, and I was right — a smooth, cooking date capturing the nexus of mainstream and bop. Bari fans will find great joy in this outing. Nice job, Cellar Records.

LILAC HILL [no label 755491 161593] is the first recording from Korean born and New York based SUKYUNG KIM [p]. The five tracks on this all too short CD [30:00] are Kim originals. They are rich with form and substance played by Kim with Ethan Helm [as], Paul Ju Bong Lee [gtr], Luca Alemanno [b] and Jongkuk Kim [drm]. Hopefully next time, she'll make a longer

effort.

HOW TO TURN THE MOON [Pyroclastic Records PR 10] presents ten duo tracks by pianists ANGELICA SANCHEZ and MARILYN CRISPELL recorded in September 2019. As a rule, I find piano duos somewhat lacking in spontaneous excitement, a quality not true in most classical music. Despite the fact that I typically think of Crispell as an explosive pianist, things simply don't ignite on this release.

BEN ROSENBLUM'S latest is titled KITES AND STRINGS [One Trick Dog Records 195269 009441]. This undated recording includes a total of ten tunes, three of which are covers. Unfortunately, none of them held my interest. The music draws on classical, klezmer, pop and Bulgarian rhythms with Rosenblum doubling on accordion. Rosenblum calls this his Nebula Project with a band that includes T-Wayne Tucker [tpt], Jasper Dutz [ts/b.clt], Rafael Rosa [gtr], Marty Jaffe [b] and four guests.

The spritely playing of BEN ROSENBLUM [p] and the compositions of Gregg Hill make this recording work. THE MUSIC OF GREGG HILL [Cold Plunge Records 885007814351] features Ben's trio of Marty Jaffe [b] and Ben Zweig [drm]. The six Hill compositions [42:16] go by seamlessly, making it an enjoyable listen of piano bop, circa 1952.

I enjoy CDs from drummer MATT WILSON. His latest, recorded in October 2019 — HUG! [Palmetto Records PM 21969] — is no exception. Perhaps it's the band featuring Jeff Lederer [reeds], Kirk Knuffke [cor] and Chris Lightcap [b]. Or, is it the unpretentious nature of the music, which is always solid? Lederer's exemplary sax work in this ensemble is notable.

The vocals and chants take me back to Sun Ra days, including a tongue-in-cheek chant about space. When you've finished your first listening, play it again and enjoy it with an even greater appreciation.

RICH HALLEY [ts] continues his excellent work with Matthew Shipp [p], Mike Bisio [b] and Newman Baker [dms] on THE SHAPE OF THINGS [Pine Eagle Records 013]. Halley is amazing — he shows an amazing energy, albeit rather generic. Shipp's work is supportive of the music even when his playing becomes very percussive and less nebulous. This recording demonstrates the essence of jazz — playing

together while playing with individuality.
Vocalist ALLEGRA LEVY recently released her fourth CD on the Steeplechase label — LOSE MY NUMBER [Steeplechase sccd 31900. This October 2019 session focuses on two things: the nine compositions written by trumpeter John McNeil, and the lyrics written and delivered by Levy. The witty and sassy lyrics are about love and love lost. There is a clarity here that reminds me at times of Dave Frishberg. McNeil's compositions as well as his guest appearance on two tracks are the finishing touch to a wonderful performance supported by Carmen Staaf [p], Carmen Rothwell [b] and Colleen Clark [drm]. Pierre Dorge, who also has a new release on Steeplechase, shows up on one track playing ukulele.

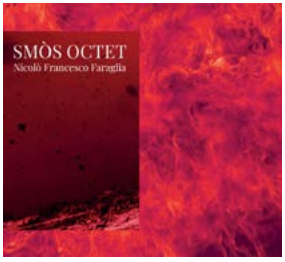
JEFF RUPERT [ts] directs the FLYING HORSE BIG BAND, playing 13 tunes associated with Ray Charles on FLORIDA RAYS [Flying Horse Records 195269 012656]. Recorded in the spring of 2019, this true jazz band [17+pieces] suggests the original Ray Charles arrangements, but are unquestionably not. Despite Rupert's capable vocals, unless you take an all original approach to the material, you can't pull it off. This is too close to the subject to which it pays tribute.
Traditional/Dixie jazz is on the menu with DON RUCH [tpt/voc] and his group Sabertooth Swing on SONGS OF FUTURE PAST [Slammin Media 619061 010127]. At less than 30 minutes, this is, depending on how one looks at it, either not enough substance or too short for its pleasures. Tunes include "Frankie and Johnny," "Chocolate Jesus" and "Atlanta Blues." Give this one to the kids!

RUSS LOSSING'S MOOD SUITE [SteepleChase Records sccd 31898] features his trio of Mark Helias [b] and Eric McPherson [drm]. This 10-section suite goes through various moods during its 64-minute performance. At some points, Lossing loses himself in the improvisation. At other times, he seems to ponder, "Where do I go, now?" This, to a varying degree, is normal for jazz musicians, and it can be part of the pleasure for the listener. In this case, for this listener, it was fun and enjoyable.

Papatamus

Those familiar with the instrumental work of RAN BLAKE will recognize the approach to NORTHERN NOIR [SteepleChase Records sccd 31899] — a duo session with ANDREW RATHBUN [ts]. Recorded in August 2018, this is a program of 18 fairly brief tracks, [55:28], mostly standards. The irregular rhythms add a patina of noir. Toss a horn into this fairly restricted arena of music and you still get Ran Blake.

AUT RECORDS of Germany is a non-profit cooperative that began in 2010. Their catch phrase is languages of the unheard, favoring post-bop or avant-music. I am not one who believes that the music says it all, and that liner notes would be helpful. Even if the musicians are well known, background about the circumstance and sources of the music is always interesting. The graphics on the cover is modern abstract art with headlines over the art, similar to what Splash records presented over the years. All the CDs reviewed below are relatively brief on time, which might indicate that they were recorded possibly for use on an LP.

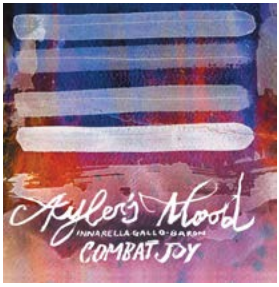


SMÓS OCTET [Aut 052] is led by NICOLO FRANCESCO FARAGLIA [gtr], who also composed the program's five tracks [39:20]. Members of the octet are Cosimo Fiaschi [ss], Jacopo Fagioli [tpt], Francesco Panconesi [ts], Federico D'Angelo [bar.s/b. clt], Luca Sguera [p], Amedeo Verniani [b] and Pierluigi Foschi [dms]. Recorded in 2018, this octet presents itself not so much as an octet as it does a small band. The mixture of free improvisation and charted sections can be an interesting juxtaposition, but too often on this date, it sounds stilted.

ACRE is a quartet of Ludovica Manzo [voice/effects], Gino Maria Boschi [gtr/m'bira], Marco Bonini [laptop/live electronics] and Ermanno Baron[drm]. Recorded in November 2019, the program features six titles [36:08] written by the group, including one track with words by renowned poet T.S. Elliot. This really is not jazz. It's everything, including what may be the kitchen sink. Much to my surprise, however, there are moments of fun. Excellent, clear sound.

GO DEX [Aut 053] is a tribute to Dexter Gordon by

the PASQUALE INNARELLA [ts] Quartet — Paolo Cintio [p], Leonardo De Rose [b] and Giampiero Silvestri [drm]. Recorded in 2019, the set includes five Gordon compositions plus "Misty" [42:31]. The approach to this music is passionately original. You may recognize some of the tunes, but you will not mistake any of the soloing for Gordon. Even the most diehard Gordon fan should enjoy the energetic and fresh approach to this music.



PASQUALE INNARELLA [ts/ss] leads a group called Ayler's Mood on this November 2018 live date titled COMBAT JOY [Aut Records 051]. The quartet that includes Danilo Gollo [b] and Ermanno Baron [dms] plays a program divided into six parts [Parts1-6] [53:01]. The first 25 minutes is almost meditative playing, which as the energy increases so do the Aylerism quotes. This is honest music and an honest performance. Give yourself over to the music.

A new MATTHEW SHIPP recording is nothing to stop the press over as it seems there is a new one, or more, every month. Yet, I find myself usually covering them. Lately, I have found them notable as I find Shipp playing in a more conservative direction, at this point in his career. Shipp's latest is THE UNIDENTIFIABLE [ESP 5039] with super support from Mike Bisio [b] and Newman Taylor Baker [drm]. This is a wonderful recording, and anyone who has been following Shipp from 1987, and who may have lost interest over the years … definitely get this, and enjoy eleven originals [54:46], recorded 10/10/2019.

JIM WALLER [ts] big band, BUCKET LIST [no label 051497 203221] is a nice, but generic big band with Jacqueline Sotelo [vocalist] and Will Kennedy [drm]. There are fourteen tracks, mostly covers, plus a new arrangement of "Rhapsody in Blue."

Mike Bisio's first recording [1983] was also the first for Rick Mandyck [sax]. At that time, Mandyck played without aligning himself with any particular group. Then, in the mid-1980s, he began recording on John Bishop's Origin Records. In 2000, Mandyck made his first recording on Origin with Bishop [drm], John Stowell [gtr] and Jeff Johnson [b].

In 2020, they met again and produced SCENES:

TRAPEZE [Origin Records 82807]. As a trio, Bishop, Stowell and Johnson work well together. Although this is a very subdued group, add Mandyck for some intense easy listening jazz.

Scandinavia embraced bop better than other areas of the globe. BO LINDENSTRAND [as] [1944-2017] was not a pioneer, but he understood Bird and bop. He has very little recorded history. NEW QUARTET [Vivecalindenstrand Records vl cd01] is a studio recording with Bo Skuba [p], Per Nilsson [b] and Anders Nyberg [drm} that emerged in 2001. The program is 10 tracks of many bop classics, played seamlessly. I wonder how much more music sits gathering dust. The good news is, it seemed that the entire Lindenstrand family was involved in this issue; hopefully, there will be more.

Percaso Records, the independent Swiss company, began around 1986, averaging about one release per year. The latest release is ROAD WORKS GLASSWARE [Percaso Records 35]. CHRISTOPH GALLIO [ss/as], who has made most of his recordings on this label, leads a band featuring Raphael Loher [p/electronics], Ernst Thoma [syn], Dominque Girod [b] and Nicolas Stocker [perc]. As he often does, Gallio uses numbers as titles.

On this recording, the tracks are named Parts: 1,2,3,4,5. Within these parts were electronic crud, spoken non sequiturs and random noise, all of which distracted my listening pleasure. What held it together, was rhythmic breaks – for sax and avant parts – which seemed pre-meditated and part of the work.

My biggest complaint with RAPHAEL PANNIER'S [dms] first release FAUNE [French Paradox Record fp004] is not about the music, but the cover design. Orange type on a beige background makes it difficult to read the information, but the music is easy to comprehend — a range of sound from 20th century modernism/impressionist to post-bop jazz. There is a trumpet that appears on this release, who is not listed or credited. Note: as a drummer, Pannier is very reluctant to use his snare; this is not a value judgement, just an observation.

At 35 minutes, WILLIAM CHERNOFF'S [b.gtr]

debut recording — AIM TO STAY [Chernoff Records cha001] — is too short, especially considering that the leader is absent from one tune. Joining Chernoff for this recording are Thad Bailey-Mai [tpt], Jonny Tobin [p], Carson Tworow [drm] and Bobby Wiens [drm]. Bailey-Mai's understated trumpet, which is featured on most tunes, has a flat, reflective sound which is complimentary to Chernoff's reflective compositions.

Mainstream lives with YOU'RE IT! [Cellar Records cmd 64120], the latest recording from MIKE MELITO [dms]. Along with Dino Losito [p], Neal Miner [b] and Larry McKenna [ts], the quartet delivers nine excellent tracks for this consistently mainstream bop label. Kudos to McKenna, a first-class tenor player in the style of Al Cohn, Zoot Sume and Phi Woods.

JOSIE FALBO: YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING [Southport Records s-ssd 0150] opens with the luxury of a full orchestra, confirming my feelings that here is another singer singing a program of overly familiar standards ... snore. I was wrong. This is one of the best of any year! Falbo may not equal the work of Ella, but she certainly has the speed and scatting skills of the best of them. There's a range that brings to mind Sarah, though less haute. The finale of this fine effort, "Tristeza," is so joyous that it is a relief from the emotions of the previous 12 tracks.

Papatamus

Tenor saxophonist MICHAEL ZILBER leads EAST WEST [Origin Records 82791]. There are two bands — EAST [a 16-piece band recorded in March 2018] and WEST [a 20-piece band recorded August 2018]. Each CD in this two CD set has seven tracks including eight originals. The remaining tracks are covers of jazz compositions [East] or well known standards [West]. Except for Joe Bagale, who sings on one track, soloists are not identified on the individual tracks.

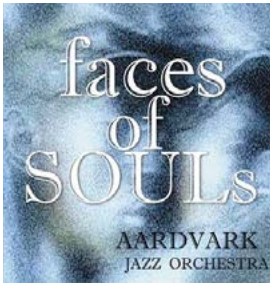
RICHARD UNDERHILL'S SHUFFLE DEMONS are featured on their eighth release titled CRAZY TIME [Stubby Records scrod 1703]. As its title suggests, this CD should have a certain fun and lightness to it. Sadly, all of that is lacking. What's here is mature but bland music, with two recitations added in an attempt to be hip. All this will surely disappoint followers of the band. May their ninth CD be better.

HAND PAINTED DREAM [Savant scd 2175] is the newest big band release from PETER HAND. Recorded in February 2018, this 19-plus musician recording is loaded with soloists including Valery Ponomarev and Eddie Allen [tpt], James Weidman [p], Don Braden [ts/flt], Camille Thurman [vocal], Ralph Lalama [ts, alt], James Burton III [tbn], Steve Johns [dms] and Peter Hand [as]. The program is pleasant and professional, but really excels on the five Peter Hand originals and on his arrangements of jazz classics such as "Berkshire Blues" and "If You Could See Me Now." Kudos are also due for the well laid out notes, photos and discography. It all adds up to a first class effort, from every angle.

Of a similar style to the One O'clock Band is the UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO JAZZ ORCHESTRA showcased on EMBARGO [UOT Jazz 829982 206220]. Among the eight tunes on this dateless recording are six student compositions and takes on "A Train" and "Hi Fly." This is a pleasant, understated recording with enough dirt to keep it interesting.

In the last Papatamus I wrote about MARK HARVEY [p] on the occasion of the release of his earliest recording. I also wrote about the AARDVARK JAZZ ORCHESTRA (AJO), which Harvey led from its inception almost 50 years ago. The AJO has just released their 10th recording on Leo Records titled

Papatamus



FACES OF SOULS [LEO Records cd lr 877]. This is an undated recording of seven lengthy tracks [70:18]. There are some vital moments over this hour, but it rarely connects, defaulting to a rambling orchestra with no one picking up and running with the inspiration. Too bad. With players like Allan Chase [as], Peter Bloom [as/flt], Phil Scarff [ts,ss] and Bill Lowe [tbn/tu], I would have hoped for more.

SILKE EBERHARD [as] admits to having a passion and knowledge of Eric Dolphy's music. She has written and arranged eight originals [51:54] for her tentet, remarkably catching the spirit of Dolphy's music on POTSA LOTSA XL — SILK SONGS FOR SPACE DOGS [Leo Records cd lr878]. This is a splendid group with strong players throughout. If you're a fan of Dolphy's music, get this without hesitation. It breaks it down in a way I don't remember ever hearing before. As Eberhard admits "the ghost of Dolphy is still around the music."

DAVE POST has issued his seventh volume of SWINGADELIC, BLUESVILLE [Zoho zm202007]. The musical content should find a welcome place for many Papatamus readers because of the familiarity of many of the tunes. Among the 14 tracks are "The Late Late Show," "I Love the Life I Live," "Harlem Nocturne," "Whats Your Story Morning Glory," "Lonely Avenue" and "The Mooche."

The latest release from bassist JEFF REED is a fine, straight-ahead bop date titled LOOK TO THE LIGHT [Sticker Street Records ssr1003]. This November 2019 date features Sean Jones [tpt], Todd Marcus [b-clt], Jonathan Epley [gtr] and Eric Kennedy [drms]. The program is a mixture of originals and jazz standards all played with thought and heart that wears very well on repeated listenings. Special notice goes to Todd Marcus, who handles the bass clarinet without apeing Dolphy.

ZEN ZADRAVEC [p] and his septet offer strong bop on HUMAN REVOLUTION [Factor Records zz 07742]. The undated recording features seven nice originals plus a beautifully rendered take on "Soul Eyes" [62:00]. Trumpeter John Douglas shows his chops briefly on the opening track, with Derrick Gardner coming on strong later in the session. Other standouts include Todd Bashore [as, ss], who plays with emotional sensitivity, and Dylan Bell singing wordlessly on two tracks. A pleasant excursion.

Papatamus

STEPHANE SPIRA [ss] and GIOVANNI MIRABASSI [p] are a pair of Frenchmen who came together on IMPROKOFIEV [Jazzmax Records 3521383 461167] . They are joined by Donald Kontomanou [drm], Steve Wood [b] and by Yoann Loustalot [flg], who appears on one track. The recording has a lovely sense of humor and lightness about it as the group plays music inspired by Improkofiev Suite (excerpts from Violin #1) plus a Carla Bley and Erik Satie piece. Good stuff.

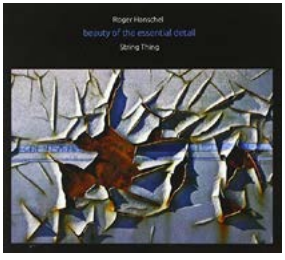
BRIAN SCANLON [as/ts] has made close to 100 dates as a sideman, but BRAIN SCAN [no label 888295 938440] recorded in 2019 is, I believe, the first session under his own name since 1972. Scanlon is joined by a group of mostly well known studio musicians including Tom Ranier [p], Trey Henry [b], Peter Erskine [dms] and Larry Koonse [gtr]. There are eight originals plus "Harlem Nocturne" on the program. At first I was impressed by the way the music swings and by the dexterity of Scanlon's sax work. However, after another listen or two, it left me wanting more depth.

FOR NOW is the newest release from BRIAN LANDRUS [bari/bclt/flts] on the Blueland label [BLR2020]. Joining Landrus in the foreground are Fred Hersch [p], Billy Hart [dms] and Drew Gress [b]. The quartet is augmented by Michael Rodriguez [tpt], Sara Caswell [vln], Joyce Hammann [vln], Lois Martin [vol], and Jody Redhage-Ferber [cello]. The 12 tracks are a mixture of nine originals and three standards. Although the CD offers good music in many colors - strings, quartet, solo bass clarinet, uptempo, and ballads — the sequencing leaves it a bit unsatisfying as a whole.

Brian Landrus [bari/bclt/flts] is also part of the band on vocalist CECE GABLE'S fine recording — MORE THAN A SONG [New York Jazz Project 1001]. The set features ten standards that fit Gable's breathy and sincere delivery. In addition to Landrus, the band includes Roni Ben-Hur [gtr], Harvie S [b] and Sylvia Cuenca [dms]. The band is at its best when interacting with the singer. Landrus' interplay with Gable is a scene stealer on one of the longest tracks on the CD — "It's Alright With Me" [6:01].

Strings are in the forefront on ROGER HANSCHEL'S

Papatamus

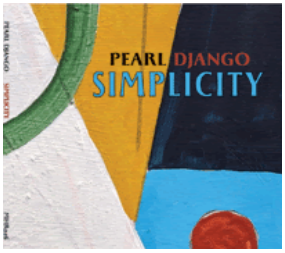


BEAUTY OF THE ESSENTIAL DETAIL [MicNic Records mn 7]. A group called String Thing — Nicola Kruse [vln], Ingmar Meissner [viola], Gunther Tiedemann [cello] and Jens Piezunka [b] — joins saxophonist Hanschel on this October 2013 recording. The nine compositions [61:54] are Hanschel originals and played mostly in unison, suggesting a strict discipline. Composition takes the spotlight on this session, with Hanschel, who has been a member of Kolner Saxophone Mafia, playing as part of a chamber string quintet.

Moserobie Records has corralled two of the finest post bop tenor men — JUHANI AALTONEN and JONAS KULLHAMMAR — on this May 2019 date titled THE FATHER,THE SONS & THE JUNNU [mmlcd 124]. They are joined by two relative new comers to the Scandinavian jazz scene — CHRISTIAN MEAAS SVENDSEN [b] and ILMARI HEIKINHEIMO [drm]. The improvisations, each contributed by a band member, play out like a suite. It opens with a scratching rhythm that touches deep into one's gut as the other musicians fall in line and carry on with the spirit. Frankly, any recording that features two veteran sax men of this caliber would be tempting fate to not succeed. Three generations of creative talent bodes well, in this celebration of Scandinavian post bop.

PEARL DJANGO have been around since the mid '90s with a number of CDs to their name. Over the years they have moved away from "Django" as evidenced on SIMPLICITY [Modern Hot Records mhr 026]. This latest effort offers 11 originals penned by different members of the quintet. Even though the orthodoxy of Django may not be in the forefront, you can still hear the strum of guitar against the pluck of the bass, riding under the flowing melodies of the accordion and violin [more reminiscent of a fiddle, and before you write in, it is the same instrument but each with a distinctive sound]. A lovely recording in the pseudo- Django vernacular.

Inspired by Django, but played out of the normal vernacular is REZ ABBASI'S DJANJO-SHIFT [Whirlwind Recordings WR4762]. Here, with his trio of Neil Alexander [org/electronics/synthesizers]



and Michael Sarin [drm], Abbasi plays nine tunes associated with Django but restructures the melodies and harmonies. Despite familiar titles like "Swing 42," and "Cavalerie," I could only identify the original tune when it would make a brief appearance like a sunken ship at low tide. It's a fun listen, and one of Abbasi's best, especially for folks of post-Django music.

LAFAYETTE GILCHRIST brings his exciting piano style to NOW [no label 613285 781726]. This two CD set, recorded in November 2019, features Herman Burnie [b] and Eric Kennedy [drm] playing Gilchrist tunes like "Assume The Position," "On Your Belly Like A Snake" and "More Careful." Disc two is far less percussive and "Monkish" than disc one, and it takes a moment to adjust to its more softer, more romantic side.

Matthew Shipp introduced a new sound/direction in jazz piano style since arriving on the New York avant scene and making his first appearance on Cadence Jazz, in 1987. Today, he has almost 200 recordings to his name. His latest is a two-CD set titled MORPH [ESP Records esp5026]. Recorded in March 2019, disc 1 (subtitled Reckoning) is a duo set with drummer Whit Dickey, while disc 2 (subtitled Pacific Noir) adds trumpeter Nate Wooley to the mix. Shipp is usually more angular than of recent, making this recording a nice respite from his more rhapsodic approach. Wooley and Shipp have been recording with Ivo Perleman, but I don't remember the energy and interplay at this inspired level.

Bassist FERDINANDO ROMANO has written some lovely music for TOTEM [Losen Records los242-2]. The eight originals [55:59] were written to feature vibist Nazareno Caputo and trumpeter Ralph Alessi, whose playing on six tracks is lovely against the composed sections. Tommaso Lacoviello is added on flugelhorn, for three tracks.

Composition is basic to the music on JASON KAO HWANG'S HUMAN RITES TRIO [True Sound Recordings ts 03]. The composed parts are well integrated into the music, allowing the listener to focus on the improvisation. There are moments of hesitancy during transitions for musical directions.

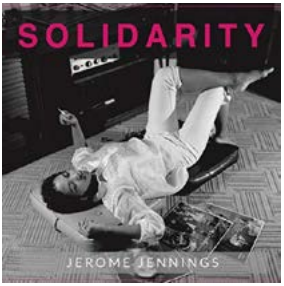
There are some moving solos and group forays. After several listenings, I would concur that this is meaty music.

ANGELA TURONE [voc/p] and CHRIS PRATT [gtr] have released SOUNDS OF BRAZIL [Factor Records 829982 210586]. The nine tracks come together for a very traditional CD that includes a lovely piece of Brazilian music, as well as familiar tunes like "The Pawnbroker" and "Bewitched." Although there are no surprises with this approach, it is an effort worthy of your time and ears.

Drummer JEROME JENNINGS' SOLIDARITY [lola Record lor-j2] is a vibrant recording with a tentet that includes Tia Fuller [sax], Christian McBride [b], Josh Evans [tpt] and others. Things open with "Bebop" taken at such a tempo that it is over before one's ears catch up with it; but it's cool. The eleven tracks on this undated session include a nice variety of material, mostly originals with two well thought-out drum solos. Camille Thurman takes one vocal and also shows her skills on tenor sax There is some subtle underlying politics to this recording which deserves attention, no matter what your politics are. Enjoy.

TWO HOURS EARLY, TEN MINUTES LATE [Accretions alpo71] is a new duo recording with JASON ROBINSON [ts] and ERIC HOFBAUER [gtr] playing a dozen compositions by the late Ken Aldcroft. As expected, there is a give-and-take of the two instruments that occasionally play in unison. Much of the variety and gifts of this music really unfold on repeated listenings, and does so without becoming familiar. This has held up for the better part of a week, making it good listening, not easy listening. The CD comes with extensive liner notes. Very nice indeed.

Strings with improvisation and/or rhythm is a combination that's hard to beat. Charlie Parker knew that, as did Archie Shepp, Max Roach, Dominic Duval and others. Bassist/composer EVA KESS keeps that tradition going with FALLING STARS [Neu Klang Records ncd4230]. This September 2019 recording features two violins, viola, cello, piano and drums, and it is a beauty. The combination of written



music and improvisation is wonderful, with only minor exceptions. Overall ,this is an exciting and tasty release.

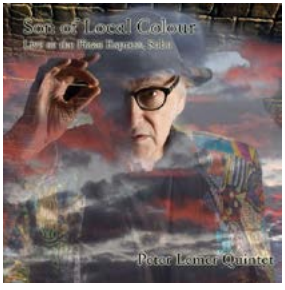
CLAIRE DALY'S RAH! RAH! [Ride Records RID-CD-34] should find favor with fans of the baritone sax and with the music of Rahsaan Roland Kirk. The 10 tracks include Kirk originals and a couple harmless vocals, two originals and a handful of standards. "Rah Rah" for Daly to pay homage to "Rah" on her newest release.

ESP Records got its start by releasing recordings from unknown or little known free-jazz musicians of the day. The music was often played free to extreme. One of the latest releases on that label — OWL XOUNDS EXPLODING GALAXY [ESP 5050LP] — has the characteristics of earlier ESP releases, in that it is a total free blow out. These are unissued tracks [28:64] from the Splintered Visions LP by Gene Janus [b], Adam Kriney [drm], Mario Rechitern [sax], and Shayna Dulberger [b]. Previous issues were released on very limited editions. If you long for the innocence and energy of the early days of the ESP and BYG labels, then this is for you.

PETER LEMER [p] was one of the original artists recorded on ESP. Now, after a career on the continent, a few dozen recordings and about seven years of silence, he is back at ESP with SON OF LOCAL COLOUR [ESP 5031]. Recorded live at Pizza Express in February 2018 with the same group as his earlier ESP release — John Surman [ss/bari], Tony Reeves [b] and Jon Hiseman [dms], with Alan Skidmore [s] taking the place of George Kahn. I was not a fan of Lemer originally, but this CD is quite enjoyable.

NoBusiness Records has issued RICOCHET [nbcd 128], the third volume of its SAM RIVERS project. This sessions finds Rivers playing with his trio of Dave Holland [b/cello] and Barry Altschul [drm]. As with the first two volumes, Rivers is in good and forceful voice on this January 1978 date from the Keystone Corner. The title track, which clocks in at 52:14, fills the entire CD.

From the bizarre world of C.C. Cochran comes JOHN FINLAY, SOUL SINGER [Vesuvius Records



vm002]. Eleven tracks, six of them original, are packed with heart felt singing, reminiscent of Al Green and various other soul singers.

BRENT JENSEN offers a Paul Desmond tribute on THE SOUND OF A DRY MARTINI [Origin Records 82396]. Jensen's alto is joined by Jamie Findlay [gtr], Zac Matthews [b] and Dean Koba [drm]; all do a wonderful job of evoking the Desmond sound. It is so comforting and familiar that I began to dose off about midway through the recording, and I think the producer possibly did as well, as near the end of "Out Of Nowhere" there's the unmistakable sound of a dial tone from a phone left off its hook. A lovely CD, but not as lovely as the original.

Tenor saxman, GREGORY DUDZIENSKI, has released BEAUTIFUL MOMENTS [OA2 Records 22183]. This November 2019 date has Chris White [p], Kelly Sill [b] and Jeff Stitely [drm] playing some excellent originals. If the music had been written and recorded by a first line jazz artist in the 1950s, they would have become jazz standards. Here is music that's lyrical and delivered without bravado. Bravo.

JEREMY LEVY and his jazz orchestra take inspiration from Gustav Holst on THE PLANETS: REMAGINED [QA2 Records 22182]. Levy rearranged and conducted Holst's original works and made them more enjoyable. The jazz element, unfortunately, is secondary.

Vibraphonist SERGIO ARMAROLI'S Decenver 2019 recording features Harri Sjöstrôm [ss] and Giancarlo Schiaffini [tbn]. Hence the title — DUOS & TRIOS [Leo Records cd lr892]. The program is divided into two sections — nine duos and three trios.

The results are disappointing. Although Sjöstrôm and Schiafiffini have been around for many years, Armaroli is relatively new to recording. He simply adds color to the exciting sounds of the veteran players.

The duo of GEORGE McMULLEN [tbn] and VINNY GOLIA [reeds/flute] is featured on LINE DRAWINGS VOLUME 1 [Slidething stm101] and SLIDETHING VOLUME 2 [stm 102]. McMullen first recorded with Golia in the early 1990s, and then again in 2019. However, the artists seem less comfortable with each other on this 2015 date. If I

had to recommend one volume over the other, there is a greater flow between the artists on Volume 2.

JOHN DI MARTINO treats us to a 14 Strayhorn compositions on PASSION FLOWER [Sunnyside Records ssc4114]. All tunes are nicely and freshly handled, including a vocal on "Lush Life" by Raul Midón. The tune, which is what "Giant Steps" is for saxophonists, is handled well by Midon. There is also phenomenal playing from saxophonist Eric Alexander on this July 2019 session.

Alexander, who has appeared on hundreds of recordings, is never less than average. Especially fresh here is the group's take on "Take the A Train". If you're a Strayhorn fan, get this CD for its many surprises and joys.

TANIA GRUBBS is a new singer to me, and her LIVE AT MAUREEN'S JAZZ CELLAR [Tania Grubbs Records 888295 977173] is quite enjoyable. Grubbs has a rather small mid-range voice and displays it well on subtly emotional lyrics. The setting here is jazz with David Budway [p], Jeff Grubbs [b], James Johnson III (dms) and Ron Affif [gtr] serving up more than introductions to the dozen songs on this recording. Each tune averages about six minutes, leaving time for these musicians to stretch out. The five tunes from the jazz canon are the highlights of this live date.

PAULETTE MC WILLIAMS is another new singer to me who released A WOMAN'S STORY [Blu jazz 640668 348528]. She shows great potential, but it is wasted on the dribble which makes up most of the 12 tracks here. The exceptions are two Janis Ian songs. Good singer, but a lousy CD.

Singer MAYITA DINOS released her debut disc titled THE GARDEN IS MY STAGE [Dash Koffman Records dhr 1025]. The 13 tunes here are well chosen as Dinos handles the material with care, nuance and originality. The arrangements for her ensemble are well done, but lack interaction between the players.

RAINBOW BABY [Orenda Records 0076] is the latest release from CATHLENE PINEDA [p]. Kris Tiner [tpt], Tina Raymond [drms] and David Tranchina [b] join Pienda on ten original compositions. The linear music is winsome and lonely with nice interaction

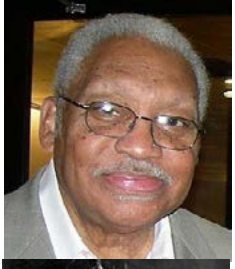
between Pineda and Tiner. This is a pianist of some merit.
Folks who enjoy guitar and organ combos will find a good one in HIT IT [no label 888295 996099] by the BK TRIO, featuring BRIAN KOOKEN [gtr], Greg Hatza [B3 organ] and Robert Shahid [drm]. The organ grinds away while the guitar glides without restraints over eight originals. Good listening.
Active on the scene for the past 40 years, RADAM SCHWARTZ [p/org] has several recordings on the Arabesque label. His latest is ORGAN BIG BAND [Arabesque Records 195081 600888], a set of 10 swinging and foot tapping tunes. There are a number of solid solos from this 14 piece band with drummer David F. Gibson — given prominent second billing on the CD's cover, but I don't see why. He has one solo and it kicks the band as expected, but there are other soloists who played more dynamically. A good listen.
The 3D JAZZ TRIO [Diva Jazz Orchestra 3dcd-2020] is yet another branch of SHERRIE MARICLE'S Diva Jazz Orchestra.The good new is I can't think of any of her many efforts that are not artistically credible, including this trio date. Jackie Warren's piano has a touch of Red Garland, while Amy Shook supports the effort on bass.
HORACE TAPSCOTT with the PAN AFRIKAN PEOPLES ARKESTRA - ANCESTRAL ECHOES, THE COCINA SESSIONS, 1976 is he latest material from the Tapscott archive eleased on the Dark Tree label (DT(RS)13). This recording has music structured similar to Sun Ra. With just four tracks and around 70 minutes, it could have made a stronger recording with some editing of redundant percussion rounds and the excessive ensemble wandering. But if all are given a chance, there are some inspiring solos in the ensemble. What is encouraging is the notes indicate that the Tapscott family retains some rights to the music.There are huge gaps in Tapscott's discography. Hopefully Dark Tree can fill in those gaps and do the recordings with good audio.One can only guess what goodies might still be issued.
There was an agreement between Paul Desmond and Dave Brubeck that when Desmond went out on his own he would not record with a piano. Here he is on a live set from Toronto with Ed Bickert [gtr], Don Thompson [b] and Jerry Fuller [drm]. PAUL DESMOND; THE COMPLETE 1975 TORONTO RECORDINGS [Mosiac md7-269]. captures the band at Bourbon Street in 1975. Desmond's playing with Dave Brubeck, arguably the most popular jazz group in North America In the 1950s and 1960s, helped put him on the map. I am a big fan of Desmond's distinctive and lovely style and this is a wonderful set of his music, with the quality of the recording and notes living up to the Mosaic standard. Desmond adds the "butter" to the familiar and lyrical tunes from the Great American Songbook on this recording. However, after a few hours of listening to this set, the music falls into the background. I still prefer the recordings of Desmond with Brubeck, Getz or Mulligan.

Robert Rusch, edited by Abe Goldstein

Obituaries


Bill Withers


Bucky Pizzarelli


Ellis Marsalis


Henry Grimes


Lee Konitz

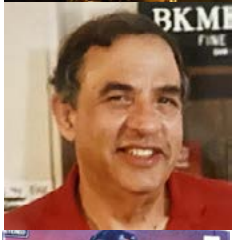

Bill Smith

ANDREW KOWALCZYK, *producer, died on April 6, 2020. He was 63.*
ANDY GONZÁLEZ *died on April 2020. He was 69.*
BILL WITHERS, *singer - songwriter, died on March 30, 2020. He was 81.*
BUCKY PIZZARELLI, *guitarist, died on April 1, 2020. He was 94.*
CAREI THOMAS, *jazz pianist and composer- died on. She was 81.*
DANNY LAEKE, *studio engineer died on April 27, 2020. He was 69.*
DONN TRENNER, *died on May 16, 2020. He was 93.*
EDDY DAVIS *banjo virtuoso died on April 7, 2020. He was 79.*
ELLIS MARSALIS *died on April 1, 2020. He was 85.*
FREDDY COLE *singer, pianist, died on June 27, 2020. He was 88.*
FREDERICK C TILLIS *[ts/ss/composer] died on May 3, 2020. He was 90.*
HAL WILLNER, *legendary producer died on April 7, 2020. He was 64.*
HENRY GRIMES, *legendary bassist, died on April 17, 2020. He was 84.*
JEANIE LAMBE, *legendary Glasgow jazz singer died on May 29, 2020. She was 79.*
JOHN MAXWELL BUCHER *trumpet and cornet, died on April 5, 2020. He ws 89.*
KEITH TIPPETT, *British jazz pianist died on June 14, 2020. He was 72.*
LEE KONITZ, *legendary jazz saxophone artist died on April 15, 2020. He was 92.*
LUCKY PETERSON *[gtr/kbds] died on May 17, 2020. He was 55.*
MICHAEL COGSWELL, *a jazz archivist and historian died on April 20, 2020. He was 66.*
ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS *died on April 6, He was 70.*
PETER JOHNSON ECKLUND, *cornet, composer, died on April 8, 2020. He was 74.*
RICHARD TEITELBAUM *died on April 9, 2020. He was 70.*
RICHIE COLE, *Alto Sax, died. He was 72.*
RONALD LEWIS, *Preserver of New Orleans Black Culture, died. He was 68.*
BILL SMITH *[clt] died on Feb. 29, 2020. He was 93*

Obituaries

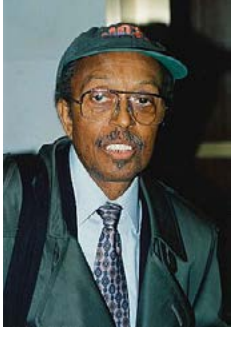

Bob Protzman


Claudio Roditi



Dan Jaffe

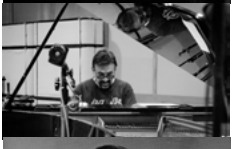
Don Burrows

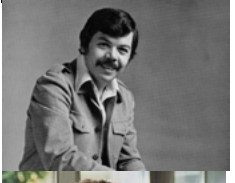

Jimmy Heath

BOB PROTZMAN, *jazz critic, died on Mar. 4, 2020. He was 83.*
CLAUDIO RODITI, *trumpeter, died on Jan. 17, 2020. He was 73.*
DAN JAFFE, *jazz poet, died on Feb. 12, 2020. He was 87.*
DON BURROWS, *multi-instr., died on Mar. 12, 2020. He was 91.*
FRANK GRASSO, *trombone, died about March 3, 2020. He was 69.*
JIMMY HEATH, *tenor sax, died on January 19, 2020. He was 93.*
JOE BOB NELSON, *guitarist, died on Dec. 20, 2019. He was 78.*
KENNY ROGERS *singer, songwriter, died on March 21, 2020. He was 81.*
LYLE DAVID MAYS, *pianist, died on Feb. 10, 2020. He was 66.*
MCCOY TYNER, *pianist, died on March 6, 2020. He was 81.*
MIKE LONGO *pianist, died of complications due to the COVID 19 virus on March 25, 2020. He was 81.*
PETER SCHIMKE *died on Feb. 29, 2020. He was 59.*
RAY MANTILLA, *percussonist, died on March 21, 2020. He was 85.*
RICH OWEN HARNEY, *pianist, died on Jan. 6, 2020. He was 65.*
SUSAN WEINERT, *guitar, died on March 5, 2020. She was 59.*
WALLACE ROONEY, *trumpet, died of complications due to the COVID 19 virus on March 31, 2020. He was 59.*
WILLIAM OVERTON SMITH, *clarinetist and composer, died on February 29, 2020. He was 93.*


Lyle Mays


McCoy Tyner


Mike Longo

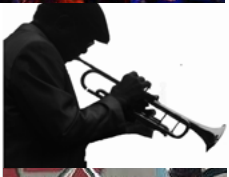

Ray Mantilla


Susan Weinert


Wallace Rooney

Obituaries


Annie Ross


Eddie Gale


Gary Peacock


Helen Jones Woods


Ira Sullivan


Sterling McGee


Steve Grossman

ANNIE ROSS, *jazz singer and actor, died on July 21, 2020. She was 89.*
EDDIE GALE *[tpt] died on July 10, 2020. He was 78.*
GARY PEACOCK *[bass] died on Sept. 4. 2020. He was 85.*
HAL SINGER *[ts] died on August 18, 2020. He was 100.*
HELEN JONES WOODS *[tbn] died on July 25, 2020. She was 96.*
IRA SULLIVAN *[tpt, fl] died Sept. 21, 2020; He was 89.*
STANLEY CROUCH *[drm] died on Sept. 6, 2020. He was 75.*
STERLING MCGEE *[gtr/voc] died on Sept 6, 2020 of covid-.19. He was 86.*
STEVE GROSSMAN *[sax] died on August 13, 2020. He was 69.*